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In spite of the pandemic and its ensuing upheaval in our personal lives and around the world, MAFA has continued in its mission of support for the Holy Mountain and, for the first time, for a convent for women outside of the Holy Mountain that has historic associations with Mount Athos.

MAFA Joins the Mount Athos Center to Produce an English Translation of the Mount Athos Panagion

ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΑΘΩ ΑΓΙΩΝ Ο ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἀθανάσιος ὁ Ἀθωνίτης, κτίτωρ μονῆς Μεγίστης Λαύρας († 1001/4)

Ἡ γέννησι τοῦ ἱεροῦ τοῦ ἀθηναικοῦ κοινωβιακοῦ μοναχισμοῦ ὀνόματι Ἀθανασίου τοῦ Ἀθωνίτη τοποθετεῖται τὴν περίου μετὰ τὸν 925 καὶ 930. Τόπος καταγωγῆς του ὄχι εἶναι ἡ Τραπεζούντα τοῦ Πόντου καὶ τὸ βαπτιστικὸν τοῦ ὀνόματι ἦσαν Ἀβραάμους. Ὁ πατήρ του, μετὰ οἰκονομικῆς καταγωγῆς ἀπὸ τὴν Ἀνατολίαν τῆς Συρίας, πέθανε πρὸ τοῦ ὄ γιῶς του ἄλλοι ἐστὶ ζωῆ. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ μητέρα του, μετὰ οἰκονομικῆς καταγωγῆς ἀπὸ τὴν Κολλίδα τοῦ Πόντου, δὲν ἔζησε παρὰ λίγο μετὰ ἀφ’ οὗτο οὐλοῦσάρασε τὸ ὄφθαλμὸν τοῦ γιῶς τῆς. Τὴν ἀντροφὴ τοῦ ὄφθαλμοῦ παιδιοῦ ἀνέλαβε ἡ γυναίκα κάποιου συγγενεῶς καὶ συντοπία τῆς μητέρας του, ὁ ὄνομα Λεγιάν Κανίτης καὶ συγκαταλογεῖται μετὰ τὸν ἱερῶν μελῶν τῆς κοινωβιακῆς τῆς Τραπεζούντας. Σχίσματα μετὰ τὸν δεύτερο βιογράφο τοῦ ὄνομα, ἡ γυναίκα αὐτὴ ἦταν μοναχὴ, ἡ ὄνομα νοθεύουσα τὸ παιδί καὶ ζῆ μετὰ σαρκοσύνῃ καὶ ἔργασταν.

Ἡ ἀρετὴ τοῦ Ἀβραάμου ἦταν φανερὰ ἴδεν ἀπὸ τὰ παιδικὰ τὸ χρόνο, τὸ ἴδιο καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη του πρὸς τὰ γράμματα. Ἀφοῦ μαθήτεσε ἀπὸ κάποιου τοπικοῦ γραμματιστοῦ, μετῆς ἐστὶν Κωνσταντινούπολιν γὰ ἀνάστης σπουδῆς τὸν καιρὸ τοῦ αυτοκράτορα Ρωμανοῦ Α΄ Ἀσκαπανοῦ (920-944). Ἀφορμὴ στάθηκε κάποιος κομποκτηρῶς, ὄνοματι εὐπράξατος φρόν, ποῦ ὄταν πέθανε ἀπὸ τὴν Τραπεζούντα, προσέξτε τὸ ἴδιος τοῦ νεαροῦ Ἀβραάμου καὶ τοῦ ζήτησε νὰ τὸν ἀκολουθήσῃ ἐστὶ βουδαντικῆς πρωτεύουσα, Σινδοῦσάντος τὸ ἀσκητικὸ πρόσω ζωῆς μετὰ τὴν δέξα γὰ τὴν γνάθου. Ἐὰ βρεῖ ἐν πρώτοις συμπαραστάτης ἐστὶν πνευματικὸ τοῦ ὄνομα τὸν ἱερῶν στρατηγὸν Ζηροφῆρ καὶ τὸν οἰκονομικῆς του ποῦ ὄν συμβάλλον ἐστὶν οἰκονομικῆς ἐτήρησιν τῶν σπουδῶν του. Καθηθηρῆς του ἐστὶν γνάθη καὶ ἐστὶν ἀρετὴ ὄν γίνη ὄ Ἀθανάσιος, ὁ τὴν «προκαλλήμενος τῶν παιδευτηρίων» τῆς Κωνσταντινούπολης. Σὲ μικρὸ χρονικὸ διάστημα ὄτερα ἀπὸ ὄροφον ἀπόφασιν τῶν δασκάλων

του καὶ μετὰ ἀποκρηματικῆς συναισθησῆς ὄ Ἀβραάμους ὄν ἀναλάβῃ διανοητικὸ ρόλο ἀπὸ παιδευτηρίου. Χάρη ἐστὶν πολυετηρὴ κοσμικῆς του παιδείας συνέβαλε ἐστὶν προοδικτικῶν πλοῦθῶς μαθητῶν, πράγμα ποῦ τὸν ἔκανε εὐρύτερα γνωστὸ καὶ κίνησε τὸ ἔνδιαφέρον καὶ τοῦ τότε αυτοκράτορα, τοῦ φιλομαλοῦς Κωνσταντίνου Ζ΄ Πορφυρογέννητου (944-959).

Ὅσοιο ὄ Ἀβραάμους, θεωροῦσας πῶς ἐπιλέκειται ἀπόφασιν καὶ περισσότερο ἐστὶς κοσμικῆς τιμῆς καὶ φροντίδας, ἀποφάσισε νὰ ἀπομακρυνθῇ ἐστὶν Κωνσταντινούπολιν. Κατῆρξας συνόθεν, οἰ τὸν τότε στρατηγὸ τοῦ Αἰγαίου Πελάγους, Ζηροφῆρ, ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ ἐστὶν Ἀθῆνας. Κατὰ τὴν ἐπιστροφὴν τοῦ ἀντίκρισε γὰ πρῶτη φορὰ τὸν ἴδιος, γηροῦς ποῦ, γὰ τὸν βιογράφο του, ἦταν καθαροῦσας νὰ τὴν μετῆς ἐγκαταστάσῃ του ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ. Μετὰ τὴν ἐπίδοσ τοῦ ἐστὶν Κωνσταντινούπολιν διέγνωσας μετὰ τοῦ ἴδιου στρατηγῶν τὸν Μιχαὴλ Μαλέτιος, ἡγεμόνο ἐστὶν μονὴ τοῦ Κιωνά ἐστὶν Βιθυνία. Ἐκεῖ ὄν γνωριστὴ μετὰ τὸν ἀνεφρὸ τοῦ τελευταίου, Νικηφόρο Φωκά, ποῦ τότε ἦταν ἀκόμα στρατηγὸς τοῦ ὄνομα τῶν Ανατολικῶν. Ἐστὶν μονὴ τοῦ Μιχαὴλ ὄ Ἀβραάμους ὄν καρετῆ μοναχῶς μετὰ τὸ ὄνομα Ἀθανάσιος. Ἀφοῦ ἔζησε ἐκεῖ γὰ τέσσαρα χρόνια, αἰσθάνεται τὴν ἀνάγκη τῆς περαιτέρω ἡσυχίας καὶ γὰ αὐτοῦ ἀποσύρεται ἐστὶν περιοχή μετὰ τὸ ὄνομα Κυκλάδος.

Ἐστὶν τόπος αὐτοῦ ὄν δεχτῆ τὴν ἐπισκοπῆ τοῦ Νικηφόρου Φωκά, ὁ ὄνομα ἐδεῖλωση τὴν ἐπιθυμία νὰ γίνη πνευματικὸ παιδί τοῦ ὄνομα. Τὸ ἴδιο συνέβῃ μετὰ τὸν ἀδελφὸ τοῦ μαγιστροῦ καὶ κοροπολάτη Λόντα Φωκά. Ὅι πνευματικῶς του ἀρετῆς συμβάλλαν ὄστε τὸν Μιχαὴλ Μαλέτιος νὰ τὸν ἀποκαλέσῃ διδασκῶ του, πρῶτο ποῦ ὄ βιογράφος του ἡμεροῦσας ἔρη ἀπὸ διδασκῶ ἐστὶν τύπο, ὄνομα ἐστὶν μονὴ τοῦ Κιωνά, ἀλλὰ ἐστὶν πρόσω. Ἐπειδὴ ὄμοις ἔβρινε πῶς δὲν ἦταν ἄξιος νὰ ἀναλάβῃ τὴν πνευματικῆ αὐτῆ ἐδῶθη ἡ γὰ λόγους ἄλλους ἀδυσκρίτους, ὁ ὄνομα Ἀθανάσιος ὄν ἀπονομηθῇ τὴν τιμὴ αὐτῆ καὶ ὄν

ΑΓΙΟΥ ΚΤΙΤΟΥΡΕ ΑΓΙΟΡΕΙΤΙΚΩΝ ΜΟΝΩΝ

Ἄγιος Ἀθανάσιος ὁ Ἀθωνίτης, τοιογραφία, πῶς ἐστὶν Πρωτόν, Μανουὴλ Πανσελίνοσ (ἀνοκ), σελ. 1309

In 2013 The Mount Athos Center (Agioreitiki Estia) published its spectacular 415-page volume, *Hagiorite Panagion. The Chorus of the Saints on Athos*, under the editorship of the respected and internationally recognized scholar, Symeon A. Paschalidis (<https://www.agioritikiestia.gr/en/hagioreitikon-panagion-ton-en-atho-ho-choros>). The above image (pages 52-53) shows the beginning of the life of Athanasios the Athonite, founder of the Great Lavra Monastery († 1001/4), illustrated by the icon of Athanasios from the wall of the Protaton church attributed to the painter, Manuel Panselinos. It illustrates the quality and sumptuousness of this volume. Now MAFA and the Mount Athos Center have entered into a partnership to produce an English translation. We have already read the pilot project, a translation of the same life of St. Athanasios the Athonite by Andrew Philip Hendry. The translation is beautifully done, in language that is flowing and inspirational and at the same time does full justice to the beauty of the original.

The project's total cost for MAFA is €10,000 (\$11,875) spread over the three year period during which time the translation will be produced. We are pleased to announce that we have contributed our first instalment and the project has begun. We look forward enthusiastically to its completion in 2023/24.

Update on Grigoriou Monastery Fire Recovery



Image: Damaged electromechanical equipment after the Grigoriou Fire

MAFA has continued its support to the Holy Monastery of Grigoriou, helping to fund the repairs and rebuilding that were critically needed following the fire that destroyed their electromechanical facility two years ago. In the first half of this year, we made our second contribution, making good use of our emergency aid fund. MAFA's total contribution was all made possible by the generous donations of American members of the Friends of Mount Athos and growing numbers of donors that have discovered MAFA and have enthusiastically supported our mission.

MAFA's appeal on behalf of Grigoriou Monastery is ongoing, and we invite you to contribute either directly to the Grigoriou Appeal (<https://www.mountathosfoundation.org/appeals>) or to MAFA to help replenish our Emergency Aid Fund (<https://www.mountathosfoundation.org/appeals>, select "Mount Athos Emergency Aid Fund").

MAFA Supports the sisters of the Holy Convent of St. John the Forerunner

Located high on Mt. Kissavos (a.k.a. Mt. Ossa) in central Greece, this monastery was founded by the blessed martyr St Damianos (of Philotheou Monastery, Mt Athos) in the 16th century. After the last monk of the original monastery died in 1889, the local village of Anatoli took care of it until monks from Karakalou Monastery of Mt Athos came in 1981 and began to build a new structure next to the old monastery. Unfortunately, the monks from Karakalou left in 1985, unable to finish the new building.

In 2000, a group of determined and intrepid sisters from the Holy Monastery of Saint Paul the Apostle (<https://www.saintpauls-monastery.gr/en/home-2/>, located on the southeastern tip of the Attic peninsula), under the guidance of Fr. Dositheos Andrianopoulos (of Dionysiou Monastery, Mt. Athos) took possession of now abandoned and deteriorating monastery. Under the energetic and charismatic leadership of igumen (abbess) Mother Theodekti, who is well known to the Friends of Mount Athos, the sisters brought renewed vigor to its rehabilitation.

Sister Theoktiste, assistant to Mother Theodekti, informs MAFA that "Our greatest longing from a materialistic standpoint has been keeping the old monastery from ruin and restoring its church together with its precious frescoes from the 16th century. By the grace of God and help of others, we were able to accomplish this a few years ago, but it has drained our finances, as well as any funds from our relatives and friends." However, the monastery now has a pressing need. The vibrancy of this sisterhood has attracted new sisters, who are much appreciated because they are needed to sustain the Convent into the future. The problem is, there are no cells for the new sisters, who are having to double up in existing cells and crowd into any available nook or cranny in the existing buildings.

Members of the Friends of Mount Athos who have met Mother Theodekti or participated in the recent FoMA zoom session with her will understand her charisma and how she inspired the sisters to succeed where the monks had failed. Here is her description of the community of sisters:

What makes our community special, apart from our simplicity and devotion as Orthodox monastics, is our multi ethnicity and involvement in organic farming. Having sisters from 13 different countries means we can converse in Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Persian and Russian. This makes it possible for us to welcome guests from all over the world. Our community has also helped teach other monastic communities in Greece how to start up and run an organic farm. In addition, we participate in the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms of Greece (WOOFG, <https://woof.gr/>). It is part of a worldwide movement linking visitors with organic farmers to promote cultural and educational experiences based on trust and non-monetary exchange. We are also active in Peliti (Πελίτι, <https://peliti.gr/>), an organization for the preservation and distribution of traditional seeds.

Those of us on the MAFA Board of Directors who share connections to the American Farm School outside of Thessaloniki especially appreciate the significance of this work. The mission of the sisters of the Prodromos Convent is an inspiring complement to the far-sighted and groundbreaking work of the Farm School, now serving a new region in Greece while preserving a historic 16th-century monastery.

MAFA wants to help. Funds are urgently needed to construct new housing for the younger sisters. We urge you to go to the MAFA website and make a donation to this richly deserving project. And to see the Convent for yourselves, we urge you to view *Sisters of the Earth* on their You Tube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOUuuZ7dd-w>) and to learn more about them by visiting their website, www.saintjohns-monastery.gr. (To view in English, click on the English flag or click here: <http://www.saintjohns-monastery.gr/?lang=en>.)

MAFA SCHOLARSHIPS

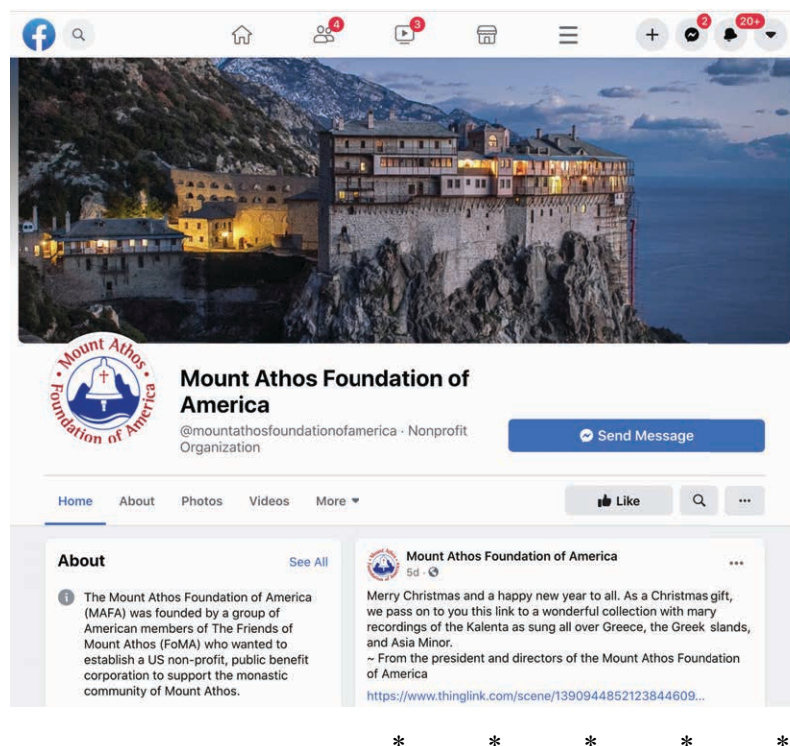
MAFA is pleased to announce its first 2021 scholarship: to Professor Kostis Smyrlis (Ph.D., the Sorbonne), a researcher for the National Hellenic Research Foundation in Athens (<http://www.eie.gr/>) and the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris (<http://www.cnrs.fr/>). We are especially appreciative of our partnership with **The Mount Athos Center in Thessaloniki**, which provides invaluable support for our scholarship winners, assuring the best chance for success of their projects.

Prof. Smyrlis is the head of a four-person team of scholars working on the edition of the archival documents of the Holy Monastery of Zographou as part of the *Archives de l’Athos* series. Each volume in this series includes an extensive introduction dealing with the history of a monastery and the topography of its territorial holdings during the medieval period. The team directed by Prof. Smyrlis is conducting a survey of the areas where the Zographou Monastery held landed property, namely the Athonite peninsula, various locations in Halkidiki, and the Strymon River Valley, comparing today’s topographical and archeological data to the information found in the archival documents, and identifying the location of the estates, where possible. Our MAFA scholarship is funding travel and related expenses for this survey.

The publication of the medieval archival documents of the monasteries of Mount Athos in the *Archives de l’Athos* series, that began in the 1930s in Paris and continues to this day, has contributed enormously to the study of the social, economic, and religious history of the Byzantine Empire. More particularly, the accompanying studies on the landed holdings of the monasteries have been of particular importance for understanding the historical geography of the Holy Mountain and its broader area, and for studying the history of the landscape and the environment, as well as human settlement, demography and toponyms. The holdings of the monastery of Zographou, the subject of this project, are of particular importance, since they extend in areas not too well covered by previous volumes on other monasteries, for example the estuary of the Strymon river.

We wish Prof. Smyrlis every success and are honored to be able to support him in this important project.

MAFA on Facebook



Dionne Katinas, our website designer (designsbydionne.com) and her colleague, Rich Frongillo, have performed superb service for us maintaining our ever-changing website and developing our new **MAFA Facebook Page**.

If you haven't yet seen our Facebook page and "liked" or "followed" us, please do so! Then our postings will be passed on to your friends, helping MAFA achieve wider awareness in 2021 of the Holy Mountain – also part of our mission. Thank you, Dionne and Rich, for your continuing service to MAFA!

If you are interested in becoming a member of the MAFA Volunteer Corps and are willing to contribute time and effort to help us carry out our mission of support for the Holy Mountain, please contact us at info@mountathosfoundation.org or visit us via Facebook or our website, www.mountathosfoundation.org to let us know of your interest. We would love to hear from you.

MAFA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charity, and donations to any of the above mentioned MAFA appeals will be tax deductible. You can donate directly from the MAFA website at:

<https://www.mountathosfoundation.org/donate/>.

Summary of MAFA Accomplishments to Date

During the first half of 2021 MAFA passed the \$50,000 mark in its cumulative contributions for the benefit of the Holy Mountain and Athos-related projects. MAFA grants and donations to date have supported the following:

1. 7 Scholarships for Athos-related research
2. Axion Estin Cell Restoration
3. Grigoriou Monastery Fire Recovery
4. Simonopetra Footpaths and Roads Rehabilitation Planning Project
5. Sisters of the Prodomos Convent on Mt. Kissavos in central Greece
6. English Translation of the Athonite Panagion in collaboration with the Mount Athos Center in Thessaloniki
7. Supporters of Athonite & Monastic Medicine (for the Athos Health Center)

On behalf of our Board of Directors, I thank you all for your generous contributions that have made possible those accomplishments and such a successful first half of 2021 despite the current pandemic!

Robert W. Allison, President,
The Mount Athos Foundation of America