

Trade and Tribute: Byzantium and the Black Sea Straits

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Introduction

One of the striking sights at the Bosphoros today is the sheer number of merchant vessels lying at anchor at its entrance, waiting to pass through – a reminder of and a testimony to the passage's ages-old importance to commercial traffic. In Antiquity, a similar sight would have been seen from the *polis* of Byzantium. Situated as it was at the southern entrance of the Straits, on their European side (in the Golden Horn promontory), it afforded a spectacular view of the ships making their way in and out of the Black Sea. Outside the Black Sea proper, Byzantium played a crucial role in the economic life of that region and also in that of the Mediterranean. Control over the Straits (or the Thracian Bosphoros), which connected the two major seas, was of course what gave Byzantium its importance, from its foundation by (mainly) Megarian colonists in ca. 660 BC, to Roman times and well beyond.¹ A clear illustration of this is provided by Polybios' well-known account of events in the second half of the 3rd century BC (Polyb. 4.38.1-10, 45-52). The main points of this account are as follows:

In 220 BC, Byzantium became enmeshed in a war with a powerful Aegean city, Rhodes, and with a powerful Black Sea monarch, Prusias I of Bithynia. As Polybios makes clear, this political crisis had chiefly been caused by an economic crisis. For some time, Byzantium had been paying heavy tribute – 80 talents a year – to the neighbouring Gauls, who under the ruler Comontorius had established the Tylian Kingdom in the area of the former Odrysian Kingdom in Thrace. Pressured by the tribute (*piezomenoi ton phoron*), Polybios explains, the Byzantians were compelled to impose a toll on all ships passing through the Thracian Bosphoros. It was the great financial loss which this measure inflicted on the merchants that prompted Rhodes, the leading sea-power of the times, to react. On behalf of traders and their communities the Rhodians asked the Byzantians to abolish the toll, and, when the latter refused to do so, the Rhodians declared war against them. The participation of Prusias I of Bithynia in that war, on the other hand, is said to have been due to several grudges he had against Byzantium (Polyb. 4.49.1-4).

The broader background of the conflict with Rhodos is detailed by Polybios (4.38.1-10). Owing to its favourable geographical position, Byzantion had complete command over the supply of, and derived the greatest financial benefit from, all the goods that were being traded between the Pontos and the Mediterranean. No one could sail in and out of the Pontos without the Byzantians' consent. Therefore, as long as the Byzantians kept the passage open to commercial traffic and unencumbered from monetary exactions, or as long as they did not allow it to fall into non-Greek hands, they were regarded as deserving the gratitude of the Greeks for being the "common benefactors of all" (*koinoi euergetai panton*: 4.38.10) – a title ordinarily reserved for Hellenistic kings and, from the later 3rd century on, the Romans, too. Their decision, shortly before 220 BC, to impose a toll, however, made the Pontic trade unprofitable for merchants, as a result of which the Byzantians, honouring no longer their ancient obligations towards the Greeks (cf. Polyb. 4.45.9-10), fell into disfavour. The conflict did not last long. But its end was marked by the Byzantians' acceptance, declared in their peace treaty with the Rhodians, to abolish the toll (Polyb. 4.52.5; SV III: no. 516).

It is in connection with the key economic position of Byzantion and the conflict of 220 BC that Polybios, in a brief but famous passage, describes the main commodities traded between the Mediterranean and the Pontos:

For as regards necessities of life, it is an undisputed fact that the most plentiful supplies and best qualities of cattle and the multitude of humans who are trafficked as slave labour (*to ton eis tas douleias hagomenon somaton plethos*) reach us from the places lying around the Pontos, while out of their surplus these same places supply us plentifully with honey, wax and salt fish. From the surplus products of our own places they receive olive-oil and every kind of wine. As for grain there is a give-and-take; sometimes they opportunely [or: comfortably] ship supplies to us, at other times they receive supplies from us (Polyb. 4.38.4-5; translation adapted from W.R. Paton, Loeb edn.).

Several important themes underlie Polybios' report of events in 220 BC. One is the ability of a strategically located place to exert a considerable influence on the flow of marketable commodities between, and so link economically, two large and commercially vibrant regions. Another is the interaction between a Greek *polis* and its vastly more numerous (and powerful) non-Greek neighbours as well as the implications of that interaction: Byzantion features here as a Greek bulwark towards aggressive, tribute-hungry and trade-disrupting non-Greek peoples, protecting as it did the economic interests of its cultural brethren from external threats. Inseparable from this, furthermore, is the sharp opposition between two modes of economic behaviour, which indeed go some way toward circumscribing two *qualitative* different kinds of economy:

a Greek “trade-based” economy versus a “barbarian” predatory economy, the one sustained by the pursuit of economic gain through peaceful and unconstrained buying and selling, the other fuelled by forced tributary exactions that themselves triggered off further taxes (i.e. the toll); in short, a dichotomy between the “free-trade” economy and the “coercive” political economy. A fourth theme, finally, and one standing above all the others, consists of the very tendency of cumulative pressures – just like ominous clouds – to concentrate at the Thracian Bosphoros and especially at Byzantion, with the result of turning the area into a charged field of tension. These pressures came from different directions and from different kinds of sources, some political others purely economic. The resulting tension mostly (but not only) appeared in the form of a strong claim by the political authority to have a share in the profits of trade: either by demanding tribute, or by taxing those using the passage, or by doing both of these things simultaneously.

An historical analysis of these pressures is therefore highly required if we want to gain a better understanding of the economic processes linking the Pontos and the Mediterranean together.² Also, save for isolated comments in works on the political history of Byzantion and Kalchedon, some of which are urgently in need of an update,³ proper scholarly treatment of the economic importance of Byzantion still waits to be undertaken. The same goes for the Straits, one of most important passages in the Mediterranean world *and* the sole seaward outlet of the entire Black Sea region: closing the passage for an extended period of time was likely to cause economic *asphyxia* in either of the worlds it connected – leaving as the only alternatives the far less accessible and more costly land routes.

However, my aim in this paper is a modest one. The taxes-trade relationship and particularly the tension characterizing that relationship are too vast issues to be adequately treated in such a short space. Here, they will be addressed by way of treating two specific questions. They both arise from a simple observation. The toll (re-)imposed in about 220 BC was not something new; monetary charges on those using the Straits had been the normal situation previously as it was to be again in later times,⁴ to which should be added that tribute and other kinds of taxes were constant factors in the area. Why, then, did the merchants raise so strong a complaint against the re-introduction of the toll that it led to a war? And was it only out of altruism, and the concomitant wish to feature as “the common benefactors of all (the Greeks)”, that the Byzantians, in some year before 220 BC, waved their acknowledged right to a substantial source of income by abolishing the toll? In combination, the specific answers that will be suggested to these questions are also going to show that the “trade-based economy” of the Greeks and the “predatory economy” of the “barbarians”, rather than battling each other (as Polybios claims), largely enjoyed a symbiotic relationship. This seems at least to be one of the points emerging from a comparison of the situation in the 3rd century with that prevailing earlier, especially in the 5th century BC.

Trade and Empire: the 5th century BC

Polybios, we have seen, emphasizes the privileged economic position of Byzantium in mid 3rd century BC. This position, it is true, owed much to the city-state's ability to gain a sufficient degree of political power to pursue its own interests, which, until ca. 220 BC, seem to have coincided with those of the other Greeks, especially those of the Mediterranean. But it is crucial to distinguish between the geographical area as such (Byzantium as a city in the Straits) and the political entity wielding authority over it. In terms of topography (and hydrography), Byzantium's position had always been far more advantageous than that of Kalchedon, the *polis* almost facing it on other side of the Straits – whose unfavourable location had earned it the description “the city of the blind”.⁵ Yet as a power capable of exploiting its geographical advantages on its own behalf, Byzantium was a latecomer. The crucial issue is therefore not which city was situated favourably in the Thracian Bosphoros, but *who controlled* the narrow, 20 miles long stretch of water that connected two major areas and their economies. The one who held command over it was able to decide which Pontic producers (and products) could reach which Mediterranean destinations, and also which Mediterranean producers (and products) could approach Pontic ports. In short, he who commanded the Straits was in a position to exert an immense economic influence. All this, however, could only be achieved through investment in military infrastructure and technology on a scale that only a rich and powerful state was able to undertake. Enter the *tributary empire*, one of the sources generating a considerable amount of pressure around the Thracian Bosphoros.

This is not the place to rehearse the long history of conquest in the area. It is enough to note that in the early 5th century BC Byzantium (and Kalchedon) stood amidst three rivalling tributary empires. From 477 BC onwards, and for the remainder of the century, one of these, the Athenian Empire, succeeded in ousting the other two from the region. The Persians withdrew to their Asiatic heartland.⁶ The third imperial power, the Thracians (who habitually applied military pressure on Byzantium from its foundation onwards),⁷ was left no other option than to remain an uneasy neighbour in the northwest. Thus, from early on, Thracian rulers were effectively deprived of relatively wealthy tribute payers along the North Aegean coast and at the Bosphoros. For much of the 5th century, consequently, Byzantium had to deal with the pressures issuing from one tributary empire, that of Athens.

To a certain degree, the magnitude of these pressures can be quantified. Presumably, Byzantium entered the imperial organization (formally, the Delian League) as one of the “ship-contributors” (*ATL* III, 206).⁸ But later on it reverted to annual cash contributions (*phoros*). Our evidence for its yearly tribute covers the period from 454/3 BC to 428/7 BC. Two things should be noted. One is that for a time Byzantium paid tribute together with its dependencies, the *polis* of Kallipolis and the island of Bysbiskos. The other, and more

significant, is that its attested payments start at a relatively high level, only to reach still higher levels in the following decades: from 15 talents (in 450/49, the second largest payment of that year) it goes up to 15 talents and 4,300 drachmas (in 443/2), then to 18 talents and 1,800 drachmas (in 433/2), and again to 21 talents and 3,200 drachmas (in 430/29).⁹ Such increases may have a *political* significance, in as much as they might reflect Athenian pre-emptive or even punitive measures towards a resourceful (or unruly) ally (cf. below). However, they definitely also have a pronounced *economic* significance, since they do reflect Athens' trust in Byzantions' capacity to pay so high amounts in tribute. Though the highest of these payments (i.e. slightly over 21 talents) is merely one-fourth of the 80 talents a year that the city was to pay later on (in the 3rd century) to the Tylian Kingdom, it nonetheless still represents a considerable amount. So, for much of the 5th century BC, the *polis* of Byzantion was subjected to heavy imperial exactions, which it (and its dependencies) proved able to meet.

To a large measure, that economic ability was created and sustained with support from the imperial centre: Athens, in short, was fattening Byzantion by boosting its role in trade, not least in the grain-trade. Mainly, in three interconnected ways.

1. The first was by making the city a central *entrepôt* for the commodities traded between the Pontos and the Aegean. This trade included exports of Pontic grain to *the Aegean* (not just to Athens), a traffic which is attested in the early 5th century, and which seems to have grown even more in importance after the middle of the century (see, e.g., Hdt. 6.5, 26 [Histiaios of Miletos' seizure of merchantmen sailing out of the Pontos]; 7.147 [ships carrying Pontic grain to Aigina and Peloponnesos]; Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.35 [large number of grain-ships sailing into the Peiraieus in 410 BC]).¹⁰

Evidence for Byzantion's status and function as an *entrepôt* under the control of imperial Athens comes from two Athenian inscriptions that are dated to the early 420s (for a different interpretation of these documents, see Braund in this volume). They separately give permit to two members of the empire, Methone and Aphytes, to export annually a certain amount of grain from Byzantion.¹¹ Granted, these permits, each being issued to a named importer-community and specifying the maximum amount they were allowed to take out every year, have an ad hoc character. Not so, however, with the broader activity into which Methone and Aphytes are permitted to partake, i.e. the "export of grain from Byzantion" (ἐἶν[αι ἐχ]σα[γῶ]γῆν ἐγ Βυζαντίου σίτου) as such, which, besides being a well-established and regularly ongoing affair, concerned *Pontic* grain in general, rather than grain grown in Byzantion in particular (cf. note 14 below). For one, these operations were closely supervised by the imperial officials in charge of the traffic passing through the Hellespont, the *Hellespontophylakes* ("Guards of the Hellespont"), rather than by officials especially appointed to control exports of *Byzantine* grain. For an-

other, the specific duties of these officials, as detailed in the Methone decree, were (a) to keep records of *all* outgoing shipments (not only those of Methone) and check that no-one exported more than his officially granted quota; (b) to see to it that no one obstructed the dealings of authorized exporters (i.e. a protective function performed by these “Guards”, about which more will be said below); and (c) to impose fines on ships carrying unauthorized exports, literally: “to let authorization-carrying exporter-ships sail out un-fined (*aze-mios*)” (M&L *GHI*, no. 65.35-41).¹²

That all this supervision routine was, according to the inscription, being carried on in connection with the “export of grain from Byzantion” renders one thing almost certain: that the “Guards of the Hellespont”, the *Hellespontophylakes*, were actually based in the city of Byzantion itself, and they seem to have been equipped with the means that would enable them to enforce their authority over a wider area (see p. 310 below). Thus, by the 420s BC at the latest, Byzantion had become a bulking point where foodstuffs and other commodities originating from the Black Sea were assembled before further – and, as regards grain – imperially authorized reshipment. In the context of the 220s BC, Polybios says that the Byzantians are “the people who derive most financial benefit from the situation of their city, since they can readily export all their surplus products and import what they need without any hardship or danger” (Polyb. 4.38.8-9). Save for the changed power-political relations, the situation was not much different in the second part of the 5th century BC. During this latter period, the directorship over the economic processes lay securely in Athens’ hands, not those of Byzantion. Her overall aim was indeed to enhance Byzantion’s commercial significance, even though the underlying *imperial* interest at core was fiscal,¹³ and to some extent political too, i.e. to starve enemies to submission (e.g. Dem. 20.60).

In a sense, therefore, the second and third ways in which the city’s role in trade was boosted issued almost directly from the first.

2. The second one relates to infrastructural facilities and services that helped create more local wealth, private and public. Byzantion’s status as a central *entrepôt* for shipments of grain could not but have had a beneficial effect on its domestic *emporion*, harbour and *agora* (all three in *FGrH* 115: Theopompos F 62; [Arist.] *Oec.* 1346b18-19; Xen. *An.* 7.1.19), since all other kinds of commodities, besides grain, would have passed through it as well. As the meeting point of traders who brought there the surplus of both Pontic and Mediterranean producers, the city would have given to sections of its residents opportunities to prosper. In particular, trade was likely to impact directly on warehousing facilities, banking and such other specialized services that either required or stimulated the accumulation of commerce-related capital. Together with the volume of in- and outgoing traffic, all this meant an increase in the amount of private wealth liable to local taxes and dues, and consequently a corresponding increase in public revenue. To be sure, Byzantion did command

agricultural resources of its own.¹⁴ But it was primarily the huge commercial traffic using the Straits that made it possible for the city to meet its tributary obligations to Athens, paying, as we saw, such high annual rates of tribute as 15, 18 and 21 talents. Fifth-century Byzantion was a very prosperous *polis* and it owed its prosperity primarily to commerce. Indeed, as noted above, the city possessed dependencies – a clear sign of relative strength, political and economic. Moreover, it proved able to muster sufficient naval resources for attempting to break loose from the Athenian Empire twice, once in 441/0 BC (together with Samos: Thuc. 1.115.5, 117.3), and again in 411 (Thuc. 8.80.3). Yet both attempts largely failed, and Byzantion continued to be economically fed *and* milked by imperial Athens.

3. Discussion of the third way in which Byzantion's commercial significance was boosted can be centred on treatment of an important question. What were the economic demands on those using the Straits, and what exactly justified these demands? Our first secure piece of evidence for payment of a toll is provided by Xenophon, who calls the charge *dekate*, i.e. payment of 10 % of the value of merchandise on each ship.¹⁵ Xenophon reports that in 410/9 BC an Athenian naval force commanded by Alkibiades sailed to the Kalchedonian Chrysopolis (situated almost opposite Byzantion, at modern Üsküdar), fortified the place and established a toll station (*dekateuterion*) there (Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.22; Diod. 13.64.2-3). When Polybios, in the context of 220 BC, calls the charge *telos* (4.47.1), *paragogion* (4.47.3, cf. 3.2.5) and *diagogion* (4.52.5), he probably uses three less specific terms for what actually was a levy of a *dekate*.¹⁶ Two issues are raised by Xenophon's report. First, his wording – i.e. the toll was paid by "the ships sailing out of the Pontos" (cf. 4.8.27) – is in contrast to what Polybios says – the toll was paid by "the ships sailing into the Pontos" (e.g. 4.44.4). This might suggest that different practices applied in 410/9 and in 220 BC *and* that in either instance the merchants were charged only once, i.e. on entering or exiting the Pontos. However, little weight should be placed on the differing expressions, and it is virtually certain that payment of the toll was at all times demanded of both the ingoing and the outgoing traffic.¹⁷

Second, later historians – ancient as well as modern – have taken Xenophon's report to mean the *first introduction ever* of the *dekate* in 410/9 BC.¹⁸ But there are reasons to doubt this interpretation. An Athenian decree from the late 430s (the so-called first Kallias decree) makes reference to items of expenditure from a special fund that was set up at Athens from the revenues of "the *dekate* whenever it has been sold".¹⁹ I agree with those scholars who find it probable that this *dekate* is the one levied in the Straits.²⁰ Indeed, considering the sizeable amounts of money which the 10 % toll can be reckoned to have yielded every year (on which see below), it seems unlikely that Athens would have let that source of revenue remain unexploited or in others' hands during the time she had complete control over Byzantion and the Straits. Very probably, therefore, what Xenophon registers in 410/9 BC is the establishment by the

Athenians of a toll station (*dekateuterion*) at a new place, i.e. at Kalchedonian Chrysopolis, not the first introduction ever of the *dekate* itself. Since Byzantion had been a key stopping point for all commercial traffic and the base of the *Hellespontophylakes* earlier in the 5th century, it is far more reasonable to suppose that, before it was relocated to Chrysopolis, the imperially controlled *dekateuterion* was initially located there.²¹

As is known, a series of quick political changes took place in the area towards the end of the 5th century. In 411 BC, Byzantion revolted from Athens and went over to Sparta, which maintained a garrison in the city until 408, in which year Alkibiades brought Byzantion again under Athenian control (Thuc. 8.80.3; Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.15). Kalchedon, on its part, passed onto Spartan hands in 411, if not a year earlier, and, save for an interval of Athenian occupation in 410/9, remained under Spartan control until it was regained by Athens in 389.²² I suggest that it was their loss of Byzantion to the Spartans in 411 that compelled the Athenians, in the next year (410/9), to move their *dekateuterion* to a new site within the part of the Bosphoros under their control, i.e. to Kalchedonian Chrysopolis. Two major Greek powers had now divided the area between them, the one of which, it seems, still surpassed its rival in military supremacy. For as events in the year 410/9 indicate, despite winning Byzantion to their side (and despite their garrison there), the Spartans were unable to wrest command over the Straits completely from the Athenians (Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.35-36). Though there is no direct evidence to show this, it is therefore quite probable that for a short period of time (in 410/9 at least) the *dekate* was claimed, with varying degrees of success, by two rivalling powers at two separate toll stations, one in Byzantion, the other in Chrysopolis (for a similar situation in early 4th century, see below).²³ However, such a political (and probably also fiscal) fragmentation in the area occurred only shortly before the disintegration of the Athenian Empire. For most of the 5th century, stability prevailed, with a single imperial power enjoying absolute monopoly, political as well as economic.

As to the workings of the *dekateuterion*, two points need to be considered. One relates to its day-to-day management. It is almost certain that, following custom (e.g. Andoc. 1.133-134)²⁴, the collection of the toll was normally auctioned, presumably every year, to individuals, who as purchasers of the right to collect the charge demanded the actual amounts from payers. Since this collection process took place at Byzantion, the toll-farmers would have numbered local people, whose profits therefore ought to be added to the trade-related wealth created at Byzantion. Reporting of the Athenians' recapture of Byzantion from the Spartans in 390/89 BC, Xenophon says that "after sailing to Byzantion, he [Thrasyloulos] sold the *dekate*", meaning that this was done at Byzantion (Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.27, 31). Referring to the same events, Demosthenes (20.60) says that, having again become masters of the Hellespont, the Athenians "sold the *dekate* (at the Straits) and thus being well provided with money forced the Spartans to conclude a peace". Finally, as we saw, also the

dekate mentioned in the Kallias decree was sold (IG I³, 52A.7). As far as one can tell, no person (or group of persons), or any commodity, was ever exempt from the toll. Since individual toll-farmers took care of the financial side of operations, the *Hellespontophylakes* can only have provided ancillary services in this connection (p. 310 below).

The second point concerns the approximate amount of the total yearly yield from the *dekate*. This, of course, is something beyond our reach. However, I shall venture to use two separate figures, both from the 4th century, as general pointers to the level of economic operations. One is the figure of 400,000 *medimnoi* (some 13,000 metric tons) which Demosthenes reports as the amount of Pontic grain annually imported by Athens (see Moreno in this volume).²⁵ At five drachmas per *medimnos* (a not unrealistic valuation price),²⁶ the monetary value of this is two million drachmas, ten percent of which is 200,000 drachmas. And this figure, we should note, relates to only *one* commodity (grain) shipped to only *one* destination (Athens). We are not able to say how much Pontic grain was imported annually by Athens or by any other Aegean consumer-community in the 5th century BC. But even if we follow the sceptics and lower considerably the annual amount of *Athenian* imports during the second part of the fifth to only half the figure reported for the 4th century, the resulting monetary yield from the *dekate* (still *one* commodity, shipped to *one* importer) would still be a nice 100,000 drachmas. For the second part of the 3rd century, we have only an indication about the value of goods passing through, namely, the size of the annual tribute paid by Byzantium (cf. below). As regards grain, however, it needs to be remembered that during this latter period the Pontos and the Mediterranean were already taking turns in supplying each other with this particular kind of commodity (Polyb. 4.38.5), a circumstance whose influence on the annual earnings from the toll would, if anything, have been positive.

The other figure I am going to use is the 700 talents (or 4,200,000 drachmas), which is said to be the profit made by Philip II of Macedon, when he seized less than 230 (perhaps as many as 180) merchantmen that were just ready to sail out of the Black Sea in 340 BC. This huge sum, it is reported, represented the total accruing from (a) the timbers of demolished ships, (b) the grain and hides that made up these ships' cargo and (c) the cash they carried.²⁷ Even if ship timbers and cash together counted for as much as one half of Philip's total profit (a share that I deliberately set unrealistically high), there still remained a respectable 2,100,000 drachmas worth of "taxable" commodities, i.e. hides and grain; ten percent of this is 210,000 drachmas.²⁸ However, the correct procedure must be to make the same kind of calculation for all of the 230 merchantmen that would have passed through the Straits, had it not been for Philip's hostile action. On average, each of these ships would have carried cargo worth 11,666 drachmas, not a particularly high sum (note that a ship carrying 3,000 *medimnoi* of grain is now considered as an average-size ship; valued at five drachmas per *medimnos*, its total cargo would be worth 15,000).²⁹

Thus, the total value of the grain and hides on 320 merchantmen would come up to about 2,683,180 drachmas, 10 % of which is (in round numbers) 268,000 drachmas. In a less conservative estimate of the share of grain and hides in Philip's total profit, the figures would, of course, be still higher. The amounts resulting from each one of my calculations relate to the annual earnings of the toll farmers. What the public authority auctioning the *dekate* earned is another matter; in most years, its annual revenue must have been somewhat below these sums. One objection to all this may be that the toll might not always have been demanded at the rate of 10 %. We have, admittedly, no year-by-year, or decade-by decade, information about the rate of the charge, so that it cannot be excluded that a different percentage may have been used in some years. However, while this is a possibility to be reckoned with, it seems very likely that 10 % was *the rate normally charged* for most of the time: in 355 BC, Demosthenes, despite the fact that he was referring to much earlier events, calls the toll at the Straits quite matter-of-factly "the *dekate*", as if his contemporaries were familiar with it to need any further explanation (Dem. 20.60); and this charge may well be one of the *dekatai* (in the plural) that he mentions in another speech (Dem. 23.177: 357/6 BC) as well as one of the two *dekatai* referred to in the Grain-Tax Law of 374/3 BC.³⁰

In ca. 430 BC, we have seen, the Athenians exacted from Byzantion slightly over 21 talents (or 126,000 drachmas) a year in tribute; this sum was paid from the public treasury of Byzantion, which itself relied mostly on local taxes and dues. In addition, the Athenians received annually an unknown sum from the farming out of the *dekate*; this amount was paid by the toll-farmers from monies they themselves had collected from traders. Though the actual figure cannot be pinpointed, we can now feel quite confident that the yearly turnover from the toll in the 430s and 420s was usually well in excess of the 250,000-300,000 drachmas (41-50 talents) bracket. Thus, as Byzantion's contribution to imperial Athens, tribute and toll revenue together (21 + 41 or 50 talents) amounted to over 62 or 71 talents a year. This puts a certain event in an interesting light. When the Tylian ruler Comontorius, in a year before 220 BC (i.e. at a time when Byzantion itself auctioned the toll), decided to raise the tribute paid to him by Byzantion, he set it at 80 talents (or 480,000 drachmas) a year; he no doubt had a clear idea of what the toll at the Straits was able to fetch.

Let us sum up. The economic operations (i.e. the sum of wealth transferring and wealth creating processes) in the Straits during the 5th century BC were chiefly fuelled by trade, toll and tribute, and involved three principal actors: (a) the *imperial power* (Athens), (b) a fiscally (very) well-situated *subordinate* (Byzantion), and (c) the *merchant*, Pontic or Mediterranean. Heading these operations, Athens was routinely gathering a large share of the trade-generated resource for then, in due time, to spend part of it on the upkeep of the military and administrative machinery that she had to maintain for supervising the area around the Straits, including the extraction of compulsory

payments and their safe shipment to the imperial centre.

As an intermediary, Byzantion benefited from having its *emporion* aggrandized, all the while the city saw to it that trade-based revenue was converted into the tribute demanded by the imperial centre. Since this conversion procedure was primarily assisted by Pontic and Mediterranean traders, the wealth it processed consisted of the surplus production that was being exchanged between the two major seas.

Finally, the sole private, (normally) non-coercion-employing economic actor in the entire ensemble, the merchant, had to use part of his profit on feeding, with unequal shares, his two public collaborators. Thus, the upper parts of this food-chain accommodated the politically organized, *predatory* (i.e. compulsorily taxing) economy, its lower part the privately conducted, *trade-based* (i.e. market-exploiting) economy. But synergy, rather than opposition, is what characterized the mutual relationship of this trio. And no cultural or ethnic distinctions – e.g. Greek versus non-Greek – seem at any time to have invaded this structure in order to define its exploitative nature; quite the contrary. That the Byzantians protested strongly against this whole arrangement twice (i.e. the revolts of 441/0 and 411) is quite understandable, considering their awareness of the benefits to be had from independence, as opposed to such spin-offs as accrued from their function as a “conversion machine”. What matters here, however, is that (as far as we know), no representative of the lowest part of the food-chain, the *merchant*, ever voiced a complaint against Athens, or Byzantion, or the toll. Why?

The merchant

Arguably, no one felt the pressures more heavily than the merchant. To begin with, the profit he proved able to make from a commercial venture was to some extent decided by the purchase/sale price differential, the related factors of supply and demand and the information he managed to obtain beforehand about these matters. But at least just as decisive a factor was how heavily *and/or* frequently he was taxed; much depended on the degree to which his transaction costs (or water transportation costs) became burdened by *extra-commercial* exactions, i.e. outlays which, *prima facie*, had little to do with his main business of buying and selling with a view to making a profit. Habitually, the merchant’s itinerary was dotted by requirements to pay a variety of taxes.

One kind of charge, for instance, was tacked onto the obligatory conversion of his own currency into that valid locally at the point of destination, a fiscal device that, among other places, operated in 4th century Olbia and very probably also in Byzantion itself.³¹ In each port, moreover, the merchant had to pay the *pentekoste*, the standard 2 % charge on the value of goods, on top of which might come local market dues (e.g. the sales tax, *eponion*, and others). Local authorities, furthermore, may devise special fiscal demands: one such

was the 30 % tax which the Bosporan king Leukon demanded from all those exporting grain from his kingdom in the 4th century (Dem. 20.32, cf. *Syll.*³, 212). Another, less transparent kind of expenditure, to be dealt with presently, consisted of fees paid for protection, or (what amounted to the same) for not being exposed to assault and seizure. Finally, there were the charges for passage. Those using land-routes may have to pay a road-tax, an example of which is now offered by an inscription regarding Pistiros, a Thracian *emporion* near modern Vetren.³² Its seaward fiscal equivalent was encountered by those sailing through easily controlled, heavily trafficked narrows, among which the one at the Thracian Bosporos enjoyed pride of place.

In light of this, one might then be inclined to conclude that a good part of the bill was ultimately footed by the individual merchant. In aggregate, such costs were bound to burden his budget so heavily that his profit would either be diminished substantially or be replaced by direct economic loss; this was, after all, exactly the point of the traders who complained against Byzantium's re-introduction of the toll in 220 BC (Polyb. 4.47.1). All in all, the coercion-based economy was claiming a large part of the profits made from free trade, as it made transaction costs rise to very high levels. Hence the modern view that the predatory, political economy kept market economic elements at bay or at an atrophic state.³³ For several reasons, however, caution is advisable towards such a conclusion.

This is in no way to deny that merchants, under certain circumstances, risked forfeiting a good part (or all) of their expected profit in payments of *extra-commercial* exactions. But it *is* to call attention to the fact that they often could – and did – make use of two other options, which have been largely overlooked by modern historians.³⁴ The first option, which I intend to treat more fully elsewhere, was predicated on the ability of merchants to prognosticate the approximate frequency and magnitude of certain transaction costs, above all, the array of taxes and dues (*tele*) to be paid en route, including the toll at the Straits. This being done, the next step was to try to get rid of (preferably all of) these expenses by converting them into *negotiable costs*, meaning costs which, owing to a pre-existing agreement between political authorities, were non-payable by those who fulfilled a specific condition.

Exemption from dues or taxes (*ateleia*) is a widely known phenomenon in the Classical Greek and Hellenistic worlds. Exemption covered either a specific tax or taxes, or, as was frequently the case, all fiscal obligations at a given place (*ateleia panton*). In a number of instances, the privilege was granted to a named individual, in other instances to a state. We now know that in these latter cases, the beneficiaries were all those merchants (citizens as well as foreigners) who actually used the *ateleia*-holder's ports as their operational bases (the specific condition to be fulfilled): the grant of *ateleia* by the Bosporan rulers to Athens, for instance, meant that *all* merchants sailing to and from the Peiraieus were exempt from such exactions when coming to the Bosporan Kingdom.³⁵ The *ateleia* arrangement represented a solution to the traditional conflict existing

between (a) a polity's dependence on customs income, especially from foreigners, on the one hand, and (b) its raising of (sometimes high) tariffs against foreign importers, on the other. For most merchants (i.e. all others than the small group of personal grant-holders), *ateleia* was a privilege they could enjoy because it had been negotiated, on their behalf, by a political authority. Thus, by choosing to make the ports of *ateleia*-holding polities his bases of operations, a merchant could reckon beforehand which of his transactional costs belonged to the category of *negotiable costs* and so write them off his budget. Political mechanisms, in short, intervened to ensure that some traders attained a competitive edge over others (i.e. the non-privileged ones) by being offered "costs-protection" against the fiscal claims of the exporter/producer.³⁶ It was important for those polities which were connected as granters and grantees of *ateleia* to publicize widely their offer, just as it was important for traders to be in possession of such information.

The second option historically puts the ancient sea trader squarely into the larger company of pre-modern traders worldwide.³⁷ It not only protected him against a constantly high personal risk, but also against a potentially great economic loss. Briefly, in addition to all the polities that taxed him along his route, the merchant had also to face an assortment of "armed tax-claimers", who through use of physical force (or the threat of physical force) insisted on taking possession of part or the whole of his cargo and profits. Insurance against the unpleasant consequences of such encounters took the form of an economic transaction, i.e. the purchasing of protection – sometimes even directly from the source of danger itself. Regardless of what they are called – "protection fees", "extortion money", or the more neutral "monies to enemies" (on which see below) – these were outlays which made water transportation costs rise substantially, and which, therefore, the merchant would try to minimize or get rid of completely. Before proceeding to explain how this was done, and in order to get an idea of the force with which these issues made themselves felt within our geographical area, we need to look briefly at the *business rhythm* around the Straits. Its particular pulse beat and intensity were chiefly determined by two factors, the one climatic, the other the result of human action. In combination, these two produced a traffic pattern characterized by its spasmodic bursts, with very busy days followed by slow days.

First, the *climatic* factor. Unstable weather conditions in the region so to speak "set the clock" for the movements of the commercial traffic, creating short- and long-term cycles. Since southwesterlies (the winds helping vessels push upwards against the strong channel currents) and strong northeasterlies (the winds holding up ships from entering the Pontos but easing the exit voyage) alternated, there were normally longish waiting periods, often up to a week or more, at either entrance; the comments of ancient and modern observers fully agree on this.³⁸ A separate determinant of the business rhythm issued from the widely acknowledged seasonal divide marked by

“the rising of Arktouros” (i.e. the time of the autumnal equinox) in September, when the autumn storms set in. To avoid the great risks which these posed, Mediterranean-bound ships as a rule started their homeward voyage *before* that date. Accordingly, those contravening that rule were considered as taking too great a risk.

These differences in the degree of risk within the limited area of the Straits had long-range economic consequences. In fact, their effect can be directly read in the differences between the rates of interest (*tokos*) demanded by financiers advancing loans to maritime traders. In one case, the rate of 22.5 % is demanded (at Athens), if the ship sailed out of the Straits before the rising of Arktouros, but it is raised to 30 %, if the same ship sailed out after that date (Dem. 35.10).³⁹ The expression “those [ships] which sailed out of the Pontos after the rising of Arktouros” seems nearly synonymous to “those [ships] which worked on high interest loans” (see [Dem.] 50.19). Climatic conditions, in sum, were responsible for short-term “bottle-necks” at the Straits’ entrances and also for long-term traffic fluctuations, as most merchant vessels chose to pass through not individually and at random, but in small or large “fleets” setting out at pre-determined times. Hence the accounts of contemporary observers, who, when they describe grain ships either leaving the Straits for the Aegean (e.g. Hdt. 1.147) or arriving at a particular port (e.g. Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.35: Peiraeus), almost always talk of “fleets” of merchantmen. Hence, too, the great convenience or even necessity of having a suitable and well-protected assemblage point at or near the entrances of Straits.

It was the *human* factor, however, that not only helped to sustain the business rhythm described above, but also gave it a noticeably firmer structure. Much-trafficked sea routes – eminent “highways” chiefly expediting the movement of a few, highly-priced commodities – tended also to be the “armed tax-claimer’s” favourite hang-out. Piracy is too big a topic to be even cursorily treated here.⁴⁰ Nonetheless, some of its most signal characteristics must be mentioned, since it represents yet another of the chief pressures that gathered together at the Straits. What is at issue here is less the predator’s political or social identity – from an economic point of view, as for the merchant’s point of view, it was immaterial whether vessel, cargo, crew and passengers were snatched by the commanders of Philip II of Macedon or by one of the notorious archpirates, since they both were aspects of a single variable: risk. Our concern is much more with the constant hazards created by the systematically practised violent seizure (or threat of seizure) of valuables and persons.

For the Mediterranean side of this business, there is evidence to exemplify almost all of the existing types of predation, from the state-sponsored or state-condoned kind, at one end of the spectrum, to the entirely private one, at the other end. Moreover, the same evidence unflinchingly shows how thickly raiding activity was concentrated along the sea lanes leading from the Straits southwards. In the early 5th century BC, Histiaios of Miletos was seizing merchantmen sailing out of the Pontos, using Byzantion as his base (Hdt.

6.5.26) and presaging the upsurge in raiding activity that is reported from ca. 431 BC onwards (Andoc. 1.138; Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.1-13; Isocr. 4.115). In 340 BC, we have seen, Histiaios' conduct was being replicated by Philip II, who sought "to become master over Byzantion and the *sitopompeia* of the Greeks" (see source cited in note 27, with [Dem.] 19.87, 230, 301-302, 341). A little earlier than this, in the 360s, Byzantion itself had gone predator ([Dem.] 50.6). In the 5th century, the Athenians were launching anti-piratical expeditions – Kimon's against Skyros, Perikles' against the Thracian Chersonese (Plut. *Cim.* 8; *Per.* 19) – and they went on taking similar measures in the 4th century (e.g. *IG II²*, 1623.276-285). In the 5th and 4th centuries, organized gangs of independent (i.e. non-state) predators had set up operational bases on such strategically situated islands as Halonnesos (Dem. 7.2; 12.13), Euboia (Dem. 18.241) and Melos (Dem. 58.56). These examples can easily be multiplied. Freedom of sailing the seas was recognized to be so central an issue that it often appeared as a special clause in peace treaties: "hindering [the voyage of] merchant vessels" (*ta ploia koluein*) and "forcing merchantmen into [a] harbour" (*ta ploia katagein*) had become quasi-technical terms emblematic of the dangers at sea (e.g. *SV* 329 [346]; [Dem.] 17.19-21 [337]; *IG II²*, 416 [ca. 330 BC]).⁴¹

In our sources, the Pontic side of this business (coastal wreckers excluded) takes on a distinctly ethnic garb. Predatory activity at sea is said to have been nearly the monopoly of certain peoples inhabiting the eastern (i.e. Caucasian) shores of the Black Sea to the north of Kolchis: namely, the Heniochoi, Zygoi and Achaioi, a threesome which is sometimes joined by the Tauroi of the Crimea.⁴² In the 4th century BC, Aristotle (*Pol.* 1338b20-25) described these peoples as ardent practitioners of piracy (*leisteia*) and fearful man-eaters (*anthropophagoi*). However, it is Diodoros and Strabon, who preserve fuller and more accurate descriptions.⁴³ First, they were highly mobile predators who, being the holders of "sea-power" (*thalassokratia*), operated with their fleets across the entire Black Sea basin. Secondly, this they could do thanks to their invention of a light, agile and fast-sailing craft called *kamara*, which put them on the vanguard of naval technological development.⁴⁴ Thirdly, their operations were actually amphibious, since they raided both ships at sea and coastal/inland settlements or cities – the latter placing them in the same category of pressures as those generated by the Thracians and the Scythians, who took their share in the wealth of Greek cities by exacting from them tribute-like payments masked as "gifts" (*dora*).⁴⁵ Fourthly, rather than being "man-eaters", they were really "man-hunters", since their specialty seems to have been slave-trafficking and extortion (i.e. demanding ransom-money for their captives). Fifthly, their relationship to regional powers was just as ambiguous as the corresponding relationship of their Mediterranean counterparts, being both on the run from the fleets of local rulers *and* co-operating with these same rulers.⁴⁶ Sixthly, and as a consequence, their predatory mode of acquisition, falling squarely within the political economy, appears to have enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with the economy of peaceful trade in and

around the Black Sea; especially so, because they themselves could effortlessly switch from the one kind of economy to the other (i.e. securing supplies by force, disposing these supplies in the free market), as when, for example, the Bosporan rulers provided them with infrastructural facilities and markets, at which they could offer their catch for sale (Strabo 11.2.12 [496]). Finally, the Heniochoi, Zygoi and Achaioi are also said to be part-time agriculturalists, given to tilling poor soils during the cold months, and launching their fleets of *kamarai* when the start of the sailing season signalled the opening of the “raiding season”.

The hazards of predatory activity produced two results. One was the merchant’s response to seek out the one who could provide the best possible protection at the lowest possible price, that is to say, transaction costs were *traded off*; or, failing to find such a supplier, to throw such costs onto somebody else, that is to say, transaction costs were *negotiated* away. Either way, *extra-commercial* costs were converted into *intra-commercial* costs, since it was thanks to them that the trader became able not only to pursue his business at all, but also to increase his personal profit. For reasons that will become apparent below, the former procedure, *trading off costs*, was predominant in the 5th century, the latter, *negotiating costs away*, became predominant from the 4th century onwards. Here, suffice it to note that for most of the 4th century protection-related costs seem on the whole to have risen substantially, compared to the 5th century BC. In the same period, too, state-organized protection was offered less frequently than before, and even an Athens-based merchant may be officially informed that he had to carry his goods over water “at his own risk” (*kindunoi toi heautoi*). This is the very expression used in the so-called Athenian Grain-Tax Law of 374/3 BC.⁴⁷ Here, “at his own risk” is almost synonymous to “at his own expense” – that is, on this occasion, protection was not part of the public services offered, but had to be procured separately. It is in situations like this that the merchant tried to transfer anticipated, risk-related costs to somebody else.

One of Demosthenes’ speeches preserves the sole surviving written agreement from the 4th century BC concerning a trading venture. The agreement is between two Athens-based merchants and the moneylenders who advanced funds with which to finance a voyage to Bosporos and back again. One of the terms of the agreement is that the moneylenders accept responsibility for two kinds of costs: (1) those accruing from losses which the merchants might suffer from compulsory jettison of goods (*ekbole*); and (2) any costs accruing from “monies paid to enemies (*polemioi*)”.⁴⁸ Winds and piracy together set their imprint on sea-trade finance. The transference of either kind of expense from the merchants to the moneylenders, one effectuated at the repayment of the loan after the completion of the voyage, is to take the form of a deduction from the principal owed of (1) the total monetary value of losses through *ekbole* and (2) the total amount of money paid *en route* to “enemies” (Dem. 35.10-13). So, in those instances in which the merchant was left to conduct

his operations *kindunoi toi heautoi* ("at his own risk"), his immediate response was to have the moneylenders cost-protect him, or (what amounts to nearly the same) cost-insure him.

The need for protection comes out just as clearly in those cases in which it was absent. An episode from 376 BC will suffice to show this. An unprotected fleet of Peiraieus-bound grain-ships was suddenly exposed to the threat of seizure (by a Spartan fleet commanded by Pollis) during the final leg of its voyage from the Black Sea, right at Cape Gerastos in south-eastern Euboia: the shippers "did not wish to sail along the coast [to the Peiraieus], since the Spartan fleet had taken up position in Aigina, Keos and Andros". Panic-stricken, the Athenians hastily sent out a naval force, which prevailed in the ensuing sea-battle and thus managed to prevent the seizure of the merchantmen (Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.60-61; Diod. 15.34.3). Evidently, the provision of escort from the start would have made a difference.

The second result of predatory activity, one receiving help from the climatic factor, was related to the organization of trade. Politics and merchants alike had become convinced of the need to synchronize their seaward movements and to incorporate them into a larger organization. That organization included convenient rendezvous points, at which vessels could assemble before sailing in convoy to their north- or southbound destinations. Winds and piracy, that is, broadly decided the business rhythm around the Straits and its institutional setting. Whenever, as was often the case, naval escorts joined these operations to become a crucial part of their organizational setting, the rendezvous points in question attained the character of pick-up and delivery points at either end of arterial sailing routes, each of which routes then came to fit the concept of the "protection route". The infrastructural core of the "protection route" consisted of the "naval base-trade-station" compound (pick-up and delivery points inclusive), where escort-providing trireme fleets (logistically speaking) could "catch their breath",⁴⁹ where cargo-carriers (militarily speaking) could seek safety from assaults, and where merchants (now operationally speaking) could find institutional and business arrangements comparable to those offered by the caravan station on land. Here, I briefly demonstrate the applicability of the concept of the "protection route" to one such route, for which relatively good evidence exists from the 4th century BC.⁵⁰

The Hieron-Aegean route

Hieron is a site within the Straits, on the Asiatic side of the channel, just 7 to 8 km from its northern mouth (at modern Anadolu Kavagi-Yenimahalle) (Fig. 1). From early times it was known for its sanctuary of Zeus Ourios ("of the Fair Winds") and the Twelve Gods.⁵¹ But the site's importance to commercial traffic is first attested from the early 4th century BC,⁵² when it appears under Athenian control.⁵³ I confine my treatment to two particular aspects of Hieron's importance.

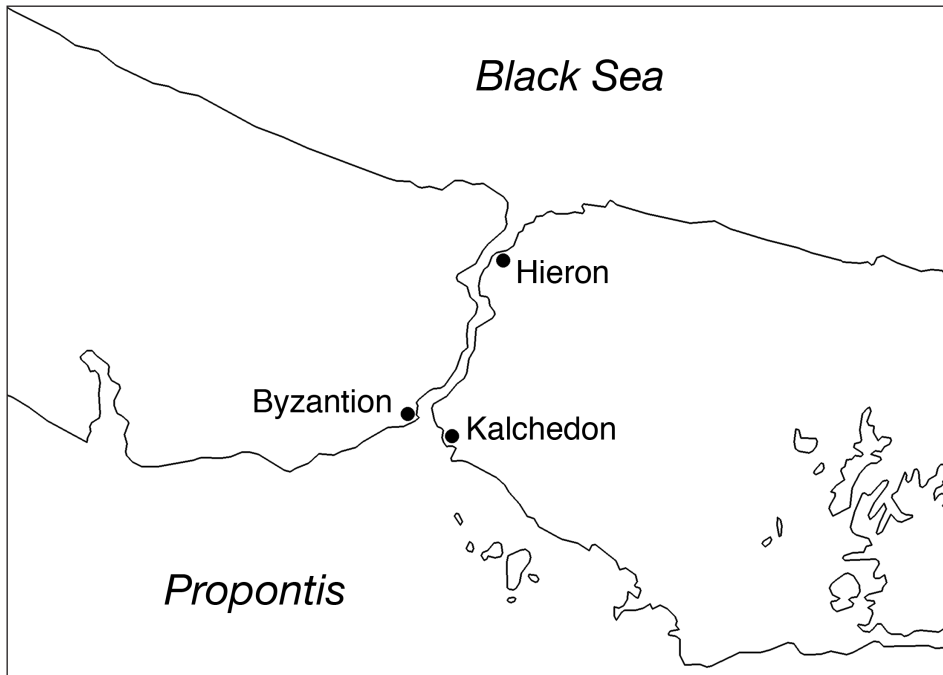


Fig. 1. The Thracian Bosphoros with the location of Hieron.

(i) *An information centre.* *Stelai* carrying copies of the decrees which recorded the exchange of privileges between the Bosphoran rulers (especially Leukon: 389-349 BC) and the Athenians are reported by a contemporary source to have been posted in three different places: in the Kingdom of Bosphoros, in the Peiraieus and at Hieron (Dem. 20.36). One of the privileges in question, it will be remembered, was tax-exemption (*ateleia*), in all the Bosphoran ports (including Theodosia), to those who carried grain to Athens.⁵⁴ Furthermore, Hieron is the find-spot of the inscription carrying the well-known Coinage Decree from Olbia (cf. p. 297 above).⁵⁵ Publication of decisions of this kind precisely at Hieron did not have only a symbolic value. It had a practical purpose as well, in that it was meant to provide merchants with most useful information about currency regulations at various Black Sea destinations and to make known to them which ports and routes offered "cost protection". In addition, if moneylenders (at Athens and elsewhere) were to know the time of a ship's movements from and to Hieron, so that they could fix the rate of interest due to them (Dem. 35.10, on which see p. 300 above), then a smoothly working system of communications must have had a branch there. Together, all these features mark out Hieron as a key point in maritime commerce.

(ii) *An established rendezvous point.* This is most clearly attested by evidence from the year 362/1 BC, when an Athenian naval squadron acted on explicit orders to escort grain ships (*epi ten parapompen tou sitou*). Having picked up

the grain carriers at Hieron, the naval squadron escorted them through the Straits and then further on to the Peiraieus and a few other Aegean destinations.⁵⁶ The surviving description of this voyage puts a good deal of stress on the dangers that were facing the merchants and shippers on this occasion. What mostly caused these dangers was the high mileage/predator ratio prevailing at the time. This seems to have been the reason why ambassadors of a different city-state, Maroneia, had come to Hieron with the specific task of formally requesting the Athenian general in command of the escorting squadron to admit Maroneia-bound grain ships into his convoy – a request that the general did meet, despite the extra labour (and danger) which this is said to have entailed for his naval crews.⁵⁷ The security-services offered to merchant carrying grain to Maroneia had been negotiated by a political authority. It is almost certain that for these services the Athenian commander was recompensed in cash, plausibly paid by the *polis* of Maroneia, rather than by the merchants themselves.

Indeed, in the 4th century, non-Peiraieus-bound (or non-Athens-based) traders who received Athenian naval protection often had to pay separate fees in return for that service. In a speech to the Athenians, Demosthenes described the situation as follows (341 BC):

All the generals who have ever set sail from your naval bases (...) receive sums of money from the Chians, the Erythraians and from whatever people they can – I am speaking of those who live in Asia Minor. Generals commanding one or two ships receive less; those in charge of large fleet receive more. Also those who pay do not pay the relevant sums – being large or small – for nothing; for they are not madmen. No, they purchase for the merchants sailing from their harbours protection against wrongdoing (*me adikeisthai*) and forceful seizure (*me sulasthai*) – providing, as they do, escort for the safe conduct of their own ships (*parapempesthai ta ploia ta hauton*) – or some similar service. They say that they give “benevolences” (*eunoiai*). That is the name which is used of these exactions (Dem. 8.24-25).

These statements are presented in defence of the Athenian general Diopieithes, who in ca. 343/2 BC allegedly had used questionable methods for making monetary exactions in the Hellespont. That the conveyance of grain (*sitopompia*) was a central concern with these protective escorts is unquestionable, not least in light of the well-attested interest of any *polis* to ensure its own food-supply and,⁵⁸ in times of open hostilities, to prevent such supplies from reaching its enemies. Such a strong concern with the transportation of grain, however, should not lead to the conclusion that naval protection only covered grain-transport. First, the tendency of our sources to lay a good deal of stress on the conveyance of this particular commodity (very much so at the

expense of such commodities as fish or slaves) is much more a reflection of ideological priorities and political aims, rather than of the realities of trade. Secondly, there is nothing to indicate that merchant vessels not carrying grain were discriminated in the organization of convoys, and indeed we have direct evidence showing that this was definitely not the case (cf. below). Often the assignment of protective naval squadrons was simply to guard against predators (*epi ten phylaken ton leiston*: IG II², 1623.276-282). In reality, therefore, naval protection covered all kinds of cargoes, for which the appropriate fees were paid.

Furthermore, it may be noted that these fees mostly were paid by political communities, not by the individual merchants. Outspoken *polis* concern with the infrastructure and conduct of trade is more generally indicated by evidence from Olbia, a Pontic polity which in about 320 BC appears in possession of its own fleet of "public merchantmen" (*demosia ploia*), a feature that might have been more common than we are accustomed to think, especially in view of Xenophon's recommendation, in ca. 355 BC, that Athens ought to acquire such a public fleet of merchant vessels in order to enhance her revenue from trade.⁵⁹ The passage from Demosthenes just quoted shows in addition the close correlation existing between the *quality* of the protection offered (small or large escorting fleet) and its *price* (smaller or larger sums of money). In about 406, the general Erasimides was convicted for withholding "money from the Hellespont, which belonged to the Athenian people", plausibly the proceeds of such "benevolences" (Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.2). Again, when rendering accounts after a mission in the early 4th century, the general Diotimos acknowledged his having received an (unspecified) amount of money from the *naukleroi* and *emporoi*, which he then surrendered to the state; allegations were immediately raised against him that he had kept an extra (and undeclared) 40 talents from this business to himself (Lys. 19.50). There can be little doubt that these sums represented the general's proceeds from escort services.⁶⁰

Thus, Hieron functioned as a pick-up point. But it simultaneously functioned also a delivery point. Our clearest evidence for this regards the south-bound traffic, i.e. Hieron's receiving of fleets of merchant vessels before their exit from the Pontos. In September 340 BC, it was the Athenian general Chares who had orders to escort merchantmen sailing from the Black Sea to the Aegean; these were the 230 ships with Pontic grain and hides that were attacked by Philip II of Macedon (see p. 295 above; this is one of the instances showing the provision of protection to also non-grain-carrying ships).⁶¹ After his arrival at Hieron, it is reported, Chares was suddenly called elsewhere, leaving warships at Hieron, "so that they could gather together the merchantmen sailing from the Pontos" (*hopos an ta ploia ek tou Pontou synagatosi*). I take this to evidence the active part played by the Athenian warships in the "gathering" process (*synagoge*). In the first place, the initial attempts by Philip's ships "to force the merchantmen to shore" (*ta ploia katagein*) as they were approaching Hieron proved wholly unsuccessful, since each time they were being fouled up by the

Athenian squadron. In the second place, precisely because of his inability to prevail, Philip had a force landed on the site just opposite Hieron, establishing his own base there; only then did Philip become able to launch a full-strength strike at Hieron and seize the 230 merchantmen that had assembled there.

The implication, therefore, is that before that strike the merchant ships were making it to Hieron safely, primarily thanks to the fact that the final leg of their voyage was being carried out under Athenian protection; “gathering together” (*synagoge*), in short, meant that the Athenian war-craft busied themselves with fetching merchantmen from near-by Pontic ports, anchorages or even at sea, in order to assemble them at Hieron. One limit to their range of action along the south-eastern seaboard of the Pontos was clearly Herakleia: the Byzantion – Herakleia run (129 sea miles) was known as “a long day’s voyage for a trireme under oars” (Xen. *An.* 6.4.2).⁶² It should be noted that in 340 BC perhaps as many as 50 of the 230 merchant vessels under Athenian protection carried goods to destinations other than Athens – these ships were ultimately found by Philip to be “not enemy ships” (*polemia [ploia]*). Apparently, as Maroneia had done in 362/1, a number of city-states had asked the general Chares in 340 BC to admit to his convoy also vessels bound for their ports.

Let us sum up by citing a parallel case. In 325 BC, the Athenians resolved to establish a naval station in a completely different area, at some coastal site along the Adriatic. According to the document recording this decision, the station was to perform three basic functions. From that place, the Athenians (a) would carry on their own “homeward trade” (*emporía oikeia*), (b) they would supervise the “transportation of grain” (*sitopompia*) to various destination, while (c) by establishing their “own naval base” (*naustathmo oikeiou*) there they would offer protection (*phylake*) against Tyrrhenian sea-raiders.⁶³ The evidence adduced above suggests that, from the early 4th century onwards, all three of these basic functions were also being performed by Hieron. It and its counterpart in the Adriatic typified the “naval base” “trade-station” compound,⁶⁴ the pick-up and delivery points by means of which seaborne trade was duplicating the caravan-stations of landward trade. As an ideally-located naval and commercial station at the northern mouth of the Bosphoros channel, Hieron was in addition used by traders and their partners as an information centre. All in all, Hieron, was *the* central point in those north-south running trade routes for which the concept of the “protection route” seems applicable.

Who might have provided escort services within the Black Sea from the 4th century onwards is a question that cannot receive full treatment here. We may note only briefly one plausible candidate, the ruling dynasty of the Bosphoran Kingdom. In a decree of 347/6 BC, the Athenians justify their award (actually a renewal) of honours to “the sons of Leukon”, who ruled at that time, by referring to the promise made by these latter to the Athenian people (a) “to take care of the dispatch of the grain (*epimelesthai tes ekpompes tou sitou*) in the same way as their father Leukon had done”, and also (b) “eagerly to render whatever services the Athenians need”.⁶⁵ While neither of these need

include escort services, the positive Athenian response to a Bosporan request for skilled naval specialists, a matter recorded in the final part of the same decree, is definitely indicative of the Bosporan rulers' endeavour to expand and perhaps also modernize their naval potential. The specialists in question all belong to the part of a trireme complement called *hyperesia*, i.e. a group of 16 "petty-officers" on each ship (including helmsmen); those about to be sent to the Bosporan Kingdom in 347/6 BC (apparently "on loan" only) are explicitly instructed by their home authorities "to do their utmost in serving the sons of Leukon" – probably both as actual crews and as instructors of local manpower.⁶⁶ By the final decade of the 4th century, Bosporan naval strength appears not only to have been firmly established but also to have a wide circle of beneficiaries. For in 310 BC, Diodoros reports, having won the title of ruler over the kingdom, Eumelos "continued to perform benefactions (*euergesiai*) towards the Byzantians and the Sinopians and most of those Greeks who live in the Pontos".⁶⁷ One of these benefactions is specified as follows:

On behalf of those who sailed in the Pontos, he waged war against the barbarians who were accustomed to engage in piracy (*leistuein*), the Heniochoi, the Tauroi and the Achaioi; and he cleared the sea of sea-raiders (*leistai*), with the result that not only throughout his own kingdom, but even throughout most of the inhabited world (since the merchants were spreading the word about his magnanimity) he received the most beautiful fruit of benefaction (*euergesia*), namely, praise (Diod. 20.25.2)

This "protector-as-benefactor" theme matches almost exactly Diodorus' and Strabon's description of Rhodos, a Mediterranean sea-power that acted as "protector of the seas".⁶⁸ Moreover, Polybios, as we have seen (p. 288 above), says that until 220 BC the Byzantians were being regarded as the "common benefactors (*euergetai*) of all", on account of leaving the passage through the Straits free of charge – a protective function, too, even though one performed through different means. Yet in about 310 BC, Byzantium itself was among the recipients of the Bosporan ruler's protection. King Eumelos' services to cities and to the merchants sailing in the Pontos, rather than being something limited to his own (short) period of rule, may well have had antecedents going back to the early 4th century, or even further back. In fact, the incipient beginnings of the *Bosporan* services may have coincided with the withdrawal of Athenian imperial power from the area in late 5th century BC. A specific event marks that withdrawal.

Between 410 and 405 BC, Nymphaion passed from Athenian hands onto those of the Bosporan ruler Satyros I (433/2-389/8 BC); shortly after, it became a dependency of Pantikapaion.⁶⁹ Nymphaion was a port city on the coast of the Kimmerian Chersonesos (Crimea), just south of another and better-known port city, Pantikapaion (modern Kerch). Like the latter, Nymphaion faced east

towards the narrow strait of Kerch, which connects the Black Sea with Lake Maiotis (Sea of Azov); its geographical position was thus quite similar to that which Byzantium occupied at the mouth of the Straits (Fig. 2). Even though within an arm's length from the main power in the region, i.e. the Bosporan Kingdom, Nymphaion was in the 5th century BC a tribute-paying member of an empire whose political centre was located hundreds of miles away, the Athenian Empire.⁷⁰ Already at that time, Nymphaion probably had city walls, and its acropolis was possibly fortified; the city's harbour was later on praised by Strabo for its qualities (Strab. 7.7.4 [309-310]; cf. Ps.-Skylax 68).⁷¹ So, besides purely strategic concerns, inclusion of Nymphaion into the Athenian Empire must certainly have been motivated also by its proximity to the North-Pontic grain-producing regions and their ports of trade (Gylon, Demosthenes' maternal grandfather, for example, owned a landed estate in the region: Aisch. 3.171). Maintenance of imperial authority in such a distant, but well-situated and well-equipped subject required that Athenian naval squadrons routinely visited the area, if not for any other purpose, then for looking after Athens' own interests and those of its tribute-paying, North Pontic allies.⁷² By 410-405 BC, therefore, the Nymphaion-Byzantium route (not necessarily a direct sailing route) had plausibly become furnished with much of the organizational trappings that characterize the "protection route". However, until clear, 5th century evidence turns up to demonstrate Nymphaion's partaking in the escort services, this must remain largely hypothetical. Differently, though, with the organization of protection in and around Byzantium.

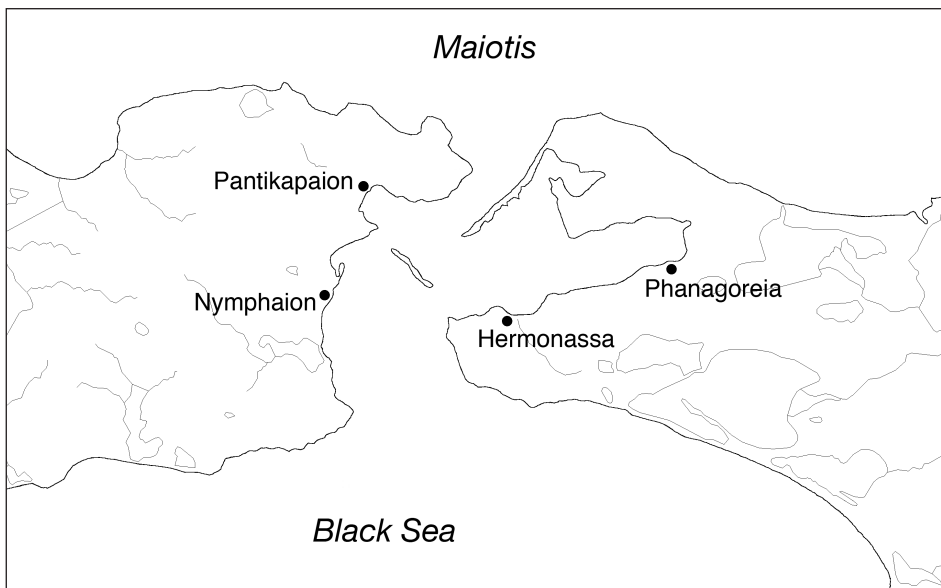


Fig. 2. The Kimmerian Bosphoros.

Fifth century evidence, part of which has already been discussed above, offers secure glimpses of that organization. It included the “Guards of the Hellespont” (*Hellespontophylakes*), an office with a predominantly military character,⁷³ or alternatively with authority to enlist permanently-posted military support, both on land – Byzantion hosted an Athenian garrison (*phroura*: Ar. *Vesp.* 237) – and at sea. Whether the regular squadron of twenty guard ships (*nees phrourides*), mentioned as part of a standing imperial force (Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 24.3), had anything to do with the Straits is not known. We are, however, better informed about another fleet. When they moved the toll-station (*dekateurerion*) from Byzantion to Chrysopolis, the Athenians stationed thirty warships there with the specific purpose of offering protection (*phylake*). Xenophon specifies the tasks of this fleet as follows: they were ordered “to take care of the merchantmen sailing out of the Pontos (*epimeleisthai ton ekpleonton ploion*)” and “to harm the enemy in any way possible” (Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.22; cf. Diod. 13.64.2-3). Owing to the highly unstable situation in the area at that time, probably more warships than normally were required on that occasion. What looks like a more normal fleet-size is given by Xenophon in a later passage, where he reports that nine Athenian warships were permanently on duty in the Hellespont “protecting merchantmen” (*ta ploia diephylatton*: *Hell.* 1.1.36). The provision of protection services during the 5th century BC seems to stand to a direct relationship to the charge paid at the Straits.

Ten percent (*dekate*) is commonly considered to be too high a rate, especially when compared to the usual 2 % paid in harbour dues (*pentekoste* or *ellimenion*). Therefore it is often explained as a temporary measure of the year 410/9 BC, one necessitated by the ongoing (Peloponnesian) war and its effects on Athenian finances.⁷⁴ This view, however, seems not entirely warranted. Not only is a *dekate* in evidence in Athens in the 420s (in my view, the *dekate* charged at the Straits) and also in the early 4th century (Dem. 20.60), but, as far as we can tell, 10 % is also attested as the normal rate of customs charges demanded elsewhere (see n. 32). Perhaps more importantly, to decide whether the 10 % toll at the Straits was “too high” or “too low” we need to take into account what those paying it received in return, i.e. to view the charge as part of their total transaction costs. For most of the 5th century, the Athenians were doing what Xenophon says the Spartans became able to do only in 388 BC: “Antalkidas, who had more than eighty ships, was master of the sea: he could thus stop ships from the Pontos sailing towards Athens and force them to Sparta” (Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.28). And, even if the historicity of Perikles’ so-called Pontic expedition is questioned (Plut. *Per.* 20), there is enough 5th century evidence to support Plutarch’s own point about the Athenians’ “confidence and audacity in sailing wherever they wished and making themselves complete masters of the sea”.

Traditionally, it is believed that through payment of the toll merchants bought permission to enter or exit the Black Sea. In a formal sense, this is correct. However, what has been said above on the organization of trade strongly

supports the view that the charges paid bought the merchants more than that. In fact, they gave them access to the escort services of *the* pre-eminent imperial power of the times.⁷⁵ Until about 410-405 BC, in short, Mediterranean and Pontic traders who were using each others ports (and who were not expediting “the enemies” of Athens) had the advantage of facing relatively low water transportation costs. This was chiefly because they had to share the profits from their trading ventures with only one representative of the command economy, one who by virtue of his power-monopoly and superior military technology was able, for a single payment, to offer high-quality protection. Simply put, it was the navy of the Athenian Empire that for a 10 % *ad valorem* charge shuttled the merchant relatively safely between his Aegean ports and Byzantion, and perhaps even between Byzantion and some North Pontic destinations, too.

Byzantion: a fiscal benefactor (euergetes)

This system is in sharp contrast to the “multi-taxation” system effective in the area after the disintegration of the Athenian Empire. During this period, several representatives of the command economy, all operating at or near the Straits, simultaneously competed in claiming a share in the trader’s profits. Yet no one among these tax-claimers proved able to provide anything resembling the cost-effective services of their monopoly-holding predecessor – cost-effectiveness being in this case measurable by one’s ability to make all others redundant. The change from one system to the other was perhaps initiated in 410/9 BC, when merchants probably were being asked, for some time, to pay the *dekate* at two places, at Spartan-held Byzantion and at Athenian-held Chrysopolis (cf. p. 294 above); bottoms regarded as “enemy ships” (*polemia ploia*) by the one power, were naturally those enjoying the protection of the other. Soon, the pressures in the Thracian Bosphoros were to take on a new intensity and a new character, leaving their imprint on the trader’s budget. A review of the evidence relating to the 4th century is beyond the purposes of this chapter. To exemplify the general situation, however, we may take a closer look at events around the year 362 BC.

The high mileage/predator ratio prevailing in about 362/1 BC owed not least to trouble in the North Aegean; the situation is detailed by the speech [Dem.] 50, held shortly after these events: (a) revolt in the Odrysian Kingdom in Thrace by a vassal hostile to Athens and in occupation of the Thracian Chersonese; (b) pressure from Kyzikos against Prokonnesos (an Athenian ally); (c) seaborne raids against the shipping carried out by Alexander of Pherai, who, having seized Tenos, sold its inhabitants as slaves (*andrapodismos*); last, but not least, (d) naval squadrons from three city-states – Byzantion, Kalchedon and Kyzikos – were separately and repeatedly forcing into their respective harbours merchantmen sailing out of the Pontos (*katagonton ta ploia*).⁷⁶ Thus these were times of very high-risk for merchants, and our list does not include

either the dangers posed by private operators or those likely to be encountered along the routes leading north from the Straits. It was the duty of an Athenian naval squadron, it will be remembered, in this year to escort primarily Peiraeus-bound merchantmen safely from Hieron and out of the channel, past the warships of Byzantion, Kalchedon and Kyzikos. All this brings out quite neatly the point that, in fiscal terms, the right of passage and protection were almost inseparable parts of a single arrangement.

Who demanded payment of the toll at that time? Very probably, each and every one of these violence producers, depending, that is, on the relative naval strength he could muster. At Hieron, we have seen, a variety of services were offered to traders and shippers, including the service of escort. In 362/1 BC, the place was firmly under Athenian control. Even though no *dekateuterion* is so far attested in Hieron, its existence at that time, or at least the imposition of a charge there, can be inferred with considerable likelihood. As to the kind of activity in which Byzantion, Kalchedon and Kyzikos engaged, it can perhaps be elucidated by the case of Byzantion, for which additional evidence is available.

It consists of one of the financial (or fiscal) stratagems listed in Book Two of Pseudo-Aristotle, *Oeconomica* (2.2.3, 1346b30-35). Experiencing famine and a shortage of funds, we are told, the Byzantians took to forcing into their harbour merchant ships sailing out of the Pontos. Then, when some time had passed and the merchants protested of being detained so long,

they became taxed with payment, to the Byzantians, of interest at the rate of 10 % (*eteloun autois tokous epidekatous*), and they [sc. the Byzantians] ordered that all those who purchased something, in addition to the purchase-price, should pay a charge of 10 %.

My understanding of this difficult passage is briefly this.⁷⁷ Having forced the merchant vessels into their harbour,⁷⁸ the Byzantians were detaining the merchants, until these had paid 10 % of the value of their cargo, plainly a tax which, by being called *tokos* ("interest"), was masked as the earnings from a regular loan transaction – part of the financial stratagem. As a favourable gesture towards the merchants, the Byzantians then allowed them to make good their losses by throwing the extra 10 % charge onto the buyers of their merchandise, thus making it almost compulsory for the merchants to unload and sell their goods at Byzantion.

Van Groningen abstained from proposing a definite date for this event, reasoning, in my view correctly, that the Byzantians are known to have resorted to similar practices on more than one occasion.⁷⁹ Indeed, typologically (but not necessarily chronologically), this financial stratagem is closely related to the Byzantians' line of action in 362/1 BC, as reported in [Dem.] 50, a speech which, in contrast to the *Oeconomica*, is a contemporary, nearly eye-witness account. Contrary to what some modern commentators maintain,⁸⁰ that ac-

count does not say that the Byzantians resorted to predatory action against merchantmen because of famine; it only says that “they wanted to use the grain themselves (*heneka tes idias chreias tou sitou*)”, and that “they compel [the shippers and merchants] to discharge the cargoes of grain (*kai anagkazousi ton siton axaireisthai*)” [Dem.] 50.6 and 17, respectively), neither of which necessarily means the occurrence of famine or grain-shortage of any kind. It may very well be, as the author of the *Oeconomica* says, that the Byzantians themselves were justifying their predatory action with reference to famine (*sitodeia*). But as the same author admits when reporting resort to a similar stratagem by the Kalchedonians, the *declared* cause of a particular action need not be the *true* one: “[the Kalchedonians] were seizing the ships sailing into the Pontos, using a well-sounding pretext” (*meta prophaseos eulogou*).⁸¹

All in all, in 362/1 BC (and probably on other occasions, too), the Byzantians were exacting a 10 % *ad valorem* charge from merchants sailing through the Straits by means of applying a milder decree of extortion. Even though Pseudo-Aristotle does not call that imposition a *dekate* (nor does he make its collection the business of a *dekateuterion*), the charge paid by all those merchants who were forced to put into Byzantion was nonetheless a *dekate* in all but the name; and from the state’s point of view, this particular form of a *dekate*, one not requiring the mediation of toll farmers, had the additional advantage of letting the total proceeds go undiminished to the public treasury. If, as seems exceedingly likely, Kalchedon and Kyzikos were applying the same or similar procedures with the ships which they were separately forcing into their harbours, then the dots marking fiscal claims along the trader’s itinerary had in the 4th century increased noticeably.

Granted, the extraordinary situation in 362/1 BC cannot be taken to typify the entire 4th century. Yet, even when the predator/mileage ratio fell to a lower level, as it surely did at various times, it was still a “multi-taxation” system that remained characteristic of this period. Two consequences followed: higher water transportation costs; and greater risk due to the poor-quality protection on offer. Arguably, it was precisely this kind of situation which the Byzantians began to exploit with success in the second part of the 3rd century – to their own advantage, as well as to the advantage of the merchants and the communities they used as their commercial bases. For at that time, Byzantion, perhaps initially with Ptolemaic support,⁸² decided to revive the older, monopolistic system, even if in a toned-down version and by somewhat different means; which chiefly meant, not as a grand naval empire, but as a lesser hegemonic power, which, by acquiring control over sufficient resource, could afford acting as a new type of protector-as-benefactor. Enter the “fiscal” benefactor.

The wider historical background for this, i.e. Byzantion’s territorial expansion (especially eastwards into the Asiatic side of the Straits), shall not detain us here. Suffice it to note that by 220 BC their territory included part of Mysia.⁸³ More important for our purposes is that by 220 BC they had obtained complete

mastery over the Bosphoros channel, and probably also control over a wider area immediately extending outwards from either mouth of the channel. This they were able to do chiefly because, in addition to their city's favourable location at the southern mouth of the channel, they now could also control the channel's northern mouth through their possession of Hieron.

Before it was acquired by Byzantion, Hieron had been in the hands of the Seleukid kings. Polybios reports that "shortly before this" (i.e. the year 220 BC), the Byzantians had bought Hieron for a large sum of money (Polyb. 4.50.3). Dionysios of Byzantion furnishes the additional piece of information that they had purchased it from Kallimedes, the Seleukid official who was in charge of the place.⁸⁴ Neither Polybios' vague time indication ("shortly before this", "an elastic phrase": Walbank 1957, 504), nor the named Seleukid official helps us to establish the date of Byzantion's takeover of Hieron. Why did the Byzantians decide to invest "a large sum of money" in the purchase of Hieron? Polybios gives the following explanation (Polyb. 4.50.2-3):

(...) τὸ καλούμενον (...) Ἱερὸν, ὃ Βυζάντιοι μικροῖς ἀνώτερον χρόνους μεγάλων ὀνησάμενοι χρημάτων ἐσφετερίσαντο διὰ τὴν εὐκαιρίαν τοῦ τόπου, βουλόμενοι μηδεμίαν ἀφορμὴν μηδενὶ καταλιπεῖν μήτε κατὰ τῶν εἰς τὸν Πόντον πλεόντων ἐμπόρων μήτε περὶ τοὺς δούλους καὶ τὰς ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς θαλάττης ἐργασίας.

(...) the place (...) called Hieron, which shortly before this the Byzantians, owing to the advantageous location of the place, had made their own, buying it for a large sum of money, as they wanted to leave to no one any operative base whatsoever that could be used against the merchants [or: in regard to the merchants] sailing in the Pontos, or, again, in regard to the slaves and the business of the sea itself.⁸⁵

I agree with the current translations that *aphorme* means "an operative base from which one can sail out".⁸⁶ However, my rendering of the clauses explaining the use of that base allows for the possibility that the one who possessed Hieron did not necessarily attack merchants (just as he evidently did not attack the slaves and the business of the sea), but quite the contrary he was mindful of all three of these. At any rate, what Polybios probably reports is that from their newly-acquired base, Hieron, which at that time appears to have been a fortified stronghold (*phrourion*),⁸⁷ the Byzantians provided to traders an old kind of service: naval escort. At the same time, they enhanced Hieron's role as a central station in especially the slave-trade. In short, within their area of control (not least within the Straits), the Byzantians aspired to establish three kinds of monopoly: one in the business of protection, in which Hieron performed its traditional function as a seaward "caravan-station", i.e. a pick-up and delivery point along the north-south running routes; another

monopoly in the business of slave-trafficking, in which Hieron served as a key re-distribution point for the movement of humans, from the Pontic sources of supply to their Mediterranean loci of demand; and a third monopoly in the fishing business.

Some scholars question the significance of the Black Sea as a source of supply of slaves to the Mediterranean, but the evidence to the contrary (see Avram in this volume) cannot be easily dismissed.⁸⁸ Indeed, it is precisely in connection with the Byzantians and the whole affair about the toll in the Straits that Polybios offers his well-known list of the main commodities that were traded between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean; one of these is said to be “the multitude of humans who are trafficked as slave-labour” (*to ton eis tas douleias agomenon somaton plethos*: Polyb. 4.38.4). The *emporion* Tanais, according to Strabo (11.2.3), functioned in Hellenistic times as a north-shore port of the re-shipment of human captives (mainly Scythians), who were brought there by inland peoples.⁸⁹ In the western shores, Istros and Odessos were among the main re-distribution points for Thracian captives, while along the southern littoral Sinope, Amisos and Teion stood for Paphlagonian and Bithynian supplies (Avram in this volume). Humans trafficked from these and other Pontic places to the Mediterranean slave-markets had to pass through Hieron. By purchasing the place, the Byzantians could oust all competitors, becoming the sole controllers of the southbound traffic.

Monopoly-holding, it seems, was part of a larger scheme which, in addition to trade in certain commodities, included the provision of protection. A strong concern with the establishment of a monopoly within a wider area is indicated by Polybios’ wording “they [sc. the Byzantians] wanted to leave to no one any operative base whatsoever”. This same concern is made even more explicit by Memnon of Herakleia, when he accounts of a specific event. In 250 BC or slightly later, the Kallatians intended to make the *emporion* Tomis (which bordered Kallatis) a *monopolion*. However, even though they concerned the eastern shore of the Black Sea, these plans alarmed the Byzantians to such a degree that they waged war against the Kallatians (and the Istrians): the attempt to give a port-of-trade the status of a *monopolion* was the cause of that war.⁹⁰ Obviously, building up their own monopoly system around the Straits required the hindrance, or forceful demolition, of rival schemes for *monopolia* round the Black Sea.

It therefore looks as if the investment in, and reorganization of, Hieron were parts of a larger and considered course of action, which the Byzantians were pursuing systematically in the second half of the 3rd century. Allowing free passage through the Straits – another way of saying that part of the traders’ transaction costs had been *negotiated away* – was a means of attracting more users of Byzantium’s services. It certainly meant loss of toll revenue. But an increase in the volume of trade passing through Byzantium and Hieron saw to it that any such losses were in the long run counterbalanced by trade income. Thus, to compensate for their inability to provide top-quality regular

protection of the imperial kind, the Byzantians were instead providing high-quality *cost*-protection of the fiscal kind, as a result of which the merchants' profits rose.

As Polybios (4.38.8-9) notes, in ca. 220 BC, "the Byzantians were the people who derived most benefit from the Pontic trade, because the situation of their city allowed them to export their surplus and import whatever they required on advantageous terms and without any danger or hardship". A fairly reliable index of Byzantium's rise to prosperity from the increasing trade, as well as from its role as a fiscal benefactor, is the very magnitude and timing of the pressure that began to be applied by Comontorius and his Tylian Kingdom. At first, the Byzantians were for a time compelled, through raids of shifting regularity, each time to give "gifts" (*dora*) to the amount of 3,000, or 5,000, or as much as 10,000 gold staters (i.e. 60,000, 100,000 and 200,000 Attic drachmas, respectively).⁹¹ After some time, however, the demands not only did become regularized, but also raised considerably, as Comontorius now replaced this irregular kind of tribute with payment of eighty talents (480,000 drachmas) a year (Polyb. 4.46.3-4).

This, in sum, was the situation prevailing in the Straits for part of the 3rd century, until ca. 220 BC. All the while, Comontorius and the pressures he was generating from the west served continually as a reminder to all of Byzantium's limitations in the field of monopolies – especially their power monopoly. Another reminder of the same circumstance came from the east in the form of hostile action of Prusias I of Bithynia, who succeeded in snatching Hieron from the Byzantians and holding it for a brief spell of time. Finally, a third and perhaps even more disturbing reminder came from none other than the acclaimed *prostates* within the Aegean, Rhodes, a sea-power that was prepared to fight not only for its own commercial interest, but also for the interests of a larger number of polities (Polyb. 4.38).

Conclusion

In the third quarter of the 3rd century BC, after it had armed itself with an assortment of local, "limited-range" monopolies, Byzantium was making a serious effort to *cost*-protect the merchants trading between the Mediterranean and the Pontos. This is the short answer to one of the questions raised in our introductory section (p. 289 above). The long answer has been given in more detail in the preceding four sections. Byzantium, it has been argued, pursued largely the same goal as one of its more distinguished historical precursors in the area, the Athenian Empire. The means of achieving that goal, however, were necessarily different. Lacking the resources and might that were needed to maintain real (i.e. unchallenged) monopoly over the protection routes *and* the key-points connecting them, Byzantium prioritized a parallel role as "fiscal benefactor"; its free-of-charge passage policy was an essential part of this role. As a result, traders obtained a marked reduction of their transaction costs. The

positive, symbiotic relationship that had existed in the days of the Athenian Empire between the political economy and the free market economy was thereby re-established. Pretty much like grants of *ateleia*, toll-free passage was facilitating the conversion of extra-commercial expenses to intra-commercial ones, creating favourable conditions for trade between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. But unlike commerce-related *ateleia*, toll freedom constituted part of a larger package of protective measures and covered a far broader circle of economic actors than just the privileged few. This seems to have been the criterion which, according to Polybios, qualified the Byzantians to the title of “common benefactors of all” (*koinoi euergetai panton*).

This whole arrangement, however, became upset by the Byzantians’ decision to re-introduce the toll, a decision forced upon them by the tributary demands of the Tylian Kingdom. The reason why merchants reacted against this, it has been suggested above, owed less to the fact that they had again to pay charges for passage *per se*, and more to the fact that these charges both increased their transaction costs *and* bought them lower-quality security services. Once more the political economy – this time in the guise of the Rhodian navy – rushed to the rescue of free trade. In 220 BC, the toll was abolished and with it also the tribute that Byzantion paid to the Tylian Kingdom (Polyb. 4.46.4). At the same time, political re-arrangements in the area transferred managerial responsibility for the protective mechanisms at the Straits into new hands: the Byzantians ceded their place to Kavaros, the new ruler of the Tylian Kingdom, a change that occurred almost seamlessly, and with the full-hearted approval of the Rhodians and Prusias I of Bithynia (Polyb. 4.52.1). No Greek bulwark towards aggressive, tribute-hungry and trade-disrupting Greeks was raised, because none was needed any longer. Polybios’ eulogy of Kavaros, summing up the ruler’s achievement from 220 to the dissolution of his kingdom in ca. 212 BC, unfortunately survives in a fragmentary form. Nevertheless, quoting the extant text seems a fitting way of closing this paper:

Kavaros, the king of the Gauls living in Thrace, being kingly and high-minded (*megalophron*) by nature, took care that the traders sailing to Pontos enjoyed great security (*pollen men asphaleian*), and at the same time he rendered great services to the Byzantians in their wars against the Thracians and the Bithynians (Polyb. 8.22).

A new “fiscal benefactor” had been found. That he ruled over the erstwhile predators and was of non-Greek stock seems to have mattered little to the Greeks as long as he convinced them that he possessed the values they prized most.

Notes

- 1 Foundation date: Hdt. 4.144.2, cf. Euseb. *Chron.* versus Arm. (ed. Schöne II, 86). Loukopoulou & Laitar 2004, 915-916 (no. 674: Byzantion) cite further references.
- 2 The relationship between trade and fiscal exactions (tribute, taxes) has so far chiefly been treated in works which employ a predominantly theoretical line of reasoning, and which focus on the Roman Empire: see, in particular the model proposed by Hopkins 1980, and 1995-1996. A similar approach, discussing the possible impact of domestic fiscal exactions (i.e. liturgies and the *eisphora*-tax) on the level of private production and wealth in Classical Athens, is used by Osborne 1991.
- 3 I only know of two monographs on the history of Byzantion in Antiquity: Merle 1916; Newskaja 1955. See also Oberhummer 1899a, and 1899b; Olshausen 1996; for the inscriptions: *I.Byzantion*.
- 4 See, for instance, the *lex portorii provinciae Asiae* from ca. AD 62: Engelmann & Knibbe 1989; *SEG* 39, 1180, paragraph 2, lines 8-11 (dating from 75 BC) and *passim*.
- 5 Hdt. 4.144.1; Strab. 7.6.2; Dio Cass. 75.10.1. Cf. Malkin & Shmueli 1988. Thorough topographical description: Polyb. 4.38-44, cf. Dion.Byz. *Anaplus Bospori Thracii* (Müller (ed.) 1882).
- 6 Persian domination in early 5th century: Byzantion under Otanes, the Satrap of Lydia (Hdt. 5.26). The city took part in the Ionian Revolt 499-494 BC (Hdt. 5.103.2), but the Persians regained it (Hdt. 6.33.2) and held it until it was re-conquered in 478 by the Spartan Pausanias (Hdt. 9.89; Thuc. 1.94.2, cf. 1.128.5). Probably in the next year, Byzantion became a member of the Athenian Empire (Thuc. 1.131.1; cf. *ATL* III, 206).
- 7 Diod. 14.12.2 (r403); Polyb. 4.45.1. Thukydides (2.97.1-6), writing of king Sitalkes (429/8 BC), offers a description of tribute collection in the Odrysian Kingdom; even though he distinguishes between "tribute" (*phoros*) and "gifts" (*dora*), he stresses that in total value they were equal. On the Odrysian Kingdom, see Archibald 1998. Similar pressures by the Scythians: Vinogradov 1980; Marčenko 1993; Archibald 1994.
- 8 Rhodes 1992, 36.
- 9 *IG* I³, 263.V.16 (450/49); *IG* I³, 269.II.26 (443/2); *IG* I³, 279.II.32 (433/2); *IG* I³, 281.III.18 (430/29). Byzantion's presence in the assessment of 425/4 is restored: *IG* I³, 71.II.175. Cf. also *ATL* I, 250.
- 10 Early and more recent scholarship on 5th and 4th century grain exports from the Black Sea focuses mainly on the importance of a single importer, Athens: e.g. Gernet 1909, 271-391; Jardé 1925; Brašinskij 1963; de Ste. Croix 1972, 45-49; Noonan 1973; Isager & Hansen 1975, 20-23; Montgomery 1986; Figueira 1986. Some scholars, however, remain sceptical about the amount of Pontic grain exports to the Mediterranean world and especially to Athens in the 5th and (to some extent also in the) 4th centuries. They particularly point out that the figures for Athenian grain imports from the Black Sea, as given by our written sources, are exaggerated: see, e.g., Garnsey 1985; Garnsey 1988, 123-149; and Garnsey 1998, 63, 183-200; Vinogradov 1997b, 22-30; Tsetschladze 1998a, 63; Braund in this volume. For Athenian grain supplies from her *klerouchies* Lemnos, Imbros and Skyros, see the Grain-Tax Law of 374/3 BC, Stroud 1998; Moreno 2003. Continuing emphasis on the importance of Pontic grain exports: Austin 1994,

- especially 558-564; Whitby 1998; Keen 2000; Pébarthe 2000 and Moreno in this volume.
- 11 Methone: M&L, *GHI*, no. 65 (*IG I³*, 61, second decree), lines 33 ff.) Aphytis: *IG I³*, 62-63. See Pébarthe 2000, 55 with n. 76, 63.
 - 12 The relevant provisions are in lines 36-41: (a) γραφσαμένος δὲ πρὸς τὸς ἑλλησπ[ον-] / [το]φύλακας ἐχσάγε[ν] μέχρι τῷ τετραγμένω, (b) μέτε αὐτοὶ κολυόντων ἐχσάγεν μ[έτ-] / [ε ἄλ]λον ἐόντων κολύεν, (c) ἀζέμιος [δὲ] / [ἔσ]το καὶ ἐ ναῦς ἐ ἐχσάγοσα. See also Pébarthe 2000, 71-72; Rubel 2001. Rubel's rendering of the word *azemios* (in *IG I³*, 61.40-41) as "zahlungsfrei", i.e. "exemption from payment of the toll" (Rubel 2001, 44-45, 50) is not warranted. The word means "not liable to a fine".
 - 13 See also Pébarthe 2000.
 - 14 Even though Byzantion's productive capability was excellent, in practice it was unreliable. Polybios (4.45.7-8) says that the Byzantians are "the owners of a most fertile countryside, when they have carefully cultivated it and superb harvest is the result". But, he goes on to explain, the repeated raids of their non-Greek neighbours, who destroy part of the crops and carry away the rest, made the cultivation of that territory a non-paying proposition. It is more than likely that the Byzantians found themselves in the same plight also in the 5th century BC; its city-walls "were particularly strong on the landward side to the west", and an uninhabited area within the city-walls, called Thrakion, was probably used to accommodate rural fugitives in time of trouble, see Loukopoulou & Łaitar 2004, 918, and the works cited in note 7 above.
 - 15 Vélissaropoulos 1980, 212. Cf. Engelmann & Knibbe 1989, 166.
 - 16 For *diagogai* as a source of public income: [Arist.] *Oec.* 2.1346a8; *Syll.*³, 135 (*diagoge*); Strab. 4.3.2 (*diagogika tele*).
 - 17 Walbank 1957, 497. Note that elsewhere (at 4.47.1) Polybios says that the toll was imposed on those "exporting from the Pontos".
 - 18 Polyb. 4.44.3-4; cf., e.g., Funke 1989, 155-156. Some scholars, especially those who regard the introduction of the toll as a wartime measure (see note 74 below), find the 10 % to be too high: e.g. M&L, *GHI*, 161. Rubel (2001, 49) sees the rate of 10 % as something new in 410 BC, necessitated by the war crisis. He believes that before 411, when the toll was collected at Byzantion and not at Chrysopolis, the rate was only 2 %.
 - 19 *IG I³*, 52A; M&L, *GHI*, 58A.7. For a proposal to move the conventional date of 434/3 to ca. 431 BC, see Kallet-Marx 1993, 105-107.
 - 20 Tod, *GHI*, I, 109-110; Merle 1916, 23, n. 1; Mattingly 1964, especially 45-46 (Harpokration's reference to Antiphon for the word *dekateutas*), Cawkwell 1975, 54, n. 4.
 - 21 So also Rubel 2001. The year(s) in which the toll and the *Hellespontophylakes* were established remain unknown, but, as Rubel convincingly argues, both of them may date from the very early years of the empire. On the other hand, and *pace* e.g., Merle 1916, 22-23, there is nothing in particular to link the establishment of the toll station at Byzantion to Perikles' so-called Black Sea expedition of 436/5 BC: Plut. *Per.* 20, with Lewis 1992, 145-146 with n. 113.
 - 22 Plut. *Alc.* 29.6; Diod. 13.66.2; Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.1-12, 2.2.1, 4.8.27-28.
 - 23 Stroud 1998, 83: "We cannot assume that Athenian control of tolls and shipping at the entrance to the Bosphoros survived the victories of Antalkidas and the Spartans in that region in 387 BC". As Stroud notes, Dem. 23.177 may well refer to Athenian control of the *dekate* at the Straits again by 357/6 BC.

- 24 Cf. Stroud 1998.
- 25 Dem. 20.31-33, cf. Lys. 22.14; Xen. *Oec.* 20.27. According to a tradition known to Strabo (7.4.6) the Bosporan ruler Leukon, in the years between the opening of the port of Theodosia in 355 and ca. 349/8, sent to Athens from that port the amount of 2,100,000 *medimoi* of grain, i.e. an annual average of 260,000 *medimnoi* (see Moreno in this volume). The reliability of Demosthenes' figure of 400,000 *medimnoi* (at Dem. 20.32) continues to be the subject of debate, see, e.g., Braund in this volume, and more generally note 9 above. As Whitby notes (1998, 123), few today will take Demosthenes' figure at face value, and among the sceptics are those who believe it has an upward bias and those who believe it has a downward bias. I share the general scepticism towards this figure, but I also doubt whether Demosthenes' deviation (at whichever direction) from the correct figure was so significant as to mean much for my calculations.
- 26 Which is not to say that it was anything like "a normal price": see Reger 1993, 312-314.
- 27 Didymus' *Commentary on Demosthenes*, 11.1, cols. 10-11 (Pearson & Stephens (eds.) 1983); cf. *FGrH* 115: Theopompos F 292; *FGrH* 328: Philochoros F 162. For the view that Philip seized 180 of the 230 ships, see Hammond & Griffith 1979b, 576, generally followed by Bresson 2000, 132-133.
- 28 Bresson 2000, 132-133, 277-278, who (277, n. 57) concludes that these ships carried a total of 690,000 *medimnoi* of grain. Whitby's estimate (Whitby 1998, 124-125) is either 600,000 or 800,000 *medimnoi*, depending on the tonnage of the ships (120 or 160 tons).
- 29 Ships with a capacity to carry 3,000 *medimnoi* of grain (120 tons) were the commonest: Casson 1971, 183-184; Vélissaropoulos 1980, 62-64; Bresson 2000, 278, with n. 66; Whitby 1998, 124.
- 30 The two unidentified *dekatai* mentioned in the Grain-Tax Law of 374/3 BC: Stroud 1998, 4, lines 59-61, with pp. 81-84.
- 31 Olbia: *IOSPE* I², 24; *Syll.*³ 218; Dubois 1996, 28-39, no. 14. Byzantium: [Arist.] *Oec.* 2. 1346b24. Cf. Rostovtzeff 1941, 1287; Bogaert 1968: 119-120. For accounts kept of the currency conversion expenses, see [Dem.] 50.69.
- 32 Velkov & Domaradzka 1994; *SEG* 43, 486; cf. Archibald 2000-2001. For a similar charge for passage demanded in Egypt (i.e. an *ad valorem* tax of 10 % for transportation of goods through the Canopus), see the so-called *stele* of Nectanebo I (380-362 BC): Gunn 1943, especially sections 9-10. On the customs register from 5th century Elephantine in Egypt: Yardeni 1994; Briant & Descat 1998. See also the 1st century AD fiscal regulations of Kaunos: *SEG* 14, 639. A survey of the different kinds of taxes and dues is given by Vélissaropoulos 1980, 205-231, especially 214-215. A broader perspective is provided by N. Purcell 2005, 200-232. On the *pentakoste*, in particular, see Gofas 1969.
- 33 Finley 1985.
- 34 On prices and price-making, see Bresson 2000, 263-307 (chapter 11: "Les cités grecques, le marché et les prix"); Reger 1993; Reger 1994 (especially 54-55, 134-137, 144-144, 145-146: evidence for short-term price fluctuations on Hellenistic Delos), and the valuable essays collected in Andreau, Briant & Descat 1997.
- 35 On *ateleia* to merchants: Bresson 2000: 125-130, 137-138, 145, 147; cf. Oehler 1896; Schwahn 1934. On the legal problems involved in identifying *ateleia*-holders, see Pébarthe 2000, 61-62 (perceptive comments on *IG* I³, 40.52-57) and Rubinstein

- (forthcoming). On the Bosphoran rulers' grant of *ateleia* to Athens, see Burstein 1978; 1993; Tuplin 1982; Braund in this volume.
- 36 Whether the political authority granting *ateleia* made the primary producers pay, via domestic taxes, for the discount given to merchants, or it recouped the loss in some other way is an important question, but one that cannot be treated here.
- 37 For this and what follows I am using the theory about "tribute and trade" developed by Frederic C. Lane (Lane 1966; 1979) and further refined by Niels Steensgaard (Steensgaard 1972; 1981). Cf. also Gabrielsen 2001.
- 38 Hdt. 9.114: "strong winds inhibit the north-bound voyage so that a fleet has to seek shelter at Lekton". Procop. *Aed.* 5.1.6-16 (5th century AD): ships had often to wait at Tenedos until a wind blowing from the south appeared (cf. e.g. [Dem.] 50.53). The importance of Tenedos is also attested by [Dem.] 17-19 (331 BC): the Macedonians had "forced all the ships coming from the Black Sea to put in at Tenedos". Louis Robert calls Tenedos the Gate of the Dardanelles, "où les navires attendaient, parfois longtemps, le bon vent qui permet de lutter contre le courant descendant" (Robert 1977, 10, n. 33). Modern observations about the prevailing wind conditions: Labaree 1957, especially 32-33; Neumann 1991. On all these matters, particularly the strategic position of Tenedos, see now Rutishauser 2001. On the significance of Sestos, see de Ste. Croix 1972, 48.
- 39 Cohen 1992, 54-55.
- 40 Garlan 1978; Adams 1989; de Souza 1999; Gabrielsen 2005.
- 41 On *katagein*, see de Ste. Croix 1972, 314; Garnsey 1988, 142-143, 150-151, 162.
- 42 Asheri 1998; Braund & Tsetschladze 1989; Tsetschladze 2000-2001.
- 43 Diod. 20.25; Strab. 11.2.12, 17.3.24, and 7.4.5-6 (on the Tauroi). Cf. also Xen. *An.* 7.5.12; Plut. *Per.* 50; Plin. *HN* 6.15.16; Tac. *Hist.* 3.47. Compare with the raids for booty and extortion by the Athenians, e.g. Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.20-22, 1.2.4, 1.3.3.
- 44 Davies 1984, 286.
- 45 See, for instance, the application of these pressures on Olbia: *IOSPE I²*, 43, especially A.10-23, 43-45, 83-94; *Syll.*³, 495. Cf. Vinogradov 1980; Marčenko 1993.
- 46 Garlan 1978, 16.
- 47 Stroud 1998, 4, lines 10-12, with commentary pp. 49-50: "merchant", in this inscription, is the "buyer" (*ho priamēnos*) of the *pentekoste*-tax payable in grain by Skyros, Imbros and Lemnos to Athens; *ho priamēnos* was responsible for the shipment of the grain to Peiraieus and its further transportation to Athens. Stroud (*ibid*) prefers the view that in cases such as this one, when no protection was offered by the state, the merchant had to manage without it. In my view, the provision "at his own risk" may well include the loss of cargo in storm, but I find it unlikely that it includes other kinds of risks, see Stroud 1998, 40-50.
- 48 I take "enemies" (*polemioi*) here to refer to just anyone who was being hostile to the merchants, be he the state-sponsored (or state-condoned) kind of predator or the independently operating, private one.
- 49 Gomme 1933b; Gabrielsen 1994, 118-123.
- 50 These routes and the evidence relating to them deserve a more detailed study than can be undertaken here.
- 51 Ps.-Skylax 67, 92; Polyb. 4.39.6, 50.2; Dion. Byz. *Anaplus* (Müller (ed.) 1882), 75 ff. with notes to frs. 58-59. *Syll.*³, 1010 = *I.Kalchedon* 13 is an epigram on a 3rd century altar.
- 52 Lehmann-Hartleben 1921; Lehmann-Haupt 1923. I have profited greatly from discussing this topic with Dr. Moreno, who generously shared with me his first-

- hand knowledge of the site. I have not been able to see O.L. Gabelko's paper, "Aims, Ways and Methods of Control over the Thracian Bosporos", which was presented at the Second International Congress on Black Sea Antiquities, Ankara 2-9 Sept. 2001.
- 53 Territorially, though, Hieron belonged to Kalchedon: Diod. 20.111.3; Strab. 12.4.2.
- 54 Dem. 20.30-35; 34.36; *IG II²*, 653 (of 289/8 BC): honours to king Spartokos. Cf. Burstein 1993. *Syll.³*, 212: Leukon's grant of grain export privileges to the Mytileneans.
- 55 *IOSPE I²*, 24; *Syll.³*, 218; Dubois 1996, no 14; cf. Lehmann-Haupt 1923, 372.
- 56 [Dem.] 50.17-19, 58.
- 57 [Dem.] 50.17-19, with 14, 20-23, 58.
- 58 Garnsey 1988.
- 59 *Syll.³*, 495.146-151; Xen. *Vect.* 3.14. Cf. Gabrielsen 1997, 195, n. 106.
- 60 In 335/4 BC, the general Diotimos (a nephew of Diotimos in Lys. 19.50-51) took charge of a squadron of fast-sailing triremes that were dispatched "to protect [merchantmen] from seaborne predators" (*epi ten phylaken ton leiston*: *IG II²*, 1623.276-282). In 326/5 BC, a naval force under the general Trasyboulos was sent "to convoy the grain transport" (*epi ten parapompen tou sitou*: *IG II²*, 1628.37-42).
- 61 For this event and what follows, see Didymos' *Commentary on Demosthenes* 11.1, col. 10.34-11.5: *FGrH* 328: Philochoros F 162, cf. *FGrH* 115: Theopompos F 292. See also Bresson 2000, 131-149 (chapter 7: "L'attentat d'Hieron et le commerce grec"). The decree inserted in Dem. 18.73-74, which claims that the Athenian protective force numbered 20 ships, is a later fabrication, see Wankel 1976, 444-445.
- 62 Cf. Morrison, Coates & Rankov 2000, 103, with Map 13.
- 63 *IG II²*, 1629.165-277, especially 217-223.
- 64 In Didymos' *Commentary on Demosthenes* 11.1, col. 10.40.42-44, Hieron is classified among the *hormeteria* (operational naval bases) and *kataphygas* (ports of refuge).
- 65 *IG II²*, 212.13-17, with Isokr. 17.57. See Gaidukevich 1971, 96-97.
- 66 *IG II²*, 212.59-65. On *hyperesia*, see Morrison 1984.
- 67 See Gajdukevich 1971, 85-86; Hind 1994a, 502.
- 68 Diod. 20.81.3; Strab. 14.2.5, cf. Polyb. 4.47.1-2. Gabrielsen 1997. See p. 288 above.
- 69 Aisch. 3.171-172 (Nymphaion: a "place (*chorion*) that at that time was a possession" of Athens); cf. Harp. s.v. "Nymphaion". Aischines' characterization of the Bosporan Kingdom as an "enemy", if not something invented to serve his rhetorical purposes, cannot constitute evidence for a long-standing hostility between the Spartocids and Athens, *contra* Burstein 1993. On the incorporation of Nymphaion into the Bosporan Kingdom, see Šelov & Kovedjaev 1985, 90-91; Zavoikin 1995, 92. Dependency of Pantikapaion: *SEG* 45, 996 (389-349 BC), cf. Hind 1994a, 492-493, 8; Tssetskhladze 1997b, 78-80.
- 70 *FGrH* 342: Krateros F 8 (Nymphaion paid one talent a year in tribute); *IG I³*, 100; *ATL* I, 527-529, 557; Aisch. 3.171-172.
- 71 Avram, Hind & Tssetskhladze 2004, 948 (no. 704) with further literature.
- 72 Imperial subjects in the northern Black Sea: Meiggs 1972, 197-198, 328-329; Hind 1994a, 492; Avram 1995, 195-198; Mattingly 1996; Braund 2003. Controversy persists about the extent and purpose of Perikles' so-called Black Sea expedition of 436/5 (Plut. *Per.* 20), which is usually associated to *IG I³*, 1180, a casualty list restored to mention "in Sinope": some scholars believe that the expedition was

- confined to the southern shore, others believe it probably reached the north (Hind 1994a, 492), while still other again doubt whether it took place at all: see Angeluscu 1992; Tsetsckhladze 1998a, 56-57. Neither of these views can be confirmed, and the point I make in the text is not dependent on any of them. In 424 BC, the Athenian general Lamachos with ten warships sailed into the Pontos on a fund-raising expedition (*argyrologia*): Thuc. 4.75.1-2, with Hornblower 1996, 245-247. Only in this case we can be fairly certain that the expedition did not proceed farther than the southern shore.
- 73 MacDonald 1982, 119; Rubel 2001, 46. Too much, I think, is sometimes made of Thukydides' report (Thuc. 3.2.2) that Mytilene, just prior to her revolt in 428/7 BC, imported Pontic foodstuffs and other commodities, e.g. MacDonald (1982, 119-120) and Rubel (2001, 47), who take the incident as an indication of the inability of the *Hellenotamiai* to exercise tight control (or of the fact that their office had not yet been established at that time). In fact, Athens' wish to accommodate a resourceful "ally" may be a sufficient explanation.
- 74 A wartime measure: M&L, *GHI*, 161. Rubel (2001, 49) suggests that before 411 BC the rate probably was only 1 to 2 %. But see MacDonald 1981, 143: "the need to make the toll a wartime measure seems unnecessary".
- 75 Cf. de Ste. Croix 1972, 47-48.
- 76 [Dem.] 50.4-6, 17 (quotes from 6).
- 77 Van Groningen 1933, 62-66.
- 78 Cf. de Ste. Croix 1972, 314.
- 79 Van Groningen 1933, 62-66. Other instances of Byzantian raids on shipping: e.g. Dem. 5.25 (346 BC). Byzantion's bid at micro-imperialism: Dem. 15.26; Polyae. *Strat.* 6.25.
- 80 Austin 1994, 559; de Ste. Croix 1972, 47; Garnsey 1988, 143. A.T. Murray, *Demosthenes*, vol. VI. Loeb Classical Library (London & Cambridge, Mass., 1964), translates [Dem.] 50.6 as follows: "...and the Byzantines and Chalcedonians and Cyzicenes were forcing their ships to put in to their ports because of the scarcity of grain in their own countries".
- 81 Ps.-Arist. *Oec.* 2.2.10, 1347b25-26.
- 82 Close relations between Byzantion and the Ptolemaic Kingdom in this period: Avram 2004; Archibald in this volume.
- 83 Polyb. 4.50.4, 9, with Strab. 12.8.11 (territory of Byzantion in Roman times). See Walbank 1957, 504-505; *FGrH* 81: Phylarchos F 8 reports Byzantian dominion over the Bithynians, cf. *I.Apameia*, p. 48; Avram 2003, 1203-1205. The process of expansion was already on in ca. 353 BC, with incorporation of Kalchedon and Selymbria: Dem. 15.26; Polyae. *Strat.* 6.25. Dion.Byz. 41 mentions Ptolemaios Philadelphos' gift of *chora epi tes Asias* to the Byzantians. Referring to Theopompos (*FGrH* 115: Theopompos F 247), Stephanos of Byzantion (s.v. *Astai* and *Astakos*) says that Astike, a region between Perinthos and Apollonia Pontike, was territory belonging to the Byzantians (*chora Byzantion*).
- 84 Dion.Byz. *Anaplys* fr. 58, who calls Kallimedes *Seleuci exercitus dux*. See also Lehmann-Hartleben 1921; Bengtson 1944, 118 (no. 16). Grainger 1997, 99. Memnon of Herakleia (*FGrH* 434: Memnon F 15) mentions a war between Byzantion and Antiochos; Vinogradov 1999, 288-289 identifies the Seleukid king with Antiochos II.
- 85 The translation of W.R. Paton (*Polybius, The Histories*, vol. 2. Loeb Classical Library [London & Cambridge, Mass. 1962, repr. 1960], p. 421) is as follows: "... the place

called “The Holy Place” on the Bosphorus, which a few years previously they had acquired by purchase for a large sum, owing to its favourable situation, as they did not wish to leave anyone any base from which to attack traders with the Pontus or interfere with the slave-trade or the fishing”. The translation of J. de Foucault (*Polybe, Histoires*, ed. Budé [Paris 1972]) reads as follows: “Hieron ... place que, ... les Byzantins avaient acquise en la payant fort cher à cause de l’heureuse position des lieux, pour ne laisser à personne aucune base de départ contre ceux qui naviguent sur le Pont pour y faire du commerce ou se livrer au trafic des esclaves, ainsi que ceux qui vivent de la pêche sur mer”. My own translation, given in the text, takes into account the possibility that, in view of the “μήτε ... μήτε” construction, the prepositions κατά and περί can carry a similar, if not the same, meaning: LSJ s.v. κατά (with gen. no. 7) is rendered “in respect of”, “concerning” (e.g. Xen. *Cyr.* 1.2.16; Aisch. 3.50), and περί (with acc. nos 5, 3) is rendered “about”, “concerning”, “in respect of”. Finally, Walbank 1957, 504, translates τὰς τῆς θαλάττης ἐργασίας with “gain from the sea itself”, especially “fishing”. While “fishing” seems justified, it may be noted that elsewhere (e.g. *IG* II², 903 = *Syll.*³, 640, line 2: πρὸς τεῖ κατὰ θάλατταν ἐργασίαι) the same expression means “commercial activities at sea”, particularly “trade”.

86 E.g. Polyb. 1.41.6.

87 When Prusias of Bithynia, after the war of 220 BC, surrendered Hieron to the Byzantians, he saw to it that its installations were demolished so that it could not be used as a *phrourion*: Polyb. 4.52.7-8.

88 The negative view: Tsetschladze 1998a, 67-69 (with references to further literature); Braund & Tsetschladze 1989; Tsetschladze 2000-2001. The positive (and older) view: Pippidi 1973; Heinen 2001, especially 487. The question of whether piracy or warfare was the main source of supply was raised by Finley 1962. From an economic point of view, however, the question is of lesser relevance, see Gabrielsen 2005.

89 On the northern shores *emporion*, see Hind 1995-1996; Hind 1997.

90 *FGrH* 434: Memnon of Herakleia F 13 (Photios 228a-b): “Not much later, war was waged by the Byzantians against the Kallatians (who were a colony of Herakleia) and against the Istrians about the *emporion* Tomis, which bordered Kallatis, as the Kallatians intended to make the place a *monopolion*. Each side sent embassies to Herakleia to secure its alliance”, etc. See Avram 2003, 1187-1188, n. 15-18, and 1211-1212, dating the war to about 255-254 BC. See also Ager 1996, 108, no. 34, who dates the event to the period 253-247 BC.

91 For the conversion of “gold pieces” into drachmas, see Walbank 1957, 499.