

SIGHT, TOUCH, AND IMAGINATION IN BYZANTIUM

Considering the interrelations between sight, touch, and imagination, this book surveys classical, late antique, and medieval theories of vision to elaborate on how various spheres of the Byzantine world categorized and comprehended sensation and perception. Revisiting scholarly assumptions about the tactility of sight in the Byzantine world, it demonstrates how the haptic language associated with vision referred to the cognitive actions of the viewer as they grasped sensory data in the mind in order to comprehend and produce working imaginations of objects for thought and memory. At stake is how the affordances and limitations of the senses came to delineate and cultivate the manner in which art and rhetoric were understood as mediating the realities they wished to convey. This would similarly come to contour how Byzantine religious culture could also go about accessing the sacred, the image serving as a site of desire for the mediated representation of the divine.

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To unrequited love

*Let me touch you with my gaze,
optic nerves and visual rays.*

– Flula Borg (feat. Mamrie Hart), “Eye Love You” (2015)

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Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
<i>Note to the Reader</i>	xiv
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xvi
Introduction: Can't Touch This	I
PART I HOW SIGHT IS NOT TOUCH	27
1 The Medium of Sight	29
2 The Problem of Tactility	51
3 The Commonalities of the Senses	90
PART II PHOTIOS AND THE UNFOLDING OF PERCEPTION	109
Introduction to Part II	111
4 “Has the Mind Seen?” The Language of Effluxes	116
5 “Has It Grasped?” Apprehending the Object	128
6 “Has It Visualized?” I The Grasp of the Imagination	142
7 “Has It Visualized?” II The Problem of Fantasy	156
8 “Then It Has Effortlessly. . .” Judgment and Assent	169
Conclusion to Part II	187

viii	<i>Table of Contents</i>	
	PART III MEDIATION, VENERATION, REMEDIATION	197
9	Medium and Mediation	199
10	Tactility and Veneration	243
11	Synesthesia and Remediation	284
	Conclusion: Tempted to Touch	326
	<i>Bibliography</i>	342
	<i>Index</i>	386

Tables

1. Photios's theory of perception	<i>page</i> 131
2. Porphyry's theory of perception	136
3. Comparison of Photios's and Porphyry's theories of perception	140

Note to the Reader

Since this volume is ultimately of a technical nature, featuring diligent close analyses of primary texts in their original language, it is understood that challenges could emerge for novice readers or those coming from cognate fields and disciplines. Keeping these challenges in mind, every effort has been made to aid in the accessibility of this book. The names of late antique and Byzantine authors have been standardized according to their appearance in the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, both for consistency and for the sake of looking up any less well-known figures discussed herein. All primary sources are cited by their Latin titles as they appear in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG). This will enable the reader to readily look up the full text in that repository through a title search without the complex guesswork of having to extrapolate a Byzantine author's Latinized name. For both names and source titles, the reader is particularly encouraged to consult the TLG bibliography.

The goal has been to provide as full citations as possible so that students of Classics, Medieval, and Byzantine Studies can readily find texts without the hindrance of limited citations, of field-specific abbreviations and idiosyncratic customs, or of cryptic numerations of volumes, passages, and text. Therefore, every effort has been made to provide all the necessary information for finding cited texts in the TLG, as well as in the published editions and translations. Given the lack of standardization as to how texts are numbered, the reader is provided in all instances with both page numbers and book, section, etc. numbers that agree with both digital and hardcopy versions. Redundancies, however, have been avoided. Thus, for example, in cases where page numbers alone are used to numerate the text, pages alone are listed; and other possible numerations that are either superfluous or unnecessary for either cross-checking the original text or its translations have been judiciously left out. All this information has been compiled and presented with particular sensitivity as to how the texts can be searched and found in their online iterations for ease of use; and also, so

Note to the Reader

xv

that both original texts and translations can be compared with other editions and/or alternative translations.

In the hopes of providing greater ease of accessibility for independent scholars and those at institutions with limited resources, diligent care has been paid to citing editions of texts and translations that are available as open-source materials or on large-scale textual databases, such as the Hathi Trust Digital Library, Google Books, the Perseus Digital Library, the digital Loeb Classical Library, and the *TLG*. My hope is that scholars from all parts within and outside the academy who are able to access this tome will be able to critically engage with my arguments by readily cross-examining its texts and sources. This book is intended to be as much a contribution to our scholarship and an intervention in our methods, as a roadmap of constellations for further research, study, and thought.

Abbreviations

- LSJ H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. S. Jones, *A Greek–English Lexicon*, 9th edition (Oxford University Press, 1996).
- PG Ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologia Cursus Completus: Series Graeca* (Paris: Migne, 1857–1866).
- TLG Ed. Maria C. Pantelia, *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae Digital Library* (University of California, Irvine), www.tlg.uci.edu