



ANGELIKI LAIOU

APRIL 6, 1941–DECEMBER 11, 2008

Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine History, Harvard University

Director of Dumbarton Oaks, 1989–1998



A Service in Thanksgiving

Thursday, January 29, 2009, two o'clock in the afternoon

The Memorial Church, Harvard University

Cambridge, Massachusetts

A Celebration of Life

Monday, April 6, 2009, three o'clock in the afternoon

The Music Room, Dumbarton Oaks

Washington, District of Columbia



ANGELIKI LAIOU



A Service in Thanksgiving

Thursday, January 29, 2009, two o'clock in the afternoon
The Memorial Church, Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

The service was conducted by Diana L. Eck.
The pianist was Edward E. Jones, Gund University Organist and Choirmaster
in The Memorial Church, Harvard University.

Senior Ushers

John Duffy, Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine Philology and Literature
John Womack, Robert Woods Bliss Professor of Latin American History and Economics

Ushers

(Professor Laiou's Graduate Students)

Ece Gulsum Turnator, Jakub Kabala, Rena Lauer, Alex Medico More



PRELUDE

Pavane Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Three Gymnopédies Erik Satie (1866–1925)

Elégie Jules Massenet (1842–1912)

OPENING REMARKS

Diana L. Eck

*Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies and
Master of Lowell House, Harvard University*



Dear colleagues and friends and family, we are gathered here today in The Memorial Church in Harvard Yard to remember and celebrate the life of our beloved Angeliki Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine History. It is important that the university comes together—professors, students, and staff—to honor one of our own. It is important that we gather in support and love around those most intimate among her associates, especially her beloved son Vassili. And as we do so, we know that Angeliki’s world and influence is far wider than even this great university. We are joined today by members of the Hellenic community, and by Constantinos Orphanides, the consul general of Greece, representing the government of the Hellenic Republic.

Each of us brings to this time and place memories of this remarkable, elegant, and cosmopolitan woman. Collectively, we have known her as a colleague in the History Department, as a lively and incisive member of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, as a member of the Hellenic community of greater Boston, as director of Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C., as a beloved teacher and mentor, as a friend, and as mother. No doubt, some of us here have admired her from a distance and through her work as a consummate scholar. As we gather and listen to those who will offer remembrances today, may our own memories be renewed and amplified by one another.

For my part, I have known Angeliki since the year I joined the Harvard faculty. I was still an associate professor when Angeliki became a full professor in 1981. The *Crimson* reported, “Angeliki Laiou, an expert in Byzantine history, will join the History Department as its only tenured woman on July 1, 1981, when she becomes professor of history.” This brought the number of tenured women on the Harvard faculty to sixteen. Eventually, I was number twenty. There were few women in the Faculty Room of University Hall when we gathered for FAS faculty meetings in the 1980s. I often sat with Angeliki at faculty meetings—on the smoking side of the Faculty Room, then divided, as some may recall, into smoking and non-smoking sections. Angeliki rolled her own. I did not, but watched with astonishment at her exceedingly impressive talents. Smoking, of course, was banned in faculty meetings in 1987.


It was really in the context of faculty meetings that I continued to see Angeliki. She was a great faculty citizen. She frequently wrote editorials and letters to the editor of the



Crimson about university affairs. When she stood to speak, it was always to the point. One could sense something of the public figure known in Greece—she was at ease and powerful at the microphone, and was well deserving of one of her many honors, Commander of the Order of Honor of the Hellenic Republic.

I remember most recently our 2007 deliberations on the General Education curriculum. Did we really want to have a category of General Education called “The United States and the World?” Did that not suggest either that the United States was not really a part of the world, or that there were two entities of equal weight and importance, the United States, on the one hand, and all of the rest of the world, on the other? Might that not convey that we somehow see the world, in its geographic and chronological complexity, as a sort of backyard of the United States, whose only place in the curriculum was to allow students to better understand the present and the future of the United States? She had a wide and cultured view, always deprovincializing Harvard.

Angeliki was a long-time member of the Lowell House Senior Common Room, a fact I discovered to my delight only when I became Master of Lowell House. She would sweep in for festive dinners, High Tables, and faculty dinners. She would bring guests from abroad for sherry in the Lowell House Library, enabling them to see something of Harvard that was slightly genteel and conversational.

In these moments we share today, we will relish and cherish the life of this woman, Angeliki Laiou, somehow larger than life itself. 



Ioli Kalavrezou

*Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine Art History,
Department of the History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University*

Psalm 121 was read in English and in the Greek Septuagint version traditionally ascribed to the Hellenized Jewish diaspora of the third century BCE. The Septuagint was one of the foundational texts of Byzantine civilization.

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|---|---|
| 1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills.
From whence does my help come? | 1 ἦρα τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου εἰς τὰ ὄρη
πόθεν ἤξει ἡ βοήθειά μου; |
| 2 My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth. | 2 ἡ βοήθειά μου παρὰ κυρίου τοῦ
ποιήσαντος τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν. |
| 3 He will not let your foot be moved,
he who keeps you will not slumber. | 3 μὴ δῶς εἰς σάλον τὸν πόδα σου,
μηδὲ νυστάξῃ ὁ φυλάσσων σε. |
| 4 Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep. | 4 ἰδοὺ οὐ νυστάξει οὐδὲ ὑπνώσει
ὁ φυλάσσων τὸν Ἰσραηλ. |
| 5 The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade
on your right hand. | 5 κύριος φυλάξει σε,
κύριος σκέπη σου
ἐπὶ χεῖρα δεξιάν σου. |
| 6 The sun shall not smite you by day,
nor the moon by night. | 6 ἡμέρας ὁ ἥλιος οὐ συγκαύσει σε
οὐδὲ ἡ σελήνη τὴν νύκτα. |
| 7 The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life. | 7 κύριος φυλάξει σε ἀπὸ παντὸς κακοῦ,
φυλάξει τὴν ψυχὴν σου. |
| 8 The LORD will keep your going out
and your coming in from this time
forth and for evermore. | 8 κύριος φυλάξει τὴν εἴσοδόν σου
καὶ τὴν ἔξοδόν σου
ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν καὶ ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος. |



REMEMBRANCE


Vassili Thomadakis

Son of Angeliki Laiou



Thank you all for being here. I would like to express my gratitude to Harvard University for its support the past few months, including this memorial service. There could, of course, be no more fitting place for a memorial service for my mother than here. She loved this institution, and she dedicated decades of her life to serving it. And while she was obviously proud of being part of this institution itself, it was her interactions with her colleagues and students that made this such a special place for her. I recall her telling me every fall, with the commencement of the new school year, how she felt newly invigorated. I doubt that anything was more professionally exciting to her than getting to know new students, full of fresh ideas and energy—except perhaps following the success of her former students later on. She very often attributed her youthful appearance and vigor to the energy she drew from her students at this university. And even to the very end, being able to still advise students and write recommendations for them was something that lifted her spirits during her fight with cancer.

While her love of Harvard and her dedication to her students will not come as a surprise to anyone here, those who did not know her personally may not be aware that she strove to strike a balance between her career and her family life. And she accomplished just that; she was the most wonderful, caring mother someone could ask for. I still look back to when she was named chairman of the History Department. Despite all of the new responsibilities that position entailed, and the pressure she must have felt, she would never fail to be there to help me with my homework or to cook dinner—and those of you who had the pleasure of sampling her cooking know how special that was! It may not seem possible, but she was as dedicated to her family and friends as she was to her students—perhaps more so. This balance in her life was something which I always respected her for and for which I am deeply grateful—that she could reach the professional heights which she did while still being such a loving mother as well as a loyal and caring confidant and friend, a tender soul who would console a friend in need as quickly and as naturally as she would provide sage advice to a young person making important decisions about the future.

I would like to leave you with one final thought. In her last week, when she was in the hospital, she received countless messages, cards, calls, and visits from friends, colleagues, and students. She was deeply moved by this outpouring of support. And she told me that, while she had always known that her colleagues and students respected her, it wasn't really until that point that she realized just how much people loved her and how deeply they cared about her. This newfound knowledge made her immeasurably happy in her final days, and for that I thank you. And as much as I miss my mother and lament the fact that she left us so early, it is also a comfort to me to see how many lives she touched during her time. 

REMEMBRANCE

John Womack


*Robert Woods Bliss Professor of Latin American
History and Economics, Harvard University*



Angeliki [An-jell-ée-kee] I called her, and she never corrected me. So Angeliki I call her now, to remember her and tell her goodbye. Not long ago, when the graduate school here was huge, fifty to sixty new students every year in the History Department, when meanwhile in the big world President Kennedy was shot, and Greek politics was pounding toward national military repression of a strong civic left, Angeliki was here, in her twenties, in the thick of intense graduate historical studies, and quietly deep in political concerns. A brilliant student, writing her thesis on a Byzantine emperor, she was intellectually focused, sophisticated, and clear, as few of the rest of us were. She could also think clearly about politics; unlike many others of us, she didn't confuse school, friendship, and struggles for justice or power.

She and I were almost in the same cohort in getting our Ph.D., being appointed "instructor" here, promoted to assistant professor, and given tenure. All along what impressed me most about her was her bravery and discipline. She had kindly mentors. But because of her special field, she had to deal constantly with the toughest, sharpest, most conservative, imposing, impatient, and explosive senior member of the department (may he rest in peace). She charmed him. But that came naturally—didn't mean a thing. It meant everything that she knew her stuff. She spoke out, answered him, made her cases, stood her ground. And she won not just his gentlemanly delight in her company, but his scholarly and personal respect. That she braved him and succeeded him here gave her whatever more confidence she may yet have needed to confront anything else, intellectually, politically, or personally.

Where she decided it was good to belong, like here, or to the Greek socialist party, she was institutionally very loyal and highly responsible. She learned the ropes as well as the rules. She thought about them critically, measured her judgments carefully, and having made them, spoke to the point, respectful of colleagues or comrades, but all business. She made you value her respect.

For the last twenty years our offices faced each other at the end of a corner hall in Robinson. We became good friends, allies in many struggles, comrades of a kind. She most hated not facing the truth. She loved learning. She made you want to learn. Every day that I come down the hall in Robinson, I think for a happy second that I may see her door open, and her, well again, there in the light. The door's closed now. It's from our memory of her light we'll have to learn. 

INTERLUDE 

Gnossienne No. 3

Erik Satie (1866–1925)



Angeliki with her “Crusades” students at summer school in Venice, 2008



REMEMBRANCE

Rowan Dorin

Graduate Student in the History Department, Harvard University



A little over four years ago, I was an eager sophomore sitting in the cavernous Fogg lecture hall, and Angeliki swept onto the stage to begin her series of lectures for History 10A. Harvard undergraduates often speak in hushed and reverent terms of the intellectual Olympians among the faculty; surely here was Pallas Athena herself.

Her research seminar on the late medieval Mediterranean sparked my interest in the field, and I approached her about serving as a senior thesis advisor. To my surprise, she briskly accepted, then informed me that I would need to learn three new languages within the year, and assigned what seemed like half of Widener as a preliminary reading list.

For the next fifteen months, I lived in varying degrees of mortal fear. At first, it was simply the fear of the wrath of an exacting goddess should I fail to live up to her expectations. This was only exacerbated by the many graduate students—never her own, I should add—who approached me in the Great Space of Robinson, asking: “Are you the undergraduate working with Laiou? You’re so brave.”

But over time, my fear became simply that of disappointing a mentor whose dedication to my project seemed to outstrip my own. Her guidance was often subtle, sometimes so subtle that it went unnoticed, and I would show up with some exciting new insight only to have her wryly remark that she had already suggested as much weeks, or even months, earlier.


Her attention to detail was unflagging, and so too was her enthusiasm. I came to see her one November afternoon, wearied by weeks of prosopographical research. As I proceeded to lay forth my meagre findings, she stopped me, stared at me with great concern, and asked: “Are you having any fun? This is supposed to be fun, you know.” “Fun” was not a word regularly associated with the senior thesis process, and I recall greeting her remark with baffled silence. But she was right, of course, and she led by example, infusing even the simplest of emails with her characteristic wit.

Her lectures, too, were enlivened by her sharp sense of humor, but I shall remember them most for the deep and abiding humanity they evinced. She humorously described herself as “a scholar of blood and money,” but she brought tears to our eyes when she spoke of the sack of Constantinople in 1204, and there were tears in her own as she evoked the bitter legacy of the Crusades. The practice of history was meant to be fun, but in her hands, its sweep was ineffably human.

She took ferocious and personal pride in her students' work. Upon receiving my thesis readings, I wrote her a quick note, expressing relief that things had gone well. I received an immediate reply, indicating that I had every right to be pleased, followed swiftly by another email: "On second thought," she wrote, "this is an insult. How could your thesis have turned out badly? *I* advised it!"

She took passionate interest in all aspects of undergraduate life, both within the classroom and beyond. Despite being on leave during the spring of my junior year, she made time during one of her brief stops in Cambridge to attend a performance of a play that I was directing. She stayed afterwards to chat at length with members of the cast and crew, many of whom were astonished to discover that the warm and engaging audience member with the crimson hair and Amazonian jewelry was a senior professor of history.

I returned to Harvard last September to begin doctoral studies under her supervision. She told me early on about her illness, and we agreed to work through it for as long as possible. Even as her treatments intensified, she continued to meet with me for two hours at a time, at her office when she was well enough to come to campus, at her home when she was not. How she summoned such stamina and intellectual focus during a time of such great suffering I do not know, but it was driven by the unflinching, unyielding devotion to her students that so marked her life and career.

In her final months, she told me how much she hoped to take me with her to Istanbul, should she recover. That dream is ended, too soon. I must now sail to Byzantium alone, my heart singing, perhaps with Yeats, of "lords and ladies . . . of what is past, or passing, or to come," but singing most of all, Angeliki, of you. 

REMEMBRANCE

Alice-Mary Talbot

Former Director of Byzantine Studies, Dumbarton Oaks



Good afternoon. I am here today as a representative of Dumbarton Oaks, where Angeliki Laiou served as director from 1989 to 1998. I bring special greetings from our current director, Jan Ziolkowski, who regrets very much his absence from this service. My brief remarks this afternoon will focus on the significant role Angeliki played in the institutional and scholarly history of Dumbarton Oaks.


At the spring symposium of May 1972, Angeliki, then an assistant professor at Harvard University, first appeared at Dumbarton Oaks. Her first book, a brilliantly researched study on Byzantine foreign relations with the West in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was just about to appear. Her pioneering lecture that day in Washington, however, was on a very different subject: the structure of the peasant population in late Byzantium. It made a strong impact on the assembled audience, since in the 1970s, studies of Byzantine social and economic history were in their infancy, and heralded the future direction of her work. Her subsequent ascent of the academic ladder was meteoric: by 1981, after brief stints at Brandeis and Rutgers, she became Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine History at Harvard. In 1983, she was appointed to the advisory board of senior fellows for Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks, and in 1989, she became the first female director of the institution.

Drawing upon her experience as chair of the Harvard History Department, Angeliki managed the administration of Dumbarton Oaks with an iron hand, attention to detail, and fiscally conservative policies. With strategic vision, realizing that the institution desperately needed more space, especially for its rapidly growing library, she began to make plans for a capital expansion project, setting aside the financial reserves that would make possible future major construction and renovation projects. Among the highlights of her tenure as director were the purchase of an apartment building, the launching of Dumbarton Oaks's first website, and the computerization of the library holdings. One of Angeliki's special loves was the gardens, where she initiated several major restoration projects, including the Rose Garden, especially dear to her heart. In season she would affix to her blouse every day a freshly cut rose.

I should like to remark especially upon the ways in which Angeliki strengthened and expanded the program in Byzantine Studies. First of all, in 1991, she reinstated the

long-abolished position of Director of Byzantine Studies. She instituted annual colloquia, and initiated two new projects, the hagiography database and a series of translations of saints' lives.

Particularly impressive was the way in which Angeliki managed to continue active engagement in research and publication, despite the demands of administration. During her tenure she co-directed two symposia, one on Byzantium and the Italians in the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries, another on the Crusades from the perspective of Byzantium and Islam. The colloquium she organized on sexual coercion and consent in Byzantium reflects her long standing interest in the role of women, a subject which she did much to elucidate. All these conferences resulted in important publications by Dumbarton Oaks. Toward the end of her time in Washington, she embarked on the culmination of her life's work, the multi-authored three-volume *Economic History of Byzantium*, of which she served as editor-in-chief and to which she contributed several key chapters.

Angeliki left her mark on every aspect of Dumbarton Oaks. Even after her return to Harvard in 1998, she visited faithfully three times a year for the Senior Fellows meetings, always elegantly coiffed and wearing the latest fashions. Her incisive questioning of candidates for fellowships, her relentless pressure for speeding up publication schedules, and her judicious assessment of new initiatives made her an invaluable member of this committee. It is hard to believe that next week, when we convene once again to select next year's fellows, she will not be in the room. 

INTERLUDE



Romance No. 3

Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924)



REMEMBRANCE

Michael McCormick

*Goelet Professor of Medieval History,
History Department, Harvard University*



Angeliki Laiou's family has lost its foundation, Greece has lost one of her most distinguished daughters, the international world of Byzantine studies has lost its most excellent historian. Harvard has lost all of this, and something more—something at once transcendent and yet unique to our time and place. The mind and work of Angeliki Laiou transcends this time and place, and they transcend any time or place where intellects are admired regardless of the body they inhabit. But this historical mind's historic role was unique to our time and place. Angeliki Laiou seized the first moment that, however grudgingly, afforded half of the finest minds on the planet real opportunity. And so, among the flower of its first generation, Harvard University has lost now—so early, so unfairly, so suddenly—one of the great teacher-scholars in its history, who also happened to be one of the first great woman teachers, scholars, mentors, and administrators in the four centuries of our corporate existence. But the fact that she will always be remembered as one of the most distinguished of our number owes nothing to coincidence. The power and rigor of her intellect would have guaranteed her that status whether she was of the first or the fiftieth generation of the great professors of Harvard University who happen to be women.

Vice minister of foreign affairs, member of parliament, dedicated teacher, and brilliant historian—among us she was an extraordinary figure. My distinguished colleague, Charles Maier, has said that Angeliki was Harvard's Maria Callas. In fact, she surpassed even the great Callas, whose passion, it is said, sometimes outstripped her technique. The passion that fired Angeliki's work and teaching was, on the contrary, totally controlled by her coolly analytical mind. Angeliki Laiou's scholarship was pioneering—from diplomatic to demographic history, from peasant households to sex, marriage, and the status of women in Byzantine society. It includes also the mighty three-volume history of the Byzantine economy, path breaking books characterized by exemplary methodological rigor, sovereign command of the medieval and modern languages, and an unfailingly analytical eye allied with a hard-nosed approach to the evidence. The time will come for more substantive appraisals of her enormous scholarly contribution, one whose global reach is patent from the international condolences that have come in from as far afield as the national committees of Byzantine Studies of the Russian Federation, Serbia, Bulgaria, and France.

Let me rather use these moments in a more personal way, to remind us all of what is has been like, this remarkable privilege of working shoulder to shoulder with Angeliki Laiou as, in her own words, “one of my comrades-in-arms.”


She had the rare gift of an original mind, an iron will, and a penetrating intellect. She was fearless, whether looking death in the eye or something incomparably more trivial. Unlike many who never fear to speak, she always chose her words judiciously. How many of us have felt the sinking feeling I have known when suddenly, her voice was heard across the room, speaking calmly and deliberately: “Mr. Chairman, excuse me, could you please repeat what you have just said?” Inevitably the repetition would be followed by a none-too indirect—although perfectly polite—correction of the chair’s erroneous understanding of the rule, precedent, or situation.

The way her mind moved was a wonder to behold. Imagine a committee meeting, in which the valiant participants labored against the soporific impact of the chair’s report. And then, just when the report made a quiet but telling point, her head moved not a millimeter, but her eyes slid over, suddenly alert to the crux of the matter. Of course, it was the critical point on which the decision at hand would ultimately turn. The penetrating intelligence and alertness of that look was typical of Angeliki Laiou, and of no one else I have ever met. None who has seen that look will ever forget it.

This intensely private person cut an imposing figure before fifty undergraduates or five hundred colleagues. Yet as intimidating as she could appear to her students and subordinates, she displayed a devoted attentiveness that would have amazed those who knew only her imposing professional persona. How many Harvard women, students and colleagues, have said how much she meant, as a model, yes, but especially as a judicious, tough-minded yet supportive mentor in this new, more open academic world that Angeliki Laiou helped to create for all of our benefit. Nor is that impact confined to Harvard. This lily symbolizes her global reach. It is a gift from a group of female colleagues, who today hold distinguished appointments from Berkeley to Istanbul, via Columbia and Harvard, and who, alas, cannot join us in person today. It is, they write, “a memorial to an important historian and an inspiring mentor.”

When last I saw her, she was weak, but then as always, well groomed. The *Times* lay next to her on the bed—she had been studying the continuing economic crisis and the riots in Greece. She was completely lucid and typically analytical. Her ironic sense of humor did not desert her, even in this dire moment. She was, of course, totally professional. We proceeded through our unspoken agenda. First: her students. Next: could I report on the incoming graduate students? Third: the book now in preparation. When all business was covered: well, now, Mike, tell me the most important thing, how is the family?

And then I told her a story I had always meant to relay. It was at a department party about ten years ago. I had drifted into a group of female graduate students, who perhaps had had a glass or two or three of wine and who were having the liveliest of multi-poled conversations about their ambitions. “I want to be the senior professor of American diplomatic history at Princeton,” “I want to write a Pulitzer Prize winning book on museums,” “I want to be the best Latinist in North America . . .” Suddenly one of them—no Byzantinist, by the way—piped up, “I want to be Angeliki Laiou when I grow up!” All three or four of them chimed in, in unison, “I want to be Angeliki Laiou when I grow up! The way she walks into a room! The way she delivers a lecture! The outfits! The shoes! O yes, I want the shoes!” At this point Angeliki laughed quietly, closed her eyes, and murmured to me with a smile, “If I knew where she was, I would send them to her.”

The history of Harvard University in our time has not been written. But it will someday. And when that time comes, Angeliki Laiou will occupy a prominent and distinguished place in one of the great turning points in the life of this institution and this nation. I personally, and I think everyone present in this Memorial Church, rejoice in having had the privilege of knowing, learning from, and admiring Angeliki Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine History. 

READING AND CLOSING MEDITATION

Diana L. Eck



One of the poems Angeliki loved, and those most intimate with her knew she loved, is “Voices” (Φωνές) by Constantine P. Cavafy (1863–1933).

Ίδανικές φωνές κι αγαπημένες
ἐκείνων ποῦ πεθάναν ἢ ἐκείνων ποῦ εἶναι
γιὰ μᾶς χαμένοι σὰν τοὺς πεθαμένους.

Loved, idealized voices
of those who have died, or of those
lost for us like the dead.


Κάποτε μὲς τὰ ὄνειρά μας ὀμιλοῦνε·
κάποτε μὲς τὴν σκέψι τὲς ἀκούει τὸ μυαλό.

Sometimes they speak to us in dreams;
sometimes deep in thought the mind hears them.

Καὶ μὲ τὸν ἦχο των γιὰ μιὰ στιγμή ἐπιστρέφουν
ἦχοι ἀπὸ τὴν πρώτη ποίησι τῆς ζωῆς μας—
σὰ μουσική, τὴν νύχτα, μακρυνή, ποῦ σβύνει.

And, with their sound, for a moment return
sounds from our life’s first poetry—
like distant music fading away at night.

As we gather together these memories and inscribe them forever in the life of this university, and in our own lives, we give thanks for the life of Angeliki Laiou. We give thanks for the passion and energy she brought to her teaching in this place. We give thanks for the care she showed her students and for inspiration she breathed into the next generation. We give thanks for the spirit of justice and citizenship she rendered in her work and in her public life. We give thanks for her magnificent mind and the enduring work she has left for the ages. We give thanks not only for her learning, but for her wisdom. We give thanks for her wit and her love of life. We give thanks for the countless ways in which she touched our lives. We give thanks for this beloved voice, now lost to us. May it continue to speak to us in our dreams, in the thoughts of our minds, and in our own life’s poetry.

We close with words from the Hymn to Wisdom from the *Wisdom of Solomon*, written in Greek in Alexandria, perhaps in the first century BCE, part of the Biblical Apocrypha. 





Hymn to Wisdom, from *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 6:12–21 and 7:8–12
first century BCE, part of the Biblical Apocrypha
new revised standard version

Wisdom is radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
And is found by those who seek her.
She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.
One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty,
For she will be found sitting at the gate.
To fix one's thought on her is perfect understanding,
And one who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care,
Because she goes about seeking those worthy of her,
And she graciously appears to them in their paths,
And meets them in every thought.
The beginning of wisdom is the most sincere desire for instruction,
And concern for instruction is love of her,
And love of her is the keeping of her laws,
And giving heed to her laws is the assurance of immortality,
And immortality brings one near to God;
So the desire for wisdom leads to a kingdom.
Therefore, if you delight in thrones and scepters,
O monarchs over the peoples, honor wisdom, so that you may reign forever.

I preferred Wisdom to scepters and thrones
And I accounted wealth as nothing in comparison with her.
I loved her more than health and beauty,
And I chose to have her rather than light,
Because her radiance never ceases.
All good things came to me along with her,
And in her hands uncounted wealth.
I rejoiced in them all, because Wisdom leads them,
But I did not know that she was their mother.

There is in her a spirit that intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle,
mobile, clear, loving the good, beneficent, humane, steadfast.
For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;
Because of her pureness, she pervades and penetrates all things.
For she is a breath of the power of God,
A reflection of eternal light,
A spotless mirror of the working of God,
And an image of God's goodness.
Although she is but one, she can do all things,
And while remaining in herself, she renews all things;
In every generation, she passes into holy souls
And makes them friends of God and prophets.
For God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom.

In Praise of Wisdom, Sophia.







ANGELIKI LAIOU



A Celebration of Life

Monday, April 6, 2009, three o'clock in the afternoon
The Music Room, Dumbarton Oaks
Washington, District of Columbia

The service was led by Jan Ziolkowski.

The vocalist was Allison Mondel.

The pianist was Richard Fitzgerald.



PRELUDE

Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana
Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945)

OPENING REMARKS

Jan Ziolkowski

Director, Dumbarton Oaks

Arthur Kingsley Porter Professor of Medieval Latin, Harvard University



Beyond welcoming all who have come to this occasion for honoring Angeliki Laiou, I offer special thanks to Allison Mondel, for bestowing song upon us, and to Angeliki's son, Vassili Thomadakis, to Henry Maguire, and to Cécile Morrisson, for opening their hearts to share memories. To Marlene Chazan, we owe an additional debt of gratitude, for having orchestrated this event with Gail Griffin.

Although a service in thanksgiving for Angeliki Laiou's life took place already two and a half months ago up the road in Cambridge, here at Dumbarton Oaks she is being commemorated especially for the nine years from 1989 to 1998 she spent here and for the imprints she left forever on the people and places of this institution. Enough time has passed that our remembrances may be termed truly a celebration: cold winter has yielded to full spring, and we know that the gardens are in rampant bloom, even if April threatens to uphold its showery reputation.

Back in December, when the black-edged card arrived from the dean in the university mail at Harvard to formalize the shock that we had all received on the eleventh, it was emblazoned "Angeliki Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine History." The same identification appeared on the program for the memorial service there at the end of January. To many of her colleagues in Massachusetts, the title Dumbarton Oaks Professor represented little more than a name. They have heard of Dumbarton Oaks, but they have not traversed the hundreds of miles to work or study within these precincts. Or they have passed through the gardens and museum, and maybe even spent a night or two in the Guest House, but they have not actually lived in the Byzantine zone of D.C.

To be candid, I would have belonged to their number until comparatively recently. In 1980–81—immediately before embarking upon my teaching career—I held a Dumbarton Oaks and American Academy Fellowship in Rome, under a short-lived program that had been created under Giles Constable, but being on Gianicolo did not entail a commutative principle that familiarized me osmotically with Georgetown. And it is true that during Ned Keenan's tenure from 1998 to 2007, I ventured here once for a two-week sojourn, and that later, I traveled down every year or so as part of an administrative committee. But those engagements began after Angeliki's directorship had ended.

My perspective on Angeliki during her years as director was typical of those who spent their days within Massachusetts' most famous gated community. She produced a succession of highly regarded scholarly tomes, taught an extraordinarily successful core course on the Crusades, and shaped a succession of students. We all knew that she held a high position, but the duties of university administrators are hard to appreciate unless you can visualize the buildings where such individuals alternate between suffering and terrorizing their faculties. It was all the more difficult because of Angeliki's poise. Despite being in constant motion, she never gave the impression of being harried. By a miracle of sustained bilocation, she belonged entirely to at least two farflung places throughout her career—not merely Dumbarton Oaks and Harvard but also more cosmopolitanly the United States and Greece, where she was born in 1941.

Her mark on this particular location has been as strong and indelible as her character would lead one to suspect. As news of her death rippled throughout the communities both local and global with which we interlock, messages came from hither and yon that I received ex officio from colleagues, staff, fellows, and students, past and present, who knew of her attachment to Dumbarton Oaks and who wished to convey somehow to the place what Angeliki had signified to them. That very meaning is what our recollections will attempt to communicate, so that we may remember, so that we may encourage others to remember, and so that through our shared memories we may honor a remarkable woman.

Today is April 6th, what would have been her sixty-eighth birthday. But let us train our thoughts this afternoon not on what would have been or could have been but instead on what was and has been and even more on what abides and is.

In collecting my thoughts about today, I performed the hagiographic equivalent of cracking open fortune cookies in search of the one holy man who would hold out special pertinence. Alas, St. Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople; St. Gregory of St. Athanasius' monastery on Mount Athos; St. Gregory the Sinaite—none of the men with feast days on April 6th seemed particularly relevant, however venerable their life stories. At first St. Platonida of Nisibis in Syria held out more promise—or, at a minimum, she was easier to imagine as not wearing a long white beard—until I noticed that she was singled out

for being “a living example of meekness.” “Meek” is not an adjective anyone ever used to characterize Angeliki Laiou.


But how should we describe Angeliki? I wish I had the eye, the memory, and the words of a poet to perform the magic whereby the fragility of what has been taken from us can be restored to life, at least in the imagination. I regret my inability to conjure up in a few spell-like phrases, in the manner of a sorcerer—a necromancer in the truest sense—the ogival creases that a slightly ironic smile would reveal on either side of Angeliki’s mouth, the anatomical geography of the beauty mark near her strong jawline, the melody and timbre of her voice, the immaculately tailored and elegantly worn clothes that called out for the adjective *soignée*, and a thousand other such features that went into establishing her in her fullness as a person.

In my mind’s eye, I see her every day in the director’s office, not too many yards away in this building. The space has changed with time. For instance, the desk sits in a different position, and the sofa that she chose has been replaced. But for the rest the room looks so much the same that I can readily imagine her standing at the mantelpiece, probably posed by our own Joe Mills for the formal portrait that graces the cover of today’s program.

But all these efforts are immaterial. Ultimately, what lasts and matters is the impress not of Angeliki’s physical presence, which is precisely what we have lost, but rather of her thoughts and ideas, values and feelings, and words, which will remain alive among us. And so let me return to the person etched into my consciousness, a woman who was decidedly unmeek.

What stood out in Angeliki’s public persona was an intimidating strength. I chose very deliberately a participle constructed upon the element “timid,” since I had ample occasion to witness her ability to strike fear into the hearts of her addressees. When she chose to speak at a meeting, the interlocutors to whom she responded had to quake while waiting to discover what was coming. But being fearsome and fearless—both of which she was—are not traits ever to be confused with heartlessness. Part of what made her so daunting was that she was resolutely and unflinchingly honest, and the honesty she expressed gave utterance to the thoughts of a searingly learned, logical, and insightful mind. And for all the learning, logic, and insight, the honesty was also richly human,

in that it was passionately felt and had as its concomitant a fierce loyalty to those she guided, befriended, and loved.

We have not gathered in this lovely Music Room to lament a curriculum vitae to which we will no longer have access, because such documents will remain available to us forevermore. Since we are here to fête the multi-dimensionality of which the intellectual represents only one plane, I will end with a vignette of a grief that was anything but coolly intellectual, a grief that was really and truly rooted in Dumbarton Oaks, and a grief that was motivated by a loss that time has remedied. The image is of an Angeliki who cared so much about the beauty of the flora that she wept while surveying the massacre of flowers when the Rose Garden was nearly destroyed. I hope that you will all have a chance to visit the gardens, to envisage Angeliki as she overlooked the near destruction, and to notice that the roses are budding again. Angeliki would have been happy to see her works, her roses, and her loves continue. 

*Montparnasse*

Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)

from *Deux mélodies de Guillaume Apollinaire, no. 1*

words by Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918)

translated by Peter Low

Ô porte de l'hôtel avec deux plantes vertes
Vertes qui jamais
Ne porteront de fleurs
Où sont mes fruits. Où me planté-je
Ô porte de l'hôtel un ange est devant toi
Distribuant des prospectus
On n'a jamais si bien défendu la vertu
Donnez-moi pour toujours une chambre à la semaine
Ange barbu vous êtes en réalité
Un poète lyrique d'Allemagne
Qui voulez connaître Paris
Vous connaissez de son pavé
Ces raies sur lesquelles il ne faut pas que l'on marche
Et vous rêvez
D'aller passer votre dimanche à Garches

Il fait un peu lourd et vos cheveux sont longs
Ô bon petit poète un peu bête et trop blond
Vos yeux ressemblent tant à ces deux grands ballons
Qui s'en vont dans l'air pur
À l'aventure



Oh hotel door, with your two green plants
which will never
bear any flowers
Say: Where are my fruits? Where am I planting myself?
Hotel door, an angel stands outside you
handing out leaflets
(virtue has never been so well defended!).
Give me in perpetuity a room at the weekly rate.
Oh bearded angel, you are really
a lyric poet from Germany
who wants to get acquainted with Paris.
You know that between its paving-stones
there are lines which one must not step on.
 And you dream
of spending your Sunday at Garches

The weather is a bit oppressive and your hair is long
oh good little poet, you're rather stupid and too blond.
Your eyes look so much like those two big balloons
floating off in the pure air
wherever chance takes them

REMEMBRANCE

Vassili Thomadakis

Son of Angeliki Laiou




Thank you for being here, and thank you to Dumbarton Oaks for holding this memorial service.

As I was coming here yesterday evening, when the cab made a left on R Street from 28th, the driver glanced in his rearview mirror and said that he noticed I had a sad look on my face. He was quite perceptive, this driver, because it is a bit emotional for me to be here. My memories of the wonderful years I spent here are inextricably tied to memories of my mother.

It was nearly twenty years ago when we moved to Washington after my mother was named director of Dumbarton Oaks. I must confess to you that it took her some time to adjust to that position. At the outset, she missed Cambridge, and especially having daily contact with her students, and there were aspects of being in an administrative position that frustrated her.

But she grew to love Dumbarton Oaks greatly, so much so that even in her last few weeks, we shared many a laugh over stories from our time here. There were two primary reasons why she came to view her time here with such fondness. First, she had a profound respect for the purpose and mission of Dumbarton Oaks. She considered Dumbarton Oaks to be an invaluable resource in furthering Byzantine studies, which was her life's work and passion. She was also an admirer of the history of Dumbarton Oaks and of Robert and Mildred Bliss; indeed, in stories she would tell of Mildred Bliss, whom she had never met, one could always detect a sense of affection. My mother was fiercely loyal to this institution, and held strong beliefs about what initiatives would best serve Dumbarton Oaks, and at no time did she hesitate to voice those beliefs, either while she was here or after she returned to Cambridge.

But the primary reason that she so greatly appreciated the time that she spent here was the long-lasting bond that she had with many of you. By the end of her tenure here, nearly nine years, she had formed friendships and relationships which were very important to her to her last day. And it was images of my mother interacting with all of the people for whom she cared so much that flashed through my mind as I approached Dumbarton Oaks yesterday in that cab. I can see her now chatting with Don Smith, or Gail, or Larry and the

rest of the garden staff during her morning walks with our dog through her beloved gardens; I can still picture her making jokes with Silvio, or Tony, or other members of the house staff before one of the dinners at our old house at 1735 32nd Street; and I can recall visiting her in her office to find her sharing a laugh with Marlene, Nancy, or Suzanne. These images and many others are very clear, and very dear, to me. So while the cabdriver may have thought he saw sadness on my face yesterday, the fact is that these memories are very happy ones for me, because you all made my mother feel like family while she was here. 

INTERLUDE 

Mandoline

Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924)

words by Paul Verlaine (1844–1896)

translated by Emily Ezust

Les donneurs de sérénades
Et les belles écouteuses
Échangent des propos fades
Sous les ramures chanteuses.

C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte,
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,
Et c'est Damis qui pour mainte
Cruelle fait maint vers tendre.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie,
Leurs longues robes à queues,
Leur élégance, leur joie
Et leurs molles ombres bleues,

Tourbillonnent dans l'extase
D'une lune rose et grise,
Et la mandoline jase
Parmi les frissons de brise.

The givers of serenades
And the lovely women who listen
Exchange insipid words
Under the singing branches.

There's Thyrsis and Amyntas,
And there's the eternal Clytander,
And there's Damis who, for many a
Heartless woman, wrote many a
tender verse.

Their short silk coats,
Their long dresses with trains,
Their elegance, their joy
And their soft blue shadows,

Whirl around in the ecstasy
Of a pink and grey moon,
And the mandolin prattles
Among the shivers from the breeze.

REMEMBRANCE

Henry Maguire

*Former Director of Byzantine Studies, Dumbarton Oaks
Professor in History of Art, The Johns Hopkins University*



Angeliki arrived at Dumbarton Oaks with a clear vision of the direction that the institution should take. She had a strong, even passionate, view of what Dumbarton Oaks could achieve by taking an active rather than a passive role. She believed that Dumbarton Oaks should use its treasures and its dual position, being both within Washington and within Harvard, as a springboard to actively promote scholarship, intellectual inquiry, and outreach beyond the walls of the Georgetown estate.

Being a Byzantinist, Angeliki obviously took a special interest in Byzantium, but her vision went far outside the confines of that medieval empire. In 1994, for example, she organized a major conference here on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Conversations that took place at Dumbarton Oaks in 1944, which established the basis for the United Nations Charter. Within Dumbarton Oaks itself, she fostered a much greater degree of dialogue between the three areas of Byzantine, Pre-Columbian and Landscape Studies. The interdisciplinary collaboration produced at least one ground breaking project, the colloquium on Byzantine garden culture, which took place in November 1996. This meeting left a permanent mark in its subsequent publication, which was the first book ever devoted to the subject of Byzantine gardens. And here I should mention Angeliki's own love of the gardens at Dumbarton Oaks; I think of her, particularly, welcoming guests into her living room in the old Director's House, with its pots and vases full of plants and flowers, and with its tall windows looking out upon the greenhouses and open to the scents from outside.

Within the Byzantine program itself, one of Angeliki's first moves upon becoming director, was to reinstate the position of director of Byzantine Studies, which had been unoccupied for many years. The two directors who had preceded her, Robert Thomson and Giles Constable, had taken on the duties of director of Byzantine Studies in addition to their other administrative responsibilities. But Angeliki thought that, if her ambitious agenda for Byzantine Studies were to be realized, it would be necessary once again to convert the task of running the many-faceted Byzantine program into a full-time position. And, if I may say so, under her guidance it did indeed become a full time job, and more so.

Even while she gave me, the new director of Byzantine Studies, considerable freedom to create my own initiatives, Angeliki herself was responsible for a constant stream of lectures, seminars, round tables, colloquia, conferences, and research projects. Many of

these undertakings resulted in important publications, either in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* or in separate volumes. And their range was extraordinarily diverse, as is witnessed by the following titles: *Consent and Coercion to Sex and Marriage in Ancient and Medieval Societies*, which appeared in 1993; *Law and Society in Byzantium*, edited together with Dieter Simon in 1994; *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, co-edited in 1998 with Hélène Ahrweiler; *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, edited with Roy Mottahedeh, which came out in 2001; and culminating in the monumental three-volume *Economic History of Byzantium*, published in 2002, and its synthesis, *The Byzantine Economy*, which she co-authored with Cécile Morrisson in 2007. Nor should I omit to mention the important Hagiography Database, an ambitious project that was begun during the second year of her tenure. The scope of these collaborations, from which I have only drawn a few examples, is testimony to the range of Angeliki's vision and the breadth of her ambitions for Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks. They also demonstrate her belief in the necessity of connecting the study of Byzantium to the wider concerns of medieval history, in topics such as the crusades or the status of women in society. She felt strongly in the need to demonstrate that students of Byzantium, Islam, and the European West have much to learn from each other.


Finally, Angeliki had a deep concern for the welfare of the field of Byzantine studies outside the precincts of Dumbarton Oaks. She continued the program of joint appointments with American universities. Within the institution, the numerous projects that she oversaw provided temporary employment for a number of promising young Byzantinists, who were negotiating the difficult transition between the completion of their doctorates and their first teaching posts.

There can be few, if any, Byzantinists working today who have not profited from the work that Angeliki initiated and fostered at Dumbarton Oaks. Certainly, she can be compared to the person who received the five talents in the parable told by Matthew. We can take these talents both in the archaic sense, as representing the financial resources bequeathed by the Blisses, but also in the contemporary sense, as standing for Angeliki's own very considerable abilities. And certainly, following the parable, she more than doubled her gifts, producing a wonderful interest on what she had been entrusted with.

For me, it is hard to believe that she has gone, so vivid are my recollections of Dumbarton Oaks while she was its director. Although her many publications remain as a lasting legacy of her work, her departure has still left a huge void, depriving our field of one of its strongest advocates and champions.

I will close with two memories of my time at Dumbarton Oaks while she was director. The first memory is of one of the fellows' talks, given in the study. At the start of the talk, the speaker showed a slide of a cartoon, which depicted a drawing of two Christmas trees. One of the trees was orderly, with its branches trimmed into a perfect triangle and with its ornaments neatly aligned into horizontal rows. It was labeled "Conservative Christmas Tree." The other tree was disorderly, its branches sticking out at random and its ornaments placed hither and thither without any apparent plan or logic. This tree was labeled "Liberal Christmas Tree." On seeing the cartoon, Angeliki said firmly: "I prefer the first tree."

My second memory is of the annual Christmas party at Dumbarton Oaks. Angeliki is standing beside the Christmas tree. As always for a public occasion, she is strikingly dressed. The tree, of course, is a picture of orderliness, resembling the first one shown in the cartoon, with all of its branches neatly trimmed and with its ornaments perfectly aligned. Angeliki is cradling in her arms Hatcher, the infant son of Lynn Jones and the first baby to have been born to a resident fellow of Dumbarton Oaks. Like the good hegoumenissa that she was, Angeliki was a tough and exacting administrator, but she was not afraid of innovation, and she could also show a more tender side toward those who were under her care.

We owe her an enormous debt of gratitude for what she has done—both for Dumbarton Oaks and for the humanities, in the broadest sense, that the institution was founded to support. 

INTERLUDE

Gnossienne No. 3

Erik Satie (1866–1925)



Angeliki on holiday in Siphnos.

REMEMBRANCE

Marlene Chazan

Director of Financial Operations, Dumbarton Oaks



In celebrating the life of Angeliki, I am here today to talk about her as the director of Dumbarton Oaks, particularly her administrative role. Before the arrival of any director, there is much speculation—Will it be another Harvard professor? Will it be a Byzantinist? What changes will the person make? And on and on. I hope that it will come as no surprise to our current and former director here today that as potential names are released to the rumor mill, the strengths and weaknesses of the prospective directors are collectively debated and dissected. When we heard that Angeliki had been appointed, I would describe a feeling of foreboding across the institution. Most of us did not know her personally but all of us heard that she was tough, serious, no-nonsense. It was hard for us to imagine how this person would act as our director. Shortly after the news of her appointment, we heard that she wanted to meet with many of us to learn about each area. My first meeting with Angeliki occurred before she was officially the director. She met me at the front door and we walked the long hallway to the study in complete silence. I was intimidated to say the least. But by the end of our first meeting, I was impressed with her apparent intellect, her sense of humor, the excellent questions she asked of me, and the astute comments that she made. As Angeliki met more of the staff and as she began her role as director, my first impression of her was shared by many. She took an active interest in all aspects of Dumbarton Oaks and the sense of foreboding was replaced by great respect.

Angeliki worked very hard and expected the same from all of us. She probably would have been horrified to learn though that when she called the Byzantine Library with a request, it was all hands on deck until the request was fulfilled and work literally stopped for everyone working there. The garden staff knew that she would walk through the gardens almost daily before she arrived at the office and they would hear about it if she found anything not to her liking. She absolutely loved the gardens. But, she probably did not foresee that in between garden superintendents the job of acting garden superintendent would fall to her. I remember well the weekly meetings that she and I attended with the garden staff in the refectory garage, where she intently listened to what was going on and then would set the goals and workload for the week. But the most difficult task she faced in the gardens was overseeing the replanting of the Rose Garden. She recognized the huge significance of this project and made sure that we had a gifted team of professionals and

scholars to advise us every step of the way. Everyone in this room knows the successful result of that effort.

But what I remember most is her loyalty and affection for the staff. More than once we hopped on a plane to Cambridge to argue for or against a proposed policy that Angeliki felt was important to the people working at Dumbarton Oaks. Once, after a particularly busy time, Angeliki arranged a beautiful appreciation lunch for the entire staff. She wanted it elegant and memorable. She made sure it was a catered affair so that none of our staff had to work and all could enjoy the afternoon. But her favorite staff event was the Christmas lunch she shared with the housemen. At that time, the housemen had a separate kitchen. For this occasion, they would team up and cook an enormous amount of food. And there Angeliki would sit, surrounded by the men, enjoying the food, laughing at their stories, and taking immense pleasure in spending the day with this wonderful group. She felt genuine affection for each and every one of them.

Her crowning achievement and, I believe, her most important legacy was the astute financial planning she put into place to ensure that funds would be available for the inevitable expansion of space. Angeliki realized that we would have to eventually build in order to accommodate our growing collection of books and activities. So, with her famous unrelenting resolve, we worked on a financial plan, which would cover us during periods of inflation or deflation and would result in funding the massive construction project we recently completed. It was an amazing achievement that, when we were ready to build, the funds were there. We are still in a good financial position even in this depressed economy as a result of the strict budgeting and the financial plans and reserves we created so many years ago. This is my proudest memory of Angeliki and the one I wanted to share most this day.

As we gather today to honor Angeliki, I can't leave the podium without sharing my heartfelt affection for her. I admired her not only in her role as the director but as a fellow mother and as a cherished friend. Anyone who knew Angeliki was aware that her greatest source of pride and love was her son, Vassili, whom she affectionately called "the kid." They had a wonderful relationship and I would look forward to hearing the latest Vassili updates. No matter when I saw her, she always asked me about my family. She had the uncanny ability to recall the last thing I had told her about them, and she would follow up

on that conversation. She would give me parenting advice, such as the virtues of a Catholic education and learning Latin in high school. But most of all I cherished her friendship. She was an incredibly warm, engaging, caring, fiercely loyal, supportive friend with a fantastic wit and an extraordinary intellect. This is the Angeliki I will always remember and the person whose life we celebrate today. *Cee*

*O virtus sapientie*

Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179)

edited and translated by Barbara Newman, Hildegard of Bingen: Symphonia, 2nd ed. (Ithaca: Cornell Univeristy Press, 1998), 100–101.

O virtus Sapientie
que circuiens circuisti,
comprehendendo omnia
in una via que habet vitam,
tres alas habens,
quarum una in altum volat
et altera de terra sudat
et tertia undique volat.
laus tibi sit, sicut te decet,
o Sapientia.

O energy of Wisdom!
You circled, circling,
encompassing all things
in one path possessed of life.
Three wings you have:
one of them soars on high,
the second exudes from the earth,
and the third flutters everywhere.
Praise to you, as befits you,
O Wisdom!



REMEMBRANCE

Cécile Morrisson

*Advisor for Byzantine Numismatics, Dumbarton Oaks
C.N.R.S.–Collège de France*



Today, Angeliki would have been 68, and, for a few months, we would have been the same age. If she were still with us, she might not approve of a celebration of her birthday. I once ventured to wish her well on one April 6 some years ago, adding stupidly that I hoped she did not feel the burden of one more year. Her immediate reply was clear cut and sharp, though its exact wording escapes me: She had no intention of aging and didn't care about one more year. Needless to say, this was the first and only time I wished her a happy birthday! This story reveals her stamina and love of life then and later, as could be seen during her last public appearance at Dumbarton Oaks for the Spring Symposium in 2008. No one, including Angeliki, could have foreseen the dire and sweeping turn of events which took her life on December 11.

At the end of September, as the beginning of the fall semester approached, worried about some throat problems and speech difficulties that might impede her teaching, she went to the doctor and got the fateful diagnosis. She arranged everything to work through her last months and meet as many of her commitments as she could, while facing bravely a hopeless fight. As Mike McCormick recalls of his last visit to her in Massachusetts General Hospital, she was “weak but then as always well groomed . . . lucid and typically analytical, . . . totally professional,” still interested in the current economic crisis, the riots in Greece, and, of course, in her students, finally not forgetting about her visitor's family. Similarly when I went to see her in Cambridge on November 20, her voice was faint but her will as strong as before, her attentive devotion to her friends' personal travails intact. She focused on how to complete the third and final volume of the French handbook, *Le monde byzantin*, which she had worked on to the limit of her strength, and we spoke of how to continue to support the students she was leaving behind. She hardly spoke about herself, only wondering how it was that the news of her fatal illness had not spread in Athens after she had not been able to deliver in person her speech in the Academy on the anniversary of the Greek declaration of war against Italy and the Axis forces. For once, her penetrating judgment was at fault: she had underestimated the awe she inspired even in her intimate and closest friends. No one to whom she had told the truth would have dared breach the trust she had placed in them, each had kept her secret undisclosed, unable to share its burden.

When the formal announcement of her fatal illness came, followed a few days later, by that of her death on December 11, the unexpected news came as a brutal shock for a large community at Harvard, at Dumbarton Oaks, in Europe, and especially in Greece, where her funeral took place on December 19, and was attended by the highest authorities of the Hellenic Republic. Greece had lost a distinguished personality: not only a great historian of Byzantium, and a permanent member of the Academy of Athens since 1998, but also a prominent figure in the nation's politics. Her inborn sense of social justice and her interest in contemporary issues had led to her nomination in the Greek Parliament in April 2000. For six months, she served as the deputy secretary under the Minister of Foreign Affairs George Papandreou in the socialist government of Constantine Simitis. In charge of the Greek diaspora, she traveled from Europe to Russia and Turkey to Australia and the Far East, including China. There she had lectured later in the University of Nankai and always recalled this experience with pleasure and interest.

But Greece and the Greek diaspora are not alone in this loss. Many agreed in sharing their grief that they felt like orphans deprived of an irreplaceable mentor. Even those who knew only her imposing professional figure or who had worked hard under her demanding authority were aware of the unfair and untimely passing of an exceptional figure.

Looking in retrospect at her professional achievements, one is impressed by their precocity: Harvard PhD at age twenty-five under the great historian of the Crusades, Robert Lee Wolff; successor to Peter Charanis at Rutgers at thirty-four; first female director of the Gennadios Library in Athens at thirty-seven, Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine History at forty, first woman chair of a department, that of history, at forty-four, first woman director of Dumbarton Oaks at forty-seven, second woman to be elected to the Academy of Athens at the age of fifty-eight. This litany of distinctions owes nothing to *l'air du temps*: it was just the sheer recognition of the power of her intellect, of her outstanding and multifaceted scholarship, and of her administrative abilities. Anyone who ever saw and heard her take the floor at a conference will never forget her commanding presence and the alertness of her look. Her incisive questioning could cut to the quick and was much dreaded, especially by the applicants to a junior fellowship at Dumbarton Oaks. I know, however, from hearsay that those questioned recognized that she was also at the same time,



in the Greek tradition of maieutics, helping them to define a fruitful direction of their coming research. Without her, Dumbarton Oaks's symposia and many other events around the world will never be the same. She was a "star" of our small world; some compared her to *la Callas* and my husband was not the only one who affectionately called her *la basilissa*.

We are today, in the words of Rilke, like "*Verwandte, die sich im Sterbezimmer einer wirklich beliebten Person begegnen . . . relatives who see each other at the deathbed of someone they truly loved. One lives in this deep memory, the other in that . . . bis der Schmerz hinter ihnen breit wird, until the pain behind them broadens out. They sit down, lower their foreheads and say nothing . . . they are close to each other as never before.*"

So far, we have been listening to various remembrances of her as a devoted mother, a great Byzantinist, and an active director who initiated and made possible the present development of Dumbarton Oaks. Our own memories have been renewed and refreshed, surely the best way to keep her alive for years. Her books, however, will surely be a longer lasting testimony. Her immense and innovative individual scholarship will be recalled elsewhere, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* of course; in the *Abhandlungen* of the Austrian Academy of Sciences where she had been elected a corresponding member three years ago; in *Speculum* by the Medieval Academy of America; and in many other places. So no need to dwell upon it now.


But her work was not only an individual one. She believed in true collaboration and I would like to evoke, finally, what it meant to have the privilege of working with her, the greatest opportunity in my life. When she planned *The Economic History of Byzantium* in 1993, she chose the members of the editorial board to represent the various disciplines or sources she considered relevant to this wide and hardly touched subject: archival documents, archaeology, law, coins, and money. She always took into account diverging opinions and altered her previous plan in consequence. Her sense of organization was impeccable; incoming texts circulated already annotated in her fast but clear handwriting. Difficult points were discussed over successive faxes going to and fro from me and Jacques Lefort in Paris to her in Athens or Dumbarton Oaks, wherever she happened to be. But SHE did most of the work, writing several important chapters and checking the contents and the translations of thousands of pages. The breadth of the enterprise was such that it

took her longer than expected; the Dumbarton Oaks English edition was published in 2002 and the Greek one only in 2006.

Generally, she preferred shorter delays, as the story of *Urbs Capta* highlights. She had set up the first International Congress ever organized in the Academy of Athens on the 800th anniversary of the Fall of Constantinople to the Latins. She wanted the proceedings of the April 2004 meeting to be published ASAP and so they were. Her authority was such that the authors respected the deadlines. The copyediting, entrusted to Frances Kianka, an old friend of Dumbarton Oaks, was swift and accurate. The layout was prepared in a few months and she came to Paris for the final proofreading. The book was out in November 2005, eighteen months after the meeting, a feat worthy of the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

There were long hours of work (I had learned early on that if I was summoned at twelve, I had better forsake any prospect of having some sort of lunch!), but at the end of gorgeous days in September we would go for walks along the sunny riverside of Île Saint-Louis, near the Collège de France. It calls now to my mind the poet Apollinaire:

Sous le pont Mirabeau, coule la Seine. . . .
Faut-il qu'il m'en souvienn
La joie venait toujours après la peine. . . .

Indeed, it is in blissful simple moments like this one that she would like to be remembered, as I am sure she would have insisted that we should carry on and look ahead following her footsteps. À Dieu Angeliki, and thank you. 

INTERLUDE 

Voyage à Paris

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

poem by Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918)

translated by Peter Low

Ah! la charmante chose
Quitter un pays morose
Pour Paris
Paris joli
Qu'un jour dût créer l'Amour.

Ah, how delightful it is
to leave a dismal place
and head for Paris!
Beautiful Paris,
which one day Love had to create!

CLOSING REMARKS

Jan Ziolkowski




I have only a few closing remarks. Mainly I would like to reiterate my gratitude to our singer and speakers for having made the past hour a magical time. For picking the site (an undeveloped area that Angeliki yearned to see cultivated), for conceiving of the memorial, and for putting it into effect, I am grateful to Gail Griffin.

I invite you sometime to cross the front lawn and to visit at the southeast corner, on our side of the wall from where the entrance to the Dumbarton Oaks park is located at R Street. There you will find a pink marble bench that faces the main building, with a matching pink marble birdbath before it. The bench and birdbath are both enduring, strong, and beautiful, traits that we can identify with Angeliki. It is not difficult to picture her on the bench, her back warmed by a sun that will arrive each day from Greece, her eyes surveying the property—and keeping a strict eye on the director’s office.

Dumbarton Oaks is a place of inscriptions. The ones outside, flanking the entrance, tell what the founders intended by their bequest. The ones within the walls reveal much about the characters of staff members who have cared deeply for this unique institution—and for whom it has reciprocated with equally profound affection. A favorite inscription of mine can be read in front of the greenhouse, where it is said of William James Gray, superintendant from 1922 to 1937, that “He won the regard of all who knew him and an enduring place in their memory. The dignity of his spirit is gathered into the shadows of these gardens he loved so well.”

For Angeliki an inscription has been chosen from Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859), who observed that “Le passé n’éclairant plus l’avenir, l’esprit marche dans les ténèbres.” The aphorism earned a second wind thanks to Hannah Arendt (1906–1975), who in her book entitled *Past and Future (La crise de la culture)* translated the words pessimistically as “Since the past has ceased to throw its light upon the future, the mind of man wanders in obscurity.” But the pessimism retains a healthy wisp of idealism if we render the sentence instead as referring to what can happen but has not necessarily done so. I take it to mean “When the past no longer illuminates the future, the spirit walks in darkness.”

That moment has not and will not come, so long as we have historians like Angeliki and so long as institutions such as this one keep history alive. 



*Le passé n'éclairant plus l'avenir,
l'esprit marche dans les ténèbres.*

—Alexis de Tocqueville

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