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Style and Ideology in Byzantine Imperial Art

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Abstract

The study of style in Byzantine art has an interest for historians as well as connoisseurs. In imperial art, two contrasting conventions of encomium can be distinguished, both having counterparts in court panegyrics. The first is the metaphorical visualization of the emperor as a garden of the graces; this type of encomium lent itself to expression in classical forms. Examples include the Paris Psalter in art, and *ekphrasis* by John Geometres and Constantine the Rhodian in literature. A second type of panegyric praised the emperor as a diagram of supernatural qualities; this convention could give rise to images which were highly abstract, as may be seen in the frontispiece pages of MS. Coislin 79 in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The stylistic features of the imperial portraits in this manuscript relate them both to angels and to the visual signs of Christ's divinity—the same relationships were expressed in contemporary panegyrics. Similar characteristics can be seen in the famous mosaics of Constantine Monomachos and Zoe and of John II Comnenos and Irene in Hagia Sophia, where there is a change in style between the two mosaics echoing a shift in the language of court panegyrics over the same period.

When the Byzantines wrote about art, they did not discuss it in the vocabulary of twentieth-century art criticism, making an artificial distinction between style and iconography. They discussed the interrelationships of form and meaning in their own vocabulary, which was largely the vocabulary of Late Antique rhetoric. For this reason, many twentieth-century writers have accused the Byzantines of being blind to what modern critics would call style, especially styles now considered to be abstract and unclassical.¹ But a close reading of the Byzantine writers reveals that they were, in fact, extremely sensitive to styles and to their meanings, whether those styles were, in present-day terms, classicizing and naturalistic on the one hand, or abstract and schematic on the other.

This paper will focus on style as a conveyer of political meanings in Byzantine imperial art, and especially on the role played by style in visual panegyrics of the Byzantine emperors. It examines two different conventions of imperial encomium, which were expressed in art as well as in the literary compositions of the Byzantine court. The first convention was to visualize the ruler metaphorically as a garden of the graces; this was a style of panegyric

which lent itself to expression in classical forms, in art as well as in literature. The second convention was to see the emperor as a diagram of supernatural qualities; this mode of praise could give rise to images which were highly abstract.

The best example of the first style of encomium, the comparison of the ruler to a garden of the graces, is the famous Paris Psalter, which is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.² It is generally accepted that the tenth-century miniatures of this manuscript, or the models from which they were copied, were closely associated with the imperial court in Constantinople. The precise nature of that association is disputed, but as Buchthal has observed, a strong hint is given by the miniature on folio 7v, which shows King David between personifications of the two imperial virtues of Wisdom and Prophecy (Fig. 1). In the painting, David is shown holding a book on which is written the opening verses of Psalm 71, which read, in part, "O God, give . . . thy righteousness to the king's son." The personification of Prophecy points to these words, as if to indicate that the request would indeed be granted. Buchthal proposed that the painting of David in this miniature is actually a portrayal of the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitos, and that the original composition adorned a psalter which he presented to his son Romanos II.³ Although it cannot be proven that these individuals were the actual father and son referred to by the inscription in the book, an imperial context for the Psalter does seem likely. Here, as often in royal panegyric, David is the image of the emperor.

The best known painting from the Paris Psalter is the opening miniature of the present manuscript, which shows David as composer of the Psalms (Fig. 2).⁴ The stylistic qualities of this composition can best be appreciated by comparison with a painting of the same subject in the ninth-century Chludov Psalter, now in the History Museum in Moscow (Fig. 3).⁵ In the earlier manuscript, the youthful musician sits on a rock silhouetted against a neutral background of black parchment, with three animals from his flock beside him. Below, to the left and the right, two other episodes from David's early life are shown, his killing of the lion and his killing of the bear. In the miniature of the Paris Psalter, on the other hand, the psalmist appears in an incomparably richer context. Here he is joined on his rocky perch by the personification of Melody, who leans her left arm casually on his shoulder as she listens to him playing in the shade of a tree. His



FIGURE 1. *David between Wisdom and Prophecy*. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. gr. 139, fol. 7v (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).



FIGURE 2. *David as Psalmist*. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. gr. 139, fol. 1v (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

audience also includes the personification of Mount Bethlehem, a bronzed youth, semi-nude and crowned with a wreath of laurel. A comely nymph, representing a fountain, peeps at David coyly from behind a column supporting a vase of water. Around the musician cluster his animals: sheep, goats, and a dog. The whole scene is placed in a detailed natural setting, in which the viewer can find features such as mountain peaks, shaded ravines, and a stream, as well as all kinds of vegetation, including trees, bushes of various kinds, clumps of grass, and even tall reeds beside the fountain. In a word, the painting presents what modern art historians would call a classical landscape, replete with allusions to antiquity, such as the nymph of the fountain, or the mountain rendered as a handsome youth. And somewhere in the melody of this David there is surely an echo of the harmony of the ancient Orpheus, such as can be seen in a Roman mosaic from Tarsus in Cilicia, where Orpheus sits in a mountainous landscape with the animals clustered around him (Fig. 4).⁶ In this respect the miniature followed a venerable tradition in Byzantine literature and art, which associated the composer of the Psalms with the Thracian poet.⁷

This richly composed painting has been much discussed by art historians who have tried to solve the problem of its artistic sources.⁸ Here I would like to pose

another question: what was the *purpose* of such imagery in this context, in a psalter connected with a tenth-century Byzantine emperor?⁹

An answer to this question is given by the conventions of imperial panegyric, for a common device of court orators was to compare the ruler to a fruitful landscape, or a garden. The ninth-century patriarch Photios, for example, addressed the emperor Basil I with these verses: "Let us pluck flowers from the meadows of eloquence and wisdom, in order that we may crown the honored head of our wise despot. . . . You may cherish your flock in the springtime of your wisdom, and direct them by leading them to the lifebringing pastures."¹⁰ Still closer in spirit to the miniature in the Paris Psalter is a remarkable poem written by the tenth-century Byzantine court poet and orator John Geometres, who adorned the conventional metaphors employed by Photios with a host of learned classical allusions. The poem by John Geometres is both an *ekphrasis*, that is, a literary description, and a panegyric of a contemporary ruler. The poet starts by describing a setting which is like an earthly paradise, speaking of the earth below adorned like a bride with all kinds of vegetation, with plants, bushes, and trees, such as laurels, vines, ivy, and fruit trees. He tells of shaded places and glades, and of fountains, streams, and springs. He describes reeds,



FIGURE 3. *David as Psalmist*. Moscow, State History Museum, MS. 129D, fol. 147v (from M. V. Ščepkina, *Miniatury i Hludovskoj Psalt'iri* [Moscow, 1977]).

grasses, pastures, coppices, wooded vales, ravines, mountain peaks, and hollows. He talks of all kinds of flowers, and scents, and colors. He describes streams that are the baths of the Graces and could even be described as the Graces themselves, except that there are not three streams, as in the case of the mythical Graces, but thousands. He sees all kinds of wild beasts and birds, which have hastened to one place, to the beauty of the lord, just as they once gathered at the melody of Orpheus. He hears the melodious singing of the various species of birds—all sing, of course, of the lord. He asks himself, like many another Byzantine writer before him, what are the works of those famous ancient sculptors, of Praxiteles, of Phidias, of Lysippus, and of Polycleitus, in comparison to these? The poem concludes with the praises of a despot, who has gathered together all beauties and who is himself the foremost beauty of the place.¹¹

In this panegyric, the historian of Byzantine literature will find several familiar ideas. Not only is the ruler compared to a fertile land but also, in alluding to Orpheus, John Geometres brings in another common convention of Byzantine imperial encomium, the comparison of an emperor to a new Orpheus, who uses his skills in harmony to tame his enemies and pacify his dominions, just as the ancient poet charmed the wild beasts.¹² The art historian, however, will find the piece more puzzling. It is very hard to determine from the opaque language of the poem precisely what the orator is describing, for his composition shares fully the Byzantine literary virtue of obscurity. The poet might, for example, be describing a building adorned with sculptures, for which a possible parallel would be the



FIGURE 4. *Orpheus*. Antakya, Archaeological Museum, mosaic from Tarsus, detail (photo: author).

palace church of the Armenian King Gagik at Aght'amar, constructed in the tenth century. On the outside of this church there is a carved frieze depicting a vine scroll containing a variety of birds, beasts, and plants; at the center, forming the focus of the composition, there is a seated king, who might be Gagik himself (Fig. 5).¹³ But another possibility is that the poem describes an actual garden adorned with fountains and ornamental statuary.¹⁴

Nevertheless, even though it is difficult to determine precisely what the poem is describing, the general message of the piece is clear: the ruler harmonizes the terrestrial world, which in turn praises him through its grace and beauty. This concept is expressed in part through the lavish use of such classical references as Orpheus, the Three Graces, and the renowned ancient sculptors Praxiteles and company.

The poem also helps to explain the function of the imagery in the opening miniature of the Paris Psalter (Fig. 2). If it is accepted that the manuscript was connected with the imperial court, then it can be seen that the detailed landscape and the classical elements in style and imagery were not simply art for art's sake, but part and parcel of the panegyric; through David, they were intended to reflect glory on the emperor. As the poem put it, "the lord who gathered all beauties together, himself is the greatest beauty of the place." Here was a ruler who could



FIGURE 5. *Aght'amar, Palace Church of King Gagik, sculptures on east facade (photo: author).*



FIGURE 6. *Giants. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. suppl. gr. 247, fol. 47 (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).*

create order and beauty better even than the greatest artists of antiquity.

Another poem which reveals the significance of classicism in tenth-century imperial Byzantine art and literature is the long description of the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, written by Constantine the Rhodian between the years 931 and 944.¹⁵ This work on the Holy

Apostles, like the poem by John Geometres, is not only a description but also a panegyric. In his introduction, the poet says that he composed his piece at the behest of his namesake, the learned Emperor Constantine VII.¹⁶ The poet prefaced his account of the church of the Holy Apostles and its Christian mosaics with an elaborate prologue containing descriptions of the seven wonders of Constantinople, including five of the monumental columns of the city together with the *anémoudoulion*, or weather vane, which was said to have been constructed by Theodosius I, and the senate house at the Forum of Constantine. In the course of describing these wonders, Constantine speaks about their classical sculptures; for example, at one point in his prologue the poet gives a long description of the bronze doors in the senate house, with their reliefs showing the battle of the Gods against the giants. First he tells us that these doors originally belonged to the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, in the dark time of error and idol worship. Then he describes their reliefs in detail, listing the gods Zeus, Poseidon, and Apollo, each with his attributes, as well as Heracles clothed in his lionskin. Of the giants, Constantine says that they “had their feet turned in and coiled underneath them like serpents, . . . so that those who looked at them would be in fear and trembling.”¹⁷ These creatures may be visualized from the miniature of the dying giants in a tenth-century Byzantine copy of a classical treatise on snake bites, the *Theriaca* of Nicander, which is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris (Fig. 6).¹⁸

Having shown off his classical erudition in his account of the senate house reliefs, the medieval poet distances himself from possible criticism by adding the following postscript: “With such errors was the stupid race of [pagan] Greece deceived, and gave an evil veneration to the indecency of vain impieties. But the great and wise [emperor] Constantine [the Great] brought [the sculptures] here to be a sport for the city, to be a plaything for children and a source of laughter for men.”¹⁹

The reader of Constantine’s poem starts to wonder why the writer describes these secular and even pagan monuments, of which he was forced to express disapproval, before beginning his avowed task, the description of the church of the Holy Apostles. However, before he starts his *ekphrasis* of the Christian church, Constantine does at last explain his purpose. He says that he has conquered Orpheus and his lyre, as *he* does not sing unseemly songs of demons, like the pagan poet, nor of the disgraceful deeds of Zeus, nor of the Rape of Persephone, but instead sings godly melodies to his emperor. The emperor, says the Byzantine poet, is a fruitful tree of the Muses and a shining plant of the Graces; not, of course, the Muses of audacious Homer, but the undefiled virgin muses whom strong Solomon crowns and who represent the godly virtues.²⁰ In other words, Constantine’s patron, and the poet himself, possess the graces of pagan art and literature, without the defilement of their content. In the opening lines of his poem,



FIGURE 7. *Michael VII Doukas and Maria the Alanian Crowned by Christ*. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Coislin 79, fol. 2bis v (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

Constantine tells us that he has composed a *florilegium*, a crown woven of musical flowers, which he presents to his powerful and much-lauded emperor.²¹ Thus the poet, in effect, appropriates as ornaments the descriptions of the classical sculptures of Constantinople and weaves them into a panegyric wreath to crown a Christian ruler. In Constantine's poem, as in the Paris Psalter, classical details adorn Christian subject matter, in this case the Church of the Holy Apostles, in a work of art whose purpose was to glorify the emperor.

The type of panegyric represented by the Paris Psalter, richly detailed and classical in its allusions, coexisted with another mode of encomium which had a totally different character. This second style of imperial praise was diagrammatic and abstract; it is well represented by two of the frontispiece pages from MS. Coislin 79 in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, a collection of homilies of John Chrysostom (Figs. 7 and 8).²² These famous Byzantine imperial portraits, and the manuscript to which they belong, had a complicated early history, for it appears that the two miniatures were originally painted for presentation to the emperor Michael VII Doukas, perhaps in the



FIGURE 8. *Michael VII Doukas Enthroned*. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Coislin 79, fol. 2 (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale).

year 1072, shortly after his marriage to Maria "the Alanian," and were then subsequently retouched for presentation to Michael's successor, Nikephoros III Botaneiates, perhaps in 1078 or 1079, when that emperor in his turn had married the same Maria. For the new presentation to Nikephoros III, the features of the emperor were altered, especially his beard and his nose, to make him appear older; at the same time the inscriptions were rewritten to refer to the new ruler. But, apart from these alterations, the two images were essentially composed to honor Michael VII.²³

Originally, the two miniatures faced each other at the front of the manuscript. On the left, Christ, emerging from a golden sky, crowned the emperor and empress (Fig. 7); on the right, the emperor sat on a high throne, flanked by the two imperial virtues of Truth and Justice above and by four court officials below (Fig. 8).

In terms of style, these miniatures present a complete antithesis to those of the Paris Psalter. Gone are the

metaphorical graces of antiquity; in their place are two resplendent diagrams. The images are stripped of incidental detail; instead of a burgeoning landscape, the backdrop is an unbroken expanse of shining gold; there is not even a ground for the emperor and empress in Fig. 7 to stand on. The tall imperial figures show no movement, but stand or sit stiffly and completely frontally. The imperial couple hold their arms in identical positions, their faces are inert and impassive. Their bodies are flat and dematerialized, with no hint of roundness in their costumes.

One might be tempted to attribute this difference in style to the difference in date between these miniatures and the illustrations in the Paris Psalter, which were painted over one hundred years earlier. But the “abstract” qualities that have just been described do not apply to all of the figures in the eleventh-century miniatures. In contrast to Michael and Maria, the Christ who crowns them is rendered with a marked degree of movement and animation (Fig. 7). With the lower part of his body, Christ faces the emperor, on the left, but he twists his chest and shoulders as if he were turning to face the viewer. Likewise, his head is turned to the left, but his gaze is directed at us. The fact that Christ is looking out at the viewer even though his head is seen in three-quarter view gives his face an intensity of expression that is totally lacking from the frontally composed imperial images.

Similar stylistic distinctions can be observed in the page with the enthroned emperor (Fig. 8). The emperor is completely frontal, but the two virtues above his throne show considerable motion. Their bodies are turned inwards, towards the throne, but their heads are facing outwards. Truth, on the left, gazes out at the viewer, while Justice, on the right, looks down at the two dignitaries standing below. The officials themselves, while they share in the imperial rigidity to some extent, all turn their heads inwards, to look at the emperor. In other words, the frontality of the emperor and empress in the Coislin manuscript is specific to them, and not to the other figures.

A similar stylistic language was employed for imperial portraits of other periods, even for portraits which were approximately contemporary with the classicizing paintings of the Paris Psalter. A tenth-century example of this stylistic mode is provided by the well-known ivory showing the coronation by Christ of the Ottonian emperor, Otto II, and his empress, Theophano, which is dated 982–3 (Fig. 9). Although the ivory is western, probably carved in Italy, it depends closely on a Byzantine model; Theophano was, in fact, a Byzantine princess, and the carver of the inscriptions was probably a Greek.²⁴ The tenth-century ivory presents the same stylistic distinctions as the eleventh-century miniatures. The bodies of the imperial couple are stiff, frontal and flat, the heavy folds of their jewel-encrusted costumes falling without pleats. Christ, on the other hand, makes a slight but distinct move toward the



FIGURE 9. *Otto II and Theophano Crowned by Christ*. Paris, Cluny Museum, Ivory (photo: Reunion des Musées Nationaux—Paris).

emperor, turning his head to look down on Otto, and bending his right leg at the knee.

Several modern writers have suggested that the style of this type of imperial portrait is a tribute to majesty or dignity.²⁵ A review of the written sources, however, reveals that the Byzantines were willing to give much more specific interpretations to the style of these “abstract” images, even if those interpretations were diverse and to some extent at variance with each other. For example, there was an obvious parallel to be made between imperial figures such as those in the Coislin manuscript and the way in which archangels were conventionally portrayed in Byzantine art: the parallelism included not only elements of imperial costume such as the *loros*, the *chlamys*, and the *divitision*, but also the style of the portraits, for the archangels of the



FIGURE 10. *True Cross Reliquary. Limburg an der Lahn, Cathedral Treasury (photo. Hirmer Fotoarchiv, Munich).*

heavenly court were often portrayed in stiff and motionless poses. Archangels of this type can be seen in the enamels of the True Cross reliquary at Limburg-on-the-Lahn, dated after 963, where the frontal figures of Gabriel and Michael contrast with the Virgin and John the Baptist, who turn in deference to Christ (Fig. 10).²⁶ In addition, the bodies of the archangels in heaven tended to be rendered as flat and without modelling, because of their lack of materiality. The mosaic of the Archangel Gabriel in the apse of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (Fig. 11), for example, differs from the mosaic of the Virgin and Child which it flanks (Fig. 12); in contrast to the Virgin, and even to the infant Christ, whose limbs are well modelled by shade and whose bodies are firmly set upon a three-dimensional throne, the angel appears thinned out by light and gold—the gold ground gives no indication of a spatial setting and the unbroken sheets of gold in the costume dematerialize the form.²⁷

There are many texts, both visual and literary, which compare emperors to angels. The scholar and court official, Michael Psellos, addressing a panegyric to the mid-eleventh-century emperor, Constantine IX Monomachos, asks: “Shall I, then, compare you to someone? But whoever could make you a subject of comparison, you who are so great and above compare? . . . For you have outdone



FIGURE 11. *The Archangel Gabriel. Constantinople, Hagia Sophia, mosaic on the south side of the apse (photo: Byzantine Visual Resources, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.).*

nature, and have become closest to the ranks of the spiritual beings. . . . How therefore shall we complete your portrait . . . ? For you are to some extent a being with a body and without a body, both above nature and better than nature. We compare you, therefore, to the finest of bodies and to the more immeasurable of those without bodies.”²⁸ Other orators made similar comparisons, with more or less prolixity. Michael Italikos, for example, addressing John II Comnenos, called him an “angel of God, sent by Him to prepare the road against the enemy.”²⁹ And, of course, when the dynasty of the Angeloi came into power at the end of the twelfth century, the orators had a field day.³⁰

In art, the comparison of emperor with angel was suggested by means of juxtaposition as well as through costume and style, as can be observed from the ivory tip of a scepter now in Berlin, on which was carved the Virgin crowning an emperor, probably Leo VI, the Wise (Fig. 13).³¹ The emperor, on the left, is mirrored by the angel Gabriel, on the right; they share not only costumes but also the attributes of orb and scepter, which they hold in identical poses.³²



FIGURE 12. *The Virgin and Child. Constantinople, Hagia Sophia, mosaic in the apse (photo: Byzantine Visual Resources, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.).*



FIGURE 13. *An Emperor Crowned by the Virgin. Berlin, Dahlem Museum, tip of an ivory scepter (photo: Hirmer Fotoarchiv, Munich).*

One possible meaning, then, that might be conveyed to a Byzantine viewer by the style of the imperial portraits in the Coislin manuscript was an association of the emperor and empress with immaterial beings; but there was also the potential for other, and even contradictory, messages. A second possible reading is suggested by a remarkable passage from another panegyric by Psellos. In a verse encomium addressed to Isaac Comnenos, who reigned from 1057 to 1059, Psellos addressed the emperor with a series of epithets stressing the stability of his character and judgment: “You are an image of the signs of God. You are straight, true, stiff, exact, sweet, gentle, steadfast, firmly fixed, lofty, . . . a lantern of purity, a light-bringer of piety, an impartial judge, unwavering in judgment, . . . a secure counsellor, noble, unshaken in (stormy) waves.”

Having run out of epithets to describe the emperor’s immovable rectitude, Psellos made use of a series of rhetorical questions: “Where is there any anger in you, where are there streams of laughter, where are there traces of rage, and where is there babbling of speech? Where is there boasting, or violence, and a wily mind? Where [do we see] a knitting of the brows or an angry expression? For there are no unseemly qualities in you, neither easily excited emotion, nor false speech, nor severity, nor a deceiving heart, nor a gloominess that sends clouds into people’s hearts, nor a fearful glance, nor the harshness of threats, . . . nor excessive toil, nor delight, nor any graces, nor much laughter. . . .”³³

In this passage, then, Psellos describes the imperial virtues largely in negative terms; the emperor is totally unmoved by the excesses of emotion, unwavering in judgment, rigid, calm, and serene.³⁴ In short, Psellos is describing precisely the type of imperial image that is found in the frontispiece miniatures of the Coislin manuscript, portraits which are lofty, stiff, and straight, which lack any movement or expression, which are, as Psellos says, without any graces, but which shine with the light of the emperor’s virtues (Figs. 7 and 8).

Psellos calls the characteristics of this type of imperial portrait “an image (*eikon*) of the signs of God.” His statement raises the possibility that the rigid style of the images was intended to illustrate not only imperial virtues of inflexibility but also the emperor’s special closeness to God. In order to test this hypothesis, it is necessary to look briefly at images in Byzantine churches, and to examine in particular the stylistic signs through which Byzantine artists expressed the idea of the Incarnation, that is, the combined divinity and humanity of Christ.

In his panegyric, Psellos places great stress on the notion that the emperor shows no emotion, or *ēthos*. In Byzantine portrayals of the life of Christ, an absence of emotion was seen as a sign of His divine status, while, conversely, the showing of feeling was a sign of His

humanity. The idea was often expressed in Byzantine hymns and sermons, as well as in descriptions of works of art. Preachers and hymnographers, for example, said that Christ wept at the death of Lazarus, as the Gospel tells us, in order to display His human nature.³⁵ They also said that Mary wept over her son's tomb, because she was really the mother of Christ. We can find a clear example of such an interpretation applied to art in the Patriarch Photios's famous description of an image of the Virgin and Child, which he says was the first to be restored in the church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople after the ravages of iconoclasm: "A virgin mother, with a virgin's and a mother's gaze, dividing in indivisible form her temperament between both capacities. . . . For, as it were, she fondly turns her eyes on her begotten Child in the affection of her heart, yet assumes the expression of a detached and imperturbable mood at the passionless and wondrous nature of her offspring, and composes her gaze accordingly."³⁶ This passage is an apt description of many Byzantine images of the Virgin and Child, including the mosaic in the main apse of Hagia Sophia, where the Virgin does indeed assume a distant and detached expression while at the same time holding her Child (Fig. 12).³⁷

A more explicit statement of the doctrinal significance of facial expression in images of Mary can be found in the description of the mosaics in the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, which was written by Nicholas Mesarites between 1198 and 1203. Speaking of the Virgin in the Nativity scene, Mesarites said that "she lies on a mattress . . . showing the face of a woman who has just been in pain—even though she escaped the pangs of labor—in order that the dispensation of the incarnation might not be looked upon with suspicion, as trickery."³⁸ A visual parallel to this remarkable statement can be found in the newly cleaned frescoes of Hosios David in Thessaloniki, which are approximately contemporary with Mesarites' *ekphrasis*. The face of Mary in the Nativity scene, with its deeply arched brow line, does indeed appear to express fatigue and perhaps a hint of sorrow, if not of pain (Fig. 14).³⁹

The Byzantine writers on art tell us, then, that the expression of emotion on faces was an index of Christ's humanity, while, conversely, an impassive or detached expression denoted his divinity. The same was true of movement. Psellos, it will be remembered, listed a lack of movement as one of the "signs of God" that could be seen in imperial images. We can find confirmation of this idea in the late ninth-century description by the emperor Leo VI of the mosaics in the church constructed by his father-in-law, Stylianus Zaoutzas. Although this building no longer survives, it is possible to illustrate the emperor's remarks by reference to the contemporary mosaics of the Ascension in the dome of Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki (Figs. 15–18).⁴⁰ At the summit of the church, says Leo, there are



FIGURE 14. *The Virgin from the Nativity. Thessaloniki, Hosios David, fresco, detail (photo: from E. N. Tsigaridas, *Oi toichographies tēs monēs Latomou Thessalonikēs* [Thessaloniki, 1986], pl. 7).*

angelic beings who "are the messengers of God's communications to men" and of whom some, namely the *polyommata* are "continually turned toward" the Creator,⁴¹ that is, frozen in poses of perpetual deference. In such a fashion, the two angels who support the feet of the ascending Christ at the top of the dome in Hagia Sophia flank their master in rigid symmetry (Fig. 15). On the other hand, in the scenes of Christ's Incarnation, Leo says that all is movement. In the Ascension mosaic, for example, he tells how each of the Apostles is depicted in a different pose: "His disciples are standing there, fashioned with such lifelike character by the painter, that they seem indeed to be seized by the various emotions of living persons (here Leo uses the word *ēthos*). One of them gives the impression of following the ascending [Christ] with his eyes; another is seen to be all ears, attempting to capture the meaning of the words that are uttered above . . . ; another is pensive because of his astonishment; another is filled with wonderment and fear."⁴² This passage is closely matched by the mosaic in Thessaloniki, in which there is one Apostle staring upward (Fig. 16), another who is "all ears" as he inclines his head to hear the sounds from above (Fig. 17), another who is pensive, cradling his cheek in his hand (Fig. 18).⁴³ The artist has made a conscious attempt to vary their poses, in contrast to the motionless tableau of Christ above, enthroned frontally and flanked by symmetrical angels.

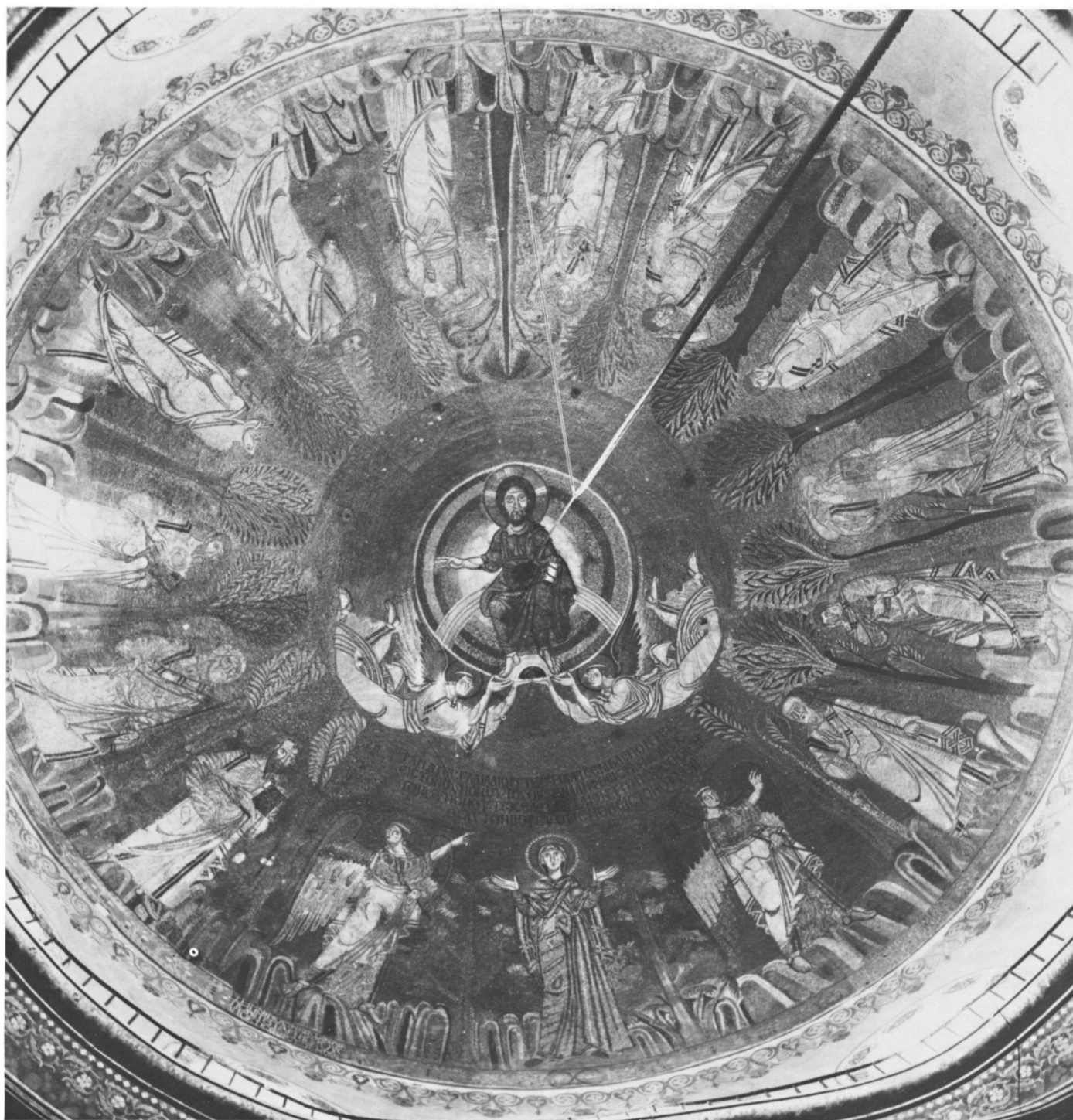


FIGURE 15. *The Ascension. Thessaloniki, Hagia Sophia, mosaic in the dome (photo: Lykides)*

Another example of this distinction between immobility and movement, as signs of the divine and the human, can be found in a comparison of two Byzantine coins, a gold *solidus* issued by the emperor Alexander in 912–913 (Fig. 19) and a *solidus* issued a few years later by Romanos I, in 921 (Fig. 20). The earlier coin shows the

emperor being crowned by a saint with a long beard, a long tunic, and a mantle attached over his chest (Fig. 19). According to the latest and most convincing interpretation, the saint is St. John the Baptist.⁴⁵ This coronation is, then, an imitation of the Baptism of Christ, for the parallel between imperial anointing and Christ's Baptism



FIGURE 16. *Apostle from the Ascension. Thessaloniki, Hagia Sophia, mosaic in the dome, detail (photo: Lykides).*



FIGURE 17. *Apostle from the Ascension. Thessaloniki, Hagia Sophia, mosaic in the dome, detail (photo: Lykides)*



FIGURE 18. *Apostle from the Ascension. Thessaloniki, Hagia Sophia, mosaic in the dome (photo: Lykides)*



FIGURE 19. *Gold solidus of Alexander, reverse. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks Collection (photo: Byzantine Visual Resources, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.).*



FIGURE 20. *Gold solidus of Romanos I, obverse. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks Collection (photo: Byzantine Visual Resources, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.).*

was a familiar theme in imperial ideology.⁴⁶ The coin of Alexander, however, is an unusually graphic statement of the idea, for here the emperor appears to virtually take the place of Christ, especially if the viewer has in mind the typical Middle Byzantine iconography of the Baptism.⁴⁷ It is perhaps not altogether surprising that this coin type was not repeated again by later emperors. The coin of Romanos I shows the emperor being crowned not by John the Baptist, but by his master, Christ (Fig. 20); the relationship between emperor and Christ is no longer one of parallelism, but of definite subservience of the one to the other.

The shift in meaning between the two coins is accompanied by significant differences in the stylistic language employed by the die-cutters. In each case, the pose of the emperor is completely frontal. But when the emperor is crowned by John the Baptist, John is in motion, turning toward the emperor, so that the saint is seen in three-quarter view. On the other hand, when it is Christ who crowns, Christ is set completely frontally and, furthermore, at a slightly higher level than the emperor.

Returning, then, to the portrait of the emperor and empress in the Coislin manuscript, we find a number of paradoxes (Fig. 7). The message of the iconography is clear: Christ emerges from heaven to crown the imperial pair, who are thus his subjects. But the *style* suggests the possibility of a different meaning, one might say of a subtext, for both emperor and empress can be said to share in the conventional signs of Christ's divinity, that is, they are motionless and their faces are impassive. Christ, on the other hand, is shown with a liveliness of pose and expression that is characteristic of his human nature. In this painting, the divinity of Christ is shown not by style, but by iconography; for his body is cut off below the waist. In his description of the mosaics in the church built by Stylianus Zaoutzas, Leo VI tells us specifically that the device of cutting off the lower part of Christ's body was a way of suggesting that the Incarnation of Christ did not detract from his sublimity or majesty.⁴⁸

The style of the imperial portraits in the Coislin manuscript can, then, yield two different meanings, which are apparently at variance with each other. That is, the



FIGURE 21. *Constantine IX Monomachos and Zoe Making Offerings to Christ. Constantinople, Hagia Sophia, mosaic in south gallery (photo: Byzantine Visual Resources, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.).*

manner in which the emperor and empress are painted can associate them at the same time with the archangels, who are the lieutenants of Christ, and with Christ himself, the supreme ruler.

The ambiguity of these messages is as characteristic of the literary panegyrics as of the visual. According to Psellos, one of the acknowledged characteristics of Byzantine rhetoric was the display of ambiguous statements.⁴⁹ In Byzantine literature, as in art, an encomium may state explicitly that the emperor is the faithful servant of God, but at the same time will hint at a higher status, of parallelism or even equality between the human and the divine rulers. For instance, a very common image of the panegyrics was to compare the emperor to the sun, and, by implication, to Christ, the Sun of Justice.⁵⁰ Already in the sixth century, the poet Corippus, describing the accession of Justin II, spoke of “the equal rising of two suns,” implying through his choice of words that one sun was the emperor, the other the Sun of Justice.⁵¹ In the twelfth century, the poet Theodore Prodromos, addressing John II Comnenos on the feast of the Baptism, declared that the city of Constantinople shone in the rays of two suns, the one being Christ, the Sun of Justice, standing naked in the Jordan, the other being the shining light of the emperor.⁵² Psellos, too, hints at this convention, for in the same panegyric in which he compares Constantine Monomachos to the angels, he says that the emperor is greater than the physical sun, higher, in fact, than everything that appears to the senses.⁵³ And here, of course, is another potential interpretation of the gold in the imperial portraits; not only does gold dematerialize the imperial



FIGURE 22. *John II Comnenos and Irene Making Offerings to the Virgin and Child. Constantinople, Hagia Sophia, mosaic in south gallery (photo: Byzantine Visual Resources, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.).*

images, and thus associate them with the angelic beings, but also it can allude to the light of the Sun of Justice. To quote from a panegyric addressed by John Camateros to Isaac II, the emperor rises as the Sun of Justice and shines richly upon his subjects with his gold-gleaming rays.⁵⁴

The language of the literary panegyrics is deliberately opaque and ambiguous, now intimating the emperor’s divine qualities, now drawing back from statements that could be considered blasphemous. In art, likewise, the style of the imperial portraits hints at the status of the emperor; he may be, in the more orthodox sense, an archangel, the chief lieutenant under God; but, by a different reading, he might be seen to share in the qualities of God himself.

A final point to be made is that the language of Byzantine panegyric, conventional though it was, was capable of nuances of meaning, which can be perceived in art as well as in literature. Such nuances can be seen, for example, in a comparison of the two famous panels in the south gallery of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, each of which shows an emperor and an empress making donations to the church, in the person of Christ (Figs. 21 and 22).⁵⁵ The earlier panel shows in its present state Constantine Monomachos and his elderly bride, the empress Zoe, presenting a bag of money and a scroll recording a gift to Christ, who is enthroned between them (Fig. 21). In this mosaic the emperor and the empress are clearly in motion, turning their shoulders toward Christ as they offer their donations, and bowing their heads as a sign of respect. This composition leaves the viewer in no doubt of the emperor’s subservience to Christ; the statement is similar to one that is made by Psellos in the course of his panegyric to the same emperor: “What the creator is in relation to you, this you may be in relation to us (your subjects).”⁵⁶

The other imperial panel is over seventy years later, and depicts John II Comnenos, with his empress Irene (Fig. 22).⁵⁷ There are some significant differences in both style and iconography. Most obviously, the emperor and empress now present their gifts to the Virgin and Child, instead of to the enthroned Christ. But in addition, the portraits of the imperial couple are in this case almost completely frontal. Only in the sidelong glance of Irene's pupils and in the almost imperceptible turn of John's head is there a hint that the donors may be deferring to the recipient of their gifts. Moreover, there is a much smaller difference in height between the imperial pair and the central figure of the Virgin. In other words, this image accords a higher status to the donors vis-a-vis the recipients. Here too, with respect to this more daring statement of imperial status, there are analogies in contemporary panegyrics. For example, in one of his poems Theodore Prodromos compares the victories of John II to the feast of Christ's Nativity, setting Christ and the emperor in parallel: "Once again," says Theodore Prodromos, [we celebrate] the birthday of Christ and the victory of the Emperor. The birth inspires awe, the victory is irresistible. Again God has been seen, [coming] out of Teman bearing flesh, and the Emperor has entered out of Teman bearing victory. The star of God announces His Advent to the Magi, but the many stars of his trophies declare the Emperor. One of them has three Persians doing obeisance to Him as He lies in His crib; the other has all of Persia bending its neck under his feet. . . . Both of them regenerate the whole of creation, both ascend on high, both . . . defeat all the barbarians, destroy cities, increase the boundaries of New Rome, and become the saviors of the Christian clergy."⁵⁸

This panegyric not only compares the emperor directly to the infant Christ, but even does so to the detriment of the latter; for the emperor's victory over *all* the Persians is compared favorably to Christ's receiving the homage of only three. The audacity of the comparison goes beyond the flatteries which Psellos addressed to Constantine Monomachos. It is not inappropriate to see a similar degree of hyperbole in the style of the contemporary portraits of John II and his spouse in Hagia Sophia, where both emperor and empress partake more of the divine attributes of immobility and frontality than was the case in the earlier mosaic.

The hyperbolic language of the panegyric by Theodore Prodromos was repeated in encomia directed to later twelfth-century emperors.⁵⁹ The Byzantine emperors of the twelfth century were, in real terms, less powerful than their predecessors, but their spoken and visual propaganda compensated by making more of their special relationship to God.

In summary, different artistic styles could carry definite messages about imperial power and status. The style could either be classicizing and naturalistic, as in the case

of the Paris Psalter, or it could be highly abstract, as in the case of the imperial portraits in Hagia Sophia. But, in either case, style was part and parcel of the message of the work of art. Style did have a political history in Byzantium, and that history is a valid subject of enquiry for the art historian.

NOTES

1. See, most recently, the discussion by R. Grigg, "Byzantine Credulity as an Impediment to Antiquarianism," *Gesta*, XXVI/1 (1987), 3–9, esp. 3.
2. MS. gr. 139. The very extensive bibliography on this manuscript is listed by A. Cutler, *The Aristocratic Psalters in Byzantium* (Paris, 1984), 70–71.
3. H. Buchthal, "The Exaltation of David," *JWCI*, XXXVII (1974), 330–33.
4. Fol. 1v.
5. MS. 129D, fol. 147v. Facsimile edition: M. V. Ščepkina, *Miniatjur'i Hludovskoj Psalt'iri* (Moscow, 1977).
6. L. Budde, *Antike Mosaiken in Kilikien*, II, *Die heidnischen Mosaiken* (Recklinghausen, 1972), 121–26, figs. 156–67.
7. K. Weitzmann, *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art* (Princeton, 1951), 67–68, figs. 82–85 and H. Stern, "Orphée dans l'art paléochrétien," *CA*, XXIII (1974), 1–16, esp. 12–14. For a critique of the latter article, see Sr. Charles Murray, "The Christian Orpheus," *CA*, XXVI (1977), 19–27. On the David-Orpheus mosaic at Gaza, see P. C. Finney, "Orpheus-David: a Connection in Iconography between Greco-Roman Judaism and Early Christianity?" *Journal of Jewish Art*, V (1978), 6–15, fig. 1.
8. See, especially, K. Weitzmann, "Der Pariser Psalter MS. Grec. 139 und die mittelbyzantinische Renaissance," *Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, VI (1929), 178–94, and H. Buchthal, *The Miniatures of the Paris Psalter. A Study in Middle Byzantine Painting* (London, 1938), 13–17.
9. For recent discussions of the problem of classicism in tenth-century Byzantine art, see: K. Weitzmann, "The Classical Mode in the Period of the Macedonian Emperors: Continuity or Revival?" in *Byzantina kai Metabyzantina*, I: *The "Past" in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. S. Vryonis, Jr. (Malibu, 1978), 71–85; H. Belting, "Problemi vecchi e nuovi sull' arte della cosiddetta 'Rinascenza Macedone' a Bisanzio," *Corsi di cultura sull' arte Ravennate e Bizantina*, XXIX (1982), 31–57; *idem*, "Kunst oder Objekt-Stil? Fragen zur Funktion der 'Kunst' in der 'Makedonischen Renaissance,'" in *Byzanz und der Westen*, ed. I. Hutter (Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 432 [Vienna, 1984]), 65–83; I. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, "The Cup of San Marco and the 'Classical' in Byzantium," in *Studien zur mittelalterlichen Kunst 800–1250, Festschrift für Florentine Mütherich*, ed. K. Bierbrauer, P. K. Klein, W. Sauerländer (Munich, 1985), 167–74.
10. *Panegyricus in Basilium*, Ode II; Migne, *PG*, 102, cols. 583–84. Other panegyrics describing the emperor as bringer of the spring include a piece by Michael Psellos addressed to Constantine Monomachos (*Scripta minora*, ed. E. Kurtz, I [Milan, 1936], 14, line 27) and a poem by Theodore Prodromos, addressed to John II Comnenos (Migne, *PG*, 133, col. 1380B).
11. Ed. J. A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecae regiae Parisiensis*, IV (Oxford, 1841), 276–78 (=Migne, *PG*, 106, cols 912–15).

12. On this *topos*, see P. Magdalino, "The Bath of Leo the Wise and the 'Macedonian Renaissance' Revisited: Topography, Iconography, Ceremonial, Ideology," *DOP*, XLII (1988), 97–118, esp. 104–7.
13. S. Der Nersessian, *Aght'amar Church of the Holy Cross* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 25, pl. 39; S. Der Nersessian and H. Vahramian, *Aght'amar* (Documenti di Architettura Armena, 8, Milan, 1974), 13, fig. 41; A. D. Grishin, "The Aght'amar Wall Paintings: Some New Observations," *Parergon*, N.S. III (1985), 39–51.
14. I am indebted to Paul Magdalino for this suggestion.
15. Ed. E. Legrand, "Description des oeuvres d'art et de l'église des Saints Apôtres de Constantinople: Poème en vers iambiques par Constantin le Rhodien," *Revue des études grecques*, IX (1896), 32–103. On the author, see G. Downey, "Constantine the Rhodian: His Life and Writings," *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of A. M. Friend, Jr.*, ed. K. Weitzmann (Princeton, 1955), 212–21. For a discussion of the poem in connection with the "Joshua Roll," see M. Schapiro, "The Place of the Joshua Roll in Byzantine History," *GBA*, s. 6, XXXV (1949), 161–76, esp. 174, reprinted in *idem*, *Late Antique, Early Christian and Medieval Art* (New York, 1979), 49–66, esp. 61.
16. Ed. Legrand, 36, line 8.
17. Ed. Legrand, 40, lines 125–45.
18. MS. suppl. gr. 247, fol. 47. The miniature has been discussed by K. Weitzmann, in *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, 142–43, 185–86, fig. 118.
19. Ed. Legrand (as in n. 15), 40, lines 147–52. On this passage, see also C. Mango, "Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder," *DOP*, XVII (1963), 55–75, esp. 67.
20. Ed. Legrand, 45, lines 285–311.
21. Ed. Legrand, 36, lines 1–16.
22. Fols, 2bis v. and 2.
23. I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), 107–18, figs. 70, 71, 73–76; C. L. Dumitrescu, "Remarques en marge du Coislin 79: les trois eunuques et le problème du donateur" *Byzantion*, LVII (1987), 32–45.
24. I. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, "Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory," *DOP*, XXXI (1977), 305–25, esp. 315–16.
25. A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Strasbourg, 1936), 8–10, pointed out that immobility was already an ideal of imperial ceremonial in the Late Antique period; Spatharakis, *Portrait* (as in note 23), 254–55; C. Jolivet-Lévy, "L'image du pouvoir dans l'art byzantin à l'époque de la dynastie macédonienne (867–1056)," *Byzantion* LVII (1987), 441–70, esp. 443.
26. M. Ross, "Basil the Proedros, Patron of the Arts," *Archaeology*, XI, 4 (1958), 271–75; K. Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels* (Shannon, 1969), 75–78, fig. 22; Belting, "Kunst oder Objekt-Stil?" (as in n. 9), 82.
27. C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, "The Apse Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul. Report on Work Carried out in 1964," *DOP*, XIX (1965), 115–51, esp. 130.
28. Ed. Kurtz (as in n. 10), 31, lines 8–19. In another imperial panegyric, Psellos speaks of the "angelic way of life" followed by the emperor in the palace. Ed. Kurtz, 34, line 27.
29. Ed. P. Gautier, *Michel Italikos. Lettres et discours* (Archives de l'Orient Chrétien, 14, Paris, 1972), 249, lines 8–11.
30. See, for example, two epigrams by Theodore Balsamon describing paintings of Isaac II: K. Horna, "Die Epigramme des Theodoros Balsamon," *Wiener Studien*, XXV (1903), 184–85 and 200. These poems have been translated and discussed by P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the Twelfth Century," *Byzantinische Forschungen*, VIII (1982), 152, 154.
31. K. Corrigan, "The Ivory Scepter of Leo VI: A Statement of Post-Iconoclastic Imperial Ideology," *AB*, LX (1978), 407–16.
32. On some coins of Isaac II Angelos, the emperor stands beside the Archangel Michael; see Magdalino and Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art," (as in n. 30), 159, fig. 13.
33. Ed. Kurtz (as in n. 10), 46–47, lines 36–56.
34. Psellos's description of Isaac I Comnenos recalls the famous description of Constantius II by Ammianus Marcellinus: "Augustus . . . faustis vocibus appellatus . . . talem se tamque immobilem, qualis in provinciis suis visebatur, ostendens. Nam . . . velut collo munito, rectam aciem luminum tendens, nec dextra vultum nec laeva flectebat et (tamquam figmentum hominis) nec cum rota concuteret nutans. . . ." (*Res Gestae*, 16.10.9, ed. J. C. Rolfe, I [Cambridge, Mass., 1982], 247); cited by Grabar, *L'empereur* (as in n. 25), 10, n. 2.
35. St. John Chrysostom, "In Joannem homilia LXIII," *PG*, 59, col. 350; Andrew of Crete, "Canon in Lazarum," *PG*, 97, col. 1388. See T. Baseu, "N. Mesarites und seine Beschreibung der Apostelkirche in Konstantinopel" (Dissertation, University of Vienna, 1987), 91.
36. *Homilia XVII*, ed. B. Laourdas (Salonica, 1959), 167; Translation by C. Mango, *The Homilies of Photius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), 290. The sermon is discussed by R. Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and its Icons* (London, 1985), 143–60.
37. On the question whether Photios was describing the mosaic now seen in the apse of Hagia Sophia, see, most recently, N. Oikonomidès, "Some Remarks on the Apse Mosaic of St. Sophia," *DOP*, XXXIX (1985), 111–15.
38. *Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople*, ed. G. Downey (*Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s., XLVII, pt. 6 (1957), 877–78; cited by E. Kitzinger, "The Hellenistic Heritage in Byzantine Art," *DOP*, XVII (1963), 104.
39. D. Mouriki, "Stylistic Trends in Monumental Painting of Greece during the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *DOP*, XXXIV–XXXV (1980–1981), 77–124, esp. 121, fig. 90. E. N. Tsigaridas, *Oi toichographies tēs monēs Latomou Thessalonikēs kai ē byzantinē zōgraphikē tou 12ou aiōna* (Thessaloniki, 1986), 107, pl. 7.
40. On the date, see K. Theocharidou, "Ta psēphidōta tou troullou stēn Agia Sophia Thessalonikēs. Phaseis kai problēmata chronologēsēs," *Archailogikon Deltion*, XXXI, pt. A (1976), 265–73; R. Cormack, "The Apse Mosaics of S. Sophia at Thessaloniki," *Deltion tēs Christianikēs Archailogikēs Etaireias*, s. D, I (1980–1981), 111–135, esp. 127, n. 42. On immobility as a sign of divinity, see also Weitzmann, "The Classical Mode" (as in n. 9), 71–72.
41. *Homilia XXXIV*, ed. Akakios, *Leontos tou Sophou panygērikoi logoi* [sic] (Athens, 1868), 275–76.
42. Ed. Akakios, 277–78; translation by C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453* (Englewood Cliffs, 1972), 205.
43. On the poses of the apostles, see H. Maguire, "The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art," *DOP*, XXXI (1977), 149–150. The article by M. Panagiōtidēs, "Ē parastasē tēs analēpsēs ston troullo tēs Agias Sophias. Eikonographika problēmata," *Epistēmōnikē Epetērīs Polytechnikēs Scholēs Panepistēmiou Thessalonikēs*, VI, 2 (1974), 67–89, is unavailable to me.
44. P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, III, part 2 (Washington, D.C., 1973), 524–25, 544, pls. 35, 36.
45. Jolivet-Lévy, "L'image du pouvoir" (as in n. 25), 447–48, figs. 3–4.

46. *Ibid.*, 448. See also the panegyric poem of Theodore Prodromos which compares the victorious John II Comnenos to the baptized Christ; "Hymnus domino Joanni Comneno in baptismali festo Christi," *PG*, 133, col. 1390. For the association of baptism with imperial portraits in painting, see S. Ćurčić, "The Original Baptismal Font of Gračanica and its Iconographic Setting," *Zbornik Narodnog Muzeja*, IX–X (1979), 313–23; Z. Gavrilović, "Divine Wisdom as Part of Byzantine Imperial Ideology," *Zograf*, XI (1980), 44–52.
47. As seen, for example, in the tenth-century fresco of the New Church at Tokalı Kilise; A. W. Epstein, *Tokalı Kilise* (Washington, D.C., 1986), fig. 69.
48. "Homilia XXXIV," ed. Akakios (as in n. 41), 275; translation in Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire* (as in n. 42), 203.
49. *Chronographia*, VI, 197; ed. E. Renauld (Paris, 1926), 68. Compare VI, 190, ed. Renauld, 64.
50. Grabar, *L'empereur* (as in n. 25), 104–5.
51. *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, Book II, line 150; ed. and trans. Averil Cameron (London, 1976), 52, with discussion on 162.
52. "Hymnus domino Joanni Comneno in baptismali festo Christi," *PG*, 133, col. 1392A.
53. Ed. Kurtz (as in n. 10), 12, lines 6–10.
54. *Oratio die Epiphaniae habita*, ed. Vasilij Eduardovic Regel, *Fontes rerum byzantinorum*, I (Leipzig, 1982), 244, lines 15–19. There were, of course, other potential meanings of gold in imperial costumes and images. For example, Michael Italikos, in an address to the Patriarch Michael, associates the gold of the imperial diadem with the emperor's virtues; ed. P. Gautier, *Lettres et discours*, Archives de l'Orient Chrétien, 14 (Paris, 1972), 76, lines 1–7.
55. T. Whittemore, *The Mosaics of Hagia Sophia at Istanbul*, III (Boston, 1942), 9–20.
56. Ed. Kurtz (as in n. 10), 31, lines 1–3.
57. Whittemore, *Mosaics of Hagia Sophia* (as in n. 55), 21–32.
58. "Hymnus in Christi natalitiis imperatori Joanni Comneno dedicatus," *PG*, 133, col. 1387.
59. For example, a poem describing a lost image portraying the emperor Manuel I Comnenos and his empress Maria of Antioch being crowned or blessed by Christ (in a composition perhaps somewhat similar to that of Paris Coislin 79) addresses the emperor frankly as "another god, making a second creation"; Magdalino and Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art" (as in n. 30), 138–39. A panegyric of Manuel I by Euthymios Malakes compares images of the deeds of the emperor to icons of the feasts of Christ; *ibid.*, 132–33.