

NOB

NORTH OF BYZANTIUM

NoB Newsletter | Spring 2026

Dear NoB Subscribers,

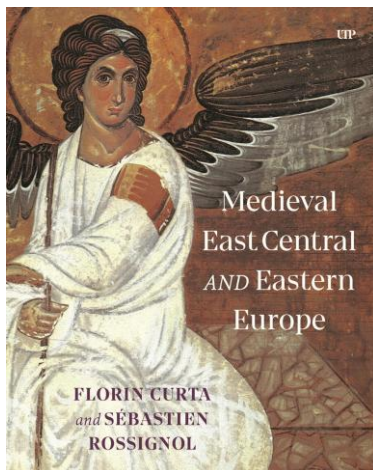
We write to share with you the Spring 2026 issue of the **North of Byzantium Newsletter**, where you will find updates on NoB initiatives, publications, events, and resources.

NoB Essay Prize

The **2026 NoB Essay Prize** will be awarded to a PhD candidate for an original research essay that focuses on an aspect of the visual culture of Eastern Europe between the 13th and 17th centuries. The essay could address an image, object, or monument from a region of the Balkans, the Carpathians, or further north, contextualizing it historically and addressing its layered meanings and functions. The submission could be an entirely new piece of research or drawn from the candidate's course-work or an already published article. The research essay, in the range of 1500-2000 words, should be submitted in English along with a 2-page CV (including details about thesis title and doctoral mentors). The winning submission will receive \$250 and the opportunity to be revised and published as a contribution on the *Mapping Eastern Europe* website.

Submit your research essay to northofbyzantium@gmail.com by **May 31, 2026** with the subject heading "2026 NoB Essay Prize."

Featured Publication



Our colleagues Florin Curta (University of Florida) and Sébastien Rossignol (Memorial University of Newfoundland) have published a much-anticipated textbook titled [*Medieval East Central and Eastern Europe*](#) (University of Toronto Press, 2025).

This timely book offers concise, accessible, and engaging chronological overviews and thematic chapters on the medieval history of Eastern and Central Europe, intended to appeal to students, teachers, and a general reader interested in the Middle Ages and the entire eastern half of Europe. The book covers historical, cultural, and religious issues, including the impact of key figures, groups, monuments, and events.

Happy Reading!

Mapping Eastern Europe



We are continually updating the *Mapping Eastern Europe* website to improve display and accessibility. In recent months, we have made available several new entries on the history and culture of Ukraine, especially in the region of Halych, as well as entries on Ottoman Thessaloniki, the Ottoman presence in the Danubian principalities, and Paolo Veneziano..

We are collaborating with colleagues at The National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy to publish 30 more entries on the cultural heritage of Ukraine by the end of 2026. Upcoming contributions will include case studies on the Ostroh Bible, the Genoese Fortress in Sudak, the Kyiv Psalter, Khotyn Fortress, and many more. We will announce the full list of published entries in the Fall 2026 *NoB Newsletter*!



This collaboration is part of the [HER-UKR: Challenges and Opportunities for EU Heritage Diplomacy in Ukraine](#) project, which is a multi-institutional and international research consortium intended to establish a global multidisciplinary research and education network. The goals of this project also include



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efforts to generate and exchange knowledge about EU heritage diplomacy and international cultural relations in general, and in Ukraine in particular; collect, map, and disseminate good practices in dealing with contested cultural heritage and cultural heritage preservation in East-Central Europe; and provide European policymakers with solid expertise on developments in Ukraine's cultural heritage field. The project is coordinated by KU Leuven under the leadership of Professor Lien Verpoest.

If you are interested in contributing to the *Mapping Eastern Europe* project, please fill out this [form](#).

Guest Lecture

On March 17, 2026, we presented our *Mapping Eastern Europe* project as a virtual guest lecture in the course *Icons and Interpretation: Contributing to Mapping Eastern Europe*, coordinated by Dr. Dorota Zaprzalska at the Institute of Art History, Jagiellonian University in Kraków. This was a wonderful opportunity to introduce the digital project to the students, discuss the challenges and opportunities of studying the history and visual culture of medieval Eastern Europe, as well as develop potential collaborations to highlight content from Polish collections on the website.

Upcoming Events

On June 23, 2026, Alice will deliver the *2026 Kent dur Russell Lecture* at the Icon Museum and Study Center in Clinton, MA, titled “**Spatial Icons: The Communion of the Apostles in Medieval Art and Ritual.**”

THE ICON MUSEUM
AND STUDY CENTER



On Wednesday, 8 July 2026 at 2:00 – 3:00 PM EDT, Alessia will be participating in the Round Table Discussion “**Shaping the Field: 100 Volumes of Brill's East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages Series**” (in the program session 1405) at the [Leeds International Medieval Congress](#).

The year 2026 marks the publication of the 100th volume in the series *East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450-1450*. Since its inception, the series has become the premier forum for innovative scholarship on the medieval histories of East Central and Eastern Europe, encompassing the vast regions stretching from the Carpathians to the steppes, and from the Baltic to the Balkans.

This round table brings together series editors, contributors, and scholars who have shaped, and continue to shape, the field through the series' diverse publications. The discussion will highlight how the series has advanced critical revisions of older historiography, opened new comparative perspectives, and fostered interdisciplinary dialogue across history, archaeology, art history, numismatics, linguistics, and related disciplines.

We are excited to participate in the upcoming *25th International Congress of Byzantine Studies* (Vienna, 24–29 August 2026), and look forward to seeing many of our colleagues at the conference. Below are the events in which we will be participating:



**25th INTERNATIONAL
CONGRESS OF
BYZANTINE STUDIES**
Byzantium beyond Byzantium

Alessia will speak in the thematic session “Cultural Exchanges at the Time of the Palaiologoi: Beyond the Borders of Byzantium” scheduled on Friday, August 28, starting at 12:30. Her paper is titled “**The Mobility of Form: Byzantium and Serbia in the Palaiologan Period.**”

Alice will speak in the “Plenary Session: Byzantium in Central Europe” scheduled on Friday, August 28, starting at 3:30. Her paper is titled “**Reframing Byzantium after 1453: Mobility, Art, Patronage.**”

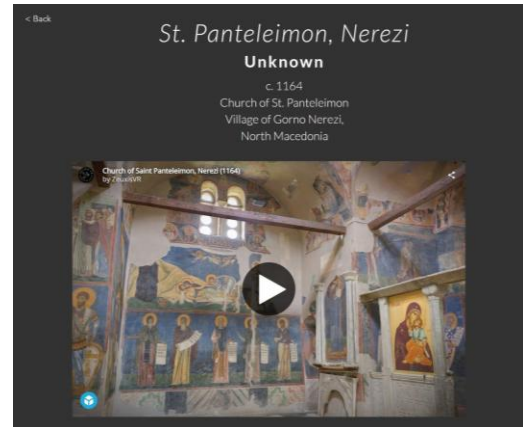
Alice will participate in the roundtable “Networks, Mobility and the Maintenance of Christian Communities Beyond Byzantium, c. 800–1500 CE” scheduled on Saturday, August 29, starting at 10:15. Her paper is titled “**Patronage, Art, and Monastic Networks in Eastern Europe.**”

Alessia is organizing the session “**Discovering Byzantium through Athonite Collections on the Princeton Campus**” scheduled on Saturday, August 29, starting at 12:30.

Explore

A new project at Lafayette College brings cultural heritage to life! [Zeuxis VR](#) is a digital initiative that creates and integrates virtual reality (VR) content to enhance student engagement in object-focused research in art history. As image technology advances, so too must the methods art historians use for teaching and conducting research. This project delivers new approaches for teaching art history by harnessing the full potential of immersive technology.

Named after the celebrated painter from Ancient Greece, Zeuxis, who was renowned for his ability to replicate the world around him, this project uses photogrammetry and virtual reality to recreate art historical sites.



Among the sites featured is the [Church of St. Panteleimon in the village of Gorno Nerezi, North Macedonia](#). The church was built ca. 1164 by Alexios Komnenos, a nephew of the Byzantine emperor John II.

NoB Book Series



[Eastern European Visual Culture and Byzantium \(13th -17th c.\)](#) is an NoB book series that explores the art, architecture, and visual culture of regions of the Balkan Peninsula, the Carpathian Mountains, as well as early-modern Russia and Ruthenia between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries. We invite proposals for monographs, edited volumes, and conference proceedings. We are also interested in translations in English of medieval textual sources and/or of recent publications focusing on the medieval and early modern art, architecture, and visual culture of regions of Eastern Europe.

All suitable submissions will undergo a double blind peer review process. Please find the book proposal form [here](#).

NoB Resources

On the NoB website, you can find links to image archives, an ongoing bibliography, and other relevant resources, which we are in the process of updating before the summer. Please send us details for events you are organizing, publications, etc. to include on the NoB website and to share with our subscribers. Send us your updates!

Follow us on X [@NorthofByzance](#), and encourage friends and colleagues to [subscribe](#) to NoB.

Best wishes to all,
Alessia and Alice
NoB co-directors