Epigram, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium

This book explores the nexus of art, personal piety, and self-representation in the last centuries of Byzantium. Spanning the period from around 1100 to around 1450, it focuses upon the evidence of verse inscriptions, or epigrams, on works of art. Epigrammatic poetry, Professor Drpić argues, constitutes a critical, if largely neglected, source for reconstructing aesthetic and socio-cultural discourses that informed the making, use, and perception of art in the Byzantine world. Bringing together art-historical and literary modes of analysis, the book examines epigrams and other related texts alongside an array of objects, including icons, reliquaries, ecclesiastical textiles, mosaics, and entire church buildings. By attending to such diverse topics as devotional self-fashioning, the aesthetics of adornment, sacred giving, and the erotics of the icon, this study offers a penetrating and highly original account of Byzantine art and its place in Byzantine society and religious life.

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Epigram, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium

IVAN DRPIĆ
To Aleksandra and Filip and in memory of Nana
Contents

List of illustrations  [page viii]
List of color plates  [xvii]
Acknowledgments  [xix]
Note to the reader  [xxi]
Abbreviations  [xxii]

Introduction  [1]
1 From composition to performance: epigrams in context  [18]
2 The patron’s “I”  [67]
3 Kosmos  [118]
4 Golden words  [186]
5 Devotional gifts  [244]
6 The erotics of devotion  [296]
7 Image of the beloved  [332]
    Conclusion  [396]

Bibliography  [403]
Index  [475]
Illustrations

0.1 Icon of the Virgin *Elpis tōn Apelpismenōn*, third quarter of the fourteenth century, Diözesanmuseum, Freising (photo: Diözesanmuseum, Freising). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [page 2]

1.1 Icon of the Last Judgment, c. 1260–80, Saint Catherine’s monastery, Mount Sinai (photo: Kharbine-Tapabor / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY) [20]


1.3 Archangel Gabriel, 1294/95, church of the Virgin *Peribleptos*, Ohrid (photo: author) [30]

1.4 Pectoral cross-reliquary, ninth or tenth century, Saint Catherine’s monastery, Mount Sinai (photo: Michigan–Princeton–Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai) [40]

1.5a–d Details of the epigram on the pectoral cross-reliquary, ninth or tenth century, Saint Catherine’s monastery, Mount Sinai (photo: Michigan–Princeton–Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai) [41]

1.6 Ivory diptych, tenth/eleventh or thirteenth century, cathedral treasury, Chambéry (photo: Damien Lachas / Direction régionale des affaires culturelles Rhône-Alpes, Conservation régionale des monuments historiques). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [43]

1.7 Porphyry column of Constantine, Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Pascal Sébah, c. 1870 / Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation Photograph Collection) [50]

1.8 Detail of the porphyry column of Constantine with the dedicatory epigram of Manuel I Komnenos, Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Robert Ousterhout) [51]

1.9 Sanctuary apse with the *Deēsis* and a section of the dedicatory epigram of the *tzouios* Constantine Spanes, 1337/38, church of Saint Nicholas, Platsa in the Mani (photo: Michalis Kappas) [53]
Illustrations

1.10 Detail of the dedicatory epigram of the *tzaousios* Constantine Spanes, 1337/38, church of Saint Nicholas, Platsa in the Mani (photo: Michalis Kappas) [53]

1.11 Detail of the dedicatory epigram of Justinian I and Theodora, mid-520s, church of Saints Sergios and Bakchos, Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: author) [55]

1.12 Steatite *panagiarion* of Alexios Komnenos Angelos, fourteenth century, formerly in the Panteleimon monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Kondakov 1902, pl. XXXI) [59]

1.13 Mosaic of the Striding Lion, fifth century, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore (photo: Mitro Hood / The Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore) [64]

2.1 Embroidered *podea* (?) with the archangel Michael and the supplicant Manuel, fourteenth or early fifteenth century, Museo di Palazzo Ducale, Urbino (photo: Soprintendenza per i Beni Storici Artistici ed Etnoantropologici delle Marche, Urbino). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [68]

2.2 Dedicatory epigram, 1314/15, church of the *Anastasis*, Berroia (photo: Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Ημαθίας, Berroia) [73]

2.3 Exonarthex of the cathedral church of Hagia Sophia, Ohrid (photo: Zoran Letra) [76]

2.4 Dedicatory epigram of the archbishop Gregory, 1313/14, cathedral church of Hagia Sophia, Ohrid (photo: Zoran Letra) [76]

2.5 Church of the Dormition of the Virgin, Skripou in Boeotia (photo: Amy Papalexandrou) [77]

2.6 Dedicatory epigram of the *prōtopatharios* Leo, 873/74, church of the Dormition of the Virgin, Skripou in Boeotia (photo: Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, Thebes) [78]

2.7 Church of the *Hagia Monē*, Areia (photo: Christina Pinatsi) [81]

2.8 Dedicatory epigram of the bishop Leo, 1149, church of the *Hagia Monē*, Areia (photo: Christina Pinatsi) [82]

2.9 Dedicatory mosaic panel with the Virgin, Christ, and George of Antioch, c. 1143–51, Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio, Palermo (photo: Alfredo Dagli Orti / Art Resource, NY) [83]

2.10 Medallion with the Virgin and Child and the dedicatory epigram of the *prōtostratōr* John Phrangopoulos, c. 1430, church of the Virgin *Pantanassa*, Mistra (photo: Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Λακωνίας, Sparta) [84]
Illustrations

2.11a–b Seal of Basil, metropolitan of Thessalonike, middle of the twelfth century, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC (photo: Dumbarton Oaks, Byzantine Collection, Washington, DC) [106]

2.12 Icon of Saint Irene with the supplicant Nicholas, eighth or ninth century, Saint Catherine’s monastery, Mount Sinai (photo: Michigan–Princeton–Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai) [109]

2.13 Joshua before the archangel and the entombment of Joshua, so-called Mēnologion of Basil II, Ms. Vat. gr. 1613, p. 3, c. 1000, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (photo: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana) [110]

2.14 Embroidered paten veil with the Communion of the Apostles, twelfth century, cathedral treasury, Halberstadt (photo: Juraj Lipták / Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt) [112]

2.15 Embroidered chalice veil with the Communion of the Apostles, twelfth century, cathedral treasury, Halberstadt (photo: Juraj Lipták / Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt) [113]

3.1 Icon of Christ with the silver frame dedicated by the archbishop Demetrios Chomatenos, 1216/17–c. 1236, formerly in the church of the Virgin Peribleptos, Ohrid (photo: after Filov 1922) [119]

3.2 Personification of Ktisis from the basilica at Ras al-Hilal, sixth century, Apollonia Museum, Souza/Sozousa (photo: Jane Chick) [122]

3.3 Personification of Kosmēsis from the basilica at Ras al-Hilal, sixth century, Apollonia Museum, Souza/Sozousa (photo: Jane Chick) [123]

3.4 Metropolis of Saints Theodores, Serres (photo: author) [126]

3.5 The Ascension of Christ, middle of the eleventh century, cathedral church of Hagia Sophia, Ohrid (photo: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY) [128]

3.6 Front cover of the so-called Phokas or Skeuophylakion Lectionary, tenth or eleventh century, Great Lavra, Mount Athos (photo: Kurt Weitzmann Archive, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University) [131]

3.7 Icon of Saint John the Theologian, twelfth century (with fifteenth- and nineteenth-century repainting), monastery of Saint John the Theologian, Patmos (photo: Monastery of Saint John the Theologian, Patmos) [133]
Illustrations xi

3.8 Icon of Saint Nicholas, c. 1390, monastery of the Great Meteoron in Thessaly (photo: after M. Chatzedakes and D. Sophianos, To Μεγάλο Μετέωρο: Ιστορία και Τέχνη [Athens: Interamerican, 1990], p. 61) [134]

3.9 Precious-metal appliqués of the icon of Saint Nicholas, c. 1390, monastery of the Great Meteoron in Thessaly (photo: after Subotić 1992, fig. 11) [135]

3.10 Icon of the Virgin Akatamachētos, fourteenth century, Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens (photo: Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens) [137]

3.11 Icon of the Transfiguration of Christ, 886, from the Zarzma monastery, Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi (photo: Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi) [138]

3.12 Front cover of Codex gr. I, 53 (= 966), fourteenth century, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice (photo: Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo – Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana) [151]


3.14 Staurothēkē, twelfth century (central field) and late thirteenth or early fourteenth century (frame), cathedral treasury, Esztergom (photo: Attila Mudrák / Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption and Saint Adalbert Cathedral Treasury, Esztergom). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [159]

3.15 Croce degli Zaccaria (obverse), restored 1278–83, cathedral treasury, Genoa (photo: D. Vinco / Comune di Genova, Archivio fotografico dei Musei di Strada Nuova) [162]

3.16 Croce degli Zaccaria (reverse), restored 1278–83, cathedral treasury, Genoa (photo: D. Vinco / Comune di Genova, Archivio fotografico dei Musei di Strada Nuova) [163]


3.18 Saint Onouphrios, 1270/71, church of Saint Nicholas at Manastir near Prilep (photo: Giorgos Fousteris) [171]
Illustrations

3.19 Portrait of Michael Philanthropenos and his wife Anna, *Typikon* of the convent of the Virgin *Bebaia Elpis*, Ms. Lincoln College gr. 35, fol. 4r, c. 1330s, Bodleian Library, Oxford (photo: Rector and Fellows of Lincoln College, Oxford) [176]

3.20 Khludov Psalter, Ms. gr. 129d, fol. 67r, ninth century, State Historical Museum, Moscow (photo: State Historical Museum, Moscow) [183]

4.1 Saint James the Persian, back of a double-sided icon, late twelfth century, Holy Bishopric of Paphos, Paphos (photo: Giorgos Philotheu / Holy Bishopric of Paphos, Paphos) [190]

4.2 Saint Nestor, 1294/95, church of the Virgin *Peribleptos*, Ohrid (photo: author). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [192]

4.3 Inscription of Leo III and Constantine V, c. 727–40, walls of Nicea/Iznik (photo: K. O. Dalman, 1930 / Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Istanbul) [193]

4.4 Plaster cast copy of a section of the edict issued by Manuel I Komnenos in 1166, Hagia Sophia, Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Cyril Mango) [194]

4.5 Icon of the Virgin and Child, late fourteenth century, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 127) [196]

4.6 Epigram, icon of the Virgin and Child, late fourteenth century, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 130) [197]

4.7 Reliquary-enkolpion (obverse), twelfth century, Moscow Kremlin Museums, Moscow (photo: S. V. Baranov / Moscow Kremlin Museums, Moscow) [199]

4.8 Reliquary-enkolpion (reverse), twelfth century, Moscow Kremlin Museums, Moscow (photo: S. V. Baranov / Moscow Kremlin Museums, Moscow) [200]

4.9 South *parekklesion* of the former church of the Virgin *Pammakaristos* (Fethiye Camii), Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: author) [203]

4.10 Detail of the epigram on the exterior, c. 1310, south *parekklesion* of the former church of the Virgin *Pammakaristos* (Fethiye Camii), Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Cyril Mango / Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, Washington, DC) [204]
4.11 Interior of the south parekklei̇sion of the former church of the Virgin Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii), Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Vasileios Marinis) [207]

4.12 Plan showing the two inscribed interior cornices (marked grey), south parekklei̇sion of the former church of the Virgin Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii), Constantinople/Istanbul (drawing: Nataša Žugić) [208]

4.13 Mosaic decoration of the sanctuary with Christ Hyperagathos in the apse, the Virgin and John the Baptist on the side walls, and the four great archangels in the vault, c. 1310, south parekklei̇sion of the former church of the Virgin Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii), Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [210]

4.14 Interior looking north with the restored arcosolium tomb of the prōtostratōr Michael Doukas Glabas Tarchaneiotes, south parekklei̇sion of the former church of the Virgin Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii), Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Vasileios Marinis) [214]

4.15 Cross-section and plan showing the layout of the dedicatory epigram of the tzaousios Constantine Spanes (marked grey), church of Saint Nicholas, Platsa in the Mani (drawing: Nataša Žugić) [216]

4.16 Melismos and a section of the dedicatory epigram of the tzaousios Constantine Spanes, 1337/38, church of Saint Nicholas, Platsa in the Mani (photo: Michalis Kappas) [219]

4.17 Page with a section of the reading for Pentecost Sunday (John 7:37–52), New York Cruciform Lectionary, Ms. M. 692, fol. 56r, middle of the twelfth century, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (photo: The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York) [221]

4.18 Page with a marginal scholion in the form of a bird, The Heavenly Ladder of John Klimax, Ms. Coislin 88, fol. 107v, second half of the eleventh century, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris) [222]

4.19 Labyrinth poem, Liturgical Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos, Ms. gr. D. 282 (olim Prodromos P. A. 14), fol. 3v, middle of the thirteenth century, Center for Slavo-Byzantine Studies “Prof. Ivan Dujčev,” Sofia (photo: Center for Slavo-Byzantine Studies “Prof. Ivan Dujčev,” Sofia). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [223]
4.20 Figured dedicatory epigram of the *panhypersebastos* Andrew, Ms. Med. gr. 43, fol. 142v, second half of the sixteenth century, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [228]

4.21 Icon of Christ, middle of the fourteenth century, Icon Gallery, Ohrid (photo: Zoran Letra) [231]

4.22 Two plaques with the dedicatory epigram of the *sebastokratōr* Isaakios Doukas (drawing: Dalibor Novak, after Kissas 2003, p. 451) [232]

4.23 Icon of the Birth of Saint John the Baptist, fourteenth century, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 143) [240]

5.1 Embroidered icon veil with the Crucifixion, c. 1295, National History Museum, Sofia (photo: National History Museum, Sofia). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [245]

5.2 Mosaic with Theodore Metochites presenting the church of the *Chōra* to Christ, c. 1316–21, former church of the *Chōra* monastery (Kariye Camii), Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY) [248]

5.3 Fresco of Saint George on horseback, late twelfth century, church of the Virgin *Phorbiōttissa*, Asinou (photo: Gerald L. Carr). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [270]

5.4 Embroidered *aēr-epitaphios* of Andronikos II Palaiologos, early fourteenth century, National History Museum, Sofia (photo: National History Museum, Sofia). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [272]

5.5 Embroidered *aēr* with the Virgin and Child, c. 1215–25/26, National History Museum, Sofia (photo: National History Museum, Sofia) [277]

5.6 Icon of the archangel Gabriel from the pair of icons showing the Annunciation, eleventh or twelfth century(?), Icon Gallery, Ohrid (photo: Zoran Letra) [286]

5.7 Icon of the Virgin from the pair of icons showing the Annunciation, eleventh or twelfth century(?), Icon Gallery, Ohrid (photo: Zoran Letra) [287]

5.8 Detail of the icon of the Virgin from the pair of icons showing the Annunciation, eleventh or twelfth century(?), Icon Gallery, Ohrid
Illustrations xv

6.1 Icon of the Virgin and Child, thirteenth century, Benaki Museum, Athens (photo: Benaki Museum, Athens) [297]

6.2 Revetment of the icon of the Virgin and Child, early fourteenth century, Benaki Museum, Athens (photo: Benaki Museum, Athens) [298]

6.3 Icon of the Virgin Hodēgētria, early fourteenth century (revetment) and eighteenth century (painted panel), Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 234). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [304]

6.4 Vita icon of Saint George with portrait of the hieromonk John, early thirteenth century, Saint Catherine’s monastery, Mount Sinai (photo: Michigan–Princeton–Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai) [309]

6.5 Portrait of the princess Juliana Anicia, Vienna Dioskorides, Ms. Med. gr. 1, fol. 6v, early sixth century, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna) [317]

6.6 Scene of the Deēsis, 1383/84, church of Saint Athanasios tou Mouzakē, Kastoria (photo: Michalis Kappas) [325]

6.7 Saint Alexander from the Deēsis, 1383/84, church of Saint Athanasios tou Mouzakē, Kastoria (photo: Michalis Kappas) [326]

6.8 Icon of the Virgin Phobera Prostasia, sixteenth century(?), Koutloumousiou monastery, Mount Athos (photo: Koutloumousiou monastery, Mount Athos) [330]

7.1 Icon of Christ, sixth century with thirteenth-century(?) retouching, Saint Catherine’s monastery, Mount Sinai (photo: Kharbine-Tapabor / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY) [354]

7.2 Icon of the Virgin Hodēgētria, c. 1370, Museum of Macedonia, Skopje (photo: Zoran Letra) [357]

7.3 Epithet ἡ Οἰσηγήτρια, detail of the icon of the Virgin Hodēgētria, c. 1370, Museum of Macedonia, Skopje (photo: Zoran Letra) [358]

7.4 Virgin Oxeia Antilēpsis pulling the monk Kaloeidas out of sarcophagus, Psalter, Ms. gr. 61, fol. 102v, shortly after 1391, Christ Church, Oxford (photo: Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford) [362]

7.5 Christ Eleēmōn, Psalter, Ms. gr. 61, fol. 103r, shortly after 1391, Christ Church, Oxford (photo: Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford) [363]

7.6 Icon of the Virgin Elpis tōn Apelpismenōn, middle of the fourteenth century, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas...
Illustrations

and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 314). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [371]

7.7 Portrait of Anna Philanthropene on the icon of the Virgin Elpis tōn Apelpismenōn, middle of the fourteenth century, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 210) [373]

7.8 Drawing of the portrait of Anna Philanthropene on the icon of the Virgin Elpis tōn Apelpismenōn, middle of the fourteenth century, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 211) [374]

7.9 Icon of the Virgin Hodēgētria with portraits of Constantine Akropolites and his wife Maria, late thirteenth or early fourteenth century (revetment) and last quarter of the fifteenth century (painting), State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow (photo: State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow) [376]

7.10 Icon of the Virgin Psychosōstria with portrait of the archbishop Nicholas of Ohrid, middle of the fourteenth century, Icon Gallery, Ohrid (photo: Zoran Letra) [377]

7.11 Detail of the icon of the Virgin Psychosōstria with portrait of the archbishop Nicholas of Ohrid, middle of the fourteenth century, Icon Gallery, Ohrid (photo: Zoran Letra) [378]

7.12 Icon of the Martyrdom of Saint Demetrius, fifteenth or sixteenth century, Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini, Venice (photo: Icon Museum, Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini, Venice) [383]

7.13 Icon of Christ Pantokrātōr, c. 1363, State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (photo: Vladimir Terebenin / State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg). For the colour version, please refer to the plate section. [391]

7.14 Portrait of the megas primikērios John on the icon of Christ Pantokrātōr, c. 1363, State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (photo: Vladimir Terebenin / State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg) [392]
Color plates

Color plates can be found between pages 264 and 265.

Plate 1 (= Figure 0.1) Icon of the Virgin *Elpis tôn Apelpismenôn*, third quarter of the fourteenth century, Diözesanmuseum, Freising (photo: Dioezesanmuseum, Freising)

Plate 2 (= Figure 1.6) Ivory diptych, tenth/eleventh or thirteenth century, cathedral treasury, Chambéry (photo: Damien Lachas / Direction régionale des affaires culturelles Rhône-Alpes, Conservation régionale des monuments historiques)

Plate 3 (= Figure 2.1) Embroidered *podea (?)* with the archangel Michael and the supplicant Manuel, fourteenth or early fifteenth century, Museo di Palazzo Ducale, Urbino (photo: Soprintendenza per i Beni Storici Artistici ed Etnoantropologici delle Marche, Urbino)

Plate 4 (= Figure 3.14) *Staurothēkē*, twelfth century (central field) and late thirteenth or early fourteenth century (frame), cathedral treasury, Esztergom (photo: Attila Mudrák / Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption and Saint Adalbert Cathedral Treasury, Esztergom)


Plate 6 (= Figure 4.2) Saint Nestor, 1294/95, church of the Virgin *Peribleptos*, Ohrid (photo: author)

Plate 7 (= Figure 4.13) Mosaic decoration of the sanctuary with Christ *Hyperagathos* in the apse, the Virgin and John the Baptist on the side walls, and the four great archangels in the vault, c. 1310, south *parekklēsion* of the former church of the Virgin *Pammakaristos* (Fethiye Camii), Constantinople/Istanbul (photo: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY)
Color plates

Plate 8 (= Figure 4.19) Labyrinth poem, *Liturgical Homilies* of Gregory of Nazianzos, Ms. gr. D. 282 (*olim* Prodromos P. A. 14), fol. 3v, middle of the thirteenth century, Center for Slavo-Byzantine Studies “Prof. Ivan Dujčev,” Sofia (photo: Center for Slavo-Byzantine Studies “Prof. Ivan Dujčev,” Sofia)

Plate 9 (= Figure 4.20) Figured dedicatory epigram of the panhypersebastos Andrew, Ms. Med. gr. 43, fol. 142v, second half of the sixteenth century, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna)

Plate 10 (= Figure 5.1) Embroidered icon veil with the Crucifixion, c. 1295, National History Museum, Sofia (photo: National History Museum, Sofia)

Plate 11 (= Figure 5.3) Fresco of Saint George on horseback, late twelfth century, church of the Virgin *Phorbiōttissa*, Asinou (photo: Gerald L. Carr)

Plate 12 (= Figure 5.4) Embroidered *aēr-epitaphios* of Andronikos II Palaiologos, early fourteenth century, National History Museum, Sofia (photo: National History Museum, Sofia)

Plate 13 (= Figure 5.8) Detail of the icon of the Virgin from the pair of icons showing the Annunciation, eleventh or twelfth century(?), Icon Gallery, Ohrid (photo: Zoran Letra)

Plate 14 (= Figure 6.3) Icon of the Virgin *Hoděgětria*, early fourteenth century (revetment) and eighteenth century (painted panel), Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 234)

Plate 15 (= Figure 7.6) Icon of the Virgin *Elpis tôn Apelpismenōn*, middle of the fourteenth century, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos (photo: after Tsigaridas and Loberdou-Tsigarida 2006, fig. 314)

Plate 16 (= Figure 7.13) Icon of Christ *Pantokrator*, c. 1363, State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (photo: Vladimir Terebenin / State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg)
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Note to the reader

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own. Scripture quotations in English follow the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. In a few instances however, all signaled in the notes, I have provided my own rendering of the scriptural text in English. As any attempt at consistency in the transliteration of Greek is bound to yield cumbersome results, I have used several systems. Long vowels are marked with a macron in Greek terms that appear in italics: hence *eikôn* rather than *eikon*. For the names of historical personages and locales, I have mostly adopted the spellings in A. P. Kazhdan (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (hereafter ODB). The names of modern Greek scholars, when encountered in bibliographical references in Greek, are latinized, but without the application of macrons. The system of the Library of Congress has been employed for transliterating references to scholarly works in Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Russian. All bibliographical references in Serbian are rendered in the Latin alphabet. When citing S. Lampros’ incomplete edition of the poems preserved in the *Anthologia Marciana* (“Ὁ Μαρκιανός κώδιξ 524,” Νέος Ἑλληνοκρημνήμων 8 [1911] 2–59, 123–92, abbreviated as *Anthologia Marciana*), I have included a second number in parenthesis: e.g., *Anthologia Marciana*, no. 88 (B145). This second number refers to the new enumeration of the poems adopted in F. Spingou’s forthcoming *Poetry for the Komnenoi*. The *Anthologia Marciana: Syllogae B & C*. When I use the term ‘cat. no.’, I am referring to the numbered catalog entry on a particular object within the catalog, the full reference to which is given in the Bibliography; when I give a name in brackets afterwards, this always refers to the author of the numbered entry, who is often not identical with the editor of the catalog. Lastly, Chapter 2 of the present book incorporates and expands upon parts of my article, “The Patron’s ‘I’: Art, Selfhood, and the Later Byzantine Dedicatory Epigram,” *Speculum* 89.4 (2014) 895–935. I am grateful to Cambridge University Press for granting me permission to reproduce this material.
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td><em>Analecta Bollandiana</em></td>
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<td>AP</td>
<td><em>Anthologia Palatina</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>ArtBull</td>
<td><em>The Art Bulletin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BF</td>
<td><em>Byzantinische Forschungen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMGS</td>
<td><em>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSI</td>
<td><em>Byzantinoslavica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ByzAD</td>
<td>L. Bender, M. Parani, B. Pitarakis, J.-M. Spieser, and A. Vuilloud, <em>Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents / Objets et matériaux dans les documents d'archives byzantins</em>, URL: <a href="http://www.unifr.ch/go/typika">www.unifr.ch/go/typika</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>BZ</td>
<td>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Cahiers archéologiques</td>
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<tr>
<td>ΔΧΑΕ</td>
<td>Δελτία τῆς Χριστιανικῆς Αρχαιολογικῆς Έταιρείας</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOP</td>
<td>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEBΣ</td>
<td>Ἐπετηρίς Έταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRBS</td>
<td>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSCPh</td>
<td><em>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>IRAIK</td>
<td>Izvestia Russkago arkeologicheskago instituta v Konstantinopole</td>
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<tr>
<td>JÖB</td>
<td>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEG</td>
<td><em>Medioevo Greco</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>MSpätAByz</td>
<td>Mitteilungen zur spätantiken Archäologie und byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Νέας Ελληνομνήμων</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRh</td>
<td>Νέα Ρώμης: Rivista di ricerche bizantinistiche</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCP</td>
<td>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PLP</strong></td>
<td>E. Trapp (ed.), <em>Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit</em> (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1976–96)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>REB</strong></td>
<td><em>Revue des études byzantines</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>REG</strong></td>
<td><em>Revue des études grecques</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RSBN</strong></td>
<td><em>Rivista di studi bizantini e neoeellenici</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ΘΕΘΕ</strong></td>
<td>Θρησκευτική και Ήθικη Εγκυκλοπαίδεια, 12 vols. (Athens: Αθανάσιος Μαρτίνος, 1962–68)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TM</strong></td>
<td><em>Travaux et mémoires</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VizVrem</strong></td>
<td><em>Vizantiiskii vremennik</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WSt</strong></td>
<td><em>Wiener Studien</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ZLUMS</strong></td>
<td><em>Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice srpske</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ZRVI</strong></td>
<td><em>Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta</em></td>
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