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BOOKS AND LEARNING IN THE BYZANTINE WORLD

FESTSCHRIFT IN HONOUR OF COSTAS N.
CONSTANTINIDES

Edited by Charalambos Dendrinou and Ilias Giarenis

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Preface

The present *Festschrift* in honour of the distinguished Byzantinist Costas N. Constantinides was initially conceived as a volume to celebrate his retirement from active academic duties at the University of Ioannina in 2016. For reasons beyond our control its publication was postponed and instead a Colloquium celebrating this happy event took place in the Central Library of the University of Ioannina on 26 October 2016, the papers of which were published in the volume *Λόγιοι και Λογισύνη στο Βυζάντιο. Συμπόσιο προς τιμήν του Καθηγητή Κώστα Ν. Κωνσταντινίδη / Scholars and Scholarship in Byzantium. Colloquium in Honour of Professor Costas N. Constantinides*, edited by P. G. Antonopoulos, I. A. Giarenis and D. C. Agoritsas (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2019). A positive result of this delay was that several younger scholars, former students of Professor Constantinides, were able to enrich the *Bibliophilos* with their articles, representing the new generation of Byzantinists who benefitted from the scholarship and guidance of our honorand.

Born in an upper-middle-class family in Cyprus on 30 December 1949, Costas Constantinides received his early education in the Greek Gymnasium of Solea. The world he grew up was marked by the uprising of the Greek Cypriots against the British colonial rule of the island that resulted in the declaration of the Independent Republic of Cyprus (1960), which, however, inaugurated intercommunal troubles and a new bitter chapter in the history of the island. In 1969 he moved to Athens where he read History and Archaeology at the University of Athens, graduating with distinction in 1973.

A Greek State Scholarship, which he earned in 1975, enabled him to move to London to pursue doctoral studies at King's College, under the supervision of Donald M. Nicol and the mentorship of Robert Browning and Julian Chrysostomides. Over the next four years Costas Constantinides would devote himself wholly to an exploration of Byzantine scholarship and education, placing firm foundations for his future work. In parallel with his doctoral research he attended courses taught by eminent scholars, including Greek Papyrology by Sir Eric Turner, Greek Palaeography by Robert Browning, and Latin Palaeography by John Barron, as well as seminars on wider aspects of Byzantine culture such as the prosopography of the Palaeologan period by Donald M. Nicol, Byzantium and Venice by Julian Chrysostomides, Byzantium and the Italian Renaissance by Joseph Trapp, Iconoclasm and the Macedonian Renaissance by Judith Herrin, and Byzantine art and illuminated manuscripts by Hugo Buchthal. This learning experience and the vivacity of Byzantine studies in Britain, reflected in the numerous seminars, lectures, exhibitions and other events culminating in the Spring Symposium organized by the British Committee of Byzantine Studies every year, left an indelible mark on our young scholar, who would treasure his links with British academia and cherish his close friendships with British Byzantinists in the decades that followed. Later on he would reflect on the particular debts he owed to his three mentors: "From Donald Nicol I

learned that mastery of the sources in the original languages is a *sine qua non* for a serious and in-depth study of the past, from Robert Browning I inherited his meticulous attention to the detail without losing the whole, while Julian Chrysostomides showed me how scholarship and education, if pursued with honesty, humility and humanity, can improve society and enlighten one's inner world". These qualities and principles he would put into good practice throughout his long academic life and career. In 1979 Costas Constantinides was awarded his doctorate from the University of London for his thesis *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and early Fourteenth Centuries (1204–c. 1310)*, which still remains a classic in the field.

It was in Athens that he met a young Cypriot student of classics, Miss Soteroula née Demetriades, who was to become the constant, unfailing, and always discreet, source of love and support in his life. They married in London in 1975. Together with her own postgraduate studies in London, and later teaching and professorial duties and commitments, Soteroula Constantinides provided him with the stable and loving family environment that Costas needed in order to pursue his diverse and intense academic and research plans.

On their return to Cyprus in 1979 Costas worked as researcher at the Cyprus Research Centre in Nicosia, who subsequently published his revised thesis in its Series Texts and Studies of the History of Cyprus (1982). Meanwhile, a summer Fellowship at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C. (1981) inaugurated a series of short and longer visits in this distinguished Centre for Byzantine Studies (1988, 1990, 1996, 1999, and 2020), which enabled Costas to take full advantage of its incomparable library and unique scholarly environment, and advance and complete several books and other studies. These visits gave him also the opportunity to discuss with visiting fellows various subjects, not always strictly academic.

It was another meeting earlier on, however, during the XVI International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Vienna in 1981, which this time proved instrumental for Costas' university career. Impressed by his paper on "The scholars and their books in the early Palaeologan period", professors of the University of Ioannina encouraged him to apply for a post as Assistant to the chair of Byzantine Literature then advertised by the School of Philosophy in the same University. Costas followed their advice without delay. His application was successful and thus he secured the post (1982). This was soon followed by his appointment as Lecturer in Byzantine History at the Department of History (1983). For the next five years, together with his teaching, administrative and pastoral duties and activities, Costas would conduct his first and most important research project involving the study of dated Greek manuscripts related to Cyprus, funded by the Cyprus Research Centre and the Dumbarton Oaks Centre for Byzantine Studies, in collaboration with his former teacher, then newly retired, Robert Browning.

This project brought Costas closer to the world of the great libraries and collections of Greek manuscripts, first in Greece (the National Library of Greece, the collection of microfilms of Greek manuscripts in the Centre for History and Palaeogra-

phy of the Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, other libraries in Athens, and the monastic libraries and collections on Mount Athos) and Cyprus (the collections of the Holy Archdiocese of Cyprus, the Metropoleis of Kition, Paphos, Limassol, and other libraries); and then in other great collections in major European Libraries including the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Biblioteca Marciana and Bibliothèque nationale de France (the latter preserving more than 350 manuscripts from Cyprus acquired during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), the United Kingdom (The British Library, Bodleian Library, University of Edinburgh Library, National Library of Scotland, and Lambeth Palace Library), Germany (Nationalbibliothek in Berlin, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, and the microfilm collection at the Max-Planck-Institut für europäische Rechtsgeschichte in Frankfurt), the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, and a number of small and private collections in European countries. Costas fulfilled this Herculean task by studying over a thousand Greek manuscripts.

The monumental volume with a catalogue and study of a selection of 110 dated or datable manuscripts, co-authored with Robert Browning, was published jointly by the two host institutions under the title *Dated Greek Manuscripts from Cyprus to the Year 1570* a decade later (1993). By incorporating manuscripts originating or copied in Cyprus or by Cypriot scribes outside Cyprus, this work broke fresh methodological grounds in the cataloguing of manuscripts and substantially expanded our knowledge of the intellectual activity in mediaeval Cyprus.

Reflecting on this period of his life Costas recalled an incident that shows how the discovery of *minutiae* is sometimes so rewarding for a scholar: “In 1983 we were taking part in the Second International Conference on Greek Palaeography in Berlin. When we visited the Nationalbibliothek to study a Gospel Lectionary copied in Cyprus in 1193 we were told that the volume with many others was taken away in 1945 and its fate was unknown. After a long search and correspondence with various institutions we managed to localize the manuscript in Cracow and convinced the University Librarian to allow us to study and include the codex in the volume of the *Dated Cypriot Manuscripts*”.

Costas’ research as part of this project together with his many other research trips, mainly during Sabbatical leaves, to these and other libraries – including the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and The Warburg Institute, Institute of Classical Studies and Institute of Historical Research of the University of London – offered him the opportunity to unearth a wealth of material, which resulted in a host of papers and communications in national and international scholarly gatherings as well as books and articles in journals and collective volumes focusing on Greek palaeography and codicology, Byzantine education and scholarship, Byzantine hagiography, the history of mediaeval Cyprus and Epirus, the preservation and transmission of Greek literature in Byzantium and the West, and editions of unpublished Byzantine and post-Byzantine texts.

Among his other major contributions in the field of Greek manuscripts and editions of texts are the study of the manuscript tradition of the *Diegesis* of the miracu-

lous icon of the Theotokos Eleousa of Kykkos (2002); the study of Epirotan manuscripts, which produced (with the help of fellow scholars) the deluxe exhibition catalogue of the Greek manuscripts of the city of Ioannina (2009); and the study and cataloguing of the Greek manuscript collection of the Holy Monastery of Iveron on Mount Athos – also aiming at training doctoral students in the painstaking cataloguing process –, which has now reached its completion with a catalogue of codices 101–200 soon to be published.

Above all Costas Constantinides has been a devoted teacher. Throughout his long academic career at the University of Ioannina he offered a wide range of courses and seminars covering all periods of Byzantine History, teaching and inspiring generations of undergraduate and postgraduate students, many of whom are now established University teachers and researchers around the world. He also proved an indefatigable organizer and administrator. Apart from the numerous local, national and international colloquia and conferences, and series of lectures he co-organized for the academic community and the wider public, several of which were held at the Byzantine Museum of Ioannina, Costas played a decisive administrative role as member of various Committees of the University of Ioannina from the very beginning of its life. It has been a great privilege to witness his efforts to establish it as one of the top Universities in Greece in the field of Byzantine studies with international appeal, attracting students and scholars from all over the world.

The University of Ioannina became Costas' home. His appointment as Senior Lecturer (1987), was followed by those of Reader (1991) and Professor in Byzantine History (1995), while a Professorship in Mediaeval Greek Literature awarded by the University of Cyprus (1992–1994) and a Visiting Professorship awarded by Royal Holloway, University of London (2003–2004), highlight once more his strong links with Cyprus and London. It is not coincidental that the University of London post-graduate working Seminar on Editing Byzantine texts has been preparing a new annotated edition with English translation of the Letters of George of Cyprus (later Ecumenical Patriarch Gregory II), for it was Costas who proposed this project on the basis of the importance of this source not only for our understanding of many aspects of Byzantine history, literature, scholarship, education, society and culture but also for its value as an example of what a student (in this case a Greek student from Cyprus) can achieve in his quest for learning, despite all challenges and difficulties in life.

After a long and distinguished career spanning more than three decades Costas Constantinides retired in 2016. In grateful recognition of his long and distinguished services as a scholar and teacher, the Department of History and Archaeology and the Dean of the School of Philosophy of the University of Ioannina awarded him the title of Emeritus Professor in Byzantine History in May 2017. Far from marking the *τέλος* of his *βιβλος* this introduced a *νέον κεφάλαιον*.

We are indeed delighted to offer the present volume to our Βιβλιόφιλος Professor Emeritus Costas N. Constantinides as an *ἀντίδωρον* for his major contribution

to scholarship and the highest educational ideals. On behalf of the editorial committee we would like to express our profound thanks to the contributors for their articles and the anonymous reviewers who improved them with their suggestions, Dr Ilias Nesseris and Dr Demetrios Agoritsas also for their generous help in typesetting the volume and the latter for preparing the Indices, the Hellenic Institute of Royal Holloway, University of London and the Department of History of the Ionian University for their support, to Professor Albrecht Berger and De Gruyter who accepted *Bibliophilos* in the series *Byzantinisches Archiv*, and to Sabina Dabrowski, Anne Hiller and Mirko Vonderstein for their valuable help and support during the preparation for the printing of the volume. Last but not least we would like to express our grateful thanks to Professor Constantinides' former students and colleagues, many of whom appear in the *Tabula Gratulatoria*, for their moral support and encouragement.

The co-editors

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