



MOUNT ATHOS CENTER

**ABSTRACTS
OF PROSPECTIVE SPEAKERS
FOR THE **THIRD**
SCIENTIFIC WORKSHOP
OF THE MOUNT ATHOS CENTER**

Contents

ANNOUNCEMENTS	3
Vladimir Božinović	4
Dr Nina Chichinadze	5
Dr Helen M.Dixon	6
Ekaterina Dughashvili	8
Dr Dejan Dželebdžić	10
Srđan Pirivatrić	11
Manuela Studer-Karlen	12
Alex Rodriguez Suarez	13
Mirjana Živojinović	14
Paschalis Androudīs	16
Constantine Vapheiades	17
Dr Eleni Vlachopoulou-Karabina	19
Nikolaos Vrızidis	20
Archimandrite Efraim Givisis-Espgymenite,	21
Demosthenes A. Kaklamanos	22
Diogenis Karagiannakidis	23
Eleni Karantzola	24
Anastassios Papaioannou	24
Dimitrios Liakos	26
Christos Malatras	27
Evangelos Matziris	29
Olga Ch. Bakirtzi	29
Athanasios Papaioannou	29
Konstantinos-Filippos Mavroulidis	30
Stephanos Paliobeis	31
Miltiadis Pappas	32
Stamatis Chondrogiannis	33
Evangelos Chrysos	35
POSTERS	36
Charalampos Aidonopoulos	37
Dimitrios Minasidis	38

Markos Pilavakis.....	38
Evangelos Fragkotsinos.....	38
Aristotelis Mentzos.....	38
Athanasios Semoglou	38
Melina Paisidou.....	38

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Architectural decoration of the outer narthex of Chilandar monastery

Katholikon of Chilandar monastery on Mount Athos is being considered as one of the most significant monuments of Serbian and late Byzantine art. While the so-called "church of king Milutin", built at the beginning of the 14th century, is well documented and studied several questions related to its later exonarthex have remained without satisfying answer.

The most important characteristic of this structure is surely rich architectural sculpture that is often related to artistic trends of Morava Serbia in the second half of the 14th and first half of the 15th century. However, as some of the earlier scholars have posed, it seems that this ensemble of sculptural decoration was not executed at once and by the same workshop of artisans.

It is more likely that architectural decoration of Chilandar outer narthex has been conducted in two stages. One part of the sculpture, such as rose windows in the upper zones of the structure, has been carved during construction of the exonarthex. Decoration in the lower zones (slabs, door and window frames) was executed in the decades after construction when arcade and bifora openings of the outer narthex have been enclosed.

All of the scholars agree that architectural sculpture of Chilandar exonarthex has close analogies to decoration of Serbian churches in Kruševac region in the last decades of the 14th century. The most prominent example from this group is church of St. Stephan, known as Lazarica, a court church of Prince Lazar of Serbia (1371-1389). This led towards hypothesis that patron of Athonite structure could also be Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović under whose rule artistic tradition of "Morava school" has flourished. It is considered that additional argument for such thesis would be a depiction of coat of arms of Lazarević family on one of the slabs in the south bifora of exonarthex.

Recent studies are however pointing toward the conclusion that heraldic emblem on the slab of Chilandar outer narthex is probably not related to the ktetorship of Prince Lazar. Since it is positioned inside of the bifora opening this slab more likely belongs to a group of sculptural decoration that was executed after construction of exonarthex. Moreover, all of the elements from this ensemble have been carved from the material in secondary use. Several ornaments that are depicted on these "spolia" are however repeating motifs from earlier sculpture of Chilandar katholikon which indicates that they were perhaps copied on site.

In this research we are presenting a hypothesis that after construction of the outer narthex all of the openings were enclosed with reused elements that were carved again in Chilandar monastery by the artisans from Serbia. Detail analysis of iconography of depicted ornaments from this ensemble, including three heraldic emblems, indicates that patron of such project could have been Prince Lazar's successor Stefan Lazarević.

Monastic Arts of Mount Athos of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Periods. Georgian Textual Evidences

The paper considers Georgian written evidences dealing with art of Mount Athos. The foundation of the Georgian Monastery of Iviron in the 10th century, which is the second most important monastic foundation of Athos, laid a foundation for manifold contacts between Mount Athos and Georgia. Preserved written sources enrich our knowledge about artistic legacy of the Holy Mountain.

The Life of the Great Georgian Athonite Fathers Ioanne (920-1005) and Ekvtime (955-1028), written in 1042-44, which is one of the most significant source for the reconstruction of the various aspects of history of religious arts of Athos. The text sheds more light on the role of art in spiritual life of the brethren. The text describes attitude towards devotional images and the monastic regulation of the possession of icons. At the same time the Life refers to the Byzantine imperial gifts to the Monastery and therefore supplies us with evidences concerning political implication of art within monastic environment. The text deals also with the typology of icons, particularly, icon decoration of chancel barriers and their iconographic repertoire.

The post-Byzantine period is characterized by an intensification of artistic contacts between Athos and Georgia. A number of 16th century inscriptions accompanied frescoes in Georgian churches (e.g. Gelati monastery catholicon, the Archangels' Church in Gremi) illustrate involvement of Greek monks in embellishment of sacred spaces and dissemination of Athonite artistic traditions in Georgia.

The 18th century account of Timothe Gabashvili who visited Athos in 1755 describes numerous Athonite monasteries. He describes churches, their decoration and venerable icons and relics. His emotional narrative gives a lively picture of Athonite life and its arts. It is not surprising that a special attention is paid to Iviron and its catholicon.

The Georgian sources elucidate the importance of Athos throughout the centuries in the impact of its artistic tradition to the local religious life.

**A Byzantine traveller to Rome returns East? The anonymous scribe of Monh;
Batopedivou, ntoul. 3, 15A.**

In July 1462 the despot Demetrios Palaiologos, who had been living in exile at Adrianopolis since the Ottoman annexation of the Morea, issued a *horismos* transferring jurisdiction over ten tenants on the island of Lemnos to the monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos. The original document is now Monh; Batopedivou, ntoul. 3, 15A.

In 1930 A. Sigalas published a transcription of the text and a photograph of the decree.¹ Over eighty years later R.S. Stefec identified the handwriting as that of the *Anonymous 31* scribe (henceforth *A31*), who copied Gemistos Plethon's *De virtutibus* in Milan, Bibl. Ambrosiana, M 52 sup. and Naples, Bibl. Nazionale III.E.19.² Stefec also identified *A31* as the scribe of Xenophon's *Anabasis* (in Vatican City, Urb. gr. 94), Thucydides (in Vatican City, Pal. gr. 133, co-written with Johannes Moschos in 1468/9 perhaps at Corone), and Arrian's *Anabasis* together with Plethon's *Monody for Helena Palaiologina* and *De processione sancti spiritus* in Salamanca, Bibl. Universitaria 115 (co-written with another anonymous scribe). Stefec suggested that *A31* came from the Peloponnese, and may have entered the service of Demetrios Palaiologos and moved with him to the court of the Sultan after the conquest of the Morea. However, D. Speranzi's recent enlargement of the *A31* manuscript cluster with the addition of Gemistos Plethon's *De fato* and *De uirtutibus* in Milan, Ambrosiana F 88 sup., Caritonymus Ermonymus' *Decem Capita* in Florence, Bibl. Medicea-Laurenziana 10.25, as well as his work on a bilingual Homer (Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibl. cod. phil. et poet. fol. 5) and on the restoration of a fourteenth-century manuscript of Libanius' *Declamationes* and *Epistolae* (Florence, Medicea-Laurenziana 57.47) provides strong evidence that *A31* was working together with other Greek emigrés at Rome in the early 1460s, shortly after the arrival of Thomas Palaiologos, brother and rival despot of Demetrios, at the court of Pope Pius II.³ In the face of such disjointed evidence, Speranzi's conclusions are understandably cautious: some of *A31*'s collaborations were produced in the Morea, some in Rome, and Stefec's identification of *A31*'s hand in the Vatopedi *horismos* is a sign of him 'returning East' in 1462.

A number of questions remain unanswered. Who was *A31* and who was he working for, Demetrios Palaiologos or Thomas Palaiologos? What was his connection with Mystra, and in particular the circle of Gemistos Plethon, whose work he was evidently so interested in promoting? What were his objectives in travelling to Italy, why did he spend such a short space of time there, and why do we find him 'back East' copying a *horimos* for Demetrios Palaiologos about a transfer of revenues to Vatopedi in July 1462? By locating the manuscript evidence for *A31* in its immediate historical and cultural contexts, I hope to

¹ A. Sigalas, "'Orismo;" Dhmhtrivou despovtou tou\$ Palaiolovgou (Ijouvlio" 1462)', *ÔEllhnikav*, 3, 1930, pp. 341-345.

² R.S. Stefec, 'Die griechische Bibliothek des Angelo Vadio da Rimini', *Römische Historische Mitteilungen*, 54 2012, pp. 95-184 (p. 138). D. Harlfinger, *Die Textgeschichte der Pseudo-Aristotelischen Schrift Peri; ajtovmwv grammw\$vn*, Amsterdam, 1971, pp. 410, 419.

³ D. Speranzi, *Omero, i cardinali e gli esuli. Copisti greci di un manoscritto di Stoccarda*, Madrid, Dykinson, 2016.

address some of these questions about *A31*, and also to enrich our present-day understanding of the end of the Palaiologan despotate, the influence of Plethon, and the impact of the Byzantine World on Renaissance Rome.

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Georgian literary school and Manuscripts of the Mount Athos (Iviron Monastery) in the context of the Byzantine cultural orientation .

Of the Georgian cultural centres functioning abroad, the Iviron Monastery on the Holy Mount Athos had the greatest importance for the development of Georgian culture. The first monks appear on Mount Athos from as early as the 8th-9th centuries, and at the end of the 10th c. the centre of the Greek monasteries also moved there. In 870 Ioane Kolovu founded one of the first monasteries, and in the subsequent period large-scale construction began, several significant monasteries sprang up, and Mount Athos was renamed the Holy Mountain. Many Christian nations had their own monasteries on Mt. Athos and, naturally, the Georgians too. After the intensification of the political and ecclesiastic relations between Byzantium and Georgia in the 10th c., the Georgians began to settle on Mt. Athos. Reliable sources for the history of the establishment of the Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos are the Life of Ioane and Euthymius (by Giorgi the Athonite), a hagiographic work composed at Iviron proper, and the Acts of the Iviron Monastery (see Actes d'Iviron).

With the assistance of the Byzantines and the fervent activity of the Athonite Georgians, by 985 Iviron became a strong monastery. Thus at the end of 10th c. Georgians established major literary centre on the mount Athos. A literary school of Mount Athos materially altered the development of the Georgian literature and the sphere of its interest; it adopted a new orientation and laid a firm basis for the progress of Georgia's cultural and literary life, The Athonite school initiated a new era in the history of the Georgian literature, styled the classical period of the Georgian literature. Translations of the Byzantine writings form one of the competent parts of the medieval Georgian literature. The translated Byzantine monuments are preserved in the Georgian manuscripts and most of them in the Iviron Monastery's collection. The Georgian translations cover almost all fields of Byzantine writings: biblical books, apocryphal literature, exegetics, polemics, liturgics, dogmatics, homiletics and e.c. Athonite Georgian manuscripts contain as hagiographic, hymnographic and homiletic on the one hand and the biblical theology, asceticism, mysticism on the other.

Translations of Eastern and Western literature have passed a path from free translation to accurate, formal, Hellenophilic translation, from dynamic, expositive to literary. The principle of free translation of Classical authors (from Greek into Latin) in the Middle Ages gradually was replaced by principle of accurate translation. Along with this, cultural-ideological and historical-literary process was underway from Pre-Hellenophilic period to Hellenophilic. Among various Christian nations Hellenophilia implied demonstration of special interest in the ideas typical of particular periods of Byzantine culture. Georgian translated literature witnessed this process from the 9th c. to 11th c., which was reflected in translations of Byzantine theological literature made in Iviron Monastery.

The present paper discusses old Georgian translation traditions on the basis of the Athonite manuscripts. Thus, formation of Hellenophilic translation trend in Georgian literature was facilitated by linguistic and ideological requirements: increase of importance

of Greek as the language of the original and increase of prestige of Byzantine education in the Eastern Christian world. Translators' cultural orientation towards thinking processes in Byzantium became active, critical study and commentary of texts, interest in actual issues of Byzantine literary theory and philosophical-scholarly concepts.

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The publishing of the post-Byzantine documents of the Holy Monastery of Hilandar

In the archive at the Holy Monastery of Hilandar are preserved hundreds of documents in Greek dating from the 12th to the 20th century. This collection began to draw the attention of scholars in the early 20th century, but the focus has mainly been on the oldest i.e. Byzantine documents. These have been published systematically, like the documents of the other monasteries of Mt Athos, in the Paris based edition, *Archives de l'Athos*, while the majority of the post-Byzantine documents remain unpublished to date. More precisely a small number of 17th century documents and the preponderance of the 18th century documents (the exact number is unknown but it is between 350 and 400) have not yet been published. For this reason the SASA Hilandar Commission began a project last year with the main aim of publishing the post-Byzantine documents in Greek from the Hilandar archive. This is a long-term project and is envisaged in two phases. The first phase will concentrate on analysis of the photograph collection and the interpretation and transcription of the still unpublished documents, followed by the publication of a small number of the documents. We are of the opinion that the first phase must also include research in the monastery archive itself. The second phase is more ambitiously conceived and will be directed towards the production of a collection of the published documents.

The decision of the Hilandar Commission to initiate this project was made, among other reasons, because the SASA archives contain a rich collection of photographs of the Hilandar documents. These photographs were taken in the winter of 1906/7 by the then young associate professor at the Faculty of Philosophy of Belgrade University, Dragutin Anastasijević, a student of Karl Krumbacher. Two facts are worth mentioning in connection with the collection. First of all, the photographs are of excellent quality, making the documents easy to read. Secondly, and more importantly, a comparison between the accompanying catalogue of these photographs (published in the *Godišnjak Srpske kraljevske akademije*, vol. 49, 1939) and the catalogue of the post-Byzantine documents of Hilandar made by Vasilis I. Anastasiadis (*Archives of the Monastery of Hilandar. Summaries of Post-Byzantine Documents*, Athens 2002) indicates that there are significant differences in their contents, particularly as concerns the material from the 17th and 18th centuries. It can be seen that certain documents mentioned in the catalogue of photographs do not appear in Anastasiadis's catalogue, and vice versa. Only after a thorough examination of the photographs it will be possible to ascertain if, and to what extent the content of the Hilandar archive changed over the course of the 20th century.

In the second part of my report I am going to explain the method according to which the texts will be published, examining the fundamental problems we will face in the course of publishing the texts and the most interesting observations. The publication of each document will be accompanied by a short description of its contents, a description of the document itself (based in the main on Anastasiadis's description), its diplomatic character, a Serbian translation, essential comments and reproduction of the document photograph. All comments on the method of publication presented in the report will be very welcome.

The excommunication of Tsar Dušan (the anathema of Kallistos) and the Hagion Oros

This paper presents the continuation of my research on the excommunication of Tsar Stefan Dušan, the results of which I communicated during the previous workshop under the title "The excommunication of Tsar Dušan (the anathema of Kallistos) – some observations made on the basis of the documents from the Mont Athos archives". On that occasion I highlighted the importance of these documents for the issue of the chronology of the lost decision (praxis) on the excommunication, issued by Patriarch Kallistos and the Endemousa Synod of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate. The conclusion was that after the decision was declared, ca. in the autumn of 1352, the full liturgical communion between the Holy monasteries of the Mont Athos and the Serbian see of Peć must have ceased, as well as the liturgical commemoration of Dušan, who from October 1345 incorporated Month Athos into his realm and was accepted by the monastic community as their earthly lord. In this presentation I intend to explore the importance of the documents from the Mont Athos archives for the further research of this church schism, as well as to sketch its consequences at Mont Athos after the death of Dušan in December 1355 up to its cancellation in October 1375. Formally Dušan`s successor was his son Uroš, but real power in the vicinity of the Holy Mountain lay in the hands of his widow Jelena, i.e. the nun Jelisaveta, and after her with Despot Jovan Uglješa, both of whom established independent rule in Serres, while their relations with Mont Athos and the Constantinopolitan Patriarchy were very much burdened by this church dispute. Patriarch Kallistos went in person to the court of Jelisaveta in June 1363 to resolve the schism but his sudden and inexplicable death made church reconciliation an unachievable goal. The return of the region ruled by Uglješa to the jurisdiction of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate began in March 1368, but was not completed until May 1371. After the death of Uglješa in the Battle of Marica in autumn 1371 Serbian influence on Month Athos diminished. The schism between the sees of Constantinople and Peć continued and had its consequences at Mont Athos where the priests who had been consecrated by the excommunicated bishops were not allowed to communion. The period of Serbian influence in Karyes, known as "the epoch of the Serboprotos" in an act of Protos Gerasimos from January 1375, left its traces on the Mont Athos and caused certain disputes over the monastic property. It was from Mont Athos that Elder Isaija of Hilandar started his mission to heal the schism, which was finally achieved on 3 October 1375, exactly on the church feast of St Dionysios Areopagites, when the representatives of the Ecumenical Patriarchy read the prayer of absolution at the grave of Tsar Dušan in Prizren. The monasteries of Mont Athos cultivated a favorable tradition about their ruler Dušan, who in a Dyptichon of the Protate was referred to as ("our late Emperor Stefan"). The Synodikon of the Great Lavra is especially indicative in this sense, since it contains references to the regular liturgical commemoration of Dušan as a great benefactor of the monastery.

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The depiction of the «Christ Anapeson»: the making of an image and its distribution

The subject of this paper concerns the relationship and influence of the liturgy on the iconographic programs of Byzantine churches and the predominant role of the Mount Athos in this process. My focus is on the complex interpretation of the depiction of Christ Anapeson.

The first apparition of the Christ Anapeson in the end of the thirteenth century on Mount Athos is in keeping with the general and prevalent tendency of the early Palaiologan period to decorate churches with multiple and varied cycles. Most of these cycles are not, however, primarily narrative in intent; their functions are to convey the symbolic complexities of theological precepts, and to make this an immediate and understandable reality. During a period of religious unrest and doubt it was necessary to stress the importance and reality of sacraments and the real presence of Christ within the Church. In this group of subjects of liturgical and sacramental symbolism stressing the role of Christ belongs also the image of Christ Anapeson. A subject not well researched yet.

The new image at the end of the thirteenth century is certainly not a coincidence although it correlates with the contemporary liturgical trends at Mount Athos. It is necessary to consider the textual sources of the Old Testament and the liturgical, exegetical and homiletic commentaries on these texts, such as sermons of church fathers and liturgical hymns and prayers, and their impact on the iconography of Christ Anapeson. In different contexts the image may have another meaning. The Anapeson image is not a narrative depiction of the death of Christ, but the representation is allegorical and theological dealing with this.

For this problematic the Epitaphios Threnos plays an important role. Conclusions are drawn about the conceptualization and contextualization of the iconographic programs and contemporary rites. Subsequently, the topic appears in Byzantine churches of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, included three other examples at Mount Athos. Its place within the church is variable; the iconographical details, the added figures and the accompanying inscriptions are changeable. Thanks to the connection to the clearly orthodox rite of Epitaphios Threnos, the Anapeson image stands as a symbol of Orthodoxy, as can be seen in some image programs. Therefore, the discussion about the depiction clarifies also the Athonite influence on other regions.

In addition to identifying and positioning iconographic examples, this study provides an exploration of the interplay and interaction of images and liturgy, and furthermore, illustrates the interdependence of images and word on this topic. The conclusions should provide explications for the meaning of the image of Christ Anapeson and the thematic program in a Palaiologan church and should illuminate our understanding of the experience of the church as a liturgical space used by a wide spectrum of the Byzantine community.

Bell ringing on Mount Athos during the Ottoman period

The religious use of bells is a practice employed in all the Athonite monasteries. The instruments, together with *semantra*, regulate the life of the monastic communities on the Holy Mountain. Nevertheless, bells and bell ringing on Mount Athos have not received much attention from scholars. For this reason, this paper aims at tracing the history of bell ringing in Athonite monasteries during the Ottoman period by focusing on the available evidence: a combination of written sources, archaeological remains and artistic representations. The use of bells is assumed to have been widespread during the Late Byzantine period; however, the lack of information about their use in Athonite monasteries before the Ottoman conquest only allows us to speculate.

Surprisingly, most evidence concerning bell ringing on Mount Athos dates to the Ottoman period, when the use of bells was strictly forbidden in territories under Turkish rule. The isolation of the Athonite peninsula and the privileged status of the monasteries probably explain why the community was allowed to ring bells. While Ottoman authorities apparently requisitioned bells from the Athonite monasteries in 1491, travel accounts prove that bell ringing was nevertheless employed during the long period of Ottoman rule. One of the oldest bells in the Holy Mountain is dated to 1622. The instrument, which is preserved at the Pantokrator Monastery, was cast in Venice.

This information shows that bells were imported into Mount Athos during this period, a detail supported by inscriptions on other bells and recorded by early scholars. Venetian workshops seem to have filled the Athonite demand for bells for centuries. Only towards the end of the eighteenth century the instruments may have been cast in situ, most likely by traveling artisans. This paper will present part of my ongoing research on bell ringing in the eastern Mediterranean. The Friends of Mount Athos have awarded me a grant to study in situ the bells preserved in the Athonite monasteries. This exciting project will shed light on bell ringing in the Holy Mountain, an understudied aspect of the everyday life of the Athonite communities.

Grand Župan Stefan Nemanjić – The metoch in Hvosno

This year, we are still marking 800 years (2017) since the coronation of Grand Župan Stefan Nemanjić – the First Crowned Serbian king. For that reason we have devoted attention to the metoch in Hvosno, which was founded by Grand Župan Stefan Nemanjić at the beginning of the 13th century, who donated to the Hilandar Monastery eleven villages, a pasture, two vineyards and a square.

The region known in the Middle Ages as Hvosno, encompassed a wide area around Peć, on both sides of the central course of the Beli Drim river and its tributaries. The Hilandar Monastery was first of all granted villages with arable land, vineyards, pastures, etc. And with dependent farm labourers who in return for the right of use (*dominium utile*) of the said holdings had specific obligations to the Monastery; then Hilandar received right of ownership (*dominium directum*) of the Dobri dol pasture, vineyards in Kruševo and Peć and the Kninac square. The monastery used those holdings and worked them, leasing them out to their tenant farmers or other, hired labourers.

We followed the enlargement of the metoch in Hvosno with donations from almost all the rulers of the Nemanjić dynasty, and with them Knez Lazar, as well as the demographic changes that influenced the change of status of some villages.

During the 13th century, the importance of the metoch in Hvosno grew so much that before the end of the rule of Uroš I, around 1276, it was recorded as being the first, before the oldest Hilandar metoch in the region of Prizren. Kruševo, third on the list of donated villages in Stefan Nemanjić's charter, in the first decades of the 14th century became of the most important village and apparently the hub of the metoch, because of which it began to be called Kruševski.

The boundary of the metoch, defined at the request of Hegumen Gervasije and the monastery superiors in September 1327, also encompassed the Labičevo pasture, a contribution by King Milutin around 1303, where, like the pasture of Dobri Dol, the Vlachs of Hilandar put out the monastery's horses and mares to graze. King Milutin ordered that the Vlachs be relieved of all obligatory farm work, and their sole duty was to take care of the said horses and mares, which they had to replace if they lost them.

The significance of the donation of the Kninac Square is revealed in the rights Hilandar obtained: priority to sell goods at the square from the holdings that were in its direct ownership, to collect every income and especially a duty on wine sold at the square; also the right to place the market square, which could be moved, where the hegumen decided. The acts of King Milutin show that the Kninac Square at the end of the 13th century gained the status of a village, which then occupied the last position on the list of villages on the left bank of the Beli Drim river.

During the 14th century, demographic changes that primarily occurred due to wars, especially during the penetration of the Turks, resulted in changes in the status of certain villages. The transcript of the general chrysobull of Emperor Dušan in 1347/48, compiled in the middle or the third quarter of the 14th century, show the demographic situation of the

villages at the time when it was being made. Let us mention first of all that the metoch in Hvosno retained the first position among the Hilandar metochs in Serbia, then, that some of the former villages became hamlets, and that the village Trg Kninac, having gained in importance, occupied the third place among the villages of the Kruševo metochs.

With the Turkish conquests of the Serbian lands, Hilandar, like other monasteries on the Holy Mount, lost their metochs on those territories. After the fall of the Serbian Despotate in 1459, all the holdings of Hilandar and the other monasteries on the Holy Mount were confiscated and the income was abolished.

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Recent findings and dating for Byzantine metalwork in Mount Athos's monasteries

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The icon collection of the monastery of Dionysiou and painters' workshops on Mount Athos, 14th – 18th centuries

As is well known, the Monastery of Dionysiou on the Holy Mountain of Athos possesses a remarkable icon collection. Of the icons in this collection, prior to the high-profile and historic 'Treasures of Mount Athos' Exhibition held in Thessaloniki in 1997, it was mainly those of the Great Deesis painted by the Cretan painter Euphrosynos in 1542 that were known to research. In the catalogue of the aforementioned Exhibition several 17th-century icons were also published in addition to those by Euphrosynos. Since then various albums and cards showing some of the monastery's icons have been published by the monastery itself. In 2008 the present speaker presented some early 17th-century icons by the painter Daniel in his doctoral thesis. Two years later, in his book *On 'Cretan' painting on Mount Athos*, he examined a wide variety of icons from the icon-screens of Dionysiou Monastery. Despite all this, the majority of the icons in the monastery's storeroom and other parts of the monastery remain unpublished. A more recent study by the present speaker attempts to remedy this lack of information, and some of the findings of this study are presented in the present paper.

The icon collection at Dionysiou Monastery includes only five icons from the Palaeologan period. Another five may be dated to the second half of the 15th century. These icons are neither of common origin nor identical in style. At least one of them, which dates from around 1400, can be reasonably claimed to be the work of a Thessalonian workshop. In addition, two triptych fragments display a close connection with the work of Andreas and Nikolaos Ritzos and can therefore be attributed to a Cretan workshop.

On the other hand, a large group of 16th-century icons are the work of Athonite painters' workshops, and indeed of celebrated artists, such as Neophytos son of Theophanes, and Tzortzes, painter of the old refectory at Dionysiou. It should be pointed out that the work of these artists should not be confused with the work of the Cretan painters on the grounds of their stylistic correspondence. We are dealing here with the work of Athonite painters who adapted the 'Cretan' style to the aesthetic needs of the Athonite monks. The same applies to 17th-century art. During that century many individual painters were active, such as Daniel and Merkourios, who painted icons both for their own and other monasteries, both within and outside Mount Athos. It should be noted that many Athonite workshops exhibit an impressive output as their works are to be found not only in all the Athonite monasteries but in other places as well. We shall call the most important of these workshops the 'Workshop of Theophanes' Descendants' because its creations are characterised by the standardised and faithful application of the great painter's artistic precepts. In spite of all this, at Dionysiou Monastery there also survive works from the period of Venetian rule in Greece, such as those by Emmanuel Skordilis and Emmanuel Dekarchos, which were votive offerings.

The production of icons on Mount Athos saw a continuous increase from the mid-17th century up until the end of the 18th century. This was due to the increased demand after the fall of Chandax (Heraklion) and the fact that Mount Athos held a prominent position in

the minds of the subjugated Greeks. The Athonite workshops now worked for a very large number of patrons in a variety of locations ranging from Constantinople to Mount Sinai and Cyprus. A large number of icons from this period are preserved in the Monastery of Dionysiou. Although many of these works are unsigned, some of them may be attributed, on the basis of their artistic idiom, to celebrated Athonite painters, such as Damaskinos of Ioannina, Benjamin of Vizye and Nikephoros Karpenisiotis.

The study of the icon collection at Dionysiou Monastery, then, has revealed the extremely important finding that, from the mid-16th century onwards, Mount Athos was not only a centre for the production of icons (and wall-paintings) but also a place where all the great artistic currents of the post-Byzantine era mingled together, sometimes discordantly, and were refashioned, all in the melting pot of Athonite spirituality.

**Signed Georgian Gold Embroideries (17th century) of the Iviron's Monastery: their
Byzantine Influences and Differentiations**

Church gold embroideries are exceptional pieces of art with highly dogmatic - liturgical content. They may also be precious historical sources, especially when they include inscriptions, often associated to the donor (s), to the craftsmen, to the time and to the place of their rendering and offering.

The Georgian gold-embroidered sacerdotal vestments and veils of the Holy Monastery of Iviron (Greek: *Ἱερά Μονή Ἰβήρων*, Georgian: *ივერთა მონასტერი*), which was founded by Ioannes the Iberian and John Tornikios, a courtier of David the ruler of Iberia (Georgia) between 980-983 AD, are considered to be a characteristic example.

These precious art works, dated back to the 17th century, were donated to the monastery by the contemporary Georgian royal court and clergy. They are characterized by their vivid Byzantine influences on their liturgical content, the iconography and the embroidery technique. At the same time, the indisputable local features are also apparent on the choice of the iconographical themes and on the embroidery execution.

The most outstanding one is the superb epitaphios of Queen Mariam (wife of King Rostom [1632-1658] from 1634 to 1658), and of Bishop of Tiflis Elise (1628-1670), where the Lamentation, the Ascension and the Lamentation at the Tomb with the figure of Elise, standing next to the coat of arms of the Georgian royal house, are depicted. After her death, two epigonatia and a stole (end of 17th cent) were bequeathed to the famous icon of Virgin Portaitissa (9th cent). Consequently, Bishop Elise donated to the monastery some more embroideries: three aëres and three cross-shaped covers of the Holy Vessels; the two of them are dedicated to the memory of Queen Mariam. Also, a decorative veil, a magnificent tabernacle (ombrellino) of Virgin Portaitissa (1686), was offered by Ashotan, uncle of King George XI, and his son Chosrhoes. Finally, two more pieces, an aër (1613/14) and an epigonation (1699), were bequeathed by the lower clergy.

All these masterpieces constitute a remarkable artistic and written testimony of the flourishing Georgian church embroidery; of its vivid Byzantine influences and differentiations; of the Georgian's pure Orthodox faith and of their deep devotion towards the Holy Monastery of Iviron during the 17th century.

Ottoman textiles in Mount Athos from the 16th to the 17th century: Remnants of a social context.

Numerous examples of luxurious Ottoman textiles survive in Athonite sacristies, many of which are fine examples of 16th- and 17th-century weaving. My presentation proposes the discussion of the surviving silks and velvets as a secondary historical source, illuminating us on the role of ecclesiastical patronage in the weaving industry and the Church's position in the wider society. For this task I draw evidence from the objects themselves and textual sources directly relevant to Mount Athos.

First of all, I will refer to the established terminology used for Ottoman woven fabrics as testified in the monastic inventories, while giving a short introduction to the consumption of oriental silks during the Palaiologan period. Mount Athos has been particularly important for my research as many bequests, donations and gifts to the monasteries by the haute clergy were in textiles. In this way, a cultural element once characteristic of clerical costume survives today more in Mount Athos than anywhere else. Ottoman textiles with generically secular patterns can be interpreted as an expression of the lay role the Church took on during this period, in addition to the spiritual guidance of the Greek Orthodox flock. It is the choice of extroversion signaling the dual, spiritual and lay, character of the Church via the parallel use of Byzantine-tradition embroideries and mainly Ottoman woven fabrics. Moreover, I will refer to textiles as tools of the secular ceremonial, elements of which might have been adopted by the Athonite monks as well. Then, by referring to a letter issued by Patriarch Jeremiah the Tranos and addressed to the Vatopediou fathers I will concisely discuss textiles as a financial resource. Finally, my discussion will close with examples of Ottoman silks with Christian patterns from Mount Athos. Sometimes naïf, other times refined, this production can illuminate even more the social context while revealing another path Christian iconography followed when reproduced on vestments.

Essentially, the aim of this presentation is to draw our attention to a less unknown aspect of monastic material culture, in which the secular and the religious elements meet in a very interesting confluence.

Archimandrite Efraim Givisis-Espgymenite,

*Archimandrite of the Holy Metropolitan Church of Thessaloniki, Post-graduate student in the
Department of History-Archaeology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki*

The church of the Protaton and Antiquity: positions and gesticulations

Protaton and Antiquity; attitudes and gestures

In this introduction we will analyze the archaic origin of the gesture of the enthroned Christ at the framed icon (proskynetarion) on the right side of the Protaton's Templon and the gestures of the Prophets on the arches. We will also demonstrate the connection of the figure of Christ at the "Doubting Thomas" with well-known mosaics and marble reliefs, ivory and wooden works of Christian art and before Christian antiquity, especially with coins and mosaics of Thessaloniki.

We will classify the different gestures and interpret their use on occasion. The influences from the Imperial cult, the hagiographic repositioning of the Christian period, the evolution of the gesture through art and worship and their use from antiquity's time through the Byzantine period to the present day, will be highlighted.

The relationship of Christ with the gods of antiquity, the bearded and beardless depictions of Jesus and their connection with the gesture will be analyzed. We will see what effect the Imperial ceremonies had on the Gospel of John and how the gesture is used in the Revelation's texts and in Paul's theology concerning (through art) the First and the Second Coming of Christ on the earth.

Demosthenes A. Kaklamanos

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Byzantine Athonite Manuscripts of the Symeon the Metaphraste's Menologion

Undoubtedly, the most prominent figure in Byzantine Hagiology is the distinguished scholar and official of the Byzantine imperial court of the 10th century Symeon the Metaphrastes, who was the redactor of a Menologion consisting of 148 texts that came to be known as the Metaphrastic Menologion. In his work, that is presumed to have been completed after the mandate of the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, one can notice a conflation of the two main trends from the pre-metaphrastic period, that is the menologic collective trend along with the "translation" of the hagiological texts. Symeon's Menologion was broadly disseminated, as we can see from the significantly large number of manuscripts attesting its existence, while in the past it was claimed that the Monasteries' Scriptoria on Mount Athos played a decisive role to the Metaphrastic Menologion's formulation and further development.

In this presentation we aim to address the issue of the contribution made by the Athonite Scriptoria to the historical development of Symeon the Metaphrastes' Menologion as well as to its individual particularities formulation through a presentation of the Byzantine Hagiorite carriers of its tradition. At the same time we will present the findings of our broader research into the manuscript tradition of the above-mentioned Menologion which is carried out under our supervision at the newly founded Laboratory of Liturgical Studies of the School of Pastoral and Social Theology at the Aristotle University's Faculty of Theology in Thessaloniki.

Representation and documents of the Athonite monasteries in the context of relations in private law

The Decision 783/2000 of the Supreme Court of Greece (Arios Pagos) prompted a comment mainly on the notion of the monastery document, its legal validity etc. The complete lack of analysis, in terms of theory and case law, on the representation and, in general, administration of Mount Athos' monasteries, despite the fact that Mount Athos' law contains important provisions concerning them, has given cause to the development of a broader text.

As is generally known, the Mount Athos' legal provisions concerning, in the very least, self-governance, enjoy greater formal force and prevail over common law. This observation becomes all the more important once it is realised that the respective general regulation of the Greek Civil Code, in a lay mans words, loses ground in the face of these provisions.

This was even overlooked by the Supreme Court in its aforementioned decision. This study attempts to illustrate and highlight the critical legal provisions of Mount Athos' self-governance, precisely in the fields of administration and, particularly, representation.

Inter alia, it is worth pointing out the existence, under law, of conditions concerning the activities of the representatives of the monasteries, which are unknown or, at least, unusual for common legal persons. Whereas, on the other hand, the lack of any provision whatsoever concerning disclosure, for example of the internal regulations of the monasteries is a fundamental feature of the organisation of the legal persons of the Mount Athos monasteries. This non-disclosure generates unprecedented issues for the person interpreting and applying the law, which, however, must be overcome.

The study, following an extensive section whereby matters regarding the administration and, in particular, the representation of the monasteries' legal persons are being discussed, concludes with a shorter one dedicated to the monasteries' documents and their validity. In this last part, the - in my opinion -error in the Supreme Court's decision is examined in detail, an error which, notably, has thus far greatly affected the case law of the competent Courts, meaning those adjudicating on the substance of the case. An additional significant point arises, it being that full application of the requirements of Mount Athos' law would have sufficed for the Supreme Court to achieve the result it considered fair, without having to resort to unsupported theoretical constructions.

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University of the Aegean

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The language of the works of Agapios Landos and the formation of a "Pan-hellenic Koine"

The Athonite monk Agapios Landos is one of the most interesting personalities of the 17th century and one of the leaders of the spiritual effort of raising the subjugated Hellenism. His works, mostly of religious content, were written for educational purposes and/or entertainment. Landos composed them on Mount Athos, as suggested by internal testimonies, and then used to travel to Venice in order to get them printed.

At the linguistic level, the variety Landos uses has been considered by researchers (cf. Eideneier 1998) as illustrating the "hyper-local, hyper-dialectic narrative Koine" that is believed to have been formed in the written speech of the 16th and 17th centuries and which probably played a decisive role in the formation of the written Greek after the establishment of the Greek state (1830).

Three works of Agapios Landos, with different textual characteristics, will be studied in this paper, with the objective to identify the basic linguistic elements of his idiolect, as well as of the presumed "Koine", in the phonetic/phonological, morphological and syntactic level. These works are:

(a) The unpublished adaptation of the popular hagiological novel *Varlaam and Ioasaf*, preserved in the autograph (acephalous and truncated) code MIET 25 of the 17th century (Perez 2002).

(b) The *Kalokairini*, his extremely popular translation in the vernacular of a selection from saint's lives with celebration days in the summer (March 1st to the end of August), first published in Venice in 1656 (Paschalides & Kaklamanos 2014).

(c) The *Agricultural*, the only non-religious work of Landos, which apart from practical agricultural knowledge contains elements of practical medicine, and was first published in Venice in 1643 (Kostoula 1991).

For our research purposes, equivalent extracts of the three abovementioned Landos' works will be selected; if they are not published, they will be transcribed from the manuscript. All extracts will be digitalized and then processed by quantitative textual analysis techniques. In order to underpin the hyper-dialectic character of Landos' language, a comparative

examination of his language features with the language of texts produced by contemporary authors of him will be carried out. Such texts are among others the notary book of the Cretan priest Ioannis Katzaras (1607-1635, cf. Iliakis 2008), or the theatrical works written during the Cretan Renaissance (e.g. by Georgios Chortatsis, cf. Karantzola 2011), in which dialectic Cretan features are undisputably featured.

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Luxury and “humble” objects in the Athonite monasteries; the patrons and the historical context (10th- 16th c.)

The relation that was diachronically developed between the Athonite monasteries and persons with different position in secular or ecclesiastical hierarchy (emperors, aristocrats, patriarchs, bishops, rulers of other Christian countries, clergy, monks and laity) is obviously reflected on the objects commissioned as gifts by them.

All these objects made by materials more or less precious, strongly demonstrate the social status and the economic power of their patrons; simultaneously they offer a multilevel research field, concerning not only the documentation of the artistic trend and the workshops in which they were created, but mainly the identification of their patrons (in the case that the dedicatory inscription lack), the donation’s initiative incentive, the particular historical circumstance, but also the way of its acquisition by a monastery, as in some cases the patron and the donor of an object is not the same person.

In this paper, based to the thorough examination of selected minor objects dated from 10th to the 16th century and taking into account the written sources, I focus to the aforementioned issues. In other words I will try to propose a “typology” of donations, establishing the parameters related to the route of the artworks from the time of their order to their reception in a specific historical moment. It is noteworthy that any interpretation effort is more complicated regarding the objects without dedicatory inscriptions, especially when the donor’s mention comes from later written or oral patriographic tradition and not from other contemporary and therefore more reliable written source.

The monasteries of the Holy Mountain and the provincial society in Late Byzantium

This paper intends to conduct research on the relations of the Athonite monasteries with the local society, by analysing the whole spectrum of economic relations and the reasons for which the members of the local society chose to support a certain Athonite monastery. Local society in our case is understood as the areas outside the "theme" of Thessalonike, where Mount Athos was situated. Research is focused on the Late Byzantine period, when the largest monasteries of Mount Athos, along with some Constantinopolitan ones, were established as the most important monastic institutions of the empire, especially after the loss of Asia Minor and the great monastic communities of the Mts. Latros and Olympos.

The social structure of the Late empire was characterised by the existence of a higher aristocracy, based principally in Constantinople and Thessalonike and, secondarily, some of its members, in the provinces. The higher aristocracy possessed largely the most important offices and titles of the empire and had also concentrated different imperial privileges and large landed estates, often in different provinces. On the other side, the lesser provincial elite had to be satisfied with imperial donations of average or little amounts of land revenues (the pronoiai) and with less important offices of local interest, while their property was principally located in the same area.

The higher aristocracy of the empire traditionally supported the large monasteries of the empire or the monasteries that were somehow connected to the particular aristocratic family. On the contrary, the lesser elite used to support mainly local monasteries. This is particularly visible in the case of the Athonite monasteries and their relation to the area of the valley of Serres. The vast majority of the Athonite monasteries' possessions originated from donations made either from the imperial family or from members of the higher aristocracy with landed possessions in the area. The monastery of Lavra, for example, acquired from the local society only one known donation of a field of 200 modioi, made by two brothers, one of which was an official of the metropolis. Accordingly, the monastery of Vatopedi had only minimal gains from the local society.

The two powerful Slavic monasteries, Chilandar and Zographou, the first supported by the kings of Serbia and the second by the kings of Bulgaria may have acquired some more connections to the local society, yet, in this case too, it was not so much the local society, as much the rulers of Serbia and Bulgaria, who contributed to the welfare of these monasteries in this area. This support may have been connected to the desire of these rulers to expand territorially in Macedonia by supporting potential sponsors. For example, the Serbian hieromonk Kallinikos, an ambassador of king Milutin to Byzantium, acquired significant landed possessions in Thrace and in Serres (where he assumed some state functions as well) and promoted his circle through acquiring imperial privileges for them, such as for the soldier Garianos in 1319. Eventually, as much Garianos, that much the descendants of the protopapas Modenos, whose son-in-law was Garianos, donated parts of their property to the monastery of Chilandar, where Kallinikos himself became a monk.

This dichotomy in the support of the higher aristocracy to the large monasteries and of the lesser provincial aristocracy to the local ones reflects the displeasure of the local elite on account of the favourable treatment of the higher aristocracy by the imperial government and the increasing local feelings of separatism. The establishment of the Serbians in the area in the 1340s was partially facilitated by this displeasure.

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Gardens and trees in the Garden of Virgin Mary

Throughout the centuries, the creation of gardens was closely associated with the founding of Christian Monastic institutions in the East and West. Founders of the monasteries chose sites with fertile land, security, water supply. The gardens that surrounded the complexes, apart from producing crop and fruits, were aesthetically beautiful, mostly walled, with flowering plants and ornamental trees. Their reference to the Garden of Eden, the "paradise on earth" was evident. There the monks worked like a bee swarm, while the Abbot promoted their inner cultivation, as a "spiritual gardener".

The monastic peninsula of Mount Athos is often referred to as "the garden of Virgin Mary", not only due to its spiritual identity, but also because of the magnificent gardens of its numerous monasteries. Their cultural landscape, remaining unchanged for centuries, with gardens covering the same areas, is an indicative element of the institutions' historical identity common with the byzantine buildings they surround. This is unique if we consider that vegetation, the basic element of the gardens and its ephemeral nature, is in perpetual change, influenced by climatic and seasonal changes, social and historic events, financial and technological facts.

Today, apart from the architectural and cultural heritage of Mount Athos, its monastic community offers valuable lessons regarding a timeless ecological aspect on environmentally friendly managing natural resources. Contemporary concepts like viability and sustainable development and modern trends in the vein of "think globally, act locally" meet ecclesiastical tradition as well as an ascetic and eucharistic approach towards natural resources which is uninterruptedly practiced in the Virgin Mary's Garden.

Keys words: Garden design, Cultural landscape, Byzantine gardens, monastic gardens, sustainable development.

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Two unidited *homilies* of John Chrysostom: Critical Edition

Saint John Chrysostom was one of the major writers of *Homilies* in Byzantine Literature. The aim of this paper is to describe the critical edition of two unedited *Homilies* of Saint John Chrysostom, which appeared for the first time in bibliography in the mid-1950s. They were both pronounced in the church of the Holy Martyr Akakios (Acacius) in Constantinople during the first years of Chrysostom's tenure as Archbishop of Constantinople (ca. 398-400AD) and one of their common points is the power of the Holy Cross.

The entire texts of the two *Homilies* have only survived in one manuscript on Mount Athos. Evidence, some of which has been also detected by previous scholars, leaves no doubt about their authenticity.

The critical edition of the two *Homilies* will be preceded by an introduction in which palaeographical, editorial, linguistic and several other matters arising from the two texts will be discussed.

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Impressions of pilgrims and travelers from the «Visitors' Book» of the Holy Supervision of the Mount Athos from 1874 to 1912

Registering the name of the pilgrims/travelers of Mount Athos and leaving a brief comment on their impressions from their visit to the "Garden of Virgin Mary" on Books especially destined for this purpose is a common practice. It is certain that "Impression/Visitors Books" were held in every monastery and hermitage of Mount Athos. "Visitors Books" are known from at least 12 out of 20 Monasteries, while for the rest of them there are no clues – at least not until today. Unfortunately, none of the older Books of the period of early travelers (16th – 17th century) and of the main period of traveling in Mount Athos (18th – 19th century) has been preserved. The majority of these Books chronologically cover periods of the 20th century, while some of them cover the period of the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Prominent position among them holds the oldest relative Book that has been preserved, the "Visitors Book of the Holy Supervision of Mount Athos", covering almost an entire century, from 1874–1961. In the 489 pages of the large-dimensioned bound Book hundreds of registrations written in hand along with brief or extended remarks of Greek pilgrims and highly acclaimed foreign visitors/travelers of Mount Athos are included. This primary material offers the opportunity to outline the human geography of traveling to Mount Athos, which in the first phase of research is limited from 1874 to the liberation of 1912, which constitutes a turning point in its historical course.

Full registration of persons enhances the locating, besides already known from other sources, of numerous so far unknown visitors, both Orthodox Greek pilgrims and heathen foreign travelers of various nationalities and of different occupations, such as hierarchs and clerics, publishers, writers, scholars, members of Royal Houses, members of Diplomatic Authorities, military members, Professors in Universities etc.

The registrations are written, in addition to Greek, in all European languages but in Turkish as well. What is characteristic is the frequent registration of not only the name but also the comments of foreign visitors in the Greek language. Registrations have the form of a simple signature of the visitor, usually a brief text and rarely an extended text covering one page with impressions.

This research aims, apart from cataloguing the total of pilgrims and travelers and their biographical elements, to investigate their relation with Mount Athos in general, to comment on their impressions and their way of expression, and to search for any so far unknown texts related to Mount Athos.

The Visitors Book of the Holy Supervision of Mount Athos is a priceless primary source for the research of the phenomenon of traveling at the "Garden of Virgin Mary".

The Ottoman music manuscripts of Athos Holy Mountain

From the very first tries of cataloguing the manuscripts of the Athos Holy Mountain, especially the music ones, mainly with the catalogs of L. Efstratiadis and later of G. Stathis, a significant number of manuscripts came up. These manuscripts besides the Greek ones, belong to other nations such as Persian, Arabic, Tatar and others. A big number from those manuscripts are also Ottoman manuscripts.

Even shortly before the fall of Constantinople, Greek musicians got interested among other things with Ottoman music. Especially during Turkish domination, the production of music manuscripts was important for both Ottoman and ecclesiastical music, since the possibilities of the notation system of the Greek ecclesiastic music was used to record foreign nations' melodies. This is because, on the one hand, the common origin of both types of music (ecclesiastical and Ottoman) as well as their time and local coexistence, but also other factors contributed to their two-way interaction. A typical example and proof of the above is the first recording of non-ecclesiastic Greek-folk music by monks in 1562 (code 1189, Iviron monastery). The peculiarity of this recording, apart from its date, lies in the fact that it is accompanied by a peculiar kratema, which is not written in Greek but in Persian language. The codes of Athos Holy Mountain libraries surprise the researchers. The number of manuscripts containing recordings of Ottoman music is quite important so that their relative apportionment in time periods gives important information about both of the types of recording and the forms, as well as their composers and their relations with ecclesiastic musicians of their time.

In this paper will be presented examples of manuscripts with records of Ottoman music and their significance in the research of both Ottoman and Greek ecclesiastical music. A relevant musical and morphological analysis also will be presented.

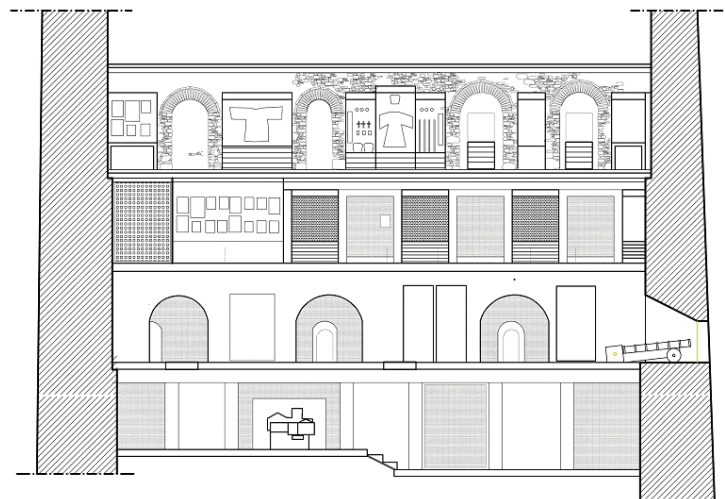
Stamatis Chondrogiannis

Architect

The sacristy of Monastery of Dionysiou at Mount Athos: from preserving and exhibiting the holy relics to highlighting the Monastery's architectural history.

The abundance and richness of the holy relics in the Monastery of Dionysiou, one of the most important monasteries in Mount Athos in that domain, led to the development of the sacristy on six different levels of the south wing, on a surface of 850m². From the very beginning, during the museological study it was clear that we were not only in the presence of a wealth of relics, but also of an important architectural heritage. Choosing the site, at the boundaries of two important construction phases of the Monastery, enabled us to directly highlight its building history. These areas include an old defensive rampart and the more recent location of the monastery's cannons facing the sea. The monastery's defensive history lay clearly before us.

The study had two goals: Collect as many of the monastery's relics in the same place; protect and bequeath them to future generations in ideal stable conditions; exhibit and highlight the monks' intellectual work and artifacts and highlight the monastery's history and the wealth of its buildings. These principles were followed in organizing the sacristy and creating the displays. The requirements and limitations in this planning were defined equally by the relics as well as by the space itself.



Along with the preservation program of the relics, a fixation and renovation program was also developed for the buildings of the monastery. Work in this wing was coordinated with the sacristy design.

The need to preserve the relics, apart from those intended to be exhibited, led to a complex type of display, with storage space in drawers, which could also function as an additional exhibition space.

Other solutions, such as the exhibition of architectural parts, transparent glass floors and trapdoors, the creation of a model and various copies, as well as visual aids, etc, offer

additional information on the interpretation of this space, along with highlighting its intellectual and artistic creations.



Evangelos Chrysos

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Removing Plato from Athos

It is not unknown, but has remained without any historical comment so far an episode from the personal correspondence of Manuel Palaiologos and Demetrios Kydonis. The episode dates back to the winter of 1382/3 and is referred to in letters no. 258, 276 and 259 of Dimitrios Kydonis, who is known for his interest in Plato, and the letters no. 3 and 4 of his pupil Manuel Palaiologos. These letters contain information about a manuscript with Plato's dialogues that was preserved on Mount Athos. Kydonis begged Manuel, who at that time was commander of Thessaloniki, to distract the manuscript from Mount Athos and send it to him in Constantinople. Despite the turbulent war situation in Macedonia with persistent local conflicts with Turkish troops, Manuel took care to locate the manuscript, detach it from the library where it was kept - unfortunately we are missing information from which library - and send it to Kydonis, quite damaged, because during its transfer it fell into the hands of pirates. A Platonic manuscript that was found in the remnants of Demetrios Kydonis after his death, the fate of which is being ignored, could possibly be the Athonite one.

Very indicative of the times and the climate in which the two scholars communicated and worth of further analysis are their sarcastic comments on the alleged ignorance and lack of interest of the monks for philosophy and especially for Plato, as well as the mode in which Dimitrios Kydonis suggested the removal *manu militari* of the manuscript from the place of its preservation. The letters reveal the scholarly interests of the two scholars, but also their arrogance and their disdain for the monks of Athos, and by extension towards the spirituality of Mount Athos in an age of growing due to the lively Hesychastic movement. Their reasoning in order to justify the extraction of the manuscript recalls the arguments that have been expressed for centuries before and after the Renaissance by Western scholars for transferring to their libraries the treasures of the Greek East.

POSTERS

Low incidence of prostate cancer among a special population group

The prostatic cancer is a common cause of death between elderly people and the pathogenesis is not still clear. Although the research is orientated to the predisposing factors of development of disease, we studied the total absence of prostatic cancer in a special group of population, the monks of Mount Athos.

The population on Athos live in specific conditions of life, diet and tradition, they are monks, which connect the attachment to the spirit of the Orthodoxy with the ritual of our church and the modus vivendi of the medieval years.

We visited Mount Athos eight times between 1998-08 and we studied the population of 17 Holy Monasteries and 27 Holy Cells populated by 1800 monks most of them being elderly (about 700). Repeated R.E., R.U/S and PSA tests in the period of 2 years in 646 individuals failed to revele any abnormality.

The interesting results of this study were analyzed and revealed that there is no evidence of prostatic cancer in this special group.

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European Research Programme BYZART: Byzantine Art and Archaeology on Europeana, Department of History and Archaeology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki / Glimpses into Mount Athos's past: digitization of photographs from the mid-20th century.

Glances at the past of Mount Athos: digitizing photos of the mid-20th century

The School of History and Archeology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki participates in the European project "Byzart: Byzantine Art and Archaeology", which aims to promoting and highlighting the Byzantine heritage⁴, through the digitization of 5.600 documents from the Photographic Archive of the *Chair of Byzantine Archeology and Art*. The *Byzart* project, through *Europeana Collections*⁵ will provide online access to 75.000 digital *objects of Cultural Heritage* on the Byzantine Art and Archeology accessible online.

Part of the digital archive consists of historical photographs of Mount Athos, with indicative and characteristic views of the Athonian peninsula (Monasteries of Vatopedi, Gregoriou, Dionysiou, Docheiariou, Iviron, Megisti Lavra, Xenophontos, Agiou Panteleimonos, Pantokratoros, Agiou Pavlou, Protaton, Simonos Petra, Stavronikita,

⁴ The project is funded by the European program *Innovation and Networks Executive Agency*: Department C – Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

⁵ Europeana collections: <https://www.europeana.eu/>

Chilandari etc.). The poster presents part of this material with exterior and interior views of the monasteries (aerial and terrestrial photos), and photographs of members of the Athonite community. Some of them are taken by well-known photographers of the mid-20th century (Christos Evelpidis, George Lykidis, Periklis Papahadzidakis). The digitized material includes also photographs from Stylianos Pelekanidis' visits to Mount Athos. As Ephor of Byzantine Antiquities of Macedonia and Thrace since 1943 and Professor of Byzantine Archeology at the School of History and Archeology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki since 1962/63, Pelekanidis developed a keen interest in promoting the cultural heritage of Mount Athos.

This material, an eloquent testimony to the earlier attempts by the Greek State to record the cultural resource of the Athos peninsula, is presented for the first time as a whole, highlighting aspects of the Athonite past.