

2020 Mount Athos Travel Scholarships Winners

The Mount Athos Foundation of America is pleased to announce the winners of our first Mount Athos Travel Scholarships for 2020. These scholarships provide up to \$1,000 to support research projects related to Mount Athos. Applicants are required to be conducting research which is related to Mount Athos, which requires travel either to Mount Athos, or to a dependency of one of the Athonite monasteries, or to one or more institutions such as museums or research institutes essential to the completion of the applicant's research project.

Mr. Xavier Agati: *On-Site study of manuscripts of a book written by 18th century historian, theologian and Mount Athos monk Caesarius Dapontes*

Mr. Xavier Agati, a scholar from Grenoble France, is working on his PhD dissertation at the Center of Byzantine & Neo-Hellenic Studies of the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Studies in Paris. The subject of his dissertation is an annotated and commentated edition of the *Book of Reigns* written by a fascinating 18th century historian, theologian and Xeropotamite monk Caesarius (Kaisarios) Dapontes. Mr. Agati will use the MAFA Travel Scholarship to fund his visits to several Holy Mountain monasteries where Mr. Dapontes lived and worked as a monastic in order to study the original manuscripts of the *Book of Reigns* and related materials.

Mr. Ugo Mondini: *The Transmission of John Mauropous' Canons in Mount Athos. Manuscripts and Cultural Reception.*

MAFA's second 2020 scholarship was issued to **Ugo Mondini**, for a study of the canons written by the 11th-century poet and hymnographer, **John Mauropous**. His name, John the Monk (Ἰωάννης Μοναχός) occurs throughout the Orthodox liturgical books like the Menaia, as the composer of numerous hymns that are still sung today in the monasteries. Only a small group of the 160 canons that he wrote have been published. Ugo Mondini is particularly interested in questions related to the reception of his hymns, that is, how and why they replaced earlier hymns in the services, and what role the monasteries of Mount Athos played in preserving and promoting his hymns. The monasteries of Mount Athos are one of the most valuable repositories for manuscripts of his hymns, especially the Megisti Lavra, and direct study of the physical manuscripts is critical to understanding which of John's canons were adopted for use within the Athonite monastic services and in what liturgical contexts they were sung.

Ugo Mondini is a Ph.D. student in Byzantine Philology in the Department of Literary, Philological and Linguistic Studies at the Università Degli Studi di Milano

2019 Mount Athos Travel Scholarships Winners

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which is related to Mount Athos, which study requires travel either to Mount Athos, or to a dependency of one of the Athonite monasteries, or to one or more institutions such as museums or research institutes essential to the completion of the applicant's Athos-related research project. Winners also receive support from MAFA in establishing effective working relationships with the monasteries on Mount Athos.

Vladimir Agrigoroaei: *Conducting an Analysis of a Rare 13th Century Manuscript, which is located at the Iviron Monastery.*

Mr. Agrigoroaei is performing an ongoing codicological analysis of a rare manuscript containing the story of Barlaam and Josaphat in both Greek and Old French. The original manuscript contained only the Greek text accompanied by rich illustrations, painted in gold, but by the beginning of the 13th century, after the Fall of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade (1204), its margins received an Old French translation of the Greek text. The original manuscript is currently located at the Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos. Mr. Agrigoroaei has recently visited Iviron to inspect and study this rare document in person.

A native of Romania, Mr. Agrigoroaei holds two PhDs, as well as three other degrees from institutions in Romania, France and Italy. Currently, he is a “chargé de recherche” – researcher at the Centre for Medieval Studies in Poitiers, France.

Vladimir Bozinovic: *Researching the Sculptural Decorations of the Exonarthex of the Hilander Monastery's Katholikon.*

Mr. Bozinovic proposes an on-site study at the Serbian Orthodox Monastery on Mount Athos, known as Hilander Monastery, of sculptural decorations, which are located in the outer narthex (called the exonarthex) of the Monastery's primary church (its Katholikon). His goal is to establish a better understanding of the history and stylistic influences of the Katholikon's architecture and sculptural decorations.

Mr. Bozinovic, a native of Serbia, is currently pursuing a PhD in Art History at the University of Istanbul. He also holds two degrees from the University of Belgrade.

2018 Mount Athos Travel Scholarships Winners

The Mount Athos Foundation of America (MAFA) is pleased to announce the winners of our Mount Athos Travel Scholarships for 2018. These scholarships provide up to \$1,000 to support research projects related to Mount Athos. Applicants are required to be conducting research which is related to Mount Athos, which study requires travel either to Mount Athos, or to a

dependency of one of the Athonite monasteries, or to one or more institutions such as museums or research institutes essential to the completion of the applicant's Athos-related research project. Winners also receive support from MAFA in establishing effective working relationships with the monasteries on Mount Athos.

Maximilian Ramseyer: *The Teachings and Writings of Archimandrite George Kapsanis: Toward Development of an Educational Model.*

An on-site study at Grigoriou Monastery of the writings of the Archimandrite George Kapsanis, late elder and abbot of Grigoriou, with the objective of developing a model for orthodox religious & spiritual education that will integrate theology, philosophy and science and spiritual growth. Mr. Ramsayer's intention is to ground this model in the foundations of Orthodox Christian teaching and learning as preserved in Athonite monastic tradition, and in particular, in the writings of the Elder George of blessed memory, whose many works on Orthodox education reveal the depth of his thinking about the implications of theology for contemporary life. Mr. Ramsayer is currently a PhD student in the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and he will be applying the above-mentioned research to his PhD studies. He holds a BA from Duke University and his MA from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, MA.

Alexander Rodriguez Suarez: *Bell Ringing in Mount Athos: Regulating the Life of the Monastic Community.*

A study of the history of bell ringing on Mount Athos, incorporating an on-site study of the manufacture and acquisition of bells currently in use in the monasteries and sketes of Mount Athos. Having already completed a research project based on published materials about monastic bells and bell ringing and the production of bells in the Ottoman period, Mr. Suarez plans to document the bells of the Holy Mountain, creating a typology based on their shapes, decoration and inscriptions. He aims – to the extent possible – to establish the bells' provenance, and answer questions about monastic patronage and dedications of the bells and about the monasteries' relationships with centers of bell production, in the Balkans and elsewhere.

Dr. Suarez is an independent scholar with degrees from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (B.A.) and King's College, London (Ph.D). He is currently a summer research fellow at Dumbarton Oaks in Georgetown, Washington D.C.