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Introduction

This volume originates from the international conference *Female Authority and Holiness in Early Christianity and* which was held online, due to Covid-19 pandemic, on 11–12 May 2021. It includes some of the conference papers along with additional essays that complement the overarching themes discussed during the conference. The conference, which saw the participation of internationally renowned scholars, aimed at investigating the representation of women’s authority and holiness from a diachronic perspective. By underlining the connection between early and medieval Christianity, it brought together texts from different periods and genres, which have traditionally been studied in isolation (e.g. apocrypha, visions, hagiography). The aim was to show that these sources describe a consistent trajectory in the context of a *longue durée* perspective. The conference centered around the notion of time, in both the literal sense of temporal passing and also time as embodied and experienced by people. By looking at time as intertwined with the construction and the experience of social and gendered roles the conference tried to explore motifs and narratives related to the different and often varying articulation of female authority, considered against the wider background of Christian ideals of holiness. Speakers explored a variety of themes like the interplay between time and traditional gender roles, male control over female authority and identity, the transmission and reception of female sainthood between early Christianity and later Christian hagiographical texts, and the emergence of new temporalities in medieval hagiography.

The volume seeks to delve into the intricate relationship between time and the construction of femininity in hagiographical discourses. The imperative for adopting a diachronic perspective arises from the stark realization that medieval women saints consistently constituted a minority in both the East and the West. Notably, in Byzantium, the presence of new female saints diminishes entirely during the late Byzantine period.¹ The divergence between early Christian and later portrayals of female authority and holiness can be elucidated by viewing time not merely as a chronological entity, but as embodied temporality, here conceived as time in its experiential and phenomenological dimensions.² On the

1 For an overview, see Alice-Mary Talbot, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001).

2 On this, see Christina Schües, “Introduction,” in *Time in Feminist Phenomenology*, eds. Christina Schües, Dorothea E. Olkowski and Helen A. Fielding (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011): 1–17, 7.

other hand, as Sarit Kattan Gribetz and Lynn Kaye state, “the term ‘temporality’” is “an alternative to ‘time’. [...] it denotes concepts, perspectives, orientations or ideas related to time that do not necessarily operate with an explicitly defined idea of what ‘time’ actually is. [...] Contrary to the term ‘time’, which describes a more circumscribed idea, the term ‘temporality’ presumes blurred boundaries and conveys greater conceptual instability and volatility than ‘time’.”³ The diverse temporal concepts shaping the entire trajectory of Christianity from the early centuries to the Middle Ages inevitably influenced gender roles within ancient and medieval societies, ushering in pivotal changes in the transmission and reception of earlier paradigms of religious authority. This interpretation hinges on the notion of “time” as a cultural construct, exhibiting variations not only across historical periods but also, at times, within the same society, often in conflicting ways.⁴

By placing a thematic focus on the diachronic transmission and re-contextualization of female authority and holiness, this volume contends that understanding the historical trajectory of women saints requires consideration of the eschatological expectations that informed early Christian narratives about female holiness. In the second and third centuries, the imminent end of times eclipsed all other temporal considerations whether social or biological. Christian minorities strategically leveraged this eschatological horizon to challenge the prevailing order of pagan Roman elites. Even after the Christianization of the Empire, this eschatological perspective in Byzantium gained reinforcement through the widespread circulation of apocalyptic motifs, strategically adopted by the imperial power for political and moral purposes. Narrative patterns infused with eschatological motivation regarding women saints became deeply ingrained, posing a challenge when novel experiences of holiness emerged alongside alternative models of lay temporality during the Middle Byzantine era. Chronologically, this volume commences with second- and third-century Christianity, addressing its subject from a broad, long-term perspective that spans from early Christianity to medieval hagiography. This expansive chronological approach is vital to underscore that the literary patterns perpetuated in later texts are rooted in earlier models. While recent observations have highlighted the utilization of apocryphal Acts as models for later Pas-

³ Sarit Kattan Gribetz and Lynn Kaye, “The Temporal Turn in Ancient Judaism and Jewish Studies,” *Currents in Biblical Research* 17/3 (2019): 332–95, 339.

⁴ See in this regard Peter Burke, “Reflections on the Cultural History of Time,” *Viator* 35 (2004): 617–26.

sions, this connection remains underexplored.⁵ The present volume diverges by treating literary texts as reflective of narrative and social structures that may not necessarily align with their contemporary production, adopting a less rigid periodization and integrating it with a long-term perspective.

Based on the diachronic perspective here assumed, the analysis of the case studies in the volume proceeds by pursuing both chronological lines of investigation (early Christianity and Middle Ages) in parallel, in order to detect potential variations. On the one hand, a focus on the first centuries of Christian era proves to be the key to frame the relationship between gender and authority within a “new” religious system. The leading role of women in this period is uncontested,⁶ and a major influence on their active participation in the spreading of the “new” religious beliefs and practices was represented by the eschatological expectation shaping second- and third-century Christianity.⁷ The impending end of times—also reinforced by the incumbent threat of persecutions and martyrdom—imposed the dissolution of the traditional social order, with the family ties gradually losing importance. Starting from the Pauline teaching on eschatology and continence in 1 Corinthians, many other Christian literary traditions exhorted Christians to renounce earthly pleasures in order to gain future salvation. This allowed women to reject their traditional familial roles, thus acquiring more active role in terms

5 Marina Detoraki, “Greek Passions of the Martyrs in Byzantium,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography* II, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Burlington: Ashgate, 2014): 61–101, 66.

6 See in this regard Ulla Tervahauta, Ivan Miroshnikov, Outi Lehtipuu and Ismo Dunderberg, eds., *Women and Knowledge in Early Christianity* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2017).

7 The most representative case in this regard is Montanism, an eschatologically-oriented prophetic movement led by one man, Montanus, and two women, Prisca and Maximilla. On Montanism, see the following monographs: Pierre De Labriolle, *La crise montaniste* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1913); Christine Trevett, *Montanism: Gender, Authority and the New Prophecy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); William Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy and Polluted Sacraments: Ecclesiastical and Imperial Reactions to Montanism* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2007); Heidrun Elisabeth Mader, *Montanistische Orakel und kirchliche Opposition: Der frühe Streit zwischen den phrygischen “neuen Propheten” und dem Autor der vorepiphanischen Quelle als biblische Wirkungsgeschichte des 2. Jh. n. Chr.* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012); Maria Dell’Isola, *L’ultima profezia: La crisi montanista nel cristianesimo antico* (Trapani: Il pozzo di Giacobbe, 2020). On Montanist women see William Tabbernee, “Women Office Holders in Montanism,” in *Patterns of Women’s Leadership in Early Christianity*, eds. Ilaria L.E. Ramelli and Joan E. Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021): 151–79; Antti Marjanen, “Female Prophets among Montanists,” in *Prophets Male and Female: Gender and Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible, the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Ancient Near East*, eds. Jonathan Stökl and Corrine L. Carvalho (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013): 127–43; Anne Jensen, “Prisca-Maximilla-Montanus: Who was the founder of ‘Montanism’?,” *Studia Patristica* 26 (1993): 147–50.

of both social and religious agency. This tendency is clearly attested by the apocryphal tradition of the Acts of the apostles, the martyr stories, and the authority of prophetesses and women teachers and spiritual guides.⁸

On the other hand, early Christian female authority can be contrasted with further expansions and reception of earlier female models of authority and holiness. The literary images of women saints in later hagiography show traces of a different form of female holiness which is no longer achieved through a rejection of social roles and norms but rather within a restored traditional social structure.⁹ The comprehensive analysis of the sources explored in this volume successfully lays the groundwork for a novel approach to investigating gender issues within late antique and medieval contexts. By centering on time as a theoretical framework, a fresh and distinctive interpretation of women's social and religious agency emerges through a comparison with earlier evidence of female authority. This approach reveals several key insights. The first relevant aspect is related to the integration of texts: traditionally examined in isolation due to differences in chronology and genres, different texts can be meaningfully brought together. This integration contributes to a coherent narrative within the cultural history of late antiquity and the medieval period. Furthermore, by employing the dual lenses of gender and time, previously debated texts take on new meanings, thus offering a richer understanding of the roles and agency of women in these historical periods. In essence, this volume not only contributes to a more interconnected understanding of historical texts but also bridges the gap between the past and the present, offering insights that remain relevant in our contemporary understanding of gender dynamics and the influence exerted on women's agency by specific temporal structures.

Taking a cue from the abovementioned theoretical framework, the contributions in this volume address topics and case studies related to the following lines of investigation:

- *The interplay between female authority, traditional gender roles, and social norms in early Christianity:*

The awareness of the impending end of times and the exaltation of martyr-

⁸ I have already attempted to describe this overarching tendency in two contributions: Maria Dell'Isola, "Waiting for the End: Two Case Studies on the Relationship between Time and Gender in Early Christianity," *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* 26/3 (2022): 446–72, and Maria Dell'Isola, "How Temporality Shapes Social Structure in the *Acts of Thomas*," *Vigiliae Christianae* 77 (2023): 155–75.

⁹ For such a contrast in terms of temporality, see Maria Dell'Isola, "Shaping Women's Agency through Temporality in *The Life and Activity of the Holy and Blessed Teacher Syncletica*," *Studia Philologica Valentina* 22 (2020): 13–31.

dom had a remarkable impact on the pre-existent configuration of Roman society over the course of the first centuries of the Christian era. As a result, for instance, women could take advantage of the situation and refuse to comply with traditional gender constraints. The emphasis on chastity, the rejection of marriage and motherhood, the breaking of family ties, are all new social phenomena determined by the pressing of an urgent “contracted” eschatological time. Consequently, female authority gradually acquired importance, in terms of both social and religious agency. This tendency is clearly observable in early Christian texts such as the apocryphal Acts, Passions, martyr stories, as well as in the accounts of female prophecy and teaching activity. In this regard, it is highly interesting to examine how the Christian description of female characters in the abovementioned texts overturns the tropes of a traditional woman’s life within the Graeco-Roman society, and to analyze what the sources tell us about the social impact exercised by the eschatologically motivated exaltation of virginity, rejection of marriage and motherhood, and promotion of female teaching and prophetic leading roles.

- *Different temporal frameworks in the transmission and reception of female authority and holiness between early Christianity and later hagiographical literature:*

Against the wider diachronic process of textual transmission, characters of early Christian narratives undergo a series of remarkable changes. Reception history thus represents a privileged access point to the analysis of modifications, changes, and reconfigurations of character description within the chronological *longue durée* of textual transmission. Could the cumulative difference of a single female character reveal different temporal frameworks in all the different available sources?¹⁰ Could we be able to discern any sensible trace of the chronological development of a narratological trend within the wider trajectory of transmission and reception of female authority and sainthood in the passage from early Christian texts to later hagiography?

- *Portraits of women saints in Christian hagiography*

Hagiography in general is characterized by certain adaptations to the previously established motif of sainthood. The cause of such a difference is easily identifiable in the effect of a series of cultural transformations with regards to the early stage of persecutions and martyrdom. After the end of the era of per-

¹⁰ A highly significant and very representative case study in this regard is the transformation of the character of Thecla between the second-century apocryphal *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and later hagiographical narratives, like the fifth-century *Life and Miracles of Saint Thecla*. On this, see Susan E. Hylen, “The ‘domestication’ of Saint Thecla. Characterization of Thecla in the *Life and Miracles of Saint Thecla*,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 30/2 (2014): 5–21.

secutions, sainthood could no longer be obtained through martyrdom. Sainthood was now to be gained through asceticism.¹¹ Asceticism was no longer framed within radical forms of eschatologically-informed behaviors, as it was now institutionalized, regulated, and included within the well-defined boundaries of monasticism.¹² The narratological structure of the Lives of female saints thus explicitly attest to a new sense of time that diverged significantly from that which characterized the impending end of times of the previous centuries. The hagiographical texts are permeated with temporal references to the various stages of a woman's life, which is thus narrated according to its natural chronological linearity and progression. In that same period, the bodies of the female saints are meticulously described as commonly subjected to a series of ascetic exercises. Such performances aim to reintegrate the body itself into the flow of time. In this sense, there is a striking contrast between the temporality experienced by the body through asceticism—i.e., acts that are allegedly able to remove the body itself from worldly, everyday life—and the flux of linear temporality where the female body still preserves its agency intact. Apparently, the focus by then was no longer on life after death, but on life on earth here and now. Consequently, sainthood had to be achieved not through a premature and violent death (i.e., martyrdom), but via the acceptance of the incessantly consuming effect of the ordinary passing of time on human bodies. How is this change of perspective reflected in hagiographical texts? And what is the role of male perspective in re-writing earlier models of sanctity? What effects did this have on the hagiographical narrative?

– *Different temporal frameworks in the relationships between early Christian female characters and women saints:*

The biographers of the Lives of women saints sometimes refer to the importance of earlier Christian female characters as models for the portrait of their protagonists.¹³ Such a comparison between two female saints

11 On this, see Évelyne Patlagean, "À Byzance: ancienne hagiographie et histoire sociale," *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations* 23 (1968): 106–26, 107–8; Nathalie Delierneux, "The Literary Portrait of Byzantine Female Saints," in Efthymiadis, ed., *The Ashgate Research Companion II*, 363–86, 381. For the analysis of the development of sainthood from the age of martyrdom to the Lives of saints, see Ángel Narro, *El culto a las santas y los santos en la antigüedad tardía y la época bizantina* (Madrid: Editorial Síntesis, 2019).

12 See in this regard Samuel Rubenson, "Christian Asceticism and the Emergence of the Monastic Tradition," in *Asceticism*, eds. Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 49–57, 49.

13 One very explicit example in this regard is the comparison between Thecla and Syncletica in *The Life and Activity of the Holy and Blessed Teacher Syncletica*. On the contrast between the two

establishes a strict and literary mutual dependance between early Christian narratives of female saints and the hagiographical portraits of the following centuries. How different is the temporal framework in two different literary portraits so strictly related to each other? What is the impact of different chronological frameworks on literary characters mutually dependent on each other?

Considering all these theoretical premises, the authors of the volume address a series of representative case studies which stress the relevance of gender in its relationship with religious authority, social and familial roles, embodied temporality, construction of sainthood, transmission and reception of literary motives and models of religious and social agency. The contributions, therefore, have been organized into three main sections which describe a consistent trajectory in the context of a *longue durée* perspective, while maintaining at the same time a comparative approach between examples from different historical periods.

The first section addresses the relevance of female authority, gender roles and religious experience and practices in early Christianity. Laura Carnevale, in her contribution entitled “A Portrayal of ‘Gendered’ Authority: Mary of Cassobola Across Time and Space in Two Ps.Ignatian Epistles,” focuses on two letters belonging to the *corpus* attributed to Ignatius of Antioch: the first letter is (allegedly) authored by a woman, Mary of Cassobola, and the second one is the response attributed to Ignatius. These letters, along with four others, are connected to the so-called Long Recension of the *corpus Ignatianum*, probably crafted by a fourth-century Arian forger. What emerges from the text is the intention of portraying Mary as a woman with authority, inasmuch she strongly advises Ignatius to acknowledge two young men, respectively as a bishop and a presbyter of two cities near Antioch. The time/space setting of these letters is second-century Asia Minor. However, Ignatius’ response involves the description of an event preceding the narrated action and set in Rome: Mary’s visit to Pope Anacletus. Applying a historical and narratological perspective to such an anachronistic account, it becomes clear how this temporal/spatial shift, along with other narrative devices detectable in both letters, supports the crafting of an extraordinary “gendered” authoritative model, set in the second century, for women and men living two centuries later.

The male control over female authority in early Christian religious experiences and practices is the focus of Luca Arcari’s article, “A Male Colonization of a Female Visionary Body: The ‘Montanist’ Prophetess in Tertullian’s *On the Soul*

female characters, see Fabrizio Petorella, “‘The True Disciple of the Blessed Thecla’: Saint Syncletica and the Construction of Female Asceticism,” *Adamantius* 25 (2019): 418–26.

94.” Religious practices from the Roman Imperial world offer examples of the employment of psychotropic practices as means of modification of the body. A clear example of the connections between psychotropic (i.e. ritual) “inputs” and visionary “outputs” (i.e. first-person descriptions of the otherworld) is described in the account concerning a Montanist “sister” as it is reported in Tertullian’s *On the Soul* 9.4. According to this text, a woman – the Montanist “sister” – claims to have lived a psychotropic experience which is however put into writing by the male members of her group. By doing so, these members aim at offering to their audience a further psychotropic written platform for other processes of inner chemical mutations. This process thereby explains the re-appropriation by male members of the group of psychotropic elements in order to colonize a specific female experience. Is it then possible to separate the female psychotropic experience of the Montanist sister from the male textualized version, Arcari asks? Is it possible to describe different gendered models of psychotropic experiences, even though they often emerge as colonizing male discourses? Is it possible, to reconstruct specific gendered models of visionary experiences starting from texts where male actions and perceptions are dominant?

Further insights into female authority in early Christianity are offered by my contribution entitled “Women Facing Martyrdom: The Interplay Between Temporality and Social and Gender Roles in Early Christianity.” With this article I attempt to discuss the image of women in the Acts of the Christian martyrs. More specifically, I focus on how the temporality of martyrdom is intertwined with the construction and the experience of social and gendered roles. The nexus between time and the construction of the feminine in these texts emerges as being particularly interesting because it sheds light on many relevant questions in early Christianity, such as the reconfiguration of family ties, social norms, and roles. The Acts of the Christian martyrs represent a significative case in this regard. The emphasis on a rejection and, in some cases, rupture of family ties caused by women who decided to face martyrdom is a constant feature of martyr stories. Furthermore, this social subversion appears to be influenced by the contraction of time determined by the experience of martyrdom. By looking at time as a key factor in martyr stories, I aim to identify a set of key features that may define embodied and experiential time in its relationship with the construction of women’s agency as it is represented in the *Acts of Carpus, Papylus and Agathonice* and the *Martyrdom of Agape, Irene, Chione and Companions*.

The second section of the volume is more specifically focused on the attempts to rewrite women’s authority within the process of transmission and reception of female sainthood. The first article of this second section has been written by Ángel Narro, and it is entitled “Emulating Thecla: Mygdonia, Xanthippe, and Polyxena. Different Conceptions of Conversion and Religious Life.” As a character symboliz-

ing the most appreciated virtues among early Christian writers, Narro says, Thecla becomes an example to be imitated by Christian women in general and, from a narrative point of view, by those women portrayed as living an ascetic life far from earthly goods in hagiography. Thecla will be a recurrent model, since she was not only an example of conversion, or the first martyr, but also the first ascetic woman and a sort of charismatic leader. For this reason, she will be imitated by other female characters playing important roles in other later apocryphal Acts. Therefore, Thecla represents an important antecedent for the future development of women saints. The article by Narro focuses on the first reception of this ideal of female sainthood inside this literary tradition. The influence of Thecla's model can be observed in two later apocryphal Acts sharing a common narrative scenario and chronology, such as those of Thomas and those of Xanthippe and Polyxena. In the former, a binary opposition between earthly and heavenly life is constantly evoked and conversion implies eschatological rewards, whereas in the latter a different conception of temporality and religious life emerges, and conversion means protection against diabolic attacks or evil in this life. The main reason for this relevant change of mindset must be found in the different historical moments in which each work is composed, since the *Acts of Thomas* are normally dated to the third century and the *Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena* to the sixth century. Both feature, as the story of Thecla did, an overturning of the traditional roles attributed to women in non-Christian societies (Indian and Graeco-Roman, respectively), but conceptions on temporality and eschatology diverge. In addition, each one treats Thecla's influence in a particular way and is focused on some precise aspects of her profile.

The literary transmission of the motif of family discord is addressed by Marijana Vuković in her contribution entitled "Husband as a 'Religious Other': Family Discord from Early Christian Apology to Medieval Hagiography." In his *Second Apology for the Christians*, the second-century Christian writer Justin Martyr reported the story of a Christian woman who refused to comply with the non-Christian sinful habits of her husband and yearned to be divorced. The motif of a husband as the "religious other" also emerged in Latin hagiographical texts, such as the late antique *Martyrdom of Anastasia* (BHL 1795). Anastasia, a wealthy aristocrat who led a humble Christian life, married a pagan Publius, but she kept her virginity, feigning illness. Publius held her captive and seized her wealth while she prayed for his conversion to Christianity or death. In the sixth-century *Life of the Fathers*, Gregory of Tours wrote about Monegundis, a female recluse separated from her husband after her daughters' death. She lived in her house like a hermit and later moved to the basilica of Saint Martin in Tours. Her devotion to God and the saint was a justification for her independence from her husband's authority. During the late antiquity, the motif of a husband as a "religious other" fur-

ther appeared in the Georgian *Martyrdom of Shushanik*. A Zoroastrian husband of Shushanik, a Christian Armenian woman, tortured her to death. Finally, the *Martyrdom of Panteleimon*, appearing in Greek and Church Slavonic manuscripts from the eleventh through the fourteenth centuries, described the saint's parents as holding different beliefs. The traveling theme of a husband as a "religious other" transformed its contexts in different texts and periods to keep its significance in a given time. In this way, the motif stayed both intertextual and contextualized. While being part of the core idea of family discord, it allowed room for different contexts to convey messages of a given time rather than staying cemented during the transmission.

The article written by Christian Høgel, "The Metaphrastic Female Saint: Time and Temporality in Rewritten Lives of Women Saints," concludes the second section of the volume. Høgel focuses on the collection of rewritten hagiography, known as the Metaphrastic *menologion* and produced by Symeon Metaphrastes towards the end of the tenth century, where female saints appear quite visibly. Eighteen out of the 148 Lives focus exclusively on female saints, whether individually or in groups, with an additional six Lives featuring a woman as a co-protagonist alongside a man. Notably, six out of the eighteen Lives centered on women are placed in September perhaps to emphasize the importance of female sanctity from the outset in a world dominated by male saints and protagonists. Symeon had limited discretion in these matters, as he adhered to established notions of sanctity and the church calendar. And yet, even his rewritten accounts demonstrate that he paid special attention to female sanctity, and that he wished to underline specific notions of time, offered by the old versions of the stories of the female saints, as well as taking new steps in promoting the temporality that adhered to female saints. Among his prime concerns were the non-evolution in the Lives of hidden saints, the grounded opposition of women saints to secular powers due to the pervert interests from these, as well as a repeated cross-reference between Lives of female saints, as if underlining their temporal correspondence.

The third and final group of contributions investigates more closely the relationship between gender, holiness and temporality in some Lives of holy women. Roberto Alciati investigates the relationship between two female ascetic characters in his article entitled "Unlike Their Mothers: The Struggle Against Time of the Two Melanias." By focusing on the stories of Melania the Elder and Melania the Younger, and by adopting a comparative approach, Alciati observes that different perceptions of temporal shifts are embodied and embedded in the language and narratives that form the imaginary of these two famous "holy women." While it is difficult to state with certainty whether both Melanias were aware of the time shift that their behavior caused, at the same time there are sufficient elements to suppose that the authors of the two hagiographical accounts were aware of

the abovementioned temporal embodiment. While not explicitly talking about “ascetic time,” Alciati writes, the biographers/hagiographers of both stories emphasize that the decision of the two Melanias to abandon the lifestyle of the world was influenced by a “time factor.”

Stavroula Constantinou contributed an article entitled “Mothers’ Time: The Temporality of Motherhood in the *Life of Martha* and the *Life of Symeon Stylite the Younger*.” Drawing on Julia Kristeva’s work on motherhood and its understanding in temporal terms, Constantinou explores maternal temporality and female holiness in two complementary early Byzantine saints’ Lives: the anonymous *Life of Martha*, the only Byzantine hagiographical text whose protagonist is sanctified through motherhood, and the anonymous Life of her son, Symeon Stylite the Younger. As will be shown, both texts bring forth important aspects of maternal temporality as examined by Kristeva in an attempt to articulate the holiness of a mother who has brought up a saintly son. Like the holiness of God’s mother, that of Martha is both material and spiritual, spatial and temporal, generative and eschatological.

Aglæ Pizzone, with her essay “Girls, Interrupted: Synchronicity and Genealogy in Tzetzes’ *Hypomnema* for Saint Lucy,” concludes the third and final section of the volume. In her analysis, Pizzone explores notions of time in John Tzetzes’ only surviving hagiographical piece, the *hypomnema* for Saint Lucy of Syracuse. By comparing it with the fifth-century Passion (BHG 995) and the ninth-century pre-Metaphrastic Passion (BHG 995d) of the saint, Pizzone shows that Tzetzes’ narrative modules bring to the fore aspects of liminality already present in the late antique narrative, glossing over discourses of genealogy more developed in the middle-Byzantine version. The introduction of the myth of Persephone right at the beginning of the piece further emphasizes an idea of circular time in which past and present collapse. Equally, Lucy’s story testifies to the redefinition of gender boundaries and to the creation of a queer temporality in which linear genealogy does not exist anymore.

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