MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF LATE ANTIQUE AND MEDIEVAL GREEK AND LATIN INSCRIPTIONS IN ISTANBUL

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Byzantine Epigraphy Programme

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1. Preface

IDA TOTH and ANDREAS RHObY

The inscrip
tional heritage of Istanbul spans multiple periods, habits, and traditions. Countless examples survive, both in situ and in various museum collections, and these provide a rich source for the study of the city's world of writing in any phase of its history, not least the medieval. Moreover, although great portion of this epigraphic trove remains hidden underneath the modern urban layer, recent findings – such as those emerging during the Yenikapi excavations – confirm that Istanbul still holds considerable promise of new and surprising discoveries.

The centrality of Constantinople to both the existence of the Byzantine Empire and the development of Byzantine Studies needs no explanation; neither does the fact that Byzantine Epigraphy, a discipline concerned with the inscriptions of the Byzantine world, looks to Constantinopolitan evidence for essential insights into the realities of public writing. And yet Byzantinists have been slow to engage with the diversity and wealth of Constantinople's epigraphic remains. The extant scholarship, where it has been forthcoming, has been predominantly interested in exploiting these epigraphs as historical sources, thus leaving a somewhat distorted view of the range and character of inscriptions in the Byzantine capital.

In convening a week-long Summer Programme in Byzantine Epigraphy, our agendas were rather different. We set out with the idea of examining both Istanbul's well known and some of its newly discovered epigraphic evidence, including inscriptions displayed in formal (and predominantly monumental) settings, and those that have often been described as casual, unofficial, and at any rate, insignificant. Such a holistic focus also benefited from a wide range of creative approaches – to context, display, taxonomy, ideology, materiality, transformation and performance – all of which have lately become part of the scholarly discourse in the field of Byzantine Epigraphy.

The present booklet was commissioned in preparation for the Summer Programme to provide work materials for the busy schedule of daily seminars, practical sessions in Istanbul's museums, and guided visits to Byzantine monuments and excavation sites. Our intention was to explore inscriptions from different viewpoints, and to open communication lines between experts in different fields. Responding to our brief to review extant epigraphic scholarship, all participants contributed chapters approaching their chosen topics from the direction of their own interests and expertise. As the week unfolded, and our group confronted an ever-greater quantity of diverse epigraphic material, new insights inevitably started to challenge many of our initial – as well as some of the traditional and long-established – assumptions. Our daily sessions also made it clear that any initiative aiming to propel the study of Constantinopolitan epigraphy forward must commit to being interdisciplinary, involving collaborations between textual and literary scholars, and between historians and specialists in visual and material cultures. Most pressingly, such an initiative requires a vigorous (re-)assessment of epigraphic evidence in situ.

The present volume, which we have renamed Materials for the Study of Late Antique and Medieval Greek and Latin Inscriptions in Istanbul, represents a revised and updated version of the original booklet. It has been prepared in the year following the Programme, and incorporates updated notes and observations, a large number of additional images, and new chapters on the Column of Constantine, amulets, late antique Latin epigraphy, the Lips Monastery and small finds from the Yenikapı excavations. We have also made...
several (conscious) omissions: although we were fortunate enough to get access to some new finds from the Theodosian Harbour and to the restorations of St Euphemia, the unpublished materials from these sites – as has been requested – have not been included in the booklet.

In every other sense, our approach has been comprehensive. We have tried to create a resource whose relevance extends beyond the scope of the Summer Programme in Byzantine Epigraphy. Our hope is that this collection of essays can serve as a teaching tool and perhaps also as a dependable *vademecum* to the extant traces of Istanbul’s rich late antique and medieval epigraphic legacy.

Oxford and Vienna, April 2020
Map of Constantinople

5. Hagia Eirene in Constantinople
ANTONIO FELLE

Introduction

The church of St. Eirene is the oldest Christian building in the city: probably a cathedral, it remained the seat of the bishop of Constantinople until 1453. The foundation of the church was traditionally ascribed to Constantine himself. However, two passages in the *Historia Ecclesiastica* by Socrates Scholasticus (see, the Appendix for the chronological list of primary sources on the history of the church) seem to suggest that St Eirene dated back to pre-Constantinian times. Its position, inside the Ottoman Topkapi Sarayi, preserved the building from being converted into a mosque, which was commonly the fate of Byzantine churches in Istanbul: instead, St Eirene was transformed into an armoury during the Ottoman period, and, more recently, it has been used as a museum. The building preserves the ground plan of Justinian’s and Theodora’s basilica, which was built by their order to replace and enlarge the earlier church, after it had been destroyed in the Nika Revolt of 532. Still in situ are parts of the 6th-century mosaic decoration in the narthex. Also, the monograms of Justinian and Theodora are visible on some capitals in the central nave.

The upper sections of the building, the dome, the bema arch, and the apse, all collapsed during the earthquake of 740. The mosaics of the apse preserve a rare example of Iconoclastic art and epigraphy, assigned usually to the reign of Constantine V Kopronymos. Very recently, Paul Magdalino in his *Renaissances d’une capital*, has suggested a different dating for the reconstruction of the church (and consequently of the mosaics and the inscriptions, too). Magdalino’s suggestion is based on the results of dendrochronological analysis by Kuniholm (*et al*.), and on a recent reconsideration of *The Short History* by Nikephoros by Marjanović. According to Magdalino, the reconstruction can be ascribed to the patronage of the Empress Irene, at the very end of 8th century.

In the apse above the altar, we see two inscriptions, one on the outer, the other on the inner edge of the arch (figs. 1-2). They have commonly been understood as belonging to the same period; however, there can be observed some palaeographical differences between them, which most certainly deserve further consideration. Both inscriptions quote the Bible, more precisely, the Book of Prophet Amos and the Psalter referring to the concept of a building created for God and by God.
The Epigraphy of Hagia Eirene

I. The Mosaic Inscriptions in the Main Apse

Fig. 1 St Eirene, the Conch of the Main Apse (© Brad Hostetler)

Fig. 2 St Eirene, the Conch of the Main Apse (Drawing by George 1912, fig. 17)
I.1 The Outer Inscription Surrounding the Conch of the Main Apse

Editions: Van Millingen 1912, 94-96; George 1912, 48-50, pl. 17; Ebersolt – Thiers 1913, 68; Biblia epigraphica, 507. Also, Grabar 1957, 153 fig. 88; Mango 1951, 60, IV; Taddei 2011, 887.

A. Text extant today: reading from a picture by Brad Hostetler, published on Flickr on May 2018. Grey letters mark the painted sections (19th-century restoration), black letters mark the original mosaic layer:

Ο ΟΙΚΟΔΟΜωΝ ΕΙ[ -c.2- ]ΟΙΚΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΑΒΑسين ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΕΠΑΓΓΕΛΙΑΝ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟς ΕΥ ΗΜΑΣ ΧΑΝΕΙΚΑΜΕΝ ΕΙC ΤΟ ΘΝΟΜΑ ΑΥΤΟΥ

B. Reading from the images previously published (Van Millingen 1912; George 1912) Grey letters mark the painted sections (19th-century restoration), black letters mark the original mosaic layer:

Ο ΟΙΚΟΔΟΜωΝ ΕΙC ΤΟΝ ΟΙΚΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΑΒΑسين ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΕΠΑΓΓΕΛΙΑΝ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟς ΕΥ ΗΜΑΣ ΧΑΝΕΙΚΑΜΕΝ ΕΙC ΤΟ ΘΝΟΜΑ ΑΥΤΟΥ

c. Transcription:

ὁ οἰκοδομῶν εἰς τὸν οἶκον σοῦ καὶ ἀνάβασιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ ἀγίου πνεύματος εὑ ήμᾶς ἤλπι εἴσαμεν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

Painted: ΗΑΝ; θ.

d. Bible quotation(s).

Judging by the surviving mosaic inscription, the original text (badly restored) quotes Amos 9,6 (the quoted passages are given in bold):

ὁ οἰκοδομῶν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνάβασιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς θεμελίων, ὁ προσκαλούμενος τὸ ὕδωρ τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ ἐκχέων αὐτὸ ἐπὶ πρόσωπον τῆς γῆς κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ ὄνομα αὐτῶ.

('he builds his lofty palace in the heavens and sets its foundation on the earth; he calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out over the face of the land— the Lord is his name': English translation from NIV)

In addition to the quotation of Am 9, 6, George (1912, 50) suggests a paraphrase of Ps 32, 21 as a source: ὅτι ἐν αὐτῶ εὐφρανθῆσεται ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν, καὶ ἐν τῷ ὄνομα τῷ ἀγίῳ αὐτοῦ ἠλπίσαμεν ('For in him our heart shall rejoice: and in his holy name we have trusted').

Mango 1951, 60 agrees with George and follows Van Millingen 1912, proposing also a possible allusion to Is 26, 8: ἡ γὰρ ὀδὸς κυρίου κρίσις ἠλπίσαμεν ἐπὶ τῷ ὄνοματί σου καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ μνήμῃ ('For the way of the Lord is judgement: we have hoped in thy name, and on the remembrance of thee').

E. the transcription of the original inscription (where I underlined the lost letters that since the restoration are replaced by the painted letters: ‘... manifestly the work of a restorer who has disregarded the grammatical construction and obscured the meaning of the inscription’ (George, 1912).

ὁ οἰκοδομῶν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν τὴν ἀνάβασιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς θεμελίων, κ(ύριο)ς ὁ θεὸς παντοκράτωρ ὄνομα αὐτῶ.
George (1912, 50) suggests that the text ends only with the word κύριος; but, reading κύριος ὁ θεὸς gives exactly the same length (of 105 letters) as the restored inscription surrounding the arch.

I, 2 The Inner Inscription Surrounding the Conch of the Main Apse

Editions: Van Millingen 1912, 94-96; George 1912, 50-51, pl. 17; Ebersolt – Thiers 1913, p. 68; Biblia epigraphica, 506. Mentioned by Grabar 1957, 153 fig. 88; Mango 1951, 60, IV; Taddei 2011, 887.

a. Text extant today: reading from a picture by Brad Hostetler, published on Flickr on May 2018. Grey letters mark the painted sections (19th-century restoration), black letters mark the original mosaic layer:

+ΔΕΥΤ EIΚΟΜΕΘΑ ΕΝ ΤΟΙϹ ΑΓΑΘΟΙϹ ΤΟΥ ΟΙΚΟΥ ΟΥΥ ΑΓΙΟϹ Ο ΝΑΟϹ ΣΟΥ ΘΑΥΜΑϹΤΟϹ ΕΝ ΔΙΚΑΙΟϹΥΝΗ ΕΠΑΚΟΥϹΟΝ ΗΜΩΝ Ο ΘΕϹ Ο ΣΗΡ ΗΜΩΝ Η ΕΛΠΙϹ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΠΕΡΑΤΩΝ ΤΗϹ ΓΗϹ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΘΑΛΑϹϹΗ ΜΑΧΡΑ+

b. Reading from the images previously published (Van Millingen 1912; George 1912) Grey letters mark the painted sections (19th-century restoration), black letters mark the original mosaic layer; the solutions of abbreviations are in square brackets, according to George 1912):

ΔΕΥΤ EIΚΟΜΕΘΑ ΕΝ ΤΟΙϹ ΑΓΑΘΟΙϹ ΤΟΥ ΟΙΚΟΥ ΟΥΥ ΑΓΙΟϹ Ο ΝΑΟϹ ΣΟΥ ΘΑΥΜΑϹΤΟϹ ΕΝ ΔΙΚΑΙΟϹΥΝΗ ΕΠΑΚΟΥϹΟΝ ΗΜΩΝ Ο ΘΕϹ Ο ΣΗΡ ΗΜΩΝ Η ΕΛΠΙϹ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΠΕΡΑΤΩΝ ΤΗϹ ΓΗϹ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΘΑΛΑϹϹΗ ΜΑΧΡΑ[N]

c. Transcription:

Δεῦτε εἰσόμεθα ἐν τοῖς ἁγαθοῖς τοῦ οἴκου σου· ἄγιος ὁ ναὸς σου, θαυμαστός ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ. ἐπάκουσον ἡμῶν, ὁ θεὸς ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, ἡ ἐλπὶς πάντων τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς καὶ τῶν ἐν θαλάσσῃ μακράν

ΟΟΥ, mosaic.

d. Bible quotation(s).

Judging by the surviving mosaic inscription, the original text (badly restored) quotes Psalm 64, 4-5: μακάριος ὃν ἐξελέξω καὶ προσελάβου κατασκηνώσει ἐν ταῖς αὐλαῖς σου. πλησθησόμεθα ἐν τοῖς ἁγαθοῖς τοῦ οἴκου σου. ἄγιος ὁ ναὸς σου, θαυμαστός ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ. ἐπάκουσον ἡμῶν, ὁ θεὸς ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, ἡ ἐλπὶς πάντων τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐν θαλάσσῃ μακράν

('Blessed [is he] whom thou hast chosen and adopted; he shall dwell in thy courts; we shall be filled with the good things of thy house; thy temple is holy, wonderful in righteousness. Hearken to us, O God our Saviour; the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them [that are] on the sea afar off').

1in. The six painted letters ΔΕΥΤ EI at the beginning of the inscription are ‘a mistake of the restorer’ (Van Millingen 1912, p. 95), incorrectly replacing the six original letters ΠΑΗΣΘΟΗ(σόμεθα).

1ex. The possible final N at the end of the inscription could be also not considered, reading μακράν, as adjective of the dative θαλάσσῃ (but we have no testimonia of this variation).
E. the transcription of the original inscription (where I underlined the lost letters that since the restoration are replaced by the painted letters):

πλησθήσομεθα ἐν τοῖς ἁγαθοῖς τοῦ οἴκου σου· ἁγίος ὁ ναὸς σου, θαυμαστός ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ. ἐπάκουσον ἡμῶν, ὁ θ(e)ος ὁ σ(ωτ)ήρ ἡμῶν, ἡ ἐλπὶς πάντων τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς καὶ τῶν ἐν θαλάσσῃ μακρά(v).

II. Monograms on the capitals in the nave arcades

Here are the monograms on the capitals in the nave arcades, according to their sequence (as displayed by George 1912, 21, fig. 7):

According to George 1912, we have four types of monograms:

II. 1 (monograms 1, 3, 8)
ΙΟΥϹΤΙΝΙΑΝΟΥ
Ἰουστινιανοῦ

II. 2 (monograms 2, 7, 9)
ΘΕΟΔωΡΑ
Θεοδώρας

II. 3 (monograms 4, 6)
ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΟΥ
Αὐγούστου (Αὐγούστας?)

II. 4 (monograms 5, 10)
ΒΑϹΙΛΕωϹ
βασιλέως

George 1912, 21: ‘The evidence of these monograms fixes with certainty the period at which the capitals were made, but it must not be applied without caution to the whole of the structure of which they form a part, as the capitals may have been reset.’
Selected Bibliography


Appendix

Literary sources on the history of Hagia Eirene church (4th-8th centuries)

330-337.
Socrates Scholasticus, Historia ecclesiastica (around the year 425), I, 16.
Καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ πόλει, δύο μὲν οἰκοδομήσας ἐκκλησίας, μίαν ἐπωνόμησαν Εἰρήνην, ἔτέραν δὲ τὴν Ἀποστόλων ἐπώνυμον.
‘He built also in the same city two churches, one of which he named “Irene”, and the other “of The Apostles’

Theophanes, Chronographia, I, 24; Georgius Codinus (Patrologia Graeca 157, 457A: Ἑκατέρας δὲ ἐν ἑνὶ πρώτῳ ιερῷ ὁ Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ μέγας ἀνήγειρε τὴν ἁγίαν Εἰρήνην τὴν παλαιὰν…)

Cedrenus, Historiarum Compendium (Patrologia Graeca 121, 544A = Tartaglia, p. 502)

335.
Socrates, Historia ecclesiastica, I, 37.
(‘Alexander… Communicating his purpose to no one, he shut himself up alone in the church called Irene: there going up to the altar, and prostrating himself on the ground beneath the holy communion table, he poured forth his fervent prayers weeping.’

340.
Socrates, Historia ecclesiastica, II, 6.
Καὶ ἐν μὲν τῇ τῆς Εἰρήνης ἐπωνυμῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ ἐχομένῃ τῆς νῦν μεγάλης καὶ Σοφίας ὀνομαζομένης ἔχερται Παῦλος, ἐφ’ οὗ καὶ μᾶλλον ἡ τοῦ ἀπελθόντος ψῆφος ἐδόκει κρατεῖν·
‘Paul therefore was ordained bishop in the church called Irene, which is situated near the great church of Sophia.’

Life of Saint Paul of Constantinople in Photius, Bibliotheca, 257
Κρατεῖ δ’ οὖν ἡ τῶν ὀρθόδοξων ψήφως, καὶ χωριστονεῖται ὁ Παῦλος ἐπίσκοπος ἐν τῇ τῆς ἁγίας Εἰρήνης ἐπωνύμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἢν ἡ χρόνος ἀντιδιαστέλλων τῆς νέας ἐδώκε καλεῖσθαι παλαιάν.
Le suffrage des orthodoxes l’emporta et Paul fut élu évêque dans l’église de saint Irène, celle qu’avec le temps, pour la distinguer de la nouvelle église, on appela l’Ancienne’ (French translation in the edition of the Collection Byzantine, Budé, vol. 5, 8 [ed. Henry, R.] p. 9 [474b]).

Life of Saint Paul of Constantinople in Photius, Bibliotheca, 257

Εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τῆς ἁγίας Εἰρήνης τῆς ἀρχαίας καλουμένη ἤν Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ βασιλεύς εἰς πλάτος καὶ μέγεθος ἐκ βραχυτέρας ἀνήγειρεν.


Janin (1953, p. 108, footnote 7) writes that, according to this source, the church was enlarged not by Constantine, but by Constantius II. But, in the Greek text we read clearly Κωνσταντῖνος, not Κωνστάντιος. Maybe the mistake is caused by the Latin translation in Migne edition: probat omnia imperator, et perferri curat magna cum reverentia reliquias sancti Pauli confessoris: et episcopi quotquot aderant una cum Nectario, longe extra Chalcedonem obviam procedunt, multoque cantu et comitato suscipiunt, et per medium urbem corpus ferentes, collocarunt in ecclesia sanctae Irenes nomini antiqui, quam Constantius imperator in latitudinem et magnitudinem e parva excitavit, cui et Paulus aliquandio praeferuerat....

This same mistake we read also in the French translation in the edition by R. Henry in the Collection Byzantine, Budé, vol. 5, 8, part. p. 17, [477b]: “L’empereur vota en accord avec tous et il accompagna très respectueusement la dépuille mortelle de Paul le Confesseur. Et tous les évêques qui étaient là, avec Nectaire lui-même, allèrent à sa rencontre très loin de Chalcédoine; ils l’accueillèrent avec des chants et une très nombreuse escorte, ils portèrent son corps à travers la ville et allèrent le déposer dans l’église de saint Irène dite l’ancienne que Paul avait desservie quelque temps; l’empereur Constance l’avait agrandie en longueur et en largeur”.

381.
Vita S. Stephani iunioris (Patr. Gr. 100, 1144D = 44, 76 Auzépy):
: ... ἡ δεύτερα ἐν Κωνσταντινούπολει, ἐν τῷ ναῷ τῆς Ἁγίας Εἰρήνης...

“... the second [council] was in Constantinople, in the church of St. Eirene...”

Hagia Eirene is there mentioned as the official place the Ecumenical Council in 381.

427.
Synaxaristes, January 20 (about the return of the remains of St. John Chrysostome in Constantinople, under Theodosius II)

ἐφέρθη εἰς τὸν ναόν τῆς Ἁγίας Εἰρήνης καὶ ἐκεῖ ἐθηκαν τὸ ἁγιόν λείψανον ἐπάνω εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν σύνθρονον, καὶ ἐβόησαν ἁπάντες: Απόλαβε τὸν θρόνον σου, Ἅγιε.

“The saint reliquary was brought to the church of the saint Eirene and there it was placed upon the episcopal seat in the synthronon; all shouted: ‘O Saint, receive back your throne!’”
37

430ca.
*Notitia urbis Constantinopolitanae* (Ed. Seeck, p. 231; p. 235)
In the *regio II* an *ecclesia antiqua* was mentioned together with an *ecclesia magna* (respectively, Hagia Irene and Hagia Sophia). Another “Eirene” church (*Irenen*) was mentioned in the *regio VIII*.

532, February 16th, Nika riot
*Theophanes Confessor, Chronographia*
I, 181 (‘A large part of the city was burned, including the Great Church, St. Eirene, the hospice of Sampson, the Augustaion, the portico of the Basilica and the Bronze House of the palace’)
See also *Cedrenus, Historiarum Compendium* (Patrologia Graeca, 121, 705B = Tartaglia, p. 627).

534–548.
*Procopius, De aedificiis*
I, 2, 13: Ἐκκλησίας δὲ τῇ μεγάλῃ ὑμορον οὗσαν καὶ συγκαταφλεχθείσαν αὐτῆ πρότερον τὴν τῆς Εἰρήνης ἐπώνυμον Ἰουστινιανός βασιλεὺς ύπερμεγέθη ἐδείματο, ἵερῶν τῶν ἐν Βυζαντίῳ σχεδόν τι ἀπάντων, μετὰ γη τῆς Σοφίας τὸν νεόν, οὐδενὸς δεύτερον.
‘The church called after Eirenê, which was next to the Great Church and had been burned down together with it, the Emperor Justinian rebuilt on a large scale, so that it was scarcely second to any of the churches in Byzantium, save that of Sophia.’

535.
*Iustinianus, Novellae,*
III, 1: ... erat autem etiam venerabilis domus sanctae Irenae, quae sanctissimae maiori ecclesiae copulata est...
Hagia Eirene and Hagia Sophia are considered together as one sanctuary, identified with only one name: ἡ μεγάλη Ἔκκλησία, with its own clergy.

563–564.
*Theophanes (+ 817), Chronographia*
I 371: Τῷ δὲ Δεκεμβρίῳ μηνὶ γέγονεν ἐμπυρισμὸς μέγας, καὶ ἐπαύθη τελείως ὁ ἕνων τοῦ Σαμψών, καὶ τὰ ἐμπυρισθέν τοῦ Ῥούφου οἰκήματα καὶ τὸ μεσιαύλον τὸ πλησίον τῆς μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας, τὸ λεγόμενον Γαρσονοστάσιον, καὶ τὰ δύο ἁγιάτηρια τὰ πλησίον τῆς ἁγίας Ἔκκλησίας σὺν τῷ μεσιαύλῳ αὐτῆς, καὶ μέρος τοῦ νάρθεκα αὐτῆς.
“In December a great fire broke out, and the hospice of Sampson was completely gutted as too were the buildings in front of the quarter of Rufus and also the middle court, near the Great Church (the one called Garsonostasion) and the two monasteries near St Eirene, along with its middle court and part of its narthex”.

740, October 26th.
*Theophanes (+ 817), Chronographia*
I, 634: καὶ τῷ αὐτῷ ἔτει σεσαμός γέγονεν μέγας καὶ φοβερὸς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει μηνὶ Ὀκτωβρίῳ εἰκοστῇ ἐκτῇ, ἵνδυκτιώνι ἐννάτῃ, ἡμέρα τετάρτῃ, ὥρα ὑγδόη, καὶ ἐπτώθησαν
38

ἐκκλησίαι καὶ μοναστήρια, λαός τε πολύ τέθνηκε... καὶ ἐκράτησεν ὁσεισμὸς μῆνας δώδεκα.
26 ottobre 740, earthquake:
‘In the same year a violent and fearful earthquake occurred at Constantinople on 26 October, indiction 9, a Wednesday, in the 8th hour. Many churches and monasteries collapsed and many people died... The quakes continued for twelve months’ (translation by Mango and Scott [1997], The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor, 572 ad AM 6232 = AD 740)

Nicephorus Patriarcha, Breviarium historicum (PG 100, col. 965 = 63, 4-16 Mango):
Χρόνου δὲ μεταξὺ παρελθόντος σεισμὸς ἐνσκήπτει κατὰ τὸ Βυζάντιον, μεθ᾿ οὗ καὶ πόλεσιν ἕτεραις καὶ χώραις ἱεροῦς ἐπιφύεται. Καὶ ἡδὴ ἅλλους τε πολλὰς οἰκους καὶ ἱεροὺς ναοὺς καὶ στοάς ἀθρόον ἐπικαταβάλλει, ἐκ πρώτων βάθρων αὐτῶν ἔστιν οὓς τούτων ἀνάτρεψας, καὶ τὸν θεῖον νεών ὑπὸ τῆς ἁγίας Εἰρήνης ἐπώνυμον καλούσι κατέσεισεν, ὃς πλησιαίτατα τής μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας.
‘After a lapse of time an earthquake occurred at Byzantium and likewise shook violently other towns and regions. In addition to many other buildings, holy churches, and porticoes which it cause to fall down at once, some of them being overturned from their very foundations, it also threw down the sacred church which bears the name of St. Eirene and stands very close to the Great Church... The quakes continued for a whole year.’
(English text by Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople, ed. Mango C. [1990], Short History [= CFHB 13], Washington, 63, 4-16: St Eirene is mentioned as one of the churches destroyed by the earthquake).