

Concept Plan Mone Karakallou Catalogue and Library Project (Dec 2008)

<< the case of the perseverance of Byzantine Orthodox book lore
in a living and continuing tradition >>

General Aim

- the CBM team will look for the most concrete and practical realisation of the stated goals, the reorganisation of the Mone Karakallou Library and its catalogues.

Primary purpose and task

- the primary purpose and task of the Mone Karakallou Catalogue and Library Project [KCLP] is to make the holdings of the Karakallou Library more accessible in order to present the actual importance of the ancient treasures in a discrete manner by new catalogues, and the rearrangement of the libraries holdings. The idea is to encourage by this way the study of the primary sources of Orthodox monastic life in its *authentic* environment, i.e. within the Monastery itself and in the Liturgical life of the Monastery community.

Integration of Codices and Monastic life

- the Mone Karakallou Catalogue and Library Project is a fine example of (re)considering the perfect integration of the ancient Byzantine holdings of codices and the underlying Orthodox monastic practical life. The Karakallou Monastery takes part in the Athos Monastic Federation and is, of course, interested in how the Karakallou Project can attune to other Catalogue and Library Projects of the Monasteries on the Holy Mountain.

Particular importance of the Project

- the particular importance of the Mone Karakallou Catalogue and Library Project is that it is set up as an initiative of the monks themselves and that it is supported by a New Orthodox Academic Approach to the Byzantine manuscripts. Further: it will be done in the actual liturgical life and ascetical tradition of the Monastery, namely within the spiritual and intellectual environment of the ancient codices, which is considered as very instructive

and interesting, both from an **internal** (the liturgical use and function in the monasteries spiritual life) as well as from an **external** point of view (the practical and formal aspects of the codices). The guidance, advise and concrete help of the Monastery is for this reason crucial in this Project. The task of the CBM team is to help the renovation of the Karakallou Library and its cataloguing work within the traditional and canonical borders of the Monastery.

Housing of the Codices and Place of the Library in the Monastery

- The Ancient Library is located in close proximity to the Katholikon (the Church in the centre of the Monastery), namely immediately in the basement behind the Katholikon, and its function is directly linked to the evangelical liturgical and ascetical life of the monastic community, and the codexforms and compilations are evidence and witnesses of that life. Codices are traditionally also kept in the Katholikon itself and in the Skeuophylakion annex the Church. The New Library is located elsewhere in the Monastery today.

The Holdings of the Monasteries Library

- the Library of Mone Karakallou consists of three holdings:

(1) the Ancient Holding of Byzantine manuscripts [cheirographa from the 9th to the 19th c.]

(2) the Old Holding of Byzantine and Greek Printed books [entypa since the 15th c.]

(3) the New Holding of Byzantine and Greek Printed Editions and other Publications

(the holdings 1-2 and holding 3 are at present dislocated)

Historical layers of the Monastic Library

- Different stages can be seen in this continuing tradition. Mone Karakallou and its library was built up since the 10th/11th century.

➤ *stage 1* is clearly reflected in the ancient holding of Byzantine manuscripts (early Christian and Byzantine period up to the Fall of Constantinople in the middle of the 15th c.);

➤ *stage 2* is reflected in the Old Collection of Byzantine Printed books (Modern Byzantine period since the Introduction of the Printing Press to the end of the 18th / beginning of the 19th c.);

- *stage 3* is mirrored in the New Collection of Byzantine and Greek editions (Modern Byzantine Greek period, since the 18th up until the present day, including the fresh publications of contemporary gerons and spiritual fathers of Athos and elsewhere)

Idea of Unification of the ancient and new holdings

The fundamental idea of the reorganisation plan is to reunite the dislocated **old** holdings (manuscripts and ancient printed editions) and **new** holding (modern series of printed books for the monks of the monastery) of the Karakallou Library, with a facilitated reading room for study and consulting the codices and books, in the central basement of the Monastery, directly behind the Katholikon.

Possible Housing and Arrangement of the codices and books

In the middle of the main building could be the reading room with current books/series, catalogues, biographical entrances, introductory works to Byzantine and Ecclesiastical Literature, encyclopaedias of Church and Religion, Lexica, Compendia, etc., and Orthodox, Byzantine/Greek and Western periodicals. In the surrounding rooms, at the left and right side, are storages the manuscripts, ancient printed and new/modern books and series. A digital catalogue will be installed and provide data of the ancient holding of manuscripts and the other collections.

Codico-liturgical characteristics of Byzantine manuscripts

- the distinct holdings of the Karakallou Library reflect the longstanding and ongoing tradition of Byzantine literature and its deep roots in Biblical and patristic codification tradition, which can be characterised as *codico-liturgical*, i.e. that the outer and inner formation and arrangements of the Byzantine codices were ruled by their liturgical function and uses, either directly by their use in the services or more indirectly by private reading/study of the monks in their cells.

Primary Task and Scope of New Catalogues

- Setting up a new catalogue of the ancient holding of Byzantine manuscripts (Lambros catalogue: 279 codices), in book and digital form. The construction (digitalisation) of the catalogues of the printed book collections will follow in due course.

Catalogues of the Library

- The Ancient Holdings of manuscripts (cheirographa) has three catalogues:
 - 1) cart files kept in a box
 - 2) handwritten catalogue book with notes in red (additions, changes, updatings etc.)
 - 3) the printed Lambros catalogue

- The Old Holding of Printed codices has two catalogues:
 - 1) cart files in the same box as the handwritten codices
 - 2) a separate handwritten catalogue book

- The New Holding of Byzantine and Greek Printed Editions and other Publications is not yet catalogued (or is in progress?).

Proposed procedure of the catalogues construction

1. First preparatory action: study of the present location and system of storage

The present location of the codices, the system of storage in the cases/on the shelves, their position, their numbering(s), the titles on the backs (identification) etc. should be noticed and annotated.

2. First Inventory List of the complete holding of handwritten codices

With the help of the existing catalogues:

- Lambros catalogue describing the codices in the Library of Mone Karakallou
- Handwritten Karakallou catalogue (in the ancient library) with additional data in red colour in the margins
- box with old cart files (ancient catalogue system?)

3. First check of the actual (physical) presence of the handwritten codices

This work should be done in the monastery with the help of (at least) two monks.

NB. Skeuophylakion? Katholikon/Kyriakon? Rarely used storage-rooms of ancient books?

4. Setting up a New Catalogue and Description Scheme (codico-liturgical)

5. *Setting up a New Digital Database for the Karakallou Catalogue(s)*

6. Storing, arranging, creating sufficient conservation conditions