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Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents:

A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments

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CHAPTER FIVE

Imperial and Royal Monasteries of the Twelfth Century

“ . . . let [the monks] pray for these people as long as the churches exist since they erected these churches so that prayers [may be offered for] them and the prosperity of their fortune.” (25) *Fragala* [C4]

“ . . . permission has been granted to me by the divine fathers, the ordinances of the church, and the requirements of the law to make regulations and act in the case of my own possessions just as I wish.” (28) *Pantokrator* [67]

“ . . . the absence of decrees generates confusion.” (29) *Kosmosoteira* [48]

This chapter includes five documents composed for foundations from the milieu of imperial or royal patronage. With one partial exception, all are from the twelfth century.¹ One, (28) *Pantokrator*, was actually composed by an emperor, John II Komnenos (1118–43), while another, (27) *Kecharitomene*, was authored by an empress, his mother Irene Doukaina Komnena. The irascible Komnenian prince Isaac Komnenos, younger brother of the former and son of the latter, was the author of (29) *Kosmosoteira*. Another document, (26) *Luke of Messina*, was authored by a monk who was helping the Norman King Roger II (1130–1154) carry out a reform of the Greek monasteries of Sicily, while the remaining text, (25) *Fragala*, was written a generation earlier for a foundation patronized by Roger II’s father Count Roger I (1061–1101) and mother Countess Adelaide.

A. Typology of the Documents

Three of the documents in this chapter, (27) *Kecharitomene*, (28) *Pantokrator*, and (29) *Kosmosoteira*, are long, complex founders’ *typika* in the series initiated by (22) *Evergetis* in the second half of the eleventh century. Since (27) *Kecharitomene* (indirectly) and (29) *Kosmosoteira* (more directly) are textually dependent on (22) *Evergetis*, it was natural that their authors should want to imitate the latter’s systematic regulation of monastic life. (27) *Kecharitomene* and (29) *Kosmosoteira* are also some of the longest documents in our collection, ranking second and third in length, respectively. The longest document, (30) *Phoberos*, is a contemporary work (see below, Chapter 6).

¹ The exception is the *First Testament* [A] of (25) *Fragala* which is dated to 1096/97; the balance of this text dates to 1105.

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The two documents from Norman Sicily, (25) *Fragala* and (26) *Luke of Messina*, are considerably shorter than the three *typika* discussed above. The first of these is in the traditional testamentary format, like the contemporary (24) *Christodoulos*. It consists of an original testament composed at the end of the eleventh century, a revision undertaken a few years later early in the twelfth century, and a supplementary text. With its tripartite structure, it is like (24) *Christodoulos* as well as the much later (51) *Koutlounousi*, illustrating the fluidity of a mercurial founder's "final arrangements." The second Sicilian document, (26) *Luke of Messina*, serves as a preface to the author's liturgical *typikon*,² which has also been preserved but is not translated here in our collection.

All three of the Komnenian authors intended to supplement their *typika* with testaments that they expected to draw up later.³ In (29) *Kosmosoteira*, the author Isaac Komnenos also mentions [116] a *Gift and Grant Ordinance* intended to make the final conveyance of his property to the foundation. Neither this document nor his *Secret Testament* are extant. Irene Doukaina, the author of (27) *Kecharitomene*, evidently decided to add a few chapters [79], [80] to her *typikon* rather than issuing a separate testament. John II Komnenos' *Secret Testament* has not survived, although the autograph copy of the *typikon* did until 1934 when it was destroyed by fire in the Peloponnesian monastery of Mega Spelaion.

Taking a precaution advocated by the monastic reform movement against private theft or official expropriation, two of the longer documents, (27) *Kecharitomene* [Appendix A], [Appendix B], and (28) *Pantokrator* [65] incorporate inventories (*brevia*) within their texts. Presumably Isaac Komnenos' *Gift and Grant Ordinance* would have contained an inventory of property conveyed to his monastery as a supplement to the considerable information on this subject already contained in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [69].

B. The Nature of Imperial and Royal Patronage

Imperial monasteries had a long history in the Byzantine Empire dating back to at least the sixth century.⁴ While no document in this collection comes unambiguously from a traditional imperial monastery before the twelfth century, it should be kept in mind that imperial patronage, unlike the private variety, was characterized by a light-handed, laissez-faire approach to institutional governance. Frequently, individual emperors relied upon their favorite monastic holy men to set up imperial monasteries, provided generous funding, and then allowed their favorites a fairly free hand with internal administration. The *Life* in which (5) *Euthymios* is encapsulated is a good illustration of how this sort of relationship between imperial patron and monastic founder functioned in the early ninth century (see above, Chapter One). (13) *Ath. Typikon* provides another example of the ambiguities and relative fluidity of this sort of patron-director relationship. In both

² Ed. Miguel Arranz, *Le typikon du monastère du Saint-Sauveur à Messine* (= OCA 185) (Rome, 1969).

³ (27) *Kecharitomene* [3]; (28) *Pantokrator* [68]; (29) *Kosmosoteira* [1], [116].

⁴ There has been no thorough study of imperial monasteries to date; much scattered information can be found in my *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C., 1987), pp. 44–46, 136–39, and passim, s.v. Index, "basilika monasteria" and "Imperial monasteries."

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cases, clever, ambitious monastic directors succeeded in avoiding close imperial control and were able to stake out their own claims to the institutions involved.

Over the long course of time, other institutions, regardless of their origins (often private), became more closely directed imperial monasteries. By the ninth century, if not before, this seems to have been the fate of the famous Constantinopolitan monastery of St. John *Stoudios*, in spite of the fact of its private foundation in the fifth century.⁵ Despite the distance involved, the emperors were also willing, upon invitation, to exercise their rights to arbitrate disputes among the monasteries of Mount Athos, as (12) *Tzimiskes* and (15) *Constantine IX* show (see above, Chapter Two).

Analyzed carefully, the two Sicilian documents in this chapter can be expected to reflect some of the conditions of imperial patronage in Byzantium itself before the twelfth century, since the Byzantine monastic reform seems to have had only a vague impact, if any, on Greek monasteries under Norman rule, while the perquisites the Norman rulers claimed for themselves were similar to the traditional rights claimed by earlier Byzantine emperors and private patrons. One of these documents, (26) *Luke of Messina*, illustrates the strong patronal role of Roger II, said to have chosen [3] the author for reconstituting certain idiorhythmic monasteries as cenobitic institutions, to have authorized him to draw up [10] a regulatory *typikon*, and to have provided [3] funding for the support of clergy and for operational expenses. There were also residential quarters (called *archontarikia*) [3], [8] for the use of the royal patron at the principal monastery of San Salvatore for which this document was written. The earlier document, (25) *Fragala*, shows a much less strong role for official patronage. Judging from it, the monastic director Gregory seems to have combined [A3], [B3] his own and other private donations with princely benefactions over two generations of Norman rule at the cost of compromising [C3] only a few of his own patronal rights, like the designation of his successor. Yet, like Athanasios in (13) *Ath. Typikon*, Gregory seems to have had a relatively free hand in administering his foundation despite his very considerable dependence on official support.

By the time imperial personages appear as the authors of founders' *typika* in the twelfth century, the triumph of the principles of the monastic reform movement had altered the nature of the patron-client relationship considerably from its earlier terms, though not entirely beyond recognition. The remarkable thing, of course, is that such august founders from the imperial family itself should have accepted the very considerable constraints on the arbitrary exercise of patronal authority that were fundamental tenets of this movement. Not only did they willingly choose in all three cases to base their foundations (either directly or indirectly) on the quintessentially reformist (22) *Evergetis* when other less extreme models (e.g., the *typikon* of the *Panagios* monastery, represented in our collection by (23) *Pakourianos*) were available, but in two cases, (27) *Kecharitomene* and (29) *Kosmosoteira*, they even imported much of the bitterly anti-elitist language of (22) *Evergetis* into their own *typika*.

A determination of the motivations of the imperial dynasty for embracing the Evergetian model for their own monastic foundations awaits further study. It appears, however, that there were individuals within the ruling elite like George Palaiologos, husband of Irene Doukaina's younger sister Anna, who were supporters even of the radical Chalcedonian wing of the reform

⁵ See discussion above in (3) *Theodore Studites*, Institutional History.

movement.⁶ As noted above in the discussion of (22) *Evergetis*, Irene Doukaina's second brother John Doukas became an Evergetian monk at the end of his life.⁷ The Doukas family's connection to *Evergetis* might conceivably go back to the 1060s if, as seems likely, Constantine X Doukas (1059–67) was one of the unnamed emperors who confirmed the monastery's independent constitution.⁸ Later, we find Theodore Prodromos, author of a bitter critique against unreformed monastic superiors, in the circle of intellectuals and artists patronized by Isaac Komnenos many years before that patron's composition of (29) *Kosmosoteira*.⁹

C. Curtailments of Reform Principles

It is against the background of this surprising allegiance to what might well be thought to be an extremely uncongenial brand of Evergetian monastic reform that the more clearly conservative features of the three Byzantine *typika* in this chapter must be considered.

1. Imposition of Lay Protectorates

Since the monastic reform movement had been shaped in large measure by the successful struggle to free Byzantium's monasteries from the depredations of the *charistike*, most of our documents authored by the first generation of late eleventh-century reformers are understandably hostile to any revival of lay authority over their foundations. In this vein, (22) *Evergetis* [12] states that the foundation is "not subject to any rights, be they imperial or ecclesiastic or of a private person." (10) *Eleousa* [18] and (23) *Pakourianos* [3], cf. [18] are like-minded. Early in the twelfth century, (30) *Phoberos* [33] adopts the Evergetian view and adds a scathing denunciation of the *charistikarioi*. Only the author of (24) *Christodoulos* [B5] was willing to impose a protector on his foundation, but the protector had to become a monk in residence and his authority was carefully circumscribed.

The decision of Irene Doukaina Komnene to create a lay protectorate for her foundation in (27) *Kecharitomene* [3] was significant even though she, like her sons John and Isaac, adamantly asserts [1] the independence of her foundation and specifically prohibits establishment of an (external) protectorate or participation in the *charistike* or *epidosis*. It is noteworthy, however, that for this office Irene avoids what was by her day a most ideologically incorrect title of *charistikarios* (still found in (24) *Christodoulos* [B6]). Instead, she chooses "protectress" (*antilambanomene*), which would find favor with two like-minded benefactors of the twelfth century, the authors of (32) *Mamas* [3] and (33) *Heliou Bomon* [3].

Indeed, in the previous century the cautious, tradition-minded author of (19) *Attaleiates* [12] had anticipated the empress in her revival of the protectorate, reconstituted as a private rather than

⁶ See Anna Komnena, *Alexiad* 5.2, ed. Bernard Leib (Paris 1967), with B. Skoulatos, *Les Personnages byzantins de l'Alexiade* (Louvain, 1980), pp. 99–105; he is commemorated in (28) *Pantokrator* [8], while his wife Anna is in (27) *Kecharitomene* [71].

⁷ (22) *Evergetis* [Appendix]; he is commemorated in (27) *Kecharitomene* [71] and in (28) *Pantokrator* [8].

⁸ (22) *Evergetis* [12].

⁹ See Alexander Kazhdan, "Prodromos, Theodore," *ODB*, pp. 1726–27; E. Jeanselme and L. Oeconomos, "La Satire contre les Higoumènes," *Byzantion* 1 (1924), 317–39; Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the Twelfth Century," *BF* 8 (1982), 123–83, at 130–32.

as a public institution as it had been when originally developed in the late tenth century (see above, Chapter Three). While it is true that this revival of the protectorate would hardly have been anticipated, much less welcomed, by the first generation of monastic reformers, the empress was not simply restoring the position of the traditional private patron within her foundation. For in (27) *Kecharitomene* [3] she specifically denies the protector control over the convent's property. Moreover, the protector could not change the *typikon*, remove the superior, enroll or expel nuns, require financial accounts, or appropriate any assets. These restrictions and others [74], [80], along with the protector's meager allotment of rights, invite comparison with the parallel treatments in the far more traditional (19) *Attaleiates*.¹⁰ Such a comparison leaves no doubt that the empress' revival of the protectorate notwithstanding, the reform movement had drastically altered contemporary perceptions of acceptable patronal privilege.

Like his mother, John II Komnenos imposed a protectorate on his foundation in (28) *Pantokrator* [70], but with a similar understanding that the protector should assist rather than profit from the foundation. Isaac Komnenos, however, returned to pristine Evergetian principles in refusing to name any protector for his foundation in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [31] except for the Mother of God herself.

2. Preferential Admissions

The other significant deviation from reform principles was the willingness of two of the three Byzantine authors to require their foundations to grant preferential admissions to their personal favorites. The empress Irene not only allows [4] any of her granddaughters preferential admissions; she also was willing to grant significant concessions on their adherence to the requirements of the cenobitic life. The empress was unwilling, however, to permit these concessions to lead to a repetition of what had once been a common feature of institutions under the *charistike*,¹¹ namely the development of an independent base of authority within the convent in opposition to the superior. A nun of the imperial family who abused her privileged position in this way was to be expelled.

Although John II Komnenos declined to exploit his position to secure preferential admissions, his younger brother Isaac Komnenos thought differently. He obliges [107] his foundation to house one of his retainers "as though he were an internal monk" (i.e., an *esomonites*), thereby reviving an institution that was anathema to the early reformers.¹² This founder also burdens his monastery with the claims of other retainers and pensioners, placing himself at odds with the prohibition of imposed guests (*katapemptoi*) found in his mother's *typikon*, (27) *Kecharitomene* [53], and that of his contemporary the author of (32) *Mamas* [26].

3. Servants Allowed

The presence of domestic servants who ranked as a lesser order of monks or nuns in all three of

¹⁰ Cf. (19) *Attaleiates* [24], [25], [26], [29], [33].

¹¹ See John of Antioch, *De monasteriis*, chap. 14, ed. P. Gautier, "Réquisitoire du patriarche Jean d'Antioche contre le charisticariat," *REB* 33 (1975), p. 119, lines 425–28.

¹² See John of Antioch, *De monasteriis*, chap. 14, ed. Gautier, p. 123, lines 471–78; cf. Alexios Komnenos, *De jure patriarchae circa monasteria* (*JGR* 3.409.29–33).

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the institutions governed by the Byzantine imperial documents clearly distinguishes these foundations from (22) *Evergetis* [24], (30) *Phoberos* [43], and the earlier Studite tradition, which strictly forbid them.¹³ As in the matter of the protectorate, these imperial documents are closer to (19) *Attaleiates* [42] in which servants were also permitted.

4. Ameliorations in Lifestyle

Monastic poverty, taken seriously by Irene Doukaina in (27) *Kecharitomene* [50], as it was in (22) *Evergetis* [22], was evidently not imposed by her son John II Komnenos on his monks in (28) *Pantokrator* [31] ff. Her other son Isaac Komnenos, here as in some other matters, is content in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [53] to follow the Evergetian precedent. Even when they endorse monastic poverty, these founders seem to have envisioned a more indulgent lifestyle within the confines of cenobiticism for their monks. Bathing, permitted by (22) *Evergetis* [28], is allowed on a more frequent basis by the empress in (27) *Kecharitomene* [58] and by her sons in (28) *Pantokrator* [15] and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [97]. The Evergetian diet, slightly ameliorated by the empress in (27) *Kecharitomene* [46], [47], [48], is made more ample by her son the emperor in (28) *Pantokrator* [9], [11], who, moreover, was willing to allow [12] the superior discretion to make fasts less rigorous. In (29) *Kosmosoteira* [6], Isaac Komnenos goes further, stating that the monks should have a “bounteous supply” of food.

5. Desire for Future Growth

As we have seen, (22) *Evergetis* [23] was virtually alone among reform monasteries in refusing to set a precise number of positions for monks at that institution, preferring that the foundation shrink in size if enough pious monks could not be recruited to take advantage of the financial support available. All three of our Byzantine imperial founders, however, indicate the number of monks that they thought could be supported.¹⁴ There was also some agreement among these authors with the more explicit sentiment for future expansion seen in the Sicilian documents. In (27) *Kecharitomene* [5] Irene Doukaina is willing to allow an expansion in numbers from 30 to 40 nuns if an increase in resources permitted, but no more, lest an increase be “a cause of anarchy.” Her son Isaac Komnenos in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [48] declares his desire for a future increase “within the scope of its [i.e., the foundation’s] potential,” though like (22) *Evergetis*, he did not want to place quantity over quality.

6. Concessions for Wealthy Applicants

While our imperial founders generally held the line or better against possibly entangling fundraising schemes with external benefactors, they were increasingly willing to trade off disciplinary concessions to wealthy applicants in exchange for large, though voluntary, entrance gifts (*prosenexeis*). Not only the Empress Irene in (27) *Kecharitomene* [4] but also her sons John II Komnenos, in (28) *Pantokrator* [17] and Isaac, in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [55] endorse this approach to increasing the endowments of their foundations. Of the three founders, Isaac Komnenos was the most entrepreneurial of all, being willing to set aside his rules banning eunuchs [3] as postu-

¹³ (27) *Kecharitomene* [5], (28) *Pantokrator* [19], and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [3]; cf. (3) *Theodore Studites* [4].

¹⁴ (27) *Kecharitomene* [5]; (28) *Pantokrator* [19], [28], [32]; and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [1], [48], [88].

lants or burials of laymen [86] within the monastery if a large enough donations were offered in exchange for these concessions.

D. Endorsements of the Evergetian Canon

Clearly then the governing class of Byzantium did not adopt the principles of the monastic reform movement without introducing considerable changes to make its content more palatable to their aristocratic tastes. Yet much of the Evergetian canon remains in their *typika*, with the striking originality of the model scarcely reduced. The two Sicilian foundations, both professedly based on Studite and other early precedents, are much less affected by the winds of change brought about by the monastic reform in contemporary Byzantium.

1. Institutional Independence

Consider in the first instance the endorsement of institutional independence by all three of the Byzantine authors,¹⁵ coupled with indignant condemnations of all the various exploitation schemes like the *charistike*, *epidosis*, and protectorate that had been practiced for a century or more by the imperial government and the ecclesiastical hierarchy before the reform. In the best reform tradition, the superior was the real governing officer of his monastery in all three of the Byzantine *typika*, the appointment of internal protectors in some of them notwithstanding.¹⁶ The authors of these documents reserve for themselves the right to appoint the superior during their own lifetimes, but allow subsequent choices to be made independently by vote of the monastic communities.¹⁷ This was obviously a crucial concession, which, combined with the careful curtailment of the power of designated protectors, gave real substance to the notion of institutional independence for the Byzantine foundations.

2. Control over Admissions through the Novitiate

The authors of the three Byzantine *typika* also provide for a probationary novitiate.¹⁸ This was an indispensable requirement for enabling reform monasteries to exercise some control over the quality of their individual monks, not to mention making it possible for them to resist applicants imposed by the public authorities of the imperial government or the church.

3. Condemnation of Alienations of Monastic Property

The three Byzantine authors also speak with one voice in condemning alienations of the landed and movable property of their foundations except under extraordinary circumstances.¹⁹

4. Support for the Principles of Cenobitic Monasticism

The authors of (25) *Fragala* and (26) *Luke of Messina*, backed by their patrons the Norman rulers of Sicily, are notably eager to uphold cenobitic life.²⁰ With varying degrees of enthusiasm, the authors of the Byzantine documents join their Sicilian counterparts in endorsing cenobitic monas-

¹⁵ (27) *Kecharitomene* [1], (28) *Pantokrator* [69], and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [12].

¹⁶ (27) *Kecharitomene* [1], (28) *Pantokrator* [26], and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [12].

¹⁷ (27) *Kecharitomene* [11], (28) *Pantokrator* [24], and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [32].

¹⁸ (27) *Kecharitomene* [30], (28) *Pantokrator* [16], and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [55].

¹⁹ (27) *Kecharitomene* [9], (28) *Pantokrator* [65], and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [45].

²⁰ (25) *Fragala* [B9] and (26) *Luke of Messina* [3].

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ticism over idiorhythmic alternatives.²¹ The crucial provision of (22) *Evergetis* [26] providing for equality in food, drink and dress for all monks, regardless of rank, receives endorsement from (27) *Kecharitomene* [56], with an exception [4] only for privileged nuns from the imperial family, and from (29) *Kosmosoteira* [53], though not from (28) *Pantokrator*. Only in (28) *Pantokrator* do monks have private incomes.

5. Independent Financial Management

The authors of the Byzantine *typika* also share the scruples of (22) *Evergetis* in financial matters. Financial management independent of the patron was a cornerstone of the constitution of reform monasteries. After their own deaths, both the Empress Irene and her son Isaac Komnenos were willing to allow the superiors of their foundations to choose their own stewards to serve as chief financial officers; John II Komnenos provides for internal financial management by the four stewards of his foundation.²² Provisions for direct management of endowed properties varied, but except possibly for (28) *Pantokrator*, the property managers were to be appointed by the superior.²³

6. No Mandatory Entrance Gifts

Following (22) *Evergetis* [37], all three Byzantine authors reject the old requirement that postulants be required to pay mandatory entrance gifts.²⁴

E. Intensifications of Reform Concerns

The adherence of the three Byzantine authors to the core of the Evergetian canon would be sufficient to establish their place in the moderate reform tradition. Yet in a few matters these authors actually show an intensification of the reforming spirit initiated by (22) *Evergetis*.

1. Honest Financial Administration

Drawing on a strand of the reform movement separate from but ideologically consistent with (22) *Evergetis*, Empress Irene's *typikon* pays special attention to the financial officers of her convent, their responsibilities, and procedures to assure that they conduct their administrations honestly.²⁵ (27) *Kecharitomene* [9] explicitly disallows property speculation through sale or exchange of the institution's landed endowment. Isaac Komnenos follows his mother's lead here in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [58].

2. Rejection of Traditional Fund-Raising Schemes

Since the late eleventh century, most reform founders had been suspicious of various traditional schemes for raising money from lay benefactors—another unhappy legacy of the *charistike*. The author of (23) *Pakourianos* [20], for example, even worried about accepting gifts offered by the laity in exchange for memorial services. In (27) *Kecharitomene* [53], the empress is even more

²¹ (27) *Kecharitomene* [2], [3], [51], [55]; (28) *Pantokrator* [9], [20], [28]; and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [6].

²² (27) *Kecharitomene* [14] and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [34]; cf. (28) *Pantokrator* [64].

²³ (27) *Kecharitomene* [31]; (28) *Pantokrator* [19], [64]; and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [40]; cf. (22) *Evergetis* [34].

²⁴ (27) *Kecharitomene* [7], (28) *Pantokrator* [17], and (29) *Kosmosoteira* [55].

²⁵ (27) *Kecharitomene* [14], [19], [24], [31].

cautious, rejecting the sale of living allowances (*siteresia*) to external nuns (*exomonitides*) that the author of (19) *Attaleiates* [30] had been willing to permit a generation earlier.

3. Rejection of Externally-Imposed Appointments

While (27) *Kecharitomene* [30] welcomes nuns tonsured elsewhere (*xenokouritides*) as applicants, it rejects [54] nuns imposed by imperial, governmental, or patriarchal authority (i.e., *katapemptai*). As a ruler entitled to make such appointments himself, John II Komnenos realized that the ability to resist unsuitable appointments was dependent upon an end to the requirement of mandatory entrance gifts. Otherwise, as he declares in (28) *Pantokrator* [17], “freedom will be given to anyone to be admitted into the monastery.” He prefers instead that “virtue count above gold or any gift,” though he was willing to permit concessions to attractive nobly-born candidates who could offer useful skills or major donations to the monastery.

F. Other Concerns of the Authors

1. Institutional Philanthropy

Many of the authors of the documents included in this chapter shared a commitment to institutionalized philanthropy, a hallmark of monasteries in the reform tradition since the establishment of an infirmary in (22) *Evergetis* [41]. The Sicilian foundation described in (26) *Luke of Messina* [8] included a hospital and a hospice. The hospital associated with (28) *Pantokrator* [36] ff. is justly famous; this foundation also supported an old age home [58] ff. and a lepers’ sanatorium [63]. For his part, Isaac Komnenos provides for an old age infirmary in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [70].

2. Welfare of the Dependent Peasantry

A concern for the welfare of the peasantry, though not Evergetian, was also emerging by now as a characteristic of reform monasteries. (26) *Luke of Messina* mentions the housing provided for its field laborers [9] as well as its lay domestic servants [8]. In (27) *Kecharitomene* [31] the Empress Irene insists that her property managers be sensitive to the needs of the dependent peasantry. Her son Isaac Komnenos arguably shows the greatest solicitude of any of our authors towards the peasantry.²⁶

3. Building Maintenance

Perhaps with some awareness that the deteriorated state of many of the empire’s private religious foundations had been one of the pretexts for the institution of the *charistike*,²⁷ some of our founders oblige the officials of their foundations to make the physical maintenance of facilities an important responsibility. In (27) *Kecharitomene* [73] Irene Doukaina is particularly urgent in placing this responsibility upon the superior, “even if the damage should be as little as one glass lamp.” Her son Isaac Komnenos urges his superior and the monks to take diligent care of all the facilities of his foundation.²⁸

²⁶ (29) *Kosmosoteira* [71], [76], [98], [104].

²⁷ See Nikephoros Phokas, *Novella de monasteriis* (JGR 3.294); recalled with bitter irony by John of Antioch, *De monasteriis*, chaps. 9 and 13, ed. Gautier, pp. 109, 114.

²⁸ (29) *Kosmosoteira* [67], [70], [73], [79], [82], [104], [108].

4. Increasing Respect for Canon Law

Early on, the reform movement found canon law a useful tool in challenging the legitimacy of the various property exploitation schemes that had been employed by the imperial government and the unreformed ecclesiastical hierarchy during the eleventh century (see below, Historical Context). Originally, when relations between reform-minded founders and the hierarchy were bad, as they were when (22) *Evergetis* [13] provided for the choice of the superior through the promotion of the steward, the canonical prerogatives of the local bishop (or patriarch) with respect to the superior's installation and blessing (*sphragis*) were simply ignored. Later, when there had been some improvement, some founders like the author of (30) *Phoberos* [35] were willing to recognize the hierarchy's prerogatives. In (28) *Pantokrator* [25] the emperor chooses a middle course, distancing the patriarch by one remove from the installation ceremonies. In general, John II Komnenos was remarkably open-minded about considering the claims of canon law in this and other instances in which they impinged on the exercise of traditional patronal rights, even if he was not always willing to set his own judgments aside when they conflicted. Some years later in (29) *Kosmosoteira*, his younger brother Isaac Komnenos cites [49] canonical precedent when it was convenient to do so, and he recognizes [4], [32] the right of the local representative of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to install the superior of his monastery.

5. Development of Monastic Dependencies

Aside from the institution of the protectorate in (27) *Kecharitomene* [3] and in (28) *Pantokrator* [70] that has already been discussed above, there are some other institutional changes of note in the foundations represented by the documents in this chapter. One characteristic of the age was the development of large, powerful foundations with many dependencies. While an occasional private or independent monastery might well have a single dependency, especially one situated in the capital for the convenience of its monks on embassies,²⁹ the creation of foundations with many dependencies was accomplished most readily with imperial (or in Sicily, princely) resources. Thus Gregory, the author of (25) *Fragala* [B11], received as many as ten dependencies as the result of two generations of patronage from the ruling Norman dynasty in Sicily, and the author of (26) *Luke of Messina* [3] presided over twenty-two dependencies subordinated directly to the principal monastery of San Salvatore and another sixteen over which he had archimandritical authority by decree of his patron Roger II. In John II Komnenos' provision for his foundation in (28) *Pantokrator* [27], he annexes to it six dependent monasteries, presumably already richly endowed beyond their own needs.

In all three of the cases here cited, the patrons were pursuing basically political objectives in support of centralized cenobitic monasticism (see below, G. Historical Context). Newfound scruples in canon law and reform sentiment against simply seizing the assets of older foundations to support new ones may account for the phenomenon of preserving the former as dependencies while freeing up their assets for use by the latter. In (28) *Pantokrator* [27], the emperor is even careful to

²⁹ For examples of such dependencies, see: (5) *Euthymios* [1], (10) *Eleousa* [17], (13) *Ath. Typikon* [34], (15) *Constantine IX* [5], (19) *Attaleiates* [6], and (23) *Pakourianos* [31]; cf. (27) *Kecharitomene* [70]. (8) *John Xenos* [1], however, provides an example of an individual who was able to assemble a foundation with many dependencies with only subsidiary imperial support.

preserve the by-then unfashionable kelliotic constitutions that were in place in most of the dependencies.

6. Definition of Monastic Offices

Several of the authors of the imperial *typika* also demonstrate a greater interest in defining the various offices to be held by the monks in their foundations and in articulating their responsibilities. This is hardly surprising, given the intimate familiarity of these authors with the complex governmental bureaucracy of the Komnenian dynasty. Yet in the previous century, the author of (22) *Evergetis*, after describing the duties of a few critical officials, had authorized [39] the superior to appoint individuals to other offices “as the occasion demands and if there is urgent need.” In (27) *Kecharitomene* [14], [19] ff., however, Irene Doukaina provides detailed descriptions of all the officials in her convent. In (28) *Pantokrator* [19], [32], her son John II Komnenos describes a foundation in which nearly all of the not fewer than eighty monks stationed at the main monastery and the additional fifty members of the clergy assigned to the adjacent church of the Mother of God *Eleousa* was either an office-holder or was assigned to a specific service. The separate listing [38] ff. of personnel assigned to the hospital is similarly comprehensive, and even suggests [48] a kind of career track.

7. Procedures for Election of the Superior

Given the central importance of the position of the superior in independent foundations, it is also not surprising that our authors were very interested in determining how the choice for this office should be made, particularly after their own deaths.

Gregory, author of (25) *Fragala* [A7], [B7], is the most old-fashioned, keeping the choice of his successor to himself as a personal prerogative, evidently subject [C3] to the confirmation of the royal patron. Curiously, however, this author comes the closest of all to obliging [A9] the superior to govern in such a way as to retain the confidence of his flock. The author of (26) *Luke of Messina* is more open to suggestions from below, providing [11] that the monks of each dependency were to nominate candidates for superior of their houses, from among which the archimandrite of the main monastery would make [12] his choice.

In (27) *Kecharitomene* [11], Irene Doukaina provides that the superior along with the entire community were to propose three candidates for the succession, with the final choice being made by drawing lots after the incumbent’s death. In (28) *Pantokrator* [24], John II Komnenos directs the current superior to make three nominations which would be discussed by the community at large after the superior’s death; if a consensus could not be reached, a choice would be made by lot. In (29) *Kosmosoteira*, Isaac Komnenos, who revives the Evergetian idea of a group of preeminent monks governing consultatively with the superior, likewise allows them to select a new superior if a unanimous choice by the community was not forthcoming.³⁰

G. Historical Context

The half-century during which these documents were composed was another crucial one for the history of the Byzantine church, which saw the triumph and consolidation of the monastic reform movement.

³⁰ (29) *Kosmosoteira* [34], [41], [45], [78]; cf. (22) *Evergetis* [13], [14], [19].

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Reconciliation of the Reformers and the Public Authorities

The reconciliation of the imperial government and the ecclesiastical hierarchy with the reform party took place at the Synod of Blachernai in 1094, which ended Leo of Chalcedon's eight years of exile and led to his reinstatement as metropolitan of Chalcedon.³¹ With the resolution of essentially personal differences between the moderates in the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the Chalcedonians, it was possible for Patriarch Nicholas III Grammatikos to concentrate on the reform of the *charistike*.

2. Alexios Komnenos' Activities in Support of the Reformers

Increasingly Emperor Alexios Komnenos could be depended upon to side with the reformers too. In May 1094, a few months before the Synod of Blachernai, he ruled that *charistikarioi* who held imperial diplomas awarding their grants could not use these as a basis for evading the registration requirement that the patriarch had announced in 1087.³² The patriarch's bold project of visiting all of the patriarchal monasteries then under lay management followed, either in 1095 or early 1096. Fiercely resisted by the *charistikarioi* who resented what they saw as an infringement of their rights or feared for the discovery of how badly they had abused their responsibilities, the patriarchal visitation brought to a head the long controversy over the *charistike*. In an important novel issued in 1096, the emperor basically upheld the patriarch's view that he should have unrestricted rights of oversight (*epiteresis*) and reformation (*diorthosis*) over all the monasteries within the patriarchate of Constantinople (i.e., the entire empire).³³

3. Impact of Alexios' Legislation on Contemporary Founders

Alexios' novel touched on several points of relevance to the interpretation of the documents in this chapter. His declaration that no patriarchal or imperial privilege could obstruct a patriarch from conducting a visitation of a monastery for the purpose of conducting a spiritual reformation, while aimed at curbing unscrupulous *charistikarioi*, failed to gain acceptance even by later reform-minded founders.³⁴ For instance, in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [4] Isaac Komnenos boldly forbids the patriarch to make such a visitation at his foundation, even in support of settling internal disputes which he himself refers to the patriarchal see for resolution.

The emperor forbade the exaction of mandatory entrance gifts (*apotagai*) from postulants on the grounds that they were uncanonical; free-will offerings (*prosenexeis*) were permitted as long as they were recorded in the institution's inventory and a notice was sent to the patriarch.³⁵ This was a tacit but precise endorsement of (22) *Evergetis* [37], which was in turn adopted by the emperor's wife Irene and his sons John and Isaac in their *typika* in later decades.

The emperor also drew a distinction between an *exomonites*, basically a non-resident lay

³¹ *Acta synodi Constantinopolitanae*, PG 127, cols. 972–84, with Paul Gautier, "Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094). Étude prosopographique," *REB* 29 (1971), 213–84.

³² J. Darrouzès, "Dossier sur le charisticariat," *Polychronion: Festschrift F. Dölger* (Heidelberg, 1966), pp. 153–54, 157.

³³ Alexios Komnenos, *De jure patriarchae* (JRG 3.407–10); for a detailed discussion, see my *Private Religious Foundations*, pp. 207–9.

³⁴ *De jure patriarchae* (JGR 3.408.7–33).

³⁵ *De jure patriarchae* (JGR 3.409.16–27).

appointee entitled to support from a monastery's revenues, and a *esomonites*, by which he understood a lay postulant imposed by an external authority (i.e., a *katapemptos*). The patriarch was to refrain from appointing the former, but could (in patriarchal institutions, at any rate) continue to designate the latter unless a particular monastery was already overburdened with non-residents it was obliged to support.³⁶ (28) *Pantokrator* [28] provides an example of various kelliotic monasteries that supported both of these kinds of appointees.

Founders of independent monasteries were extremely hostile to attempts by anyone to impose postulants on their foundations. Empress Irene, in (27) *Kecharitomene* [53], flatly forbids the appointment of "external nuns" (*exomonitides*) as well as "imposed guests" (*katapemptai*). Her son Isaac Komnenos could hardly in good conscience repeat this condemnation, however, for in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [107] he imposes a lay *esomonites* upon his foundation.

4. Patriarch Nicholas III Grammatikos' Support of Monastic Patrons

Nicholas III Grammatikos remained a friend to the reformers until his death in 1111. In (27) *Kecharitomene* [70], Empress Irene records how he granted her a patriarchal convent to serve as a funerary chapel for her foundation. He also issued a memorandum (*hypomnema*) recognizing the independence of the foundation for which (30) *Phoberos* [33] was written, limiting his own and his successors' rights in this foundation to liturgical commemoration (*anaphora*) and blessing (*sphragis*) of the foundation's superior. According to (24) *Christodoulos* [A5], the patriarch also appointed Christodoulos *protos* of the patriarchal monastery at Latros and supplied [C6] him with a fine library. Relations between them subsequently became strained, however, when Christodoulos subsequently abandoned his post, fearing for his life at the hands of the Turks. Later, though, it was the patriarchal notary Theodosios to whom Christodoulos turned when he set up a protectorate over his foundation on Patmos (see (24) *Christodoulos* [B5]).

5. John IX Agapetos and a New Generation of Reformers

Fortunately for the cause of the reformers, Nicholas' successor John IX Agapetos (1111–34) also proved to be a friend to their movement. He followed his predecessor's example (in the Athens case of 1089) in using canon law to justify annulling the grants of certain monasteries to laymen under the *charistike* in a case brought to the patriarchal synod by Constantine, metropolitan of Kyzikos, in 1116.³⁷ By cleverly locating and skillfully interpreting an old canonical precedent that had long since fallen into disuse, this patriarch determined that it was illegal for a bishop to alienate any part of the essential endowment of landed property (the *autourgion*) necessary to support his see.

Broadly interpreted, this may have served as the crucial decision that made possible the overthrow (as opposed just to the careful regulation) of the *charistike*. The reform movement had clearly paved the way for this outcome by insisting on the inalienability of a monastery's landed endowment, a principle endorsed by Empress Irene, her son John II Komnenos, and his brother Isaac Komnenos in their *typika*.

³⁶ *De jure patriarchae* (JGR 3.409.29–33).

³⁷ Grumel, *Regestes*, no. 1000; text edited by Th. Uspensky, "Mneniya i postanovleniya konstantinopolskikh pomestnikh sobarov XI i XII vv. o razdache tserkovnikh imuschestv (Charistikarii)," IRAIK 5 (1900), 1–48, at 15–29.

CHAPTER FIVE

6. Activities of Later Patriarchs in Support of Monastic Reform

Less is known about the activities of the next patriarch, Leo Styppes (1134–43). It was likely he who granted John II Komnenos the patriarchal monastery of Satyros, populated by eighteen kelliotic monks, which serves as a dependency for the emperor's foundation in (28) *Pantokrator* [27]. Yet in return, the emperor was willing to make [25] only a partial concession to him of the right to install the superior of his foundation. An unnamed patriarch similarly awarded Isaac Komnenos the ruined church of St. Stephen of the Aurelian as he records in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [108]. Later, after its restoration, this was to serve as *Kosmosoteira*'s Constantinopolitan dependency. Isaac Komnenos was also willing to trust the patriarchate for the resolution of disputes between the superior and the monks of his monastery,³⁸ which is an indication of how much relations between founders and the patriarchate had improved by the mid-twelfth century.

³⁸ (29) *Kosmosoteira* [4], [111].