



ΑΚΑΔΗΜΙΑ



ΑΘΗΝΩΝ

Research Centre for the History of
Greek Law

In the framework of the annual series of lectures
organised by the Netherlands Institute at Athens entitled

‘Byzantine Talks NIA’

dedicated to the memory of Professor Spyros Troianos

the Netherlands Institute at Athens in collaboration with the Research Centre for the History of Greek Law,
Academy of Athens kindly invite you to the third lecture of this series on:



Photo: Sotiria Nikolou

***‘Re-reading Title 1 of the Eisagoge:
Law, Justice, and Constitutional Thought in Byzantium’***

by Vasileios Alexandros Kollias

Assistant Researcher | Research Center for the History of Greek Law of the Academy of Athens,
Lawyer at the Greek Supreme Court

Moderator: Dr. Lydia Paparriga-Artemiades,

Research Director | Acting Director of the Research Centre for the History of Greek Law, Academy of Athens

Tuesday 12th May 2026, 18.00

in the Library of the Netherlands Institute at Athens,

11, Makri str., 117 42 Athens

Due to the limited number of seats, please register to nia@nia.gr or via telephone number: 210-9210760 Monday to Friday 09.00-17.00

The event will also be live streamed. For online registration please visit:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/t0uHJzq3SK6JggCnLt5u0g>



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Re-reading Title 1 of the Eisagoge: Law, Justice, and Constitutional Thought in Byzantium

Abstract:

The talk deals with the question whether Byzantium produced anything comparable to a written “constitutional charter” before modern constitutionalism. It focuses on the late ninth-century Eisagoge (Εἰσαγωγή, Introduction) and, in particular, its first title, Περὶ νόμου καὶ δικαιοσύνης (“On law and justice”). The core subject matter is functional rather than doctrinal: although the content of Title 1 of the Eisagoge largely restates juristic definitions of Roman / Justinianic Law (with some ancient Greek influences) transmitted through the Basilica, the Byzantine innovation lies in editorial design. By placing “law and justice” at the very beginning—before the institutional chapters on emperor and patriarch—the text frames political authority as grounded, at least programmatically, in a normative order prior to office-holding. Moreover, the first title of the Eisagoge is reused or echoed in some later legal compilations and authors. Thus, it might have served as a durable normative framework for public order. Without equating this with modern rule-of-law constitutionalism, the presentation will invite discussion on criteria and evidence: when do foundational principles count as “constitutional,” how should rhetoric be weighed against actual limits on power, and what would decisively confirm—or refute—this interpretation in a non-liberal imperial polity?