



**HARVARD**  
Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
DEPARTMENT OF THE CLASSICS

Provostial Fund for the  
Arts and Humanities



**Harvard  
History  
Department**

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO DUMBARTON OAKS & THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MEDIEVAL STUDIES

# **Past and Present: Cultural Politics in Byzantium and Beyond**

## **May 1-2, 2026**

Convenors: Panagiotis Roilos and Dimiter Angelov

Friday, May 1  
Fong Auditorium  
Boylston Hall 110

9:20

Welcome

ELIZABETH KAMALI, Chair of the Standing Committee on Medieval Studies

PANAGIOTIS ROILOS, Departments of Classics and Comparative Literature

DIMITER ANGELOV, Department of History

### **Keynote Address**

Chair: DAN SMAIL, Harvard University

9:30–10:00

PETER FRANKOPAN, Oxford University

*Byzantium, Global Connections, and the Politics of History*

### **I. History and the Politics of Culture**

Chair: PAUL KOSMIN, Harvard University

10:00–10:30

DIMITER ANGELOV, Harvard University

*The Cultural Politics of Constitutional Imagination: Debating Tyranny in Byzantium*

10:30–11:00

ZACHARY CHITWOOD, University of Munich

*The Ruler and the Limits of the Law: New Insights on the Concept of Princeps Legibus Solutus from the Late Eleventh Century*

### **II. Literature and Cultural Politics**

Chair: ALEXANDER RIEHLE, Harvard University

11:00–11:30

BAUKJE VAN DEN BERG, Central European University

*Constructing Literary History: The Cultural Politics of Ancient Literature in Byzantium*

11:30–12:00

FILIPPOMARIA PONTANI, Ca' Foscari University  
*Praying in Ancient Greek Verse Across the Centuries*

### **Lunch and Museum Visit**

12:00 Lunch

1:00–2:00

EURYDICE GEORGANTELI, Harvard University  
*Communicating Power: Byzantine Money and Cultural Politics*, Art Study Center, Harvard Art Museums, 32 Quincy Street. [Sign up here](#) (maximum 16 participants)

### **III. The Cultural Politics of Christianization**

Chair: CHARLES STANG, Harvard University

2:30–3:00

PANAGIOTIS ROILLOS, Harvard University  
*The Cultural Politics of Allegorization: Christianizing the Hellenic Past in Byzantium*

3:00–3:30

DEREK KRUEGER, University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
*Suppressing Same-Sex Desire in Middle Byzantine Monastic Discourse*

3:30–4:00

FABIO PAGANI, Catholic University of America  
*Reconstructing or Reinventing the Past? Plato and Pletho*

### **Coffee & tea**

4:00–4:30

### **IV. Art History and Cultural Politics: Beyond Byzantium**

Chair: CHRISTINA MARANCI, Harvard University

4:30–5:00

IOLI KALAVREZOU, Harvard University  
*The Cultural Politics of Visual Symbolism: Images of Controversies*

5:00–5:30

ANTONY EASTMOND, The Courtauld Institute of Art  
*The Politics of Style in the Byzantine East*

### **V. Lightning Talks**

Chair: DIMITER ANGELOV, Harvard University

5:30 Presentations by graduate and undergraduate scholars

6:30

Reception in Ticknor Lounge, Boylston Hall

Saturday, May 2  
History Department Seminar Room  
Robinson Hall  
35 Quincy Street

**VI. The Greek Diaspora Before and After 1453**

Chair: ANN BLAIR, Harvard University

10:00–10:30

JONATHAN HARRIS, Royal Holloway, University of London  
*The Dishypatos Family in Constantinople, Italy and France, c.1400-1496*

10:30-11:00

NATHANAEL ASCHENBRENNER, Bard College  
*Cultural Commerce: Michael Apostoles and the Economy of Greek Letters in Post-Byzantine Europe*

Chair: PANAGIOTIS ROILLOS, Harvard University

11:00

Concluding roundtable discussion