

Commission for the Historical Geography and Spatial Analysis of Byzantium

Preliminary report on the activities in the period between 2022 and
2024

At the International Congress for Byzantine Studies in Venice, a statutory meeting of the Commission for the Historical Geography and Spatial Analysis of Byzantium was held on Wednesday, 24 August 2022. In the course of this meeting, the presidium was newly elected, as the previous president Mihailo Popovic had to resign from his position in accordance with the AIEB statutes. Andreas Külzer was elected as his successor and Myrto Veikou as Vice President. Subsequently, the Commission underwent personnel changes, as some members had retired for reasons of age and others no longer were able to attend to the Commission's concerns in a satisfactory manner for various other reasons. The procedure for personnel changes within scientific commissions is also precisely regulated by the AIEB statutes and was implemented accordingly in the period between October 2022 and May 2023. Following a call for applications, expression of interest from candidates and an internal vote by existing members on those interested in joining the commission, six new members – Anca Dan, Elif Koparal, Nikos Tsivikis, Tolga Uyar, Milan Vukasinovic and Luca Zavagno – were appointed on 5 May 2023.

Work on historical geography in the late antique and medieval eastern Mediterranean is flourishing; various projects of the members are dedicated to analogue research, others pursue digital approaches, and in many cases, both approaches are combined. There is an intensive exchange of ideas and concepts, not only within the framework of the Viennese research project *Tabula Imperii Byzantini*, but far beyond it. Relevant scientific questions deal with the analysis and reconstruction of former communication routes, with settlement conditions in general and particular cases, with the relationship between central towns and

their village surroundings or with the connections between harbours and their hinterland. The questions are dealt with by intensively evaluating written, archaeological and geographical sources. Digital methods such as LCP or HGIS are regularly used to implement and visualize the results.

Individual members of the Commission meet regularly on workshops and conferences. To name just one example, at the end of October 2024, Andreas Külzer and Myrto Veikou will organize a conference on settlement structures in medieval western Asia Minor, with participation of numerous colleagues. A meeting of the members of the commission is planned for the Vienna Congress in 2026; in the meantime, the lively exchange of ideas will continue.

Written in April 2024

Andreas Külzer, president