

25. ULUSLARARASI BİZANS ÇALIŞMALARI KONGRESİ'NDE TÜRKİYE



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Byzantium beyond Byzantium

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Önsöz

24–29 Ağustos 2026 tarihleri arasında Avusturya'nın başkenti Viyana'da, Viyana Üniversitesi ve Avusturya Bilimler Akademisi Ortaçağ Araştırmaları Komisyonu tarafından “Byzantium Beyond Byzantium” başlığıyla düzenlenen 25. Uluslararası Bizans Çalışmaları Kongresi'nde 1200'ü aşkın bildiri sunulmuştur. Bu geniş kapsamlı bilimsel program içerisinde, Türkiye'de faaliyet gösteren çeşitli üniversitelerde görev yapan veya yurt dışında çalışmalarını sürdüren 80'den fazla akademisyenin sunumlarının da yer alması özellikle memnuniyet vericidir.

Türkiye sınırları içerisinde kalan çeşitli bölgelerde saha araştırmaları yürüten tarihçi ve sanat tarihçilerinin yanı sıra, Doğu Roma ve Bizans tarihinin farklı dönemlerini birincil ve ikincil kaynaklar ışığında inceleyerek bilim dünyasına yeni görüş ve değerlendirmeler sunan araştırmacıların bildirileri de kongre programında önemli bir yer tutmuştur. Bu çalışmalar; Doğu Akdeniz, Anadolu, Balkanlar ve Batı Asya coğrafyalarının Ortaçağ tarihinin değerlendirilmesinde yeni bakış açılarına dikkat çekmeleri bakımından son derece değerli olmuştur.

Kongrede sunulması planlanan bildirilerin özet metinlerinin önceden yayımlanmış olması, gerek kongre programının takip edilebilmesi gerekse araştırmacıların üzerinde çalıştıkları konular ve kullandıkları yöntemler hakkında genel bir fikir edinilebilmesi açısından büyük yarar sağlamıştır. Kongre Organizasyon Komitesi, sunulan bildirilerin sayısının oldukça yüksek olması nedeniyle tam metinlerin toplu olarak yayımlanmasını öngörmemektedir. Bu nedenle bildiri özetlerinin erişilebilir durumda bulunması ayrı bir önem taşımaktadır. Söz konusu özetler, yazılı kaynaklardan arkeolojik verilere, sanat tarihi incelemelerinden tarihsel karşılaştırmalara kadar çok yönlü araştırma ve yayın faaliyetleri yürüten bilim insanları için değerli bir başvuru kaynağı oluşturmaktadır.

Geç Antik Çağ ve Ortaçağ boyunca Akdeniz dünyasında meydana gelen tarihsel olayları, sanatsal ve kültürel gelişmeleri, toplumlar ve bölgeler arasındaki ilişkileri farklı disiplinlerin yöntemleriyle ele alan böylesine önemli ve geniş katılımlı bir uluslararası kongrede Türkiye'den çok sayıda araştırmacının yer almış olması memnuniyet vericidir. Türkiye'de yürütülen Bizans araştırmalarının uluslararası bilim dünyasındaki görünürlüğünün artması, farklı ülkelerden araştırmacılar arasında yeni bilimsel ilişkilerin kurulması ve Türkiye'de gerçekleştirilen araştırmaların sonuçlarının daha geniş akademik çevrelere ulaştırılması bakımından bu katılım ayrıca önem taşımaktadır.

Gelecek yıllarda düzenlenecek uluslararası Bizans araştırmaları kongrelerinde Türkiye'den katılan bilim insanlarının sayısının daha da artması dileğiyle, 25. Uluslararası Bizans Çalışmaları Kongresi'ne Türkiye'den katılan tüm araştırmacılara değerli

alışmaları ve sunumları iin teekkr eder, bilimsel alışmalarında başarılarının devamını dilerim.

Mustafa H. Sayar

Trkiye Bizans/Doęu Roma İncelemeleri Milli Komitesi Başkanı

Eyll 2026

Sunuş ve Notlar

Bu yayın, 24–29 Ağustos 2026 tarihleri arasında Viyana Üniversitesi’nde “Byzantium Beyond Byzantium” başlığıyla düzenlenen 25. Uluslararası Bizans Çalışmaları Kongresi’nde Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacılar tarafından sunulan bildirilerin özetlerini bir araya getirmektedir. Özetler, Adrian C. Pirtea, Giulia Rossetto ve Nikos Zagklas’ın editörlüğünde, *Mitteilungen aus der Österreichischen Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik* dergisinin 2026 tarihli özel sayısı olarak yayımlanan *Book of Abstracts*’tan alınmıştır.

Derlemenin kapsamı belirlenirken, tek yazarlı veya tek düzenleyicili katkılarda yazarın ya da düzenleyicinin; birden fazla yazarın veya düzenleyicinin bulunduğu katkılarda ise bunlardan en az birinin Türk bir araştırmacı olması veya Türkiye’deki bir üniversite ya da araştırma kurumuna bağlı bulunması esas alınmıştır. Özetler ana kaynakta yayımlandıkları şekliyle aktarılmış, metinler üzerinde herhangi bir editoryal müdahalede bulunulmamış ve Türkçeye çevrilmemiştir.

Ana kaynak olan *Book of Abstracts*’ta yer alan özetler esas itibarıyla Kongre’nin 22 Ağustos 2026 tarihinde ICBS internet sitesinde yayımlanan programını yansıtmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, son dakika değişiklikleri nedeniyle programda yer alan bazı katılımlar gerçekleşmemiş olabilir. Ayrıca birden fazla yazarın veya düzenleyicinin bulunduğu durumlarda, listelenen kişilerin tümünün Kongre’ye şahsen katılmış olduğu varsayılmamalıdır. Bu sınırlılıklar göz önünde bulundurulmakla birlikte, söz konusu katkılar Kongre’deki Türkiye bağlantılı bilimsel katılımı mümkün olduğunca kapsamlı biçimde belgelemek amacıyla bu yayına dâhil edilmiştir.

Kitapçıkta özetler, ana yayındaki bilimsel katkı türleri esas alınarak altı ana bölüm hâlinde düzenlenmiştir: (I) Serbest Bildiriler, yazarların soyadlarına göre alfabetik olarak; (II) Serbest Bildiriler (Grup Başvuruları), özgün tanımlayıcı kodlarına göre (1.08 FC, 1.09 FC vb.); (III) Genel Oturumlar, yazarların soyadlarına göre alfabetik olarak; (IV) Poster Sunumları, yazarların soyadlarına göre alfabetik olarak; (V) Yuvarlak Masa Oturumu Bildirileri, özgün tanımlayıcı kodlarına göre (2.01 RT, 2.02 RT vb.); ve (VI) Tematik Oturumlar, yine özgün tanımlayıcı kodlarına göre (1.01 TS, 1.02 TS vb.).

Bu altı bölümün ardından kitapçıkta iki ek bölüm yer almaktadır. Bölüm VII, “Düzenleyiciler (Grup, Yuvarlak Masa, Tematik Oturum)” başlığı altında, Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacıların düzenleyicileri arasında bulunduğu grup başvurulmuş serbest bildiri, yuvarlak masa ve tematik oturumları bir araya getirmektedir. Bölüm VIII ise bu derleme kapsamında tespit edilen araştırmacıları “Türkiye Bağlantılı Katılımcı Listesi” başlığı altında topluca sunmaktadır.

Kitapçığın başında, Türkiye Bizans/Doğu Roma İncelemeleri Milli Komitesi Başkanı Prof. Dr. Mustafa H. Sayar'ın kaleme aldığı önsözün ve bu sunuş yazısının ardından, “25. Uluslararası Bizans Çalışmaları Kongresi'nde Türkiye Bağlantılı Katılım Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme” başlıklı çalışma yer almaktadır. Bizantolog. kurucu ve yürütücü üyelerinden Dr. Şebnem Dönbekci tarafından hazırlanan bu çalışma, Kongre'deki Türkiye bağlantılı katılımın niceliksel ve kurumsal profilini değerlendirmekte ve gelecek kongreler açısından bazı çıkarımlar ortaya koymaktadır.

Bu derlemenin, Viyana Kongresi'ndeki Türkiye bağlantılı bilimsel katılımın topluca izlenebilmesine imkân veren bir başvuru kaynağı oluşturmasını ve ileride Türkiye'deki Bizans araştırmalarının gelişimi ile uluslararası kongrelerdeki temsiline ilişkin yapılacak değerlendirmelere veri sağlamasını umuyoruz.

Bizantolog.

Eylül 2026

25. Uluslararası Bizans Çalışmaları Kongresi'nde Türkiye Bağlantılı Katılım Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme

25. Uluslararası Bizans Çalışmaları Kongresi, bilimsel programının ölçeği bakımından oldukça geniş bir etkinlikti. Kongrede 123 tekil serbest bildiri oturumu, 49 grup başvurulmuş serbest bildiri oturumu, 6 genel oturum, 48 yuvarlak masa ve 75 tematik oturum olmak üzere toplam **301 oturum** gerçekleştirildi. Bu oturumlarda **1.237 sözlü bildiri** yer aldı; 20 poster de hesaba katıldığında bilimsel katkıların toplamı **1.257'ye** ulaşıyordu. Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacılar bu geniş program içinde tekil ve grup başvurulmuş serbest bildirilerden genel oturumlara, yuvarlak masalardan tematik oturumlara kadar farklı bilimsel formatlarda yer aldılar; ayrıca bazı grup başvurulmuş serbest bildiri, yuvarlak masa ve tematik oturumların **düzenleyicileri arasında** bulundular.

Türkiye bağlantılı katılımcıların bilimsel programdaki katkı ve rollerinin derlenmesi sonucunda, **bildiri veya poster sunan ya da bir bilimsel oturumun düzenleyicileri arasında bulunan 85 tekil Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacı** tespit edildi (Tablo 1). Bunların 69'u Türkiye'deki, 16'sı yurt dışındaki kurumlara bağlıydı. Bu 85 katılımcının dışında, programda ismi yer almayan az sayıda Türkiye katılımcısının daha kongrede izleyici olarak bulunduğunu da not etmek gerekir.

Tablo 1. Türkiye bağlantılı katılımın genel profili

Gösterge	Sayı
Bilimsel programda tespit edilen Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacı	85
Sözlü bildiri sahibi araştırmacı ¹	83
Sözlü bildiri	92
Türkiye'deki kurumlara bağlı araştırmacı	69 (%81)
Yurt dışındaki kurumlara bağlı araştırmacı	16 (%19)
Bu kongrede temsil edilen Türkiye'deki kurumlar	33
Bu kongrede temsil edilen yurt dışı kurumlar	12
Bu kongrede temsil edilen toplam farklı kurumsal aidiyet	45

¹ Bilimsel programda tespit edilen 85 Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacı ile 83 sözlü bildiri sahibi arasındaki fark, poster sunan bir araştırmacı ile yuvarlak masa düzenleyicisi olan bir araştırmacının ayrıca bir sözlü bildiri sunmamasından kaynaklanmaktadır.

Kurumsal dağılım, belirli merkezlerde yoğunlaşmanın yanı sıra dikkate değer bir çeşitlilik de gösteriyor. Kongrede Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacılar **45 farklı kurumsal aidiyetle** temsil edildi. Türkiye'deki kurumlar arasında İstanbul Üniversitesi 9, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi 8 ve Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi 5 araştırmacıyla öne çıkarken; Koç Üniversitesi ve Ege Üniversitesi dörder, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi ve Bilkent Üniversitesi ise üçer araştırmacıyla temsil edildi. Anadolu, Marmara, Trakya, Sakarya ve Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart üniversiteleri gibi farklı kurumlardan da birden fazla araştırmacı kongre programında yer aldı. Üniversitelerin yanı sıra British Institute at Ankara, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul ve İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü gibi araştırma kurumlarının temsili de bu kurumsal çeşitliliği genişletiyor.

Katılımın uluslararası boyutu da dikkat çekici. Yurt dışında çalışan **16 Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacı 12 farklı kuruma** dağılıyor. Central European University, University of Notre Dame, Ohio State University ve Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz ikişer araştırmacıyla temsil edilirken, farklı ülkelerdeki başka üniversite ve araştırma kurumlarına bağlı araştırmacılar da kongre programında yer alıyor. Bu tablo, Türkiye bağlantılı Bizans araştırmalarının kongredeki temsilinin Türkiye'deki kurumlarla sınırlı olmadığını ve **yurt dışındaki farklı akademik kurumlara uzanan bir kurumsal dağılıma** sahip olduğunu gösteriyor.

Sözlü bildirilere odaklanıldığında **83 tekil araştırmacının 92 ayrı bildiride** yer aldığı görülüyor. Bildiri sahiplerinin büyük çoğunluğu kongrede tek bir katkıyla temsil edilirken, yaklaşık beşte biri birden fazla bildiride yer aldı (Tablo 2).

Tablo 2. Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacıların bildiri sayısına göre dağılımı

Kişi başına bildiri sayısı	Araştırmacı sayısı	Oran
1 bildiri	67	%80,7
2 bildiri	14	%16,9
3 bildiri	2	%2,4
Toplam	83	%100

Bu dağılım, Türkiye bağlantılı katılımın geniş bir araştırmacı tabanına yayıldığını, bunun yanında **16 araştırmacının birden fazla bilimsel katkıyla** programda yer aldığını gösteriyor. Bildirilerin yazarlık yapısında ise tek yazarlı çalışmalar belirgin biçimde ağırlıktaydı: **92 bildirinin 81'i (%88) tek yazarlı, 11'i (%12) iki yazarlıydı.**²

² Tablolarda yer alan ve analizlerde kullanılan bildiri sayıları, birden fazla kişinin ortak yazarı olduğu bir bildiriyi tek bilimsel katkı olarak dikkate almaktadır.

Türkiye bağlantılı katkıların kongrenin tamamı içindeki payı, katılımın ölçeğini kategoriler arasında karşılaştırmaya da imkân veriyor (Tablo 3).

Tablo 3. Türkiye bağlantılı bilimsel katkıların kongre programındaki payı

Kategori	Kongrede toplam bildiri / sunum	Türkiye bağlantılı bildiri / sunum	Türkiye bağlantılı katkıların payı
Serbest Bildiri	445	46	%10,3
Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri	203	10	%4,9
Genel Oturum	21	1	%4,8
Poster	20	1	%5,0
Yuvarlak Masa	223	10	%4,5
Tematik Oturum	345	25	%7,2
Toplam	1.257	93	%7,4

Kongredeki 1.257 bilimsel katkının 93'ünün Türkiye bağlantılı olması, toplamda **%7,4'lük bir paya** karşılık geliyor. Kategoriler arasındaki en belirgin sonuç ise tekil Serbest Bildirilerde ortaya çıkıyor: Türkiye bağlantılı katkıların payı burada **%10,3'e** yükselerek kongre genelindeki oranın belirgin biçimde üzerine çıkıyor. **Tematik Oturumlardaki %7,2'lik pay** ise genel katılım düzeyine yakın bir temsil gösteriyor. Buna karşılık diğer sunum kategorilerindeki oranlar yaklaşık %4,5–5 bandında kalıyor. Dolayısıyla Türkiye bağlantılı bilimsel katılımın özellikle **bireysel serbest bildirilerde yoğunlaştığı** görülüyor.

Katılımın bir başka önemli boyutunu bilimsel oturumların oluşturulmasında üstlenilen rol ortaya koyuyor. Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacılar **49 grup başvurulmuş serbest bildiri oturumunun 1'inde (%2), 48 yuvarlak masanın 3'ünde (%6,3) ve 75 tematik oturumun 6'sında (%8)** düzenleyiciler arasında yer aldılar.³ Özellikle tematik oturumlar bu açıdan öne çıkıyor: Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacıların bu kategorideki bildiri payı %7,2 iken, düzenleyiciler arasında yer aldıkları oturumların oranı %8'e ulaşıyor. Bu veriler, özellikle tematik oturumlarda katılımın yalnızca programa

³ Burada sözü edilen üç yuvarlak masa oturumundan biri, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul direktörü Olof Heilo'nun düzenlediği 5.03 RT – *Dreams of Tsargrad: Constantinople in Russian Imperial Imagination* başlıklı oturumdur. Heilo, Türkiye'de yerleşik bir araştırma kurumuna bağlı olması nedeniyle bu çalışmada kullanılan genel "Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacı" tanımı kapsamında değerlendirilmiştir. Bununla birlikte söz konusu oturumda Türkiye bağlantılı bir araştırmacının bildirisiyle yer almaması nedeniyle, program kurucu katılım daha dar bir ölçütle, **Türkiye bağlantılı düzenleyiciliğin Türkiye bağlantılı bilimsel katılımı aynı oturumda buluşması** üzerinden değerlendirildiğinde bu oturum ayrı tutulabilir. Bu durumda yuvarlak masalardaki düzenleyicilik oranı 2/48, yani %4,2 olmakta ve aynı kategorideki %4,5'lik bildiri katılım oranına oldukça yaklaşmaktadır.

bildiri sunmakla sınırlı kalmadığını, **kongre programının oluşturulmasına katkı sağlayan “program kurucu” bir boyut** da taşıdığını gösteriyor.

Bu tablo gelecek kongreler açısından bazı somut çıkarımlara imkân veriyor. Her şeyden önce, Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacıların **bireysel katılımının güçlü olduğu** görülüyor; tekil serbest bildirilerde %10'u aşan temsil bunun en açık göstergesi. Buna karşılık grup başvurulmuş serbest bildirilerde Türkiye bağlantılı katkılarının yaklaşık %5, düzenleyiciliğin %2 düzeyinde; yuvarlak masalarda ise hem katkılarının hem de daha dar anlamda değerlendirilen düzenleyiciliğin %4–5 düzeyinde kalması, bireysel katılımındaki bu gücün gelecekte **daha fazla ortak ve önceden örgütlenmiş başvuruya dönüştürülebileceğine** işaret ediyor. Tematik oturumlarda görülen daha yüksek düzenleyicilik düzeyi ise bu yönde mevcut bir deneyim ve kapasitenin bulunduğunu gösteriyor.

Türkiye'deki Bizans araştırmaları, üniversitelerde farklı disiplinler altında yürütülen çalışmaların yanı sıra **araştırma merkezleri ve enstitüler ile arkeolojik kazı ve yüzey araştırmalarını** da kapsıyor. Bu ortamın uluslararası boyutunu ise bir yandan yurt dışındaki üniversite ve araştırma kurumlarında çalışan Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacılar, diğer yandan yurt dışındaki kurum ve araştırmacılarla kurulabilecek ve geliştirilebilecek bilimsel işbirlikleri oluşturuyor. Bu farklı bileşenler, gelecek kongrelerde **ortak grup başvuruları, tematik oturumlar ve yuvarlak masalar** geliştirmek için önemli bir potansiyel sunuyor. Bu potansiyelin daha etkin kullanılması, güçlü bireysel katılımın kurumlar arası ve uluslararası işbirliğine dayanan, daha örgütlü ve program kurucu bir katılımıla tamamlanmasını sağlayabilir.

Genel olarak bu analiz ve değerlendirmeler, Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacıların 24–29 Ağustos 2026 tarihlerinde Viyana'da düzenlenen 25. Uluslararası Bizans Çalışmaları Kongresi'nde **sayısal olarak dikkate değer, kurumsal açıdan çeşitli ve Türkiye sınırlarının ötesine uzanan bir katılım** sergilediğini ortaya koyuyor. Viyana'daki sonuçlar, gelecek kongreler açısından yalnızca katılımcı ve bildiri sayılarının değil, **katılımın biçiminin de** dikkate alınabileceğini gösteriyor. Mevcut güçlü bireysel katılımın ortak başvurular, tematik oturumlar ve yuvarlak masalar gibi program kurucu girişimlerle daha fazla tamamlanması, kurumlar ve araştırmacılar arasındaki bilimsel etkileşim ve işbirliğini güçlendirirken Türkiye bağlantılı araştırmacıların kongre programlarının şekillenmesine daha etkin biçimde katılmasına da imkân verebilir. Böylece **sayısal görünürlük, daha güçlü bir bilimsel etkileşim ve program oluşturma kapasitesiyle tamamlanabilir.**

Şebnem Dönbekci

Eylül 2026

Bölüm I: Serbest Bildiriler

1.26 FC – Manuscript Production in the 16th Century

Nature, Artichokes, and Salvation in the Oracles of Leo: Illustrated Post-Byzantine Eschatological Literature in Greek and Turkish

Aslıhan Akışık-Karakullukçu

Boğaziçi University

In the aftermath of 1453, the post-Byzantine population of Ottoman Constantinople centered their hopes in the coming of a True Emperor at the end of time. Eschatological literature attributed to Leo the Wise was circulated in both the high registers of Greek as well as the vernacular and all surviving manuscripts of the so-called *Leo Oracles* date from the post-Byzantine period. These Oracles rely on natural philosophical principles, make extensive use of symbolic language pertaining to early modern science, and point to the City as the locus of both tyranny and universal salvation. The vernacular *Oracles* refer to the True Emperor as “the gardener of the whole universe”, to ethnicities with the names of animals and vegetables, and envision the nature of reality to be constituted of the four elements. Illuminated manuscripts of the high register Oracles depict Emperors that precede the True Emperor in the guise of Ottoman Sultans with scenes of devastation. Bilingual manuscripts of this high register literature invoke the Latin word ‘*elementum*’ to refer to both the characters of the alphabet and to the building blocks of Nature: ‘*stoicheion*’. Vernacular *Oracles* also make extensive use of early modern scientific-philosophical expertise. The uses of vegetable and animal names in the vernacular *Oracles* rely on symbolic associations. Artichokes with their medicinal qualities as a hepatic cure are symbolic because they represent the regeneration of Nature in the Spring and associations with fire, water, and earth. In similar manner, wolves are also invoked. Tellingly, the *Oracles* did not only circulate in written format but were told, retold, elaborated, illustrated, and translated into other vernaculars beside Greek. European travellers to Ottoman Constantinople recorded these legends in numerous languages. Turkish translations of the Oracles survive in early modern European editions of Turkish grammar and dictionaries as well as in pictorial dossiers.

3.11 FC – Islands and Ports

Traces From Byzantine Era Tenedos (Bozcaada)

Hilal Aktur

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University

Tenedos (Bozcaada) is situated at the entrance of the Strait of Dardanelles, a strategic location in terms of marine transportation. From Antiquity onwards, Tenedos was a convenient port for fleets to take refuge and hide during wars, as well as for ships to stop over for supplies and maintenance. Tenedos frequently changed hands between the Byzantine Empire, the Genoese and the Venetians from the 13th to the 15th century and was a subject of negotiation in a number of treaties due to its geopolitically significant location. This was because the party to secure Dardanelles and Tenedos, at the strait's entrance, would also command Constantinople and the Black Sea trade. With the Treaty of Turin (1381), which marked the end of the War of Chioggia (1377-1381) between the Venetians and the Genoese over the control of the island of Tenedos, the island was evacuated and the buildings in its existing layout were destroyed, causing the fabric and building stock of the island to largely perish. Tenedos was captured from the Venetians in 1455 by the Navy Commander Hamza Bey, during the reign of Mehmed the Conqueror, thus becoming the first island in the Aegean Sea to be taken under Turkish rule. The abundance of spolia used in the Fort of Tenedos, rebuilt in the Ottoman Era, indicates layering from different periods. Within the scope of this paper, in order to understand the Byzantine Era architectural building stock, the existing surface/archaeological survey and the new excavation findings as well as the remains from Bozcaada in the Çanakkale Museum of Archaeology and Bozcaada Fort Museum were examined, and the spolia detected in Bozcaada were evaluated. The purpose of the paper is to shed light on the Byzantine Era in Tenedos (Bozcaada) through the surviving architectural works.

1.06 FC – Church Construction in Constantinople and Beyond

Byzantine Iconium and Rum Seljuk Christian Architecture

Nergis **Ataç**

Istanbul Okan University

In the 11th century, Seljuks and Turkish Beyliks invaded Byzantine Anatolia, establishing Turkish rule. Despite some emigration of Byzantines, a significant local population remained, resulting in the coexistence of Christian and Islamic religious sites, sometimes within shared settlements and castles. Throughout the Rum Seljuk era, the bishoprics enabled Christian worship to continue, raising important questions: Who supported and protected these Christian structures? Where were they located? How did the architectural landscape of the Rum Seljuks evolve, particularly regarding the existing and demolished churches, the reuse of spolia in the construction of new mosques? This study examines the Byzantine architectural heritage within the Metropolis of Iconium (Konya), a city that subsequently served as the capital of the Rum Seljuk Sultanate. Iconium retained its status as an archbishopric, allowing the bishopric to persist despite occasional difficulties. Recent field surveys have identified previously undocumented churches, and archaeological excavations have also revealed hitherto unknown ecclesiastical structures. Our research focused on Iconium, seeks to elucidate the architectural landscape of Central Anatolia during the 12th and 13th centuries, contributing to the scholarly understanding of medieval architecture through the examination of surviving structures, persisting traditions, and the cultural exchanges that developed alongside the increasing Turkish influence in the region.

5.27 FC – Byzantium, the Balkans and the Ottomans in the 14th and 15th Centuries

Shifting Frontiers and Changing Communities: Space-Making in the Lower Evros River Valley During the Byzantine–Ottoman Transition

Öykü Bahar **Balcı Güngör**
Istanbul Technical University

The Lower Evros / Meriç River—the section between Edirne (Adrianopolis) and Enez (Ainos)—served as a significant transportation axis within the historical and geographical region of Thrace until the late 19th century, in contrast to its present role as a border between Turkey and Greece which now obscures the historical unity of both sides of the river. It has connected two major routes leading to Constantinople: the Via Egnatia, passing through İpsala (Kypsela) and Feres (Vera), and the Via Militaris, passing through Adrianopolis. As an important transportation hub, the Lower Evros River also played a crucial role in the Ottoman expansion into the Balkans. The transition from Byzantine to Ottoman rule in the region began with the conquest of Adrianopolis in the 1360s and concluded with the fall of Ainos in 1456. While Ottoman urban studies often emphasize the emerging Muslim character of cities, many settlements in this region retained their Christian populations. Despite political and religious changes, such transformations are unlikely to lead to a sudden and radical change in the daily lives of local communities. The period under study—spanning the Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman eras—is characterized by the prominence of local influences in architectural production. In this context, the river functioned not only as a route of transportation but also has a significant role in cultural production, interaction, and transmission. This research investigates urban and architectural transformations focusing on themes of coexistence and continuity at the intersection of Byzantine and Ottoman cultures. Particular emphasis is placed on the "afterlives" of Byzantine architectural heritage—how elements of the past were preserved, adapted, or recontextualized. The reshaping of the socio-spatial landscape is analyzed in relation to topography, road networks, and the river itself.

2.28 FC – Inscribing in Byzantium and Beyond I

Mapping Faith in Transition: GIS-Based Analysis of Religious Inscriptions in Justinianic Western Anatolia

Emine **Bilgiç Kavak**

Sakarya University

This paper examines the spatial distribution of religious inscriptions dated to the reign of Justinian I (AD 527–565) in Western Anatolia. By utilizing published epigraphic data—primarily from cities such as Sardis and Ephesos—and applying Geographic Information Systems (GIS), this research explores the changing religious landscape during a period marked by significant theological and political transformations. The focus lies on inscriptions that contain explicit Christian terminology, references to ecclesiastical institutions, and imperial dedication. These texts are georeferenced to visualize their spatial patterns and to assess how religious authority and imperial policies were inscribed into urban and rural topographies. The study aims to offer preliminary insights into regional trends in religious expression and monumentality, reflecting broader imperial agendas in the late antique Eastern Mediterranean. As a work in progress, the project also addresses methodological challenges related to the integration of historical epigraphy with spatial analysis tools. As this research is in its early phase, the analysis presented will be exploratory in nature. It considers the potential of GIS-based models to enhance the interpretation of epigraphic corpora and opens new questions regarding the dynamics between text, space, and power. This presentation forms part of a broader effort to reassess the religious and administrative restructuring of the late antique East by combining traditional textual approaches with digital methods.

1.06 FC – Church Construction in Constantinople and beyond

The Project on the Marbles of Hagia Sophia

Zeki Boleken

Marmara University

The aim of this paper is to present the “Ancient Marbles of Hagia Sophia Project,” conducted under the coordination of Asnu Bilban Yalçın, and the new findings obtained through the studies carried out within the scope of the project. In Hagia Sophia, some of the ancient colored marbles and other stones that can be easily identified through macroscopic observation at first glance include *alabastro*, *bianco e nero antico* (marmor celticum), *cipollino rosso* (marmor Iassense), *cipollino verde* (marmor Carystum), *giallo antico* (marmor Numidicum), *marmo Proconnesio* (marmor Proconnesium), *pavonazzetto* (marmor Docimium / marmor Synnadicum / marmor Phrygium), *porfido rosso antico* (lapis porphyrites), *serpentino* (lapis Lacedemonius), and *verde antico* (marmor Thessalicum). In addition to these stones, different materials such as *portasanta*, *granito del foro*, lapis lazuli, and *breccia corallina* were also used in the revetments and pavements of Hagia Sophia. Although the aforementioned ancient colored marbles and other stones are well known in the literature, the problems they pose specifically in the context of Hagia Sophia have not been sufficiently examined. Moreover, during the restoration work, the Fossati brothers had certain marble revetments painted in colors different from their original tones, which led to significant alterations in the polychromatic pattern of the marble revetments in Hagia Sophia.

5.35 FC – Scientific Methods in Archaeology and Art History

Unknown Red Limestone Used Locally in Constantinople, Prousa and Nicaea During the Middle Byzantine Period

Zeki Boleken

Marmara University

The red limestone, now called “Rosalia” in the market, is extracted from a great number of modern quarries located in different places in Bilecik and Vezirhan. Among them, Gülümbe and Taşçılar (formerly Hirtılar) occupy a significant place. These are the oldest known quarries of this red limestone and were most probably reopened over the old ones in the 1930s. Although the limestone is well-known in terms of minero-petrographic characterization in geology and minerology, its history of use has not yet been fully recognized. The stone, not used in the Roman and Early Byzantine periods, was quarried for the first time in the Middle Byzantine period and used locally in Prousa, Nicaea and Constantinople. After that period, limited quantity of this limestone was reused in the prominent Ottoman buildings in Iznik, Bursa and Istanbul. During the field survey, we found some in situ examples used for opus sectile pavements dating back to the Middle Byzantine period in Prousa and Nicaea. Additionally, we found small architectural elements such a capital and shaft in Iznik. The most striking in situ examples of the stone were discovered in the archaeological excavations of the Byzantine Great Palace, conducted by the Directorate of Istanbul Archaeological Museums. These newly discovered and very small in situ examples are used for plinth in a small structure.

1.07 FC – Politics and Culture in the Long End of the Byzantine Empire

The Master of Demons in Topkapi Palace: A Forgotten Manuscript of King Solomon’s Zauberbuch from the Last Phase of Byzantium

Ceylan **Borstlap**

Ege University, Izmir

The incipit Ἐκ τῶν τοῦ Σολομῶντος περὶ τῆς δυνάμεως ἣν ἔλαβε παρὰ θεοῦ εἰς τὸ ἄρχειν τῶν δαιμόνων was recorded by A. Deissmann in a manuscript of the Topkapı Library (Istanbul Topkapı Serai-Bibliothek MS G.İ.17). Based upon the Greek title, he named the manuscript “König Salomos Dämonenzwang” and believed the text to derive from the *Testamentum Salomonis*, which had been published by Ch. McCown in 1922. In fact, considering Deissmann’s identification of the Topkapı manuscript as a “*Zauberbuch*”, the text might rather belong to the group of magical treatises attributed to Solomon, a fact endorsed by the category “l’astrologie judiciaire” found on an *ex libris* inscription. According to Ioannis Marathakis, a series of Greek grimoires contain astrological materials and date back to the fall of Constantinople in 1453. In this context, it was necessary to examine the Topkapı manuscript again in detail and compare it with other Greek copies of the Solomonic corpus. Before passing from Greek into the Latin-speaking world, this corpus—though commonly regarded as belonging to Orthodox Christianity—first took shape at a multicultural and multireligious crossroads. It incorporates elements of Jewish magical traditions and went on to influence later Arabic literature as well as Seljuk art. Since May 2024, this unpublished Topkapı manuscript is being studied as part of doctoral dissertation with the official permission of the General Directorate of National Palaces-Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, and all the findings obtained will be presented in this paper.

4.47 FC – New Perspectives on Landscapes and Sites of Byzantine Anatolia

Defensive Structures and Military Geography of the Biga Peninsula in the Byzantine Period: Scamander and Aisepos Valleys

Ayşe Çaylak Türker

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University

The Hellespont, which has the Europa (Gelibolu Peninsula) and Hellespontus (Biga Peninsula) regions on both sides, is approximately 65 km long between the mouths of Marmara and Aegean. The valleys extending from southeast to northwest on the Biga Peninsula form a natural route to Hellespont. Of these, the Scamander Valley connects with the Aisepos Valley, which reaches the Sea of Marmara, and forms a route that allows access from the Dardanelles to the Kapıdağ Peninsula. The natural routes we identified with this geographical approach are supported by defensive structures from the Byzantine period. There is a significant gap in the literature on the Byzantine defensive structures in and around the Hellespont. However, during the Byzantine period, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean were important economic regions. The Hellespont stood out with its geographical location in the production-consumption and trade relations between these economic areas. Therefore, securing the Hellespont was of great importance. When we look at how the Hellespont was secured in the early, middle and late stages of the Byzantine Period, we see that despite the historical information we have, there is no archaeological data. This situation creates a serious problem in understanding the Byzantine and early Ottoman periods. In addition, the intensive afforestation and construction activities that have increased in recent years are rapidly destroying the existing traces. Therefore, our study aims to determine the defensive structures of the Hellespont in the Byzantine Period and to examine the problem of what its military geography was like.

2.25 FC – Topography and Urbanism

Between Peaks and Paths: Topography as Context in the Architectural and Archaeological Survey of Late Antique Choma

Ayşe Merve **Çilingir**

Istanbul Technical University

Bülent **Arıkan**

Istanbul Technical University

This paper presents findings from an architectural and archaeological survey of the Elmalı Plain in southwestern Anatolia, focusing on the Late Antique and early Byzantine settlement of Choma. Located in the Bey Mountains at the western edge of the Taurus range, the Elmalı Plain is a highland basin whose protective topography made it a key intersection in regional and imperial networks. In Late Antiquity, the plain hosted a few urban centers surrounded by rural settlements. Choma, the largest, lay at the heart of the plain. Four major routes emphasized the plain's strategic importance: two extended northward to inland Anatolia and the Aegean coast, while two led southward to the Mediterranean and coastal Lycia. These routes linked the plain to broader imperial, trade, and pilgrimage networks, making it a connective space between inland and coastal zones. Using classical architectural documentation and systematic archaeological fieldwork, this study examines how topography influenced settlement patterns and architectural choices. It highlights Choma's role as a regional node within the Byzantine infrastructure, and how its built environment reflects evolving religious, economic, and logistical priorities. Rather than viewing the Elmalı Plain as peripheral, this study repositions it as a vital part of Byzantine provincial life. By foregrounding the interplay between geography, movement, and architecture, it offers new insights into rural life in the Byzantine world and the significance of highland regions within the empire's territorial and cultural systems.

1.13 FC – At the Frontiers between Byzantium, Sasanian Persia and the Early Caliphate

Loyalty and Lineage Beyond the Borders: The Role of Armenian Feudal Families in the Periphery of Byzantium (4th–7th Centuries)

İlhami Tekin **Cinemre**

Karadeniz Technical University

This paper investigates the political and social roles of Armenian noble families (naxarars) in the eastern periphery of the Byzantine world between the 4th and 7th centuries. By focusing on key dynasties such as the Arsacids and the Mamikoneans, Bagratids, it explores how these families navigated between imperial powers—Rome/Byzantium and Persia—and how their local authority, titles, and networks of loyalty functioned within a distinctively Armenian model of aristocracy. The study aims to show that Armenian feudal structures developed as both a reflection of and a response to imperial competition, serving as a lens through which we can examine Byzantium beyond its traditional frontiers.

5.32 FC – Ceramics and Pottery

Ceramic Trade Around Constantinople and Thrace During the Middle and Late Byzantine Period

Özgü Çömezoğlu Uzbek

Istanbul University

As the capital and the most important commercial center of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople played a central role in ceramic circulation during that era. Especially its location along the Aegean and Black Sea has provided the opportunity for exchange of the goods from these regions. Furthermore, the city had a significant role for the production of certain glazed ceramic types. Due to its proximity to Constantinople, Thrace also received ceramics with similar characteristics. The content of this study is to examine the glazed ceramic types in the region through the findings of the Damatris Palace excavations (conducted by Istanbul Archaeological Museums) on the Anatolian side of Istanbul; Istanbul Büyük Çekmece survey (Istanbul University); and the Perinthos excavations in Tekirdağ (Mimar Sinan Fine Arts Univ./MSGSU). The dominant types that constitute the content of this study are those known to be produced in Constantinople and its surroundings. The plates, bowls, cups, and pitchers of Glazed White Wares are among the productions of Constantinople and the Bithynia region. Another type, Zeuksippus family and its later derivations, which were produced in Thrace, Bithynia, and the Aegean region are also among the prominent types. In addition, variations of sgraffito ware, polychrome ware, and champlévé decoration are also among the finds. The finds we have examined demonstrate relations especially with Bulgaria, Crimea, the Thrace and Hellespont area, and Bithynia. However, some types such as Aegean Ware or Cypriot ceramics, which are common in the Aegean and Mediterranean, reached this region in very limited quantities. Numerous archaeological excavations have been undertaken in the region, and their results have been published in scientific literature. In this study, the ceramics from the three research areas mentioned above are comparatively analyzed. Our aim is to analyze the region's place in the Byzantine glazed ceramic trade, with the contribution of comparisons.

2.30 FC – Asceticism and Monasticism

Rethinking Monastic Identity: A New Perspective on Binbirkilise–Değle

Gözde **Demir Merzi**

Istanbul Technical University

Approximately 29 kilometers north of the ancient city of Laranda (now Karaman), the ruins of Binbirkilise — “Thousand and One Churches”— are scattered across the hills and plains of the extinct Karadağ volcano in central Anatolia. Beyond the numerous structures clustered within the ancient settlements of Madenşehir and Değle, Karadağ hosts additional Byzantine-era remains situated on various hilltops. While early travelers began visiting the area in the late 18th century, formal academic investigations only commenced in 1895. Within the framework of my doctoral thesis, I analyzed the architectural remains of Değle, focusing particularly on its typology, settlement patterns, and distinctive characteristics — a subject that has remained at the center of scholarly debate since the earliest explorations of the region. Although no written evidence survives to support the widespread existence of monasteries, 19th- and early 20th-century scholars frequently interpreted complexes in remote, elevated locations as monastic sites. Likewise, structures with perimeter walls, courtyards, and multiple rooms at Değle were consistently labeled as monasteries from the earliest explorations. Recent Byzantine scholarship has increasingly questioned these uncritical attributions, seeking instead to clarify the functional ambiguities of such complexes. Notably, the Alahan site has been reinterpreted as a pilgrimage center, while Cappadocia’s rock-cut courtyard complexes are now understood to have functioned primarily as residential spaces. Building on recent research and newly uncovered field evidence, this study revisits the Değle settlement, proposing that it served purposes beyond monasticism. The possibility of secular and monastic structures coexisting must be considered, recognizing the fluid boundary between religious and secular life. By analyzing Değle’s spatial relationships with neighboring settlements, strategic locations such as fortresses and military routes, and its broader integration into the Karadağ landscape, this study offers a reassessment of the settlement’s character and function.

4.32 FC – Byzantine Numismatics

Byzantine Coin Hoards in the Eskişehir Eti Archaeology Museum, Turkey

Zeliha **Demirel Gökalp**

Anadolu University

Located within the region historically known as mountainous Phrygia, and as Phrygia Salutaris during the Early Byzantine period, modern-day Eskişehir was referred to as Dorylaion (Dorlion) in Greek during antiquity and the Middle Ages. Positioned along the strategic route between Constantinople and the Cilician Gates, the city served as an important assembly point for military forces. Throughout the Early Byzantine and Early Medieval periods, Dorylaion lay along the path of Persian and Arab incursions and later became a frontier zone in the power struggles involving the Seljuks and Turkmen groups. This paper focuses on eight distinct hoards of gold, silver, and bronze coins housed in the coin collection of the Eskişehir Eti Archaeology Museum, which are dated to the period between the 7th and 13th centuries. Established in 1966, the museum initially acquired coins through donations and purchases. In subsequent years, the museum's collection expanded through rescue excavations conducted in Eskişehir and its surrounding districts and villages, as well as through the confiscation of coins recovered from illicit excavations and continued acquisitions by the museum. Within this historical framework, the coins preserved in the Eskişehir Eti Archaeology Museum not only reflect the economic and commercial life of their time but also serve as material witnesses to the region's shifting political control. The gold, silver, and bronze coins from the eight hoards provide significant insights into monetary circulation and hoarding practices in Anatolia during the Late Byzantine and Early Islamic periods. In conclusion, when evaluated in terms of both the urban history of Eskişehir and the formation of the museum's numismatic collection, this study offers valuable data for understanding local history, the Byzantine frontier, and the numismatic heritage of Anatolia.

3.24 FC – Byzantine Studies Today and Tomorrow

From Margins to Networks: Tracing the Disciplinary Formation of Byzantine Studies in Turkey

Şebnem **Dönbekci**

Koç University

This presentation examines the historical and structural transformation of Byzantine studies in Turkey, tracing its evolution from a marginal intellectual pursuit to a fragmented yet increasingly networked academic field. Drawing on original research conducted for a doctoral dissertation, it combines historiographical analysis, dissertation-based cognitive mapping, and social network analysis (SNA) to offer a comprehensive account of field formation. The first part contextualizes the exclusion and appropriation of Byzantine heritage in Turkish national narratives, followed by an exploration of the formative contributions of pioneering scholars—both foreign and Turkish—who laid the groundwork for academic institutionalization. Building on this foundation, the presentation turns to dissertation data to analyze the thematic, disciplinary, and institutional trends in Byzantine-related graduate research. This empirical corpus is treated as a cognitive and social artifact that reveals the academic lineages and mentorship dynamics shaping the field's reproduction. A modularity based SNA model, constructed from supervisory and jury networks, illustrates the structural asymmetries, emergent clusters, and peripheral institutions in the contemporary landscape. By highlighting network centrality, brokerage roles, and temporal dynamics, the analysis underscores the uneven but multi-directional consolidation of the field. Methodologically, the study employs a multi-method approach that bridges qualitative and quantitative insights, integrating grounded theory, abductive analysis, and digital visualization. Through this lens, the presentation not only maps the epistemic contours of Byzantine studies in Turkey but also theorizes its disciplinary stage using Nicholas Mullins' Four-Stage Model—a neo-Kuhnian framework of research group development emphasizing social relations in the formation of new academic specialties. The findings challenge linear or monolithic narratives of disciplinary maturation and instead suggest a spatially dispersed and institutionally contingent field. By foregrounding the significance of mentorship structures, inter-institutional ties, and historiographical memory, the paper contributes to broader debates on disciplinarity, academic genealogies, and the sociology of scholarly knowledge in non-Western contexts.

5.46 FC – Churches II

Architecture Without Borders: 12th-Century Hungary, Poland, and Rus'

Özlem Eren

University of Wisconsin-Madison

The architecture of 12th-century Galicia-Volhynian Rus' (part of modern-day Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland), reflects Byzantine, Romanesque and Slavic influences. The church of Saint Panteleimon in Old Halych, the best-preserved example of monumental architecture in Galicia-Volhynian Rus', stands at the crossroads of Eastern and Western Europe. Its heavy stone structure, gabled roof, single dome on a long drum, and sculptural decorations reflect Byzantine, Hungarian, Polish, and Italian architectural traditions. Thus, Galicia-Volhynian architecture participated in a broader phenomenon of "Byzantium beyond Byzantium" through dialogues between regional architectural traditions beyond the imperial borders of Byzantium. In the 11th century, Hungary, Poland, and Galicia-Volhynia were all ruled by centralized authorities, but by the 12th century, power slowly became fragmented. This political and social shift in all three lands likely increased connections between regions and promoted the spread of architectural elements. Orthodox princes and boyars of Galicia-Volhynian Rus' may have emulated Catholic Hungarian nobles in their aspirations to power. By comparing Romanesque elements in Hungarian and Polish churches with those in Galicia-Volhynia, the paper explores how Orthodox elites adopted Western features in response to shifting power dynamics and regional aspirations. Similarly, interactions with neighboring Lesser Poland (Krakow region), especially with Przemyśl and Chelm as former Galicia-Volhynian seats of power, and the shared identity of Rus' princes, played a key role in transmitting Romanesque elements, blending with local Byzantine and Kievan Rus' traditions. Examining Romanesque churches in Hungary and Poland reveals parallels with the architecture of Galicia-Volhynia, likely transmitted through traveling builders and cultural exchange of ideas. This challenges the Russian imperialist narrative of a continuous cultural lineage from Kiev to Moscow, showing how the architecture of Galicia-Volhynia developed through Western interactions, separate from Northeastern Rus'. This offers a new perspective on 12th-century Rus' architecture rooted in regional diversity.

5.23 FC – Perceptions and Adaptations of Byzantium from the Late 18th to the 20th Century

Constantinople Reimagined: Tracing Byzantium's Afterlife in Republican Istanbul's Built Environment

Mine **Esmer**

Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University

This paper examines Istanbul's Byzantine architectural heritage during Turkey's Republican era (post-1923) through the congress theme "Byzantium beyond Byzantium," analyzing the Historical Peninsula as a palimpsest of cultural memory. Emerging from war in 1923, Istanbul faced demographic decline and urban decay, yet excavations revealed enduring Byzantine strata—churches, city walls, spoliated elements—integrated into Ottoman and modern structures. The study traces four phases: early Republican secular-scientific archaeology (1923–1950); mid-century urbanization and ideological shifts, such as the 1953 conquest anniversary sidelining Byzantine narratives (1950–1973); heritage legislation and NGO advocacy (1973–2000); and interdisciplinary, digitally augmented approaches post-2000. It critiques tensions between preservation and neoliberal urban development while highlighting how monuments like repurposed churches and toponyms bridge medieval and cosmopolitan Istanbul. By situating the city within the "global Middle Ages," the paper underscores Byzantium's Afro-Eurasian interactions with Greek, Ottoman, and Islamic traditions, expanding Nicolae Iorga's *Byzance après Byzance* to include hybrid identities and diasporic memory. Despite globalization and demographic pressures, Istanbul's Byzantine layer—though fragmented—remains a physical and cultural anchor, exemplifying transnational continuity. Systematic research, legal frameworks, and community-engaged strategies reveal how "unchanging entities" persist amid radical urban change, offering lessons for heritage preservation. The study advocates holistic methodologies—blending archival work, digital mapping, and archaeological excavation—to protect multilayered heritage as living intersections of history, space, and community. Aligning with international statutes, it calls for transcending chronological and imperial boundaries, affirming Byzantium's enduring legacy in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond.

2.28 FC – Inscribing in Byzantium and Beyond I

Pilgrimage Inscribed in Stone: Rupestrian Complex at Medeia, Thrace

Görkem **Günay**

Istanbul Technical University

The lack of distinctive typologies for pilgrimage monuments has been noted before for Byzantine architecture. Additionally, past pilgrimage activities do not necessarily leave archaeologically detectable traces, and in the absence of textual and epigraphic evidence, identifying a site as a pilgrimage center is often a challenge. The situation is different, though, in the rupestrian complex outside Medeia (now Kıyıköy) on the Black Sea coast of Eastern Thrace, only a hundred km from the Byzantine capital, Constantinople. The pilgrimage at Medeia is inscribed on the bedrock, much like the numerous invocations that pilgrims incised on its walls, asking for help and salvation. In the earlier literature, the site is rather erroneously identified as a Late Antique monastery dedicated to St. Nicholas. Based on previously overlooked details of the spatial layout and carved decoration, as well as yet-unpublished pilgrims' graffiti and wall paintings, I argue that it was established in the early Middle Byzantine period with a terminus post quem in the 9th century, primarily to accommodate the flocks of faithful visitors rather than a monastic community. The site is in the immediate vicinity of a well-fortified harbor city, Medeia, that occupies a prominent position in the maritime transportation network north of Constantinople; it is also well-connected to the inland Thrace with navigable rivers. In this setting, I discuss how the architecture instructed a designed movement for pilgrims to follow through the bedrock, framing privileged views and providing controlled access to the objects of pilgrimage that the complex encased. Moreover, the elaborate design and intricate sculpture indicate professional involvement and possibly a patron with considerable financial means. I suggest that the episcopal authority in Medeia may have maintained and controlled the pilgrimage activity and can also be credited for the architecture.

5.36 FC – Digital Gallery (Special Strand)

Exploring the Byzantine Legacy of the Eastern Mediterranean

R. David **Hendrix**

Independent Scholar

Despite the mark it left over a thousand years, much of Byzantine cultural heritage remains relatively obscure. Even in Istanbul, the empire's former capital, dozens of lesser-known churches, cisterns, and other structures are frequently overlooked. These monuments often do not receive broader academic attention, while the public generally lacks accessible or reliable information about many Byzantine sites around the Eastern Mediterranean. As a digital and educational tool, The Byzantine Legacy aims to fill such gaps by providing accessible information and raising public awareness of Byzantine sites in Anatolia, the Balkans, and beyond. It uses photography, social media, and maps, accompanied by overviews of academic research, placing it at the crossroads of cultural heritage, academic research, and public outreach. This paper explores the project's function as a gateway for both scholars and the general public to render Byzantine monuments in Istanbul and nearby regions more accessible. Selected case studies will demonstrate this mediating role between Byzantine cultural heritage and students, scholars, tour guides, and the general public.

1.13 FC – At the Frontiers between Byzantium, Sasanian Persia and the Early Caliphate

The Role of the Magi/Mowbed in Sassanid-Byzantine Relations

Fatih İnan

Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi

The Byzantine and Sassanid Empires were at war with each other in late antiquity, which led to significant conflicts. The 7th-century conflicts were particularly significant, as they led to the Sassanid Empire's exhaustion. These wars are regarded by historians as the Last Great War of Antiquity. Religion was one of the determining factors in the centuries-long political and military struggle between the two great powers. As a result of the religious policies pursued by the Christian Byzantine Empire and the Zoroastrian Sassanid Empire, the Zoroastrian and Christian clergy played an active role in the relations. The role of the clergy can also be traced in the religious struggles that took place in the buffer zones between the two states. The Sassanid Empire was a religious State from the moment it was founded, and Zoroastrianism continued to dominate. The Zoroastrian clergy, on the other hand, had an influence on almost all levels and decisions of the state. Magi/Mowbed priests were not very involved in diplomatic missions. However, their political influence in the internal affairs of the Sassanid state was clear. Christians, living as citizens of both states, were involved as an international political factor in Byzantine and Sassanid relations. The Christian bishops were even directly involved in the diplomatic activities of the Sassanids. When the ancient sources are analyzed, it is understood that the clergy had an influential role in the politics of the states in the relations of the two great powers that lasted for centuries. This study will examine how Magi/Mowbed priests influenced political decisions in the Sassanid-Byzantine struggle, what roles they assumed, and how they managed relations with Byzantium in the light of ancient sources and modern studies.

4.49 FC – Constantinople: the Great City

Marble as a Painting: The Use of Marble Imitation in the Church of the Chora Monastery

Ayça Karabacak
Istanbul University

In the early 14th century, the reconstruction project under the patronage of Theodoros Metochites turned the Church of the Chora Monastery into one of the most important representatives of Late Byzantine architecture. This construction project not only reinforced the building structurally but also elevated it to the status of a masterpiece distinguished by its mosaic and fresco programs and its rich use of marble, reflecting the artistic and architectural understanding of its time. Through these interventions, the Church of the Chora Monastery acquired a distinctive identity in terms of architectural organization, material diversity, and decorative program. Among the construction activities carried out under the patronage of Theodoros Metochites, the parekklesion section of the building stands out in terms of both architecture and painting. The primary focus of this study has been determined to be the marble imitation paintings from the Late Byzantine period, which are located in specific areas of the building and the parekklesion. In this context, the marble imitation paintings in the building will be identified and examined in detail, the real stones/marbles they represent will be analyzed, and whether this selection reflects a conscious iconographic preference will be addressed from a multifaceted perspective. The economic, aesthetic, cultural, liturgical, and symbolic reasons underlying the preference for marble imitation paintings instead of real stone/marble in the Church of the Chora Monastery will be evaluated, and the place of this practice within Byzantine art and architecture will be analyzed through both conceptual and visual examples.

2.36 FC – Monumental Painting

Use of Dentil Frieze and Imitation Marble in Byzantine Monumental Painting Art

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Marble is one of the most significant materials employed in Byzantine architecture, particularly in the decoration of interiors. A defining feature of Byzantine architectural ornamentation is the use of marble revetments covering walls up to the level of arches and vault piers. From the early Byzantine period onward, such marble cladding was extensively utilized in major buildings, including Hagia Sophia, the Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus, and the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna. In addition to genuine marble revetments, Byzantine monumental painting also incorporated imitation marble patterns, particularly on the lower sections of church walls, which were symbolically associated with the earthly realm. In Anatolia, such painted marble imitations appear in the wall paintings of Byzantine monuments in regions such as Latmos, Hadrianopolis, Olympos, Rhodiapolis, and Cappadocia. Some of these imitative patterns are purely fictitious, while others replicate specific types of marble, such as *cipollino rosso*, *marmo proconnesio*, *bigio antico*, and *cipollino verde*, all of which were widely used in Roman and Byzantine art. Another significant decorative motif in Byzantine monumental painting that can be considered an imitation element is the dentil frieze. Like painted marble patterns, dentil friezes were integrated into the Byzantine decorative repertoire from an early period. In mosaic or wall painting borders, these motifs appear either as continuous sequences or as isolated elements framed within geometric compositions, such as squares or rectangles. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of painted imitation marble and dentil motifs in Byzantine-period wall paintings from Anatolia, examining their origins, stylistic characteristics, and aesthetic significance. Through a comparative approach, the study will contextualize these decorative elements within the broader framework of Byzantine art and architecture, highlighting their symbolic and visual impact.

4.47 FC – New Perspectives on Landscapes and Sites of Byzantine Anatolia

Resilience and Transformation: GIS-Based Analysis of Rural Settlements in Eastern Rough Cilicia

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Eastern Rough Cilicia (Cilicia Trachea), situated between the Kalykadnos and Lamos rivers, offers a significant case study of how rural and urban settlements adapted to environmental and political changes. Based on a GIS-supported survey of over 500 rural sites, this study investigates the spatial organization, resource management, and connectivity strategies from the Hellenistic to the Byzantine periods. GIS analyses map the distribution of settlements, providing an understanding of how natural factors, such as geography and resources, as well as socio-political transformations, influenced the location of settlements. This research includes both prominent centers and modest settlements, emphasizing the diversity of settlement strategies and their integration into the landscape. Field observations confirm the multifunctional nature of rural settlements, where production, storage, habitation, and religious activities were integrated into single complexes, enhancing resilience. In the Late Antique period, the construction of churches reflects the broader impact of religious, economic, and administrative shifts. As a result, these settlements may have served as central hubs for the smaller satellite settlements around them. Road networks connected settlements, fostering exchanges of goods and ideas, and strengthening regional ties. These communities adapted to their environments and overcame challenges, with the region's mountainous terrain providing a natural defense against socio-political and environmental pressures. The persistence of settlement patterns highlights the dynamic relationship between continuity and change. These communities were dynamic, blending traditional practices with new influences. Architectural continuity and the evolution of building practices show how rural societies adapted to changing conditions, ensuring sustainability. This study provides a comprehensive examination of how these settlements endured from the Hellenistic to Byzantine periods, illustrating both continuity and transformation, with an emphasis on data derived directly from fieldwork.

2.10 FC – Churches I (Turkey)

Annex Structures and Their Functions in Byzantine Churches of the Lycia Region

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Located on the Mediterranean coast of southern Asia Minor, between Caria, Pamphylia, and Pisidia, the Lycia region covers a wide area and features a significant number of Byzantine churches. Positioned along Mediterranean trade networks, Lycia was among the primary regions for the spread of Christianity. With the spread of Christianity, the region witnessed not only the emergence of new worship spaces but also the development of an architectural configuration shaped by administrative and social changes. Churches in the region are scattered across both urban centers and rural settlements, including villages, islands, and mountainous areas. Based on their primary functions, they can be classified as parish churches serving the religious needs of settlements, episcopal churches in episcopal centers, katholicons within monastery complexes -mostly located in rural areas- and pilgrimage churches that served as places of visitation due to the presence of a martyrion, relic, or cult. Spaces associated with churches through secondary functions include baptisteries; pastophoria containing the prothesis and diakonikon; martyrions; hagiasmata; and relic or burial chapels for religious use. Administrative and residential structures within episcopeia, along with monastic units such as trapezae, coquinae, and clerica, fulfilled the needs of ascetic Christian life. This study identifies and documents various annex structures located around these churches through extensive fieldwork and examines their functions based on surviving architectural and archaeological evidence. The aim is to interpret and understand the motivations and practices behind religious architectural development, as well as the associated social and administrative structures, from the late 5th century -when the first churches began to appear in Lycia- until approximately the 12th-13th centuries, when the region came under Turkish rule.

5.23 FC – Perceptions and Adaptations of Byzantium from the Late 18th to the 20th Century

Perception of Byzantine History During the WWI Through the Lens of a Late Ottoman Intellectual: An Analysis of Celal Nuri's *Rum ve Bizans* Through Morality

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This paper examines Celal Nuri [İleri]'s book *Rum ve Bizans* (1917) from the perspective of the author's understanding of morality and elaborates on the perception of Byzantine history in late Ottoman historiography. It explores how historiography intersected with discussions of moral decline and how Byzantine history was instrumentalized at this point, by close reading the book in the context of the First World War. Celal Nuri, one of the most read and productive names of the Second Constitutional and Early Republic periods, was impactful and receptive to every perspective in this complex political environment. The aim of the study is to contribute to the understanding of both the relationship of Turkish historiography with Byzantium and the roots of the negative perception of Byzantine heritage and history in today's Turkish society. The study demonstrates how the depiction of an immoral image of Byzantium served to strengthen nationalism. By analyzing Celal Nuri's framing of Byzantium, this study further explores the role of history, politics, and morality in shaping historical narratives.

3.28 FC – Ideas and Debates Between East and West in the Early Medieval Mediterranean

Between Unity and Schism: Pope Pelagius I and the Three Chapters Controversy in Italy (556–561 CE)

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Central European University

According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, only two bishops and a single priest could hardly be found for the ordination of Pelagius I, as many churches in Italy had withdrawn from communion with him on the grounds of his alleged involvement in the death of the previous pope, Vigilius. This reflects the widespread opposition to Pelagius I, primarily due to his subscription to the imperial Council of Constantinople II convened by Emperor Justinian in 553, particularly the conciliar decision to condemn the Three Chapters. Despite efforts at reconciliation, opposition to his papacy intensified over the years, culminating in the centuries-long schism of the churches of Milan, Aquileia, and Istria from communion with Rome. The paper explores the Italian front of the Three Chapters Controversy in the sixth century, focusing on the complex political and ecclesiastical dynamics during the papacy of Pelagius I (556–561) in the aftermath of the Council of Constantinople in 553. I investigate the ecclesiastical politics among the bishoprics of papal Rome, imperial Ravenna, and the schismatic sees of Milan and Aquileia. Drawing on papal letter collections, I analyze the ecclesiastical policy of Pope Pelagius I as he attempted to navigate the competing demands of imperial center in Constantinople and local resistance in the Italian peninsula. Framing this within broader ideological program of Justinian's policy of *renovatio imperii*, I argue that the Three Chapters Controversy in Italy constitutes a contested ecclesiastical frontier, where the limits of imperial and papal authority were tested and redefined. The paper thus situates the Italian schism within the wider discussions of Byzantine influence in the post-Roman West and demonstrates how ecclesiastical politics is crucial to understanding "Byzantium beyond Byzantium" in the sixth century Mediterranean.

1.26 FC – Manuscript Production in the 16th Century

Byzantine Military Treatises in Early Modern Europe: Production and Dissemination of the Manuscripts

Ferhat Sezer **Kurtoğlu**

Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

The fall of Byzantium and the subsequent westward expansion of the Ottoman state caused a steady flow of Greek migration to the West, where Greeks soon established communities. At the same time, the revival of interest in the classical heritage, namely the Renaissance, created opportunities for those Greeks who possessed calligraphic skills and knowledge of classical Greek and Byzantine literature. Using their social networks and cultural capital, some of these emigrants turned to book production and trade, creating and satisfying the demand for Greek manuscripts. In the face of the Ottoman advance and amid religious turmoil caused by reform and counter-reform movements, certain Byzantine texts gained popularity among the elites of Western Europe -the clergy, diplomats, and warlords- who sought to benefit from the abundant knowledge contained in the texts copied by Greek scribes. The focus of this paper is on the transmission, dissemination, reception, and use of Byzantine military treatises copied between 1450 and 1600, with an emphasis on texts copied in the West in the sixteenth century. Two main groups of people are studied: first, those who produced and supplied such texts, namely scribes, printers, book collectors, or book merchants; and second, various Western political and military figures who needed such knowledge in their struggle against their adversaries. The paper aims to contextualize and explain the surge of copying activity around Byzantine military treatises in early modern Europe in relation to the internal and external dynamics of each group or individual in question, thereby exploring the early modern reception of a particular aspect of the Byzantine culture.

6.14 FC – The Process of Christianization

A Regional Study of the Christianisation of Crete. Insularity and Religious Change

Sait Can **Kutsal**

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The spread of Christianity in late antiquity was a process that shaped the entire Mediterranean region. However, there are no detailed studies on the emergence and spread of Christianity for all Mediterranean regions. This also applies to the island of Crete, which offers a compelling case study for examining the dynamics of Christianisation in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Early Byzantine period. The aim of my doctoral project is to document and trace this development on the one hand, and to understand and interpret the process on the other. Drawing on written acts, martyria, epigraphic and archaeological sources—particularly church architecture and related objects—from the period around 100 to 830 AD, an interdisciplinary analysis explores how Christianisation unfolded in different settings and how it was integrated into wider ecclesiastical networks. My study addresses patterns of church construction, the reuse of sacred sites, ritual topographies, and the role of local traditions in shaping religious change and identity. A central aspect of this examination is the extent to which Crete's specific geographical features—particularly its insular nature—along with the location of the investigated monuments and the relationship between coastal areas and the hinterland, influenced the Christianisation process. By doing so, the project emphasises the regional dynamics and enables a more nuanced understanding of how Christianity was expressed and received in various environments. On this basis, a development model for the phases of Christianisation on Crete will be created, evaluated and placed in the context of broader regional developments.

4.32 FC – Byzantine Numismatics

Bulgarian Imitations and Theodore I Lascaris: An Unpublished Group of Byzantine Coins in the Tire Museum

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University of the Peloponnese

Ceren **Ünal**

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The aim of this paper is to present for the first time 51 Byzantine coins housed in the Coin Cabinet of the Tire Museum. The museum acquired this group of coins, which consists entirely of billon trachea, on 1st September 1989 from (†) Hasan Beden, a coin dealer who at that time was living in Izmir. Since the find-spot of these coins has not been recorded, a weakness that this paper recognizes, our attention will focus on the group's composition, as well as on the patina, striking, style and wear of the coins, in order to certify firstly if the coins were part of a hoard and secondly if the hoard was found locally. According to the classification of the coins gifted to the museum, this group consists of 45 imitations of Byzantine billon trachea which in the literature appear either as Bulgarian Imitations or as direct/faithful copies of uncertain mint [see M.F. Hendy's *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, vol. 4, Washington D.C. 1999, pl. XXVI, 1 (Type A: 6 specimens), 2 (Type B: 16 specimens), 3 (Type C: 23 specimens)], providing a good sample of an imitative series whose function and behaviour are yet to be understood. The group also contains five specimens of Theodore I Lascaris's first coinage struck at the mint in Nicaea (see Hendy's *Catalogue*, pl. XXVII, 5), and a single specimen of the Latin Imitative large-module billon trachea of the prolific Type A (see Hendy's *Catalogue*, pl. XLVIII, 1). Undoubtedly, this group of coins is a strong indicator of the geographical diffusion of Hendy's problematic 'Bulgarian imitative' series, and also offers new insights into the economic activity of Theodore I Lascaris in the second decade of the 13th century.

2.10 FC – Churches I (Turkey)

New Findings Uncovered During the 2024 Work on the Church of St. John of Ayasuluk Hill

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St. John, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ and the author of the Gospel, is believed to have spent most of his life in Ephesus with Mary. It is believed that some of the Gospel he wrote was completed on Ayasuluk Hill. It is known that the martyrion, which was built as a simple grave structure when he died, was later transformed into what is seen today during the reign of Emperor Justinian I. The first excavations at the St. John Monument were initiated by Greek archaeologist G. A. Sotiriou in 1921, during the occupation of Izmir. Sotiriou carried out excavations in the bema area where St. John's tomb was located, the north and east cross arms and part of the narthex. With the end of the occupation period, the excavations were paused for a short period of time and then continued by Hans Hörmann on behalf of the Austrian Archaeological Institute between 1926 and 1930. Hörmann carried out excavations in the naos, narthex, atrium and south cross arm. The results of the excavations were published in 1951 in the series *Forschungen in Ephesos*, volume IV.3. Since 2020, excavations have been carried out by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sinan Mimaroglu, a faculty member of Hatay Mustafa Kemal University. Under the direction of Sinan Mimaroglu, excavations were carried out in 2020 and 2021 on the western slope of the inner castle in order to obtain data on the early periods of Ayasuluk Hill. The 2024 excavations in the south cross arm of the church yielded important results regarding the architectural phasing of the church of St. John in the earlier period. The 2024 excavations revealed that the plans of the early phase of the church and its construction phase, as interpreted by various scholars to date, were incorrect.

4.47 FC – New Perspectives on Landscapes and Sites of Byzantine Anatolia

Phrygia in the Byzantine Period

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Ancient Phrygia, which is located within the borders of Eskişehir (Dorylaion), Kütahya (Kotyaion) and Afyon (Akronium) provinces today, is important due to its geological formation and archaeological monuments from the Phrygian period to the Byzantine period. Two different styles have been determined for the structures among the cave churches. One of them presents the plan form known in Byzantine architecture; the other has a different plan form consisting of some special analytical structures. Christianity emerged with Montanism, founded by Montanus. As a Christian sect, Montanism lived for a long time in the Phrygian region with unusual ideas and beliefs against Orthodoxy. This situation in the region was due to the traditional belief culture coming from paganism that was strong in these periods, especially the Cult of Cybele, the great nature goddess of ancient Phrygia in Anatolia. This sect draws attention with its attribution of prophetic status to two women (Priscilla and Maximilla) and also its protests against Orthodox rules. These features are a reflection of the culture dedicated to paganism before Christianity. Montanism brought alternatives in religious structures. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that they may have been built in different architectural forms than the churches known in the Byzantine Period. There are huge cave blocks consisting of building complexes in the region. It is debatable whether these are monastery complexes or not. However, in addition to churches, all of these complexes also have interconnected rooms. It is possible to suggest that all these structures served for daily life as well as religious functions. It is aimed to draw attention to the Byzantine period cultural heritage of the Phrygian region, which contains the richest examples after the Cappadocia region of Anatolia.

6.39 FC – Routes, Ships, Networks and Trade from the Black Sea to the Indian Ocean

All Aboard the Empire! Exploring Nautical Imagery in Byzantine Literature and Society

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A frequently cited anecdote in multiple tenth-century Byzantine chronicles recounts how Emperor Theophilos (r. 829–842), upon discovering that a ship passing the Boukoleon belonged to Empress Theodora, ordered the vessel and its valuable cargo to be completely burned. Outraged, he lamented that he, an emperor appointed by God, *oímoi*, had been reduced to the role of *naukleros* (shipowner)! Yet a contrasting vision appears in Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos' *De Administrando Imperio* (r. 913–959), who commissioned two of the aforementioned chronicles, where he advises his son Romanos to steer and guide the *holkás*, the merchant-ship of the world, making Romanos the *kybernētēs* (helmsman). In his analysis of imperial orations by Eustathios of Thessaloniki, Stone defined this nautical metaphor as follows: the emperor assumed the role of helmsman, the ship represented the polity, and the metaphor functioned on the premise of “the commander of that which is commanded.” However, sources such as the Rhodian Sea Law show that the *kybernētēs* (helmsman) did not hold ultimate authority aboard Byzantine ships. In practice, that role fell to the *naukleros* (shipowner), especially on cargo-bearing vessels, where he dictated the ship's course while the helmsman merely executed instructions and maintained order. This paper reconsiders the nautical allusions in Byzantine literature by placing it in dialogue with the actual hierarchical structures aboard Byzantine ships. By examining hagiographies, historical texts, and rhetorical orations, it explores how authors adapted this imagery. It argues that the *naukleroi* (shipowners) were excluded from imperial metaphor due to their ties to commerce, and the resulting shift within the metaphor from “commanding” to “guiding” reveals new insight into the understanding of the emperor's relationship with the empire and rulership.

4.47 FC – New Perspectives on Landscapes and Sites of Byzantine Anatolia

Fortification Activities of the Komnenoi in Anatolia: A Spatial Analysis of the Theme of Mylasa and Melanoudion

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From the end of the 11th century, the Byzantine defensive system in Anatolia began to collapse. As a result, its restoration became an urgent priority for the Komnenian dynasty, which came to power in 1081. Military constructions played a crucial role in the revitalisation of urban life during this period. The Komnenoi placed significant emphasis on fortifying cities, towns, villages, and major roads in order to secure the socio-economic infrastructure of the countryside. Consequently, the urban projects initiated under their rule were largely defence-oriented. Throughout 12th-century Anatolia, a deep defensive network emerged, consisting of fortresses, garrisons, and castles (e.g. Sidera, Akhyraous, Pithekas, Dorylaion, Melangeia et.al). A substantial portion of the empire's financial resources was invested in these fortifications, leading to a transformation of urban planning along *kastron* (fortress-centred) lines, with growth focused particularly around the Aegean region. The present study focuses on the defensive works specifically within the theme of Mylasa and Melanoudion, which was itself established during this era. The Komnenoi developed extensive fortification networks to secure this strategically important region emphasising on the construction and maintenance of castles safeguarding the south-western coastline of Anatolia. Notable examples of these fortresses include Herakleia, Didyma/Dios Hieron (Didim), Miletos, Iasos and Beçin (near Mylasa). The empirical data gathered in the course of this study will be digitised and analysed using ArcGIS and QGIS software. The geostrategic qualities of the castles to be discussed in these programs will be evaluated, and their connections with transport routes and their hinterland will be studied. Beyond examining the architectural and technical aspects of these fortifications, the study will also explore their relationship with broader political and socio-economic dynamics.

3.39 FC – Lived Religion and the Environment

When the Earth Shook: Disaster, Decision, and Division in the Late Roman World

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İzmir Katip Çelebi University

The fifth century has traditionally been understood as a moment of divergence between the collapsing Western Roman Empire and the enduring Eastern Empire, a dichotomy typically attributed to institutional resilience and strategic choices in the East. This paper reconsiders that narrative by foregrounding the role of natural disasters, particularly seismic activity, famine, and epidemic disease, as significant structural constraints that inhibited the Eastern Roman state's capacity to provide substantive support to the West during its most critical phases of decline. Drawing on a range of Greek and Latin sources, including the works of John Chrysostom, Socrates Scholasticus, the *Chronicon Paschale*, and Marcellinus Comes, this study reconstructs a sequence of environmental disruptions that severely impacted urban infrastructure, public finance, and demographic stability in the Eastern Mediterranean. Events such as the early 5th-century earthquakes, the devastating Constantinople quake of 447, and the destruction of Antioch in 458 required substantial imperial intervention and resource reallocation. While these natural disasters were by no means the sole determinant of Eastern Roman policy, they exerted considerable influence over the empire's strategic options. This paper argues that the Eastern Empire's limited engagement in Western affairs should be interpreted not solely as political calculation, but also as a function of environmental contingency. Integrating environmental crisis into the historiography of Late Antiquity, the study offers a revised framework for understanding the fragmentation of imperial unity in the fifth century.

5.33 FC – Armenian Art and Architecture Between East and West

Traces of Armenian-Byzantine Relations in Armenian Architecture during the Reign of Heraclius (610–641)

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This study evaluates the impact of the political, religious and cultural interactions between the Armenians and the Byzantines in the 7th century, particularly during the reign of Emperor Heraclius (610-641), on Armenian architecture, based on surface survey data. Situated on the eastern frontier of the Byzantine Empire, the Armenians were caught between the rival powers of Byzantium, the Sasanian Empire and the Arab forces, and were subject to religious pressure from both the Zoroastrian Sasanians and the Chalcedonian Byzantines. Although the Armenian Church had accepted the decisions of the early ecumenical councils (Nicaea 325, Constantinople 381 and Ephesus 431), it rejected the Council of Chalcedon in 451 and consequently remained outside the influence of the Orthodox Church. This separation was formally confirmed at the Council of Dvin (648/649) under Catholicos Nerses III. During the reign of Heraclius, the Byzantine-Sasanian wars directly affected the Armenian territories. The emperor's military campaign in 624 resulted in the devastation of Sasanian-controlled settlements in the region. The Byzantine victory in 627 and the subsequent treaty of 629 brought most of Armenia under Byzantine control. At the same time, Arab incursions into the region had begun. These political developments provided fertile ground for significant advances in Armenian architecture. Supported by Catholics, bishops, princes and nakharars, Armenian ecclesiastical architecture adopted unique forms such as domes, vaulted spaces and centralised plans. The Mren Cathedral, built between 629 and 639 under the patronage of Prince Nerseh and the architect David Saharuni, stands out as a key monument. The cathedral contains inscriptions and iconography referring to Emperor Heraclius, illustrating his presence in Armenian political and religious life. Similar references appear in now-lost monuments such as the Alaman Cathedral (637) and the Bagavan Surp Hovhannes Church (639), underlining the historical importance of Heraclius in Armenian sources.

5.12 FC – Norms, Ideals and Categorisations Within and Beyond Byzantium

Topography of Shame: How Punitive Rituals Shaped the Urban Space and Normative Behavior in Byzantium?

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Punishment processions (διαπόμψεις) were a standard component of the Byzantine punitive system. These events were regularly staged to publicly shame wrongdoers—particularly high-profile men who challenged or undermined imperial power—as part of their punishment. Such punishments likely resulted in the victims’ social death. Although employed from the fourth to fifteenth centuries, these processions, as a temporary form of movement through urban space, left little to no material trace. Nevertheless, they constituted a key intervention to the urban topography, transforming it not permanently but temporarily and on a regular basis. Their impact was profound in shaping how people conceived, imagined, and experienced the urban space. Unlike their ephemeral material presence, this dimension is traceable in written narratives, which often articulate spatial details with notable interest. The present paper investigates how punishment processions impacted the space in a temporary form, transforming it into lieux de savoir—locales of learning (Jacob 2017). Building upon recent scholarship on the spatial turn in the field of Byzantine Studies (Veikou and Nilsson 2022), it analyzes the spatiality of punishment in Byzantium. Drawing on sources from a broad range of periods and genres, it argues that these processions served purposes beyond the punishment of wrongdoers. They functioned to reclaim public space and assert imperial authority, create and communicate political information, and promote normative behaviors through the public punishment of transgressors.

2.28 FC – Inscribing in Byzantium and Beyond I

New Inscriptions from Constantinople

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Within the scope of this paper, new finds that can be included in the group of inscribed artifacts dated to the centuries during and immediately after the transformation of the imperial capital from the city-state of Byzantium to Constantinoupolis will be interpreted in terms of their contribution to the historical topography and socio-economic life of the city.

2.53 FC – Building and Creating Infrastructures in Byzantium

Palimpsest Architecture of the Istanbul Sea Walls

Nisa **Semiz**

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Istanbul Sea Walls, a monumental testament to Byzantine engineering and defensive strategies, represent a complex palimpsest of architectural enhancements, repairs, and rebuilds. These fortifications, initially erected during the reign of Constantine I (306-337) and subsequently augmented by Theodosius II (408-450), served as a critical defense against maritime assaults, safeguarding the city's coasts and strategic harbors. The sea walls along the coast of Constantinople underwent interventions at different scales depending on the needs and demands that arose during the Middle Ages. Even some interventions resulted in the defensive roles of specific sections of the sea walls being relegated, transforming them into integrated structures with multiple functions. Throughout the Ottoman period, various scales of repairs and alterations were carried out, and the sea walls lost their military significance entirely from the nineteenth century onward, which led to a new phase of transformation. The interventions and changes that the Sea Walls have undergone can be followed from the traces of different periods that have survived today, and the data provided by surveys dated to the twentieth century and recent archaeological research provide the opportunity for comparison. This study examines the palimpsest architecture of the Istanbul Sea Walls, which has been formed due to the interventions and changes that have been carried out since the Middle Ages, and aims to make an analytical reading based on the differences in materials, construction techniques and architectural details.

3.56 FC – The Reception of Byzantium in Modern Academia II

The Memory of Byzantium in Modern Anatolia: Churches, Legends, and Local Traditions in Akdağmadeni

Pınar **Serdar Dinçer**

Yozgat Bozok University

Located on the northwestern slopes of the Akdağ Mountains in central Anatolia, Akdağmadeni stands as a valuable case for examining the enduring legacy of Byzantine culture in post-Byzantine and post-Ottoman contexts. While the presence of Christian communities—primarily Greek Orthodox and Armenian—dates back only to the 19th century, the churches, local stories, and place names they left behind continue to shape the region’s cultural landscape. This paper explores the spatial memory of Byzantium through five churches identified in the Yozgat Provincial Cultural Inventory, including the Merkez Church, Merkez Upper Quarter Church, İstanbulluoğlu (now a mosque), Karapir Village Church, and the remains of the Halhacı Village Church. Employing advanced documentation methods such as architectural measurement, material analysis, and comparative typological assessment with churches in Cappadocia, Istanbul, and Bursa, this study sheds light on the architectural continuities and regional adaptations of Orthodox church architecture. In doing so, it also reflects on how local heritage has been preserved, forgotten, or transformed in the wake of demographic shifts following the 1915 deportation of Armenians and the 1924 Greco-Turkish population exchange. By reconstructing the cultural and physical memory of the Christian presence in Akdağmadeni, this paper contributes to the broader discussion of “Byzantium beyond Byzantium,” tracing how echoes of Byzantine religious space resonate far beyond the historical limits of the empire.

2.53 FC – Building and Creating Infrastructures in Byzantium

Reclaiming and Preserving the Architectural and Urban Legacy of Byzantine Trebizond/Trabzon (Türkiye)

Selin **Sur**

Middle East Technical University

Ufuk **Serin**

Middle East Technical University

Byzantine material culture, especially architectural and urban heritage, in modern Türkiye survives within a complex web of ideological, political, and practical tensions that influence its conservation, interpretation, and valorization. Here, Byzantine heritage has long occupied a ‘marginal’ —and often contested— position within national heritage narratives. This contribution examines these dynamics through the case of Trabzon, the capital of the Empire of Trebizond (1204–1461), where remnants of the Byzantine era continue to shape the city’s cultural and urban landscape, albeit frequently overlooked or reimagined. Trabzon stands out as one of the most remarkable cities in Byzantine history. It is among the most resilient of Byzantine urban centers, having preserved its urban character through the ‘Dark Ages’ (7th–9th centuries) and witnessing a significant architectural revival in the Late Medieval period when little evidence survives elsewhere in Byzantine Anatolia. Despite its historical and architectural importance, much of Trabzon’s Byzantine heritage has now been lost due to deliberate demolitions, neglect, and abandonment. These material losses are not merely the result of physical decay or urban pressures, but also stem from deep-rooted ideological tensions. Research indicates that heritage is often celebrated when it aligns with prevailing narratives of national identity, religion, or political ideology. Similarly, Türkiye’s Byzantine heritage—perceived as ‘other’ or disconnected from the national story— is often neglected, sometimes ‘appropriated’ and stripped of its original attributes, or politically instrumentalized. This contribution argues that the afterlives of Byzantine architectural heritage in Türkiye are shaped more by selective memory, shifting political ideologies, and the enduring influence of nationalist historiography than by pragmatic, functional, or economic concerns. Focusing on Trabzon, this research explores how the surviving Byzantine heritage is interpreted, transformed, or reframed to align with dominant political ideologies, and how these processes affect the preservation of the city’s architectural and urban legacy.

6.12 FC – Byzantium in the Lab: New Types of Digital and Natural Scientific Analysis

Microbiome Analysis of a Mass Burial Group from the Selçuk Ayasuluk Excavations Associated with the Early Byzantine Period: A Search for Potential Pathogens

Fatih Tepgeç

Altınbaş University

The Early Byzantine period, characterized by significant demographic and epidemiological transitions, provides a crucial framework for understanding ancient disease dynamics. In this study, we investigate a mass burial group unearthed during the ongoing Ayasuluk excavations (Selçuk, Turkey), attributed to the Early Byzantine period and consisting of the commingled remains of fifteen individuals. Through ancient microbiome analysis, we aim to identify potential pathogenic agents that might have contributed to mortality events in this population. Samples will be collected under sterile conditions to minimize modern contamination. Microbial DNA will be extracted using protocols optimized for ancient bone material, followed by shotgun metagenomic sequencing. Bioinformatic analysis will focus on reconstructing microbial communities and detecting pathogenic signatures, including bacterial, viral, and fungal taxa associated with systemic infections. Comparative analysis with reference datasets from both ancient and modern microbiomes will aid in distinguishing environmental contaminants from authentic ancient pathogens. This project, grounded in the archaeological context of the Ayasuluk excavations, will contribute to the growing field of paleomicrobiology by providing insights into health conditions and potential epidemic events during the Early Byzantine period in Anatolia. Furthermore, it may offer a broader understanding of the relationship between societal transformations and infectious disease patterns in Late Antiquity. The results are expected to enhance our knowledge of early medieval mortality and contribute to interdisciplinary discussions linking archaeology, molecular biology, and Byzantine studies.

2.10 FC – Churches I (Turkey)

The South Basilica of Perge: A Key Example of Byzantine Church Architecture in Pamphylia

Ayça **Tiryaki**

Istanbul University

The ancient city of Perge, located 18 km northeast of Antalya, was one of the wealthiest cities in Anatolia and holds great significance in the history of early Christianity, particularly following Saint Paul's visit during his missionary journeys. The city became a prominent episcopal center and was the site of multiple martyrdoms. These factors likely contributed to the construction of several churches in Perge. Among these churches, the South Basilica, located in the center of the Lower City and distinguished by its monumental scale, offers significant insight into the architectural development of early Christian basilicas in the region. Excavations conducted by the Antalya Museum have revealed the church's distinctive features, including a T-shaped transept, a three-aisled naos, and an apse with adjacent pastophoria, measuring approximately 75 meters in length. Traces of high barriers between the nave and aisles – an unusual and rare feature in Byzantine architecture – highlight the basilica's uncommon liturgical and spatial arrangements. In addition to its architectural elements, the basilica stands out for its rich stonework, both in terms of variety and decoration, featuring floral motifs, as well as allegorical animal representations, which reflect the artistic and cultural sophistication of the period. Based on the stone artifacts, the basilica is currently dated to the earliest period of the 5th century, although further research and inventory work are ongoing. This paper presents the architectural features of the South Basilica of Perge, focusing on its layout, decorative elements, and its significance within the broader context of early Christian basilicas in Anatolia. Through an evaluation of its distinctive characteristics, this study seeks to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the development of Byzantine architecture in the region.

2.58 FC – Theologies and Debates before and after 1453

George Amiroutzes and the Reconfiguration of Byzantine Theological Discourse at the Ottoman Court

Hafize **Toparslan**
Sakarya University

This paper explores how George Amiroutzes, a prominent late Byzantine intellectual and former protovestiarios of the Empire of Trebizond, contributed to the transformation of Byzantine theological discourse within the new political and religious framework of the Ottoman court. After the Ottoman conquest of Trebizond in 1461, Amiroutzes became a court advisor to Sultan Mehmed II and composed a theological dialogue based on a series of oral exchanges with the Sultan, which he later compiled and structured into written form. The work seeks to clarify key aspects of Christian doctrine in response to the Sultan's theological questions and objections. Rather than merely repeating traditional anti-Islamic polemics, Amiroutzes adapted Byzantine modes of argumentation—grounded in Aristotelian logic and eschatological speculation—to respond to the expectations of an Islamic imperial audience. As a Christian intellectual operating within a Muslim court, his position embodied a form of liminal subjectivity, enabling him to rearticulate Byzantine theological heritage across cultural and confessional boundaries. This paper argues that Amiroutzes' work exemplifies the persistence and transformation of Byzantine theological culture beyond Byzantium, as his writings continued to shape interreligious discourse in a post-Byzantine, Ottoman context. In doing so, the study contributes to broader discussions of the global Middle Ages by highlighting the dialogical, adaptive, and transregional nature of Byzantine thought in the fifteenth century and beyond.

4.48 FC – Archaeological Perspectives on Pilgrimage

Terracotta Tokens, Lead Amulets and a Mould with the Depiction of Symeon Stylites the Younger in the Halûk Perk Museum/İstanbul

Ceren Ünal

Manisa Celal Bayar University

Zeynep Çakmakçı

Dokuz Eylül University

The Halûk Perk Museum in Istanbul contains many artefacts from the Archaic, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Anatolian Turkish Principalities, Ottoman and Republican periods. The Halûk Perk Museum also includes many valuable artefacts made of stone, metal, glass, terracotta, ivory and bone dating back to the Byzantine Empire and produced for different functions. There are papers presented in national and international symposiums, published articles and book studies on Byzantine artefacts in the museum's collections, and different publication projects are still ongoing. The Halûk Perk Museum has 24 terracotta pilgrim tokens belonging to the Early Byzantine period. The 24 tokens are of interest for their typology and iconographic diversity. The Halûk Perk Museum also has 6 lead amulets in the form of pendants and a stone mould dating to the 11th century. The terracotta tokens, lead amulets and a stone mould were produced for pilgrims visiting the monastery of Saint Symeon in southeastern Anatolia and Syria. In this study, 24 terracotta tokens, 6 lead amulets and a mould with the image of Symeon Stylites preserved in the Halûk Perk Museum will be introduced in the context of the pilgrimage route and pilgrimage activities of the period to which they belong. In conclusion, an evaluation will be made on the concept of pilgrimage, pilgrim objects and their production through Symeon Stylites' tokens, lead amulets and a mould preserved in the Halûk Perk Museum.

2.44 FC – New Approaches to Networks of Byzantium

Between the Walls: Reconstructing Constantinople's Lost Street Network

Pelin **Yoncacı Arslan**

Middle East Technical University

Orçun Sena **Saracoğlu**

Middle East Technical University

Constantine VII's *Book of Ceremonies* provides invaluable documentation of Byzantine Constantinople's imperial processions, detailing customs, attire, participants, and locations. While traditional scholarship has investigated ceremonial topography mostly within the Constantinian Walls (notably A. Berger's pioneering works in 1989 and 1997), the region between the Constantinian and Theodosian fortifications remains understudied despite its significance in tenth-century processional routes. This paper makes an original contribution by reconstructing the street network of this liminal zone—neither fully rural nor densely urban—through innovative digital methodologies. It visualizes potential processional routes by extracting spatial data from the Book into a semi-structured database and proposes a comprehensive street network model for the northern and southern extents of this area. The methodology integrates geo-referenced historical and contemporary maps with Least Cost Path (LCP) analyses to determine topographically optimal routes, generating an evidence-based reconstruction of Constantinople's interstitial street system. This reconstruction offers a new spatial framework for understanding both ceremonial processions and daily life between the walls, illuminating the potential physical infrastructure of this transitional zone and transforming our understanding of how imperial ceremony activated these spaces. By bridging textual evidence from the Book of Ceremonies to the eighteenth and nineteenth-century maps through rigorous topographical analysis, this model establishes new methodological approaches for investigating Byzantine urban morphology while providing a foundation for future archaeological investigation and historical interpretation.

4.34 FC – Medieval Landscapes in Transition – Southeastern Europe and Anatolia

Mountain Landscapes and the Afterlives of Byzantium: Tracing Rural Continuities in Northeastern Anatolia

Nihan Zorlu Başel

Istanbul Technical University

This study examines rural life and settlement patterns in the highland areas of Northeastern Anatolia after the Late Byzantine period, with a focus on the Maçka district in present-day Trabzon Province. The region's mountainous landscape, characterized by steep slopes and a dense network of narrow valleys, significantly influenced seasonal movement patterns, settlement choices, and the locations of rural religious sites. Through an interdisciplinary approach that combines historical geography, architectural history, and rural landscape studies, the research investigates how spatial frameworks developed during the Byzantine period continued to shape everyday life even after the collapse of centralized political authority. Instead of interpreting the end of Byzantine rule as a moment of rupture, the study highlights ongoing processes of continuity and adaptation, evident in persistent settlement forms and long-standing cultural practices. Particular attention is given to how the terrain influenced seasonal rhythms and how churches and chapels functioned as focal points of religious life and repositories of historical memory within the rural landscape. Framing Northeastern Anatolia not merely as a periphery, the study emphasizes its role as a dynamic cultural landscape where geographic conditions, seasonal movement, and religious presence intersect in complex and enduring ways. By focusing on these rural environments, the research underscores their significance as key sites for understanding broader patterns of cultural resilience and transformation beyond imperial and urban centers.

Bölüm II: Serbest Bildiriler (Grup Başvuruları)

2.39 FC – Procopius Beyond Now! (1/4)

Procopius and Northern Mesopotamia

Elif Keser-Kayaalp

Hacettepe University

Elif Keser-Kayaalp will analyse how, in Book 2 of *Buildings*, Procopius focuses on Mesopotamia while rarely mentioning the churches or monasteries in this frontier region. She will show the potential of his many layered texts and reads the Buildings in a new light in relation to the Miaphysites.

2.39 FC – Procopius Beyond Now! (4/4)

Traces of Belisarius and His Army: Preliminary Results of Fieldwork on Dara Battlefield

Süha **Konuk**

Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University

Süha Konuk will present the preliminary results of the archaeological survey project, 2024–2026, with the aim of determining the precise location of the battle of Dara in 530 inspired by Procopius’ narrative.

2.40 FC – Building Meaning on Multiplicity: Creating and Interpreting Ambiguity and Ambivalence in the Byzantine World (3/5)

“In the Name of Father, Son and Holy Sea”: The Ambiguous Relationship between Amalfitans and Byzantines

Fermude **Gülsevinç**

Koç University

Between the eighth and eleventh centuries, the Duchy of Amalfi occupied an ambiguous position between Byzantium and Latin Christendom. Once politically attached to Constantinople yet entangled in Papal, Lombard, and Arab networks, Amalfi exemplified the coexistence of multiple, and sometimes contradictory, identities. This paper explores the ways in which Amalfitans cultivated a double-tongued rhetoric that mirrored their liminal status. Drawing on documentary, sigillographic, and material evidence, it argues that Amalfitan elites strategically manipulated Byzantine symbols and language to express both loyalty and independence. Charters that invoke imperial authority while omitting the emperor's name and churches and monasteries whose decoration emulates the Byzantine style reveal a conscious engagement with ambiguity as a political and devotional tool. Through this prism, the “Holy Sea” becomes more than a pun: it encapsulates the sacred and spatial liminality through which Amalfi articulated its relationship with Byzantium. The sea bound Amalfi to the empire through trade, faith, and a shared ritual vocabulary, yet it also provided the medium for reinterpretation and self-definition. By reading Amalfi's hybridity as a form of deliberate ambivalence rather than passive syncretism, this paper situates the duchy within a broader Byzantine Mediterranean of negotiated meanings, where ambiguity was not a sign of weakness, but a means of survival, creativity, and belonging.

3.36 FC – Anaia Reframed: Peeling Back the Layers of Religious, Commercial and Urban Narratives on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Excavations (1/5)

“Crime and Punishment” at Anaia: The Codex Theod. 2.8.18 Inscription Revisited

Suna Çağaptay

Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University

In this presentation, I would like to focus on an inscribed limestone block found in situ on the walls of a 5th-century vaulted substructure excavated at Anaia (Kuşadası, Turkey). Discovered in 2016, it was excavated in 2022. The initial epigraphical analysis of the block was done by the late Prof. Hasan Malay, who identified the text as the Greek translation of the Latin version of *De Feriis* on stopping litigation on Sunday, issued by Gratianus, Valentinianus and Theodosius I in 386. As Malay has discussed, the text bears multiple anachronisms. Measuring around 69 × 114 centimetres, the inscription refers to Principius (386) as the ἑπαρχος τῆς αὐλῆς who acted under Theodosius I; however, it cites Theodosius II and Valentinianus III, under whose joint reign (425– 450) the *Codex* was published in 438. This gives us a *terminus post quem* for the inscription and the likely construction of the vaulted substructure, which was built to provide access to the site and supported the basilical church built on top of it. The walls are clad with frescoes possibly depicting Moses crossing the Red Sea, revealing a hydraulic theme, which harmoniously ties up with the excavated remains of the fountains embedded into niches and water infrastructure. Elaborating on the symposium’s theme, my aim is twofold: First, I would like to dig deeper into the epigraphical evidence to discuss the nature of crime and its imposed “capital punishment” to argue if this inscription can be seen as a “public text” by the Anaians. Secondly, I would like to hone into the archaeological evidence to discuss the changing functions and fortunes of this enigmatic vaulted substructure within the Byzantine chronology at Anaia, stretching from the 5th to the 15th centuries.

3.36 FC – Anaia Reframed: Peeling Back the Layers of Religious, Commercial and Urban Narratives on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Excavations (2/5)

The Chronology of the Byzantine Pottery of Anaia: Production, Circulation and Consumption

Filiz İnanan

Bursa Uludağ University

Byzantine ceramics constitute the most abundant group of finds unearthed during the 25-year excavations at Anaia. Offering a wide range of samples, including glazed and unglazed, red and white clays, bespeaks a fascinating range of production, distribution, and consumption networks. A large group of these ceramics has been examined in a series of dissertations and published works. However, most of these studies focus on specific groups, as represented by middle Byzantine ware and Zeuxippus ware. The aim of this presentation is two-fold: first, to provide an overview of the classification and interpretation of all Anaian ceramic finds dating from the Late Roman-Early Byzantine Period to the Late Byzantine Period. Secondly, to reassess the patterns of production and distribution across this long chronology, making room to discuss what has not been produced at Anaia but has been imported from elsewhere. All this discussion aims to clarify any gaps in the chronological classification and the role of Anaia as a leading center of ceramic production, circulation, and consumption hub in the Byzantine period.

3.36 FC – Anaia Reframed: Peeling Back the Layers of Religious, Commercial and Urban Narratives on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Excavations (4/5)

Anaia's Harbor and Shipyard: A Model of Continuity from Byzantine into Aydinid Period

Hasan Sercan **Sağlam**

Independent Scholar

Situated on the Aegean coast of Asia Minor—about 12 km south of Kuşadası and opposite Samos—Anaia (modern Kadıkalesi) preserves an extended occupation sequence from prehistory to the 19th century. Renowned for its Byzantine remains—including a fortress, a church, and an intramural settlement—Anaia has attracted considerable scholarly attention, yet its waterfront, central to this maritime city's character, has remained comparatively understudied. This paper reevaluates Anaia's Late Byzantine harbor and maritime infrastructure through a multidisciplinary synthesis of archival records (Genoese and Venetian), portolan charts, textual sources, and archaeological and epigraphic evidence. The study advances a revised hypothesis for the harbor's precise location and argues that the waterfront included a substantial shipyard whose operations persisted into the Early Beyliks period, demonstrating continuity of maritime activity across political transitions. A nearby anchorage—later recorded in Ottoman sources as the pier of Aya Yorgi near Cape Aslan—functioned as an auxiliary mooring integrated into Genoese trade networks. Placed alongside the declining seaward role of Ephesos/Agios Theologos and the rise of fortified Ayasuluk and, ultimately, the Ottoman port-city of Kuşadası (so-called Scalanova, late 16th early 17th c.), these findings refine regional topographic models and illuminate socio-economic transformations shaping the Aegean maritime landscape.

3.36 FC – Anaia Reframed: Peeling Back the Layers of Religious, Commercial and Urban Narratives on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Excavations (5/5)

Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259–1282) and Anaia/Kadıkalesi

Siren Çelik

Marmara University

A noteworthy centre of commerce and piety from the Early Byzantine period onwards, Anaia/Kadıkalesi preserved its importance under the Empire of Nicaea and the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259–1282). During these periods, Anaia was a significant site of trade and ceramics production, while its large-scale basilica-type church was deemed worthy of extensive restoration by the Laskarids. During the 1260s and 1270s, Michael VIII granted many privileges to the Genoese regarding Anaia, such as exemption from *kommerkion* and the permission to set up their own *loggia* and buildings. Both Genoese and Venetian documents provide ample evidence of Anaia's busy traffic as a commercial centre, providing us with unique insights about the merchants' activities and the political background of the region. These same documents also indicate the presence of piracy around Anaia, with which Michael VIII seems to have been involved. Moreover, female family members of this first Palaiologan emperor, such as his sister Maria/Martha, figure in documents pertaining to Anaia, suggesting some degree of interest or involvement with the area. In addition to Italian sources and Byzantine histories of the era, several seals and coins, as well as other material excavated in Anaia, also indicate a strong link between Michael VIII and Anaia. Considering both written sources and material evidence, this paper will seek to assess the relationship of Michael VIII to Anaia within the framework of his broader Western Anatolian policy.

3.40 FC – Crossing Textual Borders: Rewriting as Cultural Adaptation (1/5)

Rewriting as Storytelling: Narratological Approaches to the Annunciation in Late Antique Liturgical Poetry

Osman Yüksel **Özdemir**
Central European University

This paper explores how biblical texts were creatively engaged in the service of storytelling in Late Antiquity. To this end, it offers two case studies: a *kontakion* by Romanos the Melodist (c. 485–560 CE) and a *mimro* by Jacob of Serugh (451–521 CE), both centered on the Annunciation. By considering not only the biblical narratives but also the broader liturgical tradition that shaped their reception, this paper treats the biblical canon as a foundational blueprint upon which these authors constructed immersive storyworlds for live audiences. To examine how Romanos and Jacob reinterpreted scripture within the storytelling culture of Late Antiquity, the paper frames their poetic practice as a process of rewriting or translation. Drawing on narratological theory, it analyzes (1) the structural comparison of the biblical text to the liturgical poetry (fabula to story), (2) the characterization of biblical figures through focalization, and (3) the use of intertextuality to establish verisimilitude and resonance for their audiences. By tracing these techniques, the paper illuminates the dialectical process through which scripture was transformed into compelling narratives. Ultimately, it argues that Late Antique liturgical poetry served as a principal medium through which lay audiences encountered and internalized the biblical canon.

5.26 FC – Rethinking Later Byzantine Frontiers (1/3)

Urban Transformation in Thirteenth-Century Anatolia in Hybrid and Ambiguous Late Byzantine Frontiers

Furkan Çağlan

University of Notre Dame

This paper examines how Late Byzantine cities in 13th-century Anatolia transformed as a result of frontier dynamics. After the Fourth Crusade, the relationship between the Byzantium and the Seljuq Sultanate of Rum impacted the socio-political, economic and cultural adaptations of Late Byzantine cities in Anatolia. In this paper, the frontier is an indeterminate area of cross-cultural interaction, hybrid conversation and adaptability rather than firm line of defense. By emphasizing this feature of the Late Byzantine frontier, this paper focuses on several cities in Anatolia – Nicaea, Trebizond, Laodicea and Ephesos – and considers how adaptations and reactions of these cities toward socio-political changings in the post-1204 period served as a stage for local autonomy, imperial claim and cross-cultural interaction. This paper utilizes both literary, material-visual and archaeological sources to examine how Byzantine and Turkish elites transformed urban space and identity in these volatile geopolitical contexts. Therefore, the paper emphasizes both continuity and transformation. For instance, Nicaea and Trebizond maintained imperial claims to regain Constantinople through architectural and ceremonial renewal, whereas frontier cities like Laodicea and Ephesos adapted through co-existence, commercial relations and religious reframing. Hence, taking into account the ambiguity of the frontier concept, this paper explores the continuity and transformation of these cities and assesses the impact of the Late Byzantine frontier as a historical phenomenon on their urban development, irrespective of whether they were frontier cities. These cities exemplify the negotiated characteristics of frontier where the interactions between Byzantium and Turkish realms were consistently obscured. Ultimately, this paper rethinks the frontier as a dynamic cultural and physical entity by situating it into the urban transformation of 13th-century Anatolia.

5.26 FC – Rethinking Later Byzantine Frontiers (2/3)

The Unmaking of Byzantine-Seljuk Asia Minor (1256-1303): The Rebellions of Cimri (1277) and Alexios Philanthropenos (1295)

Efe **Antalyali**

University of Notre Dame

This paper delves deep into the two major social upheavals that the region witnessed in the second half of the century, namely the rebellion of Cimri in 1277 in the Seljuqs of Rum and the rebellion of Alexios Philanthropenos in 1295. The presentation, first, reconstructs the socio-political and demographic implications of Baiju's second expedition into Anatolia in 1256. It demonstrates that the cataclysm Baiju's migration created in Anatolia had its most profound effects on the Turcoman groups, ushering in a domino effect that reconfigured the social and political relations in the region. However, the Turcoman groups that fled to the fringes of the Central Anatolian Plateau soon became the most significant competitors of the Seljuk ruling elite in Konya for control of the socio-political networks in Anatolia and Asia Minor. It argues, thus, that Cimri's rebellion in 1277 was the culmination point of a long struggle that the frontier Turcoman groups undertook to fill the power vacuums created by the disintegration of the Seljuk central authority, accelerated by the second Mongol invasion in Anatolia. With the failure of Cimri's rebellion, however, the frontier Turcoman groups increasingly shifted their focus to the other side of the frontier, Byzantine Asia Minor, where similar socio-political developments were taking place.

Bölüm III: Genel Oturumlar

Plenary Session: Byzantium Lost and Found

Ottoman Patriotism and the Cultural Heritage Policy: The Contexts of Byzantine Legacy in The Late (Early 20th Century) Ottoman Popular Publications

Mertkan **Karaca**

Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

This study explores late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Ottoman engagement with Byzantine heritage through the lens of the emerging and increasingly politicized concept of *vatan* (homeland). It argues that the apparent contradiction between the persistent denigration of Byzantium in Ottoman political histories and the simultaneous preservation, appropriation, and valorization of Byzantine material culture constituted a coherent political strategy rather than an intellectual inconsistency. This dual attitude is best understood as a product of the transformation of territory into a sacralized and nationalized space, within which all material remains—regardless of their religious or ethnic origins—were reframed as objects of attachment, responsibility, and sovereignty. The study is methodologically grounded in a close reading of a wide corpus of written sources, including Ottoman political histories, popular publications, art-historical treatises, educational textbooks, institutional reports, and museum-related publications from the Late Ottoman period. These texts are analyzed alongside contemporary European Byzantinist scholarship and modern historiography in order to situate Ottoman intellectual production within transnational debates on archaeology, cultural heritage, and civilization. The study demonstrates that, especially in the context of territorial losses, foreign occupation, and Greek and Russian irredentist claims, Byzantine heritage was increasingly instrumentalized as a means of asserting Ottoman custodianship over the past. Cultural heritage policies, museum practices, and popular publications functioned as tools through which sovereignty and legitimacy were articulated. By foregrounding the concept of homeland as a key analytical category, the study shows how Byzantine heritage was discursively detached from political continuity while being fully integrated into a geographically grounded narrative of ownership. In doing so, the study contributes to broader discussions on the entanglement of cultural heritage, nationalism, and historical writing in the late Ottoman and early Turkish context.

Bölüm IV: Poster Sunumları

Poster Presentation

Byzantine Elements in Early Seljuk Pottery: Interaction in Glazed Ceramic Techniques

Kaan **Kendirciler**

Ege University

The production of Middle Byzantine glazed wares began in 7th-8th century Constantinople, and these early glazed wares were sold in the capital's markets and exported to the provinces of the empire. From the 7th century onwards, the lead-based glazing technique spread gradually and was probably established in a few provincial pottery centres of the empire by the end of the 9th or beginning of the 10th century. While some workshops produced characteristic, ornate sgraffito wares in the early second millennium for local or regional consumption, others began to export their products through regional trade networks from the 12th century onwards, meeting the consumption needs of both their own regional markets and distant markets on the Aegean and Asia Minor coasts. On the other hand, nomadic Turkoman groups, who raided the Byzantine Empire from the mid-10th century until the first quarter of the 11th century, continued their attacks as the Great Seljuks over time. With the Battle of Manzikert between the Byzantine Empire and the Great Seljuks, strategic points changed hands and with the Battle of Myriokephalon, the Seljuk presence in Asia Minor became a political entity. During this process, nomadic Turkoman groups and principalities affiliated with the Seljuks, who adopted a settled lifestyle, interacted with Byzantine art and culture. This process can be interpreted as the interaction between Byzantine, Turkish, Iranian, Arab and Islamic cultures. This study aims to examine the effect of the Byzantine-Seljuk interaction on underglaze ceramic techniques through the comparison of samples. The observation that there was no significant change in production techniques in the lands under Seljuk rule, and that only the elements in the decorative theme deviated from the usual schemes, constitutes the basic basis of this question.

Bölüm V: Yuvarlak Masa Oturumu Bildirileri

2.04 RT – Late Medieval Practices of Ownership in Byzantium and Beyond: Byzantine, Armenian, Serbian, and Ottoman Contexts (2/5)

Ownership of Foundations or Founders' Rights? *Ktetorika Dikaia* in Late Byzantium

Elif Neyzi

The British Institute at Ankara

The ownership of religious foundations remains among the most intricate aspects of Byzantine legal and economic history. Examining how the Byzantines conceptualized the transformation of a property into something sacred, how they managed the resulting possession and institutional control of these sacred and consecrated spaces, and how these practices evolved over time, sheds light on the shifting social and economic interests of founders and patrons of religious foundations. This paper addresses these issues through the prism of *ktetorika dikaia*—the “founders’ rights” a key term in late Byzantine sources that has conventionally been interpreted as denoting privileges such as burial and commemoration granted to a founder within their establishment. This paper reassesses whether *ktetorika dikaia* signified attenuated forms of founders’ rights in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, as distinct from *ktetoreia* or *despoteia* (ownership, proprietorship) of religious foundations. Particular attention is given to the terminology employed in foundation deeds (*typika*), court cases, and archival documents, where the interplay between normative prescription and lived reality becomes visible. By investigating the blurred boundaries between ownership and stewardship, private initiative, endowed status, and ecclesiastical and/or imperial oversight, this paper proposes a historicizing approach to understand religious foundations. It thus contributes to ongoing efforts to reassess the nature of ownership of religious foundations in late Byzantine society.

2.04 RT – Late Medieval Practices of Ownership in Byzantium and Beyond: Byzantine, Armenian, Serbian, and Ottoman Contexts (5/5)

‘The Property is Mine’: Re-considering Mehmed II’s Absolutism as a Disruption of Medieval Legal Conventions on Ownership

Ali Daniş **Neyzi**

University of California - Davis

Much ink has been spilled on Mehmed II’s centralization of the Ottoman state and the nature of his economic reforms. An important connection between two aspects of this process remains to be analyzed: Mehmed II’s issuance of a copious amount of legal decrees (*kānūn-nāme*) and his wholesale allocation of particular tax revenues in Istanbul to his personal Islamic foundation (*vakf*). Based on readings of Mehmed II’s decrees, foundation deeds, and Ottoman revenue registers, this paper argues that the common denominator of the political, economic, and cadastral reforms undertaken during his reign was a shift in the perception of any taxable asset as the sultan’s personal property. This hypothesis is then placed into comparison with practices of land ownership and religious endowments in late Byzantine and early Ottoman contexts, in order to propose that Mehmed II’s were much too radical a deviation from medieval legal conventions of ownership. This new emphasis on Mehmed II’s policies as a legal aberration offers a fresh explanation of their almost immediate reversals in the first years of the reign of his son, Bayezid II.

2.20 RT – Boundless Byzantium: Post-Conquest Material Culture after the End of Byzantine Rule (5/5)

The Maritime and Commercial Afterlives of Anaia: Relocating the Harbor (?) and Shipyard on the Byzantine/Aydinid Cusp

Suna ağaptay

Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University

Hasan Sercan Sağlam

Independent Scholar

In this presentation, we once again turn to Anaia, a multi-period mound settlement located opposite Samos on the Aegean coast of Asia Minor. Famed for signing the trade agreements in 1261 with the Genoese and 1265 with the Venetians, Anaia became a major hub for the production of ceramics, glass, metal, and bone, which was circulated through a harbor whose location had been a matter of debate. Previous studies located the harbor on the shores of the mound or its immediate west or east and labeled an intramural structure (B40) as a *kommerkiarion* (office/residence of the tax collector). In this presentation, we examine Genoese and Venetian archival records and cartographic evidence, such as portolan charts and primary accounts, as well as recent archaeological work conducted at the site, to define the character and context of its associated maritime and commercial infrastructure and debunk localizations and labelings. Our joint presentation concludes that Anaia is likely to have had an anchorage pier that is situated to the west of the settlement and complemented by a shipyard; as such, these two features can be located within the broader context of the late Byzantine/ early Aydinid urban and economic landscape, emphasizing its role in regional maritime networks and continuity, albeit changes in the political regime. Our multidisciplinary approach integrates archaeological, textual, and cartographic analyses to fine-tune a nuanced interpretation of Anaia's maritime catchment area and its changing functions and fortunes.

3.01 RT – Herodotus in Byzantium: Transmission, Readership, Imitation (3/5)

Sites of Memory, Strategies of Power: Herodotus and the Byzantine Memoryscape

Scott **Kennedy**
Bilkent University

Herodotus' *Histories* have long shaped the imagination of the Greco-Roman and Byzantine worlds. From poetry and rhetoric to history and oratory, countless texts echo and recast Herodotean episodes to meet shifting rhetorical, political, and ideological needs. Yet one dimension of his enduring influence remains less explored: the ways in which his narratives helped construct Byzantine landscapes and identities. Drawing on the notion of lieux de mémoire, I first show how Byzantine elites preserved celebrated ancient sites of memory, such as Apobathra, where Xerxes allegedly crossed into Greece. More strikingly, they also reinterpreted their own urban memoryscapes through Herodotus' lens. For example, they arguably discovered in the Hippodrome's serpent column Delphi's tripod commemorating the Persian Wars, creating a symbol of Constantinople's programmatic self-fashioning as a new Athens and Rome, a city of victory and empire. This logic extended beyond monuments to political ritual. When the Seljuk sultan Kılıç Arslan II visited Manuel I Komnenos in 1162, I argue that planners deliberately avoided the direct Roman roads and instead ferried the sultan across the Hellespont. The court orator, Euthymios Tornikes, seized the moment to ask whether the sultan feared the strait would avenge his ancestors' hybris. Here, Byzantines recast a state visit as a conscious reversal of history: a "new Xerxes" crossed Greek waters not in aggression but in submission, legitimating Byzantine authority. Such examples reveal that Herodotus' legacy in Byzantium was not confined to textual imitation. His *Histories* could inspire a performative mimesis enacted in the very fabric of the city and in the choreography of diplomacy. Through these appropriations, Byzantines fashioned themselves as heirs to the Greeks who triumphed over Asia's tyrannical kings, recasting the past as a resource for their present.

3.16 RT – Reconfigurer l'espace par l'art chrétien sous la pax ottomanica (1/4)

The Byzantines and the Ottomans: Perceptions of Material Culture (14th–16th Centuries)

Siren Çelik

Marmara University

Both rivals and neighbours, the Byzantines and the Ottomans were in close cultural contact with each other: they observed each other's customs, clothing and food, adopting some and rejecting others. Moreover, people and objects also circulated in both directions; people switched political allegiances and/or converted, artists and masons worked for the patrons of the 'other' side. Objects such as tapestries, fabrics, weapons or manuscripts travelled through diplomacy, war and trade. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, many aspects of Byzantine culture and daily life practices were continued under Ottoman rule. Sources such as Late Byzantine histories, anti-Islamic dialogues, and satires provide fascinating insights into these interactions and the perception of the Ottomans' daily life practices, including food and clothing. Similarly, Ottoman chronicles and *menakıbnames* (saints' lives) of the 15th and 16th centuries are also revealing as to the role of the Byzantine Christians in the Ottoman society and as to how their daily life practices were perceived by the Ottomans. Other written sources, such as various travellers' accounts, and French chronicles and poetry, shed further light on both Byzantines and the Ottomans' cultural practices, as well as their interactions with each other. Finally, Byzantine and Ottoman material culture, such as frescoes, textiles and miniatures and buildings, adds further layers of meaning to the perception and depiction of 'otherness', as well as showcasing cultural interaction and hybridity. By utilising both written sources and material culture, this presentation will endeavour to discuss the cultural encounters between the Byzantines and the Ottomans in the 14th - 16th centuries, focusing on how they viewed each other's daily life practices and artwork.

3.18 RT – Arabo-Greek Translations in Byzantium and Beyond (1/3)

Beyond Translation: How Much Did the Late Byzantines Know About Arabic Philosophy?

Samet **Budak**

Princeton University

This talk explores the pathways by which philosophical knowledge moved between Byzantium and the Islamicate world in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It goes beyond the conventional hunt for translations of narrowly defined philosophical texts from Arabic into Greek, considering additional channels, including Latin and Hebrew intermediaries, instances of oral exchange, and cases of direct Byzantine access to Arabic materials without translation. In doing so, it also reflects on the shifting definitions and limits of “philosophy” in both zones and assesses the scope and boundaries of Byzantine familiarity with Islamic philosophical literature. Drawing on Arabic and Greek sources alongside Latin and Hebrew witnesses, the talk reconstructs a multicolored picture of exchange and transmission. The main argument is that late Byzantine thinkers knew much more about philosophy from the Islamicate world than is often believed and, at times, participated in a continuous, interconnected philosophical environment that included their Muslim contemporaries.

4.04 RT – Entering and Experiencing Enclosed Spaces in (Post-) Byzantium: Open Questions in Dark Zones (5/5)

Haunted Enclosures: The Aftermath of the Church of Panaghia in Antalya, Türkiye

Pınar Aykaç

Middle East Technical University

The conversion of Byzantine churches into mosques was a common practice in the Ottoman Empire, generally associated with political or symbolic motivations. The Church of Panaghia in Antalya, however, followed a slightly different trajectory, as rumours of a sealed chapel affected its destiny after its conversion. Believed to house a chapel that was closed in the 18th century, the monument sparked extraordinary tales among local Muslim and Christian communities. While Muslims believed that the chapel brought fatal illness as they thought Christians had cast curses, Christians believed that these rumours arose because of the relics of saints inside. The building's "bad reputation" continued after it was left to its own fate following a fire and later surrounded by high walls due to a plague. This presentation explores the afterlife of the Church of Panaghia, arguing that its conversion into a mosque transformed the monument into a symbolic dark zone for the Christian community, while its former function as a church continued to haunt its mosque identity, becoming a former dark zone for the Muslim community, reinforced by a physically enclosed space and rumours of a chapel associated with "dark magic". This ambiguity produced a dual identity, manifested in the monument's colloquial designation as a "Church-Mosque" in the 20th century, which shaped later perceptions and even discouraged future interventions. The case of the Church of Panaghia demonstrates how the coexistence of associations of both church and mosque transformed the monument into a mutually exclusive physical and metaphorical dark zone for two local communities.

4.05 RT – Urban Families and Households in Byzantium (7th-13th Centuries) (4/7)

“Dishonorable” Women: Concubines (παλλακαί) in Middle and Late Byzantium

Nathan **Leidholm**
Bilkent University

By the tenth or eleventh century, the term *pallakeia* (“concubinage”) could denote a wide range of practices and arrangements in Byzantium. The same term, *pallake* (παλλακή), was used to denote any kind of female partner who did not qualify as a legal wife, including sexually available enslaved women, freeborn monogamous partners, and a variety of statuses in between. Still, this coincidence of terminology carried with it assumptions and stereotypes that had accrued from centuries of association with unfree, and therefore dishonorable status. This paper argues that label “concubine” immediately associated a woman with all of the stereotypes and fears surrounding sexually available women’s bodies, including deeply engrained fears and literary tropes typically associated with enslaved women in particular, even if the “concubine” in question was not enslaved. By examining specific cases of “concubinage” in Byzantium between the ninth and thirteenth centuries, it analyzes both the impact that this had on the households involved and the attitudes and prejudices displayed by our sources.

6.05 RT – The Economy of Crete and Its Commerce with the Mediterranean World (7th-11th Centuries) (1/6)

The Text Meeting the Material

Koray **Durak**

Boğaziçi University

The purpose of this introduction is to foreground a series of textual sources—some of which have not been systematically examined before—that relate to Crete’s economy and particularly its commerce. These sources span the period from the expansion of the Muslims into the Mediterranean in the 7th century to the 11th-12th centuries, a period marked by the arrival of the Crusaders and the Turks as well as the growing influence of the Italians in Mediterranean commerce. The focus will be on three main bodies of evidence, which have not yet been fully utilized in modern scholarship: (a) the Islamic geographical genre ranging from the well-known Mashriqi authors to the less frequently cited Maghrebi geographers that offer valuable information on the island’s principal products, (b) the medical and pharmacological literature, which provides an intriguing list of medicinal substances exported from Crete to the wider Mediterranean world, and (c) the Genizah documents, which contain significant data on the Cretan economy, its trade networks and its channels of communication with the Islamic world. This tabulated presentation is intended to offer a comparative framework for assessing results derived from the archaeological evidence presented by the other participants in the round table. Through such comparison, textual and material evidence may confirm, refine, or challenge one another, offering insights not only into the character of Crete’s economy but also into the very nature and interpretive limits of each category of evidence.

6.05 RT – The Economy of Crete and Its Commerce with the Mediterranean World (7th- 11th Centuries) (3/6)

The Transformation of the Cretan Rural Settlement Pattern (and Agroecosystems) in the Early Middle Ages (ca. 550–ca.900): A Comparative Study

Luca **Zavagno**

Bilkent University

This paper aims to offer an overview of the rural surveys conducted on the island of Crete and re-assess the traditional historiographical interpretation of the fate of insular agricultural settlement patterns, ecosystems, population and agroecosystems in the passage from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages (i.e., late 6th – late 9th century). Indeed, one cannot simply take for granted that, at the time under scrutiny, Crete (as well as other important Byzantine islands, such as Sicily, Sardinia, and Cyprus) was overwhelmed by Arab incursions affecting the Central and Eastern Mediterranean. According to this traditional narrative, the island became a no man's land: commercial and shipping routes were severed, economic, social, and cultural life in the countryside came to an end, and prosperous late antique rural sites were massively abandoned in favour of hastily built and fortified (often seasonal) hilltop settlements. A comparative approach will be adopted as based on the archaeology and material culture in Cretan sites like Pseira and Mochlos (and paired with similar ones like Philosophiana, Contrada Castro, and Rocchicella Mineo in Sicily, Kofinou-Chirochitia and Galinoporni in Cyprus, and San Giorgio di Sinis in Sardinia). Such an approach should allow us to fully grasp the responses of landowners and peasants to the changing environmental and anthropogenic conditions as the Byzantine Empire experienced the transition from an economically unified “mare nostrum” to the fragmented Medieval Mediterranean. This was reflected by a change of emphasis in agricultural regimes, market responses, and landscape use (the latter too often simply explained in terms of abandonment of Roman villas and retreat to small villages), also partially stemming from the transformation of the political, military, and fiscal-administrative structures of an “empire that would not die.”

Bölüm VI: Tematik Oturumlar

1.05 TS – Unifying Byzantine Thrace: The BRIA project (1/7)

Introduction to the BRIA Project

Ivana **Jevtić**
Koç University

Nikos **Kontogiannis**
Dumbarton Oaks

The twentieth-century wars between the Balkan powers forcefully divided the region of Thrace into frontier zones, dislocating communities, and aiming to produce ethnically and culturally ‘homogenous’ modern states (Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey). The traumatic experiences profoundly impacted later historiography and seriously affected cultural heritage. This paper introduces a multidisciplinary, collaborative initiative—known as BRIA—with scholars and students originating from the three countries. The goal is to overcome borders and the resulting limitations that still shape Byzantine Studies. In this thematic session, team members, building upon their experience of travelling across the three countries, will contextualize aspects of the Thracian territory, such as rupestrian sites, riverine and coastal landscapes, settlements, and communities (past and present). Through this panel, we wish to instigate discussion on several topics, such as a new holistic methodology for understanding the Byzantine environment and rock-cut architecture, and a research model applicable to other regions. We aspire to offer fresh perspectives on comprehending the Byzantine world and to chart a course toward a more collaborative, inclusive, and sustainable future for our field of study.

1.05 TS – Unifying Byzantine Thrace: The BRIA project (4/7)

Rereading Borders in Thrace: Urban and Architectural Transitions in the Late Medieval Period

Öykü Bahar **Balcı Güngör**

Istanbul Technical University

The historical-geographical region of Thrace served as a significant mediator of cultural and architectural interaction due to its position between Asia Minor and the Balkans, particularly during the late medieval period, a time characterized by frequent changes in political authority and shifts in power. The region, alongside its Byzantine heritage, played an important role in the formation of the Ottoman identity of the principality in this early period. However, the political division of Thrace among three countries (Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria) in the early twentieth century hindered our understanding of its historical space and cultural connections, especially in the sub-regions showing similar geographic characteristics in the border zone. Drawing on the on-site visits across three countries of Thrace within an interdisciplinary framework and subsequent discussions carried out under the BRIA Project, this study investigates the concepts of ‘thinking beyond modern borders’ and the shared features of these sub-regions. In this context, the urban and architectural transition between the Byzantines and the Ottomans during the late medieval period in the Lower Evros (Meriç) River Valley, once a vibrant transportation hub but now forming the border between Turkey and Greece, is examined. The paper approaches the subject at various scales. From a broader perspective, the settlements on both banks of the river are analysed in terms of their relationships with each other, the topography, the river and the transportation network. Furthermore, the transformation of spaces and architectural details is examined at the level of individual buildings, aiming to reveal continuities and changes.

1.05 TS – Unifying Byzantine Thrace: The BRIA project (6/7)

Space-Making in Landscapes Not Made by Human Hands: A Theoretical Model for Byzantine Rock-Cut Architecture

Görkem **Günay**

Istanbul Technical University

As outcomes of an alternative mode of architectural expression, rock-cut spaces assume a wide range of functions and meanings in distant geographies and cultural contexts, constituting a weighty sum of surviving material evidence from Byzantium as well. In scholarship, the term “rock-cut architecture” is rather loosely applied to an ontologically diverse group of material. In this paper, I discuss what it means to define and redefine spaces in rupestrian landscapes. Rather than conceiving rock-cut space-making as a purely human endeavor, I adopt a new materialist perspective and examine the agentive roles of nonhuman beings, with a particular focus on rock and water. Rock is the material to carve; its physical properties and relations to other landscape elements afford and encourage certain forms of engagement. The flowing bodies of water carve caves, valleys, and sinkholes, among other landforms. Water not only excavates but also builds stalactites and other speleothems through dripping. In Byzantium, the conscious efforts of people to transform the available rocky material for whatever use they saw fit necessarily relied on the entanglements with nonhuman beings. As such, rock-cut spaces became products of nonhuman agency as much as human intentionality. To explore these dynamic relations, drawing on the field excursions and stimulating academic discussions of the BRIA project, I present a threefold theoretical model for rock-cut space-making strategies in Byzantium: carving spaces out of the rock, building spaces on the rock, and using spaces in the rock. Each category exemplifies distinct yet interconnected spatial approaches, illustrating together how Byzantine communities, rocks, and water were entangled in human-altered rupestrian environments.

1.05 TS – Unifying Byzantine Thrace: The BRIA project (7/7)

Rethinking Research Models in Byzantine Studies: The BRIA Project Approach

Bilge Ar

Istanbul Technical University

Ivana Jevtić

Koç University

While the methodological particularities of Byzantine Studies have been increasingly acknowledged in recent scholarship, the research models that underpin scholarly practice remain underexplored. Across the humanities—and especially in Byzantine studies—there is growing recognition that inherited research models often fall short of supporting the collaborative, interdisciplinary, and context-sensitive work the field demands. The BRIA Project, launched in 2022, addresses this gap by foregrounding the question of how research is conducted: how to study the rich yet understudied cultural heritage of Medieval and Ottoman Thrace, and how to build a model of collective inquiry that is sustainable and intellectually generative. Focusing on a region historically shared by Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey, BRIA proposes a cross-border, collaborative framework that transcends political, linguistic, and disciplinary boundaries. It acknowledges the diverse material conditions under which scholars operate and the varying political narratives surrounding Byzantine heritage in each country. Through joint fieldwork, site visits, and annual thematic workshops, the project brings together scholars and graduate students from major institutions in all three countries, fostering both research and training in digital and analytical methods. An essential dimension of BRIA is its emphasis on mutual learning. Early field campaigns served as formative exercises in interdisciplinary practice, allowing participants to learn from each other's methods while addressing complex and fragmentary sites collectively. Graduate students contribute within this framework, developing thesis projects aligned with BRIA's aims under shared mentorship. This model not only facilitates the co-creation of knowledge but also nurtures a shared scholarly language and perspective. By linking the region's past to broader historical narratives, the project contributes to the preservation and reinterpretation of Thrace's heritage. Integrating research, education, and collaboration, BRIA proposes a replicable model of collective scholarship that redefines the study of Byzantine heritage in politically and culturally entangled regions.

1.21 TS – Within and Beyond: The Islands of Byzantium (4/4)

“Islands in the Stream”: Re-Assessing the Byzantine Insular Economy between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (ca. 550-c. 900)

Luca **Zavagno**

Bilkent University

This contribution focuses on the economic implications of numismatic evidence from some of the most important islands of the Byzantine eastern (Crete and Cyprus) and western (Sardinia, Sicily and partially the Balearics) Mediterranean from early seventh to early ninth century. Historians have used the evidence of coinage to create false perspectives of how Byzantine insular economy changed, being mainly interested in how large the supposedly rarefied currency circulating on these islands was as a measure of their declining wealth from the second half of the seventh century on. In this paper I will argue that the monetary indicator gives us enough evidence pointing to a certain degree of economic prosperity on the abovementioned islands during the period under scrutiny, as even the more distant ones (like Sardinia and the Balearics) continued to play an important role in the political, fiscal, administrative and religious structures of the Byzantine Empire. For instance, and as it has been recently shown for the Sicilian monetary circulation from the late seventh century onwards, the rarefaction of bronze emissions vis-à-vis metrological and ponderal adjustments could owe less to an economic maelstrom brought about by the Arab raids than to the revised fiscal needs of the state. A similar trend can be sketched for Cyprus, Crete, Sardinia (where the African mint was relocated after the fall of Carthage to the Arabs in 698) and the Balearics (where an exceptional continuity of late seventh to early ninth century Byzantine bronze currency has recently been documented); indeed, for the abovementioned islands, we can conclude that a less-monetized economy did not imply a point-blank collapse of the economic life or their role as a simple military and administrative bulwark at the frontier of the empire. With this in mind, this paper will also try to show how the analysis of coinage and monetary circulation chimes with other types of material evidence allowing us to point to a relatively higher welfare of the Byzantine insular world compared to the Anatolian plateau, the Aegean region and the Balkans.

2.34 TS – Between Field Research and Digital Terrain Models: New Results on the Historical Geography of the Late Antique and Medieval Eastern Mediterranean (6/7)

The Byzantine Insular-Coastal Koine in the Early Middle Ages

Luca Zavagno

Bilkent University

When conceptualizing the role of Byzantium in the passage from a unified “Roman” Mediterranean to a fragmented Great Sea, Byzantine historiography has often conjured up a gravitational pole that left other regions (and, in particular, the coastal and insular spaces in the central and western Mediterranean) out in the cold, with the only partial exception being Sicily. Indeed, this approach has clearly overlooked those areas of the empire located away from the so-called Byzantine heartland. In this paper, I will try instead to address the problem of the supposed economic, cultural, and socio-political peripherality of those imperial territories simply regarded as marginal (due to their geographical distance from the Queen of cities) or expendable military strongholds along a supposedly static maritime or terrestrial frontier with the Caliphate or the Frankish. My attention will focus on a wider Byzantine koine that encompassed liminal coastal spaces as well as insular communities, and particularly those regions which lay beyond the Aegean heartland of the empire like the Byzantine Tyrrhenian, the Adriatic as well as the archipelago of the Balearics at westernmost “extremes” of the Byzantine Mediterranean. As commanding the sea and controlling the complex networks of routes remained at the heart of the military, political, and economic interests of the empire, this paper will explore the resilient trajectories of the regions of the Byzantine Mediterranean insular-coastal koine as they responded to variations in the political, military, and economic configuration of the Great Sea as well as the environmental and climatic changes in the passage from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages.

2.34 TS – Between Field Research and Digital Terrain Models: New Results on the Historical Geography of the Late Antique and Medieval Eastern Mediterranean (7/7)

New Observations and Assessments on the Historical Geography of Isauria

Mustafa H. **Sayar**
Istanbul University

This paper will present assessments based on observations made in recent years on the settlement geography of Germanikopolis and its surroundings, located between Lykaonia and Rough Cilicia in Isauria, one of the highest regions of the Taurus Mountains. The socio-cultural structure of the people living in the settlements located in the Isauria region during the Late Antique period and early Byzantine era shows that a more widespread settlement network emerged between the Central Anatolian plateau and the Mediterranean coast, starting from the Late Antique period and continuing into later periods. This paper will investigate which of these cities played a central role in commercial activities and the transport network in the region during the Late Antique period and the role they played in trade between the Mediterranean coast and Central Anatolia through their road connections.

2.48 TS – Byzantium and Rome (4th–7th c.): Places and Men, Rite and Art (2/4)

Some New Archaeological Evidence in Light of the Written Sources of Constantinople and Its Hinterland: The Case of Khalkedon

Asnu Bilban **Yalçın**
Istanbul University

While occasional research in the historic city of Constantinople/Istanbul continues to yield information that can help reconstruct the topographical puzzle of the ancient city Byzantium/Constantinople, its more immediate territory continues to yield new revelations that help reconstruct the history of the city and its wider region. The recent excavations at Yenikapı—being the Theodosian harbour area—have allowed us to locate the remains of a major Byzantine port structure in the city of Istanbul. Now the various excavations on the Asian shore—such as the area of the Asian railway station—have provided us with surprising data for the Roman and early Byzantine history of Constantinople and its surroundings. The area shows a series of complex structures, among which it is potentially possible to identify a silo, an apsidal structure as well as a hexagonal structure, and in addition one pillared building that was used as a workshop. These buildings were located in the port area of Khalkedon, which served as a sorting port for goods to and from western Asia Minor. Not too distant is another complex of structures, which due to their architectural features and location, are to be identified as a residence dating from the early Byzantine period. The paper will explain the newly revealed structures in light of the Roman and Byzantine historical topography of Khalkedon and its immediate vicinity, as well as of the written sources.

3.06 TS – Re-Imagining Byzantium in Late Ottoman and Modern Istanbul: Impact on Byzantine Studies (1/4)

Imagination and Knowledge: Dynamics of Displaying Byzantium in Istanbul

Brigitte **Pitarakis**

UMR 8167 Orient & Méditerranée

That imagination plays an indispensable role in the growth of knowledge is a widely accepted observation. This paper contextualizes this dynamic with regard to representing Byzantium through displays from the nineteenth century to the 1930s and from the 1990s to the present. The approach adopts the concept of display as arrangements or staging leading to multisensory experiences that boost engagement with a subject. Illustrated books and the passion they engendered in nineteenth-century Constantinople are the starting points for representing Byzantium. High-quality materials, attractive covers, and elegant or sometimes lavish interior ornament and design—and the possible inclusion of the printing house imprint or a bookplate as statements of ownership of production and prideful acquisition—drove this phenomenon, transforming such books from sources of information into objects as well. In parallel to combing through books with reconstructions of lost monuments, connoisseurs and intellectuals who frequented museums or private salons also exhibited a taste for plaster casts alongside original artifacts as aids to further their knowledge. Photography brought further expansion to the technologies of display. A new interest in displaying Byzantine material culture and history emerged in Istanbul in the 1990s and continues to evolve to this day. Renewed international, scholarly interest in the Byzantine era sparked this trend, which also benefited from a confluence of strong local incentives, including the growth of private initiatives and foundations along with collaborations involving public museums and other cultural institutions. This occurred at a time of emerging developments in urbanism and transportation that changed landscapes and, in the process, led to unprecedented archaeological discoveries. Museological and economic circumstances favored the organization of temporary exhibitions of thematic character, leading to collaborations by curators, scholars, architects, and scenographers to construct narratives in which imaginative conceptualizations augmented reality, and the two approaches mutually nourished one another.

3.06 TS – Re-Imagining Byzantium in Late Ottoman and Modern Istanbul: Impact on Byzantine Studies (2/4)

Curating Byzantinists other than Byzantines: Is There A Need For Exhibiting The Story of Byzantine Studies?

Koray Durak

Boğaziçi University

Few exhibitions worldwide have explored the history of Byzantine studies itself. Occasionally, small displays have accompanied the International Congresses of Byzantine Studies, such as *Byzance retrouvée. Érudits et voyageurs français (XVIIe XVIIIe siècles)*, which highlighted French interest in Byzantium during the 2001 Paris congress. Outside the ICBS, some institutions have integrated sections on the evolution of Byzantine studies and heritage preservation into exhibitions on Byzantine art, such as the State Hermitage Museum's Byzantium Through the Ages (2017), which also reflected on the museum's own role in safeguarding Byzantine artefacts. Exhibitions devoted to individual Byzantinists, like Thomas Whittemore, or to monuments such as the Chora Church in Istanbul may likewise be noted. This scarcity of exhibitions contrasts sharply with the numerous academic gatherings and publications on the evolution of Byzantine Studies. My aim is to explore the aesthetic, technical, and ideological reasons behind this gap. Archival materials and scholars' notes lack the visual appeal of dazzling Byzantine jewelry, while the potential audience remains limited largely to Byzantinists. The history of Byzantine Studies is often subsumed under broader medieval themes, particularly in the exhibitions presenting the national narratives of the Balkan states. "From Istanbul to Byzantium: Paths to Rediscovery, 1800–1955" curated by Brigitte Pitarakis and "The Odyssey of Byzantine Studies in Turkey" curated by Koray Durak, both in Istanbul in the early 2020s, are rare examples tracing the evolution of Byzantine studies within a national context. A related show, "What Byzantinism is This in Istanbul! Byzantium in Popular Culture", curated by Emir Alışık in 2022–2023, explored Byzantium's modern cultural afterlife, a theme seldom addressed in the world of exhibitions. This paper examines the cultural and ideological factors enabling such exhibitions in Turkey as well as the challenges of presenting scholarly archives and contextualizing the field within broader social and political frameworks.

3.06 TS – Re-Imagining Byzantium in Late Ottoman and Modern Istanbul: Impact on Byzantine Studies (3/4)

Encounters in Absence: Curating Byzantium Beyond the Dazzling Authentic

Emir **Alışık**
Koç University

Gülru **Tanman**
Istanbul Research Institute

Compared to the 1990s, the last twenty-five years have seen a significant transformation in the public display of Byzantium in Istanbul, which is visible across new excavation sites, monuments, and exhibitions. This transformation appears to have a number of parameters, and its central axis is the public reception. The emergence of Istanbul as a “spectacle” in the early 2000s driven by political aspirations regarding the European Union and UNESCO, might have played a role in the merging of culture and tourism under a single ministry in 2003, leading to the former becoming increasingly dependent on the latter. Increased international interest in Istanbul also created a niche interest in Byzantium, albeit one focused almost exclusively on its Constantinopolitan past. This surge in interest and funding was epitomized in 2010, when Istanbul became European Capital of Culture. Concurrently, the non-state actors—particularly private museums, research centres, and private universities—rushed into Istanbul’s culture scene. At the same time, public engagement with Byzantium in Istanbul has experienced what we call a “Material Turn”, and a “Historiographical Turn”. The Material Turn involves displaying Byzantium without defecting to material lavishness of the Byzantine elite or collections holding significant pieces. This entailed placing high value on digital and mechanical reproductions as exhibits. This phenomenon occasionally even approaches what Roland Betancourt formulated as Neon Byzantium: A Byzantine aesthetic that lacks direct reference to the source material. This Material Turn, combined with the diversification of topics within Byzantine studies, which is caused by the flourishing of graduate programs in Byzantine studies in Turkey, brought about the Historiographical Turn. In the absence of sui generis value of the authentic exhibit item, the focus shifts towards the exhibition narrative itself, the writing of history, which gains greater prominence, paving the way for more varied storytelling approaches. This is observable particularly in the contemporary art exhibitions with connections to Byzantium, and in the rising interest in its reception in popular culture. In this talk, we argue that the way Byzantium is encountered in Istanbul today has changed and now defined by multiple dichotomies regarding the access to source/authentic material, the inclusivity of themes, and the sustainability of cultural production.

3.06 TS – Re-Imagining Byzantium in Late Ottoman and Modern Istanbul: Impact on Byzantine Studies (4/4)

Everyone Loves Vikings: Four Years with Nordic Tales, Byzantine Paths

Olof Heilo

Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul

What was originally conceived as a physical exhibition for the 2021 Byzantine congress in Istanbul, “The Nordic Tale of Byzantine Coins,” became a digital exhibition and online learning resource in collaboration between Koç University and the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul: “Nordic Tales, Byzantine Paths,” financially supported by the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, Yapi Kredi Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık and the Retracing Connections project. First launched and presented in Venice in 2022, the site has kept growing, attracting new partners and target groups, and generated a number of spin-offs, including two conferences and a PhD course which ran simultaneously in three different countries (Turkey, Greece, and Sweden). A collaboration with the ongoing project “A Viking in the Sun” at Edinburgh University and Snorrastofa, Iceland, has put particular focus on the Norwegian king Harald Hardrada in history and legend, whereas the website’s social media presence on Instagram has closely followed the Swedish comic artist Per Demervall as his and Patric Nyström’s “Adventures of Siri” have been further developed and translated in a number of other languages. This presentation will discuss the slow emergence of a virtual “Nordic-Byzantine Empire”, underlined by the same question: why does everyone seem to love the Vikings so much?

3.21 TS – Byzantine Coin Finds Database, A Powerful Research Tool? (5/6) Database of Byzantine Coins in Turkish Museums

Zeliha **Demirel Gökalp**

Anadolu University

This paper presents a national project entitled “Digital Numismatic Museum: A Scientific Database and Virtual Exhibition Platform for Byzantine Coin Collections.” The project aims to establish an accessible Digital Numismatic Museum by digitizing Byzantine-period coin collections for the purposes of scholarly research and the preservation of cultural heritage. Within the scope of the project, the relevant collections will be transferred into a digital environment using a standardised scientific database format and will be supported by high-resolution images, typological and iconographic classifications, qualitative data (including metallurgical analysis, iconographic interpretation, and mint distribution), as well as geographical data through GIS integration. In the long term, the project seeks to enhance the visibility of Turkey’s Byzantine numismatic heritage, strengthen data sharing among researchers, and ensure the digital documentation of museum collections in accordance with international academic standards. The project envisages, for the first time in Turkey, a comprehensive digital numismatic platform that brings together regional museum collections within a bilingual (Turkish–English) digital museum portal. The museums planned to be included are those located in Eskişehir, Kütahya, Malatya, Bilecik, Bolu, Sakarya, Yalvaç, Isparta, and İzmir. The decision to focus initially on nine museums is based on the fact that the author has previously conducted authorised research in these institutions. Studies on the Eskişehir and Sakarya museum collections have been completed and are currently in the publication stage. The Byzantine coin collection of the Isparta Museum constituted the subject of the author’s doctoral dissertation completed in 2007 and has not yet been published. In the case of the Bolu Museum, only the gold and bronze anonymous Byzantine coins have been published to date. Furthermore, catalogues of Byzantine coins from the Kütahya, Malatya, Bilecik, and Yalvaç museums have already been published. Scholarly research on the Byzantine coin collection of the İzmir Museum, however, is scheduled to commence in 2026.

5.28 TS – A Cultural Heritage Beyond the Capital: The Archaeological Context of the Başpınar Religious Buildings on Byzantine Nymphaion (Mount Nif) (1/6)

Başpınar Religious Buildings: Research History and General Overview

Müjde **Peker**

Istanbul University

The Mount Nif (Olympus) is located to the east of the Gulf of Izmir (Smyrna), around the borders of the modern districts of Kemalpaşa, Torbalı, Buca and Bornova. Following the first archaeological excursions by Istanbul University between 1999–2001 in the region, the archaeological surveys continued between 2004–2005 with excavations continuing since 2006 with the permission of the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums of the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The first excursions, archaeological surveys and excavations started under the direction of Prof. Dr. Elif Tül Tulunay from Istanbul University and continued under the directorate of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Müjde Peker since 2020. Between the Kemalpaşa and Torbalı district, at a site called Başpınar in Dağkızılca village, near the Byzantine Nymphaion, a group of Byzantine structures were uncovered under the Mount Nif (Olympus) Research and Excavation Project. There is no evidence about these buildings (or their predecessors) mentioned by ancient sources, travelers or modern researchers. Through the excavations, three structures (A, B, and C), dating between the 10th and 13th centuries AD, have been unearthed in Başpınar. The building group, consisting of a large single-apse church (A), angular on the outside and round on the inside, a three-apse church with an opus sectile floor (B), and a small chapel in the south (C), was built adjacent to one another. The use of spolia identified in these structures provides insights into the chronology and multi-layered use of the area before the Byzantine religious buildings. In addition, 43 cist graves, most of which were covered with tiles, were unearthed in and around the structures. The data we have obtained from the research and excavations we have conducted have shown that the Başpınar Religious Buildings, located on a mountain slope in a fertile countryside close to water resources, may be associated with a monastery.

5.28 TS – A Cultural Heritage Beyond the Capital: The Archaeological Context of the Başpınar Religious Buildings on Byzantine Nymphaion (Mount Nif) (2/6)

Les phases des structures religieuses de Başpınar à la lumière des recherches archéologiques

Daniş **Baykan**
Trakya University

Les fouilles archéologiques du groupe de structures de Başpınar ont débuté en 2007 et ont continué sans interruption jusqu'à la saison de fouilles de 2013. Entre 2014 et 2025, aucune recherche à plein temps n'a été menée, à l'exception des travaux de protection et des fouilles limitées, jusqu'à ce que des projets de conservation permanents soient réalisés. Après sept saisons de fouilles menées à Başpınar, une tentative a été faite pour établir la chronologie de Başpınar et de ses environs, et une proposition de phases chronologiques a été formulée à partir des résultats des fouilles. La proposition des phases chronologiques repose sur les données issues des fouilles archéologiques, les dates des objets trouvés, les contextes, ainsi que sur des analogies pour ceux qui ne peuvent pas être datés. Lors de l'élaboration de la proposition des phases, non seulement les éléments architecturaux ont été pris en compte, mais en réalité, ce sont davantage les petits objets trouvés dans les contextes qui ont été utilisés. L'utilisation intense des structures religieuses à Başpınar remonte à la période des Lascaris du XIII^e siècle. Bien que des fouilles illégales et des destructions aient eu lieu avant le début des recherches scientifiques à Başpınar, des données obtenues à partir des fouilles des fondations des structures ont permis de déterminer que les bâtiments A et B ont brûlé et se sont partiellement effondrés. Les stratifications et contextes identifiables, les données architecturales, les petits objets et les données historiques régionales seront réévalués spécifiquement pour Başpınar. L'objectif de cette réévaluation est de proposer une chronologie qui couvrira également les périodes antérieures et postérieures à ce groupe de structures jusqu'à l'époque contemporaine.

5.28 TS – A Cultural Heritage Beyond the Capital: The Archaeological Context of the Başpınar Religious Buildings on Byzantine Nymphaion (Mount Nif) (3/6)

Functional, Technical and Aesthetic Evaluation of Başpınar Ceramics Based on Production and Consumption Areas

Lale **Doğ**er

Ege University

E. Merve **Kunt**

Ege University

The ceramic finds in this paper were found in the remains of two churches with at least two phases, called Başpınar A and B structures, on the southern slopes of Mount Nif (Olympos), and from the remains of Structure C, which is earlier than the other churches located to the south of Structure B. A limited number of significant ceramic fragments found on the surface was also included in the study. Finds of the campaigns conducted between 2008–2021 have been physically damaged and stratigraphically disturbed due to illicit digs. It has been observed that Byzantine Period, Transitional Period, and Late Ottoman Period ceramics are densely intermingled. In the study of Byzantine period ceramics, the main classification was made into two groups based on fabric colour: white and red. Artifacts of various functions—such as everyday tableware, religious objects, storage and transport vessels, and architectural elements—were subjected to chronological, typological, technical, and aesthetic analysis. The existing finds do not indicate local glazed ceramic production for now. However, the diversity of ceramics shows that they were supplied from near and far production centers. This paper aims to conduct a comparative study with ceramic finds from other Byzantine settlements in Western Anatolia, seeking to provide, albeit limited, data on questions such as potential production sites, trade routes, and interactions in form and typological repertoire. The archaeometric results of selected finds have also been incorporated into the study.

5.28 TS – A Cultural Heritage Beyond the Capital: The Archaeological Context of the Başıpınar Religious Buildings on Byzantine Nymphaion (Mount Nif) (4/6)

Der Einsatz von Spolien im Başıpınar-Kirchenkomplex

Selma Gün

Nif Excavation

In und um den Başıpınar-Kirchenkomplex kamen eine Vielzahl von Spolien zu Tage. Leider befinden sich die wenigsten in ihrem sekundären Einsatzort in situ. Vor allem die Marmorteile wurden aus ihrem Verband herausgerissen, um vor Ort zum Kalk verarbeitet zu werden. Für weitere Zerstörung sorgte der Bau eines kleinen Wohnhauses auf den Ruinen im 20. Jahrhundert. Die noch teilweise stehenden Mauern des Kirchenkomplexes weisen viele sekundär eingesetzte Blöcke unterschiedlicher Steinsorten und Größen auf. Die Blöcke in den Mauern des Baus A sind größer als jene des Baus B, wobei sich das Mauerwerk der beiden Kirchen auch unterscheidet. Bei den Bausteinen handelt es sich überwiegend um unterschiedliche Kalksteinsorten; Marmor ist dabei eine große Ausnahme. Eine große Gruppe bilden die im architektonischen Kontext eingesetzten Spolien aus Marmor, vor allem weißer Marmor, z. B. wie Türschweller, -rahmen, Leisten, Boden- oder Wandplatten, aber auch Grabplatten, die wahrscheinlich in den Boden eingelassen waren. Leider sind nur sehr wenige Beispiele in ihrem ursprünglichen Zweitverwendungsort zu Tage gekommen. Die Seitenwände der Sarkophage wurden wegen ihrer Maße häufig zu Türschwellen oder Türrahmen umgearbeitet. Die verzierte Seite der Sarkophage war bei der Wiederverwendung nicht sichtbar; die Ansichtsseite des neuen Bauelements wurde hochpoliert. Die Bundmarmorplättchen des Opus sectile, deren Rückseiten nicht nur poliert, sondern auch profiliert sind, lassen vermuten, dass diese aus größeren Verkleidungsplatten herausmodelliert wurden. Unter den Marmorfunden befinden sich auch Fragmente von Stelen und Skulpturen, wie z. B. eine einfigurige, vermutlich frühhellenistische Stele, die in Kirche C als Nischenboden eingesetzt war, aber unter dem Putz verborgen blieb. Die Untersuchung der Spolien legt nahe, dass sie überwiegend aus einer Nekropole stammten. Es bleibt zu klären, ob es sich um eine nahegelegene unbekannte Nekropole handelt.

5.28 TS – A Cultural Heritage Beyond the Capital: The Archaeological Context of the Başpınar Religious Buildings on Byzantine Nymphaion (Mount Nif) (5/6)

Contexte des petits objets des édifices religieux de Başpınar et leur conservation

Ceren Baykan
Trakya University

Daniş Baykan
Trakya University

Les fouilles archéologiques des édifices religieux de Başpınar ont débuté en 2007 et ont été temporairement suspendues en 2013 en raison de la mise en œuvre de mesures de protection. Entre 2014 et 2025, le site a fait l'objet de travaux limités de nettoyage, de conservation, de documentation et d'aménagement paysager. Durant cette période, des mesures de conservation temporaires ont été appliquées, tandis que des projets de conservation à long terme étaient en préparation. Bien que certains projets soient toujours en cours d'évaluation et d'autorisation, d'autres seront mis en œuvre dès que les conditions appropriées seront réunies. Cette étude présente brièvement les petits artefacts découverts dans les structures religieuses de Başpınar, en précisant leur contexte et les méthodes de conservation appliquées. Les petits objets retrouvés lors des fouilles du Mont Nif à Başpınar peuvent être regroupés en cinq catégories : métal, verre, céramique, pierre et autres matériaux. L'analyse des artefacts métalliques de Başpınar inclut des pièces de monnaie ainsi que des objets en fer, bronze, plomb et argent, de même que des indices éventuels des procédés de production métallique. Les objets en verre et en céramique seront évalués en tant que récipients et éléments architecturaux. Les données concernant la pierre et les autres matériaux seront également abordées. En revanche, les céramiques glaçurées et les pierres réutilisées (remploi) ne seront pas traitées en détail dans cette étude, car elles feront l'objet d'une présentation séparée au cours de cette séance.

5.28 TS – A Cultural Heritage Beyond the Capital: The Archaeological Context of the Başpınar Religious Buildings on Byzantine Nymphaion (Mount Nif) (6/6)

Carrying Başpınar Religious Buildings to the Future: A Conservation Proposal for Preserving the Building Phases

Bengi İnək
KU Leuven

Excavations at the Byzantine Complex of Başpınar, on the southern slopes of Mount Nif, were suspended in 2013 due to unresolved conservation challenges. This paper explores in-situ conservation strategies aimed at mitigating deterioration risks in interrupted archaeological excavation sites. Based on literature review, field observations and context analysis, three alternative scenarios—selective reburial, inclusive protection, and on-site presentation—are evaluated in terms of feasibility, reversibility, and their contribution to heritage values. The study shows that isolated conservation actions remain insufficient unless integrated within a broader site management framework. The Başpınar case demonstrates how scenario-based approaches can bridge short-term protection and long-term sustainability goals for remote Byzantine heritage, thereby supporting future research and public access.

5.31 TS – Cultural Exchanges at the Time of the Palaiologoi: Beyond the Borders of Byzantium (5/5)

Converting the Sultan: The War between Late Byzantine Platonists and Aristotelians for the Soul of Mehmet II?

Scott **Kennedy**
Bilkent University

In 1465, the Byzantino-Renaissance Aristotelian George of Trebizond traveled to Constantinople to fulfill his ambition of converting Sultan Mehmet II (r. 1451–81) to Christianity. Though unsuccessful, he continued corresponding with the sultan from Rome and prepared to send him his *Comparison of Plato and Aristotle* (1457), which claimed that Aristotle's philosophy culminated in Christianity while Plato's led to debauchery and paganism. Before he could do so, however, his Platonist rival, Cardinal Bessarion, had him arrested in 1466—a move that nearly cost him his life. This paper draws on new material to argue that George's effort to convert the sultan through Aristotle formed part of a broader debate over reconciling Platonism, Aristotelianism, and Christianity—one extending beyond the Latin West to the Ottoman court. An overlooked anti-Platonic Latin treatise of 1467 reports that a Jewish adviser told Mehmet II he could rule the world by following Plato where he agreed with Christ. Identifying this figure with Mehmet's Italian Jewish physician Yakub Pasha, I interpret George's plan to send the *Comparison* as an Aristotelian counter-campaign against Platonist followers of Bessarion's teacher, George Gemistos Plethon. Bessarion's arrest of George thus aimed to curb his interference in eastern Platonism. This episode, which ultimately made Bessarion complete his *In Calumniatorem Platonis* (1469), crucially reveals not only how post-Byzantine thinkers weaponized Plato and Aristotle as instruments of diplomacy and conversion in defining Christianity's future after 1453, but also how the later Byzantine debate over Plato had become a Mediterranean phenomenon debated by Italians, Byzantines, Jews, and Turks.

5.44 TS – Afterlives of Material Culture of Byzantium and Beyond: Perspectives on Preservation, Representation, and Appropriation (1/5)

“Post-Byzantine” before 1453? Renovations of Byzantine churches in Nemanjić Serbia (ca. 1166-1371)

Ivana Jevtić
Koç University

The concept of afterlives of Byzantine built and material culture generally refers to its reception in communities that came under Ottoman rule following the fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453, during a period commonly known as “post-Byzantine,” up to today. This paper takes a different approach. The Serbian medieval state under the Nemanjić dynasty (ca. 1166–1371) expanded south by conquering and acquiring territories from the Byzantine Empire. I explore how Serbian rulers treated pre-existing Byzantine churches in lands and towns they took over and now governed. This question is rarely addressed because, with Serbian adherence to Orthodox Christianity and its belonging to the “Byzantine commonwealth,” the two polities were not seen as religiously different. Historiography tended to relativize their political conflicts and project an idea of inter-neighboring cultural exchange that benefited and elevated the Nemanjić state. Archaeological, architectural, and visual evidence points to a more interesting and multifaceted picture of how Byzantine-built heritage was received and appropriated in the Serbian realm. My focus is on comparing the renovation strategies applied to churches in ruin or disrepair by two Serbian rulers in different historical contexts—the Grand Župan Stefan Nemanja (r. 1166–1196) and King Milutin (r. 1282–1321). By looking at how their interventions reused earlier sites, materials (*spolia*), and incorporated older structures into renovated monuments, I contextualize the Serbian response to the Byzantine past of the buildings against the backdrop of Serbo-Byzantine cultural interactions, reflecting each ruler’s understanding of ideology and Serbia’s political position. This approach broadens our understanding of the afterlives of Byzantine material culture and invites reconsideration of what “post-Byzantine” might mean—chronologically and conceptually.

5.44 TS – Afterlives of Material Culture of Byzantium and Beyond: Perspectives on Preservation, Representation, and Appropriation (2/5)

A Byzantine Ruin between State and non-State Practices of Heritage Preservation as a Popular Symbol of Istanbul’s Urban Stratification

Pınar Aykaç

Middle East Technical University

Historic cities are products of continuous inhabitation, where physical remains of successive periods are inscribed into the urban fabric. This process of urban stratification, marked by selective appropriation or rejection of earlier layers, has often been interrupted by modern heritage preservation, which initially privileged peeling away later additions to expose earlier layers but now recognises multi-layeredness as a value showing historical continuity. In the city of Istanbul, Byzantine heritage has long been embedded in the city’s urban form through Ottoman and Republican interventions, ranging from foundations for new constructions, reintegrated into later layers, to being presented as archaeological sites. Recently, an unidentified Byzantine ruin near Şengül Bath and Hacı Beşir Ağa Complex on Alay Köşkü Street was brought to public attention via social media as one of the important representatives of Istanbul’s multi-layered character. Constructed probably in the Late Antiquity or early Byzantine period, the structure was later transformed into a cistern in the Middle Byzantine period, integrated into a commercial building in the Ottoman era, and later redeveloped as an apartment building in the Republican period. By examining the modern history of this Byzantine structure, this presentation reveals how contested state and non-state practices of heritage preservation shaped the structure’s evolution and reframed it as a symbol of Istanbul’s urban stratification in the popular imagination.

5.44 TS – Afterlives of Material Culture of Byzantium and Beyond: Perspectives on Preservation, Representation, and Appropriation (3/5)

Containing the Contested: Museumification of Byzantium in the Ottoman Empire and Early Republican Turkey

Ayşe **Ercan Kydonakis**

Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU)

Museums have long been intertwined with politics, particularly in the nineteenth century amid the emergence of nation states and the dissolution of empires. As conceptually constructed institutions, they became instruments of propaganda, materializing the narratives of political regimes through selective practices of collecting, classification and display. Museums therefore emerged as emblematic loci that showcased imperial grandeur or national identity, legitimizing political authority and redefining the cultural legacies of earlier civilizations within territories defined as the nation's own. This paper examines the history of Byzantine collections in museum contexts in the Ottoman Empire within this theoretical framework. By analyzing actors in museology, shifting museological paradigms and official policies (accompanying discourses of continuity, rupture, neglect or manipulation that characterized these collections), the paper situates the legacy of Byzantium and recontextualizes the museumification of Byzantium's material heritage in the late Ottoman Empire and its afterlife in the early Turkish Republic. As one of the two principal inheritors of the Byzantine legacy, modern Greece's engagement with this contested medieval past is also considered, offering a comparative lens on the cultural politics of heritage in the post-Ottoman world. Ultimately, the paper demonstrates how the medieval material heritage of Byzantium has been continuously reframed, restructured and reconceptualized within modern political contexts, revealing broader dynamics in the negotiation of empire, nationhood, and cultural memory.

5.44 TS – Afterlives of Material Culture of Byzantium and Beyond: Perspectives on Preservation, Representation, and Appropriation (4/5)

The Management of Byzantine Churches in Ottoman Kostantiniyye: Historical Realities and Contemporary Representations of Mehmed II's Foundation (*Vakf*)

Ali Daniş **Neyzi**

University of California, Davis

This paper offers a close analysis of the contrasts between historical realities and contemporary representations of Mehmed II's foundation (*vakf*) in Istanbul. This *vakf* managed the buildings of Byzantine churches that remained operational after the city's conquest by the Ottomans in 1453 CE. I begin by introducing the multiple copies and reproductions of Mehmed II's foundation deeds conducted from its establishment in 877 H/1472 CE until 901 H/1496 CE. The earliest copy, a heavy scroll manuscript that is almost 36 meters in length and 0.28 meters in width, was found in the sarcophagus of Mehmed II's tomb. Based on in-depth analyses of Mehmed II's foundation deeds, Ottoman revenue registers of Istanbul from 1455 CE until 1546 CE, and references to Byzantine management of Constantinople in the Palaiologan period, I argue that Mehmed II's foundation presents a great deal of continuity with Byzantine practices. I then overview contemporary representations of Mehmed II's foundation in Istanbul and argue that a disruption between Byzantine and Ottoman practices is emphasized in direct contrast to historical realities, resulting in the erasure of Byzantine afterlives. I contend that Mehmed II's foundation is poorly understood due to the difficult challenge that its critical contemporary political, cultural and religious significance presents for historians to represent a nuanced interpretation of the primary documents.

6.20 TS – The Real and Imagined Landscapes of Ṭūr ʿAbdīn During the Late Antique and Islamic Periods (1/4)

Roman Soldier, Syriac Saint, and Memories of Rome in the Medieval Hagiography of Ṭūr ʿAbdīn

Reyhan **Durmaz**

University of Pennsylvania

This paper examines an underexplored character in Syriac hagiography, namely, the Roman soldier, with an eye to complicating our understanding of Syriac memories of Byzantium. In Late Antique Syriac hagiography, Roman soldiers appear mostly in two forms: as agents of the empire persecuting believers (like the soldiers oppressing the anti-Chalcedonian monks in the narratives of John of Ephesus) or as soldier saints and martyrs (such as St. Sergius). Beyond these two major tropes, soldiers appear in hagiographical narratives as vague side characters. In this paper, I will show that another trope related to Roman soldiers gradually became prominent in Syriac hagiography after the eighth century. Several saints' lives, authored in the Ṭur Abdin and neighboring regions, display the "believing Roman soldier" as a patron, helper, and disciple of Syriac holy men and women. I will contextualize this literary phenomenon within broader literary and cultural landscapes.

Bölüm VII: Düzenleyiciler (Grup, Yuvarlak Masa, Tematik Oturum)

3.36 FC – Free Communications (Group)

Anaia Reframed: Peeling Back the Layers of Religious, Commercial and Urban Narratives on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Excavations

Conveners:

Suna Çağaptay

Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University

The site of Anaia (Tr. Kadıkalesi, in Kuşadası, Aydın) has a deep stratigraphic record showing occupations and disruptions from the Bronze Age to modern times. T. Wiegand and H. Schrader studied it in 1903, and later W. Müller-Wiener in 1961. Z. Mercangöz led the first round of excavations from 2001 to 2021 which revealed a fascinating range of architectural evidence, represented by a multi-period basilica rising above a hagiasma, with a baptistery, a smaller church and a parekklesion surrounded by workshop and residential areas and associated small finds speaking for a continuity from the late Antique period to the fourteenth century, extending well into the beylik period. However, given Mercangöz's research interests in the Laskarid period, the privileged focus was on the thirteenth century. The publications primarily focus on Anaia's late Byzantine ceramic and glass production, avoiding broader discussions on the character and context of the Byzantine settlement. In this panel, we would like to focus on the new round of excavations resumed by Suna Çağaptay and her team since 2022 and use the 25th anniversary of the excavations as a moment for reflection. Accordingly, we aim to dig deeper and examine what happened at Anaia before and after the thirteenth century, focusing primarily on evidence from the newly excavated areas, namely the hagiasma, baptistery, B40 and the Area R. With papers discussing architecture, ceramics, coins, primary sources and cartographic evidence, we would like to offer a nuanced examination of the archaeological evidence at the site to explore how commerce, religion, and artistic production, impacted the built environment at Anaia. We believe that the 25th Byzantine Congress is the ideal venue to revisit Anaia's Byzantine archaeology and its deep stratigraphy within and beyond Byzantium.

Speakers & Titles

Suna Çağaptay

Filiz İnanan

Pagona Papadopoulou

Hasan Sercan Sağlam

Siren Çelik

“Crime and Punishment” at Anaia: The Codex Theod. 2.8.18 Inscription Revisited

The Chronology of the Byzantine Pottery of Anaia: Production, Circulation and Consumption

The Numismatic Evidence from Anaia in Context

Anaia's Harbor and Shipyard: A Model of Continuity from Byzantine into Aydinid Period

Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259–1282) and Anaia/Kadıkalesi

2.04 RT – Round Table

Late Medieval Practices of Ownership in Byzantium and Beyond: Byzantine, Armenian, Serbian, and Ottoman Contexts

Conveners:

Nevra **Necipoğlu**

Boğaziçi University

Land and property ownership is pivotal in discussions on social hierarchies, economic structures, and the role of the state in the economy of medieval societies. Amidst the constantly shifting political territories across the Caucasus, Asia Minor, and the Balkans from the 13th to the 15th century, this Round Table delves into the composition and legal nature of wealth and (re-)distribution of properties in Byzantine, Serbian, Armenian, and Ottoman contexts. Five early-career scholars revisit the topic through a combination of legal sources, charters, foundation documents, and historiography, in Armenian, Arabic, Greek, Old Church Slavonic, Ottoman, and Syriac. The overarching theme focuses on the relationship between private property ownership and religious and state structures. Key discussion points include the composition and legal nature of Byzantine aristocratic landholding; the extent of the Byzantine emperors' claims of ownership; the discrepancies between the legal terminologies surrounding the ktetorship of religious institutions vis-à-vis the actual practices of the ordinary people; the intricate processes of collective micro-endowments in the transformation of property into social capital that allowed non-elites to exercise limited agency within the aristocratic and ecclesiastical property systems; the transformation of Greater Armenia from a land-based aristocratic to a commerce- and land-based aristocratic society marked by increased urbanism; and the emergence of Ottoman absolutist claims over medieval legal conventions of ownership in the course of state-building and centralization. Recognizing the potential of interregional studies of the economic histories of medieval and early modern societies across medieval Eurasia, this round table also inquires whether certain late medieval modes of ownership were transferred, borrowed, or adopted interculturally.

Speakers & Titles

Thanasis Sotiriou	Ownership or Granted Possession? Rethinking Aristocratic Landholding and Imperial Authority in Late Byzantium (13th–14th c.)
Elif Neyzi	Ownership of Foundations or Founders' Rights? Ktetorika Dikaia in Late Byzantium
Anna Adashinskaya	Collective Monastic Donations: A Way to Salvation for the Late Medieval Balkan Commoners
Alasdair Grant	Landholding in the Medieval Armenian Church
Ali Daniş Neyzi	‘The Property is Mine’: Re-considering Mehmed II’s Absolutism as a Disruption of Medieval Legal Conventions on Ownership

5.03 RT – Round Table

Dreams of Tsargrad: Constantinople in Russian Imperial Imagination

Conveners:

Olof Heilo

Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul

With the conquest of Crimea in 1780, Russia replaced the Ottoman Empire as the main imperial power in the Black Sea. For almost a century and a half, the tsars would put a tremendous energy into extending their presence and asserting their dominance all around the Pontus. From the very onset, however, the symbolic prize and strategic goal of this expansion was Constantinople, the former Byzantine capital that controlled the straits to the Mediterranean, and which the tsars considered it their historical fate to rule as champions of Orthodox Christianity. The dream of “Tsargrad,” as the city was popularly known in many Slavic languages, went a long way back, and the road there had many paths. This roundtable will explore its various manifestations in Russian political, cultural and ideological imagination, and its culmination in the First World War and the revolutionary aftermath, when hundreds of thousands of imperial Russians – ironically – ended up as refugees in a city they had for so long dreamt of conquering.

Speakers & Titles

Monica White	Sailing, Walking and Riding to Byzantium: Journeys from Eastern Europe
Mogens Pelt	A Byzantine Republic Rather Than Tsargrad
Fani Gargova	De-Ottomanizing Sofia: Russian Byzantinism and the Construction of a New Capital City in the Balkans
Igor Torbakov	Tsargrad into Leningrad: Constantinople in the Early Bolshevik Imagination, 1917–1922
Julie Hansen	‘Dreams of Constantinople in the Work of Ilia Zdanevich (Iliazd)

6.05 RT – Round Table

The Economy of Crete and Its Commerce with the Mediterranean World (7th–11th Centuries)

Conveners:

Koray **Durak**

Boğaziçi University

Recent advances in the study of material culture, together with more nuanced readings of the written sources on Crete, make a round-table discussion of the island's history in the early Middle Ages both timely and necessary. The main objective of this roundtable discussion is to bring historical texts (evidence from Byzantine and Arabic sources, as well as Genizah documents) and archaeological evidence into dialogue in order to investigate the patterns of rural production and settlement, alongside Crete's commercial exchanges with the outside world. Chronologically, the discussion spans from the 7th to the 11th centuries, encompassing three major phases: the early Middle Ages under Byzantine rule, the period of Islamic control during the Cretan Emirate, and the renewed Byzantine dominion following Emperor Nikephoros Phokas' conquest of the island. The first part of the discussion focuses on the production, storage and consumption of cereals as well as on rural settlement patterns and agroecosystems, aiming to trace the transition from Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages in Crete's socio-economic structures. The second part turns to the island's urban economy and exchange. Presentations that engage with archaeological evidence, particularly ceramic evidence, shed light not only on Crete's urban development but also on its commercial links with the neighboring Aegean, regions further north, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Central Mediterranean. Key questions include the extent of regional self-sufficiency and the impact of political and economic changes in the broader Mediterranean world on the reorganization of rural production, settlement patterns and the nature of trade networks in Crete.

Speakers & Titles

Koray Durak	The Text Meeting the Material
Salvatore Cosentino	Production and Storage of Cereals in Early Byzantine Messara, Crete
Luca Zavagno	The Transformation of the Cretan Rural Settlement Pattern (and Agroecosystems) in the Early Middle Ages (ca. 550–ca.900): A Comparative Study
Giulia Marsili	Gortyn at the Eve of the Arab Conquest: Exchange Networks and Urban Economy (7th–9th c. CE)
Joanita Vroom	Exploring the Journey of Ceramics: The Intersection of Byzantine and Islamic Cultures on Crete (ca. 7th to 12th c.)
Natalia Poulou	Maritime Networks and Archaeological Evidence: Trade and Interaction between Crete and the Eastern Mediterranean, 7th–11th Century

1.05 TS – Thematic Session

Unifying Byzantine Thrace: The BRIA project

Conveners:

Ivana Jevtić
Koç University

Nikos Kontogiannis
Dumbarton Oaks

The twentieth-century wars between the Balkan powers forcefully divided the region of Thrace into frontier zones, dislocating communities, and aiming to produce ethnically and culturally ‘homogenous’ modern states (Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey). The traumatic experiences profoundly impacted later historiography and seriously affected cultural heritage. This session introduces a multidisciplinary, collaborative initiative—known as BRIA—with scholars and students originating from the three countries. The goal is to overcome borders and the resulting limitations that still shape Byzantine studies. In this Thematic Session, team members, building upon their experience of travelling across the three countries, will contextualize aspects of the Thracian territory, such as rupestrian sites, riverine and coastal landscapes, settlements, and communities (past and present). Through this panel, we wish to instigate discussion on several topics, such as a new holistic methodology for understanding the Byzantine environment and rock-cut architecture, and a research model applicable to other regions. We aspire to offer fresh perspectives on comprehending the Byzantine world and to chart a course toward a more collaborative, inclusive, and sustainable future for our field of study.

Speakers & Titles

Ivana Jevtić, Nikos Kontogiannis	Introduction to the BRIA Project
Albena Milanova,	Black Sea Coastal Thrace 4th to 15th c.: the Hinterland of the City and a
Rossina Kostova	Borderland of the Empire
Dimitra Sikalidou,	Cities, Fortresses, and Monasteries in Thrace and Their Role in Power
Anastasios Tantsis	Struggles of the 14th Century
Öykü Bahar Balcı	Rereading Borders in Thrace: Urban and Architectural Transitions in the
Güngör	Late Medieval Period
Galina Grozdanova	Rock and People in Byzantine Thrace. Two Case Studies from Glouhite
	Kamani and Michalich
Görkem Günay	Space-Making in Landscapes Not Made by Human Hands: A Theoretical Model for
	Byzantine Rock-Cut Architecture
Bilge Ar, Ivana Jevtić	Rethinking Research Models in Byzantine Studies: The BRIA Project Approach

1.21 TS – Thematic Session

Within and Beyond: The Islands of Byzantium

Conveners:

Nikolas **Bakirtzis**
The Cyprus Institute

Michael **Decker**
University of South Florida

Luca **Zavagno**
Bilkent University

Islands are both central and liminal spaces; the sea creates a paradox of separation and connectedness. Like the tides that touched the shores of the empire, despite their geographical fixedness, many islands proved fluid entities, falling beyond the political reach of Constantinople yet remaining within its political and cultural grasp while at the same time remaining an integral part of a Byzantine economic koine encompassing large Mediterranean islands (as well as coastal hubs). In fact, although the Balearics, Sardinia, Malta, and Sicily each slipped from direct rule (whereas Crete and Cyprus were reincorporated in the empire only in the tenth century), they remained part of the wider oikumene, linked via cultures of trade, religion, and artistic expression. In this panel, we will explore aspects of insular life in Byzantium as centered around themes of belonging, connection, and formation and expression of identity beyond the center. In particular, we will try to link the concept of islandness to that of “Romanitas”, as large islands present us with peculiar political, administrative, and socio-economic strategies of survival as well as material culture reflecting peculiar local identities rooted in the ontological dualism of “isolation vs. connectivity”.

Speakers & Titles

Nikolas Bakirtzis	Monks and the Formation of Island Identities in Byzantium
Michael Decker	The Island in Between: Sicilian Connections and Trade from the Vandals to the Coming of Islam
Catalina Mas Florit,	New Approaches to the Study of the Early Byzantine Period in the
Miguel Cau Ontiveros	Balearic Islands
Luca Zavagno	“Islands in the Stream”: Re-Assessing the Byzantine Insular Economy between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (ca. 550-c. 900)

3.06 TS – Thematic Session

Re-Imagining Byzantium in Late Ottoman and Modern Istanbul: Impact on Byzantine Studies

Conveners:

Brigitte **Pitarakis**

UMR 8167 Orient & Méditerranée

Emir **Alışık**

Koç University

The respective curators and symposiarchs of four major innovative exhibitions, and two conferences held in Istanbul in 2021 and 2023 share their acquired experience in a reevaluation of their approaches to these events and the subsequent results. In doing so, they address the relationship of international scholarship and major exhibitions in Europe and the United States vis-à-vis Turkish contributions to that scholarship through archaeological discoveries and local exhibitions in Istanbul. The focus is not on the objects themselves, but on the interest in exhibitions on Byzantium as a distinct civilization, on the evolution of museological approaches, and on the impact of museum initiatives on Byzantine studies as well as popular culture. The challenges of the political, economic, and cultural milieu of Istanbul on innovative approaches in Byzantine studies will also be put in perspective. The transition from the Ottoman Imperial Museum to the Museum of the Republic, the evolution of digital technologies, and a renewed interest in past civilizations in modern and contemporary art have all contributed to reshaping scholarly imaginations with regard to Byzantine civilization and the perception and reception of Byzantium in Turkey. The urban development of Constantinople/Istanbul and its place in global politics played an essential role in this process. The timeline for the proposed discussion is from the 1850s to today. An interdisciplinary approach will take into consideration historiographic analysis (focusing on documentary archives, unpublished letters, and oral history), the evolution of technology (in particular, the digital arts, photography), and artistic media (such as street art and the alternate worlds of video games, movies, heavy metal music, and literature). Each contribution will add perspective to the definition of “Byzantinism” in the scholarly world and popular culture in Turkey and elsewhere.

Speakers & Titles

Birigitte Pitarakis

Imagination and Knowledge: Dynamics of Displaying Byzantium in Istanbul

Koray Durak

Curating Byzantinists other than Byzantines: Is There A Need For Exhibiting The Story of Byzantine Studies?

**Emir Alışık,
Gülru Tanman**

Encounters in Absence: Curating Byzantium Beyond the Dazzling Authentic

Olof Heilo

Everyone Loves Vikings: Four Years with Nordic Tales, Byzantine Paths

5.28 TS – Thematic Session

A Cultural Heritage Beyond the Capital: The Archaeological Context of the Başıpınar Religious Buildings on Byzantine Nymphaion (Mount Nif, Kemalpaşa, Turkey)

Conveners:

Müjde Peker

Istanbul University

The archaeological research and excavations carried out at Mount Nif (Kemalpaşa, Turkey), located east of Izmir (Smyrna), revealed a group of Byzantine structures in Başıpınar, near the Byzantine Nymphaion. The archaeological finds proved the religious context of these buildings which are newly presented to Byzantine Studies. With the excavations, three buildings (A, B, and C), dating between the 10th and 13th centuries AD, have been unearthed in Başıpınar. Frescoes were found on the walls of the churches A and B, and opus sectile flooring was found on the central floor of church B. The crown glasses found with their plasters and marble window frames are among the striking surviving finds. In addition to the anonymous folles dated between 976-1035 AD and 1042-1050 AD, Ioannes II Komnenos, Theodoros I and Ioannes III coins found during excavations provide significant evidence for the occupation phases of the buildings. The unique finds and the architectural features of the Başıpınar religious buildings in this fertile countryside would bring to mind a monastery associated with the Capital. New proposals on the chronology and restitution of the Başıpınar religious buildings will be presented in the following papers within this session through spatial, statistical, and post-excavational analysis of the excavated parts. The data obtained from the systematic archaeological excavations of Başıpınar religious buildings and latest preliminary findings presented here will make new contributions to Byzantine Studies on this under-researched region.

Speakers & Titles

Müjde Peker	Başıpınar Religious Buildings: Research History and General Overview
Daniş Baykan	Les phases des structures religieuses de Başıpınar à la lumière des recherches archéologiques
Lale Doğer,	Functional, Technical and Aesthetic Evaluation of Başıpınar Ceramics
E. Merve Kunt,	Based on Production and Consumption Areas
Selma Gün	Der Einsatz von Spolien im Başıpınar-Kirchenkomplex
Ceren Baykan,	Contexte des petits objets des édifices religieux de Başıpınar et leur
Daniş Baykan	
Bengi İnak	Carrying Başıpınar Religious Buildings to the Future: A Conservation Proposal for Preserving the Building Phases

5.44 TS – Thematic Session

Afterlives of Material Culture of Byzantium and Beyond: Perspectives on Preservation, Representation, and Appropriation

Conveners:

Ayşe Ercan Kydonakis

Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU)

Elif Neyzi

British Institute at Ankara

The Thematic Session illuminates the intricate relationships between the afterlives of material culture and the construction of cultural memory. As Byzantine monuments and material artifacts persisted beyond their historical context, they became sites of contested narratives and varied interpretations. Drawing on the multidisciplinary expertise of six scholars on reception studies, Byzantine art and architectural history, archaeology, Ottoman history, and cultural heritage, this discussion centers on select objects to explore how Byzantine material culture and heritage have been constructed, understood, imagined, and (mis-)presented. Providing a critical lens on modern representations of Byzantine material culture in news coverage, press releases, exhibition catalogues, and games, speakers refine our understanding of the interconnection between imagined historical objects and the actors shaping these narratives. Case studies include the reinterpretation of Byzantine sacred architecture in medieval Serbia and what post-Byzantine chronologically and conceptually means, how contested state and non-state practices of heritage preservation shaped the process of urban stratification in Istanbul, the display of Byzantine material heritage in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century museums in the Ottoman Empire, modern Greece and Turkey, the afterlife of the foundation deed of Mehmed II's Istanbul vakf, the circumstances and motivations behind the transfer of the library of the Soumela Monastery, and the influence of the gaming medium on perceptions of Byzantium. The thematic session contributes to Byzantine Studies by juxtaposing the initial creation of historical objects with their subsequent afterlives as objects that were used to shape, distort, and appropriate contemporary narratives surrounding Byzantium. Through an exploration of select case studies, this discussion also invites the audience to reflect on the afterlife of Byzantium at the crossroads of academic expertise and personal experiences, which is, after all, an extension of the ongoing construction of cultural memory surrounding Byzantium.

Speakers & Titles

Ivana Jevtić

“Post-Byzantine” before 1453? Renovations of Byzantine churches in Nemanjić Serbia (ca. 1166-1371)

Pınar Aykaç

A Byzantine Ruin between State and non-State Practices of Heritage Preservation as a Popular Symbol of Istanbul's Urban Stratification

Ayşe Ercan Kydonakis

Containing the Contested: Museumification of Byzantium in the Ottoman Empire and Early Republican Turkey

Ali Daniş Neyzi

The Management of Byzantine Churches in Ottoman Kostantiniyye: Historical Realities and Contemporary Representations of Mehmed II's Foundation (Vakf)

James Baillie

Medieval Byzantium and Caucasia in Ludic Visual Memory

6.20 TS – Thematic Session

The Real and Imagined Landscapes of Ṭūr ʿAbdīn During the Late Antique and Islamic Periods

Conveners:

Elif Keser-Kayaalp

Hacettepe University

Ṭūr ʿAbdīn, a limestone plateau to the east of Mardin in southeast Turkey, was a frontier region between the Byzantine and Sasanian empires. Since the Arab conquests of the region in 640, Ṭūr ʿAbdīn has been under the rule of Muslim states. It is a remarkable cultural landscape shaped by waves of building activities, and this multi-layered topography invites reading from varying angles. It is a holy region for the Syriac Orthodox whose memory and identity are bound up not only with its physical landscape but also with the local saints and their stories. Finding echoes of Byzantium in this landscape may be surprising as Late Antique Ṭūr ʿAbdīn was mainly a refuge for the miaphysite Syriac Church, which was not theologically in communion with Constantinople. The ethnic differences between Syriac and Greek-speaking peoples further complicate the connections of this region to Byzantium. Moreover, many churches and monasteries here were not even within the boundaries of the Roman Empire, since most of them were built or extensively rebuilt after the Arab conquests. However, while being a distinct and innovative region with its multiple real and imagined landscapes, Ṭūr ʿAbdīn also conformed to Byzantine settlement patterns, models of sanctity, and other cultural expressions. It is fruitful to discuss Romanitas beyond Byzantium for this region because of the persistence and reinterpretations of what would conventionally be identified as “Roman” ideas and practices. This Thematic Session will focus on the tangible and the intangible that constitute the Late Antique and Early Islamic Ṭūr ʿAbdīn.

Speakers & Titles

Reyhan Durmaz	Roman Soldier, Syriac Saint, and Memories of Rome in the Medieval Hagiography of Ṭūr ʿAbdīn
Alexandre Varela Expósito	Aniconic Ṭūr ʿAbdīn? Questioning the Mor Gabriel Monastery Mosaic in Mediterranean Context
Virginia Sommella	When Empires Aligned: Political Kinship and Doctrinal Divide in Late Antique Ṭūr ʿAbdīn
Simon Brelaud	Carving Names Into the Ground of Osrhoene. Epigraphic Practices in the Rural Milieu at the Turn of the Byzantine and Islamic Eras

Bölüm VIII: Türkiye Bağlantılı Katılımcı Listesi

İsim	Kurum	Yurt İçi / Yurt Dışı	Bildiri / Sunum Türü	Düzenleyici
Ada Kök	Central European University	Yurt Dışı	Serbest Bildiri	
Ali Daniş Neyzi	University of California, Davis	Yurt Dışı	Yuvarlak Masa; Tematik Oturum	
Aslıhan Akışık-Karakullukçu	Bogaziçi Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Asnu Bilban Yalçın	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	
Ayça Karabacak	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Ayça Tiryaki	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Ayşe Çaylak Türker	Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Ayşe Ercan Kydonakis	Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU)	Yurt Dışı	Tematik Oturum	Tematik Oturum
Ayşe Merve Çilingir	İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
B. Yelda Olcay Uçkan	Anadolu Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Bengi İnək	KU Leuven	Yurt Dışı	Tematik Oturum	
Berkay Yekta Özer	Fırat Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Bilge Ar	İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	
Brigitte Pitarakis	UMR 8167 Orient & Méditerranée	Yurt Dışı	Tematik Oturum	Tematik Oturum
Bülent Arkan	İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Ceren Baykan	Trakya University	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	
Ceren Pilevneli Çubuk	İzmir Katip Çelebi Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Ceren Ünal	Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri (2)	
Ceylan Borstlap	Ege Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Daniş Baykan	Trakya Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum (2)	
E. Merve Kunt	Ege Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	
Efe Antalyalı	University of Notre Dame	Yurt Dışı	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri	
Elif Keser-Kayaalp	Hacettepe Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri	Tematik Oturum
Elif Neyzi	British Institute at Ankara	Yurt İçi	Yuvarlak Masa	Tematik Oturum
Emine Bilgiç Kavak	Sakarya Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Emir Alışık	Koç Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	Tematik Oturum
Fatih İnan	Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	

Fatih Tepgeç	Altınbaş Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Ferhat Sezer Kurtoğlu	Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz	Yurt Dışı	Serbest Bildiri	
Fermude Gülsevinç	Koç Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri	
Filiz İnanan	Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri	
Furkan Çağlan	University of Notre Dame	Yurt Dışı	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri	
Görkem Günay	İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri; Tematik Oturum	
Gözde Demir Merzi	İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Gülru Tanman	İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	
Güner Sağır	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Hafize Toparslan	Sakarya Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Hasan Sercan Sağlam	Bağımsız Araştırmacı	Yurt İçi	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri; Yuvarlak Masa	
Hilal Aktur	Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
İlhami Tekin Cinemre	Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Ivana Jevtić	Koç Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum (3)	Tematik Oturum
Kaan Kendirciler	Ege Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Poster	
Koray Durak	Boğaziçi Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Yuvarlak Masa; Tematik Oturum	Yuvarlak Masa
Lale Doğer	Ege Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	
Luca Zavagno	Bilkent Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Yuvarlak Masa; Tematik Oturum (2)	Tematik Oturum
Mertkan Karaca	Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Genel Oturum	
Merve Savas	Ohio State University	Yurt Dışı	Serbest Bildiri	
Metin Kaya	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Mine Esmer	Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Müjde Peker	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	Tematik Oturum
Mustafa H. Sayar	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri; Tematik Oturum	
Nathan Leidholm	Bilkent Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Yuvarlak Masa	
Nergis Ataç	İstanbul Okan Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Neslihan Kılıç	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Nevra Necipoğlu	Boğaziçi Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	—	Yuvarlak Masa
Nihan Zorlu Başel	İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Nisa Semiz	Abdullah Gül Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	

Olof Heilo	Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	Yuvarlak Masa
Orçun Sena Saracoğlu	Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Osman Kocabal	Ohio State University	Yurt Dışı	Serbest Bildiri	
Osman Yüksel Özdemir	Central European University	Yurt Dışı	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri	
Öykü Bahar Balcı Güngör	İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri; Tematik Oturum	
Özgü Çömezoğlu Uzbek	İstanbul Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Özlem Eren	University of Wisconsin-Madison	Yurt Dışı	Serbest Bildiri	
Pelin Yoncacı Arslan	Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Pınar Aykaç	Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Yuvarlak Masa; Tematik Oturum	
Pınar Serdar Dinçer	Yozgat Bozok Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
R. David Hendrix	Bağımsız Araştırmacı	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Reyhan Durmaz	University of Pennsylvania	Yurt Dışı	Tematik Oturum	
Sait Can Kutsal	Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz	Yurt Dışı	Serbest Bildiri	
Samet Budak	Princeton University	Yurt Dışı	Yuvarlak Masa	
Scott Kennedy	Bilkent Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Yuvarlak Masa; Tematik Oturum	
Şebnem Dönbekci	Koç Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Selin Sur	Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Selma Gün	Nif Kazısı	Yurt İçi	Tematik Oturum	
Şenel Kaya	İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Sinan Mimaroglu	Hatay Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Siren Çelik	Marmara Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri; Yuvarlak Masa	
Süha Konuk	Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri	
Suna Çağaptay	Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri; Yuvarlak Masa	Grup Başvurulu Serbest Bildiri
Ufuk Serin	Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Zeki Boleken	Marmara Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri (2)	
Zeliha Demirel Gökarp	Anadolu Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri; Tematik Oturum	
Zeynep Çakmakçı	Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi	Yurt İçi	Serbest Bildiri	
Zeynep Olgun	University of Cambridge	Yurt Dışı	Serbest Bildiri	