

# PROFESSOR MOROPOULOU OF THE NTUA REVISITS THE HOLY SEPULCHER

Between Sunday the 4<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2015, Professor Antonia Moropoulou of the National Technical University of Athens, accompanied by Mr Korres and his wife, Architect Asimina Koutrouli, visited the Holy Sepulcher and the Patriarchate. The aim of the visit was to perform diagnostic works on the stability of the structure of the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulcher, following the unconstitutional intervention of the Israeli Archaeological Service and Police, months ago.

On the first day of their visit, the scientists, accompanied by the Sacristan of the Holy Sepulcher, Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, and the Architect of the Church of the Resurrection, Mr Theodosios Mitropoulos, visited the Aedicula in order to carry on the designated works. On the following day, they met with H.B. Theophilos, Archbishop of Jerusalem, and exchanged views on ways in which reinforcement works may be conducted without causing damage to the structure of the monument nor altering the site's veneration status.

During the meeting, Professor Moropoulou, coordinator and head of the interdisciplinary research team of the Metsovion Technical University, assigned to provide *complete diagnostic research as well as the materials to be used in the interventions for the conservation and restoration of the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulcher*, delivered to the Patriarch the First Stage of the University's Study on: a *the geometrical documentation* by the research team of the University's School of Rural and Surveying Engineering, headed by Professor Andreas Georgopoulos, and b. *the outcome of the investigation into the representation with nondestructive methods of the*

*construction phases and materials of the interior of the Aedicula*, by the Laboratory of Materials Science and Engineering of the School of Chemical Engineering, headed by herself.

Professor Moropoulou also visited the All-holy Church of the Resurrection with Mr Emmanuel Korres, Professor at the School of Architects and Head of the Interdepartmental Programme for the preservation of monuments, known for his work on the restoration of the Parthenon monuments. In the context of this visit, a site investigation of the Holy Aedicula took place in order to set forth the principles and outline of the materials and conservation interventions. The investigation concluded that the foundations are in excellent condition and they have not failed in any way.

Structural problems have been observed only at the masonry mortar and filling materials behind the marble on the external construction at a height just over 1,5 m.

Therefore, the project will be carried out gradually in the course of successive phases without interrupting the monument's operation.

Professors participating in the interdisciplinary group, namely Mr Andreas Georgopoulos, Mr Emmanuel Korres and Mr Constantinos Spyrakos have already been called upon to collaborate towards the completion of the study by Ms Moropoulou on Thursday, the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2015. The final proposition, once discussed at the Technical University in Athens, will be presented at the Patriarchate of Jerusalem for approval by the three religious communities within March 2016.

A meeting with the Patriarch will take place on the afternoon of the same day, for the completion of the research project and discussion of the programme agreement with the Technical University.

The issue will be discussed tomorrow, the 6<sup>th</sup> of October, at a meeting in the office of the Elder Sacristan between representatives of the other two denominations, the Franciscans and the Armenians.

**From the Secretariat-General**

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