
4th International Conference on the Military History of the Mediterranean Sea

Organizing committee:

- Georgios Theotokis (Ibn Haldun University)
- Effie Sygkellou (University of Ioannina)
- Halil Berktaş (Ibn Haldun University)
- Angeliki Delikari (Hellenic Historical Society)
- Dimitrios Sidiropoulos (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

9-11 June 2025

IOANNINA, GREECE

Hosted by the University of Ioannina

Venue: *University Campus, Dourouti*



UNIVERSITY
of IOANNINA



4th International Conference on the Military History of the Mediterranean Sea

The lessons of history are never clear. Clio is like the Delphic oracle: it is only in retrospect, and usually too late, that we understand what she was trying to say.

Sir Michael Howard

Monday, 9 June

“D. Hatzis” Cultural Center Hall (Old Slaughterhouses)

17:00 – 19:00: Registration & Welcoming remarks

- Anna Batistatou (Rector, University of Ioannina)
- Christos Stavrakos (Member of the Board of Directors, University of Ioannina and Secretary of the AIEB - Association Internationale des Études Byzantines)
- Halil Berktaş (Head of History Department, Ibn Haldun University)
- Minas Paschopoulos (Deputy Mayor for Cultural Institutions, Events and Culture, Municipality of Ioannina)
- Taxiarchis Kolias (President of the Greek Committee of Byzantine Studies)

19:00 – 19:40: First keynote talk

- Immacolata Eramo (Università degli Studi di Bari): *Byzantine Military Literature: A Distorting Mirror?*

20:00: Reception (sponsored by Ibn Haldun University’s History Department)

Tuesday, 10 June

“Karolos Papoulias” Conference Center (University of Ioannina/Campus)

09:00 – 09:40: Second keynote talk

- Sophia Mergiali-Sahas (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens): *Byzantium’s strategic influence on international relations in the late medieval world system*

10:00 – 11:15

Panel 1: Siege warfare - reinterpreting the historical and archaeological evidence

Moderator: Georgios Theotokis

- Kelly DeVries (Loyola University): *The last medieval siege of Thessaloniki, 1430.*
- Patricia Antaki (University of Balamand): *“How Many Boulders Came Down out of Heaven upon Them”: Historical and Archaeological Evidence of Stone Artillery Projectiles from the Latin East – A Case Study from Crusader Anfeh, Lebanon.*
- Elisa Pruno, Chiara Marcotulli (Università degli Studi di Firenze): *The archaeological history of the siege and conquest of the Castle of Montacciannico.*

Coffee break

11:45 – 13:00

Panel 2: Re-evaluating the narrative sources


Moderator: Immacolata Eramo

- Georgios Chatzelis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki): *Stratagems and War Writing in the Synopsis Historion: A Reappraisal of its Dating, Purpose and Methodology.*
- Fatma Koç (Adiyaman University), Osman Türk (Harran University): *The Epic Equivalents of the Uses of Words Belonging to the Themes of Military Service and War in Dede Korkut Stories in Epic Context.*

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- Anastasios Deleoglou (Democritus University of Thrace): *Three military speeches in the historical work of John Kinnamos.*
 - Christos Tsatsoulis (National Hellenic Research Foundation): «Λέγεται δὲ καὶ τινὰ λευκόπωλων ἄνδρα φανῆναι, προηγέσθαι τε Ῥωμαίων»: *narratives of miraculous interventions in battle as a means of interpreting the outcome of war.*

Panel 3: Naval warfare

Moderator: Dimitrios Sidiropoulos

- Marek Meško (University of Hradec Králové): *The renewal of the Byzantine Navy during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118). Build-up of its numerical strength and its battle worthiness vis a vis Western Navies.*
-  Mauro Difrancesco (University of Salerno): *Shipbuilding and Naval Warfare in the Age of Sail: a comparison between Genoa and Venice (1645-1699).*

Lunch break

14:45 – 16:30

Panel 4: Late antique military tactics, administrative practices, and customs

Moderator: Georgios Theotokis



- Andreas Gkoutzioukostas (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki): *Observations on the Design of the Trench System in the Battle of Daras.*
- Spyros Avgerinopoulos (Independent): *The formation of the Optimates in 574–575 and the possible Ostrogothic origin of Emperor Heraclius.*
- Theocharis Alexopoulos (Independent): *Sasanian military funeral practises in the Chronicle of Theophanes.*
- Dimitrios Sidiropoulos (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki): *The state weapons workshops (fabricae) of the early Byzantine state. A tangled jurisdiction.*

Coffee break

16:45 – 18:00

Panel 5: 'Using' and 'abusing' narrative sources

Moderator: Georgios Chatzelis

-  Șerban V. Marin (National Archives of Romania, Bucharest): *How to Minimize a Disaster. The Venetian Chronicles and the Ways to Ignore the Defeat in 1172?*
-  Federico Canaccini (LUMSA University of Rome): *'When the Defeat becomes a Victory': propaganda in communal Italian societies between 13th and 14th centuries.*

Panel 6: Warrior profiles in theory and action

Moderator: Sophia Mergiali-Sahas

- Konstantinos Karatolios (University of Crete): *How Basil I became a warrior king and why Leo VI didn't become one.*
- Effie Sygkellou-Evangelos Nikolaou (University of Ioannina): *"The lion and the fox": portraying the Byzantine general (6th -12th c.).*
- Andrei Pogăciaș (Independent): *The Wallachian Voivod Mircea the Elder.*


Conference dinner

Wednesday, 11 June

10:00 – 11:40


Panel 7: Late Byzantine warfare

Moderator: Dimitrios Sidiropoulos

- Phoebe-Irene Georgiadi (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens): *The civil war between Andronikos II and Andronikos III Palaiologoi.*
- Georgios Michailidis (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens): *The use of deception techniques in the military and diplomatic spheres by Andronikos III Palaiologos.*
- Juho Wilskman (Independent): *Why the rulers of Epiros and Thessaly were so Successful in the Thirteenth and early Fourteenth Centuries?*
-  Konstantinos Moustakas (University of Crete): *The First Battles between Serbians and Turks, Stephaniana (1344) and Didymoteichon (1352): Reflections on the Identity and Battle Tactics of the Opposing Forces.*

Panel 8: Archaeology of weapons and equipment

Moderator: Marek Meško

-  Raffaele D'Amato (University of Ferrara): *A new Eastern Roman sword of 10th-11th century from Italy.*
- Evan Schultheis (Independent): *Klivanion, Clavain, Conundrum: The Particularly Byzantine Problem of Nailed Armor.*

Coffee break

12:00 – 13:20

Panel 9: Strategic routes, geopolitical spaces, and military operations

Moderator: Iason Tzouriadis

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- Athanasios Grammenos (Council for International Relations-Greece): *"Triumph or Pyrrhic Victory?" A Geopolitical Analysis of the Battle of Lepanto (1571).*
 - Kyriaki Giannouli (University of Ioannina): *Corfu as a Strategic and Pilgrimage Hub: Military Networks and Sacred Routes to the Holy Land.*
 - Jacopo Pessina (University of Pisa): *The 'discolato' in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. An involuntary recruitment system for the Tuscan expedition at the War of Morea, 1684-88.*

Panel 10: Transcultural warfare and the view of 'the other'

Moderator: Łukasz Różycki

-  Anil Yasin OĞUZ (Ibn Haldun University): *A Comparative Perspective on Warfare Tactics Against Elephants in the Mediterranean and Asian Worlds.*
- Georgios Theotokis (Ibn Haldun University): *Revisiting the myth of the "Norman invincibility" in the battlefields of southern Italy in the 11th century.*
- Luigi Andrea Berto (Western Michigan University): *The image of the "Greeks" in ninth-century southern Lombard Italy.*
- Vasileios Karatsiolis (University of Western Macedonia): *"Echoes of the West: The Military Metamorphosis of Muscovite Infantry in the Polish-Russian War (1654-1667)"*

Lunch Break

15:00 – 15:50

Panel 11: Soundscapes of war

Moderator: Georgios Theotokis

- Łukasz Różycki (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań): *Soundscape of Sieges: Insights from Selected Examples.*
- Stavroula Solomou (National Hellenic Research Foundation – external collaborator): *Soundscapes of war in Byzantine-Muslim conflicts of the 10th century.*

Panel 12: Origins, use and cultural place of swords

Moderator: Kelly DeVries

- Hadas Hirsch (Oranim Academic College, Israel): *The Cultural Biography of Swords in Early Islam: Instruments of Warfare and Socio-Cultural Artifacts.*
- Iason Tzouriadis (Royal Armouries, Leeds): *A Mediterranean Basket-Hilt Sword: The Origin, Military Use and Cultural Role of the Schiavona.*

Coffee break

16:15 – 18:00


Panel 13: Ideological and social dynamics of war

Moderator: Effie Sygkellou

- Evangelos Ntovas (University of Ioannina): *Angli in the First Crusade: Soldiers of God or Servants of the Emperor?*
- Vera Ivanovic (University of Ioannina): *Baldwin II of Jerusalem as the New Heraclius: protector of Christianity or emperor of Outremer?*
- Spartakos Tanasidis (University of Ioannina): *The treatment of the defeated Romaioi by Mehmed II: The case of the Byzantines settlers in Konstantiniyye.*
- Alessandro Monti (Independent): *"Treating prisoners well": POWs in the Italian Wars of the Sixteenth Century.*

Panel 14: Civil strife, revolts, and vying for power in the Muslim Caliphate

Moderator: Andrei Pogăciaș

-  Mehdy Shaddel (Aga Khan University London): *Civil War and State Power: The Early Islamic Empire as a Case-Study.*
- Konstantinos Takirtakoglou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki): *Armenians as a counterweight to the Mamluks: An Attempt by the Abbasids to replace the Turkish "praetorian" guard.*
- Theodora Zampaki (University of Ioannina): *The Zanj Revolt: Society, Warfare and the Treatment of the Defeated in the 'Abbāsid Society.*