



## Contents

- Visiting Scholar Peter Brown
- "Travel and Translation" Colloquium
- Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library
- Fellowship Building Progress
- Tyler Fellows in Residence
- One-Month Research Stipends
- 2014 Byzantine Greek Summer School
- From the Archives
- Friends of Music
- Washington Rare Book Group Visit
- Further Afield
- Good Ink
- Now on View

---

## Visiting Scholar Peter Brown



Peter Brown, Rollins Professor Emeritus of History at Princeton University, visited Dumbarton Oaks in November. Below, he talks about his first impressions of Dumbarton Oaks and his interactions with the current fellows.

Peter Brown: In one way, my impression of Dumbarton Oaks has never changed. It has always been one of continuous, unbroken gratitude, as solid as the yearly return of gold to the trees in the garden.

The library has always been like a dream. But what really lingers in my mind from that time was the museum. It rendered visible to me all that was most fascinating and enchanting about late antiquity as I then thought of it. Objects that, in photographs and in learned monographs, seemed somehow frozen, took on new life for me as I viewed them, for the first time, face to face in the quiet of the museum. The *Hestia Polyolbos*, the *Seasons Sarcophagus*, the choice pieces of late classical ivory work and silverware: these radiated an almost remissive beauty which dissolved the somewhat tired categories of sacred and profane, pagan and

Christian, classical, post-classical, and Byzantine. This was the living world of late antiquity come true.

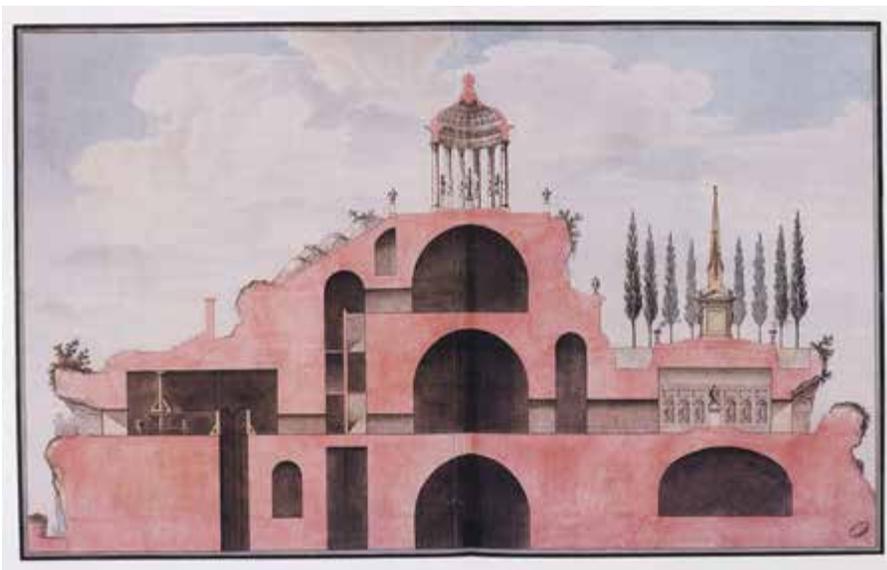
What was perhaps most rewarding of all, for me in this last week, was to make contact with so many young scholars from different lands. For many of them an “open” Byzantium can now be taken as a matter of course. This is shown by their enthusiasm not only for Greek but also for oriental languages, such as Syriac, Armenian, Coptic, and Arabic. For others, our understanding of the long and exquisite debate of Byzantium with its own classical past is heightened by greater awareness of the parallel cultural modes of Byzantium’s neighbors both to the west and to the east. Furthermore, the new interest in material culture widens our inner image of Byzantium itself. It reveals a mighty imperial system coming to grips with the tenacious, “vernacular” traditions of its varied regions.

Read more about Professor Brown's impressions of Dumbarton Oaks and thoughts on the transformation of late antique and Byzantine studies [here](#).

---

## "Travel and Translation"

### Garden and Landscape Studies Colloquium



Dutour. Project for a symbolic Mountain in Bordeaux, 5 Fructidor an II (22 August, 1794)

On November 1, 2013, the Garden and Landscape Studies Program held a one-day colloquium on "Travel and Translation." Its aim was to explore the ways in which landscape design ideas are transmitted and exchanged—sometimes through literal travel and translation, and sometimes through study, absorption, and interpretation.

This colloquium also marked the launching of [Ex Horto: Dumbarton Oaks Texts in Garden and Landscape Studies](#), a new series comprising translations of classic and rare texts on garden history and on the philosophy, art, and techniques of landscape architecture. The first two volumes were published in the fall of 2013.

---

## Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library

### Old English Editorial Board Meeting

The Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library (DOML) published its sixth Old English volume this fall, and has half a dozen more projects underway. Members of the Old English Editorial Board gathered in the Founders' Room of Dumbarton Oaks on Friday, November 8 to consider the future of Old English within DOML. The board resolved to craft a refined mission statement to guide prospective translators as the Old English series completes its remaining poetry volumes. Individual works by individual authors, and significant complete manuscripts will be preferred over works collected thematically. All present were eager to see versions A and E of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle appear in DOML, and renewed their commitment to produce volumes that will aid teaching and further the dissemination of medieval literature. Details regarding a DOML Teaching Prize and Residential Fellowship will be available shortly.



Learn more about the DOML meeting [here](#).

Pictured, left to right: Raquel Begleiter, Jan Ziolkowski, Dan Donoghue, Toni diPaolo Healey, Andy Orchard, Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe, Drew Jones, Sharmila Sen, Robert Fulk, Ian Stevenson

---

## Fellowship Building Progress



Construction continues of the future site of the new Fellowship Building, at 1700 Wisconsin Avenue. This month saw the erection of two enormous elevator shafts, extending well above the building's profile, as well as the arrival of the crane. The building is scheduled to open its doors in the fall of 2014.

Chris Morrison AIA, Cunningham | Quill Architects.

---

## Tyler Fellows in Residence

**Aleksandar Sopov** studied history at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. His MA in History is from Sabancı University in Istanbul. Currently he is a PhD candidate at Harvard in the joint program of CMES and History

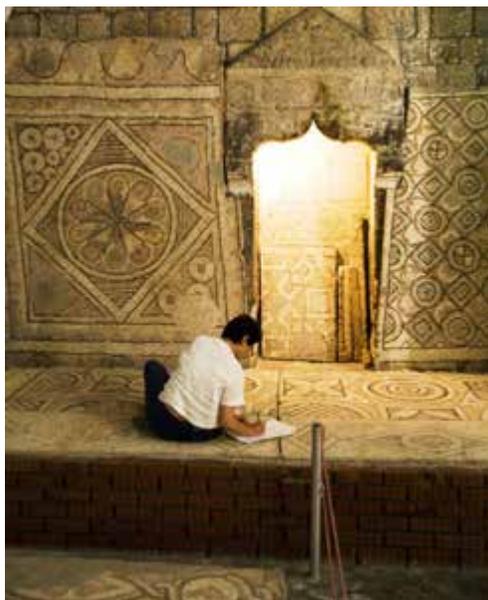


Department. His dissertation is on the creation, transfer, and implementation of horticultural knowledge in the Eastern Mediterranean in the early Modern period. By analyzing Ottoman and Arabic horticultural manuals and documents, he is focusing on Ottoman scientific thinking about agriculture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He is also actively involved in the preservation of one of the oldest urban agricultural spaces in the world, the Yedikule vegetable gardens within Istanbul's city walls, which have been tilled in continuity since antiquity.

Read more about Aleksandar's research and the Yedikule vegetable gardens [here](#).

---

## One-Month Research Stipends



The **One-Month Research Stipend** program supports advanced scholars who spend a month conducting research in the Dumbarton Oaks collections. The next application deadline is March 1, 2014.

A recent recipient, Rafah Jwejati (McGill University), worked on *A Documentary Review of Early Christian Mosaics of Syria: Can Birds be Seen as Martyrs?*

"I thoroughly enjoyed researching the hypothetical link between the cult of martyrs as it developed in Syria in the fifth century and the iconography of a mosaic floor which is yet unpublished. Toward the end of my stay, on Margaret Mullett's advice, I attended the Byzantine Studies Conference at Yale University. Last but not least, I had the great honor and privilege of meeting Peter

Brown on the very last day of my month at Dumbarton Oaks. What a month!"

Rafah Jwejati studying the "Tell Aar" mosaic panels at the Museum of Maarret el-Numan, Syria.

---

## 2014 Byzantine Greek Summer School

July 7 to August 1, 2014

Dumbarton Oaks will offer an intensive four-week course in medieval Greek and paleography in the summer of 2014. The course will be given by Alice-Mary Talbot (Dumbarton Oaks, emerita) and Stratis Papoiannou (Brown University). Approximately ten places will be available, with priority given to students without ready access to similar courses at local or regional institutions.

Students' time will be divided between the translation of sample Byzantine texts, with each week devoted to a different genre (e.g.,



historiography, hagiography, poetry, and epistolography); sessions on paleography; and individual tutorials. Students will also have the opportunity to study inscribed objects and original manuscripts in the Byzantine Collection, and view facsimiles of manuscripts in the Dumbarton Oaks Rare Books Collection.

For admission requirements and application procedure please visit our [Byzantine Greek Summer School](#) webpage.

---

## From the Archives

### A Christmas Gift – 100 Years Ago



For the Christmas of 1913, Robert Woods Bliss surprised his wife, Mildred, with the gift of a jade and pearl necklace made of two strands of graduated Imperial jade beads interspaced with natural pearls and with a gold clasp of flat circular jade set with a jade bead. Understandably thrilled by the gift, Mildred Bliss excitedly wrote her stepfather, William Henry Bliss:

“Robert’s Christmas present to me was a jade necklace, with which I expect to turn all my friends into envious enemies. The beads are more beautiful in translucency and subtler in tone than any I have seen, and while in London I think I got to the root of all jade.”

Both Blisses had a strong attraction to and a fascination with jade. Indeed, the Dumbarton Oaks Museum retains 171 jade or jadeite objects in its collection. Moreover, Robert Bliss is known to have often carried in his pocket a piece of Olmec jade, which he routinely caressed with his fingers.

Read more about Robert’s gift to Mildred [here](#).

*The Bliss Jade-and-Pearl Necklace, prominently pictured as no. 74 in the catalogue of the Sotheby-Parke-Bernet auction, January 15, 1970.*

---

## Friends of Music

Joel Fan | November 3 and 4, 2013



Pianist Joel Fan played for the Friends of Music on November 3 and 4. Mr. Fan crafted a program of "music written from 1831 to 1893, by four composers each of whom understood Romanticism in a distinct way and whose oeuvres could not sound more distinctive." Solidly in the standard repertoire were the Polonaise-fantaisie, Op. 61, by Frédéric Chopin; the Six Piano Pieces, Op. 118, by Johannes Brahms; and the Mephisto Waltz No. 1, by Franz Liszt. The program's two works by Richard Wagner were less familiar. Mr. Fan performed the Prelude to *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, arranged by the brilliant and eccentric Canadian pianist, Glenn Gould. By tweaking the score in a few places, Mr. Fan managed to play with only two hands Gould's transcription for four. The most obscure work on the program (and Wagner's last major work for piano) was the Grand Sonata for Piano in A Major, Op. 4, completed when the composer was eighteen.

---

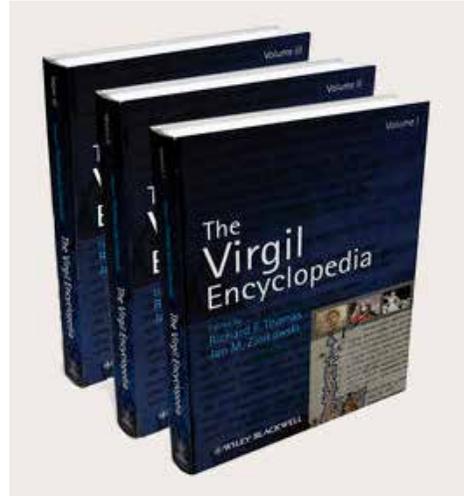
## Washington Rare Book Group Visit

The Washington Rare Book Group includes librarians, collectors, conservators, book artists, and book dealers who frequently visit area libraries and private collections, and who host programs on topics of interest to rare book professionals. On November 14 they visited Dumbarton Oaks for a tour of "The Botany of Empire in the Long Eighteenth Century" exhibition. After introductory remarks by Linda Lott they toured the exhibit with its curator, Sarah Burke Cahalan.



## Further Afield

- **The Virgil Encyclopedia** appears this month, December 2013, through Wiley-Blackwell. Featuring over 2,200 entries, it is the first comprehensive reference volume to be published in English on Virgil. The *Encyclopedia* is an editorial collaboration between Jan M. Ziolkowski (Director of Dumbarton Oaks and Arthur Kingsley Porter Professor of Medieval Latin at Harvard University) and Richard F. Thomas (George Martin Lane Professor of the Classics and Harvard College Professor), with the editorial assistance of Michael Sullivan, Research Associate at Dumbarton Oaks.
- Colin McEwan, Director of Pre-Columbian Studies at Dumbarton Oaks, gave a lecture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on November 22, as part of the museum's Friday Focus lecture series. The lecture, "Pilgrimages, Peaks, and Plumage in the Andes," was presented in conjunction with the temporary exhibition *Feathered Walls: Hangings from Ancient Peru*.
- Gudrun Bühl, Director of the Museum and Byzantine Curator at Dumbarton Oaks, gave a talk at the M. Victor Leventritt Lecture, "**New Takes on the Ancient and Byzantine Worlds**," at the Harvard Art Museums on Thursday, December 5.



---

## Good Ink



The role of Dumbarton Oaks—and of Director of Byzantine Studies Margaret Mullett—in the continuity of Byzantine Studies and in fostering the field is mentioned in G. W. Bowersock's review of two recent books by Judith Herrin, "**Storms Over Byzantium**," in *The New York Review of Books* 60, no. 18.

The Friends of Music concerts of November 3rd and 4th by pianist Joel Fan were recently **reviewed in the Washington Post**.

The October symposium on "The Botany of Empire in the Long Eighteenth Century" and Linda Lott's *Four Seasons of Flowers* were **reviewed** by Patricia Jonas in the Newsletter of the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries, no. 131 (November 2013).

Plate from *Album of watercolors of Asian fruits* (1798-ca. 1810), featured in the online exhibit, "**The Botany of Empire in the Long Eighteenth Century**."

---

## Now on View



# inspiring art

The Dumbarton Oaks Birthing Figure

June 27, 2013 — March 2, 2014

## 50 YEARS OF PRE-COLUMBIAN ART



through December 2013

## Architectural Contrasts



through December 2013

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!

Dumbarton Oaks  
1703 32nd Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20007

[www.doaks.org](http://www.doaks.org)

©2013 Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection. All rights reserved.

[Subscribe](#) to have The Oaks News delivered directly to your inbox each month.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)