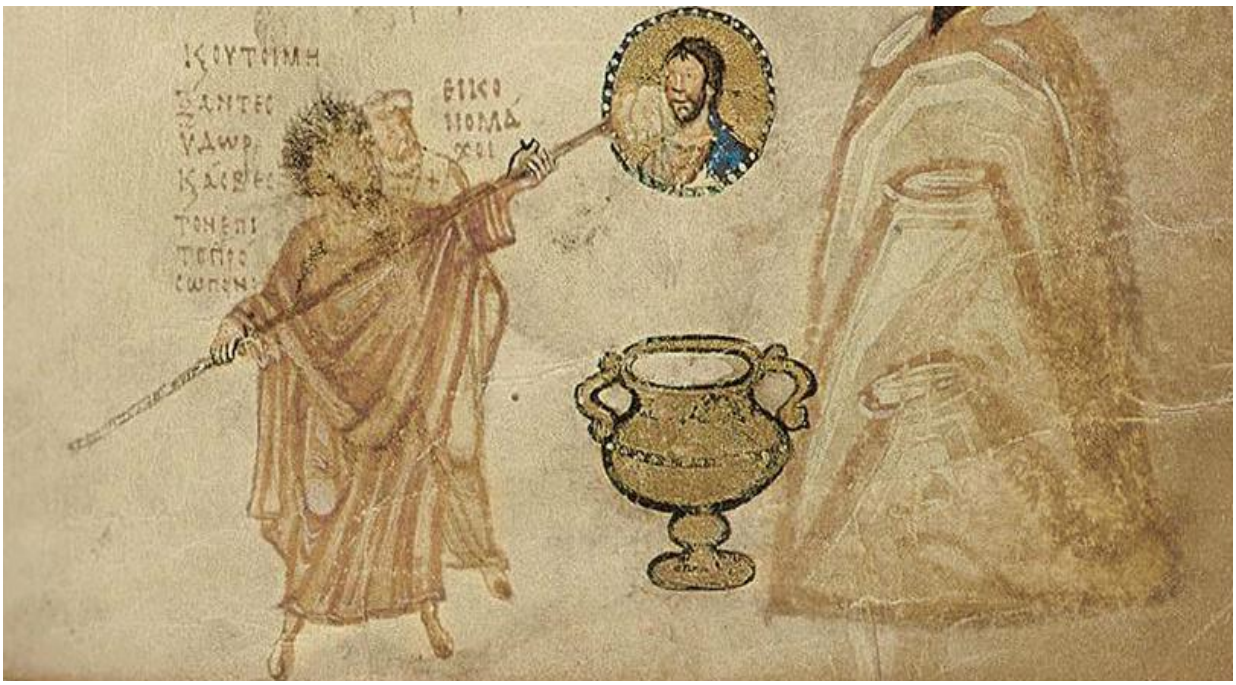
CENTER FOR EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES

CENTER FOR EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES
THIRD INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE CONFERENCE

TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION
DISSENT AND CONSENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN



CONFERENCE BOOKLET

CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY, BUDAPEST

MAY 30–JUNE 1, 2013

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PROGRAM

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CEU OKTOGON

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Prof. Niels Gaul (Central European University)

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Visual Parallels between Iconoclasts and Jews in Byzantine Psalters

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PROF. RUBINA RAJA (Aarhus University)

Marking Religious Identity in Eastern Mediterranean Late Antique Urban Landscapes: Churches as Signs of Cultural Continuity and Change

This lecture will address church buildings in the Late Antique Near East. Focus will be on contextualizing some of these buildings in the urban landscapes of which they were part. Through selected case studies questions of cultural continuity and change will be addressed. In particular the question about the common cultural *koiné* and shifting religious identities in Late Antiquity will be discussed through archaeological and epigraphic evidence.

Prof. Rubina Raja is a Professor of Classical Archaeology at Aarhus University, Denmark. Her research interests are Greco-Roman Near East, urban cultures in antiquity, religion and culture in antiquity and late antiquity, iconography, archaeological methods and natural science. Prof. Raja is the author of *Urban Development and Regional Identity in the Eastern Roman Provinces, 50 BC–AD 250: Aphrodisias, Ephesos, Athens, Gerasa* (Museum Tusculanum, Copenhagen, 2012) and is involved in several international projects.

— MAY 31 —

POPPER ROOM

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Avraham Yoskovich (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem & Heidelberg University)
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Maël Goarzin (University of Lausanne & EPHE Paris)
Late Antique Biography as an Authoritative Literary Form in Terms of Practical Ethics

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PROF. ALBRECHT BERGER (Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich)

Re-Writing the Urban History of Constantinople

After its foundation in the early forth century on the site of ancient Byzantium, Constantinople rose, within a few decades, to the rank of capital of the eastern Roman empire. But although Byzantium had a long and distinguished history, it obviously lacked a number of qualities which were deemed necessary for a predecessor of the new political and ecclesiastical centre: Byzantium had never been the seat of empire before; it had only few ancient monuments and almost no Christian past. My lecture tries to demonstrate how this defect was cured, in a first phase, by importing antiquities and martyrs, and by inventing an urban history worthy to a city of this importance and how this invented history was later reshaped and rewritten, according to the needs of the changing times. Constantinople finally became, in the imagination of its inhabitants, the last, apocalyptical capital of the Roman empire, whose future downfall meant the end of empire and of the whole world.

Prof. Albrecht Berger completed his M.A. in Byzantine Studies, Byzantine Art History and Latin Philology of the Middle Ages in Munich in 1981, worked as a research assistant at the Free University of Berlin from 1984 to 1989, where he did also his PhD (Dr. phil.) dissertation, and at the Istanbul branch of the German Archaeological Institute from 1992 to 1997. He also held various fellowships, and is professor of Byzantine Studies at the University of Munich since 2003. His research interests are the historical topography of Constantinople and Asia Minor, Byzantine hagiography and Phanariotic literature. Currently he works, as a member of a research group, on a new edition of the *Church History of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos*. Among his publications are: *Studies on the Patria Konstantinoupoleos* (1988), *The Life of Saint Gregory of Agrigentum* (1993), and *Life and works of Saint Gregentios, Archbishop of Taphar* (2006).

— JUNE 1 —

POPPER ROOM

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Chair: Prof. Mihailo Popović (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)

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Ivan Marić (Central European University)
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Márton Rósza (ELTE Budapest)
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Nicola Bergamo (EHESS, Paris)
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Christos Malatras (University of Birmingham)
The Byzantines in the Twelfth Century: The Construction of an Identity

17.30–18: Coffee Break

18–19.30: KEYNOTE LECTURE

PROF. PHILIP WOOD (Aga Khan University, London)

Khusrau II Aparavaz and the Christians of His Empire (c.585–630)

The last war of Rome and Persia, under Heraclius and Khusrau II, has often been seen as a conflict between two religions, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. This vision follows the presentation of the Roman sources, which emphasize supposed Persian atrocities in the Holy Land and the martyrdom of Christian holy men at the court in Ctesiphon. This paper uses medieval Christian Arabic sources to attempt to reconstruct attitudes to the *shah* among Christians in the Sasanian world, which seem to have been much more favorable. In particular, I focus on the election of the catholicos Sabrisho, and the production of a 'loyalist' saint's life from within the Sasanian capital.

Prof. Philip Wood completed his DPhil at St John's College, Oxford in 2007, followed by a British Academy post-doctoral Fellowship at Corpus Christi. His research considers the intersection of political and religious ideas in the late antique Middle East. His doctorate was published as an OUP monograph in 2010, and it will soon be followed by a second monograph based on his post-doc, *The Chronicle of Seert. The Christian Historical Imagination in Late Antique Iraq*, which focuses on the writing of history by Christians in Sasanian and Abbasid Iraq. Dr. Wood has taught the political and cultural history of late antiquity at Oxford and Cambridge universities for the last six years. He has also taught the same period at SOAS focusing on Martyrdom and Monasticism in the Near East within the department of the Study of Religions. Dr. Wood was previously Osborn Fellow in early medieval history at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge and a Director of Studies in history.

Concluding Remarks

Prof. Volker Menze (Central European University)

21.00: Dinner for Speakers

Trófea Grill Restaurant, Király utca 30–32, VI. District

ABSTRACTS

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Three 'Heretical' Men and a Dog: The Oral Narratives of the Caucasian Schism

The history of the Late Antique Caucasus is marked by one focal event – the so-called Caucasian ecclesiastical Schism. By the beginning of the seventh century, as a result of the accumulation of polarized theological and political aspirations, the Georgian and Armenian Churches left each other's communion. The Georgian Church finally adhered to the Chalcedonian confession, whereas the Armenian Church formulated its anti-Chalcedonian stand. The Caucasian Schism became the ultimate interpretive schema through which all adjacent events were perceived. Almost all aspects of Caucasian history were and still are being viewed through the lens of the Schism. Medieval Armenians made a good rhetorical use of the Schism, adducing new ideological dimensions to the original story, whereas Georgians apparently entirely forgot the Schism. Despite the absence of this crucial event in the medieval Georgian memory, the events around the Schism have survived in a peculiar oral form. I shall examine the different strata of smoke and mirrors that the narrative of the Schism accumulated throughout the Middle Ages, the curious inclusion of Patriarch Peter Fuller, of St. Sergius, of Katholikos Michael and other figures in the narratives of orthodoxy and heterodoxy in the region. The story narrates about a certain Peter who was stoned by the Georgians near Mt. Kangar. This Peter, according to the Georgian tradition, was Peter Fuller himself, whereas the Armenians claimed that Georgians killed the Armenian envoy, Bishop Peter. The same narrative claims that this Peter owned a dog, called Alaj, who was also killed and in whose honour the Patriarch inaugurated the Fast of Arajawork also known as the Fast of Nineveh, which is still practiced in certain areas of the Caucasus. I shall try to demonstrate how oral and written narratives of doctrinal union and separation in the Caucasian region were encapsulated in this very curious story.

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Religion and Biography in the Periegesis by Andrew Libadenos

The *Periegesis* by Andrew Libadenos is a multifaceted account by a 14th century ambassador for the emperors of Byzantium and Trebizond. The narrative, a history of Libadenos' travels, is structured as a long speech, λόγος, of gratitude to the Virgin and a number of named saints, for the help they provided in times of difficulty. It contains a strong biographical character: running through the key events in Libadenos' life, it is structured around the misfortunes suffered by the author and the experienced divine protection that helped him out of these situations. Libadenos grew up and was educated in Constantinople and began his career there at a young age: when he had barely turned twelve, he embarked on his first mission on behalf of the Palaiologan court to Mamluk Egypt. Libadenos' travels in Egypt and the Holy Land constitute the first key section of the narrative. His perception on the Middle East is strongly affected by religious imagery, a fact that has led scholars to see his religious views as rather extreme. Libadenos includes elements and experiences of holiness in the details of his account. Through prayers and their responses, he shows that he was in a constant

dialogue with holy intercessors throughout his life. The nature of the situations, where the holy enters his narrative, varies from sickness to political struggles. The proposed presentation will assess in detail the relation between Libadenos' biographical account and the religious elements therein. The following aspects will be discussed: 1) situations of divine intervention, 2) the projection of religion to depictions of territory, and 3) the relation between religion and politics. The geographical scope of the presentation ranges from Egypt and the Holy Land to Constantinople and Trebizond – the sea, which binds them together into one cultural sphere.

Arkadi Avdokhin
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Early Byzantine Hagiography on Hymns - (Liturgical) Chant between Rhetoric and Contested Practices

Despite presenting a somewhat flat landscape in terms of its purported orthodoxy, the early Byzantine Greek *Vitae* literature, as scholarship of the last half a century has shown, must have shielded a social space wrought with all kinds of tensions - social, doctrinal, sacramental and liturgical. The latter is referred to in different, but similarly insightful, contexts. In the early Constantinopolitan hagiography performing hymns is constantly in focus when orthopraxy, or even orthodoxy, is concerned – be it the Ἀκοίμητοι highly active and problematic community with their incessant psalmody, be it the mass hymnody around the pillars of Daniel the Stylite challenging the conventional notions of liturgical practices, or the highly polemical precepts the author of *Vita Auxentii* has the saint give about the "right" – orthodox, should we say? – kind of hymns to sing. Elsewhere, presentation of hymnic practices in the early *Vitae* again comes in quite often when broader issues of doctrinal debates are at stake. Lives of the Sabaite monks written in the late 6th century by Cyril of Scythopolis and addressing, before many other things, the second Origenist controversy, put a substantial emphasis on the orthopraxy of monastic psalmody as part of a bigger picture of the orthodox code of thinking and acting - hence saint Sabbas castigating the Origenists for not sticking to the simplicity of faith and psalmodic practices. Laying out the conceptual map of the nascent orthodoxy in the early Byzantium seems to rely, among other things, on this kind of, admittedly, polemical representation of performing hymns and psalms.

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Eustathios of Thessalonike as Metaphrastēs: The Life of Philotheos of Opsikion

Eustathios of Thessalonike (ca. 1115–1195) is well-known as a commentator of the Homeric epics, a rhetor and homilist, and not least as author of an eyewitness-account on the Norman siege and sack of Thessalonike in 1185; his hagiographic *œuvre*, on the other hand, attracted little attention. He composed five hagiographic pieces during his metropolitan episcopate (from ca. 1178), which are: the Enkomion of St. Demetrios (*BHG* 539), the Life of Photios of Thessaly (*BHG* 1545), the Enkomion of the so-called Kalytēnoi martyrs (*BHG* 63), the Oration to a [contemporary] stylite, and the Life of Philotheos of Opsikion (*BHG* 1535). My presentation will focus on the Life of Philotheos of Opsikion. This short oration celebrates a quite obscure saint, probably of the ninth century, as a model of perfect

priesthood. Alexander Kazhdan described the *vita* as an antimonastic pamphlet which shows parallels with Eustathios' *On the Improvement of Monastic Life*, a work dealing with the problem of monasticism in Eustathios' times. Further inquiry of the Life clarifies the context of production as well as the literary means applied by Eustathios. My paper will thus contextualize the Life of Philotheos in its Thessalonian milieu as to elucidate how Eustathios as the city's archbishop came to compose such an oration and demonstrate how this metaphrastic *vita* served his purpose of influencing his audience in the Byzantine empire's second city.

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Peculiarities of Female Patronage on Mt Athos

In this paper are examined the aspects and role of female patronage of the Athonite monasteries. Mt Athos is represented as the most important religious and monastic landscape in the Eastern Christian tradition of Byzantium and so called Byzantine commonwealth. The subject of study allows to show the peculiarities of "ethnic" and "gender" aspects of patronage of monastic landscape that was considered to be the most prestigious for Eastern medieval rulers. On the basis of Greek and Slavic charters it is possible to find out which monasteries received donations from empresses, queens, noble women and nuns (Chilandar, Zograf, St. Panteleimon, Dochiariou, etc.) and make an assumption about the motivation of patroness in 11th–15th centuries as well as the legal peculiarities of their donations for the Athonite monasteries. The particular attention is paid to the activity of foreign princesses in Byzantium, as well as the Serbian queens and empresses as patrons of Athonite monasteries. The ethnic preferences of particular monasteries seem to be very important. The other interesting point is to find out the possibilities of female patronage taking into account the most serious gender restrictions on Mt. Athos. As a specific case study is represented the story of the Serbian empress Helena who was the only patroness to be allowed to enter the Mt. Athos, as well as the exclusion of her name in later sources.

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Games in Byzantium between Tradition and Transformation

Many forms of games were played during the Roman period. Greco-Roman remained within the societal fabric of the Second Rome? How many Roman games changed their shape and became purely "Byzantine" is an interesting question. How many "new games" were created by the Byzantines and how many were 'imported' from other cultures and became part of the Byzantine social structure are two further interesting questions to be addressed. This paper shall endeavor to describe, through the recreational aspects, the changes, the continuation and the innovation of the game through the years, from the foundation of Constantinople to the Fourth Crusade. Most of the secular Roman games disappeared, such as gladiatorial games (closed by Constantine I) or *venationes* (closed during the sixth century) as well as others that were connected with the pagan tradition. The Roman world was changing into a Christian Empire but some of its games survived into Byzantine society. The most

popular Roman game, but even more famous in Byzantium, was certainly the chariot racing which was practiced until the Fourth Crusade. It preserved its rules and its aspects of both the public and political game par excellence. Other games, such as Greco-Roman wrestling, survived in the Byzantine period. *Tabla*, a very popular game during the Roman period, stayed alive in the Byzantine period and it became very popular in Byzantium. They changed some rules especially regarding the gambling which was very controlled by the ecclesiastical and political laws. When the Roman Empire became more "Byzantine" and changed its skin, some games arrived from the East. A very clear example was Byzantine polo, well known as *tzykanion*. It had certainly a Persian origin, a heritage it shares with chess, another important game in Byzantium. These two games were played almost exclusively by the élite and the imperial family, especially from the Macedonian dynasty. They became the games of the perfect chevalier and they were spread from Byzantium to Europe through the Crusade.

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The Palaiologan Scholar and His Audience: the Case of John Zacharias Aktouarios

John Zacharias (ca. 1275–after 1328) was appointed chief physician, 'aktouarios', to the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (*r.* 1282-1328) and wrote several books on medical subjects, mainly influenced by the Galenic tradition. He was not simply a medical author or a practicing physician but also a significant member of the late Byzantine intellectual elite, as his active participation in the Palaiologan literary gatherings, '*theatra*', attests. In this paper, I aim to show how John presents himself throughout his texts in his attempt to create multiple points of contact with his contemporaries. I would like to focus on the illustrated examples of eleven case histories found in his extensive uroscopy treatise, "On Urines." John plays a double role in his presentation of his clinical accounts. He is a practicing physician, and thus the central character in the story, but also a 'chronicler', who constructs a first-person narrative based on the patient's history and the physician's performance. Consequently, there is an interaction between the physician and his patients who could be considered his internal audience. Furthermore, through the constant address to his readers, he manages to keep a certain degree of intimacy with his non-present, external, audience consisting of fellow physicians and contemporary scholars. Thus, we can trace his persistent awareness to communicate with patients by offering his multifarious knowledge in exercising his profession on the one hand, and on the other hand, a similar eagerness to respond to current social needs by communicating his important observations to the Palaiologan intelligentsia.

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Aspects of Structure and Intention in the Diegesis Merike of Nicephorus Blemmydes

The two parts of the *Partial Account* of Nicephorus Blemmydes present in their unity a complex work of autobiography. On one level the autobiographical account is political in that it includes events pertaining to court and church, on another it is spiritual and tells the story of an ascetic boy who grew to become the founder of a monastery and a nominee for the patriarchal throne, on yet another it is a philosophical and theological documentation of a life spent in pursuit of education and knowledge, notably including theological treatises and extensive accounts of debates. These levels often contradict

each other and in the contrasts between the humble ascetic, haughty philosopher, and material monastic founder a vivid picture of a 13th century man emerges. Blemmydes' life in the Empire of Nicaea is made out to look like a constant power struggle between the claims of court, church, and monastery, supplemented by the machinations of enemies. Meanwhile Blemmydes seems to be caught between his learned ambition and his ascetic ideal life. In the midst of the different demands he stands fast on his autonomy as represented by both his inflexibility of faith and opinion, as when he insists on insulting the mistress of the emperor, his benefactor, and his immobility in his monastic vocation and later foundation. In my paper I will address questions of the narrative structure: How, if at all, did Blemmydes manage to fit the disparate strands of his narrative together? What is the relationship between the two parts of the *Diegesis Merike*? Is the often claimed autohagiographical nature of the work intended or rather the result of conflict between the different layers of the narrative?

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Visual Parallels between Iconoclasts and Jews in Byzantine Psalters

Since the beginning of the Iconoclastic controversy, the Byzantine scholars had been attempting to relate the origins of the Christian heresy to the activities of Jews by emphasizing their influence on the first Iconoclast emperor Leo III. The reasons for blaming the Jews and stressing their role on the creation of the heresy were various. One of the main reasons was the same interpretation of the Second Commandement and the legend about the Iconoclastic edict of the caliph Yazid II. However, from a modern point of view, any real influence of Jews on the Iconoclastic contorversy has been proved as rather dubious. The present paper focuses on the reality that the Iconoclasts were linked to the Jews also visually on the illustrations in several Byzantine psalters. The most important evidence on the parallelism between the Iconoclasts and the Jews is provided by the Chludov Psalter and the illustration on folio 67 where the acts of Iconoclasts were visually compared to the acts of Jews. This essay also focuses on the depiction of John the Grammarian on folio 35 and attempts to relate it to the depiction of Judas and simonians on other folios in the same Psalter. Attention is also paid to the depictions of the Iconoclastic councils in several Byzantine Psalters which can be related to the "synod" of Jews based on the interpretation of the words in the related Psalm. The essay accentuates the existence of a strong relation between the depicted image, texts of Psalms and Byzantine anti-iconoclastic literature. The author endeavours to answer what kinds of means were used to compare the Iconoclasts to Jews and what were the main reasons for the Byzantine illustrator to do so.

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Late Antique Biography as an Authoritative Literary Form in Terms of Practical Ethics

Late Antique biographies are particularly interesting to study in terms of practical ethics. Beyond the praise of the sage or the saint, both pagan biographies and Christian hagiographies present an ideal life one could or should follow. The ideal life presented in those texts is not only directed towards the

past, as a way to remember and praise the holy men and women whose lives are told, but also and foremost towards the present and future lifestyle one should follow after reading such texts. And in this sense, biography is an excellent literary form used by philosophers and Christian thinkers to talk about the good life. But why is it so? What are the features of Late Antique biographies that explain this general use by Christian authors and pagan philosophers? And how could biographies be seen as authoritative texts in terms of practical ethics? When writing the Life of Moses and the Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus, Gregory of Nissa (ca. 335-ca. 395) explicitly suggests the aim of such biographies: the model life presented in those texts must be put into practice by the reader and the writer himself. Similarly, philosophical biographies, such as the Life of Proclus written by Marinus (ca. 450-500), are an example of the ideal virtuous life one should lead. And while theoretical texts such as the *Enneads* and the *Sentences*, written by Plotinus and Porphyry, define very precisely the different degrees of Neoplatonician virtue, the specificity of such biographies is the concrete examples given in those texts to put into practice the different degrees of virtue explained elsewhere, in more theoretical texts. So, while theoretical or dogmatic texts could be seen as authoritative texts in terms of theoretical ethics, biographies could be seen as authoritative texts in terms of practical ethics.

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Peter of John Olivi's Image of "Ecclesia Primitiva"and Papal Stake Burnings. Exegetical Rewriting of Early Church History as Formative Factor of Heterodoxies in Southern France Around 1300

When in Marseille 1318 four spiritual Franciscans were burned by order of John XXII., a forty year dispute over the legacy of St. Francis lay in the background. But those four dissidents wouldn't remain the only victims. A decade of inquisitorial proceedings in the melting pot that was Languedoc and a lot more burnings would follow. Part of the prologue to these events is the so-called "Usus Pauper Controversy" (1278-83), in which the controversial Franciscan theologian Peter of John Olivi (1248-1298) insisted poor use was part of the Franciscan vow. In Olivi's concept of *Heilsgeschichte* Francis and his followers played leading roles on the way to the approaching apocalypse; roles dependent on strict observance of poverty. Spirituals and Beguins adopted Olivi's ideas and consequently were declared heretics. Attempts to explain the evolution of this Dissent mainly focus on the prophecies Joachim of Fiore drew from unprecedented readings of Scripture. Undoubtedly Olivi's doctrine was affected by Joachite thought. However, for some of his major concerns, like condemnation of property and the necessity of evangelical poverty, it is profitable to consider other sources as well. Here comes to mind his striking image of "ecclesia primitiva", expounded in his exegesis of the "Acts of the Apostles" (esp. Acts 2, 42-47; 4, 32-37). As early Christians in Olivi's time figured as a role model for the perfect life, he assimilated them to his teaching of "paupertas evangelica." Inter alia, against standard interpretations he argued that they held no property, either individually or in common. Olivi's exegesis was taken up and promoted by his students, and the assertion of early Christian propertylessness re-emerges in the heresy trials of the inquisition. Altogether it may be argued, that rewriting of early Christian history served as a formative factor of Dissent in the Mediterranean around 1300.

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Adaptation of Concepts of Antiquity in Medieval Muslim Social Philosophy on the Example of the Epistles of Brethren of Purity

The paper focuses on the socio-philosophical model developed by the Brethren of Purity (*Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*) based on Plato's concept of Ideal City and introduces major mechanisms of application and adaptation of foreign knowledge in spheres of social and political philosophy. The *Epistles* of Brethren of Purity is a collection developed by an anonymous group of scholars in the 10th century. The *Epistles* were aimed at classifying and analyzing the knowledge accessible to Muslim intellectual elite of the mentioned period. Moreover, the Brethren indicate the foreign knowledge as a tool for reflecting upon their own knowledge and, based on that, developing functional mechanisms of applying it. The esoteric (*bāṭin*) understanding and interpretation of the text that was adopted by the Brethren, most likely because of their affiliation to Isma'ilites, enriches the text of the Epistles with the variety of intertextualities that play essential role in the process of adaptation of foreign knowledge and its synthesis with the vernacular one. The analysis of the structure and content of the *Epistles* gives an opportunity to identify major mechanisms of adaptation of the knowledge of antiquity in a completely different cultural environment. Particularly the description of the Virtuous Spiritual City in the *Epistle*, entitled on the *Quiddity of the Call to Good*, and the allegoric description of the *Sagun Island* form a binary system where both vernacular and allogenic knowledge are reflected, and introduces Plato's sociopolitical model applied to the Muslim reality. In order to identify these mechanisms, applications of terms and notions in the text is worth analyzing, i.e., how both vernacular and foreign terms and notions are used, explained and introduced to the reader. Thus, the paper concentrates on identification and classification of terms used in the text as well as structural analysis of the text with the focus on metatextual and intertextual components.

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Uncertain Religious Identities: The Use of Biblical References in Syriac Incantation Bowls

Religious identity has always been disputed when it comes to the so-called incantation bowls; ceramic bowls with apotropaic spells, found in Mesopotamia and southern Iran in Late Antiquity. Especially when it comes to the Syriac bowls. On the one hand the Syriac script is elsewhere closely connected to the spread and development of Christianity, and there are certainly some Christian elements in the Syriac incantation bowls, but on the other hand the Syriac incantation bowls borrow heavily from Jewish and Mandaic apotropaic tradition. Consequently, different scholars have identified them as working within a Jewish, Mandaic, pagan or, finally, Christian, Hellenistic tradition. It is well-known that religious boundaries within apotropaic practices in Late Antiquity are blurry. Nevertheless, overviews of contemporary Christian amulets in Greek, Judeo-Aramaic and Mandaic incantation bowls show a quite frequent quoting or referencing of scripture, while only 5 out of 51 published Syriac incantation bowls contain hints to the bible. The use of scripture in apotropaic practices is common, and the limited use of Christian scripture in the Syriac amulets certainly begs the question of whether they were produced and/or used in a Christian context. Working from the few biblical references there are in the Syriac incantation bowls, there also does not appear to be a correlation between them and the biblical references in the Christian Greek amulets or the use of the Hebrew bible in the Judeo-Aramaic incantation bowls. Unable to link the use of biblical references in Syriac incantation bowls to

either a comparable Christian or a Jewish practice makes the situation even more puzzling, and forces future studies to search for parallels in alternative ritual practices, for example liturgy.

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The Byzantines in the Twelfth Century: The Construction of an Identity

Twelfth century was an important period for the construction of the Byzantine identity. The Byzantines constructed around this period an ethnic group based on the Orthodox religion, the subjection to the emperor and the Greek language, placing thus effective boundaries towards their neighbours. The confrontation of Byzantium with the West seems to have caused considerable repercussions to the Byzantine identity. Many Byzantine authors recognise that their contemporary Latins originate from the ancient Romans and not the Byzantines. Those ancients Romans now seem barbarians to the eyes of the Byzantines. This identification is something new in the twelfth century, but it can be met also in the accounts of contemporary western authors, who identified the ancient Trojans, the legendary ancestors of the Romans, as their own ancestors. Evidently, the Greek past is pushed to the fore as the Byzantine scholars more and more study in depth the ancient Greek literature, while many of them feel nostalgia for the ancient Greece. Although they adore the ancient Greeks as models for praise, in no case did the Byzantines trace their ancestry to them. Those were still figured as "those Greeks." The Byzantines continued to style themselves as Romans. They were the "Romans of the East" whose myth of origin was the foundation of transfer of the capital of the Roman empire to Constantinople there. The Byzantines considered themselves as, foremost, the descendants of Constantine the Great and not of August, Alexander the Great or King David.

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Consent between Word and Image: The Personification of Byzantine Imperial Ideology on Coins of Romanos I and in Letters of Nicholas I Mystikos

Divine origin of the emperor's power was a firmly established *topos* of Byzantine imperial ideology. Chosen by inscrutable divine providence, emperors acted as God's representatives on earth, mirroring hierarchy of the heavenly order. No surprise that usurper-emperors benefited from this *topos* more than others, it offered a short-cut to legitimacy they all needed. Romanos I Lekapenos (*r.* 920-944), one of the most famous usurpers on the Byzantine throne, employed precisely this idea in order to propagate his legitimacy, and, as far as we know, he was the first to place it on coins. In the coronation scene, Romanos represented himself as being crowned by Christ on the obverse – the side traditionally reserved for the heavenly sphere – of his *solidi* dating to 921. In a contemporary letter, patriarch Nicholas I Mystikos (901-907; 912-925) describes how "God by His inscrutable Judgments has established on the throne of the empire [...] the Lord Romanos," and that "he [...] attained to this rule as though guided by the very hand of God." However, Romanos' coin was not without a predecessor.

Alexander I (*r.* 912-913), although a legitimate son of Basil I (*r.* 867-886), had depicted himself as being crowned by St John the Baptist on the reverse of his *solidi*. In 'reality,' the coronation was carried out by the patriarch - who performed a gesture similar to the one represented on coins. Since Nicholas I Mystikos was the patriarch administering both coronations, my paper explores to which degree he might have been the mastermind behind appearance of these images. Hence, the subject of this paper is the origin of the 'coronation' scene on Byzantine *nomismata*, relation between Alexander's and Romanos' coins, and the role of the patriarch Nicholas I Mystikos.

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Sumissis admugit cornibus Apis: a Few Notes about Disappearance of the Last Sacred Bull Apis

Quotation from Claudian's *Panegyricus de IV consulate Honorii Augusti* (398 AD) mentions the sacred bull Apis of Memphis for the last time. The cult involving the Apis bull is probably one of the oldest and the most prominent in ancient Egypt: it lasted from about 3000 BC until the end of the fourth century AD. Whether independent or associated with other deities, the cult of the sacred bull Apis had such tremendous endurance mostly due to the constant support of the state no matter if Egyptian rulers were of native or foreign origin. Roman historian Ammianus Marcelinus (ca. 330–395 AD) made reference to appearance of the last known Apis bull in 362 AD during the reign of Julian the Apostate, and above mentioned Roman poet Claudian (ca. 370–404 AD), who was born in Egypt, may have seen or have heard off this particular sacred bull in his youth. The coinage of Julian the Apostate contains the image of a bull, presumably Apis, as well. The aim of this paper is to investigate possible reasons for reappearance and final disappearance of the Apis bull during the late fourth century AD in context of Julian's religious politics and the predominance of Christianity.

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The Hermeneutic of Testing

My research examines Jewish and Christian exegetical discourses that mitigate or clarify the divine role in biblical testing narratives (i.e., Abraham and the Aqedah, Job's suffering, Adam and Eve's fall, and other famous biblical stories). Small changes in the philosophical and theological sentiments of antique writers such as their anthropology (i.e., the human internal process of trial), their theology (i.e., the divine role and responsibility of testing), and their theological cosmology (i.e., the role of supernatural intermediaries, angels, demons, Satan, etc.) result in hermeneutical variations when these authors interpret prominent biblical testing narratives. The starting point for this paper is the New Testament Epistle of James, which takes the theological position that 'no one should say, when tested (πειραζόμενος), that "it is God who tests me" (θεοῦ πειράζομαι), for God is not tested by evil (θεὸς ἀπείραστός ἐστιν κακῶν) and he himself tests no one (πειράζει δὲ αὐτὸς οὐδένα).' Despite this strong opening theological claim, nevertheless the author in Jas 2: 21–24 can still appeal to Abraham's trial in Genesis 22 which begins famously καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐπείραζεν τὸν Αβρααμ. Likewise, in Jas 5: 9–11

James interprets the suffering of Job as an example of endurance under suffering. The potential for theological conflict embedded within the biblical testing narrative was widely recognized and addressed in Christian and Jewish exegetical discourses across the Hellenistic world. Authors approached the problem from a variety of philosophical and theological perspectives, and as a result read these testing narratives with radically variant hermeneutics. These interpretations range from the intratextual hermeneutic of assimilation in the Rewritten Scripture of Jubilees to the allegorical hermeneutic of Philo's cosmological intermedianism, to the hermeneutic of rejection in the popular hagiography of the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies. I propose that James' theological and hermeneutical concerns fit within this wider Hellenistic exegetical discourse on the roles and responsibilities of testing. As for James' hermeneutic, I propose that the author's theological, cosmological and anthropological sensibilities as demonstrated throughout the Epistle result in a hermeneutic of intra-narrative assimilation in which the cosmology of Job overrides the problematic cosmology of Abraham; likewise, the problematic anthropology of Job is overridden and assimilated to the preferable anthropological features of traditional Abraham. This "Jobraham" narrative provides for James the perfect example of a faithful tested person and a perfect acquitted God.

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Sanctity and Dissent: Contesting Holy Bodies and Holy Spaces in the City of Ambrose

Histories of religious transformation in the medieval Mediterranean are frequently constructed as narratives in the history of ideas, or of high politics, cutting out the complex social movements which so often acted in close relation with breaks in religious thought and practice. Accepting the interconnection between material change in eleventh-century Europe and "Gregorian" reform highlighted by R. I. Moore, there is still much work to be done in elucidating the effect of social processes "from below" in contesting and redefining the inherited organization of Christian worship and institutions in the Latin church of this period. A study of the radical, popular Patarine movement for religious reform in later eleventh-century Milan provides a privileged observatory for testing the character of such interrelationships. The histories of Arnulf and Landulf Senior, together with contemporary *vitae*, reveal how the orthodox liturgical and cultic practices of the Ambrosian Church were challenged by an alliance of radical clerics and urban crowds. This confrontation also precipitated, among Milanese conservatives such as Landulf, the construction of an imaginative memory of Ambrosian tradition, its history, and sacred spaces, as recorded in the historian's text. This paper will analyse the character of religious discord in the period by focusing on how particular holy spaces and the bodies of saints were made into appropriate sites of contest for both sides of the Patarine controversy; and how such conflicts effected change upon local cults and liturgy. The martyrdom and later canonisation and translation of the leading Patarine activist Ariald, and the movement's seizure of holy chrism for new rituals of baptism, are among some of the concrete incidents which demonstrate how protagonists in the conflict understood the deep social and cultural implications of redefining the place and character of ritual activity and Christian sanctity.

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The Martyr and the Sage: Stoicism and Resistance between Palestine and Babylonia

In his recent book *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis*, Daniel Boyarin posits a "cultural relationship" between Plato and the Babylonian Talmud. He claims that Syriac-speaking Christians and the great amount of effort they expended translating Greek literature into Syriac, were the mediators of this relationship. This view has recently come under fire, with scholars like Adam Becker pointing out that the translation activities of these groups, as far as we know, did not encompass the appropriate texts until much later, and did not seem to occur in the correct time period. The broader question of influence between Greek and Rabbinic literature, however, remains an important topic of discussion. Keeping in mind the ever-present issue of this cultural relationship, this paper will show, through the analysis of one story and its transformations, that the questions of influence and relationship must first be examined on the micro level, with attention paid to content and context as much as literary forms. By examining four versions of the martyrdom of the Mother and her Seven Sons (2 Maccabees 7, 4 Maccabees, Lamentations Rabbah 1: 16, and Bavli Gittin 57b), I trace the contours by which this tale journeyed from Palestine to Babylonia. This paper pays particular attention to the figure of the mother, and the articulation of Platonizing Stoic ethics that she seems to represent in the Greek versions, and curiously maintains in Hebrew and Aramaic as well; along with the ruse of "the ring," as elucidated by Shaye Cohen. Though the mechanics of this transmission can still be difficult to parse, attending to small details such as these give us a greater sense of how complex and varied the groundwork that will allow us to understand this broader "cultural relationship" must be.

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Second-Class Aristocracy in the Early Komnenian Period

Emperor Alexios I and the Komnenian dynasty established a new system, the so-called "extended family government" which introduced a new hierarchy of the Byzantine aristocracy. In forming this new elite, the emperor gave the highest positions and ranks of government to his kin. Becoming a relative of the emperor depended on complex circumstances. Most members of court who did not belong to the imperial kinship were expelled from higher parts of administration, and formed what can be called a "second-class aristocracy," an inferior group of social elite. It was by no means a uniform and monolithic multitude. Families of the second-class aristocracy such as the Basilakai, Blachernitai and Skleroi had various backgrounds and origin. Furthermore, we can discover members of these families who built their carriers either as servants of imperial relatives or as opponents of the Komnenian reign. This social group has so far received little attention in terms of marriage networks and their role in the politics of the empire. My paper will treat the early development of second-class aristocracy and the beginning of decline of some formerly leading aristocratic families during the reign of Alexios I.

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Holy Weapon against the Turks: Description of the Sword of Alexios Kontostephanos by Theodoros Prodromos

Byzantine poet Theodoros Prodromos described in one of his short works a spectacular object – the sword of general Alexios Kontostephanos. In the poem, the author appealed to the main military saints, Theodoros and Dimitrios, and asked them to bless the sword against the enemies in the West and in the East. According to Prodromos, this sword, empowered by the images of two saints instilled fear into the Turks of Anatolia. Prodromos composed his description in the first half of the twelfth century, when old ideas of "imperial defence" were reformulated and reused by *literati*, who worked at the court of John Komnenos. These educated people joined together cult of military saints which was popular among nobility of Anatolia since the eleventh century and ideology of "imperial revival" proclaimed by the new dynasty of Komnenoi. Theodoros Prodromos was one of these *literati*. In the description of the sword he forged together aristocratic cult of military saints and renewed the ideology of "sacred empire," which is defended by divine power. In my paper I will compare description of Prodromos with other famous swords of the twelfth-century Byzantine literature. Finally, I want to find the place of the poem about the sword in the discourse of "imperial revival" and to compare the work of Prodromos with similar texts from the Latin West.

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Consent behind Dissent: Muslim and Jewish Mysticism in Medieval Mediterranean, Suhrawardi and the Kabbalah

Jewish mystical traditions (mainly the Kabbalah) and their Muslim counterparts are usually studied separately. Even most prominent scholars such as Gershom Scholem carefully avoid cross-religious comparative studies. However, in the medieval Mediterranean, both religions were deeply intertwined. In the first part of my research, I would like to give a brief overview of the nearly simultaneous birth of two mystical traditions, namely the Kabbalah in Judaism, and the Illuminations (*ishrāq*) in Islam. I will focus on the very early Hebrew translations of the main figure of the *ishrāq* philosophy, that is to say Suhrawardi (such as Ibn Kammuna's). The second part of the research will be a systematic inquiry into the components of both religious systems. As Henri Corbin pointed out, the very specific and pervasive place of light in several Muslim mystical traditions is a distinct Persian feature which was taken over and elaborated by Suhrawardi, as the angelology (see the impressive amount of publications devoted to it, from the Biblical perspective as well as from the perspective of religious science, e.g., Dumezil), and probably even the mysticism of the palaces (*hekhaloth*), which predated the Kabbalah as we know it today. Besides those broad themes, the research could deal with some obvious key-words of the Kabbalah, such as the names of *sephiroth*. A second theme of research could be the way light spreads in Kabbalah and in Suhrawardi's *ishrāq*. Albeit the presence of light is a much more general fact of religions, its very specific forms and transmission may not be a mere random analogy. Thirdly and on a more encompassing level, the place of the Persian deep heritage may be at least outlined.

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Tradition and Transformation: On the Iconography of the Mithraic Tondo from Salona

Salona, once a capital of the Roman province of Dalmatia, could be easily adorned with the title of a "regional Mithraic epicenter," as it stands out among other cities of the eastern Adriatic coast for its numerous Mithraic monuments. Altogether twelve reliefs and six votive inscriptions were discovered *intra muros*, and at least two *extra muros* sites can be associated with the Mithraic cult. Although archaeological research did not offer any positive proof for the five supposed mithraea, situated supposedly both *intra* and *extra muros*, judging the size of surviving pieces of sculpture it could be only concluded that there were actually several Mithraic sanctuaries in Salona. Some of these monuments are considered outstanding examples of the Mithraic art and are distinguished either by their quality of the craftsmanship, or by rare and original iconographic motives. One such monument is a topic of this paper: the so-called Salonitan tondo, which has been puzzling scholars for years. Firstly, for its most unusual circular form which made some scholars think of it as a genuine Salonitan invention. Secondly, the extraordinary aquatic animals set around the central tauroctony scene, unique in the whole corpus of Mithraic art, have yielded different explanations, none of which seems to be satisfying enough. Nevertheless, they possess the key to understanding this enigmatic monument. Lizard, dolphin, lobster/crab and snail, highly unusual motives in the Mithraic iconography, are hereby subjected to the analysis that seeks to offer a new explanation of their meaning and of the symbolics of the monument as a whole.

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Martyrdom and Episcopal Authority: The Bishop-Martyr in Pannonian Hagiography

The present proposal focuses on two Pannonian *passiones*, the *Passio Irenaei Sirmiensis* (*BHL* 4466) and the *Passio Quirini Sisciani* (*BHL* 7035), and on the image of the martyred bishop contoured in them. I will invest a particular concern in the relationship between the bishop and the community entrusted to him, from the perspective of the bishop's pending martyrdom. Both Quirinus and Irenaeus view their respective deaths as emblematic/representative for the entire community; their martyrdom becomes a veiled exhortation for the members of the community to follow in their footsteps (cf., e.g., *Passio Quirini* 3: "ideoque offero me majoribus suppliciis, ut me quibus praepositus fui in hac vita, sequantur ad illam aeternam vitam, ad quam per huiusmodi iter facile pervenitur"). In that they are joined by the *Passio Pollionis*, which expresses a similar view on the same Irenaeus of Sirmium. In my analysis of the role of the bishop in Pannonian hagiography I shall pursue a threefold goal: first, I will examine the bishop's function in the studied sources; next, I will observe the exhortative connotations of their martyrdom: Do they fit the mainstream theologies of martyrdom? How do they interact with the (opposition to) voluntary martyrdom? Finally, I will shift the focus to the reception of these sources and, using an audience-oriented analysis, I will examine how the hagiographic image of the bishop affected the perception of episcopal authority in late antique Pannonia. Overall, I hope that, by outlining the hagiographic model of episcopal authority, I will be able to contribute to a better knowledge of late antique Pannonian Christianity.

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Uses and Misuses of the Common Concepts Strategy in Emperor Julian's Contra Galilaeos

The common concepts strategy, while having faint Platonic antecedents, became a standard tool of argumentation in Hellenistic theology. Even though it was originally aimed at showing how empirical concept formation can provide an account of the origin and justification of beliefs, including the belief in gods, its details and terminology were appropriated into a broadly construed Middle Platonist approach, carried on by later Platonists as well. In Emperor Julian the Apostate's polemical work *Contra Galilaeos*, we find an interesting, yet *prima facie* not quite sophisticated, use of this argumentative strategy. In this regard, Julian's stated aim is twofold. On the one hand, he argues that the naturally acquired concept of god suffices to establish a proper theology. On the other hand, he maintains that the appeal to any kind of divine revelation turns out to be hardly more than a pitiful trifle. In this paper, my aim is to argue for the following three claims. First, Julian's agenda of discrediting divine revelation can be seen as a countermove against those authors who have already appropriated common concepts as a means of arguing for Christian revelation, a move we can observe especially in the work of Origen. Second, in the business of refuting his opponents, Julian huddles together similar nevertheless distinct argumentative patterns of different origin, apparently mistaking them to be instances of the same strategy. Third, even though these misidentifications can easily count as a symptom of what was once fashionably called "eclecticism," they can also be accounted for as part of Julian's agenda to represent pagan philosophical traditions as a unitary movement, in contraposition to what he sees as an inherently scattered and unstable Christian position.

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The Image of Paradise on Early Byzantine Floor Mosaics on the Territory of Present Day Serbia

This paper aims to explore the visual articulation of the salvation dogma through representations of paradisiacal images in the sacred space of a church, on the example of floor mosaics made on the territory of present day Serbia in the early Byzantine period. Floor mosaics excavated in Iustiniana Prima, Naissus, Sirmium, Mediana, Nebeske stolice and Ulpiana will be explored with special attention to iconographical and iconological analysis of different notions, formulas, schemes by which the image of paradise was visualized. The concept of paradise is relied upon a very specific symbol of pleasure garden, a place of eternal bliss, based on different biblical and non-biblical narratives of salvation, and by using different iconographical schemes (geometrical motives, birds, vessels, vines, cross as the tree of life, etc) the image is artistically different but always with the same meaning. The idea was gradually formed in the Early Christian period as a result of interaction and interpretation of pagan idea of Elysium and refrigerium, Old Testament and rabbinical ideas of *paradeisos*, a walled garden, as well as the New Testament teachings of baptism, as a pledge for salvation and eternal life in Christ and the Life-Giving Tree that annulled death and helped redeem primordial sin. Since the corpus of floor mosaics is not, by now, well researched an analysis can significantly contribute to the clarification of trends of visual culture in early Byzantine period as well as the way the image of paradise, as one of the main themes in the above mentioned period, was visualized.

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Transmittable Apocalypses: Byzantine Diplomatic Letters and Latin Eschatology during the First Crusade

This paper explores the Byzantine use of apocalyptic language in diplomatic communication with the Latin West prior to and during the First Crusade. It examines correspondence between the Byzantines and various Western powers, including the Papacy, in which Alexios Komnenos appealed for military aid against the Seljuk Turks. In invoking apocalyptic narrative in these letters in order to support his immediate political needs, Alexios shows himself to be not only aware of the eschatological storyline of Christian history, but also capable of making use of it for political gain. It is only a small step from this type of pragmatic awareness to a co-option entire of the roles of the Last Roman Emperor, for the purpose of shoring up Byzantine authority. As David Olster has suggested, Byzantine apocalyptic has always argued in defence of Byzantine Romanity – it serves to restate and support the claim that Byzantium is Rome, and thus heir to the powers and narratives which belong to Rome in its role as the Christian Empire on Earth. In this repurposing of apocalyptic during the end of the eleventh century, however, a Byzantine emperor makes use of Latin Western apocalyptic to argue that same Byzantine Romanity – the central role of Byzantium in Christian history and eschatological time. The use of apocalyptic tonality and eschatological narrative in the diplomacy surrounding the First Crusade is not empty of practical effect. It is neither superstitious ephemera nor epiphenomena born of superficial similarities between the progression of actual events and the expected sequence of an apocalyptic scenario – but instead something comprised of both recognition of those similarities and awareness of their practical effects in achieving concrete and earthly goals. Apocalyptic language is significant because it is efficacious. Its presence in Byzantine-Papal diplomacy demonstrates the nature of the struggle for legitimacy surrounding the First Crusade.

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Questioning Authority: Christian Education Leading to Lay Participation in Doctrinal Debates

In making Christian education accessible for lay people, I argue that Jerome was actually enabling lay participation in significant doctrinal debates. His teaching transcended the basic catechesis that every catechumen would receive, and it instead could be regarded as theological education. Offering his 'students' insights into exegesis, Christian doctrine, and the perfection of the ascetic life, he not only empowered them to develop a strong identity in the Church, but he also authorised their arguments even when they were expressing dissent. In other words, they were given a voice. They could debate with ecclesial authorities – at the same level – and they did not have to be satisfied with a short and simple answer. I will illustrate my argument by considering some of Jerome's correspondence with these lay people, especially the ones that reflect underlying conflicts. This paper will briefly touch on the authority conflict that arose between radical ascetics and their bishops, on Jerome's letters to Marcella on Montanism and Novatianism, and on his response to Pammachius' request for clarification of his position in the Origenist controversy: each of these letters illustrates how lay Christians were indeed encouraged to take and to develop positions in important doctrinal debates.

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The Cock-Crow in Late Antiquity: Terminology & Cultural Interactions

Included in a set of a number of time-terms in Jewish ancient Literature, the cock-crow has a certain exceptional place along other time-terms of the morning. This exception is manifested in reckoning method and lingual aspects. I wish to sharpen the question and to propose the way cultural interactions may stand behind the development of this unique term in Jewish and Christian texts. The term was discussed already in a former research but I think a close philological discussion and more relevant references may contribute to a new understanding of the developments in using the Cock-crow in old Jewish-Christian rituals. Unlike a former claim, that the practice had originated in Jewish Jerusalem of the second temple, I wish to point out it carries distinctive symptoms of a non-Jewish source. It can explain the foreignness of the term in Jewish context and helps clarify an important motif in Evangelic traditions of Jesus' Passion.

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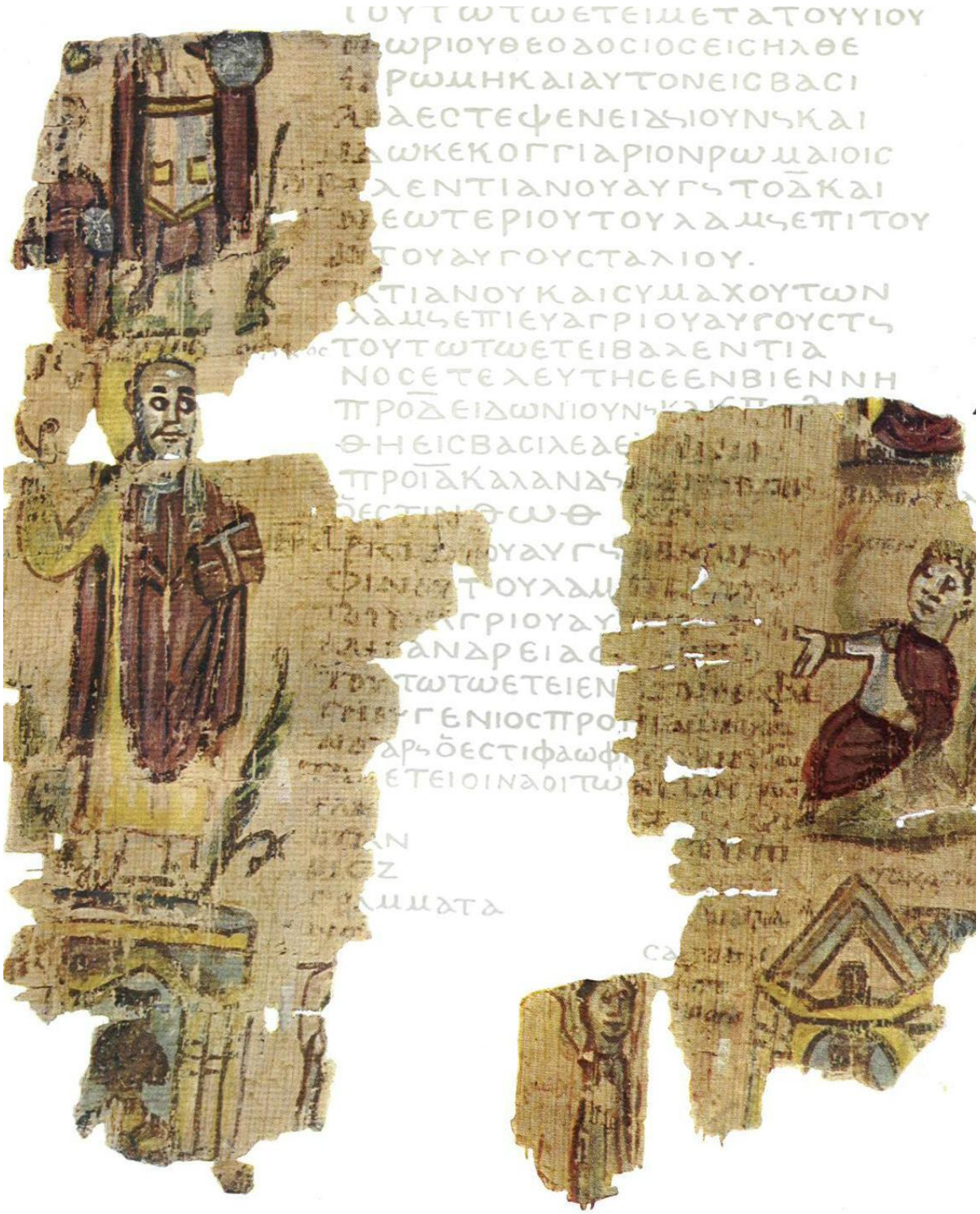

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