

The monks of Hilandar – guardians of the Monastery's estates in Serbia

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The Serbian Monastery of Hilandar, thanks to generous donations, mainly by the Byzantine kings and Serbian rulers, and other worthy nobles both of the Kingdom and the Serbian medieval state, acquired large estates in Byzantium itself and in Serbia. The monks of Hilandar, in order to take care of their estates, organised them into *metochia*, which were managed by *oikonomoi*, monks that were sent out by the monastery. Occasionally owners of lands adjoining those of the *metochia* would try to usurp either part of an estate or the monastery's right on it (e.g. grazing rights). This phenomenon was exacerbated by the Serbo-Byzantine wars, when the relations between Mount Athos and Serbia were broken off, as happened in the last two decades of the 13th century.

The abbots of Hilandar, together with the monastery's most venerable representatives, appealed to the Byzantine king and the Serbian ruler, requesting the restoration of the monastery's rights. We shall present a review of the visits made by the abbot hieromonk Gervasius to King Stefan Uroš III in September 1327 and the hieromonk Dorotheos to the Assembly at Krupišta in May-July 1355 in order to reclaim the monastery's lost rights.

Slavic toponyms and microtoponyms in Athonite monastic documents

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The study of the Slavic toponyms and microtoponyms in Greece has been undertaken mainly by foreign researchers, and principally Max Vasmer, who published his study *Die Slaven in Griechenland* in Berlin in 1941. Since then, numerous other foreign researchers have concerned themselves with issues relating to Greece's Slavic past, placing particular emphasis on the abundance of Slavic names for settlements (before their names were changed, mainly during the second decade of the 20th century), mountains, lakes, rivers, and also microtoponyms. In May 2016, upon my recommendation, a team of Greek and foreign researchers from various disciplines (Angeliki Delikari, Georgios Tsotsos, Chariton Karanasios, Dimitris Dimitropoulos, Elisavet Chatziantoniou, Georgios Leveniotis, Andreas Goutzioukostas, Phokion Kotzageorgis, Christodoulos Christodoulou, Efthymios Asimakis,

Thanasis Kallianiotis, Kiril Pavlikianov, Lora Taseva, Peter Soustal, Mihailo Popović, Marcello Garzaniti, Srdjan Pirivatrić and others), together with various undergraduate and graduate students from the School of History and Archaeology, was set up in order to embark on a fresh study of the Slavic toponyms in Greece, including the systematic recording, etymologisation and comparative study of the material. References to Slavic toponyms and microtoponyms occur in Athonite monastic documents from as far back as the 11th century. These references are very important because they appear in dated documents; thus enabling the researcher to form a picture of the early history of Slavic toponyms in certain areas. Although the issue of Slavic name-changes is touched upon by Byzantine writers, there are relatively few relevant attestations in their works. Many of the students from the School of History and Archaeology attending the Seminar on Byzantine History (IBY603) entitled 'Byzantine-Slav Relations (10th-14th cent.)' (taught by Angeliki Delikari) are carrying out studies on the Slavic toponyms, microtoponyms and anthroponyms that appear in the Athonite documents, allowing them to delve into a study of the sources and deal with original material for their research. Thus, my proposal to offer this particular workshop will be carried out with the collaboration and participation of students attending the Seminar on Byzantine History (IBY603).

**Catalogues of Hagiological Manuscripts in the Libraries of Mount Athos:
Research Programme of the Centre for Byzantine Research, Aristotle
University of Thessaloniki**

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Since 2008 the Department of Byzantine Theology of the Centre for Byzantine Research at the Aristotle University has been running the research programme entitled 'Catalogues of Hagiological Manuscripts in the Libraries of Mount Athos'. The scientific director of the programme is the President of the Centre for Byzantine Research, Prof. Symeon Paschalidis, and the principal scientific associate is Dr of Theology Demosthenes Kaklamanos. This programme aims, through on-site visits to the libraries of the Athonite monasteries and thorough research of the microfilmed codices in the Department of Manuscripts at the Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies in Thessaloniki and the Library of Congress, to produce a detailed catalogue of all the hagiological codices, both Byzantine and post-Byzantine, and also to compile and publish scientific catalogues along the lines of the relevant catalogues of Byzantine hagiological manuscripts in the public and monastic libraries of

Europe, which have been published by the Bollandists and other scholars, mainly in the series *Subsidia Hagiographica* and the journal *Analecta Bollandiana*.

The objectives and the importance of this research programme, which will initially involve the compilation of catalogues of hagiological manuscripts for the libraries of the Pantokrator, Xenophontos and Xeropotamou monasteries, become clear if one considers the inadequate palaeographic descriptions of the majority of Athonite manuscripts in the two-volume catalogue by Spyridon Lambros and the non-inclusion in the existing published catalogues of a very large number of more recent manuscripts and, quite often, older manuscripts dating from the Byzantine era.

The first volume, which includes the hagiological codices of Pantokrator Monastery, is already in the press and due to be released next autumn.

The music manuscripts of the Monastery of Pantokrator

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The cataloguing of manuscripts, as is well known, provides direct benefits both for the scientific community and also for lovers of learning in general. In the science of Byzantine musicology the recording and presentation of the music manuscripts that lie in the Athonite libraries, where the majority and the most authentic of the music manuscripts are to be found, enables us to trace the over-one-thousand-year history of the Psaltic Art, as it is reflected in the codices, from musical, historical, notational, prosopographical and codicographical points of view.

In my paper I will try to present the results to date of the cataloguing project involving the music manuscripts at Pantokrator Monastery.

On the basis of the general records provided in the catalogues of Linos Politis and Sophronios Efstratiadou, plus a number of additional manuscripts from some of the monastery's *kellia*, the total number of music manuscripts was until recently 68. Together with a number of uncatalogued manuscripts that are held in the monastery, that total has now risen to over 75.

The manuscripts date from the 14th up until the early 20th century. They contain original and, in some cases, unique compositions, principally of an Athonite character, such as those by Anastasios Rapsaniotis, Theophanes Pantokratorinos, Matthaïos Vatopedinos and many other composers. The codices include a variety of very interesting documents, such as a small number of theoretical treatises and a number of documents explaining the notational systems of the Psaltic Art.

In addition, the case of David Raidestinos, a monk of Pantokrator Monastery, and his autograph codex, the 14th-century Papadike (cod. 214), and its contents, the transcription of folk songs in other codices, the mention of historical information about the composers, the various unique epigrams and initials that adorn the music codices and many other kinds of information can all be gathered together to provide answers to various issues concerning the science of Byzantine musicology, amongst other things.

Some of the codices were produced by the monastery's notable scriptorium. There are also a number of codices written in the Romanian language. They may have been brought to the monastery from some of the *metochia* that the monastery once owned in Moldavia and Wallachia.

The study of the aforementioned data and many other kinds of information as well helps us to create a proper record and picture of the Psaltic Art, as it has been preserved and developed over the course of so many centuries, both on Mount Athos and in the Balkan region as a whole.

Copying and binding activity in the Holy Monastery of Dionysiou during the 17th century

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At the 1st International Scientific Workshop organised by the Mount Athos Center, I will be presenting a study of the copying and binding activity at the Holy Monastery of Dionysiou during the 17th century. My paper will be based on the new findings that have emerged from my latest research, mainly on Ignatios of Chios and Kyriakos of Belarus, findings that have not yet been presented to the scientific community. The paper forms part of the broader scheme, which has been underway since 1995, to compile a new catalogue for the manuscripts of Dionysiou Monastery and to study their contents and history.

This scheme, which has received the blessing and encouragement of the monastery's abbot, Archimandrite Peter, is based both on codex copies located outside the monastery and also codices written within it, and was presented for the first time at the 5th International Congress of Palaeography at Cremona in 1998. The starting-point of the paper I propose to present at the 1st International Scientific Workshop is a study of the copying and binding activity that took place at the monastery between the 15th-16th centuries and the 20th century. This twofold activity – copying and binding – attained a remarkably high level of growth, as I have pointed out to the international scientific community, in the 17th century, which is why I have selected this subject. This fact is of particular importance to Mount Athos and Athonite monasticism, and also to spiritual life in the Balkans as a whole during this period. The learned hieromonk

Ignatios of Chios played a prominent role in this process by making an outstanding contribution to the copying and conservation of the monastery's codices, which he would rebind whenever he thought necessary. At the 6th International Congress of Palaeography (Drama 2003) I presented the different aspects of his multifaceted work, and also studied the types of binding that he used. A little later, I clarified the role he played in circulating the books he bound within the Athonite state at large, and compared the types of binding that he used with the types of binding used in the Balkans during the post-Byzantine era (7th International Congress of Palaeography, Madrid-Salamanca, 2008). Ignatios' numerous handwritten notes in the monastery's codices, as well as his revision of the liturgical honour paid to St. Nephon, the saint honoured by Dionysiou Monastery (examined in my contribution to the commemorative volume published on Mount Athos in 2008, on the five hundredth anniversary of the saint's death) represent two basic aspects of his as yet unknown activities, which I have studied. A prominent role was also played by the learned monk Kyriakos of Belarus, whose considerable manuscript-copying activity I have also studied, together with that of other learned copyists at the monastery. For these reasons, the activities of Ignatios and Kyriakos are studied in two monographs. It was natural and to be expected that this mass of data would yield a certain amount of additional information and findings, and it is precisely these which are set out in the proposed paper.

Survey of the seismic capacity of the Byzantine towers on Mount Athos

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The present work examines the seismic capacity of the towered structures on Mount Athos. An important fact is the geotectonic position of the peninsula, which affects the seismicity of the region. The peninsula is approximately 45 km long and occupies an area of 332.5 sq. km. In terms of its edaphology, the peninsula presents an irregular picture, consisting as it does of a number of hill-ranges that begin at Megali Vigla and, heading in parallel directions towards the southern end of the peninsula, terminate on Mt. Athos, with a peak height of 2,035 m. The monasteries of Athos lie near the south-eastern end of the Athos peninsula, where two seismic zones meet: the Serbo-Macedonian Geological Belt and the seismic zone that follows the Northern Aegean Trench. In this area only superficial earthquakes occur, with focal depths that do not exceed 60 km.

At first a survey was conducted of the history of the tall towered structures, with a special emphasis being placed on their date of construction, as well as the dates on which any subsequent interventions were carried out. Then relevant architectural data were collected concerning the height of each tower, its surface area, and the thickness of the walls, while calculations were made of the number of openings per surface and the ratio between them.

Later a study was made of a representative sample of the towered structures on Athos. Dynamic analyses were carried out on this sample, using both the marginal analysis method with the aid of a mechanical model and time-history analysis, using the finite element method in the Abaqus-Dassault programme. Then the damage thresholds were determined for five damage levels. To be specific, the following damage levels (D.L.) were considered: i) D.L.0 = no damage; ii) D.L.1 = slight damage; iii) D.L. 2 = limited damage; iv) D.L. 3 = extensive damage, and v) D.L.4 = collapse. These levels, which were determined by using qualitative characteristics of the structural responses, were quantified by applying certain criteria to the structures' resistance curves. The first damage level (D.L.0) is defined as that point at which the structure presents no damage and therefore coincides with the end-point of the elastic response. Also, the final damage level (D.L.4) is defined as that point at which the structure would collapse and is therefore equivalent to the structure's maximum movement capacity. The intermediate damage levels were determined in relation to the previous two.

Survey in the Katholikon of the Holy Monastery of the Great Lavra

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In the case of the katholikon of the Great Lavra Monastery, adequate historical documentation exists for the date of its original construction and its founder, St. Athanasios, data which do not exist for other Middle Byzantine katholika on Mount Athos. However, so far there has been no full and comprehensive monograph studying all the aspects of the monument's history and forming an assessment of its various construction phases. We believe that this gap will be partly filled by the forthcoming publication of a volume on the church's construction history, whose conclusions we shall present here. In any case, only the study and publication of the mural decoration can complete our knowledge of this monument.

For about the last ten years a survey of the katholikon of the Great Lavra has been in progress, a survey that began with the drawing of detailed topographical and architectural plans. This was followed by an exhaustive study of the sources, both ancient and modern. After the abundance of references in 10th- and 11th-century texts, the katholikon is subsequently mentioned only from the 18th century onwards. Great emphasis was naturally placed on the depictions of the katholikon in different historical periods, such as that in the 1535 painting by Theophanes and that in the well-known sketch and descriptions by Barsky, executed in

1747. Information has also been drawn from the pilgrim's guidebooks which began to appear in the 18th century. An important contribution has been made by Mrs Vasiliki Sythiakaki-Kritsimalli, who made a systematic study of the monument's sculptural decoration and in fact wrote the relevant appendix. Finally, in 2012-2013, taking advantage of the opportunity presented by the replacement of the lead sheets on the roof, research was carried out that helped to clarify certain aspects of the monument's history.

According to earlier researchers, construction of the katholikon at the Great Lavra began in 963 and was soon completed, perhaps even before the end of the 10th century. Originally it took the form of a peculiar triconch church with choirs and side-chapels. It possessed a narrow two-storey narthex and a five-bay portico. The upper storey of the narthex had been constructed as a residence for St. Athanasios, and consisted of three bays with two domed areas flanking an elevated central space. After St. Athanasios, there is no mention of anyone else living on the upper storey of the narthex, which possessed a window looking into the naos. The Chapel of the Forty Martyrs to the north appears to be completely contemporary with the church, while the Chapel of St. Nicholas to the south was added soon after.

The katholikon complex remained in good condition until the 16th century, when it appears to have been repeatedly damaged by earthquakes, as a result of which the dome was replaced twice, the large windows were bricked in and the templon and part of the sculptural decoration were removed. Later, in the 17th century, many of these sculpted members were incorporated into the canopy of the phiale, the basin of which had been in place since the 10th century.

Finally, a number of significant interventions were carried out in the katholikon in 1814, when the two-storey narthex, the portico and the narthexes of the chapels were removed and a magnificent domed cross-in-square lite was constructed, which lent a sense of grandeur and spaciousness to the building, although it destroyed valuable information about the monument's history.

These buildings are characterised by the repeated changes and dynamic adaptations they have undergone, and for this reason can never be regarded as being fully completed.

Founding activity and donations of art works to Mount Athos (10th – 16th cent.): the picture presented by the inscriptions

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Most of the extant inscriptions in the buildings and on the artworks of Mount Athos attest to the founding and donative activity of a variety of figures from the 10th century onwards. The published material, known mainly from the fundamental corpus assembled by Millet, Pargoire and Petit (1904), as well as other more recent studies, constitutes a basic tool for studying

the dynamics and fluctuations of this phenomenon during the Byzantine era, and particularly the period after the Fall, from which most of the examples come.

This already-known material has now been supplemented by a number of unpublished inscriptions that I have identified in a variety of different monasteries. Of these, those dating from the Byzantine era are few in number, while the majority date from the period after the Fall. Their importance is obvious as they add new names to the list of Athonite founders and donors, some of them unknown figures and others known from other sources.

In my paper, basing my presentation on a number of published and unpublished inscriptions in buildings and on artworks (both monumental and portable) dating from the period between the late 10th and late 16th centuries, I will outline various aspects of the founding and donative practices on Athos during this period, the protagonists of which were a miscellany of figures of varying origins, social and educational backgrounds, financial status and rank in the secular or church hierarchies. I will comment on some of the basic characteristics of the inscriptions, such as the level of information they provide and their structure and language, and I will point out the factors that to a certain extent determined the choice of language, in relation to the founder's origins. In this case, historical conjunctures and the particular circumstances prevailing in each monastery in particular periods, play a decisive role. Finally, taking into account the information provided by the written sources and the archaeological data, a number of proposals will be made regarding the identification of the founders mentioned in certain inscriptions with certain historical figures and, in addition, various thoughts will be expressed about the provenance of inscriptions that have not been preserved in situ.

Ceramics from Iznik (Nicaea) in the Monasteries of Mount Athos (16th – 17th cent.)

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The present study focuses on the location, recording and publication of ceramic works from the workshops of 16th- and 17th-century Ottoman Nicaea (Iznik) that are to be found in the monasteries of Mount Athos. All of these works are unknown.

They consist of utilitarian and decorative plates, tiles for mural decoration, jugs and other smaller vessels. These ceramics are of white clay, upon which have been painted in vibrant colours (blue, turquoise, green, black, mauve, red and grey) a variety of geometric and vegetal designs, animals, ships, buildings etc., all combined to produce a perfect artistic and aesthetic result.

The ceramics produced by the workshops of Iznik once adorned the rooms of palaces and mosques, and when they were first produced they were expensive and highly sought-after. Most of those that are to be found on Athos today belong to the most illustrious period of production, that of the mid-16th century. This period coincided with the heyday of the Ottoman Empire, during the reign of Sultan Suleiman I the Magnificent (or Lawgiver).

In terms of the number of tiles and plates it possesses, as well as the variety of themes depicted on them (flowers, decorative motifs, ships, inscribed plates), Mount Athos is a unique case in Greece. These ceramics, which are alien to the traditional forms of church decoration, adorned numerous Athonite katholika and other devotional and non-devotional buildings, and this was exclusively due to their exceptional quality and aesthetic splendour.

One of the aims of the study is to find out how these expensive Iznik ceramics got to Mount Athos. In some cases the answer is easy because of the evidence of the sources. We know, for example, that, after his resignation, the Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysios III Vardalis (1663-1665) resided at the Athonite Monastery of the Great Lavra, whose buildings he adorned with Iznik ceramics.

Our study concerns the recording and publication of this original material, which so far, despite its huge importance, has remained unknown to research.

Embroidery on Mount Athos. Iosif Philotheitis: the unknown works of a later, 20th-century Athonite gold embroiderer

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Byzantine and post-Byzantine ecclesiastical embroidery was neither narrative nor abstract in character, but of a spiritual and symbolic nature. Samples of liturgical cloths are hoarded in the sacristies of Mount Athos. No systematic study has been conducted on them, in terms of their physicochemical analysis and recording the state of preservation of the materials from which they are made.

Many earlier and contemporary researchers, such as Millet (1927), Sotiriou (1949), Chatzimichali (1952), Johnstone (1967), Theochari (1986) and Muthesius (1995), have, in

the course of recording the ecclesiastical embroideries, wondered whether embroidery or weaving workshops ever existed on Mount Athos. Apart from the surviving works, the next reliable source of information is the records of such works or references to them in manuscripts, lists of monastic documents or tailors' books that have been preserved in the monasteries. In certain monasteries, such as Simonopetra and Stavroniketa, records exist of the quantity and quality of the materials used and the places where they were purchased. Another example of such records is the document recording the sacred objects held at Vatopedi Monastery (27 May, 9th indiction, 7104 [the year 1596]), in which there are records of cloths and vestments obtained by purchase or donation, containing such terms as *mavrochrysokladárikí*, *taftás*, *éterá kamouchenia*, etc. In spite of all this, there are no references to the manufacture of cloths or embroideries.

A complete record of all the documents in the Athonite monasteries and the discovery of embroidered signatures or dedicatory inscriptions on the works, indicating the craftsman/craftswoman or the workshop, could answer the question regarding the foundation of Athonite embroidery workshops for the production of liturgical and decorative cloths or vestments.

Outside Mount Athos, following the capture by the Ottomans of Constantinople and the other large centres of Byzantine power and culture, such as Thessaloniki, Mystras and Trebizond, orders for the manufacture of sumptuous cloths and vestments for the clergy ceased. Nevertheless, later Constantinopolitan workshops were founded with celebrated embroideresses such as Despoineta Argyri (1682-1723), Euphrosyne, Alexandra and Agathe (pupils of Despoineta), Mariora (1723-1758), Eusebia (1723-1735), Tzaoria (1733) and others. There also appeared the Athonite hierodeacon Hristofor Žefarović or Zefar, who was a well-known embroiderer, painter and copperplate engraver, who produced works both in Greece and abroad.

During the 19th and 20th centuries liturgical and decorative cloths and vestments were manufactured mainly by sisterhoods to cover the needs of the clergy, yet during this time no work was manufactured on Mount Athos.

A self-taught Athonite embroiderer who followed the Byzantine and post-Byzantine models of the great Constantinopolitan embroideresses, a man known for the quality of his work (although this remains unknown to many researchers of Mount Athos), was the hieromonk Iosif Philotheitis, who lived in the *Kelli* of the Panagouda (Nativity of the Theotokos) of Philotheou Monastery, where he died in 2013. He was one of the contemporary embroiderers on Mount Athos, whose only monastic duty was to manufacture liturgical cloths. His most important works are in the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul and in the sacristies of Vatopedi, Iveron, Dionysiou and Philotheou monasteries, as well as the Monastery of St. Dionysios on Mt. Olympus, works which rival those of important embroidery workshops and which will be presented in this study.

Finally, in our attempt to record the important embroidered and woven cloths and vestments of the Orthodox Church on Mount Athos, it is our ardent desire to create a coordinated team responsible for compiling a general record, firstly of the eponymous cloths that bear

signatures and then of the most important cloths and vestments that are to be found on Mount Athos.

Biological control of chestnut blight: a project that saved the chestnut trees of Mount Athos

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Chestnut blight, which is caused by the fungus *Cryphonectria parasitica*, is the most destructive disease afflicting chestnut trees both in Greece and the world as a whole. The disease was first reported on Mount Athos in 1988, and subsequently spread very rapidly, probably because of the intensive management of chestnut forests for the production of timber. Biological treatment is the only effective way of combating the disease and is based on the use of hypovirulent strains of the fungus. The hypovirulence is caused when the fungus is attacked by double-stranded RNA viruses of the *Hypovirus* genus. The pathogenic, virulent strains of the fungus become hypopathogenic when they come into contact, provided that they are all of the same vegetative compatibility. A project involving the artificial introduction of hypovirulent strains of the fungus *C. parasitica* was implemented in an area of 7,000 hectares of chestnut forest on Mount Athos during the period 1998-2000, in which approximately 100 trees per hectare were inoculated with a suitable fungal paste prepared at the Institute of Forestry Research.

Two extensive assessments of the project, which aimed to control the establishment and spread of the pathogenic strains, were carried out in 2008 and 2012. The results showed that the hypovirulence had reached levels of between 25.0 and 73.3% and 20.0 and 54.5% in the assessments made in 2008 and 2012, respectively. The project had a successful outcome in that it succeeded both in establishing the hypopathogenic strains of the fungus and their spread from the inoculated trees to the other diseased trees. Although the levels of hypovirulence are lower in the second assessment, they nevertheless reveal that the *Hypovirus* viruses are continuing to reduce the population of the pathogenic fungus. Young

coppice shoots in recently logged Forest Service areas are probably infected with pathogenic strains, though these soon turn into hypopathogenic ones. The most encouraging and important thing is that there is no longer any evidence of new dead trees. The chestnut coppices on Mount Athos can now be managed according to the traditional long-standing method.

The archive of the Monastery of Zographou as a focal point for the Orthodox community and a place to encounter Slavic and Byzantine literature and tradition

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The Monastery of Zographou possesses a rich archive containing hundreds of manuscripts and thousands of documents. These date from the 11th century up until the modern era, with varying concentrations for different historical periods, but an unbroken continuity overall. A striking feature is the linguistic and thematic variety of the archive's contents: documents, manuscripts, registers, incunabula with annotations etc., which show that the monastery was one of the most important spiritual centres in the Balkans and in the Orthodox world as a whole.

Part of the archive is already known to the scientific community as, since the late 19th century, researchers have shown a particular interest in the monastery's manuscripts and medieval documents. Even so, a large part of the archive remains unknown or at least only partially known. In recent years the monastery's brotherhood has launched, and is already implementing, a broad scheme to reorganise, conserve and promote the whole archive. This scheme stands out for the scientific accuracy of the work undertaken and has attracted specialised researchers, who are collaborating in a unified framework.

This paper aims to present a general picture of the present state, contents, subject-matter and size of the archive, as well as the work which is in progress and the prospects it has opened up. Special emphasis is placed on the creative co-existence of the Slavic and Byzantine literatures and traditions, which form the core of Zographou Monastery's spiritual tradition.

Time, Space and Ideas – One Possible Encounter at the Zographou Digital Library at Sofia University

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The Digital Library of Zographou Monastery at the University of Sofia was officially inaugurated in 2014. Its creation, however, had begun seven years earlier at the initiative of the brotherhood at Zographou Monastery, which generously prepared the way for the digitisation of the rich collection of Slavonic manuscripts that are held in the monastery library. The catalogue of the Digital Library is constantly being enriched with details of Slavonic manuscripts held in other collections as well, such as those at the 'Ivan Dujchev' Research Centre, the National History Museum of Bulgaria, the History Museum in the city of Kjustendil, etc. Recently, research was begun on the medieval Greek, Slavonic, Moldavian and Ottoman documents, and when this research is completed and published, these documents will be included in the catalogue, which is at the disposal of the scientific community. The Digital Library of Zographou Monastery at the University of Sofia is a unique example of the excellent and fruitful collaboration between the monastic and scientific communities, with a common goal of investigating the past.

The next step in the development of the Digital Library of Zographou Monastery has already been set in motion and involves the implementation of scientific projects and programmes designed to investigate important aspects of the history of Christianity in the Balkans, and particularly of the Athonite monastic state. The first project to be completed successfully was the publication of the *Slavo-Bulgarian History* written by the hieromonk Paisios in 1762. Other projects that are underway and are expected to be published concern Ottoman documents, Moldavian and Moldowallachian documents, the earliest known archival codex in Bulgarian from the mid-18th century, and the new catalogue of Slavic manuscripts.

Zographou Monastery's vision to preserve and develop its written heritage has already led to the establishment of the Digital Library at the University of Sofia and has initiated fruitful research into the monastery's archives. A better knowledge of history presupposes a deeper understanding of the processes of communication and cultural exchange between the different communities in the Balkans over the course of time. Inspired by the idea of preserving the precious historical relics of Zographou Monastery, the Digital Library has opened up exciting prospects and provided a unique opportunity for the study of important aspects of the cultural heritage of the Balkans.

The Collection of Ottoman Documents in the Digital Archive of the Holy Monastery of Zographou

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The Holy Monastery of Zographou on Mount Athos possesses an old, rich archive that spans a period of over a thousand years and unites in one organic unity different kinds of documents that have been conscientiously preserved by the brotherhood through the centuries. This priceless spiritual, cultural and historical treasure has tremendous potential. An international research team has gradually been put together under the monastery's supervision and under the guidance of Father Athanasios, the monastery's librarian. After the digitisation of a critical mass of archival material, the research team assembled for the purpose has agreed to pursue a common strategy in the cataloguing, study and publication of the monastery's rich digitised archival heritage, which consists of Slavic, Byzantine, post-Byzantine, Moldowallachian and Ottoman documents.

The present paper aims to inform the scientific public about the work of the Bulgarian and Greek research team, which is working on the digital copies of Ottoman documents from the Zographou archive. Numbering over 600, and including specimens that date back as far as the mid-15th century, the Ottoman documents constitute a completely unexploited archival collection, which shows tremendous potential for development. The presentation will focus on the research strategies and scientific methods that have been chosen by the research team to arrange, catalogue and classify this wealth of archival material in a specific digital form (format). It will also provide a detailed overview of the methodology that will be applied in the publication of these sources, which will take the form of a multi-volume work, the first volume of which is due to be published by the end of 2017.

'Before Conservation': The complete renovation of the library of the Holy Monastery of Zographou: analysis and presentation of preventive conservation applications

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In December 2009 the Holy Monastery of Zographou began to implement an extensive programme of preventive conservation on the whole of its archive, including the manuscripts, incunabula and more recent printed materials.

The areas formerly used for housing all these objects were judged to be totally unsuitable and for this reason the need to find new storage areas became imperative.

The main aim of the whole venture was, and still is, to find, create and develop bioclimatic areas and solutions that require no or minimal energy consumption, given the Monastery's financial inability to support conventional air conditioning systems to maintain stable climatic conditions.

The present paper presents and analyses, in chronological order, the methodology, stages and individual aspects of the preventive conservation work that has and is due to be implemented. More particularly, the paper focuses on the process of selecting suitable spaces to house the libraries, the renovation of these areas, the pest control programme, the cleaning and numbering of the objects to prepare them for their installation in the new storage areas, and the design of the new metal and wooden bookcases and their distribution in the new premises.

Finally, reference is made both to the work that is already in progress and that which is due to be carried out before the actual conservation programme begins, thereby providing the general public and anyone interested in the subject with a comprehensive picture of how the library has been approached and managed in accordance with the monastery's specific conditions and requirements.