ST. SHENOUDA THE ARCHIMANDRITE
COPTIC SOCIETY

SOCIETY PROGRESS
OCTOBER 2015 TO SEPTEMBER 2016
(By Hany N. Takla)

LOS ANGELES
OCTOBER, 2016
After 46 long months of preparations, scholars, students, and Coptic Studies enthusiasts gathered under the hot July California sun from all four corners of the globe. They came for one purpose and that is to attend and participate in what is considered the Coptic Studies Olympics. Starting on July 25, 2016, over 270 attendees from over 24 countries descended on the city of Claremont in the eastern part of Los Angeles County to attend the 11th Congress of Coptic Studies. They came to share their work, network with their peers, and learn about the vast boundaries of the field. For five consecutive days the quiet Claremont schools were transformed into a scholarly Olympic village. Using facilities from four of these schools, the attendees were treated to what was described by several and agreed to by all as the most organized and best IACS Congress to date. For the Society to organize such a world-class event was the honor of a lifetime and a recognition of our achievements in promoting Coptic Studies especially in the United States. For the host, Claremont Graduate University (CGU), it was the most prestigious scholarly gathering that they ever had and a recognition for the over five decades of Coptic Scholarship at this School. Despite the hot sun and the long walking distances at times, the seamless coordination between the Society and CGU was the main reason for the wonderful reactions conveyed. Financially it was a costly event, but the generosity of the members of the Society afforded us to achieve the brilliant success we experienced.

There were over 160 presentations made at the Congress. They were organized as an open common session for the first day including welcoming speeches by dignitaries and plenary presentations in different aspects of Coptic Studies. The following four days started with a common session in the morning followed by regular paper presentations in four parallel sessions and lasting as late as 6:30 in the evening. For the duration of the Congress there was also a wonderful exhibit to celebrate the Christian Legacy of Egypt, organized by the renowned Museum of the Bible (MOTB) with the participation of University Honold Library and the Society. To add a modern flavor to ancient artifacts, CGU held an adjoining art exhibit of the works of a young Diaspora Copt, Ms. Christine Salama, who recently graduated from the University and whose work was honored during her attendance and also praised by the scholars that usually deal more with the ancient. There were three evening receptions associated with the exhibit to introduce the three different collections it showcased along with a hosted dinner by the Society on Thursday night at the nearby St. John Coptic Orthodox Church in Covina, California at the invitation of Fr. Shenouda Ghattas of the church.
The proceedings of the Congress will be published by Peeters Publishers of Belgium and the editors were preliminarily announced as Mr. Hany N. Takla and Prof. Maged S. A. Mikhail.

**COOPERATION WITH SAINT MARK FOUNDATION (SMF)**

The new volume of *Christianity and Monasticism in Northern Egypt* is currently in its proofing stage, containing 26 chapters. They are related to the proceedings of the February 2015, Mar Mena Monastery Symposium, organized by SMF. Dr. Gawdat Gabra and Hany N. Takla are the co-editors of this publication which is the last of the four volumes for that series. Additionally, SMF generously financed and provided travel grants to three promising Coptic scholars to come from Egypt to attend and participate at the Congress.

**COMPUTERS AND COPTIC**

a. Coptic Digital Resources (CDL/CML): The Society continued its strides in expanding its digital library of Coptology. This included items from the Society's offprint collection, catalogs of Coptic and Christian Arabic manuscripts, and rare and essential volumes in the Field. Over 158 titles have been added during this year. Moreover, we have digitized an additional seven manuscripts from our Microfilm Library (CML). Several of these CDL titles will appear in our Coptic Heritage website (CH). This work can also be made available to scholars and students involved in Coptology and related fields for a nominal fee. Inquiries and requests for other titles not appearing in CH can be mailed or emailed to the Society.

c. Global Access (Internet): During the year we maintained and expanded our solid presence on the internet, which began in late 1995. Our web addresses include stshenouda.org, stshenouda.com, copticmanuscripts.com, sseics.org, and stshenouda.info. We will continue to maintain the site copticcongress2016.org. Inasmuch, we are actively expanding our presence on Facebook to showcase and announce our activities as well as to establish a communication link with those interested in learning and studying different aspects of the Coptic Heritage.

d. Coptic Heritage Site (CH): Subscribers can now have access to all the Society previous and current publications: *St. Shenouda Coptic Newsletter, Bulletin of the St. Shenouda Coptic Society, St. Shenouda Coptic Quarterly*, and *Coptica*. Other available resources include a lectionary, Bohairic-English, of the Days Commemorations in the Coptic Church; contents of the Coptic New Testament CD in Bohairic, Sahidic, Lycopolitan, Mesokemic, Greek, and English; and the first 48 items in
our manuscript collection. More items will be added from the vast resources of our CDL collection. More details and subscription information are currently available at the following address: http://demo.stshenouda.info/tc.htm.

THE CENTER LIBRARIES

During the past year the print holdings of the multiple libraries, including books, periodicals, and offprints have grown to about 14,000 items of material in the different branches of Coptology as well as Egyptology, Semitic Studies, and Middle Eastern Studies. Some of the notable additions, including several titles by our members, are as follows:


i. **Coptic Language:** Grossman, E. et al. (eds) Egyptian-Coptic Linguistics in Typological Perspective (2015); Spiegelberg, W. Koptische Etymologien. Beiträge zu einem Koptischen Wörterbuch (1920); Tukhi, R., Rudimenta Linguae Coptae sive Aegyptiacae ad Usum Collegii Urbani de Propaganda Fide (Books on Demand of 1778 ed).


n. Coptic Manuscript Collection: Ms.214 Book of Isaiah (Boh-Ar, 14th century, 1 folio); Ms.215 Unidentified Parchment Fragment (Sah, undated); Ms.216 Liturgy of St. Basil (Boh-Ar, AM 1578, 160f); Ms.217 Office of Baptism (Boh-Ar, AM 1470, 86f); Ms.218 Hagiographic Collection, Inc. (Ar, AM 1457, 110f); Ms.219 Psalmody and Doxologies, Inc (Boh, Boh-Ar, and Ar, undated, 425f)).

o. Special Collections: Anonymous, Arabic Katameros for the Month of Hatur. (1872); Gardthausen, V. Griechische Palaeographie. 2v. (1911); Tukhi, R. Pijom ente nipsalterion ente Daouid (1744).

p. John B. Callender Memorial Library: This special Library Egyptology, Greco-Roman, and Nubiology library continued to grow. It now holds more than 1,530 titles including periodicals. We hope to post a list of the contents soon on library.stshenouda.org site.

ACADEMIC EFFORTS @ CGU

The Society has once more successfully achieved its fundraising goal of $26,000 to fund the Clinical Professorship in Coptic Studies for the 2015-2016 school year. Dr. Gawdat Gabra, the designated Clinical Professor of Coptic Studies, has continued teaching multiple classes and advising numerous graduate students in the School of Arts and Humanities at CGU. For more details about the activities of the Coptic Council at CGU, visit its website http://cgu.edu/pages/5446.asp. The Coptic Council is the representative of the Society at CGU.

Through his guidance and inspiration, Coptic Studies is continuing to prosper and move forward at CGU. The fruit of such labor is continually produced at an impressive rate. Recently Patricia Ann Eshagh has been recently awarded her PhD with a dissertation titled, Tracing the Jesus Prayer Westward: Reaffirming Egyptian Influence on Western Monasticism in Late Antiquity. Other students are currently at different stages of their dissertation work: Mary Ghattas (Towards a History of Eastern Christianity: the Oriental Orthodox Communion in Egypt, 1805-Present), Tamara Siuda (Coptic Hagiography), Lincoln Hale (Coptic
New Testament). Other students are either finished with their MA thesis or are on course to complete their MA program. The introduction of the Coptic Studies Track at this prestigious School has also proved to be an invaluable leaping step in promoting Coptology in general and at CGU in particular.

The highlight of the cooperation between the Society and CGU was the joint effort in organizing and facilitating the successful 11th International Congress of Coptic Studies as was previously mentioned. Consequently, several of the former and/or present students of Prof. Gabra presented at the Congress.

The Claremont Coptic Encyclopedia (CCE) has entered its second phase of adding more updated and colored digital images to the existing articles as well as new articles. This work is accessible 24/7 worldwide for free at: http://www.cgu.edu/cce. An organizational meeting of the Area Editors was held on the evening of the first day of the Congress. Also a new Guide to the Authors has been posted. Furthermore a new Associate Managing Editor (Dr. Donald A. Westbrook) and two Assistant Managing Editors (Dr. Patricia A. Eshagh and Ms. Mary Ghattas) were appointed.

THE SOCIETY ELECTIONS

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Society, an election of officers was conducted by mail-in ballots. The results came in as: Mr. Hany N. Takla, President; Mr. Emad S. Hanna, Treasurer; and Mrs. Amany Awad-Hanna, Secretary; serving from October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2019. The four other members of the Governing Board selected by the elected officers are: Mr. Ramses Wassif, Vice President; Mr. Joseph Fahim; Mr. Emad Georgy; and Prof. Maged S. A. Mikhail. The Society would like to thank the outgoing members, Dr. Merit Shoucri and Mr. Ashraf W. Hanna, for their dedicated service.

PUBLICATIONS

Coptica: Volume 14 was published and distributed to members and subscribers. It included multiple papers from previous Society Conferences relating to St. Shenouda the Archimandrite. The editor is Prof. Maged S. A. Mikhail, Professor at the History Department of the California State University, Fullerton. Volume 15 is in the preparation.