

# Foreword

*Hinter den Mauern und auf dem offenen Land: Neue Forschungen zum Leben im Byzantinischen Reich (Behind the Walls and in the Countryside: New Research on Everyday Life in the Byzantine Empire).* This was the title of a symposium held by the *Byzantinische Archäologie Mainz (Byzantine Archaeology Mainz, now Leibniz-WissenschaftsCampus Mainz: Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident)* in June 2010 in Mainz, Germany. The author of this book, Dr Anastassios Antonaras, a leading scholar in his field working at the Museum for Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki, gave a paper with the title *Artisanal Production in Byzantine Thessaloniki (4<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*. He presented an impressive amount of evidence for workshops of all kinds in this Byzantine metropolis. The ephorates in charge of the conservation of monuments and archaeological finds had collected much evidence that came to light during building works in the city, which is preserved in the archives. Dr Antonaras compiled all the available evidence and analysed it for the symposium. Afterwards, he said to me that he had never had to put so much effort into such a short paper and that his desk had been overloaded with written records and files he had found during his research. I immediately asked him whether this could be turned into a book that could provide a unique insight into the arts, crafts and trades in Byzantium, their spatial organisation and development throughout the history of the city. He agreed and started working on the manuscript.

This book is the result, and it exceeds expectations: hundreds of archaeological finds from different areas and periods are gathered in a comprehensive catalogue that gives evidence of the city's provision with artisanal products, the craftsmen's quarters and important changes over the centuries. Thessaloniki, the second city in the Byzantine Empire with a long history from the Hellenistic age until today, provides a particularly good case study since this evidence is not available from the capital, Constantinople, itself. Thanks to the efficient ephorates overseeing all excavations comprehensively, this evidence is available in the archives and published archaeological reports.

The present volume would not have been possible without the thorough and attentive work of the editors: Dr Antje Bosselmann-Ruickbie is an art historian and archaeologist specialising in Byzantine goldsmiths' works; Dr Leo Ruickbie, a native English speaker, is a sociologist and historian; and both have a comprehensive publishing and editing record. To them a cordial »thank you«. This also goes for all colleagues in and outside of the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Mainz who have helped this book to see the light of the day. I am confident that it is a long-awaited contribution to research on Byzantine everyday life and will be well-received in its field.

Falko Daim

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