



# Gennadeion News

A SPECIAL INSERT TO THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF CLASSICAL STUDIES AT ATHENS

## Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Manuscripts Exhibit Set for May

Only a few specialists know that the Gennadius Library, well known for its wide variety of printed books, incunabula, maps, archives, and other rare collections, also possesses a collection of Byzantine and post-Byzantine manuscripts. To promote a wider knowledge of these manuscripts, the Greek Palaeographic Society, in collaboration with the Library, plans to organize an exhibition dedicated to the Gennadeion's manuscript collection in May 2004.

This precious collection was assembled mainly by John Gennadius himself, thanks to his extensive interest in all things connected to the intellectual life of post-Byzantine and modern Greece. The exceptional value of the collection lies in the fact that although it does not include impressive artistic manuscripts of the kind usually found in museums, each manuscript is a unique literary document. The collection covers a wide variety of topics and spans the thirteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Its oldest text is a Gospel on a piece of parchment, of extremely small dimensions, written in Cappadocia in the year 1226. From a palaeographical point of view, the most interesting manuscripts are the theological, liturgical, ecclesiastical, philological, philosophical, medical, music, and law documents—both Byzantine and

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## Exhibition Highlights Recent Gift to Gennadeion

Postcards say with a single image what the sender might have said with a thousand words. In the early modern era, before newspapers, magazines, and the airwaves were saturated with instant images of distant lands and cultures, postcards played a central role in communicating not only sites and monuments, but also political events and government propaganda.

"The postcards of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century provide a unique record of the history of a dynamic period when the modern world began," writes Philip Betancourt in the introduction to his catalogue of the exhibition *Greece and Her Neighbours in Historic Postcards: 1895–1920*, which

opened in December at the Gennadius Library. The exhibition also honored Mr. Betancourt, who has donated a selection of his extensive collection of period postcards to the Library.

The book and exhibition portray the history of Greece and the Balkans over a 35-year period that was critical in the formation of the modern Greek state. It begins with the defeat of Greece in its war with Turkey in 1897, and ends in 1922, with another defeat and the abandonment of Greece's territorial hopes in Asia Minor. In between, Greece fought in the Balkan Wars and expanded its territory to include Crete, Macedonia and the city of Thessaloniki, part of Epirus, Thessaly, and many Aegean islands. The dramatic events in the

*On a postcard printed in Bulgaria in 1912, the personification of Greece points the way for the Kings of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania as they charge Ottoman soldiers.*

*Photo courtesy of the Archives of the Gennadius Library.*

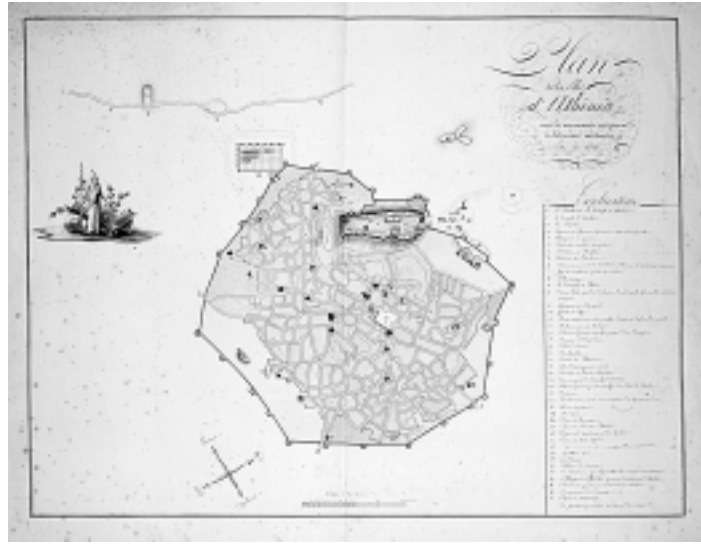
southern Balkans were mirrored elsewhere in these turbulent years, which marked the deaththroes of the Ottoman Empire and Czarist Russia.

Mr. Betancourt, who is Professor of Art History and Archaeology at Temple University, began collecting postcards over 20 years ago, drawn by their significance as an original source of information on a momentous time in Greece, where he has

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## Plan of Early 19th c. Athens Newly Acquired

The Gennadius Library recently acquired a manuscript topographical plan of Athens, *Plan de la ville d'Athènes avec les monuments antiques et les ruines existantes*, levé en 1826. Measuring 49 x 62 cm., the plan is drawn in black with various sites in the city marked in red. The name of the artist does not appear anywhere, but on the back of the plan there is a note in pencil that the plan is “dressé et dessiné par Alex de Jaquershind [?] en 1825 [?].” Unfortunately, his identity remains a mystery; he does not seem to be mentioned in either the *Larousse Grand Encyclopédie* or any other art history dictionary. It may be that he was a French engineer, part of one of the French scientific missions, who came to Greece during the nineteenth century and drew maps and plans of Athens. In fact, the plan is almost identical to another plan made in the same year (1826) by J.F. Bessan and published in his work *Souvenirs de l'expédition de Morée, en 1828, suivis d'un Mémoire Historique sur*



*Athènes, avec le Plan de cette ville* (Valognes, 1835).

The sites are recorded using letters and numbers, but the descriptions are vague and they often show the designer's lack of archaeological knowledge in spite of the title of the map, which suggests that antiquities were the focus of his attention. Thus, while the plan records archaeologically unimportant features, such as the locations of

four “Ouvertures des cisternes” [well openings], several important sites are not thoroughly identified and others are omitted entirely. For example, on the Acropolis the artist labels “Le Parthenon,” “Le Temple d'Erechthée,” “Les Propylées,” “Logement de Gourras” [hero of the Greek War of Independence], and “Magasin à poudre” [powder magazine], but not the Nike Temple. A site marked “Colonnes

*Plan de la ville d'Athènes.*

Photo courtesy of the Gennadius Library.

qui avaient été élevées à l'honneur de 2 poètes qui avaient fait les meilleurs pièces de comédie” [columns erected in honor of two poets who composed the best comedies] is the choregic monument of Thrasylus, but the identity of “Colonnes faisant autrefois partie d'un Temple” [columns that were once part of a temple] is impossible to determine. The locations of many mosques and Greek churches are marked, but the Tower of the Winds is not shown.

Despite its shortcomings as an archaeological record, the plan, acquired from a local rare-book dealer in Athens, is a noteworthy addition to the Gennadeion's collection of materials produced by early travelers and visitors to Greece. ❀

— *Sophie Papageorgiou*  
Head Librarian,  
Gennadius Library

## Library Celebrates Two Book Presentations

Two books recently published in Athens were presented at the Gennadius Library this winter.

*Η Βυζαντινή Μονεμβασία και οι Πηγές της Ιστορίας της*, Gennadius Library Director Haris Kalligas' collection and analysis of textual sources for the town of Monemvasia, was published by Estias in December. To mark the occasion, the Library hosted a celebration with speakers including Charalambos Bouras, Professor at the National Technical University, Athens; former British Ambassador to Greece, Sir Michael Llewellyn-Smith; and

President of the Gennadius Library Catherine deG. Vanderpool.

As architect, Ms. Kalligas, along with her husband Alexandros, has devoted herself to the preservation and restoration of Monemvasia. Ms. Kalligas also delved into the textual sources for the history of Monemvasia for her doctoral dissertation at the University of London, under the supervision of the late Donald Nicol, a former Director of the Library. With an introduction from Sir Steven Runciman, the thesis was published in 1990 as *Byzantine Monemvasia: the Sources*. The new publication is a translation.

In February the Library and Oceanida Publications marked the publication of Library Trustee Edmund (Mike) Keeley's book *Ακροβατώνιας στα όρια* (“Borderlines,” as the author himself translates it). The memoir tells the story of the author's many journeys across cultural divides, from his first years in Greece, when Mr. Keeley's father was the American Consul in Thessaloniki, to his time as a student in Washington, D.C. and Princeton, to his return to Greece as an adult. Speakers at the event included the writers Thanassis Valtinos and Dimitris Daskalopoulos. ❀

## Byzantine Manuscripts

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post-Byzantine, some decorated, others not.

The exhibition will include representative manuscripts from the Gennadeion's collection. Also in May, the Library will host a seminar in which palaeographers, art historians, theologians, law specialists, musicologists, and other experts will present lectures on topics pertaining to each manuscript group. The event addresses not only the scientific community but also the wider public interested in manuscripts as a testimony to the culture of their time. ❀

— *Maria L. Politi*, President,  
Greek Palaeographic Society

## World Opera Project Adds New Dimension to Mitropoulos Competition

Home to a significant personal archives belonging to the late composer and conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos, the Gennadius Library has also actively supported the annual Mitropoulos Competition since its establishment in 1996 on the centenary of his birth. This past December, Library Director Haris Kalligas awarded medals of honor to 12 young singers whose success in the competition won them roles in a new opera to be staged in ancient Olympia, marking the Cultural Olympiad.

Under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, the Orchestra of

Colors, organizer of the Mitropoulos Competition, and the Athens Concert Hall embarked in 2001 on the World Opera Project, a four-year artistic effort to commission and to create a new operatic work for the Olympics. In the 2001 "Composing Competition," the winner was Vasil Tole from Albania, whose opera *Eumenides* won first prize and the opportunity to be performed at the 2004 Cultural Olympiad. The following year, the Mitropoulos Competition's first-prize winner in the conducting category, Alpaslan Ertungealp of Turkey, took home the medal

and the job of preparing and conducting the opera.

The 2003 competition focused on singing, for the first time. In order to cast the opera, auditions were held in Boston, Munich, Tokyo, and Athens. Twenty-eight candidates from 21 countries were invited to compete at the Athens Concert Hall, culminating in a public concert on December 12, where the 12 medal-winners sang works by Puccini, Donizetti, Verdi, Mozart, Giordano, and Masagni and parts of Tole's *Eumenides*.

The World Opera Project will present *Eumenides*, a production

of the Orchestra of Colors, in the open-air theater at Olympia. Since the first year of the Mitropoulos Competition, the Orchestra of Colors has invited the Director of the Gennadius Library to present the first-prize medal, in recognition of the Library's importance as the home of many of Dimitri Mitropoulos' personal papers and manuscripts, donated in 1963 by the late conductor's friend, Kaiti Katsoyanni, and his friend and executor, James A. Dixon. ❀

— Maria Voltera  
Assistant Archivist,  
Gennadius Library

## Postcard Exhibition

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conducted archaeological research during most of his career. Best known for his work on Minoan Crete, Mr. Betancourt has received the Archaeological Institute of America's Gold Medal for Distinguished Archaeological Achievement and an honorary doctorate from the University of Athens in recognition of his contributions to the field.

As he points out in the introduction to his catalogue, "thousands of photographs and drawings were made exclusively for postcard use, never to be printed anywhere else." Postcards could be made by private individuals or companies for the usual aims and interests of tourists, or they could be issued by governments as propaganda. They would preserve a visitor's memory of Athens' Temple of Olympian Zeus; capture the image of a Cretan lady of 1905 dressed in the latest European fashion; celebrate the Balkan Alliance, with a personification of Greece pointing the way for the Kings of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania as they charge fleeing Otto-

man soldiers in the First Balkan War; or record—in newsreel fashion—the arrival of troops on the Balkan front in 1915.

Taken on their own, the postcards are evocative, but they can tell only part of the story. When they are combined with information in the Library's Archives, the historical context begins to take shape. Among the Gennadeion Archives' most significant materials are those connected with the political history of Greece and the Balkans in the first half of the twentieth century, principally the papers of the Dragoumis family, above all Stephanos, Philippos, and Ion. To enhance the information given by the postcards, Archivist Natalia Vogekoff-Brogan added to the exhibition items that illustrate life during those years. From the papers of Stephanos Dragoumis comes a letter from an Ephor, Josef Hatzidakis, pleading for the use of the Loggia in Herakleion as a new Antiquities Museum, as well as his reports on the excavations at Prinias and Phaistos. There is also an exchange of two letters between Ion Dragoumis and Pavlos Melas concerning the liberation of Macedonia, as well



*Photo, left: View from the Acropolis towards the precinct of the Temple of Olympian Zeus, Metz, and Mt. Hymettos, 1900. Photo, right: Fashionable lady in Crete, 1905.*

*Photos courtesy of the Archives of the Gennadius Library.*

as newspapers describing events in the Balkan Wars and World War I, which made their way on to the postcards in stunning variety and color.

The catalogue, with a foreword by Sir Michael Llewellyn-Smith, is bilingual, the Greek translation provided by Polymnia Muhly. Produced by Potamos

Editions, the book was partially underwritten by the National Bank of Greece. In Greece it is available at bookstores or the Gennadius Library; in the U.S., from the Princeton office through Jane Goble, e-mail: [jgoble@ascsa.org](mailto:jgoble@ascsa.org), tel.: (609) 683-0800. ❀

— Catherine deG. Vanderpool  
President, Gennadius Library

## East Wing Expansion Scheduled for Completion in Late Spring 2004

Thanks to the approaching Summer Olympics, much of Athens resembles a construction zone, and the American School and Gennadius Library are no exception. The renovations to the East Wing and the construction of Cotsen Hall are nearing completion, with the grand opening set for May 25, 2004.

*Photos, clockwise from top: December 2003, second basement stack area, to be furnished with compact shelving; December 2003, upstairs lobby with view towards mezzanine balcony; September 2003, lead architect Yiannis Vikellas (right) discusses progress with J&P Project Manager Achilles Petemerides; September 2003, southwest corner of Cotsen Hall abutting on the Library's colonnade.*



Photo: Pantelis Panos



Photo: Catherine deG.Vanderpool



Photo: Catherine deG.Vanderpool



Photo: Pantelis Panos

## Elias Petropoulos, Author and Poet, Mourned

Elias Petropoulos, expatriate Greek author who donated a large quantity of his papers to the Gennadeion over the past three decades, died of cancer in Paris on September 3, 2003. A well-known author and folklorist, Petropoulos published nearly 80 books on Greek culture, with an emphasis on the Greek “underworld.” To the non-Greek public he is known mainly from his monumental work *Rebetika*; less well known is his contribution to the preservation of Greek folk art and tradition. His books on old iron doors and windows (*Ελληνικές Σιδεριές*

*Ευλόιοι*) and modern Greek burial customs (*The Graves of Greece*) bear witness to arts that are being lost and traditions that are rapidly being forgotten.

Elias Petropoulos was also interested in recording the historic memory—as his books on the Jews of Thessaloniki (*Les Juifs de Salonique* and *Old Salonica*) show—and in contemporary artists, writing a number of monographs about painters such as Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis and Kostas Tsoklis and poets such as Odysseas Elytis (*Ελύτης*, *Μόραλης*, *Τσαρούχης*). “With the originality of his work and his

daring style, Elias Petropoulos created his own niche in Greek letters,” declared Eleftherios Venizelos, Minister of Culture, expressing his regret for the author’s death.

Petropoulos donated part of his papers to the Gennadius Library in 1974, and for the next 28 years he continued to enrich the collection with more material. The papers include his correspondence; original drawings by the author and other well-known Greek painters, such as Alekos Phasianos, used for the illustration of his books; handwritten sheet music and lyrics of

1250 rebetika songs; material related to Karagiozis and shadow theater; and photographs of musicians and singers, musical instruments, and other objects. ❀

— Natalia Vogeikoff-Brogan  
Archivist, ASCSA

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