

Keeping Time:  
Temporal Imagery and Thought in the Calendars of Later Byzantium

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**Abstract**  
(French follows)

This dissertation, “Keeping Time: Temporal Imagery and Thought in the Calendars of Later Byzantium,” explores how visual expressions of the calendar shaped understandings of time’s creation, structure, and experience. From the tenth century onward, concerted efforts of ordering temporal systems, especially calendars, emerge in astronomical, agricultural, and liturgical manuscripts. In the wake of these organizational projects, illustrations were added to these manuscripts, elaborating on the information contained within them. Work by historians of science and of liturgy has crucially revealed the mathematics and technologies involved in temporal reckoning, as well as the development of a church year filled with readings and commemorations that interlace different scales of time within liturgical rites. However, the role of visual material, including decorative imagery in tables, diagrams, and manuscripts that illustrated the calendrical information, is often eclipsed by studies that follow the calendar’s textual development. In contrast, this dissertation demonstrates that this visual material was not marginal and played a role in shaping understandings of time.

Different forms of time keeping provide the structure for this dissertation, proceeding in two parts. Part one, “The Time of the Cosmos in Heaven and On Earth,” focuses on imagery associated with dividing time and how it is made visible through either celestial patterns or earthly seasons. Drawing on attitudes toward observing atmospheric changes, whether in the heavens or in the fields, this section investigates how visualizing units of time in days, months, and years create order and shape how viewers understood their place in the world and cosmos. Chapter one pursues cosmological imagery within imperial manuscripts that pose two competing attitudes toward visualizing the origins of time in creation narratives from middle Byzantine Octateuchs. Chapter two then examines three instances where the labors of the months were added to

manuscripts to consider their ability to interact with cosmic cycles related to the origins of time, to organize information in canon tables, and to regulate land management in monastic estates.

Part Two, “Gathering and Unbinding Sacred Time,” shifts to the church year and its annual cycle of saintly commemorations to explore how illustrated manuscripts and icons use imagery to convey liturgical time. It moves beyond questions of narrative illustration to instead propose that the accumulation of saintly effigies in different media could create distinct experiences of the year. Chapter 3 analyzes two specific instances of gathering saints and images for calendar manuscripts undertaken by elite patrons who used the book as if it was a collection of relics. Following this discussion of how manuscripts structure the calendar, chapter 4 examines how these books were unbound in two sets of calendar icons at the Monastery of Saint Catherine’s at Mount Sinai that reflect alternative and competing temporalities within the monastery. As a whole this dissertation questions how calendric imagery participates in everyday life where heavenly and earthly cycles could intersect and shape the present.

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Cette thèse, intitulée “Keeping Time : Temporal Imagery and Thought in the Calendars of Later Byzantium,” explore la manière dont les expressions visuelles du calendrier ont façonné la compréhension de la création, de la structure et de l'expérience du temps. À partir du Xe siècle, des efforts concertés pour ordonner les systèmes temporels, en particulier les calendriers, apparaissent dans les manuscrits astronomiques, agricoles et liturgiques. Dans le sillage de ces projets d'organisation, des illustrations ont été ajoutées à ces manuscrits, développant les informations qu'ils contenaient. Les travaux des historiens des sciences et de la liturgie ont révélé de manière cruciale les mathématiques et les technologies impliquées dans le calcul du temps, ainsi que le développement d'une année ecclésiastique remplie de lectures et de commémorations qui

entrelacent différentes échelles de temps au sein des rites liturgiques. Cependant, le rôle du matériel visuel, y compris l'imagerie décorative dans les tableaux, les diagrammes et les manuscrits qui illustraient les informations calendaires, est souvent éclipsé par les études qui suivent le développement textuel du calendrier. En revanche, cette thèse démontre que ce matériel visuel n'était pas marginal et qu'il a joué un rôle dans l'élaboration de la compréhension du temps.

Les différentes formes de conservation du temps constituent la structure de cette thèse, qui se divise en deux parties. La première partie, “Le temps du cosmos dans le ciel et sur la terre,” se concentre sur l'imagerie associée à la division du temps et sur la façon dont elle est rendue visible par les modèles célestes ou les saisons terrestres. En s'appuyant sur les attitudes à l'égard de l'observation des changements atmosphériques, que ce soit dans le ciel ou dans les champs, cette section étudie comment la visualisation des unités de temps en jours, mois et années crée un ordre et façonne la façon dont les spectateurs comprennent leur place dans le monde et le cosmos. Le premier chapitre s'intéresse à l'imagerie cosmologique dans les manuscrits impériaux qui présentent deux attitudes concurrentes à l'égard de la visualisation des origines du temps dans les récits de création de l'octateuque byzantin moyen. Le deuxième chapitre examine ensuite trois cas où les travaux des mois ont été ajoutés aux manuscrits pour étudier leur capacité à interagir avec les cycles cosmiques liés aux origines du temps, à organiser l'information dans les tables canoniques et à réglementer la gestion des terres dans les domaines monastiques.

La deuxième partie, “Rassembler et délier le temps sacré,” s'intéresse à l'année ecclésiastique et à son cycle annuel de commémorations de saints pour explorer la manière dont les manuscrits illustrés et les icônes utilisent l'imagerie pour transmettre le temps liturgique. Il dépasse les questions d'illustration narrative pour proposer que l'accumulation d'effigies de saints sur différents supports puisse créer des expériences distinctes de l'année. Le chapitre 3 analyse

deux cas spécifiques de collecte de saints et d'images pour des manuscrits calendaires entrepris par des mécènes d'élite qui utilisaient le livre comme s'il s'agissait d'une collection de reliques. Après cette discussion sur la manière dont les manuscrits structurent le calendrier, le chapitre 4 examine comment ces livres ont été déliés dans deux ensembles d'icônes calendaires au monastère de Sainte-Catherine au Mont Sinaï qui reflètent des temporalités alternatives et concurrentes au sein du monastère. Dans son ensemble, cette thèse s'interroge sur la manière dont l'imagerie calendaire participe à la vie quotidienne, où les cycles célestes et terrestres peuvent s'entrecroiser et façonner le présent.

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### Abbreviations

AB	<i>The Art Bulletin</i>
ABoll	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
AH	<i>Art History</i>
BF	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
BMFD	<i>Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents</i> , edited by John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2000.
BMGS	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek studies</i>
BollGrott	<i>Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata</i>
BZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
CA	<i>Cahiers archéologiques</i>
DChAH	<i>Deltion tes Christianikes Archaiologikes Hetaireias</i>
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
JÖB	<i>Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
JWCI	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
OCA	<i>Orientalia Christiana Analecta</i>
ODB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i>
PG	<i>Patrologiae cursus completes, graeca</i> , ed. J.P. Migne (Paris, 1855-56)
REB	<i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i>
<i>Überlieferung</i>	Ehrhard, Albert. <i>Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche</i> . Vols 1-3. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1937-40.
SECP	<i>Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae e codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi adiectis Synaxariis selectis</i> , edited by Hippolyte Delehate. Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1902.

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## Introduction

### Byzantium in Time: Chronologies and Calendar Traditions

The true poetry of Rome lived in its institutions; for whatever of beautiful, true, and majestic, they contained, could have sprung only from the faculty which creates the order in which they consist...The imagination beholding the beauty of this order, created it out of itself according to its own idea; the consequence was empire, and the reward ever-living fame. These things are not the less poetry, *quia carent vate sacro*. They are the episodes of that cyclic poem written by Time upon the memories of men. The Past, like an inspired rhapsodist, fills the theatre of everlasting generations with their harmony.

-Percy Shelley, *A Defense of Poetry*

As part of the Christmas festivities for 25 December outlined in the *Book of Ceremonies*, a grand procession took the emperor across Constantinople and through multiple timescapes.<sup>1</sup> Initially supported by representatives from the “Blues,” one of the city’s four major demes, the emperor departed the palace and travelled to various holy sites in the city, where he gradually accumulated delegates from the other demes. The retinue stopped outside the Church of the Holy Apostles where it met members from the “Greens,” made its way through the Chalke gate, and concluded at Hagia Sophia with the “Whites” before retracing the route in reverse.<sup>2</sup> Encountering the inhabitants of the city at each of these stations, the imperial and civic groups staged a series of acclamations recounting events from Nativity and honoring the emperor. “In Bethlehem, a star heralds the sun, Christ, risen from a Virgin”<sup>3</sup> marked the narrative beginning that set the procession into motion, situating the emergence of this new biblical Era within the sun’s cosmic motions.

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<sup>1</sup> The Book of Ceremonies is a compilation that was authorized by Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos in the 950s, and that offered prescriptions for court ceremonials from earlier sources. On this text, see Michael McCormick, "Analyzing Imperial Ceremonies," *JÖB* 35 (1985): 1-20; Averil Cameron, "The Construction of Court Ritual: The Byzantine Book of Ceremonies," in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, eds. David Cannadine and Simon Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 106-36; Rosemary Morris, "Beyond the De Ceremoniis," in *Court Culture in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Catherine Cubitt (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 235-54; and Michael Featherstone, "Further Remarks on the De Cerimoniis," *BZ* 97 (2004): 113.

<sup>2</sup> For the entire procession, *The Book of Ceremonies*, Book I.2 (R35-41).

<sup>3</sup> *The Book of Ceremonies*, I.2 (R35).

These recitations that progressively inscribe the story of the Nativity onto Constantinople's urban fabric always conclude with a call and response between the leaders of the demes and the citizens of the city before the imperial procession made their way to the next stop.<sup>4</sup> The shouts of “Many, Many, Many” from the Whites were met with “Many years to you Augustai of the Romans!”<sup>5</sup> from the people.<sup>6</sup> Through their placement across the city, the stations visited by the retinue became stops symbolizing the Magi's own journey, effectively collapsing the timescales that separated biblical and imperial history, as well as identifying the emperor with a magus. But the progressive movement through the cityscape itself also indexed an accrual of time, with the series of “many years” enumerating the rotations of Christ-as-Sun in the processional timescape.<sup>7</sup>

The creation of this timescape, where biblical events were threaded through the city's imperial monuments, materialized in a powerful symbol of temporal order at the ceremony's midpoint. As the final station before the procession retraced its steps, the group stopped outside the doors of Hagia Sophia directly below the church's great *horologion*. Beneath this mechanized clock composed of 24 small doors, one for each hour of the day, the words proclaimed by the deme leaders capitalize on this timekeeping device:<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The precise terminology for the demes is *οἱ κράκται*, or “cheerleader,” and that of “the people” is *ὁ λαός*.

<sup>5</sup> *πολλὰ, πολλὰ, πολλὰ* and *πολλὰ ἔτη εἰς πολλὰ; πολλοὲ ὑμῖν χρόνοι ὁ δεῖνα καὶ ὁ δεῖνα αὐγοῦσται τῶν Ῥωμαίων*.

<sup>6</sup> The exact name for the emperor shifts at the various stations. The following are used: the divinely inspired reign (ἡ ἔνθεος βασιλεία.), the servants of the Lord (οἱ θεράποντες τοῦ Κυρίου), sovereigns of the Romans (αὐτοκράτορες Ῥωμαίων, *augoustai* of the Romans (αὐγοῦσται τῶν Ῥωμαίων), those born in the purple (αὐγοῦσταις καὶ τοῖς πορφυρογεννήτοις).

<sup>7</sup> The proclamation “Many Years to you” is a generic proclamation, occurring over one hundred times in the various processions described in the *Book of Ceremonies*. However, its repetition 16 times for the Christmas celebration sets it apart from other instantiations of the phrase. Such a fixation on the repeated accrual of time interlocked the ceremony's ephemeral performance within a larger historical scale to ensure that the emperor and empire would endure far beyond this moment.

<sup>8</sup> On the clock, see Benjamin Anderson, “Public Clocks in Late Antique and Early Medieval Constantinople,” *JÖB* 64 (2014): 26-29; Jean-Charles Ducene, “Une Deuxième version de la relation de Hārūn ibn Yahyā sur Constantinople,” *Der Islam* 82 (2005): 245-6 (text) and 248 (translation).

In Bethlehem the Virgin, from whom Christ our God was pleased to be born, opened up Paradise in Eden. Having become flesh through her, he, in his love for mankind, has freed us from the bitter taste of sin. Through her we have found the sweetness of his great and ineffable power and the hidden delight of our salvation, and have become participants in his divine inheritance.<sup>9</sup>

In these lines, the distant paradise of Eden is juxtaposed with the birth of Christ, announcing a new era of salvation whose time was tracked by this mechanized clock. Time's measurement, referenced at the start of the procession through the sun's cosmic motions and recalled in each acclamation of many years, took on a highly symbolic significance in this moment. Framed by the monumental church and its clock, enwrapped by spoken words of biblical history, and embedded within the ephemeral procession, the emperor became a timekeeper ensuring hours, years, and eras remained ordered and aligned for the future.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to this mechanized clock and its ceremonial use, other objects and monuments transformed Constantinople into a veritable time machine. Antique statuary dotted the city streets, overseeing processions like the one just described and serving as daily reminders of a classical past. Public lore ascribed undeniable power to these ancient statues. They not only recalled the past and constructed a lineage of imperium that Constantinople inherited in the present era, but they were also believed capable of foretelling the future.<sup>11</sup> In addition, relics and icons filled the

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<sup>9</sup> *The Book of Ceremonies* I.2 (R38): ὁν ἐν Ἑδέμ παράδεισον ἠνέφξεν ἐν Βηθλεὲμ ἡ παρθένος, ἐξ ἧς ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ Θεὸς ἡμῶν εὐδόκησε τεχθῆναι" σαρκωθείς γὰρ ἐξ αὐτῆς φιλανθρώπως τῆς πιχρᾶς ἡλευθέρωσεν ἡμᾶς γεύσεως τῆς ἁμαρτίας" τὸν γλυκασμὸν τῆς ἀφάτου αὐτοῦ μεγάλης ἐξουσίας καὶ τὴν ἐν κρυφίῳ τρυφὴν ἐξ αὐτῆς σωτῆρα ἡμῶν εὐρηχύτες, σύμφοιτοι γεγονάμεν τῆς θείας αὐτοῦ κληρονομίας.

<sup>10</sup> There is a rich body of literature on the Roman Emperor serving as a timekeeper that stretches back to Augustus with his calendar reform and building program. Cecily Hilsdale, "Imperial Monumentalism, Ceremony, and Forms of Pageantry: The Inter-Imperial Obelisk in Istanbul," in *The Oxford World History of Empire*, eds. Peter Bang, Christopher Bayly, and Walter Scheidel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 240-1; Peter Heslin "Augustus, Domitian and the So-Called Horologium Augusti," *Journal of Roman Studies* 97 (2007): 1–20.

<sup>11</sup> Benjamin Anderson, "Oracular Images and the Limits of Political Knowledge in Byzantium," in *Unterstützung bei herrscherlichem Entscheiden: Experten und ihr Wissen in transkultureller und komparativer Perspektive*, ed. Michael Grünbart (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021), 22-39; Benjamin Anderson, "Classified Knowledge: The Epistemology of Statuary in the "Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai," *BMGS* 35 (2011): 1–19; Paroma Chatterjee, *Between the Pagan Past and Christian Present in Byzantine Visual Culture Statues in*

major treasuries of churches and the palace that added a spiritual and protective dimension, attesting to the existence of sacred figures who were housed in the city.<sup>12</sup> In short, the sights and sites of Constantinople made different forms of time and eras palpably present in everyday life. The regular encounter of so many registers of time stretched the present, cleaving gaps in time's fabric that could maneuver between the past and future at any given moment. As such, Constantinople's wealth of statues, relics, clocks, and processions provides a powerful materialization of the fluidity of time in medieval thought, where reflection on both past and future events was necessary to understand the present.<sup>13</sup>

Yet in contrast to the diversity and compounding of times encountered across the city, words like timeless, unchanging, and static regularly define Byzantine imagery. Imperial images convey this point particularly well. In a copy of Zonaras's *Epitome of History* produced after the capture of Constantinople by Mehmet II in 1453 and now at Modena's Biblioteca Estense (MS Mutinensis Gr. 122), a sea of faces representing Byzantium's Emperors meets the viewer's gaze (figure 0.1).<sup>14</sup> All nine figures at first appear to share a formal resemblance set against a plain

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*Constantinople, 4th-13th Centuries CE* (Cambridge: CUP, 2021); Gilbert Dagron, *Constantinople imaginaire. Études sur le recueil des "Patria"* (Paris: universitaires de France, 1984); Richard Dawkins, "Ancient Statues in Mediaeval Constantinople," *Folklore* 35 (1924): 218–222; Jean-Cyril Jouette, "Divination, magie, et sorcellerie: Autour des statues antiques et des colonnes historiées de Constantinople (XIe–XIIe siècles)," in *Les savoirs magiques et leur transmission de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance*, eds. Véronique Dasen and Jean-Michel Spieser (Florence: SISMEL, 2014), 461–475.

<sup>12</sup> On icons protecting the city see Bissera Pentcheva, "The supernatural protector of Constantinople: the Virgin and her icons in the tradition of the Avar siege," *BMGS* 26 (2002): 22–27, 34–38. In the urban imaginary, Constantinople was at once a New Rome, a New Troy, and a New Jerusalem; Robert Ousterhout, "New Temples and New Solomons: The Rhetoric of Byzantine Architecture," in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, eds. Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2010), 223–253.

<sup>13</sup> In this way, the performative element of time evokes the idea of the city as palimpsest. Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, ed. and trans. Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996), 100–113.

<sup>14</sup> On the Modena manuscript, see Cecily Hilsdale, "The Timeliness of Timelessness," in *Late Byzantium Reconsidered: The Arts of the Palaeologan Era in the Mediterranean*, eds. Andrea Mattiello and Maria Alessia Rossi (Routledge: London, 2019), 58–59; Ioannes Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 182–3; Olga Gratziou "Μαρτυρίες για τους χρήστες του Ζωναρά της Μόδενας," *DChAH* 19 (1997): 39–62; Angela Volan, "Last Judgments and Last Emperors: Illustrating Apocalyptic History in Late- and

background to stress what seems to be a continuous almost unending chain of succession. But on closer inspection, Byzantium's first emperor, labeled Saint Constantine I (r. 306-337) is differentiated from his later Palaiologan peers by his flat crown and close-cropped beard to occupy the final roundel in place of its last emperor, Constantine XI (r.1449-1453), who instead holds the penultimate position. As scholars have noted, this visual conceit bridges the empire's beginning and ending, and reimagines regnal succession through the page's insistence on renewal and imperial memory for an empire whose future was uncertain.<sup>15</sup>

In another marker of time, calendars appear in illustrated manuscripts, icons, and wall paintings that seem to share a formal stillness similar to Zonaras's page of emperors. Rows of sacred figures, often grouped in threes, stand in frontal portraits in a miniature diptych at Sinai to symbolize the entire liturgical year (figure 0.2). Across the diptych's two panels, each cluster of figures represents 1 of the 365 days of the year to allow the saint's commemorated over the entire year to be seen and held in the hands. But beneath the surface, the diptych's saints mask complex temporal structures. Figures from across the known world and from different periods are brought together, who are all dressed the same with no marker of geographic or temporal difference, to coalesce in a perfected state in the present act of viewing. In opening the diptych, this community of sacred figures evokes a visionary experience of the Last Judgement where time was understood to cease, and the viewer confronts the heavenly court they aspire to join.<sup>16</sup> Given the interplay of

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Post-Byzantine Art," (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2005), 63–72; Jenny Albani, "The Epitome Historion by John Zonaras," in *Byzantium: An Oecumenical Empire (Byzantine and Christian Museum, October 2001–January 2002)* (Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Culture, 2001), 101-103.

<sup>15</sup> Volan, "Last Judgments and Last Emperors," 58-9.

<sup>16</sup> On apocalyptic thinking and time in Byzantium, see Roland Betancourt, "Prolepsis and Anticipation: The Futurity of Now in East and West," in *A Companion to the Premodern Apocalypse*, ed. Michael A Ryan (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 179; Volan, "Last Judgements and Last Emperors," 23-62.



figures, images, and sounds, in rituals, manuscripts, and objects, all of these examples convey the need to be mindful of the past and the future in systems of timekeeping, and reveal that Byzantine art was finely attuned to temporal thinking despite the impression of timelessness as this dissertation will examine.

The culture of Byzantium and how it thought about time at any period has proven difficult for scholars of many disciplines. Cyril Mango grappled with a perceived anachronism in Byzantine writing and offered the analogy of a distorted mirror, concluding that while the Byzantines lived in one world, they presented another in their art and literature.<sup>17</sup> Mango's distortion was concerned with the nature of classicism: the Byzantines were medieval, but they wrote as if they were ancients. The repercussions of this position are manifold. His overarching perception of classicism in Byzantium frames it as merely an aesthetic. It also unfairly demands a mimetic relationship between art and the world of its creators, denying creative engagements with forms and genres.<sup>18</sup> More urgently, his comments evaluate Byzantium in western terms premised on a chronologically linear progression forward in time, and deny the possibility of the perception of continuity, which was so important to the Byzantine mentality.

While Mango acknowledged the Byzantines were medieval, others mistook this distortion for regression. Byzantium was more similar to the ancients than to its contemporaries. This regressive tendency becomes particularly pronounced when looking at the discipline of art history, founded on the premise of an organized and sequential unfolding of different cultural traditions. Analyzing the narratives of this discipline as presented in textbooks and surveys, Robert Nelson has

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<sup>17</sup> Cyril Mango, *Byzantine literature as a distorting mirror: an inaugural lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 21 May 1974* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 1; for an extended discussion of the dangers of this model, see the conclusion.

<sup>18</sup> For examples, Liz James, "Eros, Literature, and the Veroli Casket," in *Reading in the Byzantine Empire and Beyond*, eds. Teresa Shawcross and Ida Toth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 403.

shown that despite the empire's roughly 1000-year history, material from Byzantium is regularly classified as ancient, not medieval.<sup>19</sup> Its time and society are manipulated, frozen at its initial Constantinian origins, to become a terminating branch that stems from Late Antiquity in art history's steady march of time and form.<sup>20</sup> By denying Byzantium's coevalness with the medieval world, its place in art history demonstrates what Johannes Fabian has called "allochronism," positioning Byzantium in a recursive system that contrasts with the Romanesque and Gothic, artistic periods that in turn give way to the Renaissance.<sup>21</sup> To put it simply, Byzantium was made to be a dead-end on the "map of art history," and constructed to serve as the negative counterpart for the Italian Renaissance.

Historiographically, the recursive model of a Renaissance can even be seen in specialized studies on Byzantine art. For a time, it was popular among Byzantine art historians to variously speak of the Theodosian Renaissance (379-450), Renaissance of Justinian (527-565), Macedonian Renaissance (867-1056), Komnenian Renaissance (1081-1204), and the Early Palaiologan Renaissance (1261- late fourteenth century). All these periods, more than half of the empire's existence, were characterized by some degree of a revival of classical heritage and representational strategies in architecture and manuscript illumination.<sup>22</sup> However, given its application to virtually

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<sup>19</sup> See Robert Nelson, "Living on the Byzantine Borders of Western Art," *Gesta* 35, no. 1 (1996): 5; Robert Nelson, "The Map of Art History," *The Art Bulletin* 79, no. 1 (1997): 36.

<sup>20</sup> This idea of "Byzantium" born out of Constantine founding Constantinople is, of course, a myth and the very terms Byzantium and Byzantine are anachronisms. Many important scholars including Leonora Neville and Anthony Kaldellis have argued instead for continuity across the Roman empire. Kaldellis, *Romanland: Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019).

<sup>21</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Time and The Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 32.

<sup>22</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex: a study of the origin and method of text illustration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947); Ine Jacobs, "The Creation of the Late Antique City: Constantinople and Asia Minor During the Theodosian Renaissance," *Byzantion* 82 (2012): 113-164; Andre Grabar, *Golden Age of Justinian: From the Death of Theodosius to the Rise of Islam* (New York, 1963); Warren Treadgold and Ihor Ševčenko, in *Renaissances before the Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984) 1-22, 75-98, 144-76; Steven Runciman, *The Last Byzantine Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); P. Schreiner,

every period of Byzantine history, the idea of a perpetual renaissance contradicts the very principle of rebirth, and all too often conflates an interest in antiquity, which was constantly present, with a “revival.”<sup>23</sup>

In the wake of these narratives about Byzantium and Byzantine art, there remains no synthetic study of temporality expressed in the Byzantine’s own terms or their imagery. To address these issues and contribute to defining one form of time in Byzantium, my dissertation explores how the Byzantine world constructed, conceived of, and encountered its own forms of time in its visual delineations of calendar systems from the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. This was a pivotal moment within Byzantine history. It is in this period that we begin to see concerted efforts in manuscripts to organize and impose order on temporal systems through astronomical, agricultural, and church calendars. The topic of the Byzantine calendars is a familiar topic, especially among historians of science and liturgy. In terms of science, the mathematics and technologies of temporal reckoning involved in translating the movement of heavenly bodies into units of time, including hours whose lengths varied depending on the season, days, months, and years have been considered through studies on astrolabes and sundials.<sup>24</sup> Among literature on the liturgy, scholars have skillfully applied these calibrations to the creation of the church year that interlaced different scales of time in liturgical rites: aligning sacred events of Christ’s life with the

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‘Renaissance’ in Byzanz? in *Kontinuität und Transformation der Antike im Mittelalter*, ed. W. Erzgräber (Sigmaringen 1989) 389; Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, (New York: Harper & Row. 1960). “Encyclopedism” can often signal the same attitude.

<sup>23</sup> The paradox of a continual renaissance was proposed by John Hanson see Hanson, “The Rise and Fall of the Macedonian Renaissance,” in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 338-350.

<sup>24</sup> Elizabeth Fisher, “Arabs, Latins, and Persians Bearing Gifts: Greek Translations of Astrolabe Treatises, ca. 1300,” *BMGS* 36, no. 2 (2012): 161-77; J. E. Morrison, *The Astrolabe* (Rehobeth: Janus, 2007); Alexander Jones, ed., *Time and Cosmos in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

lunar cycle, and a full cycle of saintly celebrations for each day of the year.<sup>25</sup> Yet these calendars also became the subject of poetry as well as illustrated programs, which have been far less considered. From this diverse calendric material, spanning images, texts, and diagrams this dissertation aims to answer the following questions: How was time conceptualized and visualized in Byzantium? How was it measured within and between its various calendars, whether ecclesiastical, monthly, or astronomical? Most importantly, what kind of imagery spoke to the Byzantine conception of time?

To explore these questions, this dissertation consolidates a corpus of temporally calibrated imagery, including illustrated calendar books that represent the commemorated saint for each day alongside their hagiography, the presentation of calendars in architectural decorations, both depicted in paintings and described in Byzantine literature, and new iconic formats more explicitly attuned to time and duration, including icons that display the full calendar across multiple panels and vita icons, which display a series of narrative episodes. Very few of these topics have been the subject of serious inquiry in the recent years, Paroma Chatterjee's monograph on the Vita icon being an important exception. Additionally, the majority of these topics lacks a systemic analysis beyond individualized case studies, has not progressed beyond the cataloging stage, or exists beyond the scope of research languages.<sup>26</sup> More to the point, the material in this dissertation has

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<sup>25</sup> Daniel Galadza, *Liturgy and Byzantinization in Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Bangor: The American Orthodox Press, 1966); Grumel, *Traité d'études byzantines, vol. 1: La Chronologie* (Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 1958), 161-235; Book 1 of the *Geoponika* is expressly concerned with the yearly cycle, the seasons, and weather. Cassianus Bassus Scholasticus, *Geoponika: Farm Work: A Modern Translation of the Roman and Byzantine Farming Handbook*, trans. Andrew Dalby (Totnes: Prospect, 2011), 39-52.

<sup>26</sup> Pavle Mijović's 1973 publication *Menolog: istorijsko-umetnicka istrazivanja* remains the only monograph on calendars used in Byzantine and Byzantine-adjacent architectural programs, mostly Serbian foundations. Pavle Mijović *Menolog: istorijsko-umetnicka istrazivanja* (Belgrade, 1973). Nancy Patterson Ševčenko has assembled an invaluable catalog of illustrated *Menologia*, grouping calendar books by their decorative program and offering some analysis on major themes. Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts of the Metaphrastian Menologion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

only rarely been discussed together. In the instances when they do appear as a group, it is often for iconographic comparisons rather than a consideration of what the temporal imagery might signify across different genres, media, or contexts as this dissertation does.<sup>27</sup>

For this reason, this dissertation does not pursue rigorous iconographic analyses, but signals the relevant literature when necessary. Nor does it primarily engage with antetypes or the intermixing of Old and New Testament figures, although these issues are briefly discussed in specific circumstances.<sup>28</sup> Instead, it considers the calendar as an organizational system that prompts reflections on the past and future. Its arguments are driven by imagery that directly corresponds to calendars. Frequently these images are either symbols and personifications of time, as in the zodiac or labors of the months, or effigies of commemorated saints who may be understood to embody their dates like the diptych discussed above. As we will see, the range of calendric expression in later Byzantium could span the monumental and immersive to the miniature and intimate, with each structuring their own experiences of the year and of time.

In considering this diverse material, I push against disciplinary boundaries that have considered these illustrated calendars as marginal or subordinate to scientific, liturgical, or classical texts to instead argue images were central to Byzantine conceptions of time. Before summarizing the chapters of this dissertation, I first briefly overview the two main methods for organizing time and its visualization: (1) the chronicle and its chronological structure and (2) the

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<sup>27</sup> Calendar Icons and illustrated calendar books frequently do appear together, but for iconographic comparison. For example, Galavaris provides a wealth of comparisons between icons and manuscripts. Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexptych of the Saint Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai* (Venice: Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post Byzantine Studies, 2009). In this dissertation, these topics are treated separately, as I argue their relationship is closer to that of cousins than siblings.

<sup>28</sup> For a discussion of these issues see Tania Velmans, "La représentation de l'espace et du temps a Byzance et les raisons qui en conditionnent la forme," in *Proceedings of the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies: Plenary Papers* (Sofia: Bulgarian Historical Heritage Fund, 2011), 495; Konstantinos Kalokyris, "Byzantine Iconography and 'Liturgical' Time," *Eastern Churches Review* 1, no. 4 (1967-8): 359-63.

calendar tradition. These systems have historically been studied in terms of textual development, but I, in turn, aim to look beyond this to consider their potential to convey information visually.

### **Chronology: Chronicles and History Writing**

In Byzantine manuscript traditions, two genres directly deal with the organization and structuring of time: chronicles and histories. As defined by Leonora Neville, chronicles are characterized as using a low- style Greek, and are concerned with salvation history, portents, and natural disasters. They convey major events that covered a broad swath of time, from creation to the present, and sometimes take the form of a list. By contrast, histories attempt to follow in the tradition of ancient historians such as Thucydides and Xenophon. They use more classicizing Greek, focus on the choices and actions of individuals, and cover a much shorter time span.<sup>29</sup> Regardless of whether these accounts position the unfolding of time within a divine schema or are politically motivated, history writing is a primarily textual genre. It aims to impose order on events through narrative sequences, and rarely received illustrations.

Eusebius of Caesarea's two-volume *Chronicon* from the 4th century exerted the most influence on temporal thinking within the Medieval world until George Synkellos and Theophanes the Confessor rewrote and extended Eusebian history ca. 808-815.<sup>30</sup> Now lost in the original,

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<sup>29</sup> Leonora Neville, *Guide to Byzantine History Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 9-10. While modern scholars have imposed a distinction between history writing and chronicles based on these criteria, the Byzantines themselves did not necessarily differentiate between the two. The late Ruth Macrides argued against the distinction all together. Ruth Macrides, "How the Byzantines Wrote History," in *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić (Belgrade: Serbian National Committee of AIEB, 2016), 257– 63.

<sup>30</sup> William Adler, "Eusebius' Chronicle and its Legacy," in *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Gohei Hatei and Harry Attridge (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), 467-91; and Alden Mosshammer, *The Chronicle of Eusebius and the Greek Chronographic Tradition* (Lewisburg, 1979). On the rewriting of history, see Jesse Torgerson, *The Chronographia of George the Synkellos and Theophanes: The Ends of Time in Ninth Century Constantinople* (Brill: Leiden, 2022), 132-36.

Eusebius's first volume, the *Chronographia* or "Annals," summarized universal history from Adam's expulsion to Eusebius's present, the year 325 AD. His massive undertaking drew on primary sources from cultures known to Eusebius and organized histories by nation including Assyrians, Hebrews, "Sicyonians" (Greeks), and Egyptians.<sup>31</sup> This information was then reorganized in a tabular form for the second volume, the *Chronikoi kanones* or "Chronological Tables," with the historical data from each nation in Volume I placed in parallel columns and synchronized across rows for ease of study.<sup>32</sup> Eusebius studiously cataloged and documented events according to regnal years of rulers and reconciled different versions of historical accounts from the Babylonians and Egyptians as well as various recensions of Genesis from the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint.<sup>33</sup> Within the tables, time was reckoned according to two systems. One was marked by decades counting forward from Abraham, (ca. 2016 BC), a time Eusebius felt could be securely dated.<sup>34</sup> The other was four-year periods known as Olympiads, beginning in 776 BC. These two systems positioned Christianity as emerging out of a divinely ordered plan laid out in the Scripture and veritably rooted in a past that was quantifiable.

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<sup>31</sup> As Jesse Torgerson has shown, chronology is both historical data, events that occurred and are documented rather than narrativized, and it is also created situated knowledge subjected to biases (what sources to use, who and what events are worth remembering). Jesse Torgerson, "Historical Practice in the Era of Digital History," *History and Theory*, 61, no. 4 (2022): 50.

<sup>32</sup> On the reconstruction of Eusebius's Chronicle, see especially Brian Croke, "The Originality of Eusebius' Chronicle," *American Journal of Philology* 103, no. 2 (1982): 195–200.

<sup>33</sup> William Adler, *Time Immemorial: Archaic Sources and Christian Chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syncellus* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1989), 47-8.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Hollerich, *Making Christian History: Eusebius of Caesarea and his Readers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021), 25; Mosshammer, *The Chronicle of Eusebius*, 136-46. For Eusebius, no one was able to "determine the amount of time spend in the so-called garden of god" with certainty. *Chronica* 36.16-17. Adler, *Time Immemorial*, 46.

Eusebius's *Chronographia* does not survive, but it was copied early in a Latin and Armenian version in the fifth century.<sup>35</sup> In the absence of a surviving medieval copy in the original Greek, a ninth-century Carolingian copy of Eusebius's *Chronikoi kanones* approximates the original layout (figure 0.3).<sup>36</sup> These two facing pages display the founding of Rome and the entry of the Latins into Eusebius's Chronology and its place within eight dating rubrics, all identified in roundels at the top of the page and color-coded to aid in differentiation. From left to right the page renders time according to the Kings of the Medes, Hebrews of Judea, Hebrews of Israel, Athenians, Latins, Macedonians, Lydians, and Egyptians. While not illustrated, the visual quality of the gridded arrangement signals connections and relationships among its contained data. This new tabular format imposes a regular order for events, and moves away from history writing or chronicles, subjected to personal biases and politics, both of which could minimize the reign of one ruler while bolstering another. In this way Eusebius's tables revolutionized how time was organized by reconciling individual events in multiple timelines, increasing their veracity. But additionally, the tables presented its information in a quasi-pictorial manner. Its contents were visualized in spatial arrangements that are not solely linear and encourage non-sequential, referenced-based engagement.

Beyond Eusebius's schematic diagramming of time, very few chronicles offer any image program at all. Elena Boeck has considered the two illustrated chronicles, referred to by their authors as *Histoires*, the Madrid Skylitzes of the mid-twelfth century and the Vatican Manasses in the mid-fourteenth century, both of which use images to illustrate the events described by their

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<sup>35</sup> Mosshammer, *The Chronicle of Eusebius*, 75ff.

<sup>36</sup> Mary Boyle, "Merton College MS 315: An Introduction," *Oxford German Studies* 46, no. 2 (2017): 213-216; Torgerson, "Historical Practice," 55.



authors. Boeck’s analysis productively compares the relationships not just between text and image but how both pictorial programs depict the same events toward different aims. Through the interplay of narrative imagery to their histories, Boeck reveals the paradox of the histories’ illustrations: history was supposed to be permanent, but its illustration reveals its malleability and the variability of the concept in Byzantium.<sup>37</sup>

While only a few chronicles include pictorial cycles, other historical texts could use chronological tables toward creative ends that exceed Eusebius’s organizational system. In a full-page grid that illustrates the cosmogony from a fourteenth-century manuscript in the Marciana Library (MS gr 516 [=904]) fourteen pen-drawn figures layer the seven days of Creation from Genesis above the seven ages of the world through a series of personifications (figure 0.4).<sup>38</sup> Labels appear above each angel in a numbered sequence, “the second day” (ἡμέρα δευτέρα), “[day] the third” (Τρίτη), to emphasize an ordered unfolding of time, with boxes of equal surface area below explaining their significance including what was made on the day or what characterized the era. Beginning with the top row of drawings, the first day of creation shows an angel wearing globular gray earrings and a large crown. The space immediately below presents the figure’s words: “In me, God created Heaven and Earth as well as light. Then the night came in. I am the first. The first and the one succeeding.”<sup>39</sup> In speech, the angel embodies the origins of time holding within them

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<sup>37</sup> Elena Boeck, *Imagining the Byzantine Past: the Perception of History in the Illustrated Manuscripts of Skylitzes and Manasses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 9-10, based on her dissertation “The Art of Being Byzantine: History, Structure, and Visual Narrative in the Madrid Skylitzes Manuscript,” (PhD diss., Yale University, 2003).

<sup>38</sup> Elpidio Mioni, “Le Tavole Aggiunte alla Geografia di Tolomeo nel Cod. Marc. 516,” in *Studi bizantini e neogreci: Atti del IV Congresso nazionale di studi bizantini, Lecce 21-23 aprile 1980, Calimera, 24 aprile 1980*, ed. Pietro Luigi Leone (Galatina: Congedo, 1983), 65. Merih Cantarella, “Art, Science, and Neoplatonic Cosmology in Fourteenth-Century Byzantium: The Illustrations of Marcianus Graecus 516 (=904),” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2019).

<sup>39</sup> ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐποίησ(εν) ὁ θε(ε)ὸς τ(ὸν) οὐ(ραν)ὸν (καὶ) τὴν γῆν [sic]· καὶ τὸ φῶς· εἴτα ἐπισήλθεν [sic] ἡ νύξ· καὶ ἐγὼ εἰμὶ πρώτη· (καὶ) πρώτη καὶ διάδοχος.

the first day constructed by light and dark, and provides the 7-day structure for the series of similar angels who follow, each one subtly differentiated with adornment. Figures alternate between blue, red, and gray earrings with headbands or diadems to convey the week of creation with each directly addressing the reader in the first person.<sup>40</sup>

Below the days of creation, the same scheme repeats only now with the seven ages of the world who are shown as elderly men. The series begins with the creation of the universe at left and ending on the right with the peaceful rule of the Christian Emperors, who are also given the space to speak in the first person: “I am the seventh era. In me is the peaceful reign of the Christian kings, who loudly praises in the cross.”<sup>41</sup> The speaking figure is clad in regalia that is no doubt modeled on the Byzantine emperor’s to encourage the assimilation of the book’s original owner with the era expressed by the image.<sup>42</sup> In this schema, the page becomes an expression of chiliastic thought, which divided the world into seven 1,000-year units leading to the second coming, with each millennium conceptualized as and aligned to one day of Creation: 6 units of development and one, the seventh, a unit of peace.<sup>43</sup> The topic of time occupies every element of the image. Notions of succession are visualized on both the level of a week and on the more monumental level of the era. Gridded images comprising the page respond to the surrounding texts, with the block at left continuing a commentary on Creation on the facing page and the one at bottom anticipating the

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<sup>40</sup> For a discussion of calendars that speak, see chapter 3.

<sup>41</sup> “ἐγὼ εὐδόμος αἰὼν. ἐν ἐμοὶ εἰρήνη πίστε(ως) χριστιαν(ῶν) βασιλεῖς ἐν τῷ στ(αυ)ρῷ καυχῶνται

<sup>42</sup> Maria Parani, *Reconstructing the Realities of Images: Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 27-30.

<sup>43</sup> Chiliastic thought reaches its fullest presentation in the work of Julius Africanus who viewed it expressly in terms of eschatology. Heinrich Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus und die Byzantinische Chronographie*, vol. 1: *Die Chronographie des Julius Africanus* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1880), 24-26; Adler, *Time Immemorial*, 19; Mosshammer, *The Chronicle of Eusebius* 146-7; however, there was not necessarily an eschatological undertone to this conception among other writers who embraced it. Martin Wallraff, “The Beginnings of Christian Universal History from Tatian to Julius Africanus,” *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* 14, no. 3 (2011): 554.

eighth and final era of man. Through this presentation, the sense of time is much greater than the text alone conveys.

As a synoptic image of Christian history, this Marciana page reveals how images can contribute and even surpass the organizational aims of a textual chronograph. The grid inhabited by personifications encourages new connections not possible within Eusebius's textual traditions alone. Not only does the page allow all of Christian history to be invoked, but it also moves beyond the numeric ordering of figures. Most strikingly the crown reappears at the end of the sequence of eras, first with a cross to signify the incarnation and birth of Christ and followed by the rule of Christian emperors to signal the triumph of Christianity. While each row is sequentially ordered, the visual treatment of the subjects forges relations between the start of the first row of angels and end of the second row of eras through the crown. But it also emphasizes correspondence. Directly below the seventh day, who conveys that they, as the sabbath, were “blessed and sanctified, and with God being pleased with their work, reigned over his creation” is the image of a Byzantine ruler, meant to signify the period when the manuscript was produced, reminding its reader that God reigned over and through their emperor <sup>44</sup>

Through this arrangement, the grid visualizes a Byzantine conception of temporal progression: days of the week, biblical past, and successive eras were all brought together and aligned to ground the viewer and their empire within a clear salvific program. Whether in tabular or visual form, Byzantine chronology existed within a mindset that embraced different scales of historicism or futurity largely informed by the Old Testament's Creation narrative. These scales

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<sup>44</sup> ἐν ἐμοὶ κατέπ[αυσεν] ὁ θεός· ἀπὸ πάντω[ν] ἔργων αὐτοῦ καὶ [ἡ]ὺλό[γη]σεν καὶ ἡγί[ασέν] με· (καὶ) ἐφράνθ[η] [sic] [ἐ]πὶ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν [του]τέστιν βασιλεί[ας] τῆς αὐτῆς ἐγνα[...]στη κτίσεως.

were always enmeshed within the present moment and conceptualized as the result of a divine plan scripturally revealed.

## Marking Time in the Calendar

A vital element of history writing is the division of time into years, whose variety of measurements provides the units of division in Eusebius's chronicling project. In the eras after Eusebius, multiple cycles conveyed different scales of time in Byzantium.<sup>45</sup> The Julian calendar provided the basis for the annual year, composed of 365 days over 12 months, each numbered continuously from 1 to 30 or 31 with an extra day inter-calculated every four years to keep the calendar calibrated with the equinoxes. 1 September announced the beginning of a new year to coincide with the Roman tax period lasting 15 years known as an Indiction cycle.<sup>46</sup> Gradually this fiscal cycle was abandoned, but 1 September and its 15-year markers remained a key chronological signpost for Byzantine chroniclers and historians who often used the Indiction year alongside the regnal year of emperors.<sup>47</sup>

While this was the most common form of dating, other systems also circulated. Years were not primarily quantified from the Incarnation like the modern BC/AD division, but numbered continuously from the alleged Creation of the world.<sup>48</sup> There was considerable debate about the

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<sup>45</sup> Anthony Bryer, "Chronology and Dating," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, eds. Robin Cormack, John Haldon, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 32.

<sup>46</sup> This period was related to a census survey of the entire empire in order to assess how much tax people could pay, which would set the taxation rates for that fifteen-year period. The years were numbered from one to fifteen and were accompanied by the regnal year of the emperor or patriarch. Arnold H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), 452–62.

<sup>47</sup> Grumel, *Chronologie*, 192–206; on taxation and imperial ideology in the medieval period see Leonora Neville, "Information, Ceremony and Power in Byzantine Fiscal Registers: Varieties of Function in the Cadaster of Thebes," *BMGS* 25 (2001): 20–43.

<sup>48</sup> Pavel Kuzenkov, "'How Old Is the World?' The Byzantine Era and Its Rivals," in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 23–24; Anthony

precision of this dating system, with the most influential coming from the *Chronographia* of Synkellos and Theophanes, who resolutely dated creation to 25 March “annus mundi 1,” roughly 6300 years from the time the authors’ time (AD 803).<sup>49</sup> In their universal chronicling of time, there was a vested interest in calibrating key events to the same day to create layers of historical correspondence. Following the work of previous chroniclers, Synkellos asserted that both the creation and the Incarnation had occurred on the same day (25 March) 5500 years apart to which he added the post-Flood drying of the Earth in 2243 and the resurrection of Christ in 5534, which was determined according to calendric information from Hebrew and Egyptian calendars.<sup>50</sup> The dating of these events across calendars to 25 March is impossible. What was more important than mathematical accuracy was allowing these four dates to align, with 25 March defined as “forever one and the same day.”<sup>51</sup>

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Bryer, “Chronology and Dating,” 31–37; Richard Landes, “Lest the Millennium Be Fulfilled: Apocalyptic Expectations and the Pattern of Western Chronography 100–800 CE,” in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, eds. Andries Welkenhuysen, D. Verhelst, Werner Verbeke (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 137–209. On Byzantine historians’ calculations, see Mary Whitby, “The Biblical Past in John Malalas and the Paschal Chronicle,” in *From Rome to Constantinople: Studies in Honour of Averil Cameron*, ed. Hagit Amirav and R. B. ter Haar Romeny (Leuven; Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2007), 279–302.

<sup>49</sup> Torgerson, *The Chronographia*, 114.

<sup>50</sup> The Hebrew lunar months, providing 1 Nisan, was reckoned to be 25 March in the Roman solar calendar as well as 29 Phamenoth from the solar Egyptian calendar. See Roger Bagnall and Klaas Worp, *Chronological Systems in Byzantine Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 162.

<sup>51</sup> The authorship behind *Chonographia* is convoluted. Like Eusebius’s version, there are two parts, a chronicle (covering 5434 annus mundi to the present 6305), believed to be written primarily by Theophanes with sections by Synkellos. The Chronology covering 1 annus mundi to 5434 is the work of Synkellos. Torgerson, *The Chronographia*, 5–7; 122; *Georgii Syncelli Ecloga Chronographia*, ed. Alden Mosshammer. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1984), 395; *The Chronography of George Synkellos: A Byzantine Chronicle of Universal History from the Creation*, ed. William Adler and Paul Tuffin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 473. For other universal chronicles and creative uses of dating see literature on John Malalas, including David Gwyn, “The Religious World of John Malalas,” in *Reading in the Byzantine Empire and Beyond*, ed. Teresa Shawcross and Ida Toth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 252; Elizabeth Jeffreys, “The Beginning of Byzantine Chronography: John Malalas,” in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity, Fourth to Sixth Century AD*, ed. Gabreiele Marasco (Leiden: Brill, 2003) 497–527 with summary of scholarship and earlier bibliography.

In addition to the administrative year and its organization by Indiction cycles and more macro-systems of universal dating, the church calendar classified its series of feasts according to rank depending on how important the saint or salvific event was deemed to be. At the top of this system was Easter. Lunar cycles determined the date for this feast aligned with the first full moon on or after the Spring equinox corresponding with the Jewish month of Nisan as outlined at the Council of Nicaea in 325. Like the Latin West, a *computus* aided in calculating the date of this celebration, which integrated mathematics and astronomy most commonly within an “epact table.”<sup>52</sup>

In a deluxe copy of Ptolemy’s *Handy Tables* from the 9th century (Vat. gr. 1291), an epact table gives instructions for deriving the epact from any date within an outdated “Diocletianic” era, that is, the reign of Diocletian (298-305 AD).<sup>53</sup> In the diagram, thirteen concentric circles inscribe a central medallion that houses a personification of the moon (fol. 47r; figure 0.5). She points to herself as a pair of bulls propel her and her chariot through the night sky, surrounded by a series of thirteen circles. A series of lines divides these circles to form 260 individual cells aligned in 20 rays that are filled with numbers. In one of these rays, slightly to the left of the moon’s crown, every cell is filled with value “0,” indicating that the table begins with the ray immediately to its right. Here, next to the innermost 0, the earliest year is given (30 [λ]), with each cell progressively increasing by one year as you work clockwise to hold the years 30 to 257 (or 314 to 541). Once the proper year is located, the number on the outermost ring holds a standard 19-year cycle of epacts. To calculate the age of the moon from a date in year 30, the epact is given as 20 (κ) which

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<sup>52</sup> Mosshammer explains that an epact is the value expressing the age in days of a moon from a fixed date within the solar calendar, allowing reconciliation across various lunar calendars, especially the Hebrew. Alden Mosshammer, *The Easter Computus and the Origins of the Christian Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 75-80.

<sup>53</sup> Benjamin Anderson, “World Image after World Empire: the Ptolemaic Cosmos in the Early Middle Ages, ca. 700-900,” (PhD diss., Bryn Mawr College, 2012), 494.

could then be used with a few calculations to yield the Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox, and provide the date of Easter.<sup>54</sup>

But the table contains more than years and data. Pairs of veiled women occupy the corners of the diagram and by pointing to the data contained within it, they become emphatic deictic markers that urge the reader to look at this outermost band. Who these women are meant to represent has been a matter of scholarly debate. Franz Boll who edited the manuscript initially read the figures as day and night, a proposal accepted by Leslie Brubaker.<sup>55</sup> Benjamin Anderson, however, has rightly critiqued this identification. It does not explain why there would be four couples, nor do the colors of their mantles lend themselves to categories of “light” and “dark,” especially when day and night are shown in an entirely different fashion in the manuscript, as we will later see in a discussion of its solar diagram.<sup>56</sup> Instead, their specific identity remains unknown, but they importantly serve as ancillary elements to the data. They bridge the personification of the moon, who also points to herself, with the quantified information about this body sought through the diagram.

The era contained within this diagram coinciding with the reign of Diocletian may have been out of date for its 9<sup>th</sup> century owner. But it is well suited for other calendric projects underway at this time, especially the collection of hagiographic material pertaining to the saints, many of whom were martyred under the reign of Diocletian. Gradually, these hagiographies were assigned

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<sup>54</sup> Mosshammer, *The Easter Computus*, 50-2; Bruno Krusch, *Studien zur christlich-mittelalterlichen Chronologie: Die Entstehung unserer heutigen Zeitrechnung* (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1938), 65.

<sup>55</sup> Franz Boll, "Beiträge zur Ueberlieferungsgeschichte der griechischen Astrologie und Astronomie," *Sitzungsberichte der philos.-phil. und der histor. Classe der k. bayer. Akad. d. Wiss.* 1899, *Heft I* (1899), 124; Leslie Brubaker and John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (c. 680-850): the Sources* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 38.

<sup>56</sup> Benjamin Anderson, "World Image After World Empire," 98.

dates in the Byzantine church calendar to form the cycle of “fixed feasts,” one of two independent but related systems that made up the year. This cycle begins 1 September, with festivals, commemorations, and anniversaries, so named because they occur on the same date each year. Secondly, the “moveable feasts,” which remember major events from Christ’s life, and depend on the date of Easter, whose date moved between March and April depending on the lunar cycle. Within these two systems, liturgical manuscript traditions known as *menaia*, *Menologia*, and *Synaxaria* choreograph the year’s order of celebrations.<sup>57</sup> In general, a *menaia* provided the hymns and prayers for the services on saints’ days, *Synaxaria* refer to the briefest church calendar and take the form of the saint’s name, the date of their celebration, and the prescribed readings, while *Menologia* contained extended lives of the saints, though these terms were frequently used interchangeably. Like their larger chronological relatives, time within the calendar is characterized by an excavation of histories from Creation to the life of Christ, and into the Early Christian time of martyrs. Yet in these liturgical manuscripts, the contents are arranged according to the date of the saint’s death so that they can be ritually remembered on a yearly basis.

Compared to the study of church calendars in the Latin west, especially those added to Psalters and the Books of Hours, research into the manuscript traditions containing Byzantium’s illustrated calendars remains in an early state of inquiry and a comprehensive history of the calendar remains to be written.<sup>58</sup> But despite this clear gap in the scholarship, the experience of the calendar had a lasting impact on the Byzantine imagination, and imagery proved to be a

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<sup>57</sup> See discussion in Chapter 3.

<sup>58</sup> At present, the most rigorous work on the Byzantine calendar has not progressed much farther beyond the cataloging and editing level (Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* and Delehay, *SECP*). For the medieval west: see most recently Sandra Hindman and James Marrow, eds., *Books of Hours Reconsidered* (Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2013); Roger Wieck, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York: Braziller, 1988); Roger Wieck, *The Medieval Calendar: Locating Time in the Middle Ages* (New York: Morgan Library, 2017).



powerful tool in bridging the present with an increasingly distanced Christian past populated with holy figures and martyrs.

## Literature Review

While it is customary to begin a dissertation with a review of the relevant literature, the topic of time in Byzantine imagery has not generated a substantial corpus of work to survey. As touched upon above, many facets of time existed in Byzantium and informed how it was organized and structured. Imperial time of succession, church time with its liturgical rituals as well as personal experiences of time and the quotidian were often present in imagery and objects. These facets are referenced in scholarship interested in other matters, but the relevance of these temporal dimensions on objects or manuscripts has rarely been the subject of a rigorous or sustained art historical study. Additionally, the diversity of manuscripts and objects discussed within this dissertation traverse genres and disciplines—astronomical material, romances, economic management, *ars sacra*, liturgical manuscripts, medicine, icons, and narrativity to list just a few—making it difficult to identify what to survey at the outset. For the sake of clarity and cohesion, I have instead opted to include thematic reviews of the literature within each chapter and reserve this section for a larger theoretical commentary on the temporal turn within medieval art historical studies, which sets the groundwork for this dissertation.<sup>59</sup>

While we currently lack an art historical study of Byzantine temporality, our present moment offers an opportunity to reassess the temporal logic of visual culture. The increased pace of modern life prompted historians such as Johannes Fabian and Reinhart Koselleck to theorize

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<sup>59</sup> See also Michael Gubser, *Time's Visible Surface: Alois Riegl and the Discourse on History and Temporality in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006); Keith Moxey, *Visual Time: The Image in History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

heterochronicity, identifying the multiple timescales that we inhabit and that shape our horizons of possibility.<sup>60</sup> Art historians too have turned their attention to the many timelines that objects can construct and traverse. Eva Hoffman, Alicia Walker, and Cecily Hilsdale have deprioritized single moments of medieval origin and production in favor of more attenuated and often unpredictable timescales informed by Arjun Appadurai's theory of the social lives of things.<sup>61</sup> As we continue to sharpen the analytic tools developed from what we might call a 'temporal turn,' this dissertation considers how images actively helped shape Byzantine understandings of time.

Western medievalists and early modern historians have produced a robust body of scholarship considering how texts and objects can manipulate experiences of time. Carolyn Dinshaw's work has productively shown how acts of reading medieval texts produced a "heterogeneous" present. Arguing that the experience of time expressed by medieval manuscripts cannot be encompassed by dualisms between secular and spiritual, subjective and institutional, or linear and nonlinear, she imagines a space where the now was intertwined with the historical past.<sup>62</sup> Beyond reading, looking at objects and imagery held similar opportunities for staging unique temporal experiences. Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood have explored how images could induce irregularities in the course of time. Their work revealed the ubiquity of temporal junctions in early modern art, which today are separated and categorized as discrete through periodization.

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<sup>60</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Time and The Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); Reinhart Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeite* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979).

<sup>61</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Cecily Hilsdale, "The Social Life of the Byzantine Gift: The Royal Crown of Hungary Re-Invented," *AH* 31 (2008): 602-31; Eva Hoffman, "Pathways of Portability: Islamic and Christian Interchange from the eleventh to twelfth century," *AH* 24, no. 1 (2001): 17-50; Alicia Walker, "Cross-cultural Reception in the Absence of Texts: The Islamic Appropriation of a Middle Byzantine Rosette Casket," *Gesta* 47, no. 2 (2009): 99-122.

<sup>62</sup> Carolyn Dinshaw, *How Soon is Now? Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 116.

Yet while these scholars have viewed earlier, late antique, or eastern material from a western perspective, the shapes that time and the year took within Byzantine visual culture remain to be explored on their own terms. Four art historians are notable exceptions. Nancy Patterson Ševčenko and Kimberly Bowes have explored ritual, Christian, and universal time in *Menologia* traditions and Late Antique consular diptychs respectively.<sup>63</sup> Working out from these specific types of objects, their work has shown how the visualization of the calendar could be made personal or actively regulate time for a given community. Robert Ousterhout has argued that the imagery of the Chora Church in Constantinople was structured in such a way that the past, present, and future intersected and interacted with viewers in the hopes of eternal salvation.<sup>64</sup> In terms of oracular material, Benjamin Anderson has analyzed the connections forged by prophecies expressed by statues and images. His work uncovers the overlap of distinct temporalities involved in ascertaining information about the future derived from signs in the present.<sup>65</sup> His interests in scales of time also extend to the cosmic, with his detailed study on medieval attitudes toward cosmological imagery and the forms of knowledge they may offer or conceal.<sup>66</sup> Beyond these individual studies, there are no synthetic treatments of how time was understood and visualized in Byzantium.

This is where my dissertation intervenes. At present, our approaches to time in Byzantium have proven far too myopic for its ubiquitous presence in daily life. This dissertation addresses

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<sup>63</sup> Ševčenko, “Marking Holy Time: The Byzantine Calendar Icons,” in *Byzantine Icons: Art, Technique, and Technology*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Athens: Heraklion, 2002), 51-62; Kimberly Bowes, “Ivory Lists: Consular diptychs, Christian Appropriations and Polemics of Time in Late Antiquity,” *AH* 24, no. 3 (2001): 338-57.

<sup>64</sup> Robert Ousterhout, “Temporal Structuring in the Chora Parekklesion,” *Gesta* 34, no.1 (1995): 63-76.

<sup>65</sup> Benjamin Anderson, “The Uncanny Encounter,” in *Time and Presence in Art Moments of Encounter (200–1600 CE)*, eds. Armin Bergmeier and Andrew Griebeler (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2022), 159-173.

<sup>66</sup> Benjamin Anderson, *Cosmos and Community* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2017).

this gap by consolidating an archive of artworks that demonstrate distinct senses of temporal orientation in order to provide a fuller account of how ideas about time were elaborated in visual terms during the centuries surrounding the development of its various calendars. This dissertation considers three main points. (1) How the creation of time was observed and visualized; (2) how the division of time intersected with other technologies of organization and order; and (3) how images of the calendar could both reify and supersede its organizational system. These points force us to take temporal images not as decoration or embellishment to calendars or other organizational genres, but as elements thoroughly embedded within the organizational structures of time.

### **Dissertation Outline**

This dissertation is divided in two halves, each beginning with an introduction and more detailed chapter summary. In brief, different forms of time keeping and their imagery structure this dissertation. Part One, “The Time of the Cosmos in Heaven and On Earth,” focuses on imagery associated with dividing time and how it is made visible through either celestial patterns or earthly seasons. Drawing on attitudes toward observing atmospheric changes, whether in the heavens or in the fields, this half investigates how visualizing units of time in days, months, and years created order and shaped how viewers understood themselves in the cosmos and on earth. Chapter one pursues cosmological imagery in imperial manuscripts that pose two competing attitudes toward how time is created and represented, one based on harmonious and hierarchical levels and the other on divine mystery and scriptural knowledge. Chapter two then examines the labors of the months, which were added to three middle Byzantine manuscripts, and considers their ability to interact with cosmic cycles related to the origins of time, to organize information in canon tables, and to regulate land management in monastic estates.

Part Two, “Gathering and Unbinding Sacred Time,” shifts to the church year and its annual cycle of saintly commemorations to explore how illustrated manuscripts and icons use imagery to convey the liturgical time. It moves beyond questions of narrative illustration and instead proposes that the accumulation of saintly effigies in these different media created distinct experiences of the year: one aligned with the miraculous time of reliquaries, and the other concerned with visualizing the symbolism of liturgical time. Chapter 3 analyzes two calendar manuscripts that gather saintly images in a manner akin to collections of relics. In this way, they imagined the calendar as a reliquary. Chapter 4 then examines the unbinding of saintly imagery in two sets of calendar icons at the Monastery of Saint Catherine’s at Mount Sinai. These calendar icons, I argue, reflect alternative and competing temporalities within the monastery. As a whole this dissertation questions how calendric imagery participated in everyday life where heavenly and earthly cycles could intersect and shape the present.

## Part I: The Time of the Cosmos in Heaven and on Earth

In a ninth-century copy of Ptolemy's *Handy Tables* (MS Vat. gr. 1291), an elaborate circular diagram bridges levels of personified time (fol. 9r, figure 0.6). Working inward the outermost band depicts the twelve signs of the zodiac arranged counter-clockwise to account for the sun's passage across these unmoving stars. Occupying the middle band of images, the months corresponding to the zodiac signs all carry out seasonally appropriate activities. Below these symbols that connect heaven and earth, busts of nude women in poses that frequently mirror their monthly counterparts convey the hour at which the sun enters each sign: white for a daylight hour and black for the night, with the more specific numerical hour given above them. At the very center of this image is the luminary responsible for the division between day and night and the seasons: the sun. Like his lunar counterpart from this manuscript discussed in the introduction, the sun, crowned and pulled in a quadriga by four white horses, bursts from a light blue circle. The solar diagram within the Vatican Ptolemy is an exceptional image, with no equivalent in other copies of the *Handy Tables* despite the popularity of this text.<sup>67</sup> As a comprehensive snapshot of the universe with allusions to kingship, the diagram connects miniscule and monumental cycles of time. Hours of the day and the year, ushered in by an imperial figure, envision the succession of rulers listed as temporary manifestations of an unbroken chain of succession. In this way they relate to the sun's eternal course across the cosmos marked by regularity and renewal.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> David Pingree, "The Teaching of the *Almagest* in Late Antiquity" *Apeiron* 27, no. 4 (1994): 75-98; Anne Tihon, "Les sciences exactes à Byzance," *Byzantion* 79 (2009): 380-434.

<sup>68</sup> Benjamin Anderson uses this image as the frontispiece to his book, acknowledging its connection to notions of kingship and cosmic knowledge. In addition to the 66 tables, there is a list of rulers extending from Nabonassar of Babylonia to the reign of Alexander (r. 912-913) that were continuously updated despite changing hands (16v-17r). He identifies a change in hands between Constantine (r. 741-775) and his successor Leo (r. 775-780) and continuing through Nikephorus (r. 802-811). Anderson, *Cosmos and Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 116. For the Royal Canon, see Alden A. Mosshammer, *The Easter Computus and the Origins of the Christian Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 17-18.

Extrapolating on the temporal material in Ptolemy's *Handy Tables*, the Byzantine image supplements the data contained by its associated table with a set of personifications. The outer ring and inner circle map a set of correspondences between the sun and cosmos that are experienced on earth. As the sun traverses the cosmos, it brings the seasons and hours of day, all of which are displayed on the page. For example, when the sun leaves the constellation of cancer in the cosmos, at the 3rd hour of the night on 24 July, we profit from the pleasures of that month, whose labor holds a stick and a basket of fresh fruit at left under a lion for Leo who pounces upward (figure 0.7).<sup>69</sup> Similar scenes evoke seasonal pleasures beyond gathering fruit in summer. From enjoying music in early autumn (October) to celebrating the renewal of civic offices with a consular figure (January) the image encapsulates the diversity and order of the year across nature and man-made institutions.

Compared to material from the Latin West where the labors make frequent appearances in manuscripts and architecture, this temporal cycle is relatively rare in Byzantine imagery. Among the Zodiac, too, the material remains scant. This relative dearth in material has contributed to the view that both sets of earthly and heavenly signs were echoes of the classical past. However, in the two chapters that follow, I challenge their perceived marginal status to reveal their prominent role in thinking about time in later Byzantium beyond classical references or adoptions from their cultural neighbors.

Chapter one explores the origins of time in cosmological models. It brings astronomical diagrams from scientific manuscripts into conversation with illustrated Genesis cycles that display the Creation sequence. While Church Fathers and later Byzantine theologians agreed that these

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<sup>69</sup> For other data on the image, see Franz Boll, "Beiträge zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der griechischen Astrologie und Astronomie," *Sitzungsberichte der philos.-phil. und der history. Classe der k. bayer. Akad. D. Wiss.* 1 (1899): 126-9.

heavenly bodies served as signs for time, the eleventh- and twelfth-century Octateuchs in particular imagine divergent models for time's creation through setting the sun and moon into motion. One side of the debate, following classical models from Ptolemy and Plato, conceptualized the cosmos as a series of nested spheres that was rooted in the mathematical, harmonious, and precise division of time. For its proponents, time was an expression of eternity, which was legible in its workings. By contrast, the other side followed Scriptural exegesis, whereby the structure of the cosmos aligned with the description of the Tabernacle given to Moses. For believers of this theory, time existed in an anagogical relationship with sacred implements and the liturgical experience. The zodiac emerged on both sides of this debate as a stable frame for reckoning time, but as the final section of this chapter shows, it also appeared independently in commemorative contexts like the Pantokrator monastery to convey stability and order while imagining the foundation as a heavenly kingdom.

Turning from the heavens to the earth, chapter two explores how the labors of the months were used as pictorial devices for dividing time. In addition to surveying the literary expressions of the labors, it considers three instances where the monthly imagery was added to manuscripts to extend their interest in cultivating knowledge. The first is a scene from the Octateuchs of the Old Testament patriarch Enoch with the personified labors of the month, who we are told was able to translate celestial signs into seasons and months and ultimately document time. Beyond this, the labors also appear as caryatids in the imaginative architecture of canon tables, where their structure visualizes correspondences across all four Gospel accounts. Enshrined by time's organization, the scriptural material appears to exist both within it and beyond it. In the final example, they pair with their symbols of the Zodiac to divide a liturgical *typikon*. In this final instance, the months become symbols of land management, materializing hopes for future yields in the fields and economic



success for the wealthy monastery. The variety of settings for these working men in the case studies under consideration, including an illustrated sacred history, the frontmatter for a gospel book, and a *typikon*, requires a more nuanced understanding of how the temporal theme was applied. Taken together these two chapters allow the discussion to move beyond classical sources and toward a deeper engagement with these temporal motifs within Byzantine thought.

## Chapter 1

### Cosmic Time: Visualizing the Cosmos and Zodiac

Opening a fourteenth-century manuscript containing Theon of Alexandria's commentary on Ptolemy's *Handy Tables* (Ambrosiana H57 sup., fol. 1), a tonsured astronomer engages with a dramatic blue sky densely packed with stars (figure 1.1).<sup>70</sup> The monastic stargazer stands on the portico of a building rendered just enough to remain legible. A thin column supports a pitched entryway and a roof with a looped serpent to house the text's opening eta,<sup>71</sup> but otherwise the image's background is a pure field of gold that opens to the cosmos. Accompanied by a young student who records the pertinent data taken from the sky, the astronomer busies himself with the task at hand. He grasps an astrolabe to methodically take measurements and chart the heavens. Far more detailed than anything else on the page, the celestial field monitored by the pair of monks reveals an abundance of signs: 52 shining stars evenly distributed in the sky with the sun and moon hovering in the upper right corner personified as large orbs of gold and silver. The sun's strongest ray descends to earth as a material beam properly aligned with the astrolabe's alidade, the bar that

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<sup>70</sup> Not much has been made of this manuscript. David Pingree, "An Illustrated Greek Astronomical Manuscript: Commentary of Theon of Alexandria on the Handy Tables and Scholia and Other Writings of Ptolemy Concerning Them," *JWCI* 45 (1982): 185-86; Benjamin Anderson, *Cosmos and Community in Early Medieval Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 109-10.; for the work of Theon of Alexandria; Theon of Alexandria, *Le "Petit Commentaire" de Théon d'Alexandrie aux Tables Faciles de Ptolémée*, ed. Anne Tihon (Vatican, 1978) and *Le "Grand Commentaire" de Théon d'Alexandrie aux Tables Faciles de Ptolémée, vol. 1*, ed. J. Mogenet, Anne Tihon (Vatican, 1985), *Commentaires de Pappus et de Théon d'Alexandrie sur l'Almageste*, ed. Anne Tihon, 3 vols. (Vatican 1931-43); Raymond Mercier, *Ptolemaïou Procheiroi Kanones: Ptolemy's Handy Tables* (Leuven: Université catholique de Louvain, 2011) 64-72.

<sup>71</sup> The presence of the serpent looped around the building's roof remains elusive with no proposals in the literature on the manuscript. To offer one speculative reading, given the astronomical nature of the image and manuscript, I am inclined to see the serpent as a reference either to a snake-like star that was purported to exist in the ninth sphere of the heavens related to natural disasters or as the interpenetration of a star known as "head and tail" between the sun and moon, used to explain eclipses and imagined as a dragon. Catherine Baudry, "Un traité cosmologique byzantin inédit: le Harleianus 5624, ff. 283r-284v," *Byzantion* 84 (2014), 16-18; Anne-Laurence Caudano, "Astronomy and Astrology," in *A Companion to Byzantine Science*, ed. Stavros Lazaris (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 210, 229.

traverses the tool's diameter and that the astronomer holds with his other hand.<sup>72</sup> In registering the altitude of the sun and calibrating it with the zodiac and calendar dates that would be incised on the instrument's other surface, the astrolabe's hands point to the data needed to translate the celestial sign into hours and minutes.

In the image's capacity to bring the observer and the observed intimately close, the illustration effectively demonstrates the aims of the manuscript. Its 180 pages contain commentaries on Ptolemy's *Handy Tables* as well as the tables themselves, which serve as mathematical aids to ascertain the positions of heavenly bodies at any given moment and for a variety of purposes including time keeping, measuring latitude for cartographic purposes, and mapping the stars and constellations in the sky by means of an astrolabe.<sup>73</sup> Along with the care taken to delineate the various parts of the astrolabe, the vista offered by the frontispiece presents a specific astronomical phenomenon. The night sky filled with stars and a softly glowing moon occupies the same space as the sun creating an image that gestures toward one of the more remarkable moments of the cosmos's patterns. Whether or not it directly aims to illustrate an eclipse, by envisioning a moment that overlays day and night, the image distills the specific goals of the *Handy Tables*. It authenticates the book's compendium of data and degrees taken from celestial observation, using the angle of the sun to reveal the positions of heavenly bodies, both

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<sup>72</sup> On the use of the astrolabe, see Flora Vafea, "From the Celestial Globe to the Astrolabe: Transferring Celestial Motion onto the Plane of the Astrolabe," in *Astrolabes in Medieval Culture*, ed. Josefina Rodriguez-Arribas, Charles Burnett, Sile Ackermann, and Ryan Szpiech (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 132-33.

<sup>73</sup> Various plates were involved in the different calculations that could be kept in a receptacle, "δοχεῖον" or mater from the writing of the 6<sup>th</sup> century theologian and philosopher John the Grammarian. The term "δοχεῖον" appears in Heinrich Hase, "Joannis Alexandrini, cognomine Philoponi, de usu astrolabii eiusque constructione libellus," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 6 (1839): 146; and Joannes Philoponus, *De usu astrolabii eiusque constructione, Über die Anwendung des Astrolabs und seine Anfertigung*, ed. Alfred Stückelberger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 40; Flora Vafea, "From the Celestial Globe to the Astrolabe," 136-38.

visible and invisible. In short, it visualizes not only the act but also the outcome of using the manuscript.<sup>74</sup>

Ptolemy's *Handy Tables* preserve the purely technical elements of Greek astronomy, excerpted and expanded from the more theoretically based *Almagest*.<sup>75</sup> The tables contained across the manuscript provide the mathematical equations for determining the length of daylight for a given day, and circumference of a planet, as well as more ideological grounds in listing the succession of rulers continuously updated from Nabonassar (747 BC) to Constantine XI (r. 1449-53) and the Ottoman Murad II (r. 1421-44 and 1446-51) used to reckon astronomical movements into units of time including 25-year periods, years, months, days, and hours.<sup>76</sup> Certainly applicable for a range of intellectual pursuits, the book's contents contain a wealth of information and offer

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<sup>74</sup> Only one astrolabe from Byzantium survives, likely because they were melted down, but in addition to the treatises that survive describing their use, a marginal comment contemporary with the manuscript describes the same process illustrated in the manuscript. In a lengthy marginal note from a fourteenth century codex authored by the astronomer and astrologer John Abramios, Abramios describes observing one of the fixed stars, and calculating its longitude. Having ascertained this data, he then adjusted his astrolabe to calculate the time of night that this observation was recorded. He says his estimate was confirmed by the sounding of a clock, and he then repeated the same procedure for other stars. The account animates the expected outcome of the Ambrosiana manuscript in its effective translation of the night sky into quantifiable data both spatial and temporal. Ihor Sevcenko, *Études sur la polémique entre Théodore Métochite et Nicéphore Choumnos* (Bruxelles: Byzantion, 1962), 117 note 2; Divna Manolova, "Discourses of Science and Philosophy in the Letters of Nikephoros Gregoras," (PhD diss. Central European University, 2014), 68 note 321.

<sup>75</sup> Alexander Jones, "Ptolemy's Handy Tables," *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 48 (2017): 238-41; David Pingree, "The Teaching of the *Almagest* in Late Antiquity," *Apeiron* 27, no. 4 (1994): 75-98; Anne Tihon, "Les sciences exactes à Byzance," *Byzantion* 79 (2009): 380-434.

<sup>76</sup> Ptolemy used 18-year periods, whereas Theon's commentary instead used 25. Nathan Sidoli, "Mathematical Tables in Ptolemy's *Almagest*," *Historia Mathematica* 41, no. 1 (2014): 13-37; David Pingree, "An Illustrated Greek Manuscript," 452; The full list of tables is categorized by William D. Stahlman, "The Astronomical Tables of Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1291," (PhD diss., Brown University, 1959), 2-17. The tables of the right and oblique ascension (Tables 1-9), of the solar and lunar mean motions and anomalies (Tables 10-15), the so-called "preliminary table" relating to lunar motions (Table 16), the prosneusis table (17), a table of corrections relating to lunar parallax (18), a table of eclipse magnitudes (19), the eclipse tables proper (20-21), a table of solar declination and lunar latitude (22), an expanded table of lunar latitudes (23), a table of hourly lunar motion (24), a table for calculating the length of the longest day (25), two tables concerning the length of daylight (26-26a), two "horizon diagrams" (27-27a), parallax tables for the calculation of eclipses (28-35), tables of planetary longitudes (36-45) and latitudes (46-50), tables of planetary stationary points (51-55) and of planetary phases (56-64), a table of maximum elongations from the true sun (65), and finally a catalog of the fixed stars (66). Commentary on these lists at 30-173.

the data for its reader to immerse themselves in and visualize the cosmos at any point in time, bridging the successive movement of heavenly bodies across the cosmos with imperial succession on earth.<sup>77</sup>

Over the pages that follow within the Ambrosiana *Handy Tables*, images continue to augment the astronomical data in provocative ways, moving between technical illustrations of observation and more imaginative, artistic imagery. Small vignettes of personified planets, variously depicted sitting on or carrying the symbols of the zodiacal signs that are their astrological houses, exaltations, and, in some cases, dejections, accompany the data corresponding to the tables of anomaly for the planets, used to calculate the relative distance between a planet and observer.<sup>78</sup> In one of these images, the figure for Mars as a warrior in armor wields a sword in one hand and holds a scorpion for Scorpio, Mars's house, in his lap along with a crab for Cancer on top (figure 1.2). This striking group rides a ram for Ares, also a house of Mars with his feet resting on a goat for Capricorn. The small illustrations do not directly contribute to how the data contained within the tables were ascertained like the opening frontispiece, but instead they visually translate the properties of the cosmos into a striking mnemonic image based on mathematical equations and the spatial relationships between viewer, planet, and the zodiac.

Personifications like the one for Mars occur for all the heavenly bodies aligned with the tables and data that largely correspond to each. The images elaborate on the connections between

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<sup>77</sup> On the regnal lists, see David Pingree, "An Illustrated Greek Astronomical Manuscript," 186; Alden Mosshammer, *The Easter Computus and the Origins of the Christian Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 17-18; and more generally Otto Neugebauer, "'Years' in Royal Canons," in *A Locust's Leg: Studies in honour of S. H. Taqizadeh*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater and Walter Bruno Henning (London: Percy Lund, 1962), 209-212; Leo Depuydt, "'More Valuable than All Gold': Ptolemy's Royal Canon and Babylonian Chronology," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 47 (1995): 97-117; Mossman Roueché, "Stephanus the Alexandrian Philosopher, the Kanon and a Seventh-Century Millennium," *JWCI* 74 (2011): 1-30.

<sup>78</sup> David Pingree, "An Illustrated Greek Astronomical Manuscript," 191; for the tables of anomaly, see Stahlman, "Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1291," 135-6.

the planets as they travel across a geocentric cosmos in the space between the viewer grounded on earth and the fixed zodiac, creating a composite image that holds together the planet and its associated signs. In its orbit, it would be impossible for Mars to simultaneously occupy a position so close to Ares, Cancer, Scorpio, and Capricorn. Instead, the image emphasizes correspondences and relationships on a monumental scale. Far from the direct observation of the cosmos sketched at the manuscript's opening, these cosmic personifications of planets and constellations are a playful tour de force in their inventive combinations and compositions that propose other ways of looking at and thinking through the cosmos and our relation to it.

It is the aim of this chapter to consider the cosmic origins of time and how they were visualized in manuscripts. As we will see, time was understood to have been created by the creation of the sun and moon, which served as signs for scales of time, including days, months, and years.<sup>79</sup> But in the manuscript's illustrations, the same night sky gives way to different levels of time. One was legible in the diurnal, monthly, and annual temporal patterns visualized through the astrolabe and quantified through data in the manuscript's tables. The other was visionary. The celestial grouping moves away from astronomical patterns and reconfigures the cosmos to visualize information built on cosmological relationships. Regardless of the mode used in their cosmological expression, both observational practices in the manuscripts mediate part of an expansive cosmos through other signs, whether numerical or pictorial, to reveal elements of its structure.

This chapter explores how celestial patterns inscribed time, primarily through a consideration of images that pictured time's creation in the middle Byzantine tradition of illustrated Octateuchs. This is a corpus of manuscripts largely created in the mid-eleventh to early twelfth

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<sup>79</sup> Philosopher Lorraine Daston has contended that observation creates time, a statement made palpably present in Ambrosiana's frontispiece where time is given by the sun and quantified by the astronomer's instrument. Lorraine Daston, *Observation as a Way of Life: Time, Attention, Allegory* (Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 2011), 7.

century and envisions the Christian past through the Septuagint, drawing on material informed by astronomical debates in their illustration cycle for Creation. While the extensive catenae across all surviving Octateuchs and commentaries on Genesis describe the role of the sun and moon in measuring time, none clarifies how these movements take place or physically generate time. It is the illustrations more than anything else that articulate the creation of time, its cosmological origins, and its relation to earth.

I first consider the didactic and exegetic potential of illustrated Genesis cycles. I then look at how the Septuagint verses characterize the cosmos and the ways that Early Christian philosophers and theologians alike construct images and diagrams to reconcile these descriptions with the observable world. The second half of this chapter examines how these astronomical debates were reignited in the creation cycles of the Octateuchs. The late eleventh-century Vatican Octateuch (Vat. gr. 747) conveys a Ptolemaic cosmos of nested spheres to communicate a Platonic ideal where temporality and eternity can coexist. Against this series of images, the slightly later Topkapi Octateuch (Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi gr. 8) refutes this position, conveying an image where time is governed solely by God. I conclude by looking at the zodiac imagery from the Pantokrator to show that these representations of the celestial spheres were not marginal nor solely relegated to esoteric scholarly debate. Such imagery in fact played a central role in not only defining the nature of time but marking time within a commemorative context.

## Illustrated Books of Genesis and the Octateuchs

Three major recensions of illustrated Genesis manuscripts survive.<sup>80</sup> (1) The Vienna genesis from the sixth century, which begins its illustrative program with Noah and the Flood.<sup>81</sup> (2) A contemporary manuscript known as the Cotton Genesis now preserved as charred and damaged fragments with a Creation cycle included in its program and which likely reproduced the Septuagint text in full.<sup>82</sup> And (3) the later corpus of Octateuchs from the eleventh and twelfth centuries that expands the book of Genesis and remaining Pentateuch with the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth.<sup>83</sup> The exceptional nature of Genesis is unsurprising. Through its collection of information and the enormous span of time covered, the stories and images of Genesis penetrate the past to its very beginnings, furnishing information on the origins of a diverse array of philosophical and social topics including the origins of time, as well as of races, languages, and

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<sup>80</sup> See most recently Maja Kominko, "Illustrated Manuscripts of the Septuagint," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, ed. Alison Salvesen and Timothy Michael Law (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 745-57. Other fragmentary cycles survive, such as the programmatic frontispieces of the Leo Bible.

<sup>81</sup> Most recently, see Barbara Zimmermann, *Die Wiener Genesis im Rahmen der antiken Buchmalerei: Ikonographie, Darstellung, Illustrationsverfahren und Aussageintention* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2003); classic studies include Hans Gerstinger, *Die Wiener Genesis* (Vienna, 1931); John Lowden, "Cotton Genesis"; Mira Friedman, "More on the Vienna Genesis," *Byzantion*, 59 (1989): 64-77; Mira Friedman, "On the Sources of the Vienna Genesis," *CA* 37 (1989): 5-17; Otto Mazal, *Kommentar zur Wiener Genesis, Faksimile-Ausgabe der Codex theol. gr. 31 der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien* (Frankfurt, 1980); Karl Clausberg, *Die Wiener Genesis* (Frankfurt, 1984).

<sup>82</sup> After the fire, about 60 fragmentary leaves were recorded by the deputy librarian of the Cotton Genesis, David Casedy. Some of them were borrowed in 1743 by George Vetrue to make watercolor drawings; five of them are lost and four found their way to the library of the Bristol Baptist College. The four Bristol fragments were purchased by the British Museum in 1962 and since then all known remnants of the original manuscript have been held together. Kurt Weitzmann and Massimo Bernabò pieced together the fragments based on the genesis cycle from the San Marco mosaics and the Palermo Ivories; James Carley, "Thomas Wakefield, Robert Wakefield and the Cotton Genesis," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 12 (2002): 247-53 and Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert Kessler, *The Cotton Genesis: British Library, Codex Cotton Otho B VI, The Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint; v. 1* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), 4-7.

<sup>83</sup> John Lowden, "Illustrated Octateuch Manuscripts: A Byzantine Phenomenon," in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2010), 107-52; John Lowden, *The Octateuchs: A Study in Byzantine Manuscript Illustration* (State College: Penn State University Press, 1992); Kurt Weitzmann and Massimo Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).



social customs that are made to speak to present viewers.<sup>84</sup> Yet despite the clear value of the text as a foundational narrative, only two of these recensions illustrate the initial creation cycle where light and dark, heaven and earth, water and land, and the sun and moon were made, that is, the sixth-century Cotton genesis and the later Octateuchs. Eschewing continuity, their illustrated programs instead respond to the Genesis verses differently in line with contemporary beliefs about time and its visualization. In this section, I provide an overview of the first chapter of Genesis, the ambiguities in the text, and how early commentators and illustrations both sought to clarify these issues.

Following the creation of light on the first day, the heavens on day two, and the third day's separation of land and sea with the addition of plant life, the fourth day of creation witnessed the emergence of the luminaries (the sun and moon, the planets, and stars). Within the Septuagint's text, the verses read:

And god said, let there be luminaries in the firmament of the heavens for giving light upon the earth, to part between day and night. And let them be for signs, and for times (καιρούς), and for days (ἡμέρας), and for years (ἐνιαυτούς). And let them be for giving light in the firmament of heaven, so as to shine upon the earth, and it was so. And God made the two great luminaries. The greater luminary for the beginning of the day and the lesser luminary for the beginning of night, as well as the stars. And God put them in the firmament of heaven so as to shine upon the earth and to begin the day and the night and to part between light and darkness. And God beheld that it was good. And so on the fourth day, there was evening and there was morning (Gen. 1:14-19).<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Such attitudes continue to hold true in the present, with the book of Genesis used in missionary projects. Lowden, "Concerning the Cotton Genesis," 49.

<sup>85</sup> καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς γενηθήτωσαν φωστῆρες ἐν τῷ στερεώματι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ εἰς φαῦσιν τῆς γῆς τοῦ διαχωρίζειν ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἔστωσαν εἰς σημεῖα καὶ εἰς καιροὺς καὶ εἰς ἡμέρας καὶ εἰς ἐνιαυτούς. καὶ ἔστωσαν εἰς φαῦσιν ἐν τῷ στερεώματι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὥστε φαίνειν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. καὶ ἐγένετο οὕτως. καὶ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τοὺς δύο φωστῆρας τοὺς μεγάλους, τὸν φωστῆρα τὸν μέγαν εἰς ἀρχὰς τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ τὸν φωστῆρα τὸν ἐλάσσονα εἰς ἀρχὰς τῆς νυκτὸς, καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας. καὶ ἔθετο αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῷ στερεώματι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὥστε φαίνειν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. καὶ ἄρχειν τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ διαχωρίζειν ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ φωτὸς καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σκοτοῦς καὶ εἶδεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι καλόν. καὶ ἐγένετο ἑσπέρα καὶ ἐγένετο πρωί, ἡμέρα Τετάρτη.

From this moment, the text makes clear that time is made and set into motion by the creation of these heavenly bodies, and is defined by the regular succession of day and night. These luminaries replace the eternal light that was put in place on day one to serve as signs for the origins of dividing time based on observable phenomena, inscribing time through their daily patterns. But understanding the period between creation and the fourth day proved difficult. The problem for commentators, philosophers, and theologians involved determining whether measured time and creation were coterminous, which impacted how the initial Genesis sequence was conceptualized and illustrated. Before turning to early illustrations, I first survey some of the ways theologians navigated the ambiguities of the text in exegesis and homilies, which in turn shaped how the cosmos was depicted.

For early commentators on Genesis and Creation, one of many disagreements concerns whether the first day of creation marked temporal movement in its chronological progression, or whether time emerged only later with the luminaries.<sup>86</sup> For example in *On the Creation of the Universe* from the first century AD, Philo, the Hellenic Jewish philosopher, asserted that when Genesis said “In the Beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” the expression was not meant in a temporal sense, but remained in a primordial, atemporal state. According to his interpretation:

every period of time is measured by a series of days and nights caused by the movement of the sun as it goes over and under the earth. But the sun is part of heaven, so that time is confessedly more recent than the world. It would be correct to say that the world was not made in time but that time was formed by means of the world, for it was heaven’s movement that was the index of the nature of time.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> William Adler, *Time Immemorial: Archaic History and Its Sources in Christian Chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syncellus* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1989), 44-45. For a discussion of this issue in Antiquity, see Richard Sorabji, *Time, Creation, and the Continuum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 98-130, 193-209, 232-52.

<sup>87</sup> Philo, *On the Creation of the Universe*, 7.26; see also Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis*, I.2, trans. Colson and Whitaker (London, 1971).

Because time as it is understood through the movements of the luminaries was made after the earth, Philo maintains that the creation narrative refers only to the order by which God created the world, and was without time. From this order that “predates” time, models and patterns for the time of the world followed only after the earth was formed and furnished with plants, leaving the first three “days” to exist in an unknowable noetic and mystical state.<sup>88</sup>

But for others this primordial time was assessable through the created luminaries. As described by Basil of Caesarea’s second homily on the *Hexameron* from 378, he explains the emergence of time from eternity, which could be seen in the temporal patterns. He begins by asserting that days are measured by light from the created sun:

Thus, every time that, in the revolution of the sun, evening and morning occupy the world, their periodical succession never exceeds the space of one day. But must we believe in a mysterious reason for this? God who made the nature of time measured it out and determined it by intervals of days; and, wishing to give it a week as a measure, he ordered the week to revolve from period to period upon itself, to count the movement of time, forming the week out of one day revolving seven times upon itself: a proper circle begins and ends with itself. In fact, it is also characteristic of eternity to turn back upon itself and never to be brought to an end.<sup>89</sup>

Basil’s comments provide an alternative to Philo’s reading. What Basil makes explicit is that in a hierarchic fashion, time’s structure on earth can lead toward its noetic and mystical origins: weeks and days, and if we take this up in scale, months, and years as well, have beginnings and endings in their measurement. But the celestial patterns responsible for them do not. They exist in eternal cycles of return and renewal without beginning or end, and in this way bear the divine mark of their creation. To witness cycles of time was not only to experience the outcome of a divine law

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<sup>88</sup> Sorabji, *Time, Creation, and the Continuum*, 208-9.

<sup>89</sup> Basil of Caesarea, “Homily II,” in *Exegetic Homilies*, trans. Agnes Claire Way (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1963), 34-35.

but also to view eternity anagogically, moving from the structures of time put in place to a world outside of time without beginning or end in a manner that evokes Plato's description of time as a moving image of eternity in the *Timaeus*.<sup>90</sup>

Alongside these commentaries, imagery tied to the verses also sought to clarify the matters in visual terms of time and its relationship to divine knowledge. In the early illustrated editions of the Cotton and Vienna Genesis, images expanded upon the Septuagint text, which could be quite spartan. Due to the regular appearance of large illustrations, occupying the same width of the text and anywhere from one-third to two-thirds of the page's height, Hans Gerstinger viewed the Cotton Genesis and its Vienna counterpart as "schoolbooks" for an imperial prince or princess.<sup>91</sup> However, John Lowden points out that the images often demand learned exposition to understand their meaning, requiring familiarity with, or access to, knowledge outside of the books' pages.<sup>92</sup> Such details make it clear that the role of these early images is not only to increase the value of the manuscript or clarify the text, but also to interpret it and provide a visual, exegetical reading.

For example, in one of the scenes from an extended cycle showing the life of the patriarch Joseph, son of Jacob, in the Vienna genesis an astronomer gazes to the sky with a spindle next to two women who attend to a child (fol. 16r; figure 1.3).<sup>93</sup> The astronomer, dressed in a blue cloak studded with silver stars, appears on the right side of an illustration of Joseph resisting the advances

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<sup>90</sup> In Plato's *Timaeus*, time is described as "a moving image of eternity," progressing according to number. With a view to the generation of time, the sun and the moon and the five other stars [planets] came into existence for determining and preserving the numbers of time." *Timaeus*, trans. Bury, 38C.

<sup>91</sup> Hans Gerstinger, *Die Wiener Genesis* (Vienna, 1931), 178.

<sup>92</sup> John Lowden, "Cotton Genesis," 50. For a reconstruction of the layout, 48; Weitzmann and Kessler, *Cotton Genesis*, 127-237 (diagrams).

<sup>93</sup> The Vienna Genesis has a unique relationship to the Septuagint verses. Some are paraphrased or edited, while others are copied verbatim. Kominko, "Illustrated Editions of the Septuagint," 746.

of Zuleika, Potiphar's wife, shown reclining on a bed and tugging at his mantle as the text above describes.<sup>94</sup> Below these two scenes, another register displays a woman at left who cares for an infant while the other two spin, understood as references to the three Fates.<sup>95</sup> Only the small bedroom scene at left has any grounding in the text, with most of the illustration offering information outside the textual narrative. With both right-most figures on either register raising their spindle in a similar manner, the page strongly communicates a prophetic undertone that cuts through heaven and earth. Both extraneous elements assure the reader that Joseph is part of a divine plan whether through classical images of the spinning Fates or prognostication with this future literally written in the stars.<sup>96</sup>

As seen in the example of Joseph, the illustrations are not merely didactic aids to the text but rather invite deeper engagement beyond the story. By incorporating additional details concerned with cosmological time, they could offer supplementary and complex messages about fate and prophecy that interact with the text and transform the page into a dense network of meaning and associations. In the Cotton Genesis, too, the images gesture beyond what is written. In one example for the third day of Creation reconstructed from its fragments, it is only mentioned in the text that "the earth brings forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind" (Gen. 1:11; figure 1.4). But in the miniature, the rendered plant life receives a level of specificity in line with contemporary illustrated botanical treatises: apples, cumin, a black

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<sup>94</sup> Genesis 39:12.

<sup>95</sup> Michael Levin, "Some Jewish Sources for the Vienna Genesis," *AB* 54, no. 3 (1972): 242-3. For the fates, see Markos Giannoulis, *Die Moiren: Tradition und wandel des Motics der Schicksalsgöttinnen in der antiken und byzantinischen Kunst* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2010).

<sup>96</sup> There is likely also a nod to Joseph's own abilities to interpret dreams, which also had their own signs and served as prognostication, occurring with his brothers, in his episode in the prison, and before Pharaoh, and which offered Joseph his own cosmological imagery. For Joseph's dream sequence in Byzantine writing, see George Calofonos, "Dream Narratives in the Continuation of Theophanes," in *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Christine Angelidi (London: Routledge, 2014), 112.

poplar, and a chrysanthemum are all identifiable. Beyond displaying a specific landscape, the miniature's details also orient the reader in time. To the right of the image of the Creator are three women with wings in white peploi. The presence of these figures who are not accounted for within the Genesis text, has in part been explained by Marie-Thérèse D'Alverny. She has connected Augustine's (354-430) *Commentary on Genesis* with the winged figures who appear across the Cotton Genesis's reconstruction. In Augustine's work, the creation of light is also the moment of creation for the angels, who successively accumulate each Creation event to embody the "days" and celebrate what has been divinely made.<sup>97</sup> While not preserved in the Cotton fragments, the creation of the luminaries in the San Marco atrium mosaics in Venice, believed to be a general copy of this sequence, repeats the angelic day markers who now total to four (figure 1.5).<sup>98</sup> They stand to the right of an orb holding the cosmos with the sun and moon at opposite ends to clearly convey the balance of day and night as well as the presence of divine time outside of these celestial patterns.

These early illustrations reveal how divine knowledge about time could be legible within the narratives surrounding creation. In the Cotton Genesis, angelic personifications embody the divine light from the dawn of Creation and mark the sequence of events. These figures coexist with the emergence of the luminaries so that the origins of time are understood as part of a divine plan and within a celestial hierarchy. The Vienna Genesis, in turn, demonstrates how careful observation of the luminaries could lead toward divine knowledge through prophecy and fate,

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<sup>97</sup> Marie-Thérèse D'Alverny, "Les anges et les jours," *CA* 9 (1957): 271-300; cf Glenn Peers, *Subtle Bodies: Representing Angels in Byzantium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 30-35. Like the three women in the Vienna Genesis who point to Greco-Roman images of the Fates, these too derive from classical imagery taken from personifications for days and updated to fit within Early Christian doctrine.

<sup>98</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, "The Genesis Mosaics of San Marco and the Cotton Genesis Miniatures," in *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice, vol. II*, ed. Otto Demus (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 105-42; Lowden, "Concerning the Cotton Genesis," 42.

visualized through the personifications of fate whose spindle and thread intentionally mirror the astronomer's own. In this way, observation not only creates time, but was capable of transporting viewers beyond it.

### Creation and the Octateuchs

Turning now to the later Octateuchs, their illustration program for the Creation replaces the angelic personifications with more robust cosmological models that were circulating across scientific and theological manuscripts. The Octateuchs are a corpus of six documented manuscripts that contain the first eight books of the Septuagint. This group continues the tradition of expanding the exegetical potential of the scriptural text by means of both copious illustrations that punctuate the text in an even rhythm and a catena system composed of commentaries on the verses.<sup>99</sup> It is generally held among both textual critics and art historians that there is a close relationship between five from this group: the eleventh-century Vat. gr. 747, three from the twelfth century including Istanbul Topkapi Saray gr. 8, Vat. gr. 746, and Smyrna Evangelical School A.1 (presumed destroyed in 1922 but surviving in photographs), and the thirteenth-century Mount Athos, Vatopedi 602. The opening of the Topkapi manuscript explicitly attributes the text to a son of emperor Alexios Komnenos, suggesting that this manuscript tradition had appeal to courtly

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<sup>99</sup> Lowden's monograph and that of Weitzmann and Bernabò remain the foundational studies. John Lowden, *The Octateuchs*; Weitzmann and Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*. See also Jeffrey Anderson, *The Creation of the Illustrated Octateuch* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2022); Josef Strzygowski, *Der Bilderkreis des Griechischen Physiologus des Kosmas Indicopleustes und Oktateuch nach Handschriften der Bibliothek zu Smyrna* (Leipzig, 1899); Jean Lassus, "La Creation du Monde dans les Octateuques byzantins du douzième siècle," *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot* 62, no. 1 (1979): 85-148; Cynthia Hahn, "Genesis Illustration in the Octateuchs," *CA* 28 (1979): 29-40; Massimo Bernabò, "Considerazioni sulle fonti testuali di alcune miniature della Genesi degli Ottateuchi Bizantini," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, ser. III, 8, no.2 (1978): 467-88; Doula Mouriki-Charalambous, "The Octateuch Miniatures of the Byzantine Manuscripts of Cosmas Indicopleustes," (Ph.D diss., Princeton University, 1970); Kurt Weitzmann, *The Joshua Roll: A Work of the Macedonian Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), 6-38; Fedor Uspenskij, *L'Octateuque de la Bibliotheque du Serail á Constantinople* (Sofia: Impr. De l'Etat, 1907); Dirk Christiaan Hesselning, *Miniatures de l'Octateuque grec de Smyrne, Codices Graeci et Latini duce Scatone de Vries, suppl. 6* (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1909).

audiences.<sup>100</sup> A sixth in Florence (Laur. Plut. 5.38) from the eleventh century is distanced from this group as it likely served a liturgical purpose.<sup>101</sup>

Research to date on the Octateuchs can be divided according to methodologies that attempt to situate the manuscripts within a comprehensive chronology of illustration strategies. Kurt Weitzmann promoted an approach that focused on the transmission of images through a series of copies, and positioned the Octateuchs within a general classicized framework that preserves and points back to an earlier and lost prototype, related to but ultimately distinct from the earlier sixth-century Genesis illustrations.<sup>102</sup> This approach has rightly been critiqued in recent years for applying models of textual transmission to imagery.<sup>103</sup> Along these lines, scholars pointed to external factors involved in the creation of new imagery, especially the liturgy.<sup>104</sup> John Lowden argues this point well, shifting the conversation to a focus grounded in the present to assert that the rich illustrations of the Octateuch cycles resulted from a middle-Byzantine accumulation of ideas and images from numerous contexts, which were combined selectively for new purposes.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Anderson, *Cosmos and Community*, 135-138; Lowden, "Illustrated Octateuch Manuscripts," 111-115.

<sup>101</sup> The eleventh-century codex Laur. Plut. 5.38 contains only six miniatures illustrating the text as far as Genesis 1:26, stands independent from the others. On this manuscript see Massimo Bernabò, "Considerazioni sul manoscritto Laurenziano Plut. 5.38 e sulle miniature della Genesi degli Ottateuchi Bizantini," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, ser. III, vol. 8, no. 1 (1978): 135-57. A later date has recently been proposed on paleographic grounds ca. 1275-1300. L. Perria and A. Iacobini, "Gli Ottateuchi in età paleologa: Problemi di scrittura e illustrazione: Il caso del Laur. Plut. 5.38," in *L'arte di Bisanzio e l'Italia al tempo dei Paleologi 1261-1453*, ed. A. Iacobini and M. della Valle (Rome, 1999), 69-111; Lowden, "Illustrated Octateuch Manuscripts," 110.

<sup>102</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, *The Joshua Roll*, 30-38.

<sup>103</sup> Mary Lyon Dolezal, "Manuscript Studies in the Twentieth Century: Kurt Weitzmann Reconsidered," *BMGS* 22 (1998): 222-4.

<sup>104</sup> For example, Ševčenko, "Illuminating the Liturgy: Illustrated Service Books in Byzantium" in *Heaven on Earth: Art and the Church in Byzantium*, ed. Linda Safran (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 217-20; Anthony Cutler, "Liturgical Strata in the Marginal Psalter," *DOP* 34/35 (1980/1980): 18.

<sup>105</sup> John Lowden, "Illustrated Octateuch Manuscripts: A Byzantine Phenomenon," in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, eds. Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2010), 149.



This was especially true for the Octateuch's verses on Creation, where different images about the shape of the cosmos were integrated into the sequence to clarify the ambiguity about time's origins.<sup>106</sup> For the Vatican Octateuch (Vat. gr. 747), the image corresponding to the creation of the luminaries presents a geocentric cosmos (fol. 16v; figure 1.6). Personifications of the sun and moon appear as busts encased in orbs on either side of the image's frame against an arching band of green that enwraps the curve of the earth. Placed at different levels against a heaven filled with red stars, each luminary has its own orbit around the cosmos. Through this layout, the image evokes an ascending hierarchic order from earth to the moon and sun, and ultimately toward an unknown third zone visible in the image's corners. By contrast, the Topkapi image (Topkapi gr. 8) pulls apart these zones (fol. 31r; figure 1.7). Now flattened, the earth, unframed and presented as an island near the text, is positioned beneath an inverted blue arch of heaven with gold and white stars. Busts of the sun and moon are symmetrically distributed and labeled on either side of the heavens, with a sliver of unworked page emerging between earth and heaven to emphasize the division of these two realms.

The catena on Genesis by Theodoret from the third century was integrated into the Octateuchs to provide clarifying details on the verses and to act alongside the images. However, its contents do not provide a cosmological description and offer little insight into why there is such stark differences between the two manuscripts.<sup>107</sup> For this verse, Theodoret instead explains that the luminaries were “for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years,” which he reads on two levels, one temporal and the other predictive. He begins by explaining the construction of

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<sup>106</sup> For alternative readings of these images not about time, but about kingship, see Anderson, *Cosmos and Community*, 135-40.

<sup>107</sup> On the *Questions* see Theodoret of Cyrus, *Catena graecae in Genesim et in Exodum*, 2, *Collectio Coisliniana in Genesim*, trans. Françoise Petit (Turnhout, Louvain, 1986); Theodoret of Cyrus, *Questions on the Octateuch, Volume I: Genesis*, trans. Robert C. Hill (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2011).

time, days, and years based on the movement of these luminaries. The sun forms days through its rising and setting, and its full course from the south to the north marks one year. This is in turn divided by seasons. As it moves north from the equator, spring occurs, bringing summer as it continues north. Then after reaching its northernmost point and traveling south, Autumn begins, followed by winter when the sun is at its southernmost point.<sup>108</sup> According to Theodoret, the moon also plays a role in this division of time by counting the months, as it completes its course in thirty days.<sup>109</sup> While the moon may no longer have been used to divide the months by the twelfth century, his reading suggests that in addition to their shared 30-day periods, the word for moon (μήνην) and month (μήνα) are the same to create a harmonious, if idealized, correspondence between the luminaries the cycles of time they create.<sup>110</sup>

In the second half of his reading, he moves away from the divisions of time to reflect on other applications of these signs, including agricultural patterns and prognostication. For this, he distinguishes himself from “astrological fools” whose methods are never expressed to argue that signs conveyed in the heavens demonstrate the time for sowing, planting, and winnowing.<sup>111</sup> In outlining the value of these celestial patterns for structures of daily life, he also describes more

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<sup>108</sup> Ὁ ἥλιος, ἀνίσχων μὲν καὶ διάμενος, τὰς ἡμέρας ποιεῖ, εἰς δὲ τὰ νότια καὶ τὰ βόρεια μέρη διατρέχων, τὸν ἐπαύστου κύκλον ἀποτελεῖ, οὗτος καὶ τὰς τροπὰς ἐργάζεται, ὡς καιροὺς ὠνόμασεν ἡ θεία γραφή ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ σημερινοῦ τόπου πρὸς τὰ βόρεια μεταβαίνων, τὰ ἔαρ ποιεῖ· εἴτα ἐκεῖθεν ἐπαντὸν μέχρι τούτων τῶν ὄρων, τὴν θερινὴν κατασκευάζει τροπὴν προϊόντος δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐντεῦθεν ἐπὶ τὰ νότια, τὸ μετόπωρον να γίνεται. “Question XV,” *Questions on the Octateuch*, 34.

<sup>109</sup> ἐπανιών δὲ αὐθις, τὸν χειμῶνα ποιεῖ, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ δρόμου τῆς σελήνης τὸν τῶν μηνῶν μαθάνομεν ἀριθμόν· διὰ τριάκοντα γὰρ ἡμερῶν, ἐξ ὁρῶν δεσυσῶν, τὸν οἰκεῖον δρόμον πληροί, οὗ δὴ χάριν τὸν τῶν τοσούτων ἡμερῶν ἀριθμὸν μήνα προσαγορεύομεν, ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὴν σελήνην ονομάζουσι μήνην. “Question XV,” *Questions on the Octateuch*, 36.

<sup>110</sup> This was likely a reference to the Hebrew calendar’s lunar cycle. On this see Sacha Stern, *Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar, 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE-10<sup>th</sup> century CE* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>111</sup> σημεῖα τοίνυν ἡ θεία καλεῖ γραφή τὸ εἰδέναι σπόρου καιρόν, τοῦ φυτεῦσαι, του καθιέραι, τοῦ ξύλα τεμεῖν εἰς ναυπηγίαν καὶ οἰκοδομίαν ἐπιτήδεια. “Question XV,” *Questions on the Octateuch*, 36.

circumstantial instances: sailors have learned when to lift and when to cast anchor, when to unfurl and furl the sail based on the rising and setting of stars.<sup>112</sup> Finally, rare instances marked within the sky could also be a divine message: the observance of a comet, shooting star, or meteor has often informed viewers of an enemy attack, an invasion of locusts, or a plague on cattle or people.<sup>113</sup> All said, the catena furnishes these luminaries with an abundance of possible meanings but does not clarify or describe the nature of time's creation.

Instead, Theodoret's engagement with the verses and the concept of time gradually moves outward. He explains the regular patterns of these luminaries, then ascribes to them significance through activities like when to sow or plant, progressively engaging with more irregular patterns, outlining that even the proper times that do not fall into cyclical patterns can also be read within the sky, such as when to sail or seek shelter. Theodoret's attention given to these atmospheric signs is not unique, Cicero regarded the same practice as a form of "natural divination" practiced by shepherds, mariners, farmers, and others constantly exposed to the elements.<sup>114</sup> But it emphasizes the encyclopedic nature of information contained in the sky: in its accumulation of times, there is seemingly a time for everything in this catena, and even anomalies within this order are foretold by signs in the heavens.

To return to the illustrations that accompany this commentary on the Geneses verses in the two Octateuchs, their images of the cosmos imagine alternative positions for the creation of time. For the Vatican model, the layers of spheres that share a shape with earth imagine everything

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<sup>112</sup> ἐνταῦθεν καὶ οἱ ναυτιλία του χρώμενοι μεμαθήκασι πότε μένα κατάρα, πότε δὲ καθορμίσαι τις προσήκει τὸ σκάφος, καὶ πότε μὲν πετάσαι δεῖ τὸ ιστίου πότε δὲ καθελεῖν· ἡ πεῖρα γὰρ αὐτοῦς ἐξεπαίδευσε τὰς τῶν ἀστέρων ἐπιτολὰς τε καὶ δύσεις, "Question XV," *Questions on the Octateuch*, 36.

<sup>113</sup> πολλάκις δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς κομήτην, ἡ πωγωνίτην, ἡ δοκίδης ἰδόντες, ἡ πολεμίων ἐγνώμεν προσβολήν, ἡ ἀκρίδος ἐμβολήν, ἡ κτηνῶν ἡ ἀνθρώπων φθοράν. "Question XV," *Questions on the Octateuch*, 36.

<sup>114</sup> Cicero, *De divinatione*, I.xviii, I.xlix.

within the cosmos as a part of this divinely ordered system. The signs announced by the luminaries are handed down from heaven to earth within a harmonious hierarchy that allowed for prediction in their relationships. The reverse is also true: observing and abiding by these signs is to connect with divine knowledge. In other words, the world is contained not only by the cosmos, but also by the time it creates. The Topkapi image dispels congruency between these cosmological elements. The earth is less bound within time than underneath it and the image does not emphasize regular patterns of cyclicity so much as show that the cosmos is governed directly by God.

While the differences in visualizing time's origins are apparent through formal elements alone, these details were the result of contemporary intellectual debates about the shape of the cosmos. Among the sources used for the Octateuch's genesis cycle, art historians have acknowledged the presence of images from two contemporary and competing theories of the shape of the cosmos. Cynthia Hahn and Doula Mouriki have convincingly shown that some Octateuch miniatures adopt illustrations from Kosmas's sixth century *Christian Topography*, a text that encompassed far-reaching topics such as geography, natural history, theology, and cosmology, now surviving in three illustrated copies: Vatican Greek 699, a ninth-century codex, and two eleven-century copies, Sinai Greek 1186, and MS Plut. 9.28 at the Laurenziana.<sup>115</sup> These copies, produced in Constantinople leading up to and immediately surrounding the emergence of the Octateuchs, replicated the author's original images of the cosmos.<sup>116</sup> In copying this cosmological

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<sup>115</sup> Hahn, "Creation of the Cosmos," 31; By contrast Wanda Wolska-Conus's critical edition of the *Topography* insists that the origins of illustration of the Octateuch and *Topography* are "strictment les mêmes," not considering the possibility that the *Topography* was the source for the Octateuch itself. Wanda Wolska-Conus, *La topographie chrétienne de Cosmas Indicopleustes: théologie et sciences au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 138.

<sup>116</sup> Kosmas refers to both his "drawings and book" as a single unit (Prologue 1); Doula Mouriki argues that the images are the product of the "finest workshops" in Constantinople. Mouriki, "The Octateuch Miniatures," 4-8; for a useful overview of the use of images, see Benjamin Anderson, "Reviewed Works: *The World of Kosmas: Illustrated Byzantine Codices of the 'Christian Topography'* by Maja Kominko; *Images of Cosmology in Jewish and Byzantine Art: God's Blueprint of Creation* by Shulamit Laderman." *Studies in Iconography* 36 (2015): 201-9.

articulation of a universe shaped like the Tabernacle beyond copies of the *Christian Topography*, its appearance within the Octateuchs, including the Topkapi's illustration, a book recounting the biblical past, effectively lent a greater degree of credence to this model.

Similarly, Benjamin Anderson's study of celestial imagery points to the lack of a singular view of the heavens. His inquiry largely focused on the notion of kingship and conflicting ideals that took place within the illustrations of creation, effectively using the *Topography* imagery against models that embrace Ptolemy's theory where the universe is shown in ascending spheres like the Vatican image.<sup>117</sup> While art historians have acknowledged the influence of astronomical material on developing the sequence of imagery in the Octateuch cycle, at present these conclusions have not been brought to bear on how they impacted the conceptualization of time and attitudes toward history. These different approaches to the same text, I propose, have implications on the Octateuchs as a historical document for imperial eyes.

### **Conceptions of the Byzantine Cosmos**

At least three models of the universe circulated in Byzantium between the ninth and fourteenth centuries, and two of them in particular were represented with specificity in the Octateuchs' illustration of Genesis 1.<sup>118</sup> The two dominant approaches, mentioned above, reproduced in the illustrated programs were (1) a spherical, geocentric model with earth at the center inherited from classical Greek astronomy and especially the theories of Ptolemy, and (2) a box-like vaulted model, sometimes referred to as Antiochene after its associated exegetic school of thinking, that envisioned a flat earth sloping from the north developed from descriptions of the

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<sup>117</sup> Anderson, *Cosmos and Community*, 107-44.

<sup>118</sup> Jean Lassus, "La Creation du Monde," 93-94.

tabernacle taken from the Septuagint.<sup>119</sup> In addition to these two, there was a third ovoid model of unclear origins.<sup>120</sup> As discussed above, Byzantine thinkers understood the movement of heavenly bodies to determine time, but they remained divided about the relationships between these travelling heavenly bodies, the movement that makes time possible, and the origins of time.<sup>121</sup>

These debates not only had a public dimension with leading thinkers arguing their positions, but also took on a visual dimension. Diagrams of multiple models could invite comparison and convey the superiority of one, as was the case in the eleventh-century Laurenziana copy of Kosmas's *Christian Topography* (Plut. 9.28).<sup>122</sup> The most common model of the heavens was geocentric and premised on a series nested spheres inherited from Ptolemy, an Alexandrian astronomer, mathematician, and geographer, as visualized on fol. 96 (figure 1.8). A yellow globe symbolizes the earth and is bound by eight homocentric circles.<sup>123</sup> Each one is labelled ascending through the planets (Mercury, Venus, the moon, sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn) that progressively

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<sup>119</sup> Maja Kominko, *The World of Kosmas: Illustrated Byzantine Codices of the Christian Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 42-49.

<sup>120</sup> Anne-Laurence Caudano, "Cosmologies et cosmographies variées dans les manuscrits byzantins tardifs," *Byzantion* 85 (2015): 4-10. The third model will not be discussed within this chapter. It did not receive the same visual treatment as the other two.

<sup>121</sup> Jean Philopon, *La Création du monde*, trans. Marie-Claude Rosset and M. H. Congourdeau (Paris: Migne, 2004), 33; William Adler, "Did the Biblical Patriarchs Practice Astrology? Michael Glykas and Manuel Komnenos I on Seth and Abraham," in *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Maria Mavroudi (Geneva: Pomme d'or, 2006), 245-263; Gianna Katsiampoura, "Nikephoros Gregoras versus Barlaam of Calabria: A Debate over the Prediction of Eclipses in Constantinople in the 14th Century," *Neusis* 13 (2004): 138-48.

<sup>122</sup> For example, cosmological models took center stage in clashes between Kosmas and Philoponus on the shape of the universe in ca. 550. Nikolaides, *Science and Eastern Orthodoxy*, 31-4. In crafting an image of the cosmos, these diagrams synthesized elements visible to the human eye with philosophical and scriptural knowledge that shaped how time and history were conceptualized. Linda Safran, "A Prolegomenon to Byzantine Diagrams," in *The Visualization of Knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Marcia Kupfer, Adam S. Cohen, and J. H. Chajes (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 21-55. See also the papers presented for a 2018 symposium hosted by Dumbarton Oaks, Jeffrey Hamburger, David Roxburgh, and Linda Safran, eds., *The Diagram as Paradigm: Cross-Cultural Approaches* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2022).

<sup>123</sup> Maja Kominko, *The World of Kosmas*, 235-6; on the manuscript see Jeffrey Anderson, *The Christian Topography of Kosmas Indikopleustes: Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 9.28. The Map of the Universe Redrawn in the Sixth Century* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2013).

expand to the outermost band of fixed stars (the zodiac) with Sagittarius and Capricorn shown at top. Included within the last sphere, the months are labelled to correspond with each constellation.<sup>124</sup> The recurring rings of a uniform shape that gradually expand outward convey an image of supreme and harmonious order in line with Platonic ideals expressed by Basil and the Vatican Octateuch's image. With no beginning or end in their trajectories, all aspects of the cosmos shared the same shape from the lowest to the highest level and could continue its patterns until the end of time.

The manuscript containing this diagram directly sought to overturn Ptolemy's cosmological theory through an exegetical reading of the Tabernacle as described in Exodus. This position was most forcibly communicated by Kosmas Indikopleustes in his sixth century *Christian Topography* whose primary goal was to refute that the universe is spherical.<sup>125</sup> According to Kosmas's conception, the shape of the cosmos was given to Moses in Exodus 25, when God spoke to Moses about the Tabernacle: "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount."<sup>126</sup> Kosmas took this description as a microcosmic pattern for the visible world, furnishing it with the sacred implements: the seven branches of the menorah

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<sup>124</sup> The symbols of the zodiac are also labelled outside the band in red, along with corresponding Egyptian months.

<sup>125</sup> Maja Kominko, "Angels and stars: astronomy in the Christian topography," in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Volume III*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 118; for a summary of the text's contents, see Wolska-Conus, *Topographie*, 12-26. For more negative valuations of the work, Colonel Henry Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, vol. 1 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1866), xlv; Bernardus de Montfaucon, "Praefatio in Cosmae," in *Collectio Nova Patrum et Scriptorum Graecorum, Tomus Secundus* (Paris: Rigaud, 1707), vi.

<sup>126</sup> *Christian Topography* 2.15 "Yea, even the blessed Moses having been ordered on Mount Sinai to make the Tabernacle according to the pattern which he had seen, said under divine inspiration, that the outer Tabernacle was a pattern of this, the visible world."

represented the planets and shewbread the twelve months of the year supplanting the cosmic signs of time with sacred symbols.<sup>127</sup>

Directly facing the illustration of the nested spheres in the Laurenziana manuscript, Kosmas's diagram envisions the cosmos in the shape of a chest in line with the description in Exodus (figure 1.9). Fit inside a closed box, the image divides the cosmos into levels that are clarified with neighboring inscriptions. At top, the heavens (στερέωμα) as a barrel-vaulted dome enclose the earth below shown a mountain surrounded by the sea and enclosed on all sides. Its summit is orbited by two heavenly bodies representing the sun. One at right (labelled ήλιος ανατέλλω) and at left (ήλιος αγνών) represent the rising and setting sun, whose different heights emphasize the sun's movement around the earth to create night and day.<sup>128</sup> Above, and within the arched upper level of the cosmos, an iconic roundel of Christ oversees the motions occurring below, with his realm labelled in red on either side of the diagram's exterior as "the kingdom of heaven" (βασιλεία τῶν Ουρανών). The addition of this bust infuses the diagram with a spiritual dimension that is not present within earlier conceptions of the cosmos including the Ptolemaic models. In its structure, it abandons the Platonic distribution of heavenly bodies in favor of bounded areas that combined different forms with their own behavior. However, all of these behaviors remain directly orchestrated by a divine presence.

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<sup>127</sup> Kominko, "The Science of the Flat Earth," in *The Christian Topography of Kosmas Indikopleustes*, 73; *Christian Topography* 9:6. In his exegetical readings of the scripture, Kosmas and his imagining of the beginnings of time as reproduced within the Topkapi Octateuch build on the work of other historians, notably Josephus in conceiving of the cosmos. For Josephus, the tabernacle was also an imitation of the cosmos: "Now here one may wonder at the ill-will which men bear to us, and which they profess to bear on account of our despising that Deity which they pretend to honor; for if any one do but consider the fabric of the tabernacle, and take a view of the garments of the high priest, and of those vessels which we make use of in our sacred ministration, he will find that our legislator was a divine man, and that we are unjustly reproached by others; for if any one do without prejudice, and with judgment, look upon these things, he will find they were every one made in way of imitation and representation of the universe." Flavius Josephus, *Judean Antiquities*, ed. Louis Feldman (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 7:7.

<sup>128</sup> Kosmas, *Christian Topography* IX; Komino, *The World of Kosmas*, 210-13.



Positioning the two models against one another within the same manuscript constructs a clear visual polemic, one that directly expands early debates on time's place within the cosmos. Kosmas's barrel-vaulted model concerns itself only with the pattern of days created by the sun overseen by Christ above, while Ptolemy's spherical model positions the movements of all the heavenly bodies within the year's cycle of months, which is inscribed onto the cosmic model. In addition to separating the earth from the other elements of the cosmos, Kosmas's conception also separates different scales of time accessible via the spherical shape and movements. Rather than allowing the eternal to exist through the temporal movements, he resorts to allegory, positioning the tabernacle's description in an anagogical relationship to an image of the cosmos. In this way, Kosmas threads together the books of Genesis and Exodus. He abandons the nested spheres that progressively expand outward to instead encourage deeper layers of engaging with the scriptural text. This method of layering the scriptural information and Christian history is not limited to Kosmas. As discussed in the introduction, Synkellos's *Universal Chronicle* also sought to connect scriptural information according to precisely the same day across history, including the first created day and the Incarnation.<sup>129</sup> In this way, Kosmas's barrel-vaulted image of the cosmos was directly aligned with trends in the writing of history, now expressed through images.

Evidenced by the corpus of illustrated Genesis cycles, how creation was envisioned remained a matter of debate that continued in imagery from the sixth century to the Octateuch illustrations of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These programs and the changes in their iconographies also index shifting understandings of aristocratic ideals that either align Christian

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<sup>129</sup> For Synkellos's "Forever one and the same day," see *Georgii Syncelli Ecloga Chronographia*, ed. Alden Mosshammer. (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1984), 395; *The Chronography of George Synkellos: A Byzantine Chronicle of Universal History from the Creation*, ed. William Adler and Paul Tuffin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 473; Jesse Torgerson, *The Chronographia of George the Synkellos and Theophanes: the ends of Time in Ninth Century Constantinople* (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 114-148.

and Platonic notions of time that were embedded in the Ptolemaic cosmos, or emphasize scriptural understandings to offer a more immediate experience of unmediated divine power and will. Informed by these two understandings, the second wave of Creation imagery in the Octateuchs emphasizes renewed interest in understanding one's elite place in the cosmos that reveals shifting relations to time within their broader programs.

### **Vat. gr. 747: Ptolemy and the Spheres**

As a whole, the Vatican Octateuch (Vat. gr. 747) contains the Letter of Aristeas, which narrates the text's translation from Hebrew into Greek, and Theodore of Cyrrihus's *Questiones in Octateuchum*, with 367 miniatures embedded in the text to accompany the first eight books of the Septuagint.<sup>130</sup> Following Kondakov's initial study of the manuscript, scholars place it within the third quarter of the eleventh century (ca. 1050-1075) based on the characteristic *Perlschrift* script and the similarity of its miniatures to securely dated manuscripts from the period, including the Theodore Psalter of 1066.<sup>131</sup> In the opening creation sequence of the Vatican Octateuch, the images of the Creation narrative act as an additional catena for the verses, using the Ptolemaic spheres to create a Platonic relationship between time and eternity. I first situate the images within their sequence and consider the exegetical readings that reconcile the text's description of time's origins with visible signs.

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<sup>130</sup> Most recently, Jeffrey Anderson, *The Creation of the Illustrated Octateuch*; See also Devreesse, *Codices Vaticani graeci*, vol.3, 263. Lowden, *Octateuchs*, 11-15. Weitzmann-Bernabò, *Octateuchs*, 331-34; Lidia Perria, "Scrittura degli Ottateuchi fra tradizione e innovazione," in *Bisanzio e l'Occidente: arte, archeologia, storia. Studi in onore di Fernanda de' Maffei*, ed. Claudia Barsanti (Roma: Viella, 1996), 211-15.

<sup>131</sup> Lowden, *The Octateuchs*, 14; the only opposing date has been by Anderson who places it in the middle of the thirteenth century although does not argue reasoning. Jeffrey Anderson, "The Seraglio Octateuch and the Kokkinobaphos Mater," *DOP* 36 (1982): 83, note 7. For comparable manuscripts see survey in Kurt Weitzmann, *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illustration*, ed. Herbert Kessler (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 271-313.

The miniatures for the first book of Genesis appear alongside short verses from the Old Testament books, but the pairing of these texts and their images is always dwarfed by the extensive catena system from Theodoret's *Questions* as in the first miniature of the cycle for primordial creation (Genesis 1:2, fol. 14v; figure 1.10).<sup>132</sup> In this first image of the cosmos, the illustrator closely follows the verses above in large script: "and darkness was over the abyss. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters."<sup>133</sup> Beneath these words, a visual rendering of the semicircular heavens appears with the unformed Earth labelled outside the border at left (*γῆ ἀόρατος*, a reference not to these verses but the previous page on the reverse of this one) and a mass of sharp peaks framed by a strip of light blue water. The darkness is a second band above in brown, with an inscription at right specifying that it covers the abyss. With its inscriptions, the illustration parses out the verses to form connections across the creation narrative's verses. Engulfing the verse and miniature is an extensive catena system that intervenes between the two. The number 3 (Γ) beside the second verse aligns it with its specific text in the catena, describing what spirit moved over the water, which Theodoret identifies as air. Incorporating image, text, and catena, the page becomes an apparatus for study, sometimes clarifying scriptural verses, and building connections across the text.

As the Creation narrative continues, the second day repeats the semicircular dome of heaven above a scene showing the division of light from dark who are personified and inscribed not in the Septuagint's terms, but as diurnal markers of "night" and "day" that anticipate the creation of the luminaries (fol. 15r; figure 1.11). Night grips a staff planted on the ground in

<sup>132</sup> Kurt Weitzmann and Massimo Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, 15-17.

<sup>133</sup> καὶ σκότος ἐπάνω τῆς ἀβύσσου καὶ πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἐπεφέρετο ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος.

shadows while Day floats, triumphantly holding a torch.<sup>134</sup> It is hard not to read this added exegetical element announcing time's division on day two, written in the same hand as the rest of the book's program, as a direct contestation of Philo's denial that time emerged only after earth's formation, on day 4. That Philo's allegorical commentaries were in circulation among high court officials, including Psellos and the younger Niketas of Serres only, at precisely the time that the Octateuchs were created, strengthens this belief.<sup>135</sup>

After this moment of division, the miniatures that follow continue separating matter. The next page labeled Day 3 displays the separation of the waters by the firmament or heaven, shown in a green band, between the celestial waters above and the water below, both now surging with spirals, without a semicircular dome of heaven (fol. 15v; figure 1.12).<sup>136</sup> Finally, on the facing page, the layers of water and heaven are truncated, with the lower water transformed into the ocean as it cascades from the small miniature into the map of the world to its right, communicated through labels (fol. 16r; figure 1.13).<sup>137</sup> Having created the earth complete with ocean and fertile lands, the following page formally introduces the luminaries and time. In the progressive development of Creation outlined in the Octateuchs, this is the first moment that the image provides a definable perspective. Its discernable spheres allow the entire cosmos to take shape, not just the abstract states of matter it contains, like "light" or "water." In this way, it positions the known world within

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<sup>134</sup> Kurt Weitzmann and Massimo Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, 17-18.

<sup>135</sup> On Philo in eleventh century Byzantium, see David Runia, "Philo in Byzantium: an Exploration," *Vigiliae Christianae* 70 (2016): 272-4. Psellos provides extensive allusions to Philo's Allegorical Commentary in his *Encomium of the monk John Kroustoulas reading in the (church of the) Holy Shrine* identified by Antony Littlewood. "No. 37," *Michaelis Pselli Oratoria Minora*, ed. Antony Littlewood (Leipzig: Teubner, 1985), 137-151. The text has an earlier edition by Paul Gautier, "Eloge inédit du lecteur Jean Kroustoulas par Michel Psellos," *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 17-19 (1980-1982): 119-147.

<sup>136</sup> Kurt Weitzmann and Massimo Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, 18-19.

<sup>137</sup> Kurt Weitzmann and Massimo Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs*, 19-20.

a larger and mathematically logical system that conceptualizes time within the earlier creation of divine light.

Through the gradual sequence of creating matter, the template that leads up to the luminaries is one of rational layout and clear organization. Land, water, heaven, light, and darkness consistently appear with clear divisions that seem to be self-generated in the wake of God's initial act of creation. With its constant display of engendered material, presented in an ordered and legible perspective, it is as if the initial scenes of matter and light labelled as "day" contain within them the blueprint for all that follows, both material and temporal. In fact, after the creation of day and night (fol. 14v), the semicircular dome of heaven does not reappear until pages later with the creation of man (fol. 18v), an event outside the 7-day creation sequence. By progressing in this way and independently from a guiding hand of heaven, the images assure its reader of notions of succession that are divinely created and that progress naturally.

This unfolding of creation over the first days constructs a way of viewing the beginnings of the world and time. It is premised on a chain of relations set into motion by natural laws created by God. Following Plato's description of time in the *Timaeus*, where time was a moving image of eternity, the idealized geometry could rationalize the cosmos and provide a model capable of predicting changes through movement and connecting temporal systems with eternity. These elements of creation premised on ordered progression lay the foundation for the larger historical narrative that follows. Just as time is set into motion according to divine logic, so too are the events that transpired in the Septuagint and that lead toward the aristocratic reader's own time. Its series of narratives offer an array of Patriarchs, Prophets, Judges, and Kings, who had been chosen before the creation of time, presented for the current imperial figure to model himself on within this line of succession.

Ultimately the union of Ptolemaic theory and the creation narrative allowed Early Christian and later Byzantine thinkers to conceive of a world where the signs responsible for time's origin could bind together the past and future through an eternally renewing process. Through this threading across time, the repetitive nature of time's structures that were codified in calendric systems could also evoke the eternal without beginning or end in a way that had direct implications for an eleventh century court reader. In conceiving the creation of the luminaries as independent from the hand of God, the Vatican miniature is unique among its related manuscripts. It structures an anagogic relationship that uses visible signs and patterns to lead toward an outcome that was already divinely put in place. More common strategies, as we will see in the next section, position the creation of the luminaries in a divine schema that is directly overseen by God. In this way, the scriptural text and pictorial information contained within this imperial manuscript set a course for history that accounts for cosmological structures as well as the unfolding of history.

### **Topkapi MS gr. 8: Kosmas and the barrel-vaulted universe**

Istanbul's Topkapi Octateuch cycle (Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi gr. 8) contains the same texts as the Vatican Octateuch, but is nearly twice as long, using larger text throughout with little differentiation between the Septuagint verses and catena.<sup>138</sup> Of all the Octateuchs, the Topkapi manuscript is the only one that provides explicit evidence of its patron and date. The manuscript begins with a lengthy paraphrase of the Letter of Aristeas made by "a son born in the purple" of the Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (d. 1118).<sup>139</sup> Uspenskij proposed that this must be

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<sup>138</sup> Lowden contends that they were written using the same pen. Lowden, *The Octateuchs*, 22.

<sup>139</sup> Lowden, "Illustrated Octateuch Manuscripts," 111; The paraphrase is published with a Russian translation in Fedor Uspenskij, *L'Octateuque de la bibliothèque du Sérail à Constantinople*, 1–14. See most recently the discussion in Weitzmann and Bernabò, *Byzantine Octateuchs*, 335–36. For the Letter of Aristeas see Abraham Wasserstein and David Wasserstein, *The Legend of the Septuagint: From Classical Antiquity to Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Isaak, the younger brother of Emperor John II Komnenos (ruled 1118–43), and this identification has been accepted by scholars.<sup>140</sup> The Topkapi’s image program differs from the earlier Vatican manuscript in its Creation imagery to imagine a cosmos governed by a divine and unknowable logic informed by Kosmas’s writings in his *Christian Topography*. By abandoning an understanding built on nested spheres in this slightly later version, the formation of the cosmos conveys a mysterious unfolding of time that reminds its imperial aristocratic reader of the supremacy of divine power that directs time.

Across the entire Creation narrative, the Topkapi Octateuch disavows the Platonic relationship between the earth and heavens, opting instead to consistently include its inverted, semicircular dome above each image of the creation sequence. For the creation of the heavens, which divided the lower and upper waters and required a junction between heaven and the unformed earth, the image duplicated heaven so that two coexist in the illustration. Above the unformed earth shown as a mound at bottom and surrounded by light blue identified as the lower waters, a darker band of blue represents the heavens, with the upper celestial waters in light blue above it (fol. 28r; figure 1.14).<sup>141</sup> But the image introduces a second heaven at top in the semicircular shape. Because of this addition, the entire middle section, that is, what was originally the upper waters and the heavens, is now labeled “the lower waters” (ὕδωρ ὑποκάτω τοῦ στερέωματος) and the upper semicircle is the heavens (στερέωμα ἥτοι οὐρανός). Weitzmann and Bernabò refer to this as a mistake, viewing the image’s role as primary an illustration of its

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<sup>140</sup> Lowden, “Illustrated Octateuchs,” 111.

<sup>141</sup> Weitzmann-Bernabò, *Octateuchs*, 18-19, the description follows theirs as the inscriptions are not included in the black and white plate. A neighboring image is included in the appendix with labels.

associated text.<sup>142</sup> But such a reading overlooks the exegetic potential of Genesis imagery seen in the sixth century versions and the Vatican Octateuch. The inclusion of the double-heaven is, in my view, not a mistake but an integral part of the visual program, which is premised on the separation of heaven from earth in line with Kosmas's model.

Such a separation, underscored by the inverted semicircle, can be seen across the sequence. The division of the waters and related separation of dry land from these waters, too, continue to emphasize the heavens as a distinct realm removed from earth (fol. 29v; figure 1.15). Within these conjoined scenes, the illustration pulls apart heaven and earth, so that the lower waters (labeled (ὕδωρ ὑποκάτω του ουρανού) in the upper scene flow down to earth at bottom to become the ocean.<sup>143</sup> The pair of images that requires a junction between these two realms pulls them apart to a greater degree than in the Vatican scenes to create the illusion of increased distance. In other words, even in events in the creation that call for heaven and earth to coexist, the Topkapi's visual program abides by another logic closer to the barrel-vaulted cosmological model.

In the omnipresence of heaven across all the Creation scenes, the Topkapi program emphasizes a divine presence overseeing all events in the Creation. Every episode of creation including the creation of time is shown along with and through a representation of heaven that exists separate from earth. By ascribing this astronomical phenomenon not to physics or philosophy but to a theologically-centered world, time remains directed by a Christian and spiritual logic in line with Kosmas's theories of the cosmos. To return to the Topkapi's representation of the luminaries a final time, in its covering of the earth below, heaven's semicircular vault would

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<sup>142</sup> "The scribe apparently mistook the original [heaven] for another zone of darker colored water." Weitzmann-Bernabò, *Octateuchs*, 18.

<sup>143</sup> Weitzmann-Bernabò, *Octateuchs*, 19-20.



have had an undeniable architectural connotation.<sup>144</sup> The constant appearance of this dome would call to mind the patron Isaak's own experiences not only of the world and its time, but within the church. Illustrating the cosmos as a system eternally overseen by divine power in a sacred book thus justifies the act of reading, adds historical meaning to the liturgical experience, and ensures that its contents contain elite knowledge beyond what is written.

In this courtly context, the alternative shape of the cosmos, governed not by an eternal logic but by an incomprehensible divine plan, retains echoes of the prior period of transition during the eleventh century, which concluded with the reinstatement of political stability brought by the Komnenian dynasty. The empire entered the eleventh century as a powerhouse, but the ensuing decades witnessed an unexpected disintegration of this power due to a range of political circumstances: domestic class conflict, foreign invasions.<sup>145</sup> By the time the Topkapi manuscript was made in the early twelfth century, the Komnenian dynasty was newly established, and memories of uncertain imperial succession were fresh. The choice to open a book of sacred history for an imperial figure with a perpetual reminder of the hand of God is apropos, and it cuts two ways. It reminds the viewer that their present reality is divinely willed and brought about by God, but, by being beyond the limits of knowledge, it is not possible to know if or when this would

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<sup>144</sup> Slightly later, in Symeon of Thessalonike's description of sacred space, the church became a cosmological expression with the firmament in particular referencing the sanctuary. In this conception, the sanctuary-as-firmament brings to light the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible. Symeon's words are not unique and echo the sentiments of many theologians in the east and west but is particularly useful in his specific diagramming of church architecture. See Nicholas Constanas, "Symeon of Thessalonike and the Theology of the Screen," in *Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens*, ed. Sharon Gerstel (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2006), 166-8; Robert Ousterhout, "The Holy Space: Architecture and Liturgy," in *Heaven on Earth*, ed. Linda Safran (University Park, Pa., 1998), 81-120; Henry Maguire, "The Language of Symbols," in *Earth and Ocean: The Terrestrial World in Early Byzantine Art* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987), 5-15; and Tia Kolbaba, "Liturgy, Symbols, and Byzantine Religion," in *The Byzantine Lists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 102-23.

<sup>145</sup> Lauxtermann, "Introduction," *Byzantium in the Eleventh Century Being in Between, Papers from the 45th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Exeter College, Oxford, 24-6 March 2012*, ed. Marc D. Lauxtermann and Mark Whittow (Routledge: London, 2017), x.

change. In this way, it introduces regnal time into its experience, aligning the dynasty with the Judges and Kings described in the Octateuchs whose successes are offered as models to emulate for the benefit of viewer's own present circumstance.

As a book for imperial study, the creation cycle invites consideration on how time is created through signs, but it also requires its handler to synthesize text and image. The sacred books, passages, and catena brought together in the Octateuchs are designed not only to provide an account of the past but to explain its significance. Not limited to the past, the catena's extrapolations have value for the future as well. Illustrations aid in synthesizing this information and their relationship to the origins of time offer their reader an important commentary on the temporal condition of history in a book explicitly concerned with the biblical past. While not categorized as a form of history writing, the swath of time covered, densely explained and illustrated, places it in the realm of history and offers meaning to its Byzantine readers. In the few extant examples from this period, text and image work together and illustrate the narrative events.<sup>146</sup> But the divergent illustrations of the cosmos do not align with their text so much as they invite further speculation especially oriented on "signs" for time. In other words, they imply far more than they show and invite their reader to speculate on the spiritual reasons behind historical events.

### **Cosmic Commemoration: the Zodiac and the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator**

Compared to their contemporaries in Europe and the Islamic world where cosmological models presented a unified image of the universe, the intellectual resurgence of astrological thinking and expressions of calendars in Byzantium did not form a distinct iconography and

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<sup>146</sup> Elena Boeck, *Imagining the Byzantine Past: The Perception of History in the Illustrated Manuscripts of Skylitzes and Manasses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 9-10.

continued to be debated.<sup>147</sup> As we have seen, these images became an important testing ground to explore the affinities between classical explanations of the Cosmos in thinkers such as Ptolemy who viewed the universe as a sphere, and Christian figures like Kosmas who aligned with literal biblical understandings of world's origins through the vaulted model with a flat earth. More than taking on different shapes, both the sphere and the vault had temporal implications for the beginnings of time and unfolding of history. One image of time seen in the Vatican Octateuch allows history to progress according to a rational plan that was laid out even before the act of creation, while the other in the Topkapi manuscript favors divine intervention, with constant reminders of God's hand in shaping the outcome.

With the onset of the Komnenian dynasty, there was a resurgence of cosmological thought that permeated history writing, poetry, and art. Not only did the illustrations of the Octateuch envision conflicting miniatures for the cosmos but historians associated with the court also wrote histories that linked the creation of the cosmos with their own time. The monastic figure Michael Glykas presented his *History* in 1118 in four parts: (1) from the Creation to Adam, (2) Cain and Abel to Julius Caesar, (3) Caesar to Constantine, and (4) Constantine to the death of Alexios I Komnenos in 1118.<sup>148</sup> Book 1 occupies nearly half of the entire work and presents an extensive

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<sup>147</sup> Benjamin Anderson, *Cosmos and Community*, 114; Rembrandt Duits, "Celestial Transmissions: An iconographic classification of Constellation Cycles in Manuscripts (8<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries)," *Scriptorium* 59 (2005): 147-202; Mechtild Hanner, *Ein antiker Sternbilderzyklus und seine Tradierung in handschriften vom frühen Mittelalter bis zum Humanismus: Untersuchungen zu den Illustrationen der "aratea" des Germanicus* (Hildesheim: George Ols Verlag, 1997); Moya Carey, "Al-Sufi and Son: Ibn al-Sufi's poem on the Stars and its Prose Parent," *Muqarnas* 26 (2009): 181-204; Moya Carey, "Mapping the mnemonic: A Late Thirteenth Century Copy of al-Sufi's *Book of the Constellations*," in *Arab painting: Text and Image in Arabic Manuscripts*, ed. Anna Contadini, (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 65-71; Anna Caiozzo, *Images du ciel d'Orient au Moyen Age: Une histoire du zodiaque et de ses représentations dans les manuscrits du Proche-Orient Musulman* (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2003).

<sup>148</sup> The text has not been edited following the 1836 edition, Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Michaelis Glycae Annales* (Bonn: Weber, 1836), 1-126; See Leonora Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing* (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), 205-9; Soutana Mauromatē-Katsougiannopoulou, "ἘΞαμερος του Michael Glyka: Mia eklaikeutikē epistemonikē pragmateia tou 12ou aiona," *Vyzantina: Epistē monikon organon Kentrou Vyzantinōn Ereunōn Philosophikēs Scholēs Aristoteliou Panepistemiou* 17 (1994): 7-70.

description of Creation, lifting entire sections of his text from Basil's homilies on the *Hexameron*, attesting to the continued relevance of this Platonic mode of thinking in the twelfth century. This interest in the cosmos continues into the second book with his description of the patriarch's knowledge of astrology and in Book 4, to describe unusual phenomena like eclipses discussed to firmly set the history of Constantinople within a cosmological history of divine economy.<sup>149</sup>

In addition to Glykas's *History*, verses composed by leading court poets provided an aesthetic and didactic experience of the universe that also conveyed concern about time and its effects. In one example written by Constantine Manasses and gifted to the *sebastokratorissa* Irene, *On the Nature and Power of the Planets* provides a didactic introduction to the laws of astronomy and astrology providing the names and orders of the planets on their spheres, then moving on to their nature and powers, listing the twelve signs of the zodiac with descriptions, and finally to the houses of the planets, the powers of the stars, and their configurations.<sup>150</sup> But in addition to loading the verses with as much knowledge as possible especially concerning sickness and decay, Manasses's poem reaffirms the orthodoxy of his work and its importance for daily life.<sup>151</sup> At the poem's conclusion, Manasses asserts the stars themselves are not divine, but their nature and power were created by God as signs of seasons and times (v. 565-584), underlining the prevalence of this thought beyond theological circles and contexts.

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<sup>149</sup> In addition to this work, Glykas is famous for his debate with Manuel I Komnenos on the proper uses of astrology, which is a continuation of the issues discussed in Book 2.

<sup>150</sup> Anne-Laurence Caudano, "An Astrological Handbook from the Reign of Manuel I Komnenos," *Almagest* 3, no. 2 (2012): 60-2; "On the Nature and Power of Planets" *Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum*, vol. 7 (Bruxelles: Lamertin, 1898-1936), 213-224. The poem was originally attributed to Theodore Prodromos based on a manuscript attribution: Emmanuel Miller, *Poemes astronomiques de Théodore et de Jean Camatère d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*, 7. On the question of attribution, see Magdalino, *L'Orthodoxie des astrologues*, 112 and Odysseus Lampsidis, "Zur Sebastokratorissa Eirene," *JÖB* 34 (1984): 91-93.

<sup>151</sup> For example, in describing the planets, the most attention by far is given to Saturn, the "bringer of sickness" (v. 129), whose description is developed considerably more than that of the other six planets. Saturn (v. 26-138), Jupiter (139-216); Mars (217-257); Sun (258-287); Venus (v. 288-311); Mercury (312-345); and the Moon (v. 346-357). Miller, *Poemes Astronomiques*.

Beyond fears of decay, time also carried with it the possibility of oblivion. However, coming out of the eleventh century and into the Komnenian dynasty, the memory of how fast political tides could change had not yet faded. Searching for stability, the zodiac offered a powerful symbol. The planets and luminaries moved, creating time that could be favorable or ominous depending on their position. But the frame for this cosmic theatre was understood to be the fixed stars of the zodiac, which were steadfast and unmoving in binding the universe together.

Precisely this symbol is represented on the pavement of the Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople, which was begun in 1118 by Ioannes II Komnenos and later completed by his son and successor Manuel I.<sup>152</sup> The central space of the naos was covered in multicolored marbles with porphyry and verde antique inhabited by birds, mythical beasts, and wild animals. Although now obscured following the monastery's conversion, the opus sectile pavement had two large disks embellishing the eastern and western sides of the South Church. To the west, scenes from the life of Samson occupy the space before the entrance to the bema, with four scenes set into roundels decorating the spandrels that frame the large disk (figure 1.16).<sup>153</sup> On axis with this cycle on the eastern side is another wheel with scenes from the zodiac and personifications of the four seasons, alternating against red and black backgrounds and personifications of the four seasons all facing

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<sup>152</sup> Zodiac pavements, while more common in the late antique period are not well understood. For some, such as Rachel Hachlili, zodiac pavements in sacred spaces could evoke a literal calendar. Others have instead seen it more symbolically. Zev Weiss argue its appearance on pavements refer to the centrality of God in the act of creation. Most recently, Jodi Magness has taken a mystical approach based on the central sun figure, understood to be a figure who could be summoned at will to impart scriptural knowledge. Zev Weiss, *The Sephoris Synagogue: Deciphering an Ancient Message through its Archaeological and Sociohistorical Contexts* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2005). Jodi Magness, "Heaven on Earth: Helios and the zodiac cycle in ancient Palestinian Synagogues," *DOP* 59 (2005): 7-8; Rachel Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 309 and Hachlili, *Ancient Mosaic Pavements: Themes, Issues, and Trends* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 35-56.

<sup>153</sup> Ousterhout identifies the three surviving scenes as Samson and the lion, Samson smiting the Philistines, and Samson removing the gates at Gaza. He theorizes the fourth was Samson destroying the house of the Philistines, Robert Ousterhout, "Architecture, Art, and Komnenian Ideology," in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography, and Everyday Life*, ed. Nevra Necipoglu (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 146.

toward the east and carrying attributes and framed by knotted columns, although heavily damaged to the point of obscuring legibility (figure 1.17).

As outlined within the *typikon*, the monastery's founding document, the building was designed as the dynastic mausoleum for the Komnenoi family.<sup>154</sup> In line with its commemorative function, a high degree of historicism is built into the foundation. Scholars have demonstrated the antiquarian attitude of the monastery, with its *typikon* adopting archaic language and establishing a comparison with the nearby Holy Apostles, which served as the mausoleum for Constantine. But the surviving imagery of the floor mosaic especially participates within this project, as Robert Ousterhout and Benjamin Anderson have pointed out. In line with the cycle of Samson who was a common antetype for Byzantine rulers and occasionally appeared in late antique floor mosaics, the coexistence of the zodiac with land and sea creatures inhabiting the rest of the pavement harkens back to Early Christian pavements as an image of the cosmos.<sup>155</sup> But read in light of the debates about the shape of the cosmos and its temporal structures, the reappearance of the zodiac can be understood as an emphatic symbol that anchored time for its viewers in the present and not as the result of twelfth-century interest in astrology.<sup>156</sup>

In order to deepen our understanding of the zodiac pavement, which would be one of the first images to be encountered when entering the church, it is instructive to return briefly to the manuscript image of the monks with the astrolabe, with which this chapter opened. While both

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<sup>154</sup> Ousterhout, *Master Builders of Byzantium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 120-1; Ousterhout, "Architecture, Art, and Komnenian Ideology," 134; Eleanor Congdon, "Imperial Commemoration and Ritual in the *Typikon* of the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator," *REB* 54, no. 1 (1996): 161-99.

<sup>155</sup> The theme of Samson was a popular one among the Komnenoi, like astrological topics. The same scenes appear on a pavement of the hero in the epic poem *Digenes Akritas* and it was also extensively illustrated in the *Octateuchs*. *Digenes Akritas* VII.63-70; Lowden, *The Octateuchs*, 57-60.

<sup>156</sup> Paul Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1142-1180* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1993), 377-82.

pavement and manuscript represent the heavenly bodies for a monastic audience, there are profound differences. In the miniature, the instrument, tethered to the sun, was, above all, interested in shifts in the sky to understand changes and calibrate them alongside the reign of rulers. But the zodiac pavement tracks a different kind of time for the monks of Pantokrator. Neither the pavement nor the zodiac itself were understood to move, providing a stable and eternal anchor for the commemorative ritual services within the space. But like the *Handy Tables*, which provided the equations necessary to extend the time range indefinitely into the future in spite of changing empires, the commemorative nature of the building enveloped the zodiac and integrated it into its ephemeral rituals tied to different scales and performances of time including daily rituals calibrated to specific hours and annual services in honor of the Komnenian dynasty. In this way, the pavement's reference to the cosmos imagined the Komnenoi as ensuring stability in the monastery even beyond their earthly death. In other words, they imagined themselves as ensuring order on earth like God oversaw these actions in heaven, strengthening the hierarchic relation between the two realms. These commemorative services, to be discussed in the second half of this dissertation, were attached to different time scales and performances of time that included daily services and annual commemorations.

While there may be considerably less cosmological imagery surviving from Byzantium than its neighbors, this chapter has shown that its appearance in public contexts and elite circles suggest that it was meaningful. It became not only a form of diagrammatic thinking that positioned individuals in relation monumental structures, but also a set of relations. The zodiac's appearance in the court especially calls for a revaluation beyond the result of an eccentric interest in astrology. Instead, the pavement at Pantokrator made visible a set of connections that ensured its patron was remembered in a material way.

## Chapter 2

### Working Time: Labors of the Months in Byzantine Manuscripts

#### Hysmine & Hysminias: Double Time

In the fourth book of the twelfth-century romance *Hysmine and Hysminias* written by the mysterious court figure Makrembolites,<sup>157</sup> the eponymous hero Hysminias and his companion Kratisthenes wander into a lush garden where they contemplate the nature of love.<sup>158</sup> Following an encounter on the previous evening with painted images of the four cardinal virtues (Wisdom, Strength, Temperance, and Justice) personified as young women, the men turn to consider another series of paintings initially overlooked.<sup>159</sup> Next to an image of Eros enthroned, they gaze upon a set of twelve men described as being of foreign races, foreign tongues, and foreign birth, who are all engaged in different tasks, giving the impression of a dynamic show of artifice within the natural garden.<sup>160</sup> Hysminias describes the physical attributes of these men through a lengthy ekphrastic passage, lingering on their adorned bodies in motion within this pictorial space. One man is described:

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<sup>157</sup> Eumathios/Eustathios Makrembolites's identity has been the topic of several studies. H. Hunger, "Die Makremboliten auf byzantinischen Bleisiegeln und in sonstigen Belegen," in *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, ed. Nicholas Oikonomides (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1998), 5-7; Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "La tradition manuscrite d'Eustathe Makrembolitès," *Revue d'histoire des Textes* 10 (1980): 107, note 2.

<sup>158</sup> For the romance, see Elizabeth Jeffreys, "The Novels of Mid-Twelfth Century Constantinople: The Literary and Social Context," in *Aetos: Studies in Honour of Cyril Mango*, ed. Ihor Ševčenko & Irmhard Hutter (Stuttgart, 1998), 191-199; Ingela Nilsson, *Erotic Pathos, Rhetorical Pleasure: Narrative Technique and Mimesis in Eumathios Makrembolites' 'Hysmine and Hysminias'* (Uppsala: Studia Byzantina Uppsaliensia, 2001); and most recently, Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias* in *Four Byzantine Novels: Theodore Prodromos, Rhodanthe and Dosikles; Eumathios Makrembolites, Hysmine and Hysminias; Constantine Manasses, Aristandros and Kallithea; Niketas Eugenianos, Drosilla and Charikles*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012) with notes and full bibliography. More generally, see Roderick Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (London, Routledge, 1996).

<sup>159</sup> Paroma Chatterjee, "Viewing and Description in *Hysmine and Hysminias*: The Fresco of the Virtues," *DOP* 67 (2013): 209-225; Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the Twelfth Century," *BF* 8 (1982), 144. For the personifications more generally see Colum Hourihane, ed., *Virtue and Vice: The Personifications in the Index of Christian Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

<sup>160</sup> Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias* 4.4.3.



with a profusion of flowers, and busy about the flowers like a bee. He was not depicted as a gardener but rather like someone wealthy and prosperous, very cheerful and jovial. The charm of his face had a rival in the beauty of the meadow. His hair flowed over his shoulders, braided elaborately and very carefully. His head was garlanded with flowers, and roses were entwined in his braids. His tunic reached to his feet and looked to be of gold; it was bestrewn with flowers billowing out. His hands were full of roses and all other plants that delight the nostrils. His feet were clad in sandals for not even that part of his body was unadorned. And the meadow was reflected in the sandals on his feet as though in a mirror—such charm had the painter bestowed on this figure even down to his feet and sandals. (4.7.1-3)

And another:

Was standing outside the doors of the bathhouse with only a towel wrapped around his loins, so that every other part of his body was uncovered; he appeared to be dripping with sweat and quite drenched. On seeing him you might say that the man is panting and had, as it were, collapsed in heat, so well had the craftsman delineated his form in paint. In his right hand he held a conical vessel which he was conveying to his mouth and from which he was quaffing; in his left hand he held the towel around his navel, so that it should not fall and reveal his entire body. (4.10.1-3)

It slowly becomes evident that the ephemeral and environmental effects of blooming flowers and insatiable heat affecting the men are keyed to the seasonal patterns of the year. Even without an explicit identification, the men are to be understood as personifications of the twelve months, a genre of imagery well known from antiquity that depicts male figures engaged in seasonally appropriate tasks associated with agricultural work or leisure.<sup>161</sup> This association is confirmed several lines later when Makrembolites's extensive treatment of the calendrical year comes into sharp focus. Only after Hysminias has described the twelfth and final man does his companion alert him to brief inscriptions above all the figures written in iambic verse, beginning with, "When you see these men, you see all of time" (τούς ἀνδρας ἀθρων τὸν χρόνον βλέπεις ὅλον) (4.17.2).<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> For an overview of the labors, see Doro Levi, "The Allegories of the Months in Classical Art," *AB* 23, no. 4 (1941): 251-91.

<sup>162</sup> Elizabeth Jeffreys, "The Labours of the Twelve Months in Twelfth Century Byzantium," in *Personifications in the Greek World: From Antiquity to Byzantium*, ed. Judith Herrin and Emma Stafford, (London: Routledge, 2016), 317.

How precisely to translate *χρόνον* has been a matter of debate among the various translations of the text. Some, as in Charles Barber's study on the erotics of gardens in Byzantium, have read it strictly within the romance's classical framework as time in the broadest of sense.<sup>163</sup> Others instead have adopted the later and more common usage of the word to signify "year" as in Elizabeth Jeffreys's most recent translation and edition of the text.<sup>164</sup> While the difference here is slight and the word was likely intended to playfully operate between the two meanings, the philological confusion points to larger problems that vex the topic of time in Byzantium: can the romance's description of time tell us anything about twelfth-century attitudes or is it merely a repetition of classical prototypes? *Χρόνον*'s semantic field provides a compelling entry into the presence of monthly labors within Byzantine art and writing. In the passages that follow, the creative interplay between the protagonists and images points to a uniquely Byzantine sensibility that positions a new engagement with time's unfolding, and sets the stage for this chapter's examination of the labors of the months in Byzantine manuscript decoration between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries.

In the next scene of the garden sequence, the companions' contemplation continues. The extended presentations of these monthly men are repeated through their inscriptions, but now dramatically compressed to a single line for each. The man with his aromatic florals is now described with the short line: "The meadow that was painted full of roses and blooming with flowers, and the man in its midst strewn with flowers, depicts the season of spring" (4.18.4). And the one under the sweltering sun is abbreviated to: "the man who had bathed, and was naked, drinking, and sweating shows you the hot season when the body becomes parched" (4.18.7). After

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<sup>163</sup> Charles Barber, "Reading the Garden in Byzantium: Nature and Sexuality," *BMGS* 16 (1992): 7.

<sup>164</sup> Elizabeth Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 204.

the prolonged exposition in which Makrembolites indulges his audience in time's sensual pleasures and seasonal changes through extended descriptions of heat or the scents of blossoming flowers, the second encounter truncates the monthly units so that a complete experience of the year is distilled to fit within the margins of a single page.

Much of this novel revolves around doubling or mirroring, using pairs to symbolically link elements within a vaguely classicized plot. This can be variously seen in the hero and heroine, Hysminias and Hysmine who share the same name, the story, which is framed by a cycle of festivals so that it begins and ends with the same event, or the repeating evenings in the garden taking place at the novel's center where the art surrounding the central figures communicates the novel's major overarching themes of purity, love, and progress.<sup>165</sup> But what is so compelling about Hysminias's delayed moment of realization in the novel is the author's ability to make the calendar, something whose organizational framework should be straightforward, grounding, and familiar, into a strange and disorienting experience through its refracted presentations. Between Hysminias's personal *ekphrasis* and its pithy recapitulation through iambic inscriptions, the year is both attenuated into a sensitive reading of the most miniscule and fleeting details and compressed into brief lines that act as short percussive cuts within a text that otherwise overflows with excess. But in addition to Makrembolites's masterful treatment of these scenes and their two descriptions, we are to understand there is a third representation at play: the painted image. As a visual expression of the calendar, these too could communicate their own temporality separate from their

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<sup>165</sup> Ingela Nilsson, "Spatial Time and Temporal Space: Aspects of Narrativity in Makrembolites," in *Der Roman im Byzanz der Komnenenzeit: Referate des Internationalen Symposiums an der Freien Universität Berlin, 3. bis 6. April 1998*, ed. Panagiotis Agapitos and Diether Reinsch (Frankfurt: Beerenverlag, 2000), 94-108; Panagiotis Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia: a poetics of the twelfth-century medieval Greek novel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005) especially chapter 3, "Allegorical Modulations," 113-224.

descriptions. Whereas the *ekphrases* unfold over varying lengths of duration, the wall's images present all of time at once as the central inscription makes clear.

As a set of figures, the men represent organization and temporal precision through their activities that make up the year. However, at no point is this calendar meant to track time itself, and the doubling actively undermines the logic of their ordered and precise activities. Instead, the experience of time at this moment is primarily an aesthetic one, whether through the synoptic pictorial representations or the tightly controlled iambic verses describing the seasonal work that the men carry out in attenuated or compressed descriptions. As if the months comprising the year were eternally frozen within discussions that touch on transient seasonal experiences of blossoming flowers and insatiable heat, the monthly passages go beyond scientific or agricultural uses of reckoning time with the calendar to instead focus on how the men were fully integrated into the environment and divide the year.

At its core, Makrembolites's story is a courtly romance and not primarily a philosophical treatise on time. But cast in the shadow of Hyminias's all-consuming desire and mental obsession with his beloved, temporal manipulation is central to the story's success.<sup>166</sup> His encounter with the representations of the months sets the back end of the story into motion, where the lovers will be separated, kidnapped by pirates, and, finally, make their way back to one another exactly a year later during the same festival. In fact, the progression of this narrative with its cyclical pattern of return and replication creates a temporally dizzying effect where the forward momentum of the plot brings with it vivid recollections of the past: in the wake of these trials and tribulations, when

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<sup>166</sup> Yet in contrast to the uncontainable excess of the text, this moment is also one of containment. Surrounded by the walls of the garden the protagonists are enclosed by time and cannot take it all in fully. For a western perspective on temporal manipulation on calendrical texts, see Jessica Brantley, "Forms of the Hours in Late Medieval England," in *The Medieval Literary: Beyond Form*, ed. Catherine Sanok and Robert Meyer-Lee (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2018), 61-83.

the couple does encounter one another in the same place, on the same date, at the same festival, separated only by one year, the first response is not joy, but hesitation and disbelief.

These early moments in the romance when encounters with the painted images interrupt the narrative flow frequently attract art historians and literary scholars who have forged tangible connections between the literary *ekphrases* within the Komnenian novels and objects and the material culture of the imperial courts.<sup>167</sup> Paul Magdalino revealed how the iconography of the *Eros Basileus* in *Hysmine and Hysminias* closely aligns with representations of Manuel I Komnenos, particularly the recuperation of classical Greek texts and transformation of classical ideals in Byzantine artistic expressions.<sup>168</sup> Magdalino and Robert Nelson have also argued that the four virtues described in the text were related to the palace decoration and renovations undertaken by Manuel I which included a dome with the same four virtues encircling the emperor.<sup>169</sup> Yet despite being the longest and most elaborate of the *ekphrases* in the romance, the months have received less attention. In contrast to the other two sets of images, which have been directly linked to the identifiable elements of the Komnenian court, the months are generally understood to serve as evidence for the novel's classicizing setting, citing antique traditions for visualizing time with

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<sup>167</sup> For an extended treatment of the relationship between literature and the imperial experience, see Roderick Beaton, "The World of Fiction and the World 'Out There': the Case of the Byzantine Novel," in *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider*, ed. Dion Smythe (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 179-188.

<sup>168</sup> Paul Magdalino, "Eros the King and the King of Amours: Some Observations on Hysmine and Hysminias," *DOP* 46 (1992): 197-204, esp. 199; Robert Ousterhout, "Art, Architecture, and Komnenian Ideology at the Pantokrator Monastery" in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography, and Everyday Life*, ed. Nevra Necipoglu (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 146-147. See also Carolina Cupane, "Eros Basileus: La figura di Eros nel romanzo bizantino d'amore," *Atti dell'Accademia di Scienze, Lettere e Arti di Palermo*, ser. 4, vol. 33, pt. 2 (1974): 243-97.

<sup>169</sup> This connection is based on anonymous verses contained in the thirteenth-century codex Marciana gr. Z 524, a collection of various poetic texts and dedicatory epigrams on works of art. Magdalino and Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art," 142-143, n. 43. Chatterjee, "Viewing and Description," 210, although Chatterjee is less interested in connecting the imagery to specific monument contemporaneous with Manuel than with dissecting ekphrastic language; Fotini Spingou, *Works and artworks in Byzantium Twelfth Century Poetry on Art from MS Marcianus gr. 524* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

personifications and verses,<sup>170</sup> or as a Christianized allegory for eternal love.<sup>171</sup> Significantly, scholars of both camps frequently assert that the monthly subject is unusual and obscure.

Beyond presenting the longest encounter with imagery within the garden, this moment is the only one of undeniable interactivity between the characters and the romance's imagery. At first the theme of time is uncertain, and the text prolongs revealing its meaning as the reader witnesses the protagonists actively think through the painted images. This slow process of looking coincides with the varied meanings ascribed to idyllic settings in Byzantine art, which could evoke a celestial paradise outside of time as in the apse of the sixth century church of Sant'Apollinaire in Classe at Ravenna, with its manicured lawn brimming with flowers and lush trees (figure 2.1),<sup>172</sup> or the triumph of man over nature and the time of earth, evident in literature's emphasis not on the vegetation but on man-made objects including walls, sculptures, and fountains.<sup>173</sup> In short, nature and the garden were primarily idealized sites of enchantment for courtly eyes, not of reality or of work. And yet, of all the images discussed in Makrembolites's garden, it is the monthly men that stage the most direct relationship between man, art, and nature: in the early image from the sequence cited above, the blossoming flowers seem to literally explode from the youth's body. There was a clear temporal aspect to these themes. As an escape and seemingly always in bloom and immune from decay, to enter the garden was to step out of time or to master it.

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<sup>170</sup> Jeffreys, "The Labours of the Twelve Months," 309-310.

<sup>171</sup> Kurt Plepeltis, *Eustathios Makrembolites, Hysmine und Hysminias* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1989). For perceived Christian themes more generally in the novel see Joan Burton "Reviving the Pagan Greek Novel in a Christian World," *GRBS* 39, no. 2 (1998): 179-216, esp. 208-213.

<sup>172</sup> Henry Maguire, "Paradise Withdrawn," in *Byzantine Garden Culture*, ed. Antony Littlewood, Henry Maguire, and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 23-35.

<sup>173</sup> Barber, "Reading in the Garden," 6-7. This is certainly true in the descriptions taken from *Hysmine and Hysminias* presented above.

Within this chapter, I push against the generalized classicism and eccentricity perceived within the ekphrasis on the months to argue that we have not yet grasped the full relevance of the labors within the Byzantine imagination as they appear in manuscript illustrations from the twelfth to fourteenth century. After a brief review of the literature, I analyze three distinct appearances of the labors in Byzantine art. I begin by examining representations of Enoch within the Octateuch tradition, where busts of the months were added to images of the patriarch to create a more complex image showing the origin of time's division. I then consider a second instance where the use of monthly imagery in the canon tables of an elite corpus of Gospel books stages a more interactive approach to working the text that intersects with reading technologies and the arts of memory. In the final section I analyze the liturgical typikon of the imperial monastery of St. Eugenios in Trebizond that brings together agricultural cycles and the ritual year through large illustrations of the months that aid the monks in navigating multiple levels of time. By foregrounding the interactivity of the illustrations and tables, I ultimately argue that the months and their metaphoric or literal relationship with the land engage in dividing time and generating new understandings of the texts.

### **Literature Review: Cultivating Time**

The multiple ekphrases on the calendar within Makrembolites' text frequently appear in discussions of the revival of classical poetry exploring time and the seasons in court culture from the eleventh to twelfth centuries.<sup>174</sup> Initial interest in this corpus of calendrical verses began with the work of literary scholars, especially Jean Darrouzès, who provided a survey and cursory chronology of the genre and identified Christopher Mytilene as the originator of the Byzantine

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<sup>174</sup> Makrembolites, *Hysminias and Hysmine*, 201, n. 102.

idiom around the first half of the eleventh century.<sup>175</sup> From his survey, two poetic discourses on time were established: on the one hand, an attempt to represent the entire liturgical calendar where the cycle of feasts are identified by name and date, or, in more elaborate versions, the circumstances of martyrdom are given.<sup>176</sup> On the other hand, natural cycles of seasons, heavenly bodies, and the passage of time through the months were translated into rhythmic verses. As liturgical calendars will be discussed in a later chapter, my interests in the cases that follow in this chapter will focus on the natural and environmental cycles.

After Darrouzès, Elizabeth Jeffreys has more recently produced a study on the months in Byzantine literary exercises. Her approach to the material encouraged a classicized understanding of their reappearance. She connected them to antique models and suggested that the mechanics behind their eleventh- and twelfth-century revival can be traced to generic archaism, inspired by a small number of late antique calendar verses preserved within the Palatine Anthology, a collection of Greek poems and epigrams compiled ca. 980.<sup>177</sup> In addition to Makrembolites's *Hysmine and Hysminias*, leading poets such as Theodore Prodromos wrote a set of free-standing verses on the twelve months of the year that also describes the attributes of each and commented on the

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<sup>175</sup> Darrouzès devoted a comprehensive survey of surviving material through the calendars of seven authors: Christopher of Mytilene, Sergios the Monk, Gregory the Monk, John Maurpopus, Theodore, Michael the Monk, and Arsenios the Monk. Jean Darrouzès, "Les calendriers byzantins en vers," *REB* 16, no. 1 (1958): 83-84.

<sup>176</sup> For example, Mitylene might give multiple lines in honor of a saint, conveying their name, date, and circumstances of death, whereas another instantiation, like the verses of Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, may give only the name arranged in the calendric order. The length does not necessarily signify prestige, as discussed in chapter 3. See Enrica Follieri, *I calendar in metro innografico di Cristoforo Mitileneo*. Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1980; Rudolf Stefec, "Die Synaxarverse des Nikephoros Xanthopulos," *JÖB* 62 (2012): 145-61; Lia Raffaella Cresci, "Διὰ βραχέων ἐπέων (K 83.2): Stratégies de composition dans les calendriers métriques de Christophore Mitylenaios," in *Poetry and its Contexts in Eleventh Century Byzantium*, ed. Floris Bernard and Kristoffel Demoen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 117-131.

<sup>177</sup> Elizabeth Jeffreys, "The Labours of the Twelve Months," 312-13. On Theodore's connection to the Anthology: Averil Cameron, *The Later Roman Empire AD 284-430* (London: Fontana, 1993), 341 note 31.



appropriate dietary measures for the period.<sup>178</sup> Distinct from the *ekphrases* in the romance, each month in Prodromos's treatment makes a short statement in the first person characterizing his appearance followed by advice on what one should or should not consume.<sup>179</sup> For example, Prodromos repeats the trope of bouquets of flowers for the month of May. But in his presentation, the spiritual benefits of flowers contrast with the disastrous effects of indigestion:

I bring forth the rose that relieves low spirits, and the lovely lily whose bloom rings good cheer, and I nurture sturdy green grass. But you should not eat meat from the belly or the legs, for this gives rise to fiery bile which engenders ague and gout.<sup>180</sup>

Beyond demonstrating the appeal of the calendrical genre among literary figures associated with the Komnenian court, Prodromos's first-person verses subvert the dominant understanding of the natural environment as a site of man's triumph through its subjugation and transformation.<sup>181</sup> Instead, similar to the relational structure seen within *Hysmine and Hysminias*, the performance of Prodromos's verses demands that we listen and take knowledge of earth's bounty from the speakers, who are an embodiment of time.

Beyond the literary application, the monthly labors' enduring popularity in antiquity can be more substantially demonstrated through a series of floor mosaics dating from the fourth to

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<sup>178</sup> The best survey of Theodore's literary output remains Wolfram Hörander, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1974), 55.

<sup>179</sup> These elements are lifted from a pamphlet of unknown date attributed to the sophist Hierophilus, likely referring to Herophilus, a major figure within classical medicine. See Roberto Romano, "Il calendario dietetico di Ierofilo," *Atti della Accademia Pontaniana* 47 (1998): 197-222.

<sup>180</sup> Quoted in Jeffreys, "The Labours," 312.

<sup>181</sup> Anthony Littlewood, "Gardens of the Byzantine World," in *Byzantine Gardens and Beyond*, ed. Helena Bodin and Garnar Hedlund (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet 2013), 32. See also the cautionary tale of the twelfth century Nikephoros Basilakes who attempts (and fails) to move a cypress. Basilakes, "Progymnasma 26", in *Progimnasmata e Monodie*, ed. A Pignani, (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1983), 225-28 and summarized in Barber, "Reading in the Garden," 10-11.

sixth centuries, found throughout the Mediterranean.<sup>182</sup> In several sites that spanned sacred spaces and elite domestic residences across Carthage, Argos, Antioch, and Scythopolis, scenes of harvesting, vintage, and seed planting were arranged and labelled by their respective months to become visual calendars for interiors. In the calendar sequence that composes the pavement of the so-called monastery of Lady Mary in the city walls of Scythopolis (sixth century), the labors revolve around personifications of the sun and moon (figure 2.2). All equally distributed in radiating bands, the months display agricultural tools or symbols of action so that March on the left of the image leans on his shield clad as a warrior and April carries a young goat (figure 2.3). Surrounding this central calendar disk are additional scenes of the natural world: birds occupy an array of geometric frames and are interrupted by the appearance of larger wildlife to present a model of the cosmos that includes space and time in the monastery's interior (figure 2.4).<sup>183</sup> While there remains debate among literary scholars and art historians as to whether the motif originated as poetry or as monumental art,<sup>184</sup> the continual presence of both suggests a relationship of mutual development, with text and image responding to one another and providing creative possibilities for experiencing the calendar.

Whereas the literary treatment of the calendar has been extensively examined in Byzantine studies, visual depictions of the theme have proven more difficult to navigate. This is

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<sup>182</sup> See Gunilla Akerström-Hougen, *The Calendar and Hunting Mosaics of the Villa of the Falconer in Argos* (Stockholm: Svenska Institutet i Athen, 1974).

<sup>183</sup> On these cosmic floors, see Henry Maguire, *Earth and Ocean: The Terrestrial World in Early Byzantine Art* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987), 82-83. Fabio Barry, "Walking on Water: Cosmic Floors in Antiquity and the Middle Ages," *AB* 89, no. 4 (2007): 634-37. For related but different zodiac material, see Jodi Magness, "Heaven on earth: Helios and the zodiac cycle in ancient Palestinian synagogues," *DOP* 59 (2005): 1-52.

<sup>184</sup> Doro Levi, "The Allegories of the Months," 251-52; Henri Stern, "Poesies et representations carolingiennes et byzantines des mois," *Revue archéologique* 45 (1955): 141-186.

understandable as both the visual and textual traditions abruptly end after the sixth century, and only reappear in manuscripts in the twelfth century. In comparison to the ubiquity of calendric expressions in antiquity, the thin corpus of material and their fragmentary nature within later Byzantium is primarily discussed either through individual case studies or more often by means of general characterizations. These are primarily guided by iconographic readings anchored by the late antique floor mosaics and leading toward religious associations.<sup>185</sup> As in the calendar imagery at the monastery of Lady Mary, the pavement imagined the unfolding of the year framed by vignettes of nature and animals became part of a symbolic language that conveyed a cosmic knowledge governed by a divine order.<sup>186</sup>

In terms of general art historical approaches, James Carson Webster's *The Labors of the Months in Antique and Medieval Art* from 1939 remains the most detailed and comprehensive catalog to date of representations of the months from antiquity into the twelfth century that touches on Byzantine traditions.<sup>187</sup> His study focuses on the development and variations in iconographic types across Europe with particular attention given to how agricultural practice influenced the activities artists chose to represent the months, an approach that is echoed in Colum Hourihane's introduction to the more recent catalogue, *The Occupations of the Months and Signs of the Zodiac in the Index of Christian Art*.<sup>188</sup> These studies both conclude that the conceptual and iconographic

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<sup>185</sup> This discrepancy between visual and literary analyses is, however, understandable. Unlike the poems which have been preserved within the manuscript tradition, the material record for images is much spottier and the sets that have been preserved are often incomplete due to damage.

<sup>186</sup> For other perspectives, see above n.175.

<sup>187</sup> A more recent publication by Simona Cohen explores the personification of Time in medieval and Renaissance art, however her analysis is generally more interested in time as a singular embodiment in visual art than in the individual months representing time. Simona Cohen, *Transformations of Time and Temporality in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

<sup>188</sup> James C. Webster, *The Labors of the Months in Antique and Medieval Art to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1938), 1: "Since the scenes had an immediate and contemporary relationship to the artist who carved or painted them, their content was not so rigidly set as in the case of sacred

underpinnings of medieval traditions were derived from classical seasonal poetry as well as calendar mosaics and friezes from the antique world. From Webster's point of view, because Byzantine art did not develop into the same expansive genre scenes that can be seen in the medieval west, it aligned itself with classical models which were copied without development.<sup>189</sup>

However, given the range of Byzantine poetic and monumental renderings of the labors of the months, it is hard to accept that they were mere copies of classical examples, especially when the ancient corpus remained in flux and was subjected to regional differences. Prior to Webster's wide-ranging monograph, more localized studies on the development of calendrical imagery were carried out, particularly by Henri Stern and Josef Strzygowski, who both looked to the Chronograph of 354 in order to understand later sets of monthly imagery.<sup>190</sup> Sitting at the nexus of textual and visual traditions, the Chronograph of 354 was a lavish New Year's gift that collected a body of knowledge and was organized according to a wide spectrum of temporal units including a world chronicle, a historical list of consular figures up to the present, Christian and polytheistic

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representations, the subject-matter of which was recorded in the scriptural narratives. In the latter the intention of the artist was to fix, from out his storied mind, things which had happened "long ago," things to which the consecration of time and religion had given an eternal and unchanging state, whereas in the former his concern was with things which happened and reappeared "now" — and these present things, drawn from his daily life, differed somewhat from country to country...although the sacred scenes differed in details of iconography or costume, the labors of the months, in their very subject-matter, could react more freely to the influence of contemporary life and reflect with more variety the customs of different localities." Colum Hourihane, *The Occupations of the Months and Signs of the Zodiac in the Index of Christian Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

<sup>189</sup> Webster, *The Labours of the Months*, 25-26. This line of thinking will be revisited in the conclusion as it problematically ascribes a timeless quality to the Byzantine set. Because the land does not change, and the culture does not change, they must be the same.

<sup>190</sup> Josef Strzygowski, "Die Monatscyclen der byzantinischen Kunst" *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 11 (1888): 23-46; Henri Stern, "Poesies et representations," 183. See also Alois Riegl, "Die mittelalterliche Kalenderillustration," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 10 (1889): 1-74; Riegl, "Die Holzkalender des Mittelalters und der Renaissance," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 9 (1888): 451-57.

festivals, and various illustrated calendars.<sup>191</sup> While the original is preserved only in later fragmented copies, the copiously illustrated compendium of dates, personifications, and other information demonstrates the Late Roman preoccupation with associating human figures and events with the mathematics of chronology.<sup>192</sup>

As studied by classicists Henri Stern and Michele Salzman, one of the primary tasks of the Chronograph was the recording of time, exemplified by the informational calendar lists that accompanied full-page illustrations for each of the twelve months. In their original binding, these lists would face a representation of the associated month, listing the holidays, market days, and numerous other data, with this information frequently repeated in the image (figure 2.5).<sup>193</sup> To look at one illustration from the Chronograph, the illustration for December as it is preserved in a later copy in the Vatican library collections (MS Barb. Lat. 2154, fol. 23) shows the month as a young man in embellished and seasonally appropriate clothing who holds a torch while engaged in a game of dice (figure 2.6). Various other paraphernalia hover in the background, including a face mask and birds hanging on a hook to convey the month and work with the list on the facing page. For example, the dice serve as a visual reference to the games associated with *Saturnalia*, whose celebration is among the list's contents on the neighboring page. All these objects, enshrined beneath a lavishly decorated architectural frame, are further animated through a Latin

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<sup>191</sup> On the codex, see Michele Salzman, *On Roman Time: The Calendar-Codex of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Henri Stern, *Le calendrier de 354: etude sur son texte et sur ses illustrations* (Paris: Geuthner, 1953).

<sup>192</sup> On the complexities of this manuscript, see Richard Burgess, "The Chronograph of 354: Its Manuscripts, Contents, and History," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 5, no. 2 (2012): 345-96.

<sup>193</sup> Other data includes the associated astrological sign, the days of the week, and even cosmically determined "unlucky days. See Michele Salzman, "Minding Time: Pagan and Christian Notions of the Week in the Fourth Century Roman Empire," in *Time and Temporality in the Ancient World*, ed. Ralph Rosen (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 185-212.

tetrastich in the margin and a distich at the bottom of the page which describe the festivities that end the year.<sup>194</sup> Working between text, image, and memories of past urban experiences, the page vividly communicates the popular holiday of *Saturnalia* and the surrounding season in a way that would have been familiar to its fourth-century Roman audience.

The illustrations of the Chronograph are not codified labors, nor are their associated lists a simple table of days and dates. Instead, their use should be understood alongside the other informational data, transforming the codex into a monument of accumulated knowledge that is conveyed through the multiple rhythms of Roman time. With the potential to illuminate new ways of navigating time, the codex overlays various cycles of time, including political, religious, civic, and celestial with representations of space, binding together the major cities of the late Roman Empire: Rome, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Trier who are all shown as divine fortunes (*Tyches*) with symbols of what they contribute to the empire to express a renewing surplus of festivals and yields.<sup>195</sup> Ultimately the calendar emerges in the Chronograph as an ever-expanding collection of information that responded to the specific needs of its elite patron. The Chronograph's pages with the calendar as its center piece, present a series of illustrations displaying success and

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<sup>194</sup> Tetrastich: Winter, collecting in the furrows of earth the seeds of the annual sowing, makes it fertile. Everything drips with rain. Now December may dedicate again its merry feasts to Saturn (i.e., may again celebrate the Saturnalia): now, O slave, it is granted you to play with your master. *Annua sulcatae conectens semina terrae/ Pascit hiems: Pluvio de love cuncta madent./ Aurea nunc revocet Saturno festa December:/ Nunc tibi cum domino ludere, verna, licet.* Distich: I leave to your festivals, O December, to describe you, although such as you are, you bring the year to a close(?) *Argumenta tibi mensis concede December.* Doro Levi, "Allegories of the Months," 272. In the original, the tetrastich and distich immediately followed the calendar section, and were likely added to the illustrations later.

<sup>195</sup> Henri Stern, *Le calendrier de 354*, 124-144; Kathleen Shelton, "Imperial Tyches," *Gesta* 18 (1979): 27-38; on the later Byzantine tradition, see Liz James, "Good Luck and Good Fortune to the Queen of Cities: Empresses and Tyches in Byzantium," in *Personification in the Greek World from Antiquity to Byzantium*, ed. Judith Herrin and Emma Stafford (London: Routledge, 2005), 293-307.

wealth across the cities and over the year. In other words, it becomes a repository of information about the Roman Empire that uses divisions *of* time to ensure a prosperous future *through* time.

In the wake of the Chronograph's substantial treatment in the literature, some Byzantine art historians have rightly taken issue with this tendency to collapse Byzantine and classical representations by looking to prior prototypes. Gunilla Akerström-Hougen's study of the sixth-century calendar mosaic from an elite villa in Argos (ca. 500) for example has proposed other possibilities. Six frames spanned the length of the villa's pavement in its south porch contemporary with the monastery so that pairs of the month appear together (figure 2.7). Beginning with January who presents himself as a consular figure wielding his *mappa* in line with the annual celebrations that start the year, the course of time unfurls in pairs. For Akerström-Hougen, the next quadrant with March and April, visible in the image, allegedly diverges from earlier precedents.<sup>196</sup> She contends that the transformation of the months' iconography to a warrior figure for March and a shepherd for the month of April heralds a new and unique type of calendar used for a specifically Byzantine cycle of months.<sup>197</sup>

However, this line of argument accounts only for iconographic motifs, and more persuasively fits with scholarly understandings of the period of late antiquity as a time of transformation and change. Compared to the contemporary mosaic at Scythopolis, both show warriors albeit dressed in considerably different armor while April holds a goat in Scythopolis and a sheep in Argos.<sup>198</sup> Such differences may be explained through regional differences and

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<sup>196</sup> Some cycles present a shepherd for March and a dancing youth for April. Gunilla Akerström-Hougen, *The Calendar and Hunting Mosaics of the Villa of the Falconer*, 72-82.

<sup>197</sup> Gunilla Akerström-Hougen, "'When you behold these men, you see the whole year': a Study of Byzantine Pictorial Calendars, an Embryo of a Corpus," *Acta ad Archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia* 18, no. 4 (2004): 162-64.

<sup>198</sup> Additionally, in its appearances across extant examples, the set never quite aligns even among later instantiations of the labors in Byzantine illumination.

development, which had always been a driving factor in Greco-Roman calendars, as Doro Levi and James Webster have proposed.<sup>199</sup> But more importantly, scholarship on the Byzantine labors has inaccurately characterized the classical representations as uniform, when these models were not consistent, nor codified, and existed across sacred and secular spaces. Instead of characterizing the Byzantine expressions as retrograde, a more nuanced understanding must be sensitive to the constantly evolving nature of this material, which continued to find new purposes, settings, and uses. Overall, previous iconographic studies of the personified months have been helpful in charting how this temporal imagery spread across the medieval world and distinguished itself from other examples. But I contend that this line of inquiry has eclipsed other ways that the images could operate as well as limited our understanding of the labors' value within Byzantine manuscript traditions. Along these lines, scholarship has yet to account for why these figures were added to their respective manuscripts in the twelfth and fourteenth century.

In contrast to the bulk of literature on the monthly labors throughout the medieval world, I propose a different approach for understanding this temporal imagery that considers the role of the land and the strategies for ordering and engaging with complex textual material. With the standard approach to the labors of the months in Byzantium still dominated by a search for origins, the attention given to the months within art historical analyses remains focused on the individual figures or their agricultural activity.<sup>200</sup> If we broaden our gaze outward and think about how Makrembolites mobilized the labors for his protagonists in *Hysmine and Hysminias*, the use of these images in their manuscript contexts not only allows us to reimagine the page as an

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<sup>199</sup> See Table B in Levi, "The Allegories of the Months," 274-275; Webster, *The Labours of the Months*, 1.

<sup>200</sup> See, for example, Maja Kominko, "Visions and Meanings: Personifications in the Octateuch Cycles," in *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages, Meanings*, ed. Angeliki Lymberopoulou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 121-134.



informational landscape that the labors frame or participate within, but also to consider how they construct a more interactive engagement between the reader and the page before them.

To pursue this new direction, I draw on burgeoning work on diagrams and the visualization of knowledge within the premodern world led by Francis Marchese, Andrew Riggsby, and Linda Safran.<sup>201</sup> As visual representations that interpret rather than illustrate, the diagram accompanying a text acted as a tool that invited further analysis. If we situate the sets of personifications within their new settings, whether adding depth to illustrations of Enoch and man's invention of time or framing organizational data in the case of canon tables and *typika*, their use reflects a diagrammatic potential that has yet to be considered. With each section devoted to a different temporal period—the Octateuch illustrations for the Old Testament, the Canon tables for the New Testament, and the typikon for an ever-renewing present, I consider how the addition of temporal imagery adds to their pre-existing formats and traditions through their insistence on dividing time.

### **Working Overtime: Enoch and the Octateuchs**

Revisiting the Octateuchs discussed in the previous chapter, I now focus on the depiction of Enoch in Vat. gr. 746, dating to the second quarter of the twelfth century.<sup>202</sup> Among the corpus of Octateuchs, this is the best preserved of the miniatures and demonstrates how the use of monthly labors contributes to a greater understanding of the scene beyond the Septuagint's text. Ultimately,

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<sup>201</sup> Francis Marchese, "Tables and Early Information Visualization," in *Knowledge Visualization Currents: from Text to Art to Culture*, ed. F. Marchese and E. Banissi (New York: Springer, 2013), 35-61; Andrew Riggsby, "Guides to the Wor(l)d," in *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire*, ed. Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 88-107; Linda Safran, "A Prolegomenon to Byzantine Diagrams," in *Visualization of Knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Marcia Kupfer, Adam S. Cohen, and J. H. Chajes (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 21-55. See also the papers presented for a 2018 symposium hosted by Dumbarton Oaks, Jeffrey Hamburger, David Roxburgh, and Linda Safran, eds., *The Diagram as Paradigm: Byzantium: Cross Cultural Approaches* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2022).

<sup>202</sup> On the manuscript's dating, Lowden, *The Octateuchs*, 26-28.

what feels like the most classical aspect of the scene has no grounding in the previous models, leading to questions concerning what their addition in the Octateuch cycle's narrative might signal for the books' users.

Among the illustrations, the Vatican Octateuch includes a portrait of Enoch, an otherwise marginal figure in the narrative of Genesis.<sup>203</sup> He emerges out of an extensive genealogical passage of patriarchs from Adam to Noah in the fifth chapter, ending with the cryptic line “and he [Enoch] was not; for God took him.”<sup>204</sup> Despite the brevity of his description in Genesis 5, the corresponding image in the manuscript extends his narrative into three distinct vignettes demarcated by a thick red frame (fol. 18r; figure 2.8). In the scene farthest to the right and closest to the text itself, the patriarch stands frontally against an undecorated background, crowned with a nimbus and holding an unrolled scroll. Beside him to the left sits a diminutive personification of *Thanatos*, or death, who contorts his body so that he faces off to the left and away from Enoch. At top, an image of the cosmos covers the pair and repeats a previous illustration from the Creation sequence that shows the sun and the moon on either side of an inverted heavenly dome.<sup>205</sup>

Enoch's placement toward the upper margins of the page is considerably distant from the verses it illustrates, which are on the previous pages (fol. 47v-48r). Instead, the illustration is embedded in Theodoret's catena, which attempts to explain the enigmatic Genesis verse associated with the Patriarch. The text surrounding the image describes how Enoch was taken to another place

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<sup>203</sup> While Enoch was a minor figure in Genesis, there was an apocryphal text known as the *Book of Enoch* used by Early Christian theologians to supplement material conveyed in Genesis that continued to be used into Byzantium, such as Synkellos's *Chronographia*. Adler, *Time Immemorial: Archaic History and Its Sources in Christian Chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syncellus* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1989), 9-11.

<sup>204</sup> Genesis 5:24: και ευηρέστησεν Ενώχ τω θεώ. και ουχ ευρίσκετο ότι μετέθηκεν αυτόν ο θεός.

<sup>205</sup> Vat. gr. 746, as well as the Smyrna manuscript, largely follow the Topkapi Octateuch's program and have been referred to as the “Komnenian” Octateuchs.

and set apart from the life of mortals so that he might suggest the resurrection that was to come.<sup>206</sup> Numerous inscriptions within Enoch's frame provide information on how to understand the scene in light of its exegesis while distilling information from the previous page's verses. The patriarch at right is framed by these words: "Enoch, having invented writing, then was the first to identify the months, the seasons, and the division of time" (figure 2.9).<sup>207</sup> Next to the personification of death, the inscription continues below: "having opposed death, an unavoidable force."<sup>208</sup> The scroll in Enoch's hands reveals the results of his inventions and observations: "The first month is March, the second..."<sup>209</sup> badly flaked but still legible. With this scroll, Enoch confirms the chronographic calculations of figures such as Synkellos, who dated creation to 25 March as well as aligned a number of key scriptural events to this same date, and appears in the *Octateuch* as the first writer of history.<sup>210</sup>

Placing Enoch in a separate frame makes explicit his separation from the time he created out of the cosmic bodies above him and emphasizes his status as a prefiguration for Christ. Following the divine creator who set the luminaries into motion to serve as signs for time, Enoch read the signs and created a system of order for humanity through the months. Through the

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<sup>206</sup> Theodoret, "Question XLV," in *The Questions on the Octateuch, Vol. I, On Genesis and Exodus*, ed. John Petruccione and Robert Hill (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 95.

<sup>207</sup> Ενώχ, μνηθεὶς γραμμάτων πρῶτος νόον, εφεύρε πρῶτος μήνα, καιρόν, και χρόνον

<sup>208</sup> Ἀληστον ἰσχύν κατὰ θανάτου φέρων

<sup>209</sup> ὁ πρῶτ[ος] μην Μάρτιος, δεύ[τε]ρος

<sup>210</sup> In this way, the image emerges as a challenge to Eusebius's uncertainty. Whereas Eusebius concluded that the time of Creation and the time that transpired between it and Abraham was "indeterminate," this biblical figure provides a resolute answer that the first month was March. Adler, *Time Immemorial*, 9-11. Henri Stern views the beginning of the year with March as a reference to an archaic calendar and in line with Easter. This may also be true, but the Emphasis on "first" here is staking a claim in light of chronological advancements. Stern, "Poesies et representations," 183.

interplay of text and image, the reader is led to understand both the annual cycle of time structured by a logical sequence of agricultural activities and man's place within this changing world, harkening back to the opening pages that designate the creation of heavenly bodies as markers for time.<sup>211</sup>

Within the split scene at left, the illuminator embellishes Enoch's division of time and explicitly shows the effects of its passage. At top are two rows of personifications of the months, beginning with March as a warrior whose namesake is legible on Enoch's scroll and proceeding through September, until the series breaks off and picks up again at left with October.<sup>212</sup> The men are all shown as half busts who hover against the undecorated page. June holds a long-edged implement resembling a sickle while September carries a basket of grapes across his shoulder. Interestingly, despite the clear agricultural theme that many of these figures convey, they are separated from the source of their bounty. A sloping red line cuts across the left-most portion of the illustration to divide the labors from the earth as they hover in the air aligned with the neighboring cosmic model. Below this there are several sarcophagi shown in various degrees of decay. Care has been taken to show weeds and vegetal overgrowth that allude to a future when the commemorative monument will be subsumed by these natural forces and reclaimed by the land, underlined by the fact that in turning away from Enoch, *Thanatos* gestures to this ruinous landscape. In other words, time has not saved these monuments, which crumble in stark contrast to the patriarch who was able to escape death as the text communicates.

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<sup>211</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>212</sup> Interestingly, while all the illustrated Octateuchs that contain this scene, that is, the five closely related group, none of them reflect a consistent set of personifications. Despite the small differences among the twelve, all of them begin with March, which suggests that it was more important to primarily reflect the year starting in March than in cultivating a specifically Byzantine set as Akerstrom-Hougen implies. Akerstrom-Hougen, "When You Behold These Men," 169.

In essence, the illustration provides an artistic rendering of time that is freighted with information. The illustration revisits the opening Genesis sequence, whereby the heavenly bodies were put into motion and served as signs for time, as discussed in the previous chapter. Enoch's image represents the culmination of this process, translating the signs for the seasons of the entire year into their monthly personifications (figure 2.10).<sup>213</sup> Reading from left to right, the natural cycles of all forms of time appear: the passage of the seasons prompting agricultural activities tied to planting and harvesting, which are literally separated from the earthly scenes by the border and are suspended above in the sky. But despite their clear engagement with the changes occurring on the ground, they are instead aligned with the movements of the sun and moon immediately to their right. From this formal choice, the arrangement of the elements within the scene communicates that Enoch created the annual cycle from observing the movements of the sun and moon. The intimate connection between the terrestrial and heavenly worlds in the miniature reveals the cosmic cycles that make change, growth, and aging legible to us.

Additionally, the effects of this repeating cycle, and Enoch's triumph over it, play out with a reference to the linearity of earthly life. While Enoch evokes the Creation narrative, having first invented writing and then putting time into words, ultimately allowing him to enter heaven, the rest of humanity is meant to live within this system. Aging, the inevitability of earthly death, and oblivion coalesce at the bottom of the frame to construct an ethics of memory and commemoration.<sup>214</sup> Despite the promise of renewal that the seasons and months communicate

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<sup>213</sup> These signs were explicitly associated with their associated actions in the catena. Theodoret of Cyrus, *Questions on the Octateuch, Volume I: Genesis*, trans. Robert C. Hill (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 34: σημεία τοίνυν ἢ θεία καλεῖ γραφή τὸ εἰδέναι σπόρου καιρόν, τοῦ φυτεῦσαι, του καθιέραι, τοῦ ξύλα τεμεῖν εἰς ναυπηγίαν καὶ οἰκοδομίαν ἐπιτήδεια.

<sup>214</sup> In an architectural version of this ethics of memory, see Robert Outserhout, "Temporal Structuring in the Chora Parekklesion." *Gesta* 34, no. 1 (1995): 68.

through planting, harvesting, and general taming of the land, the organic time of the earth also conveys the gradual consumption and degradation of the carved sarcophagi (figure 2.11). The image reminds its reader of what is implicit within the genealogical sequence, namely that, along with the continuation of a line through generations comes the inevitability of human death. By pairing the ordered and personified year above with a ruinous landscape of monuments in disarray below, the miniature makes clear the importance of holding the past's events and figures in the reader's memory.

Despite the elaborate visual treatment given to Enoch's illustration, encompassing a miniature model of the cosmos, personifications of the months, and a landscape full of sarcophagi, the patriarch is only a marginal figure within the Old Testament and Octateuch text.<sup>215</sup> The illustration moves beyond the minimal data provided by the canonical text to create a profoundly different picture related to Enoch's ability to read and translate the environment around him.

Yet, in contrast to the scene's emphasis on temporal knowledge and the expression of this new organization that goes beyond the Septuagint's text, when Enoch's illustration appears in scholarly literature, its discussion distills only individual elements—either the iconographic origins of Enoch's portrait or the presence of personifications throughout the Octateuchs—at the expense of considering the entire miniature. As identified by Maja Kominko and Doula Mouriki, the right scene of Enoch and *Thanatos* in the Octateuch illustration is in part a direct copy of the portrait of the same figure in Book V of Kosmas Indikopleustes's *Christian Topography*. The same

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<sup>215</sup> However, in contrast to this scant textual treatment, Enoch enjoyed a lively apocryphal tradition in Syriac and Ethiopian sources, often within apocalyptic accounts that describe him as ascending to heaven, meeting, God, and being returned to communicate his vision. The illuminator was likely familiar with these traditions, yet chose to express Enoch coming face to face with divinity through the apprehension of a complex system of knowledge and expression. *The Book of Enoch*, trans. George Schodde (Andover: Draper, 1882), 176-79.

image used in the Vatican Octateuch appears in the illustrated copies from the ninth and eleventh centuries (Vat. gr. 699 from the ninth and Sin. Gr. 118 and Laur. Plu. IX.28 from the eleventh; figures 2.12-14). Its appearance in Kosmas's *Christian Topography* accompanies a catalogue of thirty-seven patriarchs, prophets, and saints from Adam to Saint Paul chronologically arranged, whose figures are first introduced with a portrait then followed by a brief biographical sketch to conclude Kosmas's account of the Israelites' exodus.<sup>216</sup>

Enoch's portrait within all three surviving copies of the *Christian Topography* shares a clear relationship to his portrait in the Octateuch illustrations in terms of composition, posture, and gesture of the figures. As in the Octateuchs, the portrait identifies both Enoch and *Thanatos* although Kosmas's design provides much less information: merely Enoch and an inscription reading, "Death who turns away from him." Most of the knowledge expressed visually with the illustration is instead given in the accompanying biographical text. All Kosmas's miniatures of the Old Testament patriarch precede the same text:

This is Enoch on whom the sentence of death did not take effect, for he was translated by God that he should not see death, as is recorded in divine scripture in order that thereby it might be declared to use that death shall not have power over man, but that his power over him shall be dissolved as was exhibited in the case of the Lord Christ, when his power was entirely broken. This is Enoch who was translated to life as proof of the power of God to after generations, a power capable of warning of death from mortals, yea even of permitting them while living to undergo the change to a better state. This is he who along with Elias will in the last days withstand the Antichrist and refute his error, according to the ecclesiastical tradition. This is he who through faith escaped the way of death.<sup>217</sup>

From this characterization of Enoch, the temporal sensibility is purely eschatological and nowhere is there mention of his interest in measuring more cyclical aspects of time beyond his ability to

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<sup>216</sup> Maja Kominko, *The World of Kosmas: Illustrated Byzantine Codices of the Christian Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 134.

<sup>217</sup> Quoted in Doula Mouriki-Charalambous, "The Octateuch miniatures of the Byzantine manuscripts of Cosmas Indicopleustes," (PhD diss, Princeton University, 1970), 28.

escape his own earthly death. The Octateuch miniature, however, elaborates these details by including monthly personifications to visualize the structure of the year and time more broadly. In some sense the Octateuch tradition pictures Enoch as an architect or engineer of time who himself is allowed to exist outside of it, separated from this cycle by the frame and made explicit in the catena.

In addition to the personification of death, Maja Kominko has provided an overview of the various personifications used in the Octateuch cycles, citing the prevalence of temporal and topographical themes, which augment the setting and help to set a tone but are otherwise unnecessary to the action.<sup>218</sup> To cite just one example, the sacrifice of Noah after the flood reveals how temporal personifications contributed abstract concepts to the biblical story (figure 2.15). After the dismantling of the ark, the next scene shows Noah standing to the left of an altar at center. To the right, his three sons stand among several animals, including a lion and a camel. Farther to the right personifications of day and night strain to support a circle containing the seasons, who are also personified, but arranged out of order: spring is at the lower left of the ring, shown as a youth in a long robe holding a flower; summer is shown in the upper right as a farmer cutting grain; in the upper left is autumn personified as a sower; and winter in the lower right is a man warming himself by a fire (figure 2.16).<sup>219</sup> As an image of the biblical event, the personifications participate in illustrating God's promise to Noah that henceforth "seed and harvest, cold and heat, summer and spring shall not cease by day and night." (Genesis 8:22). While not essential for the

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<sup>218</sup> Maja Kominko, "Visions and Meanings," 123; For more discussions of the complex relationship between text and image: Meyer Schapiro, *Words, Scripts, and Pictures: Semiotics of Visual Language* (New York: Braziller, 1996); Leslie Brubaker, "Every Cliché in the Book: The Linguistic Turn and the Text-Image Discourse in Byzantine Manuscripts," in *Art and Text in Byzantine Culture*, ed. Liz James (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 58-82.

<sup>219</sup> The figure for day appears to work harder than any of the personified and laboring seasons, with his bulging eyes and body stretched across the surface.



comprehension or coherence of the scene, the personified seasons as well as day and night clarify a more specific aspect of the story, which otherwise would be very difficult to glean from the miniature alone. Similar to the Late Antique pavements that conveyed an unending and prosperous image of divine order, the seasonal personifications out of order appear to operate above and beyond time's cycle to ensure endless favor granted to Noah by God, which would continue through his line.

The use of these seasonal youths in the illustration of Noah's sacrifice contributes to Weitzmann's argument that Byzantine manuscript illustration absorbed classical elements into Christian settings, especially in the form of personifications for temporal or topographical settings. But Enoch's illustration with the personified months operates in a fundamentally different manner than the example of Noah.<sup>220</sup> Instead, they illuminate the tension between personification and schematization within Greek thought as initially proposed by T.B.L. Webster in their attempt to rationalize complex, abstract systems and the relationship between cycles of time on earth and through the movement of heavenly bodies.<sup>221</sup> Their use within Enoch's scene takes on a much more active and diagrammatic role than the passive embellishment in the illustration of Noah's sacrifice. Situated as floating above the earth, the months emphasize how the annual rhythm of time set into motion by the movement of heavenly bodies influences life on earth, primarily through aging. The busts evoke a long tradition of personifications to stand in for the months from the past who now float separated from their bucolic settings. Through this formal displacement, the measurement and cyclical division of the year exist apart from the teleological flow of life on

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<sup>220</sup> Maja Kominko, "Visions and Meanings: Personifications in the Octateuch Cycles," 128-29; Liz James, "Good Luck and Good Fortune to the Queen of Cities: empresses and *Tyches* in Byzantium," in *Personification in the Greek World*, 293-307.

<sup>221</sup> T. B. L. Webster, "Personification as a Mode of Greek Thought," *JWCI* 17, n.1-2 (1954): 21.

earth, and, in so doing, attempts to map out multiple experiences of time: one structured by the regular and renewing cycle inscribed on earth by celestial movements and the other by a steady march toward death in need of remembrance and commemorative practices.

The appearance of monthly imagery within the Enoch story reflects how schemata for the year could be combined and displayed to visualize multiple temporal levels, whether explicitly or implicitly. The floating busts on fol. 48v allude to the moment when patterns in time's expansiveness were ascertained, measured, and divided into units. The choice to begin with March rather than with September, the start of the civic year, reflects a specific inclination related to the politics of rewriting history, reinvigorated by Synkellos's ninth century *Chronographia*, in its spirited redating of time. Ultimately, the most classicized element of the image is also the most recent element, whose incorporation is independent from the text it accompanies.

### **Working the Text: The Canon Tables**

Just as the Octateuch illustration of Enoch uses calendrical imagery to comment on the creation of time and the potential to transcend it, the decorative program for a deluxe group of gospel books also brings together another set of monthly personifications. However, here they act as a frame for the opening set of canon tables. The best known of this group is a modestly sized gospel book (24.2 x 17.4 cm), which was produced in Constantinople during the second quarter of the twelfth century and now housed in the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne.<sup>222</sup> The same

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<sup>222</sup> It has been dated to the second quarter of the twelfth century through scribal analysis and surviving dated examples, particularly an illustrated New Testament at the Getty. See Robert Nelson, "Theoktistos and Associates in Twelfth-Century Constantinople: An Illustrated New Testament of AD 1133," *J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 15 (1987): 63-64; Margaret Manion & V.F. Vines, eds., "Byzantine Manuscripts, MS. Felton 710/5," in *Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts in Australian Collections* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), 23-6, with earlier bibliography; Hugo Buchthal, "An Illuminated Byzantine Gospel Book of about 1100 AD" in *Art of the Mediterranean World AD 100 to 1400* (Washington DC: Decatur, 1983), 140-49; Josef Strzygowski, "Die Monatscylen," 23-46. The manuscript was sold in 1882 from the collection of the Duke of Hamilton, but its history prior to that is unknown.

set of months and decorative imagery also appear in a closely related gospel book held by the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice (MS gr. Z. 540 [=557]),<sup>223</sup> as well as the Vani Gospels (Tbilisi, Kekekliдзе Institute of Manuscripts, MS A. 1335), a manuscript written in Georgian but likely decorated by an illuminator in Constantinople at the end of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth.<sup>224</sup>

Arranged three to a page and installed on individual columns, diminutive personifications of the months in Melbourne's canon tables convey a year's time, assumed to be the prototype for the two later copies.<sup>225</sup> These men carry out activities appropriate for their seasons while decorated headpieces brimming with tangles of vines precariously balance above their heads. The series of men is aligned with the Byzantine calendar so that September opens the program on the first column, gathering grapes into a large wicker basket on his back, followed by October the fowler who presents one of his birds, and November digging into the column's capital as he plows (figure 2.17). All these months are named by small inscriptions in brown ink beside them. Time's course progressively continues over the pages that follow until all twelve months of the year have been presented.<sup>226</sup> They are then followed by twenty-four personifications of virtues which shift the organization from temporal to thematic. In this way related traits appear together: knowledge stands with an overflowing cornucopia and is flanked by thought, holding a book, and judgement,

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<sup>223</sup> This manuscript however abandons the decoration of the subsequent tables.

<sup>224</sup> On the manuscript see Evfimij Takaichvili, "Antiquités géorgiennes: 1. L'évangile de Vani," *Byzantion* 10 (1935): 655-663; Shalva Amiranashvili, *Gruzinskaja Miniatur* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1966), pls. 30-33; Hugo Buchthal, "Studies in Byzantine Illumination of the Thirteenth Century," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 25 (1983): 36, 40.

<sup>225</sup> Buchthal, "Gospel Book," 145-6.

<sup>226</sup> Water damage has resulted in the loss of 4 of the original 10 canon tables. However, the set can be confidently reconstructed from the related manuscripts who share the same decorative program.

gesturing in speech (figure 2.18). A series of six magicians and entertainers ultimately brings this sequence to a close (figure 2.19).

By the twelfth century, canon table decoration had reached a pinnacle, with many elaborate designs appearing in deluxe gospel books.<sup>227</sup> However the choice of such specific temporal and thematic subjects is without precedent in the ornament of canon tables. Due to the unconventional choice of decoration and the monumental donor portrait of the monk Theophanes presenting his gospel book to the Theotokos that opens the manuscript (figure 2.20), scholarship to date has largely concerned itself with matters of patronage and its presumed monastic context. Hugo Buchthal concluded that the book was produced in a monastery's scriptorium due to the garb of Theophanes in the donor portrait and the assumed monastic origin of its iconography, which he argued was lifted from illustrated editions of Klimakos's *Heavenly Ladder*.<sup>228</sup> Along these lines, scholars pursuing a monastic reading have argued that the representations of these men working within the canon tables allowed the reader to see a reflection of their own world, which ultimately should be abandoned in their progressive pursuit of divine truths.<sup>229</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko has since questioned this assumption, using the personified virtues and their relationship to contemporary court imagery to ask "just how monastic is this manuscript?" Ševčenko's intervention has brought a revaluation of the group of virtues, with most agreeing that they are in

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<sup>227</sup> Nelson, "Theoktistos and Associates," 59-63.

<sup>228</sup> Hugo Buchthal, "An Illuminated Byzantine Gospel Book," 145-146. The inscription accompanying the miniature identifies this Theophanes as the donor, scribe, and illuminator of the manuscript who is exceptionally painted with a halo and nearly matches the towering size of the Theotokos. However, Robert Nelson has been cautious to take this claim at face value as it was common for patrons to claim in an inscription that they had made the object rather than the actual artisan. Nelson, "Theoktistos," 64.

<sup>229</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Spiritual Progression in the Canon Tables of the Melbourne Gospels," in *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honor of Roger Scott*, ed. John Burke et al, (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2006), 334-343; Margaret Manion, "Authentication, Theology, and Narrative in the Gospel Book of Theophanes," in *Byzantine Narrative*, 320-333.

fact a product of court rather than monastic culture. But what does this shift in context mean for the labors of the months?

While initial studies have provided invaluable insight into the complexities surrounding the manuscript, I propose a different approach to make sense of the months within this section. Challenging a courtly-monastic binary, I instead focus on how these temporal images might augment how the canon tables were used as an organizational apparatus that engaged in visualizing patterns across the four gospel narratives. I consider the unique transformation of representing the year's structure within the canon tables and their emphatic visualization of knowledge through organization. Ultimately, I argue that by framing the reading apparatus, the months encourage a higher engagement with the gospels, shifting the initial focus of the personifications from working the fields to working the text. In other words, the ordering of key scriptural information set against the flow of the year does more than shape the reader's experience of this canonical set of texts by overlaying narrative time, biblical time, and the yearly cycle. It also stages a more interactive and dynamic relationship between text and reader, stimulating rhetorical skills such as memorization and composition in a format that challenges monastic and courtly divisions.

Art historical conversations about canon tables remain indebted to Nordenfalk's early study, *Die Spätantiken Kanontafeln*, which emphasized the sanctity of the decoration and attempted to form connections between the universal architectural frames seen across cultural communities and specific sites from the holy land.<sup>230</sup> Occasionally, in some examples, small narrative scenes referencing the gospel stories or portraits of prophets and evangelists might even hover in the margins. More recent art historians, such as Jaś Elsner and Günter Bandmann have

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<sup>230</sup> Carl Nordenfalk, *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln; kunstgeschichtliche Studien über die eusebianische Evangelienkonkordanz in den vier ersten Jahrhunderten ihrer Geschichte* (Göteborg: O. Isacson's boktryckeri, 1938), 107-108.

stressed the un-specificity of these fictive spaces as an “idealized architectural ensemble” that communicates the sanctity of the text.<sup>231</sup> Yet the inclusion of the temporal figures in the architectural frames, with their insistence on the passage of time, neither communicates a timeless sacred place nor do they bear any direct relationship to the stories that they frame. Taking up Elsner and Bandmann’s revaluation, the architectural frameworks of the canon tables create colonnaded spaces elaborately decorated that were not fixed and stable locales but were instead sites of producing meaning and conveying the sanctity of the information they contained.

The personifications atop their columns in the canon tables resemble the classical tradition of *Menologia rustica*, of which two examples are recorded with only one surviving.<sup>232</sup> These two rural stone calendars, likely dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and excavated in Rome, were carved in the shape of a block, and are believed to have supported a sundial.<sup>233</sup> Across the four surfaces, each of the four faces lists the agricultural operations and festivals for three months along with the length and number of days they contain beneath symbols of the zodiac (figure 2.21). There is no direct correspondence between the zodiac imagery and the information within the columns, but the carved subjects create connections through text and image as the zodiac in the heavens oversees

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<sup>231</sup> Jaś Elsner, “Beyond Eusebius: Prefatory Images and the Early Book,” in *Canones: The Art of Harmony. The Canon Tables of the Four Gospels*, ed. Alessandro Bausi (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020), 104-5; Günter Bandmann, “Beobachtung zum Etschmiadzin-Evangeliar,” in *Tortulae: Studien zu altchristlichen und byzantinischen Monumenten*, ed. Walter Nikolaus Schumacher (Rome: Herder, 1966), 22: “ein ideals architektonisches Ensemble.”

<sup>232</sup> The other is preserved only in sixteenth century line drawings. See Lucia Pirizio Biroli Stefanelli, *Palazzo della Valle: la collezione di antichità ed il menologium rusticum Vallenese* (Rome: Confederazione Generale dell’Agricoltura Italiana, 1976); Daryn Lehoux, “Days, Months, Years, and Other Time Cycles,” in *Time and Cosmos in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, ed. Alexander Jones (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 102-3

<sup>233</sup> These were excavated before the advent of modern archaeology, so the provenance and original use of these objects are uncertain. Daryn Lehoux, “Days, Months, Years,” 102-3; Michele Renee Salzman, *On Roman Time*, 170; Annie Leigh Broughton, “The *Menologia Rustica*,” *Classical Philology* 31, no. 4 (1936): 353.

the activities that take place below them on earth. The carved surface becomes an informational window bridging the time of day, the time of year, and time of the zodiac across its faces.<sup>234</sup>

Distinct from this classical tradition, the personifications on their columns within the canon tables do not engage in tracking any form of time. But when situated within the canon table as an apparatus, the personifications of the labors reflect an interest in visualizing knowledge and demonstrating interconnections across the manuscript. Originally conceived by Eusebius in the early fourth century, the canon tables were designed as a reading technology capable of fostering new ways of interacting with the text.<sup>235</sup> Listing events in the Scripture, generally according to key events, the grid allows patterns of similarity to appear through a process of indexing and mapping the entire text. The scriptural units are first sorted according to their frequency of correspondence across the four accounts and grouped vertically so that each column corresponds to one of the gospels. Then these textual units are horizontally aligned in rows with either four, three, two, or single columns. The tables are defined by the intersection of these columns and rows that visually establish links across each gospel, bringing each account into direct and comparative relation with one another.<sup>236</sup>

To demonstrate how this manuscript allows a reader to interface with this information: suppose you are reading about the feeding of 5,000 in the Gospel of Mark, which was read on the fifteenth week after Pentecost (sometime roughly in September), and would like to see if it occurs

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<sup>234</sup> On the concordance between heaven and earth, see Daryn Lehoux, *Astronomy, Weather, and Calendars in the Ancient World: Parapegmata and Related Texts in Classical and Near Eastern Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>235</sup> Matthew Crawford, *The Eusebian Canon Tables: Ordering Textual Knowledge in Late Antiquity*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); Andrew Riggsby, *Mosaics of Knowledge: Representing Information in the Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>236</sup> Crawford, *Canon Tables*, 21-54; Gerard Genette, *The Architexts: An introduction*, trans. Jane Levin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

in any of the other gospels. If you look to the margins on folio 94r of the manuscript, two numbers are provided: the first number in black is the number for this section within Mark's account, which happens to be 64 (= ξΔ, figure 2.22). Beside this, a second number in red tells you which table to consult (here an alpha for Canon one), which conveys stories in all four Gospels. Consulting the first canon table and scanning the column for Mark between October and November, you will eventually come to the number 64, and reading horizontally you can see where the story also appears in Matthew, Luke, and John (figure 2.23).<sup>237</sup> The grid, as it lists events in the scripture according to key events, brings patterns of similarity to the surface through a process of indexing and mapping across the varied accounts. Scholars of theology primarily Matthew Crawford have drawn on this apparatus as a paratext for the scriptural information, underlying its potential to chart connections throughout the entire body of texts through its structure and system of documenting. The diagrammatic impulse undergirding these functions also had a visual component that could extend beyond its architectural framing and ultimately transform the entire page into an informational landscape that is worked and expanded through the act of reading.<sup>238</sup>

As organizational tables, the information enshrined within their elaborate frames can simultaneously stretch out the four gospel narratives as well as conveniently arrange them so that the verses are presented parallel to one another. Eusebius's recalibration of the gospels into units that are at once separate and unified in the early fourth century exists within a long line of devices that intervened into sacred texts and rearranged them. Most broadly, the codex form itself changed

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<sup>237</sup> Given the structure and arrangement of the liturgical year, one of these four would have been read in the period between October and November—the entry for Luke, which is read in week of the 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost (October/November).

<sup>238</sup> Beatrice Kitzinger gestures to the tables' reference to monumental media as a design choice for shaping experience, Kitzinger, "Framing the Gospels, c. 1000: Iconicity, Textuality, and Knowledge," in *The Visualization of Knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Marcia Kupfer et al (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 87-114.



how readers interacted with the text, shifting layouts from a continuous roll to gatherings and pages, which allowed an ease of cross referencing.<sup>239</sup> In terms of readability and ease, Tatian's *Diatessaron* from around 170 AD compressed the four canonical gospels into a single narrative allowing a more economical model that facilitated quickly finding an episode.<sup>240</sup> But expansion seems to have been far more popular than compression, as more devices were introduced for additional and increasingly more specialized purposes: lectionaries listed scripture lessons for particular services organized by the calendar date of their reading and *catenae* appeared alongside biblical passages linking them with excerpts from patristic commentaries.<sup>241</sup> All of these devices with their interest in transforming how the canonical text was presented reimagined the ways that readers could engage with the information organized and contained within the book.

In light of these organizational strategies, which ultimately strive to save time, the information sought by the reader in the tables or in the scriptural verses always returns them to time via the annual framework. But this need not point to the world outside the book as has been argued.<sup>242</sup> Evoking the calendar pavements in late antique churches and synagogues seen, for example, in the Monastery of Lady Mary discussed above, where similar labors were contained within a divine schema of the universe, the monthly labors reimagine this spatial relationship. Time

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<sup>239</sup> Claudia Rapp, "Holy Texts, Holy Men, and Holy Scribes: Aspects of Scriptural Holiness in Late Antiquity," in *The Early Christian Book*, ed. William Klingshirn and Linda Safran (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 197-98; also, the classic text, Weitzmann, *Illustration in Roll and Codex: a Study on the Origin and Method of Text Illustration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 69-77.

<sup>240</sup> William Peterson, "The Diatessaron and the Fourfold Gospel," in *The Earliest Gospels: The Origins and Transmission of the Earliest Christian Gospels: The Contribution of the Chester Beatty Gospel Codex P45*, ed. Barbara Aland and Charles Horton (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 189; on reading technologies see Georgia Frank, "The Memory Palace of Marcellinus: Athanasius and the Mirror of the Psalms," in *Ascetic Culture: Essays in Honor of Philip Rousseau*, ed. Blake Leyerle and Robin Darling Young (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 97-124.

<sup>241</sup> M. Clark, "Catena," in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, ed. Everett Ferguson et al. (London: Routledge, 1999)

<sup>242</sup> Manion, "The Gospel Book of Theophanes," 33.

now becomes a container for the book's scriptural universe as fictive architecture housing abbreviations of each verse. Time, as well as the virtues, were both common diagrammatic subjects, making them logical choices within the canon tables interface. Like Eusebius's other project, the *Chronikon*, pulled apart dating systems to find correspondences, so too did diagrams of the Virtues. In a later example in Uppsala that accompanies George Plethon's fifteenth-century treatise "On Virtues," the four cardinal virtues branch out beneath a decorated red frame labelled "The Virtues" (*ἀρεταί*) (figure 2.24). This division continues beneath each of the four, giving way to their subordinate qualities. Justice leads to characteristics such as piety, civic virtue, and honesty.<sup>243</sup> Through the pulling apart of these two themes commonly encountered in diagrammatic modes, their position in the canon tables reveals the eternal knowledge that lies behind them, intelligible through devoting oneself to the lessons within the book and extracting the information between its pages.

The narratives framed by the year's passage also took on a more conceptual form with the celebration of the liturgical calendar: aligned with the civic year, this cycle opened with the feast for the nativity of the Theotokos on September 8<sup>th</sup> and closed with the feast for her death in mid-August. Between these two bookends, the twelve major feasts outlining the events of Christ's life fell into the framework of the year and were ritually re-enacted through hymns and images over the course of the annual cycle.<sup>244</sup> Liturgical reform and the introduction of new books attuned to more specialized uses led to innovations in how the Gospel narratives were encountered and experienced, often keyed into the annual celebration of church festivals, which mapped the

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<sup>243</sup> Safran, "Byzantine Diagrams," in *The Diagram as Paradigm*, 17-18.

<sup>244</sup> Derek Krueger and Robert Nelson, "New Testaments of Byzantium: Seen, Heard, Written, Excerpted, Interpreted," in *The New Testament in Byzantium*, 11; Anderson, *The New York Cruciform Lectionary*, 2.

narratives contained within the gospels onto the liturgical year: passages about the nativity of Christ were read at Christmas, about his baptism on Epiphany, about his passion during Holy Week, and about his resurrection on Easter. Furthermore, according to the tenth-century witnesses to the lectionary for Hagia Sophia, the usual service of the divine liturgy was comprised of two lections from the New Testament, one from the Gospels preceded by a reading from the Apostles, usually a letter from Paul. This lectionary combined an older system for Saturdays and Sundays with a newer arrangement for every day of the year and assigned the pericopes from the Gospels in relatively sequential and continuous reading according to the seasons: John from Easter to Pentecost, Matthew and Luke from Pentecost to the beginning of the Lenten cycle, and Lent largely given over to Mark.<sup>245</sup> But more specific to the canon tables, where the months were used for the narratives occurring across all four Gospels, this seasonal arrangement of the readings meant that one of the four entries would likely correspond to the months that house it.

By opening the text, these tables translate the cycle of the Gospel year into numerical data to express correspondences across all four accounts, communicated with the help of temporal imagery. In so doing, the tables offer a microcosm of the scriptural world, constructing a space where the rhythm of the year in its constant state of change can exist alongside the sacred and historic time of the Gospels and prompt a more active engagement with the text. Matthew Crawford and Rolf Strøm-Olsen have each analyzed this spatialized aesthetic of the Eusebian Canon Tables in Armenian and Late antique examples respectively. Each contends that the opening tables acted as a kind of monumental gateway to the Gospel text, pointing to how the

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<sup>245</sup> *Le typikon de la Grande Eglise: Ms Saint-Croix no 40 Xe siècle*, ed. Juan. Mateos (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1962); Juan Mateos, *La celebration de la parole dans la liturgie byzantine: Étude historique* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1971); Job Getcha, *The Typikon Decoded* (Yonkers: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2012), 59-66.

illuminated tradition surrounding the tables became integrated and conventionalized across the centuries.<sup>246</sup> As the opening pages, this gateway enacts a progression from the outside world into the sacred textual space found within the gospels. Such an imaginative spatialization and engagement with the text allows us to move beyond the ornament as purely decorative and into the mental space that the pages could create in readers.

The placement of the tables at the beginning rather than the end undoubtedly adds weight to theories that the architecture of the tables was designed as an imagined gateway, but the realities of reading and engaging with the New Testament point toward non-sequential and reference-based reading. It is unlikely that a reader would open the codex and meditatively move through each folio of the canons before moving on to the desired verse within the text. Other manuscripts, such as the Lectionary, where the readings were arranged sequentially and according to the date they were read in the liturgical calendar, served this purpose. The Melbourne Gospel book was above all else designed for private study and contemplation, able to be used in a variety of ways. The reader could interact with the individual gospel narratives or enter the text at any point via the tables to construct new connections.

Looking to contemporary ideas about memory and retention, the desire to break down large swaths of information into more manageable units was a central concern and the visualized architecture in the tables had a theoretical foundation. From the classic treatises of antiquity, especially the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as well as those by Quintilian, memory in the medieval

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<sup>246</sup> Matthew Crawford, "Seeing the Salvation of God: Images as Paratext in Armenian Commentaries on the Eusebian Canon Tables," in *The Eusebian Canon Tables: Ordering Textual Knowledge in Late Antiquity*, 245; Rolf Strøm-Olsen, "The Propylaic Function of the Eusebian Canon Tables in Late Antiquity," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 26 (2018): 405.

world continued to be characterized in architectural terms, such as a floor plan to a house.<sup>247</sup> Within these imagined spaces, materials were not only arranged and stored in discrete rooms or compartments, but these individual units were also designed to be divided, gathered, or recombined through the art of composition. Composition then, was based on a system of learning that was locational and specifically architectural. But more importantly, as a site of inventory, the art of memory was a creative and associative practice, fragmenting the texts to be remembered and arranging the parts in relation to the complex whole to be remembered.

Such mnemonic processes and their relationship to canon table design was initially remarked upon by Mary Carruthers, who in *The Book of Memory* drew attention to the mnemonic potential of the usual gridded format of a manuscript page containing canon tables in passing:

It has been suggested that, in this context, an arcade motif may derive from the ancient mnemonic advice to use buildings - including intercolumnia, the spaces between columns - as backgrounds for things to be remembered. Certainly intercolumnia is one of the most enduring types of memory locus. Within each rectangular space made by the columns in the Eusebian Tables, the name of the gospel is written at the top, and then the chapter numbers of the synoptic passages are recorded. Horizontal lines, sometimes colored, are drawn between every four numbers (in the Greek text) or five (in the Latin); the effect is to divide the page into a series of small rectangular bins, none holding more than five items. Such a layout is clearly designed for mnemonic ease.<sup>248</sup>

The arrangement of imagery in Melbourne's canon tables further encourages the mnemonic potential. Grouped into threes, each page represents a full season with an appeal to sensation: a man warming himself by a fire or the preparation of the year's vintage. After the months, each of the virtues are arranged in related sets to build connections across the page, and lastly, the images of magicians stand in to illustrate not connections, but the tables that correspond only to narratives

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<sup>247</sup> Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. Harry Caplan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), III, 17; 208-9; Quintilian, *Quintilian: The Orator's Education*, ed. Donald Russell, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), x. iii. 25-30.

<sup>248</sup> Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: a Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 118.

unique to the four gospels. The more frequently one used the book, the more familiar they would become with the organized information, gradually retaining its contents after regular and continual use. Its reference system, integrated into the text and expressed at its opening, encourage repeated use and from a number of entries.

This ordered knowledge takes on greater meaning with the personified months. As demonstrated by the opening account of Hysminias, the idea of the garden was a prominent feature of texts, especially in the romances, and has been characterized as a site of control and mastery. Not only can this be seen through the cultivation of the natural world but also through setting its bounds, and juxtaposing nature against art. If we take Charles Barber's point that the Byzantine Garden was very much a "textual" space, the men on their columns speak to the conceptual labor of reading and studying the text, creating an alternative, informational landscape where the reader and the object can explore multiple points of view: mining, scanning, and ruminating over individual parts that guide the reader as they worked toward a complete and eternal truth.<sup>249</sup>

### **Harvesting Time: The Liturgical Typikon of St. Eugenios**

The previous section discussed how manuscripts reshaped experiences of the year through the development of a new apparatus and the division of the gospels into sections that were read each day to create a complete cycle. The liturgical typikon of the imperial monastery of St. Eugenios in Trebizond furthers this process of reimagining the year by bringing together text and image to divide time into multiple calendars and seasons. In this deluxe typikon with a dedicatory image and inscription dating it to 1346, miniatures of monthly labors and zodiac symbols announce the start of each month.<sup>250</sup> For November, a warmly dressed figure prepares to drive a plow pulled

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<sup>249</sup> Charles Barber, "Reading in the Garden," 18-19.

<sup>250</sup> The manuscript is now at Vatopedi Monastery in Mount Athos (Vatopedi Cod. 1199). According to the colophon on fol. 307v, the liturgical typikon of the monastery was commissioned by Prokopios Chantzames who donated it to

by a pair of yoked oxen: his right foot resting on the plow head (figure 2.25). Farther ahead, the personification for Sagittarius seems to lead the plow forward as it leaps out of the frame. He marks November as his target, visualizing the correspondence between heaven and earth. Similar scenes begin the other months within this manuscript so that a team of workers transfer wine into large *amphorae*, echoing the actions of January's sign Aquarius (figure 2.26). Together these miniatures construct an entire agricultural year of interlocking cycles: cultivating wheat and the transformation of grapes into wine, each with its own season and tasks. In short, the pages present an environment constantly being cultivated, communicated through the men and their activities.

Approaching the relationship between time and the monastic environment, this section considers how time was tracked as well as stored through material extraction and land management. It shifts from the mental growth and rumination visualized in the canon tables toward new economic models as monasteries became leading landholders in managing labor. I read the illustrations of Eugenius's typikon in light of contemporary interest of Hesiod's poem *Works and Days*, an ancient poem that was extensively copied and updated to reflect Byzantine implements and practices, and the middle Byzantine compendium the *Geoponika*, to show how this engagement with agricultural work brought about new ways of thinking about time through containment, cultivation, and commercialization.

The monastery of St Eugenius was re-founded by Alexios II in the early fourteenth century, resulting in a revival of the saint's cult that encouraged a wave of pilgrimage to the site of his relics.<sup>251</sup> Rosinqvist's dossier of materials pertaining to the cult in Trebizond, which includes the

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the monastery for the salvation of his soul in February of 1346 and identifies the scribe as John Argyros. Josef Strzygowski, "Eine trapezuntische Bilderhandschrift vom Jahre 1346," *Archiv für Kunstwissenschaft* 13 (1890): 241.

<sup>251</sup> The imperial interest in reviving the cult around this figure is discussed in the saint's miracles, which discusses how the saint aided the Trapezuntine emperor to fight a dragon in the mountains in the south. For the miracles of St. Eugenios and more bibliography see Jan Olof Rosenqvist, *The Hagiographic Dossier of St. Eugenios of Trebizond*

miracles collected by the metropolitan of Trebizond Lazaropoulos in the fourteenth century, identifies that the monastery was in existence as early as the ninth century. While only the *katholikon* survives at present, archaeological work undertaken by Baklanov and expanded by Ballance in the early twentieth century has allowed us to partially reconstruct the foundation's complicated building history. Originally, St. Eugenios was a large-scale, three-aisled, barrel-vaulted basilica that was later transformed into a central-dome cross-in-square church.<sup>252</sup> In the fourteenth century, when the Komnenoi adopted Eugenios as one of their protective saints, the monastery received a surge of imperial patronage, and served as the coronation site for Alexios III.<sup>253</sup> It is in this later stage of imperial patronage and expansion that the liturgical typikon was produced. Beyond the practicality of the book, reflecting the liturgical calendar of the monastery through its daily services, celebrations, and feasts, the illustrations in the manuscript consist of two full-page miniatures beyond the monthly program, which include a portrait of St. John of Damascus and St. Sabas, and a donor portrait of Prokopios offering a miniature version of the book to St. Eugenios at the end of the book (fol. 315v).<sup>254</sup>

Very little art historical attention has been given to this manuscript. Josef Strzygowski provided initial line drawings of the miniatures in the late nineteenth century and situated the images in relation to classical calendar poems, signaling similarities and discrepancies.<sup>255</sup> By far,

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(Uppsala: Byzantine Upsaliensia, 1996); and Jan Olof Rosenqvist, "Local Worshippers, Imperial Patrons: Pilgrimage to St. Eugenios of Trebizond," *DOP* 56 (2002): 193-212; esp. 197-199.

<sup>252</sup> N. Baklanov and Henri Grégoire, "Deux Monuments byzantins de Trébizonde," *Byzantion* 4 (1927): 370-373; Selina Ballance, "The Byzantine Churches of Trebizond," *Anatolian Studies* 10 (1960): 157.

<sup>253</sup> Rosenqvist, *The Hagiographic Dossier*, 39.

<sup>254</sup> Iohannis Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscript* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 206-207; see also Hans Belting, *Das illuminierte Buch in der spätbyzantinischen Gesellschaft* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1970), 32-35 for further bibliography.

<sup>255</sup> Josef Strzygowski, "Eine trapezuntische Bilderhandschrift," 241-63.



the most sustained focus brought to the illustrations has been through the work of the historian Anthony Bryer, who has compared the illustrations to thirteenth- and fourteenth-century copies of Hesiod's eighth century BC poem *Works and Days* primarily through the point of view of agricultural technology. Bryer examines representations of the plow seen in November against others such as Triklinos's contemporary copy of Hesiod (Marc. gr. Z.464; figure 2.27). Triklinos's image at the bottom shares a resemblance to the *typikon* with the pair of yoked oxen, but the *typikon* emphasizes its wealth by displaying the plow's iron tip, an addition that would have increased the tool's efficacy.<sup>256</sup> Other tools, like the *lisgarion* added to Marciana illustration, were exclusively Byzantine and demonstrate the more common means of turning the soil added to this ancient text (figure 2.28).<sup>257</sup> But in addition to representing men at work and engaged in activities that are appropriate for the season, the miniatures also stage a relationship with the land that was both literal and intellectual.

By reorienting our perspective toward the more relational aspects of labor, the land itself becomes equally important as the tools which held value for monastic and courtly communities alike. As Michael Camille argued in his study of the Luttrell Psalter, the landscape and labor could become a metaphor for the kingdom of God, offering an idealized image of order within fertile fields for the eyes of aristocratic men less hardened by work than those shown.<sup>258</sup> But unlike the

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<sup>256</sup> More common than the iron tip was a sharpened wooden point, which was considerably less expensive but required cross plowing. Bryer, "The Means of Agricultural Labor: Muscles and Tools," in *The Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. Angeliki Laiou (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 106-7; Bryer, "Byzantine Agricultural Implements: the Evidence of Medieval Illustrations of Hesiod's 'Works and Days,'" *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 81 (1986): 45-80; the presence of iron tools and their preciousness is attested within legal documents beginning in the seventh century. See John Teall, "The Byzantine Agricultural Tradition," *DOP* 25 (1971): 51.

<sup>257</sup> Bryer, "The Means of Agricultural Labor," 107.

<sup>258</sup> Michael Camille, "Laboring for the Lord: The Ploughman and Social Order in the Luttrell Psalter," *AH* 10, no. 4 (1987): 447-8.

nostalgic reproduction of a golden era breaking down in his reading of the Luttrell Psalter, private estate management and its acquiring of land, its cultivation and exploitation, were on the rise within the Byzantine economy from the twelfth to fourteenth century— especially led by monasteries.

In recent years, historians have turned to foundation documents and legal contracts to advance how we think about the environment, its management, and its exploitation in Byzantium, notably Alice Mary Talbot, John Haldon, and Konstantinos Smyrlis.<sup>259</sup> Often the land given by members of the aristocracy to monastic foundations in exchange for commemorations was transformed not only for the construction of churches and cells, but also for the planting of gardens, orchards, and vineyards.<sup>260</sup> Like the commemorative rituals occurring within the church for a patron's spiritual benefit, the management of these fields could also yield financial benefits for the foundation. While monastic *typika* are clear about monitoring the storing of produce, their transformation, and their use of hired hands for work, they say very little about surplus produce.<sup>261</sup> Based on documents of landholdings and the projected surplus, Smyrlis theorizes the commercialization of these landholdings in kind and in cash. For monasteries located near major markets, the produce from fields would have been taken first to the monastery, and then after keeping what was necessary, the rest would be sold. In this way, the monastery would have served as a storehouse for the surplus of the estates and continue to receive future yields for monetization.

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<sup>259</sup> Alice Mary Talbot, "A Monastic World," in *The Social History of Byzantium*, ed. John Haldon (Malden: Blackwell, 2009), 257-78; John Haldon, *The State and the Tributary Mode of Production* (London: Verso, 1993); Kostas Smyrlis, "Management of Monastic Estates: Evidence from the Typika," *DOP* 56 (2002): 245-261; Michel Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre d VIe au XIe siècle. Propriété et exploitation du sol* (Paris: Sorbonne, 1994).

<sup>260</sup> Margaret Mullett, "Founders, Refounders, Second Founders, Patrons," in *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries*, ed. Margaret Mullett (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 2007), 23-24; Alice-Mary Talbot, *Varieties of Monastic Experience* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 2019).

<sup>261</sup> Smyrlis, "Management," 256; 260-61.

In line with the cycles of renewal within the manuscript, the yields received created a future through that visualized surplus that recalls the year-round bounty from across the empire as visualized in the months and *tyches* in the *Chronograph* of 354.

But the appearance not of passive personifications but of the labors for the month in the *tyikon* for the monastery bears economic significance. The labors appear in the pages of an elite monastic manuscript at the precise moment when plots of land began to fall under the jurisdiction of these monasteries. While the surrounding area of the monastery of St. Eugenios has now been built up with only its church remaining, the accounts of pilgrims traveling to the monastery allow it to be partially reimagined with key data suggesting its profitable yields and extraction. The accounts emphasize its place within the landscape, resting on a hill outside the city walls to the east, where it overlooked the surrounding fields. One fourteenth century pilgrim named Barbara pauses on her approach to reflect on the land's fertility: "westerly winds come from the so-called Mountain of Mithras which rises above and especially in spring people flock there and enjoy the flowers and plants and take great delight in the sight of their blooms and in the thick grass."<sup>262</sup> Beyond enjoying the pleasures of nature, another contemporary visitor gestures to these fields and their yield in more explicit economic terms. Of the monastery's storage rooms, he writes specifically about the wine-cellar where "jars and little amphoras, wine-skins and bottles, bowls and cups and goblets" were kept, in a large enough quantity to cause immediate "awe and amazement."<sup>263</sup> Such collections of miracles were subject to exaggeration. But they seem to resonate with the activity shown within the manuscript, especially with the scene for January, which transforms the landscape into a field filled with jars and amphorae for wine, destined for

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<sup>262</sup> Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 268-71.

<sup>263</sup> Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 274-277.

the pilgrim's awe-inspiring storeroom. More than vessels, these containers allowed time to accumulate in the storeroom, ensuring that the monastery had (more than) enough for the future.

The knowledge required to carry out these activities of harvesting and viticulture circulated in several forms throughout Byzantium and was most likely transmitted by oral tradition within families or monastic communities. As for textual traditions, such knowledge was conveyed primarily through scholarly compilations such as Hesiod's *Works and Days* and the *Geoponika*.<sup>264</sup> As in the *Typikon* with its precise regulation of rituals throughout the year, both of these agricultural treatises are quite specific about the timing of activities: for example, in discussing the wheat harvest, the *Geoponika* says 'On July 6, threshing begins. In these days there is neither rainfall nor dew.'<sup>265</sup> Similarly, Hesiod's *Works and Days* includes a section on the suitability of different days of the month for different events: the twelfth day is good for a woman to set up her weaving, however the thirteenth is bad for sowing crops.<sup>266</sup> These works, as well as Eugenius's liturgical *typikon*, were deluxe illustrated editions. Their usefulness and the kind of knowledge they offered readers remains debatable and may have been more as wisdom literature than practicality. For example, when the court historian John Tzetzes commissioned an edition of *Works and Days* for himself, his contemporary Theodore Prodromos satirically pointed out the disconnect

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<sup>264</sup> For the Greek text, see Casiano Baso, *Geoponica, sive Cassiani Basi scholastici De re rustica eclogue*, ed. Heinrich Beck (Leipzig: Teubner, 1885); Cassianus Bassus Scholasticus, *Geoponika: Farm Work: a modern translation of the Roman and Byzantine farming handbook*, trans. Andrew Dalby (Totnes: Prospect Books, 2011). For a study on the sources involved in the creation of this work, see Christophe Guichard, "Sources et constitution des Géoponiques à la lumière des versions orientales d'Anatolius de Béryte et de Cassianus Bassus," in *Die Kestoi des Julius Africanus und ihre Überlieferung*, ed. Martin Wallraff & Laura Mecella (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009) with the list of referred authors on pp. 273–74.

<sup>265</sup> *Geoponika* III.6.8, pg. 95; see also Dionysius Stathakopoulos, "Between the Field and the Place: How Agricultural Products were Processed into Food," in *Eat, Drink, and Be Merry: Food and Wine in Byzantium*, ed. Kallirhoe Linardou and Leslie Brubaker (London: Routledge, 2007), 29–30.

<sup>266</sup> Hesiod, *Works and Days*, ed. Thomas Macmillan (London: Macmillan), 779; 780–81.

that intellectuals, who could read Hesiod, did not need him, while the tillers of the soil, who did need Hesiod, could not read him.<sup>267</sup>

To return to the manuscript's images, the relevance of work in the monastery, however, presents a different perspective where the tasks of working and especially managing the agricultural and viticultural processes were necessary aspects of daily life. The men depicted in the miniatures were not monks and are unquestionably noble: they are never tonsured and are often shown with quite luxurious fabrics. For example, May collects flowers in an elaborated decorated fabric (figure 2.29) and August relaxes on a cushion layered with equally luxurious textiles (figure 2.30). As an idealized image of a prosperous year and of labor and leisure, the images provide the monastery's abbot a model of perfected management and time, with the arrival of zodiac constellations ensuring the proper conditions for profitable work.

By bridging the activities occurring outside the monastery's architectural foundation and the liturgical rites occurring within it, the scenes of labor transform the manuscript into a compendium of regulating temporally organized activities. Much of the occupations associated with agricultural manuals and their place within the typikon's liturgical calendar are concerned with illustrating the correct times at which to carry out tasks within the year, whether that corresponds to work or to the proper hymns to recite. These illustrations could be regarded as a pictorial set of instructions for how to seize the present moment, conveying that each event whether agricultural or liturgical has a precise point within the ordered scheme of the calendar. But this impulse toward grasping the ever-fleeting immediacy of the right time is augmented by a more general theme within the texts and illustrations. While the text reveals an interest in extreme temporal precision, the work accompanying it fits the moment within a larger schema: grapes are

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<sup>267</sup> Giuditta Podestà, "Le Satire Lucianesche di Teodoro Prodromo," *Aevum* 19 (1945): 247.

harvested into baskets in September (figure 2.31) and reappear in January as wine, forging connections across the year (figure 2.26). The reappearance of the harvested material communicates an endless surplus, whose annual yield would continue to fill the monastic storehouse and ensure the futures.

With its combination of the calendar and illustration of the months, St. Eugenios's liturgical typikon simultaneously maps the progressive passage of time through the year with its appropriate feasts and activities, while also reflecting on the engagement with the monastery's holdings. Whereas Basil of Caesarea described the earthly realm as "the succession of time, forever pressing on and passing away, never stopping in its course,"<sup>268</sup> the monastic interest in land management participates in his expanding image of time through its annual practices of extraction and production. Rather than a succession of times, the illustrations propose a stratification, where multiple ways of tracking time can be observed from the monastery, constantly accumulating time in its profitable fields.

## Conclusions

Using the three sets of monthly labors representing men engaging with their environment, this chapter has shown that the timeless understandings of the natural world has been far too limiting. The practices of working the landscape were instead founded upon constant change, whether the changing landscape as marking time within the Octateuch, the transformation of scriptural knowledge into spiritual growth within the Canon Tables, or the commercialization of the changing landscape in an urban monastery. Each of the sets of months discussed in this chapter operate between and across monastic and courtly contexts, and yet discussions around the

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<sup>268</sup> Philip Schaff and Henry Wallace, eds., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series, Volume VIII Basil: Letters and Select Works* (New York: Cosimo, 2007), 54.

manuscripts continue to reify the boundary between these spheres. Margaret Mullett and Leonora Neville have both shown how porous the division between court and monastery could be, opting to highlight moments of convergence and interchange instead of division. Margaret Mullett has looked at the social base of Komnenian literature and court practices, identifying the moment as a period of experimentation and individualism. Focusing on the performances that surrounded the elaborate literary gatherings of *Theatra* and the *kyklos*, Mullett reconsiders the scant evidence we have for patronage, which could be nothing more than a suggestion with the writer left to their own devices in fashioning a work.<sup>269</sup> Rather than placing the court at the center, Mullett proposes a network in which artists and writers of both court and monastic backgrounds acted together, forging a close relationship to the artworks that appear in works of poetry and monastic manuscripts.<sup>270</sup>

Leonora Neville has similarly considered the retinue of intellectuals who surrounded Anna Komnene. As a patron of major thinkers, she transformed her apartments within the religious complex founded by her mother into something reminiscent of a salon. Here, framed within a monastic setting, the court was reconfigured where matters of the world, including science, theology, politics, and history were vigorously debated.<sup>271</sup> Taking this world of porous boundaries as it has been reconstructed through the literary analyses of Mullett and Neville, questions of patronage which have dominated the studies devoted to art production within this period prove to be ill equipped to handle the unruly nature of these temporal subjects. It would seem mobility and

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<sup>269</sup> Margaret Mullett, "Aristocracy and Patronage in the Literary Circles of Comnenian Constantinople," in *Letters, Literacy, and Literature in Byzantium* ed. Margaret Mullett (Burlington: Variorum, 2007), 173-201. See also Panagiotis Agapitos, "Poets and Painters: Theodore Prodromos' Dedicatory verses of his novel to an anonymous Caesar," *JÖB* 50 (2000): 173-85.

<sup>270</sup> Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century," 142.

<sup>271</sup> Leonora Neville, *Anna Komnene: The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 5-6.

versatility were key to this moment, and the varied histories of foundations and their patrons suggest that it may be more productive to dispose of the starkly alternative stereotypes of “aristocratic” and “monastic,” made vividly clear with the typikon of St. Eugenios.

By reorienting how we engage with the personifications away from their iconographic origins and toward their social engagement with the land, our perspective can shift to revisit the collapse of Byzantine labors with the classical world. While the labors and the work that they embody have led to a perceived timelessness of the landscape in their continuity from the classical world to Byzantium, the land was changing in its approach, evidenced in how it was monetized, exploited, and managed. Glimpses of technological innovation in the means of production can also be seen in the later Byzantine manuscripts of Hesiod’s *Works and Days* where tools are updated to reflect a Byzantine reality. But these manuscripts were for the elite, and not for the farmers who performed the agricultural work. Instead, the month’s labors of the typikon do not glorify the work so much as the profit from that labor which was destined to fill the pockets of the elite.



## Part II: Gathering and Unbinding Sacred Time

In the preface of the tenth-century *Synaxarion* for the Church of Constantinople, its anonymous compiler expresses the purpose of his comprehensive collection of saints as martyrs not as an encyclopedic “who’s who” of Byzantium’s most illustrious and sacred figures as modern scholars have characterized it, but as a devotional tool.<sup>272</sup> In conceiving of this project, he endeavors in his own words to “offer a view of those things that are distant in time and space *as if they were present*.”<sup>273</sup> The result of his monumental undertaking shaped the church year through hagiographic narratives. He mined the strata of Church history so that prophets, judges, and kings of the Old Testament, heroic martyrs of Early Christianity, Church officials (bishops, abbots, patriarchs), and new saints like Hosios Loukas who lived as recently as the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century could all come together in the same place and at the same time in the original compilation. Each figure included within the copies that stem from this project is arranged not chronologically, traversing time from Christian origins into the present as in a historical chronicle, but according to the date on which the figure allegedly died beginning with September 1<sup>st</sup>, the start of the year. Through this collection, the calendar accumulated narratives of saints’ lives that officiants recited in both monastic and cathedral services. Yet the experience of these narratives extends beyond the textual, and the notion of “presence” encompasses a visual component as well, whether held in the mind or seen in tandem with the reading. The next two chapters will examine how images in manuscripts and icons defined the notion of presence.

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<sup>272</sup> Alexander Kazhdan, “Constantinopolitan Synaxarium as a Source for Social History of Byzantium,” *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 251 (1996): 485; Anthony Bryer, “A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire,” *Minerva* 3 (1992): 39.

<sup>273</sup> *SECP*, col. xiv.

The compiler's enterprise for the *Synaxarion* provides a system of commemorations for the fixed feasts of the church year, which supplemented the Twelve Great Feasts (the *dodekaorton*). Nine of these have their own fixed place in the year (the Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany, Hypapante, Transfiguration, Presentation of the Virgin, the Dormition, and the Exaltation of the Cross) and three have mobile dates depending on the lunar calendar (Palm Sunday, the Ascension, and Pentecost). Easter holds its own calendar and manuscript tradition within the "paschal triduum," independent from the Great Feasts.<sup>274</sup> Out of the interpenetration of these cycles, the steady unfolding of Christ's biography through the Church year tempers the daily worship of different and changing saints.

By the tenth century, Byzantium's church calendars present a complicated choreography of cycles of varying lengths as well as media, bridging different manuscripts, hymns, and imagery. Any historian who deals with the rituals of the church year, whether in art or through the liturgy, must confront this formidable system of timekeeping. In contrast to the calendars discussed in the previous two chapters, which are grounded by changes in the natural world either through observations of the seasons or of the passage of the zodiac, the church year is structured by a different temporal order on multiple scales, both daily, weekly, and yearly. But these are anything but stable. If a commemoration falls on a Sunday for example, it is superseded by the weekly Sunday services, with dense liturgical *typika* acting as referees for the calendar. For example, in the eleventh-century *typikon* for the Constantinopolitan monastery of Evergetis (MS Athens Ethnike Bibliothek 788), if the commemoration of its founders Paul and Timothy (16 April) falls

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<sup>274</sup> Robert Taft, "Great Feasts," *ODB*; Ernst Kitzinger, "Reflections on the Feast Cycle in Byzantine Art," *CA* 36 (1988): 51.

on a Sunday, the commemoration is transferred to the following Monday and took precedence over Symeon of Persia (17 April).<sup>275</sup>

This *typikon* from the Evergetis monastery remains one of the earliest and fullest expressions of a liturgical calendar from a Constantinopolitan monastery.<sup>276</sup> As evidenced by the example of commemorations for the monastery's founders, its pages strive to outline as well as navigate a system for the year's rituals: who to commemorate, when, which texts to read and in what order, and what to do if the commemoration falls on a more important feast. In its structuring of time, this manuscript reflects the great efforts underway to organize liturgical time and create order from what otherwise could be a complex and convoluted system. *Typika*, in essence, become the architecture for liturgical time within monastic rituals, but encompassing the multimedia experience of the celebration of saints and the life of Christ, what are the temporal implications of making these figures present? How do these rituals allow multiple figures with their own places in history to hold the same space at the same time? The following chapters explore how two distinct calendar genres grapple with these issues and use imagery to move beyond hagiographic narratives that they represent.

Chapter 3 explores two specific instances of rewriting *Menologia* manuscripts, calendar books that contain the lives of the saint's commemorated, with imagery produced in Constantinople and Thessalonike, leading hagiographic centers, that followed the expansion of the liturgical calendar. As objects actively involved in the structuring of the year through gathering sacred subjects, the manuscripts provide insight to how the calendar is transformed into a

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<sup>275</sup> The *Synaxarion of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis, March-August, the Moveable Cycle*, trans. Robert Jordan (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 2005); John Klentos, "Byzantine Liturgy in Twelfth-Century Constantinople" (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1995), 248.

<sup>276</sup> Dirk Krausmüller, "Liturgical innovation in 11th- and 12th-century Constantinople: hours and inter-hours in the Evergetis Typikon, its 'daughters' and its 'grand-daughters,'" *REB* 71 (2013): 149.

collection of relics for the personal gain of two important patrons. I take as my case studies a so-called “imperial menologion” (MS Walters 521) undertaken by Michael IV (r. 1024-1041), who not only fuses two of the most important calendars, one in image and the other textual, but also emulates these cycles with saints that held personal relevance to be performed and observed in monasteries in Constantinople. In so doing, his menologion revision evokes an imperial relic collection offered to urban foundations for his protection. The second case study looks at a more personal expression in the form of a miniature book (MS Bodleian gr. th. f. 1) that combines images and poetry for the spiritual benefit of the Despot of Thessalonike, Demetrios Angelos Doukas Palaiologos. This diminutive book uses the structure of liturgical manuscripts to create an object of personal devotion that speaks across the boundaries of media and genres in the form of an elaborate reliquary. Examination of these two examples shows the calendar to be a matrix for elite patrons to make holy figures present as both a civic tool and as an intensely personal devotional work.

Following this discussion of how manuscripts structured the calendar, I turn to the corpus of calendar icons, four of which are preserved at Sinai. These icons present small effigies of every saint commemorated, arranged across multiple panels. While these icons have received general discussion, they have yet to receive rigorous individual scholarly attention, especially with respect to their distinct constructions of liturgical time. Scholars have expertly shown how images shaped an emerging liturgical present in Early Christianity, but theologians were revisiting these notions in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and discussing the structure of time in liturgical commentaries, especially the *Protheoria*.<sup>277</sup> Images, and the calendar icons in particular, are also

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<sup>277</sup> As defined by Derek Krueger and Jaś Elsner, liturgical time allowed biblical events to come to life in any audiences “here” and “now” while simultaneously pointing back to the sites where the events were believed to have taken place. Derek Krueger, “Liturgical Time and Holy Land Reliquaries in Early Byzantium,” in *Saints and Sacred Matter: The Cult of Relics in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Cynthia Hahn and Holger Klein (Washington: Dumbarton

engaged in these discussions. One polyptych positions the calendar in relation to the Life of Christ and the Second Coming, the two events that gave meaning to the liturgy and its rituals. Another set with a panel for each month is installed on the twelve piers of the monastery's *katholikon*, or main basilica, to define the sacred space and position it between time and eternity. Ultimately, I argue that these icons give visual insight into how time was being conceptualized at this time.

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Oaks, 2015), 111-112; Jaś Elsner, "Replicating Palestine and Reversing the Reformation: Pilgrimage and Collecting at Bobbio, Monza, and Walsingham," *Journal of the History of Collections* 9 (1997): 120; Many of these comments follow anthropological methods outlined in Roy Rappaport, "Ritual, Time and Eternity," *Zygon* 27 (1992): 5-30.

### Chapter 3: Gathering Time Engaging with the Calendar in Imperial Illustrated *Menologia*

#### Troubling Times

At the conclusion of a late fourteenth-century *enkomion*, or panegyric, praising Saint Agathonikos of Nikomedia, the author, a bishop of Selymbria named Philotheos, provides a list of several miracles performed by the honored saint.<sup>278</sup> The first two given reflect generic healing miracles commonly seen within the genre. Agathonikos acts through his relic to cure various injuries and diseases suffered by illustrious figures including the emperors Manuel I Komnenos and John V Palaiologos.<sup>279</sup> In this case, the efficacious relic is a celebrated fragment of his skull enshrined in the city. However, in the final instance, Philotheos diverges from these healing miracles to instead convey another form of divine contact independent from the saint's sacred relic. He first describes the envy that some of his fellow clergymen felt toward him, an emotion so intense that it drove his peers to unjustly accuse him of selling sacred objects from local churches and even ripping marble from their interiors to furnish his own palace. The author assures us that these claims are false, but they were brought before the emperor and patriarchs regardless. An investigation ensues, and only after a lengthy deliberation process does the case resolve in the bishop's favor. Now exonerated, Philotheos does not turn to thank God or the saint directly for the proper judgement, but instead comments on a coincidence of calendar dates: "Oh miracle!" he exclaims, "it was on the feast day of the martyr Agathonikos."<sup>280</sup> With this conclusion, the author

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<sup>278</sup> Paul Magdalino, "Byzantine Churches of Selymbria," *DOP* 32 (1978): 311. Alice Mary Talbot, "Old Wine in New Bottles: The Rewriting of Saints Lives," in *The Twilight of Byzantium*, ed. Slobodan Curcic and Doula Mouriki (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 23. See also Henry Maguire, "From the Evil Eye to the Eye of Justice: the saints, art, and justice in Byzantium," in *Law and Society in Byzantium: Ninth-Twelfth Centuries*, ed. Angeliki Laiou and Dieter Simon (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1994), 231.

<sup>279</sup> Magdalino, "Selymbria," 312, note 21.

<sup>280</sup> ἐν τῇ τοῦ μάρτυρος Ἀγαθονίκου μνήμῃ, ὡ τοῦ θαύματος. Quoted in Magdalino, "Selymbria," 311.41-42.

juxtaposes Agathonikos's physical remains with auspicious timing to reveal how the saint could incite change not only through his relics, but through his commemorative feast as well.

The context surrounding these celebratory turns of events is at once formulaic in Byzantine liturgical thought and unique in its privileging of the calendar and keen temporal junctions. Liturgical theories concerning ritual performance and its engagement with central figures from the biblical past, especially the life and Passion of Christ, have long emphasized the immediacy of these sacred historical events, understood to occur in the viewer's present.<sup>281</sup> Hymns and objects surrounding liturgical rituals could vividly illustrate this temporal bending, and encourage viewers to identify with events distant in time through first person language and shifting verb tenses. Liturgical scholars Daniel Galadza and Derek Krueger have both revealed the complex linguistic oscillations experienced in Palm Sunday processions, where the marker "today" (σήμερον) became a hinge, traversing past and present in its repeated presentations.<sup>282</sup> The first *sticherion* recited before the start of the procession orients "today" in its historical context:

Today (σήμερον) the Saviour came to the city of Jerusalem to fulfill the Scripture. And all took palms in their hands, spread their garments before him, knowing that he is our God, to whom the Cherubim cry without ceasing, "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed are you, who have great compassion. Have mercy on us."<sup>283</sup>

<sup>281</sup> On engagement with the liturgical year and renewal of memory, see Thomas Talley, *Origins of the Liturgical Year* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 235-6; Paul Bradwell and Maxwell Johnson, *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts, and Seasons* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2011), 89-90.

<sup>282</sup> "'Blessed is He Who Has Come and Comes Again': Mimesis and Eschatology in Palm Sunday Hymns and Processions of Twelfth Century Jerusalem," in *Hymns, Homilies, and Hermeneutics in Byzantium*, ed. Sarah Gador-White and Andrew Mellas (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 168-89; Derek Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 75-76.

<sup>283</sup> Ἦλθεν ὁ Σωτὴρ σήμερον ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν Ἱερουσαλὴμ πληρῶσαι τὴν Γραφὴν, καὶ πάντες ἔλαβον ἐν ταῖς χερσὶ βαΐα, τοὺς δὲ χιτῶνας ὑπεστρώνουν αὐτῷ, γινώσκοντες ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὃ τὰ Χερουβὶμ βοᾷ ἀπαύστως· Ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις· εὐλογημένος εἶ ὁ ἔχων πληθὺς οἰκτιρῶν· ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. Based on manuscript Hagios Stavros gr. 43, fol. 7r in Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus *Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμητικῆς Σταχυολογίας*, vol. 2 (St Petersburg: Kirsvaoum, 1894), 15; Follieri *Initia hymnorum ecclesiae Graecae, Studi e Testi*, vol. 2 (Vatican: Vatican City, 1960-66), 33. This *sticherion* is attributed to John the Monk (i.e. John Damascene) in some sources and is found as the Aposticha of Palm Sunday evening Vespers in the textus receptus. Quoted in Galadza, "Blessed is he," 176.

But in the *sticherion* that immediately follows this, the same “today” places the viewer in their present moment, celebrating the feast and acknowledging that the Passion events have passed:

Let us come as well today (σήμερον) to the new Jerusalem. Let us fall down before Christ, for, behold, he is seated not upon a young colt, but upon the highest throne of the Seraphim. Instead of olive branches let us offer him fruits of mercy, and let us cry out to him: “Hosanna in the highest! Blessed are you, who have great compassion. Have mercy on us.”<sup>284</sup>

Through repeating the day-marker “today” coupled with same closing refrain, the verses create continuity while making the verbal modulations that move from a today in the past tense (πληρῶσαι) to one in the present (προσπέσωμεν) even more pronounced. In other words, singers start and end with the same words that in turn point toward different temporal orientations existing in the space between them.<sup>285</sup>

Objects used for these services could also reshape a liturgical today through their inscriptions and imagery. As an example of what was a prevalent trend of mimetic images throughout the history of Byzantium, a pair of late twelfth-century *aeres*, liturgical veils that covered the paten and chalice during Eucharistic services, features the Communion of the Apostles with two lengthy dedicatory inscriptions embroidered into the silk (figure 3.1).<sup>286</sup> Each veil, now

<sup>284</sup> Δεῦτε καὶ ἡμεῖς σήμερον ἐπὶ τὴν νέαν Ἱερουσαλήμ· προσπέσωμεν Χριστῷ ἰδοὺ γὰρ κάθεται οὐκ ἐπὶ πώλου νέου, ἄλλ’ ἐπὶ θρόνου ὑψηλοῦ τῶν Σεραφίμ προσφέροντες αὐτῷ ἀντὶ κλάδων ἐλαίας καρπὸν ἐλεημοσύνης καὶ βοῶμεν αὐτῷ ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις· εὐλογημένος εἶ ὁ ἔχων πλῆθος οἰκτιρμῶν, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. Quoted in Galadza, “Blessed is he,” 176.

<sup>285</sup> As Christina Gschwandtner notes, the liturgical today is always simultaneously the concrete today of physical reality and the eternal ‘today’ without temporality. Gschwandtner, “Mimesis or Metamorphosis? Eastern Orthodox Liturgical Practice and Its Philosophical Background,” in *Inward Being and Outward Identity: The Orthodox Churches in the 21st Century*, ed. John Jillions (Basil: MDPI, 2017), 79.

<sup>286</sup> Ivan Dripč, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 111-17; Warren Woodfin, “Liturgical Textiles,” in *Byzantium: Faith and Power*, ed. Helen Evans (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 295-6; Franz Dölger, “Die zwei byzantinischen ‘Fahnen’ im Halberstädter Domschatz,” *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters*, Suppl. 3 (1935): 1351-1360; Patricia Strohmaier, “Vom liturgischen Textil zum Werbebanner? Zwei byzantinische Goldstickereien im Dom zu Halberstadt,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 80, no. 2 (2017): 219-246.



in the Halberstadt treasury but originally gifted to a Constantinopolitan church repeats the same subject. Christ stands at left before an altar distributing the bread and wine to groups of six approaching apostles. Beyond identifying the patron, the *sebastos* Alexios Palaiologos, the majority of the inscriptions acts like the Palm Sunday *sticheria* in forging links between Alexios and Old and New Testament figures, Moses's Israelites and the adulteress sinner from Luke's Gospel.<sup>287</sup> The paten veil reads:

If no Israelite might look directly upon the countenance of Moses, when he came down from the mountain of divine contemplation, how shall I look upon the [...] body unveiled, how to gaze at it? Thus, with fear I offer a covering [literally, 'intermediary'] to it, to the that is superior to all heavenly hosts, I, *sebastos* Alexios Palaiologos, pious servant. And you, Logos, grant that I may look upon your countenance on the Day of Judgment.<sup>288</sup>

While the chalice veil reads:

A harlot brought tears and ointment to you; having dried your feet with her hair, she received at once the remission of her sins. But since I have nothing of this kind, instead of tears I offer you pearls, instead of ointment I present gold, O Logos, [...] of [...], for I wish to reverently touch your mysteries. I, *sebastos* Alexios Palaiologos, ask for the remission of my countless sins.<sup>289</sup>

The silks' language oscillates between the Old and New Testament against the same image in what is a visual translation of the *sticheria*'s repetitive temporal markers. But in their distinct

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<sup>287</sup> Byzantine conceptions of the self especially among the aristocracy commonly drew on Biblical antetypes. For the "at once" aspect of saintly figures and contemporary patrons, see Cecily Hilsdale, "The Imperial Image at the End of Exile: The Byzantine Embroidered Silk in Genoa and the Treaty of Nymphaion (1261)," *DOP* 64 (2010): 192-3. See table of biblical antetypes in Dimiter Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium (1204-1330)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 87-88; Henry Maguire, "The Art of Comparing in Byzantium," *AB* 70, no. 1 (1988): 88-89 who describes balanced compositions of figures that mirror one another formally, thematically, or both as one of its most distinctive characteristics.

<sup>288</sup> From Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 114: Εἰ Μωσέως πρόσωπον ἰδεῖν ἀμέσως ἴσχυσεν οὐδεὶς Ἰσραηλίτης τότε ὅταν κατήλθεν ἐξ ὄρους θεοπτίας, πῶς ἀπαρακάλυπτον αὐτὸς ἀνίδ[ω] τὸ [...]σ[...]μ[...] σῶμα, πῶς ἐντρανίσω; δέδοικα τούτῳ λοιπὸν εἰσφέρειν μέσον, ᾧ [ὅ]περ [π]ά[ν]των τα[γ]μάτῳ[ν οὐρανίων, σεβαστὸς] Ἀλέξιος εὐσε[β]ή[ς] λ[ά]τρη[ς] Παλαιολόγος· ἅλα μοι νέμοις, Λόγε, ἰδεῖ τὸ σὸν πρόσωπον ἐν κρίσει τότε.

<sup>289</sup> From Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 114-15: Πόρνη προσῆξε δάκρυά σοι καὶ μύρον· θριξὶ δὲ τοὺς οὐς ἀπομάξασα [π]όδας εὐθὺς ἔλαβε λύτρον ἀμαρτημάτων· ἐγὼ δέ τι τοιοῦτον οὐκ ἔχ[ω]ν [ὁ]λως ἀντὶ δακρύων μαρ[γ]άρου[ς] σοι προσφέρω· ἀντὶ δὲ μύ[ρ]ου χ[ρ]υσὸν εἰσάγω, Λόγε, [...]ε [...] τοῦ [...] μυστηρίων σὼν εὐλαβῶς θίγειν θέλων σεβαστὸς Ἀλέξιος αἰτῶν τὴν λύσιν Παλαιολόγος ἀμετρήτων πταισμάτων.

inscriptions, the chalice veil in particular moves from sight to touch to stage an intimate experience using the harlot as a model: if possible, Alexios, like the harlot, would bring Christ tears and ointment, and wipe Christ's feet with his hair. These gifts are translated into the material composition of the *aeres*: tears are pearls and gold threads become the ointment. By calibrating the object's imagery with its celebration in the liturgical performance, the *aeres* reach across time, giving the biblical past new significance by means of the material presence and use of the gift.<sup>290</sup>

To return to the opening text, the bishop's stress on the saint's feast date reflects an important shift away from the general observance of Christ's life within the liturgy and toward other meaningful dates in the calendar centered on the saints. Philotheos's *enkomion* does not offer imagery or even describe the relic in his text. But by including the date of his exoneration alongside experiences with Agathonikos's relic, he nonetheless encourages his audience to think about these events together. While not a healing miracle, Philotheos's own encounter with the saint understands the truth coming to light as a proxy for the Agathonikos himself. In his retelling, it is the saint who guides the deliberations in favor of the bishop and ultimately dispels the charges. These miraculous events or divine apparitions usually entail a tangible contrast between the states of before and after brought about by contact or interfacing with an object, whether an icon or relic. But according to the *enkomion*, there was no image, object, or text that altered Philotheos's fate: the saint was present, and this presence was mediated through a calendar date as if the day itself were a relic.

Throughout this chapter, I argue that such a comparison between a relic and the saint's calendar day is not coincidental. Although the celebrated healing skull of Agathonikos no longer

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<sup>290</sup> Derek Krueger, "Liturgical Time and Holy Land Reliquaries in Early Byzantium," in *Saints and Sacred Matter: The Cult of Relics in Byzantium and Beyond*, edited by Cynthia Hahn and Holger Klein (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2015), 120.

survives, its power was undoubtedly mediated by means of a reliquary and not the piece of skull alone. These containers were transformed into receptacles for divine power: they held the relic but also extended its meaning, using gold and gems to visually convey a sacred status that enshrined and embedded bits of bone, cloth, and dust.<sup>291</sup> They helped to tell a specific story about the saint that privileged their entrance into heaven as well as their reconfigured and perfected state, often following gruesome martyrdoms. Relics and their reliquaries are often regarded as numinous objects where the divine and the mundane meet—and where the eternal present of the divine intersects with historical time—and this was equally true of their hagiographies. Accounts describing the deeds of saints were also documented, collected, and slotted into time through the feast days of the calendar. Like the reliquary and the physical relic, the day became a temporal container that held the saint in its association with a specific feast date in the year. The saint's relic and his feast day are specifically invoked in Philotheos's verses, and both were understood to hold the presence of the saint.

There was a strong temporal implication to this act of viewing reliquary or reading the saint's life. The invocation of a saint, whether that is conveyed through engaging with a relic or an icon, or by reading hagiographic texts, was understood as linking heaven and earth. It required, in Peter Brown's terms, an imaginative dialectic, whose effect was to raise the saint's power above normal associations of place and time, allowing them to act anywhere and in any given present.<sup>292</sup> To convey this point, a pilgrim casket now at the Vatican demonstrates how images participated

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<sup>291</sup> Cynthia Hahn, *The Reliquary Effect: Enshrining the Sacred Object* (New York: Reaktion, 2017), 10-17; for the promotion of cults and the collecting of relics, see Cynthia Hahn, *Strange Beauty: Issues in the Making and Meaning of Reliquaries, 400-ca.1204* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2012), especially on the subject of shaped reliquaries and treasures. Patricia Miller Cox, "'The Little Blue Flower is Red': Relics and the Poeticizing of the Body," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8, no. 2 (2000): 214-19.

<sup>292</sup> Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 78.

in shaping narratives about sacred events and the concept of time specifically (figure 3.2).<sup>293</sup> This sixth-century box encases a collection of stones and relics collected by an unknown pilgrim who travelled to the area around Jerusalem. Inscriptions written on the casket's contents identify their original site, so that a piece of wood in the upper righthand corner is inscribed with "Bethlehem" (figure 3.3)<sup>294</sup> Images on the container's lid elevate these bits of stone and wood from matter into relics by positioning them alongside the narrative scenes that were associated with their sites. Bethlehem's wood corresponds to an image of the Nativity in the lid's lower left, with the Virgin, Joseph, and Christ huddled beneath a cave alongside a donkey and cow, with the Magi's star at top in anticipation of the events to come (figure 3.4).

This scene joins the other collected material and painted images to form a complete account of Christ's birth and life, death, and resurrection. Beside the Nativity, Christ's baptism is on the lower right, the Crucifixion at center, the Mary's at the tomb in the upper right beside the Ascension, all supplemented with associated material from their physical sites around the region. In its collection of matter and representation, the box could replicate the experience of the pilgrimage after it ended and from a distance. Yet these images and relics also corresponded to the liturgical calendar: each pair in the casket was also associated with a major feast in the year. Material corresponding to the great feasts accumulate and transform the object into a time machine,

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<sup>293</sup> Beate Fricke, "Tales from Stones, Travels through Time: Narrative and Vision in the Casket from the Vatican," *West 86th* 21, no. 2 (2014): 235-6. For a complete bibliography see Martina Bagnoli, ed., *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics, and Devotion in Medieval Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 36; Bruno Reudenbach, "Loca sancta: Zur materiellen Übertragung der heiligen Stätten," in *Jerusalem, du Schöne: Vorstellungen und Bilder einer heiligen Stadt*, ed. Reudenbach (Bern: Lang, 2009), 23; Derek Krueger, "Liturgical Time and Holy Land Reliquaries," 112-4.

<sup>294</sup> Others include a stone from the Resurrection at center, a stone from Mount Zion, a stone from the Mount of Olives.

less by inviting comparison between today and the past than by containing the calendar year through image and sacred matter.

As a system of timekeeping, a calendar's regularity and structural organization appear at odds with the relic's capacity for miraculous timing and the desires brought to these objects by the devout to change time.<sup>295</sup> However, within this chapter I argue that Philotheos's encounter with his saint, mediated through the calendar, is not exceptional. Rather his remarks demonstrate a wider belief that viewed the collections of saints bound in manuscripts and venerated in the calendar as gathering time, much like the contents of the Vatican casket. Not only did these texts present the saint as living, martyred, and resurrected figures in the course of their reading, but illustrated editions commissioned by elite figures used images of martyrdoms that mimicked the effects of relics and acted as sacred matter.<sup>296</sup> This is seen in the two illustrated calendar books explored in this chapter, one at the Walters Art Museum (MS 521) and a miniature book at the Bodleian (MS Gr. th. 1). These two manuscripts employ a number of representational strategies for their programs, including lush illustrations in gem tones and miniscule images that recall jeweled reliquaries, with both calling upon the gathered collection of saints for protection on behalf of their patrons.

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<sup>295</sup> Paroma Chatterjee, "The Byzantine Icon of the Virgin in the Church of the Blachernae: Michael Psellos on the Problem of Miraculous Timing," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 51, no. 2 (2021): 241; Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage," *DOP* 56 (2002): 91-92.

<sup>296</sup> In this way, the illustrations are in line with the work of Alexei Lidov who has recently argued "sacred spaces were signaled by a coming together of relics, icons, architectural devices, church decoration, and liturgical rituals oriented toward a particular part of the complex, and also indicated by the recitation of special canticles, incense burning, and various forms of lighting. Overall, the coming together of these various media created what we might define as Byzantine holy matter." Alexei Lidov, "Icons Made of Relics: Creating Holy Matter in Byzantium," *RES* 75/76 (2021): 93.

## The Byzantine Church Year

Before turning to the case studies, I first provide an overview of the Byzantine church year and the manuscripts that organized it. Like the Latin West the liturgical calendar in Byzantium is composed of two distinct but interlocking parts with its own cycle of saints and date for Easter.<sup>297</sup> On the one hand, the cycle of “fixed feasts” so named because they occur on the same date each year, contained festivals, commemorations, and anniversaries beginning September 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>298</sup> On the other hand, the cycle of “moveable feasts” dependent on the date of Easter, whose date wanders across the springtime months depending on the lunar cycle.<sup>299</sup> The moveable feasts existed separate from the fixed cycle and took precedence, dislodging the fixed feasts when the two came into conflict to form the complete year and regulated by liturgical *typika*.<sup>300</sup> In settings of intense cultural contact such as Jerusalem, there is ample evidence of concelebration between Greeks, Latins, Armenians, and Georgians, although this situation became considerable more tense in the twelfth century with the Crusades.<sup>301</sup> All said, the differences between the Eastern and Western

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<sup>297</sup> On the Western Calendar, see Cyrille Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy: An Introduction to the Sources*, trans. William G. Storey and Niels Krogh Rasmussen (Washington: Pastoral Press, 1986); on the two cycles see Joyce Hill, “Coping with Conflict: the Lunar and Solar Cycles in the Liturgical Calendars,” in *Time and Eternity: the Medieval Discourse*, ed. Gerhard Jaritz and Gerson Moreno-Riano (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 100-1.

<sup>298</sup> Anthony Bryer, “Chronology and Dating,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Robin Cormack, John Halden, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 31-37.

<sup>299</sup> Sévérien Salaville, “La Formation du Calendrier Liturgique byzantine d’après les recherches critiques de Mgr Ehrhard,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 50 (1936): 312-23; Robert Taft, “The Veneration of the Saints in the Byzantine Liturgical Tradition,” in *Θυσία αἰνέσεως. Mélanges liturgiques offerts à la mémoire de l’Archevêque Georges Wagner (1930-1993)*, ed. J. Getcha and A. Lossky (Paris: Presses S Serge, 2005), 356-7.

<sup>300</sup> Elena Velkova Velkovska, “The Liturgical Year in the East,” in *Handbook for Liturgical Studies, Vol 5: Liturgical Time & Space*, ed. Anscar Chupungco. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000), 157-8.

<sup>301</sup> See Daniel Galadza’s reading of *The Life of Peter the Iberian* in, *Liturgy and Byzantinization in Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 7. For the original, see *John Rufus: The Lives of Peter the Iberian, Theodosius of Jerusalem, and the Monk Romanus*, ed. and trans. Cornelia Horn and Robert Phenix (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 62-3. On cultural interaction in the Holy Land more generally, see Christopher MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Daniel Galadza “Greek Liturgy in Crusader Jerusalem: Witnesses of Liturgical Life at the Holy Sepulchre and St Sabas Lavra,” *Journal of Medieval History* 43, no. 4 (2017): 436-7; Johannes Pahlitzsch and Daniel Baraz, “Christian Communities in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099-1187),” in *Christians and Christianity in the*

Calendars did not come down on calendars predominantly, but of the liturgical structure containing them. Whereas the Roman rite of fixed feasts, the *Sanctoral*, was constantly edited to remain subordinate to the *proprium de tempore* with its list of moveable feasts, the *typikon* regulated all of this material in the East, which required elaborate casuistry to navigate and justify its rules modulations.<sup>302</sup>

In their simplest form, Byzantine calendars are not unlike our own. They are lists of data, rigorously utilitarian and hardly works of art. Yet between the Palm Sunday *sticheria* and Philotheos's verses, the dates contained by the annual calendar became much more than a steady flow of celebrations. Built up around these informational lists, the cycle of festivities and commemorations could serve as a window into other places and times. But most importantly, both the reliquary and the calendar were what the devout interfaced with in experiencing their faith and history, ranging from collected but fragmented lists of saints arranged at disparate intervals across the year seen in the fourth century to every day having anywhere from one to twelve commemorated figures by the twelfth century.<sup>303</sup>

Emerging in the wake of an assortment of fragmentary traditions of a few saints from across the year both within the capital and well beyond it, the cycle of commemorations venerating the

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*Holy Land: From the Origins to the Latin Kingdoms*, ed. Ora Limor and Guy Stroumsa (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 207.

<sup>302</sup> Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of Divine Office and its Meaning for Today* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993): 311-13; for a recent overview of the two cycles in the west, see Matthew Champion, *The Fullness of Time: Temporalities in the Fifteenth Century Low Countries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018) 44-46. The substitution outlined in the introduction to Part II is relatively straightforward compared to others. On what has been called the typika's "Talmudic casuistry" see Taft, "The Veneration of the Saints in the Byzantine Liturgical Tradition," 356.

<sup>303</sup> 9 October has 12 commemorations listed: (1) Apostle Jacob; (2) Martyrs Juveninos and Maximos; (3) Deaconess Poupia of Antioch; (4) Martyrs Anne and Elisabeth; (5) Patriarch Abraham and Lot; (6) Jason bishop of Damascus; (7) Phlorentios and Diokletianos; (8) Strationikos and Seleukia; (9) Martyr Nikomedos; (10) Hieromartyr Dorotheos; (11) Martyr Gaudentios of Macedonia; (12) Father Peter. *SECP* 121-126:1-12. 24 September in contrast has only one: Thekla, who had a particularly robust cult. *SECP*, 75-78:1.

saints began to take shape in the 10<sup>th</sup> century *typikon* of the Great Church, which contained a commemorative calendar for use at Hagia Sophia.<sup>304</sup> In this early formation of a Constantinopolitan calendar, at least one saint, but often more, was inserted into each day of the year to provide a full cycle of commemorations for key holy figures and events that the church had decided were meaningful to the city and to Orthodox history. The dates assigned to these commemorations do not correspond to the saints' birthdays but to the date of their alleged deaths and are arranged according to the calendar beginning with 1 September and running until 31 August.<sup>305</sup>

Beyond the initial collection within the *Typikon* of Hagia Sophia, a series of liturgical manuscripts with biographical data for these figures structure the liturgical year, known as *Menologia*, *Synaxaria*, and *Menaia*.<sup>306</sup> In general, a *synaxarion* contains brief entries that identify the saint and the nature of their martyrdom and deeds, but often no more than a simple list.<sup>307</sup> Similarly conveyed in brief form, *menaia* provide the hymns and prayers for the services occurring on each saint's day arranged by month.<sup>308</sup> But *Menologia*, in particular, present the opportunity for much more expressive possibilities. They contain full, literary accounts for their entries,

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<sup>304</sup> Juan Mateos *Le Typikon de la Grande Église: MS Sainte Croix no. 40, Xe siècle* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1963). The saintly commemorations established within this manuscript evolved from early Christian lists of martyrs, especially the fourth century Jerusalem lectionaries. See Daniel Galadza, *Liturgy and Byzantinization in Jerusalem, 300-349*.

<sup>305</sup> Taft, "The Veneration of Saints," 355.

<sup>306</sup> Nancy P. Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts of the Metaphrastian Menologion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 3.

<sup>307</sup> Hippolyte Delchaye, "Les Menologes Grecs," *ABoll* 16 (1897): 311-329; J. Noret, *Ménologes, synaxaires, menées*, *ABoll* 86 (1968) 21-24; Wim Vander Meiren, "Précisions nouvelles sur la généalogie des synaxaires byzantins," *ABoll* 102 (1984) 297-301.

<sup>308</sup> Nancy P. Ševčenko, "Synaxaria and Menologia," in *A Companion to Byzantine Illustrated Manuscripts*, ed. Vasiliki Tsamakda (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 319.



recounting the saint's complete life from birth to death and occasionally posthumous miracles. These interrelated and superimposed cycles of information continue to structure the year through the appropriate texts and hymns for each day, creating an experience of the year marked by constant contrasts: juxtaposing different books and interlacing poetry, prose, music, and imagery.<sup>309</sup>

By the eleventh century at the latest, lengthy lives of these saints are integrated into liturgical services and collectively read aloud each day in monasteries during the morning service of *orthros*.<sup>310</sup> This moment of textual reworking and liturgical integration also witnesses the addition of illustrations to these texts. The design strategy for these manuscripts could vary widely, regardless of whether the book was designed specifically for liturgical services or not. Sometimes the miniature may be a historiated initial as in a menologion at the British Library (Add. 36636).<sup>311</sup> Conflating image and text, the vertical axis of the opening Iota provides an ideal setting to express the life and death of Saint Hieron (Ἱερών; figure 3.5). Bloody skulls piling up to the left of the letter's base imply the saint's martyrdom and are faced by an executioner at left who continues his rampage. In contrast, at the top of the Iota, Hieron appears in his perfected image, now haloed and standing in orans position with his name floating between his hands.

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<sup>309</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "The Evergetis *Synaxarion* and the celebration of a saint," in *Work and Worship at the Theotokos Evergetis 1050-1200*, ed. Margaret Mullett and Anthony Kirby (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 1997), 398-99.

<sup>310</sup> The Evergetis *Synaxarion* stipulates what life is to be read each day. See entries in *The Synaxarion of the monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis*, trans. Robert Jordan (Belfast: The Institute of Byzantine Studies, 2000).

<sup>311</sup> *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum 1900/05* (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1907), 166-68; Charles Van de Vorst and Hippolyte Delehay, eds., *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum Graecorum Germaniae, Belgii, Angliae* (*Subsidia Hagiographica* 13) (Bruxellis: Société des Bollandistes, 1913), 276; Albrecht Ehrhard, *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche von dem Anfängen bis zum Ende des 16 Jahrhunderts* (TU 50-52) vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1936-1952), 402. Marcel Richard, *Inventaire des manuscrits grecs du British Museum I, Fonds Sloane, Additional, Egerton, Cottonian et Stowe* (Paris: CNRS, 1952), 64. Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts*, 125-128.

In its presentation of the saint, the Iota communicates Hieron's place in heaven and on earth even before the first word of the Life is read. Other instances, like the famed illustrated calendar book for the emperor Basil II (Vat. gr. 1613), known as a menologion despite being a synaxarion and dating to ca. 1000, opt to separate text and image. In one scene from Basil's edition, an executioner returns his blade to his sheath while the commemorated saint, Saint Lucy, suffers the loss of her severed head beside tufts of red and blue flowers and in front of purple mountains (figure 3.6).<sup>312</sup> The brilliant crimson of her tunic incised with gold and corresponding bursts of blood appear stronger than the flames next to her in a manner that vividly conveys life even in light of her death. Below, in sixteen lines, the text describes her biography and this gruesome martyrdom.

Regardless of the time of year in the Vatican manuscript, whether early fall or the heart of winter, saints are dismembered in a world of jewel tones.<sup>313</sup> In the scene for Polyeuktos of Mitylene, commemorated on 10 January, the same fields of blossoming red and blue flowers mark the ground where the saint's head will fall (figure 3.7). Similarly, the 40 martyrs of Sebaste are commemorated on 9 March, whose martyrdom recounts how they froze to death in a lake near present-day Sivas in central Anatolia amid the coming spring.<sup>314</sup> Beyond showing false time and

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<sup>312</sup> Ihor Ševčenko, "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II," *DOP* 16 (1962): 243-76; The dating of this manuscript is contentious, with most generally agreeing on a date around 1000. cf. Der Nersessian, "Remarks on the Date of the Menologium and the Psalter Written for Basil II," *Byzantion* 15 (1940): 111.

<sup>313</sup> In a sense, standardization was at the heart of Basil's menologion. Time and place in the Vatican manuscript appear as uniform as the pages themselves. Each page meticulously divides text and image into equal parts so that the illustration and the saints' lives occupy precisely the same space on the page. Saints whose lives emerged from extensive textual development, like the *megalomartyr* Demetrios, and those with the briefest of notices within the Constantinopolitan *Synaxarion*, such as Ariston bishop of Alexandria, are each treated in the same manner, either expanded or contracted to fit within sixteen lines to stress a unified collection more than individuals. The collection of figures becomes a pageant of Christian history that allows its viewer to remember their past in any given present. *SECP*, 163-166:1 (Demetrios); 11-12:4 (Ariston).

<sup>314</sup> The 40 martyrs would have been illustrated in the second volume of Basil's manuscript, which does not survive if it was ever made. For the hagiography, *SECP* 521-524:1.

the wrong season, the discrepancy between the illustrations and the passage of time dictated by the calendar reflects a conquering of time itself. In their eternal landscape, the illustrations construct another world immune to the changing landscape characterized by the monthly labors.<sup>315</sup> Even the executioners, always wearing flamboyant costumes threaded with gold and inhabitants of the earthly realm, seem to be pulled into their golden background to ensure that attention falls on the dismembered and sacred body. With these fertile backgrounds for the fall and winter months and the scenes' sumptuous colors and materials, the tortured saints stand in for the perfected body. Whereas the British Library's historiated initial pulls apart these states with the iota's column, the Vatican menologion overlays them: Lucy, Polyeuktos, and countless others exist in an eternal state of dismemberment against backgrounds that erupt in color from flowers and mountains. The consistent equilibrium of word and image allows both to occupy the same page and for the martyred body to always be reconstructed through the text.

It is important to note that editions with imagery comprise only the smallest fraction of all our surviving calendar books (about 5%).<sup>316</sup> Such disparity raises an important question: what role were these images meant to perform within the year? And does the addition of imagery change the experience of the church calendar over the year? Scene after scene in the calendar book, the presented images look and feel the same in their suspension of narrative action. The saint who died within their own time is always shown still alive in the image before the viewer, even in the case of Lucy who is shown in the wake of her martyrdom. While the miniature may illustrate the

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<sup>315</sup> This can also be extended to the architectural backdrops that defy engineering in order to enshrine the venerated body.

<sup>316</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts*, 6-7. Of the nearly 850 manuscripts that comprise the Metaphrastian recension, the most popular and officially sanctioned calendar book in Byzantium, traditionally spread across ten volumes, only 43 surviving manuscripts contain any sort of figural decoration, and 20 of these 43 have been aligned into seven separate editions, radically reducing the total number. All these cluster between the eleventh and twelfth century; Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* vol. 2, 694-95.

martyrdom, the death is never fully completed. In this way, the illustrations introduce new ways of thinking about time within the calendar that intersects with the transformation of relics and reliquaries for liturgical performance. The time displayed in these illustrations, invariably against gold backgrounds, contributes to the “liturgical now” and its space in between states, bridging different levels of historical pasts and the immediacy of the present.

This chapter pursues this tension by exploring illustrated strategies for two later *Menologia* manuscripts as modes of personal engagement with the calendar. These examples of elite Byzantine *Menologia* have not been directly discussed alongside one another, but in addition to being calendar manuscripts commissioned by imperial patrons, they both use their collection of saints and images as powerful metaphoric relics. In arguing this, I move beyond the textual and informative structure of the calendar that provides a shape for the year to consider how time was experienced or altered through the illustrations in these calendar books. By exploring the role of these images, how they were used and engaged with, and how they mute the passage of narrative and chronological time, this chapter adds nuance to their perception as static and timeless. In particular, the gathering of saints within these manuscripts who lived across the known world and at different times mirrored with the wealth of miracle-working relics brought to Constantinople, which housed the largest and most famous relic collection in the Christian world until the Fourth Crusade (1204).<sup>317</sup> As a reflection of these sacred and illustrious treasuries, the elite manuscripts became tools with political and spiritual import. They used the calendar as a collection of ordered sacred time to support their individual aspirations and desires for protection.

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<sup>317</sup> For relic collections in Constantinople, see Paul Magdalino, “L’église du Phare et les reliques de la Passion à Constantinople (VIIe/VIIIe–XIIIe siècles),” in *Byzance et les Reliques du Christ*, ed. Jannic Durand and Bernard Flusin (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2004), 15-30; John Wortley, “Relics and the Great Church,” *BZ* 99, no. 2 (2007): 631-2.

## Approaches to the Calendar and Menologia

Textual and liturgical analyses have dominated understandings of these manuscripts within scholarly literature. Recently, however, attention has shifted to the imagery and hymns that surrounded these texts in their ritual performances.<sup>318</sup> In the overview that follows, I trace the initial cataloguing work that occurred around calendar books, which sought to organize the calendar from a list and toward more holistic narratives. I then move on to art historical interventions into these early studies to reveal the power of images in shaping calendar traditions and their experiential possibilities.

Laying the foundations for how Byzantium's calendar traditions are understood, the Bollandist Hippolyte Delehaye and German theologian Albert Ehrhard each produced key studies on manuscript transmission with emphasis placed on the development of hagiographic narratives. In his monumental edition of the Constantinopolitan *Synaxarion*, Delehaye endeavored to provide scholars with a text based on a well-preserved witness, the *Sirmondianum Synaxarion* (*Berolinensis Phil.* 1622) from the twelfth/thirteenth century.<sup>319</sup> This witness is particularly rich in hagiographic information with anywhere between one and twelve entries corresponding to saints commemorated for every day of the year and spanning multiple columns of text to single lines.<sup>320</sup> However, the *Sirmondianum* edition was produced very late in the calendar's development. As such, his monumental publication of the *Synaxarion* lends itself particularly well to general understanding of the shape of the calendar in twelfth-century Constantinople, but cannot account

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<sup>318</sup> On the differences between monastic and cathedral rites, see Taft, "Cathedral vs. Monastic Liturgy in the Christian East: Vindicating a Distinction," *BollGrott* 3 (2005): 173-219; Nicholas Denysenko, ed., *Icons and the Liturgy, East and West: History, Theology, and Culture* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017).

<sup>319</sup> On the manuscripts, see Hippolyte Delehaye, "Le Synaxaire de Sirmond," *ABoll* 14 (1895): 396-434; *SECP*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1902).

<sup>320</sup> However, even within single entries, there may be multiple saints listed.

for various *synaxaria*, both earlier and coeval, which are too numerous and distinct, and whose entries are subject to erasures, revivals, and redistributions.<sup>321</sup>

At present, Delehaye's hefty publication remains the fullest and most accessible edition of a Byzantine *Synaxarion*.<sup>322</sup> He had no intention of reconstructing the "original" tenth-century *Synaxarion*, but rather to focus attention on the peak of an ever-changing tradition, providing an extensive apparatus across the footnotes to signal regional variations, additions, and subtractions.<sup>323</sup> Despite this fact, it remains a common misconception that the Byzantine calendar was monolithic and synonymous with Delehaye's published edition.<sup>324</sup> Ongoing work on the development and transmission of the calendar tells a more complicated story. Wealthy individuals and specific foundations like monasteries may have their own cycle of saints. Others aligned themselves with the cycles of more important institutions. And still others continued to use older versions of the *Menologia*.<sup>325</sup> Regardless of what edition a foundation or community used, it was through the arrangement of these figures and dates in the calendar manuscript that communities

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<sup>321</sup> Andrea Luzzi, "Synaxaria and the Synaxarion of Constantinople," in *The Ashgate Companion to Byzantine hagiography, Vol 2: Genres and Contexts*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 200; Hippolyte Delehaye, "Les ménologes Grecs," *ABoll* 16 (1897): 329.

<sup>322</sup> A translated edition of this has long been desired, but given the quantity of texts, and critical apparatus, this would be a herculean endeavor.

<sup>323</sup> For example, the critical apparatus will identify anomalies that appear in some manuscripts but will not always reproduce the life. See for example the discussion of E and rare South Italian recensions in Chapter 4.

<sup>324</sup> This idea was initially put forward by Albert Ehrhard, *Überlieferung, vol. 1*, (Leipzig, 1936), 28. Even during the eleventh century there remained room for change. Within the *typikon* for the reformed monastery the Mother of God Petrizonitissa written by Gregory Pakourianos in 1083, the founder foresaw that services outside the specified commemorative cycle will naturally arise. Paul Gautier, "Le typikon du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos," *REB* 42 (1984): 62-63:738-9.; Robert Jordan, "Pakourianos: Typikon of Gregory Pakourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Petrizonitissa in Bačkovo," in *BMFD, vol. 2*, ed. Thomas and Hero (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Press, 2000), 533.

<sup>325</sup> See most recently the table of five fourteenth-century lectionary calendars compiled by Robert Nelson. Nelson, "The Calendar of Saints in Hodegon Lectionaries," in *The Eloquence of Art Essays in Honor of Henry Maguire*, ed. Andrea Olsen Lam and Rossitza Schroeder (Milton: Taylor and Francis, 2020), 225-45 (Appendix).

remembered their pasts, whether individual or collective, or created new pasts in the hopes of elevating their status.<sup>326</sup>

In contrast to Delehaye's study of the *Synaxarion*, Ehrhard pursued the hagiographic traditions related to *Menologia* to reveal the threads that came together to construct the calendar while also signaling distinct traditions that existed independently from the *Synaxarion* in use at Hagia Sophia. His 1936 compendium of saints' lives excavated Delehaye's edition to accumulate and catalogue hagiographic texts across time, beginning with early attempts undertaken by Eusebius of Caesarea in the fourth century.<sup>327</sup> At the core of Ehrhard's study was the reconstruction of the most popular *Menologion* in circulation, the Metaphrastian redaction comprised of 148 hagiographical texts that were rewritten at the end of the tenth century and embraced as the official redaction.<sup>328</sup>

Attention has fixated on the textual transformation of these compendia of feasts and commemorations.<sup>329</sup> But in tandem with these collections that witnessed continual auditions, deletions, and reassignments, poems and images also participated in shaping the calendar. Metrical verses begin to shape hagiography, from epigrams in remembrance of individual saints to versified *Synaxaria* collections for all the saints honored in the year undertaken by Christopher Mitylene in

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<sup>326</sup> Galadza, *Liturgy and Byzantinization*, 10-11; Kruger, *Liturgical Subjects*, 67-105. Due to the distinctly personal nature of the calendar to any given community, tracing the evolution of these lists from their emergence to their completed form would need to be treated individually rather than as a collective development.

<sup>327</sup> Ehrhard, "Verzeichnis der Bibliotheken," in *Überlieferung* vol. 1, 1.

<sup>328</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of Metaphrastes's project, see Christian Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes: Rewriting and Canonization* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002) and Henrik Zilliacus, "Zur stilistischen Umarbeitungstechnik des Symeon Metaphrastes," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 38 (1983): 333-50.

<sup>329</sup> See for example the recent publication Anne P. Alwis, Martin Hinterberger, and Elisabeth Schiffer, eds., *Metaphrasis in Byzantine Literature* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021).

the eleventh century.<sup>330</sup> Like the purely poetic compositions, calendars exclusively conveyed in images also appear in Sinai.<sup>331</sup> Yet as a result of the textual dominance that privileges material rich in biography and narrative details for an edifying or liturgical purpose, the gradual adoption of other applications of the calendar, whether visual or poetic, is often viewed as an eccentric offshoot at the expense of meaningful engagement with these forms. This dismissal of alternative approaches that used poetry and imagery is even more striking when oriented within the aims of the broad program of rewriting saints' lives underway across the eighth to the later tenth centuries.<sup>332</sup>

Despite these varied efforts, historiography on Byzantine hagiography largely follows Ehrhard in its focused and sustained attention given to Symeon Metaphrastes's edition.<sup>333</sup> 148 Saints' Lives comprised his recension arranged unevenly in the order of the calendar across 10 volumes in its standard configuration.<sup>334</sup> He revised the style of these Lives in line with literary conventions of the time: earlier texts are given a high level of rhetorical polish, with complex and high level of classical syntax.<sup>335</sup> But he was not the only one. A century prior, Theodore the Studite

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<sup>330</sup> For a full sketch of his biography and his œuvre Stefanos Efthymedis, "Greek Byzantine Hagiography in Verse," *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography, Vol. II Genres and Contexts*, ed. Stefanos Efthymedis (London: Routledge, 2017), 163-4 with additional bibliography.

<sup>331</sup> See chapter 4 for a discussion of these calendar icons.

<sup>332</sup> Claudia Rapp, "Byzantine Hagiographers as Antiquarians, Seventh to Twelfth Centuries," in *Bosphorus: Essays in Honour of Cyril Mango* (Amsterdam: Adolf Hakkert, 1995), 32-33.

<sup>333</sup> For an overview, see Christian Høgel, "Symeon Metaphrastes and the Metaphrastic Movement," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 184.

<sup>334</sup> Due to a number of factors, not the least Metaphrastes's falling out of favor with the court of Basil II, the enterprise likely was not completed. It was only after his death that the texts gained widespread recognition. Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes: Rewriting and Canonization*, 89-130 esp. 127-30, with List of Metaphrastic texts as an appendix (172-204); Ehrhard, *Überlieferung*, vol II, 306-709; Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts*, 5.

<sup>335</sup> Christian Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes*; Daria Resh, "Toward a Byzantine Definition of Metaphrasis," *GRBS* 55, no. 3 (2015): 754-787; Bernard Flusin, "Vers la Métaphrase," in *Rémanier, Métaphraser: Fonctions et techniques de la réécriture dans le monde byzantin*, ed. S. Marjanović-Dušanić and Bernard Flusin (Belgrade: Université de Belgrade, 2011), 85-99; Elizabeth Schiffer, "Metaphrastic Lives and Earlier Metaphraseis of Saints' Lives," in



and Methodius, who would become Patriarch of Constantinople, both endeavored to arrange saintly figures according to the liturgical year based on their own writings.<sup>336</sup> Through these various processes which culminated in the imperial endorsement of the Metaphrastic collection, the development of the calendar with its additions and forms reveals itself to be closer to a living document, subjected to many different approaches and strategies, than to a monolith.

After the rewriting of the hagiographic cycle, the images added to the text aid in expressing the narrative. They adorn the text, often responding to its plot by visualizing key episodes, particularly the martyrdom, to heighten the emotional response of the narrative. Nancy Patterson Ševčenko's catalogue of illustrated editions of the Metaphrastian recension shows that at least seven distinct pictorial strategies for the Lives were in circulation in roughly 100-year period from the eleventh to early twelfth century, with 23 other manuscripts outside these editions representing related but ultimately dissimilar approaches.<sup>337</sup> The standard approach is to include one image (either a portrait or martyrdom) at or near the text's opening.<sup>338</sup> Others are more economical, with only an image of the first saint in the volume.<sup>339</sup> And still others are more inventive, with all the saints commemorated in the volume arranged on the frontispiece.<sup>340</sup> Each of these strategies deploy imagery to structure distinct ways of reading and temporalities of use.

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*Metaphrasis: Redactions and Audiences in Middle Byzantine Hagiography*, ed. C. Høgel (Oslo: Research Council of Norway, 1996), 22-42. On the text's use of language see Elisabeth Peyr, "Zur Umarbeitung rhetorischer Texte durch Symeon Metaphrastes," *JÖB* 42 (1992): 143-55; Henrik Zilliacus, "Zur stilistischen Umarbeitungstechnik des Symeon Metaphrastes," *BZ* 38 (1938): 333-50; Henrik Zilliacus, "Das lateinische Lehnwort in der griechischen Hagiographie," *BZ* 37 (1937): 319-44.

<sup>336</sup> Ehrhard, *Überlieferung*, vol. 1, 18-24.

<sup>337</sup> For a full list of the catalog, see Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts*, 11-181.

<sup>338</sup> Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts*, 40-82.

<sup>339</sup> Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts*, 26-34.

<sup>340</sup> Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts*, 11-26.

Modelling this interaction between text and image, one manuscript for December in Milan (Biblioteca Ambrosiana gr. 1017) uses multiple episodes to convey distinct episodes of the hagiography. The entry begins with standing portraits of the commemorated saints, in this case the Five Martyrs of Sebaste (figure 3.8). With the first image likely grafted from the calendar portion of lectionaries, where portraits of Auxentios, Mardarios, Eugenios, Orestes, and their leader, Eustratios, who were martyred under Diocletian stand in the margins of commemorations listed for the month of December (figure 3.9), the *Menologia* sequence allows the images to act in dialogue with the text. It is through reading the text that the martyrdom becomes animated, with the end coinciding with the dismemberment of the holy bodies. The row of haloed saints is pulled apart in different registers of the margins, with each member tortured individually, whether hung upside down and prodded, beaten with clubs, or beheaded (figure 3.10). The illustrations provide an effective corollary to the hagiography, invoking the presence with the simple portrait and responding to the text by visualizing the death.<sup>341</sup>

While the assimilation of illustrations to fit with narrative conventions has dominated understandings of this *Menologion*, such a linear sequence of reading may be too simplistic and diminish the intentional ambiguity of the opening portraits. Are these meant to be representations of the martyrs sanctified before their death or their perfected state? The flexibility of the opening portrait, in allowing both states to exist simultaneously, exceeds the confines of the textual narrative and embraces the uniquely hagiographic temporality of figures who could transcend space and time.

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<sup>341</sup> Surprisingly, Chatterjee reads this sequence of images in a linear fashion: the first scene, in her view, anticipates their martyrdom. But there is nothing to suggest that this image was not or could not also be their resurrected presence. Chatterjee, *The Living Icon in Byzantium and Italy: The Vita Image Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: CUP, 2014), 75-6.

Among one particularly elaborate example of the use of images to layer temporalities among the Metaphrastic manuscripts, a volume for the month of September (London, British Library Add. 11870), dated to the second half of the eleventh century displays the life of Saint Anthimos, bishop of Nicomedia, celebrated on 3 September.<sup>342</sup> Inserted into a patch of tendrils with blue and pink rosettes that frame his portrait, four roundels visually elaborate on the saint's death as it is described within the text (figure 3.11). From his throne in the upper left roundel, Emperor Maximian orders two youths to Semana where Anthimos was hiding (PG 115, 173d). They find him on a hill in the upper right scene (176a-b), bring him back to the emperor who then aids in torturing him on a wheel in the lower left image (180b) and, ultimately, Anthimos performs his final prayer and is decapitated in the lower right vignette (184). These images all converge on a central medallion of the saint, who emerges from the martyrdom heroically as a bishop. Its cycle of images is thoroughly imbricated in the organizational structure of the manuscript. Above it, in gold ink, an inscription provides the date (the same month [September], 3). Below the headpiece but within the ornamental pylon, the saint's name and profession are given in bolded script: "The martyrdom of the hieromartyr Anthimos bishop of Nikomedia." His biography then unfolds with key data: where he was born, where he travelled, his good deeds, his death. However, despite the acts and miracles performed by Anthimos as described in the text, the opening miniature can hardly be said to illustrate his Life. Instead, the roundels which could easily show key events from the beginning and end, present the briefest of cycles that contain only the final events leading up to his death, the ultimate event that is commemorated.

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<sup>342</sup> Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts*, 118-125; Christopher Walter, "The London September Metaphrast Additional 11870," *Zograf* 12 (1981): 11-24 with earlier bibliography.

While scholars such as Christopher Walter have argued that these hagiographic cycles reproduce a now-lost cycle, I do not believe a model is necessary.<sup>343</sup> Ultimately, these images do not primarily illustrate the saint's Life. They serve as vivid reminders for the reader in their present moment that this death happened today on this date and give a momentary face to the numinous presence of the saints through their suffering. Rather than narrative precision, the headpiece's dissection of episodes evokes the dismemberment of the saints that they accompany and makes explicit what was implied within the Ambrosiana sequence in its reconfiguration of narrative progression. The central medallion of the saint who disrupts the visual cycle of the roundels makes this dislodgement pronounced, as it is this image that addresses the viewer as they maneuver between the past singular events of martyrdom and Anthimos's eternal presence at center.

In the tradition of calendar books, the term "illustration" and its implicit subordination of image to textual narrative may be an inappropriate conceptual framework for the miniatures that actively undersells what kinds of time the imagery presents. Sirarpie Der Nersessian and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko have both pointed out that the illustrations used within calendar books do not necessarily align with the texts that they represent.<sup>344</sup> For example, the notice for Clement within the Vatican manuscript describes how the saint was exiled to Ankyra by Trajan and imprisoned in a stone chamber where he died of starvation. His body was carried to Cherson by his followers, but idolaters threw the corpse into the sea where several unspecified miracles took place. Rather than showing this martyrdom scene, the miniature transforms Clement's story into an updated liturgical event corresponding to a specific miracle not expressed within the text below it (figure

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<sup>343</sup> Walter, "The London September Metaphrast," 15.

<sup>344</sup> Sirarpie Der Nersessian, "The Illustrations of the Metaphrastian Menologium," in *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honor of Alfred Friend* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 266-7; Throughout in, Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *Illustrated Editions of the Metaphrastian Menologion*, 25, for example.

3.12). Within the framed miniature a priest carries a large processional cross as attendants follow holding lit candles and censers. In the opposite corner, a child gestures toward the priest from the left corner beside a sarcophagus in the sea.

Expressing an episode from the miracles collected within his *Passio* written by Ephrem bishop of Cherson, the image visualizes an annual ceremony that took place on the date of Clement's death when the sea would recede, and large crowds flocked to visit the stone shrine, unmade by human hands, where the saint's body rested.<sup>345</sup> At one of these processions, a child was left behind and taken by the rising tide. The following year the mourning parents returned and found their child still alive. When asked how he had been saved, the child held the sarcophagus with one hand and pointed to the body within it, saying that he had been saved by the saint. In this instance, the scene corresponds not to the saint's martyrdom as conveyed in the textual entry, but to a liturgical presentation that was to be commemorated in the present.

Other illustrations similarly emphasize not the holy event or even its miracle, but its liturgical experience. As a final case in point, scenes commemorating environmental events that wreaked havoc on the city of Constantinople, like the infamous earthquake of 740, are commemorated, but not literally depicted. Rather than showing the damage that Hagia Sofia incurred on 26 October, the illustration for that day shows the patriarch leading a procession toward a church (figure 3.13). Here, like the entry for Clement, a large and jeweled cross towers above the assembled group at left with candles and censers as they approach the facade.<sup>346</sup> It would of course be sacrilegious to depict Constantinople as a broken city within a book concerned with

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<sup>345</sup> Sirarpie Der Nersessian, "The Illustrations of the Metaphrastian Menologium," 266-7; Migne, *PG* 2, 641.

<sup>346</sup> John Baldovin, "A Note on Liturgical Processions in the Menologion of Basil II," in *Εὐλόγημα Studies in Honor of Robert Taft, S.J.*, ed. Ephrem Carr (Rome: Centro Studi S. Anselmo, 1993), 34-35.

sacred history, but the scene nonetheless encourages an association with the present.<sup>347</sup> With the accompanying images of Clement and the earthquake, the visualization of liturgical rites moves from the historical time of the entry and toward cyclical, ceremonial time, commemorating not the event but an act of its remembrance.

Such narrative approaches, using the texts to understand the illustration, follow the scholarly trend of rewriting and updating *Menologia* narratives, but ultimately fail to account for the complex series of images. I argue that these were far more present-oriented than has been acknowledged. Scholars such as Kurt Weitzmann, Anthony Cutler, and Mary-Lyon Dolezal have all connected the manuscript illustrations in Gospel Books, Psalters, and Lectionaries to shaping liturgical experiences.<sup>348</sup> Yet this attention has not been brought to bear on illustrated *Menologia*, despite playing a role in these same rituals and even illustrating them in lieu of the saints and events that their entries describe. Illustrated *Menologia*, I propose, collect and frame their contents like elaborate reliquaries and the act of collection constitutes a temporal act based on ritual and storytelling. With illustrations that exceed hagiographic texts, the pictorial programs of the two manuscripts discussed in the following sections serve as potent vehicles for navigating the tensions of liturgical time and saints' paradoxical presences within earthly time and outside of it. For the Walters *Menologion*, this is done indirectly, copying the images of a book akin to a contact relic, or the *menologion* may be explicitly compared to a reliquary, as in the Bodleian's *Bildmenologion*.

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<sup>347</sup> And yet Byzantine authors do this constantly when they describe the end of time. See András Kraft, "Constantinople in Byzantine Apocalyptic Thought," *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 18 (2012): 25-36.

<sup>348</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, "Narrative and Liturgical Gospel Illustration," in *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, ed. H. Kessler (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 247-70; Anthony Cutler, "The Liturgical Strata in the Marginal Psalters," *DOP* 34/35 (1980/1981): 17-30; Mary Lyon Dolezal, "Illuminating the Liturgical Word: Text and Image in a Decorated Lectionary (Mount Athos Dionysiou Monastery Cod. 587)," *Word and Image* 12 (1996): 23-60.

### The Walters Menologion and the Imperial Group

The Walters menologion (W 521) is a sizable manuscript (23 x 30 cm) produced in Constantinople for the saints celebrated in January, and dated to the mid-eleventh century.<sup>349</sup> Its 295 folios contain richly decorated illustrations, one to begin each saint's life. The opening miniature for the saints Theonas and Theompimtos presents the two saints between three ragged peaks, using the empty space between them to provide vistas for their ensuing martyrdom (figure 3.14). Theonas bends about to be bludgeoned by a bat while two youths prepare to bury his companion. The landscape frames not only how we are to view the saints, but also the text below, which follows in a clear script that spreads across two columns aligned with the saints' bodies.

This manuscript for the saints celebrated in January formerly comprised part of what was once a multivolume edition of the so-called "Imperial *Menologion*" dated to the mid-eleventh century. In addition to five severely damaged fragments from the Benaki Museum containing saints celebrated in December and February, the only other illustrated edition of this group is a manuscript that covers the months of February and March now in the State Historical Museum in Moscow, dated to the latter half of the eleventh century based on literary analysis.<sup>350</sup> Other editions from this group date to the twelfth through fourteenth centuries or to the late sixteenth century, but contain no ornament.<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> The most comprehensive analysis of this manuscript remains Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "The Walters 'Imperial' Menologion," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 51 (1993): 43-64; Georgi Parpulov, "A Catalogue of Greek Manuscripts at the Walters Art Museum," *The Journal of the Walters Art Museum* 62 (2004): 83-88.

<sup>350</sup> This corpus was divided by Ehrhard into two groups (named Menologia A and B) according to literary styles with B from the mid-eleventh century and A from the latter half of the century. Moscow belongs to group A and not having consulted the Walters manuscript it was placed in the same group, however it seems to belong to the earlier recension due to its different prayer formula discussed below. On these texts, see Ehrhard, *Überlieferung*, vol. 3, 341-443.

<sup>351</sup> Ševčenko, "II. The Imperial Menologia and the 'Menologion' of Basil II," in *The Celebration of the Saints in Byzantine Art and Liturgy* (Farnham: Variorum, 2013).

In this section, I bridge the foundational work undertaken by both textual historians and art historians who have separately uncovered the various sources of the manuscript's contents to understand how the patron—an emperor named Michael— used this manuscript to insert himself into the monastic ritual services. In line with imperial donations to monastic foundations, the manuscript imitates a collection of relics through image and texts, which are combined for use in monastic services on behalf of the donor. Through both text and image, the manuscript entwines hagiography with the emperor's imperial legacy to honor the saint and the emperor in the same act. By using specific imagery tied to a more celebrated book from the past, Basil's calendar book, and imperially oriented prayers, the manuscript capitalizes on the relic's paradoxical potential to exist in multiple places at once threading the monastery, palace, and heaven.

The Imperial *Menologia* group owes its name and mid-eleventh century date to the fact that each hagiographical text closes with an acrostic prayer for the emperor, who is invoked but never explicitly named. The Walters *Menologion* and related illustrated editions introduced this acrostic, which was then copied in all later editions of the Imperial group, even when the miniatures are omitted.<sup>352</sup> In these prayers, God is called upon to act through the intercession of the saint and grant an array of benefits to the emperor that vary from entry to entry, including victory over his enemies, health and a long life, a peaceful reign, remission of his sins, success on the Day of Judgement and life eternal.<sup>353</sup> Each one of the prayers that closes the individual texts is articulated through metrical clauses whose initials always compose the same name followed by an initial:

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<sup>352</sup> The removal of the miniatures in the later manuscripts likely economic. A full menologion was already a costly venture due to the materials needed to construct a manuscript for all saints. Adding images to each saint would only add to these costs.

<sup>353</sup> François Halkin, *Le Ménologe Impérial de Baltimore: textes grecs publiés et traduit* (Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1985).



Michael P. It could be written flush in capital carmine letters (figure 3.15), staggered (figure 3.16), or marked only by the Mu and Pi with the remaining letters scattered across the text (figures 3.17).

This acrostic and the identity of Michael P have been the primary material used for positioning the manuscript within a specific period. Who the acrostic refers to has been long debated by scholars with two key candidates proposed. The most common reading established early on by Ehrhard and Halkin has associated the acrostic with emperor Michael IV “the Paphlagonian” (r. 1034 - 1041), imagined to be the recipient of the recited prayers. Others however have argued that acrostics more frequently name their author and not the addressee.<sup>354</sup> Accounting for this, another reading led by Theochares Detorakis has suggested that the acrostic refers to Michael I Keroularios, patriarch of Constantinople (1043 to 1058).<sup>355</sup> Adding to the confusion, a twelfth-century manuscript in this group highlights a K at the end of its acrostic, plausibly changing the name to Michael P(atrarches) K(onstantinopolis) or K(eroularios).<sup>356</sup> Francesco D’Aiuto’s work addressed the objections to Ehrhard’s initial proposal, collecting a number of examples where acrostics do refer to the dedicate and not the author, while also rejecting the reading of the Pi as an abbreviation for Paphlagonian to suggest the letter had magical numerological significance.<sup>357</sup> But after studying the texts collected in the manuscript, it has been concluded that

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<sup>354</sup> B.A. Vilesius, *Illuminated Greek Manuscripts from American Collections: An Exhibition in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. Gary Vikan (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 80.

<sup>355</sup> Theochares Detorakis, “He chronologese tou autokratorikou menologiou tou B. Latysev,” *BZ* 83 (1990): 46-50.

<sup>356</sup> As in Athos Dionysiou 83 (1142); Ševčenko, “The Walters Menologion,” 63, note 67.

<sup>357</sup> Francesco D’Aiuto, “Nuovi Elementi per la datazione del Menologio Imperiale: i copisti degli esemplari miniate,” *Rendiconti: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di Scienza Morali*, Ser. 9, vol. 8 (1997): 715-47. There is an additional argument that concerns the word “agarene” which frequently appears in the texts. However, the debate has recently been settled by Francesco D’Aiuto who has confirmed that it reflects Michael the IV based on the use of “Agarene,” in the eleventh century in particular to refer to the Seljuks. D’Aiuto, “Nuovi Elementi,” 724.

the appearance of an epithet *ἀγγελώνυμος*, “angel named” in the life of the Prophet Jeremy could only refer to the Emperor Michael.<sup>358</sup>

When surveying the textual entries and their representations, an imperial connection for this group of *Menologia* is difficult to deny. Textually most of the entries follow the 148 entries from the Metaphrastian recension, with two key interventions for standardization. The manuscripts (1) expand the collection by adding saints in order to cover the entire liturgical year and (2) reduce all entries to a more manageable length for communal reading.<sup>359</sup> In the Walters *Menologion* specifically, the manuscript unites the 20 saints honored across the Metaphrastian group’s two volumes for January (Volume 7: 5-17 January, 9 total entries and Volume 8: 18-31 January, 11 total entries) and increases their number to 25. While the Metaphrastian recension began to be illustrated around the same time as the production of the imperial group as discussed in the London and Milan examples above, the imperial group pursues other avenues for its imagery by either reproducing the corpus of images used for the *Menologion* of Basil II or directly imitating it.<sup>360</sup>

Such a tight relationship between the manuscripts can be glimpsed when considering the scene for Paul of Thebes. In the miniature for both manuscripts, the scene retains the same formal structure (figures 3.18-3.19). St. Anthony clasps the legs of the dead Paul sheltered beneath a cave, with the later manuscript matching the colors as closely as possible to its prototype, even striving to replicate the cleft mountain peaks that tower in the background. This replication was done to

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<sup>358</sup> D’Aiuto, “Nuovi elementi,” 732.

<sup>359</sup> François Halkin, “Le mois de janvier du ‘Menologe impérial’ byzantin,” *ABoll* 57 (1939): 225-36; the number 1449 corresponds only to the numbered entries and not multiple figures within individual entries, nor does it include the additional figures added in more localized recensions included across the footnotes; Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* vol. 2, 566-67; vol. 3, 392-93.

<sup>360</sup> Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts of the Metaphrastian Menologion*, 187-96.

such precision that Anna Zakharova contends that the same painters who worked on the Basil's *Menologion* may have been involved in the Walters and the Moscow copies that followed it.<sup>361</sup>

The imagery from Basil II's calendar book, however, poses a different problem than the Metaphrastian texts. As a *Synaxarion* with shorter texts, each day frequently has more than one entry. Effectively the imperial group transforms multiple manuscript traditions. It streamlines them into a full version that is above all pragmatic on a daily and liturgical level. Its script is clear and legible, and its entries are organized with singular entries for each day of the month, allowing it to be used consistently throughout the entire year within monastic rituals to honor both the saint and the emperor.

Yet even with the abundance of options offered by Basil's manuscript, there remained room for personal interventions in the Walters *Menologion*. Zotikos Ptochotrophos, the "feeder of the poor," appears among the saint commemorated in the Walters manuscript, a figure who was not part of the Metaphrastian recension, nor included in any other illustrated calendar (figure 3.20).<sup>362</sup> Within the illustration, a henchman propels a pair of saddled mules who drag the commemorated saint across a landscape that comes to life amid the saint's death: flowers blossom across the groundline and a miracle-working spring gushes in the left corner marking the site where Zotikos's eye was ripped from his body. Such a scene of martyrdom with its dramatic event and landscape follows the conventions set by Basil's *Menologion*, and sits comfortably within the manuscript's image program. In the absence of a model, the image evokes its source material but does not replicate one of the other martyrdom scenes from Basil's book, opting instead to retain

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<sup>361</sup> Anna Zakharova, "The Miniatures of the Imperial Menologia" *Nea Rhome: Rivista di ricerche bizantinistiche* 7 (2011): 136-7.

<sup>362</sup> For the list of the standard saints, see Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes*, 195-8.

elements from its newly written entry.<sup>363</sup> From this instance of rewriting and the creation of a new image, there was a clear value in possessing a full and specific collection of texts and imagery for the manuscript.

Scholars have commented upon the peculiar nature of the illustrated editions in the imperial group, but to date have only gestured toward the forces driving their creation. It is odd that Michael oversaw the production of at least two separate illustrated versions of this calendar in the Moscow and Walters manuscripts. The situation is made more peculiar as the pair uses the same imagery but different layouts for the manuscripts: the Walters announces the start of the Life with an illustration at the top of a new page, while the Moscow manuscript allows the images and texts to run continuously.<sup>364</sup> In other words, there is no way they could have been produced as a group. Although speculative, in accounting for both manuscripts' formatting and layout, with the text always arranged in two columns and in a clear script, it is very likely that the *Menologia* were distributed to different institutions where they were used within their separate liturgical services, probably one of the two that Michael is known to have patronized, and in particular the Kosmidion where the emperor was tonsured shortly before his death and where he was buried.<sup>365</sup>

The concluding poems for each saint couched within the Walters acrostic also adopts a distinct formulation that encourages a relationship between the emperor and a monastic community. In addition to addressing the saint directly on behalf of the emperor, these prayers employ first person plural language. For example, the concluding prayer for Zotikos, the text wills

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<sup>363</sup> Ševčenko's analysis suggests that the painter worked their way through the menologion of Basil II to find a suitable model for this newly composed hagiographic text. But her proposed model from Basil's manuscript has only surface similarities to the scene. Ševčenko, "The Walters 'Imperial' Menologion," 48-9.

<sup>364</sup> D'Aiuto has persuasively shown that the Benaki fragments were another volume of the Walters edition of the imperial group. D'Aiuto, "Nuovi Elementi," 736.

<sup>365</sup> The other foundation being the *Ptochotropheion*. Ševčenko, "The Walters 'Imperial' Menologion," 58.

that “our” emperor’s desires, including “eternal rest from suffering and all kinds of sorrow and pain,” and a life where “splendor and joy are united,” are heard through the intercession of the holy martyr Zotikos.<sup>366</sup> Until that time comes, the prayer and its hagiographic entry conclude by urging the community to come together “in grace and charity of the lord.” Beneath an image of the saint with the miracle-working spring located outside the city walls and a lush eternal landscape, the *Menologion*’s image straddles the present and the salvific future that its prayer imagines. In this way, Michael’s manuscript constructs a community by engaging with the monastic foundation, where the first-person plural language of the prayers provides additional power to the commemorative service. It allows the emperor’s name to be inscribed into the service through the acrostic prayer, while also deliberately citing the most celebrated calendar of its time in the deluxe manuscript donated to the monastery.

Among the most unusual examples of illustrated Menologia, the Walters *Menologion* is driven above all by imperial fidelity in its imagery and texts, even when a direct model is lacking. In the creation of a decorative program for the collection of texts, the Walters seems to have mined the previous and most illustrious edition from the imperial collection, citing it intentionally as an act of commemoration. Nancy Patterson Ševčenko’s work on the Walters *Menologion* concludes with an important hypothesis on why the manuscript displays such fidelity to Basil’s edition for its imagery. For her, both emperors were threatened by foreign invasions from the Bulgarians. Because Basil’s campaign was effective and referenced in his images, it may have prompted the replication of his imagery: like a prayer, the replication of a tried-and-true formula could bring about a desired result.<sup>367</sup> To push this point further, the attitude toward Basil’s manuscript directly

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<sup>366</sup> Michel Aubineau, “Zoticos de Constantinople, nourridier des pauvres et serviteur des lepreux,” *ABoll* 93 (1975): 84-5.

<sup>367</sup> Ševčenko, “Walters Imperial Menologion,” 60-61.

took on that of a relic collection more than a series of icons. In their precise replication and visual proximity, the miniatures gesture toward a contact relic, serving as an effective means of protection with the express desire to shape the future as directly outlined in the closing prayers. Importantly, the calendric manuscript transforms an immersive space like a treasury with its collection of relics into a book able to be held. The book allows the saints to appear not individually but physically bound together as a unit, amassing more intercessors and allies to bring about this change within a book that could be used and processed.<sup>368</sup>

To return to the illustrations of the manuscript one final time having considered the dynamics of expansion and connections integrated into its images, the miniature for the veneration of St. Peter's chains, commemorated on 16 January, gives insight into the object of devotion (figure 3.21). This particular relic was kept in Constantinople in the church of St. Peter near the sacristy of Hagia Sophia, which the entry in Delehay's *Synaxarion* states was translated to the city by "our pious emperors."<sup>369</sup> In the Walters miniature, the Patriarch of Constantinople bends with veiled hands before a wooden table draped with a red textile within the church. A deconstructed interior surrounds this action, with the altar to his right covered by a pyramidal-roofed baldachin and enwrapped by the gray marble of the synthronon. To the left and behind him, a curtain wraps around a column with a sloping cornice to presumably represent the nave of the church. The

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<sup>368</sup> As outlined by Ševčenko, Betancourt, and Galavaris, liturgical books were as much sacred objects as they were manuscripts for use. Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Illuminating the Liturgy: Illustrated Service Books in Byzantium," in *Heaven on Earth: Art and the Church in Byzantium*, ed. Linda Safran (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 197; Roland Betancourt, *Performing the Gospels: Sight, Sound, and Space in the Divine Liturgy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 6-7; George Galavaris, "Manuscripts and the Liturgy," in *Illuminated Greek Manuscripts in American Collections*, 20-25.

<sup>369</sup> *SECP*, 395, although the entry does not specify which emperors. Vera von Falkenhausen, "Petri Kettenfeier in Byzanz. Phantasien über ein Apostelfest," in *Fest und Alltag in Byzanz. Hans-Georg Beck zum 18 Februar 1990*, ed. Günter Prinzing and Dieter Simon (Munich: Beck, 1990), 129-44.

liturgical setting for the scene is undeniable with the costuming and space clearly articulated, which make the absence of the celebrated relic itself striking.

Its absence is all the more puzzling in light of its presence in Basil II's manuscript (figure 3.22). The chain that bound the hands of Peter when Herod imprisoned him can be seen clearly on the table of the entry within Basil II's image, as can the other elements that comprise the Walters miniature. The text that accompanies the Walters miniature calls on Peter to protect the emperor via the hidden chain and grant him victories and a peaceful existence, compounded by repeating these desires in the acrostic appended to the end of the text.<sup>370</sup> Even though the relic is meant to be the focal point of the commemoration, the fact that it remains hidden in the illustration makes the book an ancillary to the relic. Its illustration ultimately becomes like a reliquary, concealing the thing itself while expressing its efficacious potential.

The illustrations within the Walters allow the manuscript's imperial patron to bring together the figures collected within Basil II's manuscript with the extended Metaphrastian menologion, adapted for communal reading. This act of bridging and transforming calendric material capitalizes on the experiential effects of relic collections where time and space are remade. Particularly, the Walters *Menologion* is able to insert the imperial palace within the direct line of communication between earthly time and the timelessness of the heavens, invoked in the manuscript's imagery generally, and specifically through the daily rituals that surrounded the manuscript in honor of the emperor.

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<sup>370</sup> François Halkin, ed., *Biblioteca Hagiographica Graeca* (Brussels, 1957), no. 1486, 211-12. Ehrhard attributes the text to Constantine Porphyrogenitos based on a later, fourteenth-century manuscript (Kosinitza 29). Ehrhard, *Überlieferung* vol. 2, 568; but in an eleventh-century manuscript, it is attributed to John Chrysostom, E. Batareikh, "Discours inédit sur les Chaînes de S. Pierre attribué à S. Jean Chrysostome," in *Chrysostomika. Studi e ricerche intorno a S. Giovanni Crisostomo a cura del Comitato per il XV centenario della sua morte* (Rome: Libreria Pustet, 1908), 1004-05.

### The Oxford Bildmenologion

If the Walters imperial *Menologion* evokes a commemorative donation for the daily benefit of the emperor, a miniature *Menologion* now at the Bodleian library presents a much more intimate and personal manuscript. The Oxford *Bildmenologion* (MS gr. th. f. 1) is as handsome as it is diminutive, with roughly pocket-sized dimensions small enough to easily fit within one's palms when held open (126 x 95 mm).<sup>371</sup> It is dated to the years between 1320 and 1344 through a concluding dedicatory inscription, which identifies Demetrios Palaiologos (ca. 1295-1344?), the youngest of Andronikos II's (r. 1282-1328) sons who survived childhood and "Despot of Thessalonike," as the book's patron.<sup>372</sup>

The manuscript's program weaves together multiple temporal cycles. It opens with a series of 10 full-page images of the great feasts depicting events from the life of Christ, so that the transfiguration appears deceptively monumental despite its small scale: its treatment of drapery and the apostle's bodily contortion as they tumble down the mountain display remarkable attention to detail (ff. 1v-6r, figure 3.23). Its program then concludes with a cycle of seven scenes taken from the life of St. Demetrios (54v-55r), the patron's namesake. The saint first appears standing before an architectural facade holding a martyrs' cross (figure 3.24), before moving through six brief episodes from his Life and relationship with his saintly companion Nestor, including the martyrdom of Nestor followed by Demetrios, and concludes with his entombment (figure 3.25).<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>371</sup> The full shelfmark for this manuscript is Bodleian Library MS gr. th. f. 1. Summary catalog no. 2919, presented to the Bodleian library by William Webb of Magdalen College, Oxford 8 February 1613. For a codicological overview of the manuscript, see Irmgard Hutter, *Menologion bizantino de Oxford (MS. Gr. th. f.1)* (Madrid: A. y N. Ediciones, 2006).

<sup>372</sup> Aberkios Papadopoulos, *Versuch einer Genealogie der Palaiologen, 1259-1453* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1962), no.58; Angeliki Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins: The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II, 1282-1328* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1972), 46.

<sup>373</sup> The sequence in this cycle reverses their calendar dates, Demetrios is commemorated before Nestor. As is typical in these episodic sequences, there is only one scene that relates to Demetrios before his death. Demetrios opens and



Between the feast and Demetrios sequences, the bulk of the manuscript concerns itself with the full cycle of commemorative feasts for the year from 2 September and running through 31 August (7v-53v, figure 3.26).<sup>374</sup>

In its miniature form, the manuscript resembles books of hours where western European readers moved through the life of Christ guided by daily prayers, but in its content, the manuscript uniquely plays with how time was expressed and measured. Within this section, I show how the *Bildmenologion* reimagines the traditional relationship between hagiography and illustration. Staging its expansive experience of the year through an interplay of images and *prosopopoeia*, where the manuscript adopts a number of subjectivities to speak from different perspectives, the book creates a space able to break apart spans of time into smaller units and incite reflection on the relationships between them. I begin with the representational strategy for the central calendar portion of the manuscript and move to how the text interacts with these scenes, ultimately arguing that the text and image work together to rhetorically transform the manuscript into a jeweled reliquary.

The Oxford *Bildmenologion* has existed on the fringes of scholarly conversations about the nature of calendar books. Not only is the manuscript the sole illustrated menologion to survive from the final centuries of Byzantium, but it is also the only book of its kind composed almost exclusively of images. Confronted with a relative absence of hagiographic texts to guide the experience in comparison to the lengthier saints lives that were rewritten, Irmgard Hutter, among the few scholars to engage with the manuscript, often comments on the painter's negligence and

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ends the 7 scenes, and the first of the cycle shows him before the emperor, but the rest of the cycle concerns his companion, Nestor.

<sup>374</sup> One bifolium is missing which would have completed the cycle of great feasts, a blank page, and a full-page image for 1 September.

artistic inability: the wrong manner of death is shown, and the stereotypical decapitation is too often used.<sup>375</sup> Others who have considered the manuscript, such as Hans Belting, have argued that it was a pocket calendar, serving as a deluxe but utilitarian object designed to follow along with the liturgical feasts occurring at a foundation.<sup>376</sup> However, these readings emerge from a bias that favors a specific set of hagiographic narratives at the expense of other textual genres that were also used alongside the calendar.

Similar to a reel of film, page after page the manuscript tracks the continuous action of the annual year through small pictures. Bound by a red frame and entirely painted in gold ground, the *Bildmenologion*'s calendar pages are divided into quadrants so that each corner corresponds to the commemorations of one day. Within these intensely small vignettes, the figures can feel quite packed, pushing the small image toward illegibility. Folio 15 for the dates of October 28-31 reveals the disorientation this representational strategy can produce (figure 3.27). In the upper left scene alone, an executioner brandishing a sword freezes moments before slaying St. Terentios, the main figure commemorated on the 28<sup>th</sup> (figure 3.28). A label above identifies Terentios, but in addition to him, seven lobed halos pile up on the ground in the corner, signifying an additional group that corresponds to the members of his family who were martyred with him and named in Terentios's *Synaxarion* entry.<sup>377</sup> At left, another group of two men await their own martyrdom. A final collection of three men completes the scene, one of them in bishop's regalia and the two others

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<sup>375</sup> This is the verdict given on the images in Irmgard Hutter, "Das Oxforder 'Bildmenologion,'" in *Byzantinische Sprachkunst: Studien zur byzantinischen Literatur gewidmet Wolfram Hörandner zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Martin Hinterberger and Elisabeth Schiffer (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 151-52.

<sup>376</sup> "Mit ihnen konnte er auch der Liturgie folgen, deren Texte ihm ja von den Zelebranten vorgetragen wurden," Belting, *Das illuminierte Buch in der spätbyzantinischen Gesellschaft* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1970), 43. However he is especially critical of the manuscript and deems it a failure in comparison to the books of hours from the west. Belting, *Das illuminierte Buch*, 45.

<sup>377</sup> *SECP*, 169:1. Terentios and his family are not part of the Standard Metaphrastian Menologion.

mirror our own status as spectators for the action are separated from the scene, watching from behind a rocky and mountainous landscape. Though unlabeled, their halos and proximity to Terentios suggests that they too represent other saints remembered on the 28<sup>th</sup>.<sup>378</sup> Out of this abundance of detail, where the thirteen saints significantly overpower the singular executioner, all framed within a space measuring approximately 45 x 37 mm, the frame emphasizes a packed collection of saintly martyrdoms. This same arrangement continues in the three neighboring scenes and continues across the calendar to convey a year densely populated with saints.

In the scenes composing the commemorative calendar, the individual frames condense maximum information into their confined spaces while still achieving variation between the days and among the figures. Saints stand bent, kneeling, or lying, either with hands bound or raised in prayer, while behind them executioners swing swords in a swashbuckling manner, often with several other severed heads collecting in the corners. Other executions ensue in a similarly direct and brutal manner: knives are plunged into throats, lances thrust into sides, stones are hurled, and clubs thrown. Bodies are dismembered, strangled, dragged across the earth, thrown headfirst down a mountain, burned, or drowned. But parts of saints, necessarily broken apart to complete their martyrdom, coexist with others who remain whole as they tower behind mountains and look down from above, presumably from their resurrected and perfected state.<sup>379</sup> All sharing the same space, they encourage comparison across earthly death and spiritual rebirth. In their reconfiguration of the common formula that uses hagiographic texts to divide sequences of images, the

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<sup>378</sup> Based on iconography, Hutter has proposed that some of these figures may be Kyriakos bishop of Jerusalem and John Chozebites with companions. Hutter, "Das Oxforder 'Bildmenologion,'" 196.

<sup>379</sup> Veronica Delladora has argued for the significance of the mountain as spiritual map to mark the soul's ascent or to mark a saint's powers. Delladora, *Landscape, Nature, and the Sacred in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 168.

*Bildmenologion* accumulates these scenes and uses their immediacy to convey these acts independent from the texts associated with the saints.

In addition to this internal space that unites different temporal states, the manuscript's minimal use of text aids in orientation. At the beginning of October's sequence, the scene of Ananias includes an alpha above it to signify the first day of the month (figure 3.29). Additionally, short texts written in red ink occupy the empty fields around the painted images, which at first may seem to only name the figures. However, these words deceptively masked as inscriptions faithfully reproduce a versified calendar by poet Nikephorous Kallistos Xanthopoulos written in the first half of the fourteenth century and contemporary with the period in which the manuscript was produced.<sup>380</sup> In this poem that spans the manuscript's pages, the months speak in the first person, activating the written word through speech. They imagine the month as an adorned body: "I bear Symeon and Mamas"<sup>381</sup> begins September in the full poem, and in the manuscript, the month of October opens with the line "my ornament is the steadfast Ananias" inscribed at the top of folio 11v (figure 3.30).<sup>382</sup> Like the lists of information that create the calendar in its most basic form, Xanthopoulos's verses are as straightforward and bare-bones as you can get.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>380</sup> Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos was an eminent court poet. For his contributions to intellectual life in the fourteenth century, see Wolfram Hörandner, "Teaching with Verse in Byzantium," in *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, ed. Wolfram Hörandner, Andreas Rhoby, and Nikos Zagklas (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 462 and A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," *BZ* 11 (1902): 38–49; for the poem itself, see Rudolf Stefec, "Die Synaxarverse des Nikephoros Xanthopulos," *JÖB* 62 (2012): 154–59.

<sup>381</sup> *Ἐγὼ Συμεὼν καὶ τὸν Μάμαντα φέρω*. The opening calendar folio that would begin September is lost and the upper margin of the folio containing 2–5 September is too illegible to confirm that this verse is there, but the rest of the month bears lines tightly aligned with the poem, including epithets. Such fidelity to the poem, however, is unambiguously confirmed with the start of October, which replicates the exact line

<sup>382</sup> *Ἐμοὶ δὲ κόσμος ἡ στάσις Ἀνανίου*, reproduced in the image.

<sup>383</sup> Wolfram Hörandner has productively reevaluated the nature of "the didactic" in poetry, see "The Byzantine didactic poem, a neglected literary genre? A survey with special reference to the eleventh century," in *Poetry and its contexts in eleventh-century Byzantium*, ed. Floris Bernard and Kristoffel Demoen (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 55–67.

However, the first-person voice within the manuscript is key in transforming its experience. Olga Bush has productively advanced how we understand *prosopopoeia* through her reading of ivory caskets from the Islamicate world. These gifted vessels themselves give the gift of voice: they do not merely speak in place of the poet or patron but are allowed to speak in their own voice.<sup>384</sup> In the context of this small manuscript, Xanthopolous's verses on the months are not descriptive in the same way as Makrembolites's ekphrases on the months were in the previous chapter with attention given to even the most minute detail. Instead, they interact with the painted images to stage both an experience and a dialogue.

As an experience, the verses with their interest in adornment interact with the painted imagery. The poem, intensified by the book's images, consciously fuses the informational with the ornamental in a handy format. The months actually speak and describe what they are wearing, with the saints acting as threads to a precious garment or as adornment like jewelry, whose opulence is amplified by the inclusion of more unnamed saints around them. In this way, the monthly monologue illustrates what Michael Roberts has termed the "textual dazzle" with its metaphorical appeal to color and embellishment.<sup>385</sup> The rapid succession of one name after another in the text, passing as quickly as the glimmer of jewelry, restructures the year into a driving pace that squeezes all essential information into a confined space, that also explodes with more information. There are always far too many saints painted in the scenes than there are named in the poem, but all of this can still fit comfortably within the hands.

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<sup>384</sup> Olga Bush, "Poetic Inscriptions and Gift Exchange in the Medieval Islamicate World," *Gesta* 56, no. 2 (2017): 182.

<sup>385</sup> Michael Roberts, *The Jeweled Style: Poetry and Poetics in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 46-7.

But art, too, was capable of dazzling through its own physical qualities like color, plays of light, and these characteristics could be productively harnessed to manipulate time.<sup>386</sup> For example, the famous *enkolpion* reliquary with Saint Demetrios from the thirteenth century preserved at Dumbarton Oaks uses multiple surfaces, materials, and representations to play with the saint's dual natures, one martyred in the past on earth and another eternally present in heaven.<sup>387</sup> On its outer surface a polychrome enamel portrait displays the saint dressed as a soldier, bearing armor, a sword, and shield against a gold background and enwrapped by an inscription (figure 3.31).<sup>388</sup> This flat and seemingly impenetrable surface opens through a miniature golden screw to reveal a wall of gold, with two doors whose borders are molded to resemble pearls (figure 3.32). These in turn open to a golden relief sculpture showing the saint in repose at his ciborium (figure 3.33).

The *enkolpion*'s visual portrait and tomb encase the "blood and balm" its inscription purports to contain, and work together to express the saint's presence as simultaneously alive and dead. While there has been confusion about the lack of residue from the balm, such a literal reading of the epigram may not hold for this object. Like the collection of saintly images and Philotheos's opening *enkomion* where Agathonikos acted independent from his relic, the effigy of the saint may itself symbolize for the relics he was famous for. More specifically in temporal terms, handling the object moves from an earthly portrait of the saint in polychrome frozen in enamel toward his

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<sup>386</sup> Patricia Cox Miller productively explores the interaction between verbal rhetoric and objects. Miller, "The Little Blue Flower is Red," 227.

<sup>387</sup> Ioli Kalavrezou, "No.117 Enkolpion reliquary of Saint Demetrios," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, AD 843-1261*, ed. Helen Evans and William Wixom (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 168 with earlier bibliography, esp. Andre Grabar, "Un nouveau reliquaire de saint Demetrios," *DOP* 8 (1954): 305-13; Charalambos Bakirtzis, "Pilgrimage to Thessalonike: The Tomb of Saint Demetrios," *DOP* 56 (2002): 175-92.

<sup>388</sup> "The faith of Sergios carries the venerable receptacle of Demetrios' blood together with the balm. He asks to have you as protector, while he is living, and when he is dead, along with the two martyrs who have won the prize." <http://museum.doaks.org/objects-1/info/27463>.

enshrinement, carved in gold that flickers and moves in the surrounding light to capture his numinous nature.

The *Bildmenologion* also gradually reveals Demetrios's life and death in its closing sequence, but the calendar portion more effectively displays literal and rhetorical dazzle in its presentation. The diversity of saints represented in the manuscript glimmers on the page in the viewer's present from multiple times whether martyred on earth or perfected in heaven. All are clad in different colors, in various positions, and condensed into a single space that is overlaid in gold and that invites inspection. As an impactful union of the visual and textual, word and image play off of each other in the miniature manuscript that calls out to be handled and transforms the manuscript into a gem-encrusted object.

Xanthopoulos's monthly monologue is neither the only poem nor the only subject that speaks in the manuscript. Beyond the lines that name Demetrios Palaiologos as the owner, Demetrios's dedicatory poem takes the form of an imagined confession to his soul to which he gifts this manuscript (figure 3.34).<sup>389</sup> The iambic verses concluding the manuscript construct an elaborate and innovative appeal to the calendar that hinges specifically on its images more than their textual stories.<sup>390</sup> Like the months, Demetrios also speaks from the first person, creating a space where multiple subjects speak to his soul within this gift.

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<sup>389</sup> P. Joannou, "Das Menologion des Despoten Demetrio I Palaiologos," *Byzantinischen Zeitschrift* 50 (1957): 307-309. The poem and translation are reproduced in full in the Appendix.

<sup>390</sup> At the expense of sustained engagement with the copious amount of imagery, textual historians, notably Ioannou and Irmgard Hutter have largely focused on the final dedicatory lines of this poem to identify the patron as the *despotes* Demetrios I Palaiologos and to situate the manuscript during his posting in Thessalonike, where he served as despot in 1322 at the latest and died soon after in 1340 with various stays in Constantinople. But this closing epigram holds more information about how the object was meant to be viewed and used. Irmgard Hutter, "Der *despotes* Demetrios Palaiologos," 213-4. Hutter's argument adds many details to the attribution of Demetrios I as patron, however the localization of the manuscript follows standard views that attribute high quality objects with the capital. Joannou, "Das Menologion des Despoten Demetrios I Palaiologos," 308-9.

His poem begins by expressing his frustration and disappointment with himself for his wandering eyes and for squandering his time with superficial passions (lines 1-2).<sup>391</sup> He then identifies his soul as the intended recipient of this votive offering (line 3). To counteract the unbearable stimulus of the world, he says he had this book made, gathering his own “swarm of allies” to fight against his distractions (lines 8-9). The verses explicitly point to its extensive calendar (“all of time”), referring to this cycle as a kind of “composite/compound medicine” to cure the wounds and diseases of his soul (lines 12-13).

The book, so clearly manufactured to be a vehicle for private devotion with the aim of spiritual healing and betterment, makes it difficult to view it as a pocket calendar meant for tracking time, following along with the liturgical celebrations of a foundation, or as a copy of monumental painting as has been argued within the literature.<sup>392</sup> The sheer diminutive size of the book itself let alone the number of saints hinders a reading like this. Like Ivan Drpić has claimed regarding the visual therapy offered by the collection of images, Demetrios’s miniature book capitalizes on the compressed nature of metrical poems as a kind of medicine that can be easily internalized.<sup>393</sup> As seen in the conclusion to chapter 1 of this dissertation and expressed specifically

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<sup>391</sup> See Delphine Nachtergaele’s transcription from the Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams for the full Greek: <https://www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/19580>.

<sup>392</sup> Hans Belting, *Das illuminierte Buch*, 42-45; Pavle Mijovic *Menolog* (Belgrad, 1973), 32-53. Belting argues that the diminutive images were inspired by a set of “daily icons” that were brought out and placed near the altar each day. However, this is closer to modern Russian Orthodox practices and there is no account of a set of icons like this in use during the Byzantine period. The only exception to this might be the icons hung on the walls of Sinai however there is no account of these being brought out each day. Pavle Mijovic in contrast argues that the miniature manuscript emerged from a hagiographic -iconographic manual developed in the Thessalonike-Serbia area. Although the model book is now lost, Mijovic’s study of monumental programs that emerged in the region came from a pastiche of Constantinopolitan Menaia and Synaxaria from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and especially from monastic circles on the periphery of the empire spanning the Orient and southern Italy, whose calendar was sourced from the iambic calendar of Christopher Mytilene. Both of these readings seem to be complete fantasy.

<sup>393</sup> Ivan Drpic, “Image as Medicine: Pictorial Therapy in the Oxford *Mēnologion*,” (paper presented at the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, virtual, 2020), 11.



in Manasses's poem, Time (*χρόνον*) brought with it decay and illness.<sup>394</sup> Demetrios's object provided one way of combating these effect by amassing a visual counterpoint of time through all possible celebrations thereby increasing the "medicine's" spiritual potency.

To orient this spiritual medicine within the calendar book's program one final time, the medicinal benefits presented by the imager are not merely conceptual. The commemorated bodies that form the calendar exist in a constant state of dismemberment. Perpetually breaking apart for the benefit of its patron, the saints evoke the representation of plants in medical manuscripts. Within medical manuscripts like a contemporary copy of Dioscorides's *De Materia Medica* from the mid-14th century and preserved at the Biblioteca del Seminario Vescovile, Padua (cod. 194), roots and herbs are shown in their full form but must be torn apart, smashed, pulverized, or dissolved to extract their healing properties. An image of apsinthion (*ἀψίνθιον*) in this codex roots itself within the text below while offering its tendrils, fronds, and buds, which we are told must be pressed into a wine to relieve pain (figure 3.35).<sup>395</sup> Many other plants and herbs collected in this manuscript require similar treatment, and the *Bildmenologion* creates its own spiritually corollary to this in its assortment of compressed martyrdoms. Terentios's frame documents his death and the breaking apart of his body for the spiritual benefit of later Christians, collected in both *Menologia* and reliquaries.

Attempts to contextualize the Bodleian *Bildmenologion* within art history or literary studies alone fail to capture what is so unique about the manuscript. Instead, these two strands of research

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<sup>394</sup> Chapter 1, "Cosmic Commemoration."

<sup>395</sup> On the manuscript see Griebeler most recently, "How to Illustrate a Scientific Codex in the Palaiologan Period," in *Late Byzantium Reconsidered: The Arts of the Palaiologan Era Reconsidered*, ed. Andrea Mattiello and Maria Alessia Rossi (London: Routledge, 2019), 89-91; Elpidio Mioni, "Un ignoto Dioscoride miniato Il codice greco (194 del Seminario di Padova)," in *Libri e Stampatori in Padova. Miscellanea di studi storici in onore di Mons. G. Bellini*, ed. Antonio Barzon (Padua: Antoniana, 1959), 346-76.

must be brought into conversation as has been productively seen within studies on epigram and art led by Ivan Drpić, Brad Hostetler, and Andreas Rhoby.<sup>396</sup> As an object adorned with metrical inscriptions, the manuscript facilitates an interaction between visual and verbal elements to transform the commemorative year into a spiritual medicine. They mediate between viewer and object explaining the latter's meaning and function, but they also reshape the viewer as well whose subject is surprisingly mutable: speaking as the months, and addressing his own soul. In this multiplication of places and times, the verses structure the calendar as a reliquary containing the sacred relics of the saints who themselves are both the contents and its decoration, serving as precious stones like the pearls and gems described in the lines. The *Bildmenologion* embodies time in a clever poetic exercise for its patron: on the one hand expansive, building up the year through so many holy figures and on the other, condensed, reduced to the smallest form in size and text.

## Conclusion

Perhaps most forcibly, the *Bildmenologion* presents a material manifestation of Philotheos's *enkomion* with which this chapter began. The collections of saints remembered over the calendar year that allowed Agathonikos to reach across time and guide the bishop's judiciary deliberations takes on an elaborate visual dimension with the book meant to protect its patron. Through the pages of the *Bildmenologion*, the saintly bodies calibrated for every day of the year are obsessively fragmented over the course of the pages and operate as relics themselves. These manuscripts are ultimately not a relic, but their composition and presentation play with the relic's temporality. Rather than collecting a relic for every saint, the miniature manuscript provides a

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<sup>396</sup> Ivan Drpic, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Brad Hostetler, "Epigrams on Relics and Reliquaries," in *The Visual Culture of Later Byzantium (1081-1350)*, vol. 1, ed. Foteini Spingou (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022); foundational work on epigrams remains Marc D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine poetry from Pisides to Geometres*, vol. 1 (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2003).

more manageable alternative that is grounded in metaphor and conceptual interpretation. In presenting the iconic image of every saint and martyrdoms for the year, the manuscripts discussed within this chapter thread together the earthly death of martyrs while calling to mind their heavenly rebirth, bound within a format that purposefully evokes elaborate, gem encrusted reliquaries.

This chapter has moved away from reading the images in terms of narrative, an approach that ultimately flattens the conceptual work of the miniatures in communicating across time. The Walters Imperial *Menologion* transforms Basil II's calendar book, which effectively protected its patron, into a liturgical book capable of also aiding its patron through monastic prayers and services. It copies and streamlines two sets of imperial calendars for regular services that ensured daily commemoration, which itself was a temporal act. The integration of commemorative services into a book structured for daily use compounds this commemorative effect, distributed across every day of the year and in multiple places.

The *Bildmenologion*, however, returns to the realm of personal devotion. Its miniature format creates a space of introspection and intense focus by pulling the reader in. In terms of literary instantiations of the miniature, Susan Stewart has argued that by constructing a space that exists beyond the limits of reality, miniature objects gesture toward an "infinite time of reverie."<sup>397</sup> Enclosed in this tiny space, the visual expression of time skillfully captures the sense of infinity through its unquantifiable number of figures that inhabit the book's pages. In drawing the viewer in and creating a sense of interiority, the jewel-like and precious appearance of the miniatures, amplified by Xanthopoulos's verses, had a reliquary effect. Additionally, the juxtaposition of saint's pulled apart connected to medical practices that transformed whole plants into fragments.

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<sup>397</sup> Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 65.

Ultimately the manuscript played with both these forms of healing, whether through relics or medicine in its representational strategy.

Given the frequent appearance of protection that both these illustrated manuscripts exhibit, Philotheos's juxtaposition of healing relic and the saint's feast day no longer feels strange but demonstrative of broader thought and engagement with the calendar. The year's progression could invoke the saint on its own, but the addition of effigies within the imperial manuscripts increased their power and potency.

## Chapter 4: Time Unbound

### Imaging and Imagining Time in Sinai's Calendar Icons

#### Introduction

On an exceptionally large icon (1.58 x 1.39 m) dated to the nineteenth century and now in the collection of the monastery of Simonopetra on Mount Athos, the year's feasts honoring the saints previously bound together within *Menologia* manuscripts now unfurl across a single surface (figure 4.1).<sup>398</sup> As a product of the modern Russian calendar and not of the Byzantine year, the icon begins at the top left corner with January and runs to December at the bottom right.<sup>399</sup> Small frames delineated by thick gold borders carve out quadrants for each month, and are named by small black bands centered in the upper frame of each group. January to May regularly appear above the saints with each month housing seven rows of figures or narrative events, always identified by small inscriptions. The commemorations gradually advance from left to right and down the rows before beginning at the top again for a new month. Interrupting this ordered arrangement, the months of June and July in the middle of the panel stretch horizontally into four rows, but otherwise follow the same progressive pattern. As the midpoint of the year, these two months flank a central grouping of twenty-three scenes taken from the cycle of Great Feasts with a large medallion at center showing an image of the trinity. Below, the remaining five months run their course to conclude the year before the cycle picks up once again at top to mark a new year. Taken as a whole, the commemorated saints, who all stand on a common ground line with only

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<sup>398</sup> To date this icon has only been published within I. Tavlakis, *Treasures of Mount Athos* (exh. cat.) (Thessaloniki: Holy Community of Mount Athos, 1997), no. 2.136, 200; and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Marking Holy Time: The Byzantine Calendar Icons," in *Byzantine Icons: Art, Technique, and Technology*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Heraklion: Crete University Press, 2002), 56.

<sup>399</sup> Up until the end of the fifteenth century, the Russian year began on March 1. Then, the Moscow court began the calendar year on September 1. Around 1700, Peter the Great then broke with Orthodox Church and introduced January 1 as the beginning of the year. Paul Keenan, *St Petersburg and the Russian Court 1703-1761* (Palgrave: Hampshire, 2013).

the occasional reference to architecture or landscape, offer a synoptic image of the calendar that can be taken in instantaneously: days, months, and the year layer on top of one another to create a series of icons nested within icons.

Supplementing the iconic cycle of commemorations, Evangelist portraits serve as the corners of the panel's frame, and bands composed of seventy miniature icons of the Virgin encircle the entire calendar. Through this expansive surface with its copious collection of images and icons, all the months are allowed to touch either the core comprised of the major feasts from Christ's life, or the four Evangelists who documented these stories. In this way, the panel structures a Christian cosmos where the months appear to literally revolve around the events central to the faith.<sup>400</sup> But this assemblage of images also builds up a series of complex liturgical and devotional strata. Referencing the daily reading of saints' lives, the incessant presence of the Virgin in icons both processed and fixed in space, as well as the author portraits of the Evangelists who wrote the gospel passages recited during the services, the panel operates at a complicated intersection of liturgical contexts and references. Using the Simonopetra icon as an entry point, this chapter considers a group of related calendar icons from Byzantium to pursue these layers and how representing the calendar on icons like this one could create time.

Simonopetra's icon has largely evaded scholarly attention, but its monumental scale and hagiographic content have led to speculations about the purpose and potential use of this icon and those like it.<sup>401</sup> Within Athanasios Karakatsanis's 1997 catalogue for *Treasures of Mount Athos*, Ioannis Tavlakis describes how Tsar Nicholas II presented this icon to a coterie of monks who had

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<sup>400</sup> Similar suggestions of feasts revolving around Christ's body have been made earlier, however these only focus on the moveable calendar, not the fixed one. See Belting *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image Before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 253.

<sup>401</sup> The exhibition catalog containing this icon makes no reference of where in the monastery it currently resides nor where it has been installed in the monastery's history. It is likely in the monastery's treasure at present.

travelled from their monastery in Mount Athos to his court in an act of “alms begging.”<sup>402</sup> The larger narrative spurred by this act emphasizes imperial ideas of largesse and the power and control that come with it, with the Tsar enshrining their shared Russian calendar in the form of a gift. As Nancy Patterson Ševčenko has commented in passing, the presentation of such a massive icon commemorated the liturgical calendar observed by both imperial and monastic groups at different sites, with the icon itself understood to regulate time.<sup>403</sup>

For Ševčenko, icons like this serve to keep the commemorations aligned to an imperial center and consistent across space, acting as an iconic Greenwich Mean Time.<sup>404</sup> In its collection of saints, the icon resembles the *Menologia* traditions discussed in the previous chapter, which did structure the year’s feasts. Along these lines, the icon’s display of daily feasts threads the Tsar’s memory into the daily life of the monastery through the creation of a timepiece created through imperial patronage and gifted to a distant monastic institution. Similarly, Hans Belting, asserts that these iconic expressions of time reflect a unified profile of the church in the recurring cycle of the year.<sup>405</sup> These larger theoretical considerations buttress centralizing claims of empire and its church, ensuring that the same calendar is observed everywhere. Given the icon’s sheer size and the wealth of information contained on its surface, its association with regulating time is understandable. The panel would hang on a wall and catalog the major commemorations of the

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<sup>402</sup> I Tavlakis, *Treasures*, 200.

<sup>403</sup> Nancy P. Ševčenko, “Marking Holy Time,” 56. As we will see, I argue against a regulatory function, even in this case. Rather than regulating time, this icon and those related to it enshrine time, allowing the icon to construct its own form of time. But it also reflects a shared history of the same regulatory nature for time. The gift in this case emphasizes commonality and the superiority of the giver.

<sup>404</sup> Ševčenko, “Marking Holy Time,” 55.

<sup>405</sup> Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 252.

year on a large scale. It resembles a didactic object capable of orienting oneself in time, serving as a reference object for those living and working under this icon.

Like the towering belfries of Western Europe structuring the hours or Augustus's imposing solar meridian demonstrating the perfect alignment of the reformed calendar with the progress of the sun, the calendar icon may appear to participate in such a universalizing of time.<sup>406</sup> These previous efforts to streamline time through successive and regulated temporal units in the form of large scale monuments took a highly public and visible stage in their aim to bring a community into shared patterns of daily life and historical identity: they fit events into a larger scheme and embed the memory of figures or occurrences from the past in their presentation. The icon shares in these concerns with its size, its string of named celebrations, associations with the Tsar, and the centrality of the liturgical calendar within monastic foundations. But while *Menologia* manuscripts were designed to regulate time with their successive pages announcing a new day and a new commemoration, we should not assume the panel performs these same tasks.

When reproduced in the Mount Athos catalog, the icon presents ideal viewing conditions.<sup>407</sup> It occupies nearly the full page and invites close inspection of both the individual parts and how they relate to the whole. But this was not how the icon would have been viewed in its original context. On the one hand, the scale of the icon requires a level of spatial distance to take in the surface in its totality. On the other hand, however, in embracing the distance needed to see the entire plane, one loses the ability to differentiate the saints, who eventually blend into a sea

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<sup>406</sup> This was of course not new to Byzantium and part of a rich history within the Roman world. James Ker, *The Ordered Day: Quotidian Time and Forms of Life in Ancient Rome* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2022), 9-14; Peter Heslin, "The Julian Calendar and the Solar Meridian of Augustus," in *The Cultural History of Augustan Rome*, ed. Matthew Loar, Sarah Murray, and Stefano Rebeggiani (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 77.

<sup>407</sup> For a larger consideration about the ethics of displaying Byzantine objects, see Robert Nelson, "The Discourse of Icons: Then and Now," *AH* 12, no. 2 (1989): 145.



of figures despite being named in their inscriptions. To engage with the icon and its figures, then, requires a complicated dance of distance and proximity, marked by the mass of figures dominating the viewer while also letting the wall of saints, who are hardly differentiated from one another beyond their names, wash over them. But what does this tell us about the visual experience of time and narratives, which were so intricately structured within manuscript traditions and which the expansive surface of the icon radically transforms? The expansive panel forming the calendar made up of daily commemorations does not easily communicate a current point in time to a viewer in the way that a clock can announce the time. While the icon is precise in its order and arrangement, I do not believe that it displays the same mode of precision a timekeeping device might. It instead gives meaning to the present by enwrapping any moment in time in a full expression of the year composed of sacred history.

Focusing on the origins that lay behind Simonopetra's icon, I argue that these panels create their own form of time. With their accumulation of saints ordered by commemoration date they at first appear to be a copy of *Menologia* manuscripts unbound on a single surface, as many scholars have noted. But while the term "*Menologia*" is regularly applied to these icons, using the same name for both encourages assumptions that manuscript and icon performed similar functions, which I do not believe to be the case. The calendar panels instead draw on the formal qualities of the icon, notably the gold ground and single or reduced group who form the panel's devotional focus, which scholars and Byzantines alike viewed as thresholds to the eternal, outside time and place, to instead hold multiple places and times.

## Sinai's Calendar Icons

Simonopetra's icon represents a late example of how a collection of images structured the liturgical calendar of fixed commemorations separate from their hagiographic texts, a form that enjoyed a particularly robust revival in Russian icon painting between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>408</sup> However, prior to this resurgence, the tradition of calendar icons finds its roots in the middle Byzantine period, and these form the focus of this chapter.<sup>409</sup> Over the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, four examples of these calendar icons survive. All of them now reside within the monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai, where they were likely created, and unlike the Simonopetra icon's single panel, all the Byzantine examples embrace a diptych, polyptych, or multi-panel form.<sup>410</sup>

In their appearance, any one of these icons appears deceptively simple. They present a collection of saints arranged in a regular pattern so that every day is distinct and marked by the effigy of a saint or saints commemorated on that day. While there is a sense of uniformity, each scene is unlike those that precede and follow it. To take one example, a miniature diptych (36.5 x 49.1 cm) now preserved in Sinai's treasury compresses six months' worth of commemorations to fit on each of its panels (figure 4.2). Beneath a lobed arch at top, roundels hold the Great Feasts with six per panel, revolving around busts of Christ on the left wing and the Virgin on the right.

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<sup>408</sup> Irina Shalina, "Catalog no. 11: Menaion for December," *Gates of Mystery: The Art of Holy Russia*, ed. Roderick Grierson (Milan: InterCultura, 1992), 91-93. Russian monthly Menologia in the form of portable icons made their appearance on Mount Athos in the seventeenth century. Voktopoulos, *Byzantine Illustrated Manuscripts of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem*, nos. 16-17.

<sup>409</sup> Dating for these icons has been difficult, and lead primarily by manuscript comparisons, while some like the Soterious and Weitzmann view them as primarily inventions of the eleventh centuries, Ševčenko and Mouriki push them to the twelfth, with the latest date proposed by Ševčenko as 1200 for the nave icons.

<sup>410</sup> For a general overview see most recently Maria Lidova, "Martyrs, Prophets, Monks: Calendar Icons in the Collection of St Catherine's Monastery at Sinai (11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Century)," *IKON* 14 (2021): 24-25. Ševčenko, "Marking Holy Time."

The spacious arrangement of these feasts starkly contrasts with the densely packed cycle of fixed commemorations below them, which occupy the bulk of the diptych. Figures stack on top of each other, most commonly in groups of three, to embody each day, approximately 182 days or 546 figures per panel. Following Symeon Stylites on his column for the first day of the year, 2 September contains Mamas as the first entry at left, with the Patriarch John Nestor slightly behind him to the right, and Italus the Younger behind the pair, shown only by his floating head (figure 4.3).<sup>411</sup> Clothing type and age differentiate the figures, with grey beards, patterned *omorphoria*, or brightly colored *chlamydes* rippling across the surface to convey slight variations, but the majority of scenes conforms to the same frontal, standing portrait. Even major commemorations in the calendar like the Nativity follow suit, eschewing the manger scene to picture the virgin upright and holding the infant with Joseph behind them (figure 4.4).

Yet small narrative scenes occasionally interrupt these trios. The Virgin's entrance into the temple, for example, celebrated 21 November, loosely fits within architectural setting beneath a baldachin (Figure 4.5), and for larger groups collectively martyred like the 40 martyrs of Sebaste at the top of the second panel, the entry condenses all forty figures into a painted arch that transforms their allocated space into a frigid lake (figure 4.6). Moments like these lend specificity within the largely homogenized group, where the icy water and their contorted, expressive bodies or the schematic temple convey pivotal elements of the story and disrupt an otherwise formulaic pattern. But they also reveal the interplay between the diptych's small scale and its abundance of legible information packed onto its surfaces. In other words, despite the quantity of figures and

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<sup>411</sup> The inscriptions are illegible, but I argue that these three are depicted based on their common appearance within various synaxaria/Menologia and iconography. These attributions may change after either in person consultation of high-definition images of the icon and its parts.

their dense presentation, the image remains sensitive to each figure's identity and even emotional state, rewarding close looking.

Like the diptych, the three other contemporary sets of calendar icons at Sinai are formed by combining multiple panels, but all have distinct scales and illustrations—none are identical.<sup>412</sup> One set, the twelve panels now installed on the piers within the Justinianic *katholikon*, the monastery's main basilica, is larger and more communal (figure 4.7). These panels portray their sacred figures almost exclusively as standing frontal portraits, presenting a steady stream of subtly different but overall uniform saints who have overcome their earthly martyrdoms holding martyrs' crosses.<sup>413</sup> Unlike the portraits seen in the diptych and nave icons, the two others that complete this corpus instead opt for martyrdom scenes. A polyptych spreads the calendar across four of its panels, framed by an image of Christological cycle on one wing and the Second Coming on the other, straining toward a comprehensive experience of time and Christian history (figure 4.8). Another set that only partially survives uses small arched panels for each month with Gospel and Passion cycles on the reverse of its martyrdom sequence (figure 4.9). Overall, this corpus of calendar icons at Sinai has largely evaded sustained art historical consideration and remain theorized as a monolithic group. The scant attention given to the icons stresses their small number and lack of comparable material, theorizing that they are unique to the monastery.<sup>414</sup> Viewed from

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<sup>412</sup> Ioanna Christoforaki, "Paving the Road to Sinai: Georgios and Maria Soteriou on the Holy Mountain," in *Approaching the Holy Mountain: Art and Liturgy in Saint Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai*, ed. Sharon Gerstel and Robert Nelson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 23.

<sup>413</sup> In this way the composition evokes the sense of experimentation in films, like montage and collage. Tom Gunning, "Now You See It, Now You Don't" The Temporality of Cinema Attractions." *Velvet Light Trap*, no. 32 (1993): 6; Helen Powell, *Stop the Clocks! Time and Narrative in Cinema* (London: Tauris, 2011); Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>414</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, "Icon Programs of the 12th and 13th Century at Sinai," *DChAH* 12 (1984): 108; Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Marking Holy Time," 52.

this perspective, their place within broader understandings of Byzantine icons and the use of images becomes eclipsed by their perceived idiosyncratic nature.

Beyond their small quantity, the icons have existed in the shadows of scholarly literature for two reasons. First, the icons subvert expectations of how an icon is supposed to look in formal terms. Abandoning a centralized focal point, the surfaces represent multiple subjects whose repetition competes for the viewer's attention. Ultimately, however, no singular figure on the panel can sustain the gaze. Instead, the eye scans across the impressive and unusual number of saints contained by the icon who all appear the same from a distance. The impact of the panels is not an individual address but an embrace of the plural. In this way, the images demand a profoundly different sense of engagement than traditional icons with their singular portrait, and even *vita* icons that frame the central image with smaller vignettes.

Second, the icons are explained as copies of illustrations from the manuscript tradition. This approach draws on iconographic correspondences, particularly in deluxe lectionaries, where the marginal portrait of a saint is placed alongside their listed date in the manuscript's calendar portion, such as the one included in a late-eleventh century lectionary from Constantinople (Vat. gr. 1156).<sup>415</sup> For 21 September, both the Vatican's lectionary image and the large icon in Sinai's nave are remarkably consistent in their representations of the martyrs Eustrathios, Theopistes and their children Theopistos and Agapios (figures 4.10 and 4.11). Across both icon and manuscript,

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<sup>415</sup> Lectionaries are liturgical books that contain the readings from the bible for daily services arranged by the calendar. Most of these have lists appended to their back indicating the feasts, first mobile and followed by the fixed commemorations with their proper readings. On Vat. gr. 1156 see Roland Betancourt, *Performing the Gospels: Sight, Sound, and Space in the Divine Liturgy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Job Getcha, "Le système des lectures bibliques du rite byzantin," in *La liturgie, interprète de l'écriture*, vol. 1, ed. A.M. Triacca and A. Pistoia (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 2003), 25-56. For a generic survey of the lectionary, see Elisabeth Yota, "The Lectionary," in *A Companion to Byzantine Illustrated Manuscripts*, ed. Vasiliki Tsamakda (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 287-99. On illuminated lectionaries, see Mary-Lyon Dolezal, "The Middle Byzantine Lectionary: Textual and Pictorial Expression of Liturgical Ritual," (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1991).

the two adult figures share the same dress, posture, and gesture, substituting small arched tablets for the children's martyrs' crosses in the iconic version. Similar examples of correspondences between Lectionary calendars or *Menologia* and the Sinai's other calendar icons are easily found.<sup>416</sup> But neither portraits nor martyrdoms ever align with a single Constantinopolitan model or calendar. There are always notable additions and omissions. Furthermore, by approaching the panels as mere copies, this characterization downplays what is offered by the new format.

It is true that, like the series of frontal portraits seen in illustrated *Menologia* manuscripts, the accumulation of painted saints on these panels emphasizes sameness above all else. Like the diptych, on all these calendar examples, individual saints from disparate regions and periods are always dressed atemporally and according to profession for visual unity. For example, on all the panels, every bishop wears precisely the same garbs regardless of period rather than keeping in line with the changing fashions. It is only through the diminutive red inscriptions that accompany the effigies that they can be differentiated. But the experience of the panel is quite different from that of the manuscript. The hagiographic material without fail identifies where the saints were from and when they died. Not only do the icons lack the narratives dictating their saint's places and periods, but the collective presence of these figures also emphasizes their similarity. In this way the group refocuses away from a historical account and toward an accumulation in the present.

From the shared formal qualities of the portraits, there is a clear relationship of filiation between the book and panels. But this union is better expressed as cousins and not as siblings.<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>416</sup> For the tradition of martyrdom scenes, Galavaris provides ample comparanda between multiple manuscripts and the polyptych. See Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexptych of the Saint Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai* (Venice: Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post Byzantine Studies, 2009).

<sup>417</sup> Sinai's small diptych serves as the cover image for the two-volume *Ashgate Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*. This is an invaluable resource, however it does not discuss the calendar icons, and implies that they are visual counterparts to the hagiographic collections described within the volumes. Stephanos Efthymiadis, ed., *The Ashgate Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 2014).

Distinct from the manuscripts, the spatialization of time within their setting provides the premise for the icon more than the gathering of figures from across time and place. The icons' figures appear to represent time, materializing it through the painted series of saints, while also undoing it to create a specific form of time through the icons. In order to provide a more nuanced understanding of how these icons create time, and for whom, I aim to consider how the icons construct a physical space where different calendars and understandings of time come together. Beyond iconographic connections to a world outside the monastery, what remains to be considered is their visualization of an instantaneous experience of the year in a site as freighted with timescapes as Sinai's monastery. Far from marginal, I argue that the emergence of this set of icons and their distinctive format directly engaged with innovations in liturgical thought debated in commentaries over the eleventh and twelfth centuries, visualizing new understandings of time's structure, organization, and experience.

In arguing this position, the chapter proceeds in two halves, anchored by a pair of distinct case studies.<sup>418</sup> After reviewing theories of the icon in relation to narrative and the place and time of liturgical rituals, part one focuses on Sinai's polyptych donated by an Iberian patron named Ioane Tokhabi. Scholarly attention on this set focuses on the framing panels with scenes from the life of Christ and Last Judgement at the expense of the four calendar icons comprising its center. But I argue that this commemorative cycle grounded in martyrdoms is integral to the composition's commentary on time, orienting events on earth, especially those experienced by the icon's patron Ioane, within a larger narrative of resurrection. Following this, the second half moves on to the twelve large panels within the nave, which constitutes my second case study. In contrast to the

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<sup>418</sup> The bilateral calendar icons are too fragmentary to articulate a holistic message, and until a high-resolution image of the diptych is produced, one is unable to discern what saints are on the wings. The nave icons and polyptych do have the necessary images to arrive at some conclusions.

dominant view of the icons as regulating the celebrations that take place in the monastery, I propose that they were far more atmospheric, reflecting different places and calendars to expand the architectural setting. None of these icons is directly engaged with liturgical practices, however I argue that they echo the morning recitation of the saints' lives and serve as sustained reminders of different places and times that augment the temporal experience of the liturgy developing across the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

### **The Time of the Icon**

A nativity icon from Sinai contemporary with the calendar group provides an entry to considering the temporal play of icons that seemingly correspond to narratives but extend beyond them. Within an arched panel, angelic choirs part, allowing the holy spirit to descend to a scene of the nativity, which occupies the center of the panel (figure 4.12).<sup>419</sup> Revolving around this central image of the nativity, hills frame the events leading up to and following this event. Figures reappear in multiple modules, announcing new episodes and propelling the story forward aided by inscriptions. In the upper corners, the Magi are led by the star, playfully grasped by their leader, appearing immediately below their adoration of the infant to spatialize the temporal proximity of this episode (figure 4.13).<sup>420</sup> Facing this scene on the right, they take their exit, we are told by means of a different route, which the panel specifies through displaying their departure toward the righthand frame (figure 4.14).<sup>421</sup> Beyond the Magi, the spatial and narrative organization of the

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<sup>419</sup> Soteriou, *Icones* vol. 1 fig. 43-45; vol. 2, 59-62; Kurt Weitzmann "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century," in *Thirteenth International Congress of Byzantine Studies* ed. Joan Hussey et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 13; Glenn Peers, "Cat. 14: Scenes of the Nativity," in *Holy Image Hallowed Ground*, 155.

<sup>420</sup> The inscription reads: ΟΙ ΜΑΓΟΙ ΟΔΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΙ ΥΠΟ ΑΣΤΕΡΟΣ, "the Magi being led by the star," quoted in *Holy Image Hallowed Ground*, 155.

<sup>421</sup> ΔΙ' ΑΛΛΗC ΟΔΟΥ ΑΝΕΧΩΠΗCΑΝ, "by another way they [the magi] returned," quoted in *Holy Image Hallowed Ground*, 155.



panel forms a densely packed and visually intense story. In the middle register, Joseph leads two midwives to the cave at left, the family enters Egypt with the Infant, and Elizabeth hides in a miraculous cave with John the Baptist to evade a charging soldier at right, all communicated through hills that undulate across the panel. These episodes, intermixing arrivals and departures above the gruesome chaos of Herod's massacre of the innocents, appear to add up to the nativity's narrative. And yet the arithmetic involved to construct the story is anything but straightforward. The middle register alone juxtaposes events before and after Christ's birth with no sequential logic. Instead, time is reimagined across the icon's swelling hills to construct associations outside teleological progression.

The panel's reworking of temporal structures is indicative what I refer to as "iconic time," which is distinct in its confluence of timescapes. In my opinion, the scenes on the Nativity panel were never meant to be mentally reconstructed in a literal or linear way but intentionally operated on their own timescale to capture the movement surrounding the story. In order to clarify this point, I first introduce the dominant arguments brought to bear on the icon as a specific genre in relation to constructions of time. I engage with the medium's formal and experiential properties that art historians have used to characterize the icon as timeless. I then survey how these images were mobilized, in some cases literally, in processions calibrated to specific times of the day, week, or year. The section concludes by positioning the calendar icons alongside another icon type clustering at Sinai, the *vita* icon. I move beyond questions of how faithfully the icons depict their narratives to outline a specific attitude toward time that the calendar icons present in their assemblage of figures that resonates with contemporary liturgical thinking.

Initial approaches to the monastery as a site and its trove of icons argued for an unchanging continuity that offered viewers direct access to another time and place. In this vein, George Forsyth

writes, “outwardly, fourteen centuries had little altered St. Catherine’s. Seeing it was like glimpsing the vanished world of Byzantium.”<sup>422</sup> Forsyth’s remark echoes those of Early Christian pilgrimage accounts, especially the famous fourth century Egeria, whose peregrinations around the site allowed her to physically enter into events from the Bible and connect her to Old Testament prophets like Moses and Elijah. Such experiences across time have fed into the mythic and timeless narrative imposed on the monastery in general.<sup>423</sup> This perspective can also be extended to the icon collection at the site, in particular. As seen in the opening Nativity icon, the subordination of linear understandings of time in the narrative could foster intimate experiences of multiple scenes simultaneously.

Art historians such as Gary Vikan and Ernst Kitzinger have understood Byzantine icons as timeless on account of their formal language. In conceiving of the panel’s surface as a threshold where the two planes of heaven and earth intersect, Vikan draws attention to the erasure of earthly time and real space in favor of an eternal stillness. The mechanics behind this transcendent experience emerge from qualities such as the empty fields of gold or pronounced architectural frames that act as barriers to keep reality and the present from seeping into the panel.<sup>424</sup> Furthermore, Kitzinger has viewed icons of the feast cycle, perhaps the most temporally grounded type within the iconic imagery, as an attempt to dislodge the events of Christ’s life from their

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<sup>422</sup> George Forsyth, “Island of Faith in the Sinai Wilderness,” *National Geographic* 125, no. 1 (1964): 87.

<sup>423</sup> Kristine Larison has added nuance to the idea of the Sinai landscape, Larison, “Mount Sinai and the Monastery of Saint Catherine: Place and Space in Pilgrimage Art,” (PhD diss. University of Chicago, 2016).

<sup>424</sup> Gary Vikan, “Sacred Image, Sacred Power,” in *Sacred Images, Sacred Power in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 1-11, esp. 4: “references to earthly time or ‘real’ space were potentially distracting, and in any case, irrelevant. Gold backgrounds, bust-length portraits, over-large eyes, gestures of blessing, “otherworldliness,” timelessness, a sense of transcendental power – these defining characteristics of icons were all dictated by the theology of sacred images and, more specifically, by the nature of the icon experience itself.”

calendar date.<sup>425</sup> By evacuating markers of place and history to situate the events outside historical time, Kitzinger contends that the imagery shows an eternal and all-pervasive divine economy was behind the events.

As one example from a multi-panel composition of the feast cycle from the fourteenth century feast cycle now at the British Museum, the icon of the Transfiguration sets the scene deep in an arched frame (figure 4.15). Traces of movement can be seen at bottom with the apostles pummeling downward after they were knocked off their feet by the divine revelation, but the majority of the surface encourages speculation on a monumental image Christ enwrapped in a monumental blue mandorla. For Kitzinger, compositional strategies, like axial symmetry and the lack of differentiation between the landscape and gold background, create a stillness that arrests the gaze rather than moving forward in the feast sequence to create the illusion of an eternal presence.<sup>426</sup> While Vikan and Kitzinger both engage in the notion of time and the complex questions it presents through theories of reproduction, stasis, and cyclical reenactment, they view engagement with the icon primarily as occurring between the sacred past and a salvific future, but ultimately as a timeless experience. This view, however, was a product of their time, and is not the only way of looking at icons. Other approaches, both modern and Byzantine, construct more rigorous understandings of the icon's relation to time.<sup>427</sup>

Following important work on the interplay of gold surfaces that shimmered in candlelight, this formal stillness has moved toward more complex phenomenological engagements with the

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<sup>425</sup> Even more than the calendar icons, the feast icons would undoubtedly be associated both with the calendar and with the narrative of Christ's life.

<sup>426</sup> Ernst Kitzinger, "Reflections on the Feast Cycle in Byzantine Art," *CA* 36 (1988): 56-7.

<sup>427</sup> Robert Nelson, "The Discourse of Icons: Then and Now," 154-55.

icon.<sup>428</sup> However, the implications of the icon's initial eternal characterization can still be felt and can be problematic, especially among non-Byzantinists who have used these qualities to denigrate Byzantine art. Invocations of the Byzantine formal idiom as timeless, immutable, and static abound in art historical literature, and it is often invoked to serve as a pivot or negative counterpoint for the innovations of the Renaissance in a progressively oriented march of time and form.<sup>429</sup> This is not new. Nagel and Wood have characterized the Byzantine icon's reception in fifteenth century Europe as an "authoritative design, a sovereign and styleless appearance, an overall effect of temporal immunity" understood to be antiquities by Western eyes.<sup>430</sup> But this evaluation remains rooted in questions of style and form without considering the icon's flexible relationship to past prototypes, which could be replicated for important purposes or transformed. Above all else, these understandings of the icon and its relationship to time and to timelessness are grounded not in Byzantine attitudes or beliefs, but on Western, modern notions.

Looking to religious images in the East and West, Robert Nelson has called attention to this conflation of the time of icons with their timeless perception by outsiders. He contends that Byzantine art must be understood differently from medieval art forms prevalent in western Europe. By using icons of Christ that are engaged in dialogs, that is, they respond to prayers brought to

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<sup>428</sup> Rico Franes, "When All That is Gold Does Not Glitter: on the strange history of looking at Byzantine Art," in *Icon and Word: The Power of Images in Byzantium: Studies Presented to Robin Cormack*, ed. Antony Eastmond and Liz James (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 14; Glenn Peers, *Sacred Shock: Framing Visual Experience in Byzantium* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2004), 107-17, 126-31; Bissera Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," *AB* 88, no. 4 (2006): 639-40.

<sup>429</sup> Robert Nelson, "Living on the Byzantine Borders of Western Art," *Gesta* 35 (1996): 5; Robert Nelson, "The Map of Art History," *AB* 79, no. 1 (1997): 36; and more recently Cecily Hilsdale, "The Timeliness of Timelessness," in *Late Byzantium Reconsidered: The Arts of the Palaiologian Era in the Mediterranean*, ed. Andrea Mattiello and Maria Alessia Rossi (London: Routledge, 2019), 63.

<sup>430</sup> Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone, 2010), 105, 109; Rembrandt Duits, "Byzantine Icons in the Medici Collection," in *Byzantine Art and Renaissance Europe*, ed. Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Rembrandt Duits (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 160.

them in the form of inscriptions, he shows how Byzantine imagery could always be firmly grounded in the present.<sup>431</sup> From this level of viewing, there is no need for a visual language to differentiate the past or the future, which implied distance. The devotional image is primarily about immediacy: it does not serve singularly as evidence of things to come or that once were, but instead according to this reading, all of history has folded in on the image.<sup>432</sup>

Nelson's comments about the structuring of time in the devotional image call for a reassessment of Kitzinger's assertions regarding the Feast cycle. Cycles with multiple scenes for taken from Christ's life were far less about a removal from time toward timelessness than about adding to time in the present. This conclusion resonates with liturgical commentaries from the eleventh century keyed to the Byzantine rites that explicitly used imagery to demonstrate the kind of time experienced in the liturgical present. In particular, a rigorous exploration of time crystallized in the *Protheoria*, a commentary on the Divine Liturgy written and revised by Nikolaos and Theodoros of Andida over the course of the eleventh century.<sup>433</sup> Within this text, the liturgy reflected a symbolic portrait whose individual components pointed to a whole, although this whole could be assembled in different configurations to incite deeper introspection.<sup>434</sup>

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<sup>431</sup> Robert Nelson, "Byzantine Art vs Western Medieval Art," in *Byzance et le monde extérieur: contacts, relations, échanges*, ed. Michel Balard, Élisabeth Malamut, and J.-M. Spiser (Paris: Sorbonne, 2005), 263-5.

<sup>432</sup> Nelson, "Byzantine Art vs Western Medieval Art," 265: "Because of the present-oriented environment of holy images, Byzantine art did not have the same need for a visual language of the past or the future, the principal tenses of Western medieval art." cf. Roland Betancourt, "Prolepsis and Anticipation: The Apocalyptic Futurity of the Now, East and West," in *A Companion to the Premodern Apocalypse*, ed. Michael A Ryan (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 179-180.

<sup>433</sup> For classic commentaries on the Divine Liturgy, see Rene Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins de la divine liturgie du VIIe au XVe siècle* (Paris, 1966); H-J. Schulz, *The Byzantine Liturgy* (New York: Pueblo, 1986); for critique of these editions see most M. Zheltov, "The disclosure of the Divine Liturgy by Pseudo-Gregory of Nazianzus: edition of the text and commentary. *BollGrott*, 3rd ser., 12 (2015): 215-16.

<sup>434</sup> In Hans-Joachim Schulz's reading of this text, the liturgy becomes an iconic embodiment since it likens the liturgy to an icon of Christ's body, Hans-Joachim Schulz, *The Byzantine Liturgy*, 89-98.

According to the authors, the liturgy not only represented the Passion, death, and resurrection of Christ but also all the acts of his life, both public and private, simultaneously.<sup>435</sup> While composed of several interlocking services, with each possessing their own duration calibrated to specific moments of the day, the liturgical sequence does not chart specific narratives that were read or evoked, but the entire economy of the redemptive history of Christ. One event may represent various moments in the narrative of Christ as a chain of connected references, or may multiply endlessly.<sup>436</sup>

In explaining their complex theses, its authors often draw on liturgical imagery and tableaux to express the multiplication of meaning within a single action and the junction of discrete episodes. In one of these instances, the authors turn to the icon as a useful case. While the surface may depict only individual scenes or figures, they must be understood to contain the whole history of salvation: “For in these [Holy Icons painted in manifold colors],” they write, “are represented all the mysteries of the Incarnation of our Christ and God to be seen by the faithful.”<sup>437</sup> The commentary itself has no illustration, but its appeal to imagery that would be common to its readers lends greater temporal depth to common images adorning sacred spaces and enveloping the space not just with sacred figures but their own histories.

Work on two key icon types in particular have also advanced how we understand the image’s presentation of historical and eternal time: the bilateral icon and the *vita* icon. I do not believe that these icons were made in direct response to liturgical commentaries like the *Protheoria*, but are rather indicative of broader trends in thinking about temporal relationships in

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<sup>435</sup> Nikolaos and Theodoros of Andida, *Protheoria* (PG 140: 418-486); Bornert, *Les commentaires*, 181-213.

<sup>436</sup> Barbara Crostini, “Interpreting the Interpreters: The Principles and Aims of the *Protheoria*,” *Ostkirchliche Studien* 42 (1993): 55-56; Roland Betancourt, “A Byzantine Liturgical Commentary in Verse,” *OCP* 81 (2015): 457.

<sup>437</sup> Chapter 3. Quoted in Crostini, “Interpreting the Interpreters,” 55.

ritual performance or time more generally. Belting's case study on the twelfth-century bilateral icon of the Man of Sorrows and lamenting virgin on its respective sides shows how discrete episodes could coexist through its multiple painted surfaces. On one side, an emaciated bust portrait of the dead Christ fills the entire surface, with the body occupying the width of the panel (figure 4.16). On the other side, the Virgin holds an infant Christ, wearing an emotional expression on her face and overseen by mourning angels who float above the group (figure 4.17). Belting uses the images' multiple surfaces to propose that this new icon type adapted and transformed previous images to fit the needs of the reformed Holy Week rituals, characterized by their heightened drama in hymnography and readings between the ninth and eleventh centuries.<sup>438</sup>

These new additions to the liturgy juxtaposed texts honoring the Crucified Christ and the lamenting Virgin. In particular, the Good Friday celebrations assigned kanons, known as *Threnoi*, that stage dialogues between the Virgin and Christ.<sup>439</sup> These instances where the dead Christ is mourned alongside the memory of his birth could become a direct reenactment of the simultaneity of Christ's life as it was schematized in the *Protheoria*. Romanos's *Kontation*, *Mary at the Cross* integrated into the service, for example, creates elaborate temporal shifts in which Mary laments the frustration of past hopes, notes the present absence of apostles, and finally describes his future resurrection in swift successive movements.<sup>440</sup> As a visual corollary to the Romanos text, the multiple sides of the bilateral icon mobilize the dramatic tension of the dialogue, where the lamenting Virgin anticipates what is to come on one side and recalls the birth at his Crucifixion on

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<sup>438</sup> Belting, "An Image and its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium," *DOP* 34/35 (1980): 1-16.

<sup>439</sup> These services likely occurred more frequently than only on Good Friday. Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Icons in the Liturgy," *DOP* 45 (1991): 54, note 67.

<sup>440</sup> Οὐκ ἤλπίζον, τέκνον...Margaret Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* (Lanham: Roman, 2002), 142-44.

the other.<sup>441</sup> The sides can never be seen together as a single image, but they hold these events together nonetheless. Installed on a pole and processed through space, the icon offers a devotional center for the recited text, which would take on different resonances depending on what side is revealed, which is concealed, and at what point in the recitation of the texts the imagery was visible. In this way the bilateral icon's two sides give added meaning to the texts spoken, effectively participating within the Passion rituals and lamentation mood associated with the liturgical period. But the icon additionally represents the entire narrative, from life to death to resurrection, in its use within the liturgical performance, effectively conveying the juncture of events across time and a redemptive whole.

In the second icon type related to the Calendar icon, *vita* icons offer an opportunity to consider painted hagiography in a manner that recalls the Nativity icon. As discussed by Paroma Chatterjee and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, these icons were didactic panels that displayed multiple episodes from a saint's life around an iconic portrait for spiritual edification.<sup>442</sup> On a fifteenth-century expansion of a thirteenth-century *Vita* Icon of Saint Nicholas, the saint appears bust length, garbed like as a bishop wrapped in an *omophorion* that hangs on his shoulders and framed by two diminutive monks named Klimos and Pimen on either side (figure 4.18). He blesses with his left

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<sup>441</sup> Hans Belting, "An Image and its Function," 11-12; Demetrios Pallas, *Passion und Bestattung Christi in Byzanz. Der Ritus-das Bild*, *Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia*, 2 (Munich, 1965); cf James Rodriguez, "Images for Personal Devotion in an Age of Liturgical Synthesis: Bilateral Icons in Byzantium, ca. 1100-1453," (PhD diss., Yale University, 2018).

<sup>442</sup> Soteriou, *Icones vol. 1*, 170; *vol. 2*, 155-56; Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *The Life of Saint Nicholas*, 59. On the *vita* icon generally see Paroma Chatterjee, "Archive and Atelier" and Chatterjee, *The Living Icon in Byzantium and Italy: the vita image, eleventh to thirteenth century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "The 'Vita' Icon and the Painter as Hagiographer," *DOP* 53 (1999): 149-165; N.P. Ševčenko, "An Eleventh Century Illustrated Edition of the Metaphrasteian Menologion," *Eastern European Quarterly* 13 (1979): 423ff; N.P. Ševčenko, "Vita Icons and 'Decorated' Icons of the Komnenian Period," in *Four Icons in the Menil Collections*, ed. Bertrand Davezac (Houston: The Menil Collection, 1992), 56-69; Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 256.



hand and holds a bejeweled Gospel in his right while on either side of him he is gifted the very *omophorion* on his shoulders by the Virgin and Christ offers the book.

Surrounding this central scene are two frames that give additional narrative and historical relevance to the figure. The inner frame communicates events from the saint's life. The first in the upper left corner shows the saint's birth (figure 4.19), then gradually moving toward his schooling and consecration as bishop, again shown in his *omophorion* in the upper right corner (figure 4.20). Returning to the rectangle at left, immediately below his birth, Nicholas, now a bishop, leads the celebration of mass. Each scene presents the bishop in a different capacity, charting episodes in the saint's life, his good deeds and his swift response to those in need, all leading toward death in the lower right corner. Nicholas even appears posthumously in one scene, rescuing a boy named Basil from his service as a cupbearer for the Arabs and returning him to his family (figure 4.21).<sup>443</sup> But this scene does not follow his death as it would logically. It is instead fully integrated into the flow of images between his birth and death. Ultimately, the order of episodes is often jumpy, combining elements of the story tied to the Metaphrastian *Menologion* from the eleventh century but with no attempt to replicate the text's narrative structure.

The outer frame embeds Nicholas and his life in rows of saints named in miniature inscriptions to form an expanded Deesis scene. This frame is laden with historicity, with forty saints and sacred figures arranged around Nicholas according to profession. But more than serving as an image of Christian history, the intercessory schema of the Deesis becomes a dense diagram of time and space grounded in the present more than the past. It conveys the upward movement of the donors' prayers through its rows of saints stacked vertically, with Nicholas in particular as the

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<sup>443</sup> Ševčenko, *Life of Saint Nicholas in Byzantine Art* (Torino: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1983), 143-48.

largest figure and directly below the enthroned Christ, as their venerated figure.<sup>444</sup> All told, none of the framing scenes align with the linear conception of time often ascribed to presentations of narrative as in storytelling or their illustration.<sup>445</sup> Instead, the surface's multiple images convey a portrait of the saint that cuts through time with its diagrammatic directionality and combination of episodes.

These changes in how icons represent their subject, moving away from single images and embracing fragmented parts, illustrate the medium as one of constant experimentation, as defined by Annemarie Weyl Carr.<sup>446</sup> But how their subjects are displayed also document the emergence of new ways of thinking about time underway in the collection of hagiographies and the elaboration of liturgical practice in distinct ways. In the case of the Vita icon, the panel's frame conveys the hagiographic life collected in *Menologia*, but the experience of "reading" the image is consistently derailed by the larger imposing iconic portrait. Nicholas's vita icon uses the central portrait to point to an entirely different form of time that is separate from the narrative scenes surrounding it. It allows temporal unfolding and eternal presence to not only be juxtaposed but to work in tandem and alongside a collection of equally venerated sacred figures, who present his life not as a single event on earth but embedded in a larger historical apparatus.

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<sup>444</sup> Paroma Chatterjee has theorized that its configuration suggests that the figure of Nicholas emerges from his historical precedents. Chatterjee, "Cat. 17: Vita Icon of Saint Nicholas," in *Holy Image Hallowed Ground*, 161.

<sup>445</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*. Ševčenko adheres to a linear, textually biased reading of the frames on the narrative icons since she remarks that they "start with a birth scene...and end with a death." This is untenable in that not all the panels depict the birth and the death scene need not be where the eye comes to rest at the end of the viewing process. See Ševčenko, "The Vita Icon", 151.

<sup>446</sup> Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Originality and the Icon: The Panel Painted Icon," in *Originality in Byzantine Literature, Art, and Music: A Collection of Essays* edited by Antony Littlewood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 115-124.

Turning to my two case studies, these multiple forms of representation effectively intersect with the how liturgical thought was shifting to fold discrete events into larger swaths of time and provide an entry to understanding how the calendar icons convey time. Rather than expressing hagiographic material, the calendar icons illustrate the liturgical action of a litany of saints. The litany was involved in the Byzantine rite throughout the church year, initiated by the deacon who begins a series of petitions asking for the intercession of saints. In this invocation, the litany took the form of a list of saints, followed by the congregation responding with *Kyrie Eleison* repeatedly.<sup>447</sup> Ultimately, like these compressed moments of call and response that bring to mind the individual saint in succession, the icons become charged sites that hold together their collection of saints to intercede on behalf of the supplicant in their present.

### **Time Folds in the Sinai Polyptych<sup>448</sup>**

Among the set of calendar icons at Sinai, a polyptych of six panels gifted by the Georgian monk Ioane Tokhabi, who lived at the monastery from the late eleventh to twelfth century, arguably envisions the fullest staging of time among Sinai's calendar group (Figure 4.22).<sup>449</sup> Six

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<sup>447</sup> Taft, "Litany," *ODB*; Taft, "Lite," *ODB*; John Baldovin *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: Origins, Development, and Meaning of the Stational Liturgy* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1987) 167-226.

<sup>448</sup> Several phrases have been used to describe this iconic composition: hexptych, polyptych, Ioane's icon. While the number of panels is six, I use polyptych rather than hexptych to retain the three thematic categories of the composition.

<sup>449</sup> I use Ioane in this section in line with his Georgian identity. The Hellenized Ioannes appears in the Greek inscriptions throughout, and Ioane within the Georgian texts. The icons were first published by George and Maria Soteriou in their catalogue of 1956-8, although they did not recognize them as forming one composition. Soteriou & Soteriou *Icones*, vol. 1, 146-9; vol. 2, 121-3, 125-8; Kurt Weitzmann, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the 11th Century," in *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Painting*, ed. Herbert Kessler (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 29-30; Pavle Mijović, *Menolog* (Belgrade, 1973), 180; Pavle Mijović, "Gruzinskie menologi s XI po XIV vek," *Zograf* 8 (1977): 17-23; Kurt Weitzmann, "Icon Programs of the 12th and 13th Century at Sinai," 107-12; Doula Mouriki, "La présence géorgienne au Sinai d'après le témoignage des icônes du monastère de Sainte-Catherine," in *Βυζάντιο και Γεωργία: Καλλιτεχνικές και πολιτιστικές σχέσεις; Συμπόσιο*, ed. Konstantinos Manafis (Athens, 1991), 39-40; Doula Mouriki, "Icons from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century," in *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine*, ed. Konstantinos Manafis (Athens, 1990), 99-100; Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Marking Holy Time," 52-3; Nicolette Trahoulia, "The Truth in Painting: a refutation of heresy in a Sinai Icon," *JÖB* 52 (2002): 271-85; Annmarie Weyl Carr, "Icons and the

panels, each measuring 48 x 35.5 cm and painted on both sides, unite to form this polyptych, which was likely produced in the late eleventh century based on epigraphic details in the Georgian script.<sup>450</sup> There are three themes involved in this composition. One theme occupies the extreme left, with a single panel displaying a row of five Virgins at top and scenes from Christ's miracles below (figure 4.23).<sup>451</sup> All but one of the five Virgins bear inscriptions identifying each with important Constantinopolitan sites: from left to right these are the (1) Blachernitissa, a miraculous image from the Blachernai, (2) the Hodegetria, a famous icon from the Hodegon Monastery processed weekly through Constantinople's city market beginning in the eleventh century, (3) an unspecified image of the Virgin and Child, likely referencing the apse mosaic at Hagia Sophia and the Virgin of the Burning Bush,<sup>452</sup> (4) the Hagiosoritissa, believed to adorn the reliquary shrine at the Chalkoprateia Church, and (5) the Cheimeunte, an icon that appears only briefly in *The Book of Ceremonies* and lacks any other reference of any kind.<sup>453</sup> Below this iconic frieze, an even grid

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Object of Pilgrimage in Middle Byzantine Constantinople," *DOP* 56 (2002): 75-92; George Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych of the Saint Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai* (Venice : Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies, 2009); Maria Lidova, "Creating a Liturgical Space: The Sinai Complex of Icons by Ioannis Tohabi," in *Georgian Art in the Context of European and Asian Cultures, June 21–29 2008*, eds. Skinner, Tumanishvili & Shanshiashvili (Tbilisi, 2009), 226-31; Zaza Skhirtladze "Sinat'is satselits' do khat'is shedgenilobisat'vis," *Proceedings of Art History Department of Tbilisi State University* 2 (2000): 197-225 (with English summary); Zaza Skhirtladze, "The Image of the Virgin on the Sinai Hexaptych and the Apse Mosaic of Hagia Sophia, Constantinople," *DOP* 68 (2014): 369–86; Niamh Bhalla, *Experiencing the Last Judgement* (London: Routledge, 2021), 154-203.

<sup>450</sup> I follow Bhalla on this dating, *Experiencing the Last Judgement*, 154. Trahoulia prefers a later date in the twelfth century. Trahoulia, "The Truth in Painting," 279.

<sup>451</sup> I resist using the beginning or first icon in this description. As we will see the manner of display discourages a linear reading. Parts move and fold in on one another, resisting a stable "beginning" or "ending."

<sup>452</sup> This image is referred to by Carr as specific to Sinai, the Virgin of the Burning Bush. Zaza Skhirtladze, however argues it is a representation of Hagia Sophia. Given the interplay of times on the panels, and the central position of this Virgin, it was likely meant to signify both and speak differently to the viewer depending on their experiences in and outside the monastery. Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage," 77; Skhirtladze, "The Image of the Virgin on the Sinai Hexaptych and the Apse Mosaic of Hagia Sophia, Constantinople," *DOP* 68 (2014): 378-383.

<sup>453</sup> Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage," 77-81.

of 36 squares conveys major miracles from the life of Christ beginning with the miracle at Cana and ending with a Passion sequence.<sup>454</sup>

The second theme is shown on the right most panel, which contains a chaotic and visionary experience of the Last Judgement (figure 4.24). Scenes of communal torture punctuate the gold field beneath a heaven crowded with innumerable haloed figures. At right of this panel, a fiery river engulfs bodies in line with Daniel's apocalyptic vision, and windows into miniature torture chambers punctuate the surface to exemplify the disorder ensuing from the end of time. These scenes of torture are mirrored on the panel's left side with collected saints gathered by profession.<sup>455</sup>

Between these exterior panels associated with the Virgin and Last Judgement, a calendar sequence comprises the third and largest theme (figure 4.25). Four panels form this central group, with three months arranged on each to loosely correspond to the seasons Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer. On these central panels, the saints span nine bands of ten individual scenes, separated by small gold frames. Clad in blues and reds, the saints populating the calendar panels vibrate with intensity. Figures are beheaded in the same swashbuckling manner as the *Bildmenologion*, and are also crucified, tortured, or, should the saint have died peacefully, shown in a standing portrait. For example, an executioner decapitates Saint Menas to signify 11 November while his co-martyrs

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<sup>454</sup> Following the miracle at Cana the sequence is as follows: Christ healing the paralytic, Christ giving sight to the blind man, Christ healing the leper, The Raising of the Daughter of Jairus, Christ curing Peter's mother-in-law, Healing of the people with diverse diseases, Christ exorcising the demoniae, The Raising of the Widow's Son, the two blind men on the road, a damaged scene, Christ and the Samaritan woman, Christ curing the man with dropsy, healing the paralytic, the healing of the ten lepers, healing of the paralytic, Christ speaking to Zacchaeus, the healing of the Deaf and Dumb man, the cursing of the fig tree, the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, Mary Magdalene anointing the feet, the raising of Lazarus, the entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the washing of the feet, the prayer at the garden of Gethsemane, the Betrayal, Pilate rendering his decision, the Mocking of Christ, Simon taking up the cross, the Deposition, the Lamentation, the Anastasis, the Ascension, and a blank scene, potentially Pentecost or the Koimesis (?). Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexptych*, 27-43. Trahoulia largely follows this identification with some omissions and substitutions, "The Truth in Painting," 272.

<sup>455</sup> Even the scene of heaven has a chaotic quality: figures are illegible and share in the same claustrophobic groups.

Victor and Vincent lie with severed heads on the ground (figure 4.26). Beside them in the neighboring scene, John the Almoner stands in bishop's vestments holding a book for 12 November. Above every scene is a bilingual caption in Greek and copied in Georgian that bears the saint's name and specifies the means of death.<sup>456</sup>

But distinct from the even and regular grid delineated on the polyptych's Virgin panel, the sequence of saints on these group embraces a different strategy. The pronounced gold frames holding every date conveyed by the saints expand and contract across the four panels, allowing horizontal congruence, but causing the vertical columns to shift from left to right in their imperfect alignment. Sometimes the difference is slight. The left most column on the first calendar panel appears to correspond as the eye moves downward, but approaching the bottom, the frames begin to swell. Other times, the lack of a grid is more pronounced: none of the panels have a central column to give the illusion of axial symmetry. Its effect lends a sense of movement to the entire visual field of unquantifiable saints.

The reverse of all six panels is painted in red with a central gold cross, outlined in black, and apotropaic acronyms marking where the arms intersect. Epigrams span the upper and lower margins that name Ioane and express his aspirations for salvation (figure 4.26).<sup>457</sup> For example, on the reverse of the calendar panels, the text reads:

*The four-part phalanx of glorious martyrs  
Together with a multitude of prophets and theologians,  
All priests and monks were successfully painted by Ioannes  
As he sent them as timely mediators before the Lord*

<sup>456</sup> For example. 'Ο ἁγ[ιός] μήν[ας] κ[αί] οἱ λοι[ποί] ξιφία τε[λειοῦνται]; 'Ιω[αννης] ο ελε ήμ[ων] εν ειρ ή[ν] τε[λειοῦνται].

<sup>457</sup> The four calendar icons, for example, have the following acronyms, which have been read as apotropaic: X Z Σ K (ξύλον ζωής σωτηρία κόσμου), Α Π Μ Σ (Ἀρχὴ Πίστεως Μυστηρίου Σταυρός), Ε Ε Ε Ε (Ελένη Εύρε 'Ελέους 'Ερεισμα), X X X X (Χριστός Χάριν Χριστιανοίς Χαρίζει). See Christopher Walter, "The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross," *REB* 55 (1997): 203-4.

*In order to receive redemption from what he is sinful of.*<sup>458</sup>

Unravelling across the four calendar panels, Ioane's epigram outlines the purpose of his imagery, whose effigies are rendered to intercede on behalf of their creator. The inscription acts as a silent litany on the reverse side of the calendar that not only calls on but also visualizes its expansive collection of saints.

Although now preserved at Sinai as six discrete panels, George Galavaris conclusively demonstrated that they were conjoined, revealing their original order.<sup>459</sup> Confirming Weitzmann's initial hypothesis, the panels of the miracles and Last Judgement flanked the central calendar portion through small metal hinges that are extant on the sides of the first and last calendar icons. From these hinges, the two outer panels of the Virgin and Last Judgement panels could move, folding in to cover the fall and summer panels respectively. In this "closed" position, the central months of winter and spring would remain visible.<sup>460</sup> To be clear, these central calendar panels were never obstructed even when their outer wings were closed, as illustrated in the reconstruction (figure 4.28).<sup>461</sup>

There have been two dominant approaches to this polyptych and its complicate use of thematic imagery and epigrams. One has been to focus on the figure of Ioane himself as patron

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<sup>458</sup> Andreas Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst, Byzantinische Epigramme in inchriftlicher Überlieferung* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010), 50-55.

<sup>459</sup> Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych*, 20-21. The original arrangement of these panels has been a matter of debate. Weitzmann initially argued in favor of six hinged panels due to the presence of small metal hinges on the two extreme sides of the calendar icons, and holes for joints, which are absent on the left side of the Marian icon panel and the right side of the Second Coming, presumably the ends. However, Zaza Skhirtladze contended that there were only five icons, the Marian icons at the center and flanked by two calendar panels, with the Second Coming added later. Weitzmann, "Byzantine miniature," 297.

<sup>460</sup> Lidova, "Creating a Liturgical Space," 228.

<sup>461</sup> There is no evidence of hinges on the other two calendar icons, so it is unlikely the entire composition folded in on itself like an accordion. The four calendar icons served as the central panel for the smaller two wings.

and his Georgian community at Sinai.<sup>462</sup> As argued by Doula Mouriki and Nina Chichinadze among others, the panels attest to a growing Georgian population at Sinai and were made as a pictorial liturgical calendar for the community.<sup>463</sup> In this view, the creation of the bilingual polyptych with its poetic epigrams is in line with other artistic projects including a renovation of their primary chapel in honor of St. George, both of which likely appeal to Sinai's broader monastic community and enhanced the standing of its Georgian members.<sup>464</sup> The second has been to consider the significance of the individual panels. Most recently Niamh Bhalla has looked to the Last Judgement panel specifically as an attempt to construct and consolidate the Georgian community. The presence of Georgian script at the center of the Last Judgement served as a stronger reminder to that community and provided a vision of the future to be internalized.<sup>465</sup>

The first panel with the Marian icons and miracle cycle has received similar attention, with scholars interested either in iconography or in devotional practices. Annemarie Weyl Carr cogently contextualizes the first panel's imagery in terms of pilgrimage and its relationship to the major centers of Constantinople. Her analysis revealed the complex relationship between iconography, epithets, and objects probing whether the iconic suite of Marian imagery at the top of the first panel referenced physical icons or were meant to point to places that housed these important miracle-

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<sup>462</sup> Sofia Kalopissi-Verti, "Painter's Portraits in Byzantine Art," *DChAH* 17 (1993-4):134-6; Maria Lidova, "The Artist's Signature in Byzantium: Six Icons by Ioannes Tohabi in Sinai Monastery (11th-12th century)," *Opera Nomina Historiae: Giornale di cultura artistica* 1 (2009): 77-98; Maria Lidova, "Manifestations of Authorship Artists' Signatures in Byzantium," *Venezia Arti* 26 (2017): 89-105; Nina Chichinadze, "Representing Identities: The Icon of Ioane Tokhabi from Sinai," *Le Muséon* 130 (2017): 401-20.

<sup>463</sup> Mouriki, "Icons from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century," 39-40; Bhalla, *Experiencing the Last Judgement*, 156.

<sup>464</sup> Skhirtladze, "The Image of the Virgin," 358.

<sup>465</sup> Bhalla, *Experiencing the Last Judgement*, 199.



working objects.<sup>466</sup> Nicolette Trahoulia saw in this panel a theological message responding to twelfth century controversies of Bogomilism. In her consideration, embedded in its composition was a statement about the intercessory power of the Virgin and veneration of icons more generally.<sup>467</sup> But what of the calendar panels, which were the largest and most visible in any configuration?

Informed by these approaches, the calendar portion remains on the sidelines of discussions, all too often unacknowledged or as marginal to the framing panels.<sup>468</sup> But the physical relationships within the polyptych's panels are not coincidental and there are liturgical underpinnings to the panels' revelatory nature that have not been brought to bear on this iconic composition. The exterior panels allowed the historic era of Christ's life and future era of the Second Coming and Last Judgement—events that are charged and always present in liturgical action—to literally fold into the calendar. In so doing, I propose that they staged a commentary on revelation that gave meaning to the present. Neither of these exterior wings portrayed events that a figure from late-eleventh century Sinai observed firsthand. But the stories of Christ's miracles were read daily in the lections to present the entirety of the Gospels over the year, and

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<sup>466</sup> Carr, "Object of Pilgrimage," 75-81; Such a reading is strengthened by Zaza Shkirladze's consideration of the central image of the Virgin, the only one of the group to lack a specific inscription offering only M-P ΘY (Μητηρ Θεου), contending that this representation connotes the apse mosaic of Hagia Sophia. Shkirladze, "The Image of the Virgin," 376.

<sup>467</sup> Trahoulia, "The Truth in Painting," 276-77.

<sup>468</sup> When the calendar panels are invoked, scholars tend to focus on stylistic or iconographic elements. Along these lines, Galavaris's iconographic analysis of all panels in the group has shown a wealth of potential sources that may have influenced the images spanning icons and deluxe illustrated *Menologia* from Constantinople, especially the *Menologion* of Basil II. Similar Constantinopolitan associations are brought to bear on the epigrams that not only name the saint but describe their manner of death, which scholars have read in dialogue with the poems of Christopher Mitylene. The results of iconographic and textual analyses remain inconclusive and speculative on the sources used to create the polyptych. The choice of saints for inclusion in the panels does not neatly reflect the *Synaxarion* for Constantinople, nor the poetic verses of Mitylene: there are esoteric choices of saints and omissions. Bhalla, *Experiencing the Last Judgement*, 187.

the Passion was ritually reenacted in the liturgy each day. Through these services, the monastic community prayed for future salvation, with ample allusions to the Last Judgement. The proximity of these scenes on the polyptych and their ability to exist with and on the commemorative calendar gives visual shape to theological relationships that underpinned the regular, daily services and commemorations.

Returning to the reconstruction of the closed wings, the potential for revelation can be seen by the interplay of epigram and imagery. The calendar's call for the painted saints to intercede on behalf of Ioane would never be on display, but the Georgian monk repeats his desire for redemption on the other panels that would be visible when the exterior wings were closed. For the panel with the iconic frieze and miracles, he writes:

*The humble monk Ioannes painted with desire these holy images which he gave to the famous Church where he found everlasting grace. O child, accept the maternal intercession and grant full redemption from sins to the pitiable old man who asks for it.*<sup>469</sup>

And immediately below this:

*Thy salvific Passions, o Word, with miracles too great to be conceived by the mind and expressed by words, were beautifully painted in red by the monk Ioannes, who implores for forgiveness of his sins.*<sup>470</sup>

Finally, on the reverse of the Last Judgement panel continues his plea for Salvation:

*As Daniel, who foresaw Thy terrible Last Judgment, o Almighty Abyss of Mercy, having it in mind and written on the tablets of his heart, the miserable among the monks Ioannes has reverentially painted Thy Second Advent, importunes Thee, O Maker of the Universe, to be a merciful not wrathful Judge on that day.*

Following studies on the individual panels, scholars have often read the images in relation to their epigrams in terms of direct correspondence—that is, they read the images invoked textually as

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<sup>469</sup> Trahoulia, "The Truth in Painting," 272-3.

<sup>470</sup> Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych*, 137. Rhoby, *Byzantinische Eipgramme*, S. 162-167.

corresponding to the painted surface on each's obverse side.<sup>471</sup> In this way the “successfully painted” figures described behind the four central panels refer to the calendar saints while those “painted with desire” correspond to Constantinople's pilgrimage icons. But this rigid approach to the panels overlooks how they operated and were animated across the calendar's surface. The epigrams on the panels that could move and be made visible repeat the message on the hidden text in conveying Ioane's wish for future salvation and redemption, forcing them to be viewed not in isolation but as a part of the larger ensemble. The epigrams and images thus stage a larger dialogue between the intercessory role of the saints and the Virgin and a direct appeal to Christ at the Final Judgement while confronted by the calendar.

In commentaries on the liturgy, theologians attempted to reconcile the sequential experience of the ritual in time with salvific events that cut through time often through imagery or ritual action. The Andidans in their *Protheoria* encouraged liturgical events to not be seen in isolation, but as interlaced with those that precede and follow it, requiring viewers to recall what has transpired and be mindful of what was to come. For them, significance was gained through the connections of between parts of a whole. This proved to be particularly useful in instances when the whole could not be entirely visualized, such as something abstract like liturgical action or time itself. In describing the elevation of the eucharistic gifts at the altar, the raising of the consecrated bread resembles both the lifting up on the cross and the Resurrection.<sup>472</sup> Here, at a particular moment when liturgical objects become symbols weighted with theological and narrative significance, the referent is multiplied to simultaneously operate at different times at once. It

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<sup>471</sup> The hand of these epigrams matches those of the inscriptions on the figural sides, proving that they were made at the same time and were an integral part of their composition. Bruni, “Identifying the Autograph,” 113-20.

<sup>472</sup> On the Elevation rite, see Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of John Chrysostom V: The Precommunion Rites* (Rome: Pontificio istituto orientale, 2000), 226-230. See also Zheltov, “The Moment of Eucharistic Consecration in Byzantine Thought,” in *Issues in Eucharistic Praying in East and West: Essays in Liturgical and Theological Analysis*, ed. Maxwell Johnson (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2010), 293-301.

expresses not merely the immediacy of viewing the object, but of a dramatic traversal of time and space that includes the eternal and the services experienced daily. Sinai's polyptych offers an experimental materialization for these theoretical discussions, enfolding all these events into a single object that could be seen and explored. The polyptych expresses events that loom large in liturgical symbolism in a format that included daily rituals. In this way, it uses its panels display discrete moments within salvific history that could also be linked to or hidden within the calendar.

To return to the miniature images on the polyptych one final time, the notion of revelation was directly imbricated in its composition through the Virgin imagery occupying the top of the left panel. In two of these representations, the icons they reference were keyed into weekly cycles: every Tuesday, the Hodegetria was processed across the city market, exuding holy oil and flying its bearers through the air, and the Blachernitissa was famous for its "regular" miracle each Friday.<sup>473</sup> As described by Michael Psellos among others, Blachernitissa demonstrated its miraculous power through the apparently unaided rising and falling of its veil.<sup>474</sup> In the court case recounted by Psellos, the verdict was revealed by showing something. This also had liturgical connotations, that Chatterjee rightfully connects, with the raising of the *ares* that covered the

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<sup>473</sup> Alexi Lidov, "The Miraculous Oerformance with the Hodegetria of Constantinople," in *Hierotopy: Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. Alexi Lidov (Moscow: Progress-Tradition, 2006), 311–316; Alexi Lidov, "The Flying Hodegetria: The Miraculous Icon as Bearer of Sacred Space," in *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance: Papers from a Conference Held at the Academia di Danimarca in collaboration with the Biblioteca Herziana (Max Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Rome (31 May-2 June, 2003))*, ed. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: Erma di Bretschneider, 2004), 273-304; Paroma Chatterjee, "The Byzantine Icon of the Virgin in the Church of the Blachernae: Michael Psellos and the Problem of Miraculous Timing," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 51, no. 2 (2021): 241-62; Charles Barber, "Movement and Miracle in Michael Psellos's Account of the Miracle at Blachernae," in *Envisioning Experience in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Giselle de Nie and Thomas F. X. Noble (Farnham, Surrey: Routledge, 2016), 9-22; Bissera Pentcheva, "Rhetorical Images of the Virgin: The Icon of the 'Usual Miracle' at the Blachernae," *RES: Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics* 38 (2000): 34-55.

<sup>474</sup> Paroma Chatterjee, "Michael Psellos and the Problem of Miraculous Timing," 242; Valerie Nunn, "The Encheirion as Adjunct to the Icon in the Middle Byzantine Period," *BMGS* 10 (1986): 83.

chalice and the paten, understood as the divine presence.<sup>475</sup> Following this, the veil was a powerful symbol—and heavy with meaning despite its billowing lightness in the regular Friday miracle—that was premised revelation. The polyptych’s wooden panels are, of course, not silken veils. But that this same icon of the Virgin appears on the panel’s wings along with other miraculous imagery certainly aligns its patterns of divine revelation with multiple cycles of time that include the week, month, and year. It maps these evocative but complex allegories of revealing and concealing into familiar patterns to aid in comprehension.

From this interplay of surfaces and images, the central four icons exceed the calendrical. As a chain of six panels joined together with the external two articulated as wings, the panels allow sites and times to collapse onto one another as a devotional tool that gave greater meaning to the calendar’s commemorations. The creation of this visual calendar that incorporates the life of Christ and cycle of saints is just as concerned with structuring the entirety of Christian history, whether that is historical or prophetic, as it is with the present calendar. The panels transform temporal units into an overarching account of salvation, expressing a structure beginning with the life and death of Christ and his miracles, and concluding with his second appearance on earth. While these events are all depicted on the panels to emphasize the connections between them, the exterior portions that can conceal the painted surfaces remind the viewer that their content should also be imprinted in the heart, ensuring all these events can be experienced internally.

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<sup>475</sup> Taft, *The Great Entrance*, 42; Chatterjee, “Miraculous Timing,” 256.

### Inscribing Sacred Space and Time with Sinai's Nave Icons

Today a set of twelve large calendar icons mounted on piers tower over the Justinianic *katholikon*'s nave at Sinai (figure 4.29).<sup>476</sup> The panels are organized so that each one corresponds to a month of the year, and together they comprise my second case study. September's panel, visible in the image, demonstrates the compositional scheme consistent across the set. A later sixteenth-century frame with the month's name and associated zodiac sign holds a large panel covered in gold and filled with small figures who represent the celebrations for the month. The panel is quite large (129 x 67 cm) and strips away the civic commemorations from Constantinopolitan manuscripts like earthquakes and eclipses to focus almost exclusively on the wealth of saints honored by the church.<sup>477</sup> Any given panel holds on average 90 figures, who are always distributed across six rows, typically with fifteen figures arranged in each, that align to give each panel a gridded effect. But without borders to separate saints or days, the surface conveys a steady flow of commemorations propelled forward by differences in the color and patterning of the gold, red, and blue tunics of male martyrs to encapsulate an entire month.

While their arrangement at first glance appears packed, repetitive, and without separations for new dates, there is more to their placement that reveals a complex internal logic. Diminutive Greek numerals designate the day of the month in red and heavily abbreviated inscriptions, small enough to hinder legible from the ground, name the figures who are otherwise too alike be identifiable. To convey this point, in the center of the panel for September, the figures of Makrobios and Gordian hold martyr crosses, differentiated only by Makrobios's beard but

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<sup>476</sup> Soteriou, *Icones*, 117-9; Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Cat. 31: Menologion Icon for August," in *Holy Image Hallowed Ground*, 197. These icons may not have been made for this location, but I believe they were made for this arrangement.

<sup>477</sup> The only exceptions are occasional liturgical feasts like the elevation of the cross, but this need not be specific to Constantinople.

otherwise strikingly similar in appearance, while their neighbor the Venerable Peter of Atroa, an otherwise minor figure within the calendar, wears a long beard dressed as a monk for 13 September (figure 4.30). Underneath their inscriptions, the saints making up this day stand in a group so that the primary commemoration is at center, in this case, Makrobios, with the other celebrated saints to their side, like his companion Goridan and the less widely known Peter.<sup>478</sup>

Occasionally, the entry contains more narrative details: the scene for 22 October shows the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus slumbering within their mythic cave (Figure 4.31). The scene takes the density and spatial arrangement of the entries to the extreme all the while retaining elements of individuality. Aberkios, bishop of Hieropolis towers above a mountainous scene immediately below his inscription and the date. Underneath him and sheltered within a dark cave, the seven sleepers sit, lean, and recline within the cavernous space. The scene exhibits great sensitivity to the particularities of the figures and these subtle details teasingly invite inspection ultimately denied by their placement on the piers. This organizational pattern continues across all twelve panels so that every day is assigned two or three figures or a narrative scene. In view of the relaxed treatment of the facial features and painterly brushwork used to illustrate the individual figures, the icons have been dated to 1200 by Ševčenko and Doula Mouriki, understood as reproducing the marginal portraits included in deluxe lectionaries from elite Constantinopolitan scriptoria in line with a more refined Komnenian style.<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> Ševčenko, “Cat. 31: Menologion Icon for August,” 197. In this specific instance, Gordian usually shares an entry with Makrobios, but is listed after Makrobios in identifying the group. While they appear in the Constantinopolitan Synaxarion, they are not the main commemoration, nor do they appear in the Metaphrasteian recension. *SECP*, 40-41:2.

<sup>479</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, “Marking Holy Time,” 52; Doula Mouriki, “Icons from the 12th-15th Century,” 108. The Soterious however prefer an earlier date in the twelfth century, ascribing it to a “provincial style” imitating the capital, *Icons*, vol. 2, 119.

These twelve icons have proven notoriously difficult to interpret, especially in terms of function. By icon standards, they are quite large—by far much larger than the other calendar icons at Sinai for this time. Their considerable surface area and evenly spaced figures led to their conceptualization as didactic tools for devotion like the *vita* icons, installed in a public space for a large audience to observe.<sup>480</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko and Hans Belting have each eloquently connected these concepts to argue that icons regulate commemorative practices in the monastery. In this interpretation the saints painted on the icons were purported to serve as a visual guide for the order of these services. They announce what came before and what was to come to direct the flow of celebrations at this remote monastery. Acting as a visual guide, the figures populating the frame have been characterized as reflecting Constantinople's calendar, echoing the Constantinopolitan scriptoria centers used to date the icons, and leading to the assertion that they were gifted from the capital to ensure that the rhythm of the year followed Constantinople's time.<sup>481</sup> However, this reading prioritizes the imperial capital in determining the set of commemorations at the expense of other centers of production.

In the contention that the nave icons are calibrated to Constantinople's commemorations, scholars have equated the Constantinople cycle with the universal church. By stressing the connection to Constantinople, previous work on the icons focused on potential visual sources to understand their function. I instead approach the collection of saints with attention to their local connection at Sinai, which possessed its own local sacred geography, ties to the capital, as well as diverse communities with their own culturally determined calendars to understand the icons. From

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<sup>480</sup> Annemarie Weyl Carr, "The Vita Icon of Saint Basil: Notes on a Byzantine Object," in *Four Icons*, 70-93, 94-105; Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "The *Vita* Icon and the Painter as Hagiographer," *DOP* 53 (1999): 160.

<sup>481</sup> Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 252; Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Marking Holy Time," 55.



this multicultural community and the selection of figures, I show that the calendar icons infuse elements from the *Synaxarion* of Constantinople with other calendars and sites, effectively using the panel to stretch the calendar to its fullest potential. Ultimately, I argue that the icons do not serve primarily a practical purpose, nor do they attempt to calibrate the celebrations at Sinai with those occurring in Constantinople or elsewhere. But their arrangement on the piers creates time through reconciling the liturgical calendars of different foundations and regions.

To explain the appearance of the saints within the Sinai's nave, Nancy Patterson Ševčenko and Alexander Schmemmann's liturgical theories of different attitudes toward time provide a point of entry.<sup>482</sup> According to Schmemmann's reading of the liturgy, the Byzantine rite had two main components, corresponding to distinct conceptions of time: the Eucharistic rite and the rites connected with the church year. The rituals associated with the Eucharist aimed to transcend time through the daily repetition of this one unchanging Sacrament. No matter when the Liturgy and celebration of the Eucharist are enacted, the rituals are understood to manifest a reality that is outside of time and separate from the day or hour.<sup>483</sup> Surrounding these core rituals, commemorations calibrated to the calendar provide a fundamental organizing principle and unite the church year with the dates of the natural year. Nancy Patterson Ševčenko drew on this liturgical theory to advance a sensitive argument about the built environment and its decoration in Byzantium. She contends that the liturgical division aligns with the spatial division of the middle Byzantine Church between the nave as a space for the laity and reflecting earthly time and the sanctuary reserved for ordained clergy and displaying the eternity of heaven.<sup>484</sup>

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<sup>482</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Bangor: The American Orthodox Press, 1966), 20.

<sup>483</sup> Schmemmann, *Liturgical Theology*, 35.

<sup>484</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Art and Liturgy in the Later Byzantine Empire," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, ed. Michael Angold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 128.

As she has shown, images participate in this spatialized separation. Monumental painting in the sanctuary often visualizes the Communion of the Apostles, like the embroidered *aeres* discussed in the previous chapter gifted by Alexios. From the eleventh century onward, the scenes of the heavenly communion are represented to a degree of specificity that elements from the contemporary Eucharist are accurately represented.<sup>485</sup> This update can be seen in the sanctuary apse of Savro Nagoricino (1318), where Christ offers bread and wine to his apostles above while bishops below bend and take on the role of participants sporting updated garments and with the inaudible prayers inscribed on their scrolls (Figure 4.32). In the surrounding space, saints are arranged on the walls of churches not according to the calendar but by profession and in a strict, spatialized hierarchy: female saints like Mary of Egypt often inhabit the narthex serving as a reminder before leaving the church and entering the world, warrior saints close to the floor within the naos for protection, apostles and bishops in the apse closest to the sanctuary.<sup>486</sup> With limited space, not all saints in the history of the Church could be included in the architecture, resulting in only leaders or the best known of the categories able to be shown.

Put in a larger context, scholarly readings of the Middle Byzantine architectural program have read the saintly imagery within a pyramidal schema.<sup>487</sup> With an image of Christ Pantokrator in the dome, down through angels and saints on the walls below, the painted images visualize an

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<sup>485</sup> Sharon Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 15-36; Sharon Gerstel, "Liturgical Scrolls in the Byzantine Sanctuary," *GRBS* 35, no. 2 (1994): 196.

<sup>486</sup> Christopher Walter, *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church*, (London: Variorum, 1982), 174-5; 181-184; Doula Mouriki, "Stylistic Trends in Monumental Painting of Greece during the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *DOP* 34/35 (1980/1981): 80-82.

<sup>487</sup> Otto Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium* (Boston: Boston Book and Art Shop, 1955), 10-14; Thomas Mathews, "Religious Organization and Church Architecture," in *The Glory of Byzantium*, ed. Helen Evans and William Wixom (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 27; 32-43.

entire heavenly universe. In its strict horizontal zones, whether this is read from the top downward or anagogically from the bottom up, the vertical axis allows a viewer to position themselves within this hierarchical space that conveys the ideal of *taxis* and allows access to divine revelation. This expression of supreme order, evenly distributed across the space with strict hierarchies is legible through architecture and its visual decoration and is understood to be essential to the function of the empire in its own time and place on earth. Its hierarchic nature is even conceptualized in the as linking heaven and earth in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, a Neoplatonic work from an anonymous sixth-century writer but attributed to Dionysios the Areopagite (ca. first century): “The goal of a hierarchy, then, is to enable beings to be as like as possible to God and to be at one with him... a hierarchy bears in itself the mark of God.”<sup>488</sup>

Time itself is no exception. As discussed in chapter one, the luminaries responsible for time also bore in themselves the mark of creation and were capable of leading toward eternal truths according to Basil’s homiletic treatment. Yet, despite the growing influence of the liturgy on the creation of art, the cultivation of *Menologia*, and an awareness of the potential of hierarchic expression of time to lead to heaven from earth, Nancy Patterson Ševčenko has remarked on how little the church calendar and earthly time influenced the articulation of these monumental programs.<sup>489</sup> Instead, it was far more common to see saints organized by hierarchy and profession, not by time. It is only much later that the calendar receives fuller monumental treatment within

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<sup>488</sup> Colm Luibheid, trans., *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 154: “The goal of a hierarchy, then, is to enable beings to be as like as possible to God and to be at one with him. A hierarchy has God as its leader of all understanding and action. It is forever looking directly at the comeliness of God. A hierarchy bears in itself the mark of God. Hierarchy causes its members to be images of God in all respects, to be clear and spotless mirrors reflecting the glow of primordial light and indeed of God himself. It ensures that when its members have received this full and divine splendor, they can then pass on this light generously and in accordance with God’s will to beings further down the scale.” (*Celestial Hierarchy*, chap. 3, 165A: 6-7).

<sup>489</sup> Nancy Ševčenko, “Art and Liturgy in the Later Byzantine Empire,” 144.

fourteenth-century Serbian foundations.<sup>490</sup> Compared to the standard monumental architectural program, these twelve icons provide the only evidence that survives of a collection of saints organized by the calendar and installed within the nave. Far more common at this time are the miniature portraits integrated into *Menologia* manuscripts. Understanding these twelve panels sits at the intersection of two processes of church standardization and organization: hierarchical monumental decoration and calendric manuscript systems. Both architectural and the calendar have their own order and span the monumental and the miniature to construct a space enwrapped by sacred history as expressed by the calendar. In light of this, the division of imagery and temporal themes in the nave and sanctuary may be true in some cases, but the icons do not wholly abide by this binary.

Returning to the figures on these icons, the selection of saints arranged according to the calendar reveals how earthly time could give way to expansive experiences in the singular space of the *katholikon*. As an example of this wide-ranging potential, the entry for the 7<sup>th</sup> on the September panel between the miracle at Chonae and the Birth of the Virgin, shows Sozon at center as a youth, with bearded Euppsychios on the left and a young Faustos at the right (figure 4.33). All three of these men present themselves in brilliant red costumes with details of gold, bringing a level of homogeneity to this heavily populated icon. However, the *Synaxarion* of Constantinople makes no mention of Faustos for 7 September, nor does the saint appear in any of the neighboring days as one might expect.<sup>491</sup> In fact, his documentation on 7 September in *Menologia* and

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<sup>490</sup> see Nicole Paxton's recent reading of Decani, Nicole Paxton, "The Genealogical Tree of the Nemanjić Dynasty, Dečani Monastery," *Mapping Eastern Europe*, eds. M. A. Rossi and A. I. Sullivan, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://mappingeasterneurope.princeton.edu/item/the-genealogical-tree-of-the-nemanjic-dynasty-dec>. Mijovic *Menolog* 32-53; summarized in Irmgard Hutter, "Der *despotes* Demetrios Palaiologos und sein 'Bildmenologion' in Oxford," *JÖB* 57 (2007): 203 n.85; Ševčenko, *Illustrated Manuscripts of the Metaphrastian Menologion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 191.

<sup>491</sup> Delehaye's *Synaxarion* for 7 September lists Sozon, Euppsychios, Stephanos, Peter, and Loukas. *SECP*, 21-26:1-5.

*synaxaria* traditions is limited to a single reference from recension C, a branch unique to Southern Italy, and preserved in Ambrosiana B104.<sup>492</sup> Yet, his unique presence within calendar traditions is not legible in his depiction on the icon. In fact, he is encouraged to be read alongside the more familiar figures of Sozon and Euppsychios with the group's coordinated red costumes with complementary gold detailing. Other instances of saints redistribute them across neighboring days, as was common, and allow the icons to tell their own time. But the September icon's reference to Faustos in particular attests to a creative adaptation of calendars that was not as focused on Constantinople as previously believed, nor grounded in any singular place.<sup>493</sup>

These creative adaptations suggest that we need to reconsider the arguments about time and empire. Like the *Menologia* manuscripts, these icons gather an impressive number of figures to populate their panels that had a very visible place within the *katholikon*. But in addition to unbinding the pages from these manuscripts that organized the year, the figures are also dislodged from their position in place and time. As seen in the pairing of Sozon and Faustos above, differences remain subtle regardless of when or where the figure lived so that a figure like the holy martyr Sebastiana (figure 4.34), a disciple of Paul from Moesia who was persecuted under Diocletian (r. 284-305) looks uncannily similar to any other female figure, like Hermione of Ephesus (figure 4.35) martyred two centuries earlier under Trajan (r. 98-117), or the fifth century

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<sup>492</sup> Andreas Luzzi, "Statu Quaestionis sui Sinassari italogreci," in *Histoire et Culture dans l'Italie byzantine*, ed. Jacob André (Rome, 2006), 155-175; Stefano Parenti, "Per l'Identificazione di un anonimo calendario Italo-Greco del Sinai," *ABoll* 115 (1997): 281-5.

<sup>493</sup> More standard reorganization occurs among the saints. For example, Perpetua who is commemorated 2 February in most Constantinopolitan calendars, is moved to 3 February. But other examples are not within the Synaxarion of Constantinople, like Lollianos who is listed on 26 June beside David of Thessalonike. Lollianos appears only in a later Constantinopolitan edition (Paris BnF Coislin 223) dated to 1300. This decision to include Lollianos diverges from the *Synaxarion*, which lists five commemorations. In other words there was no shortage of saints if this was the source text for the icons.

martyr Theodora from Alexandria (figure 4.36) persecuted under Zeno (r. 474-475/476-491), differentiated only by the color of her veil. Without their hagiographies that meticulously identified where the figure came from and under whose reign they were martyred, the panels forcibly eradicate overt associations to any one place. In light of these instances, to approach the sacred effigies as an imperial impulse from Constantinople is antithetical to the icon's structure.

The icons do retain references to Constantinople, but these references are not imperial. They do not contain famous Constantinopolitan relics such as the Mandylion as one would expect to find on the August panel, nor are there references to Emperors, except those who became a saint, such as Constantine. The icons' subjects are always more ecclesiastical than they are imperial. On the October panel from Sinai, directly across the nave, for example immediately following the feast for the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, there is the image of a bishop, otherwise ordinary amid his peers except for his peculiar, beardless face (figure 4.37). The figure has been identified as St. Ignatios the Younger, a eunuch patriarch (847-858; 867-877). His status as a eunuch is generally indicated by the combination of an old man's silver hair with a clean shaven and youthful face. This specific mode of representation is consistent albeit in a different arrangement across Basil's imperial calendar book (figure 4.38) and within the architectural decoration of Hagia Sophia where it was once visible on the north tympanum of the Great Church, which more clearly represents the Sinai icon's image (figure 4.39).<sup>494</sup> Given the selection of saints and its divergences from the *Synaxarion*, the appearance of this particular portrait is not about Imperial Constantinople. Instead, its references are about the church and figures important to Christian history.

Faustos's presence is significant too, and for similar reasons. Ignatios's entry on the panel points to a figure from a powerful site within the Orthodox world, and who has been preserved in

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<sup>494</sup> Ševčenko, "Marking Holy Time," 55.

architectural and elite manuscript illumination. Faustos, by contrast, is entirely absent from Constantinopolitan sources, whose hagiography likely came to the monastery via South Italian pilgrims traveling to the monastery. His presence thus undermines the potential emphasis on some universalizing Constantinopolitan calendar, as has been argued. Instead, from these differences in selection and arrangement of those on the panels, it is clear that the saints are the product of cultural interchange multiplying place and time within the *katholikon* for a community rich in linguistic diversity and their own cultural calendars. Moments such as Faustos's inclusion, who is inserted into the panel, dressed like his peers, most of them wielding a martyrs' cross to symbolize triumph over their tortures, allow a heavenly choir and their place in heaven's eternity to emerge through the calendar.

Oscillating between the part and the whole, the temporal implication of this iconic format requires a more nuanced definition that fully embraces neither the prescriptive celebrations outlined within *Menologia* for each day that comes or has passed, nor the visions of the Second Coming described in Daniel's apocalyptic vision as choirs of saints descending onto earth organized by their saintly occupations. These icons do not fully abide by the division of earthly time and eternity seen in architectural programs, but instead overlay them to visualize how the cycle of feasts intersect with the Christian past and future.

To return to their configuration and placement on the piers, while each saint is named, these inscriptions would not be legible. Without the aid of the sixteenth century frames that name the months, even these would be difficult to differentiate among the other panels. These matters become especially pronounced in the changing light of each day. In the daylight, the eye might indulge in the colors of fabric and types of saints represented on the panels. But in the early morning hours, when the lives of saints would have been read in the liturgy, the candlelight required for these hours before sunrise cause figure and ground to reverse (figure 4.42). The gold

background set aflame by the candlelight utterly obscures the figures and resists even the most basic levels of identification. The saints appear exactly the same in silhouette regardless of gender or profession. The icons become a vantage point reflecting all possible commemorative cycles occurring across the world, not necessarily from Constantinople. Along these lines, the calendar icons' presence at Sinai was much less regulatory as they have primarily been read. Within the changing environment and placed too high for their inscriptions to be legible, these icons took on a more atmospheric role: always presence but not necessarily in focus.

### **Conclusion: The Time of Sinai**

This chapter proposed a new reading of Sinai's calendar icons that guided not by the elite manuscripts they are often compared to, nor Constantinople as a cultural center, but by the icons themselves and their relationship to Sinai. In reorienting their understanding toward their monastic context, connections to other centers emerge centered on Christian history more than a universal Church calendar. This was seen in the links between Georgia, Constantinople, and Sinai in the polyptych or between Southern Italy, Constantinople, and Sinai in the nave icons. In the spirit of Sinai's cultural diversity, the conclusion for this chapter looks at an account not from the Byzantine world but from the medieval west.

A description by the Dominican Felix Fabri who travelled to Sinai on pilgrimage in 1483 provides the earliest account we have of the nave icons in their current configuration.<sup>495</sup> After visiting several chapels and exchanging prayers for indulgences, he and his companions entered the *katholikon*'s nave. In his quest to accumulate indulgences, he is far more specific about this

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<sup>495</sup> *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri, Part 2* (London, 1897), 608-610. Fabri describes going from column to column to collect "Holy Time" in repentance for his sins and describes the columns holding relics of the saints painted on the panels. In viewing the panels in relation to the relics behind them, Fabri's account evokes the argument from chapter 3.



space than his preceding visits to small chapels. He comments on the 12 columns supporting the structure, six on each side, which contain the relics of many saints. On each column, a picture hangs to communicate the saints whose relics are contained in the column and all the saints who are commemorated on the month's days. Following this overview, he approaches each column, one by one, kneels before each, and calls upon the saints shown on the image and encased in the column to grant him indulgences. Praying at the column for January alone Fabri writes that he was given 7 years of indulgences. In his description of the nave's icons, the pilgrim positions the calendar in line with many of the themes discussed across the second half of this dissertation. The icons display and name what is hidden, becoming ancillary to the relics believed to be contained by the columns. In the process of veneration Fabri also calls upon the painted saints to grant him forgiveness from his future sins. In his petition he gives voice the painted litany, emphasizing the numinous potential of these sacred effigies.

Fabri's movement through the nave contains an uncanny echo of the Byzantine emperor's Nativity procession. The series of acclamations that allowed the emperor to collect many years in his movement across the city fusing time scales and timescapes takes material form in Fabri's compressed experience within the monastery, with its own sacred timescape: years are quantified and collected from a Byzantine calendar by the pilgrim. By the time of Fabri's visit in 1483, Constantinople had been taken by the Ottomans and now had an entirely different calendar with its own festivities and urban processions, inscribing new times into city's layered past.

### **Conclusion: The Time of Byzantium**

The chapters of this dissertation have argued that imagery played an important role in the conception of time in Byzantium's calendars. As outlined in the image of Zonaras's emperors and the Marciana cosmogony discussed as the first image in this dissertation's introduction (Figure 0.1), the Byzantine conception of time was able to thread together categories of past and future so as to give meaning to the present. The case studies that followed reveal the manifold ways that the past could be reused or reanimated in later Byzantium that went beyond notions of archaic, as they have been conceptualized. Like the work of historian or chroniclers, images from the classical past could reconfigure the origins of time and concept of history as in cosmological imagery. Similarly, labors of the months could work beyond their calendric signification, expressing the division of time and emphasize the Christian origins within organizational tables. In part two, the transcendent time of the liturgy was nuanced to consider the distinct expressions of temporal imagery that ordered and directed time in service manuscripts. These *Menologia* bind together sacred figures from across time and the known world like a collection of relics, bending and reshaping the year's order. Iconic expressions of the liturgical calendar could, in turn, unbind the saints in manuscripts and put them into spatialized settings that allowed viewers to illustrate the invisible workings of liturgical time.

In closing, I turn to a small church in the center of Athens. The façade program of the Little Metropolis church reflects the condensation of many temporal issues discussed in this dissertation, including a material engagement with the classical past, temporal junctions, and the coordination of calendars (figure 5.1). This small, domed cross in square church has been variously dated from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with Bente Kiilrerich pushing the date to the 15<sup>th</sup> century,

though it is most often discussed as a monument of the late 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>496</sup> The Little Metropolis is notable for its exterior, which is constructed almost exclusively of reused blocks of marble and sculptural fragments. Ninety pieces of *spolia* cover the exterior walls of this monument, including reused architectural details such as dentils and capitals.<sup>497</sup> But in addition to these structural elements, a series of large, spoliated panels form a continuous frieze-like band envelopes the structure with an array of antiquities spanning over a millennium in date that includes grave *stelai* with crosses, geometrical orthogonal designs, and fierce animals that correspond to eastern textiles and crosses.

Among this grouping of archaeological fragments from the distant and more recent past, the western wall poses a unique temporal juxtaposition. Below the ancient cornice with dentils, a long calendar frieze forms a band immediately above the doorway in two halves, with proposed dates ranging from the third century BC to the third century AD (figure 5.2).<sup>498</sup> The calendar frieze contains 41 individual scenes carved in low relief, including the astrological calendar with symbols of the zodiac, personifications of the months, and vignettes that stand in for each month's festivities. In the present configuration, the frieze begins with the month of March. At left a bearded man leads a goat to sacrifice likely corresponding to the Festival for the City Dionyia held

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<sup>496</sup> Amy Papalexandrou, "Memory Tattered and Torn: Spolia in the Heartland of Byzantine Hellenism," in *Archaeologies of Memory*, ed. Ruth Van Dyke and Susan E. Alcock (Wiley & Sons, 2008), 56-80; Bente Kiilerich, "Making Sense of the Spolia in the Little Metropolis in Athens," *Arte Medievale* IV, no. 2 (2005): 95-114; Olga Palagia, "The Date and Iconography of the Calendar Frieze on the Little Metropolis in Athens," *Journal des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 123 (2008): 215-236; Henry Maguire, "The Cage of Crosses: Ancient and Medieval Sculptures on the 'Little Metropolis' in Athens," in *Thymiana: Studies in Memory of Laskarina Boura* (Athens: Benaki Museum, 1994), 169-72; Ioannes Svoronos, "Der athenische Volkskaldener," *JIAN* 2 (1899): 21-78. K. Michel and A. Struck, "Die Mittelbyzantinischen Kirchen Athens," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung* 31 (1906): 279-324; Erika Simon, *Festivals of Attica: An Archaeological Commentary* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983).

<sup>497</sup> An updated survey of all 90 fragments is needed. Presently, Kiilerich provides a thorough overview of many fragments in "Making Sense of the Spolia in the Little Metropolis," *Arte Medievale* IV (2005): 95-98.

<sup>498</sup> H.G. Gundel, *Zodiac. Tierkreisbilder im Altertum* (Mainz, 1992), 97-98.

on 10-17 Elaphebolion (Early March), then a ram for Ares (17 March) who nudges against a personification for the month of Mounichion, shown as a bare-chested young man (figure 5.3).<sup>499</sup> The pattern continues to cover the entire year with crosses carved over some imagery. Following the March/Mounichion, Taurus has been replaced by a cross, the bull's hooves still visible in the lower margins, likely an approximation of the date of Easter (figure 5.4).

Judging by the two halves, the frieze originally began with the month of October/Pyanopsion, which presently occupies the middle of the band.<sup>500</sup> Through this reconfiguration of the blocks for the church's construction, the frieze then conveyed the church year beginning in Spring in line with the Easter cycle, but it also harkens back to Synkellos's universalizing chronicle that positioned the beginning of time, the post-Flood drying of the land, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection all on 25 March. In addition to a calendar, the antique fragment became a tangible reminder of the past in its sequence and its material presence. While any study of spoliation must be sensitive to economic value, the reorganization of the frieze material on site reveals that there were other elements at play beyond the market limitations or financial benefits of reuse. Among the copious fragments that found new life within the church's walls, the calendar frieze conveys clear evidence that the architectural pieces were not merely immured into the façade, but reconstrued to align with Byzantine developments of the calendar and thoughts about time more generally.

Attention given to the monument, like much of Byzantium's calendric imagery, has primarily been a study of origins. Early interest led by Henry Maguire considered the program in

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<sup>499</sup> Erika Simon, *The Festivals of Attica*, 102.

<sup>500</sup> This is confirmed by the rough edges on the left side of the Spring/Summer panel and the right side of the Fall Winter panel in contrast to the smooth edges of the inner edges.

terms of magical protection, pointing to the apotropaic significance of many of the subjects, such as crosses, fierce animals, and magic squares and circles.<sup>501</sup> Some elements of the spoliated frieze show instances of intervention more clearly aligned with apotropaic and superstitious attitudes. On the eastern façade a block with Greek inscriptions referring to a Choregic victory that honored a theatre actor is placed upside down. But this does not account for the presence of much more recent material that are undifferentiated and placed alongside these older fragments. The exterior walls allow old material, carved in the style of the Parthenon's Panathenaic frieze on the eastern façade (ca. fifth century BC) to adorn the same monument as fragments with mythical beasts heraldically flanking foliage, whose closest comparison is found in carvings from the tenth and eleventh centuries and textiles. Despite the gaps in time, there is no difference in how they are treated on the facades.

Other scholars have instead suggested that the use of older fragments was part of a larger attempt to ground modern Christian identity within the authority of the past. Charalambos Bouras characterizes the building as a "mimesis of an archaic building" expressing nostalgia for the greatness of classical Athens.<sup>502</sup> Amy Papalexandrou echoes these sentiments, stressing the "appreciation for antiquities as a visual link to a great past."<sup>503</sup> But while we can answer in the affirmative that the collection of fragments speak to the past, as do most cases of spoliation, the question is not so straightforward with the calendar frieze. What past is on display, the classical

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<sup>501</sup> Henry Maguire, "The Cage of Crosses," 169; ; Cyril Mango, "Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder," *DOP* 17 (1963): 55-75; Helene Saradi-Mendelovici, "Christian Attitudes Toward Pagan Monuments in Late Antiquity," *DOP* 44 (1990): 47-61; Liz James, "'Pray not to fall into temptation and be on your guard': Antique Statues in Christian Constantinople," *Gesta*, 35 (1996): 12-20; T.S. Scheer, *Heidnische Vergangenheit und christliche Gegenwart. Die Kultbilder der Götter in der Spätantike*, in *Epochenwandel? Kunst und Kultur zwischen Antike und Mittelalter*, ed. by F.A. Bauer, N. Zimmermann, (Mainz 2001), 36-44.

<sup>502</sup> Charalambos Bouras, *Byzantinê kai metabyzantinê architektonikê stên Ellada* (Athens 2001), 128.

<sup>503</sup> Amy Papalexandrou, "Memory Tattered and Torn, 57-59; 62.

past of the original frieze or a new, universalizing Christian past evoked by its arrangement? It seems that in its reconfiguration, the frieze was not simply a relic of a past time, but material altered in the present to point toward different times. In other words, spolia may not accurately represent what the frieze conveys in the same way that the building's other fragments do in their specific references to time, like the Choregic panel. Nor do its fragments entirely convey an archaizing impulse as the classical labors did in Enoch's Octateuch illustration. Rather they occupy some middle ground between past relic and modern invention.

The western façade of the Little Metropolis encompasses multiple calendars—astrological, monthly, festal—that are aligned and more visible to communities than many of the case studies discussed throughout this dissertation, which circulated in deluxe manuscripts and inside elite foundations. But despite being the most public instance of a calendar in a Byzantine city, it is also the most ambiguous or elusive. The festivals suggested by the hewn blocks do not align exactly with later Byzantine cycles, and their low relief hinders legibility. As anyone who has visited the monument knows, despite its prominent place on the church façade, the calendar does not stand out and is easy to miss. But in line with chronological thinking, fully expressed in Synkellos's *Chronographia*, the more layers time could accrue, the more spiritually charged it became. 25 March, in his conceptual, could be a day and “forever” in containing an entire salvific plan across the Old and New Testament. The Little Metropolis's calendar frieze may follow suit, commemorating these events by aligning its very construction with this chronology.

Time's spectral presence on the façade, held by the church's wall, but often unnoticed, speaks to understandings of time in Byzantium more generally. Like initial scholars were deceived by the spolia on its walls, which lead toward the building's characterization as “classical” or “nostalgic,” the broader disciplines of Byzantine art and literature met similar fates from Mango's

distorted mirror to its dead-end on the map of art history. In short, the frieze's appearance encapsulates both the omnipresence of time in Byzantium and its complexities. But to put the building back in its presumed twelfth-century context, one senses an uncanny reversal of this regressive system. While Byzantine time is obscured by classicized elements and "archaism" today, the opposite may well have been true in twelfth-century Athens: the classical elements were obscured in favor of creating a Byzantine past.

## **Appendix I: Figures**

Figure 0.1 Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Gr. 122, fol. 294v. Photo: Author.



Figure 0.2: Menologion Diptych with Feast Scenes, Mount Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 194.

Figure 0.3: Oxford, Merton College 315, fol. 77v–78r. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/6c2d7998-5b67-42ea-bfbd-8fd4c9bc4445>.

Figure 0.4: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. 516, fol. 159r. Photo: Cantarella, “Art, Science, and Neoplatonic Cosmology,” 463.

Figure 0.5: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1291, fol. 47r. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1291](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1291).

Figure 0.6: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1291, fol. 9r. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1291](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1291).

Figure 0.7 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1291, fol. 9r, detail. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1291](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1291).

Figure 1.1: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, H57 sup., fol. 1: Photo:  
<http://213.21.172.25/0b02da82800af419>.

Figure 1.2: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, H57 sup., fol. 121. Photo:  
<http://213.21.172.25/0b02da82800af419>.



Figure 1.3: Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. theol. gr. 31, fol. 16r. Photo: <https://onb.digital/search/305968>.

Figure 1.4: Reconstruction of Day 3 of the Creation, with the Angelic figures marking the day.  
Photo: Weitzmann and Kessler, *The Cotton Genesis*, fig. 7.

Figure 1.5: Venice, San Marco Basilica, atrium, mosaic for day 4, the Creation of the Luminaries, late 12<sup>th</sup>/early 13<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Weitzmann and Kessler, *The Cotton Genesis*, fig. 12.

Figure 1.6: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 747, fol. 16v. Photo:  
[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.747](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.747).

Figure 1.7: Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi Kütüphanesi, gr. 8, fol. 31r. Photo: Anderson, *Cosmos and Community*, 137.

Figure 1.8: Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 9.28, fol. 96. Photo:  
<https://tecaabml.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/plutei/id/148247/rec/1>

Figure 1.9: Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 9.28, fol. 95v. Photo:  
<https://teca.bml.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/plutei/id/148247/rec/1>.

Figure 1.10: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 747, fol. 14v. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.747](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.747).



Figure 1.11: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 747, fol. 15r:  
[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.747](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.747).

Figure 1.12: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 747, fol. 15v:  
[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.747](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.747).

Figure 1.13: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 747, fol. 16r:  
[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.747](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.747).

Figure 1.14: Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, gr. 8, 28r. Photo: Weitzmann and Bernabo, *The Octateuchs*, pl. 16.

Figure 1.15: Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, gr. 8, fol. 29v. Photo: Weitzmann and Bernabo, *The Octateuchs*, pl. 30.

Figure 1.16: Istanbul, Pantokrator Monastery (Zeyrek Camii), south church, eastern opus sectile pavement with Life of Samson, 12th century. Ousterhout, "Architecture, Art, and Komnenian Ideology," 140.

Figure 1.17: Istanbul, Pantokrator Monastery (Zeyrek Camii), south church, western opus sectile pavement with symbols of the zodiac, 12th century. Ousterhout, "Architecture, Art, and Komnenian Ideology," 139.

Figure 2.1: Ravenna, Basilica of Sant'Apollinaire Nuovo, Apse, 6<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/byzants/40116579233>.



Figure 2.2: Scynthopolis, Lady Mary Monastery, Calendar Pavement, ca. 6<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Hagan, “Time, Memory, and Mosaics at the Monastery of Lady Mary,” 37.

Figure 2.3: Scynthopolis, Lady Mary Monastery, March and April from calendar pavement, ca. 6<sup>th</sup> Century. Photo: Hagan, "Time, Memory, and Mosaics at the Monastery of Lady Mary," 37.

Figure 2.4: Scynthopolis, Lady Mary Monastery, wildlife around calendar pavement, ca. 6<sup>th</sup> Century: Photo: Hagan, "Time, Memory, and Mosaics at the Monastery of Lady Mary," 40.

Figure 2.5: Vatican, Biblioteca Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 9135, fol. 239. Photo:  
[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.lat.9135](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.9135).

Figure 2.6: Vatican, Biblioteca Vaticana, Barb. Lat. 2154, fol. 23r. Photo:  
[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.lat.2154](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.2154).

Figure 2.7: Argos, Villa of the Falconer, January through May from Calendar Pavement (ca. 500). Photo: Akerstrom-Hougen, *The Calendar and Hunting Mosaics of the Villa of the Falconer* (pullout).

Figure 2.8: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 746, fol. 48v. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.746](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.746).

Figure 2.9: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 746, fol. 48v, detail. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.746](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.746).



Figure 2.10: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 746, fol. 48v, detail. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.746](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.746).

Figure 2.11: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 746, fol. 48v, detail. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.746](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.746).

Figure 2.12: Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 699, fol. 56r. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.699](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.699).

Figure 2.13: Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine, gr. 1186, fol. 93v. Photo:  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/00271076642-ms>.

Figure 2.14: Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 9.28, fol. 126r. Photo: <https://tecaabml.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/plutei/id/148247/rec/1>.

Figure 2.15: Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 746, fol. 57r. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.746](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.746).

Figure 2.16: Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 746, fol. 57r, detail. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.746](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.746).

Figure 2.17: Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710-5, fol. 3r. Photo:  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_662](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_662).



Figure 2.18: Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710-5, fol. 4v. Photo: [https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_662](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_662).

Figure 2.19: Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710-5, fol. 7r. Photo:  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_662](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_662).

Figure 2.20: Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710-5, fol. 1v. Photo: [https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_662](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_662).

Figure 2.21: Menologium Rusticum Colotianum, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD. Photo: <https://isaw.nyu.edu/exhibitions/time-cosmos/objects/roman-calendar-inscription>.

Figure 2.22: Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710-5, fol. 94r. Photo:  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_662](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_662).

Figure 2.23: Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710-5, fol. 3r, detail. Photo: [https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_662](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_662).

Figure 2.24: Uppsala, Uppsala University Library, gr. 8, fol. 162v. Photo:  
<https://www.manuscripta.se/ms/100008>.

Figure 2.25: Mount Athos, Vatopedi monastery, cod. 1199, fol. 65r. Photo: Karakatsanis, *Treasures of Mount Athos*, 166.



Figure 2.26: Mount Athos, Vatopedi monastery, cod. 1199, fol. 109v. Photo: Karakatsanis, *Treasures of Mount Athos*, 166.

Figure 2.27: Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Graecus Z.464, fol. 34r. Photo: Bryer, “The Means of Agricultural Production,” pl. 2.

Figure 2.28: Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Graecus Z.464, fol. 34r, detail. Photo: Bryer, “The Means of Agricultural Production,” pl. 2.

Figure 2.29: Mount Athos, Vatopedi monastery, cod. 1199, fol. 177r. Photo: Karakatsanis, *Treasures of Mount Athos*, 167.

Figure 2.30: Mount Athos, Vatopedi monastery, cod. 1199, fol. 202r. Photo: Karakatsanis, *Treasures of Mount Athos*, 167.

Figure 2.31: Mount Athos, Vatopedi monastery, cod. 1199, fol. 44r. Photo: Karakatsanis, *Treasures of Mount Athos*, 166.

Figure 3.1: Small Aeres, Halberstadt, Halberstadt Cathedral Treasury, No. 87, late 12th century.  
Photo: Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 112-113.

Figure 3.2: Pilgrim Casket, Vatican, Museo Sacro, late 6th or early 7th century. Photo: <https://m.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani-mobile/en/collezioni/musei/cappella-di-san-pietro-martire/reliquiario-in-legno-dipinto-con-scene-della-vita-di-cristo.html>.



Figure 3.3: Pilgrim Casket, Vatican, Museo Sacro, late 6th or early 7th century, detail. Photo: <https://m.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani-mobile/en/collezioni/musei/cappella-di-san-pietro-martire/reliquiario-in-legno-dipinto-con-scene-della-vita-di-cristo.html>.

Figure 3.4: Pilgrim Casket, Vatican, Museo Sacro, late 6th or early 7th century, detail. Photo: <https://m.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani-mobile/en/collezioni/musei/cappella-di-san-pietro-martire/reliquiario-in-legno-dipinto-con-scene-della-vita-di-cristo.html>.

Figure 3.5: London, British Library Add. 36636, fol. 48v. Photo:  
[https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_36636](https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_36636).

Figure 3.6: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1613, pg. 242. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

Figure 3.7: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1613, pg. 302. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

Figure 3.8: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, cod. E.89, fol. 211. Photo: Weitzmann, "Illustrations to the Lives of the Five Martyrs of Sebaste," pl. 4.

Figure 3.9: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1156, fol. 270v. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1156](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1156).

Figure 3.10: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, cod. E.89, fol. 234r. Photo: Weitzmann, "Illustrations to the Lives of the Five Martyrs of Sebaste," pl. 5.



Figure 3.11: London, British Library, MS Add. 11870, fol. 44v. Photo:  
[https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=add\\_ms\\_11870](https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=add_ms_11870).

Figure 3.12: Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1613, pg. 204. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

Figure 3.13: Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1613, pg. 142. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

Figure 3.14: Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W.521, fol. 25r. Photo:  
<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W521/description.html>.

Figure 3.15: Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W.521, fol. 27v. Photo:  
<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W521/description.html>.

Figure 3.16: Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W.521, fol. 37v. Photo:  
<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W521/description.html>.

Figure 3.17: Moscow, Gosudarstvennyj Istoričeskij Muzej, Synod. gr. 183, fol. 142r. Photo: D’Aiuto, “La Questione delle Due Redazioni,” Tav. 1.

Figure 3.18: Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W.521, fol. 28r. Photo:  
<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W521/description.html>.



Figure 3.19: Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1613, pg. 321. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

Figure 3.20: Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W.521, fol. 50v. Photo:  
<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W521/description.html>.

Figure 3.21: Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W.521, fol. 105r. Photo:  
<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W521/description.html>.

Figure 3.22: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1613, pg. 324. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

Figure 3.23: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 3v. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.

Figure 3.24: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 54v. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.

Figure 3.25: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 55r. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.

Figure 3.26: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 18v. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.



Figure 3.27: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 15r. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.

Figure 3.28: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 15r, detail. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.

Figure 3.29: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 11v. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.

Figure 3.30: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 11v, detail. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.

Figure 3.31: Demetrios Reliquary, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC, early 13<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: <http://museum.doaks.org/objects-1/info/27463>.

Figure 3.32: Demetrios Reliquary, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC, early 13<sup>th</sup> century (open).  
Photo: <http://museum.doaks.org/objects-1/info/27463>.

Figure 3.33: Demetrios Reliquary, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC, early 13<sup>th</sup> century (open).  
<http://museum.doaks.org/objects-1/info/27463>.

Figure 3.34: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gr. theol. f. 1, fol. 55v-56r. Photo:  
<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/a77c8264-9651-49c8-bf6b-f6d9f9077586>.



Figure 3.35: Padua, Biblioteca del Seminario Vescovile, cod. 194, fol. 4v. Photo: <https://medicaltraditions.org/padova/images>.

Figure 4.1: Menologion Icon, Monastery of Simonopetra, Mt Athos, 19th century. Tavlakis, *Treasures of Mount Athos*, 201.

Figure 4.2: Menologion Diptych with Feast Scenes, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> Century. Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 194.

Figure 4.3: Menologion Diptych with Feast Scenes, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, detail (2 September). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 194.

Figure 4.4: Menologion Diptych with Feast Scenes, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, detail (Nativity). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 194.

Figure 4.5: Menologion Diptych with Feast Scenes, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, detail (Virgin's Entrance into the Temple). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 194.

Figure 4.6: Menologion Diptych with Feast Scenes, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, detail (40 Martyrs of Sebaste). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 194.

Figure 4.7: Menologion Icon (July), Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200. Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.



Figure 4.8: Polyptych, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych* (pullout).

Figure 4.9: Menologion Icon (February) with Gospel Scenes on the Reverse, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Soteriou and Soteriou, *Icones*, vol. 2, figs. 144-5.

Figure 4.10: Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1156, fol. 253v. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1156](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1156).

Figure 4.11: Calendar Icon for September, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200, detail.  
Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.

Figure 4.12: Nativity Icon, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, First half of twelfth century.  
Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 154.

Figure 4.13: Nativity Icon, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, First half of twelfth century, detail (Magi arriving, below, and adoration, above). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 154.

Figure 4.14: Nativity Icon, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, first half of twelfth century, detail (Magi Departing). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 154.

Figure 4.15: Transfiguration from Feast Cycle, London, British Museum, ca. 1310-1320. Photo: [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H\\_1852-0102-1](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1852-0102-1).



Figure 4.16: Double-Sided Icon with the Virgin Hodegetria and the Man of Sorrows, Byzantine Museum, Kastoria, 12th Century. Photo:  
<https://www.nga.gov/features/byzantine/virginmanofsorrows.html>.

Figure 4.17: Double-Sided Icon with the Virgin Hodegetria and the Man of Sorrows, Byzantine Museum, Kastoria, 12th Century. Photo:  
<https://www.nga.gov/features/byzantine/virginmanofsorrows.html>.

Figure 4.18: Vita Icon of Saint Nikolaos, Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, early fifteenth century. Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 160.

Figure 4.19: Vita Icon of Saint Nikolaos, Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, early fifteenth century, detail (birth). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 160.

Figure 4.20: Vita Icon of Saint Nikolaos, Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, early 15th century, detail (consecration). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 160.

Figure 4.21: Vita Icon of Saint Nikolaos, Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, early 15th century, detail (miracle of the cup bearer). Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 160.

Figure 4.22: Polyptych, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych* (pullout).

Figure 4.23: Polyptych, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, Panel with Virgins and Miracles. Photo: Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych* (pullout).



Figure 4.24: Polyptych, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, Panel with Last Judgement. Photo: Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych* (pullout).

Figure 4.25: Polyptych, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, Fall and Winter Panels. Photo: Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych* (pullout).

Figure 4.26: Polyptych, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, detail of Fall Panel (Victor and Vincent and John the Almoner). Photo: Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych* (pullout).

Figure 4.27: Polyptych, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, reverse. . Photo: Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych* (pullout).

Inscriptions Visible, spread across the four panels:

*The four-part phalanx of glorious martyrs  
Together with a multitude of prophets and theologians,  
All priests and monks were successfully painted by Ioannes  
As he sent them as timely mediators before the Lord  
In order to receive redemption from what he is sinful of.*

Figure 4.28: Polyptych, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, 11<sup>th</sup> century, “closed” position.  
Photo: Galavaris, *An Eleventh Century Hexaptych* (pullout).

Inscriptions visible:

#### LEFT SIDE

*The humble monk Ioannes painted with desire these holy images which he gave to the famous Church where he found everlasting grace. O child, accept the maternal intercession and grant full redemption from sins to the pitiable old man who asks for it*

*Thy salvific Passions, o Word, with miracles too great to be conceived by the mind and expressed by words, were beautifully painted in red by the monk Ioannes, who implores for forgiveness of his sins*

#### RIGHT SIDE

*As Daniel, who foresaw Thy terrible Last Judgment, o Almighty Abyss of Mercy, having it in mind and written on the tablets of his heart, the miserable among the monks Ioannes has reverentially painted Thy Second Advent, importunes Thee, O Maker of the Universe, to be a merciful not wrathful Judge on that day.*

Figure 4.29 Southern wall of katholikon with calendar icons visible, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai. Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image Hallowed Ground*, 11.

Figure 4.30: Calendar Icon for September, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200, detail (Makrobios, Gordian, and the Venerable Peter). Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.

Figure 4.31: Calendar Icon for October, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200 detail (Seven Sleepers of Ephesus). Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.



Figure 4.32: Southern side of Apse with the Communion of the Apostles and officiating bishops carrying liturgical scrolls. Staro Nagoricino, Macedonia, 14<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Ševčenko, "Art and Liturgy in the Later Byzantine Empire," 135.

Figure 4.33: Calendar Icon for September, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200, detail (Euppsychios, Sozon, Faustos). Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.

Figure 4.34: Calendar Icon for September, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200, detail (Sebastiana). Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.

Figure 4.35: Calendar Icon for September, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200, detail (Hermione). Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.

Figure 4.36: Calendar Icon for September, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200, detail (Mother Theodora). Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.

Figure 4.37: Calendar Icon for October, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200, detail (Patriarch Ignatios). Photo: Cecily Hilsdale.

Figure 4.38: Constantinople, Hagia Sofia, North Tympanum with Ignatios, ca. 9<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Ševčenko, "Marking Holy Time," 61.

Figure 4.39: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vat. gr. 1613, pg. 134. Photo: [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).



Figure 4.40: Calendar Icon for November, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, ca. 1200, detail.  
Photo: Nelson and Collins, *Holy Image Hallowed Ground*, 32.

Figure 5.1: Athens, The Little Metropolis, Western Façade, late 12<sup>th</sup> century(?). Photo: Palagia, "The Date and Iconography of the Calendar Frieze," 216.

Figure 5.2: Athens, The Little Metropolis, western façade, calendar frieze, 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (?).  
Photo: Palagia, "The Date and Iconography of the Calendar Frieze," 218-9.

Figure 5.3: Athens, The Little Metropolis, western façade, calendar frieze, 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD(?), detail. Photo: Palagia, “The Date and Iconography of the Calendar Frieze,” 227.

Figure 5.4: Athens, The Little Metropolis, western façade, calendar frieze, 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (?), detail. Photo: Photo: Palagia, “The Date and Iconography of the Calendar Frieze,” 227.

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