

Sinaiticus

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The Bulletin of the Saint Catherine Foundation
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PHASE ONE BUILDING WORK NEARS COMPLETION



In a fitting prelude to the foundation's 20th anniversary celebrations, the first phase of the construction project at Sinai is nearly complete. Work has centred on the east side of the monastery's iconic 1930s to 50s building, the South Range. Long known to the foundation as the South Wing, the building has a new, more accurate, name and a new lease of life, as the expanded library on the second floor takes shape. 'Every day, things are changing dramatically', says Father Justin, Sinai's librarian and the project's chief documenter. The photograph pictured here shows just how much has been achieved in recent months.

Dimitris Dondos, Chairman of the London Board of Trustees, has overseen the project from the beginning. While the Phase One construction cost has come in below budget, he reports that the foundation's reserves will be exhausted soon. New funds must be raised as the foundation's attention shifts to the Boxing Project and Phase Two construction of the conservation workshop, digitization studio and modern books library.

TWENTY YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT

2016 South Range Project – Phase One **2008 East Wing Cells Project •**
Codex Sinaiticus Project **2007 Condition Assessment Survey –**
Early Printed Books • Water Wells Project **2006 Condition Assessment**
Survey – Manuscript Collection **2005 Archbishop Porphyrios III**
Library Disinfestation Project **2004 Kitchen Project • Conservation –**
Old Refectory • Cell 31a Project **2001 Achtenames Project**
1999 Water Storage and Pumping System Project

The London foundation was launched in June 1996, followed a year later by the American Associates. The Swiss association was set up two years after that, in 1999. The charities rely on the support of individual donors, the old and new friends and benefactors who have financed the work in Sinai for two decades now.

To date, some €6 million (£5 million, \$6 million) has been spent on projects in Sinai. Nearly half that amount was for Phase One building work, and the remainder for conservation and related projects, as listed in the box on page 1.

SECURITY CONCERNS CONTINUE TO IMPACT SINAI

Travel advisories remain in force for South Sinai, and visitor numbers remain depressed since the downing of the Russian MetroJet flight from Sharm El Sheikh and the crash of the Paris-Cairo EgyptAir flight. Outbreaks of violence in North Sinai continue, but these are fewer now that the tunnels into Gaza have been closed and the leader of Wilayat Sinai ('Province of Sinai'), the local Islamic State affiliate, has been killed.

As always, the army maintains a strong presence in Sinai through the inevitable check points and armed patrols. There is a particular emphasis on the monastery and its security, especially in the last several years.

The Bedouin of Wadi Feiran cultivate opium and marijuana as cash crops in an area with limited options for income. This leads to sporadic violence. Nevertheless, the Fathers find reasons for hope.

Pilgrims from Jerusalem visited the monastery in August 2016. Scheduled flights between Istanbul and Sharm El Sheikh resumed one month later. Most important of all, the people working on the renovation of the library have continued to travel to the monastery in spite of security fears.

SUPPORTING THE BEDOUIN

The foundation continues to support the Bedouin community. So great was the response to the 2015 Christmas appeal that no new funds were needed in 2016. Some £37,000 (\$46,000) remain, enough for distribution for a further 18 months.

The monastery continues to be the conduit for the aid. Until a few months ago, Father Daniel handed out food, medicine and cash as needed. After 25 years at the monastery, he speaks fluent Arabic and knows many of the Bedouin personally. In his role as *oikonomos*, or steward of the monastery, he has taken food and clothing to very remote Bedouin settlements, helping not only the Gebeliya Bedouin, but all the Bedouin of the wider area. These duties have now devolved to Father Symeon.

The monastery has given one Bedouin student some \$230 (£180) for university fees for one year. Three Bedouin taking university degrees in Cairo live at the monastery's dependency there. They each receive \$70 (£55) per month for expenses.

The financial crisis has had a particularly negative effect on sick Bedouin. Ahmed, a Gebeliya in his late 60s, suffers from a congenital form of paralysis. Well known to the Fathers, he lives in Tarfa, just half an hour from the monastery. Initially his legs were affected, then his arms. Now he can only move his head and eyes. With the foundation's help, the monastery was able to cover Ahmed's recent medical expenses and pay for a wheelchair. Small amounts go a long way in Sinai. This vital aid for Ahmed totalled \$75 (about £60).

Wagi, a Gebeliya Bedouin employed at a hotel in Saint Katherine Village, had a stroke a few months ago, with extensive bleeding in his head. Just 37 and the father of two young daughters, he needed help with his hospital costs. Again, thanks to the foundation, the monastery was able to meet his expenses, two weeks of hospital care in Sharm El Sheikh (\$926, £730) and six weeks in Cairo (\$1,637, £1,290).

A SPECIAL DELEGATION FROM AL-AZHAR VISITS SAINT CATHERINE'S MONASTERY

On 30 June 2015 a special delegation from Al-Azhar University visited Saint Catherine's Monastery. Al-Azhar University was founded in the year 972 for the study of the Qur'an and Islamic law. Today, thousands of teaching institutes in Egypt and throughout the world are affiliated with Al-Azhar, which has been called Sunni Islam's oldest and most prestigious university.

The President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, has called upon Mohamed Ahmed el-Tayeb, the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, to foster the principles of a moderate Islam in an effort to counter extremism in today's world. The faculty of the university have responded positively to this initiative. Referring to recent acts of terrorism, Dr Abbas Al-Shouman, the Under-secretary for Al-Azhar, has said, 'It is the duty of every Egyptian to stand against terrorism and it is the duty of every [Muslim] believer to condemn such acts and condemn those responsible for them, or at the very least not express support for them. All Egyptians must show national unity, which is a slap in the face of terrorism and which strengthens national stability. Al-Azhar, for its part, finds such events totally unacceptable.'

In a direct response to this initiative, a conference was held at Saint Katherine Village from 28 June to 1 July 2015. The conference was directed by seven of the leading imams of Al-Azhar, accompanied by three laymen who are the personal assistants to the Grand Imam for public relations.

This site was chosen because of the activities of Islamic militants that have been taking place in North Sinai. It also provided an opportunity to express respect and support for the community of Saint Catherine's Monastery.

The imams from Al-Azhar spoke about the Muslim policy of tolerance and care for the Biblical peoples. Examples to the contrary in the history of Islam must be seen as exceptions that are not to be taken as authoritative.

All peoples must work together in unity as we seek to transcend divisive issues and move forward for the good of the country.

On Tuesday the delegates of Al-Azhar visited Saint Catherine's Monastery, accompanied by the mayor of Saint Katherine Village. They were shown the church, the adjacent sacristy (where important icons, manuscripts and other treasures are on display), after which they visited the mosque located within the monastery, the Chapel of the Burning Bush and the Burning Bush growing outside the chapel. The monks of Saint Catherine's Monastery presented the delegates with facsimile editions of *The History of Sinai and the Arabs*, by Naum Shoucair Bey, first published in 1916, and still the best history of the area in Arabic. They were also given reproductions of David Roberts' famous lithograph of Saint Catherine's Monastery and bottles of olive oil from the monastery's own trees.

The visit was an important opportunity for the monks of Saint Catherine's to point out that the monastery has existed for over 1,400 years as a respected Christian institution within the larger world of Islam. The monastery is an intrinsic part of Egypt's long and multi-faceted history.

The delegation from Al-Azhar was glad to learn more about the heritage of the monastery, located at the base of Mount Sinai, revered by Christians and Muslims alike. Religious devotion does not exclude respect for others. The peaceful relations that exist between Christians and Muslims at this holy place is a sign of hope that Sinai holds for the world.

FATHER JUSTIN

LIGATUS NEWS

Now that the new shelving and racking have been installed in the renovated library, work is progressing on the Boxing Project. Prof. Nicholas Pickwoad has reviewed the draft specifications of the stainless steel boxes that will house some 2,000 of the bound manuscripts. He has provided specifications for the linings of the boxes, which make use of 27 components, each differing in size according to three different sets of variables. Bidders for the project will be expected to submit a sample box with their proposal. Once a manufacturer is selected, boxes will be produced in batches, with the schedule to be agreed with the successful bidder, taking into account the availability of funds.

The 'Language of Binding' thesaurus of bookbinding terms was published online on 23 June 2015 (www.ligatus.org.uk/lob). Since then its use has been growing. In April 2016 the thesaurus was accepted by the Library of Congress as a controlled vocabulary for the description of bookbindings in MARC records, the standard used worldwide for the cataloguing of rare books.

A graduate of the Ligatus conservation course in Palermo, Ambra d'Aleo, has completed a translation of the thesaurus into Italian that is currently being reviewed by a small group of Italian book conservators. Groups in Denmark, France, Germany and Spain are just starting the same work of translation, and the thesaurus is in part already translated into Greek, though this will require more work. When the translations are complete it will be possible

to search the thesaurus in any of these languages and read the results in the same or any of the other languages.

A manual for the description of bookbindings based on the Language of Bindings thesaurus should be published soon. Entitled *Coming to Terms: guidelines for the description of historical bookbindings*, it will run to some 585 pages, with almost 600 illustrations, including 64 pages of colour photographs.

We are currently in talks with the Leventis and Niarchos Foundations about possible funding for the major database that is the third component of our plan to make bookbindings more accessible to researchers and to provide a core of research data for general use.

Ligatus will celebrate its tenth anniversary with a one-day conference in Chelsea on 24 February 2017. We will have papers given by the six PhD graduates of Ligatus on their current research and work, and will take the opportunity to highlight our work for the monastery.

We continue with our PhD programme, and are currently supervising six students.

NICHOLAS PICKWOAD

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The Saint Catherine Foundation and its related associations in Switzerland and the United States support conservation work at the Monastery of Saint Catherine. The monastery's library is the present focus of conservation activities. To safeguard this historic archive, the foundation is raising funds for the renovation of the Library building and for the conservation and boxed storage of the manuscripts and early books.

SAINT CATHERINE FOUNDATION
14 Cleveland Row, London SW1A 1DP, UK
Telephone +44 20 7396 5420
Fax +44 20 7396 5440
Registered charity number 1053138.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATES OF THE SAINT CATHERINE FOUNDATION
A 501 (c)(3) charitable organization.

ASSOCIATION SUISSE DES AMIS DE LA FONDATION SAINTE-CATHERINE
A Swiss-registered non-profit association.
secretary@saintcatherinefoundation.org
www.saintcatherinefoundation.org

NEW LIBRARY TAKES SHAPE

FATHER JUSTIN



The entryway. Ribs across the ceiling vault have been transformed into arches, with limestone supports. Limestone capitals have been added to the columns. The low wall to the left has been faced with limestone, and a limestone floor will be installed and polished. This will make an impressive entryway to the thick metal door that opens to the first room.



A new stairway has been added, for additional access. It is steel, with limestone steps. The sixth-century wall has been revealed and will be left visible. This will allow manuscripts to be carried up to the library by an inner flight of stairs.



The reading room has underfloor heating, for warmth during winter without the need for radiators. A long table and chairs will be provided for visiting scholars, and the room will be lined with shelves for reference books.



The stainless steel balcony has been installed. Two stairways at opposite corners of the room provide access to the balcony level. Racks and trays to hold boxed manuscripts will be installed below the balcony, with shelves above for the early printed books.



Rolling stacks have been installed in two rooms that adjoin the balcony. These will hold the archives, New Finds and the collection of scrolls.



Very soon, the manuscripts, early printed books, and the archives will be moved into the newly renovated library. This will transform it from a series of rooms, into a working library. It will endure for many years as a tribute to the foundation's devotion and care for the preservation of this great treasure, the library of Sinai.

BOARD CHANGES IN LONDON, NEW YORK AND GENEVA

Dr Pericles Petalas, founding treasurer and trustee, has retired from the London board. The Chief Executive Officer of EFG Bank European Financial Group SA, Pericles Petalas forged a strong link between the foundation and the bank, one of the foundation's original, and continuing, sponsors. Founding trustee Dr Eugenie Richardson succeeds Dr Petalas as treasurer. A founding trustee and close collaborator from the foundation's early days, Dr Mikhail Piotrovsky of the State Hermitage Museum becomes an emeritus trustee. Laila Moussa also assumes emeritus status, continuing her long association with the foundation and monastery, of great cultural and historical importance to her native Egypt.

Jamie Bowden has joined the London Board in his capacity as Deputy Private Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales, the foundation's Royal Patron. On loan to the Household of His Royal Highness from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Jamie Bowden has spent most of his career in the Middle East, and has been Ambassador to Bahrain and, most recently, Oman. In 1984, as a British Army officer, Jamie served with the Multinational Force in the Sinai and visited Saint Catherine's on a number of occasions. In collaboration with the monks, he arranged for soldiers from the Force to clean up Mount Sinai.

With the death of Sir Ronald Grierson (see page 8), the Saint Catherine Foundation has lost its oldest board member, and one of the most dynamic. Sir Ronald is simply irreplaceable. It is therefore fitting that a young trustee should be appointed in his place: Marcadia Lampropoulou brings a new point of view to the UK board. A graduate of Oxford University (2006) and the London School of Economics (2007), Marcadia has helped to raise more than £750,000 for Greek charities. She lives in Athens, where she is the head of International Development at the Museum of Cycladic Art.

Prof. Dr. Claudia Rapp joined the London trustees in December 2015. Her academic and practical knowledge of Sinai will greatly assist the board in its deliberations. Claudia is Scholarly Director of the Sinai Palimpsests Project and Board Member of the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library, Professor of Byzantine Studies at the University of Vienna and Director of the Division of Byzantine Research at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. She helped to organise the 'World Comes to Sinai' conference at Bridgewater House, and presented a key paper.

Dr John Brademas served on the Board of Directors of the American Associates from the foundation's inception until his death. A former member of the US Congress and former president of New York University, John seemed to know just about everyone. He was always happy to share a vital contact or an essential piece of information, a quality that made him an indispensable board member for 20 years. His tribute will appear in the next issue of *Sinaiticus*.

The American board has named two retiring members to a new Emeritus board. Both joined in the foundation's inaugural year: Helen Bender, Esq., Associate Professor of Law at Fordham University School of Law, and the architect Costas Kondylis, principal of the New York firm Costas Kondylis and Partners, LLP. The American Associates gratefully acknowledge their continuing association.

A founding member of the London board, Professor Oriana Baddeley joined the New York board in 2013. She is an art historian, Dean of Research at the University of the Arts London and member of the Research Centre for Transnational Art, Identity and Nation (TrAIN). Oriana has curated exhibitions on the Sinai theme in London, Geneva and St Petersburg, notably *Sinai Byzantium Russia* (1999) and *Fred Boissonnas: the Sinai Expeditions 1929-1933* (2011). The editor and author of a number of publications on Sinai, she is currently working on the 2017 exhibition of Fred Boissonnas photographs at the Royal Geographical Society.

John Manley's visit to Sinai with his family in 2007 has resulted in an ever-closer relationship with the monastery and the foundation, culminating in his appointment to the New York board last year. John says Sinai 'is such a holy place. No matter anyone's faith tradition, I think it connects us all to God and brings us all together. I think we live in a world that very much needs their prayer. There is so much history there to preserve and protect but no less important, to find ways to share'. The foundation will benefit greatly from John Manley's involvement. A private investor and philanthropist, he also serves on the boards of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

A long-time supporter of the Saint Catherine Foundation, Lady Lully Gibbons also joined the American board a year ago. With her husband, the Hon Sir David Gibbons, she was a Founding Benefactor of the US foundation. Following Sir David's death (see page 7), she renewed her commitment to the foundation's work.

Emma Antonatos, a founding member of the Swiss Comité, has left the board after 17 years of service. Four new members have been appointed: Nicolas Ducimetière, Assistant Director and librarian of the Martin Bodmer Foundation in Cologne, Dr Lorenzo Amberg, Swiss Ambassador to Greece (2010-15), Me Anthony Walter of the 12 Mont-de-Sion law firm and Me Romanos Skandamis of Etude Skandamis. Me Skandamis seconds Me Nicolas Gagnebin in his role as Secretary.

The death of Monseigneur Joseph Roduit, abbot of Saint Maurice d'Agaune and membre d'honneur of the Swiss association, is announced in this issue (see page 9). He is succeeded, both as abbot and membre d'honneur, by Monseigneur Jean Scarcella. Similarly, Professor Jan Blanc, Dean of the Faculty of Lettres, University of Geneva replaces the former Dean, Professor Nicolas Zufferey, as membre d'honneur.

OBITUARIES

The Honourable Sir John David Gibbons, KBE (1927 - 2014)



Sir David and Lady Gibbons set sail for Sinai in October 2007.

The Saint Catherine Foundation mourns the loss of Sir David Gibbons, a Founding Benefactor of the American Associates. Sir David and his wife generously supported the foundation's work, attending the galas at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1997 and 2004 and participating in the 2007 Library Grand Tour. The trip allowed them to visit Sinai, and following Sir David's death, Lady Gibbons joined the board of the American Associates, where she continues to champion the foundation's conservation work.

The Gibbons name is synonymous with Bermuda. Sir David was one of Bermuda's most important businessmen and politicians. He was leader of the United Bermuda Party and, simultaneously, Premier and Finance Minister for five years, from 1977 to 1982. Remembered as one of the architects of modern-day Bermuda, he is credited with helping to lay the foundations of the British island territory's present-day prosperity. The landmark Insurance Act was passed during his premiership.

Sir David was a master at juggling his political and business careers. 'He was up at 7 am every morning and ran his own business as well as putting in more than enough

time in the Cabinet Office', according to his Deputy Premier, Jim Woolridge. Sir John Swan, his successor as Premier, described him as 'multidimensional' and a 'multitasker'.

From 1954 onwards, Sir David was CEO of Edmund Gibbons Ltd, the banking, insurance and retail company founded by his father in 1916. He served as chairman of the Bank of Butterfield (1975-84) and Colonial Insurance (from 1986), and he was director of Nordic American Tanker Shipping (from 1995).

A graduate of Hotchkiss School and Harvard, where he studied economics, the young David successfully negotiated the competing attractions of North America and Britain. He was a talented tennis player in his youth, and Bermuda's junior singles and doubles champion in 1944. He particularly enjoyed deep sea diving, a sport he practiced into older age.

Family life was very important to Sir David. He doted on Lully, Lady Gibbons, their three sons, Thomas, David and James, and Ede, his daughter from his first marriage. 'Sir David lived by principles of honesty, integrity, hard work and discipline', said the Bishop of Bermuda, the Rt Revd Nicholas Dill. In a statement issued the day of his death, Premier Craig Cannonier paid tribute:

Sir David was a man of great accomplishment – a political leader during a time of turbulence and change, a renowned businessman who succeeded both here at home and abroad, and a philanthropist whose generosity benefited many. His life's work made Bermuda stronger and more prosperous. May he rest in peace.

Sir David's widow, Lady Lully Gibbons, recently joined the Board of Directors of the American Associates. She speaks here of the importance of the monastery and the trip she and her husband made to Sinai.

My first memory of being at the monastery is sitting on a camel as my husband and I made our way up Mount Sinai in the dead of night. The abundant stars in the clarity of the desert air, the feeling of the extraordinary history of the mountain, and then the kindness and the warmth of the Bedouin when I had to seek some medical attention, all combined to affect me deeply.

Before that, I can remember a fundraiser, courtesy of HRH Crown Princess Katherine at the Metropolitan Museum, with former President George Bush senior attending. Then, of course, the unforgettable trip my husband and I took from Athens to the Sinai via Alexandria, which led up to our ascent of the mountain.

Sinai is a unique place that now, because of terrorist and other threats, does not receive as many visitors as before. It is vital to keep the foundation going, to make sure the monastery survives.

The uniqueness of this site is in my view unparalleled in the world. It must be preserved for future generations to enjoy and to learn from. It has been my privilege to be associated with the monastery and to contribute in some small way.

Sir Ronald Grierson
(1921 - 2014)



The Saint Catherine Foundation mourns the loss of Sir Ronald Grierson, member of the Board of Trustees until his death at the age of 93. Advanced age notwithstanding, Sir Ronald remained active in foundation affairs, contributing his legendary networking skills, together with insights gleaned from a long career as a banker, businessman and public servant. A busy schedule and exceptional demands on his time meant that Sir Ronald (or Ronnie, as he was affectionately known by his friends) would sometimes arrive late for a board meeting or leave before the end, but he could always be counted on to provide an essential piece of advice or information.

The quintessential English gentleman, Ronnie began life in Nuremburg as Rolf Hans Griessmann, the privileged child of a prominent German Jewish family. He spent his early years there, studying at the Realgymnasium, moving with his parents to Paris in 1932, where he attended the Lycée Pasteur, and on to London and Highgate School four years later. Hitler ensured there would be no return to Germany for the Griessmanns.

Ronnie went up to Balliol College, Oxford in 1939. Arrested and interned at the start of the war, he joined the Army Air Corps, where he trained as a parachutist and anglicised his name. Now Ronald Hugh Grierson, he served in North Africa and Europe, ending the war as an officer of the Black Watch Regiment, complete with kilt.

Ronnie's career path took many twists and turns, from his long association with Warburgs bank (1948 onwards), where he would become managing director, and his time at the General Electric Company (1968-96), both as vice-chairman and chairman, to his involvement with the UK Industrial Reorganisation Corporation, European Commission in Brussels and South Bank Arts Centre in London.

Ronnie dedicated considerable time and energy to philanthropy, not only as a member of the board of the Saint Catherine Foundation, but also as a trustee of numerous organisations, including the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Academy of Arts and the Prince of Liechtenstein's Foundation, among many others. He was chairman of the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer and Action Against Hunger, charities particularly close to his heart.

Ronnie is remembered as a man of great charm and true generosity of spirit. He was fluent in half a dozen languages and never reluctant to make waves in any of them. Famously peripatetic, Ronnie made so many transatlantic trips on Concorde that, according to an oft-repeated joke, he risked crossing himself mid-Atlantic. Ronnie seemed indestructible as he continued his urbane, globetrotting ways into his tenth decade. So it was with shock and disbelief that his friends heard the news of his death in October 2014. Ronnie is survived by his son Jacob and his stepdaughter Felicity Waley-Cohen. His wife Heather died in 1993.

Michael Jaharis
(1928 – 2016)



The Saint Catherine Foundation mourns the loss of Michael Jaharis, a Founding Benefactor of the American Associates. Michael generously supported the foundation's work with his wife Mary, former vice-president of the American Associates. Michael attended the American Associates' founding gala at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1997, the subsequent one there in 2004, and almost all events sponsored by the Associates in New York and London. Michael was a widely admired, leading figure in support of Orthodoxy, Hellenism, the Arts and Learning in America. He and Mary founded the Jaharis Family Foundation, Inc.,

to support philanthropic endeavors in many fields. Michael was a Benefactor of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, along with Mary, and a Museum trustee. They established the Mary and Michael Jaharis Galleries for Byzantine Art at the Museum, a eponymous curatorship for Byzantine art, and generously supported the Museum's Greek and Roman Department. At the Art Institute of Chicago they established the eponymous Galleries of Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Art and supported exhibitions at both institutions. Michael also served as a Director of The Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA) and as a member of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs.

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America made Michael an "Archon Exarchos of the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle," one of the highest honors bestowed upon laity on behalf of His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in recognition of his commitment to the church. Michael was Vice Chairman of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Council, Founding Member and Director of *Faith Endowment for Orthodoxy and Hellenism* and Founding Member and Executive Committee Member of the Greek Orthodox Leadership 100 Endowment Foundation. Michael was awarded an honorary degree by Hellenic College – Holy Cross Theological Seminary, where he and Mary endowed the Mary Jaharis Center for Byzantine Art and Culture and a chair in New Testament Studies. As a tribute to Greece and his parents, Michael supported the establishment of the Jaharis Home for the Elderly in his parents' hometown of Aghia Paraskevi on the island of Lesbos in Greece.

Tufts University recognized Michael's dedication to education with an Honorary Doctor of Public Service degree. There he was a Trustee Emeritus and Chairman of the Board of Overseers for its School of Medicine and with Mary endowed the Jaharis Family Center for Biomedical and Nutrition Sciences, the Jaharis Family Chair in Family Medicine, and multiple Scholarship Funds. Columbia University Medical College, where he was a Benefactor and a member of its Board of Visitors, presented him with a Crown Award for his service and support. He was a Member of the Board of Overseers and a Benefactor of the Weill Cornell Medical College and Graduate School of Medical Sciences and with Mary he supported the development of the eponymous Center for Health Law at DePaul University where he attended law school.

Michael, a prominent innovator in the pharmaceutical industry, began his career at Miles Laboratories, became president and CEO of Key Pharmaceuticals in 1972 and founded Kos Pharmaceuticals in 1988. Michael then co-founded Vatera Healthcare Partners LLC, where he remained active until his death. Michael's family was most important to him and he is deeply missed by his wife Mary, his son Steven and his wife Elaine and children Melina, Michael and Valerie and his daughter Kathryn and her children Wilder and Ava, and all who knew him.

HELEN EVANS

Monseigneur Joseph Roduit (1939-2015)



Monseigneur Joseph Roduit, abbé de Saint-Maurice d'Agave, a été membre d'honneur de l'Association suisse depuis la visite que nous avons rendue ensemble au monastère de Sainte-Catherine en 2005 jusqu'à son décès survenu en décembre 2015. Il eut à cœur de favoriser les échanges et les visites entre son abbaye et notre Association et il vécut dans une relation spirituelle profonde avec l'archevêque du Sinaï, Monseigneur Damianos, auquel il apporta en 2005 de précieuses reliques de la Légion thébaine.

Le faire-part suivant a été publié dans *Le Temps* du 21 décembre 2015:

« Les membres et le président de l'Association suisse des Amis de la Fondation Sainte-Catherine profondément affectés par la disparition de Monseigneur Joseph Roduit, leur membre d'honneur, gardent la mémoire de son rayonnement humain et spirituel et de la merveilleuse rencontre œcuménique qui prit place au Sinaï en 2005 entre l'abbé de Saint-Maurice et l'igoumène du monastère, Mgr. Damianos. »

CHARLES MÉLA

EVENTS

NEW YORK

Benefit dinner at Battery Gardens

5 October 2016

Battery Park was the setting for a convivial evening in aid of the Saint Catherine's Library Conservation Project. More than 150 donors, including a large contingent of young supporters, gathered for drinks and dinner at Battery Gardens Restaurant in Battery Park. A full moon and mild weather meant that guests could enjoy the spectacular views of New York Harbor and the Statue of Liberty while meeting members of the Board of Directors and learning more about the progress of the South Range renovation work. Dimitris Dondos, Chairman of the London foundation, and the Sinai librarian, Father Justin, were on hand to explain all that has been accomplished this year, both during the reception and in their presentations during the dinner.

Peter Vlachos, Vice President of the Board of Directors, served as Master of Ceremonies. Reverend Dr Robert Stephanopoulos, Emeritus Dean, Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity and a long-time supporter, gave the invocation. HRH Crown Princess Katherine of Serbia, President of the American foundation, welcomed the guests. A silent auction raised significant funds. The evening came to a close with the benediction by Reverend Father John Vlahos, Dean, Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity.

The event chairs worked hard to make the dinner a success: Liberty Angeliades, Zoe Moshovitis, Robert Shaw and Peter Vlachos. They were ably assisted by the event committee: Froso Beys, Katherine Embiricos, Dr Karen Burke Goulandris, Andre Gregory and Kassandra Romas. Presiding over the event as Honorary Chairpersons were Lady Gibbons and John Manley. A good time was had by all.

LONDON

'The World Comes to Sinai: Saint Catherine's Monastery and its library as a cultural magnet'

6 February 2016

Spearheaded by Dr Eugenie Richardson and Prof. Dr Claudia Rapp, the Saint Catherine Foundation organised a workshop-conference featuring papers on the manuscripts, printed books and history of the Sinai library. Dr Sebastian Brock of the Department of Oriental Studies at Oxford University dealt with the question, 'How Did the Syriac Manuscripts Get to Sinai?'. Prof. Dr. Rapp of the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at Vienna University took as her subject, 'Visitors from the

Christian Orient and the Palimpsested Manuscripts', while Prof. Nicholas Pickwoad spoke about 'Sinai and the Market for Printed Books', a subject he first investigated during the course of the Condition Assessment at Saint Catherine's. The workshop-conference concluded with a paper by Prof. Petros Koufopoulos (Department of Architecture, University of Patras) entitled 'A View to the Future: The New Library Wing'.

There was a great turnout of people who have a connection to the monastery—personal, spiritual and scholarly—and a good level of friendly conversation during the breaks. The participants commented on the high quality of the papers and the important and groundbreaking work that they reflect.

Twentieth anniversary celebrations planned for November 2017

The Royal Geographical Society in London will be the venue for a series of special events to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the London foundation and American Associates. To coincide with an exhibition of photographs by Fred Boissonnas, a conference, private view, reception and gala dinner will take place at the RGS in Kensington Gore on Thursday, 2 November. The Boissonnas exhibition will open to the public on 3 November and run through 1 December. The foundation is also planning an exciting weekend of activities on the theme 'Egypt in London' (2-5 November 2017). See the back page of this issue of *Sinaiticus* for more information.

GENEVA

Activités de l'Association suisse des Amis de la Fondation Sainte-Catherine

En 2014, le Comité s'est réuni à trois reprises et l'Assemblée générale s'est tenue le 13 mai dans la salle Historique de la Fondation Martin Bodmer (Bibliothèque et musée à Cologny).

À la suite de l'exposition organisée en 2012 sur Les mots et les monnaies, de la Grèce ancienne à Byzance, une vidéo de 45 minutes a été réalisée en 2013 avec le concours du Musée Benaki et le soutien de la Fondation Kikpe. Commentée par le professeur Charles Méla, elle a été projetée le 10 février 2014 en présence du Consul général de Grèce, M. Angelos Ypsilantis à l'intention de nos membres au cours d'une soirée à la Fondation Martin Bodmer.

Après l'AG du 13 mai, a eu lieu une visite de l'exposition, inaugurée le 4 avril, consacrée à Alexandrie la divine, du IV^e siècle avant notre ère jusqu'au Ve siècle après: Les Ptolémées successeurs d'Alexandre, dont la conquête avait ouvert le monde grec à la Perse et à l'Inde, fondèrent la Bibliothèque d'Alexandrie qui fut le creuset dans lequel furent élaborés tous les savoirs dont notre monde a hérité. Ils prirent la décision capitale pour les échanges entre l'Orient et l'Occident de faire traduire en

grec les « sagesse barbares », celles des prêtres égyptiens, perses, chaldéens, indiens, ainsi que la Torah du peuple juif dans la fameuse traduction de la Septante. Alexandrie, Bagdad, Cordoue, Florence, c'est toute la chaîne de la transmission culturelle et du dialogue des cultures qui s'est ainsi déroulée au fil d'une exposition enrichie par les prêts de la Laurenziana de Florence et des objets d'art de la collection de Jean-Claude Gandur.

Cette exposition, a eu un très grand retentissement et a été visitée notamment par Mme Irina Bukova, Directrice générale de l'UNESCO. Cette relation directe a permis ensuite au président Méla, lors des événements qui ont menacé le monastère de Sainte-Catherine dans la 2ème moitié de l'année d'entrer en contact avec l'UNESCO et d'obtenir l'assurance du secrétaire de la Convention de 72 sur le patrimoine mondial et de la directrice adjointe en mission au Caire de leur vigilance et du suivi attentif de la situation : leur entretien avec cinq ministres en septembre leur confirmait que le site avait pour ces derniers une grande valeur.

En raison de la situation préoccupante du monastère, le président Méla s'est rendu à Londres le 22 octobre pour participer à la réunion de la Fondation Sainte-Catherine à Bridgewater House. Un soutien a été décidé au bénéfice des Bédouins du village. La Fondation Saint-Charles que préside Mme Denise Papayoannou a octroyé un don de CHF 5'000 pour les besoins des Bédouins. Dans le même esprit l'AG de notre Association a accepté à l'unanimité d'apporter aux Moines pour leurs besoins dans cette période extrêmement critique une aide exceptionnelle, ponctuelle et non-renouvelable, de CHF 50'000.

D'autre part, M. Richard de Tscherner, président de la Fondation Carène a fait don à notre Association de CHF 30'000, somme affectée exclusivement à des investissements et des dépenses liées à la préservation des manuscrits. Le but de la Fondation Carène est ainsi défini: « Transmission du savoir et préservation de racines culturelles. La contribution en question servira donc à préserver la mémoire de l'histoire et de la culture chrétienne ainsi qu'à faciliter la transmission du savoir, moyennant des manuscrits en bon état. »

Au Louvre à Paris, s'est tenue en 2014 une exposition sur le Trésor de l'Abbaye Saint-Maurice d'Agaune, fondée en 515, dont Mgr. Roduit, membre d'honneur de notre Association, a été le 94e abbé (entre 1999 et avril 2015). Nous avons été douloureusement touchés par l'annonce de sa disparition à la fin de l'année 2015 et avons publié le 21 décembre dans le journal *Le Temps*, en hommage à ce « marcheur de l'Évangile, infatigable pèlerin, fidèle et vigilant dans la prière, artisan avec ses frères chanoines de cette laus perennis que l'Abbaye a maintenue sans discontinuer chaque jour pendant 15 siècles », le faire-part qu'on lira p. 9.

En 2015 le Comité s'est réuni régulièrement à cinq reprises et six fois en 2016. Lors de l'Assemblée générale du 31 mars 2015 à la Fondation Louis Jeantet ont été projetés deux films d'une dizaine de minutes sur le Musée Benaki et sur les églises byzantines. La participation du président Dimitri Dondos à la réunion du Comité le 10 décembre a permis de faire le point sur la situation au Sinaï, l'avancée

des travaux dans la bibliothèque, ainsi que sur la nécessité de poursuivre notre aide aux Bédouins. Notre Comité a également entrepris de se rajeunir et de se renouveler en accueillant trois nouveaux membres, M. Nicolas Ducimetière, vice-président de la Fondation Martin Bodmer, bibliophile averti en charge de la bibliothèque de la Fondation, et deux avocats, Me Romanos Skandamis, président du Jeune Barreau et premier Secrétaire de l'Ordre et Me Anthony Walter, spécialisé dans le droit bancaire et financier et le droit des sociétés, qui est le fils de Mme Véronique Walter, membre très actif de notre Association depuis son début.

En 2016, le Comité s'est adjoint M. Lorenzo Amberg, qui a été ambassadeur de la Suisse en Grèce. Mgr. Jean Scarcella, abbé de Saint-Maurice d'Agaune a accepté de devenir membre d'honneur de l'Association, à la suite du décès de Mgr. Joseph Roduit.

L'Assemblée générale du 24 mai 2016 à la Fondation Martin Bodmer a accueilli le président Dimitri Dondos pour un exposé détaillé sur les aménagements en cours et l'état des lieux au monastère, assorti d'une projection, ouverte au public, d'un film sur le site du monastère et l'état actuel des travaux et des locaux. M. Nicolas Ducimetière a ensuite ouvert le musée de la Fondation pour une visite guidée de l'exposition à la fois scientifique et littéraire intitulée *Frankenstein, créé de ténèbres*.

Le 26 octobre, le professeur Alain Desreumaux, directeur de recherche émérite au CNRS et président de la Société d'études syriaques, a été invité à donner dans la Salle Historique de la Fondation Martin Bodmer une conférence, illustrée de projections et présentée par le professeur Bertrand Bouvier, sur le thème : *Sainte-Catherine du Sinaï et la préservation du patrimoine syriaque et araméen chrétien*. Après avoir pu consulter et étudier dans l'après-midi la remarquable Peshitta de la Collection Bodmer, un tétra-évangile syriaque datant de la fin du Ve siècle, le conférencier a exposé au public les récentes méthodes de déchiffrement des palimpsestes et évoqué le fonds très important de manuscrits syriaques de la bibliothèque du monastère, ainsi que celui des manuscrits christo-palestiniens du monastère N.-D. des Syriens en Égypte, un patrimoine important, actuellement menacé, des chrétiens d'Arabie et de Palestine du VIe au XIIIe siècle.

CHARLES MÉLA

Président de l'Association suisse

REVIEW

A SINAI MANUSCRIPT AND ITS ILLUSTRATIONS: A NEW STUDY

SEBASTIAN BROCK

Maja Kominko, *The World of Kosmas. Illustrated Byzantine Codices of the Christian Topography*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Best known among the glories of the Library of Saint Catherine's Monastery are the illuminated manuscripts, the most splendid of which were, not surprisingly, produced in Constantinople rather than in Sinai; this applies, for example, to the Gospel Lectionary (Greek cod. 204), with its magnificent standing portraits, to the illuminated headings to the Homilies of St Gregory of Nazianzus (Greek cod. 339), and to the delightful scenes illustrating the Book of Job (Greek codex 3).¹ One candidate for an illuminated manuscript actually produced at the monastery on Sinai is the Greek codex 1186, one of three known illustrated manuscripts of a work entitled the *Christian Topography*, by the sixth-century author generally known today as Cosmas Indicopleustes, 'sailor on the Indian ocean'. These three manuscripts form the basis of a recent book by Maja Kominko, entitled *The World of Kosmas. Illustrated Byzantine Codices of the Christian Topography*.² The author's aim is to try to reconstruct, on the basis of a careful comparison of the illustrations in the three manuscripts, the content of the illustrations as they must have appeared in the sixth-century original codex of the work. Given the extreme rarity of surviving illuminated manuscripts from the sixth century, the potential results of such a quest are likely to be of great value for the study of late antique book illustration and, especially in the case of this particular work, also for the study of the close interrelationship between text and image.

Of the other two manuscripts involved, one is in the Vatican Library (Greek 699 of the ninth century), and the other in the Laurentian Library in Florence (Laur. Plut. IX.28), dating, like the Sinai manuscript, from the 11th century. The former is generally attributed to a Constantinopolitan workshop, while the latter is thought possibly to have been written in Moni Iviron, on Athos. In fact the Sinaitic origin of Sinai Greek 1186 has been questioned on the basis of its binding, which is said to display certain features of Italian bindings; this, however, may not be a serious objection since there are some known cases of pilgrim bookbinders who carry out work in monasteries they are visiting.

In their content there are some significant differences between the Sinai and Florence manuscripts on the one hand, and the Vatican one on the other. After a chapter on the author and the date of the work and its growth, along with its intriguing exegetical background (Kosmas claims that his teacher was Patrikios, who ended up as Catholicos

of the Church of the East), Maja Kominko proceeds systematically, studying the illustrations Book by Book of the *Christian Topography*, comparing the illustrations in the three manuscripts and the relationship of these to the text; she also takes into account the illuminated Septuagint manuscripts containing the first eight books (or Octateuch) of the Greek Bible. Not all the Books of the *Christian Topography* deal directly with the biblical text, for Book II includes illustrations of Adulis (in Ethiopia), which the author saw on his travels, and Book IV discloses his views of the structure of the universe: he was a 'flat-earther', several of whose views were very soon to be challenged by a notable philosopher of Alexandria, John Philoponos. In Book V, Kosmas turns his attention to the biblical text of Exodus; the first part of the Book commences with the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness and culminates in the Theophany to Moses on Mount Sinai, where particular attention is given to the details of the Tabernacle, whose blueprint had been revealed to Moses. Approximately a century and a half later, the Venerable Bede was to devote an entire treatise to the topic of the Tabernacle. The latter part of Book V, by contrast, focuses on individual patriarchs and prophets, including several New Testament figures; these brought to an end the original form of the *Christian Topography*, with the ensuing Books VI to X being subsequent additions made by the author. These Books, which contain many fewer illustrations, are concerned with the subject of celestial topography, with most of Book VIII devoted to the miracle of the sun's regression experienced by Hezekiah and described in Isaiah 38:1-7 (and parallels in Kings and Chronicles). Although Maja Kominko is not basically concerned with the Sinai manuscript and its two companions in their own right, it is worth mentioning that in an appendix she provides a detailed codicological description of all three manuscripts, including information on their bindings.

As the author notes in her introduction, previous studies of Kosmas' *Christian Topography* have either been focused on the text, or on the illustrations, and only rarely have the two been brought together. This is something that she has now very successfully and illuminatingly done in her well-documented study.

1. Good colour illustrations from these can be found in K.A. Manafis, *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery* (Athens, 1990), pp.327-41.

2. Cambridge, 2013. There are 31 coloured plates and just over a hundred pages of black and white illustrations (the paper cover also has a fine coloured one).

DR SEBASTIAN BROCK is an Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College, University of Oxford.

THE SINAI LIBRARY: A RESOURCE OF CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEUVEN, 9-11 SEPTEMBER 2015

HIEROMONK JUSTIN OF SINAI

Leuven is a small town to the west of Brussels, the site of an important university founded in 1425. It had a significant library of manuscripts and many printed books. These were deliberately destroyed by the Germans on 25 August 1914, at the beginning of the First World War. A conference was held in 2015 to mark the anniversary of this tragic event. But it was also the occasion to recall both the fragility and the importance of libraries today, even as the nature of libraries is changing, with the proliferation of digital resources and online access. Father Justin, the librarian of Saint Catherine's Monastery, was invited to be one of the keynote speakers.

In the middle of the sixth century, the emperor Justinian ordered the construction of a basilica and high surrounding walls at the traditional site of the Burning Bush. The walls and the church have stood ever since. The roof beams of the basilica, the trusses, and even the purlins are intact from that time. The eighth beam from the back bears the inscription,

+ Ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας τοῦ εὐσεβ(εστάτου) ἡμῶν βασιλέως
Ἰουστινιανοῦ +
+ For the salvation of our most pious Emperor Justinian +

The inscription was carved when he was still living. It would predate the year 565. To be at Sinai is to step back into a world that has survived largely intact from Late Antiquity.

For this reason, it was a moment of utter terror when, on 30 November 1971, a fire broke out in a kitchen opposite the Sinai basilica. The fire spread slowly but steadily through the kitchen, the monks' cells and a chapel along the north wall. A firetruck was brought from an airfield 20 kilometres away, and bedouin formed a bucket brigade, bringing water to extinguish the flames. It took some eight hours to put out the fire, and used up almost all of the water from the monastery's wells and cisterns.

Archimandrite Sophronios, the *skēvophylax* of the monastery, insisted on singlehandedly restoring this area. By 1975, he was working in the tower of Saint George, which projects from the north wall of the monastery. This area had narrowly escaped the fire. But an interior floor of the tower had collapsed many years before, owing to the great age of the timbers, and the poor quality of the construction materials available. He was clearing away the room when, on 25 May 1975, at 2.15 in the afternoon, he noticed a piece of parchment in the debris. He understood the significance of the discovery, and began to keep a detailed record of each day's events, as hundreds of manuscript leaves and fragments came to light. It took three weeks to clear the area, using the utmost caution so as not to damage any of the manuscripts. What had he found?

In centuries past, precious manuscripts were kept in the tower of Saint George, since it was one of the most secure parts of the monastery. Dilapidated manuscripts,

loose quires, single leaves and fragments had been set aside in one corner of the room. In 1734, Archbishop Nikiphoros Marthales created new quarters for the library, and asked that all of the monastery's manuscripts and books be gathered together in their new quarters. We know now that when the manuscripts were transferred from the tower of Saint George, the damaged fragments were left behind. It was this deposit that came to light in 1975, collectively known as the New Finds.

The manuscripts were in a range of languages: Greek, Christian Palestinian Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, Georgian, Slavonic, and Latin. Let us look at a few specific examples. Each of these is important in its own right. If we then step back and consider them in perspective, we will see that they allow us insights into the history of Sinai at a time when there is little information from traditional historical accounts.

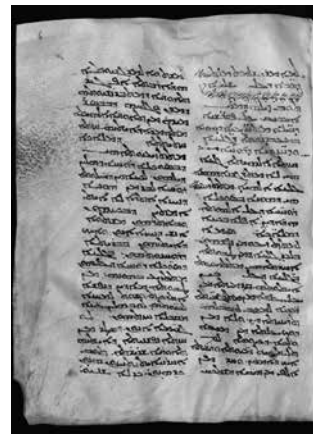
Greek

The most important discovery was twelve folios, two half folios, and twenty-three fragments from the Codex Sinaiticus. The texts are from the first seven books of the Old Testament, and from the Shepherd of Hermas, that is, from the beginning and end of the manuscript. The best preserved leaves include the verse from the book of Numbers, 'And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his rod twice; and much water came forth, and the congregation drank, and their cattle' (Numbers 20: 11). Although this manuscript would have reached Sinai at a later time, it is a reminder that, from the fourth century, Sinai was an extension of the Holy Land, the far reaches of the Holy Land. As such, it was also a part of the Greek-speaking world.

New Finds Majuscule 5, dating from the eighth or ninth century, is a *Tropologion*, giving hymns and odes for feast days (1). This is the oldest surviving copy of the canons composed in iambic verse attributed to Saint John of Damascus.¹ New Finds Majuscule 4 is a *Tropologion*, giving various canons for feasts that occur between 3 July and 29 August. For 9 August, there is a canon in honour of Aaron the Priest, a local feastday that has not been retained, even at Sinai. The New Finds included a number of scrolls. Greek New Finds Minuscule Scroll 62



1. New Finds Majuscule 5.



2. Christian Palestinian Aramaic Lectionary 41.



3. Sinai Syriac 52.

is an *Heirmologion*, giving the hymns according to the tones. It has been dated to the ninth or tenth century. New Finds Majuscule 26, also dated to the ninth or tenth century, is a school text of the *Iliad*, giving lines of the poem, alternating with notes on vocabulary and grammar.

We know that Greek letters flourished in Palestine in the seventh and eighth centuries, with the contributions made by John of Damascus, Andrew the Jerusalemite (who became bishop of Crete), Cosmas of Maiuma, Stephen the Sabaite, George the Syncellus, Michael the Syncellus and Theodore and Theophanes the Grapti.² This is reflected in the Sinai library, which contains numerous Greek manuscripts dating from that time. All of these manuscripts speak of continuity at Sinai after the seventh century, as Greek remained the language of converse, study and prayer.

Christian Palestinian Aramaic

Among the New Finds were a number of manuscripts written in Christian Palestinian Aramaic. A manuscript that dates from the seventh or eighth century contains the Sayings of the Desert Fathers, number 59 in the collection. One of the most beautiful is a Lectionary dating from the 13th century, manuscript number 41 (2).

Christian Palestinian Aramaic is a type of Western Aramaic, and thus is close to the dialect that would have been spoken by Jesus and his disciples, and the first Aramaic-speaking Christians.

Syriac

Syriac New Finds 24 is a copy of the Psalter, with a beautiful illumination of King David. The title reads, 'David, Prophet and King'.

The writings of Dionysius the Areopagite consist of four treatises and ten letters. Although these works pass under the name of the Athenian who was converted by the Apostle Paul, as mentioned in Acts 17:34, the works are not referred to before the close of the fifth century. They were translated into Syriac by Sergius of Resh'aina, who died in 536.

The oldest surviving manuscript of the works of Dionysius the Areopagite is Sinai Syriac 52, a manuscript of the sixth century, that is, the very century in which these works were first translated into Syriac (3). Among the New Finds were additional fragments from this same manuscript.

Classical Syriac was the language spoken in upper Mesopotamia. In the Late Antique world, Syriac-speaking villages stretched from the Mediterranean to the foothills of the Zagros, and from Antioch to Ctesiphon, the Persian capital. Many important works of Greek philosophy, literature, and medicine were translated into Syriac. In addition, many works of Christian poetry and exegesis were composed in Syriac.

Arabic

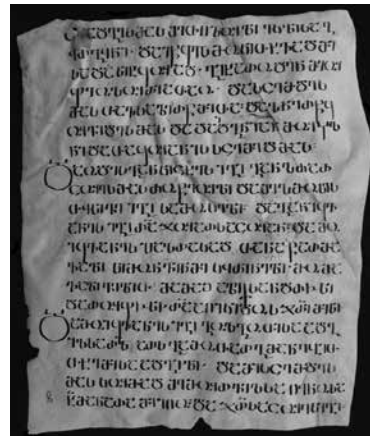
Sinai Arabic New Finds 8 and 28 are from a manuscript of the Gospels. This has been dated to the latter half of the eighth century, or the beginning of the ninth, based on its orthography.³ By the middle of the ninth century, we have dated manuscripts. New Finds 14 and 16, also a manuscript of the Gospels, bears the date 859 (4).

Sinai Greek New Finds Majuscule 2 is a manuscript of the Epistles of Saint Paul, written in parallel Greek and Arabic, dated to the ninth century. The text has been marked to allow for liturgical readings on the most important feastdays.

Syria, Palestine and Egypt came under Arab rule in the early seventh century. By the eighth century, Christians were expressing themselves in Arabic, and finding their place in Arabic culture. It was then that many works were translated from Syriac into Arabic, or, more rarely, directly from the Greek. In this way, the torch of learning was passed from the world of classical antiquity to the emerging Arabic-speaking world.



4. Arabic New Finds 14 and 16.



5. Georgian New Finds 10.



6. Slavic New Finds 1.



7. Latin New Finds 1.

Georgian

Sinai Georgian New Finds 10 is a Jerusalem Lectionary dated to the ninth century (5). It is one of several Sinai manuscripts that have been invaluable in reconstructing the typicon of Jerusalem as it was in the tenth century.

There is evidence for Georgian monks at Sinai as early as the sixth century, but this reached a zenith in the ninth and tenth centuries. Georgian scribes copied out manuscripts of the scriptures, lectionaries and other liturgical books, as well as lives of the saints, homilies and ascetical writings. Some of these were important translations made at Sinai. These manuscripts are an important witness to monks from Georgia living at Sinai, translating texts and creating manuscript copies.

Slavonic

Sinai Slavic New Finds 1 is an *Euchologion* written in the eleventh century (6). The writing is skilfully executed, with colors added in red, green, yellow, azure and black. It is written in Glagolitic, the script developed by Saints Cyril and Methodius in the ninth century, to facilitate the introduction of Christianity to the Slavic-speaking world.

The manuscripts at Sinai in Glagolitic and Slavonic are some of the earliest surviving Slavic liturgical texts. They are also evidence that pilgrims came to Sinai from the Slavic lands soon after their conversion.

Latin

Sinai Latin New Finds 1 consists of several quires that belong to a Latin manuscript in the Old Collection, containing the psalms, a calendar of selected saints, a list of the apostles and the places where they preached, a list of the liberal arts, and the Passion of Saints Peter and Paul (7). When E A Lowe studied the Psalter in the Old Collection, he listed a number of aspects of the orthography, punctuation and contractions that are otherwise unknown in Latin manuscripts. But they would be natural to one versed in Greek and Syriac scribal practices.⁴ The evidence points to a scriptorium where Latin was still alive, though at some remove from the Latin-speaking West, and in an area where the scribes were bilingual or even trilingual, accustomed to writing in Greek and Syriac or Arabic. It is likely that the manuscript was written in Jerusalem, or one of the areas of the Holy Land. We should not rule out the possibility that it was written at Sinai. This manuscript becomes an important witness to a Latin presence in the Holy Land before the First Crusade.⁵

These and other leaves from Latin manuscripts included among the New Finds are being studied even now, and we plan to publish a comprehensive catalogue. Even one leaf may allow us to reconstruct an important connection between Sinai and the Latin-speaking West.

Palimpsests

The Sinai library has manuscripts dating from the seventh to the tenth centuries that were written there, or brought with difficulty from elsewhere. But with Sinai even more isolated, it became difficult for the monks to procure new parchment. They were often constrained by necessity to take some existing manuscript, whose text was now considered less important, or perhaps a manuscript that was falling apart from age, and already missing sections. The writing could be erased, and the valuable parchment used a second time. The original writing remains faintly visible beneath the second text. This is what is known as a palimpsest.

As a result of such reuse of older parchment, Sinai has over one hundred sixty manuscripts with palimpsest text. When scholars come across a palimpsest, very often it is the original text that is of the greater interest. If the original writing was large, and if the second text was written at right angles to the first, it may be possible to make out the underlying text. But more often, this is not the case, and the original writing remains elusive, and it would seem, beyond recovery. And yet, from the few words that are legible in the margins of these manuscripts, scholars have long known the importance of such texts.

Recent advances in digital photography techniques have made it possible to recover these faded texts. They are photographed using separate narrow bandwidths of light in what is known as multi-spectral imaging. Specialists then process and combine these images, searching for the combination that will best clarify the underlying writing. Good results are not guaranteed. But in many instances, the text that was all but invisible before, now becomes legible.

Many advances have been made in this field by a team of scientists that assembled from a number of different institutions to work on the Archimedes Palimpsest, a tenth-century manuscript whose underlying texts contain otherwise unknown works of Archimedes, speeches by Hypereides and other writings. Important volumes have recently been published that explain the technologies developed for the recovery of the original script, with critical editions of the resulting texts.⁶ These same scientists were given funding for a five-year programme to photograph the palimpsests at Sinai. The Sinai manuscripts often present a different set of challenges. But important progress has been made here as well.

Last year, we photographed Sinai Greek New Finds Majuscule 2 with multi-spectral imaging techniques. All of the leaves were taken from three different earlier manuscripts. Approximately two-thirds of the leaves are from a volume that was of the same size and format. As a result, the upper writing is almost directly over the lower, making it much more difficult to decipher. But the original text is clear on several leaves, and on folio 72 verso, we read about a letter that the Emperor Arcadius sent in reply to Pope Innocent concerning 'the thrice-blessed John'. This would be Saint John Chrysostom, and a reference to the turbulent events surrounding his banishment from the capital.

Four single leaves are from a seventh-century work called the *Pandects of Holy Scripture*, by Antiochus of

Palestine, who became the abbot of the Lavra of Saint Sabbas, outside Jerusalem. The *Pandects of Holy Scripture* is a compendium of the teachings of the scriptures and the fathers of the Church, arranged in 130 chapters. Antiochus was a witness to the destruction of Jerusalem by Chosroes in 614, and his compendium includes an account of the 44 monks of the Lavra who were killed at that time.

The remainder of the manuscript, consisting of 16 bifolia and four single leaves, was taken from what would have been a large and beautifully written manuscript. The underlying text contains passages from Ezekiel, Jeremiah, the Epistle of Jeremiah, the Lamentations of Jeremiah and Baruch. There is also one leaf from the book of Ecclesiasticus.

Sinai Georgian New Finds 13 is a manuscript with various ascetical and hagiographical texts, written by a scribe named Mikael in the tenth or eleventh century. The manuscript is a palimpsest. Professor Zaza Aleksidze, Director of the Centre of Manuscripts, in Tbilisi, Georgia, was able to identify the underlying text as Caucasian Albanian, an ancient language once spoken in the Caucasus to the east of Georgia. This language had only survived in a few inscriptions carved on stone, and in one Armenian manuscript that listed the letters of the alphabet.

There is a long history of the translation of Greek works into Syriac. In the sixth century, Sergius of Resh'aina translated 26 medical texts by Galen. These translations have not survived, apart from scattered quotations, and one incomplete manuscript at the British Library. In 2008, an anonymous collector purchased a Syriac *Triodion* written in the 11th century. It was known to be a palimpsest, with the underwriting also in Syriac, dating to the eighth or ninth century. Multi-spectral imaging has confirmed that the underlying text is the most complete extant copy in Syriac of Galen's medical treatise, *On Simple Drugs*.⁷

Leaves from this same manuscript have recently been identified at the Vatican Library, the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Houghton Library of Harvard University. One leaf remains at Saint Catherine's Monastery, Syriac New Finds fragment 56. There is evidence that the manuscript was brought and presented there sometime in the 12th to 13th century.⁸ This gives a Sinai provenance to the manuscript.

Sinai Arabic New Finds 8 and 28 is a manuscript of the Gospels in Arabic, dated to the second half of the eighth century, or the beginning of the ninth (see page 18). Parchment must have been very difficult to obtain at that time. The leaves of this manuscript are very often sewn together from two, three, or four small patches, and most of these are leaves where the original text was erased. A decorative initial is faintly visible on one leaf, and Latin is visible in the margin below. Multi-spectral imaging allows us to see the text more clearly. It is written in what has been identified as an Insular script, a style of writing developed in Ireland, that spread to England, where it flourished between AD 600 and 850. This was the age of Aidan and Cuthbert and Bede, the time of an unusual flowering of monasticism in England. Scholars have long noted parallels between earliest monasticism in the British Isles, and earliest

monasticism in Egypt, in its organization, its architecture and its spiritual ethos. Now, for the first time, we have manuscript evidence for a link between that world and Sinai.

We have only recently completed the photography of this manuscript with multi-spectral imaging. As it is studied and analyzed, not only for the texts it contains, but for the archaeological levels, as it were, of the underlying and superimposed texts, its history will become more clear. But already it points to interconnections that have been little appreciated in histories of that time.

All of the manuscripts we have seen were recovered from the tower of Saint George. They could easily have perished in the fire that broke out at Saint Catherine's Monastery in 1971. They have proved to be of the greatest interest to scholars, because of the texts that were recovered, and because of the information they provide on the history of the monastery from the seventh to the tenth centuries, a period for which there are few historical sources. The importance of the New Finds will be even more evident next year, as we post the images of the Sinai Palimpsest Project online. We lament the loss of any manuscript even more in our own time, for we have seen how even one leaf from a manuscript can be so important for scholarship and history.

The Destruction of Libraries by the Islamic State

The deliberate destruction of libraries has again become a topic of the greatest urgency. In December 2014, members of the Islamic State burned Mosul University's central library, and in February 2015, they burned 10,000 books and 700 manuscripts in the Mosul Public Library. Libraries, churches and cultural monuments have been systematically destroyed throughout the regions of Iraq and Syria under their control. In August 2015, we read about the destruction of monuments at Palmyra that had stood for 2,000 years, and the destruction of the Saint Eliane Monastery in central Syria, which traced its history back to the fifth century. Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, has said, 'The cultural cleansing underway at the hands of ISIL/Daesh must stop. The persecution of communities reflecting the great diversity of Syria, combined with the systematic destruction of some of the most iconic representations of Syria's rich heritage, testifies to an ideology of hatred and exclusion.'

While Saint Catherine's Monastery has remained a place of peace, we would be remiss in our responsibilities if we did not feel great concern over these developments. What steps are we taking in our responsibility for the Sinai library?

Responsibility Today

We are in the process of renovating the library building. This is being funded by the Saint Catherine Foundation. The new building will provide better storage conditions and greater security for the library.

The monastery has recently approved a project for the digital photography and online access of the Syriac and Arabic manuscripts. Scholars are coming increasingly to appreciate the significance of these manuscripts.

Writing about the Arabic manuscripts of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Peter Brown has said, 'For here we can listen to a Christianity of the Middle East that resolutely combined engagement with the Islamic present and loyalty to its own past. They show that Christianity found its own voice in the Arabic language, so as to contribute to the exuberant new Arabic culture.'⁹

We cannot fully appreciate the complex history of the Middle East without an understanding of the critical first centuries of Arab rule. At a time when many Christians are leaving their ancestral homelands, these texts would remind them of their own rich heritage, a heritage that we must make every effort to preserve, and to make accessible. Their voice also deserves to be remembered and heard in the contemporary Middle East.

Saint Catherine's Monastery is an isolated outpost in the Sinai desert. The monastic community there is small. But we are reminded yet again that the spiritual heritage enshrined there, in its library especially, is of significance for the whole world.

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2. Cyril Mango, 'Greek Culture in Palestine after the Arab Conquest', Guglielmo Cavallo, Giuseppe de Gregorio, and Marilena Maniaci, editors, *Scritture, Libri e Testi Nelle Aree Provinciali di Bisanzio*, vol. 1 (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi Sull'Alto Medioevo, 1991), pp. 149-150.
3. Hikmat Kachouh, 'Sinai Ar. N F Parchment 8 and 28: Its Contribution to Textual Criticism of the Gospel of Luke', *Novum Testamentum*, 50 (2008), p. 30.
4. E A Lowe, 'An Unknown Latin Psalter on Mount Sinai', *Scriptorium*, vol. ix (1955), pp. 177-199.
5. E A Lowe, 'Two Other Unknown Latin Liturgical Fragments on Mount Sinai', *Scriptorium*, vol. xix (1965), pp. 3-29.
6. Reviel Netz, William Noel, Natalie Tchernetska and Nigel Wilson, ed., *The Archimedes Palimpsest. Volume One: Catalogue and Commentary. Volume Two: Images and Transcription* (Cambridge: Published for the Walters Art Museum by Cambridge University Press, 2011).
7. Siam Bhayro, Robert Hawley, Grigory Kessel and Peter Pormann, 'The Syriac Galen Palimpsest: Progress, Prospects, and Problems', *Journal of Semitic Studies*, vol. LVIII/1, Spring 2013, pp. 131-148.
8. G. Kessel, 'Membra disjecta sinaïtica I: a reconstitution of the Syriac Galen Palimpsest', in André Binggeli, Anne Boud'hors, Matthieu Cassin (eds), *Mélanges Paul Géhin* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta X). Leuven: Peeters (forthcoming).
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THE SINAI PALIMPSESTS PROJECT

CLAUDIA RAPP AND MICHAEL PHELPS

As *Sinaiticus* readers know well, the library of Saint Catherine's Monastery is second only to the Vatican Library in the richness of its holdings that extend across the centuries and represent the most important languages of medieval Christendom. The main collection contains well over 4,500 manuscripts (plus a significant number of early printed books), most of them in Greek, but also in no fewer than ten further languages. The second largest language group is—not surprisingly, considering the monastery's history—Arabic, followed by Syriac. Most of the manuscripts reflect the needs and interests of the generations of monks who called the monastery their home: scriptures, liturgical texts, but also patristic writings and other texts of spiritual value.

Early in the history of the monastery, books were probably kept in the sacristy adjacent to the church. It was only in 1734 that a specially dedicated library was constructed in the southern range. The story of the fire of May 1975, and the subsequent discovery of a large number of further manuscripts, now known as the 'New Finds', is told by Father Justin elsewhere in this issue of the bulletin (see page 12). As a result of this discovery, the library holdings, especially in the languages of eastern Christianity, were increased by more than 30 per cent. There were some 1,100 manuscripts, parts of manuscripts and fragments, including 836 manuscript items in Greek (among them 12 folios of the Codex Sinaiticus and parts of the *Iliad* in ninth-century writing), but also in Arabic, Syriac, Old Church Slavonic and a surprisingly large number of codices in Georgian and items in Latin. In keeping with their utilitarian character, the New Finds manuscripts also contain a very high percentage of palimpsest materials. The entire Sinai collection of palimpsests is quite substantial: at present, we are aware of more than 160 palimpsested objects, both from the main or Old Collection and the New Finds. By comparison, the Bibliotheca Laurenziana in Florence has 29, and the Austrian National Library in Vienna has 23 palimpsests.

These Sinai palimpsests are the focus of a new research project, undertaken by the Early Manuscript Electronic Library (EMEL) at the invitation of the Synaxis and His Eminence Archbishop Damianos. The work is carried out under the Directorship of Michael Phelps, with Professor Claudia Rapp of the University of Vienna as Scholarly Director. We have just completed the fourth year of a five-year funding period, supported by the Arcadia Fund of London with a total grant of \$2.1 million.

Palimpsests are, as the Greek root of the word indicates (*palin* [again] + *psao* [to scrape, to erase]), re-used sheets of written parchment. Beginning in about the fourth century, specially prepared animal skin became the common writing material used in the production of books in codex form. Several folded parchment sheets, inserted one into another, were stitched together to form a quire,

or gathering. The completed gatherings would then be bound between two covers to form a codex. At times and in areas where parchment became rare, earlier codices that were considered to be no longer of use or of relevance were taken apart. The original writing on the parchment folios (what we now call the undertext) was removed and new writing was applied in the overtext. What makes palimpsests so exciting is that their undertext may contain new languages, new scripts and new texts.

The work of the Sinai Palimpsests Project proceeds in five steps:

1. Evaluation

Before any manuscript is imaged, Father Justin, who takes responsibility to ensure the safety of the manuscript, determines whether it is safe to handle. Then, a detailed codicological analysis is undertaken in order to establish the conjoints of each recto and verso. This is essential for reconstructing the sequence of the erased undertext, which sometimes extends across two pages.

2. Image capture

The manuscript is imaged by our imaging team, which employs two young camera operators from Greece. Logistics on the ground are provided by the Jebeliya Bedouin and the staff of the monastery's hostel. Several members of our scientific team had already contributed to the development of innovative spectral imaging methods to recover the erased layer of the Archimedes Palimpsest. The spectral imaging system in use at the monastery is based on innovations of the Archimedes Palimpsest Project, but also features a variety of advances and additions of that system. The manuscript is mounted on a computer-controlled cradle built and distributed by Stokes Imaging in Austin, Texas, which supports fragile codices during imaging. Each recto and each verso is imaged 33 times. (By comparison, the Archimedes Palimpsest Project produced 16 images per folio.)

We use five modalities of image capture:

- 1) 'Standard' spectral imaging.** The parchment is illuminated with 12 narrow bands or wavelengths of light from the Ultraviolet (UV) to the Infrared (IR).
- 2) Raking illumination.** Light is projected onto the parchment at a low angle of incidence to discern surface texture and reveal original traces of lines or of erasures.
- 3) Colour fluorescence imaging.** The parchment is illuminated with short-wavelength light (UV or Blue). It absorbs some of the short-wavelength light and emits light at a longer wavelength. For example, when parchment is illuminated with UV light, it 'glows', or fluoresces yellow. Since the fluorescent light comes from within the parchment, even the faint traces of erased ink on the surface of the parchment cast a shadow and become more visible. We then use a colour filter wheel that rotates in front

of the camera to analyze the colour components of the fluorescence.

4) UV reflectance imaging. The colour filter wheel also includes a UV pass filter that blocks all the visible light of fluorescence and transmits to the camera only UV light reflected off the surface of the parchment. This often provides the best images of the erased text where the parchment has suffered abrasion or has otherwise been damaged.

5) Transmissive illumination. (newly developed for our project). Where corrosive inks have severely eroded the parchment (*Tintenfrass*), they leave behind letter-shaped channels in which the parchment is thinner and less dense. Backlighting the parchment generates images where the erased text appears as bright letters against a dark background.

3. Image Processing

The captured images of a folio are analyzed and the data from multiple captured images are combined in order to

generate derivative images which maximize the legibility of the erased texts.

1) Batch processing. In a semi-automated process, project scientist Keith Knox combines data from a UV image, where both undertext and overtext appear, and a red or IR image, where only the overtext appears, in order to highlight the undertext and distinguish it from the overtext. This generates a legible result for approximately 65 or 70 per cent of the imaged folios and results in a series of 25 processed images for every imaged side—a process that is essential, as we are dealing with a large quantity of folios.

2) Supervised Processing. If batch processing does not yield good results, the folio is referred to project scientists Roger Easton, Bill Christens-Barry and Dave Kelbe. In manual, labour-intensive processing, these scientists use a variety of methods to try to elucidate the undertext of difficult folios, often in close collaboration with the scholars, another hallmark of the project. In most cases, they use statistical processes—principle component analysis and independent component analysis—which isolate



Left: Arabic New Finds 8, 16v and 17r. Visible light image. *Right:* Arabic New Finds 8, 16v and 17r. Image captured in UV illumination through a blue filter. Erased text features a full-page illustration of a medicinal herb, fifth century CE.



Left: Syriac New Finds frg 65, 1r. Visible light image. *Right:* Syriac New Finds frg 65, 1r. Result of processing spectral data (Roger Easton). Erased text (black) is a Syriac translation of Galen's 'On Simple Drugs,' ninth century CE.

different features in the ‘stack’ of 33 images of each folio, such as the parchment, the overtext and the undertext.

4. Description and Analysis

An international team of more than 20 experts in all the different languages represented in the palimpsests is creating catalogue descriptions for the undertext, analyzing the scripts and identifying the texts. One benefit of the electronic medium is that it allows us to re-create the original sequence of an undertext, which may now be scattered within the same codex or dispersed between different manuscripts, by linking images online. For this purpose, we have created the appropriate catalogue infrastructure (we call it Katlkon) for an electronic database of palimpsests, building on work previously developed for the Walters Art Gallery by Doug Emery. Here, too, the project is breaking new ground. Katlkon is an all-in-one tool that can document the entire process in its various stages: visual codicological examination, the shot list for imaging, quality control on site (in case an image has to be taken again), processing off site, distribution to scholars for study, and data entry by scholars.

5. Digital Library

The end result of our work will be an open-access database of images and accompanying catalogue descriptions for each recto and verso. The resulting digital library of Sinai palimpsests will be hosted online on behalf of the monastery by the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Project data will be deposited for archiving and for local access at the monastery in Sinai and at the monastery’s Athens metochion, and will be archived at UCLA. The educational part of the database is already accessible online at www.sinaipalimpsests.org. The images and catalogue descriptions will be added gradually.

To be working on this project is an exciting opportunity, similar to an archaeologist cutting the first trench at a new site. The new discoveries that can be expected fall into four categories: new insights into palimpsestation, new scripts, new languages and new texts—all of them contributing to a deeper understanding of the central cultural role that Saint Catherine’s Monastery played through the ages.

Because we are dealing with a large collection of palimpsest manuscripts that has accumulated over time in the same location, one of the long-term results of our study will be insights into the process of making and using palimpsests that the study of individual manuscripts simply cannot yield. So far, we can say that the greatest activity in palimpsestation occurred surprisingly early, beginning with the ninth and tenth centuries and continuing into the 12th century and beyond. We have observed that older texts were removed either by scraping with a blade or a pumice stone, or washing off, or a combination of both. And we note that the preferred overttexts were utilitarian, mostly liturgical, such as prayer books.

Our preliminary study has made visible a disproportionately high number of samples of older script styles of the fourth to sixth centuries, when Greek was

still written in majuscule letters. Before our Palimpsests Project began, new languages had already been discovered among the New Finds palimpsests: in 1996, underneath a Georgian version of the Sayings of the Desert Fathers copied probably in the tenth century, the Georgian scholar Zaza Aleksidse was able to discover (Sin. Georgian NF 13 and Sin. Georgian NF 55) what would eventually become 250 pages of the Gospel of John and a Bible Lectionary in Caucasian Albanian, the language of a people who lived in the eastern Caucasus from the late fourth century BCE to the seventh century CE (ancestors of today’s Udi, who live in the Republic of Azerbaijan). Until then, the written form of Caucasian Albanian had only been known from a few words in inscriptions on stone and clay, and a script chart of the 15th century. Our project has just this last year taken new images of these manuscripts and achieved significantly better legibility, leading to some major corrections in the text.

Although we cannot reasonably expect to find further new languages, we have already found evidence for the extensive presence of unexpected languages in the monastery’s collection: Ethiopic and a significant amount of Latin, probably in an early insular script from the British Isles. And that is in addition to Arabic, lots of Syriac, Georgian, Armenian and, of course, Greek. Moreover, there is a very large number of palimpsests in Christian Palestinian Aramaic—a dialect of Aramaic used by the Orthodox Christians in Palestine between the sixth and the 13th centuries.

Among the new texts that have so far been identified are a hymn to St Nicholas in Greek, Christian Palestinian Aramaic translations of (known) Greek texts, previously unattested Georgian versions of the Psalms, and several medical texts of the Hippocratic tradition. Of special interest are illustrations: two drawings of medical plants in a Greek pharmacological manuscript, and a drawing of two heads under a roof supported by two columns in a Latin undertext. More discoveries and identifications are expected as the project is approaching the end of its funding period.

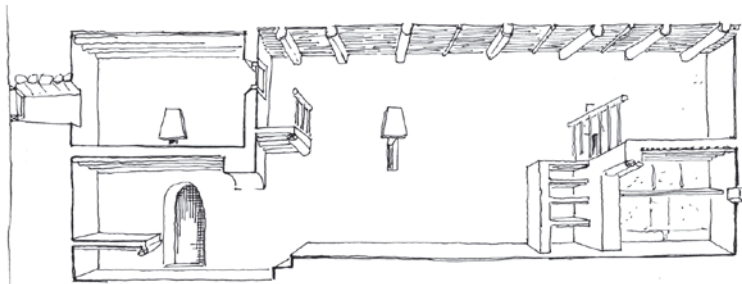
Despite or rather because of its location, Saint Catherine’s Monastery has been a magnet for monks, pilgrims, visitors and treasure hunters throughout the ages. Their presence is reflected in the rich and varied library holdings. While this was well established for the Old Collection, it was brought to the fore to an even greater extent with the discovery of the New Finds in 1975. Now, with the ongoing work on the palimpsests, we can dig even deeper to make visible hitherto unknown or poorly known texts and languages and to take the full measure of the monastery’s cultural reach.

PROFESSOR CLAUDIA RAPP, Scholarly Director of the Sinai Palimpsests Project and Board Member of the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library, is Professor of Byzantine Studies at the University of Vienna and Director of the Division of Byzantine Research at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. She joined the Board of Trustees of the Saint Catherine Foundation in 2015.

MICHAEL PHELPS is Director of the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library, a non-profit research and service organization based in Los Angeles, California.

A HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY AT THE MONASTERY OF SINAI

PETROS KOUFOPOULOS AND MARINA MYRIANTHEOS-KOUFOPOULOU



1. Reconstruction drawing of the library rooms in the Tower of St George (P. Koufopoulos).

While the significance of the Sinai monastery's unique collection of manuscripts, incunabula and early printed books has been recognized since the 19th century, the history of the library is less well known. The subject was taken up relatively recently by scholars such as Kurt Weitzmann, George Galavaris and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko as part of their work on the manuscripts. The first history of the library as such, a short account by Panagiotis Nicolopoulos, did not appear until 1990. This was followed in 1993 by a more complete study by Father Demetrios Digbasanis, former librarian of Sinai, today Metropolitan of Gjirokastra, which includes details of the collection's formation and where it was kept.

The study that follows focuses on the identification of the buildings that housed the library.

The early years of the library

It is generally accepted that during the early Christian and Byzantine periods the 'place of the books' was a place of safety – a tower, perhaps, or the area above the narthex in the main church – and not a specially built library room. The keeper of the books would likely exercise his duties in the church, and some of the Sinai manuscripts do indeed contain dedications to the monastery church of Sinai.

The Arab conquest of the Sinai Peninsula in the seventh century marked a turning point in the history of the library. The number of volumes and the need for a proper place to hold them increased, as the numerous hermitages in the mountains surrounding the monastery were abandoned and the many manuscripts kept there were moved to the fortified enclosure of the monastery itself. The books and codices could very well have been stored in the Justinian basilica – in the sacristy, at the east end of the south aisle, in the original simple niches preserved in the walls, or in similar niches in the church's oil storeroom, in the north aisle.

There is a good possibility that books were also kept in the pre-Justinian tower, which served the needs and life of the monastery from the very beginning. Substantial remains of this square tower survive today inside the monastery, including the vaulted oil storage room on the lower level

and, above it, the Chapel of the Mother of God, recently identified as the central church of the original skete 'of the hermits of the Bush'.

The Tower of St George

From the 13th century onwards the mediaeval Tower of St George housed some of the monastery's manuscripts. They were kept in two small rooms, one set above the other, the lower room lying about one floor above ground level (1). The rooms communicated with the nearby sacristy, where other treasures of the church were housed. Access was through another set of rooms built between the church and the north fortress wall, among them the 13th-century Chapel of the Holy Apostles. These rooms were demolished in the early 20th century.

The books and manuscripts could have been moved here following the catastrophic earthquake of 1201, when the tower was repaired. Early 16th-century graffiti appear to support this possibility. The earliest written reference dates from 1712. Michael Eneman from Uppsala speaks of 'books stacked one above the other' in a 'room along the wall near the monastery's main church'. The rooms were furnished with poorly made bookshelves of simple planks, reeds and clay. The original plasterwork is preserved *in situ*. It seems that this extraordinary place inside the tower served as a secondary library, additional to the nearby storerooms of the church.

The books remained in the tower until at least 1734, when Archbishop Nikiphoros Marthales reorganized the library. Worn books no longer in use were left behind, together with loose folios and parchment fragments intended for the repair of manuscripts. A large part of the tower was destroyed during the great flood of 1798. Debris fell into the old library rooms from the earthen floors and the terrace of the chapel above, burying the contents, which lay forgotten for almost two centuries. The tower walls were reconstructed in 1801 with the assistance of Napoleon's engineer Kleber.

In a disastrous fire on 30 November 1971 flames spread from the sacristy to the upper part of the tower, and debris again collapsed into it from above. The late sacristan, Archimandrite Sofronios Montesatos, cleared the area in 1975. He unearthed the material buried here and discovered the manuscript fragments, scrolls and books known today as the New Finds, events that are well recorded in his diaries.

The Library of Archbishop Nikiphoros Marthales

Archbishop Nikiphoros Marthales (1729–47) is widely regarded as the founder of Sinai's modern-day library. He ordered the classification and rehousing of the collection in a set of rooms south of the chapel of St Anthony, and wrote detailed accounts of the work to improve the library (2).



2. West facade, Library of Archbishop Nikiphoros Marthales (Ordnance Survey, 1868).



3. Library of Archbishop Nikiphoros Marthales, showing the 15th-century Islamic panel set into the door (Matson Collection, c.1920).



4. The south side of the monastery after the demolition of the vernacular buildings (Sinai monastery archive, c.1930).

Construction began in 1734. It was carried out by the monk and mason Philotheos, who had been invited to the monastery from Proconessos Island to repair the lead-sheathed roof of the main church. Philotheos was assisted by ‘the elderly monk Simeon and all the standing monks’, according to an inscription on the wooden lintel above the east entrance. The inscription was lost when the building was demolished in the 20th century, but fortunately the text was published by MHL Rabino in 1938. The inscription can be seen in a 1933 photograph of the entrance by Fred Boissonnas and in many similar photographs in the monastery’s archive and in the Roussen, Matson and other collections.

The Library of Archbishop Nikiphoros would remain in use for some 200 years. It was demolished in the 1930s, but a vestige of the architecture survives: the 15th-century Islamic panel that was originally set into the entrance door. A 1930s photograph documents the panel (3), which is on display today in the sacristy museum.

Nikiphoros entrusted the classification of the library to the scholar Protosyngellos Isaias, who was named *epistates* (supervisor of the books) by the Synaxis, the council of Fathers. Isaias collected all the scattered volumes from the monastery’s various book storerooms, lockers, niches and monks’ cells and put them in order. He prepared the first catalogue and donated his personal collection of books, as did Archbishop Nikiphoros, who brought his library from Constantinople to Sinai.

A number of books and manuscripts had long been kept in rooms adjacent to the Archbishop’s lodgings. Under Nikiphoros this collection remained here, and it would be kept here until the 1950s, arranged according to the plan the archbishop had introduced in the 18th century. Philotheos had again been entrusted to reorganize the space. By the end of the 19th century an annex was built

to the west of the tower. Early photographs document the interior of this area, with manuscripts and printed books set out in order on bookshelves. The loss of valuable manuscripts like the fourth-century Codex Sinaiticus and the ninth-century Uspenskij Psalter, whether through theft or loans, resulted in the addition to the shelves of protective wooden railings.

Construction of the South Range

In the 1860s, during the tenure of Archbishop Cyril (1859-67), an extensive renovation of the monastery was proposed. The radical plan was in keeping with the ideals of the time. A wooden model from the period reveals a project to demolish all the poorly constructed vernacular buildings, apart from the church and Justinian fortress. Fortunately it was only partly implemented. The buildings along the east and west fortress walls were remodelled and unified under long flat roofs behind new timber balconies, with the monks’ living quarters to the east and a guest wing to the west. Most of the work was carried out by the sacristan, Gregorios, who died in 1889.

By the beginning of the 20th century, the Library of Archbishop Nikiphoros and all the vernacular buildings on the south side of the monastery were in a very bad state of repair. The decision was taken to demolish them and erect a new building in their place. According to historic plans of the monastery by Richard Pococke (1738) and the Deacon Gennadius (1813), the demolished buildings included four medieval chapels named after Saints Sergius and Bacchus, St Demetrios, the Three Hierarchs and Archangel Michael, as well as several cells and workshops (4). Due to a lack of funds, work on the cleared site was delayed for 25 years, and it was only under Archbishop Porphyrios III (1926-68) that construction began. The new building was designed by the Greek architect Petros Frangoulis, who was assisted

on-site by an Italian, Arnaldo Lycurgus Latsioni. Situated inside the fortress wall, it included an icon storeroom on the first floor and a modern library on the second floor.

Photographs of the South Range under construction were discovered recently in the monastery's archives (5, 6). Viewed together with images from the Matson Collection, they reveal the difficulties involved in implementing this large-scale project in the Sinai Desert. A rather modern, for the era, mixed building system was employed, combining a reinforced concrete framework with load-bearing masonry. Construction stopped during the Second World War and resumed soon after.

It seems that by the year 1938 the new library building was ready for use, although the collections were not yet in place. We can assume that by 1951 the manuscript and book collections were permanently placed in the library, leaving no space for the large icon collection, which was housed in the large east room on the first floor.

Two small marble plaques inside the library, one mounted next to the other on the east wall, commemorate the date of completion, 27 August 1938, and the sponsor, Theodoros Polychroniou Kotsikas. Another, larger marble inscription on the north wall of the central staircase commemorates the beginning and very end of this ambitious project (1930 and 1951) and pays tribute to King Farouk of Egypt and Archbishop Porphyrius III. A further two small marble plaques name the project's five benefactors and four donors.

Library of the Cairo Dependency

Although it is directly connected to the Sinai library, the library of the monastery's Cairo dependency is little known to scholars. Established during the tenure of Archbishop Cyril II (1759-90), it became known as the 'Archbishop's Library'. The collection is rich in early printed books, some of which bear the name of the Sinai library. It seems that books went back and forth between the two libraries.

By the end of the 19th century, the Cairo library was transferred from the original dependency in the Tzouvania area of old Cairo to a new neoclassical building near Al-Zahir Mosque. Archbishop Porphyrios II (1904-26) mentions in his memoirs that novices studied here for three years before gaining admission to the Sinai monastery (7).

PROFESSOR PETROS KOUFOPOULOS is a Conservation Consultant to the Monastery of Sinai, Professor of Architectural Conservation and Building Technology at the University of Patras, Greece and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Saint Catherine Foundation.

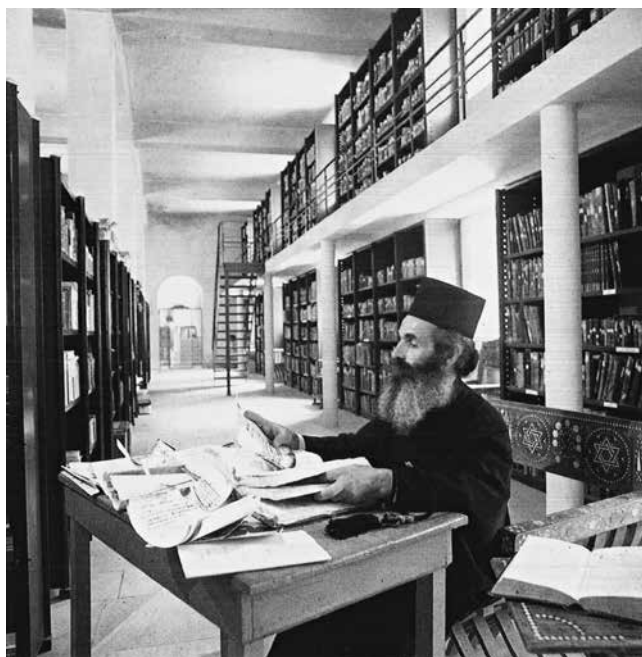
DR MARINA MYRIANTHEOS-KOUFOPOULOU is Scholarly Consultant to the Monastery of Sinai and researcher in the history of its architecture and archaeology. She is a Board Member of the Mount Sinai Foundation, Athens.



5. Construction of the ground floor, South Range (Matson Collection, 1933).



6. Sanctification of the South Range foundations (Sinai monastery archive, c 1930).



7. The late Archimandrite Sophronios Montesatos, sacristan of the monastery, at work in the Sinai library in the 1970s.



SAVE THE DATES

EGYPT IN LONDON: A WEEKEND

2 - 5 November 2017

A special weekend of activities for friends and benefactors will begin with the opening of the Boissonnas exhibition at the Royal Geographical Society in London on 2 November 2017. Celebrated photographer of Greece and the Mediterranean world, Fred Boissonnas (1858-1946) is also known for his work in Egypt in the years between the wars. Egypt's first king, Fuad I, commissioned Boissonnas to document the monuments, people and landscapes of his newly independent country, previously a British protectorate. A magnificent book resulted, *L'Égypte*, published in 1932 in an edition of 300 copies, and a centrepiece of the Royal Geographical Society exhibition.

Inspired by the works on display, 'Egypt in London' will explore the multiple connections between Egypt and Britain's capital city. Egyptomania can be traced back to Napoleon's Egyptian campaign of 1798 and Nelson's victory over Napoleon in the Battle of the Nile that year. Defeated by the British at sea, Napoleon was at first successful on land, occupying Cairo. French scholars travelling with Napoleon's soldiers set up the Egyptian Institute there. They embarked on a survey of Egypt, documenting sites like the Pyramids and the Sphinx and collecting antiquities like the Rosetta Stone.

By 1801 the British had defeated the French. The Egyptian antiquities collected by the French were brought to Britain as spoils of war. To this day, the Rosetta Stone is central to the British Museum's Egyptian displays. Privileged access to the museum's Egyptian collections is envisaged as part of the Egypt in London weekend. So too, is a private visit by candlelight to Sir John Soane's Museum, home to the architect and preserved exactly as he left it on his death in 1837, complete with Egyptian artefacts such as the sarcophagus of Seti I.

The artist David Roberts (1796-1864) is renowned for his scenes of Egypt, produced as series of lithographs, and the Print Room at the Victoria and Albert Museum is well known in turn as the repository for many of them. A private visit to the V & A is planned to see these and other treasures.

The Egyptian style changed the look of London forever when Cleopatra's Needle was set up on the Victoria Embankment in 1878. The massive granite obelisk was transported from Heliopolis to its new home by the Thames thanks to Victorian ingenuity and philanthropy. A tour of this and other London landmarks is planned as part of the Egypt in London programme.

Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922 gave new impetus to the Egyptian taste. Carter was famously funded by the aristocratic Egyptologist Lord Carnarvon. A large part of his collection of Egyptian antiquities was sold to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, but important pieces remain in the Antiquities Room at Highclere Castle. A visit to Highclere will be a highlight of the Egypt in London weekend, and not just for its Egyptian associations. The imposing house and grounds are familiar to viewers around the world as the setting for the award-winning television series *Downton Abbey*.

The full itinerary of Egypt in London will be published soon. Meanwhile, make a note of the dates and plan to join us for what promises to be a unique weekend to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Saint Catherine Foundation and American Associates.