



COPTIC STUDIES ACROSS CONTINENTS

The past six months has seen a series of Coptic Studies conferences across the continents drawing on the ever growing research by Coptologists and researchers from around the world.

The Second Coptic Studies International Conference (5-7 December, 2014) in Cairo, Egypt was hosted under the auspices and presidency of His Holiness Pope Tawadros II. This was also on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Institute of Coptic Studies (ICS) at Deir Anba Rueiss, Cairo (1954-2014). The theme of the conference was "Coptic Studies – Future Aspirations". Papers covered areas of culture, history, language, literature, liturgy, monasticism, art history, among other.

St. Mark Foundation (US) held its Seventh International Symposium on Coptic Monasticism at St. Mina Monastery, King Mariout on February 10-13, 2015. This symposium documented the history of early Christianity, Monasticism and Covenants and their status. Previous symposiums were held at the monasteries of Wadie el Natrun, Fayyum, Sohag & Akhmim, Aswan & Nubia, and Koskam Mountain Deir el Muharak. Papers at these symposiums are published by the American University in Cairo Press.

On April 18, 2015 the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies (CSCS) sponsored its Eighth Annual Coptic Studies Symposium at the University of Toronto. The symposium brought together scholars from both Coptic and Ethiopian Studies disciplines to discuss cultural and mutual exchanges in areas of church history, monasticism, literature, liturgy, archaeology and art history. The CSCS publishes symposium papers in the Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies.

Between June 5 and 7, 2015 the Coptic Orthodox Centre in Stevenage held the Third International Symposium on Coptic Culture: Past Present and Future with a focus on "Ordinary Lives, Changing Times".

The symposium was hosted by H.G. Bishop Angelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the UK. The symposium brought together archeologists, art historians, ethnographers, historians, linguists, and other specialists whose research focussed on daily existence in Egypt both in religious settings and in secular life. Papers ranged far and wide and included the cross-cultural use of symbols such as the Coptic cross, dowry through artifacts, Coptic women's personal correspondence between the third and eighth centuries, food production in monasteries, the early production of *abarka* (wine) for the Coptic liturgy, food and dress as prescribed by Clement of Alexandria, the role of Coptic music in daily life, socio-cultural life in Egypt as reflected in Marquerite Nakhla's paintings (1940-1975), Victor Fakhoury's icon "Martyrs of Maspero" in St. Mark's Coptic Museum's collection, and more! The keynote address was given by Professor Heike Behlmer from the University of Göttingen, Germany who is responsible for a twenty-year project to provide a complete digital edition of the Sahidic Old Testament. The keynote address was given at the British Museum and attended by over one hundred people and UK dignitaries. Papers will be published by the American University Press in Cairo.

The 17th annual Coptic studies day organized by Association francophone de coptologie also met in Lisbon from 18 to 20 June at Faculty of Theology, Catholic University of Portugal. Gathered were francophone scholars from a wide range of disciplines and from as far as Australia.

H.G. Bishop Angelos, the host of the Symposium at Stevenage expressed the significance of such international gatherings of scholars when he said that Coptic Studies "... is not just about 'antiquity' but translates our heritage to explain who we are today and provides the vision of who we can be in the future."



CSCS Symposium Participants and Board of Directors

Left to right: Dr. Ramez Boutros (President), Joseph Youssef, Professor Ugo Zanetti (Keynote Speaker), Fr. Bigoul el-Suriani, Ihab Khalil, Dr. Mat Immerzeel, Dr. Helene Moussa, Professor Michael Gervers

University of Toronto Student Associations Join the U of T Coptic Studies Endowment Campaign

On Sunday June 14, 2015, from 3:00 pm to 9pm, the gym at Holy Virgin and St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Cathedral (Markham) was buzzing with excitement and energy. For the first time, twelve co-ed volley-ball teams from the different Coptic Churches across the GTA and Southern Ontario competed for the U of T Coptic Orthodox Students Association (COSA) trophies. Each team was joined by fellow friends and supporters rooting for them!



First Place Winners: WatchTheseBaes



Father Pishoi Attala handing the funds raised at this event to Ms Heather Mclean, Senior Development Officer (responsible for this campaign), Faculty of Arts and Science, U of T



Second Place Winners: St Cassarine



It certainly was a very effective way of drawing the attention and interest of university students, graduates and their families about Coptic Studies at the U of T. Each player had to pay a registration fee. Parents were also asked to donate snacks and soft drinks which were in turn sold. The response was way beyond the expectations of the organizers who are already planning for more such events in the future!

But this friendly and competitive event was not only about competing for a trophy! It was the outcome of several months of planning led by organizers Fady Anees, Monica Reyad and Mary Shehata of the U of T Coptic Orthodox Students Association (COSA), St. George campus and the Coptic Christian Student Association (CSSA), Scarborough campus, with the purpose of raising awareness about Coptic Studies courses offered at the U of T and contributing funds towards the U of T Coptic Studies Endowment Campaign. The goal of this campaign is to establish a degree programme in Coptic Studies at the U of T Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations.