

Edited by HELEN SARADI  
In collaboration with AIKATERINI DELLAPORTA

# BYZANTINE ATHENS

## PROCEEDINGS OF A CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 21–23, 2016  
BYZANTINE AND CHRISTIAN MUSEUM  
ATHENS

Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports  
BYZANTINE & CHRISTIAN MUSEUM





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Editor: Helen Saradi  
Graphic Design: Yannis Stavrinos and Akakia Publications UK  
ISBN: 978-960-386-543-8  
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## THEONI KOLLYROPOULOU – ANNA LAMBROPOULOU

### Hagiography of Athens: The Formation of the Christian Tradition of Byzantine Athens (4th–9th Century)

The gradual spread of Christianity in Athens<sup>1</sup>, a centre and symbol of ancient learning, had already begun by the 1st century, when, according to the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 18:16–34), Paul preached in Athens. Athens appears to have preserved its pagan character longer than did other cities in the Greek-speaking East<sup>2</sup>. In the written sources the image of the city is still pagan in the 4th century. Christianity is evident primarily in the presence of Athens' bishop Pistos in the 1st Ecumenical Council<sup>3</sup> and in three martyria dated to the late 4th–early 5th century: the Martyrium of St Leonides, attached to the basilica of the Ilissos<sup>4</sup>, a martyrium dedicated to the Athenian martyrs Menas and Hermogenes by the Rizokastron at the Acropolis<sup>5</sup> and a subterranean chamber, located inside the ancient enclosure of the city (at 11–13 Agiou Markou Str.)<sup>6</sup>.

At the beginning of the 5th century several Christian churches were built, the most important of which are the Tetraconch, later known as the Great Panagia, in the courtyard of the Library of Hadrian<sup>7</sup>, and the basilica of the Ilissos<sup>8</sup>. The location of the Tetraconch in the centre of the ancient city and indeed in the heart of the Library of Hadrian is symbolically charged. The central government, perhaps in connection with the empress Eudokia (421–460), of Athenian origin, may have been responsible for its construction at such a central point<sup>9</sup>. At the end of the 5th century the Parthenon was converted into a three-aisled basilica consecrated to the Virgin (Panagia

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1 For the spread of Christianity in Athens and in Attica, see PALLAS, *Ἡ Ἀθήνα*; TROMBLEY, *Hellenic Religion I*, 283–332; CASTRÉN, *Paganism and Christianity* 211–223; DI BRANCO, *La città dei filosofi* 181–197; BALDINI, *Atene: la città cristiana* 309–321; TZAVELLA, *Christianisation of Attica*; G. DELIGIANNAKIS, *From Paganism to Christianity in Late Antique Athens: A Re-Evaluation*, in: *Athens II* 137–152.

2 TROMBLEY, *Hellenic Religion* 283–332. For a more nuanced view see DELIGIANNAKIS, *From Paganism to Christianity* 149–152.

3 D.I. MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, II. Florence 1759, 701.

4 BOURAS, *Βυζαντινή Αθήνα* 185–187, no. 22, 257, n. 37.

5 PALLAS, *Ἡ Ἀθήνα* 880, n. 116a, 930.

6 LASKARIS, *Monuments funéraires* 422–423, fig. B 34, 47.

7 TRAVLOS, *Πολεοδομική εξέλιξις* 132, 139, n. 2; PALLAS, *Ἡ Ἀθήνα* 867–870; BOURAS, *Βυζαντινή Αθήνα* 66–68, 256, 257, n. 39.

8 PALLAS, *Ἡ Ἀθήνα* 26–28.

9 FOWDEN, *The Athenian agora*; DI BRANCO, *La città dei filosofi* 220–227.

Atheniotissa)<sup>10</sup>. In the early 7th century the Erechtheion was also converted into a Christian church, while the date of the conversion of the temple of Hephaistos at Theseion is still unknown<sup>11</sup>.

The Church in Athens was apparently flourishing at this period, as its members had the financial wherewithal to build martyria and basilicas. In the early 5th century, the empress Eudokia and the policy of Theodosius II (408–450) of rapprochement between pagans and Christians appear to have strengthened the Church in Athens. In the late 5th century, the increased power of the Church is evident in the conversion of the Parthenon into a church and culminates in the closure in 529 by Justinian (527–565) of the Neoplatonic Academy. Furthermore, most of the churches in the countryside around Athens date to the late 5th or to the 6th century<sup>12</sup>.

In contrast to the archaeological evidence, however, there are no hagiographic texts concerning the saints of Athens of the Early Byzantine period. This may be because there were no monastic establishments in Athens and Attica at the time and certainly shows that the bishops of Athens were not active in composing Lives of the saints of Athens and promoting their cult. Nor are bishops of Athens known to have been involved in public construction, in contrast to the situation in other cities, and their personalities remain invisible until the 12th century, when prominent scholars began to occupy the archiepiscopal throne<sup>13</sup>.

Despite this lack of hagiographic texts, however, the increasing strength of the Athenian Church is reflected in a series of other texts: in the Life of Proclus written by his disciple Marinus of Neapolis, possibly in 486, in the fifth-century Apocryphal Acts of Philip, in theosophical texts dated to the second half of the 5th to the 6th century and in the Ἐξηγητικὸν περὶ τοῦ ἐν Ἀθήναις ναοῦ by pseudo-Athanasios of Alexandria, dated to the second half of 5th/6th century. It can also be seen in the connection of the Corpus Dionysiacum with Dionysios the Areopagite.

In the Life of Proclus, the goddess Athena is shown asking for the removal of her statue from the Parthenon, obviously before its transformation into a church<sup>14</sup>.

In the Apocryphal Acts of Philip<sup>15</sup>, Philip preached in Athens and impressed the Athenian philosophers, who were converted through the power of miracles that proved the power of the new religion.

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10 MANGO, *The Conversion*; TADDEI, *La metamorfosi*; KALDELLIS, *The Christian Parthenon*; OUSTERHOUT, *The Parthenon 293–329*; KIILERICH, *From Temple to Church*.

11 B. KIILERICH, in the present volume, suggests that the Hephaisteion was converted into a church in the 9th/10th century.

12 TZAVELLA, *Christianisation of Attica*.

13 KALDELLIS, *The Christian Parthenon 122–129, 145–162*.

14 Marinus, *Vita di Proclo* (ed. R. MASULLO), 30.

15 *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha II/2* (ed. M. BONNET), 3–16; *Acta Philippi*; cf. DI BRANCO, *La città dei filosofi 201–203*.

The aim of the Theosophy of Tübingen<sup>16</sup> was to demonstrate the superiority of the Christian faith to paganism and the peaceful transition to the new religion. In the Oracles of the Greek Gods, dated between 474 and 503, an inscription is cited, allegedly found at the site of the famous temple of Kyzikos, during the reign of Emperor Leo (457–474), containing a prophecy of Apollo that the temple was to be converted into a church in honor of the Theotokos, like ‘the temple in Athens’, which is presumably the Parthenon. Such oracles foretelling the transformation of a pagan temple into a Christian church appear to have been circulating at the time. An inscription recording a similar oracle has been found in a church built on the site of a temple in Ikaria<sup>17</sup>. The aim of such prophecies was to justify to pagans the establishment of Christianity and to facilitate Christian proselytism.

In the Ἐξηγητικὸν περὶ τοῦ ἐν Ἀθήναις ναοῦ<sup>18</sup> attributed to pseudo-Athanasios, Apollo, who is presented as a wise mortal, built the ‘Temple of Athens’, that is, the Parthenon, several years before the birth of Christ and inscribed the words Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ on its altar. The Seven Sages then gathered in the Parthenon (in an adaptation of the story of the Symposium of the Seven Sages)<sup>19</sup> and asked Apollo what temple this was and to whom the altar belonged. Apollo predicted that the shrine would be dedicated to the Theotokos and foretold the birth of Christ. This episode, which is a Christianized version of the tradition of the Seven Sages, is repeated in the theosophical collections published by Erbse<sup>20</sup>, dating from the second half of the 5th to the 6th century<sup>21</sup>. Thus in the second half of the 5th and in the early 6th century, Christian intellectuals and ecclesiastics constructed narratives to account for the success of the new religion and for the defeat of paganism. In appropriating pagan tradition, they facilitated the process of convergence with pagans and promoted the spread of the Christian religion.

The geopolitical and military role of Athens was acknowledged by

16 Textus Theosophiae Tubingensis (ed. H. ERBSE) 1–56; Anonymi Monophysitae Theosophia: An Attempt at Reconstruction (ed. P.F. BEATRICE). Leiden 2001, xxxiv–l. Cf. MANGO, The Conversion of the Parthenon 201–203; BUSINE, Gathering Sacred Words.

17 G. DELIGIANNAKIS, Late Paganism on the Aegean Islands and Processes of Christianisation, in: ‘Paganism’ 325–327.

18 A. VON PREMERSTEIN, Ein pseudo-athanasianischer Traktat mit apokryphen Philosophensprüchen im Codex Bodleianus Roe 5, in: Εἰς μνήμην Σπυρίδωνος Λάμπρου. Athens 1935, 183–186.

19 Plutarch, Moralia: Τῶν ἑπτὰ σοφῶν συμπόσιον (ed. F.C. BABBITT), 146b–164d.

20 See Προφητεῖαι ἑπτὰ Ἑλλήνων σοφῶν περὶ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (μ: 1–7) and concisely: ω: 9, γ: 10, π: 1 (Theos. gr. fr.). Cf. A. BUSINE, The discovery of inscriptions and the legitimation of new cults, in: Historical & Religious Memory in the Ancient World (eds B. DIGNAS – R.R.R. SMITH). Oxford 2012, 244–256.

21 On these texts see BUSINE, Paroles d’Apollon; EADEM, Les Sept Sages prophètes du christianisme. Tradition gnomique et littérature théosophique, in: Theologische Orakel in der Spätantike (eds H. SENG – G. SFAMENI GASPARRO). Heidelberg 2016, 257–280.



Constantinople in the 8th century<sup>22</sup>, in the context of the strengthening of imperial control in central and southern Greece. At some point during this period, Athens may have become the seat of the *strategos* of the theme of Hellas<sup>23</sup>. In 732 the ecclesiastical province of Illyricum was detached from the Church of Rome and was annexed to the Church of Constantinople<sup>24</sup>. The bishopric of Athens was subsequently detached from the metropolis of Corinth and was elevated to the status of a metropolis, now subordinate to Constantinople. This promotion occurred in the second half of the 8th century, most likely during the reign of Eirene of Athens (797–802)<sup>25</sup>. This strengthening of the position of Athens in the Empire may be connected with efforts on the part of the state to reinforce Byzantine control over southern Greece and with the ascent to the throne of Eirene of Athens, who, following the imperial tradition, promoted the Church of her native city.

The imperial interest in Athens<sup>26</sup> is of great importance here, in that most Athenian saints were included in the Synaxarion of the Church of Constantinople in the 10th century. The degree of incorporation of local saints into the liturgical calendar of Constantinople depended on the political, military, economic, and ecclesiastical importance of the region in question for the central administration of the Empire. Southern Italian and Sicilian saints, who originated in a region of great importance for Byzantium, were also incorporated in the calendar of Constantinople<sup>27</sup>. Thus the inclusion of the saints of Athens in the Synaxarion of the capital, in addition to the obvious liturgical significance, shows that Constantinople regarded Athens as particularly important in political and military terms.

The Lives<sup>28</sup> and services (*akolouthiai*) of the saints of Athens were composed during the Middle Byzantine period. Thus their cult was systematized with synaxaria, services, and liturgical *typika*. This ordering of local cults was not done at the behest of the Athenian Church. Rather, it was a consequence of the connection of Athens with Constantinople<sup>29</sup>. The organization and

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22 On Athens in the early Middle Ages see R. BROWNING, Athens in the Dark Age, in: Culture and History. Essays presented to Jack Lindsay (ed. B. SMITH). Sydney 1984, 297–303 (= Variorum Reprints 1989, IV); ZAVAGNO, Cities 55–58.

23 See the references in the article of Y. Theocharis in the present volume.

24 Theophanes, Χρονολογία (ed. C. DE BOOR) I, 404.

25 V. LAURENT, L'érection de la Métropole d'Athènes et le statut ecclésiastique de l'Illyricum au VIIIe siècle. *REB* 1 (1943) 68–71; DARROUZÈS, Notitiae episcopatum 19 and no. 2.38; BRUBAKER – HALDON, Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era 174–176.

26 The influence of Constantinople is also attested on Athenian sculptures in this period: see the article of Y. Theocharis in the present volume.

27 E.g. Gregory, bishop of Akragas (24 Nov., Synax. CP 251–253), Leon (21 Feb.) and Beryllus (21 Mar.), bishops of Catania (Synax. CP 479–480, 551–552).

28 On the image of Athens in the hagiographical texts see DI BRANCO, La città dei filosofi 200–220.

29 For the impact of the *typikon* of Constantinople on the *typikon* of the Church of Athens, cf. Demetrios Chomatianos, *Analecta sacra...* (ed. J. PITRA) 619–620. Cf. ALEXOPOULOS, When a Column Speaks.

strengthening of the position of the Church of Athens led to the promotion of its saints, the aim of which was to create from the early centuries the image of a Christian city whose glory matched that of Classical Athens.

Thus the Church of Athens possessed many saints from the 1st century. Hagiographical texts mention at least twenty saints of Athenian origin. For the 1st century several saints are attested: Anakletos, bishop of Rome (whose memory is celebrated only by the Catholic Church)<sup>30</sup>, the bishops of Athens Hierotheos<sup>31</sup> and Dionysios the Areopagite<sup>32</sup>, Damaris<sup>33</sup> and the disciples of Dionysios the Areopagite, Eleutherios and Roustikos, who were executed with him<sup>34</sup>. From the 2nd century mention is made of the apologists Athenagoras<sup>35</sup> and Aristides<sup>36</sup>, of Hyginos, bishop of Rome (also honored only by the Catholic Church)<sup>37</sup> and of Narkissos, bishop of Athens<sup>38</sup>, who is mentioned by the Apostle Paul (Rom. 16:11). Saints dating to the 3rd century are Pope Xystus or Sixtus II<sup>39</sup>, the martyrs Venedimus, Paulinus, and Herakleios<sup>40</sup>, Isauros, Basil, and Innocent<sup>41</sup>. The Athenian Dareia and her husband Chrysanthos<sup>42</sup> were executed during the reign of Numerianus (283–284). The scholarly martyrs Menas Kallikelados and Hermogenes<sup>43</sup> were executed under either Maximinus (235–238) or Maximian (285–305), according to Synax. CP, or under *Diocletian* (284–305), according to BHG. The martyrs' miracle-working relics were translated and deposited in the outer wall of the Acropolis, in the martyrion

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30 13 Jul.

31 4 Oct., BHG I, 751, MR I, 330–335; PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 858, n. 29.

32 3 Oct., BHG I, 554–558, MR I, 321–329; Another *kanon* for Dionysios by Germanos I, patriarch of Constantinople, is published in AHG II, 1–11. There was a church erected in his honor on the Areopagus (7th century); see TRAVLOS – FRANTZ, The Church of St. Dionysios.

33 3 Oct.

34 3 Oct., Synax. CP 101:4.

35 24 Jul., PG 6, 889.

36 13 Sep., PG 2, 1261.

37 11 Jan.

38 Narkissos is commemorated on 31 Oct. with the apostles Stachys, Apellos, Amplias, Urban and Aristovoulos (Synax. CP 786:5, and 8; on 30 Jun.; MR I, 571, 573).

39 10 Aug., Synax. CP 881. See also Μαρτύριον τοῦ ἁγίου μεγαλομάρτυρος Λαυρεντίου καὶ τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ, 2 (ed. F. HALKIN, Inédits Byzantins d'Ochrida, Candie et Moscou. Brussels 1963).

40 18 May.

41 17 Jun. and 7 Jul., Synax. CP 753–754:59, 804–805, Μηναῖον τοῦ Ἰουνίου... Venice 1843, 64–67. Another *kanon* for the saints, composed by hymnographer George, is published in AHG XI, 119–126, while a second, composed by Joseph the Hymnographer, is unpublished (see E. ΠΑΡΑΕΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΩΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, Ταμείον ἀνεκδότων βυζαντινῶν ἁσματικῶν κανόνων... Athens 1996, 220, no. 675).

42 19 Mar., Synax. CP 547–548, BHG I, 313, MR IV, 111–116. In the *kanon* of the saints Athens is not mentioned, and thus the assumption of PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 860 that there existed a church in their honor in Athens is not justified.

43 10 Dec., Synax. CP 293–294 and Synaxaria Selecta 31–34, BHG I, 1271, MR II, 441–449. Two *kanons* composed by the hymnographers George and Anastasios Quaestor are published in AHG IV, 219–229, 230–240.

mentioned above erected in their honour. The ascetic Mark the Athenian<sup>44</sup> is attested in the 4th century and in the 5th century the empress Eudokia<sup>45</sup>. The empress Eirene of Athens (+803) dates to the 8th/9th century<sup>46</sup> and Basil, Archbishop of Thessalonike, dates to the 9th century<sup>47</sup>.

Other saints are connected with Athens in different ways. Some of them suffered martyrdom in Athens. St Andrew and St Paul, who were soldiers from Mesopotamia, Dionysios and Christina, and the Athenians Venedimus, Paulinus, and Herakleios<sup>48</sup> were executed in Athens during the persecutions of Decius (249–250). St Agathokleia<sup>49</sup> suffered martyrdom in the hands of her aristocratic mistress, although nothing is mentioned in synaxaria about where she underwent martyrdom. On the basis of early Byzantine funerary inscriptions<sup>50</sup>, a church dedicated to her has been identified in the area of Ermou Str. near Monastiraki<sup>51</sup>.

Other saints were famous bishops of Athens: Rufus, one of the Seventy Apostles<sup>52</sup>, Pistos, who took part in the First Ecumenical Council of 325, Publius<sup>53</sup> and Leonides<sup>54</sup>. St Modestos, who lived during the reign of Maximian (285–305), converted to Christianity while he was in Asia Minor. He accompanied an Athenian Christian silversmith to Athens, where he was

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44 5 Mar., Synax. CP 509, BHG II, 1039–1041n. The Athenian origins of Mark have been challenged: his name is considered a reflection of that of Mark, the founder of the Church of Alexandria (Mark the Athenian was a monk in the desert of Egypt) and his descent from Athens may be a parallel of the evangelist Mark's itinerary from Rome to Alexandria: see CH. AGGELIDI, Ο Βίος του Μάρκου του Αθηναίου (BHG 1039–1041). *Symmeikta* 8 (1989) 35.

45 13 Aug., Synax. CP 887–889 and Synaxaria Selecta 27–57.

46 9 Aug., Synax. CP 877–878:56: Ειρήνης τῆς νέας.

47 1 Feb., Synax. CP 439:1.

48 18 May, Synax. CP 684:51, 688:2, 692:27, MR V, 118–122, AHG IX, 200–206; PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 860–861.

49 17 Sept., Synax. CP 49:35, 52–53, PG 117, 53–55. For an anonymous unpublished *akolouthia* of Agathokleia, see ΠΑΡΑΕΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΦΟΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, Ταμείον 46, no. 57\*.

50 TRAVLOS, Πολεοδομική εξέλιξις 142, n. 6; CREAGHAM – RAUBITSCHER, Epitaphs 39–40; BRADDEEN, Inscriptions 188; SIRONEN, Inscriptions 178–179, no. 110, 202–203, no. 148, 378, n. 31; BALDINI, Atene: la città cristiana 310, 313.

51 See K.S. ΠΙΤΤΑΚΥΣ, L'ancienne Athènes ou la description des antiquités d'Athènes et de ses environs. Athens 1835, 497, 500.

52 30 Jun., Synax. CP 786, BHG III, 2174.

53 13 Mar., Synax. CP 534:19. Cf. Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History IV, 23, 3 (ed. G. BARDY); PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 853, 858–859.

54 15 Apr., Synax. CP 604:52, BHG II, 983z–984. In the Menaion (Μηναιον τοῦ Ἀπριλίου... Venice 1863, 54) there is simply a synaxarian notice (after all the commemorated saints) without an *akolouthia* on St Leonides. The MR does not include his commemoration. Michael Choniates mentioned the Martyrium attached to the basilica of Ilissos in honor of Leonides: Michael Choniates, Εἰς τὸν ἅγιον ἱερομάρτυρα Λεωνίδην..., 151.2, 22 (ed. S.P. LAMPROS I); see S. EUSTRATIADIS, Λεωνίδης ὁσῖος ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἀθηνῶν καὶ Λεωνίδης μάρτυς ὁ ἐν Τροιζῆνι. *Theologia* 13/2 (1935) 170–179; F. HALKIN, Saint Léonide et ses sept compagnes martyrs à Corinthe. *EEBS* 23 (1953) 217–223; IDEM, Recherches 60–63.

baptized by the city bishop and withdrew to live as an ascetic<sup>55</sup>. In the 5th century bishop Klematios is attested on a tomb slab as *hosios* (ὁ ἐν ὁσίοις ἐπισκοπήσας Κλημάτιος) which suggests that he was sanctified<sup>56</sup>. This conclusion is confirmed by the seated position in his burial<sup>57</sup>. Hosios Martinianos<sup>58</sup> (late 5th–early 6th century) visited Athens and was honored with a glorious burial<sup>59</sup>. In the 10th century Hosios Fantinos, passing through Athens, venerated the relics of Martinianos<sup>60</sup>, which are also mentioned in his *akolouthia* (13 Feb.)<sup>61</sup>. Michael Choniates in a homily Εἰς τὸν ὄσιον Μαρτινιανὸν implies the existence of an eponymous church<sup>62</sup>, thus indicating that Hosios Martinianos was worshipped at least until the 12th century.

Women occupy an important place among the saints of Athens. These include Damaris and Agathokleia, while the canonization of empresses Eudokia and Eirene of Athens display a notably political character. Several saints of the Early Byzantine period bear Latin names, such as Innocent, Xystus or Sixtus, Venedimus, Paulinus and Mark, a point which may be connected with the subordinate position of Athens to the Church of Rome. As is to be expected, in the early years of the Athenian Church some saints bear pagan names, such as Aristides, Agathokleia or Athenagoras.

It is suggested that the Athenian aristocracy was for a long time reluctant to endorse the Christian faith, because it had links with the philosophers, many of whom held high positions in the local and imperial administration. However, the Church of Athens includes a notable number of educated saints<sup>63</sup> emanating from higher social strata: apologists, bishops of Athens and of Rome and empresses. It is known that classical philosophy and poetry were condemned in Christian literature for their pagan content, but were always considered useful for Christians who wished to achieve refined literary style<sup>64</sup>. The deprecation of antique *paideia* is understandably stronger in hymnographic texts. Thus, in a hymn, the first-century bishop of Athens Hierotheos, an educated aristocrat and member of the Areopagus, is praised for his rhetorical

55 CH. LOPAREV, Ἄθλησις τοῦ ἁγίου Μοδέστου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἱεροσολύμων, 1892. A short distance from Koropi, close to the Middle-Byzantine church of the Transfiguration there is a small church dedicated to St Modestos: S. ΜΑΜΑΛΟΥΚΟΣ, Ἅγιος Μόδεστος (Ἅγιος Θεόδωρος) στο Κορωπί, in: Ἐκκλησίες στὴν Ἑλλάδα μετὰ τὴν ἄλωση II. Athens 1982, 223–230.

56 SIRONEN, Inscriptions 156–157, no. 83.

57 PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 865.

58 13 Feb., Synax. CP 461–462, Synaxaria Selecta 463–464:48–49; BHG II, 1177–1180; MR III, 577–584.

59 Synax. CP, Synaxaria Selecta 463–464:48–49; AASS Feb. II, 666–671; PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 862.

60 14 Nov., Synax. CP 224.

61 ἡ θεία χάρις τῶν λειψάνων σου (AHG VI, 240).

62 Michael Choniates, Εἰς τὸν ὄσιον Μαρτινιανὸν 343–344.

63 See DI BRANCO, La città dei filosofi 203–206.

64 Cf. Basil of Caesarea, Πρὸς τοὺς νέους, ὅπως ἂν ἐξ ἐλληνικῶν ὠφελοῖντο λόγων (ed. F. BOULENGER), 41–61.

skills and for the fine style of his writings which please and embellish the faithful<sup>65</sup>.

The large number of Athenian saints, the lofty social background of some of them and their high education suggest that the Church in Athens consciously pursued a programme intended to advertise the *τοσοῦτον... περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων*<sup>66</sup>. Thus the glory, power, and social position of the followers of the new religion could now be equated with that of the prestigious accomplishments of the classical Athenian tradition. The model of the poor, humble, and illiterate Christian, frequently promoted as an ideal by the Church during its early centuries, stressed that poor, illiterate fishermen from Galilee managed to defeat educated orators and philosophers<sup>67</sup>. This tradition is now adjusted to the classical tradition of Athens, which results in the prominence of educated and socially eminent Christians. Thus, during the early centuries, educated members of the Athenian Church were apologists who addressed Roman emperors. According to Eusebius of Caesarea, Quadratus composed an apology which he addressed to Emperor Hadrian (117–138) during the emperor's visit to Athens some time around 124–125<sup>68</sup>. Athenagoras delivered a defence of Christianity before Marcus Aurelius (161–180) around 177<sup>69</sup>. From the 1st to the 3rd century, three highly educated Athenians, Anakletos, Hyginos and Xystus or Sixtus II, became bishops of Rome.

Now it is not only Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus who studied in Athens. At the beginning of the 7th century, George, Patriarch of Alexandria, wrote in his *Life of John Chrysostom*<sup>70</sup> that Chrysostom came to Athens to complete his studies. The confrontation between Chrysostom and the philosopher Anthemios in the presence of the eparch Demosthenes and the prelates of the city of Athens leads to their conversion. The incident, surely fictional, is the only piece of evidence that Chrysostom studied in Athens. Athens now appropriated Chrysostom, the most fervent of all polemicists among all the Church Fathers against the pagans.

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65 MR I, 332, 333.

66 Heb 21:1.

67 This view is not abandoned, and it is promoted in the hymnography by Romanos Melodos in the hymn τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων: stanza 16, vv. 4–5, 8, and in the hymn εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν Πεντηκοστήν: stanza 17, vv. 2–8, Romanos le Mélode V. Hymnes XLVI–LVI (ed. J.GR. DE MARTONS). It is repeated by the anonymous poet of the Akathistos Hymn: ed. C.A. TRYPANIS, Fourteen early Byzantine cantica. Vienna 1968, 29–39, stanza 17, vv. 1–13. In the *akolouthiai* it is used as a *topos*, which acquires a special significance, when it refers to saints of Athens (e.g.: for Dionysios the Areopagite MR I, 322; for Paul, Andrew, and their companions AHG IX, 203, vv. 80–86, 205, vv. 131–136; for Quadratus MR I, 224; for Menas and Hermogenes AHG IV, 223, vv. 97–98, 226, vv. 190–193, 231, vv. 29–35).

68 Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History IV, 3, 2–3; P. FOSTER, The Apology of Quadratus. *Expository Times* 117.9 (2006) 353–359; PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 853, 859. Quadratus is celebrated on 21 Sep., Synax. CP 67, MR I, 220–229; H. GRÉGOIRE, La véritable date du martyre de S. Polycarpe et le “corpus polycarpianum”. *AnBoll* 69 (1961), 34–36.

69 TROMBLEY, Hellenic Religion 284, n. 5.

70 F. HALKIN, Douze récits byzantins sur Saint Jean Chrysostome. Brussels 1977, 82–84.

The list of saints of the Church of Athens does not, however, include any prominent saints. The patron saint of the city, Dionysios the Areopagite, did not enjoy the elevated status and fame of the patron saints of other cities, such as the Virgin did in Constantinople, St Demetrios in Thessalonike or the apostle Andrew in Patras. In choosing Dionysios the Areopagite, the Church of Athens certainly promoted an important individual as patron saint of the city. He was the city's first bishop, a scholar, of aristocratic origin, a martyr, and a miracle-worker. Significantly, Dionysios was subsequently linked to the tradition of the Theotokos, who became the patron of Athens after the conversion of the Parthenon into a church. According to tradition, Hierotheos, Dionysios the Areopagite, and the apostle Timothy were carried on clouds, as were the Apostles, to be present at the Dormition of the Virgin in Jerusalem<sup>71</sup>. Thus the Church of Athens was placed immediately after the first Christian Church of Jerusalem, since the representatives of the Athenian Church were considered worthy of apostolic honors. Although the Athenian hierarchs were not present at the important events in Christ's life, passion, and entombment, nor did they witness his Resurrection, they did, however, witness the Dormition of the Virgin. Their presence there, just as the presence of Timothy, bishop of Ephesus, where John the Evangelist preached, elevated Christian Athens to a leading position within the Church<sup>72</sup>. In fact, Symeon Metaphrastes (10th century) presents Dionysios as analogous to the apostle Paul<sup>73</sup>. Likewise, in the *akolouthia* of the saint, in the *Menaion*<sup>74</sup> and in the *kanon* of the patriarch Germanos I (8th century)<sup>75</sup> Dionysios is clearly connected with the conversion of the Parthenon to a church of the Virgin, the powerful patron of the city. This tradition is also repeatedly mentioned in hymnographical texts, which

71 PG 4, 593C = PG 115, 1036C; PG 3, 681D = B.P. SUCHLA (ed.), *Περὶ θεῶν ὀνομάτων*, *Corpus Dionysiacum I*, 141; cf. *Synax.* CP 893; BHG 554–558; LOENERTZ, *Le panégyrique de S. Denys*; S. SHOEMAKER, *Ancient Tradition of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption*. Oxford 2002, 29–30. For his depiction in art, in the Dormition of the Virgin in the presence of bishops, see WALTER, *Three Notes* 260–268.

72 The *imitatio Pauli* is a type of *imitatio apostolorum* and is a common hymnographic *topos* for bishops (D. CHRISTIANS, *Athleten, Ackerbauern und Hirten: Typisierung der Heiligenverehrung im Gottesdienstmenaum*, in: *Bibel, Liturgie und Frömmigkeit in der Slavia Byzantina. Festgabe für Hans Rothe zum 80. Geburtstag* (eds D. CHRISTIANS *et al.*). München–Berlin 2009, 160, 165). In fact, Germanos compares Dionysios to the apostle Peter (Mat 16:18), thus emphasizing the contribution of the patron saint of Athens to the strengthening and foundation of the Church (AHG II, 9, vv. 170–172).

73 PG 115, 1037.

74 Ὡς τοῦ σκεύους ὑπάρχων/ τῆς ἐκλογῆς/ ἀπεικόνισμα θεῖον... (MR I, 324).

75 AHG II, 1–11, vv. 7–8, 56–58, 194–199, 239–243.

shows that it had been incorporated into the liturgical life of the Church<sup>76</sup>. In his *akolouthia* in the Menaion, Dionysios is referred to with the terminology of the Pentecost, as used by Luke (Acts 2:2). Thus, again, the patron saint of Athens is presented as equal to the Apostles, who received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (ὡσπερ τις οὐράνιος/ ἦχος φερόμενος)<sup>77</sup>.

According to another tradition<sup>78</sup>, Dionysios witnessed the eclipse of the sun that occurred during the crucifixion of Christ. This is the so-called 'Vision of Heliopolis'<sup>79</sup>. Here Dionysios is a pagan who witnessed the terrible events that took place during the death of Christ on the Cross. The vision of Heliopolis is uniquely depicted in a miniature in the Khludov Psalter, produced in the mid-ninth century and of Constantinopolitan origin, bearing the eloquent caption Ἕλληνας, ἤγουν Διονύσιος<sup>80</sup>.

The attribution of the *Corpus Dionysiaticum* to Dionysios in the early 6th century<sup>81</sup> facilitated the incorporation of Athens into the Christian tradition. In addition, the *Corpus Dionysiaticum* appears consistently in the liturgical texts, namely the *akolouthiae*, as attributed to Dionysios<sup>82</sup>. Dionysios is compared with Moses, the religious and political leader of Israel, which is a common hagiographic *topos* for the hierarchs<sup>83</sup>. The attribution of the *Corpus Dionysiaticum* to Dionysios pervades this comparison. Dionysios is compared to Moses both as a ποιμὴν<sup>84</sup> and because, like Moses on Sinai, he enters the holy darkness (γνόφος) and converses with God. In this case, the common *topos* of the ascent to the Acropolis of virtue<sup>85</sup> is equivalent to the ascent to the mountain of virtue, which refers to Sinai. This metaphor reflects the attribution of the *Corpus Dionysiaticum* to Dionysios and highlights Dionysios' leading role, equivalent to that of Moses, in the consolidation of the Christian religion

76 ...ἐπὶ τὴν θέαν ἔσπευσας/ σώματος τοῦ ὄντως ζωαρχικοῦ/ τῆς μόνης Θεοτόκου... Ἐν τῇ σεπτῇ κοιμήσει σου,/ Παναγία Παρθένε,/ παρῆν ὁ Διονύσιος/ σὺν τῷ Ἱεροθέῳ/ καὶ Τιμοθέῳ τῷ θείῳ/ ἅμα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις... (*akolouthia* of St Dionysios the Areopagite, MR I, 328, 329). Ὁμοδίαιτος, μάκαρ,/ τῷ τῶν Ἀποστόλων ὑπάρχων συστήματι/ σὺν αὐτοῖς ἐπέστης/ τῇ κοιμήσει τῇ θεία... (*akolouthia* of St Hierotheos, MR I, 332). Cf. B. LOURIE, Peter the Iberian and Dionysius the Areopagite... *Scrinium* 6 (2010) 165, n. 71.

77 MR I, 325.

78 Dionysius the Areopagite, Epistula vii ad Polycarpem antistitem. PG 3, 1077–1081.

79 P. PEETERS, La vision de Denys l'Aréopagite à Héliopolis. *AnBoll* 29 (1910) 302–322.

80 Khludov Psalter, Moscow, Hist. Mus. gr. 129, f. 45v. Cf. WALTER, Three Notes 256–257.

81 The *Corpus Dionysiaticum* has recently been attributed to Damaskios: see MAZZUCCHI, Damascio.

82 MR I, 321–329 and AHG II, 1–11.

83 Φῶς ἐνδυσάμενος Χριστόν,/ τὸ φωτεινὸν περιβόλαιον,/ ἐλαμπρύνθη τῇ αἴγλῃ τοῦ πνεύματος/ τὸν νοῦν, Διονύσιε,/ ὡσπερ πάλαι ὁ θεόπτης Μωσῆς (AHG II, 11, vv. 229–233). The typology for Moses in the *Corpus Dionysiaticum* has been studied by P. RØREM, Moses as the Paradigm for the Liturgical Spirituality of Pseudo-Dionysius. *SP* 18/2 (1989) 275–279; IDEM, Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to their Influence. New York–Oxford 1993, *passim*.

84 AHG II, 2, v. 12.

85 The *topos* is also used for Dionysios and for other Athenian saints.

in Athens. Thus Athens is now elevated to the same level as Sinai. According to the *kanon* of Patriarch Germanos I, the figure of Dionysios is illuminated by the divine light, as is the face of Moses during his time on Mount Sinai, when he conversed with God (Ex 34:29). The comparison of Athens to Sinai in hymnography predates the Εισβατήριος of Michael Choniates<sup>86</sup>. Germanos was one of the first poets to compare a hierarch to Moses by employing the ascent to Sinai, the entrance to the *gnophos* (γνόφος), the reception by Moses of the tablets written by God (θεογράφων πλακῶν), and the illumination of Moses' face by the divine light<sup>87</sup>. This *topos* is part of the *topos* of the ascent to the height/mountain of virtue<sup>88</sup>.

Apart from Dionysios, the Athenian Church included apostles, such as its founder, the apostle Paul, and the apostle Philip, and some of the 70 apostles who preached in Athens (Quadratus) or became its bishops (Narkissos and Rufus). The narration of the Acts by the apostle Luke, and the apocryphal Acts of the apostle Philip establish the apostolicity of the episcopal throne of Athens.

The commemoration of an important number of Athenian saints has been connected and identified with the memory of other saints, primarily of mainland Greece, a well-known and difficult problem in hagiography. Dionysios the Areopagite was identified in the 9th century with his namesake who preached in Gaul and was martyred in Paris in the 3rd century<sup>89</sup>. Leonides, bishop of Athens, has been connected with his namesakes in Corinth and Troezen<sup>90</sup>. Publius has been linked at various periods with saints of the Church of Corinth (Quadratus, Cyprian, Anektos, Paul, Dionysios, and Crescens)<sup>91</sup> and with saints of Constantinople (Africanus and Terence τοὺς ἐν τῷ Πετρίῳ)<sup>92</sup>. The apostle Quadratus preached the gospel in Athens and in Magnesia where he was martyred during the persecution of Hadrian. Quadratus was very rapidly identified with the martyr of the same name who was also martyred in Magnesia during the reign of Decius (249–251), and in some cases also with his

86 Michael Choniates, Εισβατήριος... (ed. S.P. LAMPROS), 36. Michael Synkelos (ca. 761–846) also praised Dionysios as Moses: PODOLAK, *L'agiografia* 234, vv. 349–373.

87 For example, this *topos* was used in hymnographical texts by Cosmas Melodos (MR III, 365), Andrew of Crete (AHG V, 369) and Theophanes Graptos (MR III, 366) for Gregory the Theologian, by Theophanes Graptos for Gregory of Neokaisareia (MR II, 179, 180, 182), by Joseph the hymnographer for Daniel the Stylite (MR II, 463), Leo, pope of Rome (MR III, 616), Spyridon bishop of Trimythous (MR II, 473) and for the martyr Neophytos (MR III, 320), by George for the hieromartyr Erasmus (AHG XI, 127) and by patriarch Photius for the patriarch Methodios (AHG X, 61).

88 D. CHRISTIANS, *Topoi in liturgischen Hymnen zu Ehren heiliger Mönche*, in: *Pěniže malo Georgiju. Sbornik v čest na prof. Georgi Popov* (eds M. JOVČEVA *et al.*). Sofia 2010, 218–219.

89 See LOENERTZ, *La légende Parisienne*; PODOLAK, *L'agiografia* 179–191.

90 PALLAS, *Ἡ Ἀθήνα* 859–860.

91 10 Mar., Synax. CP, *Synaxaria Selecta* 51.

92 13 Mar., Synax. CP 533–534. See PALLAS, *Ἡ Ἀθήνα* 858–859.



namesake in Corinth<sup>93</sup>. The *kanon* of Joseph the Hymnographer mentions the veneration of relics, a tomb and a church of St Quadratus: Ἱαμάτων χάρισματα/ πᾶσιν ἡμῖν/ ὁ τάφος σου πηγάζει,/ ἱερὲ Κοδράτε... Νόμῳ φύσεως τάφῳ τὸ σῶμά σου.../ νῦν κατακείμενον/ θαυματουργεῖ παράδοξα... Ῥεῖθρα ἱαμάτων ὁ ναὸς/ ὁ σὸς τοῖς χρήζουσι/ πηγάζει πάντοτε... Σοῦ Μαγνησία κατέχει/ τῶν λειψάνων τὴν θήκην...<sup>94</sup>. Pallas, on the basis of these verses, expressed the view that there was a church of St Quadratus in Athens. However, although there is no reference to Athens in these verses, there is mention of the relics and the church of the saint of the same name in Magnesia. The Athenian martyrs Isauros, Basil, and Innocent, who were martyred in Apollonia during the reign of Numerianus (283–284), were connected with a group of saints from Italy consisting of Peregrinus, Lucian, Pompey, Papius, Saturninus and Germanos, who because of persecution by Trajan (98–117) came to Epidamnus (Dyrrachion), where they were executed. St Menas Kallikelados has been identified with Menas the Egyptian<sup>95</sup>, and St Modestos has been connected with his namesake bishop of Jerusalem<sup>96</sup>.

The identification of Athenian saints with saints of Corinth arose from the subordination of the Church of Athens to the Church of Corinth in the early Byzantine centuries. Analogous identifications with saints of the Church of Constantinople are due to the connection of the Athenian Church with Constantinople in the Middle Byzantine period that we have already mentioned. Indeed, it appears that in the 9th century, the cult of certain saints connected with Athens and venerated in Constantinople was revived in Constantinople. These include St Euphemia (16 Sept. and 11 Jul.)<sup>97</sup>, in whose honour, according to an inscription of the 5th–6th century, there was a church in Athens<sup>98</sup>, and St Agathokleia, whose *synaxis* was celebrated ἐν τῷ Δευτέρῳ in Constantinople<sup>99</sup>. The relics of St Menas the Kallikelados and St Hermogenes<sup>100</sup>, according to their Synaxarion, were translated to Constantinople following St Menas' prayer to God<sup>101</sup>, or were translated θεῖῳ προστάγματι to Athens. The identification of Athenian saints with saints venerated in other regions may indicate that the inhabitants of these areas kept alive the memory of the glory of classical Athens and so were willing to accept that their local saints were connected

93 BHG 359, 357–358. See PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 859–860.

94 MR I, 224, 225, 228, 229.

95 11 Nov., BHG I, 1250–1269, BHG II, 1250–1269m, MR II, 109–121; H. DELEHAYE, L'invention des reliques de Saint Ménas à Constantinople. *AnBoll* 29 (1910) 117–144; PALLAS, Ἡ Ἀθήνα 862–863.

96 18 Dec., Synax. CP, Synaxaria Selecta 52–53.

97 Synax. CP 47–49, 813–814 respectively.

98 SIRONEN, Inscriptions no. 266, 378, n. 31.

99 Synax. CP, Synaxaria Selecta 52:40–42.

100 Synax. CP 293–294 and Synaxaria Selecta 31–34.

101 Cf. JANIN, La géographie ecclésiastique I/III 335. The translation of St Menas' relics to Constantinople is mentioned in the martyr's *kanon*: Ἐξατήσω τοῦ τεθῆναι σου τὸ λείψανον,/ μάρτυς, εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον... (AHG IV, 237, vv. 155–156).

with their namesakes from Athens. It is also possible that the Athenian Church sought the incorporation of eponymous saints from other regions into its list of saints, in order to reinforce its prestige.

The inclusion of the saints of Athens in the Synaxarion of Constantinople, the existence of martyria and churches in their honor as early as the Early Byzantine period, the mention of the veneration of their relics (of Hosios Martinianos, St Andrew, and St Menas and St Hermogenes) indicate that the cult of these saints existed in Athens and beyond. The strongest evidence for maintenance of their cults in Athens lies in the existence of an *akolouthia*, since the *akolouthia* of a saint could be performed in any church, even if there was no church consecrated to that particular saint.

The *akolouthiai* of saints offer a means for communication with the congregation, since poetry becomes an appealing medium for catechism and admonition. Thus the *akolouthiai* became the medium for promoting dogmatic or other teachings by the Church. The *akolouthiai* of the saints of Athens were composed by prominent hymnographers: Andrew of Crete or Byzantios (7th–8th century) wrote a stanza for St Dionysios the Areopagite. Theophanes Graptos (8th century) composed *akolouthiai* for St Dionysios the Areopagite, St Hierotheos, and St Martinianos, while Patriarch Germanos I (8th century) an *akolouthia* for St Dionysios the Areopagite. Clement (8th century) composed an *akolouthia* for St Martinianos. Joseph the Hymnographer (9th century) wrote *akolouthiai* for Quadratus, Chrysanthos and Daria, Menas and Hermogenes, Narkissos, Stachys, Apellos, Amplia, Urban, and Aristovoulos, Paul, Andrew, Dionysios, Christina, Venedimus, Paulinus, and Herakleios. George (9th century) wrote *akolouthiai* for Paul, Andrew, Dionysios, Christina, Venedimus, Paulinus, and Herakleios, Menas and Hermogenes. Anastasios Quaestor (10th century) composed *akolouthiai* for St Menas and St Hermogenes. Gregory (perhaps 13th century) composed an *akolouthia* for St Isauros, St Basil, and St Innocent. In these hymnographic texts, Athens openly becomes a symbol of the Christian faith or this is implied through the use of selected references to the classical era. The classical past and its reputation are also downplayed, because the city is now known for its Christian identity, which at least once is attributed to Dionysios the Areopagite, whose martyrdom is characterized as ἀπαρχὴ πανίερος<sup>102</sup>.

Following the preaching of Paul, the κατείδωλος πόλις changes and becomes an εὐσεβῆς πόλις, ... ὀρθοδοξοῦσα<sup>103</sup>. In the *kanon* of Hosios Martinianos, the symbolic identification of Athens with the conquest of apathy by the *hosios* is surprising. Martinianos leaves a city of passions, i.e. Caesarea in Palestine, and comes to Athens, the city of im-passion: φεύγων γὰρ ἐκ πόλεως/ τῆς τῶν

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102 Theophanes Graptos, 9th century, MR I, 328.

103 MR I, 329.

παθῶν ἀπαθείας/ πόλιν ἔφθασας<sup>104</sup>.

Several hymnographic *topoi* used in these *akolouthiai* originate in the glorious classical past of Athens and especially from its state organization, which clearly shows the influence of pre-Christian Athenian heritage on Christian literature. Naturally, all these *topoi* are especially charged with meaning in the hymnographic texts for the saints of Athens. The achievement of a spiritual goal by St Dionysios the Areopagite<sup>105</sup> and Martinianos<sup>106</sup> is expressed through ascent to the Acropolis. St Hierotheos enjoys in heaven the ἀντιδόσεις of earthly life<sup>107</sup>. The rejection of secular offices is presented as κληρουχία for St Menas<sup>108</sup>.

Thus the strengthening of the Athenian Church occurred in two stages, one over the 5th/6th century and the other in the 9th century. During both stages, a decisive role was played by the intervention of the imperial administration at Constantinople. The reference to the saints of Athens in the Synaxarion of Constantinople, the existence of martyria and churches in their honor, the mention of the veneration of their relics and mainly the composition and use of *akolouthiai* for celebrating their memory demonstrate the cult of these saints in Athens and beyond, and reveal the process of forming Athens' Christian tradition.

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104 AHG VI, 236, vv. 90–93. On the image of Athens in the Byzantine literature see H. HUNGER, Athen in Byzanz: Traum und Realität. *JÖB* 40 (1990) 43–61; РНОВУ, Reminiszenzen 24–91.

105 AHG II, 9, vv. 174–175.

106 AHG VI, 239, vv. 162–163.

107 Βεβαίως ἀντιδόσεις ἀπολαβῶν (MR I, 333).

108 AHG IV, 222, vv. 221–226.