

45<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Byzantine Studies Conference

# Abstracts of Papers

October 17-20, 2019  
University of Wisconsin-Madison



# Sponsored by:

UW Madison Anonymous Fund

Department of History

Department of Classics and Ancient Near East Studies

Department of Folklore and Comparative Literature

Program in Medieval Studies

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# 2019 BYZANTINE STUDIES CONFERENCE PROGRAM

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16<sup>TH</sup>

### 6:00 PM Mike Clover Memorial Lecture

**"The Contagion of the Gaze: A Persistent motif in Medieval Art and Modern Theory"**

**Professor Anthony Cutler, Penn State**

Department of Art History, Elvehjem Building

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17<sup>TH</sup>

### 3:00 PM, Russian Icons in the Chazen Museum of Art

The Chazen Museum of Art has a collection of approximately 40 Russian icons ranging in date from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The core of the collection (23 examples) was given to the university by Joseph Davies, who served as ambassador to the Soviet Union (1937-38). This informal workshop will introduce participants to the collection including works not on view in the main galleries and will discuss issues of iconography, authenticity and collecting.

### 4:30-8:00 PM, Conference Registration Begins

**The Chazen Museum of Art**

### 5:30-6:30 PM, Public Lecture, The Chazen Museum of Art

**"Re-Claiming The Original 'Degenerate Art': Disability, Alterity and Byzantine Studies."**

**Professor Elena Boeck, DePaul University, Department of the History of Art and Architecture**

*Mellon-Borghesi Workshop on Thinking Race: Migration, Representation, and Appropriation in the Middle Ages and Beyond.* Sponsored by the University of Wisconsin at Madison's Program in Medieval Studies, and the Center for the Humanities.

### 6:30-8:00 PM

**Conference Opening Reception, Chazen Museum of Art**

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## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18<sup>th</sup>

8:00 AM

Registration continues, Memorial Union, Outside of Tripp Commons

8:10-9:45 AM

### FRIDAY EARLY MORNING – Panel 1 A, B

<b>Panel 1A</b> <b>Location: Old Madison</b>  <b>Organized Panel.</b> <b>Gendered Subjectivities</b>  <b>Chair: Adam Goldwyn</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions  Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&A <b>Roland Betancourt. Queer/ing Desire in the Lives of Transgender Monks</b>  Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&A <b>Derek Krueger. The Homophobia of George the Monk</b>  Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&A <b>Erin Walsh. (Un)Holy Desire: The Foreign Woman in Romanos Melodos</b>	<b>Panel 1B</b> <b>Location: Beefeaters</b>  <b>Considerations about Death &amp; Burial Practices</b>  <b>Chair: Jeffrey Beneker</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions  Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&A <b>Maria Doerfler. Valens's heir, Basil's legacy: Contextualizing an early Byzantine Syriac funerary-sermon (BL Add MS 18,813)</b>  Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&A <b>Jonathan Zecher. Byzantine Anthologies and the Ordering of Death and Judgement</b>  Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&A <b>Fotini Kondyli. Dealing with "Special Dead": Death, Disease and Afterlife in Late Antique Thebes</b>
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9:45-10:00 AM BREAK

10:00-11:35 AM

### FRIDAY LATE MORNING – Panel 2 A, B

<b>Panel 2A</b> <b>Location: Old Madison</b>  <b>Organized Panel.</b> <b>Narrating Women: Life, Death, and the Rhetoric of Female Self-Fashioning.</b>  <b>Chair: Roland Betancourt</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions  Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&A	<b>Panel 2B</b> <b>Location: Beefeaters</b>  <b>Race, Identity and Inter-Marriage</b>  <b>Chair: Tia Kolbaba</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions  Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&A
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<p><b>Adam Goldwyn. Women's Voices at the Intersection of Romance and History, or That Time Niketas Choniates Saved a Woman from the Latins During the Sack of Constantinople</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Ana C. Núñez. Harmonizing opposites: Anna Komnene's use of rhetorical apologetic in the Alexiad</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Megan Moore. Elite Mediterranean Emotional Communities and the Romance of Erotic Grief</b></p>	<p><b>Thomas Dale. Representing Race in Medieval Venice</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Christopher Livanos. Mixed-Race Identity in the Epics of Digenes Akrites and Antara Ibn Shaddad</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Sophia Moesch. The Divorce of Lothar II and the Uncanonical Fourth Marriage of Leo VI: Secular and Religious Power under Carolingian and Macedonian Rule</b></p>
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**11:35 AM-1:00 PM  
LUNCH BREAK**

**11:35 AM-1:00 PM  
JAHARIS GRADUATE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP &  
LUNCHEON**

**Location: Council Room**

Complimentary Graduate Student Development Workshop and Lunch,  
Sponsored by the Mary Jaharis Center for Byzantine Art and Culture

1:00-2:30 PM  
FRIDAY EARLY AFTERNOON – Panel 3  
Location: Tripp Commons

BSANA-Sponsored Roundtable:  
“Byzantine Studies in North America: The Role of the Research Institutes and Foundations.”  
Organizer: Ben Anderson. Discussants: George Demacopoulos, Sharon Gerstel, Dimitri Gondicas, Young Kim, Dimitris Krallis, Brandie Ratliff, Anna Stavrakopoulou

2:30-2:45 PM BREAK

2:45-4:50 PM  
FRIDAY LATE AFTERNOON– Panel 4 A, B, C

<p><b>Panel 4A</b> <b>Location: Old Madison</b></p> <p><b>Imperial Rhetoric</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Lynn Jones</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Sviatoslav Dmitriev. Early Byzantine Ideologies and Identities in Two Panegyrics for Anastasius I</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Milena Repajić. Rhetoric and Republic: Konstantinos Doukas' Accession Speech</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Jeffrey Beneker. A Plutarchan Reading of Leo the Deacon</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Iskandar Bcheiry. Identifying a ninth-century Syriac recension of the Notitia Antiochena in the Oriental Institute Museum-Chicago</b></p>	<p><b>Panel 4B</b> <b>Location: Beefeaters</b></p> <p><b>Transmission: The Byzantine Empire and its Global Connections</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Betsy Williams</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Mikael Muehlbauer. Inventing Late Antiquity in Medieval Ethiopia</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Robert Olsen. Tang China between Byzantium and the Caliphate: Contacts between China, Byzantium, and the Caliphate in the 7th and 8th Centuries A.D.</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Jennifer Ball. The Materiality of Byzantine Silk in the West</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Cecily Hennessy. Constantinople and Winchester, Manuel II and Henry the Lion, the Lithos and the Lamentation</b></p>	<p><b>Panel 4C</b> <b>Location: Profile</b></p> <p><b>Text and Image</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Brad Hostetler</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Sean Leatherbury. The Lives of Artists in Late Antique Syria: Epigraphic Evidence from Houses, Churches, and Synagogues</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Ariel Fein. Monumental Messages of Salvation: The Arabic Inscription in the Martorana Dome</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Elisa Galardi. The David Casket: A Gift for the Byzantine Empress</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Courtney Tomaselli. The Audacity of Word and Image: Becoming Christ in the Psalter Vat. Gr. 1927</b></p>
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4:50-5:10 PM BREAK

Location:  
Inn Wisconsin Room

5:10-7:15 PM

FRIDAY EVENING– Panel 5 A, B

<p><b>Panel 5A</b> <b>Location:</b> Old Madison</p> <p><b>Organized Panel.</b> <b>A Discussion of Robert Ousterhout's</b> <b><i>Eastern Medieval Architecture</i> (OUP, 2019)</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Young Richard Kim</p> <p><b>Roundtable Participants:</b> Benjamin Anderson Christina Maranci Vasileios Marinis Ida Sinkevic</p> <p><b>Respondent:</b> Robert Ousterhout</p>	<p><b>Panel 5B</b> <b>Location:</b> Beefeaters</p> <p><b>Monks and Monastic Life</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Hannah Ewing</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Thomas Schweigert. A pictorial, non- canonical gospel harmony at Saint Sergius in Gaza? Visualizing Choricus of Gaza's Laudatio Marciani</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Alexander Titus. Ἐξω Παιδεία: Gregory Palamas' Triads As A Monastic Reading of Byzantine Humanism</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Felix Szabo. Inside the Library of an Eleventh-Century Eunuch Monastery</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Nikolas Hoel. To be Written Upon: The Odd Case of the Disfigurement of Theodore and Theophanes Graptoi</b></p>
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7:15-9:00 PM

FRIDAY EVENING RECEPTION  
Memorial Union, Tripp Commons

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19<sup>TH</sup>**  
 Memorial Union

8:00-10:35 AM  
**SATURDAY EARLY MORNING – Panel 6 A, B**

<p><b>Panel 6A</b>  <b>Location: Old Madison</b></p> <p><b>Art and Building in the Final Byzantine Centuries and the Modern Period</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Elena Boeck</b>        *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Rossitza Schroeder. Late Byzantine Monochrome Images</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Olga Yunak. The Unfinished Style of Frescos as Theology of Participation: the Case of the Transfiguration Church on Illina Street in Novgorod, Russia (1378)</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Mateusz Ferens. The Post-Byzantine Condition Anachronically Imagined</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Fani Gargova. A Theory of Byzantine Architecture by Louis Van Overstraeten (1818-1849)</b></p>	<p><b>Panel 6B</b>  <b>Location: Beefeaters</b></p> <p><b>Texts and their Audiences</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Byron McDougall</b>        *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Ugo Carlo Luigi Mondini. Attuning Rough Voices to the Hymns of God. John Mauropous, His People, His Audience</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>James Skedros. Memory and the Synaxarion of Constantinople</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Tiffany Van Winkoop. Master of Ceremonies? Ritual, Dialogue, and Political Agency in 1042</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A  <b>Luca Farina. Abū Ma‘šar in Byzantium. First Remarks on the Greek Version of al-Mudākarāt fī asrār al-nuġūm</b></p>
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**10:35-10:50 AM BREAK**  
 Location:  
 Inn Wisconsin Room

10:50 AM-12:55 PM  
SATURDAY LATE MORNING – Panel 7 A, B

<p><b>Panel 7A</b> <b>Location: Old Madison</b></p> <p><b>Political negotiations. Shifting borders</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Christian Raffensperger</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Marco Cristini. Wandering Popes: Papal Travels to Constantinople in the Sixth Century</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Alex Magnolia. Byzantines and Brides: Negotiating Romanness and Kinship across Frontiers</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Jonas Tai. Constantinopolitan Responses to the Byzantine Refugee Crisis of 1302 - 1307</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Joe Glynnias. The Black Mountain outside Antioch and Byzantine monasticism in the 11th century</b></p>	<p><b>Panel 7B</b> <b>Location: Beefeaters</b></p> <p><b>Vision, Salvation, and the Christian Identities</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Betsy Bolman</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Ravinder Binning. Katanyxis and the Making of Byzantine Art.</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Katherine Taronas. Animal Encounters in Early Christian Art: Visualizing Salvation through Juxtaposition.</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Elizabeth Zanghi. The Invisible Icon At El Nazar Kilise, a Tenth Century Church in Cappadocia</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Karin Krause. Surpassing the Acheiropoieta of Old: Meanings and Associations of Byzantium's Holy Tiles</b></p>
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12:55-2:15 PM  
**BSANA BUSINESS LUNCH, Location: Tripp Commons**

All conference attendees are warmly encouraged to register for and attend the BSANA Business Lunch.

2:15 AM-4:20 PM  
SATURDAY EARLY AFTERNOON – Panel 8 A, B

<p><b>Panel 8A</b> <b>Location: Old Madison</b></p> <p><b>Materiality and Meaning</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Jennifer Pruitt</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Evan Freeman. Intermaterial icons: ritual transformation of a Byzantine censer in the Metropolitan Museum</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Ozlem Eren. Icon Revetments as Iconostases in a Dynamic Sacred Space</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Jacqueline Mann. Turning Saints to Souvenirs: Reliquaries as Transformers in Early Byzantium</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Diliana Angelova. Carving and Story-Telling on Byzantine Caskets</b></p>	<p><b>Panel 8B</b> <b>Location: Beefeaters</b></p> <p><b>The Mary Jaharis Center for Byzantine Art and Culture Sponsored Panel. Byzantine Animal Studies: Texts, Contexts, Methodologies.</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Ana C. Núñez</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Stavros Lazaris. Animals in Byzantium, to comfort humans and their souls (exploited animals; animals for leisure; animals as symbols; animals as objects to be studied)</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Tristan Schmidt. The 'Leo-Pardos' and the enemy of double-descent-- Manuel I's hunts as political metaphors</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Florin Leonte. Communication and Public Justice: How Animals Talk in Late Byzantium</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Przemyslaw Marciniak. (Micro)history of Byzantine Insects (11th-12th centuries)</b></p>
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4:20-4:35 PM BREAK  
Location:  
Inn Wisconsin Room

4:35-6:40 PM  
SATURDAY EVENING – Panel 9 A, B, C

<p><b>Panel 9A</b> <b>Location: Old Madison</b></p> <p><b>Themes and Borrowings in Theology and Philosophy</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Christopher Livanos</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Matthew Neumann. Gregory Palamas and Augustine of Hippo's De Trinitate</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Aleksandar Jovanovic. Flirting with the Romans: Byzantine Popular Culture in the Romaic Ghazals of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi and Sultan Walad</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Alexandre Roberts. Greek and Arabic Grammar and Philosophy in Byzantine Antioch: Abdallah ibn al-Fadl al-Antaki's Notes on John of Thessaloniki's Encomium to St. Demetrios</b></p>	<p><b>Panel 9B</b> <b>Location: Beefeaters</b></p> <p><b>Architecture: Theories, Cities, Theologies</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Galina Tirnanic</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Justin Willson. On the Diagrammatic Aesthetic of Byzantine Art</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Gözde Demir. The Zenonopolis Church and Its Place in Early Byzantine Architecture</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Pelin Yoncaci-Arslan. Modelling the Possible: The Architecture of the Byzantine Urban Procession</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Erik Yingling. Reframing the Metamorphosis of Christ: Ecologies of Transformation at St. Catherine's Monastery</b></p>	<p><b>Panel 9C</b> <b>Location: Profile</b></p> <p><b>Crafting Identities: Resilience, Myth, and Religion</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Young Kim</b> *5 minutes for session opening and speaker intros/transitions</p> <p>Paper 1: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Tia Kolbaba. The Paulicians and the Myth of the "Medieval Manichee"</b></p> <p>Paper 2: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Adam Schor. Exploring religion when there is no "religion": Implications for and insights from Byzantine studies.</b></p> <p>Paper 3: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Cahit Mete Oguz. Identity and Social Resilience in the Twelfth-Century Byzantine Peasantry</b></p> <p>Paper 4: 20 minute paper, 10 minute Q&amp;A <b>Jovana Anđelković. Voices of Dissidence in Mid-Byzantine Letter Collections</b></p>
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Beginning 6:40 PM  
BSANA Governing Board – Short Saturday Meeting  
Location: Capitol View Room

Beginning 6:40 PM  
EVENING RECEPTION  
Memorial Union, Tripp Commons

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**SUNDAY, October 20<sup>th</sup>**

**8:00-9:30 AM**

**JAHARIS GRADUATE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP & BREAKFAST**

**Location: Inn Wisconsin**

Complimentary Graduate Student Development Workshop and Breakfast,  
Sponsored by the Mary Jaharis Center for Byzantine Art and Culture

## **Voices of Dissidence in Mid-Byzantine Letter Collections**

Jovana Anđelković (Simon Fraser University)

Close reading of Byzantine histories uncovers a world of symbolic, metaphorical and intertextual meanings, one in which ancient Greek or Roman heroes step in to perform various contemporary roles. More often than not, understanding of these multilayered literary systems depends on the reading of the text as a whole. Beyond an internal conceptual logic, every single history belongs to an external scheme, to a tradition that describes the Empire or the World from its beginnings. Letters, on the other hand, carry a sense of immediacy. Due to the nature of surviving manuscripts, we rarely know what the logic behind the collective efforts of one author was (if it was indeed his logic or effort that stimulated the process). That mostly prevents us from finding an internal reasoning that would “decode” the message of the creator. However, a tradition of letter collections persisted throughout Byzantine history and grew significantly from the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The very fact that there was a large enough audience for letter collections of certain officials, clerics and intellectuals even outside their immediate communities, seems rather intriguing. By tracing the thematic and textual regularities, this paper looks at 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century collections as a distinctive genre, one that functions as recognisable entity and relies on the systemic nature of a specific literary tradition.

A survey of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century letter collections that includes 50 authors (if all ancient canonical writers are factored in) reveals a very frequent peculiarity: the issue of exile. Even if it is not the case of an actual banishment from the community (for an example, Theodore Daphnopates was just “retired” from his function), an epistolary lamentation over some kind of political exclusion is very apparent in letter collections (Nicholas Mystikos, Leo Choirosphaktes, Leo of Synada, Ioannes Mauropous, etc.). These troubles were usually described in very similar, strongly emotional language. Overly passionate vocabulary, this paper would argue, is not an elegant topos that simply belongs to epistolary genre, but recognition of a larger Greco-Roman social practice that perceives those politically active individuals whose collections survived, as outspoken critics. Exile epistolary literature receives a new impetus from the late-republican and late antique periods. It has been argued (Whitmarsh, 2005) that it is a form used to articulate the relationship between self and polis in terms more appropriate for the world-empire of the Roman principate. After Vespasian and Domitian’s banishment of philosophers, exile became a certain attribute of the free-speaking thinker. Staying along these interpretative and societal lines, it seems relevant to ask why mid-Byzantine letter collections highlight the motif of exile in their author’s biographies and/or their epistolary testimonies. Finally, manuscript traditions seem to speak more about the need and wants of the audiences – since stories of one ambassador, administrator, or metropolitan’s hardships survive in multiple manuscripts far away from their home (Patmos, Athos, or in Slavic translations throughout the Balkans), it is therefore not just the author who worries about preserving his work.

## **Carving and Story-Telling on Byzantine Caskets**

Diliana Angelova (University of California, Berkeley)

Byzantine rosette caskets (boxes made of strips of bone and bone or ivory panels pinned to a wooden core) constitute the largest category of secular objects that have come down from Byzantium. In stark contrast to mainstream Byzantine art, the vast majority of the boxes (dated from the 9<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> century) dwells on irreverent and seemingly blasphemous scenes. The sides and lids of the boxes are populated with carvings of unruly Erotes, drunken soldiers with bare bottoms, pagan gods wrapped in languorous embraces, and hybrid monsters. Though recognizably pagan and overall executed following conventions of the classical artistic idiom, many figures and the logic guiding how they were assembled into larger scenes remains opaque. In eschewing Christian themes completely, in adopting imagery associated with paganism, and in resisting interpretation partly by being funny, the boxes present a riddle.

Are the images on Byzantine boxes with mythological scenes meaningful, or do they only appear to project meaning by copying well-known iconographic types? Were the pagan images meant to mock antiquity or to elicit laughter? Do the images form iconographic programs or are they haphazard assemblages of scenes? These questions, seemingly concerned with the iconography of a particular class of Byzantine objects, are bound to the larger question of Byzantium's relationship to classical culture, of which artistic expression forms one facet. Did the Byzantines understand classical art, cherish it, and continue it? Or, did they understand it poorly, ridicule it, and, apart from occasional revivals, reject it?

Many scholars have worked on these questions, considering them mostly from various iconographic viewpoints. Thanks to Anthony Cutler's pioneering work, the importance of production methods as key to understanding how to interpret the images was also recognized. Cutler proposed that the boxes were "mass-produced" from pre-carved "stock" of plaques and strips. In his view, the pagan images on Byzantine boxes therefore cannot be considered as forming premeditated iconographic programs; rather they are meaningful only with respect to "emotional tenor." In a relatively recent paper, Gudrun Bühl challenged Cutler's thesis in part by observing the greater tolerance the Byzantines had (as opposed to the current viewers') for irregular ("unregelmäßig"), asymmetrical design, in part by noting size differences between boxes that preclude stock production, and in part by creative solutions adopted to accommodate variety in the shape of the boxes.

This paper proposes a new model for the making of the boxes, especially with respect to the bone plaques and panels. It argues that the Byzantine artists carved each box individually in a process that commenced with attaching the uncarved but polished bone plaques and strips to the wooden core of the box by the means of bone pins. The carving occurred after the surface was completely covered. Support for this thesis comes from first-hand examination, high-resolution photographs, and computational photography, specifically Reflectance Transformation Imaging. The unity of production suggests that the imagery on each individual box advanced a coherent program. Several examples of unity in story-telling are considered.



## **Modelling the Possible: The Architecture of the Byzantine Urban Procession**

Pelin Yoncaci-Arslan (Middle East Technical University)

The Constantinopolitan urban procession is a common public performance that has been described or cited in many primary Byzantine sources. In literature, scholars have mostly utilized explanatory models from anthropology and investigated social implications of processions - not so much concentrating on the performative context of these urban events. Ritual in the ancient city, however, as stated by Joseph Rykwert, is not necessarily an ideological mask for technological or political rationality (J. Rykwert, *The idea of the town: The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World*, 1976). Rather, it both effects and reveals the coexistence of the everyday (pragmatic) city and the symbolic city. Thus, at the scale of the city, a ritual functions like a monument and performs, what Clifford Geertz identifies, an interpretative function (Clifford Geertz, *Local knowledge: Further essays in Interpretive Anthropology*, 1983). The spectacular ritual procession, then, constitutes a reconstructive, ephemeral mnemonic instrument in the urban landscape.

To highlight potential Byzantine “mnemonic instruments” regularly staged and rigorously choreographed within city spaces, this paper searches for the architecture of the urban procession based on the analysis of a collection of chronologically organized Byzantine urban ceremonies in Constantinople. Some of these processions were performed in public streets and imperial fora; others around private spheres like palaces and chapels. Some were meant to legitimate political power; others to manifest the presence and the dwelling of the Theotokos on earth. Some derived their power through repetition, others by overwhelming spectators. Beyond such differences, however, all Constantinopolitan urban processions displayed certain common features. Each was three dimensional and sequential, occurred over a period of time and in a series of places. Each presented “a visual list” summarizing the particular content. Different locales where the events occurred were usually suggested by a path with fixed nodal points and by the crowd shifting from one to another as the sequence evolved. Thus, movement and sequence became the first set of constituent elements of the architecture of the procession. Other basic elements were the performer's body and a relationship between the performer(s) and the audience, usually manifested in or reflected upon a permanent architectural artifact during or after the procession. Building upon an experiential and experimental approach utilizing 3D visualization techniques, the case studies discuss questions like: what could be the possible media with which to read the architecture of the Byzantine urban processions? Do urban processions in any way contribute to the signification and the subsequent reception of any permanent “architectural trace”?

## **The Lives of Byzantine Silks in the West**

Jennifer L. Ball (City University of NY)

A majority of Byzantine silks that survive today in church treasuries and museum collections in Western Europe do so thanks to the medieval practice of using these precious textiles to wrap relics and shroud saints, and also elites, such as bishops and kings. The paths these silks took from Byzantium to, say, Charlemagne's tomb, like the famous Elephant silk tapestry used to shroud him in the eleventh century, is usually discussed in high-level diplomatic terms: These silks are viewed as examples of Byzantine imperial largesse bestowed upon the courts of the West, symbolizing Byzantine dominance of the lucrative silk Industry. This paper seeks to examine assumptions made about Byzantine silk gifts.

The presumption that silks only made their way west via imperial gift stems from an interpretation of the regulations in the *Book of the Prefect* and the oft-cited story of the confiscation of silk contraband from Liutprand of Cremona as he left Constantinople. Based on these texts, it is said that it was illegal to sell Byzantine silks outside of the empire, but these likely do not refer to *all* silks, but only specific ones, such as those dyed with murex purple.

While there is no doubt of "silken diplomacy" as Anna Muthesius has envisioned, there is textual evidence of a market economy of luxury silks in the West. Thinking of these silks only in terms of imperial gift, furthermore, imagines them only from the perspective of the giver and has left unexplored the question of why the recipients considered silks appropriate for burials. Silks were very expensive and, in Western Europe, relatively hard to come by, so using large, multi-colored silks, especially imperial ones, as shrouds needs further explanation.

I look to the much earlier custom of wrapping relics in silks, a practice which begins in the fourth century, and connect it to wrapping the holy dead in silk shrouds, a practice which eventually extends to the burial of elites. An examination of relic wrapping reveals unique qualities of the silk fiber which warranted its use for the sacral habits of carrying, storing and venerating relics. Touch, or rather protection from it, was a primary reason for the use of silk to wrap relics. Silk as a protector and conduit of the holy extended to saints' burials, which were given new silk shrouds whenever their tombs were opened. St. Siviard interred in France in the seventh century was shrouded in two Byzantine silks, for example, one from the tenth and another from the twelfth century. Presumably his tomb was opened at least once, perhaps twice, when the later silks were added.

This paper probes the lives of Byzantine silks, seeking to flesh out the avenues of transport westward, and their eventual use in burials. These practices ensured the survival of many silks and helps us to understand their reception as not only focused on Byzantine luxury but also its material importance in ritual.

**Identifying a ninth-century Syriac recension of the *Notitia Antiochena* in the Oriental  
Institute Museum-Chicago**

Iskandar Bcheiry (Lutheran School of Theology)

*The Notitia Antiochena* is a list of episcopal sees of the patriarchate of Antioch that was put together in Greek in 570 A.D., by Anastasios I, the patriarch of Antioch (561–571 and 593–599) but is known only from later testimonies in Greek, Armenian and Syriac. *The Notitia Antiochena*, has attracted much attention since its first edition by Athanasius Papadopoulos-Kerameus (1894). S. Vailhé then dedicated a study of this document and made the first attempt to restore the original form of the document. Additional recensions were published by H. Gelzer (1892); G. Parthey, (1866), F. Nau, (1909), and Ignazio Efrem II Rahmani, (1920). The original Greek document has not survived, but it was restored by Ernst Honigsmann (1925) with the help of all the surviving later recensions, including one Syriac recension published by Efrem Rahmani (1920). Arthur Vööbus in his *The Synodicon in the West Syrian tradition* published another Syriac recension found in a manuscript dated to the early thirteenth century (1976). The recensions of what is published up till today of *Notitia Antiochena* are found in manuscripts copied after the twelfth century.

During my work of cataloging Syriac manuscripts in the Oriental Institute Museum-Chicago, I identified a parchment leaf written in elegant Syriac script from the middle of the ninth century which contains a detailed list of episcopal sees of the patriarchate of Antioch (*Notitia Antiochena*). This is the oldest unknown recension up to day of the original Greek document of *The Notitia Antiochena* which is survived in Syriac translation faithfully transliterated from the Greek. My presentation for this conference sheds light on this unpublished historical document, its uniqueness, and its importance in the context of Byzantine-Syriac history in Syria and East Anatolia at the end of late antiquity and early period of Islam.

## A Plutarchan Reading of Leo the Deacon

Jeffrey Beneker (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Leo the Deacon organized his history of the years 959-976 around the reigns of two emperors, Nikephoros Phokas and John Tzimiskes. His focus on individuals as an organizing principle connects him to a historiographical trend of the tenth century, when authors showed a special interest in narrating historical events so as to highlight the actions and character of the emperor (Scott 1981; Markopoulos 2003, 2009). This new style of historical biography replaces the traditional chronological approach, though the exact reasons for the change and where the authors found their techniques remain unexplained. Markopoulos (2009, p. 699) suggests that “we would do well to consider ... the influence of Antiquity, and writers such as Xenophon and Plutarch.”

In this paper, I take up Markopoulos’ suggestion by reading Leo’s history against Plutarch’s *Parallel Lives*. I show that in both form and content, the serial histories of Nikephoros and John are in fact quite similar to a book of parallel lives. I am not claiming that Leo is deliberately imitating Plutarch. I show, however, that in attempting to solve the same problems (e.g., how to combine the careers of two leaders in a single work; how to demonstrate their character by narrating historical events), both authors made many of the same choices. This suggests either a direct or indirect Plutarchan influence. More speculatively, I argue that Leo may actually have taken the *Parallel Lives* as his model. I believe the evidence allows for this conclusion but does not prove it definitively.

There is, for example, close similarity in form and purpose. The structure of a Plutarchan book is flexible but also defined by several elements (Duff 2011), including a prologue in which Plutarch reflects on the purpose of writing. We find such a prologue in Leo, too, where he explains that history (ἱστορία) is useful in part because it “sets down some deeds for people strive after and emulate, and others to be rejected and avoided,” and he further hopes that people will not neglect useful examples while entangling themselves in harmful ones (1.1). Here Leo is very close to Plutarch’s stated purpose, which he expresses over several books. In the *Demetrius–Antony*, for instance, Plutarch claims that there is benefit in not leaving bad examples uninvestigated (ἀνιστορήτως), so that by knowing them his readers may become “more eager observers and imitators” of the good (*Demetr.* 1.6). In the *Aemilius–Timoleon*, he explains the process of emulation: “I try to use my investigation (ἱστορία) to give order to my life and to shape it according to the virtues of these men” (*Aem.* 1.1). Both authors, then, view their work as an investigation into the past with the aim instructing the reader in virtue and vice and providing examples to follow in their own lives.

Other points of similarity include the transition between “lives,” the selection of material, and the use of internal *syncretism* to compare the main figures with their contemporaries to highlight character.

## **Queer/ing Desire in the *Lives* of Transgender Monks**

Roland Betancourt (University of California, Irvine)

One of the challenges in articulating the history of queer figures in Byzantium is the conflation between male effeminacy and female masculinity with same-gender eroticism and desire in both primary and secondary sources. In order to conceive of the wide spectrum of queer subjectivities in the premodern world we must first acknowledge that ancient and medieval authors often attack same-gender desire not as such, but through the notion of a person betraying their assigned gender identity. Intriguingly, some of the more unabashedly descriptive accounts of same-gender desire appear in the narratives of transgender monks – that is, figures who are assigned female at birth, but who live their lives as male monastics, passing as eunuchs. In these stories from the fifth to the ninth century, the monks' trans-male identities allow authors to unabashedly confront these figures as the recipients of both male and female sexual interest and desire.

In the story of Smaragdus, for example, the appearance of the trans monk into the monastery poses a threat to his brothers who are wrought with a same-gender desire for the young, beardless monk, who passes as a eunuch. The story here, however, does not marvel at what sort of man this monk could be that he might elicit the desire of his fellow brothers. Instead, the situation is handled calmly and with a clearly established plan: isolate the monk and limit his contact with others in a highly regulated environment. The challenges of youthful, beardless monks were a well-established challenge for monastic communities, intimated and explicitly recounted throughout monastic rules and narratives repeatedly.

In such instances of same-gender desire, it is femininity that is guilted as the object of attraction for their brethren. On the part of these authors, the monks are ostensibly not attracted to other men, but rather to a transcendent femininity. While there is a manifest desire for an intimacy between these brothers, the representation of this intimacy is purposely short-circuited by the ascription of its origin in the feminine features of the brother. The conceit here being that ultimately such intimacies are nevertheless rooted on a heterosexual impulse.

The complexity of sexual desire around gender-queer figures, like eunuchs and trans monks, embodies the need for us to take on a more nuanced and capacious language to articulate queer desire in the premodern world. Acknowledging and respecting trans men as men, it is necessary to contour a model of sexuality and subjectivity that is capacious enough to include trans men, eunuchs, and other gender- fluid figures. These shifts open new horizons for thinking about non-normative, queer forms of desiring and sexuality. The immediate goal here is to not exclude trans and non-binary figures from structures of intimacy and desire – or, even worse, to include them in these intimacies by denying their non- binary/trans gender identity. But, furthermore, this opens the possibility to think through the queerness of other sexualities (like demisexual, asexual, aromantic, and even antisexual subjectivities) as part of the umbrella term of queer sexuality and subjectivity.

## ***Katanyxis* and the Making of Byzantine Art**

Ravinder Binning (Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art)

*Katanyxis*, a piercing, shocking moment of guilt, is a penitential phenomenon integral to Byzantine spirituality. It is a personal practice of compunction involving the body and the memory, a prickling self-awareness of being implicated in sin. In order to avoid the future fires of Christ's punishment, the penitent must arouse a pain in the heart, and weep from guilt for sins committed in the body. These tears cleanse sinful impurity and re-orient the body on the path to salvation. The personal practice was essential to the Desert Fathers' early Christian spirituality, and subsequently, John Klimakos' (c. 579-659) sixth-century monastic treatise *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. While Byzantine monasticism set the precedent for this way of tears, *katanyxis* entered broader spiritual experience first through Romanos the Melodist's (c.490-556) sixth-century liturgical compositions. The tradition continued in the Lenten liturgies of the *Triodion*; the first-person, immersive poetics of these liturgies made *katanyxis* the object of ritual cultivation in the Middle Byzantine period. Recently, several scholars have examined the mediation of *katanyxis* by text and vocal participation. Less explored, however, is how the desire for *katanyxis* also fueled the production of sacred images, and even reflected Byzantine attitudes about the value of visual experience in the struggle for salvation.

The question becomes: how does one connect the penitential piercing of the heart with the piercing effect of certain images? A ninth-century icon of the Crucifixion from the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine in Sinai and a tenth-century ivory plaque showing the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste today in Berlin offer two case studies in the visual mediation of *katanyxis*. This paper does not analyze these works from an iconographic approach but rather, examines how their images orient the viewer in a fallen position. These forms of visual implication emerge through combinations of image and text or intense focalization on the suffering body. The paper accounts for these effects in certain texts from Byzantine Iconoclasm, and exposes how the mediation of *katanyxis* supported several Iconophile defenses of images. The findings suggest that the provocation of fear and intense bodily sensation was central both to eighth- and ninth-century Iconophile ambitions and the subsequent production of art in the Middle Byzantine period.

## **Wandering Popes: Papal Travels to Constantinople in the Sixth Century**

Marco Cristini (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Sailing to Byzantium was a hazardous but not unusual task for sixth century bishops of Rome. Three popes traveled to Constantinople in the space of twenty years: John I and Agapitus on behalf of the Ostrogothic kings, Vigilius of emperor Justinian. John I was sent to the East in order to convince Justin to end the persecution of the Arians, Agapitus had to discuss both the ongoing Gothic War and the accession of Anthimus to the Constantinople see, whereas Vigilius was summoned in order to deal with the Three-Chapter Controversy, not to mention Silverius, who was exiled by the emperor to Lycia ostensibly because of his anti-monophysite attitude.

Contemporary sources such as the *Liber Pontificalis* or Liberatus' *Breviarium* focus mainly on religious questions, which is understandable considering that they were written for a clerical audience. However, modern scholarship has also favored ecclesiastical and theological disputes over diplomacy and military issues, thereby neglecting the political background of these papal travels, which should be addressed in order to understand their chief purposes.

Pope John I left for Byzantium in the wake of the succession crisis which upset the Ostrogothic kingdom after the death of Eutharic, Theoderic's son-in-law: it is likely that the persecution of the Arians was a mere pretext, since John's main aim was to obtain Justin's recognition for the young Athalaric, Theoderic's grandchild and successor. Agapitus had to persuade the emperor to sign a peace treaty with Theodahad and Silverius was sent to Lycia more for fear that he and a few senators who were exiled together with him could betray Rome to the Goths than because of his theological ideas. The same is true for Vigilius, who remained in Sicily for many months in spite of Justinian's alleged urgency to meet him in order to settle the Three-Chapter Controversy.

Papal travels to the East between 525 and 545 indicate that political issues were at least as important as theological ones, if not more, when the court of Byzantium had to deal with the bishops of Rome. They also show that the symbolic relevance of the popes depended upon the balance of power between Ravenna and Constantinople, since both the Gothic sovereigns and the emperors needed the support of papal authority in order to substantiate their claims over Italy. Justinian's conquest of Rome was a setback for the pontiffs: previously persuasion and religious concessions were needed to secure their cooperation, thereafter sheer coercion sufficed.

## **Representing Race in Medieval Venice**

Thomas Dale (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Recent research on the art of medieval Venice (e.g. Deborah Howard ) has looked beyond well-known cultural and political connections with Byzantium to consider a range of visual allusions to the Islamic Middle East. Trade, pilgrimage and sacred history offer rationales for this Eastward turn and suggest a generally positive view of cultural hybridity, albeit one inflected with orientalist exoticism. Focusing on 13th-century mosaics in the atrium and former “Porta da Mar”, this paper explores how global culture becomes racialized. I draw on recent approaches advocated by Madeline Caviness and Gerry Heng, arguing that these narrative mosaics fashion medieval racist discourses at a time of heightened awareness of ethnic and religious difference.

I consider two key moments in the mosaic narratives of San Marco. At the original south, sea entrance of the basilica, turbaned, bearded men attempting to strike Saint Mark as he celebrates the Easter mass in Alexandria are anachronistically labelled “Saraceni.” In the adjacent scene the light-skinned Saracens are joined by a dark-skinned man who beats the prone figure of Mark as he is dragged through the streets. For medieval viewers, these figures portrayed the Islamic other of contemporaneous society, the opponents of the Christian crusaders recast as persecutors of Venice’s patron saint. Dark-skinned Nubians or Ethiopians identified the Saracens with the Plinian monstrous races of Africa on one hand, and the cursed descendants from Noah’s son Ham. This depiction of Muslim Egyptians draws on Byzantine conventions ranging from the Menologion of Basil II around 1000 to the Byzantine Octateuchs of the 12<sup>th</sup> century but conforms to explicitly racialized, European viewpoints.

Venice’s stance towards Jews within its own community emerges in the Abraham narrative. This dense narrative is notable for an emphasis not on skin colour but on the bodily marking of religious and racial difference through circumcision. The juxtaposition of Ishmael’s circumcision with the scene of the circumcision of “all men” heightens the distinction made between Christians and the other religious descendants of Abraham, Jews and Muslims who were equated as the non-Christian other through genital marking. Inscriptions framing the Abraham cycle reinforce a racialised discourse: prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel refer to the Jews as a rebellious people, while the inscription on the intrados of the northern arch confirms that Jews have been repudiated by God and the promise to Abraham transferred to the Gentiles.

The racialized treatment of Jews and Saracens in these thirteenth-century mosaics, I argue, comes at a time when Jews and Muslims had become both more prominent and more threatening in the Venetian Christian imaginary. Jewish money-lenders and merchants settled in Venice during the thirteenth century and came under increasing legal and social scrutiny. This new visibility of the Jews in the city, Venice’s enhanced trading presence in Alexandria, and its role in the Mediterranean slave trade may be seen as conditioning the negative reaction of their increasing presence viewed in the mosaic and their inscriptions.



## **The Zenonopolis Church and Its Place in Early Byzantine Architecture**

Gözde Demir (Yıldız Technical University)

Zenonopolis (today the village of Büyükkarapınar in the province of Karaman, Turkey), is located in ancient Isauria, and is known as the birthplace of Emperor Zeno who ruled the Byzantine Empire in two successive reigns (474-475 and 476-491). An inscribed marble slab was found in Zenonopolis at the beginning of the 20th century. The inscription, which was dated to the year 488, was later taken to Braniewo in Poland. The text of the inscription refers to a structure which was dedicated to St. Socrates. Various researchers have interpreted this architectural composition as a church which must have stood in Zenonopolis. The first archaeological survey of the ancient city, mainly with the purpose of finding inscriptions, was made by George Ewart Bean and Terence Bruce Mitford in 1964. These researchers did not mention the existence of a church or a mountain fortress, but only some rock-cut sarcophagi in their brief report, published in 1970. The area was overlooked by scholars until 2004, when it was visited by Turgut Saner. In an article detailing his initial observations, Saner argued that a relationship exists between the ruins of the structure that was found on the pasturage of the modern village and the content of the inscription. Saner argued that these ruins may be identified as an Early Byzantine church with three naves. Moreover, this church might be the Church of St. Socrates as it reflects some features specific to the 5th century. After brief visit and the publication of his initial findings, a small scale intensive survey was conducted at three different places of the ancient site in 2008-2009 by Saner. The necropolis area, a mountain fortress and the ruins of the church were documented and despite the poor preservation of the ruins, particularly of the church site, much data related to their architecture was compiled. Re-used ancient architectural pieces, which were found in houses in the modern village, were also examined in this study.

The aim of this paper is two-fold: Firstly, it is to date and reconstruct the church visually and its stone decorative pieces based on data from the Saner's survey, drawing comparisons with contemporary and similar 5th and 6th century churches located in Isauria and Rough Cilicia and their architectural components. The construction technique is crucial to understanding whether the church reflects the building features of the Early Byzantine period and the characteristics of the nearby geography. The second aim of the paper is to explore any contact between the church and the inscription. It is known that emperor Zeno invested in building activities of many churches in the eastern part of the empire. The evidence suggests the conclusion that Emperor Zeno and/or his brother supported building or restoration activities at their place of birth, just as they did in many places in Isauria and Cilicia in the 5th century.

## **Early Byzantine Ideologies and Identities in Two Panegyrics for Anastasius I**

Sviatoslav Dmitriev (Ball State University)

The two surviving panegyrics for Anastasius I (r. 491-518)—in Greek, by Procopius of Gaza (*ca.* 465-*ca.* 528), and in Latin, by Priscian of Caesarea (d. *ca.* 530)—are often put together in historical investigations, as important sources on his reign and early Byzantium in general, and in philological studies, as specimens of the same literary genre. The two panegyrics predictably reveal certain thematic overlapping, while their differences have been treated as individual attributes. The divergence between the two texts has much deeper roots, however. They differed not only in terms of their authors' religious and cultural views, but, more important, by projecting traditional tenets of Greek and Roman political philosophies, respectively.

The two panegyrics pursued the same aim of legitimizing and glorifying the ruler in vastly dissimilar ways. The Anastasius of Procopius obtained imperial rule through the unanimous vote of the people in accordance with his virtuousness, which took precedence over succession by inheritance, whereas the supreme power of Priscian's Anastasius was derived from above. The former view dated back to Plato's image of the ideal ruler as "animated law" (the expression Procopius used), which survived in Greek philosophical and rhetorical works. Priscian's rationalization reflected the conventional Roman perception of the divine origins of imperial power, which evolved into the idea that it came from the Christian god.

Different imperial ideologies encompassed different sets of imperial virtues: Procopius' emphasis on the ruler exemplifying virtue through personal conduct as the teacher of wisdom contrasts with Priscian's vision of the ideal emperor as a law-abiding magistrate who ruled in cooperation with the senate. Even when raising the same themes, Procopius and Priscian interpreted them in significantly different ways, like when they spoke of the emperor being "chosen," or discussed the role of the emperor in "war and peace," or developed his image as "father." Priscian's stance was corroborated by Corippus' panegyric, in Latin, for Justin II: both speeches conveyed the Roman view that went back to the early imperial period.

Divergent imperial ideologies reflected conflicting cultural identities in sixth-century Byzantium. While matching Anastasius up with many great personalities from the Greek past, Procopius avoided comparing him with Roman heroes, just like Priscian did not mention any Greek historical figure as worthy of being associated with Anastasius. Both Priscian and Corippus projected the Roman tradition of (favorably) comparing the virtues of the imperial addressees with those of their predecessors; this is lacking in Procopius' panegyric because the Greek perception of the virtuous ruler as "animated law" made any comparisons unnecessary. Procopius, accordingly, did not exclusively attribute Anastasius' rule to the Christian god, unlike Priscian.

When brought together and examined within a broader historical and theoretical context, the two panegyrics for Anastasius reveal the co-existence of two differing perceptions of early Byzantine imperial ideology and cultural identity, each tracing its origins into earlier centuries.

**Valens's heir, Basil's legacy: Contextualizing an early Byzantine Syriac funerary-sermon (BL Add MS 18,813).**

Maria E. Doerfler (Yale University)

One of the most famous panegyrics from late antiquity is Gregory of Nazianzus's commemoration of the recently deceased Basil of Caesarea. In recounting the departed friend's feats, Gregory recollects, *inter alia*, the influence Basil had enjoyed even over imperial matters. Some time in the early 370s C.E., Gregory reports, the Emperor Valens, with whom Basil had clashed over Trinitarian issues, had summoned the bishop to Constantinople, and had demanded his theological conformity; when Basil balked, Valens had prepared to exile him from his see. And yet, Gregory reports, the emperor's decree was divinely annulled: on the eve of Basil's departure, Valens's young son, Valentinian Galates, fell ill. Desperate for the recovery of his only heir, Valens appealed to Basil, resulting, as Gregory claims, in the boy's temporary recovery. In due course, the child nevertheless died – the consequence, Gregory suggests, of Valens's mingling "salt water with fresh water" by consulting Eunomian bishops alongside Basil.

Later Byzantine historians, from Theodoret onward, embraced the tale of the orthodox bishop's confrontation with the heretically-inclined emperor over the body of an imperial scion. Basil's Greek oeuvre, by contrast, remains wholly silent on the affair. Intriguingly, the same cannot be said for the bishop's Syriac legacy: a seventh-century manuscript (BL Add MS 18,813), the property of a certain Samuel bar Moses, thus contains, alongside other works by Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, and indeed Basil himself, a sermon "that the holy Mar Basil preached on the occasion of the burial of the king's son." Whether the child that had, in the sermon's depiction, entered into the bosom of Abraham was indeed Valentinian Galates is of course impossible to ascertain; and yet, within the context of Basil's ministry, it is this incident that most commends itself as an occasion for such a sermon – whether from Basil's own pen, or attributed to him by others familiar with the story of his confrontation. This paper charts the sermon against its historical, theological, and performative backdrop, considering it in the context of Byzantine funerary oratory and the later reaches of the Trinitarian controversy.

## Icon Revetments as Iconostases in a Dynamic Sacred Space

Özlem Eren (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

This study aims at reaching a deeper understanding of icon revetments in the Eastern Orthodox Church through the review of theological concepts such as visibility, presence and absence. Icon revetments have long been analyzed in terms of their practical function as protections to the material of the icon from the outside elements, i.e. to hide the icon. But instead, I argue that icon revetments have a deeper theological significance in the sense that they are analogous to iconostasis in the church and the cover of the Eucharistic host. In all of these cases, the aim of the act of covering is not to hide but to reveal the mystery of the divine. The symbol of veil is the key. Father Pavel Florensky pointed to this paradox of revealing through concealing when he wrote that iconostasis does not hide anything from the congregation, but on the contrary, it calls attention to the mysteries of the altar. The Iconostasis embodies the paradox of revelation and concealment of the two natures of Christ, that is the mystery of the Incarnation.

The method I apply to understanding the nature of Eastern Orthodox icons (hence, revetments) is as follows: Byzantine sacred space is an extension of the divine realm which is inclusive of the worshippers. The icon is an essential part of the liturgical space, therefore, a closer examination of the dynamic properties of the Byzantine sacred space also helps explain the place of the icon (and revetments) in this system. The iconostasis separates the sanctuary, where the mystery of *real presence* in the Eucharist takes place, from the ordinary space where the congregation stands. However, in the Post-Iconoclastic understanding, icons do not have divine presence in them. The participation of the beholder in the rituals and worship inside the church helps understand how Byzantines perceived icons.

In light of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian scholarship on reverse perspective, such as Pavel Florensky, Lev Zhegin and Boris Rauschenbach, but diverging from them, I argue that the depicted space inside the icon does not follow a systematic reversal of linear perspective rules; but rather, the icon space is understood as a dynamic space where the beholder can mentally enter into it and thus, *be present* in the divine realm. The revetment marks the point of mental entry into the divine realm. Alexei Lidov's introduction of *hierotopy* in the Byzantine studies allows further ground to be covered in other, less studied areas, such as icon revetments. A closer look at selected iconostases and revetments from Byzantine and Russian examples reveal the thematic and technical parallels, which in turn supports the underlying theological parallels.

In sum, I consider revetment as part of the icon, not as a barrier between the worshipper and the icon itself. My research contributes to the scholarship on the performative aspect of icons and the understanding of a dynamic sacred space in Byzantium.

**Abū Maʿšar in Byzantium.**  
**First Remarks on the Greek Version of *al-Muḏākarāt fī asrār al-nuḡūm***  
Luca Farina (University of Padova)

The fortune of the Greek version of the renowned work entitled *al-Muḏākarāt fī asrār al-nuḡūm* by Šāḏān has hitherto been largely ignored, merely being the subject of a single paper written by David E. Pingree in 2003. Through the analysis of ignored manuscripts — unknown or ignored by Pingree the present paper will be a first step to attempt a review of that article by shedding new light on the relations between the original Arabic text and its Byzantine version. This is an important case study because the proposed text was translated first from Arabic into Greek and then from Greek into Latin in times close to its production. Whereas both the Arabic and Greek versions are still unpublished and understudied — this work will be a first attempt to propose some preliminary studies of a new edition of the two of them —, the Latin version and its fortune have been studied by scholars such as L. Thorndike (1954) and G. Federici Vescovini (1998). The Greek text is part of the *Μυστήρια β τοῦ Απομάσσεω* and has been re-edited by Eleutherios Elis — a scholar close to the circle of Ioannes Abramios — who in 1388 copied one of the most important witnesses of the text: the BA, Ang. Gr. 29. The present paper aims at analysing the manuscript tradition of both Greek and Arabic versions, comparing the two texts on the basis of their structure and discussing the way it was translated from Arabic into Greek. The text is a dialogue between the greatest astrologer of the ninth-century Bagdād, Abū Maʿšar, and his pupil Šāḏān about all fields of astrology. The fact that it was translated and used in Byzantium at different times raises some questions regarding the links between Byzantium and the Islamicate world, particularly concerning scientific progresses, and the division between science and what is now referred to as *magic*. Overall, I aim to analyse the way *al-Muḏākarāt* was translated into Greek in Byzantium, most likely during the eleventh century and then re-used in the fourteenth century in the circle of Ioannes Abramios, an intellectual well versed in astrology nourished by interests towards scientific progression in the Islamicate world. I will then attempt to make some remarks about the widespread attention Byzantine intellectuals had towards scientific progression in the Islamicate world. Moreover, this case study allows for a re-evaluation of the — still widespread idea of Byzantium as a closed society by revealing its openness to external developments in the field of science and the fluidity of the conception of astronomy and astrology in late Byzantium.

## **Monumental Messages of Salvation: The Arabic Inscription in the Martorana Dome**

Ariel Fein (Yale University)

Encircling the celebrated domical mosaics of the twelfth-century Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio (Martorana) church of Palermo, Sicily, rests a painted Arabic inscription, all-but-forgotten in scholarship on the topic. The Arabic epigraph pairs passages from the Greek Orthodox liturgy, the *Epinikios* hymn and the Great Doxology. The texts' exuberant praise of the heavenly bodies matches the majestic imagery represented in the dome's shell and drum: the enthroned figure of Christ gazes downwards from the dome's apex, raising his hand in a gesture of speech as if to voice the Greek text inscribed in a framing band, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not be in darkness but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). Against the glittering gold mosaic background, Archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel encircle the throne, bowing towards Christ in gestures of praise and worship.

Since its discovery in 1871 and subsequent publication by pioneer of Siculo-Arabic studies Michele Amari in 1872, the content of the inscription has neither been reconsidered nor has its placement within the church been substantially addressed. The scholarly discussion of the church, led by Otto Demus (1950) and Ernst Kitzinger (1990), focused almost exclusively on the mosaic program and the relationship of the Martorana, the Grand Vizier George of Antioch's foundation, to Norman King Roger II's coeval Cappella Palatina. Even as Mark Hesslinger (2009) and Antonino Tranchina (2017) have turned their attention toward the Martorana's domical program, questions of word and image, and artistic reception remain open.

In attending to the powerful visual presence of both the Arabic and Greek epigraphy in the Martorana dome, this paper permits a new interpretation of the church's decorative scheme. I suggest that rather than an "ad hoc" solution imitating its royal counterpart, the combination of text and image in the Martorana's dome produced an original result, specific to the space it inhabited and its multiple interpretive communities. I posit that the Arabic domical inscription, precisely aligned with the dome's Greek text and mosaic imagery, inventively dramatizes salvation as an immersive spatial, aural, and affective experience. By integrating the Martorana's Arabic epigraphy into a discussion of the monument, this paper opens up questions about how multilingual texts operate as material artefacts in dialogue with each other and with their surroundings.

## **The Post-Byzantine Condition Anachronically Imagined**

Mateusz J. Ferens (University of Wisconsin, Madison)

This paper considers Byzantine and post-Byzantine sources in which a future post-Byzantine condition is anachronically imagined. These sources introduce narratives of future events to explain and give meaning to contemporaneous political and cultural challenges. I also argue that these narratives were a part of an active attempt to shape a distinct post-Byzantine identity. Thus, my argument contributes a new perspective on the transition of Byzantium into the post-Byzantine condition.

When the Cretan painter Georgios Klontzas wrote and illustrated his *Universal Chronography* (ca. 1590-92), he recorded not only past events but also the eschatological future of the world. In so doing, he imagined the future resolution of the post-Byzantine condition. His work was not anomalous. Works anticipating the fall of Constantinople and the city's eschatological role can be traced as far back as the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* and earlier. Therefore, the first premise that my paper proposes is that the post-Byzantine condition preempted the fall of Constantinople in imagined narratives. Such narratives frequently broke through into lived reality as they guided certain political and cultural activities of the Byzantines in their responses and attempts to control imagined futures. In these examples considered in my study, the post-Byzantine condition, even in an imagined state, provided the framework for significant political and cultural activity. In a twist that would see the historiographical phrase "*Byzance après Byzance*" become coupled with the addendum "*post-Byzance avant post-Byzance*," I posit that the post-Byzantine condition existed anachronistically alongside the Byzantine as a lived reality and cultural trajectory. Through works of Byzantine and post-Byzantine artists and writers, I investigate anachronic imaginations to better understand the significance of their work during a time of heightened political, social and cultural change.

On a broader level, this paper reconsiders the meaning of the term "post-Byzantine." I point to evidence that destabilizes the category which sees post-Byzantium as a chronological marker set at 1453. Instead, I present the post-Byzantine condition as a cultural trajectory that was distinct from and coexisted alongside the Byzantine. Most clearly visible at the periphery of the shrinking Byzantine Empire where territorial loss challenged the Hellenic, Romaic, and Orthodox Christian identities of local populations, narratives of an imagined post-Byzantine condition helped these populations secure a foothold into an otherwise unpredictable future that threatened their existence.

## Intermaterial icons: ritual transformation of a Byzantine censer in the Metropolitan Museum

Evan Freeman (Yale University)

This paper explores the transformation of Byzantine artworks in the context of ritual. This should not be confused with dynamic visual properties exhibited by objects such as metal relief icons when exposed to flickering candlelight or incense smoke. Rather, it posits “intermaterial icons” as a unique category of objects designed to be changed by their ritual interaction with distinct substances such as food, fire, or incense.

A cast copper alloy censer handle from Byzantium, today preserved in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, offers an example of this type of object. Dated to the thirteenth or fourteenth century, it displays a bust-length, relief image of the Virgin in an orans pose. The handle comes from a handheld *katzion* censer, of which examples survive from the Middle and Late Byzantine periods. References to *katzia* censers first appear in eleventh-century texts such as the *Diataxis* of Michael Attaleiates from March 1077. Depictions of *katzia* appear in Late Byzantine icons of the Dormition of the Theotokos, which has led scholars to speculate that *katzia* may have been used in funerary contexts. A fourteenth-century fresco of St. Stephen using a *katzion* in the Prothesis niche at the Church of St. Demetrios at Markov Monastery in the Republic of Macedonia suggests *katzia* may have been used in the Prothesis rite.

The placement of the Virgin orans on the Metropolitan *katzion* is suggestive. When the censer was used, the Virgin faced outward toward the people or objects being censured, implying that she was meant to be viewed by more than just the cleric holding the censer. Additionally, this depiction of the Virgin terminates at her midsection, just above the censer bowl (now lost) where the coal and incense would have been placed. This position of the censer bowl, coal, and incense corresponded with the implied position of the Virgin’s womb.

The addition of a coal and incense to this censer transformed an otherwise ordinary icon of the Virgin orans into an intermaterial icon of Christ’s incarnation. The line between mimesis and metaphor blurred as the censer at once represented the Virgin iconographically while the coal and incense evoked literary descriptions of the mystery of the Virgin birth. Comparisons between the Virgin’s pregnancy and the “burning bush,” an oven, and a censer were widespread in Byzantium. Notably, the eighth-century *Historia Ekklesiastike kai Mystike Theoria* by Patriarch Germanos I of Constantinople states: “The censer demonstrates the humanity of Christ, and the fire, His divinity” (Meyendorff, 78-79). The ninth-century Latin interpolation of this text elaborates: “The interior of the censer is understood as the [sanctified] womb of the [holy] virgin [and Theotokos] who bore the divine coal, Christ, in whom ‘the whole fullness of the deity dwells bodily (Colossians 2:9)’” (Meyendorff, 78-81). This intermaterial icon would have taken on particular significance in the Prothesis rite, which increasingly interpreted the preparation of the bread with the Virgin birth in the Middle and Late Byzantine periods.



## The David Casket: A Gift for the Byzantine Empress

Elisa Galardi (University of Pennsylvania)

The David casket is a small ivory chest richly carved with images and metrical inscriptions. While the casket's tenth-century date and Constantinopolitan provenance have generally been accepted in scholarship, the function of the object and the meaning of its decoration are far from settled. To date, all interpretations of the casket have been predicated on two assumptions, namely, that the decorative program aims at praising the emperor and that the epigraphic and figural components of the casket are only loosely related to each other. In this paper, I question these assumptions and offer an alternative, holistic interpretation centered on the figure of the empress. I argue that the object's intended recipient was the empress, not the emperor. Analyzing how the images and texts gracing the casket work in concert, I further propose that the scenes from the David cycle were meant to prefigure the life of the empress's new-born child.

The language of the two epigrams on the casket—which, to date, has not received the attention it deserves—is notable. The epithet *χριστευλόγητος*, applied to the imperial couple, shows affinities with acclamations for imperial weddings and epithalamia and highlights the casket's nuptial associations. Further, the description of the empress's body as *θησαυρὸς προτερημάτων ξένων* underscores the themes of fertility and progeny. Procreation was of central importance to every imperial marriage, since it strengthened the power and legitimacy of the ruling couple. The emphasis on fertility and progeny points to the empress as the intended recipient of the casket, which must have served as a matrimonial or, more likely, birth-related gift. As prescribed by the *De Ceremoniis*, eight days after a child's birth, the empress was showered with gifts in a formal ritual.

In light of these considerations, a different interpretation of the narrative cycle on the casket can be proposed, one that takes into account the empress's point of view. Textual sources, such as imperial acclamations and wishes for the newborn child from the *De Ceremoniis*, allow to see the figure of David as a paradigm not only for the emperor, but also for his male progeny. Contemporary evidence and a later, twelfth-century epigram composed for the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene provide further support for reading the David cycle on the casket as a proleptic vision of the life of the newborn prince. The interpretation of the casket as a gift commemorating the birth of an heir is further strengthened by the conspicuous placement of scenes related to childbearing and parenthood, otherwise uncommon in visual depictions of David's life.

Our accounts of Byzantine imperial art all too often assume a male, emperor-centered point of view, excluding or downplaying the element of gender dynamic in the visual articulation of power. Taking into account a female perspective allows to fully appreciate the visual and textual program of the David casket and envision how this object was meant to operate in its original context.

## **A Theory of Byzantine Architecture by Louis Van Overstraeten (1818-1849)**

Fani Gargova (University of Vienna)

In 1850, *Architectonographie des Temples Chrétiens*, a history of Christian architecture by Henri Désiré Louis Van Overstraeten, was published posthumously after his sudden death at age 31. In this uncompleted treatise, Van Overstraeten dedicates a considerable portion to Byzantine architecture, tracing its history and specificities, based on a three-part periodization divided: 1. from Jesus Christ until the reign of Justinian, 2. from Justinian until 1203, and 3. from 1203 until 1453. Even beyond the sections on Byzantine architecture, recurring references to Byzantine buildings reveal a deep interest and preference for Byzantine architecture in comparison to, for instance, Gothic or Renaissance buildings.

The relevance of Van Overstraeten's treatise derives from the author's direct translation of his theories into the architecture of Saint Mary's Royal Church in Brussels, Belgium. The church is one of the city's most prominent landmarks due to its location on top of a hill, the convergence of several main thoroughfares at its spot, and the conscious creation of visual axes in the urban design. Van Overstraeten deliberately chose to erect the church in the Byzantine style, which is confirmed by his fierce defense of the style against critique from government officials. However, this is a curious fact, since the appearance of the church could be rather described as an eclectic combination of the Romanesque and Gothic styles.

In this context, the architectural debate about the so-called *Rundbogenstil* is central, not only in its influence on 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture, but also in later scholarship's reception of the resulting style and its significance. Thus, based on the specific example of Van Overstraeten's treatise and structure, which is compared and contrasted with other contemporary examples, this paper argues that the Byzantine style in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century architectural theory was understood not solely in terms of the design of the façade or the inclusion of individual signature Byzantine elements, such as arches or domes. Rather, the specificity of the Byzantine style needs to be sought in considerations on the spatial volume and proportions of a structure.

## **The Black Mountain outside Antioch and Byzantine monasticism in the 11<sup>th</sup> century**

Joe Glynias (Princeton University)

In this paper, I shed light on a hitherto unexplored phenomenon that alters our picture of Middle Byzantine monasticism: the multilingual Chalcedonian monasticism on the Black Mountain. In 969, Antioch returned to Byzantine control as the capstone of their invasions of Syria. As the city and its walls had remained grand under Islamic rule, the Byzantines quickly invested in making the city their political and ecclesiastical center in the region once more. However, in the three centuries since the Islamic conquests Antioch had changed in an important way: the predominantly Melkite (i.e. Middle Eastern Greek Orthodox Christian) population had become Arabic-speaking. In the following century, Byzantine Antioch became the center for Melkite intellectual activity. The texts written and translated by Antiochene Melkites proved foundational to Christian Arabic literature. While the patriarchate was the center of Christian Arabic scholarship in the city, the nearby Black Mountain to the west of Antioch thrived as a monastic destination for Melkites and other Orthodox Christians. Just as the early Athonite monasteries were assuming a primary role in the western Orthodox monastic world, the numerous monasteries of the Black Mountain were performing a similar function in the east.

The Black Mountain was an inexorable part of the same monastic networks in which Constantinople and Athos were hubs. However, because (i) Greek was not the primary language used in these monasteries, and (ii) none of their libraries survived to the modern era, the extant evidence has remained uncollated. Thus, the Black Mountain has been overlooked in narratives of Byzantine monasticism. Through studying and contextualizing this information, we gain a greater understanding of Byzantine monasticism in this period.

The material discussed in this paper illustrates the prosperity of monastic life on the Black Mountain, the scholarly activity flourishing in a multitude of languages, and the vast networks that connected Black Mountain monks to monasteries inside and outside of the empire. The compiled letters of Nikon of the Black Mountain provide the basis for a cultural history of Antiochene monasticism. Other scholars at the mountain produced scores of extant but unedited translations from Greek into Arabic and Georgian that illustrate how this multilingual Byzantine atmosphere impacted non-Greek intellectual traditions. Informative colophons in manuscripts from the Black Mountain in Greek, Arabic, Syriac, and Georgian display the active scribal culture at these monasteries. In particular, the monastery of St. Symeon the Stylite the Younger stands out as an intellectual center where Chalcedonian scholars were working, translating, and producing manuscripts in Greek, Arabic, Syriac, Georgian, and Armenian. By shining light on this Byzantine monastic hub, where Greek was not the primary language of use, we see a different Byzantium than that viewed solely through places where Greek reigned supreme. Nevertheless, we see how Byzantine power promoted Greek texts and induced the translation of Greek Christian writings. Through this paper, I hope to establish a path for further studies of non-Greek Byzantine texts as normative Byzantine religious expressions.

## **Women's Voices at the Intersection of Romance and History, or that Time Niketas Choniates Saved a Woman from the Latins During the Sack of Constantinople**

Adam Goldwyn (North Dakota State University/University of Münster)

This paper examines the way women's lives and deaths are described in twelfth-century narratives of war, particularly in the fictional Komnenian novels and the nonfictional historiographical writing of Niketas Choniates. Like most Byzantine historiography, Niketas' account is centered around the small circle of powerful figures at the center of imperial high politics. And yet, in one remarkable narrative sequence during the 1204 Sack of Constantinople, Niketas' narrative shifts dramatically to focus on one otherwise unremarkable refugee family whose experience is substantially like the thousands of other casualties and refugees the reader encounters in the *Histories*. This makes sense, however, since that family was none other than Niketas' own. That is to say, Niketas uses a mode of impersonal objective narrativity to describe the events that happened to other people, and a subjective and personal mode to describe similar events when they happened to him. The duality of Niketas' positionality will be focused around a particular scene during his flight: when Niketas saved the life of one refugee girl who was about to be captured by the Latins, a moment that stands out when compared to all the other unnarrated women's lives Niketas never narrated.

Niketas' narrative scene-construction in this scene can best be understood when put in context not just of his named historiographical sources, such as Eustathios of Thessaloniki's *Capture of Thessaloniki*, written in the immediate aftermath of that city's 1186 sack, but also of fiction writing of the period. In narrating his own flight, Niketas adopted the affective rhetorical style of the Komnenian novels which, though fictional, prioritize the emotional experience of individual characters, and women in particular. In Theodore Prodromos' *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, for instance, the narrative begins with the conquest of Rhodes by a barbarian fleet, and the narrative is given over not to the sack of the city as a whole nor the (non-existent) political or geo-strategic consequences of the attack, but to the experiences of a young man and a young woman who are captured and sold into slavery during the attack. Indeed, much of the narrative itself is given over to the characters' first-person descriptions of their own experiences; thus Rhodanthe becomes variously a woman narrated about and the narrator of her own life.

The affective narrative strategies employed by Prodromos and the other novelists of the Komnenian period thus offer a rhetorical template that allowed Niketas to articulate the emotional experience of his own refugee flight and his saving of the refugee girl. This paper thus not only emphasizes the ways in which women's suffering is narrated, but also the destabilized boundary between fiction and nonfiction: from the perspective of a feminist narratology, the novels are just as true as history, in that they articulate the reality of a particular interior experience in a way that history cannot; history, too, becomes more fictional, since the historian too employs the novelist's strategies of artful narrative construction.

## **Constantinople and Winchester, Manuel II and Henry the Lion, the *Lithos* and the Lamentation**

Cecily Hennessy (Christie's Education, London)

This paper addresses the migration and influence of Byzantine iconography on art of the west in the twelfth century and, in particular, iconography which is influenced by current events in Constantinople. It discusses well-known paintings in the Holy Sepulchre Chapel in Winchester Cathedral, England, which, as exceptional survivals of the period, have been discussed at length, and their relation to Byzantine painting has been noted. However, this paper highlights previously unrecognised yet distinct links with developments in Byzantine iconography.

The twelfth-century wall paintings on the east wall of the Holy Sepulchre Chapel are in two registers. On the upper, is a Deposition scene and on the lower, a composite scene of the Marys at the Tomb, a Lamentation often referred to as an Entombment, and an Anastasis. This paper argues that in the painting of the Entombment/Lamentation, Christ is not being placed into the sarcophagus, which is some distance below, but rests on a red stone while his body is anointed for burial. This has not previously been noted.

The stone on which Christ's body was embalmed, known as the *lithos*, was brought from Ephesus to Constantinople by the emperor Manuel I (1143-80) in 1169-70. This revered relic was placed in the Chapel of our Lady of the Pharos and ten years later was moved to the Komnenian mausoleum at the Pantokrator monastery and Manuel was buried next to it. After this time the red stone itself, as has been demonstrated by Ioannis Spartharakis, is shown in Byzantine Lamentation scenes, with Christ laying on it. Since in the Winchester paintings, it appears that Christ is laying on a red stone, it is argued here that the presence of the *lithos* in Constantinople and its subsequent incorporation into the iconography of the Lamentation was reflected in the Lamentation in Winchester Cathedral.

This paper also suggests that the use of this iconography may be due to a western patron who had strong ties with Manuel I and who visited Constantinople in 1172, Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony (1142-80 d. 1195) and of Bavaria (1156-80). When in Constantinople, just two years after the arrival of the precious relic of the *lithos*, he was greeted warmly by Manuel and given many gifts on his way to and from Jerusalem. Henry was one of the most prolific patrons of his age, was married to Matilda, the daughter of Henry II, and spent time in Winchester in 1184 and again in 1188, the period to which these paintings are dated.

These findings are significant in correctly identifying the scene as one in which Christ's body is being anointed for burial and lamented over, in demonstrating the influence of current events on the development of byzantine iconography and the swift movement of that iconography, and in proposing an identification of the previously unknown patron of these important paintings.

**To be Written Upon:**  
**The Odd Case of the Disfigurement of Theodore and Theophanes *Graptoi***  
Nikolas O. Hoel (Northeastern Illinois University)

Buried within the *vita* of Michael the Synkellos, is the story of two holy brothers, Theodore and Theophanes. These two ninth-century Byzantine saints were disciples of Michael and traveled to Constantinople with him. They were also iconodules, and hence received the ill-fated attention of the iconoclast emperor Theophilus. According to the sources, the two men were questioned and tortured by the emperor. At a point of high drama, twelve iambic verses were etched into the forehead of each of the brothers. At that moment, the two became the *grптоi*, “those written upon.” They also became disfigured through the action of other humans and by the will of God. Scholars have questioned the true extent of the iconoclastic controversy, arguing that texts like the *Life of Michael the Synkellos* overstated the conflict for a polemic purpose. Yet, the two brothers were depicted as being disfigured.

Soon after the mutilation occurred, the controversy ended. If we believe that sources, Byzantium returned to normal and the veneration of icons resumed. Theodore died, partially as a result of his wounds and was acclaimed a martyr by iconodules throughout the empire. His brother, Theophanes, was appointed to the office of Metropolitan of the very important see of Nicaea. As a result, both of these saints achieved high status and great authority within the Church. This paper argues that authority was granted because of, and not despite of, their disfiguration and that their status changed as a result of their disability. What is strange about this authority is that it seems to contrast the commonly-held traditions in the empire. In Byzantium, the sources describe many occasions when people were forcibly deformed, either through blinding or the cutting off of their noses, to disqualify them from imperial office. A prime example of when the Empress Irene blinded her son and co-ruler, Constantine VI, so she could rule alone. Perfection of body seems to have been a requirement for authority; and yet, Theodore and Theophanes gained high levels of influence seemingly as a result of their deformity. Their case seems to be a complete inversion of theory and custom: disability is not cured but created as a sign of the miraculous and the deformed are not beheld as monstrous.

This paper begins by examining the odd case of Theodore and Theophanes through the lens of current theories of disability and monstrosity to better understand how in a society that prized the perfection of the body as a requirement for secular authority, that two monks could gain spiritual authority when disfigurement was forced upon them. This paper then explores how this specific episode highlights premodern view of the legibility of the body. These analyses will help to further enlighten modern views of disability in Middle Ages and in Byzantine to show that people in those societies could invert their associations with disability especially in the name of religion.

**Flirting with the Romans: Byzantine Popular Culture in the Romaic Ghazals of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi and Sultan Walad**  
Aleksandar Jovanović (Simon Fraser University)

Citizens of Ankyra, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, could still marvel at the ruins of the temple of Augustus and Roma that bore on its walls a decently preserved autobiography of the first emperor, which served as a constant reminder of their Roman past. Other than by such ancient landmarks, the inhabitants of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum were also constantly reminded of their Roman identity through a series of social mores and popular culture that they shared with the citizens of the Byzantine empire. For instance, places of Christian worship in the sultanate continued to record the passage of time by Byzantine imperial reigns. Paying attention to both physical landscapes and societal practices of the Christian Roman populace in the Sultanate of Rum allows us to rethink the ways in which we perceive the place of this now subaltern, albeit majority population, in Seljuk society.

In this paper, I focus primarily on the social landscape of Seljuk urban spaces by analyzing the Romaic, i.e. vernacular Greek-language, poetry of two major mystics of the greater Persianate world: Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi and his son, Sultan Walad. Examining the Romaic opus of these two non-Roman thinkers vis-à-vis their major Persian works allows us to explore Roman influences on cross-cultural relationships in thirteenth-century Seljuk Ikonion. I argue that specific works were composed in *rhomaika* because of their very Roman content that would not necessarily befit traditional Persianate ghazals which Rumi and Walad composed. The fact that the Romaic poems were in essence inspired by Roman popular culture and humour becomes even more discernible once compared with Byzantine literary production that flirts with popular Roman popular street culture.

I specifically examine the content and language of Ioannes Tzetzes' *Epilogue to the Theogony* vis-à-vis the Roman poems of Rumi and Walad. By offering a comparative analysis of both the content and lascivious language of the Romaic ghazals and Tzetzes' *Epilogue*, we are able to gaze into the world of Roman street culture and humour. Furthermore, on the examples of the two mystics, we see the ways in which Roman popular culture managed to leave a visible imprint on the non-Roman populace of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum.

## **The Paulicians and the Myth of the "Medieval Manichee"**

Tia Kolbaba (Rutgers University)

The Paulicians, a Christian sect that originated in the region of the upper Euphrates, migrated into the eastern Byzantine Empire in the middle of the sixth century. Small in number, they seem only rarely to have come to the attention of the ecclesiastical or imperial authorities until the middle of the ninth century when they established an independent state centered on Tephrike (modern Dvriği). From Tephrike, raiding parties of Paulicians ventured as far as Nikomedia, Nikaia, and Ephesos, which they sacked in 869/70. All of this brought more sustained attention from the authorities in Constantinople, and there were numerous attempts to subdue them. They were finally defeated by a Byzantine force in 878.

The Paulician heresy has traditionally been labeled as dualist or "Manichean" and the Paulicians identified as one link in the transmission of Manichean dualism from Persia in the fourth century to southern France in the thirteenth. This portrayal is based on an inadequate understanding of the methods used by early Christian and medieval heresiologists who invented "the medieval Manichee," fooling themselves and generations of later scholars into believing that a hidden tradition of metaphysical dualism was nurtured by heretical groups and spread by heretical missionaries from the Near East to the Languedoc.

The Paulicians are universally identified in Byzantine sources as heretics, and almost universally labeled "Manicheans." According to both Byzantine heresiologists and modern historians, they spread their "Manicheanism" from the Near East through the Balkans to southern Italy and eventually southern France. There are strong reasons to doubt, however, that the Paulicians were dualists or in fact influenced by Manicheanism in any way. Indeed an understanding of how heresiological texts were compiled and composed makes the "Manichean" accusations against the Paulicians incredible. The texts which accuse the Paulicians of dualism are derivative and composite, written not by observers of the Paulicians but by heresiologists doing research in a library. In contrast, the one eyewitness account of the Paulicians, which is hostile and polemical, nevertheless can adduce none of the usual evidence of dualism, such as extreme asceticism, repudiation of marriage and reproduction, or denial that Jesus Christ was truly human. The Paulicians rejected the Old Testament and were literalist readers of the New Testament. They rejected the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church, emphasized the spiritual meaning of the sacraments, and revered the apostle Paul above all other teachers, so that their leaders took the names of Paul's followers and wrote letters that imitated the letters of Paul. Their history gives us a glimpse of a unique Christian sect that occupied a liminal region between emperors and empires, usually beyond the effective reach of higher authorities. These challengers of Byzantine orthodoxy were products of their own times and places—not revivers or carriers of an ancient but ever-new Manichean heresy. Their case shows also the challenges of studying heresiological texts and the importance of recognizing their conventions from the early Christian period to the present.



**Dealing with “special dead”: death, disease and afterlife in Late Antique Thebes**  
Fontini Kondyli (University of Virginia)

During the excavations at the Ismenion Hill at Thebes, Greece undertaken by Bucknell University in collaboration with the Greek Ministry of Culture, a large Late Antique cemetery (5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> c.) was discovered outside the city walls. The excavations brought to light numerous burials, ranging from single to multiple ones, and mass graves that point to different co-existing burial practices as well as to the long use of the area as a cemetery. The burial goods found accompanying the deceased, such as ceramic vessels, coins and jewelry speak to the ways that early Christian communities cared for their dead, informed both by their religious beliefs and Roman law. The analysis of the human remains also revealed an extraordinary number of skeletons with severe diseases, mainly leprosy but also cancer and the plague. This cemetery is a rare find; while we know about leprosaria in big cities, such as Constantinople and Jerusalem, very little is known about such operations in smaller cities. Furthermore our knowledge is based primarily on textual sources since no such Late Antique site has been excavated in the Mediterranean.

The high percentage of leprosy offers a rare window to the living conditions, care and burial of diseased populations. In this paper I examine the type, distribution and meaning of burial goods and explore what they can reveal about Late Antique concepts pertaining to the body, disease and death. I draw comparisons with other contemporary cemeteries throughout the Eastern Mediterranean that housed a more typical population to unpack the meaning of “special dead” and understand if and how the deceased at the Thebes were treated differently in terms of mortuary practices.

The discovery of the cemetery offers new data on the topography and importance of Late Antique Thebes that allow us to reconsider and reconstruct the economic and socio-political conditions in the city at that time. It also poses new questions about the location and mode of operation of charitable foundations, such as hospital and leprosaria in Late Antiquity. It forces us to consider such operations and activities within a wider urban framework that considers the local topography and the pre-existing built environment, particularly the leprosarium’s relation to other places of prayer and healing, roads and water sources.

## Surpassing the *Acheiropoieta* of Old: Meanings and Associations of Byzantium's Holy Tiles

Karin Krause (The University of Chicago)

This paper examines the legends about the two portraits of Christ believed to have miraculously appeared without human intervention on ceramic tiles at Hierapolis and Edessa, respectively. These icons allegedly came into being when tiles were brought in contact with the *Mandylion of Edessa*, Christ's famous portrait "not made by hand" (*acheiropoietos*) on a textile fabric. The supernatural creation of both images on tiles is described in considerable detail in the *Narratio de Imagine Edessena* (c. 945), (allegedly) authored by the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus.

Unlike the *Mandylion* itself, its replicas on tiles have not attracted much scholarly attention. In this paper, I examine the *Narratio* along with other writings in order to illuminate meanings and associations of these objects in Byzantium that have hitherto been overlooked. I demonstrate that the circumstances of how the holy tiles came into being allude to prominent *acheiropoieta* of Judaism and ancient Greek paganism—the Mosaic tablets of stone and the statue of Athena Polias on the Athenian Acropolis. Byzantine sources leave no doubt that Christ's *acheiropoieta* surpassed in important ways their ancient predecessors associated with pagan polytheism and Judaism. The holy tiles, I argue, were of key significance for the Byzantines in terms of their claims to religious superiority and special divine protection for the empire.

The narrative of the creation of the first portrait of Christ on a tile, the *Keramos of Hierapolis*, reveals itself as inspired by ancient Jewish texts that offer exegesis of the Scriptural passages relating Jahwe's transmission of the Law to Moses. The second tile was discovered at Edessa in 544, when the *Mandylion* successfully warded off the Persian siege of Chosroes' troops. Elements in the narrative

allude to Pausanias' account of the *acheiropoietos* statue of Athena Polias on the Athenian Acropolis. Significantly, this pagan *palladium* failed to protect its city against another Persian attack, that of 480

B.C. The allusion to the statue of Athena obviously serves for contrast to underscore the efficacy of the *Mandylion* as a reliable *palladium*. Not only did the *Mandylion* successfully protect Edessa against its enemies, but on the occasion it also revealed another replica of itself on a tile.

While the subsequent history of the *Keramos of Edessa* is difficult to trace, it is known that the *Keramos of Hierapolis* was transferred to Constantinople in 967. There is evidence that after its arrival in the capital, the tile from Hierapolis along with the *Mandylion* served to visibly substantiate imperial ambitions of presenting Byzantium as New Israel. I argue that the material support of the *Mandylion*'s miraculous imprints ought also to be seen in this light, as it strongly points to both the Incarnation of Christ and the Gospel. After discussing the different associations of clay, I conclude that in the propaganda of the Byzantines as God's new chosen people not only material objects, but indeed also the objects' material, served to deliver the message.

## The Homophobia of George the Monk

Derek Krueger (UNC Greensboro)

The ninth-century *Chronicle* of George the Monk provides an important and neglected source for Byzantine attitudes toward male homoeroticism. George's homophobic rhetoric derives almost entirely from earlier sources. George's *Chronicle* affords an examination of how middle Byzantine authors manipulated and reorganized the legacy of late antique attitudes to same-sex desire and transmitted this synthesis to the middle Byzantine world.

After relating an episode in the reign of Justinian involving the emasculation of two bishops accused of pederasty, George departs from his narrative sequence to provide a lengthy excursus—ten pages in the modern edition—that fulminates against men who engage in sex with men, the rape of boys, and the erotic proclivities and gender failures of eunuchs. In George's treatment, although these categories maintain distinct vocabulary, their causes and consequences overlap. His assemblage of sources articulates but does not resolve tensions in his construction of male homoeroticism, which for him includes both sex between adult men and the corruption of youths. Even between adults, penetrated and penetrator are equally culpable in the feminization of the penetrated, thus combining ancient logics of sexual natures and roles for male and female with early Christian concerns with *arsenokoitia*. Moreover, it is as if both partners were involved in an act of castration.

As a genre, universal history strove to record what earlier authors had already established as truth. In that sense George intended both to be faithful to and expound upon his principle source, John Malalas's sixth-century *Chronicle*. When he deviates from or adds to the extant narrative tradition, we glimpse his special accent or particular concerns, even when the added material also comes from existing writings. He adds gruesome detail to Malalas's account of the bishops' punishment, including their public catheterization. He clearly regards the punishment as just. (Procopius criticized Justinian's motives in this episode.) George identifies the bishops' sin with the story of Sodom in Genesis 18 and Jesus' warning about Sodom and the Day of Judgment in Matthew 18:10. These references trigger the excursus, in which George draws from 1) a previously undescribed eclogue *Against Sodomites* derived from the works of John Chrysostom, and 2) a treatise against eunuchs attributed to Cyril of Alexandria. The final element is not found among Cyril's extant works and is not known or noted in previous Byzantine sources, although it reappears in the Suda under the entry for "Eunuchs and the Castrated."

Working from his sources, George provides nothing distinctive, but sought to rearticulate his conception of tradition. George did not strive to make logically coherent arguments. Instead he amalgamated a cross-section of extant expressions of opprobrium toward male same-sex activities, which he effectively transmitted as a package of invective to later readers both Byzantine and Slav, as manuscripts and versions demonstrate.

**Animals in Byzantium, to comfort humans and their souls (exploited animals;  
animals for leisure; animals as symbols; animals as objects to be studied)**  
Stavros Lazaris (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique)

Animals have recently become important as subjects of history as part of the overall “animal turn” which has developed within several academic disciplines. Much of this interest stems from two works (Singer 1975; Derrida 2006). While these were works of philosophy – the first ethics, the second epistemology –, the increased attention they have brought to animals has encouraged several academics within the humanities and social sciences (psychology, sociology, law, literary studies...) to re-evaluate the place of non-human animals within their research, studying them both in their interactions with humans and as worthy objects of enquiry in themselves. This trend has not left history untouched; while some significant work was carried out by Keith Thomas (Thomas 1983) and Robert Delort (Delort 1984) in the early 1980s, the last ten years have been particularly fruitful (Kalof 2007; Roche 2008; Baratray 2012; Campbell 2014). In addition to these publications, in 2013 the journal of the philosophy of history, *History and Theory*, devoted an entire issue to animals in history, while during the 2000s several conferences were devoted to the theme of animals in medieval and ancient history (*Man and Animal in Antiquity*, Rome, 2002; *Le médecin initié par l’animal*, Lyon, 2005), and at least another four in 2016.

In several of these studies, it was clearly established that the animal has its own story that deserves further attention. In my paper, through four perspectives: exploited animals; animals for leisure; animals as symbols; animals as objects to be studied I propose to present a survey dedicated to the Byzantine man and his relationship with animals, or rather to the relationship between animals and men in Byzantium, because it’s the animal’s point of view that can tell us about men and their perception through space and time.

**The Lives of Artists in Late Antique Syria:  
Epigraphic Evidence from Houses, Churches, and Synagogues**  
Sean Leatherbury (Bowling Green State University)

Hundreds of carved and mosaic inscriptions survive from the interiors of houses, churches, and synagogues built in greater Syria from the third through the seventh centuries A.D. While these texts have been mined for the raw information that they provide the contemporary archaeologist, historian, or art historian—including names of patrons and patron saints, and dates of completion—their mentions of artists, especially mosaicists, involved in the construction and decoration of buildings often has been overlooked. This paper extends the work done by Michael Donderer on the mosaicists of the Roman period (*Die Mosaizisten der Antike und ihre wirtschaftliche und soziale Stellung*, 1989) and utilizes this rich trove of epigraphic evidence to reconsider the place of these individuals in their communities.

After a brief survey of what the Greek and Syriac inscriptions can tell us about patrons—including their diverse social statuses, and the common practice of donation by subscription, i.e. donors paying for parts of a building like the fourth-century synagogue at Apamea—the paper focuses on the epigraphic traces of artists in the houses, churches, and synagogues of the region. Some artists, like Zosimos of Samosata, a mosaicist active at Zeugma (modern Gaziantep), “signed” their work, indicating at least a regional level of renown, as well as a degree of itinerancy. However, while traveling masters and their workshops were undoubtedly a feature of the landscape, other inscriptions indicate that artists were more deeply rooted in their localities, which agrees with the mentions in late antique homilies of artists who attended religious services. Based on the inclusion of artists’ names in dedications placed in prominent locations within churches especially, this paper suggests that artists were valued members of faith communities. Looking at the epigraphic evidence with new eyes, this paper argues for a reconsideration of the categories of ‘patron’ and ‘artist’, recovering important facets of the lives of late antique artists.

## **Communication and Public Justice: How Animals Talk in Late Byzantium**

Florin Leonte (Palacký University of Olomouc)

This paper explores how animals were constructed as agents of political negotiation as well as individual subjects in the literature of late Byzantium. During this period several texts that featured dialogues and debates between animals circulated widely at the Byzantine court. Among them, anonymous compositions like the Book of Birds and the Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds echoed the conflicts between various political factions vying for authority in Constantinople. However, these literary encounters between animals not only revealed historical information hidden under intricate references but they also held an underlying symbolic effect that pointed to the Byzantines' views about the animal world. In discussing such issues, I bring a literary approach to the late Byzantine writings of animal debates together with perspectives from ethology. This paper thus contributes to the study of the Byzantine attitudes towards animals and to the conceptualization of animals as parts of a view of court society that prized competition and ambition (φιλοτιμία).

My investigation proceeds from the assumption that in Byzantium the animal world was regarded as a large depository of signs that could yield an understanding of the divine order. As a result, representations of animals in a polemical environment often suggested their ethical engagement underlined by a didactic approach. This idea can be reinforced by the overview of the differences between the literary animal dialogues, on the one hand, and the late Byzantine polemical and satirical dialogues, on the other hand. Such a comparison, which considers the circulation of the ancient Platonic and Lucianic dialogic models, also allows us to better understand the specificity of the animal debates.

Another observation underlying the present analysis is that these texts had a strong taxonomic focus. The texts reflected the court τάξις in Byzantine Constantinople with its intricate structures and shifting allegiances. Animals were usually grouped into opposing factions characterized by their natural habits (e.g. herbivores vs carnivores). Doubtless, this systematization of types of animals reflected an aristocratic view of the court. There were animals that received more praise and were considered to be more prestigious than others. This situation clearly echoed the court hierarchy informed by kinship relations and ideas of responsibility.

Taking these observations into account, this paper further argues that the type of communication present in the dialogic texts of late Byzantium involving animals are different from those in other regular dialogues, a highly popular genre in late Byzantium. In addition, this paper demonstrates the late Byzantine dialogues like the Poulologos or the Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds also mark a shift from the representation of animals as objects to that of beings capable of subjective experience and of engagement in moral actions.

## Mixed-Race Identity in the Epics of Digenes Akrites and Antara Ibn Shaddad

Christopher Livanos (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

The heroes of the most popular Medieval Greek and Arabic epics were both characters of mixed-race ancestry. I argue that a comparative study of the *Epic of Antara* and *Digenes Akrites*, concentrating on the Grottaferrata manuscript, enhances our understanding both epics, especially regarding how the outsider/hero navigates communal identity. Both epics show mixed-race characters facing crises of identity that can only be overcome through the adoption of a religion that teaches the unity of humankind.

Digenes, the son of a Christian woman and an Arab emir who converts to Christianity to marry her, is fully accepted by the elites of Byzantine society. His society never rejects him, but rather he sees himself as unsuited to life at the center of Empire and therefore voluntarily removes himself to the far frontiers of the Byzantine world. In contrast, Antara, the son of an Ethiopian slave woman and a respected Arab warrior, and equally proud of both cultures, struggles to win acceptance in Arab society through military and poetic achievement. Antara bests his foes in combat as well as in poetic competition, sometimes during the same encounter. If language is the defining mark of Arab identity, it is a mark that the mixed-race hero only wins by proving a mastery of Arabic surpassing the greatest poets of his age.

Christianity is the defining mark of Roman identity in *Digenes*, although the Greek hero never has to defend his identity because it is never questioned. The epic extols Christian love as the hope for human unity and peace, but the Christian hero, paradoxically, lives in a constant state of warfare. *The Epic of Antara*, taking place a generation prior to the coming of Islam, shows a war-ravaged and decaying order barely held together by Antara, and the epic ends optimistically as Antara's daughter is converted by the prophet Muhammad and his descendants are recorded as heroes and martyrs of Islam. Many of these descendants of Antara are the progeny of his marriage to the Roman princess Maryam. Thus, *The Epic of Antara*, like *Digenes*, shows the combination of intermarriage and religious conversion as the formula to institute a more peaceful and stable social order.

While my paper concentrates on the outsider-as-hero motif, I also discuss scenes that suggest connections between the texts, such as instances of beast combat immediately following marriage, and depictions of the heroes' sexual violence and subsequent remorse. I conclude by contrasting *Digenes Akrites'* nostalgic vision of the glorious reign of Basil I with *The Epic of Antara's* vision of the pre-Islamic past, which celebrates pagan virtue while acknowledging its limitations and foreshadowing the need for Islam. Religion promises peace in both texts, but in *Digenes* the promise is unfulfilled, while *The Epic of Antara* ends with the promise beginning to come true.

## Byzantines and Brides: Negotiating Romanness and Kinship across Frontiers

Alex Magnolia (University of Minnesota)

Discussions of border-crossing and fretting about who is on which side of frontiers are not new to the twenty-first century. In the Middle Ages, as powerful kingdoms grew in Western Europe, authors in the Medieval Roman Empire began to think about how their state related to other polities, developing a vocabulary to place themselves at the top of a Christian hierarchy. Questions of performing gender, negotiating identity, and the politics of belonging are at the center of this essay. Marriage, used as a means of cementing political alliances through kinship, was both essential and often problematic in the Roman state, as women coming into Constantinople had to be civilized in the customs of the Romans, while brides leaving the empire were expected to retain their essential Romanness.

Fathers and male guardians transacted their daughters in the Middle Ages in transnational arrangements that saw diplomatic brides shunted across Europe. In using the term “transact,” I describe only how some women were used and viewed by men (and male authors) to cement alliances, not their lack of agency in the states and families they entered—many became powerful leaders in their own right. When faced with the growth of strong kingdoms in Western Europe and increasing contact between Franks, Germans, Italians, Bulgarians, and others, Roman emperors turned to exogamy as a means to cement alliances or ensure a shaky peace. This posed problems for some thinkers, who criticized the practice of elevating a barbarian to the same level as a *basileus*, and the word used, *sympentheroi*, or “co-sanguineous fathers in law,” emphasized the alliance through marriage, if not exactly by blood. While the men may have drawn up the alliance, the women connected it, and their stories and experiences—historical women like Theophano (10<sup>th</sup> century), Maria Lekapena, (10<sup>th</sup> century), Agnes-Anna (12<sup>th</sup> century), and fictional ones like the *Doukaina* in *Digenis Akritas*—are at the forefront of this study.

In a survey of diplomatic brides, kinship politics across frontiers, and the process of Medieval Romans policing their Roman identity, I deploy a range of sources from the tenth through twelfth centuries, notably Vatican Greek Codex 1851 (The *Eisiterioi*, as dubbed by Michael Jeffreys and Cecily Hilsdale), *Digenis Akritas*, and the imperial manuals of Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos. These sources allow both a textual reading of how lists of titles and ways of imagining foreigners contrasted with the staid majesty of Constantinople in the minds of Roman authors as well as a visual reading of the dramatic *Eisiterioi* illuminated manuscript, which shows a young bride’s transition from a meek foreign girl to a full-fledged *augousta*; her metamorphosis is cultural and physical, as she enters Constantinople and is changed into the regalia of the *despoina*. Given that, my work intersects issues of gender, identity, kinship and foreignness, and ways of imagining the other.



## Turning Saints to Souvenirs: Reliquaries as Transformers in Early Byzantium

Jackie Mann (Independent Scholar)

The small flasks that carried sanctified substances away from sites of holy pilgrimage in the fifth- sixth century AD Mediterranean are much collected, displayed in museums, and discussed in scholarly work- but what of the apparatus that created those holy substances? The oils and water that once filled these pilgrim flasks had supposedly been run over the relics of saints, thus creating souvenirs or *eulogia*: a blessing that had met with a holy person, place, or other object. This paper endeavors to connect living saints and their relics to *eulogia* by way of a certain type of reliquary vital to this process of transformation: the circulatory reliquary. While relics and *eulogia* have, independently and with each other, been popular subjects of study for many years, a more complete exploration of the roles that circulatory reliquaries played in the definition and creation of relics and *eulogia* fills a hole in the scholarly narrative of early Byzantine pilgrimage.

This paper begins by establishing that reliquaries were vital to the very definition and authentication of relics and their divine power via their containment in reliquaries. Bone and other materials would only be unidentifiable organic material without their containment and identification as relics by a reliquary. This paper continues by describing the process of *eulogia* creation via circulatory reliquaries by way of contemporary accounts and archaeological evidence. Reliquaries with a full or partial circulation system were often sarcophagus-shaped and incorporated one or more openings. Such circulatory systems allowed for liquids to be poured inside reliquaries, encountering the relics and thus becoming sanctified via physical contact, and later be retrieved or deposited for distribution to worshippers. Circulatory reliquaries allowed for the transfer of divine power via physical contact of substances intended for collection by pilgrims and other worshippers. Divine power was often conceptualized by Byzantines as having physical presence: soil for souvenir tokens was taken from sites of miracles, and in some circles, seeing an icon was equated with touching one. These roles of identification and transformation were made possible by the presence of circulatory reliquaries. Evidence for these more theoretical conclusions is based predominantly on contemporary accounts by pilgrims in addition to some physical evidence, including visual analysis of surviving examples of reliquaries.

I aim to suggest that circulatory reliquaries of the fifth-sixth centuries AD, thus far understudied, were a vital part of secondary relic creation and of early Byzantine pilgrimage practices more generally. This paper concludes with the proposition that early Byzantine circulatory reliquaries are often overlooked intermediaries that allowed Byzantine pilgrims to visualize divine power on Earth and transformed divine power into holy souvenirs.

## **(Micro)history of Byzantine Insects (11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries)**

Przemysław Marciniak (University of Silesia)

“The gnat, they say, is like the elephant, so I will argue that the flea is like the panther”, states Michael Psellos. His three pseudoscientific treatises on fleas, bedbugs, and lice are a curious testimony to Byzantine experiments with zoological and literary traditions (*Or.min.* 27- 29, Littlewood 1985: 94-115). They combine Aristotelian knowledge with the Lucianic tradition of writing paradoxical enkomia. Yet, they have not attracted much interest from students of Byzantine culture, most likely because they do not contribute to our understanding of Byzantine zoological knowledge.

The thirteenth book of the 10<sup>th</sup> century compilation *Geoponika* includes information about various insects (such as locusts, ants, and fleas) and advises how to exterminate them. Unfortunately, none of the almost fifty manuscripts of this text are illustrated, so there is no visual evidence (there are illustrations of insects in the much earlier Vind. Med. gr. I.) Yet, Byzantine literature offers a surprising selection of texts on insects – the three above-mentioned, unstudied, pseudoscientific treatises penned by Michael Psellos on fleas, bedbugs, and lice (for some preliminary remarks see Hawhee 2017: 101–108, for translation see Billerbeck & Zubler 2000: 118-32), poems on the spider and the ant by Christopher of Mytilene, and a psogos of a fly by Eugenios of Palermo. Human interaction with insects concerns two intertwined areas of interest: biophysical reality and “the abstract world of aesthetics, fantasy, and metaphysical speculation” (Egan 2017: 563). Byzantine writers often merged these two spheres to produce new meaning - a detailed description of an animal is used to convey a more symbolical meaning. This twofold yet complementary, approach to animals is especially visible in texts, which are located between the real and the imaginary as they include a detailed description of an animal, which, in turn is used to express a symbolic meaning. Christopher of Mytilene describes a spider in a very detailed way to ponder God’s might, while Eugenios’ description of a fly, a subversive take on Lucian’s paradoxical enkomion, is conducted to prove his participation in Greek *paideia*.

Therefore, my presentation studies the role, which the insect imagery played in the literary and cultural imagination of the Byzantines in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. I intend to show how the “insect discourse” was constructed, and what purposes it could serve.

**Marriage of Leo VI:  
Secular and Religious Power under Carolingian and Macedonian Rule**  
Sophia Moesch University of Oxford/ Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)

In *The Byzantine World* (2012) Stephenson cites Ullmann who expressed his concern to work towards an integration of Byzantium into Medieval History in 1972. Stephenson regrets that “nearly four decades later, the Byzantine World is still peripheral to the interests of [...] the Medieval World” (p. xxi). In this paper, I propose an intercultural comparison and examine what can be gleaned from Carolingian and Byzantine portrayals of state-Church relations about connections of thought and ideas between the West and East.

My recourse to the terms ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ refers to the two linguistic communities – the Latin West and the Greek East. The paper is based on the premise that there was a flourishing of intellectual activity after Charlemagne’s rule under the Carolingians and Basil I’s rule under the Macedonians. On both sides, political advisers were involved in legitimising power. Many of them were ecclesiastics; some were laymen. Their culture of advice, correspondence, and their engagement with ancient sources, are arguably representative of the intellectual elites who provided moral instruction. Doctrinal and legal questions, ranging from marriage to Church property, involved secular and ecclesiastical authorities under the Carolingians and Macedonians. The paper considers the divorce of King Lothar II and the fourth marriage of Emperor Leo VI as case studies for understanding the interplay between secular and religious power.

When the marriage of Lothar II with Theutberga remained childless, Lothar II wanted a divorce and approval for marrying his mistress. A dispute arose among secular and ecclesiastical leaders. The assumption was, as formulated in Archbishop Hincmar’s *De divortio Lotharii* (evaluating the separate legal responsibilities of the religious and secular powers), that moral failure on the part of the ruler implied that the Church intervened as the superior power. Considering the outcome of the dispute (Hincmar and Pope Nicholas I ordered Lothar II to return to Theutberga), the Church prevailed.

After Leo VI’s first three wives had died without providing an heir, his mistress bore him a son in 905. Leo VI wanted the child and mistress to be legitimated, and Patriarch Nicholas I (as evident in his correspondence and writings) agreed to baptize the child, on condition that he leaves the mistress. Nevertheless, Leo VI had a priest perform the marriage. While Nicholas I was looking for a formula by which Leo VI could be given dispensation according to Byzantine Church law, Leo VI requested a verdict from the other four patriarchates. This was a political decision: Leo VI believed that Nicholas I had once plotted against the throne. When the four patriarchates approved the marriage, Leo VI forced Nicholas I to abdicate in 907.

By examining the Carolingian and Macedonian uses of *dispensatio* and *οἰκονομία*, as well as *paenitentia* and *μετάνοια*, my paper asks what can be gleaned from such disputes about differences in state-Church relations and the composition of the intellectual elites under Carolingian and Macedonian rule.

**Attuning Rough Voices to the Hymns of God.  
John Mauropous, His People, His Audience**

Ugo Carlo Luigi Mondini (University of Milan)

With the noteworthy exception of Michael Psellos' poetical *corpus*, the literary works of the other two major Byzantine poets of eleventh century, John Mauropous and Christophoros Mitylenaios, are traditionally categorized into two different macrogenres: 'saecular' and 'ecclesiastical' poetry. Regarding the first, BERNARD 2014 has enhanced our knowledge of its contexts of production and fruition, without an extensive reflection about the numerous religious poems of both authors. Nevertheless, this demarcation stands on a dichotomy deeply rooted in Byzantine Studies, which should be reconsidered to reach a wider understanding of the historical relevance of Byzantine authors in the light of their production as a whole.

John Mauropous' *corpus* is a prime example of the complex interaction between author, styles, and audience. On the one hand, he recollected his own works written in a high literary style (dodecasyllabic poems, epistles, orations) into a single manuscript (MS Vat. gr. 676, see BIANCONI 2011) for a learned audience. On the other hand, as Michael Psellos testimonies (*Panegyric Oration* 17, 493-527 Dennis), Mauropous strived to enable common people to properly glorify God through hymns. Thus, people would get accustomed both to liturgical rhythmical modes and to the content of canons. This pedagogical and religious task perfectly suits his episcopal activity, and the large number of canons ascribed to Mauropous demonstrates that they played a major role in his literary production.

Although his canons were composed for public performance, Mauropous did not renounce to the same theological density which can be found in his religious epigrams in learned metre, above all in the ekphrastic poems on Great Feasts. In these poems, he raises the literary style and organizes the contents according to the ekphrastic *topoi*. However, these dodecasyllables display lexicon and images directly inspired to the corresponding canons used in the liturgy of each festivity. In fact, Mauropous was obviously acquainted with the traditional Greek liturgy because of his religious activity, but the importance of canons in his production is neither casual nor restricted to intertextual references. Mauropous' efforts towards 'saecular' and 'ecclesiastical' poetry are manifestly equivalent: their contents are similar; their style and lexicon are based on the same sources; the amount of writings in each genre is analogous.

As FOLLIERI 1964 explains, Mauropous' canons had been scattered throughout textual tradition and yet they are gathered in recognizable compact groups. This datum could reveal an original authorial organization of Mauropous' canons: in contrast to what happened to his learned literary works, this project didn't result in a manuscript, but it may have left traces in manuscripts. In any case, John Mauropous was indeed aware of the difference between 'learned' and 'ecclesiastical' styles, but he didn't favor one to the detriment of the other. His poetical *corpus* is the most interesting case study in eleventh-century Byzantine poetry and its comprehensive analysis provides access to Mauropous' literary workshop as well as a methodological *ratio* applicable to other contemporary *corpora*.

## **Elite Mediterranean Emotional Communities and the Romance of Erotic Grief**

Meagan Moore (University of Missouri)

In this paper, I explore how emotions function along and depend upon a spectrum of gendered performances in the elite culture figured in medieval Mediterranean romance. Specifically, I look at how all gendered positions participate in what I am calling an “erotics of grief,” a way of eroticizing the sacrifice integral to the functioning of elite, Mediterranean culture through narratives of heroism in a time of war and death. Despite traditional associations of women with hysteria and emotional excess, and despite men’s supposed emotional commitments to rage, eroticized grief writes the narrative of heroism that unifies and undergirds the emotional communities of the privileged elite. Reading with grief reveals commonalities among the emotional cultures of the medieval Mediterranean elite in ways that transcend both gender and nation, and I offer as examples readings of the Philomela legend, the Komnenian novels, and Old French romances. In this paper, and in the larger project from which it stems, I read with Georges Bataille and Judith Butler to query how an erotics of grief performed across a spectrum of gendered positions performs the fundamental narrative of elite community.

## **Inventing Late Antiquity in the architecture of Medieval Ethiopia**

Mikael Muehlbauer (Columbia University)

Following the collapse of the late antique empire of Aksum, northern Ethiopia entered a “dark age” period, wherein little is known of the region. However around the year 1000, a rump Post-Aksumite state commissioned a triad of centralized-cruciform churches in East Tigray, unparalleled in scale, morphology and use of barrel vaults. I argue that these rock-cut churches were built in a period where Fatimid investment in the Red Sea trade promoted a post-Aksumite chieftaincy which in turn provided economic and political stability in East Tigray. This also involved the sending of new ecclesiastical authorities from the Coptic Patriarchate, newly relocated to Fustat. These churches as such exhibit experimental forms in Ethiopian architecture, including spatial hierarchy based around a central module, and barrel vaulting: features which were not found in the region earlier. This paper locates these enigmatic buildings within broader historical citations and revivalism that occurred in the art and architecture of the Mediterranean, both Byzantine and Fatimid, produced around the year 1000. I propose that the radical plan and articulation the three churches embody is effectively a reinvention and localization of the aisled cruciform churches of late antiquity, one that based its articulation largely on classical Ethiopian construction styles but also concurrent Fatimid architectural developments. The decorative programs of the church that of low-relief geometric ornament, I propose, were repurposed from imported textiles made newly accessible with the development of Fatimid trade and newfound stability in Ethiopia.

**Gregory Palamas and Augustine of Hippo's *De Trinitate***  
Matthew Frederick Neumann (University of Chicago)

The reception of Augustine in the east has been a highly neglected topic in the academy, at least until recent times. Since the nineteenth century if not earlier, Augustine has been seen as hostile vis-à-vis the Orthodox tradition, with the common narrative being that Augustine, by “essentializing” the Trinity, reduced it to the divine essence and destroyed the personal distinctions among the persons of the Trinity. Such hostility has led to a great deal of skepticism concerning whether Augustine’s arguments could have been used by Gregory Palamas, one of the most prestigious theologians in the Orthodox tradition. Robert Sinkewicz, the translator of Palamas’ *150 Chapters*, argued that one should not read Augustine’s ideas into Palamas despite the apparent parallels, referring specifically to Augustine’s mental triads and the idea that the Holy Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son.

Despite Sinkewicz’s claim, the work of Reinhard Flogaus has demonstrably shown that Palamas’ *150 Chapters* (*Cap.*) made use of the bishop of Hippo, chiefly through Maximus Planoudes’ 1280 Greek translation of *De Trinitate* (*De Trin.*). This study compares Palamas’ *Cap.*, especially *Cap.* 34-37 and 125-35, with Augustine’s *De Trin.*, focusing on two major topics: the Holy Spirit as the love between the Father and the Son, and the ways in which both authors discuss Trinitarian predication, including the distinctions they make between such predications within the Godhead and in the relationship between God and creation.

Since the reception of Augustine in Palamas concerning the first subject is significantly affected by the way that Augustine was transmitted to Palamas, an in-depth analysis comparing *Cap.* to Planoudes’ Greek translation and to Augustine’s Latin is necessary. The various uses of similar vocabulary, especially when combined with the ambiguities of translation, demonstrate that Palamas is drawing on Augustine, and that Palamas’ essence-energies distinction allows him to go even further than Augustine, who qualifies his own statement of the Holy Spirit as this love.

The second topic examines a subject in Augustine which is not treated in Palamas, but whose omission by Palamas seems intentional. It reflects the role of the essence-energies distinction as a key difference in the two authors’ approaches, but this very difference allows Palamas to use Augustine’s arguments to support his own position, as Palamas can speak of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Son without conceding to the *filioque* in the immanent Trinity. Palamas’ deliberate omission of how the Holy Spirit fits into a model of predication based on relations indicates that he knew this argument would be a stronger one for the *filioque*. Palamas’ use of Augustine presents an approach that does not require one to think that Palamas was somehow “surrendering” to western conceptions of the Trinity, for the assumed dichotomy between “western” and “eastern” approaches is one which Palamas himself challenges.

## **Harmonizing opposites: Anna Komnene's use of rhetorical apologetic in the *Alexiad***

Ana C. Núñez (Stanford University)

This paper examines the literary style of Anna Komnene, namely her use of rhetorical apologetic to harmonize the conflicting demands involved in writing the *Alexiad*. Such apologetic rhetoric, this paper argues, allows Anna to reconcile Emperor Alexios I Komnenos' defeats—such as Norman conquest in Sicily, or Latin crusaders in Antioch and the Holy Land—with the victorious image of him she wished to construct. Furthermore, this apologetic rhetoric enables Anna to accommodate her “womanly” literary duty as Alexios' daughter—to offer up effusive praise in honor of Alexios, to establish him as the emperor par excellence—with her “manly” literary duty as an historian—to record events with a critical eye, to not shirk away from the truth. To narrate both Alexios' defeats and his victories, and to honor her duties as both a daughter and an historian, Anna had to find a delicate rhetorical balance. This paper argues that one of the ways in which Anna achieved this was through the use of three apologia: 1) an emphasis on a cycle of sin and restoration; 2) a polemic against Latin “others;” and 3) an emphasis on the Byzantines' superior Roman-Christian identity.

Anna's apologia can be understood, this paper suggests, from the context of earlier seventh- and eighth-century male authors, such as George of Pisidia and Syncellus, who similarly had to balance defeat and victory. Writing about the Persian and Arab conquests of Jerusalem, or the Avar threats to Constantinople, these earlier authors faced their own tumultuous times in which the familiar rhetoric of “Christian imperial triumphalism” would not suffice, and instead gave way, as the work of David Olster has shown, to apologetic. This paper argues that Anna's own apologetics appear to parallel these earlier models in both style and function, as they too seek to exculpate defeat and narrate victory. But for Anna such apologia prove even more versatile, for not only do they balance Alexios' defeats and his victories, but they also allow Anna to harmonize the literary demands placed upon her because of her dual identity as both Alexios' daughter, and as the historian of Alexios' reign.



## **Identity and Social Resilience in the Twelfth-Century Byzantine Peasantry**

Cahit Mete Oguz (Simon Fraser University)

While Manuel I Komnenos tried to create a bulwark of fortified villages along the Asian frontier we are not sure whether the village communities themselves actually favoured this. If so, can such local acquiescence be taken to signify political allegiance? Was twelfth-century rural dissatisfaction at a time when the taxation of the provinces was increasingly farmed out to non-Romans, connected to a sense of identity? Should cases where the Roman peasantry seems to have switched allegiances to the Turks (e.g. Lake Pousgouse) be analyzed as examples of social resilience? Questions such as these that place the peasants themselves in the spotlight are difficult to answer, and yet in an overwhelmingly agrarian society like Byzantium the importance of understanding the mindset of the basic producers of state income and public sustenance need not be overstated. Frontier village communities, during a period in which external pressure appeared to challenge their internal cohesion, are ripe for further study.

This paper seeks to bridge recent discussions on provincial Roman identity with the concept of 'social resilience', which was developed within context of the socio-environmental approach to Byzantine history. During the late-eleventh and twelfth centuries external stressors placed considerable pressure upon liminal village communities of the Roman polity. This study focuses mainly on Anatolian frontline villages in areas which ultimately changed political allegiance, either as a result of external pressure or out of their own freewill. Extensive new archaeological and palaeoclimatic data is useful for analyzing both fortification patterns in peripheral regions and climatic stressors affecting the local peasantry respectively. Such hard data complements the main source material used in this paper, that is narrative (and to a certain extent documentary) sources, to reach a more rounded assessment of peasant identity, political allegiance and social resilience in the face of both external and internal stressors appearing within the twelfth-century context.

In studying these village communities we need to keep in mind that limitations in pre-modern communications hindered the capacity of provincial society to develop truly grassroots reactions to either central authority or foreign threats. That said, a surprising degree of social and political cohesion emerges from the study of the Roman peasantry's reaction to, and overcoming of, the internal and external pressures acting on them. Overcome does not necessarily imply retaining political allegiances, or even the pre-crisis social fabric, but surviving through this period as an intact village community. It remains for us to discuss whether social resilience translated into political allegiance. In other words, did the quest for local survival undermine age-old macro- political identities?

**Tang China between Byzantium and the Caliphate:  
Contacts between China, Byzantium, and the Caliphate in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Centuries A.D.**  
Robert Olsen (Saint Louis University)

The seventh and eighth centuries were a time of dramatic change for the Near East. The seventh began with the final, climactic war between Rome and Persia – a war that had been waged repeatedly, one could argue, since Xerxes and Darius – and the eighth dawned with a new great power, the Arab Caliphate, stretching from the Pyrenees to the Indus. The old world order had in many ways been transformed. In the course of this transformation, the Byzantine capital of Constantinople was a repeated target for the Umayyad dynasty who (with some reason) hoped that, should the capital fall, there would be little standing in the way of their continued expansion. The Byzantines, for their part, were well aware of the danger they faced – and the instrumental role their capital played in protecting them.

And yet, they also sought alliances and support in unlikely places. The Bulgars, often the enemy of Byzantium, played an integral role in the breaking of the Arab siege of 717. The Khazars, a Jewish people in modern Ukraine, were instrumental in the return of the deposed emperor Justinian II to the Byzantine throne in 705 and were convinced at several points to attack the Arabs via the Caucasus. But perhaps the most surprising of outreaches was to the Tang court in Chang'an. According to the *Old Book of Tang*, the Chinese court was visited by either three or four official embassies from the Byzantine Empire between 643 and 719. The court officials record the gifts these embassies brought but tell us nothing of their mission. It seems likely to me – and my paper argues – that the Byzantines were seeking some form of military support against the caliphate, perhaps bolstered by reports that the Tang court had taken in Peroz III, son of the last Sasanian Shah.

But it was not just the Byzantines who had diplomatic contacts with the Tang. The *New Book of Tang* records five embassies sent from the Caliphal court between 651 and 798. While the sources yet again leave us in the dark as to the mission of these embassies, some of the information in these two Chinese court records can give a glimpse into their mission. The subject of the Arab sieges of Constantinople is, surprisingly, recorded with a high amount of accuracy with one exception: the Tang believed that the Arabs were successful in their second attempt on the city. Based on this and other evidence, it seems to be a record of Arab diplomatic propaganda, seeking to convert a loss – which the Byzantine emissaries would surely have described – into a success. Ultimately, examining the interactions of these two states with the court of China can give us a unique glimpse into diplomatic and military strategies in the seventh and eighth century Near East.

**Visual Residues of a Forgotten “Middle Ages”: A Panel Discussion of Robert Ousterhout’s  
*Eastern Medieval Architecture* (Oxford University Press, 2019)**

**Chair:** Young Richard Kim (Onassis Foundation)

**Roundtable Participants:**

Benjamin Anderson (Cornell University) Christina Maranci (Tufts University) Vasileios Marinis (Yale Divinity School) Ida Sinkevic (Lafayette College)

**Respondent:**

Robert Ousterhout (University of Pennsylvania)

The Onassis Series in Hellenic Culture, a joint venture between Oxford University Press and the Onassis Foundation USA, has published twelve volumes, with topics ranging from Greek tragedy to Hellenistic navies to Anna Komnene. While the series has now been discontinued, one final volume will be published this year, Robert Ousterhout’s *Eastern Medieval Architecture: The Building Traditions of Byzantium and Neighboring Lands*. This landmark publication “offers an expansive view of the architectural developments of the Byzantine Empire and areas under its cultural influence, as well as the intellectual currents that lie behind their creation,” and it is no exaggeration to suggest that this book will serve as a foundational study and standard reference in the field of Byzantine art and architecture.

To celebrate the publication of this work and its esteemed author, this panel will bring together five experts in the field to review and discuss the volume, its arguments, and its images, followed by a response from Dr. Ousterhout.

The panel will include four panelists and a moderator.

## Rhetoric and Republic: Konstantinos X Doukas' Accession Speech

Milena Repajić, University of Belgrade

Imperial accession speech is a very elusive genre of Byzantine rhetoric – seldom preserved and severely understudied. One of the few surviving accession speeches is, unsurprisingly, found among the plethora of texts written by Michael Psellos (*Oratoria Minora*, 5). It is the speech emperor Konstantinos X Doukas presumably gave (possible discrepancies between the original oral oration and the surviving text are irrelevant for this particular subject) upon his accession to the throne on Christmas day 1059.

Evidence we have around the oration is extraordinary: Michael Attaleiates gives the abbreviated version of the speech in his *History*, and in *Chronographia* Psellos himself left a dramatic account of the events surrounding it, a kind of “behind the scenes” of Konstantinos' address to the public. This rare text is essential for understanding how the dialogue between the imperial authority and the citizens of Byzantium operated.

The context of Doukas' rise to power is a series of shady events surrounding the abdication of Isaakios I Komnenos who decided to take up the monastic habit and leave the throne to him. The turmoil is reflected in the speech itself: half of it is dedicated to Konstantinos' explanation of his rightful and miraculous accession and Isaakios' voluntary abdication, and a significant portion deals with the rights of empress Aikaterine, former emperor's wife, who is to be mentioned first in imperial acclamations.

Finally, the new emperor exposes the principles of his future rule and gives promises to the people of Rome. The most important issue for this subject is the fact that Konstantinos emphasizes three times that what he says should be transmitted to the people in the provinces (*thema/eparchia*), giving perspective on the way imperial messages were communicated outside Constantinople. This paper argues that people in the provinces would have gotten relevant information about important events in their state, particularly those that directly affected their practices, such as whom they mention in acclamations and what their emperor's policies will be.

Information from this oration are analyzed alongside emperor Anastasios' accession speech recorded in *De Ceremoniis*, where details of the ceremony are thoroughly described. Together they provide an idea of what an important event of imperial accession, hinted at in various historiographical texts, could have looked like. The analysis of accession speech has important implications for understanding Byzantine political culture. Observed through the lens of Byzantine republicanism (as exposed in Kaldellis 2015) accession speech is part of the delicate negotiation between the emperor and those who constitute Roman *politeia*, namely the Senate, the army and the people. This perspective gives us a new angle for reexamining Byzantine rhetorical practices and their social and political implications. The thesis of this paper is that instead of talking *at* their subjects, emperors were talking *with* their people. They were communicating and justifying their actions and policies rather than reiterating vague *imperial formulae*. Republic requires different rhetoric than theocracy does, and Byzantines had just the thing.

**Greek and Arabic Grammar and Philosophy in Byzantine Antioch:  
‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī’s Notes on John of Thessaloniki’s Encomium to St.  
Demetrios**

Alexandre M. Roberts (University of Southern California)

In the eleventh century, the Chalcedonian Christian deacon and theologian ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī produced an annotated Arabic translation of the *Encomium to St. Demetrios* by John of Thessaloniki (d. ca. 620). This paper focuses on Ibn al-Faḍl’s marginal comments on his own translation of this text. These Arabic marginalia demonstrate how Ibn al-Faḍl mobilized his training in Greek grammar, Arabic grammar, physics, metaphysics, cosmology, and philosophical doxography for his own intellectual, institutional, and communal agenda. Through this example, the paper advocates for a more holistic approach to Byzantine intellectual history that integrates the ‘secular’ and ‘religious’ interests of Byzantine scholars working across linguistic divides.

Ibn al-Faḍl’s work was part of an ambitious Christian Greek-Arabic translation movement centered around Antioch in the eleventh century, a time when Byzantine rule over the primordial patriarchate had been firmly established. Ibn al-Faḍl’s prolific translations (available today almost exclusively in manuscripts) embraced the Greek patristic authors most widely read and celebrated in contemporary Byzantine literary culture, from Basil of Caesarea and John Chrysostom to Maximos the Confessor and John of Damascus. He thus helped make a Byzantine ecclesiastical curriculum available in clear and terminologically precise Arabic.

An analysis of Ibn al-Faḍl’s annotations on John of Thessaloniki’s *Encomium* shows how an Arabic-speaking Christian in communion with the Byzantine Church read and interpreted this late antique Christian ‘classic’ through the lens of Greek and Arabic philology, logic, and philosophy. This reveals his complex relationship with that heritage, negotiated and articulated as part of his participation in the Byzantine ecclesiastical tradition and his reading of a Byzantine ecclesiastical text. Ibn al-Faḍl’s work thus offers a glimpse of a wider Mediterranean and Middle Eastern scholarly culture—shared by Muslims, Christians, Jews, and others, within the Byzantine Empire and beyond its borders—of robust intellectual curiosity ostensibly in the service of tradition.

**The 'Leo-Pardos' and the enemy of double-descent –  
Manuel I's hunts as political metaphors**  
Tristan Schmidt (Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz)

One of the prominent features of Komnenian imperial representation is the praise of the emperor as a successful hunter. Following traditions that can be traced back to ancient concepts of ideal rulership, the image of the emperor defeating dangerous animals related particularly well to the general appreciation of martial virtues within the military élite of the time. In the imperial context, hunting descriptions had the intention to portray the emperors as the most virtuous and able of warriors, alluding to aristocratic role models, like the popular narrative of the hero Digenis Akrites. Beyond these unambiguous references, however, they often provided further subtexts, turning episodes about imperial hunts into similes for current political and social conflicts.

Particularly interesting cases are two descriptions of emperor Manuel I hunting lions and *pardaleis*. One of them appears in the history of Ioannes Kinnamos, the other one in the inaugural speech as *Hypatos tōn Philosophōn* by Michael Anchialu, later Patriarch of Constantinople. Although not explicitly related to each other, both descriptions show striking similarities. A thorough analysis of the violent encounters between the emperor and the predatory beasts, as well as a precise examination of the animal species involved, reveal more layers of meaning, beyond the classical description of the successful hunter. Both authors place their episodes in the context of concrete political and military conflicts – in one case the alleged rebellion of the *Prōtostrator* Alexios Axuch, in the other a war against Serbians and Hungarians – using the stories of the encounter between man and animal as foreshadowing similes.

Uncovering the concepts related to the animals involved, as they appear in ancient and medieval zoological as well as Christian interpretations, explains their specific literary functions. Kinnamos purposely introduces the medieval concept of the *Leo-Pardos*, a hybrid between lion and the ominous *pardalis*, with regard to the ethno-religious background of the “rebel” Axuch. The two types of *pardaleis* in Michael’s speech, attested already in Ancient zoological literature, were meant to characterize the two upcoming military adversaries. Furthermore, despite the strong literary character of the episodes, it has to be asked to what extent these episodes could still be perceived as reality by the contemporaries. The examples show how authors and orators, familiar with both the day-to-day politics and the traditional learning of their time, transferred and transformed knowledge on animals in a political context, providing evidence for a lively, interdiscursive exchange in public discourse at the Komnenian court.

## **Exploring religion when there is no “religion”: Implications for and insights from Byzantine studies**

Adam Schor (University of South Carolina)

The concept of religion in common use across modern societies is largely a modern construct. “Religion” is often assumed as a universal human experience; in fact, it was built out of experiences of confessional conflict and imperialism since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, based on idealized Christian (mainly Catholic and/or Protestant) prototypes. Historians and ethnographers have long known that non-Christian societies, and pre-modern societies (even when Christian), do not share this most important cultural concept. Thus, they have drawn from an array of scholarly re-definitions of religion, intended as “etic” categories of analysis. Recently, however, pre-modernists have joined in “iconoclastic” debate about the value of using “religion” as a category. Expanding on the work of Jonathan Z. Smith and Talal Asad, several scholars—especially Brent Nongbry in *Before Religion* (Yale Univ. Press, 2015), and Carlin Barton and Daniel Boyarin in *Imagine No Religion* (Fordham Univ. Press, 2016)—have suggested curtailing the use of “religion” in translations of pre-modern texts, strictly defining and caveating its use as an analytical concept, or actively seeking alternative terminology and conceptual frames. Other scholars have avoided this trend, instead proposing new ways to redefine “religion” for historical study.

This paper offers a summary and critical exploration of recent methodological debates about the utility and limits of religion as an etic category, and a case for linking this discussion to Byzantine studies. I argue for four points. First, I endorse concerns about the mismatch between “religion” and pre-modern realities. Even most scholarly re-definitions of religion feature assumptions tied to the confessionalist and imperialist fires in which the common concept was forged. These assumptions may seem superficially to fit Byzantium, but in many settings (from the fractious clergy of the fourth century to the philosophers of the fifteenth) they can lead to anachronism and teleological reasoning.

Second, I question the viability of scholars’ efforts to avoid “religion.” It is surely fruitful to ponder alternative translations. With such a central category, however, we have little hope of its full removal from our historical thinking. Merely avoiding one term does not erase the web of related concepts; it can further cloud our reasoning.

Third, I call for a conceptually pluralist approach to the study of “religion” in Byzantium. Rather than just accept a mismatched, Modern-Latin-Christian-derived conceptual frame, we can inflect our study of Byzantine society and culture with multiple concepts, from likely and unlikely sources. We can describe falsely familiar Byzantine phenomena with terms adapted from Jewish, Islamic, Hellenic and other not-specifically-Christian traditions. We can also look further afield, to modern theorizing about supposedly secular spheres of human life.

Finally, I urge Byzantinists to join in these debates, not just to better study Byzantium, but to positively influence other fields. Byzantium’s governance, social organization, law, art and learning all clash with the assumptions of “medieval religion” as frequently defined. For that very reason, they can be used to craft fresh conceptual frames that may shed new light on other pre-modern societies.

## **Late Byzantine Monochrome Images**

Rossitza Schroder (Graduate Theological Union)

In the context of the intensely polychrome and color-coded world of the Byzantines, monochrome images create a conundrum. This paper discusses the significance of such monochrome representations in Palaiologan church decoration. It ties them to the rise of a concurrent grisaille aesthetic both East and West and considers their function in the context of monastic devotions. I argue for the rightful place of Byzantine monochromes in the development of a global medieval aesthetic, while singling them out as vehicles for a particular theological posture and monastic practice. Specifically, I contend that the absence of color in Byzantine grisailles functions to create distance and to present a form of incompleteness that requires the audience's active involvement.

Monochrome representations appear in several distinct contexts of which I consider only two—as painted relief decorations on buildings or objects and as prefigurations in scenes from the Old Testament. The images in the first category are distinctly ornamental and can be traced to ancient sources such as marble reliefs. I suggest that these particular grisailles provided painters with the opportunity to display their virtuosity and self-assuredness in handling more than one artistic medium.

The images in the second category are more complex; they are commonly incorporated in Old Testament theophanies and could contain either single depictions of Mary or of Mary and Christ. They stand for a different, spiritual reality as well as for the prefigurative nature of the Old Testament scenes. They are visual equivalents of the linguistic and ultimately of the theological *skia* or shadow as articulated by Paul in his letter to the Hebrews (10:1). They are thus unfinished images awaiting their completion.

These are not simply the artist's thoughts left visible as suggested by the title of a recent publication (K. Baum et al., eds., *Unfinished: Thoughts Left Visible* [New York, 2016]), but rather interactive visual stimuli requiring the audience's participation. According to Byzantine theology colors are a necessary ingredient of each icon; in light of this and in the context of Old Testament scenes the grisailles function as underdrawings which prompt the viewer to mentally fill the missing color. Thus the task of the contemplative monks was to finish them creating in their minds images not made by human hands. I further argue that this process had ethical repercussions—according to the writings of late Byzantine theologians like Patriarch Athanasios and Theoleptos of Philadelphia the process of adding colors to an icon is analogous to acquiring virtues.

In light of the evidence presented in this paper it becomes clear that late Byzantine grisailles do not reflect a form of artistic abstinence ushered by hesychasm as suggested by some scholars; rather, they manifest a sophisticated visual culture with a distinct theological flavor nourished and consumed by monks and their supporters.



**A pictorial, non-canonical gospel harmony at Saint Sergius in Gaza?**  
**Visualizing Choricus of Gaza's *Laudatio Marciani I***  
Thomas E. Schweigert (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Choricus of Gaza's first encomium to Marcian [535] contains an *ekphrasis* of the bishop's new *Church of Saint Sergius* (long since vanished). Art historians mine this for comparisons with extant apse mosaics, manuscript miniatures, and pilgrims' tokens. The central apse garners attention for its apparent similarity to that at *San Vitale* in Ravenna. The non-figural side apse mosaics often go unremarked, but not by Choricus! He is reminded of "the poet of Syracuse"—Theocritus—and *Idyll I*, but Choricus' description also evokes the contemporary *Armenian Birds Mosaic* at Jerusalem, whose amphora sprouts vine scrolls with grape clusters. This can be read as visual synecdoche for the Incarnation—Mary's pitcher—alluding to the *Annunciation at the Spring* from the *Protevangelium of James (PJ)*. Choricus' "pitcher of cool water," then, contains the life-giving water and is the vessel which bore the Incarnate Word. A sophist and rhetor rather than churchman—more conversant with pagan than Christian literature—Choricus must be read carefully, mindful that what he knows—and doesn't know—informs what he sees and thus describes. I read in his descriptions of the *Saint Sergius* decoration an amalgam of the canonical and apocryphal which maximizes the appearances—and enhances the role—of the Virgin Mary. Choricus testifies, unwittingly, to what I argue is a Justinianic church of the *Theotokos* and Marian shrine.

Choricus also describes 28 "gospel" pericopes—from *Annunciation* to *Ascension*—painted on the ceiling. Here, as Jesus walks on the water, Peter also has a go, unsuccessfully, as found exclusively in *Matthew* [14:22-33]. This scene appears at Dura-Europos, but, in third century Syria, the textual source would have been a *gospel harmony*, Tatian's *Diatessaron* or even the one whose fragment was found at Dura! While some scenes described by Choricus can ostensibly be linked to individual gospels—chapter and verse—others cannot. At *Saint Sergius*, the risen Christ appears, not to Mary of Magdala, but His mother, contrary to canonical scripture. Choricus' identification could be mistaken, but this version, found in the *Diatessaron* or other harmonies, informed the Syro-Palestinian tradition and is depicted in the miniatures of the *Rabbula Gospels*, where the Virgin appears as central figure from *Crucifixion* through to *Pentecost*. The initial scenes—seemingly from *Luke*—are fully intelligible only with recourse to *PJ*. Here the Virgin Annunciate spins the purple thread for the new Temple curtain—a story from *PJ*, not *Luke*. Choricus seems to describe the *Annunciation to the Shepherds* twice (!), first appealing to the sense of hearing, then to sight (and possibly alluding to Herodotus). I read, respectively, *Joseph Sees Time Stand Still*, from *PJ*, and *Luke's Annunciation to the Shepherds*.

Rather than Theocritus or Herodotus, the images at *Saint Sergius*, as visualized in my reading of Choricus, resonate with the hymns of Romanos the Melodist, and Maximus the Confessor's harmonized *Life of the Virgin*, both with *Diatessaronic* and apocryphal roots. This research draws upon—and hopes to contribute to—burgeoning literatures on early Christian apocrypha, Marian devotion, and body and the senses.

## **Memory and the *Synaxarion of Constantinople***

James C. Skedros (Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology)

The Byzantines utilized a variety of means to preserve the memory of the past, be it historical writing, biography, copying of manuscripts, rhetorical and literary mimesis, liturgy, and hagiography to name the most obvious. As an interpretive framework, memory has been employed in Byzantine studies for quite some time. Methodologically, the role and function of memory in the study of Byzantium (and the medieval West) can be divided into two general categories: the art of memory (*ars memoriae*) and the construction of memory. With regard to hagiography, it has been the latter category that has primarily occupied the attention of Byzantinists and historians of religion. By utilizing recent methodological studies on memory in medieval Western Europe, this paper examines the role of memory (both its “art” and “construction”) in the tenth-century *Synaxarion of Constantinople*.

The *Synaxarion of Constantinople* (*SynCP*) is a liturgical book with hagiographic content. The term “synaxarion” is fluid and was used by the Byzantines to denote a liturgical text that contained a calendar of fixed feasts with appointed readings. The *SynCP* reflects an additional use of the term denoting a book that lists the commemoration of saints during the ecclesiastical year. As a calendar of saints, the *SynCP* identifies the commemorations for the Great Church of Constantinople for each day of the year (beginning with September 1). For many saints, a brief notice containing the name and other identifying information is all that is contained. For some saints, much longer entries are provided. Edited by H. Delehaye (*Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Propylaeum ad AASS Novembris*, 1902), the *SynCP* is mostly comprised of commemorations of martyrs, confessors, fathers, and ascetics. Commemorations of emperors, earthquakes, translations of relics, establishment of churches, and astronomical events are included as well.

The *SynCP* provides an opportunity to study both the construction and the art of memory simultaneously operative in a liturgical/hagiographical text of imprecise generic identity. Although the paper does not break new methodological grounds for either of these uses of memory, the paper contributes to our understanding of the construction of memory in Byzantium. In particular, this paper argues that the content of memory for the Byzantines within a quasi-liturgical framework extends beyond the ecclesial and religious. An examination of the rhetorical structure of the short formulaic references to memory found throughout the *SynCP* as well as the content of the transmitted memory found therein demonstrate that the *SynCP* was a unique mechanism for institutional (i.e. ecclesiastical), political (i.e., imperial) and communal (i.e., Constantinopolitan) constructions of memory. Finally, this paper provides further support for the consideration of the extended role hagiography played in Byzantine society beyond supporting the cult of the saints.

## Inside the Library of an Eleventh-Century Eunuch Monastery

Felix Szabo (University of Chicago)

The *Diataxis* of Michael Attaleiates is a unique piece of documentary evidence. Signed by its founder in 1077, the *Diataxis* is the only substantial witness to survive for the tiny Constantinopolitan monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon ("the All-Merciful"). This was in many respects a relatively unremarkable monastic community: founded at the end of its patron's lifelong career in civil administration, the Panoiktirmon was essentially a Stoudite monastery, tasked with overseeing Attaleiates' poorhouse in Rhaidestos, managing his property holdings, and praying for his and his family's souls.

Yet this document, along with the community it governed, was also extremely unusual. Inventories appended to the *Diataxis* record no less than seventy manuscripts, for a monastery of at most only seven monks. These manuscripts range in content from standard-issue saints' lives to patristic homilies to their founder Attaleiates' contemporary *History*, and even include a salacious ancient novel. The *Diataxis*, however, is the only surviving Byzantine monastic foundation document to record one particularly unusual stipulation: admission to this community was not merely extended to eunuchs, but actually limited to them.

This presents something of a problem for situating the Panoiktirmon into broader understandings of Byzantine monasticism. Eunuchs are an uncomfortable subject for many monastic authorities: mistrusted at best (or, at worst, outright barred from taking up the habit), their place in mainstream Byzantine monastic practices is uncertain. Despite the clear participation of these individuals in the fullness of Christian life—including the monastic profession—little is known of these individuals' attitudes and preferences regarding that participation, particularly outside lay, courtly contexts. Worse still, much of the evidence of surviving canonical sources was created by non-eunuchs, whose representations may range from uninformed to misinformed to outright hostile.

The *Diataxis*, however, offers a valuable corrective to these biases. Although the monastic regulations were themselves drawn up by Attaleiates, a non-eunuch, the inventories subsequently appended to these regulations post-date the deaths both of Attaleiates himself as well as his son Theodore; their content reflects the life of the monastery under relative self-governance. These inventories paint a picture of eunuchs' monastic activity unparalleled by other evidence, recording the monastery's possessions of precious fabrics, liturgical utensils, icons, and—most importantly—books. In this paper, I use the manuscript inventories of the *Diataxis* to reconstruct the reading life of these monks, and show that despite its generally orthodox content this was hardly a "bearded" library. What were these monks reading? How might this have informed their monastic practice? And what might such a reconstruction reveal of eunuchs' elusive spirituality?

## Constantinopolitan Responses to the Byzantine Refugee Crisis of 1302-1307

Jonas Tai (Rutgers University)

From 1302 to 1307, refugees from Europe and Asia Minor fled to Constantinople after major Turkish victories at Magnesia (1302) and Bapheus (1302) in Asia Minor and the Catalan Company's victory at Apros (1305) in Thrace. Starvation in the early years of the crisis resulted primarily from ineffective food distribution, civic corruption and civil apathy, and was later exacerbated by an absolute lack of food in the city from 1306 to 1307. Byzantine responses to the panic-inducing collapse of Asia Minor and the subsequent population displacements reveal a marked shift in the Byzantine mindset, that earlier attempts at preservation and recovery now shifted towards policies of outright survival. This psychological shift towards fear also contributed to the apathy of many Byzantines, especially the *dunatoi*, in aiding the refugees, and Athanasios' attempts at social and political reform may be viewed as an effort to restore confidence as well as efficacy.

By 1300, largely as a result of the Latin occupation from 1204 to 1261, the philanthropic services and facilities traditionally available in Constantinople were already insufficient to deal with the poverty in the city, let alone with the rush of refugees. The Orphanotropheion, the primary philanthropic institution in Constantinople prior to the Fourth Crusade, derived much of its wealth from its Anatolian estates and suffered immensely with the permanent loss of Asia Minor in the late 13th and early 14th centuries. The *De Ceremoniis* of Pseudo-Kodinos reveals that the position of *orphanotrophos*, the overseer of the Orphanotropheion, was gradually deprived of its responsibilities and defunct by the mid-13th century, while the megas hetaireiarchês, the official specifically in charge of refugees, was corrupt and ineffective.

Responses to the situation took two major forms. First, there were attempts to stem the tide of refugees at its source in Asia Minor with material funding and improved leadership, most notably by the emperor Andronikos II (1282-1328) and patriarch Athanasios I (1289-1293, 1303-1309). Angeliki Laiou's study of this morale-based approach can be combined with Speros Vryonis' research on the *Notitiae Episcopatum*, to conclude that the sending of religious leadership to Asia Minor during and after the crisis was partially a continuation of a policy initially put forth by Theodore Metochites and Andronikos II. Second, there were attempts to alleviate the situation within the city. The letters of the patriarch Athanasios and the appointment of two men as *demarchês* reveal the extent of these efforts. The positions of the *demarchês* as experienced civil servants, sometimes seen as a subversion of the established institutions of the city, in fact strengthened those institutions in the face of moral corruption in the organs of the state and society.

Although the refugee crisis of the early 14<sup>th</sup> century is well-known, scholars have for the most part pursued its study only where it intersected with the main focuses of their works. Focusing specifically on the crisis allows us to shed light on the massive population displacements that accompanied the shrinking of the Byzantine state in this period. Further research on the refugees, covering such issues as communal reconstitution and resettlement, may yield important information about the responses and effects of such a complete demographic change on economy and society.

## **Animal Encounters in Early Christian Art: Visualizing Salvation through Juxtaposition**

Katherine Taronas (Harvard University)

The compositional unit of a frontal, standing figure flanked by a symmetrical pair of animals appears with surprising frequency throughout the corpus of Early Christian art; it forms the primary iconography for representing certain Old Testament figures (Daniel and, more rarely, Susanna), metaphorical images of Christ (the Good Shepherd and Orpheus charming the animals), and major saints (Thecla, and later, Menas). The burial chambers of the oldest section of the most ancient Roman Christian catacomb, that named for the bishop Callixtus (constructed c. 220 CE), anchor their painting programs around this image-type: five apices of the domed ceilings in this part of the catacomb contain shepherds between adorsed pairs of sheep, one dome centers on Orpheus charming animals with his lyre, and still another dome features Daniel between two lions. In his fourth-century CE panegyric *Life of Constantine*, Eusebius of Caesarea praises the glinting, gilded-bronze σύμβολα of the Good Shepherd and Daniel and the Lions commissioned by the emperor to adorn the public squares of Constantinople (3.49). Although Eusebius' account of Constantine's deeds may not be reliable, the selection of subject matter Eusebius attributes to Constantine for this key marker of religious change accords with a phenomenon in Early Christian art that this paper takes as its subject. Not only are such figures and their animal associates extremely popular in the earliest Christian visual art, but, as in Eusebius' pairing and in the decorations of the Roman Catacombs, they are often grouped together, generating meaning through multiplication and inviting exegetical connection through visual similarity.

This paper seeks to account for the prominence of images that juxtapose holy figures and animals in Early Christian art by unpacking some of this iconography's symbolic resonances. The encounters visualized in this iconography can be grouped into two categories: the first, (to which the Daniel, Susanna, and Thecla images belong) shows human beings imperiled by worldly evil but who will be saved through their faith and virtue. The second category, peaceful, Orphic images of paradise and protection, represents the salvation to be attained by the followers of Christ. Here the central human figure stands symbolically for the divinity, while human worshippers are transfigured into pastoral animals as they approach the divine. These two categories offer twin visions of salvation, as well as a commentary on sacrifice and martyrdom, that cohere when linked by shared a visual configuration. Such images, pairing the human and animal in encounters that speak alternatively of opposition and harmony, domination and communion, were sites in which to articulate, work out, and reflect upon the relationship between human, animal, and divine within the new cosmology put forth by Christianity. Confrontation with the nonhuman animal is always a process of evaluation of self and other, and a detailed examination of how these images signify allows us to consider views about the place of human beings within the created world at a key moment in the formation of Christian identity.

***Ἐξω Παιδεία: Gregory Palamas' Triads As A Monastic Reading Of Byzantine Humanism***  
Alexander Titus (Princeton Theological Seminary)

In his *Defense on Behalf of the Holy Hesychasts* (more commonly known as the *Triads*), the great Byzantine monastic theologian Gregory Palamas frequently ascribes to his opponents, notably the Italo- Greek philosopher Barlaam of Calabria, a certain adherence to what he calls “external education” (ἔξω παιδεία, *Tr.* II.i.1-44) or, more specifically, “Hellenic education” (ἡ καθ’ Ἑλληνας παιδεία, *Tr.* I.i.2; ἡ ἑλληνικὴ παιδεία, *Tr.* II.i.36). Throughout the treatise, but principally in *Triads* I and II, Palamas uses the closely-associated terms of “external wisdom” (ἔξω σοφία), “external philosophy” (ἔξω φιλοσοφία) and “external learning” (ἔξω μάθημα) in a similar fashion. In these pages, Palamas firmly rejects the supposition, presented by some of his opponents, that in order to attain spiritual perfection, it would be necessary for Christian monks to study the Greek classics and acquaint themselves with the secular sciences (ἐπιστήμη). In fact, far from being a necessity, Palamas says that engagement with these kinds of materials would constitute for the monk a serious spiritual hindrance. On the one hand, as scholars such as Anthony Kaldellis, Niketas Siniosoglou, Sergei Mariev, and Magda Mtchedlidze have shown, this was not the first time concerns about “ἔξω παιδεία” had been raised by Christian theologians in the Byzantine world. However, it was not until the 14th century that this tension between monasticism and humanism would reach the level of a doctrinal controversy involving the whole Church. For John Meyendorff, the condemned opponents of Palamas represented the very “spirit of the Renaissance” which would eventually sweep through Italy and then all of Western Europe. For others, the triumph of Palamas plunged the Eastern Church into fundamentalism, obscurantism, irrationality, and anti- intellectualism. Yet this does not adequately explain why some of the most notable partisans of Byzantine hesychasm, such as Nicholas Kabasilas, Gennadios Scholarios, and Maxim the Greek, were also all accomplished humanist scholars in their own right. Thus drawing on some of the insights of Constantine Tsirplanis, this paper seeks to demonstrate that Palamas’ own position on “ἔξω παιδεία” was much more nuanced and highly specific to the monastic context, drawing deeply from the Byzantine monastic tradition itself in regards to the role of knowledge, education, and science.

## The Audacity of Word and Image: Becoming Christ in the Psalter Vat. Gr. 1927

Courtney Tomaselli, Elon University

Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1927 is a late-eleventh century illustrated psalter, created in a monastic context, with a large and complex image painted before each psalm and ode. The images in this psalter are didactic, moralizing, and guide the viewer to *theosis*, meaning a union with God. Vat. gr. 1927 ends with the Beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-12) and a final image following the text. When taken together, the text and final image reveal an audacity and creativity in image conception and text/image relationship not often granted to the creators of Byzantine images.

While the Beatitudes occasionally appear in certain psalters as part of a group of Eucharistic texts, they are rarely appended to the Odes in Middle Byzantine psalters. The final illustration in Vat. gr. 1927 alludes to, but does not actually illustrate, the Sermon on the Mount. To either side of Christ are Apostles and Jewish elders. But he is not in any earthly outdoor location. Instead, Christ sits in a trefoil space evenly demarcated with silver lines; this space pierces a wall extending behind the two groups of men. He is not the adult Christ found in many other illustrations of the Sermon on the Mount. Christ's visage is that of the high-foreheaded Christ-Emmanuel. The lower part of the trefoil in which Christ sits looks very similar to a *synthronon*. The top portion of the trefoil is incongruous unless understood as an abstracted apsidal conch of a church. This image is unique within the corpus of extant Byzantine art.

The audacity of this image becomes clear when taken in conjunction with the extant text of the Beatitudes. The folio preserves verses nine through twelve. Verse eleven, the last to begin with "blessed," has had several pronouns changed from the second person plural to the first person plural. Uncial *etas* emphasize this vowel shift. It now reads "Blessed are you when they insult *us* and persecute and utter all kinds of evil against *us* falsely on account of me." The manuscript contains less than a handful of deviations from the standard Septuagint text and was written by a talented scribe, indicating that the text at the very end of this psalter has been purposefully altered to identify the viewer's sufferings with those of Christ, and the viewer with Christ himself — his journey through the psalms to *theosis* is complete.

This is but one of many points of evidence within the psalter's images indicating that they heavily draw on the theology of Symeon the New Theologian, who wrote devotional and didactic works following the format of the Beatitudes in both his *Ethical* and *Catechetical Discourses*. The totality of evidence suggests that the psalter was produced under Niketas Stethatos of the Stoudios Monastery in Constantinople, who wrote Symeon's saint's life and edited his writings.

## Master of Ceremonies? Ritual, Dialogue, and Political Agency in 1042

Tiffany VanWinkoop (Simon Fraser University)

Recent scholarship has re-examined political ideology and praxis in the Byzantine Empire, proposing that an emperor's legitimacy was derived from the assent of the people and could consequently be rightly removed if popular expectations of virtuous rule were not satisfied. My paper explores the ways in which Byzantine religious ceremony, specifically the ritualized Easter ceremonial, may have facilitated such political dialogue between the emperor and his subjects through the example of Michael V's (c. 1015-1042) failed attempt to sideline Empress Zoe. While imperial ceremonial did not remain the same over time, the information contained in Constantine VII's (c. 905-959) *Book of Ceremonies* suggests that Michael may have had strategic reasons to time his power play on the week following Easter. In this paper I argue that Michael may have taken advantage of the Easter ceremonial calendar in order to consolidate power through the formation of political alliances and the propagation of a certain imperial image. As our sources suggest he also sought to gauge the reactions of the participating Constantinopolitans. Even though Michael's attempt ultimately proved unsuccessful, his actions draw attention to a previously unconsidered intersection between state ceremonial and political action, by drawing a causal connection from theorized propaganda to realized action.

While no record exists of how Michael conducted the ceremonies preceding his power play, Michael Attaleiates (c. 1022-1080) specifically describes the positive response Michael V received from the Constantinopolitans for his lavish procession on the Sunday following Easter, a ritualized event described in the *Book of Ceremonies*. Michael's reaction to the peoples' response draws an apparent causal relationship between ceremonial success and political action. Had Michael followed the procedures of the *Book of Ceremonies*, his power play would have followed ten straight days of celebrations which included feasts, the ritual distribution of wealth, and processions throughout the city. Such opportunities would have afforded him ample time to place his political agents in the city, win over undecided dignitaries through favours flowing in the context of more or less public ceremonial, and forge an image of strength for the gaze of a Constantinopolitan audience – an audience whose support would have been necessary for successful political action.

By examining the ritualized protocols presented in the *Book of Ceremonies*, one can envision the underlying political dialogue which permeated facets of the Byzantine cultural experience, challenging a reductionist view which separates secular political agency from religious customs. Through Michael's logic, one can see how ceremonies may have served as pivotal moments of political decision-making, bringing a potential emperor and his future subjects closer together both proximally and ideologically. In Michael's case, ceremony confirmed his belief that he had popular support and should act accordingly. Although the people ultimately reached a different conclusion resulting in his demise, their "dialogue", evident in his use of the capital's ceremonial calendar, challenges scholarship to consider the role of ceremonial and ceremonies in the generation of political consensus.



## (Un)Holy Desire: The Foreign Woman in Romanos Melodos

Erin Walsh (Duke University)

The early sixth-century liturgical poetry of Romanos Melodos provides scholars manifold representations of desirous women. Romanos crafted female biblical figures speaking, moving, and *physically* striving in the pursuit of holiness as their bodies expressed desire for the divine. His poetry is rife with erotic imagery that builds dramatic tension within the *kontakia*. In his poetry featuring encounters between men and women, we see Romanos constructing holy and impure desire through female characters.

Within his poetic corpus are *kontakia* featuring non-Israelite women such as Potiphar's wife from Genesis and the Samaritan woman of the Gospel of John. These characters, marked by gender as well as their "ethnic" markers, become vivid characters in his narrations. Romanos amplifies the erotic encounter between Joseph and Potiphar's wife to underscore the extraordinary self-control of the male protagonist. Here the poet maps gender along the binaries of virtue and vice, self-control and licentiousness, Israelite and non-Israelite. The poet repeatedly draws the listener's attention to the physical beauty of Joseph, contextualizing the woman's own desire. In the process of constructing a model of virtue and sexual restraint through Joseph, Romanos echoes inherited tropes of the dangers of the foreign feminine allure which threatens to feminize men.

In contrast, the *kontakion* on the Samaritan woman provides an extended meditation on the mutual desire of the Samaritan woman and Christ, especially in reference to the woman's multiple husbands. Jesus gives voice to his own desire, and this mutuality draws together divine eros and human response. Read in light of the *kontakion* on Joseph, the muted eroticism of the Samaritan woman's longing is expressed through her desire for knowledge and the "living water" Jesus offers. Without the corporeal imagery of "On Joseph," this *kontakion* "On the Samaritan Woman" renders the woman a figure for the "unblemished" church through assiduous attention to her affective and pious disposition.

In the hands of late ancient poets the thin biblical "memory" acquired added density; familiar characters possessed personal histories and their bodies physicality. Representing Greek poetic traditions of early Byzantium, Romanos's writings afford scholars insight into the ways liturgical compositions scripted expressions of desire and constructed the gendered subject. Within the *kontakion* on Joseph, the unbridled desire of the "foreign" woman imperils the virtuous man. All Christians are exhorted to model his steadfast adherence to virtue. Meanwhile the Samaritan woman becomes a model of feminine desire that responds to the initial desire of God for humanity. By identifying her as a "type" for the church, Romanos spiritualizes her desire.

A comparative reading of these two texts shows how the language of feminine desire – as well as the presence or absence of male desirous response – exemplifies the complexities of gender construction within Romanos's poetry. More broadly, this comparative reading brings the particular contours of each *kontakion* into view. Through a close reading of these relatively understudied parts of Romanos's corpus this paper contributes to our understanding of the discourse of desire in Byzantium.

## On the Diagrammatic Aesthetic of Byzantine Art

Justin Willson (Princeton University)

At the symposium *The Diagram Paradigm*, held at Dumbarton Oaks in 2018, Jeffrey Hamburger, David Roxburgh, and Linda Safran asked: “Why is so much of ‘Western’ medieval art diagrammatic in character, but so little of Byzantine and Islamic art?” On the contrary, this essay suggests that Byzantine art could be highly dependent on diagrams. Scholars of Byzantine art have paid too little attention to the relation between images and diagrams. One case in point is the close affinity that Herbert Kessler suspected between the dispute of the *Filioque* and two types of trinitarian icons in the Komnenian period. The first, commonly called the *Synthronoi*, showed the three persons of God seated together, often around a table, as on Rublev’s famous Trinity icon. The second, the *Paternitas*, portrayed the Son seated in the Father’s lap, holding a mandorla with the Spirit, symbolized as a dove.

At the same time as these two iconographies were being widely disseminated, Byzantine authors, beginning with Eustratios of Nicaea in the early twelfth century, were debating the relative value of a ‘linear diagram’ (τὸ σχῆμα εὐθύς) versus a ‘triangular diagram’ (τὸ σχῆμα τριγωνικόν) depicting the three persons. Eustratios’s remarks were developed by Hieromonk Hierotheos, in Asia Minor in the thirteenth century, and later by the Cretan preacher Joseph Bryennios, in the early fifteenth century.

Remarkably, Hierotheos and Bryennios interpreted their diagrams in the context of trinitarian icons. In Hierotheos’s case, the diagrams were directly identified with the *Synthronoi* and *Paternitas*. The key manuscripts of Hierotheos (Florence, Laur. Plut. VII 19; Venice, Marciana, Gr. 153, both early 14th century) and Bryennios (Sofia, ‘Prof. Ivan Dujčev,’ Cod. D. Gr. 262, early 15th century, which is an autograph) include images of both types of diagrams. Whereas the ‘linear’ diagram represented the persons in a vertical, hierarchical arrangement, as on the *Paternitas*, and was associated with Catholic theologians’ claim that the Spirit also flowed ‘from’ (ἐκ) the Son, the ‘triangular’ diagram depicted the persons arranged as an equilateral triangle, as in the *Synthronoi*, and was associated with the Orthodox view that no rank ‘order’ (τάξις) exists in the godhead. While these diagrams and the texts in which they were explained have gone unstudied by art historians, they reveal a close relationship between images and the schematic representation of theological ideas in Byzantium. In turn, Eustratios, Hierotheos, and Bryennios offer a vocabulary for scholarship invested in the formal semantics of Byzantine images.

Rather than the ‘Paternitas’ and ‘Synthronoi,’ viewers in the later centuries of Byzantium would have conceived of these images as ‘linear’ and ‘triangular’ schematizations of the Christian God.

**The Unfinished Style of Frescos as Theology of Participation:  
The Case of the Transfiguration Church on Illina Street in Novgorod, Russia (1378)**  
Olga Yunak (Graduate Theological Union)

The unfinished quality of the frescos painted by Theophanes the Greek in the Transfiguration Church on Illina Street in Novgorod (Russia) stands out as a curious and unresolved phenomenon in Byzantine studies. Theophanes, originally from Constantinople, is considered to be the most extraordinary iconographer of 14th-century Russia, emerging before Andrey Rublev and the myriad of notable icon painters of the Russian “renaissance” of the 15th and 16th centuries. The Transfiguration Church on Illina Street belongs to the group of churches that were built between 1360 and 1390 in Novgorod.

These churches were sponsored by wealthy, well-connected families who aligned themselves with the official agenda of church leadership at the time. This particular trend was reflected in the decoration programs of these churches.

The focus of this study is a small subsidiary chamber, known as the Trinity Chapel, in the gallery of the Transfiguration Church. The chamber features an unusual program of decoration with stylites, martyrs, and ascetics of the Christian East. Many scholars note Theophanes’ subdued color palette, which creates the impression of unfinished-ness. Did Theophanes use subdued colors intentionally? And if so, what did he mean to convey with this limited color palette? I argue that Theophanes’ unfinished-ness is purposeful and serves as an invitation to the faithful to participate in the “making” of an image. I also argue that this style of painting helps Theophanes to carry out a deeper theological purpose—in the context of preparation for Lent, to finish the unfinished would mean to climb “spiritual ladder.”

To support my proposition, I draw my evidence from the symbolism of the architecture and iconography of the Trinity Chapel. First, I analyze the historical shift in the use of gallery chambers in Byzantine and Northern Russia. The influence of the monastic tradition on the “city” churches indicates that these chambers hold the position of privilege architecturally and hierarchically. Suspended between “earth and heaven,” they were designed to be used only by those with high spiritual authority. Second, I analyze the unusual iconography of the Divine Liturgy in the Trinity Chapel and the inscriptions on the scrolls of the Holy Fathers. Both suggest a strong connection with the monastic services in the pre- Lenten season. On the last Sunday before Lent, traditionally dedicated to the Eastern Holy Fathers, monastic anchorites would gather for a communal service before they retreated into isolation for Lent.

Based on the above evidence, I propose that high-ranking individuals in a civic or ecclesiastic community might have used the Trinity Chamber as a place of isolation and deep contemplation, perhaps right before the Lenten season. The importance of my study is to demonstrate that art is not merely illustrative of theology, but rather that it is capable of carrying out theology. It takes an individual as idiosyncratic and talented as Theophanes the Greek, who was also deemed a “clever philosopher,” to show this to us.

## **The Invisible Icon At El Nazar Kilise, a Tenth Century Church in Cappadocia**

Elizabeth Zanghi (Sorbonne Université)

Hagioscopes are not uncommon in Byzantium. Although they have been less studied than their counterparts in the Occident, we have textual and material evidence for their existence throughout the empire. Typically, they served a functional role for people who wished to be in solitude while still being able to participate in the services or offices taking place within a church. In Cappadocia we have many examples of these kinds of hagioscopes. At the famous Tokalı Kilise, a window connects a hermit's cell to the *naos*, giving the person inhabiting the space a direct view of the sanctuary.

Similarly, at the Karabaş Kilise, the hagioscope presents a sightline between the occupier of a cell and the sanctuary as well as with the possible donor panels to the south of the sanctuary. The hagioscope at El Nazar places the privileged person in communication with both of these elements, the sanctuary and the possible donor panels, but it also puts that person in communication with the faithful who would have inhabited the church. The opening is found in the central dome and has been commonly identified as a simple window. However, this window is attached to a cell on the second level of the monument which was covered from view during its 1998 restoration, but which can be seen in earlier photographs. The cell could have been occupied by a privileged person that would have wanted to have visual and/or auditory communication with the *naos* of the church, as is the case for other hagioscopes. What makes this hagioscope special, though, is that it could serve a function for the the occupier of the cell as well as for the faithful below.

While other hagioscopes are typically sequestered, such as at Karabaş or in other parts of the empire, at El Nazar the window is placed in a privileged part of the church, the central dome, within a privileged iconographical scene, the Ascension of Christ. The window is even framed in such a way that makes it resemble the other iconographical panels throughout the church. Consequently, the faithful below would have seen, in addition to the inspiring scene of the Ascension, the image of the occupant of the cell looking back on them. Although no *typikon* exists for this monument, or any other monument in Cappadocia, we see a similar hagioscope at the Church of Saint Neophytos in Cyprus. The present work uses the *typikon* of this monument and other writings from the hermitage's founder, along with architectural, iconographical, and stylistic evidence found within the church of El Nazar, to suggest observations about the person who would have inhabited the cell behind the hagioscope. It also makes comparisons with other hagioscopes both in Cappadocia and elsewhere to show how this particular hagioscope may not have simply been a means of communication for a privileged person, but a living icon of a living saint.

**Byzantine Anthologies and the Ordering of Death and Judgment: George the Monk's  
*Chronicon* (IV.23) as Canon and Contribution**  
Jonathan Zecher (Australian Catholic University)

Death and judgment regularly exercised the Byzantine imagination, and the history of its conceptualization displays the Byzantine ordering of knowledge and development of ecclesial identity. Vasileios Marinis (*Death and the Afterlife in Byzantium*, 2017) argues that Late antique notions of afterlife varied widely among Greek-speaking Christians but they were, to some extent, constricted and homogenized between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Centuries. During this period the “tollhouse myth”—a very particular conception of post-mortem judgment that found its fullest explication in the 9<sup>th</sup> c. *Vita Basilii Junioris*—emerged, and was thereafter retrojected onto earlier material. This myth offered, it seems, a framework for integrating and blending a diversity of conceptualizations of the afterlife. Building on Marinis’ argument, this paper draws on recent theorizations of cultural memory and Roman miscellanies, to show more specifically how the canonizing work of *anthology* served to homogenize conceptualizations of death around the “tollhouse” myth.

Aleida Assmann (“Canon and Archive”, 2010) has shown that the selective process of canonization marks the active work of cultural memory, and is twinned with less visible processes of forgetting. Thus, while a canon purports to be definitive and transparent, it is, in fact, selective and constructed. Moreover, as recent studies on miscellanies in the Roman Empire have shown, anthologization, in its construction, imposes order on the world beyond the text (König and Whitmarsh, *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire*, 2010), in ways that reflect the miscellanist’s own milieu. A critical examination of anthology, therefore, elucidates the conditions of individuals’ concern to impose order on knowledge and, therefore, on the world, as well as the means by which such order is imposed.

This paper draws on Assman, König, and Whitmarsh, to elucidate the role played by middle Byzantine *florilegia* in canonizing the afterlife and retrojecting the “tollhouses” onto Late antique Christian literature as a framing mechanism for ordering and determining language about death and afterlife. Specifically, it offers a careful analysis of George the Monk’s *Chronicon Breve* IV.23.

This text is a world-chronicle that, at many points launches into didactic and polemic discussions of theological and ecclesiological matters. In those sections, George departs from source material in either Malalas or Theophanes, and resorts to anthologization. The sources given by George—Neilos (really Evagrius), Cyril of Alexandria—differ in key ways from similar passages in earlier collections like the *Apophthegmata Patrum* and *Sacra Parellela*. At the same time, these and George’s excerpts from Diadochos of Photiki, Ps-Chrysostom, and Pope Gregory I, are echoed in later additions to Anastasios and in Paul Evergetinos, among others. Thus, George’s *Chronicon* witnesses to conceptualization in transition, and shows us the process of canonization—selection, juxtaposition, modification, and attribution—which determine the direction of that transition. This process has implications for Byzantine self-understanding in later encounters with Latin conceptualizations, such as Purgatory, and for the debates that continue to rely on Byzantine sources for a canonical—now normative—tradition.



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