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# Society News

Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies



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Issue 18

November 2011

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The eleventh century is in many respects a crucial period in the history of Byzantium. It is a period of fundamental changes and transformations (internally and externally) and a period rife with clichés and dominated by the towering presence of Michael Psellos whose (usually self-contradictory) accounts continue to loom large in the field of Byzantine studies. It is above all a period we need to know more about – and the aim of this Spring Symposium, therefore, would be to question our assumptions and explore new avenues of research.

There will be seven plenary sessions: The world of Psellos; The here and hereafter (two sessions); Byzantium from within; Byzantium and beyond (two sessions); Other voices. Twenty three distinguished scholars have agreed to give papers on a wide range of subjects related to Archaeology, History (Social, Economic, Political), Literature and Art History.

## Call for communications

All graduate students and post-docs are cordially invited to give a communication paper in the Communications Sessions. Each communication session will consist of five ten-minute presentations, followed by 25 minutes discussion at the end. Please send your abstract (200 words max.) to [marc.lauxtermann@exeter.ox.ac.uk](mailto:marc.lauxtermann@exeter.ox.ac.uk) by 31 December 2011. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

## Registration

We are offering early registration for the symposium at the following rates: Full: £75; Members of the SPBS: £65; Students (unwaged): £30. After 1 March 2012 rates will rise to £85, £75 and £35 respectively. The fee for one-day participation is £40 (full fee), £35 (members of SPBS), and £20 (students).

The registration fee includes coffee, tea and sandwich lunches on Saturday, Sunday and Monday and a wine reception on Sunday. It does not include the conference dinner on Sunday, which is booked separately.

## How to book and pay

Online booking will soon be available. Details will be announced shortly on the website of OCBR ([www.ocbr.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ocbr.ox.ac.uk)), on the Facebook page of the Symposium and through Bedlam.

## Accommodation

There are sixteen single college rooms available in Lady Margaret Hall at £62 plus VAT per night. Please inform us as soon as possible if you need accommodation:

[marc.lauxtermann@exeter.ox.ac.uk](mailto:marc.lauxtermann@exeter.ox.ac.uk).

For students on a tight budget we are looking into cheaper options. For information please contact Prerona Prasad:

[prerona.prasad@keble.ox.ac.uk](mailto:prerona.prasad@keble.ox.ac.uk)

## Symposiarchs

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## Programme

### Saturday 24 March, 2012

**9.30 Registration & Coffee**

**10.20 Opening**

**10.30 Session 1: The world of Psellos**

Michael Jeffreys: *Psellos' dominance in the historiography of the eleventh century: past, present and future*

Floris Bernard: *Literary gatherings and authorial practices in the network of Michael Psellos*

Jean-Claude Cheynet: *Administration provinciale dans la correspondance de Michel Psellos*

**12.00 Session 1: Discussion**

**12.30 Lunch**

**13.30 Session 2: The here and the hereafter 1**

Paul Magdalino: *From 'encyclopaedism' to 'humanism': the turning-point of Basil II and the millennium*

Andrew Louth: *Spirituality in the age of Michael Psellos*

Jane Baun: *Eleventh-century eschatology*

**15.00 Session 2: Discussion**

**15.30 Tea**

**15.45 Session 3: The here and the hereafter 2**

Barbara Crostini: *Eleventh-century monasticism between politics and spirituality*

Dirk Krausmueller: *From competition to conformity: monastic fasting and social change*

Judith Ryder: *Leo of Chalcedon and conflicting ecclesiastical models*

Georgi Parpulov: *The rise of devotional imagery in eleventh-century Byzantium*

**17.45 Session 3: Discussion**

### Sunday 25 March, 2012

**9.00 Communications I & II (2 x 5 speakers)**

**10.15 Coffee**

**10.30 Session 4: Byzantium from within**

James Howard-Johnston: *The Peira and legal practices in eleventh-century Byzantium*

Leonora Neville: *Taxes and taxis: some thoughts on ideology, money and power in eleventh-century Byzantium*

Peter Sarris: *Rural landscapes and social structures*

**12.00 Session 4: Discussion**

**12.30 Lunch, Annual General Meeting of SPBS**

**13.30 Session 5: Byzantium and beyond 1**

Florin Curta: *The image and archaeology of the Pechenegs*

Tim Greenwood: *Byzantine influence on Armenian urban consciousness*

Jonathan Shepard: *Byzantino-Latin exchanges*

**15.00 Session 5: Discussion**

**15.30 Tea**

**15.45 Session 6: Byzantium and beyond 2**

Anthony Eastmond: *Georgian devotional practices*

Robert Ousterhout: *Cappadocian settlements and architecture*

Mark Whittow: *The eleventh century and the feudal revolution*

**17.15 Session 6: Discussion**

**18.15 Reception**

**20.00 Dinner**

**Monday 26 March, 2012**

**9.00 Communications III, IV, V & VI  
(4 x 5 speakers)**

**10.15 Coffee**

**10.30 Session 7: Other voices**

Peter Frankopan: *Images of the family in Anna Komnene's Alexiad: a new interpretation*

Catherine Holmes: *The Chronicle of John Skylitzes*

Dimitris Krallis: *An eleventh-century rhetorical interface between army and civilians: Attaleiates' Encomium to Botaneiates*

Charlotte Roueche: *Kekaumenos at the frontier*

**12.30 Session 7: Discussion**

**13.00 Closing and Lunch**

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## A message from the Chair of the SPBS

### International News

The summer was dominated by the International Byzantine Congress in Sofia, Bulgaria. On behalf of the British National Committee, I attended the General Assembly (a sort of Byzantine 'United Nations') which was held at Samokov, on 26<sup>th</sup> August. Two decisions were taken at that meeting: the first to elect Professor Emerita Judith Herrin of Kings College, London as President of the *Association Internationale des Etudes Byzantines* (AIEB) and the second, to hold the next international congress in Belgrade. The latter vote was won by a very small margin (1 vote) as against the other candidate, Istanbul. Many of you will by now have heard that, as a consequence of her grave disquiet (shared by many present) about the circumstances surrounding both these votes (no advance nominations, no discussion permitted about candidates or venues, votes taken by ballot when, it could be argued, they should have been by show of hands etc), Judith Herrin has now submitted her resignation. As a consequence, a fresh General Assembly has been summoned for Paris in February, 2012. At the time of writing, the Agenda has not yet been received and it is not clear whether this

meeting will deal only with the issue of the vacant Presidency, or whether other issues will be raised. The British National Committee will be urging the implementation of clear and transparent procedures in advance of this meeting, in particular the advance nomination and seconding of candidates for the Presidency. In addition, we will be pressing for the practical implementation of the SPBS paper on the formation of a Development Committee for AIEB which, although it had been consigned to the bottom of the Agenda(!) was accepted in principle by the General Assembly, again, alas! without any discussion being permitted. I will keep members of SPBS informed of further developments on all these issues. On a happier note, the '2006 Fund' of the SPBS was delighted to be able to award Bursaries to attend the Congress to sixteen present, or very recent, graduate students of British universities, two of whom also obtained grants from the Congress organisers. We will hope to include some of their reports in the next Bulletin.

### Academic News

In response to a request from colleagues at Glasgow University, I wrote on behalf of the Society to express our disquiet at the

implications of the University's proposals for Slavonic Studies. I am glad to report that, following discussions within the University, fresh plans have been made which will preserve the teaching of Russian, Polish and Czech and support for the teaching of Central and Eastern European Studies has been re-affirmed. The Principal of Glasgow University replied personally to my letter, which would seem to indicate that the Society's concern was, indeed, taken seriously.

### **National News**

As announced in last year's newsletter, the Society has developed links with two 'sister' societies. A large and appreciative audience assembled on 5<sup>th</sup> July to hear Prof. Robin Cormack lecture on 'Cyprus and the Sinai icons' at the London Hellenic Centre and to enjoy the reception kindly offered by the Director, Mrs. Agatha Kalisperas, afterwards. We shall be repeating this event next year at a slightly earlier date in June, 2012. On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2012, we shall be joining forces with the Friends of the British School at Athens for another joint event (see the announcement elsewhere in this Newsletter). At the Autumn Lecture of the Society on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, members heard a fascinating paper by Professor Michelle Brown on *From New Rome to Romford: Aspects of cultural relations between Britain and Byzantium, 600-900*. Our thanks to our colleagues in King's College London for arranging the venue: the rather intriguing space of the refurbished Anatomy Museum! Particular thanks must also go to Michael Heslop, Chair of the Membership Committee for his hard work in seeking out 'new partners' and to Mike Saxby (Membership Secretary) who attends all events with our 'banners' and with membership forms at the ready. Our total membership now exceeds four hundred.

### **The Treasurer**

Our long serving (twenty-five years!) Treasurer, Michael Carey, will be retiring from the post at the next AGM. Elsewhere in the Newsletter you will see an Announcement about the election of his successor. Please do consider whether you would like to present yourself to serve the Society in this capacity. Michael has been a tremendous mainstay of the SPBS

Executive. As well as pursuing a busy legal career and serving on other charitable bodies, his financial acumen and legal expertise (not the least in drafting our Constitution and guiding us into Charitable status) have been of immense value to the Society as it has grown and developed. We will miss him very much at Executive Meetings, but hope to see him at SPBS events for very many years to come. Our warmest thanks to him come with our very best wishes for the future!

### **The Future**

The SPBS Executive, ever mindful of the march of progress, is about to embark on a review and upgrade of its electronic resources, primarily the SPBS Website. So if you have views on this and on 'social networking' in general (Should we 'Twitter'? Do we need a 'Facebook' page?) please do let me have them.

### **And finally..**

Three places on the Executive Committee will be up for election (or re-election) at the 2012 AGM. Further details about this in the Bulletin, BUT

- Please contact the Secretary, Tim Greenwood, as soon as possible for further details if you would like to consider serving either on the Executive of SPBS or as Treasurer.
- Please PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION promptly (contact Mike Saxby [mss714@bham.ac.uk](mailto:mss714@bham.ac.uk) if you have any problems/queries) and make sure you let him have an up-to-date e-mail address, as the Society will use this means of communication more and more.
- Please feel free to contact me ([rosemary.morris@york.ac.uk](mailto:rosemary.morris@york.ac.uk)) with any comments or suggestions you may have about what the Society is, or should be doing!

See you in Oxford!

**Rosemary Morris**  
[rosemary.morris@york.ac.uk](mailto:rosemary.morris@york.ac.uk)

## Spring Symposium and Conference Grants

The Society offers grants for the following: Attendance at the annual Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Travel to conferences and Conference organisation.

### Spring Symposium Grants

The SPBS offers a number of grants to subsidise the cost of attending the spring symposium. They are available to those registering for **the whole conference** and are designed to enable those who would **otherwise be unable to afford the cost** of the symposium to attend. Priority will be given to students at UK universities and to the unwaged in the UK. Byzantinists based outside the UK who wish to attend

the symposium are encouraged to apply to their own national committee of the AIEB for financial support if needed.

### Conference Travel Grants

The SPBS offers travel grants to fund **postgraduate students** to attend conferences and exhibitions abroad. It is limited to students studying for a postgraduate degree at a British university. Priority will be given to students who have had papers

accepted for delivery at the conference for which they are applying.

### Conference Organisation Grants

The SPBS also offers small grants to help with the **organisation** of one-off small conferences, workshops, conferences, day-schools or seminars. Here applicants must be the event organiser and be based in the UK. Applications from postgraduate students will be given priority.

## Deadlines

Applications for Conference Travel and Conference Organisation are considered by the Development Committee of the SPBS at half-yearly intervals. The deadlines for submissions are **1 March and 1 November** each year. The **deadline for Symposium Grants is 1 March** each year. Late applications will not be considered. Forms and guidelines are available on the SPBS website.

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## Membership Matters

### Annual Subscriptions

Please note that if you pay your subscription annually then your payment for 2012 is due by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012. (The only exception to this is for new members joining between 1 September to 31 December 2011; your subscription will then cover your membership until 31 December 2012). Subscriptions for UK members remain £20 ordinary and £10 student; for overseas members, the sterling equivalent of these rates. Please make cheques payable to 'SPBS' and send to:

Dr Mike Saxby  
Membership Secretary  
Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity  
College of Arts and Law  
University of Birmingham

Birmingham B15 2TT

Any UK member wishing to pay by banker's order should request a banker's order form from the Membership Secretary.

### Email Addresses

The Society now sends out many announcements by email. If you are not on the Society's email list but would like to be please send your details to the Membership Secretary at [mss714@bham.ac.uk](mailto:mss714@bham.ac.uk)

Please note that the Society's email list is used only by the Society's committees. It is not published internally to members nor is it made available to any person or organisation outside the Society.

## Treasurer of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies

After a quarter of a century of continuous service by Michael Carey, the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies is looking for a NEW TREASURER.

This is your opportunity to become involved in the promotion of Byzantine Studies in the UK. Nominations are sought from across the full range of the existing membership of the Society. Enthusiasm, organisation and a desire to promote Byzantine studies are much more important than holding an academic post. The only precondition is that you must be a member of the Society at the date of publication of this advertisement.

If you are interested in finding out more about the responsibilities of the Treasurer, please get in touch with the Secretary: Tim Greenwood, Department of Mediaeval History, University of St Andrews, 71 South Street, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9QW, Scotland OR email: [twg3@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:twg3@st-andrews.ac.uk) and he will send a prepared outline to you.

If you wish to stand as Treasurer of the Society, please write to the Secretary at the above address or by email, with the names of your proposer and seconder (both of whom must also be existing members of the Society). Nominations close on 24 February 2012.

Please also include a one-page manifesto or personal statement as part of your submission so that all the members can learn something about you and your ideas for the financial future of the Society. All manifestoes and personal statements will be posted on the Society's website and circulated by email after nominations have closed so that members can read them in advance of the election.

The new Treasurer will be elected at the Society's Annual General Meeting at 1.00pm on Sunday 25 March 2012 in the Symposium venue at the University of Oxford.

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## Research News

### The International Network of the Composition of Byzantine Glass Mosaic Tesserae

The International Network of The Composition of Byzantine Glass Mosaic Tesserae sponsored by the Leverhulme Trust 2007-2010 and directed by Professor Liz James at the University of Sussex, has now published online databases of sites and sources of Byzantine mosaic glass tesserae:  
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/byzantine/mosaic/>

There are three databases in total:

- 'Structures' records buildings (4C-15C) where we have archaeological evidence (finds) of glass wall mosaics.

- 'Texts' contains records of primary Byzantine sources which mention mosaics.
- 'References' is a bibliographical database of modern scientific publications about glass mosaics.

The databases can be searched or browsed for information. All three are in a state of continuous updating and we therefore invite contributions, corrections and suggestions for improvement to keep developing the databases further. For enquiries, please contact:

Liz James: [e.james@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:e.james@sussex.ac.uk)

Bente Bjornholt: [b.k.bjornholt@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:b.k.bjornholt@sussex.ac.uk)

# Conference Report

## Reflections on the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia, 22-27 August 2011

Since the programme of the conference can still be found on the web, it does not seem worthwhile to offer a blow-by-blow account of the many and varied sessions that took place through the week. Instead I shall offer a few impressions of the congress. The papers took place in the buildings of the university St Kliment Ohridski close to the city centre, within easy reach of many, if not all, hotels. The university rooms varied greatly in quality; some had recently been refurbished, others featured benches that might easily deposit the unwary on the floor, and others again were far too small for the sessions that had been scheduled there. The opening ceremony was packed; many had to stand. Throughout the conference the weather was hot and sunny, with the result that some rooms grew unbearably warm in the afternoon.



University St Kliment Ohridski



Reception at the National History Museum

exhibitions and receptions organised during the week, the highlight of which was the event at the National Museum of History, the former presidential palace, at which the current president addressed the assembled Byzantinists.

As the Canadian representative of the AIEB I also had the opportunity to visit Samokov, a small town some 60 km from Sofia, where the assembled delegates were treated to a tour of several interesting sites, including a Justinianic hilltop fortress. As for the deliberations that took place, I shall leave it to others to report on them.

There were some one thousand people in attendance, many from Eastern Europe; by no means all those featured in the programme were present, as became clear when it became necessary for others to read out their papers. While the mornings were reserved for plenary sessions, the afternoons featured parallel sessions, with similar topics being grouped together each afternoon. This was frustrating, since it meant a large number of clashes, which could have been avoided. Nevertheless, the papers gave a good opportunity to meet fellow scholars, to make contacts, and of course to hear useful contributions on a wide range of topics. There were a number of



Reception at the Archaeological Museum

Overall, I have to say that I enjoyed this congress more than some earlier ones, perhaps because I knew more of the people there. The compact nature of the city, where good restaurants were plentiful and within easy reach, undoubtedly helped matters. Although there were problems with certain aspects of

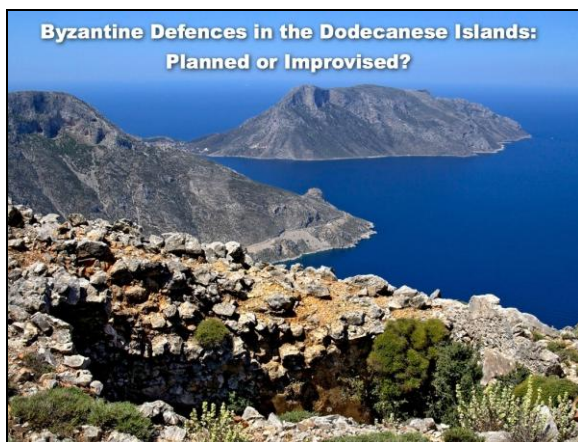
the organisation these did not overshadow the event as a whole and I am left hoping that I shall have the opportunity to visit Bulgaria again.

**Geoffrey Greatrex**

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## Forthcoming Lecture

### Spring Lecture



Following the success of the first Summer Lecture, a joint event with the Hellenic Centre, the Society is pleased to announce that the first Spring Lecture will take place at 6 pm on Tuesday 20 March, 2012. This will be a joint event with the Friends of the British School at Athens in Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. The illustrated lecture, entitled *Byzantine Defences in the Dodecanese: Planned or Improvised?*, will be given by Michael Heslop, a member of the Executive Committee of the Society. The lecture will be held in Room G22/26 on the Ground Floor of the South Block of Senate House.

Following the lecture, there will be an informal reception in the same room. Admission is free for SPBS members. Further details will be announced on the website.

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## Bulletin of British Byzantine Studies 38 (2012)

### Call for Contributions

This is our annual invitation to all members of the Society to send us their information, for inclusion in **BBBS 38**, due to appear in March 2012. Please send details by email (or email attachment) where possible:

fiona.haarer@kcl.ac.uk, or by post: Dr Fiona Haarer, Dept of Classics, King's College, Strand, London, WC2R 2LS. The deadline is **31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011**. Please email in advance if your entry will arrive after the deadline.

Please include the following information:

**Name**

**Publications:** 2011.

**Publications:** forthcoming.

**Work in Progress**

**Fieldwork:** excavations, surveys, study & conservation (completed in 2011 and planned for 2012).

**Theses:** not previously reported; begun in 2011; completed since BBBS 37. Please send abstracts of all completed theses.

**Conferences, Lectures, Seminar Series, Summer Schools:** programmes & papers given at recent and forthcoming events.

**Conference Reports**

**Exhibitions:** reports of recent exhibitions and notices of forthcoming exhibitions.

**University News:** new courses; student grants offered.

**Obituaries**

**Books & Websites:** notices & reviews of recently published or forthcoming works; new journals; new websites.

**Announcements:** Please add any information you wish to bring to the attention of members.

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**Fiona Haarer, Editor**  
fiona.haarer@kcl.ac.uk