







Wittgenstein-Prize Project "Mobility, Microstructures and Personal Agency" International Medieval Congress Leeds 2021 (5-9 July 2021)

"Moving Byzantium IV" Sessions

Abstracts

Papers are allocated 15 minutes, followed by 30-minute discussion at the end of each session.

Sponsor: The Wittgenstein-Award Project of Prof. Claudia Rapp (University of Vienna/Austrian Academy of Sciences) "Moving Byzantium: Mobility, Microstructures & Personal Agency" funded by the Austrian National Research Foundation (FWF)

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.

1. Session 2001 - Friday 9 July 2021: 09.00-10.30

Moving Byzantium, I: Frontiers on the Move across Sea and Land

Organiser: Claudia Rapp (University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences)

This session focuses on processes of migration and exchange across external and internal borders of the Byzantine Empire between the 7th and the 13th century, integrating written sources in various languages as well as material evidence and digital methods.

Introduction – Moderator: Claudia Rapp (Leader, Moving Byzantium Project, University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Christos G. Makrypoulias (Independent Scholar, Athens)

Crossing the Internal Borders: Garrisons, Reinforcements, and Mobility in the Byzantine Army

The creation of the Byzantine thematic system in the seventh century is thought to have created a sedentary military force designed mainly for local









defense against Arab raids in Anatolia and the preservation of remaining imperial territories in the Balkans. The organization of these supposedly "part-time militia" troops into expeditionary forces capable of not only intercepting large raiding armies, but also of carrying the fight across state borders into enemy territory is considered one of the long-term achievements of Byzantine military commanders. Indeed, modern researchers seem to focus almost exclusively on these efforts, which ultimately led to the recapture of vast tracts of formerly Byzantine lands by the end of the tenth century. However, apart from these large-scale troop movements, one may glimpse in the sources of the period a different kind of military mobility: the more or less temporary dispatch of units from one region of Byzantium's interior to another, to serve either as garrison troops or as reinforcements in response to a local crisis. The aim of this paper is to sift through all available evidence that might shed light on the movement of Byzantine troops within the empire and to study — as far as the sources will allow — the various aspects of this lesser-known practice (composition of troops, reasons behind such strategic dispositions, distance between a unit's original station and new garrison post etc.).

Francesco Dall'Aglio (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia) Border Identities: Local Magnates on the Byzantine-Bulgarian Frontier, 1195-1215

The new state, however, showed a certain frailty in its internal organization. Apparently, the Asenid clan was litigious and the power of the ruling group was often challenged by its junior members and/or collateral relatives. This led not only to open rebellions, sometimes resulting in the death of the ruling tsar, but also to the creation of a surprisingly high number of 'border principalities' led by minor members of the clan, dissatisfied with the balance of power and willing to carve for themselves an independent polity on the mountainous border, exploiting the hostility between the kingdom of Bulgaria and the Byzantine (or Latin) empire and offering their loyalty on a case-by-case basis to the contender who seemed more willing to grant them the greatest advantage.

While the long-term political aspirations of those magnates were different, the most important point was survival: this forced them to side, more often than not, with Constantinople. Yet, judging from what the sources report, they never forgot their ethnic allegiance and never tried to 'become Byzantines', simply putting themselves at the service of the empire – even when it would have been the wisest choice.

Given their ultimate fate, it may be tempting to look at those microprincipalities as failed states: yet, their short-lived existence is an excellent casestudy to understand the process of ethnic and state formation on a border region dividing two apparently irreconcilable worlds, and the way in which conflicting









personal, 'national' and strategic agendas shaped the actors involved, sometimes far beyond their original intentions.

Maciej Czyż (University of Wrocław)

Muslim Refugees in Byzantium in the 10th-11th Centuries

The aim of this paper is to present cases of Muslim flight from Islamic lands to Byzantium in 10th-11th centuries, as well as to present the broader context for those migrations. Both group movements and individual cases will be examined, biographies of Muslim political figures who sought in Byzantium will be explored in detail. This paper is based mostly on Arab primary sources that include the works of Al-Antākī, Ibn al-Atir, Al-Magrīzī (Itti 'āz al-Ḥunafā' and Al-Ḥiṭaṭ), Ibn Ḥawqal. In the case of the migration of the Banu Habib tribe, the opinions of Marius Canard will also be mentioned. Given the need for additional historical sources beyond the ones that were researched for this paper, the Alawite immigration to the Syrian coast will only be touched upon briefly in the context of the findings of Yaron Friedman. This summary presentation is an excerpt of an unpublished part of the author's PhD thesis at the Oriental Studies Faculty of the University of Warsaw, 2016.

2. Session 2101 - Friday 9 July 2021: 11.15-12.45

Moving Byzantium, II: Trade and Arts on the Move across Borders and Routes

Organiser: Claudia Rapp

In this session, the mobility of material culture due to commercial and artistic exchange as well as movements of merchants, artisans and ideas are explored across the entire Byzantine Millennium within the Mediterranean and beyond, all the way to East Africa.

Moderator: Grigori Simeonov (University of Vienna)

Katerina Ragkou (Philipps-Universität Marburg)

Mobility of Commodities and Communities: The Trade System of the Eastern Mediterranean in the Age of the Crusades (Late 11th to Mid-14th Centuries)

The starting point of this research is the late 11th century and its terminus the mid-14th century. This timeframe includes profound changes in the organization and character of the communities living along the shores of the eastern Mediterranean. During the 11th and 12th centuries they witnessed the growth and the political collapse of the Byzantine Empire due to the capture of its









capital Constantinople by the armies of the Fourth Crusade in 1204, which led to establishment of various Byzantine successors states and Latin polities in its lands. The dissolution of the Byzantine Empire and its consequences marked a societal and economic upheaval in the wider Eastern Mediterranean. Despite the ongoing conflicts between the various states the seaborne trade was intensified and all of them depended on each other economically, while they used their unique resources to increase their own wealth.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the trade system of the Eastern Mediterranean in various scales and how it was affected by the continuing political-territorial changes. This research is based on excavation records, survey data and written sources. Its primary focus is on Byzantium and its relationship with the Italian maritime powers and the Frankish States before and after 1204. For the pan-Eastern Mediterranean perspective the distribution of tableware pottery is investigated. The dynamics of a regional economy within these developments is given with the analysis of the industrialized sector and agricultural production of the Peloponnese, which was in the center of the maritime routes between East and West. Interestingly, after 1204 the Peloponnese was divided into three distinct political entities the Frankish Principality of Achaia, the Venetian colonies of Modon and Coron and the Byzantine lands in the southeast, thus it encompasses all three different political authorities.

Ioanna Christoforaki (Research Centre for Byzantine & Post-Byzantine Art, Academy of Athens)

Beyond the Borders of Byzantium: Artistic Mobility in the Eastern Mediterranean after the Fourth Crusade

The term 'border' usually evokes the notions of boundaries and limits, of restricted space and controlled contact. Borders, however, are neither stable nor static: they are there to be crossed, violated, and even attacked; they are permeable, fluid, and mobile. In contrast, this paper aims to examine the patterns and mechanisms of artistic mobility across the borders of the eastern Mediterranean after the Fourth Crusade.

Soon after 1204, the paths of cultural exchange became immensely dynamic and culturally diverse. A variety of people (such as merchants, crusaders, settlers, refugees, itinerant builders and artists) along with a multitude of objects (including icons, illuminated manuscripts, devotional artefacts, and model books) circulated widely around the Mediterranean, which functioned as a contact zone, a space where two cultures, the Byzantine and the Latin, met, clashed and grappled with each other.

From the thirteenth century onwards, Venetian Crete, Hospitaller Rhodes, and Lusignan Cyprus lie beyond the material borders of Byzantium but offer a unique paradigm of artistic mobility along the medieval Mediterranean. With the cultural epicentre of Constantinople temporarily gone and the arrival of the Latin rulers,









new networks were established in the Mediterranean basin which facilitated a vibrant artistic interchange between the East and the West and resulted in a rich confluence of cultural ideals.

In seeking to trace the practicalities of artistic mobility in each one of these recently established Latin polities, this paper will examine the various means of exchange through two main catalysts: people and objects. By delving into textual evidence referring to artists' travels and settlements, combined with the survey of unpublished or little known visual material in the form of church decoration and funerary monuments, it will attempt to offer a more nuanced understanding of the exchange of styles, forms and ideals in a comparative framework across the eastern Mediterranean.

Božana Maletić & Matteo Pola (Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, Sapienza Università di Roma)

Cultural Mobility in Adulis (Eritrea): New Data on Marble Trade and Architectural Models

The port city of *Adulis* standing on the Red Sea shores, in present-day Eritrea, represents an interesting example of the influences of the Byzantine world outside its borders.

The city had an extremely important Late Antique phase that reflected its wealth and the status of its citizens at that time. In particular, in line with the well-known conversion to Christianity of the Axumite kingdom, the urban structures included various churches which have been found during the archaeological excavations. These buildings, from the perspective of architectural forms and decorations, present important points of contact with Byzantium. Furthermore, these aspects confirm the connections between this city and the Empire, already well known from the historical sources.

From 2018 the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archeology is in charge of the excavation of the largest church of *Adulis*, discovered by a British expedition during the mid-nineteenth century. This excavation recovered interesting finds in Proconnesian marble, as the fragments of presbyterial slabs with incised crosses, now preserved in the British Museum, that represents, with other examples discovered in other churches of the city, the most geographically distant evidence found so far, outside the Mediterranean basin of this type of artefacts.

The recent excavations of the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archeology allow a clearer determination of the church planimetry, which betrays typical Syriac models. Furthermore, numerous new marble fragments have been found, that expand considerably our knowledge of the entity of maritime trade of these artefacts along the southern Red Sea route to the Horn of Africa. These elements merge peculiarly with a strong local substrate that influences architecture and decorative solutions. The new data, therefore, allows a resumption of the interpretative proposals made so far on the trade of marble materials from the









Mediterranean basin, as well as a profound reflection on the reception of Byzantine models by the Axumite culture.

Karin Krause (University of Chicago)

New Tablets for the New Israel: The Translation of Relics and Byzantine Supersessionism under Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus

This paper explores two homilies authored by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus for new festivals he established to commemorate the recent translation of relics from the East to Constantinople. In ways unprecedented in Byzantium, these relics are in the imperial rhetoric advertised as material testimonies of the empire's privileged status as the New Israel. The supersessionist claims advanced in the two orations and the motivations for those claims have not previously been examined. The first homily, the *Narratio de Imagine Edessena* composed in 945, was occasioned by the arrival of the Holy Mandylion. In the previous year, Christ's icon "made without hands" (*acheiropoietos*) had been transferred from Mesopotamia along with an autograph of Christ, his Letter to King Abgar. The second homily, composed in 946, celebrates the translation of the bodily remains of St. Gregory the Theologian from Arianzus.

Claims about Constantinople as the New Jerusalem, where the Byzantine emperor ruled as the New Moses or New David, had been voiced since late antiquity. However, in the tenth century, and particularly during the reign of Constantine VII, official endeavors to depict the Byzantines as God's chosen people appear to have reached a peak. This is evidenced especially strongly by the imperial orations discussed in this paper. In unique ways, Constantine takes advantage of the relics' physical properties to present them as the new "tablets" of the new covenant in Christ. In this talk, I examine the strategies employed in these orations to advertise the recently acquired relics as material signifiers of the religious orthodoxy of the Byzantine people and above all of its ruler, Constantine VII.

3. Session 2201 - Friday 9 July 2021: 14.15-15.45

Moving Byzantium, III: Writing on the Move across Genres and Materials

Organiser: Claudia Rapp

This session focuses on reflections of mobility in written evidence from epigraphy, historiography, and poetry from the Byzantine world and the Christian East between Late Antiquity and the 13th century, integrating archaeology and philological analysis.









Moderator: Giulia Rossetto (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Arkadiy Avdokhin (National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow)

Epigraphic Habit and Migration across Early Byzantium: Seventh-Century Apse Inscriptions in Santa Maria Antiqua between Rome and Egypt

Santa Maria Antiqua is well-known as a monument on the crossroads of cultures and artistic traditions between early Byzantium and Rome. Serving the needs of the pro-Byzantine Greek-speaking community, the Roman church was a point a productive exchange and hybridization between various architectural, devotional, and artistic traditions. I will argue that the epigraphic programme of Santa Maria Antiqua's apse should also be seen as a product of translation of east Byzantine 'epigraphic habit'. I will suggest that the movement of forced migrants from east Byzantium (Egypt and Palestine) in the wake of the Arab conquest brought along particular patterns of the use of liturgical 'inscribed space' to Rome.

John Chrysostom, Leo, Gregory Nazianzen, and Basil of Caesarea are depicted as holding scrolls with extracts from the acts of the Lateran Council (AD 649) in the apse. In contrast to the conventional reading of the inscriptions as a potent statement which pope Martin was allegedly making though the medium of publicly visible epigraphy that would reinforce his doctrinal and political clash with the Constantinopolitan (miathelete) emperors, I will argue that the inscribed doctrinal texts were not instances of monumental epigraphy engaged in a dialogue with Roman audiences. Placed within the barely visible altar space, and presenting conceptual difficulty to common viewers, the theologically dense *dipinti* were much rather the kind of concealed devotional epigraphy that was flourishing in Egyptian and Palestinian monastic spaces.

I will suggest that the apse inscriptions from the culturally, linguistically, politically and doctrinally diverse monument of Santa Maria Antiqua vividly attest to the movement of ideas, religious and artistic practices in early Byzantium, as Egyptian and Palestinian Christians were seeking refuge in western regions carrying their cultural and ideological habits with them.

Ilias Nesseris (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Books on the Move: The Circulation of Manuscripts in 12th-Century Byzantium

There can be no doubt that in Byzantium the written word was held at the very core of its essence and culture. Indeed, Constantinople was considered as the centre of the *Oecumene*, the entire known inhabited world, according to the Byzantine ideological constructs, and held the sceptres not only in political or









financial terms, but also as an educational centre with its many libraries, scriptoria, schools and literary circles. In stark contrast to the developments in the Latin West, the likes of Homer and Pindar, Plato and Aristotle, to mention but a few, were never forgotten or lost, but their works were continuously discussed in reading circles (the so-called *theatra*), copied time and again, taught and commented upon and eventually passed from one generation to the next in an almost unbroken line up to the Renaissance.

This aspect was especially prominent during the twelfth century, which has been acknowledged as the golden era of rhetoric in Byzantium and by extension the golden era of higher education itself, since in the numerous schools that functioned in the capital at the time taught many intellectuals of great calibre, such as Theodoros Prodromos and Eustathios of Thessalonike. The aim of the present paper is twofold, on the one hand to detect the attitude of these scholars towards their books, their most prized possessions usually, through their own writings and on the other examine more specifically the availability and the circulation of books during this period.

Krystina Kubina (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Moving Identity Through Poetry in the 13th-Century Byzantine World

Poetry was an integral part of cultural life in Byzantium. It was read and discussed in literary circles, inscribed on objects and buildings, and performed at ceremonies. In this way, it was used as a means of self-fashioning by those who wrote, read and commissioned it. On the other hand, poetry contributed to the formation and maintenance of a group identity by addressing a limited number of people who shared the same cultural tastes and ideological values.

The 13th century was a period of great change for Byzantium marked by the loss of unity within the empire. People and power, after 1204 in particular, moved away from Constantinople to various other places such as Nicaea, Epirus and Trebizond, where they founded new political entities competing over political and social supremacy. The texts, literary traditions and manuscripts that they valued travelled with them. In other places like Cyprus, Westerners obtained political power, while in the (Byzantine) Greek community Byzantine literary culture abided. Being Byzantine from the 13th century onwards did not mean to belong to the Byzantine (Palaiologan) empire, but to relate to a specific cultural and ideological tradition.

My paper will explore how poetry was used as an identity marker in an unstable time by looking at some understudied texts from Nicaea, Salento and Cyprus. The paper will reveal how poetry propagandised legitimate imperial power, how it was used to strengthen and defend orthodoxy against the Westerners and how authors created a picture of the (righteous) Byzantine and the (wicked) 'other' in their poems. Moving away from Constantinople as the centre









of interest, I will focus on how poems both mirrored the social and cultural conditions under which they were produced and how they participated in shaping the Byzantine identity. In this sense, poetry was a vehicle to transfer power and culture to new places and contexts.

Roman Shliakhtin (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)

Sultan on the Move: Sulaymān ibn Qutlamish in the Byzantine Rhetoric of the 11th-12th Centuries

The Seljuk prince Sulaymān ibn Qutlamish (a. 1075-1086) was the main leader of the Seljuk Turks in Bithynia in the era preceding the First Crusade. Widely considered as the founder of the sultanate of Rum, for his Byzantine contemporaries, Sulaiman was a migrant troubletwister, whose status changed in time and space.

The paper investigates the evolution of the image of Sulaymān ibn Qutlamish in Byzantine narrative sources of the eleventh-twelfth centuries. In *Historia* of Michael Attaleiates, Sulaiman is a formidable ally of Nikephoros III Botaneiates. For Skylitzes Continuatus Sulaymān is a subject of an analytical report, prepared for elite around Alexios I Komnenos. In the *Historical Material* of Nikephoros Bryennios, the Seljuk prince is an enemy who exploited Byzantine weaknesses. For Anna Komnene, Sulaymān was a chief opponent of Alexios I Komnenos, who struggled with Great Seljuks and committed suicide. "A wretched man perished wretchedly," - notes Anna upon his death.

The paper focuses on the spatial aspect of Sulaymān's image. All Byzantine authors describe him as an extremely mobile ruler, who was able to travel from Nicaea to Antioch in time of twelve nights. The mobility of Sulaymān was a threat to Byzantium. In the eleventh century, Byzantine literati reported on the origins and actual status of this active threat to Byzantine sovereignty. In the twelfth century, the mobility of Sulaymān was a threat that Byzantine literati had to counter with stability of their protagonists. The persistent presence of Sulaymān in Byzantine rhetoric demonstrates the significance of the challenge that Seljuk migration presented for Byzantine discourse. This migration stimulated the discussion of mobility *inside* the twelfth-century Byzantium, that continued long after Sulaymān was dead.

4. Session 2301 - Friday 9 July 2021: 16.30-18.00

Moving Byzantium, IV: Identities on the Move across Gender and Language

Organisers: Claudia Rapp and Paraskevi Sykopetritou (University of Vienna/Austrian Academy of Sciences)









In this session, mobility not only between places and spaces, but also between identities and languages across social borders, is highlighted on the basis of written evidence and oral traditions, with a special focus on women in the Byzantine and post-Byzantine world.

Moderator: Christodoulos Papavarnavas (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Ekaterini Mitsiou (University of Vienna/Austrian Academy of Sciences) Women and Violence in Late Byzantium: Between Gender Constructions and Social Borders

There are various publications on crime and punishment, as well as on the position of women in Byzantium. However, there is a desideratum in modern scholarship to study women, crime and violence as a separate theme of gender studies in order to detect patterns of actions when women are involved in or when they are the victims of violent behaviour.

The present paper aims at presenting and analysing violent acts by and against women in the last centuries of Byzantium. Based on cases attested in the written sources from the 13th to the 15th centuries, the paper draws from criminology and sociology on female violence. The paper also draws from Byzantine law, which emphasises regulation and punishment. A primary goal of the paper is to understand the gender components of female criminality and violence against women as indicators of social borders and trespassing of social norms.

Zoltán Szegvári (Saint Athanasius Greek Catholic Theological College, Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

Cultural Exchange between Latins and Greeks Represented in Late Byzantine Epistolography

As cultures continuously interact with each other, the transmission of cultural goods is a necessary phenomenon. However, members of the cultures involved in particular cases may perceive it in radically different ways, regarding it as a process of enrichment, or as corruption.

Late Byzantine society had a contradictional relationship with the Catholic, or with their term, Latin, world. It involved war, economic conflict, religious and cultural enmity on the first hand and common military actions, mutually beneficial economic cooperation, the experience of common Christian beliefs and learning from each other on the other hand. Most naturally, individual Byzantines themselves formed opinions on these events, based upon their own attitudes and experiences.

My paper deals with the representation of cultural exchanges in a genre of Byzantine literature, that is, epistolography. The analyzed letters are selected from major extant Late Byzantine letter-collections, while the focus is on the type of









cultural exchange in question, the evaluation of it by the author and the devices the author uses to represent it. In my analysis, I rely on the anthropological model of Fredrik Barth and Thomas Hylland Eriksen, which underlines that the self-definition of a culture is not only about the cultural goods it possesses, but even so about the boundaries it draws between other cultures and itself. The selected letters provide important and interesting details on how certain authors constructed the image of different types of cultural exchange with the 'Latins', and where did they draw the boundaries of their own culture.

Elias Petrou (Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, University of California, Irvine) Moving from Constantinople to Venice: The Case of Manuel II's Illegitimate Daughter Zampia Palaiologina Doria and her Descendants

Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos was the father of the two last Byzantine rulers, John VIII and Constantine XI Palaiologos. Both of them died without leaving any descendants behind and the continuation of Palaiologos' family was inherited to their siblings — Theodoros II Palaiologos, Andronicos Palaiologos, Demetrios Palaiologos, and Thomas Palaiologos. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, they were scattered at various courts in Constantinople, Cyprus, Rome, Russia serving various political purposes due to the importance of their name.

However, one branch of the imperial family left Constantinople for Italy decades before the sack of the city. Manuel II's illegitimate daughter Isabella (Zampia) was his first born child and she, along with her daughters, played a significant role in the Emperor's external policy at the beginning of the 15th century. At the same time, the arrival of the Italian humanists in Constantinople in order to study the Greek language and culture crossed paths with the illegitimate imperial family. The marriage of the Italian humanist Francesco Filelfo with Zampia Palaiologina Doria's granddaughter, Theodora Chrysolorina, had as a result the relocation of the family to Venice, after the completion of Filelfo's studies in the capital. Nevertheless, Filelfo's family maintained a close relationship with Constantinople and the imperial institutions there.

The paper attempts to chart the family tree of Zampia Palaiologina Doria until the middle of the 15th century and the final establishment of Filelfo's family to the West. Who was Zampia's mother and how Manuel II treated his illegitimate child? Who were her daughters and how Francesco Filelfo was involved? What was their connection with the imperial Institutions? The presentation will focus on philological sources of contemporary scholars along with paleographical evidences of various manuscripts.









Francesco G. Giannachi (Università del Salento)

Danielis's Travels and Legacy: Literary Invention and Historical Truth with Particular Regard to Some Recently Found Evidence in Southern Italian Griko Literature

The historical accounts (Skylitzes, Theophanes continuatus) about the rich widow from Patras named Danielis and her relationships with the first emperor of the Macedonian dynasty Basil I have been interpreted by the modern historians as an amplification of the historical events and, moreover, an attempt to model the story of Danielis and Emperor Basil I on that of the Queen of Sheba or on an episode of the Ps. Kallisthenes' Alexander Romance. Therefore some historical data can be considered as truth, in particular the fact the Basil's son, Leo, became Danielis' heir. I focus on the legacy of hundreds of slaves to the Emperor as recorded by Theophanes Continuatus; the slaves were sent to colonize part of the Thema tis Longovardias. I have searched in the Greek speaking area of Apulia any linguistic evidence that can recall the historical data we read in the Byzantine historians and, moreover, I made some field researches in the orally transmitted literature of the *Griko* people in order to find any trace of the Danielis' story. I found some possible references in the novels firstly edited in the last recent years but only a not yet published novel, O cunto me ti chira ce tu ria (The novel about the widow and the king) I was able to transcribe, seems to be directly connected to some historical events concerning the widow Danielis and the Byzantine emperor Basili I. After a brief overview on the historical accounts concerning the widow Danielis, I will read and comment the piece of *Griko* orally transmitted novel and, then, speak about the possible connections with the real historical events.

Concluding Discussion and Remarks

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