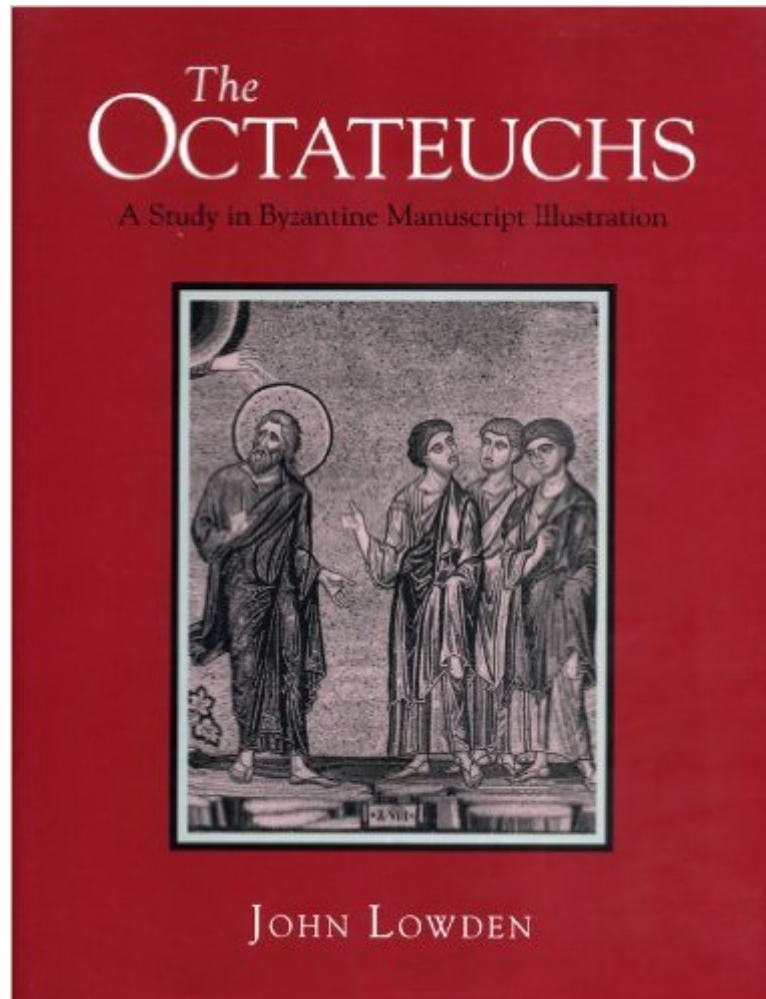


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The Octateuchs: A Study Of Byzantine Manuscript Illustration



Synopsis

Scholars have until now lacked a detailed study of the Octateuchs, a group of five illustrated Byzantine manuscripts that accompany the text of the first eight books of the Bible. Since the first historical studies of Early Christian and Byzantine art in the late nineteenth century, the Octateuchs have been considered important to hypotheses about the development of biblical illustration as well as to more detailed iconographic studies. John Lowden's study makes available much new information about the Octateuchs that includes a number of previously unpublished manuscript images and pages. Lowden examines the Octateuchs both individually and as a group, determining the relationships among them and offering many suggestions concerning the process of their creation. The author also covers topics ranging from antiquity to the Renaissance and takes up issues as diverse as the invention of illustration, the transmission of iconography, the role of archetypes and lost models, and the artist as copyist or inventor. His broader discussion includes individual works ranging from Dura Europos to the Sistine Chapel and art-historical constructs such as the Macedonian Renaissance. In addition, Lowden critically examines approaches to studies of such illustrations, specifically those of Kurt Weitzmann.

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