

**REPRESENTATIONS OF BEHEADING SCENES IN THE MENOLOGION  
OF BASIL II (Vat.gr.1613)**

An iconographical survey of a 10<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine manuscript

by

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## ABSTRACT

### REPRESENTATIONS OF BEHEADING SCENES IN THE MENOLOGION OF BASIL II (Vat.gr.1613)

An iconographical survey of a 10<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine manuscript

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Department of Archaeology and History of Art, M.A. Thesis, 2018

Thesis Supervisor: Alessandra Ricci

This study focuses on the Menologion of Basil II preserved in the Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, an illustrated ecclesiastical calendar that presents short notices for each commemoration day. The codex encompasses 430 miniatures of high quality painted on gold-leaf backgrounds, suggesting a Constantinopolitan production and consequently represents one of the highest points of development in Byzantine manuscript tradition. Approximately, one third of the miniatures employ scenes of beheading as the method of execution of Christian martyrs, visually forming the most frequent type of persecution. This study aims to conduct an iconographical analysis of these scenes through analyzing recurring patterns in the representations of decapitation. It is argued that the persistent choice of representing the beheaded martyr in the moment preceding the execution is reminiscent of the iconographical motifs used in depictions of Sacrifice of Isaac. A thorough investigation presented in the format of a catalogue has been employed to identify these recurring motifs. The first chapter presents the codicological and historical background of the manuscript; the second chapter identifies the methodological approach applied to catalogue entries; the third chapter discusses the relationship between the scenes of the Sacrifice of Isaac and Early Christian martyrdom scenes and examines the similarities between the Menologion's beheading scenes and representations of 'Aqedah [binding] in monumental painting and manuscript illumination prior to the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

**Keywords:** Byzantine manuscript, Menologion, Basil II, Martyrdom, Hagiography, Beheading, Sacrifice of Isaac, Asia Minor

## ÖZET

### II.BASİLEİOS MENOLOGION’UNDA BAŞ KESME SAHNELERİNİN TASVİRİ (Vat.gr.1613)

10.yüzyıl’a ait Bizans el yazmasının ikonografik araştırması

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Tez Danışmanı: Alessandra Ricci

Bu çalışma, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana’da muhafaza edilmekte olan ve her azizin anma günü için kısa bir yaşam öyküsü bölümüyle birlikte, resimli Hristiyan dini takvimini konu alan kodeks Vat.gr.1613’ü birincil kaynak olarak kullanmaktadır. II.Basileios’un Menologion’u olarak daha iyi bilinen eser, 430 varak zeminli minyatürden oluşmaktadır ve el yazmasının üstün kalitesi Konstantinopolis’te üretilmiş olabileceğine işaret eder. Kodeks bu yönleriyle, Bizans el yazması geleneğinin en gelişmiş örneklerinden biridir. Yaklaşık olarak minyatürlerin üçte birini, şehit edilme yöntemi olarak kafa kesmenin kullanıldığı Hristiyan şehitlerinin tasvirleri oluşturur. Bu işkence türü, görsel olarak kodekste en çok tekrarlanan şehit etme yöntemidir. Bu çalışma, baş kesme sahnelerinin ikonografik analizi yoluyla tekrar eden motifleri ortaya çıkartmayı hedeflemektedir. Bu bağlamda, baş kesmenin özellikle ölüm anından hemen önceki sahneyle tasvir edilmesi yinelenen bir olgudur ve İshak’ın kurban edilme sahnesini anımsatmaktadır. Bu kapsamlı ikonografik inceleme, bir katalog formatında sunulmaktadır. İlk bölüm, kodikolojik ve tarihi çerçevede kodeksin geçmişini incelemektedir. İkinci bölümde, katalog için uygulanan metodoloji anlatılmaktadır. Üçüncü bölüm, İshak’ın kurban edilme ikonografisi ile erken dönem Hristiyan şehitlerinin arasındaki bağı kurmakta ve Menologion’daki baş kesme sahneleri ile Aqedah’ın [bağlama] 11. yüzyıldan önceki tasvirlerinin arasındaki benzerlikleri konu almaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Bizans el yazması, Menologion, II.Basileios, Şehitlik, Hagiografi, Baş kesme, İshak’ın kurban edilme teşebbüsü, Asya Minör

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover Page.....	i
Abstract.....	iii
Özet.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Abbreviations.....	xii
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	xiii
<b>CHAPTER I: The Menologion of Basil II: An overview</b>	
1.1 Historical background and codicological description of Vat.gr.1613.....	1
1.1.1 Provenance	
1.1.2 Physical condition	
1.1.3 Text, miniature and overall size	
1.1.4 Variations of page layout	
1.1.5 Page numbering system	
1.2 The classification of Vat.gr.1613 amongst forms of hagiographic Byzantine manuscripts.....	9
1.3 Menologia as a genre prior to Vat.gr.1613.....	14
1.4 Earlier Studies on the Vat.gr.1613.....	15
1.4.1 S.D. Nersessian and suggestions on the dating of Vat.gr. 1613	
1.4.2 I. Ševčenko and the theory of the eight illuminators	
<b>CHAPTER II: The representations of beheading in the Menologion of Basil II</b>	
2.1 Methodology and the structure of the catalogue entries .....	24
2.2 Types of beheading representations.....	34
2.2.1 Type A: Scenes depicting the moment preceding the beheading	
2.2.2 Type B: Scenes depicting the moment following the beheading	
2.2.3 Type C: Scenes where Type A and Type B occur concurrently	

2.2.4	The scene depicting the discovery of the Head relic of St. John the Baptist	
2.3	The representation of attire in the beheading scenes of the Menologion of Basil II.....	42
2.3.1	Martyrs	
2.3.2	Soldiers	
2.3.3	Other	
2.4	The link between the image and the text: detection of the Greek word ἀποκεφαλίζω in the main 16-verse minuscule text.....	51
<b>CHAPTER III: The iconography of the Sacrifice of Isaac and continuities with beheading scenes in the Menologion</b>		
3.1	An overview of the Sacrifice of Isaac in the Old and the New Testament.....	55
3.1.1	The study of iconographical motifs of Sacrifice of Isaac: two examples	
3.1.2	Martyrdom in Judaic and Early Christian traditions	
3.1.3	Martyrdom before Christianity	
3.2	Representations of Sacrifice of Isaac prior to 11 <sup>th</sup> century.....	70
3.2.1	Monumental painting	
3.2.2	Manuscript illumination	
3.3	Connection between the iconography of Sacrifice of Isaac and the beheading scenes in the Menologion of Basil II.....	88
3.3.1	Soldiers vs. Abraham	
3.3.2	Martyrs vs. Isaac	
3.4	Assessment and statistical analysis of the beheaded martyrs in Vat.gr.1613.....	90
3.4.1	Types of representations	
3.4.2	Geographical distribution of martyrs	
<b>CHAPTER IV: Conclusions and further remarks.....</b>		
<b>98</b>		
Bibliography.....		101
Appendices		
<b>Appendix A.</b>	Catalogue of the beheading scenes.....	111
<b>Appendix B.</b>	Regional distribution of the beheaded martyrs.....	386

**Fig.53.** Map 1. The geographical distribution of the beheaded martyrs according to their birthplace or place of martyrdom based on *The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos*.....387

#### LIST OF FIGURES

**Fig.1** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1156, 270v-271r.

Image retrieved from the Digital Vatican Library

[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1156](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1156)

**Fig.2** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.142: Detail from the poem that addresses the earthquake of 740 AD.

Image retrieved from the Digital Vatican Library

[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613)

**Fig.3** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.237.

**Fig.4** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.238.

**Fig.5** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, The frontspiece with the dedicatory epigram addressing Basil II, p.XIII

**Fig.6** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.32 (Left).

**Fig.7** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.21 (Right).

**Fig.8** Catalogue ID 2, p.10: Babylas of Antioch

**Fig.9** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.10: Detail from CI 2, Babylas of Antioch [The same month, 4]

**Fig.10** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.12: Detail from CI 3, Hermione of Ephesus [On the same day]

**Fig.11** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613: Illuminated crosses

**Fig.12** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.142: Detail from CI 3, Hermione of Ephesus

**Fig.13** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.155: Detail from CI 51, Acindynus, Anempodistus, Aphthonius, Elpidephorus, Pegasus of Persia

**Fig.14** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.10: Detail from CI 2, ligature for the conjunction “καὶ”

**Fig.15** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.21: CI 6, Euppsychius of Caesarea



**Fig.16** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.58: CI 22, Phocas of Sinope

**Fig.17** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.126: CI 43, Artemius of Egypt

**Fig.18** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.12: CI 3, Hermione of Ephesus

**Fig.19** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.82: CI 30, Dionysius the Aeropagite

**Fig.20** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.242: CI 84, Lucy of Syracuse

**Fig.21** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.109: CI 37, Andronicus, Probus and Tarachus

**Fig.22** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.420: CI 136, The discovery of St. John the Baptist's decapitated head by Ignatius the Bishop and Emperor Michael

**Fig.23** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 19: CI 5, Faustus the Priest and Abibus the Deacon

**Fig.24** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 58: CI 22, Phocas, bishop of Sinope

**Fig.25** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 10: CI 2, Babylas of Antioch, the patriarch of Antioch

**Fig.26** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 252: CI 90, Daniel the prophet

**Fig.27** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.228, CI 80, Athenodorus of Mesopotamia

**Fig.28** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613 p.150: CI 50, Zenobie and Zenobius of Aegeae

**Fig.29** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.62: CI 23, Herais of Alexandria

**Fig.30** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 317, CI 107, Monks of Raitha

**Fig.31** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 170, CI 58, Alexander of Thessalonica with Maximian the Emperor

**Fig.32** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.117: CI 40, The discovery of the head of Longinus the Centurion.

**Fig.33** Egypt, El Bagawat, Chapel of Exodus: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art  
<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.34** Yerevan, The Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, MS 2374 (Etschmiadzin Evangeliary): Sacrifice of Isaac

**Fig.35** Israel, Beth-Alpha Synagogue, Torah Shrine, mosaic floor  
Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art  
<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.36** Israel, Beth-Alpha Synagogue, Torah Shrine, mosaic floor: Sacrifice of Isaac

**Fig.37** Syria, Damascus, National Museum of Damascus, Dura Europos Synagogue: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art  
<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.38** Italy, Rome, Catacomb of Priscilla: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art  
<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.39** Italy, Rome, Catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art  
<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.40** Italy, Ravenna, Church of San Vitale: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art  
<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.41** Egypt, Mount Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art  
<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.42** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Par.gr.510 (The Paris Gregory), f. 174v: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Image retrieved from the Digital The Bibliothèque nationale de France  
<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84522082/f94.item>

**Fig.43** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.699 (The Christian Topography of Cosmas), 59r: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Retrieved from the Digital Vatican Library  
[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.699](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.699)

**Fig.44** Moscow, State Historical Museum, Gr.129 (Chludov Psalter), 105v: Sacrifice of Isaac  
Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art

<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.45** Mount Athos, Pantokrator Monastery, Pantokrator 61(Pantokrator Marginal Psalter), 151v: Sacrifice of Isaac

Image retrieved from the The Princeton Index of Medieval Art

<https://theindex.princeton.edu/>

**Fig.46** Distribution of all miniatures by each illuminator

**Fig.45** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.122: CI 42, Sadoth of Seleucia

**Fig.46** Distribution of all miniatures by each illuminator

**Fig.47** Distribution of beheading scenes by each illuminator

**Fig.48** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 414: CI 135, Sadoth of Seleucia

**Fig.49** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.280: CI 100, Martyrs of Nicomedia

**Fig.50** Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.379: CI 127, Martyrs of Nicomedia

**Fig. 51** The geographical distribution of beheaded martyrs

**Fig.52** The distribution of the three types of beheading representations

**Fig.53** Map 1. The geographical distribution of the beheaded martyrs according to their birthplace or place of martyrdom based on *The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos*

## ABBREVIATIONS

**Acta Sanctorum** Carnandet, Jean-Baptiste, Jean Stiltingh, Jean Limpens, Jean Clé, and Jean Périer. *Acta Sanctorum Quotquot Toto Orbe Coluntur: Vel A Catholicis Scriptoribus Celebrantur Quæ Ex Latinis Et Græcis, Aliarumque Gentium Antiquis Monumentis Collegit*. 71 Vols. Parisiis Et Romæ: V. Palmé, 1867.

**BHG** Société Des Bollandistes, ed. *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca Ediderunt Socii Bollandiani Editio Altera Emendatior Accedit Synopsis Metaphrastica*. Bruxelles: Soc. Des Bollandistes, 1909.

**CI** Catalogue Item

**Fig.** Figure

**ibid.** In the same place (*Latin: ibidem*)

**MS number** Manuscript page number

**ODB** *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan et al. Oxford, 1991. 3 Vols.

**ODCC** *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross. 2nd. ed. London, 1974.

**ODJR** Werblowsky, R. J. Zwi, and Geoffrey Wigoder. *The Oxford dictionary of the Jewish religion*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

**PG** *Patriologica Graeca* Migne, J.P. *Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca et orientalis*. Parisiis, 1857-1886.

**Synax.CP** *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. H. Delehay. Propylaeum ad Acta SS. Novembris, Brussels, 1900.

## INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on a survey analysis of the beheading scenes presented in the Menologion of Basil II, an illuminated Byzantine manuscript that was produced in the last quarter of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively referred as Vat.gr.1613, the Menologion<sup>2</sup> is an exemplar of a specific genre of Byzantine illuminated manuscripts, presented in the form of a calendar of the liturgical year organized according to the commemoration day of each saint. The contents of Vat.gr.1613 cover the first six months of the ecclesiastical year, beginning with the first day of September and ending on the last day of February. More accurately, it is classified as a *synaxarion*, consisting only half of the year, rather than a *menologion* that contains a full calendar of the twelve months. Vat.gr.1613 is one of the most richly illuminated manuscripts surviving from the Byzantine Empire, encompassing 430 miniatures staged in front of detailed architectural settings or exquisite landscapes, against gold-leaf backgrounds. The over-the-top quality of the miniatures and the physical state of the manuscript hints an imperial commission and consequently a Constantinopolitan production. Acting as the colophon of the manuscript, the frontspiece opens with an epigram that addresses Basil II, clearly pointing to a production either commissioned by or presented to the Emperor.

Cardinal Annibale Albani translated the text of the manuscript into Latin and transcribed the scribal text to printed Greek in 1727<sup>3</sup> and the Bibliotheca Apostolica

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<sup>1</sup> For the discussion of the proposed dates of production by S.D.Nersessian, see Chapter I, 1.3.1.

<sup>2</sup> Henceforth, ‘the Menologion’ will be used as a shorthand to refer to Vat.gr.1613. The non-capitalized form of the word, the *menologion* or the plural form *menologia*, refers to the genre of manuscripts classified as ecclesiastical calendars.

<sup>3</sup> Albani, A., and A. Fantauzzi. *Menologium Graecorum Jussu Basilii Imperatoris Graecae olim editum, Munificentia Et Liberalitate Sanctissimi Domini Nostri Benedicti XIII.: In tres Partes divisum Nunc Primum Graecae et Latine Prodit. Tres Menses complectens A Martio Ad Augustum. Pars*

Vaticana commissioned a catalogue accompanied by a facsimile edition<sup>4</sup> in 1907, containing detailed iconographical descriptions for each scene. This study uses both resources for guidance, especially with the effort to translate the title of each page that depicts a beheading scene. To this day, the complete content of Vat.gr.1613 has not yet been translated to English and the iconographical motifs encapsulated in the manuscript have not been studied exhaustively from an art historical point of view.<sup>5</sup> Beginning with N. Kondakov, several attempts have been made to identify the stylistic habits of the manuscript's illuminators.<sup>6</sup> A. Venturi's study and application of the Morellian method showed that an overall analysis of a work of art with such complexity cannot be made solely by applying art historical methods, while K. Weitzmann suggested that an iconographical study needs to precede the overall stylistic analysis of the work.<sup>7</sup> Today, the Menologion is preserved in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in Vatican City where the manuscript was digitized on an online platform<sup>8</sup> as a part of an ongoing project that started in 2013 to electronically publish the entire collection of 80.000 manuscripts that are held in the Vatican Library.<sup>9</sup> This study was made possible by this access provided by the digitized form of the manuscript that enabled extensive analyses to be conducted without time limitations of studying the manuscript in the scriptorium. However, the current study is merely a

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*Tertia.. Ex Typographia Venerabilis Capellae SS.MI Sacramenti Apud Antonium Fantauzzi Typographum, & Characterum Fusorem, 1727.*

<sup>4</sup> *Il Menologio: Menologium Graecorum (Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613). II. Codices e Vaticanis selecti phototypice expressi.* Vol. 8. Fratelli Bocca, 1907.

<sup>5</sup> The only complete translation available is into Latin, where the scribal Greek have been simultaneously transcribed into printed Greek.

<sup>6</sup> The theory of the eight illuminators, now widely accepted, has been put forward by I. Ševčenko and will be discussed in Chapter I, 1.3.1.

<sup>7</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 205. Overall, these earlier studies have shown that applying a Western art historical perspective to Byzantine miniatures fails to address the issues arising from the differences in styles.

<sup>8</sup> "Digitalizzazione Manoscritti Biblioteca Vaticana." *Digitavaticana*. Accessed October 20, 2017. <http://www.digitavaticana.org/?lang=en>.

<sup>9</sup> "Vat.gr.1613." *DigiVatLib*. Accessed October 20, 2017. [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

stepping-stone and a first attempt to understand the miniatures of the Menologion, an area that requires extensive research, a wider perspective and a meticulous approach.

The principal objective of this study is to generate a categorical analysis of the beheading scenes and identifying recurring iconographical motifs of this style of execution in the Menologion. Beheading is only one of the methods used in persecutions against Christians during the Late Antiquity; among with others such as crucifixion, drowning, mutilating body parts, stoning and these other executions are also presented in the manuscript. Through these iconographical analyses, the study aims to suggest an early iconographical model that could possibly explain why beheading is presented in the manner that is categorically classified, while comprising the majority of the martyrdom scenes throughout the manuscript. The classifications lead to two main iconographical motifs: one depicting the moment before the decapitation occurs and the other presenting an already beheaded martyr, showing the aftermath of the execution. The three types of representations identified through the analysis present the following scenes: the first and the most frequent type depicts the preceding moment of beheading on its own, the second type solely presents the moment after the decapitation where the head of the martyr is completely separated from the body, and the third type combines both events and displays a simultaneous representation. This study proposes that the model which depicts the moment preceding the execution derives from an older iconographical motif, namely from the representations of Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac, as described in Genesis 22. The iconographical similarities are investigated through recurring motifs, such as Abraham's knife-bearing right arm and the soldiers' right arm raised towards the sky, the body positioning of martyrs and Isaac and their bound hands. In both representations, the willingness of the figure is emphasized, as in the kneeling



gesture of Isaac and yielding pose of the martyrs. Furthermore, a geographical survey is conducted to explore the distribution of the beheaded martyrs in the Menologion by looking into the place of martyrdom and the area of origin of the martyrs, whenever this information is available.

Of the 430 scenes depicted in the Menologion, a substantial number of 138 miniatures depict martyrdom through beheading, making it by far the most frequent method of persecution. For the details that are investigated in this study, a catalogue proved to be more beneficial and practical for the reader than following a narrative approach. Thus, **Appendix A** is composed of a 138 distinct catalogue entries where a translation of the title of each page is presented,<sup>10</sup> followed by a descriptive section that surveys the iconographical motifs and presents the historical background of the martyrdom through primary and secondary sources. An important source of reference is the hagiographical texts of the saints' lives, the *vitae*, which are mentioned whenever it was available for the commemorated saints. The beheading scenes are then categorized according to their iconographical motifs that reveal the types of beheading scenes used in the manuscript. A common motif—classified here as Type A—depicts the moment preceding the execution, where the executioner is captured in the motion of raising his arm with his weapon, while the martyr awaits death in a stationary yielding gesture. Another version, Type B, portrays the moment after the execution took place, where the decapitated head is severed from the body. Type B rarely occurs by itself and in most cases it is coupled with a Type A beheading and whenever the two portrayals are depicted concurrently, is it categorized as Type C. For each portrayal, the physical position of the body and

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<sup>10</sup> The majuscule title serves as a tool to identify the names of martyrs being presented on each miniature, followed by a 16-line formulaic text describing the events that took place preceding the execution. Due to time limitations, the translation of the entire descriptive text have been omitted, but the text has been scanned for words or word groups narrating the execution method by beheading.



hands of each saint have been described in the catalog entry to enable comparison with the iconographical motifs present in the Sacrifice of Isaac. Additionally, each saint has been grouped into a regional area they are affiliated with and the majority of this data is based on the online database *The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos*.<sup>11</sup> Region 1 contains saints originating from Asia Minor, while Region 2 is composed of Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Arabia, Persia, and Armenia, and Region 3 represents the West. **Appendix B** is a map to illustrate the findings of the geographical areas. (Fig.49) The results achieved from the geographical investigation have not been discussed in detail towards the reasoning of the findings and it is an area of research that is beyond the scope of this study.

Chapter I examines the historical background of the Menologion and describes the codicological aspects of the manuscript, presented as an overview of available information on the codex. S.D Nersessian's study<sup>12</sup> sets *terminus ante quem* and *terminus post quem* of the manuscript, while I. Ševčenko's seminal work<sup>13</sup> published in 1962, introduces the theory of eight illuminators. Furthermore, the provenance, physical condition, miniature and overall size, variations of the page layout, and the numbering systems applied to the manuscript are discussed. In Chapter II, the methodology applied to the analysis of the beheading scenes is described in detail. A general description for the formatting of the catalogue entries presents the modes of study that are used throughout the analysis. Furthermore, the costumes of the martyrs and the soldiers are defined through the recurring elements in clothing, revealing the rank and the role of the figures. Finally, the detection of

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<sup>11</sup> "Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: Introduction." Princeton University. Accessed October 21, 2017. <https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/intro.php>.

<sup>12</sup> Sirarpie Der Nersessian. "Remarks on the date of the menologium and the psalter written for Basil II." *Byzantion* 15 (1940): 104-25. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44168520>.

<sup>13</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243-76. doi:10.2307/1291164.

words or word groups narrating the event of beheading in the 16-line main text of the manuscript is presented to establish the relationship between the text and the image.

Chapter III presents an assessment of the connection between Genesis 22 and the representation of beheading, framed with the examples from the depictions of Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac prior to the production of the Menologion in monumental painting and illuminated manuscripts. The biblical narrative of the binding of Isaac and Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his true heir is discussed in comparison with Christ's Passion. The Early Christian martyrs are then discussed as 'Other Christs' who are following the example of Christ in the manner of their deaths. Consequently, the similarities between Isaac's slim escape from death and the Early Christian martyrs' willing attitude towards their demise are analyzed by looking at iconographical motifs that are present in both scenes. Finally, in Chapter IV, a discussion of the results perceived through the categorical analyses on the iconographical program of the beheading scenes in the Menologion is presented.

## **CHAPTER I: The Menologion of Basil II: An overview**

The Menologion of Basil II is amongst the most renowned manuscripts produced in the history of Byzantium. The manuscript's lavish illuminations are seen as culminating examples of Byzantine art and such a massive scale undertaking is a celebration of the artistic production attained in Constantinople. The Menologion marks the high quality achieved by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> century; belonging to the period of artistic production that has been attributed as the Macedonian Renaissance of Byzantine art.

### **1.1 Historical background and codicological description of Vat.gr.1613**

#### **1.1.1 Provenance**

The dedicatory epigram in the frontispiece of the manuscript indisputably addresses Emperor Basil II. (Fig.5) The 28-verse epigram serves as the colophon of the manuscript, giving clues about the circumstances regarding its production. Basil II is generally distinguished from his grandfather's grandfather, Emperor Basil I, by the term Bulgar-slayer [Βουλγαροκτόνος, Boulgaroktonos], used for celebrating his military victories in this area. However this term was not used during or immediately after his reign.<sup>14</sup> As such, the poem does not address Basil II as the Bulgar-slayer, but instead, the epigram refers to Basil II as the 'sun of the purple' and 'the one reared in the purple robes' in the verses,<sup>15</sup> emphasizing his royal birth and not stressing any of his deeds. The glorifying set of adjectives used to elevate his status and praising his mightiness are present, however there is no reference to his victories. Another manuscript produced during his reign, the Psalter of Basil II, opens with a frontal standing portrait of Basil II and styles him as an Emperor in his

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<sup>14</sup> Paul Stephenson, *The legend of Basil the Bulgar-Slayer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 51.

military attire. The Psalter is thought to be a later work produced to address Basil II's successful army career, depicting him as a war hero.<sup>16</sup> It is truly a depiction of the triumphal moment in his long reign, and places him as a victorious military leader. Although the Menologion captures hundreds of figures in its 430 miniatures, it never depicts Basil II in any of the scenes.

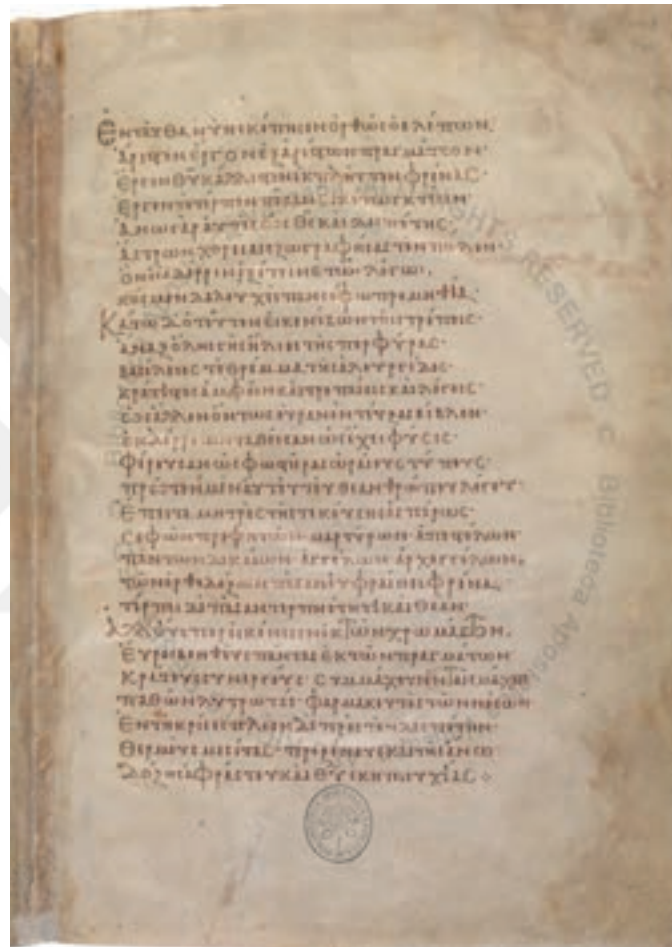


Fig.5 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, The frontpiece with the dedicatory epigram addressing Basil II, p.XIII

<sup>15</sup> "Details, Menologion of Basil II" Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams. Accessed February 04, 2018. <http://www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrence/view/id/274/>. The lines 11 and 12 are, 'ἄναξ ὅλης γῆς ἥλιος τῆς πορφύρας;' and 'βασιλείος τὸ θρέμμα τῆς ἀλουργίδος;'.

<sup>16</sup> Stephenson, *The legend of Basil the Bulgar-Slayer*. 51. The psalter of Basil II is housed in the Marcian Library in Venice and is referred as Cod. Marc. gr. 17. The mentioned miniature is located in fol. 3r and it is the most famous depiction of Basil II, where two archangels flank him around his shoulders while eight figures are kneeling at his feet in the act of *prosknesis*. There is a disagreement among art historians about the dating of the psalter, while some believe it is a production of a later period in Basil II's reign, A. Cutler and others believe it belongs to the initial part of his career.

Presumably produced in Constantinople<sup>17</sup>, Vat.gr.1613 has a provenance that can be traced back from its date of production to our day with limited precision. It is believed that the manuscript did not leave Constantinople until the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when it arrived to the possession of a Genoese doctor of law, Bartolomeo di Giacomo.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently, the Duke of Milan, Ludovico Sforza purchased the manuscript at the end of 15th century.<sup>19</sup> Thereafter, Niccolo Sfondrato, a cardinal during the papacy of Pope Gregorio XIII (1572-1585) acquired the manuscript from Sforza.<sup>20</sup> Sfondrato's papacy began in 1590 AD and he took the name Pope Gregorio XIV. After his death in 1591 AD, the manuscript came to the ownership of Cardinal S. Cecilia who passed it on to Pope Paul V in 1615 AD<sup>21</sup> and from this point onwards the Menologion remained in the possession of Vatican Library where it is still preserved today. Cardinal Annibale Albani translated the manuscript to Latin and transcribed the Greek text in 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>22</sup> In 1907, Vatican Library commissioned a catalogue accompanied by a facsimile edition<sup>23</sup> with a detailed description of each scene. Vatican Library digitized the manuscript on an online platform<sup>24</sup> as a part of an ongoing project that started in 2013 for eventually

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<sup>17</sup> The production quality, the script and the colophon addressing an imperial entity all direct to the hypothesis that Vat.gr.1613 was produced in the Stoudios Monastery scriptorium, yet it remains as a notion that can not be proved with precision or material proof.

<sup>18</sup> *Il Menologio: Menologium Graecorum (Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613)*. II, Codices e Vaticanis selecti phototypice expressi. Vol. 8 (Fratelli Boccaa, 1907),V.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Albani, A., and A. Fantauzzi. *Menologium Graecorum Jussu Basilii Imperatoris Graece olim editum, Munificentia Et Liberalitate Sanctissimi Domini Nostri Benedicti XIII.: In tres Partes divisum Nunc Primum Graece et Latine Prodit. Tres Menses complectens A Martio Ad Augustum. Pars Tertia..* Ex Typographia Venerabilis Capellae SS.MI Sacramenti Apud Antonium Fantauzzi Typographum, & Characterum Fusorem, 1727.

<sup>23</sup> *Il Menologio: Menologium Graecorum (Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613)*. II. Codices e Vaticanis selecti phototypice expressi. Vol. 8. Fratelli Boccaa, 1907.

<sup>24</sup> Digitalizzazione Manoscritti Biblioteca Vaticana." Digita Vaticana. Accessed October 20, 2017. <http://www.digitavaticana.org/?lang=en>.

electronically publishing the entire collection of 80.000 manuscripts in their possession.<sup>25</sup>

### **1.1.2 Physical condition**

Brown ink is used throughout the manuscript for both the majuscule titles and the minuscule main text, except for the initials at the beginning of 16 lines, which are ornamented in gold.<sup>26</sup> The initials are outlined in the same brown ink and gold filled in the thin-lined frame. The signatures of the illuminators are also written with the same brown ink, in slightly smaller characters than the minuscule text. The parchment is of medium thickness, smooth,<sup>27</sup> and was once very white but at present state it shows some yellowing, especially visible on the bound side of the folia. In some pages of the manuscript, mild flaking on the miniatures can be observed, however the extent of physical damage that occurred due to the aging of the paint is not excessive and it never disables the viewer from observing the content in its entirety. On most pages, peeling is only present in small areas where some details are clouded, such as the facial characteristics. The written text is intact except for few small areas where presumably the water damage altered the holding of the ink on the parchment, however it is not certain if this occurred during the time of execution or at a later time.

### **1.1.3 Text, miniature and overall size and script**

The Menologion is written in 10<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine Greek<sup>28</sup> and begins with a dedicatory poem on page XIII revealing the patron of the manuscript as Emperor

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<sup>25</sup> Vat.gr.1613." DigiVatLib. Accessed October 20, 2017. [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

<sup>26</sup> Kirsopp Lake and Silva Lake, eds., *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts to the year 1200: VII Manuscripts In Rome, PART I, X VII* (Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.: The American Academy of Arts and Sciences),14.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Discussed in H.Hunger, 'Minuskel und Auszeichnungsschriften im 10.-12. Jahrhundert' in *La Paléographie*, 204-205. Also in, P.Canart, 'La paléographie grecque et byzantine' in *Colloque international du Centre national de la Recherche scientifique*. Paris, 21-25 octobre 1974.

Basil II, written in Alexandrian Auszeichnungsmajuskel,<sup>29</sup> which is stylistically consistent with other manuscripts of the same period.<sup>30</sup> A uniform Alexandrian uncial script is used throughout the manuscript in titles, identifying the miniature that first indicates the date of the commemoration, either in a number form or in cases where the date matches the previous page, a phrase specifies the repeated date. Following the date, the commemorated saint or the content of the scene is identified. The 16-line verse is written in minuscule script inside a single column unlike the later period *menologia* that are almost always written in double columns. From the 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the minuscule handwriting evolved from cursive script and replaced the uncials.<sup>31</sup> The 16-line main text of Vat.gr.1613 is written in a 10<sup>th</sup> century minuscule and throughout the script, ligatures and abbreviations have been used to save space and achieve speediness in writing. The Alexandrian uncial, widely used in titles and headings, is characteristically a combination of majuscule and minuscule, and extends both above and below the baseline.<sup>32</sup> Overall, few ligatures are used in the titles unless conjunction words like καί coincides with the end of the line. Each title begins with a gold illuminated cross of several different shapes.<sup>33</sup> A decorative gold initial marks the beginning of the minuscule text, which strictly runs for 16 lines, never more or less. Furrows of pattern ruling with a stylus through the minuscule script can be observed running through the 16-lines, ruling the writing. It also encapsulates the title, miniature, and the text all within the same margins. The tracing is invisible due to the applied pressure of a steel stylus and can only be seen in the form of furrow. The guiding lines of the text are more precise

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> John Lowden, *The Jaharis Gospel Lectionary: The story of a Byzantine book / John Lowden* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven, Yale University Press, 2009), 48.

<sup>31</sup> ODB, A. Kazdhan, 'Literature', 1236.

<sup>32</sup> Lowden, *The Jaharis Gospel Lectionary: The story of a Byzantine book*. 49.

<sup>33</sup> These shapes are discussed further in detail in Chapter II.



than the frames of the miniatures, which do not always follow sharp lines. However, an effort to double frame the miniature is visible, with a gold filling sandwiched between blue line for the outer border and a red inner frame line. Both these lines are thin in nature but at times, the illuminators touched the frame with a freehand, leaving marks of unequal thickness in the lines. The overall size of the manuscript ranges from 35.5 to 36.5 cm in height and 28.5 to 29.2 cm in width.<sup>34</sup> The miniature size ranges from 17.7 to 18 cm in height and 12 to 12.2 cm in width.

#### **1.1.4 Variations of page layout**

The trademark of the Menologion of Basil II is that all the miniatures are painted against a uniform golden background, creating a glorious atmosphere for the commemoration of the Christian saints. As a general convention of the illuminators, the mountains never overreach towards the skyline, leaving sufficient space for the viewer to grasp a sense of the golden sky, even though it is not depicted in its natural blue color. Another continuous use of gold is the nimbus encircling the heads of the saints, a recurrent trait separating them from the executioners. The details of the costumes of the saints and executioners alike are a result of a meticulous alternation of the patterns and colors used. The tunic, leggings, *chlamys*, and slippers are always depicted in a variety of interchanging colors that avoids a sense of uniformity or repetition in the viewer's mind. Furthermore, the costume stands out as a distinguishing element for the rank of the saint, clarifying whether he is a priest, deacon, bishop, or simply a person unaffiliated with the Church.

The layout of each page is constructed through three major components: the majuscule script title identifying the content of the miniature, the 16-verse

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<sup>34</sup> "Manuscript - Vat.gr.1613." Digital Vatican Library. Accessed February 04, 2018.



minuscule text and the rectangular miniature. The margins of all the components are equal, never reaching outside the limits of one another, except for the initial letter of the 16-verse text. The title varies in length, depending on the subject matter, however a great majority occupy a space of two lines of Alexandrian uncial script. Each initial letter occupies approximately equal space to three minuscule lines and always leans to the left side of the page. In principle, the miniature and the 16-verse minuscule text occupy approximately equal spaces, each inhabiting half the space of the page after subtracting the space covering the margins on the top and at the bottom of the page. The top margin is not equal for every page and the length of the title affects its measurement. Whenever the title reaches the length of three lines, the margin tilts to uppermost end of the page, leaving a smaller space from the top of the leaf to the beginning of the first line.<sup>35</sup>

The page layout of the Menologion is constructed in two alternating styles. In both layout systems, the title stands at the uppermost part of the folio, and in the first layout system, the 16-line minuscule immediately follows the title, leaving the bottom part for the miniature. (Fig.6) The second layout system begins with title and is followed by the miniature, leaving the space on the bottom of the page for the 16-verse minuscule. (Fig.7) The two layout systems have been used in an alternating manner by the illuminators, creating a rhythm of flow throughout the manuscript, avoiding repetition.<sup>36</sup> The alternating layout has been used systematically and always follows the rule of a half and half occupied by the 16-line

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<https://digi.vatlib.it/mss/detail/206481>. The poem is separated into three parts through bigger initials.

<sup>35</sup> This feature proves that the scribe did some calculation before he began writing the title, but also could point to the fact that the space allowed for the title was fixed and he had to move the text upwards every time the content was longer.

<sup>36</sup> I observed the variation of page layout was consistent with alternating on the two sides of the same folio and presumably this might be the result of illuminator's effort to avoid executing miniatures on the same part of the verso and the recto as there is a slight trace of the miniature reflected as a shadow on the text of the other side.

main text and the miniature in a rotation, while a fixed space is reserved for the title in each combination. Throughout the manuscript, the name of the illuminator is present in the margin of each page. Some exceptions are the fifteen pages where the 16-line main text is missing, of which two lack both the main text and the title. In every case, the miniatures are present, clearly indicating that the miniature and the text were executed separately.<sup>37</sup>

### **1.1.5 Page numbering system**

The Menologion has a visible numbering system that appears on the upper left corner of each page. These Arabic numerals were added on the folia at a later period and they are written in faded black ink. The digitized version of the manuscript presents the same numbering system, beginning with 1 and ending in 430. In the catalogue entries, this number is retained as the MS number. Traditionally, manuscripts have been numbered in recto and verso format, differentiating each side of the folio allowing the investigator to recognize the flesh and skin side of the parchment.

The Menologion is an exception, having been numbered in a continuous system, beginning with 1 and ending with 434, the exact amount of pages existing in the manuscript. Thus, it is not possible to identify which two pages are the sides of the same folio by solely observing the numbering system. The last four pages of the manuscript are left blank. Additionally, the Arabic numbers run only in the pages where miniatures are depicted and a Latin numbering system indicates the initial pages. The manuscript opens with five blank pages; beginning with *piatto anteriore* and this section runs through Ir to IIr.

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<sup>37</sup> Ihor Ševčenko, "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962), doi:10.2307/1291164, 245.



Fig.6 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.32 (Left)

Fig.7 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.21 (Right)

Subsequently, from IIIr to XI, an alphabetical Latin list signed by Leone Allacci catalogs the names of the saints followed by commemoration days and related page numbers.<sup>38</sup> This part was added after the manuscript came to the possession of the Vatican Library. From XIII to XV, an epigram occupying a single page reveals the patron of the manuscript as Basil II, leaving the other side of the page blank. The illuminated part of the manuscript officially starts with page number 1 and it runs for 434 pages with four blank pages at the end followed by *piatto posterior*. The manuscript overall is composed of 217 folios. Judging from the traces of the paint on page XV that presents consistency with the first miniature, the first illuminated page is painted on the backside of this blank folio.

## 1.2 The classification of Vat.gr.1613 amongst forms of hagiographic Byzantine manuscripts

<sup>38</sup> *Il Menologio: Menologium Graecorum (Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613). II. Codices e Vaticanis selecti phototypice expressi*. Vol. 8. Fratelli Bocca, 1907. VIII.

Despite its name ‘Menologion of Basil II’, Vat.gr.1613 is an example of a hagiographical calendar that contains short notices about saints’ lives accompanied by illustrations for each text. The word *menologion* derives from the Greek words μήν, signifying a month, and λόγος, which can be translated as a catalog within the context of Byzantine illuminated manuscripts.<sup>39</sup> The monthly catalog, namely the *menologion* as a genre, emphasizes the close association between the organization of the Church calendar and the collection of lives of the saints in the liturgical tradition of Byzantium.<sup>40</sup> In fact, the content of Vat.gr.1613 does not include entries for the entire ecclesiastical year and thus is not considered to be a true *menologion*. Incorporating only half of the liturgical calendar, Vat.gr.1613 begins with the first day of September and ends with the last day of February. Yet, another type of hagiographical calendar that better describes the nature of Vat.gr.1613 is referred in Byzantine Greek as a *synaxarion*.<sup>41</sup> This word derives from σύναξις, signifying ‘a gathering’ in Ancient Greek<sup>42</sup> that evolved into meaning ‘a feast day’ or ‘an ecclesiastical celebration’<sup>43</sup> in the Orthodox Christian context. While the capitalized word ‘Synaxarion’ refers to the liturgical manuscript that contains the short notices of saints’ lives, the non-capitalized usage of the word addresses the short notice itself. The calendric organization of the *synaxarion* is predominantly similar to the *menologion*, following a parallel set of commemoration days that are distributed

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<sup>39</sup> E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods: From B.C.146 to AD 1100* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), 719. The Greek word λόγος has multiple other meanings pertaining to a word, speech, discourse or reason.

<sup>40</sup> A.P.Kazhdan, ed., *The Oxford dictionary of Byzantium* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), Nancy P. Ševčenko, ‘The Menologion of Basil II’, 1341. Hereafter, the abbreviation *ODB* will be used.

<sup>41</sup> *ODB*, Robert.F.Tart and Nancy P. Ševčenko ‘Synaxarion’,1991.

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=sunacis&la=greek#Perseus:text:1999.04.0057:entry=su/nacis-contents>

<sup>43</sup> Andrea Luzzi, “Synaxaria and Synaxarion of Constantinople” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography: Volume II: Genres and Contexts*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis, Ashgate research companion (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011-2014), 197.

unevenly<sup>44</sup> amongst each of the days. The separation between the two genres derives primarily from the *menologion*'s lengthier texts, which pose a narrative function, in comparison to the *synaxarion* notices' brief nature. The *synaxarion* incorporates concise informative paragraphs arranged as short biographies of saints and they do not necessarily employ a codex on their own; they often occupy only a part of a type of a manuscript generally referred to as a *lectionary*<sup>45</sup> where these notices are rarely illustrated. An exception is Vat.gr.1156, where the *synaxarion* section is richly illuminated with small frontal portraits of the saints. (Fig.1) Within the genre of *synaxaria*, a more detailed version the *synaxarium maius* presents lengthier texts while the *synaxarium minus* is the type with shorter versions of the texts.<sup>46</sup> In some manuscripts, the notices are supplemented by a set of instructions directing the reader to follow the Divine Office in an orderly fashion while reciting the text. The instructive elements existing in some of the *Synaxaria* manuscripts are classified as *Synaxaria-Typika*, as the word *typikon* generally refers to a set of instructions to be followed in the liturgical ceremonies of monastic tradition.<sup>47</sup> The short notices begin with the identification of the saint, continuing with details about his or her martyrdom and in instances where the saint met a natural death, the deeds performed during their lifetime are described.<sup>48</sup> The content of *synaxaria* is not restricted to the lives of the saints but often includes accounts of natural phenomenon and historical

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<sup>44</sup> In fact, in Vat.gr.1613 itself, the number of miniatures depicted for each day varies and for each day anywhere between one to eight saints have been commemorated.

<sup>45</sup> Nancy P. Ševčenko, "Synaxaria and Menologia," in *A companion to Byzantine illustrated manuscripts*, ed. Vasiliki Tsamakda, Brill's companions to the Byzantine world, 2212-7429 Volume 2 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2017), 319.

<sup>46</sup> Andrea Luzzi, "*Synaxaria and Synaxarion of Constantinople*", 197.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 198

<sup>48</sup> The layout of the notice was studied by Paolo Odorico who suggested the text followed six functions, beginning with the statement of origins of the saint followed by a declaration and support of faith, and finalizing with received saintly status. The functions did not always follow the same order but the texts repeatedly underlined these same functions for all who were being commemorated. For further reading see: Paolo Odorico. "L'agiografia tra teorizzazione e pratica culturale." *Études balkaniques* 1 (1994): 53–79.

events along with commemorations of emperors and other important figures. On the other hand, *menologia* describe a saint's life meticulously and these longer accounts serve as an example of the hagiographical genre known as the *vitae*.<sup>49</sup> Traditionally, both types of commemorative calendars were compiled to be read aloud during the liturgical service on their respective days, especially during *orthros*.<sup>50</sup> The setting for this service is long believed to have been monastic compounds where such lengthy services are admissible.<sup>51</sup> Another analogous genre is the *menaion*, which differentiates from the *menologion* and *synaxarion* through its insertion of liturgical poems and prayers into its content.<sup>52</sup>

The nature of the texts that are encompassed in the Menologion of Basil II are examples of texts that are found in *synaxaria* and they are in fact compressed into a comparatively short 16-lines for each commemoration day. An outstanding aspect of the Menologion of Basil II is that for every feast day there is an accompanying miniature, while other *synaxaria* are rarely illustrated, such as the 10<sup>th</sup> century *Synaxarion of Constantinople*.<sup>53</sup> Thus, in Vat.gr.1613, the miniature functions as a visual portrayal of the content of the text that incorporates details about when, where, and how the saint received martyrdom. Not all the feast days are expressions of saints' receiving martyrdom but the vast majority depicts the violent deaths met by holy men and women. For feast days where the saint is simply commemorated for his or her holy deeds rather than a martyrdom story, a frontal

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 197

<sup>50</sup> ODB, Robert.F.Tart and Nancy P. Ševčenko 'Synaxarion', 1991. In canonical hour system, the *orthros* is the equivalent of the Latin *matins* and was practiced during the daybreak. Parts of the *synaxarion* were read following the sixth ode of the *kanon* as a commemorative service according to each saint's feast day.

<sup>51</sup> Nancy P. Ševčenko, *A companion to Byzantine illustrated manuscripts*, 322.

<sup>52</sup> ODB, Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Menologion of Basil II', 1341.

<sup>53</sup> ODB, Robert.F.Tart and Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Synaxarion', 1991. The earliest copies of *Synaxarion of Constantinople* manuscripts include biographies of Joseph the Hymnographer and Antony Kaulas who lived between 893-901 AD. Consequently, the Constantinopolitan synaxarion was presumably



portrait presenting the saint in the orant position replaces the eventful execution scenes.



Fig.1 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1156, 270v-271r*

compiled some time after 901 and judging from the parallel inclusion of biographies with the Menologion of Basil II, it was produced before the latter's commission.

In these miniatures, little is revealed about the deeds of the saints through the iconography<sup>54</sup> but the ecclesiastical rank can be judged through the clothing and the architectural setting sometimes give clues about the location they are affiliated with.<sup>55</sup> Thus, brief as it may be, the 16-line main text in the Menologion becomes an indispensable part of the manuscript where the details of the events as well as the biographies of the saints are clearly disclosed, contextualizing the miniatures.

<sup>54</sup> An exception is the Stylite saints who are always depicted stationary on their columns, presenting the manner of the life they led.

<sup>55</sup> Ann Powell. "Byzantine Landscape Painting: With Special Reference to the Illustrations of the Menologion of Basil II, Vat. Grec. 1613." (Ph.D Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1963), 41. Powell suggested that the churches in the Menologion are represented accurately however the secular buildings merely follow a model from the 6<sup>th</sup> century that carry no resemblance to the actual buildings themselves.

### 1.3 Menologia as a genre prior to Vat.gr.1613

The fate of *menologia* and *synaxaria* as collections of commemorative services for saints depended largely on the practice of hagiography as a literary and artistic genre in Byzantium. With the emergence of Christianity, this new genre for commemorating early saints began in the form of *acta*, *martyrion*, and *apophthegmata patrum* texts and evolved into an artistic form in later-period manuscripts. The first *vitae*, the Life of Anthony the Great is believed to be penned by Athanasios who lived between 295-373 AD<sup>56</sup> and the production of the work is dated between 356-362 AD.<sup>57</sup> Thereafter, such *vitae* continued to be penned, mostly as a supporting element in promoting the cult of saints. Stories of the miracles performed by the saints and the sayings of the desert fathers were other popular written material produced for similar purposes.

In the period between 650-800 AD, little hagiographical material was produced; this period is now referred as the so-called Byzantine ‘Dark Age’ where all artistic and literary activities were halted with the rise of Iconoclastic tendencies.<sup>58</sup> Nonetheless, beginning again in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, liturgical hagiographical collections started to be compiled for recitation during the monastic services. A. Ehrhard<sup>59</sup> suggested that Theodore of Studios’s (759-826 AD)<sup>60</sup> mention of a collection of

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<sup>56</sup> Alice-Mary Talbot, “Hagiography,” in *The Oxford handbook of Byzantine studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John F. Haldon and Robin Cormack, Oxford handbooks (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 863.

<sup>57</sup> Derek Krueger, *Writing and holiness: The practice of authorship in the Early Christian East*, Divinations (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 5.

<sup>58</sup> Stephanos Efthymiadis, “Hagiography from the ‘Dark Age’ to the Age of Symeon Metaphrastes (Eighth-Tenth Centuries),” in *The Ashgate research companion to Byzantine hagiography*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis, Ashgate research companion (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011-2014), 95.

<sup>59</sup> A. Ehrhard, *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homileischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche*. 3 vols. (Leipzig 1937-52). Ehrhard’s study remains to be an important exhaustive source on the study of hagiographical literature.

<sup>60</sup> *ODB*, A.Kazhdan, ‘Theodore Stoudios’, 2044.



*martyria* can be considered the first written evidence towards the existence of *menologion* as a hagiographical genre.<sup>61</sup>

#### **1.4 Earlier Studies on the Vat.gr.1613**

Within the scope of this study, only two of the earlier studies have been discussed in detail to contextualize the research that was conducted on the beheaded martyrs. The other studies that exist have been used whenever the context required so, however the next section is not a complete historiographical background of the manuscript.

##### **1.4.1 S.D. Nersessian and suggestions on the dating of Vat.gr. 1613**

S.D. Nersessian addressed the issue of the dating of the Menologion in her 1940 study and grounded her reasoning through a comparative study of the text and the illustrations. Prior to her study, the Menologion was dated roughly between the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup>, as was suggested by A.Cutler, who based his reasoning that the painter Pantoleon was the same person whose name appeared elsewhere, placing Vat.gr.1613 contemporaneous with the Psalter of Basil II.<sup>62</sup> Today, S.D. Nersessian's study still remains the sole scientific approach that bases the logic of dating of Vat.gr.1613 within the textual and illustrative contents of the codex. The tradition prior to her study suggested that the manuscript was produced around the year 1000, in the later period of Basil II's reign, however this approach did not incorporate the evidence that rested on the historical events that were described in the notices themselves.<sup>63</sup> In contrast, her study placed the manuscript's production to the earlier part of Basil II's reign through contextual evidence in both text and illustration, which she was also able to support through historical framework. S.D. Nersessian observed that the manuscript included a 3-line

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, Robert.F.Tart and Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Synaxarion', 1341.

<sup>62</sup> *ODB*, Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Menologion of Basil II', 1342.

<sup>63</sup> The dating prior to S.D. Nersessian's study have largely been grounded on the paleographical and codicological aspects of the manuscript.

prayer addressing the earthquake that took place on 26<sup>th</sup> of October of the 24<sup>th</sup> year of Leo the Isauran's reign.<sup>64</sup> (Fig.2) However, the earthquake that occurred in 989 AD and had devastating effects in Constantinople was not addressed at all in the Menologion of Basil II.<sup>65</sup> The 989 AD earthquake was mentioned in the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* and the literary works of Byzantine historians like Leo the Deacon (ca.950-992 AD) and John Skylitzes (1040-1101 AD).<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, the event was narrated in the literary works produced in Armenia and the West and was considered to be one of the most destructive earthquakes that affected Constantinople, tearing down the dome of Hagia Sophia, which took 6 years of reconstruct. The costly effort to rebuild the destructed dome of Hagia Sophia was commissioned by Basil II himself. Curiously, the event had not been included within the content of Vat.gr.1613, a manuscript that was either commissioned by or gifted to Basil II. Through her contextual investigation, S.D. Nersessian questioned if the exclusion of 989 AD earthquake could pose as evidence that the manuscript was written before this date, which could explain its silence on a natural disaster of such great scale. One problematic issue is that although the format of the *synaxarium* is well known, little is certain about the selection of its content. Thus, it is not possible to be precise about how widely the earthquake of 989 AD was presented in other *synaxaria*, or if it was included at all. The author of *Synaxarion of Constantinople's* 1902 edition,

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<sup>64</sup> Sirapie Der Nersessian. "Remarks on the date of the menologium and the psalter written for Basil II." *Byzantion* 15 (1940): 104-25. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44168520>,104. According to Leo the Isauran's reigning years, this earthquake happened in year 740 AD. The prayer in the manuscript addresses this natural disaster in a manner where the prayers are directed towards such an occurrence to never befall on them again.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*,106. Although the nature of the Menologion, being a liturgical calendar, is not listing a chronology of events, it follows the *Synaxarion of Constantinople's* context very closely thus the exclusion of the earthquake is a legitimate argument.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*,105

P.H.Delehaye,<sup>67</sup> suggested that the manuscript was originally written at the monastery of Bathyrhyax in Bithynia<sup>68</sup> and the proximity of the production center may be the reason behind the inclusion of 989 AD catastrophe.<sup>69</sup> Alternatively, the manuscript might have been produced for the use in a Constantinopolitan church, which might also pose as the reason of the event's inclusion.<sup>70</sup>

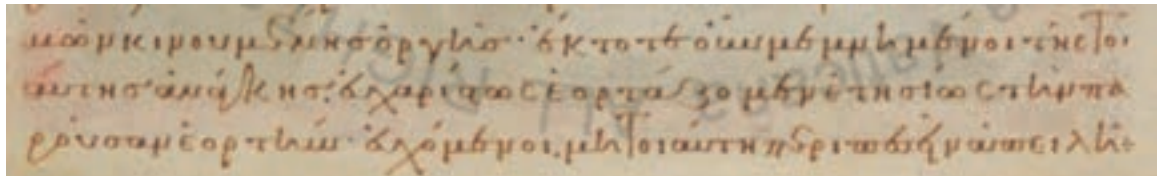


Fig.2 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.142: Detail from the poem that addresses the earthquake of 740 AD.*

Aside from the exclusion of the earthquake, the Menologion of Basil II does not mention any persons or events from the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The entry for patriarch Anthony, who died in 901, is the latest account in the manuscript, and the closest to its production date.<sup>71</sup> Thus the manuscript does not pose as a source that outlines recent historical events, which might explain the exclusion of the earthquake. If the Menologion of Basil II is omitting events that happened within hundred years of its production, clearly the scribes did not put any effort to update the contents of the *synaxarium* and kept the content limited to the copies produced in the later part of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Alternatively, Vat.gr.1613 might be a faithful copy of an earlier *synaxarium*, produced in the late 900s but content-wise, remained restricted to an earlier version. The scope of the text in the Menologion is continuous with the content of the *Synaxarion of Constantinople*, except for the presence the shorter

<sup>67</sup> This study marks the beginning of the systemized study of *Synaxarion of Constantinople* through a meticulous transcribing of a manuscript from the 12-13<sup>th</sup> century and remains the only fully edited *synaxarion*.

<sup>68</sup> P.H.Delehaye, ed., *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitane* (Bruxelles: Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1902, reprinted 1954), 106.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.,107.

notices in the latter text. It is possible that the scribes selected only the lengthy notices for Vat.gr.1613, excluding the short texts. Still, the inclusion of the 740 AD earthquake is perplexing, as it is not a lengthy account in the *Synaxarion of Constantinople*.<sup>72</sup> Another possibility is that, as scribes were careful to never exceed the 16-line limit for each commemoration day, a summarization of information might have been implemented to be able to follow the strict format of the manuscript. S.D. Nerssassian observed that some saints, such as St. Donale, St.Cosmas and St. Ignatius, the abbot of monastery of Bathrrhyax, are not commemorated in Vat.gr.1613 but they were presented in the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century copies of the *Synaxarion of Constantinople*. Later *synaxaria* that follow the model of Vat.gr.1613 did incorporate the biography of St. Donale.<sup>73</sup> One suggestion is that Vat.gr.1613 is actually a copy of a *synaxarium* that was composed in early 10<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>74</sup> which has been lost since.

Another saint, namely St. Luke the Stylite, whose exclusion from the Menologion raises the question of discontinuity with other *synaxaria*, might in fact have been initially intended to be included. In the depictions of the later-period *synaxaria*, St. Luke the Stylite is usually depicted sitting on a column, portrayed frontally towards the viewer. The life of St. Luke the Stylite is acknowledged in both the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* and in Paris.gr.1589 and both sources reveal that his column was erected in Eutropius, a district on the Asian coastline of Constantinople.<sup>75</sup> In modern Istanbul, the area falls between the districts of Kadıköy and Kalamış. According to Leo the Deacon's accounts, a stylite saint was drowned in

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.,108

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 109.

Eutropius during the earthquake that took place after the death of Bardas Phocas.<sup>76</sup> On the commemoration date of St. Daniel the Stylite, December 11<sup>th</sup>, Vat.gr.1613 depicts a saint standing on a column raised in a small area extended from the main land, surrounded by the sea. (Fig.3) The page lacks both the main text and the title, however the intended saint was commemorated either on the 11<sup>th</sup> or the 12<sup>th</sup> of December. Other *synaxaria* commemorate St. Luke the Stylite on December 11<sup>th</sup> and both the date and the manner of depiction increase the possibility that the partially completed page of Vat.gr.1613 was intended for him. If the miniature was intended to be St. Daniel the Stylite, he would have been depicted twice in the Menologion, by the error or choice of the illuminators.<sup>77</sup> Through observation of the miniatures, it is clear that the model used for the two depictions were not the same and the illuminators possibly used different models if both were portraying St. Daniel the Stylite. (Fig.4) On the other hand, if p.238 of the Menologion is indeed intended to be St. Luke the Stylite, it is notable that he died on a Thursday on December 11<sup>th</sup>.<sup>78</sup> The years 984 AD and 979 AD are the two years that the 11<sup>th</sup> of December corresponded to a Thursday and the latter is the most probable date of his death.<sup>79</sup> Consequently, S.D. Nerssassian proposed the *terminus post quem* of the manuscript as 979 AD, the year St. Luke the Stylite died or possibly a few years after this event.<sup>80</sup> Since the earthquake finds no mention in the manuscript, according to S.D. Nerssassian, its date can be taken as the *terminus ante quem*, placing the manuscript's production between the years 979-989 AD.

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> *Il Menologio: Menologium Graecorum (Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613). II. Codices e Vaticanis selecti phototypice expressi.* Vol. 8. Fratelli Bocca, 1907. Throughout the beheading scenes in the manuscript, 4 martyrs were depicted twice, thus it might not necessarily be an error but instead point to a conscious repetition.

<sup>78</sup> Sirarpie Der Nersessian. "Remarks on the date of the menologium and the psalter written for Basil II." *Byzantion* 15 (1940): 104-25. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44168520>,111.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

Furthermore, this suggested production period also aligns with historical events. Great civil wars marked the beginning of Basil II's reign (976-1025 AD) and before he could establish himself firmly to the throne, he had to discard those who acclaimed themselves emperor. The period between 976-989 AD entirely revolves around the distress between Basil II, Bardas Skleros, and Bardas Phocas. The first thirteen years of Basil's reign is a period of internal civil unrest, but at the same time it is prior to the second half of his reign, when he concentrated on military affairs outside Constantinople. It is also a period of time when he focused on establishing the legitimacy of his reign, which might explain commissioning such a lavish manuscript to his name. Furthermore, the epigram in the beginning of Vat.gr.1613 does not mention any military victories with precision, which might be due to the fact they did not take place yet. Beginning with 991 AD, Basil II concentrated on his expeditions in Bulgaria and he spent the years 991-995 AD with his armies abroad.<sup>81</sup> Thus, the dates suggested by S.D. Nersessian do indeed reflect a period of time when Basil II could reasonably commission Vat.gr.1613, a plausible theory that can be traced to the content of the manuscript.



Fig.3 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.237*

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.





Fig.4 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.238*

#### 1.4.2 I. Ševčenko and the theory of the eight illuminators

I. Ševčenko proposed that the Menologium of Basil II is the only extant Byzantine codex in which the names of its illuminators can be identified through the labels in the margins. His 1962 study suggests that the complete work of painting the 430 miniatures was a shared task distributed amongst the eight illuminators, who used strikingly similar painting styles that led to uniformity almost to a degree of monotony.<sup>82</sup> He further proposed that the miniatures were executed prior to the work of the scribe or scribes, based on the fact that some fifteen pages are lacking the main text, two of which the titles are also missing, whereas all the miniatures had the signature labeling in the margin of the pages. I. Ševčenko concluded that the labeling process corresponded to the names of the illuminators.

The eight names identified by Ševčenko were Pantoleon, Michael of Blachernae, George, Symeon, Michael the Younger, Menas, Nestor, and Symeon of Blachernae. The miniatures were not equally distributed amongst the illuminators. Of the eight painters, the most productive was Pantoleon; his name appeared in total of 79

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<sup>82</sup> Ihor Ševčenko, "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962), doi:10.2307/1291164, 245.

margins, whereas 27 miniatures are attributed to Menas.<sup>83</sup> A problematic issue emerges as it is not possible to track stylistic continuities with individual names as all the illuminators were perhaps using a common model, or models, trying to remain as faithful as possible to every minute detail. Consequently, eight distinct styles of painting with valid distinctions from one another could not be established. A. Venturi applied the Morellian method to Menologion's miniatures and J. Labarte, C. Bayet, and N. Kondakov attempted to find continuities in the stylistic aspects of the representations by looking through details such as the costume and drapery of the figures.<sup>84</sup> The opinions of the scholars not only varied on the quality of the representations but they also failed to establish a stylistic template for each illuminator. K. Weitzmann proposed that the distinctive elements discovered through investigating the paintings of a single illuminator were in fact due to the dissimilarities that were already present in the model the painter was relying upon.<sup>85</sup> In 1960, Dr. A. Frolow legitimately argued that the signatures did not address the illuminators themselves but instead the names of the painters of which the representations were copied from, based on the fact that the Greek phrase τοῦ αὐτοῦ, meaning 'by the same' can not be representing an individual signature of an artist who completed the work itself but instead it could indicate the original model that was being used.<sup>86</sup> He suggested that there was a single illuminator, copying 430 miniatures based on the styles of eight different painters and the names were merely references, belonging to the painters of the models he used. Dr. A. Frolow's theory explains the continuity of style across the manuscript, but raised the question of how such an elephantine amount of work was accomplished by a single illuminator, which

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 246.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 247.



would consequently indicate that he worked on the manuscript for at least two years while the commissioner Basil II waited uncomplainingly for the delivery.<sup>87</sup>

The single-painter theory was largely rejected by I. Ševčenko, as he analyzed the manuscript by looking at the system of distribution amongst the quires, which revealed that the illuminators worked simultaneously, perhaps in the same scriptorium and they painted at different paces.<sup>88</sup> He classified each page in order to establish the organization schema, by listing the page number, name in the signature, the word group τοῦ αὐτοῦ or τοῦ ζωγράφου present in the margin, the day of commemoration, the flesh or hair side of the folio, cases where the text or title is missing and the corrections on the signature. Through his analysis and investigation of the ordering of the quires, he was able to conclude that the nature of the work undertaken by the illuminators was not the product of one man's effort to copy the model of eight different painters. I. Ševčenko agreed with the production date of the Menologion postulated by S.D. Nersesian between 979-989 AD, which consequently makes it unlikely for Vat.gr.1613 to be a faithful copy of another similar manuscript created during the reign of Basil II.

Furthermore, I. Ševčenko analyzed the existence of patterns on the flat surfaces of architectural details where he suggested that the palmette, angular leaves and the lily-like ornaments belonged to Pantoleon, Nestor, and Menas while these details never appear in the work of the other illuminators.<sup>89</sup> The iconographical analysis supported his initial claim that the manuscript was a product of a team effort.

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 248.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 259.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 265

## CHAPTER II: The representations of beheading in the Menologion of Basil II

Chapter II first describes the applied methodology and the structuring of the catalogue entries in **Appendix A**. It then defines the three types of beheading scenes that were identified in this thesis. This section is followed by a discussion of the scene where the discovery of the Head relic of St. John the Baptist is depicted. After a summary on the use of attire in the beheading scenes, finally, the connection between the text and the image is outlined by the results achieved from detecting the Greek word ἀποκεφαλίζω in the 16-verse main text.


### 2.1 Methodology and the structure of the catalogue entries

Catalogue ID 2



MS number 10  
MS commemoration date September 4  
Type A

Region 1  
Vita Homily by John Chrysostom  
Beheaded martyr(s) Babylas of Antioch



Transliteration  
+ΜΗΗ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Α.  
ἉΒΑΪΣΣΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ἹΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΒΑΒΥΛΑΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ ἈΝΤΙΟΧΕΙΑΣ, ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ Σ' ὙΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΝΗΠΙΩΝ:  
English translation  
The same month 4.  
The struggle of Hieromartyr Babylas, the patriarch of Antioch and his young companions.  
Description  
According to title, hieromartyr Babylas, the patriarch of Antioch is depicted in the miniature. Eusebius records that Babylas died in a prison during the reign of Decius in

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Fig.8 Catalogue ID 2, p.10: Babylas of Antioch

The catalogue entries in **Appendix A** are organized according to two numbering systems. First, the Catalogue ID is the primary number that appears at the top left corner of each entry that ranges from 1 to 138, encompassing all the beheading scenes in the manuscript. (Fig.8) Following the Catalogue ID, the pages of the manuscript are cropped, presenting the miniature depicting the beheading scene. Thus, the catalogue entries do not contain the entire page as it appears in the manuscript. However, the miniatures in their original form can be reached through the open-access Digital Vatican Library<sup>90</sup> from where all the images in this study are retrieved. Below the cropped image of the miniature, the six classification categories are presented in two columns, outlining the major points of investigation conducted on the beheading scenes. These six classifications are: the manuscript number, the manuscript commemoration date, type of the beheading scene, the region, the *vita*, and the names of the beheaded martyrs.

The second numerical system used in this study is the manuscript number (MS number), indicating the page number of the miniature as it appears in the Menologion. The captions of the figures throughout this study are tagged with the page numbers as they appear in the original manuscript, corresponding to the MS number in the catalogue entries. The original numbering of the manuscript is written in Arabic numeral system and can be followed consistently on the top left corner of each page<sup>91</sup> penned with a faded brown ink which matches exactly with the numbering system that was employed by the online Digital Vatican Library<sup>92</sup> version of Vat.gr.1613.

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<sup>90</sup> DigiVatLib. Accessed October 24, 2017. [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

<sup>91</sup> *Il Menologio: Menologium Graecorum (Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613). II. Codices e Vaticanis selecti phototypice expressi*. Vol. 8. Fratelli Bocca, 1907. IX. The use of Arabic numerals instead of the Greek system indicates that they were probably penned at a later time than the original execution date of the manuscript, perhaps after its arrival to the Vatican Library.

<sup>92</sup> "Vat.gr.1613." DigiVatLib. Accessed October 24, 2017. [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613).

The manuscript commemoration date (MS commemoration date) refers to the day a particular saint is celebrated according to the ecclesiastical calendar incorporated in Vat.gr. 1613. The manuscript follows two main approaches in the presentation of dates. First, for each new date from the same month, a number follows the phrase ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ [The same month] in the Greek numerical system. In the original manuscript, a capitalized Greek letter presents the number by placing circumflex over it (Fig.9), indicating the date of the commemoration. For the transcription of the text, the numbers were presented with a ‘’ sign following the Greek letter following the modern transcription system of Greek numerals.

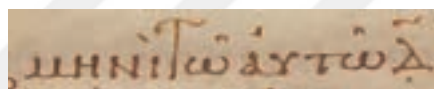


Fig.9 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.10: Detail from CI 2, Babylas of Antioch [The same month, 4.]*

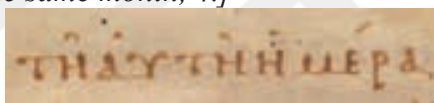


Fig.10 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.12: Detail from CI 3, Hermione of Ephesus [On the same day.]*

Second, the phrase ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ [On the same day] appears for the saints sharing an identical commemoration day as the previous saint, to denote that they were celebrated on the same day. (Fig.10) In these instances, the day of the month is not specified directly on the page and one needs to inspect the previous pages to find where the recurrent number is initially presented. The date of commemoration of each saint intermittently varies from one *menologion* to another and is not consistent across Orthodox and Catholic ecclesiastical calendars. This study only informs the reader on the organization of saints' commemoration dates as presented in the Menologion. Whenever available, the irregularities on the dates between Vat.gr.1613 and other resources are noted. Sporadically, the commemoration day alters only by a

single day, as with Boniface of Tarsus who is celebrated on the 20<sup>th</sup> of December in Vat.gr.1613, while, according to *BHG*, his commemoration day is the 19<sup>th</sup> of December.<sup>93</sup> In other cases, as with Serapion of Corinth, who is celebrated on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December in the Menologion of Basil II, *BHG* provides the date March 21<sup>st</sup>, separating these two accounts by several months.<sup>94</sup>

Following the commemoration date, the type of beheading scene is classified according to the three types of representations identified for the scope of this study.

These three types are:

**Type A:** Scenes depicting the moment preceding beheading

**Type B:** Scenes depicting post-beheading

**Type C:** Scenes concurrently depicting two separate executions, one prior and the other after the beheading

Throughout the scenes classified as Type A, B or C simultaneous executions may be observed, practiced through other persecution methods such as crucifying, burning at the stake, or drowning. Two distinct events are sometimes merged to fit into a single frame, a common feature throughout the manuscript, as a result of the historical event itself containing details of several types of executions occurring in the same instance. The current analysis focuses only on the act of beheading, while noting the other executions in the description section of the catalogue entries. The three types of representations are not affected by the existence of other forms of execution. The types identified above will be further discussed in Chapter II, 2.2.

Another classification identified within the scope of this study addresses the region that the martyrs are affiliated with. The areas are grouped in three major regions:

**Region 1:** Asia Minor

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<sup>93</sup> *BHG*, 41.

<sup>94</sup> *BHG*, 228.

**Region 2:** Palestine, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Syria, Arabia, Persia and Armenia

**Region 3:** West

The martyr's affiliation with the region is frequently obscure, often without clarification if the location is the saint's birthplace or the city where he or she came to be well known. In others, the place specifically indicates the location of their martyrdom. The differentiations cannot easily be made with precision, and consequently this study retains the regional tags applied in the Lois Drewer Internet Index of Medieval Art.<sup>95</sup> Wherever it was possible to address the issue with suitable evidence, the relationship between the martyr and the region was discussed in the description section of the catalogue entry. For the categorizations of the Regions 1-3, the cities and the regions were defined through *'The Digital Atlas of Roman and Medieval Civilizations'*, published digitally by Harvard University. Region 1 incorporates places that are grouped together as Asia Minor, including recurring centers such as Nicomedia, Antioch, Ephesus, Galatia, Pisidia, Phrygia, Thrace, and Constantinople (Byzantium). Region 2 groups the area in the eastern and southern borders of Asia Minor, including the cities of Jerusalem and Alexandria along with regions Arabia, Armenia, Syria, Phoenicia, Mount Sinai, Mesopotamia, and Persia. Region 3 consists of the area that falls on the borders of former Western Roman Empire, simply referred as 'West', stretching from the Aegean Islands to Saragossa in Spain, extending over Upper Thrace, Crimea, Cyprus, Crete, Athens, Thessaloniki, Rome, and Milan.

Whenever the written account of the life of a saint (*vita*) is available, the first paragraph of the description section in the catalogue entries denotes the source and specifies its author. If the original text is available, it has been scanned for any

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<sup>95</sup> "Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Database." Princeton University. Accessed March 15, 2018. <https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/>.

indication of martyr's beheading along with other relevant data presented in the historical text. However, the majority of the beheaded martyrs do not have *vitae*, although they are continuously listed in the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* (*Synax.CP*), *Acta Sanctorum* (Act.SS), *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* (*BHG*) or *Patrologiae cursus completus* (PG). These sources frequently specified the year of the martyrdom and the reigning emperor during the time of the execution. Finally, the sixth entry in the categorization section reveals the names of the martyr(s), listed in accordance with the Greek majuscule title appearing in the original manuscript. Although the miniatures do not always represent their executions, the witnesses are listed in this section as well when their names are present in the title.

Following the six classifications, an image of the title text is presented as a cropped picture retrieved from the Digital Vatican Library website, in the same manner as the miniatures. In some entries, the title texts appears skewed as a result of the irregularity between the natural tilts, caused by the discontinuity between the hand of the scribe and the rectangular form of the cropped image. The title of each page begins with an illuminated cross. The crosses have a variation of forms in the original manuscript; however a standardized Unicode Syriac cross<sup>96</sup> has been used throughout the catalogue entries to represent the initial ornamentation of each page. Each cross is unique, indicating that the illuminator did not use a stencil but painted the ornaments with a free hand. The general four types of variations are illustrated below (Fig.11):



*Illuminated cross, Type A, p.7*



*Illuminated cross, Type B, p.18*

<sup>96</sup> □ Cross, East Syriac, U+2671, Syriac Christianity





*Illuminated cross, Type D, p.43*



*Illuminated cross, Type C, p.21*

Fig.11 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613: Illuminated crosses*

The title text is finalized with an ornamental punctuation mark that has been transliterated as a four-dot symbol,<sup>97</sup> that functions as the modern full stop. (Fig.12) In some catalogue entries, the four-dot ornament is replaced with other forms of punctuation and the transcription retains the closest symbols available in the Unicode system.<sup>98</sup> (Fig.13) Sandwiched between the initial cross and the four-dot sign ending, the title text is consistently written with faded brown ink, encompassing the diacritical marks and accents while omitting the iota subscript.

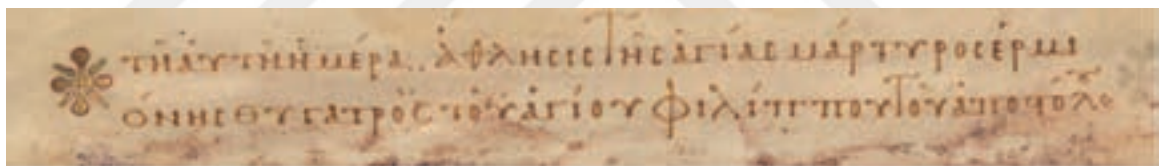


Fig.12 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.12: Detail from CI 3, Hermione of Ephesus*

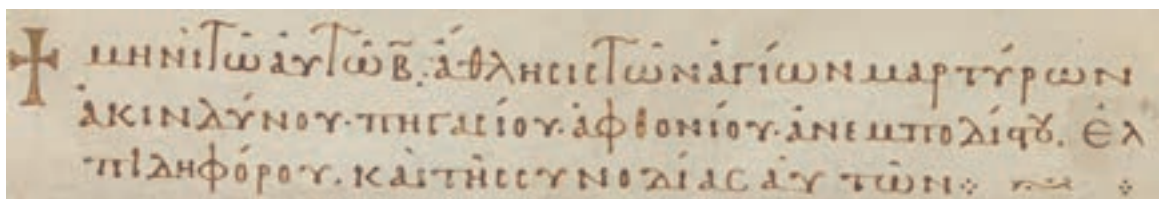


Fig.13 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.155: Detail from CI 51, Acindynus, Anempodistus, Aphthonius, Elpidophorus, Pegasius of Persia*

The transcription of titles that are penned in majuscule script preserves the capital Greek letters, to remain as faithful as possible to the original text. The title is

<sup>97</sup> □, Four- dot punctutation mark ,(U+2058).

<sup>98</sup> The ending has been transliterated as □ ≈ □.



written in Alexandrian Auszeichnungsmajuskel and, especially in line endings, the scribe used various ligatures that were common in Byzantine manuscripts produced at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. In the original text of the manuscript, the conjunction word “καὶ” (Fig.14) and the “ov” in the endings of the words have been shortened with ligatures. The transcription uses uppercase Polytonic Greek, omitting ligatures and abbreviations as well as all diacritical marks except for the acute accent following a Greek numeral. Each time a ligature or an abbreviation was used in order to compress the text in the manuscript; the transcription gives the word in full form with the additional letters in brackets. Some letters, such as the Greek *sigma*, look similar to a Latin ‘C’ throughout the original manuscript, but for clarity, this letter is replaced with the traditional Greek sigma ‘Σ’ in the transcription. Rough and smooth breathings, grave and acute accents, and the circumflex over the letters are omitted in the transcription of the text. Nevertheless, they can be observed in the image of the original text. The Byzantine Greek text throughout the Menologion, majuscule and minuscule alike, is written without word separation. For better comprehension of the text, separation is applied in between the words in all transliterations.



Fig.14 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.10: Detail from CI 2, ligature for the conjunction “καὶ”*

Following the English translation of the transliterated title text, each scene has been studied individually with an emphasis on the iconographical components. Firstly, the description section identifies the name of the saint being martyred according to the translation of the title text. Furthermore, the paragraph encompasses details about the martyr with references to *vitae, passio, homilies*, and other accounts that have been

collected through various sources.<sup>99</sup> The informative introduction gives the reigning emperor during the time of the execution and martyr's year of death whenever it was possible to retrieve this information. The second paragraph is an iconographical analysis of the scene, beginning with the posture of the saint. Oftentimes, the martyr appears in a kneeling position in front of the executioner, emphasizing their willingness to yield to death without fear or objection. An emphasis on the position of the hands has been presented in order to build the relationship between the depiction of the beheaded martyrs in the Menologion and iconography of the Binding of Isaac. Following the description of the posture, the costume of the martyr is described. When the vestments indicate a rank in the Church, the classification of the martyr in the ecclesiastical order is specified. The costumes in the Menologion are discussed in detail in Chapter II, 2.3. The martyr's depiction is followed by a description of the soldier's posture and costume in the same manner. The majority of the persecutors in the manuscript are Roman soldiers and they are depicted in the moment preceding the beheading, with a sword-bearing right arm stretching towards the sky while grasping a scabbard with the other hand. The *chlamys* that is worn over the short tunic is frequently depicted in mid-air, indicating the soldier is caught in the motion of drawing his sword, immediately before he begins the beheading of the martyr. Aside from the martyrs and soldiers, it is not always clear if the witnesses in the miniatures are martyrs expecting their turn of execution or they are simply viewing the events. The martyrs are presented with nimbus around their heads without exception, encircling the face with a golden halo that signifies their elevated status of sainthood. In Christian art, the earliest depictions of the nimbus date back to 5<sup>th</sup> century AD and

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<sup>99</sup> The main sources used in this study are: Dumbarton Oaks Hagiography Database, The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium (*ODB*), The Synaxarion of Constantinople (*Synax.CP*), The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (*ODCC*), Acta Sanctorum (Act. SS), Patriologica Graeca (PG) and Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca (*BHG*) that are listed in Abbreviations on p.xi.

it has been continually used from this period onwards to emphasize the dignity or sanctity of a person.<sup>100</sup> In the Menologion, the nimbuses are identical for each martyr in the beheading scenes, except for the representation of Young Christ in CI 78 (p.205), where Jesus miraculously appears to Peter of Alexandria dressed in torn white clothes. The nimbus of Young Christ has a red Greek cross inscribed inside the golden circle, which is distinct from all the other nimbuses depicted around the heads of the martyrs. In Christian art, Christ is almost always presented with a cross-inscribed halo, alternatively referred as the Nimbus of Our Lord.<sup>101</sup> In contrast, the executioners do not have nimbuses.

A standard landscape in the manuscript has mountains flanking the plane while the figures are positioned on a green groundline. In some scenes, structures such as arches, churches and other buildings can be observed in the background. The architectural and floral details scattered across the landscape have been briefly described in the description section of the catalogue entries.<sup>102</sup> The third and the last paragraph identifies the word or the phrase narrating the event of beheading in the 16-line main minuscule text, where the transcription is presented in lowercase Polytonic letters while retaining the diacritical marks. A translation of the word or word group indicating beheading is presented in brackets. The paragraph also identifies the painter of the miniature according to Ihor Ševčenko's study where he listed the names inscribed in the margin of each page.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Herbert Norris, *Church vestments: Their origin & development* (Mineola N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2002), 146.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>102</sup> For a detailed analysis on the buildings and floral patterns in the Menologion of Basil II : Ann Powell. "Byzantine Landscape Painting: With Special Reference to the Illustrations of the Menologion of Basil II, Vat. Grec. 1613." Ph.D Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1963.

<sup>103</sup> Ihor Ševčenko, "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## **2.2 Types of beheading representations**

For the purpose of determining the recurring iconographical motifs of the beheading scenes in the Menologion, the 138 catalogue entries are organized into three categories. The distinction between the scenes are established on the manner of depicting the decapitation scene, depending whether the action is portrayed in the moment preceding or succeeding the execution. The relationship between the timing of the beheading and the portrayal of Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac is discussed in Chapter III.

### **2.2.1 Type A: Scenes depicting the moment preceding the beheading**

Type A scenes are characterized as 'about to be beheaded' scenes where the martyrs have not yet been decapitated, but are portrayed in the moment shortly preceding the execution. The body of the martyr is not violated and he usually is portrayed in a kneeling position, standing before the executioner. The arrangement of the martyr and the executioner is often in the center of the plane if there are no other simultaneous executions. Of the total 138 beheading scenes in the Menologion of Basil II, 77 scenes depict a martyr about to be beheaded with the absence of a final execution. The number increases from 77 to 127 if the scenes where a decapitated martyr is portrayed alongside a martyr who is about to be beheaded are included. The number accounts for a vast majority of the total number of miniatures where beheading is the designated method of execution.

The typical scene illustrating the moment before the decapitation portrays the martyr kneeling in front of the Roman soldier, where the head is faintly lowered towards the knees, implying a gesture of yielding to execution. In some depictions, the martyr raises both hands towards the sky in an act of prayer. Throughout the decapitation scenes, as well as in the miniatures where other execution methods are

used, none of the martyrs show a sign of fear or objection against their executioners; confident acceptance of death is emphasized. Below the waist, the martyr's kneeling posture is frequently depicted with a bent right leg which is positioned few steps ahead from the other leg that leans towards the back, straight, and parallel to the upper body. Aside from this recurring posture, the legs may also be depicted next to one another, or simply a step apart from each other. As they are about to be beheaded, the bodies of decapitated martyrs are depicted sideways, unlike the standing frontal portraits of the saints who died in natural circumstances. Similarly, the stylite saints are always depicted frontally in a seated position at their columns. In some scenes, the martyrs' hands are loose and placed over the knees (Fig.15) or at the chest level while in others, the martyr raises his hands towards the sky in an act of prayer. (Fig.16) In 65 miniatures, martyrs' hands are bound behind their backs, mimicking the iconography of the Binding of Isaac as he was about to be sacrificed by Abraham. (Fig.17) Characteristically, the executioner behind the martyr raises his right arm towards the sky, holding a large sword as the tool of the execution. The sword-bearing arm is bent from the elbow and the positioning portends that he will start the decapitation with the back of his hand. The executioner grasps a scabbard with his left hand, arranged vertically to the groundline, indicating that the sword was drawn from inside this holder. The momentary action in the scene is emphasized with the soldier's *chlamys* suspended in mid-air as if it is caught up in the wind created by the motion the executioner is performing.



Fig.15 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.21: CI 6, Eupychius of Caesarea*



Fig.16 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.58: CI 22, Phocas of Sinope*





Fig.17 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.126: CI 43, Artemius of Egypt*

### **2.2.2 Type B: Scenes depicting the moment following the beheading**

Of the 138 beheading scenes in the Menologion of Basil II, 50 scenes portray a decapitated martyr, where the body is completely separated from the body. This number includes the scenes where a Type A martyrdom is portrayed concurrently with a decapitation portrayal. The classification Type B includes the scenes where only a decapitated martyr is present without being combined with a martyr who is about to be beheaded. Consequently, 10 scenes in the manuscript are categorized as Type B, where another martyr who is expecting his beheading does not accompany the decapitated martyr. The minute number of scenes where the aftermath of decapitation is the exclusive motif underlines the emphasis being made on the preceding moments of beheading. Although the number of individual depiction of decapitation is exiguous, there is great variation amongst the portrayals. Fig.18 shows Hermione of Ephesus, suspended in mid-air, while her head is depicted farther away from her body. Hermione's hovering position is peculiar and this iconographical model is not repeated elsewhere in the manuscript. The soldier behind her is clearly finished with the execution as he is placing his sword back into the scabbard. Blood springs from her decapitated head and severed neck, flowing down towards the

groundline, indicating that the illuminator did not attempt to conceal the results of the violence she experienced. Dionysius the Aeropagite, bishop of Athens, is depicted holding his own decapitated head while his two companions are kneeling on the ground, hands bound behind their backs. (Fig.19) Their heads are rolling towards Dionysius' feet. The copious amounts of blood springing from Dionysus and his companions' severed necks are depicted without censor.



Fig.18 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.12: CI 3, Hermione of Ephesus*



Fig.19 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.82: CI 30, Dionysius the Aeropagite*



Lucy of Syracuse, dressed in a bright red tunic, is still in the kneeling position she was in before she was decapitated. (Fig.20) Her head is rolling on the groundline, few steps away from her body. The soldier is placing the sword into the scabbard, having finished the execution, a common feature of scenes where beheading has already occurred.



Fig.20 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.242: CI 84, Lucy of Syracuse*

### 2.2.3 Type C: Scenes where Type A and Type B occur concurrently

Type C consist of depictions where a combination of Type A and Type B scenes appear simultaneously, where a martyr who is about to be beheaded is depicted with another martyr(s) who has already been decapitated. 50 miniatures in the manuscript present a concurrent scene where both Type A and Type B martyrs are portrayed synchronously. The decapitated martyrs are displayed in close proximity to the awaiting martyr, and their bodies are often situated horizontally on the ground near their feet, illustrating the implemented violence. Andronicus, Probus, and Tarachus exemplify the three recurring iconographical motifs of the beheading scenes in Vat.gr.1613: a martyr who is waiting his turn off execution, another who is about to be beheaded, and finally a decapitated saint lying on the ground. (Fig.21) This line-up epitomizes the three stages of execution itself, where a martyr is

witnessing the death of companions, another is about to receive the fatal wound, and lastly, a third has already been persecuted.



Fig.21 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.109: CI 37, Andronicus, Probus and Tarachus.*

#### **2.2.4 The scene depicting the discovery of the Head relic of St. John the Baptist**

One scene is exclusively unlike the three types of beheadings described above. In all other miniatures, either a martyr is already decapitated or is about to be beheaded, however CI 136 is an exceptional depiction where there is no execution present in the scene (Fig.22), but instead portrays the finding of a relic, the decapitated Head of St. John the Baptist. Although he is not considered as an Early Christian martyr, St. John the Baptist was one of the first amongst the Christians to be beheaded.<sup>104</sup> The circumstances of his execution are often depicted as a portrayal of events revolving around Herod the Great (4 BC-39 AD) and his stepdaughter Salome. This miniature have been included as one of the 138 beheading scenes, both due to the fact that there is a beheaded head present in the scene and also because the motif

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<sup>104</sup> *ODB*, J.Irmscher, A.Kazdhan, Robert.F.Taft, A.Weyl Carr, 'John the Baptist', 1069-70. His place in the Christian tradition is significant, often described as the precursor, meaning the one who came before Jesus Christ. His life is described in apocryphal gospels and acts. The parts of his life where his birth was announced by an angel, his baptism of Jesus Christ, his arrest and consequent beheading by Herod the Great are substantially described in text and artistic depictions. His beheading however, is an individual event that happened before Christian persecutions and thus he is not considered to be a victim of mass violence directed towards Christians.

depicting the finding of a relic have been presented in an another miniature, as in the double- portrayal of Longinus the Centurion. (Fig.31) Emperor Michael and Ignatius the Bishop are present in the process of the discovery, facing each other in as they are conversing amongst themselves in awe. The head is placed inside a golden two-handled vessel, looking upwards towards the sky. As two men of uncertain occupation are digging up the relic, a crowd behind Emperor Michael and Ignatius the Bishop is viewing the event with astonishment .The exclusion of the execution itself is compelling; while John the Baptist's beheading befalls during the reign of Herod the Great (4 BC-39 AD), the Roman client king of Judea at the dawn of 1<sup>st</sup> century, the miniature simply depicts a Byzantine Emperor witnessing the discovery of the relic, an event closer to in time to the manuscript's production date. The illuminator presents this significant event with an imperial witness along with the Church's highest-ranking official, however it is important to emphasize that John the Baptist was the first amongst all martyrs in the manuscript to receive martyrdom through beheading.



*Fig.22 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.420: CI 136, The discovery of St. John the Baptist's decapitated head by Ignatius the Bishop and Emperor Michael*

## 2.3 The representation of attire in the beheading scenes of the Menologion of Basil II

### 2.3.1 Martyrs

The representations of vestments in Byzantine art serve as a significant source for understanding the role and function of dress in the Byzantine world. Liturgical vesture and secular dress depicted in the Menologion of Basil II are described throughout the description section of the catalogue entries. In Vat.gr.1613, five main categories of people are depicted, composed of saints, soldiers, imperial figures, the elite, and foreigners.<sup>105</sup> Throughout the manuscript, martyred saints and soldiers occupy the vast majority of the figures represented in the miniatures and their recurring presence is emphasized through their costumes that serve as one of the identifying elements differentiating their roles in the scene. The scope of this study focuses on the beheaded saints and their executioners, whereas depictions of the imperial figures and the elite are rare.<sup>106</sup>

The saints in the Menologion are dressed in clerical vesture whenever the martyr's occupation is affiliated with the Church. The details of the liturgical vestments demonstrate the martyr's rank in the sacramental order, acting as a display of their hierarchical position. Throughout the manuscript, the saints are consistently represented with nimbuses, whether or not they held a position in the Church, including the depictions where their decapitated heads are separate from their bodies.<sup>107</sup> The Menologion of Basil II mainly presents five types of ecclesiastical people: patriarchs, bishops, priests, deacons and monks. The vestments for each of

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<sup>105</sup> Jennifer L. Ball *Byzantine dress: representations of secular dress in eighth- to twelfth-century painting* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 90.

<sup>106</sup> Few exceptions are: CI 142, the finding of the decapitated head of John the Baptist, with Emperor Michael overseeing the event, and CI 61 where Emperor Maximian is depicted seated on a throne alongside the martyr.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

these categories reveal their role in the Church, identifying their rank through the distinguishing elements of their vesture.

The position of deacon in the Church existed as early as the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, referring to a servant in the Church.<sup>108</sup> As the lowest ranking church official, the deacon typically wears a *sticharion*, a long sleeved white tunic made from white linen, suitable for his rank. The garment can be compared to the *tunica alba* of Late Antique style of dress, however the Byzantine version was never worn with an outer garment.<sup>109</sup> Unadorned and simple, deacon's *sticharion* is coupled with an *orarion*, the stole that reaches down about two meters in length worn around the left shoulder, extending over his chest and back.<sup>110</sup> Subordinate to the priest and the bishop, the deacon was allowed to marry and served as a chief assistant to the bishop.<sup>111</sup> As a part of ecclesiastical custom, a deacon was created through the process of asking for the priest's blessing on his vestments, the *sticharion* and the *orarion*.<sup>112</sup> Fig.22 portrays Abibus the Deacon in the leftmost corner, dressed in a long white *sticharion* worn over an underlying *anterion* without a diaconal stole.

Similarly, the priest wore a *sticharion* and a stole, *epitrachelion*, measuring a length of two meters.<sup>113</sup> The priest's *sticharion* was intermittently strained with a *zone* while the deacon's dress was never belted. The main difference between a priest's *sticharion* and a deacon's was a more fitted cut; the priestly garment included narrow sleeves reaching to his wrists. Over the *sticharion*, the priest wore a cape called *phelonion*, inspired by the Roman *paenula*. In Vat.gr.1613, the representations

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<sup>108</sup> Herbert Norris, *Church vestments: Their origin & development* (Mineola N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2002), 4.

<sup>109</sup> Warren T. Woodfin. *The Embodied Icon: Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>111</sup> *ODB*, A.Papadakis, 'Deacon', 592.

<sup>112</sup> Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon: Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium*, 9.

<sup>113</sup> *ODB*, Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Epitrachelion', 725.

of the *phelonion* depict the garment folded up to the shoulders, enabling more flexibility in movement.<sup>114</sup> *Phelonion* could be worn both by priests and bishops and its Western rite equivalent is the *chasuble*.<sup>115</sup> It was later decorated with an overall pattern of crosses in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and consequently this pattern was not represented in the Menologion of Basil II.<sup>116</sup> Faustus the Priest is depicted with a white *sticharion* and a dark brown *phelonion* in Fig.23.



Fig.23 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 19: CI 5, Faustus the Priest and Abibus the Deacon

The bishop's overall dress is composed of a *sticharion*, an *epitrachelion*, and a *sakkos* that were all similar to the priest's attire. The chief distinction of bishop's dress is the broad outer stole, called the *omophorion*. A bishop's *sticharion* is marked by ornamental stripes, called *potamoi*. While his *epitrachelion* is identical with the priests, four or five embroidered crosses (*poloi*) adorn a bishop's *omophorion*.<sup>117</sup> A *Sakkos* is worn over the *sticharion*, and resembles the *phlenion* in form, a shorter tunic reaching down to the knees. Until the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the bishop's office was the

<sup>114</sup> Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon: Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium*, 12.

<sup>114</sup> ODB, Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Epitrachelion', 725.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 'Paenula', 1551.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 'Polystaurion', 1696.

<sup>117</sup> Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon: Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium*, 16.



first and only office allowed to wear an *epimanikia*.<sup>118</sup> This pair of detachable gold-embroidered cuffs were worn over the *sticharion*. In Fig.23 Phocas, the Bishop of Sinope is depicted with a grey *sticharion*, a brown *sakkos*, and grey *omophorion* with black embroidered crosses, indicating his rank as a bishop of the Church.



Fig.24 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 58: CI 22, Phocas, bishop of Sinope

The patriarchs of the principal cities such as Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem dressed identically to the bishops.<sup>119</sup> Babylas, the patriarch of Antioch is portrayed with a mustard-colored *sakkos* and a blue *sticharion* with yellow stripes beneath it. (Fig.25) A white *omophorion* with gold embroidered crosses encircles his neck and the overall representation repeats typical characteristics of a bishop's attire.

In representations of apostles and prophets, a *chiton* is adorned with a *himation*, a garment that is thrown over the underlying long tunic that leaves the right shoulder free.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>118</sup> ODB, Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Epimanikia', 713.

<sup>119</sup> Warren T. Woodfin, Warren "Orthodox Liturgical Textiles and Clerical Self-Referentiality." in *Dressing the part: textiles as propaganda in the Middle Ages*, ed. Kate Dimitrova and Margaret Goehring (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 32.

<sup>120</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *Illustrated manuscripts of the Metaphrastian menologion*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 9.





Fig.25 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 10: CI 2, Babylas of Antioch, the patriarch of Antioch.



Fig.26 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 252: CI 90, Daniel the prophet

The Roman version of the himation is a *pallium* and it was no longer in use during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries in Byzantium.<sup>121</sup> Representations of Abraham also frequently represent the Old Testament figure wearing a heavily draped *pallium*. In Fig.26, Daniel the Prophet is portrayed wearing a blue *chiton* beneath a *himation*, with lozenge-patterned blue leggings and grey boots.

Monks are identified in Vat.gr.1613 through their monastic habit, the *schema*, which consisted of two basic parts. In Byzantium, the monastery was responsible for

<sup>121</sup> ODB, Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Himation', 932.

providing the habit and it was distributed to the monks every year.<sup>122</sup> A short, sleeveless vest referred to as the *mandyas* was worn over the *analabos*, a long tunic made out of cotton or wool.<sup>123</sup> (Fig.27) Around the waist, a thin rope fastened the garment and the overall arrangement resembled a large cross.<sup>124</sup> The *analabos* functioned as a garment that mimicked the crucifixion in a monk's habit, symbolically embracing Christ's manner of death through their clothing. The Byzantine *typika* uses the word *himation* to refer to the dark cotton mantle worn by monks and nuns.<sup>125</sup> A hood called *koukoullion* and a pair of black slippers called *kaligia* completed the dress.<sup>126</sup> Along with the monastic habit, a monk could externally be recognized by the tonsure, a special haircut signifying the clerical state of the person.<sup>127</sup>

In the Menologion of Basil II, nuns are identified through their long tunic and *maphorion* that tightly covers both the head and the shoulders similar to the dress of the Virgin Mary in her representations.<sup>128</sup> The nuns wear their *maphorion* in a strict manner, covering their heads tightly, leaving only the face and the hands visible.<sup>129</sup> (Fig.29) Other female figures in the manuscript simply wear a loose tunic of varying colors with slippers and are distinguished from the male saints through their long hair and feminine form. However, the feminine details are subtle, at times a female saint and a young male disciple are indistinguishable from each other. In some

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<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 'Costume', 539.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>124</sup> Elizabeth S. Bolman, "Depicting the kingdom of heaven Paintings and monastic practice in early Byzantine Egypt," in *Egypt in the Byzantine world, 300-700*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 415.

<sup>125</sup> *ODB*, Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Himation', 932

<sup>126</sup> *ODB*, A.Kazdhan and Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Footwear', 796.

<sup>127</sup> *ODB*, A.M.Talbot, 'Metochion', 1356.

<sup>128</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *Illustrated manuscripts of the Metaphrastian menologion*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). 10.

<sup>129</sup> *ODB*, Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Costume', 539.

representations, the chest reveals two rounded drape lines alluding to female breasts.

(Fig.28)



Fig.27 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.228, CI 80, Athenodorus of Mesopotamia



Fig. 28 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613 p.150: CI 50, Zenobie and Zenobius of Aegeae



Fig.29 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.62: CI 23, Herai of Alexandria*

### 2.3.2 Soldiers

In the Menologion of Basil II, the soldiers are represented without armor or *cuirass*, identifying their role as executioners rather than being dressed for warfare. Throughout the manuscript, they typically wear a short tunic fitted with a belt around the waist, tight leggings, and boots.<sup>130</sup> Some soldiers wear a *chlamys*: a short cape worn over the tunic that is usually represented in mid-air suggesting the wearer is caught in motion. The dress code for the soldiers is more vibrant than the saints, presented in alternating colors and ornate patterns. In each tunic and legging combination, a contrasting effect is created by painting the tunic in one color while using a drastically different one for the leggings. Roundel, argyle, or lozenge patterns in gold are frequently used as elaborate details on the leggings.<sup>131</sup> The executioners are sometimes shown with darker skin colors, wearing a small turban suggesting that the person is a foreigner to the context of the Menologion.<sup>132</sup> (Fig.30)

<sup>130</sup> Jennifer L. Ball, *Byzantine dress: representations of secular dress in eighth- to twelfth-century painting* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 90.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*





Fig.30 Vatican City, *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 317, CI 107, Monks of Raitha*

### 2.3.3 Other

In representations of the imperial figures in Byzantine art, the *loros-costume* or the *chlamys-costume* were used to portray the emperors' public appearances.<sup>133</sup> In the beheading scenes of Vat.gr.1613, imperial figures are rarely depicted, except for few scenes. In Fig.31 the Roman Emperor Maximian (286-305 AD) is seated on a throne, viewing the martyrdom of Alexander of Thassalonica, dressed in Byzantine imperial costume. He is depicted wearing the *chlamys-costume*, the attire worn since the Early Byzantine period, where over a long tunic, a *chlamys* is fastened over the shoulder.<sup>134</sup> He is wearing a *stemma*, the official imperial crown and bright red shoes, a color reserved for emperors.<sup>135</sup> Similarly, in Fig.31 Emperor Manuel is dressed in a long blue tunic and a gold-red *chlamys*, fixed with a *fibula* on his right shoulder. Manuel's *stemma* is jeweled and more ornate, underlining the development in imperial costume throughout the centuries.

<sup>133</sup> Maria G. Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images: Byzantine material culture and religious iconography (11th-15th centuries)* / by Maria G. Parani, The medieval Mediterranean, 0928-5520 v. 41 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003),11.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.,13.

<sup>135</sup> Woodfin, "Orthodox Liturgical Textiles and Clerical Self-Referentiality", 144.



Fig.31 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 170, CI 58, Alexander of Thessalonica with Maximian the Emperor*

#### **2.4 The link between the image and the text: detection of the Greek word ἀποκεφαλίζω in the main 16-verse minuscule text**

The catalogue entries have been investigated for the word or the group of words that point to the act of beheading in the main 16-verse text of each entry in order to establish the relationship between the text and the miniature. Of the total 138 entries, 120 present a word or a word group narrating the act of beheading in the main texts. In the majority of the cases, the scribe used the Greek verb ἀποκεφαλίζειν, which directly translates as ‘to behead’.<sup>136</sup> In other entries, the act is described through a word group, oftentimes containing the Greek noun κεφαλή [head], accompanied by suitable verbs that describe the execution method. A total of 17 entries do not mention the act of decapitation in the main text, although the iconography expressly displays components of a standard beheading scene that involves a kneeling martyr stranding before a soldier who raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky with the intention to decapitate him. In the same vein, the

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<sup>136</sup> E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods: From B.C.146 to AD 1100* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), 220.

main text is entirely missing in one page, although it displays the iconographical attributes of a beheading scene.<sup>137</sup>

The verb ἀποκεφαλίζειν is used in its various forms, according to the tense, gender and number of people involved in the act of beheading represented in the miniature. The word was also used in the New Testament in following instances narrating the beheading of John the Baptist: καὶ πέμψας ἀπεκεφάλισεν τὸν Ἰωάννην referring to the beheading of John in prison in Matthew 14:10; ὃν ἐγὼ ἀπεκεφάλισα Ἰωάννην οὗτος [John, whom I beheaded, has risen], Mark 6:16; καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἀπεκεφάλισεν αὐτὸν [and having went away he beheaded him], Mark 6:27; and Ἰωάννην ἐγὼ ἀπεκεφάλισα [I had John beheaded], Luke 9:9.<sup>138</sup> The Menologion of Basil does not illustrate the beheading of John the Baptist, which is commemorated on August 29<sup>th</sup>, as the manuscript stops at the end of February.

The word κεφαλὴ is most commonly accompanied by the verb ἀποτέμνειν,<sup>139</sup> which specifically expresses the notion of severing the head of the martyr, as in the word group τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτέμνεται [had his head cut off]. Similarly, the verb τέμνειν,<sup>140</sup> which also means ‘to cut’ in Greek, is being used in the same manner. In some cases where the verb τέμνειν was used with the word μάχαιρα,<sup>141</sup> meaning a large knife or a sword, identifying the executioners tool, as in the word group τέμνεται τὴν κεφαλὴν μαχαίρα [had his head cut by a sword]. Depending on the number of martyrs being beheaded in the scene, κεφαλὴ is used in singular or plural

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<sup>137</sup> As discussed earlier, the pages with missing texts where miniatures are already completed stand as a proof that the task of illuminating each page was performed prior to the work of the scribe, sometimes resulting in an incomplete display of the representation.

<sup>138</sup> Harold K. Moulton, *The analytical Greek lexicon consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures with a grammatical analysis of each word and lexicographical illustration of the meanings* (Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1850), 43.

<sup>139</sup> Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods: From B.C.146 to AD, 237*. The verb literally means ‘to cut off’, however oftentimes it was used to insinuate the decapitation of a person.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 1074.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 737.



forms, which clarifies the number of the martyrs who have already been or are about to be beheaded together, even though the iconography does not always display the final act. In cases where a single martyr is about to be beheaded and other figures are positioned as witnesses in a corner of the landscape, the plural form of the word signifies that they too, are about to be beheaded after the depicted execution.

In the case where the beheading is in the form of the discovery of a decapitated head, the word group εὐροῦσα τὴν κεφαλὴν [having found the head] is used, as in the case of the martyrdom of Longinus the Centurion. (Fig.32) In this particular case, the verb ἀπεκεφάλισεν is also mentioned in the main text, used for the left side of the plain representing Longinus in a kneeling position as he is about to be beheaded. The double-portrayal of Longinus continues with a depiction of a female figure finding his buried head in a refuse, occupying the right end of the miniature. The main text serves as a clarification that the bodiless head belongs to Longinus himself and carefully uses two textual descriptions together, matching exactly with the miniature's content.



Fig.32 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.117: CI 40, The discovery of the head of Longinus the Centurion*

Similarly, the discovery of the head of John the Baptist is narrated in the main text with the word group ποῦ κεῖται ἡ τιμὴ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ [where his honorable head

lies] while the title also confirms the event with the word group Ἡ ἀνάμνησις εὐρέσεως τῆς τιμίας κεφαλῆς τοῦ Προδόμου. [Commemoration of the discovery of the Honorable Head of the Forerunner]. With the visual absence of the beheading of John the Baptist, the main text does not include the verb ἀποκεφαλίζειν, presenting continuity with the depiction and the narrative.

By looking at the substantial number of the textual descriptions of beheading scenes, the small number of cases with missing textual descriptions of the event of decapitation is not considered as a deviation in the image-text continuity for the decapitation scenes. These instances, where the text did not narrate the event, present a possibility that because the miniature and the text was not produced by the same hand, the illuminator might have had the freedom to represent the manner of execution method as he saw fit, without textual support. Further research on the total 430 miniatures and their individual texts can explain if there is such description involving a textual narration of a beheading scene elsewhere, devoid of the depiction of the decapitation. However, the scope of this study did not include an overall assessment of all the miniatures in the Menologion of Basil II. The presence of continuity between the text and the image for the 138 miniatures investigated in this study proves that for the majority of the beheading scenes, the text narrated the miniature's content, establishing a link between the 16-verse main text and the miniature.

## **CHAPTER III: The iconography of the Sacrifice of Isaac and continuities with beheading scenes in the Menologion**

### **3.1 An overview of the Sacrifice of Isaac in the Old and the New Testament**

*Isaac ergo Christi passuri est typus.*<sup>142</sup>

The precedents for the beheading compositions of the Menologion of Basil II are mostly found in the Biblical scenes from both earlier monumental and manuscript painting. This chapter first investigates the concept of martyrdom in Judaism and Christianity. It then concentrates on the Old Testament narrative of Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac, described in Genesis 22, which is often read as a prefiguration of Christ's death on the Cross that served as a model for the Early Christian saints.<sup>143</sup> The similarities between the representations of Sacrifice of Isaac and the beheading scenes in the Menologion have iconographical continuities that repeatedly underline the moral of the sacrifice of life for faith. The Hebrew word 'Aqedah [binding], that designates the story of God's test of commanding Abraham to slay his own son, which is a shorthand reference to the near Sacrifice of Isaac, is used interchangeably with the latter in the following part of this study. Alluding to the narrative in Genesis 22, 'Aqedah emphasizes Isaac's bound hands, a recurrent motif that is also found in martyrs who are 'about to be beheaded' in the Menologion. After discussing the rabbinic and patristic understanding of the Sacrifice of Isaac and its relation to the idea of Early Christian martyrdom, the earlier scenes are exemplified below, through depictions of 'Aqedah, that have been produced prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>142</sup> Theodosia Tomkinson, trans., *On Abraham: Saint Ambrose of Milan* (Etna Calif.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2000), cap. VIII.

<sup>143</sup> Edward Kessler, *Bound by the Bible: Jews, Christians, and the sacrifice of Isaac* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 66.

As P. Magdalino pointed out, the perception of the Old Testament in Byzantium is a study that is yet to be conducted.<sup>144</sup> Although a number of studies appeared, no monograph on the issue exists, and the Christianization of the Old Testament is an area that awaits scholarly investigation, offering potential for further research. Yet, scenes from the Old Testament have been repeatedly illustrated in Byzantine manuscripts, monumental painting and small objects and the story of Genesis 22 is no exception. Over the centuries, amongst all of the representations that illustrate Abraham, the Sacrifice of the Isaac is the scene that has been most frequently depicted.<sup>145</sup>

In principle, the Jewish canon is a combination of the written and the oral forms of Torah, composed of rabbinic writings and Hebrew Scriptures.<sup>146</sup> Christianity takes up the Hebrew Bible, naming it the Old Testament, while adding the New Testament to its canon, forming the Holy Bible. While it is the ‘Old Testament’ to Christians, referred to as the *Tanakh* by the Jews, the Hebrew Bible is the shared text for the followers of the two monotheistic religions.<sup>147</sup> The Christian doctrine builds up on the context created by the Old Testament, having resolved the issues of creation and genealogy. With few differences between their readings, Genesis 22 is a mutual text in all three monotheistic religions, including Islam. Both Christian and Jewish traditions read Genesis 22 with uniformity, almost word for word, and there is no disagreement between the translations of the text from Hebrew to Greek.<sup>148</sup> However, the exegetical reading of Genesis 22 received a large variety of

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<sup>144</sup> Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson, “Introduction,” in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Robert S. Nelson, Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine symposia and colloquia (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks; Chichester John Wiley [distributor], 2010), 7.

<sup>145</sup> Colum Hourihane, ed., *Abraham in medieval Christian, Islamic and Jewish art*, Index of Christian Art: Resources 04 (Princeton: The Index of Christian Art, 2014), xiii.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>147</sup> Edward Kessler, *Bound by the Bible: Jews, Christians, and the sacrifice of Isaac* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 30

interpretations, in both patristic and rabbinic traditions. Islam shares the understanding that Abraham is the founder of their religion, although it tells a different version of Abraham's test. The Muslim world assumes Ishmael instead of Isaac as the son to be sacrificed by Abraham in Mount Moriah. Yet, Muslims celebrate the divine replacement of Ishmael by a ram annually, during the Eid al-Adha through sacrificing animals.

Genesis 22 originally appears in the Hebrew Bible as a moral story narrating Abraham's devout faith, demonstrating the culmination point of his obedience to God. The Christian interpretations of Genesis 22 have been discussed from a point of view regarding the influence of Jewish teaching on the formation of patristic understanding as well as the the possible interaction between the two religions, leading to a simultaneous impact from both ends. The Jewish tradition reads the story of the Binding of Isaac during the Jewish New Year, Ro'sh ha-Shanah, whereas Christians take up the reading of Sacrifice of Isaac in Eucharist prayers in the days prior to Easter.<sup>149</sup> In many ways, both religions perceive and comprehend Genesis 22 in a similar manner.

As the first patriarch, father, and the founder of the Hebrew people, as well as the father of multitude of nations, Abraham's life is extensively narrated between Genesis 11:27 and 25:18.<sup>150</sup> Many scholars date his lifetime to 1800 BC, however a disagreeing view suggests a wider range of dating between 2000-1400 BC.<sup>151</sup> Abraham's ancestors practiced pagan religion and believed in multitude of gods. Son of Terah, brother to Nahor and Haran, uncle to Lot, and husband to Sarah, Abraham was the first amongst his family to follow a faith involving a single deity. According

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.,5

<sup>150</sup> R. J. Zwi Werblowsky and Geoffrey Wigoder, *The Oxford dictionary of the Jewish religion* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 5. Hereafter will be abbreviated as *ODJR*.

<sup>151</sup> *ODJR*, Gary A. Rendsburg 'Abraham', 5.

to the Old Testament, he was born in Ur and died in Haran, spending most of his life travelling across Mesopotamia, Canaan, Palestine, and Egypt.<sup>152</sup> He first received the knowledge that his offspring would survive many generations in Mamre and throughout his life he remained obedient to God. In many ways, Abraham's life is a continuous narrative of tests, where he meets with difficult situations that he overcomes through his unfailing faith. Ultimately, he married Sarah but the union remained childless for a long time and Abraham's longing for a child was resolved through his affair with another woman. During this time, he fathered Ishmael, his firstborn son, from Hagar the maidservant, while he was married to Sarah. Other stories in the Old Testament emphasize that he was twice tested on issues surrounding his wife Sarah, where he lied about her true identity in both occasions. She was first captured by the Pharaoh and then King Abimelech and in both stories she was finally returned to Abraham safely. Sarah and Abraham eventually had a child, Isaac, when they were both at an advanced age. Perhaps the most difficult of Abraham's tests is his trial involving the Sacrifice of Isaac, a miraculously born child who was pledged to be the forerunner of many generations, by God himself. In Genesis 22, Abraham is tested through the most difficult sacrifice conceivable for a father. He proves that his obedience to God overcomes his love for his son and he follows God's command without hesitation. Genesis 22 presents Abraham's story with a short, whimsical text where Abraham never questions God's will or expresses any pain, thoughts, or feelings about slaying his child. With the help of his strong will, he begins a journey with Isaac and two other companions. After receiving the divine command, the events unfold very quickly with very few revealing details about the three-day journey. On the third day, Abraham leaves the group to pray,

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<sup>152</sup> Colum Hourihane, ed., *Abraham in medieval Christian, Islamic and Jewish art*, Index of Christian Art: Resources 04 (Princeton: The Index of Christian Art, 2014), xi.

having arrived at the mountaintop, and returns with a knife and wood for the burnt offering. Isaac questions his father about the whereabouts of the sacrificial animal, and Abraham firmly states that God will provide it. Thereafter, Isaac is bound and placed on an altar, until divine intervention disrupts the event.

In many ways, Abraham is presented as the ideal model of a devout believer in a monotheistic God, one that takes every possible measure to please Him to prove his unflinching faith. Isaac symbolically represents the hard-achieved seed of a man, but more importantly his role as the promised leader of the Israelite people is a contradiction of God's word, where the life of the ancestor of generations to come is asked for in a divine sacrifice. Were Isaac to be slain by the hand of Abraham, the promise made by God would fail to be fulfilled. Ultimately, the angel of the Lord, appearing in 22:11, commands Abraham to stop the sacrifice and then reappears after the replacement of the ram and celebrates Abraham's obedience with blessings in 22:15.<sup>153</sup>

According to Jewish tradition, the word 'Aqedah [binding] refers to the Binding of Isaac as described in Genesis 22 and literally means 'binding', specifically describing the part of the event where Isaac was bound on Mount Moriah as he was about to be slaughtered by Abraham.<sup>154</sup> During the second day of Ro'sh ha-Shanah, Genesis 22 is read in the synagogue and the Midrashic interpretation of the story emphasizes the moral of forgiveness of the sin.<sup>155</sup> The Christian tradition, specifically the early church fathers read 'Aqedah as a foreshadowing for the manner of Christ's death. 'Aqedah was frequently challenged by the rabbinic law, especially due to the questionable moral justice of God's near approval and extreme demand of human

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<sup>153</sup> Moshe J. Bernstein, "Angels at the 'Aqedah: A Study in the Development of a Midrashic Motif," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 7, no. 3 (2000), 264.

<sup>154</sup> *ODJR*, Lou H. Silberman, "'Aqedah' 58.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*



sacrifice, specifically a firstborn son who were promised to be the forerunner of many generations.<sup>156</sup>

Abraham's trial of sacrificing his son is by no means a unique event in cultural history of civilizations. The moral relationship between father and son has long been a plot for stories belonging to numerous cultures. The concept of primordial father can be observed in Greek mythology, Icelandic myths, Chinese tradition, Hindu culture and most famously in the Oedipus myth.<sup>157</sup> The Near Eastern tradition also has similar stories, where a king or a noble leader is tried with sacrificing his son's life, in return for the well-being and survival of his city and the people he is ruling over. Mesopotamian tradition heavily relies on sacrifice in the form of a purification rite, as opposed to the Christian idea of atoning for the sins of the many.<sup>158</sup> The presentation of the offering is the major emphasis, rather than the final result.<sup>159</sup> Beginning with the narrative in the Old Testament, the anthropology of infanticide resolved into a test to demonstrate an unfailing faith to a single God, who may demand the life of a child in return for the proof of obedience to his will.

As Christian doctrine refers to Christ's death as God's sacrifice of his own son for the sins of all people, the rabbinic reading regards Isaac's redemption as the redemption of all Israelites.<sup>160</sup> In the same vein, Early Christian martyrs identified themselves with Christ, finding pride in following the same manner of death. As early

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<sup>156</sup> Jane Kanarek, "He Took the Knife: Biblical Narrative and the Formation of Rabbinic Law," *AJS Review* 34, no. 01 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0364009410000012>, 69.

<sup>157</sup> Erich Wellisch, *Isaac and Oedipus: A study in biblical psychology of the sacrifice of Isaac, the Akedah* / E. Wellisch, International library of psychology. Psychology and religion v.5 (London: Routledge, 2000, 1954), 10.

<sup>158</sup> Karin Finsterbusch, Armin Lange and Diethard Römheld, eds., *Human sacrifice in Jewish and Christian tradition*, Numen book series, (Leiden: Brill; Biggleswade Extenza Turpin [distributor], 2007), VIII.

<sup>159</sup> Albert I. Baumgarten, *Sacrifice in religious experience*, Studies in the history of religions Numen book series, (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 39.

<sup>160</sup> Jan Willem van Henten and Friedrich Avemarie, *Martyrdom and noble death: Selected texts from Graeco-Roman, Jewish and Christian antiquity* / Jan Willem van Henten and Friedrich Avemarie, Context of Early Christianity (London: Routledge, 2002), 172.

as the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, the bishop martyr Ignatius asked to be an imitator in the sufferings of Christ, presenting his passionate yearning for mimicking His demise.<sup>161</sup> In many ways, the Christian experience is defined by following both the words and the deeds of Christ, including his manner of death. Christ's Passion emphasizes the long suffering of Christ; beginning with his trial and the unfolding of events leading to his crucifixion at Golgotha, an extensive narrative of his suffering that he endured uncomplainingly. For the Early Christians, Jesus was both a teacher and a model and his suffering defined the ways of living for Christian communities. Soon after his death, the Roman Empire launched organized persecutions against Jesus's followers in an attempt to squash the rise against their domination. Christian identity is molded by the idea of suffering and death of the Messiah, creating a system of moral virtues based on endurance, patience, and sacrifice.<sup>162</sup> The martyr not only seeks redemption, but he also wishes to follow Christ in the manner of His life as well as His death. Even before the composition of the Acts of martyrs, the ideology of Christian martyrs imitating Christ in suffering has been the guiding principle of the Jesus movement.<sup>163</sup> For example, the text of the Martyrdom of Polycarp explicitly describes his sufferings as an imitation of Christ<sup>164</sup> and it is among the many martyrological texts that describe sufferings in accordance with the Messiah's.

In the Christian context, Isaac is frequently referred as a prefiguration of Christ. In the New Testament, Galatians 3:16 is often read with a hint of Isaac's position as the representation of Christ around the word seed. In the same vein, both figures were born miraculously, as Isaac was the child of a couple of advanced age,

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<sup>161</sup> Candida R. Moss, *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

unable to conceive previously, while Christ was conceived by a virgin through divine intervention. The ram that miraculously appears from the bushes to meet death instead of Isaac and it symbolizes Christ on the Cross, as both are waiting to be sacrificed, while Isaac represents Christ in the Eucharist.<sup>165</sup> As early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, Melito, the Bishop of Sardes (died c.180 AD)<sup>166</sup> makes the connection between Isaac and Jesus through his analysis of Isaiah 53:7-8<sup>167</sup>, where he claims that like the lamb who was taken to slaughter, both Isaac and Christ went to their demise without hesitation, carrying the wood and the cross for their executions by themselves. Both were led to their sacrifice by their father while Isaac was saved by divine intervention, Jesus' full suffering and ultimate death was for the redemption of mankind from their sins. Similarly, Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyons (130-202 AD) wrote that the near-sacrifice at Mount Moriah was a prototype for the sacrifice at Golgotha following the example of Abraham where people learnt to abide by the word of God.<sup>168</sup> Origen's homily, known to us today through Rufinus' Latin translation, also outlines the similarities between Isaac and Christ, and he stresses that just as Abraham offered his only beloved son, God delivered up his Son for the sake of all mankind.<sup>169</sup>

### **3.1.1 The study of iconographical motifs of Sacrifice of Isaac: two examples**

Beginning in the early 20th century, art historians frequently studied the iconography of Genesis 22, however, an extensive historiographical investigation is beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, only the two most relevant studies that outline the types of depictions of Sacrifice of Isaac will be discussed here. The

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<sup>165</sup> Alison Moore Smith, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Isaac in Early Christian Art," *American Journal of Archaeology*, 26, no. 2 (Apr. - Jun., 1922), 159.

<sup>166</sup> Van Woerden, 216

<sup>167</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+53&version=NIV;KJV>

<sup>168</sup> Van Woerden, 217.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

variations in the motifs appearing in these depictions are meticulously described in both A.M Smith's and Van Woerden's studies.

In her 1922 study, A.M. Smith attempted to identify five different iconographical representations of the Sacrifice of Isaac, largely by looking at the recurrent characteristics of each type. She proposed that the Western type of representation was continually influenced from depictions in Asia Minor, creating a repetitive iconographical model for generations to come. In this vein, she first identifies the Western Hellenistic type, where a bearded Abraham is wears a tunic and a *pallium* while holding a knife with his right hand, and grasps Isaac from his hair with his left.<sup>170</sup> In the Hellenistic type, Abraham's left hand either rests on Isaac's head or grasps his head by pulling his hair. The ram's representation is a neutral element whether or not it is included in the scene. The Hellenistic type of representation is mostly recurrent in Roman sarcophagi as well as some of the catacombs of Rome. In the Asiatic-Hellenistic type, Abraham is again presented in a heavily draped long tunic while he holds a knife with his right hand, and faces towards the sky where the Hand of God emerges from an arc of Heaven.<sup>171</sup> The distinguishing factor between the Western and Asiatic-Hellenistic types is the box-shaped altar; while in Asiatic representations Isaac is always placed on the altar, in the Western renderings he might be standing or kneeling nearby the altar.<sup>172</sup> In the Alexandrian-Coptic type, a bearded Abraham is depicted frontally, wearing flowing white draperies. He holds a knife with his right hand while resting his left hand on Isaac's head. The form of the cylindrical altar in these renderings is peculiar to this

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<sup>170</sup> Alison Moore Smith, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Isaac in Early Christian Art," *American Journal of Archaeology*, 26, no. 2 (Apr. - Jun., 1922), 162.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

area and can be observed in the 4<sup>th</sup>-century El Bagawat fresco in Egypt.<sup>173</sup>(Fig.33) Another distinguishing element in the fresco is the depiction of Sarah, Isaac's mother, standing next to his son with open hands towards the sky in an act of prayer. Isaac's hands are not bound but crossed across his chest, clearly departing from the Hellenistic type.



Fig.33 Egypt, El Bagawat, Chapel of Exodus: Sacrifice of Isaac, 4<sup>th</sup> century

A.M. Smith identified the fourth type as the Palestinian-Coptic rendering of the scene, departing from all other types of representations through an additional detail. In the miniature of the Etschmiadzin Evangeliary, dating from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Isaac is depicted leaning back towards a staircase that leads up to a burning altar.<sup>174</sup> (Fig.34) All other details in the scene are recurrent iconographical components present in other types of representations. Abraham is frontally positioned, holding a knife in his right hand while grasping Isaac's head. The Hand of God emerges from the top left corner of the scene and the ram is standing on the left side of Abraham,

<sup>173</sup> Edward Kessler, *An introduction to Jewish-Christian relations*, Introduction to religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 94.

<sup>174</sup> Smith, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Isaac in Early Christian Art," 167.

partially concealed in his draped tunic, looking towards Isaac. A cypress tree emerges on the left corner of the miniature, a common element in Coptic representations of the scene.<sup>175</sup> However, the altar with a staircase is unique which led to A.M. Smith's classification of the scene as a distinct type.



Fig.34 Yerevan, *The Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, MS 2374 (Etschmiadzin Evangeliary): Sacrifice of Isaac, 6<sup>th</sup> century*

The final classification proposed by A.M. Smith is the Byzantine type, which she described as the most intricate style, having combined details from the previous representational types.<sup>176</sup> The Byzantine type relied typically on Early Christian renderings, however during this era, the Sacrifice of Isaac was depicted infrequently, a notion that A.M. Smith justifies as the result of the Crucifixion symbolically overtaking the 'Aqedah.<sup>177</sup> Beginning with the 6<sup>th</sup>-century San Vitale mosaics, the

<sup>175</sup> Dale C. Allison, *Testament of Abraham*, Commentaries on early Jewish literature (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 107.

<sup>176</sup> Smith, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Isaac in Early Christian Art," 168.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.



Byzantine type appeared within the context of monumental paintings and mosaics as part of larger pictorial programs of churches as well as in illuminated manuscripts. In general, the renderings of the Byzantine type adopted the patterns of the Asiatic-Hellenistic type, while implementing elaborate details to the representation.<sup>178</sup>

Almost 40 years after Smith's iconological analysis of the Sacrifice of Isaac, I.S. van Woerden revisited the topic by consulting *The Princeton Index of Christian Art*. The 1961 study criticized Smith's analysis for the insufficient dating and literary support, which were updated in her study with precision through the use of the Index. She lists 195 monuments that depict the Sacrifice of Isaac, including Jewish representations, Early Christian frescoes preserved in the catacombs, wall paintings, mosaic floors, sarcophagi, lamps, glyptica, manuscripts, and miscellaneous objects.<sup>179</sup> For each item, she studies a list of 17 iconographical components that recur in the depictions, outlining the continuities in the motif. These components include Isaac carrying the sticks, Isaac carrying the sticks and being sacrificed, Isaac walking, Isaac kneeling, Isaac on the altar, Abraham and Isaac praying, Isaac naked, Abraham wearing a *pallium* or a *tunica exomis*, the Hand of God, man or angel, knife, and ram tethered to a tree.<sup>180</sup> In both the Beth-Alpha and Dura Europas Synagogues, the ram is tied to a tree, pointing to God's Providence, yet departing from the original text that does not include this detail. However, Melitino, who writes in the Christian context, reads the tying of the animal symbolically referring to Christ bound on the Cross.<sup>181</sup> In Christian monuments, the recurring theme is the emphasis on deliverance, fitting with the funerary context of the catacombs of Rome, which

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Isabel Speyart Van Woerden, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Abraham," *Vigiliae Christianae* 15, no. 4 (Dec., 1961), 243.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 235.



directly refers to the saving of the souls.<sup>182</sup> The study stretches to the monuments of medieval West, marking the resemblances and discontinuities observed between the new and the old. However, von Woerden clearly emphasizes that, as early as the first centuries AD, the iconographical motif of Sacrifice of Isaac was affiliated with Christ's Passion. In conclusion, the preliminary results of the connection established between these studies and the Menologion lead to the hypothesis that the depictions of Sacrifice of Isaac are comparable with depictions of beheaded Early Christian martyrs of Vat.gr.1613.

### **3.1.2 Martyrdom in Judaic and Early Christian traditions**

Soon after the death of Christ (30-33 AD), sporadic persecutions against the followers of Jesus started with the initiative of Roman administration and lasted for almost three centuries, until Constantine's conversion to Christianity. The hostility against Christians escalated with organized persecutions ordered by emperors such as Decius and lastly by Diocletian. Claudius, who expelled the Jewish Christians from Rome in 49 AD, perhaps ordered the first official act against the Jesus movement.<sup>183</sup> Nero famously blamed Christians for the fire that burnt the city of Rome and he was the first emperor to order an official persecution of Christians.<sup>184</sup> By 111 AD, Pliny the Younger was reporting to Trajan from northern Asia Minor, where the emperor ordered him not to pursue Christians but if they are to be caught for unruly behavior and refuse to follow the pagan customs, they were to be executed.<sup>185</sup> Organized persecutions in mass scale marked the reigns of Decius (249-251AD), Valerian (253-

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Margaret Mary Mitchell, Frances M. Young and K. Scott Bowie, *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine*, Cambridge history of Christianity v. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006),70.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid,71.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

260 AD) and Diocletian (303-305 AD).<sup>186</sup> The Roman administration desired the continuation of orderly governance, which was disrupted and threatened by a small sect, whose members chose willing deaths over sacrificing for the Roman Emperor. The trend quickly spread from Asia Minor to Upper Egypt and the West, and soon Christians uniformly acted against Roman administration's pressure for practicing pagan traditions. The persecutions of Christians started during the reign of Nero (37-68 AD), especially after his claim that the Great Fire in Rome (64 AD) was set by them. In early fourth century, the Edict of Milan (313 AD) finalized the wave of violence, directed towards the followers of Christ beginning in the second half of the first century AD. The persecutions took place in extensive areas falling inside the borders of the Western Roman Empire. Accounts of historian Eusebius of Caesarea reflect the aspects of the violence in detail.<sup>187</sup> Lasting until the reign of Constantine I, where he legalized the religion, the persecutions issued by Emperors Diocletian and Galerius, known as the Great Persecution (303 AD) are referred as the most violent executions that were practiced.

### **3.1.3 Martyrdom before Christianity**

In the ancient world, martyrdom was a concept that was largely understood as a form of death received by courageous people, who tried resisting the tyrannical authority in individual trials as in the example of Socrates in Athens.<sup>188</sup> The term martyr was never used in the context of dying for faith or a cause until the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, and remained as a judicial term indicating a common witness to a

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 72. Hereafter, the Roman emperors' reigning years are taken from: Margaret Mary Mitchell, Frances M. Young and K. Scott Bowie, *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine*, Cambridge history of Christianity v. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006),xxii-xxiii.

<sup>187</sup> Yet, Eusebius' accounts are not considered factual and have been considered to be subjectively written.

<sup>188</sup> G. W. Bowersock, *Martyrdom and Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995),7.

trial in a court of law.<sup>189</sup> Thus, the term and the concept of martyrdom are not identical prior to Early Christian era and it was only understood in the modern sense after the recognition of persecutions directed towards the Jesus movement. W.H.C. Frend claimed that martyrdom as a concept originated in Judaism and continued to exist in Early Christian communities in the Late antiquity.<sup>190</sup> He postulated that the sufferings served as an atonement of the sins committed by all Israeli people, very much like the New Testament's approach on the sacrifice of Jesus, serving as ransom for the many.<sup>191</sup> Frend agreed that the new meaning of the word martyr in Greek was only realized with the establishment of Early Christian church, however he believed the concept derived from the Old Testament and other rabbinic literature.<sup>192</sup> Instead, the Hebrew bible uses the idiom *qiddush ha-Shem*, meaning to die for sanctifying the name of God.<sup>193</sup> The ultimate way to sanctify God's name could be achieved through martyrdom, that is, by sacrificing one's own life for faith. In the same vein, Abraham's willingness to offer his son Isaac's life is traditionally read as an act of supreme sacrifice and it represents a near martyrdom, disrupted by divine intervention.<sup>194</sup> As a persecuted Messiah, Jesus' role in reconfirming this idea of sacrificing one's life for faith is indisputable. Frend believed that the concepts of sacrifice, ransom and deliverance to God existed before Christianity and traced back to Judaic tradition, continuing an understanding of eagerness and willingness to die for the rewards that can only be received beyond death.<sup>195</sup> In contrast, G. Bowersock

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>190</sup> Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the making of Christianity and Judaism / Daniel Boyarin*, *Figurae reading medieval culture* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999)

<sup>191</sup> W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and persecution in the early church: A study of a conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1965), 31.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, 80.

<sup>193</sup> *ODJR*, 'Martyrdom', 444.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Marc Brettler, "Is there martyrdom in the Hebrew Bible?," in *Sacrificing the self: Perspectives on martyrdom and religion / edited by Margaret Cormack*, ed. Margaret Cormack, *The religions / American Academy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, 2001),4.

argued that martyrdom was not a product of Judaism, but instead flourished in the Roman cultural environment and derived from the pagan customs.<sup>196</sup> Roman emperors ruled with a system that derived from the Hellenistic empire tradition, basing their right to govern to divine order that originated from the *Diadochoi* that established their link to Olympian Gods. The public was required to make sacrifices to the emperor's *genius*, the divine force that protected and inspired to rule.<sup>197</sup> With the rise of Christianity, the martyrs were positioned against the obedience that was expected from Roman citizens. They persistently acted against the pressure of following pagan customs and preferred to die instead of renouncing Christ. With their unflinching faith, they supported the core of the belief system that escalated into becoming the world's largest monotheistic religious community. In many ways, the discussion on the origins of martyrdom leads to the direction of accepting its new meaning in Christianity. Peter Brown, in his seminal study of the cult of saints and their function in Latin Christianity emphasized that the Early Christian martyrs received death in its most magnificent form, receiving the gift of perseverance from God.<sup>198</sup> Their martyrdom stories transformed the understanding of and their legacy evolved into a concept of posthumous recognition that served as a role model for generations of believers to come.

### **3.2 Representations of Sacrifice of Isaac prior to 11<sup>th</sup> century**

In this thesis, *The Princeton Index of Medieval Art* (previously the *The Princeton Index of Christian Art*) was consulted for the dating, provenance, and literary background for the works of art representing the Sacrifice of Isaac. The Index

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<sup>196</sup> Daniel Boyarin, "Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, no. 4 (1998), <https://doi.org/10.1353/earl.1998.0053>

<sup>197</sup> Margaret Mary Mitchell, Frances M. Young and K. Scott Bowie, *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to Constantine*, Cambridge history of Christianity v. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 72.

<sup>198</sup> Peter Brown, *The cult of the saints: Its rise and function in Latin Christianity* / Peter Brown, Enlarged edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 72.

classifies the scene as ‘Abraham: sacrificing Isaac’ and the inventory have been filtered to match the works of art produced before the year 1000 AD, preceding the production date of the Menologion of Basil II. Chiefly, two types of works are investigated in the next portion of this study: monumental painting and manuscript illumination. All other types are omitted, however this by no means indicates that there is a limited amount of such examples. On the contrary, numerous Christian sarcophagi depicting the Sacrifice of Isaac survive from different periods of time, predominantly from the Late Antiquity. Similarly, small objects have not been included. Both the sarcophagi and the small objects depict the scene in a three dimensional manner whereas this thesis retains only examples that are practiced on two-dimensional mediums. Genesis 22 was a very popular depiction for many centuries, and the Index lists about 200 distinct representations. This thesis first lists examples from monumental painting that dates between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. It then describes illuminated manuscripts with depictions of Sacrifice of Isaac dating from the 9<sup>th</sup> century, produced before the Menologion of Basil II.

### **3.2.1 Monumental painting**

Discovered in 1928, the Beth-Alpha synagogue in Palestine is a unique depiction of the scene Sacrifice of Isaac.<sup>199</sup> Dating from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the mosaic panel stands as a solid proof against the claim that Judaism avoided figural representations due to the strict observance of the Second Commandment.<sup>200</sup> Furthermore, during most of Late Antiquity, the distinction between the Jewish and Christian productions of artifacts is vague, as the two religions have not yet been

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<sup>199</sup> Eleazar Lipa Sukenik, *The ancient synagogue of Beth Alpha: An account of the excavations conducted on behalf of the Hebrew Univ., Jerusalem from the Hebrew*, Nachdr. d. Ausg. Jerusalem u. London 1932 (Hildesheim, New York: Olms, 1975), 5. The chance discovery took place in the winter excavation of Hebrew University, Jerusalem in December 1928 by E.L.Sukenik.

<sup>200</sup> *ODJR*, Baruch J. Schwartz, ‘Ten Commandments’, 684.

categorically separated as in the modern understanding.<sup>201</sup> In the three-panel system preserved in the mosaic floors in the Beth-Alpha synagogue, the Sacrifice of Isaac is portrayed in the lowermost register. The remaining parts of the panel depict a Torah shrine and the twelve zodiac signs with personifications of the sun and the four seasons. In her iconographical study of the 'Aqedah, van Woerden suggested that the representation in the Beth-Alpha synagogue is unique and cannot be classified within any of the six stylistic types. Specifically, the strange positioning of the Isaac caught in mid-air led to scholarly discussion regarding van Woerden's statement that the scene is unclassifiable due to this aspect. The ram's positioning is also afloat, which has been proposed as an allusive symbolic representation of Christ's death by hanging on the Cross.<sup>202</sup> Some scholars also suggested that the suspension of the ram might be the result of simple spatial concerns of the artists.<sup>203</sup> However, her observation have been largely denied by looking at other depictions of the 'Aqedah, where the iconographical components of the Hand of God and the presence of the knife are repeated elements in later renderings of the scene as well as mid-air representations elsewhere such as Via Latina.<sup>204</sup> Overall, new research places Beth-Alpha Synagogue as a representation of 'Aqedah in line with the Christian iconographical representations that are rooted in Late Antiquity.<sup>205</sup>

The mosaic panel in the Beth-Alpha Synagogue is adorned with a band of palm trees on the top, separating it from the two scenes that are depicted in the

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<sup>201</sup> Jaś Elsner, "Archaeologies and Agendas: Reflections on Late Ancient Jewish Art and Early Christian Art," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 93 (2003), 115. The distinction becomes more clarified by the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, which matches with the dating of the Beth-Alpha mosaic. Furthermore, the fact that the panel is inside a synagogue most distinctly places the panel in the Jewish artistic production context. Elsner proposes that the symbols such as Torah shrine and menorah do not necessarily pose as an evidence of occupation by the Jews.

<sup>202</sup> Joseph Gutmann, "Revisiting the "Binding of Isaac" Mosaic in the Beth-Alpha Synagogue," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute, New Series* 6 (1992), 79.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.* The panel is inscribed with the names Marianos and his son Aninas, presumably the names of the artists.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.



registers that stand above the Sacrifice of Isaac. (Fig.36) From the left corner, two companions of Abraham are walking with a saddled donkey, while one is holding the animal from its back, the other companion is pulling the string that is attached to its neck. In the center of the plane, a ram is standing afloat in mid-air and a string attached to the animal's neck keeps it bound to a tree. From the top of the panel, the Hand of God emerges from a cloud towards Abraham's head. Next to the ram and the tree, Abraham is depicted, and is by far the largest figure in the panel. He is holding a knife with his right hand while he lifts Isaac with his left, up to the level of his head. Isaac is facing towards Abraham with his hands are crossed over his chest as he is being led towards a rectangular, flaming high altar in the right corner of the mosaic. He is floating in mid-air and Abraham's hands seem to be not touching him, as if he has been released from his father's capture. Throughout the panel, the ram, the Hand of God, Abraham, and Isaac are inscribed. Below the register, the border is decorated with a small pomegranate tree, a fish, a chicken with four chicks, a bird and a vine. (Fig.35) Stylistically, the depiction of 'Aqedah in the Beth-Alpha Synagogue is simplistic, figures are not detailed and the clothing are not draped or detailed. The mosaic panel has been damaged in several areas however it does not disrupt the overall perception of the scene. However, in general terms, Abraham's approach towards Isaac is parallel to the prototype of later periods, posing as an early example. The meaning of the Beth-Alpha floor mosaic is discussed through the positioning of the ram, departing from the original text through binding of the animal to a tree, which is proposed by A.Stuiber to be an emphasis on God's Providence and his divine intervention.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Isabel Speyart Van Woerden, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Abraham," *Vigiliae Christianae* 15, no. 4 (Dec., 1961), 235.



Fig.35 Israel, Beth-Alpha Synagogue, Torah Shrine, mosaic floor, 6<sup>th</sup> century



Fig.36 Israel, Beth-Alpha Synagogue, Torah Shrine, mosaic floor: Sacrifice of Isaac, 6<sup>th</sup> century

The 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD Dura-Europos Synagogue (245-256 AD) in Syria is another example from a Jewish sacred setting that incorporated Roman, Greek, and Persian traditions, as well as a Christian chapel that was later added to the structure.<sup>207</sup> Situated over the Torah shrine on the west wall, above the arch of the niche, there is a depiction of that is unique in its portrayal of Abraham, who is represented with his back turned to the viewer, holding a knife in his right hand.

<sup>207</sup> Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert L. Kessler, *The frescoes of the Dura synagogue and Christian art*, *Dumbarton Oaks studies* 28 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1990) 155-157.

(Fig.37) On the far left side, a seven-branched menorah is depicted next to a citron and a palm branch. Centrally, the Temple of Jerusalem is represented next to a high altar where Isaac lies, waiting to be sacrificed. Above the altar, the Hand of God emerges from the top margin and beneath Abraham; a ram is depicted beside a tree. A figure emerges from in the distance, situated above Abraham, who has not been clearly identified. Some scholars suggested he is a double-portrayal of Abraham himself, while others claim that he is Ishmael.<sup>208</sup> It has been suggested by C.H. Kraeling that the existence of the citron, palm branch, and the menorah are both a direct reference to the ark of Covenant, referring to the temple of Jerusalem and an emphasis on Abraham's unfailing obedience to God's magnanimity delivered as a moral story in Jewish tradition.<sup>209</sup>

The catacombs of Rome, used predominantly by Christians as a burial ground until the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, were frequently adorned with depictions of the 'Aqedah. The setting for the depictions emphasizes death and burial in the Early Christian communities, a direct reference to deliverance. In the Catacomb of Priscilla, dated between 250-399 AD, the representation depicts Abraham frontally, pointing towards his right side while Isaac is carrying a bundle of sticks on his left. The tool of execution is nowhere to be seen and the representation is clearly a simplified one, missing the common iconographical components that are observed elsewhere. (Fig.38) In the Catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter dated between 320-340 AD, the depiction is closer to the later-period iconography.

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<sup>208</sup> Edward Kessler, *Bound by the Bible: Jews, Christians, and the sacrifice of Isaac* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 96.

<sup>209</sup> Isabel Speyart Van Woerden, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Abraham," *Vigiliae Christianae* 15, no. 4 (Dec., 1961), 235.



Fig. 37 Syria, Damascus, National Museum of Damascus, Dura Europos Synagogue: Sacrifice of Isaac, 245-256 AD

On the right wall, Abraham is frontally depicted with a knife in his right hand as he approaches Isaac whose hands are bound behind his back. A ram stands on the left side of Abraham and next to Isaac, a lit altar can be observed. (Fig.39)



Fig. 38 Italy, Rome, Catacomb of Priscilla: Sacrifice of Isaac, 320-340 AD





Fig.39 Italy, Rome, Catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter: Sacrifice of Isaac, 250-399 AD



Fig.40 Italy, Ravenna, Church of San Vitale: Sacrifice of Isaac, 525-549 AD

The Late Antique mosaic residing in the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna is presented within the iconography of the Eucharist, alongside with representations of the offerings of Cain and Melchizedek. The mosaics are dated between 525-549 AD and the depiction of Genesis 22 is placed inside an arch on the left wall.<sup>210</sup> (Fig.40) A.M Smith classified the San Vitale mosaic as a rendering of the Asiatic-Hellenistic prototype, as Isaac is standing on top of the altar in a kneeling position and all the other elements prescribing the type are present in the representation. Abraham is

<sup>210</sup> Edward Kessler, *Bound by the Bible: Jews, Christians, and the sacrifice of Isaac* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004),162.

depicted as a bearded older man, wearing a heavily draped tunic and he grasps Isaac with his left hand from his hair while he holds a large knife with his right hand. A ram is standing on Abraham's right and the Hand of God emerges from the top of the semi-circular register that the scene is fitted inside. Abraham's sword-bearing right arm is raised towards the Hand of God and as he is about to begin the execution, his face is turned towards the sky. On the far left corner of the mosaic Sarah, Isaac's mother, stands on a doorway as Abraham is offering a calf to three angels.

The bema of Justinian's basilica within the complex of Monastery of Saint Catherine houses the mosaic panel depicting the Sacrifice of Isaac on the marble revetment to the left side of the apse.<sup>211</sup> (Fig.41) Dating to the 6<sup>th</sup> century, it has been investigated by K. Weitzmann, who revealed that the pilaster beneath the surface of the panel depicts the sacrifice of Jephthah (Judg II:29-39), another narrative from the Old Testament that closely relates to the 'Aqedah.<sup>212</sup> Furthermore, the traces of the depiction show that the layered compositions strikingly resemble each other. Abraham is depicted standing behind Isaac, as a nimbed elderly man with white hair and beard, wearing a heavily draped *pallium*. Immediately to his right, a large leaf emerges from a tree branch. He approaches Isaac with a knife-bearing right hand while grasping his son's hair with his left hand. Isaac is kneeling with his back turned to Abraham, on top a rectangular high altar covered with a cross-inscribed drapery. A blazing fire emerges behind Isaac and a ram accompanies him. From the top right corner of the panel, an arc of Heaven emerges with three rays of light descending towards Abraham's head. He turns his head away from his son and the beams of light, facing towards the left side of the panel.

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<sup>211</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, "The Jephthah Panel in the Bema of the Church of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964),341.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid*, 342.





Fig.41 *Egypt, Mount Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine: Sacrifice of Isaac, 6<sup>th</sup> century*

### 3.2.2 Manuscript illumination

Two manuscripts survived from the Pre-Iconoclastic period that illustrate the Old Testament: the Cotton Genesis (Cod.Cotton Otho B.VI) and the Vienna Genesis (Cod.Vindob.theol.graec.31) preserved in the British Museum and Imperial Library in Vienna, respectively.<sup>213</sup> In both manuscripts, the representation of Genesis 22 is not found. Similarly, the Joshua Roll (Vat.Pal.gr.431) depicting the Old Testament Book of Joshua in the form of a *rotulus* does not include the Sacrifice of Isaac in its cycle of biblical representations.<sup>214</sup> Therefore, with the exclusion of these important manuscripts illustrating the Old Testament, Byzantine codices dated before the production of the Menologion of Basil II have been presented, as they are far more applicable to the present study. Numerous Western manuscripts also represent ‘Aqedah, however within the scope of this study, these codices have not been included.

<sup>213</sup> Emmy Wellesz, *The Vienna Genesis: with an introduction and notes by Emmy Wellesz* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1960)

<sup>214</sup> Steven H. Wander, *The Joshua roll* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2012)

The Paris Gregory, also known as Par.gr.510, is a Middle Byzantine manuscript that can be compared with the Menologion of Basil in that its richly embellished folia suggest royal patronage. Securely dated between 867-886 AD, Par.gr.510 was produced for Basil I, the great-great grandfather of Basil II.<sup>215</sup> In fact, the imperial portraits presented in the initial pages of the manuscript that strongly suggest a Constantinopolitan production.<sup>216</sup> The contents include the homilies of the 4<sup>th</sup> century Cappadocian church father, Gregory of Nazianzus in the form of his full 44 orations, along with his letters and a part of his *vita* written by Gregory the Presbyter.<sup>217</sup> The manuscript contains a total of 46 miniatures that display 200 different scenes, including the Sacrifice of Isaac.<sup>218</sup> One of the revolutionary aspects of the Paris Gregory is the staggering number of 1500 illuminated initials, originally a feature of Western illumination, which makes its earliest appearance in a Byzantine manuscript.<sup>219</sup>

In Par.gr.510, the depiction of Isaac's near-sacrifice by Abraham is displayed as a preface to the sermon 'On Theology'.<sup>220</sup> The miniature depicts three scenes in three registers. From top to bottom these scenes are: the Sacrifice of Isaac, Jacob's dream and struggle with the angel, and the Anointment of David. (Fig.42) On the far right corner of the first compartment, Abraham is holding Isaac from his head, while directing a short knife towards his neck. As his body is turned towards Isaac, his head is turned towards his back, looking up to the sky where a ram emerges from behind a

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<sup>215</sup> Leslie Brubaker, "Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus," in *A companion to Byzantine illustrated manuscripts*, ed. Vasiliki Tsamakda, Brill's companions to the Byzantine world, Volume 2 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2017), 356.

<sup>216</sup> Leslie Brubaker, *Vision and meaning in ninth-century Byzantium: Image as exegesis in the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus / Leslie Brubaker*, Cambridge studies in palaeography and codicology 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 5.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>219</sup> Leslie Brubaker, "Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus," in *A companion to Byzantine illustrated manuscripts*, 356.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, 359.

mountain. Isaac is kneeling in front of his father with his hands bound behind his back. He is wearing a white tunic with a red band around his waist and red leggings. A rectangular column with a stake on its top emerges from the far right corner of the miniature, representing the altar that was prepared of Isaac's sacrifice. Both Abraham and Isaac's names are inscribed around their heads, leaving no doubt that this is indeed a depiction of 'Aqedah. Abraham's head is encircled inside a nimbus, indicating his holy status and he is wearing a long, draped white tunic with a brown *phlenion* that wraps around his underlying garment, leaving his left shoulder uncovered.



Fig.42 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Par.gr.510 (*The Paris Gregory*), f. 174v: *Sacrifice of Isaac*, 867-886 AD

Of the three extant Byzantine copies of the 6<sup>th</sup> century prototypes of Christian Topography, Vat.gr.699 is a 9<sup>th</sup> century manuscript<sup>221</sup> that includes miniatures from the Old Testament. The style of illumination in the manuscript predominantly

<sup>221</sup> ODB, A.Kazdhan and Nancy P. Ševčenko, 'Kosmas Indikopleustes', 1152.

matches with 9<sup>th</sup> century Constantinopolitan production.<sup>222</sup> The content of the manuscript is written anonymously, however from the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards it has frequently been attributed to Kosmas Indikopleustes.<sup>223</sup> It is believed that the original text was authored in Alexandria, around 543 AD. The remaining copies belonging to Byzantine illumination schools reside in Mount Sinai and Florence.<sup>224</sup> The text originally deals with the concept of the eternity of the universe and makes use of biblical interpretations, attempting to connect science and religion in harmony. The content is arranged in ten books, where the use of biblical figures gradually builds up the understanding of the divine plan.<sup>225</sup> Vat.gr.699 is composed of 123 parchment folios and the text is written in a slanting uncial.<sup>226</sup> Two flyleaves introduce the main text and the digitized version of the manuscript is available in the Digital Vatican Library.<sup>227</sup>

On the top left corner of the Sacrifice of Isaac miniature, two companions with a donkey are depicted, illustrating the journey to Mount Moriah. (Fig.43) Beneath them, Isaac is depicted on the left side the miniature, describing the events leading up to his near-sacrifice in Mount Moriah. In this depiction, he is standing on the left side of Abraham as he carries a bundle of sticks on his back. A ram that is bound to a small tree emerges beneath him. The iconography shows Abraham, the largest figure in the miniature, holding a knife in his right hand while grasping Isaac's hair. He is wearing a long blue tunic and a pink *pallium* with black sandals. Depicted

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<sup>222</sup> Maja Kominko, *The world of Kosmas: Illustrated Byzantine codices of the Christian topography* / Maja Kominko (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 230.

<sup>223</sup> Maja Kominko, "The *Christian Topography* of Kosmas Indikopleustes," in *A companion to Byzantine illustrated manuscripts*, ed. Vasiliki Tsamakda, Brill's companions to the Byzantine world Volume 2 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2017), 395.

<sup>224</sup> These manuscripts are; Sin. Gr.1186, that is kept in the Monastery of Saint Catherine and Laur.Plut.9.29 residing in Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana.

<sup>225</sup> Maja Kominko, "The *Christian Topography* of Kosmas Indikopleustes," in *A companion to Byzantine illustrated manuscripts*, 402.

<sup>226</sup> Maja Kominko, *The world of Kosmas: Illustrated Byzantine codices of the Christian topography* / Maja Kominko (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 227.

<sup>227</sup> DigiVatLib. Accessed April 09, 2018. [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.699](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.699).

as an old man with white beard, Abraham has a gold nimbus encircling his head and he is the sole figure with such an attribute in the miniature. On the top right corner of the miniature, the Hand of God emerges from inside an arc of Heaven, with rays descending towards Abraham. Isaac is kneeling in front of his father, dressed in a blue tunic while he is bending his left leg; his right 90-degree bent leg horizontally touches the ground. His hands are bound behind his back. Next to them, a flaming bowl represents a lighted altar. The figures are inscribed in Greek, identifying the scene precisely as a representation of Genesis 22. In the main text, the scene is described as a prefiguration of Christ's Passion, and as Isaac is carrying the bundle of sticks leading up to his sacrifice, he is identified with Jesus carrying the Cross to the hill of Golgotha.<sup>228</sup>



Fig.43 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.699 (The Christian Topography of Cosmas), 59r: Sacrifice of Isaac, 9<sup>th</sup> century*

The Chludov Psalter, alternatively referred as Gr.129, is a manuscript that encompasses the Psalms and Odes. In the 169 folios presently intact, 225 illustrations

<sup>228</sup> Maja Kominko, "The *Christian Topography* of Kosmas Indikopleustes," in *A companion to Byzantine illustrated manuscripts*, 402.

accompany the text, occupying the lower, lateral and upper margins of the leaves.<sup>229</sup> The manuscript does not have a colophon that precisely clarifies the production date and the scribe, however it has most often been attributed to the second half of 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>230</sup> The provenance of the manuscript however, can be traced back to 961 AD, according to the marginal note appearing on folio 39r, where there is an indication that it was housed in Lavra of St. Athanasius on Mount Athos.<sup>231</sup> Another note on folio 169r suggests that the manuscript travelled to a church in a monastic compound located in modern Turkish Heybeliada, one of the Princes Islands offshore from Constantinople, by Nectarius the hieromonk who dedicates the book to this location in 1648.<sup>232</sup> Thereafter, the Chludov Psalter was taken to Russia by V.Gregorovitch through his excursions in Turkey and Greece in 1844-47, who then passed it on to A.I Khludov in the 1860s.<sup>233</sup> At his bequest, the manuscript was transferred to the monastery of St. Nicholas in Moscow. In 1907 it was taken from the monastery to the State Historical Museum in Moscow, where it still resides today.<sup>234</sup> Gr.129 is written in a small, upright uncial, known as the upright ogival and throughout the manuscript<sup>235</sup>, vivid colors have been used to highlight the contours around the figures. Stylistically, it is closely associated with Mount Athos, Pantokrator 61, categorized as a Marginal Psalter.

Folio 105v illustrates the Sacrifice of Isaac where images are wrapped around the text that occupies the top right quarter of the page, narrating Psalm 105, Verse

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<sup>229</sup> Kathleen Anne Corrigan, *Visual polemics in the ninth-century Byzantine psalters* (Cambridge England, New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1992),143.

<sup>230</sup> *ODB*, J.Irmscher, A.Kazdhan and J.H.Lowden 'Psalter', 1753.

<sup>231</sup> Kathleen Anne Corrigan, *Visual polemics in the ninth-century Byzantine psalters*, 140.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*,143.



9:1.<sup>236</sup> (Fig.44) Abraham is depicted twice, once in the upper right corner, gesturing in prayer towards a starred arch of Heaven where Hand of God emerges with rays towards him. He is depicted as an old man with white hair and beard and is dressed in a long white tunic and slippers. Beneath the text and Abraham's first representation, the lower half of the miniature depicts the near-sacrifice of Isaac where Abraham stands behind his son, grasping him from his hair while raising his knife-bearing right arm towards Isaac's head. He is dressed in an identical white tunic and an angel that emerges from inside a starred arc of Heaven, holding a scepter, interrupts his motion. Isaac is kneeling in front of Abraham with his hands bound behind his back. Around the figures, inscriptions identify the scene with precision.



Fig.44 Moscow, State Historical Museum, Gr.129 (*Chludov Psalter*), 105v: *Sacrifice of Isaac*, second half of 9<sup>th</sup> century

The Pantokrator Psalter, alternatively referred as Mt. Athos, Pantokrator 61, is amongst the group of psalters that are stylistically classified as Marginal Psalters. It takes its name from the Pantokrator Monastery at Mount Athos, where it resides

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 142.

today. In its 226 numbered folios, the manuscript encompasses the Psalms and Odes with suitable illustrations encircling the text in the lateral, bottom and upper margins of the pages. The Psalms are rendered in the Constantinopolitan style and the script is similar to the upright ogival uncials used<sup>237</sup> in the Chludov Psalter, insinuating the close relationship between the two manuscripts. Pantokrator 61 is not preserved in its entirety at Mount Athos and some of the missing folios are located in the Leningrad State Library where it is kept under the name Cod.265.<sup>238</sup> The manuscript has no colophon naming its scribe and the date with precision; however it has been considered to be produced between 800-899 AD. The catalogue that was rendered by Lambros at Mount Athos Library proves its safekeeping in the monastery in 1895.<sup>239</sup> No records are available to trace the manuscript's arrival to Mount Athos or the preceding locations where it was kept. The 113 illustrations are depicted in vivid colors, usually inscribed with names that help identify the depicted scenes with accuracy.

Folio 151v depicts the Sacrifice of Isaac along with other accompanying scenes from the previous verses of Psalm 105.<sup>240</sup> (Fig.45) The text is wrapped on the top right corner of the page reaching down a length of two-thirds of the full height of the page, leaving a thin area in the margin for the depiction of the 'Aqedah. The left half of the page is filled with two scenes, beginning with an arc of Heaven emerging from the top left margin. The paint around the arc is flaking due to physical damage in the miniature. Beneath the arc, a depiction of Moses leading the Israelites begins with a pillar of fire from left side and proceeds with two Israelites holding large

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<sup>237</sup> Corrigan, *Visual polemics in the ninth-century Byzantine psalters*, 145.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>240</sup> Psalm 105, verses 39-40 alludes to Miracle of Manna and Moses leading the Israelites while verse 41 directly suggests to Moses smiting the Rock. Verse 42 refers to the promise made to Abraham, signifying his near-sacrifice of his son Isaac. The scenes are rendered around the text without separation however they do not form a cyclic narrative of continuous events.

bowls accompanied by five quails leading up to a group of other Israelites standing before a blue cloud. Below the representation, Moses is holding a rod having completed the smiting of the Rock.<sup>241</sup> Two Israelites are reaching toward the water that emerges from the rock; one drinking from it while the other is holding a bowl to collect water. This representation ends halfway down the page, leaving the bottom right corner to depict Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. An arc of Heaven emerges from the last line of text with rays reaching towards Abraham. He is depicted as an old man, wearing a white tunic and a grey *pallium*. He is holding a knife in his right hand, directed towards Isaac, as he grasps his hair with his left hand. Both figures are not painted from the waist down and only the contours of the rest of their bodies are visible. Isaac's outline depicts him as kneeling next to a fire as his hands are bound behind his back.



Fig.45 *Mount Athos, Pantokrator Monastery, Pantokrator 61(Pantokrator Marginal Psalter), 151v : Sacrifice of Isaac, 800-899 AD*

In both manuscript tradition and monumental painting, the Sacrifice of Isaac was depicted throughout the centuries with recurring iconographical motifs. These

<sup>241</sup> The miracle of smiting of the Rock is described in Exodus 17:6.

motifs, although they differed from one work of art to another, remained strikingly close to the narrative presented in Genesis 22.

### **3.3 Connection between the iconography of Sacrifice of Isaac and the beheading scenes in the Menologion of Basil II**

#### **3.3.1 Soldiers vs. Abraham**

The iconographical components of the majority of the beheading scenes in the Menologion of Basil II show continuities with the depiction of Abraham in the representations of Genesis 22 by means of the execution tool and Abraham's manner of approach towards Isaac. The original text of Genesis 22 specifically identifies Abraham's tool of choice for the slaughter with the Hebrew word מַכְרֵלֹת [knife].<sup>242</sup> Throughout the Menologion of Basil II, the Greek word μάχαιρα,<sup>243</sup> [a large knife or a sword] is used to describe the execution tool for martyrs. In many representations studied earlier in this chapter, Abraham is repeatedly depicted with a knife in his right hand, raising it towards the sky as if he is about to begin the execution of Isaac. Similarly, the soldiers with the intention of beheading in Vat.gr.1613 always approach to martyrs with a sword. Oftentimes, the Hand of God emerges from above, indicating the divine intervention stopping Abraham from completing the action. In the same vein, the soldiers in the Menologion of Basil II are depicted with a sword-bearing right arm, raised towards the sky, as they are about to begin the decapitation. Although the Hand of God is not present in the majority of the beheading scenes of Vat.gr.1613, the execution is captured in the moment preceding the action, much like the representations of the 'Aqedah. However, in the few miniatures where the Hand of God is present in the Menologion of Basil II, the iconographical motif is not used in the same manner. Genesis 22 never mentions that his father would decapitate

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<sup>242</sup> Jane Kanarek, "He Took the Knife: Biblical Narrative and the Formation of Rabbinic Law," *AJS Review* 34, no. 01 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0364009410000012>, 70.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 737.

Isaac. The small knife indicates that if Abraham were to take on with the action, he would presumably cut his sons' throat according to the choice of the execution tool. However, both actions would violate the neck, an attempt to sever the body from the head. In many representations, Abraham is depicted on the right side of Isaac, approaching him from behind. He is not visible to his son as he raises the knife towards him. However at this stage, Isaac is frequently bound and he is aware of the actions that are about to take place. Yet, Abraham's approach from behind Isaac resembles the soldiers' posture in the Menologion of Basil II, who has been frequently depicted behind the martyrs in a similar way. Furthermore, in some miniatures, the soldiers grasp the hair of the martyr, perhaps to align the head in the position where they can begin decapitation. Correspondingly, Abraham is sometimes depicted grasping Isaac's hair, securing his position before he could begin the execution.

### **3.3.2 Martyrs vs. Isaac**

In many representations of the 'Aqedah, Isaac kneels before his father, with his back facing Abraham. He is almost never portrayed as looking towards Abraham, and the iconography always emphasizes his obedience while the overall moral of the story is also Abraham's submission to God's will. In Dura Europos, Abraham turns his back on the viewer; however even in this positioning the father and son do not face each other. One exception is the fresco in the Catacomb of Priscilla, where Abraham gazes towards the left side of the plane, while Isaac is carrying a bundle of sticks on his back. However this scene reflects the earlier events described in Genesis 22, emphasizing Isaac as the bearer of his own sacrificial tools. Abraham often gazes towards the sky in the representations, underlining the narrative where God orders him to halt his actions. The soldiers in the Menologion of Basil II are also often

portrayed standing behind the martyrs. Their gazes are fixed in various directions, however they never meet face to face with the martyrs. This iconographical trait indicates that there is no sign of objection or resistance from the martyr towards the soldier as they are always willingly yielding to their deaths. Furthermore, the act of beheading is often accomplished with the executioner beginning the action by approaching the person from behind. Amongst all the iconographical motifs recurrent between Isaac and the martyrs, perhaps the most striking detail is that both are frequently portrayed with their hands bound behind their backs. Genesis 22 clearly indicates that once Abraham prepared to slay his son, he restrained Isaac by binding his hands. In 65 miniatures, martyrs' hands are bound behind their backs, reminiscent of the iconography of the Binding of Isaac while he was about to be sacrificed by Abraham.

### **3.4 Assessment and statistical analysis of the beheaded martyrs in Vat.gr.1613**

The continuity between the iconography of 'Aqedah and beheaded martyrs in the Menologion is investigated through the analysis of iconographical motifs that overlap between the soldiers and Abraham as well as the martyrs and Isaac.

#### **3.4.1 Types of representations**

The Menologion is composed of 430 miniatures and throughout the beheading scenes, a word or word group narrating the event of decapitation is manifested in 88% of the cases. The 138 beheading scenes, catalogued in **Appendix A**, occupy approximately 32% of the whole manuscript, a dominating one third of the depictions. Pantoleon was responsible for creating the majority of the miniatures in the manuscript and his name appeared a total of 79 times<sup>244</sup>, of which 52 are

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<sup>244</sup> Ihor Ševčenko, "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962), <https://doi.org/10.2307/1291164>, 249. According to Ševčenko's analysis, the names appear with the following frequencies in the margins : Michael of Blachernae 61, George 45, Symeon 32, Michael the Younger 67, Menas 27, Nestor 71 and Symeon of Blachernae 48.



depictions of beheading scenes. Nestor only painted one beheading scene, although his name appears a total of 71 times in the margins, and the rest of the illuminators shared the task by painting between 10-19 depictions of decapitation scenes. Pantoleon appeared to be the most productive amongst the group of eight illuminators and the number of beheading scenes he painted is consistent with that. However, Menas, who painted the least amount of miniatures throughout the manuscript, who would be expected to depict the smallest number, illuminated 10 beheading scenes. On the other hand, Nestor, of his 71 representations, presented only a single decapitation scene. The results revealed that the distribution of the miniatures amongst the illuminators is not continuous within the group of beheading scenes.

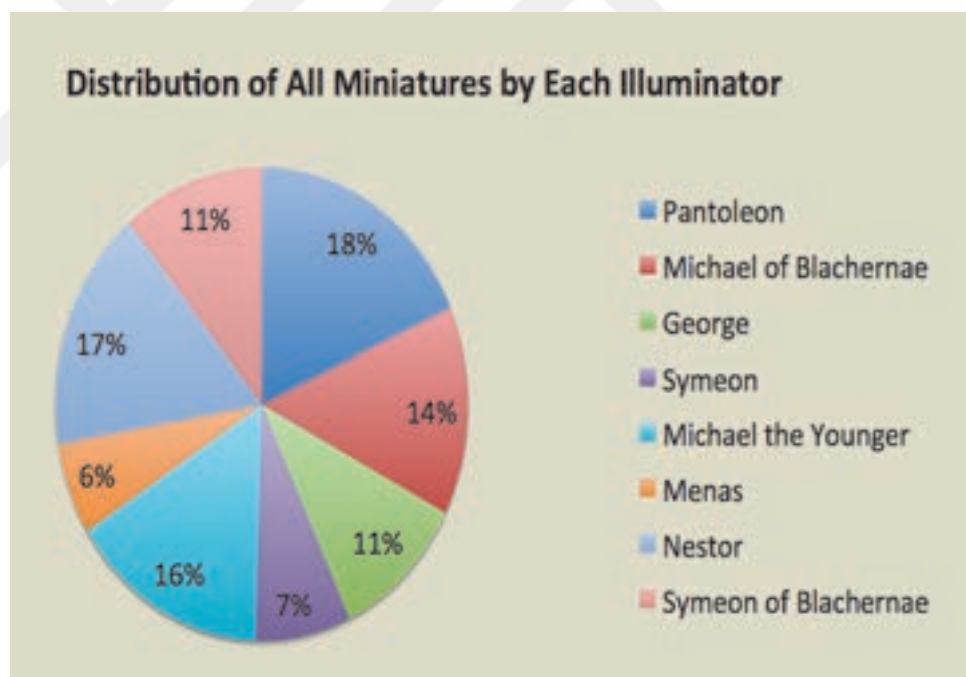


Fig.46 *Distribution of all miniatures by each illuminator*

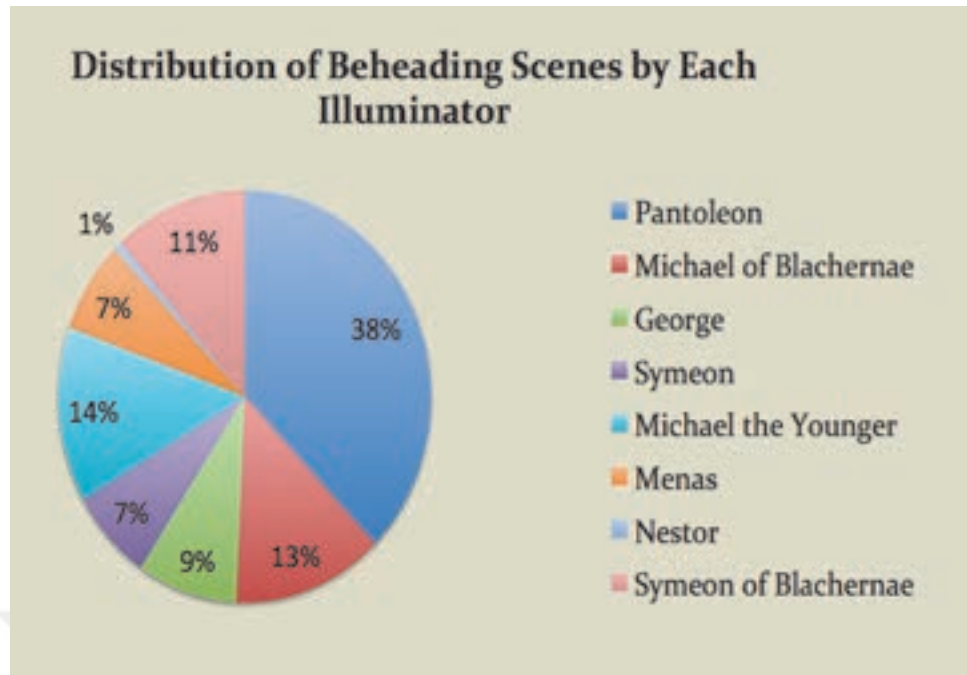


Fig.47 *Distribution of beheading scenes by each illuminator*

Throughout the beheading scenes, 4 martyrdoms are repeated, however in each case, the two representations are presented on different commemoration dates. Sadoth of Seleucia is initially presented on 19<sup>th</sup> of October (Fig.46) and he is depicted for the second time on 20<sup>th</sup> of February (Fig.47) The first representation is illuminated by Menas and Michael of Blachernae illustrated the second one with striking similarity. Both scenes are presented with a group of witnesses on the left side of the plain. In Menas' representations a part of the group lies already decapitated beneath Sadoth's feet whereas Michael of Blachernae depicts the group as they are awaiting their turn of execution. In both representations, Sadoth is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The main difference between two depictions of Sadoth is his attire: Menas presents him with a simple grey tunic with his hands bound behind at the back while Michael of Blachernae depicts him wearing the typical costume for a bishop as he raises his hands beneath his *sakkos* as in an act of prayer. Similarly, Porphyrius the Mime is depicted twice, on 15<sup>th</sup> of September (CI 41,p.13) and 4<sup>th</sup> of November (CI 52, p.159) by Symeon of

Blachernae and Nestor respectively. The two representations are strikingly different, completely disagreeing except for the body positioning of Porphrius, who is presented in both miniatures as kneeling in front of a Roman soldier with his hands bound in his back.



Fig.48 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 122: CI 42, Sadom of Seleucia*



Fig.49 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p. 414: CI 135, Sadom of Seleucia*

Theodore of Alexandria is depicted on September 12<sup>th</sup> (CI 9, p.32) and December 3<sup>rd</sup> (CI 78, p. 221) by Michael the Younger and Michael of Blachernae respectively. Again, the representations show a variety of differences. While Michael the Younger

presents Theodore of Alexandria as middle-aged man with brown hair and beard dressed in a plain long tunic, Michael of Blachernae depicts him as an elderly man with white hair and beard, dressed in a bishop's attire. Finally, the Martyrs of Nicomedia are depicted on 28<sup>th</sup> of December (CI 100, p. 280) and 7<sup>th</sup> of February (CI 127, p. 379) and Pantoleon, presenting the singular case where an illuminator repeated a depiction amongst the beheading scenes, illuminated both representations. The two depictions are different in approach, while CI 100 presents a crowded scene showing a variety of methods of executions, CI 127 presents a group of martyrs piled on top of each other, surrounded by three Roman soldiers who are raising their swords in order to behead the martyrs in the group. The stylistic difference reveals Pantoleon avoided repeating the manner of rendering the scene in order to achieve a variety in compositions that are quite close to each other in the page order.



Fig.50 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.280: CI 100, Martyrs of Nicomedia*



Fig.51 *Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr.1613, p.379: CI 127, Martyrs of Nicomedia*

Of the three types of representations that have been categorized through this study, Type A, presenting scenes with martyrs who have yet not been decapitated, forms the core of the iconographical style used to render this execution method. Of the 138 total catalogue entries, Type A representations are found in 77 entries, where an already decapitated martyr does not accompany the martyr who is waiting to be beheaded. Approximately 56% of the beheading scenes are classified as Type A; however, these are only the scenes where an about-to-be-beheaded martyr is presented on his own, excluding the scenes where an already decapitated martyr is present in the scene. Type C representations are apparent in 50 miniatures, comprising 36% of the beheading scenes. Together, Type A and C representations are dominating the beheading scenes by 92%, leaving an 7% for Type B depictions where the decapitated martyr is presented on his own and %1 for the unclassified scene where only a decapitated head is present, devoid of the beheading scene. (Fig.52) The numbers clearly indicate that by far the most repeated iconographical motif in the beheading scenes is the depiction of the moments preceding the actual decapitation. Even in scenes where a completed beheading is present, the



iconography combines with an about-to-be-beheaded martyr, showing the early and late stage of the execution in the same instance.

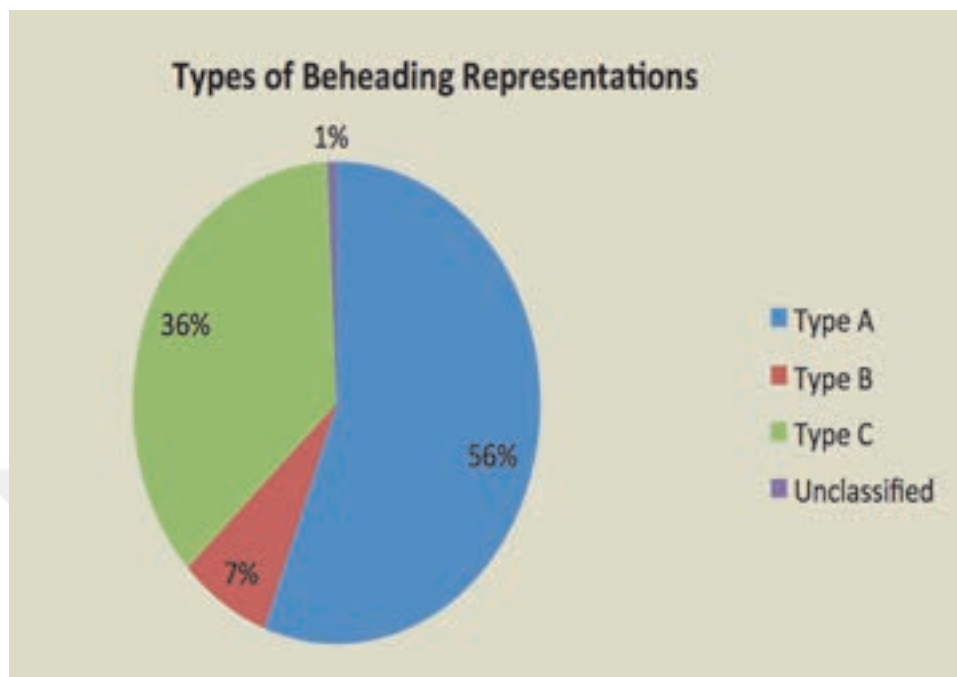


Fig.52 The distribution of the three types of beheading representations

### 3.4.2 Geographical distribution of martyrs

The geographical analysis conducted in this study is presented in **Appendix B**, Map 1. The martyrs are grouped into three major geographical areas based on the places identified by *The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos*.<sup>245</sup> Region 1 represents Asia Minor and in 59 cases the martyrs were either martyred or recognized within this area, composing the majority of approximately 43% of all beheading scenes. Region 2 follows by occupying 32% whereas Region 3 presents 23% of the martyrs who were killed through decapitation.<sup>246</sup> (Fig.53) 3 miniatures presented martyrs whose place of birth or recognition can not be identified within an area, and thus were excluded from the

<sup>245</sup> "Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: Introduction." Princeton University. Accessed October 21, 2017.

<https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/intro.php>.

<sup>246</sup> The limits of the regions are discussed in Chapter II, 2.1.



geographical analysis. Major cities, such as Alexandria, Rome, and Nicomedia were frequently addressed for executions, positioning them as persecution centers. The most recurrent place is Nicomedia, presented 12 times as an area of origin for the beheaded martyrs. Rome and Alexandria appeared 9 times each, while Persia and Jerusalem were addressed 5 times. Overall, Asia Minor is positioned as the region where most martyrs originated from or were martyred in.

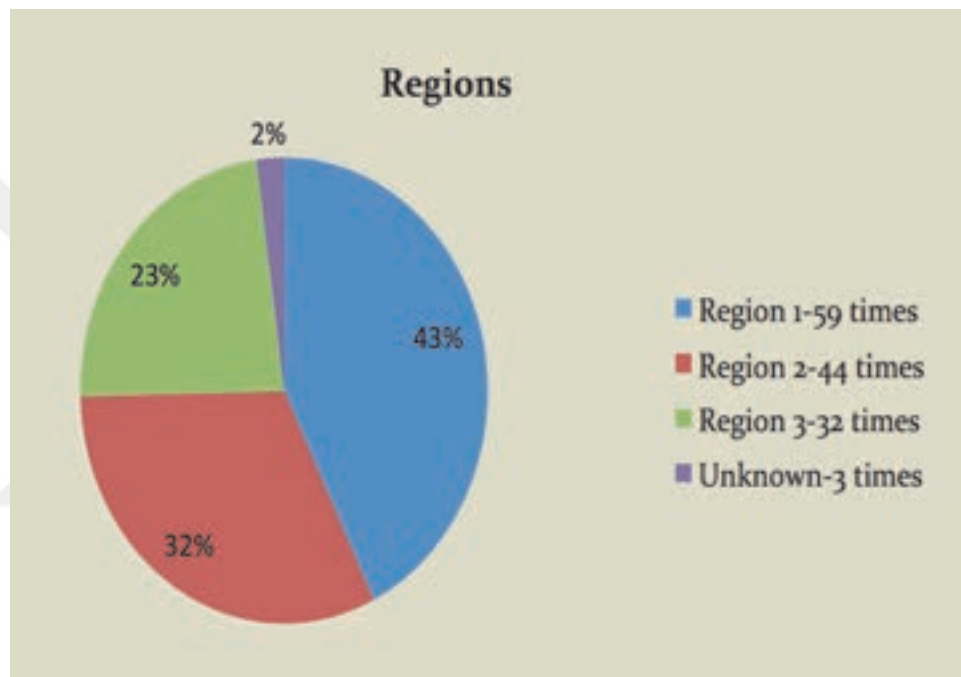


Fig.53 *The geographical distribution of beheaded martyrs*

#### CHAPTER IV: Conclusion and further remarks

The word martyr, in the Christian sense, derives from the Greek μάρτυς, translating as ‘a witness’ to an event. The Hebrew Bible uses the word frequently in its original meaning within the context of judicial hearings and trials. Yet, even though the concept of martyrdom exists in the Scripture, it is never referred with the word μάρτυς. The meaning has evolved and in the Early Christian world, the word martyr became the term describing people who suffered willing deaths for their faith. The core of Christian doctrine built on the idea of Christ’s death on the cross, for redeeming the sins of all people, a bitter sacrifice on God’s end of his beloved son. The Early Christian martyrs followed Christ’s footsteps in persecution, trial, and death rather than renouncing their faith. Whether it be on the cross, on a stack, or through beheading, the common feature of all martyrdoms was the yielding gesture, eagerly accepting death in the dire circumstances instead of avoiding, resisting or escaping persecution. As early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, Clement of Alexandria refers to persecutions of Christians and martyrdom as noble deaths and their chivalry comparable with the classical Greek heroes.<sup>247</sup> The age of pagan sacrifice and the trials of the Old Testament had passed, and it is the time of Christian heroes, building the core of a belief system that resides on the shed blood of martyrs.

As a liturgical calendar, the Menologion of Basil II heavily emphasizes the martyrdom depictions of the saints represented through September to the end of February. It underlines the hostile environment of the Early Christian era, where these first followers of Christ often met violent deaths. However, the corporeality of the martyr is not necessarily there for emphasizing the gruesome details. In fact, the

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<sup>247</sup> Carole Straw, “A very special death!: Christian Martyrdom in Its Classical Context,” in *Sacrificing the self: Perspectives on martyrdom and religion* / edited by Margaret Cormack, ed. Margaret Cormack, The religions / American Academy of Religion (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, 2001), 39.

majority of the beheading scenes depict the martyr before the actual violence took place, emphasizing the yielding position of the martyr in front of the executioner. In the representations where the physical body reveals the disfigurement and violation of the martyr, it is almost always paired with a non-attacked martyr, showing the ‘before and after’ of the violent act in the same instance. This study proposes that this is a conscious choice of the pictorial program presented in Menologion of Basil II, as a deliberate effort to portray the spiritual glory achieved through the systematic persecutions suffered by the saints during the early centuries following Christ’s death. Through avoiding depictions of total annihilation of martyrs’ bodies, the representations in the Menologion of Basil II draw the attention of the viewer to another dimension of the persecutions: the forming of a belief system grounded on the persecuted past, reaching to a peaceful present where the sacrifice of the many led to the ultimate salvation of the Church. The core of the sacrifice in Christian thought resided on the ultimate deliverance of God’s Son to death, and the early followers met similar fates, ever empowering the spiritual realm of Christian understanding.

Typologically, the Sacrifice of Isaac has been frequently referred to as the prototype of the prefiguration of Christ and ultimately it foreshadows the representations of the suffering of the martyrs. The Sacrifice of Isaac finds no representation in the Menologion of Basil II. The only instance where Isaac is illustrated in the manuscript is the frontal portrait in the representation of the Three Holy Patriarchs, along with Abraham and Jacob. However, the legacy of Abraham’s near-sacrifice and his trial survives within the representations of Christian martyrs. The analysis conducted in this study is the first attempt and a stepping-stone to understand the iconography surrounding the beheading scenes in the Menologion of Basil II. A thorough analysis and expansive research is yet to be conducted and by no

means the current analysis leads to final results in understanding the iconographical motifs presented in the codex. To my knowledge, it is also the first study to translate the titles of the pages presenting decapitation of the martyrs. These translations made it possible to identify the names of the martyrs with precision without relying on other sources. Furthermore, the scanning conducted for the word and word groups narrating beheading aided the claim that the representations were indeed scenes where the martyrs were executed through decapitation. The manner of the representation of beheading as a method of persecution is studied through the catalogue that allowed the observance that predominantly martyrs were represented before the decapitation actually took place. Additionally, through the analysis of regions where the martyrs are affiliated, it is now apparent that the majority of the beheaded martyrs in the Menologion of Basil II originate from/were martyred in Asia Minor, in comparison with regions in the West, Upper Egypt, Palestine, Armenia and Mesopotamia. The reasons for this achieved result is beyond the scope of this study and is a subject that requires further reseach.

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**APPENDIX A**

## Catalogue ID 1



**MS number** 7

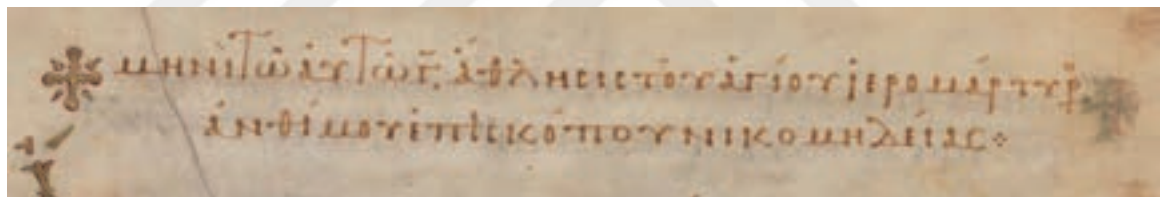
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** Sept.3

**Vita** Symeon Metaphrastes, *Vita*

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Antimus, the bishop of Nicomedia



### Transcription

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Γ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ<sup>248</sup> ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΝΘΙΜΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ  
ΝΙΚΟΜΗΔΕΙΑΣ ∴

### English translation

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Anthimus, the bishop of Nicomedia.

<sup>248</sup> The noun ἄθλησις signifies ‘a contest, combat, athletic sports, conflict or struggle’. (E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods: From B.C.146 to AD 1100* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), 89.) The word has been frequently used in reference to martyrdom and in association to the ordeal of saints. Repeated throughout the manuscript's uncial titles, ἄθλησις underlines the saints' trials, whether or not they suffered violent deaths. For uniformity, it is translated as ‘struggle’ throughout the catalogue entries but it should be noted that the word carries the wider meanings pointing at martyrs' tribulations in this context.

## Description

The title of the folio identifies the hieromartyr Anthimus, bishop of Nicomedia.<sup>249</sup> According to Eusebius, Anthimus was beheaded in 303 and was amongst the leading churchmen who were martyred in important cities.<sup>250</sup> Drewer's catalogue entry indicates he was beheaded during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>251</sup> A vita composed presumably by Symeon Metaphrastes in 11<sup>th</sup> century indicates he was tried and tortured during the reign of Maximian (284-305 AD).<sup>252</sup> The *Synaxarion of Constantinople* indicates that Anthimus was beheaded and he is commemorated on the third day of September.<sup>253</sup>

In the depiction, Anthimus of Nicomedia is standing sideways in a backwards half upright pose, kneeling forward while his hands are turned towards the sky in the act of prayer. He is about to receive martyrdom and his hands are unbound and covered under the *sakkos* revealing his episcopal ranking.<sup>254</sup> The sign of the cross embroidered on his *omophorion*, a vestment that could only be worn by bishops<sup>255</sup>. He is represented with a nimbus around his head, indicating that he received sainthood after his martyrdom.<sup>256</sup> His hair and beard are both grey-white, demonstrating his old age. The Roman soldier who is about to start the execution stands in an upright posture behind Anthimus, with his right arm stretching towards the sky while he holding a large sword. He is depicted in the preceding moment before the beheading and his sword does not touch Anthimus yet. With his left hand, he holds the scabbard, with a red rope encircling his wrist. He is wearing a crimson tunic and blue leggings that have a star-like shape pattern. Anthimus and the Roman soldier are depicted in a mountainous area and occasional floral details are scattered around them. They are both standing against a golden background and while the groundline for Anthimus is a green plain; the Roman soldier is standing on an incongruous perspective at the tip of a mountain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τέμνεται τὴν κεφαλὴν μαχαίρᾳ [had his head cut by a sword] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> In the Menologion of Basil II, the episcopal ranking of Anthimus is referred as hieromartyr whereas other saints that are not in the church's hierarchy are simply indicated as martyrs.

<sup>250</sup> Eusebius. *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine*. Translated by G. A. Williamson. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1965. 344.

<sup>251</sup> Drewer, Lois. "Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: September - 3." Princeton University. Accessed October 15, 2017. <https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/calendar.php?month=September&day=3>.

<sup>252</sup> *ODB*, 110.

<sup>253</sup> Delehaye, Hippolyte, ed. *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: e codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi adiectis Synaxariis selectis opera et studio*. Brussels: Apud Socios Bollandianos, 1902.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 292.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, 1526.

<sup>256</sup> The attribute of a nimbus is common and repeated in all depictions of the martyrs in the Menologion of Basil II unless indicated otherwise in the description of the miniatures.

<sup>257</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologion of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 2



**MS number** 10

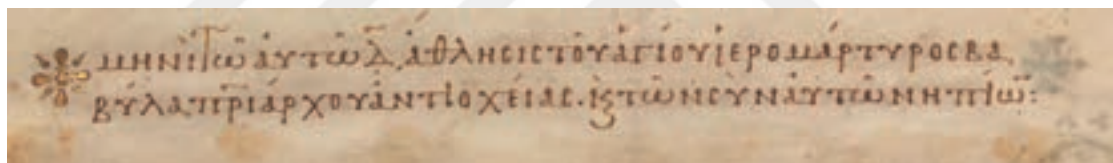
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 4

**Vita** John Chrysostom, *Homily*

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Babylas of Antioch



### Transcription

✝ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Δ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΒΑΒΥΛΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ  
ΑΝΤΙΟΧΕΙΑΣ, ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΝΗΠΙΩΝ :

### English translation

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the hieromartyr Babylas, the patriarch of Antioch and children with him.

### Description

According to title, hieromartyr Babylas, the patriarch of Antioch is depicted in the miniature. Eusebius records that Babylas died in a prison during the reign of Decius (249-251 AD) in Antioch, while Leontios details the event further, suggesting that Decius himself murdered him, as Babylas would not allow Emperor Philip the Arab

inside the church.<sup>258</sup> According to John Chrysostom's sermons, Babylas was murdered due to his opposition to an emperor.<sup>259</sup> The Bollandists record of two passions written about Babylas, along with a *homily*<sup>260</sup> by John Chrysostom aside from the sermons mentioned above.<sup>261</sup>

Babylas is depicted at the moment preceding the beheading, kneeling forward with both of his hands raised towards the sky in an act of prayer while they remain hidden under his *sakkos*. He is depicted with clothes suggesting an episcopal ranking, with the sign of the cross embroidered on his *omophorion*, a vestment that could only be worn by bishops.<sup>262</sup> The Roman soldier is behind Babylas, raising his right arm with a sword, indicating he is about to begin the execution. His red tunic and blue cape are visible while the remaining part of his body is hidden behind Babylas. In manuscripts illustrating Symeon Methaphrastes' lives, Babylas is usually depicted as a bishop of old age, who is beheaded while being accompanied by three children.<sup>263</sup> Vat.gr. 1613 also depicts Babylas with three children witnessing his beheading. They are placed on the left side of the plain and only two of them have their entire bodies visible, while a third is represented merely with the tip of his head and nimbus. The figures are represented in a mountainous area and occasional floral details are scattered around them. They are standing against a golden background while standing uniformly on a green ground line.

The act of beheading is not mentioned in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> *ODB*, 243.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> W. Mayer, "A Homily on the Martyr Babylas," in *'Let Us Die That We May Live': Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria (c. AD 350–AD 450)*, ed. J. Leemans, W. Mayer, P. Allen, and B. Dehandschutter (London and New York, 2003), 140–48.

<sup>261</sup> Delehayé, Hippolyte, ed. *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca. Ediderunt Socii Bollandiani*. Bruxellis: Société des Bollandistes, 1909. 31.

<sup>262</sup> *ODB*, 1526.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

<sup>264</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



## Catalogue ID 3



**MS number** 12

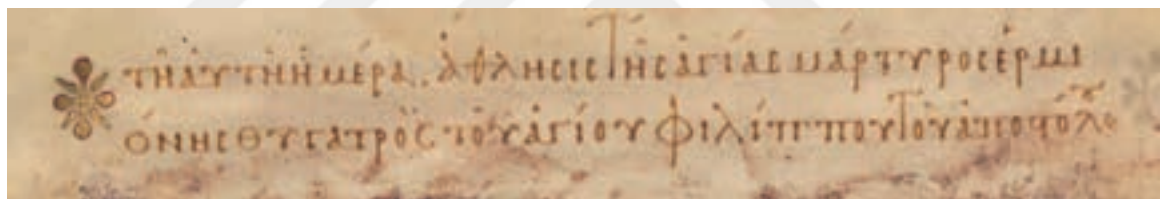
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 4

**Vita** -

**Type** B

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Hermione of Ephesus



### Transcription

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗΣ ΘΥΓΑΤΡΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Hermione, the daughter of the holy apostle Philip.

### Description

According to the title, the saint being represented in the scene is Hermione, the daughter of Philip the Apostle. She is one of the four daughters of Philip who are mentioned as prophetess according to the Acts of Apostles 21:9.<sup>265</sup> She is

<sup>265</sup> Acts chapter 21 KJV (King James Version)." ACTS CHAPTER 21 KJV. Accessed November 17, 2017. <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Acts-Chapter-21/>.

represented in a miraculous pose of her body and head are floating in the air, horizontally aligned with the ground line. The execution has already occurred and her decapitated head has already been detached from the body, with blood flowing from both parts of her severed neck. She is wearing a long dark grey tunic and her arms are stretched towards her head, which stands an arm's distance from her body. The Roman soldier stands behind her body and having finished the execution, he is placing his sword back to its scabbard. He is wearing a red tunic, blue leggings and dark grey boots. The green plain is decorated with groups of plants that are evenly distributed in front of Hermione's body. Behind both figures, a mountainous landscape, an architectural detail of a columned structure is visible against the golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group Ἀδριανὸς [...] προσέταξεν ἀποκεφαλίσθηναι [Adrian (...) ordered the decapitation] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the folio. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 4



**MS number** 18

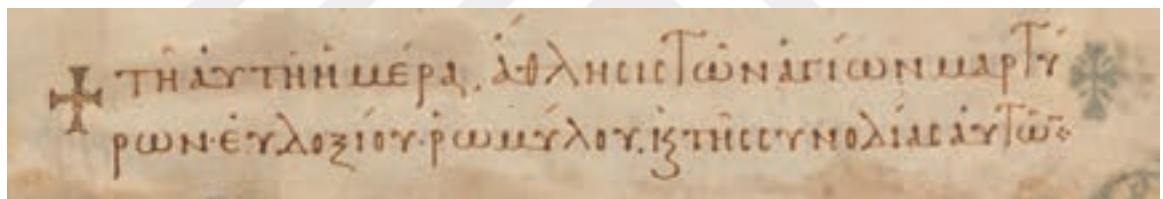
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 6

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Eudoxius and Romulus at Melitene



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΕΥΔΟΞΙΟΥ ΡΩΜΥΛΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ  
ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Eudoxius, Romulus and their companions.

### Description

According to the title, Eudoxius, Romulus and their companions are depicted. Eudoxius and Romulus were soldiers who were martyred at Melitene, Armenia, during the reigns of Trajan (98-117 AD) and Diocletian (284-305 AD)

respectively.<sup>267</sup> According to the main text in the manuscript, Eudoxius lies on the ground decapitated while Romulus leans forward in front of the Roman soldier, waiting for his execution to take place. Both martyrs are bound from the back. There are five witnesses to the event that occupy the left corner of the composition. Only one of them is illustrated in entirety, while the remaining four are hidden behind him, represented through only with the their halos and heads. Both Romulus and Eudoxius are wearing identical, long white tunics that reach to their feet, fiwith a gold colored detail finish across the shoulders. Their footwear is also white matching with their attire. Eudoxius' severed neck and decapitated head display bleeding, confirming the fatal outcome of the execution. The Roman soldier is standing behind Romulus with his right sword-carrying hand raised, suggesting that he is in the course of carrying out the beheading. He wears a red tunic, a blue cape, brown leggings and white boots. Against the golden background, two mountains are visible and all the figures stand on a green plane.

In the main text, the act of beheading is demonstrated with the word group *πολλὰ βασανίσας ἀπεκεφάλισεν* [after a long torture, he beheaded him] Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: September - 6." Princeton University. Accessed November 17, 2017. <https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/calendar.php?month=September&day=6>. Act.SS. Sept.11,511-17; PG CXV, 617-33.

<sup>268</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 5



**MS number** 19

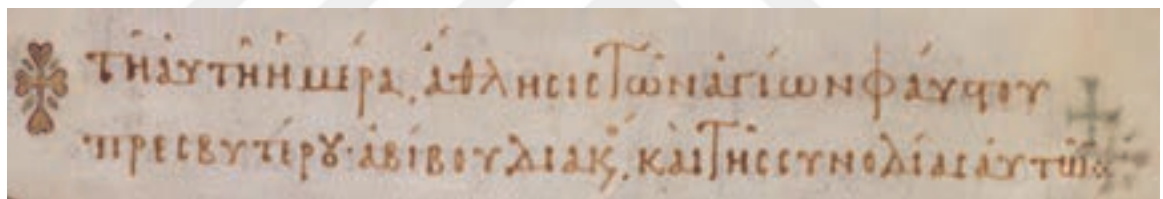
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** September 6

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Faustus, Abibus of Alexandria and their companions



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΦΑΥΣΤΟΥ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΥ ΑΒΙΒΟΥ ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟΥ  
ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of Saint Faustus the Priest, Abibus the Deacon and their companions.

### Description

According to the title, the Saint Faustus the Priest and Abibus the Deacon are being martyred along with their companions. The main text reveals that the martyrdom takes place in Alexandria and both Faustus and Abibus belong to the Church in this

city and they were martyred during the reign of Decius (249-251 AD).<sup>269</sup> According to their clothes, the higher-ranking Faustus<sup>270</sup>, a priest of the church, is wearing a dark brown *sticharion* and leaning forward in front of the Roman soldier. Both his hands concealed by his garment, as in a position of prayer and his eyes are fixed looking towards the four young female attendants whose hands are crossed over their chests. Abibus the deacon, on the other hand, is wearing a plain white *sticharion*, is standing to the left side of the plain and waits his turn in martyrdom with his left hand slightly extended forward.<sup>271</sup> The Roman soldier is standing behind Romulus with his sword-bearing right arm raised, suggesting that he is about to begin the execution. Both his tunic and cape are blue and the remainder of his body is hidden behind Faustus. Against the golden sky, two mountains are visible and all the figures stand on a green plane with few floral details.

In the main text, the act of beheading is demonstrated with the word group τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀπετμήθησαν [had their heads cut off]. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos:September - 6." Princeton University. Accessed November 18, 2017.

<https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/calendar.php?month=September&day=6>

<sup>270</sup> *ODB*, 1718.

<sup>271</sup> *ODB*, 1956.

<sup>272</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



## Catalogue ID 6



**MS number** 21

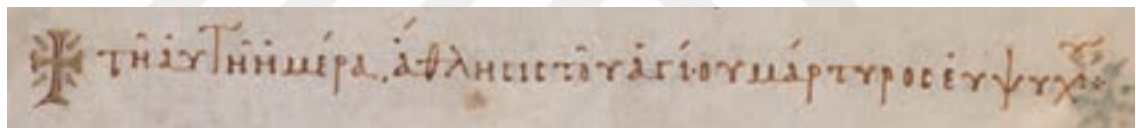
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 7

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Euphrosyne of  
Caesarea



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΥΨΥΧΙΟΥ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Euphrosyne.

### Description

According to the title, the martyr represented in the miniature is Euphrosyne of Caesarea. Basil of Caesarea mentions him in his letters as one of the most celebrated martyrs.<sup>273</sup> He was martyred during the reign of Julian the Apostate for his role in

<sup>273</sup> Founded by JAMES LOEB 1911 Edited by JEFFREY HENDERSON. "Basil, Letters, Volume I: Letters 19." Loeb Classical Library. May 03, 2017. Accessed November 18, 2017. <https://www.loebclassics.com/view/LCL190/1926/volume.xml>.

destroying the temple dedicated to the pagan god of Fortune.<sup>274</sup> Euppsychius is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier who is about to decapitate him. His hands are loose and resting on his knees. He is wearing a long, dark grey garment and footwear in matching color. According to the main text, he is not holding a religious rank and his occupation is unknown. The Roman soldier is wearing a blue tunic and *chlamys*, red leggings and brown boots. Mountains on both sides flank the golden background and the figures are standing on a green plain with occasional trees and plants. A blue river runs between the plain and the mountains.

In the main text, there is no mention of beheading. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading the name on the page margin. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>275</sup>



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<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 7**



**MS number** 28

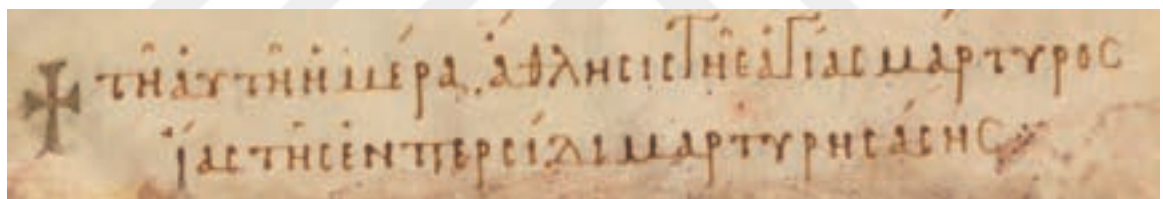
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** September 11

**Vita** Macarius the Monk, *Passio*

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Ia of Persia



**Transcription**

✝ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΝ ΠΕΡΣΙΔΙ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΣΗΣ  
✧

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Ia, who was martyred in Persia.

## Description

According to the title, Ia of Persia is about to be martyred. Ia was a virgin and her martyrdom took place in Persia.<sup>276</sup> A *passio* by Macarius the Monk is being currently translated into English.<sup>277</sup> She is depicted in a kneeling position, yielding to the Roman soldier who is standing behind her. The soldier is raising his sword while holding a scabbard with his other hand. She is dressed in a long and loose dark grey tunic and white shoes with red soles. The Roman soldier is wearing a red tunic, a green *chlamys*, blue leggings and yellow boots. The leggings are marked by a geometric pattern with same shade of yellow as his boots. Mountains on both sides of the composition flank the golden background while the figures are standing on a green groundline with a few floral details.

In the main text, the act of beheading is demonstrated with the word group *διὰ ξίφους ἐτμήθη τὴν κεφαλὴν* [had her head cut off by the sword]. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: September - 11." Princeton University. Accessed November 19, 2017.  
<https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/calendar.php?month=September&day=11>

<sup>277</sup> Oaks, Dumbarton. "Translations of Byzantine Saints' Lives Listed Alphabetically." Dumbarton Oaks. November 07, 2017. Accessed November 19, 2017.  
<https://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/resources/translations-of-byzantine-saint2019s-lives>.

<sup>278</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 8



**MS number** 31

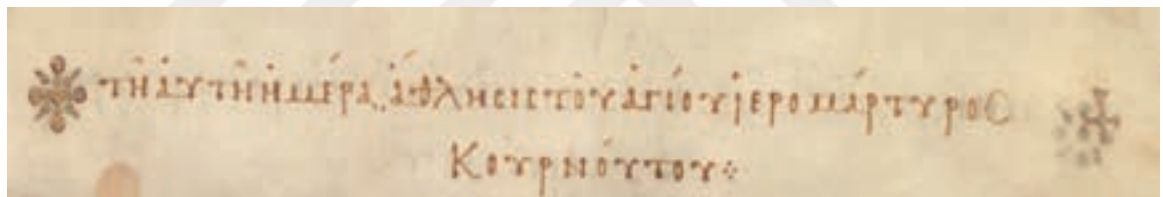
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 12

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Cornutus of  
Nicomedia



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΚΟΡΝΟΥΤΟΥ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of holy hieromartyr Cornutus.

### Description

According to the title, the martyr being represented in the scene is Cornutus. The main text reveals that he was a priest in Nicomedia. He kneels before the Roman soldier who is about to behead him, with his hands raised in an act of prayer, concealed under his dark yellow *sticharion*.<sup>279</sup> The Roman soldier stands behind

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<sup>279</sup> ODB, 1956.

Cornutus, dressed in a dark blue tunic, a red cape, leggings in lighter shade of blue and brown boots. He is yet to draw his weapon from the scabbard. The figures are standing on a green plane where the golden background is flanked by mountains on both sides of the composition with a few scattered floral details.

In the main text, the act of beheading is expressed through the word group ἀπετμήθη τὴν κεφαλὴν [had his head cut off]. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>280</sup>



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<sup>280</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 9



MS number 32

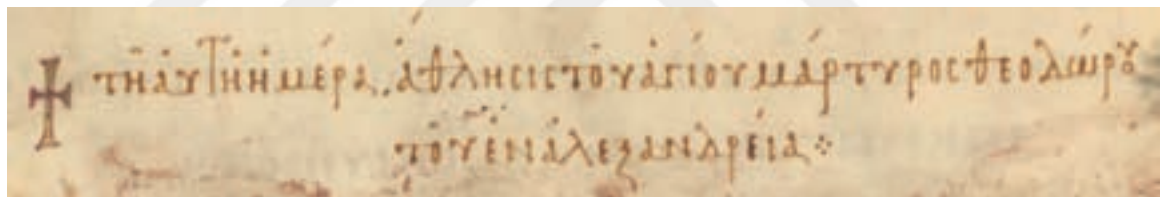
Region 2

MS commemoration date September 12

Vita Anonymous, *Vita*

Type A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Theodore of Alexandria



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕΙΑ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of holy Theodore of Alexandria, martyred in Alexandria.

## Description

The title reveals that the martyr about to be beheaded is Theodore of Alexandria. An anonymous *Vita* is being translated into English by Arietta Papaconstantinou but was not available at the time of writing this study.<sup>281</sup>

He is seen in a kneeling position in front of the Roman soldier. He is wearing a white *sticharion*<sup>282</sup> with sleeves that have an embroidered detail in gold color. The Roman soldier wears a blue tunic, a red cape, red leggings and white boots. He is standing in an erect position raising his right arm with a sword while holding a scabbard with his right. The figures are standing on a green plane where the golden background is flanked by mountains on both sides of the composition with few scattered floral details.

In the main text, the act of beheading is demonstrated with the word group ἐδικάσθη παρὰ τοῦ ἄρχοντος ἀποκεφαλίσθῃναι [she was convicted by the magistrate to be beheaded]. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Oaks, Dumbarton. "Translations of Byzantine Saints' Lives Listed Alphabetically." Dumbarton Oaks. November 07, 2017. Accessed November 19, 2017.

<https://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/resources/translations-of-byzantine-saint2019s-lives>.

<sup>282</sup> *ODB*, 1956.

<sup>283</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 10



**MS number** 33

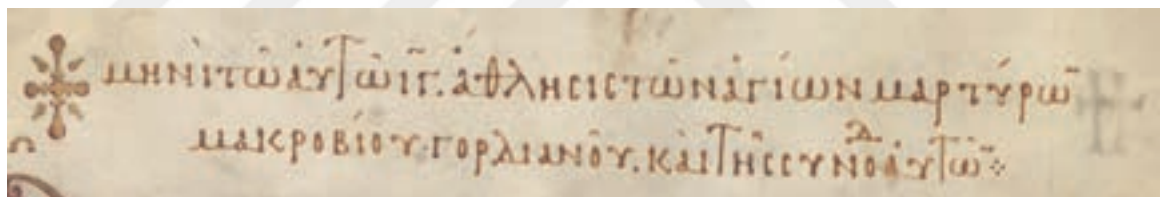
**MS commemoration date** September 13

**Type** C

**Region** 3

**Vita** Constantine Akropolites, *Vita* (Zoticus)

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Gordian, Macrobius, Elias, Zoticus, Lucian and Valerian of Tomi



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΓ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩ[Ν] ΜΑΚΡΟΒΙΟΥ ΓΟΡΔΙΑΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ  
ΣΥΝΟΔ[ΙΑΣ] ΑΥΤΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Macrobius, Gordian and their companions.

## Description

According to the title, Macrobius and Gordian are being martyred in this scene. A *Vita* of Zoticus by Constantine Akropolites exists, however the contents of this translation were not available at the time of this study.<sup>284</sup>

The composition consists of a left side, depicting the act of beheading and a right side with six companions who are witnessing the event. One of the witnesses leans on a sarcophagus in what seems to be a display of grief. The witnesses are shown with flames issuing forth from their feet. Macrobius and Gordian are presented together with their three companions.<sup>285</sup> On the left side, Zoticus is already beheaded.<sup>286</sup> He wears a grey tunic and is kneeling to the ground on his knees and elbows. His decapitated head floats in the air, shedding blood on the ground. The second martyr, Lucian,<sup>287</sup> who is about to be beheaded, leans slightly in front of the executioner, wearing a white tunic.<sup>288</sup> His head is positioned as if he is looking back to the viewer, and his hands are bound on the front side of his body. The Roman soldier is wearing a red tunic and a blue *chlamys*, with blue leggings and white boots. The leggings are patterned with lozenges. He raises his right arm with a sword while with his left hand he is holding the scabbard.

In the main text, the act of beheading is demonstrated with the word group ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded]. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> T. Miller. "The Legend of Saint Zotikos according to Constantine Akropolites," *Analecta Bollandiana* 112 (1994): 339–76

<sup>285</sup> Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: September - 13. Princeton University. Accessed November 28, 2017. <https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/calendar.php?month=September&day=13>.

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>287</sup> Not to be confused with Lucian of Antioch by who has a *Vita* written by John Chrysostom. The latter was martyred through starvation. For more, see: John Chrysostom, *The Cult of Saints*, trans. W. Mayer (New York, 2006), 63–74.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>289</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 11



**MS number** 34

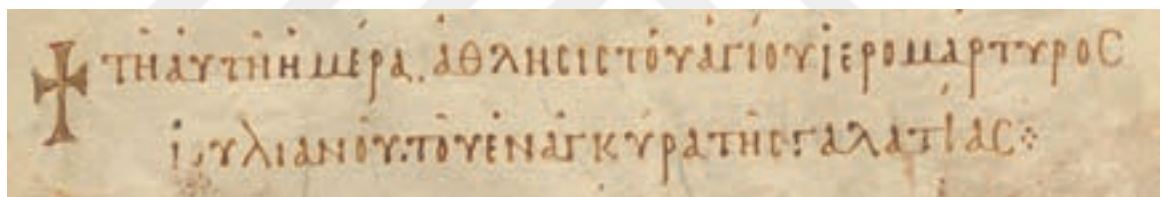
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 13

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Julian of Ancrya



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΙΟΥΛΙΑΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΓΚΥΡΑ  
ΤΗΣ ΓΑΛΑΤΙΑΣ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Julian of Ancrya in Galatia.

### Description

According to the title, Julian of Ancrya is about to be beheaded in this scene and his martyrdom took place in Galatia. Julian is acknowledged as a hieromartyr in the title and the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* identifies him as a priest. He was executed

during the reign of Licinius (308-324 AD) and he is commemorated on September 13<sup>th</sup>.<sup>290</sup>

Julian kneels before the Roman soldier; his hands are loose and crossed on his knees. He wears a brown *sticharion* and a white *epitrachelion* with embroidered crosses that hangs through the center of his garment. He wears a *phelonion* with an underlying *sticharion* in matching mustard color. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. The Roman soldier stands behind him and the soldier's lower body is hidden behind Julian's. He wears a red tunic and his mustard color boots are revealed from the tip of his right leg. He raises his sword-bearing right arm while holding a scabbard with his left hand. Next to Julian, a water jug sits next to a flowing stream of water that springs from a mountainous area. At the far right corner of the miniature a vaulted structure emerges, similar to an aqueduct. The figures are represented in a mountainous area and few floral details are scattered around them. Against the golden background, the figures stand uniformly on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the passive verb ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the folio. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> *Synax. CP*, Sept. 13, par. 3 (cols. 41-2)

<sup>291</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 12



MS number 39

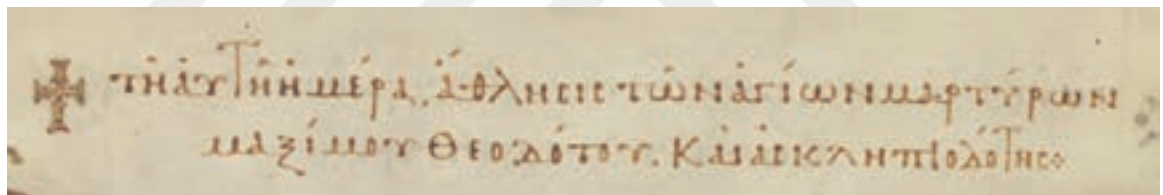
Region 1

MS commemoration date September 15

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Maximus,  
Theodotus and Asclepiodota of Thrace



Transcription

✝ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΜΑΞΙΜΟΥ ΘΕΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ  
ΑΣΚΛΗΠΙΟΔΟΤΗΣ ∴

English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Maximus, Theodotus and Asclepiodota.

## Description

According to the title, Maximus, Theodotus and Asclepiodota are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Thrace during the reign of Maximian (286-205 AD)<sup>292</sup>

Maximus, wearing a mustard colored tunic, is already beheaded. His kneeling body is separated from his head and his hands are mutilated. While his arms lie parallel to the ground, his decapitated head rests facing the viewer on the far right corner of the plane. Piles of blood flow from the severed parts of the Maximus' body. To his left, Theodotus is about to be beheaded as he kneels in front of the Roman soldier. He is wearing a pink tunic and his hands are frontally bound. The Roman soldier wears a belted yellow tunic, black patterned leggings, yellow boots and a black *chlamys*. His sword-bearing right arm is raised towards the sky while his left hand rests on the scabbard. On the far left corner of the plane, Asclepiodota witnesses the events while waiting for her execution. She wears a long sleeved grey tunic that loosely covers her body down to her feet. Her hands are bound behind her back while her head is slightly turned down the left and she gazes towards the Roman soldier. Her long hair is tied at the back and the curly ponytail stretches down to her shoulders. Against the golden background, a singular mountain stands skewed on the right side of the plain. All four figures are depicted on the same green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀπετμήθησαν [they had their heads cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the folio. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> *Anal. Boll.* XXV, 496-97. Also in; *Act. SS.* Sept. V, 31-36. and *Synax.CP*, Sept. 15, par. 2 (cols. 46-7).

<sup>293</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 13



**MS number** 41

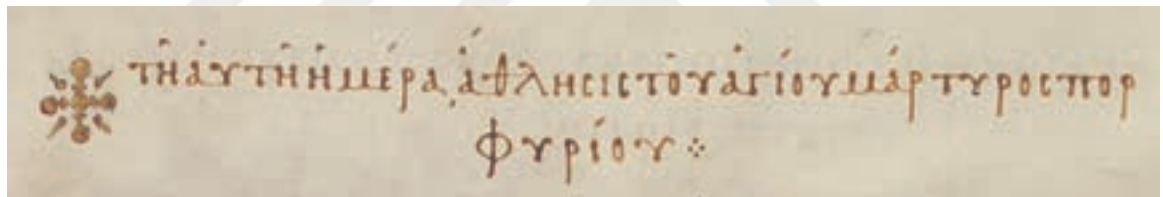
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 15

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Porphyrius the Mime



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΠΟΡΦΥΡΙΟΥ †.

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Porphyrius.

### Description

According to the title, Porphyrius is about to be beheaded in this scene. He is believed to have been be martyred in Caesaraea in Cappadocia, during the reign of Aurelian (270-275 AD)<sup>294</sup>.

<sup>294</sup> Act. SS. Nov. II, 230-32.

Porphyrius is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier, as his upper body is turned sideways to the viewer. His left leg is bent and it extends further on as his right leg stretches towards the back. He wears a draped, long white tunic and black sandals. Across the tunic, two vertical red lines emerge from each shoulder and reach down to the tip of the dress. The Roman soldier stands behind Porphyrius and wears a short blue tunic, gold and red patterned darker blue leggings and yellow boots. He raises his right arm with a sword while holding the red scabbard with his left hand at hip level. On the right side of the plain, mountains occupy the scene both figures are stand on a green groundline against a golden background. Few floral details are scattered across the right side of the miniature.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἀποκεφαλίσαι αὐτὸν [to behead him] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the folio. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>295</sup>



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<sup>295</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 14



MS number 42

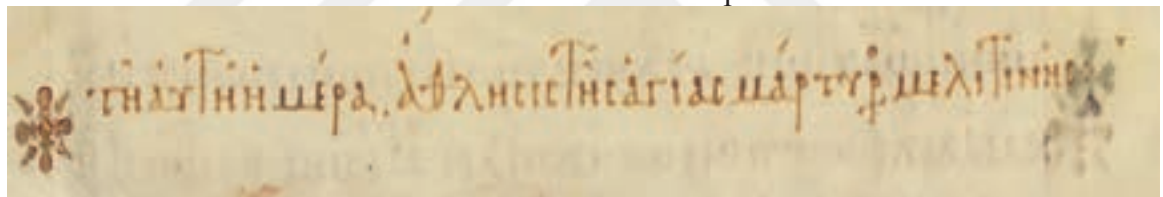
Region 3

MS commemoration date September 16

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Melitina of Marcianopolis



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΜΕΛΙΤΙΝΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Melitina.

**Description**

According to the title, Melitina is about to be beheaded in this miniature. He was martyred at Marcianopolis in Moesia during the reign of Antoninus Pius (19-86 AD).<sup>296</sup>

Melitina is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier with her right hand resting on her left knee while stretching her right leg towards her back. She is standing sideways to

<sup>296</sup> *Synax.CP*, Sept. 16, par. 4 (cols. 50-2).

the viewer and her eyes are fixed in a distance looking towards the right side of the scene. She wears a draped lavender tunic and white slippers. Her curly brown hair reaches to her shoulders. The Roman soldier stands behind her with his sword-bearing right arm stretching towards the sky, preparing to decapitate her. He wears a black tunic, a blue *chalym*s, blue leggings with gold lozenge patterns and yellow boots. Mountains on both sides flank the scene. Against the golden background, the figures are standing on a green groundline. On the left side, a black triangular shape on the mountain is suggestive of a cave entrance. A richly decorated vaulted arch is located on the far right side of the scene. Beneath this structure, a dark green human figure is suspended in mid-air, as if it is a fallen piece of classical sculpture. A similar human figure in gold is falling in between the two columns of the arch.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was decapitated] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the folio. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 15



MS number 43

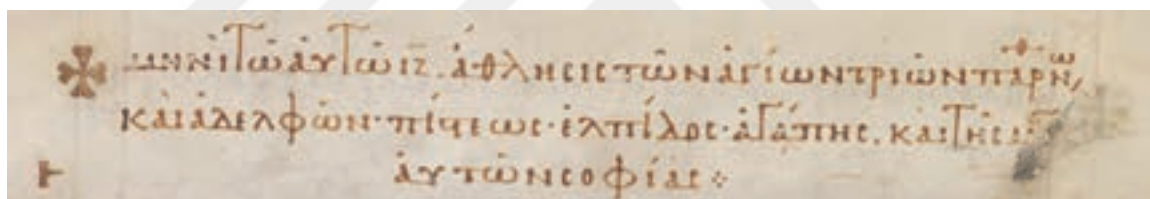
Region 3

MS commemoration date September 17

Vita Symeon Metaphrastes, *Vita*

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Pistis, Elpis and Agape of Rome



Transcription

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΖ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΤΡΙΩΝ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΔΕΛΦΩΝ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ  
ΕΛΠΙΔΟΣ ΑΓΑΠΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ Μ[ΗΤΡΟΣ] ΑΥΤΩΝ ΣΟΦΙΑΣ ∴

English translation

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the three holy virgins and the trusted sisters Pistis, Elpis, Agape and their mother Sophias.

Description

According to the title, the three virgins Pistis, Elpis and Agape are depicted with their mother Sophias accompanying them. The three sisters Pistis, Elpis and Agape are named after faith, hope and charity (love) respectively and their mother Sophia

was forced to witness their execution.<sup>298</sup> In the *Synaxarion of Constantinople*, they are commemorated on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, matching with the date in Vat.gr.1613.<sup>299</sup> The group was affiliated with the city of Rome.<sup>300</sup>

The left side of the miniature depicts the martyrdom of the three sisters. Two of them are kneeling to the ground and their heads separated from their bodies. A third sister is kneeling in front of the Roman executioner with her left leg kneeled forward while her right leg is stretched backwards. She is wearing a long grey tunic, and black slippers. The decapitated sisters wear yellow and pink tunics. All of them have brown, curly and long hair. The Roman soldier is wearing a black tunic with golden stripes, red leggings and a grey *chlamys*. On the right side of the miniature, a burial scene is depicted and Sophia is laying the three deceased bodies, presumably of her daughters, into a sarcophagus. Sophia wears a yellow-red *maphorion* with a blue band circling around her hairline. Her garment is covering her head, shoulders and arms all the way to her wrists. She is pressing both of her hands on the lifeless bodies that are wrapped in light blue winding sheets. Behind both scenes there is a uniform mountainous landscape and all figures stand on a green groundline against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the words ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was decapitated], repeated twice, and then with the phrase ξίφει κατεκόπη [was cut down by the sword] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> *ODB*, 1927.

<sup>299</sup> *Synax. CP*, Sept. 17, par. 1 (cols. 51-2).

<sup>300</sup> *BHG*, 230. Also ; PG CXV, 497-513.

<sup>301</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 16



**MS number** 45

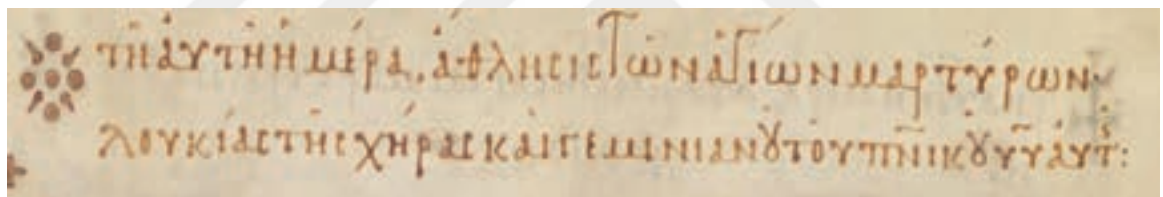
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** September 16

**Vita**

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Lucy and Geminianus of Rome



### Transcription

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΛΟΥΚΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΧΗΡΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΓΕΜΙΝΙΑΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΠΝ[ΕΥΜΑΤ]ΙΚΟΥ Υ[ΙΟΥ] ΑΥΤ[ΗΣ] ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Lucy the Widow and her spiritual son Geminianus.

### Description

According to the title, Lucy the martyr and her spiritual son Geminianus are depicted in the miniature. Lucy is identified as a widow who she was martyred in Rome alongside with Geminianus during the joint-reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD) and Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>302</sup>

<sup>302</sup> *Synax.CP*, Sept. 17, par. 3 (cols. 53-4).

Two distinct scenes are represented simultaneously dividing the plain from the center. On the left side, Lucy the widow's deceased body, dressed in a brown *maphorion* is lying on the ground with her hands are clasped on her chest. She wears black slippers that are visible at the tip of her dress. On both sides of her, trees of a wooded mountain surround her body. On the right side of the plain, a Roman soldier is preparing to behead Geminianus. Both the Roman soldier and Geminianus are wearing short tunics, blue and lavender respectively, leaving their legs naked. The Roman soldier stands behind Geminianus and raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while his left hand rests on the rope that is attached to his scabbard. He wears knee-high white stockings and black slippers while Geminianus is standing barefoot. Against a golden background, the right half of the scene is depicted against a barren mountain slope while the left side is occupied by Sophia's sylvan resting place.

There is no mention of the beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 17



**MS number** 49

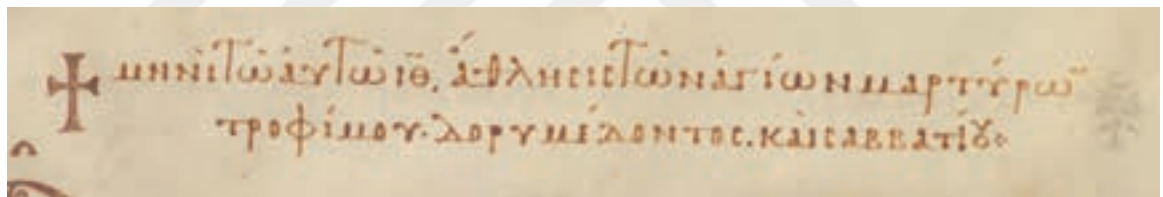
**MS commemoration date** September 19

**Type** C

**Region** 1

**Vita -**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Trophimus and Dorymedon of Synnada and Sabbatius of Antioch in Pisidia



### Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΘ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩ[Ν] ΤΡΟΦΙΜΟΥ ΔΟΡΥΜΕΔΟΝΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΑΒΒΑΤΙΟΥ ∴

### English translation

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Trophimus, Dorymedon and Sabbatius.

### Description

According to the title, Trophimus, Dorymedon and Sabbatius are depicted in the miniature. The group was martyred in Antioch of Pisidia in 277.<sup>304</sup>

<sup>304</sup> *BHG*, 261. Also; Act. SS. Sept. VI, 12-20PG CXV, 733-49.

On the left side of the miniature, Trophimus and Dorymedon stand before the Roman soldier, who already decapitated one of them while the other martyr is kneeling before him with his hands frontally bound. His head is completely separated from the body and blood flows from both ends of the severed head. Both martyrs are dressed in tunics. The Roman soldier is wearing a short blue tunic with red patterns on the tip of its short sleeves. His legs are bare between the skirt and the level his white boots reach. He raises his sword-bearing right arm to the sky while resting his left hand on a black scabbard. A purple brick structure with an arched entrance emerges behind the figures on the left side of the plain. A slight flaking around the chest and skirt of the Roman soldier's blue tunic is observable due to physical damage on the miniature. On the right side of the plain, Sabbatius hangs from a wooden pole, with both his hands and feet bound. The Roman soldier is dressed in a red tunic, crimson leggings, white stockings and black slippers. He pierces Sabbatius' chest with a lance, reminiscing of torments directed to Jesus Christ. Blood spills and pours from Sabbatius' chest all the way down to the ground. Against a golden background, the figures are depicted uniformly on the same green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 18



MS number 50

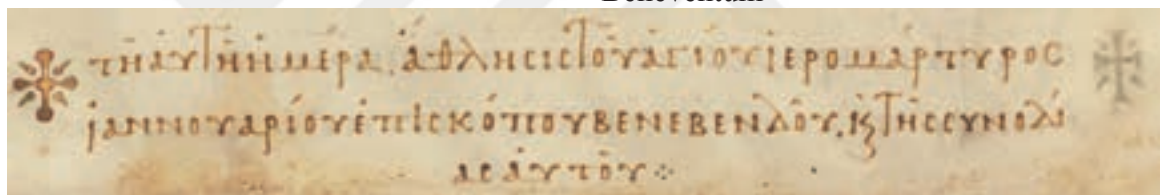
Region 3

MS commemoration date September 19

Vita Anonymous, *Vita*

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Januarius of Beneventum



Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΙΑΝΝΟΥΑΡΙΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ  
ΒΕΝΕΒΕΝΔΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ∴

English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Januarius, bishop of Beneventum, and his companions.

Description

According to the title, Januarius, the bishop of Beneventum is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in Puteolis, during the reign of Aurelian (270-275 AD).<sup>306</sup>

<sup>306</sup> BHG,108. Also; *Vita S. Ianuarii episcopi et martyris* (Monte Cassino,1875), vii-xxxi )

Januarius stands on the right side of the plain, kneeling before the Roman soldier as he raises his arms towards the sky. He wears a grey *sticharion*, light yellow *phlenoion* and a grey *omophorion* with an embroidered black cross. Beneath the *sticharion*, his grey slippers are revealed and he is portrayed as an elderly man with white hair and beard. Standing behind him, the Roman soldier is dressed in a blue tunic and his body is hidden from waist down. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while resting his left hand on a red scabbard. Behind Januarius, a lion that walks freely without causing any harm to the saint. On the left side of the plain, a group of five companions dressed in various colors of tunics watch the scene with their arms clasped or bound behind their backs. A lioness emerges from behind a small mountain and is moving in front of them, showing no signs of attack to the saint. Against a golden background, mountains on both sides flank the scene and the figures stand on a green groundline with occasional floral details.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀπετμήθησαν [they had their heads cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 19



MS number 55

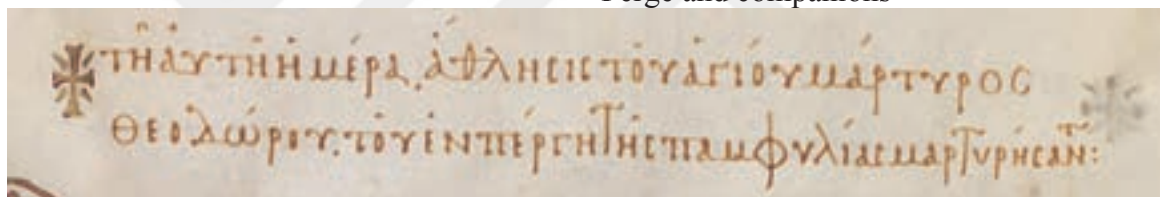
Region 1

MS commemoration date September 19

Vita Anonymous, *Passion*

Type C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Theodore of Perge and companions



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΠΕΡΓΗ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΜΦΥΛΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤ[ΟΣ] :

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Theodore who was martyred in Perge of Pamphilia.

**Description**

Theodore was martyred in Perge during the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161 AD)<sup>308</sup>. Other ecclesiastical calendars commemorate him also on April 19<sup>th</sup>.<sup>309</sup>

<sup>308</sup> *Synax. CP*, Sept. 21, par. 3 (cols. 65-6).

<sup>309</sup> *BHG*, 247.

Theodore is about to be beheaded on the left side of the miniature and he is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier, slightly skewing to the left. He wears a long white tunic belted around the waist and he is barefoot. Two of his companions are lying down in front of him, already beheaded with their heads completely separated from their bodies. Blood springs out from the necks and heads and their eyes are closed. They are dressed in mustard and grey tunics and their hands are placed parallel on the two sides of their bodies. The Roman soldier is standing between the deceased bodies of the martyrs, holding a sword towards the sky with both arms. He wears a blue tunic, leggings and boots and his body is positioned looking sideways to the viewer. Behind him, there is a mountainous landscape. On the right side, one of Theodore's companions is being crucified, facing frontally to the viewer, wearing a purple tunic. Blood spills from both his nail-pierced hands. On the right lower side of the plain a blazing stake stands next to martyr's feet. The figures stand on a green groundline against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 20



**MS number** 56

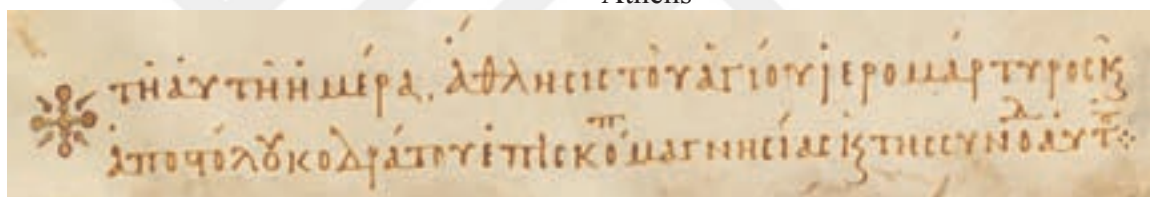
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** September 21

**Vita**

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Quadratus of Athens



### Transcription

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ ΚΟΔΡΑΤΟΥ  
ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ ΜΑΓΝΗΣΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔ[ΙΑΣ] ΑΥΤΟΥ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr and apostle Quadratus, bishop of Magnesia, and his companions.

### Description

According to the title the holy hieromartyr and apostle Quadratus, the bishop of Magnesia is about to be martyred. The *Synaxarion of Constantinople* commemorates him on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September.<sup>311</sup> He was martyred during the reign of Hadrian (117-138 AD).

<sup>311</sup> *Synax. CP*, Sept. 22, par. 1 (col. 67)

Quadratus is dressed in a transparent light blue *sticharion*, an ivory *phlenion* and a white *omophorion* with two embroidered crosses. He wears black slippers and is kneeling towards the Roman soldier, holding his *omophorion* with his left hand while his right hand is reaching out towards the ground. Depicted as an elderly man with a balding hairline, the Roman soldier is wearing a blue tunic, red leggings and grey boots. He is stretching his sword-bearing right arm to his back while his left hand is hanging loose forwards as if he is trying to establish his balance. Behind Quadratus, on the left side of the plain, there is a columned structure resembling a church. Mountains occupy the right side of the plain. Both figures stand on a green groundline against the golden background. Few floral details are scattered across the landscape.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἀπετμήθη κεφαλὴν [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 21



MS number 57

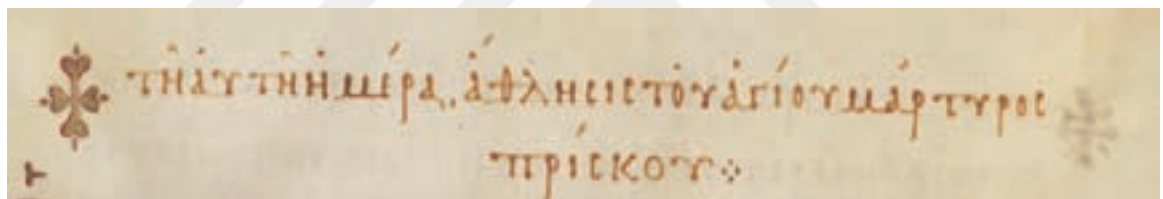
Region 1

MS commemoration date September 22

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Priscus



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΠΡΙΣΚΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Priscus.

**Description**

According to the title, Priscus is about to be martyred in this miniature. The time and place of his martyrdom is unclear yet according to the *Synaxarion of Constantinople*, he was commemorated in the capital on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September.<sup>313</sup>

<sup>313</sup> *Synax. CP*, Sept. 22, par. 4 (col. 70).

Priscus kneels before of the Roman soldier, wearing a white tunic and black slippers, holding his chest with one hand; the other rests on his left knee. His right leg is stretched back and he is standing sideways. Behind him, the Roman soldier stands frontally and he wears a red tunic, a blue *chlamys*, brown leggings and yellow boots. He is drawing his sword from its scabbard while his *chlamys* flows in the sky as if he is caught in a moment of action. Mountains flank both sides of the plain and while Priscus stands on the green groundline, the Roman soldier is positioned incongruently. To the far right side of the plain there is a columned and domed structure. Few floral details are scattered around the green groundline and the scene is depicted against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτμηθεὶς [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>314</sup>



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<sup>314</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 22



**MS number** 58

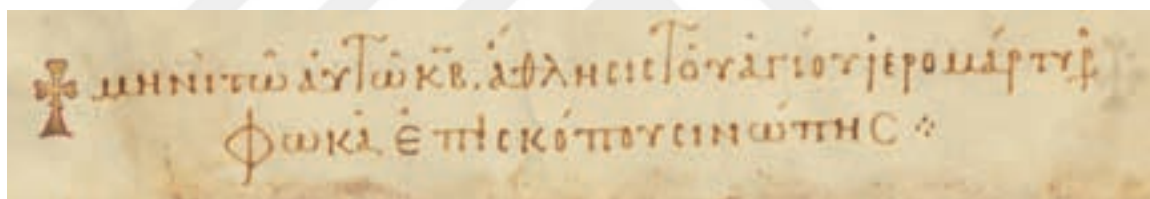
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 22

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Phocas of Sinope



### Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΒ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡ[ΟΣ] ΦΩΚΑ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ ΣΙΝΩΠΗΣ ∴

### English translation

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Phocas, bishop of Sinope.

### Description

According to the title, Phocas, the bishop of Sinope is about to be beheaded in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Trajan (98-117 AD).<sup>315</sup>

Phocas kneels before the Roman soldier and is dressed in the vestment of a bishop. He is wearing a grey *sticharion*, a brown *phlenion* and a grey *omophorion* with two

<sup>315</sup> *BHG*, 215. Also; Act. SS. lul. 111, 639-45 ; 3a ed. 610-16., PG L, 699-706.

black crosses embroidered on it. His hands are hidden under the *phlenion* and he is portrayed as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is raising his right arm with a sword while he holds the red scabbard with his left hand. He is wearing a blue tunic, red leggings and white boots. On the left corner a stake is burning in front of the mountainous landscape while on the far left there is an arched and vaulted structure similar to an aqueduct is visible. The figures stand on a green groundline against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group Τραϊανὸς [...] ἀπεκεφάλισεν [Trajan (had him) beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>316</sup>



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<sup>316</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 23



**MS number** 62

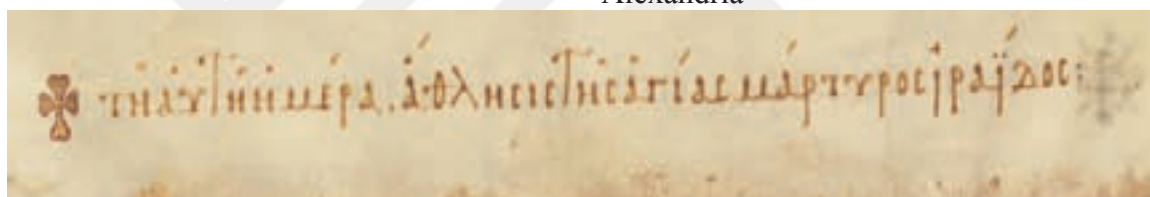
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** September 23

**Vita**

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Herais of Alexandria



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΙΡΑΙΔΟΣ :

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Herais.

### Description

According to the title, Herais is about to be martyred in this scene. She was martyred in Egypt during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD)<sup>317</sup>

Judging from her vestment, Herais is a nun, wearing a black *maphorion* over a long brown tunic. The *maphorion* covers her neck completely and she is wearing black slippers. The Roman soldier stands behind her holding his sword with both arms,

<sup>317</sup> Synax.CP, Sept. 23, par. 5 (cols. 74-5).

dressed in a red tunic. From the waist down his body is hidden behind the martyr's body. The right side of the plain is crowded with nine female figures, all wearing various colors of *maphoria*, differing from Herais', their uncovered necks are not covered. Only the three frontal figures' faces are visible and while the furthestmost is watching the martyrdom, the figure on the farthest right is looking towards the rays from an arc of heaven in the sky. On the far left corner, two warriors are protecting a two-storey columned and arched building. These soldiers differ drastically from the Roman soldier who is about to behead Herais. The former are dressed in short tunics and boots however they are armed with spears and shields.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>318</sup>



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<sup>318</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



## Catalogue ID 24



**MS number** 69

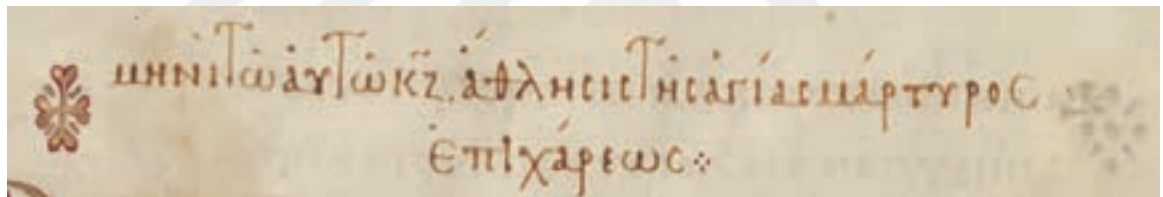
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 27

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Epicharis of Constantinople



### Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΖ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΠΙΧΑΡΕΩΣ ∴

### English translation

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Epicharis.

### Description

According to the title, Epicharis is about to be martyred in the miniature. She was executed in Constantinople during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>319</sup>

She kneels before a Roman soldier and her hands are resting on her upper thigh. She is wearing a grey tunic and black slippers. Her brown curly hair reaches to her

<sup>319</sup> *Synax. CP*, Sept. 27, par. 2 (col. 83).

shoulders. The Roman soldier stands behind her and he is wearing a blue tunic. He raises his right arm towards the sky while holding a black scabbard with this left hand. His lower body is hidden behind the martyr making allowing only his white boots to be seen. Mountains flank both sides of the plain and on the left side a spring is flowing from the mountain. On the right side there is an architectural detail of a building is visible. Figures stand against a green groundline against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀποκεφαλίσαι [to behead] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>320</sup>



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<sup>320</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 25



**MS number** 70

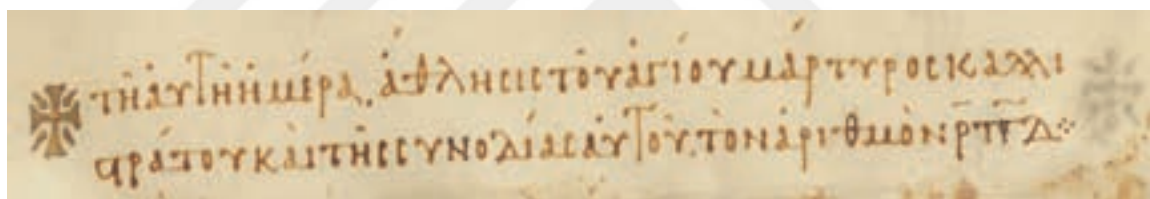
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 27

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Callistratus of Byzantium



### Transcription

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΚΑΛΛΙΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ  
ΑΥΤΟΥ ΤΟΝ ΑΡΙΘΜΟΝ ΡΠΔ' ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Callistratus and his 184 [ (sic- 49)] companions.

### Description

According to the title Callistratus and his four companions are being martyred in this scene. She was executed in Byzantium during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>321</sup>

<sup>321</sup> *Synax.CP*, Sept. 27, par. 1 (cols. 81-3), PG CXV, 881-900.

Callistratus is about to be beheaded and he is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier. He is wearing a long yellow tunic that has a black patterned detail encircling his shoulders. His right leg is bent on the ground and his left hand is resting on it. His left leg is stretched all the way to the back. The Roman soldier is standing to the left of Callistratus and he is wearing a yellow tunic, blue leggings, a grey *chlamys* and yellow boots. He is raising his left arm to the sky while holding a sword and he grasps a scabbard with his right hand. One of Callistratus' companions lies parallel to the green groundline, wearing a grey tunic. His decapitated head lies separate from his body with blood spilling from it. Both his arms are reaching out towards the decapitated head as his hands clasp the ground. On the far right side of the plain four companions, dressed in various colors of tunics are viewing the martyrdom scene. Only two of them have their whole body visible while the remaining pair is hidden behind them, only visible through their nimbuses. In a mountainous landscape, the figures stand on a green groundline against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

## Catalogue ID 26



**MS number** 72

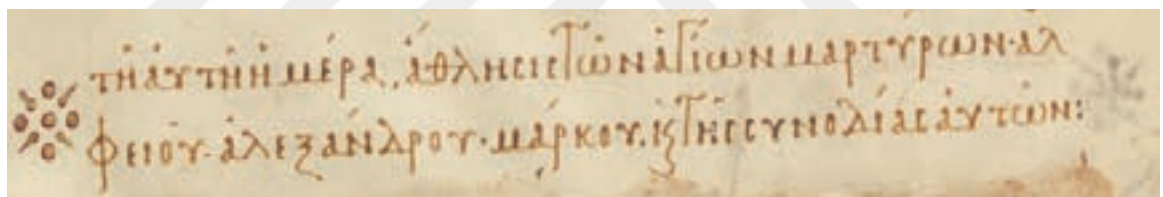
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** September 28

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Martyrs  
Alphaeus, Alexander and Mark



### Transcription

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΑΛΦΕΙΟΥ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΜΑΡΚΟΥ  
ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Alphaeus, Alexander, Mark and their companions.

### Description

According to the title, the miniature depicts the martyrdom of Alphaeus, Alexander, Mark and their companions. They were martyred in Calytus of Pisidia.<sup>323</sup>

<sup>323</sup> BHG,10. Also, PG CXXXVI, 264-84., *Synax. CP*, Sept. 28, par. 2 (cols. 86-88).

On the far left corner, Mark is about to be beheaded. He is wearing a long grey tunic and black slippers. His hands are bound at his back and he stands sideways, kneeling before his executioner. The Roman soldier behind Mark is also standing sideways, with his left leg in front of the other, as if he is walking towards Mark while he raises his right hand to the sky holding a sword. He grasps a scabbard in his left hand. He is wearing a green tunic, blue leggings, yellow boots and a dark blue *chlamys*. At the center of the miniature, one of Mark's companions is already beheaded. His decapitated head is separate from his body, with blood spilling from both the severed head and the neck. He is wearing a long yellow tunic and he is knelt on the ground with his arms reaching forwards towards the decapitated head. On the far right side, two companions are viewing the martyrdom with their hands clasped or bound behind. Judging from the course of action in the scene, they stand next in line to be executed. Mountains against a golden background surround the landscape. All of the figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 27



MS number 75

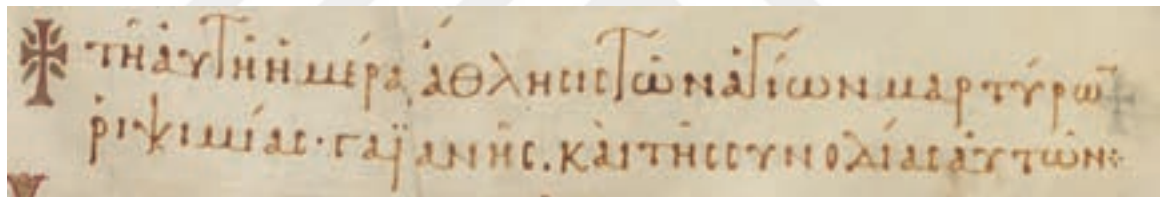
Region 2

MS commemoration date September 30

Vita

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Ripsime and  
Gaiana of Armenia



**Transcription**

✝ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩ[Ν] ΡΙΨΙΜΙΑΣ ΓΑΙΑΝΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ  
ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Ripsime, Gaiana and their companions.

**Description**

According to the title, Ripsime, Gaiana and their companions are being martyred in this miniature. Ripsime was considered to be amongst those followed Gregory the Illuminator, the founder and the first bishop of Armenian Church whose feast day

matches with hers however he is not represented in the miniature.<sup>325</sup> He lived in the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and thus they are considered saints of the Church belonging to this era.<sup>326</sup> Although the title suggests that companions accompany Gaiana and Ripsime, the miniature only shows two females, one is about to be beheaded while the other witnessing the event.

According to the 16-verse main text, Gaiana stands on the far left, bound behind her back. She is already tortured and her feet are bleeding but the cause of her injuries is not clear. She wears a long grey tunic and two round folds of draping around her breast level underline her feminine characteristics along with her curly hair falling down to her shoulders. Ripsime is about to be beheaded and she kneels in front of the soldier with her hands bound at her back. She wears a long yellow tunic and her curly hair reaches to her shoulders. The soldier in this miniature is dressed in a white tunic, white leggings and white slippers. He wears a red headdress that is untypical of Roman soldiers' attire, and presumably underlines that he is a foreigner to the context of the Menologion of Basil II. He is holding a sword up with both hands in the air, aimed at Ripsime. Against a golden background mountains flank both sides of the landscape.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἀπετμήθην τὴν κεφαλὴν [had her head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>327</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> *ODB*, 883. Gregory the Illuminator is represented in a *menologion* residing in British Library (B.L.Add.11870, fol 242v) where he is decapitated, however the manuscript lacks the textual emphasis on the execution method.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*, 884.

<sup>327</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 29



MS number 80

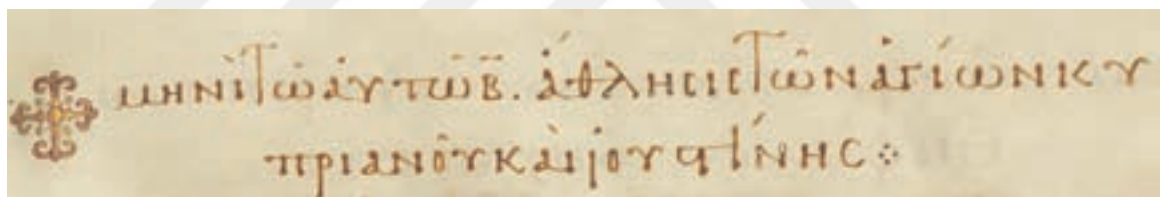
Region 1

MS commemoration date October 2

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Cyprian and Justina of Nicomedia



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Β΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΚΥΠΡΙΑΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΙΟΥΣΤΙΝΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of SS Cyprian and Justina.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts the martyrdom of Cyprian and Justina. They were martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD)<sup>328</sup>

<sup>328</sup> BHG, 59. Also, Act. SS. Sept. VII, 242-45; 3a ed. 224-26. PG CL, 1173-1232.

Cyprian is kneeling before the Roman soldier and his hands are hidden beneath his grey *sakkos*. He wears a light blue *sticharhion*, black slippers and a white *omophorion* with an embroidered black cross over it, signifying a bishop's vestments. The Roman soldier behind him wears a green tunic and a *chlamys* and his body is hidden behind Cyprian's from the waist down. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky and his left hand rests on the scabbard. Cyprian's hands are parallel to each other and elevated towards the sky as in a gesture of prayer. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey beard and hair. On the far left corner, Justina stands, facing towards Cyprian, as she is witnessing the event. She wears a grey tunic and a red *maphorion* covering her head and neck completely. She also elevates her hands towards the sky, molded together at the center, as if she is in the act of praying. Mountains flank both sides of the plain while a river flows on the right side. Figures stand on a green groundline where there are few floral details scattered around. A golden background completes the miniature.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 30



**MS number** 82

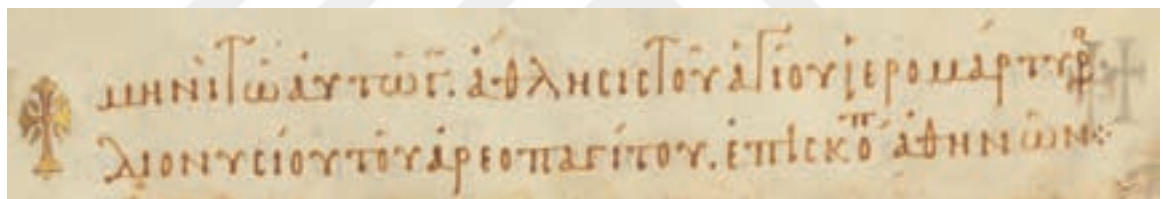
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** October 3

**Vita** Michael Synkellos, *Vita*

**Type** B

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Dionysius the Areopagite



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Γ´.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟ[Σ] ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΑΡΕΠΑΓΙΤΟΥ,  
ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠ(ΟΥ) ΑΘΗΝΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Dionysius the Areopagite, bishop of Athens.

**Description**

According to the title, Dionysius of Areopagite, the bishop of Athens is depicted in this scene. He is a 1<sup>st</sup> century saint and he is celebrated on the third of October, converted to Christianity by St.Paul.<sup>330</sup> His vita penned by Michael Synkellos in

<sup>330</sup> ODB,629.

833-834 AD dates his execution to the reign of Trajan (98-117 AD)<sup>331</sup>. He is also included in Symeon Metaphrases' *menologion*<sup>332</sup> and the *Synaxarion of Constantinople*<sup>333</sup> that describes his physical characteristics. He is often depicted as the bishop of Athens, who carries his own head after his martyrdom in Byzantine art. The Khludov Psalter (Moscow, Hist.Mus.gr.129,fol.45v) places him amongst the witnesses of the eclipse during the crucifixion.<sup>334</sup>

The center of the miniature is occupied with the martyrdom of Dionysius, which has already occurred. He is holding his decapitated head with both his hands, concealed by his purple *sakkos* with yellow drape lines. Beneath the *sakkos*, he wears a grey *sticharion* with white drape lines and black slippers. Blood spills from the severed head towards the green groundline, creating a pool. He is depicted as an elderly man with a white beard and hair. The Roman soldier stands behind Dionysius and having carried out the execution, he is placing his sword back in the black scabbard. He is wearing a green-grey tunic, a lavender-white *chlayms*. His face seems to be disfigured, possibly the result of a retouching attempt by the illuminator. On the right side, a female figure, identified as Catulla in the main 16-verse minuscule text, is seated at the side of a mountain and she holds out a blue shroud, as if about to receive the severed head of the martyr. On the far left side, behind Dionysius, two companions are also already decapitated with blood running through their necks. They are both wearing white tunics with their hands bound behind their backs as they are kneeling down. Their heads are rolling at the foremost side of the plain and the companions are reflected as young men. Behind them, the detail of a structure with an ornate column is visible. Against a golden background, the center and the right side of the plane is mountainous. All of the martyrs and the Roman soldier stand uniformly on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the verb ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [(they) were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>332</sup> PG IV, 669-84. Also, *BHG*, 76.

<sup>333</sup> *Synax. CP*, Oct. 3, par. 1 (cols. 101-3).

<sup>334</sup> *ODB*, 629.

<sup>335</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 31



MS number 83

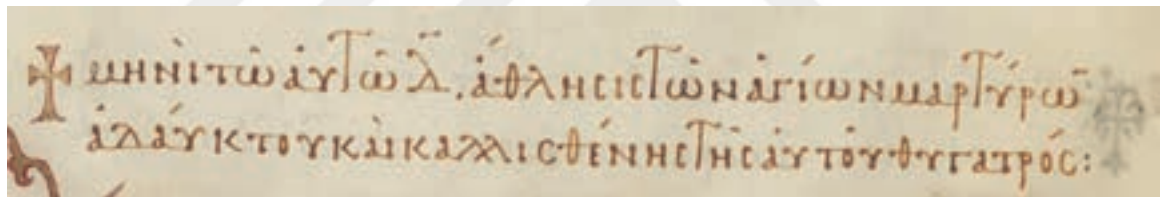
Region 1

MS commemoration date October 4

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Adauctus and his daughter Callisthene of Ephesus



Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Δ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩ[Ν] ΑΔΑΥΚΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΛΛΙΣΘΕΝΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΘΥΓΑΤΡΟΣ ∴

English translation

On the 4<sup>th</sup> the of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Adauctus and his daughter Callisthene.

Description

According to the title, the miniature depicts Adauctus and his daughter Callisthene. They were martyred during the reign of Maximinus II Daia. (309-313 AD)<sup>336</sup>

<sup>336</sup> *Synax.CP*, Oct. 4, par. 4 (cols. 104-5).

On the left side, Adautus kneels before a Roman soldier and his hands are resting on his knees. He is wearing a long, light yellow tunic, belted across the waist and adorned by two grey cuffs on the sleeves. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. Behind him, the Roman soldier is beginning to remove his sword from a black scabbard. He is wearing a yellow tunic, a blue *chlamys*, dark blue leggings and white boots. The right side of the miniature is occupied with the prospective narration of the event of Adautus' burial, as his wife and Callisthene, his daughter are placing his dead body wrapped in a winding sheet into a sarcophagus. Both his wife and Callisthene wear a long *maphorion* that tightly covers their necks and heads, revealing no visible skin other than the face and the hands. Against a golden background, mountains flank the scene on both sides. The two events are concurrently depicted on the same green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ὁ δὲ ἄρχων [...] αὐτὸν ἀπεκεφάλισεν [the magistrate (...) beheaded him] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 32



MS number 84

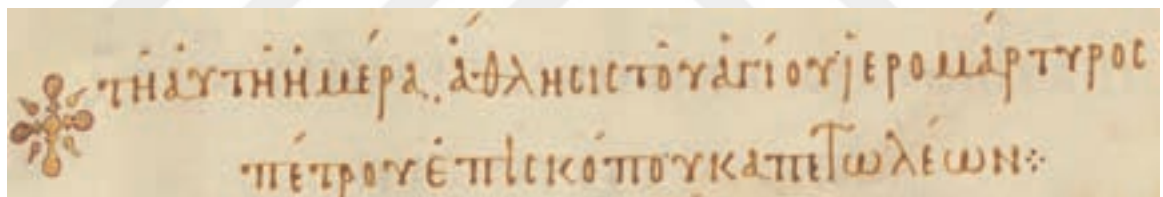
MS commemoration date October 4

Type A

Region 2

Vita -

Beheaded martyr(s) Peter of  
Capitolias



Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΠΕΤΡΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ  
ΚΑΠΕΤΕΩΛΕΩΝ ∴

English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Petrus, bishop of Capitolias.

Description

According to the title, the scene depicts Peter, who served as the bishop of Capitolias. Arabs executed him in early 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>338</sup>

Initially appearing to be a crucifixion scene, the miniature depicts consecutive periods of torture directed towards Peter. The final execution came by the sword and through beheading. Peter's hands are nailed to a cross while he stands on a small platform, different from the traditional crucifixion procedure that involves fixing all limbs on the cross. He wears a purple *sticharion* with yellow drapes and a white *omophorion* with white embroidered crosses suitable to his rank as the bishop of Capitolias. He is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. His head is slightly skewed to the left, reminiscing the position of Jesus Christ's head in depictions of his crucifixion. The Roman soldier behind him is also standing on a platform, which is taller than Peter's, enabling him to reach his head level. He raises his sword-bearing right arm while holding a scabbard with his left hand. He wears a red *chlamys*, white boots, a green tunic and blue leggings, which are both patterned with large golden lozenges. Against a golden background, mountains flank the scene on both sides with few floral details scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> *Synax. CP*, Oct. 4, par. 5 (cols. 105-6).

<sup>339</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 33**



**MS number** 86

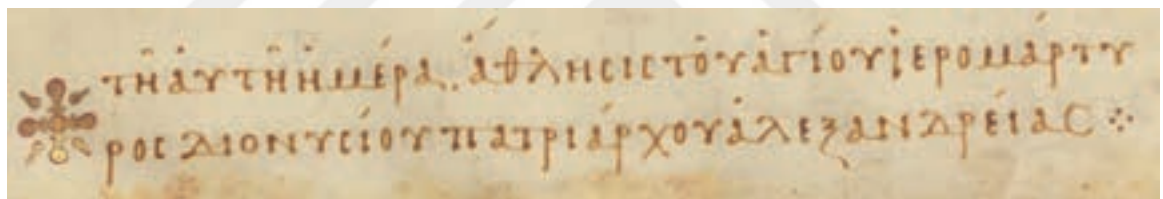
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** October 4

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Dionysius of Alexandria



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ  
ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕΙΑΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The stuggle of the holy hieromartyr Dionysius, patriarch of Alexandria.

**Description**

According to the title, Dionysius is depicted in the miniature. He played a significant role in shaping the leading movements and controversies of the Church during the

time he lived and died in 264 AD.<sup>340</sup> He converted the natives in Kufra and the Prefect of Egypt exiled his followers in 257 AD.<sup>341</sup>

In the center of the plain, he is kneeling before the executioner who is about to perform the beheading. Dionysius is dressed in a blue *sticharion*, a brown *sakkos* with yellow drape lines and a white omophorion with black embroidered crosses. Depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard, he is raising his hands, concealed beneath the *sakkos*, as in an act of prayer. His attire reveals his ranking as a patriarch, who dresses identical with the bishop of the Church. The soldier is standing behind him and he is depicted sideways, raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky. He is wearing a blue tunic with lozenge patterns and patterned leggings, a red *chlamys* and grey boots. Over his head, he is wearing a red turban that identifies him as a foreigner to the context of the manuscript. Both figures stand on a uniform green groundline. On the far left corner, an unidentified building is visible. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group αὐτοῦ κεφαλὴν διὰ ξίφους ἀπετμήθη [his head cut off by the sword] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>342</sup>

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<sup>340</sup> *ODB*, 2117. Also, Charles Lett. Feltoe, ed., *The Letters and Other Remains of Dionysius of Alexandria* (Cambridge University Press, 1904), 90-105.

<sup>341</sup> W.H.C. Frend, "The Failure of the Persecutions in the Roman Empire," *Past & Present* 16 (Nov., 1959)

<sup>342</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 34



**MS number** 95

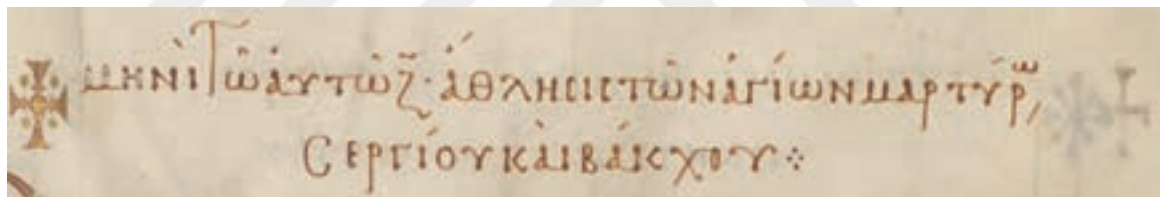
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** October 7

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Sergius and Bacchus of Syria



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Ζ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΣΕΡΓΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΒΑΚΧΟΥ ∷

**English translation**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the same month.

The struggle of holy martyrs Sergius and Bacchus.

**Description**

Sergius and Bacchus are well-known and highly popularized Early Christian saints, executed during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD)<sup>343</sup> They were both positioned

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<sup>343</sup> ODB,1321.

as soldiers of the army, Sergius as a *primikerios* and Bacchus as *sekoundokerios*,<sup>344</sup> however they are not always portrayed in military uniform. Although Bacchus is quite commonly depicted as receiving martyrdom through flogging and separately from Sergius,<sup>345</sup> the Menologion of Basil II portrays both figures in the same scene and insinuates they were both beheaded.

According to the title, the martyrs Sergius and Bacchus are depicted in this scene. On the left side of the miniature, Bacchus is kneeling towards the Roman executioner and he is about to be beheaded. He is wearing a long blue tunic that has a yellow round detail around the shoulders and a horizontal yellow band at the feet level. He is wearing matching yellow slippers and his hands are bound behind him. Both Bacchus and Sergius are depicted as beardless youths with brown hair. The Roman soldier is standing sideways towards him and faces the martyr's head around his waist level. He holds a sword up in the sky with his right hand while holding a scabbard with the left hand. Wearing a short yellow tunic, brown *chlamys*, blue leggings and yellow boots, he is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and a thin moustache. Sergius is witnessing the event in the far right corner of the miniature, dressed in a yellow tunic and matching yellow slippers and his head is turned down slightly to the left. Against a golden background, the miniature depicts a mountainous landscape with few trees and the figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

There is no mention of Sergius' and Bacchus' beheadings per se in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> ODB, 1979.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid.

<sup>346</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 35



**MS number** 99

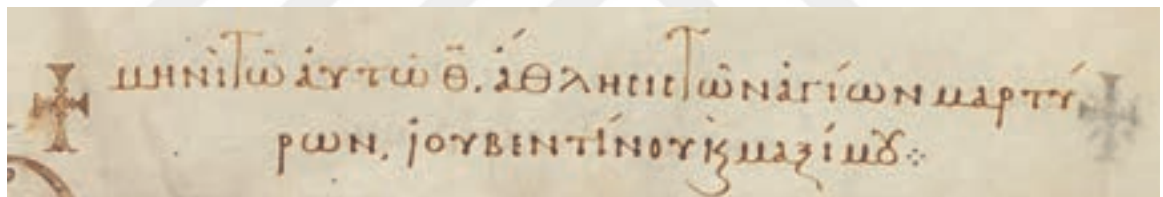
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** October 9

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Juventinus and Maximus of Antioch



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Θ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΙΟΥΒΕΝΤΙΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΜΑΞΙΜΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the ninth of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Juventinus and Maximus.

**Description**

According to the title, Juventinus and Maximus are depicted in the scene. They were martyred in Antioch during the reign of Julian the Apostate (331-363AD)<sup>347</sup>.

<sup>347</sup> *Synax.CP*, Oct. 9, par. 2 (cols. 121-2). Also, *BHG*, 136, PG L,571-78.

Either Juveninus or Maximus is kneeling before the Roman soldier, dressed in a long white tunic. He is barefoot and his hands are bound behind him. His body is depicted sideways as his eyes are fixed towards his co-martyr. The Roman soldier stands behind the martyr; dressed in a red tunic, grey leggings and boots. His sword-bearing right arm is raised towards the sky while resting his left hand on the scabbard. The co-martyr is dressed in a grey tunic and he is kneeling in front of them, his knees and elbows touching the ground. His head is completely separated from the body and the face is turned towards the sky, in the opposite direction from the body. Piles of blood spill from the severed neck. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides. The martyrs are both standing on the green groundline while the Roman soldier stands on one of the mountains in an elevated position.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν ἀπέτεμε [he cut their heads off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 36**



**MS number** 103

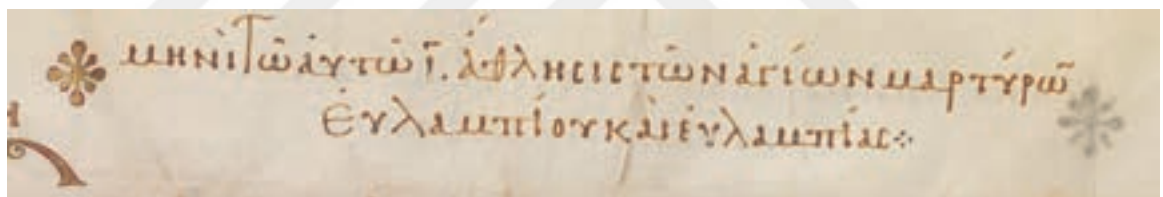
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** October 10

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Eulampius and Eulampia of Nicomedia



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Ι΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΕΥΛΑΜΠΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΛΑΜΠΙΑΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Eulampius and Eulampia.

**Description**

According to the title, Eulampius and Eulampia are depicted in this miniature. They were martyred during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD) in Antioch.<sup>349</sup>

Eulampius kneels before the Roman soldier, dressed in a yellow tunic and black slippers. His hands are bound behind his back and he is about to be beheaded. His gaze is fixed towards a far off point in the left, away from the soldier and Eulampia. The Roman soldier behind him is dressed in a red tunic, blue leggings and grey boots. His sword-bearing right arm is raised towards the sky while holding the scabbard with his left hand. Eulampia stands barefoot on the right side of the plain, viewing the martyrdom. She is dressed in a grey tunic with her hands bound behind her back. Her curly brown hair reaches to her shoulders. All the figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. On both sides, mountains flank the landscape against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> Act. SS. Oct, V, 69-78. Also, PG CXV, 1053-65., *BHG*,85.

<sup>350</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 37



MS number 109

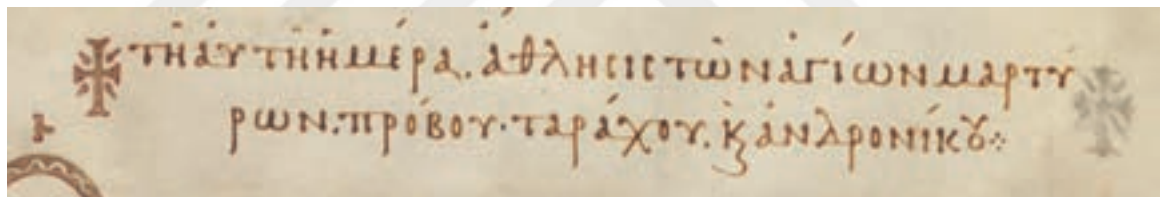
Region 1

MS commemoration date October 12

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Andronicus,  
Probus, Tarachus



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΠΡΟΒΟΥ ΤΑΡΑΧΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΔΡΟΝΙΚΟΥ  
✠

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Probus, Tarachus and Andronicus.

**Description**

According to the title, the three martyrs Probus, Tarachus and Andronicus are depicted in this scene. They were martyred in Cilicia, Anazarbus in 304.<sup>351</sup>

<sup>351</sup> BHG, 220. Also, Act. SS. Oct. V, 566-84. and PG CXV, 1068-80.

On the far left, Andronicus stands with his hands bound behind his back, wearing a white tunic and black slippers. Centrally, Probus is kneeling before the Roman soldier and he is about to be beheaded. He wears an identical white tunic and black slippers and his hands are bound behind his back. The Roman soldier is standing behind Probus, wearing a green tunic, blue leggings, a blue *chlamys* and grey boots. His sword-bearing right arm is raised towards the sky. The scabbard's tip and his left hand are concealed behind Probus' nimbus. At the right end of the miniature, Tarachus is kneeling on the ground, wearing a grey tunic and black slippers. His head completely separated from his body. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. Behind Tarachus, an entrance to a mountain is depicted with an arcaded and columned structure. Against a golden background, all figures stand on a green groundline. Mountains flank the landscape and few floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 38



**MS number** 110

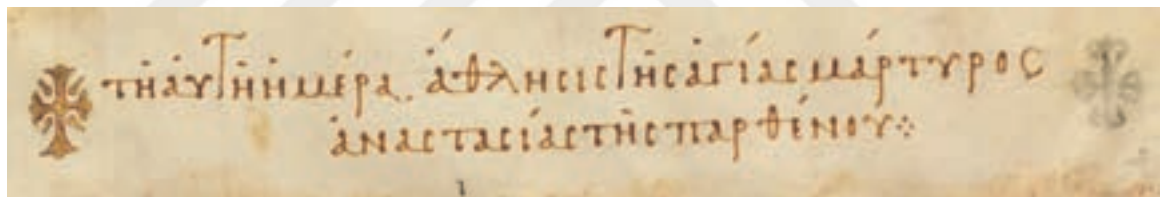
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** October 12

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Anastasia the Virgin



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Anastasia the Virgin.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Anastasia the Virgin. She was martyred during the reign of Valerian (253-260 AD).<sup>353</sup>

<sup>353</sup> BHG, 12. Also, PG CXV, 1293-1308., Act. SS. Oct. XII, 520-28.

She is depicted with a long yellow tunic and a red *maphorion*, a nun's habit that tightly covers both the head and the neck. Her headdress is dark blue. Her mutilated body is suspended in mid-air as she waits for her beheading. Both her hands and feet are separated from her body, clasped together while blood spills from the severed limbs. The Roman soldier stands next to her, occupying the right side of the plain. He is dressed in a red tunic, brown leggings, yellow stockings and black slippers. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm while grasping the scabbard with his left hand. Against a golden background, the landscape is mountainous and as Anastasia floats in the air, the Roman soldier stands on the green groundline.

There is no mention of Anastasia being beheaded in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>354</sup>



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<sup>354</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 39



MS number 114

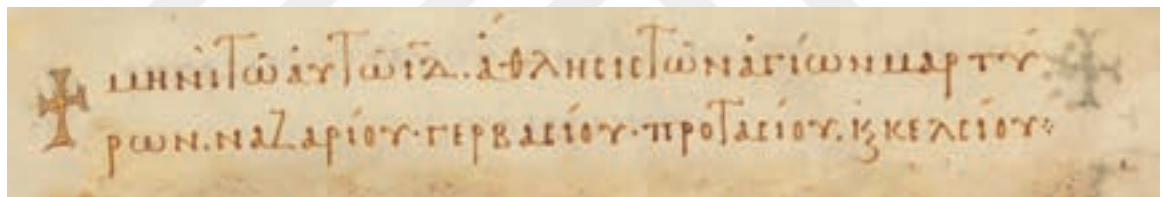
MS commemoration date October 14

Type C

Region 3

Vita -

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Celsus,  
Gervasius, Nazarius and Protasius of  
Milan



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Δ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΝΑΖΑΡΙΟΥ ΓΕΡΒΑΣΙΟΥ ΠΡΟΤΑΣΙΟΥ  
ΚΑΙ ΚΕΛΣΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Nazarius, Gervasius, Protastius and Celsus.

**Description**

According the title, Nazarius, Gervasius, Protastius and Celsus are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred during the reign of Nero.<sup>355</sup>

<sup>355</sup> BHG,184. Also, PG CXVI, 896-908.

On the far left side of the plain, Celsus is standing with his hands bound behind his back. He is wearing a light blue tunic and black slippers. Next to him, in the center, Nazarius kneels before the Roman soldier and he is about to be beheaded. He wears a purple tunic with yellow drape lines and black slippers. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey beard and hair. The Roman soldier wears a tunic in different hues of red, yellow leggings and grey boots. He raises his right arm towards the sky with a sword while grasping a scabbard with his left hand. The beheaded bodies of Gervasius and Protastius are kneeling to the ground, dressed in grey and yellow tunics, in front of Nazarius and the Roman soldier. Their footwear is hidden behind Nazarius' tunic. Both their heads are completely separated from their bodies and blood spill from the severed parts. The decapitated heads portray younger men with brown hair while Nazarius is depicted as an elderly man with grey beard and hair. Against a golden background, mountains flank the landscape while all figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τέμνεται τὴν κεφαλὴν [cut his head off] the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>356</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 40



MS number 117

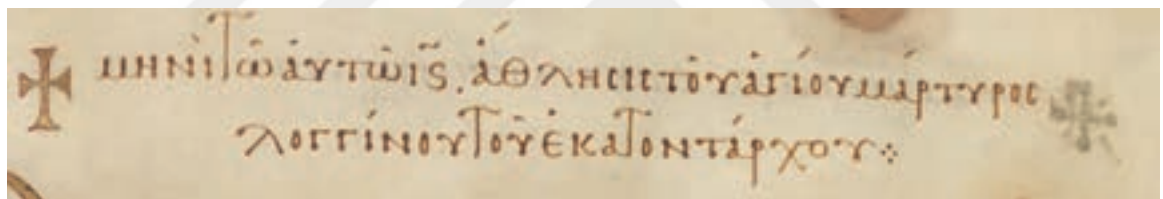
Region 1

MS commemoration date October 16

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Longinus the Centurion



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΣ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΛΟΓΓΙΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΚΑΤΟΝΤΑΡΧΟΥ.✠

**English translation**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of holy martyr Longinus the Centurion.

**Description**

According to the title, Longinus the Centurion is depicted in this scene. Traditionally, Longinus is the first person who converted to Christianity after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ<sup>357</sup>. He was an officer in the Roman army before becoming a follower of Christ. He was martyred in Cappadocia.<sup>358</sup>

<sup>357</sup> *ODB*, 555.

<sup>358</sup> *BHG*, 138. Also, PG CXV, 32-44.

Longinus is about to be beheaded and his hands are bound behind his back. He is dressed in a yellow tunic and slippers. Two blue lines run vertically across the garment beginning from both sides of the shoulders down to his feet. Behind him, a Roman soldier is raising his right arm with a sword while holding a black scabbard with his left hand. He is wearing a blue tunic, red leggings and grey boots. On the left side of the plain, two younger co-martyrs are witnessing the events. They are dressed in grey and blue tunics and black slippers. Both their heads are slightly tilted to the left side, displaying sorrow. On the right half of the miniature, a woman dressed in a red *maphorion* with an underlying blue tunic is holding a stick in her right hand while she kneels to the ground towards a decapitated head that sits in a refuse. The body belonging to the discovered head is nowhere to be seen and this part of the miniature reflects the invention of the head relic of Longinus. All figures uniformly stand on a green groundline, against a golden background. Mountains on both sides flank the landscape. Few withered trees are present in front of the mountains.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the verb ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] and discovery of the relic with the word group εὐροῦσα τὴν κεφαλὴν [having found the head] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 41



MS number 120

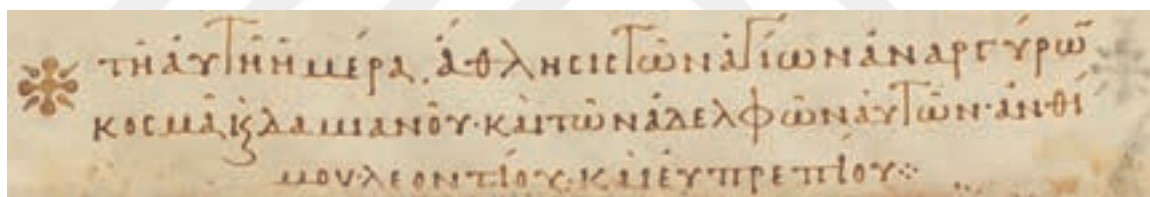
Region 2

MS commemoration date October 17

Vita -

Type C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Cosmas and Damian of Arabia and their brothers Anthimus, Leontius and Euprepus.



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΑΝΑΡΓΥΡΩΝ ΚΟΣΜΑ ΚΑΙ ΔΑΜΙΑΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ  
ΑΔΕΛΦΩΝ ΑΥΤΩΝ ΑΝΘΙΜΟΥ ΛΕΟΝΤΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΠΡΕΠΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy healing saints Cosmas and Damian and their brothers Anthimus, Leontius and Euprepus.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Cosmas, Damian and their brothers Anthimus, Leontius and Euprepus. Cosmas and Damian are classified as *anargyroi*,

saints with an attribute of healing the sick.<sup>360</sup> Their bodies were believed to be buried in a tomb in Ascalon<sup>361</sup> and pilgrims frequented the city.

Cosmas and Damian are centrally depicted and while one of them waits for his beheading, the other saint is already decapitated. The one who is kneeling before the Roman soldier is wearing a lavender tunic and black slippers. His right leg is placed in front of the left leg, which is extended towards his back. He rests his right hand on his right knee. The Roman soldier stands behind him, and while his right foot is on the green groundline, his other foot is pressing on the already decapitated martyr's body, which is dressed, in a long white tunic. The martyr's head is completely separated from his body and he is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The soldier is dressed in a green tunic, red leggings and *chlamys* and grey boots. He raises his sword-bearing right arm while grasping the scabbard with his left hand. Anthimus, Leontius and Epuprepus stand on the right corner of the miniature. They are dressed in various colors of tunics and they wear black slippers. Depicted as youthful figures, only two of them are depicted entirely, while the third's body is hidden behind the pair. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene while all figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισε [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>360</sup> *ODB*,85.

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid.*,208.

<sup>362</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 42



MS number 122

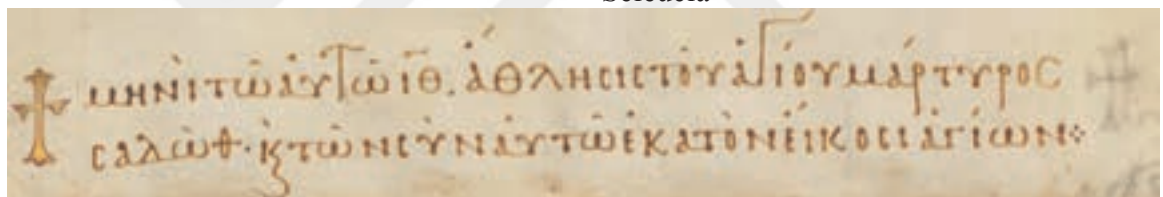
Region 2

MS commemoration date October 19

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Sadoth of Seleucia



Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΘ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΣΑΔΩΘ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΕΚΑΤΟΝ ΕΙΚΟΣΙ ΑΓΙΩΝ ∴

English translation

The 19<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of holy martyr Sadoth and his one hundred and twenty companion of saints.

Description

According to the title, Sadoth is depicted with one hundred and twenty companions. He was martyred in Seleucia during the reign of the Persian king Shapur II (309-379 AD) in the 4<sup>th</sup> century<sup>363</sup>.

Sadoth is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. He wears a grey tunic and black slippers. His hands are bound behind his back and he kneels before the Roman soldier with his right leg in front of the leg, as his body is turned sideways. The Roman soldier behind him is dressed in a pink tunic, blue leggings and grey boots. The tunic has blue-gold patterns around the short sleeves, the chest and the skirt. He raises his right arm holding a sword with his right hand while his left hand rests on the scabbard. In front of Sadoth there are four bodies and seven decapitated heads. Each head presents a face of an individual character belonging to different age groups while sharing the common aspect of having their eyes closed. On the far left corner, a group of companions are witnessing the event. Two young men, dressed in long tunics, with their hands behind their back, occupy the frontline. Both their heads are slightly tilted to the right, as in displaying the emotion of sorrow. All the figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. A mountainous landscape is depicted against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀπετμήθη [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Menas as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>364</sup>

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<sup>363</sup> *ODB*, 1681. Also, H. Delehaye, in *Anal. Boll.* XXI, 143-47 Id., *Les versions grecques des actes des martyrs Persans sous Sapor II*, *Patrologia orientalis*, II (Paris, 1905), 445-50., *BHG*, 227.

<sup>364</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 43



**MS number** 126

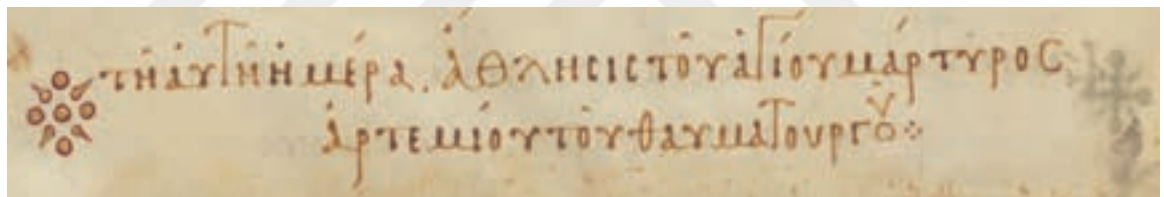
**Region 2**

**MS commemoration date** October 20

**Vita** Anonymous, *Miracles, Passion*

**Type A**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Artemius of Egypt



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΡΤΕΜΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΘΑΥΜΑΤΟΥΡΓΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of holy martyr Artemius the Miracle-worker.

**Description**

According to the title, Artemius the Miracle-worker is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in Antiochia of Syria, in 363 AD<sup>365</sup> According to an anonymous account of his *Passion*, he was commissioned by Emperor Constantius to bring the

<sup>365</sup> *BHG*, 26. Also, A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Varia graeca* (Petropoli, 1908), 1-75., P. Van den Ven, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XII (1903), 16.

relics of apostle Timothy to Constantinople in 356 AD and by 360 AD he held the office of *doux* of Egypt.<sup>366</sup> He then declared his Christianity to Emperor Julian, who asked him to renounce his faith and make a sacrifice to Apollo. Upon his refusal, Artemius was put through various forms of torment and he was finally executed through beheading.<sup>367</sup> His relics were then transferred to Constantinople, where they were kept in the Church of St. John the Baptist.<sup>368</sup>

Artemius kneels before the soldier and his hands are bound behind the back. In this kneeling gesture his legs are side by side, unlike the posture commonly kept by other martyrs with one of the legs advancing forward while the other is stretched to the opposite direction. He is dressed in a purple short tunic, with yellow drape lines and grey boots. A blue cone shaped garment is encircling his shoulders. His legs are naked between the end of the skirt and the boots, displaying his skin color, which is slightly darker than the other martyrs' complexion depicted in the manuscript. The soldier behind him is similarly depicted with darker shade of skin color. His red tunic is out of the ordinary; it resembles a Greek *himation*,<sup>369</sup> leaving his right shoulder undressed while the garment is draped around his left shoulder. He wears red leggings and grey boots and raises his naked right arm with a sword while holding a black scabbard with his right hand. The figures occupy the very center of the miniature and they stand on a uniform green groundline, although the left leg of the soldier is behind Artemius. Mountains flank the scene on both sides of the plain against the golden background. Some floral details are scattered around the landscape.

There is no mention of Artemius being beheaded in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>370</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> Virgil S. Crisafulli and John W. Nesbitt, *The miracles of St. Artemios*, The medieval Mediterranean v.13 (Leiden: Brill, 1997),1. His passion is preserved in two manuscripts, Parisinus 769 and Parisinus 1468.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*,3.

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*,5.

<sup>369</sup> *ODB*, 932. The Roman equivalent, *pallium*.

<sup>370</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 44**



**MS number** 130

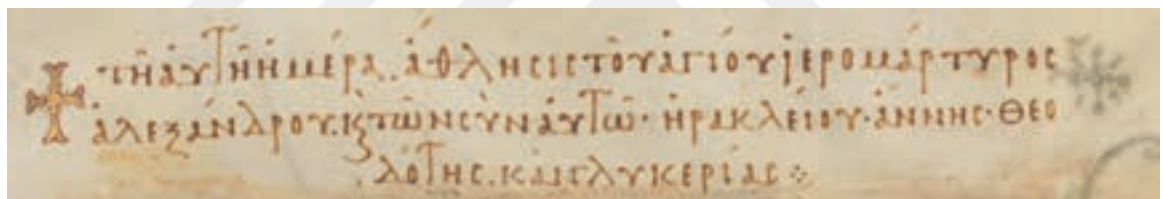
**Region** unknown

**MS commemoration date** October 22

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Alexander and Heraclius



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΟΥ ΑΝΝΗΣ ΘΕΟΔΟΤΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΓΛΥΚΕΡΙΑΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Alexander and with him Heraclius, Anna, Theodota and Glyceria.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Alexander, Heraclius, Anna, Theodota and Glyceria. The time and place of their martyrdom is unknown.

Alexander is about to be beheaded and he kneels in front of the Roman soldier with one leg stretched forward at the other leg is bent at the back. He is wearing the

vestments of a bishop, a yellow *sticharion*, a brown *sakkos* that reaches halfway over the it and a grey *omophorion* with two pairs of black crosses embroidered around the neck and the ends. The garb is completed with black slippers that are visible beneath the *sticharion*. His hands are hidden under his clothes and they are raised towards the sky as in the act of praying. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is wearing a blue tunic and blue leggings. His feet are hidden behind Alexander. He raises left arm with a sword<sup>371</sup> while grasping the red scabbard in his right hand. Immediately beneath Alexander, the decapitated dead body of Heraclius lies horizontally with his back leaning to the groundline. His arms are neatly placed on his sides as his hands are resting on his thighs. He is wearing a grey tunic that is adorned with a very thin stole with tasseled ends and a black *epimanikia* around his wrists. His decapitated head is hovering above his body, with piles of blood pouring from both ends of the severed neck. To the left side of the miniature, a group of three women, Anna, Theodota and Glyceria are standing wearing long tunics and *maphorion*, covering their necks and heads. Their hands are raised above in chest level in various positions as if they are conversing amongst each other. All of them wear red slippers. Mountains occupy only the right side of the landscape while all figures are depicted on a uniform green groundline against the golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἀπέτεμε καὶ αὐτῶν τὰς κεφαλὰς [he also cut their heads] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>371</sup> This is very uncommon because in almost every other beheading scene where a sword is raised, the soldier holds it with his right hand while grasping the scabbard with the other hand.

<sup>372</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 45



MS number 132

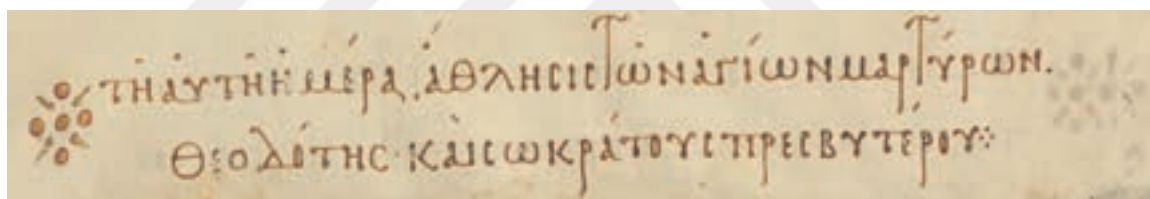
Region 1

MS commemoration date October 23

Vita -

Type B

Beheaded martyr(s) Socrates the Priest and Theodota of Nicaea II



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΘΕΟΔΟΤΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΩΚΡΑΤΟΥΣ  
ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Theodota and Socrates the Priest.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Theodota and Socrates the Priest. Theodota and Socrates were martyred in Nicaea and Ancyra respectively, during the reign of Alexander Severus (222-235 AD).<sup>373</sup>

<sup>373</sup> *Synax. CP*, Oct. 23, par. 2 (cols. 157-8).

On the left side of the plain, Theodota and Socrates have already been decapitated. Theodota wears a yellow tunic while Socrates is dressed in grey attire. They are positioned side by side on the ground and their heads are completely separated from their bodies. Piles of blood spill from the severed parts of their bodies, while their deceased bodies are fixed in the kneeling position. Theodota's hands are clasped in her chest, while Socrates' are stretched out forward, parallel to the ground. Theodota's longer brown hair and feminine facial characteristics identify her as the female saint. Behind the martyrs, the Roman soldier is placing his sword back to its black scabbard, indicating he has completed the task. He is dressed in a red tunic that is adorned with blue bands across the short sleeves and the skirt. On the right half of the miniature, a female martyr dressed in a yellow tunic is being thrown into a furnace. The soldier carrying her body wears a blue tunic, red leggings and grey boots. This female figure perhaps reflects the sufferings of Theodota prior to the beheading. However, there is no indication of burning in the beheaded body. All figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. Against a golden background, mountains occupy the scene, stretching from one end to the other without interruption.

The act of Socrates' beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἐτμήθη τὴν κεφαλὴν [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>374</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 46



**MS number** 135

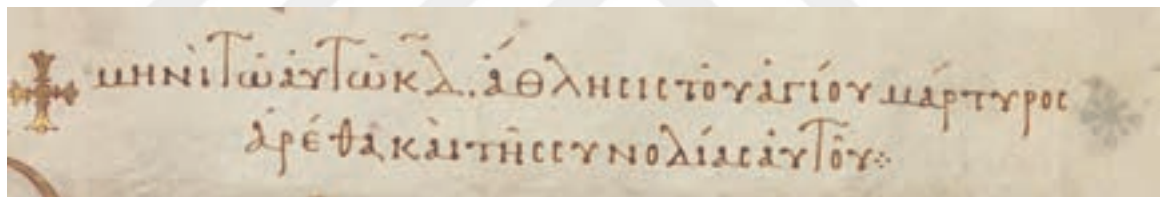
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** October 24

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Arethas of Najran



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΔ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΡΕΘΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ∴'

**English translation**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Arethas and his companions.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Arethas and his companions. He was an Arab who served as the chief of Najran, committed to spreading Christianity in South Arabia. He was martyred through decapitation in 520 AD<sup>375</sup>

<sup>375</sup> *ODB*,162. Also, I. Shahid, "Byzantium in South Arabia", *DOP* 33 (1979): 23-94.

At the center of the plain, Arethas kneels in front of the Roman soldier and he is about to be beheaded. His upper body is bent and his chest is almost reaching to his knees. His right hand is on his chest while with his left hand is reaching out forward, parallel to the groundline. His body is depicted sideways and he wears a long white tunic, adorned with gold ornamental bands around his neck and at the tip of the skirt. He is depicted as an elderly man with white beard and hair. The Roman soldier behind him is wearing a red tunic and a blue *chlamys*, raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a scabbard with his left hand. His body is hidden behind Arethas' from the waist down and is aligned with the martyr, positioned sideways to the viewer. On the far left corner, a young companion witnesses the event with his head slightly tilted towards the left, suggesting a gesture of sorrow as a specimen of the recurring iconography described by Henry Maguire.<sup>376</sup> He wears a light pink tunic that has a golden ornament, looped around the neck, surrounding his shoulders. The tunic is belted around the waist and the same golden band is repeated at the end of the long skirt. He wears black slippers and his hands are bound at the back. On the far right corner, sixteen companions are witnessing the event. Only three of them have individual faces visible while the remaining martyrs are depicted through the tip of their nimbuses. The two frontal figures are presented with their entire bodies, wearing tunics with gold ornamental bands looping around the neck, across the chest and at the tips of the skirts, similar to the youth depicted on the left. Against a golden background, there is a mountain on the left side of the plain with few floral details scattered around. The figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>376</sup> Henry, Maguire, "The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977): 123. doi:10.2307/1291406.

<sup>377</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76, doi:10.2307/1291164.250. THE GOOD ONE

**Catalogue ID 47**



**MS number** 141

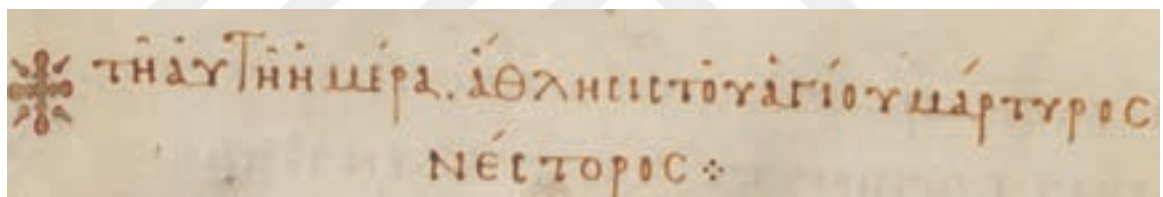
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** October 26

**Vita** St. Demetrios of Thessalonica,  
*Passio*

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Nestor of  
Thessalonica



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΝΕΣΤΟΡΟΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Nestor.

**Description**

According to the title, Nestor is depicted in the miniature. According to Metaphrastes' version of Nestor's martyrdom, he was buried in a shrine in Thessalonica, nearby a stadium and a public bath.<sup>378</sup> According to a *passio* by St.

<sup>378</sup> *ODB*, 606. The colonnaded building in the miniature might be depicting the details of previous versions of Nestor's martyrdom that travelled to Metaphrastian *menologion*.

Demetrius of Thessalonica, he was martyred during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>379</sup> He allegedly killed Emperor Maximian's favorite soldier Lyaios and was martyred swiftly as a reaction to this incident.<sup>380</sup>

Nestor is kneeling before the Roman soldier with his hands tied at the back with a black rope. He wears a dark red tunic with gold bands encircling halfway through the upper arms and around the sleeves. His upper body is in a kneeling position where his chest is turned towards the knees while his left foot is few steps further away from the right. He is depicted as a young man, beardless and with long brown hair. He wears blue leggings, white stockings and black slippers. The Roman soldier behind Nestor is dressed in a blue tunic that is heavily draped with yellow lines, red leggings and white slippers. Behind them, a mountainous landscape reaches to a colonnaded building on the far right corner. Against a golden background, few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισε [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>381</sup>

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<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*, 1461.

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>381</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 48



MS number 143

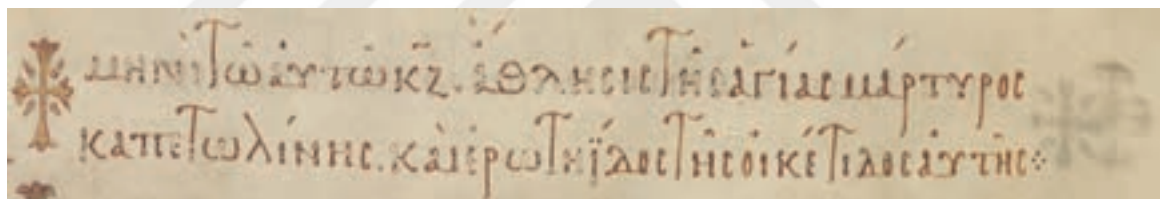
Region 1

MS commemoration date October 27

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Capitolina and Erotheides of Cappadocia



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΖ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΚΑΠΙΕΤΩΛΙΝΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΡΩΤΗΪΔΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΟΙΚΕΤΙΔΟΣ ΑΥΤΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Capitolina and her slave Erotheides.

**Description**

According to the title, Capitolina and her slave Erotheides are depicted in the miniature.

They were martyred in Cappadocia during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> BHG, 43.

Judging from the lavish dress, the deceased body belongs to Capitolina while the woman who is about to be beheaded is her slave, Erotheides. On the left, Capitolina lies on the ground with her head completely separated from her body. She is dressed in a white tunic that is adorned by purple-yellow bands around the neck, sleeves and the skirt. Capitolina is barefoot and her arms are neatly placed on two sides of the body, as blood spills from her severed neck and decapitated head. Immediately behind Capitolina's body, there is a colonnaded structure with surrounding trees. In the center of the miniature, situated between the martyrs, a stake is ablaze. On the right side of the plain, Capitolina's slave Erotheides is kneeling before the executioner, dressed in a dirty white tunic. Her left hand is resting on her right arm, which is stretched forward, parallel to the ground. Her right foot is a step further away from her left and she is barefoot. The executioner behind her is dressed in a sleeveless blue tunic, red leggings and white boots. The dress is not typical of Roman soldiers as depicted in the manuscript. Against a golden background, a single large mountain occupies the space behind the stake.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτέμνεται [had her cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 49



MS number 148

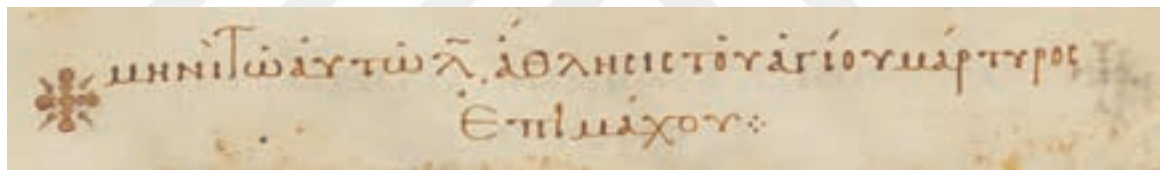
Region 2

MS commemoration date October 30

Vita -

Type A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Epimachus of Alexandria



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Λ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΠΙΜΑΧΟΥ ✠.

**English translation**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Epimachus.

**Description**

According to the title, Epimachus is depicted in the scene. He was martyred in Alexandria in 205 AD.<sup>384</sup>

Epimachus is kneeling before the Roman soldier, dressed in a brown tunic. He is barefoot and his hands are bound behind his back with a red rope. He is depicted as a

<sup>384</sup> *BHG*, 82. Also, PG CXV, 1320-25

middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is dressed in long sleeved red tunic, blue leggings and brown boots. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a black scabbard with his left hand. On the left side, an arched structure is visible. On the right corner, there is a *tempietto* emerging in between mountaintops. Against a golden background, the landscape is flanked with mountains. The figures stand on a green groundline with few scattered floral details.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [they were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>385</sup>



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<sup>385</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 50



MS number 150

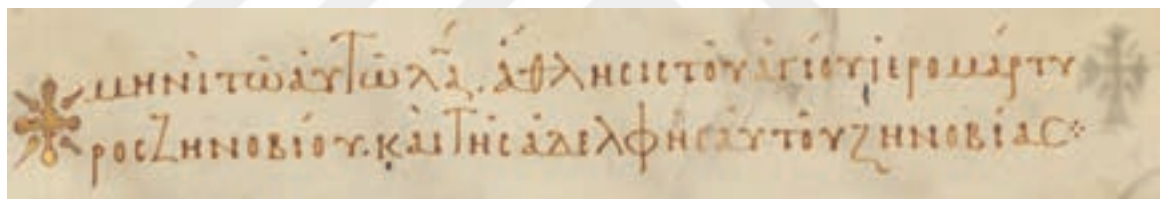
Region 1

MS commemoration date October 31

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Zenobie and Zenobius of Aegae



Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΛΑ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΖΗΝΟΒΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΑΔΕΛΦΗΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΖΗΝΟΒΙΑΣ ∷

English translation

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of holy hieromartyr Zenobius and his sister Zenobie.

Description

According to the title, the miniature depicts Zenobius and his sister Zenobie. They were martyred in Aegae of Cilicia during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>386</sup>

<sup>386</sup> BHG, 265. Also, PG CXV, 1309-18

Zenobius is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier who is about to behead him. He is dressed in a yellow *sticharion* and a white *omophorion* with embroidered crosses encircling his shoulders. The vestment indicates that Zenobius is a bishop who is addressed as a hieromartyr in the title. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with black hair and beard. His left foot is few steps further on than his left and he is wearing black slippers. The Roman soldier behind him is dressed in a dark green tunic, a grey *chlamys*, gold patterned blue leggings, grey stockings and black slippers. His sword-bearing right arm is raised towards the sky while he is holding a red scabbard with his left hand. He stands on an elevated level compared to Zenobius, however all of the figures in the landscape are depicted on the same green groundline. On the far left corner, Zenobie stands with her hands either bound behind at her back. She wears a long blue tunic with yellow drape lines, light blue stockings and yellow slippers. Against a golden background, mountains flank the landscape while floral details are scattered around the plain.

There is no mention of beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner a team effort.<sup>387</sup>

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<sup>387</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 51**



**MS number** 155

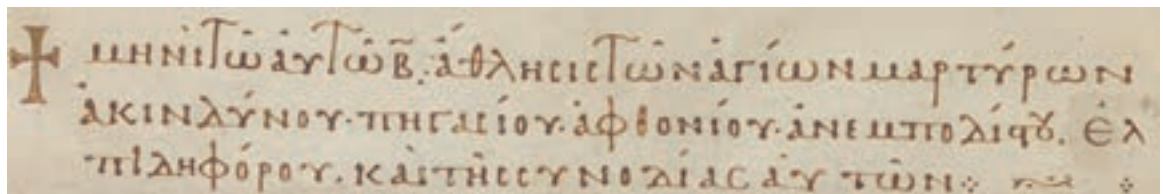
**Region 2**

**MS commemoration date** November 2

**Vita -**

**Type C**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Acindynus,  
Anempodistus, Aphthonius,  
Elpidephorus, Pegasus of Persia



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Β'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΑΚΙΝΔΥΝΟΥ, ΠΗΓΑΣΙΟΥ, ΑΦΘΟΝΙΟΥ,  
ΑΝΕΜΠΟΔΙΣΤΟΥ, ΕΛΠΙΔΗΦΟΡΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ✠ ~ ✠

**English translation**

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of holy martyrs Acindynus, Pegasus, Aphthonius, Anempodistus, Elpidephorus and their companions.

**Description**

According to the title Acindynus, Anempodistus, Aphthonius, Elpidophorus and Pegasius are depicted. They were martyred in Persia during the reign of Shapur II (309-379 AD).<sup>388</sup>

This miniature is one of the most crowded scenes in the manuscript, in as much as it depicts several different types of executions occurring concurrently. At the lower far left corner, Acindynus and Pegasius have already been executed through drowning and their bodies are floating in the running blue stream. By the riverside, a Roman soldier dressed in a red tunic, green leggings and grey boots is about to throw Anempodistus to water as he carries the martyr's body on his shoulders. In the center of the scene, Elpidophorus is about to be beheaded and he kneels in a 90-degree angle, dressed in a purple-yellow tunic. He is depicted as an elderly man. He is standing barefoot and the deceased bodies of two decapitated martyrs are lying horizontally to the ground, next to his feet. The Roman soldier is about to behead Elpidophorus and is dressed in a blue tunic, red leggings, and a red *chlamys*. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a blue scabbard in his left hand. On the far right corner of the miniature, a group of martyrs are standing in a cube shaped, flaming furnace made of brick. Behind the mountain on the left side of the plain, another group of martyrs are witnessing the event. Against the golden background, the arc of Heaven emerges from the top center margin of the miniature.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 2, par. 1 (cols. 187-90)

<sup>389</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 52



**MS number** 159

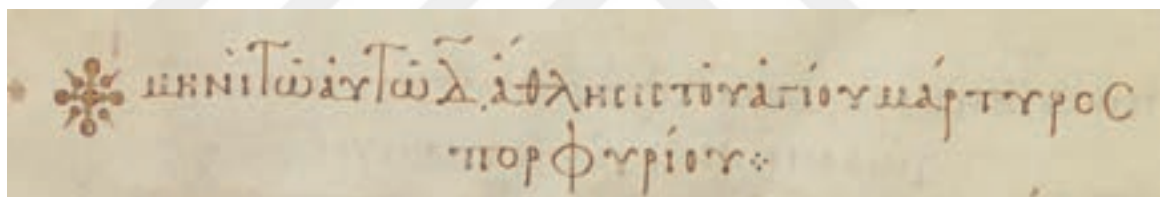
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** November 4

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Porphyrius the Mime



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Δ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΠΟΡΦΥΡΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Porphyrius.

**Description**

According to the title, Porphyrius is depicted in the miniature. He is believed to have been be martyred in Caesaraea in Cappadocia, during the reign of Aurelian (270-275 AD)<sup>390</sup>.

<sup>390</sup> Act. SS. Nov. II, 230-32. This is the second time Porphyrius is depicted, for the other entry, see CI 14.

He wears a white loincloth and kneels before the Roman soldier in a 90-degree angle. His upper body is naked and his hands are bound at the back. Porphyrius stands barefoot and his right leg is leaning forward as his left leg is stretched towards the back. The Roman soldier standing in front of him is dressed in a richly patterned short yellow tunic, a red *chlamys*, white stockings and black slippers. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while resting his left hand on a black scabbard. On the far right corner, a witness dressed in a purple- yellow tunic, black stockings and black slippers raises his left hand holding his chin as in a gesture of awe. He wears a small white turban and the patterns in his dress indicate that he belongs to an upper-class circle, presumably of a foreign origin. A building resembling a church, with a colonnaded entrance half way disguised in a red curtain is situated on the far left corner of the miniature. Few floral details are scattered across the plain. Against a golden background, the figures uniformly stand on the same green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 53



**MS number** 161

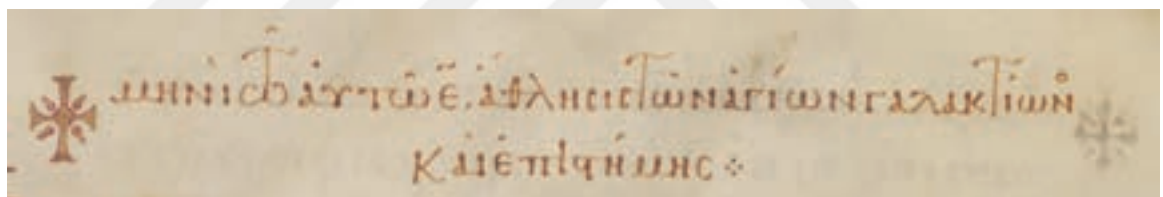
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** November 5

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Galaction and Episteme of Phoenicia



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Ε΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΓΑΛΑΚΤΙΩΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the SS Galaction and Episteme.

**Description**

According to the title, Galaction and Episteme are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Emesa of Phoenicia during the reign of Decius (249-251 AD).<sup>392</sup>

One of the most violent scenes in the manuscript, both martyrs have been depicted nude and dismembered. Their amputated limbs are on the green groundline, with

<sup>392</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 5, par. 1 (cols. 193-5).

blood spilling from the severed parts. On the far left side, the intact torso of Episteme is hovering in the air, dressed in a loincloth, leaving her breasts uncovered. The femininity of her body is vague and it is chiefly presented through her decapitated head where her long brown hair reaches down to her neck. Next to her, Galaction's torso is also floating in mid-air, severely mutilated however his head is yet intact and attached to his body. His body is still positioned as if he is kneeling. Depicted as an elderly man with white beard and hair, Galaction is also completely naked and his body's curved position covers his genitalia. On the left corner of the miniature, the Roman soldier stands with his sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky while left hand rests on the red scabbard. He is wearing a green tunic, a red *chlamys*, red leggings and brown boots. Against a golden background, mountains flank the plain and few floral details are scattered around the green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 54



**MS number** 162

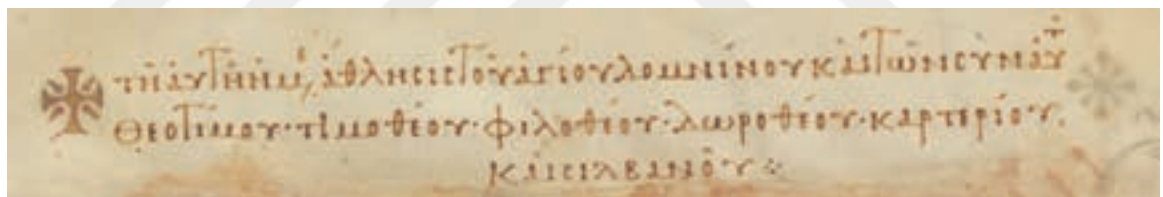
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** November 5

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Dominus, Theotimos, Thimoteos, Philotheos, Dorotheos, Karterios and Silvanos



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΔΟΜΝΙΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΘΕΟΤΙΜΟΥ  
ΤΙΜΟΘΕΟΥ ΦΙΛΟΘΕΟΥ ΔΩΡΟΘΕΟΥ ΚΑΡΤΕΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΣΙΛΒΑΝΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the St Dominus and with him of [SS] Theotimos, Thimoteos, Philotheos, Dorotheos, Karterios and Silvanos.

**Description**

According to the title, Dominus, Theotimos, Timoteos, Philotheos, Dorotheos, Karterios and Silvanos are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Emesa in Phoenicia during the reign of Maximinus II Daia (305-311 A.D).<sup>394</sup>

Of the eight martyrs that are represented in the scene, seven are addressed with their names however it is not possible to identify them individually. A group of four martyrs wait for their martyrdom on the far left corner, dressed in long tunics and grey slippers. Only the two of them are depicted in their entirety, while the remaining two are hidden behind the frontal pair, represented merely through the tip of their nimbuses. In the center of the scene, an elderly male martyr is kneeling before the Roman soldier. He is dressed in a long brown-grey tunic and grey slippers. Positioned sideways to the viewer, his hands are tied behind his back and his eyes are fixed to a point in distance towards the right side of the plain. The Roman soldier is standing behind him, dressed in a purple tunic, red leggings, a blue *chlamys* and white boots. He raises his sword-bearing right arm, while his left hand is hidden behind the body of the martyr. Three decapitated bodies lie on the green groundline with their bodies scattered around in different positions. Piles of blood spill from their severed necks and heads. Overall, the miniature is dominated by a large black mountain beginning from the right side of the plain, reaching out to the left corner. A smaller brown mountain is situated behind the group of four martyrs on the leftmost corner. Against a golden background, all figures uniformly share the same green groundline except for the Roman soldier, who is standing on the black mountain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀποκεφαλισθέντες [having been beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>394</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 5, par. 1 (cols. 195-7).

<sup>395</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 55



MS number 165

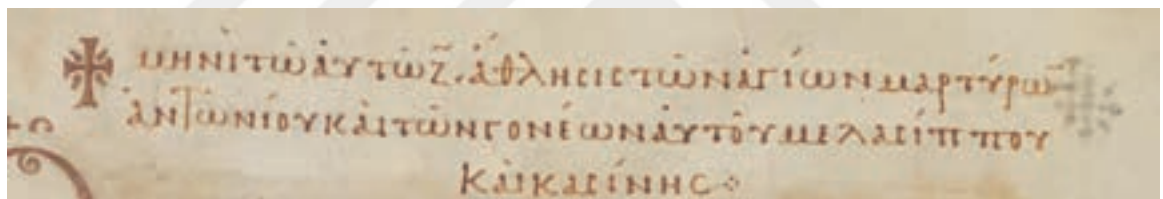
Region 1

MS commemoration date November 7

Vita

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Melasippus,  
Anthony and Cassina



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Ζ'

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΓΟΝΕΩΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ  
ΜΕΛΑΣΙΠΠΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΣΙΝΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Anthony and his parents Melasippus and Cassina.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Anthony and his parents Melasippus and Cassina. They were martyred at Ancyra in Galatia during the reign of Julian the Apostate (355-360 AD).<sup>396</sup>

<sup>396</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 7, par. 3 (cols. 201-2).

The left side of the miniature depicts the torture Anthony's parents Melasippus and Cassina endured. Suspended on a horizontal bar from their wrists, they both wear white loincloths. On the left, Cassina's legs are amputated and blood spills from the severed parts of his body. His head is slightly tilted to left. Melasippus' breasts are cut off and they are situated next to Cassina's dismembered legs. Next to the severed limbs, a block and axe are suggesting the method of torture. On the right side of the plain, Anthony is about to be beheaded and he kneels before the Roman soldier, dressed in a similar white loincloth with his parents. Standing sideways to the viewer, his arms are crossed in front of his chest and he is depicted as a young boy with brown hair and a muscular body. The Roman soldier is dressed in blue tunic, green leggings with a lozenge pattern and white boots. Against a golden background, two small mountains are situated on the left corner of the scene with few floral details scattered around the plain. Anthony stands on the same green groundline with his parents' severed body parts.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group *καὶ ξυρᾶται τὴν κεφαλὴν* [has his head cut clean off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>397</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 56



**MS number** 166

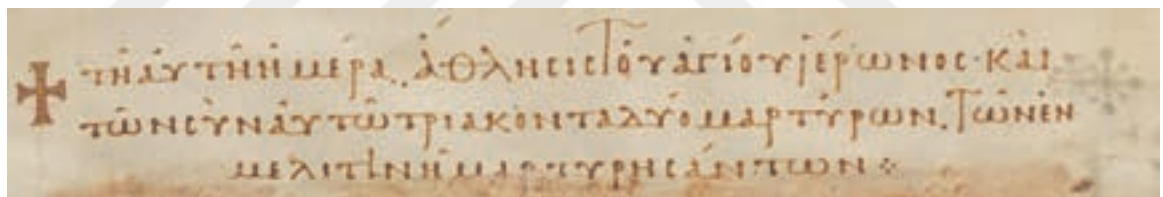
**MS commemoration date** November 7

**Type** C

**Region** 1

**Vita** -

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Hieron of Melitene and thirty-three martyrs of Melitene



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΩΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΤΡΙΑΚΟΝΤΑ ΔΥΟ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΜΕΛΙΤΙΝΗ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the St Hieron and his thirty-three companion saints who met with martyrdom in the city of Melitene.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Hieron and his thirty-three companions who were martyred in Melitine. They were martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>398</sup>

On the far left corner, a group of four companions are standing and witnessing the martyrdom. One of the martyrs is depicted with his full body visible and is wearing a belted yellow tunic, white stockings and yellow slippers. Behind his shoulders, the heads of three companions are discernible. Hieron stands barefoot at the center of the plain, kneeling before the Roman soldier with his hands bound behind his back with a thin black rope. He is wearing a white loincloth and his legs next to one another. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. The Roman soldier is approaching him with his hands crossed above his head, holding the sword with both hands. He is wearing a green patterned red tunic and yellow patterned purple leggings, white stockings and black slippers. Next to Hieron, the opulently dressed bodies and severed heads of two more martyrs are depicted. Their heads are situated next to the Roman soldier's left foot with blood gashing from the severed necks. Both their tunics indicate that they are of a higher social status and ornamented bands adorn their attire around the shoulders and wrists. Standing in the far right corner of the plain, a group of lavishly dressed companions witness the scene with their hands bound behind their backs, amounting to a total of fifteen. However, the torsos of only four of them are discernable, at which level the bodies of the decapitated martyrs hide their legs and feet. The companions on either sides of the miniature are not nimbed, indicating they did not achieve the saintly status. A single mountain on the right side of the plain occupies the space behind the fifteen companions. Against a golden background, the figures uniformly stand on the same green groundline.

There is no mention of beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> *BHG*, 105. Also, *Synax.CP*, Nov. 7, par. 1 (cols. 199-201).

<sup>399</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 57



MS number 167

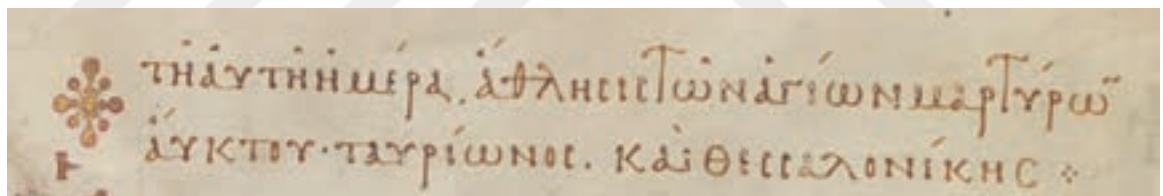
Region 3

MS commemoration date November 7

Vita -

Type A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Auctus, Taurion and Thessalonica of Amphipolis



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΑΥΚΤΟΥ ΤΑΥΡΙΩΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ  
ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Auctus, Taurion and Thessalonica.

**Description**

According to the title, Auctus, Taurion and Thessalonica are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Macedonia at an unknown time.<sup>400</sup>

On the left side of the plain, Thessalonica is raising her arms towards the sky as in an act of prayer. She is dressed in a long brocade mantle that is richly decorated with golden roundels. Beneath the long skirt, her red slippers are visible. She looks towards an arc of Heaven that is represented with a semicircle, emerging from the top of the frame. In the center of the miniature, Auctus, dressed in a loincloth, is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier. Depicted as a middle-aged man with black hair and beard, his back bent forming a 90-degree angle to the ground and his hands are bound behind his back. Behind him, Taurion is waiting to be beheaded, dressed in a loincloth with his hands bound behind his back. He is depicted as a beardless young man. On the right side of the plain, a domed church is surrounded by high brick walls. Beneath these walls, a grey reliquary casket is situated on the far right corner of the miniature. Against a golden background, the figures stand on the same green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀποκεφαλίζοντα [are being beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 7, par. 4 (cols. 202-4).

<sup>401</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 58



**MS number** 170

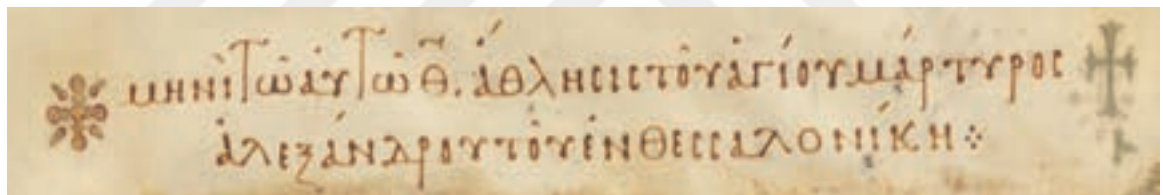
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** November 9

**Vita**

**Type** B

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Alexander of Thessalonica



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Θ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ  
✠

**English translation**

On the ninth of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Alexander of Thessalonica.

**Description**

According to the title, Alexander of Thessalonica is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Maximian (286-305 A.D).<sup>402</sup>

<sup>402</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 9, par. 11 (col. 208).

On the left side of the plain, Emperor Maximian is sitting with his legs crossed inside a throne with two eagles adorning its roof. He is dressed in a light blue tunic with a darker blue mantle crossed in his chest. His right hand is touching his chin and he is wearing a crown, depicted as a middle-aged man with black hair and beard. Behind the throne, a young soldier is holding a spear and a shield, dressed in a red tunic. In the center of the plain, the decapitated body of Alexander is lying horizontally to the ground while a Roman soldier stands behind him, placing his sword inside a black scabbard. Alexander is dressed in a grey tunic and his hands are bound behind his back. His decapitated head lies further away from his body as blood spills from both mutilated ends. Above the head of the Roman soldier, two winged angels carry the soul of Alexander towards an arc of Heaven represented as a semicircle emerging from the top frame line of the miniature. Against a golden background, mountains occupy the right side of the plain with few floral details scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀποκεφαλίσαι [to behead] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>403</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 59**



**MS number** 171

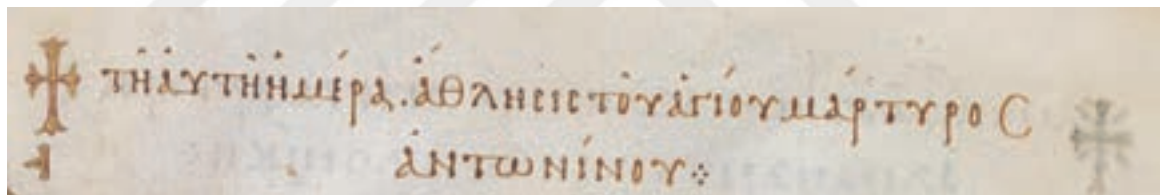
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** November 9

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Antoninus of Apamea



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ Σ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Antoninus.

**Description**

According to the title, Antoninus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred at Apamea in Syria during the reign of Constantius (337-361 A.D).<sup>404</sup>

On the right side of the plain, Anoninus is kneeling on the ground with his arms crossed over his chest. He is dressed in a yellow tunic and black slippers. Two Roman soldiers are approaching with swords directed towards him. The martyr is depicted as a middle-aged man with black hair and beard. The Roman soldiers are dressed in blue and red tunics with grey boots. The left side of the plain is dominated by a large two-storey church building supported by colonnades and reaching to the groundline through marble stairs. Against a golden background, mountains occupy the left side of the miniature as the figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

There is no mention of Antoninus being beheaded in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>405</sup>



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<sup>404</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 9, par. 12 (col. 208).

<sup>405</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 60



MS number 173

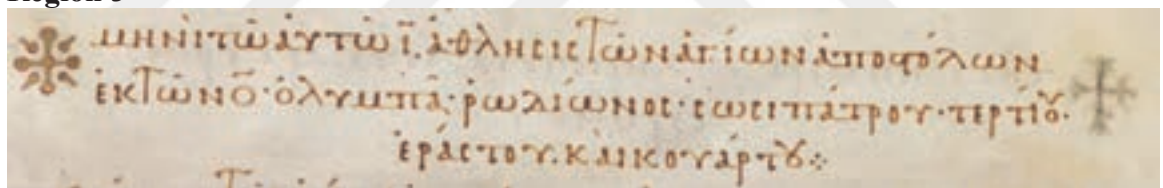
MS commemoration date November 10

Type C

Region 3

Vita -

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Olympas,  
Herodion, Sosipater, Tertius, Erastus,  
Quartus



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Ι΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ ΕΚ ΤΩΝ Ο ΟΛΥΜΠΙΑ ΡΩΔΙΩΝΟΣ  
ΣΩΣΙΠΑΤΡΟΥ ΤΕΡΤΙΟΥ ΕΡΑΣΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΥΑΡΤΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of Olympas, Herodion, Sosipater, Tertius, Erastus and Quartus [six] of  
the of the Seventy Holy Apostles.

**Description**

According to the title, Olympas, Herodion, Sosipater, Tertius, Erastus and Quartus are depicted in the miniature. They were 1<sup>st</sup> century martyrs belonging to the group of seventy apostles following the discipleship of Paul the Apostle.<sup>406</sup>

On the left side of the plain, Olympas and Herodion are in front of the Roman soldier. One of them is already decapitated and his body, dressed in a grey tunic, is lying horizontally on the ground. His hands are clasped in front of him as his rolled head rests on his knees. Blood gashes from his neck. The other martyr is kneeling in front of the soldier with his hands bound behind his back. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with black hair and beard. He is barefoot and dressed in a yellow tunic. The Roman soldier is dressed in a green tunic, blue leggings and grey boots. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while he is grasping a scabbard in his left hand. He is about to begin the decapitation. On the left side of the plain, a group of four martyrs are raising their arms towards the sky as in an act of prayer towards an arc of Heaven that is depicted as a semicircle emerging from the top frame line. Each martyr on the right half of the miniature is dressed in a *sticharion*, a *sakkos* and an *omophorion* in various colors allowing one to identify them as bishops of the Church. Against a golden background, mountains occupy the landscape as the figures stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀπετιμήθησαν [had their heads cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 10, par. 1 (cols. 209-10).

<sup>407</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 61



MS number 174

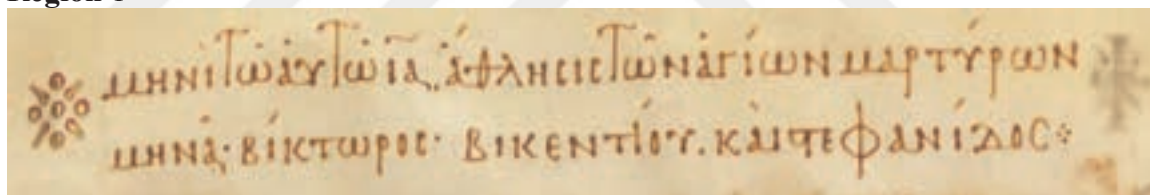
MS commemoration date November 11

Type C

Region 1

Vita -

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Menas of Egypt, Victor of Syria, Stephanis of Syria and Vincent of Saragossa



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΑ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΜΗΝΑ· ΒΙΚΤΩΡΟΣ· ΒΙΚΕΝΤΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΙΔΟΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Menas, Victor, Vincent and Stephanis.

**Description**

According to the title, Menas, Victor, Vincent and Stephanis are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Phrygia during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>408</sup>

On the left side of the plain, a martyr depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier who is about to begin beheading him. He is wearing a grey tunic and as he rests his right hand on his knees, he is standing barefoot. Beneath his feet, another martyr is already decapitated as he kneels on the ground dressed in a yellow tunic. The Roman soldier is raising his right arm towards the sky as he prepares to begin the decapitation. On the far left corner of the plain, a third martyr is waiting to be decapitated as his hands are bound behind his back. Behind them, a mountainous landscape occupies the background. On the right side of the plain, Stephanis' hands are fixed with ropes on two identical palm trees. She is dressed in a long, white tunic and her curly brown hair reaches down to her shoulders. She is standing barefoot and her dress reveals her gender with drape lines circling around her breasts. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape and floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word groups τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτέμνεται [has his head cut off] and τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀπεμήθη [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>409</sup>

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<sup>408</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 11, par. 1 (cols. 211-214). Also, *BHG*, 175.

<sup>409</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 62



MS number 180

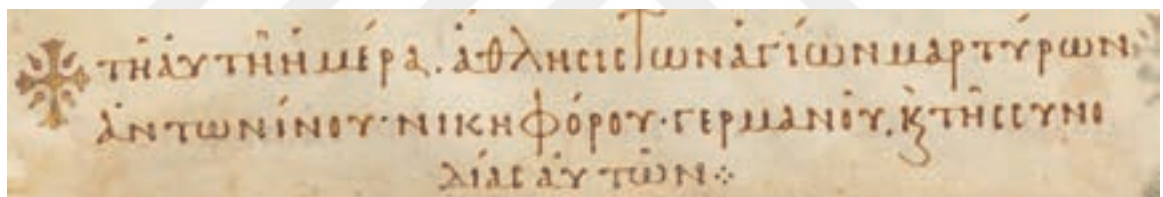
MS commemoration date November 11

Type C

Region 2

Vita -

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Antoninus,  
Germanus and Nicephorus of  
Caesarea



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ,

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟΥ · ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ ·  
ΓΕΡΜΑΝΟΥ, ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Antoninus, Nicephorus, Germanus and their companions.

**Description**

According to the title, Antoninus, Nicephorus, Germanus and their companions are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Caesarea in Palestine during the reign of Maximinus II Daia.<sup>410</sup>

Antoninus is kneeling before the Roman soldier, wearing a light pink tunic and black slippers. His hands are bound behind his back. The Roman soldier raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a brown scabbard with his left hand. He is wearing a blue tunic, gold lozenge patterned black leggings and grey boots. On the left side of the plain, a witness dressed in a grey tunic and black slippers is viewing the beheading with his hands either clasped or bound behind his back. The bodies of co-martyrs Nicephorus and Germanus lie at Antonius' feet and they are already decapitated, with their heads completely separated from their bodies. Both of them are wearing grey tunics and blood gashes out from their severed necks. On the right side of the plain, unnamed martyr is depicted enveloped by flames. He is dressed in a yellow tunic and prays towards an arc of Heaven from which golden rays issue forth in his direction. Against a golden background, the landscape is mountainous and some floral details are scattered across.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὰς κεφαλὰς ἐν Καισαρείᾳ ἀπετμήθησαν [had their heads cut off in Caesarea] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>411</sup>

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<sup>410</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 13, par. 3 (cols. 221-2).

<sup>411</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 63



MS number 183

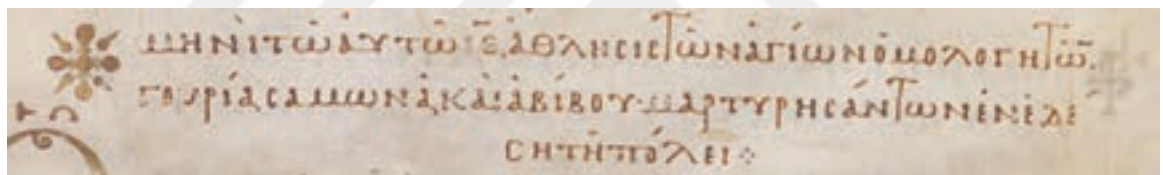
Region 1

MS commemoration date November 15

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Gurias, Samonas and Abibus in Edessa



Transcription

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΕ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΟΜΟΛΟΓΗΤΩΝ ΓΟΥΡΙΑ· ΣΑΜΩΝΑ, ΚΑΙ ΑΒΙΒΟΥ· ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΕΔΕΣΗ ΤΗ ΠΟΛΕΙ ∴

English translation

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of SS Gurias, Samonas and Abibus, the Confessors, who were martyred in the city of Edessa.

Description

According to the title Gurias, Samonas and Abibus are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Edessa during the reign of Diocletian and Licinius (305-311 AD).<sup>412</sup>

<sup>412</sup> BHG,103. Also, PG GXVI, 128-61

Gurias is standing on the far left corner with his hands bound at the back, wearing a purple tunic and grey boots. He is depicted as an elderly man with white beard and hair. Next to him, Samonas is about to be beheaded and he kneels in front of the Roman soldier, wearing a long yellow tunic and boots. The soldier is wearing a dark blue tunic, bright blue leggings and grey boots. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a scabbard with his left one. On the far right corner of the plain, there is a fire furnace where within which Abibus is about to be martyred. A Roman soldier, wearing a blue tunic, is attending to the fire. Against a golden background, mountains occupy the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀποτέμνονται [they have their heads cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>413</sup>



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<sup>413</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 64



MS number 184

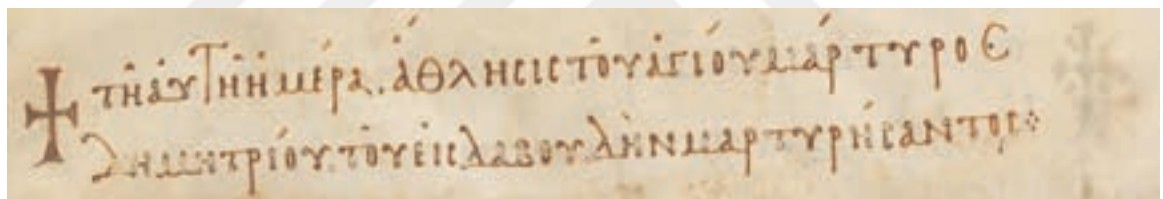
Region 2

MS commemoration date November 15

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Demetrius of Dabude



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, ΤΟΥ ΕΙΣ ΔΑΒΟΥΔΗΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤΟΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Demetrius who was martyred in Dabude.

**Description**

According to the title, Demetrius is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred at Dabude in Nubia, during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD) or Maximinus II Daia (308-313 AD).<sup>414</sup>

<sup>414</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 15, par. 3 (col. 226).

Demetrius is dressed in a long blue tunic and black slippers and kneels in front of the Roman soldier. His hands are resting on his left knee while his right leg stands on a 90-degree angle to the ground. The Roman soldier wears a blue *chlamys*, a red tunic, blue leggings and yellow boots. He raises his right arm to the sky with a sword while grasping a scabbard with his left hand. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene and the two figures stand uniformly on the green groundline. Few trees and floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτμηθεὶς [having had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>415</sup>



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<sup>415</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 65



MS number 189

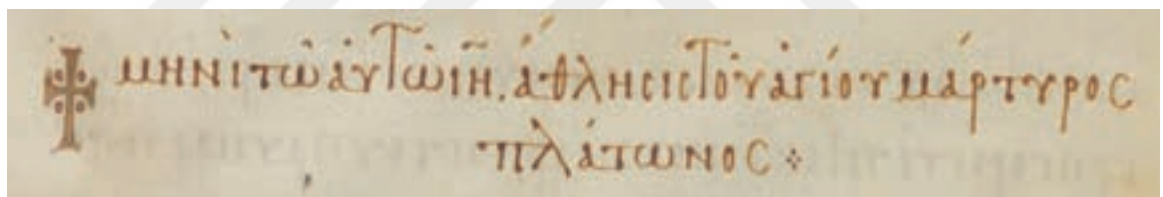
Region 1

MS commemoration date November 18

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Plato of Ancyra



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΗ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΠΛΑΤΩΝΟΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Plato.

**Description**

According to the title, the holy martyr Plato is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>416</sup> BHG,216.

Plato kneels before the Roman soldier with his hands bound at his back, wearing a loincloth. He is depicted as a beardless young man and he is barefoot. The Roman soldier behind him wears a red tunic, a blue *chlamys* and grey boots. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a brown scabbard in his left hand. Plato's upper body conceals the soldier's left leg. Against a golden background, mountains flank the landscape as few trees are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>417</sup>



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<sup>417</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 66**



**MS number** 190

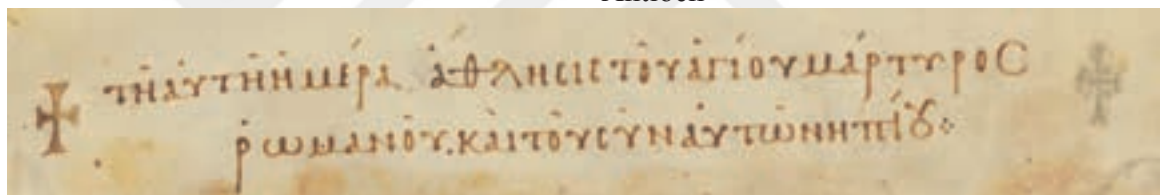
**Region** 1

**MS commemoration date** November 18

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Romanus of Antioch



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΡΩΜΑΝΟΥ, ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΝΗΠΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Romanus and of the child with him.

**Description**

According to the title, Romanus and a child are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Antioch during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>418</sup>

<sup>418</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 18, pars. 2-3 (cols. 235-6).

On the left side of the landscape, a young male, dressed in a gold patterned blue tunic is kneeling before a Roman soldier. He is barefoot and judging from his height, he is only a child that corroborates the title. The Roman soldier behind him is wearing a red *chlamys*, yellow boots, a brown tunic and black leggings that are both patterned in gold. The head of a female figure, wearing a black *maphorion* is hidden behind a mountain and she is watching over the events. On the right side, two Roman soldiers are strangling Romanus with a black rope as he sits back on a rock, wearing a grey tunic. He is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The Roman soldier on the left, wears a blue tunic and the soldier on the right side is wearing a purple tunic, blue leggings and yellow boots. The figures appear to be incarcerated within a high, brick-walled building, reminiscing a prison, judging from its high fortifications and the tightly secured door on the left. Against a golden background, all figures except the female witness are standing on a uniform green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the landscape.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>419</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 67



MS number 191

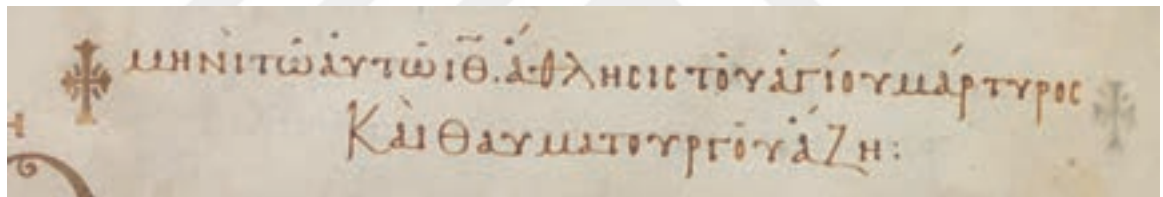
Region 1

MS commemoration date November 19

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Azas of Isauria



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΘ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΑΥΜΑΤΟΥΡΓΟΥ ΑΖΗ ∴

**English translation**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Azas, the Miracle-worker Azas.

**Description**

According to the title, Azas the Miracle-worker is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Diocletian.<sup>420</sup>

Two concurrent beheadings are about to take place in the miniature. On the left side of the plain, a young female is kneeling in front of a Roman soldier as she is wearing

<sup>420</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 19, par. 3 (cols. 237-8).

a white tunic and black slippers. As she is about to be beheaded, her left foot is pressing on the nimbus of a decapitated martyr's head, while her right foot is suspended in mid-air. The Roman soldier behind her firmly clasps his sword, raised towards the sky, with both in a two-handed backhand grip position, on the left side of his body. He is dressed in a blue tunic and his lower body is hidden behind the martyr's. On the far left corner, a female dressed in a patterned pink dress is viewing the event with her hands bound behind her back. In the center of the plain, five bodies and their decapitated heads are scattered on the ground, wearing various colors of tunics. On the right side of the plain, Azas is about to be beheaded as he kneels before the Roman soldier with his hands bound behind his back. He is depicted as an elderly man with white beard and hair, wearing a dark blue tunic with gold drape lines. The Roman soldier approaches Azas with one foot in front of the other as he raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a scabbard in his left hand. He is wearing a red tunic, gold patterned black leggings and grey boots. Against a golden background, mountains flank the landscape. Some floral details are scattered across and there is a small marble column on top of the mountain on the right side of the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>421</sup>

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<sup>421</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 68



MS number 193

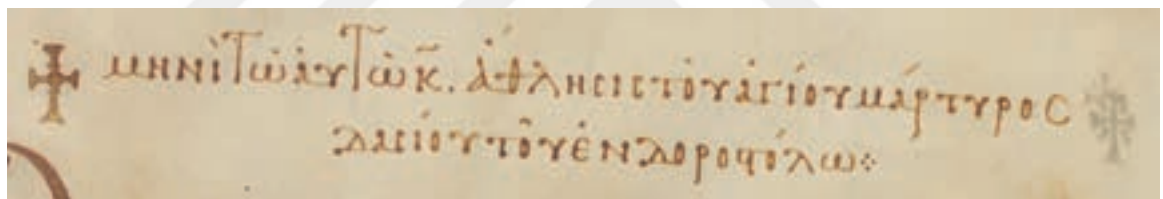
Region 3

MS commemoration date November 20

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Dasius of Durostorum



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Κ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΔΑΣΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΔΟΥΡΟΣΤΟΛΩ ∴

**English translation**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Dasius in Durostorum.

**Description**

According to the title, Dasius' martyrdom in Durostorum is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 A.D).<sup>422</sup>

Dasius is kneeling before the Roman soldier and his hands are bound in his back. Dressed in a blue tunic and grey slippers, he is depicted as an elderly man with white

<sup>422</sup> BHG, 69.

hair and beard. The Roman soldier approaches him with his body turned sideways, both of his arms are raised towards the sky, holding a sword. He wears a grey *chlamys*, a brown tunic, gold patterned leggings and grey boots. Against a golden background, mountains flank the scene while few floral details are scattered across the green groundline.

There is no mention of Dasius being beheaded in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's



Catalogue ID 69



MS number 194

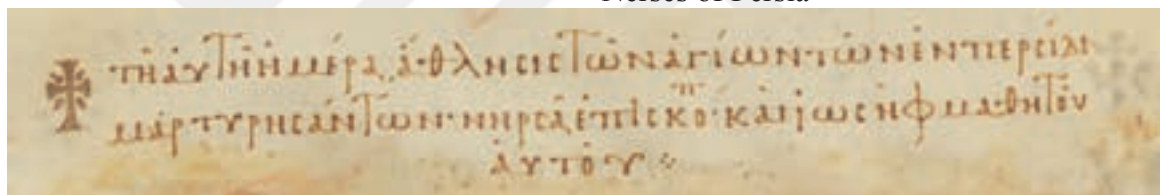
Region 2

MS commemoration date November 20

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Joseph and  
Nerses of Persia



Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΠΕΡΣΙΔΙ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤΩΝ· ΝΗΡΣΑ  
ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΙΩΣΗΦ ΜΑΘΗΤΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΥ ∴

English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of SS Nerses the bishop and his disciple Joseph, who were martyred in Persia.

Description

According to the title, the holy martyrs Nerses the bishop and his disciple Joseph of Persia are depicted in the miniature. Nerses and Joseph were martyred in Persia during the reign of Shapur II (309-379 AD).<sup>423</sup>

Joseph of Persia is dressed in a grey *sticharion* and a white *omophorion* with embroidered crosses, addressing his rank as a bishop. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. His hands are bound behind his back and he is wearing black slippers. In the center of the plain, Nerses kneels before the Roman soldier dressed light yellow and white *sticharion* and a white *omophorion* with embroidered crosses. His rank as a bishop is of a higher status than Joseph's as he is depicted as an even older man with white hair and beard. The Roman soldier is wearing a grey *chlamys*, blue tunic, red leggings, yellow stockings and white slippers. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a scabbard in his left hand. Against a golden background, the landscape is flanked by mountains on both sides with few floral details scattered across the plain. All the figures stand uniformly on a green groundline.

There is no mention of the beheadings of Joseph and Nerses in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>424</sup>

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<sup>423</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 20, par. 5 (col. 241).

<sup>424</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 70



MS number 196

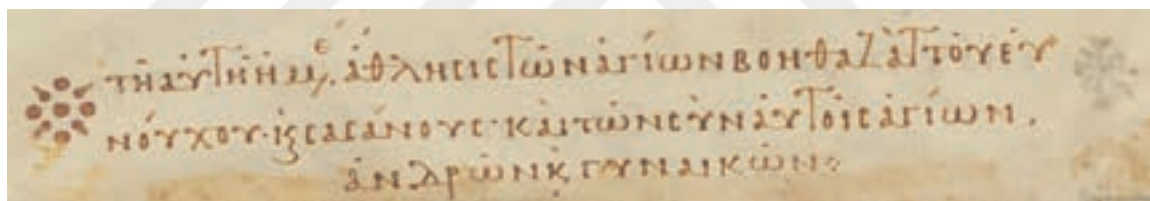
MS commemoration date November 20

Type A

Region 2

Vita Anonymous, *Miracles of St.Thekla*

Beheaded martyr(s) Boethazatus, Sazanes, Anna and Thekla of Beth-Seleucia



Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕ[ΡΑ].

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΒΟΗΘΑΖΑΤ[ΟΥ] ΤΟΥ ΕΥΝΟΥΧΟΥ, ΚΑΙ  
ΣΑΣΑΝΟΥΣ, ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΑΝΔΡΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ∴

English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the SS Boethazatus the eunuch, and Sazanes, and the saintly men and women with them.

## Description

According to title, Boethazatus the eunuch, Sazanes and holy men and women are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Persia during the reign of Shapur II (309-379 AD).<sup>425</sup> Amongst the martyrs represented in the miniature, Thekla is known as an apostle and first female martyr.<sup>426</sup> She was born in Ikonion, travelled extensively during her life and finally died in Seleucia when she was 90 years old.<sup>427</sup> A 5<sup>th</sup> century collection of *Miracles* penned anonymously reconstructs her legendary life, describing the miracles she performed, as well as her escape from death several times through supernatural circumstances.<sup>428</sup>

On the left side of the plane, in front of a mountain, a young male dressed in a patterned yellow tunic is about to be stabbed to death by a Roman soldier. His hands are bound at his back and he is directly looking at his persecutor. The Roman soldier holds a short knife in his right hand that is about to cut through the martyr's throat. He is dressed in a red tunic, black boots, white stockings and black slippers. Beneath them, four male co-martyrs are lying dead in various positions with blood issuing forth from the wounds. In the center of the plain, a female martyr is kneeling before a Roman soldier and she is about to be beheaded. She is wearing a nun's habit, a brown *maphorion* over a dark purple *sticharion* covering her neck and head completely. Her hands are placed on her knees and her rounded back implies that she is an elderly woman. The Roman soldier is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a black scabbard in his left hand. As he is preparing to behead her, he is wearing a red tunic, dark green leggings and grey boots. To their left, a group of women are standing and witnessing the event, uniformly dressed in nun's habits. On the far left corner, three co-martyrs, also dressed in nun's habits are kneeling to the ground and a sword-bearing Roman soldier approaches towards them. Mountains flank the scene on both sides of the plain. Against a golden background, all figures share a common green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>429</sup>

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<sup>425</sup> *Synax. CP*, Nov. 20, par. 8 (cols. 243-4).

<sup>426</sup> *ODB*, 2033.

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.*,. Also in, Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, *The life and miracles of Thekla: A literary study*, Hellenic studies 13 (Washington, D.C., Center for Hellenic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University, London: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2006)

<sup>429</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 71**



**MS number** 199

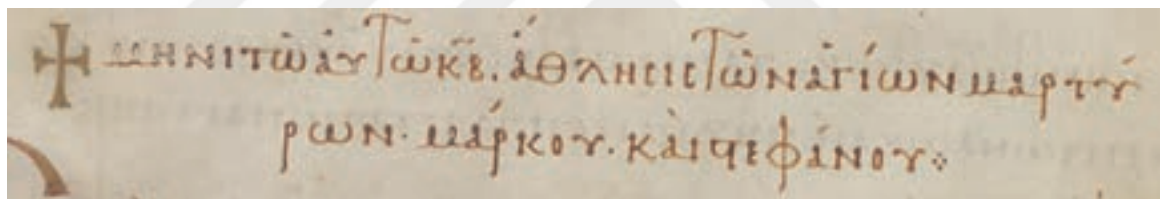
**Region 1**

**MS commemoration date** November 22

**Vita -**

**Type A**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Mark of Antioch  
in Pisidia and Stephanos



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΒ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΜΑΡΚΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥ ∷

**English translation**

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Mark and Stephanos.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts the holy martyrs Mark and Stephanos. They were martyred at Antioch in Pisidia, during the reign of Galerius (305-311AD).<sup>430</sup>

<sup>430</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 22, par. 3 (col. 246).

On the left side of the plain, Stephanos is standing and watching the martyrdom of Mark, with his hands bound behind his back. Stephanos is wearing a long, roundel patterned tunic and yellow slippers while his head is slightly tilted towards the left. About the face of Stephanos, the miniature has been damaged, making it difficult to identify his facial expression. In the center, Mark is kneeling before a Roman soldier and his hands are also bound behind his back. He is wearing a long purple tunic with yellow drape lines and the outfit is completed with black slippers. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is dressed in a roundel patterned blue tunic, purple leggings with gold patterns and grey boots. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a red scabbard with his left hand. The figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. Few floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἀπετμήθησαν τὰς [...] κεφαλὰς [had their heads cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>431</sup>

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<sup>431</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 72



MS number 201

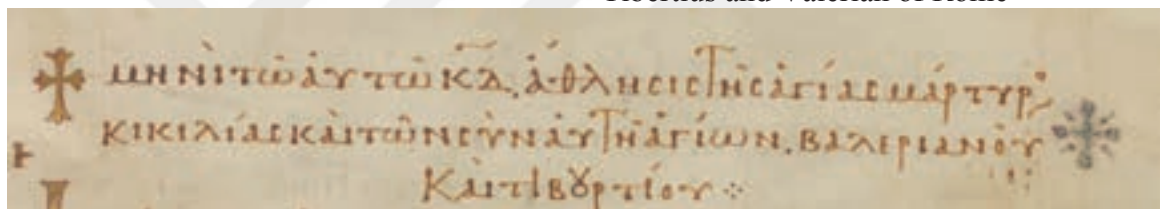
Region 3

MS commemoration date November 24

Vita -

Type C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Cecilia,  
Tibertius and Valerian of Rome



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΑ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΚΙΚΙΛΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΗ ΑΓΙΩΝ  
ΒΑΛΕΡΙΑΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΙΒΟΥΡΤΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Cecilia and with her of SS Valerian and Tibertius.

**Description**

According to the title, holy martyr Cecilia, Valerian and Tibertius are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Rome in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD<sup>432</sup>

<sup>432</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 22, par. 1 (cols. 243-5)

On the left side of the plain, the dead bodies of Valerian and Tibertius lie flat on the ground, with their heads completely detached from their bodies. Blood gashes out from the severed parts of their bodies. They are dressed in long tunics with ornamented rectangular stoles hanging down from their chests vertically. Both the wrists and the end of the tunics are adorned with gold colored bands. On the right side of the plain, Cecilia, dressed in a loincloth, is kneeling before a Roman soldier. She is concealing her breasts by crossing her arms across her chest. Her upper body is depicted sideways and her long brown hair reaches down to her shoulders. The Roman soldier raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a black scabbard with his left hand. Depicted sideways to the viewer, he wears a red tunic, blue leggings and grey boots. A white, round brick structure with a red roof emerges behind Cecilia. Against a golden background, the landscape is mountainous on the left side. A single flower is depicted next to Cecilia's bare feet.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἐτμήθη τὴν κεφαλὴν [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>433</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 73



MS number 202

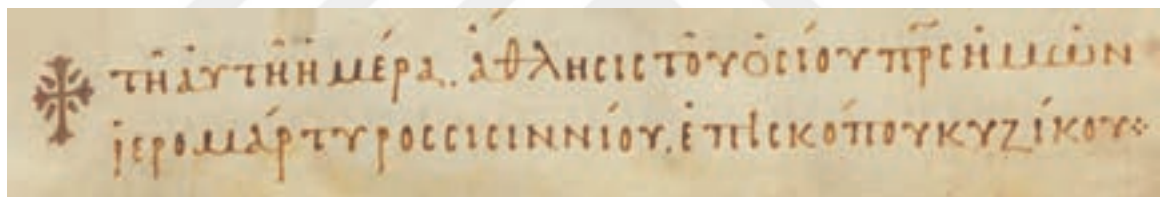
Region 1

MS commemoration date November 24

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Sisinius of  
Cyzicus



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΟΣΙΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΣΙΣΙΝΝΙΟΥ,  
ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ ΚΥΖΙΚΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of our holy father and holy martyr Sisinius, the bishop of Cyzicus.

**Description**

According to the title, Sisinius the bishop of Cyzicus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD)<sup>434</sup>

<sup>434</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 23, no. 3 (cols. 250-2)

Sisinius kneels before a Roman soldier, dressed in a light blue *sticharion*, a purple *sakkos* with yellow drape lines and black slippers. The tip of a white *epitracheloion* with a gold band hangs in between the two layers of his vestment, manifesting his rank as a bishop. He holds a two-handled liturgical vessel through a piece of red cloth between his hands as in the gesture of making an offering. The contents and the base of the chalice are not visible and small white gems surround the rim. Sisinius is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him raises his right arm towards the sky, as he is about to begin the beheading. He is dressed in a blue tunic and from waist down his body is hidden behind Sisinius. At the right side of the plain, a columned and walled structure emerges. A statue of a nude male holding a spear adorns its roof. A two-storey building with a large wooden door, an ornamented tympanum and a cone shaped tower occupies the left side of the plain. The figures stand on a green groundline against a golden background. Few floral details are scattered around the landscape.

There is no mention of Sisinius beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>435</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 74



MS number 205

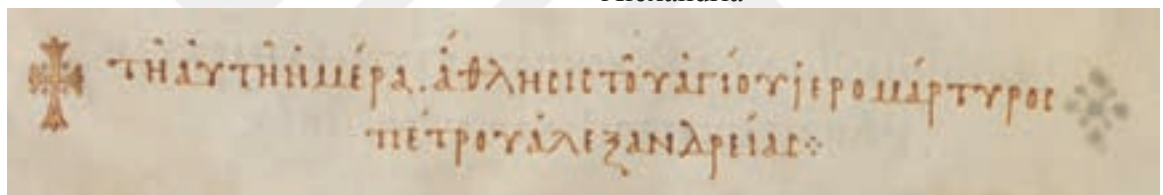
Region 2

MS commemoration date November 25

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Peter of Alexandria



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΠΕΤΡΟΥ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕΙΑΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Peter of Alexandria.

**Description**

According to the title, Peter of Alexandria is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in 311 AD at Alexandria.<sup>436</sup>

Peter is kneeling before the Roman soldier with one of his knees touching the ground while the other one is bent halfway. Raising both hands towards the sky as in an act

<sup>436</sup> BHG, 210.

of prayer, Peter is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. He is dressed in a light blue *sticharion*, a purple *sakkos* with yellow drape lines and a white *omophorion* with black embroidered crosses. His clothes manifest his status in the Church as a bishop. Peter is looking towards a figure of young Christ, who is walking towards him, dressed in torn white clothes. Jesus is depicted as a beardless young man and walks barefoot while holding a scroll in his left hand. His nimbus is different from the martyrs' nimbuses, with a red cross inscribed inside the circle, which distinctively identifies him as Jesus Christ. Behind Peter, a Roman soldier dressed in a purple tunic is about to behead him, raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a scabbard in his other hand. All figures stand on a uniform green groundline. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀπετμήθη [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>437</sup>

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<sup>437</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 75



**MS number** 206

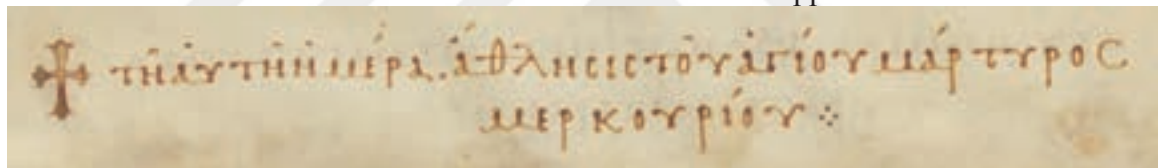
**Region 1**

**MS commemoration date** November 25

**Vita -**

**Type A**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Mercurius of  
Caesarea in Cappadocia



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΜΕΡΚΟΥΡΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Mercurius.

**Description**

According to the title, Mercurius is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Valerian (253-260 AD)<sup>438</sup>

Mercurius is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier, dressed in a loincloth with his hands bound behind his back. The Roman soldier approaches him, raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky, in order to behead him. He is wearing a blue

<sup>438</sup> H. Delehaye, *Les legendes grecques des saints mitttaires* (Paris, 1909), 234-42.

tunic, dark blue leggings and grey boots. On the left side of the plain, a small building emerges, resembling a tomb sanctuary. From the lower side of the building, a spring flows from a lion-head spot. On the far right corner of the miniature, an arched structure is partly concealed behind a mountain. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. The figures stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθσαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>439</sup>



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<sup>439</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 76



MS number 207

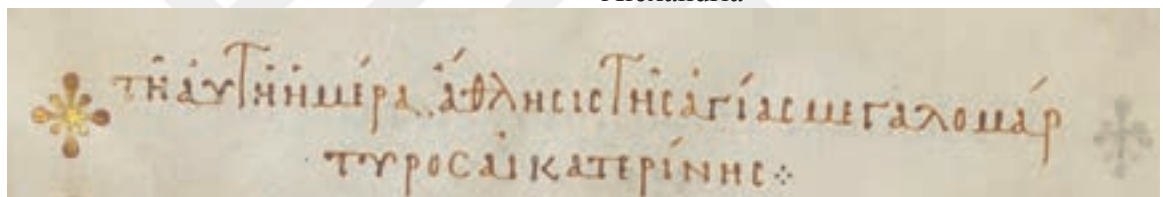
Region 2

MS commemoration date November 25

Vita Anonymous, *Passion*

Type A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Catherine of Alexandria



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΙΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy megalomartyr Catherine.

**Description**

According to the title, Catherine is depicted in the miniature. According to the anonymous *passion*, she was of imperial background and Emperor Maxentius stripped her from her title.<sup>440</sup> Upon her conversion of the empress and other members of royal family to Christianity, Emperor Maxentius ordered her to be decapitated.<sup>441</sup> During the time of her death, she miraculously bled milk from her

<sup>440</sup> *ODB*, 392.

<sup>441</sup> *Ibid.*,

wounds and her body was later transferred to a monastery in Mount Sinai, which thereafter was dubbed St. Catherine Monastery.<sup>442</sup> She was martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>443</sup>

On the right side of the plain, Catherine is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier who is about to behead her. She is wearing a crown and a lavish blue mantle with gold roundel pattern. Her dress is of imperial standard and she is depicted as a young woman with blonde hair reaching to her shoulders as she is crossing her arms across her chest. The Roman soldier behind her is about to begin the decapitation and holds a sword in his right hand as he grasps a black scabbard with his left one. He is dressed in a patterned green tunic, a blue *chlamys*, blue leggings and yellow boots. On the left corner of the plain, a group of eleven young men who are dressed in identical blue garments are being burnt at the stake. Above them, an arc of Heaven is depicted as a semicircle emerging from the top frame line. The Hand of God is reaching out to the group of young men from inside the arc. On the left side of the plain, the background is mountainous. Against a golden background, all figures stand uniformly on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>444</sup>

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<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, 393.

<sup>443</sup> *BHG*, 43. Also, Act.SS.Oct. XII, 212-17.

<sup>444</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 77



MS number 212

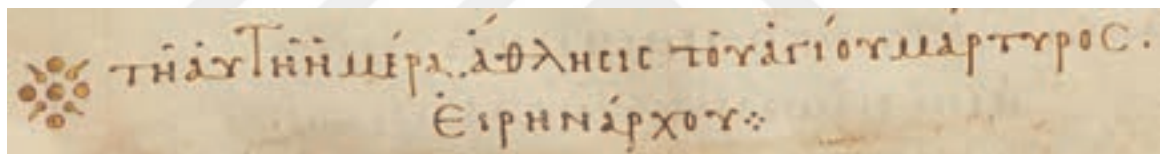
Region 2

MS commemoration date November 28

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Irenarchus of Sebaste



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΙΡΗΝΑΡΧΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Irenarchus.

**Description**

According to the title, Irenarchus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred at Sebaste [today Sivas] in Lesser Armenia, during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>445</sup>

Irenarchus kneels before the Roman soldier, wearing a dark purple tunic with yellow drape lines with his right hand stretching forward as his left hand rests on his chest.

<sup>445</sup> *Synax.CP*, Nov. 28, par. 3 (col. 264).

He is wearing black slippers and depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him wears a blue tunic with geometric patterns across the tip of the short sleeves and chest. His sword-bearing right hand is raised towards the sky, while he rests his left hand on the scabbard. He is carrying a red shield on his back, hanging from his left shoulder and he wears grey leggings and black slippers. Both figures have a darker shade skin color compared with other figures depicted throughout the manuscript. A large mountain, with its peak skewing to the right side of the landscape, dominates the background. On the left side of the plain, a grey cubic building encircles a tree while a more elaborate structure resembling a church emerges from the far right corner of the miniature.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>446</sup>

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<sup>446</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 78



MS number 221

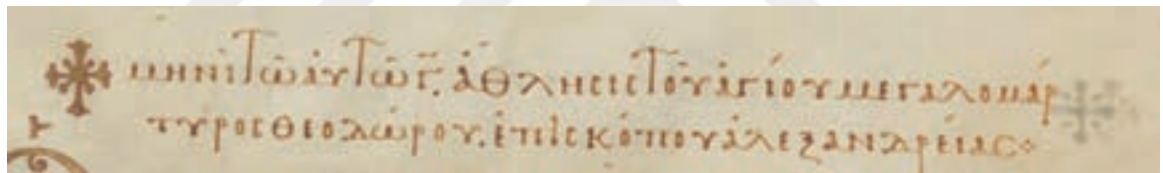
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 3

Vita Anonymous, *Vita*

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Theodore of Alexandria



### Transcription

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Γ´.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ, ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ  
ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕΙΑΣ ∴

### English translation

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy megalomartyr Theodore, the bishop of Alexandria.

### Description

According to the title, the miniature depicts the megalomartyr Theodore, the bishop of Alexandria. An anonymous *Vita* is being translated into English by Arietta Papaconstan tinou but was not available at the time of writing this study.<sup>447</sup>

<sup>447</sup> Oaks, Dumbarton. "Translations of Byzantine Saints' Lives Listed Alphabetically." Dumbarton Oaks. November 07, 2017. Accessed November 19, 2017.  
<https://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/resources/translations-of-byzantine-saint2019s-lives>.

As indicated by the word ἐπισκόπου, Theodore is depicted with garments appropriate to his clerical rank as a bishop. He is wearing a light blue *sticharion*, a light yellow *sakkos* and an *omophorion* encircled around his neck with embroidered golden crosses. His black slippers are visible below. Both his hands are raised across his chest, concealed underneath the *sakkos* and placed parallel to each other as in an act of prayer. He is depicted as an elderly man, with greying hair and white beard. He is kneeling before the Roman soldier with his left knee bent forward, while his right leg is stretched backwards. The Roman soldier is standing behind him and is wearing a blue tunic with small lozenge patterns in gold. Around the waistline, his dress is belted with a red piece of cloth and his blue *chlamys* is draped as it is blown by the wind. His sword-bearing right arm is raised towards the sky while his left hand rests on the red scabbard. From waist down, only the bottom part of his left leg is visible where his yellow leggings and black slippers are visible. Against a golden background, both figures stand on the same green groundline, while mountains flank the plain. On the left side of the miniature, a blue stream flows, while a building emerges from the left side of the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>448</sup>

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Also, K. Wessely, *Die Vita S. Theodora*, Funfzehnter Jahresbericht des k. k. Staatsgymnasiums in Hernalts (Wien, 1889), 25-44.

<sup>448</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 79



MS number 224

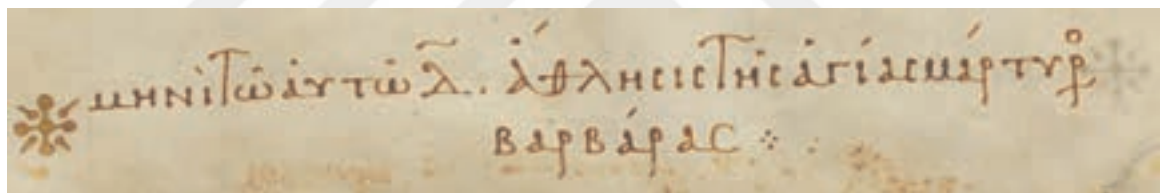
Region 1

MS commemoration date December 4

Vita Anonymous, *Passion*

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Barbara of  
Nicomedia



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Δ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΒΑΡΒΑΡΑΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 4th of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Barbara.

**Description**

According to the title, Barbara is depicted in the miniature. She was the daughter of a wealthy pagan nobleman Dioskoros in Nicomedia and upon her conversion to Christianity, her father tried to execute her.<sup>449</sup> She was martyred during the reign of Maximian (286-305 A.D).<sup>450</sup>

<sup>449</sup> *ODB*, 252.

<sup>450</sup> *BHG*, 32. Also, PG CXVI, 301-16.

Barbara is dressed in a pink tunic and red slippers and her dress' wrists are adorned with golden cuffs. Depicted as a youthful female, she has long brown hair reaching down to her shoulders. She is depicted in a kneeling position and her body is bent halfway towards the groundline. A Roman soldier is standing behind her; dressed in an unusually ornate military costume with a dark grey tunic, blue *chlamys*, green leggings and white slippers.<sup>451</sup> He is depicted as an elder man with grey hair and beard. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while resting his left hand on the scabbard. Against a golden background, mountains flank the landscape. Small green trees surround the plain while both of the figures stand on a uniform green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισε [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>452</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> According to *ODB*, the representation of Barbara in the Menologion of Basil II depicts her father executing her that could explain the lavishness of the costume.

<sup>452</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 80



MS number 228

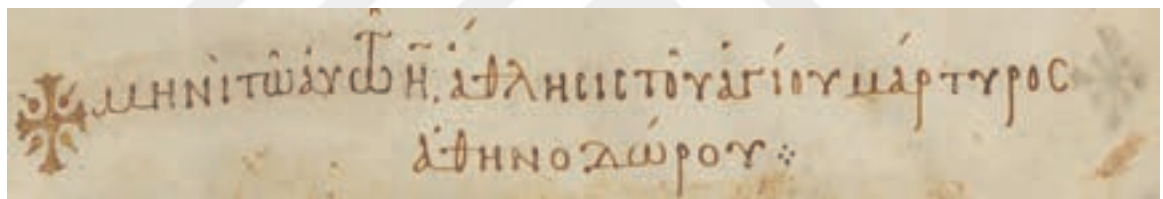
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 8

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Athenodorus of Mesopotamia



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Η΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΘΗΝΟΔΩΡΟΥ ∷

**English translation**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Athenodorus.

**Description**

According to the title, Athenodorus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD)<sup>453</sup>

Athenodorus is depicted wearing a *schema* of a monk, composed of a black belted, mustard colored mantle and a black stole hanging from the center of his back and

<sup>453</sup> *Synax.CP*, Dec. 7, par. 3 (cols. 285-8)

chest. The stole is patterned with thin grey lines, acting as the vertical end of a looped cross around his body that is horizontally tightened with a thin rope belted across his waist. He is wearing *kaligia*, a special pair of black slippers that formed part of the monastic habit. His hands are raised at the chest level, as in an act of prayer. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. Behind Athenodorus, a Roman soldier wearing a green tunic, patterned blue leggings and grey boots is depicted in an unusual state in comparison with the other executioners presented in the beheading scenes of the manuscript. His right arm is severed from his body at the shoulder, and blood drips from both mutilated ends; the arm still holds a sword that was originally directed towards Athenodorus. As he prays towards an arc of Heaven, this is clearly a moment of divine retribution preventing the executioner from completing his task, in order to save the monk's life. Against a golden background, mountains flank the landscape. Few floral details are scattered across the plain while both figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀποκεφαλίσαι [to behead] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>454</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 81



MS number 236

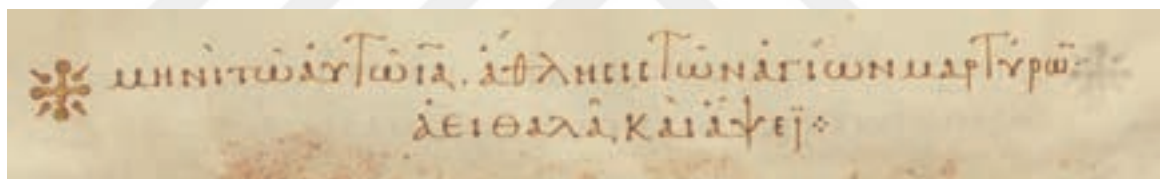
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 11

Vita -

Type A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Aithalas and Apseus of Arbela



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΑ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΑΙΘΑΛΑ ΚΑΙ ΑΨΕΪ ::

**English translation**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Aithalas and Apseus.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Aithalas and Apseus. They were martyred in Persia during the reign of Shapur II (309-379 AD).<sup>455</sup>

<sup>455</sup> *Synax.CP*, Dec. 11, par. 2 (cols. 300-302).

Aithalas is kneeling before the Roman soldier, dressed in a blue tunic with yellow drape lines and black slippers. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. His hands are bound behind his back. The Roman soldier is dressed in a dark blue tunic, red legging with horizontal brown stripes and red slippers. He is standing behind Aithalas, raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky as he rests his left hand on the scabbard. Apseus is standing on the left side of the plain, dressed in a red tunic with yellow drape lines and black slippers. His hands are bound behind his back and he is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. His head is slightly tilted towards the left. Against a golden background, mountains flank the landscape while all the figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered around the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>456</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 82



MS number 240

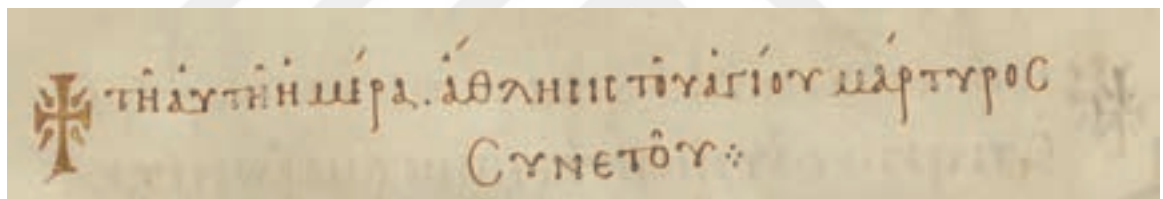
Region 3

MS commemoration date December 12

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Synetus of Rome



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΣΥΝΕΤΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The stuggle of the holy martyr Synetus.

**Description**

According to title, Synetus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in Rome during the reign of Aurelian (270-275 AD)<sup>457</sup>

Synetus is kneeling before the Roman soldier, resting his hands on his knees, dressed in a grey tunic, a purple garment with yellow drape lines and black slippers. He is

<sup>457</sup> *Synax.CP*, Dec. 12, par. 2 (cols. 303-6).

depicted as a middle-aged man with black beard and hair. His ecclesiastical position is manifested as a lector (*ἀναγνώστης*),<sup>458</sup> whose primary responsibility was to read the texts from Epistles during the liturgical ceremonies.<sup>459</sup> The *anagnostai* were generally classified as minor clergy in the Byzantine Church.<sup>460</sup> Behind Synetus, the Roman soldier raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky, while resting his left hand on the red scabbard. He is dressed in a blue tunic, a purple *chlamys*, red leggings, yellow stockings and slippers. Synetus is depicted as a young beardless man. Against a golden background, mountains flank the plain and the figures stand on a blue groundline. A small building resembling a church emerges from the far left corner,

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὴν [...] αὐτοῦ κεφαλὴν ἀπετμήθη in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading the name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>461</sup>



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<sup>458</sup> "Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: December - 12." Princeton University. Accessed February 18, 2018.

<https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/calendar.php?month=December&day=12>.

<sup>459</sup> *ODB*, 84.

<sup>460</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>461</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 83



MS number 241

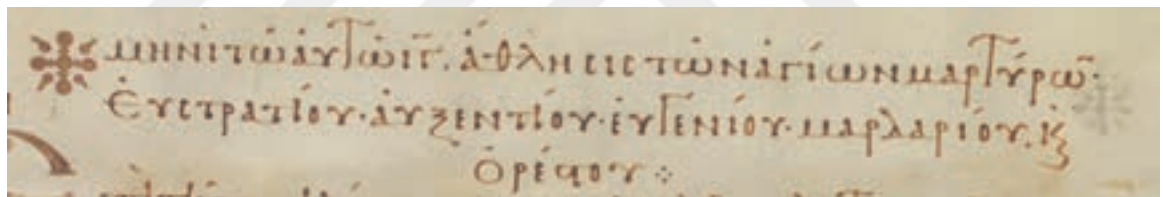
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 13

Vita -

Type C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Eustratius,  
Auxentius, Eugenius, Mardarius and  
Orestes



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΓ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΟΥ, ΑΥΞΕΝΤΙΟΥ,  
ΕΥΓΕΝΙΟΥ, ΜΑΡΔΑΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΟΡΕΣΤΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Eustratius, Auxentius, Eugenius, Mardarius and Orestes.

**Description**

The scene is frequently referred to as ‘the Five martyrs of Sebaste’ and portrays the violent executions of five male figures during the reign of Diocletian (284-305

AD).<sup>462</sup> However in Vat.gr.1613, only four different martyrdom events are concurrently displayed and K. Weitzmann suggested that the manner of presentation might be driven by artistic convenience.<sup>463</sup> Although there seems to be five martyrs, the decapitated head of Auxentius is portrayed as a relic, suspended in a tree branch, while the moments prior to his beheading are displayed next to it. This double portrayal make the scene seemingly visualizing five martyrs, where in fact only four are present.

According to the title, Eustratius, Auxentius, Eugenius, Mardarius and Orestes are depicted in the miniature. The scene is densely populated with four martyrs, two executioners and three witnesses. On the far left corner of the miniature, an executioner is pressing a hot iron bar to a martyr's chest. He is suspended from his feet, hanging upside down from the top margin of the miniature. The middle-aged male martyr is dressed in a loincloth and his hands are bound behind his back. Immediately to his right, on the elevated center of the plain, another martyr who is dressed in a lavender tunic is kneeling in a prayer position with his hands dismembered from his body. His body is turned towards an arc of Heaven that is represented as a double half-ellipse, in two different shades of blue. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard while blood spills from the mutilated parts of his body. In the lower center of the plain, a martyr dressed in a loincloth is lying horizontally on a gridiron. He is depicted as a beardless young man. On the uppermost center of the plain, the severed head of an elderly martyr rests on the branches of a tree. This relic is depicted with an accompanying crow that is watching over the head from the top part of the tree. Beneath the tree, the same martyr, namely Auxentius, is about to be beheaded by a Roman executioner.<sup>464</sup> He is dressed in a loincloth, hands bound behind his back and he is barefoot. He is twice depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The Roman executioner behind him is dressed in a blue tunic, red leggings, yellow stockings and he raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky, while his left hand rests on the scabbard. On the far right corner, a group of three witnesses led by a lavishly dressed male figure point to the events with hand movements. Against a golden background, a single purple mountain dominates the landscape.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>462</sup> Kurt Weitzmann, "Illustrations to the Lives of the Five Martyrs of Sebaste," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 33 (1979), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1291434>. 99.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>464</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>465</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 84



MS number 242

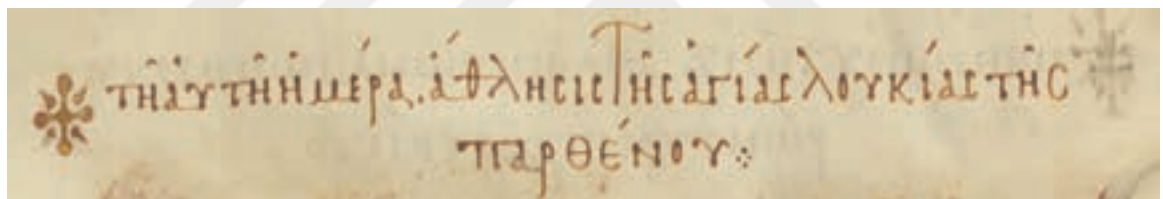
Region 3

MS commemoration date December 13

Vita -

Type B

Beheaded martyr(s) Lucy of  
Syracuse



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΛΟΥΚΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of St Lucy the Virgin.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Lucy the Virgin. She was martyred at Syracuse in the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>466</sup>

<sup>466</sup> *Synax.CP*, Dec. 13, par. 2 (col. 306).

She is kneeling before a Roman soldier dressed in a red tunic. Her hands are loose and her severed head is depicted rolling in the ground, next to her body, which retains its position prior to the execution. The Roman soldier behind her is dressed in a heavily patterned grey tunic, a blue *chlamys* and leggings. His white stockings and black slippers are partly concealed by Lucy's body. He has completed placing his sword back into its red scabbard, and he is holding on to it with both hands. He is depicted as a young beardless soldier gazing directly at the viewer. On the right side of the plane, a large fire is burning. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. On the far left corner, an arch emerges behind the mountain. The figures stand on a yellow-green groundline and few floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading the name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>467</sup>

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<sup>467</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 85



MS number 243

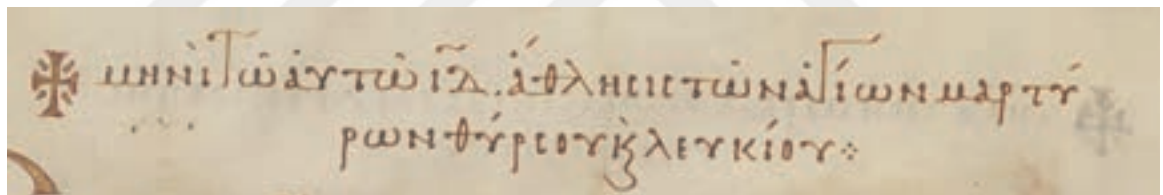
Region 1

MS commemoration date December 14

Vita -

Type A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Leucius and Thyrsus of Nicomedia



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΔ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΘΥΡΣΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΛΕΘΚΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Thyrsus and Leucius.

**Description**

According to the title, Thyrsus and Leucius are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Nicomedia.<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> BHG, 260.

The landscape is divided into two equal parts. On the left side, the beheading of Leucius is about to take place and on the right side, Thyrsus stands in an act of prayer. Leucius is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard and he kneels before the Roman soldier, dressed in a plain grey tunic and black slippers. His hands are bound behind his back. The Roman soldier approaches him and he is depicted sideways wearing a maroon tunic, blue leggings, white stockings and brown slippers. He raises his sword-bearing right arm while he grasps the scabbard with his left hand. On the far left corner, a witness, dressed in a lavish blue tunic with roundel patterns is viewing the event with his hands bound behind his back. Thyrsus raises both his hands towards the sky in an act of prayer and his body is depicted sideways, facing the right end of the plain. His back is turned against Leucius and he is standing next to an empty marble sarcophagus. He is also depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and hair. He wears a red *phelonion*, a grey tunic and black slippers. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the plain. All figures stand uniformly on a green groundline and there are some floral details around the sarcophagus.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>469</sup>

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<sup>469</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 86



MS number 244

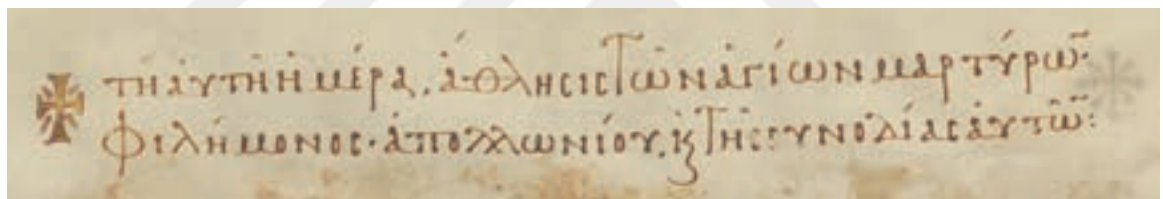
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 14

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Philemon of Antioe and Apollonius.



Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΦΙΛΗΜΟΝΟΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΕΝΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ  
ΣΘΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ∴

English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Philemon, Apollonius and their companions.

Description

According to the title, Philemon and Apollonius are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Antioe in Egypt during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD)<sup>470</sup>

<sup>470</sup> BHG, 212.

In the center of the plain, Philemon is about to be beheaded and he is dressed in a light pink tunic and white slippers. His hands are resting on his left knee as his right leg is stretched towards the back. He is depicted as a beardless young man with brown hair. The Roman soldier behind him is caught in motion, raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a scabbard with his left hand. He is dressed in a red tunic, blue *chlamys*, light blue leggings and grey boots. On the right side of the plain, Apollonius is witnessing the event with his hands bound at his back. His unadorned blue tunic and brown *orarion* manifests his rank in the Church as a deacon. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. Against a golden background, mountains flank the landscape. The figures stand on a mountainous groundline and few floral details are scattered across the lower part of the plain.

There is no indication of beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>471</sup>

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<sup>471</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 87



MS number 246

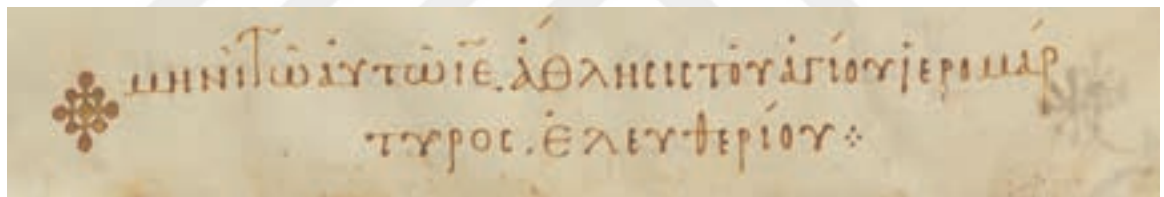
Region 3

MS commemoration date December 15

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Eleutherius of Illyricum



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΕ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΙΟΥ∴

**English translation**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Eleutherius.

**Description**

According to the title, hieromartyr Eleutherius is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred at Rome, in the reign of Hadrian (117-138 AD).<sup>472</sup> His life is depicted in Pala D'oro within St. Mark's Basilica in Venice.<sup>473</sup>

The main text identifies the second martyr portrayed on the left side of the plain as Corebus. On the right side of the plain, Eleutherius is kneeling in between two Roman soldiers as one of the executioners grab him from his head, who is dressed in a blue tunic, red leggings and white boots. Eleutherius' hands are loose and he reaches towards the legs of the executioner as he is about to be beheaded. The martyr is dressed in a blue *sticharion*, a brown *sakkos* and a white *omophorion* with embroidered crosses, manifesting his rank in the Church as a bishop. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier on his left is approaching him with a sword, dressed in a highly ornate dark blue tunic, leggings and grey boots. On the left corner of the plain, Corebus is about to be beheaded by a Roman soldier who is dressed in a red tunic, purple leggings and white boots. The martyr wears a plain white tunic and he is barefoot. At the far left corner, a cylindrical furnace is blazing. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. All five figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the lower part of the landscape.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀποκεφαλίζεται [is beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>474</sup>

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<sup>472</sup> *BHG*, 79. Also,

<sup>473</sup> *ODB*, 1555.

<sup>474</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 88



MS number 247

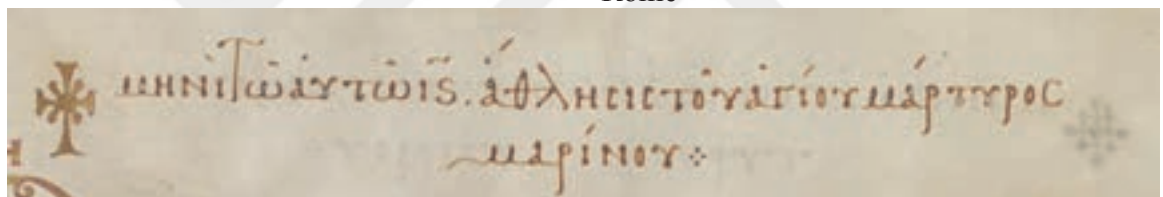
Region 3

MS commemoration date December 16

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Marinus of Rome



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΣ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΜΑΡΙΝΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Marinus.

**Description**

According to the title, Marinus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred at Rome during the reign of Marcian (450-457 AD).<sup>475</sup>

In the center of the plain, he is kneeling before the Roman soldier, with his body bent halfway, horizontal to the groundline. His hands are bound behind his back and

<sup>475</sup> *Synax.CP*, Dec. 16, par. 2 (cols. 313-4).

he is dressed in a light pink tunic and yellow slippers. He is depicted as a beardless young male with brown hair. The Roman soldier is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while resting his left hand on a scabbard. The soldier is dressed in a blue tunic with a matching *chlamys*, red leggings and yellow boots. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. An arched structure emerges from the back of the mountain on the left side of the plain. A column stands on the summit of the mountain on the right side of the landscape. Both figures stand on a green groundline as floral details adorn small hills on the lower part of the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>476</sup>



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<sup>476</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 89



MS number 251

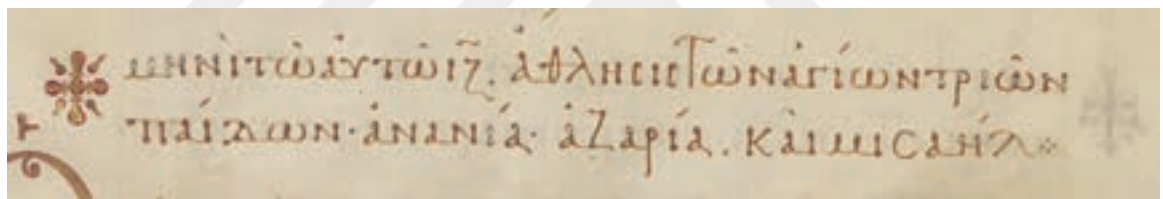
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 17

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Ananias,  
Azarias, Misael of Jerusalem



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΖ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΤΡΙΩΝ ΠΑΙΔΩΝ, ΑΝΑΝΙΑ, ΑΖΑΡΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΜΙΣΑΗΛ ∴

**English translation**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the three holy youths Ananias, Azarias and Misael.

**Description**

According to the title, the three holy youths Ananias, Azarias and Misael are depicted in the miniature. Also referred to as ‘the Three Hebrews’ or ‘Holy Children’, they were a group of youths captured by Assyrians and thereafter executed in a fiery furnace by Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>477</sup> They refused to worship his golden statue, which eventually led to their persecution. Once they were placed

<sup>477</sup> ODB, 2081.

inside the furnace, their bodies miraculously escaped the flames, reminiscing the womb of the Virgin that was not affected by the divine fire.<sup>478</sup> Their relics were rumored to have been kept at St. Romanos in Constantinople. They are often depicted in Persian attire accompanied by an angel.

On the right side of the plain, the three young men are standing inside a blazing furnace. They are being watched over by an angel who opens his arms in a gesture of embracing them while touching the heads of the martyrs on both ends. The three martyrs are depicted as young males, dressed in ornate Persian style attires.<sup>479</sup> The right half of the plane shows the martyrdom of the same three youths. One is already beheaded and another holds his decapitated head in his hands. The mutilated body lies flat on the ground. The remaining youth is kneeling before the Roman soldier and he is about to be beheaded. The Roman soldier is dressed in a red tunic and grey *chlamys* as he is holding a sword towards the sky. His body is hidden behind the martyr's. Against a golden background, a single mountain is visible on the right side of the plain. The figures stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀποκεφαλισθῆναι [to be beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>480</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>479</sup> "Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: December - 17." Princeton University. Accessed February 20, 2018. <https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/calendar.php?month=December&day=17>.

<sup>480</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 90



**MS number** 252

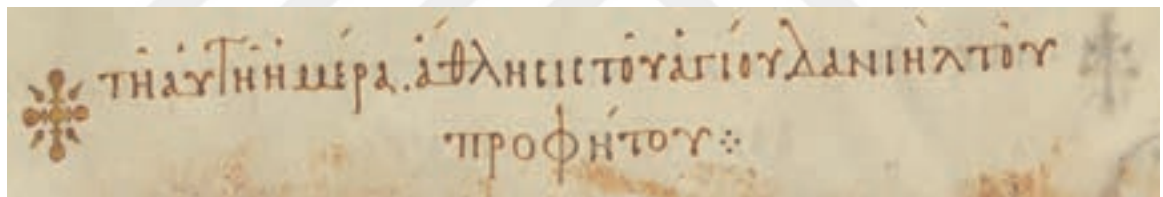
**MS commemoration date** December 17

**Type A**

**Region 2**

**Vita** The Old Testament, *The Book of Daniel*

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Daniel the Prophet



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΔΑΝΙΗΛ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy Prophet Daniel.

**Description**

According to the title, Daniel the prophet is depicted in the miniature. He was an Old Testament prophet, commemorated together with the Three Hebrews on December 17 and his relics were rumored to have been kept in the Church of St Romanos in Constantinople, which was a popular site of pilgrimage.<sup>481</sup> He is often depicted in a

<sup>481</sup> ODB, 584.

Lion's Den, standing in an orant position between two lions, as it was narrated in the *Book of Daniel* that largely describes his trials and tribulations.<sup>482</sup>

The scene is divided into two parts. On the left side, Daniel is portrayed standing in a black pit, his body posture upright and frontal in an *orant* position, as two lions surround him. He is dressed in a lavish Persian dress with a red *phlenion*, blue leggings and grey boots. He is depicted as a young man wearing a cylindrical cap, indicating his status as a prophet. On the right side of the plain, Daniel is depicted for a second time in a kneeling position before a Roman soldier. As he is about to be beheaded, he places his hands on his knees. He is dressed in Persian attire, identical to those in the preceding depictions while the Roman soldier approaches him with his sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky. The executioner is dressed in a blue tunic and red leggings with lozenge patterns. Yellow boots complements his costume. The figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Against a golden skyline, three mountains with equal summit points occupy the background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>483</sup>

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<sup>482</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>483</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 91



MS number 253

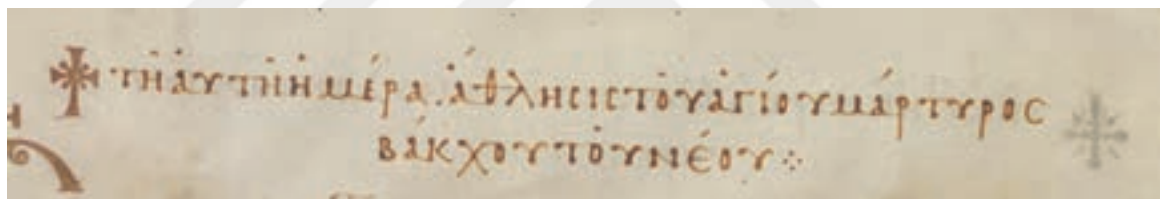
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 17

Vita Anonymous, *Vita*

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Bacchus the Younger



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΒΑΚΧΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΝΕΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Bacchus the Younger.

**Description**

According to the title, Bacchus the Younger is depicted in the miniature. An anonymous *vita* mentions that he was born in Maiouma, Palestine in 770 AD<sup>484</sup> He came from a family who converted to Islam from Christianity and was decapitated

<sup>484</sup> F. Combefis, *Christimartyrum lecta trias* (Parisiis, 1666), 61-126.

during the Arab rule of Palestine for refusing to renounce his Christian faith to the Muslims.<sup>485</sup>

Bacchus the Younger is kneeling in front of a soldier, who is about to behead him, with his hands raised at the chest level as in an act of prayer. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. He is dressed in a monastic *schema*, wearing a yellow tunic beneath the dark grey *himation* and the black slippers referred as *kaligia*. The soldier is dressed in a blue tunic, red leggings and grey boots. His skin color and the turban indicate that he is of different origin than the regular Roman soldier depictions throughout the manuscript. A building resembling a church emerges on the far left corner of the plain. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape as both figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>485</sup> *BHG*, 32.

<sup>486</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 92



MS number 255

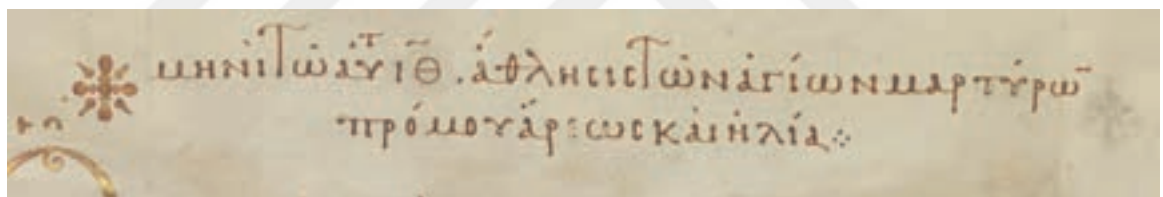
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 19

Vita Eusebius, *History of Martyrs in Palestine*

Type C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Promos, Ares and Elias of Ascalon



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΘ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΠΡΟΜΟΥ, ΑΡΕΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΗΛΙΑ ∴

**English translation**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Promos, Ares and Elias.

**Description**

According to the title, holy martyrs Promos, Ares and Elias are depicted in the miniature.

They were martyred in Ascalon in Palestine during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>487</sup> According to the account of Eusebius, Promos and Elias were beheaded by a sword, while Ares was forced to confess through torture by fire.<sup>488</sup>

On the left side of the landscape, Ares is standing upright and frontal, opening his arms in an *orant* position, inside a blazing furnace. A Roman soldier, who feeds the flames with a dry branch, is adding fuel to the fire inside the cubical structure. He is kneeling at the level of the furnace and is dressed in a red tunic that leaves his left shoulder bare, coupled with white stockings and black slippers. The right side of the plain is occupied by the beheadings of Promus and Elias. Both martyrs have their hands bound behind their backs and are dressed in long plain white tunics. One of them is already beheaded and his decapitated head rolls to the rightmost corner of the plain with piles of blood emerging from the mutilated parts. The other martyr is in a kneeling position in front of the Roman soldier, who is dressed in a maroon tunic and black *chlamys*. The executioner approaches the kneeling martyr with a sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. The figures stand uniformly on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>489</sup>

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<sup>487</sup> BHG, 25.

<sup>488</sup> William Cureton, *History of Martyrs in Palestine by Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea: Discovered in a very ancient Syriac manuscript* (London: Williams and Norgate, MDCCCLXI), 54.

<sup>489</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 93



MS number 260

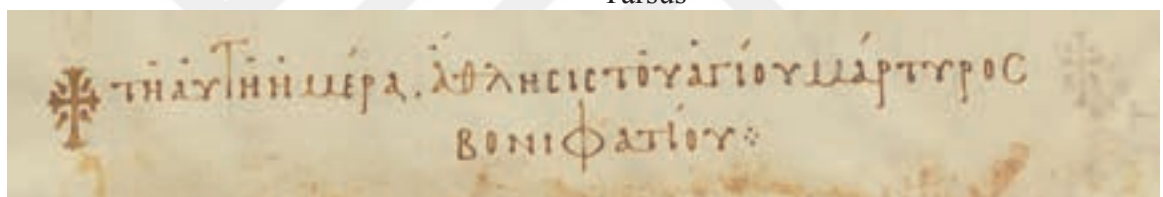
Region 1

MS commemoration date December 20

Vita

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Boniface of Tarsus



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΒΟΝΙΦΑΤΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Boniface.

**Description**

According to the title, Boniface is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in Tarsus during the early 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>490</sup>

In the center of the plain, Boniface kneels before a Roman soldier with his hands bound behind his back. He is depicted as an elderly man with greying hair and beard.

<sup>490</sup> *BHG*, 41. Also, PG CXV, 241-57., Act. SS. Maii III, 22-25; 3rd ed. III, 19-21.

Boniface is dressed in a lavish red tunic with a gold patterned neckband, blue leggings and black slippers. The Roman soldier raises his right arm towards the sky as he rests his left hand on the black scabbard. He is wearing a blue tunic, grey *chlamys*, brown leggings and grey boots. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. The figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>491</sup>



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<sup>491</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 94



MS number 261

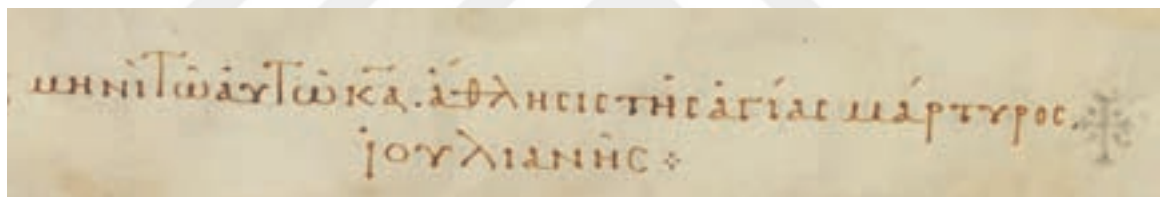
Region 1

MS commemoration date December 21

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Juliana of  
Nicomedia



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΑ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΙΟΥΛΙΑΝΗΣ ∷

**English translation**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Juliana.

**Description**

According to the title, Juliana is depicted in the miniature. She was martyred at Nicomedia during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>492</sup>

At the center of the plain, Juliana is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier, dressed in a long grey tunic and red slippers. As she is about to be beheaded, her hands are

<sup>492</sup> BHG, 134.

placed on her knees, vertically positioned to the groundline. She is depicted as a young female with no hair. Beneath her feet, two male companions lie lifeless; one resting his head on a small rock while the other is already decapitated. The Roman soldier wears a blue tunic, red *chlamys*, brown leggings, white stockings and black boots. He approaches towards Juliana with his sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky while he grasps a scabbard with his left hand. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. Few floral details are scattered across the plain. All figures are depicted uniformly on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>493</sup>



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<sup>493</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 95



MS number 264

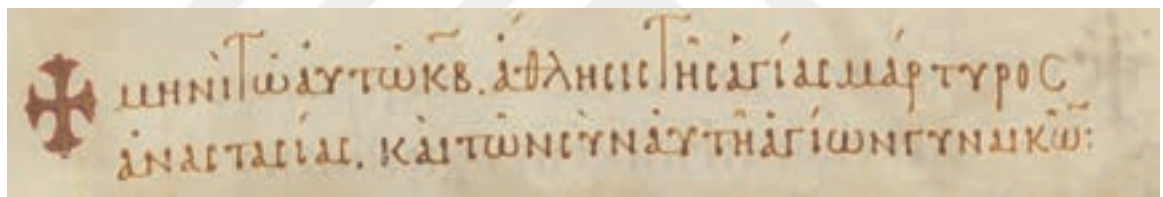
Region 3

MS commemoration date December 22

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Anastasia the Younger and a holy woman



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΒ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΗ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Anastasia and of the holy women with her.

**Description**

According to the title, Anastasia and holy women are depicted in the miniature. Although the title manifests women in plural, only a single woman is accompanying her. They were martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>494</sup> A church was dedicated to Anastasia in Rome on the southwestern slope of the Palatine, next

<sup>494</sup> BHG, 12.

to the Circus Maximus.<sup>495</sup> The monument still survives as a renovated structure built on the site of the original, Late antique building. She was a wealthy Roman matron and a widow who devoted her life to charity for Christians.<sup>496</sup>

In the center of the plain, Anastasia is kneeling before the Roman soldier while grasping her left knee with both of her hands. She is dressed in a light yellow tunic, barefoot, and her brown hair reaches down to her shoulders. She is depicted as a young woman. As she is about to be beheaded, a young female companion lies beneath her feet and she is already decapitated. She is dressed in a light blue tunic and black slippers and she has long brown hair. An unusual detail pertains to the color of her nimbus, which is pink rather than the customary gold. Her eyes are tightly closed and her facial expression reveals agony. Approaching towards Anastasia, the Roman soldier is raising his sword-bearing, left arm towards the sky. In general, the executioners hold the swords in their right hand throughout the manuscript and perhaps the composition dictated this irregularity. He is dressed in a patterned green tunic, blue leggings, yellow stockings and white slippers. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. All figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>497</sup>

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<sup>495</sup> Michael Lapidge, *The Roman Martyrs: Introduction, Translations, and Commentary*, Oxford Early Christian studies (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 55.

<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>497</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 96**



**MS number** 266

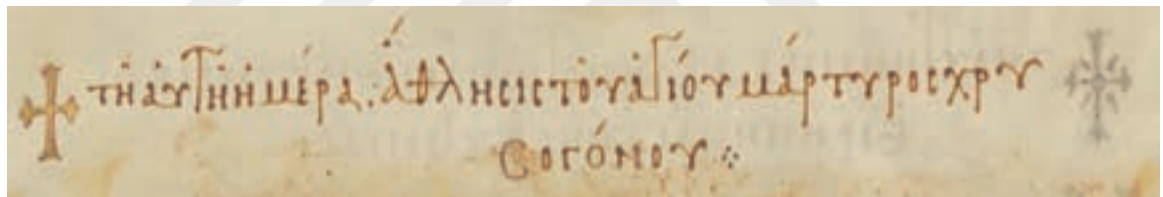
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** December 22

**Vita** -

**Type** B

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Chrysogonus of Aquileia



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΧΡΥΣΟΓΟΝΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Chrysogonus.

**Description**

According to the title, Chrysogonus is depicted in the miniature. Diocletian, who sentenced him to capital punishment, personally charged him in Aquileia, where he

was martyred.<sup>498</sup> His life is covered in length in the *passio* of Anastasia, the daughter of a wealthy senator.<sup>499</sup>

In the center of the plain, he is kneeling before the Roman soldier while his decapitated head rolls few steps ahead. Piles of blood spill from both ends of the mutilated parts of his body. He is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. Dressed in a lavish blue tunic and gold colored slippers, his hands rest on his knees. Behind him, the Roman soldier is dressed in a brown tunic, red *chlamys*, blue leggings and yellow boots. Having finished the execution, he is placing his sword into the black scabbard. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. Both figures and the decapitated head uniformly stand on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>500</sup>

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<sup>498</sup> Michael Lapidge, *The Roman Martyrs: Introduction, Translations, and Commentary*, Oxford Early Christian studies (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 58.

<sup>499</sup> Ibid.

<sup>500</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 97



MS number 269

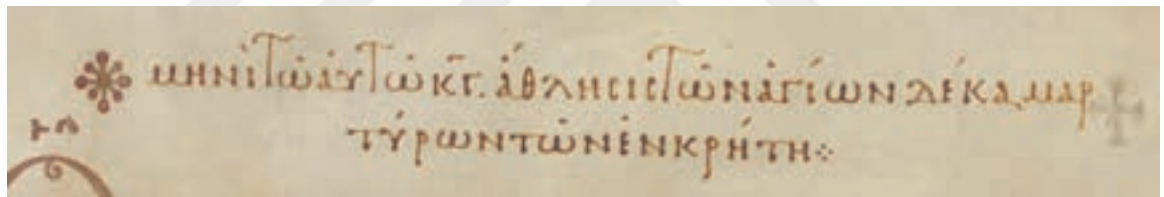
Region 3

MS commemoration date December 23

Vita

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Ten martyrs of Crete



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΓ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΔΕΚΑ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΚΡΗΤΗ ∴

**English translation**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the same month

The struggle of the Ten holy martyrs at Crete.

**Description**

According to the title, ten martyrs of Crete are depicted in the scene. They were martyred in Crete during the reign of Decius (249-251 AD).<sup>501</sup>

The illuminator organized exactly ten figures by dispersing them into three groups. On the left side, four martyrs are lying flat on the ground with each of their

<sup>501</sup> BHG, 167.

decapitated heads placed in front of their lifeless bodies. Wearing various colors of tunics, the men's hands have been bound behind their backs. In the center of the plain, one of the martyrs is about to be beheaded and he is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier while his hands are bound behind his back. He is depicted as a middle-aged man wearing a light blue tunic and black slippers. The Roman soldier is dressed in a short gold patterned red tunic and grey *chlamys*. Holding a sword, he is raising his right arm towards the sky while grasping a red scabbard with his left hand. The third a group of five martyrs await their turn on the left side of the plain, standing with their hands bound behind their backs. On the upper left corner of the scene, a seated man identified as an archon<sup>502</sup> is overseeing the executions. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the plain. Few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>503</sup>

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<sup>502</sup> “Index of Medieval Art - The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos: December – 23”, Princeton University, accessed February 23, 2018. <https://ica.princeton.edu/drewer/calendar.php?month=December&day=23>.

<sup>503</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. “The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 98



MS number 270

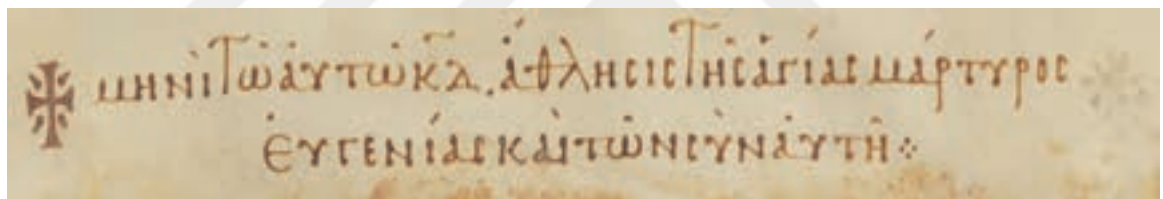
Region 2

MS commemoration date December 24

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Eugenia of Alexandria



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΑ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΥΓΕΝΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΗ ∴

**English translation**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Eugenia and her companions.

**Description**

According to the title, Eugenia and companions with her. She was martyred at Rome during the reign of Commodus (177-192 AD).<sup>504</sup> She was the daughter of Phillip, who was the prefect under Commodus.<sup>505</sup>

<sup>504</sup> *BHG*, 84.

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*

The scene is divided into two parts: on the left side two Roman soldiers are fatally stabbing her father while the right side of the plain illustrates the martyrdom of Eugenia. Phillip the Prefect is dressed in a grey tunic, brown *sakkos* with yellow drape lines and an *omophorion* with embroidered crosses, indicating his rank as a bishop. One of the two Roman soldiers attacking him is piercing his right arm with a short sword as he has fallen to the ground, stretching his right arm forward as he clenches the ground with his left hand. The other soldier is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky to behead Phillip. An ornate church emerges behind Phillip and his executioners. On the right side of the plain, Eugenia is kneeling in front of a Roman soldier, who is about to decapitate her. She is dressed in a plain, brown tunic and places her hands on her knees. Her hair is short, resembling the haircut of a male and her body displays no signs of her gender. Three decapitated companions are lying down beneath her feet with blood spilling from the mutilated parts of their bodies. Another two companions are behind her, waiting their turn with their hands bound behind their backs. The Roman soldier approaching Eugenia is dressed in a heavily gold patterned dark tunic, red leggings and grey boots. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene.

There is no mention of Eugenia's beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>506</sup>

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<sup>506</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 99



MS number 278

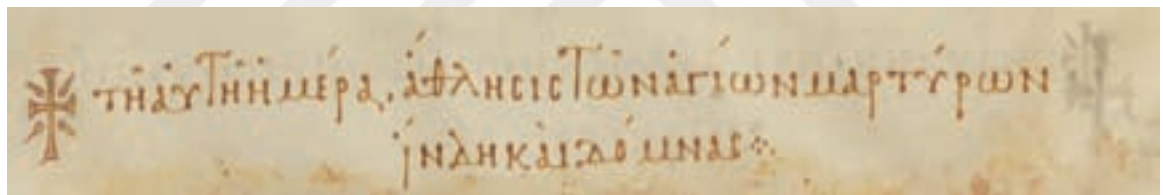
Region 1

MS commemoration date December 28

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Domna of  
Nicomedia, the virgin and the eunuch  
Indes



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΦΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΙΝΔΗ ΚΑΙ ΔΟΜΝΑΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Indes and Domna.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts Indes and Domna. They were martyred at Nicomedia during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>507</sup>

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<sup>507</sup> BHG, 116.

On the left side of the plain, Domna is kneeling before the Roman soldier dressed in a plain light blue tunic and red slippers. She has long brown hair that reaches to her shoulders and her hands are bound behind her back. Across her chest, the draping underlines the shape of her breasts, showing characteristics of her gender. The Roman soldier approaches her with his right leg a step further than his left, dressed in a pink tunic, blue *chlamys* with yellow drape lines, grey stockings and back slippers. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky, while placing his left hand on the scabbard that he sticks to the ground. On the right side of the plain, another Roman soldier, dressed in exactly the same attire with the other executioner, is carrying Indes' body on his back. She is already decapitated and her nimbed head is depicted a few steps away from the soldier, blazing inside a fire. Against a golden background, high mountains flank both sides of the scene. The figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. On the left side of the plain, a single tree is depicted on the mountainous area.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>508</sup>

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<sup>508</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 100



MS number 280

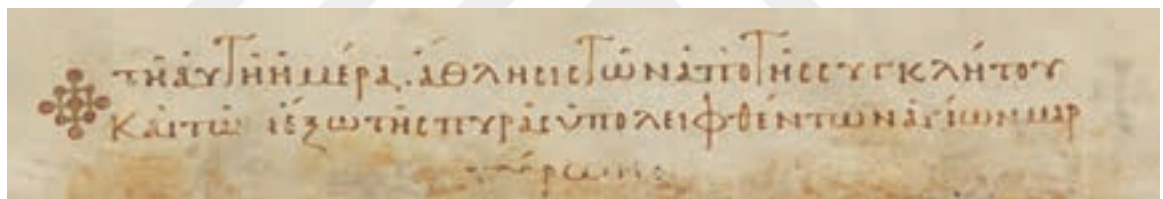
Region 1

MS commemoration date December 28

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Martyrs of  
Nicomedia



Transcription

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΟ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΓΚΛΗΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΕΞΩ ΤΗΣ ΠΥΡΑΣ  
ΥΠΟΛΕΙΦΘΕΝΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ∴

English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs [burned] in the assembly and of those captured  
away from the fire.

Description

According to the title, the martyrs of Nicomedia are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Nicomedia.<sup>509</sup>

The landscape is divided with a blue river that cuts through from the left side, leaving a small area on the leftmost corner occupied by a Roman soldier who is preparing to throw the body of a martyr into the water. He is carrying the body on his back, holding it with both hands. The executioner is dressed in a red tunic, blue leggings, white stockings and black slippers. The martyr is dressed in a loincloth and a stone is tied around his neck. Two other martyrs have already been thrown into the river to be drowned with the stones attached to their necks. In the center of the plain, a group of two martyrs are approached by a Roman soldier who have already decapitated one and is about to behead the other. These two martyrs are dressed in red and blue tunics, respectively. The executioner is dressed in a yellow tunic, red leggings and white stockings. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a scabbard with his right hand. Beneath the beheadings, a martyr is buried in a black pit from his waist down and his upper body is naked. In the upper right corner, two martyrs are inside an assembly house of Nicomedia, where 20,000 people were burnt. One of the martyrs raises his hands towards the sky as in an act of prayer. Beneath the furnace, another martyr is lying down on the ground, cornered by a Roman soldier who is stoning him. He is dressed in a blue tunic, red leggings and black slippers. Across his tunic, blood marks can be seen due to the wounds he received. The Roman soldier is dressed in a purple tunic with yellow drape lines, blue leggings and white boots. The right side of the plain is a steep hill, completed with a high mountain at its peak. The scene is depicted against a golden background.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἀπετμήθη τὴν κεφαλὴν [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>510</sup>

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<sup>509</sup> *Synax. CP*, Dec. 28, par. 1 (cols. 349-52).

<sup>510</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 101



**MS number** 289

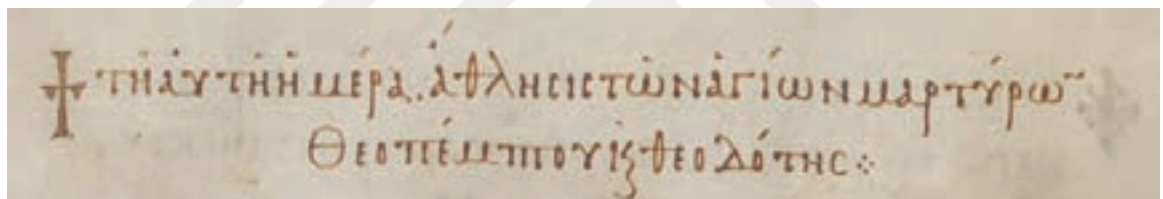
**Region** Unknown

**MS commemoration date** January 1

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Theodota and Theopemptus



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩ[N] ΘΕΟΠΕΜΠΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΔΟΤΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Theopemptus and Theodota.

**Description**

According to the title, Theopemptus and Theodota are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>511</sup>

Slightly skewed to the left of the miniature, a Roman soldier is approaching Theopemptus, who is about to be beheaded. He is wearing a loincloth and his hands

<sup>511</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Jan. 4, par. 5 (cols. 368-9)

are bound behind his back. Beneath him, concealing his body from waist down, Theodota is depicted already decapitated. Streams of blood issue forth from the mutilated parts of her body. She is dressed in a blue tunic; red slippers and her hands are bound behind her back. The Roman soldier is dressed in a green tunic and red leggings. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape and the figures stand uniformly on a green groundline.

The miniature lacks the 16-verse main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>512</sup>



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<sup>512</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 102



MS number 292

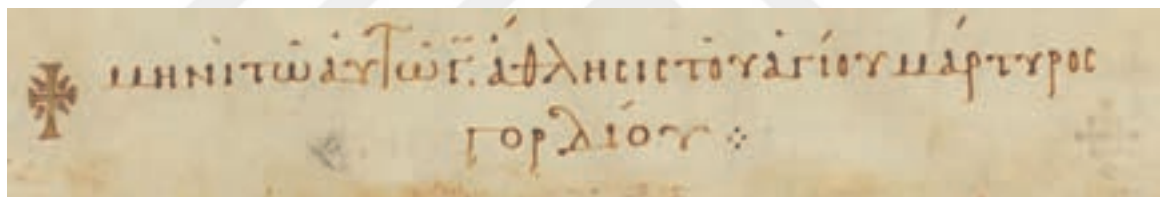
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 3

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Gordius of  
Caesarea



**Transcription**

✝ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Γ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΓΟΡΔΙΟΥ ∷

**English translation**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Gordius.

**Description**

According to the title, Gordius is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred at Caesarea in Cappadocia during the reign of Licinius (308-324 AD).<sup>513</sup>

In the center of the plain, Gordius is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier and his hands are bound behind his back. He is dressed in a long pink tunic and gold colored

<sup>513</sup> BHG, 98; *Synax\_CP*, Jan. 3, par. 1 (col. 367)

slippers. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier is approaching him with his sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky while he is holding a black scabbard with his left hand. He is dressed in a red tunic, blue *chlamys*, gold patterned brown leggings and grey boots. A small church emerges from the upper right corner of the miniature. The martyr is standing on the green groundline while the soldier is positioned on the mountain. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. Floral details are scattered across the groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἀπετμήθη τὴν κεφαλὴν [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>514</sup>



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<sup>514</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.





MS number 295

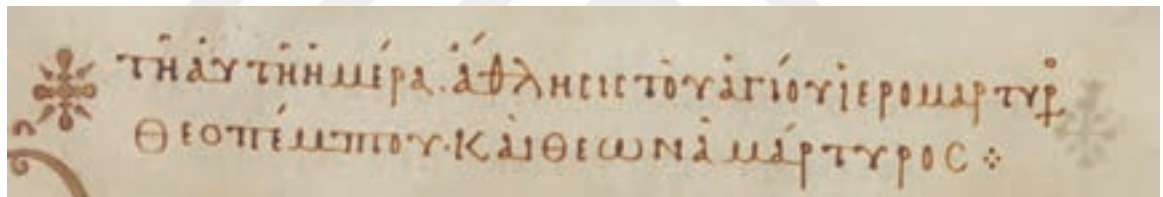
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 4

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Theopemptus of Nicomedia and Theonas the martyr



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΘΕΟΠΕΜΠΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΩΝΑ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Theopemptus and Theonas the martyr.

### Description

According to the title, Theopemptus and Theonas are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Nicomedia during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>515</sup>

<sup>515</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Jan. 4, par. 5 (cols. 368-9)

On the left side of the plain Theopemptus is about to be beheaded, wearing a loincloth and having his hands bound behind his back. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is dressed in patterned blue tunic, leggings and *chlamys* with grey boots. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while resting his left hand on a red scabbard. On the right side of the plain, Theonas is curled up on the ground, crouching at the bottom of a pit as two soldiers are burying him while pressing the earth with their feet. As he is being buried alive, he is dressed in a grey tunic and black slippers. The soldiers are holding shovels, indicating they have opened up the pit recently. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. Few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισε [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>516</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 104



MS number 302

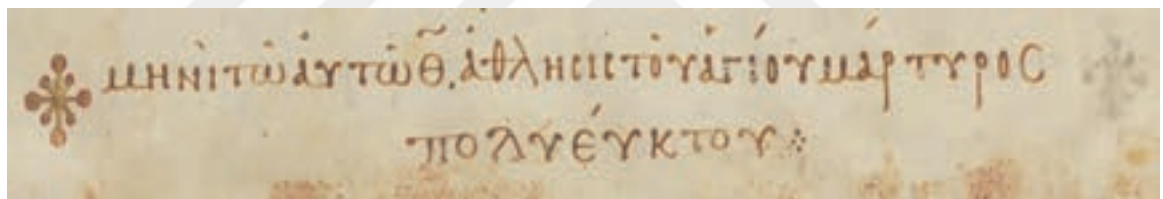
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 9

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Polyeuctus of Melitene



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Θ´.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΠΟΛΥΕΥΚΤΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Polyeuctus.

**Description**

According to the title, Polyeuctus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred at Melitene [today Malatya] in Armenia during the reign of Valerian (253-260 AD).<sup>517</sup>

He is wearing a lavish purple tunic that is encircled with gold bands across the shoulders and at the ends of the skirt. Depicted as an elderly man with white beard

<sup>517</sup> BHG, 219.

and hair, Polyuctus is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier with his hands bound behind his back. The Roman soldier is approaching him with his sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky while grasping a red scabbard with his left hand. He is dressed in a blue tunic, a maroon *chlamys*, blue leggings with orange lozenge pattern, white stockings and black slippers. An arch emerges from the far left corner of the miniature. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. Floral details are scattered around the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group ἐτμήθη τὴν κεφαλὴν in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>518</sup>



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<sup>518</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 105**



**MS number** 311

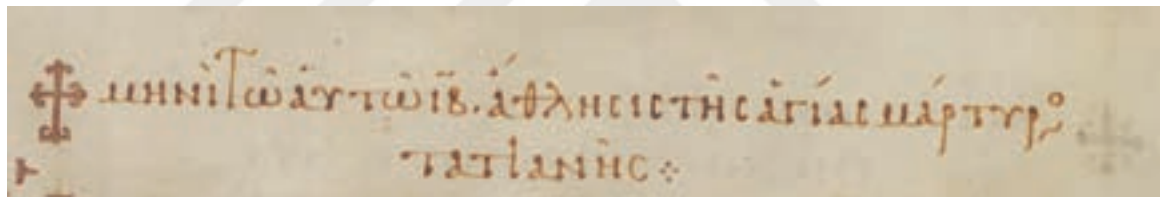
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** January 12

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Tatiana of Rome



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΒ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥΣ ΤΑΤΙΑΝΗΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Tatiana.

**Description**

According to the title, Tatiana is depicted in the miniature. She was martyred at Rome during the reign of Alexander Severus (222-235 AD).<sup>519</sup>

<sup>519</sup> BHG, 240. *Synax.CP*, Jan. 12, par. 1 (col. 385).

In the center of the plain, Tatiana is kneeling in front of a Roman soldier, who is about to behead her. She is dressed in a black-belted, yellow tunic and black slippers. She is half way bent towards the ground in front of the executioner, offering her head while her left arm is raised to the chest level. The Roman soldier is approaching towards her and he is depicted sideways, wearing a red tunic, grey *chlamys*, blue leggings and grey boots. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky as he rests his left hand on a scabbard. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. The figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀπετμήθη [had her head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>520</sup>



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<sup>520</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.





**MS number** 315

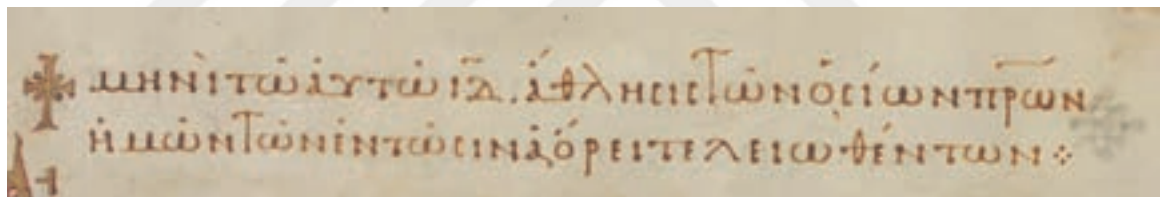
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** January 14

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Monks of Mount Sinai



### Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΔ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΟΣΙΩΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΩΝ ΗΜΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΤΩ ΣΙΝΑ  
ΤΕΛΕΙΩΘΕΝΤΩΝ ∴.

### English translation

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of our holy fathers who killed at Mount Sinai.

### Description

According to the title, holy fathers who were killed at Mount Sinai are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> BHG, 181.

There is a special reference to their holiness, using the word ὁσίοϛ insted of the usual ἅγιοϛ used for standard matyrs, suggesting that they had been members of a monastic community at the time of their martyrdom. They are depicted as a group of eight monks, dressed in identical monk habits with yellow tunics and red *mandyas* except for one figure in the middle, who is depicted with a dark grey *mandyas*. All eight monks are elderly men, with white or grey hair and beards. Blood gashes out from the wounds they received from earlier torture. Two soldiers, who are depicted in dark skin color, are approaching the monks with swords held towards the sky with their right hands. They wear white turbans indicating their foreign origin and they are approaching towards the two closest monks with the intention of beheading them. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene while all the figures stand uniformly on a green groundline.

There is no mention of beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>522</sup>

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<sup>522</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



MS number 317

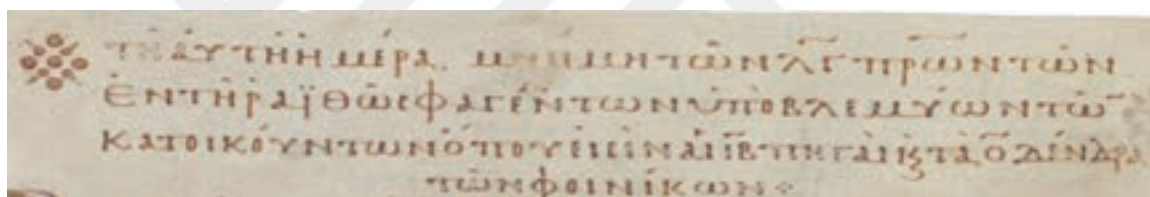
Region 2

MS commemoration date January 14

Vita

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Monks of Raitha



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΜΝΗΜΗ ΤΩΝ ΛΓ΄ Π[ΑΤΕ]ΡΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΡΑΪΘΩ ΣΦΑΓΕΝΤΩΝ ΥΠΟ  
ΒΛΕΜΥΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΚΑΤΟΙΚΟΥΝΤΩΝ ΟΠΟΥ ΕΙΣΙΝ ΑΙ ΙΒ΄ ΠΗΓΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΤΑ  
Ο΄ ΔΕΝΔΡΑ ΤΩΝ ΦΟΙΝΚΩΝ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

In memory of thirty- three fathers who were slaughtered by the Blemmyes that inhabited Raitha, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees.

### Description

According to the title, the thirty-three monks of Raitha are depicted in the miniature. They were killed by the Blemmyes, a tribe who had settled in the eastern desert between the Nile River and Red Sea, where they earned a reputation as warriors

living in Upper Egypt.<sup>523</sup> During the reign of Diocletian, the Blemmyes were raided and thereafter they lived in the fortified island of Philae.<sup>524</sup>

In the miniature, the executioners are depicted as a group of three men with dark skin wearing white turbans and short tunics in various colors. The executioner, who is standing nearest to the monks, extends a sword with his right hand parallel to the ground while grasping a scabbard with the other hand. In front of the group of three executioners, two monks are standing up and facing the Blemmyes. They are wearing the monastic garb and depicted as elderly men with white hair and beards. Beneath their feet, a group of seven monks are lying down on the ground in various positions, dressed in the same monastic attire. They too are all depicted as elderly men with white hair and beards. Two other executioners are amongst the group of monks and are directing their swords against them. Both executioners have dark skin color and they too wear turbans. Behind this crowded scenery, a church emerges from the right side of the plain. Against a golden background, palm trees flank the scene as the figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀπετμήθησαν [had their heads cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>525</sup>

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<sup>523</sup> *ODB*, 296.

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>525</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



**MS number** 326

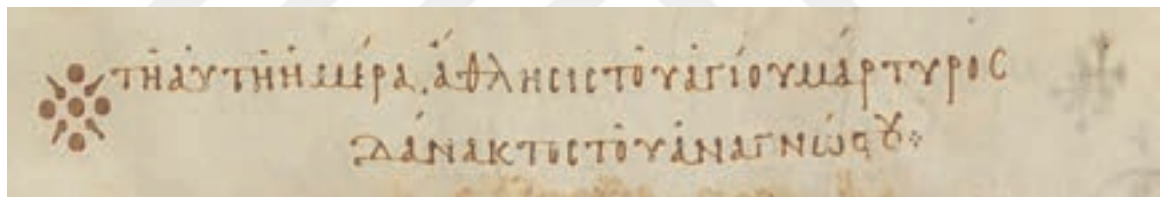
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** January 16

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Danax of Illyria



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΔΑΝΑΚΤΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΤΟΥ ∷

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Danax the Lector.

### Description

According to the title, Danax the Lector is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in Aulona in Epirus.<sup>526</sup>

<sup>526</sup> *Synax\_CP*, Jan. 16, par. 3 (cols. 397-8)

Danax is kneeling in front of a Roman soldier while holding a two-handled chalice with his hands. He is dressed in a brown *phlenion* with yellow drape lines, a black tunic and slippers. He is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is preparing to decapitate Danax. He is dressed in red tunic, blue leggings with a lozenge pattern, white stockings and black slippers. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a scabbard with his left hand. On the right side of the plain, beside Danax, a river flows next to a mountain. The river ends with a rectangular, water-laden well. A small church emerges from the top right corner of the miniature. Against a golden background, floral details are scattered across the scene.

There is no mention of Danax's beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified George as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his the name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>527</sup>



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<sup>527</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.





MS number 328

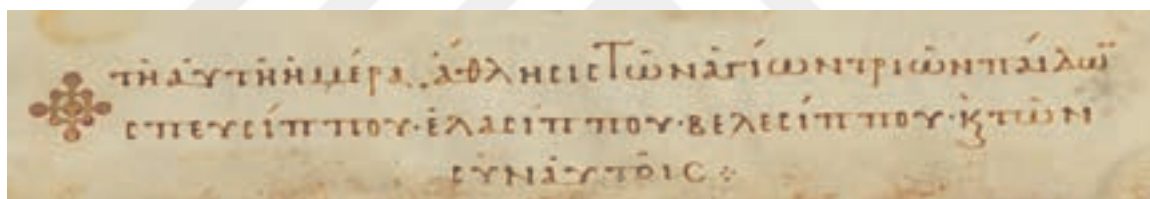
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 16

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Speusippus,  
Elausippus, Meleusippus



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΤΡΙΩΝ ΠΑΙΔΩΝ ΣΠΕΥΣΙΠΠΟΥ, ΕΛΑΣΙΠΠΟΥ,  
ΒΕΛΕΣΙΠΠΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the three holy children, Speusippus, Elausippus, Meleusippus and their companions.

### Description

According to the title, Speusippus, Elausippus and Meleusippus are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Cappadocia during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD).<sup>528</sup>

<sup>528</sup> *Synax. CP*, Jan. 16, par. 2 (cols. 396-7)

The names in the title refer to the children who are being burned alive at the stake. They are depicted as beardless young men with brown hair. They are raising their hands towards the sky as in an act of prayer. On the right side of the plain, Turbon is kneeling in front of a Roman soldier who is about to behead him. He is dressed in a light blue tunic, red leggings and black slippers. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky, while grasping a scabbard with his left hand. He is dressed in a gold patterned blue tunic and a red *chlamys*. The bodies of Neonilla and Jonilla conceal his body from the waist down. They have both already been decapitated and their bodies lie parallel to the ground with their hands bound behind their backs. Their decapitated heads have rolled a few steps away and their faces reveal female characteristics. Streams of blood issue forth from both ends of the mutilated parts of their bodies. Against a golden background, there is a mountain on the right side of the plain. All figures are uniformly depicted on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 110



MS number 333

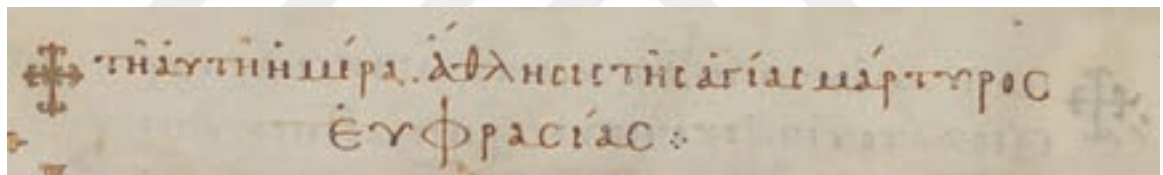
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 19

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Euphrasia of  
Nicomedia



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΥΦΡΑΣΙΑΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Euphrasia.

**Description**

According to the title, Euphrasia is depicted in the miniature. She was martyred in Bithynia during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>530</sup>

<sup>530</sup> *Synax\_CP*, Jan. 19, par. 3 (col. 404)

In the center of the plain, Euphrasia is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier dressed in a blue *maphorion* over a red tunic, tightly covering her neck and head. Her right hand is on her left knee as she bends her legs half way, stretching the left leg towards the back. The Roman soldier is dressed in a patterned red tunic, yellow *chlamys*, blue leggings, brown stockings and black slippers. He raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky, while he grasps a black scabbard on his left hand. A small church emerges behind a mountain on the far left corner of the miniature. Euphrasia stands on a green groundline while the Roman soldier is approaching her while standing on a mountain. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. A column rises on the top of the mountain, in the far right corner of the miniature. Few floral details are scattered across the landscape.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀποκεφαλίσαι [to behead] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>531</sup>

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<sup>531</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 111



MS number 335

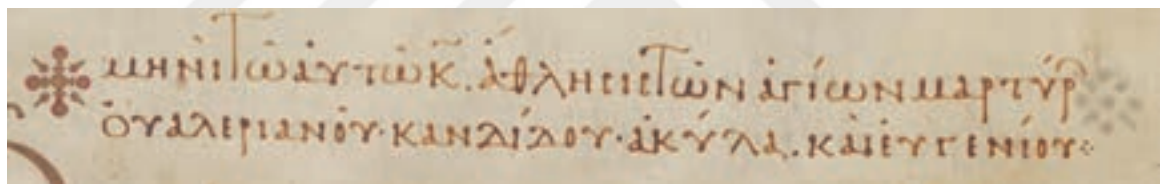
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 20

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Candidus,  
Eugenius and Valerian of Trebizond



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Κ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡ[ΩΝ] ΟΥΑΛΕΡΙΑΝΟΥ, ΚΑΝΔΙΔΟΥ, ΑΚΥΛΑ  
ΚΑΙ ΕΥΓΕΝΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Valerian, Candidus, Aquila and Eugenius.

**Description**

According to the title, Eugenius, Valerian, Candidus and Aquila are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Trebizond during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD)<sup>532</sup>.

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<sup>532</sup> BHG, 84.

A group of three martyrs, two males and a female, are dressed in loincloths and they occupy the center of the plain. A middle-aged male martyr with brown hair and beard is kneeling in front of the soldier with his hands bound behind his back. The remaining two have already been decapitated and blood gashes out from their necks and other mutilated parts of their bodies. The hands of both martyrs are bound behind their backs. The Roman soldier is dressed in a blue tunic, red *chlamys*, black leggings, white stockings and black slippers. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky as he approaches towards the male martyr to behead him. Another martyr, dressed in a yellow tunic and black slippers, is witnessing the event on the right side of the plain. His hands are bound behind his back and he is depicted as a beardless, young man with brown hair. Against a golden background, mountains flank the scene. Few floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>533</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 112



MS number 343

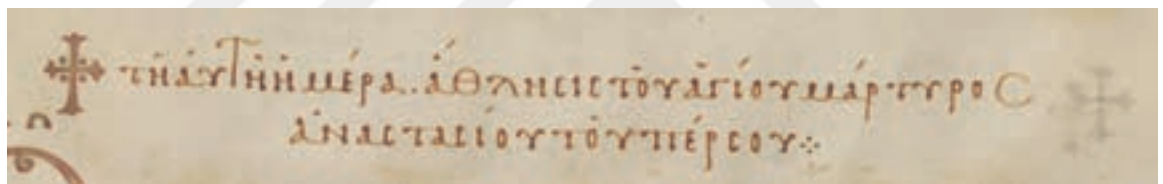
Region 2

MS commemoration date January 22

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Anastasius of Persia



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΠΕΡΣΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Anastasius of Persia.

**Description**

According to the title, Anastasius of Persia is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in Persia in 628 AD.<sup>534</sup>

In the center of the plain, Anastasius is kneeling in between two Roman soldiers, with his hands bound behind his back. While one soldier is dragging him by a rope

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<sup>534</sup> BHG, 13.

bound around his neck, the other is preparing to behead him. Anastasius is dressed in a *schema*, wearing a black *himation*, a dark red stole with gold vertical stripes and the black monastic slippers, *kaligia*. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with black hair and beard. The soldier who is about to perform the beheading is dressed in a red tunic, a blue *chlamys*, blue leggings and grey boots. The other soldier wears a yellow tunic, red leggings and grey boots. His facial details have been scraped off due to physical damage in the miniature. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. All figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>535</sup>



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<sup>535</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 113



MS number 345

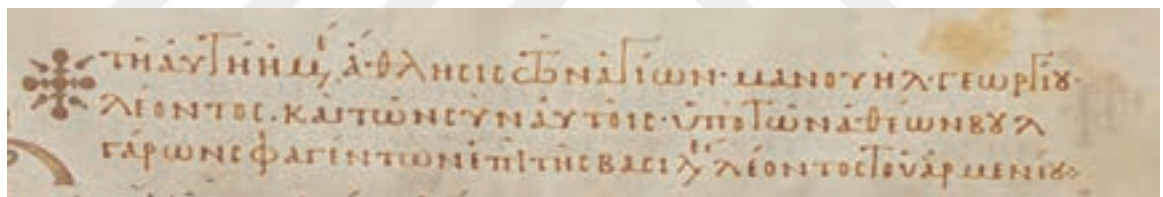
Region 3

MS commemoration date January 22

Vita Theodore of Stoudios, *Parva Catechesis*

Type C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Martyrs of Bulgaria



**Transcription**

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕ[ΡΑ].

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΝΟΥΗΛ, ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ, ΛΕΟΝΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ, ΥΠΟ ΤΩΝ ΑΘΕΩΝ ΒΟΥΛΓΑΡΩΝ ΣΦΑΓΕΝΤΩΝ ΕΠΙ ΤΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙ[ΑΣ] ΛΕΟΝΤΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΡΜΕΝΙΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of SS Manuel, Georgios, Leon and their companions, who were slaughtered by the godless Bulgarians during the reign Leo the Armenian.

**Description**

According to the title, the miniature depicts the martyrs who were killed by the Bulgarians during the reign of Leo V the Armenian (r. 813-820), of which only

Manuel, Georgios and Leon are identified by name. The account of the martyrs of Bulgaria was later included in the *Parva Catechesis* penned by Theodore of Stoudios.<sup>536</sup>

The crowded scene depicts ten martyrs that are being killed and piled up on top of each other. Three of them have already been decapitated. Blood gashes forth from their wounds inflicted on the martyrs' bodies. The three executioners, dressed in attires that imply their foreign origin, are standing around the martyrs while raising their sword-bearing arms towards the sky. Identified as Bulgarians in the title, their costumes are exemplar of the attire worn by Bulgarian warriors. It is not possible to identify the individual depictions of Manuel, Georgios and Leon amongst the group of martyrs. Against a golden background, the martyrs are piled up in the center of the miniature in front of a single black mountain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισε [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>537</sup>

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<sup>536</sup> Pananos Sophoulis, *Byzantium and Bulgaria, 775-831*, East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450-1450, 1872-8103, v. 16 (Leiden: Brill; Biggleswade Extenza Turpin [distributor], 2011), 283.

<sup>537</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 114



MS number 346

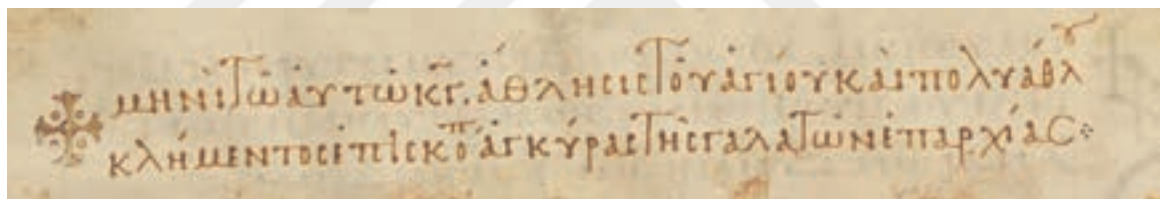
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 23

Vita -

Type B

Beheaded martyr(s) Chariton,  
Christopher and Clement of Ancyra



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΓ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΥΑΘΛΟΥ ΚΛΗΜΕΝΤΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟ[Υ]  
ΑΓΚΥΡΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΓΑΛΑΤΩΝ ΕΠΑΡΧΙΑΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy and triumphant martyr Clement, bishop of Ancyra, the diocese of the Galatians.

**Description**

According to the title, Clement the bishop of Ancyra in Galatia is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred together with his companions in Palestine in 350 AD.<sup>538</sup>

<sup>538</sup> BHG, 45.

The figures in the scene are encircled inside a semi-circular prison building with high red brick walls. On the right corner, other buildings rise attached to the walled structure. In the center, Clement's headless body is standing in front of a Roman soldier. He is dressed in a bishop's attire, a blue *sticharion*, a yellow *sakkos* and a white *omophorion* with embroidered crosses. His hands are slightly raised above and are concealed beneath his *sakkos*. Blood spills from both mutilated parts of his body. His decapitated head is placed on a rectangular altar table that has been covered with a dark blue altar cloth with a gold embroidered cross. His lifeless head manifests that he was an elderly man with white hair and beard. Behind the altar table, as indicated in the main text, two decapitated bodies, presumably belonging to Christopher and Chariton lie parallel to the ground. They are wearing plain tunics, displaying their ecclesiastical rank as deacons. Blood spills from the mutilated parts of their bodies and they are depicted as young men with brown hair. The Roman soldier behind Clement has completed the executions and is placing his sword back inside its scabbard. He is dressed in a patterned black tunic, light blue *chlamys*, dark blue leggings and white boots. The paint around his face has peeled off due to physical damage in the miniature. Against a golden background, the figures stand on a green groundline and few floral details are scattered across the landscape.

There is no mention of Clement's beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>539</sup>

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<sup>539</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 115



MS number 347

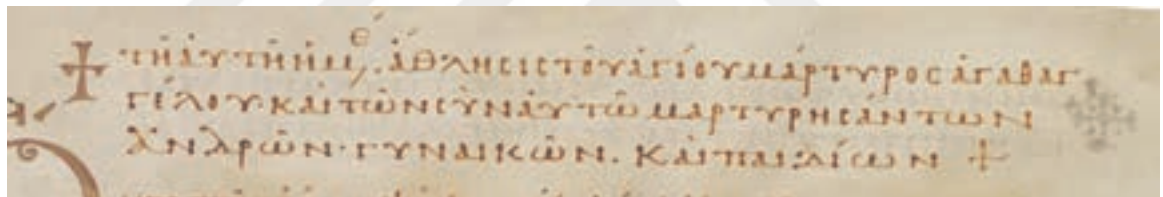
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 23

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Agathangelus of Ancyra



**Transcription**

†ΘΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕ [ΡΑ].

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΑΓΑΘΑΓΓΕΛΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ  
ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤΩΝ ΑΝΔΡΩΝ, ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΙΔΙΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Agathangelus and of the men, women and children accompanying him.

**Description**

According to the title, Agathangelus and his companions are depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>540</sup>

<sup>540</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Jan. 23, par. 1 (cols. 415-8).

Agathangelus, dressed in a red tunic with grey bands across the neck and the lower hem, is kneeling before a Roman soldier. Beneath the tunic, he is wearing brown leggings and black slippers. He is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. His hands are bound behind his back. The Roman soldier is approaching him sideways, dressed in a black tunic, maroon leggings and yellow slippers. He is raising his sword-bearing right hand towards the sky while grasping a scabbard in his left hand. While he is about to decapitate Agathangelus he has already finished beheading his four companions, whose dead bodies lie horizontally on the ground. Blood issues forth from the mutilated parts of their bodies. As manifested in the title, the group of decapitated martyrs is composed of men, women and a child. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the plain and all figures share a uniform green groundline. Some floral details are scattered across the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισε [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>541</sup>

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<sup>541</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 116



MS number 348

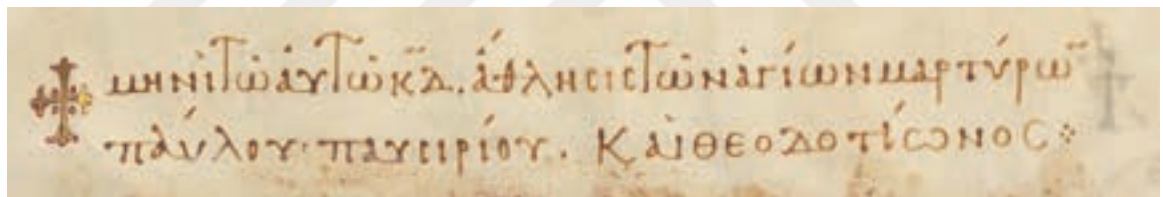
Region 2

MS commemoration date January 24

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Paul, Pausirion and Theodotion of Cleopatris



**Transcription**

†ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΔ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩ[Ν] ΠΑΥΛΟΥ, ΠΑΥΣΙΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ  
ΘΕΟΔΟΤΙΩΝΟΣ ∴

**English translation**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Paul, Pausirion and Theodotion.

**Description**

According to the title, Paul, Pausirion and Theodotion are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Egypt during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>542</sup>

<sup>542</sup> *Synax. CP*, Jan. 24, par. 2 (cols. 420-2)

On the left side of the plain, Theodotion is kneeling before a Roman soldier and is about to be beheaded. He is dressed in a loincloth and his hands are bound behind his back. The Roman soldier approaches him from behind and he is drawing his sword out of its scabbard. He is dressed in a blue tunic, red *chlamys*, blue leggings and white boots. In the right side of the plain, a martyr dressed in a loincloth is drowning in a flowing river. Another Roman soldier is carrying the body of a martyr who is dressed in loincloth on his shoulders and he is about to throw him into the water. He is dressed in a red tunic, blue leggings and white boots. Against a golden background, two mountains occupy remaining area from the river and few floral details are scattered across the green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>543</sup>

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<sup>543</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



**MS number** 356

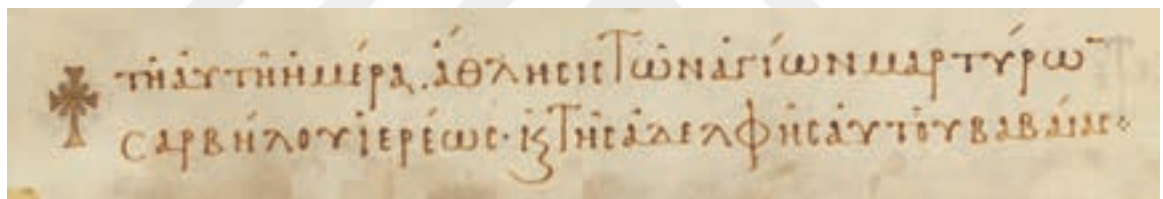
**Region 1**

**MS commemoration date** January 29

**Vita -**

**Type C**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Babaea of Edessa



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩ[Ν] ΣΑΡΒΗΛΟΥ ΙΕΡΕΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ  
ΑΔΕΛΦΗΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΒΑΒΑΙΑΣ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Sarbelus the priest and his sister Babaea.

### Description

According to the title, Sarbelus the priest and his sister Babaea are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Edessa during the reign of Trajan (98-117 AD).<sup>544</sup>

<sup>544</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Jan. 29, par. 4 (col. 432).

In the center of the plane, two Roman soldiers are sawing the body of Sarbelius, which stands restrained within an upright rack. He is dressed in a yellow tunic and depicted as a middle-aged man with black hair and beard. The soldier to his right is dressed in a blue tunic, red leggings and grey boots while the one on his left is wearing a purple tunic, green leggings and grey boots. The miniature shows extensive flaking due to physical damage that is especially apparent around the Roman soldier's face and the hem of his tunic. Beneath Sarbelius' feet, the lifeless body of Babaea is lying down parallel to the groundline. Her arms are reaching out, parallel to each other, towards her decapitated head. Streams of blood burst out from the mutilated parts of Babaea's body as well as Sarbelius' neck. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene. All figures uniformly stand on a green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded]

in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>545</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.





**MS number** 357

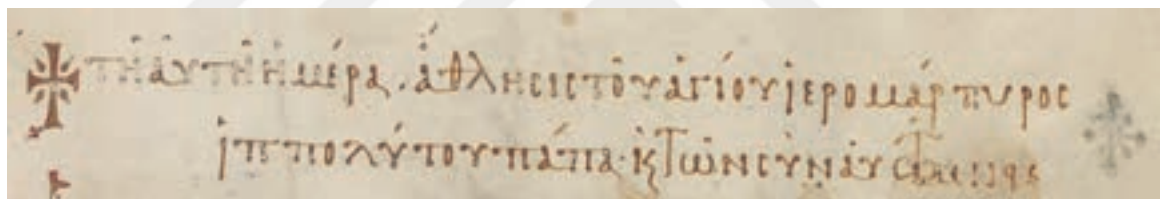
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** January 29

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Hippolytus and Sabinus of Rome



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΥ ΠΑΠΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ [...] ✠

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Pope Hippolytus and his companions.

### Description

According to the title, the hieromartyr Pope Hippolytus is depicted in the miniature along with his companions. They were martyred during the reign of Claudius (41-54 AD).<sup>546</sup>

<sup>546</sup> BHG,66.

In the center of the plain, Hippolytus kneels in front of a Roman soldier and is about to be beheaded. Depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard, he raises his hands towards the sky as in an act of prayer. He is dressed in a blue *sticharion*, a brown *sakkos* and a white *omophorion* with black embroidered crosses, manifesting his clerical rank of bishop. The Roman soldier behind him is raising his sword-bearing right arms towards the sky while he grasps a scabbard in his left hand. He is dressed in a green tunic, grey *chlamys*, dark blue leggings with flowers patters and white boots. Beneath his feet, a female martyr is already beheaded. She is dressed in a white tunic and her hands are bound behind her back. Her face shows an expression of suffering. On the right side of the plain, another martyr has been drowned in the sea. He is floating face-down in the water and his feet are bound. Against a golden background, mountains occupy both sides of the landscape. Hippolytus and the female martyr are situated on a green groundline, while the Roman soldier stands on top of a mountain. Throughout the scene, flaking can be observed due to physical damage on the miniature's surface.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>547</sup>

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<sup>547</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 119



MS number 358

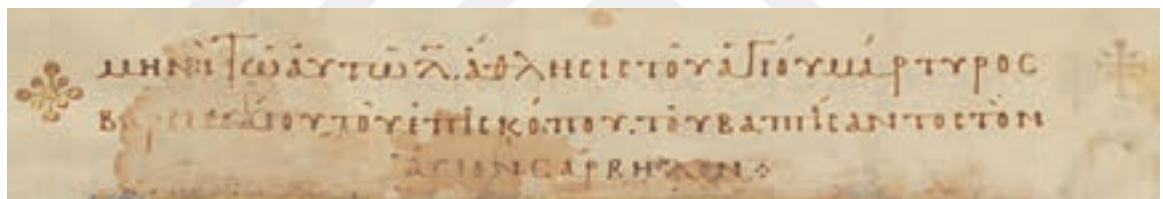
Region 1

MS commemoration date January 30

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Barsimeus of Edessa



Transcription

†ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Λ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ ΒΑΡΣΙΜΑΙΟΥ, ΤΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΠΤΙΣΑΝΤΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΑΓΙΟΝ ΣΑΡΒΗΛΟΝ ∴

English translation

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Barsimeus, the bishop who baptized St Sarbelus.

Description

According to the title, Bishop Barsimeus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Trajan (98-117 AD).<sup>548</sup> Around the second and the third

<sup>548</sup> *Synax\_CP*, Jan. 30, par. 2 (col. 434)

lines of the title text, water damage to the miniature can be observed. The text remains readable.

In the center of the plain, Barsimeus is kneeling in front of a Roman soldier who is about to behead him. He is dressed in a light brown *sticharion*, a purple-brown *sakkos* and a white *omophorion* with black embroidered crosses, underlining his rank in the Church as a bishop. Concealed under his *sakkos*, he raises his hands towards the sky, as in an act of prayer. The Roman soldier behind him is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping the scabbard with his left hand. He is dressed in a blue tunic and a red *chlamys*. The paint around his face is slightly flaked due to physical damage in the miniature. On the right side of the plain, an arched and rectangular marble altar enclosure encircles an altar table covered with a cross-patterned red cloth. The architectural detail confirms Barsimeus' role of performing baptisms as indicated in the title. On the left side of the plain a mountain and few floral details are visible. Against a golden background, the figures stand on a uniform green groundline.

There is no mention of Barsimeus' beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>549</sup>

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<sup>549</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 120



MS number 359

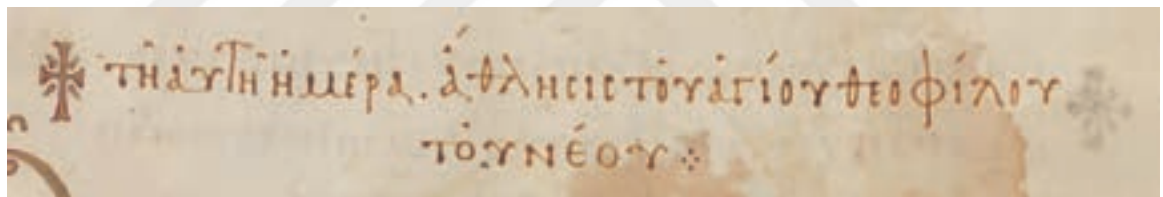
Region 3

MS commemoration date January 30

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Theophilus the Younger



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΘΕΟΦΙΛΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΝΕΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of St Theophilus the Younger.

**Description**

According to the title, Theophilus the Younger is depicted in the miniature. He was a soldier who was martyred at the hands of the Arabs in Cyprus in 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>550</sup>

On the left side of the plain, he is kneeling in front of an executioner and is about to be beheaded. Dressed in a white tunic and white slippers, his hands are bound behind

<sup>550</sup> *Synax\_CP*, Jan. 30, par. 3 (col. 434).

his back. Theophilus the Younger is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The executioner approaches him sideways, holding a sword towards the sky in his right hand while grasping a black scabbard in his left hand. He is dressed in a short red tunic that leaves his right shoulder and legs naked, coupled with white boots. His green turban and dark skin color suggests that he is not a Roman soldier but instead of different origin, presumably an Arab. On the right side of the plain, a small church building is visible. The figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Floral details are scattered across the plain. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>551</sup>



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<sup>551</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.





MS number 360

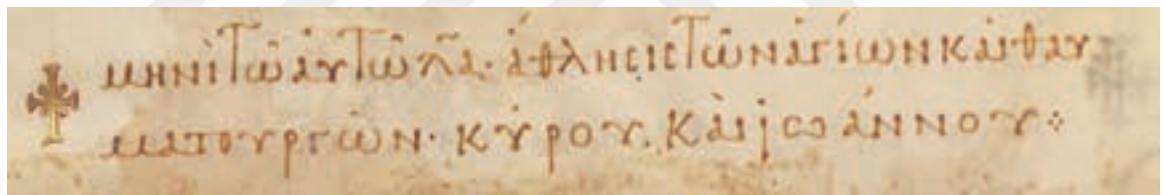
Region 2

MS commemoration date January 31

Vita -

Type C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Athanasia, Cyrus, Eudoxia, John, Teoctista, Theodosia of Egypt



### Transcription

†**M**ΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΛΑ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΑΥΜΑΤΟΥΡΓΩΝ ΚΥΡΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ∴

### English translation

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the miracle-working saints, Cyrus and John.

### Description

According to the title, Cyrus and John the Miracle-workers are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Canopus in Egypt during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>552</sup>

<sup>552</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Jan. 31, par. 1 (cols. 433-5).

In the center of the plain, Cyrus is kneeling in front of a Roman soldier who is about to behead him. He is dressed in a monastic garb, with a yellow belted *himation* and a black stole. His hands are resting on his bent knees. He is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky in while grasping a black scabbard with his left hand. He is wearing a blue *chlamys*, red tunic, blue leggings and grey boots. The paint around his *chlamys* is flaked due to physical damage in the miniature. Beneath his feet, four female martyrs have already been decapitated. Three of them kneel while standing on their elbows and knees, and a fourth is lying horizontally to the ground. The decapitated heads all have long hair, manifesting their female gender. Dressed in various colors of tunics, blood gashes forth from the mutilated parts of their bodies. John is standing on the right side of the plain, dressed in a brown tunic, leggings and black slippers. His hands are bound behind his back. One of the decapitated heads rolled next to his feet. He is facing towards Cyrus and waiting to be martyred next. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene as floral details are scattered across. All figures, except for the Roman soldier, stand on a uniform groundline. The soldier presses his right foot on a martyr's dead body while his other leg is concealed behind Cyrus' body.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>553</sup>

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<sup>553</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



**MS number** 361

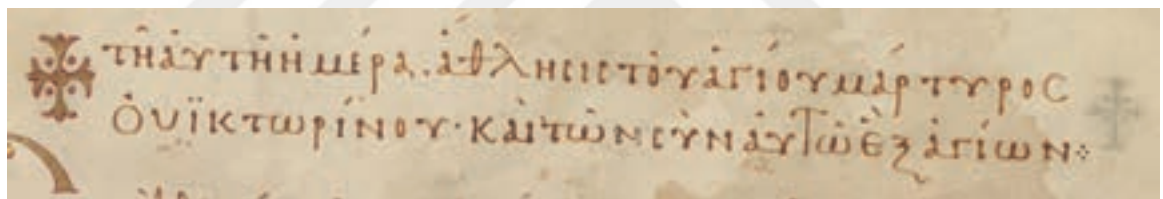
**Region** 3

**MS commemoration date** January 31

**Vita** -

**Type** B

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Serapion of Corinth



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΟΥΙΚΤΩΡΙΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΕΞ ΑΓΙΩΝ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Victorinus and his six companion saints.

### Description

According to the title, Victorinus and his six companions are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Corinth during the reign of Decius (249-251 AD).<sup>554</sup>

<sup>554</sup> *Synax\_CP*, Jan. 31, par. 2 (cols. 435-6).

The main text reveals that the remaining companions are named as Victor, Nicephorus, Diodorus, Serapion, Claudianus and Papias. Among them, only Serapion was beheaded while the rest suffered other kinds of torture. On the upper left corner, Serapion is suspended from the top, hanging upside down, and dressed in a loincloth. His decapitated body rolls on the ground as blood springs from the wounds he received. Beneath him, a group of three martyrs are inside a cylindrical marble mortar while the Roman soldiers are crushing their bodies with pestles. In the upper center, a martyr has been tortured and his hands and feet mutilated. Blood issues forth from the mutilated parts of his body. The paint is flaking around the face of this martyr due to physical damage in the miniature. Beneath him, on the groundline, a martyr is being delivered to the flames, being burnt alive as his hands are positioned across his chest in an *orant* position. The far right side of the plain is occupied with a flowing river. A Roman soldier is carrying the body of a martyr dressed in loincloth and is about to cast it into the water. Against a golden background, the landscape is mountainous with a single tree emerging between the hills.

Serapion's beheading is narrated textually with the word group Σαραπίον δὲ κατὰ κεφαλῆς κρεμασθεὶς, ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [Serapion was beheaded after he was hung upside-down] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>555</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



**MS number** 363

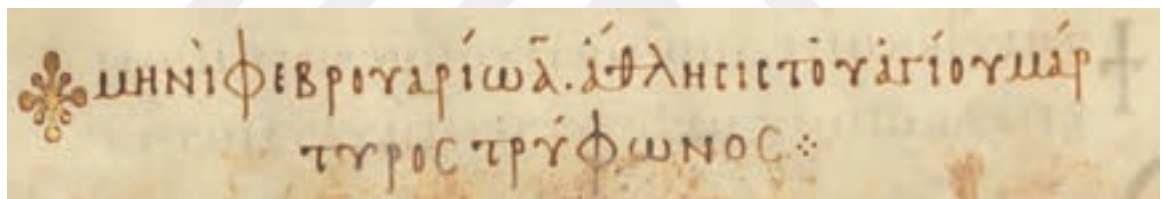
**Region 1**

**MS commemoration date** February 1

**Vita -**

**Type A**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Tryphon of Phrygia



### Transcription

†ΜΗΝΙ ΦΕΒΡΟΥΑΡΙΩ Α΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΤΡΥΦΩΝΟΣ ∴

### English translation

On February 1<sup>st</sup>.

The struggle of the holy martyr Tryphon.

### Description

According to the title, Tryphon is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in Phrygia during the reign of Decius (249-251 AD).<sup>556</sup>

He is kneeling in front of a Roman soldier with his hands bound behind his back and is about to be beheaded. Dressed in a light pink tunic and gold colored slippers, his

<sup>556</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Feb. 1, par. 1 (col. 437)

dress is adorned with gold bands around his shoulders and the tunic's lower hem. The Roman soldier is approaching him from behind and raises his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a red scabbard with his left hand. He is dressed in a light blue *chlamys*, dark blue tunic, brown leggings, white stockings and black slippers. On the far left corner, an unidentified building is visible. The figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. Floral details are scattered across the plain. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀπετμήθη [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>557</sup>



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<sup>557</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.





MS number 368

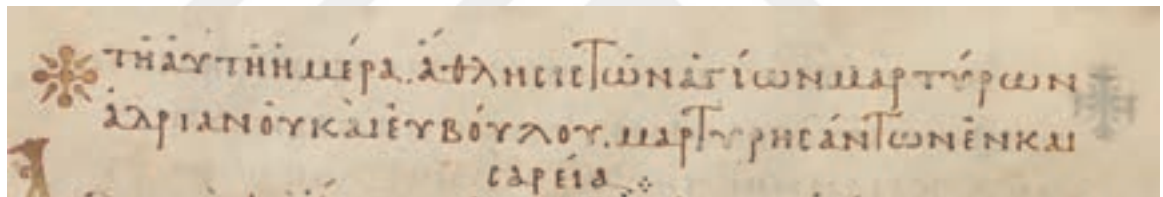
Region 2

MS commemoration date February 3

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Adrian and Eubulus of Caesarea



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΑΔΡΙΑΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΒΟΥΛΟΥ.  
ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑ ⚪

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Adrian and Eubulus, who were martyred in Caesarea.

### Description

According to the title, Adrian and Eubulus are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Caesarea in Palestine during the reign of Maximinus II Daia (308-313 AD).<sup>558</sup>

<sup>558</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Feb. 3, par. 2 (cols. 440-1).

Eubulus is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier, dressed in a loincloth and his hands are bound behind his back. He is depicted as an elderly man with a balding head and white beard. The Roman soldier is approaching him from behind, raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a scabbard with his left hand. He is dressed in a blue tunic, green *chlamys*, red leggings and grey boots. As Eubulus is kneeling on the green groundline, the soldier is standing on the mountainous area. In front of them, the dead body of Adrian has fallen to the ground. His head is completely separated from his body and his hands are bound behind his back. Dressed in a white tunic, he is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown beard and hair. A small church emerges from the far right corner of the plain. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. Floral details are scattered around the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>559</sup>

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<sup>559</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



**MS number** 369

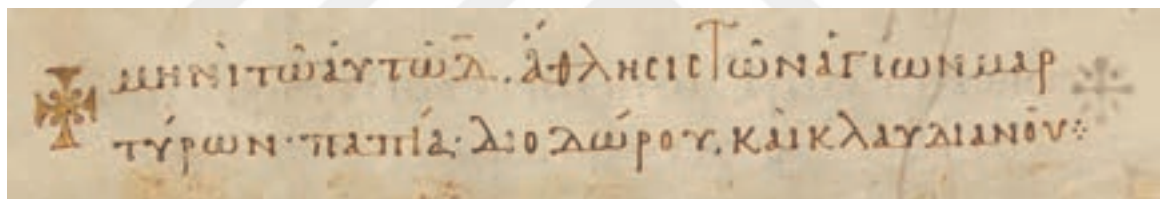
**Region 1**

**MS commemoration date** February 4

**Vita -**

**Type C**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Claudianus,  
Papias and Diodorus of Perge



### Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Δ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΠΑΠΙΑ, ΔΙΟΔΩΡΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΚΛΑΥΔΙΑΝΟΥ  
∴

### English translation

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Papias, Diodorus and Claudianus.

### Description

According to the title, Papias, Diodorus and Claudianus are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Pamphylia during the reign of Decius (249-251 AD).<sup>560</sup>

<sup>560</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Feb. 4, par. 2 (col. 443).

In the center of the plain, Diodorus kneels before the Roman soldier with his hands bound behind his back. Dressed in a blue tunic and black slippers, he is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier is depicted as if rushing towards the martyr to behead him. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while holding a red scabbard in his left hand. He is dressed in a blue tunic, blue scabbard, brown leggings and grey boots. On the left side of the plain, Papias is waiting to be beheaded with his hands bound behind his back. Dressed in a dark grey tunic and black slippers, he is depicted as a beardless young man with brown hair. On the right side of the plain, Claudianus is already beheaded. Dressed in a purple tunic with his hands bound behind his back, his body is curled up on the groundline while his decapitated head rolls in front of him. Blood spills from both ends of the mutilated parts of his body. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. Few floral details are scattered across the plain.

There is no mention of beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>561</sup>

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<sup>561</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 126



MS number 372

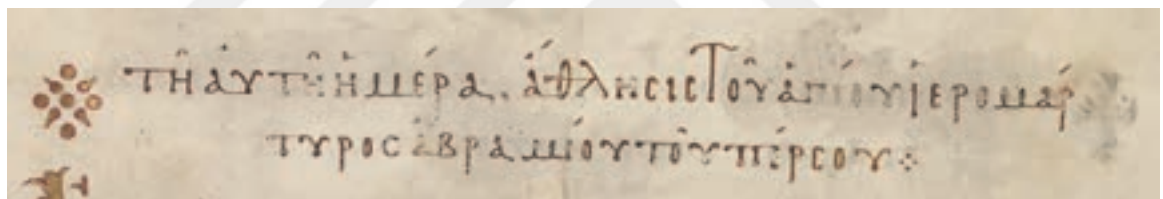
Region 2

MS commemoration date February 5

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Abraham the Persian



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΒΡΑΜΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΠΕΡΣΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Abraham the Persian.

**Description**

According to the title, Abraham the Persian is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Shapur II (309-379 AD).<sup>562</sup>

Abraham the Persian is dressed in a purple *sakkos*, light blue *sticharion* and black slippers. He is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier with his hands resting on his

<sup>562</sup> *Synax\_CP*, Feb. 5, par. 2 (col. 445)

knees. He is depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard. The Roman soldier is approaching him while raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky and placing his left hand on the scabbard that stands vertically to the ground. He is dressed in a blue tunic, purple *chlamys*, blue leggings, white stockings and black slippers. An unidentified building emerges from the far left corner of the plain. The figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Against a golden background, mountains occupy the scene while floral details are scattered around the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading the name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>563</sup>



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<sup>563</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.





**MS number** 379

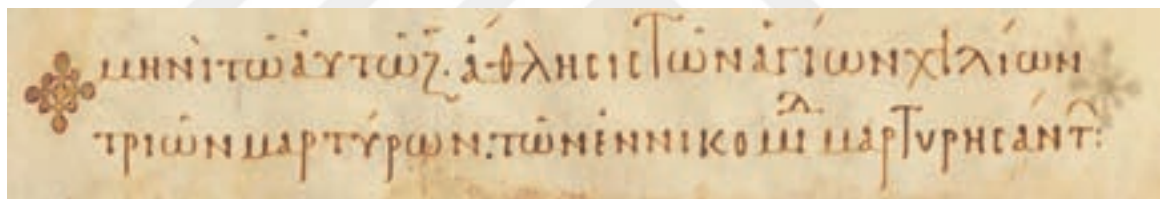
**Region 1**

**MS commemoration date** February 7

**Vita -**

**Type A**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Martyrs of  
Nicomedia



### Transcription

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Ζ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΧΙΛΙΩΝ ΤΡΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΝΙΚΟΜ[Η]Δ[ΕΙΑ]  
ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤ[ΩΝ] :

### English translation

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy One Thousand and Three martyrs of Nicomedia.

### Description

According to the title, the One Thousand and Three Martyrs of Nicomedia are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred in Nicomedia during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>564</sup>

<sup>564</sup> *Synax\_CP*, Dec. 28, par. 1 (cols. 349-52). Also, *BHG*, 171.

In the center of the plain, a group of twenty-three martyrs are piled on top of each other in a triangular formation. While some of them are depicted with their faces and full bodies, others are merely represented by the tips of their nimbuses. The group is composed of males and females belonging to different age groups and on the lower right corner, a female is caressing a baby in her arms. Three Roman executioners encircle the martyrs, raising their sword-bearing arms towards the sky. As they are about to decapitate the martyrs, the executioner that stands on the leftmost corner grasps the martyr from his head. The group of martyrs stands uniformly on a green groundline. Against a golden background, a single mountain in the center is behind the group of martyrs.

There is no mention of beheading in the main text. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>565</sup>



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<sup>565</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 128



**MS number** 385

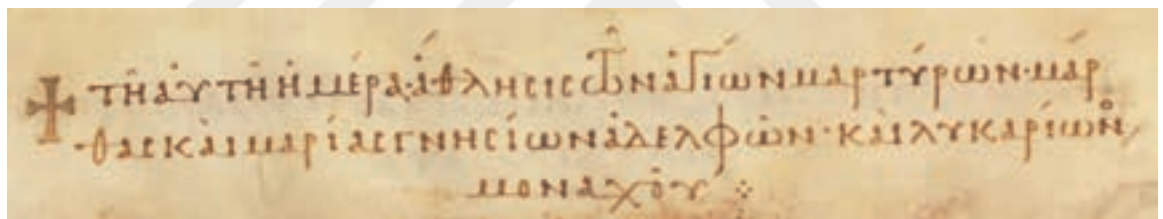
**Region** Unknown

**MS commemoration date** February 8

**Vita -**

**Type B**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Lycarion, Mary and Martha



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΜΑΡΘΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΑΡΙΑΣ ΓΝΗΣΙΩΝ  
ΑΔΕΛΦΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΛΥΚΑΡΙΩΝ[ΟΣ] ΜΟΝΑΧΟΥ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyrs and biological sisters Martha and Maria and of the monk Lycarion.

### Description

According to the title, the two sisters Martha and Maria alongside the monk Lycarion are depicted in the miniature.

Martha and Mary are nailed on crosses on both ends of the plain. They are depicted as young females, with their brown hair reaching to their shoulders. Blood gashes out of their nailed hands and feet. On the left side, an executioner is stabbing one of them and copious amounts of blood run down her body. In the center, an executioner who is dressed in a patterned red tunic, leggings and grey boots, has already decapitated Lycarion. His body is still in a kneeling position, with his hands tied behind his back. Blood issues forth from the mutilated parts of Lycarion's body. He is dressed in a monastic garb, a brown *himation* and a black *analabos*. Against a golden background, a single mountain with its summit at the very center of the scene occupies the plain. All figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered around the scene.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>566</sup>

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<sup>566</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 129



**MS number** 387

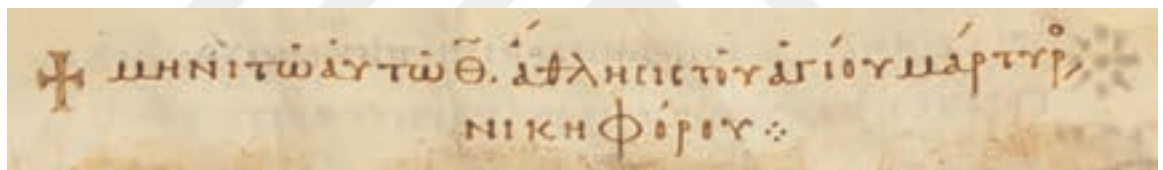
**Region 1**

**MS commemoration date** February 9

**Vita -**

**Type B**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Nicephorus of Antioch



**Transcription**

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Θ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥ[Σ] ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΥ ✠.

**English translation**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Nicephorus.

**Description**

According to the title, Nicephorus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Valerian (253-260 AD).<sup>567</sup>

Nicephorus has already been beheaded and is suspended in mid-air while falling to the ground with his body positioned horizontally to it. He is touching the green grass with both hands and wears a blue tunic, white stockings and yellow slippers. His

<sup>567</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Feb. 9, par. 1 (col. 453)

dislodged head is seen a step or so further away from his body. Nicephorus is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. Blood springs out from both ends of his severed neck. Having completed the execution, the Roman soldier behind him is placing his sword inside the black scabbard. He is dressed in a brown tunic, a red *chlamys*, red leggings and yellow boots. An unidentifiable building emerges from the far right corner. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape while floral details are scattered across the green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>568</sup>



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<sup>568</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



Catalogue ID 130



MS number 389

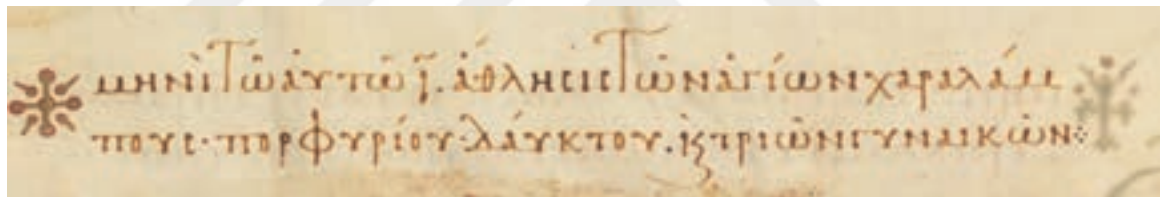
Region 1

MS commemoration date February 10

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Charalampus,  
Dactus and Porphyrius of Magnesia



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Ι.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΧΑΡΑΛΑΜΠΟΥΣ, ΠΟΡΦΥΡΙΟΥ, ΔΑΥΚΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ  
ΤΡΙΩΝ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of SS Charalampus, Porphyrius, Dactus and three women.

**Description**

According to the title, SS Charalampus, Porphyrius and Dactus, accompanied by three women are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred during the reign of Septimus Severus (193-211 AD).<sup>569</sup>

<sup>569</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Feb. 10, par. 1 (col. 455).

In the center of the plane, Charalampus is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier and is about to be beheaded. He is dressed in a white *sticharion* and an *omophorion* with black embroidered crosses. Depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard, his hands are bound behind his back. The Roman soldier approaches him from his back and is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky. He is dressed in a blue tunic with lozenge patterns, a red *chlamys*, leggings and white slippers. Beneath Charalampus, the decapitated bodies of three martyrs lie in various positions on the ground. They are all dressed in tunics with roundel patterns in various colors. One is an elderly man, the other a female, while the third martyr's face cannot be recognized. On the left side, two other martyrs are witnessing the events as they are awaiting their own execution. Against a golden background, small hills flank both sides of the plain. All figures are standing uniformly on the same, blue-colored groundline. Few floral details are scattered on the skirts of the hills.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφάλισεν [beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>570</sup>

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<sup>570</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 131



MS number 390

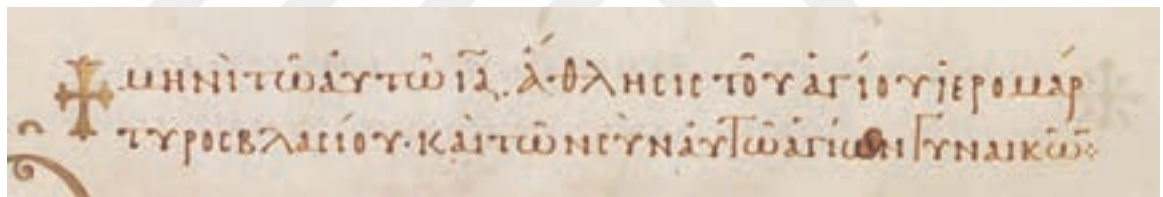
Region 2

MS commemoration date February  
11

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Blasius of  
Sebaste



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΑ΄.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΒΛΑΣΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ  
ΑΓΙΩΝ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy hieromartyr Blasius and the saintly women with him.

**Description**

According to the title, Blasius is depicted in the miniature with his female companions. They were martyred during the reign of Licinius (308-324 AD).<sup>571</sup>

<sup>571</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Feb. 11, par. 1 (col. 457).

In the center of the plain, he is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier who is about to behead him. Blasius is dressed in a light blue *sticharion*, a purple *sakkos* with yellow drape lines, a grey *omophorion* with black embroidered crosses and black slippers. The attire manifests his clerical rank as a bishop. Depicted as an elderly man with white hair and beard, he is raising his hands towards the sky as in an act of prayer. The Roman soldier behind him is dressed in a red tunic, blue *chlamys*, brown leggings and grey boots. Beneath Blasius' feet, two young martyrs' decapitated bodies lie horizontally on the ground. Blood gashes out from the mutilated parts of their bodies. On the right side of the plain, a group of six female martyrs dressed in various colors of tunics are waiting to be executed. Three martyrs standing on the front conceal the bodies of the remaining three that stand behind them. The round drape lines across their chest manifest their female gender and their long brown hair reaches to their shoulders. Against a golden background, small hills occupy the scene while figures stand on a green groundline. A single tree grows on the skirts of the hills.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Pantoleon as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>572</sup>

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<sup>572</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 132



MS number 396

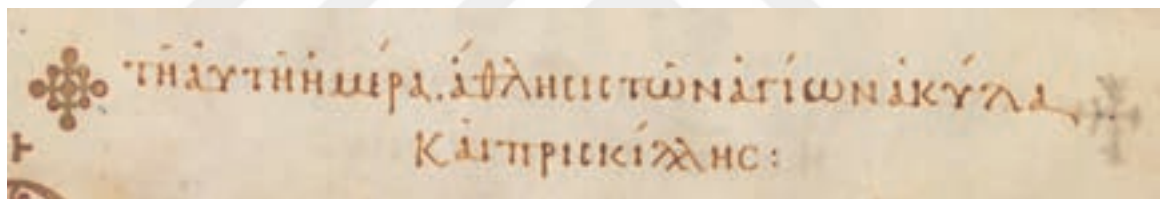
Region 1

MS commemoration date February 13

Vita -

Type C

Beheaded martyr(s) Aquila and Priscilla of Corinth



### Transcription

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΑΚΥΛΑ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΙΣΚΙΛΛΗΣ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of SS Aquila and Priscilla.

### Description

According to the title, Aquila and Priscilla are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred during the 1<sup>st</sup> century and were among the Seventy Apostles that succeeded the initial Twelve.<sup>573</sup>

<sup>573</sup> ODB, 140. *Synax.CP*, Feb. 13, par. 4 (col. 464).

In the center of the plain, Aquila is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier with his hands bound behind his back. Dressed in a maroon tunic and black slippers, he is depicted as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. Some flaking in the paint can be observed around his tunic due to physical damage in the miniature. The Roman soldier is approaching him from his back and he is preparing to behead him. Raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky, the executioner is dressed in a yellow tunic, blue *chlamys*, white leggings and brown boots. In front of Aquila, the dead body of Priscilla is curled up on the ground with her hands bound behind her back. The decapitated head has rolled a few steps away and blood flows from the mutilated parts of her body. A building emerges from the hilltop on the far left corner. Against a golden background, mountains flank the scene on both sides. The figures stand on a green groundline where a small tree is visible on the right end.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>574</sup>

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<sup>574</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.





**MS number** 403

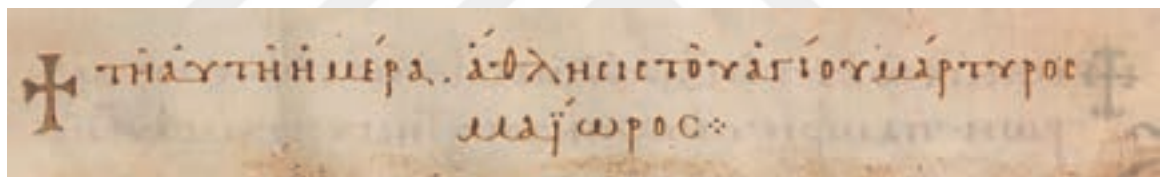
**Region 2**

**MS commemoration date** February 15

**Vita -**

**Type A**

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Major of Gaza



### Transcription

✠ ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΜΑΪΩΡΟΣ ∴

### English translation

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy martyr Major.

### Description

According to the title, Major is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred at Gaza in Palestine during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD).<sup>575</sup>

In the center of the plain, Major is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier and he is about to be beheaded. Dressed in a light blue tunic and white slippers, Major is

<sup>575</sup> *Synax.CP*, Feb. 15, par. 2 (col. 467)

depicted as a middle-aged man with black hair and beard. His hands are bound behind his back as the Roman soldier is approaching him with a sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky in his right hand. The executioner is dressed in red tunic, blue *chlamys* and black leggings with lozenge patterns and grey boots. The paint around his face is flaked due to physical damage on the miniature. An unidentifiable building emerges from the far right corner of the plain. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the scene as floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>576</sup>



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<sup>576</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

**Catalogue ID 134**



**MS number** 404

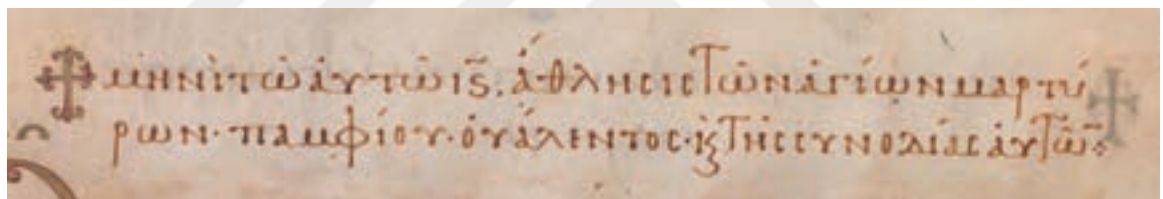
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** February 16

**Vita** -

**Type** C

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Pamphilus and Valens of Caesarea



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΣ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΠΑΜΦΙΛΟΥ, ΟΥΑΛΕΝΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyrs Pamphilus, Valens and their companions.

**Description**

According to the title, Pamphilus, Valens and their companions are depicted in the miniature. They were martyred at Caesarea in Palestine during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>577</sup>

<sup>577</sup> *Synax.CP*, Feb. 16, par. 1 (cols. 467-8)

In the center of the plain, Pamphilus is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier with his hands bound behind his back. He is dressed in a purple tunic, white boots and portrayed as a middle-aged man with brown hair and beard. The Roman soldier is approaching him with his sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky while grasping a scabbard with his other hand. He is standing on top of the bodies of the two already decapitated martyrs. On the groundline, four martyrs lie flat on the ground in different positions and they all have already been beheaded. On the left side of the plain, four martyrs are witnessing the events as they are awaiting their execution. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the plain. All figures are positioned uniformly on the green groundline.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael the Younger as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>578</sup>

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<sup>578</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



**MS number** 414

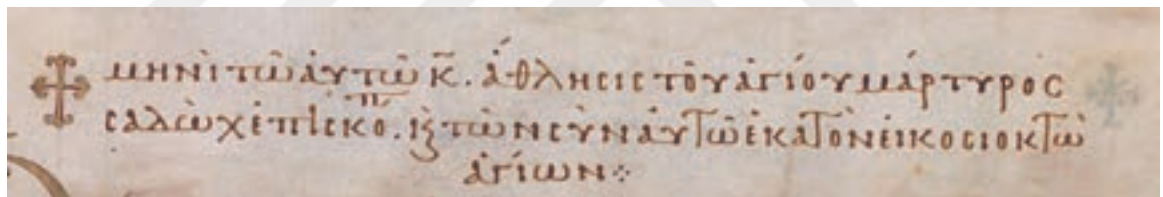
**Region** 2

**MS commemoration date** February 20

**Vita** -

**Type** A

**Beheaded martyr(s)** Sadoth of Seleucia



### Transcription

✠ ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ Κ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΣΑΔΩΧ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠ[ΟΥ] ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝ  
ΑΥΤΩ ΕΚΑΤΟΝ ΕΙΚΟΣΙΟΚΤΩ ΑΓΙΩΝ ∴

### English translation

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Sadoth the bishop and the one hundred twenty-eight saints with him.

### Description

According to the title, Sadoth the bishop is depicted in the miniature accompanied by one hundred twenty-eight saints. He was martyred in Seleucia during the reign of the Persian king Shapur II (309-379 AD) in the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>579</sup>

In the center of the plain, Sadoth is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier dressed in a blue *sticharion*, purple *sakkos* and a grey *omophorion* with black embroidered crosses, manifesting his rank as a bishop of the Church. The Roman soldier is approaching him with his sword-bearing right arm raised towards the sky while grasping a scabbard with his left. He is about to perform the beheading as Sadoth raises his hands from beneath the *sakkos* as in an act of prayer. The paint around his face is flaking due to physical damage in the miniature. He is dressed in a white tunic, red *chlamys*, blue leggings and white boots. On the left side, twenty-one martyrs are witnessing the event with their hands bound behind their backs. Only the bodies of the three martyrs at the front are entirely visible. The remaining group is merely represented by their nimbus. Against a golden background, there is a mountain on the right side of the plain. Figures stand uniformly on a green groundline. Few floral details are scattered on the green plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθησαν [were beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Michael of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>579</sup> *ODB*, 1681. Also, H. Delehayé, in *Anal. Boll.* XXI, 143-47Id., *Les versions grecques des actes des martyrs Persans sous Sapor II*, *Patrologia orientalis*, II (Paris, 1905), 445-50., *BHG*, 227.

<sup>580</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



**Catalogue ID 136**



**MS number** 420

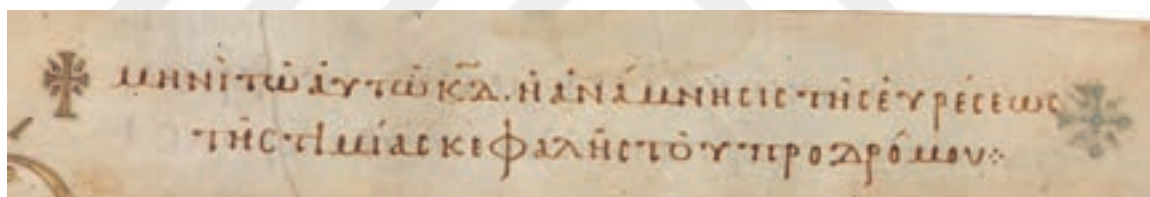
**Region 1**

**MS commemoration date** February 24

**Vita -**

**Type** unclassified

**Beheaded martyr(s)** The discovery of the Head of St John the Baptist by Ignatius the Bishop and Emperor Michael III



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΑ΄.

Η ΑΝΑΜΝΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΥΡΕΣΕΩΣ ΤΗΣ ΤΙΜΙΑΣ ΚΕΦΑΛΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΥ ∴

**English translation**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

Commemoration of the discovery of Honorable Head of the Forerunner.

**Description**

There are three reputed discoveries of the Head of St. John the Baptist that have been noted throughout the centuries. Sozomen, who describes the initial discovery in Jerusalem in the 4th century, records that the relic was transferred to Constantinople by Theodosius the Great (370-392 AD). On 21<sup>st</sup> of March 392 AD, it was deposited

at Hebdomon, in a newly erected church, named after St. John the Baptist himself.<sup>581</sup> During the reign of Justinian (527-565 AD), the relic was strangely borrowed from the city of Emesa [today Homs, Syria]-indicating it was no longer kept in the capital- for the occasion of celebrating an *enkainia*.<sup>582</sup> Finally, the Head of St. John the Baptist was discovered for the third time, in the 9<sup>th</sup> century by Michael III (842-867 AD) and Patriarch Ignatius, as depicted in the miniature. The city of Emesa is explicitly mentioned in the 16-line main text, as the historical background for the relic, which refers to the discovery by the monks of the Spelaion Monastery in 453 AD.<sup>583</sup> Furthermore, the Genoese mercenary and ambassador Baldovino Guericco's accounts assert that the relics of John the Baptist were present in the capital in the beginning of 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>584</sup> Other relics, attributed to St. John the Baptist, were brought to Constantinople at different time periods and were allegedly kept in the reliquary chapel of St Mary of the Pharos.<sup>585</sup>

Unlike the other scenes in the manuscript, the miniature depicts a commemoration for the discovery of the Head of St. John the Baptist, instead of an active execution through beheading. The word 'Forerunner' (προδρόμου) in the title directly points to St. John the Baptist, known to be the one who came before Jesus and acted as a precursor to Christ's coming. Although there is no execution present in the portrayal, the head is placed in a large golden two-handled chalice that is being dug out from the ground by two men with shovels and axes. The presence of the axe around the Baptist's head echoes the way he was beheaded, an item that often features in the iconography of his decapitation.<sup>586</sup> The beheading of St. John the Baptist is commemorated on August 29<sup>th</sup> in the Byzantine system of Church calendar.<sup>587</sup> The Menologion of Basil II runs only from September to the end of February, therefore, this scene is not portrayed in the manuscript. On the left side of the plain, a group of witnesses are looking to each other in expressions of awe. Two men lead the group of witnesses, Michael III, dressed in a lavish blue tunic, wearing a crown that indicates his imperial position. Next to him, Patriarch Ignatius is depicted as an elderly man dressed in a yellow *sakkos*, grey *sticharion* and a white *omophorion* with black embroidered crosses. His attire indicates his position as a patriarch of the Church. After the discovery, the relic was rumored to have been taken to the Studios Monastery, dedicated to St John the Baptist since its foundation in 463.<sup>588</sup>

The word group Ἡ ἀνάμνησις τῆς εὐρέσεως τῆς τιμίας κεφαλῆς τοῦ Προδόμου [Commemoration of the discovery of Honorable Head of the Forerunner] in the title reveals the content of the miniature as the commemoration day of the discovery of St. John the Baptist's honorable head. Ihor Ševčenko identified Nestor as the

<sup>581</sup> John Wortley, "Relics of 'the friends of Jesus' at Constantinople," in *Studies on the cult of relics in Byzantium up to 1204*, ed. John Wortley, Variorum collected studies series 935 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 147.

<sup>582</sup> *ODB*, 699.

<sup>583</sup> *Ibid.*, 690.

<sup>584</sup> *Ibid.*, 887.

<sup>585</sup> Annemarie W. Carr, "The Face Relics of John the Baptist in Byzantium and the West," *Gesta* 46, no. 2

(2007), <https://doi.org/10.2307/20648951>, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20648951>

<sup>586</sup> The axe is also referred in the New Testament with the phrase "See that the axe lies at the root of the tree". (Matthew 3:10 or Luke 3:9)

<sup>587</sup> *ODB*, 779.

<sup>588</sup> *Ibid.*, 1960.

illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>589</sup>



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<sup>589</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 137



MS number 421

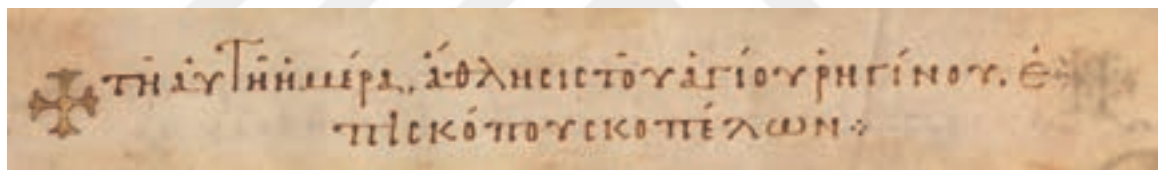
Region 3

MS commemoration date February 24

Vita -

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Reginus of Scopelus



**Transcription**

† ΤΗ ΑΥΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΡΗΓΙΝΟΥ, ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ ΣΚΟΠΕΛΩΝ ∴

**English translation**

On the same day.

The struggle of the holy Reginus, bishop of Scopelus.

**Description**

According to the title, Reginus the bishop of Scopelus is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred during the reign of Julian the Apostate in 362 AD.<sup>590</sup>

In the center of the plain, Reginus is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier; dressed in a yellow *sakkos*, grey *sticharion*, a white *omophorion* with gold embroidered crosses and black slippers identifying his rank in the Church as a bishop. His hands

<sup>590</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Feb. 25, par. 4 (col. 490)

are raised towards the sky concealed beneath the *sakkos* as in an act of prayer. He is depicted as an elderly man with grey hair and beard. The Roman soldier behind him is dressed in a blue tunic, a pink *chlamys*, red leggings and white boots and is about to behead him. He is raising his sword-bearing right arm towards the sky while grasping a black scabbard in his left hand. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape as the figures uniformly stand on a green groundline. Some floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word group τὴν [...] κεφαλὴν ἀπετμήθη [had his head cut off] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading his name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>591</sup>



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<sup>591</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.

Catalogue ID 138



MS number 422

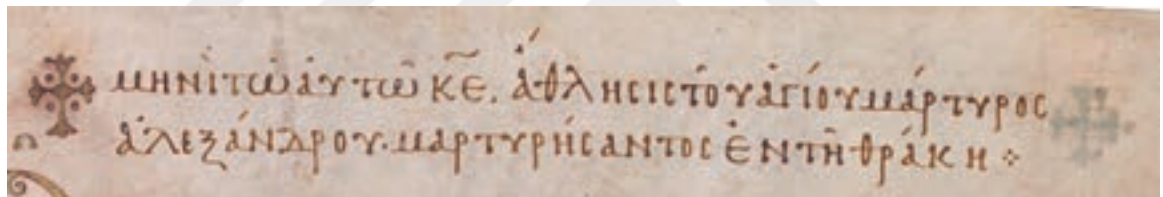
Region 1

MS commemoration date February 25

Vita

Type A

Beheaded martyr(s) Alexander of Drizipara



**Transcription**

† ΜΗΝΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΚΕ'.

ΑΘΛΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ, ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΑΝΤΟΣ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΘΡΑΚΗ ∴

**English translation**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

The struggle of the holy martyr Alexander who was martyred in Thrace.

**Description**

According to title, Alexander's martyrdom in Thrace is depicted in the miniature. He was martyred in Thrace during the reign of Maximian (286-305 AD).<sup>592</sup>

<sup>592</sup> *Synax.\_CP*, Feb. 25, par. 2 (cols. 488-9)



He is kneeling in front of the Roman soldier, dressed in a loincloth and with his hands bound behind his back. His face is turned towards the executioner and he is depicted as a beardless young man. The Roman soldier is standing on an elevated rock, with his sword-carrying right arm raised to the sky holding and grasping a scabbard in his left hand. He is dressed in a green tunic, red *chlamys*, blue leggings and grey boots. Against a golden background, mountains flank both sides of the landscape. Floral details are scattered across the plain.

The act of beheading is narrated textually with the word ἀπεκεφαλίσθη [was beheaded] in the 16-line minuscule verse of the page. Ihor Ševčenko identified Symeon of Blachernae as the illuminator of this miniature through reading [his](#) name in the margin of the folio. His 1962 study suggested that eight different artists painted the manuscript's miniatures in the manner of a team effort.<sup>593</sup>

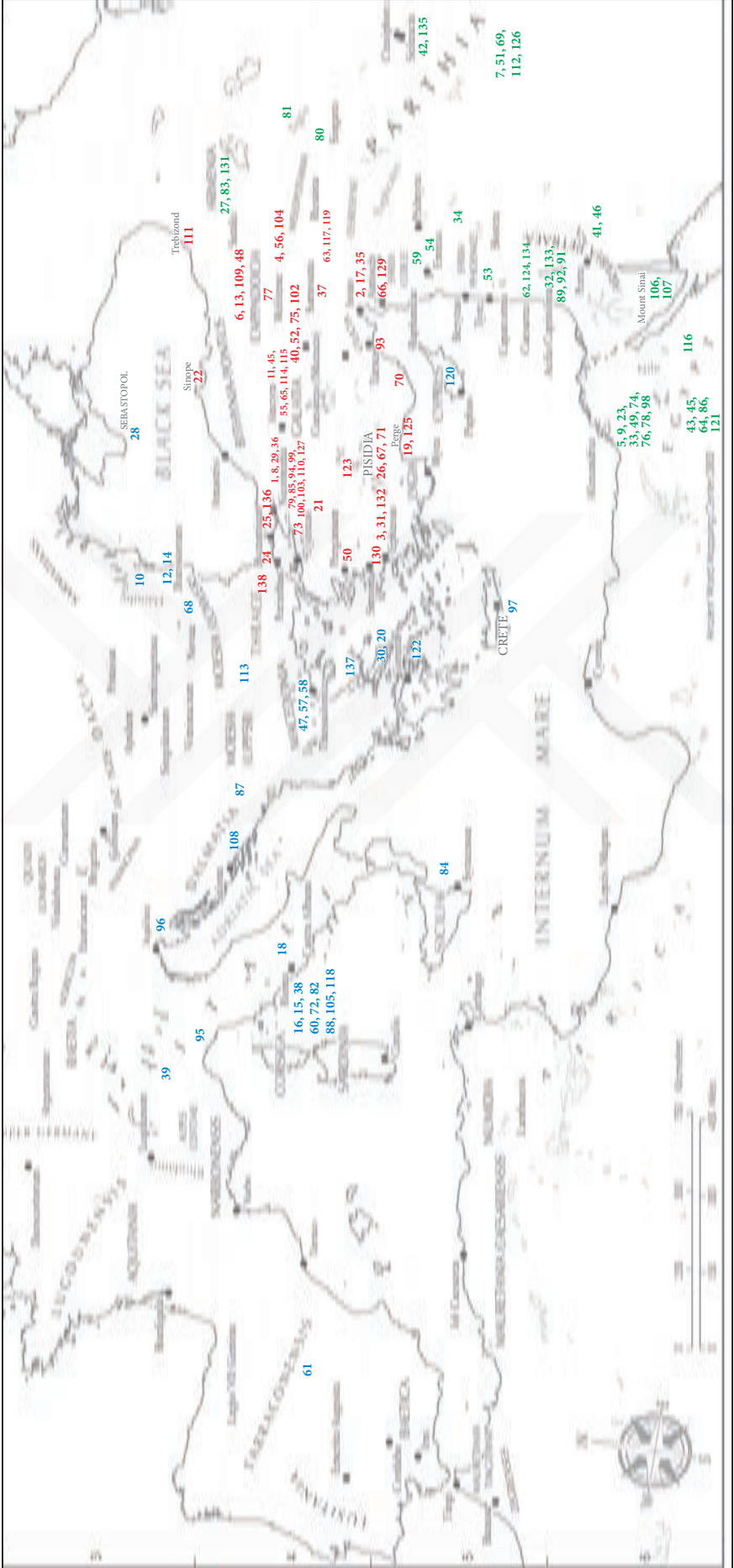


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<sup>593</sup> Ihor Ševčenko. "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 243–76. doi:10.2307/1291164.250.



**APPENDIX B**



**Fig.53** Map 1. The geographical distribution of the beheaded martyrs according to their birthplace or place of martyrdom based on *The Lois Drewer Calendar of Saints in Byzantine Manuscripts and Frescos*