

# Dumbarton Oaks

Research Library and Collection

## Byzantine Studies Program Newsletter



*2018-2019 Fellowship cohort with Program Director Anna Stavrakopoulou and visiting scholar Annemarie Weyl Carr. Image by Dumbarton Oaks.*

This year, Anna Stavrakopoulou and Eden Slone joined the Program in Byzantine Studies as Director and Coordinator, respectively. Byzantine Studies hosted fellows, junior fellows, summer, and Tyler fellows, as well as various scholars from ten countries (The Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, Poland, Romania, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States).

They brought with them diverse interdisciplinary and comparative interests (archaeology, history, religious studies, theology, philology, and material culture) contributing to a mutually enriching year, which culminated in ground-breaking scholarship and notable successes in the job market, as well as highly competitive research appointments.

We are looking forward to receiving our summer fellow cohort, which was selected from the biggest pool of applicants ever, our [Coins and Seals summer program](#) participants, and our [Coptic and Syriac Dumbarton Oaks/HMML](#) students (courses held in Minnesota). At the end of the summer, Dumbarton Oaks is co-organizing with the Textile Museum [Woven Interiors](#), a unique textile exhibition, featuring a remarkable array of fabrics used in secular and sacred spaces. [Ornament: Fragments of Byzantine Fashion](#) will open in early fall, including dress textiles, evoking fashions from a long-lost world. Moreover, our online catalogues of textiles and coins will be made available to the scholarly community within the next few weeks. Last, next year, in addition to the biggest group ever of Byzantine fellows, we will be hosting in the fall a public lecture by Dr. Helen Evans, Mary and Michael Jaharis Curator of Byzantine Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and in the spring, we will be welcoming Professor Anthony Kaldellis from The Ohio State University as a visiting scholar.

## 2019 Byzantine Coins and Seals Summer Program

**Gaining precious understanding of Byzantine reality**



*Seals in the Dumbarton Oaks collection. Image by Dumbarton Oaks.*

Coins and seals offer priceless insight into many aspects of the Byzantine world, including historical geography, prosopography, paleography, art history, theology, and economic, institutional, and administrative history. This year, the students accepted into the [2019 Byzantine Coins and Seals Summer Program](#) will be instructed by Dr. Alan Stahl (Princeton University) and Dr. Jonathan Shea (Dumbarton Oaks), examining the Dumbarton Oaks collections of twelve thousand coins and seventeen thousand lead seals, one of the most comprehensive specialized assemblages in the world.

Seminars will introduce the basics of the disciplines of numismatics and sigillography, including bibliography and the use of coins and seals as evidence for Byzantine political, economic, and art history. Students will be instructed how to read and date Byzantine coins and seals and write a catalogue entry. A variety of special topics will also be examined, such as photography of seals and coins, digital imaging, epigraphic fonts, construction of maps, construction of databases, use of Photoshop, and electronic programs for statistical analysis. Participants will also work on and present an original piece of research based on numismatic and/or sigillographic material, which they will coordinate with the program instructors.

## **2019 Dumbarton Oaks/ HMML Coptic and Syriac Summer School**

**Students learn language and paleography in Minnesota**



*Students examine manuscripts. Image courtesy of [HMML](#).*

Building on three summers of success, Dumbarton Oaks in collaboration with the [Hill Museum & Manuscript Library \(HMML\)](#) will hold an intensive [four-week course](#) introducing the Syriac and Coptic languages and paleography in summer of 2019. The program, sponsored and funded by Dumbarton Oaks, will be hosted at HMML, located on the campus of Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota. The summer school will run from July 7 to August 2, 2019.

The courses will include an introduction to paleography and to the study and use of manuscripts, especially those now available in the vHMML Reading Room from HMML's vast collection of digitized manuscripts. Following this intensive course, students will be fully equipped to continue reading on their own or to enter reading courses at other institutions.

#### FACULTY

Syriac: Dr. Robert Kitchen, Regina, Saskatchewan, and Sankt Ignatios Theological Academy, Södertälje, Sweden; Dr. Sergey Minov, University of Oxford.

Coptic: Dr. Alin Suciu, Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen; Prof. Victor Ghica, Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society, Oslo.

HMML Staff, and guest lecturers.

## ***Woven Interiors***

**On view at the Textile Museum: August 31, 2019 - January 5, 2020**



*Fragmentary roundel, Egypt, Late Roman Period, 4th century. Wool; tapestry woven. The Textile Museum 71.10. Image courtesy of [The George Washington University Museum and the Textile Museum](#).*

Vibrant colors and an array of textures enlivened the interior spaces of early medieval Egypt. Textiles were omnipresent in the villas, palaces, pavilions, churches, mosques, and humble abodes of Byzantine and early Islamic Egypt. *Woven Interiors: Furnishing Early Medieval Egypt* provides insight into the decoration of these areas, inviting the viewer to experience stunning tapestries featuring mythical beings and intriguing iconography alongside household objects and luxurious gold jewelry.

*Woven Interiors* will feature approximately sixty remarkable examples of hangings, curtains, bedcovers, pillows, and other fabrics intended for use in a range of sacred and secular spaces. These fabrics served as cozy bed cloths, adorned bare walls, cushioned hard surfaces, and veiled sacred spaces. The exhibition presents masterpieces from the Textile Museum and the Dumbarton Oaks collections, supplemented with important loans from major American institutions. The fragility of these rare pieces—which include early carpets, fabric icons, and tapestry-woven hangings—means that many have never before been exhibited, or have remained in storage for decades. Textiles will be supported by related objects in other materials—like wood, gold, and silver—to evoke the plush surroundings of the Byzantine and early Islamic Mediterranean worlds.

This exhibition is curated by Elizabeth Dospel Williams, Assistant Curator of the Byzantine Collection; Gudrun Bühl, Director of the Museum für Lackkunst, Münster; and Sumru Belger Krody, Senior Curator, The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum.

[Visit the exhibition website](#) for hours and admission.

## ***Ornament: Fragments of Byzantine Fashion***

**On view at Dumbarton Oaks: September 10, 2019 - January 5, 2020**



Excavations in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century unearthed scores of the ornate dress textiles which wrapped the people of medieval Egypt in their graves. [Ornament: Fragments of Byzantine Fashion](#) brings together complete tunics, parts of garments, and contemporary replicas of ancient dress to evoke the fashions of this now lost world. These textiles often preserved traces of their wearers in the forms of folds and stains, providing researchers with important information about the people buried in these garments. But alongside these bodily vestiges, the decoration of these textiles reveals much about the sophistication and aesthetics of the period in which they were crafted. Often cut into pieces by dealers at the time they were sold on the art market, these

fragments survive in an incomplete state that has complicated our understanding of Byzantine dress practices.

The textiles on view in this exhibition represent a small part of the holdings in the Byzantine collection, which will feature in a free digital catalogue available on the Dumbarton Oaks website. With their spectacular range of colors, patterns, and ornamental motifs, the textiles display the remarkable skill of ancient craftsmen and a compellingly modern aesthetic.

This exhibition is curated by Elizabeth Dospel Williams, Assistant Curator of the Byzantine Collection, and Gudrun Bühl, Director of the Museum für Lackkunst, Münster, with assistance from Samuel Shapiro, Postgraduate Curatorial Fellow, Museum Department.

## **Public Lecture by Helen Evans**

### **"Spheres of Influence: Byzantine Art in the Global Middle Ages"**



*Dr. Helen Evans. Image by Dumbarton Oaks.*

Dr. Helen Evans, Mary and Michael Jaharis Curator of Byzantine Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, will give a lecture titled "Spheres of Influence: Byzantine Art in the Global Middle Ages" on November 14, 2019 at 6:00pm. Dr. Evans will consider how the role of Byzantine art and culture

and its interconnections with lands beyond its territorial borders should be central to the growing interest in the Global Middle Ages.

Check our [website](#) in October for a link to register. This event is free.

## Spring 2020 Visiting Scholar Anthony Kaldellis

**Professor Kaldellis to be at Dumbarton Oaks for one month**

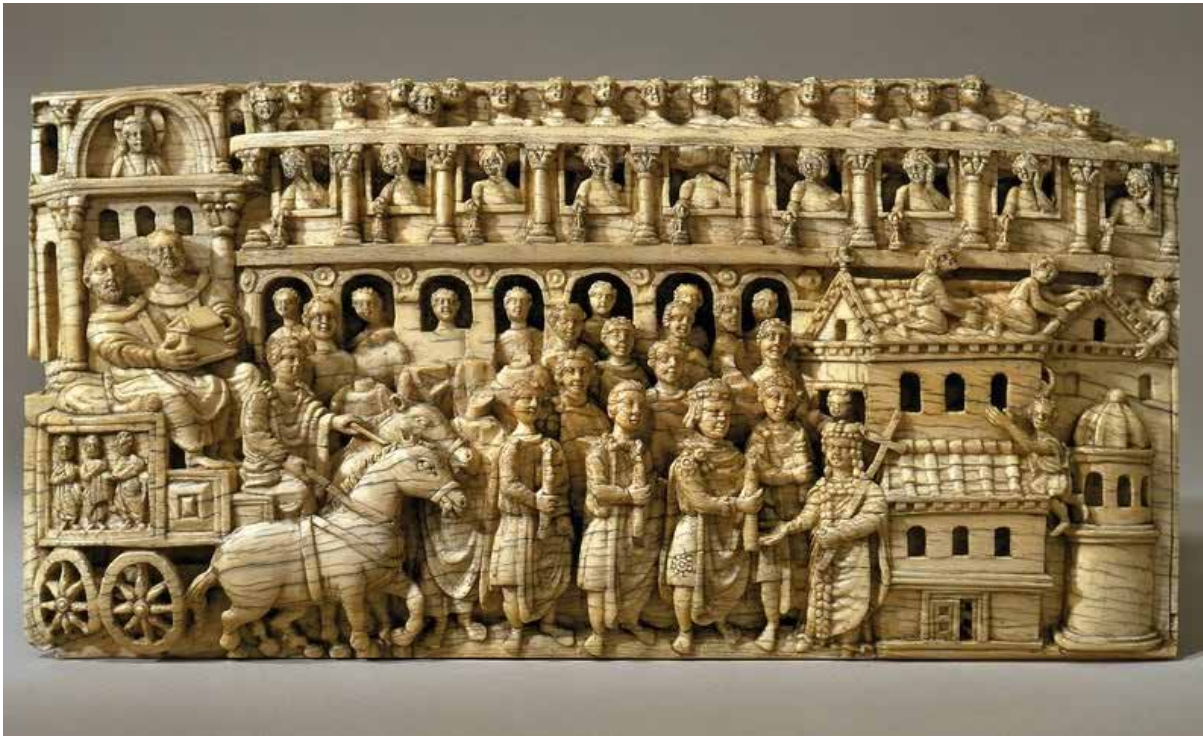


*[Professor Kaldellis](#) giving a 2017 lecture at the National Gallery of Art.*

We are excited to announce that Professor Anthony Kaldellis will join the Byzantine Studies Program as a visiting scholar in March 2020. Professor and Classics Department Chair at The Ohio State University, Kaldellis has published numerous monographs, articles, chapters, and translations on Byzantine studies, Greek historiography, and Plato, and currently serves on the *Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, Greek Series*, Editorial Board. While at Dumbarton Oaks, Kaldellis will interact with the scholarly community and use the Library for research.



## "Processions" at Dumbarton Oaks



[Trier, Cathedral Treasury, ivory panel, ca 800 \(?\): Imperial procession with relic](#)

The annual Byzantine Studies Symposium, "[Processions: Urban Ritual in Byzantium and Neighboring Lands](#)," was held on April 12 and 13 and was organized by Leslie Brubaker (University of Birmingham) and Nancy Ševčenko (Independent scholar), with support from Anna Stavrakopoulou and Eden Slone.

Military, civic, and religious processions were hallmarks of the ancient and medieval world; they continued into the Renaissance and, indeed, continue to this day. The conference speakers examined a large variety of texts, artifacts, and images to develop a new understanding of medieval urban life across multiple social registers. Studying processions introduces us to new protagonists as well, for processions involve audiences as well as participants, and groups hitherto virtually invisible (such as the team of people who prepared for the event by decorating the streets). The presentations offered ample, multifaceted evidence that the Byzantine commitment to processions was striking in terms of the resources and time allocated: there were as many as two processions a week in Constantinople, many involving the patriarch and the emperor. In the Latin West, the Crusader States, and in the Fatimid, Ottoman, and Muscovite worlds, by comparison, processions occurred far less frequently: the procession was significantly

more important to the Byzantines than to their neighbors and successors. The comparative study of Byzantine processions offered by the speakers at the symposium revealed how the Byzantines operated in a complex global network defined by local contexts, how they positioned themselves within this network, and the nature of the Byzantine legacy to the Eastern and Western inheritors of their culture.

Speakers from Greece, Italy, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States—Nathanael Andrade (Binghamton University – SUNY), Christine Angelidi (Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation), Leslie Brubaker (University of Birmingham), Michael Featherstone (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique; University of Fribourg), Michael S. Flier (Harvard University), Georgia Frank (Colgate University), Niels Gaul (University of Edinburgh), Çiğdem Kafescioğlu (Boğaziçi University), James Norrie (University of Oxford), Sebastián Salvadó (Independent scholar), Paula Sanders (Rice University), and Alexandra Vukovich (University of Oxford)—addressed topics in Byzantine, Western medieval, Slavic, Islamic, and Ottoman studies, in the fields of history, philology, religious studies, and art history. Presentations covered a wide range of topics from processions in late antiquity, in early, middle, and late Byzantine Constantinople, in Milan, Rome, Jerusalem, Egypt, North Africa, and Iberia, in early Rus and the age of Tsar, offering a synthetic, historicizing, contextualizing, and comparative examination of processions.

## **Byzantine Studies Award Opportunities**

### **[One-Month Research Awards](#)**

Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection offers One-Month Research Awards of \$3,000 to scholars holding a PhD and working on research projects in Byzantine studies or related fields. The awards were established to make the intellectual community, as well as the library, rare book, garden, and museum resources, of Dumbarton Oaks more widely available to a broader range of scholars for shorter terms and with some flexibility in starting dates. Awards are intended especially for those who might not be able to avail themselves of a longer-term fellowship at Dumbarton Oaks, or scholars in related disciplines who seek greater exposure to our fields of study. **Applications due October 1, 2019 for January 15 – June 30 award period.**

### **[Fellowships](#)**

Fellowships (junior, regular, summer, Tyler) are awarded to scholars on the basis of demonstrated scholarly ability and preparation of the candidate, including knowledge of requisite languages, interest and value of the study or project, and the project's relevance to the resources of Dumbarton Oaks. **Applications due November 1, 2019 for the 2020-2021**

academic year.

For further information on all awards, please visit the Dumbarton Oaks [website](#).

## Upcoming Byzantine Symposia and Colloquia at Dumbarton Oaks

### 2019-2020

**Colloquium** – November 15, 2019, [“The Insular Worlds of Byzantium”](#)

**Symposium** – April 24-25, 2020, “Byzantine Missions: Meaning, Nature, and Extent”

### 2020-2021

**Colloquium** – November 6, 2020, “People and Power in Byzantium”

**Symposium** – April 16-17, 2021, “On Being Conquered in Byzantium”

### 2021-2022

**Colloquium** – October 29, 2021

**Symposium** – April 29-30, 2022

### 2022-2023

**Colloquium** – November 4, 2022

**Symposium** – April 14-15, 2023

### 2023-2024

**Colloquium** – November 3, 2023

**Symposium** – April 19-20, 2024

### 2024-2025

**Colloquium** – November 15, 2024

**Symposium** – April 25-26, 2025

## Publications and Acquisitions

From the material world to the homiletic tradition



### Dumbarton Oaks Papers, vol. 72

[Click here](#) to learn more about the most recent DOP edition.



### Digitized Byzantine Manuscripts

[Explore](#) our collection of digital facsimiles and high resolution images.



### Mansfield Coin Acquisition

[Find out](#) about the promised gift of coins from Steve Mansfield to Dumbarton Oaks.



### John Chrysostom Manuscript Acquisition

[Learn more](#) about Dumbarton Oaks' acquisition of this 9th century Byzantine manuscript.

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