

Kurt Weitzmann

STUDIES IN
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Edited by
Herbert L. Kessler

With an Introduction by
Hugo Buchthal

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COMPARED with textual criticism, the history of the art of the Middle Ages is a fairly recent discipline still in the state of collecting, organizing, and editing the documents, many of which, including very basic ones, are still unpublished.¹ Moreover, art history has only started to develop a critical method through which the monuments can properly be related to each other and through which a clearer and more coherent picture of historical and artistic trends ultimately may be achieved. Of course, such a method has to be flexible and adjusted to the basic character of the Middle Ages. Contrasted with the highly individualized art of the Italian Renaissance, a methodical treatment of medieval works of art has to take into account the artist's primary concern with the iconographi-

Reprinted with permission from *New Testament Manuscript Studies*, M. M. Parvis and A. P. Wikgren (eds.) (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1950), pp. 151-74, 215-19.

¹ When this lecture was delivered at the meeting held at the University of Chicago in 1948 to honor Edgar J. Goodspeed and to discuss matters preliminary to the preparation of a new critical apparatus of the Greek New Testament it was not intended to be published. This explains its preliminary character; many of its assertions would need a fuller documentation than limited space permits. [Weitzmann returned to a number of points adduced in this study in his article, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century," *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Oxford 5-10 September, 1966* (London, 1967) pp. 207 ff.; here the recent literature. Reprinted herewith, pp. 271 ff. Special attention might also be drawn to Weitzmann, "The Constantinopolitan Lectionary, Morgan 639," *Studies in Art and Literature for Belle da Costa Greene* (Princeton, 1954), pp. 358 ff.]

cally accurate rendering of the content, which loomed larger in his mind than formalistic problems, and also his adherence to an established, sanctified tradition of rendering certain themes which goes hand in hand with self-imposed limitations on his invention of new subject matter. To be sure, the process of continued copying was by no means mechanical and permitted ample opportunity for new stylistic and even iconographical interpretations, but this traditionalism, by which the iconography of a certain scene retains for centuries, basic features of an archetype is evident and can be studied most successfully in the field of book illumination for a number of reasons: the comparative wealth of the extant material; the usually good state of preservation of miniatures; their high quality in its best products; and, what is perhaps the most important factor, the association of miniatures with a text, which permits a control over the iconographic accuracy of the picture.

Pictures and text in manuscripts often travel together over long stretches of time, so that obviously the process of copying one must have a bearing on that of the other. Thus a comparison between the method of textual criticism and of what we should like to call picture criticism becomes imperative. It has become quite obvious that each resembles the other in principle to a remarkable degree,² and that every kind of evidence as defined by Westcott and Hort in connection with the text of the New Testa-

² Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex, A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration* (2d ed. Princeton, 1970), pp. 182 ff.

ment³—the internal evidence of readings, the internal evidence of documents, and the genealogical evidence—operate in pictures in much the same way as in texts; though picture criticism has, of course, its peculiarities due to the difference of the medium. But long before these problems were discussed from the methodological point of view, the realization of an interrelation between text and picture was the working basis for many scholars in the field of book illumination. I need here only refer to the various publications of illustrated New Testament manuscripts in the University of Chicago collection as one of the many instances in which the editors were fully aware of the parallel trends in the two disciplines of textual and pictorial criticism.⁴

The complexity of problems arising from a methodical study of miniatures can best be studied in those manuscripts in which pictures are compiled from different sources, as for instance in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus in Paris (cod. gr. 510), in the Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes in the Vatican (cod. gr. 699), and in various Psalter manuscripts.⁵ To this type of illustrated manuscript, which we should like to call polycyclic, the lectionary of the Gospels also belongs and

is, in fact, one of the most characteristic examples. But there are still other reasons for closely examining the lectionary. One is its importance as the chief liturgical book of the Eastern Church which is reflected in the splendor of its illustration and another is the enrichment of our knowledge of illustrated lectionaries in recent years by a number of manuscripts from Mount Athos, some of which are still unpublished.⁶

In many instances the lectionary, kept in the church, was never opened for reading during the service. It was deposited on the altar as the most sacred possession and taken from it only for the Little Entrance in the Divine Liturgy when the deacon proceeds to the center of the church, raises the "Holy Evangelion," saying with a loud voice *Σοφία ὀρθοί*, and then carries it back through the royal doors, depositing it again on the altar. A book of such importance deserves special attention, not only as far as its rich and splendid illumination is concerned, but also for its covers. The earliest and at the same time artistically the most outstanding Byzantine book cover we possess is, characteristically

³ B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek. Introduction and Appendix* (New York, 1882), pp. 19 ff.

⁴ E. J. Goodspeed, D. W. Riddle, and H. R. Willoughby, *The Rockefeller McCormick New Testament* (Chicago, 1932); E. C. Colwell and H. R. Willoughby, *The Four Gospels of Karahissar* (Chicago, 1936); H. R. Willoughby and E. C. Colwell, *The Elizabeth Day McCormick Apocalypse* (Chicago, 1940).

⁵ Weitzmann, *Roll and Codex*, pp. 198 ff.

⁶ The photographs of the three Athos lectionaries from which examples are reproduced in this article, i.e., the one in the *skavophylakion* of Lavra (Figs. 231, 258, 259), Iviron cod. 1 (Fig. 249), and Dionysiu cod. 587 (*olim* 740; Figs. 239, 241-42, 246, 248, 251-53) were made by the author during his trips to Mount Athos in 1935 and 1936. ["Miniature and Icon Painting," pp. 214 ff.; herewith pp. 285 ff. and *idem*, "Zur byzantinischen Quelle des Wolfenbüttler Musterbuches," *Festschrift Hans R. Hahnloser zum 60. Geburtstag, 1959* (Basel and Stuttgart, 1961), pp. 223 ff.]

Fig. 231 *Mount Athos, Lavra, Skevophylakion, Lectionary, Front Cover, Christ*



enough, on a lectionary (Fig. 231).⁷ Kept as a relic in the *skevophylakion* of the Great Lavra on Mount Athos, this manuscript, according to a local tradition, was given by the emperor Nicephorus Phocas to Saint Athanasius, the founder and the first abbot of this imperial monastery. Restored though it is, the cover still conveys the impression of great splendor, which results from the employment of the most refined techniques of Byzantine craftsmanship. The figure of Christ is executed in gold repoussé, the nimbus is studded with pearls, the book in the hand of Christ and the footstool are made in the most delicate enamel cloisonné technique with brilliant translucent colors, and two small enamels with the busts of Saint

⁷ N. P. Kondakov, *Ламятини християнского искусства на Афонъ* (St. Petersburg, 1902), pp. 95 ff. and pls. XXVI-XXVII.

Gregory and Saint Basil are probably only remnants of an originally still richer enamel decoration.⁸

It must be made clear at the outset that miniatures make no contribution to the much debated question as to when the lectionary in its present form came into being. The oldest illustrated lectionaries we possess with pictures other than the portraits of the four evangelists belong to the tenth century,⁹ a period when its present form was firmly established. With very few exceptions,¹⁰ all extant illustrated lectionaries were made either in Constantinople itself or under the influence of a Constantinopolitan model, so that the evidence from the pictures bears out fully the contention of textual critics that the majority of lectionaries belong to a Constantinopolitan recension which achieved an ecumenical character in the Greek Church as early as the ninth century or perhaps a little earlier.¹¹

⁸ The frame with its stones and filigree and the stones on the ground within the arch are modern as are the filling of the arch, the left corner of the footstool, and the Christ. Originally, all of these were filled with small enamel plaques.

⁹ They are: Patmos cod. 70; Leningrad, Public Library, cod. 21; Mount Athos, Lavra, cod. A.86. Cf. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1935), pp. 46, 59, 66, and pls. LII-LIV, LXVI-LXVII, LXXI-LXXIII.

¹⁰ As, for instance, Patmos cod. 70, which originated most probably in Asia Minor, and Milan, Ambrosian Library, cod. D.67 sup., a southern Italian manuscript of the thirteenth century. Cf. A. Muñoz, *L'art byzantin à l'exposition de Grotta Ferrata* (Rome, 1906), p. 93 and figs. 61-63.

¹¹ A. Ehrhard, *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur*

MANUSCRIPT SOURCES OF LECTIONARY ILLUSTRATIONS

When the lectionary was first illustrated, the painters obviously saw no need to invent a new set of illustrations of the life of Christ but took over pictures from an illustrated Gospel book, just as the lectionary text itself is a derivation of the continuous Gospel text. We believe that already in the early Christian period the four Gospels were illustrated with a very extensive picture cycle which could be read, to use a modern simile, like a comic strip or somewhat in a cinematographic fashion. It is true that we have only a few fragments of early Byzantine Gospel illustration,¹² but two very prolifically illustrated Gospel books from the eleventh century, one in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale cod. gr. 74)¹³ and the other in Florence (Laurenziana

cod. Plut., VI, 23),¹⁴ show very clearly the early Christian system of a densely spaced, narrative illustration as it exists similarly in two fragments of early Christian manuscripts of the Septuagint, the Genesis in Vienna¹⁵ and the so-called Cotton Genesis in the British Museum in London,¹⁶ and likewise in Middle Byzantine copies which hark back to Early Byzantine models like the Octateuchs¹⁷ and the Books of Kings.¹⁸

A typical example of narrative Gospel illustration may be chosen from the

der griechischen Kirche, 1 (Leipzig, 1937), I, 27.

¹² They are: The Gospels of Rossano. Cf. O. v. Gebhardt and A. Harnack, *Evangeliorum Codex graecus purpureus Rossanensis* (Berlin, 1880); A. Haseloff, *Codex purpureus Rossanensis* (Berlin, 1898); and A. Muñoz, *Il codice purpureo di Rossano e il Frammento Sinopense* (Rome, 1907). The fragment from Sinope (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, cod. suppl. gr. 1286). Cf. H. Omont, *Peintures d'un manuscrit grec de l'Évangile de Saint Matthieu* ("Monuments E. Piot," 7 [Paris, 1900]), 175 ff. and pls. XVI-XIX; idem, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (2d ed.; Paris, 1929), pp. 1 ff. and pls. A-B; A. Grabar, *Les Peintures de l'Évangile de Sinope* (Paris, 1948). [Weitzmann, "Miniature and Icon Painting," p. 216, reprinted herewith, p. 290.]

¹³ H. Omont, *Évangiles avec peintures byzantines du XI^e siècle* (Paris [1908]). G. Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'Évangile* (Paris, 1916), pp. xxxvii ff. and *passim*.

¹⁴ Millet, *Recherches*.

¹⁵ W. Ritter von Hartel and F. Wickoff, *Die Wiener Genesis* (Vienna, 1895); H. Gerstinger, *Die Wiener Genesis* (Vienna, 1931); P. Buberl, *Die byzantinischen Handschriften* ("Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der illuminierten Handschriften in Österreich," 8, [Leipzig, 1937]), IV, 65 ff. and pls. XXI-XLIV. [cf. Weitzmann, "Die Illustration der Septuaginta," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, 3/4 (1952/53), 96 ff., translated and reprinted herewith, pp. 45 ff.]

¹⁶ *Vetusta Monumenta Rerum Britannicarum* (London, 1747), 1, pls. LXVII-LXVIII; C. Tischendorf, *Monumenta sacra inedita* (nova collectio; Leipzig, 1857), 2:92 ff.; J. J. Tilkanen, "Die Genesismosaiken von S. Marco in Venedig und ihr Verhältnis zu den Miniaturen der Cotton Bibel," *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae*, 17 (1889), 99 ff.

¹⁷ So far, only two have been published completely: Smyrna, Evangelical School, cod. A.1 (now destroyed); cf. D. C. Hesseling, *Miniatures de l'Octateuque grec de Smyrne* (Leiden, 1909). Istanbul, Seraglio, cod. 8; cf. Th. Ouspensky, *L'Octateuque de la Bibliothèque du Serail à Constantinople* (Sofia, 1907).

¹⁸ Only one illustrated copy exists today, the Vatican codex grec. 333. Cf. J. Lassus, "Les miniatures Byzantines du Livre des Rois," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, 45 (1928), 38 ff.

Fig. 232 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Cod. gr. 74, fol. 4^v. Flight into Egypt



above-mentioned manuscript in Paris. It illustrates the episode of the Flight to Egypt in the following four phases (Figs. 232–234):¹⁹ (1) The Flight to Egypt proper, in which the Holy Family consisting of Joseph, the Virgin and Child, and (in accordance with the apocryphal Gospels) a son of Joseph, are received by the personification of Egypt in front of a walled city; (2) The Massacre of the Innocents; (3) The Dream of Joseph, where he is told by the angel to return. Because of lack of space, this scene is placed on top of a walled city; and (4) The Return to Nazareth, in which Joseph, carrying the Christ Child on his shoulders, is followed by the Virgin on the ass and by one of his sons and is received by the personification of the city of Nazareth.

It may be noticed that these four scenes cover only ten verses (14–23) of the second chapter of Matthew. Taking this density of scenes more or less as a norm, one can well imagine the extent of the miniature cycle in a fully illustrated Gospel book whose scenes would have to be counted by the hundreds.

It seems only natural that, to the extent permitted in a service book, an illustrator of a lectionary should adapt

¹⁹ Omont, *Evangelies*, pls. 7–8.

Fig. 233 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Cod. gr. 74, fol. 5^r. Massacre of the Innocents

Fig. 234 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Cod. gr. 74, fol. 5^v. Dream of Joseph and Return from Egypt



this type of illustration. That this is, indeed, the case can be demonstrated by the eleventh-century Vatican Lectionary (cod. gr. 1156)²⁰ where the same scenes occur in the lection of 26 December (Figs. 235–238), and in part with the same peculiarities: (1) The Flight to Egypt, in which the son of Joseph, because of lack of space, is lacking, but where we meet also the receiving personification of Egypt, not in front of the Holy Family, but, because of lack of space, kneeling on top of the walled city; (2) The Massacre of the Innocents; (3) The Dream of Joseph, in this case as a separate picture; and (4) The Return to Nazareth, where, once more, Joseph's son is lacking while the city personifica-

²⁰ Millet, *Recherches*, p. 13 and *passim*. [Weitzmann, "Miniature and Icon Painting," p. 219 and pl. 32 and 33 a–b, herewith, p. 295; V. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967), p. 188; here the more recent literature.]

Fig. 235 Vatican, Biblioteca. Cod. gr. 1156, fol. 280^r. Flight into Egypt

Fig. 236 Vatican, Biblioteca. Cod. gr. 1156, fol. 280^v. Massacre of the Innocents



tion kneels on top of the city.²¹

Yet this kind of narrative illustration is not frequent in lectionaries and soon the peculiar nature of the liturgical book becomes apparent. A pericope is an inviolate unit, and for this reason artists

²¹ A full illustration of this episode would also include the first dream of Joseph, which precedes the flight (verse 13), and although this is lacking in the Paris Gospels, it is represented in the Vatican Lectionary (cf. Millet, *Recherches*, fig. 96). It also exists in the Florence Gospels (Millet, *Recherches*, fig. 111), which proves that this scene, too, is part of the full narrative Gospel cycle.

Fig. 237 Vatican, Biblioteca. Cod. gr. 1156, fol. 281^r. Dream of Joseph



respect its unity by not inserting pictures within the text of a lection—the example just shown from the Vatican manuscript is one of the very few exceptions. Normally they select the beginning of the lection as the most suitable place for its illustration.

Since it was the tradition of narrative illustration to have a picture physically connected as closely as possible with the text it illustrates, there was a natural tendency to depict a scene which is related to the very first verses of the lection. In an eleventh-century lectionary from Dionysiu on Mount Athos (cod. 587 [olim 740] Fig. 239),²² for instance, we find a picture of Christ meeting the blind man as the title miniature to the lection of the fifth Sunday after Easter (John 9:1–38). In the Gospel book in Paris, this episode is illustrated in no less than ten phases, beginning with the

²² [See the most recent discussion: Weitzmann, "The Wanderings of the Imperial Lectionary on Mt. Athos," *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, 7 (1969), pp. 239 ff. A number of color plates are presented in Weitzmann, *Aus den Bibliotheken des Athos* (Hamburg, 1963), pp. 65 ff.]

Fig. 238 Vatican, *Biblioteca. Cod. gr. 1156, fol. 281^r. Return from Egypt*



healing proper and ending with the healed blind man worshipping Christ,²³ while the Florentine Gospel book has only four,²⁴ the first of which, representing the meeting before the healing, is not duplicated in the Paris codex, so that altogether the narrative cycle exists in at least eleven phases. One might have expected that the illustrator of the Dionysiu Lectionary would select the most important phase, the actual healing in which Christ touches the eyes of the blind man, as the headpiece of the lection. Instead he chose the very first phase, the meeting before the healing as represented in the Florentine Gospel. The space between the dignified figure of Christ and the slender blind man, who is depicted in an expressive silhouette, is filled by Peter standing in an elegant contrapposto beside a second Apostle, and the general effect of this very balanced composition is an enhance-

²³ Omont, *Évangiles*, pls. 159–61.

²⁴ Millet, *Recherches*, fig. 663 (where the first three phases are reproduced).

Fig. 239 Mount Athos, *Dionysiu. Cod. 587, fol. 26^v. Healing of the Blind Man*



ment of the hieratic element in comparison with the same scene in the Florentine Gospel where it is part of a continuous story.

Scholars studying the text of the lectionary are familiar with the incipits or opening formulae like τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ and εἶπεν ὁ κύριος which were added to the Gospel readings when, after their cutting up into lections, they needed an introductory phrase.²⁵ On occasion these phrases are quite lengthy, like that to the lection for 14 September which reads τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ συμβούλιον ἐποίησαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ὅπως αὐτὸν ἀπολέσωσιν καὶ παρεγένοντο πρὸς πιλάτον λέγοντες ἄρον ἄρον σταύρωσον αὐτόν. In a twelfth-century lectionary in the Morgan Library in New York (cod. 692. Fig. 240)²⁶ this very phrase

²⁵ E. C. Colwell and D. W. Riddle, *Prolegomena to the Study of the Lectionary Text of the Gospels* ("Studies in the Lectionary Text of the Greek New Testament," 1 [Chicago, 1933]), pp. 1 ff.

²⁶ B. da Costa Greene and M. P. Harrsen, *The Pierpont Morgan Library. Exhibition of*

Fig. 240 *New York, Morgan Library. Cod. 692, fol. 222^r. Council of the Chief Priests*



is illustrated by two drawings in the lower corners of the cruciform text page, one representing two chief priests seated and holding council, and the other two more priests on their way to Pilate to demand Christ's crucifixion. Obviously, these representations could not have existed in a Gospel book where the phrase quoted above does not occur; and it thus becomes apparent that on occasion the illustrator of the lectionary had to invent new narrative scenes, similar in character to those he found in Gospel books.

In the course of time, however, the lectionary illustrator centered his attention on the most important phase of the story instead of clinging to the initial verses of the lection for his choice of the subject. On 1 January, the story of Christ among the Doctors is read (Luke

2:40-52), an event which in the narrative cycle of the Florentine Gospel book, for example, is illustrated with epic breadth in four phases:²⁷ (1) Joseph and Mary go to the feast of the Passover (verse 42); (2) they leave while Christ carries behind (verses 43-44); (3) Christ teaches among the doctors (verses 46-47). This scene is conflated with (4) Christ speaking to his mother, who stands outside with Joseph (verses 48-50).²⁸ Of these four phases, the illustrator of the Dionysiu codex (Fig. 241) selected not the first, which in the traditional way would have connected the picture closely with the beginning of the text of the lection, but the third because of its greater significance, and he added to it the parents from the fourth. Since we have already met a similar conflation of phases three and four in the Paris Gospels, its invention cannot be credited to the illustrator of the Dionysiu codex. But the latter related the two parts in a new and original way by using the picture frame of the main scene simultaneously as a division between interior and exterior.

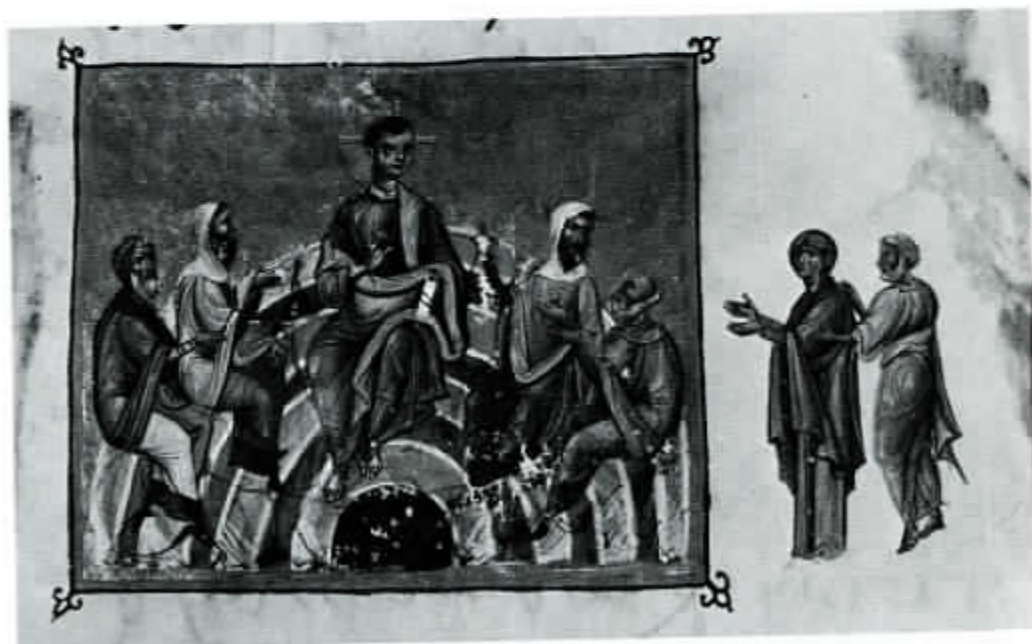
Gradually a system of selection and gradation was worked out by reducing the number of scenes and by elaborating with great splendor those of liturgical significance. While the miniatures in the Dionysiu Lectionary normally occupy only the width of one of the two text columns, in a few places we find larger miniatures extending over both columns,

Illuminated Manuscripts Held at the New York Public Library (New York, 1934), p. 20, no. 36 and pl. 36; K. W. Clark, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Greek New Testament Manuscripts in America* (Chicago, 1937), pp. 162 ff. and pl. XXXI.

²⁷ Millet, *Recherches*, fig. 656.

²⁸ In the codex gr. 510 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris the third and fourth phases are still separate scenes and Christ is represented in each of them. Cf. Omont, *Miniatures des manuscrits grecs*, pl. XXXV.

Fig. 241 *Mount Athos, Dionysiu. Cod. 587, fol. 135'. Christ Among the Doctors*

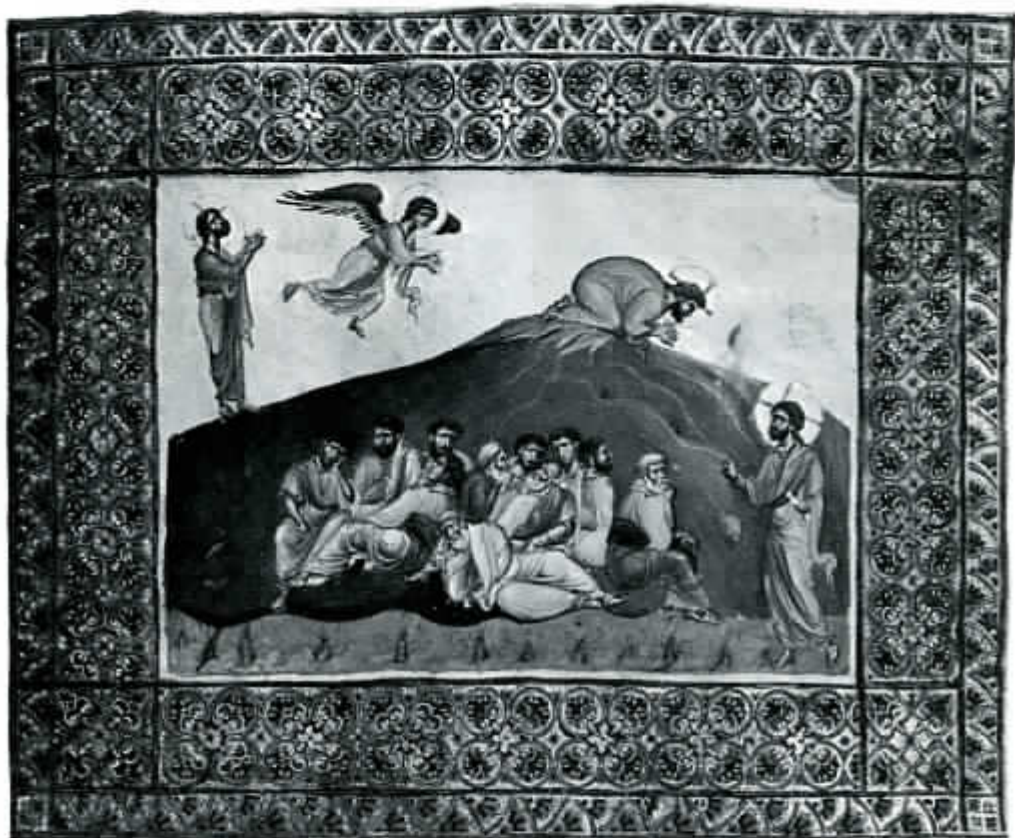


as for instance the picture of Christ in Gethsemane (Fig. 242). Within a richly ornamented frame Christ appears three times: (1) ascending the mountain and praying, (2) praying once more in *proskynesis*, and (3) speaking thereafter with his disciples. The root of this picture is still recognizable as a section out of a continuous narrative, but by regrouping the three phases, the artist unified them into a single picture—using most intelligently the ascending ridge of the mountain for the Christ praying to heaven, the slope beyond the peak for the sliding posture of Christ in *proskynesis* (whereby he created the effect of utter dejection), and the mountain as a whole as a backdrop for the group of the disciples whom he represented with a keen sense of observation in various stages of sleepiness, drowsiness, and wakefulness. Although this miniature

heads a group of twelve Passion readings preceding Good Friday, neither the first of these lections (John 13:31–18:1) to which our miniature is attached, nor any of the following contains the Gethsemane episode, which occurs in the lection read on Maundy Thursday (Matt. 26:40–27:2). As far as we can see, the transfer of this picture to its present location was governed by purely artistic reasons since the first lection, beginning with John 13:31, has no striking event which, as an introductory miniature to the story of the Passion, would have been as suitable and effective as Christ's prayer in Gethsemane.

While reducing the number of scenes from the Gospels, the illustrator of a lectionary of the same time often added scores of miniatures from other sources, particularly for the pictorialization of those feasts which are not based on

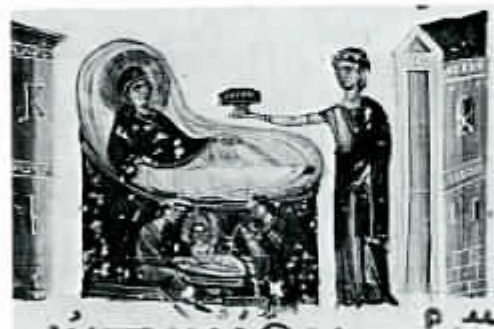
Fig. 242 *Mount Athos, Dionysiu. Cod. 587, fol. 66r. Gethsemane*



Gospel events. There are, for example, the various feasts from the life of the Virgin, among them her Birth, commemorated on 8 September, and her Presentation in the Temple, celebrated on 21 November. In the Vatican Lectionary mentioned above, the illustration of the Virgin's birth resembles and surely is ultimately derived from a Birth of Christ (Fig. 243). The artist has omitted the figure of the Child's father, while keeping the typical Washing of the Child by two midwives. The Presentation (Fig. 244) shows a greater originality and does not seem to be dependent on

any other Gospel scene for its compositional layout. Here Joachim and Anna, followed by the candle-bearing daughters of the Hebrews, present the Virgin to the priest in the Temple, and the Virgin is repeated sitting on the upper step of the semicircular marble benches of the apse of a Christian church while the angel offers her the wafer. As is well-known, the textual basis for these miniatures is the Protevangelium of James (5, 7, and 8). There is good reason to believe that the text of this apocryphal Gospel was provided at a rather early time with an extensive cycle of narrative

Fig. 243 *Vatican, Biblioteca. Cod. gr. 1156, fol. 246^v. Birth of the Virgin*



miniatures. Although no such copy exists today, a certain number of scenes from such a cycle had migrated into other texts,²⁹ copies of which are preserved from the Middle Byzantine period; and a fairly complete cycle, which, in our opinion, depends on miniature models, is preserved in relief on the alabaster columns of Saint Mark's in Venice.³⁰ The pictorial evidence points to a considerable popularity of the Protevangelium in the Middle Byzantine period, and the same can also be demonstrated by the writings of that time, as for instance the Homilies of George of Nicomedia, in which the Protevangelium plays an

²⁹ For the principle of migration of miniatures from one text to another consult Weitzmann, *Roll and Codex*, pp. 130-53.

³⁰ H. v. d. Gabelentz, *Mittelalterliche Plastik in Venedig* (Leipzig, 1903); G. Costantini, "Le colonne del ciborio di San Marco a Venezia," *Arte Cristiana*, 3 (1915), 8 ff., 166 ff., 235 ff; E. Weigand, "Zur Datierung der Ciboriumssäulen von S. Marco in Venedig," *Studi Byzantini e Neoellenici*, 6 (1940), 440 ff. [For a thorough, recent treatment of this problem consult J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la vierge dans l'empire byzantin et en occident* ("Memoires de l'Académie Royale de Belgique. Classe des Beaux-Arts," 11 [Brussels, 1964].)]

Fig. 244 *Vatican, Biblioteca. Cod. gr. 1156, fol. 268^v. Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*



important role.³¹

The situation is much the same with regard to the Gospel of Nicodemus. That this apocryphal Gospel, too, was originally illustrated in an extensive narrative cycle we know in this case not only from the Saint Mark's columns which contain several scenes based on it but also from a thirteenth-century Latin manuscript of the Gospel of Nicodemus itself, the miniatures of which surely go back to a Byzantine model.³² Of all the scenes based on the text of Nicodemus, only the Anastasis was copied very frequently, because it was the feast picture for Easter Sunday and as such had gained a widespread popularity. In the lectionary fragment in Leningrad (Fig. 245),³³ which in our opinion belongs to the tenth

³¹ J. P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologiae cursus completus . . . series graecus* (Paris, 1857-66), 100, cols. 1335 ff.

³² A. v. Erbach-Fürstenau, "L'evangelo di Nicodemo," *Archivio storico dell'arte*, 2 (1896), 225 ff.

³³ C. R. Morey, "Notes on East Christian Miniatures," *Art Bulletin*, 11 (1929), 57 and fig. 63. [Consult: Lazarev, *Storia della pittura*, pp. 139 ff., 173, n. 53 and figs. 116-18.]

Fig. 245 Leningrad, Public Library. *Cod. gr. 21, fol. 1^v. Anastasis*



century,³⁴ Christ is represented in a mandorla trampling over Hades as he grasps the hand of Adam. Apparently it was from the lectionary, where it is often the frontispiece miniature preceded on occasion only by the evangelist portrait of John, that the Harrowing of Hell spread into other media (icons, frescoes, mosaics, and the like) and developed into what one might call a canonical rendering of the Easter Feast.

The illustrated text most prolifically exploited by the lectionary painters was the menologion, which contains the lives of saints in the same order as the second part of the lectionary—also usually called a menologion—i.e., both begin 1 September. It was an easy procedure for an illustrator of a lectionary to copy

³⁴ Weitzmann, *Byzantinische Buchmalerei*, pp. 59 ff.

Fig. 246 Mount Athos, *Dionysiu. Cod. 587, fol. 124^v. St. Nicholas*



from a menologion proper the picture of a saint which preceded the account of his life or martyrdom and to transfer it to the corresponding place in the second part of the lectionary in front of the Gospel lection of the day the saint is commemorated. In certain lectionaries the pictures of the saints take an even more important place in the artistic decoration than the feast pictures from the life of Christ. Representations of martyrdom are rare, and usually the saints are depicted standing in a frontal attitude facing the spectator. In the lectionary from Dionysiu most saints, such as Saint Nicholas of Myra (Fig. 246), stand in front of a background that is ornamentalized and degenerated from an architectural point of view, but whose derivation from the *scenae frons* of the Roman theater can still be recognized. This type of background behind the standing saint is typical also of the famous menologion in the Vatican Library (*cod. gr. 1613*) which was made around the year 1000 for the emperor Basil II, as may be seen in its corresponding miniature of the same saint (Fig. 247).³⁵ Since the

³⁵ *Il menologio di Basilio II* ("Codices e Vaticanis selecti," 8 [Turin, 1907]), 226.

Fig. 247 Vatican, *Biblioteca. Cod. gr. 1613*, p. 226. *St. Nicholas*



Vatican manuscript, because of its dedication to Basil II, is obviously the product of the imperial scriptorium, it is more than probable that the illustrator of the *Dionysiu Lectionary*, who must have studied the Vatican *menologion*, also worked in the same scriptorium. Here the pictures supply evidence for the localization of the manuscript which could not be gained on the basis of textual study alone—one of those cases where the textual critic has to incorporate

art-historical information for a more complete gathering of the internal evidence of the documents.

Other pictures in the *lectionary* seem not to be derivative from other sources, but rather are inventions which neither illustrate the text of the lection to which they are attached nor any other text with which they might originally have been connected and from which they were subsequently transferred. One of the great feasts of the Orthodox Church is the Elevation of the Holy Cross, celebrated on 14 September.³⁶ In the *Dionysiu* and several other *lectionaries* this feast is illustrated by a miniature (Fig. 248) which can be explained on the basis of the

[Weitzmann, "Miniature and Icon Painting," p. 208 and *passim*, herewith, p. 272; *idem*, "Imperial Lectionary," pp. 242 ff. See also I. Ševčenko, "The Illuminators of the *Monologium* of Basil II," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 16 (1962), 245 ff.; here the recent literature on the Vatican manuscript.]

³⁶ "Miniature and Icon Painting," pp. 218 ff. and pls. 31-33.

Fig. 248 *Mount Athos, Dionysiou, Cod. 587, fol. 119^v. Elevation of the Holy Cross*



Book of Ceremonies of the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, though there is no evidence that this book itself was ever illustrated. Here we read (I, 31)³⁷ that the emperor in person takes part in the celebration of the feast in Hagia Sophia, in the course of which the patriarch mounts the ambo with the venerated relic of the Holy Cross that was kept in this church and lifts it over his head four times toward the four sides of the ambo. It is this very moment when the patriarch, accompanied by several deacons, lifts the cross while standing on the ambo of Hagia Sophia which is depicted in the Dionysiou miniature.

For many pictures of the great feasts which had become the focus of the illustrated lectionary, the post-iconoclastic period developed new iconographical schemes that were accepted as almost canonical solutions, so much so that following generations saw no need to change them in any essential point. Although the lectionary provides a proper

³⁷ Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *Le Livre des Cérémonies*, I, trans. A. Vogt (Paris, 1935), 116 ff. and 141 ff.

setting for the pictures of the great feasts, some of them were apparently not invented for this service book but for the mosaic decoration of great churches in Constantinople.

Most famous for its mosaics was the Church of the Holy Apostles whose five domes, arches, and adjacent lunettes were covered mostly with New Testament scenes, as we know from the tenth century poem of Constantinos Rhodios and from their description by Nicolaos Mesarites, who around 1200 described them in considerable detail. Unfortunately, the one manuscript of the Mesarites text preserved today is fragmentary.³⁸ The program of these lost mosaics, as becomes clear from its reconstruction based on the literary sources, was not a mere narration of the life of Christ. Only certain scenes were chosen and these for particular reasons in some ways similar to the theological purposes of the lectionary, and this explains in a large measure the close relationship between the two. Mesarites describes in detail the Metamorphosis mosaic, with which a miniature in an eleventh-century lectionary in the Athos monastery Iviron (cod. I Fig. 249)³⁹ agrees to such an astonishing

³⁸ A. Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche, 2, Die Apostelkirche in Konstantinopel* (Leipzig, 1908). [Cf. R. Krautheimer, "A Note on Justinian's Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople," *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant* ("Studi e Testi," 232, Vatican, 1964), 2: 265 ff.]

³⁹ H. Brockhaus, *Die Kunst in den Athos Klöstern* (Leipzig, 1891; 2d ed., 1924), pp. 189 ff. and pl. 25; A. Xyngopoulos, *Évangiles avec miniatures du monastère d'Iviron au Mont Athos* (Athens, 1932), pp. 6 ff. and pls. I-II.

Fig. 249 *Mount Athos, Iviron. Cod. I, fol. 305^v. Metamorphosis*



degree⁴⁰ that its derivation from the lost work in the Apostles Church can hardly be doubted. He tells us⁴¹ that in the mosaic, which occupied the northern cupola, the three disciples who had gone with Christ to Mount Tabor fell prostrate, covering their faces with their hands; that then Peter, the strongest of them, stood up as far as he could; that one of them, the older one (i.e. James), knelt with difficulty upon one knee and held his heavy head with his left arm while the greater part of his body was still earthbound; and that John did not even want to look upward, but, like a man who did not care or think of the world, a virginal man, seems to inhabit

Mount Tabor as in a house and to lie in deep sleep. Important also is Mesarites' remark that Christ was not alone in the cloud of light but Moses and Elijah stood with him. While the Iviron miniature is surely not the first copy ever made from the lost mosaic, nevertheless it seems to be the best one among the preserved monuments, and the few details which deviate from the description can be explained as changes due to the process of repeated copying.

The western cupola was occupied by a representation of the Pentecost⁴² as is the case in Saint Mark's in Venice,⁴³ which in many respects resembles the Apostles Church. This mosaic, with its peculiar compositional layout adapted to the hemispheric shape of the cupola, became the archetype of all Pentecost pictures in the Middle and Late Byzantine periods. The difficulties which arose from transforming a dome composition to a two-dimensional picture plane can still be realized by looking, for instance, at the miniature in the tenth-century lectionary fragment in Leningrad (cod. 21 Fig. 250).⁴⁴ The Apostles, who in the dome were seated in a full circle, had to be squeezed into a semicircle, and the rays descending on their heads are therefore slightly curved as they would have appeared to a spectator looking from below into the dome. The $\phi\upsilon\lambda\alpha\iota$, the representatives of the various nations

⁴⁰ Heisenberg, *Apostelkirche*, pp. 183 ff., has already enumerated this miniature among the reflections of the Apostle Church mosaic.

⁴¹ Heisenberg, *Apostelkirche*, pp. 32 ff. [For a more detailed discussion of the Iviron miniature cf. Weitzmann, "Wolfenbüttel Musterbuch," pp. 227 ff.]

⁴² Heisenberg, *Apostelkirche*, pp. 38 ff., 196 ff.

⁴³ O. Demus, *Die Mosaiken von S. Marco in Venedig* (Baden bei Wien, 1935), pp. 18 ff. and figs. 2-3.

⁴⁴ Morey, "East Christian Miniatures," p. 73 and fig. 85; O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration* (London, 1947), pp. 83 ff. and fig. 64.

Fig. 250 *Leningrad, Public Library. Cod. gr. 21, fol. 14^v. Pentecost*



(Acts 2:9-11) who in the mosaic were represented in the four pendentives supporting the dome, are in the miniature reduced to two and placed in the corners. Thus, from looking at the Metamorphosis and Pentecost miniatures it

becomes obvious that monumental art had a considerable share in the formation of what one might call the canonical rendering of the great feasts which in the lectionaries and elsewhere developed into a feast cycle.

New formulations of New Testament scenes in mosaic art, a medium which lends itself to hieratic compositional schemes, were not confined to the cupolas (where special formal conditions prevail) but originated also in other parts of the wall surface, such as the broad arches and the adjacent lunettes. There are quite a number of miniatures in the Dionysiu Lectionary which, because of their hieratic quality, one feels must have derived from a monumental archetype such as the strongly symmetrically composed Mission of the Apostles (Fig. 251), in which Christ stands in the center in a dignified position elevated on a pearl studded footstool while the Apostles, six on either side and headed by Peter and Paul, approach Christ in a devoted attitude. The fact that we deal here with an intrusion into the lectionary from an outside source is supported by the fact that the miniature is associated with the wrong text passage. Its present location is before the lection for Ascension day, on which Luke 24:36-53 is read. The proper picture for this passage would be a representation of the appearance of Christ in which he shows his stigmatized hands and feet to his disciples.

Still, the reason for the misplacement can be surmised. The proper lection of the Mission of the Apostles (Matt. 28:1-20) is read on the Sabbath of Holy Week, i.e., at the very end of the first part of the lectionary with the movable feasts, and part of it (verses 16-20) is repeated as the first of the so-called *εωθινά*. But in the latter place the Dionysiu Lectionary already had a picture of the Mission (Fig. 252) which the illustrator apparently did not want to abandon by substituting for it the monumental composition of

Fig. 251 *Mount Athos, Dionysiu. Cod. 587, fol. 32^v. Mission of the Apostles*



the same theme. Therefore, he inserted the borrowed form elsewhere, where it was not totally out of place since a composition of Christ among the Apostles also fits the Ascension passage to some degree, if not in detail, at least in its more general meaning. It is very instructive, indeed, to compare the two representations of the Missions of the Apostles.

The one preceding the *εωθινά* is a typical narrative picture in the tradition of Gospel illustration. Christ stands at the right on a hill while giving the command of the mission to the Apostles, who are represented with a keen sense of psychological observation. They are divided into two groups: one is leaning forward (*προσεκύνησαν*), the other is standing aside with signs of doubt (*έδίστασαν*). Here we have a particularly illuminating example of how two representations of the same theme may differ between a purely narrative illustration and a hieratic rendering influenced by a monumental composition.

The hieratic compositional schemes developed in monumental art had such an impact on the illustration of the

Fig. 252. *Mount Athos, Dionysiu. Cod. 587, fol. 168^r. Mission of the Apostles*



lectionary that they were adopted by the miniaturists even in scenes which, so far as we know, never existed in a fresco or mosaic. On Wednesday of the fourth week after Easter, the lection deals with Christ speaking in the Temple about circumcision on the Sabbath (John 7:14-30). In a narrative Gospel book like cod. gr. 74 in Paris this passage is illustrated by a picture in which Christ sits on one side, in front of an architectural structure suggesting the synagogue, and faces the Jews on the other while a few disciples stand between them.⁴⁵ But in the Dionysiu Lectionary (Fig. 253) Christ is seated in the center, not on a chair but on top of a flight of marble steps which are meant to represent the semicircular benches in the apse of a Christian church, while the Jews are divided into two groups, creating thereby a symmetrical and at the same time monumental and hieratic composition. This change from a narrative into a hieratic rendering is a sign of the growing independence from the Gospel model and of the establishment of a new type

⁴⁵ Omont, *Évangiles*, pl. 156a.

Fig. 253. *Mount Athos, Dionysiu. Cod. 587, fol. 19^v. Christ Speaking about the Circumcision*



of New Testament picture which emphasizes the liturgical aspect of the scene and imbues it with a sense of greater authority and permanency.

INFLUENCE OF LECTIONARY ILLUSTRATIONS

To such an extent does the lectionary of the Middle Byzantine period become the focus of New Testament illustration that a retroactive influence upon the illustration of the canonical Gospels can be observed. This process is in full harmony with the textual development. Colwell in his *Prolegomena* has demonstrated that the opening formulae, invented as incipits of the lections, were sometimes taken over by reverse process, into the running Gospel text.⁴⁶ The very Gospel book in Paris which exemplifies the characteristics of narrative illustration at the same time has a considerable number of miniatures which were taken over from a lectionary. For example, toward the end of the Gospel of Matthew the Crucifixion is represented

⁴⁶ Colwell and Riddle, *Prolegomena*, pp. 18 ff.

Fig. 254 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Cod. gr. 74, fol. 58^v. Crucifixion



three times (Figs. 254–56)⁴⁷ although one picture would have been sufficient. Of these the second (Fig. 255) is most typical for the Gospel of Matthew which alone mentions the resurrection of the dead, who in the miniature stand in open sarcophagi, whereas the third Crucifixion (Fig. 256), which represents at the left John, the Virgin, and two other Marys, is clearly based on the Gospel of John (John 19:25–27). The presence of the latter in this place cannot be explained by a misplacement within the Gospel book because in the text of the Gospel of John it is not only repeated but we find once more three Crucifixion scenes where one would have been sufficient.⁴⁸ The most reasonable assumption is that a lectionary was used as a model in which each of the four consecutive readings of the Passion (Nos. 6–9), which have the cognate readings of the Crucifixion story according to Mark (15:16–32), Matthew (27:33–54), Luke (23:32–49), and John (19:25–37), had a title miniature of the Crucifixion.

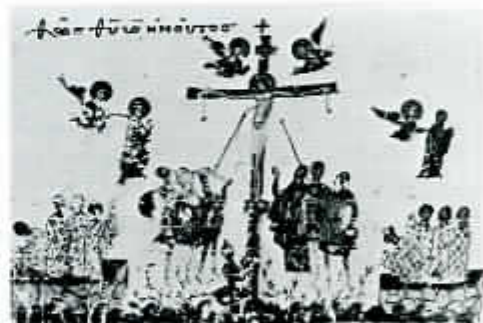
Lectionary pictures, for their content as well as for their compositional schemes, were copied not only in Gospel books but also in other texts. The Basil menologion in the Vatican starts the miniature

⁴⁷ Omont, *Évangiles*, pls. 50–52.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pls. 178–80

Fig. 255 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Cod. gr. 74, fol. 59^r. Crucifixion

Fig. 256 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Cod. gr. 74, fol. 59^v. Crucifixion



cycle for 1 September with an illustration of the Luke passage (4:16–22) in which the Book of Isaiah is given to Christ in the synagogue (Fig. 257).⁴⁹ In the narrative representation of this scene in the Gospel book in Paris⁵⁰ Christ, holding the book, sits on one side and the Jews face him from the other, and a very similar composition is found in the lectionary fragment in Leningrad,⁵¹ which obviously depends on the Gospel tradition. The composition in the Vatican menologion is totally different: here Christ stands in the center on a jewel-studded footstool showing the open book to the beholder, while the Jews, divided symmetrically into two groups, approach Christ from either side in a

⁴⁹ *Il menologio di Basilio II*, p. 1.

⁵⁰ Omont, *Évangiles*, pl. 101.

⁵¹ Morey, "East Christian Miniatures," p. 79 and fig. 94.

Fig. 257 Vatican, *Biblioteca. Cod. gr. 1613*,
p. 1. *Book of Isaiah Given to Christ*



devout attitude with veiled hands. This is obviously an adaptation of the compositional scheme invented for the Mission of the Apostles (cf. Fig. 251). It so happens that in a lectionary, the lection for 1 September is preceded by that for Saturday of Holy Week which contains the Matthew passage of the Mission. This suggests that the illustrator of the menologion used as a model a lectionary in which these two scenes followed each other, so that a fusion between the compositional scheme of the first and the content of the second could easily be achieved.⁵²

It must be the aim of the art historian

⁵² Weitzmann, *Roll and Codex*, pp. 180 ff. and figs. 190-91.

to work out, by means of a comparative method, a stemma of illustrated manuscripts and, on the basis of picture criticism, to establish families in a manner similar to that used by the text critic. One such family would comprise those lectionaries which show a decisive influence of the mosaics of the Apostles Church, such as Iviron cod. 1 with its lofty *Metamorphosis* (Fig. 249) and the fragment in Leningrad (cod. 21) with its *Pentecost* transformed under the influence of a cupola composition (Fig. 250). It must have been a splendid lectionary which first absorbed the influence of monumental art and showed its hieratic quality in stately full-page miniatures.

CLASSICAL INFLUENCES

In surveying the extant material of illustrated lectionaries we come across still another type of picture which reveals quite a different outside influence. Its chief characteristic is a strong classical appearance which manifests itself in different forms. In the so-called Phocas Lectionary in the *skevophylakion* of Lavra, of which we have already seen the splendid cover (Fig. 231), the first full-page miniature prefacing the Easter lection (John 1:1-7) represents the Anastasis with a new type of Christ (Fig. 194).⁵³ In the traditional iconography as seen in the lectionary fragment in Leningrad (Fig. 245)⁵⁴ Christ approaches Adam and, slightly inclining to him, takes his hand in order to raise him out of Hades. The new type shows Christ dragging Adam out of Hell just as Heracles dragged Cerberus out of Hell, and in his left hand Christ holds the cross as a sign of victory just as Heracles holds his club. The only conclusion which can be drawn from this coincidence of types, which surely is not accidental, is that a Heracles like that found on Roman sarcophagi (Fig. 195)⁵⁵

⁵³ K. Weitzmann, "Das Evangelium im Skevophylakion zu Lavra," *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, VIII (1936), 83 ff.

⁵⁴ For the iconography of the Anastasis consult C. R. Morey, *East Christian Paintings in the Freer Collection* (New York, 1914), pp. 45 ff.

⁵⁵ Weitzmann, "Evangelium," p. 88 and pl. IV, no. 3. [For a more detailed discussion of classical influence on New Testament illustration consult K. Weitzmann, *Geistige Grundlagen und Wesen der Makedonischen Renaissance* (Cologne and Opladen, 1963), pp. 39 ff., translated and reprinted herewith, pp. 211 ff.]

is responsible for the alteration of the Anastasis iconography, though the prototype of the miniaturist—or rather of the artist who first introduced the new type into Middle Byzantine art—was surely not a marble relief but a classical miniature.

The reappearance of classical elements in Middle Byzantine book illumination is part of a widespread revival of classical learning which started at the end of the ninth century and reached its height in the tenth century under the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, the scholar on the imperial throne. Under his guidance comprehensive encyclopedias of classical learning were made in which classical texts of all kinds were copied and excerpted, some of them surely with their pictures. From these copies the classical elements spread into Christian miniatures, into Psalters like the famous one in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale cod. gr. 139) with its numerous personifications, into the well-known Joshua Roll in the Vatican (cod. Palat. gr. 431) and, as we learn now, also into lectionaries of which the Phocas manuscript in the Lavra is not the only one to show the impact of what we call the Macedonian Renaissance.⁵⁶

The second full-page miniature of the Phocas Lectionary represents the Birth

⁵⁶ The evidence for this much debated renaissance has been adduced by the author in several works, most recently in a monograph on the Vatican Rotulus, *The Joshua Roll, a Work of the Macedonian Renaissance* (Princeton, 1948) and on a broader basis, including historical, literary, and philological evidence, in *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art* (Princeton, 1951). [Weitzmann, *Geistige Grundlagen*, for a recent discussion of the Macedonian Renaissance, herewith, pp. 176 ff.]

of Christ as the feast picture of Christmas (Fig. 258). In the center lies the Virgin in a well-understood, almost elegant contrappostic attitude and in the foreground we see the Washing of the Child, resembling in many ways the Washing of the Child Dionysus by the nymphs from which it is ultimately derived,⁵⁷ just as the Christ of the Anastasis has its prototype in a figure of Heracles. There is no reason to assume that these classicizing changes were made for the first time by the illustrator of the Phocas Lectionary. Its miniatures, like those of other lectionaries, merely help to reconstruct a Renaissance archetype which we date in the first half of the tenth century.

EVIDENCE FROM LECTIONARY ILLUSTRATIONS

For the establishment of the internal evidence of documents, miniatures are important in still another respect. At times, they furnish independent evidence of where a manuscript was made and for which locality it was destined. The textual critic depends for information of this kind chiefly on the colophon, cursed and troublesome as it may be on occasion. But in cases where the manuscript has no colophon, pictorial evidence can fill a gap where the textual critic is at a loss. The third miniature of the Phocas Lectionary represents the Koimesis of the Virgin, which like other Virgin scenes is based on an apocryphal text (Fig. 259). In its present state the Phocas Lectionary contains only three miniatures, the Anastasis, the Nativity,

⁵⁷ Cf. the representation on a Roman sarcophagus. Weitzmann, "Evangelion," pp. 89 ff. and pl. IV, no. 4.

Fig. 258 *Mount Athos, Lavra, Skevophylakion. Lectionary, fol. 144^v. Birth of Christ*



and the Koimesis, and since the manuscript is in an excellent and undamaged condition, there is no reason to assume that it ever contained other illustrations. Now it happens that Easter, Christmas, and the Day of the Dormition of the Virgin are the three feast days on which, at the time of Saint Athanasius, the founder of the Lavra, all the monks of Mount Athos came together to hold a common service in Karyaea, the capital of the little monastic republic.⁵⁸ Thus the selection of these three feast pictures provides the evidence that the Phocas Lectionary was actually made for Mount Athos.

Yet, this does not mean that it was also executed there. The style of the highly accomplished miniatures points to the leading scriptorium of Constantinople and not to Mount Athos. According to a

⁵⁸ K. Lake, *The Early Days of Monasticism on Mount Athos* (Oxford, 1909), p. 92.

Fig. 259 *Mount Athos, Lavra, Shevophylakion, Lectionary, fol. 134^v. Koimesis*



local tradition it was a gift of the emperor Nicephorus Phocas to Saint Athanasius, his personal friend. Phocas was already dead in 969, a date which in our opinion is too early for the miniatures from the stylistic point of view. But since Saint Athanasius survived his imperial friend by several decades and was still alive at the beginning of the eleventh century, the tradition that this treasured manuscript was an imperial gift to him is well borne out by the analysis of the picture style. But it was, as we believe, Basil II and not Phocas who gave the manuscript to the imperial monastery of the Great Lavra.⁵⁹

Likewise, in the case of the Dionysiu Lectionary, which has no colophon, its place of origin and destination can be made out in large measure on the basis

⁵⁹ [This thesis is expanded by Weitzmann in "Imperial Lectionary."]

Fig. 260 *Mount Athos, Dionysiu, Cod. 587, fol. 148^r. Finding of the Head of John the Baptist*



of its pictures. We have already pointed out the dependence of its pictures of saints (Fig. 246) on those of the menologion of Basil II (Fig. 247) and have drawn the conclusion that the Dionysiu manuscript is likewise a product of the imperial scriptorium, as we know for sure of the Vatican manuscript. Moreover, there is a marked emphasis among the miniatures of the former on scenes from the life of John the Baptist, including among others a representation of the Finding of the Head of John in the ninth century (Fig. 260). The representation is of the third of the three findings which took place at the time of the emperor Michael III and the patriarch Ignatius, both of whom appear in the picture. The most famous monastery of Constantinople, dedicated to John the Baptist, is without question the Studios. So in all probability the lectionary, which on stylistic grounds dates around the middle of the eleventh century, was made as an imperial gift for this monastery. In 1059 Isaac Comnenus abdicated after a short rule of two years and retired as a monk into the Studios monastery. Therefore, it is an attractive hypothesis, though admittedly it lacks final proof, that the Dionysiu Lectionary was made

by the order of this emperor at the time he retired to the Studios. In this manner the selection of the miniatures has to be judged in much the same way as the rubrication of local saints in the comes of Western manuscripts, whereby the locality for which it was made can often be determined.

In this brief sketch we have purposely centered on those aspects of the illustrated lectionary which have a bearing on similar problems of the textual critic, thus trying to make him conscious that miniatures in manuscripts, besides giving aesthetic enjoyment, can provide him at times with supplementary evidence which he cannot gather from the study of the text alone. It is true, as we said before, that the illustrations in lectionaries make no contribution to the establishment of the archetype of the Gospels in the way the text of the lectionaries promises to do whenever it will be more fully studied. But to those who are interested in the later history of Gospel and lectionary manuscripts and their place in various phases of Byzantine civilization, the pictures speak a language often just as clear and vivid as the text itself to show us the importance, function, and diffusion of the lectionary as the main service book of the Orthodox Church.