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Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents:

A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments

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with the assistance of Giles Constable

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Acknowledgments

The idea of producing a corpus of English language translations of the Byzantine monastic foundation documents was Giles Constable's, which he proposed to me as my first assignment in the spring of 1981 when I was a research associate and he the director of Dumbarton Oaks. Together he and I developed the scope of the project which governed it to its conclusion, a comprehensive series of authoritative translations of all the documents that fit the criterion of being founders' rules for medieval Byzantine monasteries.

Like most projects of this scope, the Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents Project was brought to completion with generous help from several institutions and many individuals over the last fifteen years. Foremost among the latter has been Dr. Constable, not only for the initial idea that led to the project but also for the crucial and generous support he lent to it in its early years, including the financing — through the director's discretionary fund — of two conferences of the project's participants that met at Dumbarton Oaks in November 1982 and in March 1984. Even after his departure from Dumbarton Oaks in 1985, he remained a supporter of the project through its many trials and tribulations.

As the dimensions of our project became evident, Giles Constable and I decided to seek outside support. I wrote a proposal for funding by the National Endowment for the Humanities, which in March 1982 awarded Dumbarton Oaks a small grant for \$32,000, mostly to pay for modest honoraria for the translators we proposed to hire for the project. Giles Constable and I served as principal investigators under the grant during this phase of the project. On the recommendation of Susan Mango, the NEH program officer for the grant, we sought a Greek editor for the project, and Angela Hero of Queens College, New York, agreed to join us in this capacity. Over the course of the next eight years her role in the project was to grow so significantly that she would justly come to merit the co-authorship that this completed work accords her. Her services to the project have been many, but her meticulous proofing and editing of the translations — she has read every word of the Greek texts — was the indispensable service without which the project could not have been accomplished.

Next, I began the recruitment of translators. We quickly discovered that the universe of those both willing and able to handle the translation assignments was quite small, even after we decided to cast our nets more broadly and seek translators from abroad. Determined not to compromise quality, we found it necessary to delay placing some major assignments until suitable translators were located.

Early on in the project, we became aware of a parallel effort being undertaken by Robert Jordan of Methodist College, Belfast. He had already virtually completed a fine English translation of the *typikon* of Pakourianos, and was aiming to start on other *typika* of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Appraised of our effort at Dumbarton Oaks and of our hopes for obtaining funding from the NEH, Robert Jordan graciously agreed to merge his project with our own.

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After the end of my appointment at Dumbarton Oaks in 1984, I was able to obtain an additional source of funding for the project through a fellowship for the 1984–85 academic year at the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. While the translation and proofing of the documents progressed, I computerized the project, assembled the secondary literature needed for the commentaries, and drafted introductions to the documents. After the conclusion of this fellowship, I received additional funding for the project through the Citadel Development Fund of the Military College of South Carolina, where I taught from 1985 through 1986.

The NEH grant and through it all financial support from Dumbarton Oaks ceased in January 1986. For the next four years while the last translations were completed (*gratis* — since it was no longer possible to pay honoraria), Angela Hero and I supported the project on our own private resources. At that stage Angela willingly took on additional management responsibilities and became the project's co-director. The last translation was finished in the summer of 1990, completing our collection after some eight years of work.

A Dumbarton Oaks fellowship for the academic year 1990–91 was a most welcome support for the project as it entered the final stages of editing, since I had no academic position to facilitate my work. This fellowship enabled me to complete the word processing of the translations, the corpus of which had by then become quite formidable, and most important of all, provided me with an opportunity to read them at leisure so I could lay the necessary groundwork for the planned commentary.

Whatever Angela Hero and I have been able to contribute to this project, its heart and soul was made up of translations contributed by our 14 able and dedicated translators. A word about each of their contributions, therefore, does not seem out of place here.

Alice-Mary Talbot gladly took on the most substantial share of the assignments and completed them sooner than anyone else. George Dennis volunteered for scarcely less in the way of assignments, completed them promptly, and then served as a resource for other translators and myself during the balance of the project. Robert Jordan not only agreed to merge his project with our own, as mentioned above, but then completed very elegantly phrased translations of some of the longest and most important documents. Nancy Ševčenko volunteered to translate one of the most difficult documents, the *typikon* of Kosmosoteira. Timothy Miller was not only among our initial group of translators but also several times later on in the project saved the editors grief by agreeing to translate documents that had somehow been overlooked in the first assignments. Anastasius Bandy generously took on the translation of several very long documents mid-way through the project when no one else from our team was available to do the work.

These dedicated six scholars formed the core of our original translation team. Yet the corpus would not have been complete without able and timely assistance from eight other translators. Gianfranco Fiaccadori, who applied his prodigious linguistic skills to the translation of four short but troublesome texts, including one in Old Church Slavonic. He referred me to Ilija Iliev, a fellow at Dumbarton Oaks during the 1984–85 academic year, who volunteered to translate the other Slavonic text, the *Testament* of John of Rila. Drawing on her particular area of expertise in the Cypriot church, Catia Galatariotou provided us with a translation of the *typikon* of Neophytos. Stephen Reinert contributed fine translations of some small but important texts. Early on in the

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project, Patricia Karlin-Hayter contributed fine translations of some especially difficult texts. Fr. Joseph Munitiz extended a much appreciated courtesy to the project by allowing us to include his translation of the *typikon* of Nikephoros Blemmydes, which he was preparing along with an edition for separate publication. Robert Allison enabled us to include a translation of the virtually unknown *taktikon* of Nikon of the Black Mountain by offering to translate this huge text gratis, long after our funds from the NEH to pay honoraria were gone. Towards the end of the translation phase of the project, Leslie S. B. MacCoull agreed to contribute a fresh translation of the *Testament of Apa Abraham* so that we would not have to rely on an obscure nineteenth-century English translation.

I could not have asked for a more supportive, diligent or technically proficient collaborator than Angela Hero. She and I brought the manuscript into its final form during 1992–93, during which time I held an NEH Fellowship for Independent Scholars. This fellowship provided essential concluding support for the project, without which it could not have been finished on a timely basis. With some few exceptions, the conclusion of this fellowship at the beginning of 1993 also effectively marks the end of our attempt to stay abreast of the literature.

In the course of her editorship of the translations, Angela Hero benefited in particular from the exemplary edition, translation and annotation of five of the most important *typika* by the late Father Paul Gautier. The pioneering studies of Phaidon Koukoules on everyday life in Byzantium also facilitated the understanding of texts so rich in *realia* and variety of language and style as our documents. For the preparation of the glossary, the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, edited by Timothy Gregory, Alexander Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, and Nancy Ševčenko, proved an invaluable tool.

Professor George Majeska deserves our thanks for taking on the difficult task of reviewing the translations of those documents based in whole or part on Old Church Slavonic originals. A special word of appreciation is also due to Professor Nicolas Oikonomides for his expert advice regarding certain obscure fiscal terms. Warm thanks are also extended to Lee Sherry and Alexander Alexakis of Dumbarton Oaks for identifying several patristic quotations in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*.

Dr. Johannes Koder of the University of Vienna assisted the project by kindly supplying me in 1988 with an advance copy of his forthcoming article on the fragmentary *typikon* of Mount Tmolos, which enabled me to prepare a English translation for the document and include it in our collection. Dr. Albert Failler, director of the *Revue des études byzantines*, permitted us to reproduce an earlier English translation by Joseph Munitiz of the *typikon* of Nikephoros Blemmydes.

I would like to thank Nicholas Caparrotta for offering a base for work in Hingham, Massachusetts, during the summers of 1985 and 1986, and also for providing safe storage for the project's voluminous files for nearly eight years. Martin Green provided encouragement and another base for work in Washington, D.C., on several occasions during the late 1980s. Finally, the late Jimmy Diaz, of San Jose, California, unstintingly gave me his personal and material support during all the years I was privileged to know him.

Last but not least, I should like to acknowledge the painstaking work of the Publications Office at Dumbarton Oaks in seeing these volumes through copy editing and into press. I am particularly grateful to Glenn Ruby, publishing manager, and to Robin Surratt, senior editor, and Olga Grushin, assistant editor, for their meticulous oversight of an unusually intricate and massive publication.

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Some of the greatest names in Byzantine scholarship, starting with Leo Allatius and Bernard de Montfaucon in the seventeenth century and down to Paul Gautier in our own times have done wonderful work on some of the documents that make up this collection; the reward for our labors has been the opportunity to be perhaps the first individuals to read through all of those included in our collection from beginning to end. This has enabled us to see the whole sweep of the history of medieval Byzantine monasticism unfold before us. It has been quite an experience, well worth all the work, and we now offer this collection to our readers, confident that they will share in our reward.

John Thomas
San Francisco, California
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