

# CANADIO-BYZANTINA

A Newsletter published by the Canadian Committee of  
Byzantinists

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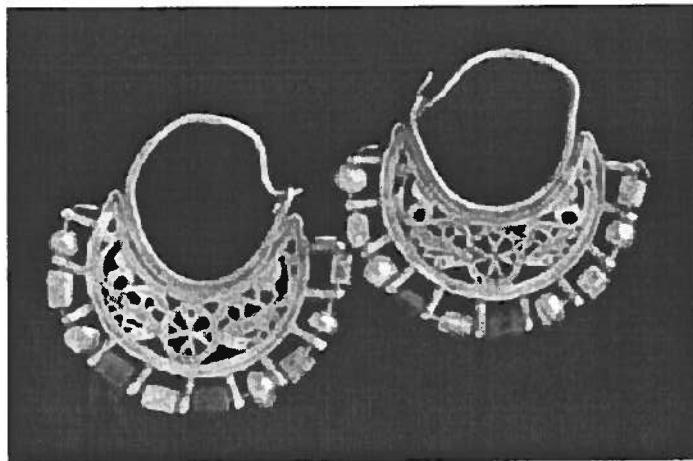
*Members will lament the passing this past year of Nicolas Oikonomides, the most distinguished Byzantinist to have held a university post in Canada. I am grateful to Daniel Sahas and his wife Sophia Mergiali-Sahas and to Franziska Shlosser for writing appreciations of him for this newsletter.*

*Byzantine Studies have, in a few short years, lost the luminaries that during the last few decades had raised our subject to not only a new scholarly level but also to public recognition (I remember how in the 1960s when travelling to conferences abroad I had to explain to immigration officials what the word Byzantine meant). Fortunately for our subject there are a few younger scholars who may one day be similarly regarded. For the present, however, I myself mourn in particular four giants who both, I know not why, thought fit to aid in very different ways my own career and admitted me to their friendship: Robert Browning, Sir Steven Runciman, Leendert Westerink and Alexander Kazhdan. I am consequently much appreciative of Graham Speake's permission to include in this issue an abbreviated version of his account, not yet published, of Sir Steven's final visit to Mount Athos. I wish to thank also Glenn Peers for succumbing to my blandishments by writing about his experiences as a Canadian Byzantinist in Texas.*

*Congratulations are due to Glenn Peers for the award of a Mellon Fellowship and to John Wortley who has been elected an Honorary Fellow of Saint John's College, University of Manitoba, and of Saint Chad's College, Durham University (U.K.), an Honorary Member of the Editorial Board of MOSAIC, Directeur de Cours at the École Pratique des Hautes Études at the Sorbonne (Paris) (i.e. Visiting Professor to conduct four advanced seminars) and who has received a Faculty of Arts Endowment Award (for publication) from the University of Manitoba and a three-year research grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.*

*All best wishes for the new millenium (or part thereof) !*

*Antony Littlewood*



Crescent-shape earrings from 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century.  
ROM inv. no. 994.220.43

## ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS

### D.F. BUCK:

He has been spending a sabbatical leave examining Socrates Scholasticus' treatment of Julian the Apostate, and comparing that with Eunapius' of Christian emperors.

### A. COMNÉNE:

She will be giving a paper on "Costume Byzantin et son inspiration pour le Costume de Cour Roumain (XVème - XVIème s.)" at the Paris Congress.

### P.T.R. GRAY:

#### Publications:

"Theological Discourse in the Seventh Century: the Heritage from the Sixth Century", *Byzantinische Forschungen* (forthcoming).

"The Sabaite Monasteries and the Christological Controversies of the Fifth and Sixth Centuries", in J. Patrich (ed.), *The Sabaite Heritage* (Dumbarton Oaks, forthcoming).

#### Lectures:

"The Life-Giving Flesh of the Saviour in Eucharist and Christology", Conference on "The Eucharist in Theology and Philosophy", Tihany, Hungary, 2000.

"New Light on the Conversations of 532", Canadian Society of Patristic Studies, Edmonton, 2000.

He has now completed his term as a member of the Executive Committee of the Byzantine Studies Conference, but has, since June, been the Secretary of the Canadian Society of Patristic Studies.

### R.P.H. GREENFIELD:

#### Publication:

*The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion: An Eleventh Century Pillar Saint*, Dumbarton Oaks, 2000 (423pp.).

#### Lecture:

"Drawn to the Blazing Beacon: Pilgrimage to the Living and the Case of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion", Dumbarton Oaks Spring Symposium, 2000 (to be published in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 [2002]).

### P.J. KIERNAN

He has won both a Greek Hellenic Association of Constantinople's Byzantine Essay Prize and the J.D. Ferguson Historical Research Foundation's Undergraduate Essay prize for his "The Posthumous Coins of Constantine and the Ascension of Elijah", which was written for a Byzantine course at the University of Western Ontario.

### A.R. LITTLEWOOD:

#### Publications:

"The Byzantine Letter of Consolation in the Macedonian and Komnenian Periods", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 53 (1999), 19-41.

Essays on "Coronation" and "Jeremias II Tranos" in G. Speake (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Greece and the Hellenic Tradition*.

Essays on "Linnaeus" and "Theophrastus" in C. Shoemaker (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Gardens: History and Design* (revised title) (forthcoming).

**S. MERGIALI-SAHAS:**

Work in Progress:

Byzantine diplomacy in the West during the 14th and 15th centuries: the Byzantine emperor as ambassador.

Diplomats, diplomatic delegations, diplomatic gifts and ceremonial during the late Byzantine period.

**P. MOORE:**

He is proof-reading *Iter Psellianum*, a catalogue/archive of the approximately 1100 works ascribed to Michael Psellos and preserved in about 1700 mss in some 100 locations. Each work is listed together with its mss and bibliography (dating from 1497 to 2000). There are separate lists of incipits, of all the mss cited and of all the latter's contents.

**J. OSBORNE:**

Publications:

"Politics, diplomacy and the cult of relics in Venice and the northern Adriatic in the first half of the ninth century", *Early Medieval Europe* 8 (1999), 369-386.

"The enamel of Doge Ordelafo Falier on the Pala d'Oro in Venice" [co-authored with David Buckton], *Gesta* 39 (2000), 43-49.

Lectures:

"The Church of San Marco, Venice, in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade", Cambridge University, UK (February 2000).

"The artistic culture of early medieval Rome: a research agenda for the 21st century", XLVIII Settimana di Studio, Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto medioevo, Spoleto, Italy (April 2000).

"The Christianization of the Roman Forum", The British School at Rome, Italy (May 2000).

"Leonard Boyle and the lower church of San Clemente, Rome", International Medieval Congress, Leeds, UK (July 2000).

"Exorcising the demons: Rome's ancient monuments in the experience of medieval pilgrims", University College Cork, Ireland (July 2000).

In May 2000 he organized and chaired a two-day conference, held in Rome under the auspices of the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma, the Norwegian Institute and the British School at Rome, to mark the centenary of the excavation of the church of S. Maria Antiqua. There were eighteen speakers from Britain, Norway, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and the United States.

**J. PAYTON:**

Publications:

"Toward an Orthodox Worldview for the Third Millennium" (in Russian) in G. Carilet (ed.), *Humanity and the Christian Worldview: Conceptualizing the Normal and Abnormal in Medicine, Science, and Society*, Simferopol, Ukraine, 1999, 95-106.

"Toward an Orthodox Approach to Higher Education in 21st-Century Russia," in N. Pecherskaya (ed.), *Higher Education in 21st-Century Russian Culture: A Christian Perspective*, St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg School of Religion and Philosophy, 2000, 46-57 (in Russian), 57-66 (in English).

"St. Gregory of Nyssa" and "Iconoclasm (Controversy)", in W.M. Johnston (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Monasticism* (2 voll.), Chicago, 2000, vol. 1, 554, 633-634 respectively.

Lectures:

"The Influence of the Protestant Reformation on the History of Ukraine", The Crimean Medical University, Simferopol, Crimea, Ukraine, May 17th, 1999).

"A Christian Approach to History", as above, May 18th, 1999.

"Eastern Orthodoxy: Hellenized Christianity? Christianity and Culture in the Orthodox Paradigm" and "Dialogue with Eastern Orthodoxy: what Western Christians can learn from the Orthodox", University of Calgary ("Annual Lectures in Christian Thought"), September, 1999.

Since 1998 he has served as Executive Secretary of CAREE (Christians Associated for Relationships with Eastern Europe), an oecumenical organization that has been working for forty years with indigenous churches and Christians in Eastern Europe in the pursuit of justice, peace and reconciliation. Much of this involves dealing with the legacies of Byzantium in church, state, culture and society.

G. PEERS:

Publications:

"Iconoclasm, Peter and the Use of Nature in the Smyrna Physiologus (Evangelical School B.8)", *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 50 (2000), 267-92.

*Subtle Bodies: Representing Angels in Byzantium*, Transformations in Late Antiquity, vol. 32 (series editor Peter Brown) Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming, February 2001.

At present (2000-2001) he is at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto and is working on another book, *Framing Byzantine Art*.

D. SAHAS:

Publications:

"Barthomeus of Edessa on Islam: a Polemicist with Nerve!", *Graeco-Arabica* 7-8 (1999-2000) (*Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Graeco-Oriental and African Studies*), 467-483.

"Why did Heraclius not Defend Jerusalem, and Fight the Arabs?", *Parole de l'Orient* 24 (1999), 79-97.

F.E. SHLOSSER:

She was the outside examiner of a Ph.D. thesis written by Jacquilyne Martin under the direction of John Wortley on "Cardinal Bessarion, Mystical Theology and Spiritual Union between East and West" in the Department of History, University of Manitoba, 2000.

J.T. WORTLEY:

Publications:

*John Scylitzes: A Synopsis of Histories (811-1067 AD), a provisional translation*, Publications of the Centre for Hellenic Studies [University of Manitoba] no. 1, 2000. The final version will include notes.

*Répertoire of Byzantine Beneficial Tales [διηγήσεις ψυχωφελεῖς]* is now available at <http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~wortley>.

Lectures:

"Byzantine 'beneficial tales' and the 'Last Things'", Dumbarton Oaks International Symposium, April 29th - May 1st, 1999.

"What the men of Kiev saw at Tsargrad in 911", paper accepted for Paris Congress.

## **MEMBERS' E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

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## **BYZANTINE COURSES AT CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES**

In addition to the courses listed in *Canadio-Byzantina* 11 (2000) members have sent me the following information:

**REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, ANCASTER (J. Payton):**

HIS 107: History of Eastern Europe.

HIS 361: The Byzantine World.

HIS 365: Intellectual History of Eastern Orthodoxy.

HIS 370: Ukraine: History and Culture.

All these courses are single-term courses, HIS 107 being offered every year, the remainder once every two years.

**SAINT PAUL'S UNIVERSITY, OTTAWA**

The Sheptytsky Institute offers two civil degrees in Eastern Christian Studies (M.A. [Th.] and Ph.D. [Th.]) and two ecclesiastical degrees (L.Th. and D.Th.). Courses taught by the Uniate Catholic faculty this year are "Theological and Historical Approaches to Eastern Christian Studies", "Issues in Eastern Christian Liturgical History: Byzantine Liturgy under Ottoman Rule", "Issues in Eastern Christian Hermeneutics and Exegesis: Patristic Exegesis - Alexandrian School", "Theological and Historical Approaches to Eastern Christian Liturgy: Byzantine Funeral Rites", "History of Eastern Christian Person: Ephraim the Syrian and Syriac Theology" and

"Theological" Antinomic Method in Eastern Mystical and Ascetical Theology" (a research seminar).

SAINT STEPHEN'S COLLEGE (affiliated with University of Alberta) (J. Payton): During the winter term of 2000 Professor Payton will be co-ordinating and supervising two D.Min. courses on "Byzantine Christianity" and "Icons and Spirituality".

UNIVERSITY OF SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE, TORONTO (T.A. Smith): "I teach a course on 'Christian Monasticisms' with a particular focus on Eastern Christianity, beginning with Syria and ending on Mount Athos; a course called 'Athos and Muscovy', which carries the theme forward into late and post-Byzantine times; and a course called 'Rome and Constantinople 843-1453' which looks at the historical relationship of the two sees and their eventual estrangement. All are graduate courses."

## **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GREECE AND THE HELLENIC TRADITION**

Five members (Bourbouhakis, Greenfield, Kamperidis, Littlewood and Shlosser) have between them contributed forty-seven of the approximately one thousand essays for this work, while forty-five further entries have been written by fourteen other Canadian scholars. The encyclopaedia, edited by Graham Speake, is unique in English in that it surveys people, places, periods, events and themes from the Bronze Age to the present. Its most useful aspect will probably be that it traces specific subjects over so long a period, whereas other Greek works of reference are chronologically far more limited. It has been published by Fitzroy Dearborn in two volumes (1861 pages, ISBN 1-57958-141-2).

## **NICOLAS OIKONOMIDES (1934 - 2000)**

*An appreciation by Daniel Sahas with the collaboration of his wife, Sophia Mergiali-Sahas, once an assistant researcher of Nicolas Oikonomides*

Another great Byzantinist died this year, after Alexander Kazhdan (1922 - 1977) and Ioannis Karayiannopoulos (ob. 1998) in the month of May (31st), the ominous month for Byzantium: Nicolas Oikonomides, Professor of Byzantine History at the University of Athens, Director of the Institute of Byzantine Studies of the National Institute of Research of Greece, Secretary of the Association International des Études Byzantines. There is a direct connection between Canada and Oikonomides as he served as Professor of Byzantine History at Université de Montréal, where he began his teaching career in 1969, and was a member of our Canadian Committee of Byzantinists. There is, therefore, ample reason for us to pause for a moment in silence and a reflection on his passing through this life.

Scholars are measured and judged, especially when they are candidates for a teaching or administrative post (one would wish in all instances!), by their *curriculum vitae*; and his is a too lengthy one for a brief memorial, and certainly unnecessary in his case. As a teacher Oikonomides did not claim to be exciting; he was honest and humble enough to confide that as a lecturer in the classroom he was boring. His seminars, however, were quite another matter. There the researcher and scholar emerged robust, especially inexorable and demanding; thence flowed a score of his students who are occupying today research or teaching positions in major universities

and institutes. He demanded nothing less than a thorough mastering of the sources and the bibliography on a subject. When asked by a student what he, or she, ought to cover, he would point not to volumes but to shelves, the topmost of which were reached only with a ladder: "But, of course, all this !"

To the end of his life he remained known as a researcher, like his teacher Paul Lemerle. He could be found almost every year, sweaty, at Dumbarton Oaks during the hot and humid Washington summers, working on the Byzantine seals in the basement. He has left us the fruits of his labours, his *Byzantine Lead Seals* (1985), his *Collection of Dated Byzantine Lead Seals* (1986) and, with John Nesbitt, the edited *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art* (1991). His name is connected also with the monumental eighteen-volume *Archives de l'Athos*, to which he contributed the *Actes* of the monasteries of Dionysiou (vol. IV), Kastamonitou (vol. IX), Docheiariou (vol. XIII) and Iviron (vols. XIV and XVI). A research project on "Levels of Literacy in Byzantium" has not, to my knowledge, seen as yet the light of publication; but those who worked with him on that project and contributed their expertise to it are still amazed by the breadth and depth of its spectrum.

With his profound knowledge of the sources and his unforgiving working habits Oikonomides made his mark in multiple areas of Byzantine studies: sources and institutions (as indicated above and in *Documents et études sur les institutions de Byzance, 7e-15e s.*, Variorum, 1976), literacy, diplomacy ("Byzantine diplomacy, A.D. 1204-1453; means and ends", in J. Shepard and S. Franklin eds., *Byzantine Diplomacy*, 1992), civilization (*Byzantium from the ninth century to the fourth Crusade: studies, texts, monuments*, Variorum, 1992), and economics and commerce (*Hommes d'affaires grecs et latins à Constantinople [XIIIe-XVe siècles]*, 1979). A more complete and annotated list of his publications in book or article form is awaiting the hand of a specialist and more competent Byzantinist.

Oikonomides was not the "fun" scholar to have around - unless one had good luck, perseverance and a discerning disposition. In such a case, whether junior or senior, one would be invited to his home for consultation, where Oikonomides himself would prepare coffee and cookies, and, for good measure in case he was not sure of his guest's preference or taste, he would have procured from the nearby patisserie a good ensemble of Greek pastries. Somehow he knew how to combine and balance a serious, business-like, dry conversation with a sweet or sharp physical taste. The last time I was with him in his office at the Institute of Byzantine Studies in Athens we had a not-so-dry, antinomically speaking, conversation on Byzantine studies in Canada over a glass of strong Cretan *raki* ! But this is not the only thing for which I will remember him fondly.

### ***An appreciation of his stay in Canada at the Université de Montréal by Franziska Shlosser***

Nicolas Oikonomides arrived in Montreal in 1969, and was hired by the Department d'histoire de l'Université de Montréal as professeur agrégé. Five years later, in 1973, he was named professeur titulaire. From 1976-1981, he was chair of the department. After a sabbatical leave, he held this position again from 1982-1984, and, at the end of this period, Nicolas Oikonomides returned to Athens, Greece.

During his stay in Montreal, he was a member of the Société des études anciennes du Québec, the Comité de lecture of Byzantine Studies, the Comité consultative du Centre interuniversitaire d'Études européennes and, of course, the Canadian Committee of the Association Internationale des Études Byzantines.

In June of 1972, the members of the Canadian Committee held their first meeting at the Learned Societies at McGill University. At this meeting, Nicolas Oikonomides presented a paper entitled: "À propos des relations byzantino-hongroise au X siècles. In this paper, he discussed the first Hungarian invasion into Byzantine territory in A.D. 934, tracing the name of the invaders, the Vardariotes, through oriental sources, especially the Arab writer Masudi.

The members met again at Queen's University in 1973. Nicolas Oikonomides and his wife were present, both of them giving papers. Professor Zacharidou-Oikonomides presented one entitled: "Trade Between Venice and Asia Minor in the Fourteenth Century", while Nicolas Oikonomides spoke on the Byzantine thematic organization. In his presentation, "Encore sur l'origine des thèmes Byzantines", he analysed the much debated question of the origin of Byzantine themata. He used the evidence gained by an accurate study of imperial seals to give substance to his theory, and drew attention to this hitherto neglected source.

While Nicolas Oikonomides was at the Université de Montréal, he supervised a number of both doctoral and master's theses (for details see below).

As a sad afterthought, I saw Nicolas Oikonomides once more after he had left Montreal at a meeting in Athens. Little did I know that it would be a last goodbye. He will certainly be missed by all of us. Wherever he was, the study of Byzantine Civilization was in safe hands.

### ***Theses (M.A. & Ph.D.) supervised at Université de Montréal by Nicolas Oikonomides***

VERGANELAKI, Valentine, *La révolte de Thessalonique au XIVe siècle (134-1350)* (1973).

HADJOPOULOS, Dionysios, *Recherches sur les révoltes à Byzance du VIIIe au XIe siècles* (1974).

LÉGARÉ, Jacques, *Le règne de l'empereur Théophile (829-842) et les relations byzantino-arabes* (1975).

SARANDI, Hélène, *La ville et la région de Patras de XIIIe au XVe siècle. Étude de géographie historique* (1977).

ASIMACOPOULOS, Angelos, *Prosopography of Greek Lives of Saints of the Stelios Palaeologan Period (XIII-XV Centuries)* (1979).

DRACOPOULOS, Catherine, *La vie et l'oeuvre de Macaire Macres, higoumène du monastere du Pantocrator a Constantinople* (1979).

BERSENEFF-FERRY, Olga, *Les voyageurs russes à Constantinople du XIIe au XVe siècles* (1979).

HADJOPOULOS, Dionysios, *Le premier siège de Constantinople par les Ottomans, de 1394 à 1402* (1980).

McGEER, Eric Michael, *Cerularius as Seen by Michael Psellos* (1984).

SARADI-MENDELOVICI, Hélène, *Le notariat byzantin du IXe au XVe siècle* (1985).

KAMPERIDIS, Lambros, *The Greek Monasteries of Sozopolis, XIV-XVII Centuries* (1989).

McGEER, Eric Michael, *The Byzantine Army in the tenth Century: The Praecepta Militaria of the Emperor Nikephoros Phokas* (1990).



## SIR STEVEN RUNCIMAN REVISITS MOUNT ATHOS

*An abbreviated version of the account, forthcoming in the Annual Report of the Friends of Mount Athos but written before Sir Steven's death by its secretary Graham Speake*

Sir Steven Runciman, doyen of Byzantine studies and one of Britain's most distinguished living historians, has recently completed a journey in his 98th year before which men half his age would quail. Braving the unprecedented temperatures of this year's July and the rigours of travel to and from Mount Athos, he has made a pilgrimage to Karyes at the invitation of the Holy Community, the governing body of Athos, to attend the rededication of the Protaton Tower.

The tower is an important building in its own right. It dates from the Byzantine period and is one of the few surviving remnants of the early monastic settlement that once owned all the land and buildings in what is now the capital of this remote monastic republic. But for Sir Steven it means far more than that. In a very real sense it is now a symbol of his life's work as a Byzantinist. This was the reason why he was so eager to accept the Fathers' invitation not only to be present but also to address the assembled company, which he did in high-flown ecclesiastical Greek.

In 1997 Sir Steven was the joint winner of the Onassis Prize for Culture, an award that was made to him personally in Athens in recognition of his lifetime's contribution to Byzantine history.... With a gesture typical of his philanthropic nature (he also endowed the lift in the London Library) Sir Steven decided to use the proceeds ... to finance a major work of conservation on the Holy Mountain ...; and with this in mind he entrusted the sum to the Executive Committee of the Friends of Mount Athos. With his full agreement we settled on a project which satisfied both his wishes and those of the society....

In the end the suggestion came from the Holy Community itself. They were already in the process of restoring the fabric of the Protaton Tower in Karyes. But in order for it to fulfil its designated function as the depository for the archives, manuscripts, and other treasures of the Protaton, together with a reading room and exhibition area, it also needed complete internal refurbishment....

In common with all the monasteries on Athos, the Protaton has a priceless collection of treasures.... Its archives are especially important and include several *typika* ... that were granted to the Holy Mountain by successive Byzantine emperors. The earliest of these, the so-called *tragos* (because it is written on goat's skin), dates from 972 and is signed by the Emperor John Tzimiskes whose signature can be read as clearly as yours or mine. Another, defining the boundary of Athos itself, dates from even earlier and was signed by the Emperor Romanos Lekapenos in 943, a link with Sir Steven's first book ["The Emperor Romanus Lecapenus and his Reign", 1929]. The manuscripts ... include illuminated Gospels from the 10th century and later. There is also a glorious collection of icons, vestments, reliquaries, and other portable treasures, many of which have never been displayed before....

The work [of refurbishment] has been done to an extremely high standard. There has long been a tradition of fine craftsmanship on the Holy Mountain, and maintaining it is just one aspect of the wide-ranging monastic revival that is currently taking place. Petros Koufopoulos is a young Greek-Australian architect who has already proved his mettle with a number of projects at various monasteries on Athos. Most notable among these, and most relevant to the Protaton Tower, is his work on the new library at Simonopetra. As at Simonopetra, so in the Protaton Tower, the woodwork is all done in good-quality light oak; cases are of a modern but

unobtrusive design; lighting, dehumidification, and temperature control are discreet and effective.

The dedication ceremony itself was to have been performed by His All-Holiness the ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew, but he withdrew at the last minute. His place was taken by Bishop Amvrosios of Karpathos, formerly a monk of Megiste Lavra, who performed the service of *agiasmos* .... Then there were speeches. The Greek Minister of Education and Religion, Mr Petros Efthymiou, spoke eloquently of Sir Steven's unparalleled contribution to the historiography of Greece, especially of the Byzantine period that had been so often neglected by historians.

In his own speech Sir Steven reminisced about his first visit to the Mountain nearly seventy years ago. He had arrived in July to find it shrouded in a chilly mist such as he had left a few days previously in his native Scotland. "But the skies soon cleared and I was able to see the beauty of the Mountain, which remains, in my experience, the loveliest piece of scenery in all the universe." He went on to comment that the monks then were nearly all old men and there seemed to be far too few younger men to carry on the traditions of the Mountain. "By the grace of God my fears were unjustified. Now we find on the Mountain monks of all ages, carrying on its acts of worship and its traditional care for the monasteries' forests and fields, but also reviving its other traditions." He concluded: "It is therefore with great joy that I find myself admitted to be among the holy men assembled to witness the sanctification of a building - an ancient building of simple beauty - adapted to house the records of the Holy Synod of the Holy Mountain. May I thank you for the privilege of allowing me to be present here to-day?"

These humble words, uttered quietly by an elderly gentleman in a dark pinstripe suit, greatly impressed the company of monks and pilgrims who had gathered to witness the event. There followed a tour of the new museum. Sir Steven's eyes lit up as they drank in the splendour of the collection so beautifully displayed in that ancient space. The *tragos* itself was produced for us all to admire. Sir Steven was presented with a special leather-bound copy of the catalogue. And there on the wall was the inscription in fine Byzantine calligraphy that will forever link his name with this tower whose refurbishment he so generously financed.

There followed a celebratory feast in the guest house of the Holy Community. Then we boarded our helicopter and away we swooped, back to the world (as the Athonites always refer to all that lies beyond their own territory). A few months ago, when we were discussing how we should travel to Athos and the desirability of chartering a helicopter, Sir Steven wrote to me, "it would be wonderful to descend from heaven to the Holy Mountain (though a return journey straight to heaven would be more valuable in the long run)"....

## **A LETTER FROM A CANADIAN BYZANTINIST IN EXILE**

Texas appears a strange, unlikely place for Byzantine studies, but at the risk of singing praises inappropriate to these pages, it is a remarkably fine place for these pursuits. I am thinking primarily of Houston, where the Menil Collection houses some of the best Byzantine objects on this continent. In fact, its frescoes from Lysi in northern Cyprus, wonderfully published by Annemarie Carr, are a real wonder, not to be missed by any interested tourist to that part of the world. The frescoes, comprising the dome and apse, the original extent of the decoration of this small chapel, are housed in a highly charged pavilion that makes the experience of seeing such a work of art difficult to forget. As a new Texan, my patriotism is perhaps exaggerated, but I was surprised, pleasantly, by an exhibit last winter organised by

the outgoing director, Bertrand Davezac. The exhibit, little publicised, was entitled "Byzantium in Texas: Images and Objects", and it revealed thirty-eight Byzantine, post-Byzantine and Russian objects from the Menil, the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston and private collections in Texas. A catalogue was envisioned, but unfortunately did not appear; a small gallery guide was produced with seven colour photographs and a handlist of objects. The exhibit had some very strong objects, but it also showed a certain civic pride and engagement with Byzantium, in some of its manifestations, that Canadians might do well to study. After all, we have very fine collections of Byzantine objects at the Royal Ontario Museum and in the Malcove Collection. These together rank just behind the Metropolitan Museum, Dumbarton Oaks and (to my mind, but this may be new-found patriotism again) the Menil, but sadly Byzantine studies, let alone Byzantine art history, are seriously lagging in this country.

I assume Canada has all the resources of Texas, since we are comparable in population if not in size, but Texas just has many surprises in store. I have been astonished at the number of field trips on which I can take students. In Austin itself an orthodox monastery performs a Byzantine liturgy in English each Saturday morning. Near Blanco another orthodox monastery advertises its icon that weeps tears of myrrh. Although it has been dragged into the courts because of its charismatic, ex-real estate developer hegoumenos and other, unwholesome accusations, it is a striking thing to find on a waterless hill in ranch country. This very oddness of contrast strikes me as the most useful aspect of these places for paedogogy. I have very few students with an Orthodox or Hellenic background, and the students are truly awestruck to stay inside a real, consecrated Byzantine chapel in Houston or to experience an orthodox liturgy in downtown Austin (again, of all places), and they are truly puzzled by the animate images in their midst, since they are mostly good church-going Protestants. At different levels, from high culture to low, Texas provides a Byzantine experience. Such things are, of course, not entirely absent in Canada, only the range of settings from long horns to oil magnates makes Byzantium in Texas so oddly compelling.

*Glenn Peers*

## **CENTRE FOR HELLENIC STUDIES, University of Manitoba**

Professor Wortley wishes members to know that The Centre for Hellenic Civilization at the University of Manitoba, under the directorship of Michael Cosmopoulos, will include matters Byzantine in its programme. It is offering to host a future meeting (2004?) of the Byzantine Studies Conference, and will shortly put on a lecture series "with a distinctly Byzantine leaning".

## **FUTURE CONFERENCES (2001)**

The Fourth Conference on Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity ("Travel, Communication and Geography in Late Antiquity") will be held at San Francisco State University from March 8th to 11th. Enquiries concerning the programme should be addressed to Professor Linda Ellis ([ellisl@sfsu.edu](mailto:ellisl@sfsu.edu)) and other enquiries to Professor Frank Kidner ([fkidner@sfsu.edu](mailto:fkidner@sfsu.edu)).

A symposium on "Orthodox Religious Engravings/Paper Icons" will be held at the University of Toronto Art Centre on March 17th and 18th. Paper icons from the Papastratos Collection in the Museum of Byzantine Civilization in Thessaloniki will be on display for the first time in North America. For information write to Professor Sheila Campbell (sheila.campbell@utoronto.ca).

The XXXVth Spring Symposium for Byzantine Studies will be held at Exeter College, Oxford from March 31st to April 2nd. Its subject will be "Writing Byzantium: Rhetoric and Byzantine Culture". For details contact Elizabeth Jeffreys (elizabeth.jeffreys@exeter.ox.ac.uk).

The Faculty of Theology of the University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, is hosting an interdisciplinary conference on the varieties of ascetical life in the Byzantine Empire [6th - 13th century]. The conference will be held from Friday, 30 March - Sunday, 1 April. This conference will focus on the current state of scholarly research in Byzantine monasticism and highlight areas in need of further study. Papers will be given in the areas of People (Founders, Reformers, Benefactors), Forms of Ascetical Life (Eremitic, Lavriotic, Cenobitic) and Monastic Philanthropy. Six members of our committee (Richard Greenfield, Neil Moran, James Payton, Daniel Sahas, Franziska Shlosser and John Wortley) will be giving papers. For information write to Professor T. Allan Smith, Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael's College, 81 St. Mary's Street, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1J4. (fax 416-926-7294; e-mail allan.smith@utoronto.ca). The deadline for the reduced cost of pre-registration (\$50) is February 16th.

The Twelfth Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, with Professor John Melville-Jones as convenor, will be held at the University of Western Australia from April 20th to 22nd. The theme will be "Byzantium and the West". Information is available on the web at [www.arts.uwa.edu.au/classics/AABS2001](http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/classics/AABS2001), while the e-mail address is [aabs@cyllene.uwa.edu.au](mailto:aabs@cyllene.uwa.edu.au).

The X Congresso Internazionale di Studi sulla Sicilia Antica will be held at Palermo and Siracusa from April 22nd to 27th on the theme of "Pagani e Cristiani in Sicilia: Quattro Secoli di Storia, secc. II-V"

This year's Dumbarton Oaks Symposium, on "Late Byzantine Thessalonike", will be held from May 4th to 7th. For details see web at [www.doaks.org](http://www.doaks.org).

A conference entitled "Words and Pictures: Religion and Culture from Christ to the Renaissance" will be held at McAuley Campus, Australian Catholic University on July 7th and 8th. The deadlines for abstracts and registration are respectively February 28th and May 31st. E-mail addresses for contact are [b.neil@mcauley.acu.edu.au](mailto:b.neil@mcauley.acu.edu.au) and [wendy.mayer@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:wendy.mayer@adelaide.edu.au).

The XXe Congrès international des études byzantines will be held at the Sorbonne and the Collège de France, on August 19th-25th. If any prospective participants have not yet received confirmation of their proposals, they should write to M.J.-F. Vannier, Collège de France, Centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 52 rue du Cardinal Lemoine, F-75005, Paris, France (Fax: 33 (0)1 44 27 28 85).

The Second International Congress on Black Sea Antiquities will be held at Bilkent University, Ankara from September 3rd to 8th. Its theme is interaction between local populations and foreign settlers on the shores of the Black Sea from the eighth century B.C. to c. A.D. 1000. For information write to either Jacques Morin, Black Sea Congress, Department of Archaeology & History of Art, Bilkent University, 06533 Bilkent, Ankara, Turkey or Gocha Tsetsckhladze, Department of Classics, Royal Holloway & Bedford New College, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX, England.

A colloquium on "The Greek Islands and the Sea" will be held at Royal Holloway & Bedford New College, University of London on September 20th to 22nd. The e-mail address for information is [j.chrysostomides@rhbnc.ac.uk](mailto:j.chrysostomides@rhbnc.ac.uk).

The Twenty-Seventh Annual Byzantine Studies Conference will be held at Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana, from November 8th to 11th. Abstracts should be submitted through the automated form on the BSC web site by March 15th. Information is available from Professor Robert Allison (e-mail address: [rallison@bates.edu](mailto:rallison@bates.edu)).

### **FUTURE CONFERENCES (2002)**

The subject of the Dumbarton Oaks Symposium, to be held from April 26th to 28th, is "Realities in the Arts of the Medieval Mediterranean, 800-1500".

A conference on "Late Antique Landscapes - Intellectual, Figural and Physical" will be organised by Hal Drake at the University of California at Santa Barbara in the spring.

### **BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

The *Bulletin d'Information et de Coordination* of the Association internationale des études byzantines is now electronic. Its address is:

<http://www.eie.gr/aieb>

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

A Byzantine journal, *Gouden Hoorn*, is being produced by Onafhankelijk Byzantinologen Overleg (Council of Independent Byzantinists) with largely non-specialist articles in Dutch and English, and can be viewed at <http://www.geocities.com/goudenhoorn>.

The web site for the Suda On Line project is <http://www.stoa.org/sol/>. New editors are needed (contact Elizabeth Vandiver at [ev23@umail.umd.edu](mailto:ev23@umail.umd.edu)).

There is a new web site (<http://www.unf.edu/classes/saints/>) for "Saints, Sainthood and Society".

## EXCHANGE OF NEWSLETTERS

The following newsletters have been received since the last issue of Canadio-Byzantina:

Bysantinska Sällskapet, Bulletin (Sweden) 18 (2000) (includes articles in Swedish with brief English summaries on the portrait of Anicia Juliana in the Vienna Dioscorides as a dynastic manifesto perhaps connected with her husband's proclamation as emperor in 512; the *adventus* motif on Nordic gold bracteats of the sixth century; the Vita of St Philaretos the Merciful as literature; the scriptorium of the monastery of Stoudios; and liturgical fans).

Byzantine Studies in Australia This is now available on e-mail (write to editor, whose e-mail address is [wendy.mayer@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:wendy.mayer@adelaide.edu.au), to be put on mailing list).

Mitteilungen aus der österreichischen Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik 14 (2000).

If anybody would like to borrow any of these or of those received earlier, please let me know.

**CANADIO-BYZANTINA**  
Newsletter of the CCB  
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