

## **The New Testament in Byzantium**

Co-symposiarchs: Robert Nelson and Derek Krueger

The New Testament lay at the center of Byzantine Christian thought and practice. Scribes copied its gospels and epistles. Lectionaries apportioned much of its contents over the course of the liturgical calendar; its narratives structured the experience of liturgical time and shaped the nature of Christian preaching. Quoted, alluded to, and expounded, it inspired and fueled the genres of hagiography and hymnography. Patrons and illustrators brought scenes from the life of Christ and his apostles to manuscripts, icons, and the walls of churches. Preachers, theologians and political theorists drew inspiration and authority from its teachings. Considering such varied legacies, this symposium assesses the impact of the New Testament on Byzantine civilization.

Following the successful symposium and volume on the Old Testament in Byzantium, we extend the investigation of the Bible in Byzantine history. We raise the following questions: What was the New Testament for Byzantine Christians? What of it was known, how, when, where, and by whom? How was this knowledge mediated through text, image, and rite? What was the place of these sacred texts in Byzantine arts, letters, and thought? We draw upon the current state of textual scholarship and explore aspects of New Testament manuscripts. But manuscripts of complete biblical texts, collections of texts, or entire Bibles were not the only or even the most important way in which the New Testament was understood, and accordingly, we explore the transformation of the New Testament as read, heard, imaged, and imagined in lectionaries, hymns, homilies, saints' lives, and illustrations in miniatures and monuments. We turn also to the role of the New Testament in framing theological inquiry, ecclesiastical controversy, and political thought. Central is our conviction that liturgy, liturgical arts, and intellectual culture offered places where exegesis continued, long after the tradition of Patristic biblical commentary had ceased. Our interdisciplinary conversation will yield fuller knowledge of the New Testament and its varied reception over the long history of Byzantium.

### **Friday, April 26**

8:30 Coffee

9:00 Welcomes

9:15 Introduction to the Symposium

### **I. Texts and Copies of the New Testament**

9:30 The New Testament Textual Tradition in Byzantium: David Parker, University of Birmingham

10:15 Illustrated New Testament Manuscripts and Their Traditions: Kathleen Maxwell, Santa Clara University

11:00 Coffee

11:30 Elective Affinities: The Genealogy of Byzantine New Testament Manuscripts: Georgi Parpulov, University of Oxford

12:15 Discussion

12:45 Luncheon

## **II. Scribes, Lectionaries, and Commentary**

2:00 Lectionaries of Constantinople: Robert Nelson, Yale University

2:45 Producing New Testament Manuscripts in Byzantium: Scribes, Scriptoria, and Patrons: Nadezhda Kavrus-Hoffman, independent scholar, New York

3:30 Discussion and tea

4:15 The Textuality of the New Testament in Commentaries and Catena, Jeremy Schott, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

5:00 Discussion

5:30-7:30 Reception

## **Saturday, April 27**

### **III. Paul and the Gospels in Exegesis, Hymnography, and Polemic**

8:30 Coffee

9:00 Byzantine Exegesis of Pauline Doctrines, Margaret Mitchell, University of Chicago

9:45 New Testament Women in Syrian and Byzantine Hymns: Susan Harvey, Brown University

10:30 Discussion and coffee

11:15 New Testament Exegesis in Middle Byzantine Polemic: Tia Kolbaba, Rutgers University

12:00 Discussion

12:30 Luncheon

#### **IV. Hagiography, Homilies, and Apocalyptic**

2:00 The Hagiographer's Bible: Derek Krueger, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

2:45 Eighth-Century Homilies on New Testament Themes: Mary Cunningham, University of Nottingham

3:30 Discussion and tea

4:00 Later Byzantine Homilies: Maximos of Simonopetra (Nicholas Conostas), Mount Athos

4:45 The Afterlife of the Apocalypse of John in Later Byzantine Apocalyptic Literature and Commentary: Stephen Shoemaker, University of Oregon

5:30 Discussion

#### **Sunday, April 28**

#### **VI. Church and Liturgy**

9:00 Coffee

9:30 Time and Narrative in Church Spaces: Charles Barber, Notre Dame

10:15 Giving Voice to the New Testament in Byzantine Chant: Alexander Lingas, City University London

11:00 Discussion and coffee

11:30 Nektarios Zarras, Narrating the Sacred Story: New Testament Cycles in Byzantine Church Decoration, University of Athens

12:15 Discussion

12.45-1.00 Conclusion