

SYMEON THE METAPHRAST, Calendar Collection (*Menologion*) of Hagiographic Readings  
for September  
In Greek, manuscript on parchment  
Byzantium, Constantinople, c. 1050 AD

[illegible]

A grand, deluxe Menologion in the text by Symeon the Metaphrast, distinguished by its early date (close to Symeon's original composition), its fine script and extensive illumination, and its lavish use of gold leaf, which place it as a product of the Byzantine imperial capital. It belonged to a monastery in Mount Athos before it was deaccessioned in 1960 and then to Martin Schøyen, who amassed one of the finest collections of Greek manuscripts in private hands in modern times. All other known copies of this text of the Menologion are in public or ecclesiastical collections.

## PROVENANCE

1. Judging from its script, the book was produced relatively soon after Symeon's collection was published, posthumously, during the reign of Emperor Constantine VIII, 1025-28 AD (Høgel, pp. 127-34). The volume's fine script and illumination, combined with lavish use of gold, identify it as a product of the Byzantine capital.

2. Until 1960, this manuscript was Codex 49 in the library of the Dionysiou Monastery on Mount Athos, Greece. It was listed by Spyridon Lambros (1851-1919) as no. 3583 in his catalogue of Greek manuscripts on Mount Athos, and subsequently mentioned by Albert Ehrhard (1862-1940) (Lambros, vol. I, p. 322; Ehrhard, vol. II, p. 322). The J. Paul Getty Museum owns another Greek manuscript, a handsome twelfth-century New Testament, from the Dionysiou Monastery (their Codex 8; now Ludwig MS II. 30; see Robert S. Nelson, "Theoktistos and Associates in Twelfth-Century Constantinople: An Illustrated New Testament of A.D. 1133," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 15 [1987], pp. 53-78).
3. Sold London, Sotheby's, 6 December 1988, lot 25;
4. Martin Schøyen Collection, Spikkestad, Norway, his MS 192; deaccession December 2010 (on the collection, [www.shoyencollection.com](http://www.shoyencollection.com)).

## TEXT

[cf. the list in Høgel, pp. 127-34]

ff. 1r-2r, Table of Contents, entitled Πίναξ ἀκριβῆς τῆς γραφῆς τοῦ βιβλίου ("Accurate Contents of the Text in This Book");

ff. 3r-31r, 1 September: Life of St. Symeon the Stylite [BHG 1686-7];

ff. 31r-40v, 2 September: Martyrdom of St. Mamas [BHG 1018];

ff. 40v-47r, 3 September: Martyrdom of Anthimus, Bishop of Nicomedia [BHG 135];

ff. 47v-54v, 4 September: Martyrdom of Archbishop Babylas [BHG 206];

ff. 54v-60v, 6 September: Miracle of the Archangel Michael at Chonae [BHG 1284];

ff. 61r-67v, 7 September: Martyrdom of Saints Eudoxius, Romulus, Zeno and Macarius [BHG 1604];

ff. 67v-70v, 7 September: Martyrdom of St. Sozon [BHG 1644];

ff. 70v-77r, 8 September: Martyrdom of St. Severianus [BHG 1627];

ff. 77v-84r, 9 September: Martyrdom of Saints Menodora, Metrodora and Nymphodora [BHG 1273];

ff. 84r-97v, 11 September: Life of St. Theodora of Alexandria [BHG 1730];

ff. 97v-101v, 12 September: Martyrdom of St. Autonomus [BHG 198];

ff. 101v-111r, 13 September: Martyrdom of the Centurion Cornelius [BHG 371];

ff. 111r-115v, 15 September: Martyrdom of St. Nicetas [BHG 1340];

ff. 115v-127r, 16 September: Martyrdom of St. Euphemia [BHG 620];

ff. 127v-136v, 17 September: Martyrdom of St. Sophia and Her Daughters [BHG 1638];

ff. 136v-143v, 18 September: Martyrdom of Saints Trophimus, Sabbatius and Dorymedon [BHG 1854];

ff. 144r-166v, 20 September: Martyrdom of Saints Eustace and Theophiste and of Their Children [BHG 642];

ff. 166v-171r, 22 September: Encomium of St. Phocas by Asterius, Bishop of Amasia [BHG 1539-40];

ff. 171v-184v, 24 September: Martyrdom of St. Thecla [BHG 1719];

ff. 184v-193r, 25 September: Life of St. Euphrosyne of Alexandria [BHG 626];

ff. 193r-204v, 26 September: Life of St. John the Evangelist [BHG 919];

ff. 205r-213v, 27 September: Martyrdom of St. Callistratus and His Companions [BHG 291];

ff. 214r-224r, 28 September: Life of St. Chariton [BHG 301];

ff. 224v-236r, 29 September: Life of St. Cyriacus the Hermit [BHG 464];

ff. 236r-266r, 30 September: Life and Martyrdom of St. Gregory of Greater Armenia [BHG 713];

f. 266v, originally blank.

A fifteenth-century hand has noted the length of each text in the lower margin under its initial column, e.g. "28 leaves" (f. 3r *infra*) for the Life of St. Symeon which extends from f. 3 to f. 31. The originally blank f. 266v contains old scribbles and doodles by four or five different hands, including the following verses: τὸ [ἔ]πος θεῖον ἐνθάδε γεγραμμένον / [...] ἐξίσταμαι καὶ πάνυ [κη]ρύσσω / τοῦ πᾶν σθεναροῦ καὶ βροτουργοῦ Δεσπότη ( "I marvel at the holy writings herein, which mightily proclaim [the mighty glory] of the almighty Lord, creator of all mortals"). On the front pastedown appear the words "this b[ook]," followed by two Greek alphabets written in the same hand.

Menologia are collections of readings for the fixed feast days of the Eastern Orthodox ecclesiastic year, which begins on 1 September. This manuscript belongs to a re-worked edition of the Menologion produced by Symeon the Metaphrast (d. c. 1000), or Symeon the "compiler

[metaphrast].” Some scholars believe him to be identical with Symeon Magister the Logothete who wrote a chronicle under Nicephorus Phocas (963-9). The present manuscript was the first volume in a set of ten (it is uncertain whether any of its original companions survive). Judging from its script, the book was produced relatively soon after Symeon’s collection was published, posthumously, during the reign of Emperor Constantine VIII, 1025-28 AD (Høgel, pp. 127-34). The volume’s fine script and illumination, combined with lavish use of gold, identify it as a product of the Byzantine capital. For a sample of closely comparable manuscripts see Gentile, pp. 164-72, cat. nos. 12-17. Ninety-nine other Metaphrastian September volumes are known (Ehrhard, II, pp. 318-58), all of them in public or ecclesiastical libraries.

## LITERATURE

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Gentile, S., ed. *Oriente cristiano e santità: Figure e storie di santi tra Bisanzio e l'Occidente*, Venice, 1998.

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Høgel, C. *Symeon Metaphrastes: Rewriting and Canonization*, Copenhagen, 2002.

Hunger, H. “Die Perlschrift, eine Stilrichtung der griechischen Buchschrift des 11. Jahrhunderts,” in *Studien zur griechischen Paläographie*, Vienna, 1954, pp. 22-32; repr. in, *Byzantinische Grundlagenforschung: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, London, 1973, no. i.

Lambros, S. P. *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts on Mount Athos*, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1895-1900 (see also Online Resources)

Sautel, J.-H., ed. *Répertoire de réglures dans les manuscrits grecs sur parchemin*, Turnhout, 1995 (see also Online Resources)

## ONLINE RESOURCES

Lambros, S. P. *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts on Mount Athos*, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1895-1900  
<http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr>

J.-H. Sautel, ed. *Répertoire de réglures dans les manuscrits grecs sur parchemin*, Turnhout, 1995  
<http://www.palaeographia.org/muzerelle/grecs1.htm>

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