PREFACE

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Cappadocia remains an area of fascination for both scholars and tourists alike. As one recent vlogger (i.e., video blogger) notes, the region is "Instagram-famous … where photographers are abundant, 'likes' are plentiful, and views are exceptional." But, the vlogger, asks, "Does Cappadocia live up to its hype?"[1] That's a question to which one can find a variety of answers, both online and off, both positive and negative. Our own opinion is, of course it does! And our advice is, simply avoid the limited sites and often intrusive activities recommended by bloggers, vloggers, and tour agencies. And explore. There is still much for the tourist, and especially the scholar, to discover off the beaten track—indeed, it is still possible to come away with a real sense of discovery. The spectacular landscapes and rich history bring together the best of the volcanic geology of the Upper Miocene and Quaternary periods with the arcane art of the Byzantine period. That said, the region may be better known to tourists than to scholars.

This, we believe, is gradually changing. Since launching this first issue of *Valonia*— the new journal of Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED) devoted to the histories of Anatolia—at least two international conferences have occurred, one in Thessaloniki, Greece, the other in Padova, Italy.[2] In addition, the most recent Sevgi Gönül International Byzantine Studies Symposium was devoted to Byzantine Anatolia, with several papers on Cappadocia.[3] There are also a variety of new research projects—beyond what could be included in our issue—ranging from traditional analyses of mural paintings to high-tech settlement surveys to scientific investigations of evidence of agriculture and climate. The new research launched in the last decades is both changing our perspective on the region and emphasizing how much new or underutilized data there is to be considered.[4]

1 Lost LeBlanc, "Is Cappadocia Worth the Hype?!," filmed in 2020, video, 18:52 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCQwOusdMfk.

2 "Cappadocia through Time: From the Byzantium to the Ottoman Empire," Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 3–4 December 2021; "Paesaggi resilienti: Aggiornamenti e prospettive delle ricerche territoriali in Cappadocia," Università degli Studi di Padova, 16 December 2021.

3 Nikos B. Kontogiannis and B. Tolga Uyar, eds., *Space and Communities in Byzantine Anatolia: Papers from the Fifth Annual International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium*, GABAM Series (Istanbul: Koç University Press, 2021).

4 To cite three examples, Ann England, Warren J. Eastwood, C. Neil Roberts, Rebecca Turner, and John F. Haldon, "Historical Landscape Change in Cappadocia (Central Turkey): A Palaeoecological Investigation of Annually Laminated Sediments from Nar Lake," *The Holocene* 18, no. 8 (2008): 1229–45; Catherine Jolivet-Lévy with Lemaigre Demesnil, *La Cappadoce: Un siècle après G. de Jerphanion,* 2 vols. (Paris: Guethner, 2015); Robert G. Ousterhout, *Visualizing Community: Art, Material Culture, and Settlement in Byzantine Cappadocia,* Dumbarton Oaks Studies 46 (Washington, D. C.: Harvard University Press, 2017), published in Turkish as *Bizans Toplumunu Görünür Kılmak: Kappadokya'da Sanat, Maddı Kültür ve Yerleşim,* GABAM Series (Istanbul: Koç University Press, 2020).

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The first study in this volume serves as an introduction. John Haldon offers a historian's perspective on the *état de la question* on settlement and economic history of Byzantine Cappadocia. As a key participant in landmark studies of agriculture and climate in historic Anatolia, Haldon emphasizes the importance of material culture in a region lacking a textual history, as well as the nuances that new scientific methods of analysis might provide.

Görkem Günay reassesses the scholarship on the rock-cut architecture of Byzantine Cappadocia, while setting it into a broader geographic context. He brings into his analysis research from other rupestrian regions of the medieval world, concluding with some suggestions of ways forward for future scholarship. He had initially suggested the tongue-in-cheek title, "Giving Voice to the Stone-Deaf"—which his paper attempts to do.

Lynn Jones turns our attention to the iconography of the painted churches, a subject that has long intrigued scholars. The painting of Cappadocia is a mixture of sophisticated, cosmopolitan compositions and styles and odd, provincial, or regional variations. By focusing on depictions of the first Christian emperor Constantine and his mother Helena, she explores the meaning of imperial representations and the possibility of an imperial cult in Cappadocia—far from the capital and frequently represented in a regional idiom. In doing so, she demonstrates the continued value of the close analysis of painting in its context.

Ivan Drpić takes a different approach to the analysis of wall paintings, looking at examples of one medium imitating another, and asking what they might mean. Why would mural painting strive "to be something beyond itself"? Why would painters on rock-carved churches attempt to imitate mural mosaics—a technique unusual to the region, at least among surviving monuments? He suggests the associations of the mosaic medium with Antiquity may have served to situate new monuments within a deep historic context.

Several papers examine the rock-cut architecture of the region, turning attention to settlement studies, villages, and residential complexes. Fatma Gül Öztürk Büke notes the wide economic discrepancies in housing, even within individual settlements. Focusing on the settlement known as Açıksaray, near Gülşehir, she examines the potential interdependence of its medieval occupants.

In a related paper, Stavros Mamaloukos and Dimitris Anastasiadis re-examine the growing evidence for Byzantine secular housing in Cappadocia. Their study focuses on surviving, elite rock-cut residences from a typological perspective. Usually organized around a courtyard, with several identifiable functional spaces in prominent positions, they exhibit both remarkable commonalities and wide variations. Because of the paucity of evidence elsewhere, the houses of Cappadocia take on increased significance for our understanding of daily life in the Byzantine Empire.

Settlement studies may be expanded with the intelligent combination of high-tech and traditional survey methods, as the long-term ongoing study of the Mavrucan Valley indicated. Nilüfer Peker and Tolga Uyar have pulled together many different types of evidence for settlement, documenting both rock-cut and masonry buildings and agricultural installations. Because the settlement sprawls across a vast, cultivated river valley, they turned to aerial documentation and georeferencing to make sense of the massive amount of physical evidence for the life of a medieval agrarian community.

Scott Redford turns our attention to the road systems and mobility within medieval Cappadocia by focusing on the thirteenth-century campaign of caravanserai construction undertaken by the Seljuks. He looks both backward and forward chronologically, situating the extraordinary building campaign within the existing framework established by the Byzantines, as well as how the caravanserais were presented in the scholarship of the early Turkish Republic.

In a concluding essay, Robert Ousterhout looks at the last decades of Cappadocian research, suggesting productive ways forward for re-imaging life in the medieval villages and countryside. New approaches and new technologies offer many possibilities, particularly when combined with traditional methods of analysis. As he emphasizes, our best tools remain a knowledgeable pair of eyes. The challenges posed by rapid touristic development and the ravages of man and nature in a fragile, natural environment make ongoing scholarly analyses all the more crucial.

Interspersed with the essays in this volume are photographs by the visual artist Sibel Horada, who explores the interface between the soil and people of Cappadocia through time. The historic landscapes are

being challenged by recent changes in the agrarian economy, with the introduction of non-native plants, fertilizers, and pesticides.

Byzantine Cappadocia might be seen as a microcosm, which represents the potential for future studies of the rich histories of Anatolia in general. With the launching of ANAMED's new journal Valonia, we anticipate increased scholarly interest in the region, a crossroads of civilizations throughout the ancient, medieval, and modern periods.

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