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Actual Problems of Theory and History of Art

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Сборник научных статей содержит материалы Международной конференции молодых специалистов, проходившей на историческом факультете МГУ имени М.В. Ломоносова 24–27 ноября 2011 г. и посвященной актуальным вопросам истории искусства и культуры от древности до современности. В статьях отечественных и иностранных авторов (на русском и английском языках) представлены результаты исследований в области изучения искусства Древнего мира, Византии, Древней Руси, Западной Европы от Средневековья до Нового и Новейшего времени, России XVIII–XX вв., а также теории искусства.

Издание предназначено в первую очередь для специалистов. Может быть использовано в учебной, научно-практической деятельности, а также интересно широкому кругу любителей искусства.

The collection of articles presents the materials of the International Conference of Young Specialists held at the Faculty of History of Lomonosov Moscow State University on November 24–27, 2011. It deals with the actual problems of art history and theory from Antiquity to the present day. The articles by Russian and foreign authors (in Russian and in English) present the results of research in the art of the Ancient World, Byzantium, Medieval Russia, Western Europe from the Middle Ages to the 20th c., Russian art from the 18th to the 20th c., theory of art.

The edition is addressed to art historians, historians, art students and art lovers.

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A study on the illuminated manuscripts from the parchment to the digital library online: report on a project co-financed by the European Social Funds

The manuscript *Marcianus Graecus* 360 (696) of Venice is a *Menologium* of 550 sheets of fine parchment containing the readings for the months of July and August, written by a single copyist in the so called minuscule *bouletée*. Until the 1992, scholars dated it to the 10th or 11th century¹. Only after it was generally accepted that the copyist was active in the middle of the 10th century in a prestigious Constantinopolitan *scriptorium*, probably connected with the imperial court².

Recent researches³ contain some new insights into the nature of the distinctive scripture inserted elegantly by the copyist under the 31 headpieces composed by rich frames in blue, gold and light green colors. A similar scripture rich of gilded decorations – pearls, curls, dashes, sometimes vegetal elements like leaves or palms – appears in a group of fifteen manuscripts made in Constantinople during the Macedonian rule. In analysis of these codices it is possible to underline not only the different styles of decorating the letters, but also the spiritual character of that kind of script which is called *Auszeichnungsmajuskel*⁴.

The gilded headpieces and the precious writing in the codex *Marcianus* define a significant relation between text and image. Yet, exploring the strong connection between the two different kinds of decorations – words and illuminations – could help us to develop new insights into the character of the manuscript and its connection with the holy space in which it was employed. In fact, this kind of distinctive writing is used almost exclusively in manuscripts containing the New Testament and liturgical texts⁵. Only rarely can this script be found in manuscripts of the Ancient Testament and examples of its use in profane books are ever fewer. It appears that the “decorated liturgical” was developed for its symbolic function⁶. Its opulent exquisite qualities, the mise en page, the close aesthetic relationship with the *kephalaia* are evocative of the presence of the Holy. Far from being a simple way to indicate the *incipit* of the texts read during the liturgy, the *Auszeichnungsmajuskel* gives with their preciousness concrete form to the words inspired directly by God. At the same time, the blue and gold headpieces evoke the gilded space where His holy presence dwells, as was also done in the temple of Solomon covered by gilded sculptures and engravings of cherubim, palms and flower buds⁷.

A complete repertory of the decorations in the codex *Marcianus* with the critical discussion of its relationship with the architectural sculpture will be published in the monograph which I'm currently preparing. Here I will only show few examples in order to demonstrate the use of suggestions of architectural origins in the frames of this manuscript, not only for their decorative models, but also for their symbolic meaning.

The headpiece which introduces the *Encomium on the Maccabees* of John the Chrysostom is decorated with a vine-scroll of leaves and inverted palms. Like a gilded door which leads our eyes and thoughts into the inspired words of the Chrysostom, the *kephalaia* closely cites the forms sculpted on the epistyle which crowns the templon of the church of the Panagia of Hosios Loukas⁸. The frame which introduces the martyr Aimilianos is decorated by a geometric composition of intersected circles of traditional origin, as appeared in the little pilaster of the templon in

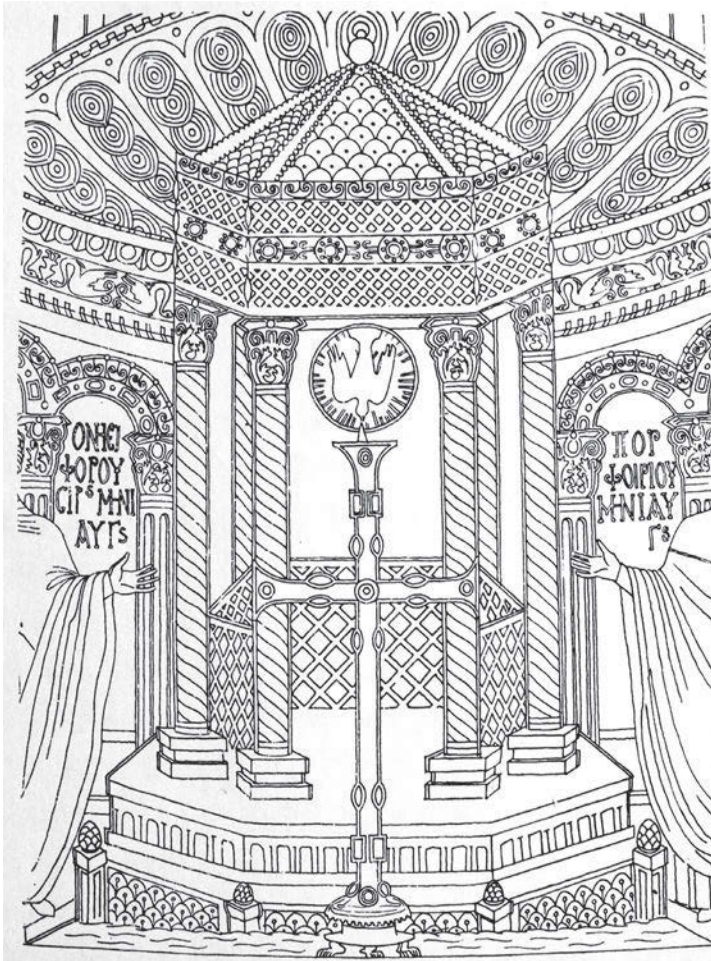


Fig. 1. Thessaloniki, Church of Saint George, reconstruction of the mosaic (from H. Torp, Mosaikkene i St. Georg-Rotunden, Oslo 1963)



Fig. 2. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canon. gr. 110, f. 293r, drawing.

the North church of Selçijker, the ancient capital of the *Diocesis Sebastena* in Phrygia⁹. Another example shows the versatility of the stylized models derived from the decorative repertory of the barriers of Justinian period. The sculptures of the church of Constantine Lips, *drungarios* of the Byzantine navy, preserved a language of articulation akin to earlier Byzantine models. Yet, in the later Constantinopolitan church of Christ Pantepoptes the epistyle of the *templon* shows a simplified version of the palms. The same level of stylization appears in the codex *Marcianus*, demonstrating the connection of its repertory to a language of metropolitan art where the carved sculpture was covered by precious metals¹⁰ and pigments.

The close stylistic relationship between these headpieces and the sculptures which decorate the Middle Byzantine *templon* gives a contribution in order to understand the performative and contextual meaning of the images. The manuscript was made to be seen and read in the larger context of a church or a monastery during the public ceremonies. The decorations on parchment create a miniaturized holy space in dialog with the monumental¹¹ holy space in which the codex was located. Both are referred to the heavenly temple, prototype of the Byzantine churches.

The connection between the representation of a sacred space and the presence of God is traditional in Byzantine Art. For example, in the mosaics of the dome of Saint George in Thessaloniki, the revelation of the holy is expressed through the Saints standing in adoration under the Heavenly Jerusalem¹². Every figure is flanked by the name written in majuscule script under the closest arch, showing a relation between scripture and architecture testified also in the mosaics of Jordan¹³ (Fig. 1). The celestial architecture in Thessaloniki cites the forms of the *frons scenae* of the ancient theatres, but the typology and abundance of the decorations seems to be referred to a different model. In fact, the figures are framed by architectures entirely covered by gold gems and pearls and adorned by palms, flower buds and geometric motifs which include the *crux gemmata* with the Holy Spirit in the middle of the composition. The same repertory is employed in the church of Saint Polyeuctos in Constantinople¹⁴, where the connection with the temple of Solomon was made explicit in the plan and dimension of the building, as well in the decorative elements, commemorated by the poem preserved in the *Palatine Anthology*¹⁵. The symbolic meaning of these gilded decorations must be considered a topos corroborated by a long theological and homiletic tradition. The relationship between the Heavenly Temple and the earthly temple is elaborated in order to legitimate the liturgy¹⁶ also in the most important building of Constantinople¹⁷. In fact, the style and the ornaments sculpted in the church of Saint Sophia were developed in blue and gold pigments by the middle Byzantine illuminators. In the *Menologium* of Basil II¹⁸, for example, the Saints are often depicted praying in a church¹⁹, or under generic architectural structures adorned with the same precious decorations in *Laubsägeornamentik* which appears in the *Menologium* of Venice.

The relationship between architecture and headpieces in Middle Byzantine illuminated manuscripts is well known and exemplified by the numerous *tempietti* and *ciboria*²⁰ depicted on parchment. Among the best known examples there are the Greek 70 of Paris²¹, the Greek I, 8 of Venice²² and the Phillips 1538 of Berlin²³. In the last of these, which contains the *Hippiatrika*, the *ciborium* is a minuscule but significant presence dominated by the large dimension of the luxurious headpiece which expresses a different, but homologous significance in glorifying with gold, flowers and palms the *incipit* of the first book. In that case the *ciborium* solves its function a little bit "shyly", may be for the profane argument of the manuscript which is horse medicine, not liturgical readings. In the *Menologium* of Venice the role of the gilded headpieces is very similar to the architectural decorations in the mosaics of the church of Saint George. They introduce the holy presence of the Saints, through their words and life, reproducing on parchment the same meanings full of theological implications. The Canon gr. 110 of Oxford²⁴ (Fig. 2) and the codex *Ottobonianus* Graecus

4 of the Vatican Library, which has been attributed²⁵ to the same scribe of the *Marcianus*, show the free interchange of such architectural elements depicted on parchment: archivolts, architraves, the so-called *pylai* and the simple rectangular frames. They introduce the theological thoughts of the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church, with the blue and gold decorations which correspond to different doors to enter in the holy temple of the Wisdom revealed in their Acts and homilies.

It is possible that the simpler frames in the manuscripts of the Vatican Library and Venice should be recognized as the blue and gold version of an epistyle. In fact, the sculptures which decorate the Middle Byzantine *templon* could explain the adoption of the trilitic system in the byzantine *kephalaia*, interpreted as a simplified version of an architrave. This might be supported by the sharing of similar and sometimes identical repertory of decorative models taken from the architectural sculpture.

The codex *Marcianus Graecus* 360 with its 31 unpublished headpieces of Constantinopolitan origin provides a significant contribution into our knowledge of these issues. As such, it was already entirely digitalized to be published online for the interest of the international scientific community²⁶.

Endnotes

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² J. Leroy, *Les manuscrits grecs en minuscule des IX^e et X^e siècles de la Marcienne*, in *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 27 (1978), pp. 25–48: 40; M.L. Agati, *La minuscola «bouletée»* (Littera Antiqua. IX.I), 2 vols, Città del Vaticano 1992, pp. 217–227: 219. His co-workers most likely included two important anonymous scribes: A and A1, to whom scholars assigned the manuscripts 43 and 44 of Patmos, decorated by a sumptuous repertory of gilded frames: *ibid.*, pp. 202–214: 205, pls. 9, 10.

³ P. Orsini, *La maiuscola distintiva 'Liturgica ornata'*, in *Alethes Philia. Studi in onore di Giancarlo Prato*, ed. by M. D'Agostino e P. Degni, Spoleto 2010, pp. 525–540: 533, 539.

⁴ That kind of script was already defined by Herbert Hunger as *Schnörkelschrift*. Kurt Weitzmann called it as *Silhouetten-Ornamentik* or *Perlschnur-Initialen*, as remembered by the art historians: H. Hunger, *Epigraphische Auszeichnungsmajuskel. Beitrag zu einem bisher kaum beachteten Kapitel der griechischen Paläographie*, in *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 26 (1977), pp. 193–210: 199–200; A. Džurova, *La miniatura bizantina: i manoscritti miniati e la loro diffusione*, Milano 2001, pp. 72, 282.; S. Dufrenne, *Problèmes des ateliers de miniaturistes byzantins*, in *XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress* (Wien, 4.–9. Oktober 1981). *Akten. I. Hauptreferate, 2. Themengruppen 7–11*, Wien 1981, in *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31/2 (1981), pp. 445–470: 459; Ead. *Problèmes des ornements des manuscrits byzantins. Deux études dédiées à Kurt Weitzmann*, in *Scriptorium* 41 (1987), pp. 35–57: 47, n. 23, 55.

⁵ Orsini, *La maiuscola distintiva* cit., pp. 525–540: 536.

⁶ *Ibid.*; Id., *Per uno studio delle scritture esposte e monumentali a Bisanzio nei secoli VI–X*, in *Miscellanea Magistrale*, in print.

⁷ *I Kings*, 6, 29.

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¹⁰ Paulus Silentiarius, *Descriptio Sanctae Sophiae, 720–754*, in M.L. Fobelli, *Un tempio per Giustiniano: Santa Sofia di Costantinopoli e la Descrizione di Paolo Silenziario*, Roma 2005, pp. 78–81; Barsanti, *La scultura mediobizantina* cit., p. 38 and note 87.

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¹² H. Torp, *Mosaikkene i St. Georg-Rotunden*, Oslo 1963.

¹³ M. Piccirillo, *Chiese e mosaici di Madaba* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. Collectio Maior. XXXIV), Jerusalem 1989, p. 190; cfr. also: A. Cadei, *La "orthographia" del Tempio del Clitunno, in Medioevo mediterraneo. L'Occidente, Bisanzio e l'Islam* (Parma, 21–25 September 2004), ed. by A.C. Quintavalle, Milano 2007, pp. 243–261: 253.

¹⁴ M. Harrison, *A temple for Byzantium. The discovery of Anicia Juliana's palace church in Istanbul*, Austin 1989.

¹⁵ *Anthologia Palatina* I, 10; R.M Harrison, *The church of St. Polyeuctos in Istanbul and the Temple of Solomon*, in *Okeanos. Essays presented to Ihor Ševčenko on his Sixtieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, ed. by C. Mango and O. Pritsak (Harvard Ukrainian Institute. VIII), Cambridge 1983, pp. 276–279.

¹⁶ V. Cantone, *Ars monastica. Iconografia teofanica e tradizione mistica nel mediterraneo altomedievale*, Padova 2008; A.-O. Poilpré, *Maestas Domini. Une image de l'église en Occident, (V^e-IX^e)*, Paris 2005.

¹⁷ Fobelli, *Un tempio per Giustiniano* cit., pp. 24–25, notes 63–71, p. 31. Cfr. also: A. Palmer, *The inauguration anthem of Hagia Sophia in Edessa: a new edition and translation with historical and architectural notes and a comparison with a contemporary Constantinopolitan kontakion*, in *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 12 (1988), pp. 117–167, with bibliography; K.E. McVey, *The Domed Church as Microcosm: Literary Roots of an Architectural Symbol*, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 37 (1983), pp. 91–121.

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²⁴ Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei* cit. pp. 13–14, pl. 71–77; I. Hutter, *Corpus der Byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften*, Bd. I, Oxford Bodleian Library I, Stuttgart 1977, n. 3, pp. 3–8; Agati, *La minuscola «bouletée»* cit., I, pp. 117–118; pl. 71; Džurova, *La miniatura bizantina* cit., pp. 73, 77, 78.

²⁵ Cfr. note 2.

²⁶ This project is co-financed by the European Social Funds and by the Veneto Region. The research has the title: “Venezia segreta. I codici greci della Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana dai depositi alla biblioteca on line” (Riferimento Programma Operativo F.S.E. 2007-2013 della Regione Veneto, alla D.G.R. n.1103 del 23/03/2010, al D.D.R. n. 520 del 07/12/2010, Cod. p. 2105/101/16/1103/2010).