

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

**International Medieval Congress in Leeds 2019 (1-4 July 2019)**

**“Moving Byzantium III” Sessions**

**Abstracts**

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

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 536 (Tuesday, 2 July 2019, 09:00-10:30)**

***Moving Byzantium I: Materialities of Movement***

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

In this session, material aspects of these phenomena are discussed, including the mobility of objects and of those who produced them. For this purpose, textual as well as archaeological evidence will be explored across geographical regions during the entire Byzantine Millennium.

**Introduction - Moderator: Claudia RAPP (Leader, Moving Byzantium Project, University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences)  
The Wittgenstein-Prize Project “Mobility, Microstructures and Personal Agency”**

This brief presentation of the five-year project ‘Mobility, Microstructures and Personal Agency’, funded by the Wittgenstein-Award of the Austrian National Research Foundation, serves as an introduction to this sequence of

four sessions. It will address salient questions and methodological issues related to the intersection between cultural, social and geographical mobility in Byzantium and beyond.

**Maria LIDOVA (University of Oxford)**

**Byzantine Artists on the Move: The Testimony of Names and Signatures**

Byzantine artists travelled extensively and, in doing so, left their mark on the artistic production of the Christian East, Mediterranean, and Latin West. Furthermore, itinerant craftsmen and objects imported from Byzantium had a great influence upon Sasanian and early Islamic visual culture. Already by late antiquity we can single out the names of masters and craftsmen who were responsible for artistic endeavors in locations quite distant from the place of their origin. One of the best sources of information for this phenomenon is to be found in autographs or artists' signatures, and in the geographical locations which appear as part of their names. However, this evidence has barely been taken into consideration for the discussion of migration and cultural exchange. Traditionally, art historians give preference to attestations of style that are specific to a particular geographical area, taking these as an indication of foreign influence and the migration of workshops. However, these judgments are often subject to personal opinion. In contrast, in the case of signatures and artists' names, we are dealing with direct testimonies to the foreign provenance of craftsmen and, in some cases, can even trace the long journeys of these workers across a range of political states and cultural environments.

Through travel and the crossing of borders, artists not only acquired knowledge from various artistic centers but became communicators of the latest trends and of the specific artistic approaches practiced in different territories. Sometimes they returned back to their original countries, but often they found the possibility of a new life and further commissions in distant locations, producing artworks and developing individual styles that could be attributed to several different national artistic traditions simultaneously.

**Andrea M. PÜLZ (Austrian Archaeological Institute/Austrian Academy of Sciences)**

**Moving Byzantium: Objects in Motion. The Mobility of Objects and Styles Inside the Byzantine Empire Illustrated by Examples of Different Types of Jewellery**

The paper will concentrate on similarities and differences as well as characteristics and distribution of significant object groups within Byzantine

jewellery in connection with the use of various metals (precious metals and copper alloys) during the Early and Middle Byzantine periods.

The goal is to differentiate between isolated regional styles and the so-called *koiné* or interregional style which comprises the characteristics and features of the Byzantine capital as well as their interaction. Do certain object groups or types or even motifs exist in specific areas and regions only, in other words, is a spatio-regional reason responsible for this? And, for example, how much influence concerning special fashions and manual skills can be determined in this context coming from neighbouring cultures? To which far-off border regions of the Empire do the effects of the capital and its style extend and who is responsible for this mobility: travelling craftsmen, whole workshops or tradespeople? The choice of material for the production of a piece of jewellery is subject to which influences? Can only the availability or accessibility to a special kind of material as well as the financial situation of the client be held responsible or are there other reasons, like the technical skills of the jeweller in a distinct region?

Good examples are the Early Byzantine lunate earrings only known in pierced work made of precious metals, which are repeatedly described as typical Byzantine craftsmanship. Their largely negative evidence in Asia Minor, a heartland in the Empire during this time, in contrast to their wide distribution outside the imperial borders, will be discussed.

All these questions lead to the transfer or exchange of ideas in form of objects and motifs as well as technology and material, promising new insights into the social and economic history, craft traditions and preferences within the Byzantine society.

**Nikolaos VRYZIDIS (Independent Scholar, Athens)**

**From Persian *Kamkha* to *Pani a la Firentina*: Textiles as Agents of Cultural Mobility in Late Byzantium**

Much of economic history of the Middle Ages is dedicated to the Latin mercantile colonies in the Eastern Mediterranean; thus illuminating various aspects of textile trade with Byzantine lands. However, while the existing scholarship has revealed the importance of woven luxuries imported from Latinate Europe and the Islamic World no consolidated narrative still exists on their agency in the context of Late Byzantium. Therefore, for this paper I propose the discussion of Islamic and Italian textiles by focusing on their capacity to reflect Byzantium's cultural receptivity and/or impenetrability vis-à-vis its heterodox neighbors.

Textiles are probably the most mobile artifacts, with their consumption being largely conditioned by every period's fashion *koine*. This was particularly true for the Medieval Mediterranean. But for Byzantine textile culture, I will argue that, this discussion can help us understand the variable manifestations of its intermediary

nature in the Mediterranean borderlands. On the one hand, the Byzantine criticisms voiced against the use of foreign silks project a strong sense of identity, even stiff and introvert at times. On the other hand, the significant influx of foreign textile terminology in Medieval Greek, mainly of Persian, Arabic and Italian origin, is an indication of how widespread the phenomenon in discussion must have been. Then, the relevant textile remnants can decisively direct my interpretation of the textual and visual sources in relation to Byzantine cultural mobility, remarkably dynamic even towards the Empire's political end. Finally, my discussion will linger on the cases that can reveal to what extent Islamic and Italian textiles were received differently by the Byzantines, or simply seen as two sides of the same coin.

**Li QIANG (Northeast Normal University, Changchun, China)**

**The Eastward Journey of Byzantine Gold Coins in Global History:  
Textual and Archaeological Evidence**

Byzantium's gold coin, solidus, was not only a valuable economic means of payment and storage, but also of propaganda, due to its high status. In order to maintain its special character and value, its export was strictly forbidden by Byzantine law, despite the fact that it was the object of desire of people outside the empire. Consequently, in practice, it was often used in the capacity of a gift, subsidies, ransoms, etc, flowing, thus, beyond the imperial frontiers. As regards its way towards the East – and by “East”, I mean mainly Central Asia and the Far East – the influx of solidi has been attested not only in written sources in different languages but also in archaeological sites of these regions. Who brought the solidus to these regions and why? What are its functions? This paper will collect and analyze the available information in these written sources and the archaeological findings, so as to answer the questions. It is assumed that the answers will not only show the thread of Byzantium's connection with these regions, but also shed light on the geopolitics on the Eurasian Continent and Byzantium's role in the network connecting the regions, in the perspective of global history.

## **2. Session 636 (Tuesday, 2 July 2019, 11:15-12:45)**

### ***Moving Byzantium II: In and Out of Byzantium***

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

This session is devoted to cultural and geographical mobility into and out of the Byzantine Empire, both within the Mediterranean as well as from and to neighbouring regions in the North and the East. Innovative theoretical approaches will come to bear in the discussion of new archaeological and textual evidence.

**Moderator: Emilio BONFIGLIO (University of Vienna)**

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

**Mobility as Craft: Byzantium and its ‘Acquisitional’ Northern Neighbours**

In contemporary discourse, ‘materialist’ motivations for migration are often deemed suspect: those claiming asylum habitually have to refute accusations of economic motivations for their migration. The discourse stands in contradiction with an equally dominant emphasis on rational economic choice making in other areas of human activity. The focus of the Moving Byzantium group on the intersection between mobility and personal agency is therefore timely. In this paper, I will look at how middle Byzantine writers discussed the mobility and ‘materialism’ of people to the north and east of the Black Sea, and how their characterisations match up with material evidence from the region in question.

The paper takes as its starting point Jonathan Shepard’s characterisation of Byzantium’s northern neighbours as ‘acquisitional societies’. This draws on the work of the anthropologist Mary Helms to characterise the spectrum of responses of Bulgars, Rus and Turkic nomads of the Ponto-Caspian steppes to both material and non-material Byzantine cultural production, and to explore the way the Byzantine ‘imperial-ecclesiastical complex’ attempted to ‘manage demand’ for such production.

While this approach captures an important part of the relationship between these societies, the notion of nomads as particularly ‘acquisitive’ also resonates with ideas in Byzantine sources and modern scholarship that require further interrogation. I will suggest senses in which Byzantium, in its interactions with these peoples, could itself be characterised as an ‘acquisitional society’.

Finally, I will draw on Helms's argument that mobility can itself be viewed as a kind of 'craft', which depended upon not only technical skills, but also the social and cultural capacities required for groups to move through geographical space. This provides a useful way for understanding mobility between and within Byzantium and the steppes.

**Alexander SARANTIS (Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum (RGZM)/  
Johannes-Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)**

**The Materialities of Byzantine Cultural and Geographical Mobility in the  
Early Medieval Western Balkans, ca. 565-800**

This paper will present the first results of an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship for experienced researchers, devoted to a project on 'Society and Economy in the Western Balkans, 565-800'. Publications on the early medieval Balkans tend to be dominated by a 'declinist' narrative, using terms such as the 'end of Antiquity' and referring regularly to 'depopulation', 'stagnation' and 'decline'. They highlight the disintegration of Byzantine political control over inland regions, and suggest that most Byzantine populations took refuge in heavily defended coastal cities and bases, Thessaloniki and Dyrrachium among the most famous. Much of the interior, it is argued, was abandoned or occupied by 'barbarian' newcomers (e.g. the Slavs) from the northern world, who lived alongside a small number of remaining agricultural communities. Evidence in some regions, Albania and southern Bosnia, moreover, has led some to argue that Byzantine military divisions survived in hill top forts, cut off from the central administration.

But to what extent were Byzantine and non-Byzantine communities isolated from one another and how far can we see Byzantine cultural and socio-economic influence over the region coming to an end? What evidence is there, conversely, for cultural and socio-economic interaction and mobility between different communities, urban and rural, Byzantine and non-Byzantine, coastal and inland? In particular, how far was Byzantine material culture used in new ways, reflecting changing and overlapping political allegiances and cultural identities?

To answer these questions, the paper will synthesise recent archaeological evidence for settlement patterns, burial practices and material culture from Greece, Albania, Serbia, the FYROM, Bosnia and Croatia. It will also use texts such as the *Farmer's Law* and *Rhodian Sea Law*, *The Miracles of Saint Demetrius*, and eighth-century legal texts such as the *Ecloga* of Leo III to show that the populations of the early medieval western Balkans were better connected, more mobile and more interactive than was previously believed to be the case.



**Francesco G. GIANNACHI (University of Salento, Italy)**

**Moving to Southern Italy: Greek Speaking People and Oral Literature from the East to the West during the Middle Ages**

Migrations of Greek speaking people (soldiers, merchants and especially slaves from the Peloponnese), attested by Byzantine historians (Cedrenus, Theophanes Continuatus), created the Greek speaking area of Southern Apulia during the reign of the emperor Basil I. The migrants settled themselves in the hearth of the Salentine peninsula, twenty kilometres from the coasts, far from possible pirates' attacks. For centuries they spoke and transmitted to the new generations a demotic Greek language they called "griko", nowadays spoken in nine municipalities, which was able to resist against important historical events such as the end of Byzantine domination on the South of Italy (1071) and the Norman conquest, the following dominations of non-speaking people and also the modern globalization. The Greeks preserved also their literary heritage, continuing to transmit orally songs and tales, preserving the literary genres of their motherland (love songs, *paraklausithyra*, begging songs, laments for death or natural disasters, short stories, tales) and creating new orally transmitted pieces of literature. I would like to speak briefly about the historical evidences of the migrations of Greek people to Southern Apulia and then to dwell on the literature of the "griko" speaking people, noting the close affinity with part of the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine literature. I would like to point the attention on a lament for death, a lament for a hailstorm and a love song and to underline the close affinity with similar texts and literary genres belonging to the Byzantine and early Modern Greek literature.

### **3. Session 736 (Tuesday, 2 July 2019, 14:15-15:45)**

#### ***Moving Byzantium III: Christianity on the Move – People, Texts, and Liturgy***

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

In this session, the movements of clerics as well as of texts and practices of faith are discussed in order to illustrate the wide-ranging mobility across geographical space of Byzantine Christianity and the ideas it represents.

**Moderator: Giulia ROSSETTO (Austrian Academy of Sciences)**

**Eleonora KOUNTOURA-GALAKI (Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens)**

#### **Byzantine Clergy on the Move: Pilgrimage and ‘Mission Impossible’**

In 1307 Catalans reinforced by the Ottomans undertook aggressive military operations against Mount Athos. The Athonite monks who, until then, were protected within the tall towers of their monasteries, realized the extremely precarious position in which the Holy Mountain found itself. As a consequence, a number of monks abandoned their monasteries and moved to other, more secure, monastic foundations.

Under such circumstances of profound instability and uncertainty, monk Savas also left the monastery of Vatopedi, where he lived since 1300. He embarked on a long journey that lasted about 20 years. He visited places, which earlier constituted strategic strongholds of the former Byzantine space and in the meantime were fallen under Latin control. He also moved to areas of great monastic in Syria and Palestine. His biographer, the patriarch of Constantinople Philotheos Kokkinos described to the fullest Savas’ extensive travels, providing valuable information on the sites visited by his spiritual mentor, from where the latter also obtained a direct knowledge of the orthodox communities there.

Monk Savas of Vatopedi was a distinctive monastic personality: he was of aristocratic origins and maintained also contacts with key political and ecclesiastical figures of the time. Examples of movements of orthodox monks and clerics engaged in similar activities within Latin-held areas during this -from a political and ecclesiastical perspective- agitated period, are not limited to Monk Savas.



This paper will shed light on the incentives that stimulated Byzantine monks and clergymen to move to sites which were of vital Byzantine interest, in particular as far as the continuity of Orthodox dogma in Latin-ruled areas was concerned.

**Walter F. BEERS (Princeton University)**

**Mobility and Provincial Connections in the Corpus of John of Ephesus  
(c. 507–88)**

Despite a few signal contributions, John of Ephesus, Syriac author of the *Lives of the Eastern Saints* and a partially-preserved *Ecclesiastical History*, remains seriously understudied. Via history and hagiography, the elderly John reflected on half a century in the history of the anti-chalcedonian/miaphysite movement, from the watershed years of the 520s to the renewed persecutions and internal schisms of the 570s and 80s. More than this, however, John's corpus represents a veritable autobiography of a man whose life was marked by a remarkable degree of geographical, social, and cultural mobility: from his birth into poverty on the Mesopotamian fringes of the empire, to ascetic pilgrimages, to missionary journeys among the uncatechized of Asia Minor, to roles as abbot, bishop, and miaphysite leader in Constantinople, where he often attracted the attention of the emperors themselves.

This paper presents a portion of the author's dissertation research—which takes a microhistorical approach to John's works—and asks how John was able to transform himself from a minimally-educated syrophone provincial to a prominent dissident leader with close connections to the empire's cosmopolitan elite. It will illustrate that John's corpus provides a wealth of data both about the provincial and religious social structures that brought him from borderland to capital, and about many of the individuals who facilitated John's priestly and episcopal career. From village landowners to itinerant holy men to wealthy patrons, a common thread can be discerned: many if not most of those who were personally connected to John throughout his life were compatriots from the territory of Amida and southwestern Armenia. This aspect of John's life suggests that childhood relationships and local patronage networks could remain of primary significance even as an individual traversed the empire and climbed to the heights of social influence.

**Elpida PERDIKI (Democritus University of Thrace)**

**co-written with Prof. Haralampos Harissis (University of Ioannina) and Dr. Anastasios Harissis**

**An Unknown Voyage of Eustathios of Thessaloniki?**

The 36th Codex held at the Historical Library of the Experimental Lyceum of Mytilene, *Greece*, encloses, inter alia, a partly researched fourteenth century historical text; the so-called “*Memorandum of an unknown physician of Lesvos from the 14th century*” which has been edited twice (*Constantinople*, 1884; *Saint Petersburg*, 1910) by Athanasios Papadopoulos - Kerameas (1856-1912). Written by an anonymous writer, the document commemorates the days of a Byzantine pilgrim’s captivity in Mytilene, *Lesvos* (an intermediary station of his return journey from Jerusalem), when attacked by the Seljuk Turks. The “physician”, as Kerameas refers to the narrator, eventually muddled through his violent abduction using his medical knowledge/remedies to successfully cure the ailing son of his captives’ leader. Consequently, the pilgrim terminated his voyage sailing to Aenos in Thrace, passing via Phocaea and Tenedos.

Considering it as historical evidence rather than a merely literary motif, the *Memorandum* stands out as the only reference to the specific Seljuks’ attack at the island of Lesvos. Following this notion, we re-review Kerameas’ nineteenth century editions aiming to identify the anonymous author. Drawn by our interdisciplinary research on the minimal historical information provided in Mytilene’s manuscript, we analyze the text’s idiosyncratic features, both in language (attic dialect) and in form (interlinear translational study) and we present newly researched aspects of the *Memorandum*’s historical background. In this paper, we follow the pilgrim’s route and, combining given historical knowledge of the Byzantium during the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, we seek to provide sufficient evidence to support the assumption that the anonymous author could be a well-known historical figure: Archbishop of Thessalonica, Eustathios (ca. 1115-1195/6).

**Arkadiy AVDOKHIN (Centre for Medieval Studies, Higher School of Economics, Moscow)**

**Moving Songs: Early Byzantine Hymn-Writing and Singing, Mobility, and Hybridity**

This paper seeks to develop a new perspective on the early stages of the liturgical history of Constantinople (4th–6th cc. AD). I propose to look at the city as

a cultural hub that drew on other regions for novel patterns of writing and performing (para)liturgical songs and hymns—a process through which one of the central aspects of the city’s cultural identity was taking shape. I keep my focus both on the literary, devotional, and doctrinal implications of importing markedly non-local hymnic traditions, most importantly those of Syria and Asia Minor, and as all looking on the practical logistics implied into of these innovations.

The first port of call is a re-consideration of the dynamics between Syriac and Palestinian influx: the kontakia by Romanos the Melodist and their presumed decline under the influence of a Palestinian newcomer, the kanōn. As examination of the evidence from papyri suggests, the kanōn may not necessarily be a later, post-Romanos development. I will also highlight possible political and cultural rationales behind the transplantation of the Syrian-influenced kontakia onto Constantinopolitan soil in the context of Justinian’s political and theological agenda to reunite non-Chalcedonian churches back into the ‘orthodox’ oikoumenē.

As a background, I will discuss 5th-century ‘wandering poets’ who made their way to Constantinople from Syria and Asia Minor: Auxentios and Alexander the Akoimetos. Although known almost exclusively through early hagiographic texts, these immigrants into the capital are crucial figures for making sense of the process of blending of traditions and hybridization that, I suggest, was at the heart of shaping the capital’s liturgical identity.

Ultimately, this paper will offer a framework of cultural hybridity in liturgical developments in Constantinople as an analytical lens through which to re-discover geographical, linguistic, liturgical and devotional mobility in early Byzantium.

#### **4. Session 836 (Tuesday, 2 July 2019, 16:30-18:00)**

##### ***Moving Byzantium IV: Across Social Strata – From the Emperor to the Peasants***

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

This session will focus on modes, infrastructures and impacts of mobility of institutions and social groups of the Byzantine Empire, discussing both material and textual evidence. Moreover, it will illustrate the interdependence between the mobilities of various social strata.

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

##### **Nadine VIERMANN (University of Konstanz, Center of Excellence: Cultural Foundations of Social Integration)**

###### **Emperor on the Move – The Transformation of Eastern Roman Monarchy in the Early Seventh Century**

The early seventh century is generally considered a crucial period in the transition from Roman Late Antiquity to a ‘Byzantine’ state. Looking at the highest political echelon what stands out is the spatial reorientation of the Eastern Roman emperor: after two centuries of sedentary monarchy Heraclius (610–641) was the first emperor to again leave his capital Constantinople and personally lead his troops into battle against the Persians, thereby setting standards for his successors in the centuries to come.

Conventionally, the reason for Heraclius breaking with established patterns of monarchic behaviour is considered to be the increasing external threat Byzantium faced in the early seventh century: a two-front war against Avars and Persians simply required the emperor to take matters into his own hands. My paper, however, will argue that the dynamics that made Heraclius leave Constantinople are to be found in internal affairs.

The argument builds on a reinterpretation of the structures that shaped the ‘metropolitan monarchy’ of the fifth and sixth centuries. Instead of emphasizing the dichotomy between Constantinople and the provinces, as has been done in recent works, I will stress the interplay of these two realms. The sedentary monarch was constantly pressurized by military office-holders that managed to transfer their power from the camp to the imperial palace. After two violent usurpations had originated in the provinces (602 and 610) Heraclius’ decision to personally

campaign has to be understood as an attempt to reclaim imperial agency over the military sector. This extension of the emperor's reach went along with a realignment of imperial representation: abandoning the image of the monarch as a transcendental figure residing in his palace, the 'court poet' George of Pisidia pictured Heraclius as the supreme commander constantly on the move and actively struggling for the salvation of his empire.

**Christos MALATRAS (Universität zu Köln)**

**The Mobility of Byzantine Provincial Officials: The Evidence of Lead Seals**

Narrative sources mainly focus on the life and careers of important officials and, even then, they offer often a fragmented picture by passing over less important stages of a man's career. In the middle Byzantine period this can be remedied thanks to the rich information provided by an abundant number of seals that survive today, and which allows us to learn about officials not encountered in narrative sources and complete our knowledge on the careers of important officials.

It is well known that the Byzantine government periodically changed the governors of the provincial districts (the "*themata*") in order to prevent local insurgences. However, less known is the pattern that an individual's career followed and how extensive was his geographical mobility. Did the governors rotate randomly in provinces or their different appointments were located deliberately in the same broader region (i.e. in neighbouring *themata*), and how long the officials normally remained as governors of a *thema*? On the other hand, did the career of the lesser officials follow a different pattern, that is, did they serve for longer in the same administrative division? The eighth and early ninth century governors, for example, often had long tenures in a single *thema*. Officials in the eleventh century, however, both military and civil, often had very short tenures of one-two years in a district, moving soon to other districts. In this case, as well, it would be useful to determine their range of geographical mobility and whether their appointments may be associated to their place of origin.

For the purpose of this presentation, the survey will focus on officials who served in the Aegean region, an area that had served as a link between the eastern and the western parts of the empire, but also as frontier between the 7<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Christos G. MAKRYPOULIAS (Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation)**

**The (Mate)reality of Combined Operations: When the Byzantine Navy is Called Upon to Transport a Byzantine Army**

The significance of the study of logistics in helping scholars understand the mechanics of waging war in the Middle Ages cannot be overemphasized. The Byzantine Empire, forced to fight on two fronts more often than it would have liked, had its fair share of difficulty in arranging for troops and supplies to reach the various theaters of war. Furthermore, being an empire with close ties to the sea, Byzantium also had to maintain a navy in order to control those seas. Often this complicated state of affairs would culminate in the Byzantine military having to plan and execute naval expeditions aimed not at finding and destroying the enemy's fleet, but at transporting a land army to its area of operations. This called for a daunting degree of logistical preparation and level of cooperation between the two branches of the Byzantine military. The aim of this paper is to examine the parameters of these naval expeditions with regard to the transport of troops, horses, and materiel. We will touch upon such issues as the types of ships needed for the task, their availability, and the methods used by Byzantine planners to surmount the difficulties posed by the need to move what sometimes amounted to a small town by ship from one end of the empire to the other.

**Talia ZAJAC (Russian and Slavonic Studies, University of Nottingham)**

**Individual Mobility and Social Identity on the Frontier Between Latin Christendom and Orthodoxy: The Networks of Duchess Gremislava Ingvarovna, 1207–1228**

While theological and liturgical differences between eastern and western forms of Christianity were emerging in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, the Orthodox dynasty which ruled early Rus' nonetheless concluded the majority of its marriage alliances with Latin Christian rulers. Though raised in an Orthodox environment, Rus' princesses travelled across confessional and geographical boundaries to become queens consort and noblewomen ruling over Latin Christian subjects. The experiences of these brides can therefore serve as a litmus test for the state of Orthodox-Catholic relations during a critical period of their development.

The talk will present initial findings of the research project investigating this issue, "Gendering the Schism: Women's Experiences of Religious Differences in the Orthodox-Latin Christian Marriages of Early Rus', ca. 1000–1250." Within the framework of this project, it will present the ongoing cultural and political



connections between Rus', Byzantium, and Poland during the reign of the Rus' princess Gremislava Ingvarovna (d. 1258), widow of Duke Leszek the White of Kraków (d. 1227), as regent for her son Bolesław V (d. 1279). Focusing on the role played by the presence of individuals from Rus' and Byzantium in Poland during in the early part of Gremislava's reign (1207–1228), the talk will discuss what these connections reveal about Gremislava's adaptation to Latin Christian religiosity, as well as her ongoing ties with her Orthodox homeland, especially through contact with her cousins, the Rus' princes Danilo and Vasil'ko Romanovich. In this way, the talk will address how a Rus' bride exercised rulership in a foreign land and negotiated emerging religious differences between her natal Byzantine Christianity and the Latin Christian culture into which she married.

### **Concluding Discussion and Remarks**

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