

THE LEVANTINE FOUNDATION

Preserving Cultural Heritage in the Near East

Conservation
Preservation & Training



in partnership with
The Supreme Council of Antiquities, The National Library & Archives of Egypt



and
The Leiden University, the Netherlands



Universiteit Leiden

TLF ANNOUNCEMENT /30 /3/2010

LEVANTINE FOUNDATION EXPANDS INTO TRAINING

The UK based charity The Levantine Foundation, currently involved in preserving the library at Deir al Surian, has announced that it is expanding its activities in Egypt into the training of local museum personnel in conservation. Driven by the shortage in Egypt of skilled conservators to appropriately care for Egypt's vast heritage, especially of paper based artefacts, the Foundation has set up an international board of experts to advise on the content of training led by Elizabeth Sobczynski, Chief Executive of the Foundation. The board draws on expertise from Egypt, Europe and the USA with Dr Zahi Hawass of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, Egypt acting as honorary Chair.

Advisory Board for the TLF Conservation Training Project

Professor Bas ter Haar Romney, Institute for Religious Studies, Leiden University, Leiden, Netherlands
Dr. Maxwell Hearn, Curator, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA
Dr. Mat Immerzeel, Director, The Paul van Moorsel Centre, Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands
Dr. Sophie Makariou, Curator of Islamic Art, The Louvre Museum, Paris, France
Dr. Ezzat H Salib, The Supreme Council of Antiquities, Cairo, Egypt
Mrs. Hoda Sarofim-Sawiris, Former Director of the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development, Cairo, Egypt
Ms. Lucia Scalisi, Conservator/lecturer, Formerly at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK
Mrs. Elizabeth Sobczynski, ACR MIPC, Conservation Consultant and Chief Executive, The Levantine Foundation, London, UK

TLF Training Courses 18 April – 6 May and October 2010

Following a pilot course at the Coptic Museum in Cairo in March 2009 TLF was successful in gaining grant funding from the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development (SFSD) through Al Ahram Beverages to deliver two intensive training courses in April and October 2010.

The courses are being organised in partnership with the Leiden University, the Netherlands, The Supreme Council of Antiquities and The National Library & Archives in Egypt.

The course will consist of lectures, practical workshops and site visits, covering subjects such as the history of illuminated manuscripts and Christian iconography, cataloguing, codicology & palaeography, embellishment and presentation of Islamic manuscripts, essentials of manuscript reading; the use of various languages, scripts and colours used in Syriac and Greek manuscripts, collection management, and environmental aspects such as pest and mould management. We are very pleased that several eminent and respected professionals in the field of Art, specialising in Christian Art in the Middle East, Islamic art and manuscripts and Theology from the Leiden University and renowned experts in conservation and collection management have agreed to present lectures and workshops during the programme.

The programme will provide a unique educational opportunity to communicate an understanding of conservation issues and preservation techniques. It will target conservators, curators, librarians, museologists, monks & nuns caring for monastic collections and unemployed graduates.

The primary goal is to assist with the preservation of Egyptian cultural heritage contained in the leading public and private collections. Secondly, it is to address pressing social development needs in the region by increasing local capacity in fields associated with conservation and museology programmes.

Training of local museum conservators will cover preventative and interventive conservation theory and practice. It will develop a high level of manual skills, together with sensitivity to and understanding of the techniques being used, as well as a respect for the disciplines they require.

Deir al Surian: Conservation Campaign 11 April – 8 May 2010

The 6th Century monastery of the Syrians houses an important collection which includes Syriac MS (the earliest dating from 400 AD) as well as MS in Coptic, Arabic and Ethiopic. The Levantine Foundation has been working to preserve this collection (parts of which are in the British Library) since 2002.

An international team of conservators led by Marzena Szczerkowska, senior book conservator, Verso Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage, Gniezno, Poland will once again be at the monastery this spring working on the conservation and refurbishment of the collection. In addition, there will be two MA students from the Camberwell College of Art and West Dean who are going to undertake conservation of selected manuscripts as part of their post graduate project.

Conservators interested in participating in future conservation campaigns with TLF should send their CV to Elizabeth Sobczynski by 31 July, email: es.aicp@btinternet.com or write to The Levantine Foundation, 106 St George's Square, London SW1V 3QY