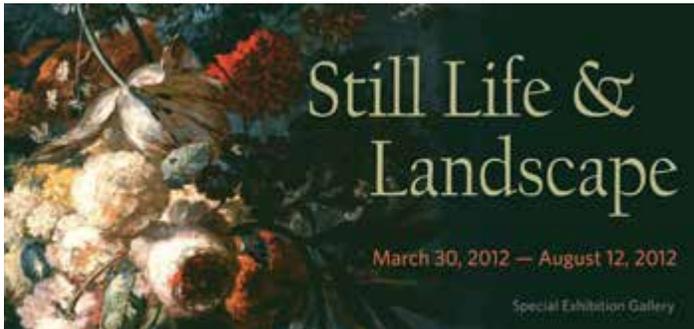




## Now on View



On Tuesday, June 26, John Beardsley, Director of Garden and Landscape Studies, was interviewed by Susan Stamberg for the NPR program "Morning Edition." They spoke about the cao | perrot installations Cloud Terrace (in the Dumbarton Oaks Gardens) and Red Bowl (in a twelfth-century leprosarium in Beauvais, France). You can listen to the full program [here](#).

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## Upcoming Events

Sign and Design:

Script as Image in a Cross-Cultural Perspective (300–1600 CE)



October 12–14, 2012

Dumbarton Oaks is pleased to announce the symposium "Sign and Design: Script as Image in a Cross-Cultural Perspective (300-1600 CE)," which will take place at Dumbarton Oaks from October 12 to October 14, 2012. During the three-day conference, co-organized by Brigitte Bedos-Rezak (New York University) and Jeffrey F. Hamburger (Harvard University), scholars of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Pre-Columbian cultures from numerous disciplines—art history, history, literature, religion, linguistics, and law—will come together to consider the purpose, operations, agency, and specular forms of iconic scripts. Please visit the symposium's [webpage](#) for further information, including abstracts, the program, and the registration form.

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## Byzantine Greek Summer School

Alice-Mary Talbot



The sixth session of the biennial Dumbarton Oaks summer school in Byzantine Greek was held between June 4 and 29. The program was co-taught by Alice-Mary Talbot, Director emerita of Byzantine Studies, and Stratis Papaioannou, Associate Professor of Classics and Director of the Modern Greek Studies Program at Brown University. The school attracted a diverse and lively group of ten doctoral students from the United States and Europe, including four Americans, a Pole, a Finn from the University of Birmingham, a British student now at Berkeley, an Italian studying in Paris, a German studying in

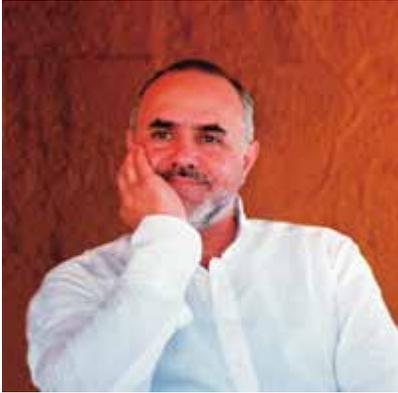
Budapest at the Central European University, and an Israeli now at Princeton. The intense class schedule included sessions of group translation of Greek texts, practice in paleography (the reading of medieval manuscripts), private tutorials, two lectures on Byzantine literature by Margaret Mullett, and an introduction to the resources of Dumbarton Oaks, such as manuscript facsimiles in the rare book library and manuscripts and inscribed objects in its art collection.

The Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Greek Summer School alternates annually with a similar program at the Gennadeion Library at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, modeled on the Dumbarton Oaks curriculum. Dumbarton Oaks covers accommodation and half-board for successful applicants, and does not charge tuition. More information about the program can be found [here](#).

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## An Interview with Panagiotis Agapitos

## Margaret Mullett



Panagiotis Agapitos is Professor of Byzantine literature and culture at the University of Cyprus. In addition to being a highly respected Byzantinist and philologist, he is also a best-selling novelist. Dumbarton Oaks was pleased to welcome Professor Agapitos as a Visiting Scholar in Byzantine Studies in April 2012. The following are excerpts from an interview conducted by Margaret Mullett, Director of Byzantine Studies. The full interview can be found [here](#).

***Panagioti, it has been great having you here this month. Can you tell us a little about the project you've been working on and what has been special about doing the work in DO?***

Well, it has been a great stay and I have very much enjoyed the company of the fellows, a really young group, but also it has been great to spend time with colleagues, and old and new friends. I have been working on a little book on histories of Byzantine literature on the way to writing one myself. I've also been looking at periodization of Byzantine literature: it sounds rather precious but it is in fact a useful methodological tool. I have been exploring the attitudes to Byzantine literature of one of the founders of our field, Karl Krumbacher (1856-1909) who wrote a *Handbook to Byzantine Literature* 120 years ago. I discovered that the DO library was amazingly helpful: I wasn't expecting it to have almost all the old material, but it does, including an offprint of 1895 which allowed me to reevaluate Krumbacher and his developing views. For example, we always think of him as believing that Byzantine literature started in the fourth century with the emperor Constantine, as the second edition (1897) of his *Handbook* does—but in fact in his first edition (1891) he thought that Byzantine literature should start in the seventh century with arguments very similar to the ones used today to mark the end of Late Antiquity, but he was forced to start in the sixth century where the classical volume in the series ended. I've also discovered that Krumbacher in 1905 proposed how Byzantine literature should look, in a chapter within a popularizing book with no footnotes, but in his most mature synthetic moment.

***Panagioti, as well as a highly respected Byzantinist and philologist you are also a best-selling novelist. How does each activity feed into the other?***

I originally thought it was straightforward. Why shouldn't a Byzantinist set a murder mystery in Byzantium? For forty years now Ellis Peters has enabled Cadfael to solve medieval mysteries, not to speak of Umberto Eco and William of Baskerville. But I admit I was wrong. It is neither unlaborious nor simple. The process of writing narrative in three dimensions drives us beyond scholarship. Ninth-century shoes may not have come down to us, but we need to represent shoes in the narrative. So I decided to take the process seriously, to be self-conscious about it, to control my own laboratory. So I ask where are the limits, and instead of creating a Philip Marlowe in Constantinople or a body in a library, I ask instead what did the Byzantines perceive as crimes in society, and I go to the legal handbooks of the ninth century to find out. This has the result of allowing me to portray a whole society not just one individual crime. This has taught me not to assume that everything happened in Constantinople: Byzantium was an empire of many cities and languages and also frontiers, and my hero experiences all this diversity. It has also helped me see that when we look at Byzantium we

cannot rely on a single specialism: literary scholars must know history and art and architecture, and it is very clear that that is the way Byzantine Studies is practiced here at DO with a great concern for interdisciplinarity, and an openness to surrounding fields.

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## Digital Humanities Informal Talks: Perry Hewitt



In the three years since Perry Hewitt became the Chief Digital Officer at Harvard University she has revitalized the university's online and digital presence. On Friday, June 15 Perry gave a talk to Dumbarton Oaks staff and interns about the role of social media and digital trends at Harvard. [Read more >>](#)

Photo credit: Rose Lincoln, Harvard Staff Photographer

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## Conservation of "Three Erotes Fishing" Floor Mosaic

Francisco López



Baltimore-based conservator Diane Fullick recently cleaned the "Three Erotes Fishing" floor mosaic in the Byzantine Courtyard of the Dumbarton Oaks Museum.

"Three Erotes Fishing" is one of a group of Roman mosaics excavated by the Antioch Expedition at Daphne-Harbie. As members of the Committee for the Excavation of Antioch and its Vicinity, Robert and Mildred Bliss acquired several finds from the fieldwork in the late 1930s. As a floor mosaic, "Three Erotes Fishing" requires conservation work more often than its wall-born

brethren. Diane Fullick's conservation process involved the use of a steam cleaner and sponges to remove the old protective coating, the mechanical removal of tenacious residue from between tesserae using dental picks and scalpel and, finally, the application by brush of a new protective coating.

The "Three Erotes Fishing" floor mosaic and other highlights from the Dumbarton Oaks Collections can be explored on our website through the [online catalog](#).

Photo: Conservator Diane Fullick and Assistant Curator Stephen Zwirn with the "Three Erotes Fishing" mosaic.

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## Manuscripts on Microfilm

Deborah Brown

The Dumbarton Oaks Research Library holds almost 2,000 microfilm rolls that are reproductions of medieval and early modern manuscripts, the originals of which are held in institutions around the world. Researchers have difficulty using the collection, as it is still without a finding aid. Last year, the library started a project to develop a searchable finding aid for this collection. The project is coordinated by Byzantine Studies Librarian Deborah Brown, who is assisted by Special Projects and Reference Librarian Sarah Burke Cahalan. Read more about the project on our [website](#), and be sure to visit the [project blog](#).

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## From the Archives

James Carder



Alexander Alexandrovich Vasiliev (Александр Александрович Васильев) (1867-1953) is often considered the foremost authority on Byzantine history and culture of the mid-twentieth century. His *History of the Byzantine Empire* (2 volumes, 1928) remains one of the few comprehensive accounts of the entirety of Byzantine history. Vasiliev was a Senior Scholar at Dumbarton Oaks between 1944 and 1948 and thereafter, until his death, a Scholar Emeritus. In 1946, he made a trip to Mexico where this photograph was taken, which he reproduced as a postcard. The card is inscribed on the back: "Prof. A. Vasiliev with a donkey at Tasco, Mexico. Yard of the Hotel Rancho Telva. July 10, 1946." The Dumbarton Oaks Archives holds the Alexander A. Vasiliev Papers, and an [online finding aid](#) is part of the new Dumbarton Oaks website. The recent publication of this finding aid has brought this important collection to the attention of several scholars, including Ionut Alexandru Tudorie, who is preparing a biography of Vasiliev to be published in a forthcoming volume of *Byzantinoslavica*. The

postcard remains part of the Alexander A. Vasiliev Papers in the Dumbarton Oaks Archives.

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## Dumbarton Oaks Titles on JSTOR

Sarah Taylor

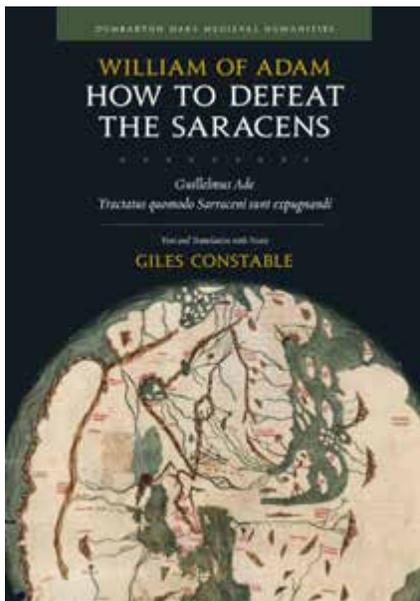
The publications department and the Pre-Columbian Studies program are pleased to announce that *Studies in Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology* is now available through [JSTOR](#).

The series, which was inaugurated in 1966, features specialized studies on the art and archaeology of the Pre-Columbian Americas. Past volumes have examined human decapitation in ancient

Mesoamerica, the burial theme in the iconography of the Moche, the major gods of the ancient Yucatan, and the hieroglyphic writing of the Zapotecs. All thirty-six titles in the series will be available in their entirety to subscribers and new content will be added as it becomes available.

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## Off the Press



Dumbarton Oaks is pleased to announce the arrival of *How to Defeat the Saracens*, by William of Adam (Guillelmus Ade). This is the second volume in the monograph series Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Humanities, which focuses on the Eastern Mediterranean during the Byzantine era through the prism of non-Greek texts. In line with the vision of the founders of Dumbarton Oaks, the series fosters scholarship that connects the Byzantine and medieval humanities.

The fall of Acre in 1291 inspired many schemes for crusades to recover Jerusalem and its environs. One of these proposals is *How to Defeat the Saracens*, written around 1317 by William of Adam, a Dominican who traveled extensively in the eastern Mediterranean, Persia, and parts of India. The treatise presents a five-pronged plan for retaking the Holy Land. In particular, it focuses on cutting off economic and military support for Egypt.

William's personal experience in the lands he describes comes through, for example, when he recollects his encounters in Persia with a captive Greek woman whose child he baptized, and in India with a lapsed Christian who said that God had abandoned him. In this volume Giles Constable provides a critical edition of the Latin text and a facing English translation. Extensive notes, produced in collaboration with other experts, guide the reader through the political, geographical, economic, military, and historical context of this fascinating work.

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## Farewells

### Günder Varinlioğlu



Günder Varinlioğlu has served as Byzantine Assistant Curator in the Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives (ICFA) since September 2008. She joined Dumbarton Oaks shortly after completing her Ph.D. in Byzantine Art and Archaeology at the University of Pennsylvania. Over the past four years, Günder has been an integral part of the ICFA team, establishing the digitization and cataloging workflow to share ICFA's collections in Harvard's VIA, serving as acting head of the department from January to October 2010, and developing and managing the

[Nicholas V. Artamonoff online exhibit](#). During the academic year of 2012-2013, Günder will be a fellow at Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations in Istanbul.

Photo credit: Günder (second from right) with ICFA staff at her farewell event. Joe Mills, 2012.

## Stephen Zwirn



Stephen Zwirn, Assistant Curator in the Byzantine Collection, retired from Dumbarton Oaks this June. In twenty-six years of curatorial work, Stephen has played an integral role in the development of the Dumbarton Oaks Museum. On the occasion of his retirement, Stephen recently gave an interview for the Dumbarton Oaks Oral History Project.

First introduced to Dumbarton Oaks in the late 1970s as a student from New York University, Stephen's long and fruitful curatorial tenure has spanned a third of the institution's history, over a quarter of a century, through four directorships and through two major renovation projects. The first of these major renovation projects occurred between 1987 and 1989 when the Director, Robert Thompson, launched a construction project that would literally change the shape of the museum. Working with the Curator of the Byzantine Collection, Susan Boyd, Stephen re-designed the galleries and re-installed the collection, taking advantage of this opportunity to reinterpret the collection and to reimagine its narrative implications. Twenty years later, under the directorship of Edward Keenan, another major construction project gave Stephen a second opportunity to completely reinstall the collection under the guidance of the current Director of the Museum, Gudrun Bühl. Few curators have the opportunity to affect such profound and long-lasting change on the presentation of a museum's permanent collection, but Stephen has done it no less than twice at Dumbarton Oaks.

Stephen's plans for his retirement include a wealth of scholarly projects, and Dumbarton Oaks looks forward to Stephen's continued contributions to Byzantine Studies.

Photo credit: Stephen Zwirn in the museum's Byzantine Courtyard, before a case displaying Byzantine jewelry. Joe Mills, 2012.

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## Further Afield

Jan Ziolkowski, Director of Dumbarton Oaks, presented the paper "Medieval Precedents for Sceptical Philology" at the conference *The Marriage of Philology and Scepticism: Uncertainty and Conjecture in Early Modern Scholarship and Thought*, which took place at The Warburg Institute of the University of London on June 22.

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## Good Ink

*Miracle Tales from Byzantium*, a volume in the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library translated by Alice-Mary Talbot and Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, was selected as the “translation of the month” on [Feminae: Medieval Women and Gender Index](#).

## Social Media

Dumbarton Oaks has joined [Twitter](#) and [Pinterest](#)! Make sure to follow us.

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