



OXFORD CENTRE FOR  
BYZANTINE RESEARCH

## Annual Report 2019-2020



David Hendrix/The Byzantine Legacy

The Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research  
The Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies  
University of Oxford  
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Oxford  
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## Governance of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research

The Committee of the OCBR in 2019-2020 was:

Professor Peter Frankopan (Director), Professor of Global History (Worcester)

Professor Philip Booth, A.G. Leventis Associate Professor in Eastern Christianity (St Peter's)

Professor Dame Averil Cameron, Professor of Byzantine History (Keble)

Professor Gregory Hutchinson, Regius Professor of Greek (Christ Church)

Dr Ine Jacobs, Stavros Niarchos Foundation Associate Professor of Byzantine Archaeology and Visual Culture (University)

Professor Marek Jankowiak, Fellow and Associate Professor of Byzantine History (Christ Church)

Professor Marc Lauxtermann, SNF Bywater and Sotheby Professor of Byzantine & Modern Greek Language & Literature (Exeter)

Professor David Taylor, Associate Professor of Aramaic & Syrian (Wolfson)

Dr Ida Toth, Lecturer in Byzantine Epigraphy (Wolfson)

Rosalind Michell, Administrator

The Committee is made up of *ex-officio* appointments and representatives of the faculties of History, Classics, Theology & Religion, Medieval & Modern Languages and Oriental Studies.

The Committee of OCBR met several times this year, and at least once each term. Its finances are administered by the History Faculty.



Jerusalem - Haram ash-Sharif - Dome of the Rock – mosaics Judith McKenzie/Manar al-Athar

## Introduction

The Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research was established in the summer of 2010 to present and promote research activity by senior scholars working in Byzantine Studies and related fields at the University of Oxford.

The Centre hosts and helps fund conferences, colloquia and special lectures, and also commissions and supports research projects by researchers working in Oxford and with close links with the University.

Oxford has long been one of the world's leading centres for Byzantine Studies, where many scholars of the highest calibre have made their careers, including Dimitri Obolensky, Cyril Mango, Elizabeth Jeffreys, James Howard-Johnston, Sebastian Brock, Nigel Wilson, Robert Thomson, Kallistos Ware, Mark Whittow and Averil Cameron.

Generous support for the posts of the Directorship and Administrator for the OCBR and the OCBR Director's discretionary fund have had a huge impact on what the OCBR has been able to achieve. It has enabled us to start to take steps to consolidate the OCBR as a centre for research for LABS in Oxford, to raise our profile, within the University and beyond, to forge more international links, and to secure further philanthropic support for LABS.

In the past the OCBR has been managed 'virtually' with all the constraints that that entails. Following substantial backing from our benefactors, the University allocated the OCBR an administrative office in the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Suite for Byzantine Studies within the Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies, part of Oxford's Byzantine hub.

The office has been redecorated and equipped with a computer, monitors, a printer and tea and coffee making facilities. This is the first time that the OCBR has had a physical home within the University. Having an address and dedicated telephone number hugely improves our visibility within the University and make us easier to contact for those outside. The Administrator is able to offer an open door to colleagues and students, making support easily accessible. There is space for a graduate student to hot desk in the office and Professor Frankopan occasionally holds tutorials there. Importantly, it enables the OCBR to maintain close relations with the Faculty of Classics.

Following standard University advertising and recruitment policies and procedures Rosalind (Ros) Mitchell was appointed to the role of Administrator of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research, and took up the post on 4th November 2019.

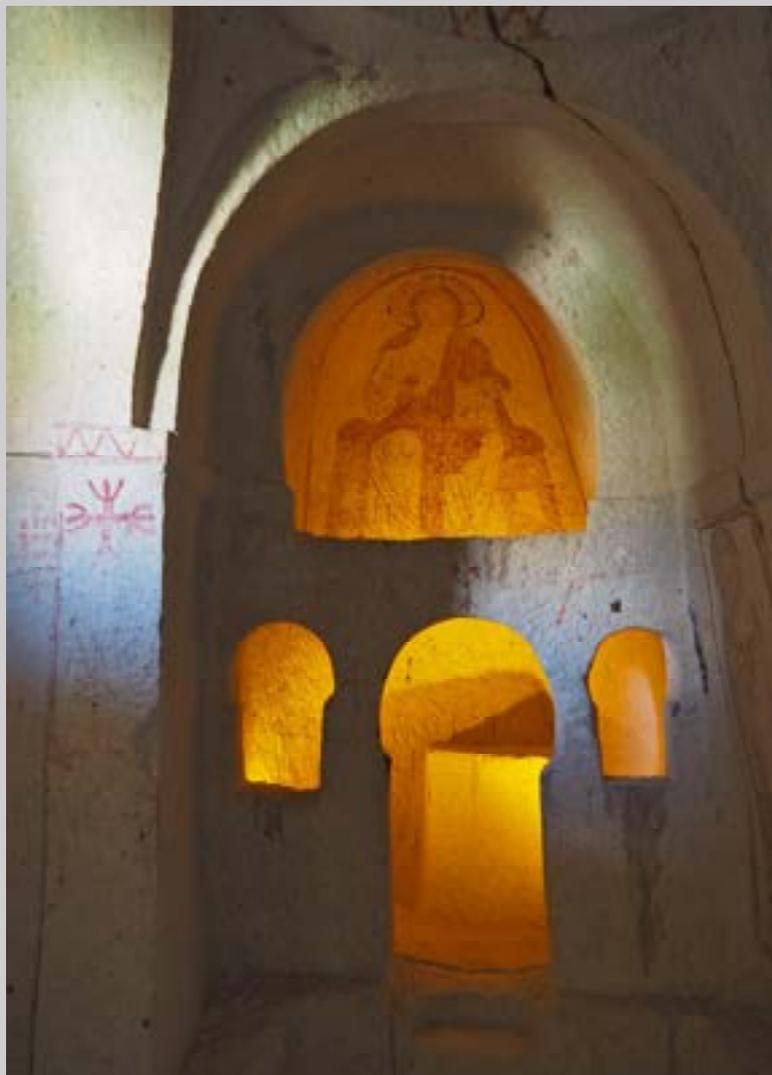
The appointment of an Administrator has enabled the OCBR to reach out beyond Oxford to link up with other constituencies and interested parties. The creation of social media accounts has been both popular and well-received, with tweets about Byzantine studies, matters of interest to Byzantinists, medievalists and scholars often being retweeted by an active and engaged community of followers that now numbers almost 1,100. This allows the OCBR to communicate the work of specialists working in Oxford to a much wider audience - and in particular, to non-specialists too.

The appointment of the Administrator has already delivered significant results, enabling the OCBR to function much better within the University and also to open its windows to a wider world beyond. This process will continue in 2020-21. In particular, we are keen to build on co-operation with other universities working in the same and similar fields of research. We have already begun to share our lecture lists with institutions around the world - and during lockdown, have hosted speakers from Harvard, Venice, The Vatican Library and beyond. Clearly COVID-19 has presented some very significant challenges but also some opportunities, not least virtual collaborations.

The OCBR booklets of events for Hilary and Michaelmas Terms can be downloaded from our website:

<https://www.ocbr.ox.ac.uk/article/ocbr-hilary-term-2020-booklet-out-now>

<https://www.ocbr.ox.ac.uk/article/ocbr-trinity-term-2020-booklet>



Goreme - Open Air Museum - Pantocrator Church (Pantokrator Kilisesi) (25) Marlena Whiting/Manar al-Athar

## Director's Report

During these times, wrote the historian Procopius in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, there was a pestilence which almost annihilated all humanity. Historians of Late Antiquity and the Byzantine have long paid attention to the importance of the outbreaks of infectious disease and to their consequences – partly because the Justinianic plague that lingered on for two centuries after its emergence in the 540s and the Black Death of the 1340s were two of the most devastating pandemics in human history.

Perhaps not surprisingly, a cottage industry sprung up during the Covid-19 crisis of 2019-20, with a great deal of demand from the media to look for examples of past disease and their consequences. Needless to say, there are a great many differences between the two plague catastrophes and what the world has been going through since the World Health Organisation was notified of a new emerging infectious disease had been identified in Wuhan on 31 December 2019. Nevertheless, the impact on universities, on research and on the OCBR has been profound.

As this Annual Report shows, the academic year had been spectacularly productive before CoVid-19 struck. As usual, there was an astonishing range of events and activities that took place in the first two terms. One of the last before lockdown was delivered by Monica Green, OCBR Visiting Scholar for 2020, who by chance happens to specialise in pandemics, epidemics and disease in the Middle Ages (and beyond) and in particular works on the etiology of infectious disease and has been a trail-blazer in showing how historians need to understand and use genetic data and materials in their assessment of the past.



Dan Gallaher and Katerina Vavaliou collecting the Calliope Prize in Berlin on behalf of Peter Frankopan.

The pandemic led to an immediate and dramatic change in the way we work, study and interact. All events scheduled for the summer term were postponed and will take place next year – assuming restrictions are eased or lifted altogether.

However, we quickly shifted to using new technologies to host lectures and seminars, with speakers delivering papers from Harvard, Kiev, Venice and the Vatican. The lectures and

seminars we have held have been well attended, with viewers regularly streaming from more than a dozen countries.

This presented opportunities, of course, but challenges too, not least in the sharply reduced personal interactions that are such an important part of intellectual exchange – as well a bedrock of the Oxford tutorial system for under-graduates, and an essential part of graduate engagement and development.

Lockdown has also made research difficult for all. Although some primary materials for Late Antique and Byzantine Studies and related fields have been digitised, a large number have not. Likewise, secondary scholarship is often not in e-book form. This has often made life difficult and frustrating – and also uneven as inevitably not all have been affected equally or in the same way. In practice, each of us has had to work on tasks that can be accomplished rather than those that should have priority – which is not ideal.

As this Annual Report shows, there have been some outstanding conferences, lectures and events this year – both before and after lockdown began. There have been many individual highlights as well as many achievements that show how vibrant our subject is at all levels in Oxford. However, it is worth drawing special attention to three extraordinary high points this year.

First, in the summer of 2019, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation made a very substantial gift to Oxford that secured the Niarchos, Bywater & Sotheby Professorship in Medieval and Modern Greek Language and Literature, held by Professor Marc Lauxtermann; and also the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Associate Professorship in Byzantine Archaeology and Visual Culture. The Foundation additionally provided funding for a DPhil scholarship and a Masters' scholarship, as well as for the OCBR Directorship and for an Administrator for the OCBR.

While this extraordinarily generous gift, supplemented by funding from Oxford University, represents a major expression of confidence in the work we do in Oxford, its significance above all lies in the fact that it protects this for the long-term future. The gift is transformational for the OCBR, for Late Antique and Byzantine Studies in Oxford and for the subject globally. We are immensely grateful to the Foundation, its trustees and its officers.

Second is the award of a substantial gift by the A. G. Leventis Foundation to endow the A. G. Leventis Foundation Professorship in Eastern Christianity which the Foundation has supported for almost two decades. This grant secures the position in perpetuity and ensures that this crucial post, held by Phil Booth, can be cemented into our long term plans. The generosity of the A. G. Leventis Foundation was further demonstrated by a new three year graduate scholarship for a student undertaking a DPhil course, as well as a three year grant to the OCBR for its core programmes.

The A.G. Leventis Foundation have supported the OCBR since it was founded in 2011. We are extremely fortunate to have such generous and committed donors who have played a fundamental role in everything we have done in our field for many years. Again, I offer my personal thanks, that of the OCBR committee and all those working in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies in Oxford to the trustees and administrators.

Last and not least of the year's highlights is the award of the Kenyon Medal to Professor Dame Averil Cameron by the British Academy for Lifetime Contribution to Byzantine Studies. This singular distinction reflects the outstanding role that Professor Cameron has had in the field of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies over the course of a career that has been as pioneering as it has been productive. The recognition of Professor Cameron and her work provides a wonderful testimony to the seminal contribution to our subject.

It also gives me great personal pleasure to congratulate Professor Cameron, who served as Chair of the OCBR from its inception in 2011 until standing down in 2019. Dame Averil has played a crucial part in the scholarship of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies, but also in helping ensure its long term future. All of us in Oxford and at the OCBR owe a great debt of gratitude.

This coming year will be a difficult one to navigate. It will require flexibility and pragmatism; but I am proud that the OCBR and the academic community in Oxford is in robust shape and am looking forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead during and above all after the CoVid-19 crisis has passed.

Professor Peter Frankopan

Director, OCBR

October 2020



Setif - Triumph of Dionysus Mosaic (Setif Archaeological Museum) Marlena Whiting/Manar al-Athar

## Late Antique and Byzantine Seminar

Convened by **Marek Jankowiak** and **Marc Lauxtermann**

### Michaelmas Term 2019

Week 1 16<sup>th</sup> October                      Mihail Mitrea (Newcastle)  
'Light and Fire: Hesychast hagiography and editorial practice in late Byzantium'

Week 2 23<sup>rd</sup> October                      Ivan Drpić (Pennsylvania)  
'The fictive mosaics of medieval Serbia'

Week 3 30<sup>th</sup> October                      Ekaterini Mitsiou (Göttingen)  
'New approaches to the 13th century: Prosopography, networks and tree rings'

Week 4 6<sup>th</sup> November                      Chris Wickham (Oxford)  
'Commerce in Byzantium in the long eleventh century'

Week 5 13<sup>th</sup> November                      Jonathan Shepard (Oxford)  
'John Mystikos – an underrated envoy to Rus?'

Week 6 20<sup>th</sup> November                      Annika Asp (Birmingham)  
'From 'successor state' to 'empire'? The relationship between Trebizond and Constantinople during the Palaiologan period'

Week 7 27<sup>th</sup> November                      Gianfranco Agosti (Rome)  
'Seeing, reading and understanding a metrical inscription in late Antiquity'

Week 8 4<sup>th</sup> December                      Yannis Stouraitis (Edinburgh)  
'Representations of Romanness in Byzantine civil wars'

### Hilary Term 2020

Week 1 22<sup>nd</sup> January                      Péter Bara (Szeged)  
'Leo of Chalcedon: A debating canonist?'

Week 2 29<sup>th</sup> January                      Aslıhan Akışık (Wolfson)  
'Late Byzantine and early Ottoman literary representations of Constantinople'

Week 3 5<sup>th</sup> February                      Nikos Zagklas (Vienna)  
'Vitriolic attacks in twelfth-century Byzantium: Poetry, satirical strands, and intellectual antagonism'

Week 4 12<sup>th</sup> February                      Roman Shlyakhtin (Mainz)  
'Last border of Byzantium? Byzantine-Seljuk border zone in lower Sakarya valley from Komnenoi to Palaiologoi'

Week 5 19<sup>th</sup> February                      Constantin Zuckerman (Paris)  
On the History, improperly styled "Secret", of Nicetas of Paphlagonia, and the power of anathema over books'

Week 6 26<sup>th</sup> February Alexander Mallett (Waseda, Tokyo)  
'Christians, Turks, and the origins of the First Crusade'

Week 7 4<sup>th</sup> March Alexander Riehle (Harvard)  
'Is textual criticism dead? A report on the forthcoming edition of Nikephoros Choumnos' letter collections'

Week 8 11<sup>th</sup> March Andras Nemeth (Vatican)  
'The Excerpta Constantiniana and the editor of the fragmentary historians: New fragments from Dexippus and Polybius'

#### Trinity Term 2020

Week 2 6<sup>th</sup> May Aslıhan Akışık (Wolfson)  
'Mehmed II's Patria, Byzas' Palace, and Ottoman Hellenism in the Fifteenth Century'

Week 3 13<sup>th</sup> May Pamela Armstrong (Oxford),  
'The Transmission of Monumental Art: Travelling Saints and Monastic Networks'

Week 4 20<sup>th</sup> May Alessandra Bucossi (Venice), title tbc  
'A New Key to Understanding the Schism?'

Week 5 27<sup>th</sup> May Yannis Stouraitis (Edinburgh)  
'Representations of Romanness in Byzantine Civil Wars'

Week 7 10<sup>th</sup> June Andras Nemeth (Vatican)  
'The Excerpta Constantiniana: Revisiting Constantine VII's Cultural Enterprise.'



Casablanca - Hassan II Mosque

Peter Nagy/Manar al-Athar

# The Late Antique and Byzantine Archaeology and Art Seminar

Convened by **Ine Jacobs** and **Ida Toth**

## Michaelmas Term 2019

Week 1 17<sup>th</sup> October Sophie Moore (Newcastle)

‘The Other Çatalhöyük: Historic Cemeteries and Cultural Memory’

Week 2 24<sup>th</sup> October Ivan Drpić (Pennsylvania)

‘Snatch Me Away from the Drunkenness of Passions’: Byzantine Devotional Pectorals and the Practice of Prosochē’

Week 3 31<sup>st</sup> October Manana Odisheli (Oxford)

‘Georgia in Late Antiquity: Literary and Material Culture’

Week 4 7<sup>th</sup> November Elodie Powell (Oxford)

‘Mosaics and Memory: Late Antique Figured Funerary Mosaics from North Africa’

Week 5 14<sup>th</sup> November Grace Stafford (Oxford)

‘Adornment as Public Spectacle in Late Antique Art and Culture’

Week 6 21<sup>st</sup> November Rowena Loverance

‘The Day the Sun Stood Still... Representations of Joshua in Late Antique, Byzantine and Crusader Art’

Week 7 28<sup>th</sup> November Kyriakos Fragoulis (Birmingham)

‘Economic and Urban Realities in Late Antique Dion (Greece) through the Ceramic Evidence’

Week 8 5<sup>th</sup> December Miroslav Vujovic (Belgrade)

‘Early Christian Burials in Sirmium: Recent Finds’

## Hilary Term

Week 1 23<sup>rd</sup> January Ginny Wheeler (Bern)

‘Water and wealth: aquatic display in a late antique neighborhood at Ostia (IV, III-IV)’

Week 2 30<sup>th</sup> January Carlos Cabrera-Tejedor (Oxford)

‘Archaeological excavations at the late antique basilica of Son Pereto, Balearic Islands (Spain)’

Week 3 6<sup>th</sup> February Phil Stinson (Kansas)

‘Current research questions: The Temple of the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion at Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity’

Week 4 13<sup>th</sup> February Roman Shlyakhtin (Mainz)

‘Stones, drones and renovations: current problems in the research of the Land Walls of Constantinople’

Week 5 20<sup>th</sup> February Pamela Armstrong (Oxford)

‘Excavations at the Monastery of Satyros, Constantinople, and the birth of the Küçükyalı Arkeopark’

Week 6 27<sup>th</sup> February Bryan Ward-Perkins (Oxford)  
‘The saints in the mosaics of Ravenna’

Week 7 5<sup>th</sup> March Hugh Jeffery (Edinburgh)  
‘Byzantine Aphrodisias: the archaeology of a medieval community’

Week 8 12<sup>th</sup> March Catherine Vanderheyde (Strasbourg)  
‘The many sides of Byzantine sculpture: textual sources, materials, techniques, ornamental and anthropomorphic motifs’

Trinity Term 2020

The seminar series did not run this term.



Algiers – National Museum of Antiquities – Mosaics, set 8

Marlena Whiting/Manar al-Athar

## OCBR Special Lectures

Vienna Lecture – Dr Nikos Zagklas, University of Vienna

[Vitriolic Attacks in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: Poetry, Satirical Strands, and Intellectual Antagonism](#)

The OCBR sponsored the Late Antique and Byzantine Seminar's Vienna Lecture, which was delivered by Nikos Zagklas, Assistant Professor of Byzantine Literature at the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, University of Vienna. Nikos spoke on 'Vitriolic Attacks in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: Poetry, Satirical Strands, and Intellectual Antagonism'. He considered how Byzantine works are not always flattering and pleasant to the ears of an addressee. They can abound with abusive and vitriolic assaults. This holds especially true for works written in verse. The lecture discussed some of the trends that emerge in satirical poetry written in the twelfth century as well as some of the models the poets use for the composition of their works.



Adana – Seated Woman Mosaic

Miranda Williams/Manar al-Athar



OXFORD CENTRE FOR  
BYZANTINE RESEARCH

Late Antique & Byzantine Seminar: Vienna Lecture

**Vitriolic Attacks in Twelfth-Century Byzantium:  
Poetry, Satirical Strands, and Intellectual Antagonism**

**NIKOS ZAGKLAS, UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA**



Wednesday, 5 February 2020, 5pm

The Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies, 66 St Giles'

OCBR Visiting Scholar – Professor Monica Green

## What Happens When We Expand the Chronology and Geography of Plague’s History?

The OCBR was delighted to invite Monica Green to Oxford to give a very timely lecture on ‘What Happens When We Expand the Chronology and Geography of Plague’s History?’. This event was streamed online, reaching a global audience. A recording can be found here:

<https://ox.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=318f4e77-a5df-4c21-8cbc-ab8000cc522e>

Monica considered how plague’s history has usually been told through a Eurocentric lens. Although the eastern Mediterranean figures squarely in narratives of the Justinianic Plague, and Black Death narratives have long seen that late medieval pandemic as “originating” in the Black Sea, we know now that the common conception of both these epidemic crises has obscured larger geographic connections, and thus skewed our chronology as well. Recent palaeogenetic work on *Yersinia pestis* (the causative organism of plague) reveals why we need to expand our understanding of plague’s impacts. This, in turn, allows common, comparative questions to be raised about plague’s history across pre-modern Afro-Eurasia.

Planning for the following presentation was done in early January 2020, before almost anyone had a clue that the world was about to be immersed in a new pandemic event. Originally meant as a presentation to Byzantinists, the talk was reframed to capture the essence of the larger work I have been doing the past 24 years to reframe the history of infectious diseases in a global framework of analysis. Although still focused on the history of plague (the main disease I’m working on at the moment), my central argument is that an evolutionary approach to the history of infectious diseases gives a powerful new way to understand pandemics past and present, and hopefully a way to avert similar events in the future.

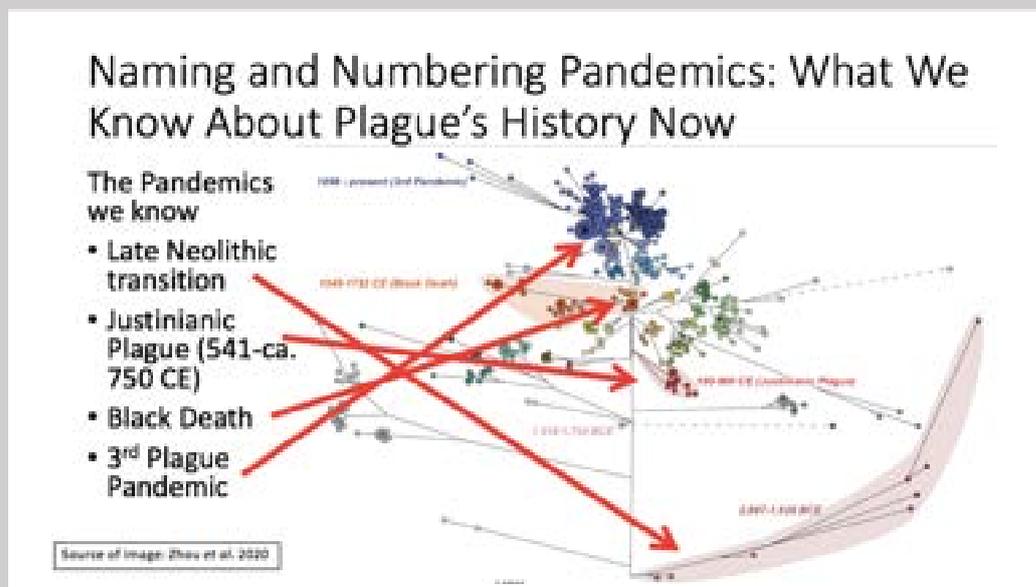
The linchpin of all this work are new ways the biological sciences are contributing to the investigation of disease history. These contributions are of several kinds, but the most important have come from genetics. These function at two levels. First is phylogeny, the work of constructing “family trees” showing the evolutionary development—the “familial” relations—of microorganisms. Everyone will likely have noticed the phylogenetic trees published almost daily for the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. Here’s the one from 9 February, showing genomes just sequenced in England:



COVID19 phylogeny, here with Feb 9 genomes from England. Source: <https://nextstrain.org/ncov>.

SARS-CoV-2 has only been around since about November 2019, so far as we know right now. But prior to its arrival, there have been major diseases circulating around the globe for centuries. Tuberculosis, for example, although almost certainly originating in the eastern hemisphere, was present in the western hemisphere (the Americas) for at least the past 1000 years.

The present talk focuses on the story of plague, the disease caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis*. The talk focuses on summarizing the ways in which genetics—by reconstructing the evolutionary history of the pathogen—has told us things about plague’s history that we never previously had an inkling of. It has told us how deep plague’s history with human populations has been (back to the Late Neolithic). It has suggested how broadly plague may have spread in the past (across the Eurasian steppe in the Bronze Age; throughout east, central, and western Eurasia and even into Africa in Antiquity and the Middle Ages). Here’s the latest phylogenetic tree of *Yersinia pestis*, with the major pandemic events marked:



Source: Zhemin Zhou, Nabil-Fareed Alikhan, Khaled Mohamed, Yulei Fan, the Agama Study Group, and Mark Achtman, “The EnteroBase user’s guide, with case studies on *Salmonella* transmissions, *Yersinia pestis* phylogeny, and *Escherichia* core genomic diversity, *Genome Research* 30 (2020), 138-152, fig. 5. Labeling: M. H. Green, 2020.

Note the shaded areas: the Neolithic transition; the Justinianic Plague; and the Black Death. Historians have known for generations of the latter two events, of course, because we have eyewitness testimony of both events, as well as many other kinds of evidence. What is stunning, however, is that we also now also have aDNA for those events. “aDNA”—the other new kind of evidence genetics has put on the table—is short for “ancient DNA,” molecular fragments that have been retrieved from people who died of the plague. This has been pieced together fragment-by-fragment, allowing us to understand how those strains of *Y. pestis* compare to modern strains (all the non-shaded circles on the tree). That comparison, in turns, allows us to make inferences about where the different historical strains circulated, and begin to investigate what animal species hosted them.

But telling the story of a one-celled bacterium is only part of the history we need to reconstruct. How was the disease transmitted over such long distances? Why at particular times, but not others? Getting the “human” part of these stories connected to the history of the pathogen is the work that historians now need to do. The present talk, therefore, gives a sketch of what we know about plague’s history and what questions are currently being investigated. In the question-and-answer session at the end, we covered a variety of topics, some having to do with the specifics of plague’s history (especially the many questions we still have about the Justinianic Plague of Antiquity) but also the urgent questions we face in the present day, faced with a pandemic event that gives every sign of being as cataclysmic for its implications on world history as the Black Death of the later Middle Ages.

Humankind has faced pandemics before. We don’t know nearly as much as we should about them, however. There is much to do in making better sense of pandemic events of the past and in better understanding what they might teach us to better face an uncertain future.

Monica H. Green

Twitter: [@monicaMedHist](https://twitter.com/monicaMedHist)

E-mail: [mhgreen@asu.edu](mailto:mhgreen@asu.edu)



Ananuri - Church of the Holy Mother of God (Ghvtismshobeli)

Miranda Williams/Manar al-Athar



OXFORD CENTRE FOR  
BYZANTINE RESEARCH

## What Happens When We Expand the Chronology and Geography of Plague's History?



Photo: Annette Hornischer

**Professor Monica Green**  
**OCBR Visiting Scholar 2020**

1st Floor Seminar Room, 1pm & via Twitter @OxfordByzantine



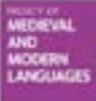
## OCBR Sponsored Seminar Series

### Early Slavonic Seminar Series

Michaelmas Term

# EARLY SLAVONIC SEMINAR

**MICHAELMAS TERM 2019**



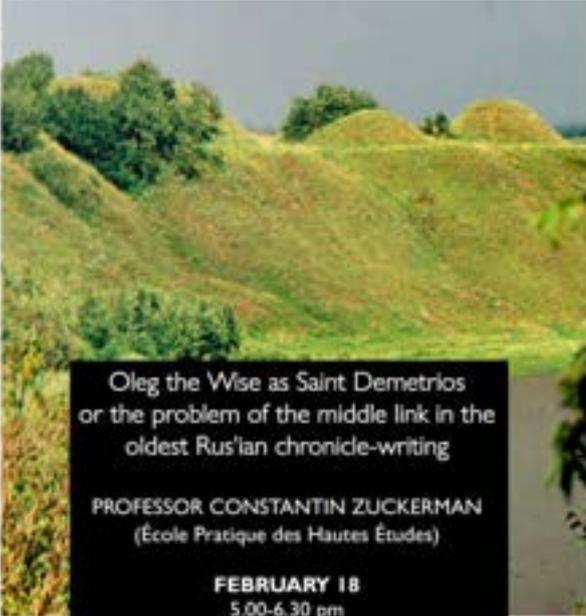
**OCBR**  
Oxford Centre for Byzantine Studies

				
<b>October 29</b>	<b>November 8</b>	<b>November 9</b>	<b>November 19</b>	<b>December 3</b>
<b>Dr Aleks Plankowski (Reading)</b>	<b>Prof Diana Mithkova (Sofia)</b>	<b>SEEMSG @St Edmund Hall Medieval Slavonic Meeting</b>	<b>Prof Giorgio Ziffer (Udine)</b>	<b>Dr Nick Mayhew (Stanford)</b>
<i>The archaeology of holy war and colonisation in the Balks</i> <small>*Seminar Room, MML, 47 Wellington Sq.</small>	<b>@TORCH Slavonic Event</b>		<i>The Scissors on Law and Grace: between textual criticism and interpretation</i>	<i>Trans perspectives on medieval and early modern Slavic culture</i>

Taylorian Institution, St. Giles' St. // Main Hall // 5 pm - 6 pm // contact [alexandra.vakovich@seh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alexandra.vakovich@seh.ox.ac.uk)

### Hilary Term

**HILARY 2020**

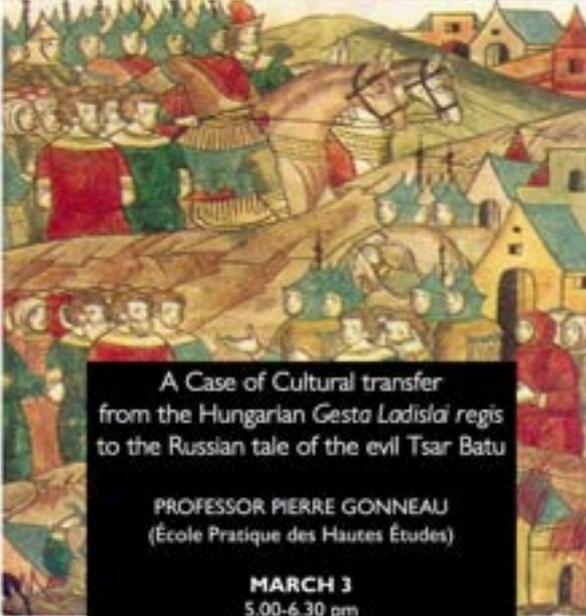


**EARLY SLAVONIC SEMINAR**

Oleg the Wise as Saint Demetrios  
or the problem of the middle link in the  
oldest Rus'ian chronicle-writing

**PROFESSOR CONSTANTIN ZUCKERMAN**  
(École Pratique des Hautes Études)

**FEBRUARY 18**  
5.00-6.30 pm  
Ioannou Centre  
First Floor Seminar Room



A Case of Cultural transfer  
from the Hungarian *Gesta Ladislai regis*  
to the Russian tale of the evil Tsar Batu

**PROFESSOR PIERRE GONNEAU**  
(École Pratique des Hautes Études)

**MARCH 3**  
5.00-6.30 pm  
Ioannou Centre  
First Floor Seminar Room

**MFO**  
Maison Française d'Oxford

Contact: Alexandra Vakovich [alexandra.vakovich@seh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alexandra.vakovich@seh.ox.ac.uk)

## Trinity Term

OCBR was pleased to continue its support of the Early Slavonic Seminar Series, convened by Alexandra Vukovich. The OCBR donated £400 to enable the invitation of guest speakers. A report by Alexandra can be found on page x.

### Seminar Programme:

Week 1 28<sup>th</sup> April Dr Vadym Aristov (Institute of Ukrainian History, Kyiv)  
The First Church of St Sophia in Kyiv

Week 2 5<sup>th</sup> May Professor Susana Torres Prieto (IE University, Madrid)  
Was Alexander really from Macedonia? The East Slavic genealogy of Alexander the Great

Week 3 12<sup>th</sup> May Dr Sean Griffin (Dartmouth College)  
Medieval Memory Wars in Post-Socialist Russia and Ukraine

Week 4 19<sup>th</sup> May Professor Christian Raffensperger (Wittenberg University)  
The Kingdom of a Rus': A New Theoretical Model of Rulership

Week 5 26<sup>th</sup> May Dr Ines Garcia de la Puente (Boston University)  
Tradition and Creation, or How Did Rus'ian Chroniclers Construct Their World?

Week 6 2<sup>nd</sup> June Professor Don Ostrowski (Harvard University)  
Who Wrote the Povest' vremennykh let?

Week 7 9<sup>th</sup> June Mr Justin Willson (Princeton University) and Mr Ashley Morse (Harvard University)  
Belated Jerusalems: Maksim Grek against Translatio Hierosolymi

Week 8 16<sup>th</sup> June Professor Robert Romanchuk (Florida State University)  
How and Where the Old Slavic Digenis Akritis Was Made

Week 9 23<sup>rd</sup> June Professor Petr Stefanovich (Higher School of Economics, Moscow)  
The “grand retinue” in North-Eastern Europe in the 10th-11th centuries



Khirbet et-Tannur - sculptures (Amman Jordan Archaeological Museum)



Sean Leatherbury/Manar al-Athar

### Early Slavonic Webinar

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Early Slavonic Seminar went completely online in Trinity Term 2020, becoming the Early Slavonic Webinar, taking place via Zoom at 5 pm (BST) on Tuesdays during full term. Due to the unexpected and widespread impact of the pandemic, the seminar had to be quickly adjusted to suit the remote format. Unexpectedly, both confirmed speakers and supplementary speakers, who were approached due to the flexible format, were extremely enthusiastic to give their papers online and were happy to adapt to an online format. In fact, there was so much enthusiasm for the webinar format that nine speakers (instead of the usually four) were confirmed for Trinity Term 2020. Thus, weekly meetings were held, and contributors presented their research in a more compact form, up to 40 minutes, followed by a general discussion. Zoom was selected as the platform for delivery, as it is generally well-known and used throughout the world. Furthermore, it is much easier to access by parties unaffiliated with the hosting institution. So, although the University of Oxford had a preference for Microsoft Teams, due to the number of external participants and speakers, Zoom (and its Webinar function) was selected as the platform for delivery, due to its accessibility, and its Q&A, Chat, and Polling features further recommended it.

The nine speakers for the Early Slavonic Webinar in Trinity Term 2020 were: Dr Vadym Aristov (Institute of Ukrainian History, Kyiv): *The First Church of St Sophia in Kyiv*, which queried the established timeline of a church dedicated to St Sophia in medieval Kyiv; Dr Susana Torres Prieto (IE University, Madrid): *Was Alexander really from Macedonia? The East Slavic genealogy of Alexander the Great*, exploring what the Slavonic tale adds to the controversial topic of Alexander the Great's identity; Dr Sean Griffin (Dartmouth College): *Medieval Memory Wars in Post-Socialist Russian and Ukraine*, exploring the uses of the medieval past in the modern politics of north-eastern Europe; Dr Christian Raffensperger (Wittenberg University): *The Kingdom of a Rus': A new Theoretical Model of Rulership*, exploring ties between western medieval historiography and the place of Rus; Dr Ines Garcia de la Puente (Boston University): *Tradition and Creation, or How did Rus'ian Chroniclers Construct Their World?*, examining mapping practices in early Rus before the development of maps; Professor Don Ostrowski (Harvard University): *Who Wrote the Povest' vremennykh let?*, revisiting the question of authorship of the compilatory *Primary Chronicle*; Justin Willson (Princeton University) and Ashley Morse (Harvard University): *Belated Jerusalem: Maksim Grek against Translatio Hierosolymi*, on the philology of a Muscovite treatise mapping Jerusalem onto the Muscovite landscape; Dr Robert Romanchuk (Florida State University): *How and Where the Old Slavic Digenis Akritis Was Made*, on the philology of the Greek epic in Slavonic; and Professor Petr Stefanovich (Higher School of Economics, Moscow): *The "grand retinue" in North-Eastern Europe in 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries*, on the practicalities of the princely military retinues in Rus in comparison with those of their neighbours.

The webinar format was an opportunity to invite speakers and participants from abroad, which is why all of the speakers were either based in Russia and Ukraine or the United States. In effect, the remote format was a unique opportunity to host speakers from abroad and, as the pandemic continues and we continue to work remotely, there will be further opportunities to host speakers

from outside of the United Kingdom. The success of the Early Slavonic Webinar recommends the online format and future seminars (once it is deemed safe to proceed with in-person events) should be hybrid, either alternating between seminars and webinars or livestreaming the seminar. Even without major dissemination, the Early Slavonic Webinar welcomed between 30 and 50 attendees per session and the audience make-up was truly international. The Zoom Webinar function worked well and attendee engagement was high, both via Q&A and via video/audio-linked discussion. In the future, the polling function may be used to boost active participation. Every webinar session garnered positive written feedback and there is general enthusiasm for the Early Slavonic Webinar to continue.

As a result of the pandemic, the funding allocated by the OCBR was not used for its intended purpose and the funding was solely used to cover the Zoom licence and Webinar add-on. Since the University of Oxford has a marked preference for Microsoft Teams, which is not suitable for meetings with external speakers/attendees, the convener purchased a Zoom licence and Webinar add-on independently. The Zoom (with Webinar add-on) fees for April-June 2020 were £82.49/month; totalling £247.47.

The Early Slavonic Seminar will continue in the 2019-2020 academic year and I plan to apply for further OCBR funding for Michaelmas-Lent Term 2020/21 to cover the Zoom licence and Webinar add-on. The Early Slavonic Webinar for Michaelmas Term 2020 will host six speakers from Russia, Estonia, the United States, and Poland and will be advertised in the coming weeks. I am very grateful to the OCBR for funding the Early Slavonic Webinar. I found that the online sessions were lively and fomented a great deal of discussion and exchange between Oxford-based academics, speakers from diverse institutions and academic cultures, and participants from fifteen different countries.



Antioch - Daphne - House of the Boat of Psyche (Hatay Archaeological Museum)      Ross Brns/Mana al-Athar

## Conferences, Colloquia & Workshop Grants

In 2019-20, the OCBR made a number of grants to enable colloquia and conferences to take place in Oxford and beyond.

Christian Russia in the Making. The World of the Slavs: forgotten meeting-place of different cultures'

30<sup>th</sup> January – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020

This conference had a strong Oxford cohort on the organising committee: Mirela Ivanova, Alexandra Vukovich, Sofia Vaz Pinto Simões Coelho, Marek Jankowiak and Jonathan Shepard

The OCBR donated £1200 to sponsor 2 sessions: 'History of the church in Rus' and 'Source studies in Cyrillic texts'. These were organised by Jonathan Shepard and Alexandra Vukovich.



The Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History Polish Academy of Sciences  
Centre for Historical Studies  
Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research  
Early Slavonic Research Seminar  
Centre for East European Studies University of Warsaw  
Institute of Central Europe  
The Polish Young Academy of the Polish Academy of Sciences

**The World of the Slavs:  
Forgotten Meeting Place  
of Different Cultures**

# Christian Russia in the Making

**in memory of Professor Andrzej Poppe  
(12 July 1928 – 31 January 2019)**

Warsaw (30 January – 1 February 2020)

## CONFERENCE PROGRAM

**30 January 2020**

### location

Joachim Lelewel Conference Hall at the Institute of History Polish Academy of Sciences  
(Rynek Starego Miasta 29/31; 00-272 Warsaw)

### panels organised by

Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research  
Early Slavonic Research Seminar

**8.00-9.00 Registration**

**9.00-9.30 Opening Ceremony**

**9.30-11.45**

### PANEL 1

#### History of the Church in Rus'

Chair: **Mirela Ivanova** (University of Oxford)

#### **Jonathan Shepard**

University of Oxford

The workings of Byzantine Soft Power, and Abbot Leontios' progress

#### **Angus Russell**

University of Cambridge

Fiscal dues of early Rus':  
between 'church' and 'state'?

#### **Андрей Юрьевич Виноградов**

Национальный исследовательский университет  
„Высшая школа экономики“

Анджей Поппе и митрополит Иларион

#### **Александр Мусин**

Russian Academy of Sciences

История Русской церкви *versus* история митрополии  
Росии: до и после трудов Анджея Поппе

#### **Elena Melnikova**

Russian Academy of Sciences

The harbingers of Christianity in the heathen past  
according in the Old Russian *Primary Chronicle*

#### **Alexandra Vukovich**

University of Oxford

On Professor Poppe's Assessment of the Earliest  
Age of Rus: Some New Perspectives

**11.45-12.00 Coffee Break**

**12.00-14.15**

### PANEL 2

#### Slavia Orthodoxa: religion, ideology and territory

Chair: **Alexandra Vukovich** (University of Oxford)

#### **Aleksander Paroń**

Polish Academy of Sciences

Biała Chorwacja: terytorium na pograniczu  
Wschodniej i Zachodniej Słowiańszczyzny

#### **Aneta Gołębiowska-Tobiasz**

University of West Bohemia

„Idźcie najpierw do Bułgarów i wybadajcie wiarę ich”.  
Obraz islamu w miastach Bułgarii Kamskiej oczami posłów  
Włodzimierza Światosławicza a źródła archeologiczne

#### **Aleksei Shchavelev**

Russian Academy of Sciences

Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavich's Baptism in 987  
(The Verification of the Annual Date)

#### **Márta Font**

University of Pécs

Веки распространения христианства с Владимира  
Святого до Владимира Мономаха – с сопоставлением

**Sofia Simões-Coelho**

University of Oxford

Christian Vladimir in the Making.  
State-building and the Vladimirskaja  
in the Principality of Vladimir-Suzdal'

**Petr Stefanovich**

Higher School of Economics, Moscow

A God-mandated Ruler: A Political Idea  
in Pre-Mongol Rus'

14.15-15.45 Lunch

15.45-18.00

**PANEL 3/1****Source Studies of Cyrillic Texts**

Chair: **Jonathan Shepard** (University of Oxford)

**Marek Jankowiak**

University of Oxford

The conversion of Rus': why not Islam?

**Taras Shumeyko**

independent researcher

„Яже созда на правоверней основе“:  
к интерпретации *Слова о законе  
благодати* в свете новейших  
археологических исследований

**Sergejus Temčinas**

Institute of Lithuanian Language

Древнерусское *Моление* Даниила Заточника:  
текстология и авторство

**Pavel Lukin**

Russian Academy of Sciences/Russian Presidential  
Academy of National Economy and Public Administration

Три сюжета из *Historia mongalorum*  
Плано Карпини: палеография,  
текстология, просопография

**Tatiana Vilkul**

National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

Early witnesses of the Slavonic Genesis:  
*Sermon on Law and Grace, the Primary Rus'  
Chronicle* and the *Book of Jacob the Jew*

18.00-18.15 Coffee Break

18.15-20.15

**PANEL 3/2****Source Studies of Cyrillic Texts**

Chair: **Dariusz Dąbrowski** (Uniwersytet Kazimierza Wielkiego)

**Marina Kuryшева**

Russian Academy of Sciences

The Manuscript of the Treatise  
*De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*

**Алексей Алексеевич Гиппиус,  
Савва Михайлович Михеев**

Russian Academy of Sciences

Новое в прочтении актов XIII в.  
на стенах церкви св. Пантелеймона в Галиче

**Jitka Komendová**

Univerzita Palackého

Древнейшее историописание Руси и Центральной  
Европы: перспективы сравнительного исследования

**Ирина Сергеевна Юрьева**

Russian Academy of Sciences

Соотношение грамматических и лексических  
синонимов как средство определения  
текстологических швов Киевской летописи

**Adrian Jusupović**

Polish Academy of Sciences

Stemma codicum of the Chlebnikovskij group  
of letopisi and the Hypatian Codex. The protograph  
of the so-called Codex of the Rostislavichi

20.30 Dinner

## Conference Report

(Conference held in Warsaw, 30 January – 1 February, in memory of Professor Andrzej Poppe, 12 July 1928 – 31 January 2019)

Hosted by Dr Adrian Jusupović, the conference took place at the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences and (on the final day) in the Centre for East European Studies (University of Warsaw). The date was chosen so as to mark the first anniversary of the death of Professor Andrzej Poppe, a towering figure in the field of Old Rus, Byzantine and Eastern European history. The programme registered the full sweep of Professor Poppe's scholarly life and achievements. More than fifty papers were given by scholars drawn from the length and breadth of Europe, including Ukraine and the Russian Federation. With the help of funding from the OCBR, several alumni, alumnae and scholars from Oxford participated in the proceedings and delivered papers.



Jonathan Shepard



Marek Jankowiak

The first day was taken up by the panels held under the auspices of the OCBR and the Early Slavonic Research Seminar, the opening session being chaired by Dr Mirela Ivanova. In her paper, Dr Alexandra Vukovich reconsidered Professor Poppe's vision of early Christian Rus through fresh lenses, taking due account of anti-statist alongside statist approaches. Telling examples came from the uses made of Byzantine coins, notably the permutations in visual imagery on the coins struck by Prince Vladimir and his successors. Visual imagery also loomed large in Sofia Vaz Pinto Coelho's presentation. She compared the large-scale processions of the Virgin Hodegetria in Constantinople with the role of the icon now known as 'The Virgin of Vladimir', taken to the city of Vladimir by Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii. There, the icon served to enhance his legitimacy and overlordship, appealing to the secular and ecclesiastical elite, rather than the populace at large. The title of Dr Marek Jankowiak's paper posed a provocative question: 'The Conversion of Rus: why not Islam?'. Highlighting the vitality of the trading in dirhams for slaves in the ninth and tenth centuries, he suggested that the Rus' interest in Byzantium mounted only when the inflows of Islamic silver to the north were faltering: chronological profiling of the silver-hoards in Rus suggests as much. Angus Russell (now Cambridge-based, but a LABS Masters alumnus) pointed out the dual role of the church in Rus: as keepers of weights-and-measures, churchmen fostered equitable transactions in the market-

place; at the same time, they were exempted from market-dues, which may even have been collectable by them. Comparison of normative texts with the charters issued by princes for particular places suggests the complexity of interactions between ‘church’ and ‘state’ in Rus. Dr Jonathan Shepard suggested that the assignments (designated and actual) of Abbot Leontios of Patmos, as clarified by Poppe in an important study, may shed light on the workings of Byzantine Soft Power vis-à-vis the Holy Land, the target of many Rus pilgrims, and also the seat of a Rus prince in the service of Manuel I Komnenos.



Panel 1 (left to right: Angus Russell, Mirela Ivanova, Jonathan Shepard, Andrei Vinogradov)

The conference’s final session took the form of a panel, co-chaired by Dr Ivanova and Dr Andrzej Szabaciuk (Catholic University of Lublin). Discussion was lively and wide-ranging and tackled such questions as what the study of the Humanities can and should be doing in today’s world – the uses of the Humanities in, for example, fostering a sense of citizenship while looking beyond one’s own borders. If viewpoints from Kiev or Moscow are (understandably) rather different from those at points further west, the desirability of putting study of the Humanities on a firm, independent basis was clear to all. So, too, was the need to give younger scholars from different countries and cultures the chance to exchange facts and thoughts and engage in joint-projects: such projects, with their pooling of expertise, are all the more appropriate for interdisciplinary subjects like the World of the Slavs in the premodern era. The conference may itself be one small step towards realising this aim. At the same time, several Oxford attendees tried to limit their carbon footprint by travelling at least one way by train – and would thoroughly recommend this to all colleagues.

From their different angles, the papers also served to illustrate and enliven the original themes and purpose of the conference, in keeping with the work and thought of Andrzej Poppe: the land of Rus was from its beginnings a ‘meeting-place of different cultures’, something that twenty-first-century decision-makers overlook at their peril.

Jonathan Shepard

## Martyrdom on the Margins conference

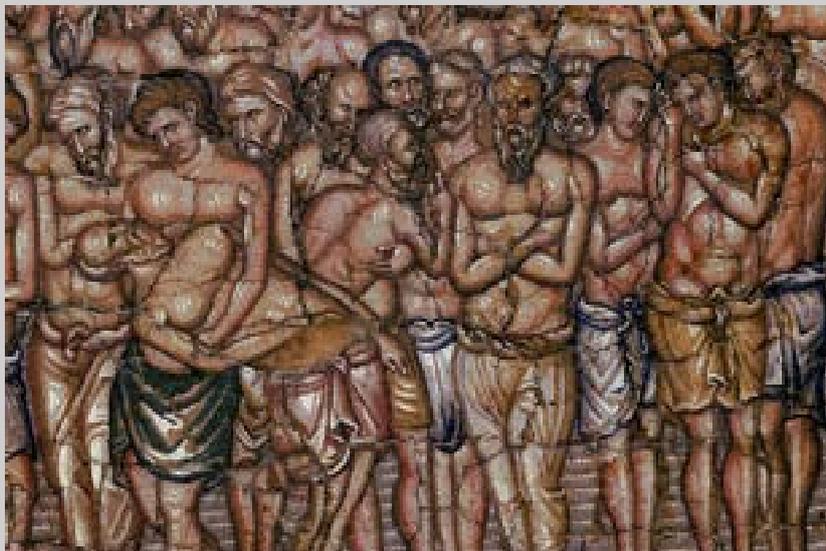
20<sup>th</sup> February 2020

The OCBR made a grant of £1500 towards the running of this interdisciplinary and trans-historical conference, which focussed on the place of martyrdom in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam during the first millennium CE.

The idea of martyrdom features prominently in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Despite this, pre-modern Jews, Christians, and Muslims often understood martyrdom in radically different ways. This conference aimed to explore both the similarities and differences between ideas of 'dying for God' in the three religions, stretching from the Hellenistic to the Medieval periods. In particular, it explored the concept of 'martyrdom on the margins,' that is, cases which diverge from the classic model of martyrdom most closely associated with the saints of the pre-Constantinian period. This included, but was not limited to Jewish martyrs in the Seleucid and Roman periods, martyrs who emerged through intra-Christian violence, martyrs in Shi'i or Khariji Islam, or Jewish martyrdom at the time of the Crusades. It also included reflections on the theological significance of martyrdom in the three religious traditions, the semantic range of the word 'martyr' in various pre-modern languages, the rhetoric of martyrdom and its connection to biblical tradition, early Christian, Rabbinic, Islamic and the Qur'an. Possible influence between and among the three religions was also considered

The goal is to understand martyrdom more broadly by exploring non-traditional manifestations of the practice, both as an event in time and its literary, liturgical, and theological afterlives. By studying martyrdom 'on the margins,' we stand to better understand what is central to tradition more broadly, the ways in which innovation is introduced, how old practices are revived, and how minority traditions become majority ones. Contemplating practices on the margins also prompts us to rethink what constitutes a 'canon'; indeed, what texts constitute the most significant examples of martyrological literature and how can these be reconceptualized through study of sources often regarded as 'peripheral'?

A report by Christian Sahnner on the conference follows.



The Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia (detail), Late Byzantine, ca. 1300. Byzantine Collection, BZ.1947.24, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

# Martyrdom on the Margins

20/02/2020

MBI Al Jaber Building, Corpus Christi College,  
Oxford



Sponsored by:  
The Centre of the Study of the Bible in the Humanities | Faculty of  
Theology and Religion | Faculty of Oriental Studies | Oxford Centre  
for Byzantine Research | Oriel College | Corpus Christi College |  
Convened by: Prof. Hindy Najman and Prof. Christian Sahner

## Workshop Report

On 20 February 2020, “Martyrdom on the Margins,” a one-day workshop focusing on martyrdom in premodern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, was held at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. The event, which received significant financial support from OCBR, was a great success, attracting an interdisciplinary audience of several dozen scholars and students throughout the day. This included large numbers from the late antique and Byzantine studies community. The event was organised under the auspices of the Oxford Centre for the Study of the Bible in the Humanities, a new initiative based at Oriel College and led by Professor Hindy Najman of the Faculty of Theology. The workshop was convened by Professor Najman and Christian Sahner as an attempt to build bridges between different faculties and intellectual circles within the university working on the three religious traditions.

Another impetus for the workshop was the recent publication of Christian Sahner’s monograph, *Christian Martyrs under Islam* (Princeton, 2018), which explored “marginal” or “non-traditional” examples of martyrdom and martyrdom discourses in the late antique and early medieval Middle East. The goal of the event was thus to explore parallel examples of “marginal” martyrdom traditions in the three great monotheistic religions, and through these to explore questions of intellectual centres and peripheries, cross-cultural influences, and the development of literary canons, among other issues.



Adam Gaiser



Hindy Najman

The workshop featured a distinguished group of scholars who traveled to Oxford from around the world, along with several local participants. They included:

Jan Willem van Henten (University of Amsterdam) – The Marginality of Ancient Jewish Martyrdom

Israel Yuval (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) – Jewish Martyrdom as Halachic Transgression

Anna Abulafia (University of Oxford) – The Polemics of Martyrdom in the Hebrew Chronicles of the First Crusade

Elizabeth Castelli (Barnard College) – Hostile Witnesses: Making Martyrs out of Persecutors in Lactantius's *De mortibus persecutorum*

Mark Edwards (University of Oxford) – Were the Early Christians Persecuted?

Christian Sahner (University of Oxford) – Community and Identity in the Christian Martyrs of the Early Islamic Period

Sean Anthony (Ohio State University) – The Crucified Martyrs of the Early Shī'ah: Understanding their Late Antique, and Early Islamic, Context

Adam Gaiser (Florida State University) – Early Shurāt (Khārijite) Poetry on Martyrs



Sean Anthony

Not only did OCBR contribute to the cost of the workshop, but it also generously supported the cost of food at two lunchtime talks given by conference speakers. The first was by Sean Anthony, who on 19 February at St Cross College discussed his new book about the origins of the biography of the Prophet Muhammad. The second was by Adam Gaiser, who on 21 February at the Oriental Institute discussed his research on the origins of the Khariji movement in early Islam. Both events were a success, attracting about a dozen attendees each, mainly from the communities of late antique and Islamic studies.

This was among the last international conferences to take place in Oxford before the Coronavirus crisis hit in March 2020. It is therefore with gratitude that the organisers wish to thank the OCBR for its support, and it is with eager anticipation that they look forward to collaborating again in better times.

Christian C. Sahner

Associate Professor of Islamic History, Fellow of St Cross College

Faculty of Oriental Studies &



Present a lunchtime talk on early Islamic history

Adam Gaiser

Professor of Religion, Florida State University

**Tradition, Text and Taxonomy at the Origins of the Ibādī Movement:  
A Study in Critical Approaches to Early "Khārījism"**



Friday 21 February 2020

13.00-14.00

Spalding Room, Oriental Institute

For questions, please contact: [christian.sahner@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:christian.sahner@orinst.ox.ac.uk)

*A light lunch will be served at both events*

Faculty of Oriental Studies &



Present a lunchtime talk on early Islamic history

Sean W. Anthony

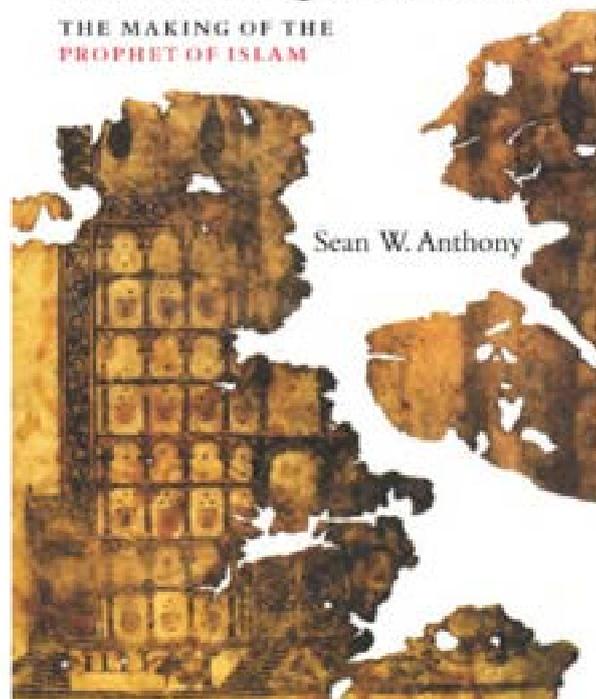
Associate Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Ohio State University

A discussion of his forthcoming book:

*Muhammad and the Empires of Faith: The Making of the Prophet of Islam* (California, 2020)

# Muhammad and the Empires of Faith

THE MAKING OF THE  
PROPHET OF ISLAM



Wednesday 19 February 2020

13.00-14.00

Ian Skipper Room, St Cross College

For questions, please contact: [christian.sahner@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:christian.sahner@orinst.ox.ac.uk)

A light lunch will be served at both events

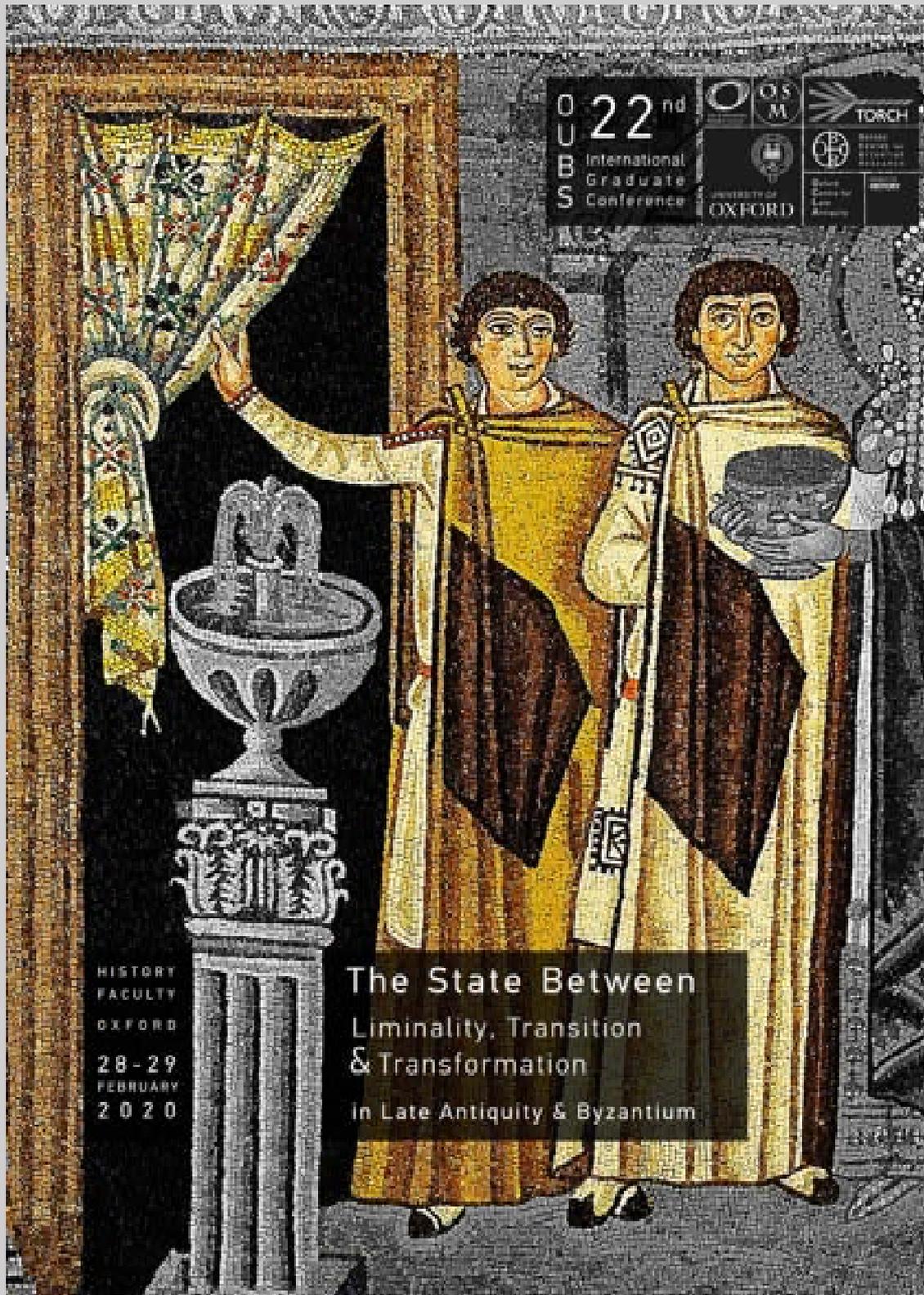
The Oxford University Byzantine Society's 22nd International Graduate Conference  
28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020

"The State Between: Liminality, Transition and Transformation in Late Antiquity and Byzantium."

The OCBR donated £600 towards the running of this conference which attracted 48 graduate and post-doctoral speakers. A further £300 was donated in the form of travel bursaries for participants from the EU so as to widen access to the conference and enable young scholars from across Europe to meet and exchange ideas.



Algiers - National Museum of Antiquities – ivory Marlena Whiting/Manar al-Athar



22<sup>nd</sup> OUBS International Graduate Conference at the History Faculty  
'The State Between: Liminality, Transition and Transformation in Late Antiquity and Byzantium'

## The State Between: Liminality, Transition and Transformation in Late Antiquity and Byzantium

For many centuries, Byzantium was characterised in historiographical narratives as a transitional state: a retrospective bridge between antiquity and modernity. However, while Byzantium undoubtedly acted as an intermediary between these worlds and eras, it is important to recognise the creativity, originality, and vitality which characterised this empire and its population. Much as Late Antiquity has been reframed recently as a period of evolution rather than decline, so too can the Byzantine world be viewed in a new light through the lens of liminality. This conference aims to explore the fluid and the unfixed, periods of transition and ambiguity; the state of being 'betwixt and between'.

There are many cases in which liminality can be applied effectively as a historiographical tool to understand aspects of the Late Antique and Byzantine world. For instance, the lives of individuals were shaped by liminal experiences, in both secular and religious spheres. From the experience of widowhood to that of a novice entering monastic life, Byzantine lives were marked by the transition from one social status and identity to another: the middle phase in which liminal personae are simultaneously 'no longer' and 'not yet', existing between positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention and ceremonial. Liminal spaces permeated societies in the broader Byzantine world, from local landscapes, to religious buildings, to household interiors. As such, liminality provides a constructive framework with which to approach the transition and transformation of the Late Roman city to Medieval Islamic urbanism. On a larger scale, polities formerly on the periphery of the Byzantine world (the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula, the Steppe, the Slavic *oecumene*) often came suddenly to the foreground of the political landscape, resulting in the formation of new cultural networks and the shaping of identities.

Liminality is often defined in spatial terms, but it is also about process. For the cultural anthropologist Victor Turner, a 'liminal phase' can be an event or process which involves the disruption of existing hierarchies and power-structures. This definition of liminality as an inter-structural phase not only applies to political and economic change, but also may be extended to the subjunctive world of ideas and philosophical thought: the realm of what is possible and what may be.

Including contributions on political, social, literary, architectural and artistic history, and covering geographical areas throughout the central and eastern Mediterranean and beyond, this conference aims to provide an interdisciplinary and kaleidoscopic view of the Late Antique and Byzantine world.

Poster Background Photo: Mosaic of Theodora - Basilica of San Vitale (Ravenna, Italy)  
© Petar Milošević / CC BY-SA

**The State Between:  
Liminality, Transition &  
Transformation in  
Late Antiquity & Byzantium**

The Oxford University Byzantine Society's  
22<sup>nd</sup> International Graduate Conference

28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> February 2020  
History Faculty, Oxford

Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**09:00** Registration

**09:30** Opening Remarks

Daniel Gallaher  
(OUBS President)

**10:00** Sessions 1a & 1b

**1a** | Liminality in Middle Byzantine Literature  
Chair: Josh Hitt

Vasily Zagrebin  
(Lomonosov Moscow State University)  
*Apollonios of Tyane in Middle Byzantine Literature*

Yan Zariпов  
(St Hilda's College, Oxford)  
*Theodore Prodromos between Christian Piety and Classical Learning*

Alberto Ravani  
(Exeter College, Oxford)  
*And Also Others Have Written "Wald's":  
The Boundaries of the "Wald" in 12th-century  
Byzantine Literature*

**1b** | The Syriac Frontier  
Chair: William Bunce

Bogdan Draghici  
(Wolfson College, Oxford)  
*"How Can a Son Raise against His Father?"  
Cultural, Theological and Artistic Mutations at  
the Outskirts of the Empire*

Daria Jedrzejewska  
(Adam Mickiewicz University)  
*The "Tale of Euphemia and the Goth" and the  
Shaping of Local Identity in Elessa within the  
5th-century Roman Empire*

Nicholas Tziotis  
(King's College London)  
*Chrysostom on Marriage: Syriac Ideas  
Transformed in an Antiochene Context*

**11:30** Coffee Break

**12:00** Sessions 2a & 2b

**2a** | Settlements in Transformation  
Chair: Katerina Vevalliou

Vasiliki Arkoumani  
(National Technical University of Athens)  
*The Transformation of the Urban Character of  
Cydonia (Chania) under Venetian Rule*

Jonathan Query  
(Durham University)  
*Halmiris: A Fortification in Transition*

Robert Hayes  
(St Hilda's College, Oxford)  
*Between Public and Private Space in the  
Aristocratic Residences at Mystras*

**2b** | Overlapping Authorities  
Chair: Chloé Agar

Nikola Bogachev  
(Central European University)  
*Symeon the New Theologian*

Matthew Hasall  
(University of Cambridge)  
*Intertextual Political Debate in Justinian's  
Constantinople*

James Cogbill  
(Worcester College, Oxford)  
*The Liminality of Imperial Kinship by Choice  
in Late Byzantium*

**13:30** Lunch

**14:30** Sessions 3a & 3b

**3a** | Negotiating Space  
Chair: Robert Hayes

David Williams  
(Royal Holloway)  
*Hagia Sophia as Built by Muhammad and  
al-Khidr*

Mathilde Sauquet  
(Independent researcher)  
*Islamic Influences in Norman-Sicilian Art  
after Roger II*

Alessandro Carabia  
(University of Birmingham)  
*Dying on a Frontier Region:  
Reassessing the Contribution of Necropoleis  
in the Study of Late Antiquity and Byzantine  
Liguria (5th-7th centuries)*

**3b** | The Literary and the Liminal  
Chair: Alberto Ravani

Anna Trento  
(Università degli Studi di Padova)  
*Literary Sources on Monastic Settlements in  
Palestine and Sinai in the 6th-7th centuries*

Chloé Agar  
(St Cross College, Oxford)  
*Transition and Transformation in Coptic  
Hagiography*

Ekaterina Rybakova  
(Lomonosov Moscow State University)  
*"Pneuma": Between Body, Soul and Mind*

**16:00** Coffee Break

**16:30** Sessions 4a & 4b

**4a** | The Eastern Frontier  
Chair: Callan Meynell

George Robert Luff  
(Independent researcher)  
*Liminality in Politics and Identity on the  
Eastern Frontier of Byzantium, c.969-1071*

Eric Medawar  
(Princeton University)  
*Bilingual Arab-Greek Seals and the Lives of  
Arabs in 10th and 11th century Byzantium*

Joaquin Semano del Pozo  
(University of Edinburgh)  
*Between Medieval Legend and Byzantine  
History: Emperor Heraclius' Single Combat*

**4b** | The Slavic World  
Chair: Sofia Simões Coelho

Angus Russell  
(University of Cambridge)  
*"Tango", "Myt" and the Politics of Muscovite  
Fiscal Appropriation*

Paolo Angelini  
(Independent researcher)  
*The Slavs' Transition from Customary Law  
to Written Law Systems*

Benjamin Gray  
(Balliol College, Oxford)  
*"The Buried People":  
Novgorod and the Baltic Finns*

**18:00** Wine Reception  
... Followed by Informal Dinner

## The State Between: Liminality, Transition & Transformation in Late Antiquity & Byzantium

The Oxford University Byzantine Society's  
22<sup>nd</sup> International Graduate Conference

28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> February 2020  
History Faculty, Oxford

Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020

09:00 Registration and Coffee

10:00 Sessions 5a & 5b

5a | Experiencing the Liminal  
Chair: Miranda Gronow

Shandra Lamasaur  
(Kellogg College, Oxford)

*The Kelsey Pendant: The Performative and  
Sensorial Experience of an Early Byzantine  
Amulet*

Julian Wood  
(University College, Oxford)

*Between 'Chroma' and Christology:  
The Role and Function of Colour in the 'Three  
Treatises' of John of Damascus*

Alexis Gorby  
(St John's College, Oxford)

*Transformation of the Crossing of the Red Sea  
Sarcophagi*

5b | Intercultural Dialogues  
Chair: Lorenzo Sacconi

Carmelo Nicolò Benvenuto  
(Università degli Studi della Basilicata, Potenza)  
*Byzantine Dialogues with the Latins during  
the Comnenian Age*

John-Francis Martin  
(Oriel College, Oxford)  
*Neither Greek nor Latin:  
Cardinal Bessarion's Encyclical to the Greeks  
and the Flight of the Byzantine Pro-Unionists*

Sofia Simões Coelho  
(University College, Oxford)  
*Holy Fools in Byzantine and Persian Sources:  
Liminal Behaviours and Urban Environments*

11:30 Coffee Break

12:00 Sessions 6a & 6b

4a | Thresholds of the Divine  
Chair: Julian Wood

Natalia Turabelidze  
(Ivane Javakhisvili Tbilisi State University)  
*Personification in Medieval  
Georgian Monumental Painting:  
Mosaics of the Ishkhani Cathedral*

Zarifa Aliqperova  
(Wolfson College, Oxford)  
*'Alam al-Din Qaysar and His Shrine for Rumi*

Ivan Alekseen  
(Russian State University of the Humanities)  
*A Cycle of Apostolic Suffering in a Chapel of the  
Hagia Sophia in Ohrid*

4b | Between Armenia and Byzantium  
Chair: Daniel Gallaher

Lewis Road  
(University of St Andrews)  
*The 'Abozhar'ic' and the Construction of  
Armenian Geo-political Space in the 7th century*

Lucas McMahon  
(Princeton University)  
*Mleh the Armenian between Constantinople  
and the Byzantine-Abbasid Frontier*

Stephanie Forrest  
(University of Cambridge)  
*'Liminal' Byzantium in the 7th and 8th  
centuries Viewed through Armenian Eyes*

13:30 Lunch

14:30 Sessions 7a & 7b

7a | Boundaries and Transgression  
Chair: Rebekah Wahnou-Pym

Daniel Pleshak  
(Saint Petersburg University)  
*Patriarchal Drag: Disempowerment and  
Changing Roles in George of Pisidia's 'Bellum  
Avanicum'*

Kristina Ilko  
(University of Cambridge)  
*The Cult of Saint Marina between  
Constantinople and Venice*

Lora Webb  
(Stanford University)  
*The Patron and Moses in the Bible of  
Leo the Sakellarios*

7b | Beyond the Frontier  
Chair: James Cogbill

Benjamin Sharkey  
(Magdalen College, Oxford)  
*Christian Conversion among Turkic Nomads*

Ólafur Haukur Árnason  
(Corpus Christi College, Oxford)  
*Armenian and Byzantine Ecclesiastics in  
11th-century Iceland*

Raymond Ngh  
(Keble College, Oxford)  
*'Barbarians and Imperialisation':  
A Comparison of Liminal Identity across  
Eurasia in Late Antiquity*

16:00 Coffee Break

16:30 Sessions 8a & 8b

8a | A World Transformed  
Chair: John-Francis Martin

Isabella Heinemann  
(St Hilda's College, Oxford)  
*Mehmed II as Roman Emperor:  
Kritovoulos' 'History' Contextualised*

Sima Menikidou  
(University of Cyprus)  
*Cosmopolitan Trebizond:  
the City of Cross-cultural Entanglements*

Lorenzo Sacconi  
(Wolfson College, Oxford)  
*Between Turks and Latins:  
Liminal Aspects of Greek Captivity and Their  
Centrality in 14th-century History*

8b | Reframing Belief  
Chair: Raymond Ngh

William Bunce  
(Wadham College, Oxford)  
*Misphysikum on Trial in the Courts of Justin II*

Ben Kybett  
(University of Cambridge)  
*Clevidian and Christianisation:  
Fighting Religiosus Transformation at the  
Late Antique Court*

Wojciech Nadobnik  
(Adam Mickiewicz University)  
*Pagan as a Liminal Status in the Letters of  
Theodoret of Cymbus*

18:00 Closing Remarks

18:30 Wine Reception

20:00 Conference Dinner

Between the 28th and 29th February 2020, the Oxford University Byzantine Society (OUBS) hosted its 22nd International Graduate Conference at the History Faculty. Entitled ‘The State Between: Liminality, Transition and Transformation in Late Antiquity and Byzantium’, the conference invited speakers from over 20 countries to apply the framework of liminality to their research. Over the two days, students and academics fought through the cold, rain and hail to listen to papers covering diverse aspects of the Late Antique and Byzantine world.

Originally used by anthropologists to describe rites of passage, the concept of liminality has since been successfully adopted by scholars from a range of disciplines. Viewing the Late Antique and Byzantine world through the lens of liminality brings to the foreground aspects of ‘in-betweenness’, emphasising fluidity and dynamism rather than discrete categorisation. Such an approach lends itself particularly well to Late Antique and Byzantine studies, given the field’s interdisciplinary character and its extraordinary resilience to simplistic definition.

One of the strongest facets of this year’s conference was the extent to which its participants engaged with the theme in a sophisticated and creative way. One session, whose geographical focus ranged from Iceland to central Eurasia to China, illustrated the global scope of Byzantine studies as well as the immense value of comparative approaches. The emphasis on liminality as an interpretative framework also encouraged interdisciplinary discussion as papers were delivered by specialists in diverse fields, from Late Antique Theology to Medieval Georgian Art. These sessions are representative of the very high quality of the papers throughout the conference, many of which led to keen discussion both inside and outside the seminar room.



Behind the scenes, the many mundane but crucial tasks required to keep the conference running were carried out by a small dedicated group of student volunteers. These ranged from assembling and handing out conference packs to attendees, to arranging college accommodation for speakers and chairing sessions. The outbreak of COVID-19 in Italy presented an additional challenge for the organisation of the conference this year. Thankfully some speakers were able to give their papers remotely, and those present showed considerable patience and understanding as adjustments were made to the conference timetable.

The immediate impact of the conference has been quantifiable to a certain extent. Speakers engaged with the conference feedback collection process, which will be used to shape the event’s organisation in future years. A volume of selected proceedings will also be prepared for publication. This will provide speakers with an excellent opportunity to hone their arguments and respond to the feedback of their peers. Above all, it is hoped that the connections formed

between speakers will blossom into a supportive and multidisciplinary community of postgraduate scholars. Networks such as these are more crucial than ever when facing the challenges of these uncertain times.

Over the years, the OUBS conference has benefitted from the stalwart support of the Oxford Centre of Byzantine Research (OCBR). Whilst presenting and discussing our own research is a necessary part of our academic development, these conferences often place a large financial burden upon postgraduate students. Thanks to an extraordinary donation from the OCBR, however, the OUBS were able to provide travel bursaries to speakers for the very first time. The conference was organised by Dan Gallaher, Josh Hitt, Lorenzo Saccon and Katerina Vavaliou, with support from The Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research, The Oxford Centre for Late Antiquity, Oxford Medieval Studies, The Arts and Humanities Research Council, The Oxford Research Centre for Humanities, and The Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies.

Dan Gallaher and Joshua Hitt  
President & Treasurer of the Oxford University Byzantine Society 2019-20  
DPhil candidates



Ivory of the Deposition of Christ, 12<sup>th</sup> Century, Constantinople at the National Museum of Ravenna  
Hendrix/Byantine Legacy

David

## A Celebration of Mary Whitby

13<sup>th</sup> March 2020

The OCBR contributed £750 to this international colloquium which celebrated the career and academic contributions of Mary Whitby, who retired in 2019. Speakers were asked to present papers which intersect with Mary's many contributions to Late Antique and Byzantine Studies.

A report of the event follows.



Kissufim - church - mosaic

Andres Reyes/Manar al-Athar

## Colloquium Report

The event in honour of Mary Whitby had the fortune and misfortune of being perhaps the very last in-person event of 2019. The virus was just starting to arrive in the UK, and despite some hesitation, Mary decided to go ahead! It was a lovely event to end an in-person year on, even if unknowingly. Some speakers could not make it due to travel restrictions already in place, but online technologies went our way and we had excellent papers in honour of Mary from afar from Cladua Rapp (Vienna), Katerina Carvounis (Athens) and Filip Doroszewski (Warsaw) as well as wonderful in person tributes by Peter Heather, Nadine Viermann (Heidelberg), Marina Bazzani (Oxford) and Gillian Clarke (Bristol). Many of Byzantium's great and the good came to pay their respects. One James Howard-Johnston traversed much of the country to make it. It was, all in all, a great success, and if only a small fragment of the justly deserved gratitude and appreciation Mary is due for her decades of hard work as scholar and teacher at Oxford.

Mirela Ivanova

Junior Research Fellow in Medieval History

## A CELEBRATION OF MARY WHITBY



Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March

Rees Davies Room, Faculty of History, Oxford

Speakers will include Gillian Clark, Claudia Rapp, Marina Bazzani, Katerina Carvounis, Nadine Viermann, Filip Doroszewski, and others.

Full details will be circulated later in Hilary Term.

To register for the event, please contact either Phil Booth ([philip.booth@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:philip.booth@theology.ox.ac.uk)) or Mirela Ivanova ([mirela.ivanova@univ.ox.ac.uk](mailto:mirela.ivanova@univ.ox.ac.uk)).

Supported by



Cyprus in the Long Late Antiquity workshop  
18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (Postponed to 2021)

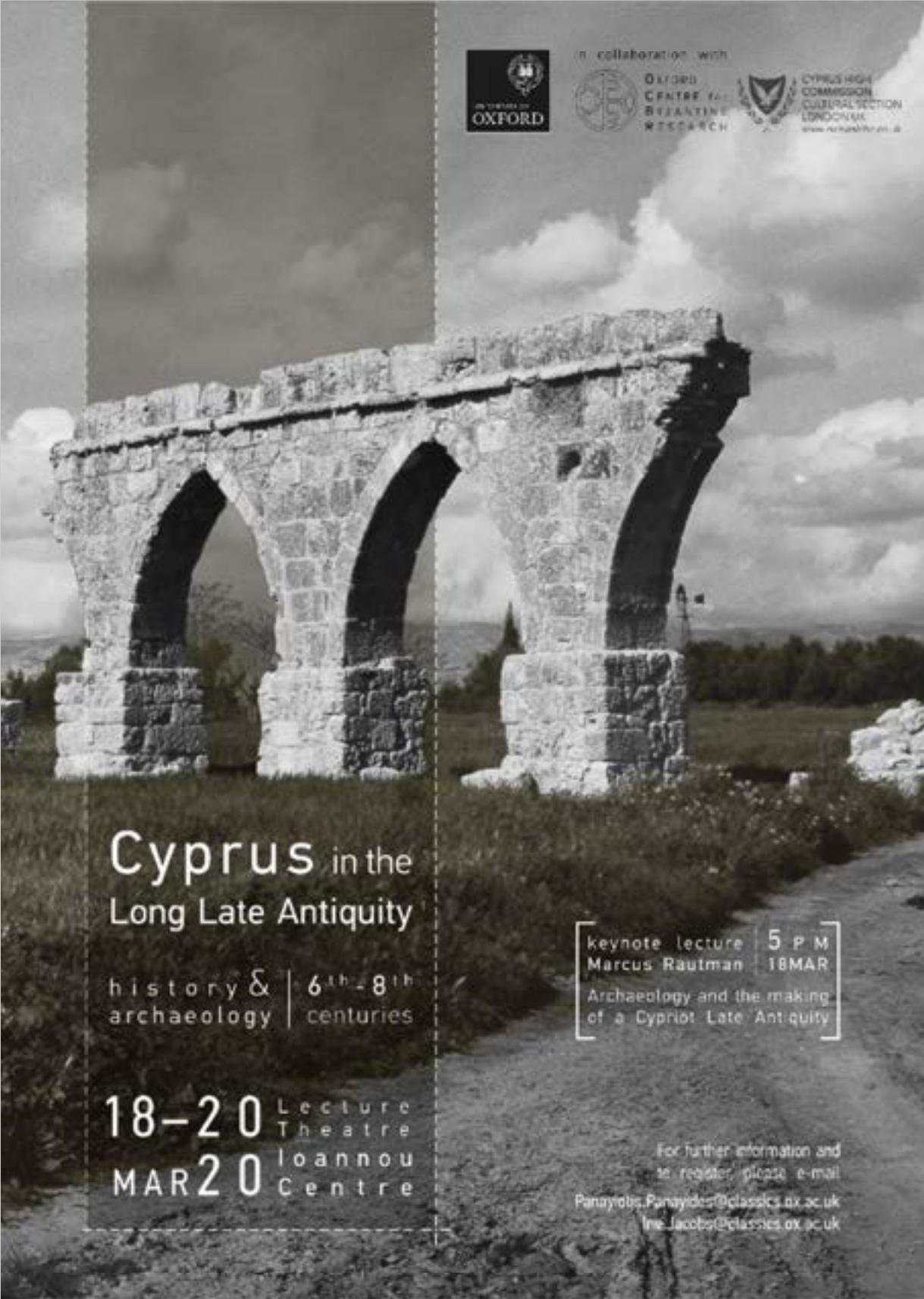
The OCBR committed £4,000 towards the running of the Cyprus in Long Late Antiquity workshop, which will now take place in the academic year 2020-21. The workshop will be a great opportunity to reframe the scholastic lens through which Cypriot landscapes, both geographical and sociological, are viewed and the OCBR welcomes the opportunity to contribute.

This workshop will bring together archaeologists and historians engaged with various aspects of Cyprus in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, in order to collate the results of recent and past work across diverse fields in a comprehensive way. The aim is to reconstruct the complex landscape of Cyprus towards the end of Antiquity, bringing the disparate lives of its settlements to the forefront. Topics to be discussed include the development, appearance and/or disappearance of large and smaller settlements in the *chora*, their relationship with the cities, and their integration with the Mediterranean and the Capital; continuities, changes and ruptures on various levels (e.g. urban, social, administrative, ecclesiastical), especially those reflected on material culture (e.g. architecture, epigraphy, ceramics, coins, and other ‘small finds’); local production of pottery; advances in ceramic chronologies and their impact on the construction of archaeological narratives.

This conference will form the basis for a comprehensive edited volume. Participants to the workshop will present their own studies as well as discuss the structure and content of this volume and decide on further contributors.



Basilica of Sant' Apollinare in Classe     David Hendrix/Byzantine Legacy



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COMMISSION  
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# Cyprus in the Long Late Antiquity

history & | 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>  
archaeology | centuries

18-20 Lecture  
Theatre  
MAR 20 Ioannou  
Centre

keynote lecture | 5 P M  
Marcus Rautman | 18 MAR  
Archaeology and the making  
of a Cypriot Late Antiquity

For further information and  
to register, please e-mail  
[Panayiotis.Panayides@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Panayiotis.Panayides@classics.ox.ac.uk)  
[Ina.Jacobs@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Ina.Jacobs@classics.ox.ac.uk)

## Collecting Africa: Before, during and after colonial overrule

27<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (Postponed to 2021)

The OCBR was delighted to grant £565 towards the Collecting Africa conference, which will now be held in the academic year 2020-21. The ethics and narratives surrounding collected objects require rigorous interrogation and the OCBR is pleased to have the opportunity to support a conference doing just this.

In recent years European and US museums and libraries have been facing mounting calls for the return of objects taken or acquired from Africa and other parts of the world during the Colonial era. The objects, the ways in which they are gathered and presented, and the institutions which house them have become contested, even when they are not obviously tied to histories of violence and dispossession. The contestation is driven by a greater awareness of the relations between knowledge and politics, but also by changes in society and the balance of power. In the media, attention is often deflected away from the complex history underlying the acquisition, formation, and study of these collections towards issues that are relevant to the competing interests and struggles of individuals and modern societies, which shows that these debates are as much about the present as they are about what actually happened in the past. Museums in the UK have responded in different ways to these challenges, by seeking to include culturally diverse communities and ethnic minorities in their activities, by reaching out to institutions in Africa to offer collaborations, and by being open about the histories of colonial violence that brought these objects into their current setting. While scholars and governments debate on the institutional actions and activities that should be taken to address these contested collections.

Throughout history, traders, museum representatives, travellers and missionaries from Europe and Africa collected objects, gathered botanical and mineral samples, and took photographs for a variety of educational and socio-political reasons, who were assisted in these processes by African interlocutors engaged in a series of political projects of their own. Taken as a whole, these collections can be viewed as historical records of choices and values, while the processes which led to their creation and categorization bear witness to relations of power and knowledge. How did these interactions reshape their respective concepts and categories about each “other”? Did these collecting patterns change over time?

This conference seeks to place these debates in a historical perspective and provide an analysis of materials from Africa in UK collections that focuses on the significances they possessed in the contexts from which they were taken and on the significances they assumed and assume in the contexts in which they were and are deposited and displayed. To what extent are the current narratives reliant on vocabularies and paradigms that need to be reassessed? Papers that consider the acquisition of material before, during, and after the age of new imperialism in comparative terms are particularly encouraged. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the acquisition of objects from different regions, including north Africa, and from different epochs, including the classical and late antique periods. Presentations that explore collections of natural history are equally welcome.



## COLLECTING AFRICA: BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER COLONIAL OVERRULE

April 27, 2020, St Luke's Chapel, Radcliffe Humanities,  
Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG

**8.30-9.00 | REGISTRATION & COFFEE**

### MORNING SESSIONS

**9.00-9.10 | OPENING REMARKS**

**SESSION 1 | Chair: Johanna Zetterstrom-Sharp (Horniman Museum)**

09.10-09.30 Jeremiah Garsh, (University of Cambridge) *'Repatriation' as '(re)insertion': A quest to return something new*

09.30-09.50 Ali Bennett (Paul Mellon Centre), *Ugandan Collections and Collectors: From colonization to decolonization*

09.50-10.10 Eyob Derillo (British Library), *Restitution or Decolonisation: The Magdala Manuscripts as a case study*

10.10-10.20 Q&A

**SESSION 2 | Chair: David M. Anderson (University of Warwick)**

10.20-10.40 Zoe Cormack (Oxford University), *Frontier markets in African objects: Collecting during colonial violence and civil wars in South Sudan*

10.40-11.00 Rachel Jennings (Powell-Cotton Museum), *Hunting for science and profit: The 'Merfield collection' and its Cameroonian collectors*

11.00-11.20 Dorothen Reule (University of Hamburg), *The Juul-Jensen Collection of Ethiopic manuscripts in the Bodleian Library: A comparative view*

11.20-11.30 Q&A

**11.30-11.50 | COFFEE BREAK**

**SESSION 3 | Chair: Mai Music (Bodleian Library)**

11.50-12.10 Jacopo Gnisci (University of Oxford), *Imaging and collecting nineteenth-century Ethiopia*

12.10-12.30 Chris Wingfield (University of East Anglia), *Unicorn Hunting? Ontologies and collecting in early nineteenth century South Africa*

12.30-12.50 David M. Anderson (University of Warwick), *Imperial loot: British military expeditions in Africa, c.1864-1884*

12.50-13.00 Q&A

**13.00-13.50 | LUNCH BREAK**

## **AFTERNOON SESSIONS**

**SESSION 4 | Chair: Jacopo Gnsel (University of Oxford)**

13.50-14.10 Famoye Abiodun Daniels (Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria), *K.C. Murray: A changing trend in the European collection of Nigerian arts, 1928-1960*

14.10-14.30 Judith Opoku-Boateng (Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana),

*Tapping history to rebuild the future: J. H. Kwabena Nketia and the making of a postcolonial archive*

14.30-14.40 Q&A

**SESSION 5 | Chair: Shadreck Chirikure (University of Cape Town)**

14.40-15.00 Lisa Bernasek (University of Winchester), *Change or continuity? Tuareg material culture at the Horniman Museum*

15.00-15.20 Heba Abd ed Gawad and Alice Stevenson (UCL), *Collecting Egypt: Centring Egyptian communities within legacies of British archaeology*

15.20-15.30 Q&A

**15.30-15.50 | COFFEE BREAK**

**SESSION 6 | Chair: David Pratten (University of Oxford)**

15.50-16.10 JoAnn McGregor (University of Sussex), *Re-narrating a missionary's curios: Decolonizing dialogues in Botswana and Brighton*

16.10-16.30 Dan Gordon (Great North Museum), *Abel's Africa: Decolonising the Chapman Collection*

16.30-16.50 J.C. Nyala (University of Oxford), *'Not what you think they are': Reconstructing history with African collections*

16.50-17.00 Q&A

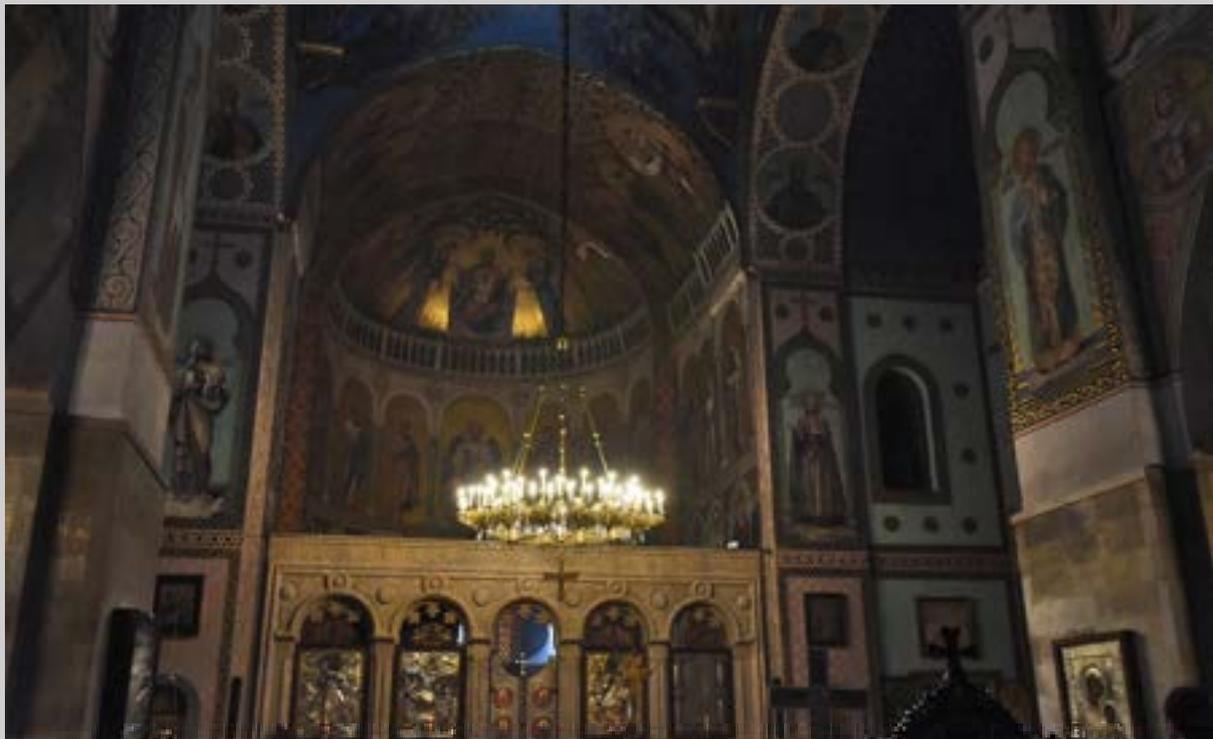
**17.00-17.30 | CLOSING REMARKS: Dan Hicks (Pitt Rivers) & Shadreck Chirikure (University of Cape Twn)**

## The Virgin Beyond Borders

29<sup>th</sup> June – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 (Postponed to 2021)

The OCBR committed £2,000 to this international conference organised by Dr Niki Tsironi and originally due to take place in June 2020, which has been postponed until next academic year. The conference is part of a larger research project aiming to extend knowledge of the development of the cult of Mary beyond the traditional chronological and regional parameters applied within the field, particularly highlighting the Coptic (Egyptian) and Syriac evidence amongst the more widely studied Byzantine materials. It is hoped to bring these isolated fields into dialogue and foster a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approach to the field of Marian Studies, ultimately establishing a network of scholars whose work subsequently considers the complex interactions and networks of cultural and religious exchange that exist throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. The project was initiated by Dr. Niki Tsironi, Byzantinist at the Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation and Associate in Byzantine Studies at the Centre for Hellenic Studies, Harvard University and Dr. Sabrina Higgins, who is an Assistant Professor in the SNF Centre for Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser and both of whom are experts on the Virgin Mary.

The organisers hope that this international conference will offer the occasion to participants to forge a research network of international scholars working on the cult of Mary within the Late Antique and Byzantine periods, who might not otherwise have the opportunity to engage with the materials emerging from our various geospatial fields. They will be able to develop new theoretical approaches applicable to Marian Studies by challenging the conceptual undercurrents that dominate the contemporary discipline, i.e. ‘cult’, ‘ritual’, etc.



Church of the Virgin Mary Tbilisi

Ross Burns/Manar al-Athar

From Alexandria to Kabul: Languages, Cultures and Communities of the Sasanian World  
22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2020 (Postponed to 2021)

The OCBR has committed £2,000 to this workshop, which will focus on the tremendous linguistic diversity within the Sasanian Empire which ruled land roughly equivalent to Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Armenia, Yemen, and more from 224 CE to 651 CE. The Sasanian Empire was rival to the Roman and Byzantine Empires, and eventually was conquered by Arabs, who adopted much of their ruling ideology and many of their administrative practices. It ruled a greater territory than the Roman and Byzantine Empires, and its impact on history has been recognized, though remains highly underappreciated.

This workshop is particularly timely since it targets a topic — linguistic communities — that is central to numerous fields, including the Caucasian world of Armenia and Georgia; the Babylonian cultural zone including Christian churches using Syriac and the rabbinic Jewish communities; the Coptic communities in Egypt; and the Iranian world including Afghanistan and Central Asia in the East. The study of these Eastern late antique groups has continued to mature in the past decades and is sure to grow further given the many graduate students currently pursuing similar work. At the same time, many scholars are now asking more incisive questions about the Sasanian Empire's own attitude and actions towards those groups living under their rule and the diverse religious and cultural responses that constitute the multi-cultural hotbed of Iranian political hegemony in Eastern Late Antiquity.

The workshop aims to tackle these and a range of other questions pertaining to the socio-linguistic world of the Sasanian Empire. It will feature a variety of distinguished scholars from Europe and North America working at the intersection of a variety of fields. It also represents continued efforts to establish a new field of academic research – Iranian Late Antiquity – in the Faculty of Oriental Studies and the broader Late Antique and Byzantine community at Oxford. This effort draws on the presence of post-holders in Sasanian Studies and Syriac Studies and a Junior Research Fellow associated with both Linguistics and Classics, along with a range of other faculty, post-doctoral fellows, and graduate students working on the late antique and early medieval East. Finally, the workshop will follow on the heels of the highly successful Seminar Series the last two years also kindly sponsored by the OCBR, Oriental Studies, and Wolfson College's Ancient World Research Cluster. As a result, interest in the broader Iranian world in Oxford is high at precisely the time when the workshop will take place.

The programme includes the following speakers:

Samra Azarnouche (EPHE, Paris) – Pahlavi (Zoroastrian Middle Persian)

Adam Benkato (UC Berkeley) – Bactrian and Sogdian

Kevin van Bladel (Yale) – Arabic and New Persian

Aaron Butts (Catholic University of America) – Greek, Hebrew and Jewish Babylonian Aramaic

Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst (Berlin) – Middle Persian and Parthian Inscriptions

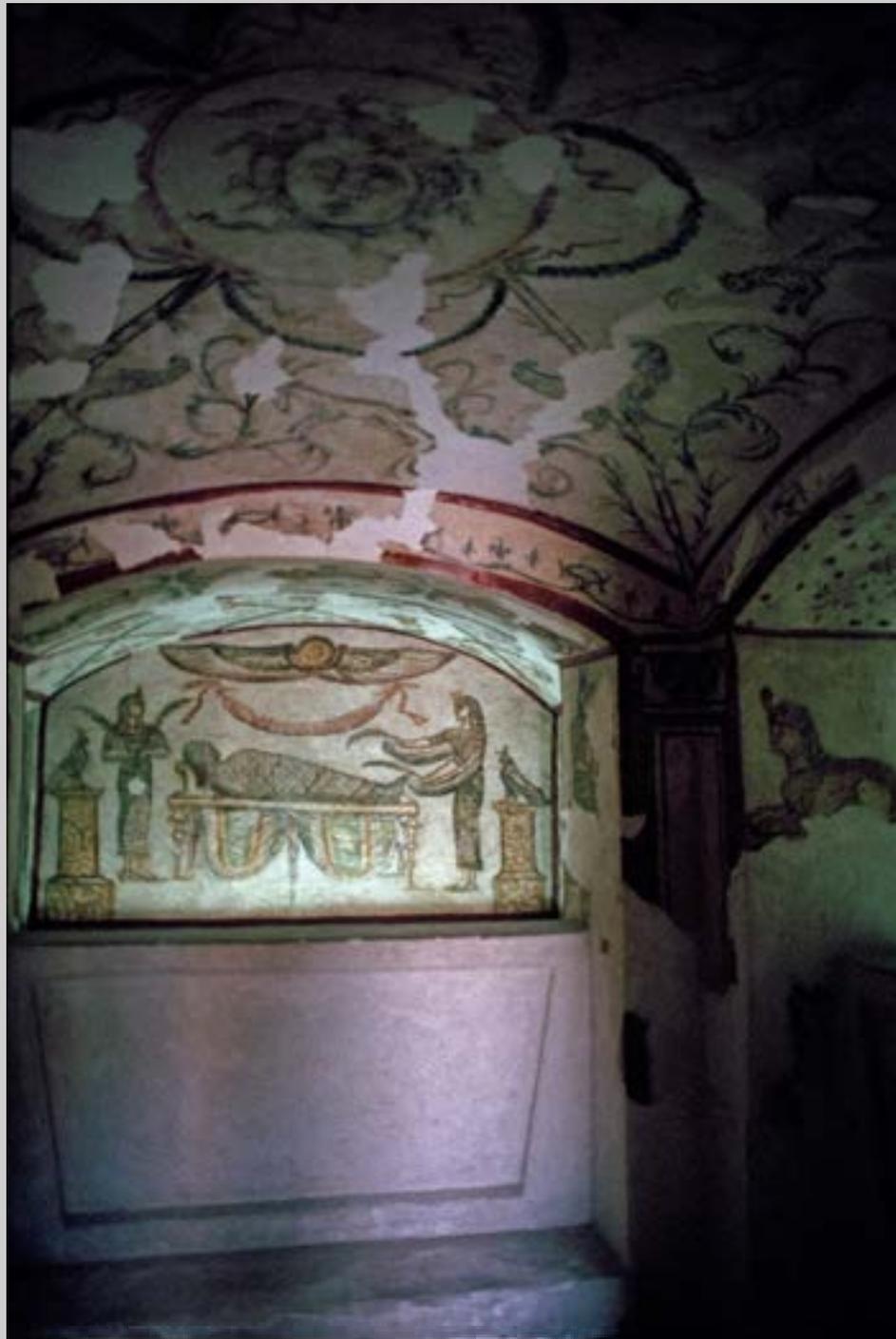
Tim Greenwood (St Andrews) – Armenian

Charles Häberl (Rutgers, New Jersey) – Mandaic and Aramaic Magic Bowls

Arietta Papaconstantinou (Reading) – Coptic

Steven Rapp (Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas) – Georgian

David Taylor (Oxford) – Syriac



Alexandria - Tigrane Pasha Tomb

Judith McKenzie/Manar al-Athar

## Armenian and Georgian historical garments – a heritage for heritage management in eastern Turkey

13<sup>th</sup> June (Postponed until 2021)

The OCBR granted £500 towards this workshop being organised by Vendi Jukić Buča to address the topic of Armenian and Georgian cultural heritage preservation in eastern Turkey. One route of protecting Armenian and Georgian ecclesiastical architecture is to raise awareness about its importance among local communities. This workshop will help to develop strategies in cultural management that utilise reconstructed historical garments. These are becoming a useful tool in the visualisation and perception of the past (e.g. in museums, tour guiding).

The conference proceedings will be published (open access) and the following are due to speak:

Professor Christina Maranci (Tufts University, paper on Byzantine sculpture)

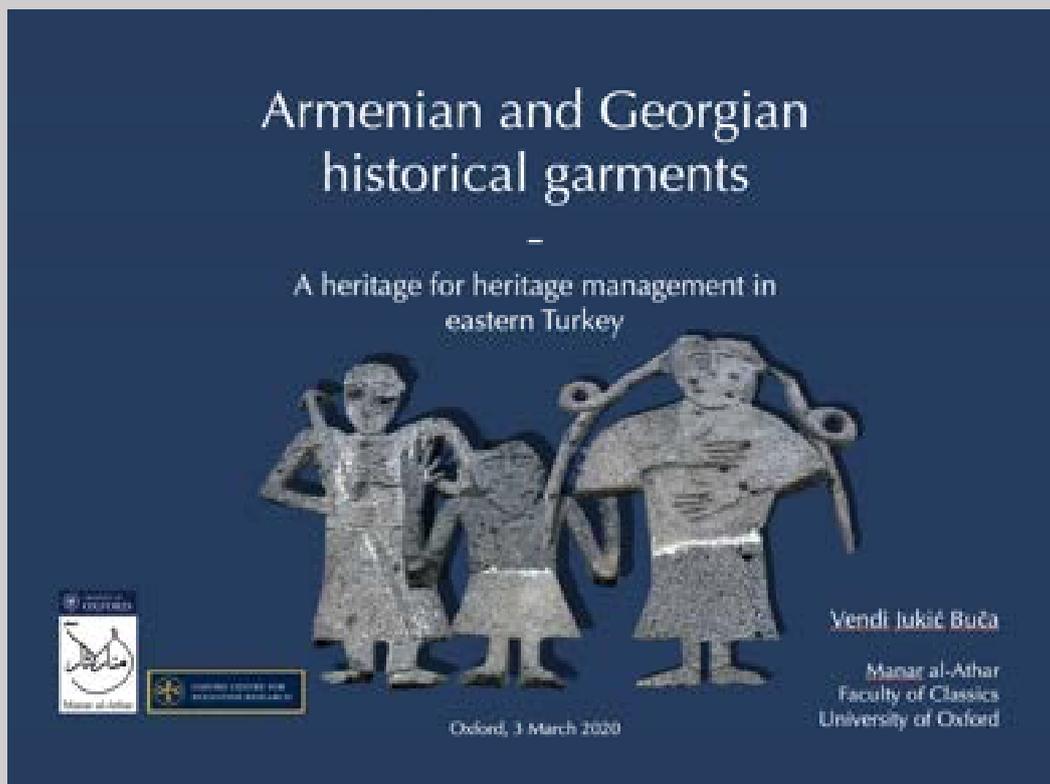
Dr Irene Giviashvili (Chubinashvili National Centre for Georgian Art History and Heritage Preservation, paper on Bagrationi donor images from the Georgian monuments of north-eastern Turkey)

Kristina Gwartzman (University of Ljubljana, paper on costumes as a visual instrument in managing cultural heritage).

Professor Lynn Jones (Florida State University)

Svetlana Poghosyan (Sardarapart Ethnomuseum Yerevan)

Dr Vendi Jukić Buča (Armenian ecclesiastical sites in the Kars Province, eastern Turkey, and their current state, preservation and revalorization).



## Projects

### Manar al-Athar

Funding was given to the Manar al-Athar project, an open-access, high resolution, searchable image archive for teaching, research, and publication. The project received a £5,500 grant to enable its researchers to build upon this unique resource.

£5,000 of this was specifically to support the preparation and uploading of 7,800 high-quality photographs of Armenian sites now in eastern Turkey onto the Manar al-Athar open-access photo-archive. The photos were taken by an Oxford team in 2019; OCBR contributed to the cost of that work, by funding the travel of one of the team members, Dr Efthymios Rizos. The Armenian sites visited and photographed include: Ani, Kars, Oğuzlu, Doğruyol, Kozluca, Çengilli, Kümbetli, Khtskonk Monastery, Yağikesen, Gölbelen, and Kecivan Kalesi. The specific work required on these photographs, prior to uploading them onto the Manar site, was that of identifying, culling, sequencing, editing, labelling and metadata tagging. This work is being done by Dr Vendi Jukić Buča who has extensive experience working for Manar; her work would be directly overseen by Dr Miranda Williams.

With some 4000 photographs already uploaded and available on Manar from the territory of modern Armenia, and nearly 5000 more from Georgia and Tao-Klarjeti, this new material will complete coverage of the whole of historic Armenia, and indeed of the wider Caucasus.

The OCBR is delighted to announce that Board member Ine Jacobs is the newly appointed Director of Manar al-Athar. A report by Ine on the project's activity during 2019-20 follows.



Digor (Khtzkonk) Monastery (Credit: Miranda Williams/Manar al-Athar)

### Manar al-Athar 2019-20 Report

The Manar al-Athar open-access photo-archive (<http://www.manar-al-athar.ox.ac.uk/>), based in the Faculty of Classics at the University of Oxford, provides high-resolution, searchable images for teaching, research, publication, and heritage work. These images of archaeological sites, with buildings and art, cover the areas of the former Roman Empire which later came under Islamic rule, as well as adjoining regions, and the chronological range is from c. 300 BC through the Islamic period. Manar al-Athar is in continuously development, and now has c. 73 000 photographs online. Additions to the photo-archive in the last year include c. 5 000 photographs of ecclesiastical sites in Georgia, c. 2 000 photographs of early Islamic desert castles in Jordan, and the expansion of Manar al-Athar's coverage of late antique floor mosaics from Jordan and eastern Turkey.

In the last 18 months, the archive has also focused on consolidating its photographic coverage of archaeological sites and monuments under threat, particularly those in Syria. Manar al-Athar now has c. 13 000 photographs of Syrian cultural heritage online, including photographs of Palmyra, Aleppo, Apamea, Hama, and mosaics from the region around Maarat an-Numan – all areas which have seen damage and/or destruction during the Syrian civil war. A further c. 4 000 photographs of Islamic period buildings in Damascus will be uploaded before the end of the year. Other forthcoming additions include c. 7 000 photographs of mosques in Cairo.



Ani - Church of St Gregory of Tigran Honents (Credit: Vendi Jukic Buca/Manar al-Athar)

Members of the Manar al-Athar team travelled to eastern Turkey in May 2019 to photograph sites for inclusion on the open-access Manar al-Athar photo-archive. The costs for vehicle hire in Turkey, as well as travel and accommodation costs for one team member, Efthymios Rizos, were covered by OCBR. The primary focus of the trip was to undertake detailed photographic documentation of the churches at Ani, the capital of the Bagratid Kingdom of Armenia, but the

opportunity was also taken to photograph other key medieval Armenian and Georgian sites in the vicinity of Ani, including the Church of the Apostles and citadel in Kars, Bagnair Monastery, Doğuyol, Eghegnamor Monastery, Karmir Vank, Şeytan Kalesi, Kecivan Kalesi, Kümbet Kilise, Urta, Oğuzlu, and various sites at Erzurum. This trip resulted in the production of a photographic record of c. 7 800 photographs.

In 2020, OCBR has continued its support of Manar al-Athar's work on eastern Turkey and has generously provided partial funding towards the identification, sequencing, editing, labelling and metadata tagging of these photographs for inclusion in Manar al-Athar photo-archive. OCBR's support was also key to an application for the remaining funds to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. A decision on this application, which was submitted in July 2020, is pending. It is hoped that this material will begin to be uploaded in the first half of 2021. With some 4 000 photographs from the territory of modern Armenia already uploaded and available via Manar al-Athar, and nearly 5 000 more from Georgia and Tao-Klarjeti (Turkey), this new material will complete Manar al-Athar's coverage of the whole of historic Armenia, and indeed of the wider medieval Caucasus. The photographic record has a particular focus on church architecture and decoration, providing a resource of considerable value for specialists in Caucasian studies, as well as those with wider interests in ecclesiastical architecture, wall-painting, and relations with the Byzantine Empire.

In addition to adding to its resources, Manar al-Athar is establishing connections to other digital projects focused on the archaeology, art, architecture, and cultural heritage of the ancient and medieval world. It has been awarded an IRC-AHRC grant for the establishment of the network *Premodern Digital Cultural Heritage: Networking Open-Access Image Repositories of Ancient and Medieval Content*. The network, led by Manar al-Athar, further includes EAMENA, Historic Environment Image Resource (HEIR), The Heritage Gazetteer of Libya, The Heritage Gazetteer of Cyprus, Archaeological Service of Ireland, Chester Beatty Library, Gothic Past and Monastic Ireland. It will examine areas of overlap between the projects' missions and content area coverage. The aim is to generate collaborative plans for enhancing the sustainability of the projects, as well as for future expansion.

Dr Ine Jacobs



Kars - Church of the Apostles (Credit: Efthymios Rizos/Manar al-Athar)

## OCBR Awards, Prizes and Grants

### Academic Prizes

The OCBR awards a prize to the best performance in a paper relating to Byzantine Studies in Finals. In 2019, the Prize was awarded to Madeleine Duperouzel (Regent's Park).

The OCBR awards a prize to the best performance of a graduate student in Master of Studies or Master of Philosophy examinations in Byzantine Studies. In 2019, the Prize was jointly awarded to Angus Russell and John-Francis Martin, both of whom are now studying for DPhils.

### OCBR Graduate Research Awards

The OCBR Graduate Research Awards are used by graduate students to undertake foreign travel to further their research. No awards were made during 2019-20 due to the impact of Covid-19.

### Research Grants

The Oxford Centre for Late Antiquity

The OCBR supported its sister research centre, The Oxford Centre for Late Antiquity, (OCLA) through a contribution of £2,000 to core funding. For further details of OCLA's activities in 2019-20, please visit <https://www.ocla.ox.ac.uk/>

### Archiving Grants

#### The House of Kybele and its city wall neighbourhood at Aphrodisias, from Late Antique to Byzantine times

29<sup>th</sup> June – 31<sup>st</sup> August (Postponed to 2021)

The OCBR has committed £2,000 to this project, led by Ine Jacobs, which aims to examine the urban quarter around the House of Kybele in Aphrodisias (Turkey). Excavated in ten campaigns between 1961 and 1986, its extensive remains, including a stretch of the Late Antique fortification wall, an associated warehouse, and an aristocratic residence, were never published. Through an investigation of the old excavation records and thorough revisiting and recording of both the architectural remains in situ and the remaining finds, this project seeks to clarify the sector's functions as well as trace its uninterrupted occupation into Mid-Byzantine times.

In order to acquire a better understanding of the sector of the House of Kybele, Ine plana to undertake a documentation season of two months which will achieve the following:

1. The deteriorated old profiles will be straightened and, where necessary, cut back to guarantee their safe recording.
2. All structural remains will be thoroughly cleaned to prepare for conservation, and documented with orthophotography.
3. An architect – Aikaterini Vavaliou -, with the assistance of a student of architecture, will produce a state plan of the sector as well as draw key-elevations and cross-sections.
4. Through an investigation of excavation records kept in the Aphrodisias archive, finds will be catalogued and plotted onto the state plan. They will be tracked down in the depots of the

excavation house and the Aphrodisias Museum so that they can be described and photographed. A selection of finds will be drawn.

5. The original wall decoration of the House will be reconstructed through a study of the site's photographic documentation.



Orthophoto of the urban quarter with indication of separate structures

The results of this study will provide evidence for the patterns of movement inside and between buildings, both at the ground level and through the underground tunnel system. They will help clarify the chronology of the sector and its consecutive occupation phases, as well as shed light on the functions of individual spaces and the area as a whole. They will be published in the form of a peer-reviewed paper in an English-speaking archaeological journal. In addition, they will provide me with the exciting, well-documented new material with which to apply for major grants focusing on 'Dark Age' and Byzantine occupation phases of the site.



1984 photograph of the House's northern wing, looking West. Mid-Byzantine floor and wall visible in the room in the back left.



Sundial found in the House of Kybele in 1963. Obverse with declination and latitude scales. reverse with list of latitudes of regions and towns.

## Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity

The OCBR granted £5,400 to enable the completion of this database by paying for the in-putting of the evidence in Greek which had been missing from the *Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity* database: <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk> This project was originally funded by the ERC, with Bryan Ward-Perkins, Emeritus Professor of Late Antique History, as Principal Investigator, and aimed to chart and investigate the origins and early development (up to c. AD 700) of the cult of saints in all Christendom and in all the languages that have left surviving evidence (Armenian, Coptic, Georgian, Greek, Latin and Syriac). The project-team is currently producing a print-volume that will outline the broad conclusions of the project, but has already put on line its searchable database of the available evidence, with the texts presented in their original language and in English translation, accompanied by contextual commentary. There are some 7,700 entries in the database, some still in the process of being edited, but the large majority (5,500) already freely available – Bryan Ward-Perkins is spending the first years of his retirement making the full evidence available, and producing the print-volume.



Sanliurfa (Edessa) – Orpheus Mosaic (Sanliurfa Museum) Sean Leatherbury/Manar al-Athar

## Saving the Byzantine site of al-Andarin (Androna) images

£5,000 was donated as the first instalment of the OCBR's contribution towards a 2 year project archiving images of the Byzantine site of al-Andarin (Androna) and the Silk Roads. The work is being undertaken by the Historic Environment Image Resource project, further information about which can be found on its website, <http://heir.arch.ox.ac.uk/pages/home.php>

A report on the project so far can be found below.



HEIR image 67951: 35mm colour slide, Kashgar, People's Republic of China, September 1988, showing a nomad settlement on the Karakorum Highway, from the Caroline Wickham Jones collection.



HEIR image 66067: 35mm colour slide of the 1999 excavations at al Andarin, Syria, captioned "AND 99, Roll, no." Andarin bath S section, ash deposit S of later wall "8". Note discoloration of the slide due to active fading of cyan and yellow dyes.



HEIR image 6541: B/W contact print of Syria: "Deir Sim'an" (Simeon Monastery), by Georges Tchalenko

## 2019-20 Report

In MT 2018, the OCBR kindly agreed to finance a two-year project on Saving rare images of the Byzantine site of al-Andarin (Androna) and the Silk Roads, to be undertaken by the HEIR Project at the Institute of Archaeology, Oxford. The grant was requested to save, and make publicly available, a key endangered 35mm image record of surveys and excavations at the Byzantine site of Androna/al-Andarin (<http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk/ANDS.html>), and a very rare collection of images taken along sites on the Silk Road in 1988. The first grant of **£5,000** for the year 2018-2019 was made available in April 2019, and with it we have digitized over 1,000 endangered 35mm slide images which are now available for researchers and the general public for the first time. 35mm slide film is unstable and deteriorates over time: when the sites and cultures recorded on this film are under threat or have already disappeared, the need to preserve the images is urgent. Thanks to OCBR funding, we are able to preserve the following two important image resources:

### 1. Silk Road images

We have cleaned, scanned, uploaded, and added meta-data to the entire Caroline Wickham Jones 35mm Silk Road journey slide collection (526 images). Dr Caroline Wickham-Jones is an archaeologist who photographed people, cultures, archaeological and historical sites along the **Silk Roads** through Pakistan, Mongolia and China in 1988, during a brief window of opportunity for outsiders to travel along the Karakorum Highway, along with further images of Russia taken in the same year.

Highlights of the collection include photographs of the Gojal Valley, Hunza, Gilgit Baltistan before the formation of Attabad Lake, and images of Uyghur daily life and worship. The Uyghur people, and their mosques, are currently being systematically targeted by the Chinese government

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/27/the-world-knows-what-is-happening-to-the-ughurs-why-has-it-been-so-slow-to-act>)

The images are now freely available to researchers and the public on the HEIR database (<http://heir.arch.ox.ac.uk>) where they can be found under the search term 'Wickham Jones OCBR'.

## **2. Excavations at Al Andarin, Syria**

Work was undertaken to scope the contents of eight large boxes of mixed material deposited at the archives in 2018 by Dr Marlia Mango relating to the Byzantine site of **Androna / al-Andarin** in Syria. This image archive represents the sole surviving comprehensive visual record of the archaeology and landscape as surveyed by the Oxford Androna team between 1997-2007, when excavations came to an abrupt halt. The archive contains a large number of 35mm slides from the excavations and landscape surveys, which like, the Silk Road images, are fast deteriorating. These images, together with notebooks and other papers are all the more important now, as the site is actively under threat and parts have already been looted and destroyed in the ongoing war.

Neither the site nor the images have been fully published, though an old, partial, database and a set of CDs were retrieved from the archive, which are in the process of being transferred into modern formats. Given the state of the archive upon arrival, a lot of time has been invested in trying to reconstruct and understand site contexts, and especially to extract information relating to the 35mm images. To date over 500 images of the site, the excavation team, and archaeological finds (an estimated 10% of the total collection), have been scanned and uploaded to the HEIR database. The collection of meta-data continues to provide a challenge which we hope to address in the next phase of this project.

The digital images of Al-Andarin are freely available to the researchers and the public through the HEIR database (<http://heir.arch.ox.ac.uk>) which is hosted by the School of Archaeology, while the original slides will be retained and preserved at the Institute of Archaeology.

## **3. Institute Scoping and Georges Tchalenko Syrian Images**

In addition to the Al Andarin images, the team took the opportunity to test scan contact prints from the undigitized image archive of archaeologist Georges Tchalenko, whose photographic record of villages and archaeology in Syria from the 1930s to 1950s is at the Institute of Archaeology. We will add these important photographs to HEIR in the next phase of the project. A search of HEIR using the term 'Andarin' will find all the Al Andarin images as well as the test Tchalenko images of the same region. We also scoped the Institute of Archaeology 35mm slide teaching collection, identifying slides relevant to Byzantine art and archaeology. The main individual slide collections range in date from the 1960s to the 1990s, and include unpublished photographs taken by John Lloyd, Timothy Potter, Martin Harrison and Andrew Wilson. The collection is extensive, and is in urgent need of scanning. As part of this project, we scanned c. 600 images from the Andrew Wilson collection of sites in Libya and Tunisia.

Dr Katharina Ulmschneider

## OCBR Publication Grants

The OCBR is occasionally able to assist with the publication of particularly significant scholarly works by its members. In 2019-20, it made 2 such awards:

*The Beginnings of the Ottoman Empire*, by Professor Clive Foss

The OCBR made a grant of £1000 for the use of maps within this book and also copy editing. This major grand work will be published by OUP as part of the Oxford Studies in Byzantium series.



Clive Foss



Clive Foss

Late Antique and Early Medieval Finds from St Theodore's Quarter in Pula, by Dr Vendi Jukić Buča

The OCBR made a grant of £200 to cover the proofreading of this monograph.

The monograph is to be published by the Archaeological museum of Istria in Pula, in 2020. It is based on Vendi's dissertation on Late Antiquity and Pre- Romanesque church architecture and sculpture in Istria (Croatia).

The monograph has two parts. The first outlines the general historical and archaeological situation in Istria and Pula during Late Antiquity and the early medieval period. The historical setting and a description of the archaeological material provides an essential contextual frame to our consideration of the finds made at the site. The second part is dedicated to the site itself and a comparative analysis with other finds in Pula, Istria and the broader region.

The investigation of the St Theodore's Quarter site has contributed to our knowledge of Pula's urban development throughout its continuous occupation from the Iron Age to the fifteenth century. Conclusions drawn with regard to finds from the site may be of use in a comprehensive interpretation concerning the origins, sources of influence, dates and other characteristics of late antique and early medieval finds made in the broader area.



Uzun Kemer

David Hendrix/Byzantine Legacy

**VENDI JUKIĆ BUČA**

**Kasnoantički i ranosrednjovjekovni nalazi  
iz četvrti sv. Teodora u Puli**

**Late Antique and Early Medieval Finds  
from St Theodore's Quarter in Pula**



**MONOGRAFIJE I KATALOZI 33 - ARHEOLOŠKI MUZEJ ISTRE**

Pula 2020.

## Travel Grants

### Oxford University Byzantine Society International Research Trip

The OCBR donated £3,000 towards the cost of the OU Byzantine Society's annual research trip, which was due to be a 10 day tour of Georgia. A fascinating itinerary had been planned by the Society:

Day 0 – Arrival in Tbilisi

Day 1 - Tbilisi: Metekhi and Sioni, Narikala Fortress, Georgian State Museum

Day 2 - Mtskheta: Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, Samtavro Monastery, Shio-Mgvime monastery Jvari monastery, Armaztsikhe (Bagineti)

Day 3 - Bolnisi Basilica, Dmanisi archaeological site, Betania.

Day 4 - Gergeti Trinity Church, Return to Tbilisi via Ananuri

Day 5 - Alaverdi Monastery, Ikalto Monastery, Telavi, Gurjaani Kvelatsminda.

Day 6 - Gori: Kvatakhevi Monastery, Ateni Sioni, Uplistsikhe

Day 7 - Kutaisi: Kutaisi's citadel, Bagrati Cathedral, Gelati Monastery, Motsameta, Kutaisi Historical Museum

Day 8 - Akhaltsikhe: Akhaltsikhe, Samtskhe-Javakheti History Museum, Vardzia

Day 9 – Tbilisi: National Centre of Manuscripts; Museum of Fine Arts

Regrettably, the trip had to be cancelled due to Covid-19, resulting in the return of the travel grant.



Tbilisi - Metekhi Church

Olga Grinchenko/Manar al-Athar

## Doing a Post-doc in the Time of CoVid-19



The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, which was soon followed by a country-wide lockdown has posed many challenges for the post-doctoral community. For many of us, it meant that up-coming conferences, seminars, and workshops were suddenly either cancelled, delayed, or, in the case of some enterprising organisers, quickly transferred to an online format. And for some of us, it meant suddenly cancelling research trips. In my case, a series of trips, including a workshop at the University of

Toronto, the OUBS trip to Georgia, a research trip to Russia, a conference in the United States, and a lecture in Germany, were all either cancelled or delayed. For me, the pandemic has impacted the possibility of accessing new material – I was planning to look at several liturgical books at the Trinity Lavra of St Sergius – and has thrown off my research timeline. With this in mind, I am pleased to see a concerted effort to digitize collections and museums, archives, libraries, and publishers are making an unprecedented amount of material available online.

One of the upshots of this period has been the fostering of online communities for post-docs and other ECRs in order to share resources, information, and organise online events. With the TORCH network (New Critical Approaches to the Byzantine World) that I co-organise with Mirela Ivanova and several other ECRs in the UK and Europe, we have met online for thematic discussions of new and old publications and ideas in our field. Thus, research and exchange has only really been abridged rather than fully interrupted. Sedenterisation threw current events into sharper relief and I closely followed discussions about the reversion of Hagia Sophia to a mosque, which led to my own engagement with the topic, in a series of articles published in *The Balkanist Magazine*, *Balkan Insight*, and in an interview with *Der Spiegel*. Events in the United States, which many of us witnessed in the news and online, led to discussions about the transformative potential of the highly mediatized BLM movement that centred anti-racist struggle. At the academic level, the impact has been a robust integration of new critical approaches to historical material. The Byzantine Studies Association of North America, in conjunction with the New Critical Approaches to the Byzantine World Network, organised an international workshop ‘Towards a Critical Historiography of Byzantine Studies’ that explored the role of colonial and imperial enterprises in the creation of our field and in shaping the way we think about our object of study. The workshop attracted many international ECRs working on and interested in these questions and a publication is currently underway as result of the workshop.

Although, the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on research are difficult to prognosticate, my funder, the British Academy, has already extended the duration of my fellowship for another academic year and, I am told, that other funding bodies have done the same. For most post-docs, the disruption to research is only compounded by a noticeable contraction of academic jobs this year, which leaves many of us apprehensive.

Alexandra Vukovich

## The A. G. Leventis Foundation Graduate Scholarship

Thanks to the generosity of the A. G. Leventis Foundation, OCBR administers a graduate scholarship for an outstanding student pursuing doctoral research at Oxford. In 2019-20, the Scholarship was held by Adele Curness (St John's), who is working on Byzantine and early Norman Italy.

Adele's thesis considers stories and how they shape communities. It is a study of a corpus of hagiographical texts which were produced in southern Italy between the tenth and the twelfth centuries about Greek-speaking holy men who lived in the Byzantine province of Calabria between the ninth and the twelfth centuries.

### Adele Curness – A. G. Leventis Foundation Scholar 2017-20



My doctoral thesis, on the insights the hagiography of Byzantine Calabria can provide about power and politics in the western Mediterranean, is now in its final stages. This term, I (pandemic willing!) will complete the final chapter, which I was unable to work on to any significant degree over the lockdown. I am incredibly grateful for the support of the OCBR in agreeing an extension of funding for Michaelmas term 2020. This money will allow me to complete my thesis to the standard it deserves, when I initially feared that I would have to compromise on quality when the lockdown meant I could not access materials I needed. This generosity is in contrast to the experience of many graduate students, and reflects the strong support I have received from the OCBR and the A. G. Leventis Foundation throughout my graduate studies.

Following the submission of my thesis, which I hope will happen in November, I will begin a six-month research fellowship at the Royal Historical Society. I am looking forward to beginning new research on my postdoctoral project, which will analyse the impact of the Norman conquest on the physical and administrative landscape of Calabria.



Beja (Vaga) - Education of Achilles mosaic (Bardo Museum)

Sean Leatherbury Manar al-Athar

## Stavros Niarchos Foundation Scholars

Brian Lapsa – Stavros Niarchos Foundation D.Phil Scholar

Thesis: Formation by Mimesis: Literate Culture and the Imitation of God in Late Antiquity



I am a first-year D.Phil. candidate in Classics at Oxford University, where the focus of my research is on the history and philosophy of education in antiquity. Specifically, I'm looking at the ways in which mimesis (imitation) was used in pedagogy, both in the mastery of skills and in the formation of character. As part of this, I'm keeping an eye out for the role exemplary figures such as heroes, gods, and God might play. My academic background is in History (B.A., University of Virginia), Philosophy (M.A., M.Phil, Catholic University of Leuven), and Classics (B.A., Oxford), and I've also worked as an academic translator (French to English, chiefly philosophy). During my master's studies in Leuven I taught a weekly course on Plato to lawyers at the University of Leiden, one of my favourite academic experiences thus far. Currently I have an adjunct post at the University of Latvia (Riga) as an assistant researcher in Roman History. Both in Riga and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe (Vienna, Lviv) I've been a guest speaker on Classical Education as an ancient phenomenon with a 21st-century future, another favourite theme of mine and a field I hope to work in for the rest of my life. I'm particularly keen to help revive education in the Classics in the post-Soviet states bordering Russia, where it has all but disappeared.

All things considered, I've been extremely fortunate. That's to say that as for Coronavirus-related difficulties, these have happily been very limited in my case. While there are some texts which I haven't been able to consult, many of the texts on which I'm working I was able to stockpile in advance of library shutdown or access online. My research has continued apace and I have already submitted (as of 19 June,) all my documentation and what I intend to use as a section of Chapter 1 of my dissertation as part of my application to the Classics Faculty for Transfer of Status. While I wait for the Faculty to schedule a viva (on Zoom, most likely), my supervisor and I have worked out a schedule for carrying on the research during the summer months, and I don't anticipate any substantial departures from my work routine henceforth.

I would like to thank the Stavros Niarchos Foundation for their continued support, which has been absolutely essential in mitigating the difficulties that might otherwise have beset me during this bizarre time!



Acholla - House of the Red Columns (Bardo Museum)

Sean Leatherbury/Manar al-Athar

James Cogbill – Stavros Niarchos Foundation Masters' Scholar



I received my undergraduate degree in Ancient and Medieval History from the University of Birmingham in 2019, having written my dissertation on 'Middle Byzantine dynastic practice, 867-1118'. I am currently a graduate student at Worcester College, University of Oxford, undertaking a Master's in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies within the Faculty of History. I will produce two substantial pieces of research over the course of this degree: an extended essay on 'fictive' imperial kinship in the Late Byzantine period; and an extended essay on the role of priests and their families in rural Byzantium. These will provide a valuable foundation for my intended doctoral project on the roles and functions of members of the extended imperial family in the governance of the state in Late Byzantium.

I have been very fortunate that none of my immediate or extended family members have been medically affected by COVID-19. The pandemic has, however, had a significant impact on my academic studies. For example, teaching sessions and research seminars have been conducted online, placing limitations on my ability to have academic discussions with, and seek advice from, current and emeritus faculty members. The pandemic has also forced the cancellation of my sub-faculty's research trip to Georgia. Most significantly, library closures have limited my access to key resources (the bulk of which are only available in print form), which has had a detrimental impact upon the progress and comprehensiveness of my research.



Apamea - synagogue - mosaic (Brussels Museum of Art and History)

Maria Lidova/Manar al-Athar

## Oxford Graduate Scholarship Match Funded Scholar

Joshua Hitt – DPhil History



In 2016 I received my BA in History and Ancient History from the University of Exeter. I completed an MPhil in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies at the University of Oxford earlier this year, and I am currently at Oxford reading for a DPhil in History. My research aims to explore what it meant to grow old in Byzantium in the twelfth century AD. In my thesis I look at the ways in which old people are represented in contemporary literature, inscribed texts and religious art and discuss the patterns underlying these different images of ageing. The topic of ageing in Byzantium is relatively understudied and the methodology employed in my thesis aims to offer a fresh perspective that will contribute to the growing scholarship in this area.

During much of 2019-20 I focussed on reading broadly and refining the methodology and scope of my thesis. This has culminated in a draft of a substantial introductory chapter, setting out the approach of my research and its place within the wider scholarship on old age. I have also produced an initial draft of one of the chapters from the main body of my thesis. This deals primarily with the negative and satirical tropes concerning old age found in the literary and historical texts of the twelfth century. The course of the last academic year was undeniably affected by the outbreak of Covid-19, with students and staff adapting to the rapidly changing circumstances. Helped by the large amount of material available online, I have been able to continue making steady progress with my research, albeit by prioritising chapters with the most familiar source material.



Petra – Blue Chapel

Judith McKenzie/Manar al-Athar

## Oxford University Byzantine Society Report

For many years, the Oxford University Byzantine Society (OUBS) has stood at the heart of Oxford's Late Antique and Byzantine Studies (LABS) community. The OUBS is an entirely graduate-run organisation that aims to foster a supportive academic community of students and scholars. Our main role involves welcoming new students into the discipline and keeping everyone up to date with news and information from week to week.

During my time as president, I have set out to shape the OUBS to reflect the huge variety of academic interests and backgrounds within the LABS community at Oxford. As the society continues to grow in size and ambition, I must acknowledge the tireless work of previous OUBS presidents and their committees. In just a few short years, they have radically redefined the scope of the society and moulded it into the dynamic entity that exists today.

It is this spirit of adaptation and innovation that will, I hope, continue to drive the OUBS in the years to come. A testament to this ambition is our annual research trip. Following on from successful research trips to Bulgaria, Iran and Greece, the OUBS was set to lead a group of 35 to Georgia in April 2020. Georgia was chosen as the destination with a view to broadening the academic horizons of Oxford's LABS community, bringing into focus the study of the South Caucasus. The itinerary was tailored to the research interests of the trip's participants and presented an excellent opportunity to deepen Oxford's connections with Georgian scholars. Furthermore, thanks to the generous support of the Oxford Centre of Byzantine Research (OCBR), the cost of student participation in the research trip was to be subsidized. Regrettably, however, the global impact of the Covid-19 outbreak prevented the trip from taking place.

Fortunately, the other major event of our annual calendar was able to go ahead as planned. For over two decades, the OUBS has organised an international graduate conference. The event has continued to grow, and this year we were pleased to welcome 48 speakers from over 20 different countries. The conference was entitled 'The State Between: Liminality, Transition and Transformation in Late Antiquity and Byzantium' and was held between the 28th-29th February 2020 in the History Faculty. The OUBS conference provides a platform for postgraduates and early career researchers to discuss their work in a friendly and supportive environment. It also performs an important role on a larger scale, showcasing the value and diversity of postgraduate research.

As my own academic interests lie in medieval Armenia, it has been my aim to open up the conference to scholars conducting research beyond the traditional framework of Byzantine studies. Consequently, it was a great pleasure to listen to the many different responses to the conference theme and engage with the interdisciplinary dialogue that emerged from those two days. Nonetheless, it has been also my intention to improve access in more general terms. Whilst presenting and discussing our own research is a necessary part of our academic development, these conferences often place a large financial burden upon postgraduate students. Thanks to the support of the OCBR and the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies (SPBS), however, the OUBS was able to set up a bursary scheme for speakers for the very first time.

Oxford can often come across as an unusual, and - dare I say it - *Byzantine* institution. For this reason, the OUBS has endeavoured to make the process of orientation more straightforward for incoming LABS students. In addition to organising a mentoring system for new graduates, the

OUBS also publishes a 'Welcome Pack' to explain the idiosyncrasies of academic life at the university. Furthermore, our two weekly mailing lists exist to promote awareness of academic events and job opportunities, ensuring that students are able to make the most of their time at Oxford. To that end, the OUBS has organised a wide range of social events: Michaelmas term saw an 'emeriti tea', a 'women's drinks' event, and a mid-term academic support meeting. With the onset of the Covid-19 crisis and the extended period of lockdown, the OUBS also experimented with a series of online social events.

Above all, these events aim to promote communication and foster support networks between postgraduates, faculty members and emeriti on an interdisciplinary level. In the challenging years to come, I have no doubt that the OUBS will continue to grow and innovate, uniting young researchers through shared interests and forging an international community for the next generation of scholars.

Danaiel Gallaher

OUBS President 2019-20



Milk Grotto, Bethlehem

Judith McKenzie/Manar al-Athar



As the president of the Oxford University Byzantine Society, I understand its role will be particularly important in this academic year, considering the unprecedented situation in which we all find ourselves. The Society will have to be present, now more than ever, in order to support its members and make sure that its activities continue despite the difficulties that this global pandemic will surely present. Therefore, organising new events and adapting our traditional ones will be the Society's main goal.

Thus, the Mentoring Scheme, which has always proved to be beneficial in welcoming new students to Oxford and to our department, will continue to encourage mentors and mentees to meet, online or in person, if students are comfortable doing so and strictly following government guidelines.

The society will make it its priority to respect the restrictions regarding meetings, such as the rule of six, but we are planning to organise smaller encounters in person for those in need to socialise, while online meetings will become a weekly occurrence. These will prove fundamental in creating a strong sense of community and introduce new students to our Society. These online meetings will probably take place on Wednesdays, following the Late Antique and Byzantine Seminars. This will allow us to encourage students to participate in the seminar and give them a weekly event to look forward to.

The annual Graduate Conference is the most important event organised by our society, and the OUBS committee wants to make sure that the high standards it has come to represent will be maintained this year as well. The Conference itself will focus on self-representation in Late Antiquity and Byzantium, a topic of wide breadth and that will certainly create engaging discussions. As many other society and groups are moving their events online, it seems sensible to do so also with our annual Graduate Conference. This, however, should be seen as an opportunity to create an even more welcoming and accessible events, with the goal of meeting again in Oxford in the future. To do so, we will have to secure access to streaming platforms and reconsider the traditional structure followed by previous conferences. This is an exciting and challenging perspective, and will require great participation and support from all those involved.

Our 2020 OUBS trip was already disrupted by Covid19, and we are very aware that last minute changes may disrupt future plans. Therefore, the committee is considering other options, without discarding the possibility of OUBS activities. These may be visits to Oxford rich manuscript collections, or day trips to London to visit museum collections (for example the Victoria and Albert Museum) containing Byzantine material.

## OCBR Board Output Reports

Professor Peter Frankopan (Director)



This was a busy year – even after we went into enforced lockdown in March 2020. In September 2019, I was invited by the Prime Minister of Singapore to give the keynote lecture on ‘War and Wealth’ to mark the Bicentennial anniversary celebrations. I gave a lecture on the perspectives history offers to contemporary political developments in Lithuania to ministers from the Baltic States, while in January, I lectured in Geneva at the Europaeum for Lord Patten, the Chancellor of Oxford University and Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission (2004-14) on ‘Europe in the age of Xi and Trump’. In November 2019 took part in a round-table in Central Asia on the past, present and future of the Silk Roads, attended by high ranking ministers from China, Russia, South Asia and the US. In January 2020, I was invited by the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Ireland to launch Ireland’s Asia-Pacific Strategy in Dublin. In the summer of 2020, I chaired a meeting of ministers and senior officials from the eleven CAREC (Central Asia Regional Co-operation) countries program – including China, the Central Asian republics, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

I gave talks at festivals/events in India, Thailand, Denmark, Abu Dhabi and Corfu. In the winter of 2019, I took part in a round table discussion at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam alongside Jose Manuel Barroso, Admiral Mike Mullen, Michael Ignatieff, Sima Samar, Eric Li and Michael Ignatieff on *Götterdämmerung*.

Closer to home, I gave the Ertegun Lecture for 2019 in Oxford on ‘Writing a new history of the world’, and spoke on ‘Empire and the dangers of young change makers’ as part of the Blavatnik School of Government ‘Challenges of government conference.’ I gave a lecture at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies on ‘Reclaiming history: moving away from Eurocentrism’, and took part in an event on ‘Reinventing peace in an age of disorder’ organised by the Oxford Centre for Research in the Humanities (TORCH). I gave a lecture to students at University College, London on ‘How and why to be a Byzantinist’, and delivered the Sir Christopher Ricks Lecture with the title ‘What is the point of studying history?’ to school-age pupils in Wantage.

After lockdown, all events were shifted to virtual formats. I gave the keynote to open a two day conference hosted by Leiden University on ‘Contesting Empires: Sogdiana, Bactria and Gandhara between the Sasanian empire, the Tang dynasty and the Muslim Caliphate (600-1000 CE)’. I chaired two sessions at the Dark Archives conference in Oxford on the ‘Medieval Readable and Unreadable’.

Other virtual events I spoke at this academic year included being in conversation with Pulitzer prize winner Siddhartha Mukherjee on the role of pandemics in history; with HE Omar Ghobash, assistant minister of culture in the UAE on the Future of Diplomacy; on China in global history with the Royal Asiatic Society of Beijing; on the world after Coronavirus with Professor Ngaire Woods of Oxford; on how the world changes during pandemics with Lord Williams (former Archbishop of Canterbury), Peter Tatchell and others at the Cambridge Union; I was in discussion with Malcolm Turnbull, former Prime Minister of Australia for the How to Academy; and with Parag Khanna on Orwell’s predictions of global division.

I took part in the Hay festival, interviewing Roger Robinson, winner of the 2020 Ondaatje Prize; in the Cambridge Alumni festival, talking to Prof. Sujit Sivasundaram; and the Chelsea History festival with Prof Valerie Hansen of Yale.

I wrote several articles in the press this year. In December 2019, I wrote that the biggest challenge facing the world for the next decade was global pandemic – this appeared on the cover of Prospect magazine on 1 January, just as the World Health Organisation was alerted to the identification of a new emerging infectious disease in Wuhan. I wrote too for *The Times*, *Sunday Times*, *History Today*, *Straits Times*, *Le Un*, *Le Point*, *History Today*, *BBC History Magazine*, *Desperta Ferrot* and elsewhere on topics ranging from the history of pandemics to the worst political advisor in Byzantine history. Major interviews appeared in Spain (*El Mundo*), France (*Le Point*), Argentina (*La Nación*), Italy (*Corriere della Sera*); Switzerland (*Weltwoche*); Denmark (*Politiken*; *Krtisteligt Dagblad*); Netherlands (*De Groene Amsterdammer*); and Greece (*To Vima*; *Kathimerini*). I appeared several times on BBC Radio, Sky News and also on CNN with Christine Amanpour. I nominated and spoke on Konstantin Tsiolkovsky for BBC Radio 4's Great Lives series; on Genghis Khan for You're Dead to Me (BBC Radio 4); and on Alexios I Komnenos for the History of Byzantium podcast.



Peter Frankopan sporting his Justinian mask

In the autumn of 2019, I was awarded the Carical Prize for Humanities at a prize ceremony in Cosenza; and also Germany's prestigious Calliope Prize in Bremerhaven. In 2020 I was named President of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs.

This academic year, I was asked to advise and talk to multiple government ministries in the UK and elsewhere, including the Prime Minister's office; the Treasury; the Foreign Office; the Ministry of Defence; the International Olympic Committee; the Asian Development Bank; UNESCO; the President of Armenia; and others.

I published academic articles on the global impact of knowledge exchange; on Wagner and social, economic and political change; on the history of patristics and the Orthodox church in Asia; on the global middle ages; and wrote a new introduction to the histories of Herodotus. As series editor of a major new series on the history of Constantinople, I have been busy preparing the first three volumes for publication; these should appear before the end of 2020.

Otherwise, I have mainly spent the year working on a major new project on climate science in the Byzantine Empire and beyond. This will be published at the end of 2021 or early in 2022.

## Professor Phil Booth



I started the year with fifteen graduate students across the Faculties of History, Theology and Religion, and Classics, several of whom I co-supervise. These also included two visiting students from universities in Belgium and China. They work on a variety of topics from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries, and traversing the eastern Mediterranean, Caucasus, and Middle East. Two of my DPhil students -- one working on the rise of Islam, the other on Byzantine foreign policy in the sixth century -- successfully completed this year.

My plans for the year were severely disrupted by the pandemic. In April I had intended to take up an invited visiting fellowship at the Freie Universität in Berlin, as part of the DFG project 'Beyond Oriental Despotism'. I also cancelled a week in June at the University of Vienna as visiting lecturer, and an invited lecture in July at the University of Cologne, as part of a 'Global Byzantium' lecture series. As a collaboration between the History Faculty and the Oriental Institute in Oxford, three colleagues and I had organised for the summer a new eight-week seminar series, 'After Rome and Further East', which brought together eight leading international scholars on the history of the Near and Middle East in the period c.500-c.1000. Circumstances permitting, it will be reorganised for next year.

In my own research, I have continued to work on Egyptian Christian communities in the transition between the Roman and Islamic empires. I contributed a large article on ecclesiastical relations between Antioch and Alexandria in the eighth and ninth centuries to a forthcoming collection on minority communities under Islamic rule, and am currently completing a major piece on Christian rebellion and environmental history in eighth-century Egypt, in collaboration with Andrew Marsham at Cambridge, and a shorter article on the involvement of Egyptian communities in the second Arab siege of Constantinople in 717/8. Nevertheless, my major focus has been a new monograph for Princeton University Press, on the making of the Egyptian church in the period from the mid-sixth to mid-ninth century. It will be finished next year.



Tipasa – Cathedral      Marlana Whiting/Manar al-Athar

## Professor Dame Averil Cameron, FBA



This has been a strange year because of the effects of the pandemic, which have been severe in the UK and in UK universities. A special lecture by Professor Scott Fitzgerald Johnson of the University of Ohio and other lectures and an exhibit in honour of my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday planned for May and June 2020 had to be postponed, but our seminars have continued online and have attracted international members who would not have been able to attend in person. I am also part of the network organised in Oxford on Critical Approaches to the History of Byzantium, whose next webinar is held in conjunction with the US Byzantine Studies Association. I have also taken part in webinars on Byzantine subjects run by Princeton and Harvard Universities and by the Australian Catholic University.

I retired as chair of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research in 2019 when Professor Frankopan became the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Director of the Centre but I remain a member of the committee. I continue to be the President of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, whose Executive Committee is also the British National Byzantine Committee. Sadly our annual symposium planned to take place at Birmingham earlier this year on the theme of Nature and the Environment had to be cancelled because of the pandemic, but will now take place in March, 2021. The international Byzantine Congress planned for Istanbul in 2021 will now take place in 2022 in a different host country.



Averil Cameron in Greece

I have published four papers during the past year:

‘Justinian and the sixth century now’, in Sven Günther et al, eds., *Byzantium in China. Studies in Honour of Professor Xu Jialing on the Occasion of her Seventieth Birthday*, *Journal of Ancient Civilizations* 6, Supp., New Series 1 (Changchun: Institute for the History of Ancient Civilizations, 2019), 57-70

'The present in the past and the past in the present', in G. Cecconi, R. Lizzi Testa and A. Marcone, eds., *The Past as Present. Essays in Honour of Guido Clemente*, Studi e Testi tardoantichi 17 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), 133-50

'Late antiquity and patristics: partners or rivals?', Ptarmigan Lecture 2018, to appear in *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 28.2 (2020), 283-302 (given as the Ptarmigan lecture, Faculty of Theology and Religion, Oxford, 2018)

'Byzantium now – contested territory or excluded middle?', *Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 6 (2020), 91-111 (the Rydén lecture, given at Uppsala, 2018)

I have also published reviews in *The Tablet* and *History Today* (a review of Judith Herrin's book on Ravenna from the fifth to the ninth century, out in August 2020), and I am collaborating with Jonathan Shepard and Peter Frankopan in the editing of a large volume arising from the exhibition, conference and seminar held in Oxford in 2018 to mark the centenary of the late Professor Dimitri Obolensky, and especially the publication of his book *The Byzantine Commonwealth* in 1971. The volume will be published by Oxford University Press in the series Oxford Studies in Byzantium, with the title *Byzantine Spheres: the Byzantine Commonwealth Re-evaluated*.

I gave the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Autumn Lecture 2019 and the keynote lecture at the 2019 annual Edinburgh conference in Byzantine and early Islamic studies, and I was recently the subject of a webinar for Fordham University, New York, on Women Scholars of Orthodox Christianity ([https://youtu.be/3\\_CNGP2I1tw](https://youtu.be/3_CNGP2I1tw)).

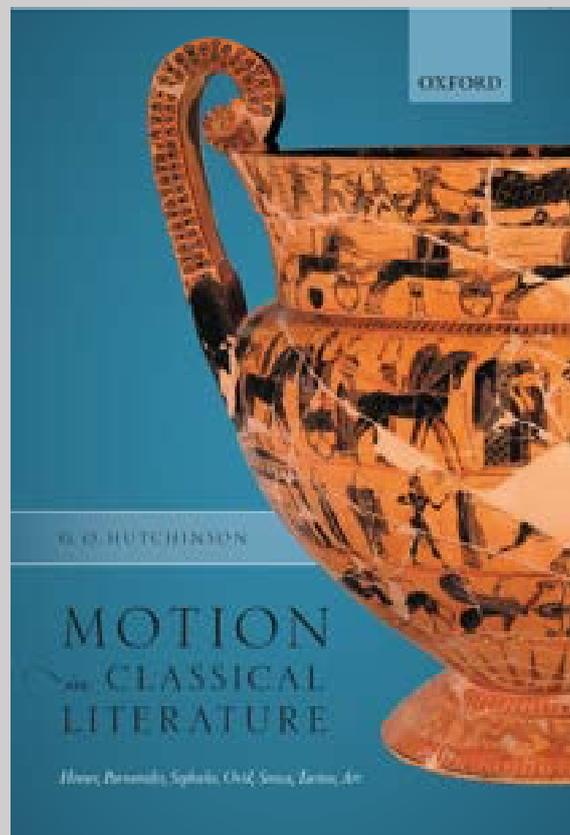
Most recently I have been honoured with the Kenyon Medal of the British Academy for my lifetime contribution to Byzantine studies (announced 7 August 2020).



## Professor Gregory Hutchinson



In May 2020, a book of mine was published: *Motion in Classical Literature: Homer, Parmenides, Sophocles, Ovid, Seneca, Tacitus, Art* (Oxford). It's on the unusual subject of how literature represents and exploits the physical movement of gods, horses, warriors, ships, old men, comets... At least the cover is nice.



A couple of articles by me have been published too:

‘Anacreon on stage? A note on P. Oxy. LXXXIV 5410’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 213 (2020), 4-5.

‘Space and text worlds in Apollonius’, in *Trends in Classics* 12.1 (2020) (special issue edd. E. Papadodima and A. Stefanis, ‘New Approaches to Ancient Epic’), 114-25.

In March I was due to speak on 'La collection dans les papyrus' at a conference in Strasbourg on 'Savoir et collection'; but events intervened.

I've supervised graduates who have been working on, among other things, Alcaeus, the fragments of the Hellenistic orators, the organization of Hellenistic poems into sections, 'publication' in the Greco-Roman world, and alchemical literature.

I have been kept busy as the Chair of the Research Committee in the Faculty of Classics; but even more busy as Director of Graduate Studies in Classical Languages and Literature. Since March, the bulk of my time has been spent in helping graduates amid the great difficulties of the pandemic. They have risen to the challenges magnificently.



Algiers - National Museum of Antiquities - mosaics - set 8    Marlena Whiting/Manar al-Athar

## Dr Ine Jacobs



I delivered the following seminars and lectures, in Oxford and elsewhere, during 2019-20:

Keynote “New meanings for old monuments”

Colloquium *Urban Transformations in the Ancient World*

University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands (8 May 2020) *Postponed*

“Coins lost in puzzling places”

Ancient Material Religion Seminar series

The Baron Thyssen Centre for the Study of Ancient Material Religion,

The Open University (23 January 2020), <https://www.openmaterialreligion.org/past-events/ine-jacobs>

Keynote “The many lives of statues”

Workshop: *Transforming the Past: the concept of object biographies*

Bern, Switzerland (24 October 2019)

I am working on the publication of the Aphrodisias excavations of the Tetrapylon street, the city’s busiest north-south boulevard. The street’s layout and its transformations over the centuries throw light upon daily life in the city and provide evidence for social history from Late Roman times up until today. Excavations started in 1963 near the city’s famous Tetrapylon. A further stretch of about 70 m of the paved Roman street was exposed in the 1980s. New systematic excavations started in 2008. I took over management of all Aphrodisias excavations as field director and direct supervision of the Street excavations in 2016 (Figure 1).



Aphrodisias, Guiding a group of Greek, Bulgarian, Turkish, UK and US colleagues around the site

So far, only summaries of these excavations have been published in *Aphrodisias Papers V*.<sup>1</sup> I am currently preparing the final publication of the entire area, a collaborative Tetrapylon Street

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<sup>1</sup> Yıldırım, B. (2016) Excavations on the Tetrapylon Street, 2008-2009; Ögüş, E. (2016). Excavations on the Tetrapylon Street, 2010-11; Sokolicek, A. (2016) Excavations on the Tetrapylon Street, 2012-14, in R. R. R. Smith, J.

volume for the Aphrodisias series, published by Reichert. I am responsible for the volume's conception, illustrations and editing of chapters, half of which are to be written by myself, half of which will be contributions by find specialists on the statuary, ceramics, glass, small finds etc. found in the excavation area. Although hampered by the closure of libraries and inaccessibility of the site due to Covid-19, my team and myself are preparing photographs, drawings, reconstructions, catalogues of material, and chapters on the excavations, the architecture, and all the rich and varied material found during the excavations (Figures 2, 3).

In addition, as recent campaigns have clarified that this street was densely occupied during the so-called 'Byzantine Dark Ages' (7<sup>th</sup> to early 9<sup>th</sup> century AD), we are preparing a methodological article on the nature of this occupation.

Whereas the summer of 2019 was spent on the site of Aphrodisias, the Aphrodisias Project's plans for 2020 had to be drastically adjusted: instead of the planned three-month study and excavation season (June-August), I supervised a shorter one-month study season (15 June-15 July), carried out by a strongly reduced local team only, from a distance. Some very useful work was being done, but most of our 2020 plans (including the further study of objects excavated in the Street area) have to be moved to 2021.

Between August 2019 and now, I finished three commissioned articles, including an overview of the city in the late antique East for the *Blackwell Companion to Cities in the Greco-Roman World* (ed. M. Flohr & A. Zuiderhoek); a contribution on shifting perception of the city in the sixth century for a book volume *Cities as Palimpsests* (ed. A. Wallace-Hadrill); and an overview of the development of the architectural form of the triumphal arch in Late Antiquity for the *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* (RAC).



Aphrodisias, Remains of the street colonnade collapsed in the seventh century

At the start of 2020, I published an article on Village churches and donors at the end of Antiquity in the volume *Inscribing Texts in Byzantium. Continuities and Transformations*, edited by my

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Lenaghan, A. Sokolicek, and K. Welch (eds), *Aphrodisias Papers 5: Excavation and Research at Aphrodisias, 2006–2012* (JRA Supplementary Series 103). Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

two colleagues I. Toth and M. Lauxtermann. I have received proofs of four further articles, all of which are planned to be published before the end of 2020:

- Old statues, new meanings. Literary, epigraphic and archaeological evidence for Christian reidentification of statuary, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 113, 787-834 (Figure 4);
- Hosting the council in Nicaea. Material needs and solutions, in: Y. Kim (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Council of Nicaea*, Cambridge-New York: Cambridge U.P.;
- Late antique encroachment in the city centres of Asia Minor: economic bustle and socio-political significance, in: R. Haensch and Ph. von Rummel (eds) *Himmelwärts und erdverbunden? Religiöse und wirtschaftliche Aspekte spätantiker Lebensrealität (Band 1 des Clusters 7 des DAI)*;
- Archaeology as an alternative source for late antique Christianity. The example of ritual deposits, in: Haensch and von Rummel



Aphrodisias. 2020 Drawings of objects found during the Tetrasyon Street excavations

In the past twelve months, I co-organised the 2020 gathering of BANEAE (British Archaeology of the Near East) on *Critical Debates in the Archaeology of the Middle East* (9-11 January 2020), which for the first time in its history incorporated talks on late antique, Byzantine and Islamic periods and topics. In addition, from 18 to 20 March 2020, we had planned the conference *Cyprus in the Long Late Antiquity. History and Archaeology between the 6th and 8th Centuries* (Figure 5). Due to Covid-19, the conference had to be postponed. We are currently planning to let it proceed in January 2021, in a combined on-site and digital format.

In the past 12 months, I was invited to review submissions to the journals *Byzantion*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, and *British Archaeological Reports*. I remain on the editorial board of *Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums* and the *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*. I assess applications made to the British Institute at Ankara, the Carnegie Trust and the Austrian Science Fund. I am the external examiner in the Habilitationskommission of Dr. Alexander Sokolicek, for the Universität Wien. Finally, I am an expert member of the Cult3 (History and Archaeology) Fellowship panel

of the Research Foundation Flanders, which distributes highly prestigious doctoral and postdoctoral scholarships.

I currently supervise 5 DPhil students in Archaeology, the Department of Continuing Education and Classical Archaeology, working on the following topics:

1. 'The network of fortified settlements of eastern Central Greece (6<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> c. AD)' (Aikaterini Vavaliou)
2. 'Early medieval military conflicts between Byzantium and the Barbaricum' (Jelena Borivoja Jaric)
3. 'Artistic representations of women in late antiquity, 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD' (Grace Eleanor Stafford)
4. 'Amuletic Traditions in Early Byzantium' (Shandra Eugenie Lamaute)
5. 'Brick Tombs in the Sichuan Basin during the Eastern Han Period (25-220 AD): Regional Identity and Cultural Fusion' (Li-Chia Liu)

I also supervised MSt students in Classical Archaeology (1) and Late Antique and Byzantine Studies (2)

The Manar al-Athar online photo-archive ([www.manar-al-athar.ox.ac.uk](http://www.manar-al-athar.ox.ac.uk)) based in the Faculty of Classics, was founded by Dr Judith McKenzie. Manar provides high resolution, searchable images for teaching, research, heritage work and publication, free of charge and labelled in both Arabic and English. These images of archaeological sites, buildings and artworks cover the areas of the Roman Empire which came under Islamic rule (the Levant, Egypt and North Africa), and adjoining regions. It has particular strength in the conflict zones of Syria. The chronological range is from Alexander the Great (i.e. circa 300 BC) through the Islamic period.

After the sudden passing of Dr McKenzie in May last year, Prof Bryan Ward-Perkins functioned as interim director in 2019-2020. In April 2020, I took over the scientific leadership of the project and have since been appointed Director of Manar al-Athar. Currently, the site holds 73,000 records. We intend to add to this in future years. We have for instance recently put in applications to consolidate Manar al-Athar's coverage of the endangered sites and monuments of Libya with the ALIPH foundation (International alliance for the protection of heritage in conflict areas) and to expand the archive's geographical coverage to incorporate modern-day Armenia with the Gulbenkian foundation. The OCBR is providing matching funding for the latter.

Our second aim for the coming years is to expand the impact of the website and its usage by both academic and non-academic audiences. The Manar team have just obtained an IRC-AHRC grant for the establishment of the Digital Humanities Research Network 'Premodern Digital Cultural Heritage'. Growing numbers of digital archive projects are engaging with cultural heritage issues, from digitising historic photos of archaeological sites in regions in conflict, to recording data on sites under threat from climate change. However, often these projects do not communicate with each other as best they could, leading to a duplication of efforts. Additionally, projects have been focused so far on academic audiences rather than on other groups of users,

even though they are useful and important resources for museum and cultural heritage professionals, students, and other groups, including local populations. The 'Premodern Digital Cultural Heritage' research network aims to address both of these issues by promoting collaboration between open-access (i.e. freely accessible) digital projects in the UK and Ireland that focus on premodern (ancient and medieval) content. The network will be run by the Manar al-Athar team.

Next academic year, I will continue the writing and compilation of the chapters of the Aphrodisias 'Tetrapylon Street' volume as well as additional articles resulting from the street excavations. I have also been asked to write a 20,000 word chapter on 'Anatolia and the Levant in Late Antiquity' for the multi-volume reference work *The Oxford History of the Roman World (OHRW)*. The chapter will comment on the remarkable vitality of Anatolia and the Levant in this period, a story long known but one that has become increasingly apparent through ongoing archaeological work. The Manar al-Athar archive will continue to expand its database and, as described above, explore ways to engage with wider audiences.

Finally, I have sought and received pump-priming funding from the Fell Fund for a project on archaeology and everyday religious activity in Late Antiquity. Whereas archaeology has so far been either ignored as a potential source for research on everyday religion, or has been used only as an illustration of what texts tell us, the pilot study and the envisioned larger project will demonstrate that archaeology, when viewed on its own terms, can radically alter what we understand under the label of religion. The pilot project will demonstrate the range of relevant archaeological material and confirm the methodology's effectiveness as well as initiate the building of the project's database.



Parthenon, Metope North 32 in situ (1962). The metope was reidentified as an Annunciation scene (Photograph by Eleutherios Feiler, DAI Negative No. D-DAI-ATH-Akropolis 2287)



An example of religious graffiti: a gameboard, consisting of two rows of five dots, has been turned into an evocation of a church building by the addition of a few shallow lines. At the top, an apse was added, at the bottom a narthex, the dots were interpreted as columns, the chancel and ambo are indicated, and both extremities have been given a cross sign.

## Professor Marek Jankowiak



The first half of the academic year was largely taken by teaching and supervisions. My first co-supervised doctoral student, Giandomenico Ferrazza, has successfully defended his thesis on the Greek popes of the late seventh at early eighth centuries at Roma Tre; several others are on track. The second half was a time of writing, facilitated by COVID-19. Together with my co-editors, I have submitted for publication two edited volumes summarising my earlier project

*Dirhams for Slaves* on the slave trade between Viking-Age Scandinavia and the Islamic world in the ninth and tenth centuries. *Viking-Age Trade: Silver, Slaves and Gotland* will be published by Routledge in October 2020, and *The Invisible Commodity: The Archaeology of Slavery in Early Medieval Northern Europe* by Springer in the first half of 2021.

Work continues on several monographs: on dirham imitations from northern Europe, on the implications of the mentioned slave trade system, and on the monothelete controversy in Byzantium in the seventh century. On this last topic, I have written two articles on a mistake in the chronology of the popes in the seventh century (with implications ranging from Ireland to Syria) and on the Arab conquest of Egypt. I have joined the editorial board of the *Revue des Études Byzantines* and, despite everything, managed to explore Byzantine sites in Lykia, Pamphylia and Isauria.



Theodosian Walls

David Hendriz/Byzantine Legacy

## Professor Marc Lauxtermann



This has been an extraordinary year due to the outbreak of Covid-19, which in March brought life to a halt. Organizing supervision, teaching and examining of undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate students has taken up a great deal of my time since then. I am extremely grateful to all my colleagues and to the students themselves for being so proactive in finding alternative solutions and keeping the programme in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies the success story it has been for the past few years.

This year's LABS cohort consisted of seven MSt and two MPhil students, working on a wide range of subjects, from early to late Byzantium, from centre to periphery, from literature to material culture. All of these students have done remarkably well in trying times, as borne out by the high quality of their research essays and dissertations.

In Michaelmas and Hilary, I gave a series of lectures, not only to the MSt and MPhil students, but also to graduates, postgraduates, academics and other people interested in Byzantine literature. The topic in Michaelmas was rhetoric in Byzantium, with particular focus on the so-called *progymnasmata*, writing exercises taught at Byzantine schools which enabled pupils to master the ins and outs of literary discourse, such as narration ('how to write a good story'), characterization ('how to write monologues and dialogues') and description ('how to evoke a setting'). In Hilary, I lectured on Greek hagiography from Southern Italy, focussing on both literary and historical aspects: that is to say, storytelling and folklore on the one hand and socio-political realities in the Byzantine province, on the other.

I also organized the usual weekly text seminar. In Michaelmas, we read a text by Nicholas Mesarites: a hilarious account of a failed palace coup in 1190, with as its principal character the aptly called John the Fat – a blubbery mass of fat with a crown on its head. In Hilary, we read Mazaris' *Descent into Hell*, an early fifteenth-century satire on greedy courtiers and incompetent doctors in Constantinople. On the Modern Greek side of things, I gave a number of lectures on folk songs and their performative aspects.

I also co-organized the graduate seminar in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies on Wednesdays which featured a host of speakers both from the UK and from abroad. All the lectures were fascinating. Personal highlights for me included Ivan Drpić on fake mosaics, Chris Wickham on commerce in the Levant, Gianfranco Agosti on late antique verse inscriptions, Roman Shlyaktin on the Byzantine-Selcuk border zone and Alexander Riehle on the letter collection of Nikephoros Choumnos. All the lectures were very well attended, attracting audiences from across disciplines. In Trinity, the graduate seminar went online, which allowed colleagues from other universities to participate in the discussions afterwards. The highlight of the online lectures was probably the talk by Anthony Kaldellis on his upcoming history of the Byzantine Empire. The online sessions also drew in the crowds, though some were initially a bit queasy about meeting in virtual space.



Prof. Lauxtermann reading Lysias to students of the University of Ghent

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Most of Michaelmas and Hilary was spent on getting articles and an edited volume ready for press, but I managed to write an article on ‘Story-telling East and West’, in which I focused not only on translations of narrative texts from Greek into Arabic and from Arabic and Syriac into Greek, but also on literary influences across the borders (e.g. similarities between *Digenes Akrites* and Arabic heroic poetry). I also gave an invited lecture on the same topic at the University of Edinburgh.

The topic of how stories move from East to West, and back again, has very much been a recurrent theme in my research in recent years, and I intend to continue working in this direction, perhaps even turning it into a major research project.

As I already indicated, I spent the whole of Trinity Term on crisis solving and helping the LABS programme not only survive, but also thrive. And I continued to do so because the crisis is still ongoing in the UK.

I prepared two papers for publication over the summer. The first offers new insights into book culture and social codes in 14th-century Cyprus, based on a hitherto unknown source. The second deals with the introduction of the Akathistos Feast in the liturgical calendar of Constantinople. Part of the summer was also devoted to one of my supervisees, Giulia Paoletti, who is now ready to submit her doctoral thesis: *The Multifarious Muse: Two Palaeologan Collections of Paraenetic Chapters*, which is really a major achievement and something of which to be proud.



Kairouine Mosque, Fez



Peter Nagy/Manar-al-Athar



## Professor David Taylor



In addition to heavy teaching duties, I was mostly working on finishing my edition of a new manuscript of the earliest Syriac text of the Gospels.

In June 2019 I was a key-note speaker at the Eighth North American Syriac Symposium, at Brown University (where I spoke on the Reception and after-life of the Teaching of Addai, and its account of the conversion of King Abgar).

In September 2019 I was invited to lecture at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, and I was also involved in some doctoral examining there.

In February 2020 I spoke to a local group in Buckingham about the recent discovery of a new manuscript of the earliest Syriac text of the Gospels.

In July I was due to speak at the XIII Symposium Syriacum in Paris, but this was cancelled due to Covid19.



Temple of Bacchus, Baalbek – back and north side

Ross Burns/Manar al-Athar

## Dr Ida Toth



In December 2019, I was invited to address the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at The Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna on ‘Word, Image, Ornament and Material Support: Genoa’s Volto Sacro’. I had been due to give a lecture on ‘Inscribing Texts in Byzantium: Continuities and Transformations’ in March at Università di Roma “La Sapienza”, Rome, however, this was postponed due to Covid-19. A talk on ‘Seven Sages in the Byzantine Book of Syntipas the Philosopher’ at the ‘Seven Sages of Rome’ Conference, Freie Universität Berlin, Institut für Deutsche und Niederländische Philologie, Ältere deutsche Literatur, 15-16 May 2020, Berlin was cancelled for the same reason.

2019-20 has been a busy year in terms of research. The following has been submitted and peer-reviewed:

‘Building Inscription from the Church of St Nicholas in Manastir’; ‘Later Byzantine Epigraphic Traditions’; ‘The Genoese Pallio’ in: Ch. Barber and F. Spingou, eds., *Readings in the Visual Culture of Later Byzantine (1081–1330s). Texts on Byzantine Art and Aesthetics*, vol. 3 (CUP 2021)

The following are in progress:

‘Inscriptions in Byzantine Patriographic Literature’ in: G. Agosti and G. Pezzini, eds. *Proceedings of the International Workshop Epigraphy and Literature in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 4 March 2019, St Andrews (UK)*

‘Late Medieval Antiquarian Culture and the Poetics of Reuse: Three Case Studies’, in: S. Cagaptay and A. Akisik, eds., *Late Byzantine Cities, Late Byzantine Cities, in the Proceedings of the International Workshop on Late Byzantine Cities, August 2019, Istanbul (Turkey)*

‘The Pallio of San Lorenzo: Sources and Contexts’, in: M. Angar and G. Wolf, *Proceedings of the Workshop ‘Il Pallio di San Lorenzo: dopo il restauro e prima del suo ritorno a Genova’*, *Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Opificio delle Pietre Dure, and the Museo di Sant’Agostino, February 2018, Florence (Italy)*

I completed chapters on Theodore of Sykeon, *Patria Constantinoupoleos, Narratio de Imagine Edessena*, Manuel Holobolos and Manuel Chrysoloras to be included in: E. Jeffreys, I. Toth, F. Haarer, *Byzantine Greek Reader: An Anthology of Byzantine Literature*, (in preparation, CUP)

I have had the following books published:

I. Toth, A. Rhoby, eds., *Materials for the Study of Late Antique and Medieval Greek and Latin Inscriptions in Istanbul*, Oxford and Vienna 2020 (online edition: <https://austriaca.at/8370-2>)

M. Lauxtermann and I. Toth, eds., *Inscribing Texts in Byzantium: Continuities and Transformations. Papers from the Forty-Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, London and New York 2020

I have contributed the following book chapters:

‘Editors Preface’ in: M. Lauxtermann and I. Toth, eds., *Inscribing Texts in Byzantium: Continuities and Transformations. Papers from the Forty-Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, London and New York 2020, xxi-xxv

‘The Epigraphy of the Abgar-Story: Traditions and Transitions’, in: M. Lauxtermann and I. Toth, eds., *Inscribing Texts in Byzantium: Continuities and Transformations. Papers from the Forty-Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, London and New York, 2020, 73-104

‘The Column of Constantine’ in: I. Toth, A. Rhoby, eds., *Materials for the Study of Late Antique and Medieval Greek and Latin Inscriptions in Istanbul*, Oxford and Vienna 2020, 43-47

‘A Fifteenth-Century Building Inscription of George Branković’ in: I. Toth, A. Rhoby, eds., *Materials for the Study of Late Antique and Medieval Greek and Latin Inscriptions in Istanbul*, Oxford and Vienna 2020, 79-81

‘Graffiti in St Sophia’, in: I. Toth, A. Rhoby, eds., *Materials for the Study of Late Antique and Medieval Greek and Latin Inscriptions in Istanbul*, Oxford and Vienna 2020, 217-21

I was co-applicant on a successful application to the Fell Fund (Oxford University) for a project documenting Georgian Ecclesiastical Architecture from the 6th to the 13th Century. I was a contributor to the project GRAPH-EAST: Latin as an Alien Script in the Medieval (ERC project, PI: Estelle Ingrand-Varenne, CNRS au Centre d’études supérieures de civilisation medievale, Poitiers, France). I also contributed to the project ‘Byzantine and post Byzantine donor inscriptions of Lakedaimon’ (PI: Christos Stavrakos, University of Ioannina, Greece). I was co-editor (with Andreas Rhoby) of the series ‘Studies in Byzantine Epigraphy’ (Brepol).

I am currently supervising both Mst and MPhil (LABS) students: Rebekah Wahnon-Pym, Julian Wood and Robert Heynes. I am also supervising the following doctoral students: Jan Zaripov (Classics), Josh Hitt (History), Sergey Fadeev (MML, deferred).

My priority in 2020/21 will be my university duties. I expect to spend most of my time looking after my students, and making sure that the delivery and assessment of my courses are done to the highest possible standard. My plan is to publish some of my work in progress (see, above); to prepare the first volume of the series Studies in Byzantine Epigraphy; to finalise the list of participants for the Round Tables that I will co-chair at the International Congress of Byzantine Studies (2022) and the International Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy (2022).



Sagalassos exhibition at Yapı Kredi Cultural Center



David Hendrix Byzantine Legacy

## OCBR DPhil Students

The DPhil course is Oxford's highest research degree. Candidates do research leading to a major contribution Late Antique and Byzantine Studies, working on primary sources to help further understanding of the subject. Doctoral research is supervised by one (or two) senior academics but candidates work independently to produce a 80-100,000 word dissertation. This process takes several years and usually follows a MSt or MPhil course taken at Oxford. We are lucky enough to attract some of the best graduate students and early career scholars in the world to do research with us. The current crop is an outstanding group:

### Thomas Adamson-Green



Topic: *Ordering Knowledge: Knowledge and Power in the Byzantine Compilation Movement, c.886-1000*

Supervisor(s): Phil Booth, Catherine Holmes

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/thomas-adamson-green>

### Chloe Agar



Topic: *On the Representation of Visions in Selected Coptic Hagiographical Texts*

Supervisor(s): Phil Booth, Gesa Schenke

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/chloe-m-agar>

### Daniel Alford



Topic: *Kin and Culture: Marriage and Inheritance in Late Antique Armenia*

Supervisor(s): Phil Booth, Yuhana Vevaina

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/daniel-alford>

### Philip Atkins



Topic: Politics in the Age of Theodosius I?

Supervisor(s): Neil McLynn

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/philip-atkins>

### Adele Curness



Topic: *Hagiography and Society in Southern Italy (10th-12th centuries)*

Supervisor(s): Catherine Homes, Chris Wickham

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/adele-curness>

### Johannes Ender



Topic: Crossing the threshold: A comparative study of the Graeco-Arabic, Arabic-Latin and Arabic-Greek translation of occult literature

Supervisor: Professor Marek Jankowiak

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/johannes-ender>

### Daniel Gallaher



Topic: *T'ovma Arcruni and his World: Armenian Historical Traditions in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*

Supervisor(s): Phil Booth, Theo van Lint

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/daniel-gallaher>

### Joshua Hitt



Topic: *Age and Identity: The Discourse of Old Age in Byzantine Literary and Visual Culture, Tenth-Twelfth Centuries*

Supervisor(s): Ida Toth

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/joshua-hitt>

### Brian Lapsa



Topic: *Christian idea of imitation of the divine and its antecedents in Greek rhetoric and education*

Supervisor(s): Teresa Morgan

### John-Francis Martin



Topic: *The Byzantine Catholics: A Study of the Network of Byzantine Intellectuals who Converted to Catholicism, c.1350 - 1453*

Supervisor(s): Phil Booth, Catherine Holmes

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/john-francis-martin>

### Callan Meynell



Topic: *Roman Identity in Byzantium: Empire, Church, and War. The Political and Religious Bases for Romanness in Byzantium and Their Development*

Supervisor(s): Marek Jankowiak

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/callan-meynell>

### Giulia Paoletti



Topic: *The Spiritual Chapters of Andronikos Palaiologos*

Supervisor: Marc Lauxtermann

Link: <https://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/people/giulia-maria-paoletti>

### Alberto Ravanni



Topic: *John Tzetzes' Allegories of the Iliad*

Supervisor(s): Marc Lauxtermann

Link: <https://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/people/alberto-ravani>

### Lorenzo Saccon



Topic: *The Size and Importance of the Greek Slave Trade in the Fourteenth Century*

Supervisor(s): Marek Jankowiak

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/lorenzo-saccon>

### Ngoh (Raymond) Shian Haw



Topic: *The New History of Zosimus*

Supervisor(s): Phil Booth, Neil McLynn

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/shian-haw-ngoh>

### Andrew Small



Topic: *The Golden Opportunity: A Global History of Eleventh-century Byzantine Italy*

Supervisor(s): Chris Wickham

Link: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/people/andrew-small>



Palmyra - museum – sculpture

Sean Leatherbury/Manar al-Athar

## MPhil in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies

This two-year course has been devised as a multi-purpose introduction to the Roman world in Late Antiquity, to Byzantium, the medieval successor of the East Roman Empire, and to neighbouring peoples and their cultures.

### Core Papers

A core paper on History, Art and Archaeology, or History and Byzantine Literature is taken during the first two terms of each academic year (comprising two sets of weekly classes), examined on the basis of two 5,000-word essays on topics of their choosing (subject to the approval of their supervisor), submitted at the end of each summer term (Trinity Term).

- History, Art and Archaeology: Late Antiquity
- History, Art and Archaeology: Byzantium
- History and Literature: Late Antiquity
- History and Literature: Byzantium

### Advanced options

Three advanced options are selected by the students, and may include topics in ancient and medieval languages and literatures, the auxiliary disciplines of papyrology, epigraphy, palaeography, numismatics, sigillography (usually studies in pairs), or artefact studies, or advanced study in the literature, history and religion of the area.

There are no detailed descriptions for these papers, as much of the teaching will be tailored to the individual training needs and interests of students on the programme. The programme convenor and a candidate's individual supervisor will agree with the student a suitable programme of work at the start of the academic year.

There were 5 students during 2019-20:

### James Cogbill



Topic: Education, confession and asceticism: A reassessment of the relationship between monks and secular clergy in Middle Byzantium  
Supervisor: Marek Jankowiak

### Madeleine Duperouzel



Topic: Virtue and Violence: The Death of Hypatia and Literary Constructions of Late Antique Womanhood  
Supervisor: Phil Booth

**Sarah Gianakon**



Topic: On Hunting and the Rationality of Hunting Dogs in the Late Antiquity  
Supervisor: Neil McLynn

**Sofia Vaz Pinto Simoes Coelho**



Topic: Isidor of Rostov and Ioann of Ustiug. Iurodstvo and the transformations of northern Rus  
Supervisor(s): Marek Jankowiak and Jonathan Shepard

**Rebekah Wahnon-Pym**



Topic: “Maligned Genders and Desire: Male and Female Prostitution in the Greek-speaking World c.200-500CE”  
Supervisor(s): Ida Toth and Conrad Leyser



Leptis Magna - statue of Tiberius (Tripoli National Museum) Ross Burns Manar al-Athar

## MSt in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies

The Master of Studies in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies has been devised as a multi-purpose introduction to the Roman world in Late Antiquity, to Byzantium, the medieval successor of the East Roman Empire, and to neighbouring peoples and their cultures. It can be taken as a free-standing degree, or as the first step towards doctoral research. Students have the option of selecting a focus of study dependent on their knowledge of languages or on their primary interests in the field.

### Core Paper

A core paper on History, Art and Archaeology, or History and Byzantine Literature during the first two terms of the academic year (comprising two sets of weekly classes), examined on the basis of two 5,000-word essays on topics of their choosing (subject to the approval of their supervisor), submitted at the end of the summer term (Trinity Term).

- History, Art and Archaeology: Late Antiquity
- History, Art and Archaeology: Byzantium
- History and Literature: Late Antiquity
- History and Literature: Byzantium

### Advanced options

Two advanced options courses are selected by the students, and may include topics in ancient and medieval languages and literatures, the auxiliary disciplines of papyrology, epigraphy, palaeography, numismatics, sigillography (usually studies in pairs), or artefact studies, or advanced study in the literature, history and religion of the area.

There are no detailed descriptions for these papers, as much of the teaching will be tailored to the individual training needs and interests of students on the programme. The programme convenor and a candidate's individual supervisor will agree with the student a suitable programme of work at the start of the academic year.

This course was taken by 6 students 2019-20:

### William Bunce



Core Essay Title 1: Miaphysism on Trial in the Courts of Justin II  
Core Essay Title 2: The Bishop at Work: The Council of Carthage of 525  
Supervisor(s): Phil Booth

### Benjamin Gray



Core essay title 1: The Great War that never happened: Ethiopia as saviour in post Islamic conquest Christian apocalyptic  
Core essay title 2: Vod, Izhera and Korel: The dynamics of Novgorod the Great's relationship with three Finnic groups  
Supervisor(s): Marek Jankowiak

### **Oliver Harrison**



Core essay title 1: Oliver Cromwell the Byzantine Tyrant, Thomas Fuller's comparison between Oliver Cromwell and Emperor Andronikos Komnenos  
Core essay title 2: Confronting the past: Byzantine perceptions of Roman heritage during a period of decline (11th to 12th century)  
Supervisor(s): Marek Jankowiak

### **Robert Hayes**



Core essay title 1: Aristocratic Houses and the Architecture of Power in Fifteenth-Century Mystras  
Core essay title 2: How does the portrayal of Iconoclasm in the Byzantine historiographical tradition affect our understanding of the reality of corporal punishment?  
Supervisor(s): Ida Toth and Ine Jacobs

### **Benjamin Sharkey**



Core essay title 1: Liminal Christianity among the Turkic Nomads of Central Asia (Sixth to Eleventh Centuries)  
Core essay title 2: Joseph Metropolitan of Merv (fl.780): his appeal to the caliph and his conversion to Islam  
Supervisor(s): Phil Booth

### **Julian Wood**



Core essay title 1: Between Chroma and Christology: The Role and Function of Colour in the Iconophile Writings of John of Damascus  
Core essay title 2: The Burning Question of Damaged Icons in the Age of Iconoclasm  
Supervisor(s): Ida Toth and Ine Jacobs



Mtskheta - Svetitskhoveli Cathedral - interior

Miranda Williams Manar al-Athar

## OCBR Exchange Programmes

### Oxford - Princeton-Vienna-Mainz-Berlin Graduate Exchange (Postponed)

The Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research has been pleased to finance Oxford's transport costs to Vienna, Mainz and Berlin over the last four years. For several years, the History Faculty has been engaged in Oxford-Princeton-Vienna-Mainz-Berlin Graduate Exchange, a conference designed to give advanced doctoral students a unique opportunity to present their work, and to forge connections with fellow graduates and senior academics from some of the best universities in the world. The conference venue circulates amongst the five institutions, with the hosts providing accommodation and other basic needs, and the guests funding all transport costs.

Vienna was due to host the conference in June this year and the Oxford cohort was to be led by Bryan Ward Perkins, Julia Smith and Ida Toth. The OCBR had agreed to grant £2000 to cover the travel costs of the participants.

## Exhibition Grants

The OCBR did not receive any applications for such grants in 2019-20. Typically, exhibitions are the culmination of research projects and occur later in the academic year, which would not have been possible last academic year due to the national lockdown.



Baalbek - mosaic of the Seven Sages - House of Patricius (Beirut National Museum) Andres Reyees/Manar al-Athar

## The Harrison Fellowship

The Harrison Fellowship was established in honour of the late Professor Martin Harrison to enable a young archaeologist from Turkey to conduct research at Oxford. The OCBR did not make an award in 2019-2020.



Trabzon - Hagia Sophia - south porch Miranda Williams MaA

## Teaching of Turkish at Oxford

OCBR continued its commitment to contribute to Turkish language teaching, to enable students to gain familiarity with a language where more scholarly work focusing on Byzantium and the surrounding region is being written. No call was made on these funds in 2019-20.



**2019 – 2020**

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