

Canadio-Byzantina

A Newsletter published by the Canadian Committee of Byzantinists

No.32, January 2021



St Saviour in Chora (Kariye Camii) the last judgement (14th century); the church, having been a museum, is now being reconverted to a mosque

Contents:		Book Review (S. Moffat)	26
Activities of Member	3	Obituaries	28
Reports & Articles		AIEB business	30
Report on Baturyn (V. Mezentsev)	13	Short notices	33
The Perpetual Conquest (O. Heilo)	18	Disputatio Virtualis	34
Crisis at the Border of Byzantium (p. boudreau)	22	CIBS 1990s lecture links	35
		Essay Competition	35

Introductory remarks

Welcome to the ninth bulletin that I have put together, incorporating, as usual, reports on our members' activities, reports on conferences and articles, a book review, and announcements on forthcoming activities or material or events relevant to Byzantinists.

Readers will note that this issue is rather less handsomely produced than than the last few, for which I can only apologise. Chris Dickert, who had polished the latest issues so well, is no longer available to help, so that I must fall back on my own methods. I have tried nonetheless to make the lay-out as attractive as I can, even if I am still using WordPerfect X5; I find it hard to manipulate images in MS Word, which I usually use. Not all hyperlinks seem to work in WordPerfect, alas, so please bear this in mind. I am naturally open to collaborate with those more proficient in these issues than I am: proposals are more than welcome!

Since 2017 our membership fees have remained the same: **Full membership costs \$30, student membership \$15**. See further the report on our current situation by our treasurer, Richard Greenfield, on p.13; I am grateful to him also for proofreading this issue. The funds are to cover our dues to the AIEB and to allow us to offer our annual essay prize.

I am sorry to be including two obituaries in this issue. Despite the death of Fr Dimnik, Volodymyr Mezentsev has contributed a report on the Baturyn excavations in recent years, a feature that has adorned every issue for many years now. The other obituary is that of Thanos Fotiou, whom I used to see regularly in Ottawa, the author of several articles still widely cited about the *Dialogus de Scientia Politica* of the sixth century.

I have repeated some information from an earlier issue here to do with the lectures given in the 1990s, originally organised by the Canadian Institute for Balkan Studies; among the authors of the papers are Speros Vyronis, Jr., Ihor Ševčenko and Warren Treadgold. I alluded to them in passing last year, but I thought it sensible to give full details here: see p.35 below.

There is no need for me to comment here on the problems all have faced this year; many colleagues mention them in their annual reports. Much has been written on plague as a result, notably on that which arose during the reign of Justinian, viz. the Early Medieval Pandemic; I contributed to this torrent of material myself (upon request, I hasten to ask) in the bulletin of the Spanish Byzantinists, reprinted in that of the Swedish centre in Istanbul. Details may be found in my report below. These requests gave me the idea of including material by colleagues overseas, in this case that of Olof Heilo about Hagia Sophia. The COVID pandemic has perhaps obscured some of the measures being taken in Turkey today, which is why I thought his article would be of interest. I am glad also to be including material by our members Peter Boudreau and Stefan Moffat: reviews and reports are always welcome. In the end, contrary to my expectations, we have ended up with a bumper issue. Readers will also find details on the deferred international congress here as well as on an initiative to do with the governance of the AIEB. Our website remains (in principle) at:

<http://www.scapat.ca/canbyz/>

but we are still working on reestablishing it after SCAPAT renewed its ownership of this domain.

It remains just to wish our members a pleasant and less stressful 2021!

Geoffrey Greatrex

ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS

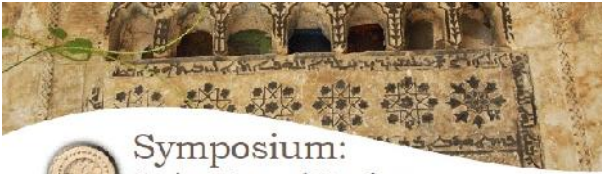
George Amanatidis-Saadé, University of Ottawa

I am a second-year doctoral student under the supervision of Dr. Geoffrey Greatrex in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa. I have just recently won the Joseph-Armand Bombardier SSHRC Doctoral Scholarship for my Ph.D. project which primarily involves the creation of a critical biography of Marutha of Martyropolis. I presented at the 20th Annual Symposium of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies (CSSS) in November this year. My paper, which will be published in the Journal of the CSSS this upcoming year, looks at how the Shah Yazdigird I used the Syriac Christian community of his realm to further a cosmopolitan agenda in a time of peace between Rome and Persia.

Additionally, I will be pursuing a year-long co-tutelle in Paris with Dr. Christelle Jullien at the Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (INALCO), part of the Université Sorbonne Paris Cité. This co-tutelle will take place during the 2021-2022 academic school year. My collaboration with Dr Jullien has in fact already begun, as Dr Geoffrey Greatrex and I have co-authored a chapter on Romano-Iranian relations in the early fifth century for Dr. Jullien's collective book *Discourse, power issues and images. Transversal studies on the reigns of Yazdgird I and Wahrām V*, which will be published in late 2021 in the *Late Antique History and Religion* collection by Peeters Publishers.

Emmanuel C. Bourbouhakis, Department of Classics, Princeton University

Like so many, I saw my working life upended by the pandemic as my academic credentials and years of teaching came up wanting when trying to teach phonics, math, or French to our five-year old. By contrast, writing books and articles about Byzantium now feels more like leisure. Among these is a monograph in progress about Byzantine letter-writing as a literary practice with socioeconomic roots in later Roman society, part of which was distilled into a chapter for the recent *Brill Companion to Byzantine Epistolography*, titled 'Epistolary Culture and Friendship'. A return to teaching Greek palaeography has given new momentum to work on a critical edition of the *Rhetorica et grammatica* of the eleventh-century court intellectual, Michael Psellos, being carried out with my colleague in Firestone Library, David Jenkins. Byzantine manuscripts also form the backbone of a study of the mediaeval reception of ancient Greek literature, provisionally titled 'Beyond Transmission: The Mediaeval Reception of Antiquity and the Making of the Classical Canon'. Finally, having allowed him to lie fallow after a period of exhaustive cultivation, I have returned to the learned Byzantine classicist Eustathios, with forthcoming articles on his varied corpus, including his extensive commentaries on Homeric epic and that on the *Description of the Known World* by the second-century geographer Dionysios Periegetes.



Symposium:
Syriac Beyond Borders
Le Syriaque au-delà des frontières

The Canadian Society for Syriac Studies would like to invite the public to its twentieth annual symposium.
La société canadienne des études syriaques aimerait inviter le public à son vingtième symposium annuel.

PANELS

- The Portrayal of Geographical Space in the Canons of Marutha of Martyropolis
Heghan Hecric, University of Toronto
- Yazdigird the forerunner: Early Iranian Cosmopolitanism: and its effects on Christian Society in the Second Empire
George Amanatidis-Saadé, University of Ottawa
- Demanding Conversions in Late Antique Iran: View from Syriac, Armenian, and Middle Persian Sources
Ani Monarchianzasky, University of Utah
- Kavad's Vision of Christ at Amida
Michael R. J. Bonner
- The View from the Frontier and the View from Within: Comparative Perspectives of Jews and Christians in the Sassanian Empire
Geoffrey Herman, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes
- The Syriac Orthodox Dioceses – A Historical Overview
Khalid Lopez, CSSS
- Provincial Boundaries, Canon Law, and Expansion during the Golden Age of the Church of the East
James Toma, University of Toronto

November 14th, 2020 / 14 November, 2020
10:00 AM – 2:30 PM
The conference will take place via the Zoom platform.
Le colloque sera déroulé via la plateforme Zoom.
Link/lien : <https://zoom.us/j/91552886392?pwd=SUk2cXpqZWlHOCZnNmduSUTJlZjZlMzQz>

uOttawa CSSS / SCES Symposium XX SCAPAT

Awaiting publication, at various points in the proverbial pipeline, are articles about Byzantine funerary laments, historiography and the Byzantine *renovatio imperii*, and the effects of poetic study on Byzantine prose composition. In addition to ‘Greek Palaeography and Mediaeval Manuscript Culture’, I will be teaching ‘Introduction to Late Antique and Byzantine Literature’ this Spring, all remotely, of course. Finally, my Byzantinist colleagues at Princeton and I look forward to restarting our rather successful monthly ‘Re-Imagining Byzantium’ workshop series this Fall, attended by Byzantinists and fellow travellers from the wider academic catchment area.

peter boudreau, McGill University, Montreal

I am a fourth year PhD candidate in the department of art history currently working on a dissertation that explores how late Byzantine imagery could both visualize time as well as navigate different temporal systems. This summer I completed my first chapter on “iconic time” with particular emphasis given to Sinai’s calendar icons and presented material from this chapter at the 2020 Canadian Conference of Medieval Art Historians at Guelph University and the 2020 Byzantine Studies Conference (held virtually). I have now begun preliminary work on my next chapter which explores the revival of the personifications of the months in monastic manuscripts and erotic novels while also preparing to co-teach an introductory survey of world art in the winter term.

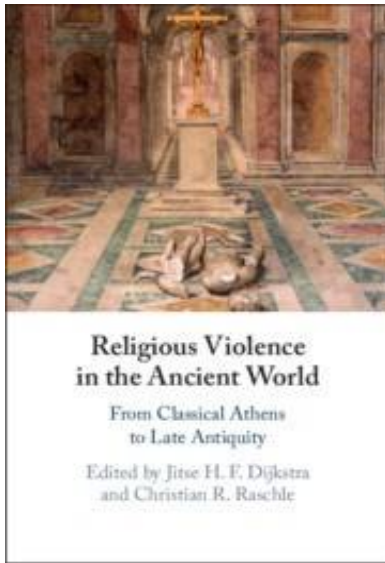
Aurora Camaño, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver

In 2020, I completed my comprehensive examinations and became a PhD Candidate in Archaeology at Simon Fraser University. I have now begun the research stage of my dissertation on Roupenid Cilicia, which examines questions of identity and nostalgia in contexts of relocation as performed through the built landscape. Spring 2020 also marked the beginning of my university teaching career, as I was given the opportunity to design and facilitate a new third-year special topics course in Byzantine Art and Archaeology that was cross-listed between the Hellenic Studies, Humanities, and Archaeology departments at SFU. In fall of 2020 I began a new Research Assistant position for Dr Sabrina Higgins which combines digital humanities, art history, and Mariology. In addition to my doctoral programme and professional commitments, I completed a book chapter on the archaeology of forced migration (forthcoming) for the IEMA series, presented preliminary findings at the Society of Architectural Historians annual meeting, and co-organized the plenary session on Creative Pedagogies in Byzantine Studies for the 2020 Byzantine Studies Conference with Dr Marica Cassis. I also gave a paper in this session which reflected on the challenges of teaching Byzantine Archaeology in the absence of physical collections and discussed how I approach engaging with the material past in the virtual classroom.

Lindsay Corbett, McGill University, Montreal

This year, I was awarded the SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier Scholarship for my dissertation entitled ‘The Late Byzantine Icon: New Forms for Visual Legacies at the End of Empire’. Research from one of the dissertation chapters was presented at the 2020 Canadian Conference for Medieval Art Historians at Guelph University, as well as at the 2020 Byzantine Studies Conference. Additionally, I completed my fellowship as the 2019-2020 Fred and Betty Price Research Award recipient at the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts, where I worked on the installation of the ‘Tout-Monde’ permanent exhibition. I successfully completed my comprehensive exams over the spring, and my dissertation prospectus was approved at the end of the summer. I look forward to co-teaching an undergraduate course at McGill in Winter 2021 on

Sacred Space in the Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean.



Hugh Elton, Trent University, Peterborough

‘Fighting for Chalcedon: Vitalian’s rebellion against Anastasius’ in Dijkstra, J. and Raschle, C., eds., *Religious Violence in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 367-388

‘Changing Patterns of Urbanization in Roman Isauria’ in Polosa, A., Kızırlarlanoğlu, A., and Oral, M., eds., *ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗ: Studies in honour of Eugenia Equini Schneider* (Istanbul: Ege Yayınları, 2019), 87-99

This year I’m teaching the Age of Attila which is going well, next year I’ll be teaching my fourth-year seminar on Fifth-Century Constantinople again.

Alexandros Grammatikopoulos, Athens (and University of Ottawa)

I am a first-year M.A student in Classics at the University of Ottawa. I am primarily interested in the social and cultural history of the Late Roman and Byzantine Empires. For my thesis I will use the fifth century’s legend of Euphemia and the Goth (Syriac and Greek versions) and its historical content for reconstructing some aspects of the society and culture of late antique's Middle East. I have a B.A. (Theology) and an M.A. from the University of Athens (Thesis title: The Edessa of Syria between the first and fourth centuries, and the Syriac version of Church History of Eusebius). In the same year, I passed the general entry exams, and I got admitted to the History and Archaeology Department of the University of Athens.

Geoffrey Greatrex, University of Ottawa

My commentary on Procopius’ *Persian Wars* is being assessed by readers. All being well, the commentary should appear in 2021, published by Cambridge University Press. At the same time there will appear a separate full translation of the work with short notes. This is based on Averil Cameron’s translation of 1967.

Publications in 2020:

‘Procopius and the Plague in 2020’, first published in *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Bizantinística* 35 (mayo de 2020), 5-12, then, in a slightly revised version in *Kalabalik. Bulletin of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul* 8 (summer/autumn 2020), 11-15.

‘Romianoj kaj persoj en la malfrua antikvo: milito, arto kaj kulturo’ in A. Striganova, D. Ševčenko, A. Wandel, eds, *Internacia Kongresa Universitato, 73-a sesio. Tutmonde, 1 - 8 aŭgusto 2020*, 36-50. A paper based on this presentation was also given in French at Lille (virtually) in December 2020.

‘The Emperor, the People and Urban Violence in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries’ in J. Dijkstra and C. Raschle, eds, *Religious Violence in Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2020), 389-405.

Richard Greenfield, Queen's University, Kingston

He has taught an undergraduate seminar on Byzantium and an undergraduate lecture and seminar on the Origins of the Crusades (both of the latter remotely); also a graduate seminar on Religious identity, dissidence and interaction in Byzantium. He has continued to supervise two MA and seven PhD students (but congratulations to Kerim Kartal who graduated in October; Julian Yang is defending in December). He continues to work as co-editor (with Alexander Alexakis of the University of Ioannina) for the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, Greek Series. The latest volume to appear is John Duffy, ed., and trans., *Sophronios of Jerusalem: Homilies*. Look for two volumes appearing in 2021: *The Byzantine Sinbad: The Book of Syntipas the Philosopher and The Fables of Syntipas* Translated by Jeffrey Beneker and Craig A. Gibson; and *The Life and Death of Theodore of Stoudios*, Edited and Translated by Robert Jordan and Rosemary Morris.

Cecily Hilsdale, McGill University, Montreal

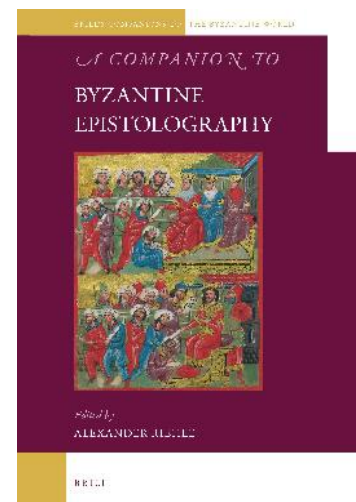
Although talks that had been scheduled for St Andrews, Kingston, and Athens were all cancelled due to the pandemic, I did deliver one paper at the Canadian Conference of Medieval Art Historians at the University of Guelph on the topic of 'The Historicity of Later Byzantine Ars Sacra.' The following essays came out in print over the year and I did a podcast for Anthony Kaldellis' Byzantium & Friends series:

'The Culture of Decline in Later Byzantium', in *Coping with Geopolitical Decline: The United States in European Perspective*, ed. Frédéric Mérand (Montreal; Kingston; London; Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020), 53-76.

'Letters and Letter Exchange in Byzantine Art', in *A Companion to Byzantine Epistolography*, ed. Alexander Riehle (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2020), 374-402.

'The Timeliness of Timelessness: Reconsidering Decline in the Palaiologan Period', in *Late Byzantium Reconsidered: The Arts of the Palaiologan Era in the Mediterranean*, ed. Andrea Mattiello and Maria Alessia Rossi (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 53-70.

'Byzantine Soft Power in an Age of Decline', episode 18 of Byzantium & Friends hosted by Anthony Kaldellis, February 27, 2020
<https://byzantiumandfriends.podbean.com/>.



The present academic year should be my last as Graduate Program Director for Art History and Communication Studies at McGill, although I will continue to direct the undergraduate interdisciplinary Minor in Medieval Studies and also to sit on the Governing Board of the Byzantine Studies Association of North America and on the Editorial Board for *Speculum*.

Alexandra Kelebay, McGill University, Montreal

I am a sixth-year PhD candidate in Byzantine art history at McGill University under the supervision of Dr Cecily Hilsdale. My research explores the role of portable luxury objects in mediating cultural and

imperial relationships throughout the medieval Mediterranean world, with a particular focus on the ways in which *Byzantininess*—as a visual and cultural ideal—is appropriated to specific ideological agendas. This summer, I finalized a first draft of my dissertation which explores the relationship between the capital cities of Kyiv and Constantinople through a series of treasure hoards from the 11th-early 12th centuries. At present I am working on completing my dissertation by Winter 2021.

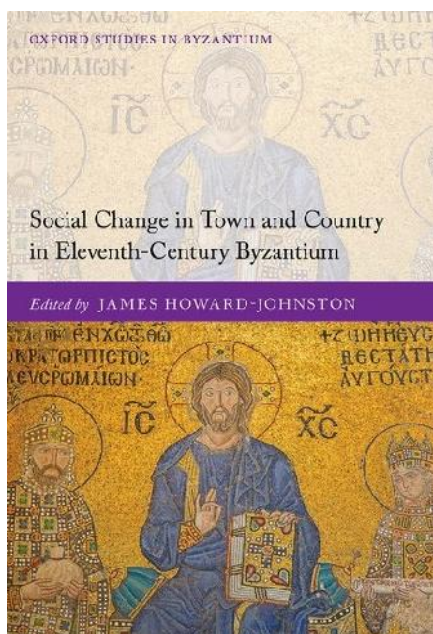
JaShong King, University of Ottawa

As many of us no doubt also experienced, COVID has upturned many of our previous timetables and events for research. A joint presentation between me and fellow University of Ottawa PhD student Lydia Schriemer on women, imperial law, and digital database design was accepted to the international Association of Digital Humanities Organizations conference (intended to be held in July in Ottawa), but this conference was cancelled due to the pandemic.

During the summer, I assisted in designing maps for Geoffrey Greatrex's forthcoming commentary on Procopius' Persian Wars. Over the same period, I also continued assisting in Theodore de Bruyn's SSHRC-funded project on personal identity construction between laypersons and monks in sixth century Gaza, and presented some of its findings to a well-attended remote audience at the University of Ottawa.

With my advancement to PhD candidacy at the start of this year, my dissertation research has now begun to crystallize. At this current stage, the research intends to apply a syntactical discourse analysis to the post-Theodosian Code novels. The purpose of this methodology is to tease out differences in the political power of pressure groups on Late Roman emperors via the language the imperial office chose to use within those new laws. An ancillary result of this research will be an encoding into TEI-XML of the post-Theodosian Code novels as a digital edition, which will be made freely available for other digital humanists to utilize.

Dimitris Krallis, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver



Fully engaged in administrative work, in 2020 I dedicated much of my time steering a process of consolidation that led to the integration of the Hellenic Studies Program I directed until this last May, into SFU's Department of Humanities, which is now our new home. I have continued in my role as Director of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies and have sought in collaboration with my colleagues to maintain rich programming in the midst of the pandemic. As part of that programming I hosted at SFU this past year's Island Sessions symposium, which featured the following theme: 'Political Animals: explorations of the political across the ages'. Here I presented a paper entitled 'Army commanders as managers of demotic power in Byzantium: Debate, persuasion, and politics among the *genos stratotikon*.'

This year also saw the publication of my article 'The Social Views of Michael Attaleiates', which is featured in *Social Change in Town and Country in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, a volume edited by Dr James

Howard-Johnston and published by Oxford University Press. Over the summer I completed co-translating my second monograph in Greek. It will be published by Αλεξάνδρεια editions in Athens in the fall of 2021 under the title: *Βίος και πολιτεία ενός Βυζαντινού Μανδαρίνου: Το Βυζαντιο ιδωμένο αλλιώς*. As I look to the beginning of my upcoming sabbatical year (September of 2021), I am setting the groundwork for a new research project on cities as elements of political instability in middle Byzantium and I am looking forward to what the post-pandemic world might bring. Meanwhile I am still reading on bureaucracies, Chinese officialdom, and notions of impersonal governance for a longtime coming paper on Byzantine officials, which I hope to finish in the coming year.

Antony Littlewood, University of Western Ontario, London

His research into cricket history was brought to a halt this year by the plague, since he was prevented from going to Britain to work in the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Records Office. He hopes to be able to resume research there in 2021 or 2022.

This last January and February, nonetheless, he visited on his own Lesotho (for the second time), where he saw the tracks of dinosaurs in a river bed and neolithic San rupestrian paintings before exploring the mountains on the South African border; the densely forested Bioko Island of Equatorial Guinea; South Sudan, where the highlight was a couple of days at a tribal cattle-herding camp; and Afghanistan, where disturbances curtailed areas far from Kabul, although he did traverse much of the Panjshir Valley. To his knowledge he met only one member of the Taliban, but he was protected throughout by a guard, once a companion of the country's great military hero Ahmad Shah Massoud. He himself, following local advice, wore a traditional hat so that, at least from a distance, he could pass for an Afghan. Since he has now reached the age of 80, his days of adventurous travel may be over, although of the world's sovereign countries he has only glimpsed and not set foot in two, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

Georgios Makris, UBC, Vancouver

I should start by emphasizing that several of my scholarly activities this past year were marred by the pandemic. In the summer, I learned that I was awarded a two-year Insight Development Grant by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to begin the documentation and publication of an excavated urban site in Greece that was inhabited between the tenth and fourteenth centuries. In the fall, I presented one paper on an archaeological excavation of a medieval cemetery in Epiros, northwestern Greece, and its findings at the seminar series of the Department of Classical, Near Eastern, and Religious Studies at the University of British Columbia and I also served on an Interviewing Workshop for early career scholars at the Annual Byzantine Studies Conference (both held online).

An article of mine appeared in 2020: 'Living in Turbulent Times: Monasteries, Settlements, and Laypeople in Late Byzantine Southwest Thrace', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 74 (2020). A couple of chapters in edited volumes are ready, but still forthcoming.

Shamus McCoy, University of Ottawa

My M.A. thesis concerns the Germanic use of food and food texts in the sixth century to emulate (cultural) *Romanitas*. The hope of my work is to highlight how food was wielded as a cultural tool by non-Roman peoples after the imperial power had shrunk back to the East. Hence my interests lie with

food history primarily, as well as cultural history, and the study of identity in Late Antiquity.

Lucas McMahon, Princeton University

In 2020, along with continuing to work on my dissertation, I was awarded funding by the Center for Digital Humanities @Princeton as the PI of 'Mapping Medieval Metadata'. This grant provides funds to create a geodataset of Byzantine lead seals where some sort of information about find location is available. Currently some 3100 specimens have been identified and are in varying stages of preparation. I hope to release the complete dataset at some in 2021 in a variety of formats (ESRI shapefile, Google Earth .kml, .rtf spreadsheet) so that it will be of use to others. This is very much a first pass, and I've simply been picking the low-hanging fruit from whatever publications have been available to me. A current bibliography of what has been included is available here <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ImzE6zT7iXTIH0sv1YyCf5jB4thEPFoqLQCO2iIJ2Cw/edit#gid=0> and if anyone has anything to suggest, I'd be happy to add it.

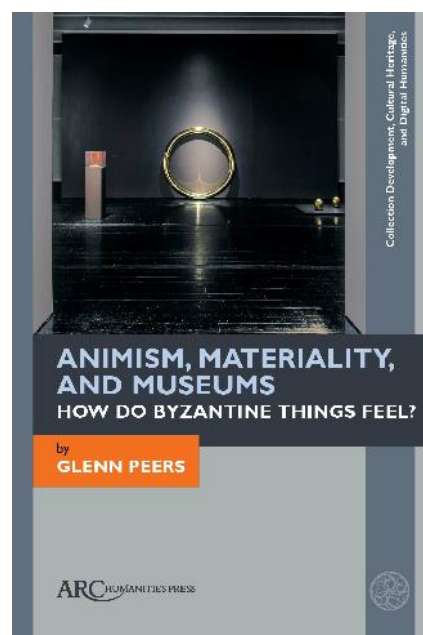
Glenn Peers, Syracuse University, New York (in 2020-1 at The Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA)

Still forthcoming:

Animism, Materiality and Museums: How Do Byzantine Things Feel?, ARC Humanities Press, Leeds, UK (2020). [open access, when it appears]

Byzantine Tree Life: Christianity and the Arboreal Imagination (in collaboration with Thomas Arentzen and Virginia Burrus), forthcoming 2021.

Editor's note: an interesting and very positive review of one of Glenn's earlier books, with a contribution by Barbara Roggema. *Orthodox Magic in Trebizond and Beyond: A Fourteenth-Century Greco-Arabic Amulet Roll*, Seyssel, France, La Pomme d'or, 2018, was published recently in *The Medieval Review*, 20.10.04, <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/tmr/article/view/31574>



Dan Russell, University of Ottawa

My M.A. thesis concerns the literary portrayal of sixth-century soldiers, specifically non-Romans. What I would like to do is to chart the dichotomy between positive and negative portrayals of barbarians in sixth century sources. My general research interests include Greco-Roman historiography, the late Roman military, the genre of military manuals, the Hellenistic period, and Syriac historians.

Linda Safran, Toronto

I hope all of my colleagues are doing all right in this crazy year. Since the last issue of *Canadio-Byzantina*, three articles have appeared:

‘Hunting for Medieval Graffiti in the Salento’ in ‘Puglia’, special issue, *Metropolis* (November 2019): 78–83 (in Hebrew)

‘The Season of Salvation: Images and Texts at Li Monaci in Apulia’, in *The Eloquence of Art: Byzantine Studies in Honour of Henry Maguire*, ed. Andrea Olsen Lam and Rossitza Schroeder (London: Routledge, 2020), 283–99

‘A Prolegomenon to Byzantine Diagrams’, in *The Visualization of Knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Marcia Kupfer, Adam S. Cohen, and J. H. Chajes (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 361–82

I’m not allowed to post the last two on my academia.edu page, so please contact me if you’d like a PDF. I also published two short book reviews, both in *Common Knowledge* 26, no. 1 (2020): Andrea Carandini with Paolo Carafa, eds., *The Atlas of Ancient Rome: Biography and Portraits of the City*, trans. Andrew Campbell Halavais, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); and Neville Agnew, Marcia Reed, and Tevvy Ball, eds., *Cave Temples of Dunhuang: Buddhist Art on China’s Silk Road* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2016).

An edited volume based on the 2018 D.O. symposium has been sent off now that all the contributors have managed to obtain photos and permissions from Covid-closed repositories: *The Diagram as Paradigm: Cross-Cultural Approaches*, co-edited by Jeffrey F. Hamburger, David Roxburgh, and Linda Safran (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, forthcoming 2021?). In that book I have an introduction to Byzantine diagrams and an essay titled “Diagramming Byzantine Orthodoxy.” Last but not least, a new textbook, *Art and Architecture of the Middle Ages: Exploring a Connected World*, co-authored with Adam S. Cohen and Jill Caskey, is now in the hands of Cornell University Press (already accepted; ~160,000 words, 451 illustrations). The book deals with late antique, Byzantine, European medieval, Islamicate, Jewish, and polytheistic works in all media, from Santiago de Compostela to Samarkand and from Scandinavia to the Sahara. It will be accompanied by a *free* website that already contains almost 400 mini-essays and photos of a vast range of complementary works, as well as timelines, primary sources, a glossary, and podcasts. I’ll continue to add to this website during the coming year.

Alexandra Vukovic, British Academy Research Fellow, University of Oxford

The past year has been difficult in increasingly novel ways and, as experienced by many colleagues, all of my research, teaching, and academic engagement has moved to online platforms. The beginning of 2020 started well with an international conference at the Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, which I co-organized with Polish and British colleagues. The conference ‘The Slavonic World: A Forgotten Cultural Crossroads’ brought together colleagues from Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Hungary, Britain, Canada, the United States, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Spain for a three-day conference, which will be published in the form of proceedings. In February, I presented what would be my final in-person paper at the Centre for Manuscript and Text Cultures at the University of Oxford where I spoke on ‘The Re-Shaping of the medieval past in Muscovite chronicles’.

The initial stages of the lockdown resulting from the pandemic found me in Toronto from where I had to quickly re-organize and deliver two courses and a series of undergraduate lectures for the University of Oxford. These included two graduate courses: ‘Byzantine Civilization and its Expansion 913-1204’ and ‘Late Antique & Byzantine Studies: Slavonic Literature and History’, and a series of undergraduate lectures on ‘European and World History: Eastern Europe, Rus, and the Eurasian Steppe 900-1400’. Although there were many challenges, including many technological catastrophes, this early experience

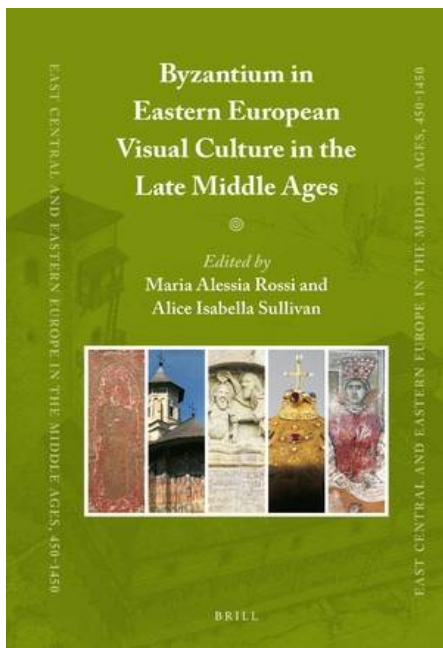
with online teaching prepared me for the series of lectures and tutorials that I delivered for the pre-1700 portion of the special subject finalist course on ‘Waging War in Eurasia, ca.1200-1945’ earlier this term.

From Trinity Term 2020, beginning in May, I moved my Early Slavonic Studies Seminar online. The seminar had previously been a fortnightly event at Oxford’s Taylorian Institution. However, I received many positive responses to my initial call for contributions, so I switched to a weekly webinar on Tuesdays at 5 p.m. (UK), which was remarkably well-attended and which continues this year with an international line-up of speakers: Early Slavonic Webinar (via Zoom). The activities of the research network (New Critical Approaches to Byzantine Studies) that I co-convene at The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities met online during the lockdown and produced a series of webinars: April 2020: Orientalism 2020; May 2020: The ‘Global Turn’ in Medieval History; June 2020: Putting Modes of Production to Work: Critical Materialist Conceptions of Byzantine History and Historiography. Details of these and other events can be found here:

<https://torch.ox.ac.uk/new-critical-approaches-to-the-byzantine-world-network#tab-877261>

As a result of these activities and the Network's open letter to the International Association of Byzantine Studies, the network collaborated with BSANA on an international online event that took place in August: Towards a Critical Historiography of Byzantium. A publication is currently underway on the basis of the topics we discussed.

Restrictions on travel have moved many events online and although it would have been exciting to present in person, I was honoured to have been invited to deliver a seminar paper on ‘Creating “The Rus”’: Ethnicizing the Byzantine World’ at the Critical Theory for Byzantine Studies Seminar at Boğaziçi University; and a lecture on ‘The Byzantine Coinage of Early Rus (or how events in China effected settlement in Kiev)’ at the Institute for the History of Ancient Civilizations of the Northeast Normal University in Changchun.



My research was heavily disrupted by the pandemic and the sudden sedentarization brought on by the closing of many institutions, as well as voluntary self-isolation to stem the spread of Covid19. Although I was unable to travel to Russia and Italy over the summer and at the beginning of this academic year, I was able to complete several outstanding publications and was pleased to witness the publication of my article: ‘How Byzantine was the Moscow Inauguration of 1498?’ in Maria Alessia Rossi and Alice Sullivan (eds.), *Byzantium in Eastern European Culture in the Late Middle Ages, East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450-1450* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 35-71.

I am anticipating the imminent publication of a further article: ‘Le Prince et son épée dans la Rous’ du Nord à la suite de l'exil byzantin de Vsévolod Iourevich’ in Élisabeth Yota (ed.), *Byzance et ses voisins* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2020). I completed a further four chapters that are expected to appear over the coming year: ‘Picturing Empire at its

Periphery: What the coins of Tmutarakan tell us about Rus’, in Joan Neuberger and Valerie Kivelson (eds.), *Picturing Russian Empire* (Oxford University Press); ‘Travel and Travellers in Rus and Muscovy’

in Sebastian Sobecki (ed.), *Medieval Travel Writing: A Global History* (Cambridge University Press); ‘The Travelling Nun of Rus, Evfrosiniia of Polotsk in the Holy Land’ in Steffen Hope (ed.), *Saints and the Several Images* (Museum Tusulanums Forlag); ‘Victory and Defeat Liturgified: The Symbolic World of Martial Ritual in Early Rus’ in Johannes Pahlitzsch (ed.), *Victors and Vanquished. Cultures of War in the Northern and Mediterranean Worlds. Byzantium and European Cultures of War* (Mainz University Press).

Events in Turkey over the summer prompted many responses, including from Byzantinists, and I contributed two articles on the topic of the reversion of Hagia Sophia, as well as heritage management in Turkey: ‘Turkey’ Heritage (Mis)management’, September 24, 2020 press article commissioned by Balkan Insight: <https://balkaninsight.com/2020/09/24/turkeys-heritage-mismanagement/> and ‘The Political Life of Monuments: Hagia Sophia One Month On’, September 2, 2020 press article for *The Balkanist Magazine*: <https://balkanist.net/the-political-life-of-monuments-hagia-sophia-one-month-on/> .

Conor Whately, Winnipeg

Books:

Greek and Roman Military Manuals: Genre, Theory, Influence, co-edited with James Chlup, Routledge
The Roman Military from Marius to Theodosius II, Wiley

Book Chapters:

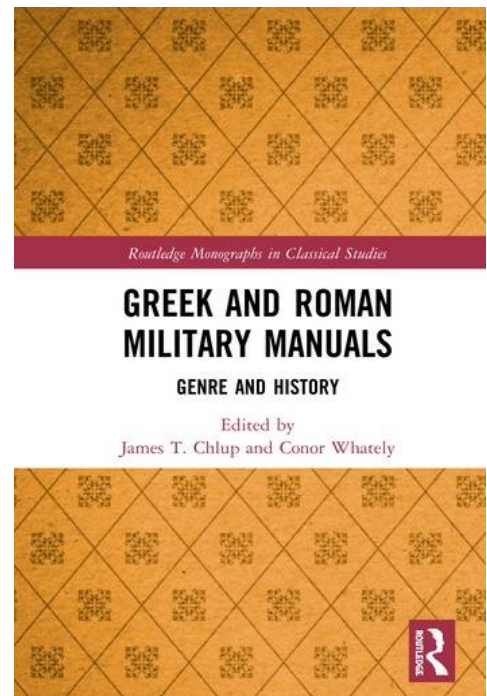
‘Military Manuals from Aeneas to Maurice: Audience, Function, and Historiography’, in Chlup and Whately (eds.), *Greek and Roman Military Manuals: Genre, Theory, Influence*, Routledge

Book Reviews:

2020: Giangiulio, Maurizio, Elena Franchi and Giorgia Proietti, eds. *Commemorating War and War Dead: Ancient and Modern*. Stuttgart, *CJ Online Reviews* 2020.08.08

2020: Y. Stouraitis, *Brill’s Companion to the Byzantine Culture of War*, Leiden, *EHR* 135: 443-445

2020: C. Doyle, *Honorius: the Fight for the Roman West*, London, 2018/2019, *JRS* 110: 370-1.



REPORTS

Treasurer's Report

Membership in 2020 has bounced back after the slow start signalled in last year's report. We continue to have 16 paid up full members and now number 21 students. Thanks to everyone for getting their dues in in the end and to those supervisors who continue to support us by buying memberships for their students. If we can maintain these levels, we can just about keep up with the costs of functioning. I am still accepting dues by cheque for this year, despite the issues of getting to my office and collecting mail caused by the pandemic. We are looking to some other solution, however, which would enable us to receive payment by, e.g., e-transfer in the near future. But please do send your dues as usual.

Richard Greenfield

ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

Archaeological Research of Baturyn in 2020

Despite the pandemic, this past summer, archaeologists conducted annual excavations in the town of Baturyn, Chernihiv province, Ukraine. This Canada-Ukraine project is sponsored by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) at the University of Alberta, the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (PIMS) at the University of Toronto, and the Ucrainica Research Institute in Toronto. The Ukrainian Studies Fund in New York also supports the historical and archaeological investigation of early modern Baturyn.

In 2001, then the director of CIUS Prof. Zenon Kohut founded and subsequently directed the Baturyn project; since 2014 he has been its academic adviser. The project's executive director Dr Volodymyr Mezentsev (CIUS) and the late Prof. Martin Dimnik (1941-2020), the former president of PIMS and an eminent historian of the medieval Chernihiv Principality, have participated in this research and the dissemination of its findings. Seventy-five students and scholars from the Chernihiv College National University, the Hlukhiv Lyceum, and the Institute of Archaeology at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Kyiv, as well as many volunteers, took part in the 2020 excavations. Archaeologist Yurii Sytyi of the Chernihiv College National University leads the Baturyn archaeological expedition.

Archaeological studies have established that medieval Baturyn arose in the 11th century as a frontier stronghold of the Chernihiv Principality of Rus'. In 1239, it was destroyed by the Mongols, who razed the remaining settlement in 1275. During the 14th and 15th centuries, the Chernihiv land was incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and in 1618-48 belonged to the Polish Kingdom. In 1625, King of Poland Sigismund III Vasa rebuilt and fortified Baturyn on its original site. One view suggests that the town was named in honour of the Polish King Stephen V Báthory.

After the first destruction of Baturyn by invading Russian troops in 1632, Polish royal officials and magnates restored the town and transformed it into an important military, administrative, and commercial centre near the border with Muscovy. Archaeological finds of many silver and billon Polish, Lithuanian,

Livonian, Swedish, and Swiss coins, as well as imported goods attest to Western connections of 17th-century Baturyn.



Fig.1 a, b. Polish silvered bronze belt, 1610-30s. Baturyn Museum of Archaeology. Photo by A. Konopatsky.

The costly silver-and-bronze belt, discovered near the site of its former fortress in 1997, might have belonged to a local Polish governor or an officer of the garrison (fig.1). The clasp bears the relief triumphal motif of a mounted knight or king in armour, which was widely used in Polish elite art during the 1610-30s.



During the 1648-54 national liberation war, Polish rule over central Ukraine was overthrown and the Cossack state, or Hetmanate, was founded, albeit under the suzerainty of the Russian Tsar. Between 1669 and 1708, Baturyn was its capital and the main seat of the Cossack rulers, or hetmans (fig.2). The town



Fig.2. Panoramic view of Baturyn before its destruction in 1708. Hypothetical reconstruction by O. Bondar, 2020.

flourished under the powerful and enlightened Hetman Ivan Mazepa (1687-1709), who had been brought up and educated in Poland and Western Europe. In alliance with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Swedish Empire, Mazepa resisted militarily Moscow's growing authority over central Ukraine and proclaimed the Cossack Hetmanate an independent

principality. However, in 1708, Russian Tsar Peter I quelled Mazepa's revolt and devastated and burned the insurgent Baturyn to the ground.

Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovsky (1750-64) reconstructed the town as the capital of the Cossack polity on the eve of its abolition and merging by the Russian Empire in 1764. Until Rozumovsky's death in 1803, Baturyn experienced its last urban revival, but subsequently fell into decay.

Prior to 1700, in Baturyn's southern suburb of Honcharivka, Mazepa commissioned his principal residence, which was looted and burned by the Muscovite forces in 1708. In central or Cossack Ukraine, it was the earliest known fortified palatial complex with regular layout designed according to contemporaneous Western models of the so-called *palazzo in fortezza*. The remnants of its ramparts, bastions, a stately three-story masonry baroque palace, a wooden court church, and the dwellings of guards, servants, and guests have been excavated by our expedition since 1995. The results were presented in *Canadio-Byzantina* 22-31 (2011-19).

From 2018 to 2020, archaeologists continued excavating the debris of the early 18th-century brick vaulted corridor west of the Mazepa palace site. By last summer, seven metres of this underground passageway with seventeen descending steps had been unearthed, but its eastern end has yet to be reached. The lowest step was uncovered about 5 m below ground level. Conjecturally, this tunnel led to the neighbouring brick basement (8.5 by 6.5 m in size) of a destroyed and hitherto unidentified building. Further archaeological

investigations of the remnants of this corridor and adjacent structures should allow us to determine their full dimensions, ground plans, and specific purposes within Mazepa's manor.

The 24-year excavations at Baturyn have enriched its Museum of Archaeology with one of the largest collections of architectural and decorative ceramics in Ukraine. It includes over 8,500 ceramic stove tiles from the 17th and 18th centuries and their fragments, representing 353 various ornamental types and subtypes. Nearly 30 kinds of these plaques were applied for revetting the heating stoves in the Honcharivka palace (figs.4-6).



Fig.3. Reconstruction of the early 18th-century tiled heating stove at the residence of Judge General Vasyl Kochubei in Baturyn. Photo by V. Mezentsev.

The 2018-20 excavations of the underground tunnel and around it yielded many fragments of fine ceramic tiles. In fact, they did not originate from the stoves of its ruined superstructure, but, instead, from those in Mazepa's burnt palace, which stood 19 m to the east. These tiles are decorated with masterful floral or, sometimes, geometric relief patterns in the Ukrainian baroque style. More expensive plaques have polychromatic glazing.

The technology of glazed ceramics was introduced to Kyivan Rus' from Constantinople in the late 10th century. Rus'-Ukraine adapted the designs of brick stoves faced with terracotta and glazed tiles and their ornamentations from Central Europe, particularly from



Fig.4. Fragments of the polychrome glazed ceramic stove tiles with floral ornaments. 2009 excavations of the remnants of Mazepa's palace in Honcharivka, the suburb of Baturyn. Photo by V. Mezentsev.

Poland and Lithuania, during the late medieval and early modern eras. They were commonly used for heating and embellishing the interiors of Ukrainian residential houses at that time (fig.3). Assimilating these Byzantine traditions and Western influences, Ukrainian artisans created their own, distinctive baroque style of decorative stove tiles in the 17th and 18th centuries (figs.3-9).

Employing computer photo collage and graphic techniques, researchers have prepared hypothetical reconstructions of three types of the broken multicoloured glazed ceramic cornice stove tiles found in the tunnel and



Fig.5. Broken multicoloured glazed ceramic cornice stove plaques, discovered in the debris of the corridor at Mazepa's manor in Honcharivka in 2019. Photo by Yu. Sytyi, computer photo collage by S. Dmytrienko, 2020.

nearby in 2019 (figs.5, 6). Two tiles feature a combination of ornate flower baroque motifs and stylized elements of classical and early modern architectural adornments. The upper part of one plaque resembles an entablature frieze with alternating rosettes of two kinds separated by curved triglyphs. Another tile has a row of flower-like rosettes on the top and a line of acanthus leaves below (fig.6).

Various types of massive circular flower-like polychrome glazed ceramic rosettes were placed in sequences along the friezes of entablatures of the Honcharivka palace, as well as numerous 17th and 18th -century churches, belfries, and monastic buildings in Kyiv. This decorative method was transplanted from Italian

Renaissance architecture to Kyiv in the 1630-40s. From there, it spread to early modern ecclesiastical masonry structures in central Ukraine.

Researchers believe that Mazepa invited the best tile-makers from Kyiv to finish his palace in Honcharivka. They adorned its entablatures' friezes with rows of ceramic rosettes in keeping with this popular Kyivan fashion and could also replicate the rosette motif in the compositions of cornice stove tiles, supplementing them with stylized triglyphs and leaves from classical tradition (fig.6). Among the numerous 17th-18th-century stove tiles fashioned by local Baturyn craftsmen, such ornaments are unknown. Therefore, the recreated plaques from the revetments of stoves in Mazepa's richly embellished main residence in Baturyn reflect the mastery of the leading Kyivan artisans of architectural majolica of the 1690s (figs.4-6).

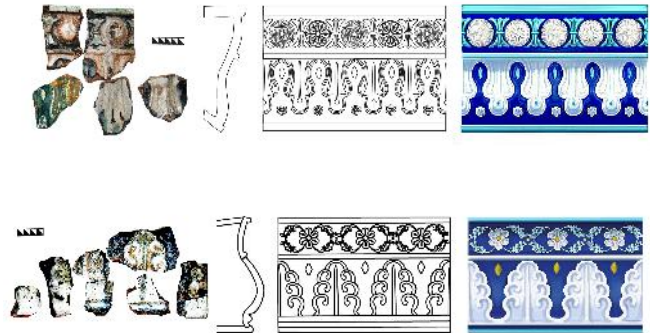


Fig.6 a, b. Polychrome glazed ceramic cornice stove tiles, found during the corridor excavations in 2019. Photos by Yu. Sytyi, hypothetical reconstructions, computer photo collages, and graphics by S. Dmytriienko, 2020.

In 2017-20, in the northwestern suburb of Baturyn, the expedition continued excavating remnants of the residence of Pylyp Orlyk, the Hetmanate's chancellor general. After Mazepa died, Orlyk succeeded him as the hetman in exile (1710-42) and wrote the first Ukrainian Constitution in 1710.

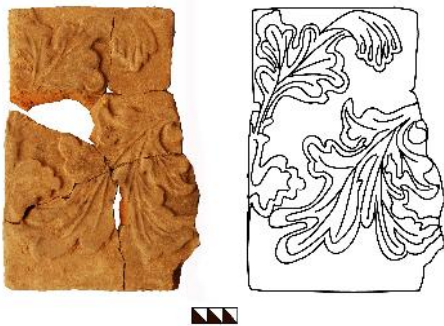


Fig.7. Fragment of the terracotta frieze stove tile. 2020 excavations of the remnants of Orlyk's home in Baturyn. Photo by Yu. Sytyi, graphic by S. Dmytriienko.

Investigation has shown that in 1707-08 Orlyk constructed and decorated his home and its heating stoves, modelling on those in Lithuania, his motherland. It was a spacious one-story house made of logs with several rooms and no cellar. Orlyk's dwelling was burned down during the Muscovite sack of Baturyn in 1708.

Archaeologists have unearthed the foundations of two ruined solid brick heating stoves, each of them nearly 2 by 2 m in size. Probably their lateral façades, as well as the interior walls of Orlyk's home, were whitewashed. From 2018 to 2020, many fragments of the ceramic revetment tiles were discovered around these stove foundations. The square plaques are approximately 30 by 30 cm in size and 1.2 cm thick. They are larger than the regular square stove tiles used in 17th-18th-century Baturyn and elsewhere in Ukraine. Tiles excavated at the site of Orlyk's residence are predominantly ornamented with plant relief designs in the Ukrainian baroque style.

The costlier plaques have multicoloured or monochrome glazing. The cheaper terracotta tiles devoid of any enamel, and some are lime washed.

This past summer, a sizeable part of a rectangular terracotta plaque, 18 cm wide and perhaps about 30 cm long, was found at this site. It was a detail of a horizontal band dividing the stove's sections. This tile features a classical motif of stylized acanthus leaves (figs.3, 7).

Among the stove tiles unearthed at the site of Orlyk's home, there are number of fragments with unique elaborate relief compositions of his and Mazepa's coats of arms. Several of them have polychrome glazes or are lime washed, and some have terracotta surfaces. Computer photo collage and colour graphic

reconstructions of the assemblages of fragmented and burnt glazed ceramic plaques bearing Orlyk's and Mazepa's arms, 1707-08, together with their descriptions and analyses, were published in *Canadio-Byzantina* 30 (January 2019), p.12, fig.3; and 31 (January 2020), pp.13-14, fig.5.

In this current issue, I present our hypothetical reconstruction of a fragment of the upper façade of one ruined stove from the Orlyk residence (fig.8). It features a central recreated square multicoloured glazed tile with his heraldic emblem in relief against a background of square terracotta plaques with flower relief patterns. In the physical and graphic reconstructions of early modern Ukrainian heating stoves, including those in Baturyn, as a rule only a single square heraldic tile was affixed to the middle of frontal and lateral walls. Analogous compositions are known on the 17th-century tiled stoves from Orlyk's homeland-the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Investigators have posited that it was accomplished local Baturyn tile-makers who faced the stoves at his home in 1707-08. Stove plaques collected there are considered to be the best known examples of ceramic and heraldic arts created in Mazepa's capital on the eve of its fall. Their technical and artistic qualities are similar to the high standards of early 18th-century Kyivan earthenware.

From 2017 to 2020, in the southeastern edge of the hetman capital, the expedition excavated remnants of a timber dwelling of the early 18th century. It could belong to a well-to-do Cossack who served as a gunner at the artillery arsenal of Mazepa's fortified villa in neighbouring Honcharivka.



Fig.9. Massive glazed ceramic cornice stove plaques with plant designs in relief. Excavations of the remnants of an early 18th-century Cossack dwelling at the southern periphery of Baturyn in 2020. Photo by Yu. Sytyi, graphic by S. Dmytriienko.

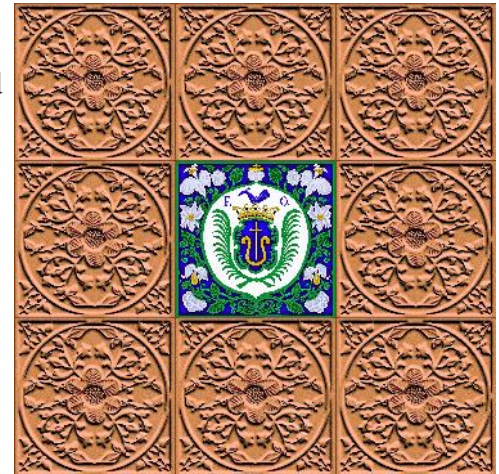


Fig.8. Fragment of the upper façade of the heating stove at Orlyk's residence, featuring the glazed ceramic plaque with his coat of arms surrounded by terracotta tiles bearing flower relief patterns. Hypothetical reconstruction by V. Mezentsev and S. Dmytriienko, computer graphic by S. Dmytriienko, 2020.

This house had a ground floor and a basement furnished with an ordinary heating stove made of clay and adobe bricks. Many broken ceramic stove tiles and two massive intact cornice plaques of local manufacture have been unearthed there (fig.9). They are green-glazed and bear imposing Ukrainian baroque plant relief patterns. Their decoration is more modest when compared to that of the stove plaques from the residences of the hetman and his chancellor described above (cf. figs.4-9). This dwelling, like the adjacent neighbourhood inhabited by craftsmen and tradespeople, was burned during the Russian attack on Baturyn in 1708.

Thus, recent archaeological research of Baturyn testifies to the vibrancy of its ceramic craft during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. From the 1690s onwards, skilled Kyivan tile-makers worked in Baturyn and likely advanced the local production. Early 18th-century ornamental and heraldic stove tiles fashioned for the elite residences in Mazepa's capital are comparable to the quality architectural majolica of Kyiv and represent valuable pieces of Ukrainian baroque ceramic art.

The total destruction of Baturyn by the army of Tsar Peter I in 1708 disrupted its economic and cultural development for half a century. After this onslaught, the local manufacturing of stove tiles with relief images in the Ukrainian baroque style never recovered in Baturyn. In the second part of the 18th century, during the town's revival under Hetman Rozumovsky, the stoves and fireplaces at his palaces and administrative buildings were embellished by flat ceramic plaques with glazed drawings in the Dutch style imported from Holland or Russia. Researchers of Baturyn plan to resume excavations there when the pandemic quarantine will be over.

Volodymyr Mezentsev

The perpetual conquest

This article is reproduced, with kind permission, from the website of the Nordic Byzantine Network, where it was posted in July 2020, <https://nordbyz.wordpress.com/2020/07/24/the-perpetual-conquest/>

As [turquoise carpets](#) begin to cover up the ancient marble floors of the Hagia Sophia in preparation for the first Muslim Friday prayers to be held there since 1935; as various rumors about the future of its Byzantine mosaics make their rounds on websites and social media; as one petition follows another against the decision of the Turkish state to revoke the building's status as a museum, one question seems to remain strangely unanswered: why? There is certainly no lack of mosques in Istanbul that could explain the instant need for yet another one, and one at that which has to be installed, at very short notice and by extremely complicated means, within a world heritage site. What makes the Hagia Sophia so important as a site of prayer that the Turkish president has invited [Muslims from all over the world](#) to express their joy and relief over its re-conversion into a mosque? Is it a sheer provocation against the Christian and / or secular dictates of the West, a political gambling with religious and nationalist sentiments within Turkey? Or both (and if so, how)?



The point in the following is not to make any statement about what the Hagia Sophia is or what it should be or what it should not be, but merely to propose an interpretation of the current controversy that goes beyond Huntingtonesque solipsisms about the fated enmity of religions and civilizations and instead takes a look at what the building has signified in the past and what it might, consequently, mean to current decision-takers. It could be argued, as often seems to be the case, that the building means different things depending on the semiotic framework of the beholder: to (Orthodox) Christians, as a monument to the apex of Byzantine culture and civilization under emperor Justinian I, to (Sunni) Muslims, as the

foremost prize of the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople under Mehmed II, and to secularists, as a living proof of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk's) commitment to Turkish neutrality and reconciliation. But the fact that the three readings are fixated on one and the same location indicates that the semiotic field is to be found

inside the Hagia Sophia as much as outside of it; in other words, that the three are intimately connected in ways that none of them may be willing to openly admit.

The Power and the Glory

The Hagia Sophia was built as a political statement. In between the schizophrenic legacies that Procopius would devote to him as simultaneously defender and restorer of Roman power in the Mediterranean, and embodiment of the empire's inner decay and deterioration, and after the Nika riots that had almost evicted him from Constantinople and left the central areas of the young capital in smoking rubble, Justinian I needed a visual manifestation of power that would forever stamp his name upon the fabric of the city, confirm the status of the city as center of cultural gravity within the empire, and show the world that the empire had lost nothing of its ancient vigor or attraction. The 'Great Church', which would indeed remain the biggest church in Christendom for almost a millennium, was erected at impressive speed; it was inaugurated just five years after its much humbler predecessor had been destroyed in the Nika riots.



By one of the many ironies of fates, this was precisely the amount of time that it would take, practically to the years a century later, for the nascent Caliphate to conquer the entire Middle East from the empire. The parallel is of course coincidental, but still merits some attention: if Justinian had (as the anecdote goes) outdone Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem when the first liturgy was celebrated in the Hagia Sophia in 537, the Caliph Umar prayed on the newly conquered Temple Mount in Jerusalem in 638 while listening to a prophecy about the Divine wrath that was about to befall Constantinople. The symbolical

significance of the late Roman capital in Early Muslim conquests cannot be overstated: it figures, as a tantalizing end point of the conquests, in Muslim eschatology which seems to have both inspired and been inspired by the repeated attempts of the young Caliphate to conquer the city, from the mid-seventh century raids where Abu Ayyoub Ansari died up to the great siege of 717–18.

In these traditions, Constantinople was the Roman Empire; but, it might be inferred, The Great Church was Constantinople: it is no coincidence that later Turkish receptions of this history seem to have internalized the prophecies in such a way that Paradise was promised to the Muslim who would pray inside the Hagia Sophia. As in all such cases, the distinction between the terrestrial and eschatological end was blurred. The conquest of all terrestrial empires would have put the Caliphs and their followers in charge of a Paradise on earth; at the same time, the fall of all terrestrial empires would have signalled the impending Day of Judgment and so, by consequence, the coming of the heavenly Paradise. The two Paradises were one; and, while the early Caliphs lacked a Great Church, they made the second Justinian support the decoration of the Great Mosque in Damascus in such a way that the merging was apparent to everyone.

The Whore of Babylon and the Woman Clothed in the Sun

Christians were hardly unprepared for the setbacks they had faced. The relationship between the Christian salvation story and the Roman Empire had always been a complicated one, and although the Apocalypse of John had a less central status in the East, Byzantine traditions from this time prepared for a tentative fall of Constantinople in similar ways both to how the Muslims imagined it, and to how the Early Christian tradition had prophesied the fall of Rome: the "Great Babylon", embodying all sins and vices that are corrupting the earth, and ruled by or personified by a woman, is ultimately destroyed – that is, unless it is saved by a man. In the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, the emperor is suddenly, at the very moment when the Muslims have penetrated the walls of Constantinople, shaking off his "drunkenness" to evict the intruders from all the lands they have conquered.

But it is not merely by resorting to manly ideals that the city can still spy a hope of surviving its inevitable doom. The cult of the Virgin Mary as protector of Constantinople increases in the wake of the repeated assaults against it, not merely those from Muslims: the Blachernae shrine was included within the city walls already after the 626 Avar Siege, and the walls themselves were understood to stand under a particular protection by the Virgin, who denied the unworthy entry into her domains. The imagery is well-known from Late Ancient and Medieval hymns and prayers to the Mother of God and imbedded in the visual code of innumerable Orthodox churches and icons, where she embodies – in the words of Romanos the Melodist – "paradise in a cave". The Hagia Sophia is no exception: the famous mosaic of the Theotokos, once described by the patriarch Photios, is found in the apse above the choir. Mehmed II, who conquered Constantinople in 1453, is said to have taken a liking to the image; at least it remained visible – as can be seen on drawings from the eighteenth century – long into the Ottoman era.



If the terrestrial Paradise can be saved by invoking its celestial roots or recalling its eschatological meaning, then the fall of the city will first and foremost be a moral one: the Virgin will take her protecting veil from it only if it lapses into sin. Whether Constantinople ultimately "fell" or was "conquered" is still a matter of discussion in English, but it is notable that the former term is never used with reference to the Crusader rape and pillage in 1204. If used, it is reserved for the Ottoman conquest in 1453.

Emasculating the Conqueror and Revirginating the Fallen

The Arabic word for conquering, *fataʿa*, originally means to open. From there derives the term *futūʿ* which is used to describe the Early Muslim conquests of the Middle East, and the epithet that was eventually bestowed upon Mehmed II as conqueror of Constantinople, *Fatih*, which in turn has provided the name for the administrative unit of Istanbul that corresponds to the old Byzantine city. The Ottomans were well aware that they could claim a historical continuity from the Early Muslims who had tried to conquer Constantinople in the seventh and eighth centuries: they erected a shrine to Ayyoub (Eyüp) Ansari outside the old city walls (almost facing the bygone Blachernae shrine within) where new sultans underwent a kind of coronation ceremony, and marked several other tombs in the city which they claimed belonged to fallen Arab warriors

from the sieges. Both the conquest of the city, and the attempts to conquer it, thus became parts of a sacred history of desire and possession.

It was never uncontested, however. At the very latest from the Russo-Turkish war in 1768–74 it was clear that the Ottomans were defending their prize against an enemy whose goal it was to liberate the “captive maiden at the Bosphorus” and make the Hagia Sophia into a church again. Russian and other Orthodox Christian claims to Constantinople would considerably affect nineteenth-century politics, and the city’s future was unclear still after the showdown in the First World War. It explains Mustafa Kemal’s decision to make Ankara the capital of the new Turkish republic, and forms an important backdrop for his decision to transform the Hagia Sophia into a museum. But while his neutralization of the contested ground came nothing short of an emasculation to those who still believed in the Caliphate, it could also be said to have constituted an act of revirgination which once again made the building possible to conquer.

From the 1950s, as Turkey regained political confidence due to its NATO membership and Istanbul began to grow into the most populous city of Europe, the cult around the conquest and the conqueror reappeared. Under the current AKP rule it has turned into a veritable obsession, as can be seen in movies, TV series, monuments, memorial sites and a whole panorama outside the city walls. The paradox about this is that it has taken place as Turkish state authorities have often done their best to play down, deny and even erase the Byzantine heritage of the city, which raises the question which city they actually take a pride in having conquered. The rapid dwindling of the non-Muslim population of Turkey has further detached the modern state from the past that it is trying to emulate. What remains is just the neurotically iterated act of power and submission of a faceless opponent, the scenery of a walled city that exists solely for the purpose of being taken, over and over again.

To Have and Not to Have

For the Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the conquest is a rhetorical device on which he has been able to rely at all critical moments. After the July 2016 coup attempt, he made his supporters physically assemble and metaphorically prepare for battle outside the old city walls of Istanbul. Having secured his grip on the Turkish state in the years that followed, the Hagia Sophia was, in many ways, the last bastion for him to conquer. Many wondered why it had taken him so long. Demands to restore its status as a mosque had been raised from the very onset of its conversion into a museum and the boundaries had been pushed long before the rise of the AKP: the enormous calligraphic panes with the names of the Caliphs had been returned to the walls, loudspeakers to enable calls for prayers had been installed in the minarets, a prayer room had been set up for the staff. In Trabzon and Iznik, the old Hagia Sophia churches were transformed from museums into mosques several years ago at the behest of other political parties. That something was finally about to happen in Istanbul was clear the latest on May 29 this year, as [the annual celebration of the 1453 conquest was marked by erecting a prop city wall in front of the building](#).

There may be several reasons behind the timing. The Covid-19 pandemic has bereft Turkey of most of its tourists, which means that no tickets will be sold to the museum anyway; the bleak economic outlook may have led to a desperate desire for a boost of popularity among the traditional AKP electorate. Furthermore, the loss of Istanbul last year to a city mayor from the Kemalist opposition seems to have come close in the eyes of Erdoğan to losing Constantinople to the Byzantines. It should also be recalled that a building which the president for many years loudly expressed his desire to pray in was not the former Great Cathedral of Constantinople but its cousin, the Great Mosque in Damascus. Having in effect lost the battle against Bashar

al-Assad – and having been [utterly humiliated by Vladimir Putin in his last attempt to discuss the situation in Syria this winter](#) – this is a dream that Erdoğan will never see come true. In an obvious attempt to retaliate for the Hagia Sophia transformation, Russia has declared that it will sponsor the building of [a small copy of the Hagia Sophia in Hama, Syria](#) to be used as a Russian Orthodox church. Erdoğan, on the other hand, claims that the lost entrance fees from the Hagia Sophia museum will be compensated by oil revenues from Libya, where he is moving many irregular troops from Syria. And, as to further add to the list of boasts that he will never be able to live up to, he has declared that he is next going to [liberate the Temple Mount in Jerusalem from Israel](#).

But at the end, the simplest explanation might be that a tension cannot be built up infinitely. At some point it will require a release. In practice, the realization of the promise to once again pray in the Hagia Sophia means a strategical loss to Erdoğan, for the building was always more valuable to him as an object of desire than as an object of possession. Once this Friday prayer is over, it will be just another one of Istanbul's many mosques. As news of the event are broadcast across the world, stirring anti-Islamic sentiment among Christians and Turkophobia in the Balkans, and confirming European right-wing ideologists that the continent is about to face a neo-Ottoman siege, the question may remain in the long run, whether it was all really worth it.

Olof Heilo, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul

Photos by Geoffrey Greatrex and Jonathan Bardill. The picture of the Theotokos is in the public domain from <https://www.wikiart.org/en/byzantine-mosaics/the-virgin-and-child-theotokos-mosaic-in-the-apse-of-hagia-sophia-867>

Crisis at the Borders of Byzantine Art History: Preservation, Patrimony, and Armenian Heritage in Artsakh

It would be an understatement to say that 2020 has cast the contingencies of historical thought in sharp relief. Not only have we watched monuments commemorating morally questionable pasts topple from their plinths in the momentum of the Black Lives Matter movements across North America and Europe, but we also witnessed Byzantine architecture, identity, and heritage make front-page news this summer in light of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's conversation of Istanbul's Hagia Sophia into a mosque. In the wake of this latest iteration of Hagia Sophia, a number of statements, research forums, and public lectures emerged over the last few months reminding us of the multiple histories that continue to resonate within the structure. These events also raised questions about the extent to which organizations such as UNESCO ought to get involved without veering into gestures of imperialism. Regardless of the personal opinions we may hold regarding these events, most would agree that our relationship to monuments and historical preservation is at the forefront of our minds now more than ever.

Only time will tell what will happen with Hagia Sophia. But if history is any indicator, it will continue to serve as a vital symbol of Istanbul's identity thanks to organized efforts from the intellectual community and world heritage organizations. Sadly, the same cannot be said for sites outside of Turkey, such as Djulfa, a historic Armenian cemetery that was obliterated¹ by the Azerbaijani military in 2005. In other words, whereas

¹ See the video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZu2zqFE_gI

the Turkish government has served as custodians to Hagia Sophia and the other Byzantine monuments it has inherited, displaying varying degrees of openness to work with foreign groups on matters of preservation, this patrimonial stewardship is not the standard. Given the events that have unfolded on the modern borders of Byzantium, it is imperative that we recognize the precarity of medieval monuments that reside outside Istanbul and which have unfairly become helpless pawns subjected to the cruelty of the shifting borders of a post-Soviet world.

Beginning 27 September amidst the public discourse surrounding the fate of Hagia Sophia, Azerbaijani forces continued its retaliation against Armenia with a systematic assault in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh, known as Artsakh to Armenians. With minimal coverage in Western media, the attack targeted not only civilian homes, hospitals, and schools throughout the region, but also major cultural sites including two assaults on the 19th-century Holy Savior Ghazanchetsots Cathedral in Shushi, the region's capital, leaving the structure still standing but in critical condition.²

While Russia brokered a peace deal on 9 November³ that stipulated the handing over the region of Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan in increments starting 14 November and continuing through 1 December, the war may have come to an end but the uncertainty regarding Armenia's monuments continues to intensify. As with any longstanding conflict, the roles of aggressor and victim have included a number of players both national and independent over the years. But, when it comes to the preservation of historically significant monuments, the haunting video of Djulfa reveals that Azerbaijan's track record is anything but clean. An independent investigation⁴ carried out between 1997 and 2006 further revealed that Azerbaijan razed the Armenian region of Nakhichevan of its material heritage, including over 90 medieval churches, 22,000

historical tombstones, and 5,840 *khachkars* (monumental decorative crosses carved in stone unique to Armenian material culture).⁵ Given the sites that Azerbaijan's aggression has targeted both historically and at present, there is no reason to believe that the events currently unfolding in Artsakh will play out any differently than what happened in Nakhichevan.



As it stands now, countless more Armenian monuments are in imminent danger: thousands of medieval monuments in the region are at risk of widespread erasure, including a 5th/6th century Christian basilica known as Tzitzernavank (left), the 9th-13th century monastery of Dadivank with its sprawling

² See <https://www.wsj.com/articles/cultural-heritage-in-the-crosshairs-once-more-11605731198>

³ Cf. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-54882564>

⁴ See <https://hyperallergic.com/482353/a-regime-conceals-its-erasure-of-indigenous-armenian-culture/>

⁵ <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/478063>

complex and rare frescos (right) that bear intimate familiarity with the Byzantine painting practices, as well as *khachkars*, mausoleums, and churches. Intwined with these physical monuments is the preservation of Armenian heritage and history itself, which has only recently begun to assert itself within North American scholarship.



Although Armenian art is rarely included in art historical survey courses, the Metropolitan Museum of Art's fall 2018 exhibition, *Armenia!*⁶ and its accompanying catalog have shown the far-reaching involvement of Armenians, allowing us to trace their extensive networks of trade and patronage from China to Byzantium, Africa, and Western Europe, and, by the early modern period, into the Americas. As the early fourteenth century title page for the Gospel of John included here demonstrates, the



art of medieval Armenia developed a style that was distinct yet was anything but insular. The page's richly decorated header and elaborately meandering vegetal interlace patterns reveal a unique synthesis of Byzantine and Islamic influences in its design. Beyond objects, historical chronicles penned by Armenian monks and intellectuals provide textual scholarship with a degree of objectivity and frankness about the realities of Byzantium so rarely seen from the local court historians.

We are only just beginning to apprehend the value of Armenian monuments, objects, history, and heritage thanks not least to the recent publication of rigorous academic studies on the history and art history of the region by leading academic publishers such as Oxford University Press. I cite only a handful of publications that have made primary accounts from the medieval Kingdom of Armenia and its material culture available to an English-speaking

audience: Dr Christina Maranci's 2018 *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction* and Dr Timothy Greenwood's 2017 *The Universal History of Step'anos Tarōnec'i* both available through OUP, as well as Dr George Bournoutian's *A Concise History of the Armenian People* republished in its seventh edition in 2018. Prior to these publications, one needed French, Russian, and/or modern and medieval Armenian to engage with this material-though, as Byzantinists who are acutely aware of the need for intensive language training, realistically one would need all of them. In addition to these general studies, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) has staged and archived a series of roundtables with leading scholars on the art, architecture, and history of Artsakh providing translation when necessary.⁷

Armenia's contribution not only to Byzantine studies specifically, but also to our understanding of the Middle Ages more broadly still has much to offer. The burgeoning work on Armenia within Anglo circles and its growing interest in the Byzantine community presents an exciting new frontier for our discipline as we continue to grapple with the complexities of what a global Middle Ages truly means. However, we are now at an impasse and risk losing these spectacular monuments and cultural links to reckless acts of state sponsored military shelling.

⁶ See <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2018/armenia>

⁷ See <https://naasr.org/blogs/event-videos>

Peter Brown's masterful review of the Armenia exhibition at the Met rightly emphasizes the manuscripts' and *khachkars*' relentless pleas for us to remember: to remember the scribe, to remember the artist, and to remember the patron and their family.⁸ As historians of a past as fragmentary as Byzantium, we are all too familiar with oblivion and how easy it is for entire histories to be buried by time. In the colophon to one gospel book, the Armenian scribe recounts his journey as he fled from his home in Erzincan to Istanbul as a civil war wreaked havoc on the city and its surroundings in a 1338 episode chillingly similar to the present:

And those who fled were devoured by the cold weather, and our land came to its last breath. And hearing all this and seeing all this, and grieving much, I could not write.

As heartbreaking as the scribe's message may be, it also reminds us of the vocational aspects of our work. Organizations such as the World Monuments Fund,⁹ a private, non-profit organization that has promoted the documentation and preservation of Armenian monuments in Turkish control following the 1915-1922 genocide, have initiated work with the Armenian and Azerbaijani governments in the hopes of protecting Artsakh's landmarks from further damage. In addition, a number of petitions have circulated around the internet calling on the safeguarding of the region's cultural heritage.¹⁰ But these initiatives must be further supported and advanced through education.

If Armenia's monuments and objects are to be preserved, they must first be more widely known within our immediate communities. We can no longer leave Armenian material to be siloed within Armenian studies. Rather, the more we strive to embrace and to foreground Armenia in our teaching and in our scholarship, the more we can raise awareness, interest, and enthusiasm for a corpus of material whose chances of survival diminish with each day of inaction and silence.

A silver lining of the pandemic has been the unprecedented access to digitized material and globally broadcasted scholarship. What we do with this material remains up to us.

peter boudreau, PhD Candidate, Department of Art History, McGill University
peter.boudreau@mail.mcgill.ca

Referenced image: Title Page of the Gospel of John (1300-1310), Sargis (illuminator). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1938, 38.171.2.

www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/449536?searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=Sargis&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1

Image in the public domain (open access license accessible below image)

Tzitzernavank image: By Intrepid wanderer - originally posted to Flickr as Tsitsernavank, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4481483>

Fresco: By Khachen - Shahan Mkrtchian, "Treasures of Artsakh", Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5778614>

⁸ See <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2019/01/17/armenia-between-two-empires/>

⁹ See <https://www.wmf.org/blog/wmf-statement-safeguarding-cultural-heritage-nagorno-karabakh>

¹⁰ E.g. <https://www.change.org/p/unesco-protect-armenian-cultural-historical-sites-in-artsakh>

Book Review

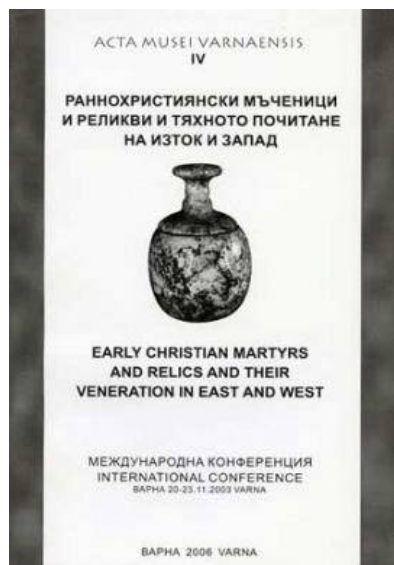
Members are encouraged to contribute book reviews; we have published a few in the past. They can be of any book relevant to the field of Byzantine studies. The book need not be recent, moreover. I am grateful to Stefan Moffat for this contribution.

Minchev, Alexander, Valeri Iotov (eds), **РАННОХРИСТИЯНСКИ МЪЧЕНИЦИ И РЕЛИКВИ И ТЯХНОТО ПОЧИТАНЕ НА ИЗТОК И ЗАПАД. МЕЖДУНАРОДНА КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ, ВАРНА, 20-23 НОЕМВРИ 2003 Г** - *Early Christian Martyrs and Relics and their Veneration in East and West. International Conference, Varna, November 20th-23rd, 2003* (Varna, BG: Varna Archaeological Museum, Acta Musei Varnaensis 4, 2006) 344 pp.

This is a collection of chapters centred on early Christian martyrs and their relics that were presented as a conference in Varna, Bulgaria in 2003. There are 24 unnumbered chapters, accompanied by black and white figures. 2 chapters are in German, 6 in French, and the remainder in English. Every chapter is accompanied by an abstract in Bulgarian.

The cult of martyrs and their relics, which makes up the core of the cult of saints as practiced by Christians, was central to Christianity in Late Antiquity. Late antique theologians, such as ‘church fathers’, wrote about it. It has been studied for over a century. Much work has been done in parts of the Roman Empire where written records, generally in the form of Christian theological writings or inscriptions, exist that offer a view of local Romans' views on the cult of saints. North Africa, Gaul, Italy, Asia Minor, Syria-Palestine and Egypt are examples of these regions.

Rome, Asia Minor and Syria-Palestine are all sources for chapters in the reviewed book. Early popes in Rome sought to make the early Christian burials of the Roman catacombs important sites of martyr commemoration. In the work under review, Lucrezia Spera deals with the distribution of martyr burials in Roman catacombs in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, and how this distribution ties in with the cult of the saints. Danilo Mazzoleni writes about inscriptions and graffiti dedicated to martyrs from the cult’s origins to the 7th century CE, generally scanning the entire empire, but emphasizing the inscriptions in Rome's catacombs, such as those commissioned by pope Damasus in the 4th century CE. Yoram Tsafrir discusses the location of relics in the churches of Palestine and Arabia in Late Antiquity. Renate Pillinger writes about the cult of relics and martyrs in Ephesus.



Martyria and pilgrimage to holy places became important aspects of early Christianity. Many of the chapters of this book deal with the discovery of supposed *martyria* at particular locations based on the presence of architectural features such as crypts or cavities beneath altar tables or other artifacts such as sigma-shaped *mensae*. A strength of the reviewed book is the number of chapters in English, French or German about this phenomenon in South-East Europe. Stela Doncheva collects all known examples of *martyria* in Bulgaria, categorises them and discusses how they relate to eastern religious practice. Carol Snively deals with an underground chamber beneath the apse of the episcopal church in Stobi. Irina Adriana Achim discusses a church with a crypt at Histria, Romania. Anica Gorgievska writes about potential *martyria* at Heraclea Lyncestis based on the presence of cavities

beneath church altars and a sigma-shaped *mensa*. Alexander Minchev describes a church in Varna (Greco-Roman Odessus) equipped with a crypt, and the reliquaries associated with it. Further on Odessus, Pavel Georgiev argues that it was a centre of Monophysitism based on the architecture of a particular church located at the suburb of Djanavara, which also houses relics. Aristotle Mentzos analyzes the crypt and the bema in the Church of Saint Demetrios in Thessaloniki. Andrzej B. Biernacki discusses the *martyrium* at Novae on the lower Danube, housing relics of Saints Luppous and Simeon Stylites the Elder and attached to the episcopal church, as well as interpreting a building to the south of the episcopal basilica as a pilgrims' hostel, with among the artifacts a mensa.

Supposed martyria are identified elsewhere at Karnobat in Bulgaria (Zhivko Aladjov, Tsonja Drazheva, and Dimcho Momchilov), at Golech near Silistra on the lower Danube (Georgi Atanassov), and at Lozenec on the outskirts of Sofia (Stefan Boyadjiev). Gordana Milošević studies a cemetery (called a necropolis by the author) beside a martyrial church in Niš, Serbia. Kiril Trajkovski writes about a tomb-turned-Christian memoria at the village of Morodvis in the Bregalnica valley of North Macedonia, east of Stobi.

Some chapters discuss reliquaries. In Chapter 20, Nikolai Markov writes about a reliquary from the Roman town of Ratiaria, Bulgaria. The following chapter written by Alexandra Dimitrova-Milčeva concerns a reliquary from the region of the Roman city of Nikopolis ad Nestum, Bulgaria. Galena Radoslavova writes about a reliquary from Abritus, Bulgaria.

Christianity also reached regions outside of the borders of the Roman Empire. the Greek city of Chersonesos in the Crimea is the source for two chapters in the book (Elena Klenina, Evgeniy Turovskiy). They discuss the evidence for the cult of relics in an episcopal church and in sepulchres in the city, respectively.

Other chapters analyze records of conciliar canons regarding martyrs, or later medieval material culture distantly associated with saints. Chapter 3 by Todor Enchev rather generally discusses how canons from church councils in Late Antiquity shaped the belief in martyrs and relics. Vera Zalesskaya writes about a recently acquired 12th-14th century CE icon at the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg that is associated with the Bogomils.

The book's greatest weakness is the lack of an index. Given the brevity of many of the chapters, and their very local perspective on the main topic, an index would have been a very helpful tool that would have allowed these local views to be placed in a larger context.

Three books (two published before the conference and one after it) would have contributed much to the analysis of the material culture. These are: James Howard-Johnston's and Paul Anthony Hayward's edited volume *The Cult of the Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown* (1999), John Crooks *The Architectural Setting of the Cult of Saints in the Early Christian West, c. 300-1200* (2000), and Lucy Grig's *Making Martyrs in Late Antiquity* (2004).

The authors who contributed the chapters on Rome, Asia Minor or Syria-Palestine have published similar results elsewhere in a readily available language such as English, French, or German, making these chapters a bit redundant to someone knowledgeable with those regions or authors. However, as mentioned earlier, all of the chapters dealing with South-East Europe (which makes up the bulk of the book) were written in English, French, and German. Scholarship on South-East Europe is generally in one of the local languages: Serbian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Greek, or Romanian. This publishing in widely available languages of results

from local places little-known to Anglophone, Francophone or Germanophone students of the cult of saints makes these chapters valuable sources of information to a wider audience, which enhances the value of the book.

Stefan Moffat

Obituaries

Thanos (Athanasios) K. Fotiou (1935-2020)

Athanasios Fotiou, 85, passed away at his home surrounded by his loving wife and children on Monday 13 July 2020 after a seven-year battle with prostate cancer, one month shy of his 86th birthday. He is survived by his wife, Lilian, and his children Alexandra, Andrew and Michael, as also by his grandchildren Benjamin and Sophia. Born in Marathousa Greece on 11 August 1934 to Sophia and Spiridon Fotiou, he was the last remaining of his three younger siblings. He endured much during and after WWII and during the Greek Civil

War. He was an honoured University Professor of Classics at Carleton University for over thirty years, receiving his Ph.D. at the University of Cincinnati in 1967. He graduated from his beloved Anatolia College in Salonika Greece in 1954.

Thanos was a very warm and convivial person who had an encyclopaedic memory for people and places; rarely could I mention a Canadian classicist or a Byzantinist about whom he could not relate at least one anecdote. In the field of Byzantine studies he worked on the *Anonymous Dialogue on Political Science* of the sixth century, which was the subject of his thesis, and he published several important articles on the work, mainly in the 1980s, e.g. in *JÖBG* 27 (1978) and *Byzantion* 51 (1981). Mention must also be made of his role in the translation and commentary of John Kaminiates' *Capture of Thessaloniki*, which appeared in 2000, published in the *Byzantina Australiensia* series, a collaboration with his old friend David Frendo.

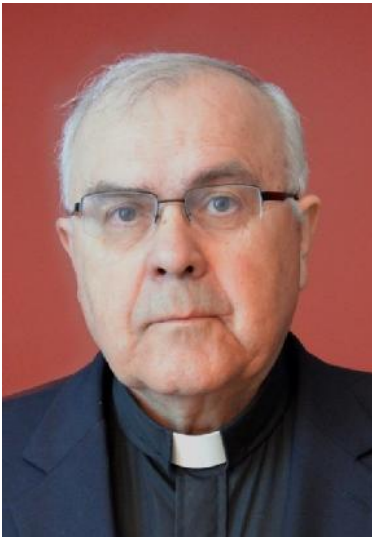
More recently, he undertook research on aspects of the German occupation of Greece in the 1940s, publishing *Η ναζιστική τρομοκρατία στην Ελλάδα* in 2011; he embarked on

a tour of Greece to promote the book. A video of a presentation of the book may be found at: https://emfilios.blogspot.com/2011/12/blog-post_61.html

Since then he had been working on Greek emigrants to the United States, especially in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Thanos will be sorely missed by his colleagues around the world.



Fr Martin Janez Dimnik, CSB (1941-2020)



Fr Dimnik died peacefully at Presentation Manor on November 15, 2020. He was born on 6 October 1941, in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, the son of the late Martin Dimnik and Zorka Perlić. He is survived by his sister Susan Revai (Gene), his niece Adrienne, nephew Gene Jr. (Tina), grandniece Sophie, and many cousins. The family emigrated to Austria in 1943, and to Canada in 1949, settling first in Raymond, Alberta, and then in Lethbridge. Martin attended elementary and high school in Lethbridge, graduating from St. Francis High School in 1960. He then entered St Basil's Novitiate, Richmond Hill, taking first vows on August 15, 1961.

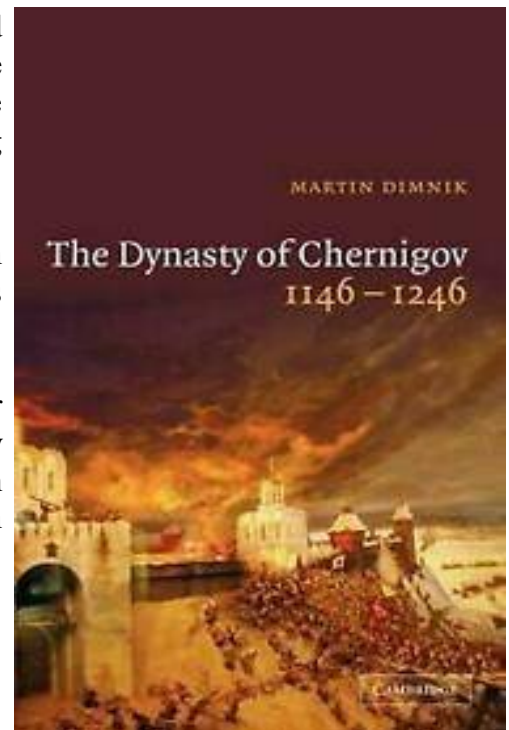
After profession he went to live at St. Basil's Seminary while taking his university course in Slavic Studies. He received his B.A. degree in 1965 and then taught for two years at St. Michael's College School. He took his theology at St. Basil's Seminary and at the Toronto School of Theology and received the degree of Master of Divinity in the fall of 1971. He also obtained an M.A. degree in Slavic Languages and Literatures in 1970. He was ordained to priesthood on June 26, 1971, by Cardinal George Flahiff in Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Lethbridge.

After earning his D.Phil. from Oxford in 1976, Martin was appointed to the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto, where he remained for the rest of his academic career, serving as Institute Secretary, Praeses, and Academic Dean in addition to publishing numerous articles and books on Kyivan Rus'.

In 2014 he moved to the Basilian Fathers Retirement Residence. In November 2018 Fr. Dimnik moved with the Basilian Fathers Retirement Community to Presentation Manor (Scarborough).

In light of the current pandemic, there will be a Memorial Mass for Fr. Dimnik at a later date. Burial will be at the Basilian plot at Holy Cross Cemetery, Thornhill, ON. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Basilian Fathers Retirement Fund, 95 St. Joseph Street, Toronto, ON M5S 3C2.

A fuller obituary may be found in the Basilian Newsletter, vol.61, no.18, for November 2020.





Initiative to Democratize the AIEB

The decision of the International Bureau of the Association internationale des études byzantines (AIEB) to move the planned Istanbul 2021 Congress to Italy following a vote by national committees, made salient some of the limits to the present model of our international body in fostering a democratic and transparent decision-making process. The New Critical Approaches to Byzantine Studies network members were struck by the letter issued by Turkish graduate students open letter expressing concern over the decision to move the 2021 (now 2022) international congress. We collaborated a letter outlining some of our concerns and suggestions on ways forward for the field of Byzantine studies and the way it is organised internationally. This letter, which can be read here in its entirety, is meant to function as an invitation to begin working collectively and collaboratively to develop Byzantine studies further.

It is important to begin by recognising the profound difficulties our field faces, on account of the Turkish state's actions in the last five years. There is a clear need to respond in the face of military operations and occupations. These military actions have been coupled with the political weaponization of refugees' lives; widespread criminalisation and imprisonment of Kurdish and Turkish politicians and activists, the replacement of elected representatives with state appointees, and extra-territorial assassinations of Kurdish and Turkish political figures; repressive measures against women, feminist movements, and LGBTQ+ communities; and the pervasive criminalization and imprisonment of higher education workers. As a field significantly focused on the region within contemporary Turkish borders, we have a responsibility to offer meaningful responses to these developments. Yet our experience as a network has highlighted the extreme difficulties of finding a response that balances the need to refuse complicity and the need for solidarity with colleagues in Turkey, who continue to work in extremely difficult conditions. In particular we are very mindful of how critiques all too often veer into anti-Turkish racism in particular, and Islamophobia in general, both of which remain far too common across our field.

We believe our field should be committed to challenging reductive nationalist narratives about the past and addressing the legacies of colonialism reflected in structural disparities between global regions. We believe this dual mission should be reflected in the way our field is structured and organised. We therefore would like to outline three areas where it is necessary to bring our scholarly values in line with current praxis. It is with this in mind that we outlined three areas to

1. boost transparency and promote direct democracy by standardizing voting procedures and encouraging general membership to committees;
2. engage in a process of denationalisation and cooperation with the formation of non-national committees and multi-site conferences;
3. promote sustainable events that offer a hybrid format with a fully online option while making sure that participants who wish to attend in person, can do so with expanded funding options.

The AIEB was founded nearly 100 years ago and must evolve and respond to the changing character of the field: including the shifting circumstances of individual byzantinists (who may not have national representation and, in some cases, lack institutional support) and an increasingly global field. We invite all colleagues who share some or all of the perspectives and proposals outlined here to get in touch, so that we can begin working collaboratively and collectively to develop them further. Please email us on: newcriticalapproaches@protonmail.com, as we have already and will continue to organize meetings and engage in a dialogue with the AIEB executive.

Alexandra Vukovich

Report on the AIEB for 2020 (Geoffrey Greatrex)

The main decision of the AIEB this year, following a vote among the national committees (see the article just above), was to shift the five-yearly congress from Istanbul to Padua and Venice and to defer it by one year to August 2022. The Turkish organisers are still involved in the programme, which, indeed, will largely be the one that they had set up. The Italian association now has a website to do with the congress:

<http://www.studibizantini.it/it/24th-international-congress-of-byzantine-studies-venice-padua-23-28-august-2022-2/>

The AIEB also reacted to news from Turkey about the conversion of both Hagia Sophia and St Saviour in Chora into mosques: the president, John Haldon, wrote a number of letters to the Turkish authorities and to UNESCO about these announcements. Information on this and other matters pertaining to AIEB can be found on their website and in their bulletins (to which one can subscribe by going to the website).

Message from the Italian organisers (December 2020)

We are making our best effort in keeping you informed on developments in the plans for the next International Congress of Byzantine Studies. If the current COVID 19 global pandemic crisis will substantially improve, the Congress, as agreed, is scheduled to take place in Venice – Padua on the **22- 27 AUGUST 2022**.

At the moment though, the current situation (as per November 2020) does not allow us to make further plans, and no contractor has been so far officially hired, in order not to waste resources should the Congress be further postponed. However, what we can do is to start working on the structure of the program and define the new calendar for submissions of your contributions to the Congress.

As the Bureau of the AIEB has already made clear, the Congress will substantially keep the same program defined for Istanbul, with minor adjustments. In this sense, we are giving the opportunity to participants, should they so wish, to revise their proposals to take the new location of the Congress into account. This includes plenary sessions, round tables and free communications.

We ask you to submit a confirmation of your willingness to participate in the Congress and your revised proposal with the title/titles of contributions and name of participants.

The following cases may occur:

1) If you are a scholar who wants to offer a FREE COMMUNICATION, there is something new for you:

A) If you want to simply offer a free communication and you are fine to be grouped with other speakers, we will do it for you. You just send us the title of your paper and at least 5 keywords by APRIL 15, 2021.

B) If you want to offer a free communication, but you wish either to be inserted in the same group with other colleagues (e.g. colleagues you know already working on the same subject or on a subject that you feel is complementary to yours), or you want to present a research group (maximum 9 people and minimum 6 in 2 hours), you can do it. But be aware that in this case applies the rule that the group of scholars cannot include only people coming from one country, both according to the principle of nationality of the participants and of the country where they live: i.e., it is not possible to have a group composed, for example, by 5 scholars who either are all Italian (living in Italy or abroad) or work all in Italy (being Italian or not).

You just send us the list of participants (with their affiliations and nationalities), the titles of their papers and at least 5 keywords by APRIL 15, 2021.

This new format is planned especially for young scholars.

2) If your ROUND TABLE has been accepted by the Turkish committee: let us know by MAY 15, 2021 if you are still willing to organize and manage the round table you submitted and confirm the abstract of the round table together with the list of participants (with their affiliations) and the titles of their contributions.

Also in this case, if you wish so, you may change the topic of the round table to take the new location into account; however, this be the case, the Venetian-Paduan committee will have to examine the new proposal and discuss it with the international bureau.

We would also like to remind you that a round table should have a maximum of 6 and a minimum of 4 participants and that the group of scholars cannot be coming from only one country both according to the nationality of the participants and the country where they live: i.e., it is not possible to have a round table composed, for example, by 5 scholars who either are all Italian (living in Italy or abroad) or work all in Italy (being Italian or not).

3) If you have been invited by the Turkish committee to present a PLENARY SESSION PAPER: let us know by MAY 15, 2021 if you are still willing to give your paper and confirm your final title. Please note that you may also change your topic to take the new location into account.

The deadline for submitting the final version of your paper for the proceedings of the congress is JULY 15, 2021. You can find further updates on the website of the Associazione Italiana di Studi Bizantini:

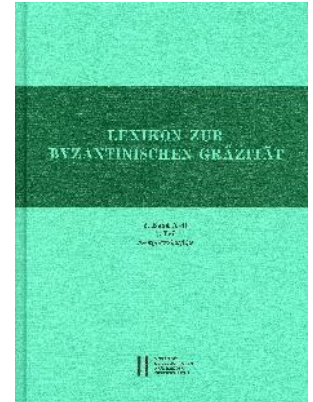
<http://www.studibizantini.it/24th-international-congress-of-byzantine-studies-venice-padua-23-28-august-2022-2/>

If you have questions or doubts, you can write to icbs2020@studibizantini.it

SHORT NOTICES

All fascicles of the *Lexikon zur Byzantinischen Gräzität* (LBG) now freely available in digital form

We are pleased to inform you that, thanks to the initiative of *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG), the entire *Lexikon zur Byzantinischen Gräzität* (LBG) is now freely available in digital form on TLG's website: <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lbg>. The LBG, under the editorship of Erich Trapp, a joint project of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW), the University of Vienna and the University of Bonn, was published in 8 fascicles between 1994 and 2017 by the publishing house of the ÖAW. (From *Byzantine News*, issue 34).



Call for Submissions: *Estudios bizantinos*. Journal of the Sociedad Española de Bizantinista

The journal may devote part of each annual volume to a single theme, with its own introduction and accompanying materials. Works presented for publication will be submitted to an evaluation process which will decide as quickly as possible whether to accept or reject it. We encourage readers of *Estudios bizantinos* to **subscribe** to the journal in order to receive the latest news of publication. They can also learn about other news relating to Byzantium on the web of the **[Sociedad española de Bizantinística](#)**.

New yearly series, *Études byzantines et post-byzantines* (ÉBPB)

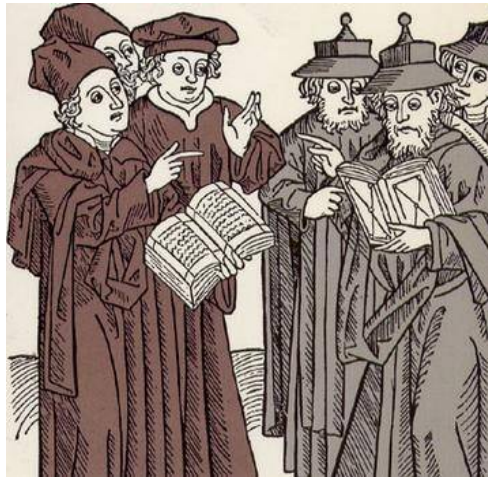


I am delighted to announce the publication of the first two volumes of the new yearly series of *Études byzantines et post-byzantines* (EBPB). The first two volumes contain the Proceedings of two Byzantine conferences organized in Bucharest in recent years, edited respectively by Petre Guran and David Michelson and by Paolo Odorico. The presentation of these two volumes, as well as their content are available on the new website of the Romanian Society for Byzantine Studies: <https://srsb.ro/ebpb/>.

The Romanian Society for Byzantine Studies also has a new facebook address and a twitter address, where you can find all announcements about the activity of the Society and its events: <https://www.facebook.com/srsbyzantium.ro> <https://twitter.com/srsbyzantium>

Andrei Timotin, President, Romanian Society for Byzantine Studies
Editor, *Études byzantines et post-byzantines*

DISPUTATIO VIRTUALIS



La dix-neuvième édition du colloque annuel de la Société des études médiévales du Québec (SÉMQ), la *Disputatio virtualis*, se déroulera cette année, comme son nom l'indique, en mode virtuel. Préparez viennoiseries et café : on y consacrera des matinées, à raison d'un samedi par mois, entre mars et mai 2021. Les dates exactes seront confirmées en janvier.

XIX COLLOQUE ANNUEL DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DES ÉTUDES MÉDIÉVALES DU QUÉBEC

À l'occasion de son colloque annuel, la SÉMQ décerne un prix de 100 \$ pour la meilleure communication étudiante et invite le lauréat ou la lauréate à soumettre son texte au comité de rédaction de la revue *Memini. Travaux et documents*.

Les propositions de communication, d'environ 300 mots, doivent être accompagnées d'un curriculum vitæ sommaire précisant l'institution d'attache, le programme d'étude et le nom du directeur ou de la directrice de recherche. Merci de rassembler en un seul document les propositions se rattachant à un même panel, avec le titre du panel. Les propositions doivent être envoyées au secrétariat de la SÉMQ (semq.secretaire@gmail.com) avant le 31 janvier 2021. Les étudiant.e.s de maîtrise et de doctorat qui souhaitent y présenter leurs recherches peuvent soumettre une proposition individuelle ou, pour la première fois, ils et elles sont invité.e.s à soumettre un panel. Constitués de deux ou trois personnes, les panels devront regrouper des présentations articulées autour d'une thématique commune. En plus d'être une belle occasion de présenter en compagnie d'ami.e.s et collègues qu'on ne voit plus assez à notre goût, la proposition d'un panel est une expérience enrichissante et qui prépare aux rencontres internationales.

Au plaisir de vous voir (virtuellement) à cette occasion !

Editor's note: I am grateful to Louis-Patrick St-Pierre for drawing this event to my attention: it is obviously of interest to Byzantinists, and I hope some of our members may be able to take part. The website of SEMQ may be found at: <https://www.semq.uqam.ca/>

Image:Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1124059>
The image depicts a disputation between Christian and Jewish scholars (1483)

Eight lectures from the 1990s, published by the Canadian Institute for Balkan Studies (Toronto), are available on the web through the University of Ottawa's depository. I announced this already in bulletin 28 (2017), but I think it is worth repeating the details again here; each paper is about 32 pages in length. The details are as follows:

K. Ware, 'A Fourteenth-Century Manual of Hesychast Prayer: The Century Of St Kallistos And St Ignatios Xanthopoulos' (1995), available at:
<http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/35619>

I. Ševčenko, 'Observations on the Study of Byzantine Hagiography in the Last Half-Century or Two Looks Back and One Look Forward' (1995), available at:
<http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/35618>

H. Maguire, 'Image and Imagination: The Byzantine Epigram as Evidence for Viewer Response' (1996), available at:
<http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/35616>

P. Magdalino, 'The Byzantine Background to the First Crusade' (1996), available at:
<http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/35615>

G. Myers, 'A Tale of Bygone Years: The Kontakion for the Dedication of a Church in Medieval Rus'. A Source Study and a Reconstruction' (1997), available at:
<http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/35621>

S. Popović, 'The Architectural Iconography of the Late Byzantine Monastery' (1997), available at:
<http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/35617>

W. Treadgold, 'Why Write a New History of Byzantium?' (1997), available at:
<http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/35620>

Undergraduate Essay Contest in Byzantine Studies

The winner of this year's essay contest is **Victoria DeHart** from Simon Fraser University. She wrote an essay entitled 'Tracking the Peacock Motif in Byzantium'. In this wide-ranging and very well researched essay, Victoria goes from peafowl in the Graeco-Roman world, starting as far back as the Minoans, through the end of Byzantium covering such diverse media as ivory plaques (Minoan) to classical-Greek-era coins from Samos. She covers the history of the birds in texts, their appearance in excavations (faunal remains in places like Bulgaria and North Africa), and explores how they were consumed - more for ostentation than taste. Not

surprisingly, their (the peacock's especially) distinctive plumage was the focus of most attention, whether in gifts, gardens, or otherwise, in both the ancient and Byzantine worlds.



We are also pleased to announce the next Undergraduate Essay Contest in Byzantine Studies, which is designed to celebrate and reward exceptional research undertaken by undergraduate students in Canada who have written essays, in English or French, on any theme relating to Byzantine studies, i.e., concerning the eastern Roman Empire from A.D. 312 to 1453. Applicants do not need to be a major in a pertinent discipline (Archaeology, Art History, Classics, History, etc.) to submit their work. Furthermore, the course for which the essay was written need not be focused specifically on Byzantine Studies. The prize for the winner will be \$100. Essays should be submitted electronically (from a university e-mail address) by either the student or the instructor on the student's behalf. In either case, the student should have the instructor's endorsement. They should be sent in pdf format to:

Dr Conor Whately
Department of Classics
University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 2E9
c.whately@uwinnipeg.ca

Photo of eagle and hare, 10th century, from a closure slab, Byzantine museum, Thessaloniki

There should be no indication of the student's identity on the essay document itself. Instead, the required information should be provided on a separate document (also sent electronically) that indicates the student's name, email address, university affiliation, and the title of the paper. If the essay is being submitted by an instructor the name and email address of the applicant should be included.

The essay should be submitted as it was written for its course without revisions, with the exception of typographical corrections. It should be 10-20 pages in length (including bibliography and double-spaced). Students may submit only one essay per year. It is possible to submit the essay both to this contest and to that organised by SCAPAT (www.scapat.ca).

The judging is based on both the essay's content and its form: the winning essay must be well written, clearly organized and free from errors of grammar and syntax; and the contest winner will have made good use of the pertinent sources, have covered their chosen subject thoroughly, and ideally have provided new insights on their chosen topic. The deadline for submitting material to the competition is May 31st, 2021. The winner will be notified in September (2021) and will be announced in a subsequent CAN-BYZ newsletter.

If you have not renewed your subscription for this year, please send a cheque (\$30 or \$15 for students) payable to 'The Canadian Committee of Byzantinists' to Prof. Richard Greenfield, Department of History, Watson Hall, Queen's University, 49 Bader Lane, Kingston ON, K7L 3N6.