

SIX SCRIBES OF THE EARLY COMNENIAN PERIOD

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Abstract

On the example of six scribes whose names and dates of activity are known, this article discusses the styles of calligraphy current in Constantinople during the second half of Alexis Comnenus' reign (c. 1100-1118), compares these styles to those of the preceding period, and proposes a socio-political explanation for their different character.

Key-words: Greek palaeography, Byzantine scribes, Comnenian dynasty

Resumen

A partir de los casos de seis escribas cuyos nombres y fechas de actividad son conocidos, este artículo discute los estilos de caligrafía presentes en Constantinopla durante la segunda mitad del reinado de Alejo Comneno (ca. 1100-1118), compara estos estilos con los del período precedente y propone una explicación socio-política de su carácter diferente.

Metadata: Paleografía griega, Escribas bizantinos, Época comnena

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The *Praxapostolos* once numbered 7681 in the library of Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872) now forms part of the Van Kampen Collection. Photographs published on-line by the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts (Plano TX) show its versified scribal colophon²:

Τὸ παρ(όν) τοῦτο Κύρου πάντ(ως) βιβλίον·
καλλιγραφηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ Καλλιστρά(του)
μον(ῆς) μοναχοῦ τοῦ Λιβ(ός) ἐν ξενῶνι
Ἰνδικτος πρώτη μὴν Ἰούλιος πέλει·
ἔτο(ς) ,ςχίς' :-

Another versified colophon by the same hand is found at the end of an undated Psalter³. My earlier transcription of its damaged text must be corrected as follows⁴:

[Εἴληφεν τέρ]μα ψυχ[ω]φ[ελ]ῶν ῥημά[τ](ων)·
καλλιγραφ[ηθ](έν) [ύ]πὸ [τ]οῦ Καλλιστ[ρ]άτ[ου]
μον[(ῆς)] μοναχοῦ τοῦ Λιβ[ος] ἐν ξενῶνι⁵.

The two poems (if they may be so called) indicate that a scribe named **Callistratus** was active in AD 1108, that he was a monk of the Lips Monastery in Constantinople⁶, and

¹ I thank Christine Kossyva, Maria Litina, Marie Cronier, Inmaculada Pérez Martín, Monk Theologos of the Iviron Monastery, Marc Lauxtermann, Erich Lamberz, and Nigel Wilson for their kind help with my work on this article. – Manuscripts marked with an *asterisk are available in digitized form on the Internet. The respective URL links are listed on the website *Pinakes: Textes et manuscrits grecs* (Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, Paris).

² *Orlando FL, The Holy Land Experience, The Scriptorium, Van Kampen 902, f. 271v. On the manuscript see I. Spatharakis, *Corpus of Dated Illuminated Greek Manuscripts to the Year 1453*, 2 vols., Leiden 1981, nr. 318. Ff. 35-41 are later replacements.

³ *Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery, Gr. 40, f. 248v.

⁴ Cf. G. Parpulov, *Toward a History of Byzantine Psalters, ca. 850–1350 AD*, Plovdiv 2014, 114 and fig. 8.

⁵ The words μοναχοῦ τοῦ Λιβ have been erased and overwritten by a late Byzantine hand with τοῦ Προδρόμου.

⁶ Nothing is known about the history of this monastery in the eleventh and twelfth centuries: see most recently V. Marinis, "Tombs and Burials in the Monastery *tou Libos* in Constan-

that he lived in a hospice or hospital (ξενών). Τὸ παρὸν τοῦτο Κύρου πάντως βιβλίον is an ex-libris: “The present book indeed belongs to Cyrus” (about whom nothing else seems to be known).

Unlike the previously unnoticed Callistratus, **John Chaldus** is familiar to the scholarly world⁷ – without anybody having realised that his two manuscripts are actually the work of a single hand. One, a collection of St Basil’s ascetic treatises, was finished on 21 April 1086 by Ἰωάννης εὐτελὴς μοναχὸς καὶ πρεσβύτερος⁸; the other, a theological miscellany, was completed on 6 July 1105 by Ἰωάννης εὐτελὴς μοναχὸς καὶ πρεσβύτερος ὁ Χάλδ(ος)⁹. Although the earlier book is on parchment and the later one largely on paper, they are similar in codicological terms: the quires in both are numbered *li2*¹⁰, and their ruling patterns (34C2 and 20C2/30C2, respectively) are of the same type¹¹. According to the note from 1086, John was a priest of the Church of the Virgin and St Abercius at the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate¹².

The scribe **John Coulix** (Ἰωάννης ὁ Κοῦλιξ, Ἰωάννης ἀμαρτωλὸς καὶ ξένος, Ἰωάννης εὐτελὴς καὶ ξένος ὁ Κοῦλιξ, Ἰωάννης ὁ Κούλικας ὁ Τζιμισχῆς) is known from the colophons of two biblical manuscripts dated 1101 and 1103¹³, the second of which was

tinople”, *DOP* 63 (2009) 147-166: 149.

⁷ RGK III, nr. 313. On Χάλδος as a surname (with fourteen documented occurrences in the eleventh and twelfth centuries), see the on-line database M. Jeffreys et al., *Prosopography of the Byzantine World*, London 2016³, s.v. and A. Capone, “Alcuni *excerpta* di testi patristici nel Vat. gr. 504”, *Orpheus* 26 (2005) 20-27: 20.

⁸ Moskva, Государственный исторический музей (State Historical Museum, ГИМ), Syn. gr. 29: K. Lake – S. Lake, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts to the Year 1200*, 10 vols., Boston 1934-39, nr. 230.

⁹ *Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (BAV), Vat. gr. 504. Detailed description of the manuscript: F. Ronconi, *I manoscritti greci miscellanei. Ricerche su esemplari dei secoli IX-XII* (Testi, studi, strumenti 21), Spoleto 2007, 219-238. Lamberz, Ronconi, and Sciarra argue (inconclusively, to my mind) that the manuscript was copied on Mount Athos: E. Lamberz, “Die Handschriftenproduktion in den Athosklöstern bis 1453”, in G. Cavallo – G. De Gregorio – Marilena Maniaci (eds.), *Scritture, libri e testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio*, vol. 1, Spoleto 1991, 25-78: 44-45; E. Sciarra, “Massimo Confessore tra Constantinopoli e l’Athos”, in D. Bianconi (ed.), *Oltre la scrittura. Variazioni sul tema per Guglielmo Cavallo* (Dossiers byzantins 8), Paris 2008, 143-165: 149-155.

¹⁰ I.e., in the lower inner corner of the first and last pages of each quire.

¹¹ On ruling patterns: J.-H. Sautel, *Répertoire de réglures dans les manuscrits grecs sur parchemin* (Bibliologia 13), Turnhout 1995.

¹² R. Janin, *Le Siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat oecuménique. Les églises et les monastères* (La géographie ecclésiastique de l’Empire byzantin I.3), Paris 1969², 3.

¹³ *Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Suppl. gr. 1262 *cum* *New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 1991.232.15 (the two once formed a single volume: W. D. Wixom

commissioned by Leo Nicerites, courtier (οἰκεῖος ἄνθρωπος) of Emperor Alexis Comnenus¹⁴. The epithet “stranger” (ξένος) almost certainly means that Coulix was a monk¹⁵.

The hand of **George Pamphilus** (Figs. 1-2), who signed a two-volume set of Euthymius Zigabenus’ *Dogmatic Panoply*¹⁶, can also be identified in a collection of ascetic texts by St Basil¹⁷. The quires in all three codices are numbered *Ii1*¹⁸, while the ruling patterns are *20C1*, *20C1*, and *32D1*. St Basil’s works are prefaced with a miniature including a portrait of Βασίλειος Ἀνζᾶς, μοναχός, εὐσεβῆς σακελλίου¹⁹: this Anzas evidently ordered the book to be copied (but certainly did not copy it himself)²⁰ and must be identical with Βασίλειος μοναχός καὶ ὀρφανοτρόφος ὁ Ἀνζᾶς, addressee of an imperial

[ed.], *Mirror of the Medieval World*, New York 1999, nr. 105); London, Lambeth Palace Library, 1214: C. Wright – M. Argyrou – Ch. Dendrinos, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Greek Manuscript Collection of Lambeth Palace Library*, London 2016, 335-344. On the cryptographic notes on f. 34r in the Parisinus: H. Omont, “Manuscrits grecs datés récemment acquis par la Bibliothèque Nationale”, *Revue des bibliothèques* 8 (1898) 353-360: 354 and N. G. Wilson, “Scholarly Hands of the Middle Byzantine Period”, in *La paléographie grecque et byzantine*, Paris 1977, 221-239: 229, n. 14.

¹⁴ On Leon Nicerites: M. Jeffreys et al., *Prosopography of the Byzantine World* (cit. n. 7), s.v.

¹⁵ C. Wendel, “Die ταπεινότης des griechischen Schreibernönches”, *BZ* 43 (1950) 259-266: 261.

¹⁶ Moskva, ГИМ, Syn. gr. 387 *cum* Hagion Oros, Μονή Βατοπεδίου, 162: G. Parpulov, “The *Dogmatic Panoply*”, in V. Tsamakda (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantine Illustrated Manuscripts* (Brill’s Companions to the Byzantine World 2), Leiden 2017, 430-431: 431 (with the text of Pamphilus’ scribal colophons). The fact that the two manuscripts form a pair was kindly pointed out to me by Prof. Erich Lamberz.

¹⁷ *København, Kongelige Bibliotek, GkS 1343 4° *cum* Città del Vaticano, BAV, Barb. gr. 462 (the two originally formed a single codex: S. G. Mercati, “Nota sul Codex Hauniensis 1343”, *Classica et mediaevalia* 17 [1956] 109-118). The entire manuscript is copied by one scribe, whom I identify as George Pamphilus. A page from the Barberinianus (f. 150r) is illustrated in P. Canart – L. Perria, “Les écritures livresques des XI^e et XII^e siècles”, in D. Harlfinger – G. Prato (eds.), *Paleografia e codicologia greca. Atti del II Colloquio internazionale*, 2 vols., Alessandria 1991, I.67-118 and II.51-68: 58. To verify the identity of the handwriting, readers can compare this illustration with my Fig. 2. – Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 2172 was probably copied by Pamphilus, too: P. Canart, “Les étapes de la constitution d’un manuscrit: le cas du Vaticanus graecus 469”, *Quinio* 2 (2000) 17-35: 19 and 21-22.

¹⁸ I.e., in the lower inner corner of the first page of each quire.

¹⁹ *København, KB, GkS 1343 4°, f. 1r. This is one of the very few portrait miniatures overlooked by I. Spatarakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Byzantina Neerlandica 6), Leiden 1976. The other are Hagion Oros, Μονή Μεγίστης Λαύρας, A 9, f. 1v; Sankt-Peterburg, Российская национальная библиотека (National Library of Russia), Gr. 274, f. 1r; *University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library, 129, f. 1v.

²⁰ See J. Nesbitt – W. Seibt, “The Anzas Family: Members of the Byzantine Civil Establishment in the Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Centuries”, *DOP* 67 (2013) 189-207: 201 (with the

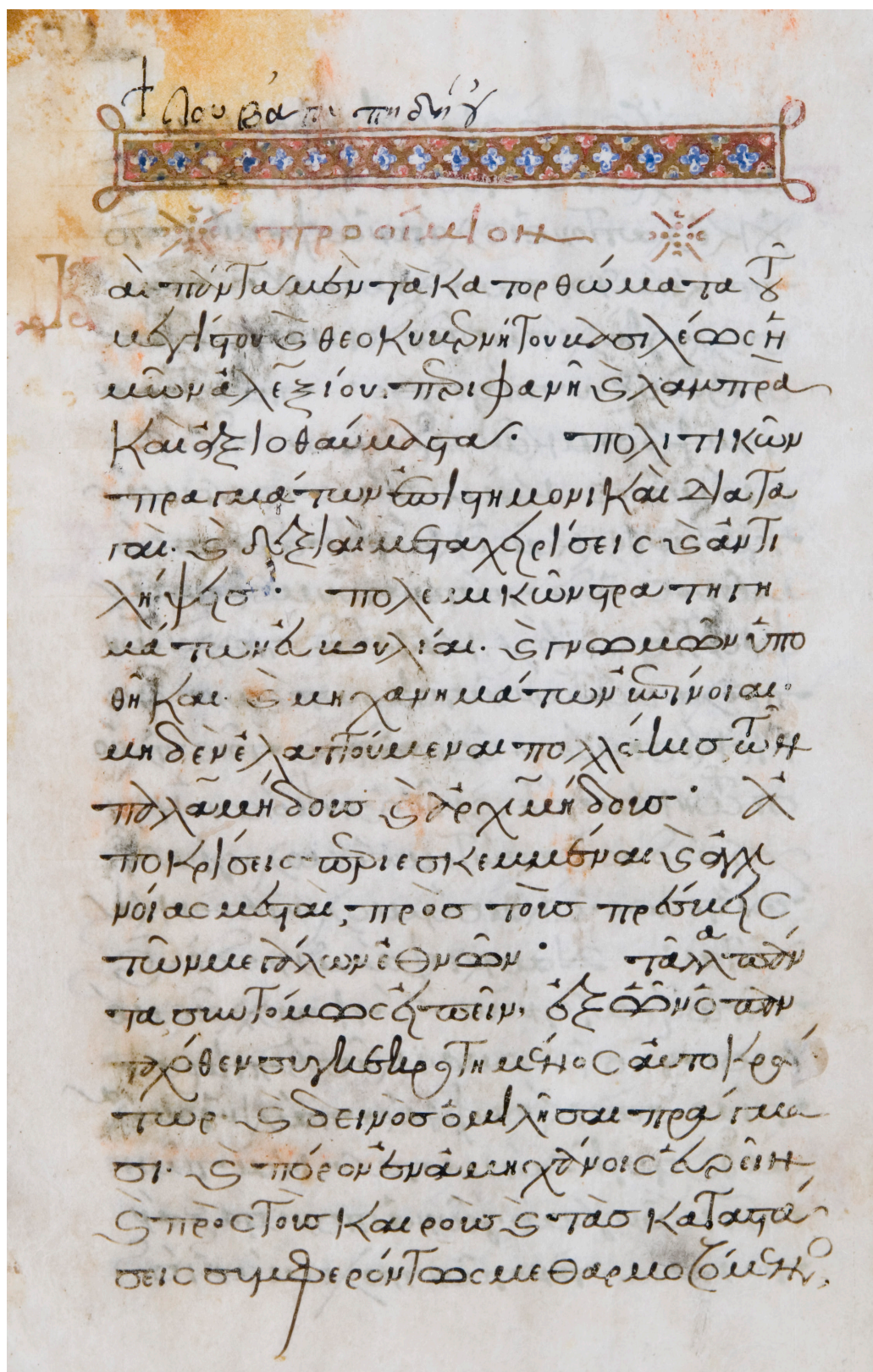


Fig. 1. Moskva, Государственный исторический музей, Syn. gr. 387, f. 7r
(photo: Museum)

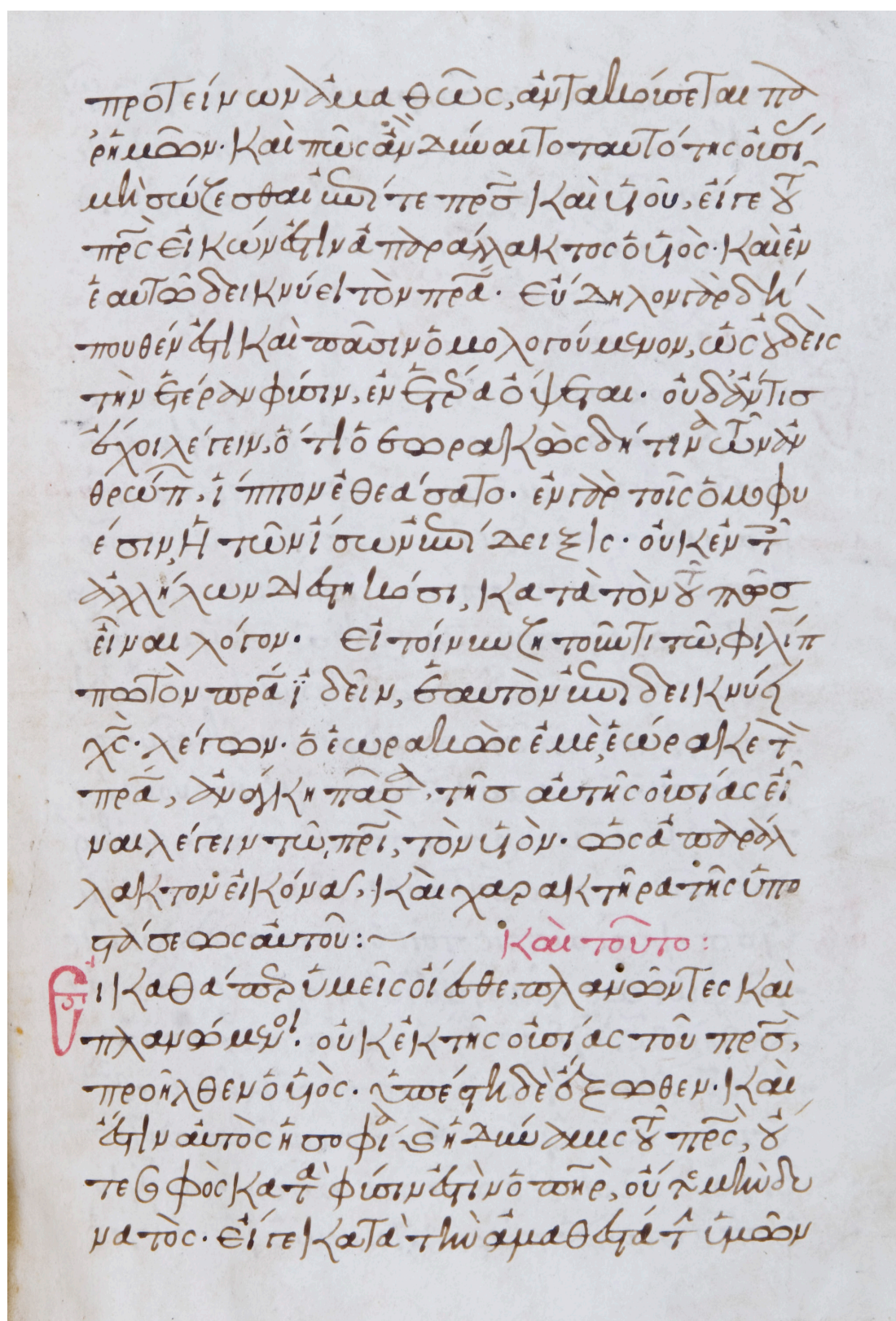


Fig. 2. Moskva, Государственный исторический музей, Syn. gr. 387, f. 424r
(photo: Museum)

rescript (λύσις) issued on 21 March 1096²¹. The *Panoply* manuscript cannot be older than 1112 (which is the earliest possible date for the text it contains)²² and is very likely to have been an imperial commission²³.

Another surviving copy of the *Dogmatic Panoply* must also have been produced under Emperor Alexis Comnenus († 1118), depicted in its frontispiece miniatures²⁴. The peculiar handwriting of its scribe re-appears in a two-volume New Testament²⁵. The quires in all three manuscripts are numbered *Ie1*²⁶, the ruling patterns being, respectively, 32C1, P2 32D1, and P2 32D1. The New Testament's erased scribal colophon has yielded under ultraviolet light the monastic name **Michael** (Μιχαήλ μοναχός)²⁷.

text of two dedicatory poems naming Basil Anzas). *RGK* III, nr. 66, mistakenly identifies Anzas as a scribe. In fact the verb τεύχω in the poems means that he commissioned the manuscript.

²¹ N. Svoronos, "Les privilèges de l'Église à l'époque des Comnènes: un rescrit inédit de Manuel I^{er} Comnène", *TM* 1 (1965) 325-391: 326; J. Nesbitt – W. Seibt, "Anzas Family" (cit. n. 20), 200. As *orphanotrophos*, Anzas would have been responsible for the imperial Orphanage of St Paul, restored by Alexis Comnenus on a grand scale: προκάθηται γὰρ ἀνὴρ τις τῶν ἐνδοξοτάτων φροντιστῆς τῆς μυριάνδρου ταυτησί πόλεως· ὀρφανοτροφεῖον δὲ ταύτη τοῦνομα (Anna Comnena, *Alexias* XV.7, edd. A. Kambylis – D. R. Reinsch, *CFHB* 40, Berlin 2001, 484). Haun. GkS 1343 4^o cum Vat. Barb. gr. 462, where Anzas carries the more junior title *sakellion*, must be earlier than 1096. On the two offices of *sakellion* and *orphanotrophos*: *ODB*, 1537-1538 and 1830.

²² The text in Vatop. 162, f. 150r (*PG*, vol. 102, 397D-400A) refers to the theological discussion that occurred during Peter Grossolano's visit to Constantinople; this visit is known to have taken place in 1112: *ODB*, 885. The margins of f. 150r contain two poems in praise of the emperor, written in Pamphilus' hand (I have resolved the abbreviations without parentheses and introduced modern punctuation): Νόημα λαμπρὸν εὐσεβοῦς στεφηφόρου. | Ὅρα τὸ λῆμμα τοῦ σοφοῦ βασιλέως, / Ἀλεξίου μοι τοῦ φιλευσεβεστάτου.

²³ G. Parpulov, "*Dogmatic Panoply*" (cit. n. 16), 430-431. The margin of f. 149r in Vatop. 162 preserves the following versified exchange between Pamphilus and Zigabenus, who evidently knew each other in person: Τοῦ Παμφίλου· Τίς οὗτος; Εὐθύμιος, οὗ κλέος μέγα / ἐν ὀρθοδόξοις καὶ σοφοῖς μονοτρόποις, / ὁ Ζιγαβηνός, τήνδε τὴν Πανοπλίαν / ὁ συντεταχὼς εὐφυῶς τῶν Δογμάτων. Τοῦ Ζιγαβηνοῦ· Ποῖον κλέος; Πέπανσο, μὴ γίνου κόλαξ. Prof. Lamberz has kindly allowed me to see a colour photograph of this page. The text printed above in italics is written in a hand and ink that are different from Pamphilus', and may be an autograph of Zigabenus.

²⁴ *Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 666, f. 2r-v.

²⁵ Princeton University, Firestone Library, Garrett 5; Sofia, ЦСБП „Иван Дуйчев“ (Center "Ivan Dujčev"), D. gr. 369 cum New York, Morgan Library and Museum, M.714. The latter two formed originally a single volume: A. Džurova, "Le *Praxapostol Cod. Dujčev* 369, l'Épître aux Juifs et l'Apocalypse *Cod. 714* de Pierpont Morgan Library = *Olim Kos. 53*", *BSI* 56 (1995) 471-482.

²⁶ I.e., in the lower outer corner of the first page of each quire.

²⁷ Princeton, Garrett 5, ff. 224v-225r: S. Kotzabassi – N. P. Ševčenko – D. Skemer, *Greek Manuscripts at Princeton, Sixth to Nineteenth Century: A Descriptive Catalogue*, Princeton 2010,

Constantine, nephew (or protégé) of the bishop of Chonae (Κωνσταντῖνος ἀμαρτωλὸς ὁ τοῦ Χωνῶν), is named in a *Nomocanon* of Fourteen Titles dated by another hand to the year 1103 and in an undated collection of Old Testament books (Figs. 3-4)²⁸. In the latter manuscript, Constantine calls himself “lowliest servant of our holy lady” (ἔσχατος δούλος τῆς ἁγίας ἡμῶν δεσποίνης): the word δέσποινα here cannot designate the Virgin (who is always termed παναγία or ὑπεραγία) and must refer to an empress – perhaps Alexis Comnenus’ mother Anna Dalassene²⁹.

The work of Callistratus, Chaldus, Coulix, Pamphilus, Michael, and Constantine provides a sample of Constantinopolitan book production at the dawn of the twelfth century³⁰. Of course these six were not the only scribes active in the Byzantine capital c. 1100-1115 – but they are the only ones for whom we have at present a modicum of personal data: their names and sometimes the names of their patrons. The fact that books were ordered by the monarch (most probably through intermediaries) and by members of his entourage is hardly new, but the relatively high social position of the scribes themselves is worthy of note: Constantine, a bishop’s nephew, was personally close to the empress; in spite of being monks, Chaldus and Coulix used surnames; Pamphilus

28-35, esp. 30, figs. 44-50. G. Parpulov, *Toward a History* (cit. n. 4), fig. 27 shows yet another manuscript evidently copied by Michael.

²⁸ Hagion Oros, Μονή Βατοπεδίου, 266: K. Lake – S. Lake, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts* (cit. n. 8), nr. 112 (ff. 9r-24v and 130r-134r are copied by a supplementary hand); Hagion Oros, Μονή Ιβήρων, 15: P. Sōtēroudēs, *Ἐπεὶ Μονὴ Ἰβήρων. Κατάλογος ἐλληνικῶν χειρογράφων*, vol. 1, Hagion Oros 1998, 22-24 and Fig. 4. Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ τοῦ Χωνῶν is almost certainly a single person, but the two manuscripts are clearly not copied by the same hand: the Vatopedi one must be the work of the monk John, who recorded his name (ζῳθφεῖωθ υειζι ισθννλχ ξλνθυλχ, i.e. γραφεῖσα χειρὶ Ἰωάννου μοναχοῦ) in a cryptographic colophon of f. 261v.

²⁹ The rule of the Petra Monastery in Constantinople refers to Anna as ἡ θεοφύλακτος ἁγία ἡμῶν δέσποινα καὶ μήτηρ τοῦ θεοστεφοῦς [καὶ] κρατίστου ἡμῶν βασιλέως κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ: G. Turco, “La *diatheke* del fondatore del monastero di S. Giovanni Prodomo in Petra e l’Ambr. E 9 sup.”, *Aevum* 75 (2001) 327-380: 350. Alexis’ wife Irene Doucaena “remained overshadowed by Anna Dalassene until the latter’s retirement” in 1099: *ODB*, 1009. The former empress Mary of Alania, also called ἡ ἁγία ἡμῶν δέσποινα, took the veil in 1086: G. Parpulov, *Toward a History* (cit. n. 4), 77 and fig. 17.

³⁰ I have deliberately excluded from consideration *London, British Library (BL), Add. 36654 and the now lost Berlin, Preußische Staatsbibliothek, Gr. qu. 55: K. Lake – S. Lake, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts* (cit. n. 8), nrs. 75 and 202. In the former, the year 1103 is found in a non-scribal dedicatory note on f. 215r: Προ(σ)αφειερώθη(η) ἡ βήβλο(ς) αὕτη τι μο(νῇ) τ(ῆς) [...] παρὰ τοῦ θε(ο)φι(λεσ)τ(ά)τ(ου) ἐπισκ(ό)π(ου) Θεοδωρ(ο)πόλ(εως) (μον)αχ(οῦ) Λαυρεντ(ίου) etc., while the manuscript itself must be of somewhat earlier date. In the latter, the damaged non-scribal note on f. 213r that supposedly yielded the date 1103, records the death of a grandson (ἔκγονος) of Emperor Alexis Comnenus, while the handwriting of the scribe (Hilarion) can be assigned to the second quarter of the twelfth century: see n. 38 below.

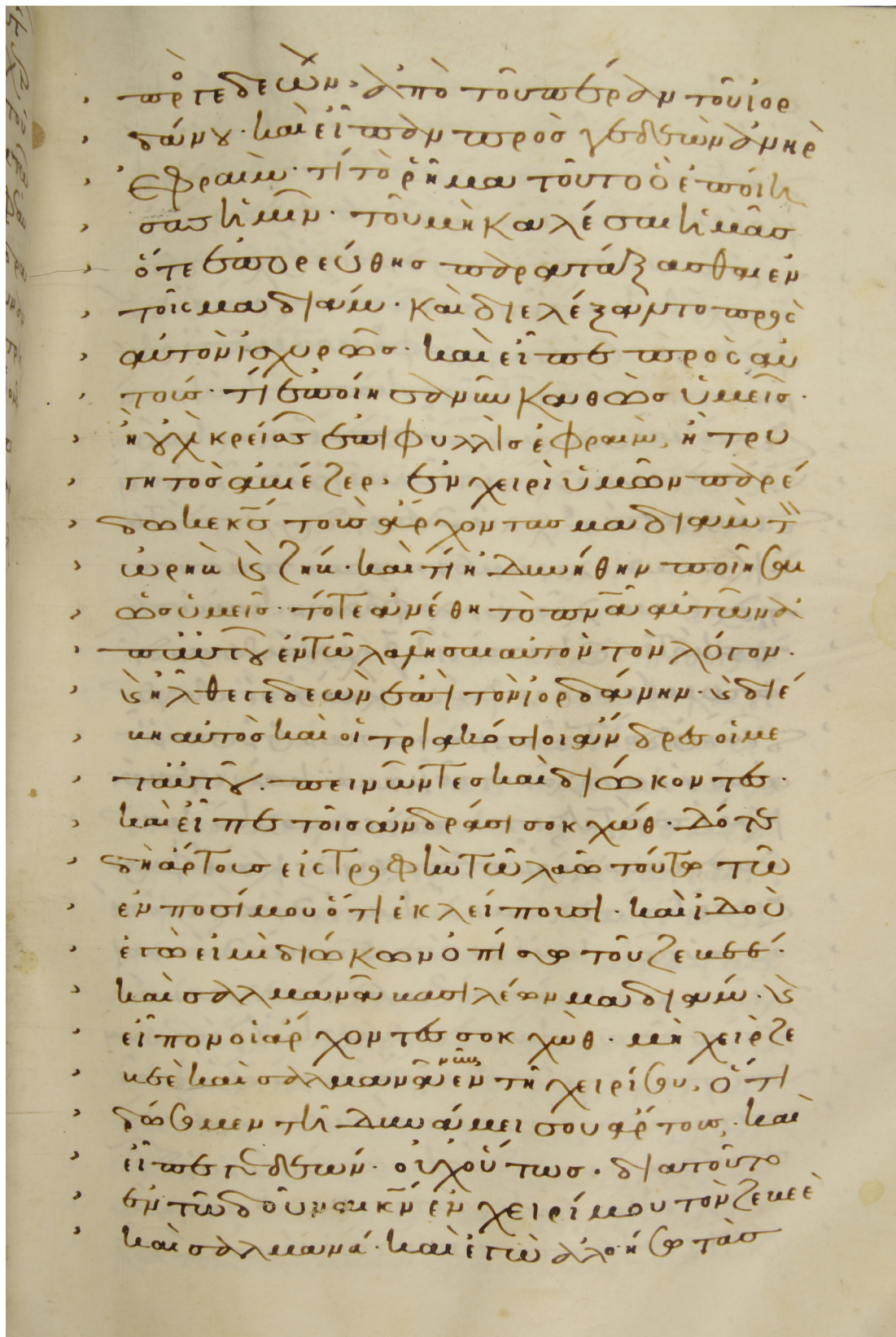


Fig. 3. Hagion Oros, Moni Ibhrown, 15, f. 100r (photo: Monastery)

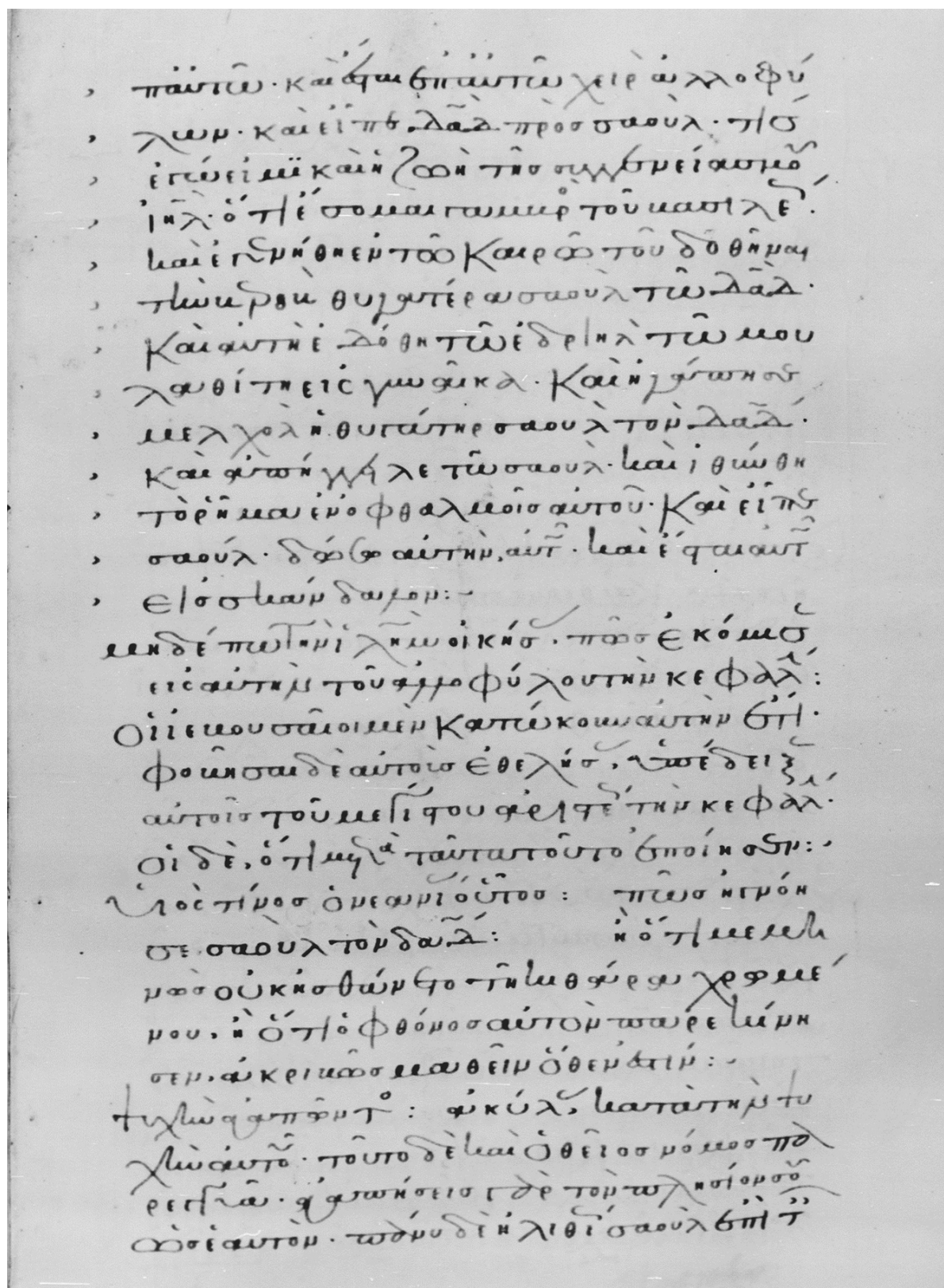


Fig. 4. Hagion Oros, Μονὴ Ἰβήρων, 15, f. 231r (photo: Ἱστορικό και Παλαιογραφικό Ἀρχεῖο, Μορφωτικό Ἰδρυμα Ἐθνικῆς Τραπεζῆς)

is probably the πρόεδρος George Pamphilus attested on a lead seal and in a patriarchal document from 1140³¹. Only Callistratus, living in a hospice as he did, may have been impecunious – and perhaps elderly. In 1105, Chaldus, too, must have been of advanced age (for he had been copying books since at least 1086), while Pamphilus (still alive in 1140) stood probably at the beginning of his career. Such generational differences evidently did matter, because (judging from Chaldus' example) a personal writing style would not, once formed, change noticeably over the years. The six scribes' actual dates of birth being, however, unknown, one can do no more than trace the earlier precedents and subsequent development of the calligraphy that they practiced in the first decade of the twelfth century.

"Calligraphy" is certainly the right word – for all six men were trained professionals copying books on a regular basis, – but one observes in fact three different versions of it. First, there is what has been called (with reference to Coulix) "calligraphy manquée"³² and can be more aptly termed "**late *Perlschrift***": the hand has the standard *Perlschrift*'s generally regular appearance³³ but is spiced up with enlarged letters (Chaldus' κ and τω; Coulix's φ, ν, ω, open ρ and θ, 3-shaped ζ; Callistratus' α, κ, Δ, and distended υ), involutions (Coulix's ρι, ον, ων), long curved tails (Coulix), or angular nuclei (Chaldus' ει and α). Then there is the "energetic **stylised cursive**" of Pamphilus³⁴: prominently leaning to the right, unevenly spaced, accented with large majuscule letters (Τ, Ε, Κ, Γ, Α, Λ) and with sharply pointed breathing marks. Last, there is the manner of Constantine and Michael than I shall call "**typographic minuscule**": the letters – squarish, upright, compactly shaped, widely spaced – resemble printers' type; upstrokes and downstrokes form plain lines (the hooks typical of the *Perlschrift* have almost disappeared); majuscule forms (Ε, Η, Κ, Φ, Γ, Β, Δ, Θ) predominate; some of these, as well as δ and ο, may be enlarged³⁵; ligatures are all but eliminated (leaving the horizontal caps of π, τ, σ and the tail of δ as the sole means of connecting adjacent letters)³⁶.

³¹ G. Parpulov, "Dogmatic Panoply" (cit. n. 16), 431. On the civilian title *proedros*: ODB, 1727; J. Gouillard, "Quatre procès de mystiques à Byzance (vers 960-1143). Inspiration et autorité", *REB* 36 (1978) 5-81: 29, n. 3.

³² N. G. Wilson, "Scholarly Hands" (cit. n. 13), 229.

³³ Cf. the typical features listed in H. Cancik – H. Schneider (eds.), *Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World*, Antiquity vol.10, Leiden 2007, 664 (s.v. "Pearl Script") and in P. Canart – L. Perria, "Les écritures livresques" (cit. n. 17), 84-85, n. 66.

³⁴ Canart – Perria, 91-92 with fig. 6.

³⁵ These two features are also present in Callistratus' handwriting.

³⁶ E. Gamillscheg, "Fragen zur Lokalisierung der Handschriften der Gruppe 2400", *JÖB* 37 (1987) 313-321: 320, notes the existence of this new style, without describing it in detail.

All three writing manners continue in use down to the mid-twelfth century (when for obscure reasons Constantinopolitan book production appears to have almost ceased³⁷): the *Perlschrift* is represented by Hilarion (Figs. 5-6)³⁸ and by the anonymous copyists of the Sinai Gregory³⁹ and of the Urbino and Christ Church Gospelbooks⁴⁰; the “stylised cursive”, by Nicetas⁴¹ and Theoctistus⁴²; the “typographic minuscule”, by Arsenius⁴³, Nikon⁴⁴, and the nameless scribe of the codices *Ebnerianus* and *Scorialensis*⁴⁵. While the former two styles

³⁷ Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 1176 (I. Spatharakis, *Corpus* [cit. n. 2], nr. 155), datable to 1166, is the only manuscript of certainly Constantinopolitan provenance from the century’s second half. I find the handwriting clumsy, with no pronounced stylistic character.

³⁸ Hilarion signed (f. 292v) the now lost Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Gr. qu. 55 (K. Lake – S. Lake, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts* [cit. n. 8], nr. 202) and copied also (judging from the handwriting) Moskva, ΓΙΜ, Syn. gr. 153. On the date and origin of the latter manuscript: A. Cataldi Palau, “Deux manuscrits de Ménées du monastère du Prodrome de Pétra et le groupe de Kokkinobaphos”, in A. Bravo García – I. Pérez Martín (eds.), *The Legacy of Bernard de Montfaucon: Three Hundred Years of Studies on Greek Handwriting* (Bibliologia 31), Turnhout 2010, 107-132 and 735-743. *Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, Παναγίου Τάφου 52 seems to be by Hilarion’s hand, too.

³⁹ *Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, Gr. 339. On the manuscript’s date: C. Mango, “Twelfth-Century Notices from Cod. Christ Church Gr. 53”, *JÖB* 42 (1992) 221-228: 227.

⁴⁰ *Città del Vaticano, BAV, Urb. gr. 2; Oxford, Christ Church, Wake gr. 32: I. Hutter, *Corpus der byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften. Handschriften in Oxford*, vol. 4, Stuttgart 1993, nr. 24.

⁴¹ *Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 586.

⁴² *Paris, BnF, Gr. 1570; Hagion Oros, Μονή Διονυσίου, 8: R. S. Nelson, “Theoctistos and Associates in Twelfth-Century Constantinople: An Illustrated New Testament of A.D. 1133”, *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 15 (1987) 53-78.

⁴³ *Paris, BnF, Gr. 891; Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 537, ff. 3-213; Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 1191.

⁴⁴ Hagion Oros, Μονή Κουτλουμουσίου, 90α: S. Kadas, *Τα εικονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα του Αγίου Όρους. Κατάλογος μικρογραφιών, εικονογραφικό ευρετήριο*, Thessalonike 2008, 410. The last leaf of the Gospel of John in this manuscript is a fourteenth-century replacement by the hand that added the *Praxapostolos* on ff. 153r-285r, but the note at the Gospel’s end (f. 152r) no doubt faithfully repeats the now lost original scribal colophon from AD 1144/5: Ἡ δὲ παρούσα βίβλο(ς) γέγραπται, ἐν ἔτει ,ςχνγ´· ἰνδικτιῶνος ὀγδόης· χειρὶ Νίκωνο(ς) (μον)αχ(οῦ), τοῦ ἀθλίου κ(αὶ) ἐλεεινοῦ· βασιλεύοντος εὐσεβῶς Μανουήλ τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ· κ(αὶ) ἀρχιερατεύοντος θεοπροβλήτως Μιχαήλ (μον)αχ(οῦ) τοῦ Ὁξείτου τοῦ ἀρχιεπισκ(ό)π(ου) Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Νέας Ῥώμης· καὶ οἰκουμενικοῦ π(ατ)ριάρχου. Cf. H. von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte*, vol. I.1, Göttingen 1911, 151.

⁴⁵ Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. T.inf.I.10; El Escorial, Real Biblioteca, X.IV.17: H. Buchthal, “A Greek New Testament in the Escorial Library: Its Miniatures and Its Binding”, in I. Hutter (ed.), *Byzanz und das Westen. Studien zur Kunst des europäischen Mittelalters* (Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 432), Wien 1984, 85-98.

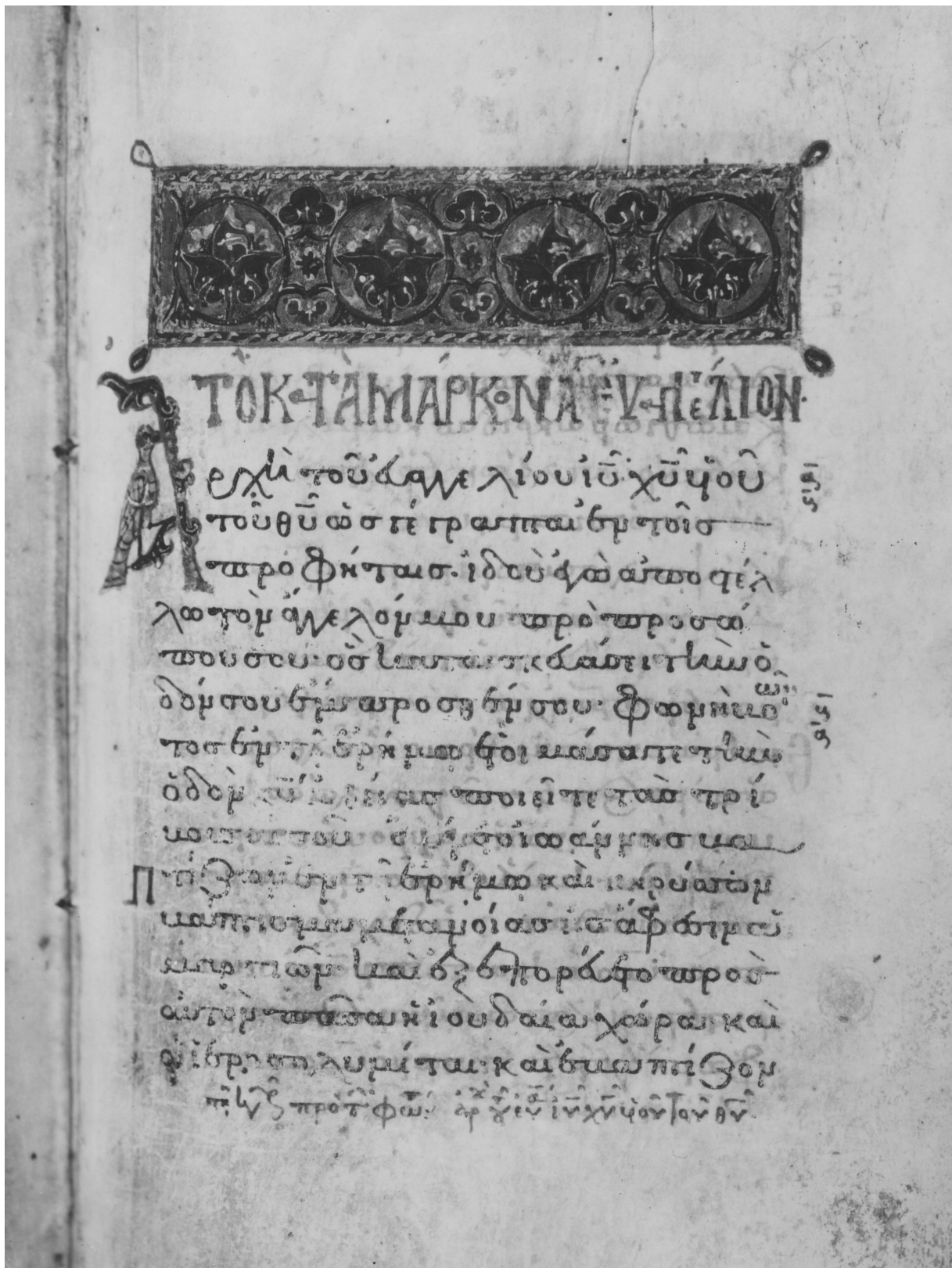


Fig. 5. Olim Berlin, Preußische Staatsbibliothek, Gr. qu. 55, f. 85r (photo: Harold R. Willoughby Corpus of New Testament Iconography, University of Chicago)

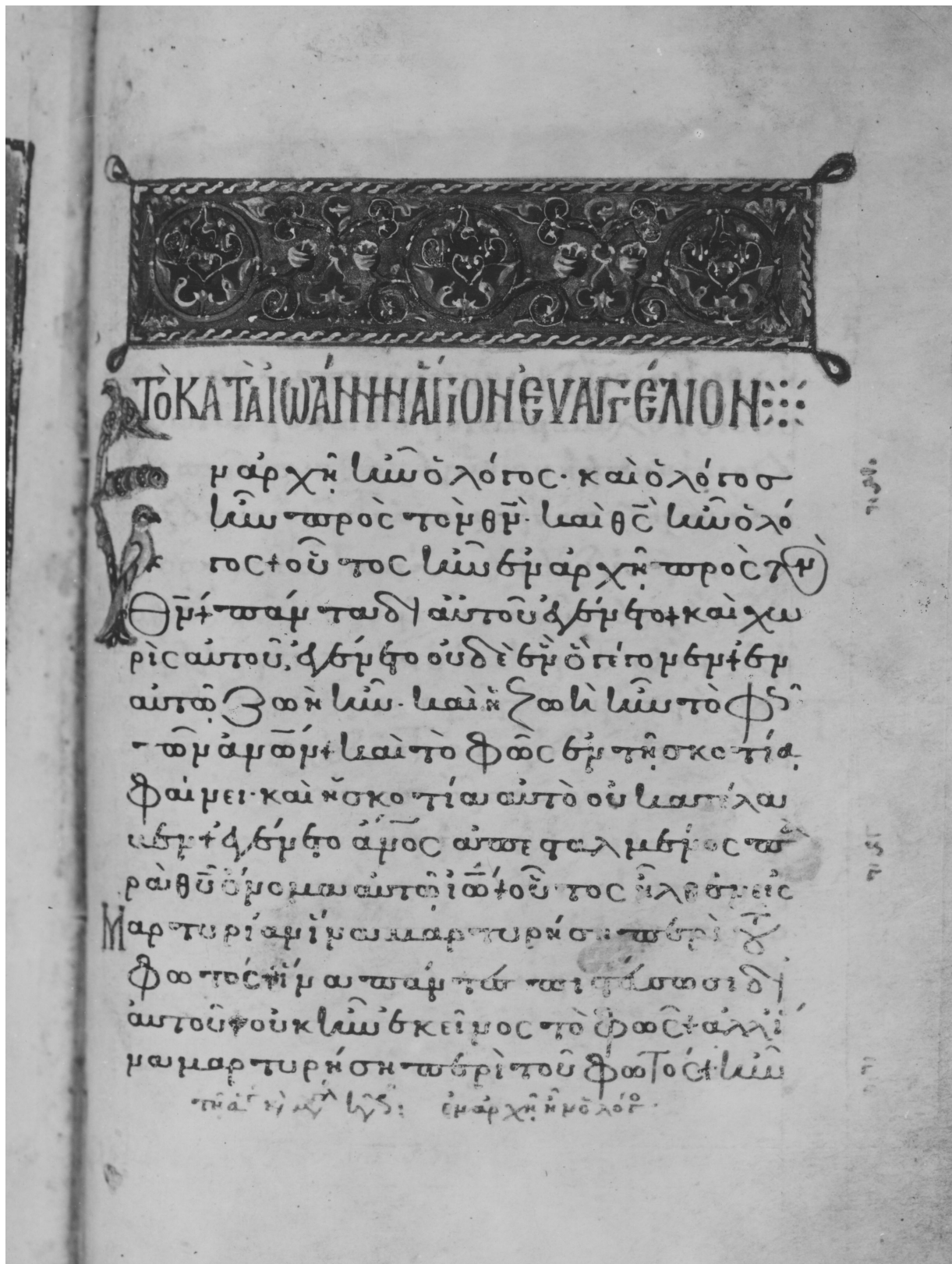


Fig. 6. *Olim* Berlin, Preußische Staatsbibliothek, Gr. qu. 55, f. 230r (photo: Harold R. Willoughby Corpus of New Testament Iconography, University of Chicago)

can be traced back, in various permutations, to the 940s and 950s, when the earliest dated *Perlschrift* manuscripts appear⁴⁶ and cursive bookhands emerge⁴⁷, the “typographic minus-cule” has no clear forerunners before 1100⁴⁸. During the first half of the twelfth century it became widespread (Fig. 7)⁴⁹.

The emergence of a new style is much easier to observe than to explain, but a few speculations will be offered by way of conclusion⁵⁰. Although small luxury volumes continued to be copied in the troubled first decade of Alexis Comnenus’ reign (1081-1118)⁵¹,

⁴⁶ I. Spatharakis, *Corpus* (cit. n. 2), nrs. 9, 12, 14. See further M. D’Agostino – P. Degni, “La *Perlschrift* dopo Hunger: prime considerazioni per una indagine”, *Scripta* 7 (2014) 77-93: 83-93.

⁴⁷ There are no precisely dated tenth-century specimens, but see, for example, *Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W.523, discussed by N. Kavrus-Hoffmann, “Tenth-Century Greek Gospels at the Walters Art Museum: Writing Styles and Ornamental Motifs”, *Journal of the Walters Art Museum* 62 (2004) 21-34: 27-29 and G. Parpulov, “A Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts of the Walters Art Museum”, *ibid.*, 71-189: 92-93.

⁴⁸ I know of just one possible eleventh-century precursor for this style: the modified *Perlschrift* in Hagion Oros, Μονή Μεγίστης Λαύρας, Δ 51.

⁴⁹ As a starting point for future systematic research, I list some of the examples known to me (many of them erroneously dated in the past to the *late* twelfth century, rather than to the century’s *first half*): *Athēna, Εθνική Βιβλιοθήκη της Ελλάδος, 160; Berlin, Staatsbibliothek PKB, Gr. qu. 77; *Città del Vaticano, BAV, Barb. gr. 136; Città del Vaticano, BAV, Pal. gr. 247; *Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 260; Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 645; Città del Vaticano, BAV, Vat. gr. 1541; *Edinburgh, University Library, 219; Hagion Oros, Μονή Διονυσίου, 33; Hagion Oros, Μονή Διονυσίου, 38; Hagion Oros, Μονή Κουτλουμουσίου, 77; *London, BL, Harley 5602; *London, BL, Harley 5685; *London, BL, Royal 2 A VI; Manchester, John Rylands Library, Gr. 13; Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, M 54 sup. *cum* *Paris, BnF, Suppl. gr. 1355, ff. 1-6 (a Psalter and a now-fragmentary Gospelbook that once formed a pair); Moskva, ГИМ, Syn. gr. 407; *Moskva, Российская государственная библиотека (Russian State Library), F.201 (Norov Collection), 24; New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, 237; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Holkham gr. 115; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Roe 1; *Oxford, Magdalen College, Gr. 7; *Paris, BnF, Gr. 102; *Paris, BnF, Gr. 384, ff. 1r-128v; *Paris, BnF, Gr. 501, ff. 3r-217v; *Paris, BnF, Gr. 1880; Patmos, Μονή Αγ. Ιωάννου του Θεολόγου, 274; *Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, Gr. 21; *Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, Gr. 153; *Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, Gr. 169; Syracuse NY, University Library, 226.048 G; Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Theol. gr. 177.

⁵⁰ For some pertinent general observations, see E. Crisci – P. Degni (eds.), *La scrittura greca dall’antichità all’epoca della stampa. Una introduzione*, Roma 2011, 159-165; D. Bianconi, “Età comnena e cultura scritta. Materiali e considerazioni alle origini di una ricerca”, in A. Bravo García – I. Pérez Martín (eds.), *The Legacy of Bernard de Montfaucon* (cit. n. 38), 75-96 and 707-718: 75-90; I. Pérez Martín, “La sécularisation du monachisme byzantin à l’époque macédonienne: l’évidence manuscrite”, in O. Delouis – S. Métivier – P. Pagès (eds.), *Le saint, le moine et le paysan. Mélanges d’histoire byzantine offerts à Michel Kaplan* (Byzantina Sorbonensia 29), Paris 2016, 563-588.

⁵¹ I. Spatharakis, *Corpus* (cit. n. 2), nrs. 99-101 and 104-107.

the circumstance that “the empire was almost at its last gasp”⁵² inevitably disrupted book production: in 1081, a Georgian translator of the Metaphrastian *Menologium*, working at a monastery on the outskirts of Constantinople, complains of “la malignité des temps, l’absence de secours humain, la pauvreté matérielle et aussi la cherté du parchemin – car deux *k’selani* reviennent à un dénier”⁵³. The subsequent political stabilisation and monetary reform were accompanied, c. 1090, by a thorough re-staffing of the imperial chancery, where new documentary hands abruptly replace the old ones⁵⁴. By c. 1100, bookhands were experiencing a similar (though less abrupt) change, with the *Perlschrift* going out of fashion – probably because it was associated with the patronage of the old imperial regime, now perceived as decadent (“The women’s quarters in the palace had been the scene of utter depravity ever since the infamous Constantine Monomachos had ascended the throne, and right up to the time when my father [Alexis Comnenus] became emperor had been noted for foolish love intrigues, but Anna [Dalassene] effected a reformation; a commendable decorum was restored and the palace now enjoyed a discipline that merited praise⁵⁵.”) While some scribes (Chaldus, Coulix) strove to transform the old calligraphic style from within, others (Pamphilus) sought a middle ground by espousing an alternative tradition of “cursive” calligraphy, and a third group (Constantine, Michael) made a clean break with the past by developing a distinctly new manner: the “typographic minuscule”. This last trend may well have been favoured by the new rulers: Anna Dalassene is Constantine’s presumed patron, and her son Alexis Comnenus entrusted to Michael one of the official copies of his *Dogmatic Panoply*⁵⁶.

⁵² Anna Comnena, *Alexias* III.9, tr. R. E. Sewter, *The Alexiad* (Penguin Classics), London 2009², 99.

⁵³ French translation of the scribal preface to Hagion Oros, Μονή Ιβήρων, Georg. 20: R. P. Blake, “Catalogue des manuscrits géorgiens de la bibliothèque de la laure d’Ivion au Mont Athos”, *Revue de l’Orient chrétien* 23 (1931-32) 289-361 – 29 (1933-34) 114-159 and 225-269: 123-124.

⁵⁴ A. P. Kazhdan, “Die Schrift einiger byzantinischer Kaiserurkunden und die konstantinopolitanische Kanzlei in der zweiten Hälfte des XI. Jahrhunderts”, in K. Treu (ed.), *Studia codicologica* (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 124), Berlin 1977, 263-264.

⁵⁵ Anna Comnena, *Alexias* III.8, tr. R. E. Sewter (cit. n. 52), 96.

⁵⁶ In the words of the manuscript’s dedicatory poem, “this book is the most mighty ruler’s armoury of divine dogmas” (Η βίβλος αὕτη τοῦ κρατίστου δεσπότης θείων πέφυκεν ὄπλοθήκη δογμάτων). See the full text in the on-line *Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams* (Greek Section, Department of Literary Studies, Ghent University). On the Slavonic translation of this poem: Ё. Trifunović, “Превод стихова Георгија Памфила у „Паноплији догматики” Јевтимија Зигавина”, *Зборник Матице српске за књижевност и језик* 42 (1994) 469-476.

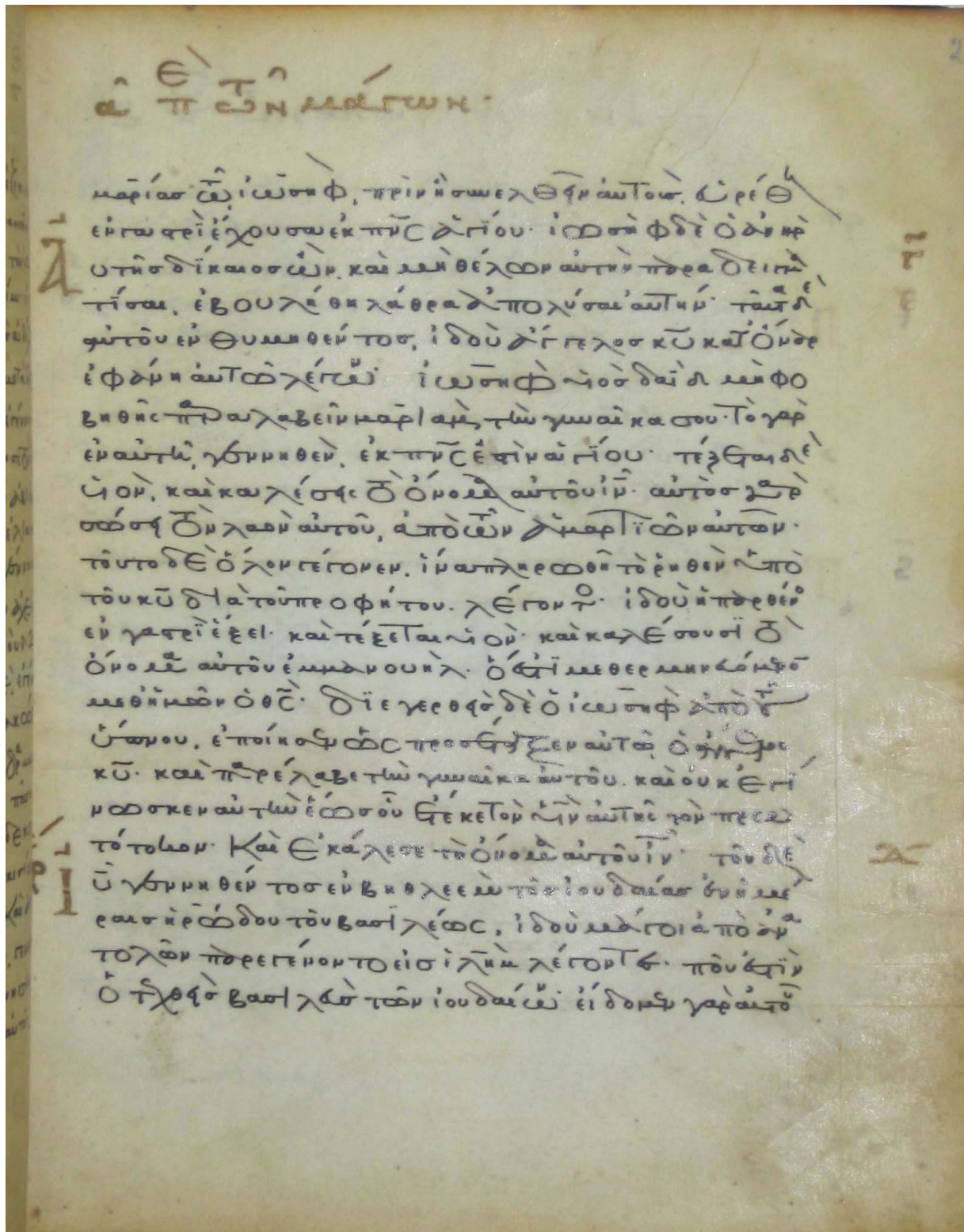


Fig. 7. Manchester, John Rylands University Library, Gr. 13, f. 2r (photo: author)

