

CALL FOR PAPERS

Translating Byzantium and Byzantium Translating

Vienna, June 2-3, 2023

June 2: Central European University
Quellenstrasse 51, D002, 1100 Vienna

June 3: Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, University of Vienna
Postgasse 9, Lecture Hall, 1010 Vienna

Translation - the process of rendering a text from one language into another - is a well-observed feature of the Byzantine world. At the same time, reflecting on translation raises issues related to the interpretation, adaptation, and re-contextualisation of texts, ideas, as well as of images and material culture.

The first aim of this conference is to explore translation proper. The translation of letters, commentaries, and homilies into Armenian, Arabic, Coptic, Georgian, Latin, Church Slavonic, and Syriac points to an intense interest in the Greek literature produced inside and outside of the Byzantine Empire. In addition, the existing array of material copied from other languages into Greek demonstrates that translating in Byzantium was a multi-directional process. Whilst translations can help us to understand the transmission and dissemination of different textual traditions, they are also witnesses to the social, trans-cultural, and political environments in which they were produced.

The second aim is to treat translation in broader terms, using it to explore issues relating to multilingualism, the mobility of ideas and objects, as well as how we as scholars treat, categorise, and prioritise language in our respective disciplines. How did the Byzantines themselves deal with and reflect on the presence of multiple languages? How has the dominance of classical Greek in the curricula of 'Western' universities or the equation of Byzantium with Greek Orthodoxy impacted the way Byzantine history is told and conceptualised?

Possible topics may include but are not limited to:

- Textual translations
- Reconstruction of textual traditions through translations
- Political, cultural and social context of translation
- Reshaping narratives through translations and sources in different languages
- Byzantine conceptualizations of and current approaches to multilingualism
- Insider and outsider perspectives on Byzantium
- Translating the visual culture of Byzantium
- Performative and material translations of Byzantine ideologies

Keynote speakers: Prof. Claudia Rapp (University of Vienna / Austrian Academy of Sciences)
Prof. Baukje van den Berg (Central European University).

We invite applications from graduate students at MA and PhD level. Those wishing to have their 20-minute paper considered should send an email to medstudent@ceu.edu, lewis.read@univie.ac.at or aleksandar.andjelovic@univie.ac.at with a paper title, a 200-word abstract, and an academic affiliation by 24th March 2023. Applicants will be notified by April 5th. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Organisers: Aleksandar Anđelović, Andrei Dumitrescu, Dunja Milenković,
Osman Yüksel Özdemir, Cosimo Paravano, Lewis Read