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Los Angeles

Replacing Byzantium:

Laskarid Urban Environments and the Landscape of Loss

(1204-1261)

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

by

Naomi Ruth Pitamber

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2015

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Replacing Byzantium:

Laskarid Urban Environments and the Landscape of Loss

(1204-1261)

by

Naomi Ruth Pitamber

Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Sharon Elizabeth Gerstel, Chair

The year 1204 witnessed the cataclysmic fall of Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, to western crusaders. Following the exodus of many from the city, the Laskarid dynasty rose to power, established their capital at Nicaea (modern Iznik), and ruled until 1258. Their realm straddled Thrace and the eastern Aegean Sea to the western Anatolian coast and its river valleys. The dynasty consisted of four emperors: Theodore I Laskaris (r. 1204-1222); his son-in-law, John III Doukas Vatatzes (r. 1222-1254); John III's son, Theodore II Doukas Laskaris (r. 1254-1258); and Theodore II's son, John IV Laskaris (r. 1258-1261). In 1261, Michael VIII Palaiologos, co-emperor and regent for John IV, usurped the throne, recaptured Constantinople, and inaugurated the last great Byzantine dynasty, the Palaiologoi. Laskarid art, architecture and

material culture reflect the adaptations and transformations resulting from traumatic urban displacement, diaspora and a period of exile. A thematic, comparative study focusing on urban environments, key monuments, and material culture through the lens of exile positions my dissertation to fully illuminate the Laskarid realm's singular transition from Constantinople's hinterland to Byzantium's heartland. Laskarid architecture and material culture act as the fulcrum between loss and reclamation, between a connection to a common Constantinopolitan past and an exiled present. The Laskarids also provide the logical cultural and artistic link between the Komnenian dynasty that ruled preceding the fall of Constantinople (1081-1185) and the Palaiologan dynasty that flowered after its recovery (1261-1453). The extent to which the art, architecture and material culture of the Laskarids is self-conscious of its Byzantine past, subject to contemporary circumstances, and the extent to which the Laskarid dynasty fostered the efflorescence of Palaiologan art in Constantinople after 1261 are questions this dissertation aims to answer.

The dissertation of Naomi Ruth Pitamber is approved.

Charlene Villaseñor Black

Patrick Geary

Sharon Elizabeth Gerstel, Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015

Dedicated to

My grandparents

Samuel (†) and Alice Gokalsingh Pitamber (†)

Ruth Naomi Mulcahy DeWitt (†), Charles and Maradelle Langseth DeWitt

My parents

Suresh and Penelope DeWitt Pitamber

And all who whole-heartedly seek and embrace second chances

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Vita

Naomi Ruth Pitamber graduated Valedictorian of her class in 1995 from Castle Hills First Baptist High School. She was an All-American Cheerleader, Texas State Champion in Vocal Performace, and Ford Scholar. She studied Pre-Med at Trinity University from 1995-1997 on a voice scholarship, and after discovering Art History and Classics, transferred to the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, where she graduated with a BA in Art History, *summa cum laude* with honors, 2000, writing her senior thesis under the supervision of Professor Cecil L. Striker. Between 2000 and 2002, she studied Classical Greek and Latin at her *alma mater's* Post-Baccalaureate program in Classics, in addition to continuing her vocal studies and working in the Mediterranean Section of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Under the auspices of the prestigious Bliss Prize Fellowship in Byzantine Studies, she matriculated into the Art History Department at Harvard University, 2002. After one year, she returned to San Antonio where she began tutoring in math, science, writing, and standardized tests. In 2004, she enrolled at the University of Texas at San Antonio and completed her MA in Art History in 2005 with Professor Judith Sobré, at which time she also began teaching undergraduate courses on Global, Medieval, and Byzantine Art and Architecture. While teaching at UTSA, she began classes at Trinity University and has nearly completed a Physics major and Mathematics minor. After matriculating into the PhD program at UCLA in 2008 to work with Professor Sharon Gerstel, she spent the summer of 2009 studying Medieval Greek at the Gennadius Library in Athens. She advanced to candidacy in May of 2010, and spent that summer studying Turkish at Boğaziçi University in İstanbul. The next three years were spent living in Washington, DC, Europe and the eastern Mediterranean conducting research on her dissertation

project. In April 2013, she returned to the United States, and spent the 2013-2014 academic year living in Los Angeles, California. She currently resides in San Antonio, Texas.

Introduction

In August 2014, the United Nations reported that over half of all Syrians, approximately 6.5 million people, had been internally displaced by the country's ongoing civil war (2011-present) and by March 2015 approximately 3.8 million had left the country as refugees, fleeing to neighboring Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt (Figure 1). Many refugees now live in camps built just across the Syrian border, remaining as close as possible to their native land without being directly in danger. None of the camps were built with the intention of providing a durable housing solution for the refugees, but given that no curtailing of the Syrian civil war is in sight, the camps have become more like permanent homes than short-term emergency housing. Millions are entering their fourth year in the camps, but tens of thousands of other Syrian refugees have been granted asylum, humanitarian, or resettlement visas and will be relocated permanently, primarily to Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States of America.¹ The staggering exodus of Syrian citizens from their native country is the largest population displacement since World War II, and has already dramatically changed the relationship between Syria, its landscape, and its people. Not only has the integrity of the Syrian state been irreparably fractured, but the connection between the nation's communities, its individual inhabitants, and their collective futures has been severed. For millions, the separation will be permanent.

The land of Syria, now suffering civil war, also bears the scars of wars and power struggles dating to its ancient and medieval past. The Krak des Chevaliers, an important crusader

¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Resettlement and Other Forms of Admission for Syrian Refugees," Report of 9 January 2015, accessible online at [>>](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/open docPDFViewer.html?docid=52b2febafc5&query=syrian%20resettlement).

castle from the twelfth century, recently provided shelter and protection to approximately nine-thousand villagers and anti-government rebels who lived in Hosn, the village at the base of the medieval fortress (Figure 2). In retribution for providing this shelter, the crusader castle was bombarded with heavy cannon fire. While it suffered damage, it did not collapse and succeeded in protecting those within. Prior to the civil war, the castle had provided a source of civic pride and income as an international tourist destination, eventually becoming one of Syria's UNESCO World Heritage sites. While it may at first appear to be ironic that a twelfth-century crusader castle could successfully shelter thousands of villagers caught in the cross-fire of a civil war in 2014, the castle's architecture proved to be safer and stronger than any of the homes in the valley below, all of which were eventually destroyed in the violent seven-month siege. The Krak des Chevaliers, a prime example of twelfth-century crusader military architecture, combines medieval European castle forms with Roman and Byzantine urban fortifications, including Constantinople and Nicæa, initially encountered by the western knights during the First Crusade (1095-1099).²

The story of Syria and its refugees is still unfolding, while that of the Fourth Crusade and the manifold effects it had on the Byzantine empire and its population now lies over eight centuries in the past. The narrative of imperialistic conquest, whether in the name of resources,

² For crusader architecture in the eastern Mediterranean, see P. Deschamps, *Les châteaux des croisés en Terre-Sainte*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1934-1977); R. Fedden, *Crusader Castles, a Brief Study in the Military Architecture of the Crusades* (London, 1950); T. S. R. Boase, *Castles and Churches of the Crusading Kingdom* (London, 1967); H. Kennedy, *Crusader Castles* (Cambridge, 1994); D. Pringle, *Fortification and Settlement in Crusader Palestine* (Aldershot, 2000); C. Bouras, "The Impact of Frankish Architecture on Thirteenth Century Byzantine Architecture," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, eds. A. E. Laiou and R. P. Mottahede (Washington, DC, 2001), 247-262; D. Pringle, *Churches, Castles and Landscape in the Frankish East* (Burlington, 2013); H. E. Grossman, "On Memory, Transmission, and the Practice of Building in the Crusader Mediterranean," in *Mechanisms of Exchange: Transmission in Medieval Art and Architecture of the Mediterranean ca. 1000-1500*, eds. H. E. Grossman and A. Walker (Leiden, 2013), 481-517; H. E. Grossman, "Syncretism Made Concrete: The Case for a Hybrid Moreote Architecture in Post-Fourth Crusade Greece," in *Archaeology in Architecture: Papers in Honor of Cecil L. Striker*, eds. J. J. Emerick and D. M. Deliyannis (Mainz, 2005), 65-73.

religion, or manifest destiny, is not a new one. But, for the Byzantines, the traumatic loss of Constantinople resulting from the Fourth Crusade was the first real *caesura* in the divinely ordained hegemony of the Roman empire, whose political origins extended back to the formation of the Roman Republic in 753 BC, and even earlier to the mythical origin of the world at the hand of God. Between these great events were the legendary foundation of the Roman people by one elusive Trojan—Aeneas—who managed to relocate himself and his accompanying exiles to the Italian peninsula, and the transfer of the historic Republican, and then Imperial, capital from Rome to Byzantium, or *New Rome*, by Constantine I (r. 306-337) in 324 (dedicated 330). From the Byzantine, or more properly, Constantinopolitan perspective, the loss of Constantinople—the loss of New Rome—effectively severed the empire’s continuity with its majestic past.

The break in continuity that resulted from foreign invasion was without parallel in Byzantine history. Compared to the addition and loss of important territories over the centuries preceding 1204, the loss of Constantinople to the crusaders struck at the very heart of Byzantium’s identity and existence. The city of Constantinople, tied through its very name to the founder of the Christian Roman empire, was also the anchor of the Byzantine State. To those who lived there, it was the epitome of civilization. No place had a higher standard of education, culture, medicine, or economic success. No place more clearly displayed the wealth and piety of its citizens, nor was any place as envied or as desirable.³ With its loss to the crusaders, the foundation of nearly every traditional form of the empire’s culture was shaken. It is this identity, centered on Constantinople, which was shattered by the Fourth Crusade. The crusaders’ hostile takeover and despoiling of the famously rich and historic capital precipitated an exodus of most of the city’s inhabitants, who left with little money, property or supplies. Like the Syrian

³ See for example the comments by the French abbot Suger in *Abbot Suger, on the Abbey-Church of St. Denis and its Art Treasures*, ed. and trans. by E. Panofsky (Princeton, 1946), Section XXXII.

villagers of Hosn, seeking shelter nearby at Krak des Chevaliers or the nine-million Syrian refugees seeking safer havens over the borders, the thirteenth-century Constantinopolitans fled impoverished to the borderlands of the former empire, settling primarily in the successor states centered around Epiros, Trebizond, and Nicæa (Figure 3). The fragmented population was collected and reformed during the *Interregnum*, the period between the cataclysmic invasion of Constantinople by Frankish and Venetian crusaders in 1204 and the Byzantine reconquest of their capital in 1261, primarily through the efforts of the Laskarids, whose art, architecture and material culture form the subject of this study.

Interregnum, or a period of disruption between reigns, is not the only term that could be used to describe the tumultuous years in the first half of the thirteenth century, but it is one that I think represents a constellation of perspectives particularly useful to themes in this study. First, the term privileges the post-Restoration era (i.e. after 1261), when control of the capital had been retaken by Byzantine Greek rulers. By then, the anxiety of displacement and exile had come to an end and the intervening period could honestly be referred to as an “interregnum.” Between 1204 and 1261, the continuity of Byzantine rule under the Laskarid dynasty existed *outside* Constantinople, albeit in direct reference to it. The perspective held by the first-generation exiles was that their displacement would soon come to an end; that theirs was only a temporary situation. That general expectation, I believe, changed by the rule of John III Doukas Vatatzes (r. 1222-1254), the second Laskarid emperor, who continued to seek to recapture Constantinople, but did so from a position of authority in which all major requirements for a functioning Byzantine state had been recreated in exile. At this point, the only thing missing was Constantinople itself, the *raison d’être* of their military action. This leads to the cultural utility of *interregnum*, which designates a period of time when Constantinople is referred to in any

number of ways—through commemoration, memory, as a *desideratum*—but was neither lived in, experienced, nor physically known. Finally, it is important to understand that the perspectives and retrospectives espoused by Byzantine historians both during and after the Interregnum ended were informed by the successes of exile and the messy, quasi-heretical beginning of the Palaiologan dynasty. Lasting for fifty-seven years, the Interregnum ended when emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1258-1282) entered Constantinople in triumph in 1261, ousting the already weakened Western rulers from power. Authors George Akropolites (1217/1220-1282), George Pachymeres (1242-1310), and Nikephoros Gregoras (1295-1360) each either witnessed the usurpation of the throne by Michael VIII Palaiologos in 1258 or became involved in his court, including the pro-Laskarid Arsenite controversy that raged throughout most of his and his son's reigns.⁴ Thus, the Interregnum signals a set of issues dealing first with the challenges and characteristics of Byzantine rule from outside of Constantinople, as well as a set of difficult political and religious issues that sprang up in the early Palaiologan period but which were directly connected to the years spent in exile.

The history of the Laskarid dynasty proper has only recently become the focus of major academic studies. Many important historical questions about the Interregnum have been posed and explored, primarily concerning how the Byzantine empire was re-established in exile both politically and spiritually, as well as on the economic history and prosopography of this interim period. Understanding how Byzantine political culture changed and evolved, particularly given

⁴ George Akropolites' history picks up where Niketas Choniates' work ends, and spans the years just preceding the fall of Constantinople up to the year 1261, see *Georgii Akropolite Opera*, 2 vols., ed. A. Heisenberg (Stuttgart, 1978); *Georgios Akropolites*, ed. E. Kaltsogianni (in preparation). Nikephoros Gregoras's history covers the years 1204-1359, see *Nicephorus Gregoras*, 3 vols., eds. L. Schopen and I. Bekker (Bonn, 1829, 1830 and 1855); *Nikephoros Gregoras Rhomäische Geschichte*, 6 vols., ed. A. Heirseemann (Stuttgart, 1973); *Nikephoros Gregoras*, ed. F. Kolovou (Berlin, in preparation). George Pachymeres' history covers the years 1261-1308, and focuses on the reigns of Michael VIII and his son Andronikos II Palaiologos, see *Georgii Pachymeris, de Michaele et Andronico Palaeologis*, 2 vols., ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1835); *Georgii Pachymeris relationes historicas edidit, introductione notisque instruxit*, ed. A. Failler, trans. V. Laurent and A. Failler (Paris, 1984, 1999, and 2000).

that there was no longer a central authority to enforce society's laws, has also been an important direction in the historical research, as has how this breakdown of unity and power resulted in regional identities and the aggrandizement of power (and property) by lesser, local lords.

The first narrative history of the Laskarid era was published in 1912 by Alice Gardner.⁵ In 1965, H el ene Ahrweiler presented a detailed study of the region around Smyrna in the thirteenth century based on archival documents from Patmos and Latmos monasteries.⁶ By 1975, when Michael Angold published a valuable and detailed description of the characteristics and changes of Byzantine government while in Anatolian exile, Niketas Choniates' orations and letters and his history had been re-edited and published.⁷ In 2007, Dimitar Angelov wrote about the shifting ideologies in political identity between the Komnenian and Palaiologan periods through an extensive, close examination of sources.⁸ Monographs on the four Laskarid emperors have been and continue to be written.⁹ Work on the interrelationships between the Nic ean realm and the Despotate of Epiros, Genoa, Venice, other dioceses in the Orthodox and Catholic churches, as well as the neighboring powers of Bulgaria, the Seljuqs, and Serbia have been well

⁵ A. Gardner, *The Lascarids of Nic ea: the Story of an Empire in Exile* (London, 1912). The primary Greek sources she used were published in the Bonn Corpus (Bonn, 1828-1897) and/or the PG (Paris, 1857-1858).

⁶ H. Ahrweiler, "L'histoire et la g eographie de la r egion de Smyrne entre les deux occupations turques (1081-1317), particuli erement au XIII^e si ecle," *TM* 1 (1965), 2-202. Beginning in 1966, under the auspices of the International Association of Byzantine Studies, the *Corpus Fontium Histori e Byzantin e* was established to commission new critical editions of Byzantine texts that continue to be published today.

⁷ M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Lascarids of Nic aea, 1204-1261* (Oxford, 1975); id., "Administration of the Empire of Nic ea," *ByzF* 19 (1993), 127-138; *Nicetae Choniatae orationes et epistulae*, ed. J. L. van Dieten (Berlin, 1972); *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 2 vols., ed. J. L. van Dieten (Berlin, 1975).

⁸ D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204-1330* (Cambridge, 2007).

⁹ J. S. Langdon, "John III Ducas Vatatzes' Byzantine Imperium in Anatolian Exile, 1222-54: The Legacy of his Diplomatic, Military and Internal Program for the *restitutio orbis*," PhD dissertation, History, University of California, Los Angeles, 1978-1979; J. B. Papadopoulos, *Th eodore II Lascaris, empereur de Nic ee* (Paris, 1908); E. Giarenas, *Η συγκρότηση και η εδραίωση της αυτοκρατορίας της Νίκαιας. Ο αυτοκράτορας Θεόδωρος Α΄ Κομνηνός Λάσκαρις* (Athens, 2008); D. Angelov on Theodore II Laskaris (in preparation).

documented. Scholarly attention to these “international” relationships has provided proof that while the economic, diplomatic, and religious networks in the northeastern Mediterranean may have been disrupted in 1204, they also began to recover fairly quickly as each of the eastern rump states forged new alliances.¹⁰

While new sources have not been discovered, the existing ones have been refined with expert attention, appearing in new editions and translations throughout the last several decades, notably the *History* of George Akropolites (Macrides, 2007), the *History* and letters of Niketas Choniates, and a new edition of the letters of Michael Choniates.¹¹ The works of several other important thirteenth- and fourteenth-century authors are currently being re-edited and are due to be published in 2015 or soon thereafter.¹² These have provided long-overdue, critical editions of Byzantine texts, most not been edited since the Italian Renaissance. Valuable in their own right, these publications, taken as a whole, represent a highly invigorated critical stance with respect to

¹⁰ W. Miller, “The Empire of Nicaea and the Recovery of Constantinople,” in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. 4 (Cambridge, 1924-1936); D. Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258-1282* (Cambridge, 1959); G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick, 1969), 418-466; S. Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1971); M. Angold, “The Problem of the Unity of the Byzantine World after 1204: The Empire of Nicæa and Cyprus (1204-1261),” *Πρακτικά τοῦ πρώτου διεθνoῦς Κυπρολογικοῦ συνεδρίου* 2 (1972), 1-6; V. Gjuzelev, “Bulgarien und das Kaiserreich von Nikaia (1204-1261),” *JÖB* 26 (1977), 143-154; A. Stavridou-Zaphraka, *Νικαία καὶ Ἡπειρος τοῦ 13^{ου} αἰῶνα: ἰδεολογικὴ ἀντιπαραθεση στὴν προσπάθεια τους νὰ ἀνακτήσουν τὴν αὐτοκρατορία* (Thessaloniki, 1990); M. Angold, “Byzantium in Exile,” in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. 5, ed. D. Abulafia (Cambridge, 1999), 543-568; *Identities and Allegiances in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, eds. J. Herrin and G. Saint-Guillain (Burlington, 2011); S. Métivier, “Byzantium in question in thirteenth-century Seljuk Anatolia,” in *Liquid & Multiple: Individuals & Identities in the Thirteenth-Century Aegean*, eds. G. Saint-Guillain and D. Stathakopoulos (Paris, 2012), 235-258 and E. Mitsiou, “Networks of Nicæa, 13th-century Socio-Economic Ties, Structures and Prosopography,” *ibid.*, 91-104.

¹¹ *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, trans. H. Magoulias (Detroit, 1984); *George Akropolites, The History*, trans. R. Macrides (Oxford, 2007); *Niketæ Choniatae Historia*, ed. J. L. van Dieten (Berlin, 1975); *Nicetae Choniatae, orationes et epistulae*, ed. J. L. van Dieten (Berlin, 1972); *Michaelis Acominati Opera*, 2 vols., ed. S. P. Lampros (Gröningen, 1968); *Michaelis Choniatae epistulae*, ed. F. Kolovou (Berlin, 2001).

¹² Published under the auspices of the Corpus Fontium Historiæ Byzantinæ: *Theodoros Skutariotes Chronica*, ed. R. Tocci (Berlin, 2015); *Georgios Akropolites*, ed. E. Kaltsogianni (in preparation); *Ioannes Kantakuzenos*, ed. S. Schönauer (Berlin, in preparation); *Nikephoros Gregoras*, ed. F. Kolovou (Berlin, in preparation); *Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos*, eds. A. Berger, C. Gastberger, and S. Panteghini (Vienna, in preparation); *Theodoros Skutariotes, Synopsis Chronike*, ed. A. Hohlweg (Berlin, in preparation).

the main sources of Byzantine history and literature.¹³ The most important for the thirteenth century are volumes 4, 5 and 6, containing cartularies and archival documents from the monastery of St. John the Theologian on the island of Patmos, monasteries in Herakleia at Latmos, and elsewhere in Asia Minor and the eastern Mediterranean. This dissertation benefits not only from these expert critical editions of primary sources, but also from the historians who have worked with them. Interestingly, while a number of Laskarid buildings are mentioned in the sources, only a handful has been identified with surviving architecture (i.e. the Laskarid Palace at Nymphaion, the Church of the Dormition at Nicæa). Many of those mentioned have not been matched with surviving ruins, including the famous double-monastery of Sosandra built by John III and his queen, Irene, or the cathedral basilica of Nicæa.

In contrast to the documented sources, the physical material that remains in the landscape of exile—whose territories initially constituted a wide swath of the western Anatolian coastline and stretched inland (east) along the Hermos, Cayster, Mæander and Lycus river valleys, then grew to include the neighboring islands of Chios, Patmos, Samos and Rhodos, and finally extended into the northern Aegean, Thessaloniki, and further north into Thrace—this material culture, art, and architecture has only very recently begun to be studied. Prior scholarly work, perhaps not surprisingly, centered first on the spoils of war won from Constantinople, namely its art and architectural decoration, its icons and relics, that left the city in the hands of the crusaders

¹³ For instance, the enormous work of Franz Ritter von Miklosich and Joseph Müller, *Acta et Diplomata Græca Medii Ævi, Sacra et Profana*, published in Vienna between 1830 and 1890 was republished in 2012. See *Acta et Diplomata Græca Medii Ævi Sacra et Profana*, 6 vols., eds. F. Miklosich and J. Müller (Vienna, 1830-1890; rpt. Cambridge, 2012). Volume 4 contains acts and diplomas from the following sites: from the monastery of the Blessed Virgin on Mt. Lembos near Smyrna, the monastery of St. Paul on Mt. Latmos near Miletos, and the monastery of the Virgin Makrinitissa on Mt. Drongo and the Blessed Forerunner on Mt. Dryanubaias. Volume 5 contains acts and diplomas from the following areas: the monastery of the Virgin Nea Moni on Chios, the Ionian Islands, the city and churches of Ioannina, the monastery of St. John the Baptist near Serres, the hospital in the city of Rhædesto, the monastery of St. Luke Steriotes in Phocis, the city and churches of Monemvasia, the monastery of the Virgin Megaspelaion in the Peloponnese, acts of monasteries on Mt. Sinai, and information on Theodore Skoutariotes. Volume 6 contains information about the monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos.

for points West, primarily to northern Italy and Venice, and secondarily on the effects of Latin rule in Constantinople itself in the implementation of western monastic life within Orthodox ecclesiastical contexts and of western feudalism in a formerly centralized bureaucratic empire.¹⁴

The Interregnum continues to materially affect the parameters of contemporary historical inquiry about it. Questions about the specific movements of key individuals—Theodore I Laskaris, for instance—in the year 1203, become significant, as do broader questions of historiographic importance, such as the content of collective memory for specific populations before, during, and after the Interregnum. My view, as indicated by the title of this study, focuses on the physical replacement of Byzantium in exile through the urban environments and the effects it had on the surrounding landscape. Two centers stand at the heart of this discussion: Nicæa and Nymphaion, which were the imperial and ecclesiastic capitals of the Laskarids during this period. As such, these two sites—and their accompanying architecture—anchor my discussion of how a landscape of loss was transformed into a new homeland. Two features of Nicæa will be discussed at length: the city walls, which received additional fortifications under the first two

¹⁴ While the exchange of influence and inspiration between the west and Byzantium was by no means confined to the thirteenth century, the surge of ideas and material culture out of Constantinople following the despoiling of the city significantly flooded the western market with authentic ancient relics of great artistic and spiritual value. On the Pala d’Oro, see H. R. Hahnloser and R. Polacco, *Tesoro di San Marco* (Florence, 1965) and G. Lorenzoni, *La Pala d’Oro di San Marco* (Florence, 1965). For architecture and mural decoration, see O. Demus, *The Church of San Marco in Venice. History, Architecture, Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1960); E. Kitzinger, “The Byzantine Contribution to Western Art of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,” *DOP* 20 (1966), 265-266; J. H. Stubblebine, “Byzantine Influence in Thirteenth-Century Italian Panel Painting,” *DOP* 20 (1966) 85-101; O. Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West* (New York, 1970); *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West: Selected Studies by Ernst Kitzinger*, eds. E. Kitzinger and W. Eugene Kleinbauer (Bloomington, 1976); O. Demus, “Venetian Mosaics and Their Byzantine Sources: Report on the Dumbarton Oaks Symposium of 1978,” *DOP* 33 (1979), 337-343; id., *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice* (Chicago, 1984); id., “San Marco Revisited,” *DOP* 41 (1987), 155-156; R. Nelson, “The Italian Appreciation and Appropriation of Illuminated Byzantine Manuscripts, ca. 1200-1450,” *DOP* 49 (1995), 209-235; H. Klein, “Eastern Objects and Western Desires: Relics and Reliquaries between Byzantium and the West,” *DOP* 58 (2004), 283-314. For the Cistercians in Orthodox monasteries, see E. A. R. Brown, “The Cistercians in the Latin Empire of Constantinople and Greece, 1204-1276,” *Traditio* 14 (1958), 63-120. See *Kalenderhane in Istanbul: Final Reports on the Archaeological Exploration and Restoration at Kalenderhane Camii, 1966-1978*, 2 vols., eds. C. L. Striker and Y. D. Kuban (Mainz, 1997-2007) which records the archaeologists’ discovery of frescoes illustrating the life of St. Francis on the walls of a chapel behind the main apse when the church was converted for use in the Latin rite sometime between 1204-1261. These frescoes are now on display in the İstanbul Archaeological Museum.

Laskarid emperors, and the church of Hagia Sophia, my major addition to the corpus of known Laskarid buildings in Nicæa. At Nymphaion, recent excavation of the Laskarid palace has unearthed new details and features, which, when studied in tandem with the historical record, shifts our understanding of the Laskarid realm's southern territory. Exile here is *from* Constantinople, arguably a metonym for the Byzantine Empire even then, and most clearly discernible in the architectural and urban fabric of Nicæa and Nymphaion.¹⁵

The notion of exile is indigenous in the writings of some authors in this period, notably Niketas and Michael Choniates, both writing prolifically from separate exiles, with audiences ranging from friends and ecclesiastic colleagues to emperors (see Chapter One). These perspectives have been discussed from a literary perspective, but not anchored to the physical environment, a link I explore in Chapter Two. Specific facets of exile theory will be developed in each chapter.¹⁶ Dovetailing the reconquest of the city in 1261, I will also explore how Laskarid art, architecture, and material culture provide the logical cultural and artistic link between the Komnenian dynasty that ruled preceding the fall of Constantinople (1081-1185) and the Palaiologan dynasty that flowered after its recovery (1261-1453). No other dynasty or successor

¹⁵ Sources testify that imperial patronage of new and historic churches, shrines and monasteries both in and outside the capitals of Nicæa and Nymphaion was extensive, not only for Nicæa, but for Epiros and Trebizond as well. These monuments are important in defining the Orthodox *oikoumene*, mapped across the Aegean Sea, the Balkans, and part of western Anatolia. While certainly politically relevant (both within the Orthodox Christian world and in opposition to Latich Christianity), I have elected not to include a study of the holy topography here primarily due to the fact that the parameters of this study prevent it and that in many cases, are dependent on the findings presented here. This important material deserves a full treatment, which I shall include in future work.

¹⁶ For exile in the western Middle Ages, see *Exile in the Middle Ages: Selected Proceedings from the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds 8-11 July 2002*, eds. L. Napran and E. van Houts (Brepols, 2004); S. L. Einbinder, "Recall from Exile: Literature, Memory and Medieval French Jews," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 15, No. 3 (2008), 225-240. For exile, intellectuals, literature and art, see E. Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, 2003); G. Abramson, "Exile, Imprisonment and the Literary Imagination," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 13, No. 2 (2006), 171-191; *Exiles, Diasporas and Strangers*, ed. K. Mercer (Cambridge, 2008); *Exile and Creativity*, ed. S. R. Suleiman (Raleigh-Durham, 1998); L. Nochlin, "Art and the Conditions of Exile: Men/Women, Emigration/Expatriation," *Poetics Today* 17, No. 3 (1993), 317-337.

state was as well positioned to contribute to Palaiologan art and architecture, but how or even if the Laskarids did so has long been an outstanding question in the field of Byzantine art and architectural history (see Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six).¹⁷

The recovery of Laskarid material has been hampered by the isolationism embraced by the Turkish government with respect to its cultural heritage.¹⁸ Archaeological work throughout western Turkey has accelerated over the last twenty years, often revealing new Laskarid material, though unfortunately the findings are usually not collated or interpreted synthetically.¹⁹ And, Byzantine art and culture largely remain in the background of Turkish cultural heritage, save for the income-generating sites of Hagia Sophia in İstanbul, the colorful Late Antique mosaics and frescoes from the Great Palace in İstanbul and the Zeugma Mosaic Museum near Gaziantep, and the terrace houses on Ephesos's main street. So-called "rescue excavations" follow the not-entirely-unexpected discoveries unearthed during the enhancement of civic works in both small and large Turkish cities and towns.²⁰ Combined these excavations have added great

¹⁷ Generally the presumption has been that with respect to history and literature, the greatest contribution of the Laskarid dynasty was preserving in the traditions of *pedeia* while outside of Constantinople. With respect to art and architecture, a few nineteenth-century scholars alone broached the question of whether there was any connection between the Komnenian and the Palaiologan to be found in the art of the Laskarids, very little of which was then known (see Chapter Four).

¹⁸ Prior to the late 1970s, most of the excavations in Turkey were conducted by foreign teams of archaeologists, but beginning with the reorganization of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism around that very time, more and more—and now nearly all—archaeological excavations are run by Turkish scholars or by multi-national teams headed by Turkish scholars.

¹⁹ As a result, the majority of archaeological findings are published as annual reports in Turkish journals such as the *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (Archaeological Meeting Proceedings) or *Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı* (Research Meeting Proceedings), both issued annually or semi-annually. These journals can be accessed online at the main Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism website: << <http://www.kulturvarliklari.gov.tr/TR,44758/e-kitap.html>>>. Two other important Turkish-language journals that presently publish Byzantine material are *Belleten* and *Haberler (Türk eskiçağ bilimleri enstitüsü haberler)*. Various other scattered university journals occasionally feature reports on Byzantine archaeological projects, including conference proceedings in İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir.

²⁰ See, for instance, material discovered when digging for sewers, new foundations, or regional dams, or the now famous two-year long excavation of the Yenikapı/Theodosian Harbor in preparation for an underground subway

breadth to the medieval archaeological landscape of western Anatolia, a landscape that was formerly defined by long-standing European digs at Antioch, Assos, Ephesos, Miletos, Pergamon, Sardis, and Troy, all aimed at Hellenistic, Greek and Roman strata. Byzantine layers were documented, but dug under, and so the newer, ongoing excavations allow for contemporary documentation of the Byzantine, and in some cases, Laskarid, eras of the sites. Given the upsurge in archaeological activity over the last ten years, the Byzantine archaeological landscape of western Turkey deserves redefinition.

The foundational work on Laskarid architecture, an exploratory article focused on creating a chronology and typology, was published in 1972 by Hans Buchwald, and provides a valuable starting point for my own study. Buchwald continued his work on Laskarid architecture with Church E and Church EA at Sardis, and his findings will be published (posthumously) in June 2015.²¹ The church of Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, which Buchwald did not include, was the subject of a monograph in 1995 by Sabine Möllers, and its beautiful opus-sectile pavement was published and redated to the Laskarid period by Cristina Pinatsi in 2006.²² The ancient walls of Nicæa were studied by Alfons Maria Schneider and Clive Foss, both of whose detailed publications enhanced the efficiency of my own work. Foss continued his architectural and archaeological work in western Asia Minor, notably on fortresses in the provinces of Lydia and

stop for the İstanbul Marmaray transit line (the latter excavated lasting for two years with round the clock excavation, directed by İstanbul University).

²¹ H. Buchwald, "Laskarid Architecture," *JÖB* 28 (1979), 263-296; id., *Churches EA and E at Sardis* (Cambridge, 2015).

²² S. Möllers, "Neue Beobachtungen zur Hagia Sophia in Iznik-Nikaia," *AA* (1987), 689-693; ead., *Die Hagia Sophia in Iznik, Nikaia* (Altfer, 1994); C. Pinatsi, "New Observations on the Pavement of the Church of Hagia Sophia in Nicaea," *BZ* 99, No. 1 (2006), 119-126.

Bithynia.²³ Short reports continue to be published on Byzantine and some Laskarid material recently discovered in the Nif mountains behind Nymphaion and at Anaia, whereas work on the Laskarid periods at Nicæa, Nymphaion, Prousa, Smyrna, and Latmos has come to a standstill.²⁴ The scattered material in Greece is very well-published and even better preserved, but studied without reference to newly excavated material in Turkey, most likely due to a long standing linguistic barrier between the two countries. This may be the reason for the disconnect between the preponderance of scholarly work on Laskarid history, where medieval Greek texts are central, and Laskarid art and architecture in western Anatolia, and has been one of the greatest challenges for this study. That the era of Laskarid exile happened to take place in western Anatolia has handicapped the academic study of Laskarid architecture and material culture, for modern Turkey's national identity has been crafted in ways that historically attach little

²³ A. M. Schneider and W. Karnapp, *Die Statmuer von Iznik (Nicaea)* (Berlin, 1938); C. Foss, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis* (Cambridge, 1976); id., "Late Byzantine Fortifications in Lydia," *JÖB* 28 (1979), 297-320; id., *Nicaea: A Byzantine Capital and its Praises* (Brookline, 1996); C. Foss and D. Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications: An Introduction* (Pretoria, 1986).

²⁴ For Anaia, see Z. Mercangöz, "Batı Anadolu'da Geç Dönem Bizans Mimarisi: Laskariler Dönemi Mimarisi," PhD dissertation, Art History, Hacettepe University, 1985; ead., "Kuşadası'nın Kültür Mirasında İki Bizans Kalıntısı; Kurşunlu Manastır ve Kadikalesi," in *Geçmişten Geleceğe Kuşadası Sempozyumu*, ed. A. G. Serifoğlu (Kuşadası, 2003), 139-145; ead., "Kuşadası Kadikalesi 2001 Yılı Çalışmaları," *KST* 25, No. 2 (2003), 125-138; ead., "Kuşadası Kadikalesi Kazısı," *İzmir Kent Kültürü Dergisi* (İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayını) 5 (2002), 272-276; ead., "4. Yılında Kuşadası, Kadikalesi/Anaia Kazısı," *E.Ü. Sanat Tarihi Dergisi* 14, No. 1 (2005), 205-223; ead., "Kuşadası Kadikalesi Kazısı 2006 Yılı Çalışmaları," *KST* 29, No. 3 (2007), 449-470; E. Akdeniz, "Kuşadası Kadikalesi Kazısında Bulunan Bir Hitit Heykelciği," *Olba* 9 (2004), 21-57; id., "A New Excavation in Western Anatolia: Kadikalesi (Ancient Anaia)," *Olba* 13 (2006), 1-33; İ. Türkoğlu, "2001-2002 Yılı Kuşadası Kadikalesi Kazı Çalışmaları," *TEBE Habeler* 16 (2003), 18-20. For Nif Dağları, see A. B. Yalçın, "The Nif (Nymphaion) Mountain Project: A New Byzantine Complex Discovered" in *The Proceedings of the Twenty-Second International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. A. Nikolov, Vol. 3 (Sofia, 2011), 23; ead., "The Nif Mountain Project: The Byzantine Complex at Başpınar" in *Abstracts from Ecclesiastical History Today: Recent Paradigms and New Approaches* (Moscow, 2011), 297-300. For Herakleia at Latmos, see T. Wiegand, *Der Latmos* (Berlin, 1913); F. Krischen, *Die Befestigungen von Herakleia am Latmos* (Berlin, 1922); G. P. Schiemenz, "Die Malereien der Paulus-Höhle auf dem Latmos," *Pantheon* 29 (1971), 46-63; Z. Mercangöz, "Bafa Gölü, Kiliselikteki Manastır Kilisesi," *Ege Üniversitesi Arkeoloji ve Sanat Tarihi Dergisi* 5 (1990), 117-138; U. Peschlow, "Latmos," in *Reallexicon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, Vol. 5, eds. K. Wessel and R. Restle (Stuttgart, 1993), 651-716; A. Peschlow-Bindokat and U. Peschlow, *Der Latmos: eine unbekannte gebirgslandschaft an der Türkischen Westküste* (Mainz, 1996); O. Kresten, "Das Kloster des heiligen Paulos am Berge Latros oder vom Berge Latros?" *JÖB* 50 (2000), 187-204; J. Prolovic, "Die Wandmalereien des Klosters Yediler am Latmos," in *Wiener Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik, Symposium Wien 2002*, ed. W. Hörander et al. (Vienna, 2004), 372-386; A. Peschlow-Bindokat, *Herakleia am Latmos: Stadt um Umgebung* (Istanbul, 2005).

importance to its medieval Byzantine past. Laskarid material in Turkey runs a constant risk of being disenfranchised permanently from the country's cultural heritage narrative.

Despite these challenges, a lengthy residence in Turkey and Greece allowed me to repeatedly visit the main Laskarid sites of Nicæa, Prousa, Nymphaion, Manisa, Latmos and others, often before, during and after excavation. While not all sites are treated here with the same depth, these experiences enabled me to take stock of both older, archived objects and sites in tandem with newly recovered Laskarid material. In addition to expanding the corpus of materials, this study problematizes and justifies the use of exile as a methodological tool for interpreting Laskarid works of the Interregnum. Chapter One is a first effort at understanding the legal background of exile and its development from a capital punishment to a literary posture. In this chapter, I also discuss how exile changed from a punitive and individual experience to a collective one through letters written both before and after 1204. I address how the boundaries and frontier zones before 1204 affected the perception of the landscape afterwards. Bringing the topography of exile to light and probing how it was experienced by those who endured it prior to and after the loss of Constantinople enhances our understanding of population displacement after 1204. Examining architecture, topography and documented sources, I trace the changes in how exile was experienced before and after 1204, highlighting the gradual reduction in the collective consciousness of “being in exile” over the course of four generations of Laskarid rule.

In Chapter Two, I document the earliest territorial acquisitions by Theodore I Laskaris (r. 1208-1222) and John III Doukas Vatatzes following the publication of the *Partitio Romanicæ*, by studying the towers, walls, and inscribed fortifications that remain in Nicæa, Heraklea Pontica, Prousa, Smyrna and Tripolis, among others. By analyzing Laskarid inscriptions that remain on city walls and fortifications (including some unpublished and untranslated) I draw a direct

connection between the documented perspective on exile espoused by writers such as Michael and Niketas Choniates, refugees from Constantinople after 1204, and Theodore I's adoption of that perspective. The city walls of Nicæa were evocative of the lost capital of Constantinople for the Laskarids, their court, and the refugee population which came to reside there.

Chapter Three posits a central role for Hagia Sophia in Nicæa as the new Patriarchal church of the empire in exile, commemorating and replacing the now Latin Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. This chapter focuses on the renovations to the interior of Hagia Sophia, particularly the inlaid opus sectile pavement that was installed in the west end of the church proving that this monument was used by the Laskarids as their coronation church. Hagia Sophia was never included in the Laskarid architectural corpus, and its addition is significant for defining what was architecturally essential for a Byzantine capital, even in exile.

Chapter Four discusses and analyzes for the first time the fragmentary remains of Laskarid fresco painting in an effort to connect the artistic developments before the Fourth Crusade to the efflorescence of Palaiologan painting in Constantinople. The tangled historiography surrounding Laskarid painting is, I hope, unraveled and clarified enough that future publications on this topic can use the examples and chronology presented here.

Chapter Five takes up the question of how the Laskarid rulers created and communicated their imperial image without the benefit of Constantinople as a setting. Several unique and striking images on Laskarid coins and seals show a deep interest in representing icons from Constantinople, notably the icon of Christ Chalkites. I discuss the connection between the image of Christ Chalkites during the Laskarid period with the icons of Christ Chalkites predating 1204, as well as the enormous Christ Chalkites in the esonarthex of the Church of Christ in the Chora during the fourteenth century. There is also a parallel development in the local Nicæan cult of St.

Tryphon, an early Christian martyr whose cult was reinvigorated under the Laskarid rulers, particularly Theodore II Laskaris (r. 1254-1258), who minted coins with his image.

Chapter Six focuses on the newly excavated and restored palace at Nymphaion, its reputation as a site of health and healing and its role as a secondary imperial capital. Among the visual and architectural features that were “brought back” to Constantinople after 1261, the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion finds its natural counterpart in the Tekfur Sarayı, built into the Komnenian walls of the Blacherna district, renovated completely by Michael VIII. The imperial imagery of exile, namely cantilevered Betas and the *fleurs-de-lis* (which had been appearing on Laskarid coins and seals) appear in the Tekfur Sarayı, illustrate that Laskarid imperial imagery was powerful enough to warrant Michael VIII’s reliance upon it after usurping the throne in 1258 from John IV. Each of these chapters discusses the value of the exilic art, architecture and material culture to the Palaiologan period. These examples provide clear evidence that the “innovations” of the early Palaiologan period that appear in Constantinople are, in fact, continuations from exile or have their source there.

Methodologically, the idea of exile suggests itself as a lens through which to interpret this period, for “exile” as a theme appears regularly in the sources. Understanding exile during the Interregnum, both the experience and the concept, is key to answering the question of how Byzantium was “replaced” in exile, the governing question of this study. Understanding that the initial diaspora population fully expected their exile to be temporary is also an important perspective that needs attention. The first wave of refugees likened themselves and their situation to the exiles-par-excellence of old, the Jews enslaved in Babylon, evicted from their rightful home in Zion (i.e. Jerusalem), their sacred Temple destroyed and its sacred treasures stolen. Why the Byzantine refugees would have identified with this story is clear, and though the

identification lasts for some time, it does not endure throughout the Interregnum. Thus, though the sense of being in exile characterized much of the writing in the first decades of the thirteenth century, it actually ended years before Constantinople was reconquered in 1261, confirming my original hypothesis that the empire was fully and successfully replaced in exile, an argument that can only be made when texts and material culture are married as components of a single interdisciplinary analysis.

Unlike Epiros, Arta and Trebizond—other sites of exile and displacement—it was in the Nicæan realm that the fractured empire began to be replaced. The establishment of a sovereign Byzantine state in exile could not but refer to Constantinople in its building programs and imperial self-representations. Though Constantinople as a construct changed during the Interregnum: from longed-for-homeland, to a homeland only some could remember, to unknown legend, it never ceased to be a reference point in the collective memory of those who had fled and the generations that followed. In 1261, those who returned to Constantinople were mostly born outside of it and had never seen or entered the city. Experiences of exile continue today all throughout the world, and the challenges faced in light of stark, violent, and unanticipated relocations bear many of the same characteristics as they did in thirteenth-century Byzantium.

Once the Laskarids realized they were in Bithynia to stay, they began to work to strengthen their cities against attack, to develop the land and make it agriculturally productive, and to replace the offices, churches, and bureaucratic and ecclesiastic positions deemed most necessary. This is how a homeland is created out of exile, and only occurs with great physical effort and a sense of commitment and belonging. The urban environments they renovated, commemorated, and caused to flourish prove that the Laskarid dynasty succeeded in replacing Byzantium within a landscape of loss.

Chapter One
The Experience and Landscape of Exile before and after 1204

On 13 April 1204, the capital of the Byzantine empire fell to the knights of the Fourth Crusade. Among its many refugees was a man named Niketas Choniates, originally from an important fortress town on the Lycus river in the central Anatolian frontier, Chonai (ancient Colossæ, modern Honaz). Surnamed for his city of origin, Niketas and his brother Michael had been sent as young boys to Constantinople to receive their education. Both quickly rose through the ranks: Michael becoming the bishop of Athens, and Niketas becoming one of the highest-ranking officials in the Byzantine court, *Grand Logothete*, under the Angeloi emperors. Deeply connected to the imperial court, Niketas witnessed the backhand dealings, multiple *coups-d'état*, shady usurpations, bribes and betrayals that led to the overthrow of Constantinople. His perspective is extremely valuable, not simply for the narrative of events that he left us, but because he, like so many, had lost nearly everything almost overnight. Niketas's voice as an eyewitness is palpable even centuries later. Writing from exile in Laskarid Nicæa, where he and many of his fellow refugees eventually settled, Niketas records the angst he experienced upon being separated from Constantinople and his great desire to return to his home even as he was exiting the great, walled city:

“O Imperial City,” I cried out, “City fortified, City of the great king, tabernacle of the most High, praise and song of his servants and beloved refuge for strangers, queen of the queens of cities, song of songs and splendor of splendors, and the rarest vision of the rare wonders of the world, who is it that has torn us away from thee like darling children from their adoring mother? What shall become of us? Whither shall we go? What consolation shall we find in our nakedness, torn from the bosom as from a mother's womb?

When shall we look upon thee, not as thou now art, a plain of desolation and a valley of weeping, trampled by armies and despised and rejected, but exalted and restored, revered by those who humbled thee and provoked thee, and once again suckling the milk of the Gentiles and eating the wealth of kings? When shall we doff these shriveled and tattered rags which, like fig leaves and garments of skins, suffice not to cover the whole body and

which the foreigners, as treacherous as the serpent, forced upon us with attendant evils and injuries?

Do thou propitiate God, O holiest of cities? Bring forward, on thy behalf, the temples, the martyrs' relics, these debacles, the magnitude of the trials and tribulations suffered by thee in full measure, consigned to the flames by impious men. For he says, "Call upon me in the day of *thine* afflictions and I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me."

Shall I ever more look upon thee, O holiest and greatest of all temples, O terrestrial heaven, O throne of God's glory, O thou chariot of the cherubim, O thou second firmament proclaiming the work of God's hands, a work singular and wondrous and a gladness resounding through the whole earth? And who shall answer but he alone who, having been made trial of in his Passion, knows how to succor those who are sorely tried, he who delivers the poor man from the hands of his oppressors and the poor man and the needy from his despoilers, and as the creator of all things ever changes them for the better?

Emptying out the vexations overflowing from our souls in this fashion, we went forth weeping and casting lamentations like seeds.²⁵

Niketas's elegant outpouring on such a painful occasion carries all the erudition of his extensive education in the capital. Moreover, he alludes to a number of Biblical and historical events to assist in expressing the depth of his grief, providing common ground for his readership. The "tabernacle" initially seems to refer to the city of Constantinople, but in fact must be referring to the Church of Holy Wisdom, Hagia Sophia—the city's cathedral and home to the patriarch. The origin of the allusion to Hagia Sophia as a "tabernacle" is somewhat less apparent, but was originally forged centuries earlier by the Byzantine emperor Justinian I (r. 527-565), whose architects had employed the same measurements of *the* Tabernacle in Jerusalem, built by King Solomon (r. 970-931 BC), when Justinian I rebuilt the church of Hagia Sophia (532-537). Regarding Niketas's "nakedness," "fig leaves," and "tattered skins," it is clear that Choniates and his compatriots felt they had just been expelled from Eden. Like Adam and Eve, after they had been cast out of the Garden as punishment for their sins, the Constantinopolitans left the city and

²⁵ *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, trans. H. Magoulias (Detroit, 1984), 325-326; *Niketae Choniatae Historia*, ed. J. L. van Dieten (Berlin, 1975), 591 l. 21-593 l. 51.

found themselves east of Eden, nearly naked, possessionless, and fully conscious of their sinfulness, shame, and destitution, facing an unknown life ahead that portended only strangeness, toil, and pain. To Choniates' credit, no other story could provide a stronger or more precise parallel narrative to the experience of the refugees leaving Constantinople, nor was any home more impossible to return to.

For Choniates and his fellow Constantinopolitans, their diaspora and ensuing exile was punitive, collective and permanent, without question. Today, exile takes innumerable forms: it may be optional or required, political or religious, temporary or permanent, individual or collective, punitive or even salvific. In modern times, exile is something a person or group of people “go(es) into,” ostensibly in order to *survive*—a persistence of being that may range from “not dying” but could also imply fully retaining one’s integrity by not capitulating with respect to one’s beliefs, morals, vocation, etc. The exile of Nelson Mandela to Robben Island, South Africa, was intended to be punitive and permanent. It turned out to be political, collective, and eventually temporary, for Mandela was freed after nineteen years. His exile on Robben Island had in fact preserved and facilitated the high democratic standards espoused by his political party: fortunately he had been imprisoned and sentenced to hard labor with its highest-ranking members, Mandela’s fellow freedom fighters.²⁶

The continuity of the Dalai Lama, the administrative and religious leader of Buddhist Tibet since the seventeenth century, has been interrupted many times, not only to patiently await the clear candidate for the next Dalai Lama, but to prevent nearby powers from encroaching on his territory. Thus, like the Byzantine empire, Tibet has endured many an interregnum—a discontinuity in legitimate leadership within one’s own territory—and similarly, both have been

²⁶ N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela* (Boston, 1995).

restored in exile. Unlike the Byzantine empire, which eventually regained its capital at Constantinople and continued until 1453, the Dalai Lama lost Tibet to invaders, such that all subsequent Dalai Lamas (at least those not murdered as minors) ruled from exile in India. In their case, an exile that was meant to be temporary became permanent, but allowed the Dalai Lama to retain the integrity of his mission. The current Dalai Lama (the fifteenth) states there may not be another after him, a prophetic possibility that testifies to the gradual assimilation extended (i.e. permanent) exile requires.

Self-imposed exile is also an option, such as that adopted by writers, philosophers, poets and other humanists, all for different reasons. Some possess backgrounds so unique and diverse that adulthood itself is an ongoing exilic experience, following—like Adam and Eve—an irretrievable loss of innocence. Others choose exile intentionally as an intellectual or creative posture, one that purposefully espouses and maintains an alienation that is both constant and utilitarian for the sake of their art. Still others, like the millions of Syrian refugees from the ongoing civil war, find themselves in exile involuntarily, unprepared, and fully in denial. Theirs is political, violent, punitive and most likely, permanent. More than any other case mentioned, the plight of the Syrians presents a vivid contemporary example of undemocratic military conflict with enormous civilian casualties, in many respects similar to the consequences endured by the inhabitants of Constantinople during and after 1204.

In the twenty-first century, our awareness of identities, geographies and political events is almost global in its scale. We can no more avoid witnessing the present day forced migrations of humans, whether from famine, war, natural disaster, or because of hostile (or even peaceful) invaders than we can overlook the seasonal migrations of birds. In the last forty years, work in exile studies has broadened the paradigms for systematically studying the vicissitudes of human

experiences induced by displacement, exile, and forced expulsion. It has generated numerous helps that are particularly relevant for understanding and analyzing the exilic qualities of Byzantium's Interregnum. While this study aims first to discuss the term "exile" with respect to Byzantine history and culture, I also hope to add to the growing field of exilic studies, among whose subjects Byzantium does not yet number. This study, to my knowledge, is the first attempt at capturing a multi-faceted picture of Byzantine exile – how it was conceived, implemented, and experienced.

The tenor of writings in this period is one of lament regarding the interminable displacement of residents from their city, tinted throughout with a deep abiding uncertainty as to why it was happening. The typical astronomical signs and portents did not provide other worldly warnings to the Byzantines of the impending downfall of the Constantinople. The consequences of the Fourth Crusade were surprising, to say the least: without signs from the cosmos, the severity of the consequences could not have been anticipated. Niketas Choniates writes that:

As for the fate which befell the queen of cities, neither celestial nor terrestrial sign was given, as happened often in the past, portending the calamities of mankind and the pernicious attack of evils. Bloody raindrops did not pour down from heaven, nor did the harvest [moon] turn blood red, nor did fiery stones fall out of the sky, nor was anything new observed; but many-legged and many-handed Justice appeared without the sound of footfall or handclap as a zealous avenger, fell silently and inaudibly upon the City, and made of us the most ill-starred of men.²⁷

Choniates' assumption that such a catastrophe would normally be preceded by astronomic portents of God's displeasure (i.e. clear warning signs to all) illustrates something more than a commonly held pre-modern cosmology. It conveys a deep underpinning of the mainstream Byzantine perspective: that the Roman empire and its population were both chosen and favored by God, and their continued success and prosperity proved it. Losing them, and losing

²⁷ *O City of Byzantium*, 320; *Niketae Choniatae Historia*, 586, l. 70-78.

Constantinople, forced this assumption to surface and be questioned. Their key to understanding and accepting the loss of divine favor would be provided through the adoption of the idea of exile, which, while it felt as severe as a death sentence, could technically be ended and one's community restored.

Acknowledging that 1204-1261 was a period of exile without qualification or investigation would be a disservice to the complications of the time. But, other than inspiring the unofficial moniker of the Laskarid realm as "the Empire in Exile," the fruitfulness of exile as a descriptor of the period, which possesses a deep context of its own, has remained unplumbed. Given the momentum of exile studies today, it would be irresponsible to reference "exile" without first providing a detailed historical contextualization, through sources, architecture and historical geography. The remainder of this chapter aims to provide exactly this. First, I will discuss the legal history of exile as a punishment. Secondly, I will present detailed analyses of a few well documented individuals sentenced to exile before 1204 and then present the experiences of those who survived the Fourth Crusade, in an effort to demonstrate not only the shift from individual to collective exile, but how the themes and concerns changed as a result. Lastly, I will present a discussion of common sites of exile, the traditional role of Constantinople in defining exile, and the numerous changes that resulted when it was lost.

My goal is not simply to identify the places of exile in Byzantium, but to come to understand the effects that exile had on the Constantinopolitan perceptions of exilic geography and topography: which is to say, how exile related to borderlands, frontiers, architecture, the Emperor, and most importantly, to the city of Constantinople, and then to consider how those entrenched views affected post-1204 experiences. How can the experience of exiled Constantinopolitans in a post-1204 world be properly understood if the role of Constantinople in

orienting exilic experience prior to 1204 is unknown? In the Laskarid period, when the working system of government had necessarily shifted away from the highly ritualized “stage set” of Constantinople—the imperial city—to a lightweight, mobile, itinerant court, with a much smaller city as its *de facto* capital, one might anticipate that the Byzantine perspective on exile also underwent a significant shift in orientation. The refugees, on the one hand, felt that they were still in exile, but they also came to believe that they had re-established the empire and that Nicæa was the new imperial capital. The dissonance of being in exile *and* being at the capital paints a tableau of contradictions rich for exploration.

The ways, means, and results of exile in Byzantium before 1204, which were primarily focused on individuals, provide useful parameters for understanding the Interregnum – the period dating from 1204 to 1261 – which was characterized by its own historians not only as a decisive break in the continuity of the Byzantium but as a period of collective exile.²⁸ The invasion of Constantinople in 1204 and the implicit destruction of the Byzantine empire were perceived as proof positive that a spiritual breach of faith had occurred; however, the nature of that breach and the path to reconciliation between the Orthodox community and God were as difficult for the refugees to discern as they are to pinpoint today, but in one sense, this does not truly matter. Naturally, a Byzantine would hold humankind to be utterly sinful, and any consequence,

²⁸ The decisiveness of the break in Byzantium’s historical continuity in the eyes of its contemporaries cannot be overemphasized. For a contemporary account, see *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, trans. H. Magoulias (Detroit, 1984); *Niketæ Choniatae Historia*, ed. J. L. van Dieten (Berlin, 1975); R. Macrides, *George Akropolites, The History* (Oxford, 2007); *Georgii Acropolitæ, Opera*, 2 vols., ed. A. Heisenberg (Stuttgart, 1978). Modern histories of the Interregnum tend to focus on one of the three major rump states that emerged after the loss of the capital. For Nicæa, see A. Gardner, *The Lascarids of Nicæa: the Story of an Empire in Exile* (London, 1912); M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicæa, 1204-1261* (Oxford, 1975); D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204-1330* (Cambridge, 2007); J. S. Langdon, “John III Ducas Vatatzes’ Byzantine Imperium in Anatolian Exile, 1222-54: The Legacy of his Diplomatic, Military and Internal Program for the ‘restitutio orbis’,” PhD dissertation, History, University of California, Los Angeles, 1978-1979; W. Miller, “The Empire of Nicæa and the Recovery of Constantinople,” in *Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. 4 (Cambridge, 1924-1936); A. Stavridou-Zaphraka, *Νικαία και Ήπειρος τοῦ 13^{ου} αἰώνα: ἰδεολογικὴ ἀντιπάραθεση στὴν προσπάθεια τους νὰ ἀνακτήσουν τὴν αὐτοκρατορία* (Thessaloniki, 1990).

however devastating, would be nothing more than what he deserved. But, hope remained that forgiveness would be granted, and that the people and their Capital would be restored to one another. In the hope of “resurrecting” the Byzantine empire, writers searched for explanations and solutions for their suffering.

To understand the devastating nature of the displacement of so many people and the experience of exile that so deeply marked it, we should look at the traditional foundation informing exile as a legal punishment, the Byzantine legal code. Unlike modern nations, the Byzantine state did not oblige itself to rehabilitate its criminal population, thus exile and banishment should be considered a special form of geographical incarceration, distinguishable from other kinds of incarceration such as life enslavement or sentences of hard labor in imperial mines and quarries. There is also a strong, observable continuity between Roman and later Byzantine law regarding the implementation of exile as capital punishment.

Exile as punishment had been practiced within Byzantium throughout its history. Designed to separate and isolate a person from his natural society, a sentence of exile was grave; only a sentence of death by fire or crucifixion was more severe.²⁹ Byzantine law intended that exile be a punishment akin to a living death, removing every societal benefit from a citizen except for his life. The harshest sentences of exile stipulated deportation to sparsely populated islands and the revocation of citizenship and wealth; lighter sentences required only that the criminal be banished from his native city for a specified length of time. Although the sentence varied, all exiles experienced a restriction of their movement and activity as well as forced removal from their homes. When inflicted as a punishment without a set term, exile could only be ended by imperial recall, whereupon the exiled criminal was restored to his original home.

²⁹ *The Digest of Justinian*, ed. and trans. A. Watson, Vol. 2 (Philadelphia, 1985), Book 48, Section 19.

To best appreciate the connotations of exile prior to the Interregnum, the characteristics of exile as a punishment for capital offences need to be ascertained and described. In Roman law, exile served as a punishment for high crimes and was exclusively an imperial prerogative. Both features are traceable in the surviving law codes of the Roman empire that Byzantium inherited and continued to collate, edit, expand and publish.³⁰ The legal code contains the oldest cultural artifacts on exile in Byzantium, and as such is an important foundation.

Byzantine law distinguished two main types of exile: *exoria* (ἐξορία), a sentence of either permanent or temporary banishment, and *periorismos* (περιορισμός), a sentence that required the criminal's confinement within prescribed boundaries. The major difference between *exoria* and *periorismos* concerned the disposition of the criminal's property: it could either be retained by the criminal and his family, or seized by the Imperial treasury.³¹ In Latin, *exilium* and *relagatio* are the terms used to designate punitive exile. In English they are rendered as *relegation* and *deportation*, respectively, where "deportation" involves the revocation of the exile's citizenship, but "relegation" allowed the criminal to keep his citizenship. While the specific meanings of the terms would naturally be very important in court proceedings or legal documents, for ease of understanding and translation here they can simply be considered to be permutations of punitive exile.

Relevant selections from the aggregate of Byzantine law that deal with exile as punishment include central legal texts: the fifth-century *Codex Theodosianus*,³² the sixth-century

³⁰ For the subject of exile in ancient Greece, see S. Forsdyke, *Exile, Ostracism and Democracy: The Politics of Expulsion in Ancient Greece* (Princeton, 2005).

³¹ "Exile" in *ODB*.

³² Christianity became a legal religion in the Roman Empire in 313 with the Edict of Milan by Constantine the Great and Licinius; Christianity became the official state religion in 380 with the Edict of Thessaloniki, by Theodosios I, Gratian, and Valentinian II. In the year 429, Emperor Theodosius II (r. 401-450) ordered a new encyclopedic edition

Digest of Justinian, the eighth-century *Ecloga* of Leo III, the ninth-century *Basilika* of Leo VI,³³ and the tenth-century *Book of the Eparch*. By comparing the specifications of codified law here with actual cases of implemented exile in the second section, we can distinguish the pivotal roles of Constantinople and the Emperor in delineating the landscape and axes of exile.

The laws and edicts of the Theodosian Code were utilitarian, providing a comprehensive, updated resource for legal education in Constantinople and Rome. The cases of exile in the Theodosian Code are not extensive, but nonetheless worth discussing for they illustrate the moment when Christianity and Imperial law formally unified. In the Theodosian Code, “heresy” is a capital offense, and warrants capital punishment, either death or exile.³⁴

A little over a century later in Constantinople, Justinian ordered a second collation of Roman law, in an effort to eliminate repetition and smooth over the legal code’s internal

of the Roman Legal code that would collect laws created from the rule of Constantine the Great (r. 306-337) to the present time, with *addenda* up to 438, the year of the volumes’ publication. The sixteen books of the Theodosian Code collate, edit, and chronologically organize myriad laws promulgated since the adoption of Christianity as the state religion in 380. See A. Brent, *The Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order: Concepts and Images of Authority in Paganism and Early Christianity before the Age of Cyprian* (Leiden, 1999). Heresy specifically denoted beliefs or practices opposed to Orthodox Christianity, such as Judaism, Donatism, Montanism, and Manichaeism. It is asserted, for example, in Book XVI, that “Ac primum quidem volumus esse publicum crime, quia quod in religionem diuinam committur, in omnium fertur iniuriam” Translated as: “Above all, we desire that their heresy be considered a crime against the state, because that which is perpetrated against divine religion [i.e. Orthodox Christianity] is a crime against all.” See *Les lois religieuses des empereurs romains de Constantin à Théodose II*, Vol. 2, ed. T. Mommsen, P. Meyer and P. Krueger (Paris, 2005-2009), 284. Translation mine.

³³ Ostrogorsky notes that the Basil I “initiated a revival of Roman law” under the title “Purification of the old law,” which, while never completed or published, seems to have been the basis for Leo VI’s *Basilika*. See Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 239.

³⁴ *Les lois religieuses des empereurs romains de Constantin à Théodose II*, 284-291, 297, 304-305. Though this particular promulgation specifically indicts the Christian heresies of the Manichaeans, Montanists, and Priscillianists, it lays bare an early iteration of an important concept: unorthodox belief and practice are crimes against the State. The law mandates that heretics’ properties should be confiscated and their freedoms rescinded. It also prohibits engagement in commerce or exchange of any kind. Those who gather to discuss or affirm heresy and condemn Orthodox Christianity are “banned, and then driven into exile.” The sites of their meetings were also confiscated as property of the State. Even the owner of the building or property where the meetings took place was to be sent to work in the imperial mines, or, if he happened to be “free,” he would be deported (i.e. exiled), whether he was aware of a meeting’s heretical nature or not. A condemned heretic usually was offered the opportunity to recant his heresy by professing the Orthodox faith, and so commute his sentence. Typically, those in leadership positions within the heretical sect, such as priests, teachers and ministers, were escorted into exile to separate places, ostensibly to prevent their beliefs from spreading and forming communities of like-minded individuals.

contradictions.³⁵ The *Corpus Iuris Civilis* provided the bulk of the legal code still in use in the Middle Byzantine period, and forms the basis for both the *Ecloga* (completed 726) of Leo III (r. 717-741) and the *Basilika* (completed 892) of Leo VI (r. 886-912). The Digest contains fifty books. Book forty-eight is of particular value for this study because it deals with criminal proceedings, accusations and indictments, treason, murderers, parricides, extortion, investigations, and punishments, including exile and banishment.³⁶

Topping the list of capital offences that could result in exile was murder, which, when proved resulted in one of two forms of capital punishment: death or exile. The penalty for murder was “deportation to an island and the forfeiture of all property” a version of capital punishment reserved “for persons of a status too high to be subject to the statutory punishment; those of lower rank are usually either crucified or thrown to the beasts while their betters are deported to an island.”³⁷ Section 22 of Justinian’s *Digest* directly concerns how exile was implemented in Byzantium. As mentioned above, the exile could either be *relegated*, meaning he

³⁵ *The Digest of Justinian*, 2 vols., trans. and ed. A. Watson (Philadelphia, 1985). The full text of Justinian’s *Corpus Iuris Civilis* is accessible at <<<http://droitromain.upmf-grenoble.fr>>>, which contains digitized versions of the following two nineteenth-century editions: T. Mommsen, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1872), and D. Gothofredi, *Corpus Iuris Civilis Romani*, 5 vols. (Naples, 1828). The section dealing with exile, known as the *Digest*, is one of the four parts of the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, the authoritative encyclopedia of Roman law up to the 530s.

³⁶ *The Digest of Justinian*, Book 48: *On Murderers*, Section 8: *Lex Cornelia, on murderers and poisoners*, §14, n. pag.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Book 48: *Murderers*. 8: *Lex Cornelia, on murderers and poisoners*, §3.5. Throughout the law, one observes a double standard applied consistently up until the sixth century. In Section 8: *On Murderers*, the law differentiates the form of capital punishment based on the class of the criminal. Exile, the milder form of capital punishment, was reserved for the elite. Lower-class individuals who committed the same crimes were condemned to death by crucifixion or burning. When exile was imposed, it was almost always an “internal exile”—that is to say, within the boundaries of Byzantium’s own territories. Included among these were individuals such as the high-class woman convicted of abortion, or the man of high rank who killed his wife caught in the act of adultery.

was remanded to a place for a set length of time but allowed to retain his citizenship and property, or he would be *deported*, meaning that all the above were forfeited.³⁸

Relegation could be sentenced by a number of authority figures, including the Senate, city prefects, provincial governors, etc., whereas the authority of the emperor was required to sentence exile. Though the right to deport a citizen belonged to the emperor, he delegated that right to one person only, the eparch of Constantinople. He ranked higher than all others in the city except for the emperor himself.³⁹ Though the office of the eparch dates almost to the beginning of the Byzantine empire (it was established in 359 by Constantius II [r. 337-361]), the Book of the Eparch, which dates to the middle of the tenth century serves as a manual of rules and regulations for governing the different guilds operating in Constantinople.⁴⁰ When banished from the greatest marketplace in the world, the offending merchant faced exclusion from commerce and exchange of material consequence and was thereby prevented from accruing the wealth and connections his presence there would have otherwise afforded. Provincial governors

³⁸ Ibid., Book 48, §22: *Persons under Interdict relegated and deported*, no. 14. The distinction between the two means that: “§14. *Ulpian, book...*: A relegated person is one who is barred from a province or the city or the surrounding area, either permanently or for a period. 1. There is a major difference between relegation and deportation; for deportation takes away both citizenship and property, while relegation preserves both, unless there is confiscation of property. 2. Relegation may be carried out by the emperor, the senate, the prefects, and provincial governors, but not by consuls.”

³⁹ E. Freshfield, *Roman Law in the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 1938), b. The Eparch’s jurisdiction extended one hundred Roman miles (ninety-two international miles in every direction around Constantinople. See also *The Digest of Justinian*, Book 48: *Murderers*, §19: Punishments, § 2, which clarifies that the Urban Prefect was given the right to sentence exile and banishment among his other duties: “§2. We should understand a person condemned on a capital charge [as condemned] on grounds for which the appropriate [punishment] for the condemned is death or loss of citizenship or slavery. 1. It is agreed that since the time that deportation replaced interdict from fire and water, a person does not lose his citizenship before the emperor has ordered him to be deported to an island; for there is no doubt that a governor does not have the power to deport. However, the urban prefect does have the right of deportation, and immediately after the prefect has passed the sentence, [the condemned man] is seen to have lost his citizenship.

⁴⁰ Freshfield, *Roman Law*, 14-15, 30, 39, 41. A favorite penalty recorded throughout is “banishment,” designated for breaches of laws governing the urban marketplace. Moneylenders who choose to not declare the existence of counterfeit money to the Eparch. Perfumers who break the rules regarding where to sell their wares, butchers of red meat who buy or store pork, and those who try to raise the rental fees of a bakery, manipulate the cost of grain, or interfere in any way with the baking of bread in the city are all subject to banishment by the Eparch.

could recommend deportation to an island but must write to the Emperor and await his decision.⁴¹ A *provisio* could be made for the sentence of “relegation” which was not permanent and which did not involve the seizure of the criminal’s property, but could involve deportation to an island if the provincial governor’s province contained an island. These was also a clear description of the hierarchy of criminals who are either deported or exiled, based on the length of time they need to serve and whether or not their possessions and citizenship were to be taken.⁴²

By the Middle Byzantine period, nearly three centuries later, sympathies had shifted in favor of the lower classes and sentences of death were sometimes diminished to mutilation. The

⁴¹ *The Digest of Justinian*, Book 48: *Murderers*, §22: *Persons under Interdict relegated and deported*, §6. According to Section 22, provincial governors were required to send a letter to the emperor with recommendations and requests for deportation to an island. Thus, while the governor could deport a criminal, the destination had to be approved by the emperor. This excerpt also refers to holding the criminal in prison until his sentence of deportation can be carried out. The law specifically denies the power of deportation and exile to the Empire’s provincial governors, who, after the reorganization of the territories into themes in the seventh century, came to be known as “στρατηγοί” (*strategoí*, or military governors). “§6. *Ulpian, Duties of Proconsul, book 9*: [...] 1. However, provincial governors are not given the right of deportation to an island, although it is given to the urban prefect; for this is expressly stated in a letter of the deified Severus to the urban prefect, Fabius Cilo. Therefore, provincial governors, whenever they think fit to deport anyone to an island, must put this same on record by sending his name in writing to the emperor so that he may be deported to an island; they [must] then write to the emperor having set out all the consideration in such a way that he may decide whether the [governor’s] sentence on the man is to be carried out and whether he ought to be deported to an island. In the meantime, however, while the correspondence is going on [the governor] should order the person to be kept in prison...” In this case, the governor could “relegate” a criminal to an island, specifically that “§7. *Ulpian, Duties of Proconsul, book 10*: [...] There are two classes of relegated persons: There are certain persons who are relegated to an island, and there are those who are simply barred from a province, but are not assigned an island. 1. Provincial governors can relegate to an island, but only if they have an island under them (that is, geographically part of the province which they administer), and they can specially assign that island and relegate persons to it; if, however, they do not have [an island], they may still pronounce that they are relegating [someone] to an island and write to the emperor so that he himself may assign an island. But they cannot condemn [someone] to an island which they do not have in the province that they govern. In the meantime, until the emperor assigns an island, the person relegated is to be handed over to the military.”

⁴² *The Digest of Justinian*, Book 48: *Murderers*, §22: *Persons under Interdict relegated and deported*, §7. “2. There is this difference between those deported and those relegated to an island, that a person can be relegated to an island both for a period and permanently. 3. Whether he be relegated for a period or permanently retains his Roman citizenship and does not lose his capacity to make a will. 4. It is shown in certain rescripts that those relegated for a period should not be deprived of either all or part of their property, and the sentences of those [judges] who have deprived persons relegated for a period of their property, or part of it, have been censured, though not to the extent of invalidating the sentences thus passed. [...] 7. However, he [the governor] can relegate outside his province. 8. Also he can relegate someone so as to stay in a particular part of the province, so that, for example, he is not to go outside a particular civitas or leave a particular region. 9. However, I know that governors generally relegate to those parts of a province which are more deserted. [...] 19. Furthermore, it is customary to sentence certain persons to be barred from remaining within the territory of their native land, or within its walls; or that they should not go outside their native land, or should remain in certain villages.”

Ecloga (completed 726) of Leo III (r. 717-741) presents a softened view on capital punishment, though death was still mandated for certain crimes.⁴³ The *Basilika* (completed 892) also changes the sentence of capital punishment from that specified in Justinian's *Digest*, which mandated, for example, that the punishment for "willful murder" include the loss of property. And, as Ruth Macrides notes regarding the novel of Constantine VII, there is an insistence upon "exile to a place far from the scene of the crime, [which] was intended, according to Constantine [VII], to serve the double purpose of punishing the murderer and protecting his victim's relations from the painful reminder [that] the killer's presence would have been."⁴⁴

The *Theodosian Code*, the *Digest*, the *Book of the Eparch*, the *Ecloga* and the *Basilika* present a picture of exile as the second most severe punishment for capital crimes after a sentence of death. The importance of exile was such that the Emperor was often, if not always, involved with the specifics of the criminal's sentence, particularly with respect to the criminal's placement. Constantinople, the spiritual and bureaucratic center of the empire, was the "place from which" criminals were exiled.

Singular to Collective Exile

Exile in Byzantium prior to the year 1204 was experienced on a much smaller scale than after the fall of Constantinople, when its inhabitants, severed from their urban landscape, experienced

⁴³ B. Singowitz, "Die Tötungdelikte im Reich der Ekloge Leons III. des Isauriers," *ZSavRom* 74 (1957), 319-336; G. T. Dennis, "Death in Byzantium," *DOP* 55 (2001), 1-7, esp. 7; R. J. Macrides, "Killing, Asylum, and the Law in Byzantium," *Speculum* 63, no. 3 (1988), 509-538, esp. 514, fn. 22. It appears that by the eighth century, custom had changed. In cases where capital punishment would have been meted out otherwise, it was still normative to exile higher-class criminals, but only to blind or maim, rather than kill, those of the lower classes.

⁴⁴ Macrides, "Killing, Asylum, and the Law in Byzantium," 511, where she also notes that Constantine VII's new law punishes the criminal *not* according to his social status, as had been the case, but according to his motive and whether or not the murder was accidental or premeditated. This shift reflects, in her view, influence from the Orthodox Church, which began to advocate for a clement perspective based on forgiveness and repentance.

both a real separation from their home and witnessed the severing of the capital from its empire. The refugees were forced by circumstances beyond their control to embrace the identity of exiles. Unlike those sentenced with legal exile, there was no certainty they would ever be able to return to their homes. Here was the severest punishment conceivable, inflicted not by the emperor, but by God, the flawless Supreme Judge. It was this large-scale displacement that I believe caused the concept of exile itself to undergo transformation, and that this transformation is traceable in the works of the Byzantine *literati* writing during the thirteenth century. These works, in the form of histories, letters, and autobiographical writings, are not about exile *per se*, but they illustrate perspectives on the issue. To better discern these changes, a description of the records and sources on exile prior to 1204 is warranted.

The connection of exile, punishment, and divine favor deserves exploration. Exilic literature prior to 1204 most often takes the form of letters written as “consolations on exile,” which were drawn up to comfort those who had been banished, or were sent from those in exile to others. Exilic letters often dealt with loss of the familiar. Prior to 1204, Byzantine exiles mitigated the confines of their sentences performatively, usually through (sometimes illicit) letter writing. Letters from exile are a unique admixture of personal details conveyed through an array of literary tropes and conceits, often with multiple destinations. Like the Epistles of the New Testament, these letters bear witness to personalities, viewpoints, desires, and complaints in provocative ways. Letters written by political exiles such as John Chrysostom, Theodore the Stoudite, and archbishop Theophylact of Ohrid provide well documented examples of exilic experiences prior to 1204.

The exiled criminal, who, as we have seen, was from the higher-classes, found a way to mitigate his isolation through maintaining an active correspondence.⁴⁵ Letters were bridges, manufacturing *presence* from *absence* in the exchange of news, ideas, and other concerns or desires. In this way, the letters sent from one in exile carried his presence back into society (to different degrees) and were often forwarded to more than one recipient, each new destination subverting the barriers imposed by his punishment. The letters the exile received in turn brought personal, albeit delayed and fragmented, interaction to him in his isolation, lessening its sting. Letters sent to and from those in exile in Byzantium constitute a sub-genre in epistolography, a branch of literary studies under which fall not only the letter-writing in general but its language, the collecting of letters, and the network of contacts made by and the information conveyed in the letters.⁴⁶

The punitive character of exile prior to 1204 continued into the Interregnum, but its dynamic and scope expanded drastically. Exile during the Interregnum was perceived not just as punishment, but also as punishment for having broken the superceding law of God. The collective nature of exile goes without saying, for many Constantinopolitans had lost the same homeland at the same time, and eventually settled in many of the same places together. Exile, which previously had been an individuated and acutely personal loss of one's status in society, and one's home and possessions, became shared collectively after 1204. In addition to all this, the tenor of exilic writing during this time sought out new allusions, increasing the epic qualities of their experience.

⁴⁵ *The Digest of Justinian*, Book 48, 19: Punishments §4.

⁴⁶ For epistolography in general in Byzantium, see S. Papaioannou, "Letter-Writing" in *The Byzantine World*, ed. P. Stephenson (London, 2010), 188-199.

As the collapse of the empire moved into the realm of fact, Byzantium's surviving intellectuals labored to understand the calamitous loss of their empire and capital. Letters continued to be written during the Interregnum, and show a continuation in how to deal with being in exile, though their content shifts. In contrast to the court-sanctioned histories of Choniates, Akropolites, Gregoras, Skoutariotes, and Pachymeres, these letters can provide a degree of personal counterpoint and are filled with interesting details. Notable individuals who wrote after 1204 and who happen to be well represented in the textual record include brothers Michael and Niketas Choniates, Nikolaos Mesarites, and Nikephoros Blemmydes. Greek writers of the Interregnum naturally turned to the textual traditions with which they were most familiar in their attempts to understand what had occurred and if restoration might be possible.

In the thirteenth century, we observe that these writers looked to the stories of exile from the Hebrew Bible, notably the Jewish exile under Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar II during the first two decades of the sixth century BC. Though events nearly two millennia earlier than the thirteenth century might appear too historically distant to be relevant, a long tradition of Judeo-Christian exegesis had kept them alive in Byzantine Orthodox consciousness. The preoccupation with the story of Jewish exile to Babylon of the sixth century during the Interregnum is a very different choice than what had been common in exilic writing before, both in tone and in which models were cited for edification. These exemplars usually focused on Job, Christ, and other individuals from the Old and New Testaments known for their patient and faithful attitudes in the midst of suffering. The continuity between the models of old and those in the thirteenth century was that it was, of course, the same God who allowed this suffering. The hierarchy of earthly power mirrored that in heaven—just as only the emperor could recall an exile, only God could recall the Byzantines to Constantinople and end their term of punishment. We shall see that

works written after 1204 show a separate set of priorities than the *consolationes* written before 1204, indicating an important shift in how the leaders viewed the effects of their empire's collapse and their place within the crisis. While the full history of exile in Byzantium is much too large a project to deal with here, by focusing on a few well documented cases I will be able to isolate and describe the basic characteristics of exilic practice and experience in Byzantium before and after the loss of Constantinople in 1204. In doing so, the transformation from the individual to the collective nature of exile will be made abundantly clear, as will the role of Constantinople in defining the nature of both kinds of exile.

The ancient Roman tradition of writing *consolations on exile* was the foundation for Byzantine exile epistolography.⁴⁷ The tradition of letter writing, particularly in exile, possesses a performative quality to it that continued throughout the Byzantine period, whether the exile suffered was self-imposed, figurative, or punitive. Besides networks of interaction, the letters contain information about sites and circumstances of exile by the very people who experienced it, and can be useful both for understanding the phenomenon of exile at the level of the individual, and for gaining first-hand information about the circumstances and sites of exile that are in some cases not well known archaeologically. Interestingly, while Constantinople was often a letter's destination, it was by no means the only one for letters sent or received by exiles from the fifth century onwards.

My discussion will first focus on two individuals, John Chrysostom and Theodore the Stoudite, both of whom were exiled from Constantinople. Though they were by no means the only individuals, high profile or otherwise, whose stories are worth hearing, but they garnered

⁴⁷ See M. Lowrie, "Ovid's Triumphs in Exile: Representation and Power," in *Writing, Performance and Authority in Augustan Rome* (Oxford, 2009), 259-275; J.-M. Claassen, *Displaced Persons, The Literature of Exile from Cicero to Boethius* (London, 1999). M. Mullet, "Originality in the Byzantine Letter: The Case of Exile," reprinted in *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium* (Aldershot, 2007), 39-58.

immense popular power and were of too high a rank to simply execute.⁴⁸ Regarded as one of the most important Church Fathers in the history of Orthodoxy, John Chrysostom, the Antiochan bishop appointed Patriarch of Constantinople in 397 found himself exiled twice from his position due to his role in conflicts between emperor Arcadius (r. 394-408) and his wife the empress Aelia Eudoxia (395-d. 404) and the Egyptian ecclesiastics who felt envious of his promotion.⁴⁹ Soon after he returned from his first exile, he found himself in trouble yet again, and after a particularly violent riot on Easter 404 the patriarch was placed under “house arrest” for two months in the episcopal palace. Unfortunately, the location of this particular palace is unknown, but it was likely near to Hagia Sophia and Hagia Eirene.⁵⁰ Following this, he was dethroned and sent by the emperor to Cucusos, a city in Armenia Minor (Κυκυσός, Armenia Secunda, [modern Göksun] Figure 4).⁵¹ At present very little is known about Cucusos in the fourth or fifth

⁴⁸ M. Bogdan-Petru, “Some Notes on the Clerical Exile in the Byzantine Empire since the end of the Antique world to the Macedonian Ascension,” *Classica et Christiana*, 5/2 (2010), 351-367.

⁴⁹ J. N. D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom* (Ithaca, 1995), 232. John’s first exile in 403 could hardly be called a true one, because before he reached his destination he was called back to the capital. He had stopped in Prainetos (modern Karamürsel), near Nikomedia (modern İzmit) and was ordered to return by emperor Arcadius (r. 395-408) and his wife the empress Aelia Eudoxia (395-d. 404).

⁵⁰ Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 243. The remains of the episcopal palace that was located adjacent to Hagia Sophia date to the Justinianic rebuilding of the church in 532-537, with parts dating later to the reign of Justin II, see K. Dark and J. Kosteneć, “The Hagia Sophia Project, Istanbul,” *Bulletin of British Byzantine Studies* 37 (2011), 48-68, esp. 56-60.

⁵¹ Sokrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book VI, Chapter XVIII, “...For the space of two months, John refrained from appearing in public; after which a decree of the emperor sent him into exile. Thus he was led into exile by force.” Sozomenos, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book VIII, Chapter XXII, writes “He [John] made no other censure than that, in being sent into banishment without a legal trial or any of the forms of the law, he was treated more severely than murders, sorcerers, and adulterers. He was conveyed in a little bark to Bithynia, and thence immediately continued his journey...The officers who held John in custody conveyed him to Cucusos, a city of Armenia, which the emperor by letter had appointed as the place of residence for the condemned man.” Like many both before and after him, Sokrates mentions the accompanying terrestrial disasters of these events, saying in Book VI, Chapter XIX that “Furthermore as on the thirtieth of September, in the last-mentioned consulate, there was an extraordinary fall of hail of immense size at Constantinople and its suburbs, it was also declared to be an expression of Divine indignation on account of Chrysostom’s unjust deposition: and the death of the empress tended to give increased credibility to these reports, for it took place four days after the hail-storm... But whether John’s deposition was just...or the empress died on John’s account, or whether these things happened for other reasons, or for these in connection with other, God only known, who is the discerner of secrets, and the just judge of truth itself.” Sozomenos, in Book VIII, Chapter XXVII, agrees because “...about the same period some hailstones of extraordinary magnitude fell at Constantinople

centuries.⁵² Chrysostom was neither the first—that was Paul I, Patriarch of Constantinople from 337-351—nor the last to be exiled to this distant place.⁵³ It is arid, high in altitude and extremely cold in the winters, all aspects that amounted to a difficult climate for John.

Within John's corpus of letters, one recipient stands out—the Constantinopolitan deaconess Olympias—with whom John had worked while Patriarch and who was his primary personal correspondent during exile. At least seventeen letters survive that were written to her during her own exile to Cyzicus in Bithynia. About the journey to Cucusus John wrote:

...considering the trials which have been inflicted on me...for to pass over all that occurred in Constantinople, after my departure thence, you may understand what sufferings I endured on that long and cruel journey, most of which were sufficient to produce death; what I endured after my arrival here, after my removal from Cucusus, and after my sojourn in Arabissos.

...and neither the inclemency of the climate, nor the desolation of the region, nor the scarcity of provisions, nor the lack of attendants, nor the unskillfulness of physicians, nor the deprivation of the bath, nor perpetual confinement in one chamber as in a prison, and the impossibility of moving about which I always used continually to need, nor perpetual

and in the suburbs of the city. Four days afterwards, the wife of the emperor died. These occurrences were by many regarded as indications of Divine wrath on account of the persecution that had been carried on against John.”

⁵² Informal Turkish news reports that late Roman/early Byzantine mosaics and Latin inscriptions were illegally excavated from Göksun's Çataltepe. There is also an arch made of dressed masonry, referred to by the locals as the “Broken Church” (Kırılıkkilise), though to what kind of building the arched portal once belonged has not been confirmed. Not far from Cucusus is the site of Arabissos (modern Afşin) and Ptanadaris (modern Yassi Höyük), both of which have yielded Roman and late Roman remains. Whatever had been illegally excavated at these sites was sent, as far as I can tell, to the Kahramanmaraş Museum in Maraş under the authority of Dr. Ramazan Hurç. To the south of Göksun is an acropolis with the remains of a dressed masonry fortress, known locally as “yalnız burç” or “the lone bush.” See also, R. Janin, “Cucuse,” in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, Vol. 13 (Paris, 1956), col. 1084-1085.

⁵³ Paul I (also known as St. Paul the Confessor) was patriarch from 337-350. Paul was exiled to Thessaloniki, his birthplace, but went to Rome to seek assistance from Pope Julius I. For this exile see Sozomenos, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book III, Chapters III, VIII, and IX, in which Sozomenos writes that “Paul was, according to orders, secretly conducted through the palace contiguous to the bath, to the seaside, and placed on board a vessel and was sent to Thessalonica, whence, it is said, his ancestors originally came. He was strictly prohibited from approaching the Eastern regions, but was not forbidden to visit Illyria and the remoter provinces.” After this he was recalled and then sent once more into exile, his last, to Cucusus, where he was murdered by strangulation, see Sozomenos, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book IV, Chapter II, and Book II, Chapters XVI and XXVI. Paul I was eventually interred in the Church of St. Paul, which was renamed in his honor. See R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantine*, III: *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1969), 394-395.

contact with fire and smoke, nor fear of robbers, nor a constant state of siege, nor anything else of this kind has got the better of me;⁵⁴

In enumerating his difficulties, John effectively communicates the pain he was experiencing while also posturing strength in the midst of his suffering to provide consolation for Olympias, who was herself struggling from incessant anxiety and depression over their permanent separation. His letters, rooted in the consolatory tradition, became infused with and dependent on exhortations drawn from Scripture, which was itself undergoing canonization during this time. While it is natural that John, as a bishop, would look to the Scripture for support, it is useful to see the terms in which he does so. I see stoic tenets embedded within his words, but tenets which have been associated with exemplars of suffering known from the Old and New testaments. In one of his letters to Olympias, John stresses:

For there is only one thing, Olympias, which is really terrible, only one real trial, and that is sin...but as for all other things, plots, enmities, frauds, calumnies, insults, accusations, confiscation, exile, the keen sword of the enemy, the peril of the deep, warfare of the whole world...they are but idle tales. For whatever the nature of these things may be they are transitory and perishable, and operate in a mortal body without doing injury to the vigilant soul.⁵⁵

John specifically names exile as one of the “other things” that count as “idle tales” particularly because they are transitory, and can be prevented from injuring the “vigilant soul.” He continues to write with the argument that the sufferings that accompany exile must not be overcome, but are to be identified with the sufferings of Christ. John recommends to Olympias:

...I leave this as thy task, that you may reckon up everything accurately and compare them with the misfortunes, and by occupying yourself with this good employment may

⁵⁴ See Letter 2 §4, in “Letters to Olympias.” In *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 1, Vol. 9, ed. P. Schaff (Peabody, 1996), n. pag. He notes the troubles of his time in Constantinople, and makes the point that the journey to his exilic destination was difficult enough to kill him, and that the various places he was made to live in the region around Cucusos were not at all safe or comfortable. There are a number of interesting features of this corpus of letters between John Chrysostom and Olympias, particularly with respect to the personal and private nature of their communication.

⁵⁵ See Letter 1, §1 in “Letters to Olympias.” In *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*.

divert your mind from despondency; for you will derive much consolation from this work.⁵⁶

John asks Olympias to employ her mind by comparatively assessing the differences between her and Christ's sufferings. Earlier, he had discussed at length the suffering and lives of the Old Testament prophets Jeremiah and Job, known for the immense misery they endured and had yet remained faithful to God.⁵⁷ These exemplars, together with that of Christ, provided paragons for both he and Olympias to look to for support. Throughout his letters, John makes reference to the books of Isaiah and the books of Matthew, Luke, and John from the Gospels, as well as the Letters of Paul to the Corinthians. His letters to Olympias, to Pope Innocent I, and to other clerics and bishops of his acquaintance are filled with allusions or quotations from the Holy Scriptures, much in the same vein. So far reaching was his influence (and his pen) even while in exile, that the emperor escalated its severity. John was prohibited from writing any further letters and sent even farther away, this time to Pityus (modern Pitsunda, in the Caucasus mountains) along the eastern coast of the Black Sea. His journey on foot was slow going, and three months later he had only reached the city of Comana, in the Pontus, where he then died (Figure 4).⁵⁸

⁵⁶ See Letter 1, §1 in "Letters to Olympias." n. pag.

⁵⁷ See Letter 2, §3 in "Letters to Olympias." n. pag. Regarding Job, John acknowledges that his suffering was among the worst. He asks Olympias to "Think not however that it is an excuse to justify you in desiring death, that Job desired it, not being able to bear his sufferings. For consider the time when he desired it, and the disposition of his circumstances—the law was not given, the prophets had not appeared, grace had not been shed forth as it was afterwards, nor had he the advantage of any other kind of philosophy."

⁵⁸ Sokrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book VI, Chapter XXI: "John taken into exile died in Comana on the Euxine, on the fourteenth of September, in the following consulate, which was the seventh of Honorius, and the second of Theodosius." Sozomenos, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book VIII, Chapter XXVIII: "John was at the same time condemned by an imperial edict to a remoter place of banishment, and soldiers were sent to conduct him to Pityus; the soldiers were soon on hand, and effect the removal. It is said that during this journey, Basiliscus, the martyr, appeared to him at Comani, in Armenia, and apprised him of the day of his death. Being attacked with pain in the head, and being unable to bear the heat of the sun, he could not prosecute his journey, but closed his life in that town."

John and Paul I, both patriarchs, had been exiled to Cucusos in Armenia Secunda. Both had died while in exile, the former in Cucusos and the latter in Comana, near the Black Sea coast, on his way to his final destination. Interestingly, the bodies of both were eventually “brought home” to Constantinople and interred in churches of great importance. Paul I was placed in St. Paul’s church in Constantinople, built by his nemesis, Macedonius, while John Chrysostom was laid to rest in the Church of the Holy Apostles, an honor that at that time had been given to only one other who was not an apostle—Constantine the Great.⁵⁹ The bodies of both men were brought back to Constantinople within a few decades of their deaths and deposited in these shrines.⁶⁰ The reincorporation of these exiled patriarchal bodies back into the city and their inclusion in the Orthodox canon of saints may have necessitated the return of their bodies to Constantinople, or at least the legend that it had taken place.

Theodore the Stoudite (759-826), the iconophile monk and abbot of the Stoudios Monastery in Constantinople (modern İmrahor Camii), found himself punished not just once, but three times with the sentence of exile. His reformist beliefs had led him into direct conflict with various Byzantine emperors. We know the duration of his sentences, and the sites where he was sent have been reconstructed with some accuracy, thanks to the hundreds of his letters that

⁵⁹ Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l’empire byzantin*, 41-51.

⁶⁰ Sokrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book V, Chapter IX, writes that “The emperor at that time caused to be removed from the city of Ancyra (modern Ankara), the body of bishop Paul, whom Philip the prefect of the Prætorium had banished at the instigation of Macedonius, and ordered to be strangled at Cucusos, a town of Armenia...He therefore received the remains with great reverence and honor, and deposited in the church which now takes its name from him.” Regarding John Chrysostom, in Book VII, Chapter XLV of his *Ecclesiastical History*, Sokrates writes that “Not long after this, Proclus the bishop brought back to the Church those who had separated themselves from it on account of Bishop John’s deposition...Having obtained the emperor’s permission, he removed the body of John from Comana, where it was buried, to Constantinople, in the thirty-fifth year after his deposition. And when he had carried it in solemn procession through the city, he deposited it with much honor in the church termed The Apostles...This happened on the twenty-seventh of January, in the sixteenth consulate of the Emperor Theodosius.” His translation is illustrated in the Menologion of Basil II.

remain.⁶¹ Theodore was first sentenced to exile by Constantine VI in late 796 or early 797; this era of exile was brief, lasting approximately five months. After Theodore had spoken out against Constantine VI's unwarranted divorce, he and ten fellow monks made the journey to Thessaloniki, arriving on the Feast of the Annunciation, 25 March 797, whereupon Theodore began writing letters.⁶² True to the law, Theodore's exile in Thessaloniki ended when iconodule empress Irene recalled him and installed him as abbot of the Stoudios Monastery in Constantinople in 798.⁶³ The sites of his imprisonment and exile include monasteries in Constantinople, an unnamed monastery in Thessaloniki and at least two fortresses in Asia Minor, a dungeon in the port city of Smyrna (modern İzmir), and lastly what was most likely a monastery on the island of Chalki (modern Heybeliada of the Princes' Islands) (Figure 5). He was recalled all three times, and even once reinstated as abbot of the Stoudios Monastery.⁶⁴

In 807, Theodore and several of his monks were placed in imperial custody within the monastery of Sts. Sergios and Bacchos, near Hagia Sophia and the Great Palace, though the sixth-century surrounding monastic buildings they would have been confined to are no longer standing.⁶⁵ After being held at Sts. Sergios and Bacchos, they were then transferred to the Agathos monastery on the Asian side of the Bosphoros, near Chrysopolis. Following their

⁶¹ *Theodori Studitæ epistolæ*, 2 vols., ed. G. Fatouros (Berlin, 1992); A. Gardner, *Theodore of Studium, his Life and Times* (London, 1905), 58, 123, 145; P. J. Alexander, "Religious Persecution and Resistance in the Byzantine Empire in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries: Methods and Justifications," *Speculum* 52, No. 1 (1977), 238-264.

⁶² Cholij, *Theodore the Stoudite*, 42. Cholij notes in footnote 255 that there are five letters that date from this early period, and two of them perhaps date to immediately before the first period of his exile.

⁶³ T. Pratsch, *Theodoros Studites (759-826) – zwischen Dogma und Pragma* (Bern, 1998), 110-113; J. Pargoire, "S. Théophane le Chronographe et ses rapports avec S. Theodore Studite," *VizVrem* 9 (1902), 69-71.

⁶⁴ Cholij, *Theodore the Stoudite*, 57. When Iconoclasm revived under Emperor Leo V (r. 813-820), Theodore the Stoudite and numerous other Orthodox bishops were anathematized, deposed, and either imprisoned or exiled for their iconodule beliefs. The faithful were sentenced in the spirit of the Theodosian Code's prohibition on heresy, which at this time aligned with iconodule dogma, and which contrasted Imperial religious policy at the time.

⁶⁵ Cholij, *Theodore the Stoudite*, 50.

anathematization, they were moved to the Hagios Mamas monastery, near to the Stoudios monastery, and from there they were sentenced to exile outside the city.⁶⁶

Theodore's second period of exile began when he and his monks were sent away by Emperor Nikephoros I (r. 802-811) from ca. 808 to 811, when Theodore was recalled.⁶⁷ Theodore was sent to the island of Chalki, Platon was sent to Okseia,⁶⁸ while Joseph went to Proti.⁶⁹ In letter 554 to his uncle Platon, Theodore wrote "the greatest gift of heaven is to be in exile."⁷⁰ The Princes' Islands were close enough to be monitored, but isolated enough to succeed in keeping its prisoners out of the way.⁷¹ Moreover, these islands were within the territory of the capital, and could be used by the emperor at will since they were governed by his appointed Eparch, and no other governor could lay claim them.

Theodore was sentenced to his third period of exile in 815, but the rate of his correspondence was so high that he was remanded in 816 to the fortress in Metopa in Bithynia near Lake Apollonia near Prousa (modern Bursa) and then to a second fortress in Bonita

⁶⁶ Cholij, *Theodore the Stoudite*, 50-53, esp. fn. 309; for the Monastery of Agathou, see Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 23; for Hagios Mamas, see id., *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, 314-319; J. Pargoire, "Les Saints-Mamas de Constantinople," *IRAIK* 9 (1904), 261-316.

⁶⁷ Pratsch, *Theodoros Studites (759-826)*, 170; Cholij, *Theodore the Stoudite*, 52. His fellow monks were separated from one another and sent to various different sites, including Cherson, Thessaloniki, and Lipara, among others. The leaders of the Stoudite monastery, namely Theodore, his uncle Platon, and Joseph, were exiled to separate sites among the Princes' Islands. Based on the description of their exile, the sentences of deportation these monks faced conforms to the sentence required for heresy in the Theodosian Code, in which case the separation of like-minded individuals from one another was the most important goal.

⁶⁸ Other inmates included Nikephoritzes (the chief minister of Michael VIII Doukas) and two Constantinopolitan Patriarchs—John and Michael II. Janin discusses a monastery dating perhaps to the ninth century that housed ascetics and at times, exiles, see id., *Les églises et les monastères*, 61-76.

⁶⁹ *Theodori Studitæ epistulæ*, vol. 1, *14; Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 63.

⁷⁰ *Theodori Studitæ epistulæ*, vol. 1, *491-492, which dates from the period of Theodore's second exile.

⁷¹ E. Malamut, *Les îles de l'empire byzantin (VIII^e-XII^e siècles)*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1988); R. Janin, "Les Îles des Princes, Étude historique et topographique" *EO* 23 (1924), 178-194, 315-338, 415-436.

(Βόνιτα) in Anatolia, where he spent three years, until May/June 819.⁷² The location of the latter site has not been archaeologically attested, but it was in the theme of Anatolia and not far from a salty lake, which Pargoire argued should be identified with a site near to modern day Acıgöl, also known as Çardak Gölü or Acıtuz Gölü.⁷³ The ever-increasing distances from Constantinople where Theodore were directly related to the growing severity of his sentence. But, his grit was beyond what exile could shatter, and Theodore continued to write.⁷⁴ From Bonita, Theodore was transferred to a dungeon in Smyrna (modern İzmir) for about twenty months, when he was finally recalled by Michael II after Leo V had been murdered.⁷⁵ He fled to the island of Prinkipios in 823, and though he returned to the Asian mainland, he died on the island in 826. In 844, his body was translated from Prinkipios to St. John Stoudios monastery where he was buried with his uncle Platon who had already been brought back.⁷⁶ Like John Chrysostom and Paul I before him, Theodore's body was returned to the city of Constantinople though he had died in exile.⁷⁷

⁷² Chohij, *Theodore the Stoudite*, 58, see fns. 345 and 347; W. Tomaschek, "Zur historischen Topographie von Kleinasien im Mittelalter," *Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien* 124 (1891), 1-106.

⁷³ J. Pargoire, "La Bonita de Saint Théodore Studite," *EO* 6 (1903), 707-712.

⁷⁴ Chohij, *Theodore the Stoudite*, 59, esp. fn. 351. Once, when he was caught sending letters, he was punished severely with one hundred lashes. Connected to what became, at least in his case, the illicit activity of communicating via letter, was the fact that Theodore used code-names when addressing letters to his own monks, because he feared the letters' interception by imperial agents.

⁷⁵ *Theodori Studitæ epistulæ*, 259-261, 263.

⁷⁶ *Theodori Studitæ epistulæ*, *19.

⁷⁷ Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 69. Theodore also wrote a consolatory letter on the death of Theophane, in exile at the monastery on Prinkipios in 817. His active role in the ecclesiastical community seems not to have been hindered much by being in exile, as the number (564) and content of his edited letters attest. Only a few times does he write in the consolatory tradition, and whether it was from exile is not known because the letter is undated. In letter 29, for example, Theodore writes to condole bereaved parents whose three-year old child had just died, understanding that their first two children had also died prematurely.

The period of Iconoclasm continued to generate numerous high-ranking exiles. The father of future Patriarch Nikephoros I of Constantinople (806-815), Theodore, was exiled to Pemolissa (modern Osmancık) in 763, another far distant fortress in the Black Sea region and then to the city of Nicæa, where after six years, he died in 770.⁷⁸ His son, Nikephoros I, was also sentenced to exile and like Theodore the Stoudite and his monks, Nikephoros I's first stop was the Agathos Monastery in Chrysopolis.⁷⁹ His biographer, Ignatios the Deacon, says:

Why do I need to elaborate at great length upon the unpleasant [aspect] of the place and its inconvenience for dwelling in comfort? For anyone who is there and wishes to can test and examine the [particulars] of the site instead of just hearing about them, [learning] what sort of place it was and its later transformation...⁸⁰

Nikephoros immediately set about making the land fruitful by building a number of “interconnected cisterns branching through the hollow rocks.” He also “consecrated...martyrs’ shrines that are completely decorated with [images of] their holy struggles...” and eventually made it into a monastery.⁸¹ From there, Nikephoros I was removed by imperial order even farther away, to the Monastery of St. Theodore Teron, where the deposed Patriarch lived thirteen years more, until he died in 828.⁸² Like the others before him, the remains of Nikephoros I were also translated back into Constantinople in 846, less than twenty years after his death.⁸³

⁷⁸ E. A. Fisher, “Life of the Patriarch Nikephoros I of Constantinople,” in *Byzantine Defenders of Images: Eight Saints’ Lives in English Translation*, ed. A.-M. Talbot (Washington, DC, 1998), 25-141, esp. 26 and 45.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 30. In the *Vita of Nikephoros I* by Ignatios the Deacon, the place of Nikephoros’s first exile as “a ridge facing the Bosphoros.”

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 31, where the author notes that in exile Nikephoros wrote “tracts defending his views.”

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 33.

In the Middle Byzantine period we observe a popularization of exile as a literary trope, which evolved into a perspective, espoused both by those who actually had been sentenced to exile, but also by those who were obligated to spend significant stretches of time away from the capital. This genre flourished in the textual record of the Byzantine world, and was always oriented towards Constantinople and cognizant of distance from it. Naturally, the differences between an exile under the law and a self-denominated “exile” settled at some far-distant, unfamiliar location are numerous. The trope of being separated from civilization and society, the loss of Constantinopolitan culture and its urban landscape provided a common existential ground, particularly among the educated, aristocratic elite. They were exactly the stratum employed in church and government bureaucracies, and it was they, if any, who would be most likely to be sent into exile. In this light, the experience of separation from one’s home, particularly if that home was Constantinople, becomes an important touchstone in understanding the direction of exile in Byzantium.

In the pre-1204 world punitive exile, though very real, is adopted metaphorically by people stationed in positions outside Constantinople, or even people who were sent on official business and though having to leave, knew they would return.⁸⁴ This is a perception that appears often in letters from the Middle Byzantine period, where “being in exile” means “not being in Constantinople.” Margaret Mullet mentions this in her detailed discussion of the theme of exile, noting that “the episcopal official exiles, and those feeling that their posting intellectually and socially constituted exiles, are the most numerous” in the Komnenian period. She mentions several, notably Theophylact, the Archbishop of Ohrid (the archbishopric of Bulgaria) from 1078-1107, who writes that he is in exile, not because he actually has been sentenced to exile,

⁸⁴ C. Galatariotou, “Travel and Perception in Byzantium,” *DOP* 47 (1993), 221-241.

but because he is separated from Constantinople.⁸⁵ He feels his situation in Ohrid will change him for the worse, and is deeply concerned that his new environment would adversely affect his intellectual abilities, resulting in “boorishness,” “a lack of learning,” and “barbarism.”⁸⁶ Among the many literary parallels for his situation, Theophylact compares his station in Bulgaria to that of the Jews in Babylon.⁸⁷

As we have discussed, the content and purpose of letters written by those in exile before 1204 varies substantially. The most common emotion that can be observed was the expression of pain at being separated from one’s home and loved ones. Also notable is the complaint that the exile’s new surroundings are uncultured, uncivilized, and barbaric, and the poverty and discomfort that accompany their journey to their new (uncivilized) home. This judgment precipitates a clear longing to be back in civilization, nearly always referring to the city of Constantinople. Mullet isolates the transformation of the *feeling* that one is in exile (as opposed to actually *being* in exile) within literature to be indicative of a sense of loss and separation from Constantinople in particular. She also notes that this feeling of being in exile when one is away from Constantinople underpins the majority of exile literature at this time. This perceptual shift points toward the next step in the transformation: that the work being written in the tradition of exile is not being written by people *in* exile. It is being written by people who are not in

⁸⁵ M. Mullet, “Originality in the Byzantine Letter,” in ead., *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium* (Montreal, 2007), esp. 45, 51.

⁸⁶ Mullet, “Originality in the Byzantine Letter,” 44-45.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 47, esp. fn. 79; Mullet also mentions examples of Alexander of Nicæa, who was the metropolitan of the see until 944 when he was deposed and exiled, and Theodore of Kyzikos, who was confined to a small house in Nicæa also during the tenth century. See Chapter Two.

Constantinople.⁸⁸ The inverse of this perspective proves its truth: anywhere not Constantinople is experienced as exile.

Throughout these individuals' writings, Constantinople, the home of the Emperor and Patriarch and bastion of high civilization in the medieval world, emerges as the *desideratum* of the exile, and later, of any cultured, educated person who finds himself in an indentured post at a distance from the City. Through these letters we see not only how Constantinople was viewed by notable Byzantine exiles, but how Constantinople *had* to be viewed. The rigidity of this paradigm, centered so deeply on Constantinople, is transformed during the Interregnum when most Constantinopolitans were separated from Constantinople, not by edict of their emperor, but by what seemed to be the will of God working through their greatest enemies, the Venetian and Frankish crusaders.

Niketas Choniates' brother, Michael, who had been appointed bishop of Athens in 1182, was removed from his office following the Fourth Crusade and entered a self-imposed exile in 1205 when Athens became the seat of the "duchy of Athens," now ruled by the de la Roche family. Michael left for the island of Keos, where he stayed until 1217 when he moved to Boudonitsa near Thermopylae, where he would reside until he died in 1220 (Figure 6).⁸⁹ A

⁸⁸ Ibid., 50-51, where she notes poems by John Mauropous about leaving and returning to his Constantinopolitan home, and Constantine Manasses' work *Horoipodikon*, which "describes longing and travel precisely in terms of deprivation of Constantinople." For Constantine Manasses, see K. Horna, "Das *Horoipodikon* des Konstantin Manasses," *BZ* 13 (1904), 313-355.

⁸⁹ On Michael Choniates, see V. Katsas, "Η κατά την Ἑλλάδα βυζαντινὴ μονὴ τοῦ Προδρόμου· τελευταῖος σταθμὸς τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ Μιχαὴλ Χωνιάτη," *Βυζαντιακά* 1 (1981), 99-129; For Keos, see I. N. Psylla, *Ἱστορία τῆς νησοῦ Κεας* (Athens, 1921), 127-138, esp. 134; for churches on Keos in general, see C. P. Demetropoulos, *Οἱ ἐκκλησίες τῆς Κεας* (Thessaloniki, 1983); Mullet, "Originality in the Byzantine Letter," 41, esp. fn. 32. See also J. Herrin, "Realities of Provincial Government: Hellas and Peloponnesos, 1180-1205," *DOP* 29 (1975), 255-284. See also *Landscape Archaeology as Long-Term History Northern Keos in the Cycladic Islands*, eds. J. F. Cherry, J. L. Davis, and E. Mantzourani (Los Angeles, 1991), 352, 367. The authors note that there are frescoes assigned to the thirteenth century in a Byzantine church at Hagioi Apostoli near Kotmeria. The island of Keos is located about sixty kilometers southwest of Athens. Like many of the areas apportioned in the *Partitio Romaniae*, islands off the coast of Attica had to be won by the crusaders, and Keos, among several others, was no exception. It was taken over by the

monastery in the *chora* of Keos hosted Michael Choniates for about twelve years. Despite several invitations by the Orthodox patriarch and the emperor in Nicæa, Michael refused to leave his exile, which was impossible, he said, due to his chronic bad health. One imagines that from the island of Keos, Michael could keep an eye on Athens, which he had come to revere, much as those who had been exiled to the Princes' Islands could see, but not reach, Constantinople. Like Constantinople, Athens had been overrun, and his commitment to the city and his "flock of believers" warranted, he said, his staying as near as possible. By placing himself on Keos, he created a tension that replicated features of well-known exiles of the past, which he would have known from his own studies and experiences in Constantinople. During his exile, Michael wrote several times to emperor Theodore I Laskaris. In Letter 94, written in or around the year 1208, he commends the emperor as follows:

...when the Queen of Cities had been cast upon the shores of Asia by the barbarian flood [sweeping over] the walls of Byzantium, a pitiful shipwreck, she was welcomed, guided and saved by you, and in addition, like a master or even a father, you call out in zeal for Christ to those who had been expelled in any direction whatsoever, "Come to me, all of you, and I shall give you rest." ...In accord with a truly divine command you fashioned Asia as a second ark in which you preserved for Asia herself the remnants of the Roman state and at the same time the seeds of a second world.⁹⁰

Michael draws an image of the Queen of Cities being displaced by "the barbarian flood," up to the shores of Asia where Theodore I was able to gather "her" up and save her, like the animals of the world in Noah's great ark before the Flood. In this Old Testament metaphor, Michael communicates that at least part of the Queen of Cities' essence was to be found not only her physical landscape, but in her people and in "the remnants of the Roman state." His believed

Ghisi brothers with the assistance of Domenico Michieli and Pietro Giustiniani, though it appears that there were still no Italian inhabitants in 1214, perhaps not even until 1220.

⁹⁰ *Michaelis Choniatae epistulae*, Letter 94, 122-124. Translation by Michael McGann, October 2010.

firmly that enough of the state had in fact been saved by Theodore I that it could eventually be reestablished, writing:

But it is my prayer that you [Theodore I] not only maintain Asia untrodden by the Italians and completely impassable to them, but also rescue the Queen of Cities from their insolence and drive them like rabid dogs from the holy walls of our Jerusalem, as great David [drove] the Jebuseans from the older Jerusalem...and being named through the ages founder, co-founder and re-founder of the City of Constantine, the all-blessed Queen. For it is no less honourable an achievement to rebuild a city that has fallen than to construct it from its foundation and in truth [it is most honourable] to be the restorer of that throne that had been brought crashing to the ground.⁹¹

Michael exhorts the emperor to rescue the Queen of Cities from the crusaders and thus become the refounder of Constantinople. Despite the bishop's hopes and encouragement, this epithet would go not to Theodore I but to Michael VIII Palaiologos and only in 1261. Choniates asserts that Asia now holds the greatest stake in what remained of the Byzantine state after 1204: this in the form of the emperor himself and his work of restoration of Byzantium and its key features. These, once re-established in Constantinople, were in Michael's view, enough for Theodore I to be considered a co-founder and re-founder of the city, in fact a "new Constantine." While that epithet went to Michael VIII, the true work of restoration began with Theodore I, who had already begun to re-establish the empire, not in Constantinople, but in Nicæa, even in these early years of his reign. In a second letter (Letter 136) to Theodore I, written in 1217 from the Prodromos monastery in Boudonitsa, Michael writes that:

And what is most extraordinary and unbelievable except for those who know you, you did not succeed to the empire, to weapons, to treasures or to armies, but unarmed you slipped out from the city armed only with your intelligence and noble purpose. Occupying one little town, you launched attacks from it on the enemy, and in the words of scripture "like a wall of fire you surrounded and burned the enemy..."⁹²

⁹¹ *Michaelis Choniatae epistulae*, Letter 179, 284-286. Translation by Michael McGann, October 2010.

⁹² *Michaelis Choniatae epistulae*, Letter 129, 222-223. Translation by Michael McGann, October 2010. See W. Miller, "The Marquisate of Boudonitza," *JHS* 28 (1908), 234-249.

Michael's oblique reference to Nicæa—"one little town"—set in contrast to "the city" of Constantinople, proves that he thinks Nicæa no great asset in the war to win back the capital, and that the true strength in the Nicæan realm comes from the emperor himself. While Michael's compliment of Theodore I's resourcefulness (given that he was so unprepared) is rhetorically self-serving, I will show in Chapter Two how Theodore I used the "little town" of Nicæa much to his advantage in both securing his power, legitimating it, and restoring the empire.

In Michael's letters, we begin to see the first references to the Laskarid realm as an empire in exile, modeled on that of the Jews in Babylon. In Letter 129, Michael writes that like the Old Testament prophets Ezekiel and Daniel, the Laskarid leaders should work to free those who are suffering, like those who suffered in Babylon.⁹³ The consolatory tradition continued even when the prevailing state for nearly all was a state of exile. Requests for supplies, for encouragement, for medicine, and to provide a measure of consolation one to another on their many common misfortunes account for nearly all the major themes in Michael's (and others') letters. His brother, Niketas, who eventually found himself at the Laskarid court in Nicæa, also continued the consolatory tradition, writing letters to those who were bereaved, but tinged throughout with a sense of despondency for their common lot. In Letter 15, Niketas writes that they are all cut off from the beautiful city of Constantinople, and echoes his brother's symbolism of exile in Babylon.⁹⁴ In one of his *selentia*, written for Theodore I, Niketas places these words in the mouth of the emperor:

Εἰ δὲ καὶ τὰ εἰσιτήρια ἐορτάσομεν ἢς ἐκπεπτόκειμεν πόλεως εἰς ἐλευθερωτὴν Μωσὴν καὶ τὸν ἐπανάγοντα τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν Σιών Ζοροβάβελ κριθείσης τῆς βασιλείας μου, εἶη

⁹³ See also Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile*, 13; *Michaelis Choniatae epistulae*, 129, 208-211; 179, 284-286.

⁹⁴ *Nicetae Choniatae, orationes et epistulae*, ed. J. L. van Dieten (Berlin, 1972), Letter 15, 147-169, esp. 149 and 168.

ἂν τοῦτο τῶν σῶν θαυμασίων ἔργων θαυμασιώτερον καὶ τῶν πώποτε τελεσθέντων ἐξαισίων ἐξαισιώτερον.

If then we were allowed to celebrated a triumphal *adventus* into the City from which we had been previously expelled, marking my reign like the liberator Moses and Zorobabel, who restored the captives to Sion, it would be even more wonderful than your [Christ's] wonderful works and more extraordinary beyond all that which already has been ordained and accomplished.⁹⁵

Choniates names these Old Testament prototypes as the epitomes towards which Theodore I should strive. Whether or not this or any of the other *selentia* was ever read aloud to his official court is not known, but Choniates' comparison between the work of the great liberators of the Jews and the stated task of Theodore I's reign prioritizes ousting the enemy and winning back the city, bringing an end to the exile in which the Byzantines found themselves. Perhaps the speech was meant to predestine Theodore I's reign for greatness, or to aggrandize support for him against the many foes surrounding the Nicæan realm.

The deep sense of loss surrounding the events of 1204 and the years immediately following were compounded for Nikolaos Mesarites, the *skeuophylax* of the Church of the Pharos in the Great Palace in 1200, who lived through the battle for Constantinople in 1204 and remained there until 1207, leaving only when his brother, John, died. Nikolaos's *Funeral Oration* for John addresses many current events, not only the conquest and the difficulties he encountered staying in Constantinople as an Orthodox Greek. As a member of the clergy, Nikolaos writes of the great pain experienced by others in his community, now more of a remnant than a minority, likening their sufferings to the Jews in Babylon, to the sufferings of the

⁹⁵ *Nicetæ Choniatae, orationes et epistulae*, Letter 13, 128. My thanks to Anthony Kaldellis for assistance translating this passage.

faithful and of heroes like Daniel but remained faithful.⁹⁶ Later in the speech, Nikolaos makes it clear that the monks could leave Constantinople as many had done before them and go, for instance, to the Laskarid realm ruled by Theodore I, or to Paphlagonia, ruled by David Grand Komnenos, and to barbaric places like Serbia and Bulgaria—even to the Turks—all of whom would be more hospitable to them than the crusaders, rather than stay in the City. But, Nikolaos recounts, the Orthodox monks had made an intentional choice to stay in Constantinople in penance for their and their community's sins.⁹⁷ The choice to stay and be subjected to internal displacement within the city, to be removed from their original positions and redistributed throughout the monasteries and churches that had not been given away to the western Latin orders could be seen as a collective exile of a different kind. While Constantinople was still their common context, proof that it was no longer “theirs” was everywhere: from the loss of their former homes and churches, to the large burned areas throughout the city, to the ruined buildings and traces of violent conflict that were left unrepaired.

After his brother died, Nikolaos was sent on a journey to Nicæa to deliver a letter from the clergy of Constantinople to Theodore I.⁹⁸ Among his own works is a letter written to the abbot and monks of the monastery of Evergetes in Constantinople, in which he chronicles his journey from Constantinople back to Nicæa, via the cities Pylai, Nikomedia and Neakome. It was during this time that Nicæa became Mesarites' permanent home and to which he completely transferred his former devotion and loyalty to Constantinople. Theodore I made him the

⁹⁶ See A. Heisenburg, “Der Epitaphios des Nikolaos Mesarites auf seinen Bruder Johannes,” in *Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Kaisertums und der Kirchunion*, I (Munich, 1922), 3-75, esp. 45-49, Sections 33-36.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 62, Section 49, lines 9-32.

⁹⁸ A. Heisenberg, “Der Bericht des Nikolaos Mesarites über die politischen und kirchlichen Ereignisse des Jahres 1214,” in *Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Kaisertums und der Kirchunion*, III (Munich, 1923), 3-96.

archbishop of Ephesos, and during this time Mesarites was chosen to represent the Nicæan Orthodox community to the Latin Christians.⁹⁹

The writings of another important ecclesiastical figure in the Laskarid realm, Nikephoros Blemmydes, aim at an altogether different set of expectations for emperor Theodore II Laskaris, most probably as an indictment against the behavior of his father, John III Doukas Vatatzes.¹⁰⁰ While Blemmydes' works offer a range of interesting features, I want to study Blemmydes from the perspective of an author situated within exile, one whose connection to Byzantium can be argued to have been completely formed through his experience in the territories of the Laskarid realm. He acknowledges that Byzantium was his "father-land" and had been captured by "the Italians."¹⁰¹ When Theodore II Laskaris gained the throne in 1254, he received from Blemmydes, then a proven leader in ecclesiastical and educational circles, a composition known as the *Βασιλικὸς Ἀνδρίας*, or the *Imperial Statue*, studied and published by H. Hunger and I. Ševčenko.¹⁰² Throughout the text, Blemmydes exhorts Theodore II to perfect his moral leadership through piety, temperance, and military preparedness, all themes one would expect to appear in the genre of "the mirror of princes." For our purposes, however, it is the references made by Blemmydes to the empire in exile and the loss of Constantinople that warrant close

⁹⁹ Galatariotou, "Travel and Perception in Byzantium," 221-241; Heisenberg, "Der Bericht des Nikolaos Mesarites," 3-96.

¹⁰⁰ J. Munitiz, *Nikephoros Blemmydes, A Partial Account* (Leuven, 1988); id., *Nicephori Blemmydæ opera* (Brepols, 1984). Nikephoros Blemmydes' own lifespan parallels the years of Byzantine exile. He was born in Constantinople in 1197, and left with his family at some point following the conquering of the city in 1204. He was raised and educated first in Bursa, and continued his studies in Nicæa.

¹⁰¹ Munitiz, *Nikephoros Blemmydes*, 97.

¹⁰² H. Hunger and I. Ševčenko, *Des Nikephoros Blemmydes Βασιλικὸς Ἀνδρίας und dessen Metaphrase von Georgios Galesiotes und Georgios Oinaiotes* (Vienna, 1986).

attention. His interest in condemning the moral conduct of the leaders of the Nicæan empire comes through even more clearly understanding its royal recipient. Blemmydes writes:

28. But let us leave these far-away examples, given their large number, and mention events that are quite close to us. What was it that delivered our Shrine, the City excelling over all others, and filled the whole world with unspeakable calamities? Was it not the infamous conduct of its protectors ([a conduct] which they pursued with such zeal) [?] and the fact that because of this they had become too soft to offer any resistance?

29. For nothing turns men into women more easily than a passionate and mad attraction for the latter; no other thing corrupts both body and soul more readily than filthy life and effeminate lewdness.

30. Temperance makes the body robust, temperance gives strength to the soul, while intemperance corrupts both.¹⁰³

This inability to regulate one's internal passions and lusts, Blemmydes writes, results in an inappropriate effeminacy in men, and can be cited as the reason the Byzantine emperors were incapable of defending Constantinople against the knights of the Fourth Crusade. Whereas Niketas Choniates had focused on the evils of the Latin crusaders, Blemmydes looks to ethical conduct as his mode of censure. Naturally, their collective sinfulness was enough to warrant any punishment God might deem necessary. Blemmydes' version of forwarding his own agenda is through creating the *Imperial Statue*, with its litany of examples of both good and bad princes, drawn from the Roman and Hellenic past, both inform and model the behaviors to imitate or avoid, and how to strike a balance between the two. Blemmydes continues with the suggestion that:

165. If people of this kind [that is, wise people of calibre (see Section 158)] are difficult to find today, it is because they are ignored, while the wicked prosper and are preferred; for all that is sought after and highly valued increases and acquires self-confidence, whereas all that is neglected wastes away and disappears.

¹⁰³ *Des Nikephoros Blemmydes Βασιλικὸς Ἀνδρίας*, 124.

166. Why else has our vast culture been extinguished and the propriety of our mores, ruined, except, surely, because we dismissed people of such kind and selected their opposites instead, [to hold] both secular and spiritual offices?

These statements make plain Blemmydes' opinion that not only the character of the ruler, but that of his subordinates should be exemplary, and that the emperor and his secular and ecclesiastical bureaucracies should conform to the highest moral standards, and be above reproach. Understanding In the sections that follow, Blemmydes gives a few examples in which the Jews of the Old Testament found themselves in nearly hopeless military battles, and because of their subscription to "Divine laws" they prospered and succeeded in their endeavors. In contrast:

194. ...When, however, [the Israelites] 'turned away from the ways' of the Lord and showed contempt for His laws, 'choleras' befell them and venomous beasts bit them; moreover, the earth engulfed them, fire set them to flames and turned them to ashes; they were turned into cowards by their enemies; they suffered defeat and utter destruction, their cities were stormed, and their kin, led away into captivity; they succumbed to all kinds of oppression, internecine wars and massacres; in addition to all that, to droughts, to [periods of] barrenness and starvation.¹⁰⁴

In this statement, Blemmydes draws a parallel between the collapse of Constantinople and the fate of the Jews, illustrating his perspective that Byzantine leadership should conform more closely to "the ways of the Lord," or consequently run the risk of losing God's favor, so newly returned. Many different perspectives were espoused in the name of achieving the return of God's favor. Texts like Blemmydes' *Statue*, if taken literally, make the argument that these recommendations were primarily useful in regaining God's favor, and that the necessity of doing so successfully was a prerequisite for returning to Constantinople.

I believe, however, that by the reign of John III, the collective and imperial perspective on being in a state of exile had itself shifted. Where Niketas and Michael Choniates, and even

¹⁰⁴ *Des Nikephoros Blemmydes Βασιλικὸς Ἀνδρίας*, 144.

Theodore I, had felt all the urgency of their recent expulsion from the capital, what its loss meant, and the impatience to end it, by the reigns of John III and Theodore II, real progress had been made towards successfully, if not completely replacing the key components of the empire in exile. Once the patriarch had been elected and the emperor had been crowned in Nicæa, the vacuum left by Constantinople stopped increasing. With the flood of refugees into the cities of Asia Minor: Nicæa, Ephesos, Sardis, Smyrna, Pergamon, Laodicea, and more, “Constantinopolitan culture” spread as well. The government was functioning, raising taxes, enforcing laws, launching campaigns to defend its borders and recover more territory, and we see that the letters that begin to be written in the second generation contain few laments, and rather focus on what might be considered business as usual. Diplomatic missions, arranged marriages, military orders, as well as journals, autobiographies and histories continued almost without interruption. While the city of Constantinople remained just out of sight, the landscape into which the refugees had fled was, with their investment of time, effort and expertise, proving it could supply and support its new inhabitants.

The Landscape of Loss

The landscape of Byzantium prior to 1204 is as much a product of the empire’s natural physical topography and highway system as it was of Constantinople’s location on the shores of the Bosphoros. Like the milestones that had been recalibrated from Rome to Constantinople in the fourth century, sites of exile were marked by their relative distance from Constantinople, a distance held constant by law and ensured by difficult geography. The picture that emerges is a sliding rule based on several variables: distance vs. proximity, isolation vs. community, and physical incarceration vs. free movement that could be arbitrarily adjusted according to the

emperor's whim. These aspects of "exilic experience" are not directly stipulated by law, which while clear on points of citizenship, wealth, and determining the degree of exile, mentions nothing regarding its implementation. While it may be difficult to argue that these experiential aspects of one's exile developed into customary law, patterns do emerge often enough that we shall see certain sites are repeatedly designated as the destination for exiles. The physical and geographical characteristics of exile before 1204 informed the general understanding of the empire's larger landscape that the Constantinopolitan refugees inherited. We have already begun to see what the pre-1204 landscape of exile was, what its characteristics were, and how that landscape was experienced. Exile was effective as a punishment due to how topography and architecture could work seamlessly together to isolate the individual from society-at-large, and vice-versa, creating so strict an isolation that it was tantamount to a kind of social death. Experiences of punitive exile were affected by the multiple destinations of exile – Aegean islands, monasteries, deserted frontiers and gated cities – all isolated sites chosen for their natural ability to restrict one's movements. Yet, this isolation was filled with a tension: there was the possibility for communication and the hope for eventual release or escape. In stark contrast, the collective nature of exile after 1204 kept the groups of refugees more or less intact, and their isolation was not from society, but from their capital and what had been their predictable futures.

Prior to 1204, two horizons of exile emerge, the first lay at the fringe of territory of Constantinople in the form of the Princes' Islands and monasteries on the Asian shore of the Bosphoros. At the edge of its visible circumference, one could say, are the islands and the Asiatic shore, all separated from the capital by bodies of water, but not unreachable. Drawing from the case studies prior to 1204, one finds that the areas suitable for exile shared a few characteristic features: they were cut off from larger society in some form or another, they were

sparsely populated or uninhabited, and they were physically and geographically isolated (either naturally or artificially). The preference for islands as sites of confinement and exile that we observed in the excerpts of Roman imperial law discussed earlier have continued through the early Byzantine period. The second horizon of exile clusters along the far southern and eastern borders of the empire's Anatolian territories.

The Princes' Islands, as islands of confinement always just on the horizon of the capital, exemplify the "ideal" exilic location in many respects. By the twelfth century, the entire island of Terebinthos was apparently enclosed by the cloister of the unnamed monastery that housed several famous imperial exiles, including the Patriarch Ignatios (also the monastery's founder) in 861, Constantine, son of Romanos I Lekapenos in 945, and Orthodox Patriarch Theodosios (1179-1183) who made numerous repairs to the monastery during his time there (Figure 5).¹⁰⁵ There was an active monastery dedicated to the Transfiguration of Christ on the island of Antigone/Panormos that also received exiles ordered there by Romanos I Lekapenos (Figure 5). By the end of the twelfth century, however, the monastery had fallen into ruin.¹⁰⁶ Like Antigone, Okseia was home to monasteries and exiles alike, particularly in the ninth and eleventh centuries, as well as ascetic monks who found the challenges of its rugged topography rewarding for their spiritual exercises.¹⁰⁷ Patriarch Ignatios has restored a monastery dedicated to the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste on the island of Plati (Figure 5) in the middle of the ninth century, which eventually served as a destination of exile in the eleventh century for a number of imperial exiles including

¹⁰⁵ Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 63.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 66-67.

Prousianos the Bulgarian in 1027 and Constantine Dalassenos in 1034.¹⁰⁸ The largest island, Prinkipios, was first the site of an imperial palace, built by Justin II (r. 565-574), before it became a site of exile for high-profile imperial and ecclesiastical figures (Figure 5). The women were sent to the monastery that the empress Irene had established there in the eighth century, and which Janin believes lay on the northeastern area of the island. There were three male monasteries on the island, namely Saint Nicholas, Saint George, and the Monastery of the Transfiguration.¹⁰⁹ Proti, as we have seen, was the site of several exiles during the Iconoclast controversy, usually at the monastery of St. Sabbas. Chalki did not receive exiles until ninth century; there was already an active monastery there then. Several were built in later centuries: St. Akepsimas in the tenth century and Holy Trinity and Panagia Kamariotissa in the eleventh century.¹¹⁰ These monastic complexes, in combination with the islands themselves, provided a least some level of comfort and interaction, and in the case of imperially funded monasteries, perhaps greater comfort than what might have been supposed.

Nearly all sites of exile were located well outside, or on the fringe of Constantinople's city limits. Some, such as the Princes' Islands, just off the southern coast of the Bosphoros in the Sea of Marmara, were nearer while others were far distant, such as military outposts on the Crimean peninsula in the Black Sea or small, mostly uninhabited islands in the Aegean Sea. Other cases demanded the exile's movements be closely monitored; these could be incarcerated in their own homes (a kind of medieval "house arrest"), or remanded to a small town or monastic

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 67.

¹⁰⁹ Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 69.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 72-76; T. F. Mathews and C. Mango, "Observations on the Church of Panagia Kamariotissa on Heybeliada (Chalké), Istanbul with a Note on Panagia Kamariotissa and some Imperial Foundations of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries at Constantinople," *DOP* 27 (1973), 115-132.

complex where their movements and communications could be observed. An example of this is the official Niketas Magistros (ca. 870-946), who was deported from Constantinople and sent to another of his houses on the southeastern edge of the Hellespont, where he spent the next eighteen years (927-945).¹¹¹

Given the contraction of Byzantine territories after the Macedonian rulers, and particularly following the battle of Manzikert in 1071, the “far distant” places of exile had been drawing nearer and nearer to the capital. The farthest territories still under Byzantine rule at the end of the twelfth century lay no more than five hundred Roman miles away from Constantinople (excluding Trebizond), stretching to the west coast of Achaia, the southern reaches of the Peloponnesos and included both Crete and Cyprus. Imagined in the form of a circle of territory with Constantinople at its center, the imperial boundaries stretch over the southern half of the Balkan peninsula, arcing over the whole of the Aegean Sea and its islands, and then continuing over an approximately one hundred and forty Roman mile wide (approximately one hundred and fifty international miles) area, following the outline of the western Anatolian coast (Figure 7). The empire shared a relatively new border in the northwest with Bulgarians and Serbs, and one to the east in Anatolia with the Seljuk Turks (Figure 8).

Paul Magdalino describes the Byzantine state during the Komnenian period as “one of the most centralized in the medieval world,” and describes the territorial extent of the empire at this time to be coterminous with “the limits of Greek linguistic culture and Orthodox Christianity” and one that “corresponded to the area needed to support a large standing army and navy.” Magdalino also characterizes the relationship between the capital and the remaining provinces as one where “as Constantinople became more and more self-important, self-centered

¹¹¹ *Nicétas Magistros, lettres d'un exilé (928-946)*, ed. L. G. Westerink (Paris, 1973).

and exclusive of the ‘outer territories,’ it became increasingly noticeable that Constantinople needed the ‘outer territories’ more than the latter needed Constantinople.”¹¹² It is also worth considering the practical overlap between the physical city of Constantinople, whose greatest extent was demarcated by the traditional jurisdiction of the Eparch, and the portions of the provinces of Optimaton, Opsikion and Thrace over which the Eparch’s jurisdiction appears to have extended. Understanding that there would have also been governors for these three themes, where was the legal boundary of Constantinople? This question brings up the practical and imagined boundaries of the capital city as well.

By 1203, Constantinople was the glorious capital of a much smaller realm, still seated on the Bosphoros but buffered by one, two or at most three provinces from its nearest neighbors. In 1203, the provinces surrounding Constantinople included Optimaton (including Bithynia and Pontus), Paphlagonia, a northwestern slice of Bukellarion, Opsikion, Thrakesion, the southwestern quadrant of Anatolikon, the western two-thirds of Kibyrrhaioton, Cyprus, Samos, Chios, Crete, the Peloponnesos, Hellas, Nikopolis, Thessalonike, Dyrrachion, the southern two-thirds of Bulgaria, Macedonia, Strymon, Thracia and Chersones (Figure 9).

All these factors come into play as we are attempting to nuance and define how the “center” and the “periphery” may have actually been perceived and experienced in the first several years of the thirteenth century. Some of the customary sites of exile, such as the islands of the Aegean, remained in Byzantine hands into the thirteenth century, while others, including islands off the Dalmatian coast, or the interior provinces of the Anatolian plain, became Frankish or Venetian. Thus, the outer boundaries to which the citizens of Constantinople fled were, in fact, the outermost reaches of territory that had belonged to the pre-1204 empire. The Despotate

¹¹² P. Magdalino, “The Byzantine Empire, 1118-1204,” in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. D. Abulafia, Vol. 5 (Cambridge, 1999), 611-643.

of Epirus settled along the far eastern coast of the Balkan peninsula, the empire of Trebizond to its mountainous retreat along the southern Black Sea coast, and the Laskarid empire, centered at Nicæa, found refuge in a place that had already felt the impact of the First Crusade and the domination of the Seljuk Turks.

The events surrounding the invasion of Constantinople by the Crusaders and the collapse of the empire in 1204 make tracing the changing political and demographic landscapes extremely difficult. In Figure 10, which illustrates the cities given to either the Venetians, the Crusaders, or left unattributed to either, one observes that the *Partitio Romaniae* divided up the former Byzantine empire with a distinct Venetian preference for maritime trade routes and their ports.¹¹³ By the end of the Fourth Crusade, the Venetians had acquired custodianship of the seaways and island harbors *en route* to Constantinople and the Holy Land, forging an independent path between the western and eastern halves of the Mediterranean Sea.

Moreover, a nearly constant struggle for territory ensued between the crusader knights themselves immediately after the decision. Not only were the precious items of Constantinople, its homes and goods, being divvied up as the spoils of war, but also the territories of the empire itself were being distributed through the casting of lots, and then bartered for and exchanged. Niketas Choniates writes that:

When they began to cast lots for the cities and provinces [end of September 1204], it was a marvel to behold and witness over a period of time the unsurpassed loss of all sense by these deluded men, or perhaps it would be more fitting to speak of their derangement. As though they had already been installed as kinds of kinds and held the whole terrestrial globe in their hands, they commissioned tax assessors to register the taxable Roman lands...before apportioning these by lot...Some wrangled over the cities that were allotted and exchanged cities and territories among themselves.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ A. Carile, "Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae," *StVen* 7 (1965), 125-305.

¹¹⁴ *O City of Byzantium*, 327.

Choniates' sarcastic astonishment at the dissection of the Roman empire is not surprising, and is confirmed by crusader sources.¹¹⁵ It is interesting that not all the cities held by Byzantium were mentioned in the *Partitio Romaniae*. Of importance for the current discussion are the cities of the coast of western Anatolia, including Nicæa, Prousa, Smyrna, and the islands off the coast. As can be seen in Figure 10, Prousa was not assigned, nor was Magnesia, Smyrna, or the cities along the Mæander River Valley. In fact, in the latter there was a general scramble for property that continued throughout the period, in which friends of the emperors benefitted most.¹¹⁶ Only Chios, Samos, and a few of the cities in the Byzantine theme of Opsikion, including Pergamon were specifically noted as now belonging to the Latin Emperor of Constantinople, Baldwin I (formerly Baldwin IX, Count of Flanders). Nicæa, Villehardouin records, was named a “duchy...and one of the highest dignities in Romania” and “given” to Louis of Blois by Emperor Baldwin; this is also confirmed by Robert de Clari.¹¹⁷ Arta, on the other hand, was apportioned to the Venetians. The dictates of the *Partitio Romaniae*, while specifying which former Byzantine territories were to be ruled by whom, were hardly authoritative, and each of the rulers faced opposition in their new lands, meeting with strong Byzantine resistance on almost all fronts. Louis of Blois, in reality, never took ownership of the “Duchy of Nicæa.” Constantine and Theodore Laskaris had been defending the area against invasion since 1203, and Louis himself was killed in action at Adrianople in a battle against the Cumans in 1205.

¹¹⁵ See Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. and trans. E. Faral (Paris, 1961).

¹¹⁶ P. Thonemann, *The Maeander Valley, A Historical Geography from Antiquity to Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2011), 272, 289, 328. My thanks to Jas Elsner for pointing me to Thonemann's excellent publication. See also *Acta et Diplomata Græca Medii Ævi Sacra et Profana*, 6 vols., eds. F. Miklosich and J. Müller (Vienna, 1830-1890; rpt. Cambridge, 2012), Vol. 4, 290-295.

¹¹⁷ Villehardouin, 112; Robert de Clari, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. and trans. P. Lauer (Paris, 1924), 105.

With the loss of Constantinople, the territories of the periphery lose their anchor, and one would predict that the incumbent regional networks and smaller bureaucratic structures would take over. In the larger scheme of things, this is exactly what is observed in the period immediately following the fall of the capital. Aspiring leaders rise up in Trebizond, Nicæa, Thessaloniki, and Arta, among many other regions, aiming to consolidate power locally before engaging with the crusaders and with one another. Many local Byzantine leaders intended to make bids for the throne, but it was Theodore I Laskaris who mobilized both military and ecclesiastic forces and soon came to be regarded as the legitimate Emperor of the Eastern Roman empire. He established his capital at Nicæa, and the center of the Byzantine empire moved from the Bosphoros to Bithynia. The adjustments and reorientations that accompanied this move were numerous and long lasting.

As we have seen in the previous section, the sites of exile were arranged along two horizons: the first, the horizon of the city of Constantinople, in the form of the Princes' Islands and the Asian coastline across the Bosphoros and the Sea of Marmara. The second was out of sight, along the farthest borders of the empire, along borders that were mysterious and ineffable. It was primarily to the latter that the refugees fled following the loss of Constantinople, though the partition enacted by the crusaders set new borders in areas where there once had been continuous thematic territory. Some of these areas had already been heavily charged with the notion of exile for centuries. Others were thrown more or less into the balance by virtue of being the nearest possible cities to Constantinople not yet under crusader rule.

Conclusion

One of the important distinctions contained in this chapter is that the experience of exile changed from before and after 1204. Not only did the simple number of people suffering the effects of exile grow exponentially after 1204, the models upon which letters and writings from exile changed form as well. When an individual was serving his sentence of exile, as in the cases of John Chrysostom and Theodore the Stoudite, their sufferings were modeled on paragons of the Hebrew Bible—Job, Daniel, and so on—and, naturally the sufferings of Christ during his passion. Twelfth-century notions of exile were expanded to include not just those who were sent into exile as punishment, but those who were sent by their sovereign to posts that lay far away from Constantinople. These experienced “exile” also in isolation, and though it was ordered by their superiors, was hardly a legal punishment. Thus the “feeling” that one was in exile came to be associated with “not being in Constantinople.” Both the force of exile as a punishment and the expulsion from Constantinople were felt by the refugees after 1204. What had previously been endured alone, and then was shared with a relatively small network of people via letter, was now held in common. Blemmydes may have proposed that Theodore II could maintain a high standard of character as a preventative measure, but the real salvation had come through the military leadership of Theodore I and John III, who began to rebuild defensible frontiers, a new capital and a safe haven.

Exile, when experienced by so many, could not simply look to individual cases from the past for comfort, and so the terms in which it was experienced also changed. The way that exile made sense at this larger scale required new exemplars, primarily provided by the Jews exiled in Babylon. The Queen of Cities—New Sion—the head and heart of both Orthodoxy and the Byzantine state was, like Jerusalem—the old Sion—invaded, despoiled and overtaken by foreign

powers. The examples of the Jews in Babylon offered a predictable and pre-ordained narrative upon which to superimpose the collective misfortune of the Constantinopolitans who fled. Such a claim also intimated a plan for redemptive action that seemed to guarantee, with a restoration of the citizens' good faith, a triumphant homecoming to their lost capital, at least among those of the first generation after 1204. This literary trope promises a catharsis for expressions of emotion and ambition, but do not capture the sense of loss for the city of Constantinople itself, or the experience of those who left as they attempted to become familiar with other topographies of their empire. We have seen that it is precisely these "borderlands" against which the refugees were pressed that had long been associated with political exile and frontier zones of war.

The landscape in question—all of Asia Minor that lay on the other side of the Bosphoros—was the "opposite" of Constantinople in a number of ways. It was a wilder, less civilized land, that had been lost, invaded, overtaken, and rewon for Byzantium at least twice in recent history. It was often a war zone, and continued to be so for a time. The eastern edges of Byzantine territory were exactly the borderlands where exiles were sent. This boundary line was not fixed, but drew closer and closer to the western Anatolian coastline, a "loss of landscape" that itself was demoralizing. The major cities and towns of Antioch, Caesarea and eventually Chonai, the gateway to the east, and all the Roman roads built centuries earlier, had by this time fallen into the hands of Seljuqs and Mongols. By the beginning of the thirteenth century, many Greek-speaking Orthodox communities in Asia Minor could offer only nominal and spiritual allegiance to the empire.

As H el ene Ahrweiler discusses, the tragedy of these compounded losses: of God's favor, of Constantinople, of their prestige and power, had destroyed their expectations and probably futures. To combat this sense of unknowing, she writes, "they reinvented the past in order to

understand a future that remains uncertain.”¹¹⁸ Ways of crafting a communal identity, particularly in order to unite the incumbent population with the influx of people from the Capital, now brought so low, ranged from promoting their “Greekness” in opposition to the enemy’s “Latinness,” and their Orthodoxy in opposition to their heresy. Such polarization were very real, and even more importantly, very useful for the emperors in need of consolidating their power in a period of immense flux and pressure. While the propagandistic language served the Laskarid emperors and the court very well, the defenses raised by belief systems, religion, and ethnic origins are very interesting, but they could not and did not resolve the insecurities of the region. If the Laskarids were not able to set and defend borders against the crusaders, their exile would be permanent. From this perspective, the military victories, followed by intensive building campaigns of Theodore I and John III laid claim to cities, fortresses, and strategic sites allowed for the *possibility* of a landscape of exile, that we shall see, over time, became a new homeland.

¹¹⁸ H. Ahrweiler, “L’expérience nicéene,” *DOP* 29 (1975), 21-40.

Chapter Two Fortifications and Inscriptions in the Laskarid Capital and Realm

Shortly before the year 1254, the young prince Theodore II Laskaris (b. 1222) delivered an encomium in praise of the city of Nicæa, in the presence of his father, emperor John III Doukas Vatatzes (r. 1222-1254), the greatest builder in the history of the Laskarid realm. Speaking in a flowery and embellished style, the prince opened his speech with a description of the city's fortifications, the “ornament of Nicæa”:¹¹⁹

Men of Nicæa, your most illustrious city, from the very sight of it alone, gives great pleasure to the rational mind—by the firm wall which encircles the grounds within, with its remarkable size and symmetry, by its situation, its battlements and towers and the height of both of them, the most magnificent and choice material of its structure, and the arrangement and skillful method of its construction—by all that is within and all outside; by all that is its own, and by its essential and adventitious qualities; by all the good things that flow in every day from the excellence of its site; and by you, honorable men, that is a part of your character. For it is then that a city is above other cities, and a queen above queens, and a ruler above rulers, a superior above superiors—appropriately distinguished in rank one over the other—when it excels them in the use of reason.¹²⁰

Praising the walls that had sheltered the Byzantine rulers throughout decades of exile, Theodore II, born in Nicæa, emphasized the defining feature of the Bithynian capital.¹²¹ Nicæa would

¹¹⁹ C. Foss, *Nicæa: A Byzantine Capital and Its Praises* (Brookline, 1996), 155.

¹²⁰ “Ἄνδρες ὦ Νικαεῖς, ἡ περιφανεστάτη πόλις ὑμῶν ἐξ αὐτῆς καὶ μόνης τῆς ὄψεως ἐμποιεῖ πολὺ τῆ λογικῆ ψυχῆ τὸ τερψίθυμον, ἐκ τε τῆς περὶ κύκλωσε τοῦ ἔνδον χώρου καλοτειχίας, ἐκ τε τοῦ ἀξιολόγου μεγέθους ταύτης καὶ ἰσορρόπου, ἐκ τε τῆς θέσεως, ἐκ τε τῶν θριγγωμάτων, τῶν πυργωμάτων, τοῦ τῶν ἀμφοτέρων ὑψώματος, τῆς περιφανεστάτης ὕλης καὶ ἐξαιρέτου τῆς οἰκοδομῆς, τῆς κατασκευῆς καὶ ἐντέχνου μεθόδου τῆς αὐτῆς σπαρτιάσεως ἐκ τε τῶν ἔνδοθεν καὶ τῶν ἐξωθεν, τῶν ἰδίων, τῶν οὐσιωδῶν, τῶν ἐπουσιωδῶν, τῶν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ τόπου καλοκάγαθίας συρρέοντων καθεκάστην πάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν, καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν, ὧ σεμνοὶ ἄνδρες, τὴν κοσμιότητα καὶ κατ’ ἥθος λογικὴν παιδείαν ἀσυγκρίτων. Τότε καὶ γὰρ ἐστὶ πόλις πόλεων, καὶ βασιλις βασιλίδων, καὶ ἄρχων ἀρχων ἀρχόντων, καὶ ὑπερέχων ὑπερεχομένων, καὶ καταλλήλως θάτερον θατέρου ἐξαιρέτον τῆ τιμῆ ὀπόταν ὑπερβαίνει τῆ λογικότητι.” Ibid., 132-133. Theodore II, when visiting Pergamon (modern Bergama), laments its ruined classical remains. He makes no mention of the vast fortification walls surrounding the upper acropolis built by his father there a generation earlier. For full translation of his remarks, see A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2008), 337; *Theodori Ducae Lascaridis Epistulae CCXVII.*, ed. N. Festa (Florence, 1898), Letter 80, 107-108.

¹²¹ On the praise of walls in *encomia*, see H. Saradi, “The Monuments in the Late Byzantine Ekphrasis of Cities,” *BSI* 69, no. 3 (2011), 179-192, esp. 185-189, where the author discusses the *encomia* on Nicæa by Theodore II Laskaris and Theodore Metochites.

undergo many transformations during the years of Laskarid rule, but the repairs and renovations to its formidable walls proved instrumental in defining the city's role as the new capital in exile. Close examination of the Laskarid fortifications and their and other inscriptions illustrates how the Laskarid rulers fashioned themselves as the preservers and extenders of Byzantine power.

Framed by thick, high fortifications with numerous towers, the walls of Nicæa were surrounded by a moat and possessed four monumental gateways (Figures 11, 12 and 13), a system of defense that effectively protected the city from infiltration.¹²² Unlike the walls of Constantinople, overrun by crusading knights in 1204, Nicæa's walls had never been breached by armed attack. The city, in contrast to Constantinople, presented an image of impregnability and safety. Theodore II emphasizes this contrast in his encomium, characterizing Constantinople as a city that was "taken" and one that had "yielded" whereas Nicaea was able to consolidate "the lost and broken portions of the empire."¹²³

Clive Foss has suggested that the walls of Nicæa would have held a symbolic resonance for refugees entering the city in 1204-1205 after their expulsion from Constantinople.¹²⁴ The walls of the two cities had long been embedded in the image of their respective civic identities. Their enormous fortifications delineated municipal domains and created sizeable obstacles to enemy attack. The design and appearance of the walls structured the urban experiences of their

¹²² The city gates still retain their ancient names that indicate the terminal points of the roads passing through them, i.e. İstanbul Gate, Lake Gate and Lefke Gate.

¹²³ "...And because you have received the imperial government, oppressed by its opponents, and like an unbreakable rock, guarding it and frightening away the assaults of the enemy, you blunt their spears; shattering their strength, guarding your own people, contending with the enemy, you securely consolidate beside you the lost and broken portions of the empire." See Foss, *Nicæa*, 149.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 82. The protective appeal of the walls of Thessaloniki, among many other fortified residences throughout Macedonia, Greece and the Balkan peninsula are discussed in N. Bakirtzis, "Byzantine Fortification," in *The Byzantine World*, ed. P. Stephenson (London, 2012), 352-371; id. and P. Oreopoulos, *An Essay on Byzantine Fortification, Northern Greece 4th-15th c.* (Thessaloniki, 2001).

respective inhabitants, defining ingress to and egress from the cities. Furthermore, both sets of walls shared a similar antiquity and had been the beneficiaries of imperial repairs throughout their histories. This chapter focuses on the efforts to repair and enlarge the city walls of Nicæa by Theodore I Laskaris and John III Doukas Vatatzes, whose primary concerns were Nicæa's defensibility. But, the additions they made provided Nicæa with more than a strengthened circuit of city walls: they informed an imperial perspective that contributed to Nicæa's image as the new Byzantine capital of a new realm.

The walls visible today encircling Nicæa are the result of numerous repairs and rebuilding due to attacks and earthquakes.¹²⁵ The earliest city walls were begun during the reign of the Roman emperor Gallienus (r. 253-268), continued under the short-lived reigns of Macrianus II and Quietus (r. 259/260-261), and completed by Claudius Gothicus (Claudius II) in 268-270. A coin type minted in Nicæa during the reigns of Macrianus II and Quietus features the walls of the city on its reverse, showing two of the four monumental gateways into the city (Figures 14 and 15): their overall appearance resembles the inner gates still visible today.¹²⁶ Comparing, for example, the İstanbul (Constantinople) Gate (Figure 12) or the Lefke Gate (Figure 13) to the gates depicted in the coins, one observes a large, central Roman arched gateway flanked by towers. In-between the wall's towers and the central arch are square panels, probably niches for housing sculpture or marble reliefs, both of which are decorative elements typical for gateways. The arch carries an entablature, above which is another series of smaller

¹²⁵ A. M. Schneider and W. Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer von Iznik (Nicæa)* (Berlin, 1938); Foss, *Nicæa*, 5.

¹²⁶ Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 3, fn. 2. For locally minted coins in Bithynia see W. Wroth, *A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum*, ed. R. S. Poole (Bologna, 1981), xiv-xvii. The only city view on a coin comparable to the Nicæan coins of Macrianus II and Quietus is one showing a perspectival view of the city of Amisus in the Pontus, minted under Severus Alexander (date unknown, early third century), *ibid.*, 12, pl. 2, n. 8. The intervening decades between the minting of the coin of Severus Alexander and those of Nicæa preclude a conclusion that their similarity resulted from civic competition.

arches, and also perhaps niches. These coins, while not numerous, advertised the imperial beneficence to the city and publicized the feat of urban engineering that promised to ensure Nicæa's safety. Minting bronze coins such as these was a privilege granted to the provincial governor and other civic officials by the emperor, thus the coins featuring Nicæa's city walls should be considered illustrative of Nicæa's civic pride in its new, robust fortifications.

Though a series of Gothic and Arab attacks would damage the walls in the following centuries, they were never compromised. In 727, Nicæa suffered a particularly vehement, but ultimately unsuccessful, attack by two Arab armies. An inscription, still *in situ* on the inner face of the wall between towers 68 and 69 (Figure 16), commemorates the general rebuilding of the city walls and the north and south gates by Leo III (r. 717-741) and his son Constantine. Its prominent location on the inner wall adjacent to the İstanbul Gate guaranteed that it would have been seen regularly by those leaving the city, serving as a constant reminder of the imperial patronage that Nicæa had received.¹²⁷ Inscriptions found in the collection of the İznik Archaeology Museum attest to restorations by emperor Michael III (r. 842-868) in the year 857/858.¹²⁸ All four extant inscriptions of Michael III follow the same form:

Πύργος Μιχαήλ μεγάλου βασιλέως ἐν Χ(ριστ)ῷ αὐτοκράτορος
Tower (of) Michael, the great Basileus and Emperor in Christ.

One of the inscriptions contains the date 857/858, confirming the date of the other inscriptions (Figure 17).¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Foss, *Nicæa*, 90-91; Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 49; C. Foss and D. Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications: An Introduction* (Pretoria, 1986), 90; for a catalogue of İznik Archaeological Museum inscriptions translated into Turkish and German, see S. Şahin, *Katalog der antiken Inschriften des Museums von İznik (Nikaia): İznik Müzesi antik yazıtlar kataloğu*, 2 vols. (Bonn, 1979 and 1987).

¹²⁸ Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 51-52; Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 92.

¹²⁹ Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 51-52.

A series of severe earthquakes in 1063-1065 leveled parts of the walls, which were again repaired.¹³⁰ During the attack on the city by the knights of the First Crusade in 1097, the incumbent Seljuq Turks rebuilt sections of the walls, though this did not prevent the crusaders from winning the city eventually.¹³¹ When Theodore I Laskaris arrived in Nicæa in 1204-1205, the most recent repairs to the city walls would have occurred a generation earlier.¹³² Based on written evidence, it appears that the new Laskarid ruler delayed repairs or improvements to the capital's walls until after his coronation as emperor in 1208, when he had rights over the city as the new emperor of a new capital. Three inscriptions, two of which are lost, record Theodore I's repairs to Nicæa's city walls and confirm this dating. Two contain simple language, recording his name and the date of the renovation. The third inscription is unique, presenting a text that stands in a metaphorical relationship to the tower upon which it is affixed. While these three inscriptions have been briefly mentioned in previous scholarship,¹³³ two additional inscriptions of Theodore I have been uncovered at other sites, neither of which has been discussed in secondary literature on the subject.¹³⁴ All five will be discussed here, both in an effort to clarify

¹³⁰ For text and discussion of the earthquakes of 1063-1065, see Chapter Three and Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantine*, 105.

¹³¹ Foss, *Nicæa*, 93.

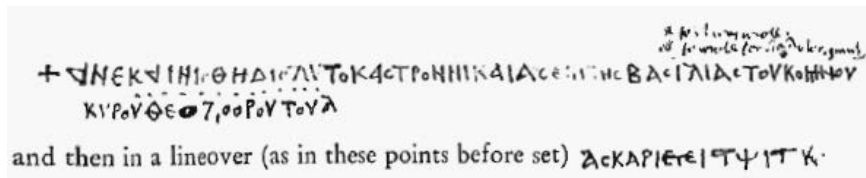
¹³² Foss believes that some areas of the Lake walls and towers were rebuilt at the end of the eleventh century under the Komnenoi. See Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 102.

¹³³ J. Raby, "A Seventeenth-Century Description of Iznik-Nicæa," *IstMitt* 26 (1976), 149-188; Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 53; Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 85-86, 95-96.

¹³⁴ Inscriptions naming Theodore I are also found at several churches in Cappadocia, namely at the Church of the Archangels' Monastery in Cemil: "(The church) was decorated with much effort and desire thanks to the succour of the servant of God Bartholomeos, hieromonk, and of his brother Leo, deacon, sons of Michael of Sampso, by my hand, [that of] Archigetas, painter, in the year 6726, indiction 6, under the emperor Theodore Laskaris;" and at Karşı Kilise near Gülşehir: "under the reign of Theodore Laskaris, in the year 6720, indiction 15, on the 25th of the month of April;" at the Church of the Forty Martyrs of Süveş (modern Şahineffendi): "This very holy church of the Forty Martyrs of Christ was renovated thank to the succour of the servant of God, the hieromonk Makaris, for [the remission of] his sins, by hand of the monk Etios [=Aetios], in the year 6725, indiction 5, under the emperor [Theodore Laskaris]; and one recorded but lost from Gökçetoprak, located to the west of Nevşehir in the Octagon of

the Laskarid emperor’s work at Nicæa, but also to understand Theodore I’s role in defining Nicæa as the new center of Byzantium in exile.¹³⁵

The three inscriptions located at Nicæa were recorded in the journal of Rev. Dr. John Covell, who traveled to Nicæa between 1669 and 1677.¹³⁶ One assumes that Covell transcribed each of the inscriptions as they then appeared to him; the images from his journal are reproduced below with transliterations and translations. The first inscription, recorded in the 1670s, was located on a section of the walls repaired by Theodore I:



+ ἀνεκαινιώσθη διόλυτο[ν] κάστρον Νικαίας ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλ[ε]ίας τοῦ κομνηνοῦ
 ασκάρη ἔτει ςνις (6716) κ[όσμου]
 κύρου θεοδώρου τοῦ λ

The citadel of Nicæa, having been utterly destroyed, was renewed by the Emperor Lord Theodore Komnenos Laskaris in the year of the world, 1208.

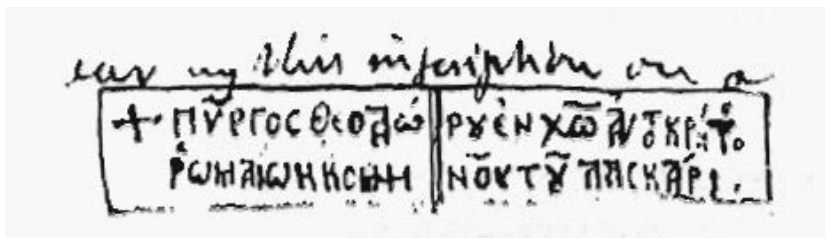
Sivasa: “In the year 6...[the church] was restored, upon the death of Laskaris, under the reign of Vatatzes.” See S. Métivier, “Byzantium in question in thirteenth-century Seljuk Anatolia,” in *Liquid & Multiple: Individuals & Identities in the Thirteenth-Century Aegean*, eds. G. Saint-Guillain and D. Stathakopoulos (Paris, 2012), 235-258, esp. 238-240; T. Uyar, “L’égglise de l’archangélos à Cemil: le décor de la nef sud et le renouveau de la peinture byzantine en Cappadoce au début de XIIIe siècle,” *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Ετ.* 29 (2008), 119-130; G. Kiourtzian, “Une nouvelle inscription de Cappadoce du règne de Théodore Ier Laskaris,” *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Ετ.* 29 (2008), 131-138, which discusses the inscription at Cemil. For the lost inscription from Gökçetoprak, see H. Rott, *Kleinasiatische Denkmäler aus Pisidien, Pamphylien, Kappadokien und Lykien* (Leipzig, 1908), 251-252. While these inscriptions are located in active Orthodox churches or monasteries, the inclusion of the emperor’s name does not indicate an extension of Laskarid authority over these areas of Cappadocia, though they imply informal political allegiance to the Laskarid emperor.

¹³⁵ For usurpers of the Byzantine throne, conquering the city of Nicæa appears to have been a key step in consolidating Byzantine imperial and military power for several centuries prior to 1204, particularly since the city was the last urban bulwark before attempting to win Constantinople, for not only was Nicæa located on a major north/south highway but it was also the capital of the Byzantine theme of Opsikion, and a marshaling area for the army.

¹³⁶ J. Raby, “A Seventeenth-Century Description,” 149-188.

Fashioned from bricks set on edge, the inscription was written in majuscule Greek letters. The difficulty of the brick and mortar as a medium for Greek writing accounts for oddly shaped letters (such as “A”) and collapse of the “M,” “N,” and “H” letter forms into one another (as in “KOMNHNOU”).¹³⁷ Foss suggests that this inscription, which does not survive, was located somewhere between tower 49 and the Istanbul Gate.¹³⁸ According to Covel: “From that gate [i.e. the south gate] to the North. Upon one tower thereabouts aloft near the foot of * the place of * the battlements....we found this inscription rudely wrought * in a freeze * with bricks set edge wise...”.¹³⁹ The most likely spot for the inscription’s original location is along the northeastern stretch of the city walls, somewhere between tower 48 and tower 64 (between the Lefke and Istanbul Gates, Figure 11), an area extensively repaired by Theodore I.¹⁴⁰

The second inscription was located on tower 19, which formed the southeastern corner of the city walls (Figure 11).¹⁴¹ The curvilinear shape of the letters, the frequent use of abbreviations, and Covel’s drawing indicate that the inscription was carved into two slabs of marble set side by side:



¹³⁷ Inscriptions made from bricks set edge-wise appear on a number of Byzantine fortifications, including at Constantinople and Thessaloniki.

¹³⁸ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 103.

¹³⁹ Raby, “A Seventeenth-Century Description,” 151.

¹⁴⁰ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 110-111.

¹⁴¹ Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 30; Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 85-86.

+ πύργος θεοδώρου ἐν χ[ριστ]ῷ αὐτοκράτορ(ος)
 Ῥωμαίων Κομ[ν]ηνοῦ τοῦ Λασκάρη

The tower of Theodore Komnenos Laskaris, Emperor of the Romans, in Christ¹⁴²

Tower 19 is one of several along the southern wall that presents evidence of Laskarid era repairs.¹⁴³ It should be noted that this inscription of Theodore I's follows the same language as those of Michael III, discussed previously. The thirteenth-century towers are characterized by their large square shape, bases of stone and marble spolia that reach almost to the middle of their preserved height, and bands of brick and cloisonné masonry (in the form of rectilinear stone and brick patterns) in their uppermost registers.

The third inscription at Nicæa is still located on tower 106 (Figure 18), which together with tower 19 are the great western and eastern corner towers that bracket the long expanse of walls defining the southern face of the city (Figure 11). This inscription, set into the lower courses of the tower walls, presents a different type of text from the first two:



+ ΠΥΡΓΟ[Σ] ΧΑΛΛΑ	ΝΗΣ [οὔτος ἐπι-
ΒΟΥΛΑΣ ΔΕ ΣΥ	ΓΧΕΙ Π[ολεμί-
ΟΝ[.] ΛΑΣΚΑΡΙΣ	ΙΤΗ[ς ἐποίησε]
ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ ΤΟ	ΘΑΥΜ[α]

This Tower of Babel was made and indeed the enemy is confused.
 Theodore Laskaris made the wonder (ἴτης?)...¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Raby, "A Seventeenth-Century Description," 152, 157.

¹⁴³ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 84-97.

¹⁴⁴ Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 52; Foss, *Nicaea*, 94. Translation mine.

Alfons-Maria Schneider, whose study of Nicaea's walls is fundamental to this analysis, reconstituted the missing text, which forms the basis for my translation. Like the second inscription, this text was also carved into marble and immured in the inner tower façade (Figure 19). The plaque was set above a band of brick in a part of the lower wall that is otherwise constituted by large marble spolia. A double arcade frames each the four lines of text. In all likelihood, the marble was salvaged from a columnar sarcophagus and trimmed down for reuse. Such sarcophagi, decorated with figures placed under arcades, are found locally in the Iznik Archaeology Museum. The figures that would have once stood beneath the arches may have been chiseled off to create a flat surface capable of receiving the inscription, as at Hagia Sophia in the city center (Figure 37). Looking at the tower from ground level (Figure 18), the carved plaque is distinguished by shape and color from the smooth surface of the wall. The band of bricks directly beneath the inscription underlines the text, permanently emphasizing the message above.

The part of the inscription that is missing, noted in brackets above, has not been recovered. I have identified the name “Πύργος Χαλάνης” as a euphemism referring to the Tower of Babel.¹⁴⁵ In the book of Genesis, the Tower of Babel (“Πύργος Χαλάνης” in the inscription) was the setting for the dispersal of the Babylonians, a people who once had been united by a single tongue, but were then cursed by God with a multiplicity of languages for their role in enslaving the Jews in the seventh-century BC. The legend holds that the Babylonians, unable to understand each other, were scattered across the world, taking their multiple languages with them. A second detail in the inscription confirms a specific reference to the Tower of Babel and

¹⁴⁵ Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 52.

the city of Babylon: the word “ΣΥΤΧΕΙ” possesses the same root as the name given for Babylon in the Greek Septuagint, “Σύγχυσις,” or “confusion.”¹⁴⁶ A direct reference to the Tower of Babel on a Laskarid fortification, particularly when the other inscriptions are generic in content, generates questions: What meaning was the inscription intended to convey? What was Theodore I’s interest in associating the rebuilding of Nicæa’s city walls with the Tower of Babel?

The meaning of the inscription unfolds on literal and metaphorical levels. On its most basic, literal level, the inscription serves to identify the patron of the tower as Theodore I and to associate him with the rebuilding of the city walls. On the metaphorical level, the inscription establishes an intertextual relationship between the words of the inscription, the text of the Old Testament, and the tower. By naming it “This Tower of Babel,” the Babylonian and Laskarid fortifications become conflated. This conflation extends to the experience of exile currently occurring for the Constantinopolitan refugees, and their sense of connection to the Jews of the Hebrew Old Testament, sent into exile from Jerusalem. By extension, the mythical city of Babylon is remembered as a place of past exile and associated with the Nicæa as a place of *current* exile. As Michael Angold has pointed out, Niketas Choniates likened the waters of Nicæa’s nearby lake to the “waters of Babylon” with which the Byzantines would atone for the sins that brought them into exile.¹⁴⁷ The physical meaning is explicit: the Nicæan tower is named the Tower of Babel, “a wonder, built by Theodore I Laskaris, to confuse and confound the enemy.” The might of the citadel/tower is also harnessed, for its self-evident purpose was to confound and scatter the enemy in the way that the Babylonians themselves had been confounded and scattered when cursed with a multiplicity of languages. An irony is embedded in

¹⁴⁶ Genesis 10:10 -11:9. Greek Septuagint in English translation.

¹⁴⁷ M. Angold, “Byzantium in Exile,” in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. 5, ed. D. Abulafia (Cambridge, 1999), 543-568.

this statement, particularly since it was precisely this tower that had been weakened by Bardas Skleros, a usurper, in 978 and then finally collapsed during the attack on the city by the knights of the First Crusade in 1097; thus, the tower became known as the Gonatas or “kneeling” tower.¹⁴⁸ Theodore I may have had that ignominious defeat in mind as he rebuilt the tower, fully intending *his* to stand and endure where its predecessor had failed—to cause an enemy attack to break without the tower itself breaking. The levels of meaning are interwoven and complex, highlighting Babylon and Nicæa as cities of exile for God’s chosen people, who in this case, would be its inhabitants: we remember that the inscription is on the *interior* of the tower wall.

The inscription on tower 106 was not the first time that Nicæa’s walls had been connected to Babylon. In his *History*, Niketas Choniates (1155-1215/16) discusses the walls of Nicæa during the revolt of Andronikos I in 1184, conflating the walls of Nicæa with the enormous and impenetrable walls of Assyrian Babylon: “For many days, Andronikos rode up to the walls but was unable to accomplish anything; it seemed to him that he was assaulting precipitous mountains, or that he was foolishly engaging stony ridges in battle and contending against Arbela and the walls of Semiramis, or shooting arrows into the sky.”¹⁴⁹ In his text Choniates recalls Strabo the Geographer’s (active 20 BC-23 AD) description of the Semiramis’s walls around ancient Babylon, associated by scholars with the Assyrian queen Semiramis (late ninth-century BC). Strabo had written that Babylon was situated on a flat plain and surrounded by high, thick walls.¹⁵⁰ Naturally, Choniates’ simile was partially intended to assert his knowledge of classical works, such as Strabo’s. But Babylon was also the fortified city where the

¹⁴⁸ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 48, 95-96.

¹⁴⁹ *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, §281, 156.

¹⁵⁰ *Strabo: Geography, Books 15-17*, Vol. 7, ed. and trans. H. L. Jones (Cambridge, 1930), 199.

Jews had been taken by King Nebuchadnezzar II (r. 604-562 BC) following his destruction of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. Surrounded by thick, high walls, Babylon became a place of exile for the Jews. Nebuchadnezzar II is also credited with having finished (due to the efforts of his newly acquired Jewish slaves) the great ziggurat in Babylon, also known as the Tower of Babel, or more accurately, the Great Ziggurat of Etemenanki. Thus, Nebuchadnezzar II is both the ruler of Babylon and the builder of the Tower of Babel, and *not* a figure a Byzantine Emperor would want to be associated with.

By making reference to the Jewish exile from Jerusalem (i.e. Sion), was Theodore I positioning himself as the Babylonian King? From this perspective it might seem that Theodore I was indeed fashioning himself as Nebuchadnezzar II, but this is not the case. Niketas Choniates was the first to articulate the view of Theodore I not as Nebuchadnezzar, but as a second Zorobabel, the exiliarch who led the Jews back to Jerusalem from Babylon and then built the Second Temple.¹⁵¹ The notion that Nicæa was considered a Byzantine Babylon and that Constantinople was the lost Sion, at least at this early phase, indicates that the Constantinopolitans, and specifically Theodore I, understood their present position as one of exile and displacement. This cord of tension of both being in exile and yet being in the capital is seen here for the first time—written on Theodore I’s newly renovated tower.

The inverse of this perspective would be the association of Constantinople with Sion, a topic that appears in an exilic letter by Michael Choniates, Niketas’s brother, and bishop of Athens:

Ἐπεὶ δ’ ἡ νέα Σιών κατὰ τὴν παλαιὰν ἐγκαταλειφθεῖσα ἔαλω καὶ ἐκπεπόρθηται καὶ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ πληρώματος ὅσον λαθὸν ἢ ψιλῶθεν ἐξεπεπτώκει εἰς τὴν ἐν Βιθυνίᾳ Νίκαιαν μετῴκισατο, κἀνταῦθα καὶ οὗτοι μεταναστεύουσιν οἱ χθὲς μετὰ χαιρόντων τῶν ἑαυτῶν

¹⁵¹ See *Niketas Choniatae, orationes et epistolae* (Berlin, 1972), 236.

πολιτῶν χαίροντες, σήμερον μετ'αὐτῶν κλαιόντων κλαίοντες οἱ αὐτοί, καὶ ὡς ἐν εὐδαιμονία κοσμήτορες ἦσαν τῆς πόλεως, οὕτως ἐν δυστυχεῖ ποικία παρακλήτορες.¹⁵²

When the New Sion (Constantinople), abandoned like the Old (Jerusalem), had been captured and pillaged, those of its population who escaped by being overlooked or by emptying their pockets, moved to Nicæa in Bithynia and there changed their abode, rejoicing yesterday with their rejoicing fellow-citizens, today lamenting with them as they lament, and just as they were leaders of the City in prosperity, so in unhappy absence from home they are comforters of their fellow-citizens.¹⁵³

The metaphor suggested by Theodore I in the inscription at Nicæan is completed here in Michael Choniates's letter, where he discusses how the new Sion (Constantinople) had been abandoned like the old Sion (Jerusalem). Theodore I claims Nicæa then not as a tertiary Sion, but as a tower of Babel in the Babylonian citadel that receives and protects Byzantium's exiles. Michael Choniates, himself exiled from his episcopal see at Athens, asserts that Nicæa is a place of lamentation, and established the perspective that the city was a citadel of exiles reminiscing about their lost homes in Constantinople. It is this perspective that initiates Nicæa's transformation into a Byzantine capital.

Two other intramural inscriptions—one from Heraklea Pontica (modern Karadeniz Ereğli) and the other from Prousa (modern Bursa)—indicate Theodore I's patronage beyond Nicæa's city limits. The inscription from Prousa was recorded before it disappeared; however, no information about its physical appearance survives or is recorded. The text reads:

ἀνηγέρθη οὗτος ὁ πύρ-
γος παρὰ τοῦ εὐσεβεστά-
του ἡμῶν Βασιλέως Θε-
οδώρου Κομνηνοῦ τοῦ Λασκάρου
μηνὶ Ὀκτοβρίῳ ΑΙΡΙΠΜΚ¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² *Michaelis Acominati Opera*, 2 vols., ed. S. P. Lampros (Gröningen, 1968), Vol. 1, 354, §26, l. 8-18.

¹⁵³ I thank Michael McGann for his assistance with this translation.

¹⁵⁴ “Bithynia – Prusa ad Olympum (Bursa) – IK Prusa ad Plympum 211 – #PH278701. See *Die Inschriften von Prusa ad Olympum*, ed. T. Corsten, 1, IK 211 (Bonn, 1991). Translation mine.

This tower was erected
by our most pious
Emperor Theodore
Komnenos Laskaris
in the month of October, [date, 1204-1222].

The city of Bursa rebelled early on against their new Latin overlords, and their constituency in the Laskarid realm was confirmed by the first Treaty of Nymphaion (1214) signed by Theodore I and Henry, Emperor of the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople. Heraklea Pontica, on the other hand, was located along the Black Sea coast in Paphlagonia, and was among those territories claimed by David Megas Komnenos of Trebizond after the fall of Constantinople. The main walls around the city were built by David, however there is a citadel outside the city that was built by Theodore I. That inscription reads:

+ ἄν οἱ λίθοι κράζωσιν ἐκ παροιμίας
πέμψον βοήν ἄλαλος, ἄψυχος πέ[τ]ρα
τὸν πυργοποιὸν κρά[ζε τον κτίσα]ν[τά σ]ε
κέλευσμα μικρὸν [- - -]
Κο[μν]ηνοφουῶς Λασχάρ[ου] Θεοδ[ώ]ρου
αὐτοκρατοῦς τὸν πύργον ἤγε[ι]ρε, ξένε

If the stones from the proverb could cry out
[they] would silently send forth a shout, and lifelessly the stone
does cry out that you are the founder and wall-builder,
... a minor order...
of emperor Theodore Laskaris, born of a Komnenos,
Stranger, he built this tower!¹⁵⁵

This inscription, which was probably located on the small citadel, was found at an undisclosed location somewhere next to the walls of Heraklea Pontica. Like the inscription on tower 106 in

¹⁵⁵ “Pont.-Herakleia (Ereğli) – IK Heraclea Pont. 39 – #PH265241. See *The Princeton Project on the Inscriptions of Anatolia*, ed. D. F. McCabe (Princeton, 1984) and the Packard Humanities Institute CDrom collection (1991); Foss, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 151. References to “the stones crying out” can be found throughout the Old and New Testament, see Habakkuk 2:9-11 and Luke 19:28-40.

Nicæa, this text is rather poetic, playing on the irony of stones in the wall, speechless and lifeless, yet capable of proclaiming the identity and heritage of their builder.¹⁵⁶

While not directly specified, I believe this inscription belongs to Theodore I Laskaris, who took Heraklea Pontica in 1214 from the Grand Komnenoi, along with the rest of Paphlagonia.¹⁵⁷ Within it there is an insistence on Theodore I being “born of a Komnenos,” a patronym that the emperor would have shared with David, his defeated foe.¹⁵⁸ The origin of Theodore I’s Komnenian connection is perfectly clear, but the assertion pits him squarely against David Megas Komnenos, who had used the same imperial family name as a justification for his right to take over Trebizond and even to ask for aid from the Latin rulers of Constantinople when Theodore I challenged him at Heraklea Pontica.

Another architectural “signature” may be found in the form intramural crosses that would serve to identify other walls and towers belonging to Theodore I. On towers 19, 38, and 102, and on the walls between towers 37, 38 and 39 in Nicaea (Figure 11), crosses fashioned from bricks are preserved in the upper levels of their superstructure, areas rebuilt by Theodore I (Figure 20). There are other crosses immured in the walls, but they are different in kind, and formed from reused marble capitals into which crosses had been carved in relief. These spoliated marbles

¹⁵⁶ For the evidence of other secular monuments “speaking” to their audience vis-à-vis the inscription as script, see A. Papalexandrou, “Orality in Monumental Inscriptions,” in *Art and Text in Byzantine Culture*, ed. L. James (Cambridge, 2007), 161-187, esp. 176-181.

¹⁵⁷ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 150-151.

¹⁵⁸ Including one’s aristocratic, or royal, patronym was an important association in elite Byzantine circles. The Komnenoi (the famous and powerful dynasty that ruled prior to the now hated Angeloi) were among the most desirable forebearers with whom to associate. In the decades after the fragmentation of the Empire due to the loss of Constantinople, those with some inherited familial connection to the imperial family made the most by publicizing that association. In the Laskarid realm, this occurs on coins and seals issued by the dynasty (Chapter Five).

appear in the towers rebuilt by Michael III.¹⁵⁹ Apotropaic symbols such as crosses, spoliated marble, and other markers appear in fortification walls at Thessaloniki and Constantinople.

Aside from his work at Nicæa, Prousa, and Heraklea Pontica, Theodore I may have also rebuilt fortifications at Tripolis, an important point of defense on the Mæander River, of which only a single tower stands today.¹⁶⁰ Foss has argued that the defenses of the city were erected by John III Vatatzes, known for numerous urban renewal projects in the southern parts of the Nicæan realm.¹⁶¹ The tower bears no inscription identifying its patron, but the site is mentioned during the reigns of both Theodore I and John III as a stronghold in their battles against the Seljuqs along the Mæander River Valley frontier. The tower retains a decorative motif, a cross in relief on a piece of marble *spolium* (Figure 21). Foss argues that the tower dates to the thirteenth century based on its method of construction and mortar characteristics. In light of the appearance of this cross, I would suggest that the tower might have been decorated by Theodore I to imitate the crosses on the walls and towers of Nicæa. The remaining circuit walls and other towers do not survive at Tripolis, making a full comparison with Nicæa difficult. Given the comparative material available at present, it seems much more likely that the fortress at Tripolis, which did not leave Laskarid hands, would have been repaired before or soon after Theodore I's battle at Antioch-on-the-Meander in 1211.¹⁶² Antioch-on-the-Meander is approximately thirty miles down river from Tripolis. Theodore I's victory there, followed by his victory at Heraklea Pontica in 1214, generates a simple narrative of the emperor's building program: conquer, then re-fortify.

¹⁵⁹ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 85-86, 88, 96-97 on tower 88.

¹⁶⁰ W. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (Amsterdam, 1962), 35.

¹⁶¹ C. Foss, "Late Byzantine Fortifications in Lydia," *JÖB* 28 (1979), 297-320, esp. 299-302.

¹⁶² See *Niketas Choniatae, orationes et epistolæ*, in which Choniates writes an oration to celebrate Theodore I's victory at the Mæander, 172; see Foss, "Late Byzantine Fortifications," 300-302.

Beginning with Nicæa in 1208, then Tripolis around 1211, and Heraklea Pontica in 1214, Theodore I, at least in the early part of his reign, made an effort to refortify the cities and fortresses brought under his control, and to gird the new boundaries of the empire with towers embellished with crosses and inscriptions.

This kind of two-pronged approach to fortifications—rebuilding and inscribing—was a practice developed by previous emperors with respect to the walls of Constantinople. The capital’s walls were covered with dozens of inscriptions identifying their builders or restorers. And, like the walls of Nicaea, Constantinople’s fortifications bore evidence of centuries of imperial patronage. Once Constantinople was lost, the imperial prerogative to continually repair and maintain the capital’s defenses was transferred to the leaders at Nicæa. The symbolic power of the Constantinopolitan walls, however, could not be so easily transferred.

John III also undertook an extensive building project at Nicæa. Based on the building materials and evidence that Foss noted in Theodore II’s *encomium*, we know that his father doubled the fortifications around Nicæa by adding an entirely separate, second circuit wall just outside the original one. According to Theodore II:

For since it [Nicaea] has gained the supreme rank from the almighty hand of God, as He himself only knows; and has received this strengthening, certainly, of the walls and towers which it had before through the great deeds of the sublime Emperor [John III Doukas Vatatzes], it doubles its security, walled in with projecting towers and dressing its walls with battlements, adorned with beauty, and firmly fixed with stability...¹⁶³

This additional circuit wall, combined with a new exterior moat, altered the appearance of Nicæa’s walls and entirely changed the city’s defensive system (Figures 11 and 22). The

¹⁶³ For the complete English translation of Theodore II Laskaris’ oration “In Praise of Nicæa,” section 11, see Foss, *Nicaea*, 144-145. “Τῆ γὰρ μαντουργικῆ χειρὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ τὰ πρωτεῖα, ὡς οἶδε μόνος, αὐτός, αὕτη λαβοῦσα καὶ ταῖς ἀριστουργίαις τοῦ ὑψηλοῦ βασιλέως τὴν γε, ὡς εἶκος, ἐπίτασιν τῶν ὧν εἶχε δεξαμένη περιτειχισμάτων καὶ πυργωμάτων, διπλασιάζει τὸ ἀσφαλές, περιτειχιζομένη τοῖς προπυργώμασιν, καὶ ἐπενδυσμένη τοῖς θριγγίοις θριγγώματα, τῆ τε ὠπραιότητι καλλωπιζομένη καὶ στηριζομένη τῆ ἐδραιότητι...”

ostensible reason for adding the extra circuit was the flat topography of the site, where plains had given the enemy easy access in battle, were easier to attack, so extra walls were built to provide obstacles that the natural topography could not. On the south side of the city of Bursa, for example, a double-wall was built to check advances from the plain just below the city, and a similar method of concentric fortifications can be seen at Amasya as well. Better known are the famous double land walls at Constantinople.¹⁶⁴

John III possessed a unique talent for evoking different moments in the Byzantine past through his patronage. In this case, the double-wall design implemented at Nicæa clearly recalled the walls of Constantinople in form, although the former are comparatively smaller in scale. In adding a second curtain wall and moat that resembled Constantinople's, John III implies that there is a specific degree of fortification necessary for a Byzantine capital.¹⁶⁵ At Nicæa, the exterior moat added beyond the second wall reproduced Constantinople's system of defense. Understanding that Nicæa's moat would have been flooded (like Constantinople's) further alters our present-day understanding of the cities, both of which were protected by a combination of a sea or moat on all sides.¹⁶⁶

Nicæa's Laskarid fortifications also included chapels constructed within the towers, both those rebuilt and repaired by Theodore I and John III. Little studied, and unfortunately in a poor state of preservation, are the two small chapels built into the two larger towers of John III's

¹⁶⁴ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 15, 17, 43; B. Meyer-Plath and A. M. Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 2 vols., (Berlin, 1943), vol. 1, 5-12, Tafel 1, vol. 2, 26-28, 33-35; W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen, 1977), 286-319.

¹⁶⁵ Foss, *Nicæa*, 83.

¹⁶⁶ For the flooded moat at Nicæa, see Theodore II Laskaris's encomium "In Praise of Nicæa," which reads "For all around it [i.e. Nicæa] I say it again, are the fairest crops; vineyards beyond the number that nature knows how to count, full-flowing waters, easy to cross, and easily carried by the opportune construction of the city wall, and also potable and most transparent, having their outlet above the level of one's head, and poured in a circle round all the city." See translation in Foss, *Nicæa*, 147.

circuit walls that flanked the İstanbul Gate (Figure 23). The eastern tower (Foss’s tower 67a) appears to have housed a chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas, while the western chapel (Foss’s tower 68a) contained frescoes of saints (Chapter Four). A chapel, also dedicated to St. Nicholas, had been installed in the land walls of Constantinople, atop the section built by Leo V (r. 813-820) in the tower built by Romanos III (r. 1028-1034, Figures 24 and 25). An inscription still *in situ* in the wall of the tower indicates that the tower was named for its chapel, stating “The tower of St. Nicholas was built from the foundations by Romanos, the Christ-loving ruler” (Figure 26).¹⁶⁷ John III’s construction of a chapel to St. Nicholas in Nicæa confirms the emperor’s interest referencing a specific stretch of Constantinopolitan walls, particularly the area around the Blacherna district built by the emperors of the Macedonian dynasty (867-1056). As we have seen, the walls of Constantinople and Nicæa were subject to imperial building campaigns that included the construction of small chapels that placed their cities’ defenses under holy protection.

This link between the old and new capitals, added to those already mentioned, must be seen as intentional. John III was responsible for strengthening the defenses of more than twenty-two cities, though inscriptions confirming them are rare.¹⁶⁸ One such inscription is included on the walls around the acropolis at Smyrna (modern İzmir):

Τήνδε πόλιν τὸ πάροιθεν ἀγακλυτήν περ ἑοῦσαν
τείχεσι · μαρμαίρουσαν ἐϋστεφάνοις ἐνὶ πύργοις

¹⁶⁷ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 56, 66. Foss notes: “...the rebuilding [of tower B19] affected only the upper parts, where the tower was added onto the already existing embrasured bastion. The addition, like the (undated) original, shows an alternation of brick bands and courses of stone...” For previous discussion on the walls of Leo III, see Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, vol. 2, 109-121 and inscription no. 65, 141; for the chapel of St. Nicholas, see W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexicon*, 303.

¹⁶⁸ The sites include Pegæ, Smyrna, Magnesia, Nymphaion, Asar, Melanoudion (Heraklea at Latmos), Mentiana, İki Kule, Kite, Amyzon, Macre, Telmessos, Sardes, Magidion, Tabala, Mæonia, Kula, Salata, Palaeopolis, and others. These fortifications are dated by analogy by Foss, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 151-159 and id., “Late Byzantine Fortifications in Lydia,” 297-320.

καὶ χάρισιν βρύουσαν, ὅσαι πτολίεθρον ἄεξον,
εὖστοον, εὐάγου<ι>αν, εὐδρομον, εὐλοέτειραν,
ἀλλὶ περιμάχητον ἰδὲ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρη
χεῖρ ὀλοοῖο χρόνοιο διέσπασεν, ἥυτε νεβρὸν
πόρδαλις ἀγρία, ἔβαλλε δέ μιν κατὰ γαίης, |
γρηῖ δ' ἐθήκατό μιν πάντ' εἴκελον ἰσχυνοπαρείῳ,
κάλλος ἀμαλδύνασα καὶ ἀγλαΐην ἐρατεινήν.

Ἄλλ' ἄρα Ῥώμης κοίρανος ὀπλοτέρης Ἰωάννης,
παῖς [τῶν] Δουκοφύτων ἐρικυδῶν [ῶν] βασιλῆων,
οἰκτεῖρας μογέουσαν, ἀποφθιμένην τ' ἐλαιῖρων,
γῆρας ἀπέξεσεν ἠδ' ἀκμηῖτ' ἀνετεύξατο γυῖα,
πυκνώσας τε παρῆα, καὶ ἄψα λυγρὰ τονώσας,
θήκατο κουριδίην ἀπὸ γρηῖος πεντακορόνου·

τόνδε τε καὶ βασίλειαν, ἄνα χθονὸς ἠδὲ πόλοιο,
κάλλιμον, εὐπατέρειαν, ἐπήρατον, εἶδος ἀρίστην,
ὄψιν ἐπικέλιον Χαρίτεσσιν λευκοπαρείοις,
φυῆν θ' ὑψικόμοισιν εἰσκομένην κυπαρίττοις,
θείης ἐς λυκάβαντας ἀπειρεσίους συνανάσσειν.
Ἔτ (ει), σπλα'.

This city, which was formerly famous for its gleaming walls in particular, crowned with towers and filled with graces which glorify the city: beautiful stoas, lovely streets, many homes, baths, a highly-prized harbor and all-nourishing land...The hand of destructive time tore them down, just as the fawn is torn down by the wild leopard, they were thrown upon the earth, its beauty replaced by a hollow-cheeked old lady, disguising its splendid loveliness.

But then, John, the ruler of the Younger Rome, a child and offspring of the Dukai and famous emperor, lamenting what the city had suffered and taking pity on what had wasted away, scraped away the layers of old age and tirelessly built up its limbs, thickened its withered cheeks, braced its weak joints, and replaced the five-crooked old woman with a young girl.

And so He, lord of earth and heaven, and also the Empress, so beautiful, of noble descent, lovely, excellently formed, of all with the most beautiful exterior, resembling the white-cheeked Graces, in stature as tall and well-tressed as the Cypress, by God may they rule for countless years. In the Year 6731 (1222/1223 AD).¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ John III was particularly active in this region: besides restoring the walls at Smyrna, he built walls around the upper acropolis at Nymphaion, and at many other sites, including Magnesia in whose environs he built the double-monastery of Sosandra. For further bibliography see *Inscripfen Griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien*, ed. G. Petzl (Bonn, 1987), 323-325, esp. for last two lines of text; for edition of text used here, see Epigram 281, lines 1-19 (missing lines 20-21), in *Anthologiae Graecae Appendix Epigrammata demonstrativa, Epigrammatum anthologia Palatina cum Planudeis et appendice nova*, Vol. 3, ed. E. Cougny (Paris, 1890). Translation mine.

Coinciding with the year of his coronation, this inscription the restoration of the citadel atop Smyrna, overlooking the enormous harbor, is likened to reversing time: here an old woman grows younger, stronger and more fresh. This poetic interpretation portrays John III's interest in renovating the site as one stemming from sympathy for the architectural ruins of the city, with a view towards the symbolism of aesthetic architectural form. According to the inscription, his desire to renew the walls was prompted by witnessing their decrepit state, a view that filled him with sadness and pity. Yet, it is exactly Smyrna that would become a second center of power and wealth in the Nicæan realm under John III, a city that naturally needed its own system of defense. Under John III, Smyrna's harbor sheltered the Laskarid navy and was important not only as a military base, but as the heartland of the realm's agricultural production, and not far from Nymphaion, where the imperial court wintered, a site favored by John III (Chapter Six). Notable for our purposes is John III's epithet, "the ruler of the Younger Rome (Ρώμης κοίρανος ὀπλοτέρης)," which refers to Constantinople, not literally, but figuratively. Thus, enough had been replaced in exile by John III's reign that he ruled over "Constantinople" in an abstract sense. Like it is possible that the lack of specificity was intentional, referring instead to the empire in exile, which carried the imperial tradition.

John III obliquely refers to the lost capital of Constantinople in a letter written to Pope Gregorius in 1237, translated by Anthony Kaldellis, in which the emperor responds (with a tone of mocking incredulity) to the pope's request to validate the rule of the crusaders over Constantinople:

How is it that you approve unjust and grasping attitude and hands, and regards as a matter of law, that theiving and murderous takeover by which the Latins installed themselves in the city of Constantine?...Even though we have been forced to change our location, regarding our rights to that authority we remain unmoved and unchanging, by the grace

of God. For he who is emperor rules over a nation (*ethnos*) and a people (*laos*) and a multitude, not over rocks and wooden beams, which make the walls and towers.¹⁷⁰

In this short excerpt of the emperor's letter, we observe that John III believed that the empire over which he ruled, comprised of an "*ethnos* and *laos*," was continuous with that which had ruled from Constantinople. This implies that Constantinople, comprised of "rocks and wooden beams, which make the walls and towers" cannot itself grant authority to rule the empire. The emperor's statement might initially appear to diminish the importance of the physical city of Constantinople; if it does this, it also shows that the Byzantine empire was seen to have been replaced in Nicæa, and that the Bithynian city became Constantinople's whole and complete substitute. That Constantinople was the referent for Nicæa in the process of replacement is not surprising, but it is an interesting distinction for John III to draw that residence in Constantinople could not emperors make.

For nearly eight centuries, Constantinople's walls had framed the city and regulated traffic through their impressive gates. The very roads that had been so carefully gated and guarded were flooded with tearful refugees following the city's defeat. Niketas Choniates described the city walls of Constantinople following his own departure from the capital:

And now, we cannot freely gaze upon thee [Constantinople], face to face, nor joyously cling to thee as to a mother and openly pour out for thee a libation of tears...we emit piteous and mournful cries; expelled far from thy nesting places, hungry and thirsty, shivering in squalor...we are no longer able to find the way back to our homes in the City, but roam far and wide like fickle migratory birds and the planets. In other words, although we are apart, we are united to thee, and being separated, we are intertwined like those who are joined together in spirit even though removed in body...And we likewise wish to cast our eyes upon thee and to draw near, for we have been altogether deprived of clasping thee wholeheartedly to our breast and of boldly embracing thee as in former times, kept asunder by the barbarian forces as though by a solid body much more impervious than glass.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, 237.

¹⁷¹ *O City of Byzantium*, 318.

Within this excerpt, the deep and abiding connection between city and citizen is made abundantly clear. The metaphorical relationship of mother and child models the intense bond between home and inhabitant. The sensation of being separated from Constantinople causes Choniates acute pain, made all the more poignant given the improbability that they would ever be reunited. As Choniates exits the city, he remarks:

As we left the City behind, others returned, thanks to God, and loudly bewailed their misfortunes, but I threw myself, just as I was, on the ground and reproached the walls both because they alone were insensible, neither shedding tears nor lying in ruins upon the earth, and because they still stood upright. If those things for whose protection you were erected no longer exist, being utterly destroyed by fire and war, for what purpose do you still stand? And what will you protect hereafter unless you strive to bring destruction to the enemy in the day of wrath...¹⁷²

Choniates' "reproach" of the walls intimates his previous opinion of them—that they were monumental works whose purpose was to protect and preserve Byzantium. He chastizes them for remaining emotionless and unmoved ("insensible") and, even worse, standing upright when the city had fallen. Choniates accuses the walls of continuing to exist in the absence of the population that they once embraced and protected. The walls of Constantinople were the last sight seen by the refugees as they exited their imperial capital, and it is those walls that would have been remembered upon first seeing the city walls of Nicaea. Theodore II, born eighteen years after the fall of Constantinople, states that Nicæa:

...having united its [the walls'] single strength to that duality of strength from the emperor, that celebrated vestment around it, it exceeds by far the cities famous of old in the world. Since its towers are blessed with the straight rising of cypresses, and are like pillars of adamant, one might call it the House of Wisdom sung by Solomon. For defences are established in it in many ways, since the very name of Victory has been consecrated to it by God.¹⁷³

¹⁷² *O City of Byzantium*, 25.

¹⁷³ “διὸ κυπαρίττων εὐθείας ἀναβάσεως εὐμοιροῦντα αὐτῆς τὰ πυργώματα, καὶ στύλοις ἀδαμαντίνοις ταῦτα παρεικαζόμενα, τὸν τῆς σοφίας εἶπη τις οἶκον αὐτὴν παρὰ Σολομῶντι τὸν ἐξυμνούμενον πολλαχῶς καὶ γὰρ ἐκ ταύτη ἀπὸ Θεοῦ.” Foss, *Nicaea*, 144-145.

In his claim that Nicæa “exceeds by far the cities famous of old in the world,” could Theodore be suggesting that Constantinople had now been superceded? What is unusual is that similar language had been employed by Niketas Choniates once to describe Constantinople:

City fortified, City of the great king, tabernacle of the most High, praise and song of his servants and beloved refuge for strangers, queen of the queens of cities, song of songs and splendor of splendors...¹⁷⁴

The walls play a pivotal role, both literally and rhetorically, in elucidating the superlatives used by each author. Some generations later, following the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261, Theodore Metochites (1270-1332) gave his “Nicene Oration” before the Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (r. 1282-1328) in Nicæa:

And we may introduce this moderate number of things from the outside into our discussion of the city. But what is her own proper crown, and in all ways, I know not whether it is better to say the last or the first, unshakable boundary of her prosperity – who would not be astounded to look upon these walls around her, which draw so much confidence from their construction that the effort of every kind of engine against is of no use but a wholly vain spending of time on the impossible? The form of the city is circular, the most capacious that exists. She disdains every inequality lying near her and makes it a point of honour to join them together; not the way most towns cheat at the rough ground and take advantage of its steepness. But she, well disposed toward mankind and regularly built, relies on herself and her external circuits, so finely constructed that it is at once a pleasure and a marvel to behold their undeceived foresight, their great unconquerable beauty, their splendid barrier. Such is the unyielding strength of the whole construction from the arrangement of its materials and such are the towers in it: they strive upward, trusting in their foundations; below, they stand forward from the continuous line of defense, and meet the enemy as champions unwearied and unmoved. And their friendliness to one another and unwillingness to stand far apart might look to you like some surrounding circle of dancers, orderly and very pleasing for the city to enjoy from within, yet armed, if an enemy approach them from the outside, and unsociable for him to meet with. So generous is the city in these matters that, as you can see, it also places another circuit a little in from of the first; this by itself might have been enough for other towns, taking some difficult ground as an ally, as they devise in most cases. But as for her, the excellent care taken for security is not thus satisfied nor has she failed to innovate in this, but even in front of this, as you see, stretches a deep ditch filled

¹⁷⁴ *O City of Byzantium*, 325.

with mud which, cleverly contrived, she hides from sight and treasures up for those who unexpectedly fall in.¹⁷⁵

Metochites, praising the city in which he lived as a child,¹⁷⁶ comments on the unassailable quality of the walls, their beauty, and their functionality, while noting that they would offer as great a degree of aesthetic pleasure and comfort to those living within them as they would provide a barrier and threat to enemies outside. He, like Theodore II, notes the second ring of walls, showing that this Laskarid addition had become fully assimilated into the city's urban identity.

At the beginning of the Laskarid period, Nicæa's walls would have appealed to the refugees' longing to see Constantinople again. They would have entered their new home through a gate labeled with the name of the home they had left. By 1208, when Theodore I was crowned and the new Orthodox Patriarch appointed, the irony of being in the capital and yet in exile stimulated a constant negotiation between the exiled inhabitants and their new urban setting. By the middle of the thirteenth century, Nicæa's city walls had been fully repaired and expanded, providing a safe haven for the exilic court and its small bureaucracy. Thus, the repairs made to the walls by the first two Laskarid emperors indicate an interest in memorializing Constantinople both symbolically and physically. The symbolic conflation of Theodore I's tower 106 with the mythic Tower of Babel indicates an acknowledgement and acceptance of the present state of exile. John III's second curtain wall, their towers, and the surrounding moat became a key feature in *encomia* on the city's appearance in later years, and boosted its resemblance to Constantinople. Each act of patronage nuances the cityscape of Nicæa, affirming its substitution

¹⁷⁵ For an English translation of the complete "Nicene Oration," by Theodore Metochites, see Foss, *Nicæa*, 174-177. For the 1290-1295 date of the oration, see Janin, 106, fn. 1.

¹⁷⁶ Foss, *Nicæa*, 128.

for Constantinople. Despite the sense of displacement and the acknowledgement of Nicæa as a site of exile, both Theodore I and John III continued the standards of imperial patronage of city walls that had been set by previous Byzantine emperors both at Constantinople and at Nicæa. The special modifications to Nicæa reflect the urban environment of Constantinople, and the investment in defensive architecture along the borders of hard won territory begin to define the boundaries of the new realm.

The insistence on Nicæa as a substitute for Constantinople, a perspective immured in the inscriptions and renovations of Nicæa's city walls, would appear to be no longer necessary after the end of the Interregnum in 1261, when Constantinople once again became capital of the empire. In fact, in its most straightforward interpretation, the iconography of Michael VIII's gold *hyperpyron* (Figure 27), minted in Constantinople just after 1261, references the homecoming of the exilic court by showing the city walls of Constantinople encircling the Virgin *orans*, on the coin's *obverse*, and the coronation of Michael VIII on its *reverse*. Scholars have argued that the circuit of city walls specifies a Constantinopolitan context, and while the city is not named explicitly, the image became, in the words of Anthony Cutler "canonical" for the duration of the Palaiologan period.¹⁷⁷ The presence of the Virgin encircled by walls is understood as an allusion to Michael VIII's triumphal entrance into Constantinople on 15 August 1261, when an icon of the Virgin, the city's protector *par excellence*, met him at the Golden Gate (Figure 28).¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ A. Cutler, "The Virgin on the Walls," in id., *Transfigurations: Studies in the Dynamics of Byzantine Iconography* (University Park, 1975), 111-141; *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, Vol. 5, part 1, eds. A. R. Bellinger and P. Grierson (Washington, DC, 1999), 5, 7-13, 82-83, 103-104, 108.

¹⁷⁸ Icons of the Virgin had reportedly been displayed on or carried in procession along the walls of Constantinople since the seventh-century Avar attacks on the city. For detailed discussion of the sources, see relevant chapters by C. Angelidi and T. Papamastrakis, "Picturing the Spiritual Protector: from Blachernitissa to Hodegetria" and B. V. Pentcheva, "The Activated Icon: the Hodegetria procession and Mary's *Eisodos*," in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. M. Vassilake (Aldershot, 2005), 195-208, 209-224, respectively.

Michael VIII chose to portray an image of Constantinople's city walls on the first gold coins minted in the capital, an iconographic type whose precedent, I believe, was the bronze coins minted in Nicæa nearly one millenium before (Figures 14 and 15). Like the Roman, Byzantine, and Laskarid emperors who had repaired the walls of Nicæa, Michael VIII repaired and raised the height of the walls of Constantinople early on in his reign.¹⁷⁹ Michael VIII's coin shows himself, escorted by the archangel Michael, being crowned by Christ enthroned. An image of an emperor being crowned was not necessarily unique in Byzantine numismatic iconography, but when this coin was issued, Michael VIII had already been acclaimed emperor in Nymphaion and crowned in Nicæa in 1259. Theodore II, four years earlier, had remarked:

Thus does the city of you Nicæans now, today, as it is honoured in this speech of a patriotic lover of your city, distinguished men, crown your own heads with the purple of grandeur and truth.¹⁸⁰

Recalling Metochites' metaphor of Nicæa's city walls appearing to be a circular crown—"But what is her [i.e. Nicæa's] own proper crown, and in all ways, I know not whether it is better to say the last or the first, unshakable boundary of her prosperity (i.e. the city walls)"—we see that Michael VIII's image of his own Constantinopolitan coronation, where Christ places the imperial crown on Michael's head, extends Metochites's and Theodore II's metaphors of the City as a "crown." By pairing his coronation image with an image of the Constantinopolitan walls, Michael VIII conflates the Imperial crown with the "crown" of Constantinople, invested anew with the crownings of previous Laskarid emperors at Nicæa.

¹⁷⁹ A.-M. Talbot, "The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII," *DOP* 47 (1993), 243-261; D. Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258-1282* (Cambridge, 1959), 129; Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 42.

¹⁸⁰ Foss, *Nicæa*, 135.

The great city walls of Nicæa and Constantinople facilitate a slippage in both time and locale, insinuating an overlap between the two Byzantine capitals by means of their highly recognizable walls.¹⁸¹ The memory of Nicæa’s walls, within which the Laskarid emperors had sought refuge and where they had rebuilt the core of Byzantine power during a period of great strife, had once hosted the memory of Constantinople’s walls, and had been rebuilt in *their* image. Now, it was Nicæa’s infallible walls that were being recalled in the Palaiologan hyperpyron. Theodore I Laskaris had created a ring of fortified towers, with Nicæa at their heart, extending from Paphlagonia to the Meander. John III continued to extend and fortify this new frontier and gave Nicæa a second wall, endowing the realm’s capital with real stability and safety. Thus the walls of one capital substitute for those of the other, creating in turn continuity through memories and other resuscitations of the Byzantine past. Leaving Nicæa, Michael VIII planned to be crowned for a second time in Constantinople, sometime between 15 August and the end of the year. While this second coronation in Constantinople was primarily symbolic of the relocation of the Byzantine imperial “crown” back to Constantinople, it would take place in the cathedral of Hagia Sophia, the patriarchal church that had also been lost and replaced in Nicæa during the period of the Interregnum.

¹⁸¹ It may be that coins of Macrianus II and Quietus were known in thirteenth Nicæa, particularly since they had been minted there a millenium before.

Chapter Three Memory and Architecture in Hagia Sophia, Nicæa

In 1204, as a result of the Fourth Crusade, Constantinople was despoiled of its treasures and depopulated through a mass exodus of its inhabitants. Among those who escaped was Theodore I Laskaris, *despotes* under Emperor Alexios III Angelos (r. 1195-1203). Together with his wife Anna, Alexios III's daughter, the couple began to assemble a court in the nearby city of Nicæa (modern İznik) (Figure 11). Safely ensconced in Bithynia, they welcomed Constantinopolitan refugees and laid the foundation for what would become known to scholars as the Nicæan empire. The legitimacy of the fledgling empire was predicated on the all-important claim of possessing the Orthodox patriarch and his *cathedra*, or basilica. With the installation of Michael IV Autoreianos in Nicæa in 1208 as the Orthodox patriarch, Theodore I was crowned in Nicæa, and the empire was reestablished in exile.¹⁸²

While the core of Byzantine power may have been restored through the election of a new patriarch and crowning of a new emperor, the context of that power had shifted entirely – from the rich and layered Byzantine context of Constantinople to a small, venerable city in the Bithynian hinterlands of the former capital. The loss of Constantinople had not only severed its inhabitants from their homes, but also the capital from its empire, producing a decisive rupture in the generally held belief that the Byzantine empire existed and was sustained over the centuries through divine favor and protection. The city's former citizens, including Theodore I and his supporters, were now refugees, united by their devastating experience. Contemporary sources,

¹⁸² M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society Under the Laskarids of Nicæa (1204-1261)* (Oxford, 1975), vii.

discussed in Chapters One and Two, related the expulsion of the Byzantine population from Constantinople to that of the Jews from Jerusalem, both literally and figuratively.

Constantinople, once the historic heart of the Byzantine Imperium and the Orthodox faith, became the capital of *Romania*, the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople, following 1204. In the minds of its exiled inhabitants, the city was transformed into an object of collective memory. Having lost the epicenter of their civilization, the refugee Byzantines desired more than anything to recapture the city; however, fifty-seven years would elapse before they would re-enter Constantinople's gates as rulers. In the intervening generations, an active recollection of the memory of Constantinople, and by extension, Byzantium, would shape the concerns of the Laskarids as they set about establishing their new capital in Nicæa. There, the dynasty began to replace the lost capital through acts of patronage intended to memorialize Constantinopolitan monuments recently lost.

Building architecture to memorialize important sites, whether sacred or political, was not a new practice in Byzantium. Maurice Halbwachs, whose foundational work on collective memory is well known, argued that Christian memory “retrieves in its midst...a quantity of objects that incessantly aroused and enlivened its remembrances.”¹⁸³ For Christianity, these “objects” would include churches, shrines, symbols, icons, etc. Churches were erected on holy sites, sanctified through the miraculous presence of a saint's remains or wonder-working natural phenomena, and provided a discrete space for liturgical rituals and imagery intended to manifest divine presence. Halbwachs's observation comes from his interest in understanding where memory can be localized exterior to a group of people, in this case, a *collective framework* fashioned from objects, writing that “Collective frameworks are...precisely these instruments

¹⁸³ M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago, 1992); id., *The Collective Memory* (New York, 1950); id., *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte* (Paris, 1971).

used by the collective memory to reconstruct an image of the past which is in accord, in each epoch, with the predominant thoughts of the society.”¹⁸⁴

When Constantinople changed hands and its inhabitants were separated from their city, its presence could only be resurrected in the memories of its citizenry. Continuing the themes presented in Chapter Two, I will demonstrate that the church of Hagia Sophia, Nicæa, fully replaced the lost cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, the most important church in Byzantium. In the context of Nicæan exile, Hagia Sophia in Nicæa was a viable “instrument” of collective memory upon the exiles could “reconstruct an image of the past.” While it is not unexpected that Constantinopolitan refugees and rulers would attempt to rebuild certain features of the beloved capital they had lost, the process of selecting which features to re-create in exile shows which elements were considered indispensable. Clearly illustrating these choices and describing the lines of continuity forged by them is of the utmost importance to understanding how the Laskarids replaced Byzantium in exile.

The church of Hagia Sophia plays a vital role in the transformation of Nicæa into the interim capital. The church’s dedication, antiquity, and renown prompted its substitution for the Constantinopolitan Hagia Sophia, the *mega ekklesia*, now desecrated and under Latin rule.¹⁸⁵ The Nicæan metropolitan church became the cathedral of the Orthodox patriarch in exile, and received the patronage of the Laskarid court, epitomizing how the Laskarids memorialized lost Constantinopolitan monuments by harnessing their memory, creating a life-line between the past and present.

¹⁸⁴ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 38.

¹⁸⁵ For the Latin Christians in Hagia Sophia and in the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople, see E. H. Swift, “The Latins at Hagia Sophia,” *AJA* 39, No. 4 (1935), 458-474; R. L. Wolff, “The Latin Empire of Constantinople and the Franciscans,” *Traditio* 2 (1944), 213-237; id., “The Organization of the Latin Patriarchate of Constantinople 1204-1261: Social and Administrative Consequences of the Latin Conquest,” *Traditio* 6 (1948), 33-60.

Hagia Sophia in Nicæa

The church of Hagia Sophia in Nicæa is located at the center of the modern town, standing on the southeast corner of the intersection of modern roads covering the ancient *cardo* and *decumanus* below.¹⁸⁶ The main roads passed through four gates, directly linking the site to two major Roman highways (Figure 11).¹⁸⁷ Built on Roman foundations, the church of Hagia Sophia occupies a site that most likely once belonged to the ancient gymnasium, forum or perhaps to one of its major temples.¹⁸⁸ At some point in the fifth century, following the city's elevation to metropolitan status, this public urban space was requisitioned to become the site of the city's new episcopal church.

Hagia Sophia in Nicæa emerges from its role as a metropolitan church in the Early Christian period to become the site of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, convened in 787 by the Iconophile Empress Irene (r. 780-790, 792-802) and nominally by her son, Emperor Constantine

¹⁸⁶ The modern name of the city, İznik, is a compound of the Greek: εἰς τὴν Νικαίαν, which means “into Nicæa” preserving an idea of directionality, i.e. the roads which lead “to Nicæa.”

¹⁸⁷ The roads through İznik follow the route of the ancient Roman roads of the city, which has been verified by excavations undertaken in 2003 near Hagia Sophia and in 2012 near the Murad I Hamamı. For the Byzantine road system and its Roman antecedents, see W. M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (London, 1890), esp. 74-82.

¹⁸⁸ The Greek author Strabo in the first century AD remarked on the regularity of the city's walls and the precise perpendiculars formed by Nicæa's two main roads, saying that “it was possible to see the four gates from a stone set in the middle of the Gymnasium,” indicating that this structure would have been located at the Roman city's center, see Foss, *Nicaea*, 1, 10. Strabo writes, “In the inland parts of Bithynia is Bithynium, situated above Tieium, and to which belongs the country about Salon, affording the best pasturage for cattle, whence comes the cheese of Salon. Nicæa, the capital of Bithynia, is situated on the Ascanian lake. It is surrounded by a very large and very fertile plain, which in the summer is not very healthy. Its first founder was Antigonus, the son of Philip, who called it Antigonía. It was then rebuilt by Lysimachus, who changed its name to that of his wife Nicæa. She was the daughter of Antipater. The city is situated in a plain. Its shape is quadrangular, eleven stadia in circuit. It has four gates. Its streets are divided at right angles, so that the four gates may be seen from a single stone, set up in the middle of the Gymnasium.” Foss has also identified at least one reference to the *tetrapylon* (four-sided free-standing arched gateway) that would have marked the intersection of the two main roads, see *Strabo, Geographica*, ed. A. Meineke (Leipzig, 1877), book XII, chapter 4, section 7.

VI (r. 780-797), by which time Nicæa had become the capital city of the *theme* of Opsikion.¹⁸⁹ As the site of the Council, the church witnessed the beginning of the reinstatement of icon veneration in Orthodox devotional and liturgical practice, resulting in the final resolution of Iconoclastic debates, celebrated annually as a holy feast known as the “Triumph of Orthodoxy.” The church then disappears from the historical record until the thirteenth century, when the Laskarids chose it to be the new seat of the patriarchate.¹⁹⁰

Imitatio Sophiae: The Second Hagia Sophia of the Byzantine Empire

Hagia Sophia’s role within Laskarid Nicæa has been neither established nor interpreted. Numerous debates concerning the church’s building phases, decorative schemes and even its identity and dedication have made conclusive interpretation of the building difficult. Hans Buchwald, the first scholar to assemble a corpus of Laskarid buildings, completely excluded Hagia Sophia, explaining that he would consider only those buildings created *ex novo* by the Laskarids during the thirteenth century.¹⁹¹ The first task of this chapter, then, is to integrate the building into the Laskarid architectural corpus.

¹⁸⁹ The Seventh Ecumenical Council, also known as the Second Council of Nicæa, consisted of seven meetings held in the church of Hagia Sophia; the eighth took place in the Magnaura Palace in Constantinople.

¹⁹⁰ During the revolt of Isaak Angelos against Andronikos Komnenos in 1183-1184, Nicholas, bishop of Nicæa, collected his flock and led them in procession from the city as suppliants to Emperor Andronikos, against whom they had recently rebelled. It appears that the church in which they gathered was Hagia Sophia, though it is not explicitly named, see *O City of Byzantium*, 158.

¹⁹¹ For previous bibliography on Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, see C. Gurlitt, “Die islamitischen bauten von Isnik (Nicaea),” *OAr* 3 (1912-1913), 49-60; O. K. Wulff, *Altchristliche und byzantinische Kunst* (Beschreibung der Bildwerke der christlichen Epochen) 3 (Berlin, 1923); N. Brounoff, “L’église de Sainte Sophie de Nicée,” *EO* 24 (1925), 471-481; M. Alpatoff, “Les fresques de Sainte-Sophie de Nicée,” *EO* 25 (1926), 42-45; A. M. Schneider, “Forschungen in Nicaea-İznik,” *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 11 (1935), 405-406; id., “Die römischen und byzantinischen Denkmäler von İznik-Nicæa,” *IstForsch* 16 (1943), 1-40, 21 plates; S. Eyice, “Two mosaic pavements from Bithynia,” *DOP* 17 (1963), 373-383; H. Buchwald, “Lascarid Architecture,” *JÖB* 28 (1979), 261-296, esp. 262; S. Möllers, “Neue Beobachtungen zur Hagia Sophia in Iznik-Nikaia,” *AA* (1987), 689-693; A. B.

The church that exists today is the result of numerous building phases, dating from the fifth to the twenty-first century (Figure 29). The extensive repairs made to the church following severe earthquakes that occurred in 740 and 1063-1065,¹⁹² in addition to decorative and refurbishing projects the church received through imperial donations, indicate the basilica's value and importance throughout the Early Christian, Middle Byzantine, and Laskarid periods. As recently as 1980, visitors to the church would have found the building nearly buried under layers of the city's urban fabric and debris. After four excavations, taking place over the course of sixty years, and following a series of restoration projects, the church of Hagia Sophia, like many other monuments of historic religious significance in Turkey, was converted into a museum. In 2011, it was refitted to function as a mosque and was opened for prayer as the Ayasofya (Orhan) Camii.¹⁹³

The church of Hagia Sophia has been the subject of several previous studies, each giving a different foundation date. In 1912, Oskar Konstantin Wulff visited Nicæa and decided that the church, based on the role Hagia Sophia would have played in the Seventh Ecumenical Council in

Yalçın, "Un affresco con la 'Deesis' nella Santa Sofia di İznik-Nicaea," *Milioni* 2 (1990), 369-380, with plates; S. Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia in İznik/Nikaia* (Altfer, 1994); *İznik Throughout History*, eds. I. Akbaygil, H. İnalçık, and O. Aslanapa (Istanbul, 2003); C. Pinatsi, "New Observations on the Pavement of the Church of Hagia Sophia in Nicaea," *BZ* 99, no. 1 (2006), 119-126. Based on conversations with Buchwald in Vienna in January of 2011, I learned that he purposefully excluded the church of Hagia Sophia from his analysis due to its complicated state of preservation, but acknowledged that the church would have been used during the Laskarid period.

¹⁹² On 26 October 740, an earthquake struck Constantinople and western Anatolia, and was so destructive that its occurrence was thereafter commemorated during the Orthodox liturgical year on its anniversary. Earlier earthquakes date to 2 December 362 and 11 October 368, see Foss, *Nicæa*, 35.

¹⁹³ A new roof and controversial conservation of the building's ruins were completed in 2003 by a Turkish architectural firm from Bursa. Thereafter the building operated as a museum under the name Ayasofya Müzesi. In November 2011, the museum was refitted to function as a mosque and was opened for prayer on the Muslim holiday of Kurban Bayram. I have attempted to make contact and discuss the restoration with Gözde Demirtaş, who worked on the restoration with İY-KA İnşaat Şirketi. The company, now out of business, has not been forthcoming with records, photographs, and any other information about the church's restoration. The utility of the building is heightened by the recent addition of a new wooden roof which will preserve the building's ruined walls, worn frescoes, exposed opus sectile pavements and foundations from further weathering and deterioration.

787, should be dated to the eighth century. In 1924, Brounoff gave the church an early Christian foundation in the fifth century, assigned a mid eighth-century date for the redesign of the interior, and an eleventh-century date for the reinforcement of its outer walls. Brounoff suggested the cupolas at the east ends of the aisles, which Wulff previously had dated to the thirteenth century, were Palaiologan (i.e., post-1261).¹⁹⁴ In 1935, Alfons-Maria Schneider examined Hagia Sophia and concluded that the two pastophoria at the east end date to the eleventh century, but that the fresco painting within them dates to either the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Schneider also redated the second rebuilding phase of the church to the eleventh century. In 1994, Sabine Möllers published a monograph on Hagia Sophia. As a result of her investigations, which focused on excavating parts of the interior and most of the exterior down to the foundations, she confirmed a fifth-century date for the earliest church on the site. Möllers assigned the original Hagia Sophia to the fifth century based on the similarity of its ground plan to the church of St. John Stoudios in Constantinople.¹⁹⁵ Hagia Sophia's perimeter walls, made of neat ashlar blocks, date from this first building phase and have remained intact, allowing for a relatively simple reconstruction of its original ground plan as a three-aisled, galleried basilica with a single apse at the east end that is semi-circular from the interior and polygonal (three-sided) from the exterior (Figure 30). The apse retains its original *synthronon*, and its three windows have been reopened. The western entrance into the building shows evidence of three portals and two windows, and would once have been masked by a narthex or

¹⁹⁴ Brounoff, "L'église," 471-481; Gurlitt, "Die islamitischen bauten," 49-60; Wulff, *Altchristliche und byzantinische Kunst*, 402. Brounoff does not specify to which century of the Palaiologan period he believes the pastophoria belong. It is a slight mistake to attribute to Brounoff a fourteenth-century Palaiologan date, rather than a thirteenth-century one, when he in fact does not specify one or the other. Both Schneider and Möllers assume that Brounoff believes the frescoes to date to post-1261.

¹⁹⁵ Möllers, *Hagia Sophia*, 46.

porch; only a narrow portion of its south wall survives today.¹⁹⁶ On the south side of the church's east end was a small annex that originally communicated with the south aisle of the church, discovered by Möllers during her excavations, and which she dated to the church's original, fifth-century building phase.¹⁹⁷ The first church can be reconstructed as follows: the interior would have had two colonnades, topped either by arches or by an entablature, with a second colonnade at gallery level, either with or without clerestory windows. The church would have had a trussed timber roof.¹⁹⁸ Möllers dates the main rebuilding of the church, after Schneider, to the eleventh century, with thirteenth-century fresco painting in the *arcosolium* and *pastophoria*.

Since the remains of the first building phase of Hagia Sophia survive solely along the building's perimeter foundation walls,¹⁹⁹ the ground plan of the original church has been reconstructed based on comparisons with other early churches in Constantinople. Expanding on Möllers's comparisons, I would include the four other churches collected by Thomas Mathews in

¹⁹⁶ Foss, *Nicaea*, 102. The narthex is estimated to have once measured the width of the building, about twenty-two meters, and approximately six and a half meters in depth.

¹⁹⁷ Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 62-69.

¹⁹⁸ U. Peschlow, "The Churches of Nicæa/İznik," in *İznik Throughout History*, 203. Excavations revealed three Ionic impost capitals, small enough to have supported Hagia Sophia's gallery level entablature. Numerous other fragments of architectural sculpture, including large columns, small double columns, other Ionic and composite capitals, small double capitals, carved marble slabs and templon stands, among others survive and warrant further study. Also from the original church are two marble discs published by K. Weitzmann and I. Ševčenko, "The Moses Cross at Sinai," *DOP* 17 (1963), 394:

Medallion A: [---]σοι	Medallion B: ὁ θεὸς
εὐχάμενος,	ἐπέτυχον·
εὐχαριστῶν	ἀνέθηκα,
τὰ σὰ ἐκ τῶν σῶ(ν)	σοι προσήγαγον.

Translation (I. Ševčenko): "...having prayed unto Thee, O God, I succeeded. In gratitude, I have dedicated; I have offered Thee Thine own from Thine own." These two discs were reportedly found under a window in the south (?) gallery of the Church of St. Sophia in İznik during "the second exploratory excavation in 1955." Sources for the sculpture of Hagia Sophia in Nicæa include C. Barsanti, "The İznik-Nicæa's Archaeological Museum: In Search of a Catalogue," in *İznik Throughout History*, 265-301; Y. Ötügen, *Forschungen im nordwestlichen Kleinasien, antike und byzantinische Denkmäler in der Provinz Bursa* (Tübingen, 1996). For the reconstructed plan of the original Hagia Sophia, see Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 39-43.

¹⁹⁹ The lower portions of the walls of the north and south aisles and the lower part of the east apse end, however, are original to the first building phase.

his work on early Christian churches in Constantinople.²⁰⁰ Confirming the fifth-century date of the original church of Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, they include St. John Stoudios, dated to 463 (Figure 31), the Topkapı Sarayı basilica (Figure 32), the Theotokos Chalkoprateia basilica (Figure 33), and the Theodosian Hagia Sophia (Figure 34). All are located in Constantinople and date to various moments in the fifth century.²⁰¹ Key comparative points can be discerned from their ground plans: the rectangular narthex at the west entrance, at least two colonnaded aisles with galleries, and the semi-circular/polygonal apse containing a synthronon.

There is evidence that Hagia Sophia was originally built to serve as Nicæa's metropolitan basilica. In 364, the emperors Valens and Valentinian elevated Nicæa to the rank of metropolitan. Due to its elevated ecclesiastical status, Nicæa came into conflict with Nicomedia (modern İzmit), the city that historically held the more ancient metropolitan status within the

²⁰⁰ T. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park, 1971). Möllers names only St. John Stoudios and the Theotokos Chalkoprateia as architectural comparisons to Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, see ead., *Hagia Sophia*, 41.

²⁰¹ The Topkapı Sarayı basilica most likely dates to the early fifth century, and may have been built earlier than St. John Stoudios. It was excavated in 1937 by Aziz Oğan, then director of the Topkapı Sarayı Museum. Its remains are now located below the garden level in the second courtyard of the Topkapı Sarayı, the Ottoman palace. See A. M. Schneider, "Grabung im Hopf des Topkapı sarayı," *JDAI* 54 (1939), 179-182; H. T. Bossert, "İstanbul Akropolünde Üniversite Hafriyatı," *Üniversite Konferansları* 125 (1939-40), 206-231; A. Oğan, "Les fouilles de Topkapı Sarayı entreprises en 1937 par la Société d'histoire Turque," *Belleten* 4 (1940), 318-335; E. Mamboury, "Les fouilles byzantines à Istanbul et ses environs," *Byzantion* 2 (1951), 426-427; Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople*, 11-41. Mathews writes that there was a heavy concentration of coin finds at the floor level from the reign of Theodosius II (r. 408-450) but this dating has been challenged by another scholar who dates a Corinthian pier capital found there to 430-460. See *ibid.*, 19-27. Mathews further connects the Topkapı Sarayı basilica and St. John Stoudios to the Theotokos Chalkoprateia, located near Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, which also may date from the reign of Theodosius II (r. 408-450) or from the reign of his sister, Pulcheria (r. 450-453). The Chalkoprateia, dedicated to the Theotokos, was her most venerable shrine. The Chalkoprateia basilica only partially survives, including a semi-circular apse with a polygonal exterior and enough of its walls to show a general rectilinear shape. Mathews explains the following regarding the church's date: "Some historians attribute its foundation to Theodosius II and others to his sister Pulcheria, but the latter fail to specify whether this occurred during the reign of Theodosius or during Pulcheria's own reign. The *Novellae* of Justinian attribute it to Verina, the wife of Leo I (r. 457-474) or to Justin II (r. 565-578)." Mathews concludes by positing that the Chalkoprateia church was the object of patronage by imperial Theodosian women, arguing that Pulcheria, sister of Theodosius II "may have begun the church while Verina would have completed it. Her completion of the church could be attributed to a restoration following an earthquake, as Pseudo-Codinus indicates." See *ibid.*, 28. The church's remains, which include Early Christian fresco painting, are in the basement of the Zeynep Sultan Hotel on Zeynep Sultan Sokak, off Divan Yolu, in Sultanahmet, İstanbul.

province of Bithynia.²⁰² The fact that Nicæa was elevated at all, and that the emperors decided to promote the city to the rank of a *metropolis*, was due to the fact that Valentinian had been acclaimed emperor there on 25 February 364. When the Second Ecumenical Council met in Constantinople in 381, the metropolitan of Nicæa is recorded to have been in attendance, confirming that the Imperial decree elevating Nicæa had in fact been enacted.²⁰³ Given its central position in the city and early date, Hagia Sophia in Nicæa must have been built to serve as the city's new cathedral.²⁰⁴ It is only following the promulgation of the Theodosian Code in the fifth century that the sites of Roman buildings, often in areas of prime real estate, began to be requisitioned for church construction.²⁰⁵

The new church in Nicæa, I argue, was intended to imitate the form and name of the fifth-century Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. By imitating the Constantinopolitan basilica, Hagia Sophia in Nicæa aligned itself with the new patriarchate in the capital to support its own

²⁰² For arguments recorded on the issue of comparative ecclesiastical rank between Nicæa and Nicomedia, see Foss, *Nicæa*, 12-13. Some have incorrectly cited the year 368 for the imperial proclamation elevating the city. The decree by which Valentinian and Valens raised Nicæa to metropolitan status is located within the thirteenth session of the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon, taking place on 30 October 451: "Translation of the law: 27. The Autocrats and Caesars Flavius Valentinian and Flavius Valens, fortunate, pious, august, perpetual victors, address the people of Nicæa. Even though our seal has been clear and conspicuous to all, from the time when by the will of the Almighty we received the sovereignty of empire and the helm of public affairs, we shall still in addition to this cherish as the very origin of this good fortune the fact that your city, which was filled with exultation at our good fortune, was the cause of joy and happiness for the entire people. Accordingly, since it was formerly called a metropolis, and this is contained in the ancient laws, there can be no doubt but that this remains firm and unshaken and will increase in time to come...For the future, having crowned it, we decreed its issuing in your city. Therefore let this custom be preserved for ever, and let your city be a metropolis, while maintaining the custom relating to official visits by the Bithyniarch; and no one is to abolish any of the other [customary rights]. By the will of the Almighty may the dignity of your city increase. Rejoicing therefore, redouble your prayers and take delight in the fact that this honour has been accorded to you, with every doubt having been laid to rest for the future, as you reflect how you have received perpetual kindness and forethought from our decrees," in *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, Vol. 3, eds. R. Price and M. Gaddis, (Liverpool, 2005), 30-31.

²⁰³ N. Q. King, *Theodosius and the Establishment of Christianity* (London, 1961), 98.

²⁰⁴ Peschlow, "The Churches of Nicæa/Iznik," 202-203.

²⁰⁵ Schneider believed that the church had long been dedicated to Hagia Sophia, and that it was also the metropolitan church of Nicæa, given its location at the crossroads of the two major streets. See id., "Die römischen und byzantinischen Denkmäler von Iznik-Nicæa," 10.

recently acquired metropolitan status. Constantinople itself, only a generation before, had needed to establish its own patriarchal see in the fourth century, beginning a battle for preeminence against the four older patriarchal sees at Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Rome. Now the capital of the Roman empire, Constantinople sought to centralize ecclesiastical power within itself, claiming the status of “first among equals.” Hagia Eirene, and then Hagia Sophia, had been built to provide a cathedral for the “new” pre-eminent bishop of Constantinople.

Unlike its more famous antecedent in Constantinople, the exact circumstances surrounding when the original Hagia Sophia in Nicæa was built and dedicated are shrouded in obscurity. Neither texts nor inscriptions survive recording when it was built and by whom, or when it was dedicated and to whom. But, given the church’s origin in the fifth century, I argue that Hagia Sophia in Nicæa was indeed the second basilica to share the dedication to “Holy Wisdom” with the cathedral in Constantinople.²⁰⁶ Hagia Sophia in Iznik predates other churches dedicated to Hagia Sophia in the Byzantine empire, and should be considered the first church outside the capital to take on that dedication. Thus, to cement its own elevation to metropolitan status, Nicæa had arrived at a deceptively simple solution: the city built a church “copying” the patriarchal church of Constantinople, laying claim to its hierarchic ecclesiastical power by standing, literally, in its namesake’s shadow. The evidence, while scattered and fragmentary, indicates that Hagia Sophia in Nicæa was in fact the second Hagia Sophia to be built in the Byzantine empire, an observation that has gone unnoticed, but which has great relevance for the church’s role in thirteenth-century Laskarid Nicæa. To clarify this connection, a synopsis of the

²⁰⁶ Other Early Christian churches dedicated to Holy Wisdom survive in Vize, Turkey; Thessaloniki, Greece; and Sofia, Bulgaria. Vize may date from the early seventh to the ninth century; Sofia and Thessaloniki date earlier, most likely to the sixth century. Beneath the present Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki there is evidence of a five-aisled, longitudinal basilica whose original dedication is unknown. The churches standing in Vize, Thessaloniki, and Sofia were built in the “so-called” extended cross, domed church form, in imitation of the Justinianic church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (Hagia Sophia III).

history of the first and second Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (the latter copied in Nicæa) will prove helpful.

Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, dedicated to the Wisdom of God, was a new kind of dedication, not to a saint, but to the abstract concept of Holy Wisdom, the “logos,” a central philosophical tenet in Neo-Platonic thought that was quickly absorbed by Christian theologians such as Philo, Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, Porphyry, and Augustine of Hippo.²⁰⁷ In fact, Hagia Sophia was the second church, not the first, to be dedicated in this vein during the Early Byzantine period. Hagia Eirene (Holy Peace), which stands next to the present day Hagia Sophia, had been the new capital’s first cathedral, built by Constantine the Great (r. 306-337). Rowland Mainstone argues that the early historical sources, namely Sokrates, clearly identify Constantine the Great’s son, the Emperor Constantius II (r. 350-361) as the builder of the first Hagia Sophia (i.e. Hagia Sophia I), and began its construction around the year 350 or 351.²⁰⁸ Dedicated by patriarch Eudoxias (formerly patriarch of Antioch) in 360, Hagia Sophia replaced

²⁰⁷ Each of these theologians played a part in transferring elements of Platonic philosophy to Christian doctrine. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) is nearly contemporary with the establishment of churches known to have been dedicated to abstract conceptualizations of God. Glanville Downey mentions an interesting proposal by E. Ivanka, which is that Constantinople possessed churches dedicated to the Neo-Platonic ideas associated with Trinitarian doctrine, taking the form of God’s Wisdom, Peace, and Power, monumentalized as the churches of Hagia Sophia (wisdom, or “Σοφία,” a symbol of Christ the Son), Hagia Eirene (peace, or “Εἰρήνη,” a symbol of the Holy Spirit) and Hagia Dynamis (power, or “Δύναμις,” a symbol of God the Father). This interesting proposition may have more than marginal relevance for Nicæa, within whose city walls were images or buildings that carried denotations of exactly these concepts. *Sophia*, in the form of the church of Hagia Sophia, and *dynamis*, personified in the form of an angel, and labeled as such, in the barrel vault mosaics of the apse (surviving today only in photographs) at the Church of the Dormition, see G. Downey, “The Name of the Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople,” *HTR* 52, No. 1 (1959), 37-41.

²⁰⁸ Sokrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica* (Cambridge, 1720), covers the years 305-459. Sokrates was born in Constantinople in 380, and according to him, the first cathedral in Constantinople was Hagia Eirene, built by Constantine I. Constantine the Great was also associated with the Church of the Holy Apostles, but he was not directly associated with the building of the first Hagia Sophia. Mainstone reminds us that the textual record itself was rather confused on the matter of who originally built the first Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. The *Chronicon Pascale*, for example, is ambiguous with respect to the foundation of the church versus the foundation of the city by Constantine. Later writers, like Cedrenus in the eleventh century, showed the difficulty of reconciling the crystal clear attribution of Hagia Sophia’s foundation by Constantius II found in Sokrates with what the generally held belief that it was founded by Constantine I. See Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia*, 131.

Hagia Eirene as the cathedral church of Constantinople, becoming the second most important patriarchate in Orthodox Christendom after Rome.²⁰⁹ It was during the tenure of patriarch John Chrysostom in 404 that Hagia Sophia suffered the violence of arson during the riots attendant upon his expulsion from the patriarchate (see Chapter One). Hagia Sophia was rebuilt (Hagia Sophia II) and rededicated on 10 October 415 under Emperor Theodosius II (r. 408-450). Prior to the fifth century, the Constantinopolitan cathedral was referred to as *mega ekklesia*, the Great Church. Within the textual record, references to the Great Church as *sophia* did not appear until the middle of the fifth century, around the time when Hagia Sophia in Nicæa was built. The Nika riots in the Augusteum, near to Hagia Sophia, resulted in a second conflagration that destroyed Hagia Sophia II early in January 532.²¹⁰ Emperor Justinian ordered the third Hagia Sophia (Hagia Sophia III, 532-537), the church standing today, to be built on the foundations of Hagia Sophia I and II, but chose an architectural form quite different from that of the previous longitudinal basilica-plan churches. As a result of sequential construction on the same architectural footprint, very little about the first or second church is known directly. Based on the allusions to and tangential descriptions of the previous churches in the writings of early Christian authors such as St. John Chrysostom, Theophanes, Palladius, and in the *Chronicon Paschale*, and given the physical evidence brought to light in the 1935 excavations and 1945 trenches dug in and around the Justinianic church by Alfons-Maria Schneider, Mainstone reconstructed Hagia

²⁰⁹ “Because it is new Rome, the bishop of Constantinople is to enjoy privileges of honour after the bishop of Rome,” in Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia*, 133. The bishop of Constantinople’s first cathedral, Hagia Eirene, was Eusebius, who had been translated (the technical term for moving a bishop, and later the remains of saints, from one seat to another) from Nicomedia to Constantinople in 338 or 339.

²¹⁰ C. Mango, *The Brazen House* (Copenhagen, 1959), 30; J. B. Bury, “The Nika Riot,” *JHS* 17 (1897), 92-119.

Sophia II as a five-aisled basilica with galleries.²¹¹ Schneider's excavation of the area in front of the exonarthex, revealed that the *stereobate*, *stylobate*, portico, and lower walls were built upon natural bedrock, indicating that these were the earliest levels of the earlier churches, belonging to one, or more likely to both of the previous churches.²¹² In his reconstruction, Mainstone proposed that Hagia Sophia II would have had a central nave, four side aisles with colonnades supporting a gallery level, and a timber roof (Figure 34).

Although Hagia Sophia in Nicæa has been compared to St. John Stoudios, the Topkapı Sarayı basilica, and the Theotokos Chalkoprateia, no one has yet compared it to Hagia Sophia II, the Theodosian Church with which it shares both a name and an architectural plan. One way of showing the close relationship between architectural models and their copies, as demonstrated by Richard Krautheimer, is by noting correlations between the buildings' proportions, of length relative to width.²¹³ Mainstone reconstructed the Theodosian Hagia Sophia with a proportion of 0.75, based on measurements that were taken from the walls' exterior edges, west wall to east apse and outer north aisle wall to outer south aisle wall. Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, whose fifth-century perimeter remains fully intact, is geometrically similar, built with a scale factor of exactly 0.75, calculated by the author in the same fashion. Not only is this proportional

²¹¹ Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia*, 134-136; A. M. Schneider, "Die vorjustinianische Sophienkirche," *BZ* 36, no. 1 (1936), 77-85.

²¹² "The trial holes beneath the present nave floor disclosed three short lengths of wall towards the west end. Those to north and south were aligned almost parallel to the axis of the present church, and about 20 meters apart measured between their centre-lines..." in A. M. Schneider, "Die Grabung im Westhof der Sophienkirche zu Istanbul," *IstForsch* 12 (Berlin, 1941), 1-46, 31 plates. There is proof that brick walls, still *in situ*, from Hagia Sophia I, were used in the rebuilding of Hagia Sophia II, leading architectural historians to believe that the first and second church shared foundations and had similar ground plans. See K. Dark and J. Kosteneč, "Field Reports: The Hagia Sophia Project, Istanbul," *Bulletin of British Byzantine Studies* 37 (2011), 48-68.

²¹³ R. Krautheimer, "The Carolingian Revival of Early Christian Architecture," *ArtB* 24, No. 1 (1942), 1-38.

correlation remarkable, it is extremely precise, and not repeated in the already mentioned Constantinopolitan churches (Figure 35).²¹⁴

Nicæa, the Citadel and Foundation of Orthodoxy

Nicæa was the site of the First and Seventh Ecumenical councils.²¹⁵ Most scholars believe that the Hagia Sophia mentioned in the 787 decree of the Seventh Ecumenical Council is the building in İznik that currently bears that name.²¹⁶ The church of Hagia Sophia is only connected to the eighth-century event, when it served as the convention site for over three hundred and fifty bishops to debate the orthodoxy of icon veneration. The conciliar decree published upon the completion of the Seventh Ecumenical Council establishes this connection:

²¹⁴ Mainstone's informed reconstruction of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople measures 54 by 72 meters, giving a width to length proportion (also known as a scale factor) of 0.75. Hagia Sophia in Nicæa measures 22 by 29.5 meters, also giving a scale factor of 0.75. That of the other churches are as follows: St. John Stoudios, 0.8; Topkapı Sarayı basilica, 0.7; and Theotokos Chalkoprateia, greater than 0.8.

²¹⁵ R. L. Fox et al., *Pagans and Christians* (New York, 1987), 607-662. The First Ecumenical Council took place in the Imperial Residence in Nicæa, of which nothing has been recovered archaeologically. See C. Mango, "The Meeting-Place of the First Ecumenical Council and the Church of the Holy Fathers," in *Iznik Throughout History*, 305-313, esp. 309. The Church of the Holy Fathers in Nicæa, a monument to the First Ecumenical Council, appears to have been standing, fully functioning, and even attracting pilgrims in 727-729. By the eighth century, a church dedicated to the three hundred and eighteen (318) Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council had been built in Nicæa and stood until the earthquakes of 1065, see Foss, *Nicæa*, 112. There is some discussion about the possible discovery of an imperial palace within the city limits near the Lefke Gate. See Azize Ethem's column "Village Voices" in *Cornucopia* 44 (2010), 188: "What we do know is that some unfortunate man bought a plot of land to build a house a couple of streets east of the Lefke Gate. Excavation work revealed a magnificent mosaic floor and other treasures. It has been noted, because of the quality of the mosaics, that it may be the site of the Roman governors' palace, which has always been thought to be on the lake's shore. The floor has been recovered with soil to keep it hidden from all of us who don't know of its existence. Now we all await the authorities' next move..." Further digging on Afyon Sultan Sokağında for a sewer canal unearthed even more of the mosaic, which shows evidence of a large tessellate stone floor decorated with octagonal panels with interlaced ribbon borders and featuring large, expressive human faces. As of 29 January 2014, when the mosaics were reported in the Turkish news, the excavations have continued under the authority of the İznik Müze Müdürlüğü.

²¹⁶ Foss writes that the name of Hagia Sophia in İznik results either from "local history or because, as in other places, the name of Hagia Sophia may be given to a major mosque converted from a church by analogy with Constantinople." If this is the case, it would be well worth a study of these other Hagia Sophias to determine in which cases the name was the result of a dedication of the church to the Holy Wisdom of God and in which cases it was the result of a patterned, formulaic renaming of churches into mosques. Möllers writes that in 1818 J. v. Hammer first identified the church in Nicæa, then Orhan Camii, as Hagia Sophia. Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 10.

The holy, great and universal synod, by the grace of God and by order of our pious and Christ-loving emperor and empress, Constantine and his mother Irene, assembled for the second time in the famous metropolis of the Nicaeans in the province of the Bithynians, in the holy church of God named after Wisdom, following the tradition of the catholic church, has decreed what is here laid down.²¹⁷

Empress Irene did not originally intend to hold the Seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicæa, but rather at the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople.²¹⁸ Due to the tense political climate in the capital, the empress was compelled to move the council elsewhere, and settled on Nicæa. Later, at the eighth and final meeting in the Magnaura Palace in Constantinople, one attendee, Epiphanius, gave this speech:

Hail to you also, famed citadel of Nicæa, a name renowned among the metropolises, glorious crown of the province of Bithynia; previously hallowed by the presence of the 318 holy, godly fathers, now by their successors to the number 350, and by the crowds, hard to number, of the reverend monks; you are surrounded by the favours of their blessings. For in you the foundation of the orthodox faith, when in danger of being overturned by a certain Satanic perversity, received its unshakable establishment. In you, that divine assembly of the fathers captured the wild and savage beast Arius by spreading out the holy net of the Scriptures, and shot him down with fearful curses; and thence we – the whole of mankind – have learned the doctrine that the Son of God the Father is of the same nature as His Begetter. Therefore, the duality of the pious emperors has ordered the present holy assembly of this company, equal in number to that one, to be brought together in you – Irene the new Helen with her son, the true new Constantine. May the grace of the spirit which shines in you from the holy fathers of that time and now, preserve them for plentiful years, granting them undisturbed rule. May it throw the hosts

²¹⁷ “Ἡ ἀγία μεγάλη καὶ οἰκουμένη συνόδος, ἡ κατὰ θεοῦ χάριν καὶ θέσπισμα τῶν εὐσεβῶν καὶ φιλοχρίστων ἡμῶν βασιλέων Κωνσταντίνου καὶ Εἰρήνης τῆς αὐτοῦ μητρὸς συναθροισθεῖσα τὸ δεύτερον ἐν τῇ Νικαίων λαμπρᾷ μητροπόλει τῆς Βιθυνῶν ἐπαρχίας, ἐν τῇ ἀγίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ ἐπονομαζομένῃ Σοφία, ἀκολουθήσασα τῇ παραδόσει τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας, ὥρισε τὰ ὑποτεταγμένα.” For English translation and Greek original, see Norman and Tanner, *Decrees*, 133, *133.

²¹⁸ The First Ecumenical Council took place in an imperial palace in Nicæa in 325, the Second took place in Hagia Eirene in Constantinople in 381, the Third at the Church of St. Mary in Ephesus in 431, the Fourth Council took place across the Bosphorus at Chalcedon, perhaps at Hagia Euphemia in 451, and the Fifth in 553 in an unknown church or palace in Constantinople. The Sixth Council was held in one of the imperial palaces with a domed roof in 680-681 in Constantinople, and the Seventh in Nicæa in 787. The “first” Seventh Council was convened by Constantine V in 754 in the palace complex of Hieria on the Asian side of Constantinople, but this council was later rejected and its rulings overturned by the decrees of the “second” Seventh Council in Nicæa. The Church of the Holy Apostles was the site first proposed to host the “second” Seventh Council, and was the capital city’s church most closely associated with imperial power, populated as it was by numerous burials of Byzantine emperors and empresses. Thus, Empress Irene’s desire to hold the Seventh Council at the Church of the Holy Apostles speaks to her claim to be a legitimate Empress of Byzantium.

of enemies down at their feet, just as the abundant supply of good things may not be lacking for us. Hail, therefore, famed beauty of the metropolises, for this, that in you the first of our blessing arose, and in you the final one also, not in importance but in number: the restoration of the ancient tradition of the holy icons of our catholic Church to its proper place.²¹⁹

While this speech was not delivered within Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, Epiphanius's words recall specific Orthodox moments with Nicæan contexts, alluding to the long distant First Ecumenical Council as well as the Seventh, coming to an end even as he spoke. He mentions the Byzantine empress "...Irene, the new Helen with her son, the true new Constantine..." referring to her son Constantine VI, directly conflating the leadership of the fourth- and eighth-century mother and son pairs in the formation of the Orthodox faith.²²⁰

Michel Alpatoff, who visited Nicæa in 1924, mentioned having seen a fresco in Hagia Sophia of Constantine the Great and his mother Helena, confirmed by inscription, which he believed to date to the eleventh century.²²¹ The fresco, perhaps an image of Sts. Constantine and Helena holding the relic of the True Cross, acts as a mirror to Epiphanius' text above, superimposing the pair who historically had brought Christianity into the empire (Sts.

²¹⁹ "χαίροις δὲ καὶ σὺ Νικαέων περίκλυτον ἄστει, τὸ ἐν μητροπόλεσι περίπυστον ὄνομα, τῆς Βιθυνῶν ἐπαρχίας τὸ εὐκλεέστατον ἀκροθίνιον, ἢ πρότερον μὲν ταῖς τῶν ἁγίων ὀκτωκαίδεκα καὶ τριακοσίων θεοφόρων πατέρων ἴχνησιν ἁγιασθεῖσα, νῦν δὲ τοῖς τούτων διαδόχοις τριῶν ἑκατοντάδων σὺν πέντε δέκασιν ἀριθμῶν ἐκπληροῦσιν, εὐλαβῶν τε μοναχῶν οὐκ εὐαριθμήτων πλήθει, ταῖς αὐταῖς τῶν εὐλογιῶν περικυκλωμένη χάρισιν. Ἐν σοι γὰρ τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως ὁ θεμέλιος ὑπὸ τινος σατανικῆς δυστροπίας σεισθεῖναι κινδυνεύων ἐδραῖωσιν ἀκλόνητον εἴληφεν. Ἐν σοι τὸν ἄγριον ἐκεῖνον καὶ ἀτίθασον θῆρα Ἄγριον ὁ θεῖος ἐκεῖνος τῶν πατέρων χορὸς τὰ ἱερά τῶν Γραφῶν ἐφαπλώσαντες λινὰ ἐζώγησαν, καὶ τοῖς φοβεροῖς κατηκόντισαν ἀναθέμασι, κἀντεῦθεν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ὁμοούσιον τῷ γεγενηκότι πᾶσα φύσις ἀνθρώπων θεολογεῖν ἐκμεμάθηκεν. Διὰ τοι τοῦτο καὶ τὸ παρὸν ἱερώτατον σύνταγμα τῆς ἰσαριθμοῦ ταύτης χορείας δυὰς εὐσεβῶν βασιλέων ἐν σοι συγκροτηθῆναι τεθέσπικεν, Εἰρήνη νέα Ἑλένη σὺν υἱῷ γνησίῳ νέῳ Κωνσταντίνῳ, οὗς ἡ ἐν σοι τοῦ πνεύματος χάρις τοῖς τότε καὶ νῦν ἁγίοις ἐπιλάμψασα πατράσι, φυλάξοι δαυσιλέσι χρόνοις ἀτάραχον αὐτοῖς τὸ κράτος δωρουμένη, καὶ τῶν ἐχθρῶν τὰ φύλα πρὸ ποδῶν καταστρώσει, ὡς ἂν ἡμῖν ἢ τῶν ἀγαθῶν μὴ διαλίποι χορηγία, χαίροις τοίνυν ὃ μητροπολέων περιδοξὸν κάλλος, ἐν τούτοις, ὅτι ἐν σοι τὸ πρῶτον ἡμῖν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνέφυ, ἐν σοι δὴ ἦν τὸ τέλος οὐχ ὡς πρὸς ἀξίαν πρὸς ἀριθμὸν δὲ ἦτις ἐστὶ τῶν σεπτοτάτων εἰκόνων τῆς καθολικῆς ἡμῶν ἐκκλησίας ἢ ἀρχαία παράδοσις, ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀποκατασταθεῖσα ὄροις." Foss, *Nicæa*, 21.

²²⁰ For further bibliography see G. Dumeige, *Nicée II, Histoire des conciles œcuméniques*, Vol. 4 (Paris, 1978); J. M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford, 1984), 45-50.

²²¹ Alpatoff, "Les fresques," 42-45.

Constantine and Helena) with the image of Empress Irene and Emperor Constantine VI, who would be credited with restoring icon veneration to Orthodox practice, thus ending Iconoclasm. The iconography of that image would have possessed particular relevance in Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, where the orthodoxy of icon veneration was championed and won. As Natalia Teteriatnikov has written, the iconography of the True Cross changed after the end of Iconoclasm, when its simple, symbolic value became imbued with liturgical and historical meaning consistent with confirmed Orthodox doctrine.²²²

By the end of the eighth century, Nicæa's Orthodox history had become thoroughly ingrained with its civic identity through its metropolitan church and the two Ecumenical Councils held there—all instrumental in the formation of Orthodox Christianity. The *Vita* of St. Basil, who lived in the fourth century, contains an episode in which possession of “the metropolitan church” of Nicæa, which can be none other than Hagia Sophia, was fought over between Arians (considered to be heretics) and Orthodox Christians. The church doors were locked, and each sect was charged with the task of praying for them to open (miraculously, of course) without a key. Hagia Sophia refused to open for the Arians, but its doors burst open wide for St. Basil, the Orthodox representative, showing the basilica's own Orthodox leanings. By the time this story from St. Basil's *vita* was written, centuries later after his lifetime, the Orthodox character of Nicæa and its metropolitan church had not only become a fact of history, but had permeated the very walls of Hagia Sophia.²²³

²²² N. Teteriatnikov, “The True Cross Flanked by Constantine and Helena-A Study in the Light of the Post-Iconoclastic re-evaluation of the Cross,” *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Ετ.* 18 (1995), 169-188.

²²³ See Foss, Nicæa, 11; *Vita Theophanis et Theodori, Ανάλεκτα Ιεροσολυμιτικής σταχυολογίας*, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus (St. Petersburg, 1897), 219-221.

In the fifth century, the architectural association of Nicæa's Hagia Sophia with the Theodosian basilica of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople strengthened Nicæa's elevation to metropolitan status for the Bithynian basilica retained the proportion and basilican footprint of the groundplan of Hagia Sophia II. When the Laskarids arrived in Nicæa in 1204 the historic connection of Nicæa and Orthodoxy would have been fully apparent and powerfully suggestive. Hagia Sophia, in its name, form and history, would have prompted its adoption as the exilic realm's new patriarchal church in the thirteenth century, a substitution that will be proved by the evidence presented in the remainder of this chapter. As the Laskarids renovated the city, the church of Hagia Sophia would receive imperial donations in the form of interior decoration, and the church would serve also as their coronation cathedral.

Hagia Sophia's Architectural History, Eighth to Eleventh Centuries

Earthquakes have plagued western Anatolia continually, and their destructive effects have complicated efforts to discern the building history of Hagia Sophia. An earthquake in 740 desolated Constantinople and its environs, including Nicæa.²²⁴ Foss believes that portions of the large internal piers and short longitudinal walls of the church's nave, which replaced the fifth-century colonnades, date to the middle of the ninth century based on the similarities between the building's mortar and brickwork with mortar and brickwork with those of towers along Nicæa's walls known to have been repaired by Michael III (r. 842-867, see Chapter Two).²²⁵ Möllers

²²⁴ Theophanes records that this earthquake left only one church standing in Nicæa, but does not mention the church by name, see Foss, *Nicæa*, 19. The archaeological record indicates that parts of several churches were left partially standing, so that perhaps Theophanes meant only one church was left standing "undamaged."

²²⁵ Michael III was two years of age when he ascended to the throne of Byzantium; the walls of Nicæa were repaired by him later on in his reign. Foss dates the second major building phase of Hagia Sophia to his reign, citing brick

suggests that the church floor was raised and paved prior to the eleventh-century earthquakes, explaining how the *arcosolium* burial in the north aisle was predominantly concealed by it.²²⁶

A second series of disastrous earthquakes hit Nicæa between 1063 and 1065. Michael Attaliates wrote the following:

After the two year period, there having occurred an earthquake more violent than the repeated ones that had followed, but lesser than the first one, which was the greatest, Nicæa in Bithynia suffered a disastrous collapse and almost complete destruction. For its most famous and greatest churches, both the one dedicated to the Wisdom of God's Logos (i.e. Hagia Sophia) and serving as the metropolitan seat, and that of the Holy Fathers (where the Synod against Arius had been confirmed by the most holy and orthodox fathers and the true creed was proclaimed and shone forth brighter than the sun), were shaken and demolished, and the walls as well as private dwellings suffered the same fate. And from that day on, the quakes ceased.²²⁷

The destruction caused by these earthquakes and the rebuilding that ensued are the dominating factors in Hagia Sophia's complicated architectural history.²²⁸ In the second rebuilding phase

and mortar parallels with the walls he repaired, dated by inscriptions. See Foss, *Nicæa*, 103, and Chapter Two. Peschlow disagrees with Foss's dating of any repairs to the ninth century. See Peschlow, "The Churches of Nicæa/Iznik," 206.

²²⁶ Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 49-51.

²²⁷ "Ἀπὸ τότε δὲ καὶ μέχρις ἐνιαυτῶν δύο σποράδες ἐπεφοίτων σειμοὶ κατὰ διαφοροὺς καιροὺς. Καὶ τὸ θάμβος μέγιστον ὅσον περιεγίωτο τοῖς βροτοῖς. ἦσαν γάρ τινες ἕξωροι, οἳ παρεοικότας σειμοὺς τῷ μεγίστῳ δ' ἄθρο ἄνευρον, οἱ μὲν τοῦτον οἱ δ' ἐκείνους κατὰ σ' ἴσθκριν ὑπεραίροντες καὶ παρηκολουθωκέναι τότε δι' ἡμερῶν τεσσαράκοντα καὶ μὴ πλείω βραχεῖς τινὰς προσεπέφερον. τὸ δὲ διὰ διετοῦς χρόνου κλονεῖσθαι τὴν γῆν πᾶσιν ἀμνημόευντων ἦν καὶ μηδ' ἱστορία περιλητόν. Ἀγαθίας γάρ περὶ τοῦ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ Ἰοθστινιανοῦ σθμβεβηκότος σειμοῦ γεγραφώς, καὶ καταπληκτικὸν τοῦτον καὶ μέγιστον σθγγραψάμενος ὡς καὶ κίονωας ἀποσφρω δονᾶσθαι τοῦ δε τοῦ οἴκου τεσσαρακονθήμερου καὶ μὴ περαιτέρω προβῆνα ἱστόρικε. Μετὰ δὲ τὴν διετίαν, σειμοῦ γενομένου μείζονος μὲν τῶν μετὰ συγχῶν, ἐλάττονος δε τοῦ πρώην μεγίστου, πέπονθε πτωσῶν ἢ κατὰ Βιθυνίαν Νίκαια καὶ πανωλεθρίαν μικροῦ δεῖν καὶ καταστροφὴν παντελεῖ. οἱ γὰρ ἐπισημότετοι ταύτης ναοὶ καὶ μέγιστοι, ὃ τ' ἐπ' ὀνόματι τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σοφίας καθιδρυμένος καὶ καθιερωμένος τῇ μητροπόλει καὶ ὁ τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων, ἔνθαπερ ἢ κατὰ τοῦ Ἀρείου σύνοδος τοῖς ὀσιωτάτοις καὶ ὀρθοδόξοις ἐβεβαιώθη πατράσι, καὶ τὸ ὀρθότομον ἐπαρρησιάσθη καὶ τηλαυγέστερον ἡλίου διέλαμψε, συνταραχθέντες κατηδαφίσθησαν. Καὶ τὰ τεῖχη τῆς ὀμοίας τύχης σὺν τοῖς πολιτικοῖς οἰκίμασι μετεσχίμασι. Καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνης τῆς ἡμέρας τὰ τοῦ τρόμου κατέλγξεν. Ἦσαν δὲ ταῦτα καὶ εἴσπραξις ἀμαρτημάτων καὶ χόλος θεῖος ἐξ ἅπαντος, ἠνίττοντο δὲ, ὡς ἔοικε, καὶ τὴν τοῦ εἰρημένου ἔθνοους ἐπιφοίτησιν καὶ κατάλυσιν, ἐν γὰρ ταῖς θεοσημίαις πρὸς τοῖς εἰρημένοισι καὶ τι μέλλον ἐπισκῆψαι προτεθεώρηται." *Michael Attaliates, Historia*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1853), 90-91. For an English translation see C. Mango, "The Date of the Narthex Mosaics of the Church of the Dormition at Nicæa," *DOP* 13 (1959), 245-252.

²²⁸ In Foss's view, Hagia Sophia was either not damaged in the earthquake of 740, or it was damaged and then repaired afterwards, in time for the Second Council to meet in there in 787. This church may have subsequently been damaged again by an unknown earthquake or fire, necessitating the ninth-century repairs he observed. The eleventh-

that followed the earthquakes of 1063-1065, Möllers states that the north, south, and east narthex walls were reconstructed, the roof, semi-dome and the apse were rebuilt, and a barrel vault was installed over the bema. The superstructure of the north and south pastophoria was built into the surviving corners of the aisles' east ends at this same time, and the floor was repaved. A stone sarcophagus was placed in each of the pastophoria. The sarcophagus in the north pastophorium survives only in the form of gray marble fragments (Figure 36) while that in the south is mostly complete and *in situ* (Figure 37). Both were concealed when the floor level was raised.²²⁹ The arcosolium was also partially buried by the higher floor level, so that only its upper lunette remains visible (Figure 38). Piers were erected in the nave, and were separated from one another by a pair of triple arcades on each side (Figures 39 and 40). Any repairs that might have been made in the eighth or ninth century are difficult to discern today, due to the fact that most would have been knocked down during the massive earthquakes of 1063-1065, and then obscured by the subsequent eleventh-century repairs made to church. It is natural to conclude that the rebuilding of the church was also accompanied by a full-scale redecoration, complete with marble revetments, frescoes, and mosaics. Which elements of Hagia Sophia's interior correspond to the period of Laskarid tenure in Nicæa (1204-1261) or to the Komnenian period just prior (1081-1204) have not yet been determined. Distinguishing them is the task of the remainder of this chapter.

century repairs, he says, are easily differentiated from the earlier phases and would have to have been made following the earthquakes of 1063-1065.

²²⁹ Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 31.

Laskarid Modifications to Hagia Sophia

The state of knowledge of Laskarid art, in particular, is scanty; therefore, any additions to the corpus are invaluable for evaluating the Laskarid contribution to Byzantine art historiography, and for answering the larger questions posed by this study, namely how the Laskarid dynasty effectively replaced Byzantium in exile, and in what ways Laskarid art functions as the missing link between Komnenian and Palaiologan art (as separate from architecture). The dilapidated fresco painting at Hagia Sophia, concentrated in the north and south pastophoria, in the north aisle's arcosolium grave, and the beautiful inlaid pavement at the west end have been ascribed to many different dates, ranging from the eleventh to the fourteenth century. I believe that each of these areas of the church warrants re-examination in order to define their date range more narrowly, and to separate the works dating to the Laskarid era from the rest.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss the inlaid mosaic pavement at the west end of the church by reviewing its date in comparison to other pavements both in the church and elsewhere in Bithynia and in Trebizond. Christina Pinatsi was the first to point out that its presence at Hagia Sophia attests the basilica's role as the patriarchal church of the Laskarid empire, and confirms patronage of the Laskarid court.²³⁰ Through an analysis of the modular nature of the mosaic, and other pavements noted, but not studied, in the nave, I will present evidence that suggests that the pavement was actually part of a much larger renovation of the church interior—a renovation that I will show included the entire nave floor and the pastophoria, under the Laskarids. I intend to confirm the current dating of the pavement in Hagia Sophia, Nicæa, conclusively proving that Hagia Sophia became the seat of the Orthodox patriarch and

²³⁰ Pinatsi, "New Observations," 119-126.

functioned as the Laskarid coronation church. This interior decoration is a prime example of Laskarid artistic patronage, but is not mentioned at all in the historical sources. The second major component of Laskarid artistic patronage at Hagia Sophia, namely the frescoes of the pastophoria, will be addressed in Chapter Four. The style and composition of the pavement and the frescoes bear directly on the tenets of a Laskarid artistic style, a description of which becomes possible here for the first time.

The Imperial Omphalion

During an early twentieth-century excavation of the church interior, an extremely fine inlaid Byzantine pavement was uncovered at the west end of Hagia Sophia's nave, located slightly over one meter inside the nave from the central door (Figure 41). This pavement, like the pastophoria frescoes, had been dated to the eleventh-century rebuilding of the church.²³¹ Pinatsi convincingly re-dated the pavement to the first half of the thirteenth century, arguing that it was installed in the metropolitan church as a ritual coronation pavement, or *omphalion*, for the Laskarid emperors (Figure 42).

The pavement at Hagia Sophia measures 2.7 meters square (approximately 8.9 feet), and its governing compositional features are based on a circle inscribed within a square. The circular designs and interlacing hitch knots are confined to the area within the innermost square. Around the main central disk are arranged eight more discs (four green, four maroon), encased and intertwined with one another by means of a ubiquitous white marble ribbon, or interlace. While the central disc is surrounded by eight double hitch knots, each of the eight surrounding discs is

²³¹ For the pavement's supposed eleventh-century date, see Eyice, "Two Mosaic Pavements," and Y. Demiriz, *Örgülü Bizans Döşeme Mosaikleri – Interlaced Byzantine Mosaic Pavements* (Istanbul, 2002).

tied to the central disc and to its two neighbors. At the outermost edge each of these discs, another set of hitch knots twists to create the effect of a second circle, this one with a diameter just shy of the inner square's side measure. In the interstitial space remaining along the cardinal axes, that is to say, between the circumference of the second circle and the sides of the inner square, as well as in the more spacious corners, are other hitch knots and a set of discs, one in each of the four corners, fastened securely into place by an array of no less than five hitch knots per disc. These knots unfold and seem to be ironed into a straight line in order to demarcate the innermost perimeter of the square. The border that appears between the inner and outer square border is the same one that once encircled the central green marble disc, and which repeats around several of the rectangular panels in the square framing border of the pavement. This border is formed by a series of elongated diamonds of similarly colored stone or marble set on point next to one another, whose intervening spaces are filled with alternating triangles of black and white (Figure 43). A section of the border still on display in the İznik Archaeology Museum in 2009, showing instead of the yellow or green diamonds, a grayish white, accented by cream and black, I have identified as belonging to the border that surrounds the central disc (Figure 44).

The pavement presents features that Pinatsi argued to be characteristic of the thirteenth century: namely, the use of *opus tessellatum* (floor mosaic made of small stone or marble tesserae), *intarsia* (pieces of stone or marble or glass paste inlay fitted into a visible background support), and the *fleur-de-lis*, a symbol associated with the Laskarid rulers, in this case cut from black, green, rose and yellow granite and marble.²³² *Opus tessellatum* refers to the use of small tesserae, like those typically used in Byzantine wall mosaics, in floor mosaics, and is a technique that appears in both twelfth and thirteenth century floors. At Hagia Sophia, the term is used to

²³² Pinatsi, "New Observations," 121.

designate the use of stone and glass tesserae to outline or fill in lines and borders. These tesserae appear throughout the omphalion in many colors, including bright blue, emerald green, and black (Figures 45 and 46).²³³ Intarsia refers to a kind of opus sectile in which stone is cut and fitted into a visible background, made of stone, marble, or even cement. In its strictest definition, *intarsia* does not appear in the omphalion at Hagia Sophia, but is imitated by the red and white eight-petalled blossoms that are placed in the spandrels between the largest circle and the innermost square border (Figure 46). Seven of these blossoms survive out of the ten or eleven I estimate (based on the pattern of distribution evident today) there once were. The alternating red and white petals, which are the same shape and size for all the blossoms, are formed from white marble and either a reddish-maroon marble or granite. Each *stigma* is formed either by opus sectile, by glass tesserae, or by small discs of blue or purplish gray stone (as in Figure 46). In my view, the eight-petalled flowers most closely resemble the widespread primrose or the less common *mignon dahlia*, and are meant to be seen as representation of real flowers, whereas the *fleurs-de-lis* that surround the central disc are stylized and symbolic (Figure 47).

The eight fleurs-de-lis are distributed in the spandrels just outside the central green marble disc. Of the original lilies, only seven survive today. The lilies are carved from four distinct colors of marble, two each from marble or granite in a dark, blackish green, a light cream-yellow (the second yellow lily is missing), in black, and a warm peachy rose. Unlike the intarsia blossoms, inlaid to appear as if the flowers themselves had been opened flat and pressed dry on the floor at their peak, the lilies are depicted in a symbolic profile. The three petals erupt from a base that, interestingly, does not resemble other Laskarid lily “bases.” For example, compared to the lilies of St. Tryphon that appear on Laskarid coins, and which tend towards

²³³ Pinatsi notes that *opus tessellatum* appears at Sagmata Monastery, St. Nicholas in Kalloni, and at Vlacherna in Arta, see *ibid.*, 121.

either a naturalistic or a symmetrical form (Figure 48), the lilies in the pavement were carved with a distinctive lower profile: a rectilinear edge that is squared at the ends, sitting atop an isosceles trapezoidal base. The change in the lily's profile may suggest a separate object, for example, a hanging oil lamp, made either of glass or bronze.²³⁴ The lilies of the omphalion, in either event, are being presented in the moment of their miraculous blooming, strongly reminiscent of the lily of St. Tryphon "which lies in the lamp of the martyr [and] blooms in the frost and snows of winter."²³⁵

The presence of the inlaid lilies is altogether compelling for a Laskarid identification, as Pinatsi suggested, primarily for the reason that this motif linked the Laskarids to St. Tryphon, a saint venerated by the Laskarid dynasty and a famous martyr of Nicæa, whose relics miraculously caused a lily bulb to sprout and bloom his feast day of 1 February. Theodore II, whom Tryphon visited in a dream, also authored an *encomium* to his saintly benefactor, and eventually built a monastery and university dedicated to Tryphon in Nicæa.²³⁶ The saint, who also happened to be an early Christian martyr of Nicæa, was usually depicted with the blooming lily as his main attribute, signifying that the lily motif in the Laskarid era serves a purpose beyond mere decoration: that it specifically references Laskarid rulers.²³⁷ As Pinatsi noted, each of the four Laskarid rulers associated themselves with the lily on their coinage, a practice continued by usurper Michael VIII Palaiologos. The continual use of this symbol into the 1260s indicates that the lily had become the major symbol of the legitimate imperial authority of the

²³⁴ Such as in the mosaic panel from Syria, now in the National Museum, Copenhagen (inv. no. 15137). For illustration, see L. Bouras and M. G. Parani, *Lighting in Early Byzantium* (Washington, D.C., 2008), 28, Fig. 27.

²³⁵ Foss, *Nicæa*, 106.

²³⁶ See *Theodori Scutariotæ Additamenta ad Georgii Acropolitæ Historiam*, in *Georgii Acropolitæ Opera*, 2 vols., ed. A. Heisenberg (Stuttgart, 1978), Vol. 1, 277-302, esp. 291, l. 6-15; 291-292, l. 20-1. 2.

²³⁷ Foss, *Nicæa*, 104-108.

Laskarid dynasty.²³⁸ By arguing that the pavement functioned as an omphalion, Pinatsi connected Hagia Sophia to Byzantine imperial court and coronation ceremonies during the Laskarid era.²³⁹

Though the lilies' backgrounds have since eroded away, a few earlier black and white photographs happen to remain (Figure 49), and these, combined with close inspection of the remaining lilies, have allowed me to create a reconstruction that conveys the original style and coloration of the fleur-de-lis spandrel (Figure 50). One detail that should not be over-looked is the bright, contrasting-colored opus tessellatum outline around each lily: the black and dark green lilies receive outlines in bright greenish-blue, terracotta red and white tesserae, while the rosy peach lilies are outlined in black and bright green-blue tesserae. It is likely that the creamy yellow lily would have also been outlined in black and bright green-blue, like the rosy peach. As with the inlaid blossoms, the lilies were outlined in bright, contrasting colors, whose purpose was to define and separate the flower from its decorative background. In Figure 46, for example, the blossom is completely surrounded by a bright green-blue line of opus tessellatum, giving the viewer the sense that the flower is set on top of, rather than embedded within (which it is) the geometrically patterned field; this is exactly the solution used for distinguishing the lilies from their similarly ornate opus sectile backgrounds.

The irregularly shaped fields where the lilies are placed are created by eight double-hitch knots (shown flattened), rendered in curvy pieces of white and gray veined Proconnesian marble, wending its way through the omphalion as pliantly as lengths of thick ribbon. Each overlap of the

²³⁸ As in the copper trachy of Michael VIII Paliologos, Type A. See P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coinage* (Washington, D.C., 1999), 253; M. F. Hendy, *Coinage and Money in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C., 1969), esp. 528-553, Plate XXXVII.

²³⁹ Pinatsi, "New Observations," 122-125.

hitch knot creates a negative space in the center, filled with even smaller discs in maroon red, creamy yellow, rosy peach, or dark green marble: these, in turn, are outlined by a thin outer ring of triangular black and white stones, set point to base, along the disc's perimeter. The pointy dark black color of the edging is pulled, as though it were paint, along the line of the marble ribbon's overlapping edge, creating a heavy dark outline that implies a thin shadow of sorts, clarifying (one assumes for the convenience of the viewer looking down from above) exactly which marble ribbon lays in front and which curves behind. This ubiquitous black outlining, made of thin pieces of black stone, is an important characteristic that the omphalion at Hagia Sophia in Nicæa shares exclusively with the omphalion pavement at Hagia Sophia in Trebizond, a feature Pinatsi noted that argued for Hagia Sophia at Nicæa's pavement's thirteenth-century date.²⁴⁰ In addition to this "black outlining," I have found at least two opus sectile patterns that are shared by the pavements at Nicæa and at Trebizond that suggest an even closer relationship between the two *omphalia* than has been noted thus far.

The pattern in Figure 44 is one of the two that I have identified at both Hagia Sophia in Nicæa and at Hagia Sophia in Trebizond. One of the most significant in the pavement in Nicæa, it is unique and distinctive, and appears at Hagia Sophia in Trebizond twice in the rings surrounding that pavement's central disc, and around one of the surrounding discs as well (Figures 51 and 52). A second pattern features prominently in pavements at both churches, one in which elongated ovals are pieced together to make a circle, inside of which is placed a differently colored square. The interstitial spaces are then filled with other triangles of other colors. This pattern appears throughout the opus sectile background of the omphalion at Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Figures 49 and 50) and is the second to appear in Hagia Sophia, Trebizond.

²⁴⁰ Pinatsi, "New Observations," 125-126.

While Pinatsi advanced a date in the thirteenth century based on these two pavements' compositional similarities, namely the use of *opus tessellatum*, I would venture to argue that this feature, when combined with the pavements' similar style and dossier of technical features, as well as the shared repertoire of patterns, strongly suggests that the same workshop executed both pavements. Hagia Sophia in Trebizond was built during the reign of Manuel I Grand Komnenos (1238-1263). It appears that the workshop that produced Trebizond's pavement was also active earlier during the reign of the Laskarids in Nicæa (1203-1261).²⁴¹

I also observed that the Nicæan omphalion shows clear traces of having been inserted into the already existing eleventh-century floor. First, a large piece of the white and gray marble that was displaced by the omphalion was moved and now runs north to south next to the threshold. Secondly, a small section of the thin white marble band that runs west to east has been repositioned at the northwestern corner to run north-south (Figure 53). Lastly, it is evident that there was a buffer zone surrounding the space cleared for the installation of the omphalion, particularly evident on the north and south edges, whereas one can observe two *opus sectile* borders, nearly identical except that they are of different widths. The southern buffer zone required three rows of the border design, while the north edge required only two (Figures 54 and 55). Through a study of the other fragmentary remains of pavements and mortar beds from Möllers' excavation reports, I believe that there is enough compelling evidence to suggest that the Laskarid repaving, of which the omphalion is the best preserved remnant, extended along the length of the whole nave of the church.

²⁴¹ For Hagia Sophia in Trebizond, see D. Talbot Rice, *The Church of Hagia Sophia at Trebizond* (Edinburgh, 1968); A. Eastmond, *Art and Identity in Thirteenth-Century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and the Empire of Trebizond* (Aldershot, 2004).

The other traces of decorative pavement within the church have been briefly noted by Eyice and Möllers. A total of nine stretches of pavement besides the omphalion are known at present: these have been recorded in the church and its annex, in photographs, or in archaeological reports. Five of these fragments—the altar base in the bema (fifth century), the opus sectile in the synthronon (fifth-eleventh century), the opus sectile in the bema (eighth-eleventh century), and the two layers of pavement in the annex (fifth-eleventh century)—do not bear directly on this discussion, for they all predate the omphalion by at least one building phase. It is also important to recall that the interior of the church has never been fully excavated, that only small portions of the nave have been cleared of debris, and that a few select trenches dug to foundation level when Schneider studied the building (Figure 56). The fifth-century floor was only partially uncovered by Schneider during his excavations around the northern aisle exterior doorway, and he described it as consisting of large, rectangular marble slabs.²⁴² The lowest floor level is exposed in the eastern areas of the church, but does not retain its fifth-century floor covering. In the bema of the apse, the altar base is still *in situ*, and in one of Möllers' photographs one can observe a column, recut to serve as an altar stand, that has fallen over and broken the altar base (Figure 57).²⁴³ As with the church's building phases, there are inconsistencies regarding the dating and sequence of the church's floor levels. Fortunately, while complicated, their indeterminate dating does not directly affect the Laskarid omphalion and other thirteenth-century remains.²⁴⁴

²⁴² Schneider, "Die römischen und byzantinischen Denkmäler von İznik-Nicæa," 13.

²⁴³ Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 15.

²⁴⁴ As of 2015, there is a new permanent floor on top of the eleventh-century floor, surmounted by a square-shaped carpeted platform for those who worship within the mosque. All medieval floor finds, save those of the thirteenth-century Laskarid omphalion and the column bases, are now hidden under the tile floor, or possibly even removed, perhaps taken to the local museum. Schneider had reconstructed two succeeding levels of the floor (the first at

Of the four remaining pavements that survive, three show characteristics similar to the omphalion and to other known thirteenth-century pavements. While it is difficult to ascertain a complete picture of the eleventh-century floor into which these pavements would have been inserted, enough traces remain in the west end of the nave and along edges and corners of the internal piers and outer walls to facilitate an informative description. Interestingly, these areas of the nave floor show evidence of having been reworked, mostly likely in conjunction with the installation of the omphalion in the thirteenth century, suggesting that the Laskarid decoration of the pavement extended throughout the nave of the church. The size of the omphalion, taken as a “module,” repeats five times down the nave. The long side borders and intermediary edges produced by the repetition of this “module” of squared space are respected and referenced in the fragmentary pavement evidence that remains. Not only do the edges correspond along both the north-south and east-west axes, but the remains themselves present characteristics similar to the omphalion. As mentioned previously, opus sectile mosaic was laid in the bema and apse (Figure 58). Near the bema, particularly around the piers of the eastern end, the floors are covered in a pastiche of primarily greyish white marble slabs, rectilinear in form, pieced together as though the governing concern was simply to create a luxurious marble-covered floor. In contrast, in the far west end of the nave, we observed long stripes of various colored marbles, ranging in width and hue, from white and gray, dark grey, light peach yellow and dark peach, to bright white, that

ground zero, the second in the eleventh century), which extended uniformly throughout the church. Unfortunately, despite Schneider’s claim that the eleventh-century level floor extended from the bema eastwards through the apse, he provided no clear proof of it beyond noting the opus sectile along the north edge of the bema (but which did not extend across the altar or come up flush to the east wall of the central apse). Furthermore, the similarity between the opus sectile remains of the bema at the eleventh-century level and those in the synthronon at ground zero suggests that they were repaved at the same time. Today, from the bema boundary eastwards, the level of the floor drops to ground zero, where the only original remains are the altar base and the flooring of the apse and synthronon. Thus, the outstanding question is whether the floor level was raised ubiquitously in the eleventh century, or only in part, and if so, was it indeed the case that the two levels (the bema and the central apse) were repaved contemporaneously, despite being at different levels. Based on what remains today, the thirteenth-century Laskarid insertions seem to have been restricted to the eleventh-century floor level.

were part of the eleventh-century pavement (Figure 53). While the interest in contrasting hues and polychromy is evident, there are no mitered corners, no interlace, and no opus sectile work in either of these two sections of the eleventh-century pavement. If one were to imagine the basic patterns evident at the west end and near the bema throughout the nave, it becomes clear that the more ornate areas of pavement were restricted to the bema and the apse, while the nave and aisle were covered in slabs or stripes of both colored and grayish marble.²⁴⁵

The three fragments of pavement in the nave, in contrast, show distinctive features indicating that they once belonged to pavements that were part of larger compositions (Figure 59). I have annotated Möllers' ground plan showing the location of the pavement fragments and include it here as Figure 60. In Figure 61, we see a light-colored (perhaps white or peach) square marble panel encased by darker marble frame with mitered corners. In Figure 62, about two meters directly west of Figure 61, is a second example of a light-colored square marble panel, this time placed next to a fragment of a mitered frame. In this case, the frame would have surrounded a panel now missing, and not the marble panel shown. Even more important is the mortar bed lining the western edge of this panel, which contains clear evidence of semi-circular inlays surrounded by multicolored triangular borders (Figure 63).

To further elucidate a "Laskarid style" of pavement, we can study the few examples of pavements that remain from known thirteenth-century contexts elsewhere in Nicæa, made during Laskarid tenure in the city. Most applicable are the pieces of floor mosaic found at Church A, identified by Ioannes Papadopoulos as the church built by Theodore II Laskaris dedicated to St.

²⁴⁵ Pavements of a similar style and distribution within the apse and bema are found in Kalenderhane, Istanbul. See C. Striker and D. Kuban, "Work at Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul: Fifth Preliminary Report (1970-1974)," *DOP* 29 (1975), 306-318, Fig. 1.

Tryphon.²⁴⁶ During Semavi Eyice's cursory inspection of Church A, located on the north-south road heading north out of the city, a few interesting examples of floor pavement were uncovered. These small remains are particularly relevant to this discussion because Church A has been dated to the thirteenth century based on analysis of its mortar and building techniques.²⁴⁷ In Figure 64, we can see a portion of the church's marble and opus sectile pavement. The composition of the border is based on the interplay of inlaid squares, marble or stone octagonal frames, and inlaid circles. The marble octagons' upper five edges are visible while their lower "edges" are subsumed into a continuous band of marble that functions as both frame and setting. The centers are inlaid with discs featuring elongated marquis ovals in a dark stone, probably black or green granite, arranged in flower and cross patterns around a center point. Small triangles, also dark, are arranged in geometric patterns in the intervening spaces. The material out of which these inlays are made, I believe, is a composite of stone and fine-grained white-colored cement into which the dark stone or glass pieces were laid. In between each of the octagons, there is another octagon composed of square and triangular stones in at least three colors.

Two interesting congruities between the fragments from Church A and the mortar bed at Hagia Sophia come to light: first, the elongated marquis ovals that appear in the left disc at Church A appear in several sections of the omphalion at Hagia Sophia, and the exact same pattern appears in Figure 65. The cross pattern of the right disc at Church A appears in a detail of

²⁴⁶ I. Papadopoulos, "Ο ἐν Νικαῖᾳ τῆς Βιθυνίας ναός τοῦ Ἁγίου Τρύφονος," *Επ.Ετ.Βυζ.Σπ.* 21 (1951), 110-113. Papadopoulos identified the church as that of St. Tryphon because at the time of publication, that church was a possible thirteenth-century church lacking attribution and Theodore II's renovation of St. Tryphon had long been attested in the sources but not associated with any standing structure. In addition, the cursory examination of the building showed that there were additional buildings attached to it, suggesting to Papadopoulos that these must be the monastic quarters referred to in the sources. There are, however, other thirteenth-century churches in the city and these, which were found in the decades since his publication, could also be candidates for Theodore II's St. Tryphon.

²⁴⁷ S. Eyice, "İznik'de bir bizans kilisesi," *Belleten* 13 (1949) 37-52; Papadopoulos, "Ο ἐν Νικαῖᾳ," 110-113.

the omphalion, Figure 66. Secondly, the pattern of the mortar substrate in Hagia Sophia's nave pavement and the tiny triangles of opus sectile still *in situ* are a nearly perfect match to the border from Church A. I have provided a reconstruction superimposing the border from Church A on the mortar bed at Hagia Sophia to show their similarity (Figure 67). Set more or less halfway between the marble octagons along the upper edge of the border were large triangles bordered by smaller triangles of opus sectile, bringing the border flush to the perimeter line. A very small portion of the original triangular opus sectile work of the border at Hagia Sophia is pointed out by an arrow in Figure 62. In light of the very close similarity between the known thirteenth-century floor mosaics of Church A, it is likely that the decoration in the eastern area of the nave at Hagia Sophia was, like the omphalion at the west end, a thirteenth-century addition, but one that was unknown until now.

To add some sense of the scale the nave floor's extensive redecoration, I have drawn lines in accordance with the north and south sides of the omphalion, continuing them along the length of nave. I have also sectioned the nave into modules of the same dimensions as the omphalion (Figure 60). A telling compositional feature is that the remains along the north edge coincide with the "line" I have drawn continuing the northern edge of the omphalion, while that of the south is off by a miniscule margin, likely a result of the fact that the omphalion is not perfectly square. Nevertheless, along the south edge, attention to the guiding "line" is still discernable, for another marble panel is set next to a double-curved spandrel, cut to fit neatly between two large circular inlays, but is now missing. The correspondence between the lines of the pavement at the west end with pavements at the east end of the nave illustrates a defined re-articulation of the central part of the nave by means of a modular design that highlighted the long nave of the historical basilica. It is within this long, central swath that the circular edgings,

mitered edges and marble panels appear (Figure 68). In my opinion, the fact that these remains are spread throughout the nave of the church indicates that the Laskarid repaving of the cathedral extended beyond the omphalion.²⁴⁸

It is clear that the square module of the omphalion repeats five times down the length of the nave, leaving a distance at the far west end between the west edge of the omphalion and the threshold equal to that between the eastern-most module and the west edge of the bema. Furthermore, the north and south edges of the modules align with the framed marble pieces *in situ* at the east end. Even more interestingly the concrete mortar bed that remains was placed at the halfway point in the fourth module. The framework of the nave's modular reconstruction, based on a unit defined by the dimensions of the square omphalion, shows a non-arbitrary correspondence with the fragments discussed above. In addition, these pavements exhibit design features that are internally consistent with the Laskarid omphalion and with the floor fragments from Church A. At minimum, enough evidence remains to confirm that the omphalion at Hagia Sophia was part of an extensive redecoration of the central nave floor at Hagia Sophia, which likely coincided with its adoption for use as the patriarchal seat and Laskarid coronation church. Such an interest in the central nave is logical, for not only was the omphalion placed there, but the large ambo would have been located here as well.

The “Laskarid style” of decoration, based on my analysis of the omphalion, shows a marked preference, perhaps even an affection, for endlessly interlacing knots of various sizes, for

²⁴⁸ Semavi Eyice recorded a small pavement in the south aisle on his ground plan of Hagia Sophia which he drew based on the presence of the design's large central marble disc, still *in situ* when Möllers photographed the area decades later, and which corresponds to the fourth example of extant pavement. Eyice deduced perimeter of the design from the concrete mortar bed that once remained. No traces of either the concrete mortar bed or the disc exist today. Eyice's identification of the interlacing design present in both the omphalion and the south aisle pavement led him to conclude that they dated to the same period, i.e. the eleventh century. Without being able to study the pavement firsthand, I can neither corroborate nor correct this dating. See Eyice, “Two Mosaic Pavements from Bithynia,” 374; Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Pl. 29, Fig. 2.

opus sectile work privileging the polygon and the tessera, and for the brightest and most vivid colors of blue and green laid against the background of creamy white, peach, dark green, porphyry purple, and red, and for the imperial symbol of Byzantine power in exile, the *fleur-de-lis*—these are the hallmarks of Laskarid style.²⁴⁹

In terms of form and function, there is one natural antecedent to the omphalion at Nicæa: the large, elaborate omphalion in the pavement of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (Figure 69), installed in the major redecoration of the church after the end of Iconoclasm, with later repairs.²⁵⁰ Like the omphalion in Nicæa, the omphalion at Constantinople was itself inserted into the original Justinianic (i.e. sixth century) floor. The omphalion is located in the southeastern quadrant of the naos, and its insertion breaks the line of the fourth green marble band that would have followed the profile of the ambo. The omphalion features enormous disks of various colors of marbles, primarily red porphyry, green porphyry, giallo antico and others. The style of circular interlacing is much less complicated than at Nicæa, though the resemblance between them, particularly the governing design of a circle within a square, is intentionally similar.

²⁴⁹ Due to the length of time the omphalion at Hagia Sophia, Nicæa, was mistakenly dated, a number of subsequent publications founded their datings of other examples Middle Byzantine pavements based on the Nicæan omphalion marking a high point of craftsmanship in the eleventh century. Pavements located in Bursa, for example, contain bright polychrome patterns within interlacing circles, nearly as complicated and bountiful as that at Hagia Sophia. While Eyice and Demiriz have grouped them under the rubric of Middle Byzantine pavements, particularly those dating to the late eleventh century, I believe that in light of Pinatsi's re-dating and my analysis, it would be worthwhile to refine the chronology of pavements in Bithynia. For example, the pavement of the Orhan Gazi Türbesi once belonged to a Byzantine church of an unknown architectural type. The interlacing compositions are remarkably close in form to those at Nicæa, but lack the opus tessellatum, intarsia and the fleur-de-lis, and also do not contain any patterns in its opus sectile similar to those seen at Nicæa. I would contend that the Orhan Gazi Türbesi pavements precede those at Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, but are later than those at the Church of the Dormition. The governing compositional technique of the interlace as both border and definer of complicated curvilinear shapes at the Orhan Gazi Türbesi links it to Nicæa, to be sure, but it is not contemporaneous.

²⁵⁰ A second porphyry omphalion is mentioned in Theophanes's *Chronographia*: “καὶ κρατήσαντες αὐτὸν οἱ δίκης ὑπηρέται παρέστησαν τῷ πορφυρῷ ὀμφαλίῳ τῷ ἐκεῖσε.” ed. C. de Boor, Vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1883), 285, lines 10-11. Unfortunately, no material remains of this second omphalion exist, but it was located just outside the Chalke Gate, immediately before the threshold, designating where the Emperor would stop and venerate the image of Christ Chalkites before entering the Great Palace. For the Chalke Gate, see Mango, *The Brazen House*, 84-85.

At Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, there is a series of four small marble panels inserted into each of four corners of the framing squares, each of which features multicolored glass paste inlay, a version of intarsia in which glass, rather than stone or marble, is used as fill. The inlaid panels show a bright yellow flower blossom with eight petals, with shadings in blue, green and red (Figure 70). Silvia Pedone incorrectly perceived that the glass paste inlay technique, in which colored glass resin fills shallow depressions carved into marble (an attempt to recreate cloisonné in a larger, non-metallurgic form) seen at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople also appears in the pavement at Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, which it does not. While the form of both churches' blossoms, as well as their placement nestled in the corners of their respective omphalia, are strikingly similar, they are accomplished in two different techniques.²⁵¹

Glass paste intarsia is a well-attested decorative technique throughout the early Christian period, and flowered in buildings in Constantinople in the early sixth-century (as in the beautiful inlaid columns from St. Polyeuktos, among others). It resurfaces in the tenth century in the Monastery of Constantine Lips in Constantinople as well as in Thessaloniki. In the thirteenth century, examples remain in the form of large marble discs in the pavement at Hagia Sophia in Trebizond (Figures 71 and 72) and in a piece of monumental sculpture from an unknown church in Arta (Figure 73).²⁵²

Both Arta, the capital of the Despotate of Epiros, and Trebizond were early rivals of the Laskarids during the Interregnum. Their competing claims to the Byzantine throne were expressed not just through war amongst themselves and against the Latin Kingdom of

²⁵¹ S. Pedone, "The Marble Omphalos of Saint Sophia in Constantinople," in *The Eleventh International Colloquium of Ancient Mosaics, October sixteenth-twentieth, 2009, Bursa, Turkey, Mosaics of Turkey and Parallel Developments in the Rest of the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, ed. M. Şahin (Istanbul, 2011), 749-768.

²⁵² *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. H. C. Evans (New York, 2004), 79-80.

Constantinople, but also through their attempts to harness Byzantine emblems of power in their artistic and architectural works. So, while the technique of glass paste inlay appears at Arta and Trebizond, the eight-petalled flowers at Nicæa, rendered in vivid polychromy, strongly resemble the golden-red eight-petalled blossoms at Constantinople, a visual correlation that is extremely specific, unique, and intentional. Another kind of connection between Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and the Laskarid family exists—a connection forged just prior to the fall of the city, that illuminates the specific familiarity the Laskarids would have had with the imperial omphalion in Constantinople, and illustrates what would become for the Laskarids a personal association of Hagia Sophia as the site of a Byzantine emperor’s acclamation and coronation.

After 18 July 1203, when Alexios III Angelos, Theodore I’s father-in-law, abandoned the city, a series of interim emperors were acclaimed in rapid succession in Constantinople, even as the crusader knights were attacking and invading the capital. The third emperor in this series was Theodore I’s brother, Constantine Laskaris, to whom the imperial throne fell by lot in April 1204. Niketas Choniates makes a point of saying that the drawing of lots between Laskaris and another young man, Doukas, took place in Hagia Sophia.²⁵³ Theodore Laskaris (the future Theodore I) had been campaigning in Asia Minor as of 1203 and had already chosen Nicæa as his base of operations. From there he, one surmises, set about consolidating military power in the name of his brother. When Constantine was killed in the spring of 1205, Theodore I was likely acclaimed emperor.

Constantine Laskaris was the last emperor to be crowned in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Theodore I claimed the throne soon after but waited until 1208 to be crowned in Nicæa when the new patriarch could perform the coronation. Both Constantine and Theodore

²⁵³ *O City of Byzantium*, 314; B. Sinogowitz, “Über das byzantinische Kaisertum nach dem vierten Kreuzzüge,” *BZ* 45 (1952), 345-356.

were high-ranking officials in the Imperial court, and had first-hand access to the coronations of previous emperors. In light of Constantine Laskaris's hurried "coronation" in Hagia Sophia, Constantinople, in 1204, it is reasonable to assign patronage of the omphalion at Hagia Sophia in Nicæa to Theodore I, both in honor of the appointment of the new Orthodox patriarch, Michael IV Autoreianos, and in preparation for his own coronation as Byzantine emperor in 1208.

Hagia Sophia, the Patriarchal Church in Exile

The momentous coronation of the first emperor in exile would have warranted a redecoration of the new patriarchate. Having already noted Theodore I's extensive building program both in Nicæa and elsewhere, and given that it was he who inaugurated the use of the lily of St. Tryphon on his coinage, it is reasonable to attribute Hagia Sophia's new pavement to him. There would have been sufficient time between Theodore I's acclamation in 1205, the appointment of the patriarch in 1206, and the coronation in 1208 to allow for the redecoration of the nave and the transition of Hagia Sophia's ecclesiastical personnel into other posts to make space for the patriarchal clerics.²⁵⁴ All Laskarid emperors would be subsequently crowned at Hagia Sophia, including the founder of the Palaiologan dynasty, Michael VIII Palaiologos, crowned at Nicæa in 1259 after he had been acclaimed in Nymphaion.²⁵⁵

I have demonstrated that the omphalion and the pavement in the nave of the church were embellished with imperial symbols and rendered in the highest calibre of decorative techniques

²⁵⁴ Pinatsi, "New Observations," 123. Angold has shown that by the 1220s the patriarch had become the head of both his own clergy and of the episcopal clergy of Hagia Sophia proving that "the patriarch effectively combined the positions of œcumenical patriarch and metropolitan bishop of Nicæa." See Angold, "The City Nicæa, ca. 1000-ca. 1400," in *İznik Throughout History*, 34-36, fn. 82.

²⁵⁵ Foss, *Nicæa*, 75.

at hand—techniques and styles that clearly connoted Byzantine imperial patronage. I have also offered reasons why the Laskarid pavement at Hagia Sophia was not only more extensive than originally thought, but was likely predicated on the coronation of Theodore I in 1208, and can thus be dated to between 1205/6 to 1208. Like the post-Iconoclastic omphalion that had been placed in the floor of Hagia Sophia in the late eighth century, the omphalion at the Nicæa was also inserted at a later date in order to properly mark out imperial presence in the church, a connection borne out by the two omphalia's similar styles and decorative features.

During the chaos of 1203-1204, each of the “emergency” emperors was acclaimed and crowned in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, including Constantine Laskaris. Observing how these emergency acclamations were conducted insistently, even necessarily, at Hagia Sophia betrays an indivisible interconnectedness of the cathedral's interior space, Orthodox practice, and the public legitimization of imperial power. More than any other building in thirteenth-century Nicæa, the basilica of Hagia Sophia would have fostered itself as a site of collective memory for the refugees, one that would have been particularly powerful and essential during the first decades of the Interregnum. In 1205, Hagia Sophia in Nicæa had been harnessing, cultivating, and preserving the memory of the Constantinopolitan cathedral for centuries, both in the former's ground plan and through the memory of the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787. Once fitted with an imperial omphalion of its own and housing the patriarch, Hagia Sophia in Nicæa could evoke the prestige and historicity of its prototype and successfully serve as its substitute.

Up until now, the identity of the patriarchal church in the Nicæan empire has been contested. Scholars who have worked on Laskarid architecture differ in their opinions, but the main candidate had been the Church of the Dormition in Nicæa. Foss holds that the Church of the Dormition possessed the correct liturgical features of a dressing room, a large ambo, and a

gallery where the emperor could appear after his coronation. Though Hagia Sophia would have been the metropolitan church, its lack of galleries, Foss claimed, would have prevented it from serving as the seat of the patriarchate. He argued that two separate sets of clergy were maintained during Laskarid rule, one for Nicæa and one representing the clergy of Hagia Sophia in the former capital.²⁵⁶ In contrast, Möllers believes that Hagia Sophia was the cathedral church of Nicæa, based on its basilica ground plan and prominent central location. Pinatsi believes that the Laskarids chose Hagia Sophia to be the patriarchal church based on her redating of the pavement. Angold remains of the opinion that Hagia Sophia, again, based on its size and location, would have served as the patriarchate during the Laskarid era.²⁵⁷ His arguments are based on direct mention of Hagia Sophia by patriarch Germanus II (1223-1240) and on the fact that after 1209, there was no longer a separate bishop of Nicæa presiding from Hagia Sophia, but only the patriarch. Furthermore, the separation of Hagia Sophia's clergy from Constantinople's clergy eventually became unnecessary as the two melded together over time. Both patriarchs Michael IV Autoreianos and Germanus II were drawn from the highest echelons of the patriarchal clergy at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople: Michael IV was a *mega sakellarios* and Germanus II was a deacon.²⁵⁸ The transition of Hagia Sophia in Nicæa from metropolitan into patriarchal church occurred between the years 1204-1209, during which time the church received

²⁵⁶ Foss, *Nicæa*, 67, 111. The necessity of a gallery, ambo, and a dressing room are drawn from the liturgical requirements for a Byzantine coronation, whose prerequisites can be found in Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos's *de ceremoniis*. See *Le livre des cérémonies*, ed. A. Vogt, 2 vols., 4 parts (Paris, 1935-40) and Foss, *Nicæa*, 93. Pinatsi specifically addresses Foss's previous textual and architectural objections. Regarding the gallery, Pinatsi concludes that the version of the coronation in the Book of Ceremonies by Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos makes no mention of galleries and royal appearances, which seem to be restricted to texts on the subject dating to the mid-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. With respect to the presence of an ambo in the church, Pinatsi remarks that there are mentions of wooden structures that could have served the same function, and which naturally would have been unlikely to have survived the passage of time.

²⁵⁷ Pinatsi, "New Observations," 123; Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile*; id., "The City Nicæa, ca. 1000-1400," in *İznik Throughout History*, eds. I. Akbaygil, H. İnalcık and O. Aslanapa (Istanbul, 2003), 27-55, esp. 36.

²⁵⁸ Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile*, 201. *Mega sakellarios* means "high treasurer."

an omphalion pavement and its staff was merged with the exiled clergy from Constantinople. The coronation of Theodore I in 1208, which must have taken place there, indicates that the Nicæan basilica had practically and symbolically replaced the cathedral of Constantinople. The new omphalion marked the event, while the Laskarid era frescoes were painted to cover the interior of an historic, ancient basilica, establishing the context for the reestablishment of Byzantine Imperial and Orthodox power.

If Nicæa came to provide a locus for the collected memories of ecclesiastical and spiritual authority from earlier periods of Orthodox history, it was in the process of acknowledging those memories in later periods that changed Nicæa into Byzantium's capital in exile. In conditions of exile, acts of remembering are exercises in representation, continually produced. Hagia Sophia's architectural connection to its Constantinopolitan archetype, its shared dedication to Holy Wisdom, and its role in creating Orthodoxy through the Ecumenical Councils provided a precious substitute for a church that might never be in Orthodox hands again.

Though the Church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople was lost, its similarly ancient namesake had survived in Nicæa. Imperial donations given to the church by the new Laskarid emperor indicate that it was perceived by him and his court to be the heir of Constantinople's Hagia Sophia and suitable to function as the new patriarchate. Until now, the church of Hagia Sophia in Nicæa was not only disenfranchised within the corpus of Laskarid architecture, but its role in memorializing Constantinople had been completely invisible. Understanding its role in the new Laskarid realm and discerning its importance to the court demonstrate the first of many instances of how continuity with the past was forged anew.

Based on the understanding of Nicæa and Hagia Sophia presented here, the presence of an Orthodox past would not have been difficult for the Laskarids to see at the beginning their

tenure in the city. One might say that selecting the Hagia Sophia “at hand” to replace the one that had been lost would be among the most natural of actions to take: and in retrospect, it is. This act and its effects, however, were not easy to discern from our standpoint in the present day. The act of replacing Hagia Sophia would have several consequences for the tenor, nature, and perspective on exile the Laskarids espoused, however natural their actions might seem at the outset. Each Laskarid emperor continued the great tradition of architectural patronage that Byzantine emperors had begun centuries earlier. Theodore I and John III Vatatzes were both instrumental in rehabilitating Nicæa as capital, and were particularly concerned for the city’s good defense.

The new cathedral, the new patriarch, and the new emperor each legitimized and empowered the other through the ritual act of the imperial coronation, which, while occurring in exile, began a transformation of the exilic landscape into a new homeland. In the hands of the Laskarids, Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, which had so long stood in the shadow of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, shows a flexibility in its function despite its ancient architectural form, that was yet supple enough to allow it to host rituals belonging by right to another building, effectually facilitating the first act of replacing Byzantium in exile.

Chapter Four Fresco Painting in the Laskarid Realm

Of all Byzantine artistic genres, Byzantine painting has benefitted longest from scholarly attention—both to its absolute and relative chronology and to the larger art historical concerns of patronage, style, social context, theological significance and interpretation. The historiography of the Interregnum supports the notion that the fragmentation of Byzantine society due to the loss of Constantinople in 1204 was disruptive enough to stall artistic production, to debilitate the machinery of state, and to challenge and fragment collective identity. These, among other things, it certainly did. It is clear, however, that the Byzantine artistic impulse did not completely flag during the Interregnum. Thirteenth-century painting during and after the Interregnum is hardly unknown. Numerous fresco programs from churches in the other exilic courts at Arta and Trebizond and in the monasteries and church complexes in Cappadocia have survived fairly intact and become subjects of monographs and other analyses.²⁵⁹ In contrast, examples of Laskarid monumental and small-scale painting are both rare and difficult to identify and date.²⁶⁰ Laskarid painting has never been the subject of even a minor study. Given the larger goal of this dissertation—to identify elements of continuity, discontinuity, transformation and innovation in

²⁵⁹ For the church of the Blacherna in Arta see M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Η Βλαχέρνα της Άρτας τοιχογραφίες* (Athens, 2009). For Trebizond, see A. Eastmond, *Art and Identity in Thirteenth-Century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and the Empire of Trebizond* (Aldershot, 2004); D. G. Giannoules, *Οι τοιχογραφίες των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Άρτας κατά την περίοδο του Δεσποτάτου της Ηπείρου* (Ioannina, 2010).

²⁶⁰ Preliminary work on thirteenth-century manuscript illumination has been conducted by Kurt Weitzmann who suggested that a group of illuminated manuscripts he redated to the thirteenth-century must have been made in Constantinople, which he believes, even while under Latin rule, would have remained the center for Byzantine manuscript illumination and other scriptorial arts during the Interregnum. A different group of manuscripts, small *tetraevangelia*, have been grouped together by Hans Buchthal, who argued that they were made in the provinces and stand as links to early Palaiologan painting from outside the boundaries of Constantinople. See K. Weitzmann, “Constantinopolitan Book Illumination in the Period of the Latin Conquest,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 25 (1944), 193-214; H. Buchthal, “Studies in Byzantine Illumination of the Thirteenth Century,” *JbBM* 25 (1983), 27-102. For further bibliography on Greek painting in the thirteenth century, see M. Chatzidakis, “Aspects de la peinture murale du XIII^e s. en Grèce,” 59-74; A. Grabar “Art du XIII^e siècle. Problèmes et methodes d’investigation,” 1-10; V. J. Djurić, “La peinture murale serbe au XIII^e siècle,” 145-168, all in *L’art byzantin du XIII^e siècle* (Belgrade, 1967).

Byzantine artistic culture during the Interregnum for the first time—identifying and analyzing what does remain of mural painting in the Laskarid realm is an essential first step.

The Laskarids' efforts, which range in character from the directly mimetic to the purely innovative, effected the replacement of the capital in exile. Observing the order in which buildings and other culturally relevant works were made, modified, or invented, and describing these efforts allows us a chance to see through the monolith of Byzantine art to its fundamentals. Works from the Despotate of Epirus, the empire of Trebizond, and the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople—all carriers and inheritors of Constantinopolitan culture, like Nicæa, to some degree—demonstrate continuous, Byzantine-minded artistic production, both in spite of and in reaction to the great event of 1204. Thirteenth-century fresco painting in Greece, Serbia, and Macedonia in the “metropolitan style” continues to be an active field of investigation. Thus, “provincial” networks of artistic exchange are formed and best understood within the paradigm of exchange and emulation of Constantinopolitan exemplars. In the thirteenth century, while the regions themselves often present coherence in workshop, style, patronage practices and scale, there is little connecting them to one another, except for their common Constantinopolitan point of reference. After 1204 Constantinople becomes impossible to reach, and something has to take its place.

Nicæa already has become something of a cypher for Constantinople, at least in the art historical scholarship. Nicæa, as the new capital, has been accepted as Constantinople's substitute. This substitution is, in my opinion, premature even though it is predictable. Recent work on the surviving thirteenth-century fresco programs in churches on the Aegean Islands along the western Anatolian coast—Chios, Rhodes, Samos, Patmos—argue that it was from “Nicæan painting” produced under the Laskarids that mural programs in those island churches

took their cue.²⁶¹ In this view, Nicæa replaces Constantinople as the generatrix of Byzantine metropolitan art, given that it was the capital in exile and acts as the new repository of metropolitan painting. This simple substitution is driven by patterns of art historiographical analysis dominated by the center and periphery paradigm which necessitates a cultural ‘center,’ (Constantinople) to which ‘peripheral’ art and architecture refers, emulates and indexes.

At present, the painting actually produced under the Laskarids is still all but invisible. This lacuna is understandable, for the remaining material is difficult to locate and even that which can be found has often nearly completely disintegrated. Despite these difficulties, Laskarid fresco painting *does* survive, and I intend to define here the first corpus of known Laskarid frescoes and to describe and analyze them to make a record before they deteriorate further. But, an account of Laskarid fresco painting, however fragmentary it may be, is desirable beyond the simple goal of scientific cataloguing. The Laskarid frescoes that actually survive have not meaningfully informed the analytic construct of “Nicæan painting” invoked in the secondary literature. While often useful and in most cases descriptively accurate of many modes of Byzantine artistic influence, in the case of the Interregnum this particular paradigm has not been substantiated with physical proof. Furthermore, it is more logical that works “provincial” geographically but “metropolitan” in style would become the sources, where necessary, for new buildings and their interior programs in the Nicæan realm and elsewhere. The fact that there *were* new buildings and new programs throughout Anatolia and the Balkans during the

²⁶¹ I would like to thank the Twentieth Ephorate of Chios for facilitating my visit in 2009: C. Pennas, “An unusual ‘Deesis’ in the narthex of Panaghia Krena, Chios,” *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Έτ.* 17 (1994), 193-198. See M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Στο Θάρι της Ρόδου: Ο ναός και οι τοιχογραφίες της Μονής του Ταξιάρχη Μιχαήλ* (Athens, 2006), in which the emulation of thirteenth-century painting in the dome of the katholikon at the Monastery of the Archangel Michael at Thari on the island of Rhodes is described as emulating the metropolitan style of the capital, now at Nicæa. For Rhodes during this period see A. G. K. Sabbidos, “Η Ρόδος και η δυναστεία τῶν Γαβαλάδων τὴν περίοδο 1204-1250 μ.Χ.,” *Δελτ.Έτ.Έλλ.* 24 (1981), 358-376; K. Kefala, “Οι τοιχογραφίες 13^{ου} αἰῶνα στις εκκλησίες της Ρόδου,” PhD dissertation, Byzantine Archaeology, University of Athens, 2012.

Interregnum indicates that the loss of Constantinople, while disruptive, did not nullify the influence (direct or indirect) of the Komnenian monumental style in the decades following 1204 and that this influence was carried primarily through programs in buildings outside the capital.

In an effort to populate Nicæan painting with real examples of Laskarid art, I shall focus on examples of Laskarid fresco painting with special attention to Nicæa. Does Laskarid fresco painting in the Nicæan realm replace Constantinopolitan “metropolitan” art? If not, what is the most accurate description of painted artistic production during this period? Can Laskarid painting be said to bridge the Komnenian and Palaiologan eras? If it can, then how?

To these ends, taking the Laskarid frescoes in Nicæa as a starting point, I will develop a chronology of the frescoes elsewhere in the Laskarid realm, including works with cultural or geographical connections to them. This is the first attempt to create a chronology of Laskarid monumental painting, and it will necessarily be incomplete, particularly since excavations at Laskarid sites are still ongoing. Despite this limitation, gathering and ordering these examples chronologically is essential to providing an answer to how Byzantine artistic continuity shifted, blurred, continued, or was broken when produced in an exilic context. Having addressed these questions, I will provide a description of the overlaps, innovations, disjunctions and reintegrations of Constantinopolitan artistic concerns with respect to those of the Laskarid court in exile, both before and after the Interregnum.

First, examples of known and datable Laskarid painting will be presented. These include frescoes in rooms added by the Laskarids to Nicæa’s city walls and the frescoes in the pastophoria of Hagia Sophia. Having demonstrated that Hagia Sophia was the recipient of Laskarid patronage early in the reign of Theodore I in Chapter Three, the possibility of Laskarid additions to the church interior becomes more tenable. None of these mural paintings has been

discussed or published, so I will present first a synopsis of the frescoes and the architectural history of the east end of the basilica, where most of the decorative material remains. Then I will proceed to a description and stylistic analysis of the frescoes in the church. This has not been attempted previously, one surmises, due to their extremely poor condition. Nevertheless, after lengthy study I am happy to be able to offer a detailed description of the imagery, as it exists today, and where possible, the identification of some of the figures and scenes. I argue that the frescoes of Hagia Sophia's pastophoria stylistically date to the early thirteenth century, positioning them squarely in the Laskarid era. In addition, old photographs of frescoes in tower 54, restored by Theodore I, and of frescoes in the tower chapels erected by John III just outside the Lefke and İstanbul gates, can serve as stylistic and chronological touchstones. These black and white photographs, taken by Sevil Bilgiç as part of his MA thesis in 1972 at Istanbul University, facilitate an analysis of frescoes now almost completely lost.²⁶² Secondly, following a discussion of the works of Nicæa, I will present frescoes from sites under Laskarid rule and attempt to place them in relative chronological sequence. These include frescoes in the south aisle of the Acheiropoietos Church in Thessaloniki, the lost frescoes from the terrace church at Pergamon (modern Bergama), and frescoes from the katholikon of Hosios David in Thessaloniki. In addition to a chronology, one of the main results will be an articulation of the Laskarid artistic style, a description of which becomes possible here for the first time.

²⁶² My thanks to Engin Akyürek who made available to me in December 2012 the single copy of a thesis written for the Art History Department at İstanbul University, entitled "İznik Surları," (The city walls of İznik), by Sevil Bilgiç, in 1972, which contains more than one hundred 3x5 inch black and white photographs of the walls of İznik, both general views and details, providing some of the few known images of the frescoes on Theodore I's and John III's walls and towers. The images here were re-photographed from the black and white photographs in the thesis.

The Pastophoria Frescoes at Hagia Sophia, Nicæa

The importance of understanding the eleventh-century origin of the pastophoria at Hagia Sophia is connected to the fact that no discernible structural changes to the church occurred until the Seljuq period, that is, after 1330, when the *maharib* were added to the south aisle and to the south corner of the narthex. Thus, when the Laskarids arrived in Nicæa, they made no architectural changes to the basilica, but restricted their additions to the omphalion and the pavement of the nave, and, I argue, to the fresco program in the pastophoria.²⁶³

Slobodan Ćurčić has observed that domed chapels like those at Hagia Sophia were often retrofitted into basilica-plan churches and that this was a relatively widespread phenomenon in Middle Byzantine architecture. He designated a group of churches that show more than one category of subsidiary chapels in their structure, and it is to this group that Hagia Sophia, which had two new pastophoria within the walls of the church proper, as well as a satellite chapel, should be assigned.²⁶⁴

²⁶³ One would expect that the tradition of imperial gifts and donations in the form of relics, furnishings, and property would have been continued by the Laskarids at Hagia Sophia. I am in the process of looking through the sources for evidence of specific imperial gifts to Hagia Sophia and other churches and monasteries. The founding of monasteries and schools by John III and Theodore II is well known, as is John III's support of churches and monasteries in Constantinople. Also, both Theodore I and John III are recorded as having given gifts of relics to St. Sava during his stop in the Nicæan realm on his return voyages from the Holy Land to Serbia. See *Les Némania: vies de St. Syméon & de St. Sabba*, trans. A. Chodźko (Paris, 1858), 54-58.

²⁶⁴ S. Ćurčić, "Architectural Significance of Subsidiary Chapels in Middle Byzantine Architecture," *JSAH* 36, No. 2 (May, 1977), 94-110. For the overlapping roles of subsidiary chapels and pastophoria, see G. Babić, *Les chapelles annexes des églises byzantines. Fonction liturgique et programmes iconographique* (Paris, 1969). Studies on the iconographic programs of the prothesis, such as M. Altripp's *Die Prothesis und ihre Bildausstattung in Byzanz unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Denkmäler Griechenlands* (Frankfurt am Main, 1998), argue that the character and form of the decorative programs placed into chapels retrofitted into already existing churches generally follow the stylistic goals of their era, and illustrate programs that are curated with imagery that coordinates the purpose of the room, appropriate iconography, and the taste or desires of the patron. In this sense, trying to understand the decoration of the pastophoria at Hagia Sophia cannot be approached from a strictly comparative standpoint; one in which other retrofitted chapels and their decorative programs provide suitable comparative material. Rather, following the construction of the chapels into already existing churches, it seems quite clear that the decorative

The rebuilding of Hagia Sophia's east end following the earthquakes of 1063-1065 created tall, rectilinear spaces, surmounted with domes punctuated by windows (Figure 74). When they were installed, several changes resulted both in the form and function of the church. First, and most generally, two new areas of focus were created at the east end, whereas before there would have been a continuous aisle on each side terminating at the templon screen. Secondly, the focus of the interior space in the new pastophoria was directed along a vertical axis, towards the small domes and their imagery, rather than laterally towards the central altar as had been the case previously. Each of the smooth interior drums is pierced by six windows, and rests on a cylindrical drum that appears hexagonal from the exterior. In the next level below the dome, one arched window punctuates each of the east and exterior walls (north or south, respectively). In the third level below the dome (corresponding to eye-level) the original window of the eleventh-century aisle wall remains, but has been partially cut off by the new perpendicular walls, providing both pastophoria with a new western wall with a doorway into the aisles (Figure 75). The northern and southern walls of the south and north pastophoria (respectively) were added to support the new cupolas, that, combined with the west walls, further secluded the new vertical spaces from the apse and nave. The walls architecturally separated the pastophoria from the rest of the church, but facilitated communication with the apse. The greater seclusion of the pastophoria, combined with their vertical focus, declares their new purpose. A shallow arched depression, carved into the original fifth-century eastern wall and the later brickwork may have accommodated an important icon (Figure 76). The windows allow light into the tall, tower-like spaces, and would have illuminated, through multiple light sources, the imagery on the walls.

programs these new spaces received were circumscribed by already existing programs in the churches, and by the criteria listed above.

In the secondary literature, the dates suggested for the fresco program in the pastophoria, now in a ruinous state, have consistently been conflated with the dates proposed for the building of the pastophoria. For example, Alpatoff argued that the frescoes in the pastophoria could not be earlier than the thirteenth or fourteenth century, because the architectural style of the pastophoria was, in his opinion, “Palaiologan.”²⁶⁵ The most likely options for the frescoes are either that they remain from the decorative campaign following the building of the pastophoria in the eleventh century, or that they date from its early Laskarid period renovation into the Patriarchate and coronation church. Regarding the earlier date, a refinement is possible: because Nicæa was controlled by the Turks between 1081 and 1097, the eleventh-century repairs could have been made either between 1065 and 1080, or after 1097. Cyril Mango has proved that the *katholikon* of the neighboring Hyakinthos Monastery was rebuilt almost immediately after the earthquakes stopped, between 1065 and 1067, during the reign of emperor Constantine X Doukas (r. 1059-1067).²⁶⁶ It is likely that the rebuilding of Hagia Sophia would have occurred within the same window of time, that is, in the 1060s or 1070s.

Alpatoff’s first-hand observations are valuable. He describes the figures in between the windows of the cupola as apostles and archangels, noting that the pendentives and walls held more complex programs of figures. Viewing the figures in 1924, Alpatoff describes the figures as “frontal” and isolated from one another in space. Bust-length saints appear in medallions, a preference shown, he notes, by Byzantine painters of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Alpatoff concluded, with disappointment, that there were no intimations of the free movement or thoughtful gestures characteristic of fourteenth-century Palaiologan painting in the frescoes he

²⁶⁵ An unclear designation, perhaps meaning thirteenth century, see Alpatoff, “Les fresques,” 42-45.

²⁶⁶ “The Date of the Narthex Mosaics of the Church of the Dormition at Nicaea,” *DOP* 13 (1959), 245-252.

saw at Hagia Sophia. Alpatoff's original question—did the energy and volume discernible in painting from the Palaiologan renaissance in Constantinople have its origin in Laskarid painting—was answered with a resounding negative. Believing that these frescoes were indeed Laskarid painting of the thirteenth century, Alpatoff found no useful connection to Palaiologan painting in Constantinople.²⁶⁷ Many more examples of painting from the thirteenth century have been studied in the intervening century since Alpatoff saw the pastophoria frescoes in Hagia Sophia. These examples will be discussed below, and will allow me confirm the earlier of Alpatoff's suggested dates—the thirteenth century—based not on the architecture of the pastophoria but on a better informed analysis of the stylistic developments of painting in the Aegean and in western Anatolia in the thirteenth century.

Regarding the architecture, Schneider contested Brounoff's earlier claim that the pastophoria were Palaiologan, arguing that upper regions of the church at the eastern end, namely the domes, the nave, and the apse, were all bonded to one another, and must date to the same building phase (Figure 77). Schneider revised the date of the pastophoria to the eleventh century, logically coinciding with the other areas of rebuilding.²⁶⁸ He seemed to agree without much ado that the fresco painting in the pastophoria should be dated to the thirteenth or fourteenth century, but gave no reasons why. Möllers follows Schneider's dating, agreeing that the pastophoria date to the eleventh century, but that the paintings date to the thirteenth century.²⁶⁹ None of the previous datings of the frescoes in the pastophoria, however, is actually based on a stylistic analysis of the frescoes. As we have seen, Alpatoff's opinion on the date of

²⁶⁷ Alpatoff, "Les fresques," 45.

²⁶⁸ Schneider, "Die Denkmäler von Iznik," 14-15.

²⁶⁹ Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 26-29.

the pastophoria frescoes is based on his assertion that they were built in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. Schneider, Restle, Foss, and Möllers inadvertently perpetuate Alpatoff's original hypothesis: that these were thirteenth-century frescoes, a date that lingered despite the re-dating of the pastophoria to the eleventh-century rebuilding. The visual analysis of the pastophoria frescoes will provide the evidence necessary to fix a date range for these and other frescoes in Nicæa. My conclusions about the style of Laskarid painting can be added to those offered in the previous section on the pavement, allowing for a characterization of Laskarid style based on evidence in two separate media.

Frescoes and Mosaics Recorded and Lost

Schneider and Alpatoff both mention frescoes located in the church that appear to have survived until the early twentieth century but are unfortunately no longer visible today.²⁷⁰ Schneider

²⁷⁰ The painting in the lunette of the arcosolium at Hagia Sophia could provide a useful internal comparison, but it is clear from observation that the fresco has been touched up by non-professionals since it was first painted. Möllers states that the painting does not date to the time when the arcosolium grave was first built into the wall, but post-dates the installation of the arcosolium. If the arcosolium was installed prior to the ninth century, as she claims, then the fresco could date to any subsequent period. Opinions on the date of this fresco have wavered from between eleventh to the thirteenth century. As with the pastophoria frescoes, Möllers dated the fresco in the lunette to the thirteenth century, relying on previous scholars' opinions. She mentions Restle, who wrote that the fresco, a compressed Deesis scene, was a "somewhat clumsy, peasant Deesis, probably from the thirteenth century." See Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 56, footnotes 344, 347. I believe that while the fresco painting of the Deesis in the arcosolium is original, some of the figures' facial features (particularly their eyes, eyebrows, nose, and the Virgin's lips) as well as some folds of their clothing were re-outlined in black paint at some point in the post-Byzantine or Ottoman period. I know of no professional restoration to this fresco, and assume the efforts were amateur, as is clear from the fresco's present appearance, which created an imbalance in the figures' gazes. As confirmation of this theory, observe that elsewhere in the fresco there is no use of black line anywhere, but that all the folds and highlights are created with similarly hued, but either lighter or deeper toned similar colors. For example, in the gold and blue clothing of Christ, his inner yellow-gold cloak is given depth through the use of honey and butterscotch highlights. Upon close examination, one sees that the use of black outline is irregular and untutored, creating definition quite out of character with the rest of the painting. Some examples of the irrational use of black line occur on John the Baptist's hands, on Christ's right sleeve and upper two fingertips, and at the base of his neck on his left side, where the black outline clearly overlays the original blue paint and gold halo, a bit of which can be seen peeking out beneath the tight angle of black paint purporting to clarify that area. The areas where the black lining has obscured the original features of the holy faces, however, is detrimental to how detailed and complete an analysis may be made. Yalçın dates this fresco stylistically to the eleventh century, and argues that this Deesis was

reported seeing a partial figure with traces of an inscription next to the north aisle entrance,²⁷¹ and Alpatoff, as mentioned above, reported a fresco of Sts. Helena and Constantine on the west wall of the nave.²⁷² While they can no longer be examined directly, a few rudimentary line drawings were made by each of the authors to illustrate their descriptions. Alpatoff, describing the fresco of Sts. Helena and Constantine, says that “a stiffness” suffuses their faces: both St. Helena and the young male saint whose face he drew, are characterized as “très sévère.”²⁷³ Alpatoff believes that these figures find their closest comparisons in the eleventh century, appearing to be an admixture of stylistic traits from the Macedonian and Komnenian periods (i.e. severity of facial features, lack of movement and volume, linear style). He assumes the paintings were made during the Laskarid period, ascribing to Laskarid painting a preference for archaism which includes depicting the figures in traditional postures, such as the “orator” pose, by means of a linear painting style (Figure 78). Schneider noted a remnant of fresco painting to the right of

the original decoration of the arcosolium, placed there by a local master after 1065. See A. B. Yalçın, “Un affresco con la ‘Deesis’ nella Santa Sofia di İznik-Nicaea,” *Milieu* 2 (1990), 369-380, with plates. She characterizes the fresco style as one with a “tendency towards the graphic,” particularly “visible in the linear manner of their faces and the amplitude of their drapery.” At least some part of the “graphic tendency” she observed in the frescoes, I believe, come from the presence of the repainting in black line. The single phase of this painting can be confirmed by the continuous white line that circumscribes the rounded edge of the lunette to Mary’s left, and follows her halo to Christ’s and then John the Baptist’s. The style of the Virgin’s face can best be characterized by its flat and linear qualities. Her face is empty of expression, dominated by large, staring eyes: all hallmarks of early eleventh-century figures. Christ’s and John the Baptist’s eyes have suffered in the amateur re-outlining, however their beards share a unique quality that emphasizes a much more horizontal type of moustache that contrasts with the long, curving ones seen in most eleventh-century painting. Similar versions can be observed on the men in the church of Panagia Phorbiotissa in Asinou (1192). In its basic characteristics, then, the arcosolium fresco bears visual characteristics prevalent in the eleventh century, and in contrast to Möllers, Foss, Schneider, and most others, I would agree with Yalçın, but for different reasons, and place the original, unaltered fresco in the eleventh century, noting that it may cover a previous image. Given the earlier dates of the comperanda provided and the fact that this area of the church appears not to have been destroyed in the earthquake of 1063-1065, the fresco could belong to the earlier half of the eleventh century, rather than the later.

²⁷¹ A. M. Schneider, “Die Römischen und Byzantinischen Denkmäler von İznik-Nicæa,” *IstForsch* 16 (1943), 1-40, 21 plates.

²⁷² Alpatoff, “Les fresques,” 43.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 45

the door leading outside from the northern aisle, and included a line drawing of it in his 1935 publication on the monuments of Nicæa (Figure 79). The drawing shows a continuous fragment of the lower parts of at least three standing figures. According to Schneider's notes, the central figure wears robes in red with a thick border of brown trim accented by a diagonal crisscross pattern, under a blue-green *chlamys*. A few white letters from an inscription survive to the viewer's left of the central figure's hem. In this location, the inscription must have been a supplication on behalf of a named member of the community. According to Schneider's drawing, white was also used to outline the figures' clothing (Figure 80). The figures on either side of center appear to be wearing red robes and stand on a "blue-green" background.²⁷⁴ The fresco was preserved beneath the level of fill that raised the floor level to its present height, and must have been revealed when Schneider excavated around the north aisle exit. About twenty centimeters (i.e. eight inches) below the fresco fragment lay the original level of the marble flooring, at the same level as the door's threshold. The use of blue-green in the figures' clothing, as well as in the background, may indicate separate, earlier, phase of painting, for as we shall see, it is not used at all in the pastophoria frescoes.

Extrapolating from the location of this fresco, one understands that the entire surface of the north aisle was probably decorated similarly, concealing the original sixth-century dressed masonry and brickwork repairs.²⁷⁵ The scale of the figures in this area of fresco is smaller than life-sized: the entire breadth of one figure and small portions of two more stretch across a piece of fresco measuring only fifty centimeters wide. Given the surface area available and the scale of the figures at ground level, the fresco program must have been extensive.

²⁷⁴ Schneider, "Die Römischen," Textabbildung 5, between pages 12 and 13.

²⁷⁵ Schneider, "Die Römischen," Textabbildung 5, between pages 8 and 9.

There is archaeological proof that Hagia Sophia possessed mosaic decoration in the apse and bema, dating to the eleventh-century building phase. Glass *tesserae* in variety of colors and in gold were found in the upturned soil displaced by trenches and excavations of the church's interior. Other than indicating that this area of the church received a more expensive and durable type of decoration, unfortunately nothing more can be said concerning the mosaics' date and style. A second reference to mosaic remains found in 1870 within the church may have more information to offer. The author writes that "having hoed the land inside the church we found small pieces proving that the church was not against mosaic images, on the sides of the existing building's *prothesis* and *diakonikon*." The location of these mosaic fragments is unknown but they are most likely in the İznik Archaeological Museum or in the Bursa Archaeological Museum.²⁷⁶

The Frescoes of the Pastophoria

The paintings in the upper regions of the north and south pastophoria, while not well preserved, still contain traces of figures and iconographic scenes. For convenience and clarity, I include color sketch drawings of both the north and south pastophoria in Figures 81 and 82, and I have labeled identifiable scenes where possible. Based on what can be observed, the pastophoria possess compositional styles and color schemes similar to one another, indicating the contemporaneity of their design and execution, with one small exception to be discussed below. The color scheme of the pastophoria is based on primary hues of red, gold and blue, and presents an array of figures with large yellow haloes in brightly colored clothes, generally variations of

²⁷⁶ C. Papadopoulos, "Η Νίκαια, ἤτοι μονογραφία ἱστορική, ἀρχαιολογική, παλαιογραφική, καὶ ἐκκλησιαστική τῆς πολέως ταύτης," *Ὁ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ἑλληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος* 33 (1914), 135-151, esp. 141 (Translation mine).

gold and scarlet, against a vivid blue background. The registers of pictorial space are delineated with thick red lines, often with a bright white highlight line at the very center, and sometimes a yellow band with a dark ornamental pattern. The number of windows in each of the drums and on three sides of each pastophorium creates interruptions on each of the walls with the result that figures are often standing alone or are depicted in roundels. The surfaces that would have been most conducive to uninterrupted narrative scenes (the walls abutting the bema and the west walls) are very poorly preserved. The scale of the figures is rather small per unit of space, so that the dominant color would have been the blue-green background barely visible today, interrupted by wide, blocky figures in swaths of gold and red. Land and cityscapes are rendered only in the main rectangular registers under the lunettes. The holy figures are distributed symmetrically along the major vertical axis of each of the four walls, and if they are not already framed by golden medallions, are standing on a simple dais. The palette, as it can be described today, contains bright colors and their permutations: reds, brown-reds, yellow, and white, all of which stand out vibrantly against the sky-colored background.

The ornamental decoration that remains both in the pastophoria and in the nave shows patterns and motifs well known in the Middle Byzantine era: lozenges, quatrefoils, and interlacing vines are seen regularly in fresco, tile and mosaic decoration. The soffits of the arches around the windows and blind arches in the pastophoria share a common color scheme: a dark blue and red interlocking triangle pattern on a lighter buff-white background (Figure 83). Throughout the lines are neither tense nor straight, and appear to the eye to waffle irregularly while the bands of color vary in thickness. The arches in the north and south pastophoria show a second decorative style, also with interlocking bands in red and blue on a buff white background, drawn with the same base execution (Figure 84). Lastly, the inner face of the doorways into the

aisles from the pastophoria also retain some decoration, featuring again the buff-white background, this time with arabesque red lines, highlighted in both yellow and blue, colors that coordinate with the color scheme seen elsewhere (Figure 85). One large swath of decorative fresco has survived in the soffit of one of the windows in the south aisle: this shows circles inscribed with four-petaled flowers rendered in yellow and white, outlined in navy on a red background (Figure 86), a pattern that mirrors a pattern on the *omphalion* in the nave. The decorative motifs at Hagia Sophia share stylistic features with contemporaneous designs, such as in the painted fresco border of the Church of the Acheiropoietos in Thessaloniki that, in turn, imitates tile work of the tenth and eleventh centuries.²⁷⁷

I have been able to confirm the presence of a number of figures in the pastophoria (particularly the north) not previously recorded and have been able to identify at least four iconographic scenes: *The Virgin orans with Angels* and *The Ascension of Christ* in the north pastophorium dome, *The Presentation of Christ at the Temple* on the west wall of the north pastophorium, *The Hospitality of Abraham* on the south wall of the south pastophorium, *The Agony of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane* on the west wall of the south pastophorium. Unfortunately, I have not been able to securely identify the identities of all the figures that appear, but offer suggestions where possible. The degree of deterioration and damage is so extensive that identification is impossible.

²⁷⁷ For the similar patterns in earlier architectural tiles see *A Lost Art Rediscovered, The Architectural Ceramics of Byzantium*, eds. S. Gerstel and J. Lauffenburger (Baltimore, 2001), especially p. 99, nos. 13 and 14 and p. 277, A.70; p. 108, no. 52 and p. 217, XII.26; p. 106, no. 45.

North Pastophorium

The frescoes in the north pastophorium have been cited by scholars as too damaged to warrant study, and as a result they have been completely overlooked. While the degree of damage is great, a careful visual analysis of photographs taken in 2013 allow for new observations on the fresco program. Beginning with the dome in the north pastophorium (Figure 87), it is clear that the plaster at the center of the dome has disappeared, revealing the concentric pattern of the dome's brick and mortar construction. In between the damaged center and the drum is an area of the dome where the plaster is still intact, though covered with mold, lichen and highly faded. Even so, there are original, albeit faint, traces of under-drawing and painted frescoes. Detailed examination of high-density photographs renders enough information to allow me to identify the scene of the dome of the north pastophoria *The Virgin orans with Angels* (Figure 81). This attribution is secured by the fact that details of the dome show the Virgin and at least two angelic attendants to her right (Figure 88) and less clearly, two to her left. The five figures that can still be seen were part of a group of perhaps eleven or twelve at most.

The drum of the dome in the north pastophorium contains large standing figures in between the windows. When viewed from ground level, the scale of these figures is much larger than those in the dome above. Based on their placement in the drum of the dome, their costumes and posture, these figures can be identified as a combination of Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament, including King David (crowned, with a pointed beard, Figure 89) and Daniel (in a short tunic, Figure 90), with four others. Of the six original figures, two appear to have been buried beneath a plaster restoration of unknown date, so that only traces of four figures, located at the eastern, northeastern, northwestern, and western interstices, are still visible. A seventh figure has been painted on the surface of the blocked up south window; it will be discussed

separately. The most well preserved figures are the eastern, the northeastern, and the northwestern. The eastern figure, perhaps King David (Figure 89), wears a blue tunic underneath a red mantle, edged in a thick golden band. He is wearing a crown and sports a dark pointed beard. The figure holds both of his arms outstretched to his left with his palms facing up, in a posture of supplication. The figure in the northeastern portion, perhaps Daniel (Figure 90), wears a short bright blue tunic edged at the bottom hem, cuffs, and from chin to knee in a wide bright yellow band. His tunic is belted and he wears a golden colored mantle that fastens with a brooch right at the center of his chest allowing the mantle to cascade over his broad shoulders. He has short hair and a short beard. The figure standing in the northwestern portion appears to be wearing a dark orange and red mantle over a blue tunic (Figure 91). The western figure is badly preserved, and all that can be seen today are a few patches of yellow clothing.

The south section, which abuts the apse, underwent a secondary repair, so that the southwestern, southern, and southeastern portions of the dome may postdate the original painting (Figure 92). Figure 93 shows a detail of the southeastern figure, now nearly covered with later plaster, which can be most easily seen where the original plaster and the later plaster meet in the soffit of the window. A head and golden halo in the uppermost region are all that is still visible. His head is covered in curly white-hair, and he is bearded and haloed.

The seventh figure, installed in what had been originally the south window, was added subsequently to the original decoration of the dome and drum (Figure 94). The south window, abutting the apse, seems to have been closed at some point after the building of the pastophoria, i.e. after 1065. The secondary layer of plaster, mentioned above, may have been smoothed over the southern expanse and probably coincides with the window's closure. The fresco visible today shows a standing figure, facing front, wearing voluminous blue and red robes, and while he

appears to share features similar to the iconography of Christ, is more likely an apostle, based on what appears to be a long grayish beard. He is standing barefoot with his right hand raised in blessing. Based on the damage visible in the extreme upper and lower areas of the window, the present fresco covers some earlier soffit decoration, indicating a third moment of artistic activity in the southern section of the north pastophoria dome. Even though it was added subsequent to the main phase of decoration, the figure was rendered in a style that clearly intended to coordinate with the six original figures. The dome is supported by four pendentives, each of which is decorated with large roundels of images of saints, whose outlines are only faintly visible today (Figure 95).

Of the four walls in the north pastophorium, only the western wall retains its imagery, but it has never been discussed. It does, in fact, contain the remains of several figures (Figure 96). While the entire wall would have originally been covered with fresco decoration, today only two registers remain: the lunette formed between the southwestern and northwestern pendentives, and the flat expanse of wall containing the doorway between the pastophoria and the north aisle below the lunette. The registers are demarcated by a red and yellow horizontal line. The color scheme and proportions of figures noted in the dome are consistent with what can be observed on the western wall, indicating the whole of the north pastophorium was painted in a single campaign. Three full-length figures stand facing forward in the lunette, wearing rich and bright clothing. While it is unfortunate that their heads and inscriptions no longer survive, their costumes offer some basic information. The figure at the center (Figure 97) is framed by a thin golden sashing, affixed to the right and left above his head, draping down in a narrow inverted arc. The vertical sashing to either side of the figure continues to elbow length, separating him from his companions. He has a large golden halo, and a very beautiful golden tunic highlighted

in hues of pumpkin, sunset orange, pale lavender gray and bright red. His outer tunic is shorter, rendered in flaming scarlet. The fabric billows away from his body, a contrast to his static, frontal posture. The figure to his left (the viewer's right) has deteriorated, however, the figure to his right (or the viewer's left) remains (Figure 98). This figure, standing next to the southwestern pendentive, is dressed in a heavily jeweled, imperial costume. The bright blue tunic is edged in a heavy gold fabric, studded throughout with giant white pearls and large rectangular rubies. The hem falls past the figure's feet to the ground, though the blue tunic is gathered in folds on the figure's left side, indicating that his left arm is gesturing in some fashion. There are traces of bright red, which may belong to a cape fastened to one side of his shoulders. The figure's head and halo are painted onto a part of the pendentive that attenuates towards the top of the lunette, giving an effect of the figure's head inclining forward into space. This figure may be an archangel standing on a footstool, or perhaps even an imperial donor, standing to the right side of the central figure.

In the register below the lunette, where I have identified the scene of *The Presentation of Christ at the Temple* on the west wall of the north pastophorium, there is a "painted" double arcade, spanning the width of the wall, that functions to organize the scene (Figure 99). In the central spandrel of the painted arcade is a roundel of a saint. The springing of the central column is placed directly below the feet of the central figure in the lunette above. The spandrel seems to be painted in a dark purple color, perhaps in imitation of porphyry marble. The edge of the arch is golden. Below the left-hand arch there are two standing, haloed figures. One can see the broad, balding forehead of a holy man, with a fringe of white hair circling from ear to ear, and behind him, a second figure, female, whose head is covered and is also haloed. Both figures are turned three-quarters to their left, and appear to be focusing towards the center column of the arcade.

His left hand is also raised, palm up. At the viewer's far left, there are remains of painted architecture, providing an urban framework to the scene that is taking place below the arcade. This scene should be identified as *The Presentation of Christ at the Temple* (Figure 100), with figures standing in front of a *ciborium*.²⁷⁸

In sum, the north pastophorium, which has never before been studied for its fresco decoration, contains a number of figures and scenes, including an image in the dome of an the Virgin *orans* and Angels and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple on the west wall. Above the Presentation is a series of three figures, one of whom wears an imperial costume and may either be an archangel standing on a footstool or perhaps even an imperial donor. While the identity of the majority of the figures cannot be specified, nor can there be a complete interpretation of the image cycle, understanding the scale, color-scheme and basic composition and presence of these scenes, and the presence of prophets and kinds from the Old Testament in the drum of the significantly increases the state of knowledge of Hagia Sophia's fresco program.

South Pastophorium

While the south pastophorium is, in general, acknowledged to possess frescoes in a much better state of preservation than those in the north, it also has not received a thorough analysis. Möllers lists some of the figures and their basic characteristics, while Schneider observed standing holy figures in between the windows of the dome, half-bust medallions of saints the next level down, as well as a large image of *The Hospitality of Abraham*, all of which can be confirmed here.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁸ E. N. Tsigaridas, *Οι τοιχογραφίες της μονής Λατόμου Θεσσαλονίκης και η βυζαντινή ζωγραφική του 12^{ου} αιώνα* (Thessaloniki, 1986).

²⁷⁹ Genesis 18:1-15.

This scene is difficult to identify among the frescoes remaining at present; however, I believe that it is located in the central register of the pastophorium's south wall (Figure 101).

In Christian exegesis, the story of the Hospitality was recast as one of numerous Old Testament prefigurations of the Trinitarian nature of God, where the three angels-*qua*-guests symbolize the three persons of the Trinity. The presence of this scene in the southern pastophorium, or the *diakonikon*, at Hagia Sophia, where liturgical vestments and books would have been kept is difficult to tease out, particularly since the remaining narrative images cannot be identified with certainty. It could be that the remainder of the scenes focused as well on Trinitarian imagery drawn from Old Testament, such as the *Three Hebrews in the Fiery Furnace*, or the New Testament, such as the *Baptism* of Christ or the *Transfiguration*. The Eucharist, which would have been prepared in the north pastophorium, was itself a holy “meal” that symbolized the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, as alluded to in the meal provided to the three strangers by Abraham and his wife, Sarah. The theme of sacrifice and the visual metaphors prefiguring such themes were often associated with spaces where the Eucharist was prepared.²⁸⁰

A similar image, dating from the last quarter of the twelfth century, is placed centrally above the altar of the Chapel of the Theotokos in the Monastery of St. John on Patmos (Figure 102), a foundation that had strong ties, both historically and in the thirteenth century with the vibrant monastic center at Latmos (ancient Herakleia) on Bafa Lake, and with the newly reestablished patriarchate in Nicæa.²⁸¹ The features of the scene in Hagia Sophia become clear

²⁸⁰ E. Grypeou and H. Spurling, “Abraham's Angels: Jewish and Christian Exegesis of Genesis 18-19,” in their co-edited volume, *The Exegetical Encounter Between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 2009), 181-202, which contains a full summary of the Rabbinic, Late Antique and Early Christian authors who discuss the scene of the Hospitality of Abraham.

²⁸¹ S. Papadopoulos, *The Monastery of St. John the Theologian in Patmos* (Athens, 1974), 18. Restle also mentions an interesting connection between a copy of the gospel of Matthew from the John Prodromos Monastery of Patmos, No. 72 (1, 54), which, the author states, “may have come from Asia Minor as the nucleus of the library of the

when compared with the much better preserved scene at Patmos, where we see three haloed angels (one larger, in the center, flanked by two smaller) sitting at a round table, set with all the necessary elements for a meal. Abraham, shown in diminutive scale to the viewer's far left, is depicted full length, striding towards the dinner table with a bowl of chickpeas. While the Hagia Sophia fresco is quite deteriorated, at Patmos one can easily observe two angels (that at the left and that in the center) and with some difficulty, the halo and hairline of the third angel's head, in a pyramidal composition (Figure 101). The larger- and smaller-sized angels at Patmos are replicated at Hagia Sophia, where, on the viewer's left, the smaller angel, with wings unfurled, is depicted in three-quarter view (Figure 82). Moving towards the center of the composition, we see the remains of a second, larger angel whose red- and blue-feathered wings are just visible to the naked eye, positioned front and center, directly below the south lunette window (Figure 82). Abraham, who is larger than the figure at Patmos, would have been striding towards the angels from the left-most edge. The needlessly elaborate series of folds seen hanging from his upstage arm at Patmos are repeated here, though only the white fabric and its gray highlights can be seen at Nicæa. Despite the differences in the locations of the scene at Patmos (under the eastern arch of the chapel's barrel vault) and at Hagia Sophia (on the south wall of the south pastophorium) the main compositional elements are nevertheless recognizable and similar.

The south wall of the south pastophorium retains the best-preserved images. Marcelle Restle wrote that "a very meagre remnant has survived on the dome of the side chamber, notably

Monastery of St. John, on Patmos founded from the Stylos Monastery in Latmos." See Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, Vol. 1, 54; E. Kollias, *Byzantine Art in Greece-Patmos* (Athens, 1986), 15. Kollias suggests a late twelfth-century date rather than the early thirteenth-century date suggested by S. Papadopoulos based on the presence of portraits of the Patriarchs of Jerusalem in the chapel.

the head of an Angel.”²⁸² The photograph in Restle (Figure 103) can be matched precisely to the roundel of a saint (not an angel) positioned to the east of the window in the lunette of the south wall in the south pastophorium, just above the Hospitality of Abraham (Figure 104) This saint is one of a pair arranged symmetrically around the southern pastophorium’s southern window (Figure 105). Proof that they are one and the same lies in the areas of damage that appear around the saint’s left temple and hairline: two bright white patches of damage appear in both Restle’s and my photographs and are perfectly consistent with one another. This photograph will provide the stylistic benchmark in our examination of the pastophorium frescoes, especially since Restle’s color photograph, taken circa 1967, is the earliest surviving color image. In that image, taken long before the new roof had been placed on the church, we can observe several details that are no longer visible today. First, the saint’s face and halo are markedly more detailed: the shading around his eyes, the bridge of his nose, and his lips and chin cast elegant shadows against his alabaster white skin. The dark outlines of his nose and eyes appear pencil thin, but are carried through in somewhat thicker strokes along his jawline and neck. His hair is short and wavy and does not descend much past his earlobes, though the darker outline around his hair is clear. Maintaining our focus on the features of his face, we can compare the colors in Restle’s reproduction with those in mine, and notice in the latter a much brighter palette in yellowish golds, bright lemon and even tones of butterscotch. The beautiful peachy tones of his skin and the auburn brown curls of his hair offer a much more human colored palette in contrast to the primary bright yellows, reds, golds and blues used as background and framing colors. His robe is saturated with an orange-crimson color, which is not discernable in Restle’s photographs, though in it one can see much better the drapery folds of both his *chlamys* and outer robe. In similar

²⁸² Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, Vol. 1, 85; Vol. 3, Photo 551, LXXIV.

fashion, one cannot see much of the original detail in the saint's halo in the modern photograph, just a broad plane of yellow and a faint outline around it. In contrast, Restle's photograph shows clearly the yellow halo outlined by what I perceive to be a thin dark blue line, then a much wider black, and then finally a thin bright white line separated from the black band by a space, through which we can see the glowing yellow of the saint's halo. The slightly more butterscotch-yellow used for the roundel's background continues to the lower limits of the circle, and shows no real evidence of the large gray, blue, and reddish-colored wings we have seen attached to the angelic figures elsewhere in the southern pastophorium. This indicates that he is a youthful saint and not an angel. Most important for us is the appearance of the saint's face, made all the more precious at Hagia Sophia due to the fact that almost all the faces of the saints and other holy figures have been intentionally excised. The remainder of the lunette contains another roundel on the other side of the window, as well as a faint halo above the arch of the window. The figure to the right shows a half-length portrait of a saint wearing dark rust-colored robes over a dark blue *chlamys*.

Besides these, the saint and the scene of the Hospitality of Abraham, not much has been said about the figures in the south pastophorium. Fortunately, close observation and detailed photographs yield proof of several more figures than have been previously noticed. I have found at least eleven figures in the south pastophorium dome and three in the lunette of the west wall. I have identified the sixteen mentioned by Möllers, but have found fourteen more, for a total of thirty figures (Figure 82). While they are better preserved than those in the north pastophorium, we can see clear evidence that both the north and south pastophoria were painted at the same time, in the same style, and with the same general organization of space, featuring full-length standing figures, abbreviated narrative scenes, and medallions with busts of saints painted predominantly in a palette of blue, red and gold.

The drum of dome (Figure 106) contains ruined frescoes of eleven figures (Figure 82), none of which has been mentioned in earlier scholarship on Hagia Sophia. Much of the lower two-thirds of the figures remains, but the upper areas, and the very center of the dome are lost. Like the north pastophorium, the south also features a series of standing figures in the interstices of the windows, each one here containing an angel or archangel. Like the north pastophorium, the heads have been excised. At the east a figure in a dark cloak, edged and hemmed in wide gold embroidery stands on a reddish orange dais (Figure 107). His wings are barely visible, but the long arching feathers in dark purple and grey are visible in the lower half of the picture. Figure 108 shows a similarly positioned figure in a blue under tunic, hemmed in gold, wearing a thick, dark yellow-gold toga that wraps across the front of his body from bottom right up over his left shoulder and which drapes broadly behind what we shall assume to be his outstretched left arm. His dark purple wings are strongly unfurled. In his left hand one can observe a pale blue sphere, ostensibly the *globus cruciger* held by the Archangel Michael, with whom we can tentatively identify this figure. The pattern continues in Figure 109, which shows the southwestern figure, clothed in bright and dark red, standing on what appears to be a blue-green dais. Figure 110 displays a bare-footed figure in blue clothing, whereas Figure 111 contains Christ. The last figure is so badly eroded that the faint reddish dais he stands on can only be vaguely ascertained, as are the topmost arcs of his wings.

Of the four pendentives in the south pastophorium, three retain traces of their fresco decoration. Möllers makes mentions only of the “yellow haloes discernable in the pendentives.”²⁸³ Slightly similar to those in the north, the south pendentives are decorated with bust-length saints with haloes. Here, however, the figures, which I believe may be the four

²⁸³ Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, 36-37.

evangelists, are shown in half roundels and at about half-scale compared to the other figures. One can observe that their clothes and upper bodies descend past the attenuated points of the pendentives. The northwest pendentive is unusually well preserved, and features a bright red background (Figure 112).

Each of the east and south lunettes possess a single window with two medallions to the left and right (Figure 82). On the east wall (Figure 113), Möllers mentions the medallion on the viewer's right, describing it as bright yellow with a half-length figure within it wearing a red tunic and a golden halo (Figure 114). The face and head have been excised. The medallion is outlined in a fine red line that runs tangent to a thick border painted across the east window, separating the lunette above from the expanse of wall below. This border, along with the rest of the corners and margins in the pastophorium, is also outlined with red. Möllers neglects to mention the pendant medallion to the left of the window as well. It has deteriorated to reveal its red under-painting, but retains its basic composition. One unique feature in the left medallion is the presence of two haloed figures: a larger and taller adult in the background, and a smaller figure in front. The rounded outlines of both haloes are still visible, though the identity of the saints cannot be known. One can safely assume that this is an image of the Virgin and Child, though it cannot be stated with certainty. The two medallions share the same proportions.

The north wall of the south pastophorium retains approximately one-third of its original fresco decoration. There are two pictorial registers, the upper lunette and the register below it, delineated from one another by a horizontal red line (Figure 115). The lunette originally contained at least three figures, two of which are visible today at center and to the viewer's left (Figure 116). At the apex one can observe very clearly the beautifully modeled remains of a haloed head, wreathed by a large halo and in appearance conforming to the portrait of any

number of older male saints with short beards and white hair (Figure 117). Two other saints appear in roundels to the left and, one assumes, the right, though it is no longer extant. The scene in the register below the lunette is difficult to identify, though approximately one-third of it remains. At the far left, a tall architectural complex stands, yellow and angular, rising from the lower reaches of the scene to the top. Immediately to the viewer's right is an inverted triangular shape painted in bright red with a thick yellow border. This shape could either be identified as a shield or perhaps a piece of cloth shown in perspective. Along the right-hand edge of this triangle is a long, draping pearl- and jewel-studded hem (Figure 118). The identity of this scene is not secure, but could be any one of a number of scenes that tend to feature architectural backgrounds, including *The Entry into Jerusalem*. That it is a scene from the among the major high feasts drawn from the Passion of Christ is clear, particularly since the scene to the west is *The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane* (Figure 119), which is confirmed by the single figure at the far top of the mountainous landscape, prostrate in a position of prayer usually seen only in images of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, which lies at the bottom of the Mount of Olives. A similar scene can be found in the thirteenth-century frescoes of Hosios David, Thessaloniki (Figure 120).²⁸⁴ In that scene, Christ is shown prostrating himself in prayer in the upper reaches of a barren mountainous landscape. Comparing the two figures and their relative placement in the image confirms that the scene at Hagia Sophia is the same. With this information, we can conclude that in addition to the Old Testament scenes in the south pastophorium, it, like the north, was decorated with scenes from the life of Christ. The four walls of each pastophorium would facilitate one scene each, and understanding that there is proof of *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple* in the north, the other three scenes would likely be from the early life of

²⁸⁴ Tsigaridas, *Οι τοιχογραφίες της μονής Λατόμου*, 82-83. Tsigaridas dates this fresco to the early Palaiologan period, from the years 1277-1282, when it was restored by Joseph Komnenos Maliassenos and his family.

Christ, including perhaps *The Annunciation*, *The Nativity*, and *The Baptism of Christ*. In the south pastophorium, given the presence of *The Agony of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane*, the other scenes most likely related to Christ's Passion, and may have included the *Crucifixion*, the *Descent into Limbo* and either the *Transfiguration* or the *Ascension*.

In summary, the fresco program in the north and south pastophoria show a combination of typical Komnenian compositional traits, including symmetry and hieratic scale. Given the fact that there are two sarcophagi already present in each of the pastophoria prior to adding the Laskarid frescoes, and understanding that the pastophoria were themselves built *into* existing corners of the aisles bring up the possibility that these spaces may have had overlapping devotional and liturgical roles. Moreover, that the door to the small satellite chapel to the south was sealed up when the pastophoria were put in the eleventh century indicates that a second (and separate) burial was desired (at least in the south pastophorium, where the sarcophagus remains).²⁸⁵ Thus, even though the decoration of the lower zones is lost, I believe that it is possible that there was an *added* devotional character to these spaces that persisted into the Laskarid period, and perhaps even increased.

Examination of contemporary churches in Cappadocia suggests that other figures, now missing at Nicæa, might have been included in the program. The Church of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste in Söviş, dated by an inscription to 1216/1217, during the reign of Theodore I, contains a fresco program from the same years in which the Nicæan pastophoria were painted. Its artistic style is typical for the region, and many of its figures can still be identified. Saints including those important to the Laskarid dynasty, including Tryphon and Theodore Stratelates both appear as standing half-length figures in the eastern soffit of the double arcade dividing the two short

²⁸⁵ Möllers, "Neue Beobachtungen zur Hagia Sophia in Iznik-Nikaia," 689-693.

naves of the church.²⁸⁶ The Cappadocian church at Arabsun-Gülşehir, Karşı Kilise, which also retains a dedication naming Theodore I Laskaris, dates to 1212. Within, St. Tryphon appears again, and is given special prominence at the northeastern edge of nave's barrel vault, nearest to the apse.²⁸⁷ His position next to the vault decoration is a standout, for the vault otherwise is covered with scenes from the passion of Christ, including *The Last Supper*, the *Betrayal by Judas*, the *Descent from the Cross*, the *Anastasis*, the *Angel at the Tomb*, and the *Koimesis*. Another scene alludes to Trinitarian imagery drawn from the Old Testament at Karşı Kilise: the *Three Young Men in the Fiery Furnace* on the southwest end of the church's vault. The dedicatory inscription itself, which is fragmented, is accompanied by donor portraits of three women, as Sophie Métivier notes, named Irene, Kale and Mary, described as a mother and her two daughters, as well as highly deteriorated images of three men. Another saint from Nicæa, St. Theodote, stands next to the women.²⁸⁸ The Nicæan connection between Cappadocia and the Laskarids is strengthened considering, as Tolga Uyar points out, the treaty between Theodore I Laskaris and Kaykaûs, the Seljuq lord across the Mæander, following the battle of Antioch-on-the-Mæander.²⁸⁹ Moreover, the importance and deference shown to saints from Nicæa, particularly St. Tryphon, argues in favor of the revivification of his cult as early as the reign of Theodore I. The dating of these two churches, 1212 and 1216/17, is also in the first decade of Theodore I's reign, and shows an interest by other inhabitants under "foreign" leadership to show their loyalty to the Laskarids as the heirs of legitimate Byzantine rule.

²⁸⁶ Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, XLV, 158-160, Plates 414-432.

²⁸⁷ Métivier, "Byzantium in question in thirteenth-century Seljuk Anatolia," 238-240. For St. Tryphon's location and identification, see Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, LI, 167-168, plates 476-473.

²⁸⁸ Métivier, 238.

²⁸⁹ Macrides, *George Akropolites, The History*, 93.

Given that St. Tryphon and Theodore I Laskaris are specified in churches that lay in territories outside the Laskarid realm, one may reasonably assume that they would have been included in the program of Hagia Sophia at Nicæa. Karşı Kilise remarkably preserves several references to the Laskaris court and Nicæan realm. Unfortunately, at this point it is impossible to confirm whether more scenes from the Laskarid-oriented Cappadocian churches appear at Nicæa.

Frescoes in the Laskarid Walls at Nicæa

In order to better understand the frescoes at Hagia Sophia, we turn now to the few extant examples of known Laskarid frescoes in three locations within the city walls. Frescoes dating to the reign of Theodore I have been recorded in towers 20, 26, 54, and near the South Lake Gate, at tower 92 (Figure 11).²⁹⁰ These are mostly no longer extant though tower 54 retains traces. The two towers belonging to the walls erected by John III outside the İstanbul Gate and the Lefke Gate were also decorated with frescoes of saints (Figure 121); these were observed by Schneider, and he confirmed what had been stated by earlier scholars: that the eastern tower of the İstanbul gate contained a representation of St. Nichols.²⁹¹ First, we shall look at the frescoes in tower 54

²⁹⁰ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 86-87, 92.

²⁹¹ See Chapter Two for connection to the chapel of St. Nicholas in Constantinople; J. Raby, “A Seventeenth Century Description of Iznik-Nicæa,” *IstMitt* 26 (1976), 149-188; Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer*, 26; M. Kleonymos and C. Papadopoulos, *Βιθυνικά ή Επίτομος Μονογραφία της Βιθυνίας και των πόλεων αυτής* (Constantinople, 1867), 146, where they mention seeing an icon/representation of St. Nicholas: “Ἡ νῦν θέσις τούτου δεικνύμει τῷ θεατῇ, ὅτι δὲν εἶναι ἡ ἀρχῆθεν θέσις του, ἀλλ’ ὅτι αἰτίον τι μετέφερεν ἐκεῖ ἢ μετεκίνησε τὸν ναῖσκον τοῦτον, τὸν νῦν ὀνομαζόμενον τουρκιστὶ Νιέτ τασί. Ἐντὸς τῶν τειχῶν παρὰ τὴν πρὸς βορρᾶν πύλην Σταμπὸλ καπουσί, ἐπὶ χυβάδος τῆς ἔσωθεν δευτέρας πύλης σώζονται ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἴχνη εἰκονος τοῦ Ἀγ. Νικολάου (italics mine). Ἐχεῖ πλησιέστατα σώζεται κρύπτη τις τανῦν καλουμένη φυλακὴ τοῦ Ἀγίου Νικολάου.”

rebuilt by Theodore I and secondly, those in the small chapels built into the new city walls under John III at the İstanbul and Lefke Gates.

The first images are located on the uppermost level of tower 54, in what Texier called “the room of the guards.” The room received a short, but detailed, description in Texier’s *Asie Mineure* from 1862.²⁹² This tower, in his view, was particularly interesting because of its images, executed on a plaster background that covered the brick walls. Texier wrote that the holy figures had golden haloes around their heads and wore classicizing clothes. Some figures could be identified, Texier said, by their names written in columns of Greek letters. One saint was identified as St. George riding a gray horse, for which Texier suggested a twelfth-century date, not knowing the wall’s actual thirteenth-century construction. Because of its location in tower 54’s upper level, an area rebuilt by Theodore I, the painting can date no earlier than his reign.²⁹³ Texier’s stylistic attribution cannot be fully corroborated, because the condition of the painting today is extremely poor. Portions of the horse’s black leather, silver-studded saddle tack is still visible in the faded image, while the basic outline is suggested by my drawing (Figure 122). The image was placed at chest height on the right-hand wall of the upper tower’s interior stairway, a location that can only be reached today by a dangerous climb up the steep ruins. The horse, whose head faces to the viewer’s left as she ascends the stairs, appears to be heading “up the stairs.” He and his rider, St. George, would have filled the entire surface of the particular wall. The most visible remains as of January 2013 include the grey horse’s croup, thigh, buttocks, braided tail, abdomen and gaskin. Like the saints’ heads in Hagia Sophia, the saint’s head in tower 54 was also intentionally excised. Despite tower 54’s thirteenth-century date, the

²⁹² C. Texier, *Asie Mineure: description géographique, historique et archéologique des provinces et des villes de la Chersonnèse d’Asie* (Paris, 1862), 102.

²⁹³ Foss, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 89.

fresco of St. George on horseback was painted in a style that Texier considered characteristic of the twelfth century. The choice to portray a large image of St. George, a powerful military saint, in a small staircase in the battlements of a tower harmonizes with the concerns of soldiers at war and their task to protect this city walls. His presence was likely apotropaic and comforting for those who passed by him.

Two photographs of a small barrel vaulted chapel in tower 54 survive, one showing the remains of a standing figure at the end of a row along the barrel vault towards the back wall (Figure 123). Part of the vault has caved in, taking with it a small portion of the figure's halo, and vandalism has eradicated his face. The figure, a male, is standing atop a painted *dado* that imitates marble revetment. The parallel lines of the revetment are echoed in the "dark-light-dark" triad of lines that define the picture plane against the dado, and in the curved seam where the barrel vaulted wall/ceiling joins the rear wall. The saint's halo and clothing are outlined in a dark color, and his robes show patches of a black, cross-shaped patterning beneath where his left elbow would be, indicating that he was a bishop. He appears to be wearing a light, if not actually white, robe, and has a darker tunic attached at his right shoulder, flowing freely to his left, the front corner of which ends in a small tassel. From the photograph, it is difficult to ascertain the figure's exact positioning, but he appears to be turned to the right, towards whatever imagery might have been painted the rear wall. In his right hand he holds a text scroll, which now looks like a whitish, empty box-shaped space. His left hand may be holding it taut at the bottom or gesturing to it, for the wide sleeve emerging from his cloak follows a downward diagonal angle. Given these details, the saint could be a church father, but the ruined state of the representation make his specific identity a mystery. With a few notable exceptions, figures of celebrating bishops were generally restricted to the apse; the presence of an episcopal portrait in this chapel

may indicate that mass was celebrated here for the soldiers whose duty it was to guard the walls and could not long abandon their posts. In Figure 124 all that can be seen is the continuation of the painted dado and a great deal of etched graffiti effacing what are now faint traces of another standing figure.

From John III's Lefke Gate extend walls whose upper ramparts are reached by staircases (Figure 125). At the top of each of these is a small chapel, each of which once bore traces of fresco painting. Within the chapel to the right of the gate (from the interior), the fresco is located on the small barrel vault of the chapel (Figure 126). It depicts an image of a "patriarchal cross" framed by a double-line border (one dark, one light) that is rectilinear on three sides, but shallowly curved at the top, as if to frame the cross within a niche of its own. The cross extends the full depth of the barrel vault, and is oriented so that its top is near the entrance. The arms of the cross, including the top, the shorter upper arm and longer transverse arm, all end in pointed spur-serifs, adding a calligraphic flourish to the symbol. In the photograph, to the right and left of the cross are two other image fields that contain the remains of two haloes whose upper circumferences are just barely visible. One assumes the figure's bodies continued along the walls down to the floor level (or perhaps to a border). This fresco portrays the patriarchal cross, which would have had special relevance at the entrance to the city where the Orthodox Patriarch resided.²⁹⁴

In the chapel to the left, there are remains of a figural fresco on the back wall, previously identified as the Virgin holding the Christ child, though this is not at all obvious (Figure 127).²⁹⁵

²⁹⁴ Each of the Laskarid emperors showed himself and his favored saint together holding the patriarchal cross on the reverse of their aspron trachies.

The figure is of wide proportions, with broad shoulders more suited to a male figure. The robes appear to consist of a light-colored, full, long-sleeved tunic, creased with numerous angular folds at the figure's right shoulder and elbow, and a longer, darker cloak that appears to fasten high at the neck on the figure's right shoulder. The figure's posture is standing straight, facing forward, with arms in a symmetrical gesture. The figure would have originally taken up almost all the space on the back wall. The lunette-shaped top of the back wall, formed by the end of the barrel vaulted ceiling, is bare of painting in the photograph, but nevertheless shows faint evidence of painting where the figure's head and halo would have been. As a side note, in the photograph, two heads with haloes are visible to the right, and appear to be about one head taller than the figure on the rear wall.

While the faces of both figures are very damaged (perhaps as a result of intentional erasure) their figures are faintly visible: that of the Christ child can only be found by means of his halo and shading for his face, located at the figure's left shoulder. Like the person who holds him, the Christ child also wears a lighter colored robe; both of their garments are outlined by heavy dark lines. Though the colors cannot be known for certain, their relative hues indicate a light color scheme, as opposed to the more saturated imperial blues, reds and purples traditionally worn by Mary and Christ, which would appear dark in black and white photographs. It is more likely that this is *not* an image of the Virgin and Christ. First, the bodily proportions are those of a male, not a female. The visible proportions harmonize with each other. Secondly, the folds of the figure's robes appear decidedly angular and linear, not softened and curved, as are characteristic of the Virgin's figure. Third, the costume is iconographically incorrect for the

²⁹⁵ Bilgiç, "İznik Surları, (The city walls of İznik)," (1972), 37. "Bu nişlerden sol taraftağının içinde kucağında çocuk isa ile birlikte bir Meryem figürü ayakta olarak tasvir edilmiştir." (On the left side of this niche is the figure of the Virgin Mary, depicted standing, with the Christ child in her arms).

Mother of God, who is generally dressed in the Middle and Late Byzantine period in a dark blue or dark reddish purple veiled floor length robe, often embroidered with gold accents and highlighted with gentle arabesque curves. The shape of her head is idealized as a sphere and her shoulders are narrow and rounded. The figure in the small chapel bears no physical or iconographic characteristics typical of the Virgin's appearance. The fresco's condition today makes it difficult, if not impossible to venture a new identification, though it seems quite clear from what does remain that the Virgin is not depicted here.

In sum, based on the frescoes found in the chapels of the walls built by John III around Nicæa, and the images in the chapel and staircase of tower 54 dating to the reign of Theodore I, I offer the following general conclusions on Laskarid painting in Nicaea: first, the images are painted with what would be the equivalent of "wide brush-strokes," rendering thicker lines throughout; second, the method of highlighting appears to favor high contrast colors and linear outlining in order to create detail and depth on the figures' haloes and in clothing; third, in both chapels there is symmetry and balance in the composition, as if organized around a central, vertical axis; fourth, the compositions show both a reliance on the physical space of the surface to define the picture plane; fifth, the subjects featured appear in the largest possible scale, as if to fill up all available space: sixth, the static nature of their poses gives them the appearance of being extremely dense, incapable of defying the pull of gravity that keeps them rooted to the spot. The prevalence of frontal, full-length standing saints in this chapel, and the "patriarchal cross" in the previous chapel, indicate the devotional character of both spaces. Unfortunately, without a more extensive context, we can hazard no further interpretation of their devotional focus. In their visual characteristics, these frescoes recall certain eleventh-century Komnenian traits in their shared concerns for symmetry, static posture and lack of movement, and the lack of

interest in depicting volume through color, and their preference for linear detail. All these traits are consistent with the frescoes in the pastophoria at Hagia Sophia, as is the general color scheme and large scale of the figures relative to the available wall space. The consistency of style, scale and compositional features provides a useful, if basic, characterization of the Laskarid style of painting in Nicæa for both Theodore I's and John III's reign.

Chronology of Late Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Century Frescoes

The great length of the Komnenian period precludes asserting a single era of "Komnenian Art." In light of this, I will begin with examples produced at the very end of the twelfth century and place the Nicæan examples in chronological sequence through to the early Palaiologan period.²⁹⁶ As mentioned in the first section, I will also include here examples of what are likely to be Laskarid frescoes, though they cannot be dated securely.

The small katholikon of Hosios David, or the Monastery of Latomou, in Thessaloniki, contains fresco decoration from the very end of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth.²⁹⁷ The monastic church preserves the remains of frescoes in its vaults, each half

²⁹⁶ Churches that exhibit "metropolitan style" earlier in the Komnenian period include the narthex of Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki (1150-1160), Panagia Kosmosoteira in Ferrai (Isaak II Komnenos, 1152), St. Panteleimon in Nerezi (1164), St. Nicholas tou Kasnitzi in Kastoria (1180-1200), Hagioi Anargyroi, Kastoria (1180-1200), Djurdjevi Stupovi (1175), St. George, Kurbinovo, (1191), and St. Demetrios in Vladimir (1194).

²⁹⁷ Tsigaridas, *Οι τοιχογραφίες της μονής Λατόμου Θεσσαλονίκης*, 175, 177. The Monastery of Christ the Savior of Latomou, also known as Hosios David, was rededicated in the ninth century. In the twelfth century, the monastery was restored. The author believes that the frescoes within the south vault date to this era, most likely to the third quarter of the twelfth century. In 1227-1282, Michael VIII Palaiologos granted the convent and its wealth to one of his nephews, who perhaps placed new frescoes in the monument, fragments of which have been conserved on the east wall of the north arm of the cross, which are dated to the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century. Thus, the Byzantine frescoes that were recently discovered do not date from the same period, rather those in the south vault date to the third quarter of the twelfth century, while those in the north vault date to the end of the thirteenth or to the beginning of the fourteenth century. See also A. Xyngopoulos, "Το καθολικόν της Μονής του Λατόμου εν Θεσσαλονίκη και το εν αυτό ψηφιδωτόν," *Άρχ.Δελτ.* 12 (1929), 142-180; Skawran, *The Development of*

containing one of the High Feasts: the *Baptism* on the west side, the *Nativity* on the east side (Figures 128 and 129); fragments of *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple* survive below the *Baptism* on the west wall, as do fragments of the *Transfiguration* on the tympanum of the south vault (now lost).²⁹⁸ While their color palette is much darker than what we have seen at Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, one may compare the features of the faces of Christ and St. Peter (Figure 130), particularly with respect to the contrast between the physiognomy and the remaining areas of the figures and their haloes, which appear much more linear and less modeled than their faces. In addition, the wobbly, decentered haloes that hover over the holy persons' heads are in common throughout both monuments' figures, including those from the early and later parts of the thirteenth century at Hosios David. While the compositional elements and the remaining areas of the figures' bodies show a real dependence on the main compositional elements of Komnenian monumental painting, the faces in both mark a shift towards modeled representations of the human form.

The Theotokos chapel in the Patmos Monastery, which dates to 1176-1180, is an important comparison to Hagia Sophia, particularly with respect to the compositional methods used to organize its pictorial space as well as the painterly treatment of the figures' faces and in a few cases, robed bodies.²⁹⁹ For example, at Patmos, with respect to composition, there is a pervasive and strict attention to symmetry both in the narrative scenes at Patmos (Figure 102) and in the way that the medallions and standing figures are distributed over the surface of the

Middle Byzantine Fresco Painting in Greece, 187; D. Mouriki, "Stylistic Trends in Monumental Painting of Greece during the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *DOP* 34/35 (1980/1981), 77-124.

²⁹⁸ Skawran, *The Development of Middle Byzantine Fresco Painting in Greece*, 92-93, 187.

²⁹⁹ A. K. Orlandos, *Μοναστηρακη Αρχιτεκτονική* (Athens, 1958); id., "Η τράπεζα τῆς ἐν Πάτμῳ Μονῆς Ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου," *Δωδεκανησιακὸν Ἀρχαίον* 3 (1958); id., "Fresques byzantines du monastère de Patmos," *CahArch* 12 (1962), 285-302.

wall (Figure 131). Elias Kollias suggests that this arrangement at the chapel was likely the best solution for the odd spaces created by the “architectural articulation of the walls.” The nature of the decorative schema at Patmos nestles large roundels—one might even say as large as can be fit into the area of the intercepted arcs to left and right—circumscribing half-length figures next to full-length standing figures. The roundels have the inevitable effect of demarcating a window into a kind of space distinctly “other” than the flattened surface upon which the full-length figures depicted next to the roundels stand. Moreover, the division of the picture plane into different superficial spaces implicates a difference in a figure’s scale, dependent on its milieu, a difference that is strictly maintained throughout the frescoes (Figure 131). While this type of arrangement is not unique or difficult to find among extant eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantine programs, the fact that the Theotokos chapel features such an array of figures in two scales suggests that the concerns governing the organization and execution of its decorative program were still useful and important through the end of the twelfth century and into the thirteenth. There are other parallels between Hagia Sophia and Patmos. Like Patmos, Hagia Sophia’s pastophoria are painted in a color scheme that privileges whites, reds, yellow-golds, ochers and greys against a saturated blue background. The enveloping blue background is interrupted by a plethora of circles in the form of numerous golden haloes and roundels outlined in thick yellow rings, and by the bright red lines delineating the architectural forms of the recessed arches and registers in the walls. Also as at Patmos, Hagia Sophia’s narrative scenes are restricted to uninterrupted stretches of the wall, while the remaining spaces are filled with roundels or standing figures, often in combination. The Theotokos chapel at Patmos, dated to 1176-1180 places it prior to the execution of the frescoes at Hagia Sophia.³⁰⁰ The preponderance

³⁰⁰ Fragmentary remains of a Presentation of Christ can be found in the vault of the west arm of the Panagia

of late twelfth and early thirteenth century painting in Orthodox contexts of Latmos, and on the nearby Aegean islands of Chios, Rhodes, Samos and Patmos, combined with the reliance of the latter on metropolitan aesthetic of the late Komnenian period suggest that when the Laskarids sought out fresco painting, they would do so from those Orthodox centers that, unlike Constantinople, had not directly suffered from events of the Fourth Crusade.

There are a number of features of the hieratic style exemplified at Hagia Sophia and at Patmos that appear in the narthex of Hagia Sophia's near neighbor, the Church of the Dormition, the *katholikon* of the Hyakinthos monastery.³⁰¹ The archaizing features that characterize Komnenian art are present here in full force. While the church no longer survives, there are a number of black and white photographs of the mosaic program of the church's narthex and apse. These provide an exact contemporary parallel for the style that would have prevailed in the post-earthquake decoration of Hagia Sophia, in 1065-1067. From the photographs that remain of the narthex, numerous medallions of saints similar to those seen at Hagia Sophia are interspersed with other holy figures in urban or natural settings, or standing against a gold background. For example, in Figure 132, which shows a photograph of the groin vault in the narthex, medallions with busts of Christ, St. John the Baptist, Anna, and Joachim are interspersed with the portraits of the evangelists, comfortably writing in their studies, which are in turn nestled into the vault's

Damiotissa on Naxos (late twelfth/early thirteenth century), see Skawran, *The Development of Middle Byzantine Fresco Painting in Greece*, 180-181.

³⁰¹ N. Baynes, "Die Koimesiskirche in Nikaia," *BZ* 25 (1925), 267-269; H. Grégoire, "Le véritable nom et la date de l'église de la Dormition à Nicée. Un texte nouveau et décisif," in *Mélanges d'histoire offerts à Henri Pirenne par ses anciens élèves et ses amis à l'occasion de sa quarantième année d'enseignement à l'Université de Gand 1886-1926*, 2 vols. (Bruxelles, 1926), vol. 1, 171-174; F. I. Schmit, *Die Koimesis-Kirche von Nikaia: Das Bauwerk und die Mosaiken* (Berlin, 1927); P. A. Underwood, "The Evidence of Restorations in the Sanctuary of the Church of the Dormition at Nicaea," *DOP* 13 (1959), 235-244; C. Mango, "The Date of the Narthex Mosaics of the Church of the Dormition at Nicaea," *DOP* 13 (1959), 245-252; U. Peschlow, "Neue Beobachtungen zur Architektur und Ausstattung der Koimesiskirche in Iznik," *IstMitt* 26 (1973), 145-187; C. Barber, "The Koimesis Church, Nicaea: The Limits of Representation on the Eve of Iconoclasm," *JÖB* 41 (1991), 43-60; id., "Theotokos and Logos: The Interpretation and Reinterpretation of the Sanctuary Program of the Koimesis Church, Nicaea," in *Images of the Mother of God* (Aldershot, 2005), 51-59.

four pendentives. One can see that the scale between the two sets of figures is not the same, but their ratio relative to one another is very similar to that between the roundels and standing figures at Patmos. The circular haloes, the round medallions, and the bejeweled intersecting crosses at the center of the vault may give some idea of a compositional framework that appears to have been used at Hagia Sophia, Patmos and throughout the Komnenian period. A detail of Christ's face provides, however, a true contrast to what we have seen in the faces at Hagia Sophia, where the painterly technique, albeit in fresco, is used consistently for the figures' faces.

Like at Patmos and Hagia Sophia, the Acheiropoietos Church (the Great Church of the Mother of God) in Thessaloniki, whose earliest phases date to the last quarter of the fifth century, also contains a series of frescoes belonging to the middle of the thirteenth century. These are painted on the south wall in the aisle's northern arcade and spandrels. Again, the wall surface, with its undulating lower margin, requires some adaptation. Here the decoration features alternating standing saints and roundels of saints with large candle stands bookending the composition at the west and east ends (Figure 133).³⁰² The surviving frescoes, Eftychia Kourkoutidou-Nikolaidou writes, depict eighteen of the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia, including Theodolus, Leontius, Athanasius, Cyril, Gorgonius, Dometian, Gaius, Theophilus, Candidus, Heliades, and Alexander.³⁰³ Like the upper lunettes at Hagia Sophia, the alternating rhythm of a standing saint next to a roundel necessitates both a change of scale and spatial context. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaidou remarks that the frescoes show both archaizing twelfth-century traits as well as the "lively expressions...and a fair degree of realism" in the faces of the saints deeply

³⁰² See A. Xyngopoulos, "Αἱ τοιχογραφίαι τῶν Ἀγίων Τεσσαράκοντα εἰς τὴν Ἀχειροποίητον τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης," *Αρχ.Ἐφ.* 96 (1957), 6-30, Figs. 1-14, Plates 2-5.

³⁰³ E. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaidou, *Acheiropoietos, The Great Church of the Mother of God* (Thessaloniki, 1989), esp. 33-36.

shadowed face of Christ. Furthermore, the shading of Christ's face is formed with wide depicted in the roundels, in particular (Figure 134). This feature of the frescoes—namely the archaizing traits of the pictorial composition and figures' bodies in contrast to the lively, human and realistic looking faces—is a trait that Acheiropoietos has in common with both the later thirteenth-century frescoes at Hosios David and the frescoes of the pastophoria at Hagia Sophia.

There is a general scholarly consensus that the frescoes in the Acheiropoietos Church date to the period of Interregnum, which for Thessaloniki had two phases, one of which was rule by a branch of the Komnenos family, the Komnenoi-Doukai, and the second of which involved their rule as *despotes* under the authority of John III Doukas Vatatzes of Nicæa. The first phase dates from the city's rule by Theodore Angelos Komnenos Doukas (r. 1216-1230), Manuel Komnenos Doukas (r. 1230-1237) and John Komnenos Doukas (r. 1237-1244). The second phase began in 1242, when John Komnenos Doukas was made *despotes* by John III Doukas Vatatzes, who also elevated John's brother Demetrios Komnenos Doukas (r. 1244-1246) to that rank. In 1246, an opposition party of citizens of Thessaloniki revolted against Demetrios and welcomed the rule of John III. It is not known whose patronage brought about the redecoration of the interior of the Acheiropoietos church: it could have occurred at any time between the first decade to the middle of the thirteenth century, under one of the Komnenoi-Doukai, or perhaps by one of the city's non-imperial benefactors. Both Theodore and Manuel had spent time at the Laskarid court in Nicæa, Theodore I and John III, respectively, and Manuel in particular acquired Laskarid backing during his time in exile in Attaleia (modern Antalya).³⁰⁴ The exposure of these Thessalonikan rulers to the Nicæan court and the art produced there may offer one avenue of artistic exchange for the similarities in iconic portraits during the Interregnum. The

³⁰⁴ *ODB*, 1292; L. Fundić, "Art and Political Ideology in the State of Epiros during the Reign of Theodore Doukas," *Βυζαντινά Συμμεϊκτα* 23 (2013), 217-230.

similarity in color scheme, composition, and the known interactions between the rulers of Thessaloniki and Nicæa suggests more than enough contact to argue in favor of a system of artistic exchange at the higher levels of society. Also, this was not the first large-scale decoration featuring this iconographic theme. It is also seen in the newly decorated church mentioned above in Şahinefendi, also dedicated to the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia.

Interestingly, there is a second example of artistic exchange that includes Nicæa and Thessaloniki in the thirteenth century. It involves a journey undertaken by St. Sava (b. 1174-d. 1236), the legendary Serbian prince and saint who became first archbishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church in 1219. His *vita*, written by one of his disciples, mentions that the saint visited the Nicæan realm on two separate occasions, once during the reign of Theodore I, when Manuel I Sarantenos (r. 1216-1222), then the Patriarch in exile, was requested by the Serbian monk to anoint him archbishop of Serbia.³⁰⁵ Following this momentous occasion, St. Sava's *vita* records that he stopped in Thessaloniki and stayed in the monastery of Philocali for a time. There he ordered two icons to be painted, one of the Virgin and another of Christ. To preserve them, St. Sava covered them in silver, gold, pearls and precious stones and placed them in "the monastery of Philocali."³⁰⁶ His second encounter with the Nicæan realm came at the tail end of his first voyage to the Holy Land. Having departed from Saint-Jean-d'Acre, St. Sava ended up in Bithynia, where he met John III, who received him hospitably and after arranging one of his ships to take the saint to Mt. Athos, gave the archbishop numerous relics, including a piece of the

³⁰⁵ *Les Némania: vies de St. Syméon et de St. Sabba, by hieromonk Domentijan*, ed. A. Chodźko (Paris, 1858), 54-57. The mention of Theodore I Laskaris can be found on p. 54 (Old Church Slavonic) and p. 56 (French). There is a conflation within the text between "Constantinople" and "Nicæa" where the Laskarid rulers lived. The text also mentions that Theodore I gave St. Sava a large number of gifts and treasures; see Macrides, *George Akropolites, The History*, 158-160.

³⁰⁶ *Les Némania: vies de St. Syméon et de St. Sabba*, p. 57 (Old Church Slavonic), p. 59 (French).

True Cross, covered in pearls and precious stones, and gifts of gold and silver to share with the monks on Mt. Athos whenever he should arrive. At the Monastery of Chilandar, St. Sava distributed the gifts given to him by John III.³⁰⁷ Not long after his return from Laskarid lands, St. Sava moved his metropolitan seat to the Church of the Savior in Žiča. This church had been founded by Stephen I of Serbia between 1207-1209, and its decoration appears to have taken place following St. Sava's return from the court of Theodore I at Nicæa, sometime after 1219. The church was also enlarged at this time; today there are only a few frescoes that remain from this first phase of painting. Fragments of the *Deposition* in the north transept, the *Crucifixion* in the south transept, figures of eight of the twelve Apostles, and the Virgin with the instruments of the Passion can be found in the north arm of the transept (Figure 135).³⁰⁸ It is likely that St. Sava picked up artisans and painters at Nicæa, Constantinople, or Thessaloniki, and perhaps ideas and inspiration for the decoration of the new archbishopric. Some of the later versions of the saint's life have interpolated that these acquisitions in fact took place during his journey through the Laskarid realm.³⁰⁹ Compared to the frescoes at Hagia Sophia, the scene at Žiča contains figures whose bodies are more elongated and thin, and whose heads are in much greater degree of motion and activity. It is unfortunate that the *Crucifixion* does not survive at Hagia Sophia in Nicæa: comparing the saints there with those depicted at Žiča leaves such a disjunction between

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 65-66 (Old Church Slavonic), p. 66-67 (French).

³⁰⁸ My thanks to Prof. Ivan Drpić for sharing his photographs of Žiča with me. See T. Velmans, *La peinture murale byzantine à la fin de Moyen Âge*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1977), 172-173; P. Janitzky, "The wall paintings of the thirteenth century in the Church of the Saviour at Zica," PhD dissertation, History of Art, University of California, Berkeley, 2001. Janitzky also notes that the difference between the frescoes at Studenica and at Žiča, which are separated by over a decade of time are significant, 168. Nowhere does the author suggest that the change in the style of the monumental painting could be due to the exposure of St. Sava to the mural painting to be found at the court of Nicæa.

³⁰⁹ Janitzky, "The wall paintings of the thirteenth century in the Church of the Saviour at Zica," 27.

the static and full-frontal positions of the former and the emotive body language of the latter. There is, however, a similarly symmetrical structure to Žiča's *Crucifixion*, where the figures, architecture, and even the angels are distributed symmetrically. Moreover, the liveliness of the holy figures' facial expressions and head postures is not at all transferred to their bodies, or the robes that cover them. These are shown falling and quite still, with edgy zigzag borders (such as on Christ's loincloth, or the edges of the himation and robes of the other figures). In this characteristic, the *Crucifixion* at Žiča is comparable to the hem of Abraham's white garment in Hagia Sophia's *The Hospitality of Abraham* (Figure 101).³¹⁰ While the direction of artistic exchange between Thessaloniki and Nicæa may be fluid, it appears that through St. Sava the direction of influence ran from Nicæa, Constantinople, and Thessaloniki to Serbia, and not the other way around. As many scholars have noted, the preponderance of fine thirteenth-century monumental painting in the Balkans, particularly in Serbia and Bulgaria, hold a particular pride of place in discussing the evolution of Palaiologan painting. To have identified even two real, rather than hypothetical, examples of artistic exchange involving Laskarid-period fresco painting at this early moment is important for understanding the role it had in the "achievements" of the Palaiologan renaissance.

The route from Laskarid Nicæa to Palaiologan Constantinople may have been both direct and indirect. People in Laskarid Nicæa made their way throughout the Aegean Sea through trade and military campaigns, and occasionally, as in the case of Blemmydes, in search of manuscripts. The mobility of objects in the form of treasures and relics, and the role of Nicæa, Mt. Athos, and Thessaloniki in the case of St. Sava, as sources for "metropolitan" art illustrates a peripatetic model of exposure to and acquisition of art. That Nicæa functioned as a substitute for

³¹⁰ Ibid., 27.

Constantinople in bridging artistic production during the Interregnum may very well be an accurate statement: that is was the *only* source, one can argue, cannot.

Finally, there are a few examples of frescoes I have discovered in both older and newly excavated Laskarid contexts, including frescoes from the terrace church at Bergama, frescoes still *in situ* in the church at Anaia near Kuşadası, and in the ground floor of the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion (modern Kemalpaşa). The latter I discuss in Chapter Six, whereas those at Anaia remain at present unpublished.³¹¹ Having visited the site, however, I can attest that I have seen fresco decoration applied to the first and second phases of the church building, including both large standing saints on a blue background (at least two) in the lunettes and arches of arcosolium tombs. I can attest that there are several fragments of fresco on the walls painted in imitation of veined polychrome marble panels, similar in style to those in the palace at Nymphaion.

The frescoes from the terrace church at Bergama, were collected during the excavations of the Theater Terrace in Bergama, and have been published previously, with tentative ascription to the twelfth century (Figure 136). Unfortunately though they no longer exist and reportedly were lost during World War II.³¹² In an effort to refine the dating of these fragments, I include them here. First, Pergamon was an important site during the Laskarid period. Pergamon's acropolis was refortified after 1214 and the city was visited by Theodore II Laskaris. Thus, it had

³¹¹ The citadel at Anaia was a small but important fortress on the coast of the Aegean Sea, occupied by the Laskarids during the reign of John III, who refortified it, and may have been responsible for some of the later phases of rebuilding and decoration of the basilica plan church inside it. The site is currently being excavated by Zeynep Mercangöz, Ege University, İzmir. For bibliography, see Introduction.

³¹² K. Rheidt, "In the Shadow of Antiquity: Pergamon and the Byzantine Millenium," in *Pergamon, City of the Gods*, ed. H. Koester (Harrisburg, 2000), 395-424. Rheidt discusses the frescoes and assigns them a twelfth-century date based on the fragments of marble capitals found at the site. The cruciform domed church on the theater terrace, called Church C, is no longer extant. For further bibliography on the excavations see A. Conze, "Die Stadt," in *Altortümer von Pergamon* (Berlin, 1913), esp. 318-319.

a consistent Laskarid presence.³¹³ Secondly, scholars have previously suggested that there were several small churches erected in Pergamon, both on the upper and lower acropolis during the thirteenth century, including the Theater Terrace church, which has been dated to the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143-1180), and which functioned as the bishop's seat in Pergamon. Numerous coin and seals dating to the Laskarid period now in the Bergama Archaeological Museum confirm their presence and activity. In Figure 137, I draw a comparison between the image of the Christ child in the Nativity at Hosios David in Thessaloniki and one of the many fragments of faces from the Theater Terrace Church, also showing a child, perhaps to be identified with Christ. The strong outlines and the abstracted volumes of their bodies contrasts with the painterly shading and sculpting of their faces. The face of the Angel from the Theater Terrace Church at Pergamon bears a strong resemblance to the saint at Hagia Sophia (Figure 138). Rather than dating to the beginning of the Komnenian period, epitomized by the mosaics at the Church of the Dormition in Nicæa, the Terrace Church faces appear to have much more stylistically in common with the later Laskarid and early Palaiologan examples already discussed. Laskarid rulers and its ecclesiastical aristocracy both are well known patrons of new churches and monasteries in the thirteenth century. John III and his wife, Irene Laskarina, built the double monastery of Sosandra near Magnesia, Theodore II Laskaris built a church dedicated to St. Tryphon in Nicæa. Nikephoros Blemmydes built a monastery in Ephesos (see Chapter One). Besides these new edifices, there were many renovations within Laskarid territory to religious structures, and John III was known particularly for donating money to important churches and monasteries throughout his realm and beyond. While their date cannot be proved

³¹³ For Laskarid reinforcements to the acropolis walls, see M. Klinkott, *Die Stadtmauern*, Part 1 (Berlin, 2001), 85-87; Theodore II's impressions of Pergamon are recorded in one of his letters, see *Theodori Ducæ Epistolæ CCXVII*, ed. N. Festa (Florence, 1898), Letter 80, 107-108. For full English translation, see Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, 377.

conclusively, the frescoes from the Terrace Church at Bergama place them in much closer proximity to the images we have seen from the first decades of the thirteenth century than to the middle of the twelfth.

Early Palaiologan Monumental Painting in Constantinople

The material dating to the early period of Palaiologan Constantinople is only slightly less scarce than that in the Laskarid era preceding it.³¹⁴ But, fortunately all have been well-published and discussed in terms of their contribution to the Palaiologan aesthetic, however, it would be useful here to discuss them in terms of their connection to the features we have seen developing outside of Constantinople.

The Deesis at Hagia Sophia (Figure 139) has been posited to be the work of Michael VIII Palaiologos, placed there soon after Constantinople was reconquered.³¹⁵ Given the previous imperial donations at Hagia Sophia, the insertion of a large and fine mosaic in the gallery level by an emperor is not at all unexpected. Moreover, we have seen that the redecoration of church interiors, whether panels or whole programs, also continued throughout the Interregnum, and was practiced by both Nicæan emperors at Nicæa and by *despotes* in Thessaloniki. When studied without the correct precedents, the formal appearance of the *Deesis* at Hagia Sophia truly appears to be innovative, however, when viewed in sequence with the frescoes of Hagia Sophia, Patmos, Hosios David, the appearance of the figures in the Constantinopolitan *Deesis* no longer

³¹⁴ Other examples include the frescoes of St. Euphemia near the Hippodrome, the lost mosaics of the Blacherna palace renovated by Michael VIII, and the damaged mosaics at Kilise Camii, known only through photographs.

³¹⁵ R. Cormack, "Interpreting the Mosaics of S. Sophia at Istanbul," *Art History* 4.2 (1981), 131-149; R. Nelson, "The Chora and the Great Church: Intervisuality in Fourteenth-Century Constantinople," *BMGS* 23 (1999), 67-101, esp. 78.

appear unusual or unpredictable. While I have suggested that the stylistic developments perceptible in the early thirteenth-century frescoes of *The Crucifixion* at Žiča (Figure 135) may very well have resulted from the twin effects of inspiration and artistic skill St. Sava acquired during his sojourn in Byzantine lands, one can also observe a common feature between *The Crucifixion* and *The Deesis*: the deep, still space between Christ and the figures to either side, and the steep angle of inclination of the heads of the Virgin and John the Evangelist and John the Baptist, respectively. The finely shaded volumes of the heads and hands of the Virgin and St. John the Baptist mix with the evocative expressions on their faces to create a realistic sense of an emotion being conveyed in real time and space. The painterly techniques that created an ever-increasing contrast between the sculpted hands and faces and the flattened, angular bodies under robes actually continues here. Yet, the effect of this contrast transforms the space occupied by the three figures. Unlike the many disjunctions we have seen in the wall surfaces of the churches from the first half of the thirteenth century, created by rhythmically shifting scales, an insistence on ubiquitous frontality, and the visually segregated spaces that result from margins of borders and roundels, are in the *Deesis*, erased. Rather, the turn upstage by the outside figures, and their realistic faces and hands carve both a deeper and more integrated space, but one that retains a strict symmetry and balance we have seen privileged and valued in the earlier works.

Conclusion

Laskarid fresco painting has been transformed from an invisible concept to a corpus of actual material. Frescoes in the church of Hagia Sophia confirm a second instance of Laskarid imperial patronage there, and also adds to the evidence that it was chosen for use as the Patriarchal church in exile. In defining the corpus of frescoes from this period, we have observed that there is a

great deal of continuity between the compositional tenets of later Komnenian monumental painting and the remaining frescoes of the thirteenth century from sites under Laskarid rule. With respect to defining the Laskarid style, one can state that the first areas of the image that explore a more realistic appearance are the faces of the holy figures, though symmetrically and frontally displayed. In contrast to the opinions of early scholars who saw the frescoes at Nicæa, I argue the frescoes do in fact provide evidence of a consistent march towards the full-figured, heavy and volumetric figures of the Palaiologan era. Through analyzing the Laskarid frescoes and discussing their comparanda, we have also seen how indirect, and in many cases oblique, the direction of artistic influence in painting in fact was during the Interregnum. Certainly, Nicæa appears to have held up its fair share of artistic production. But, there is evidence that Thessaloniki and Mt. Athos were also continually generating art during this period. The role of Constantinople in this period, is indeed, eclipsed by other centers, including Nicæa. One would expect the Laskarids to have embraced all avenues of continuity possible, and it appears that this kind of inclusiveness characterizes the Laskarid patronage in Nicæa's Hagia Sophia. While this chapter is an initial effort to contextualize and organize Laskarid frescoes, the findings indicate that at least with respect to painting, Nicæa can claim to be one of those sites that did continue to nurture Byzantine art, but that it was not alone in this mission.

Chapter Five The Imperial Image in Exile³¹⁶

Unlike the imperial portraits of their Komnenian predecessors and their Palaiologan descendants, no portraits of Laskarid rulers from the period of exile (1204-1261) survive today except for schematic images on coins and seals. The consolidation of Orthodox and Imperial power in exile was a significant obstacle at the beginning of Laskarid rule in Asia Minor, and one would expect to find imagery illustrating those accomplishments through imperial portraiture. Laskarid imperial images in fresco, ivory, or mosaic, if they did once exist, no longer survive. That there would have once been a plethora of portraits is only natural, given the apparent position of Laskarid conservatism, which so adeptly distilled core features of Constantinopolitan art and architecture and recreated them in exile. The redoubling of Nicæa's fortifications and the installation of the Patriarch in Nicæa's Hagia Sophia are essential examples. And, given that the Laskarid dynasty was successful in its efforts to replace the Orthodox Patriarch, imperial power was soon again centered in the person of the Emperor. How the Laskarid dynasty sought to express and display its imperial power is an important question that can begin to be answered but only obliquely, by studying the images of Laskarid emperors that *do* remain—those on their coins and seals. It should be noted that these images are repetitive and limited by the genre in which they appear—coins and seals—which, even in the best cases, have been subjected to the high degree of stylization one expects to see on the small circular surfaces of coins and signature seals. In contrast to Laskarid inscriptions, highly elided language denoting the name, patronym, and title hold primary weight in securing individual identities.

³¹⁶ My thanks and gratitude to Margaret Mullet, Cécile Morrisson, and Vivien Prigent who facilitated the research for this chapter during the 2011 Dumbarton Oaks Numismatics and Sigillography seminar in Washington, DC.

Though no true portraits of the Laskarid emperors survive, their likenesses circulated widely on coins and seals struck during this period. The lack of traditional imperial images of the Laskarid dynasty naturally precludes a direct, chronologically oriented analysis. Instead, I propose examining a portion of the corpus of Laskarid coins and seals, to build a context for interpreting the way the imperial image in exile was produced and what it meant. Although they are diminutive, these cursory images of emperors nonetheless succeeded in conveying their absolute authority and supremacy as rulers sanctioned by God. The pendant images on each of the emperor's coins and seals can be substantively analyzed. The "short-hand" iconographic tableaux created by these pairings of figures were intentional and will be an essential resource for filling the void in our understanding Laskarid imperial imagery. Furthermore, when seen against the background of a vibrant young dynasty consistently acting to restore essential aspects of a lost capital, the iconographic types appear both traditional *and* innovative. Their goal, I will argue, was to project ideations of Byzantine imperial power with saintly associations that connected them, quickly and immediately, to Constantinople and to Nicæa.

The Icon of Christ Chalkites

The extensive restorations to Constantinopolitan buildings begun by Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1259-1282) in the years following the city's reconquest continued under the reign of his son, Andronikos II Palaiologos (r. 1282-1328). Well-known among the era's aristocratic patrons was Theodore Metochites (1270-1332), who funded an extensive redecoration and expansion of the Chora monastery in Constantinople (modern Kariye Müzesi).³¹⁷ One mosaic in the narthex of the

³¹⁷ A. Oğan, *Kariye Camii eski Hora Manstırı* (Ankara, 1955); P. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, 4 vols. (New York, 1966-1975); R. Ousterhout, *The Architecture of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul* (Washington, DC, 1987);

church, a colossal image of *Christ Chalkites* flanked by the *Hagiosoritissa*, is unique in Palaiologan monumental art. The figures of Christ and the Virgin, shown full-length and standing on pedestals, are accompanied by diminutive portraits of two imperial patrons of the church, Isaak Komnenos (1093-ca.1152) and Maria Palaiologina, also known as the nun Melania, both of whom kneel below, hands raised in supplication, mirroring the Virgin's gesture towards her Son (Figure 140).³¹⁸

Due to its large scale and prominent placement in the narthex of the church, the mosaic has been the subject of numerous studies that primarily focus on patronage, devotional space, and identification of the two donor portraits.³¹⁹ The mosaic carries the inscription "Ο ΧΑΛΚΙΤΗΣ" (*ho chalkites*, Figure 141), explicitly referring to the icon of Christ Chalkites that originally stood over the Bronze Gate (*chalke/bronze*) at the entrance to the Great Palace in Constantinople. The oldest known images of Christ Chalkites were icons in Constantinople: the one above the Chalke Gate already mentioned, and a second inside Hagia Sophia. While both

Restoring Byzantium: The Kariye Camii in Istanbul and the Byzantine Institute Restoration, eds. H. Klein and R. Ousterhout (New York, 2004); R. Schroeder, "Prayer and Penance in the South Bay of the Chora Esonarthex," *Gesta* 48, No. 1 (2009), 37-54. There is evidence that Andronikos II also made extensive restorations to the monastery and church.

³¹⁸ P. Underwood "The Deisis Mosaic in the Kahrie Cami at Istanbul," in *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend, Jr.*, ed. K. Weitzmann (Princeton, 1955), 254-260, who notes on p. 255, that "When the plaster was removed beneath the inscription IC and XC at either side of the nimbus, it was found in the setting-bed that the Christ is inscribed ὁ χαλκίτης. We have, thus, a late adaptation of the famous Christ of the Chalke Gate, its name derived from the fact that its possible prototype surmounted the main entrance to the Great Palace of the Emperors."

³¹⁹ In the renovation of the church, Metochites included his own donation portrait over the central portal to the naos, and chose to either retain or insert the portraits of Maria, a Palaiologan princess and the "Lady of the Mongols," and of Isaak Komnenos, a prince and porphyrogennitos in the Christ Chalkites mosaic. If Metochites was in fact responsible, illustrating this imperially studded genealogy of church benefactors betrays Metochites' interest in showing his lineage and membership in this exclusive circle. Others have written on the female donor portrait of Melania the nun, as well as the devotional and penitential character of this particular bay of the narthex. N. Teteriatnikov, "The Place of the Nun Melanie (the Lady of the Mongols) in the Deesis Program of the Inner Narthex of Chora, Constantinople," *CahArch* 43 (1995), 163-180; C. L. Connor, *Women of Byzantium* (New Haven, 2004), 312-316; R. Ousterhout, "The Virgin of the Chora: An Image and Its Contexts," in *The Sacred Image East and West*, eds. R. Ousterhout and L. Brubaker (Chicago, 1995), 91-109.

icons are important, I contend that the source for the Chora's version of Christ Chalkites is to be found in a much more recent past, when it was popularized by John III Doukas Vatatzes who chose it to decorate a number of his coins and seals in the second quarter of the thirteenth century.

The appearance of the icon of Christ Chalkites in the period of exile was a conscious act, and I believe that its use during exile had changed its earlier meaning. Metochites embraced a version of the image when he chose to have the mosaic installed in the church. Though born in Constantinople, Theodore was educated in Nicæa and recruited by Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos to serve as court *mesazon* in 1305 and as *Grand Logothete* in 1321. Both men exhibit discernable ties to the Laskarid past: Andronikos II and Metochites both visited Nicæa and Nymphaion, the twin exilic capitals, after the reconquest, sharing a connection to territories that had harbored Byzantine culture during the Interregnum.³²⁰ The presence of the Chalkites icon in the Church of Christ in the Chora suggests that the meaning of the icon was not at all erased by the Interregnum, but that it had been resurrected by the Laskarids and had, in fact, been brought back to the capital via exile.

The enormous scale of the Christ Chalkites mosaic (measuring 4.83 meters high by 4.32 meters wide) sets the Chora image apart from other mosaics in the church. The conspicuous location of the icon is complicated by the fact its iconographic prototype remains mysterious. Before 1204, sources attest that there were at least two icons of Christ Chalkites located in Constantinople, both of which were displayed in the heart of the city's imperial district.³²¹ The earliest icon of Christ Chalkites reflects in its name its location atop the bronze gate and bronze-

³²⁰ See Chapter Six.

³²¹ G. P. Majeska, "The Image of the Chalke Savior in Saint Sophia," *Byzantinoslavica* 32 (1971), 284-295.

tilled vestibule, also known as the Chalke Gate (Figure 142), that marked the entrance to the Great Palace, the oldest imperial residence in Constantinople.³²² This icon played a major role in the Iconoclast controversies of the eighth and ninth centuries. Stories constructed during the period relate how emperors would erect, pull down and then set up the Chalke icon once again over the palace gate. Displaying and then removing the icon were public acts that expressed the incumbent emperor's view in favor of, or against, icon veneration. In 843, Iconoclasm was condemned as heretical and icon veneration restored as a true Orthodox practice. Following the resolution of the Iconoclastic controversy, it appears that the icon of Christ Chalkites became a permanent fixture in Constantinople. I would argue that by this time, it had become imbued with a symbolic meaning: whereas the image had previously been used to communicate the emperor's official stance on legitimacy of icon veneration, through its presence or absence above the Chalke Gate. In the years following Iconoclasm's resolution, the image was seen as a visual token of the Christ-sanctioned triumph of Orthodoxy, in contrast to heretical imperial power. This bid to Orthodox imperial power is one valence of the older icon that John III explicitly captured in his use of the image on his seals and coinage.

The second icon of Christ Chalkites was placed in no less important a building, Constantinople's cathedral church and home to the Byzantine Orthodox Patriarch, Hagia Sophia. Following the end of Iconoclasm, the church underwent an extensive series of interior redecorations; the icon's appearance in the church likely dates to this time.³²³ As George Majeska has shown, three Russian pilgrims to the city in the year 1200 confirmed the presence of the icon of Christ Chalkites in the Great Church, and reported that it was prominently displayed

³²² See C. Mango, *The Brazen House: A Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace in Constantinople* (Copenhagen, 1959).

³²³ R. Cormack, "Interpreting the Mosaics of S. Sophia at Istanbul," *Art History* 4, No. 2 (1981), 131-149.

above the imperial door at the west end of the nave.³²⁴ This door was known as the Imperial Doorway, designated only for the Byzantine emperor's entrances into the church. Not only was it the largest portal, the Imperial doorway was also the most lavishly ornamented, with special marble revetments above, framing, and underfoot. George Majeska postulated that this icon was originally placed at the center of the four decorative *opus sectile* panels seen, above the doorway on the inner (eastern) face of the portal (Figure 143). This icon is no longer *in situ*, and has since been replaced with an *opus sectile* cross within a baldacchino.

Though neither icon survives today, one may imagine the mirrored effect created by these two portals, each crowned with their respective icons: in imperial processions from the Great Palace to Hagia Sophia, from the perspective of a spectator in the Augusteion, one would see the emperor exiting the Great Palace and thus framed by the shining bronze gate, above which was placed the first icon of Christ Chalkites. Moving into the cathedral, from the point of view of a person inside the nave of Hagia Sophia, one could view the entrance of the emperor into the church, framed yet again by a second lavish portal, also "crowned" by this image. It is this icon that the Laskarids selected as decoration for a number of their coins and seals, impressing upon these legal instruments an image intimately and historically used to frame ceremonial entrances of the Byzantine emperor between palace and cathedral.

³²⁴ Majeska, "The Image of the Chalke Savior in Saint Sophia," 284-295. Anthony of Novgorod saw the icon in 1200, Stephen of Nogorod saw it in 1349 and an anonymous pilgrim saw it in 1390-1391. For these see G. Majeska, "St. Sophia in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries: The Russian Travelers on the Relics," *DOP* 23 (1973), 69-87; M. Bourtyrsky, "The Multiplication of a Relic: The Icon of Christ Chalkites in Late Byzantine Sources (in Russian with English summary)," in *Eastern Christian Relics*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow, 2003), 337-350, and A. Eastmond, "Byzantine Identity and Relics of the True Cross in the Thirteenth Century," *ibid.*, 205-216. For more on the pre- and post-iconoclastic icons of Christ Chalkites see Mango, *The Brazen House*, 124-129; L. Brubaker, "The Chalke Gate, the Construction of the Past and the Trier Ivory," *BMGS* 23 (1999), 258-291; A. Frolov, "Le Christ de la Chalcé," *Byzantion* 33 (1963), 107-120; J. Haldon and B. Ward-Perkins, "Evidence from Rome for the Image of Christ of the Chalke Gate in Constantinople," *BMGS* 23 (1999), 286-296.

The Icon of Christ Chalkites on Laskarid Coins and Seals

The Laskarid emperors were not the first to employ the image of Christ Chalkites on their signature seals, though its popularity during their reign is unmatched. There are a few notable examples of the image appearing on seals prior to John III's. One example shows the seal of John Pantechnes, a known correspondent of Theophylact of Ohrid (1055-1107), showing a beautiful relief imprint of the icon of Christ Chalkites on its obverse (Figure 144).³²⁵ The inscription on the reverse of the seal reads: "The Lord himself is the most secure seal for the letters of Pantechnes of the gracious name (i.e. John)," a clever reference to the function of the seal, which was to protect the privacy of the letter, and the idea of the seal as a mark of ownership and identity. The idea is referenced in Christian scripture quite often. In the Old Testament Song of Solomon, the lover (here, God) cries in chapter eight, verse six, "Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm" to his lover, the Church.³²⁶ In the New Testament, this idea continues in the second book of Timothy, where the author writes that "God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: 'The Lord knows those who are his'."³²⁷ John Pantechnes' choice of inscription puns on these references to Scripture and the function of the object, while his choice of image, the Christ Chalkites icon, now rendered and impressed in lead, fully completes the metaphor. The mirroring of the portals and the seal as an "sealed and impressed" proof of identity resonates with Bissera Pentcheva's suggestion that the icon of

³²⁵ *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, 5 vols., eds. A. R. Bellinger and P. Grierson (Washington, DC, 1966-1999), 161.

³²⁶ Song of Solomon 8:6.

³²⁷ II Timothy 2:19.

Christ Chalkites over the Chalke Gate may have been a repoussé bronze metal icon, rendered in low relief, and not at all unlike the relief image of the Chalkites icon on John's lead seal.³²⁸

The first use of the image of Christ Chalkites on an imperial seal dates to the year 1199, and belonged to the Empress Euphrosyne Doukaina (1155-1211), mother-in-law of Theodore I Laskaris (Figure 145).³²⁹ The Empress stands on the seal's reverse, labeled in Greek as "the most pious augusta," the typical manner of identifying a reigning empress. The accompanying inscription in this seal and other examples of its type is organized into the shape of the cross. On the obverse is the image of Christ Chalkites, inscribed "O XAAKITHC." As the last empress in Constantinople before the city fell in 1204, Euphrosyne adopted the Chalkites icon for her seals and would have been as familiar with it as the Russian pilgrims who visit the city the next year.

Her younger daughter, Anna Angelina, married Theodore I Laskaris in the year 1200; this pair became the first Laskarid emperor and empress in 1208. Their daughter, Irene Doukaina Komnena Laskarina, the granddaughter of Euphrosyne, married John III Doukas Vatatzes in 1222, and was technically a distant kinsman to Euphrosyne both on his and his new wife's side. As John Langdon has previously pointed out, one ostensible reason for John III to adopt this image was to align himself with Euphrosyne, the last empress in residence in Constantinople, and an imperial Doukaina.³³⁰ John III's use of this rare image endowed it with a commemorative quality as a consequence of this association, arousing the topographical connection mentioned above between the Great Palace and Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, and with Euphrosyne. Two

³²⁸ B. Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium* (University Park, PA, 2013); ead., "The Performative Icon," *The Art Bulletin* 88, no. 4 (2006), 631-655, esp. 636-637.

³²⁹ See G. Zacos and A. Vegler, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, vol. 1, part 1 (Basel, 1972), 101; for Euphrosyne, see L. Garland, *Byzantine Empresses, Women and Power in Byzantium AD 527-1204* (London, 1999), 210-224.

³³⁰ J. Langdon, "Byzantium in Anatolian Exile: Imperial Vicegerency Reaffirmed," *ByzF* 20 (1994), 197-233. Langdon also suggests that an alleged affair between Euphrosyne and an earlier Vatatzes may have resulted in the Vatatzes line that produced the future John III.

known seals of John III's depict the icon of Christ Chalkites, demonstrating a connection to his wife's grandmother, but also engaging with the broader meaning of the Chalkites icon.

A large, well-preserved lead seal shows John III crowned, standing on a dais, wearing the customary Byzantine imperial robe, a *chlamys*, holding the traditional symbols of power, the *labarum* and a *globus cruciger* (Figure 146).³³¹ To his right is the abbreviation for his name and title in Greek. On the obverse stands a full-length Christ, whose right arm is raised in a gesture of blessing and whose left arm is crooked to cradle a Gospel codex. In the inscription around Christ are the *nomina sacra* "IC XC" and the epithet "O ΧΑΛΚΙΤΗΣ." Unlike the more common image of Christ, in which he is portrayed half-length, as a bust, or seated on a throne, the icon of Christ Chalkites shows a full-length figure standing on a small platform in a pose that imitates a type of official imperial portrait showing the ruling emperor standing on a podium. Central to the image's identification is the epithet "χαλκίτης." This inscription is placed to either side of Christ's head, indicating a shift in the viewer's frame of reference, historicizing the icon by naming it. A second seal of John III's, showing Christ Chalkites on the obverse, and nearly identical to the first, proves that the emperor's use of the image was not cursory but ongoing (Figure 147).³³²

John III's interest in this image, I believe, stems from his desire to display a connection to his distant Doukas relative, Euphrosyne, in an effort to connect to his imperial forebear, and to the imperial Doukas branch more generally. This desire to associate oneself with imperial surnames had long been a pattern among the Byzantine aristocracy, but it became particularly

³³¹ See Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, no. 117, p. 107.

³³² A. Dumont, "Médaille inédite représentant l'image de Jésus sauveur chalcéen," *RN* 12 (1867), 195-200; see also G. Zacos and A. Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, vol. 2, no. 772 has edited the seal of a certain Aaron which features a standing figure of Christ is accompanied by vertical inscriptions identifying him as Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ Χαλκίτης.

important during the Interregnum among those who sought to fill the void in Byzantine leadership. For example, the rulers of Trebizond styled themselves as the “Grand Komnenoi,” while those in Epirus, Thessaloniki, and Nicæa made the most out of their Komnenian connection. Though John III’s right to rule had been given to him through his father-in-law, Theodore I Laskaris, he ruled in his own name of Doukas Vatatzes, and never called himself “Laskaris.” John III’s use of his own surnames argues for his awareness of the history and meaning behind the icon of Christ Chalkites, both as it had stood at the entrance to the Great Palace and above the Imperial Doorway of Constantinople prior to the Fourth Crusade. Its presence and its use by a distant imperial matriarch capture a very recent and visible association with authentic imperial rule, albeit one that ended with her exile to Arta.³³³

Interestingly, John III’s first wife Irene Komnena, daughter of Theodore I Laskaris, also chose an iconographically unique image to place on her imperial seals—*Chris Lytrotes*, or Christ the Redeemer, an extremely rare image type that is not attested elsewhere in the material record. Zacos and Veglery noted that the basic type of Christ Lytrotes was the same as Christ Chalkites, and that at least two versions of the former survive (Figures 148 and 149).³³⁴ In their view, both the Lytrotes and the Chalkites type indicate the aspirations of the Laskarid dynasty for recovering Constantinople: this is certainly likely if not to be expected.³³⁵ While the origin and urban placement of the Christ Chalkites icon is known, that of Christ Lytrotes is obscure. Perhaps it was invented during exile under Irene’s patronage, for it appears on her seals and hers

³³³ During the fall of the city, Euphrosyne was banished to a monastery at the mouth of the Black Sea and the Bosphoros by her husband and ended her days in Arta, the capital of the Despotate of Epirus. See Garland, *Byzantine Empresses*, 210-224.

³³⁴ Inv. No. 154/1999 now in Numismatic Museum in Athens, see *Heaven & Earth*, 2 vols., eds. A. Drandaki et al. (Athens, 2013-2014), 93, obj. 37.

³³⁵ Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, nos. 119a and 119b, pp. 109-111.

alone, unlike the Chalkites image, which appears on coins during her husband's reign. Her preference for and sense of identification with this image is clear, though its history and meaning have not yet been recovered. The possibility that this iconographic type was invented becomes more likely upon comparing its form and style to the Chalkites seal of her husband. Their coherence as a pair, with emperor or empress on one side and two related types of Christ on their obverses points to an interest in balance and parallelism.

A number of Laskarid coins also carry the image of Christ Chalkites. Unlike seals, coins were minted solely under the prerogative of the imperial exchequer. Despite the separate spheres within which coins and seals circulated, in Byzantine practice their imagery often overlapped and followed more or less the same iconographic restrictions and format. In contrast to his descendants, Theodore I Laskaris's coins are, like his seals, quite traditional in their choice of imagery. They exclusively show the emperor, his name saint, St. Theodore Stratilates, and/or Christ and the Virgin (Figures 150 and 151).³³⁶

With John III's reign, there is a veritable explosion in coinage.³³⁷ Among them are four types that exhibit the icon of Christ Chalkites. These examples of silver and copper coins will each be addressed in turn. An aspron trachy nomisma of John III's (Type B) shows on its reverse a full-length image of John III at left being crowned by Christ Chalkites (Figure 152).³³⁸ The

³³⁶ C.-L. Rollin, "Monnoies d'or des empereurs de Nicée," *RN* 6 (1841), 171-176, Plates VIII and IX. See Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 228, 235-236, where Hendy mistakenly, if tentatively, attributes a gold hyperperon to Theodore I. He corrects this in id., *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection, Vol. 4, Alexios I to Michael VIII (1081-1261), Part 2, The Emperors of Nicæa and Their Contemporaries (1204-1261)* (Washington, DC, 1999) 453; For the seal, see Vacos and Zeglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, vol. 1, part. 1, no. 116, p. 106.

³³⁷ The mint moved first to Nicæa after 1204, and generally scholars agree that it was moved a second time to Magnesia and/or Smyrna, though without the benefit of sites stamped on the coins themselves, this cannot be proved.

³³⁸ Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 238.

formulaic crowning of an emperor by Christ or the Panagia is not new on Byzantine coinage, but the scene shown here of the emperor being crowned by Christ Chalkites is unique. It should be understood as a reference to the Imperial Palace and to Hagia Sophia, the customary site of Byzantine coronations. In effect, the icon of Christ Chalkites that “crowned” the Chalke Gate and the Imperial Door at Hagia Sophia is “crowning” John III.

A billon trachy (Type H) shows Christ Chalkites on the obverse, standing on a dais while John III is shown alone, full-length on the reverse (Figure 153).³³⁹ The similarity between the coins seen here and the Emperor’s seals is unmistakable. The icon’s appearance on a coin also indicates that the image was widely circulated in society. So prevalent and powerful was this image that a thirteenth-century duke in the Anatolian province of Thrakesion, the region surrounding Smyrna, one Andronikos Dryonites, imitated John III’s use of Christ Chalkites on his own seal (Figure 154).

Trachies of anonymous issue pair Christ Chalkites on the reverse, either with the Virgin (Figures 155 and 156) or with a full-length figure of St. George.³⁴⁰ There is also a bronze coin of uncertain attribution that appears to date to the reign of John III, based on the appearance of the icon of Christ Chalkites (Figure 157). Besides the plethora of images of Christ Chalkites he clearly favored, John III’s coins featured a few other saints as well, including St. Constantine the Great, St. Theodore, and St. Michael the Archangel. After he conquered Thessaloniki in 1246, St. George and St. Demetrios were added into the mix.³⁴¹ The choice of whom to portray on his coins is connected to the urban landscape of exile: St. Constantine the Great called the First

³³⁹ Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 243, Plate 32.9.

³⁴⁰ Id., *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins*, 537-538 and *Coinage and Money*, 265, plate 36.9.

³⁴¹ P. Grierson, “The Empire in Exile, 1204-1261,” in *Byzantine Coins* (London, 1982), 239-275, pls. 69-72.

Ecumenical Council that took place in Nicæa, St. Theodore was his father-in-law's patron saint and well-known in Anatolia. The elevated importance given to the Christ Chalkites icon—now associated with imperial imagery in exile—becomes even more vivid when positioned against this array of saints.

The preponderance of these coins and the presence of the icon of Christ Chalkites are references carefully selected by John III to craft his imperial image. His desire to appear with the Christ Chalkites icon was a way of connecting his reign with emperors crowned in Constantinople who had been framed by the icon's well-known presence in the imperial precinct. Centuries earlier, when Iconoclasm's lengthy and punishing heretical rule had ended, the Macedonian dynasty ushered in a period of peace and prosperity. The icon of Christ Chalkites, once embroiled in the Iconoclastic debate, became a symbol of the return to Orthodoxy. By selecting this icon, John III equated his dynasty with the triumphant Macedonian dynasty. Visually, the symbolic representation provided by the icon of Christ Chalkites connected the new, exiled Laskarid dynasty with older dynasties and established a much needed image of continuity in the face of a devastating rupture. As a portrait of imperial power, however diminutive, the pairing of John III and the icon of Christ Chalkites clearly referenced a golden era of the Byzantine past.

Besides the iconographic proof provided by John III's coins and seals, proof of a different kind should be mentioned. John III revitalized the economic health of the Laskarid realm through a number of economic reforms and taxation policies, and enforced a strict embargo on non-native imports.³⁴² Moreover, he took the unusual stance of minting the purest

³⁴² M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea, 1204-1261* (Oxford, 1975); H. Ahrweiler, "L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations

gold coins circulated in Byzantium since John II Komnenos (r. 1118-1183). Within numismatic circles, the resemblance of John III's coins, not only in purity, but in exact iconographic details, to those of John II caused numerous instances in which those of John III were actually mistaken for John II's. Metcalf was the first to sort out the confusion, arguing that the imitation of John III's coins was exacting and intentional, "deliberately recalling the wise government and successful reign of John II and stating his claim, by the medium of a strictly imperial prerogative, gold coinage, to be the true inheritor of the Empire..."³⁴³ The newly extended territories won by John III, now circulating with his gold and silver coinage, are filled with hoards of Laskarid coinage found in Thrace, Asia Minor, and the Peloponnese.³⁴⁴ At the beginning of the Interregnum, the lure of Byzantine gold and silver in Constantinople to pay off the debts of the crusaders resulted in boullion melted down from luxury items, but practically emptied the city. One of the great successes of the Laskarid realm was minting coinage of high standard and fineness, refilling the treasuries (in Nicæa and Magnesia) and again setting the standard for gold and silver coinage in the commodities exchange. The purity of John III's gold coinage and the value of the lesser denominations were a powerful means of restoring the hegemony of Byzantine value in the medieval economic markets of the eastern Mediterranean.

turques (1081-1317), particulièrement au XIII^e siècle," *TM* 1 (1965), 2-202; ead., "La politique agraire des empereurs de Nicée," *Byzantion* 28 (1959), 51-66, 135-136.

³⁴³ M. Metcalf, "John Vatatzes and John Comnenus, Questions of Style and Detail in Byzantine Numismatics," *GRBS* 3, No. 4 (1960), 203-214, esp. 205-206.

³⁴⁴ A. M. Stahl, "Coinage and Money in the Latin Empire," *DOP* 55 (2002), 197-206, esp. 198. Stahl, in an effort to understand what the Latin Empire of Constantinople used for money, was able to point out the general shift, clear from historical documents, at least in the first several decades after 1204, of an eastern Mediterranean-wide preference for the Byzantine hyperperon as the money standard; for hoards, see Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 233-234; A. R. Bellinger, "A Hoard of Silver Coins of the Empire of Nicæa," in *Centennial Publication of the American Numismatic Society*, ed. H. Ingholt (New York, 1958), 73-81; H. P. Borrell, "Unedited Coins of the Lower Empire," *NC* 4 (1841), 15-22.

St. Tryphon and his fleur-de-lis on Laskarid Coins

Whereas John III had preferred the southern reaches of the Nicæan realm, his son and successor Theodore II Laskaris (r. 1254-1258) returned the imperial court to Nicæa. Theodore II, an erudite as well as pious emperor, is known for his patronage of architecture and particularly for his support of academic learning, interests that intersected in the church and university he dedicated to *Hagios Tryphonos*, a saint who had been martyred in Nicæa in ca. 250 during the Decian persecutions. St. Tryphon himself appears on several types of Theodore II's coins, while the *fleur-de-lis* appears on all of the Laskarid rulers' coins. St. Tryphon's appearance on these coins is an innovation in imagery, like the Christ Chalkites icon, and proof of Tryphon's miraculous presence in Nicæa as Theodore II's patron saint.³⁴⁵

The addition of St. Tryphon to the battalion of saints during the period of exile is an interesting one, for the city was already steeped in Orthodox history due its role in the First and Seventh Ecumenical Councils (323 and 787, respectively). It had long been a pilgrimage destination for this reason, especially the Church of the Holy Fathers, a shrine to the participants of the First Council that was visited by numerous pilgrims throughout the medieval period.³⁴⁶ This illustrious city, already distinguished by its role as exilic capital and home of the Orthodox Patriarch, was in the thirteenth century further graced with the immanent guidance and miraculous powers St. Tryphon, shown in the annual blooming of the lily each year on his feast day of February 1. Tryphon's lily symbolizes the purification of bodies and lands, returning them

³⁴⁵ The idea that Tryphon was Theodore II's patron saint or the patron saint of the Nicæan realm has been alluded to or suggested before, based primarily on the content of a dream the emperor had in which St. Tryphon appeared and encouraged him to make war in Thrace.

³⁴⁶ C. Mango, "The Meeting-Place of the First Ecumenical Council and the Church of the Holy Fathers," in *İzmit Throughout History*, eds. I. Akbaygil, H. İnalçık, and O. Aslanapa (Istanbul, 2003), 305-313.

to wholeness, soundness and purity. In addition, its miraculous appearance is even more striking given the unnatural container – an oil-filled lamp – from which his blossom would spring.

These lilies, scholars have noted, have appeared on the coins minted by all Laskarid emperors. As Christina Pinatsi wrote “The emblem of the *fleur-de-lis* is characteristic on the coins issued by all of the emperors of Nicæa. Theodore FI [*sic*] Laskaris himself mentions the matter in a panegyric speech, and it appears that the emperors adopted the lily symbol as an indication of power and victory by divine favor.”³⁴⁷ The lily appears on the throne of Christ on one of Theodore I’s aspron trachys (Figure 158). Pinatsi’s conclusion that the lily on these coins is connected to St. Tryphon is, I believe, wholly accurate. As Laurent has pointed out, the lily appears relatively suddenly on Laskarid coins, and has no precedent. The lily appears as well on coins of John III, specifically on two aspron trachy *nomismata* the first shows the lily on the *sagion* below the emperor’s right arm (Type O, Figure 159), and the second at the bottom of a long shaft held in the emperor’s left hand (Type U, Figure 160).³⁴⁸

It is only on coins minted during the reign of Theodore II, however, that the association of St. Tryphon and the blooming lily is made explicit. The emperor invented two coins types featuring the saint on his aspron trachy nomisma. The first (Type II) shows St. Tryphon on the obverse and Theodore II on the reverse (Figure 161). In all three examples of this type the figure of St. Tryphon, standing alone on the obverse is depicted full-length, dressed once again in a simple tunic, and surrounded by large capital letters that clearly spell out his name. Below are large blooming lilies to his left and right. Their reverses show Theodore II standing in full

³⁴⁷ Pinatsi, “New Observations,” 119-126, esp. 125. The typo in the text indicates that Pinatsi is discussing Theodore II, not Theodore I, only the former wrote an encomium to St. Tryphon.

³⁴⁸ V. Laurent, “L’emblème du lis dans la numismatique byzantine: son origine,” in *Centennial Publication of the American Numismatic Society*, ed. H. Ingholt (New York, 1958), 417-427, esp. 421-422; Henny, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins*, 497-498, Plate XXXII, 34a; 508, Plate XXXIV, 55.

imperial regalia, alone, but surrounded by a detailed inscription bearing his name and titles. He wears the *stemma*, *divitision* and a heavily patterned *chlamys*, and carries the two symbolic objects of rulership: a labarum-headed scepter in his right hand and a *globus cruciger* in his left.³⁴⁹ Another type of billon trachy shows Theodore II under the *manus dei*, or hand of God, which reaches down from the curved apex of the coin to denote favor to the emperor.³⁵⁰ In these coins, St. Tryphon has been elevated, taking the place of honor normally occupied by the Virgin or Christ, normally depicted on the opposite sides of the more valuable denominations of gold and silver/aspron/billon coins. This substitution clearly illustrates an especially powerful connection between St. Tryphon and Theodore II.

A second kind of aspron trachy nomisma (Type III) shows the emperor next to St. Tryphon who is standing in the position traditionally occupied by a patron saint. Together they hold a *labarum* with a long shaft, with a lily blooming at its base. On the obverse Christ is seated on a throne in majesty (Figure 162). The partnering of the saint and emperor, sharing the weight of the labarum, delivers a clear message of symbiotic power. Furthermore, the blooming lily at the bottom of the shaft indicates the presence of the saint's miraculous powers in the context of battle, alluding to victory, allowing the viewer to comprehend in one scene the equilibrium of spiritual and earthly power through these two figures.³⁵¹ A copper trachy is similar, showing a full-length figure of the emperor on the reverse and St. Tryphon on the obverse (Figure 163). Interestingly, St. Tryphon has changed costume, and instead of his normal tunic, he wears a military tunic and breastplate. The saint, whose *vita* communicates nothing about military

³⁴⁹ Hendy, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins*, 520.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 524.

³⁵¹ Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 521.

prowess, now appears in the guise of a military saint. Given the manner of St. Tryphon's revelation to Theodore II on the eve of an important battle, illustrating Tryphon as a military saint is not surprising. A militant Tryphon, ready for battle, should be understood as a reference to Theodore II's personal, revelatory interaction with the saint, and demonstrates a measure of innovation and versatility in the iconography of this period. A second, similar coin shows a circular bust of Christ Emmanuel, one of a number of fairly traditional and common iconographic solutions for depicting Christ, created at the end of Iconoclasm, on its obverse, with the now militarized St. Tryphon and Theodore II on its reverse (Figure 164).³⁵² The pairing of an innovative, current, iconographic image in the middle of the thirteenth century with a historic image of Christ Emmanuel, whose origin dates to the Triumph of Orthodoxy in the ninth century, sanctifies a present moment by combining current imagery with imagery from the past. The relevance of both images to Nicæa should also be noted: the return of St. Tryphon to Nicæa through Theodore II's patronage and the previous return of the icon itself to Orthodox practice, both occurred at Nicæa.

Even after the return of the exiled kingdom to Constantinople, Michael VIII Palaiologos chose to produce works with features of Laskarid art and architecture. By 1258 St. Tryphon had become a powerful sign of spiritual favor in the Nicæan realm, and his lily was retained by Michael VIII on certain issues of his coins. One example is Michael VIII's billon trachy nomisma that features not only St. Tryphon himself but also the emblematic lily in the lower field to either side of the saint (Figure 165).³⁵³ The lily continued to appear on coins minted in

³⁵² Ibid., 525; Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, 251-252, Plate 72, No. 1189-1190.

³⁵³ Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 262, Plate 36.9.

the capital through several decades of Andronikos II's reign (through 1328).³⁵⁴ A second aspron trachy shows St. Tryphon standing between two lilies on the reverse, and the emperor being crowned by the Virgin (Figure 166).³⁵⁵ Both Michael VIII and previous Laskarid emperors were, as I have argued in Chapter Three, crowned at the patriarchal church of Hagia Sophia in Nicæa. Recalling the exquisite *omphalion* in the cathedral, which has a circuit of *fleurs-de-lis* around the center medallion, the blessings of St. Tryphon on the emperors crowned in Nicæa was proof of the exiled kingdom's favor in the eyes of God.

Conclusion

The end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries witnessed the entry of objects from Byzantium into a kind of proto-international medieval marketplace. It is well known that a multitude of objects from Constantinople: highly valued relics, miraculous icons, and ecclesiastical furnishings that decorated ancient churches, were transformed from unique objects of priceless value into fungible commodities. Precious metal furnishings had already begun to be melted down to supply money to pay war debts, leading, to the perspective that sacred objects were commodities. The transformation of metal furnishings into coin, and of relics and icons into money proves that the Orthodox Christianity objects were changing the terms of the "international" market.

The loss of the city and its treasury, Byzantium's primary source of wealth, changed how icons, coinage, and the power they brought were viewed both by the Byzantines and by the westerners now on the scene. In one sense, the way that the Laskarid emperors began to

³⁵⁴ Laurent, "L' emblème du lis," 423.

³⁵⁵ Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, 239-275, Plates 69-72, esp. 253.

construct their imperial image in exile was meant to be more than just illustrative of authentic autocratic power. There was a secondary goal: to incarnate their power and authenticity to rule. They constructed their imperial image by coining money that was extremely pure, impressed with images that connoted Constantinople, successful imperial rule, and Orthodox power. The saints with whom John III and Theodore II chose to represent themselves were already present within the Byzantine iconographic tradition, but appeared in innovative arrangements on their coins and seals. These portrayals of John III and Theodore II were able to stand in the place of what had been lost and to symbolize the re-emergence of wealth, power to rule, and the very present miraculous power of the saints.

The purity of the gold coins minted by the Laskarids was unequalled and extremely costly, earned through trade and taxes, can itself be interpreted as a meditated gesture to restoring at least some of the financial losses endured because of the Fourth Crusade. The innate value of Laskarid coinage grew past the borders of the Nicæan realm, and became an extremely valuable currency in Thrace both before and after it was conquered by John III, and also in the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople throughout the Interregnum. So valuable was Laskarid money, in fact, that the Latins relied mostly upon it, and minted no coins of their own.³⁵⁶

In the two cases discussed above, John III and Theodore II espoused different powerful images to express their brand of imperial power. St. Tryphon, the patron saint of Theodore II, was promoted to special importance in the city of Nicæa. John III, by impressing coins and seals with the powerful image of Christ Chalkites, forged a topographical connection between Nicæa and the lost capital of Constantinople, and framed his reign with an authenticity that had already been forged by the history of that icon. Christ Chalkites became an image whose physical

³⁵⁶ Stahl, "Coinage and Money in the Latin Empire of Constantinople," 197-206.

genesis in the distant Byzantine past directly indexed cathedral and palace, and proclaimed the potential triumph of the Orthodox ruler over the heretical. The icon, which retained the symbolism of the end of Iconoclasm, was embraced again by the Laskarids, who watched and waited while their city was ruled by the Latins. Their optimism proved well-founded, for as righteous Orthodox rule had been restored to the Macedonians in the ninth century, so would it be restored again in 1261. The icon of Christ Chalkites at the Church of Christ in the Chora is descended directly not from the Iconoclastic image over the Chalke gate or the Imperial doorway at Hagia Sophia, but from the era of exile, when it was resurrected by John III. Christ Chalkites, who stands between Isaak, a Komnenian prince and Melene, formerly a Palaiologan princess, bridges these two powerful dynasties. Understanding how this icon was treasured by the Laskarid dynasty during exile makes its role in the Chora monastery one of hard wrought continuity. Both reconquests, of Orthodoxy and of Constantinople, resulted in periods marked by artistic and cultural resurgence; a resurgence that depended on the retention of Byzantine artistic and literary forms throughout the darkest of times.

Chapter Six Laskarid Palaces in Nymphaion and Constantinople

On the feast of the Dormition of the Virgin, 15 August 1261, Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1259-1282), entered the city of Constantinople, a city he had neither seen nor set foot in.³⁵⁷ Akropolites notes "...the metropolitan of Kyzikos [in Bithynia], George, who was also named Kleidas, performed the service. Climbing up to one of the towers of the Golden Gate (Figure 28), with the image of the Theotokos which is named after the monastery *ton Odegon*, he recited the prayers in the hearing of all."³⁵⁸ Michael VIII's entrance marked the end of three generations of exile and signaled that Constantinople was reunited with its emperor at last. Despite his ritualized entrance, replete with traditional pomp and circumstance, Michael VIII could not enter the Queen of Cities as a conquering hero, for his ascension to the throne had been rife with violence and conspiracy against the legitimate heir presumptive, John IV Laskaris (r. 1258, 4 months), and the young prince's regents.³⁵⁹ In a masterful performance, Michael VIII elected to enter Constantinople in the guise of a penitent suppliant, but one who would follow the historic

³⁵⁷ D. J. Geanakoplos writes that "The exact place [of Michael VIII's birth] is unclear from the sources, but as his family seems generally to have been connected with the court, it was perhaps at Nicæa or possibly even at Nymphæum, which in effect replaced Nicæa as capital of the Nicene Empire..." in id., *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258-1282: A Study in Byzantine-Latin Relations* (Cambridge, 1959), 17, fn. 4.

³⁵⁸ Macrides, *George Akropolites, The History*, §88, 383.

³⁵⁹ George Muzalon (who had been appointed regent for John IV, still a child when his father Theodore II Laskaris died), Andronikos Muzalon, and their elder unnamed brother were violently murdered at the altar of the *katholikon* of the Monastery of Sosandra near Magnesia, during the ninth-day commemoration of Theodore II's death in 1258. Apparently the homicides were instigated by those of noble birth who had been disenfranchised by Theodore II's meritocracy and were jealous of the Muzalon brothers' power. The army, under the leadership of Michael Palaiologos, supported the assassinations; Michael then took George Muzalon's place as John IV's regent, see Macrides, *George Akropolites, The History*, 339-348.

route along the *Mese*, beginning at the Golden Gate, where emperors returning triumphant from war would ceremonially enter the City.³⁶⁰

The icon of the Virgin Hodegetria welcomed him upon his arrival. Like the Laskarid emperors, the Hodegetria icon had suffered its own exile during the fifty-eight years of Crusader occupation of the City. The Venetians had removed it from its original home in the Hodegon monastery and placed it in the Pantokrator monastery, which came under their purview following the partition of Byzantine capital and its territories amongst the Crusaders.³⁶¹ The Virgin Hodegetria, held aloft on a tower of the Golden Gate, greeted Michael VIII, and escorted his procession to St. John Stoudios where the emperor deposited the icon.³⁶² He then continued on to the Great Church, Hagia Sophia.³⁶³ Michael VIII had already pressured Patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos to crown him in 1259 in Hagia Sophia, Nicæa, and following the reconquest of the City the emperor intended to be crowned for a second time in the Great Church. This rite

³⁶⁰ For Michael VIII as a suppliant rather than a triumphant emperor, see Macrides, *George Akropolites*, 382-384; ead., “The New Constantine and the New Constantinople,” *BMGS* 6, no. 1 (1980), 13-41. For the route of triumphant emperors in Constantinople, see C. Mango, “The Triumphal Way of Constantinople and the Golden Gate,” *DOP* 54 (2000), 173-188.

³⁶¹ See A. Carile, “Partitio terrarum Imperii Romanie,” *StVen* 7 (1965), 125-305. For the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator, see P. A. Underwood, “Notes on the Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul,” *DOP* 9/10 (1956), 291-300, esp. 299-300; R. Ousterhout et al., “Study and Restoration of the Zeyrek Camii in Istanbul: First Report, 1997-1998,” *DOP* 54 (2000), 265-270; and id., “Study and Restoration of the Zeyrek Camii in Istanbul: Second Report, 2001-2005,” *DOP* 63 (2009) 235-256.

³⁶² It is interesting that the ecclesiastical sites that usually served as priority stops (the Church of the Holy Apostles) or on the route from the Golden Gate to Hagia Sophia along the *Mese* (such as St. Onesimos, St. Mokios, etc.) were not visited. Michael VIII chose to stop at the *katholikon* of the Monastery of St. John Stoudios, a site not far from the route, but one not typically visited. See Macrides, *Akropolites*, 383-386.

³⁶³ For Michael VIII’s procession, see *Manuelis Holoboli orationes*, ed. M. Treu (Potsdam, 1908). Akropolites notes “...the metropolitan of Kyzikos [in Bithynia], George, who was also named Kleidas, performed the service. Climbing up to one of the towers of the Golden Gate, with the image of the Theotokos which is named after the monastery *ton Odegon*, he recited the prayers in the hearing of all.”

occurred sometime before 25 December 1261.³⁶⁴ The Patriarch was enthroned in Constantinople's Hagia Sophia, the Emperor retired to the Great Palace, and the Virgin Hodegetria was reinstated as the legendary Protectress of the City.³⁶⁵

Hagia Sophia, the imperial palaces throughout the city, and the holy monasteries had all suffered during the Interregnum. During the procession along the Mese towards Hagia Sophia, Michael VIII and his retinue must have witnessed the deplorable state of the capital of which they had heard so much, but were seeing now for the first time. The Fourth Crusade and the Latin occupation had caused irreparable damage. Fierce battles and rampant fires attending the conquest of the City in 1204 had destroyed large regions of the urban fabric; prior to that extensive fires had raged in the 1190s as well.³⁶⁶ The crusaders had been given money and boullion, ostensibly as payment for services rendered prior to 1204, from melting down the City's ancient bronze sculptures, the churches' silver and gold ecclesiastical furnishings, and the

³⁶⁴ The relationship between the Patriarch and Michael VIII was complicated by the fact that Arsenios had been appointed by the Laskarids. Arsenios only performed the coronation at Nicæa on the condition that Michael VIII give precedence to John IV Laskaris in rank and honor. See Arsenios's 'Testament,' in *Patriologia Græca*, vol. 140, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1887), columns 938-958, esp. 953-954; Macrides, *George Akropolites*, 348-349. Because of his reservations about Michael VIII, Arsenios fled the Patriarchal office from 1259-1260, during which time he was replaced by Nikephoros II (r. winter 1259-d. late 1260). Despite Arsenios crowning Michael VIII for the second time at Hagia Sophia, Constantinople, he excommunicated Michael VIII nominally in 1261 and continued as Patriarch until 1264 when Michael VIII sent him into exile. Michael VIII's usurpation, his blinding of John IV Laskaris, and his exile of the Patriarch reverberated throughout his reign. A large number of people identified with Arsenios, and called themselves 'Arsenites,' loyal to the Laskarid appointed Patriarch. The problems lasted well into the reign of Andronikos II. See Macrides, "The New Constantine and the New Constantinople-1261?" 20; ead., *George Akropolites*, 346, 349, 372; See D. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium 1261-1453* (Cambridge, 1993).

³⁶⁵ The icon's rightful home was the Hodegon monastery, located in the center of old Constantinople, east of Hagia Sophia and north of the Great Palace. See Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantinae Historiae Libri XXXVII*, in *Patriologia Græca*, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1887), 148:217c; Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, 208-216; A. W. Carr, "Court Culture and Cult Icons in Middle Byzantine Constantinople," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. H. Maguire (Washington, D.C., 1997), 81-99.

³⁶⁶ See "Carmen de Incendio," in *Poemata / Constantinus Stilbes*, eds. J. Diethart and W. Hörander, (Munich, 2005); P. Magdalino, "Constantinopolitana," in *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople* (Aldershot, 2007), 227-230.

lead and tin roof tiles protecting homes and palaces.³⁶⁷ Polychrome marble slabs and antique columns of exotic origin were moved around or carried off to points west as prizes. Other priceless objects such as icons and relics were pawned or sold to stand against the payment the Venetian crusaders had been promised by the treacherous Angeloi emperors, Isaak II (r. 1185-1195, 1203-1204) and Alexios IV (r. 1203-1204). These transactions spawned a commodification in the West of not only the material wealth of Byzantium but also the spiritual wealth of Orthodoxy. The City's sacred relics and ecclesiastical furnishings were traded as, and for, money, each object entering a diaspora of its own, from which they, like Constantinople's refugees of 1204, would never return.³⁶⁸

Thus, the Constantinople that Michael VIII, his court, and coterie of exiles inherited must have, in its ruined state, appeared to great disadvantage compared to the flourishing homeland they had left. In contrast to the thriving exilic capital at Nicæa and the verdant agricultural wealth of Nymphaion, Smyrna and Magnesia, Constantinople had suffered from decades of neglect. It had not been the capital of Byzantium for fifty-eight years and no longer housed the great relics of Christendom. What remained was a series of urban precincts peppered with architecture in various states of decay or total ruin, a far cry from the cherished memory of the intact, whole, "Queen of Cities" that had proved to be such a critical resource for re-creating the Byzantine capital in exile.

³⁶⁷ *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, 315, 327.

³⁶⁸ Alice-Mary Talbot has shown that the liquidation of gold and silver liturgical furnishings and icon revetments to provide money had already begun under Isaak II Angelos, who had been forced to take this measure when the Empire ran out of money to pay off the crusaders whose debt, Isaak II's son Alexios IV, had assumed, in return for the crusaders' assistance in placing his father on the Byzantine throne. See A.-M. Talbot, "The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII," *DOP* 47 (1993), 244, fn. 9.

As Chapters One through Five have demonstrated, the architecture and imagery adopted by the Laskarids in Nicæa and elsewhere in their realm forged meaningful links with the lost capital of Constantinople, links that I argue were essential for authenticating the Laskarid claim to the Byzantine throne and for successfully replacing Byzantium in exile. While I have demonstrated that there were key buildings in Nicæa that memorialized important works of architecture from Constantinople, in this chapter I shall consider a building that appeared in Constantinople after 1261, the so-called Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, whose architectural type is not local to Constantinople, but whose origin, I shall argue, can be located in exile itself.

The architecture of the early Palaiologan period in Constantinople (1261-1332) has been characterized as one of artistic innovation and cultural resurgence, and is presently understood to draw inspiration from the vocabulary of Komnenian art and architecture already present within the city.³⁶⁹ While in many cases accurate, I believe that this perspective does not explain the presence or style of the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, whose antecedent I argue was the Laskarid Palace at Nymphaion (modern Kemalpaşa), and which was likely to have been built during Michael VIII's well-documented and extensive restoration of the City.

It stands to reason that the sight of so many ruins before him would have spurred the emperor's interest in restoring the city. With what resources he could command from the Laskarid Imperial treasury (after he had bribed the aristocratic families to gain support for his usurpation), Michael VIII's daunting task was the architectural restoration of Constantinople. This lengthy rebuilding project, as Ruth Macrides has shown, was cast by Michael VIII in

³⁶⁹ R. Ousterhout, "Observations on the 'Recessed Brick' Technique during the Palaeologan Period," *Αρχ. Δελτ.* 39 (1990), 163-170; id., "Constantinople, Bithynia, and Regional Developments in Later Byzantine Architecture," in *The Twilight of Byzantium*, eds. S. Ćurčić and D. Mouriki (Princeton, 1991), 75-91; id., "Contextualizing the Later Churches of Constantinople: Suggested Methodologies and a Few Examples," *DOP* 54 (2000), 241-250.

service of his claim to be a “New Constantine,” a second founder of Constantinople.³⁷⁰ His restoration efforts focused on the most important buildings and were of two kinds: the first was directed towards the repair or reconstruction of major imperial buildings and churches in disrepair; the second, to brand new constructions. As Alice-Mary Talbot has written, Michael VIII not only strengthened and heightened Constantinople’s city walls, but he also refurbished and rededicated the cathedral of Hagia Sophia, and he cleaned, refurbished and redecored the Blachernai palace complex. He also built a new mosque in the city, and restored the Church of the Holy Apostles and the Blacherna Church, as well as two monasteries connected to his family: St. Demetrios of the Palaiologoi and St. Michael the Archangel in Chalcedon.³⁷¹ From a wider perspective, Michael VIII’s efforts at restoring and rebuilding are very much in line with patronage efforts of Komnenian and Laskarid rulers.

As mentioned above, one important Palaiologan building that I shall argue belongs squarely in this category is the so-called Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, whose place within the overall campaign to restore Constantinople has been poorly understood. The building, known in Turkish as the Tekfur Sarayı, is located at the highpoint between the fifth-century Theodosian land walls and the expansive loop of walls built in the twelfth century under Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143-1180), in order to incorporate and protect the Blacherna palace complex, church and monastery (Figures 167 and 168). In this chapter, I will argue that a direct and derivative architectural connection exists between the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos in Constantinople

³⁷⁰ *New Constantines, the Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, Fourth-Thirteenth Centuries: Papers from the Twenty-Sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St. Andrews, March 1992*, ed. P. Magdalino (Aldershot, 1994); Macrides argues that this epithet was not just the work of Michael VIII, but the result of a team effort of those closest to him over several decades, including Germanos III, Patriarch from 1265-1266, see ead., “The New Constantine and the New Constantinople-1261?” 13-41, esp. 22-23.

³⁷¹ Talbot, “The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII,” 254, 258; see *Theodori Scutariotæ additamenta ad Georgii Acropolitæ Historiam* in *Georgii Acropolitæ Opera*, ed. A. Heisenberg (Stuttgart, 1978), 275-302, esp. 287-288, where Emperor John III is recorded to have sent money to churches all over the Mediterranean.

and the Laskarid Palace at Nymphaion (modern Kemalpaşa), a key imperial residence where Michael VIII and previous Laskarid rulers had lived (Figure 169). The Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, a unique building in Constantinople, clearly retains the stamp of exile in its architectural similarity to the Laskarid Palace at Nymphaion, the *milieu* in which Michael VIII first consolidated power, and which defined his previous experience of Byzantine Imperial power. While the two palaces are often mentioned together in scholarship, debates on when the Tekfur Sarayı was built within the Palaiologan period and the limited knowledge we have of Laskarid palaces (and Laskarid architecture in general) have precluded any real attempts to forge a meaningful connection between them. Recent excavations of the Laskarid Palace at Nymphaion in 2002-2003 and 2013 have revealed new information about the site. This material, added to the analyses and interpretations presented in this study as a whole, invites a comprehensive reassessment of our present state of knowledge of the two buildings, and persuasively suggests a direct connection between them. Understanding these findings within the broader hypotheses posited in this dissertation, namely that there were Laskarid architectural innovations that were based on, as well as brought back *into* Constantinople, presents a unique line of continuity between the eras of the Interregnum and the Palaiologan period that was previously unacknowledged.

The Laskarid Palace at Nymphaion

Medieval Nymphaion is mentioned in the historical record as a Laskarid imperial residence, particularly during the winter months. George Akropolites mentions that Henry of Hainault (also known as Henry of Flanders), then Latin Emperor of Constantinople, had camped at Nymphaion

in the fall and winter of 1211.³⁷² Theodore I also spent time in Nymphaion while engaging in battles in the Mæander River valley.³⁷³ Following his defeat of the Seljuqs at the Battle at Antioch-on-the-Meander in 1211, the area north of the winding river valley became a protected territory of the Laskarid realm. Akropolites also writes that Theodore I Laskaris and Henry of Hainault signed a treaty at Nymphaion in 1214 that defined the borders between Latin and Byzantine lands in western Anatolia, ending several years of battles and establishing a decade of peace and tolerance in the region.

As the second generation of the Laskarid dynasty rose to even greater power under the leadership of John III Doukas Vatatzes (r. 1221-1254), Theodore I's son-in-law, there were a number of shifts in the Nicæan realm's territories and borderlands, and new centers of military strength and economic production arose. First, over the course of his twenty-two year reign, John III doubled the territory of the realm, eventually conquering Thessaloniki and most of Thrace, as well as several islands off the coast of western Asia Minor.³⁷⁴ Secondly, the emperor facilitated the economic enrichment of his territory through encouraging agriculture, animal husbandry and by restricting foreign imports in order to support locally made textiles, ceramics, and other goods.³⁷⁵ Finally, John III can be credited with an act even more unique, that of physically

³⁷² Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 425-431. The 1214 Treaty of Nymphaion was intended to last for ten years, until 1224; E. Freshfield, "The Palace of the Greek Emperors of Nicaea at Nymphio," *Archaeologia* 46 (1886), 382-390, esp. 385.

³⁷³ Macrides, *Akropolites*, 130-131.

³⁷⁴ Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 441-442.

³⁷⁵ H. Ahrweiler, "L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations turques (1081-1317), particulièrement au XIII^e siècle," *TM* 1 (1965), 2-202.

separating the administrative and imperial branches of the exilic government from the Patriarchate by moving the majority of his court away from Nicæa to the city of Nymphaion.³⁷⁶

John III's preference for Nymphaion was so ardent that contemporary historical writers noted it.³⁷⁷ His choice to leave Nicæa and live in the fertile plains near Smyrna (modern İzmir) may have been prompted by a number of factors, both personal and strategic. It appears that his family possessed connections and property in the surrounding region, and had been long involved in the governance of the Thrakesion theme, of which Smyrna was the principal city.³⁷⁸ There was easy access to the lower territories of the realm from Nymphaion and to the Aegean Sea from the port of Smyrna, where a portion of the Byzantine imperial naval fleet was stationed. Nymphaion lay on a major east-west highway running along the north side of the mountains, connecting Smyrna to Sardis and Philadelphia to the east, and north to Ephesos and Magnesia (Figure 170).³⁷⁹

The early history of Nymphaion is not well known, though its name indicates an abundance of water.³⁸⁰ The ancient site of Nymphaion has not yet been discovered, for there has been no large-scale excavation of the area. Small marble finds dating to the Byzantine period have been built into the walls of houses and have been immured in fountains around the modern town. The standing medieval architectural remains consist of a citadel with two curtain walls and

³⁷⁶ M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea, 1204-1261* (Oxford, 1975); id., "Administration of the Empire of Nicæa," *ByzF* 19 (1993), 127-138.

³⁷⁷ See Macrides, *Akropolites*, 369-371; *Nicephori Blemmydæ, Autobiographia sive curriculum vitæ*, ed. J. A. Munitiz (Brepols, 1984), 8.

³⁷⁸ Macrides, *Akropolites*, 150.

³⁷⁹ W. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (Amsterdam, 1962), see maps; Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile*, 112.

³⁸⁰ A *nymphaeum* (Latin) or *νυμφαῖον* (Greek) was originally a grotto with a natural water source, dedicated to the water nymphs. In the Classical Greek and Imperial Roman eras, the sources of water were embellished with marble, mosaic, and sculpted decoration.

a large keep. Located on a rocky promontory on Boz dağları and overlooking the plain to the north, east and west, the citadel has a single entrance (Figure 171). The area is well supplied with fresh water from the seasonal rivers running down from the mountains, from springs, and the surrounding plain is thick with alluvial soil.³⁸¹

Scholars still debate the original patronage of the Laskarid palace, attributing its construction to either Theodore I or John III.³⁸² Hans Buchwald thought the palace was probably the first thing built by the Laskarid rulers after 1204, placing the palace at the very beginning of his chronology of Laskarid churches and buildings. Buchwald dates the structure between 1210-1230, based on the likelihood that the finest and most central buildings of import for the Laskarid court (i.e. palaces) would have been built first, and that the stylistic character of the palace's striped façade was imitated in churches built at a later time.³⁸³ The exterior appearance of the palace has been noted by many, for it presents one of the most striking dichromatic façades known in Byzantine architecture. The combination of heavy greyish-white ashlar blocks, which solidly cover the exterior up to the first level of windows, alternating with bright red bricks, laid

³⁸¹ As of January 2015, there are annual Turkish-led archaeological surveys both in the Nif mountains where a double church has been surveyed and in the plains outside of Kemalpaşa, where a number of Late Antique floor mosaics (belonging to baths or villas?) have been accidentally uncovered. For archaeological reports, see E. T. Tulunay's reports accessible online at: <<<http://www.nifolympos.com/#!yaynkonferansbildirivb-listesi/c15uk>>>.

³⁸² On the palace at Nymphaion, Freshfield, "The Palace of the Greek Emperors of Nicaea at Nymphio," 382-390; S. Eyice, "Le palais byzantin de Nymphaion près d'Izmir," *Akten des XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-kongresses, München, 1958* (Munich, 1960), 150-153; [extended in] "İzmir yakınında Kemalpaşa (Nif) da Laskaris'ler Sarayı," *Belleten* 25 (1961), 1-15; T. K. Kirova, "Un Palazzo ed una casa di età tardo-bizantina in Asia Minore," *Felix Ravenna* 103-104 (1972), 276-305; H. Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," *JÖB* 28 (1979), 261-296; J. Jedamski, "Nymphaion: A Byzantine Palace in Exile," *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 13 (2007), 9-22; [extended in] "Nymphaion: A Byzantine Palace in Exile," MA Thesis, Medieval History, Central European University, 2007; ead. "Itinerant Rulership in Byzantium: a topographical analysis of the Laskarid Realm (1204-1261)," PhD dissertation, Medieval History, Central European University, 2013; S. Çağaptay, "How Western is it? The Palace at Nymphaion and its Architectural Setting," in *International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium* (Istanbul, 2010), 357-362.

³⁸³ Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 289-293.

four rows deep is continuous and regular around the entire building (Figure 169).³⁸⁴ As a slight modification to Buchwald's dating, I would suggest that the Laskarid palace, which sits on the flat plain below the large walled citadel, and whose character as a pleasure palace will become abundantly clear, was not built until after the battle of Antioch-on-the-Meander in 1211, when the Laskarids established a firm border along the Meander River valley, separating the Seljuk Turks from their territories. This would date the palace at the earliest to 1211, and in the reign of Theodore I. Macrides's close reading of *Akropolites* has led her to argue that the town of Nymphaion was the site of imperial residence and a place of relaxation from the very beginning of Laskarid rule, and that Theodore I would have spent time there.³⁸⁵ Until the Meander River Valley fortresses were restored and patrolled, the area around Nymphaion would not have been secure enough to warrant an exposed palace with extensive gardens. During the period of instability, between 1204 and 1211, I believe the Komnenian-era citadel above would have served as the occasional residence for Theodore I whenever he might have been conducting military operations in the south.³⁸⁶ Only after the area around Nymphaion had been able to benefit from a secure border, that is, after 1211, would a large pleasure palace in an open plain have been logical to build. Thus, while it cannot be proven conclusively, the palace was most likely built by Theodore I after 1211, and appears to have been used regularly during reigns of

³⁸⁴ Buchwald notes that the ratio between the the bricks and the ashlar is "close to 1:1." See *ibid.*, 276.

³⁸⁵ Laskarid palaces besides that at Nymphaion include an as yet undiscovered palace in Nicæa. Nikephoros Blemmydes writes that when the Patriarchate was moved to Nicæa, Theodore I had a palace built there, but its location and plan are unknown. See Macrides, *Akropolites*, 87-88, 148-153; *Nikephori Blemmydæ Autobiographia, sive, Curriculum Vitæ; necnon Epistula universalior*, ed. J. A. Munitiz (Leuven, 1984), 8.

³⁸⁶ Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 152.

subsequent Laskarid rulers, and even into the Palaiologan period, when it was used by Michael VIII and his son Andronikos II.³⁸⁷

John III not only maintained the borders and diplomatic relationships forged in the south by Theodore I's treaty of 1211, but he also sought to strengthen them in several ways, and his regular, seasonal move to Nymphaion supported those priorities. For example, he encouraged investment in the agricultural development of arable lands throughout the southern regions in order to promote the welfare and wealth of his people, and throughout his reign engaged in military campaigns against both crusader and other Greek lords in an effort to extend Nicæan territories. He accomplished this by recruiting field armies, installing peasant soldiers in bastions the frontier zones, and by maintaining an active navy with harbors at Smyrna [modern İzmir] the Hellespont and the southern coast of the Sea of Marmara.³⁸⁸ Besides being at the heart of the agricultural belt of the realm, Nymphaion's position along the east-west highway to Smyrna allowed for the dispersal of troops, both by land and sea, in every direction.³⁸⁹ Soon after he relocated the major elements of the governmental apparatus, Nymphaion was elevated to metropolitan status, though no church has been found in the city as of yet.³⁹⁰ This extra honor was certainly due to the fact that John III had chosen to make his primary residence there. Given his familial connection to the gentry in the south, and his keen attention to agrarian and military

³⁸⁷ Andronikos II left Constantinople in 1290 for Asia Minor with an army leading the way. He headquartered at Nymphaion, and stayed there for approximately three years. See D. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium 1261-1453* (Cambridge, 1993), 123; *Georgii Pachymeris, de Michaelae et Andronico Palaeologis*, 2 vols., ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1835), 153.

³⁸⁸ Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile*, 199.

³⁸⁹ Freshfield, "The Palace," 386.

³⁹⁰ Ahrweiler, "L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne," 42-43.

matters, it seems reasonable that as the Nicæan realm's territories expanded, a southern capital at Nymphaion became useful.

The Architecture of the Laskarid Palace

The Laskarid palace in Nymphaion is situated in a flat plain in the modern village of Kemalpaşa.³⁹¹ Originally identified by Edwin Freshfield during his journeys to Asia Minor in the 1880s, the building visible today has deteriorated somewhat when compared with Freshfield's photographs of 1886. Tatiana Kirova studied the palace first in 1972 and then Hans Buchwald in 1979.³⁹² The existing groundplans show possible reconstructions of the first and second floors (Figures 172 and 173).

Based on my observations at the site in 2013, I have attempted a reconstruction of the ground floor's ground plan, indicating the first and second building phases (Figure 174), which will be discussed in detail below. It is possible that the first floor retained the ground floor's basic architectural features. It is also possible, given the two building phases apparent in the ground floor, that the rest of the palace may have undergone secondary building phases, but these are undetectable at present.

In 2002, the municipality of Kemalpaşa, aided by Ege University professor and archaeologist Zeynep Mercangöz, surveyed and excavated a few small areas to the south of the

³⁹¹ There was also a residence for the imperial court at Klyzomene, ancient Clazomenai (modern Urla), situated on a peninsula south of Smyrna along the Aegean Sea, and connected to the mainland by a narrow man-made isthmus. Akropolites writes that the emperor and presumably some of his court would move to Klyzomene for the spring season after leaving Nymphaion at winter's end. See Macrides, *Akropolites*, 374, fn. 4. Annual excavation reports on "Clazomenai" can be found throughout the publication of the Turkish Ministry of Culture, *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* at <<<http://www.kulturvarliklari.gov.tr/TR,44760/kazi-sonuclari-toplantilari.html>>>. The distance between Nymphaion and Klyzomene/Clazomenai is about fifty-eight kilometers, a distance that can be traversed on horseback at a walk in approximately nine hours.

³⁹² Kirova, "Un Palazzo," 275-305; Buchwald, "Laskarid Architecture," 263-296.

palace. The excavation plots were limited to this area because of a curving roadway running north and east and the large elementary school that lies directly to the west of the palace. The schoolyard was not built on top of the present ground level, but dug into the ground and laid at a level approximately three meters below the present ground height. The materials that might have remained from the western areas adjacent to the palace would have been destroyed during the construction process. In the 2002 excavation, the remains of a number of low walls were uncovered. Notable finds from the excavation included urn burials and other pottery and coin finds dating to the reign of John III. These materials have not been made available for study, but records filed with the municipality allow us to enumerate a few concrete details, though these should not be considered complete. First, the low walls that remain show a rubble masonry construction that is consistent throughout, indicating a single building phase. When compared to the different methods of building materials used in the Laskarid palace, the low walls exterior to the palace indicate a similar fabric to the rubble masonry in the palace, and may be contemporaneous. The purpose of these adjacent rooms in the southern area excavations cannot be known until the excavations of the whole park is completed. The excavations were not continued all the way to the palace, so the manner in which the low walls that were found may or may not physically relate to the palace is still unknown.³⁹³

Beginning in 2008, YD Architects in Istanbul was hired by the municipality of Kemalpaşa to design a conservative restoration and preservation proposal for the Laskarid palace, as well as to direct the excavation of the building's interior. The newly excavated ground floor of the Laskarid palace reveals a great deal of previously unknown information about the character and use of the building during the Laskarid period. Up until now, conclusions about the

³⁹³ Working documents and photographs were made fully available to me at the offices of YD-Architects, for whom I was acting as bibliographic and historical consultant in 2009-2010, and more recent photographs in 2013.

building were predicated on what remained above ground, which was predominantly the fragmented and deteriorating shell of the superstructure. The excavations and restoration of the palace were complete as of July 2013, though the restoration phase has proceeded slowly due to lack of funds. These activities are a part of a conservatively-minded restoration project aimed to provide the building with a glass roof shelter, supported by a large, free, standing, exterior metal frame that would remain unattached to the palace's walls (Figure 175).

The building measures approximately 11.5 meters wide by 25.75 meters long. While no estimate of building's original height has been made, it is clear that there were four stories, each of which rose to a height of at least 2.5-3 meters, totaling approximately 12 meters. The ruined palace preserves only about three-quarters of its exterior walls. The interior of all the upper floors have completely fallen down, and only small portions of the interior transverse walls originally bonded to the exterior walls remain. Scant evidence survives to indicate the manner in which the palace's interior spaces were divided.³⁹⁴ Buchwald notes that heavy wall pilasters and remains of a groin vault on the south wall indicate that the first level above ground was also vaulted, though less spaciouly than the ground floor.³⁹⁵ He hypothesizes that the ground and first floor would have had similar vaulting mechanisms, but on slightly different scales. Kirova's ground plans indicate central pillars supporting at least eight groin vaults on the ground floor (Figure 172), and long and narrow groin vaults spanning the width of the palace on the first floor (Figure 173).

A doorway at ground level on the north side gave direct access to the ground level (Figure 176). This original entrance and primary staircase are centered in relation to the east and

³⁹⁴ Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 264.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 265.

west walls of the building. I hypothesize that the main staircase, located in a self-contained section on the far north side of the building, also gave access to each floor through a landing placed at the center of each floor's northern wall, and at the center of each flight of stairs. These entrances mirror the portal discovered in the north wall at ground level. The stairwell, then, would follow the basic lines of the building, continually ascending except at landings where the main doors would have been placed.

Between the ground level and the first floor, the nearly complete remains of a staircase were uncovered, built of brick and mortar construction, but faced with white marble slabs. Enough of the staircase remains to confirm that there was a single, L-shaped staircase extending from the ground floor to the fourth floor. It is wide enough to admit only one person comfortably, so that passersby would have been required to go in single file or to stand aside to let others move by them. It appears that the staircase began its ascent at a point coincident with the middle of the north wall, immediately to the left after entering through the ground floor doorway. The staircase rose along the north wall towards the east, turned ninety degrees to the south at the east wall with no landing, and continued ascending for a short extent along the east wall. The staircase then turned another ninety degrees and continued parallel to the north wall directly west until the staircase met the west wall, where it would have turned yet again, this time to the north. If the pattern observed on the ground floor was repeated throughout the building's upper storeys, then I conclude that there would have been a small landing placed at the center of each longer flight ascending from east to west, corresponding to the centered placement of the main doorway of the palace. This design places the main doorway at the center of the staircase, rather than at either of its corners. Thus, one can envision entering and exiting the different floors from a central doorway opening onto a small landing, which allows the exiting person to see the

ascending staircase to one side and the descending staircase to the other. This evidence gives some insight into how the palace's interior space may have been organized, and which elements were retained following the second building phase. Besides the function of the ground floor, one question that is now answered concerns how the building was entered and exited: the prevalent theory, now disproved, was that entrance into the building was gained from an external, wooden staircase.³⁹⁶

The ground floor has no real windows, but it does have two narrow arched windows, and one arrow-shaped slit window, all of which were fashioned intentionally by organizing gaps in the heavy white stone of the lower walls. The palace features rows of windows on the east, south and west façades of its upper three stories. On the east side, on each of the first, second and third stories was a row of single, arched windows, stretching the length of the building (Figure 177). The south wall had no windows on the ground floor, two single-arched windows on the first floor, and a large double picture window on the second floor. The fenestrations of the south wall's uppermost story is unknown, but may also have been a double picture window. The west wall was slightly different from the east in that it featured large, double-arched "picture" windows at center, with two single windows to either side, on each story (Figure 169). The north wall, which housed the stairwell, had no windows. The overall impression created by the numerous and broad windows on three sides of the building shows a keen interest in allowing those on each of the upper three floors to have several views into the forested mountains and across the plains.

There is clear evidence of a hypocaust floor in the south section of the newly excavated ground floor and numerous terracotta pipes embedded in the walls and rising vertically

³⁹⁶ Kirova, "Un Palazzo," 275-305.

throughout the remaining three floors of the palace. The pipes are placed where the interior walls and vaults meet the four major walls of the building (Figure 178). The north section was remodeled to have four independent, barrel-vaulted chambers with niches coordinating with the east or west walls (respectively), each opening to the central aisle in line with main doorway. The addition of barrel vaults required extensive modification to the original internal pilasters, which were built out and then extended and buttressed by additional brick pillars. In the north section, a quartet of small, semi-private, barrel-vaulted rooms along the west and east walls was added, each with common access to the aforementioned central aisle. Each of these small rooms has recessed wall surfaces, made from brick and covered in plaster. The purpose of this suite of four tiny rooms, I propose, was to function as private bathing rooms in the palace. They are identical to one another, have piping for water spigots in the walls, and were originally covered in fresco, some remains of which can still be seen. The modular nature indicates that each was devoted to the same purpose, that of providing personal and private bathing quarters for the residents of the palace.

Scattered throughout the ground floor are remains of non-figural fresco painting. In the south and north sections no visible decorative frescoes have survived, though it is clear that plaster covered the walls of both. In the center room, there are numerous fragments of polychrome fresco decoration still *in situ*, mimicking colorful rose, dark green and porphyry marble revetments (Figure 179). The *dado* level preserves a design of white palmettes with fronds alternating either down or up, separated by zigzagged white lines on a bright blue background (Figure 180). The painting in the central room may date from the second building phase, since the doorways in the center section were blocked up before they were covered with fresco decoration, and there seem to be no real gaps or mismatches in the visible painting. Small

finds from the excavated interior include thick, glazed square pavings tiles, in various shades of green and gold.

The south section has two rooms, a north and south, linked to each other by a central doorway. They are of nearly equal dimensions and appear to date to the same building phase. The entrance to north room of the south wing was narrowed when two brick and stone pillars were built against the original piers. Each contains numerous niches, the upper for use as shelving and the lower, which would have been concealed by the floor, for purposes related to the functioning of the bath. The southernmost room retains a built in bench on the south wall. The center area of the ground floor takes the form of an oblong oval whose four corners are softened by curving pillars that bloom into groin vaults. There is an approximately 2 meter deep well, perhaps functioning as a drain, in the center of the room, rimmed with what appears to be a marble column base hollowed out as a wellhead (Figure 181). Whether or not there is a pre-existing plumbing system, with pipes intersecting the vertical well below the ground floor is not yet known, but it appears highly likely, based on the placement of furnaces and drains elsewhere.

The ground floor was originally divided into three large vaulted rooms. The southern and northern sections were roofed with a wide brick vault, smoothed to a nearly flat surface. Traces of these vaults remain embedded in the original wall. Both sections were retrofitted at a later time: the southern section was subdivided into two smaller rooms, whereas the northern section was divided into four smaller rooms. The middle room, which features a well at the center fashioned from a marble pedestal, was covered in a large oblong groin vault, whose springing started relatively low down on the wall, and which does not appear to have changed with the retrofitting of the northern and southern sections. The original large arched doorways leading

into and from the central room were both narrowed when those areas were refitted with smaller rooms.

The toponym “Nymphaion” could connote any number of bodies of water, but at this particular location, the bountiful waters came in the form of springs and fresh mountain rivers. These were harnessed and funneled into a luxurious bath, whose interior was decorated with frescoes imitating the brightest marble revetment and paved with large, thickly glazed tiles. The degree of luxury in the Laskarid palace, combined with its beautiful views over plain and mountain, show a sincere appreciation of the cultivated landscape. If the village of Nymphaion was expedient to the Laskarid rulers as an economic and military base, it was as healthful and beautiful in its prospect. Despite the strong monumental appearance of the building, nature permeates its walls, both in the water that flows from the mountain springs into the baths and in the multiplicity of views framed by its numerous arched windows.

Both Theodore I, John III, and Theodore II are recorded as having sought out reknowned bathing complexes in Asia Minor, which has a large number of hot springs of all kinds. All spent time at baths throughout the realm including at Nicæa and Klazomene, and as we can now confirm, Nymphaion. Dimiter Angelov writes that Theodore II, at Nymphaion after he had lost his wife Elena, received advice from Akropolites to bath often in order to relieve his deep sorrow.³⁹⁷

Interestingly, an epigram, written anonymously in the thirteenth century, discusses the site of Nymphaion in particular as a place of health, conducive to the flourishing of all living things:

Τὸ πρὶν τηλεθάον Νυμφάων χεύμασι δένδρον ἐτμήθην ὠμῶς ὕλοτόμου παλάμη ἀλλὰ

³⁹⁷ My thanks to Dimiter Angelov who shared this reference with me. See *Theodore Ducaë Lascaris epistulae*, ed. N. Festa (Florence, 1898), esp. 61.6-9, 61.21-23.

γνάθους Ἡφαίστου λάβρον τε στόμ' ἀλύξαι Λασκάρει κλεινὴ νῦν καθέδρη γενόμην.

Νύμφαι τοίνυν χαίρετε, δένδρεα θάλλετε τᾶλλα νυμφαϊκοῖς θαμινῶς ῥεύμασιν ἀρδομενα
χ' ὑμεῖς Κεκροπίδες τραυλίζειν μὴ φείδεσθε τοῖς κείνων κλωσιν βήματ' ἐρεθσάμεναι.

Κύκνον ἐπεὶ μελίγυρον ἔμοῖς λάχον ἀγκαλίδεσσιν αἴρειν Μουσάω φθέγματ' ἐρευγόμενον,
οἷς πιανομένη γλυκεροῖς ἀρδεύμασιν οὔσιν τῶν ὑπὸ Νυμφάων θάλλω ἀρειότερον:

The mighty tree in front of luxuriant Nymphaion, streaming with spring waters, having been untimely cut down, has escaped from the jaws and mouth of Hephaistos and has now been fashioned, by the hand of the carpenter, into the throne of the renowned Laskaris.

And now, greetings, Nymphs! Trees, sprout anew! and you other waters crowded with nymphaic streams, and you, Athenians [i.e. descendants of King Kekrops of Athens] having been fixed on a base, pay no heed to the lisped clucking of others.

Then I chanced upon a sweet-voiced swan that trumpets with the voice of the Muses, and with bent arms carried it to us, [its voice] by virtue of irrigated land, increases in sweetness, so would I thrive better at Nymphaion.³⁹⁸

The anonymous author of the epigram discusses a tree at Nymphaion that was cut down and carved into a “throne of the renowned Laskaris.” This Laskaris could either be Theodore I or Theodore II; or, more likely Theodore II. The author calls to the Nymphs of the trees and waters of Nymphaion to continue their play, and to grow—even speaking an aside to the “Athenians” (presumably a metaphor for the Greek audience)—to be loyal to and find contentment at Nymphaion. The reference to the “sweet-voiced swan,” a bird not normally known for its beautiful voice, is proof of the favor of the Muses at Nymphaion, whose origin as Nymphs was well known, as was their association with swans. Playing on the connection between water, nymphs, and Nymphaion, the author draws out overt associations of the city’s name with an imperial residence, remarking that this is a process in which all nature takes part, including the great tree of the first stanza that has transformed into a “throne.” The expectation of inevitable

³⁹⁸ S. Lampros, “Epigramme sur l’*hédre de Lascaris*,” *Νέος Ἑλλ.* 3 (1906), 122-123. Translation mine.

flourishing embraces all who find themselves in the area, including the author, who ends his verses with “so would I thrive better at Nymphaion.”

The Greek epigram above was discovered in a manuscript in what was formerly the Royal Library in Berlin (Königliche Bibliothek), Ms. Phill. 1581. This manuscript was catalogued by Wilhelm Studemund and Leopold Cohn, and numbered as Studemund-Cohn 187.³⁹⁹ Their entry informs us that Mss. Phill. 1581 dates from the sixteenth century, and that the majority of the codex was dedicated to a copy of the *Geoponika*, a tenth-century agricultural handbook that offers instruction on everything from siting farmhouses and where to find water, to medicinal wines and how to make olive oil. The *Geoponika* also discusses the benefit of natural environments for illness in addition to its extensive notes on agriculture.⁴⁰⁰ The text advocates, for example, that buildings face eastwards, and be built “near the sea or on a hill or a slope inclining to the north.”⁴⁰¹ Furthermore, it warns against the ill effects of living in a place that is marshy or low down, which Nicæa, abutting Lake Askanios, certainly was. Finally, the text advocates the installation of gardens near to the house, to offer beautiful views and fresh air as a remedy for illness and disease.

³⁹⁹ W. Studemund and L. Cohn, *Die Handschriften-verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, Vol. 11 (Berlin, 1890/1897). This work is a catalogue of the Greek manuscripts from the “Bibliotheca Meermanniana Phillipici Græci nunc Berolineses” or the Phillipps collection of Greek manuscripts from the Meermann Library, now in Berlin, acquired in 1887. The entry by Studemund and Cohn is as follows: “178. Codex 1581 Phill. = 297 Meerm. = 311 Clar. = 145 Pel., chartaceus, cm. 15 x 10.4, saec. XVI, foliorum 289. 1. fol. 1^r: (Cassiani Bassi) *Geoponicorum* libri XX. Tit.: πρὸς κωνσταντῖνον βασιλ(έα) κωνσταντίνου πόλεως τὸν πορφυρογέννητον. incip.: Πολλοῖς μὲν καὶ ἄλλοις. Omissa sunt libri XX caput 6 et capita 8-45 (cf. cod. 1565 num. 1). Desinit in medio capite 46 (fol. 289 med.): τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν πατηγίεις ἄλιξ (p. 1271 ed. Niclas). cf. H. Beckh in *Actis semin. philol. Erlang.* vol. IV p. 312 sq.”

⁴⁰⁰ *Geoponica*, ed. H. Beck (Leipzig, 1895), with corrections and addenda by E. Fehrlé, *Richtlinien zur Textgedraltung der griechischen Geoponica* (Heidelberg, 1920); *Geoponika*, trans. A. Dalby (Devon, 2011), 70, 200; A. R. Littlewood, “Gardens of the Palaces,” in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829-1204*, ed. H. Maguire (Washington, D.C., 2004), 13-48; id. “The Scholarship of Byzantine Gardens,” and R. Rodgers, “Κηποποιΐα: Garden Making and Garden Culture in the Geoponika,” both in *Byzantine Garden Culture*, eds. A. Littlewood, H. Maguire and J. Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington, DC, 2002), 13-22 and 159-176, respectively.

⁴⁰¹ Littlewood, “Gardens of the Palaces,” 23.

John III's preference for Nymphaion may have been based on a more personal issue—the emperor's chronic bad health. Known to have suffered from apoplectic seizures, John III may have preferred to live in Nymphaion where the weather was warmer, and where he could benefit from the cultivated and extensive pleasure gardens around the palace.⁴⁰² John III's own understanding of the healthful convalescence possible in Nymphaion is illustrated by the refuge and solace he sought in his gardens during the last days of his life, and where finally he died in 1254. Freshfield translates this passage from Akropolites:

He hastened, therefore, to reach Nymphio, and arrived there before Palm Sunday, on which the emperor was accustomed to make the usual triumphal procession. Hastening his journey then, he arrived at Nymphaio, and there he celebrated Palm Sunday as usual, and spent there the Feast of the Resurrection.' It would appear that he remained there for some time ill. He then determined to go for his health to Smyrna, in order that he might pray there; but his visit to Smyrna did not seem to do him any good, and remained at a place near Smyrna called Periclystre, which is so called because it is surrounded with much water; but there his disease got worse rather than better. From this he returned to Nymphaio. I suppose then, in the summer; but he did not go into the imperial palace, but stopped in the royal tent, which was pitched in the garden of the neighborhood, where he died on the 3rd calends of November.⁴⁰³

The orator turned monk, Manuel Holobolos, by whose pen we know so much concerning the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos, also mentions Nymphaion several times in his orations. In his third oration to the "New Constantine," Manuel mentions Michael VIII's acclamation at Nymphaion, "the place, by name, as though it were flooded by water snakes..." alluding to the

⁴⁰² John III Vatatzes gained a reputation for agricultural innovation, and for his gardens. See A. Gardner, *The Lascarids of Nicæa: the Story of an Empire in Exile* (London, 1912), 192, 301; also see "Theodori Scutariotæ additamenta ad Georgii Acropolitæ Historiam" in *Georgii Acropolitæ Opera*, 286-287.

⁴⁰³ Freshfield's translation appears in "The Palace of the Greek Emperors of Nicaea at Nymphio," 385; for the Greek see *Georgii Acropolitæ annales*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1837), 94, 108, 110. For palaces and villas in Byzantium, see R. Janin, *Constantinople Byzantine*, 138-153, and S. Runciman, "The Country and Suburban Palaces of the Emperors," in *Charanis Studies*, ed. A. E. Laiou-Thomadakis (New Brunswick, 1980), 219-228.

reptiles that would abound in a site so filled with streams and rivulets.⁴⁰⁴ Holobolos's work is characterized by heavy usage of Homeric and Classical Greek place names, thus his association of Nymphaion with the word "hydra" connotes the legend of the Lernean hydra and one of the labors of Hercules.⁴⁰⁵

In strong contrast are the mentions of palacea in the works of the thirteenth-century historians like Akropolites and Skoutariotes, who discuss Nymphaion as a site of customary imperial residence. The Second Treaty of Nymphaion, dating to 1261, between Michael VIII and the Genoese, was signed at the palace. Macrides notes that Holobolos's text is the only Greek source for this treaty, and includes an *ekphrasis* on two of the *peploi* sent by the emperor to Genoa, one of which still survives and was very likely part of the first round of diplomatic gifts stipulated within the treaty.⁴⁰⁶

The palace at Nymphaion played an important role in the presentation of a powerful, successful and conspicuous imperial presence. Both Theodore I and John III campaigned actively to support the new realm's frontiers, to enlarge their borders, and as a result, were often on the move. The form of government that sufficed in exile was smaller, more efficient and more mobile than its sedentary Constantinopolitan predecessor. Michael Angold has described the innovative alterations made in the Byzantine governmental apparatus to survive in exile. Julia Jedamski also discusses the itinerant nature of the imperial government during this time in her

⁴⁰⁴ "Νυμφαῖον ὁ τόπος τὴν κληῖσιν, ὡς πολλοῖς καταντλεῖται τοῖς ὕδρασι..." in *Manuelis Holoboli orationes*, ed. M. Treu (Potsdam, 1906), 92.27-28. Translation mine.

⁴⁰⁵ The killing of the Hydra was the second labor of Hercules, see Hesiod's *Theogony*, in *Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns and Homeric*, trans. H. G. Evelyn-White (Cambridge, 1914), 25-44.

⁴⁰⁶ Macrides, "New Constantine," 34, with further bibliography; C. Hilsdale, "The Imperial Image at the End of Exile, The Byzantine Embroidered Silk in Genoa and the Treaty of Nymphaion (1261)," *DOP* 64 (2010), 151-199.

dissertation.⁴⁰⁷ Angold characterized of the Laskarids' *household government*, consisting of an administrative "skeleton crew" including the Emperor, his *mesazon*, a chief minister to the emperor, the *provestiarius*, the *epi tes trapezis*, or steward, the *pinkernes*, or butler, the *parakoimomenos*, or chamberlain, the *chartouliarios tou kanikleiou*, or keeper of the imperial scarlet inkwell, and the *mystikos*, the emperor's private scribe.⁴⁰⁸ Most of the business of the Nicæan realm was successfully conducted by the individuals in these offices, whether it was imperial, legislative, judiciary or diplomatic. The abbreviated, compacted government, so easily mobilized, sufficed in exile. As a result, the architectural environment in which the bloated bureaucracy of Byzantium prior to the Interregnum resided was unnecessary. The compact urban block palace type used at Nymphaion was suited to a smaller court and household government.⁴⁰⁹

In its scale, purpose and siting, the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion inaugurated a new kind of Byzantine architecture, one that integrated the pragmatics of a condensed imperial rulership with pleasure gardens and beautiful views. The palace is one of the few buildings that has no Constantinopolitan prototype: it is an innovation of exile. This fact gives the palace great importance in Byzantine architectural history, particularly since it was one of the few architectural types to be brought back to Constantinople following the end of the Interregnum. The proof lies in the erection of the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, whose plan and appearance are clearly based on the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion.

⁴⁰⁷ See footnote 379, above.

⁴⁰⁸ Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile*, 155-166.

⁴⁰⁹ Suna Çağaptay discusses possible eastern Anatolian origins of the Laskarid palace in "How Western is it? The Palace at Nymphaion and its Architectural Setting," 357-362.

The Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, or, the Tekfur Sarayı

For a monument so important to the history of Palaiologan architecture, scholarship on the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos is remarkably slim.⁴¹⁰ The attribution to Constantine Palaiologos, Michael VIII's first child born "in the purple," derives from the *History* by Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347-1354) mentioning the "...ἐν τοῖς τοῦ Πορφυρογεννήτου οἴκοις τῶν βασιλείων" in the Blachernai district, but distinct from the Blachernai palace complex itself.⁴¹¹ I hold that the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, also known as the Tekfur Sarayı (Figure 167) dates from the first generation of works by Michael VIII after he returned to Constantinople and was erected under his patronage. Based solely on the formal similarities between the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion and the Tekfur Sarayı, particularly their decorative exteriors, their numerous windows, and their similar block-shaped, multi-storied form, I argue that the new Palaiologan palace in Constantinople was derived from the palace at Nymphaion.

Alexander van Millingen established the original connection between the Tekfur Sarayı and the "Palace of the Porphyrogennitos" mentioned by John IV.⁴¹² He concludes that the Tekfur Sarayı is the building referred to by Kantakouzenos as the "Palace of the Porphyrogennitos,"

⁴¹⁰ The Tekfur Sarayı has recently been restored. The interior has been fitted for an independent framework and staircases that will allow tourists to safely view the building from the interior. The brick and stone-work exterior is being consolidated and repaired. In 2010, the courtyard and substructures in the area were excavated, and a few small finds were recovered. An exhibition at the Istanbul Archaeological Museum in 2011-2012 featured a few of the small finds discovered during the excavation of the palace's interior, including a stamped roof tile, a stamped brick, and a glazed, handled bowl. See "Blachernai Palace," in *Istanbul'daki Bizans Sarayları*, (Byzantine Palaces in Istanbul), eds. G. B. Çelik and M. Kiraz (Istanbul, 2011), 125-129. Skeletons from fourth- and fifth-century graves were also uncovered, indicating a funerary context for the area prior to the building of the Theodosian walls in the fifth century.

⁴¹¹ Talbot, "The Restoration of Constantinople," 250; Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, after he had retired from his imperial duties, became a monk and wrote a four-volume *History*, covering the years 1320-1356. His work is contemporary with Nikephoros Gregoras. See *Ioannes Cantacuzenus, Historiarum Libri IV*, Vol. 1 (Bonn, 1828), esp. 305.

⁴¹² van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 109-110.

referring not to Constantine VII Porphyrogennitos (r. 913-959) as some had thought, but to Michael VIII's son, Constantine Palaiologos Porphyrogennitos (b. 1261-d. 1306), husband to Irene Roulaina and the Michael VIII's first son "born to the purple." Van Millingen describes now lost decorative details once in the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, including what follows:

Over the second window (from the south) was inscribed the monogram of the legend on the arms of the Palæologi; "Βασιλεὺς Βασιλέων Βασιλεύων Βασιλεύουσι... Bullialdus, the annotator of Dukas, speaking of the palace, says that the double-headed eagle of the Palæologi was to be seen on the lintel of one of the doors; that the capitals of the pillars in the building bore the lilies of France; and that several armorial shields were found there with the monograph.⁴¹³

The monogram mentioned above, by which "Βασιλεὺς Βασιλέων Βασιλεύων Βασιλεύουσι" is understood, was in fact written by means of four "B"s, repetitions of the Greek letter *beta* or "β," book ended to one another and arrayed in the four quadrants created by the cross. The shield and monogram of the Palaiologoi (set upside down) has since been removed from the palace and set into an as yet unidentified staircase in the region of Edirenkapı, near the Edirne Gate (Figure 182). The cantilevered *betas* appearing here were first incorporated into the imperial imagery on the coins of Theodore I Laskaris (Figure 183), and continue through Palaiologan reign (Figure 184).

Van Millingen's observations, particularly those on the "lilies of France" carved onto the capitals of the ground floor's pillars, are also extremely valuable, even more so today for the original capitals and pillars are no longer *in situ*. If we are to consider the Tekfur Sarayı as a building drawing from the vocabulary of Laskarid architecture, then these lilies of France are so recognizable that they can be none other than the Laskarid *fleurs-de-lis*, appearing on Laskarid coins, sarcophagi, and pavements, as well as some of Michael VIII's early issue (Figure 185).

Given that van Millingen believed the building dated to the tenth century, he argued that

⁴¹³ van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 112-113.

the “Palaiologan double-headed eagle,” the fleurs-de-lis, and the “armorial shields” were interpolated into the building during the Palaiologan period. Given the fact that the palace is clearly the result of a single building phase and that it derives from the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion in its architectural technique and appearance, it can be dated to no other period than the early Palaiologan period. The appearance of the palace and the presence of the Palaiologan eagle, combined with two well-known Laskarid motifs, the *betas* and the lilies, indicate that the palace was built early in Michael VIII’s reign and under his patronage. While the *betas* continue to appear in Palaiologan coinage, the lilies fall out of use in coinage even before the reign of Andronikos II begins.

These visual emblems, united in the Tekfur Sarayı, show that Michael VIII, even as he set about restoring the historic capital, had the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion in mind. The endurance of these royal symbols, generated in exile, on the capitals of the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, indicates that they, like the form of the palace itself, were associated with the architecture of Laskarid imperial power. When transferred back into the Capital, they denoted a clear connection between to Nymphaion and to Nicæa.

Its location at the corner where the Komnenian walls intersect with the earlier Theodosian walls indicates that the structure was eventually subsumed into the Blacherna palace complex, and most probably built on top of already existing structures (Figure 168). Even today, it is clear that the building was sandwiched between the walls on its east and west sides. The palace, visible from outside the city, appears to be placed on top of the walls itself giving the impression of yet another tower rising from the city’s protective circuit. Terracing for the Blachernai complex abuts the Komnenian walls, located below ground level, was originally

placed there in order to provide strong, flat foundations for the palace buildings, for the natural landscape is irregular and rocky.

The exterior façades of the building, like those at Nymphaion, face east and west. Figure 186 shows the western façade, and Figure 167 the eastern, which are characterized by distinctly contrasting bands of white stone masonry and dark red brick bands, pierced by sets of single-arched windows. Other decorations include engaged columns, molded from the continuous brick and stone constituting the walls, and discretely patterned spandrel decorations. While these surface decorations are more extensive than those at Nymphaion, the dichromatic characteristic of the façades of both buildings are nearly identical. The main differences stem from the observation that unlike the impenetrable mass of tightly built monochromatic stone masonry at Nymphaion, the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos in Constantinople stands on columns framing negative space. Their superstructures, however, display a strict concern for symmetrical, orderly bands of color that completely encircle the structures. While the windows and framing of the windows in Constantinople are highly ornamental, a proper comparison with the Nymphaion is not possible, for that building's window frames, which certainly existed, have disappeared. Nevertheless, it is simple to observe that both buildings share an interest in highly fenestrated façades.

The interior of the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, like that at Nymphaion, has completely deteriorated, however enough details remain *in situ* to allow for a general description. The ground floor was covered in a vaulting system featuring groin vaults opening on the west side to the exterior (which would have had a covered courtyard). Rectangular shaped stone piers supported the springing of the ground floor's interior vaults as well as the stone voussoirs of the large arched entrances. Based on brick profiles still embedded into the walls, it is clear that the

size of the bays on the ground floor were squared out from the spacing of the arches. From a perspective within the interior, one may discern that the dimensions of the arched ground floor entrances are nominally repeated on the first story, providing that level with a parallel, if shorter, series of arches visible from the exterior.

From the exterior (Figure 167), the windows of the first story on the western façade, which share sills with the large relieving arches, are narrower than their corresponding archways. The fact that the ground floor archways consist of two biforia separated by a large central pier creates a slight imbalance in the sense of the negative space on that level. The design selected for the first storey shows a conscious effort to rectify that imbalance by distributing the windows evenly across the façade. The top floor has a total of seven windows on its western face, again, spread out evenly within its own register, and in this case, do not coordinate with the windows in the first floor. Rather it falls to the intensive surface decoration to unify the façade. At ground level on the western side, one observes the presence of three pilasters ascending along the exterior of the building, as well as up the central pier. These pilasters continue to the top of the first storey, where they are paired with pilasters placed directly above the columns of the ground storey.

The exterior of the building is much more highly decorated than the palace at Nymphaion, which adheres to a nearly abstract coloristic aesthetic of unbroken lines of alternating colors. In contrast, the surface of the Tekfur Sarayı is treated in such a way that each spandrel and border is highlighted from the striped background. The spandrels contain varied patterns that play on the difference between dark and light brick and stone, while the arches are decorated with quatre-foil ceramic insets, glazed in earthen colors.

The floor level of the first storey is almost on par with the windowsills that give it light, forming the impression that in its original state, the experience of walking on the first floor was similar to that on the ground floor, because both windows rise from ground level. In the first storey at Nymphaion, this also appears to be the case. The top level of the Tekfur Sarayı is more complicated to understand. A ledge on the western side and an indentation on the southern side clearly indicate that a timber floor was laid there, and also at the springing of the arches for the top story windows for placement of another floor, or at minimum a series of beams that would have supported the timber roof.

Müller-Wiener proposed that the palace was built between 1261-1271, during the time when he estimated that Michael VIII would have been preoccupied with restoring the Blachernai palace.⁴¹⁴ Cyril Mango believes the construction of the palace could have begun in 1261, or ended as late as 1291, and describes it as “a more elegant version of the palace of Nymphaion.” Mango posits that the ground floor was vaulted, like that at Nymphaion, and supported on columns. The first floor would have had a flat wooden ceiling and the uppermost floor would have been covered with a low-pitched roof. Missing today is a “protected” north courtyard, which Mango says would have preceded the now exposed north façade. The ground floor was subdivided into rooms and appears to have had built-in cupboards. The second floor, Mango writes, had a tiny chapel corbeled out of the south side. Unlike the palace at Nymphaion, whose four walls all retain similar degrees of decoration, the Tekfur Sarayı features much more elaborate decoration on its north and south façades, presumably because these were the faces of the building visible from ground-level. Mango also makes mention of “lost” architectural details,

⁴¹⁴ W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen, 1977), 244.

including that east façade balcony, which faced the city, was supported on consoles that ended in lions', rams' and eagles' heads.⁴¹⁵

Two other early Palaiologan monuments in Constantinople provide proof of the influence of the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion after 1261: the Boğdan Sarayı (Figure 187) and the İsakapısı mescidi (Figure 188).⁴¹⁶ The Constantinopolitan examples share the most distinct characteristic of early Palaiologan architecture in Constantinople—the dichromatic, striped façade created by bands of alternating brick and stone, which we now understand to be derived from the palace at Nymphaion. Other characteristics that the Constantinopolitan examples share are recessed arches and extensive decorative patterning of exterior brickwork and brick cloisonnée. These monuments constitute a group of early Palaiologan buildings that all share features with the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, and ultimately, with the Laskarid Palace in Nymphaion. Thus, the question of whether Palaiologan adoption of these features was inspired by Laskarid architecture must be answered in the affirmative.

The importance of illustrating the connection between the Tekfur Sarayı and the Laskarid palace in Nymphaion is two-fold. First, the connection confirms an early date of construction for the Palace of Constantine Porphyrogennitos and firmly links it to Michael VIII. Secondly, we conclude that there is not a direct Komnenian source in Constantinople for the architectural style of the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, but that the similarity between the architectural style and

⁴¹⁵ C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York, 1985), 155.

⁴¹⁶ In 1982, Robert Ousterhout postulated that two Palaiologan churches in Constantinople, the Esekapısı Mescidi (or İsakapısı Mescidi) now attached to the İbrahim Paşa Mescidi) and the Boğdan sarayı, appear to have been built by masons trained and working in the Laskarid realm, and thus represent “the architectural link between Laskarid Asia Minor and Palaeologan Constantinople. This assertion is based on the exterior characteristics listed above, as well as his observation of a type of construction technique called “brick filled mortar joints,” in which broken bricks are mixed into the mortar. Neither the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion nor the Palace of Constantine Porphyrogennitos figure in Ousterhout’s presentation, but, they are, I argue, typologically germane. See R. Ousterhout, “The Origins of Palaeologan Construction,” *BSCAbstra* (Chicago, 1982), 10-11.

appearance of the two palaces, one built in exile, the other built as part of restoration campaign in the reconquered capital, is evidence that the architectural source for the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos should be sought in Laskarid Asia Minor.

The *urban block palace*, as the type has come to be known, is a rather inelegant moniker for the large-scale, rectangular, multistoried palaces appearing in late Byzantine secular architecture. Besides at Nymphaion and Constantinople, this building type characterizes the palace complex at Mystras and the now-ruined Palace of the Grand Komnenoi in Trebizond. The urban block palace differs from the agglutinative, sprawling palaces of earlier times. Finding the origin of the urban block palace has stymied Byzantine architectural historians, for their inquiries attempt to deduce whether these large unitary buildings were adapted in Byzantium from the *palazzi* of Venice to the west or the single-block type buildings known from Armenia and Seljuk Rûm to the east.⁴¹⁷ While that question remains unanswered, I believe that it is useful to separate the theories on the ultimate origin of the urban block palace architectural type from its adoption and use in Byzantine architecture. Rather, it is useful to take the perspective that by the end of the period of exile, the urban block palace, exemplified by the palace at Nymphaion, had been integrated into the corpus of Laskarid architecture. Michael VIII depended on the legitimate imperial character of Nicæa and Nymphaion in the strategies he implemented in his quest for the throne. Thus, when the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos appeared in Constantinople a generation later, it should be understood that its antecedent was the Laskarid Palace at Nymphaion. The importance of Laskarid cities and the reliable infrastructure they provided to Palaiologan rulers can also be illustrated by the imperial visits made to Nicæa and Nymphaion by Andronikos II (r.

⁴¹⁷ See Çağaptay, “How Western is it? The Palace at Nymphaion and its Architectural Setting,” 357-362, where she notes that the Nymphaion palace appears to stand in an open plain, as do other single-block type palaces known from the Seljuks, such as that at Hasbahçe and Hacıbaba.

1282-1328), Michael's VIII's son, who traveled in Asia Minor for three years beginning in 1290. He stayed in both Nicaea and Nymphaion, making his headquarters at the latter city during his expedition there, indicating that both sites retained the imperial connotations they received in exile even after Constantinople had replaced them, and that they were still perceived as sites hospitable to the Byzantine Emperor.⁴¹⁸

To pinpoint cases in which a building in Palaiologan Constantinople was directly imitating or inspired by a Laskarid building grants the period of exile a historiographic importance. It is also proof positive that the long narrative of art and architecture of Byzantium, and of the Palaiologan period in particular, cannot be accurately understood, and in fact runs the risk of being *misunderstood*, without first grasping the motivations and results of Laskarid patronage during the Interregnum. In nearly a pure reversal to Nicæa at the very beginning of the Interregnum, the ruined city of Constantinople in 1261 became the architectural substrate of memory, in this case, the canvas upon which memories preserved in exile were painted. So much had been lost in the battles and fires that there were now blank stretches of the city, bereft of both their former buildings and, now that enough generations had passed, so had any memory of what had once stood there as well.

One of the unique characteristics of exile, regardless of geography or era, is that the suffering it brings inevitably fosters a myriad of techniques to cope with the loss of home and the stressors of adjustment to new contexts, to threats of safety, and to cultural or geographical identity, whether individual or collective. While the desire to rebuild important features of one's home when in exile is undeniable, it remains ultimately impossible. In the Laskarid case, features of Nicæa as a city provided an encouragement of their own, such as the city walls and the

⁴¹⁸ Foss, *Nicaea*, 80; see fn. 33, above.

cathedral of Hagia Sophia. In other regions of the Laskarid realm, however, the emperors were faced with different terrains, new boundaries, microclimates, habits of use and cultivation and *in situ* architecture, predestining, I would argue, the kind of buildings or complexes that would be necessary or even suitable to build.

The Laskarids were so successful in replacing Constantinople in exile that certain elements of its architectural landscape could not *but* be brought back to the capital following the end of exile. The Laskarid palace in Nymphaion was one such element: “rebuilt” in the early Palaiologan period and integrated into the very walls of the city. Scholarly work on Palaiologan art and architecture in Constantinople has generally been disconnected from the art and architecture of the preceding Laskarid period, with the effect of circumventing the possible effects of what was produced in exile. Neglecting the material remains of the Laskarids results in the erroneous perspective—one that holds the features of Palaiologan art as innovations fostered after the empire’s restitution in 1261. For example, features of the Palaiologan architecture that revived certain Komnenian artistic and architectural elements are generally viewed as having been generated through direct imitation of Komnenian monuments. This view insinuates that the works created under the Laskarid dynasty between 1204 and 1261 were inconsequential because they were produced outside the capital. It also assumes that nothing returned to Constantinople from exile and, conversely, that nothing was created in exile that warranted a return to Constantinople after 1261. It has been demonstrated in previous chapters that there are, in fact, key Palaiologan works whose origin and value derive not from a distant Komnenian past, but in fact, from the more recent Laskarid past. And, it has also been shown that the Laskarid rulers themselves were conscious of the various “pasts” of Byzantine art and architecture, and made intentional selections from the canon. Through the memories of the people who returned to

Constantinople, elements of Laskarid art and architecture were integrated into the city, creating distinct lines of continuity in spite of the decades of rupture. The Palace of the Porphyrogennitos constitutes a yet another rare example, not of Palaiologan innovation, but of an architectural form generated in Nicæan exile, deemed essential in the restoration of the city of Constantinople.

The Great Palace, the Blachernai palace and other imperial residences not only gave physical shape to the imperial office, but they became essential plot-points in the complex interplay of urban processions on Orthodox feast days and other public ceremonies. From an architectural perspective, the imperial palace defined the circumambulations of the emperor's ceremonial excursions. More than points of origin and return, palaces were also architectural complexes facilitating the highest mode of civilized life, with dedicated spaces for the work of the state, for leisure, study, worship, and recreation. Throughout the Interregnum the crusaders had siezed private property, forced out the local population, rededicated Orthodox churches in the Latin faith, and taken over palaces and aristocratic residences. The traditional rituals and intricate pilgrimages that gave Constantinople its rich urban identity, and which were essential in creating a common experience for its inhabitants, completely ceased. The crusader knights installed themselves in the more elegant and spacious homes, while the Emperor of the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople preferred to take up residence in the Boukoleon palace on the south coast of the city.⁴¹⁹ The losses were irrecoverable, despite Michael VIII's concerted effort to enrich the churches, palaces, and monasteries when he returned. But, when Michael VIII entered the city as a supplicant and was met by the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, their procession through the historic streets rekindled a uniquely Constantinopolitan experience, signaling that all key elements of the empire had been collected together once more.

⁴¹⁹ *O City of Byzantium*, 322.

When Michael VIII entered Constantinople, he was returning the empire to its historic home. During the initial years of his reign, marked by a heavy investment in repairing the damage done during the Latin Crusader occupation, it is significant that he chose to build a palace that recalled the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion, where he had first resided as emperor. In view of this, some of the innovative features of Palaiologan architecture find their origin in the era of exile. But, while the palace built in exile was transferred, its context could not be. No longer would the imperial residence be surrounded by pleasure gardens, healthy air, and fresh springs and rivers. The Palace of the Porphyrogennitos, situated in a high, protected, urban setting, lost those bucolic surroundings, and found itself, as did its emperor, back in the lost capital, but balanced, it would seem, on its very edge. Perhaps in this new location, perched on top of the mighty walls of Constantinople, one facing to the city, the other the countryside, Michael VIII and his descendants could look out, past the walls, into the green and forested lands beyond and remember the verdant beauty of the lost capital of Nymphaion.

Conclusion Exile, Extinguished

Nicæa's fame as the site of the First and Seventh Ecumenical Councils was ubiquitous. Its stature was high, ranking with Nikomedia, Ephesos, Chalcedon and Constantinople, sites of intervening church councils. Pilgrims to Nicæa primarily came to visit the Rotunda commemorating the 318 Church Fathers of the First Council.⁴²⁰ today, pilgrims (mostly Orthodox) come to see Hagia Sophia, the site of the Seventh Council, both museum and mosque.

Nicæa was not always so welcoming to foreigners, a character trait that its enormous fortifications enhanced. When Theodore I Laskaris arrived in 1203/1204, the Nicæans closed the city gates to him, but thought the better of their inhospitality and offered refuge to his wife (who was, after all, a princess). Not long afterwards, waves of Constantinopolitans, including Niketas Choniates, began to arrive at Nicæa, and the xenophobic locals, he says, begrudgingly offered them shelter and food at exorbitant rates, but offered them no shelter:

ὄθεν κατὰ μόνον τὸ σύννομον αὐτοῖς συμφερόμενοι, ἐξ ὅτου τὴν παρ' Ἀσκανία λίμνη τῆς Βιθυνῶν ἐπαρχίας προεδρεύουσιν Νίκαιαν παροικεῖν εἰλόμεθα ὡς αἰχμάλωτοι, καὶ παρὰ τοῖς αὐτοῖς συνιότες τεμένεσιν συναφεῖς τᾶλλα καθεωρᾶ μεθα...

We were crowded together; for this reason, we chose to reside, as though we were captives, in Nicæa on Lake Askania, the chief city of the province of Bithynia, and huddled about the churches where we were looked down upon as aliens.⁴²¹

Choniates mentions that they “huddled about the churches” in Nicæa, whose buildings and grounds were ostensibly public and offered some degree of respite and protection, and where, one assumes, people in need could appeal to Christian charity. Alexios III, the emperor whose ambition had resulted in the Byzantine Empire's dissolution was captured by his son-in-law,

⁴²⁰ C. Mango, “The Meeting Place of the First Ecumenical Council and the Church of the Holy Fathers,” in *Iznik Throughout History*, 305-313.

⁴²¹ *O City of Byzantium*, 355.

Theodore I Laskaris, at the battle of Antioch-on-the-Meander in 1211, brought to Nicæa and imprisoned in the Monastery of the Hyacinth, where he soon died.⁴²² True, the Nicæan gates had long been closed to foreigners; its walls had repulsed invaders for centuries, but these same walls had also protected its inhabitants and the monumental Orthodox history within it. In time, the Laskarid empire sourced this character of Nicæa and used it to provide, physically, a strong foundation for extending its power throughout western Anatolia, along the coast, and eventually into northern Thrace.

Choniates' experience is mostly indistinguishable from that of the over fifty million people worldwide who have been forcibly displaced from their homes and homeland. The tension between the exile and his homeland is best expressed in the words of Edward Said, who writes:

The fact is that for most exiles the difficulty consists not simply in being forced to live away from home, but rather...in living with the many reminders that you are in exile, that your home is not in fact so far away, and the normal traffic of everyday contemporary life keeps you in constant but tantalizing and unfulfilled touch with the old place. The exile therefore exists in the median state, neither completely at one with the new setting nor fully disencumbered of the old, beset with half involvements and half detachments, nostalgic and sentimental on one level, an adept mimic or a secret outcast on another.⁴²³

Though Nicæa's inhabitants, if we believe Choniates, looked on the Constantinopolitan refugees as "aliens," the refugees may have seen Nicæa with double-vision, observing traces of Constantinople in Nicæa's walls, in its Orthodox churches and shrines, even in the familiar names within the imperial inscriptions ran around city's perimeters. The defensive, protective stance of the Bithynian city had preserved what it encircled. When the new patriarch was first elected and placed in Nicæa, its urban Orthodox history gained powerful currency, and certainly

⁴²² W. T. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford, 1997), 717.

⁴²³ E. Said, "Intellectual Exile: Expatriates and Marginals," *Grand Street* 47 (1993) 112-124, esp. 114.

contributed to the centrality of the Orthodox faith in the identity of the *Graikoi* in exile, particularly in contrast to the form of Christianity espoused by their Latin enemies.

Given that many of the refugees who arrived in Nicæa were the elite of Constantinople, recuperating and rebuilding their lives in exile overlapped with the work of recuperating Byzantine power and rebuilding the empire. Though he was never joined by his brother Michael, Niketas finished his history of the fall of Constantinople and held office in Theodore I's court. After Nikolaos Mesarites' brother John died, he also relocated to Nicæa, and was eventually assigned to Ephesos, an extremely important and powerful bishopric that also saw the tenure of Nikephoros Blemmydes.⁴²⁴ By the thirteenth century, the ancient harbor city was already in ruins, and the metropolitan church and residence of the Ephesian bishop was located next to the old city, in full view of its ruins.

Small monastic and ecclesiastical communities dotted the outskirts of the new exilic territory: Sardis, in Hermos river valley of Lydia, had become a small community, but was given a new metropolitan church under the Laskarids—true, it was built directly on top of a ruined early Christian church, but renovations and rebuildings of sacred sites created continuity with the past, more important now than ever. Church E (and Church EA) are near the Pactolus Riverbed, and like Ephesos, in full view of the Roman ruins nearby. The monastic communities on the island of Patmos and Latmos, on either side of the fertile Mæander river delta (now separated by the Aegean Sea and a wide silted floodplain) were among the southernmost Laskarid sites. While

⁴²⁴ Blemmydes spent a great deal of his professional career in the main cities of the new Laskarid realm, Nicæa and Nymphaion, but also spent time in the religious communities in Ephesos, Latmos, and the islands of Lesbos, Samos and Rhodes. Blemmydes also traveled outside the Laskarid realm, most notably to the Holy Land, where he found healing for tetanus and witnessed holy sites, and to monasteries on Mt. Athos, to Thessaloniki, Larissa, and Ohrid, where he searched for and collected books and other scholarly works. After spending his final decades writing, the eminent and intransigent scholar-monk died ca. 1269, in the monastery he founded ca. 1241 named the Lord Christ Who Is.

they were outliers, their position on the riparian frontiers of the Aegean Sea and the Mæander river valley were accompanied by Laskarid fortifications, particularly at the ancient Roman site of Miletus, whose high ground had been topped with a fortress, both renovated and occupied during the Laskarid period. The monasteries and residences dotting the high- and lowlands of Latmos (modern Kapıkırı, on Bafa Gölü) had been fortified since they were first built in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Thanks to the charters and archives preserved at Patmos, much is known concerning the interactions between monastic communities in the area, the properties they were interested in acquiring and maintaining. Laskarid political and ecclesiastic power extended to the southern sites of the river valley, the most distant outposts of the Nicæan realm.

We have seen that early in Theodore I's reign—as shown in the Cappadocian churches mentioned in Chapter Four—that St. Tryphon had begun to receive particular attention by the court. His cult was not new, but his association with Nicæa, the site of his martyrdom, became important during this time. St. Tryphon's cult had been honored at important shrines in Constantinople from the late antique period through the Justinianic period. According to Janin, five or six churches and chapels in Constantinople, and one monastery near Chalcedon, were dedicated to St. Tryphon.⁴²⁵ His central shrine was in or near the Church of St. John the Theologian, next to Hagia Sophia and Hagia Eirene, right in heart of the patriarchal complex of the city.

⁴²⁵ R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantine*, 488-490; also, Nicholas I Mystikos, the Patriarch of Constantinople (r. 901-907/912-925), sought refuge in the monastery of St. Tryphon near Chalcedon, where he was tonsured, see Janin, *Grands centres*, 55.

St. Tryphon's hagiography survives in the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* (February 1), collated and amended by Symeon Metaphrastes in the second half of the tenth century.⁴²⁶ Most relevant for our purpose is part of the saint's *vita* relating how the fractured body of the saint, who died from beheading, was initially buried by his spiritual brethren in Nicæa with spices, unguents and a linen shroud (Figure 189). Tryphon appeared to them in a dream and requested that his body be taken back to his hometown of Lampsacus, on the southern coast of the Dardanelles, for his final resting place, where inscriptions naming him have been recovered.⁴²⁷

A second story illustrates a new aspect surrounding the saint's eventual return to Nicæa. Theodore II reportedly first "met" St. Tryphon on the eve of a particularly important battle in 1254.⁴²⁸ Skoutariotes records that St. Tryphon urged the emperor to cross the Dardanelles, which he did, resulting in Theodore II winning a decisive victory and gaining control of the city of

⁴²⁶ See *Synaxarion* of Simon Metaphrastes, accessible at <<[http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/20vs/103_migne_gm/09501050,_Symeon_Metaphrastes,_Vita_Sanctorum_Mensis_02_Februarius_\(MPG_114_125_1_146_4\),GM.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/20vs/103_migne_gm/09501050,_Symeon_Metaphrastes,_Vita_Sanctorum_Mensis_02_Februarius_(MPG_114_125_1_146_4),GM.pdf)>>, esp. pp. 1311-1328. Slightly later is the extensively illuminated *menologion* ordered by Byzantine Emperor Basil II, extant as Ms. Vat. gr. 1613, in the Vatican Library, in Vatican City. A full-scale facsimile of the manuscript is *Codices e Vaticanis selecti phototypice expressi ivssv Pii. PP. X consilio et opera cvratorvm Bibliothecae vaticanae*, (Series maior), no. 8, (Turin, 1907), and more recently, on the celebration of the facsimile's centennial, *El "Menologio de Basilio II": Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Gr. 1613: libro de estudios con ocasión de la edición facsimil*, eds. F. D'Aiuto, F. and I. Pérez Martín, (Vatican City, 2008).

⁴²⁷ “§Ις’. Ταῦτα προσευξάμενος ὁ ἀθλοφόρος καὶ προσκυνήσας Θεῶ, πρὸ τοῦ πληγῆναι τῷ ξίψει, παραδίδωσι τὴν ψυχὴν, ὥσπερ νεύματι τοῦ δεδωκότος αὐτὴν ἄφεθῆναι θελήσας οὐ κελεύσει τοῦ τυραννήσαντος. Οἱ δὲ κατὰ Νίκαιαν συνδραμόντες ἀδελφοὶ σινδόσι τε καθαραῖς καὶ ποικίλοις ἀρώμασι τὸ τίμιον ἐκεῖνο λείψανον ἐξοσιωσάμενοι, ἐκούλοντο μὲν καὶ τῇ ἑαυτῶν πόλει θησαυρὸν ὥσπερ καὶ φυλακτῆριον αὐτὸ καταθέσθαι· ἐπιστὰς δὲ ὄναρ ὁ ἅγιος ἀπείργει τοῦ ἐνθυμήματος, εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ κωμὴν Κομψάδων μετακομίσειν εἰπὼν, ὅπερ δὴ πιστῶς πεποι[μ]κασιν. Οὕτως ὁ μακάριος Τρύφων ἐξ ἀπαλῶν ὀνύχων καθιερωθεὶς τῷ Θεῷ καὶ πολλοὺς μὲν τῇ Χριστοῦ πίστει πρὸς ἀγαθῶν, πολλὰς δὲ νόσους ἀνθρώπων ἰασάμενος, πλείστας δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα τιμωριῶν ἰδέας ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας διενεγκῶν, τὸν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας στέφανον ἀνεδήσατο, εἰς δόξαν Πατρὸς, καὶ Υἱοῦ, καὶ ἁγίου Πνεύματος, νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμήν.” Transcribed from <<[http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/20vs/103_migne_gm/0950-1050,_Symeon_Metaphrastes,_Vita_Sanctorum_Mensis_02_Februarius_\(MPG_114_1251_1464\),GM.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/20vs/103_migne_gm/0950-1050,_Symeon_Metaphrastes,_Vita_Sanctorum_Mensis_02_Februarius_(MPG_114_1251_1464),GM.pdf)>> p. 1328.

⁴²⁸ Foss, *Nicæa*, 104.

Veroia.⁴²⁹ A tombstone belonging to John Komnenos Kamytzes, *megas hetaireiarches* under John III Doukas Vatatzes, records the deceased's connection to the Laskarid court and the deeds and accomplishments he performed in its name, is on display in the Byzantine Museum of Veroia (Figure 190).

The translation of the saint from the Dardanelles to Nicæa was completed when Theodore II dedicated a church to Tryphon, presumably on recovered or newly surfaced relics.⁴³⁰ The emperor invoked “the great martyr Tryphon” twice in his private correspondence.⁴³¹ Theodore II adopted him as a patron saint, and wrote an encomium to honor his spiritual intercessor.⁴³²

In this way, the noble saint achieved martyrdom and received its rewards – heavenly for him and earthly for those who call upon him. He makes miracles bloom every day; He showers gifts; He lavishes favors. You men who are sick, run to the doctor; You who seek, to the fulfiller of good requests; And everyone to him who has the power to mediate everything before God. Let no one return empty-handed, as they bring their choices and in turn receive his kindness. This does not need investigation: the world shouts it out, and the city of Nicæa loudly and truly proclaims his works as those of a noble and dependable champion. In this city he completed the struggle of martyrdom, and now here he accomplishes his great works. He brings his blessing to fruition in the incredible yearly blooming and sprouting of the lilies – what a miracle! The lily which lies in the lamp of the martyr blooms in the frost and snows of winter. When a year has passed since it was cut, the dry bulb suddenly blooms, almost escaping perception, at the house when the morning service is celebrated with hymns and the praises of the victorious martyr are sung in beautiful language. The crowd sees the miracles of Tryphon: emperors have seen it, patriarchs have observed it, and the faithful are greatly strengthened by it; Because of the miracle, demons run away, diseases are banished, and the prayers of the faithful are granted. When the miracle takes place, there is a universal festival – of infants, children, adolescents, men, old men, elders, the aged, women, laymen, soldiers, officials, priests,

⁴²⁹ For the dream, see Sathas, Vol. 7, 514, l. 8-12, and Heisenberg, *Theodori Scutariotae additamenta*, fragment 37, 291-292: ...ήνικα καὶ τὸν μάρτυρα Τρύφωνα, ὡς ἔλεγε, καθ' ὕπνου τεθέεται προτρέποντα τὴν περαιώσιν, ὄν κὰν ταῖς δυσχωρίαις, ὡς διεβεβαιοῦτο, ὕπαρ οὐκ ὄναρ, πολλάκις ἐώρακε τῶν δυνάμεων προηγούμενον.

⁴³⁰ Sathas, Vol. 7, 511 l. 29; 512, l. 11; A. Heisenberg, *Theodori Scutariotae additamenta*, fragment 35, 291, l. 1-15.

⁴³¹ *Theodori Ducae Lascaris Epistulae CCXVII.*, ed. N. Festa (Florence, 1898), letter 199, l. 42; letter 217, l. 155.

⁴³² There is an unverified reference that Basil II wrote a eulogy for St. Tryphon. Whether this is in reference to the entry for St. Tryphon in the Menologion of Basil II or not is as yet unknown. If there is a precedent for an emperor writing an encomium to St. Tryphon, it would be yet another interesting Macedonian parallel, to John III's Christ Chalkites.

and monks – every king and age of people sees it and jumps with joy. For what happens does not happen in a corner of some shadowy place, but in the church of God. Everyone, therefore, should praise the great victor Tryphon as much as possible for his miracle; As indeed should I especially because of the mercy I received from him, and I should rejoice in his great works and exult with enthusiasm, just like the divine father David when the ark came to rest, so that when the servant receives a miracle, the honor redounds to the master.⁴³³

A large gathering of all the faithful marked Tryphon’s Feast Day, celebrated annually at the saint’s church in Nicæa on February 1. As the encomium describes, the miraculous power of the saint was verified annually when the saint caused dry lily bulbs that had been placed in lamps at his shrine to miraculously bloom out of season. The lilies, though they bloomed only once per year, symbolized the saint who “...makes miracles bloom every day.”

Traces of the Laskarid lily survive in Hagia Sophia in Nicæa, on Laskarid coinage of all the emperors, and were employed by Michael VIII Palaiologos even after the reconquest of Constantinople, appearing on his coins and on the capitals of the Palace of the Porphyrogennitos. Other traces have been found on a tombstone from Nymphaion (Figure 191), which carries an

⁴³³ “Οὕτως ἠγωνίσαστο ὁ γενναῖος καὶ τοιαύτας τὰς ἀμοιβὰς ἔλαβε, τὰς ἐπουρανίους καὶ ἐπιγείους, ἐκείνας περὶ αὐτόν, ταύτας διὰ τοὺς προσκαλουμένους αὐτόν· ἀνθεὶ γὰρ καθ’ ἑκάστην τὰ θαύματα, ραίνει τὰς δωρεάς, πλημμυρεῖ τὰς εὐεργεσίας. Δράμετε ἄνθρωποι οἱ νοσοῦντες πρὸς τὸν ἱατρόν, οἱ αἰτοῦντες πρὸς τὸν χορηγὸν τῶν καλῶν αἰτημάτων, οἱ πάντες πρὸς τὸν πάντα μεσιτεύειν δυνάμενον εἰς Θεόν· καὶ μηδεὶς στραφήτω κενός, τὴν προαίρεσιν φέροντες καὶ τὰς εὐεργεσίας ἀντιλαμβάνοντες· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ τοῦτο δεόμενον ἐξετάσεως· ὁ κόσμος βοᾷ, καὶ τὰ ἔργα κηρύσσει διαπρυσίως καὶ γνησίως ὡς καλοῦ προμάχου καὶ ἀσφαλοῦς ἡ πόλις τῶν Νικαέων· ἐν ταύτῃ γὰρ τὸν ἀγῶνα τοῦ μαρτυρίου διήγνησε καὶ τανῦν ἐν ταύτῃ τέλει τὰς μεγαλοουργίας, κρίνων ἀνθήσεις παραδόξους καὶ ἐκβλαστήσεις ἐνιαυσιαίους καρποφορεῖ εὐλογίας, ὃ τοῦ θαύματος, ἐν παγετῷ καὶ χιόνι τε καὶ χειμῶνι ἀνθεὶ τὸ κρίνον τῆ τοῦ μάρτυρος λυχνία ἐγκείμενον. Μετὰ γὰρ τὴν ἐκκοπὴν τοῦτου συντελουμένου ἐνιαυτοῦ, καθ’ ἣν ὥραν τὸ ἐωθινὸν τελεῖται ὑμνῳδῆμα καὶ τοῦ ἀθλοφόρου καλλιεπῶς ἐξάδονται τὰ ἐγκώμια, τὸ ξηρὸν ἐκ τοῦ πάραντα ἀχρόνως βλαστάνει τὴν αἴσθησιν διαφεύγον κατὰ βραχύ. Καὶ ὁρᾷ τότε τὸ πλῆθος τὰ τοῦ Τρύφωνος θαύματα· τοῦτο βασιλεῖς ἐθεάσαντο πατριάρχαι τε ἐωράκασι· τοῦτο σέβεται ὁ λαὸς πᾶς, πιστὸς μᾶλλον ἐκ τούτου στηρίζεται· δαίμονες δραπετεύουσι τῇ θαυματουργίᾳ, νοσήματα φυγαδεύονται, αἰτήσεις πιστῶν πληροῦνται, μία πανήγυρις τότε πάνδημος, ὅτε δὴ τελεῖται αὐτό, βρεφῶν, νηπίων, μαιρακίων, ἀνδρῶν, γερόντων, πρεσβυτῶν, γηραλέων, γυναικῶν, χοσμίων, στρατευομένων, ὑποτελετῶν, ἱερέων, μοναχῶν ὁρῶσα καὶ σκιρτῶσα αὐτῷ πᾶν γένος καὶ ἡλικία πᾶσα· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ γινόμενον ὡς ἐν γωνίᾳ καὶ ὑποσκίφῳ τόπῳ τινι γινόμενον, ἀλλ’ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεοῦ. Διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ πάντας τὸν μέγαθρον Τρύφωνα διὰ θαύματος ἐγκωμιάζειν ὅτι πολλοῦ. Ἐμὲ δὲ καὶ μάλιστα καὶ ὅσον κατ’ οἶκτον ὃν ἔλαβον παρ’ αὐτοῦ ἀξιοπρεπῶς ἀμελεῖ καὶ ἐπιτέρπεσθαι ταῖς τοῦτου μεγαλοουργίαις καὶ ἐπιγάννυσθαι καὶ ἐνθουσιᾶν, ὡς ὁ θεοπάτωρ Δαυὶδ ἐπὶ τῇ καταπαύσει τῆς κιβωτοῦ, ἵνα θαυμαζομένου τοῦ δούλου, ἡ τιμὴ διαβαίνει πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην.” Reprinted from Foss, *Nicaea*, 105-107.

inscription that may refer to an unnamed member of the imperial family.⁴³⁴ The desert of exile gave new life to the Byzantine empire starting with the Laskarids of Nicæa, who bloomed, like the lilies of Tryphon, in miraculous circumstances.

This study has focused on the art, architecture and material culture created by the Laskarids in exile: the walls, churches, palaces, and objects that were used to capture and innovated a Byzantine political and religious identity outside of Constantinople. These acts solidified a tenuous relation to the past and framed their exilic experience. In Chapters One, Two, and Three, I have shown that the experience and topography of exile was both embraced and transformed during the first generations of Laskarid rule. The collective nature of the Constantinopolitans' exodus from the city to what were then the outer horizons of known sites of exile necessitated a transformation in the scope of exile, and the model of the exiled Jews in Babylon provided this, layering new Sion (Constantinople) upon the old Sion (Rome), and Nicæan exile caught in the tension between, both as a Babylon and a *new* new Rome. The essential connection to the memory of Constantinople can easily be seen throughout the Laskarids' early building efforts that referenced key architectural features of Constantinople, notably her city walls and cathedral church of Hagia Sophia. The extensive attention paid to redecorating the church of Hagia Sophia, transforming it from Bithynia's metropolitan basilica into the realm's second Hagia Sophia illustrates the importance of the namesake and its pivotal place in the urban landscape of both Byzantine capitals. The inscriptions and the refortification of Nicæa's city walls indicate a self-awareness of both being in exile and being in a place that was conducive to replacing the lost capital. Neither Nicæa's walls, nor its own ancient Hagia

⁴³⁴ C. Texier, "Tombeaux du moyen-âge à Kutayah et à Nymphi (Asie mineure)," *RA* 1, Vol. 1 (1844), 320-325: ΝΥΝ ΚΟΣΜΟΣ ΗΛΥΣ ΣΧΗΜΑ ΣΟΙ ΘΕΙΟΝ ΜΕΓΑ ΝΥΝ ΟΥΝ ΒΑΔΙΖΕ ΠΡΟΣ ΘΕΟΝ ΣΤΕΦΗΦΟΡΟΣ. "Now a delightful ornament gives you a divine form, so now (he) goes to God, wearing the crown." (Translation mine).

Sophia had been included within the corpus of Laskarid works prior to this study, but we have observed how crucial they are for understanding the non-negotiable architectural elements of a Byzantine capital. Through analyzing these and other known Laskarid architectural and decorative material, I have shown that in the process of commemorating Constantinople architecturally, the Laskarids began to physically replace the lost capital, thus easing the tense irony of being both in exile and yet at home. Their efforts at replacement were so successful that a number of features of Palaiologan art and architecture should be seen as directly drawing on exilic prototypes.

In Chapters Four, Five, and Six, I have demonstrated that the Palaiologan dynasty inherited far more from the Laskarids than had been previously supposed. Some of the most important monuments and characteristics of the Palaiologan renaissance possess discernable roots springing not from innovations inspired by being back in Constantinople, but rather due to discrete elements that had in fact been invented in exile under the Laskarids and were subsequently transferred. The reconstituted fresco programs of Hagia Sophia in Nicæa show a higher and finer artistic quality than other programs extant from the same period, indicating that there were important stages of development in painting in exile that had formerly been unacknowledged. While the greater portion of Laskarid fresco painting is gone, the corpus assembled is broad enough to prove it existed and was extensive in the realm, and also that it was of a consistently high quality. Within the fragments presented, enough of their quality and content remain to ascertain their value in the development of late Komnenian into Palaiologan art. With this evidence, certain features of the Palaiologan style—namely the breadth and volume of figures—are carrying forward stylistic innovations from exile. Tracing the lines of continuity between the imagery on Michael VIII's early coinage with that of Theodore II Laskaris, we

observe that the former intentionally emulated Theodore II's coins in an effort to replicate a legitimate imperial image while in the process of usurping the throne. Even after returning to Constantinople, Michael VIII chose to symbolize his triumphant return with an image type—the encircling walls of Constantinople—whose precedent was minted only at Nicæa, known for its famously strong walls. What personal choices Michael VIII made in this genre are deeply rooted in the imagery of exile.

The extant examples of early Palaiologan architecture, such as the Tekfur Sarayı, show a much closer connection to original architecture created in exile, exemplified by the Laskarid palace at Nymphaion. The similarity of the palace forms is derivative, not coincidental, and the imagery that once graced its pillars and capitals in the form of cantilevered *betas* and *fleurs-de-lis* were imperial insignia that themselves had decorated imperial spaces in Laskarid architecture in both Nicæa and Nymphaion. Given these origins, at least some of the extensive work of restoration conducted by Michael VIII upon his return to Constantinople can be seen as inserting useful and meaningful exilic imagery and architecture into the Capital.

There are areas for further research within the field of Laskarid art and architecture. Between the newly excavated sites at Nymphaion and Anaïa, and already excavated sites such as Church E at Sardis or the Terrace Church in the theater at İznik, some important examples of Laskarid architecture await publication and integration into the corpus. Other monuments seem just out of reach—John III and Irene's double monastery at Sosandra has never been found, nor has Blemmydes' church of the Lord Who Is. The archaeological museums in Bursa, İznik, and Manisa were closed to researchers during their lengthy renovations between 2011 and 2013. Now that they are open once again, there is the promise of even more detailed museum archival work, particularly in ceramics, numismatics, sculpture and metalwork are possible. The role of

the monasteries at Herakleia on Latmos, known to have been an important and vibrant site for religious life during the thirteenth century, also remains to be fully integrated into the array of communities within the landscape of exile. While I have made a first attempt at defining a corpus of Laskarid fresco painting, the issue of manuscript illumination and manuscripts in general I have left out of the study. The volume of letters and archives from the thirteenth century is astounding to the degree that I deemed it too bulky a genre to tackle here, except as they relate to the artistic and architectural works under consideration. The question of where the major scriptoria during exile would have been located is unanswered—did they continue on in Constantinople? Were they moved to Nicæa, Arta or Trebizond?

Nicæa, which would be so important during the Interregnum, would, after 1261, return once more to a provincial capital, and even house the political prisoners of Michael VIII, who consistently turned his attentions westward. Any reflection on the achievements of the Laskarid rulers would only begin during the reign of his son, Andronikos II Palaiologos (r. 1282-1328). Soon after he became emperor, Andronikos II reversed his father's decision on the Union of Lyons and restored Orthodoxy, and began to try to reunite a fragmented populace, many of whom were still loyal to the Laskarid dynasty and its last Patriarch, Arsenios Autoreianos.⁴³⁵

Andronikos II, caught in the midst of the discord created by his father, Michael VIII, made a pilgrimage of sorts to the exilic heartland. He visited Nicæa and Nymphaion, and spent time in those once-imperial capitals. The imperial connotations of the Laskarid cities of Nicæa and Nymphaion did not fade after the reconquest in 1261, and Michael VIII appears to have understood this during the early years as he consolidated his power. During Andronikos II's journey to western Anatolia in 1290, along the way he visited John IV Laskaris, Theodore II's

⁴³⁵ Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261-1453*, 94.

son and the rightful heir to the throne, whom his father had blinded as a child and kept imprisoned in a castle on the Sea of Marmara since 1261.⁴³⁶ Arsenios Autoreianos had also been imprisoned on the island of Proconnesos for denouncing Michael VIII's usurpation, refusing to perform his coronation, and then excommunicating him. Arsenios Autoreianos was eventually interred in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, his body returned from his exile to his final resting place in the cathedral of Byzantium. John IV's body was also retrieved from the long exile to which he had been sentenced, and eventually laid to rest in St. Demetrios (in Constantinople). In the fourteenth century, Stephen of Novgorod venerated both of their tombs during his visit to Constantinople.⁴³⁷

What Andronikos II might have seen, understood, and realized during his Anatolian tour has been all but invisible to us today, and most certainly differs from what historians in the Palaiologan period present. The corpus of Laskarid art and architecture has been subsumed in the backdrop of the larger events that bookend the Interregnum. Features of Laskarid art, architecture, and material culture were, like John IV's throne, usurped by Michael VIII in the years following the recapture of Constantinople, again, this time to assist in legitimating the rule of an emperor *from* exile.

The collapse of 1204 and Michael VIII's usurpation of the Byzantine throne and his unplanned recapture of the former capital in 1261, exert a teleological pull on the present-day scholarly narrative of Byzantium, a pull paralleled in the way Byzantium, and those who husbanded its history, viewed and wrote it. In many instances, the accomplishments of the exilic

⁴³⁶ Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 99.

⁴³⁷ I. Ševčenko, "Notes on Stephen, the Novgorodian Pilgrim to Constantinople in the XIV Century," *SüdostF* 12 (1953), 165-175; In 1365, the Patriarch Philotheos and the synod were reunited in the cells of Patriarch Arsenios in order to make a decision, see Janin, *Constantinople Byzantine*, 315.

leaders were purposefully obfuscated. Only in a space of disjunction and discontinuity, in this case, in a space of *not-Constantinople*, can the self-consciousness of that method even be noticed and problematized. Without it, the period of exile would remain not only darkened from our view, but any details about it, nuances within, or effects it may have had on the last phase of Byzantium, the Palaiologan period, would remain eclipsed. It also gives posterity a rare opportunity to see Byzantine self-consciousness at work. Understanding how the perception of being in exile shaped the Laskarid realm's priorities and goals, and observing how this changed in the middle of the thirteenth century will render important qualifications to the intellectual history in this transitional period. Tracing the normative and changing perspectives on exile provides the level of detail necessary for properly interpreting the building programs of each of the Laskarid emperors, and setting the stage for the primary goal of this study dissertation—to provide a comprehensive examination and solid interpretation of the art, architecture and material culture produced by the Laskarid dynasty between the years 1204-1261. Even after the reconquest of Constantinople, the landscape of loss was not forgotten. Until Anatolia was overtaken by the Seljuk Turks in the first decades of the fourteenth century, and Nicæa then became the capital of the Seljuq state of Rûm, the areas that had formerly sheltered Laskarid rulers and made the vestiges of Byzantium grow strong were continually used and visited by both Michael VIII and Andronikos III Palaiologos. In as much as Constantinople proved a resource for the Nicæan empire in exile, the exilic homeland proved an enormous resource for Constantinople and the Palaiologan dynasty after 1261.

One interesting area for further research that has already proved promising surrounds the canonization of saints from exile, including St. Tryphon of Nicæa, who was chosen by Theodore II Laskaris to be his and by extension, the Laskarid dynasty's patron saint, and the canonization

of John III Doukas Vatatzes and patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos in the years immediately after the reconquest of Constantinople. The cultivation of cults surrounding these important leaders from the era of exile during the Palaiologan period indicates not only a strong memory of the recent past, but a sense of obligation to these individuals for their roles in sustaining the empire in exile.

The sense of real discomfort concerning the usurpation of the throne by Michael VIII, with all that it entailed regarding his pro-Latin religious policies, not to mention his torture and incarceration of John IV Laskaris and dispossessing Arsenios Autoreianos of the patriarchal throne, continued throughout his and his son Andronikos III's reign. Glimpses of this discomfort can be seen in the occasional appearance of imagery strongly related to exile, such as the giant icon of Christ Chalkites at the Christ in the Chora church, renovated by Theodore Metochites, or the appearance of the exiliarchs of Babylon, including Zorobabel—those Jewish leaders who governed the exiled Jews during their captivity—who stand in the fluted mosaic domes of Kilise Camii in Constantinople in the first half of the fourteenth century. Add footnote. As mentioned previously, the bodies of both Arsenios and John IV were returned to Constantinople, it appears, and entombed in sites of honor. These acts, among others, cannot but illustrate a very real societal tension that accompanied the return to the capital. The efforts made by Michael VIII to style himself a “new Constantine” in light of the known civic discord make his choices to include Laskarid imagery even more telling, when it was clear in the eyes of many that he came by them not as their rightful heir but by usurpation.

From a wider perspective, the selection of pasts to emulate, recreate and acknowledge is a fairly constant feature of Byzantine art and architecture. The very fact that we can observe this pattern within the material produced in exile confirms that in essentials, the trauma of

displacement and loss was not so severe that it destroyed this characteristic. Nor was the reconquest in 1261 so prophetic a homecoming that the imagery and architecture of exile could be completely left behind. In both phases of transition, the city of Constantinople and the landscape of loss were intertwined, and this pattern would continue throughout the Palaiologan period. The merger of exile and homeland became part of Constantinople's new foundation: the time it had spent under Latin occupation had changed its fabric, and the cohort of people who returned there found themselves in an unfamiliar city that would have hardly matched their expectations. In their effort to rebuild the capital they had never known, they patched it together with elements from *their* homeland, where Byzantium had been replaced, the Laskarid realm of western Anatolia.

Constantinople's inhabitants had experienced not only a decisive and violent displacement from their city but the truest loss of citizenship as well. The work of four generations of Laskarid emperors transformed the Empire in exile, centered at the twin capitals of Nicæa and Nymphaion, into a new homeland, one that perfectly sufficed. This dissertation aimed to understand the process by which an exilic landscape was made into a homeland through the building and renovation of architecture, urban spaces, and through the kind of art and material culture produced there. We saw how a small town of Nicæa was transformed into the capital of a realm, and came to a better understanding of how that realm was defined and experienced. We discovered which features of the lost capital were selected to "replace Byzantium" and which of those that were replaced and innovated in exile endured after 1261. The successful replacement of Constantinople and by extension, the empire, in Laskarid urban environments and throughout what had been seen as a landscape of loss, proves that the collective exile of the Constantinopolitan refugees had already, in fact, been extinguished.

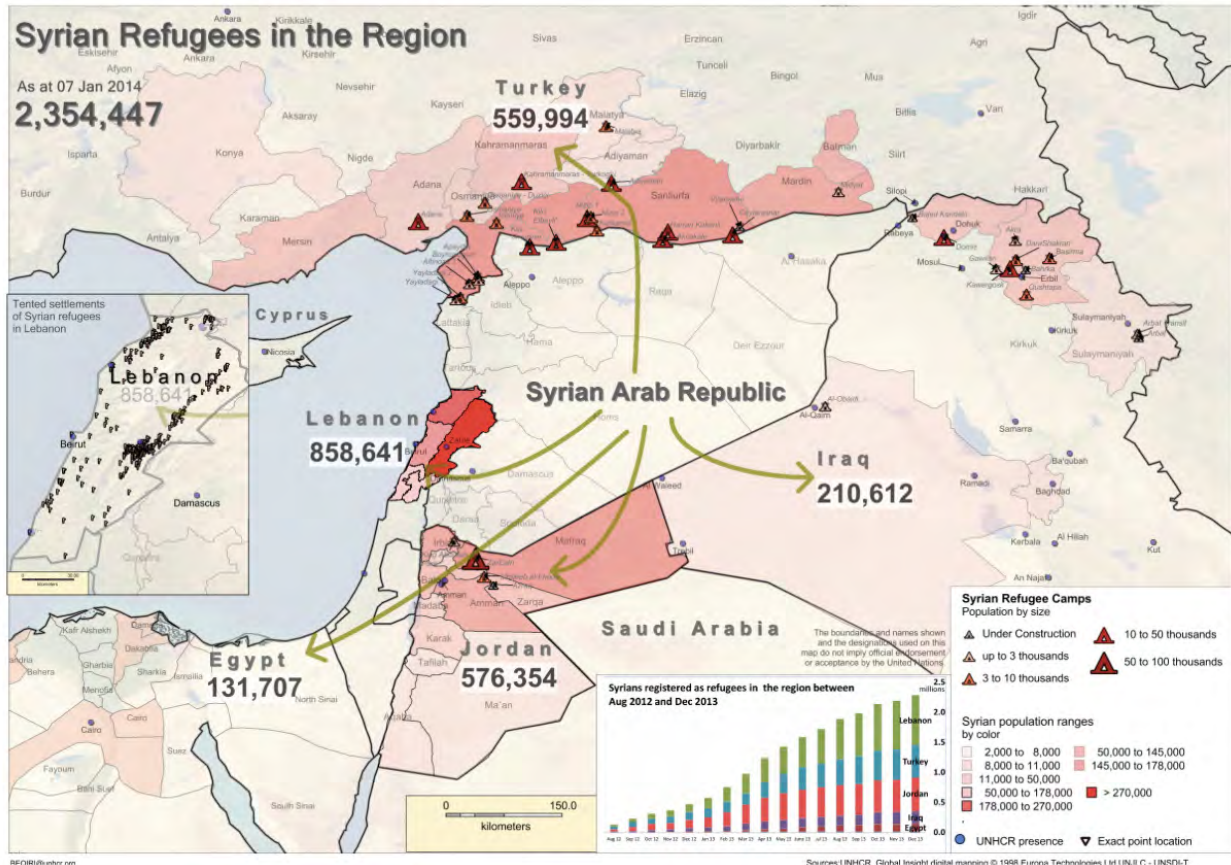


Figure 1: Map of movement of Syrian refugees out of Syria, published by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (from <http://reliefweb.int/map/syrian-arab-republic/syrian-refugees-region-7-january-2014>)



Figure 2: Krak des Chevaliers, July 2013
(from http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/81/Krak_des_Chavaliers_under_fire.JPG)

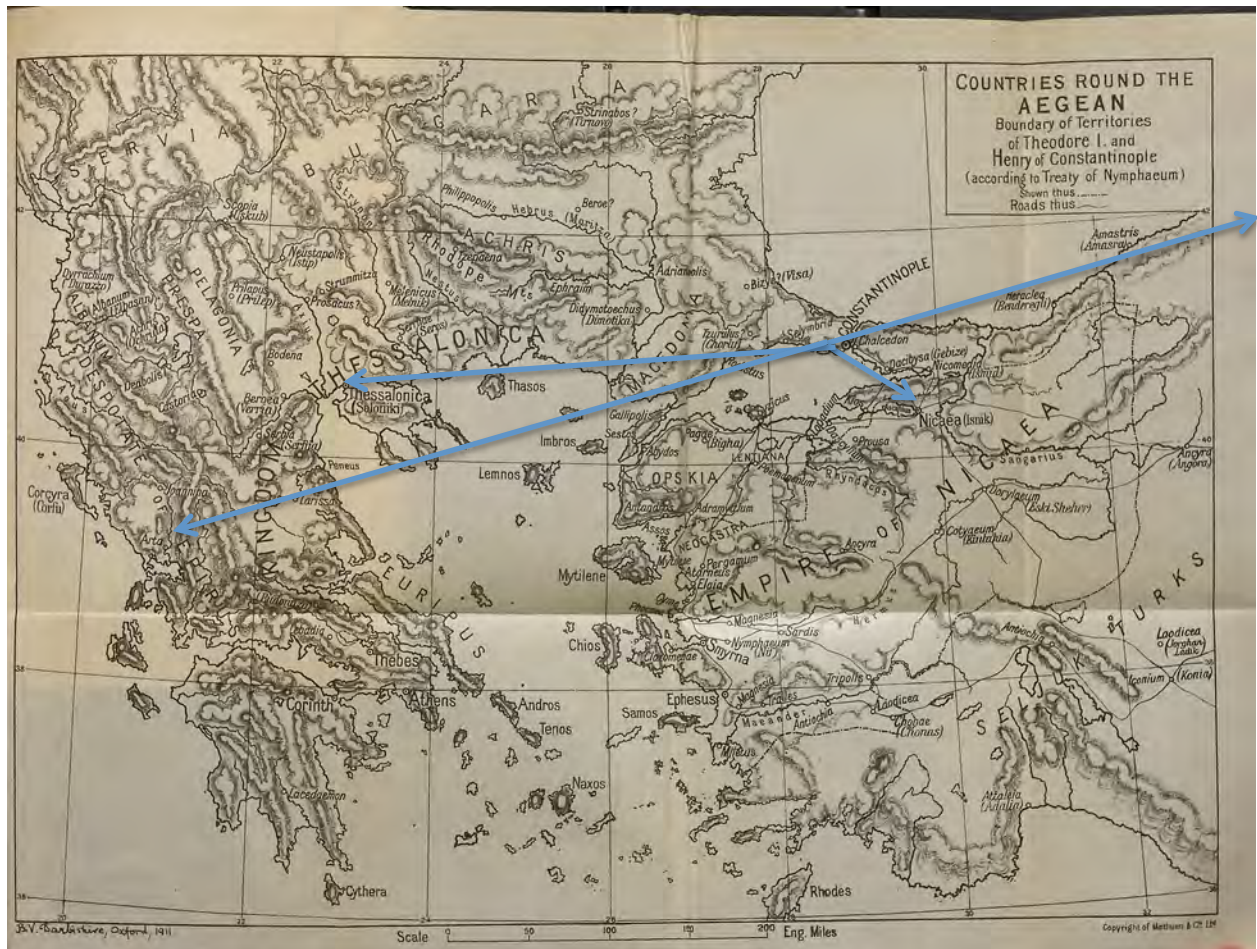


Figure 3: Map of “Countries ‘round the Aegean” with arrows to Epiros (Artâ), Thessaloniki, Nicæa, and off-grid to Trebizond (from A. Gardner, *The Lascarids of Nicæa*, inset)



Figure 4: Map of eastern Roman provinces, Armenia Secunda, the city of Arabissus, the Province of Pontus Polemoniacus, the city of Comana (from http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/41/Roman-Persian_Frontier_%2C_5th_century.png)

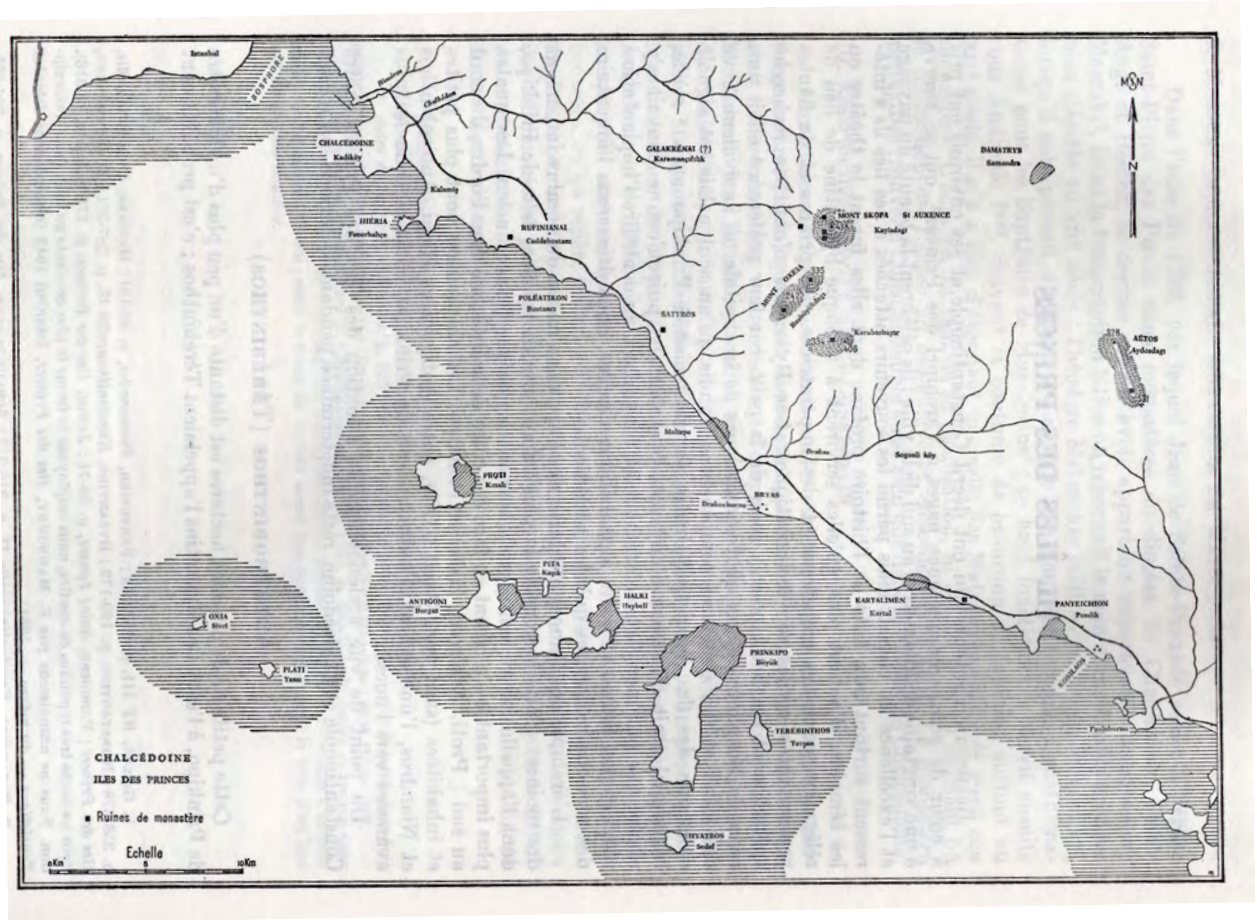


Figure 5: Map of the Bosphorus, Princes' Islands
 (from Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 62)

1. Proti (Kınalıada)
2. Antigoni (Burgazada)
3. Pita (Kaşık)
4. Chalki (Heybeliada)
5. Prinkipios (Büyükdası)
6. Terebinthos (Tavşan)
7. Hyatros (Sedef)
8. Okseia (Sivri)
9. Yassı (Plati)

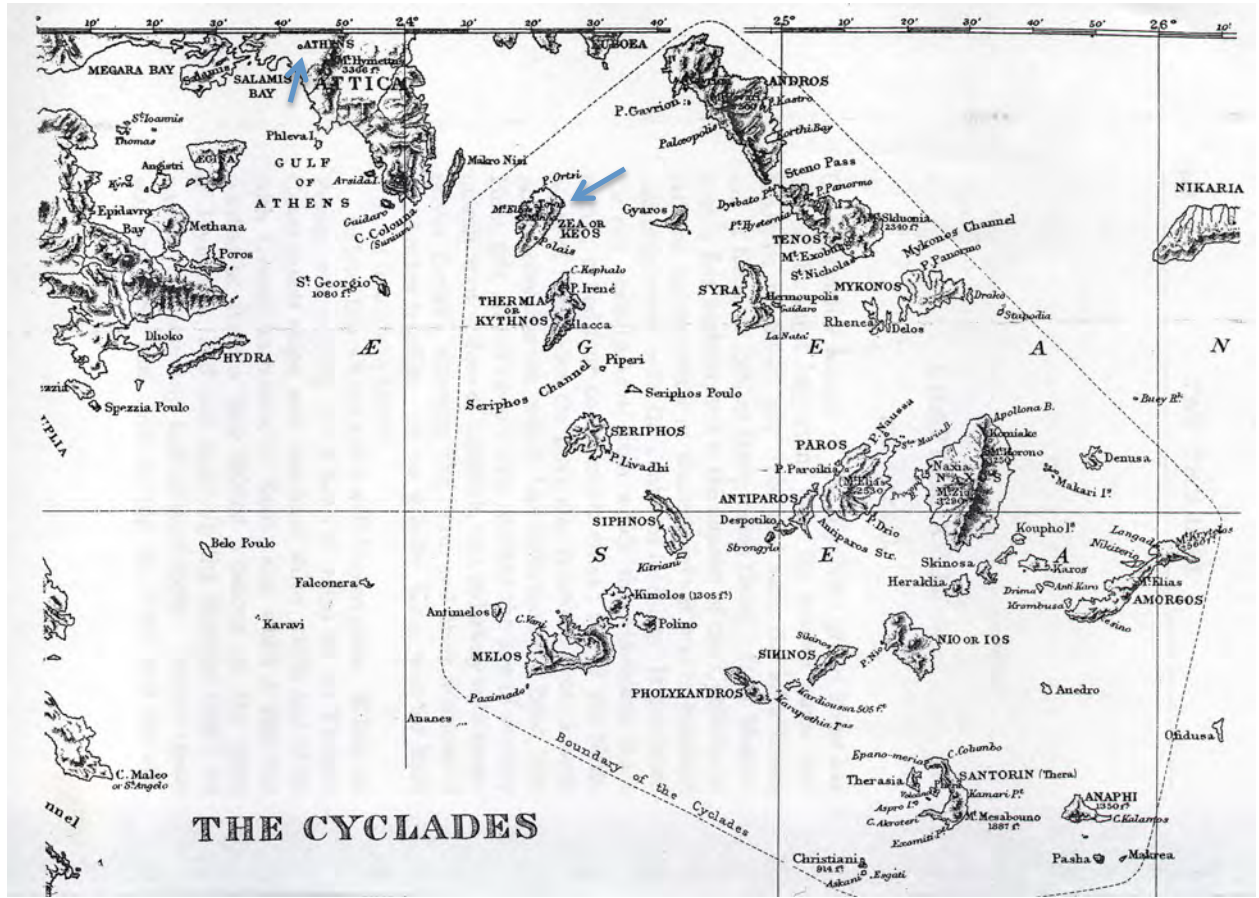


Figure 6: Map of the Cyclades with Athens and Keos pointed out (from J. T. Bent, *Aegean Islands, The Cyclades*, flyleaf)

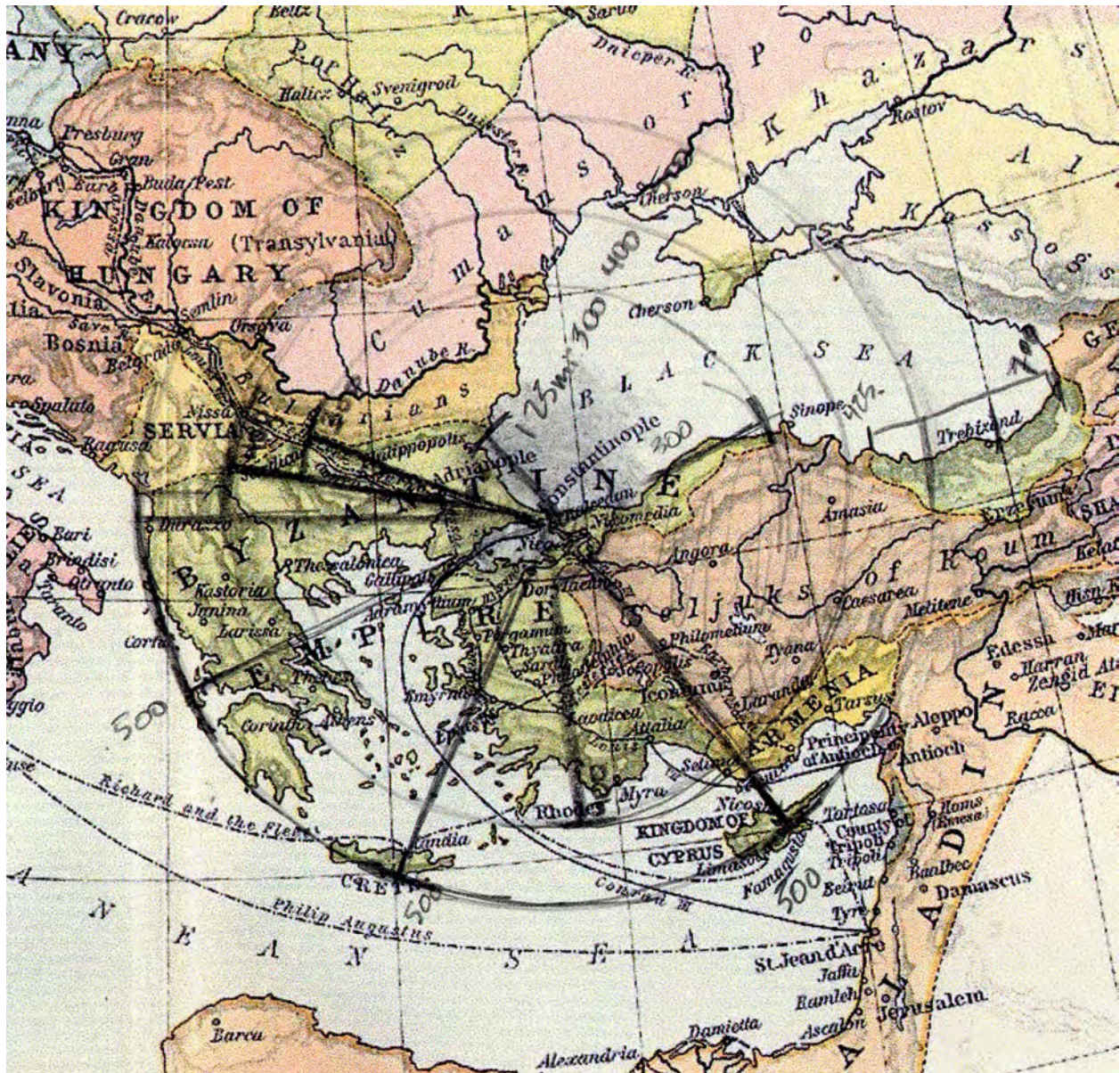


Figure 7: Map of Byzantine Empire in 1190, with drawings showing the extent of the areas ruled by the Eparch, and then other territories at various distances from Constantinople (Naomi Pitamber, 2014)



Figure 8: Map of Europe and the Mediterranean Lands about 1190, noting the borders of the Byzantine Empire with Serbia, Bulgaria and Seljuq Rûm (from <http://lib.sudigital.org/record/18856/files/SUDGTL-MAPS-2011-189.jpg>)



Figure 9: Provinces under Byzantine control in 1203 outlined in blue (from http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/cb/Byzantine_Empire_Themes_1025-en.svg/800px-Byzantine_Empire_Themes_1025-en.svg.png)

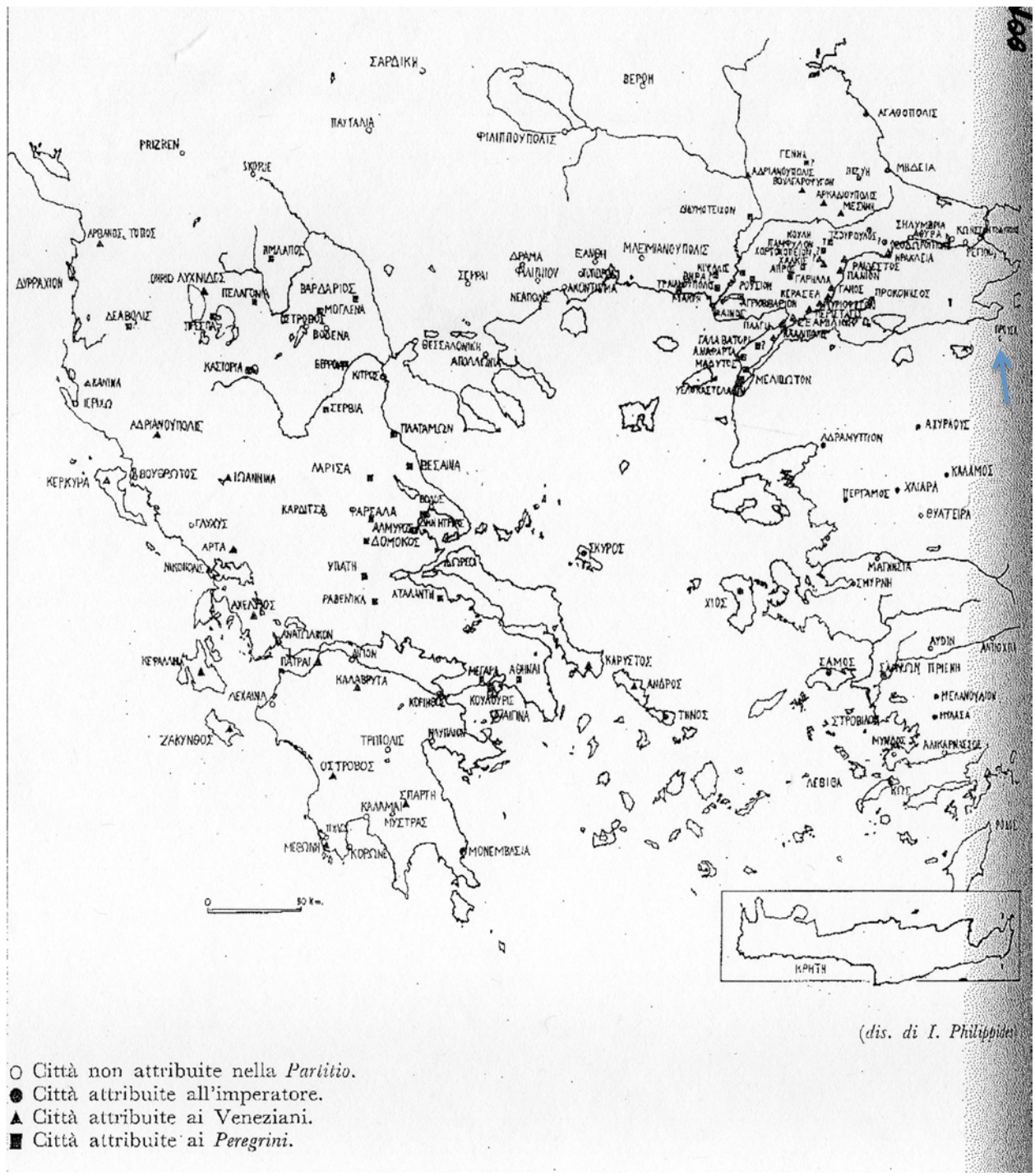


Figure 10: Map of the distribution of cities noted in the *Partitio Romaniae* (from A. Carile, "Partitio terrarum imperii Romaniae," *StVen*, Map III)

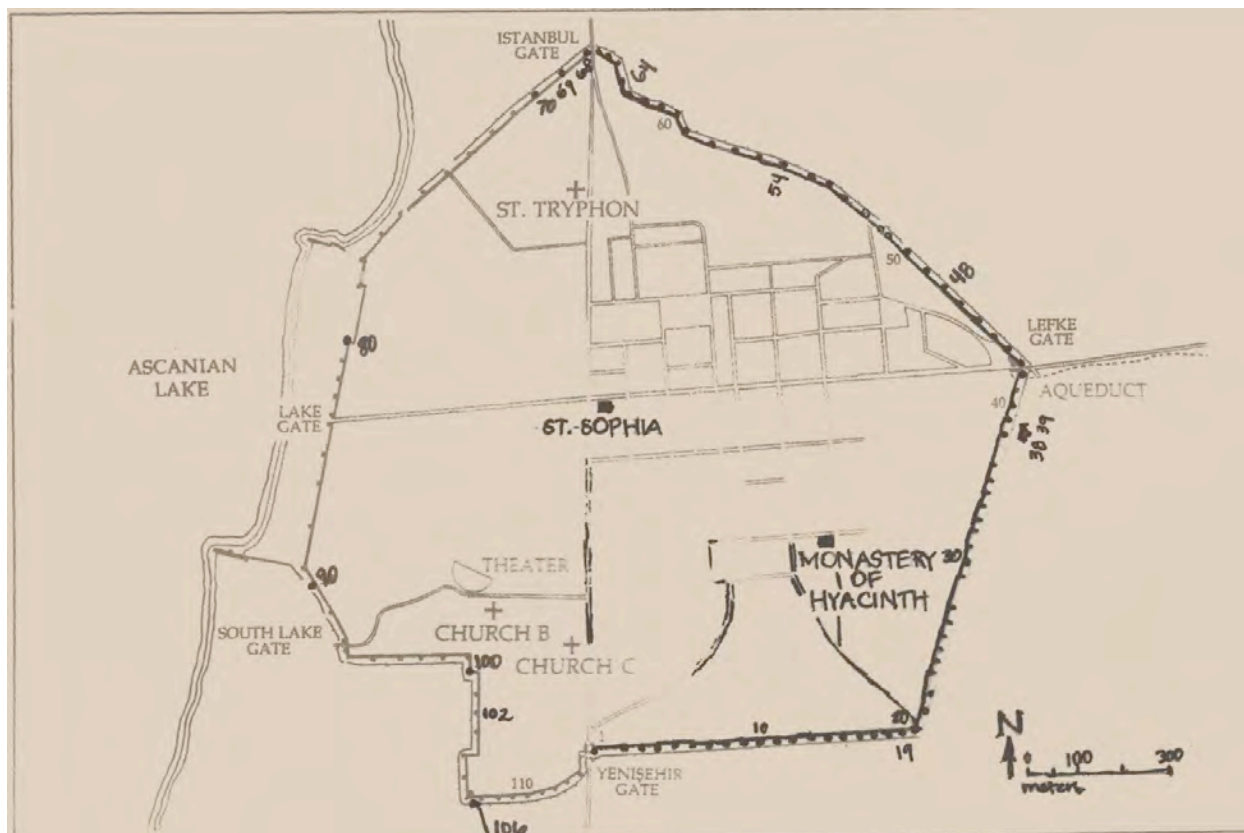


Figure 11: Ground Plan of Nicæa, showing walls, monuments and towers (after C. Foss, *Nicæa*, Fig. 1)



Figure 12: İstanbul (Constantinople) Gate, view from interior
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 13: Lefke Gate, view of Roman gate towards the city
(from http://fc03.deviantart.net/fs71/i/2012/179/2/e/iznik_lefke_gate_by_ceramicartis-t-d555y69.jpg)



Figure 14: Bronze Coin of emperor Macrianus II

(obv): Bust of Macrianus II

(rev): Nicæa's city walls, Nicæan mint, 260-261

(from [http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/macrianus/_nicaea_AE23_SNGv A_935.jpg](http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/macrianus/_nicaea_AE23_SNGv_A_935.jpg))



Figure 15: Bronze Coin of emperor Quietus II
(obv): Bust of Quietus II
(rev): Nicæa's city walls, Nicæan mint, 268-270
(from [http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/quietus/_nicaea_AE23_SNGv A_49.jpg](http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/quietus/_nicaea_AE23_SNGv_A_49.jpg))



Figure 16: Inscription of Leo III, Constantine, and Artavasdos
(Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 17: Inscription of Michael III (r. 842-867), dated 857/858, İznik Archaeological Museum (Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



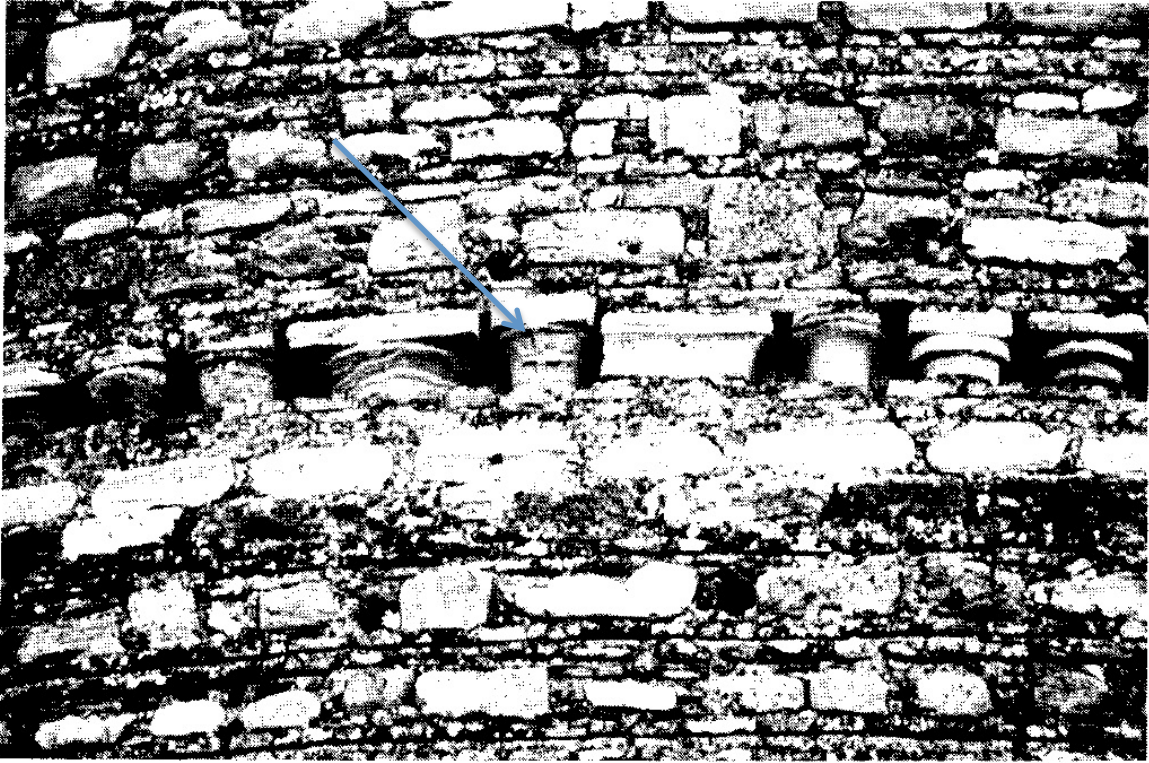
Figure 18: Tower 106, view from inside the city walls
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 19: Thirteenth-century inscription of Theodore I Laskaris, tower 106, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 20: Brick cross immured in Laskarid wall, either between towers 37 and 38, or 38 and 39 (from Bilgiç, "İznik Surları," (The City Walls of İznik), MA Thesis, Art History, İstanbul Univeristy, 1972, Image 51)



4. Tripolis: tower, detail

Figure 21: Detail of the marble cross in tower at Tripolis
(from Foss, "Late Byzantine Fortifications in Lydia," Fig. 4)



Figure 22: Inner and outer walls of Nicaea
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 23: Laskarid towers and entrance, curtain wall, Istanbul Gate, with frescoed chapels
(from [http://www.greeceturkeytours.com/bursa-iznik-nicaea-tour-from-istanbul-full-day.html#!modal-window\[gallery\]/2/](http://www.greeceturkeytours.com/bursa-iznik-nicaea-tour-from-istanbul-full-day.html#!modal-window[gallery]/2/))



Figure 24: Plan of walls in the Blacherna district, esp. 19 for the Tower of St. Nicholas (from Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 141)



Figure 25: View of the Chapel of St. Nicholas
(from Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexicon zur Topographie Istanbuls*, Fig. 345, p. 303)

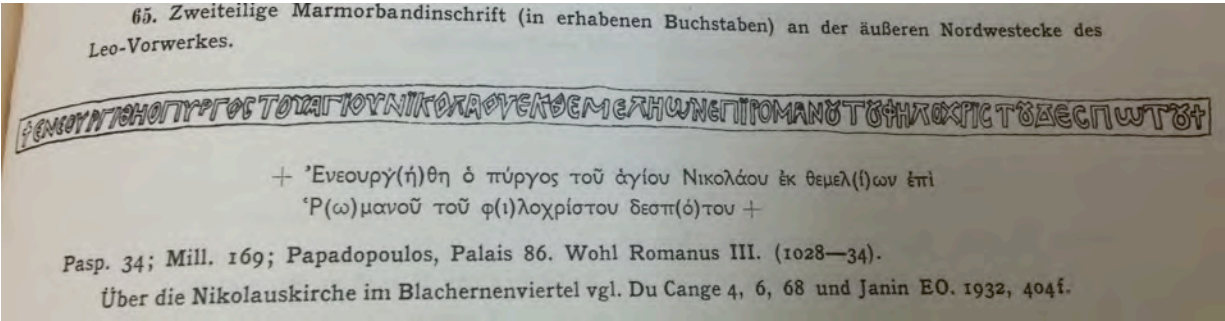


Figure 26: Inscription on the Tower of St. Nicholas
 (from Meyer-Plath and Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, 141)



Figure 27: Gold Hyperpyron of Michael VIII Palaiologos

(obv) Virgin *orans* within the city walls of Constantinople

(rev) Michael VIII escorted by Archangel Michael to Christ enthroned, to be crowned
(from <http://www.doaks.org/museum/online-exhibitions/byzantine-emperors-on-coins/doukas-lascarid-and-palaeologan-dynasties-1204-1453/hyperpyron-of-michael-viii1258-1282>)



Figure 28: Golden Gate of Constantinople, view from across the moat
(Naomi Pitamber, 2011)



Figure 29: Hagia Sophia, Nicæa, view from southeast
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)

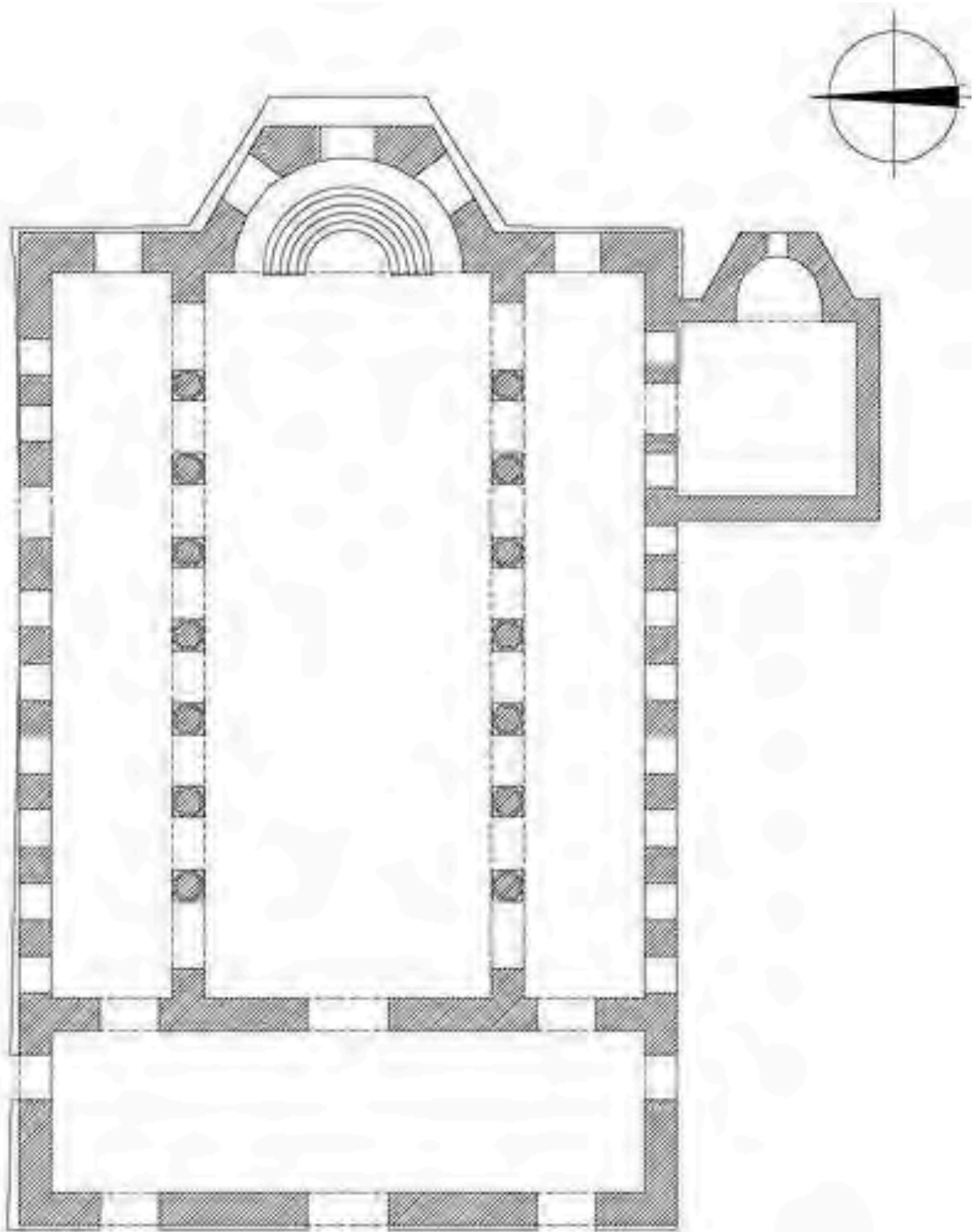


Figure 30: Reconstructed ground plan of Hagia Sophia, Nicæa, Phase One (Fifth century)
(after Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Fig. 8)

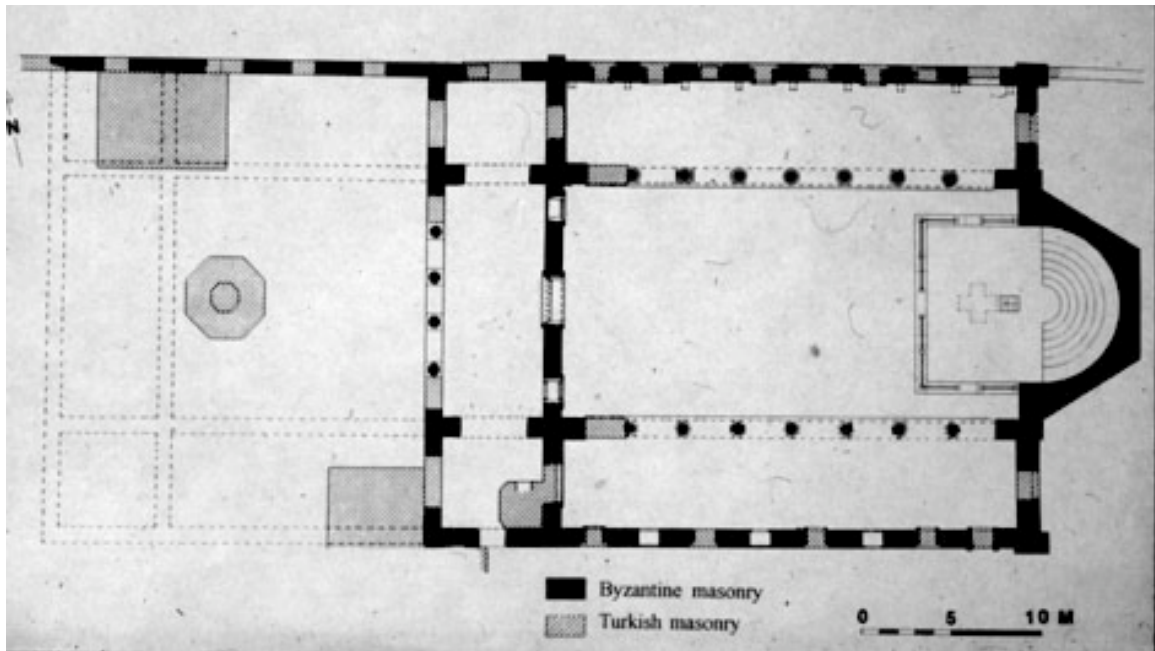


Figure 31: Ground plan, St. John Stoudios, Constantinople
(after Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople*)

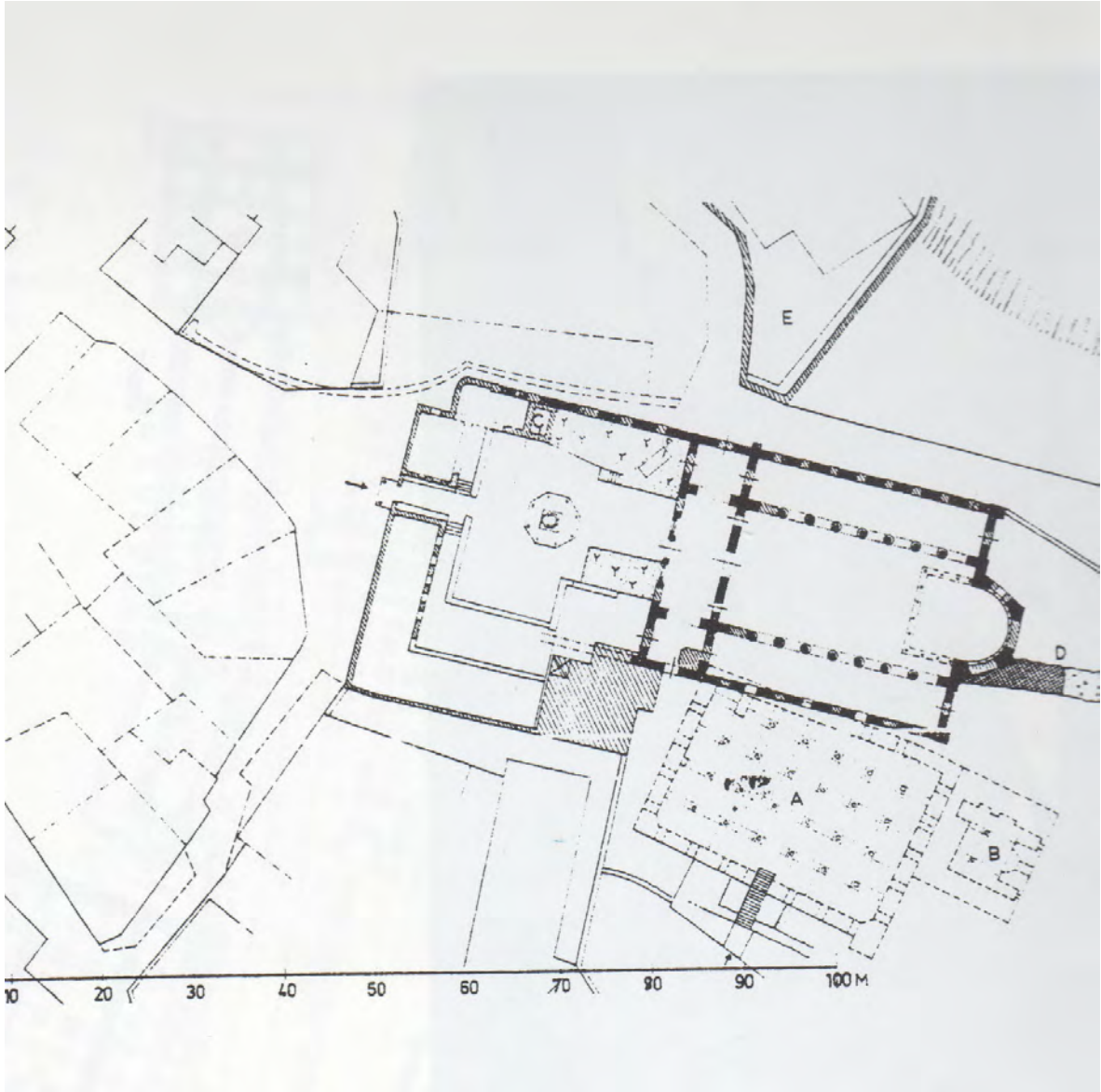


Figure 32: Ground plan, Topkapı Sarayı basilica, Constantinople
(after Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople*)

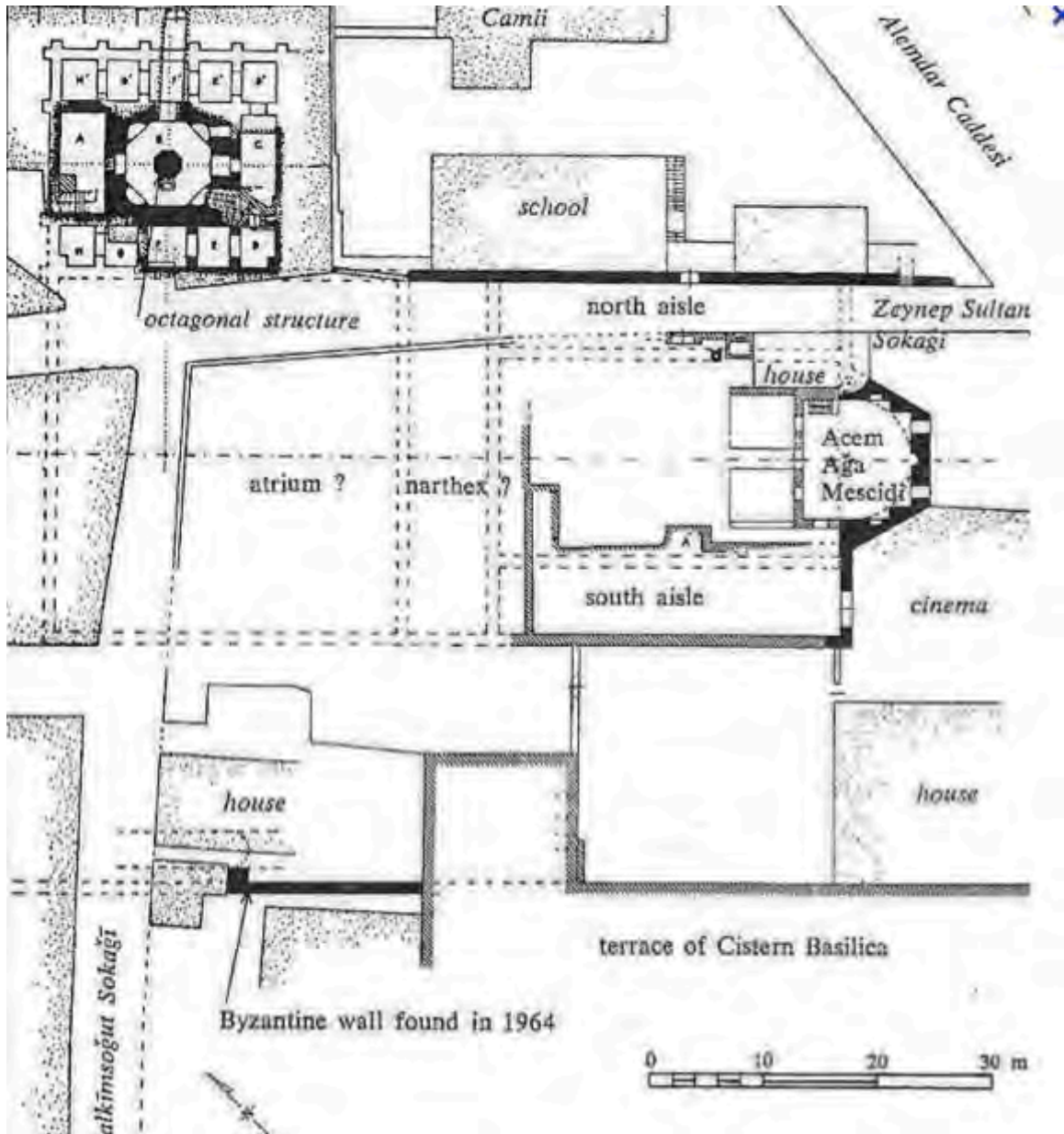
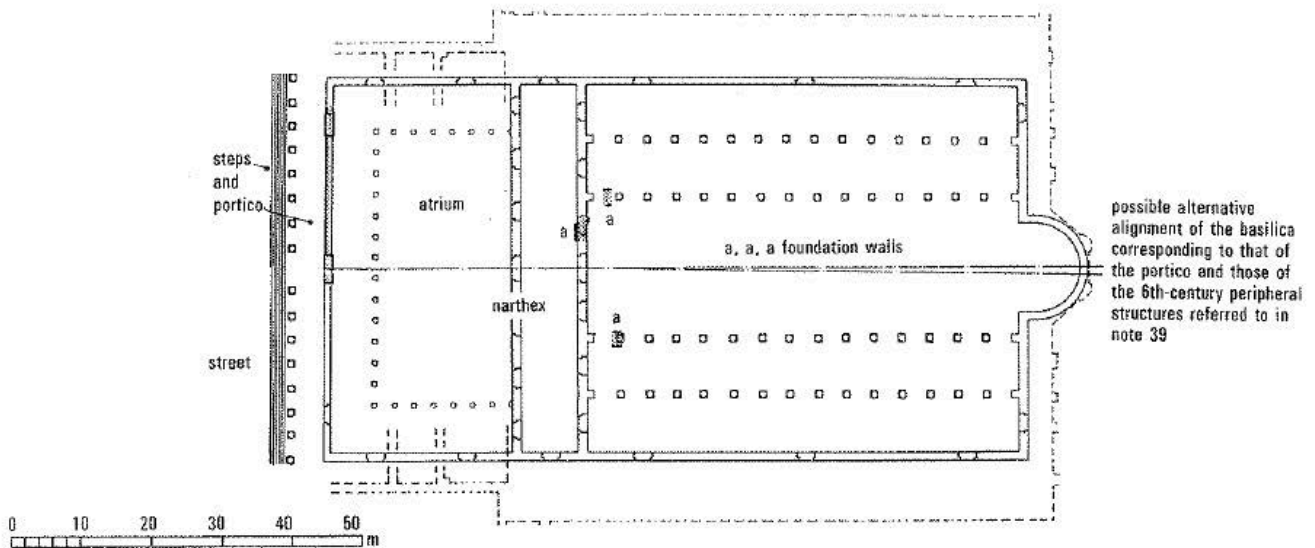


Figure 33: Ground plan, Theotokos Chalkoprateia, Constantinople
 (after Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople*)



165 A tentative reconstruction of the Theodosian Hagia Sophia, based on a scaling-up of the plans of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and other related structures.

The established remains are shown in heavy line, the tentative reconstruction in lighter full line, and the outline of Justinian's church (for comparison) in light broken line

Figure 34: Reconstructed ground plan, Hagia Sophia II, Constantinople (after Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia*, Fig. 165)

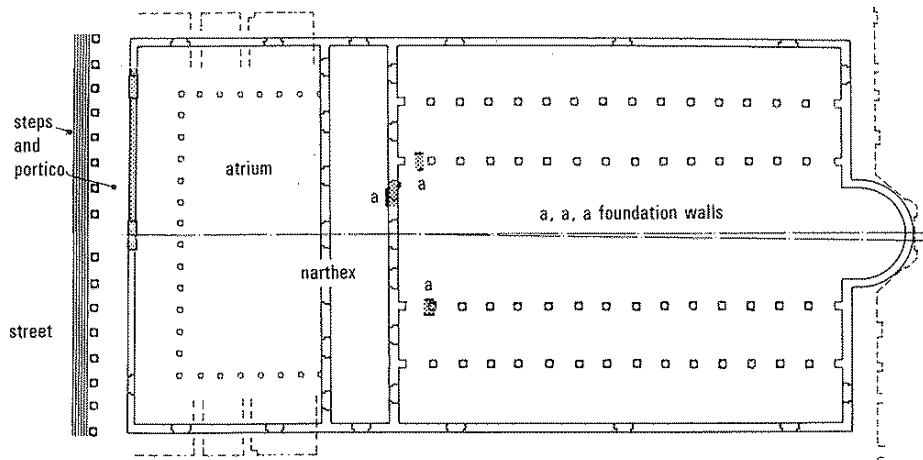
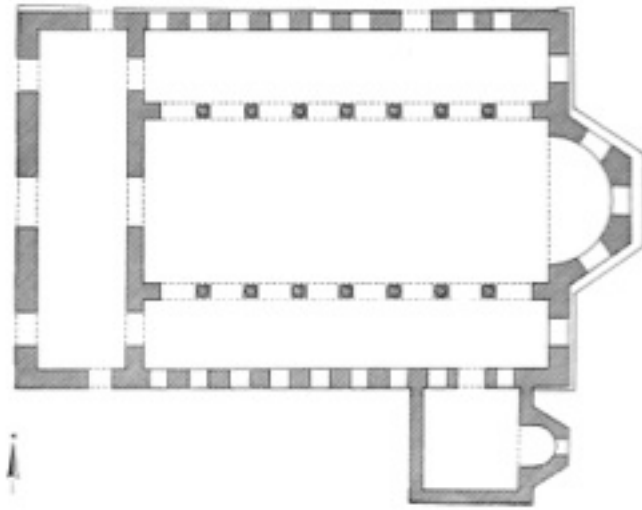


Figure 35: Hagia Sophia, Nicæa, reconstruction (after Möllers)

$22 / 29.5 \text{ m} = 71 / 95 \text{ Byzantine feet} = 0.75$

Hagia Sophia II, Constantinople, reconstruction (after Mainstone)

$54 / 72 \text{ m} = 175 / 233 \text{ Byzantine feet} = 0.75$



Figure 36: Stone Sarcophagus, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 37: Stone Sarcophagus, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 38: *Arcosolium*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)

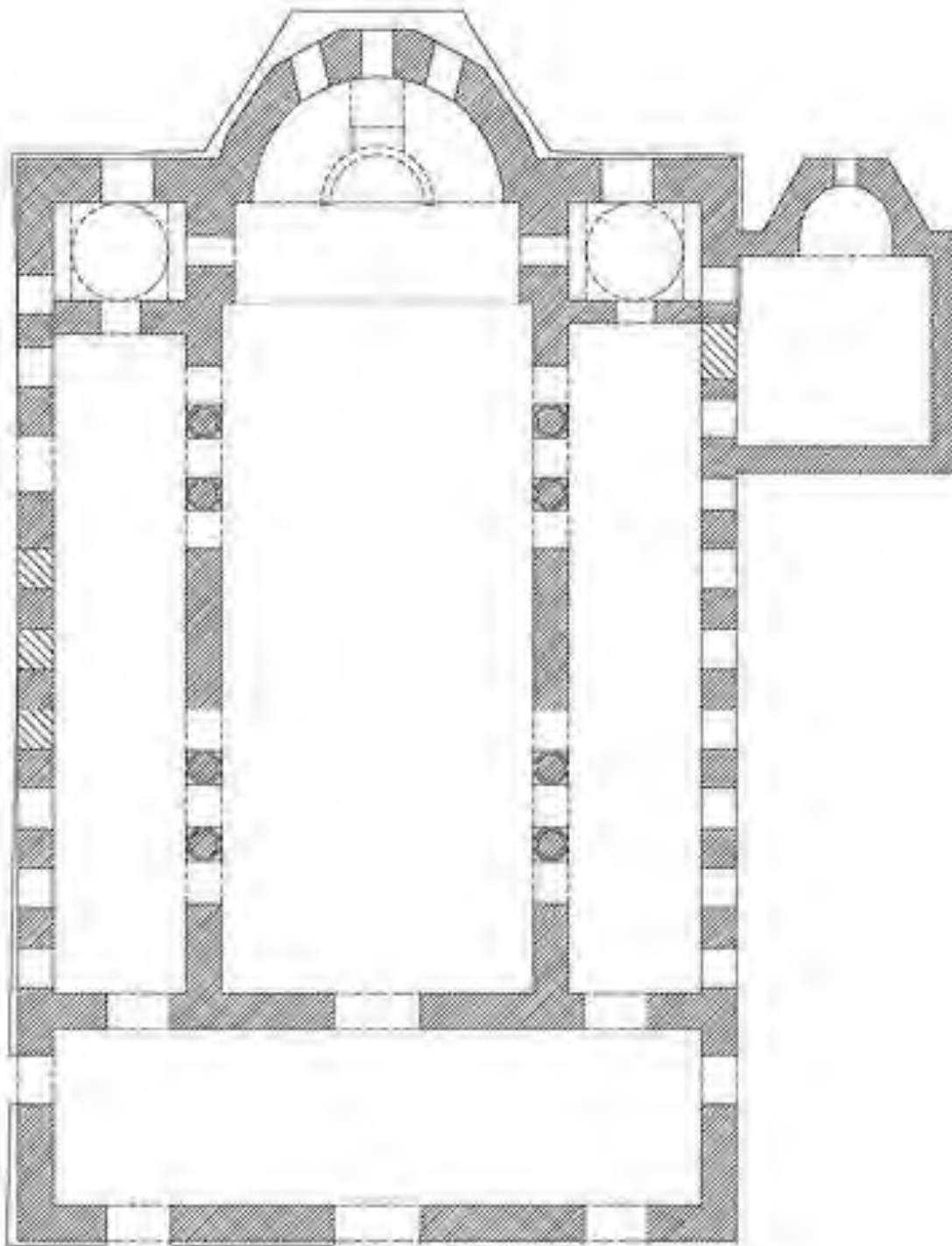


Figure 39: Reconstructed ground plan, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa, Phase Two (Eleventh century)
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Fig. 13)



Figure 40: Triple arcade embedded in great arch of Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)

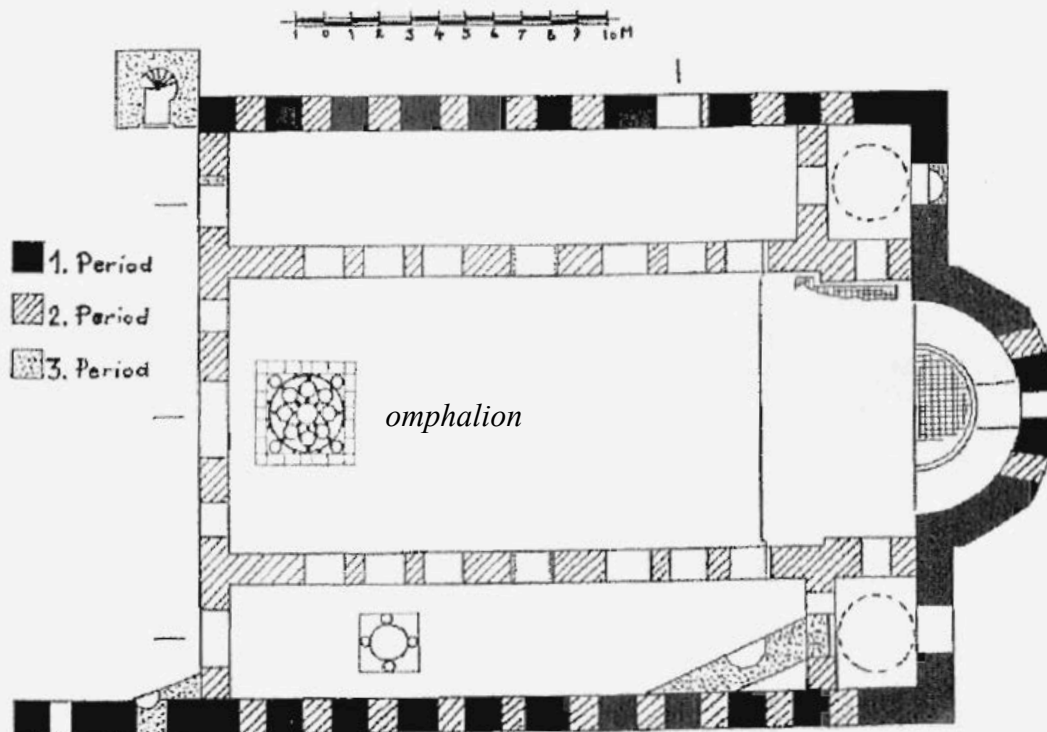


Fig. 1. Iznik (Nicaea), Hagia Sophia. Ground Plan and Longitudinal Section, showing Periods of Construction

I. Plan of Haghia Sophia, indicating the position of the pavement remains.
(S. EYICE, Two mosaic pavements from Bithynia. DOP 17 (1963) 373-384. fig. 1).

Figure 41: Ground plan of Hagia Sophia and *omphalion*, Nicæa
(from Pinatsi, "New Observations," Fig. 1, after Eyice, "Two Mosaic Pavements from Bithynia" Fig. 1.)



Figure 42: *Omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 43: Color reconstruction of rectangular panel with diamond-patterned *opus sectile* border, *omphalion* frame, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2014)



Figure 44: *Opus sectile* pavement fragments, İznik Archaeological Museum
(Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 45: Black *opus tessellatum*, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 46: *Opus sectile* flower, *opus tessellatum* border in green, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 47: Detail, center medallion, encircling *fleurs-de-lis*, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 48: Tetrarteron noummion of Theodore II Laskaris, Type 13b, undated
(From Hendy, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*,
Vol. 4, part 2, p. 526, Plate XXXVI)

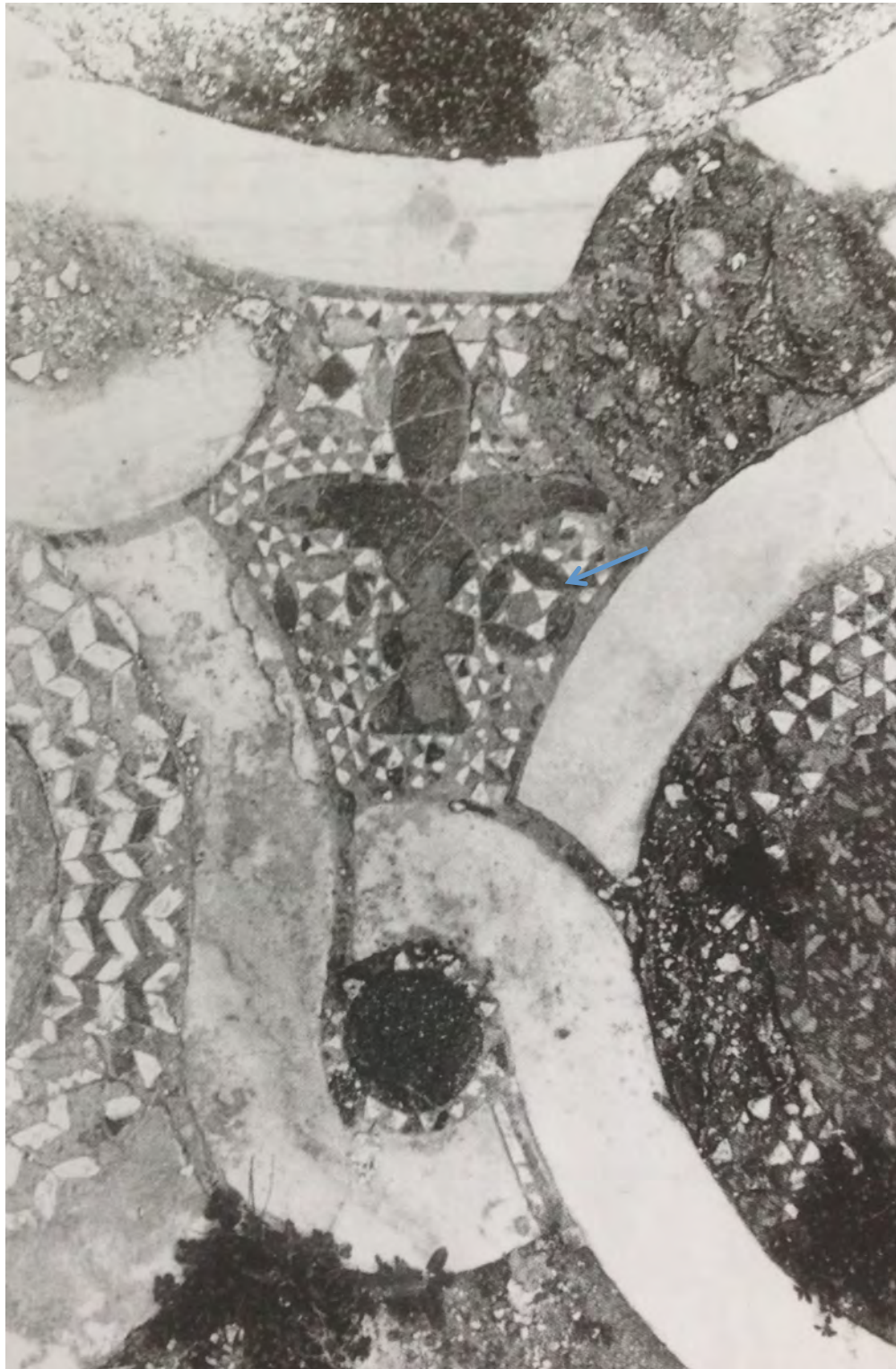


Figure 49: Black and white photograph of an intact *fleur-de-lis* spandrel, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(after S. Eyice, "Two Mosaic Pavements," Fig. 10)



Figure 50: Color reconstruction of the *fleur-de-lis* spandrel, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Suresh and Naomi Pitamber, 2014)



Figure 51: Photograph of watercolor of pavement at Hagia Sophia, Trebizond
(from D. Talbot Rice, inset)



Figure 52: Center disc (missing at top), with double ring of diamond patterned *opus sectile*, *opus tessellatum* shading (bottom) and *opus sectile* pattern, Hagia Sophia, Trebizond (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 53: Eleventh-century pavement, west end of nave, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 54: *Opus sectile* double border, north edge, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 55: *Opus sectile* triple border, south edge, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2009)

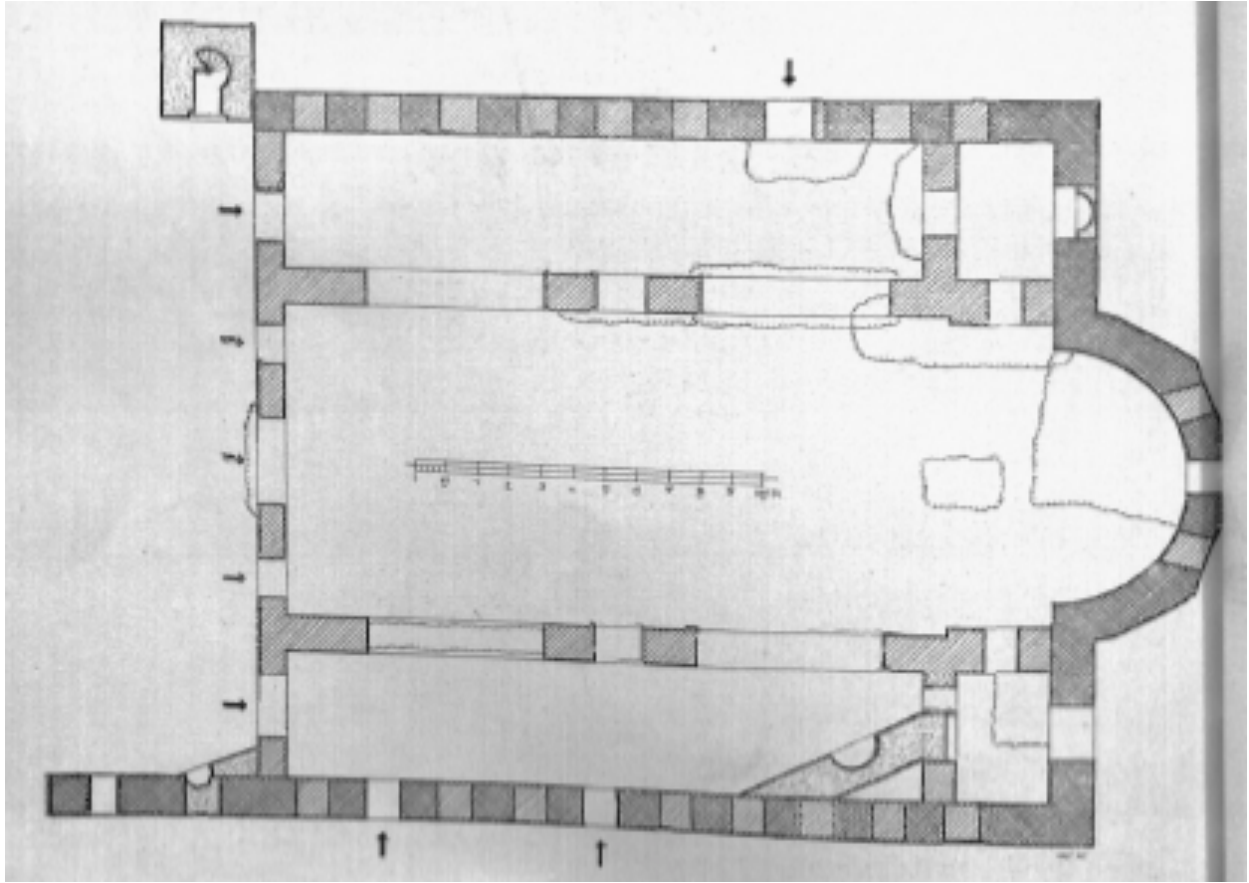


Figure 56: Ground plan of excavation trenches in Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Schneider, "Die Römischen," Plate 5)

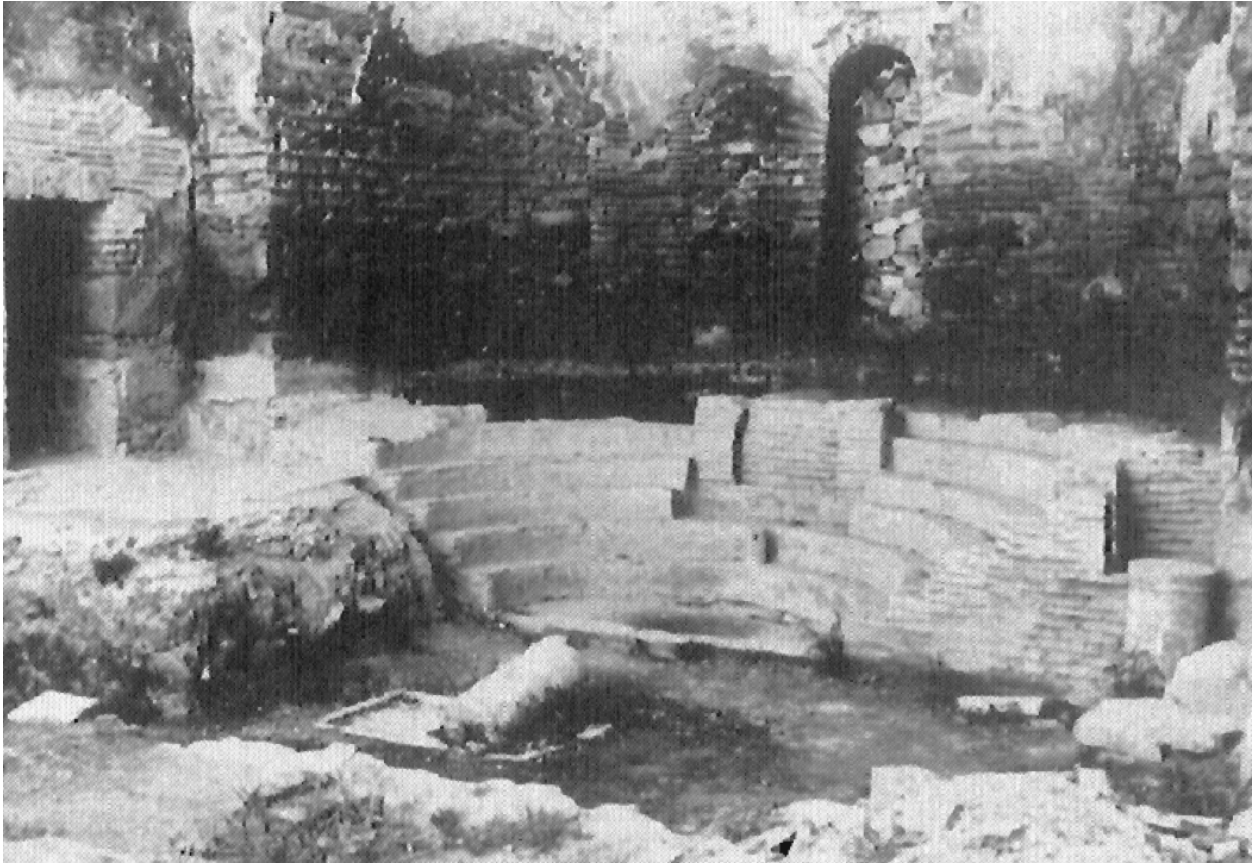
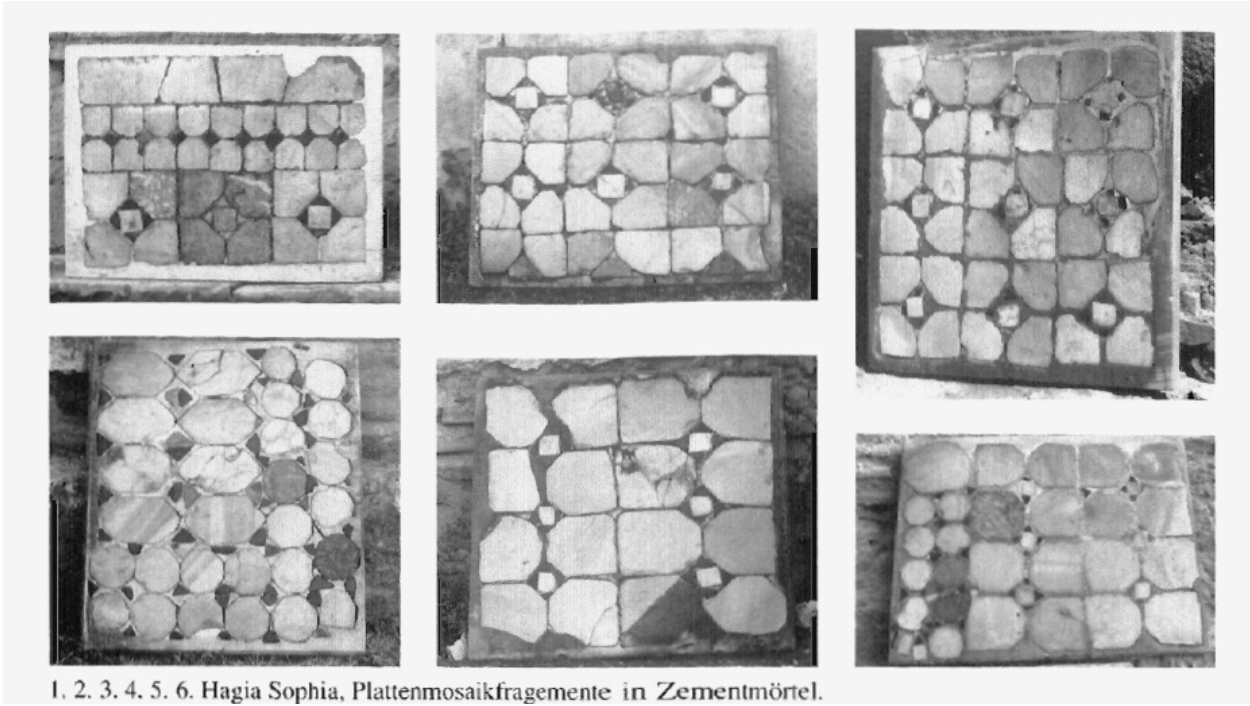
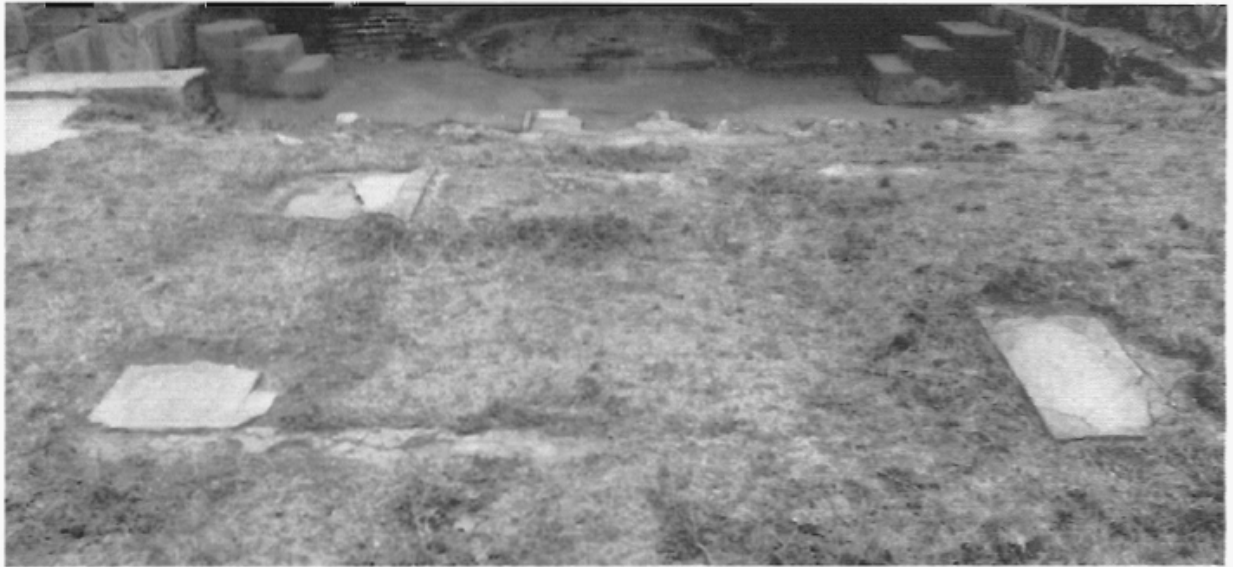


Figure 57: Photograph of apse, showing altar base with fallen column, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Plate 14, Fig. 1)



1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. Hagia Sophia, Plattenmosaikfragmente in Zementmörtel.

Figure 58: Photographs of the floor mosaics of the bema, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Plate 37, Figs. 1-6)



5. Mittelschiff. Reste der mittelalterlichen Bodenlegung.

Figure 59: Remaining marble panels and mortar beds, now covered, east end of nave, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Plate 23, Fig. 5)

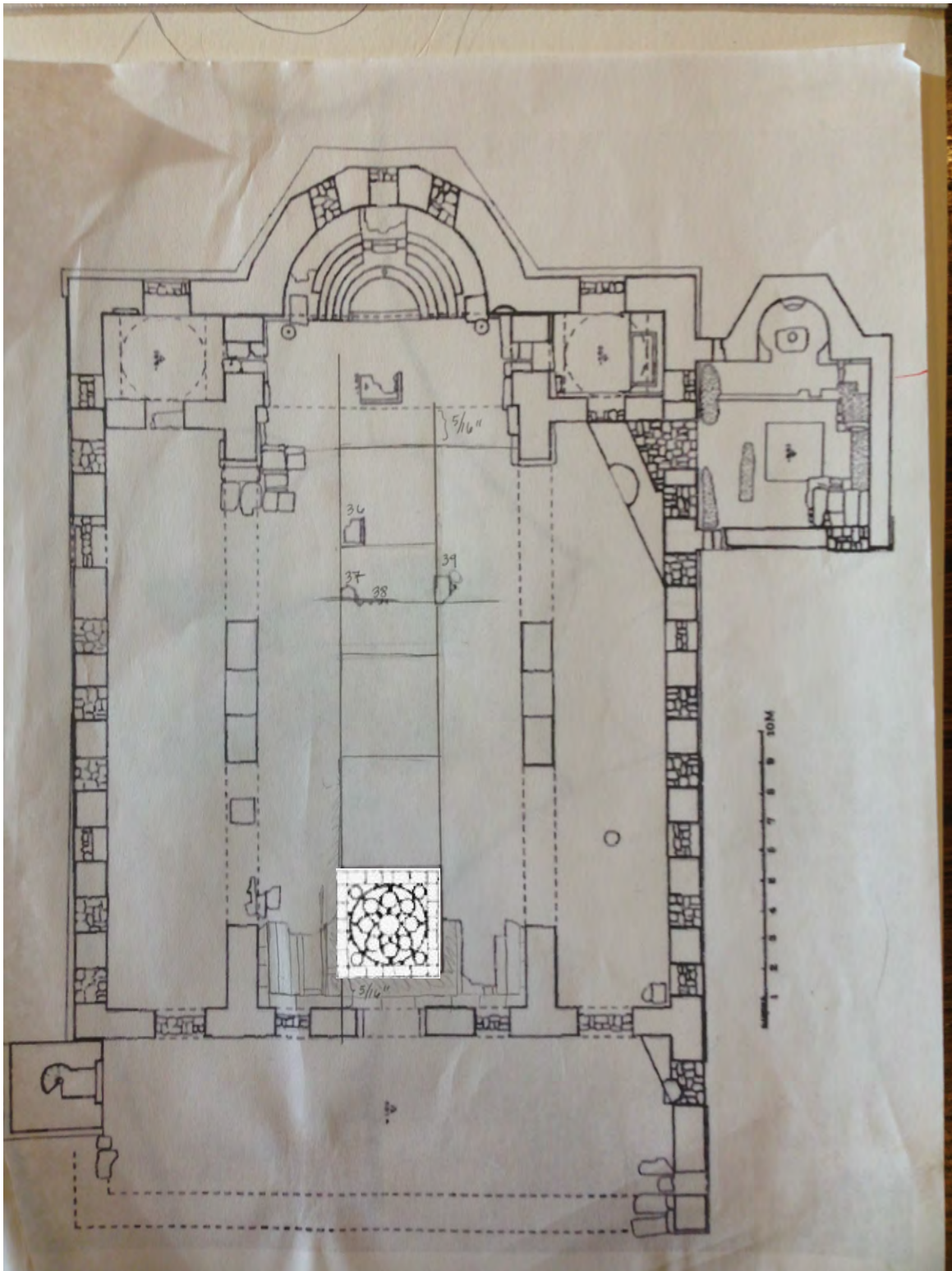


Figure 60: Ground plan with remains of pavement, plus drawn additions
(Naomi Pitamber, additions, after Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Supplement 15)



6. Mittelschiff, Platte Nr. 1.

Figure 61: Detail of nave pavement, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Plate 23, Fig. 6)



3. Mittelschiff, Platte Nr. 2.

Figure 62: Detail of nave pavement, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Plate 23, Fig. 3)

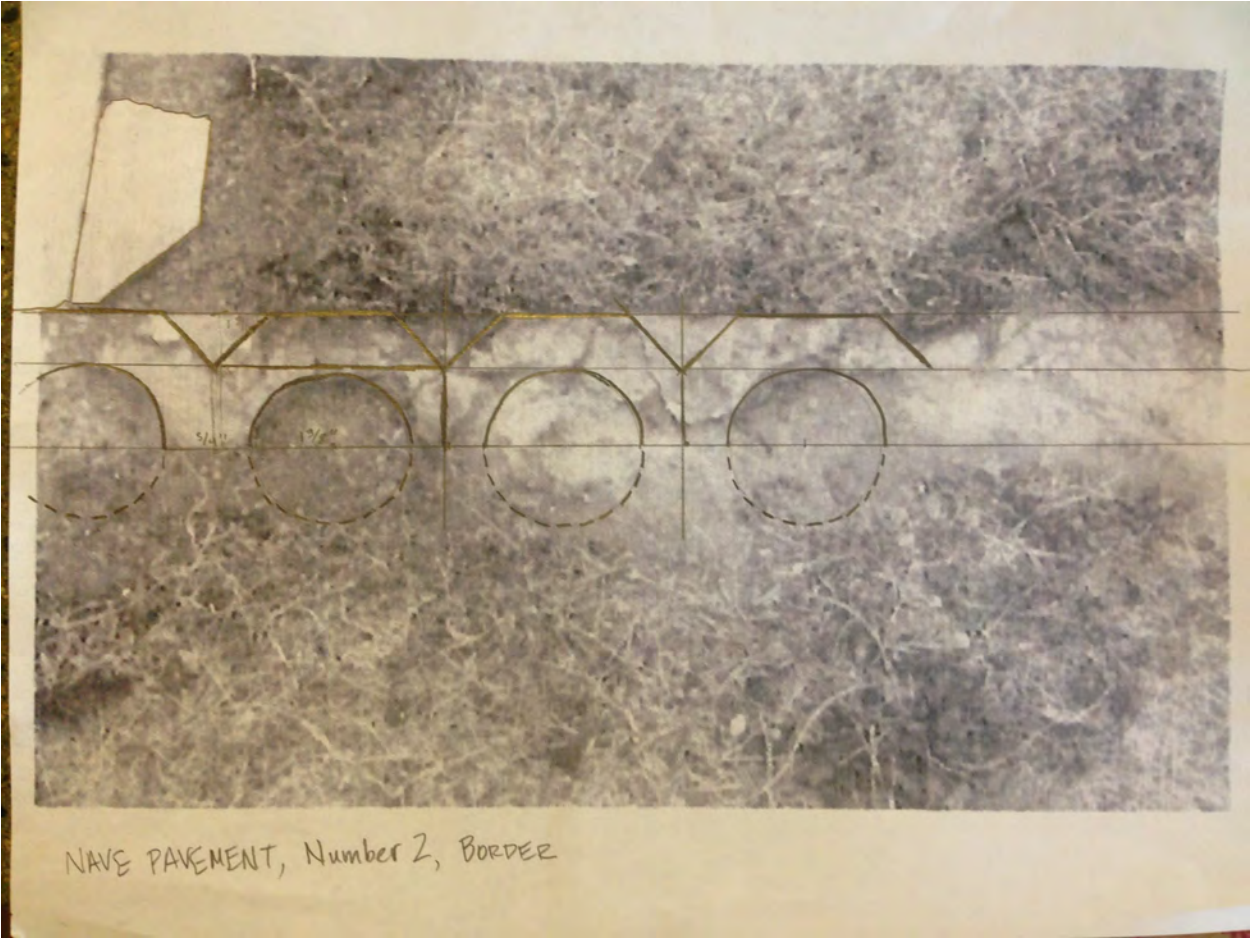


Figure 63: Detail of mortar bed from nave pavement, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Plate 23, Fig. 4)

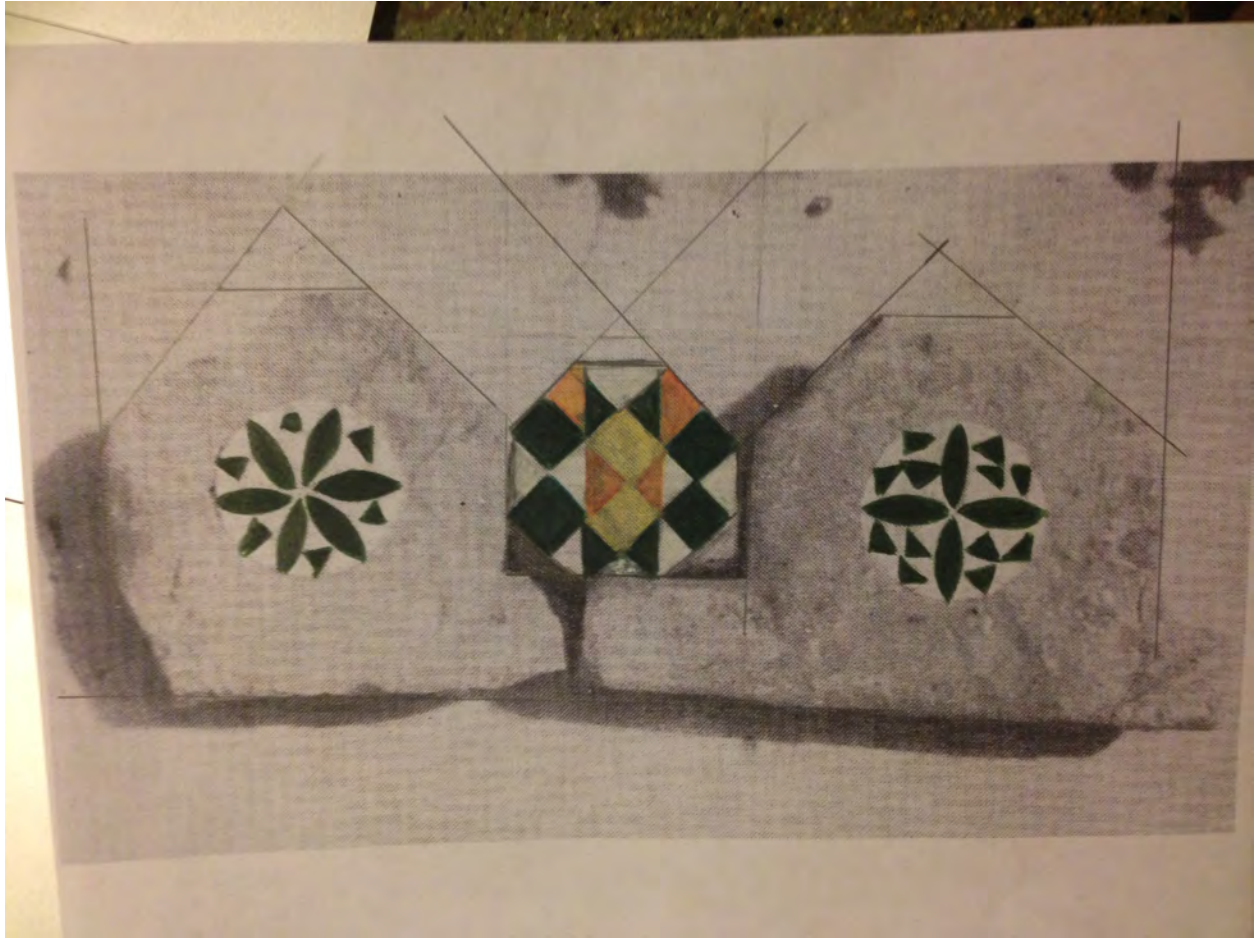


Figure 64: Church A marble and mosaic fragments, with reconstructed color
(color, Naomi Pitamber, after S. Eyice, "İznik'de bir bizans kilisesi," XIX)



Figure 65: Detail of *opus sectile* spandrel, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicaea
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)

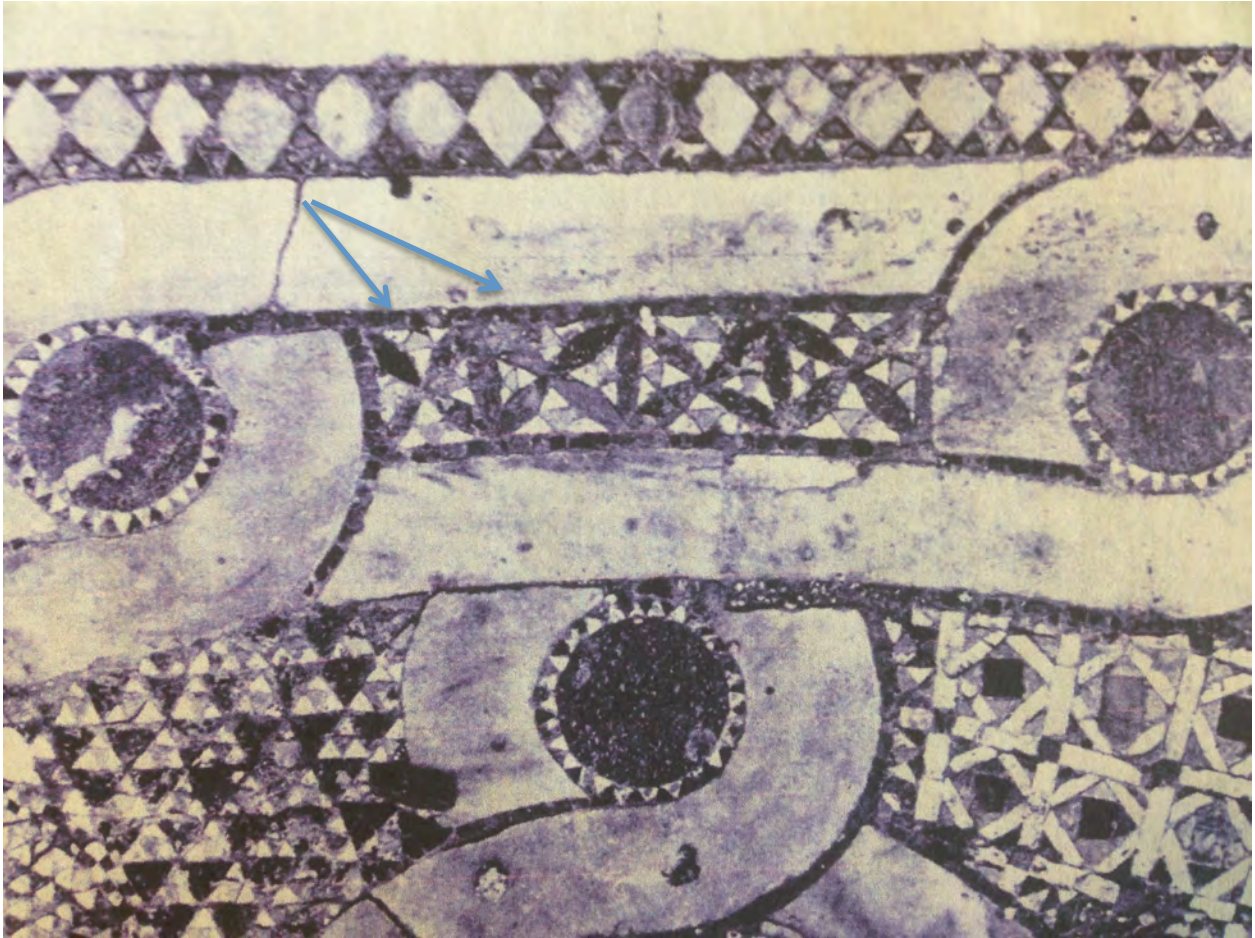
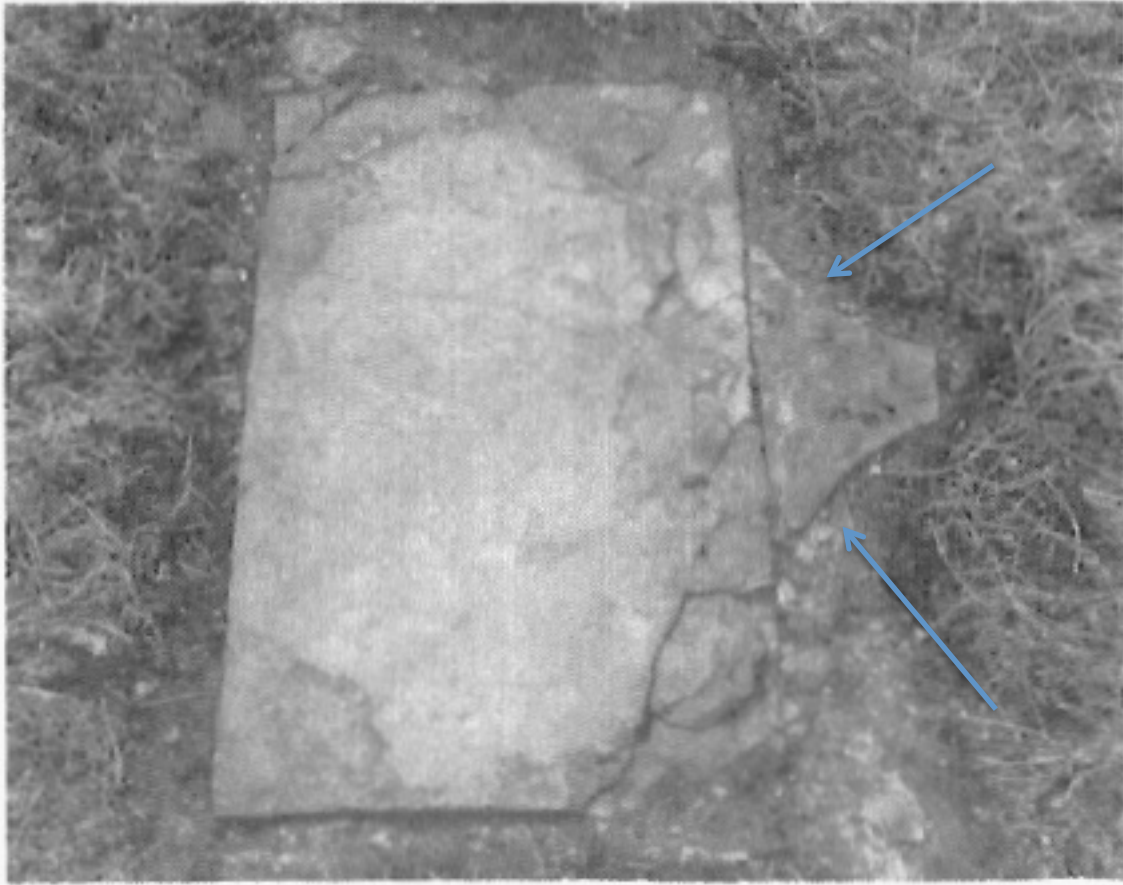


Figure 66: Detail of *opus sectile* spandrel, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(after S. Eyice, "Two Mosaic Pavements," Fig. 6)



Figure 67: Marble and mosaic border from Church A superimposed on mortar bed at Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2014)



8. Mittelschiff, Platte Nr. 3.

Figure 68: Marble pavement with curved spandrels, nave, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Plate 23, Fig. 8)



Figure 69: *Omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Constantinople
(from <http://romeonrome.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/28/files/2013-istanbul/95-omphalionemperor.jpg>)



Figure 70: Detail of glass paste *intarsia*, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Constantinople
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 71: Detail of marble disc with missing *intarsia* inlay, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Trebizond (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 72: Detail of marble disc, with missing *intarsia* inlay, *omphalion*, Hagia Sophia, Trebizond, now in the Museum of Byzantine Culture, Thessaloniki (from http://mbp.gr/html/en/mo_ysterovys.htm#)



Figure 73: Panel with Griffin Relief with colored *intarsia*, from Arta, thirteenth century
(from *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, 79-80)



Figure 74: Pastophoria and Apse, East End, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Möllers, *Die Hagia Sophia*, Beilage 10)



Figure 75: West wall (left) and north windows, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 76: Carved Niche, East Wall, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 77: Detail of bonded corners of eastern superstructure, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



FIG. 3 — UN SAINT MARTYR
(Sainte-Sophie de Nicée, mur oriental.)
Relevé par l'auteur.



FIG. 1 — UN APOTRE
(Sainte-Sophie de Nicée,
coupole sud.)

Figure 78: Two line drawings of figures in Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Alpatoff, "Les Fresques," Figures 1 and 3)

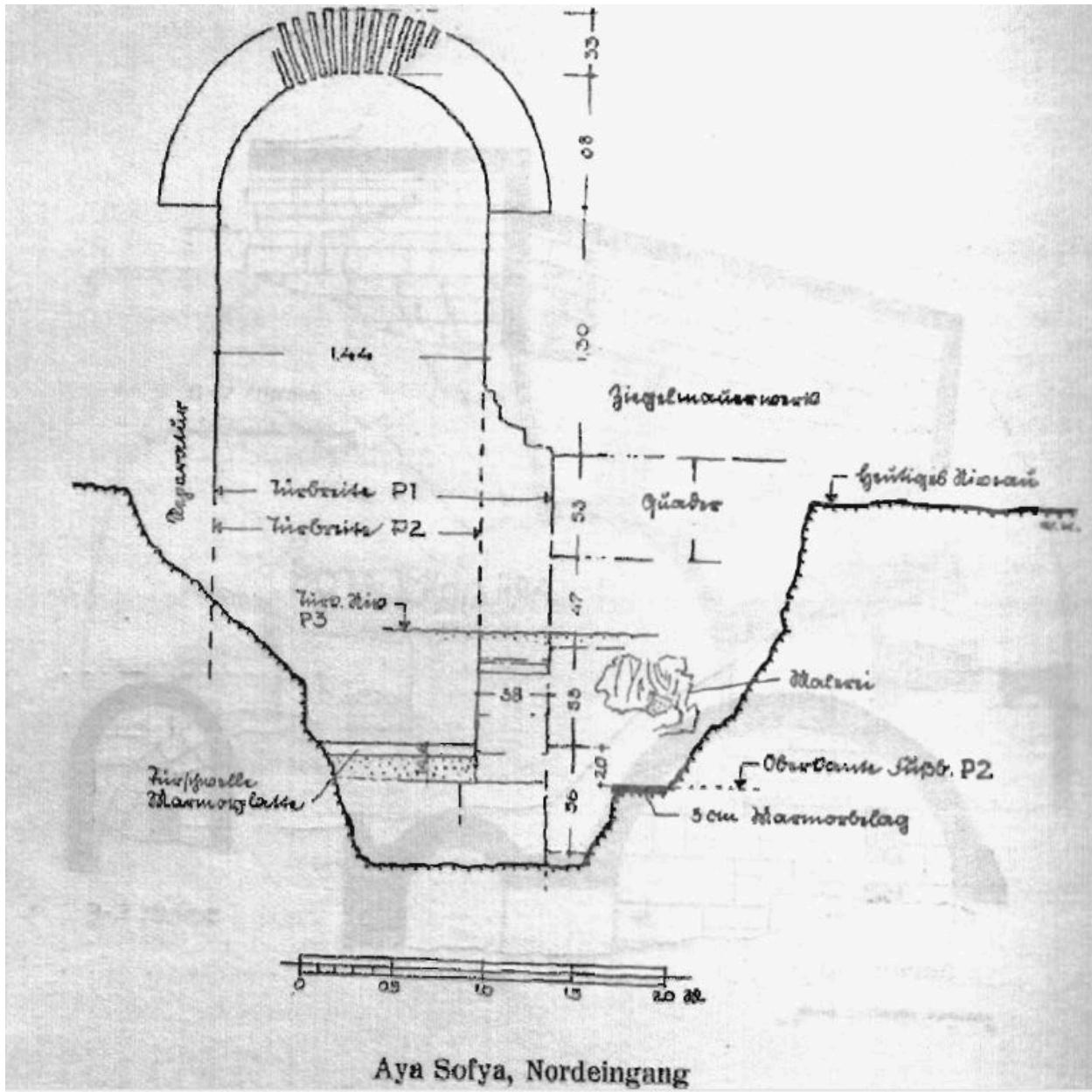


Figure 79: Line drawings of north aisle in Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
 (from Schneider, *Die Römischen und Byzantinischen*, Textabbildung 4)

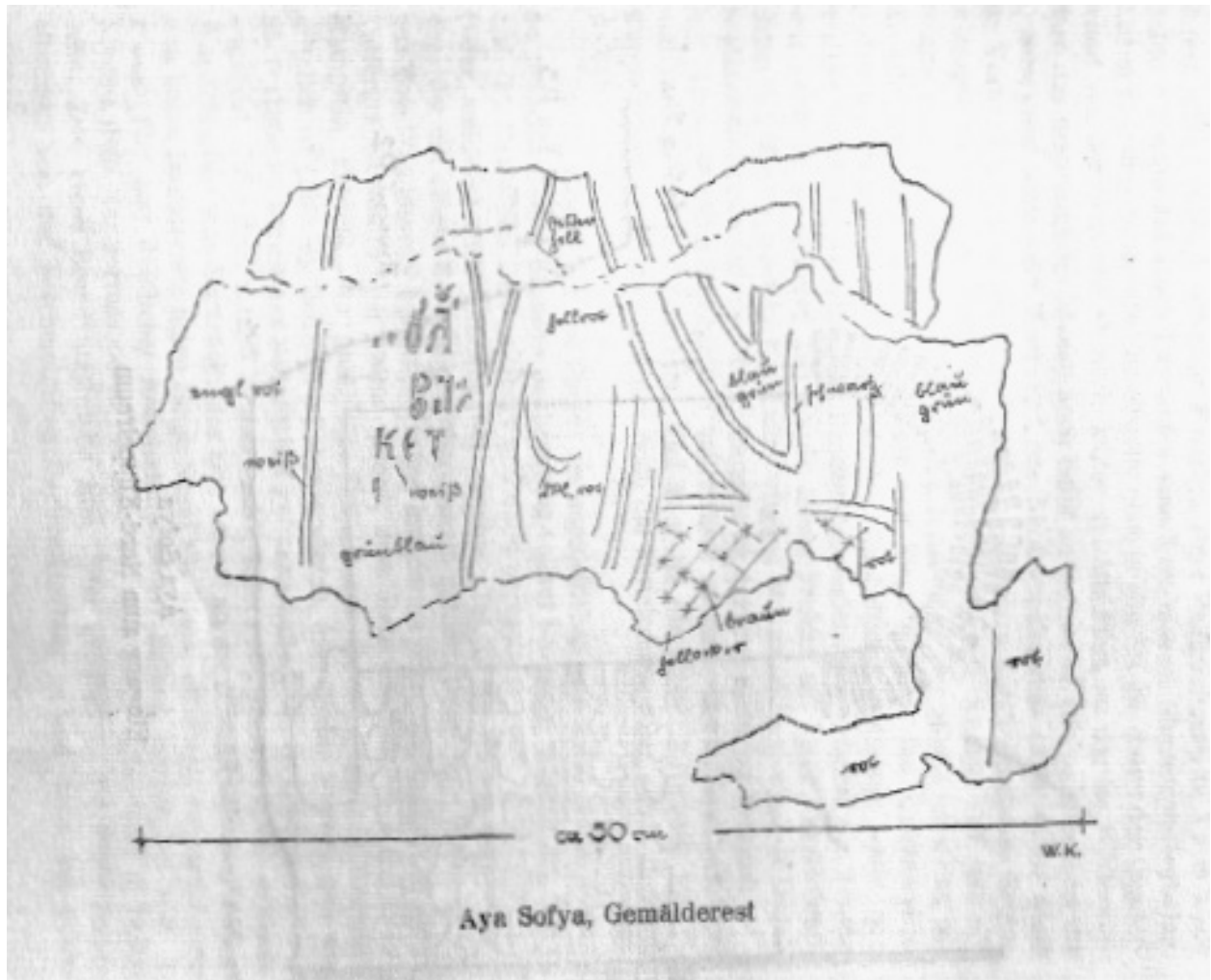


Figure 80: Line drawings of north aisle in Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
 (from Schneider, *Die Römischen und Byzantinischen*, Textabbildung 5)



Figure 81: Color Sketch of North Pastophorium fresco program, west at bottom (Suresh and Naomi Pitamber, 2014)



Figure 82: Color Sketch of South Pastophorium fresco program, south at bottom (Suresh and Naomi Pitamber, 2014)



Figure 83: Southeastern window soffit, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 84: Soffit decoration of south arch, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicaea (Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 85: Fresco decoration of doorway, North Pastophorium to Nave, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 86: Aisle arch soffit, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 87: Dome, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 88: Fresco of North Pastophorium dome, Virgin *orans* and two angels
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 89: King David (?), Drum of North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 90: Daniel (?), Drum of North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 91: Northwestern figure, Drum of North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 92: Southern hemisphere of Dome, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicaea
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 93: Southeastern figure, Drum of North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 94: South figure, south window, Drum of North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 95: Pendentive, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 96: Western wall, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 97: Center figure, Lunette, West Wall, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 98: South figure, Lunette, West Wall, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 99: Double-arcade with drawing, West Wall, North Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 100: Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Sopočani
(from Čuridč, *Sopočani*, Plate XII)



Figure 101: *The Hospitality of Abraham*, South Wall, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 102: *Philoxenia*, or *The Hospitality of Abraham*, Chapel of the Theotokos, Monastery of St. John on Patmos
(from <http://pemptousia.com/files/2012/01/abraam4.png>)



Figure 103: Head of Saint or Angel, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, Vol. 1, 85, Vol. 3, Photo 551,
Plate LXXIV)



Figure 104: Roundel with saint, South Wall Lunette, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 105: South Lunette, two medallions, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicaea
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 106: Dome, view towards south, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 107: Eastern figure, Drum of South Pastophorium Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 108: Archangel Michael (?), Drum of South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 109: Southwestern figure, Drum of South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 110: Western figure, Drum of South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 111: Christ, Drum of South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 112: Northwestern pendentive, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 113: East Wall Lunette, two medallions, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 114: South medallion, East Wall Lunette, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 115: North wall, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 116: North lunette, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



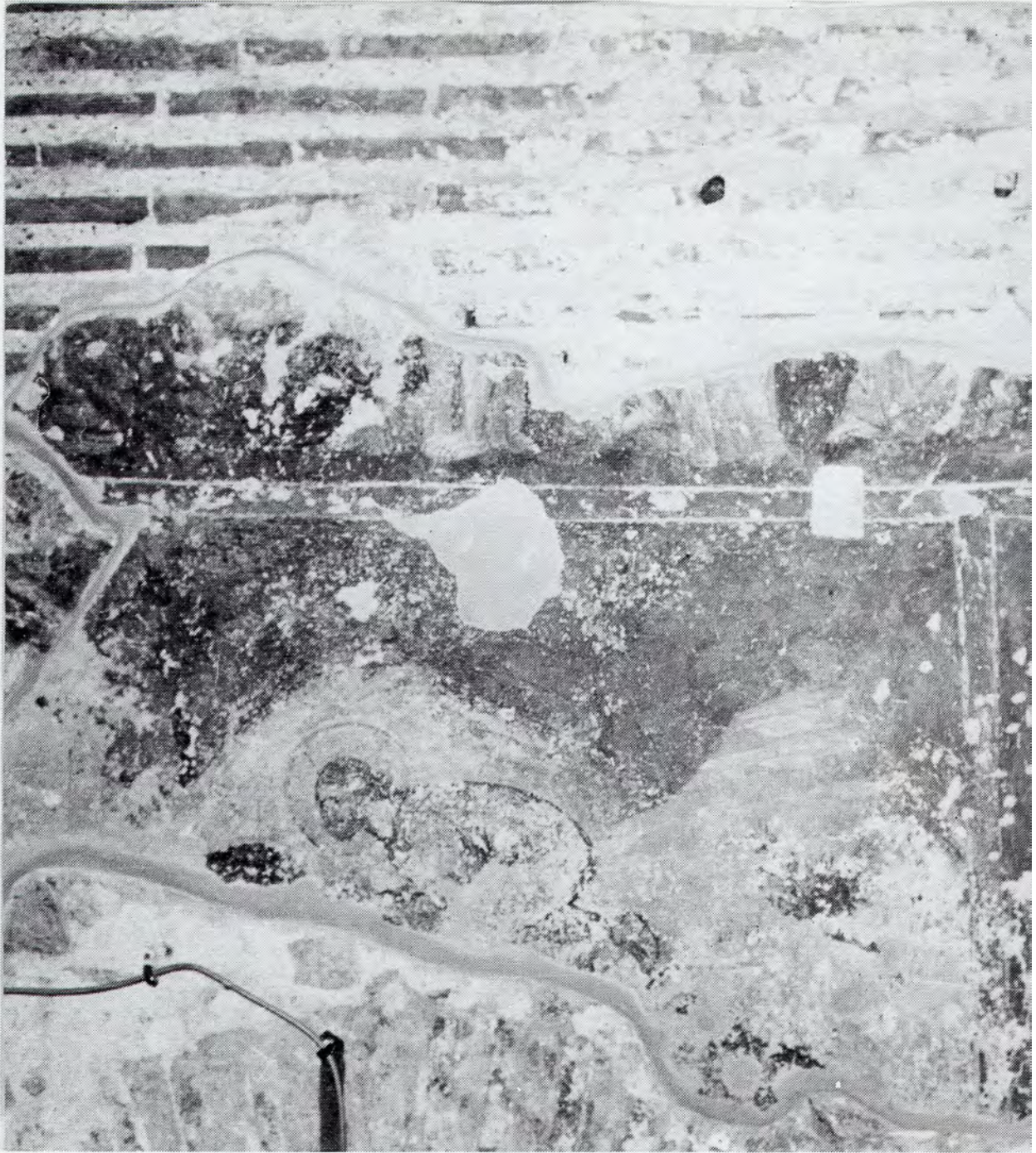
Figure 117: Head of saint in North Wall Lunette, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 118: Detail of triangular shape with pearl- and jewel-studded edge
(Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 119: West Wall, Northwest Corner, South Pastophorium, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Pl. 30. The Entry into Jerusalem, Christ on the Mount of Olives, .

Figure 120: Christ on the Mount of Olives (i.e. The Garden of Gethsemane), Hosios David, Thessaloniki
(from Tsigaridas, *Latomou Monastery*, Plate 30)

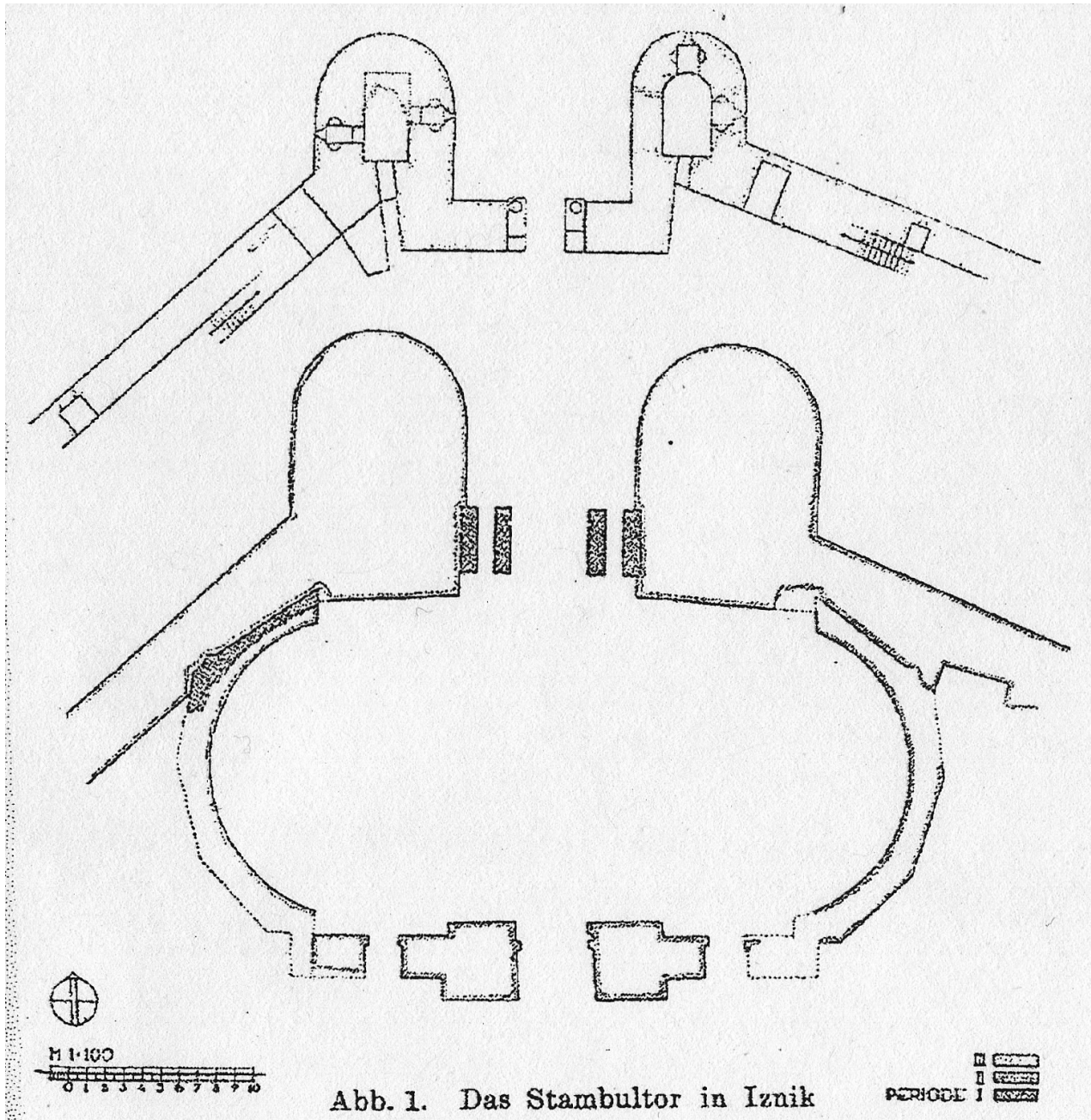


Figure 121: Drawing of Inner and Outer (i.e. Laskarid) gates on the İstanbul road, Nicæa (from Schneider, *Forschungen*, Abteilung 1)



Figure 122: St. George on a grey horse (upper), and with drawing (lower) tower 54, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



Figure 123: Saint in barrel vault in thirteenth-century tower 54, Image 125 from Bilgiç, “İznik Surları,” (The city walls of İznik), (İstanbul Univeristy thesis, 1972) (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)

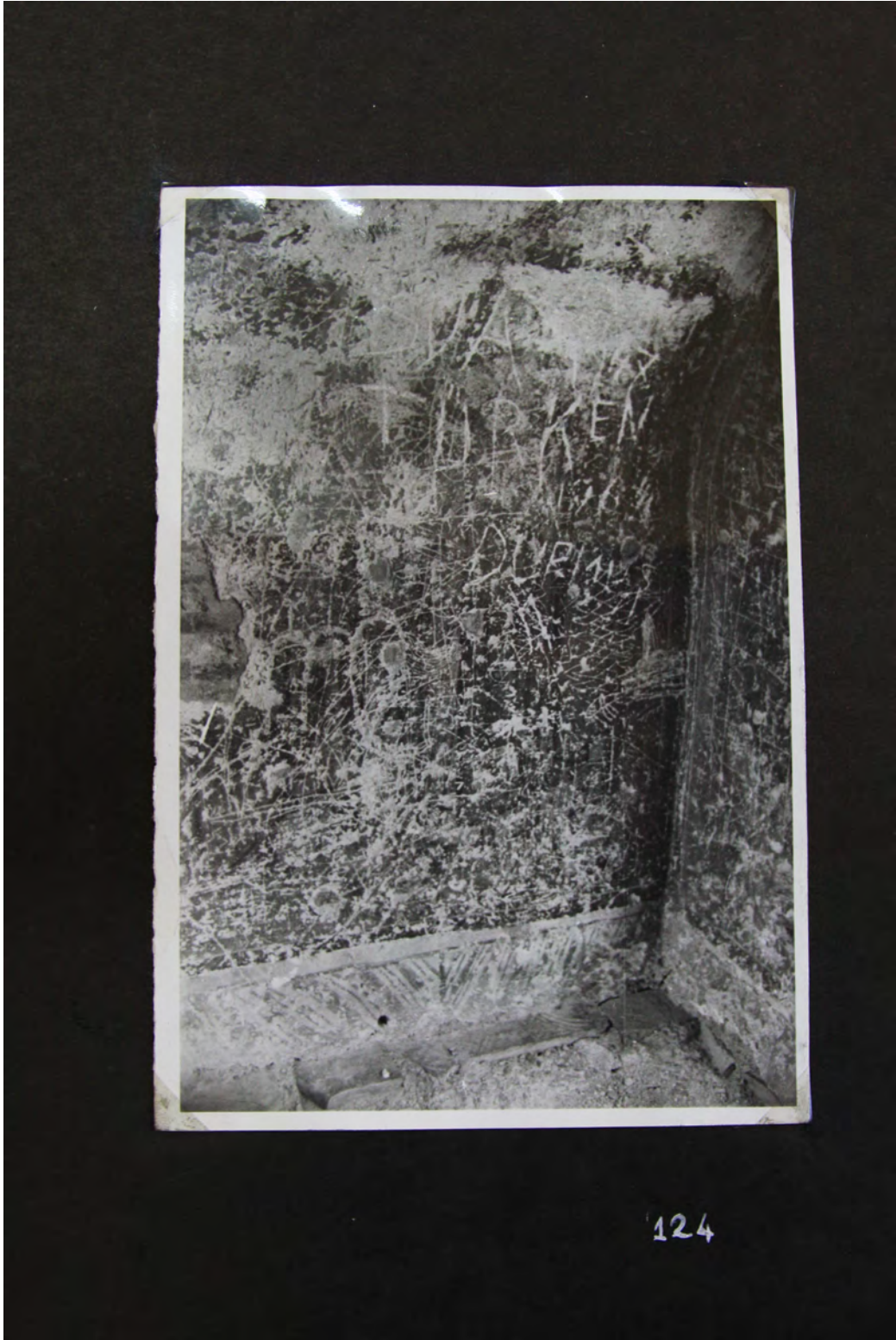


Figure 124: Barrel vault in thirteenth-century tower 54, Image 124 from Bilgiç, “İznik Surları,” (The city walls of İznik), (İstanbul Univeristy thesis, 1972) (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)

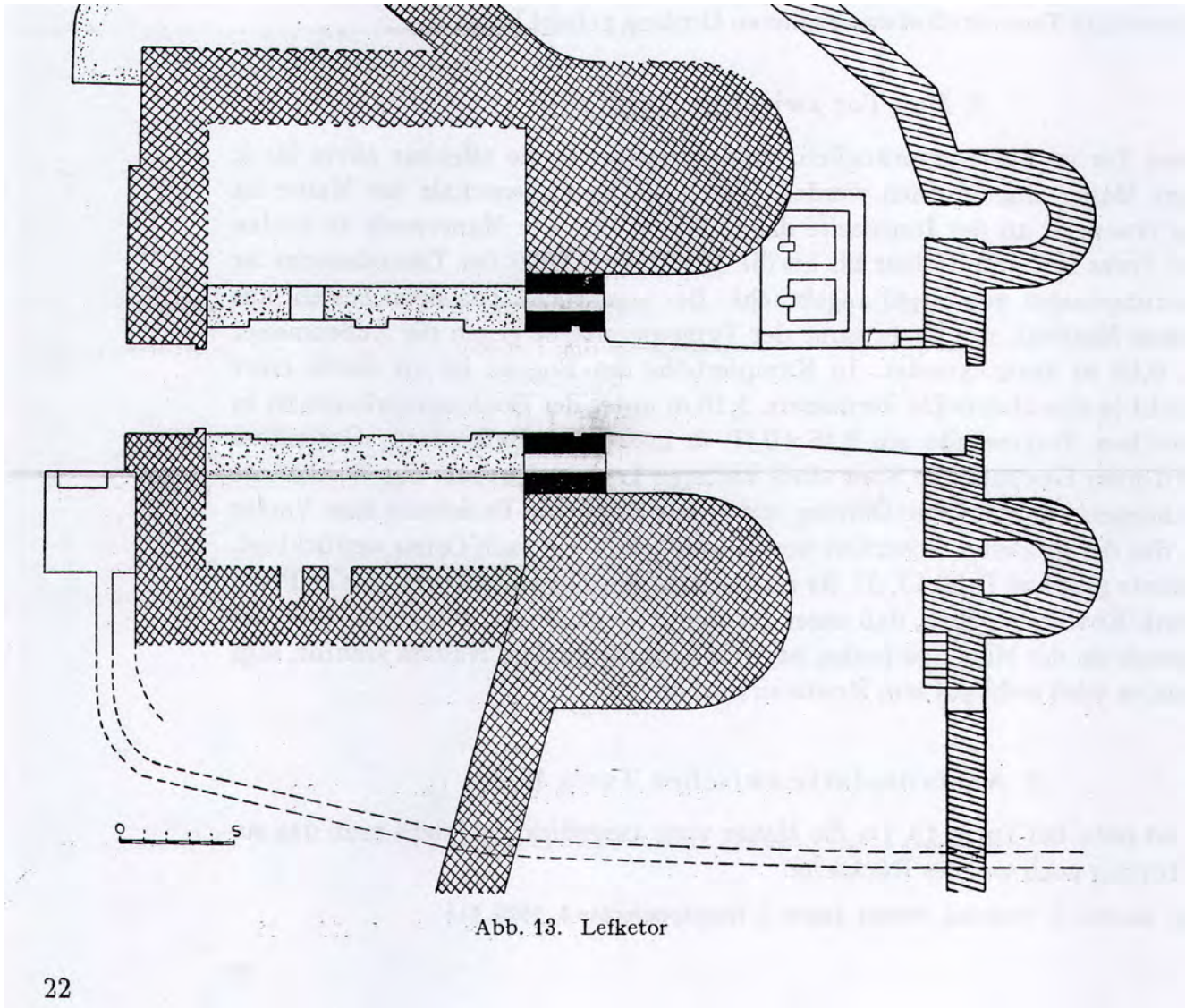


Figure 125: Drawing of inner and outer Lefke Gate, Nicæa
(from Schneider and Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer von İznik (Nicæa)*, Abteilung 13)



Figure 126: Patriarchal cross in thirteenth-century wall, near Lefke Gate, Image 122 from Bilgiç, “İznik Surları,” (The city walls of İznik), (İstanbul Univeristy thesis, 1972) (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)

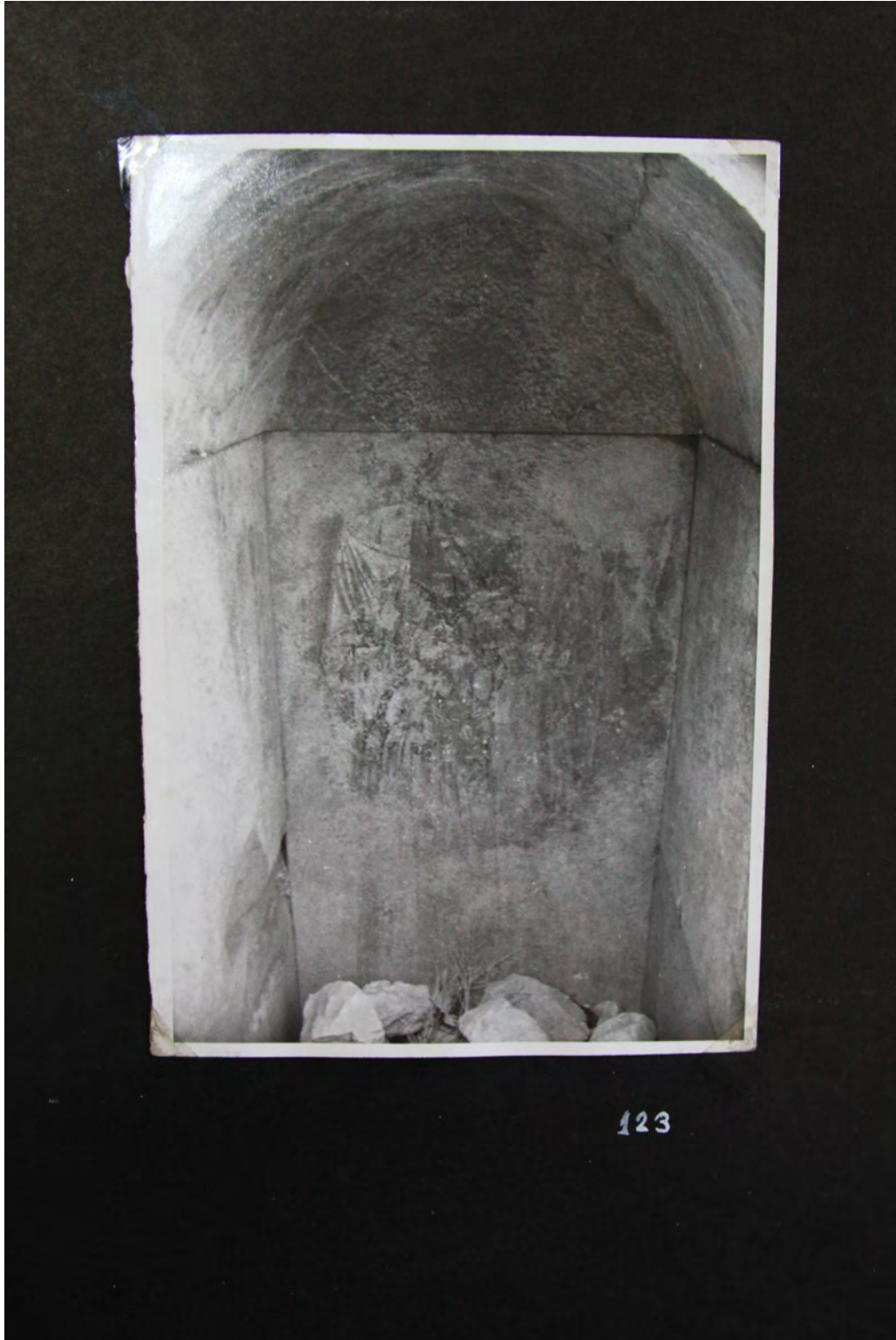


Figure 127: Fresco in chapel in thirteenth-century wall near Lefke Gate, Image 122 from Bilgiç, "İznik Surları," (The city walls of İznik), (İstanbul Univeristy thesis, 1972) (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



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Figure 128: Detail, *Nativity*, Hosios David, Thessaloniki
(From http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/2/eh2560.jsp?obj_id=1548)



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Figure 129: Detail, Bathing of the Christ Child, *Nativity*, Hosios David, Thessaloniki
(from http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/2/eh2560.jsp?obj_id=1548)



Figure 130: (upper) Detail of *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, Hosios David, Thessaloniki (from Tsigaridas, *Latomou Monastery*, Plate 31)
(lower) Detail of the face of a saint, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)



371. Patmos, Chapel of the Virgin,
north wall decoration (detail) (Photo: Orlandos, *Patmos*, pl. 10a)

Figure 131: North Wall, Theotokos Chapel, Patmos Monastery, Patmos
(from Skawran, *The Development of Middle Byzantine Painting*, Fig. 371)



Figure 132: Groin Vault, Narthex, Church of the Dormition, Nicæa
(from Mango, "The Date of the Narthex Mosaics," Fig. 1)



Figure 133: View of St. Leontios, Church of the Acheiropoietos, Thessaloniki
(Sharon Gerstel, 2012)



Figure 134: View of Christ's face, Church of the Acheiropoietos, Thessaloniki
(Sharon Gerstel, 2012)



Figure 135: Crucifixion, Church of the Savior, Žiča
(Ivan Drpić, 2006)



Figure 136: Fragments of frescoes, Theater Terrace Church, Pergamon
(from Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Stiftung
Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Archiv, Neg. 6438a)



Figure 137: (upper) Detail, Bathing of the Christ Child, *Nativity*, Hosios David, Thessaloniki (from http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/2/eh2560.jsp?obj_id=1548) (lower) Detail, face / body of Christ Child (?), Theater Terrace Church, Pergamon (from Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Archiv, Neg. 6438m)



Figure 138: (upper) Detail of angel, Theater Terrace Church, Pergamon
(from Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Stiftung
Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Archiv, Neg. 6438m)
(lower) Head of Saint or Angel, South Pastophoria, Hagia Sophia, Nicæa
(from Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, Vol. 1, 85, Vol. 3, Photo 551,
Plate LXXIV)



Figure 139: Deesis, south gallery, Hagia Sophia, Constantinople
(Naomi Pitamber, 2012)



Figure 140: Monumental Christ Chalkites, esonarthex, Chora Monastery, Constantinople (Naomi Pitamber, 2011)



Figure 141: Detail showing inscription of Christ Chalkites, Chora Monastery, Constantinople (Naomi Pitamber, 2013)

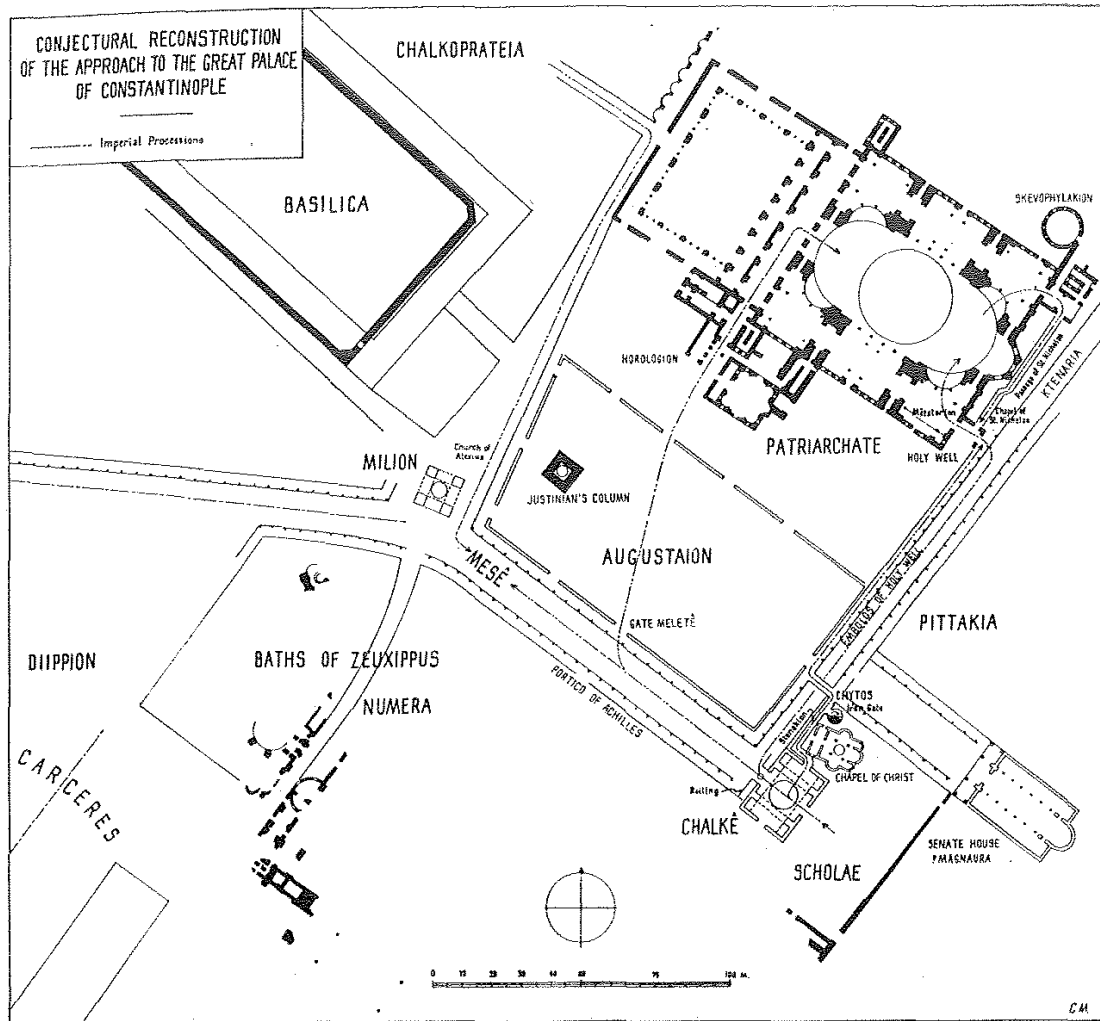


Fig. 1. Conjectural reconstruction of the Chalkè and surrounding buildings.

Figure 142: Reconstruction of the Chalke and surrounding buildings
(from Mango, *The Brazen House*, Fig. 1)



Figure 143: Detail of Marble Revetment decoration immediately above the Imperial Doorway at Hagia Sophia, Constantinople (Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Fig. 22. Seal of John Pantechnes. *Courtesy of the Dumbarton Oaks Collection.*

Figure 144: Seal of John Pantechnes

(obverse) Christ Chalkites

(reverse) “The Lord himself is the most secure seal for the letters of the Pantechnes of the gracious name (i.e. John)

(from Mango, *The Brazen House*, Fig. 22, and translation, p. 137).



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Figure 145: Seal of Euphrosyne Doukaina, ca. 1199
(obverse) Christ Chalkites,
“IC XC O XALKITHC”
(reverse) Image of the Queen with a cruciform shaped inscription,
“Εὐφροσύνη εὐσεβεστάτη ἀγούστα ἡ Δούκαινα”
(from Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, No. 111)



Figure 146: (obverse) Christ Chalkites
(reverse) John III Doukas Vatatzes
“Ἰωάννης δεσπότης ὁ Δούκας”
(from <http://www.doaks.org/resources/seals/byzantine-seals/BZS.1951.31.5.1700>)
(Fogg 1951.31.5, Seal No. 1700)

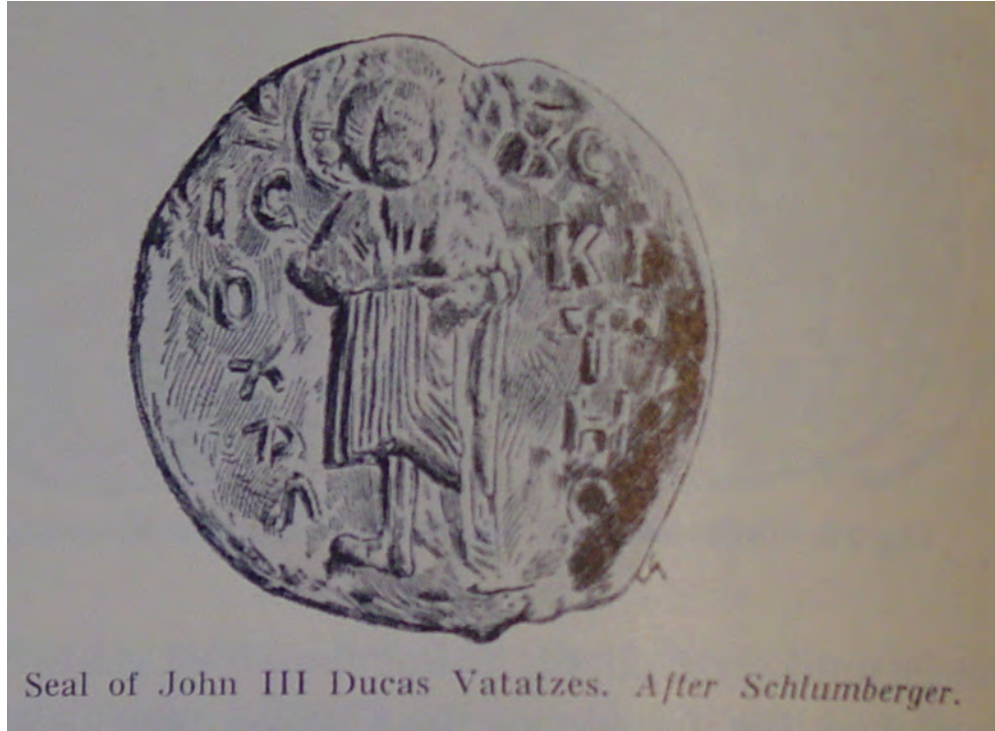


Figure 147: Drawing of seal of John III Doukas Vatatzes
(from Mango, *The Brazen House*, drawn by Schlumberger, Fig. 19)



119b

Figure 148: Seal of Irene Komnena, first wife of John III Doukas Vatatzes and daughter of Theodore I Laskaris
(obverse) IC XC O AYTPOTHC
(reverse) Ειρήνη εὐσεβεστάτη ἀγούστα Κομνηνή
(from Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, Type 119b)



119a

Figure 149: Seal of Irene Komnena, first wife of John III Doukas Vatatzes and daughter of Theodore I Laskaris
(obverse) IC XC O ΛΥΤΡΩΤΗΣ
(reverse) Ειρήνη εὐσεβεστάτη ἀγούστα Κομνηνή
(from Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, Type 119a)



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Figure 150: Seal of Theodore I Laskaris
(obverse) St. Theodore Stratelates
(reverse) Theodore I Laskaris
(from Vacos and Zeglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, Vol. 1, Part 1, No. 116, p. 106)

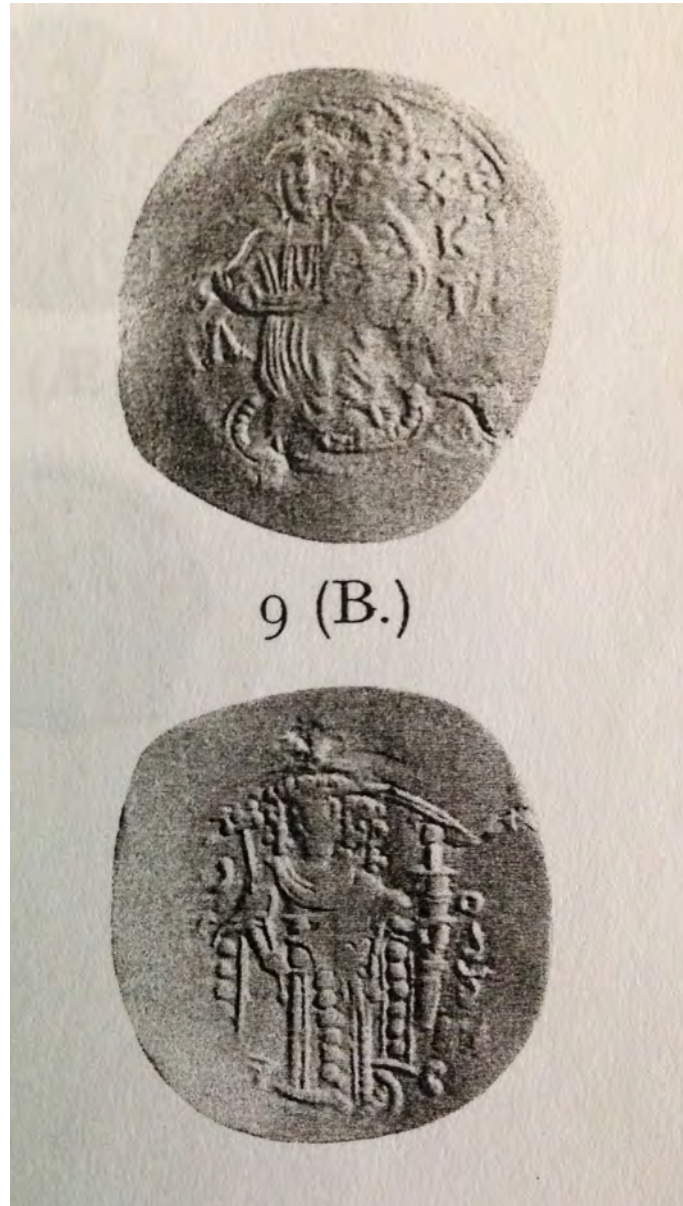


4 (R)

Figure 151: Silver Trachy of Theodore I Laskaris, Mint of Magnesia
(reverse) Theodore I Laskaris and St. Theodore



Figure 152: Silver trachy of John III Doukas Vatatzes (Type B)
(obverse) Virgin enthroned with head of Christ on breast
(reverse) John III being crowned by Christ Chalkites.
(from Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 238, Plate 32.7)



9 (B.)

Figure 153: Billon Trachy of John III Doukas Vatatzes (Type H)
(obverse) Christ Chalkites
(reverse) John Doukas (Vatatzes)
(from Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 243, Plate 33.9)



Figure 154: Seal of Andronikos Dryonites, thirteenth-century Duke of the Thrakesian theme
(from www.christies.com, Lot 273/1206)

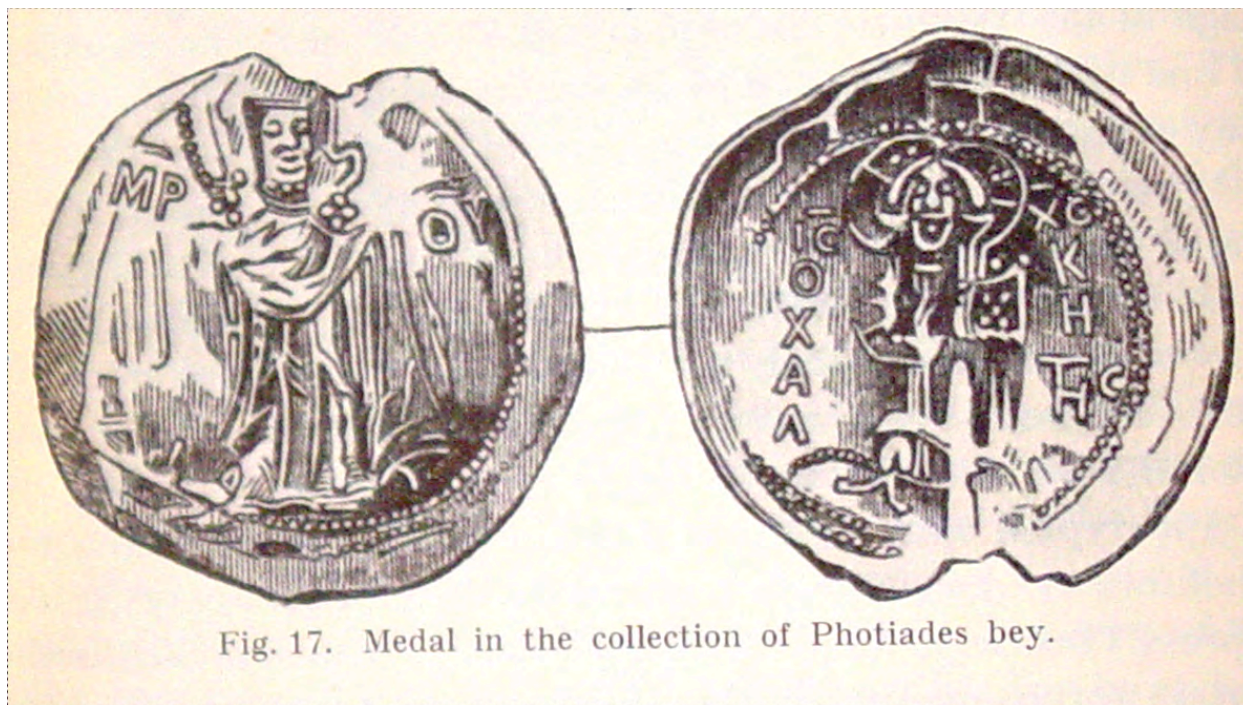


Fig. 17. Medal in the collection of Photiades bey.

Figure 155: Billon Trachy probably from the reign of John III Doukas Vatatzes
(obverse) Christ Chalkites
(reverse) Mater Theou
(from de Longpérier, "Médaille Inédite," Fig. 1; Mango, *The Brazen House*, Fig. 17)



Figure 156: Anonymous Silver Trachy probably from reign of John III Doukas Vatatzes
(obverse) Christ Chalkites
(reverse) Mater Theou
(Naomi Pitamber, 2011)



Figure 157: Anonymous bronze coin, probably from reign of John III Doukas Vatatzes
(obverse) Christ Chalkites
(from Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, p. 265, Plate 36.9)



Figure 158: Aspron Trachy of Theodore I Laskaris (Type B)
(obverse) Christ enthroned, with lilies on throne
(reverse) Theodore I and St. Theodore Stratelates
(from Hendy, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins*, p. 457, Plate XXVI, 2.1)



(34a)

Figure 159: Aspron Trachy nomisma, John III Doukas Vatatzes
(obverse) Christ enthroned
(reverse) John III, lily on *sagion*, below right arm
(from Hendy, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins*, p. 497-498, Plate XXXII, 34a)



Figure 160: Aspron Trachy nomisma, John III Doukas Vatatzes
(obverse) Standing Christ
(reverse) John III, lily at base of long shaft
(from Hendy, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins*, p. 508, Plate XXXIV, 55)

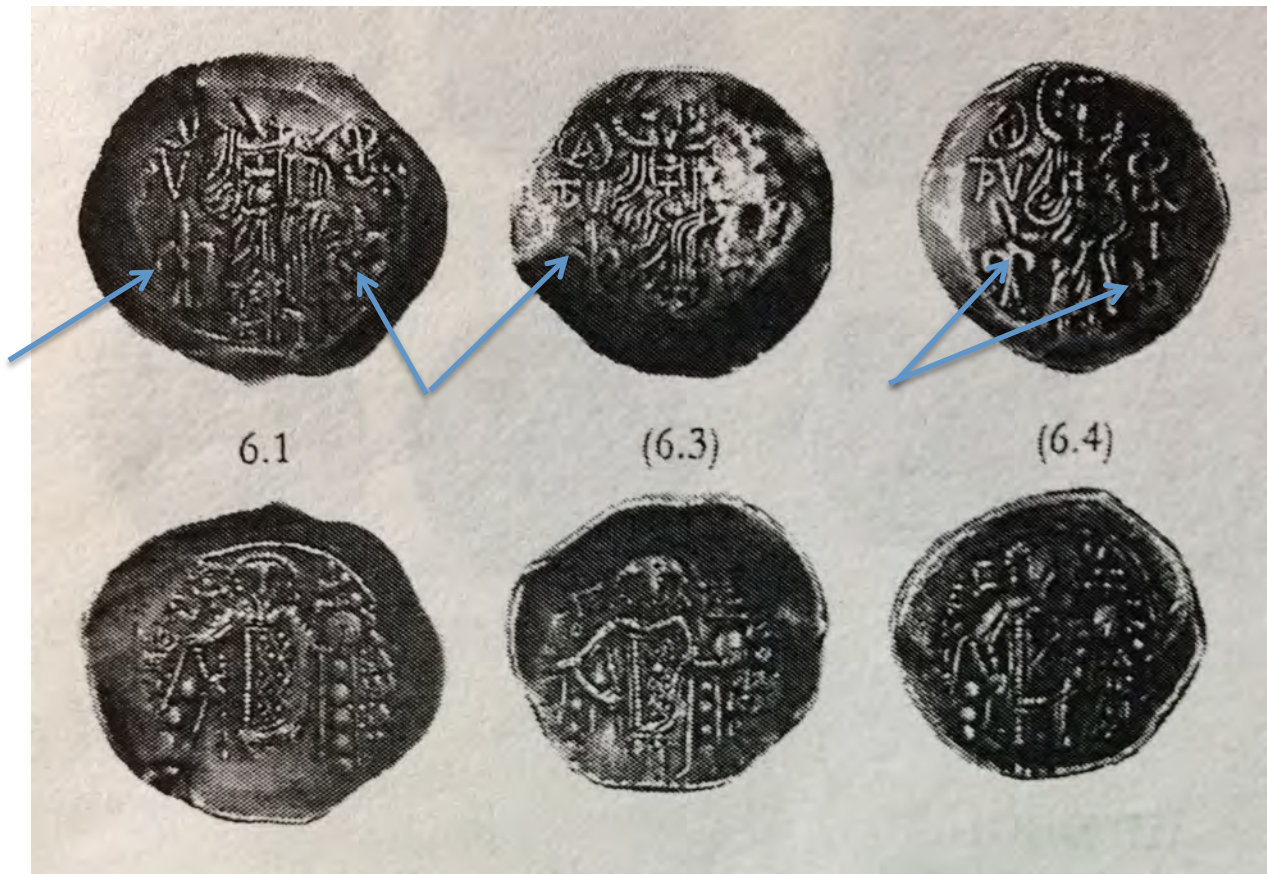


Figure 161: Three aspron trachy nomismata, Theodore II Laskaris
 (obverses) Lilies to left and right of St. Tryphon
 (reverses) Theodore II Laskaris
 (from Hendy, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins*, p. 520-521, Plate XXXV, 6.1,
 6.3, 6.4)

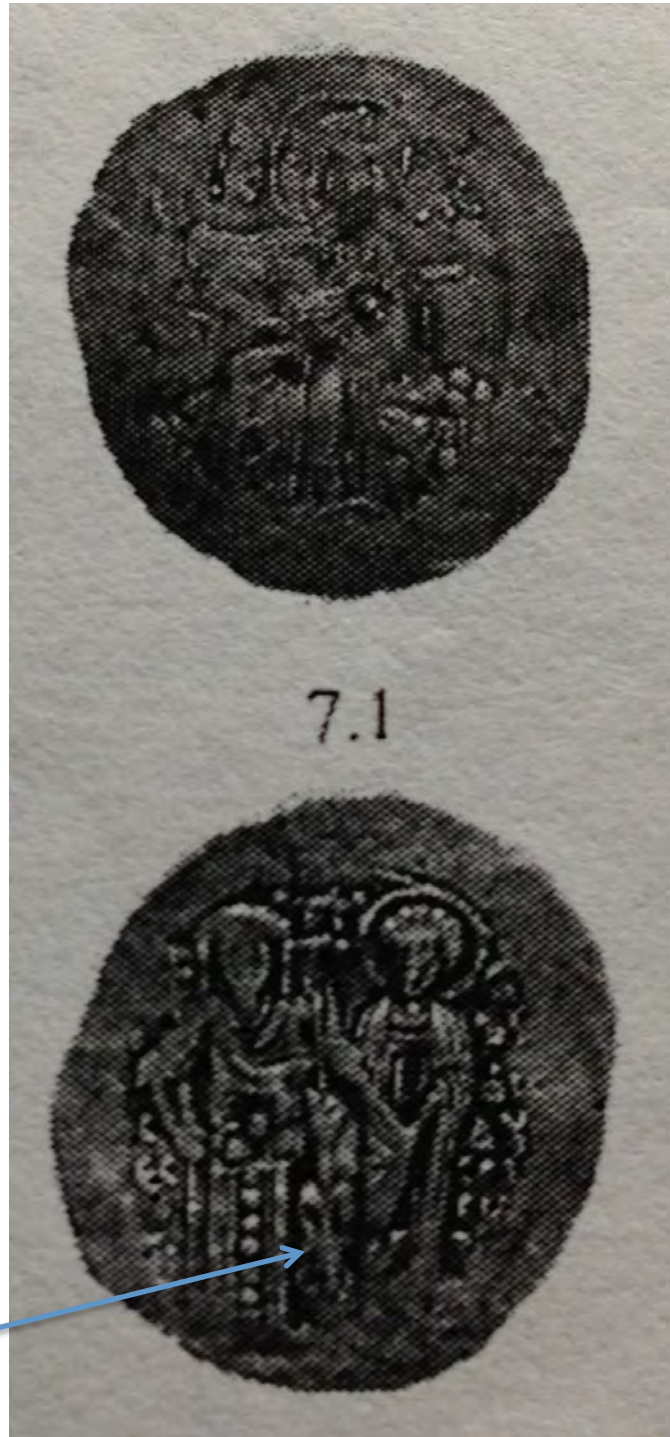


Figure 162: Aspron Trachy Nomisma of Theodore II Laskaris
(obverse) Christ enthroned
(reverse) St. Tryphon and Theodore II holding labarum, whose base is a lily
(from Hendy, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins*, p. 521-522, Plate XXXV, 7.1,
7.2)



Figure 163: Copper Trachy of Theodore II Laskaris
(obverse) St. Tryphon in military dress
(from Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, Plate 72, No. 1189)



1190



Figure 164: Copper Trachy of Theodore II Laskaris
(obverse) St. Tryphon in military dress
(reverse) Theodore II in imperial regalia
(from Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, Plate 72, No. 1190)

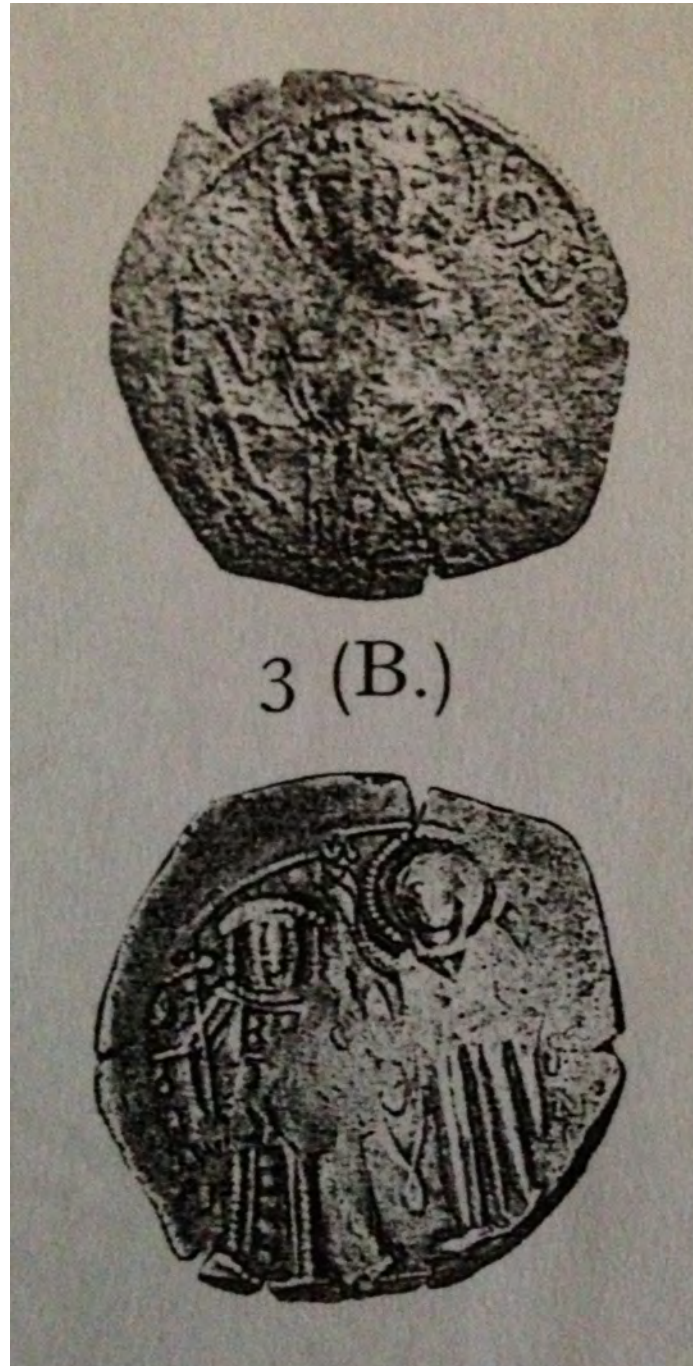


Figure 165: Aspron Trachy of Michael VIII Palaiologos
(obverse) St. Tryphon and two lilies in the lower field
(reverse) Mater Theou and Michael VIII Palaiologos
(from Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, p. 262, Plate 36.3)



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Figure 166: Copper Trachy of Michael VIII Palaiologos
(obverse) St. Tryphon standing between two lilies
(reverse) Michael VIII Palaiologos being crowned by the Virgin
(from Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, Plate 84, No. 1338)



Figure 167: East façade, The Palace of Constantine Palaiologos Porphyrogenitos, Constantinople
(from Sharealike 3.0 Unported, 2011)



Figure 169: The Laskarid Palace at Nymphaion, Kemalpaşa
(Naomi Pitamber, 2009)



Figure 171: Aerial View of Citadel, Kemalpaşa
(From Google Earth, 2014)

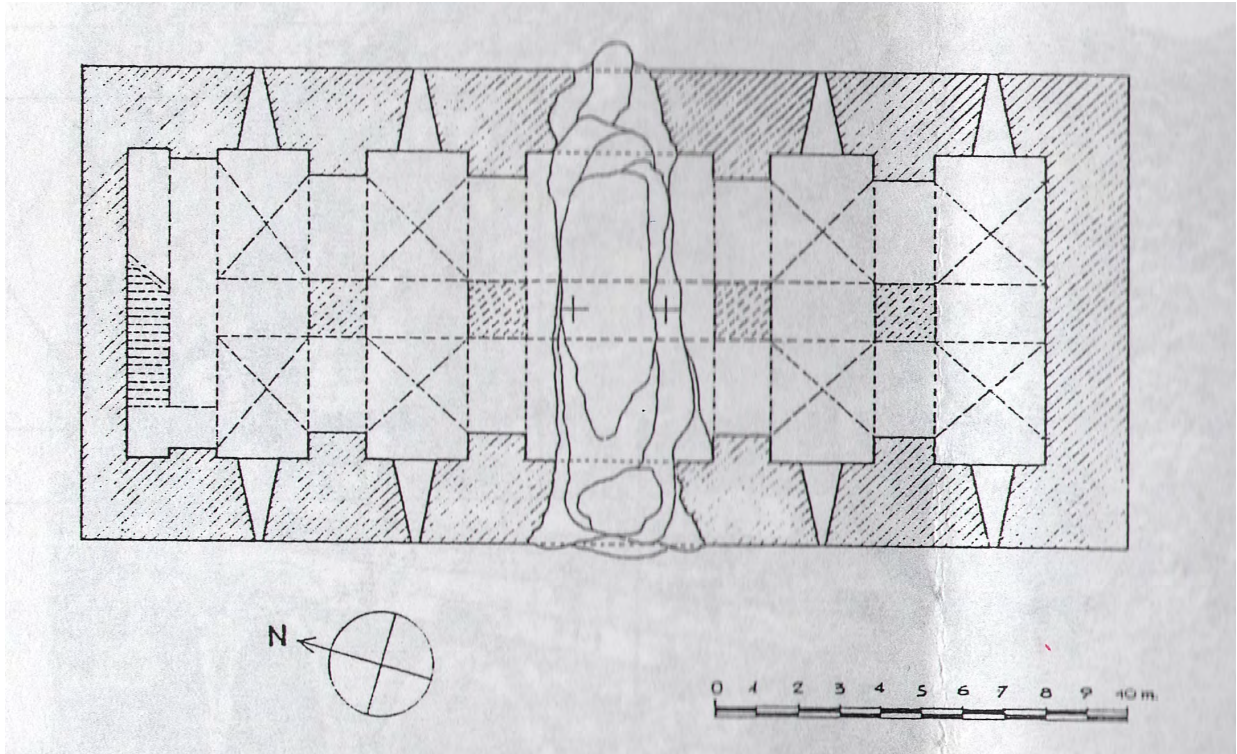


Figure 172: Ground Plan of Ground Floor, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion
(from Kirova, Fig. 4, p. 282)

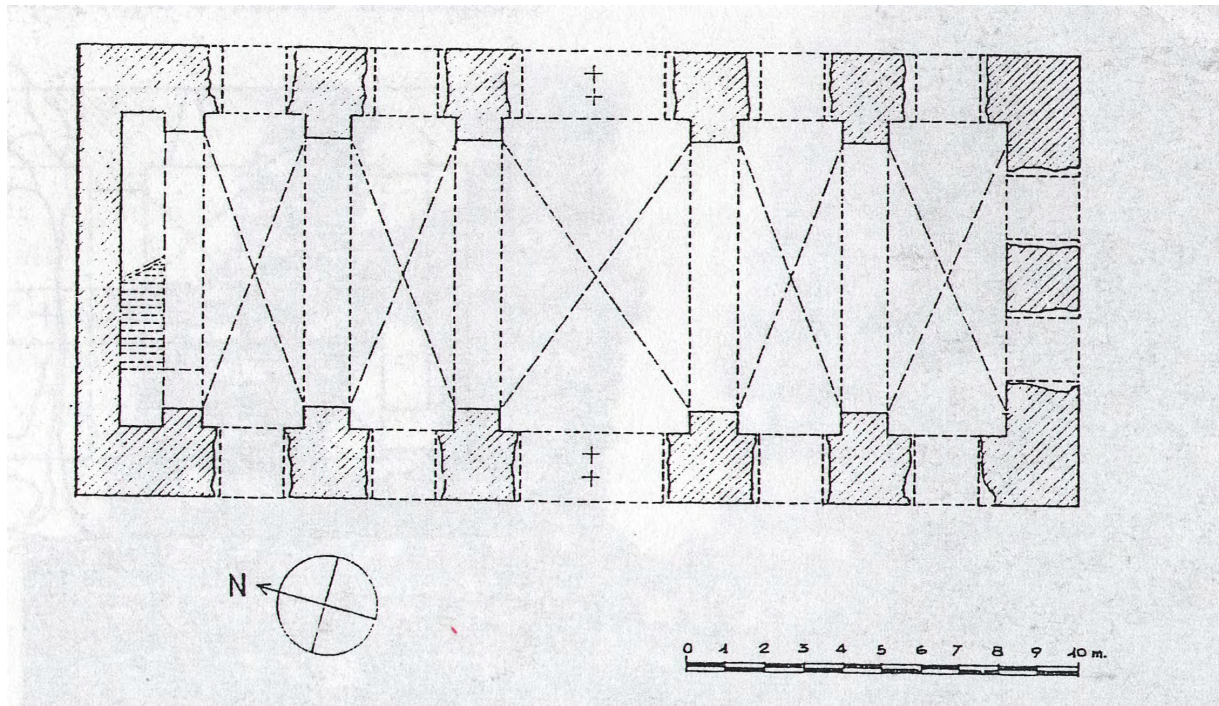


Figure 173: Ground Plan of First Floor, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion
(from Kirova, Fig. 7, p. 285)

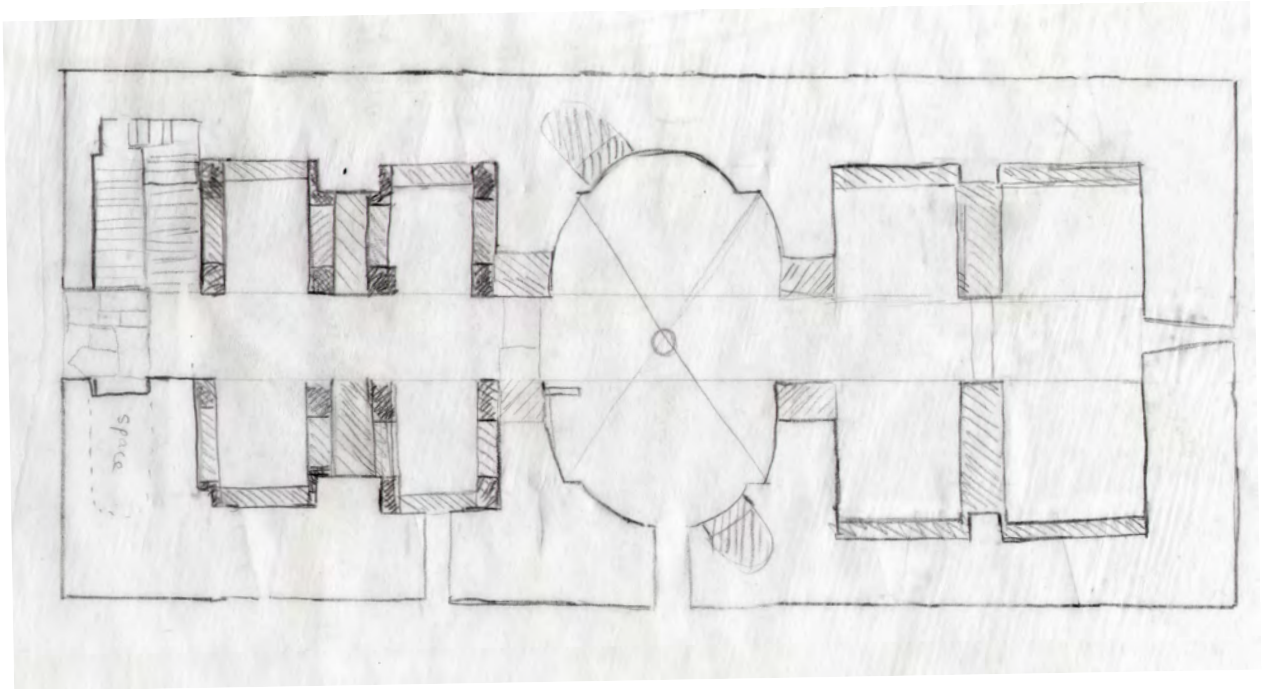


Figure 174: Reconstructed Ground Plan of Ground Floor, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion
(Naomi Pitamber, after Kirova, p. 282, 285)

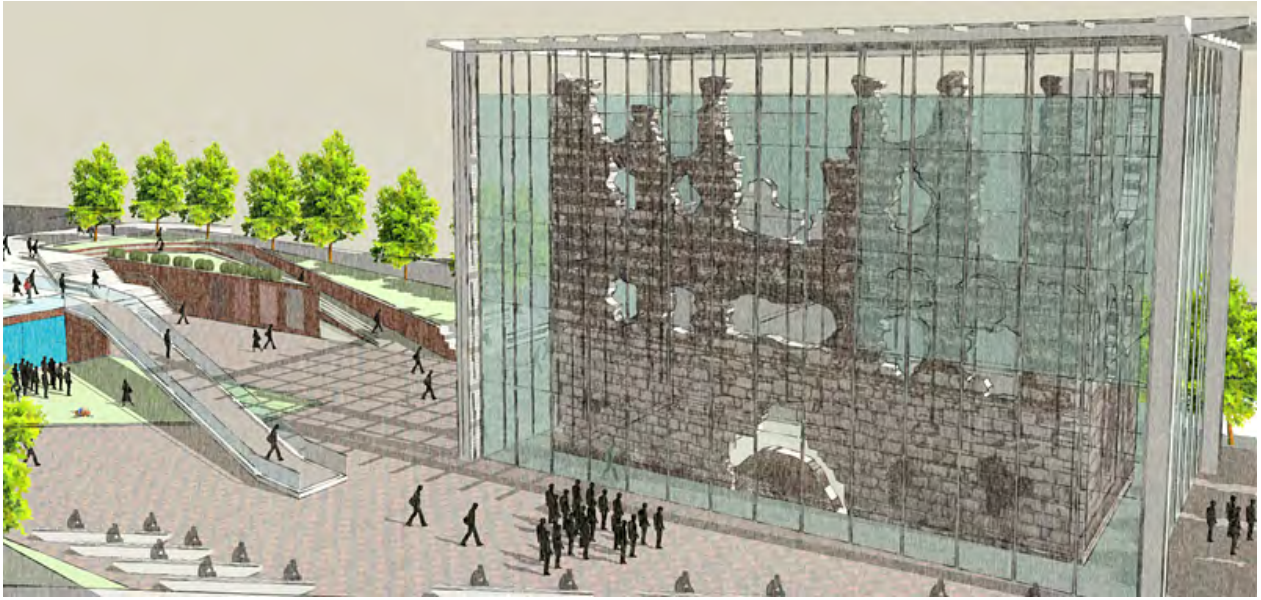


Figure 175: Digital site plan of the Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion (YD Architects, 2009)



Figure 176: Front Door at north, Ground Floor, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion
(YD Architects, 2013)



Figure 177: East façade, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion
(Photograph in the public domain)



Figure 178: Detail of pipes exiting wall surface, west side, central room, ground floor, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion (YD Architects, 2013)



Figure 179: Polychrome fresco on center room wall, ground floor, east side, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion (YD Architects, 2013)



Figure 180: Dado, palmettes and zigzag in white on blue background, center room, ground floor, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion (YD Architects, 2013)



Figure 181: Detail of well in center of center room, ground floor, Laskarid Palace, Nymphaion (YD Architects, 2013)



Figure 182: The arms of the Palaiologoi, now in the wall of a staircase in Edirnekapı, Istanbul
(from <http://icfa.doaks.org/collections/artamonoff/archive/files/bdf5bd7a61e5201e08bb990a4aa19e75.jpg>)



Figure 183: Anonymous Tetrartera, Theodore I Laskaris
(obv) cross with IC XC
(rev) two Bs
(from Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, 376, Plate 69, No. 1155)



Figure 184: Anonymous Palaiologan Billon Trachy
(obv) Four Betas
(rev) inscription
(from Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, 381, Plate 83, No. 1336)



1383



Figure 185: Copper Trachy of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259-1261)
(obv) Large *fleur-de-lis*
(rev) Michael VIII with cross and *akakia*
(from Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, 303, Plate 87, No. 1383)

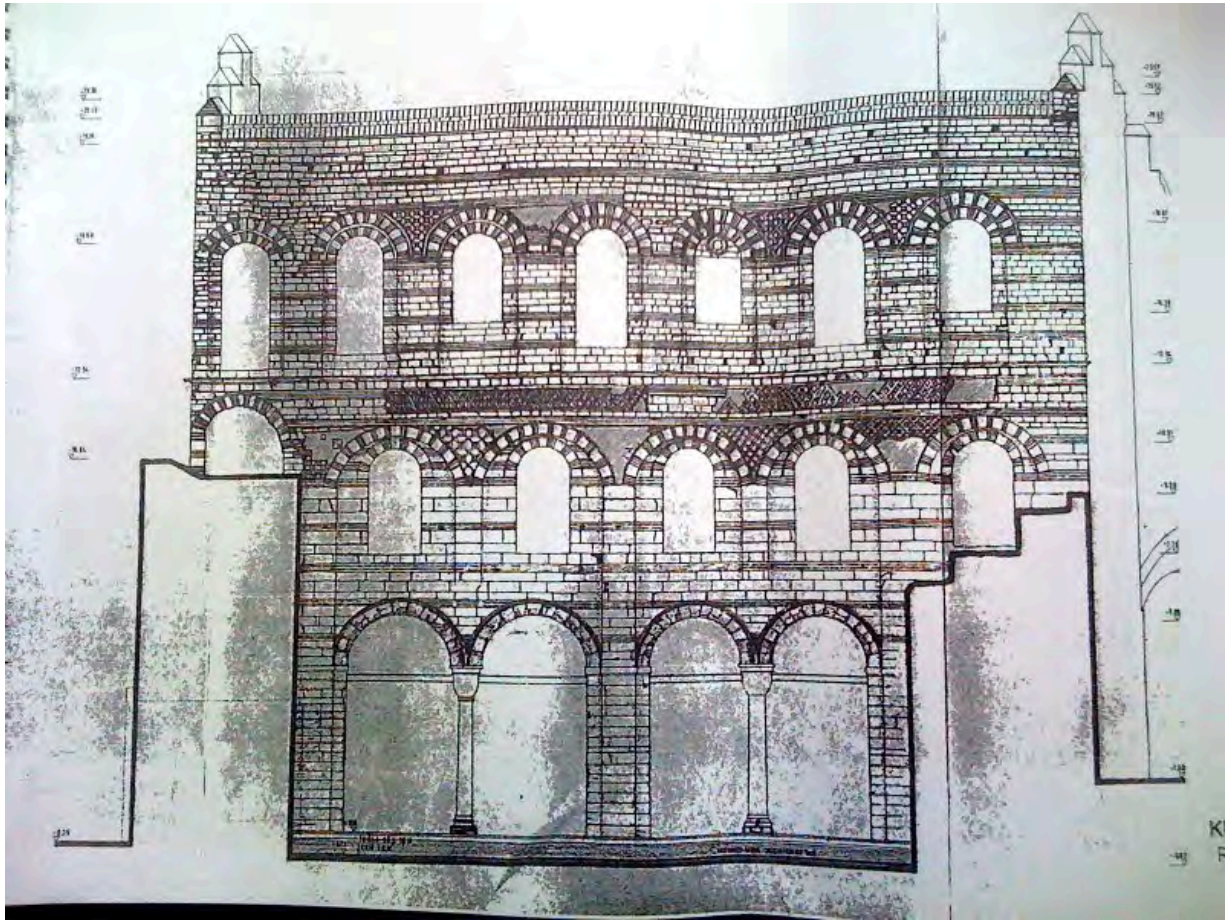


Figure 186: Western façade, facing the countryside, Palace of the Porphyrogenitos, Constantinople (YD Architects, 2002)



Figure 187: Boğdan Sarayı, Constantinople
(<http://icfa.doaks.org/collections/artamonoff/archive/files/d58fc6202264e7c8cd6eef54851122db.jpg>>>)



Figure 188: İsakapısı Mescidi, Constantinople
(<http://icfa.doaks.org/collections/artamonoff/archive/files/4a434bbed95748c52521789b490e4400.jpg>)



Figure 189: The Martyrdom of St. Tryphon in Nicæa, from the Menologion of Basil II, 1000
(Photograph from <<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7b/Tryphon_of_Campsada_%28Menologion_of_Basil_II%29.jpg>>)



Figure 190: Epitaph of John Komnenos Kamytzes, *meas hetaireiarches*, under John III Doukas Vatatzes, in Byzantine Museum of Veroia (Sharon Gerstel, 2012)



Figure 191: Engraved drawing of sarcophagus lid found at Nymphaion
(From C. Texier, “Tombeaux du moyen-âge à Kutayah et à Nymphi (Asie mineure),” *RA*, Plate 7)

List of Abbreviations for Journals

<i>AA</i>	<i>Archäologisches Anzeiger</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AnnInstKond</i>	<i>Annales de l'Institut N. P. Kondakov</i>
<i>Άρχ.Δελτ.</i>	<i>Άρχαιολογικὸν δελτίον</i>
<i>Άρχ.Έφ.</i>	<i>Άρχαιολογική ἔφημερίς</i>
<i>ArtB</i>	<i>Art Bulletin</i>
<i>AST</i>	<i>Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı</i>
<i>ByzF</i>	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
<i>BMGS</i>	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
<i>BSCAbstra</i>	<i>Byzantine Studies Conference, Abstracts of Papers</i>
<i>BSI</i>	<i>Byzantinoslavica</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>CahArch</i>	<i>Cahiers Archaeologique</i>
<i>CorsiRav</i>	<i>Corsi di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina</i>
<i>Δελτ.Χριστ.Άρχ.Έτ.</i>	<i>Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἑταιρείας</i>
<i>Δελτ.Έτ.Έλλ.</i>	<i>Δελτίον τῆς ἱστορικῆς καὶ ἔθνολογικῆς ἑταιρείας τῆς Ἑλλάδος</i>
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>Έπ.Έτ.Βυζ.Σπ.</i>	<i>Έπετηρίς ἑταιρείας βυζαντινῶν σπουδῶν</i>
<i>EO</i>	<i>Echos d'Orient</i>
<i>FR</i>	<i>Felix Ravenna</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>IRAIK</i>	<i>Izvestiia Russkogo arkheologicheskogo instituta v Konstantinopole</i>
<i>IstForsch</i>	<i>Istanbuler Forschungen</i>
<i>IstMitt</i>	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen</i>
<i>JbBM</i>	<i>Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen</i>
<i>JDAI</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JÖB</i>	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
<i>JÖBG</i>	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>KST</i>	<i>Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı</i>
<i>NC</i>	<i>The Numismatic Chronicle</i>
<i>NCirc</i>	<i>The Numismatic Circular</i>
<i>Νέος Έλλ.</i>	<i>Νέος Έλληνομνημῶν</i>
<i>OAr</i>	<i>Orientalisches Archiv</i>
<i>OCA</i>	<i>Orientalia christiana analecta</i>
<i>OCP</i>	<i>Orientalia christiana periodica</i>
<i>ODB</i>	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i>
<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca</i>
<i>RA</i>	<i>Revue archéologique</i>
<i>RN</i>	<i>Revue numismatique</i>
<i>StVen</i>	<i>Studi veneziani</i>
<i>SüdostF</i>	<i>Südost-Forschungen</i>

TEBE Haberler
TM
VizVrem
ZSavRom

Türk eskiçağ bilimleri enstitüsü haberler
Travaux et mémoires
Vizantiiskii vremennik
Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte
Romanistische Abteilung

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