



# **SPACE AND COMMUNITIES IN BYZANTINE ANATOLIA**

**PAPERS  
FROM THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL  
SEVGİ GÖNÜL BYZANTINE STUDIES  
SYMPOSIUM**

**EDITED BY  
NIKOS D. KONTOGIANNIS AND TOLGA B. UYAR**

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**ISTANBUL, 24-26 JUNE 2019**

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# Amorium and the Ever-Changing Urban Space: From Early Byzantine Provincial City to Middle Byzantine Provincial Capital\*

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**Nikos Tsivikis**

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Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH

As part of my paper for the 2019 Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, which set the general research subject “Byzantine Anatolia: Space and Community,” I would like to refocus our study of the Byzantine city of Amorium in central Asia Minor through the prism of its space, urban and suburban, and its community in relation with the passage of time and historical change and resilience. I will attempt here to discuss through different methodological approaches aspects of the *urbanitas* of Amorium as it changes in time in a city that plays different roles at different periods in Byzantine history.<sup>1</sup>

It has been exactly twenty years since the publication by Eric Ivison entitled *Urban Renewal and Imperial Revival in Byzantium*, where Amorium figures as a key example for the changes happening in urban centers of the Middle Byzantine period and the develop-

\* I would like to thank especially Prof. Dr. Zeliha Demirel-Gökalp (Anadolu University, Eskişehir) and Director of Amorium Excavations Project for having led a very successful and productive excavation since 2013 and also thank her personally for her constant support in our work. Special thanks go to colleague and friend Thanasis Sotiriou who read carefully the text of this paper and proposed improvements. I am grateful also to Amorium colleagues and friends Dr. A. Ceren Erel and Dr. Hasan Yılmazyaşar, and team members Dr. Konstantinos Roussos, Dr. Selda Uygun, Dr. Jamieson Donati, Dr. Tuna Kalayci, Elli Bia, and Zeynep Aktop, who in their capacity have all contributed to the results discussed here. Finally, once more I would like to thank Dr. Christopher Lightfoot, who continues to support work being done at Amorium.

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this study, I will be referring to the dating system that is commonly used by the Amorium Project so far: Early Byzantine (the fourth to late sixth century), Byzantine Early Medieval (the seventh to mid-ninth century) and Middle Byzantine (the mid-ninth to eleventh century).



ment of special characteristics in medieval Byzantine cities.<sup>2</sup> This inquiry into the Byzantine urban characteristics expanded some years later in the period of the seventh to ninth centuries.<sup>3</sup> Moving earlier into the Early Byzantine period and elaborating on the theme of the survival of cities of Late Antiquity, more answers were offered by Christopher Lightfoot, director of the Amorium Excavations Project from 1993 to 2013.<sup>4</sup>

We know little about the Hellenistic and Roman past of Amorium.<sup>5</sup> Its mention in a second-century BC inscription from Pessinous<sup>6</sup> and the existence of an excavated tumulus west of the city attest to some importance during Hellenistic times.<sup>7</sup> The Roman town is equally unknown except occasional archaeological finds recycled in much later buildings. The fact that Amorium had its own mint in Roman times certainly points to a significant regional center.<sup>8</sup> Its civic image, however, is still something that we can barely understand as very little evidence from the pre-Byzantine city survived the continuous reuse of material, and especially the systematic and intense rebuilding of the Byzantine Early Medieval and Middle Byzantine city. We do not know whether it was walled or whether there existed colonnaded streets, marble-clad monumental buildings, and agoras.<sup>9</sup> Maybe by comparison with nearby Pessinous we can imagine that some urban monumental arrangement would have adorned also Roman Amorium. Still, Pessinous stands out in textual sources and earlier period archaeology as a much more important city up to the sixth century, being a major – almost international – cult center and certainly important for Rome itself.<sup>10</sup> Except its status as a city, little is known about Amorium in relation to its standing in the imperial administration.<sup>11</sup> Almost the same goes for its ecclesiastical standing. Amorium was indeed a bishopric in the fifth century but remained under the

2 E. Ivison, "Urban Renewal and Imperial Revival in Byzantium (730–1025)," *ByzF* 26 (2000): 1–46.

3 Idem, "Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages (Seventh to Ninth Centuries)," in *Post-Roman Towns, Trade and Settlement in Europe and Byzantium*, vol. 2, *Byzantium, Pliska, and the Balkans*, ed. J. Henning (Berlin; New York, 2007), 25–60.

4 C. S. Lightfoot, "The Survival of Cities in Byzantine Anatolia: The Case of Amorium," *Byzantion* 68.1 (1998): 56–71; idem, "The Public and Domestic Architecture of a Thematic Capital, the Archaeological Evidence from Amorium," in *H Βυζαντινή Μικρά Ασία (6ος-12ος Αι.) / Byzantine Asia Minor (6th–12th Cent.)*, *Πρακτικά Στ' Διεθνούς Συμποσίου, Αθήνα 1997, Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών / Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών*, ed. S. Lampakis (Athens, 1998), 303–320; C. S. Lightfoot, "Amorium," in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*, 334–341.

5 C. Lightfoot and M. Lightfoot, *A Byzantine City in Anatolia: Amorium, an Archaeological Guide* (Istanbul, 2007), 32–42.

6 A. Avram and G. R. Tsetskhladze, "A New Attalid Letter from Pessinus," *ZPapEpig* 191 (2014): 151–167.

7 C. Lightfoot et al., "Amorium Kazısı 2007," *KST* 30.1 (2009): 208–212; C. S. Lightfoot, "Christian Burials in a Pagan Context at Amorium," in *Life and Death in Asia Minor in Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Times: Studies in Archaeology and Bioarchaeology*, ed. J. R. Brandt et al. (Oxford, 2016), 188–195, fig. 11.2; C. S. Lightfoot, T. Drew-Bear, and N. Tsivikis, *Amorium Reports 5: A Catalogue of Roman and Byzantine Stone Inscriptions from Amorium and Its Territory, Together with Graffiti, Stamps, and Miscellanea* (Istanbul, 2017), 11–12, figs. 1–3.

8 C. Katsari, C. S. Lightfoot, and A. Özme, *Amorium Reports 4: The Amorium Mint and the Coin Finds* (Berlin, 2012), 27–120.

9 For Roman inscriptions of Amorium, see Lightfoot, Drew-Bear, and Tsivikis, *Amorium Reports 5*, 23–54.

10 For an overview, see A. Verlinde, *The Roman Sanctuary Site at Pessinus: From Phrygian to Byzantine Times* (Leuven, 2015), 30–113.

11 In a first-century inscription from Amorium an imperial customs post is mentioned on the border with the province of Phrygia; see Lightfoot, Drew-Bear, and Tsivikis, *Amorium Reports 5*, 23–24, cat. no. 2.



Fig. 1. Amorium in its region (Source: Amorium Excavations Project).

Metropolitan of Pessinous, where local ecclesiastical authority in the region was situated.<sup>12</sup> And if any big and renowned pilgrimage centers existed in the area, it would have probably been St. Michael Archangel at Germia to the northwest.<sup>13</sup>

The geographical and topographical location of the city claims particular merits as it is set in the middle of a medium-size plain without much protection; on the other hand, the city has access to fertile lands, wood from the mountains and the highlands, marble and other stone quarries, and an abundance of underground water resources (Fig. 1).<sup>14</sup> To the south at a reasonable distance rise the Emirdağ mountains, to its north open plains where the headwaters of the Sangarios river gathers before it begins its run to the northwest, and then beyond the Sivrihisar mountains. To the west it opens to the road leading to Constantinople and to the east the road to the Konya plain and all the way to the Cilician Gates and to Syria.<sup>15</sup> As one of the last major stations before the difficult lands of

12 E. Ivison, "Kirche Und Religiöses Leben Im Byzantinischen Amorium," in *Byzanz: Das Römerreich im Mittelalter*, ed. F. Daim and J. Drauschke, vol. 2.1 (Mainz, 2010), 309–343.

13 P. Niewöhner, "Germia," in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*, 342–348; idem, "Die Michaelskirche in Germia (Galatien, Türkei): Ein kaiserlicher Wallfahrtsort und sein provinzielles Umfeld," *AA* (2010.1): 137–160; C. Mango, "The Pilgrimage Centre of St Michael in Germia," *JÖB* 36 (1986): 117–132.

14 K. Belke and M. Restle, *Galatien und Lykaonien*, TIB 4 (Vienna, 1984), 122–125.

15 K. Roussos, "Tracing Landscape Dynamics in the Vicinity of Amorium," in *Byzantine Medieval Cities: Amorium and the Middle Byzantine Provincial Capitals*, ed. N. Tsivikis (Berlin, forthcoming).

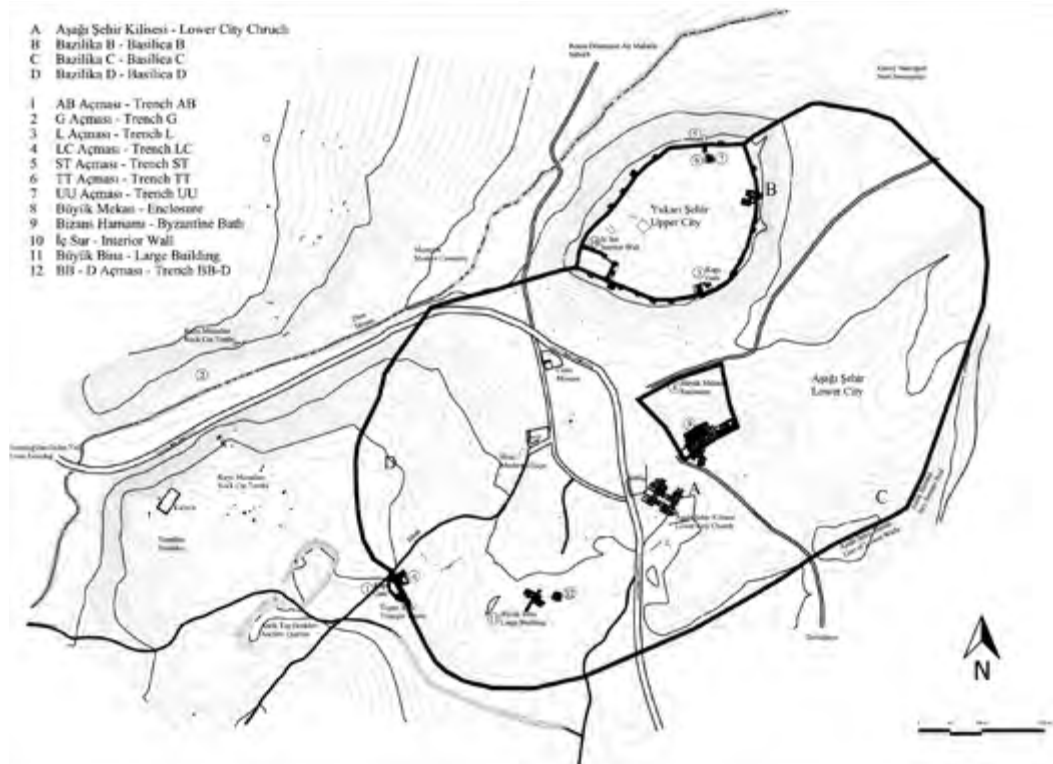


Fig. 2. General topographic plan (Source: Amorium Excavations Project).

the Konya plain, the position of Amorium on a major land-route must have played an important role as an intermediate station.<sup>16</sup>

But what would be the Byzantine urban space that we aim to discover? And how does it relate to its parts? Numerous studies on Late Antique urban space have appeared in recent years and, occasionally, scholars have attempted to tackle the much more difficult aspect of Byzantine medieval urban space.<sup>17</sup> Based on the above, we need to ask ourselves

16 For the Roman roads and milestones in the territory of Amorium: C. S. Lightfoot, "Amorium: Facts, Myths and Misconceptions," in *Amorium Reports 3: The Lower City Enclosure. Finds Reports and Technical Studies*, ed. C. S. Lightfoot and E. A. Ivison (Istanbul, 2012), 478–479; an Imperial and a Late Roman milestone have been found in Amorium, probably having been brought from somewhere in the vicinity of the town, Lightfoot, Drew-Bear, and Tsivikis, *Amorium Reports 5*, cat. nos. 1 and 7. For the evolution of Byzantine roads in the area: K. Belke, "Roads and Communications," in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*, 28–32; idem, "Communications, Roads and Bridges," in *OHBS*, 298–300.

17 Among a large number of studies on urbanism with an interest in Asia Minor for Late Antiquity, see *Archaeology and the Cities of Asia Minor in Late Antiquity*, ed. D. Ortwin and C. J. Ratté (Ann Arbor, 2011). For Early Medieval and Middle Byzantine urbanism, see the special chapter and the overarching approach in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*. Two volumes, containing papers from two conferences on Early and Middle Byzantine urbanism held at Mainz in 2015 and 2016, respectively, promise to tackle the subject with renewed interest, data, and approaches: *Urbanitas - Changes in Cityscape and Urban Life in Late Antiquity and Early Byzantine Times: Assos in Context of Urban Centres in Western Asia Minor*, ed. B. Böhlendorf-Arslan (Mainz, forthcoming); *Transformations of City and Countryside in the Byzantine Period*, ed. B. Böhlendorf-Arslan and

before ascribing to Amorium the archaeological banality of “an important Late Antique city.” What exactly categorizes important cities as such in the Eastern Roman Empire from the fourth to the seventh centuries?<sup>18</sup> A glorious Classical, Hellenistic, or Roman past? Fabulous civic monuments? A key function in the administration of the Late Roman and Early Byzantine state? An important ecclesiastical and religious center? Amorium would tick very few of these boxes, although it presented certainly its own virtues.

As part of our project many of these questions have been the focus of our research. In this respect we will attempt here to address some on the fluid urban space of Amorium through a combination of different methods employed in our research project, putting the emphasis equally on textual sources analysis, reassessment of older excavation material, new systematic excavations, landscape archaeology, and non-intrusive archaeological applications.<sup>19</sup> For our discussion here, we will limit ourselves mainly to aspects of the defensive and religious building environments: walls and churches.

## Two Byzantine views on Amorium’s changing urban space

As a result of its limited role in the Early Byzantine Empire, the city of Amorium was seldom mentioned in narrative or historical sources.<sup>20</sup> By contrast, its elevation in Byzantine provincial administration after the seventh and eighth centuries resulted in Amorium appearing regularly in post-seventh-century Byzantine textual sources, certainly much more than many other provincial towns of Anatolia.<sup>21</sup>

We will examine here two hagiographical texts that comment upon Amorium and its urban appearance, describing the city in different historical and interpretative contexts. The first passage comes from the *Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon* (BHG 1748) describing events of the late sixth century, having been compiled by its author based on earlier drafts

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R. Schick (Mainz, 2020). For recent theoretical re-evaluation of Byzantine medieval urbanism, see L. Zavagno, “The Unbearable Transience of the City: Urban Spaces in the Byzantine World in the Transition from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages (ca. 550–ca. 800 A.D.),” in *Transforming Sacred Spaces: New Approaches to Byzantine Ecclesiastical Architecture in the Transitional Period*, ed. S. Feist (Wiesbaden, 2020), 17–38; N. Tsivikis, “Moving Beyond the Invisible Cities of Byzantium,” *European Journal of Post-Classical Archaeologies* 10 (2020): 325–334.

18 I. Jacobs, “The Creation of the Late Antique City: Constantinople and Asia Minor During the ‘Theodosian Renaissance,’” *Byzantion* 82 (2012): 116, where the author proposes three physical changes marking the transition, albeit for a slightly earlier period than our interest in Amorium: urban fortifications, church buildings, and urban interventions like streets and open spaces.

19 Since 2013 the Amorium Excavations Project has been directed by Zeliha Demirel-Gökalp, professor at Anadolu University in Eskişehir. As part of the general project, a smaller international collaboration side project conducted by the Institute of Mediterranean Studies/FORTH focuses on the urban evolution of Amorium. Our side project has largely benefited from the exemplary collaboration with Anadolu University and the Turkish Ministry of Culture. From 2013 to 2018 the Amorium Urban Survey side project has been supported by a generous grant from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, and in 2020 it was awarded a grant by the Hellenic Foundation for Research & Innovation.

20 Ivison, “Kirche Und Religiöses Leben,” 309–343.

21 For an introductory discussion to the different Byzantine sources on Amorium, see T. Sotiriou, “Greek Sources on Amorium: A First Assessment,” in Tsivikis, *Byzantine Medieval Cities*, forthcoming.



soon after 640–641.<sup>22</sup> The second passage comes from one of the *martyria* of *The Forty-Two Saints of Amorium* (Martyrium B, BHG 1212) that was written in 846–847 soon after the events connected with the sack of Amorium by the Arabs in the summer of 838 and the captivity and execution of a group of high Byzantine officials.<sup>23</sup>

These two texts, separated by almost two centuries, represent the culmination of two different traditions of beholding a city. They function as an introduction to the urban and physical setting of Amorium and the ways that its contemporaries beheld the city.<sup>24</sup> Characteristic of this is the passage from the *Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon* that narrates his visit to Amorium and his interaction with the built urban environment.<sup>25</sup>

And when Theodore came close to the city of Amorion, everybody realized his saintly presence, and the city ran to welcome him in litany outside of the walls. [...] After having heard [about a young paralytic, Theodore] ordered that the young boy should be transferred to the house of a God-loving man, a man by the rank of *illustris* called Anastasios, and that the boy should be placed in the house chapel of Panagia Theotokos, where also the saint would stay for the night. And then the saint led the litany inside the city and all through the city. And they all ended at the Catholic and their First church, where he was greeted by the local bishop [...] and after the liturgy [...] he blessed the people and [...] he exited the city, and he entered the house of the above mentioned Anastasios the *illustris*, that was located outside the city walls.<sup>26</sup>

In this short description of the Early Byzantine city of Amorium, we encounter some of the main attributes of an urban settlement: the fortifications, the cathedral church, and the extra-mural residencies of the local urban elite. The characteristics of a city seem to have been typical and are part of an ecumenical language.

22 S. Efthymiadis and V. Déroche, “Greek Hagiography in Late Antiquity (Fourth–Seventh Centuries),” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 1, *Periods and Places*, ed. S. Efthymiadis (Farnham; Burlington, 2011), 71–72.

23 For the discussion on the different versions of the *Passions* of The Forty-two Martyrs of Amorium, see S. Kotzampassi, “Τὸ μαρτύριο τῶν μβ’ μαρτύρων τοῦ Ἀμορίου. Ἀγιολογικὰ καὶ ὑμνολογικὰ κείμενα,” *ΕΕΦΘεσσ* 2 (1992): 131–148; S. Efthymiadis, “Hagiography from the ‘Dark Age’ to the Age of Symeon Metaphrastes (Eighth–Tenth Centuries),” in Efthymiadis, *The Ashgate Research Companion*, 113–114. M.-F. Auzepy, “The Life of the Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorion,” in Tsivikis, *Byzantine Medieval Cities*, forthcoming.

24 The *Vita* of St. Theodore has been a basic source for discussing life in the Early Byzantine cities, towns, and villages of central Asia Minor; see S. Mitchell, *Anatolia, Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor*, vol. 2, *The Rise of the Church* (Oxford, 1995), 122–130. The ninth-century *martyria* have not been extensively utilized in regard to attitudes toward built space.

25 The *Vita* of St. Theodore regarding Amorium has been commented on before; see Lightfoot, “The Public and Domestic Architecture,” 304; Ivison, “Kirche und religiöses Leben,” 309–310.

26 For the *Vita* of Theodore (BHG 1748) see Theodore of Sykeon, *Vie de Théodore de Sykéôn*, vol.1, *Texte Grec*, ed. A. J. Festugière (Bruxelles, 1970), chap. 107: 85–86. English translation by the author. For a summary of chapter 107 of the *Vita* in English, see *Three Byzantine Saints: Contemporary Biographies of St. Daniel the Stylite, St. Theodore of Sykeon, and St. John the Almsgiver*, ed. E. Dawes and N. H. Baynes (New York, 1977), 159.

The city becomes one with its people, the passage literally describes this bond: “the city runs to welcome him in litany outside of the walls.”<sup>27</sup> Striking is also the reference of the main city church as “their first church” (πρώτης αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίας), in which the plural pronoun αὐτῶν alludes to some missing, probably masculine, noun describing the citizens of Amorium (κάτοικοι, ἐπιχώριοι, etc.). Also, the omission of a reference to the name of the saint to which the cathedral church was dedicated almost underlines an overall incorporation of the whole *urbs* inside its “catholic church”.

City walls constitute the physical boundary between the urban and the suburban/rural space, and they are constantly present in the narrative. The movement of the saint is a continuous shift between the inside and outside. Inside the walls, and thus the city, is the population, the bishop, and the main city church holding a prominent position in the urban topography. The only socially differentiated person besides the bishop, the *illustris* Anastasios, is placed outside the walls.<sup>28</sup> He represents the local elite with ties to imperial administration as shown by his title. Their grand houses and estates equipped with privately run chapels are set explicitly outside the city walls, signaling their distance from urban disturbances and, perhaps, their prominence over the rest of the population in a most Late Roman fashion.<sup>29</sup> An interesting comparison can be drawn between the nameless cathedral church inside the city walls mentioned as the church “of the city inhabitants” and the chapel in the estate outside the walls owned by Anastasios. Actually, from Amorium we have archaeological information for the existence of these elite class members in an Early Byzantine inscription mentioning a λαμπρότατος Ἀμμιανός (*vir clarissimus Ammianos*).<sup>30</sup> *Λαμπρότατος* in the period we are interested was a senatorial title lower than *ἰλλούστριος*, but nonetheless restricted to the highest members of Byzantine society.<sup>31</sup> The Ammianos inscription has been found in the modern village of Suvermez a couple kilometers west of Amorium (m. Hisar) and could possibly relate to some building or monument in the general area of Amorium, like the estate of the *vir illustris* Anastasios in the *Vita* text.<sup>32</sup>

27 The *Vita* of Theodore of Sykeon, 85: Γενομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ [Θεοδώρου] ἔγγιστα τῆς πόλεως τοῦ Ἀμορίου, κατάδηλος πᾶσι γέγονεν ἡ ἐπωφελὴς παρουσία αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἡ πόλις μετὰ λιτῶν ἔξω τοῦ τείχους.

28 B. Näf, *Senatorisches Standesbewusstsein in spätrömischer Zeit* (Freiburg, 1995), 262–272; for the rank of *illustris* in the seventh century, see J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture* (Cambridge, 1997), 161–163.

29 On similar Late Antique luxurious houses in general, see I. Baldini-Lippolis, *La Domus Tardoantica: Forme e Rappresentazioni Dello Spazio Domestico Nelle Città Del Mediterraneo* (Bologna, 2001); S. P. Ellis, “Late Antique Housing and the Uses of Residential Buildings: An Overview,” in *Housing in Late Antiquity: From Palaces to Shops*, ed. L. Lavan, L. Özgenel, and A. C. Sarantis (Leiden; Boston, 2007), 1–24. For a post-seventh-century scope on houses in Asia Minor, see P. Niewöhner, “Houses,” in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*, 109–118.

30 Lightfoot, Drew-Bear, and Tsivikis, *Amorium Reports* 5, 49, 181, cat. no. 110.

31 Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, 161–162.

32 Of course, the inscribed stone can also have been moved to Suvermez from the site of Amorium in modern times in order to be used as building material.

All these elements are both signalers and signifiers of urban space in the Early Byzantine understanding of the city.

The second description of the city of Amorium comes from a *martyrium* of *The Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorium*. This mid-ninth-century text composed in Constantinople narrates the martyrdom of the Byzantine high officials, both military and ecclesiastic, that were taken prisoner during the capture of the city by the Arabs in 838.<sup>33</sup> In the introduction of the *martyrium* we read:

There is a great city in the Anatolikon region of the Roman domain, named as Amorium since the ancient times, renown and glorious and first among all the cities following the one Queen of the cities, immensely populous, empowered with a multitude of civic and military officials and a great quantity of weapons and armors; even more immense in Amorium is the number of siege machines coming in many different shapes and for many different uses and [equally immense is the number] of catapults; with these the city is defended when under siege and threatened by enemies; and all these are contained inside the city. Since [Amorium] lies on its back in the middle of the flatlands without any natural protection other than its walls, offering itself easy to be stormed by those among the enemies wishing to annihilate it.<sup>34</sup>

This is a rich description of the site, written perhaps by a person who had lived in or experienced the city firsthand. Of course, some of the information contained in texts like this belong to literary *topoi* reoccurring among descriptions of medieval Byzantine cities, much like the artistic conventions used when depicting cities in Byzantine painting.<sup>35</sup> Here, though, we can almost prove that we are reading a rather accurate description of the ninth-century city and the landscape of the Phrygian highlands surrounding it.

In the *martyrium* the main urban ideas discussed are the city's military prowess and ability for defense, thus clearly underlining the military character of Amorium. This is described on three distinct levels: the human factor, the infrastructure, and the natural

33 A. Kolia-Dermizaki, "The Execution of the Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorion: Proposing an Interpretation," *Al-Masaq* 14.2 (2002): 141-162.

34 The text translated in English by the author is based on the *Martyrium B* of *The Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorium* (BHG 1212), see V. Vasiljevskij and P. Nikitin, "Skazanija o 42 Amorijskich mucenikach i cerkovnaja sluzbaim," *MASP* 7.2 (1905): 11, lines 12-21.

35 Characteristic is the depiction of Amorium under siege by the Arabs in the illuminations of the twelfth-century Skylitzes Madrid manuscript (fol. 59v and fol. 60v) that, while it portrays a generic fortified city, still attempts to annotate the scene with legends in Greek noting the place (Ἀμόρριον) and the main militant actors (Ρωμαῖοι and Τοῦρκοι); see V. Tsamakda, *The Illustrated Chronicle of Ioannes Skylitzes in Madrid* (Leiden, 2002), 102-103, 320-321, and 340-341. The term *Τοῦρκοι* (= Turks) probably means the Turkish mercenaries of the army of Al-Mutassim mentioned in the text, rather than contemporary realities of the author. For the edited Skylitzes text on Amorium, see John Skylitzes, *Ioannis Skylitzae synopsis historiarum*, ed. I. Thurn, CFHB 5 (Berlin; New York, 1973), 73-79. For English translation and commentary, see John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057*, tr. J. Wortley (Cambridge, 2010), 75-80.

setting. In the wording of the text this would be the presence of military men and their equipment, both offensive weapons and siege engines, the existence of walls, and the landscape that does not help by offering the city as easy prey to its enemies.<sup>36</sup>

The strongly defensive character of the city fits its role as the provincial center for the theme of Anatolikon.<sup>37</sup> Amorium was the base for a large army and it was tied with a number of military events during the Byzantine-Arab confrontation from the seventh to the ninth century already before 838.<sup>38</sup> Along these lines, this description also foreshadows the main theme of the text: the traumatic destruction of the city by the Arabs that led to the martyrdom of the forty-two saints.

### The shifting Amorium: Fortified space

A focal point in both narratives is the fortification walls of the city. It marks urban space in both accounts, Early Byzantine and Byzantine Early Medieval, although in different ways.

No trace of fortifications that can be dated to Hellenistic and Roman times has been found at Amorium. It must have been in the Early Byzantine period that the city was endowed for the first time with a massive circuit of defenses. The most striking feature of the Lower City walls is their length, since in most other Late Roman and Early Byzantine cases in Asia Minor, circuit walls are smaller than the previous cities, cutting off parts of the urban setting.<sup>39</sup> Although little of their impressive size and height can be seen today, it still takes a considerable time to walk around the entire circuit, following the traces that are visible on the ground or in aerial and satellite images. The fortification system consists of a long curtain wall protecting the Lower City pierced with gates, fortified towers, and a moat, and a shorter second one that encircles the Upper City with gates and towers of its own (Fig. 3).

Although the fortifications of Amorium were all built during Byzantine times, they seem to belong to a number of different initiatives corresponding to changing needs. Principally, we can identify three distinct broad phases: 1) the initial Early Byzantine (fifth and sixth centuries) construction of the Lower City walls and the grand circuit encircling the city; 2) a Byzantine Early Medieval (seventh and eighth centuries) episode of repairing

36 For the defenders of Amorium, see Kolia-Demirtzaki, "Execution of the Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorion"; Y. Stouraitis, "Historicity, agency, and ideology: the story of the sack of Amorion between reality and fiction," in Tsivikis, *Byzantine Medieval Cities*, forthcoming; for the siege equipment, see P. E. Chevedden, "The Invention of the Counterweight Trebuchet: A Study in Cultural Diffusion," *DOP* 54 (2000): 91.

37 On the theme of Anatolikon, see Ivison, "Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages," 28–29; J. Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World, 565–1204* (London, 1999), 73–77; Belke and Restle, *Galatien und Lykaonien*, 63–66.

38 Notable Arab invasions and raids on Amorium are recorded for the years 644, 646, 666–667, 669–670, 707, 715–716, 779, and 796. Finally, Byzantine Early Medieval Amorium was sacked and obliterated in 838 by the armies of the Caliph Al'Mutassim. For details, see Ivison, "Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages," 26; W. Brandes, *Die Städte Kleinasiens im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1989), 133–135.

39 This can be seen in many city fortifications in Asia Minor in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, like in Aphrodisias, Ephesus, Hierapolis, or Sagalassos. For further argumentation and bibliography, see Jacobs, "The Creation of the Late Antique City," 117–125.





**Fig. 3.** The Triangular Tower and West Gate of the Lower City fortifications of Amorium, balloon photograph (Photo: Amorium Excavations Project, 1994).

and updating the Lower City wall and probably the first creation of a fortified Upper City/acropolis, and 3) a Middle Byzantine episode (late ninth to eleventh century) after the destruction of the city in 838 when the Lower City walls were abandoned and a completely new fortification of the Upper City was constructed, later complemented by a small keep inside the acropolis.

The first major phase of construction for the fortifications of Amorium consists of the Lower City curtain wall with its towers and gates. The lower part of the wall is built of massive, finely-cut ashlar blocks set in places directly on the bedrock, while the higher part comprises neat rows of smaller, roughly-dressed blockwork.<sup>40</sup> The Lower City curtain walls do not contain any *spolia* from the Roman city or its cemeteries. We know of only one fully excavated tower in the Lower City walls: a triangular tower, one of a pair flanking the West Gate (**Fig. 3**).<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> The same style of construction can be observed also in other Early Byzantine buildings of Amorium, like in Church A (Iverson, "Kirche und Religiöses Leben," 313-314) or parts of the Large Building: C. S. Lightfoot, N. Tsvikis, and J. Foley, "Amorium Kazıları, 2009," *KST* 32.1 (2011): 50-51, fig. 11.

<sup>41</sup> For the excavation of the Triangular Tower and the wall segment, see C. S. Lightfoot and E. A. Iverson, "Introduction," in *Amorium Reports 1. Finds: The Glass (1987-1997)*, ed. M. A. V. Gill (Oxford, 2002), 12-13; C. S. Lightfoot and E. A. Iverson, "Amorium Excavations 1994: The Seventh Preliminary Report," *AnatSt* 45 (1995): 110-111. The triangular or V-shaped tower of Amorium is compared directly with similar towers in the fortifications of Thessalonike and elsewhere; see J. Crow, "Fortifications and Urbanism in Late Antiquity: Thessaloniki and Other Eastern Cities," in *Recent Research in Late-Antique Urbanism*, ed. L. Lavan (Portsmouth, 2001), 98-100.



Fig. 4. Segment of the seventh-century fortifications of the Upper City of Amorium (Photo: Amorium Excavations Project, 1994).

This phase may be dated to the reign of the Isaurian emperor Zeno (r. 474–491), to whom later sources attribute the re-founding of the city.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, a separate and even later tradition records that it was Zeno’s successor, the emperor Anastasios (r. 491–518), who built the walls.<sup>43</sup> Interestingly enough, no major construction at Amorium is associated with the emperor Justinian I (r. 527–565) by Prokopios in his account of the buildings constructed in Asia Minor during the emperor’s reign.<sup>44</sup>

The sophisticated fortification system employed in the Lower City walls and towers, as well as the consistent building technique, certainly point to a state initiative behind the decision to fortify Amorium.<sup>45</sup> So, regardless of the difficulty of attributing this construction to a certain imperial person of the late fifth to mid-sixth century, it is appropriate to say that the Amorium fortifications are definitely part of a new push in state-sponsored fortifications in Anatolia as part of an evolving strategy.<sup>46</sup>

The next phase of fortifications in Amorium in the seventh and eighth centuries seems to build on the existing Early Byzantine infrastructure and complement them with elements needed for the unexpected long-standing confrontation with the Arabs. The

42 George Kedrenos, *Georgios Cedrenus Compendium Historiarum*, ed. I. Bekker, CSHB (Bonn, 1838), 1:615: Ζήνων Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς [...] ἐπὶ τούτου ἐκτίσθη τὸ Ἀμμώριον.

43 Ivison, “Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages,” 35.

44 K. Belke, “Prokops *De Aedificiis*, Buch V, zu Kleinasien,” *AntTard* 8 (2000): 115–125.

45 Ivison, “Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages,” 36–37.

46 J. Crow, “Fortifications,” in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*, 92–93.

newly elevated city in the provincial administration needed additional protection in order to fulfil a new role in the defense of the empire.<sup>47</sup> Some evidence for urgent modifications can be best observed in a forewall addition that would connect the Early Byzantine triangular towers in front of the Western Gate. Probably in the mid-seventh century also the first Upper City wall was constructed with the use of extensive *spolia* mainly from the Roman cemeteries, in a completely different construction style to the Lower City fortifications (**Fig. 4**).

At some point after the 838 destruction of the city, new fortifications were built to defend the re-founded Upper City as the Byzantine Early Medieval fortification would have become useless and obsolete. These Middle Byzantine fortifications are much more visible as they stand high in the stratigraphy of the acropolis and have been easier to explore overshadowing previous fortifications of the seventh–eighth centuries. It is possible that this new fortification initiative can be dated in the second half of the ninth century as one can observe similarities with the Ankara citadel walls, especially in the design of gateways and the inner parapet wall walk-way supported by arches with buttresses.<sup>48</sup> In the most recent phase of the Amorium Excavations Project, since 2013 one of the main excavation trenches has revealed part of an internal fortified keep that occupied the southwest corner of the Middle Byzantine Upper City wall.<sup>49</sup>

Still the fortifications of Early Byzantine, Byzantine Early Medieval, and Middle Byzantine Amorium have not been recorded or studied in full. Part of our project has been an effort to check on the earlier assumptions regarding the walls through a renewed set of data.

Going back to the textual accounts, the ninth-century description offers some quite accurate topographical observations on the landscape setting of Amorium. The text mentions explicitly that the city “lies on its back in the middle of the flatlands without any natural protection other than its walls, offering itself easy to be stormed by those among the enemies wishing to annihilate it.”<sup>50</sup> Indeed, our modern understanding of the city terrain and its surrounding landscape corresponds fully to the medieval description.

In satellite imagery of Amorium and its region we can clearly observe this arrangement (**Fig. 5**). The historical city is situated in the middle of a flatland, with no mountains

47 J. Haldon, “Euchaïta: From Late Roman and Byzantine Town to Ottoman Village,” in *Archaeology and Urban Settlement in Late Roman and Byzantine Anatolia*, ed. J. Haldon, H. Elton, and J. Newhard (Cambridge, 2018), 244–245; R.-J. Lilie, *Die byzantinische Reaktion auf die Ausbreitung der Araber: Studien zur Strukturwandlung des byzantinischen Staates im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1976), 345–350.

48 U. Peschlow, *Ankara. Die bauarchäologischen Hinterlassenschaften aus römischer und byzantinischer Zeit* (Vienna, 2015), 142–151. I would like to thank Prof. Eric Iverson for pointing out this similarity.

49 The excavation at the Inner Keep on the Upper City is being led by Dr. Hasan Yilmazyaşar (Anadolu University); see Z. Demirel-Gökalp et al., “2014 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” *KST* 37.3 (2016): 202–203; Z. Demirel-Gökalp, A. C. Erel, and H. Yilmazyaşar, “2016 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” *KST* 39.2 (2018): 559–561; Z. Demirel-Gökalp et al., “2017 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” *KST* 40.3 (2019): 715–716; Z. Demirel-Gökalp et al., “2018 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” *KST* 41.4 (2020): 569–570.

50 *Martyrium B of The Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorium*, 11.19–21: ὑπίτω [...] ἐν πεδίῳ κειμένη καὶ οὐδαμοῦ ὄχρωματι φυσικῶ τιμὴ περιφραττομένη ἢ τῷ τείχισματι μόνω.





Fig. 5. Amorium, satellite image from GeoEye-1 (extraction date 07/16/2013) (Source: Amorium Excavations Project).

within a zone of five kilometers around it. It is partially nestled into a geological formation of a low rocky hill at its northwest side, made of local limestone that does not offer any real protection, although it provides raw material for construction. In the same satellite imagery, we can observe the line of the unexcavated Early Byzantine Lower City wall, which can be traced easily for most of its circuit as a stone and mortar whitish signal visible through the modern fields. Additional information is visible quite well in certain spectral filters, and based on that, we can draw the line of the curtain wall with relative accuracy (Fig. 6).

But even the two-dimensional satellite picture cannot do justice to the lively description of the ninth-century author. The correlation with reality, both medieval and modern, becomes much clearer when we examine a three-dimensional model of the site of Amorium. In a Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) model of the site, we can clearly see the fortified Lower City and the line of the walls, surrounding the also fortified Upper City on the low flat tell (Fig. 7).<sup>51</sup> As part of the Lower City fortification, we can observe also the earth depression around the walls, especially on the eastern edge, representing

51 A team from Eskişehir Technical University's Research Institute of Earth and Space Science led by Prof. Uğur Avdan conducted a drone orthophotography project of the site of Amorium in 2014 that produced also a LIDAR model; see Demirel-Gökalp et al., "2014 Yılı Amorium Kazıları," 204.



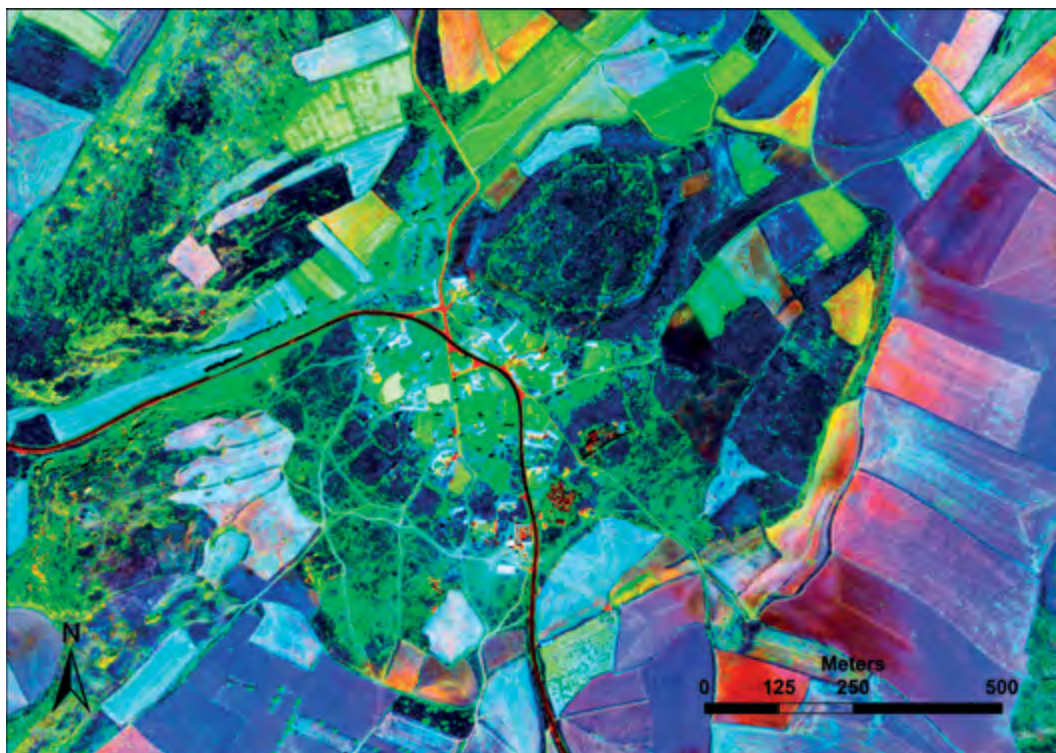


Fig. 6. Amorium with the outline of the Lower City fortification walls, Principle Components Analysis (PCA) of the same satellite image from GeoEye-1 (Source: Amorium Excavations Project).

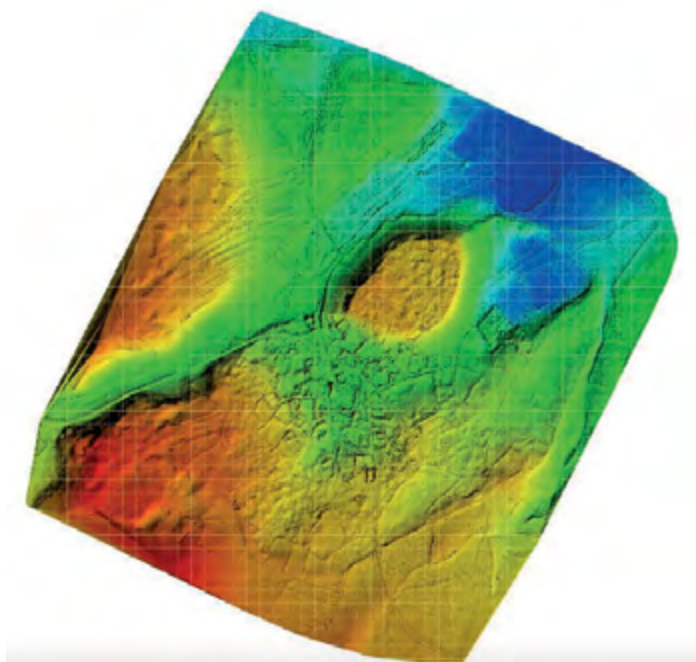
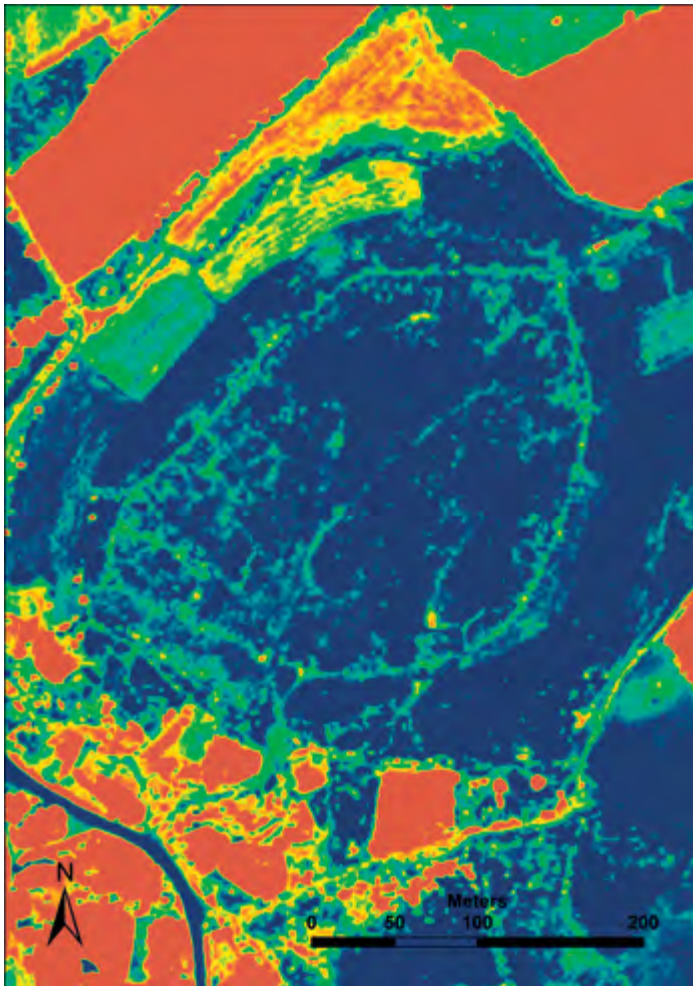


Fig. 7. Amorium, digital terrain three-dimensional model (Source: Amorium Excavations Project).



**Fig. 8.** Amorium, Upper City fortifications, Modified Soil Adjusted Vegetation Index (MSAVI) of the same satellite image from GeoEye-1 (Source: Amorium Excavations Project).

the moat and possibly streams that surrounded the walls of Amorium both on the east and west, at least during the ninth century.<sup>52</sup> Additionally, a peculiarity of the Amorium fortifications can be observed as the fortified Upper City did not stand much higher than elevated parts of the Lower City near the southwest wall line. This results in the city having a saucer-like appearance that was in many ways discernible for the Byzantines or even for their attackers.

Similar exploration of the Upper City walls through satellite imagery confirms the difficulties in tracing anything earlier than the post-ninth-century Middle Byzantine fortifications (**Fig. 8**). The processed imagery reveals the line of the Middle Byzantine fortification with details like the II shaped exterior towers and the short interior buttresses that probably supported arches carrying also the walkway (*peridromos*).

<sup>52</sup> More on the moat of the Amorium fortifications, see Ivison, “Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages,” 40; C. S. Lightfoot and E. A. Ivison, “The Amorium Project: The 1998 Excavation Season,” *DOP* 55 (2001): 382, fig. A.

## Church-building

A crucial feature in the cityscape of Amorium in the sources we examined is monumental church-building, through either presence or absence. In the seventh century *Life of St. Theodore*, activity inside the city walls is oriented towards the “Catholic and First Church of the City”. Also, outside the city walls, in the same text, a private chapel to the Virgin Mary in the mansion of the *vir illustris* Anastasios is the second scene where important events took place. By contrast, in the ninth-century description contained in the *martyrium* of *The Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorium* there is no mention of the Christian topography of the city and its churches. It is a striking and meaningful omission as the defensive character of Amorium is exhibited only through human action and not any divine providence.

Archaeological research at Amorium since 1987 has identified a number of churches at the site, marking the Christian cityscape of the Byzantine city from the fourth to the eleventh centuries. Remains of at least four large churches can be discerned inside the walled city: Church A in the center of the Lower City, Church B on the northeast quadrant of the Upper City, Church C near the southeast part of the wall of the Lower City, and Church D near the West Gate of the Lower City walls (**Fig. 2**).<sup>53</sup> Two of these churches (A and B) have been explored through excavation and are accessed through preliminary reports and publications. Church D has been intensively surveyed, and Church C is yet unexplored. Also, on a different scale, a small neighborhood chapel has been unearthed in the midtown enclosure trench. There is no evidence so far of churches outside the city walls, either monumental or private, except for occasional architectural elements or sculpture from cultivated fields in the vicinity of Amorium, although these might have been transferred initially outside the city.

The best explored and documented Christian building of Amorium is Church A – for a long period known as the Lower City Church – located in the middle of the Lower City (**Fig. 9**). It was a large three-aisled, timber-roofed basilica, with a three-sided eastern apse and auxiliary chapels in the east corners of the side aisles that should be dated to the late fifth or early sixth century, as part of the Early Byzantine urban renewal of the city.<sup>54</sup> In overall appearance and proportions, Church A at Amorium is very close to the Stoudios Monastery Basilica in Constantinople and the Hagia Sophia Basilica in Nicaea, thus also making the dating relationship possible.<sup>55</sup> Church A was a massive, well-constructed Early Christian building and remained in use in the same columnar basilica form, with

53 Ivison, “Kirche und Religiöses Leben,” 311–312.

54 Ibid., 311–317.

55 For Stoudios Basilica in Constantinople, see T. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park, PA, 1971), 35–61; C. Mango, “The Date of the Studius Basilica at Istanbul,” *BMGS* 4 (1978): 115–122; U. Peschlow, “Die Johanneskirche des Studios in Istanbul,” in 16. *Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Wien, 4–9 Oktober 1981: Akten*, vol. 2.4, *JÖB* 32.4 (Vienna, 1982), 429–434. For Hagia Sophia in Nicaea, see A. M. Schneider, *Die römischen und byzantinischen Denkmäler von Iznik-Nicaea*, *IstForsch* 16 (Berlin, 1943), 10–17; S. Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia in Iznik, Nikaia* (Alfter, 1994), 39–48; U. Peschlow, “Nicaea,” in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*, 209.





Fig. 9. Church A of Amorium, aerial orthophotographic reconstruction (Photo: Amorium Excavations Project).

only minor interventions, until its destruction in the mid-ninth century during the sack of Amorium by the Arabs, after which it was remodeled into a cross-in-square church.<sup>56</sup>

Church A, because of its size and the quality of its liturgical furnishing, is a good candidate for being the “Catholic and First Church” of Amorium mentioned in the *vita* of St. Theodore. Since Church A survived until 838, it would also mean that the church was still functioning perhaps in the same role also in the ninth-century city. This fact makes its absence from the description in the *martyrium* of *The Forty-Two Martyrs* of about 850 even more interesting. Church A offers a good example of continuous and uninterrupted use of religious landmark space from the Early Byzantine to the Byzantine Early Medieval periods.<sup>57</sup> The church was extensively remodeled after its mid-ninth century destruction into a cross-in-square church, but still the building and the location remained in use.<sup>58</sup>

56 A concise and detailed publication on Amorium’s Church A architectural phases and material is currently being prepared by Prof. Eric Ivison and will be published soon as volume seven in the *Amorium Reports* publication series. On the importance of the Middle Byzantine remodeling of Church A into a cross-in-square church, see Ivison, “Kirche und Religiöses Leben,” 327–333; R. G. Ousterhout, *Eastern Medieval Architecture: The Building Traditions of Byzantium and Neighbouring Lands* (New York, 2019), 432–434; S. Feist, *Die byzantinische Sakralarchitektur der Dunklen Jahrhunderte* (Wiesbaden, 2019), 60–70.

57 A famous example of preserving and retaining an Early Byzantine church through the Middle Byzantine times is the Basilica of St. Demetrios in Thessalonike; see F. A. Bauer, *Eine Stadt und ihr Patron: Thessaloniki und der Heilige Demetrios* (Regensburg, 2013), 127–136; for a more theoretical discussion on preserving the Basilica of St. Demetrios, see Feist, *Die byzantinische Sakralarchitektur*, 113–116.

58 Ivison, “Kirche und Religiöses Leben,” 328–338; idem, “Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages,” 40–41.





**Fig. 10.** Church B in the Upper City of Amorium, photo from the north (Demirel Gökcalp, Erel, and Yılmazyaşar, “2016 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” fig. 6) (Photo: Amorium Excavations Project).

Amorium’s Church B constitutes an entirely different evolutionary example. Located in the Upper City, Church B is currently under investigation in the new phase of Amorium excavations initiated in 2013 (**Fig. 10**).<sup>59</sup> Based on the preliminary results, we can observe that Church B was a large basilica, most probably three-aisled, with a surviving polygonal, ashlar-built apse.<sup>60</sup> The original structure of Church B must be dated to the fifth or sixth century, as suggested by the excavator, and shows evidence of fire destruction, deliberate demolitions, partial remodeling, and heavy alterations in a series of events in Byzantine Early Medieval and Middle Byzantine times, which is still too early to unravel stratigraphically.<sup>61</sup> Establishing an accurate architectural plan and dating of Church B of Amorium is still an ongoing project that future excavation and study of the building will provide. Certain similarities with other monuments in the vicinity, especially with the

59 The excavation of Church B in the Upper City has been carried out since 2013 under the supervision of assistant director of the Amorium Project, Dr. A. Ceren Erel (Hacettepe University, Ankara). A detailed presentation of the material and a study of the monument appears in A. Ceren Erel, “Amorium Antik Kenti, Yukarı Şehir, Bazilika B,” in *Türkiye’de Bizans Çalışmaları: Yeni Araştırmalar, Farklı Eğilimler*, ed. N. Necipoğlu and K. Durak (Istanbul, forthcoming).

60 Z. Demirel-Gökcalp, “2013 Yılı Amorium Kazısı,” *KST* 36.3 (2015): 653–654; Demirel-Gökcalp et al., “2014 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” 201–202; Z. Demirel-Gökcalp et al., “2015 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” *KST* 38.3 (2015): 452–454; Demirel-Gökcalp, Erel, and Yılmazyaşar, “2016 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” 561–562; Demirel-Gökcalp et al., “2017 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” 714–715; Demirel-Gökcalp et al., “2018 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” 569.

61 Demirel-Gökcalp et al., “2017 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” 715.

seven-sided ashlar apse and some of the architectural sculpture of the large basilica in Antioch of Pisidia, the so-called St. Paul's Basilica, should be noted, pointing perhaps to some closer connection between the Amorian basilica and the sixth-century Antiochean monument.<sup>62</sup>

A comparison between Churches A and B, the two better-known Amorian Early Byzantine basilicas, can be quite instructive as they exhibit some striking differences. Church B was much larger than Church A, adopted a different design of the apse (seven-sided to three-sided), both possibly followed a different articulation of their ground plan, and finally Church B was not equipped with the characteristic east chapels that we see in Church A. What excavation has shown so far is that Church B never survived into the Middle Byzantine period or some point earlier; according to the excavator, it had certainly "lost its function in the Middle Byzantine period, and maybe it was divided into rooms due to various reasons."<sup>63</sup> Still, however, some religious practice or Christian memory had survived as the finds exhibit.<sup>64</sup>

The fate of Church B from the Early Byzantine to the later periods of Amorium exhibits a different outcome in the preservation of church buildings and religious spaces in the passage from the Late Antique to the Medieval city. The reasons for the collapse or demolition of the building and the change, even partial, in use remain unanswered but point to an alteration in the character of parts of the city. This can be observed in the Upper City of Amorium, perhaps by then a fortified acropolis, as the earliest fortification of the Upper City must be dated to the mid-seventh century.<sup>65</sup>

Recent work on Church D, another of the large ecclesiastical buildings of Amorium, can provide some further insight to the discussion about continuity of use, renovation, or abandonment and repurposing of church buildings in the transition from the Early Byzantine to the Byzantine Early Medieval city. Church D, located in the western part of the Lower City and near the line of the fortifications, has not been the subject of excavation (**Fig. 11**).<sup>66</sup> However, during the 2014 and 2015 field seasons, and as part of research conducted under the Amorium Urban Survey side project, Church D was further

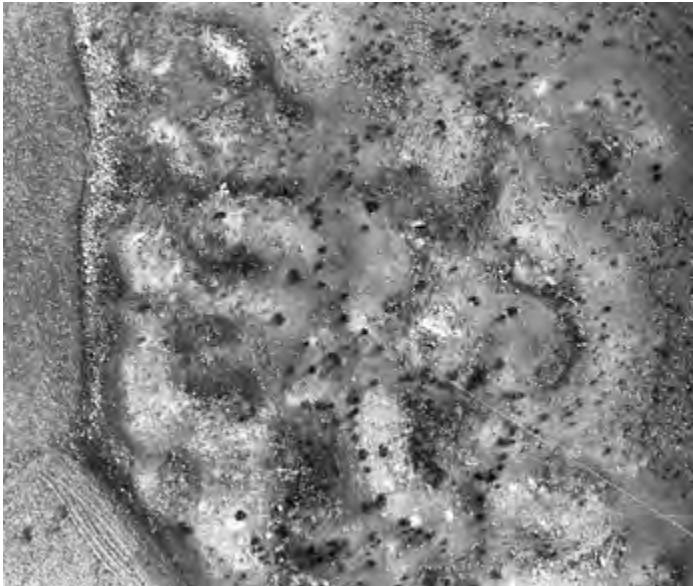
62 S. Mitchell and M. Waelkens, *Pisidian Antioch: The Site and Its Monuments* (London, 1998), 210–217; M. Taşlıalan, "Excavations at the Church of St. Paul," in *Actes du 1<sup>er</sup> Congrès international sur Antioche de Pisidie*, ed. M. Taşlıalan, T. Drew-Bear, and C. M. Thomas (Lyon, 2002), 9–32; L. Herring-Harrington, "The 'Church of St. Paul' and Religious Identities in 4th-Century Pisidian Antioch," in *Building a New Rome: The Roman Colony of Pisidian Antioch (25 BC–700 AD)*, ed. E. K. Gazda and D. Y. Ng (Ann Arbor, 2011), 109–130. P. Niewöhner, "Church Building in Anatolia during the Reign of Constantine and His Dynasty," in *Acta XVI Congressus Internationalis Archaeologiae Christianae, Romae (22–28.9.2013). Costantino e i costantinidi: L'innovazione costantiniana, le sue radici e i suoi sviluppi*, ed. O. Brandt and G. Castiglia, vol. 1 (Rome, 2016), 298.

63 Demirel-Gökcalp et al., "2017 Yılı Amorium Kazıları," 715.

64 A small number of Middle Byzantine burials have been unearthed outside the apse of the church; see Demirel-Gökcalp et al., "2015 Yılı Amorium Kazıları," 453; a Byzantine "reliquary," modelled out of a Roman grave stele, was further located inside the collapsed apse; see Demirel-Gökcalp et al., "2018 Yılı Amorium Kazıları," 569, fig. 1.

65 Ivison, "Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages," 42–43; Lightfoot, "Survival of Cities," 64–65.

66 Ivison, "Kirche und Religiöses Leben," 312.



**Fig. 11.** Church D on western part of the Lower City of Amorium, aerial photo of the site (Photo: Amorium Excavations Project, 1994).

explored with extensive use of non-intrusive archaeological methods: a) the visible surface remains, mainly due to modern stone robber pits, were revisited and surveyed anew, b) specially-procured satellite images of the site along with drone images were analyzed, and c) geophysical magnetic prospection was conducted at the location of the church.<sup>67</sup> The combination of the above data was sufficient for the creation of an architectural reconstruction model of the unexcavated monument (**Fig. 12**).

Church D was probably a three-aisled basilica with roughly a 2:1 width to length ratio, a three-sided eastern apse and at least one eastern chapel attached to its northeast corner.<sup>68</sup> Both the general design and the proportions of Church D are very similar to the better-known Church A although at a smaller scale, with striking similarities in the three-sided apse and the existence of an ancillary chapel in the east corner.<sup>69</sup> By contrast, Church D appears to have been considerably different from Church B in the Upper City in both scale and architectural plan.

The remains of Church D must be related to an Early Byzantine building probably constructed at some date close to that of Church A and possibly after the construction of the fortification walls of the Lower City of Amorium in the late fifth or early sixth century. This could further mean that Church D might also be connected to the large Early Byzantine building initiative seen everywhere in the city so far. A number of indices and

<sup>67</sup> Geophysical magnetic prospection was conducted at the site in 2015 by Dr. Tuna Kalayci and a team from the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH. For the full results, see *Amorium Reports 7: Excavation and Survey at the Western Lower City*, ed. N. Tsvikis and Z. Demirel-Gökalp, forthcoming.

<sup>68</sup> An earlier survey has noted also the possible existence of a baptistery on the north side of Church D, much like in excavated Church A; see Ivison, “Kirche und Religiöses Leben,” 314.

<sup>69</sup> For an exhaustive discussion of Early Byzantine reliquary chapels, see P. Niewöhner, “Spätantike Reliquienkapellen in Lykien,” *JbAC* 48/49 (2005/2006): 77–113.



**Fig. 12.** Church D on western part of the Lower City of Amorium, ground plan reconstruction (Source: Amorium Excavations Project).

surface finds, like architectural sculpture and fragments of wall painting, point also to a continuous life for this church at least into the ninth century. This assumption is further supported by the fact that this highly populated part of the city, in the western fringes of the fortified lower town, remained in use until the 838 destruction, as suggested by old and new archaeological finds in the nearby Triangular Tower and Large Building trenches.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> For the Triangular Tower and West Gate neighborhood, see Lightfoot and Ivison, “Introduction,” 12–13; idem, “Amorium Excavations 1994,” 110–111; for the Large Building neighborhood, see Demirel-Gökalp et al., “2018 Yılı Amorium Kazıları,” 570–571.





Fig. 13. Plan of chapel (BEM Unit 21) in Amorium's Enclosure trench (Iverson, "Excavations at the Lower City Enclosure, 1996-2008," fig. 1/10) (Source: Amorium Excavations Project).

The new situation of Byzantine Early Medieval Amorium regarding religious practice, or at least an aspect of it, can be understood broadly by examining the only new church building known that is dated to the eighth or ninth century. A small single-nave chapel has been excavated in the Lower City of Amorium in a neighborhood north of



Fig. 14. Chapel in Amorium's Enclosure trench, view of the apse (Photo: Amorium Excavations Project).

Church A.<sup>71</sup> The small chapel has been inserted during the Byzantine Early Medieval period between pre-existing and contemporary buildings: mainly a row of bathing rooms and the *apodyterium* of the bathhouse built in the sixth century but still in use (Fig. 13). The chapel consists of a single orthogonal nave, a small built apse on its eastern end with a reused column-shaft and a capital in front serving as the altar, and a small ambulatory room to the west, maybe as the narthex (Fig. 14). It had a lean-to or pitched timber roof with roof tiles stepping on the bath building, and in the interior fragments of fresco were found still attached on the south wall, indicating that elaborate wall paintings decorated the chapel. The small chapel was built at the same time as a number of wineries in this part of the city and probably functioned as a small and simple oratory for the neighborhood, its residents, and workers.<sup>72</sup>

The chapel of the bathhouse and the wineries neighborhood does not compare to anything else that we know so far in the city. It is a small and humble single-nave church

71 E. A. Ivison, "Excavations at the Lower City Enclosure, 1996–2008", in Lightfoot and Ivison, *Amorium Reports* 3, 45.

72 For a detailed presentation of the Byzantine Early Medieval neighborhood of the Enclosure, see Ivison, "Excavations," 5–151 and for the use of the chapel, 49.

with no real monumental aspirations, built on a completely different basis, for different needs and intended also for different use than any of the pre-existing basilicas of the city. Although small city chapels are not a new thing in eighth- and ninth-century Byzantine cities, it definitely tells another story on attitudes toward building environment and religious practice; a story of smaller-scale, neighborhood, or even personal level piety, a story of privately – or communally – owned religious spaces, and of a turn to “organic” or “simplified traditional” architectural forms for satisfying these needs.<sup>73</sup>

## Conclusions

In this short description of the fortunes of the different church buildings in Amorium, we can observe, as expected, different negotiations of space and function. Large Early Christian churches like Church A in the city center and Church D near the western walls are preserved in time with small alterations from the sixth up until the ninth century. Other even larger monuments, like Church B in the Upper City, seem to have been short-lived and to a certain extent, purposefully removed or at least not rebuilt. Finally, the small chapel set in between the buildings of the neighborhood of the bath and the wineries is proof of another level of facilitating the religious needs of the city inhabitants.

The “magnificent thematic capital” of Amorium, the city that ranked second to Constantinople in the ninth century according to the text of the *martyrium* regarding its ecclesiastical architecture, concentrated on negotiating its past, either by painstakingly conserving it or by recycling built and unbuilt spaces and materials into a medieval “present.” The existence and function of the old and huge Early Byzantine basilicas in the Byzantine Early Medieval city served as reminders of keeping alive a splendor needed for such a city. This was not a mean feat but a reflection of the potentials of the city in the new situation.<sup>74</sup>

Comparably, the fortifications of Amorium after their initial creation around the end of the fifth century survived through continuous use with updating, modernizing, repairing, and supplementing until the 838 sack of the city and the destruction of much of the curtain wall. One observes this organic growth of the fortifications into a continuously more complex system through Byzantine times, an evolution reminiscent of processes noted in other large cities like Nicaea, Constantinople, or Thessalonike. The Late Roman or Early Byzantine fortification system grew following the fortunes of the city it was created to protect, its evolution arbitrated largely by its success to offer protection.

To conclude, as we have seen, the transformation of the Early Byzantine town of Amorium into a vibrant Byzantine Early Medieval city translates into negotiations of

73 For an introduction to the question between buildings with architectural intentions and “popular” buildings in Byzantium, see S. Mamaloukos, “Από τον σχεδιασμό στην κατασκευή: ζητήματα εφαρμογής στη βυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική”, *ΔΧΑΕ* 39 (2018): 84–85.

74 Ivison, “Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages,” 41. Few post-seventh century cities could sustain the existence of large Early Byzantine basilicas of the past incorporated in their new capabilities and needs (e.g., Nicaea, Thessalonike, Constantinople).

space and material culture that we are able to follow based on the systematic archaeological work.<sup>75</sup> Many of these practices have been often mentioned in studies on Byzantine cities as they evolved and changed.<sup>76</sup> Negotiations used to be recognized as indices of urban “decline” in past bibliography and have been more recently seen as evidence of encroachment and ruralization.<sup>77</sup> But these same treatments of urban space in a different context, that of urban renewal in Byzantine Early Medieval Amorium, can lead to a completely different result: the creation of Byzantine medieval urban space as a distinct notion and analytical category, an urban space in dialogue but also antithetical sometimes to its Greco-Roman past.<sup>78</sup> To this approach, the discussion of city population and size of urban space as markers of *urbanitas* is just one aspect of Byzantine Early Medieval cities.<sup>79</sup>

From the fifth to the ninth century, Amorium underwent a process of change, and every instance of time during this process can be seen also as a static picture. The city was rebuilt every time out of the components that its contemporaneity provided, and the same stands for the Byzantine Early Medieval Amorium. Components of a new grammar of space, not decline, not progress, but a different set of mentalities towards built and un-built areas in the urban contexts, largely connected both to the new economic conditions and the ideological build-up of post-seventh-century Byzantium.

75 C. S. Lightfoot, “City and Countryside in Byzantine Anatolia: Amorium,” in *Byzantium in Transition: The Byzantine Early Middle Ages, 7th–8th c. AD*, ed. A. Vionis (Nicosia, forthcoming).

76 Zavagno, “The Unbearable Transience of the City,” 324–334.

77 M. Whittow, “Decline and Fall? Studying Long-Term Change in the East,” in *Theory and Practice in Late Antique Archaeology*, ed. L. Lavan and W. Bowden (Leiden, 2003), 414; on ruralization in Asia Minor, see H. Vanhaverbeker et al., “What Happened after the 7th century AD? A different Perspective on Post Roman Rural Anatolia,” in *Archaeology of the Countryside in Medieval Anatolia*, ed. T. Vorderstrasse and J. Roodenberg (Leiden, 2009), 177–190.

78 For a similar discussion focused more on the West, see also A. Classen, “Urban Space in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age: Historical, Mental, Cultural, and Social Economic Investigations,” in *Urban Space in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age*, ed. A. Classen (Berlin; New York, 2009), 1–33.

79 Brandes, “Byzantine Cities in the Seventh and Eight Centuries,” 38–41, where Amorium’s position in the sources is juxtaposed to the reality of its archaeological remains.

## ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>AA</b>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
<b>AbhBerl</b>	<i>Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin, Abhandlungen</i>
<b>ActaIRNorv</b>	<i>Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia, Institutum Romanum Norvegiae</i>
<b>AHR</b>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<b>AJA</b>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<b>AJP</b>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<b>AJS Review</b>	<i>The Journal of the Association for Jewish Studies</i>
<b>AnatAnt</b>	<i>Anatolia Antiqua</i>
<b>AnatSt</b>	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
<b>AntTard</b>	<i>Antiquité Tardive</i>
<b>AB</b>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
<b>ANRW</b>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt</i>
<b>ANMED</b>	<i>Anadolu Akdenizi: arkeoloji haberleri= News of archaeology from Anatolia's Mediterranean areas</i>
<b>AnzWien</b>	<i>Anzeiger: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien, Philologisch-historische Klasse</i>
<b>ArtB</b>	<i>Art Bulletin</i>
<b>AST</b>	<i>Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı</i>
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<b>BABesch</b>	<i>Bulletin antieke beschaving</i>
<b>BCH</b>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
<b>BEFAR</b>	<i>Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome</i>
<b>BHG</b>	<i>Biblioteca hagiographica graeca</i> , edited by F. Halkin. 3 <sup>rd</sup> ed. SubsHag 47. Brussels, 1957; repr. 1969
<b>BIAA</b>	<i>British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara</i>
<b>BMGS</b>	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
<b>BMMA</b>	<i>Bulletin of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York</i>
<b>BSA</b>	<i>The Annual of the British School of Archaeology at Athens</i>
<b>ByzF</b>	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
<b>ByzSorb</b>	<i>Byzantina Sorbonnensia</i>
<b>BZ</b>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<hr/>	
<b>CahArch</b>	<i>Cahiers archéologiques</i>
<b>CCSG</b>	<i>Corpus christianorum, Series graeca</i>
<b>CFHB</b>	<i>Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae</i>



<b>CSHB</b>	Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae
<b>CRAI</b>	<i>Comptes rendus des séances de l'année de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>
<b>CSCO</b>	Corpus scriptorium christianorum orientaliū
<b>CSLA</b>	The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity (CSLA) database, based mainly at the University of Oxford
<hr/>	
<b>ΔΧΑΕ</b>	Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἐταιρείας
<b>DenkWien</b>	Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften
<b>DOC</b>	Bellinger, A. R., Grierson P., and Hendy M. F. <i>Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection</i> . Washington, DC, 1966–1999
<b>DOP</b>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<b>DOS</b>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Studies</i>
<b>DOSeals</b>	<i>Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art</i> , edited by N. Oikonomides and J. Nesbitt. Washington, DC, 1991–
<hr/>	
<b>ΕΕΦΘεσσ</b>	Ἐπιστημονικὴ ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Φιλοσοφικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Ἀριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης
<b>EP</b>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> . 2nd ed. Leiden; London, 1960–2002
<b>EJOS</b>	<i>Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies</i>
<b>EME</b>	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
<b>EO</b>	<i>Echos d'Orient</i>
<hr/>	
<b>HEROM</b>	<i>Journal on Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture</i>
<b>HTR</b>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<b>HT</b>	<i>History and Theory Journal</i>
<b>HZ</b>	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
<b>Hugoye</b>	<i>Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies</i>
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<b>IEph.</b>	<i>Die Inschriften von Ephesos</i> . Vols. I–VIII, edited by H. Wankel et al. Bonn, 1979–1984
<b>IstForsch</b>	<i>Istanbuler Forschungen</i>
<b>IstMitt</b>	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen</i>
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<b>JbAC</b>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<b>JDAI</b>	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
<b>JECChrSt</b>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>

<b>JESHO</b>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<b>JÖAI</b>	<i>Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien</i>
<b>JÖB</b>	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i> [note: before 1969, JÖBG]
<b>JQR</b>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<b>JRA</b>	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
<b>JRS</b>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<b>JSAH</b>	<i>Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians</i>
<b>JWalt</b>	<i>Journal of the Walters Art Gallery</i>
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<b>KST</b>	<i>Kazi Sonuçları Toplantısı</i>
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<b>MAAR</b>	<i>Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome</i>
<b>MAMA</b>	<i>Monumenta Asiae Minoris antiqua</i>
<b>MASP</b>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie impériale des sciences de St.-Petersbourg, Sciences politiques, histoire et philosophie</i>
<b>MélRome</b>	<i>Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome</i>
<b>MHR</b>	<i>Mediterranean Historical Review</i>
<b>MiChA</b>	<i>Mitteilungen zur Christlichen Archäologie</i>
<b>MM</b>	<i>Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana</i> , edited by F. Miklosich and J. Müller. 6 vols. Vienna, 1860–1890
<b>MonPiot</b>	<i>Monuments et mémoires, Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Fondation Eugène Piot</i>
<hr/>	
<b>OCP</b>	<i>Orientalia christiana periodica</i>
<b>ODB</b>	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> , edited by A. Kazhdan et al. 3 vols. New York; Oxford, 1991
<b>OHBS</b>	<i>The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies</i> , edited by E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, and R. Cormack. Oxford, 2008
<b>ÖJh</b>	<i>Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen institutes in Wien</i>
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<b>PBSR</b>	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
<b>PG</b>	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca</i> , edited by J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1857–1866
<b>PBW</b>	<i>Prosopography of the Byzantine World</i>
<b>PLRE</b>	<i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> . Vol. 1, edited by A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, and J. Morris. Cambridge, 1971; Vols. 2–3, edited by J. R. Martindale. Cambridge, 1980–1992
<b>PNAS</b>	<i>Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences of the USA</i>
<b>PO</b>	<i>Patrologia orientalis</i>
<b>PoDIA</b>	<i>Proceedings of the Danish Institute at Athens</i>

<b>ProcBrAc</b>	Proceedings of the British Academy
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<b>RAC</b>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i>
<b>RACr</b>	<i>Rivista di archeologia cristiana</i>
<b>RArch</b>	<i>Rivista di archeologia</i>
<b>RBK</b>	<i>Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst</i> , edited by K. Wessel. Stuttgart, 1963–
<b>REB</b>	<i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i>
<b>REG</b>	<i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
<b>RendPontAcc</b>	<i>Atti della Pontificia accademia romana di archeologia, Rendiconti</i>
<b>RQ</b>	<i>Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte</i>
<b>RSBS</b>	<i>Bizantinistica. Rivista di studi bizantini e slavi</i>
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<b>SBMünch</b>	Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse
<b>SBS</b>	<i>Studies in Byzantine Sigillography</i>
<b>SC</b>	Sources Chrétiennes
<b>SEG</b>	<i>Supplementum epigraphicum graecum</i> , edited by P. Roussel et al. Leiden, 1923–
<b>SGS 1</b>	<i>Change in the Byzantine World in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Papers from the First International Sevgi Gönül Symposium</i> , edited by A. Ödekan, E. Akyürek, and N. Necipoğlu. Istanbul, 2010
<b>SGS 2</b>	<i>The Byzantine Court: Source of Power and Culture, Papers From The Second International Sevgi Gönül Symposium</i> , edited by A. Ödekan, E. Akyürek, and N. Necipoğlu. Istanbul, 2013
<b>SGS 3</b>	<i>Trade in Byzantium, Papers From the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium</i> , edited by P. Magdalino and N. Necipoğlu. Istanbul, 2016
<b>SGS 4</b>	<i>Identity and the other in Byzantium, Papers From the Fourth International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium</i> , edited by K. Durak and I. Jevtić. Istanbul, 2019
<b>SoSchrÖAI</b>	Sonderschriften des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes
<b>SOPJ</b>	<i>Syriac Orthodox Patriarchal Journal</i>
<b>Spolia reincarnated</b>	<i>Spolia reincarnated: afterlives of objects, materials and spaces in Anatolia from antiquity to the Ottoman era</i> , edited by I. Jevtić and S. Yalman. Istanbul, 2018.
<b>StP</b>	<i>Studia Patristica</i>
<b>Synaxarium CP</b>	<i>Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: Propylaeum ad Acta sanctorum Novembris</i> , ed. H. Delehaye. Brussels, 1902
<b>Syria</b>	<i>Syria. Archéologie, art et histoire</i>
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<b>Teubner</b>	Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana

<b>The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia</b>	<i>The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia: From the End of Late Antiquity until the Coming of the Turks</i> , edited by P. Niewöhner. New York, 2017
<b>TIB</b>	<i>Tabula imperii byzantini</i> , edited by H. Hunger. Vienna, 1976–
<b>TM</b>	<i>Travaux et mémoires</i>
<b>TÜBA-KED</b>	Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi Kültür Envanteri Dergisi
<b>TürkArkDerg</b>	Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi
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<b>VizVrem</b>	Vizantiiskii vremennik
<hr/>	
<b>ZDMG</b>	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
<b>ZNW</b>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
<b>ZPapEpig</b>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
<b>ZRVI</b>	<i>Zbornik radova Vizantološkog Instituta</i>
<b>ZLU</b>	<i>Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti</i>