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University of Michigan Studies

HUMANISTIC SERIES

VOLUME XII

STUDIES IN EAST CHRISTIAN AND ROMAN ART

PART I. EAST CHRISTIAN PAINTINGS IN THE FREER COLLECTION



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PLATE I.



ST. JOHN CLIMACUS

1A/9

EAST CHRISTIAN PAINTINGS

IN THE

FREER COLLECTION

BY

CHARLES R. MOREY

PROFESSOR OF ARCHÆOLOGY

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
LONDON: MACMILLAN AND COMPANY
1914

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St. John Climacus

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FREER COLLECTION

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CHARLES R. MOREY

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

New York

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LONDON: MACMILLAN AND COMPANY

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To

MY MOTHER

PREFACE

In the preparation of the Studies presented in the following pages I have been indebted to many for kind assistance. First of all, I am under deep obligation to Mr. Charles L. Freer for affording every facility in the use of the material in his collection and for his generous support of the publication. M. Charles Diehl, of the Sorbonne, read the Studies in proof and made valuable suggestions. Dr. E. C. Richardson of Princeton University, and Professor H. A. Sanders of the University of Michigan, assisted in the solving of palaeographical difficulties. The extent of my obligation to Strzygowski, Brockhaus, Dalton, and other masters in the field of East Christian art may be inferred from the number of citations of their contributions in the notes and in the list of illustrations.

The colored plates and heliotype plates in this volume were made by The Heliotype Company, of Boston; the negatives for plates XI–XIII were prepared by Mr. George R. Swain.

CHARLES R. MOREY.

Princeton, New Jersey,
July, 1914.

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I. TWO MINIATURES FROM A MANUSCRIPT OF ST. JOHN CLIMACUS, AND THEIR RELATION TO KLIMAX ICONOGRAPHY

i. The Illustrated Manuscripts of the Klimax

The author of the work of which Mr. Freer's miniatures are illustrations was a personage of great distinction in the history of the Eastern church. Born about the year 525, he entered the cloister on Mt. Sinai at the age of sixteen, but the desire of the hermit's life was strong within him, and he soon left the monastery for a cave at the foot of the mountain, where he lived in solitude for forty years. At the end of this period he was persuaded by the monks of his old monastery to return to them as their abbot, and in this office he continued, acquiring great reputation for his piety and learning, until shortly before his death, when he again retired to a hermit's cell. He died about 600.

To his name Johannes the Greeks added several epithets, calling him Sinaita from his monastery on Mt. Sinai, and Scholasticus in allusion to his learning. But their favorite name for him was ὁ τῆς κλίμακος, 'he of the Ladder,' alluding to the Klimax, or 'Heavenly Ladder,' which St. John wrote for the guidance of his monks, and to which he owes his fame. The Greek genitive was Latinized into Climacus, and Johannes Climacus is his traditional appellation in the West.

The Klimax was written at the request of a friend and admirer, also called Johannes, who was abbot of the neighboring monastery of Raithu, about fifty kilometres south of Sinai. It is a treatise on the evolution of the consecrated monastic life, intended as a guide to the earnest monk in the attainment of ascetic and spiritual perfection. The work is divided into thirty chapters or "rungs," corresponding with the thirty years of the secret life of Christ; it commences with a homily on "Withdrawal from the World," and ends with one on "Charity." A characteristic list of

titles to the thirty *gradus* or "rungs" is that given in Cod. Theol. Gr. 207 in the Imperial Library of Vienna, as follows:

1. περὶ φυγῆς κόσμου: Concerning Withdrawal from the World.
2. περὶ ἀπροσπαθείας: Concerning Passionlessness.
3. περὶ ξενιτείας: Concerning Home-leaving.
4. περὶ ὑπακοῆς: Concerning Obedience.
5. περὶ μετανοίας: Concerning Repentance.
6. περὶ μνήμης θανάτου: Concerning the Remembrance of Death.
7. περὶ πένθους: Concerning Sorrow.
8. περὶ ἀοργησίας: Concerning Meekness.
9. περὶ ἀμνησικακίας: Concerning Forgivingness.
10. περὶ τοῦ μὴ κρίνειν: Concerning Judging Not.
11. περὶ σιωπῆς: Concerning Silence.
12. περὶ ψεύδους: Concerning Falsehood.
13. περὶ ἀκηδίας: Concerning Indifference.
14. περὶ νηστείας: Concerning Fasting.
15. περὶ ἁγνείας: Concerning Chastity.
16. περὶ φιλαργυρίας: Concerning Love of Money.
17. περὶ ἀκτημοσύνης: Concerning Poverty.
18. περὶ ἀναισθησίας: Concerning Insensibility.
19. περὶ ψαλμῳδίας: Concerning Psalm-singing.
20. περὶ ἀγρυπνίας: Concerning Wakefulness.
21. περὶ δειλίας: Concerning Timidity.
22. περὶ κενοδοξίας: Concerning Vainglory.
23. περὶ οἰήσεως: Concerning Self-conceit.
24. περὶ ἀκακίας: Concerning Guilelessness.
25. περὶ ταπεινοφροσύνης: Concerning Humility.
26. περὶ διακρίσεως: Concerning Discretion.
27. περὶ προσευχῆς: Concerning Prayer.[1]
28. περὶ ἡσυχίας: Concerning Quiet.
29. περὶ ἀπαθείας: Concerning Tranquillity.
30. περὶ ἀγάπης: Concerning Charity.

The Klimax enjoyed a remarkable popularity during the Middle Ages, and its fame was by no means confined to the East. We find translations into Syriac, Modern Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French and Slavonic, and a belated English version is to be found in the library of Cambrai, entitled "A Spiritual Lader, or Stepes to Ascend up to Heaven," and dating in the seventeenth century.

While manuscripts of the text of the "Ladder" are abundant, those adorned with miniatures are comparatively rare; illustration, moreover, is generally confined to a simple drawing of the "Ladder," usually at the end of the manuscript, in which sometimes the rungs are labelled with the titles of the chapters, thus constituting a picturesque table of contents (Fig. 9, p. 15). The following table gives a list of the illustrated Greek Klimax codices, eliminating those whose illustration is limited to the "ladder" drawing mentioned above, or to illuminated initials and borders:

[1] Gradus 27 and 28 appear in inverse order in most manuscripts, 27 being on "Quiet" and 28 on "Prayer."

Date	Described by	Abbreviation
XI Century		
Vaticanus gr. 394.	Beissel, *Vatikanische Miniaturen*, pp. 24–25 (Taf. XIV B). D'Agincourt, *Histoire de l'Art*, V, pl. LII. Labarte, *Hist. des Arts Industriels*, III, p. 68.	Vat. 394.
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Coislin 88.	Bordier, *Description des peintures, etc. dans les mss. grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Index, pp. 318 and 320.	Paris Coisl. 88.
Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana gr. 107.	Martini & Bassi, *Cat. cod. graec. bibl. Ambrosianae*, I. p. 120.	Ambr. 107.
XI or XII Century		
Vaticanus gr. 1754.	Tikkanen, *Acta Soc. Scient. Fennicae*, XIX, 1893.	Vat. 1754.
XII Century		
Freer miniatures.		
Sinai Library, no. 418.	Kondakoff, *Travels on Sinai* (Russian).	Sinai 418.
Paris, Bibl. Nat. 1158.	Bordier, *op. cit.*, p. 203.	Paris 1158.
Paris, Bibl. Nat. Coislin 263.	Bordier, *op. cit.*, Index, p. 318.	Paris Coisl. 263.
Paris, Bibl. Nat. 1069.	Bordier, *op. cit.*, Inventaire, p. 39.	Paris 1069.
XIV Century		
Mt. Athos, Stavroniketa monastery, no. 50.	Lambros, Κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις τοῦ ἁγίου ὄρους Ἑλληνικῶν κωδίκων, I. p. 78, no. 915. 50.	Stavroniketa 50.
XV Century		
Milan, Bibl. Ambrosiana gr. 387. 1.	Martini & Bassi, *op. cit.*, I, p. 460.	Ambr. 387. 1.
Vienna, Imperial Library, Codex gr. 207.	De Nessel, *Cat. cod. graec. bibl. Caes. Vind.*, I. p. 306.	Vienna 207.

The first manuscript in the list, Vat. 394, is also the best known. A number of the miniatures are reproduced in Fig. 1, and one of them on a larger scale in Fig. 2. The latter is a fair sample of the scenes, showing considerable originality of conception, and extraordinary fineness of modelling in the faces in spite of the diminutive scale, the manuscript measuring only 24 × 17 cm. Altogether the work is worthy of its period, although the eleventh century witnessed the production of some of the best of Byzantine painting.

The miniature reproduced in Fig. 2 adorns the beginning of the nineteenth "rung" (περί ψαλμῳδίας), and the text below is arranged in two columns. The title of the first column reads, "Concerning Sleep and Prayer during the Chanting of Psalms,"

and the beginning of the second column speaks of "fasting, from which the wearied body (seeks to recuperate) by sleep." This gives us the clew to the meaning of the little scene at the extreme right where Prayer (ἡ προσευχή) chastises prostrate Sleep (ὁ ὕπνος). Sleep is black, as are all the "Vices" of this graphic allegory. In the central scene the author of the Klimax — duly labelled 'the



FIG. 1. MINIATURES OF A KLIMAX MANUSCRIPT IN THE VATICAN LIBRARY: VAT. 394.

Upper Row: to left, St. John preaching to his flock, and pointing to a bust of Christ in the heavens above; middle, above, a monk renouncing "Life" (represented as a nude male figure with wheels on his feet) and his family; middle, below, scenes representing "ploughing" and an allegory; to right, a monk starting on his wanderings, under the guidance of "Home-leaving," and a sleeping monk tempted by demons (in the form of angels) with dreams of his abandoned family.

Middle Row: to left, monks praying in a cave; to right, the burial of a holy anchorite.

Lower Row: to left, "Humility" encouraging a monk to climb the Ladder, while a Vice holds him by the foot; in middle to left, an angel encouraging a monk who is climbing the Ladder, below which stands St. John, pointing to the bound and prostrate figure of a Vice; in middle to right, St. John teaching two monks, and a Virtue expelling two Vices; to right, a monk in prayer upon the Ladder, standing on the prostrate form of "Evil Speech."

holy John' ὁ ἅ(γιος) Ἰω(άννης) — sits upon a throne in front of an architectural background in inverse perspective, and instructs four monks. To the left an elaborate allegory unfolds itself. We see a luckless monk pulled headlong from the Ladder by the Vices which he has allowed to get the upper hand. Arrogance (ἡ ὑπερηφανία)

grasps his left foot, Sleep (ὁ ὕπνος) clasps him about the middle, Vainglory (κενοδοξία) runs up from the right to bear a hand in his downfall. Gluttony (ἡ γαστριμαργία) pulls at his left arm, and False Reverence (ψευδευλαβία) at his right, while Desire (ὁ θύμος) has fastened himself to his hair. A black and naked imp labelled 'Satiety' (ὁ κόρος) sits on the ground below, lifting a cup in his



FIG. 2. MINIATURE OF A KLIMAX MANUSCRIPT IN THE VATICAN LIBRARY: VAT. 394.

To Left: Vices pulling a monk from the ladder; below, "Orthodoxy," the "Pit of Ignorance," "Satiety," and the "Rout of Goodly Virtues." To Right: St. John teaching his flock, and "Prayer" chastising "Sleep."

right hand. Another naked figure lies in a cavern to the left, which bears the inscription λάκκος ἀγνωσίας, 'the Pit of Ignorance,' and by way of contrast to his pitiable condition, the stately figure of an ecclesiastic rises above the cave, labelled ἡ ὀρθοδοξία, 'Orthodoxy.' In the lower right-hand corner, a Vice pushes away three Virtues. Above his head we read συνήθεια ἡ πονηρά 'bad company,' and above the group of virtues is the inscription δίωξις τῶν καλῶν ἀρετῶν, 'the rout of goodly virtues.' This by-play therefore

affords a fitting title to the whole allegory: "Evil communications corrupt good manners."

The other miniatures of the manuscript are largely allegories of the same sort, varied with occasional scenes from the life and teaching of St. John. A noteworthy survival from the antique is seen in one of them (Fig. 1), wherein Life (ὁ βίος) is figured as a nude man striding along on wheels, a type which is clearly derived from the Greek conception of καῖρος 'Opportunity,' and is paralleled by a similar figure on a stone parapet in the cathedral at Torcello, dated by Cattaneo in 1008.[1]

Paris Coisl. 88 is dated by Bordier in the eleventh century. It contains a miniature (Fig. 3) representing St. John seated before his monastery, and writing. The Heavenly Ladder rises from the top of the monastery. A portrait of the author is the sole illustration of Ambr. 107.

The most interesting of Klimax manuscripts is easily Vat. 1754, which was published for the first time by Tikkanen in the *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae* of 1893.[2] The manuscript consists of 195 leaves, and measures 21 × 16 cm. The first miniature (fol. 1) corresponds with the ladder drawing which often accompanies manuscripts of the Klimax and serves as a table of contents, each rung of the ladder being inscribed with the title of its particular homily. In Vat. 1754, however, this table of contents takes a unique form. Each rung is here illustrated by a microscopic picture (the figures are but 12 mm. in height) alluding to the title, and to provide room for this original treatment the ladder bends round the page in the form of a horseshoe. Tikkanen finds that these little scenes show the "uniformity of invention common to Klimax-illustrations," but that they are done so carefully as to rival larger miniatures in sureness of detail, particularly in the drawing of the face. His description of the most interesting of the pictures is here summarized, with the few additional comments that seemed necessary.

[1] Cattaneo, *L'Architecture en Italie du VIe au XIe siècle*. Trans. by Le Monnier, 1890, p. 310, fig. 166. Cattaneo's date is that of the restoration of Torcello cathedral by Pietro Orseolo II, Doge of Venice. This is the same relief that figures in Baumeister, *Denkmäler*, II, fig. 824, and was mistaken for a late Roman work by Curtius, *Arch. Zeit.*, 1875, p. 6. Such revivals of Hellenic motifs are very common in the middle period of Byzantine art. For other representations of Life in Byzantine art, see Dalton, *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, p. 158, and A. Muñoz, *L'Arte*, IX, p. 212 ff.

[2] This publication is somewhat inaccessible, and I have therefore given Tikkanen's description and critique of the manuscript in detail.

First Rung (Concerning Retirement and the Renunciation of the World): An angel pointing out Christ to a boy.

Third Rung (Concerning the Leaving of Home, and Concerning Dreams): A sleeping monk and another monk leaving him and starting on his pilgrimage. In Vat. 394 this scene is treated in

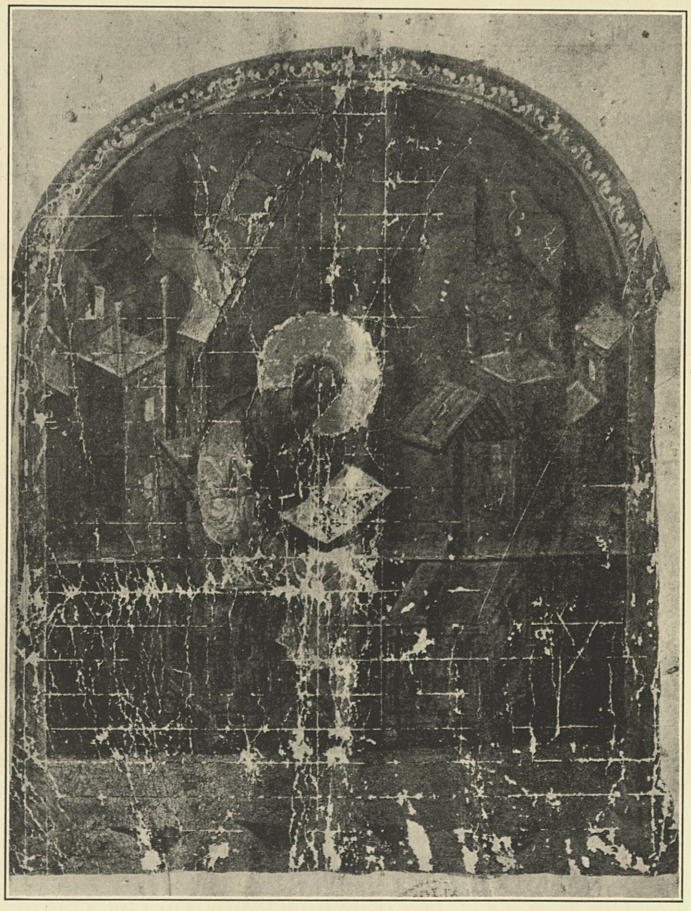


FIG. 3. ST. JOHN CLIMACUS. MINIATURE OF A KLIMAX MANUSCRIPT IN THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE: PARIS COISL. 88.

St. John writing the Klimax; in the background, his monastery of Mt. Sinai, from which the Ladder rises to Heaven.

more allegorical fashion (Fig. 1), in that the attention of the wandering monk is directed by a personification of Home-leaving (ἡ ξενίτεια) toward his sleeping brother. The elderly man and woman to the right of the sleeper and the two youthful forms to the left doubtless represent the family of the monk, while the

winged figure bending above him, and the other pulling at his garments, are not angels, but devils. This is clear from the context of the second part of the third homily, in which we read that the monk must beware of the dreams which come to him after leaving home and friends, for 'the demons will see fit to disturb us in dreams by showing us our loved ones in lamentation, or dying or grieving for us, and in trouble. . . . They often transform themselves into an angel of light and the shape of the martyrs, etc.'[1] The same tempting of a sleeping monk appears in Sinai 418.

Sixth Rung (Concerning the Remembrance of Death): A monk standing in melancholy meditation by a grave. The corresponding miniature in Vat. 394 is not finished (fol. 51). In the Sinai Klimax, the grave is replaced by a sarcophagus containing the bodies of four dead youths, a motif which reminds one of the French "Dit des trois morts et des trois vifs" of the thirteenth century, which reappears in the well-known Triumph of Death in the Campo Santo at Pisa.



FIG. 4. HUMILITY AND INDIFFERENCE. MINIATURES OF A KLIMAX MANUSCRIPT IN THE VATICAN LIBRARY: VAT. 1754.

Seventh Rung (Sorrow): A monk seated in an attitude of melancholy.

Eleventh Rung (Silence): A seated monk. In Vat. 394 the concept is expressed in characteristic fashion by a personification, a maiden in classic costume pointing to her mouth.

Thirteenth Rung (Indifference): A small demon aims an arrow at a seated monk (Fig. 4). In Vat. 394 (fol. 71 *verso*) Indifference has seized the foot of a monk who stands on the Ladder, but in the next scene lies bound at the feet of St. John.

Fourteenth Rung (Gluttony): A monk sitting at a table and drinking from a goblet (compare the miniature in Paris Coisl. 263, Fig. 7). Beside him stands a cooking apparatus on a hearth of masonry.

[1] Scala Paradisi, Migne, Patr. Graec. 88, col. 670 & 672: . . . *τότε λοιπὸν οἱ δαίμονες δι' ἐννυπνίων θορυβεῖν δοκιμάσουσιν ἡμᾶς, τοὺς οἰκείους ἑαυτῶν ἡμῖν ὑποδεικνύντες· ἢ κοπτομένους ἢ θνήσκοντας, ἢ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατεχομένους, καὶ σινομένους . . . Εἰς ἄγγελον φωτὸς καὶ μαρτύρων εἶδος πολλάκις μετασχηματίζονται, κ.τ.λ.*

Fifteenth Rung (Fornication): A demon shooting at a woman who kneels before a standing monk; the latter takes her by the hand.

Sixteenth Rung (Avarice): A monk sitting before a fire kindled from heaven, in which a body seems to burn. The concept is quite differently rendered in Sinai 418, as we shall see later.

The rest of the scenes in this series are insignificant and show a poverty of invention unusual even in Byzantine art. Repentance is rendered by a monk sitting in meditation in his cell, the Chanting of Psalms by monks who extend their hands toward Christ. For both Humility and Passionlessness the artist shows us an angel giving a *labarum* to a monk (Fig. 4), and Obedience and Charity are likewise represented by identical groups consisting of an angel giving a monk a wreath. Falsehood is portrayed by a seated monk, Meekness by one standing; Vainglory is rendered by an old monk teaching a younger one, Poverty by an aged monk in an attitude of prayer.

On fol. 2 a full-page miniature represents the Ladder reaching up to heaven. Several monks are climbing up, and above in the heavens appears an angel who extends a wreath to the first arrival. A swarm of winged devils attempts to delay the progress of the aspirants, or to thrust them from the Ladder with their fiery forks, and in the case of three they have succeeded. One of these unfortunates falls into the jaws of a dragon emerging from a cave, a familiar type of Hell. Below stands St. John Climacus, exhorting the climbers, and at the foot of the Ladder a lad, finger on brow, thoughtfully surveys the scene, a devil meanwhile plucking at his mantle.

Fol. 2 *verso* shows us St. John seated at his writing-desk, composing his book. A portrait of the same character is to be found in Vat. 394 (fol. 6 *recto*), in the Sinai Klimax, in Paris Coisl. 88, in Stavroniketa 50 and in one of the Freer miniatures.

Fol. 3 *recto* contains a miniature entitled by Tikkanen "The Triumph of Johannes Climacus" in view of the composition, which is the one usual for such apotheoses. In the midst of a throng of worshipping monks the saint stands upright on a footstool and holds out his right hand in benediction, with the gesture of a Roman emperor.

It will have been noticed in the comparisons of Vat. 1754 with

Vat. 394 that the female personifications of the earlier manuscript are absent in the scenes of the later, and that the Vices are replaced by conventional demons. The allegory in the earlier Klimax is much more sustained than in the later; here in rendering the virtues and vices the artist occasionally, as in "Remembrance of Death," depicts the monk in an act suggested by the title. This tendency to depart from the earlier Hellenizing allegory in the direction of more material treatment is a mark of the Byzantine decadence that has often been noted; but nowhere can so striking an example be found as in the thirty large miniatures which in Vat. 1754 follow the scenes above described.



FIG. 5. PENITENT MONKS. MINIATURE OF A KLIMAX MANUSCRIPT IN THE VATICAN LIBRARY: VAT. 1754.

"These miniatures," says Tikkanen, ". . . represent the glorification of the pitiful in the ascetic existence. Wretchedness and misery are elevated to an ideal. Never in fact have I seen such ostentation in the setting forth of this negative morale of monasticism, which teaches the conquest of sin by fleeing from temptation, which substitutes penance and self-tormenting, stupid brooding, for work and healthy activity, and to gain heaven, makes earth a hell!"

Some of the miniatures of this series have versified inscriptions and explanatory titles in addition. The scenes are much alike, representing groups of monks admonished by the abbot (fol. 3 *verso*) standing in deep dejection (fol. 4 *recto*); brooding over their unworthy state; stretching their hands to heaven (fol. 4 *verso*), from which issues the *Dextera Domini;*[1] praying, with hands bound behind their backs, the Virgin interceding for them (fol. 5 *recto*); sitting in misery upon the ground (fol. 5 *verso*); hiding their faces and tearing their hair in penitence (fol. 6 *recto*), while the Mother of God extends from heaven a pitying hand (Fig. 5). The artist seems to have racked his brain for new

[1] *Dextera Domini*, the "Hand of God." This was the customary, and well-nigh exclusive method of rendering the Divine Presence in Early Christian Art, and continued in favor throughout the Middle Ages in both East and West.

gestures and attitudes that could lend variety to his unending theme of self-torment. One of the monks in the miniature on fol. 9 *verso* leans on a staff in the manner of the magistrates on the east frieze of the Parthenon, or the Demos on Attic decrees. Elsewhere the monks appear half-naked. On fol. 10 *recto*, the title tells us that "they eat ashes instead of bread and mix the water that they drink with tears;" three of the five monks represented in the accompanying miniature seem to be drinking out of cups. A somewhat similar scene appears in Vat. 394, which also has a fair parallel to the scenes depicting the death of a monk in Vat. 1754 (fol. 16 *recto* and *verso*). Fol. 11 *recto* displays the effect of the ascetic existence in a group of skeleton-like half-clad monks. The limit of the painter's meagre powers of facial expression is reached in fol. 11 *verso* (Fig. 6). The goal and reward is reached at last in fol. 17 *verso*, where Christ appears to a throng of monks. In the next miniature (fol. 18 *recto*) Christ invites them to enter the gates of Paradise, and on the opposite page we find them safely inside, lifting up their hands in ecstatic adoration of the Lord. In the last miniature (fol. 19 *recto*) they stand, once more fully clad, hands crossed upon their breasts, in peace. At the head of the throng is the Virgin, adoring the Hand of God which appears in the heavens above, "thanking the Son," the title tells us, "for the saving of these."

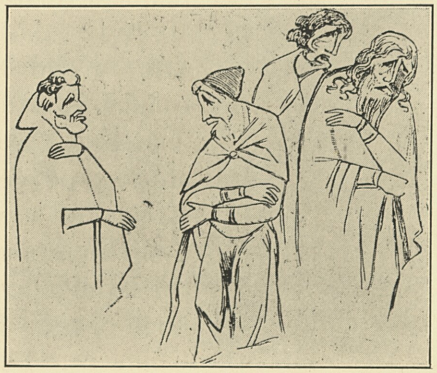
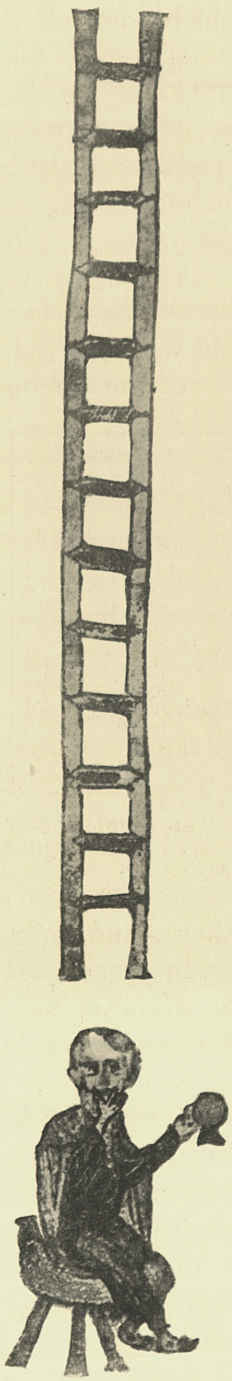


FIG. 6. PENITENT MONKS. MINIATURE OF A KLIMAX MANUSCRIPT IN THE VATICAN LIBRARY: VAT. 1754.

Vigor and skill are not lacking in these miniatures, but in general they are inferior in elegance and careful execution to those of Vat. 394. There are bad violations of proportion, and the hands and feet are often barbarous. Tikkanen finds the style as a whole to be that of the eleventh century, but dates the manuscript indefinitely in the eleventh or twelfth, one reason being apparently the absence of gold backgrounds, an omission rare in the best period. The materialistic tendency noted above would point to the later date. The unfinished condition of many of the miniatures reveals the process of painting — first a sketchy drawing,



within which the principal lights and shadows are laid on in an under-coloring of equally indefinite character, and afterwards the final coloring, put on in thick tones, with details and final outlines drawn in firm unerring strokes. Nude parts are left in the tone of the underpainting, on which the features and lights and shadows are delicately indicated with brown and white. Gray hair is under-painted with blue, which is often retained as the final color.

Of the twelfth-century manuscripts of the Klimax, to which period the Freer miniatures are to be assigned, the most interesting is Sinai 418. Kondakoff's description ("Travels on Sinai," in Russian) is partially translated in Tikkanen's article and two pages of the codex are reproduced in the album accompanying Kondakoff's work (pls. 77, 78). The first two miniatures represent the Cross, surrounded by the Evangelical beasts, and Christ receiving the book of the "Heavenly Ladder" from St. John Climacus. Besides the usual scenes relating to the composition of the work, the codex is illustrated by a number of miniatures which depict in realistic fashion the titles of the "rungs." "Withdrawal from the World" is rendered by an old man, beginning a journey and giving his garments to the poor. The homily on Dreams is illustrated by a sleeping monk tempted by two demons, after the manner of Vat. 394. "Remembrance of Death" is typified, as noted above (p. 8), by an old man standing before a sarcophagus containing four dead youths. The scenes show much realism, and apparently often without direct reference to the monastic life, as in "Bearing Malice," where we see servants assailing their masters before a personage

FIG. 7. GLUTTONY. MINIATURE OF A KLIMAX MANUSCRIPT IN THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE: PARIS COISL. 263.

A monk seated on a stool, holding a cup in his left hand. This being the headpiece to the fourteenth homily, the preceding ones are symbolized by the ladder of thirteen rungs above.

of authority, and "Avarice," which is rendered by a magnate in a blue robe seated in front of a chest, while his servants drive away beggars and receive grain from peasants. Another miniature represents an unregenerate in the midst of a revel, while the plague rages around him and the earth is already strewn with the dead. There is in this manuscript, therefore, a further development of the materializing tendency which we saw in Vat. 1754. The Hellenistic allegories of Vat. 394, already materialized in Vat. 1754, are almost completely gone in Sinai 418, where the Virtues and Vices are indicated in scenes of real life.

Paris 1158 is remarkable for its original initials and borders, but contains only one miniature, and of that but little is left except the gold ground (fol. 256 *verso*). The original composition represented the Ladder, with the figure of St. John to the left. Below him at the foot of the ladder was a crowd of monks. One can still reconstruct three figures of monks climbing the Ladder and another falling, pulled down by winged demons into the Pit of Hell below. In the arc of Heaven at the top of the Ladder appears a half-figure of Christ, who wears a cruciform nimbus. Paris Coisl. 263 contains the figure of a monk holding a goblet and seated below a ladder of thirteen rungs (Fig. 7). This motif resembles the illustrations of "Gluttony" in Vat. 1754, and "Satiety" in Vat. 394, and serves as headpiece to the title of the fourteenth homily on "Fasting." Paris 1069 contains the peculiar miniature reproduced in Fig. 8, which depicts the Ladder with its topmost rung occupied by a little figure wrapped in a shroud; Christ leans forward from the heavens to receive it. This figure Bordier calls "the human soul," — an interpretation which I see no reason to criticize.

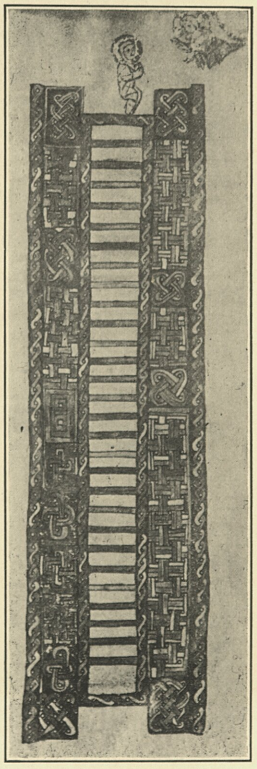


FIG. 8. THE SOUL AT THE TOP OF THE HEAVENLY LADDER. MINIATURE OF A KLIMAX MANUSCRIPT IN THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE: PARIS 1069.

The thirteenth century is proverbially poor in monuments of Byzantine art, and I know of no illustrated Klimax codex belonging to that period. The fourteenth century, however, is well rep-

resented by Stavroniketa 50, which is briefly described by Lambros in his catalogue of the manuscripts of Mt. Athos. The codex is of quarto size and contains 288 leaves. At the beginning of each "rung" appears a small picture representing monks, usually on the Ladder, praying and gazing up to heaven, and thus conceived in the manner of the majority of those of Vat. 394. Fol. 1 β contains a miniature representing the Ladder with Christ at the summit leaning forth from heaven to receive the ascending monks. Below the Ladder, among other figures, is that of St. John. On fol. 3 β is another miniature in all probability representing the same person, and we find him again in a full-page miniature on fol. 11 β, where he is seated, as in the Freer miniature, before a table on which materials for writing are placed.

Ambr. 387. 1 is a paper codex of the fifteenth century, containing among other writings a manuscript of the Ladder, in which is a ruined portrait of the author. The same date is to be assigned to the paper codex in the Imperial Library at Vienna, with its solitary miniature representing the Ladder, with monks climbing up to Christ in heaven, or falling into the jaws of Hell (Fig. 9).

From the descriptions which have preceded we see that the Freer miniatures represent the only two miniatures which are typical of Klimax manuscripts, the author portrait, and the "Ladder." In Byzantine art it is seldom we find an iconographical cycle of such variety as that of the Klimax. In the profusely illustrated manuscripts, Vat. 394 and 1754, Sinai 418 and Stavroniketa 50, the types used in all, or even more than one of the manuscripts, are rare. The miniatures representing "Home-leaving" in the first three manuscripts bear a general resemblance to one another. Sinai 418 and Vat. 1754 are somewhat similar in their rendering of "Remembrance of Death." The death of a monk in Vat. 394 is paralleled by miniatures in Vat. 1754. But these resemblances do not amount to an iconographical tradition, being due, in great part, to the uninventiveness of the artist as well as the community of content. On the other hand, the author portrait and the heaven-ascending Ladder are found in nearly all of our examples.

ii. Portrait of St. John Climacus — Plate I (Frontispiece)

The reproduction of Mr. Freer's miniatures in colored plates makes it unnecessary to describe them in detail. The initial miniature (Plate I) is on parchment, and measures 17.2 × 10.5 cm. It

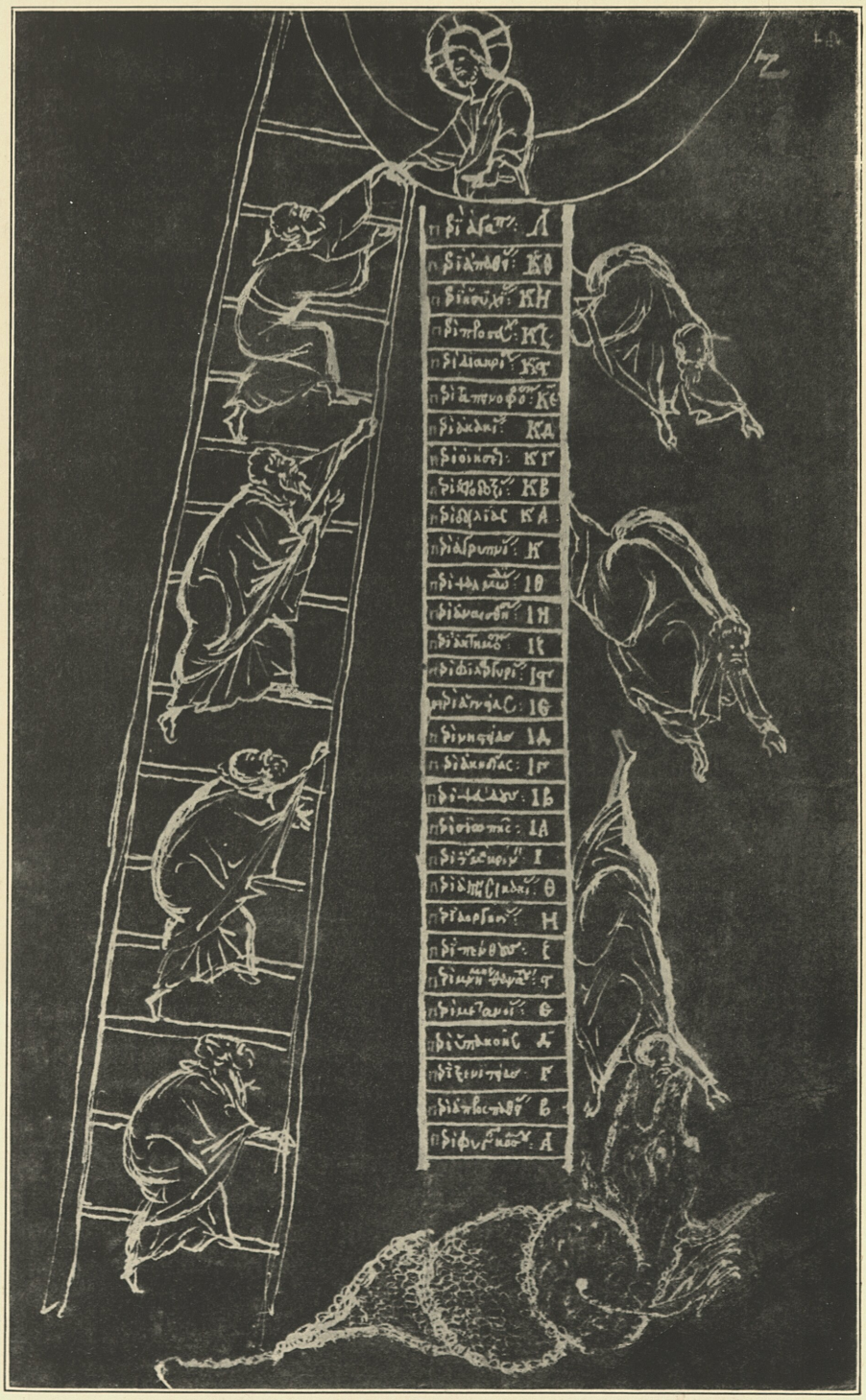


FIG. 9. The Heavenly Ladder. Miniature, Klimax Manuscript: Vienna 207.

Christ in Heaven receiving four monks who climb the Ladder. To the right, three monks falling into the mouth of a dragon representing Hell. In the centre, the Ladder, with inscribed "rungs."

has been cut out of its original page along the red border, and pasted on a paper backing. The author is clad in a tunic and the Eastern monastic cope, and sits on a cushioned bench. On his lap he holds a portable desk on which he writes, and before him stands his writing-table, with supports terminating in little knobs. On the table we see his ink-well and the phial of *minium*, the indispensable red ink used in titles and initials. In the background is his monastery of Mt. Sinai, represented by a rectangular enclosure, whose entrance is marked by a gate-tower of enormous height, crowned with a windowed drum and dome. The balcony surrounding the tower above the gateway is here turned by a false perspective into the segment of a circle. The artist had better success with the balcony on the tower which appears behind St. John in the Ladder-miniature.

The inscriptions to right and left of the figure of St. John read: ⁘ ὁ ἅγιος | ἰω(άννης) | ὁ τ(ῆ)ς κλίμακο(ς) 'St. John of the Ladder.' This seated and writing figure is the traditional author portrait in Byzantine art, and its derivation from Hellenic sources has often been noted.[1] Beginning with a variety of the seated figures on Attic grave-reliefs, the motif develops in the late classic into a seated "philosopher" holding or reading a scroll, such as we find on sarcophagi of the "Sidamara" type, and the sarcophagus of S. Maria Antiqua.[2] Virgil is thus depicted holding a *volumen* in his hands in one of the Vatican Virgils. In the famous Vienna Dioscurides of the sixth century the author is represented in a manner more like the Byzantine type, with his figure in profile. He does not write, however, but points to a root of the mandragora which Εὕρεσις 'Discovery' holds before him. This is transformed into the Christian author type in the Codex Rossanensis of the same period (Fig. 15) where we see Mark seated in an armchair and writing on a scroll, while before him stands, in attitude of dictation, a female nimbed figure whose significance is discussed elsewhere (p. 35). This type, omitting the personification, became the customary form in which the portraits of the Evangelists were cast in both Byzantine and western painting, and of course is the ultimate inspiration for our

[1] Cf. Diez, *Die Miniaturen des Wiener Dioskurides*, *Byzantinische Denkmäler*, III, p. 38 ff.

[2] *Byz. Denkmäler*, III, p. xiii, fig. 2. For the sarcophagus of S. Maria Antiqua, see *Suppl. Papers of the American School in Rome*, I, p. 148 ff., fig. 1.

Plate II.



The Heavenly Ladder

has been cut out of its original page along the red border, and pasted on a paper backing. The author is clad in a tunic and the Eastern monastic cope, and sits on a cushioned bench. On his lap he holds a portable desk on which he writes, and before him stands his writing-table, with supports terminating in little knobs. On the table we see his ink-well and the phial of *minium*, the indispensable red ink used in titles and initials. In the background is his monastery of Mt. Sinai, represented by a rectangular enclosure, whose entrance is marked by a gate-tower of enormous height, crowned with a windowed drum and dome. The balcony surrounding the tower above the gateway is here turned by a false perspective into the segment of a circle. The artist had better success with the balcony on the tower which appears behind St. John in the Ladder-miniature.

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The Heavenly Ladder

miniature. The Dextera Domini which appears in the upper right-hand corner to symbolize the divine inspiration of the writer, is also found in late portraits of the Evangelists.[1]

iii. Miniature of the Heavenly Ladder — Plate II

The second of the Freer miniatures, likewise on parchment, must have been the final one of the manuscript, for the page contains a colophon and the signature of the scribe. The ground of the miniature to the left of the ladder was originally covered with a light blue wash, shading into green at the top. To the right of the ladder the ground color was originally dark blue. The green spots along the border to the right are later splotches of color which have accidentally stuck to the leaf. Again we see the saint, this time standing before his monastery, holding a book in his left hand, and pointing with his right, the fingers of which are arranged in the form of the "Greek" benediction, to the edifying spectacle of the Ladder, on which two monks are making their way to Heaven. To the right of the monastery is the inscription: ὁ τῆς | κλί|μακ(ος). The miniature, like its fellow, was cut out of its manuscript, and in the process the lower edge of the leaf was lost. It now measures 15.6 × 13.2 cm., but the figure of St. John, which must have been originally complete, demands about 2.5 cm. of additional space, so that we may assume that so much of the lower part of the miniature has been removed. The upper right-hand corner of the miniature has also been lost, but the upper end of the Ladder was completed by the familiar motif of the Dextera Domini, of which the rays and one finger of the Hand survive.

We have already noticed that the only two miniatures which can be called typical of the Klimax cycle are the author portrait and the Ladder picture. The rest of the illustration seems to have been largely a matter of individual fancy on the part of the artist, and even the Ladder picture shows much variety. An elaborate composition is seen in Vat. 1754, where the monks who climb the ladder are welcomed at the top by an angel extending a wreath. Their progress is impeded by winged devils who try to pull them down, and three of them fall from the ladder into the jaws of the dragon below. Paris 1158 also has the devils, but

[1] Cf. *e.g.* the examples given on p. 36, note 2, and the twelfth-century manuscript described in the catalogue of the Claudin Sale (1877), where the motif appears in the portrait of Luke (Bordier, *op. cit.*, p. 306, fig. 192).

replaces the angel with the figure of Christ. In this it resembles the Vienna codex and Stavroniketa 50, both of which, however, omit the devils. In Vat. 394, on the other hand, we find the demons again, and Christ is accompanied by the Virgin. Paris 1069 displays yet another variation in the human soul at the top of the Ladder. In Vat. 1754, again, St. John stands at the foot of the Ladder, encouraging the monks to ascend. This motif is found in the Freer miniature, in Stavroniketa 50 (where the saint is accompanied by other figures) and in Vat. 394, but is lacking in the Vienna codex. In Paris 1158 a group of monks stands at the foot of the Ladder, and St. John is depicted above them. Another feature of Vat. 1754 is the dragon, which appears in the Vienna codex, but is omitted in Vat. 394. The unique detail of 1754 is the boy at the foot of the Ladder with the devil plucking at his robe. To complete our list of variants, we must note that the Vienna manuscript combines with the scene above described the simple drawing of the Ladder which occurs occasionally in codices devoid of other illustration, and that in Paris Coisl. 88, the Ladder rises from the top of St. John's monastery.

As will be shown later, the Freer miniatures belong to the early half of the twelfth century. The Ladder miniature, moreover, represents the scene reduced to its lowest terms, and reflects a tendency manifested in Byzantine art during the twelfth century toward simplicity of composition. Paris 1158 on the other hand already shows the realistic expansion of Byzantine iconography which is found in the fourteenth century Vienna miniature. But in general the most detailed treatments of the Ladder picture are found in the earliest and latest examples, and the simplest in the middle period.

The model from which the miniaturists drew the general outlines of the Ladder composition is not far to seek; indeed, it is indicated in the letter written to St. John by the abbot of Raithu, urging him to undertake the composition of the Klimax. "For if Jacob," says the worthy abbot, "while watching his flocks, saw so wonderful a sight upon the ladder, how much more should the shepherd of reasoning creatures unfold to all, not a mere dream, but a real, true, and undeviating ascent to God!" And Jacob's ladder, with its ascending and descending angels, and the sleeping patriarch below, became, in fact, the model for the Ladder pictures of the Klimax. One of the earliest Jacob's Ladders in

Byzantine art is a miniature in the well-known Ms. gr. 510 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, containing the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus, and dating in the ninth century.[1] Here we find the episode divided, Jacob sleeping on his rocky pillow at the left and further on at the right the angels mounting and descending the ladder. By the eleventh century the type which formed the immediate model of the Klimax ladder had been evolved, in the form in which we see it on the bronze doors of the cathedral of Monte Santangelo in South Italy (Fig. 10). In this incised design we have only to substitute monks for the angels, and the standing figure of St. John for the sleeping Jacob, to produce the composition of the Freer miniature. Another version of the Dream appearing in the Homilies of the Monk Jacobus, of the eleventh century (Vat. gr. 1162 and Bibl. Nat. gr. 1208), makes the angels four in number, and adds the figure of God or Christ at the top of the ladder. The archetype of such compositions doubtless formed the model for the compositions of the Klimax Ladder found in Vat. 394 and 1754, Stavroniketa 50 and the Vienna codex.



FIG. 10. JACOB'S VISION. INCISED DESIGN ON THE BRONZE DOORS OF THE CATHEDRAL OF MONTE SANTANGELO.

The inscription reads: *Scalam quam Iacob vidit in somnis*, 'the Ladder which Jacob saw in his dream.'

The Ladder of Jacob inspired many another composition in mediaeval illumination,[2] but the Ladder scene of the Klimax manuscripts itself produced an interesting and numerous progeny, not only in Byzantine, but also in Western art. It could hardly be otherwise in view of the popularity of the work, but an additional factor of importance was the inclusion of extracts from the Klimax in the readings for the beginning of Lent in the Eastern Church.[3]

[1] Omont, *Fac-similés des miniatures des Mss. grecs de la Bibl. Nat.*, pl. XXXVII.

[2] See Tikkanen, *Die Genesismosaiken in Venedig*, Helsingfors, 1889, p. 122, note 3.

[3] Brockhaus, *Die Kunst in den Athos-klöstern*, p. 82.

The later Byzantine painting followed closely the liturgy in its choice of subjects, and we therefore find the Heavenly Ladder not infrequently represented in church frescoes.[1] It won a place also in the Painter's Manual of Mt. Athos, that curious compendium of rules for the painting of sacred subjects compiled by a certain Dionysius of Fourna and deriving from late Byzantine sources, though its date can hardly be earlier than the beginning of the eighteenth century.[2] Dionysius tells us how to paint "the Ladder which saves the soul and leads to Heaven" as follows:[3] "A monastery, and outside its gates a throng of monks, young and old, with a large, high ladder in front of them reaching up to heaven. Upon it monks, some climbing, others beginning to ascend. Above, winged angels aiding them. In the heavens is Christ, and before Him on the topmost rung of the Ladder is a single aged monk of priestly dignity, extending his hands and gazing at Him. The Lord with joy receives him with one hand, and with the other places a wreath of many-hued flowers upon his head, saying to him: 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest' (Matt. xi. 28). And underneath the Ladder are a number of winged demons, seizing the monks by their robes: they pull at some, but cannot make them fall; others they have succeeded in separating a little from the Ladder. Still others they have pulled considerably away (except that they still keep hold of the Ladder, some with one hand, others with two). Others they have pulled away entirely, carrying them off prone, and clasped about the waist. Beneath them is omnivorous Hades, like a great and terrible dragon, holding in his mouth a monk, who has fallen in head foremost, with only his feet appearing to view. The inscription (should read):

'Gazing at the Ladder which extends to Heaven
Ponder well the steps of Virtue.
Fleeing then with utmost quickness this precarious life
Come to it and mount it with toil.
With the choirs of angels as thy protection

[1] Mt. Athos, Narthex of church of Dochiariu monastery (Brockhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 296); Trapeza church at Lavra (Brockhaus, p. 279). Millet gives no examples of it at Mistra (*Monuments byzantins de Mistra*, Paris, 1910).

[2] Diehl, *Manuel d'art byzantin*, p. 774.

[3] Denys de Fourna, *Manuel d'iconographie chrétienne*, ed. A. Papadopoulo-Kerameus (St. Petersburg, 1909), p. 211.

Mayst thread the snares of wicked demons,
So that, arriving at the gates of Heaven,
Thou shalt have a crown at the hands of the Lord.'"

From this we see that Dionysius' notion of the picture was very much like that of the artist who illustrated Vat. 1754, save that the latter substitutes an angel for Christ, and puts in the figures of St. John and the boy at the foot of the Ladder. The description given in the Manual thus represents the realistic development of late Byzantine iconography, and yet in its wealth of detail corresponds with the earliest forms of the Ladder picture. The Freer miniature and Paris 1069 show how far the type was simplified in the twelfth century, and a glance at the accompanying table will reveal the general features of its evolution (Fig. 11). The

Motif	XI Cent.	XII Cent.	XIV Cent.	XV Cent.	XVI & Later.
Dragon	Vat. 1754			Vienna 207	Triptych Manual
Boy and Devil	Vat. 1754				
Angel at Top of Ladder	Vat. 1754				
Christ at Top of Ladder		Paris 1158	Stavroniketa 50	Vienna 207	Triptych Manual
Christ and Virgin at Top of Ladder	Vat. 394				
St. John beside the Ladder	Vat. 1754 Vat. 394	Freer Min. Paris 1158			
St. John and Monks at Foot of Ladder			Stavroniketa 50		Triptych
Monks at Foot of Ladder		Paris 1158			Manual
Monastery		Freer Min.			Triptych Manual
"Human Soul" at Top of Ladder		Paris 1069			
Ladder Rising from Top of Monastery	Paris Coisl. 88				
Devils impeding Monks	Vat. 1754 Vat. 394	Paris 1158			Triptych Manual
Contents Table combined with Ladder				Vienna 207	

FIG. 11. Iconography of the Miniature of the Heavenly Ladder.

final form in which the subject was cast can be seen in Russian art, the ultimate phase of Byzantine, and is illustrated by two Russian ikons in the Likhatcheff collection in St. Petersburg. One is here reproduced (Fig. 12). The other, dated about 1800, has a simpler composition. A male and female saint are mounting the Ladder, and the latter is received by the enthroned Christ and the archangels, but the throng of the elect that appears in the other ikon is absent in this. Two monks fall into the pit of Hell, which is represented in the usual form as the jaws of an immense monster.

St. John's Heavenly Ladder was thus a popular type in Byzantine art and was used for other purposes than as an illustration of the Klimax. It appears in a Greek Psalter of the thirteenth century in the Vatican Library,[1] and in a very interesting tempera triptych in the Museo Cristiano of the Vatican (Fig. 13) which is here reproduced from D'Agincourt's drawing.[2] D'Agincourt dated the triptych in the thirteenth century, but Muñoz, the latest authority to comment on the monument, does not consider it earlier than the sixteenth.[3] The figure shows only the paintings of the back. The provenience of the piece is indicated by the inscription which surmounts the curious landscape of the left wing: τὸ ἅγιον μοναστήριον τὸ Σίναιον; "the holy monastery of Sinai." The monastery is depicted in the midst of its mountainous surroundings, a caravan approaches in the foreground, and in the distance are scenes representing the life and burial of a saintly anchorite. The touch of local pride evinced by the inscription seems unmistakable, and it is altogether probable that the triptych was painted at Sinai itself. It is quite in order therefore that the Heavenly Ladder of St. John Scholasticus, himself a Sinaite, should be painted on the opposite wing, and there in fact we find it, in a form remarkably like that described by Dionysius in the Painter's Manual, and resembling to a lesser extent the representation of Vat. 1754. Four monks ascend the Ladder, of whom the topmost one is attired in vestments, reminding one of the "priestly dignity" recommended for this figure by the Manual. Christ, in half-figure, bends forward from the arc of heaven to receive him. Two monks have fallen, and are dragged down by naked winged demons, while a third is plunging headlong into

[1] Vat. gr. 1927, fol. 218 *recto*. Cf. Tikkanen, *Acta Soc. Scient. Fenn.* XIX, 1893, p. 8.
[2] *Hist. de l'Art*, V, pl. XCI, and II, pp. 91–92.
[3] *L'art byzantin à l'Exposition de Grottaferrata*, p. 43.



FIG. 12. The Heavenly Ladder. Ikon in the Likhatcheff Collection in St. Petersburg.

Above, the Elect in Heaven, and Christ at the Heavenly Gates, accompanied by the Virgin, John the Baptist, and two angels. The Saviour receives a monk who has climbed the Ladder of thirty rungs. An angel offers crowns to the monk below him, and another angel brings a crown to a third monk. The latter is apparently exhausted by his conflict with the demon who flies away in disappointment to the right of the Ladder. Two monks are falling from the Ladder into the Pit of Hell. A demon stretches out his arms to receive them, and another chastises the Damned in the Pit. To the left, the monastery of Mt. Sinai, in front of which St. John stands on a pulpit and preaches to his monks.

the jaws of the infernal dragon. Below at the right, beside a church, we see a group of three saints, of whom the foremost, doubtless our own St. John, points upward to the scene upon the Ladder. A monastery perches upon a rocky eminence in the middle distance, and on the horizon an angel admonishes Pachomius (the famous ascetic of Egypt): ὦ Παχώμιε ἐν τούτῳ τῷ σχήματι πᾶσα σάρξ σωθήσεται; 'Pachomius, in this (monk's) garb will all



FIG. 13. TRIPTYCH IN THE MUSEO CRISTIANO OF THE VATICAN.

1, 2, 3, 4. Figures showing the arrangement of the scenes on the triptych.
5. Panorama of Mt. Sinai, painting on the back of the right wing.
6. Detail of the same.
7. The Council of Nicaea, painting on the back of the left wing.
8. The Heavenly Ladder, painting on the back of the central panel.
9. Detail of the same.

flesh be saved!' The scene is obviously inspired by the Klimax, and affords corroborative proof for that reason of the Sinaitic origin of the triptych, since the subject cannot have been suggested by the other paintings. The central panel of the side of the triptych represented in our figure has for its subject the condemnation of Arius at the Council of Nicaea. The three panels of the

other side have the following scenes: in the central panel, Christ enthroned amid the heavenly choirs; on the wings, the Tree of Jesse, and a similar composition representing Christ as the Vine and the twelve apostles as the Branches. It is difficult to see why the artist should have introduced into such a series the irrelevant subjects of the panorama of Sinai and the Heavenly Ladder of the Sinaite St. John, unless he were himself a resident of the mountain.

The influence of the Ladder was not confined to Sinai, nor to Byzantine art. It evidently inspired at least one western work, a miniature in the Hortus Deliciarum of Herrad von Landsperg. This work was composed in the latter half of the twelfth century by Herrad, abbess of the convent of Hohenburg in Alsace, as a kind of handbook for the education of the young girls committed to her care. The book was unfortunately destroyed by fire with the rest of Strassburg Library during the siege of 1870, and the illustrations now exist only in part and in copy.[1] The miniatures were ultra-allegorical, and this character is shared by the one which interests us, a Moral Ladder plainly inspired by the Ladder miniature of a Klimax manuscript.

This illustration represents a Ladder reaching from earth to sky, whence the Dextera Domini issues and extends the crown of life to those who succeed in mounting to the top. At the bottom the yawning jaws of a dragon threaten those who would ascend. Two demons shoot arrows at the climbers (cf. Vat. 1754, p. 9), but their shafts are parried by two angels (cf. the angels of the Manual, p. 20) armed with buckler and sword. At the second rung a soldier falls, tumbling upon the horses and armor that delighted him in life, while his companion, a woman of the world, likewise falls upon the cities and luxuries that she desired. At the fourth rung, a nun takes money from a priest and is dragged off to a sinful life. So the allegory proceeds, showing the damnation of various classes of society by the pleasures that bind them to life, until we reach the thirteenth and last rung, where we see a young woman advancing with bared head to receive the crown extended by the Hand of God. She is labelled "The Virtue of Charity" (*Virtus, id est Charitas*), in which the artist again shows dependence on the Byzantine model, for it will be remembered that

[1] Herrade de Landsberg, *Hortus Deliciarum, publié aux frais de la Soc. pour la conservation des mon. hist. d'Alsace*, Strassburg, 1879–1899, pl. LVI.

the topmost rung in St. John's Ladder was also the "Virtue of Charity" (*ἀγάπη*). The influence of the type may still be seen in Vecchietta's "Scala dei Bambini" in the Pellegrinaggio of Sta. Maria della Scala, Siena.[1]

The text on the page of the Freer miniature of the Heavenly Ladder is not a part of the Klimax but a colophon of six iambic trimeters reading:

τρ(ια)κονταριθμὸς[2] οὐ(ρα)νο̣δρόμος κλίμαξ:
ἐπ' οὐ(ρα)νοὺς φέρουσα τοὺς βρότους βάσις:
εἴληφε τέρμα τριακοντόπους κλίμαξ:
ἡ δὲ τριὰς σώζοι με τὸν κεκτημένον
. . . . .
ὦ γλῶσσα καὶ θανοῦσα· πᾶσι δεικνύεις
λόγ(ων) ἀρίστων τὴν διδάσκαλο̄ φράσιν

The verses compose a poem of rather uneven inspiration, which may be translated as follows:

'Thirty is the number of the Ladder leading to Heaven,
A Stairway bearing mortals to the sky.
The Ladder of thirty rungs has had its ending.
May the Trinity preserve me, the owner (of the book).'

Here the poem is judiciously interrupted in order to leave a space where the possessor of the volume might inscribe his name. A name was in fact once written here, but afterwards erased, no doubt by a later owner. A similar case may be seen in a Klimax codex of the tenth century in the Laurentiana at Florence.[3] The poem then concludes with the following verses:

'O tongue, though dead, thou still to all displayest
The edifying speech of virtuous words.'

Such versified colophons are by no means rare in Byzantine manuscripts. They usually take the form of eulogies of the book which the scribe has copied, or elaborate apologies to the reader for the blunders that he may have made. A number of them are collected in Omont's *Fac-similés des manuscrits grecs datés de la Bibliothèque Nationale du IXe au XIVe siècle.* The Klimax

[1] Schubring, *Die Plastik Sienas*, p. 79.
[2] The N in τριακονταριθμός has been re-traced.
[3] Bandini, *Cat. cod. graec. Bibl. Laur.* III, p. 411.

frequently inspired its copyists to such laudatory verses [1] and our scribe himself cannot be credited with the whole of his poem, for the first two verses are found in the colophon of a Klimax codex of the eleventh century in the Ambrosiana at Milan.[2]

Below the trimeters, in the left-hand lower corner of the page, is written the signature of the scribe: *πόνημ(α) θεοκτίστ(ου) ἱερομ(ονάχ)ου*; 'the work of Theoctistus, the monk.' Further letters are vaguely visible to the right of the ladder near the figure of St. John and close to the lower edge of the leaf.

Theoctistus is not an uncommon name, and it appears elsewhere in the signatures of the scribes of Greek manuscripts. It occurs for instance in a Menaeum, or monthly missal, for April, in the Imperial Library at Vienna,[3] accompanied by an invocation

[1] The following are fair examples of such colophons in Klimax manuscripts: Laurentiana (Bandini, *op. cit.* I, p. 266), XII century:

Κλίμαξ ἄνω φέρουσα τοὺς ἐναρέτους
Ἐξ ἧς κάτω πίπτουσιν ἄφρονες μόνοι.

Laurentiana (Bandini, *op. cit.* I, p. 481), XIV century:

κλίμαξ πέφυκα τῆς ἀνωτάτης πύλης.
ταύτην βαδίζων τοῦ θεοῦ σοφῶς ἔχου
ὅπως ἀναχθῇς εἰς τὸν εὐκλέα δόμον·

Jerusalem, Patriarchal Library (Papadopoulos, Ἱεροσολυμιτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη, III, no. 93, p. 154), XIII century:

Αὕτη κλίμαξ πέφυκεν οὐρανοδρόμος
κλίμαξ ἐφ' ἣν χωροῦσιν οἱ θεῖοι νόες,
ἣν ὡς λίθοι ἤγειραν ἐν στερροῖς λόγοις.

Jerusalem, Patriarchal Library (Papadopoulos, *op. cit.* II, no. 363, p. 479), early XI century:

πίστις τὰ χρηστὰ τῶν καλῶν πάντων φέρει
ἐλπὶς δὲ ποιεῖ καρτερεῖν ἐν τοῖς πόνοις
ἡ δ' αὖ τελειοῖ προσφυῶς ἡ ἀγάπη.

[2] Martini and Bassi, *op. cit.*, II, p. 616, no. 511. The editors have evidently misread the colophon, transcribing it thus:

τριαντάριθμος οὖν ὁ δρομος κλίμαξ· εἰς οὖν
ον φέρουσα τοὺς βρότους βάσις:—

[3] De Nessel, *op. cit.* III, p. 130, cod. 66:

Θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον, καὶ θεοκτίστου πόν(ος)
κἀνταῦθα δόξα τῇ σεβαστῇ τριάδι.

De Nessel offers the ingenious but hardly plausible suggestion that Theoctistus is the author of the book, and is to be identified with the companion of the celebrated abbot Euthymius of Palestine, who died in 472. He gives no date for the codex, but calls it "pervetustus."

of the Trinity like that of our trimeters. It is of course impossible to tell whether the Theoctistus of the Vienna manuscript is identical with the signer of the Freer colophon, but the identification is somewhat more likely in the case of a manuscript of the Dionysiu monastery on Mt. Athos, which is signed by "Theoctistus the sinner."[1] For this manuscript is dated in the year 1133, and the early part of the twelfth century is a period consistent with the hand of the Freer colophon, as evidenced by the square breathings and the character of the script.

The same name appears in the signature of a Menaeum, dated 1127, in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris,[2] and here the copyist tells us that his book belonged to the library of the monastery of St. John the Baptist in Constantinople. This manuscript enables us to identify the writer of the Freer colophon, for when one compares the hands used in this with that of the titles of the Paris Menaeum, the resemblance is striking (Fig. 14).[3] The same thickening of the cross-strokes of τ, δ, and π is noticeable in both cases, and the only real difference is found in the form of ζ. The ζ, moreover, of the Paris Menaeum is simply the cursive form, instead of which in the Freer colophon the scribe has preferred the more formal shape. The decisive coincidence, however, is the ϵ, which in both manuscripts sometimes takes the form ⋶. The characteristic feature of the letter is the dot on the cross-stroke, which gives it a form that is fairly rare. Gardthausen's tables show the form six times, citing it from manuscripts of the tenth, twelfth, and fourteenth centuries. Three of his examples are obtained from two manuscripts of the early twelfth century, Paris 1116 (a. 1124), and Paris 891, which dates in the year 1136.[4] A colophon in the latter shows that it, like the Menaeum of 1127, was written in the monastery of St. John the

[1] διὰ χειρὸς τοῦ ἁμαρταλοῦ Θεοκτίστου. Lambros, *Cat.* I. p. 319, no. 3542.8. The manuscript is a Gospel lectionary.

[2] Ms. gr. 1570 (Regius 2498). Omont, *op. cit.*, p. 9, pl. XLV. The signature is found on fol. 214, *verso:*

† Ἡ βίβλος αὕτη τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Προδρόμου: τῆς κειμένης ἔγγιστα τῆς Ἀετίου: ἀρχαικὴ δὲ τῇ μονῇ κλῆσις Πέτρα.†

Θεῷ τὸ δῶρον, καὶ πόνος Θεοκτίστου.

The colophon is given in full by Omont, consisting of the date, eleven trimeters deprecating the copyist's blunders, and the signature given above. The Menaeum is for November.

[3] The script to be compared is that of the title in the upper half of the text reproduced.

[4] Gardthausen, *Griechische Palaeographie*, pl. 8.

Baptist at Constantinople.[1] The existence of the peculiar form in two manuscripts from the same monastery shows that it was characteristic of the scriptorium of that cloister; its appearance again in the Freer colophon justifies us in concluding that the Theoctistus of the latter is the Theoctistus of the same monastery of St. John the Baptist at Constantinople who signed the Paris

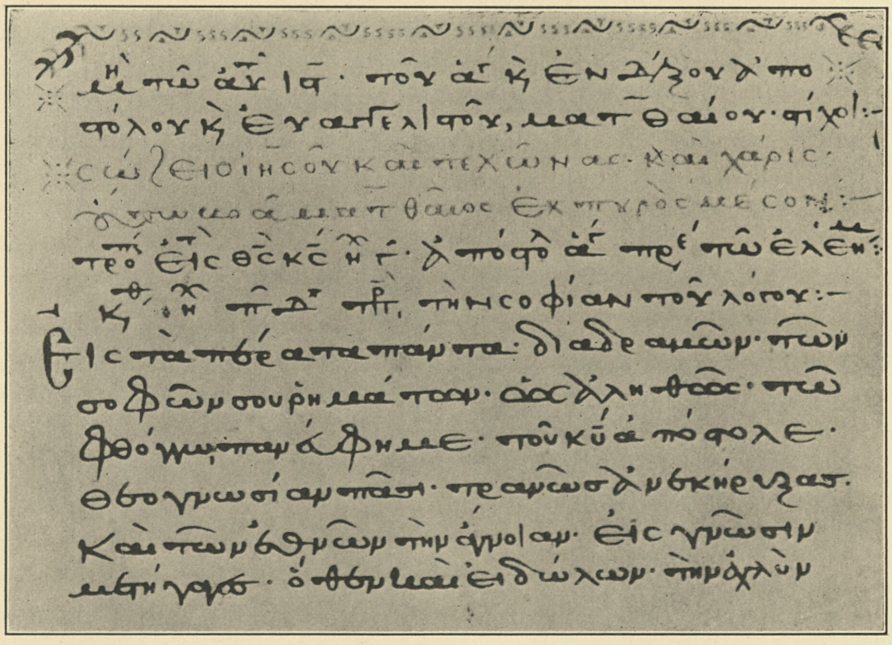

FIG. 14. SPECIMEN TEXT FROM A MENAEUM IN THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE, DATED 1127.

Menaeum of 1127, and was probably also the scribe of the Mt. Athos manuscript of 1133.

The Freer miniatures can accordingly be dated about 1130, and their place of origin identified as the monastery of St. John the Baptist in Constantinople. The style is quite consistent with such a date. It has little of the awkwardness of movement, the bold modelling, the sharp contrast of light and shade, and the conventional realism that characterize the later Byzantine painting. Neither has it quite the Hellenic dignity and freshness of the great works of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The sharp inward curve of the beard of St. John, the conventionality of the

[1] Omont, *op. cit.*, p. 10. The manuscript contains the Catechetical Sermons of Theodorus Studita. The scribe signs himself Arsenius.

beetle-like figures on the ladder, are evidence of decadence. But the relative fineness of execution, the beauty and taste of the color schemes, the dignity of conception, connect the miniatures on the other hand with the finer period of Byzantine illumination. There is also a distinctiveness of style about them which is rather hard to parallel, and may be the mark of a school. If the time ever comes when the students of Byzantine art shall feel enough assured of the outline of its general development to interest themselves in its provincial branches and monastic schools, these two miniatures of Mr. Freer's collection, as products of a definitely identified monastery in Constantinople, will afford a point of departure of first-rate importance.

II. EIGHT MINIATURES FROM A MANUSCRIPT OF THE GOSPELS

i. The Manuscript containing the Miniatures

Byzantine manuscripts of the Gospels may be divided into two classes. A codex of the first class bore the name Εὐαγγέλιον, 'Evangelion,' and took the form of a missal, containing lections in the form and order in which they were read in the service. The second is the commoner type; it contained the complete text of the four Gospels without the rearrangement necessitated in the case of the Evangelion. Such books were called Τετραευάγγελα, 'Tetraevangela.'[1] The manuscript from which the Freer miniatures come belonged to the second class, as may be seen from the normal order and unliturgical character of the chapters named in the topical indices (κεφάλεια) on the two initial pages that have been preserved (Plates IV and V), and also from the indication of the character of the text contained in the titles of these indices, as "The Holy Gospel According to St. John," which is the caption of the index to that gospel. Such indices were frequent in Tetraevangela. The tables of contents are here transcribed, accented as in the original, with the chapter numbers of the Gospel in parentheses. The headings of the index for Mark are arranged in columns like those of John for convenience of reference.

At the Beginning of John (Plate V):

∴ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰω(άννην) ἁγίου εὐαγγελίου τὰ κεφάλ(εια).

α′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ ἐν κανὰ γάμου (II)
β′ πε(ρὶ) τῶν ἐκβληθέντ(ων) ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ (II)
γ′ πε(ρὶ) νικοδήμου (III)
δ′ ζήτησις περὶ καθαρισμοῦ (III)
ε′ περὶ τῆς σαμαρείτιδος (IV)
ς′ περὶ τοῦ βασιλικοῦ (IV)
ζ′ περὶ τοῦ λη ἔτη ἔχοντο(ς) ἐν τ(ῇ) ἀσθενεία (V)
η′ πε(ρὶ) τῶν έ ἄρτων καὶ τῶν β′ ἰχθύων (VI)
θ′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ ἐν θαλάσση περιπάτου (VI)
ι′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ ἐκ γενετῆς τυφλοῦ (IX)
ια′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ λαζάρου (XI)
ιβ′ πε(ρὶ) τῆς ἀλειψάσης τὸν κ(ύριο)ν μύρωι (XII)
ιγ′ πε(ρὶ) ὧν εἶπεν ἰούδας (XII)
ιδ′ περὶ τοῦ ὄνου (XII)
ιε′ πε(ρὶ) τῶν προσελθόντ(ων) ἑλλήνων (XII)
ις′ περὶ τοῦ νιπτῆρος (XIII)
ιζ′ περὶ τοῦ παρακλήτου (XIV)
ιη′ πε(ρὶ) τ(ῆ)ς αἰτήσεως τοῦ κυριακοῦ σώμ(α)το(ς) (XIX)

[1] Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 184.

AT THE BEGINNING OF MARK (Plate IV):

τοῦ κατὰ μάρκον ἁγ(ίου) εὐαγγελ(ίου) τὰ κεφά(λεια).

α′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ δαιμονιζομένου (I)
β′ πε(ρὶ) τῆς πενθερᾶς τοῦ πέτρου (I)
γ′ πε(ρὶ) τῶν ἰαθέντων ἀπὸ ποικίλων νόσων (I)
δ′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ λεπροῦ (I)
ε′ περὶ τοῦ παραλυτικοῦ (II)
ς′ περὶ λευὶ τοῦ τελώνου (II)
ζ′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ ξηρὰν ἔχοντος χεῖρα (III)
η′ περὶ τῆς τῶν ἀποστόλ(ων) ἐκλογῆς (III)
θ′ περὶ τοῦ σπόρου παραβολή (IV)
ι′ περὶ τῆς ἐπιτιμήσεως τῶν ὑδάτων (IV)
ια′ περὶ τοῦ λεγεῶνος (V)
ιβ′ πε(ρὶ) τῆς θυγατρὸ(ς) τοῦ ἀρχισυναγώγου (V)
ιγ′ περὶ τῆς αἱμορροούσης (V)
ιδ′ περὶ τῆς τῶν ἀποστόλων διαταγῆς (VI)
ιε′ περὶ ἰωάννου καὶ ἡρώδου (VI)
ις′ περὶ τῶν ε′ ἄρτων καὶ τῶν β′ ἰχθύων (VI)
ιζ′ περὶ τοῦ ἐν θαλάσσῃ περιπάτου (VI)
ιη′ περὶ τῆς παραβάσεως τῆς ἐντολῆς τοῦ θ(εο)ῦ (VII)
ιθ′ περὶ τῆς φοινικίσσης (VII)
κ′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ μογγιλάλου (VII)
κα′ περὶ τῶν ζ′ ἄρτων (VIII)
κβ′ περὶ τῆς ζύμης τῶν φαρισαίων (VIII)
κγ′ περὶ τοῦ τυφλοῦ (VIII)
κδ′ περὶ τῆς ἐν καισαρεία ἐπερωτήσε(ως) (VIII)
κε′ περὶ τῆς μεταμορφώσεως τοῦ ἰ(ησο)ῦ (IX)
κς′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ σεληνιαζομένου (IX)
κζ′ περὶ τῶν διαλογιζομένων τίς μείζων (IX)
κη′ πε(ρὶ) τῶν ἐπερωτησάντων φαρισαί(ων) (X)
κθ′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ ἐπερωτήσαντο(ς) πλουσίου τὸν ἰ(ησοῦ)ν (X)
λ′ πε(ρὶ) τῶν υἱῶν ζεβεδαίου (X)
λα′ περὶ τοῦ βαρτιμαίου (X).
λβ′ περὶ τοῦ πώλου (XI)
λγ′ πε(ρὶ) τῆς ξηρανθείσης συκῆς (XI)
λδ′ περὶ ἀμνησικακίας (XI)
λε′ πε(ρὶ) τῶν ἐπερωτησάντων τὸν κ(ύριο)ν ἀρχιερέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων (XI)
λς′ πε(ρὶ) τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος (XII)
λζ′ περὶ τῆς ἐπερωτήσεως τοῦ κήνσου (XII)
λη′ περὶ τῶν σαδδουκαίων (XII)
λθ′ περὶ τοῦ γραμματέως (XII)
μ′ περὶ τῆς τοῦ κ(υρίο)υ ἐπερωτήσεως (XII)
μα′ περὶ τῆς τὰ δύο λεπτὰ χήρας (XII)
μβ′ περὶ τῆς συντελείας (XII)
μγ′ περὶ τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ ὥρας (XIII)
μδ′ περὶ τῆς ἀλειψάσης τὸν κ(ύριο)ν μύρῳ (XIV)
με′ περὶ τοῦ πάσχα (XIV)
μς′ περὶ τῆς παραδόσεως προφητεία (XIV)
μζ′ ἄρνησις πέτρου (XIV)
μη′ περὶ τῆς αἰτήσεως τοῦ κυριακοῦ σώματος τοῦ κ(υρίο)υ (XV)

The portion of the manuscript in Mr. Freer's possession consists of five parchment leaves which show much hard usage, particularly at the upper outer corner, where the missing parchment has been replaced with paper, while the inner edge shows in the case of nearly all the leaves that they were torn and not cut from the original binding. The following list shows the dimensions of the leaves, and the distribution of the miniatures:

Fol. I. 26.9 × 19.1 cm.

Recto, Portrait of St. Mark, 18.4 × 14.3 cm. (Plate III).
Verso, Index of selections from the Gospel of Mark (Plate IV).

Fol. II. 27 × 19.4 cm.

Recto, Descent from the Cross, 14.3 × 21.1 cm. (Plate VI).
Verso, Portrait of St. John, 13 × 11.7 cm. (Plate V).

Fol. III. 26.1 × 17.1 cm.

Recto, Descent into Hell, 20.4 × 14.3 cm. (Plate VII).
Verso, Doubting of Thomas, 20.4 × 14 cm. (Plate VIII).

Fol. IV. 26.1 × 17.5 cm.

Recto, Christ and the Holy Women, 20.1 × 14.3 cm. (Plate IX).
Verso, Madonna and Saints, 17.1 × 15.6 cm. (Plate X).

Fol. V. 26.1 × 16.5 cm.

Recto, Two Saints, 15.6 × 13.5 cm.
Verso, no miniature.

Folio I has a row of holes in its outer edge, which indicates a rebinding. It is the best preserved of the leaves and gives an idea of the original dimensions of the codex, which must have measured about 27 × 19 cm. A red border surrounds the miniatures in every case, and all but one, the portrait of St. John, fill the page. The large size of the miniatures, and the fact that the infrequent scenes of Christ and the Holy Women and the Doubting of Thomas are included in the surviving group, betoken a manuscript of unusual richness of illustration; it is probably safe to conjecture that the original codex contained from twenty to forty miniatures.

The position of the eight remaining miniatures in the original manuscript may be determined with reasonable certainty. Fol. I *recto* is clearly the initial miniature of Mark; it bears on its *verso* the list of chapters of his Gospel. Fol. II *recto*, the Descent from the Cross, is the last miniature in Luke, since the *verso* contains the portrait of St. John with the index to his Gospel and thus constituted an initial page. The next miniature after this was certainly the Descent into Hell, fol. III *recto*, that being, as we shall see later, the distinctive illustration of the fourth Gospel and regularly leading its group of miniatures. The *verso* of this leaf contains the Doubting of Thomas, a characteristically Johannine incident and indeed recorded only by the fourth Gospel. But it will also be noted that the damage to the upper outer corner of the leaves is progressively greater as we proceed toward the end of the book. Thus the leaf containing the initial miniature of Mark, fol. I, which was situated well toward the front of the codex, has suffered comparatively little. The initial miniature of John, on the other hand, has lost considerably more of the corner. Fol. III has lost a great deal more, which indicates that a considerable number of leaves intervened between it and fol. II. A

proportionate increase in the damage done to the corner is seen in fol. IV, and the half-demolished state of fol. V suggests a position near the end of the book.

ii. Portraits of Mark and John

The initial miniature of Mark (fol. I *recto;* Plate III) depicts the Evangelist, clad in blue tunic and violet pallium, seated on a chair set before a rectangular house with gilded roof and gray-blue façade. Traces of color remaining on his beard show that his hair was dark. His feet rest on a golden footstool. Before him stands his writing table, on which is set a lectern, and the Evangelist, with an indeterminate gesture of his right hand, places a written page upon, or withdraws it from, the lectern. On his knees rests the open book of his Gospel, inscribed with the partially obliterated text of the initial phrase: (ἀρχὴ τοῦ) εὐαγγελί(ου ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ) υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ. Remnants of letters are also to be seen on the leaf which Mark holds in his right hand. In the field of the upper part of the page we can make out portions of an inscription which contained the name MAPKOC. The facsimile reproduction (Plate III) obviates the necessity of a detailed description of the colors employed. The background, which is almost gone, was originally in gold, save for the green strip representing the ground which fills the bottom of the picture. The type is simply a variation of the Byzantine author type whose origin was discussed above (p. 16), the chief difference being the unusual gesture of the Evangelist's right arm and hand. There remains but one detail of the iconography to be considered, and this is of first-rate importance.

I refer to the bird which perches on one leg on the upper right-hand corner of the lectern and with the other leg supports an open book. Two possible interpretations present themselves to a preliminary view. The bird may be a dove representing the Holy Spirit, the divine inspiration of the writer, or may be the individual symbol of the Evangelist himself. One or the other of these explanations is applicable in like fashion to the similar motif in the miniature representing St. John (Plate V). Here we see the Evangelist seated in much the same surroundings as Mark. The background, originally gold, contains a fragmentary inscription in red. The writing desk, lectern and footstool are in gold with black lines. The ground-strip is gray-blue, which seems



St. Mark

proportionate increase in the damage done to the corner is seen in fol. IV, and the half-demolished state of fol. V suggests a position near the end of the book.

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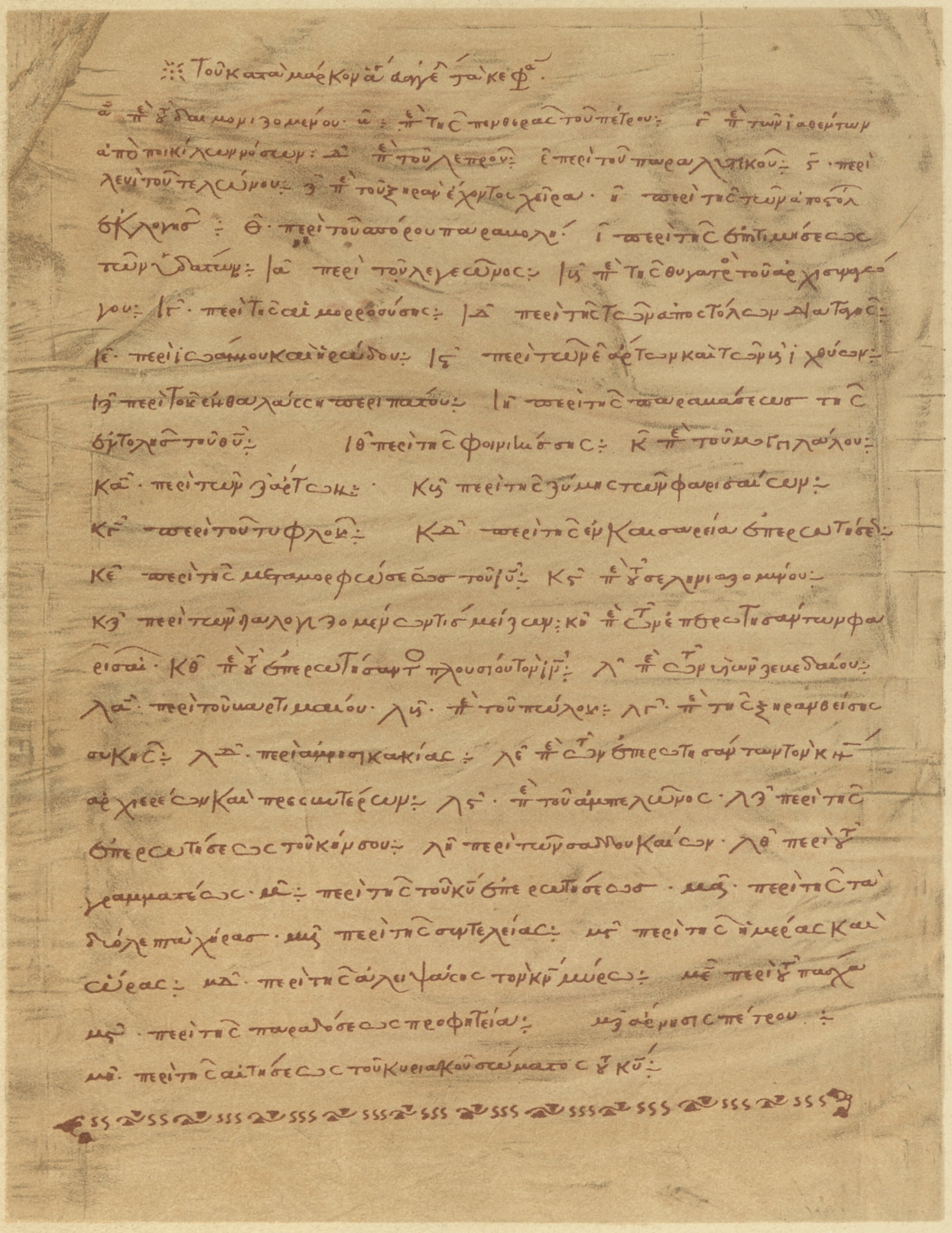
ST. MARK



INDEX OF SELECTIONS FROM THE GOSPEL OF MARK

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FIG. 15. ST. MARK WRITING HIS GOSPEL. MINIATURE OF THE CODEX ROSSANENSIS.

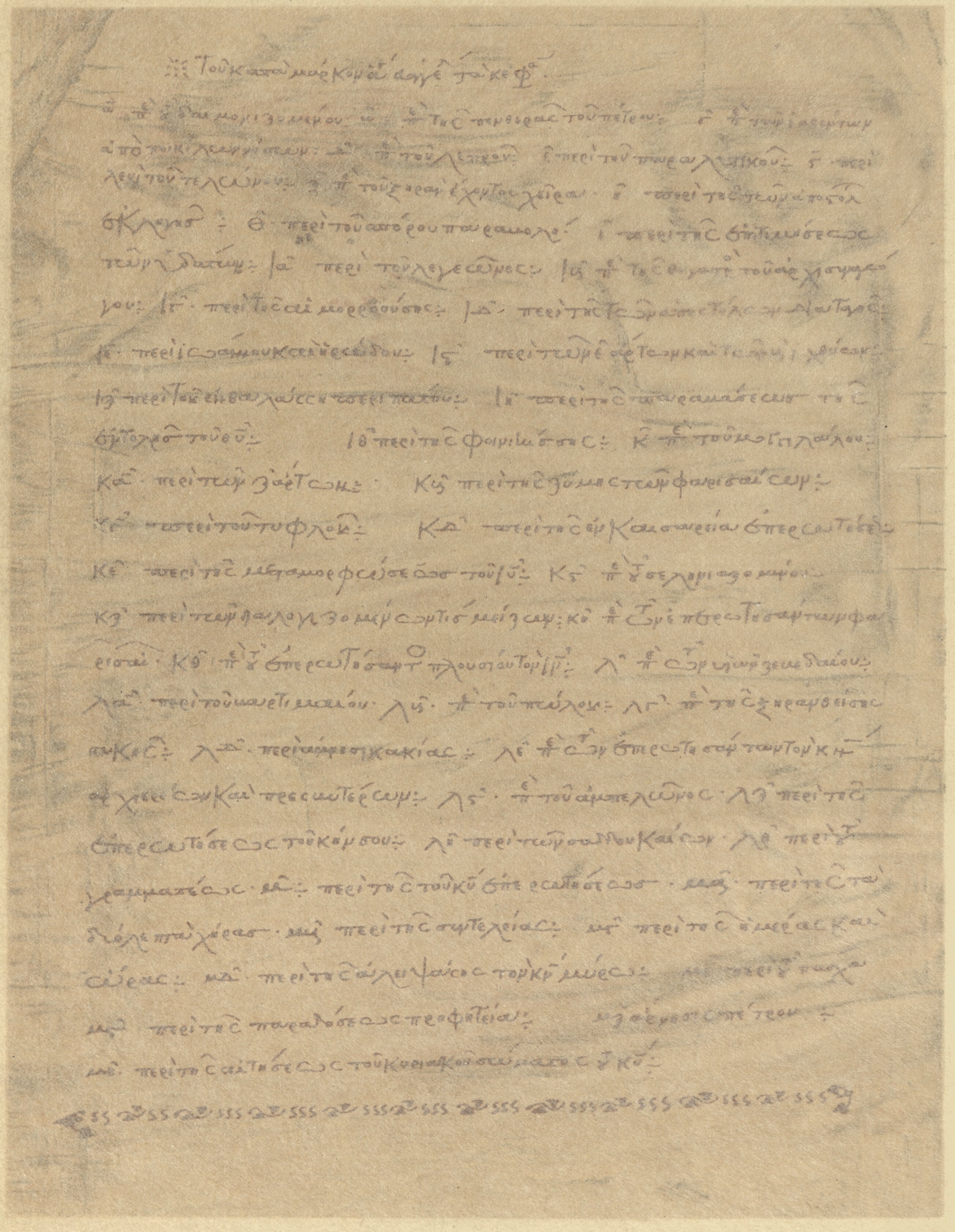
A female personification (Divine Wisdom?) dictates to the Evangelist.

The inspiration motif is not uncommon in portraits of the Evangelists. It occurs as early as the sixth century, to which period belongs the miniature from the Rossano Gospel, here reproduced (Fig. 15). The female figure with the nimbus, dictating to Mark, has been variously interpreted as Mary, or Divine Wisdom, or the Church.[1] In any case, it is the Christian translation of a motif like the Spirit of Discovery (εὕρεσις) which stands in front of Dioscurides in the Vienna manuscript of that author (see p. 16) and may be taken as a type of divine inspiration. A female personification of this sort reappears as the inspiration of Matthew in a Serb-slavonic psalter of the thirteenth century in the Chilandari monastery on Mt. Athos.[2] This figure is labelled "Premoudrost," or "Wisdom," and a similar significance is to be attached to the female half-figure which seems to dictate to John in a thirteenth century relief on the basilica of St. Mark's at Venice[3] (Fig. 16). The South Italian manuscript from which

[1] Gebhardt and Harnack, *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis*, Leipzig, 1880, p. XLVI.

[2] Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 235, pl. 28.

[3] H. von der Gabelentz, *Mittelalterliche Plastik in Venedig*, p. 141.



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the famous Durham Book (circ. 700) was copied must have further defined the motif by introducing the Logos as the inspiring familiar of the Evangelist, for on the initial page of Matthew in the Durham Book (Fig. 17) we see a nimbed and bearded head peeping out from behind a curtain, which cannot be interpreted in any other way. The winged angel which is the personal symbol of the Evangelist himself appears above his head with the label: *Imago hominis*.[1]

The post-iconoclastic period made little use of such elaborate motifs in the portraits of evangelists, and the usual method of ren-



FIG. 16. CHRIST, ST. JOHN, AND ST. MATTHEW. RELIEFS ON ST. MARK'S AT VENICE.

dering the notion of divine inspiration was the introduction of the Dextera Domini issuing from the heavens above the writer's head, as in the portrait of St. John Climacus (Plate I).[2] But other devices are found, as for example the dove which whispers in the ear of Mark in a Gospel of the twelfth century in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris,[3] and the winged genii at the ears of Mark and Luke in a Latin manuscript of the same library, with Byzantine

[1] The motif is repeated in an Anglo-Saxon Gospel of the eleventh century at Copenhagen (Westwood, *The Miniatures and Ornaments of Anglo-Saxon and Irish Manuscripts*, pl. 41).

[2] This motif is found in the following: Ms. in Claudin Sale 1877 (Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 306, XII cent.); Vat. Urb. gr. 2, an. 1143 (D'Agincourt, *op. cit.* V. pl. LIX); Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. Suppl. 242, an. 1650 (Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 295). In Slavic manuscripts the Hand is often replaced by rays, particularly in the case of John (Likhatcheff, *Matériaux pour l'hist. de l'iconographie russe*, pl. 375, Ms. of the year 1531).

[3] Bibl. Nat. gr. 51 (Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 181). Cf. the same motif in a manuscript in the Ambrosian Library at Milan (D. 67, suppl. Reproduced in Muñoz, *L'Art byzantin à l'Exposition de Grottaferrata*, fig. 63).

miniatures, also of the twelfth century.[1] In a late Byzantine manuscript (an. 1650) in the Bibliothèque Nationale,[2] the inspiration type and the Evangelist's symbol seem to have become confused, for there we find St. John dictating to Prochorus, but listening at the same time, with hand to ear, to the eagle which soars above him; and the angel of St. Matthew appears behind the Evangelist and seems to dictate to him in the same way. All these devices are employed in Slavic manuscripts of the modern period.[3]

It will have been observed, however, that in all of these "inspiration types," the relation of the writer to the angel or dove or personification is an intimate one. This was expressed in the later Byzantine painting, the epoch in which our miniatures belong, in the rather obvious fashion of depicting the medium of inspiration behind the evangelist and whispering in his ear. Our bird and "angel," on the other hand, however much they may give the impression of dictation by the open book which each is holding, are nevertheless in no such close communication with the holy scribes. Neither Evangelist looks as if he were listening to the Divine Voice. The relative position of the bird and the human figure does not differ much in fact from that given to the symbols of the Evangelists in a Lombard relief decorating a sarcophagus in S. Zeno at Verona (XI–XII century; Fig. 18).[4]



FIG. 17. ST. MATTHEW WRITING HIS GOSPEL. MINIATURE OF THE DURHAM BOOK.

May not they, the bird and angel of our miniatures, be then symbols of the two Evangelists? Two objections to this view immediately arise: the familiar symbol of Mark is not the eagle (supposing that our bird may so be interpreted), but the lion, while

[1] Bibl. Nat. lat. 276 (Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 302). [2] Suppl. 242 (Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 294).

[3] Likhatcheff, *op. cit.* plates 144, 145, 245.

[4] A rendering of the symbols above the lecterns which is practically identical with that of the Freer miniatures is found in the portraits of Matthew and Mark on some Rhenish-Byzantine ivory plaques in the Louvre, assigned to the tenth or eleventh century.

that of John is not the man, but the eagle; and second, the symbols of the Evangelists are rare in Byzantine manuscripts and are commonly supposed to occur only at an epoch much later than that to which our miniatures must be assigned.

The four beasts of Ezekiel and Revelation were given the significance of the four Evangelists as early as the second century,[1] and the identification of the types which ultimately became current in the West was that laid down by Jerome, according to which the beast "with a face as a man" was Matthew, the one "like a lion" was Mark, the one "like a calf" was Luke, and the fourth beast "like a flying eagle" was John. But the Fathers did



FIG. 18. THE CRUCIFIXION AND THE FOUR EVANGELISTS. RELIEF OF A SARCOPHAGUS IN S. ZENO, VERONA.

Above the cross are half-figures of angels. The symbols of the Evangelists are depicted as if resting on small ledges above the lecterns.

not all agree with Jerome. Irenaeus, for example, associates the lion with John, the man with Matthew, the calf with Luke, and the eagle with Mark; Athanasius gives no symbol to Matthew, but assigns the calf to Mark, the lion to Luke, and the eagle to John; Augustine refers the lion to Matthew, the man to Mark, the calf to Luke, and the eagle to John.

The earliest example of the use of the four beasts in art is found in the apsidal mosaic of the church of S. Pudenziana at Rome, which dates near the end of the fourth century; from that time on they are frequent enough. But their first appearance together with the Evangelists themselves, where each beast is depicted as the individual sign of each Evangelist, was in the mosaic

[1] Ezekiel, i, 4 ff. Rev. iv, 6 ff. Cf. Kraus, *Realencyklopädie der christl. Altertümer*, I, p. 456, and Trench, *Sacred Latin Poetry*, p. 62, note 12.



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τοῦ Κατὰ Ἰς ϗ ἁγίου εὐαγγελίου τὰ κεφ

α΄ περὶ τοῦ θν καὶ γάμου ÷
β΄ περὶ τοῦ νικοδήμου. ÷
γ΄ περὶ τῆς σαμαρείτιδος ÷
δ΄ περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐχομένῃ ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ
ε΄ περὶ τοῦ θν θαλασσίου πλείστου
ϛ΄ περὶ τοῦ λαζάρου
ζ΄ περὶ τῶν πενήτων ἄρτων
η΄ περὶ τοῦ περιπατήσαντος ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης
θ΄ περὶ τοῦ τυφλοῦ ÷
ι΄ περὶ τῆς σκηνοπηγίας τοῦ κυρίου ÷
ια΄ περὶ τοῦ ὄχλου ÷ ÷
ιβ΄ περὶ τοῦ μὴ πιάσαι ——— ÷
ιγ΄ περὶ τῆς αἰτησάσης τοῦ κυρίου ἀκοῦσαι ÷



THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

ceiling of the chapel of St. John Baptist in the Lateran Baptistery, an addition due to Pope Hilary (461–468). This mosaic is now destroyed,[1] and the earliest existing example of the individual distribution of the symbols is furnished by the mosaics of the choir of S. Vitale at Ravenna of the sixth century, where, as in the lost mosaic, the beasts are assigned after the manner of Jerome. This rule became the customary one for the Western artists of the Middle Ages, chiefly through the influence of Gregory the Great, who adopted Jerome's interpretation; in the East, however, the artists contented themselves with occasionally depicting the four symbols, often combining them in a single figure known as the Tetramorphon, but never, during the great period, associating them severally with the Evangelists.

It came to be generally believed, therefore, that the symbols are never associated with the Evangelists in Byzantine Art until very late times; and this view is reflected in the latest handbook on illuminated manuscripts, by J. A. Herbert,[2] who says that the symbols in this connection "are practically unknown" in Byzantine manuscripts, pointing out that their first appearance in those of the British Museum is in a manuscript of 1326, while the Vatican manuscripts are said to contain no example at all of their use. There are cases, however, of their occurrence earlier than the fourteenth century, and two very interesting examples on Mt. Athos are cited by Brockhaus.[3] The first is a Tetraevangelon in the Vatopedi monastery (no. 713), which, while it gives no symbol to Matthew, assigns the eagle to Mark, the calf to Luke, and the lion to John, thus following the interpretation of Irenaeus.[4] The symbols are painted on separate pages, but with obvious relation to the Evangelists, whose portraits appear on the following pages, or, in the case of Mark, on the next page thereafter. Here the eagle is given as the symbol of the Evangelist, and is further certified as his type by the book which it carries, and by the inscription: ὁ ἅ(γιος) Μάρκος. The other manuscript, in the Dochiariu monastery (no. 52), has lost the portraits of two of the Evangelists, but still retains the image of Matthew, with an

[1] Ciampini's copy of the mosaic is reproduced in Garrucci, *Storia dell' Arte cristiana*, IV, pl. 239.

[2] J. A. Herbert, *Illuminated Manuscripts*, 2d ed., London, 1912, p. 62.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 224 ff.

[4] The same distribution is used on the Russian doors reproduced in Likhatcheff (*op. cit.* pl. 145), and the man is added for Matthew.



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indeterminate bird ("probably an eagle," says Brockhaus) painted on the opposite page, and of Luke, opposite whom appears the calf. Both of the symbols are nimbed and carry golden books. The bird is inscribed with the puzzling word ϩITO, while BOC is written beside the figure of the calf. The first of these manuscripts is included among the undated manuscripts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries by Brockhaus, and the second is dated definitely in the twelfth century by Lambros.[1]

From this it is apparent that in the twelfth century the Byzantine miniaturists not only used the symbols on occasion but distributed them differently than in the West, and without a fixed association of symbol with Evangelist, save perhaps in the case of the calf and Luke. The eagle in the Vatopedi manuscript stands for Mark, while in the gospels of Dochiariu it represents Matthew. In the light of this evidence, and the fact that, explained as "inspiration types," our symbols would be inconsistent with the usual treatment of such types in Byzantine art, I feel assured that the artist intended his bird and man as symbols of Mark and John. The bird is certainly not a successful attempt at an eagle, but we cannot expect too much in Byzantine animal painting at this period, and it is hardly more convincing as a dove. It will be remembered moreover that the eagle of the Dochiariu manuscript seems to have impressed Brockhaus as an unconvincing bird, and we have the use of the eagle as Mark's symbol in the gospels of Vatopedi as a parallel to the Freer miniature. The latter and its fellow must therefore be accepted as examples of a very rare motif in Byzantine art.

Are we to ascribe the late appearance of the Evangelist symbols in Byzantine painting to Western influence? The main consideration to be urged for this would be the fact that they are typical of Western art, while there is no tradition in Byzantine to account for them. The Latin label BOC, *bos*, for the calf of Luke in the gospel of Dochiariu points in the same direction. But on the other hand, if we were dealing with a borrowed type, we should expect the symbols to be distributed as they are in the West, whereas they are used in a very unsettled manner, and not as a rule with the Western distribution. It is hardly possible therefore to cite the use of the symbols as evidence of the problematic Western strain in late Byzantine art.

[1] *Cat.* I, p. 238, no. 2726.52.

iii. The Descent from the Cross — Plate VI

The *recto* of the leaf which contains on its *verso* the portrait of St. John is decorated with a miniature representing the Descent from the Cross, the final illustration of Luke. The colors are indicated by the facsimile. The upper transverse piece of the Cross represents the *titulus* which Pilate placed above the head of the Crucified: *Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum.* Christ's feet rest as usual upon the *suppedaneum.* Joseph of Arimathea, standing on a stool, clasps the dead body of the Lord. To the left we see Mary Magdalen and the Virgin, who stands like a statue on a pedestal, and presses the hand of her dead Son to her cheek. Nicodemus climbs a step-ladder and removes the nail from Christ's left hand, while the Beloved Disciple below bends above the *suppedaneum* to wipe the blood from the feet of his Master.[1]

The scene is not an early one in Christian art, and first appears, so far as I know, in the famous Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus of the ninth century, which is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris (Fig. 19, 1).[2] The composition is that of the Freer miniature in a primitive stage of its evolution. Nicodemus[3] has no ladder, and is placed on the left side of the cross, while John stands with the Virgin to the right, in place of the Magdalen. Further on to the right appears the following scene, Joseph and Nicodemus carrying off the body for burial. The next stage of development is to be seen in a Gospel of the same library,[4] wherein Nicodemus stands on a ladder, and Joseph of Arimathea on a stool; St. John takes his position to the right of the cross, while the Virgin to the left is

[1] The background and nimbus of the Christ were originally gold, with a green ground-strip at the bottom of the picture. The Marys wore violet mantles over undergarments which seem to have been blue. Joseph of Arimathea wears a brownish pink pallium, and Nicodemus' tunic is violet. The cross is striped with brown and black. The colors of John's garments and of the loin-cloth of Christ are indeterminate.

[2] Ms. gr. 510, fol. 30, *verso*, Omont, *Fac-similés des Miniatures des Mss. grecs de la Bibl. Nat.*, pl. XXI.

[3] I have used the name Nicodemus for convenience. It is scarcely likely, however, that the earlier artists who dressed the man removing the nails in a simple tunic meant to represent the patrician Nicodemus, and probably we are to suppose him present only when the pallium is added to his costume, as in the examples of the thirteenth century.

[4] Ms. gr. 74, Omont, *Évangile avec peintures byzantines du XIe siècle*, pl. 52. This manuscript contains also a second rendering of the scene which is a primitive form of the later type described on p. 44.

accompanied by the Magdalen and the other Mary (Fig. 19, 2). The carrying of the body follows as before to the right.

In the incised design of one of the panels of the bronze doors of St. Paul's at Rome (late eleventh century, Fig. 19, 3), the composition has finally arrived at a form closely resembling that of the Freer miniature, though the sides are again reversed. Here we have angels introduced above the cross, a motif derived from the Crucifixion. Joseph of Arimathea appears behind the body

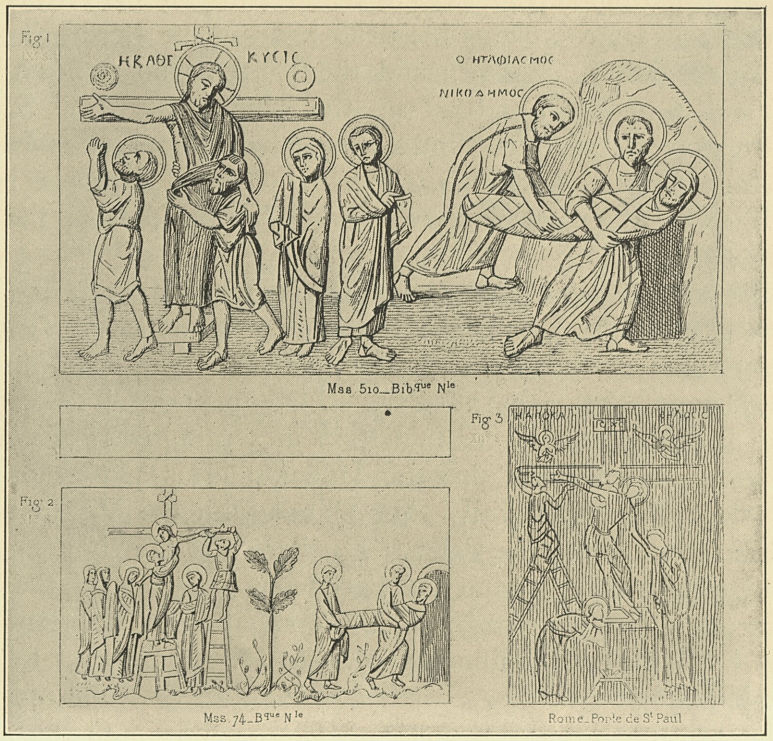

FIG. 19. EXAMPLES OF THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS, SHOWING THE EVOLUTION OF ITS ICONOGRAPHY FROM THE NINTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

of the Lord, but again stands upon a footstool or pedestal, and two other motifs of the Freer Descent from the Cross are present, the gesture of Mary as she presses the hand of her Son to her cheek, and that of John who bends to wipe the blood from the feet of Christ. In the early twelfth century we find the scene represented in the Melissenda Psalter of the British Museum (Fig. 20), where the composition is simplified, and John replaces the Magdalen at the Virgin's side. Next after this must be placed the Freer miniature, which combines the compositions of

the Psalter and the doors of St. Paul's, except that Nicodemus wears a sleeved tunic instead of the *exomis* of the Psalter, while Mary stands upon a pedestal, and is accompanied by the Magdalen.

The Freer scene is typical of the Byzantine decadence in its contradictions — the circumstantial details and the spirited movement of Nicodemus contrasting with the mannered attitude of



FIG. 20. THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. MINIATURE OF THE MELISSENDA PSALTER IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

Mary and the artificial effect of the pedestal on which she stands. The feature which clearly puts the Freer miniature later than the Psalter is the omission of the angels, which seldom appear in the later versions; thus they are omitted in a gospel of the Iviron monastery on Mt. Athos[1] which Brockhaus dates "ungefähr

[1] Iviron 5 (Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 217 ff.). Cf. the similar composition on the doors of the cathedrals of Trani and Ravello in South Italy (Schulz, *Denkmäler der Kunst in Unteritalien*, pl. XXV). These doors date in the latter half of the twelfth century. The transi-

aus dem 12. Jahrhundert." Here also two more distinctive features of the later composition are met with — the arms of Christ are both detached from the cross, and Nicodemus applies his pincers to the nails in the feet. Joseph clasps the body of Christ as before, but, with a curious effort at realism, his body is protected from the flowing blood by a towel worn over the shoulder.



FIG. 21. THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS, FROM DUCCIO'S ALTAR-PIECE.

The Virgin is depicted as before, pressing Christ's hand to her cheek, but is now accompanied not only by the Magdalen but also by the other Mary. To the right stands St. John, who has given up his former position to Nicodemus. Lastly, below the cross, appears a white mass which is probably meant to represent Adam's skull, with symbolic reference to the name of Golgotha.

tional nature of the theme as here treated is shown by the presence of the angels, though the body of Christ is detached from the cross. On a steatite carving in the Museo Cristiano of the Vatican (Muñoz, *op. cit.* fig. 86) the body is detached, stars replace the angels, Joseph of Arimathea, standing behind Christ, clasps His body, and Nicodemus removes the nails from the feet. Such a rendering of the scene should serve to date the monument circ. 1200.

The whole composition is repeated in a Gospel in Paris of the thirteenth century,[1] and is the source of later representations, as may be seen from Duccio's rendering in his famous altar-piece at Siena (Fig. 21).[2] The intermediate character of the Freer miniature gives it unusual importance in the development of Byzantine iconography, and, as will be apparent later on, is of great value in determining the date of the manuscript from which it was taken.

iv. The Descent into Hell — Plate VII

Folio III *recto* is the next page in order. While the increased damage to the corner shows that the leaf was some distance further on in the original codex, the miniature in question was without much doubt the first after the initial page of John's Gospel, for this is the position regularly occupied by the Descent into Hell.[3] The curious connection with John was due to the fact that the lection for Easter in the Greek church was taken from the fourth Gospel, and the corresponding pictorial type was not the Risen Christ, but the Descent into Hell. The Painter's Manual (see p. 20) indeed gives circumstantial directions for painting the Resurrection, but it is nevertheless a fact that the subject is rare in Byzantine art of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, and absent entirely in the mosaics and frescoes of the churches of that period.[4] The theological considerations

[1] Bibl. Nat. Ms. gr. 54 fol. 107 *recto* (Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 230, fig. 121). A similar treatment, omitting Mary's companions and the skull, is seen on an ivory of the Chalandon collection in Paris, dating in the thirteenth century (E. Molinier, *Mon. et Mém. Fond. Piot.* 1896, p. 126, fig. 1).

[2] A curious variant of the fourteenth century is found at Mistra in the Peribleptos (Millet, *Mon. byz. de Mistra*, pl. 122, 3). In this fresco the Magdalen holds the hand of Christ, and both the Virgin and Joseph clasp the body in their arms. Above the cross are weeping angels. Here also the Virgin stands upon a stool. The fresco is much like the scene described in the Painter's Manual.

[3] The color scheme is indicated by the facsimile. Christ wears a sleeved tunic of reddish color which is probably the priming for the same gilding that originally covered the pallium. Eve has a blue under-garment and a mantle of red. Adam wears a violet pallium. David's tunic was red, and his pallium blue, bordered with gold. The details of Solomon's costume cannot be determined. The sarcophagus in which Adam kneels is colored brownish pink, and streaked with purple, while that of the kings was originally blue. Below the sarcophagi on either side is the usual green ground-strip. The Pit of Hell is black, and the gates gold, which was of course the original color of the background.

[4] Cf. Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 132. It occurs in a ninth century Psalter of the Pantocrator monastery on Mt. Athos (*ibid.* p. 198).

Motif	VI Cent.	VIII Cent.	IX Cent.	X Cent.	1000–1050	1050–1100	1100–1150	1150 1200	XIV Cent.
Christ moves toward Adam	Cibor.	Chap. John VII	S. Mar. Ant.	Chek. enam. Sogh	anli	Daphni	Par. 541 Ivir. 5 Harl. 1810		Peribl.
surrounded by glory			Chlud. Ps.	Sogh	anli Add. 19352 Ivir. 1		Par. 541		Peribl.
takes Adam by hand, but moves in opposite direction				Siena Par. Ps. 20	enam. Par. 75 St. Luke St. Sophia at Kiev (mosaic)	St. Mark Torcello	Mel. Ps. Vat. Urb. 2. Pala d' Oro Harl. 1810	Trani Freer Min.	
holds roll			S. Mar. Ant.		Add. 19352				Peribl.
holds garment	Cibor.			Chek. enam.					
holds cross				Siena	enam. St. Luke Par. 75	St. Mark Daphni Torcello	Mel. Ps. Ivir. 5 Harl. 1810 Par. 541	Trani Monreale Freer Min.	
tramples Hades	Cibor. (bust of Satan added)	Chap. John VII?	S. Mar. Ant. Pantokrator, 61	Sogh Par. Ps. 20	anli Add. 19352				
tramples Satan and gates					Ivir. 1	Daphni Torcello St. Mark		Monreale	
tramples gates only				Chek. enam. Ms. Athens, 213 Siena	Par. 75 St. Luke enam.		Pala d' Oro Mel. Ps. Ivir. 5 Harl. 1810	Trani Freer Min.	
Satan white						Daphni Torcello			
black						St. Mark		Monreale	
chained				Ms. St. burg, 21	Peters-	Daphni St. Mark	Vat. Urb. 2		
Gates Crossed				Siena	enam. Par. 75	Daphni St. Mark	Par. 541 Mel. Ps. Pala d' Oro Harl. 1810	Monreale Trani Freer Min.	

ONE-SIDED COMPOSITION	Cibor.	Chap. John VII	S. Mar. Ant. Chlud. Ps. Pantokrator, 61						
SYMMETRICAL COMPOSITION				Chek. enam. Paris Ps. 20 Siena Sogh	St. Luke Ivir. 1 Par. 75 enam. anli	Daphni Torcello	Pala d' Oro Mel. Ps.	Monreale Trani Par. 541 Ivir. 5 Harl. 1810 Freer Min.	Peribl.
ADAM	Cibor.								
and Eve		Chap. John VII	S. Mar. Ant. Chlud. Ps. Pantokrator, 61	Chek. enam. Par. Ps. 20 Siena Sogh	St. Luke Add. 19352 enam. anli		Pala d' Oro Mel. Ps. Par. Harl.	Trani 541 1810 Freer Min.	
and Eve, symmetrically arranged on either side of Christ, heading throngs of Just.					Ivir. 1				
and Eve, with throng of Just, on one side of Christ					Par. 75	St. Mark	Ivir. 5 Par. 541	Monreale	Peribl.
with David and Solomon to left of Christ; John Baptist heading throng of Just on opposite side.						Daphni Torcello			
DAVID & SOLOMON				Chek. enam. Siena	St. Luke enam.		Par.	541 Freer Min.	
with Baptist					Par. (other add St. Sophia at Kiev (mosaic)	St. Mark 75 figures ed)	Pala d' Oro Harl.	Trani 1810 Freer Min.?	
with throng of Just				Ms. St. Petersburg, Sogh	Ivir. 1 (3 kings) 21 anli	Daphni (with other kings) Torcello	Mel. Ps. Ivir.	Monreale 5	
FLYING FOLD IN CHRIST'S MANTLE			S. Mar. Ant. (primitive)	Chek. enam. (developed)	St. Luke	St. Mark	Pala d' Oro Mel. Ps.		
ANGELS					Ivir. 1		Par. (bearing lance and sponge) Mel. Ps. (holding standards inscribed S. S. S.)	541	Peribl.

FIG. 22. ICONOGRAPHY OF THE DESCENT INTO HELL.

which gave the Descent into Hell its place in the Creed also made it the symbol of Christ's Resurrection in its fullest meaning, as insuring the deliverance of the Just from spiritual death, not only after, but before the Incarnation. Thus the conception of Christ trampling the gates of Hell, and raising up the Just that had gone before in the persons of Adam and Eve and the Kings of Israel, became the customary typological rendering of the Risen Lord, the pictorial embodiment of Easter. Hence the label which the scene bears in Byzantine art, ἡ ἀνάστασις, 'the Resurrection.'

The Descent into Hell is described in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus.[1] According to this story, the Baptist went first into Hell to announce the coming of Christ. Suddenly there was a cry "Lift up your gates, ye princes; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting gates; and the King of Glory shall come in."[2] Then Christ burst asunder the gates of Hell, bound Satan, and trampled him under foot. "Father Adam," falling at the feet of Christ, was raised erect, and Mother Eve in like manner, and Christ set His Cross "as a sign of victory" in the midst of Hades.

The motif of Christ's entry presented certain essential elements for the pictorial representation — Christ trampling on Satan, the broken gates of Hell, the raising of Adam and Eve, the Cross — to which the artists gradually added elements drawn from other parts of the story, like John the Baptist, David and Solomon, and others of the Just, and the tombs from which the dead are resurrected. The genesis and evolution of the scene in Byzantine art will be better understood with the help of the accompanying iconographical table[3] (Fig. 22).

The monuments cited in the table by no means comprise all those representing the theme, but are a typical list. There follow the works in which the most important are described or reproduced, arranged in the order of the dates of the monuments.

[1] Tischendorf, *Evangelia Apocrypha*, p. 389 ff.

[2] Ps. xxiv, 7. The phraseology of Psalms is apparent throughout the recital, which doubtless accounts for the prominence of David in the artistic representations, in spite of the minor rôle that he plays in the text; this explains also the frequent use of the scene in the illustrated Psalters (cf. Millet, *Mon. et Mém. Fond. Piot.* 1895, p. 209).

[3] For discussions of the iconography of the Descent into Hell, see Millet, *Mon. et Mém. Fond. Piot*, 1895, pp. 204–214; Diehl, *Mosaïques byzantins de Saint-Luc*, *ibid.* 1896, pp. 232–236; Rushforth, *Papers of the British School at Rome*, I, pp. 114–119.



The Descent into Hell

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The Descent into Hell



THE DOUBTING OF THOMAS

Century	Monument	Described or Reproduced by	Abbrev.
VI	Ciborium columns of St. Mark's, Venice.	Venturi, *Storia dell'arte italiana*, I, fig. 266.	Cibor.
VIII	Mosaic of Chapel of John VII, Old St. Peter's.	Garrucci, *Storia dell'arte crist.* IV, pl. 280. 8.	Chap. John VII
IX	Fresco, S. Maria Antiqua, Rome.	Rushforth, *op. cit.* p. 116, fig. 9. Fig. 23.	S. Mar. Ant.
	Mt. Athos, Ms. Pantokrator, 61.	Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 177.	Pantokrator, 61
	Chludoff Psalter.	Kondakoff, *Miniatures of a Greek Psalter in Chludoff Coll.* (Russian), pl. x, 3.	Chlud. Ps.
X	Psalter, Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 20.	Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 98.	Par. Ps. 20
	Chekmukmedi enamel.	Kondakoff, *Les émaux byzantins*, fig. 43.	Chek. enam.
X or XI	Fresco, Soghanli, Asia Minor.	Diehl, *Manuel*, p. 538, fig. 280.	Soghanli
	Enamelled book cover, Siena (Biblioteca).	Labarte, *Hist. des Arts Industr.* Album, II, pl. CI.	Siena enam.
XI	Mosaic, St. Luke in Phocis.	Diehl, *Mon. et Mém. Piot*, 1896, pl. XXIV.	St. Luke
	Mt. Athos, Ms. Iviron 1.	Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 225.	Ivir. 1
	Mosaic, St. Mark's, Venice.	Fig. 25.	St. Mark
	Brit. Mus. Ms. Add. 19352.	Rushforth, *op. cit.* p. 117, fig. 10.	Add. 19352
	Gospel, Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 75.	Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 137.	Par. 75
	Mosaic, Monastery of Daphni.	Millet, *Le Monastère de Daphni*, pl. XXV. Fig. 24.	Daphni
	Mosaic, Cath. of Torcello.	Dalton, *Byz. Art. & Archaeology*, fig. 427.	Torcello
c. 1100	Pala d' Oro (High Altar of St. Mark's, Venice), enamel.	Boito, *Tesoro di S. Marco*, pl. XV.	Pala d' Oro
XII	Melissenda Psalter, Brit. Mus.	Herbert, *Illuminated Manuscripts*, pl. VI. Fig. 27.	Mel. Ps.
	Commentary on Gregory Naz. Paris, Bibl. Nat. Ms. gr. 541.	Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 182.	Par. 541
	Gospel in Brit. Mus. Ms. Harl. 1810.	Dalton, *op. cit.* fig. 157.	Harl. 1810
	Monreale Cathedral, Mosaic.	Gravina, Duomo di Monreale, pl. 20 B.	Monreale
	Mt. Athos, Tetraevangelon, Iviron 5.	Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 217.	Ivir. 5
	Bronze Doors of Trani and Ravello Cathedrals, South Italy.	Schulz, *Denkmäler der Kunst in Unteritalien*, pl. XXIII.	Trani
XIV	Fresco, Peribleptos church, Mistra.	Millet, *Mon. byz. de Mistra*, pl. 116, 3. Fig. 26.	Peribl.



The Doubting of Thomas

Century	Monument	Described or Reproduced by	Abbrev.
VI	Ciborium columns of St. Mark's, Venice.	Venturi, *Storia dell'arte italiana*, I, fig. 266.	Cibor.
VIII	Mosaic of Chapel of John VII, Old St. Peter's.	Garrucci, *Storia dell'arte crist.* IV, pl. 280. 8.	Chap. John VII
IX	Fresco, S. Maria Antiqua, Rome.	Rushforth, *op. cit.* p. 116, fig. 9.	S. Mar. Ant.
	Mt. Athos, Ms. Pantokrator, 61.	Fig. 23. Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 177.	Pantokrator, 61
	Chludoff Psalter.	Kondakoff, *Miniatures of a Greek Psalter in Chludoff Coll.* (Russian), pl. x, 3.	Chlud. Ps.
X	Psalter, Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 20.	Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 98.	Par. Ps. 20
	Chekmukmedi enamel.	Kondakoff, *Les émaux byzantins*, fig. 43.	Chek. enam.
X or XI	Fresco, Soghanli, Asia Minor.	Diehl, *Manuel*, p. 538, fig. 260.	Soghanli
	Enamelled book cover, Siena (Biblioteca).	Labarte, *Hist. des Arts Industr.* Album, II, pl. CI.	Siena enam.
XI	Mosaic, St. Luke in Phocis.	Diehl, *Mon. et Mém. Fond. Piot.* 1896, pl. XXIV.	St. Luke
	Mt. Athos, Ms. Iviron 1.	Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 225.	Ivir. 1
	Mosaic, St. Mark's, Venice.	Fig. 25.	St. Mark
	Brit. Mus. Ms. Add. 19352.	Rushforth, *op. cit.* p. 117, fig. 10.	Add. 19352
	Gospel, Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 75.	Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 137.	Par. 75
	Mosaic, Monastery of Daphni.	Millet, *Le Monastère de Daphni*, pl. XXV. Fig. 24.	Daphni
	Mosaic, Cath. of Torcello.	Dalton, *Byz. Art. & Archaeology*, fig. 427.	Torcello
c. 1100	Pala d' Oro (High Altar of St. Mark's, Venice), enamel.	Boito, *Tesoro di S. Marco*, pl. XV.	Pala d' Oro
XII	Melissenda Psalter, Brit. Mus.	Herbert, *Illuminated Manuscripts*, pl. VI. Fig. 27.	Mel. Ps.
	Commentary on Gregory Naz. Paris, Bibl. Nat. Ms. gr. 541.	Bordier, *op. cit.* p. 185.	Par. 541
	Gospel in Brit. Mus. Ms. Harl. 1810.	Dalton, *op. cit.* fig. 157.	Harl. 181
	Monreale Cathedral, Mosaic.	Gravina, Duomo di Monreale, pl. 20 B.	Monreale
	Mt. Athos, Tetraevangelon, Iviron 5.	Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 217.	Ivir. 5
	Bronze Doors of Trani and Ravello Cathedrals, South Italy.	Schulz, *Denkmäler der Kunst in Unteritalien*, pl. XXIII.	Trani
XIV	Fresco, Peribleptos church, Mistra.	Millet, *Mon. byz. de Mistra*, pl. 116, 3. Fig. 26.	Peribl.

The most obvious aspect of the evolution of the type is the change from the one-sided composition of S. Maria Antiqua (Fig. 23), depicting the Raising of Adam and Eve, to the symmetrical one, wherein others partake of the Resurrection and the figure of Christ is flanked on either side by groups of personages representing the Just, revived and delivered from Hell by the power of the Cross. The change presents itself timidly in the Chekmukmedi enamel, where David and Solomon are represented rising from a sarcophagus in the upper left-hand corner of the scene, opposite the figures of Adam and Eve. The composition becomes rigidly symmetrical in Iviron 5, where Christ stands between two throngs of the Just, headed respectively by Adam and Eve, but the more usual rendering, wherein Christ raises Adam by the hand, but moves in the opposite direction to him, toward David and Solomon, is already present in the Siena enamel (10th–11th century). Other figures are added to the lateral groups in the course of the eleventh century, but this period is transitional and formative in the history of the composition, and includes such divergent examples as the extremely simple mosaic of St. Luke in Phocis, the elaborate scene in Torcello cathedral, and the exceptional variant of Daphni (Fig. 24). The Hades of the early examples, trampled beneath the feet of Christ, becomes Satan enchained, is transformed into the orthodox black imp of Byzantine art, as at St. Mark's in Venice (Fig. 25), and finally disappears in the twelfth century. The gates of Hell, crossed in the Siena enamel, are not always so represented in the eleventh century (St. Luke, Iviron 1, Torcello), and only become regularly crossed in the twelfth. The later development is seen in the Peribleptos church at Mistra, where Christ is enveloped in an elliptical glory, David and Solomon are accompanied by the Baptist



FIG. 23. THE DESCENT INTO HELL. FRESCO IN S. MARIA ANTIQUA, ROME.

Christ tramples a prostrate figure personifying Hades, and raises Adam from the tomb. Behind Adam stands Eve.

and a number of other figures, and Adam and Eve appear at the head of a throng of patriarchs and prophets (Fig. 26). Still later the church frescoes and the Painter's Manual add the fancy of angels enchaining devils, names for the minor *dramatis personae*, etc. The treatment of the scene in Russia ranges from the simplicity of the



FIG. 24. THE DESCENT INTO HELL. MOSAIC IN THE MONASTERY OF DAPHNI NEAR ATHENS.

twelfth century scheme to an elaborate panorama of Hell of the kind seen in an ikon in the Likhatcheff collection at St. Petersburg.[1]

Our miniature, by virtue of its symmetrical composition, the omission of Satan, and the crossed gates, finds its closest parallels in the twelfth century, and particularly in the Melissenda Psalter (Fig. 27). Christ raises the kneeling Adam from his sarcophagus

[1] Likhatcheff, *op. cit.* pl. 286. Cf. also pl. 265.

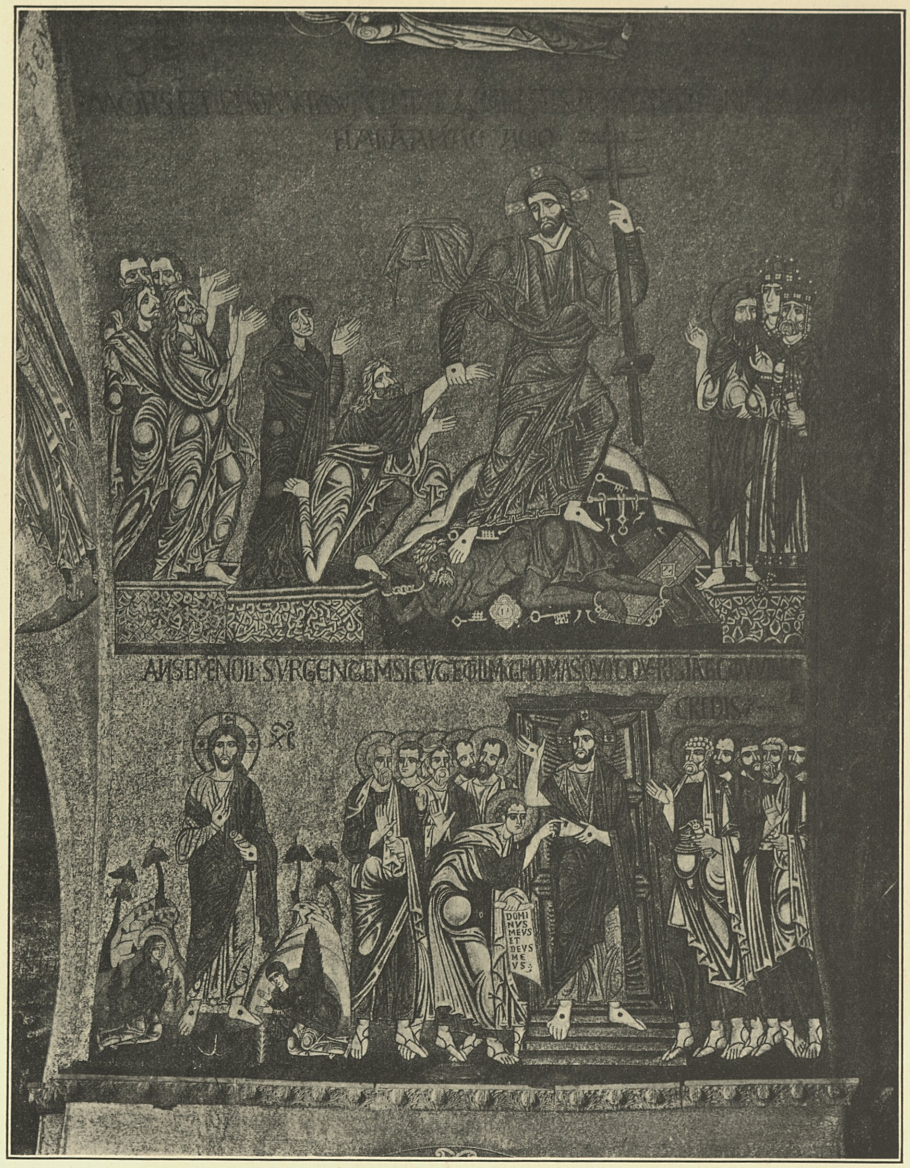

FIG. 25. Mosaic in St. Mark's, Venice.

Above, the Descent into Hell; below, Christ and the Holy Women and the Doubting of Thomas.

tomb, and strides across the gates of Hell. Eve stands beside Adam, and to the right we can discern the figures of David and Solomon. Behind them we may perhaps supply the figure of John the Baptist, who is regularly present from the beginning of the eleventh century. The iconography of the picture thus dates it in the twelfth century, or later.

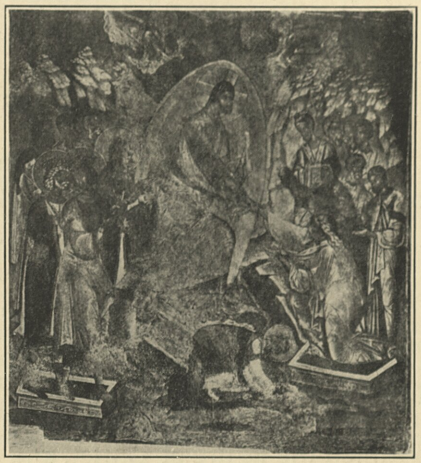

FIG. 26. THE DESCENT INTO HELL. FRESCO IN THE PERIBLEPTOS CHURCH AT MISTRA.



FIG. 27. THE DESCENT INTO HELL. MINIATURE OF THE MELISSENDA PSALTER IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

v. The Doubting of Thomas — Plate VIII

The verso of Folio III is occupied by a miniature representing the Doubting of Thomas, the second illustration of the Gospel of John. The ground strip is green, and the field of the miniature, as well as the doors behind Christ, was originally gold. Traces of the same color remain upon the reddish brown priming of the tunic worn by Christ, over which is draped a blue pallium. The disciples wear blue and violet tunics and pallia, with an alternating distribution of the colors. Above the doors, against which is outlined the figure of Christ, and the slanting roof to the right, is the remnant of an inscription in red letters. One would expect this to be the phrase which regularly labels the scene in Byzantine art: ΤΩΝ ΘΥΡΩΝ ΚΕΚΛΕΙCΜΕΝΩΝ, 'the doors being shut,' with which words John (xx. 19) emphasizes the sudden and miraculous appearance of the resurrected Christ among the disciples. The two letters which remain, however, seem to be ΟΝ, thus forming no part of the phrase unless we suppose a blunder on the part of the artist. The disciples are grouped in the spaces under the sloping roofs to right and left, Peter heading the group to the right, while Thomas on the other side steps forward and places his finger on the wound which the Saviour has uncovered by raising His right arm.

The incident, recorded only by John, is not common in Byzantine art, and is exceedingly rare in the illustration of the Gospels. It occurs perhaps in a fifth century fragment of a sarcophagus in the museum of Ravenna, on which we see a youthful unbearded Christ, half turned to the left, raising His right arm, while the disciple standing beside Him faces outward and extends his right hand toward Christ's left side.[1] A more positive rendering of the incident occurs on a sarcophagus of S. Celso in Milan,[2] dating about 400, on which we see Christ baring His right side with upraised arm, and Thomas stepping forward from the left to touch the wound. He is accompanied by only one of the other disciples. The " Thomas scenes " which have been pointed out in a mosaic of S. Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna (sixth century), on an ivory of the British Museum, and in a miniature of a Munich

[1] S. Muratori, *N. Bull. d'Archeologia crist.* 1911, pp. 34–58.
[2] Garrucci, *op. cit.* V, pl. 315, 5.

manuscript of the ninth century, are too uncertain in character to be cited as indications of the evolution of the type.[1]

The earliest example of the scene on record in which all twelve of the disciples were represented was a mosaic in Justinian's church of the Apostles in Constantinople.[2] The church was destroyed by the Turks in the fifteenth century, but the description of Mesarites gives us a vivid idea of its splendid decoration as it appeared in the twelfth century. According to this account, the mosaic represented Christ and His disciples in a house with closed doors. Christ, in the centre of the group, bared His side, and Thomas, ashamed and hesitating, but urged forward by his companions, touched the wound. The Saviour seemed to shrink, the Byzantine writer tells us, from the touch of His disciple. A picture of the same general character is found on one of the reliefs of the Monza phials, which date about 600,[3] and in a fragmentary fresco of S. Maria Antiqua[4] of the eighth century. A rather original rendering of this type of composition is to be seen in a manuscript of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal at Paris,[5] of the eleventh century. Here Christ stands to the right of the picture and raises His right arm, but seems to shrink from the insistent finger of Thomas, who approaches from the left. A group of three disciples stands behind him. No background is given. By the end of the eleventh century the scene had reached the form thereafter accepted, as we see it in the mosaics of St. Mark's at Venice (Fig. 25), and on the bronze doors of St. Paul's at Rome.[6] The tendency toward symmetry, the most constant factor in Byzantine art, arranged the disciples in groups on either side of Christ, who always stands on a flight of steps, in front of the "closed doors." The figure of the Saviour shrinks no more from the hand of Thomas, but stands erect and immobile, with the statuesque dignity that makes the subject so impressive in all its subsequent renderings. St. Thomas approaches from the left and touches the wound in Christ's right side. The same composition,

[1] Cf. Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche*, II, p. 264, note 4.

[2] Heisenberg, *op. cit.* II, p. 264.

[3] Garrucci, *op. cit.* VI, pl. 434, 6. A similar representation is found on a lead ampulla in the British Museum (*Dalton, Byz. Art & Archaeology*, fig. 399).

[4] Grüneisen, *Ste. Marie Antique*, fig. 118.

[5] No. 33 c. Rohault de Fleury, *L'Évangile*, pl. XCVII, 3.

[6] Rohault de Fleury, *op. cit.* pl. XCVII, 1. Also in mosaics of St. Luke in Phocis, Daphni, and St. Sophia at Kiev.

with unimportant variations of background, is used throughout the twelfth century (Melissenda Psalter, mosaic in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, Monreale), and continues in late Byzantine painting, appearing with the usual late Byzantine addition of architectural detail, in the fourteenth century frescoes of the Peribleptos church at Mistra,[1] in Duccio's altar-piece at Siena, and in the Painter's Manual. Our miniature, therefore, conforms to the iconography of the scene as established in the eleventh century, and traditional after that period.

vi. Christ and the Holy Women — Plate IX

Folio IV *recto* is adorned with a miniature whose ruined condition makes it difficult of interpretation until we compare a better preserved example of the same scene in a gospel of Mt. Athos[2] (Iviron 5, Fig. 28). In this manuscript the miniature occupies a place at the beginning of the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew, and illustrates the meeting of "Mary Magdalen and the other Mary" with Jesus, having particular reference to the words: "And they came and held him by the feet and worshipped him." The episode is depicted in our miniature in a fashion practically identical with that of the Athos manuscript, except that the horizon line is lower, and the figure of Jesus is larger in proportion to the size of the women. The Saviour's tunic is painted in with a yellow wash, originally overlaid with gold. His pallium was blue. The woman kneeling to the right wears a reddish garment. The background was originally gold. The ground-strip is the usual green, and the green cones to right and left are the remains of trees — very conventional trees — which indicate the garden of the Holy Sepulchre.

The theme is not common, save in late frescoes,[3] and its earliest appearance is on an ivory in the treasury of Milan cathedral, of the fifth or sixth century,[4] wherein the two women kneel to

[1] Millet, *Mon. byz. de Mistra*, pl. 121, 1. Cf. also the rendering in the Chapel of St. John, *ibid.* pl. 106, 3.

[2] Brockhaus, *op. cit.* p. 217 ff.

[3] On Mt. Athos it occurs in the frescoes of the Protaton (circa 1300), of Kutlumusi (1540), of Dionysiu (1547), and of the cloister church of Lavra. No examples at Mistra are recorded by Millet. Another example in manuscript illumination is the miniature of a Greek gospel in the Public Library at St. Petersburg (Likhatcheff, *op. cit.* pl. 353).

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Christ and the Holy Women



MADONNA AND SAINTS

the left of Christ. Between them and the standing figure of the Saviour rises a tree. In the Rabulas Gospel (586) the garden is indicated by trees and the two women kneel to the right of the risen Lord. A lost mosaic of the Apostles' church seems to have resembled our miniature at least in the one respect that the two women bowed their heads to the feet of Christ.[1] In the Tri-



FIG. 28. CHRIST AND THE HOLY WOMEN. MINIATURE OF A GOSPEL IN THE IVIRON MONASTERY ON MT. ATHOS: IVIRON 5.

vulzio ivory,[2] Christ is seated on a rock to the left of the open tomb. The women appear to the right, one kneeling, the other half erect, stooping forward with outstretched hands. The ninth-century manuscript of Gregory Nazianzenus in the Bibliothèque Nationale indicates the garden by trees and again depicts the women in differing attitudes, one prostrate at Christ's feet, the

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Madonna and Saints

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other half upright.[1] This distinction is maintained for a time in the more symmetrical representations of the later period, and the evolution of the composition into the hieratic type of the Freer miniature was only a gradual one. Thus in the mosaic of St. Mark's at Venice, of the late eleventh century (Fig. 25), we find a composition essentially the same as that of our miniature and of Iviron 5, but lacking the schematic symmetry of the twelfth century. The garden has two little hillocks and several trees, and the women are not yet prostrate on the ground. The woman to the left retains a posture more nearly upright than that of the figure on the right. The St. Mark's version occurs again in a mosaic of Monreale, of the latter half of the twelfth century, wherein the earlier and freer type is reflected, but the garden has already dwindled to two trees. Iviron 5, also of the twelfth century, shows a still more schematic composition, in which the symmetry is complete except that a souvenir of the earlier position of the woman on the left remains in the lifted head. Finally, the Freer miniature represents the most advanced degree of formality, and cannot be distant in date from the Athos manuscript, so close is the resemblance of the two.

vii. Madonna and Saints — Plate X

The *verso* of fol. IV contains a charming figure of the Madonna, standing on a low pedestal, holding the Child on her left arm, and flanked by two bishop saints carrying books, whose identity, in view of the condition of the miniature, it would be useless to attempt to determine. The Virgin originally wore a violet mantle above her undergarment, which is drawn over her head in a veil. The bishops on either side also had violet pallia, and their *omophoria* or stoles show traces of black and gold. The background was once the usual gold.

The Virgin apparently holds the Child with both hands and bends her head to His in a graceful attitude of motherly solicitude. The human quality of the group gives our Madonna considerable importance as one, at least, of the earliest examples of the "tender" Virgin. The Byzantine type[2] throughout the

[1] Omont, *Fac-similés des miniatures de Mss. grecs. de la Bibl. Nat.*, pl. XXI.

[2] Exception must be made of the remarkable sixth century Madonna at Kiev (Muñoz, *op. cit.* fig. 5) and some Coptic examples.

earlier period, in the twelfth century, and frequently even in later times, was a thoroughly hieratic conception of the Mother and Child, both being represented in frontal attitude, usually gazing directly at the spectator, the Virgin holding her head erect. The humanizing droop of the head was introduced into Italian art by the Tuscans of the thirteenth century, and the transformation of the type in Byzantine art is usually ascribed to the same period. As our manuscript cannot be placed later than 1200, its Madonna possesses an historical interest quite as great as her indubitable charm.

viii. John the Baptist and the Virgin?

Folio V, *recto*, contains the remains of a group of two saints. There is so little left of the painting that I hesitate to identify the figures, but it seems likely that they represent St. John the Baptist and the Virgin. The irregular outlines of the garment worn by the figure on the left indicate the mantle of skins characteristic of the Baptist, and the figure to the right is dressed, so far as one can determine, like a woman. But conjecture is futile in the face of the ruined condition of the painting. There is no miniature on the *verso* page.

ix. Date and Value of the Miniatures

The date of this series of miniatures has so frequently been suggested during the course of the preceding discussion that it needs few words of further definition. The text points to the thirteenth century, but is not inconsistent with the second half of the twelfth, and the style and iconography clearly indicate the period last named as the time when the manuscript was illustrated. An earlier date would probably be inconsistent with the use of the Evangelistic symbols, and certainly with the text. The introduction of scenes unusual in Gospel illustration, like the Appearance to the Holy Women and the Doubting of Thomas, also points to a date subsequent to the earlier half of the twelfth century. Another indication of the same character is the curious combination of realism and convention which is often met with in later Byzantine art, and is here observable on the one hand in the pedestal on which the Madonna stands, and on the other in the motherly droop of her head.

The thirteenth century is an impossible date, for reasons quite as good. In the first place, manuscripts so profusely illustrated are rare in that period. Again, in the scenes of the Descent into Hell and the Doubting of Thomas, we have found our best parallels in monuments close to the year 1100, like the bronze doors of St. Paul's and Trani, the mosaics of St. Mark's and the Melissenda Psalter. Iviron 5, the manuscript which is so like ours in the rendering of the Appearance to the Holy Women, is dated by Brockhaus "about the twelfth century." Lastly we have the definite evidence of the iconography of the Descent from the Cross in favor of the latter half of the twelfth century, for the well-defined type of the thirteenth century requires that both arms of the Saviour be detached from the cross, and Nicodemus employed in removing the nails from His feet. The Freer miniature maintains the earlier form in which one hand is still nailed to the cross-bar, but shows a later phase of the theme by omitting the angels which appear above the cross in the Melissenda Psalter. The period between 1150 and 1200 is therefore the time when our miniatures were produced.

The compositions are quite consistent with this date. Between the creative Neo-Hellenic art of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries and the diffuse realism of the fourteenth, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries intervene as an epoch of simplification and fixation of types. The iconography often shows this, and we have seen how the twelfth century stereotyped the Descent into Hell, crossing the gates of Hell and omitting the figure of Satan. The episodes of the Melissenda Psalter reflect the same tendency toward abbreviation and convention, and it is precisely on this account that the Psalter and the Freer miniatures seem so closely related.

The latter have not escaped the conventionality of their time. The pedestal under the Virgin's feet in the Descent from the Cross and the "Madonna with Saints," and the hieratic rendering of the Appearance to the Holy Women, so marked in its dry contrast to the example of St. Mark's, are witness to an indifferent grasp of reality on the part of our artist. All the episodes are reduced to their lowest terms. The lanky figures, the uninventive drapery, with its broad, straight surfaces or minute and numerous folds, the feet which rest on nothing, the awkward attitudes, are indeed features which already are present in Byzantine painting of the eleventh century, but here appear in sharper relief. And

still there is in the very human rendering of the Madonna a premonition of the mundane style of the fourteenth century.

As a draughtsman our artist shows himself uneven, and like most East Christian painters, he relied on the usual thick overpainting to conceal his blunders. Thus he took two tries at the left foot of Joseph of Arimathea, and nodded decidedly in his drawing of Adam's left leg. His innocence of anatomy is apparent in the Christ of the Descent from the Cross, where he draws impossible knee-caps and repeats the summary rendering of the muscles of the breast and arm which was used in the mosaic Crucifixion of Daphni, a hundred years before. The attempt at the expression of sorrow on the face of Mary in the same scene has resulted in an unconvincing grimace.

Herein, however, he shows himself but the child of his time, and a comparison with the Melissenda Psalter and Iviron 5 will make it clear that he was above rather than below the average of the twelfth century. It must be remembered that Byzantine drawing, with its sweeping and confident lines produced by the practice of hundreds of years on unchanging compositions, is usually bolder in its preliminary stage than in the finished picture, after the application of the overcolor, since the latter conceals much of the detail of the design, and deprives the preliminary sketch of freshness and vivacity by rigid adherence to clean-cut contours. Consequently, it is somewhat unfair to compare our artist's best sketches, where the loss of the overpainting has revealed them, with the finished miniatures of the Melissenda Psalter. Yet there can be no doubt that the spirited figure of Nicodemus in the Descent from the Cross is in every way superior to that of the Psalter, and it is impossible to find in the twelfth century another Virgin so appealing as that which appears in the miniature of the Madonna and the Bishop-Saints. The artist and his manuscript were among the best of their time. The unusual scenes included in the surviving series betoken a large number in the original manuscript. Apparently the artist eschewed ornamental borders, but for richness and variety of illustration the gospel in its pristine state must have equalled, if it did not outrank, the existing Byzantine manuscripts of the twelfth century.

The disappearance of the overpainting makes our miniatures of unique assistance in determining the processes of Byzantine painting, and the technique of our artist is not hard to follow.

He drew his preliminary sketch on the parchment in an ink that has faded brown, using a pen or fine brush. After this a yellow priming or sizing was laid on to form a ground for the gold wherever this was to be used — in the background, on the foot-stools of the Evangelists or the Gates of Hell, or in the draperies of Christ, who always wears a blue pallium and a gilded tunic except in the Descent from the Cross, where He wears a loin-cloth of indeterminate color, and in the Descent into Hell, where both tunic and pallium show traces of gilding. The green ground-strip (gray-blue in the portrait of John) was probably the next thing to be painted in. Details in black were often added on the yellow sizing before the gold was applied, but the inscriptions seem to have been painted in minium on the gold itself. The latter has almost entirely disappeared, leaving the yellow sizing to indicate the portions of the miniatures that were originally gilded. After these preliminary steps the final color was laid on within the outlines of the sketch directly on the parchment. Shadows were obtained by deeper applications of the tone the artist happened to be using, along the lines of the preliminary drawing. The flesh color was a reddish yellow of much the same quality as the priming spoken of above. Hair and features were drawn in ink, and possibly afterwards reinforced with black. The final task of the artist was to correct and deepen with black the main contours, and to add such minor touches as the decorative details in gold and black, and the black with which he picked out the folds of Christ's gilded garments.



COVERS OF WASHINGTON MANUSCRIPT OF THE GOSPELS, WITH CHAIN

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COVERS OF WASHINGTON MANUSCRIPT OF THE GOSPELS, WITH CHAIN

III. THE PAINTED COVERS OF THE WASHINGTON MANUSCRIPT OF THE GOSPELS

A DESCRIPTION of these interesting panels, together with a brief and tentative discussion of their date, was published by the present writer in the Introduction to the Facsimile of the Washington Manuscript.[1] In describing them here, therefore, it will be necessary only to summarize the account previously published, and to refer the reader, for details of color, to the two plates in the Facsimile which exactly reproduce the paintings.

The covers of the Washington Manuscript (Plate XI), which are now separated from the text, are two wooden panels, bevelled on the outer and the inner faces at top and bottom, and also on the sides in the case of the outer faces. The left-hand board, which is badly worn (Plate XII), varies in width from 14 cm. to 14.3 cm., and in length from 21 cm. to 21.3 cm. The right-hand board (Plate XIII) measures 14.3 cm. × 21.3 cm. The thickness of the covers varies from 1 cm. to 1.6 cm.

The back binding consists of a leather backing applied over interlacing cords of the same material. The ends of these cords were inserted in twenty-six holes in the side of each cover, and fragments of the cords still remain in place. Their protruding ends were bound by a strip of cloth, about 2.5 cm. wide, pasted along the inner face of each board. Over this is pasted a parchment backing, covering the whole inner face.

Along the upper part of the right-hand edge of the left panel is a row of seven holes, and another row of the same number of holes runs along the lower part, leaving a space of about 7.5 cm. between the two rows. On the upper edge of the same cover is a row of ten holes. The other cover has no such holes in its edges, except one in the upper outer corner, corresponding to a hole similarly placed in the left cover. A fragment of a wooden peg, still remaining in the corner hole of the latter, shows that

[1] *Facsimile of the Washington Manuscript of the Four Gospels in the Freer Collection.* With an Introduction by Henry A. Sanders. The University of Michigan, 1913. See p. 83.

cords were once inserted in these holes, probably to tie the covers together when the book was not in use. The rows of holes in the left cover, not being repeated in the other panel, seem to have been used for the attachment of flaps with which to lift the left-hand cover, or of a casing of cloth which was folded about the book.

The metal chains attached by staples to the upper outer corners of the covers[1] were probably meant to keep the book from opening to its full extent, so as to prevent abrasion of the paintings. They are undoubtedly later additions to the book.

The covers were painted after the book was bound; for irregular traces of the yellow paint used in the border remain around the holes of the back binding and on the fragments of the leather cords, and, while the same color has invaded the space between the holes into which the binding cords are inserted, it stops short at the line of the binding itself.

The figures on the covers are the four Evangelists, depicted in the order in which their gospels appear in the manuscript,[2] Matthew and John on the left cover, Luke and Mark on the right. John's figure is almost entirely erased. Mark is labelled by an inscription placed vertically to the right of his figure: MAPKOC, and to the left of Luke may be seen the last two letters of his name: AC.

The painter used no priming and has left no traces of his preliminary outline. The green filling of the background was put in after the figures were drawn; the brush-strokes are guided by the contours of the figures. The strokes are crude and irregular, indicating a rough reed brush of the kind described by Gayet in his description of the processes of Coptic painting.[3] The figures are painted in masses of ground color, and all the details of features, drapery, etc., including the hair and the black outlines of the figures, are overlaid upon this. The painting originally covered the entire panel, with a yellow border running around the edges, overlaid with a crude leaf design in green and greenish brown. The yellow was the poorest color in the painter's palette, and has peeled badly, particularly on the edges of the panels.

[1] The one attached to the left panel measures 15.3 cm.; the other 17.7 cm.

[2] Cf. Sanders, *The Washington Manuscript of the Four Gospels* (University of Michigan Studies, Humanistic Series, Vol. 9, Part 1), p. 27.

[3] *L'Art Copte*, p. 263.

Here it disappeared early and left a strip of bare wood which has weathered more than the rest of the panel, and thus gives the appearance of a border, especially on the left cover. The fugitive character of Coptic yellow was noticed by J. E Quibell in his examination of the frescoes at Saqqara.[1] The detail colors are all very thickly laid on, and the same is true in less degree of the ground color. Heavy painting has caused the green background to shade almost to black in places, especially in the centre of each panel, where the brush-strokes up and down have mingled in a thick layer of paint.

The artist used a limited palette, —black, red, yellow, slate-blue, white and green. To Matthew and Luke he gives black hair, and clothes them in a white tunic, on which the shadows are brought out in blue, and a pinkish pallium, whose folds are produced in red. Both garments are outlined in black, and the tunic of Luke has black stripes and dots. Both Evangelists carry a yellow book, with details and edges in black, and jewels indicated with red. The color-scheme, drapery and attitude of the ruined figure of John must have been, as the remaining fragments show, practically identical with that of Mark: gray hair, white tunic with black stripes and dots, and shadows indicated in black and slate-blue; red pallium with white folds; yellow book with red jewels, and black dots and edges. Both tunic and pallium were outlined with heavy black contours, as in the case of the other Evangelists. Huge yellow haloes, originally outlined in white, adorn the heads of all four figures. The flesh-color is white, shaded with pink. Eyes, ears, mouth and nose are drawn in red, and the nostrils of Matthew and Mark are indicated by touches of black. The hand of Mark is outlined in black, with a trace of a red line along the wrist. The feet of the four saints are clad in sandals, summarily indicated by thickening the black contour of the pinkish white feet at the heel and toe.

The artist shows a tendency to mix his lights with the colors used in the shadows. Thus the flesh color of the faces is made pinkish by the admixture of the red details of the eyes and ears, and the pallia of Matthew and Luke are of a pinker hue by reason of the red folds. The slate-blue shadows have similarly qualified

[1] *Excavations at Saqqara*, 1906–1907, II, p. 66. But compare Clédat's description of the paintings at Bawît (in Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, s.v. Baouît, col. 232), where red and yellow are named as the most tenacious colors.

the white of the tunics. Practically identical colors and processes were employed in the wall-paintings at Saqqara, to judge from Quibell's description, particularly in the decoration of the north wall of Cell A in the monastery.[1] Here "four colors were used, black, yellow, slate blue, red, and for the flesh of the figure on the left, pink with a greenish mixture in the shadows. The figures were painted in with broad streaks of color and the black outline added last."

The portraits of the Evangelists afforded by our panels are of great value to the student of Coptic iconography, since they give us a series in which the several Evangelists can be identified, and in which the figures are well preserved or capable of restoration. According to our portraits Matthew and Luke were visualized in Egypt as men in the prime of life, with black hair and beards, while Mark partakes of the more advanced age of John, and is represented with gray hair, head slightly bald and long pointed beard. These types of the Evangelists are the ones usual in East Christian art,[2] with the important exception of Mark, where we have a portrait distinctly differing from the current one of Byzantine art, and amounting to a characteristic Coptic type.

In Byzantine painting the Evangelist is always a man in the prime of life with round full beard — a tradition that dates back to the sixth century and is represented by the portrait of Mark in the Codex Rossanensis (Fig. 15). The earliest Coptic monument I know which depicts the Evangelists is a relief in the Metropolitan Museum in New York,[3] which can hardly be later than the fifth century. In the centre of the relief Christ is represented seated with twelve baskets of loaves at His right hand, arranged vertically in rows of four. Two angels stand at His left hand, and another beside the baskets. The subject is of course the

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 64. A quite similar palette was used at Deir-Abou-Hennes (Gayet, *op. cit.* p. 273).

[2] John is represented regularly throughout the fourth and fifth centuries as a young and beardless man. In later East Christian art he becomes an aged man when depicted as the Evangelist, and a young man when portrayed as an apostle. The differentiation of the Beloved Disciple from the aged writer of the fourth Gospel commences in the sixth century. For example, while in the sixth century mosaics of S. Vitale in Ravenna all four of the Evangelists are represented as men advanced in years, the medallion portraits of the Codex Rossanensis, of the same period, give John an aged appearance, but represent Matthew, Mark and Luke in the prime of life.

[3] Ninth Egyptian Room: 10 . 176 . 21.

PLATE XII.



MATTHEW AND JOHN

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PLATE XII.



MATTHEW AND JOHN

Multiplication of Loaves and Fishes, but the artist has added two seated figures holding books in their left hands at either end of the relief, which evidently are meant for the Evangelists. They are not, however, distinguished by labels or other attributes, and the heads are defaced.

So far as the Coptic type of Mark is concerned, the characteristic features which distinguish it from the Byzantine rendering were noticed by Strzygowski in his publication of a piece of Early Christian wood-sculpture from Egypt in the Berlin Museum.[1] Strzygowski cited the head of Mark on a wooden door (early tenth century) of the church El-Hadra in Deir es-Suriani to show the existence of a "Paul"-type of Mark in Coptic art, and argued therefrom that the Evangelist was also represented in the seated figure of a bald-headed man with a pointed beard, holding a book and surrounded by thirty-five ecclesiastics, in a carved ivory in the Louvre. He explained the thirty-five figures as the successors of Mark on the episcopal throne of Alexandria, which would date the piece in the reign of Anastasius, the thirty-sixth patriarch, who presided over the see from 607 to 609. The same type is used in a series of panels in the Museo Archeologico at Milan, and in a panel of the Victoria and Albert Museum, representing the Acts of St. Mark in the Pentapolis. It is a question, however, whether the last-named group is of Egyptian origin, or sufficiently early in date to count in this connection.[2] The Freer portrait is thus the first published monument definitely to confirm Strzygowski's contention of a distinctive type for the Evangelist in Coptic art, that is, a slightly bald and elderly man, with pointed beard, and much resembling the traditional portrait of Paul.

The date of the covers must be determined chiefly on the basis of style, but some evidence on this point is furnished by the manuscript itself, which shows traces of rebinding. There are, for instance, two cases of the sewing-in of half-leaves, where the opposite half has been torn out and is lost. In one case, a half-leaf has been torn out and pasted back in the manuscript. All these instances show that the manuscript was apart at the time, for the ends of the leaves, and the sewing as well, were concealed in the binding. The manuscript must therefore have been rebound, and

[1] *Orient oder Rom*, p. 71 ff., and *Oriens Christ.* I, p. 366.

[2] See Dalton, *Byzantine Art & Archaeology*, pp. 213 and 234.

the worn condition of the leaves, betokening long use, points to more than one rebinding. It is likely therefore that the paintings of the covers are considerably later than the text, none of which antedates the fourth century.

This is borne out by a comparison of the paintings with other Coptic monuments of reasonably certain date, particularly the paintings discovered in the funerary chapels at Bawît, and in the monastery cells at Saqqara.[1] Clédat, to whom we owe the best publications of the Bawît paintings, allows a range from the fifth to the twelfth century for the Bawît monuments in general,[2] and is very reluctant to give definite dates to the paintings, though inclining to put most of them in the sixth century. Only one of the chapels which he explored produced material evidence as to date; that is, Chapel XVII, one of whose paintings, decorating a niche in the east wall, is reproduced in Fig. 29. Graffiti scratched on the walls of this chapel contain dates belonging in the eighth century, and the decoration, as Clédat pointed out, must therefore be no later than the eighth century, "ou même VIIe."[3] Clédat elsewhere says[4] that the paintings of Chapel XVII seem to belong to the sixth century.

It will be noted, in comparing the figures on the covers with those in the Bawît painting, that they are cruder than the latter in design, but show so striking a similarity to them in the treatment of details that it is impossible to suppose that the monuments are very far apart in date. The apostle on the Virgin's left hand in the Bawît painting has many points of contact with the Mark and Luke on the covers. We may compare, for example, the angular beard of the apostle with that of St. Luke. Again, we note a close correspondence in the stripes on the wrists of both the apostle and St. Mark, in the black stroke separating right arm and breast, in the dots and stripes and the arrangement of the drapery, and the way in which the right leg is indicated beneath the pallium. The enormous haloes afford another common feature, while both the Bawît painting and the covers show the same summary way of painting the sandalled foot, and the ground-strip

[1] Cf. for Bawît, Clédat, *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des Inscr.* 1902 and 1904; *Mém. de l'Institut franç. d'Archéologie orient.* XII; s. v. Baouît in Cabrol, *op. cit.* For Saqqara, J. E. Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara*, 1906–1907.

[2] *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des Inscr.* 1902, p. 537.

[3] *Mém. de l'Instit. franc. d'Arch. orient.* XII, 2, p. 83.

[4] In Cabrol, *op. cit.* s. v. Baouît, col. 229.

on which the figures stand. The real difference between the two paintings is not one of style, but of quality; the Bawît figures are at once freer and more sure in execution, while the covers betray their decadence and a later date by a certain laxity of conception and drawing. Another point of divergence is the attitude of Mark, who stands in an easy pose, resting the weight of the body on one leg, a posture rarely seen in the sixth century, but increasingly common thereafter, and characteristic of Byzantine art.



FIG. 29. THE ASCENSION. PAINTING IN CHAPEL XVII AT BAWÎT.

The Bawît figures, on the other hand, are more squarely planted on both feet. The same marks of later date, with the exception of the attitude of Mark, are visible in a similar painting found in Chapel XLII, representing Christ in glory surrounded by the symbols of the Evangelists, and below Him the Virgin and Child enthroned in the midst of the apostles.[1] Here, if we may judge from Clédat's drawing, the treatment of drapery, faces, hands and feet betrays the same decadence, and points to the same relative

[1] Cabrol, *op. cit.* fig. 1280.

date as that of the covers. This date should be measurably later than that of the painting of Chapel XVII.

We find the style of the covers reflected again in the painting reproduced in Fig. 30, which represents part of a group decorating a niche in Cell F at Saqqara. In this the crudeness is accentuated,



FIG. 30. THREE SAINTS. WALL-PAINTING IN CELL F IN THE MONASTERY AT SAQQARA.

and visible in the exaggerated curvilinear treatment of the hands. The feet dangle, and the artist found it impossible to render the folds of the drapery. We have here a monument obviously later than the covers, but the community of style is seen in the triple vertical division of the tunic, the arrangement of the drapery of the central figure, the angular beards, the indication of the sandals

and the dots on the tunics. A graffito scratched on one of the figures in the niche was seen by Grenfell, who pronounced it to be of the eighth century.[1] It was afterwards washed away by rain, but Grenfell's judgment may be taken to indicate the *terminus ad quem* for the date of the painting under discussion.

The style of the book-covers may, therefore, be traced through a series of monuments in which a chronological sequence can be established as follows: (1) Chapel XVII, Bawît; (2) Chapel XLII, Bawît, and the Freer covers; (3) the Saqqara painting in Cell F. The evidence of the graffiti shows that (1) and (3) are no later than the eighth century. This establishes the lower limit for the period in which the covers must be placed. It remains to find the *terminus post quem*, in other words, to date, if we can, the earliest one of our series, the painting in Chapel XVII at Bawît. And this is the more important since Strzygowski[2] has questioned the propriety of the sixth century as the average date for the Bawît paintings, and is inclined to place them earlier than Clédat.

The composition which decorates the niche in Chapel XVII obviously represents the Ascension. Christ sits on a jewelled throne in the midst of a glory, blessing with His right hand, and holding an open book in His left, on which one reads the word ἅγιος, 'holy,' three times inscribed. From the clouds that support the glory emerge the heads of the Evangelical beasts. To right and left are angels carrying wreaths, and near each appears a woman's head framed in a medallion. Below we see the Virgin and the apostles, with St. Peter holding a key and book in his left hand, occupying the place of honor to the right of the Virgin.

The composition is of Syro-Palestinian origin,[3] and first appears in a form essentially similar to the Bawît example in the Syriac Gospel of the Laurentian Library at Florence, which was written in Zagba, Mesopotamia, by the monk Rabulas, in the

[1] Quibell, *op. cit.* II, p. 67.

[2] *Denkschriften der Wiener Akad.* (Phil.-Hist. Kl.), 1906: *Eine alexandrische Weltchronik*, p. 193.

[3] The type was derived, according to Heisenberg (*op. cit.* II, p. 196 ff.), from a lost mosaic of the church of the Apostles in Constantinople, dating in the time of Justinian (see p. 55), which formed the model of the composition on the Monza phials, and of the later Byzantine versions. It seems more likely, however, that the archetype is to be sought in an earlier Palestinian mosaic, and interesting data on this point may be expected from Strzygowski's forthcoming publication of the Byzantine gold ornaments in the Morgan collection.

year 586. The Syrian miniature (Fig. 31) also depicts Christ in the glory, and the wreath-bearing angels on either side. As at Bawît, we find the Virgin below, standing in an attitude of prayer among the apostles. But the miniature adds the busts of the sun and moon in the upper corners of the picture, groups the symbols of the Evangelists below the glory, inserts two half-figures of



FIG. 31. The Ascension. Miniature of the Syriac Gospel of Rabulas.

angels above it, depicts Christ standing, and holding an unrolled scroll instead of a book and lastly inserts on either side of the Virgin an angel who carries a staff and directs the attention of the apostles to the ascending Christ. The two medallions with the female heads are also omitted in the manuscript. The chief difference is found in the treatment of the lower group. In the Rabulas miniature there is much movement, the apostles gaze and point upward with expressive gestures and attitudes, and are

huddled in groups of six on either side of the Virgin. The latter, too, partakes in a measure of the general excitement. In the Bawît painting the lower group is stiff and quiet, the apostles stand in frontal attitudes holding books in their hands, and are rendered in a hieratic fashion that suppresses the dramatic connection of the lower zone with the scene above.

The distinctly Palestinian version of the type is represented by a number of reliefs on the famous oil-flasks of Monza, which were made in Palestine about 600[1] (Fig. 32). In these reliefs, Christ is depicted seated on a throne, and holding a book, as at Bawît. The symbols of the Evangelists are omitted, and two or four angels sustain the aureole. A dove and the Dextera Domini are in one case inserted below the glory and above the head of the Virgin.[2] Below stand the Virgin and the apostles. The latter are divided into two groups as in the Rabulas Gospel, and usually show the excited gestures and attitudes of the Syrian type. At least one of the flasks, however,[3] gives a composition that closely resembles the Bawît painting, in that only two angels are represented beside the glory that surrounds the Saviour, and the apostles below are quiet figures standing in a row on either side of the Virgin, giving thus the air of detachment to the lower group which was noted above.



FIG. 32. THE ASCENSION. RELIEF ON AN EARLY CHRISTIAN OIL-FLASK AT MONZA.

The conventionalized version of the Ascension type which was used in the relief of the Monza flask just mentioned must have been in the mind of the artist who composed the peculiar mosaic in the chapel of S. Venanzio at Rome (a. 640–649).[4] This

[1] Garrucci, *op. cit.* VI, pls. 433, 8. 10; 434, 2. 3; 435, 1.

[2] Garrucci, *op. cit.* VI, 434, 3. Heisenberg, *op. cit.* II, p. 198 maintains that in this case the artist has adapted the Ascension type to a representation of the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

[3] Garrucci, *op. cit.* VI, pl. 433, 8. [4] De Rossi, *Musaici cristiani di Roma*, pl. XIX.

indeed is not an Ascension, but the composition is evidently based on the type that we have been discussing, for we see a half-figure of Christ among the clouds of heaven in the vault of the apse, flanked by two half-figures of adoring angels, and below is the figure of the Virgin-orant, with Peter and Paul on either side, heading a series of the saints commemorated in the oratory. Here again the upper and lower parts of the composition are distinct, and the same statuesque pose is given to the saints of the lower zone. Another adaptation of the type is found in the painting above mentioned in Chapel XLII at Bawît, where the concept of the Ascension again is lost, and the Virgin-orant is replaced by a seated Madonna holding the Child in her lap.

The Bawît painting shows an eclectic use of both the Syrian and the Palestinian types of the Ascension. It retains the four symbols of the Evangelists which are omitted in the Monza flasks, and thus shows affinity with the miniature in the Rabulas manuscript, though it distributes them symmetrically around the aureole, and does not group them below it, as is the case with the miniature. On the other hand, it coincides more closely with the composition of the Monza flasks in rendering Christ enthroned and holding a book, instead of standing and holding a scroll as He is represented in the Syrian Gospel, and is very like one of the flasks, and also like the seventh century mosaic of S. Venanzio, in conventionalizing the scene by means of the hieratic treatment given the lower group. Judging therefore from its iconography, we should incline to give the Bawît painting a date coeval with, or somewhat later than, the date of the Monza flasks.

Such imitation of Syro-Palestinian models on the part of Coptic artists is by no means new to students of the Christian art of Egypt. A fresco at Antinoë representing the Massacre of the Innocents is clearly derived from the rendering of the same subject in the Rabulas Gospel, and the Journey to Bethlehem in the same cycle of paintings is similarly related to the corresponding scene on the ivory cover of the Etschmiadzin Gospel, which is recognized as a Syrian work.[1] A distributing centre of such influence on Coptic iconography may have been the Syrian cloister of Deir es-Suriani, and there in fact we find a tenth-century

[1] I am indebted for these observations to Mr. E. B. Smith.

painting of the Ascension,[1] which, while conforming in most respects to the version of the Monza flasks, still retains the sun and moon of the Syrian type. The earlier painting which it replaced has left sufficient traces of itself to show that it was even more like the Rabulas miniature in that it contained the two staff-bearing angels in the lower group.

We have said that, so far as the iconography of the Bawît Ascension is concerned, it should be dated about 600, or somewhat later. But dates based on iconography must always be elastic, and in this case, the strong Hellenistic survivals visible in other paintings of Chapel XVII, notably in the head of an angel tormenting the damned in a representation of Hell,[2] and in certain details of the Baptism of Christ,[3] make it unlikely that the decoration of the chapel is later than the sixth century. Nor is the formal treatment of the theme, as compared with the livelier versions of the Rabulas Gospel and most of the Monza flasks, necessarily indicative of a later date, for the tendency toward a hieratic rendering is a factor constant in the Coptic. The white cloth in Mary's girdle is of little assistance in determining the date, for, while it is characteristic of the Virgin in later Ascensions, it nevertheless occurs in the Rabulas miniature and has been pointed out by Strzygowski in an Annunciation among the Syrian miniatures of the Etschmiadzin Gospel, which he dates as early as the first half of the sixth century.[4] We shall scarcely err, in view of these considerations, in placing the Bawît Ascension between 550 and 600. The decadence manifested in the style of the book-covers would date them in a somewhat later period, and they can therefore be assigned roughly to the first half of the seventh century. The middle of this century, or its latter half, is thus indicated as the date of the painting in Cell F at Saqqara.

The evolution of Early Christian art is understood to-day (thanks chiefly to the investigations of Strzygowski) as the gradual Orientalizing of the Hellenic forms bequeathed to the Christian era by antiquity. The tide of Greek naturalism which overran the Mediterranean basin in the wake of the conquests of Alexander never obliterated the artistic traditions of Egypt and

[1] Strzygowski, *Oriens Christ.* I, pp. 360 ff.
[2] Cabrol, *op. cit.* fig. 1278.
[3] Cabrol, *op. cit.* fig. 1282.
[4] *Byz. Denkmäler*, I, p. 71, pl. V. 2.

Mesopotamia. Hardly had Greek art become established in Asia and the valley of the Nile when there began against it and within it the reaction of the Orient, traceable in a number of significant symptoms such as the obliteration of the background, the growing contrast between the lights and shadows, frontality, one-plane relief, symmetrical composition, and above all a conventional rendering of animate life.

Egypt furnished perhaps the most fertile soil in which the seeds of this reaction could grow. Greek art was really never at home in that country. Alexandria itself was the most Hellenistic of cities, but the country as a whole clung to ancient modes of expression, as indeed may be seen from the small impression made by Greek notions on the religious art and architecture under the Ptolemies and Rome. The Christian religion, nevertheless, came in Greek guise to the Copts as well as to the other peoples of the Mediterranean. Its stories and dogmas were cast in Greek artistic moulds, and the sanction thus given to Hellenistic forms prevailed long against the rising influence of Eastern art.

In Egypt, therefore, the conflict took the form of a duel between the Hellenistic Christian fashions of Alexandria and the native traditions of Upper Egypt. Alfred Gayet has devoted an interesting volume[1] to the thesis that the Copts, the native Christians of Egypt, were but passive recipients of the early Hellenistic phase of Christian religion and Christian art, and that the subsequent history of their indigenous painting and sculpture, as well as of their theology, is but a series of successive and successful reactions of a spiritual people, lovers of the mystic, dealers in symbolism, against the materialism of Greek thought. Hence the monophysite Coptic theology, and the conventional, unreal Coptic art. Certain it is that none of the early schools displayed so marked a contrast between its first essays and its later development. The early products of the Christian ateliers of Alexandria are the most Hellenic of Christian monuments, with the possible exception of the works produced in Asia Minor; and nowhere at a later period do we meet with so crude and conventional a rendering of nature, and so pronounced a tendency on the part of formal ornament to elbow out the naturalistic, as in Egypt. Gayet indeed finds much to support his contention that Mohammedan polygonal ornament is but a development of Coptic design.

[1] *L'Art Copte*, Paris, 1902.

PLATE XIII.



LUKE AND MARK

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PLATE XIII.



LUKE AND MARK

It may be said therefore that the history of Coptic art is the transformation of a free Greek naturalism into a conventional style of the crudest character. That this change was conditioned in some degree by influences from Syria and Palestine seems clear from what has been pointed out with reference to the effect of Syro-Palestinian iconography on Coptic representations of sacred subjects, but the extent to which these influences made themselves effective in Egypt is not yet thoroughly understood. It is, however, worthy of note that the time when Syria and Palestine most affected the rest of the Mediterranean basin, the sixth and seventh centuries, is also the period when the last vestige of Hellenism was squeezed out of Coptic art.

To illustrate in detail the evolution of the Christian art of Egypt is no part of the present writer's task, but its general character may be indicated briefly by pointing out certain changes which gradually manifested themselves in the treatment of the human figure. As is well known, later Greek art showed a pronounced preference for a figure in free movement, unconfined to a given plane, in contrast to the frontality, or unifaciality, which characterizes Oriental art, and the earlier phases of Greek. This preference expressed itself most often in a fondness for the three-quarters view of the face and body, and the artists, particularly in the Roman period, frequently enhanced this effect by shifting the pupil of the eye in a direction angular to that toward which the face was turned, giving the appearance of a sidewise glance. It is this oblique gaze which marks the survival of Hellenistic tradition in Christian art wherever it is found, — in the primitive phase before the frontality of the East brought in the curious stare that is so marked a feature of the mosaics of the sixth and seventh centuries, and in the post-iconoclastic Byzantine, when a fresh infusion of Hellenism followed a revival of interest on the part of the East Christian craftsmen in their Greek patrimony.

This feature might be illustrated by any number of examples drawn from Egyptian monuments which reflect the early Alexandrian style, such as the Joshua Roll and the famous illustrated codices of Cosmas Indicopleustes. It will be more interesting to examine an example wherein the Hellenistic element is but a reminiscence struggling to view through the already dominant Coptic formalism. Such a case is presented by the miniatures

of Fig. 33, which adorn a page of a History of the World, written in Greek on papyrus, now in the Golenisheff collection at St. Petersburg.[1] The text on the page contains a chronicle of the events of the years 389–392. In the illustration above to the left, we see the Emperor Theodosius, with the diminutive and hardly visible figure of the Cæsar Honorius at his right. Below

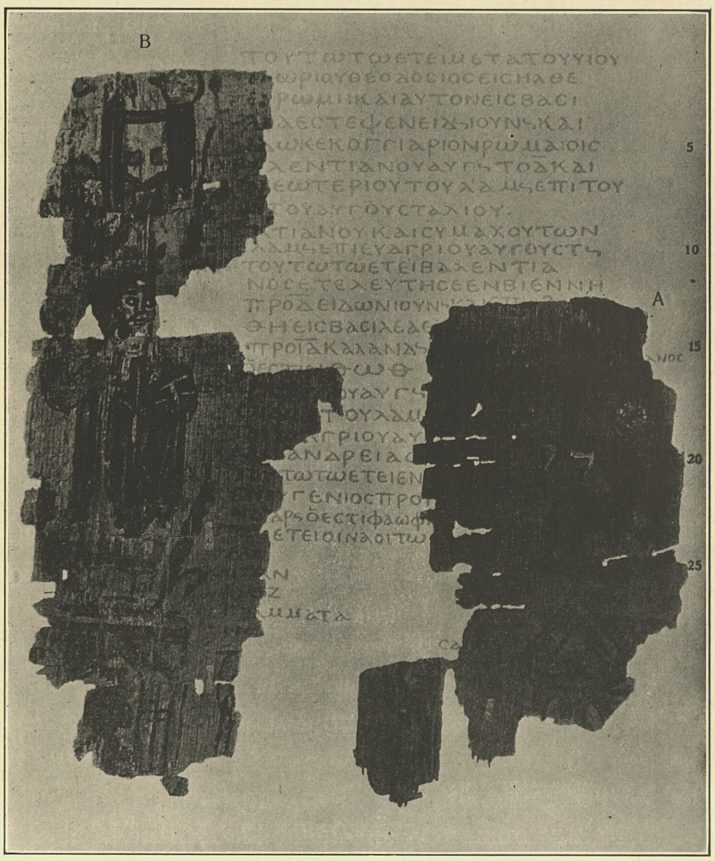

FIG. 33. MINIATURES OF A HISTORY OF THE WORLD IN THE GOLENISHEFF COLLECTION AT ST. PETERSBURG.

this group stands Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, and beneath his feet is the temple of Serapis, within which appears the statue of the god, wearing the characteristic *modius* on his head. The miniature refers to the great achievement of Theophilus' reign, — the destruction of the Serapeion by the Christians of Alexandria.

[1] Published by A. Bauer and J. Strzygowski in *Denkschriften der Wiener Akad.* (Phil.-Hist. Kl.) 1906. Cf. also Wilpert's critique of portions of Strzygowski's article in *Röm. Quartalscrift*, 1910, pp. 1–29.

The theatrical figure to the right is the pretender Eugenios, whose death is chronicled in the accompanying text, and below him we see again the temple of Serapis, assailed by two fragmentary figures of Christians, who are hurling stones at the structure. The manuscript is assigned by Strzygowski to the early part of the fifth century, and betrays in many ways an origin in Upper Egypt, thus constituting one of the earliest existing examples of native Christian art.

The reaction against the traditions of Hellenism may here be seen in the frontality given to the figure of Theophilus, the elimination of any rendering of environment, the flatness of the modelling, and indeed the general unreality of the whole. Yet even here the telltale traces of Greek technique are visible in the sidewise glance of the eyes and the three-quarters pose of the dying Eugenios. The face of the latter marks in striking manner the decay of Hellenistic drawing. The Greek habit of drawing the face in a three-quarters view has led the artist to a summary indication of eyebrow and nose by a zigzag stroke; thus ⌐L⌐, a device which was employed in the features of Theophilus. But in the face of Eugenios he gives us a zigzag which points the nose toward the right, while the head and gaze are turned in comical contrast to the left. Such an instance of misapplied technical tradition is eloquent of the painter's waning grasp of reality.



FIG. 34. THE NATIVITY AND THE BAPTISM. PAINTED WOODEN PANEL IN THE GOLENISHEFF COLLECTION AT ST. PETERSBURG.

It is obvious that the forms of naturalism will survive longer in episodes and scenes of action than in isolated figures like that of Theophilus or groups of the kind we have seen in the Bawît paintings. It is worth while therefore to compare in this connection another Coptic monument which shows the growth of Coptic convention even in the rendering of episodic scenes. This monument (Fig. 34) is a wooden panel in the same Golenisheff collection, first published by Ainaloff in 1898.[1] Certain

[1] *Viz. Vremenik*, V, pp. 181–186, pl. II.

affinities with the Rabulas Gospel which are manifest in the panel make it certain that it is to be dated at least a hundred years later than the " History of the World." Strzygowski[1] believes that it formed one of the side pieces of a five-part leaf of a diptych, a form common in Christian ivories, but of which this would be the only example in wood. The upper scene represents the Nativity. Mary reclines upon a couch, and Joseph is standing or seated beside her. Above is the crudest sort of representation of the Child in the manger. His head is marked with a cruciform nimbus which tapers off to form the shapeless body. Behind the Child appears a portion of the head of the ass. The lower scene is the Baptism. Christ is bearded (a departure from Hellenistic tradition), John bends slightly to place his right hand on the head of the Saviour, and an angel to the right holds His garments.

There is scarcely anything in Christian art more uncouth than this panel. The staring frontality of the faces, which the artist has been unable to escape even in the bent head of the Baptist, the joining of the adjacent haloes, the summary indication of the swaddled Child, the hopeless crudity of the reclining Mary, — betoken an almost completely atrophied sense of the actual. Only here and there may Hellenistic tradition be surmised — in the face of the angel perhaps, and more clearly in the zigzag stroke still used to indicate the brow and nose, but already supplemented, to render the nasal ridge, by a secondary parallel line.

The Golenisheff panel, being painted on wood, is an excellent parallel for our book-covers, and there are many features common to both monuments. Such are the heavy black outlines, the enormous haloes, the angular beard of Joseph, the peculiar curve to indicate the hair above the middle of the forehead, and the circle and dot with which the artist draws the eye and pupil. But the panel shows its earlier date in the use of gold for the nimbus, and a stucco priming on which the painting is overlaid — features reminiscent to a degree of Hellenistic technique. The book-covers, on the other hand, substituting plain yellow for the haloes, and showing no trace of priming, reflect the processes of a later period.

The Freer book-covers in fact represent the final step in the evolution briefly sketched, the fully developed Coptic style. No

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 201.

trace of Hellenism remains in these curiously formal figures, unless it be the easy attitude of Mark, which, as previously suggested, is rather an indication of Byzantine influence. The ridge of the nose is now rendered by two parallel lines, bodies and faces are flat, the figures repeat conventional types, and differentiation is merely a matter of color of hair and drapery. The complete divorce from reality reflects the last stage of the Coptic revolt against the formulas of Hellenism. The covers are unique examples of the purest artistic expression of this strange race of symbolists, devoid at once of that interest in things human which inspires the rudest works of Western Europe, and the sense of abstract beauty which relieves the most formal phases of the Byzantine.

APPENDIX

For the convenience of readers who may wish to refer to the colored reproductions of the covers of the Washington Manuscript of the Gospels, a list of the libraries containing the *Facsimile* cited in the footnote on p. 63 is here added.

LIBRARIES CONTAINING THE FACSIMILE OF THE WASHINGTON MANUSCRIPT OF THE GOSPELS, JULY 1, 1914

UNITED STATES

Amherst, Massachusetts: Amherst College.
Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan.
Auburn, New York: Auburn Theological Seminary.
Austin, Texas: University of Texas.

Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University.
Beloit, Wisconsin: Beloit College.
Berkeley, California: University of California.
Bloomington, Indiana: University of Indiana.
Boston, Massachusetts: Boston Public Library.
Boulder, Colorado: University of Colorado.
Brunswick, Maine: Bowdoin College.
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania: Academy of the New Church.
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Bryn Mawr College.
Burlington, Vermont: University of Vermont.

Cambridge, Massachusetts: Andover Theological Seminary.
Cambridge, Massachusetts: Episcopal Theological School.
Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University.
Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina.
Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia.
Chester, Pennsylvania: Crozer Theological Seminary.
Chicago, Illinois: Chicago Theological Seminary.
Chicago, Illinois: McCormick Theological Seminary.
Chicago, Illinois: Newberry Library.
Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago.
Cincinnati, Ohio: Lane Theological Seminary.
Cincinnati, Ohio: University of Cincinnati.
Cleveland, Ohio: Western Reserve University.
Clinton, New York: Hamilton College.
Colorado Springs, Colorado: Colorado College.
Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri.
Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University.
Crawfordsville, Indiana: Wabash College.

Delaware, Ohio: Ohio Wesleyan University.
Denver, Colorado: Denver Public Library.
Des Moines, Iowa: Drake University.
Detroit, Michigan: Library of the University Club.
Detroit, Michigan: Detroit Public Library.

Easton, Pennsylvania: Lafayette College.
Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon.
Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University.

Galesburg, Illinois: Knox College.
Geneva, New York: Hobart College.
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: Lutheran Theological Seminary.
Greencastle, Indiana: De Pauw University.
Grinnell, Iowa: Grinnell College.

Hamilton, New York: Colgate University.
Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College.
Hartford, Connecticut: Hartford Theological Seminary.
Hartford, Connecticut: Trinity College.
Haverford, Pennsylvania: Haverford College.
Holland, Michigan: Hope College.

Indianapolis, Indiana: Indiana State Library.
Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa.
Ithaca, New York: Cornell University.

Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas.
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania: Bucknell University.
Lexington, Kentucky: Transylvania University.
Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska.
Louisville, Kentucky: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Madison, New Jersey: Drew Theological Seminary.
Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin.
Meadville, Pennsylvania: Meadville Theological Seminary.
Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University.
Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota.
Mount Vernon, Iowa: Cornell College.

Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University.
New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers College.
New Brunswick, New Jersey: Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church of America.
New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University.
New Orleans, Louisiana: Tulane University.
New York: American Bible Society.
New York: Columbia University.
New York: Library of the Grolier Club.
New York: J. Pierpont Morgan Library.
New York: New York Public Library.
New York: New York University.
New York: Union Theological Seminary.
Newton Center, Massachusetts: Newton Theological Institution.
Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma.
Northampton, Massachusetts: Smith College.
Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame University.

Oberlin, Ohio: Oberlin College.
Olivet, Michigan: Olivet College.
Oxford, Ohio: Miami University.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: American Philosophical Society.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Dropsie College.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Lutheran Theological Seminary.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania.
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania: Carnegie Library.
Poughkeepsie, New York: Vassar College.
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Theological Seminary.
Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University.

Richmond, Indiana: Earlham College.
Rochester, New York: Rochester Theological Seminary.
Rochester, New York: University of Rochester.
Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana College.

St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Theological Seminary.
St. Louis, Missouri: Washington University.
Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah.
Schenectady, New York: Union University.
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