

# THE KOMNENIAN RESTORATION OF BYZANTIUM & ITS LEGACY

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SYMPOSIUM  
SÜLEYMANIYE SALIS MEDRESE  
IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY  
8<sup>TH</sup> – 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2026

## **SYMPOSIARCHS:**

**DR MAXIMILIAN LAU & DR GEORGIOS THEOTOKIS**

**WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO İBRAHİM HARUN DEMİREL, PROF GÜNHAN BÖREKÇİ AND MANY OTHERS AT IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY FOR THEIR HELP ORGANIZING AND FUNDING THIS EVENT, IN ADDITION TO PROF PETER FRANKOPAN AND THE OXFORD CENTRE FOR BYZANTINE RESEARCH, THE FACULTY OF HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD AND THE BRITISH SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF BYZANTINE STUDIES FOR FUNDING THIS EVENT.**

**SCHOLARS HAVE USED THE CONCEPT OF THE 'KOMNENIAN RESTORATION' OF BYZANTIUM FOR MANY YEARS, AND YET THE TERM HAS NEVER RECEIVED A CRITICAL ANALYSIS: WHAT DID THE KOMNENOI BELIEVE THEY WERE RESTORING? DID THEY ACHIEVE ANY OF THEIR AIMS, IN WHAT WAYS, AND WHAT WAS THE LEGACY OF THEIR SUCCESSES AND FAILURES?**

**THE FIRST SYMPOSIUM IN OXFORD LAST YEAR HIGHLIGHTED A NUMBER OF FURTHER THEMES THAT SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED, IN ADDITION TO MANY OTHER ESTABLISHED AND EMERGING SCHOLARS WHOSE RESEARCH IS ESSENTIAL TO ENHANCING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THIS CRUCIAL ERA OF HISTORY, ESPECIALLY FOR ANATOLIA AND THE BALKANS. ECONOMIC, ECCLESIASTICAL, FOREIGN AND SOCIAL HISTORY TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN THE SESSIONS WE HAVE ORGANIZED HERE.**

**THIS SECOND SYMPOSIUM, HELD IN THE MOST APPROPRIATE LOCATION OF ISTANBUL ITSELF, WILL THEREFORE BRING TOGETHER THE RESEARCH AND PEOPLE IN ORDER THAT THE PROPOSED HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH ON THE KOMNENIAN DYNASTY CAN COALESCE. FURTHER, A KOMNENIAN RESEARCH NETWORK, CO-HOSTED BY IBN HALDUN AND THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, WILL BE LAUNCHED FOLLOWING THIS EVENT.**

**THIS IS A SYMPOSIUM THAT WELCOMES THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALL, WHETHER PROMINENT SCHOLAR, EARLY CAREER ACADEMIC, OR SIMPLY INTERESTED PARTY OF ANY OTHER SORT - I HAVE LONG THOUGHT THAT WHENEVER A QUESTION IS ASKED PREFACED BY "THIS ISN'T MY FIELD, BUT..." IT CAN OFTEN THROW NEW LIGHT ON A SUBJECT, AND SO PLEASE DO CONTRIBUTE YOUR THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS DURING THE EVENT.**

# DAY ONE: FRIDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY

0900 - REGISTRATION

SÜLEYMANIYE SALIS MEDRESE  
SÜLEYMANIYE SALIS MEDRESE

0915 - OPENING REMARKS

DR. GÜNHAN BÖREKÇİ  
IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY, ISTANBUL  
DR GEORGIOS THEOTOKIS  
IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY, ISTANBUL

0930 - SESSION I - MATERIAL  
CULTURE & ECONOMY

**THE KOMNENIAN ECONOMY: RENEWAL,  
DECLINE, AND THE FRACTURING OF  
BYZANTIUM**

DR KATERINA RACKOU  
PHILIPPS UNIVERSITY OF MARBURG

**'CENTRE' vs. 'PROVINCE': MATERIAL  
CULTURE AND NEW IDEALS OF GENDER IN  
THE KOMNENIAN PERIOD**

DR LARA FRENTROP  
UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG

1030 - COFFEE

SERVED OUTSIDE THE DERSHANE ROOM

1100 - SESSION II - THE KOMNENIAN  
CHURCH

**HERESY AND RELIGIOUS CHANGE IN THE  
COURT OF ALEXIOS**

PROF LEONORA NEVILLE  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

**THE ECUMENICAL AUTHORITY OF THE  
KOMNENIAN EMPEROR**

DR MAXIMILIAN LAU  
WORCESTER COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF  
OXFORD

[PAPER DELIVERED ONLINE]

**THE SILENCE OF THE ARCHIVES'? THE  
KOMNENOI AND ATHOS IN THE TWELFTH  
CENTURY.**

DR ROSEMARY MORRIS  
INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR

1230 - LUNCH

SERVED OUTSIDE THE DERSHANE ROOM



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PROMOTION OF  
BYZANTINE  
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byzantium.ac.uk  
The Society is a registered charity no. 289007.

# DAY ONE: FRIDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY

1400 – VISIT TO SÜLEYMANIYE  
LIBRARY/PATRIARCHATE ARCHIVES

TBC

1530 – SESSION III - THE KOMNENIAN  
REVOLUTION & THE ARISTOCRACY

ANNA DALASSENE: THE AGE OF  
MATRIARCHY AND THE MAKING OF  
KOMNENIAN BYZANTIUM – PRELIMINARY  
REMARKS

DR LARISA VILIMONVIĆ  
UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

HOW THE KOMNENOI BECAME GRAND: THE  
POLITICS OF SURNAMES AND THE  
FORMATION OF THE KOMNENIAN  
ARISTOCRACY

DR NATHAN LEIDHOLM  
BILKENT UNIVERSITY

[PAPER DELIVERED ONLINE]

THE TRANSFORMATION OF HONORIFIC  
TITULATURE AT THE KOMNENIAN COURT  
THROUGH SIGILLOGRAPHY

GAVRIIL-IOANNIS BOUTZIOPOULOS  
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

1900 – CONFERENCE DINNER

DERALIYE RESTAURANT

# DAY TWO: SATURDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY

0900 – SESSION IV – FOREIGN  
RELATIONS

IGNORANCE OR DECEPTION: THE  
ROLE OF ALEXIOS I KOMNENOS  
(1081-1118) IN THE INITIAL  
ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE FATIMID  
CALIPHATE (909-1171) AND THE  
ARMIES OF THE FIRST CRUSADE.

İBRAHİM HARUN DEMİREL  
IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY/LEIDEN  
UNIVERSITY/KOÇ UNIVERSITY

**BYZANTIO**  
explained.

<https://byzantioexplained.substack.com/>

# DAY TWO: SATURDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY

## SESSION IV – FOREIGN RELATIONS CONTINUED

### THE KOMNENOI AND THE CRUSADERS: BETWEEN COOPERATION, CONFLICT AND LITERARY REPRESENTATION.

DR GEORGIOS CHATZELIS  
ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI  
AND OPEN UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS

### LOOKING EAST: HISTORIOGRAPHICAL APPROACHES TO BYZANTINE–TURKISH RELATIONS IN THE KOMNENIAN PERIOD

DR KORAY DURAK  
BOĞAZIÇI UNIVERSITY

1030 – COFFEE

SERVED OUTSIDE THE DERSHANE ROOM

## 1100 – SESSION V – THE RESTORATION & ITS LEGACY

### "[...] THE ARMENIANS WHO HAVE BECOME YOUR LIEGEMEN": KOMNENIAN USE OF SOFT POWER IN CILICIA IN THE 12<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

DR DAVID NEAGU  
INSTITUTE FOR SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN  
STUDIES, ROMANIAN ACADEMY/ICUB-UB

### CONDOMINIUM: A “WEAPON” OF THE KOMNENIAN GRAND STRATEGY (1081-1180)

DR IOANNIS SARANTIDIS  
ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI

[PAPER DELIVERED ONLINE]

### ROBERT OF CLARI AND EMPEROR MANUEL: KOMNENIAN ECHOES IN LATIN ROMANIA

DR FILIP VAN TRICHT  
INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR

1300 – LUNCH

SERVED OUTSIDE THE DERSHANE ROOM

## 1400 – SESSION VI – ROUNDTABLE & FUTURE PROJECT DISCUSSION

1500 – CLOSING REMARKS

DR MAXIMILIAN LAU

1530 – COFFEE & FAREWELL

SERVED OUTSIDE THE DERSHANE ROOM

THIS SYMPOSIUM WAS MADE  
POSSIBLE THROUGH THE  
GENEROUS SUPPORT OF:



IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



OXFORD CENTRE FOR  
BYZANTINE RESEARCH



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