The 2011 International Graduate Conference

BETWEEN CONSTANTINES
representations and manifestations of an empire

4–5 March 2011

The History Faculty
University of Oxford
BETWEEN CONSTANTINES
representations and manifestations of an empire

was conceived and organised by
Eleni Karafotia, Sean Leatherbury, Prerona Prasad and Jesse Simon
on behalf of the Oxford Byzantine Society

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A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMITTEE

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the Oxford Byzantine Society’s 2011 International Graduate Conference. This year’s conference promises to be very special indeed, featuring thirty-nine papers from graduate students based in no less than eleven different countries.

The remit for the OBS conference has always been to host an inclusive event at which graduate-level scholars working in various disciplines related to the late antique and Byzantine world can come together to present their research in an informed and constructive environment. While remaining true to that remit, the conference has grown steadily over the last several years. In 2009 we welcomed our first speakers from universities outside the UK. Then, in 2010, we officially became an international event, welcoming speakers from throughout Europe.

We are delighted to say that the conference continues to evolve and expand. The response to the call for papers this year was unprecedented and, as a result, a greater number of countries and institutions are represented than ever before. Furthermore, for the first time, we are pleased to offer papers presented in French as well as English, emphasising the truly international character of the Byzantinist community.

The conference has always been about the exchange of scholarly ideas, but also about the development of academic contacts. We are immensely pleased to be able to bring together such a diverse group of young scholars and we hope that the collegial friendships forged here between participants in the coming days will last for years to come. Even a brief look through the following schedule should convince you that, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, some five-and-a-half centuries after the fall of Constantinople, the field of late antique and Byzantine studies has never looked healthier.

Eleni Karafotia
Sean Leatherbury
Prerona Prasad
Jesse Simon

The OBS 2011 Conference Committee
10:00 Opening Remarks
Prerona Prasad
President, Oxford Byzantine Society

10:15 Session 1
Representing the Self: Understanding Late Roman Mausolea in Pannonia and Dalmatia
Zsolt R. Magyar
Central European University, Budapest

The Architecture of the Episcopal Church in Doclea (Montenegro)
Tatjana Koprivica
History Institute of Montenegro, Podgorica

Byzantine Fortifications in the Iberian Peninsula
Danielle Donaldson
Trinity College, Cambridge

12:00 Session 2
Journey to the East: Beyond Space and Time (The Life of St. Macarius the Roman)
Z. D. Ainalis
University of Paris I–Panthéon-Sorbonne

Singing Your Praises: Depictions of Emperors and Imperial Rule in the Hymnic Collection of James of Edessa
Simon Ford
Exeter College, Oxford

Rural existences of early Medieval Byzantium in Niketas's Life of St Philaretos
Adam Izdebski
University of Warsaw

2:30 Session 3
A tale of two castles: Katsamon, Ras and the grand strategy of John II Komnenos
Maximilian C G Lau
Oriel College, Oxford

The imperial cult of saints in the Macedonian Dynasty
Miroslav Popovic
University of Belgrade

Labelling the Local: The Archangel Michael of Chonai
Alex Rodriguez Suarez
University of London – King’s College

4:15 Session 4
Mantzikert reversed? The last campaign of Alexios I Komnenos in the Alexiad of Anna Komnene
Roman Shlyakhtin
Central European University, Budapest

‘The Land of the Beautiful Horses’: The archaeology of medieval stables in Cappadocia
Filiz Tütüncü-Çağlar
University of Victoria, Canada

‘In the world but not of it’: the contribution of the monastic economy to the functioning of trading networks in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries
Gary Pitts
University of London – Royal Holloway
9:45 Session 5

The movements of manuscripts between Byzantium and the Arabic world and the hypothesis of the role of the Graeco-Arabic translation movement in the revival of literary production in Byzantium
Jakub Sypiański
University of Paris I–Panthéon-Sorbonne

Psaltika and Asmatika in the liturgical history of the Byzantine Empire
Olga Grinchenko
Brasenose College, Oxford

Eustathios of Thessaloniki: The Parekbolai on the Iliad. The Christian modifications made by Eustathios to pagan elements and polytheistic expressions in the Homeric text
Georgia Kolovou
University of Paris IV–Sorbonne

11:30 Session 7

Byzance et l’Égypte: influence ou confrontation, l’exemple des icônes médiévales de l’église Saint-Mercure du Vieux-Caire
Julien Auber de Lapierre
École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris

The painted decoration in the Church of Holy Anargyroi at Sangri, Naxos: observations on the monumental art of Naxos during the middle and late Byzantine periods
Theodora Konstantellou
University of Athens

The Representation of Stefan Dušan as New Constantine in the Church of St. George at Pološko in Macedonia
Ana Ristovska
École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris

2:00 Session 9

Magical Remedies in Late Antique Medical Handbooks
Petros Bouras-Vallianatos
Kellogg College, Oxford

The Dream of Caesar Bardas
Jonas J.H. Christensen
University of Copenhagen

Between Aries and Orion: stars, planets and signs in the Alexander Romance
Caterina Franchi
Exeter College, Oxford

The Prophecy of the Last Roman Emperor: Transformation and Influence of an Anti-Muslim Topos
Andras Kraft
Central European University, Budapest

4:15 Session 11

Roger de Flor’s Campaign of 1304 in Western Anatolia: A Reinterpretation
Wiktor Ostasz
St. Peter’s College, Oxford

No Triumphs, Just Words: Competing Political Discourses in Early Fifteenth Century Byzantium
Florin Leonte
Central European University, Budapest

The end is nearing – omens of the Fall of Constantinople
Annika Asp
Exeter College, Oxford

5:45 Closing Remarks

Professor Marc Lauxtermann
Bywater and Sotheby Professor of Byzantine and Modern Greek Language and Literature, Oxford
9:45 Session 6

From Roman to Byzantine Law: The Change in Testamentary Deeds from Late Antique Egypt  
Maria Nowak  
University of Warsaw

The *imitatio Constantinopolitanae urbis* as a means of legitimacy and political propaganda in Late Antiquity  
Carmen Eguiluz Méndez  
University of Cantabria, Santander

The effects of the Slav invasions in the Balkans in the sixth century  
Agata Koziej  
Nicolas Copernicus University, Torun

11:30 Session 8

The Politics of Memory and Visual Politics: Comparing the Self-representation of Constantine and Augustus  
Mariana Bodnaruk  
Central European University, Budapest

Cities of God: Space and Memory in Victor of Vita’s History of the Vandal Persecution  
Luke Gardiner  
Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

Les inventions de reliques dans l’Empire byzantin  
Estelle Cronnier  
University of Paris I–Panthéon-Sorbonne

2:00 Session 10

Jerusalem, Jerash, and Caesarea: late antique urban contexts in the Levant  
Morgan Dirodi  
St. Cross College, Oxford

Across the Desert Sands: The Shifting Routes of Southern Palestine and Transjordan in Late Antiquity  
Marlena Whiting  
Lincoln College, Oxford

Between Empires: Early Christian architecture in southern Mesopotamia and Persian Gulf region  
Agnieszka Lic  
Jagiellonian University, Kraków

Halabiya Zenobia: boire, manger, stocker au VIIème siècle  
Nairusz Haidar-Vela  
University of Paris I–Panthéon-Sorbonne

4:15 Session 12

Signs in the shape of Greek letters on frescos in Roman catacombs: comments on interpretations of so-called ‘gammadia’  
Maciej Szymaszek  
Pontifical University of John Paul II, Krakow

The wreathed cross or *stephanostaurion* on sixth-century marble chancel screens in the Mediterranean region  
Bernard Mulholland  
Queens University, Belfast

The Problematic of Iconoclasm in Byzantine Art Historical Periodisation  
Adam Levine  
Corpus Christi College, Oxford
Representing the Self: Understanding Late Roman Mausolea in Pannonia and Dalmatia

ZSOLT R. MAGYAR
Central European University, Budapest

Mausolea were distinguished sites of memory in Roman cemeteries. As a result of the shift of representation of power from monumental city centers to cemeteries in Late Antiquity, funerary buildings became religious and cultural centres of power. The very spatial distribution of burials around funerary buildings reveals that the most prestigious spots within late antique cemeteries were the ones closest to martyrria and other significant mausolea. While comparing the details of mausolea and mapping their spatial distribution is necessary to understand the overall situation in Pannonia and Dalmatia, my research takes a different direction and focuses on the ways in which people expressed their identities through their mausolea. Social, cultural, religious, professional, geographical and ethnic markers all contributed to peoples’ identities in Late Antiquity, as did age and gender, and these markers were visually expressed in funerary monuments. Mausolea represented the social selves of the deceased members of the local society and the power of the still-living relatives who built them. Martyrria channeled the spiritual power of the martyrs and highlighted the role of the builder of the martyrria or the donor of the relics inside; however, the power of the saints’ tombs also belonged to the whole community. My paper collects the published data on late antique mausolea in Pannonia and Dalmatia and analyses the data using aspects like the role of different identities in the representations and the importance of remembrance and forgetting for the contemporary viewers.

Zsolt Magyar is a third-year PhD Candidate working on a thesis entitled Representing the Self: Understanding Late Roman Mausolea in Pannonia and Dalmatia. He is interested in late antique archaeology, funerary representation and late Roman Sopianae.

The Architecture of the Episcopal Church in Doclea (Montenegro)

TATJANA KOPRIVICA
History Institute of Montenegro, Podgorica

In Late Antiquity, Doclea was the episcopal see of the Roman province of Prevalis, and scholars argue that the first-known Bishop of Doclea, Basus, was appointed in 325 or 326. Based on primary sources, Bishop Constantine of Doclea took part in the Council of Ephesus in 431, and Bishop Evander of Doclea participated in the Council of Chalcedon in 451. J. Arthur, R. Munro and a group of archaeologists from Oxford explored Doclea in 1893 and 1903. Munro and his colleagues’ work is exceptionally important for developing an understanding of the sacral topography of Doclea: in the eastern part of the town, they discovered medieval churches, Basilica A, Basilica B, and a cruciform church. This paper will deal with Basilica A, a fifth-century church which was repaired during Justinian’s reign.

Basilica A has three naves and an apse, which is semicircular in the interior and
polygonal on the exterior, and a *schola cantorum* in front of the apse, along with a *diaconicon* and a *prothesis*. The *synthronon* (built-in seats with space for the episcopal chair) was arranged along the apse. Basilica A also had a narthex, as well as the remains, most likely, of an episcopal palace, and thus the church is probably the Episcopal Church of Doclea.

**Tatjana Koprivica** is working on a PhD thesis entitled *The City of Doclea in the Late Antique and Early Medieval Period*. She has been employed as a senior researcher at the History Institute of Montenegro in Podgorica since 2001. Since 2006, she has been an associate of the Montenegrin institute for textbooks and teaching aids and is the author of three textbooks and manuals for the art history teaching program in primary schools. She is interested in Medieval art and architecture in Montenegro and the wider Mediterranean.

**Byzantine Fortifications in the Iberian Peninsula**

**DANIELLE DONALDSON**  
*Trinity College, Cambridge*

This paper will discuss problems surrounding the identification of a Byzantine presence in the Iberian Peninsula during the sixth century. It will focus upon the scholarly debate on the exact locations of Byzantine fortifications, using the textual and archaeological evidence.

Recent attempts to identify the Byzantine presence in the Iberian Peninsula through archaeology have revealed little conclusive evidence of Byzantine defensive constructions. This paper will argue that, in order to understand this apparent lack of fortifications, the imperial invasion of Spain must be reconsidered within the wider context of Justinianic foreign policy during the mid- to late-sixth century.

The Byzantine conquest of the Iberian Peninsula, begun by Justinian in 551/552 resulted in the creation of a Byzantine province in Spain that lasted until 625. This episode of Byzantine occupation had a profound effect in the shaping of the future Spanish nation, influencing Visigothic law, religion and political ideology. As the Mediterranean became a sphere of Byzantine influence for almost a century, Spain also formed close contacts with Italy and North Africa. My research will address key issues regarding the diplomatic, political and cultural consequences of contacts between the Visigothic kingdom and the Byzantine province in Spain.

**Danielle Donaldson** is a third-year PhD Candidate working on a thesis entitled *Byzantine Hispania and the Visigothic Kingdom of Spain*. She is interested in addressing key issues concerning the diplomatic, political and military consequences of the newly established Byzantine military presence in the Iberian Peninsula and the western Mediterranean on the Visigothic kingdom of Spain.
Journey to the East: Beyond Space and Time (the Life of St Macarius the Roman)

Z. D. AINALIS
University of Paris I–Panthéon-Sorbonne

It is undeniable that the vast majority of Byzantinists are unfamiliar with a curious text entitled, the Life of St Macarius the Roman. Except for some brief comments by Alexander Kazhdan in his People and Power in Byzantium (Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C., 1982) and a paper presented by Christina Angelidi during a recent conference (‘La face cachée de la littérature Byzantine’ (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 2008)), this exemplary text of the Greek medieval imagination remains mostly unknown.

The exceptional significance of the text lies in the fact that it is actually nothing more than an elaborate pastiche of commonplace themes from the Medieval imagination, oriental as well as occidental: the pits of hell where the sinners burn, flying dragons, kynokephalois and other equally spectacular creatures, the Arch of Alexander the Great at the End of the World, hermits in the Gates of Paradise, Lions in the service of Man, and so forth.

In this paper I am going to briefly present the basic lines of this text, provide a textual analysis and historical interpretation, and address some of the fundamental problems of dating. Also, as the title of the paper implies, I am going to try to point out the outlines of late antique mentality regarding the notions of ‘travel’, ‘space’ and ‘time’. 

Z. D. AINALIS is a third-year DPhil Candidate working on a thesis entitled De l’Éros et autres démons. Les représentations littéraires du tabou et de sa transgression dans l’imaginaire de la société tardo-antique (IVe–VIIIe siècles). He is mostly interested in the notions of taboo, of transgression, of deviant behaviours and their imaginary representation in the hagiographic texts of Late Antiquity.

Singing Your Praises: Depictions of Emperors and Imperial Rule in the Hymnic Collection of James of Edessa

SIMON FORD
Exeter College, Oxford

In AD 675, the bishop James of Edessa undertook the revision and perfection of the Syriac text and translation of a substantial corpus of Monophysite hymns. Originally composed in Greek and largely attributed to the work of Severus of Antioch, the hymns reflect the poetic output of the church between the beginning of the sixth century and invasion of Khusrau II in the early seventh century. Although primarily concerned with commemoration of saints’ feasts and liturgical festivals, the corpus also contains a handful of hymns dedicated to celebration of pious emperors and the denunciation of tyrants. As such, they form a small but vivid window into the Kaiserkritik of a church, which, during the period, witnessed the rise and fall of its political fortunes.

Despite this, however, the collection as a whole and the political hymns in particular, have received almost no attention from modern scholarship. Accordingly, this paper proposes to examine the representations of emperors
and empire in the hymns in the context of late antique church-state relations.

Simon Ford is a third year DPhil student in History, working on the socio-political and intellectual interactions between religious elites – Jews, Christians, and Samaritans – and the later Roman state, between the Council of Chalcedon and the Islamic conquest of the Diocese of Oriens.

Rural existences of early Medieval Byzantium in Niketas’s Life of St Philaretos

Adam Izdebski
University of Warsaw

A historian of early medieval Byzantium is in a difficult situation. The society he or she wants to investigate underwent major changes, yet the record of these changes in the written sources is only fragmentary and, moreover, remains highly problematic. For this reason, every text requires critical analysis before any conclusions can be drawn.

This paper offers such a reading of the Life of Philaretos, which is the second most popular source (after the Farmer’s Law) for the rural history of the Byzantine early middle ages. Although, at first glance, the lack of miracles and the ‘lay’ character of this source prompts a historian to put his or her trust into it, soon it turns out that the actual historical information it carries is far from being clear, hidden under the layers of topoi and other literary techniques, the chief one being the modelling of Philaretos on the biblical figure of Job (which goes as far as to describe Philaretos’s properties so that they resemble Job’s wealth).

Consequently, the aim of this paper is to distinguish the literary from the real in Niketas’s account and thus evaluate the usefulness of this text for a historian of the social life and the rural realities of Byzantium.

Adam Izdebski is a fourth-year PhD candidate in Byzantine and Ancient History working on a thesis entitled Village communities in early Medieval Byzantium, which in the end turned out to be focused on the rural economies and settlement rather than on the purely social history. Apart from the socio-economic history of late antique and Medieval Middle East and Italy, he is interested in Eastern Syriac Christianity and psychometrics.
The fortresses of Kastamon and Ras – cornerstones of John II’s Grand Strategy?

MAXIMILIAN C G LAU
Oriel College, Oxford

John II Komnenos has recently been called the most successful of the Komnenian emperors for his prudent strategy of reconquest in Asia Minor, based around short campaigns whose objective was the seizure of a castle. An essential part of understanding this strategy is to understand the system of fortresses that John erected, and in this paper I intend to focus on the role of two of these fortresses in that system and their relation to each other. These are Kastamon, once the family seat of the Komnenoi, in Paphlagonia, and Ras in modern Serbia. John’s recapture of Kastamon was immediately followed by his campaign against the rebelling Serbs and the rebuilding of Ras. In this paper I will argue that John’s retaking of Kastamon caused him to build a different sort of fortress at Ras, one that can tell us more about his grand strategy for both Anatolia and the Balkans in the first part of his reign.

This paper will use both the archaeological investigations undertaken at Ras by Popovic and at Kastamon by Crow, and then link them with the chroniclers and secondary literature to show a holistic picture of John’s fortresses, something that has so far not been attempted. This then can start to shed some light upon this important, but much neglected, reign and its priorities.

Maximilian C G Lau’s research interest is currently the reign of John II Komnenos and his role during what was the turning point for Byzantine History.

The imperial cult of saints in the Macedonian Dynasty

MIROSLAV POPOVIC
University of Belgrade

The Macedonian dynasty organised itself under the sign of the triumphant orthodoxy, after the repudiation of iconoclasm. It even had its holy protectors in the heavenly world, that had followed and protected Basil I during his usurpation and helped him in royal policies, and whose cults were gradually established through a system of feasts and processions. There was an obvious need for an elevation to sainthood or a saintly patron in the reigns of the early Macedonian emperors, Basil I and Leo VI, by means of which the whole ancestry could be sanctified, given a legacy and a parallel to an Old-Testament ideal.

This work strives to illustrate and characterise the importance that Basil I and Leo VI attributed to certain saints. It shall analyse the process through which some members of the ruling dynasty were sanctified (the empress Theophano, Patriarch Stephen and Constantine) and try to find some correlation between the saint-protector dynastic cult, the evolution of the legacy model (based on Old- and New-Testamental forms), and the rationalisation of imperial ideology. Every saint had their own clear role and meaning in the mosaic of imperial ideology and the ‘holy, God-chosen’ imperial ancestry.

The reigns of the first two Macedonian emperors are characterised by a struggle for the foundation of an imperial legacy, by the reworking of the basileus’ ideology and by
an attempt of creating cult. All of this was in order to sanctify the imperial ancestry.

MIROSŁAW POPOVIĆ’s main interests are the cultural history of the Macedonian period, Byzantine hagiography, the relationship between hagiographic and historiographic genres in the tenth to twelfth centuries and the spiritual and theological background of everyday life in Byzantium.

Labelling the Local: The Archangel Michael of Chonai

ALEX RODRIGUEZ SUAREZ
University of London – King’s College

This paper deals with an epithet that makes reference to the Archangel Michael. The adjective, Choniates, describes the archangel as the one from Chonai. The city of Chonai housed the most important sanctuary dedicated to the Archangel Michael in the Byzantine Empire, and consequently it was one of the most significant pilgrimage sites in Asia Minor. As of today, the nickname can be found in different media, among them, a fresco from Cappadocia, a famous manuscript in Paris and several seals. These examples will be used in order to explain the emergence of this phenomenon, which seems to have lasted very briefly, probably less than one century. Most of the inscriptions are dated to the eleventh century. Therefore, the aim is to understand the reasons that may have led to the creation of such a geographic label. Although its existence may not appear extraordinary due to the significance of the shrine at Chonai, the brevity of the phenomenon points to the opposite. The circumstances in Anatolia during the second half of the eleventh century could partly explain its invention. Furthermore, there is a political figure with connections near Chonai who may have played a central role in the diffusion of such a label and, moreover, the iconographic type attached to it. I will therefore argue that what probably started as an image of provincial advertisement was finally used as a means of imperial propaganda.

ALEX RODRIGUEZ SUAREZ’s research interests span the middle Byzantine Period with particular emphasis on the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The topic of his PhD is the Western presence and its effects on the Byzantine society and culture during the reigns of Alexios I and John II Komnenos. In addition, he is particularly interested in subjects related to art and iconography, such as the image of the Archangel Michael accompanied by the Choniates label, imperial representations thereof and its evolution through time.
‘The Land of the Beautiful Horses’: The archaeology of medieval stables in Cappadocia

FILIZ TÜTÜNCÜ-ÇAĞLAR
University of Victoria, Canada

Renowned since antiquity as the legendary ‘Land of the Beautiful Horses,’ Cappadocia has been an important horse-breeding centre throughout its history. The present work is a study on horses and horse breeding in this region in the tenth and eleventh centuries, with special attention being paid to the architectural evidence, namely, the rock-cut stables. The time period under question is marked by change and revival in Byzantine history, in which Cappadocia played a vital role for the defense and expansion of Byzantium in the east.

The point of departure for the present work is a hypothesis suggested by V.G. Kalas that the landowner families living in monumental rock-cut mansions of Cappadocia during the middle Byzantine period bred horses in their large stables to supply their own troops, as well as those of the imperial army. In order to evaluate this theory further and shed light on the history of horse breeding in Byzantine Cappadocia, this paper investigates the stables of the elite residences within their broader archaeological, ethno-archaeological and historical context.

Although there is no question about the presence of other types of domestic livestock, as also represented in architectural evidence, the present study proposes that the stables of the elite mainly functioned to house horses and, perhaps, mules, probably bred for military purposes. Analysing the architecture of the stables in the light of literary evidence, this paper aims to draw attention to the value of horse breeding for the study of social and economic history of Byzantine Cappadocia.

Filiz Tütüncü- Çağlar is a third-year PhD candidate at the University of Victoria in Canada specialising in Islamic ceramics. Her research interests include cross-cultural interactions on the Byzantine and Islamic frontier, art and archaeology of Medieval Anatolia and North Syria, and underwater archaeology.

Mantzikert reversed? The last campaign of Alexios I Komnenos in the Alexiad of Anna Komnene

ROMAN SHLYAKHTIN
Central European University, Budapest

The battle of Mantzikert (1071) is a reference point for all historiographers of the Komnenian era. Anna Komnene is not an exception. She starts her work with a short mentioning of the military disaster. Anna places another mentioning of Mantzikert at the very end of the Alexiad. According to her, in 1116 Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) won a battle against the sultan of Ikonion, Shahanshah (1107-1116), near the city of Philomelion. After the description of the peace ceremony Anna narrates a story about this sultan. He became an ally of Alexios Komnenos after the battle, but later was betrayed and blinded during interene-cine war the by one of his amirs.

Shahanshah’s fate reminds me of Byzantine emperor Romanos IV Diogenes, who was also defeated, captured and blinded. In the battle of Mantzikert, the Byzantines were defeated by the Seljuks; in
the battle of Polybotes, Seljuks were defeated by Byzantines. Romanos Diogenes lost the battle and was blinded. In the *Alexiad*, the role of the blinded loser is given to sultan Shahanshah.

In my presentation I intend to show that one can interpret the last campaign of Alexios Komnenos in Anatolia as a ‘mirror’ of the battle of Mantzikert. By inserting this episode into her narrative, Anna Komnene built a circular narrative structure: the biography of her father started with Mantzikert, and finished with it. In 1071, Alexios was too young to fight; in 1116, Anna Komnene made her father defeat the Seljuks and ‘reverse’ the battle of 1071.

**Roman Shlyakhtin** is writing his dissertation on the image of the Seljuk Turks in Byzantine historiography of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. He is interested in the history of Byzantine literature and the history of images in general. He is also working on several small projects in the area of military history; his dream is to write a book about the battle at Myriokephalon (1176), which he tried to reconstruct in his MA Thesis. He also takes interest in the history of Byzantine diplomacy, with special attention to the relations between Byzantine Empire and Crusader States.

‘In the world but not of it’: the contribution of the monastic economy to the functioning of trading networks in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries

**GARY PITTS**

*University of London – Royal Holloway*

The great monasteries of the Byzantine Empire were often as well-resourced as the *dynatoi* and had significant territorial and administrative reach, coupled with a robust infrastructure and tax privileges. They also had an international dimension involving some of the ‘diaspora’ trading communities (e.g. the Amalfitans and the Armenians). This paper examines the role that the trading infrastructure of the great Byzantine monasteries played in the broader web of trading networks. These networks linked local and international trading networks and were a powerful force for commerce within the Empire and beyond. By examining the cases of key monastic communities and their trading activities, this paper aims to identify whether there are any conclusions which can be applied to less well-documented normal commercial activity. The paper will use both textual and archaeological evidence.

Gary Pitts is a part-time MPhil/PhD student at Royal Holloway, University of London, working on a thesis on the functioning and interaction of trading networks in the Eastern Mediterranean in the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. He is interested in diaspora networks and the economic life of objects. Gary is Head of Compliance for Europe, Mid-East and Africa of an investment bank.
The movements of manuscripts between Byzantium and the Arabic world and the hypothesis of the role of the Graeco-Arabic translation movement in the revival of literary production in Byzantium

JAKUB SYPIAŃSKI
University of Paris I–Panthéon-Sorbonne

Between the ninth and tenth centuries, interest in Greek manuscripts increased both in Byzantium and in Muslim countries. Both phenomena have much in common, but despite the geographical proximity, their appearance at almost the same time is sometimes considered incidental. Paul Lemerle, author of classic studies of the Macedonian Renaissance (Le premier humanisme byzantin) rejects any connection between them. His view has been recently reviewed by Dimitri Gutas, a specialist in the Graeco-Arabic translation movement in the Abbasid caliphate. According to him, these translations could have possibly given impetus to the resumption of literary production in Byzantium after the ‘Dark Ages’. In addition, revived demand in the caliphate for the Greek manuscripts of texts needed for translation activity could have resumed the activity of copying manuscripts in Byzantium.

In this light, an almost complete correlation between the list of works translated into Arabic in Baghdad and a list of manuscripts first copied in Byzantium in ninth century, are particularly interesting. In my paper I intend to focus specifically on one aspect of this theory. I want to explore the Byzantine and Arab narratives of manuscripts deriving from the other side of the border. Some of these stories can be considered as contrived, therefore in addition to exploring the ways by which the manuscripts moved around, I would like to examine how we can explain the appearance of fictional stories on this topic.

Jakub Sypiański’s research interests are the intellectual relations between Byzantium and the Arab world until the tenth century. In broad terms, they include all areas of cultural contacts between Byzantium, the Arab world and the Latin West in the middle ages.

Psaltika and Asmatika in the liturgical history of the Byzantine Empire

OLGA GRINCHENKO
Brasenose College, Oxford

The Byzantine Rite is known for its magnificent services, beautiful music, and meaningful poetry. Despite the large number of the liturgical manuscripts which have come down to us, the history of the Byzantine office is yet to be written. My paper will be dealing with a particular type of the Byzantine liturgical manuscripts – Asmatika and Psaltika. These are collections of hymns (mostly kontakia) to be sung by a choir (Asmatika) and a soloist (Psaltika) in the Orthodox Office dating from the late tenth to fourteenth centuries. At first glance all manuscripts resemble each other and have a similar tripartite structure; however, each copy is absolutely unique. In my paper I will provide a comparative analysis of the content of the manuscripts, describe their liturgical and calendrical features, and bring attention to the enigmatic
notation contained in these collections. It will help to shed some light on the history of one of the central genres of the Byzantine liturgical poetry such as kontakion, as well as the historical development of the Asmatika and Psaltika, which will give us a better understanding of the liturgical and musical traditions in the Byzantine empire and allow us to put them in a broader context of the Byzantine civilisation.

Olga Grinchenko is in the third year of a DPhil in Medieval Slavonic Studies. She is interested in a comparative analysis of the Byzantine and Slavonic collections of hymns; musical, textual and historical aspects of the liturgical poetry of Byzantium and pre-Mongol Russia, along with the development of the Eastern liturgical tradition in general and the history of European hymnographic books.

Eustathios of Thessaloniki: The Parekbolai on the Iliad. The Christian modifications made by Eustathios to pagan elements and polytheistic expressions in the Homeric text

Georgia Kolovou
University of Paris IV–Sorbonne

Eustathios of Thessaloniki, the most important scholar of the 12th century, wrote a particular commentary on the Iliad. The particularity of this commentary is revealed by the title itself of his work: Parekbolai are the extracts of the commentaries on Homer which compose an autonomous, continuous, and independent commentary on the Iliad. Eustathios selects and compiles the ancient scholia, the notes, the citations and the extracts of other authors in order to explicate Homer. Evidently, the Homeric citations constitute the starting point of his analysis and his compiled commentary on Homer.

The present paper demonstrates the way in which Eustathios treats and integrates in his commentary the Homeric citations; and particularly, our interest is to show how the Christian commentator treats the pagan elements and the polytheistic expressions of the Homeric text. Through a comparative reading between the Homeric citations of known editions and the Homeric citations in Eustathios, our aim is to demonstrate the Christian modifications of Eustathios to the Homeric text, the anti-pagan commentary that he invents, the replacement of the polytheistic expressions of the Homeric text by a monotheistic version and the method of the scholar to christianise, in a certain way, the interpretation of some Homeric verses.

Georgia Kolovou is a third-year DPhil Candidate working on a thesis entitled: The conception of Homer in Eustathius Thessalonicensis. Translation and Analysis of the Commentary of Eustathius on the rhapsody VI of Iliad. Her research interests are: Homeric scholia, commentaries, lexica and grammatical treatises of the Byzantine period and Byzantine literature of twelfth century.
From Roman to Byzantine Law: The Change in Testamentary Deeds from Late Antique Egypt

MARIA NOWAK  
University of Warsaw

This paper will study the interaction between statutory law and legal practice in Late Antiquity, and will focus on the external form of late Roman wills, known thanks to legal papyri and sources of statutory law, especially the Theodosian and Justinianic Codes. Through the investigation of testamentary deeds, I intend to illustrate how law and legal concepts evolved in Late Antiquity, as well as whether these changes were products of intentional legislative politics or were more accidental in nature.

A comparison between testaments preserved on papyrus and parchment and sources of statutory law illustrates both the level of legal knowledge and its application in the provinces. This paper aims to present the origins of solutions concerning the external form of wills as described in the codes of Late Antiquity. By confronting both documents of legal practice and the legal sources, I attempt to reconstruct relations between the development of the form of wills at the level of legal practice and the content of laws. As any single concordance between law and practice may be a misleading coincidence, one must follow whether changes in law corresponded with changes in practice in order to determine their relationship.

MARIA NOWAK is a doctoral candidate at the Department of Roman and Antique Law (University of Warsaw). Her research interests are papyrology and legal history.

The imitatio Constantinopolitanae urbis as a means of legitimacy and political propaganda in Late Antiquity

CARMEN EGUILUZ MÉNDEZ  
University of Cantabria, Santander

Constantinople, founded by Constantine in the fourth century on the site of the ancient Byzantium, became the nerve centre of the Roman empire, Rome having become a mere symbolic centre long before. Founded not as an antithesis to the Roma senior, but in order to unify the Greek and Roman world, the πόλις was transformed – thanks to ideological and energetic policies of civic restoration (anakaínesis or renovatio) – into a New Rome, successor and advocate of the imperial political unity.

A century later, the new Germanic leaders, in an attempt to assimilate their own political structures with Roman ones, adapted or built their capitals based on the model embodied by Constantinople, the only legitimate heiress of the first capital. This is what Cassiodorus defined as imitatio imperii or exemplar unici imperii. Thus Theoderic, in his Ostrogothic reign, and later Leovigild, in the Visigothic reign, tried to turn the cities of Ravenna and Toledo, respectively, into urbes regiae, through a program of ideological and urban imitation, a way also, at the same time, to consolidate and legitimate their power.

CARMEN EGUILUZ MÉNDEZ is a doctoral student working on the study of urban evolution of the sedes regiae in Italy and Spain between Late Antiquity and the
early middle ages, focusing on Ostrogothic Ravenna and Visigothic Toledo, since both used the model of Constantinople in order to develop themselves from an urban and ideological point of view. This doctorate received a Marie Curie Fellowship to fund a research stay for ten months at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice (September 2008–June 2009).

The effects of the Slav invasions in the Balkans in the sixth century

AGATA KOZIEJ
Nicolas Copernicus University, Torun

My paper will deal with the results of the Slavic invasions in the Balkan Peninsula during the sixth century. I will describe the self-development process of this barbaric tribe, who settled near the borders of the Byzantine empire at the turn of the sixth century and who have remained at the same place to the present day.

To begin, there will be a short chronology of the Slavic attacks on the Byzantine empire from the beginning of the reign of Justinian I up to the counteroffensive of Maurice. This will be followed by a description of the consequences of these invasions, dealing with the influence on the politics and international relations of the Empire, as well as economy, trade and demographic structure. It will be shown how these factors resulted in a decline of urban civilisation and an economic crisis in the northern provinces of the Empire. I will also examine how the appearance of the Slavs in the Balkan Peninsula changed the ethnic structure of the Byzantine empire and caused the great migrations of autochthons to the north by land or by sea.

Agata Kociej is a graduate student of History and Balkan studies in Nicolas Copernicus University in Torun. Her interests concern the history of the Balkan Peninsula during the Byzantine empire, especially the cultural exchange between Slavic tribes and Byzantium and the consequences of their cooperation. She is interested in the Medieval history of Albania and the formation of an Albanian national consciousness, but also in the process of ethnic changes caused by the arrival of the Slavs in the Balkan Peninsula.

JULIEN AUBER DE LAPIERRE
École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris

SUMMARY: On the basis of medieval icons in the Church of Saint Mercurius of Old Cairo, this paper seeks to evaluate the influence of Byzantine art on the Christian art of Egypt and to examine the usefulness of the notion of ‘Coptic art’.

L’icône, objet de dévotion par excellence chez les chrétiens orientaux, est avant tout liée à un sens théologique profond avant de pouvoir être identifiée comme une œuvre d’art. Pourtant, bien que systématiquement assimilée au monde byzantin, l’icône est tout autant présente dans le Levant et en Égypte dans le culte des Coptes orthodoxes.

Tandis que l’art chrétien sur ce territoire s’est toujours revendiqué comme un «art copte», les dernières études effectuées on tendance à remettre systématiquement cette notion en question. Longtemps considéré comme inexistant en Égypte, un témoignage de l’art byzantin est ainsi largement visible dans le domaine des icônes.

Les panneaux médiévaux ont la triste particularité d’être peu nombreux en Égypte, ce qui n’a jamais facilité leur étude. Ce manque, dû notamment à des dispersions, des destructions ou des réutilisations, n’empêche pourtant en rien de se pencher sur cet art si singulier et tellement différent des peintures murales que l’on peut observer dans la plupart des monastères coptes.

Ainsi, en se basant sur les icônes médiévales présentes dans l’église Saint-Mercure du Vieux-Caire, nous tenterons d’évaluer l’impact que l’art byzantin a pu avoir sur l’art chrétien d’Égypte et quelle est alors la véritable valeur de la notion d’«art copte».

JULIEN AUBER DE LAPIERRE is a doctoral candidate in the History of Art and is working on a thesis concerning an icon painter of Armenian origin, Yuhanna al-Armani al-Qudsi, who was active in Ottoman Egypt. His interests include the Egyptian art and archaeology, especially religious art of the eighteenth century.

The painted decoration in the Church of Holy Anargyroi at Sangri, Naxos: observations on the monumental art of Naxos during the middle and late Byzantine periods

THEODORA KONSTANTELLOU
University of Athens

The island of Naxos, situated in the heart of Aegean Sea, occupies a significant position in Byzantine art due to the large number of churches, many with wall paintings, which date from the early and middle Byzantine periods, as well as from the period between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when Naxos was under the rule of the Venetians. The existence of such a large number of wall painting layers is an authentic testimony to the artistic vitality and furthermore, to the social and financial history of the island at that time.

The Second Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities for the Cyclades (Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism) has recently conducted a rescue operation for
the Church of Holy Anargyroi in the region of Sangri, from which two layers of significant painted surfaces were discovered and conserved. This paper will concentrate on the analysis of the programme and style of the wall paintings in an attempt to draw conclusions on the dating, the patronage and the monumental function.

I also intend to shed light on related subjects like the role of the Naxians in the artistic output during the period under Venetian occupation, the probable existence of western influences in the art of Naxian wall paintings of this period, and in general, the process of the artistic confrontation and integration between the two cultures. In this way, I will attempt to envisage the cultural setting within which the monumental painting of this period was produced.

Theodora Konstantellou comes from the University of Athens. Her research interests include painting in the periphery of the Byzantine world, especially Greece, and the study of artistic production within a broader art-historical context.

The Representation of Stefan Dušan as New Constantine in the Church of St. George at Pološko in Macedonia

ANA RISTOVSKA
École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris

Constantine the Great was venerated for the example he had set for the succeeding rulers, at first Byzantine but later Serbian, Bulgarian and even Russian. In Medieval Serbia, the development of this ideology is attested from the earliest days of the Nemanjić dynasty.

On the façade of the church of St. George at Pološko, a very impressive image of the Serbian king Stefan Dušan and his family is depicted. This image represents the most explicit example in Medieval art, where iconography makes a direct analogy between a Serbian ruler and Constantine the Great. The aim of the present paper is to examine, through this representation, the desire of Dušan to present himself as a New Constantine in light of the political changes in the fourth decade of the fourteenth century, such as the rise of the Serbian kingdom and the proclamation of the Serbian empire.

Ana Ristovska recently defended her PhD dissertation, entitled The Church of St. George at Pološko, Research of the Monument and its Wall Paintings, at the École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris. Her research examines a number of aspects related to fourteenth-century Byzantine iconography, through the study of St. George Church at Pološko in Macedonia.
The Politics of Memory and Visual Politics: Comparing the Self-representation of Constantine and Augustus

MARIANA BODNARUK
Central European University, Budapest

Examining the imperial politics of memory helps elucidate the social, cultural and political changes which occurred in the Roman world in Late Antiquity. The crisis of the third century AD accelerated processes of transformation that had begun in the late Roman period, particularly in the urban spaces of Rome. Especially in the early fourth century, the conversion of the emperor Constantine to Christianity, as well as the structural transformations of the Roman empire, which are revealed through an analysis of the politics of memory together with visual politics, forced Roman society to come to terms with the religious and political consequences of the newly-Christian empire. The Eusebian model of emperor, state, and church which emerged from the fourth century eventually won out and, though it was questioned in Late Antiquity, became the basic political model for Byzantium.

This paper will focus on the following question: What were the similarities and differences between Constantine’s and Augustus’ modes of self-representation? Structural analogies between Augustan and Constantinian exploitation of visual language, as well as Constantine’s own appropriation of a pre-existing imperial visual repertoire for self-representation, explicate the ways in which emperors engaged in a politics of memory to relate to the past. Did Constantine relate to the imperial past, the Tetrarchy in particular, as Augustus did to the Republican past? Thus, a fundamental formulation follows: the study of the imperial politics of memory helps explain the massive changes to the Roman empire in Late Antiquity. This paper will specify necessary limits on this critique of political ideology.

MARIANA BODNARUK is an MA student specialising in late antique, Byzantine, and Early Ottoman Studies in the Medieval Studies Department, Central European University. Her research interests cover Late Antiquity, early Byzantium and cultural and memory studies. Her previous topics of focus were issues of memory and forgetting, particularly memory in imperial culture, which led her to the broader field of late antique and Byzantine cultural and art history.

Cities of God: Space and Memory in Victor of Vita’s History of the Vandal Persecution

LUKE GARDINER
Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

Beyond the Vandals’ conquest of Carthage, their progressive co-option of many Romano-Africans profoundly shook the confidence of certain leading Catholic clerics. This paper will show how one cleric, Victor of Vita, contested factors he perceived as crucial to this co-option (and the wider project of the legitimation of Vandal rule), from Vandal appropriation of the secular and religious loci, landscapes, and ideology on which much North African (and) Catholic identity was predicated, to
the more independent, spontaneous creation of a literary ‘shared secular space’, common to many Romano-Africans and Vandals and emblematised in the poems of the *Anthologia Latina* by the glittering imagined landscape of a new Carthage. Such valorised associations of Vandal rule with a new flourishing of secular culture are, for instance, undermined in Victor’s depictions of their destruction of many landmarks of Carthage.

Elsewhere in his *History*, Victor shows Vandals appropriating ancestral martyrial basilicas, depriving Victor’s Catholics of their public religious spaces and their martyrial heritage, only to create, through their persecutions, new martyrs – new links to the North African past - and to transform the private, marginalised spaces to which Catholics had been relegated into new loci of public religious life as they become martyr shrines.

Above all, Victor re-imagines Carthage, to the exclusion of the secular ‘collaborationist’ or the Arian Vandal, through his use of the typological models (frequently conceptualised spatially) of Biblical Zion and the ‘City of Martyrs’ – martyrs whose bloodied bodies are literally integrated into the urban fabric. Such models, derived from those rhetorical tools fashioned during the earlier, Donatist schism by both Catholics and Donatists, as well as Victor’s wider reclamation of North African space and history serve to prevent the marginalisation of Catholic identity, the development of widespread apostasy, and to forestall the feared emergence of that perennial legacy of persecution and apostasy: schism.

**Luke Gardiner** is a PhD student at Cambridge, working on Church History, heresiology, and the theorisation of (problems of) knowledge in the fifth century.

**Les inventions de reliques dans l’Empire byzantin**

**ESTELLE CRONNIER**  
*University of Paris I–Panthéon-Sorbonne*

**SUMMARY:** This paper will discuss the drive for the collection of relics in the Eastern Roman empire from the fourth to the seventh centuries. It will try to explain this phenomenon in light of its Jewish and Pagan antecedents and also to examine it in relation to religious funerary monuments of the time.

Le phénomène de l’invention ou découverte de reliques, corporelles ou non, qui devait voir le jour dès les premiers siècles du christianisme, dans l’Empire romain, n’a pas laissé que d’intriguer. Où, comment, et peut-être surtout pourquoi devait-il éclore et se développer à ce point ? – telles sont les questions qui viennent immédiatement à l’esprit. Les réponses, des réponses existent, sans doute; elles sont complexes, comme tout ce qui engage à la fois l’homme et son milieu, ses traditions, ses croyances.

Au nombre des premières inventions, celle de la Vraie Croix, fait figure de modèle; elle a suscité de nombreux débats et de fort riches études. D’autres exemples, d’autres ‘dossiers’ non moins fourmillants et ardues ont à leur tour retenu l’attention des historiens; mais aucune étude d’ensemble n’existe encore à ce jour.

Je propose, dans le cadre de la conférence annuelle des doctorants, de présenter quelques réflexions sur le culte des reliques
dans ces premiers siècles de l’Empire chrétien et byzantin. Il semble en effet que le christianisme ait d’abord eu du mal à admettre ce culte. Pourquoi alors tout à coup ces découvertes ou redécouvertes à intervalles réguliers qui n’allaient plus cesser? Pour obtenir des éléments de réponse, il est nécessaire de revenir sur la question des origines, et de s’interroger sur la place qu’y occupent les divers héritages (juifs ou païens). D’autre part, je voudrais m’interroger sur le caractère mémoriel de la sépulture, et tenter d’analyser comment une traditio ressurgit de ce monument même de la mémoire qu’est la tombe sainte, le tombeau (memoria).

Estelle Cronnier is a doctoral candidate and is working on a thesis concerning the invention and ‘discovery’ of relics in the eastern provinces of the Roman empire. Her research involves the close reading of art, architecture, historiography and hagiography of the fourth to seventh centuries.
Magical Remedies in Late Antique Medical Handbooks

PETROS BOURAS-VALLIANATOS
Kellogg College, Oxford

The paper discusses the magical remedies in the *Therapeutics* of Alexander of Tralles, in light of his construction of a multifarious medical compendium. Writing in the late sixth century, Alexander of Tralles combined his own rich practical knowledge with Galenic theories. He refers not only to the etymology, forms and symptomatology of diseases, but also to therapies including separate mention for dietetics and pharmacology. Additionally, he does not hesitate to refer to a variety of mysterious substances such as parts of animals or amulets in connection with magical remedies.

His work provides us with information about popular magical practices from various places and shows the sociocultural standards of the period. Even though Alexander recommends the use of every possible kind of healing, he differentiates his approach when it comes to using magic and does not try to explain those remedies in scientific terms. Alexander was influenced by the socially versatile context of the sixth-century milieu and clearly depicts the competition between rational and irrational medical practices. As a physician with a rational approach, the inclusion of such remedies makes him an extraordinary case.

Petros Bouras-Vallianatos has research interests in late antique and Byzantine medicine and pharmacy, the history of epilepsy in Byzantium and female imagery in Psellos’ *Chronographia*.

The Dream of Caesar Bardas

JONAS J.H. CHRISTENSEN
University of Copenhagen

The *Vita Ignatii* of Nicetas David Paphlagon is an important source for the events that lead to the rise of Basil I to the throne and to the partisan factions active in the years after the final abolition of Iconoclasm in 843. The text is, partly, a long harangue against Photius and the persons associated with him, most prominently the *caesar* Bardas, Michael III’s uncle and, according to tradition, de facto ruler of the Byzantine Empire in the years before the advent of Basil I. An intriguing episode in the *Vita Ignatii* is the story of Bardas’ dream, in which Bardas narrates his dream of his own and Michael III’s condemnation by St. Peter. Nicetas makes explicit mention of the biblical precedents of dreams sent to rulers and the whole episode invites interpretation and comparison from within the narrative framework of the *Vita Ignatii*, as well as other texts. Remarks on dream interpretation scattered throughout the text make it possible to add further meaning to this otherwise self-contained episode and thus to see it as a part of the narrative as a whole. I will suggest some readings and implications of such a contextual reading of the episode and make some cursory remarks on the consequences of the re-use of such an episode in later historiography.

Jonas J. H. Christensen’s research interests include the impact of Iconoclasm and the immediate aftermath of the Triumph of Orthodoxy on the literature of the ninth and tenth centuries, as well as the philosophical production of the middle Byzantine period.
Between Aries and Orion: stars, planets and signs in the Alexander Romance

CATERINA FRANCHI
Exeter College, Oxford

The legend says that when Alexander was born, the temple of Artemis in Ephesus burnt down to its foundations and that Philip saw in his dreams an eagle dropping a snake egg on his lap. The little snake, after having made a circle around its egg, died. It is also said that, some days before dying, Alexander saw his throne occupied by a fool who wore his garments. When the Conqueror of the World died, the earth itself, the legend says, was desperate for this loss and trembled, and the stars stopped to shine.

The birth, life and death of Alexander, as those of the great characters of Antiquity, have always been sealed by prophecies, celestial upheavals, alignments of the stars, and all these legends find their apotheosis in the Alexander Romance, a fictional work that influenced the occidental and oriental Middle Ages with its fantastic tales, reports of voyages, strange creatures and fabulous places.

This paper will focus on the attestations in this text of astrology. First it will deal with the natal chart of Alexander as it is calculated by Nectanebus, his real father and magician, which presents textual and logical problems in the first third-century α version of the Romance. Then it will discuss astronomy - the stars Nectanebus shows Alexander in the seventh-century Byzantine version ε. Finally, it will concentrate on the series of prophecies related especially to his birth and death that are to be found in all the versions, with a comparison with the prophecies as they are told by historians.

CATERINA FRANCHI is a second year DPhil candidate in Medieval & Modern Languages. She studied in Bologna, Italy, and in Paris, and has always worked on the text known as the Alexander Romance, in its Greek versions, and on the reception of Alexander the Great’s figure in Medieval tradition. She is currently working on a critical edition of Greek manuscripts of the λ version (sixth or seventh century) of the Alexander Romance.

The Prophecy of the Last Roman Emperor: Transformation and Influence of an Anti-Muslim Topos

ANDRAS KRAFT
Central European University, Budapest

One of the longest-lived and most influential apocalyptical themes in Christian as well as in Muslim tradition is the notion of a last glorious ruler who restores peace and prosperity on earth while preparing the worldly domain for its transition into the divine realm. This last ruler is known in the Christian commonwealth as the Last Roman Emperor, while its Islamic equivalent can be found in the notion of the Mahdi.

In my paper I will examine the concept of the Last Roman Emperor as it is articulated in the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius. I will trace its sources and evaluate the developments of its subsequent use down to the ninth century. By means of conceptual comparison I shall map the use and the adaptations of this eschatological
topos which, most notably, comprised anti-Muslim prophecies that were designed to counteract Islamic religious aspirations.

My investigation will show how the hard-line polemical attitude of the Last Roman Emperor was reused and adapted in subsequent polemics, but also how it was, at times, de-emphasized in order to accommodate a less aggressive opposition and instead to make a more subtle argumentation as seen, for example, in John of Damascus’ writings on Islam. In addition, it becomes clear how this originally Christian theme influenced the Muslim concept of the Mahdī, which eventually came to be incorporated into Christian eschatological considerations as seen, for instance, in the Bahira Legend.

Andras Kraft’s current research focuses on early Christian reactions to Islam (seventh through ninth centuries). He has previously dealt with the theology of Origen of Alexandria, and with Origenism and its relationship to the Desert Fathers. More recently, he has extensively studied Aristotelianism in the Muslim East, focusing on the philosophy of al-Ghazālī.
Jerusalem, Jerash, and Caesarea: late antique urban contexts in the Levant

MORGAN DIRODI
St. Cross College, Oxford

The late antique cities of the Eastern Mediterranean were flourishing centres of wealth and culture. Nowhere is this more true than in the case of Jerusalem, a city that was transformed, almost overnight, from a minor provincial city to a centre of major religious, economic and cultural importance thanks to the actions of Constantine and his successors. The objective of this paper will be to contextualise the process of urban development by means of a comparison with two other major urban centres of the region: Caesarea Maritima and Jerash.

It is my intention to show how the processes that affected Jerusalem have parallels in these other two cities. In particular, I will concentrate on exploring and comparing the alterations in the urban contexts of these three cities. It is my belief that these processes are results of the economic and ideological pressures resulting from the rise of Jerusalem as a religious and pilgrimage powerhouse of global proportions. This resulted in a transformation of the local economy and also in the way that urban space was viewed in Jerusalem. As a result of these changes, the cities of the region experienced similar transformations of their topography for economic (Caesarea) or religious (Jerash) reasons.

Morgan Dirodi is doing a DPhil in History on urban development in the eastern Mediterranean from the fourth to the seventh century. His research interests are, in particular, the impact that Christianity and Christianisation had on the urban environment, the transformation of street plans and urban topography, and the transition between Byzantine and early Umayyad cities.

Across the Desert Sands: The Shifting Routes of Southern Palestine and Transjordan in Late Antiquity

MARLENA WHITING
Lincoln College, Oxford

The region of Southern Palestine and Transjordan reflects the confluence of different social and political phenomena – the military, trade and pilgrimage – that all had an impact on the shape of the road network in this region, which took on a different appearance from the fourth through seventh centuries. This paper will examine, through a mixture of archaeological and textual evidence, the changes wrought on the road system of Southern Palestine and Transjordan, from the fragmentation of the second century Via Nova Traiana and the impact of long distance and local trade to the increase in traffic through central Sinai as a result of the desire of pilgrims to visit the holy places.

Marlena Whiting graduated with a BA from Wellesley College and an MPhil in Byzantine Studies from Oxford. She is currently working on a DPhil entitled Travel and Accommodation in the Late Antique East Mediterranean.
Between Empires: Early Christian architecture in southern Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf region

AGNIESZKA LIC
Jagiellonian University, Kraków

This paper examines early Christian architecture in the Sassanian empire as well as under indirect Persian supremacy, from the earliest remains up to the rise of Islam. Architectural decoration and some structural solutions of the churches in Ğubail, Sīr Bānī Yās, Al-Quṣur, Ḥīra, ‘Ain’Sha’ia and others indicate Persian exemplars, while they can be compared in plan with Christian architecture in Byzantine Syria.

I will focus on whether Christian architecture formed an independent building tradition in Persia or was strongly derivative of Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture, and will discuss examples of plaster decoration, spatial disposition of the churches, and specific architectural elements such as engaged columns. Due to the lack of large scale archaeological excavations in today’s Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia, the architectural history of the region is not a focus of major current research. However, we now have enough information to attempt to place the region’s churches into the history of early Christian architecture.

AGNIESZKA LIC is a graduate student in art history and comparative studies of civilisations, working on an MA thesis concerning crusader art. She is interested in early Christian and Byzantine art and architecture, especially in Mesopotamia and in the Arabian Peninsula, and in artistic interactions between Christians and Muslims in the Near East in the middle ages.

Halabiya Zenobia: boire, manger, stocker au VIIème siècle

NAIRUSZ HAIDAR-VELA
University of Paris I–Panthéon-Sorbonne

Summary: The site of Halabiya-Zenobia, situated next to the Euphrates in Syria, was a garrison town in Late Antiquity, with extant ruins dating from the reign of Justinian I. Based on archaeological investigations in 2009 and 2010, this paper will discuss the challenges in distinguishing between Byzantine and Umayyad patterns of occupation in the transitional seventh-century period on the basis of the ceramic evidence.

Le site de Halabiya-Zenobia, situé au bord de l’Euphrate en Syrie était, durant l’Antiquité tardive, une ville de garnison. C’est à Justinien que nous devons l’ensemble des ruines monumentales visibles aujourd’hui, bien que l’occupation du site ait perdu au-delà de l’époque protobyzantine.

Lors de la campagne de 2010, plusieurs pièces venant compléter un bâtiment découvert en 2009 ont été mises au jour. La quantité de céramique recueillie, ainsi que sa diversité, lui confèrent un intérêt scientifique indéniable. A travers le matériel issu de ce bâtiment, cet exposé dressera un panorama complet du vaisselier typique d’une période restreinte chronologiquement. En effet, par comparaison avec le matériel issu d’autres sites de la région, il semblerait que ce bâtiment ait été construit à la fin de l’Antiquité tardive et qu’aucune occupation omeyyade ne soit, pour le moment, attestée. Seul le VIIème siècle serait alors représenté.
Les niveaux de transition byzantino-omeyyade, bien qu'essentiels à la compréhension des sites, demeurent peu connus car peu publiés. Les changements politiques ne se reflètent pas systématiquement sur les céramiques. La longue tradition potière proto-byzantine a laissé son empreinte dans les productions omeyyades et il n'est pas toujours aisé de distinguer les caractéristiques de la fin de l'empire proto-byzantin de celles propres aux débuts de l'Islam. De plus, les changements s'opèrent lentement dans cette région où les productions, tout en restant tributaires des caractéristiques locales, s'imprègnent d'autres influences de par ses nombreuses zones d'approvisionnement. Le matériel étudié, tout en gardant les traces propres à l'époque proto-byzantine tels que les tituli picti en grec et les motifs de croix, se voit doté de nouvelles formes et décors que nous retrouverons tout au long de l'époque omeyyade.

Nairusz Haidar-Vela has been working on a doctoral thesis on the proto-Byzantine ceramics of Northern Syria since 2006. Her work deals with material from three sites: Halabiya Zenobiya, the monastery of Saint Symeon and El Bara. She is also working on the ceramics of Tyre in Lebanon in order to have a broader view of material culture in the east during the Byzantine period.
Roger de Flor’s Campaign of 1304 in Western Anatolia: A Reinterpretation

WIKTOR OSTASZ
St. Peter’s College, Oxford

The hiring of the Catalan Company was an event of central importance in the long reign of Andronikos II. After a textbook combat performance against the Turkomans in Anatolia, the mercenary army almost bled the empire to death. As most scholars have approached the Catalan episode with regard to its traumatic outcome, the first phase from the arrival of the Company in 1303 to the assassination of Roger de Flor in 1305, has too often been dismissed as a mere herald of the strife to come. While the aims and policies of the emperor and his Latin gambros have often been misrepresented as clashing, a close reading of the sources reveals a degree of understanding between the two. Although Roger was quick to enter the role of an imperial official, his methods should be carefully distinguished from those of his recruits. Andronikos had sound reasons to trust the Company and solid precedents on which to build his approach to the eastern problem.

It is the political and military activities of Roger de Flor on his mission to the Anatolian borderland that require reconsideration, as they offer an extraordinary glimpse of the provincial society deeply discontented with the Palaeologan rule and ready to follow local leaders. The Genoese connection of Roger and the curious possibility of some Catalans subsequently joining the ‘plundering confederacy’ of Karası Turks add more complexity to the interplay of various political forces in early fourteenth century Anatolia.

 Wiktor Ostasz is a graduate student of St. Peter’s College, Oxford. His research interests include the history, archaeology and historical geography of Byzantine and Medieval Turkish Anatolia, society and culture in the Christian–Muslim frontier zones, realities of provincial life in the Medieval Mediterranean, navigation, piracy and business enterprises in the Medieval Mediterranean and the history of the Medieval Crown of Aragon.

No Triumphs, Just Words: Competing Political Discourses in Early Fifteenth Century Byzantium

FLORIN LEONTE
Central European University, Budapest

This paper aims to indicate the major types of political discourse as they developed in the last decades of Byzantine history. Firstly, one can identify a discourse cultivated by the members of Byzantine clergy who downplayed the emperor’s role and denied the very existence of an Empire of the Romans. These ideas, often combined with an anti-aristocratic stance, can be found in texts of authors like Joseph Bryennios, Symeon of Thessalonike and Makarios, Metropolitan of Ankara. Secondly, in several of his rhetorical writings, Emperor Manuel II Palaeologos (1391-1425) attempted to re-evaluate the idea of imperial authority. Accordingly, he either represented himself as an emperor-didaskalos (The Foundations of an Imperial Education and The Seven-Ethico Political Orations), or played the role of an emperor-preacher by performing his homilies in the imperial palace. Thirdly, the texts of the early fifteenth-century panegyrists
incorporate a political discourse that primarily relied on projecting the virtues and values usually encountered in Byzantine court rhetoric. This type of discourse emerges in the oratorical pieces of Demetrios Chrysoloras, Isidore of Kiev, or Makarios Makres.

While these three types of political discourse overlap in their treatment of various political issues, they also provide us with an image of the confrontations between different political factions. This paper will therefore attempt to investigate to what extent these different modalities of constructing political authority were connected to wider aspects of the social and political contexts of late Byzantium.

Florin Leonte is working on a PhD dissertation at the Central European University in Budapest, which examines the rhetorical and liturgical texts of Emperor Manuel II Palaeologos, in the context of the social and political transformations taking place at the end of the fourteenth century. She has research interests in Byzantine rhetoric and epistolography.

The end is nearing – omens of the Fall of Constantinople
ANNIKA ASP
Exeter College, Oxford

The accounts of the Fall of Constantinople come from various authors, in different languages and time periods, based on firsthand experience or hearsay. However, in these accounts one frequently chances upon signs and omens warning about the approaching end. Supernatural events were experienced, but even ordinary ones, such as changes in weather conditions, were easily interpreted as signs of the end. These instances reflect the experience of fear among the Constantinopolitans for the end of the Empire and the world.

The present paper explores the experience of fear in these accounts. I will focus on references of omens warning about the inevitable and examine the ways in which the firsthand accounts transmit ideas of fear felt among the Constantinopolitans and the slightly later accounts carry on the memory of this experience, as well as how this fear reflects the contemporary Byzantines’ perceptions of their empire. I will discuss the myth of the eternal Constantinople, which is visible in Byzantine apocalyptic traditions. This myth was nourished by earlier instances when the city was under threat but always ‘miraculously’ saved or recaptured. I will argue that the myth of the eternal city finally reached its breaking-point only before the last moments of the siege, when general fear took over and was turned into apocalyptic fear. This can still be sensed in the accounts of the city’s fall, which were the last insights into the minds of Byzantine Constantinopolitans.

AnniKa ASP is a MSt student in late antique and Byzantine Studies. She is interested in middle and late Byzantine history, especially in thirteenth- through fifteenth-century Anatolia and Transcaucasia, the Fall of Constantinople and Byzantine prophetic literature.
Signs in the shape of Greek letters on frescos in Roman catacombs: comments on interpretations of so-called ‘gammadia’

MACIEJ SZYMASZEK
Pontifical University of John Paul II, Krakow

The term gammadia refers to characteristic markings in Christian art of the first millennium which appear on the mantles of figures depicted in catacomb paintings, mosaics, pages of illuminated manuscripts and on gold glass. Previous studies have interpreted these symbols as Greek letters which have particular numerical values and thus have viewed gammadia as a category of symbols contemporary to each period, conveying meanings known to everyone. This paper offers a new look at the problem and focuses on the earliest works decorated by gammadia, created in Rome around the time of Constantine the Great.

This paper will perform iconographic and statistical analyses of catacomb frescos in which these symbols appear for the first time. These analyses will help determine the frequency of gammadia, their patterns in various representations as well as the evolution of the shapes of particular signs, which are the first components of wider research regarding the problem of gammadia in relation to historical sources and surviving textiles from Late Antiquity. Cataloguing the catacomb frescoes in Rome which feature gammadia is fundamental for the analysis of the other examples scattered across the Byzantine Empire, from Greece, Italy and Croatia to Cyprus and Egypt.

Maciej Szymaszek is a second-year MA student working on a thesis entitled “Signs in the shape of Greek letters on frescos in Roman catacombs.” He is interested in the material culture of the Mediterranean from Late Antiquity until the end of Iconoclasm, Syriac Christianity, art and architecture of the region of Tur ‘Abdin and Gertrude Bell’s research in the Middle East.

The wreathed cross or stephanostaurion on sixth-century marble chancel screens in the Mediterranean region

BERNARD MULHOLLAND
Queens University, Belfast

While excavating at the monastery of Beth-Shan, Fitzgerald noted that ‘between these stones and the apse, we found a broken slab of marble [...] with a cross surrounded by a wreath carved on one side [...]’. This suggested a clue to the meaning of the word στεφανοσταυρίον (wreathed cross) which is found in both the inscriptions in the chapel floor. ‘There are examples of the wreathed cross or stephanostaurion found on sixth-century marble chancel screens throughout the Mediterranean region, and in many cases they are flanked by a pair of Latin crosses.

These stephanostauria exhibit some variations in composition. For example, the four-armed cross within the wreath can be replaced by a six- or eight-armed cross. There are also instances where the four arms of the cross are replaced by fleurs-de-lis, or where fleurs-de-lis are interspersed among the four arms of the cross. Some pierced chancel screens have intricately interlinked
cross and wreath decoration. However, at the church of St. Clement in Rome the cross within the wreath is replaced by an anagram of pope John II (AD 533-535), which provides an accurate date for the use of this decoration on chancel screens.

Of particular interest is that some of these churches are converted from a basilical plan with an inscribed apse to a triapsidal church plan, and at St. Clemente in Rome the early monoapsidal church appears to also be converted into a triapsidal church plan by presbyter Mercurius during the reign of pope Hormisdas (AD 514-523).

Bernard Mulholland is a Ph.D. candidate at the Institute of Byzantine Studies, School of History & Anthropology, Queen's University, Belfast.

The Problematic of Iconoclasm in Byzantine Art Historical Periodisation

ADAM LEVINE
Corpus Christi College, Oxford

The history of Byzantine art has focused increasingly on icons since the publication of the works at the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The shift to the study of icons was precipitated, at least in part, by the potential that the Sinai corpus had to elucidate different dimensions of the Christological debates of Late Antiquity and Byzantium. The (re-) discovery of Saint Catherine’s Monastery and its icons, however, did not challenge the narrative of Byzantine art history; rather, pre-iconoclastic icons have been read through the lens of Iconoclasm and its corresponding theological controversies.

The reason that icons have been so interpreted is largely historiographical. Byzantine art history is grounded in the Hegelian approach espoused by Alois Riegl. Riegl identified a *Kunstwollen*, a ‘will to form’ that defined each culture. This paper argues that Byzantine art history, particularly in the past thirty years, has categorized the early Byzantine period as an epoch with a single *Kunstwollen* and that Iconoclasm has become reified as the final point in the evolution of early Byzantine icon worship.

In addition to providing a historiographical critique, this paper presents an alternative methodology for the study of Byzantine art history that eschews the current derivative of *Kunstwollen* in place of a less deterministic alternative where, following Alfred Gell’s work, the icon itself is given agency.

Adam Levine’s research interests are in Roman religious history, Byzantine historiography, and early Christian iconography.
## GENERAL SCHEDULE

### Friday

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<tr>
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### Saturday

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