

This workshop is organized by the Wittgenstein-Prize Project 'Mobility, Microstructures and Personal Agency' of the FWF (Austrian National Research Foundation).
<http://rapp.univie.ac.at/>



Der Wissenschaftsfonds.

PRE-REGISTRATION:

We would like to inform you that pre-registration is mandatory. For this reason, please contact Dr. Ekaterini Mitsiou (Coordinator, Moving Byzantium Project), ekaterini.mitsiou@univie.ac.at. You will receive an e-mail with a zoom link in time for the event.

ORGANISERS:

Dr. Emilio Bonfiglio (Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen) & Prof. Dr. Claudia Rapp (University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences), in collaboration with Prof. Dr. Theo Maarten van Lint (University of Oxford) and Dr. David Zakarian (University of Oxford).

CONTACT:

Dr. Ekaterini Mitsiou (Coordinator, Moving Byzantium Project):
ekaterini.mitsiou@assoc.oeaw.ac.at; ekaterini.mitsiou@univie.ac.at

IMAGE 1:

Jerusalem, St James Monastery, 2556, f. 135b, Gospels of Gagik-Abas of Kars (© Tim Greenwood)

IMAGE 2: Zvartnots Cathedral, 7th century (© Emilio Bonfiglio)



VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

ARMENIA AND BYZANTIUM WITHOUT BORDERS III

ABSTRACTS

10TH TO 11TH SEPTEMBER 2021
VIA ZOOM



PROGRAMME

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2021

- 16:00–16:15** **Welcome and Introduction**
Emilio Bonfiglio | Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen
Claudia Rapp | University of Vienna & Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna
- 16:15–17:00** **Keynote Lecture** (Co-Sponsored by ÖASG)
Moderator: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller | Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

Tim Greenwood | University of St Andrews
Law, Inheritance, and Female Authority in Tenth and Eleventh-Century Armenia
- 17:00–18:00** **SESSION I: Political Theologies in Early Byzantium and the Caucasus**
Chair: Razmik Panossian | Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon
- 17:00–17:20** **PAPER 1: Nikoloz Aleksidze** | Free University of Tbilisi
The Politics of Saints' Relics between Constantinople and Caucasia (5th-8th cc)
- 17:20–17:40** **PAPER 2: Stephanie J. Forrest** | University of Cambridge
Step'anos Siwnec'i and Germanos I in the Girk' T'it'oc': An Overlooked Source for Armenian-Byzantine Contacts in the Early Eighth Century?
- 17:40–17:50** **RESPONDENT: Emilio Bonfiglio** | Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen
- 17:50–18:00** **Discussion**
- 18:00–18:20** BREAK
- 18:20–19:20** **SESSION II: Monetary and Military History**
Chair: Werner Seibt | Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna
- 18:20–18:40** **PAPER 3: Hasmik Hovhannisyan** | History Museum of Armenia, Yerevan
Revising the Byzantine Prototype of the First Coins with Armenian Inscription
- 18:40–19:00** **PAPER 4: Dmytro Dymydyuk** | Ivan Franko National University of Lviv
Between Archeology and Iconography: Medieval Armenian Spears and their Use against Cavalry (10th-13th c.)
- 19:00–19:10** **RESPONDENT: Sergio La Porta** | California State University, Fresno
- 19:10–19:20** **Discussion**

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 11, 2021

16:00–17:00 **SESSION III: Migration and Mobility in the 11th Century**

Chair: Neera Necipoğlu | Boğaziçi University, Istanbul

16:00–16:20 **PAPER 5: Polina Ivanova** | Harvard University, Cambridge MA
Not a Byzantine Residue: Armenian Migration from Vaspurakan and the Formation of an Armenian Landscape in Medieval Inner Pontus

16:20–16:40 **PAPER 6: Nedim Michael Gery Büyükyüksel** | École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris
"He Came Forth from the Wilderness...": Banditry, Religious Persecution and Imperial Frontier Policy in the 11th Century Byzantine East

16:40–16:50 **RESPONDENT: Tara Andrews** | University of Vienna

16:50–17:00 **Discussion**

17:00–18:00 **SESSION IV: Between Armenia and Byzantium: Power and Patronage in the Border Lands**

Chair: Vahan Ter-Ghevondian | Mesrop Maštoc' Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (Matenadaran), Yerevan

17:00–17:20 **PAPER 7: Dmitry Kosourov** | National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow
To the Question of the Armenian Origin of the Area 'al-Khalidiyat' and Its Rulers in the Byzantine Civil Wars (Second Half of the 10th Century)

17:20–17:40 **PAPER 8: Vendi Jukić Buča** | University of Oxford
Byzantine Elements on Armenian Sculpture from the Kars Region (Eastern Turkey)

17:40–17:50 **RESPONDENT: Alison Vacca** | University of Tennessee, Knoxville

17:50–18:00 **Discussion**

18:00–18:20 **BREAK**

18:20–19:20 **SESSION V: Armeno-Georgian Connections in Material Culture**

Chair: Nick Evans | King's College London

18:20–18:40 **PAPER 9: Ivan Foletti** | Masaryk University, Brno & **Cassandre Lejosne** | University of Lausanne
Armenia or Mediterranean? On the Roots of Early Sub-Caucasian Monumental Images

18:40–19:00 **PAPER 10: Bella Radenović** | The Courtauld Institute of Art, London
'Bringing Icons from the Georgians': Attitudes to Icons in the Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Armenia

19:00–19:10 **RESPONDENT: Ioli Kalavrezou** | Harvard University, Cambridge MA

19:10–19:20 **Discussion**

19:20–19:45 **Concluding Discussion**

Moderators: Theo Maarten van Lint | University of Oxford & David Zakarian | University of Oxford

ABSTRACTS

NIKOLOZ ALEKSIDZE

Free University of Tbilisi

The Politics of Saints' Relics between Constantinople and Caucasia (5th–8th cc)

The cult of the saints was shaped and developed in Caucasia in the duration of the fifth century. In the Armenian foundation narratives (e.g. Agathangelos' *Life of Gregory the Illuminator*) and slightly later in Georgian accounts (e.g. *The Life of Vaxtang* (8th c)) the saints' cult was politicized and used for ideological and political purposes. According to these foundation narratives, the relics of the saints were allegedly imported and utilized in the foundation of religious and political institutions, similarly to the activity of the Byzantine emperors and empresses in Constantinople, most notably of the Empress Pulcheria. The paper discusses the treatment of the relics of the saints in three narratives from Caucasia, Agathangelos' *History of Armenia* (5th c), the *History of the Caucasian Albanians*, more specifically the *Life of Vachagan the Pious* (6th c?) and the anonymous Georgian *Lives of the Kings* (8th c?). The primary interest of the paper lies in the 'political theologues' of the cult of the saints' relics, its usage in royal discourse and royal processions. The paper which is a part of the larger book project (*The Cult of Saints and the Body Politic: Sanctity, Gender and Polity in Medieval Caucasia*) will try to identify the possible literary sources and prototypes of these cult narratives.

VENDI JUKIĆ BUČA

University of Oxford

Byzantine Elements on Armenian Sculpture from the Kars Region (Eastern Turkey)

In this paper I will discuss selected sculptural elements present on the churches at the Armenian ecclesiastical sites from the Kars Province in the present/day eastern Turkey. They are rapidly deteriorating, but the church structures still have rich architectural decorations, or such decorations can be found detached and scattered across the respective site. Some of the sculptural elements, mostly figurative representations, were recognised in the literature as products of the direct influence of Byzantium (e.g. Holy Apostles Church – The Kars Cathedral and Kümbet Kilise as the most representative). However, they are generally regarded as rather unskilled attempts of representing the Byzantine repertoire of motifs. This paper will re-evaluate those elements with an emphasis on the possibility of local production and variation. An example of such a study can be found in the paper by C. Maranci that discusses a lintel showing the *Restitutio* at the site of Mren and constitutes a major example from the area. More research conducted on the sites from the Kars region, together with continued highlighting of their present state in the context of their immediate environment might encourage local authorities to conduct measures to make them recognizable and accessible, and help inspire their conversion to tourist sites and therefore prevent any further deterioration.

NEDIM MICHAEL GERY BÜYÜKYÜKSEL

École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris

"He Came Forth from the Wilderness...": Banditry, Religious Persecution and Imperial Frontier Policy in the 11th Century Byzantine East

Despite the frequency of references to brigandage in Byzantine sources, the study of this phenomenon, in Byzantium as in other medieval contexts, remains challenging. Valuable research has been devoted to the question of brigandage in Byzantium including, among others, the work of M. Bartusis, L. Benou, C. Asdracha, E. Gkartzonika, and P. Sophoulis. Investigation on this matter has tackled the issue of characterizing the brigand as a social entity in this cultural sphere, as well as inquired into its manifestation as a literary phenomenon in an effort to resolve the difficulties posed by the sources. However, in most cases explaining the behaviour and establishing the identities of brigands is challenging, and often the motivations of these individuals remain obscure.

This paper intends to pursue this discussion through the analysis of a case of brigandage mentioned in the chronicles of Michael the Syrian and Bar Hebraeus, and said to have taken place around the city of Melitene towards the middle of the 11th century. Through a comparative analysis of the use of the term brigand in contemporary Byzantine, Syriac and Armenian texts, and the deployment of the results of recent scholarship on the anthropology of brigandage that suggests a more symbiotic relationship between brigands and their social environment, a hypothesis is set forth as to the identity and motivations of these brigands. It is proposed that these brigands were not, as it has been suggested, rogue elements of frontier society but a particular group of Armenian Chalcedonians associated with local petty lords, in conflict with other local political actors who were reacting against imperial frontier policy and the religious politics that accompanied this. This discussion hopes to further develop our understanding of banditry in Byzantium while inquiring into the role of Armenian Chalcedonians in the administration and society of the eastern Byzantine frontier.

DMYTRO DYMYDYUK (DMITRY DYMYDYUK)

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

Between Archeology and Iconography: Medieval Armenian Spears and their Use against Cavalry (10th–13th c.)

A pole weapon is a close combat weapon consisting of a wooden shaft with a metal spearhead, which can take many forms. The most famous representation of polearms is the spear/lance, which was one of the cheapest and popular in the Middle Ages. The main task of my presentation is to analyze three archeological finds of spearheads from Ani (1) *in the form of a trident with a central straight head and two side curved hooks*),

and two from Dvin (2) *long, wide, heavy, and flat spearhead in oval form with round socket*; (3) *spearhead with one curved side hook*).

Taking into consideration the forms of the spearheads, we can assume that they could be used by infantrymen against cavalrymen to unhorse the rider (two of the spearheads have side hooks when the third is too heavy for the rider to hold). Thanks to the comparisons with Armenian, Byzantine, Rus', and Near Eastern archeological and pictorial sources, we can date the above mentioned spearheads to the 10th–13th c. (most likely, the 13th c.).

Unfortunately, we cannot completely use Armenian written sources in our study because of the lack of information about the differences between the terms of polearms (*նիզակ, գեղարդ, ռուսք/ռուսյ, մկուկ, տեգ/տէգ, տէգ նիզակ, աշտե, սլին*), the interdependences of their use, and their physical characteristics. Therefore, attention is paid to Byzantine military treatises (*Tactica of Leo VI, Sylloge Tacticorum*, etc.) where the length and properties of infantry spears (*kontaria* and *menavlion*) and their use against the cavalrymen are described.

For the first time in Armenian historiography, weapons will not be the subject but the object of research, where – in the context of art history and archaeology – the issues of pole weapons of medieval Armenian warriors will be analyzed in comparison with Eastern Roman, Muslim, Rus', and Armenian samples, in an attempt to make this study more relevant.

IVAN FOLETTI

Masaryk University, Brno

CASSANDRE LEJOSNE

University of Lausanne

Armenia or Mediterranean? On the Roots of Early Sub-Caucasian Monumental Images

Throughout the work of 19th- and 20th-century scholars, medieval Armenian art has been often considered as a provincial part of the Byzantine commonwealth. Recent studies have demonstrated that this perspective mainly arises from a Russian colonial viewpoint. While some kind of relationship with Byzantium cannot be denied, Armenian architecture and liturgy seem to be anchored in Mediterranean Syria. But, what about early monumental images in the sub-Caucasian region?

The most widespread image in apses represents a standing Christ with his right arm elevated, holding an open rotulus in his left hand. This iconography is well-known from the Late Antique Christian Mediterranean, as we can see in Rome, Thessaloniki, and Syria. One could easily interpret this broad spread as a progressive migration of models from the Mediterranean to the southern Caucasus. However, the situation appears to be more complex. In seventh-century Georgia, in the church of Tsromi, dated to around 630, the standing Christ between the two angels is holding a rotulus with a quotation from the Gospel of Saint John: "I am the Light of the World...". Around the year 1100, the exact same composition including this inscription is found

in Rome, in the oratory of Saints John and Paul. It is difficult to imagine that this is a coincidence.

The goal of this proposal is to investigate this surprising occurrence. Moreover, we will try to explain why a very old-fashioned image for the Mediterranean space is used in seventh-century Mren, Tsromi, and Aruchavank. We would like to explore the hypothesis that this older image should be seen as a manifesto of Armenian religious and cultural identity. This aspect appears even more important in light of the historical context of the seventh century, when historical Armenia found itself between the Byzantine and Sassanid Empires.

STEPHANIE J. FORREST

University of Cambridge

Step'anos Siwnec'i and Germanos I in the Girk' T'it'oc': An Overlooked Source for Armenian-Byzantine Contacts in the Early Eighth Century?

The life of Step'anos Siwnec'i (d. 735), one of the prolific Armenian scholars of the early medieval period, could itself serve as a case study in the mobility of people and ideas between Byzantium and Armenia. An author of commentaries and polemical works, and later the bishop of Siwnik', Step'anos is thought to have stayed in Constantinople throughout politically unstable period between circa 712/715 and circa 718—some years after the final Umayyad conquest of Armenia—where he is said to have completed a number of translations of Greek works, including the Pseudo-Dionysian corpus. Despite the potential value of his works for historians of both political and cultural history, however, many aspects of Step'anos have not been well researched—and particularly among Byzantinists.

This paper will focus on two letters long associated with Step'anos Siwnec'i's travels, and consider their uses as sources for Armenian attitudes towards Byzantium (and vice-versa). The documents in question are preserved in the later sections of the Girk' T'it'oc' (*Book of Letters*). The first is a letter purportedly brought to Armenia from Constantinople by Step'anos, often attributed to the Patriarch Germanos I (715–730), which makes a case for Armenian communion with Constantinople. The second is a reply attributed to Step'anos himself and addressed to Germanos, which provides a defence of the Armenian position. Though recent studies have assumed that both are authentic, there has been as yet little effort to study these documents critically, either to address the question of their origin or to examine what they reveal about Byzantine-Armenian contacts in the early eighth century.

This paper will be divided into two parts. The first will examine the history of the documents, insofar as is possible, and address the question of authenticity. The second will consider what the exchange can reveal about Armenian relations and attitudes towards Byzantium.

HASMIK HOYHANNISYAN

History Museum of Armenia, Yerevan

Revising the Byzantine Prototype of the first Coins with Armenian Inscription

Armenia, located on the crossroad of the political, economic, and cultural interactions and exchanges between West and East, has long-standing experience and traditions in organizing the monetary economy and circulation. Due to political reasons, the earliest known coins with Armenian inscriptions appeared only in the second half of the 11th century when there were favourable conditions for coin striking. These coins were struck by Kyurike II, the king of Tashir Dzoraget, who was from a branch of the Bagratid dynasty. During his reign, Bagratid kingdoms at Ani and Kars had collapsed, after which only the Kyurikids remained heirs of the Bagratid dynasty in Armenia at that time.

The design of the coins of Kyurike II bears an obvious Byzantine influence. It is commonly assumed that these coins were inspired by the anonymous folles of class A. The examination based on the canonical character of Byzantine coin design, the principles of its coin production and the evidence of written sources compel us to reconsider the view about the iconographic origin of the coins of Kyurike. In this paper we will substantiate 1) why these coins could not be copies of anonymous folles, 2) which Byzantine coins presumably served as a prototype for their design, and 3) why particularly that type was chosen.

The study of the coins of Kyurike allows us to observe how the Empire's influence retained in the region even after its loss. These unique coins are a valuable primary source, which can contribute to our understanding of cultural and political interactions and communications between Armenia and Byzantium.

POLINA IVANOVA

Harvard University

Not a Byzantine Residue: Armenian Migration from Vaspurakan and the Formation of an Armenian Landscape in Medieval Inner Pontus

Several Armenian and Byzantine historians described the migration of the royal house of Artsruni from Vaspurakan to Sebasteia and other towns in Byzantine Cappadocia and southern Pontus that took place in the early eleventh century and probably involved a significant number of people. The material imprint of this migration is almost entirely erased by many waves of subsequent destructions and population displacements. Yet, there is no doubt that despite the paucity of surviving material evidence, this migration marked a momentous demographic and cultural transformation that extended the borders of the Armenian world much further west and laid foundations for prosperous Armenian communities, such as those of Sebasteia, Amaseia and Evdokia, which would continue to flourish until the twentieth century. This paper examines fragmented material traces of the

eleventh-century Armenian settlement in the region north of Sebasteia, around the modern cities of Tokat and Niksar, using surviving evidence to investigate how the newcomers perceived and appropriated the Byzantine landscape. In particular, it focuses on the story of the Armenian monastery dedicated to St. Chrysostom in the village of Bizeri 30 kilometers north of Tokat and suggests that the arrival of Armenians and their appropriation/adoption of a Byzantine shrine magnified and perpetuated the significance of what had been a minor cult of only local significance. The paper draws on a wide range of evidence, such as local museum collections of Tokat and Amaseia, archaeological material from the excavation at Komana Pontika, epigraphy, ethnography, an Ottoman cadastral survey and travelers' accounts, Armenian memory books and oral history testimonies of the local Orthodox population preserved at the Center for Asia Minor Studies in Athens.

DMITRY KOSOUIROV

National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow

To the Question of the Armenian Origin of the Area 'al-Khalidiyat' and Its Rulers in the Byzantine Civil Wars (Second Half of the 10th Century)

This paper is dedicated to the localization of the 'al-Khalidiyat' territory in Eastern Anatolia and the identification of its rulers, 'the two sons of Bagrat, patricians, owners of al-Khalidiyat' who are mentioned in the text of the *Annals* by the mid-11th century Christian Arabic historian Yahya of Antioch. The territory of 'al-Khalidiyat' was the scene of a major confrontation during the two Byzantine civil wars (the Bardas Skleros' revolt in 976–979 and the rebellion of Bardas Phokas the Younger in 987–989), but its exact location as well as figures of its rulers is still controversial. However, the point of view about identification of the 'sons of Bagrat' with the former owners of Taron province, the brothers Gregory and Bagrat ('Taronites'), who moved to the Byzantine service in 967, is still dominant in historiography. From this speculation follows the thesis of the localization of 'al-Khalidiyat' with either Kaloudia, the theme which was located not far from Melitene, or with part of the former Armenian Principality of Taron. According to my hypothesis, appeal to the work *Universal History* by the Armenian writer of the early 11th century Stepanos Taronetsi (also known as Asoghik) along with the *Annals* by Yahya of Antioch and the 10th/11th-century manuscripts of the Monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos allow to identify the owners of 'al-Khalidiyat' with members of the Georgian nobility from the entourage of the Tao's region ruler David III Kuropalates (961–1000), who was an important participant in both Byzantine civil wars. Based on this, the 'Armenian' area 'al-Khalidiyat' could presumably be localized in the southern part of the Theme of Chaldia, near the border with the Georgian Principality of Tao-Klarjeti. Revision of this case could make a number of significant adjustments to the study of Byzantine advancement in the Armenian Eastern Anatolia during the Macedonian dynasty.

BELLA RADENOVIC

Courtauld Institute of Art, London

'Bringing Icons from the Georgians': Attitudes to Icons in the Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Armenia

In Armenian textual tradition by the tenth century icons of Christ, Theotokos and saints came to be associated with the practices of neighbouring Georgia and Byzantium. When in 969 the Catholicos Vahan I sought to introduce new icons and integrate them into celebrations of the mass, a series of church councils found him guilty of sharing the beliefs of the Georgians and repeating the errors of the council of Chalcedon. In his defence of Armenian ecclesiastical traditions articulated in *A letter to the Georgians* (ca. 1200), Mkhitar Gosh (1130–1213) does not appear to shun the practice of representing sacred subjects on painted or carved icons and venerating them. He does, however, take a strong stance against their uncontrolled proliferation and ubiquitous presence in Georgian and Byzantine churches, writing that 'we accept and respect the icons which we recognise by sight for they remind us of the lives of saints. Whilst fools believe that icons should be worshipped, the wise men choose not to eschew them'. A resident of Mqagrżeli domains and a spiritual father of Miaphysite Zakare, Gosh was intimately acquainted with Georgian ecclesiastical traditions and must have been a first-hand witness to the unprecedented inroads of these traditions into practices of the Armenian Church. This 'infiltration' culminated in a promulgation of a canon taken from the 1205 church council at Lore which concerned the acceptance of 'icons of the Saviour and all the saints'. Despite the official sanctioning of icons, the Armenian translation of the Georgian Chronicles (*Patmut'iwn Vrac'*), possibly completed by the early thirteenth century, reveals uneasy attitudes to icons, in parts substituting icons with crosses in the Armenian rendering of the chronicles or omitting references to icons altogether. This paper will investigate Armenian attitudes to icons at the time of close interactions between Armenia and Georgia.