

## International Medieval Congress in Leeds 2017 (2-5 July 2018)

### “Moving Byzantium II” Sessions



### Abstracts

Papers are allocated 15 minutes, followed by 30-minute discussion for each session.

#### 1. Session 1003 (Wednesday, 4 July 2018, 09:00-10:30)

*Moving Byzantium I: Methods, Tools and Concepts across Disciplines*

*Organizer: Claudia RAPP - University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences*

**Introduction and Moderator: Claudia RAPP** (Leader, Moving Byzantium Project)

**The Wittgenstein-Prize Project “Mobility, Microstructures and Personal Agency”**

The project Moving Byzantium highlights the role of Byzantium as a global culture and analyses the internal flexibility of Byzantine society. It aims to contribute to a re-evaluation of a society and culture that has traditionally been depicted as stiff, rigid, and encumbered by its own tradition. This will be achieved by the exploration of issues of mobility, microstructures, and personal agency. In this session, new approaches to these questions from the perspectives of digital humanities (including HGIS and network theory), social history, archaeology and art history will be presented and discussed.

**Johannes PREISER-KAPPELLER** (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)  
**Mapping Byzantine Mobility: Digital Tools and Analytical Concepts**

The first aim of this paper is a presentation of a set of digital tools which allow for the establishment of a generalizable workflow from the annotation of original texts via the extraction of data on persons, places and movements to their interactive visualisation and quantitative analysis. Tools of choice emerged from several interacting projects based on the principles of open source and open linked data. The second aim is the exploration of the explanatory value added by the application of these tools to “traditional” research, integrating approaches of (GIS-based) spatial and (multilayer) network analysis.

For this purpose, selected case-studies from across the Byzantine period will be presented, both of individual mobility (of single travellers or smaller groups) and of aggregated mobility of segments of Byzantine society at large (such as the Late Byzantine elite). Furthermore, the toolset will be also applied on archaeological data (such as the distribution of ceramics or other artefact types), thus allowing for a comparison of patterns of mobility emerging from different types of evidence. Thereby, also interplays between scales of mobility (with regard to distances, durations or size of groups) as well as between socio-economic status, gender and modes of mobility will be highlighted. Finally, already existing digital data sets for other medieval societies (such as China) render possible a trans-cultural comparison of these phenomena.

This paper in general thus has a methodological focus and is equally devised as an example of best practice in the field of digital humanities for Byzantine and medieval studies.

**Ekaterini MITSIOU** (University of Vienna – Austria)  
**Digital Mobility: Byzantine Prosopography, Networks and Space**

Intensified mobility of persons and groups marks the period after 1204. Despite the fragile political situation, the new circumstances offered various possibilities for some individuals; they could move to one of the three successor Greek States (Nicaea, Epirus and Trebizond) or to territories under Latin rule. Without doubt, a new start proved for many a difficult task, especially when separated from their families and untangled from their original network of kinship, friendship or patronage.

The mobility turn is indicative of the importance given by the historical studies nowadays to the multi-parametrical research of movement. There are various approaches in retracing and analysing human movement. The most persistent is to collect and present the information given by the narrative sources in a descriptive way. Despite its positive aspects, this approach does not allow for a full understanding of the complexity of mobility in historical periods. Moreover, it does not enable the detection of patterns in the undertaken movement.

A more promising approach is to rely on a systematic survey of prosopographic data in order to reconstruct the extent of personal and group mobility. This type of data is collected

in databases allowing for a better exploitation of information. The digitally collected material can be analysed with the help of tools such as SNA and HGIS which have been introduced in the last years in the humanities.

The present paper aims at presenting the benefits of such an approach for the years immediately after 1204. The basis will be digitally collected data from all relative sources focusing on the Empire of Nicaea, while the explanatory models of SNA and HGIS will allow for an analysis of the networks lost, re-created and newly established by historically attested persons due, during and after their movements within space.

**Florence LIARD** (Fitch Laboratory, British School – Athens / IRAMAT-CRP2A, Université Bordeaux-Montaigne); co-written with **Fotini KONDYLI** - University of Virginia, USA  
**Pottery Traditions “Beyond” Byzantium. Production and Supply in Rural and Urban Contexts within the Frankish Duchy of Athens and Thebes**

After the Fourth Crusade, the formerly Byzantine Aegean transformed into a mosaic of Frankish feudal territories and Venetian colonies. With these political changes came new trends in aesthetic tastes, demands in goods and commodities, and foodways in various parts of Greece, particularly in urban centers of trade, culture, and administration.

The conquest of Thebes by the Franks brought changes in the city’s economic and commercial activities and intensified its commercial interactions with Venice. Correspondingly, our previous research has identified some Frankish and Venetian influences in the production of cookingwares and tablewares in the plain of Thebes during the 14th century. Nonetheless, the exact extent of these Latin influences in pottery traditions of central Greece remains to be clarified through comparisons with other assemblages.

We compare our finds obtained from 60 pottery fragments at Thebes with those from 70 sherds collected during archaeological survey in the Mazi plain, a rural habitation located between the two major Frankish centers of Athens and Thebes. The focus is on cookingwares and glazed tablewares dated from the 12th to the 14th centuries. Through a combined stylistic, petrographic, and physico-chemical analysis of the pottery and comparisons with local sediments, we identify raw material exploitation strategies, we suggest possible locations for pottery workshops in Attica and Boeotia, and we characterize pottery production outputs in rural and in urban environments. We compare strategies of pottery supply at Thebes and at Mazi; in particular, we assess the connection of each site to local, regional, as well as wider trade networks.

This research provides new perspectives on the way in which geography and politics impacted the commodity circulation beyond urban centers in Frankish Greece. Correlatively, it informs on patterns of transformations in pottery craftsmanship, consumption traditions, and lifestyles in a formerly Byzantine Greek city and in its hinterland.

**Elizabeth S. BOLMAN** (Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH – USA)

**Rethinking Sites of Production for Early Byzantine Visual Culture**

The last few decades have seen a spatial turn in historical studies, drawing attention to the significance of location, movement and the perception of space. The remarkably tenacious, grand narrative of early Byzantine visual culture, however, appears largely unchanged by it. Art historians have traditionally focused on the notions of center (Constantinople) and periphery, and have attempted to use artistic character to locate places of origin for portable objects, without success. High quality objects (often illusionistic) have been attributed to Constantinopolitan workshops without corroborating evidence, based on the assumption that the principal site of sophistication, creativity and invention was the imperial capital. Scholars have for some time been problematizing the question of generative centers of culture, but these specialized studies are often ignored.

I suggest that the traditional model is too simplistic accurately to describe early Byzantine artistic production and reception. The impossibility of identifying precise sites of manufacture based on style, despite decades of attempts, suggests that different models for creative activity should be sought. I propose that we consider a world in which people, objects and ideas were in constant motion, within and far beyond the borders of the empire. While the capital, other major cities, and provinces certainly all had unique characteristics, the frequent movement of patrons, artists and objects meant that place of manufacture quite possibly did not account for style or iconography. Recent conservation work in Upper Egypt is one important source that upsets the traditional model. In a new, twenty-first century paradigm for early Byzantine visual culture, connectivity is the rule, and specific context determines significance.

## **2. Session 1103 (Wednesday, 4 July 2018, 11:15-12:45)**

### ***Moving Byzantium II: The Movement of Manuscripts***

**Organizer: Claudia RAPP - University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences**

**Moderator: Matthew KINLOCH** (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)

This session is devoted to the study of manuscripts from Byzantium and beyond (including the Islamic world), both as sources for and as objects of mobility across the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

**Giulia ROSSETTO** (University of Vienna – Austria)

#### **From West to East: Evidence for Southern Italian Manuscript Culture in St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai**

It has been stated that residents of Southern Italy were dissuaded to undertake the tiresome and costly pilgrimage to the East: the majority of Western pilgrims sailing from Southern Italian ports came indeed from regions beyond the Alps. The scholarly literature gives the impression that the Southern Italian population was quite static, in rare cases travelled to Jerusalem and even more infrequently to St. Catherine Monastery, as Sinai was arduous to reach and never became an obligatory tour stop for pilgrims during a visit to Holy Land.

Yet, there is proof of connections between the Italian peninsula and Egypt, inclusive the Sinai, based on travel, trade, and shared religious practices and beliefs.

In this paper, I will deal with manuscripts as source for highlighting these ties. Specifically, I will concentrate on Greek and Latin codices written in Southern Italy and currently preserved in the Library of St. Catherine's Monastery, recently accessible through the Library of Congress' website.

Studies of individual manuscripts have resulted in the identification of 15 codices, nine of them dated, being written between the late 10th and the 13th century: this can be stated on the basis of subscriptions, codicological and palaeographical peculiarities, ornamentation, and content. The evidence not only indicates that monks and pilgrims brought with them a variety of books from Southern Italy to Sinai. In addition, annotations suggest that Southern Italians were active members of the Monastery.

My contribution aims at gathering the complete evidence for Southern Italian manuscript culture at St. Catherine. Such a comprehensive approach will go beyond the previous studies of isolated manuscripts to enrich our knowledge about the connectivity between Southern Italy-Sinai and the people that made it possible.



**Elias P. PETROU** (TLG; University of California, Irvine, CA – USA)

**Moving Byzantium to the West: Greek Manuscripts from Byzantine Constantinople to the Italian Cities in the 15th c.**

The first half of the 15th c. was the last period of the Byzantine Empire. However, it was also the period in which the West and the East came closer than they had ever been for centuries. This can be observed not only through the numerous byzantine delegations all over Europe and the effort to unify the two churches during the council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-39), but also through the many Italian scholars and humanists who came to the byzantine capital in order to learn the Greek language and to become students next to famous byzantine teachers. During their attempt, these new-comer Italian students acquired a great number of manuscripts for their private libraries, most of them with Greek classical texts, and they took them back home after the completion of their studies. In addition, the byzantine teachers, who followed their students to the various Italian cities, carried with them valuable codices, which, after their death, became part of valuable collections and they are preserved until our days.

My paper attempts to present various cases of codices, which «travelled» from East to West, as their journey and history is being recorded through the notes on their folios by their previous owners and users. Who copied these manuscripts; by whom and where they were bought/acquired; what were their characteristics; what was their final destination etc. are some of the questions which are going to be answered. The presentation will focus on paleographical evidences, using pictures/photographs of the codices and presenting them through PowerPoint, while it will combine them with evidences from the *epistolographies* of the various contemporary scholars.

**Giuseppe PASCALE** (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano – Italy)

**Books Travelling Within and Beyond Byzantine Empire**

Reading and writing took many forms in Byzantium: certainly Byzantium was a civilization in which the book had great importance in order to convey ideas, as well as to practice religious life and to take a delightful literary experience. Not only was the written word ubiquitous in Byzantium and throughout the empire's thousand-year history writing appeared in a wide variety of contexts, but also written word tangibly travelled, within and beyond the political and cultural boundaries of Empire. The study of moving books is actually a survey about ideas, conflicts, and a manuscript is an index of the culture both of the men who copied it and of the who owned it and travelled with it. A Greek manuscript in its long journey around places and over the ages summarizes a wide range of cultural, political, religious issues. Main purpose of this paper is to follow the travels of some relevant manuscripts in order to shed new light on the subjects of literacy, education and manuscript transmission from outside the Byzantine empire as well as from within. Moreover, this kind of survey may cast light on the intellectual and commercial exchanges which occurred between Byzantium and neighbouring states in the centuries between

Antiquity and the Italian Renaissance. Chronological coverage of this survey stretches from the fourth to the XIV century. In particular, it focuses on three manuscripts: 1. the famous trilingual manuscript Ambrosianus L 120 sup.; 2. Ambrosianus A 169 sup. (IXth century, written and decorated in Southern Italy and later annotated in Thessaly); 3. the famous planoudean manuscript Ambrosianus C 126 inf., which travelled from Constantinople to Padua and then to Constantinople again, a geographical and cultural movement toward Greek and Latin world in the XIV century.

**Bruno DE NICOLA** (Goldsmiths - University of London / Institute of Iranian Studies Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)

### **Between Byzantium and the Mongols: A Rare Description of 13th Century Anatolia**

Modern scholars have often referred to Anatolia as the ‘last Frontier’ of the Muslim World or the Islamic ‘Far West’ of the late 13th and early 14th century. Seen as a remote place from the main centres of power of the time such as Constantinople, Tabriz or Baghdad, Mongol dominated Anatolia was a territory where Greek Christians, Semi-nomadic Turkmen and Persianised urban elites cohabited. The somehow lax control of the Seljuqs of Rūm first and the Mongol Ilkhans later, left north-central Anatolia, in the hand of local Turkmen emirates (beyliks) that consolidated as semi-independent political entities during the second half of the 13th century. Available information about this region in this period is not only scarce but conflictive. Major Byzantine and Persian chronicles either refer to this region either in passing, or providing contradictory information. However, by the end of the 13th century, some of these local Turkmen rulers such as the Chobanids of Kastamonu (Çobanoğulları, r. c. 1211-1308) made a consistent effort in promoting and financing the composition and copying of several texts in a variety of literary genres. Among the documents from the period that have come to us, there is the unique copy of a work dated in the early 14th century that includes a collection of letters written in Persian by a medical doctor of Iranian origin traveling in the region. Preserved in a single manuscript at the Suleymaniye Library in Istanbul, the letters include not only some unique descriptions of cities and landscapes but also a very distinctive insight into the mobility of people in medieval Anatolia. This presentation will offer an analysis of the letters contained in the manuscript with special attention to the roads followed by this physician and his impressions of the places he visited in Anatolia. The aim of the paper is to attest not only the geographical mobility of individuals but to share a unique description of a culturally diverse borderland between Byzantium and the Mongols.

### 3. Session 1203 (Wednesday, 4 July 2018, 14:15-15:45)

#### *Moving Byzantium III: The Geographic Mobility of People, Objects, and Ideas*

**Organizers:** *Claudia RAPP - University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences & Dirk HOERDER - Universität Bremen / Arizona State University*

**Moderator:** **Nicholas J. B. EVANS** (Clare College, University of Cambridge)

In this session, channels of and motivations for the mobility of individuals (e. g. pilgrimage, exile), objects (on the basis of archaeological evidence) or ideas (religious identities) will be presented and compared.

**Katinka SEWING** (Heidelberg University - Germany)

#### **A Network for Pilgrims at Late Antique Ephesus: The Case Study of a Newly Explored Pilgrimage Church at the Harbor Canal**

Besides the progress of pilgrimage sites as slowly grown complexes, another alternative occurs: Pre-planned and large-scaled church complexes, detached from a longstanding religious context. A previously neglected pilgrim church in Ephesus from the 5<sup>th</sup> century documents this phenomenon. The ruins of the former imposing building are situated outside the city center on the top of a hill, overlooking the sea and the harbor canal (fig. 1). Its unique construction was built under high efforts: Besides a two-storied, gallery-like, substructure for the church, the complex contains a huge crypt, completely carved into the rock (fig. 2).

The question arises, for which reasons this building has been erected? Why was exactly this place chosen if there was no cult continuity before? And how did the pilgrims affect the economic as well as the sacral structure of the region?

Regarding the archaeological records, the

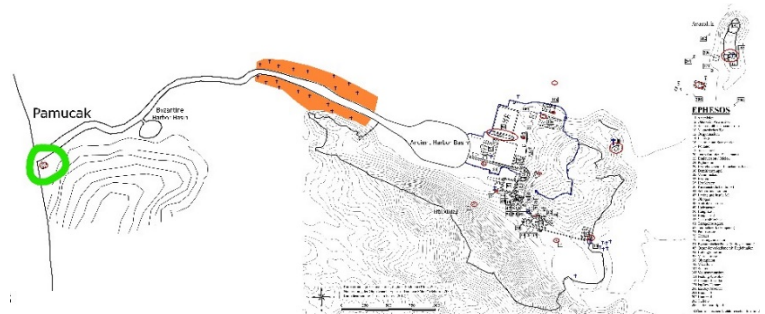


fig. 1: Early Christian Ephesus; the pilgrim church marked



fig. 2: East view of the ruins

architectural reconstruction and the historical context, the interpretation of the building as an important pilgrim church is evident. By choosing this specific landmark it was possible to combine economic benefits with religious ideas. This pilgrim church was part of a network of churches within Ephesus to solicit for pilgrims. One function was to highlight the whole pilgrimage experience with St. John's as its major destination. The site was ideal to land ships, welcome pilgrims to the pilgrimage church, and use the gathering to organize their



stay in Ephesus (fig. 1). After erecting the building complex for mainly strategic reasons, the landmark could be defined retrospectively as a mythological-religious space. Within the network, this church had to represent the status of Christian Ephesus as its first building to be seen from the sea. Enlightening these questions will help to understand the sacred topography of Byzantine Ephesus and of Christian pilgrimage in Asia Minor.

**Emilio BONFIGLIO** (University of Vienna – Austria)

### **Historical Memory in Medieval Armenia Literature: The Making of the Armenian Church**

The long process of Christianisation of historical Armenia has long been considered as the result of two major missionary activities that infiltrated the Armenian lands from two directions: one from the Greek city of Caesarea of Cappadocia in the west; another from the Syriac Christian cities of Mesopotamia in the south-east. Next to these two axes of movement, however, a new, hitherto little explored, axis has been recently reevaluated (Terian 2008): the connection between the early Armenian church and Jerusalem.

While according to legends preserved in apocryphal writings, Armenia Christianity would claim an apostolic, direct filiation, more accurate historical research points out at an actual process of conversion and Christianisation that started from the beginning of the 4th century. Although for a long time seen as monolithic and self-defining, Armenian Christianity up to the 8th or 9th century was far from being homogenous. Recent studies (Greenwood 2012) have convincingly shown that early Armenian Christianity was much more fragmented and diverse than it was hitherto conceived, showing a variety of theologies and connections with the neighbouring churches. Although the Armenian historical sources tendentiously show a political and religious influence from Persia, it was in fact the imperial church Byzantium that was exerting major pressure on the internal affairs of the Armenian local churches.

Bringing together Armenian historiographical sources with the theological epistolary collections (*Book of Letters*) and new available documents (Macarius' *Letter to the Armenians*), this paper aims at showing that the view of a monolithic Armenian early church as presented in the historiographical Armenian sources is in fact the result of a precise act of building up historical memory for local political purposes.

**Samvel GRIGORYAN** (Paul-Valery University of Montpellier III – France)

### **The Chalcedonian Armenians: Moving Borders in Isauria and Pamphylia, 1176-1226**

The nobility of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia and Isauria (before 1198 the Rubenian principality) was distinct in ethnic and confessional diversity. It included non-Chalcedonian Armenians, Franks, Greeks and Chalcedonian Armenians; the latter made up a significant percentage of so called *berdaters* ("lords of the castles"). Their fortresses and domains were concentrated in the western part of the Armenian kingdom, mostly in

Isauria, Pamphylia and Western Cilicia. Among them were even close relatives of the kings of Armenia and high-level royal dignitaries, for instance, prince Halkam, seigneur of Maniōn, Lamōs, Žermanik (Germanikupolis) and Anamuř, and his son and heir Atom (Adam, Atan, Siratan), bailli and seneschal of the kingdom, regent for Queen Zabel (Elizabeth).

This part of the nobility of the kingdom formed in 11th-12th century from two different elite types. First, it included descendants of the Armenian kings and princes which moved in 11th century from Eastern, Central and Southern Armenia to Cilicia and surrounding regions, and converted to the “Greek faith”. The second group comprises the Chalcedonian Armenians of Isauria and Pamphylia which became the vassals of the Rubenian princes after the battle of Myriokephalon (1176) when the Armenian borders extended along the Mediterranean coast as far west as Antalya.

My paper examines the implantation of these elite groups in the Rubenian principality and the Armenian kingdom, their evolution and relations with non-Chalcedonians and Franks. Special attention is paid to the role of Chalcedonian elites in the developments of interregnum and so called “War of the Armenian Succession” (1219-26) as well as to the conquest of the fortresses and domains of the berdaters of Isauria and Pamphylia by Ala al-Dīn Kaykubād I, sultan of Rum, in the first half of 1220s.

**Florin LEONTE** (Palacký University of Olomouc)

### **Traveling and the Geographies of Disorientation: Exile in Late Byzantium**

Traditionally understood as a time of decline- of lost territories, lost resources, lost authority- the late Byzantine story of a relentless succession of traumatic events obscures the personal experiences that also start to characterize early modern encounters of foreign peoples and places. This paper revisits the idea of being "exiled" and “lost” as a key requirement of several late Byzantine *pepaideumenoι* who contemplated the world from a distance while being on the move and encountering all kinds of spaces from familiar places to less friendly territories. Time and again, late Byzantine exiles negotiated ways of understanding the relationship between the inhabitants of the place of their exile and the networks - economic, social, and spatial- within which they settled temporarily. They lived in foreign residences (either Latin or Ottoman), observed community practices, and the organization of places. Sometimes they scrutinized the surrounding environment, noting geographical features and military facilities. Such explorations of space and society are to be found either in epistolary exchanges or in more elaborate rhetorical compositions. They constituted common descriptive tools applied to the natural or built environment as well as to the movement therein. While such descriptions drew on personal experiences of estrangement in places far away from Constantinople, they also provided ways of imagining connections between diverse cultures.

This paper will therefore look at hitherto little investigated evidence about exiles in late Byzantium. I will focus on several exiles who were forced to live temporarily outside Constantinople in the late fourteenth century and early fifteenth century: John Laskaris

Kalopheros, Demetrios Kydones, Manuel II Palaiologos, Manuel Kalekas, Sylvester Syropoulos, and John Eugenikos. Their cases suggest that late Byzantine ideas of mobility and living abroad must be approached as a complex interaction between personal background, the experience of “being lost,” and unknown spaces. I will argue that the insights offered by the Byzantine exiles’ travels and observation of surrounding spaces, although bearing the touch of nostalgia for Constantinople, can provide a model for a late Byzantine cultural change that saw the rise of a new attitude towards foreign spaces and mobility.

#### 4. Session 1303 (Wednesday, 4 July 2018, 16:30-18:00)

##### *Moving Byzantium IV: Social Mobility and the Byzantine World*

*Organizers: Claudia RAPP - University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences & Paraskevi SYKOPETRITOU - University of Vienna*

**Moderator: Ioannis STOURAITIS** (University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences)

This session will focus on the social mobility of individuals and groups especially at the upper echelon of Byzantine society, both from within and from beyond the borders of the Empire.

**Christos MALATRAS** (Academy of Athens – Greece)

##### **Towards the Upper Echelon: Agency and Social Ascent in Late Byzantium**

Although Byzantines desired to portray their society as stable and unchanging, social mobility was a recurrent phenomenon. However, upward mobility was less dependent on the economic capital of an individual than on his social one. Agency and patronage in Byzantium were well-known and important aspects of politics in Byzantium, but less attention has been paid to their contribution to social ascent. Patronage was in fact the main channel through which social mobility was controlled and diffused. This paper intends to investigate the different (but often synchronous) paths of social ascent in Late Byzantium and the ways that agency and patronage contributed to this ascent. The study will also examine the degree of mutual support that may have continued after the social ascent of the individual.

**Agency and imperial privilege:** The letters of many literati reveal how important agents helped people acquiring privileges (tax exemption, land donation, wage, and imperial attention) or how they, as agents, helped their “friends”. **Patronage and occupation:** By belonging to the entourage of a powerful person someone would be able to achieve social recognition and economic advantages. **Access to office and enrichment:** Offices in the financial sector were often an important source of income. Access to them was often achieved through the agency of a patron. **Social peers and support:** Support by peers was usually the right to represent them, something that in turn brought political power and eventually social ascent. **Noble marriage to patron family:** Noble marriage was usually the act that authorised someone as a social peer. At that moment social ascent had usually already been achieved. **Social ascent without patronage?:** In Late Byzantium this type of social ascent is usually connected to enrichment through trade that would be followed by access to offices, imperial privileges and a noble marriage.

**Francesco DALL'AGLIO** (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences - Bulgaria)

**Moving/Transforming *Paristrion*: From Byzantine Border Province to Heartland of the 'Second Bulgarian Kingdom'**

In 1185-6 a revolt in the region of *Paristrion* led to the emergence of a polity which claimed to be the successor of the old Bulgarian kingdom, assimilated by the Byzantine empire at the end of the tenth century. The uprising has been usually interpreted either as a fiscal revolt, or as a 'national' revival originating from the state of disarray of the Byzantine empire and from the dissatisfaction of its citizens, especially those living in the peripheries. While both interpretations contain significant degrees of truth, an important aspect of the question has been, so far, largely neglected: the social transformations experienced by the local population, whose origins were extremely varied and not necessarily tied to the Bulgarian ethnē.

The population of *Paristrion* included, in fact, Bulgarians, Byzantine landed aristocrats and civil servants, transhumant Vlachs, and settled or semi-nomad Cumans, living together in a complex and interdependent society, part of a large network extending far behind the borders of the region. Nonetheless, they chose to identify themselves as 'Bulgarians', abandoning both their old political allegiances and their frontier identity. They renounced their Byzantine inheritance and recovered, and sometimes forged, the memory of the old Bulgarian kingdom, looking to the past for legitimization and prestige.

This decision had dramatic and long-lasting consequences for the actors involved. The paper seeks to explore the social meaning of this series of movements, which led the inhabitants of *Paristrion* from periphery to centre, from province to kingdom, and from 'Byzantine' to 'Bulgarian'. The analysis will be mainly conducted from contemporary literary texts, originating in Bulgaria, in the Latin West and, especially, in Constantinople, where the revolt and the establishment of the new kingdom were followed with trepidation. Although considerably scarcer, material testimonies such as inscriptions, coins or seals will be also taken into consideration.

**Christos G. MAKRYPOULIAS** (Institute of Byzantine Research, Athens) & **Angeliki PAPAGEORGIU** (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)

**Moving in Exalted Circles: Balkan Elites, Shifting Loyalties, and Social Mobility in Byzantium (Eleventh-Thirteenth Centuries)**

The willingness of Byzantine aristocracy to incorporate foreign elements into its ranks is one of the hallmarks of the Eastern Roman Empire's pragmatic attitude towards diplomatic relations with its neighbors. Unlike the eastern provinces, where interaction with Armenian elites was the norm, the situation in the Balkans was marked by contact with numerous elites of various ethnic backgrounds, elites whose loyalties, furthermore, were far from fixed. This was clearly demonstrated in times of military confrontation in the region, when strategies of survival rather than "patriotic" ideals were uppermost in the minds of most ruling families and local potentates, whether Byzantine, Bulgarian or Serbian. As we move from the eleventh century to the Komnenian and early Palaiologan periods, upward social



mobility on the part of Balkan elites, mainly the dynastic families of Serbia and its periphery, took the form of marrying into the Byzantine ruling class. In this paper, we propose to study the mobility of Balkans elites within the political and social milieu of Byzantium in the period from the early 1000s to the end of the thirteenth century. Our research will encompass the highly illuminating case of the Byzantine-Bulgarian war of 976-1018 — with its bevy of local magnates switching sides whenever circumstances seemed favorable, and Constantinople attempting to coopt their loyalties by incorporating them into the fabric of Byzantine aristocracy (an effort which will have long-term effects throughout the eleventh century) — and will conclude with a study of marriage alliances between the Palaiologoi and the Nemanjići at the end of the thirteenth century, including a survey of the ways these Serbian rulers were portrayed in Byzantine “official” literature, i.e. historiography and court oratory.

**Márton RÓZSA** (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest – Hungary)

### **Incoming Governor: The Narrative of Visiting Provincial Administrators and its Function in the Byzantine Epistolography in the “Long” Twelfth Century**

This paper deals with some cultural aspects of the characteristics that marked the Byzantine administration in the “long” twelfth century. It is well-known that both the civil and military governors of the provinces were regularly absent from the subordinated territories in the aforementioned period. Some local archbishops and bishops left the evidence of their interactions with these administrators in their letters. The investigation turns to these sources for observing a phenomenon related to the cooperation between these authorities.

The paper analyses the narrative function and representation of the provincial governor’s arrival in the correspondences. Due to the regular absence of the governors or the considerable distance between their seat and the metropolitan see, their visit and arrival in the authors’ province, archdiocese or metropolis gained great significance. According to its importance, the visit of the official is mentioned in the letters of these clerics on several occasions. The examination is performed in two levels: the context and the characteristics of the narrative about the administrator’s arrival. The analysis of the context concentrates on the recipient, the purpose of the letter and the relation of the account on the official’s visit to the other two components. In the second level, investigation takes a special interest in the following factors: addition of biblical and classical parallels, emotions and features connected to the governor’s arrival, and the abstract use of the phenomenon in the text. The paper focuses on the correspondences of three clerics from the period, Theophylact of Ochrid, George Tornikes and Michael Choniates. In conclusion, this study intends to deepen our understanding of the influence of travelling individuals and their authority on the Byzantine élite and the provinces through cultural aspects.

### **Concluding Discussion and Remarks**

For further information about the project and updates on future events, visit our website: <http://rapp.univie.ac.at/>