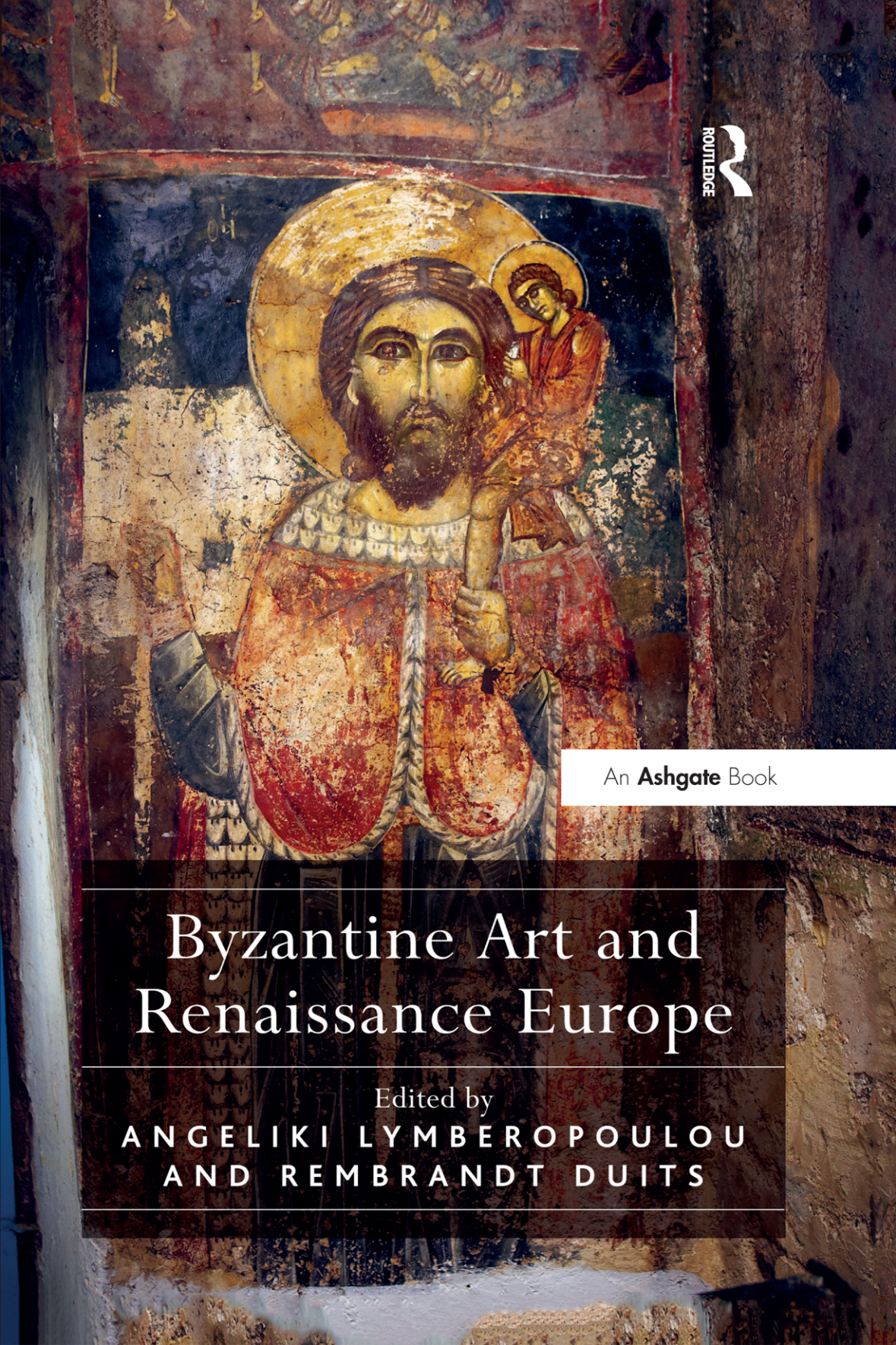

ROUTLEDGE
An Ashgate Book
Byzantine Art and Renaissance Europe
Edited by
ANGELIKI LYMBEROPOULOU
AND REMBRANDT DUITS

BYZANTINE ART AND RENAISSANCE EUROPE

Byzantine Art and Renaissance Europe discusses the cultural and artistic interaction between the Byzantine east and western Europe, from the sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in 1204 to the flourishing of post-Byzantine artistic workshops on Venetian Crete during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the formation of icon collections in Renaissance Italy. The contributors examine the routes by which artistic interaction may have taken place, and explore the reception of Byzantine art in western Europe, analysing why artists and patrons were interested in ideas from the other side of the cultural and religious divide.

In the first chapter, Lyn Rodley outlines the development of Byzantine art in the Palaiologan era and its relations with western culture. Hans Bloemsma then re-assesses the influence of Byzantine art on early Italian painting from the point of view of changing demands regarding religious images in Italy. In the first of two chapters on Venetian Crete, Angeliki Lymberopoulou evaluates the impact of the Venetian presence on the production of fresco decorations in regional Byzantine churches on the island. The next chapter, by Diana Newall, continues the exploration of Cretan art manufactured under the Venetians, shifting the focus to the bi-cultural society of the Cretan capital, Candia and the rise of the post-Byzantine icon. Kim Woods then addresses the reception of Byzantine icons in western Europe in the late Middle Ages and their role as devotional objects in the Roman Catholic Church. Finally, Rembrandt Duits examines the status of Byzantine icons as collectors' items in early Renaissance Italy. The inventories of the Medici family and other collectors reveal an appreciation for icons among Italian patrons, which suggests that received notions of Renaissance tastes may be in need of revision. The book thus offers new perspectives and insights and re-positions late and post-Byzantine art in a broader European cultural context.

Angeliki Lymberopoulou is Lecturer in Art History at The Open University, UK.

Rembrandt Duits is Deputy Curator of the Photographic Collection at The Warburg Institute, University of London, UK.

In memory of George A. Lemos (1936–2008)

Byzantine Art and Renaissance Europe

Edited by Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Rembrandt Duits

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List of Abbreviations

ASV	Archivio di Stato di Venezia
ArtB	*Art Bulletin*
ArtH	*Art History*
Byzance	*Byzance. L'Art byzantine dans les collections publiques françaises: Musée du Louvre 3 novembre 1992 – 1er février 1993* (Paris, 1992)
Byzantium	R. Cormack and M. Vassilaki (eds), *Byzantium, 330–1453* (London, 2008)
CHBE	J. Shepard (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire,* c.*500–1492* (Cambridge, 2008)
DChAE	*Deltion tes Christianikes Archaeologikes Hetaireias*
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
Faith and Power	H.C. Evans (ed.), *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)* (New York, 2004)
The Glory of Byzantium	H.C. Evans and W.D. Wixom (eds), *The Glory of Byzantium: art and culture of the middle Byzantine era, AD 843–1261* (New York, 1997)
JÖB	*Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*
Locating Renaissance Art	C.M. Richardson (ed.), *Locating Renaissance Art* (New Haven and London, 2007)
Making Renaissance Art	K.W. Woods (ed.), *Making Renaissance Art* (New Haven and London, 2007)
NdC	*Notai di Candia Inventario Provvisorio*, Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Venice
ODB	A.P. Kazhdan and A.-M. Talbot (eds), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (3 vols, New York and Oxford, 1991)

Renaissance Medievalisms	K. Eisenbichler (ed.), *Renaissance Medievalisms* (Toronto, 2009)
Viewing Renaissance Art	K.W. Woods, C.M. Richardson and A. Lymberopoulou (eds), *Viewing Renaissance Art* (New Haven and London, 2007)

List of Contributors

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Kim Woods is Senior Lecturer in Art History at The Open University, UK. Her research focuses on late-medieval northern European sculpture, especially from the southern Netherlands. She is the author of *Imported Images: Netherlandish late Gothic sculpture in England, c.1400–c.1550* (Donington, 2007) and is currently working on a book on alabaster sculpture entitled *Cut in Alabaster*.

Preface

Angeliki Lymberopoulou

This publication marks a full circle of an initiative, which started back in 2006. George A. Lemos, inspired by The Open University module *Renaissance Art Reconsidered* (AA315), which was officially launched in February 2007, and which was pioneering in its presentation of the art of post-Byzantine icons as an integral part of the European Renaissance, wished to seek funding to facilitate further research on the subject. With his support, the department of Art History at The Open University was awarded a generous two-year, part-time Fellowship on post-Byzantine Art by the A.G. Leventis Foundation, dedicated to the memory of its founder, another avid supporter of the arts, Konstantinos Leventis. This fellowship enabled research undertaken by one of the contributors to this volume, Diana Newall, on the artistic production of icons in the second half of the fifteenth century in the capital of Venetian Crete, Candia (present-day Herakleion). The research consolidated the initiative and further steps were taken in order to produce the current volume, one of the main ambitions of which is to further a dialogue between scholars working on the Byzantine East and Renaissance Europe. These two fields have traditionally remained separate; however, as this volume shows, an exchange of ideas between them could offer fresh perspectives to the study of the Early Modern period.

Unfortunately, George A. Lemos did not manage to see this project through to the end: he passed away in 2008, leaving his family and friends devastated. The London Hellenic Society (LHS), wishing to honour his memory, became our generous sponsor, and has supported this publication financially. Finally, owing to John Smedley and Ashgate, this volume saw the light and its contributors can only wish and hope that it does George A. Lemos proud.

Editorial Policy

In rendering the Greek names and place-names mentioned in this volume the standard Anglicized forms have been used, where they exist (for example, Damian instead of Damianos). In the remainder of the cases, following a trend that has been gaining acceptance recently, all names have been transcribed as literally as possible avoiding the various Latinized versions (e.g. Komnenos instead of Comnenus). Obviously, in all publications cited in the footnotes the names have remained unchanged and appear as their authors intended. Maps indicating various locations mentioned over the course of the six chapters, precede the Introduction to this volume.

The fact that this is a collection of specialized chapters and not a general survey means that we have opted not to include a central bibliography; there is relatively little overlap between the literature references of the various chapters and the bibliography would become disproportionally weighed down by expert publications on details referred to only by one of the authors in their specific contribution. Readers who wish to find out more about the topics discussed here can find all the relevant material in the footnotes to each chapter.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the London Hellenic Society (LHS) for sponsoring this publication and for their encouragement and support; to the A.G. Leventis Foundation for allowing research for this volume to be initiated by generously sponsoring the two-year, part-time Konstantinos Leventis Fellowship on post-Byzantine Art at The Open University; to John Smedley for his enthusiasm, careful attention and continuous support of Byzantine studies and publications; to Robert Anderson, Celia Barlow, Brother Nikolaos of the Franciscan monastery of the Capuchin monks in Chania, Julian Chrysostomides (†2008), Donal Cooper, Charalambos Dendrinos, Sue Dobson, Father Peter of the Catholic cathedral of the Dormition of the Virgin in Chania, Anne Ford, Kanakis Gerolimakis, Lynne Harrison, Paul Hetherington, Konstantinos Lymperopoulos, Anne Mclaughlin, Mick McTiernan, Rosemary Morris, Diana Norman, Diogenes Papadopoulos, Georgi Parpulov, Carol Richardson, Vasiliki Tsamakda and Annemarie Weyl Carr, for their constructive criticism, meticulous and useful suggestions, support and help (practical and otherwise); and to the contributors for embracing this project by showing dedication, commitment, punctuality, precision and understanding. Last, but by no means least, to George A. Lemos, to whose memory this book is dedicated, and who loved all things Byzantine (except its bureaucracy).

Maps



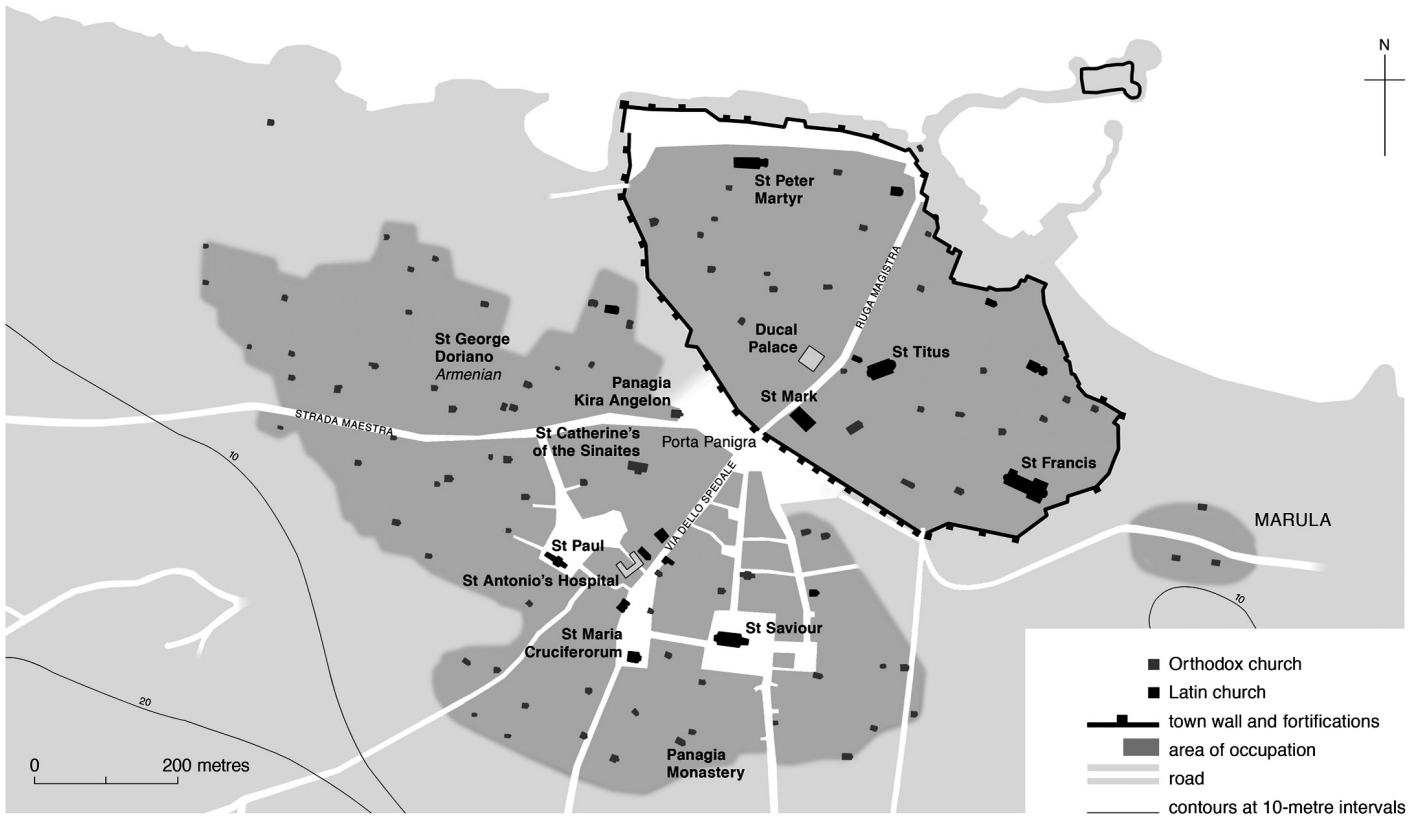
Map 1a Map of western Europe. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Rembrandt Duits.



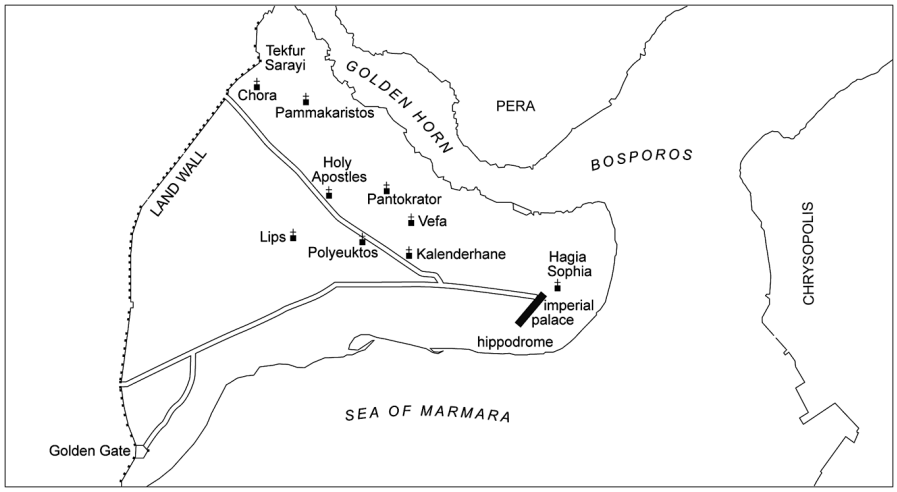
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Introduction

Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Rembrandt Duits

This book is about Byzantine art and the European Renaissance. The final phase of the long artistic tradition of the Byzantine Empire and the early stages of what is called post-Byzantine art (Greek Orthodox art produced after the fall of Constantinople in 1453) coincide chronologically with the period of western art history known as the Renaissance. In the sixteenth century Giorgio Vasari, in his *Lives of the most excellent painters, sculptors, and architects* (first edition 1550, second 1568), defined the Renaissance as a revival of the art of classical antiquity that took place in Italy between the late thirteenth and the middle of the sixteenth centuries.[1] In particular, he set this revival against the background of the *maniera greca* of medieval art – a supposed degeneration of the art of antiquity which Italian artists sought to break away from.[2] Art historians have questioned or even contradicted many points of Vasari's description, but his condemnation of the 'Greek manner' still casts a spell over our interpretation of this historical era. Similarly, historians of Byzantine art have claimed that until the fall of Constantinople, the Greek Orthodox community was largely hostile towards Latin Christianity and rejected western artistic influences even on the island of Crete, which had passed from Byzantium to Venice shortly after the Fourth Crusade (1204) and was a region where Latin and Greek Orthodox populations were in close contact for a long period of time.[3] Hence, late and post-Byzantine art and western Renaissance art have largely been studied as two separate phenomena with hardly any effect on one another.

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[1] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori. Nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. R. Bettarini and P. Barocchi (6 vols, Florence, 1966–).

[2] See Chapter 3, n. 102 and Chapter 6, n. 5.

[3] For a further discussion, see Chapter 3.

Only recently have there been attempts to re-examine this situation. In the catalogue *Byzantium: Faith and Power*, published in conjunction with the eponymous exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in New York in 2004, Maryan Ainsworth made a case for the importance of Byzantine icons as religious objects in early Renaissance Europe, specifically images of the Virgin thought to be 'by the hand of Saint Luke' the Evangelist.[4] Since then, Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood have drawn attention to the fact that Byzantine icons formed part of the incipient culture of art collecting in fifteenth-century Italy.[5] In Byzantine scholarship, the notion of a uniform aversion against the west among the Orthodox population of Crete has also been called into question and western elements in the fresco decorations of Cretan churches from the period of Venetian domination – preceding the more famous 'hybrid' Cretan icons of the post-Byzantine era – have begun to be given their due attention.[6] Three Open University module books published in 2007 discussed, for the first time, Cretan art from the Venetian period of the island in the context of a new and wider understanding of the western Renaissance.[7]

The present volume aims to bring together these separate strands of research into a larger and more unified picture. It discusses aspects of the cultural and artistic interaction between the Byzantine east and western Europe, from the 1204 sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders to the flourishing of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century post-Byzantine artistic production on Venetian-ruled Crete, where artists adapted to the demands of a bi-ethnic Byzantine/western society. It examines the routes by which artistic interaction may have taken place and analyses why artists and patrons were interested in ideas from the other side of the cultural and religious divide. The reception of Byzantine art in western Europe during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is also considered, exploring the devotional function of icons in the west and their value as collectors' items, indicating that received notions of Renaissance tastes may be in need of revision.

The central theme is cultural interaction, and the geographical area where this interaction was at its most intensive, Crete, is therefore at the centre of the volume. At the same time, it was not the intention to write yet another

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4 M.W. Ainsworth, '"A la façon grèce": the encounter of northern Renaissance artists with Byzantine icons', in *Faith and Power*, pp. 547–8. See also Chapter 5.

5 A. Nagel and C.S. Wood, 'What counted as an "antiquity" in the Renaissance?', in *Renaissance Medievalisms*, pp. 53–75; eidem, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York, 2010). See also Chapter 6.

6 A. Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael at Kavalariana: Art and Society on Fourteenth-century Venetian-dominated Crete* (London, 2006). See also Chapter 3.

7 *Making Renaissance Art*; *Locating Renaissance Art* (see specifically the essay by A. Lymberopoulou, 'The Painter Angelos and post-Byzantine art', pp. 174–210); *Viewing Renaissance Art* (see specifically the essay by Angeliki Lymberopoulou, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', pp. 171–206).

study on the Cretan hybrid icons.[8] The whole of the artistic production of Venetian Crete from the early frescoes in rural churches to the early sixteenth-century manufacture of painted panels for a mixed audience in cosmopolitan Candia is discussed and put into perspective by looking at Byzantine artistic responses to the west and western responses to Byzantium in general. This does not mean, however, that the book is meant as either a survey of late and post-Byzantine art with an eye on exchanges with the west or as a survey of the impact of Byzantine art in Renaissance Europe (it is important to point out that, in this volume, the term 'Renaissance' is used as a general indication of an historical period; the volume covers a long time-span and, as a consequence, includes material that has traditionally been labelled 'Gothic' or 'late medieval' as well as material associated with the Renaissance proper). The focus is instead on the artistic interplay of two distinct but at the same time socially and historically intimately connected cultures. Our goal is to look not just at isolated examples of such interplay but to identify larger and consistent patterns, and to do so from a point of view that is neither predominantly Byzantine nor exclusively western. It is for this reason that we have opted for a multi-author volume with six chapters written by scholars from different fields, in an attempt to bridge not just the conceptual gap that exists in the perception of Byzantine and Renaissance art history but also the academic one that separates the students of each tradition.

The first chapter by Lyn Rodley introduces the Byzantine context. It surveys the nature and circumstances of cultural contacts between the Byzantine Empire and the west since the twelfth century and their capacity to affect art and architecture produced during the late Byzantine period. The social consequences of such contacts (particularly intermarriage) are addressed for their potential impact on material culture (what kinds of artefacts were affected, and in what manner). In addition, the role of diplomatic gifts and portable art such as icons, reliquaries, manuscripts and textiles is examined as part of the cultural exchange that led to hybridization of some Catholic and Orthodox traditions, as reflected, for example, in the selection of saints in religious art, in bilingual manuscripts, and in iconographical and architectural borrowings. Using the history of cultural contacts as a framework, the chapter presents an overview of Byzantine material culture of the Palaiologan period (1261–1453), aiming to establish the forms, functions and styles of Byzantine art in its distinctive last phase and to assess the nature and extent of hybridization with western traditions before the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The chapter ends with an introduction to developments of the immediate post-Byzantine period that have a bearing on cultural interaction with the west. The pattern that emerges from this outline is one of self-conscious reflection upon the past glory of Byzantium – perhaps in reaction to the physical invasion and

[8] For numerous publications on Cretan icons, see Chapter 4.

pillaging of Constantinople by the Crusaders. There were nonetheless traces of contacts with the west, especially in places such as Mystras, which was founded by the Latin invaders in the Peloponnese in 1249 and conquered by the Byzantines 10 years later. A further mingling of traditions took place in regions outside Byzantium with overlapping spheres of artistic influence, notably the Kingdom of Jerusalem (Map 1b).

Perhaps the most prominent territory where such overlapping spheres of influence existed was late medieval Italy. In Chapter 2, Hans Bloemsma reviews the role of Byzantine art in early Italian painting, analysing the reasons for Italian interest in Byzantine forms and the practical mechanisms by which they may have been transmitted to Italy. It is generally accepted that Italian painting embraced a Byzantine element during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but there is no consensus regarding the related questions of *why* Byzantine art was so important to early Italian artists and patrons, and *how* Italian artists came to have knowledge of Byzantine art. Assessments have ranged from a mindless 'repetition … of Byzantine formulae'[9] (a vision no doubt inspired by Vasari's rejection of the *maniera greca*) to a positive artistic choice made in order to meet the changing demands of contemporary devotion. The chapter evaluates the different positions taken in the debate and assesses the relationship between iconographical innovations, stylistic renewal and religious changes in Italy. Specifically, it presents case studies from three different places at different times, which serve to illuminate successive stages in the relation between Byzantine and early Italian art: Venice around 1200, Assisi around 1250 and Siena around 1300 (Map 1a). It shows how the latest developments in Byzantine art offered Italian artists models for the creation of religious images that allowed for greater empathy on the part of the beholder. Eventually, the same search for greater empathy drove Italian painting away from Byzantium and into the direction of the greater realism and plasticity of form of the French Gothic style. Yet, even in this phase, Byzantine art may still have been a source of inspiration for the depiction of a higher, metaphysical reality (Map 1b).

Overlapping spheres of artistic influence existed also on Venetian Crete, but conditions here were different as there was a large Greek Orthodox population in a territory that had changed from Byzantine to western rule (Map 2). As mentioned above, it has long been claimed that the Greek Orthodox population of Crete remained oriented exclusively towards Byzantium until the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Among the principal evidence for this claim is the 'pure' Byzantine iconography and style of the frescoes in the many regional churches on Crete dating from the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries. Chapter 3 by Angeliki Lymberopoulou re-evaluates this evidence, showing, among other things, that the iconography of the frescoes does not always follow Byzantine traditions straightforwardly and

[9] See Chapter 2, n. 2.

could combine information from different sources – a mechanism important for the introduction of hybrid iconographical forms later on. The chapter also considers factors such as the geographical dispersion of the churches in relation to the exploitation of the island's ample natural resources by the Venetians (for whom Crete was, for a long time, the largest land area within their maritime empire). In contrast to the situation in Palaiologan Constantinople, where artistic patronage was largely a privilege of the upper class (see Chapter 1), the building and decoration of the Cretan regional churches was financed by small rural communities. These communities obtained their wealth from the increased trade in local produce which the Venetian colonization of Crete brought about. This in itself makes the Cretan churches a product of cultural interaction rather than of deliberate orientation towards Byzantium. In addition, the use of Italian building practices can be demonstrated in the architecture of the churches and elements of western iconography were at times introduced into the fresco programmes, suggesting that a cross-cultural dialogue between Cretan natives and Venetian colonists was taking place as early as the fourteenth century. It is likely that this dialogue was much more pronounced outside the inherently conservative environment of religion. Religious conservatism, on the other hand, may have been the primary reason for the traditional character of the Cretan church frescoes and even for such details as the occasional inclusion of members of the western clergy among the damned burning in Hell – a reflection of religious beliefs rather than, as has been argued, a visual polemic against the Venetians.

The Cretan churches and their frescoes are thus indicative of a degree of social and cultural interaction between the Latin and Orthodox populations on the island, leading up to the mixed society that produced the famous hybrid icons during the post-Byzantine period. As the market for frescoes in churches approached satiation during the fifteenth century, painters turned to the production of icons as an alternative means of making a living and Cretan art during the post-Byzantine period came to be virtually synonymous with icon manufacture.[10] A lot of the workshop practices established for the creation of fresco cycles during the earlier period were probably carried over into the icon workshops of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (information on these icon workshops is still relatively scarce and has to be deduced largely from published contracts, such as the ones discussed in Chapter 4[11]). This included the western custom of signing works of art, the adoption of which is first attested in fourteenth-century frescoes. Moreover, while the absorption of western influences in the frescoes was restricted by the liturgical context

[10] A. Lymberopoulou, 'Late and post-Byzantine art under Venetian rule: frescoes versus icons, and Crete in the middle'. in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 351–70.

[11] See Chapter 4, nn. 11, 153 and Chapter 3, n. 101; see also Lymberopoulou, 'Audiences and markets', pp. 188–92.

in which the images had to function, portable painted panels proved to be more adaptable, especially as these panels were not only made for the internal market on Crete itself but also began to be exported to western Europe.

In Chapter 4, Diana Newall continues the exploration of Venetian Crete and the social and cross-cultural interaction between Byzantium and the west as reflected in its art. The focus shifts from the rural hinterland to the capital Candia (present-day Herakleion; Maps 2 and 3) and its position as a European city during the second half of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The chapter explores the city's status as an important port on the trade and pilgrim routes of the Mediterranean and evaluates the impact this had on Candia's artistic activity, particularly on the rise of the Cretan icon during the early post-Byzantine period. Although the importance of the hybrid Cretan icons has been much commented on, the reasons for their existence have thus far not been explored fully. Here, the evidence for icon production in Candia is considered in its social, cultural, religious and commercial contexts, including a discussion of the ways in which hybrid forms developed to meet the requirements of both Orthodox and Latin patrons. The examination of this artistic trade in relation to pilgrimage in particular offers a fresh perspective. Specific examples of the production, sale, trade and export of icons to western Europeans, too, are addressed. This second part of the diptych of chapters on Crete demonstrates the coexistence of an extraordinary mix of populations – native Orthodox, established Venetian colonists and a constantly changing stream of travellers from further afield in Europe. As a consequence, by the beginning of the sixteenth century, the overlapping spheres of influence from Byzantium and the west were blended into a new art form that incorporated aspects of both artistic traditions.

The influence of the Byzantine artistic tradition is generally thought to have receded from western Europe as western art developed in a radically different direction during the Renaissance. Yet, Byzantine painting – some of it actually produced after Byzantine models in Italy rather than in Byzantium itself – still had a presence throughout the continent in the shape of the icons purportedly painted 'by the hand of Saint Luke'. Chapter 5 by Kim Woods reassesses the impact these works may have had, concentrating on three European artistic centres where icons are attested: Prague in the second half of the fourteenth century, Bruges and the Netherlands in the fifteenth century, and the court of Isabella the Catholic in Spain at the end of fifteenth century (Map 1a). Miraculous icons thought to have been painted by the Evangelist were highly revered objects and a number of them – or copies after them – came to the west via churchmen or rulers, including Charles IV, King of Bohemia (r. 1347–78) and later also Holy Roman Emperor (r. 1355–78). Several of these icons ended up in churches, where they obtained a cult status among the faithful. Some of them may have informed local artistic projects, such as the unusual panel paintings commissioned by Charles IV for the chapel of the Holy Cross at

Karlštejn. Maryan Ainsworth, as mentioned above, has drawn attention to the impact of Byzantine compositions on the art of the southern Netherlands during the fifteenth century. Evidence for the aesthetic appreciation of icons is more elusive, however. The icons owned by Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy (r. 1419–67) appear to have been diplomatic gifts given to his father John the Fearless (r. 1404–19) on his return from crusade in 1398 rather than deliberate acquisitions. The situation was different at the court of Isabella the Catholic. Castile had more extensive contacts with Byzantium and became home to Greek refugees after the fall of Constantinople. Isabella had several icons among her private possessions and at least one of these was passed on as a family heirloom to her daughter, suggesting a more personal relationship with the work in question.

Personal and perhaps even aesthetic appreciation for icons in the west are the principal themes of the sixth and final chapter by Rembrandt Duits, which deals with icons in art collections in fifteenth-century Italy, specifically the collection of the Medici family in Florence. Past scholarship on this subject has been affected by Vasari's use of the *maniera greca* as a negative foil against which to define the efforts of Italian Renaissance artists. The chapter analyses the documentation of the Medici icon collection in some detail and compares it to other contemporary icon collections. It tries to establish how important the icons were compared to other paintings on panel within the various collections, how the Medici and other collectors may have acquired the Byzantine works in their possession, how the value of the icons relates to that of other collectors' items, and what the role and function of the icons within the Medici household may have been. Contrary to what the Vasarian view of Renaissance aesthetics might suggest, there is at least the possibility that icons, like other collectibles, were actively sought after and not just passively obtained as diplomatic presents. The places where they were kept in the Medici palace indicate they were regarded as artefacts of considerable status and perhaps also functioned as objects of devotion. The fact that Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449–92) ordered mosaic panels from Florentine artists that were displayed next to some of his Byzantine miniature mosaic icons may also reveal a degree of aesthetic sensitivity towards these works in the *maniera greca* – a sensitivity, however, that may have been typical of patrons and collectors such as the Medici rather than of contemporary Italian artists and their aims.

Together, the six chapters form a case study on the relation between geography, history and cultural exchange. The geographical and political changes in Europe during the late Middle Ages, and specifically the western conquest of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade, resulted in a forced exposure of Byzantium to western culture, but perhaps also in a reflex response of concentration on the Empire's own cultural heritage. Historical changes in religious devotion in the west initially stimulated Italian painters to emulate the latest artistic developments in Byzantium but ultimately

drove them away from Byzantine models. Yet, despite the artistic reaction against Byzantium that was articulated in Vasari's sixteenth-century history of Italian art, Byzantine works continued to have a strong presence in western European culture in the form of venerated icons attributed to the hand of Saint Luke; the art-historical impact of these icons may have been limited, but their cultural-historical significance was substantial. Moreover, in areas that were geographically closely linked to Byzantium and historically exposed to Greek culture, notably Italy and Castile, there appears to have been also a greater receptivity to the aesthetics of Byzantine art. Nowhere was this effect stronger than on Venetian Crete, geographically situated on the borderline of Byzantine and western cultures and historically under the sway of both. It was here that a truly bi-cultural art form came into being. By putting Crete at the heart of the geographical and historical picture outlined above, the book thus redefines the position of Cretan art amid shifting spheres of cultural and artistic influence. It also shows how late and post-Byzantine art, and in particular the art of Venetian Crete, are integral to the complex narrative of European art history during the Renaissance period.

1

The Byzantine Context

Lyn Rodley

'Byzantium and the West' is a venerable topic among historians of Byzantine art,[1] who have identified a range of results for art, and sometimes architecture, of contact between the Latin west and Byzantine Greek east, from the early Middle Ages, when the Church divided, until the fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453.[2] The purpose of this opening chapter is twofold: to survey some of the evidence for contacts between eastern and western material culture and to outline the condition of Byzantine art and architecture in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Palaiologan period, the time denoted 'Renaissance' in the west.

Vehicles of Cultural Exchange between East and West

The contacts between people that allowed art and artistic ideas to travel between the Byzantine east and European west took place at various social levels, and in various contexts. At the top of the social scale there were the ritual exchanges of gifts by ambassadors from one court to another, and the trousseau-dowries carried by princesses for whom politically expedient inter-dynastic marriages were arranged. The nature of such exchanges is usually documented only in very general terms: in his *Chronicon*, written sometime between 1013 and 1018, Thietmar of Merseburg says that when the Byzantine princess Theophano, a relative of the Byzantine emperor John I Tzimisces (r. 969–76), came to the west in 972 to marry Otto II (955–83), she arrived

[1] The pioneering work in this area remains Otto Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West* (New York, 1970). Major exhibitions of the last 20 years have also given attention to it: *Byzance; The Glory of Byzantium*; *Faith and Power*; *Byzantium*.

[2] Differences which ended with the Orthodox Church under the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Catholic Church under the Patriarch (Pope) of Rome began in the ninth century and became final in 1054. See 'Schism' in *ODB*, vol. 3, pp. 1850–51.

with 'a splendid entourage and magnificent gifts'.[3] This description, though probably conventional, is likely to have covered secular luxury goods such as boxes made of ivory or gem-encrusted metalwork, embossed silver vessels and jewellery, and the fine silk textiles for which Constantinople was famous.[4] In spite of the separation of Greek and Latin churches in 1054, wedding chests and diplomatic luggage probably also included items from the wide range of religious equipment common to all Christendom: liturgical vessels, reliquaries, portable icons and ornate book covers, although books themselves perhaps had a limited currency as gifts for western recipients, few of whom would have read Greek. It is well known that the Byzantine goods brought west by Theophano and her entourage had an impact on the art of her new residence, particularly evident in manuscript illuminations associated with the Ottonian court, some of which acquired gold backgrounds, elements of Byzantine iconography and Greek inscriptions.[5] The practicalities of such transferences are undocumented and in any case likely to be as various as human behaviour: courtiers impressed by exotic foreign novelty (or eager to please their rulers) may have told the artists working for them to adopt Byzantinisms, and artists with access to court treasures would themselves have seized the opportunity to add new material to their model books – and it is probably by this route, rather than by courtly commissions, that some novelties might enter widespread use. It is likely, of course, that this process also operated in the other direction, with works by western artists and craftsmen producing similar responses in various Byzantine court circles, but material evidence of this is lacking.[6]

Further down the social scale, trade accounted for a wider arc of contacts relevant to material culture. Western merchants dealing in Byzantine lands sometimes used the convenience of their ships to bring home Byzantine goods for personal, as well as commercial, reasons. Sometime before 1065, Pantaleo, a merchant of Amalfi, brought back from Constantinople a set of bronze doors to embellish the cathedral of Saint Andrew in his home town (such doors are more portable than they might seem, since they are made of separate panels mounted in a framework that could be assembled at the destination site).[7]

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[3] D.A. Warner, *Ottonian Germany: the Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg* (Manchester, 2000), p. 103.

[4] Textiles made good gifts, being easily portable without much risk of damage; their acceptability to western recipients is evident from the frequency with which they were used to wrap the corpses or relics of eminent westerners: J. Lafontaine-Dosogne (ed.), *Splendeur de Byzance*, *Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire* (Brussels, 1982), pp. 205–19.

[5] For 'Byzantinisms' in Ottonian art: C. Dodwell, *Painting in Europe, 800–1200* (Harmondsworth, 1971), Pls 73–4.

[6] The decline and ultimate extinction of the Byzantine Empire made the survival rate of its portable art low. Most of what remains comes either from buried hoards or is found in the west, arriving there as loot or by the other routes described in this chapter.

[7] H. Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages* (Rome, 1986), vol. 1, The Byzantine Bronze Doors of Southern Italy, pp. 140–41.

Byzantine culture cannot have been unfamiliar to Pantaleo, since southern Italy was within Byzantine control until the eleventh century and retained its social conventions for long after that,[8] but the doors were evidently a novelty there and prompted a series of similar embellishments for Italian churches. They impressed no less a figure than Desiderius of Montecassino, who in 1066 sent the measurements of his own monastery church door to Constantinople (and, from the inscriptions on the doors themselves, seems to have enlisted Pantaleo's father to pay for them).[9]

The relevance of commercial life to the exposure of westerners to Byzantine material culture must have been considerably greater in the twelfth century, involving a wider range of people, when there was a large community of westerners resident in Constantinople. Many were merchants from the trading ports of Italy – Venice, Pisa and Genoa – but there were also the 'Franks' from further afield in western Europe.[10] They lived in a quarter of the city known as Pera, opposite the ancient walled promontory, and had their boatyards and warehouses on the Golden Horn, the inlet that provides Constantinople with a sheltered waterway for maintaining ships and dealing with their cargoes (Map 4). This western community thrived under the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–80), who hoped for western assistance against the increasing problem of Turkish settlement in Anatolia and encouraged marriages between Byzantine aristocrats and westerners, a trend that must also have permeated the merchant class, which had its own deals to consolidate.[11] All such alliances would have entailed exchanges of gifts and, in any case, a resident expatriate community is inevitably exposed to the art and architecture of the host country and will assimilate some of it, and Byzantine goods would also have been sent or taken back to Italy or elsewhere in western Europe as exotic luxuries or curiosities. Reciprocity is also probable, since the westerners of Pera are likely to have had among them artisans and artists of their own to supply them with buildings, decorations and works of art to their own tastes and this, in turn, may have affected the production of Byzantine art in the capital. Some evidence for this is supplied by the large stone figure reliefs, particularly of the Virgin orant or Virgin and Child, that appear in twelfth-century Constantinople after centuries in which monumental figure sculpture was all but unknown in the Byzantine Empire. The carving of these pieces is technically confident, with no sign of any gradual recovery of a lost skill and, given that it was in the Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals of the eleventh- and twelfth-

[8] G.A. Loud, 'Byzantium and southern Italy (876–1000)', *CHBE*, pp. 560–82.

[9] Bloch, *Monte Cassino*, vol. 1, pp. 139–40, 155.

[10] C.M. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West, 1180–1204* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), pp. 6–13.

[11] P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 209–17.

century west that monumental figure carving was revived, it is likely that the reintroduction of this form to Constantinople had a western source.[12]

The Crusades

Constantinople was not the only point of contact between east and west. From the eleventh century, the Crusades engendered western settlements in the Near East that provided another context for contact and interaction with Byzantine culture.[13] As in Constantinople, marriages were again a factor, especially between male Crusaders and Christian women of the Near East – for instance, Baldwin II, second ruler of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (1118–31), married Morphia of Melitene, an Armenian, though of Orthodox faith.[14] Also a factor was the presence of western artisans attached to the settlements, and so working in an environment where exposure to other artistic traditions was inevitable. A psalter of *c.*1135, probably made for the daughter of Baldwin and Morphia, Melisende (who ruled the kingdom for 18 years following the death of her husband, Fulk of Anjou, in 1143), is a compendium of the artistic hybridization thus produced. The psalter is written in Latin and the style of its illuminations suggest that as many as six artists of essentially western provenance produced them, but showing so many elements of Byzantine iconography as to suggest the use of Byzantine models.[15] The remarkable ivory covers of the book are an even more complex product of the artistic melting pot: each panel has a wide border of interlaced vegetation of a density and regularity characteristic of western manuscript illumination, enclosing a rectangle of interlaced circles recalling Byzantine textile patterns. Within the circles of the front panel are six scenes of the Life of David, traditional subject matter for the decoration of both Byzantine and western psalters, with western-style virtues and vices fighting in the spandrels. On the back, the six circles accommodate images of six kings, performing acts of mercy (Figure 1.1), following the invocation in the Gospel of Saint Matthew.[16] Each king wears a different variant of Byzantine imperial dress, three of them the cloak pinned at one shoulder characteristic of early imperial representations and the other three variants of the middle-Byzantine *loros*, a jewel-encrusted stole. The source of this variety is unknown, but a

[12] In style and iconography, the reliefs resemble Byzantine ivories and may be the products of western sculptors following models from the Byzantine minor arts: L. Rodley, *Byzantine Art and Architecture: an introduction* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 212–13.

[13] *ODB*, vol. 1, pp. 557–61.

[14] William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done beyond the Sea*, trans. E. Atwater Babcock and A.C. Krey (2 vols, New York, 1943), vol. 1, p. 450.

[15] J. Folda, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098–1187* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 137–59.

[16] Matthew 25:35–6: giving food to the hungry; drink to the thirsty; shelter to the homeless; clothing to the naked; visiting the sick; visiting the imprisoned.

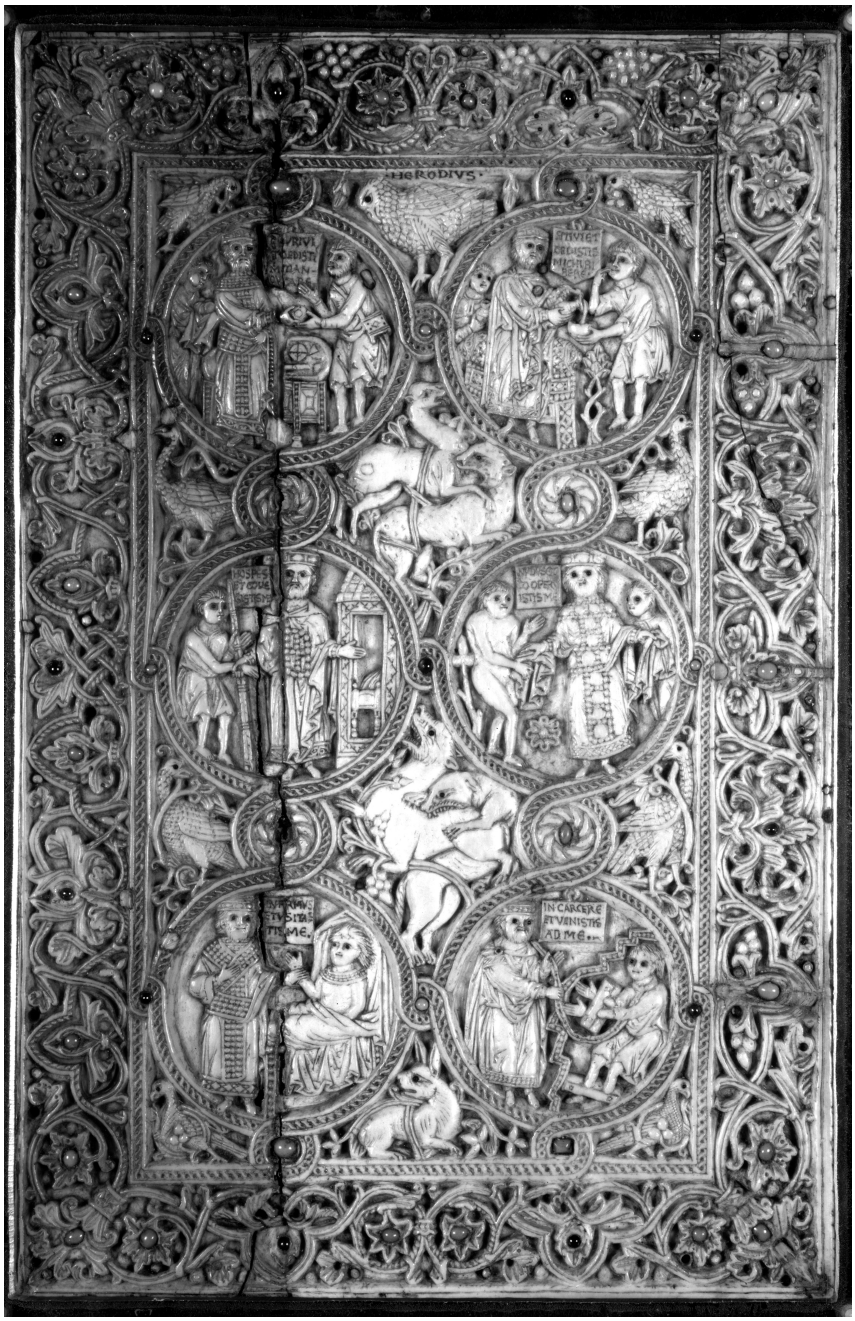


Fig. 1.1 Back cover of the Queen Melisende Psalter showing *Kings performing Acts of Mercy*, *c.*1131–43, ivory, British Library (Egerton Ms 1139, binding), London. Photo: British Library.

model book in which a range of Byzantine imperial imagery had been gathered is a possibility. In terms of practicality, it would seem likely that this ivory cover, like the book itself, was produced by western artists of the Crusader entourage, supplementing their own artistic traditions with Byzantine models (and perhaps an Islamic one that supplied the tiny polished beads of turquoise and garnet scattered in the ornamental framework).

A converse example, an icon made in the Byzantine tradition and style but apparently adjusted for an (unknown) western patron, is found in the monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai (Figure 1.2 and Plate I). The icon is of entirely Byzantine form, made of a single wooden panel from which the field for painting has been excavated, leaving the full thickness of the panel as an integral frame. The iconography is also Byzantine: a *Deësis* of half-figures (Christ between the Virgin and John the Baptist) in an upper register, with five standing saints below, identified with Greek inscriptions.[17] The central saint, Paul, is dressed in Byzantine ecclesiastical dress, but the other four are clearly depicted as western-style monks: wearing western habits, three of them (Michael, Philip, Matthew) in the brown cloth of the Franciscan order and one (George) in white, possibly Benedictine or Cistercian. All five have the epithet 'the holy new martyr', which perhaps indicates that they were a priest and four monks of western orders who met their martyrdom in the Near East during the period of the Crusades.

The Latin Occupation of Constantinople

The relationship between the Byzantine court and the Crusaders was never one of Christian brotherhood, given their entrenched differences within the same faith. It was an uneasy alliance at best, not helped by the death of Manuel I in 1180 and the consequent end of imperial protection for the western community of Constantinople: in 1182 local resentment of westerners turned to massacre.[18] This event facilitated the 1204 sacking and looting of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade, led by the elderly Doge of Venice, Enrico Dandolo, and the start of a 56-year Latin occupation of the city.[19] The changed demography of Constantinople during that period necessarily had an impact on material culture, for although some of the Byzantine aristocracy made deals with the Latin conquerors, most retreated to exile in various parts of the empire – particularly Nicaea, Epiros and Trebizond (Map 1b)– thus removing the patron class largely responsible for the upkeep of the city's fabric.[20] Some of the palaces,

[17] *Faith and Power*, pp. 360–61 (no. 219).

[18] William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds*, vol. 1, pp. 464–5.

[19] J. Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (New York, 2004).

[20] M. Angold, 'After the Fourth Crusade: the Greek rump states and the recovery of Byzantium', *CHBE*, pp. 731–42.

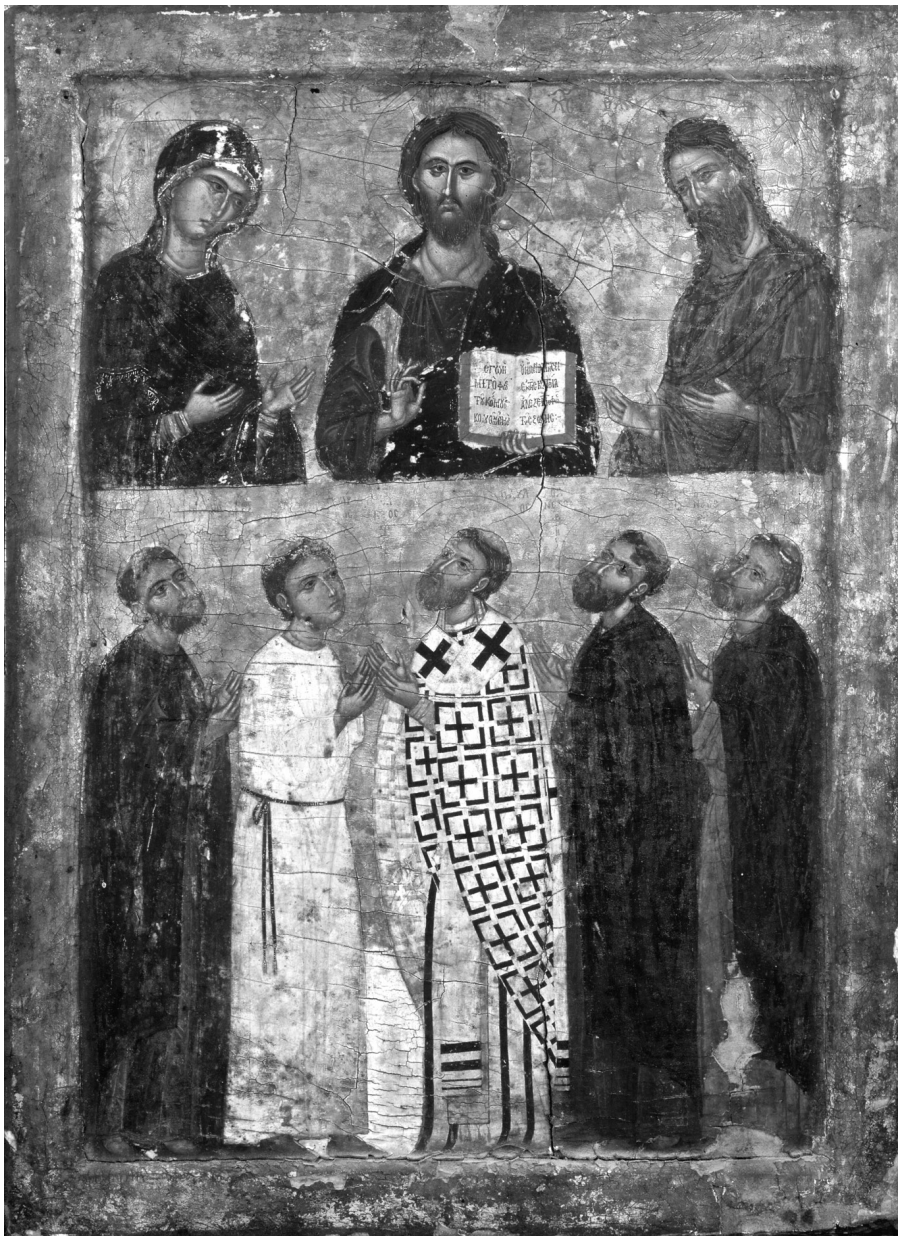


Fig. 1.2 Icon of the *Deësis* and Five Saints (Colour Plate I).

churches and other buildings were of course used by the occupiers, constituting the spoils divided up among the Latin factions, with the Venetians getting the largest share, since their ships had made the conquest possible. Institutions that were not used by the invaders, particularly churches and monasteries, continued to function but their revenues went into western coffers.[21]

The Venetian share included the great Pantokrator Monastery, founded by the emperor John II Komnenos (r. 1118–43) and his empress Eirene, which the Venetians adopted for their own use.[22] They appear to have robbed the monastery of some fine carved capitals and piers that were sent back to Venice to adorn the exterior southeast corner of San Marco there, part of a large consignment of looted columns, capitals and reliefs now decorating other parts of the building.[23] This need not indicate wanton destruction of the monastery, however, since there is also evidence for new work there, in the form of fragments of stained glass that were found on excavation of the apse floor of the Pantokrator (south) church. Although the Byzantine Empire had a long tradition of glass working, the stained-glass window was never an aspect of its church architecture and would appear to be a western import.[24] There is further proof of Latin work in the church now known as Kalenderhane Camii, once part of a monastery possibly dedicated to the Virgin Kyriotissa. In the apse of a chapel at the east end of this church a western hand painted a standing figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, flanked by 10 scenes from his life in three registers.[25] Most scenes are too damaged for certain identification, but the famous episode of Francis preaching to the birds is certain and the work must have resembled early Franciscan altarpieces like that made in 1235 by Bonaventura Berlinghieri for San Francesco in Pescia.[26] Since the Kalenderhane painting in all likelihood predates the end of the Latin occupation in 1261, it could be among the earliest representations of the Life of Francis in monumental art. Whatever the circumstances, the church surely

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[21] R. Janin, 'Les sanctuaires de Byzance sous la domination latine (1204–1261)', *Études Byzantines*, 2 (1944): pp. 134–84.

[22] Ibid., pp. 174–5.

[23] The fine carving was in secondary use at the Pantokrator, originally made for the sixth-century church of Saint Polyeuktos in Constantinople: R.M.A. Harrison, *A Temple for Byzantium* (Austin, Tex. and London, 1989), pp. 103–4.

[24] A.H. Megaw, 'Notes on recent work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul', *DOP*, 17 (1963): pp. 333–71 (esp. pp. 349–64). Megaw dismisses the possibility of western work during the period of Latin occupation, but on fragile grounds, and there is no other evidence for Byzantine stained glass.

[25] The site has phases of construction from the sixth century; the Kyriotissa attribution rests only on a painting of this subject in the church: C.L. Striker and Y.D. Kuban (eds), *Kalenderhane in Istanbul* (Mainz, 1997), pp. 8–9 and pp. 82–3, 128–42 for the Saint Francis chapel. For the Franciscan presence in Constantinople during the Latin occupation: R.L. Wolff, 'The Latin Empire of Constantinople and the Franciscans', in *Studies in the Latin Empire of Constantinople* (Variorum reprints, London, 1976), essay 7.

[26] Web Gallery of Art (www.wga.hu).

had a Latin patron, probably an Italian with a significant commitment to the Franciscan order and one who employed western artists to do the work.

While the scarcity of remains from the period makes it impossible to say that the Latin occupiers of Constantinople never commissioned local artists, the two instances of western work in occupied buildings just noted are likely to be typical. Though undocumented, it is probable that most artists of the city left with the patron class, whose wealth generally depended on land holdings outside the city, and who would need to commission new domestic and ecclesiastical buildings in their places of exile.[27] Relocation must have looked more promising to workshop families than remaining in a city ruled by Latins who adopted for their own use buildings in good condition that did not need embellishment. Nor would there have been much work available in the churches and monasteries whose wealth was confiscated. All this must have left Constantinople with a much-diminished artisan population, another factor in the deterioration of the city during the Latin occupation.

Even had Byzantine artists been readily available, it is unlikely that the Latin occupiers would have been eager to commission them. Crusader contempt for the population of Constantinople, fuelled both by the massacre of 1182 and hostility towards Byzantine Orthodoxy, is evident from the looting of the city in 1204, vividly described by several sources as stripping the churches as well as the palaces. Liturgical objects of gold and silver, encrusted with jewels and enamels, were thrown into sacks, their precious materials destined for recycling by the goldsmiths of Venice and elsewhere. The same sources identify only one class of object that was treated with greater respect: the Crusaders saved holy relics, valued for their supposed miracle-working properties.[28] For the same reason they valued the icon known as the Virgin *Hodegetria*, an image of Virgin and Child reputedly painted by Saint Luke and so a direct link with the holy family. The icon was deemed so powerful that it was paraded on the walls of the city to deter foreign attackers, and copies of it were sent out with military campaigns. The Venetians appropriated it and kept it at the Pantokrator Monastery for the duration of the occupation.[29]

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[27] For the economy of the empire of Nicaea: M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: government and society under the Laskarids of Nicaea, 1204–1261* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 97–120.

[28] Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, pp. 258–69.

[29] The icon was so named because it was kept at the monastery of the Virgin Hodegon (guides). Copies doubtless account for icons 'painted by Saint Luke' found all over Christendom: *ODB*, vol. 3, pp. 2172–3. For the subject of icons by the hand of Saint Luke, see Chapter 5.

The Morea

Although the period of Latin occupation provided little fertile ground for cultural exchanges in Constantinople, further afield the prospects were more promising. During the half-century of the occupation, some adventurous Latins sought land and fortune outside the Byzantine capital.[30] They headed south, into Greece, judiciously avoiding the mainland of western Anatolia where there could well be Turks to contend with. Thus, in the mid-thirteenth century Frankish settlements appeared in the Peloponnese, the southernmost part of Greece, known at the time as the Morea. The most important sites were at Mystras, near ancient Sparta, and Monemvasia, a rock just off the coast at the southern extremity of the Peloponnese, inhabited since at least the sixth century for the convenience of its two natural harbours between the rock and the mainland.[31] (Map 1b) Although Frankish control of these settlements was relatively brief, they provided a further context in which intermarriage, especially between western men and local Greek women, must have been commonplace and conducive to cultural mingling.[32] They also supplied the Morea with architectural forms brought from late medieval Europe: in 1249 William II Villehardouin built a hilltop fortress at Mystras, and on the hillside below a small walled town was later constructed, with a modest palace – a rectangular timber-roofed structure of two storeys with a tower at the north end.[33] A tall, barrel-vaulted ground-floor hall supports an upper floor with large pointed-arch windows, opening on one side to a fine view of the countryside. On the other side, the central window, facing into the town, opens to a balcony from which the palace inhabitants could view a courtyard below and be seen by those there, an interaction that supposes a community of some size and urbanity.[34] William II's rule at Mystras lasted only until 1259, when he was captured in the battle of Pelagonia, a decisive Byzantine action to recover the Morea, led by Michael Palaiologos, shortly to become emperor. The Frankish settlement then saw much greater development as the Byzantine administrative centre for the Peloponnese, discussed below.

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[30] D. Jacoby, 'The Latin empire of Constantinople and the Frankish states', *CHBE*, pp. 759–78.

[31] S. Runciman, *Lost Capital of Byzantium: the history of Mistra and the Peloponnese* (London, 2009), pp. 15–27; H.A. Kalligas, *Monemvasia: A Byzantine City State* (London and New York, 2010).

[32] Runciman, *Lost Capital of Byzantium*, p. 26.

[33] J. White, *Art and Architecture in Italy, 1250–1400* (Harmondsworth, 1966), pp. 29–37.

[34] A.K. Orlandos, Τα παλάτια και τα σπίτια του Μυστρά (Athens, 2000), pp. 24–33.

The Palaiologan Byzantine Empire

The Latin occupation of Constantinople ended in 1261, with the arrival from the exiled community in Nicaea of Michael Palaiologos, who thus became emperor as Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1261–82), founder of the final Byzantine dynasty. According to the historian George Pachymeres (1242–*c.*1310), Michael's first act on entering the capital was to retrieve the icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* from the Pantokrator Monastery, where the Venetians had kept it.[35] The empire was now much diminished. The dispersal of two generations of the ruling class to several locations of exile (from which, of course, they occasionally fought each other) had facilitated the westward advance of the Turks and the consolidation of their settlements. By the time Michael VIII entered Constantinople in triumph, Turkish tribal groups had taken most of Anatolia, leaving just a fringe of land below Constantinople, to the south and south-east of the Sea of Marmara.[36] Territorially, the empire was near bankrupt, but in terms of culture the next 60-odd years saw a revival of sorts, and further contacts with the west, now of pressing interest as a means of staving off the final eclipse.

Palaiologan Constantinople

Although two generations of foreign rule in any city might reasonably be expected to produce some hybridity of material culture, for the reasons given above this is unlikely to have happened in Latin-occupied Constantinople. Further, the returning aristocracy would surely have rejected as models anything clearly associated with Latin rule – Pachymeres deplored the squalid and dilapidated condition of the capital in 1261 in terms contemptuous of the expelled Latins.[37] Indeed, what little evidence there is for 'westernisms' in Palaiologan Constantinople relates to assimilations pre-dating the occupation. Thus the taste for monumental sculpture mooted above as a western introduction of the twelfth-century appears to have been maintained, since Pachymeres mentions a bronze figure group near the church of Holy Apostles, depicting Michael VIII Palaiologos offering a model of the city to the Archangel Michael.[38] (The historian also says that the figure of Michael lost its head and the city slipped out of his hands during the earthquake of 1296, damage so symbolic that the whole reference may be no more than a literary flourish, but

[35] George Pachymérès, *Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler, trans. V. Laurent, (5 vols, Paris, 1984–2000), vol. 1, pp. 216–17.

[36] J. McCarthy, *The Ottoman Turks* (New York, 1997), pp. 18–30.

[37] Pachymérès, *Relations historiques*, vol. 1, pp. 218–19.

[38] Ibid., vol. 3, pp. 258–61 and translated in C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: sources and documents in the history of art* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1972), pp. 245–6.

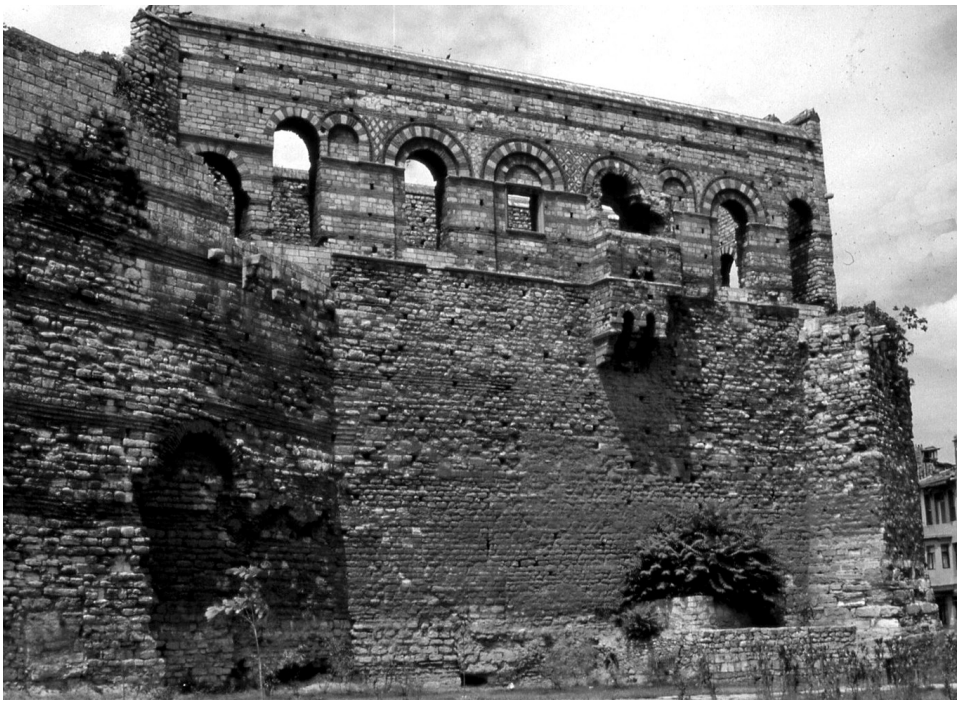


Fig. 1.3 Tekfur Sarayı, after 1261, Constantinople. Photo: Lyn Rodley.

even so, it assumes a readership that found such statuary plausible.) A more reliable reference to western origins may be found in the only substantial Palaiologan secular building surviving in Constantinople, known by its Turkish name, Tekfur Sarayı. This structure is built against the northern end of the great fifth-century land wall, in the neighbourhood of the Blachernai Palace, an imperial residence from the twelfth century onwards. In form, the building is a rectangular block of three storeys, open at ground level through an arcade on the north-west side to a private courtyard bounded on one side by the land wall, and with two floors above it lit by wide arched windows.[39] The form recalls that of the Frankish palace at Mystras, particularly since on the side facing into the city, where windows are present only in the upper floor, one of them opens to a small balcony upon which the palace-dwellers might make public appearances to those in a public area below (Figure 1.3). The extensive ornamentation of the exterior, made with alternating bands of brick and stone courses, and voussoirs of alternating colour, is characteristic of Palaiologan building and a date soon after 1261, when the palaces of Constantinople were

[39] A. Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople: the walls of the city and adjoining historical sites* (London, 1899), pp. 109–14.

cleaned up and refurbished, is likely. It is unlikely, however, that the apparently western form came from a model built by Latins in Constantinople, for there is a similar example in Nymphaio (Map 1b; modern Kemalpaşa) not far from Smyrna and an important centre for the Byzantine exiles of Nicaea.[40] The form had, therefore, been adopted by Byzantine architecture before 1261.

Tekfur Sarayı apart, Palaiologan restoration of secular buildings in Constantinople has all but vanished under centuries of Ottoman and later work. What does remain consists principally of churches that survived because they were turned into mosques, most of them associated with the longstanding Byzantine tradition of the patronage of monasteries. Since at least the mid-ninth century such patronage had been the social insurance policy of people of means, a convenient symbiosis of those who wished to live the religious life and those who could supply the means for them to do so. The monastery supplied its benefactors with a place of retirement, of refuge from the dangers of court politics, a place to keep valuables, and ultimately a place of burial and regular commemoration thereafter.[41] Some patrons founded new monasteries, many 're-founded' existing ones whose original endowment had run out, and this is what is seen in Palaiologan Constantinople. Thus, perhaps as early as the 1260s Michael Tarchaneiotes Glabas, a successful soldier and senior figure in the court of Michael VIII, restored the monastery of the Virgin Pammakaristos, a twelfth-century Komnenian foundation; in the early fourteenth century his widow Maria added alongside the church a funerary chapel which retains substantial parts of a fine mosaic decoration.[42] At the monastery of Constantine Lips, Theodora, the wife of Michael VIII, added a new church alongside the original tenth-century one, and a further (unknown) patron supplied the tenth/eleventh-century monastery now known as Vefa Kilise Camii with a fine new exonarthex and probably a funerary chapel.[43] The best preserved of these Palaiologan restorations is that of the Chora Monastery, probably a sixth-century foundation that had already had several phases of re-founding, often by imperial patrons.[44] The Palaiologan re-founder was Theodore Metochites, the grand *logothete* (prime minister) of the emperor Andronikos II (r. 1282–1328). Metochites almost completely rebuilt the monastery church, retaining only fragments of the earlier structure embedded in the east end, adding a funerary side-chapel (*parekklesion*) and an exonarthex. High-quality mosaic decoration remains in substantial parts

[40] S. Eyice, 'Le palais byzantin de Nymphaion près d'Izmir', *Akten des XI. Internationalen Byzantinistenkongresses, München 1958* (Munich, 1960), pp. 150–53.

[41] R. Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 120–42.

[42] Also known as Fetiye Camii; H. Belting, C. Mango and D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) at Istanbul* (Washington, DC, 1978), pp. 3–18.

[43] T. Mathews, *The Byzantine Churches of Istanbul: a photographic survey* (University Park, Pa., 1976), pp. 322–45 (monastery of Lips) and pp. 386–401 (Vefa Kilise Camii). The Byzantine name and patronage of the latter are unknown.

[44] Also known as Kariye Camii: *ODB*, vol. 1, pp. 428–30.

of both narthexes and in fragments in the nave, and painting in the funerary chapel is so similar in style as to be probably the work of a single workshop. This masterpiece of Palaiologan art was ready for Easter services in 1321.[45]

All these monasteries, and other fragments of Palaiologan fabric in Constantinople, have a distinctive style in both architectural decoration and monumental art, something that must have developed in the places of exile, particularly Nicaea, whence came the last Byzantine dynasty.[46] As in Tekfur Sarayı, the buildings use their brick and stone fabric to make elaborate patterns on the exterior. This is in keeping with longstanding Byzantine taste for textured exteriors, but is manifested in distinctively flamboyant combinations.

A distinctive style also characterizes both mosaic and painting, which display 'mannered' figures of non-naturalistic proportions (typically, there is a long distance between waist and knee, and a disproportionately short distance between knee and foot; figures are also often narrow at shoulders and feet, billowing out at the waist and hip). While there is variety and mobility in the postures and expressions of figures, it responds to a pictorial dynamic rather than to naturalism. Similarly, the architectural settings in which figures are placed, although drawn with indications of spatial recession, are rendered in an unconvincing manner, as can be seen in the *Enrolment for Taxation* in the Chora Monastery (Figure 1.4). An element of naturalism is present in the modelling of some Palaiologan faces, most visible in one of the earliest works to be installed in post-1261 Constantinople, the *Deësis* mosaic in Hagia Sophia, where the use of very small tesserae make it possible to represent contour convincingly (Figure 1.5). The result is not lifelike, however, for the modelling is simply applied to a stylized iconographic type of long tradition in Byzantine art.

The issue of naturalism is relevant because the Palaiologan period is sometimes described as a 'renaissance', a term that needs qualification in the Byzantine context. There was certainly a post-1261 cultural recovery following the expulsion of the Latins from Constantinople, but in the Byzantine Empire the literature and scholarship of classical antiquity had never really been lost, so 'rebirth' is an inappropriate term. Moreover, applied to the visual arts, 'renaissance' of course refers to the notion derived from classical writings that lifelike representation was the pinnacle of artistic excellence. Paradoxically, while some Byzantine literature perpetuates this view (in particular the *ekphrasis*, or poetic description), referring to works of Byzantine art as lifelike when they are patently stylized depends on fossilized use of antique literary conventions, rather than on accurate observation of contemporary Byzantine art.[47] There is no parallel in the Palaiologan works noted above for the pursuit of naturalism by the imitation of antique models, as in Italy, nor the meticulous

[45] P.A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami* ,(3 vols, New York, 1966), vol. 4 (London, 1975).

[46] Rodley, *Byzantine Art and Architecture*, pp. 339–40.

[47] C. Mango, 'Antique statuary and the Byzantine beholder', *DOP*, 17 (1963): pp. 53–75 (esp. pp. 64–8).

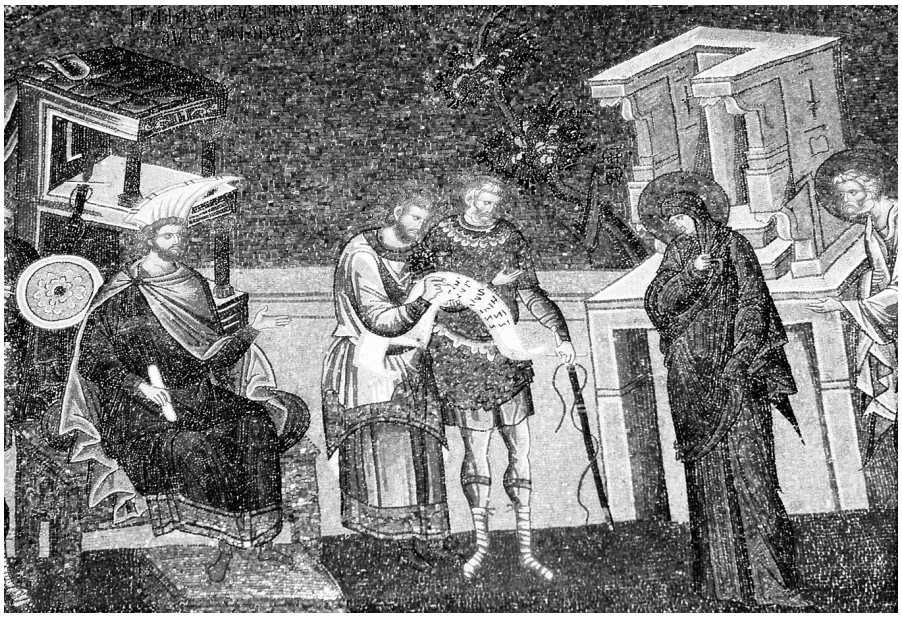


Fig. 1.4 *The Enrolment for Taxation*, 1321 (completed), mosaic, outer narthex of the Chora Monastery church, Constantinople. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library.

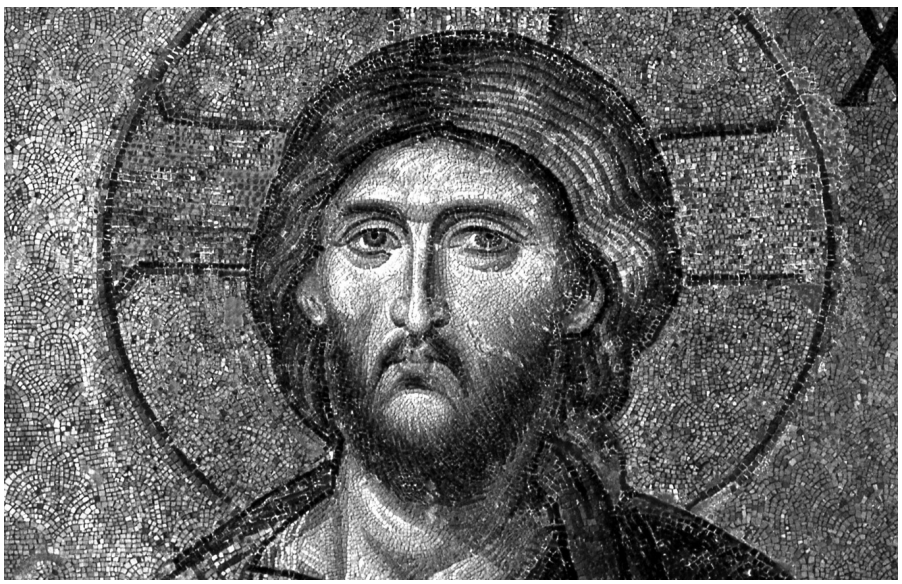


Fig. 1.5 Head of Christ in the *Deësis*, after 1261, mosaic, Hagia Sophia, Constantinople (detail). Photo: Lyn Rodley.

imitation of what the eye could see as in the north.[48] Nevertheless, although not meriting identification as 'renaissance', it is possible, even likely, that the use of modelling and conventional (though unpersuasive) indications of spatial recession in Palaiologan art did have their origins in contacts with the west. This may be indicative of an artistic development that took place in association with the exiled court in Nicaea, since the style that arrived in post-occupation Constantinople is sophisticated and coherent.

It is also possible that there were iconographical borrowings from the west. There are certainly parallels between Palaiologan and western programmes of decoration: the Arena Chapel in Padua, decorated by Giotto in about 1305, has a cycle of the Life of the Virgin and a complex Last Judgement, both also present in the Chora Monastery church in Constantinople. Both subjects do appear in much earlier Byzantine art, however, and these examples probably represent traditions common to all Christendom.[49] A better candidate for introduction from the west is the Tree of Jesse, depicting the ancestry of Christ by tracing the antecedents of the Virgin from Jesse, the father of David. This image has a long pedigree in the medieval west, but no examples from Byzantine contexts until the Palaiologan period.[50]

It is obvious from the quality of the materials and artisanship in all the Constantinopolitan restorations noted above that, while the city was impoverished at the end of the Latin occupation, the returning aristocracy was certainly not – and also that they brought with them from exile highly skilled artists and artisans, since as noted above, such workshops could not have been sustained in the capital during two generations of Latin occupation. It is therefore of interest that the Palaiologan patrons of Constantinople chose to restore old fabric rather than build anew (in the case of the Chora Monastery, it would surely have been simpler to demolish the stump of the former church, rather than incorporate it, somewhat awkwardly, into the new structure).[51] Nor was the policy of repair a reflection of practical limitations, for in 1346 a mosaic of Christ Pantokrator was put into the dome of Hagia Sophia following earthquake

[48] There had been short-lived copying of antique models in the mid-tenth century during the so-called 'Macedonian Renaissance' associated with the court of Constantine VII (r. 913–59) – further indication that the arts of classical antiquity were never quite lost in Byzantium: Rodley, *Byzantine Art and Architecture*, pp. 193–4.

[49] For the Last Judgement: L. Rodley, *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 211 (Ayvalı Kilise); S. Pelekanides and M. Chatzedakis, *Kastoria* (Athens, 1985), pp. 7–8 (Saint Stephen). For the Life of the Virgin: M. Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor* (3 vols, Shannon, 1969), vol. 1, p. 144 and vol. 3, figs 344, 349–54 (no. 33) (Kızıl Çukur).

[50] A. Watson, *The Early Iconography of the Tree of Jesse* (London, 1934); *ODB*, vol. 3, p. 2113.

[51] Retaining parts of the Komnenian nave necessitated building a wide area of filling between the south side of the nave and the *parekklesion*, visible in the plan: R.G. Ousterhout, *The Architecture of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul* (Washington, DC, 1987), illus. 11.

damage, a major technical undertaking given the huge size of the building.[52] All this being so, it seems likely that restoration, rather than rebuilding, was a choice led by the will to recognize the former power and glory of the empire in the physical restoration of the fabric of the city, especially of some of its famous institutions. The notion of self-conscious recovery of the past appears to be manifested in the mosaic donor portraits of the Chora Monastery where, in addition to the conventional image of Theodore Metochites presenting a model of his church to the Virgin, there is a large panel showing Christ and the Virgin with two more patrons, one of them Isaac Komnenos, son of Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118). It would seem that some sense of heritage led Metochites to demonstrate the venerable history of his monastery by acknowledging its twelfth-century patron.[53] Also indicative of such an impulse is some of the stone carving in these Constantinopolitan churches that follows not the shallow, stylized forms of middle-Byzantine stonework, but the deeply cut acanthus patterns of the sixth century – this is seen most conspicuously on the tomb canopies in the Chora funerary chapel.[54] Material retrospectivity of this sort is consistent with the circumstances: whatever luxury they enjoyed during their two generations of exile in Nicaea and elsewhere, Byzantine patrons in post-occupation Constantinople would have been astonished by the grandeur of the early buildings still standing in the city, such as Hagia Sophia and Holy Apostles, built on a scale not attempted for centuries. They must have been aware not only of the precarious state of the Byzantine Empire, but also of its past achievements.

That cultural retrospection of this kind endured into the fifteenth century is indicated by a small ivory pyxis (cylindrical box) in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection upon which are carved figures of two imperial family groups, plus musicians, dancers, a large peacock and a kneeling figure holding a model of a walled city (Figure 1.6).[55] Inscriptions naming the figures are imprecise as to their identities, but the piece probably celebrates the moment in 1403 when co-emperors John VII and his uncle Manuel II agreed to rule from Thessalonike and Constantinople respectively. The Dumbarton Oaks pyxis is a considerable oddity in size and date: just 4.2 centimetres in diameter and 3 centimetres high, when most Byzantine pyxides are at least three times

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[52] Nikephoros Gregoras, *History* XXIX, translated in Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453*, p. 249.

[53] Underwood, *Kariye Djami*, vol. 1, pp. 45–7; vol. 2, Pls 36–7. The other patron depicted was a close relative of Andronikos II, a contemporary of Metochites who may have contributed funds to the restoration.

[54] Rodley, *Byzantine Art and Architecture*, pp. 294–7. For details of the sculpture: Ø. Hjort, 'The sculpture of the Kariye Camii', *DOP*, 33 (1979): pp. 201–89 (esp. pp. 225–9 and 248–52).

[55] *Faith and Power*, pp. 30–31 (no. 5). For details: A. Grabar, 'Une pyxide en ivoire à Dumbarton Oaks', *DOP*, 14 (1960): pp. 123–46.



Fig. 1.6 Pyxis with Royal Figures, 1403–04(?), ivory, Dumbarton Oaks (Byzantine Collection 36.24), Washington, DC. Photo: Dumbarton Oaks.

larger and were made in the fifth or sixth centuries, when North Africa was within the boundaries of the empire and large elephant tusks were readily available.[56] Early pyxides, like so much else that has survived from early Byzantium, must have been kept in collections of antiquities of the wealthy, educated class, and perhaps inspired a Palaiologan patron who came across a small piece of ivory to commission a self-consciously archaizing piece. The tiny pyxis seems to have found its way to the west and been treasured by Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga (1444–83) as a salt-cellar.[57]

Beyond Constantinople

As Turkish settlement spread throughout the former Byzantine heartland of Anatolia, what is now Greece was the only territory left to the empire.

[56] W.F. Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühe Mittelalters* (Mainz, 1952) catalogues 47 pyxides with Christian subjects (pp. 103–21) and 18 earlier ones with pagan subjects (pp. 69–76). The type has very few examples attributed to later dates. See also L. Rodley, 'Cutting the tusk', in M. Mullett (ed.), *Metaphrastes, or, Gained in Translation: essays and translations in honour of Robert H. Jordan* (Belfast, 2004), pp. 51–6 (esp. p. 53).

[57] A. Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship: changing modes in the Italian response to Byzantine artifacts, *c.*1200–1750', *DOP*, 49 (1995): pp. 237–68 (esp. p. 255).

Its most important city was Thessalonike, always the 'second city' of the Byzantine Empire and since the mid-fifth century a centre of pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint Demetrios Thessalonike also had a Latin occupation by the Fourth Crusade, but it lasted only 20 years, so the western presence was less disruptive than the two-generation occupation of Constantinople.[58] There seems to have been no need for substantial repair or re-founding of collapsed monasteries in Thessalonike and the retrospectivity noted above for Constantinople was in any case a phenomenon likely to have been specific to the capital. Nevertheless, there was a good deal of new building as the importance of the city rose in response to the increasing vulnerability of Constantinople. The mobility of the ruling class after 1261 in fact caused the Palaiologan buildings and monumental art of the two cities to be closely related, since many of those responsible for the refurbishment of the capital also commissioned work in Thessalonike. The Glabas family responsible for the restoration of the Pammakaristos Monastery also added a chapel to the east end of Saint Demetrios and Niphon, Patriarch of Constantinople (1310–14), founded the monastery now known as Holy Apostles, close to the city wall.[59] This monastery church has an elegant programme of high-quality mosaic and painted decoration, very similar in style and iconographical content to those of the Chora and Pammakaristos monasteries in Constantinople, possibly by the same workshop. Similarly, the narthex façade of Holy Apostles resembles that of Vefa Kilise Camii so closely that it would seem that builders as well as artists travelled between Constantinople and Thessalonike.[60]

From the mid-fourteenth century, patrons and artisans also travelled to the former Frankish settlement at Mystras, which, after its capture by Michael Palaiologos in 1259, developed into a late-Byzantine centre that was no mere provincial outpost. Mystras was first ruled by a military governor (*strategos*), but in 1348 became the seat of the Despot of the Morea, responsible for governing the only substantial territory now left to the empire. The Despot was a member of the imperial family, typically a son or brother of the emperor, and Mystras became a place to which the well-to-do of the diminished empire retired, sometimes for long periods. Most famous among them was the philosopher George Gemistos Plethon (*c.*1355–1452), who after extensive travels settled in Mystras in the early fifteenth century.[61] This level of attention from the ruling class of course had implications for material culture. Monasteries were founded:

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[58] Thessalonike was retaken by the Byzantine exiles based in Epiros, in central Greece: *ODB*, vol. 3, pp. 2071–2.

[59] For the Glabas chapel: T. Gouma-Peterson, 'The parecclesion of St. Euthymios in Thessalonica: art and monastic policy under Andronicos II', *ArtB*, 58 (1976): pp. 168–82; for the Holy Apostles: N. Nikonanos, *The Church of Holy Apostles in Thessalonike* (Thessalonike, 1986). The dedication to the Holy Apostles is post-Byzantine; the original Byzantine dedication is unknown.

[60] Rodley, *Byzantine Art and Architecture*, p. 286 and figs 236, 238.

[61] Runciman, *Lost Capital of Byzantium*, pp. 97–105.

first that of Saint Demetrios (now known as the Metropolis) built and decorated with painting by 1285 for the predecessor of Nikephoros Moschopoulos, a senior cleric and scholar, who added a narthex after 1291. The church was a timber-roofed basilica, a form that had been standard for Byzantine church building until the sixth century, and remained common in the medieval west, but had been largely displaced by domed forms for Byzantine churches since the ninth century. The possibility is therefore that in its early stages of Byzantine development, architectural forms used by the Frankish settlers were retained at Mystras – as, indeed, some of their builders may have been. Towards the end of the century, the monastery known as the Brontocheion was founded by Pachomios, *protosynkellos* of the Peloponnese, who became the first abbot of the monastery and whose wealth permitted the building of a church of the Saints Theodoroi in 1290–95 and another, dedicated to the Virgin Hodegetria, by 1311.[62] Saints Theodoroi is a domed octagon, firmly within the middle to late Byzantine architectural canon, but the Hodegetria is of a curious form: a basilica at ground level, with the centre part of the nave covered by a dome raised on four piers at gallery level, almost as if the traditional Byzantine domed inscribed-cross had been hoisted above a standard basilica (Figure 1.7).[63] Of the churches that survive in Mystras, the architecture of three more is wholly Byzantine, using the inscribed-cross plan (Virgin Peribleptos, Hagia Sophia, Evangelistra) and one, the Pantanassa, of 1428, follows the combined form of the Hodegetria; a third such form was created at some time in the fifteenth century, when the old Metropolis basilica was modified by the addition of a dome to the central area of the nave.[64] It would therefore seem that these architectural hybrids were the result of a desire to 'Byzantinize' the basilical form supplied by builders comfortable with the Frankish tradition. Continuity is also seen in the architecture of the palace complex at Mystras, where the Frankish form of the first building was used in a more elaborate manner by two main phases of Byzantine extension, one in 1350–1400 to house the new Despot, and the other in the first half of the fifteenth century: both new buildings followed the rectangular-block form but with wider, round-arched windows.[65] Nothing remains of the interior decoration of the palace complex, but it was doubtless similar to the high-quality painting which survives in fragments in the Hodegetria church, showing the Palaiologan style seen in Constantinople and Thessalonike and probably representing another instance of painters travelling to wherever the work was.

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[62] *Protosynkellos* was a title awarded to a senior cleric, often appointed by a bishop of his chief assistant in an area. The church of the Virgin Hodegetria is often called the 'Afendiko' – colloquial Greek for 'boss', perhaps a corruption of Turkish *efendi*.

[63] The domed inscribed-cross (or cross-in-square) form was a standard Byzantine church type from the ninth century: Rodley, *Byzantine Art and Architecture*, p. 135.

[64] M. Chatzidakis, *Mystras* (Athens, 1981), pp. 28–30, 69–70, 73–4, 91–2, 95–7.

[65] Ibid., pp. 111–17.

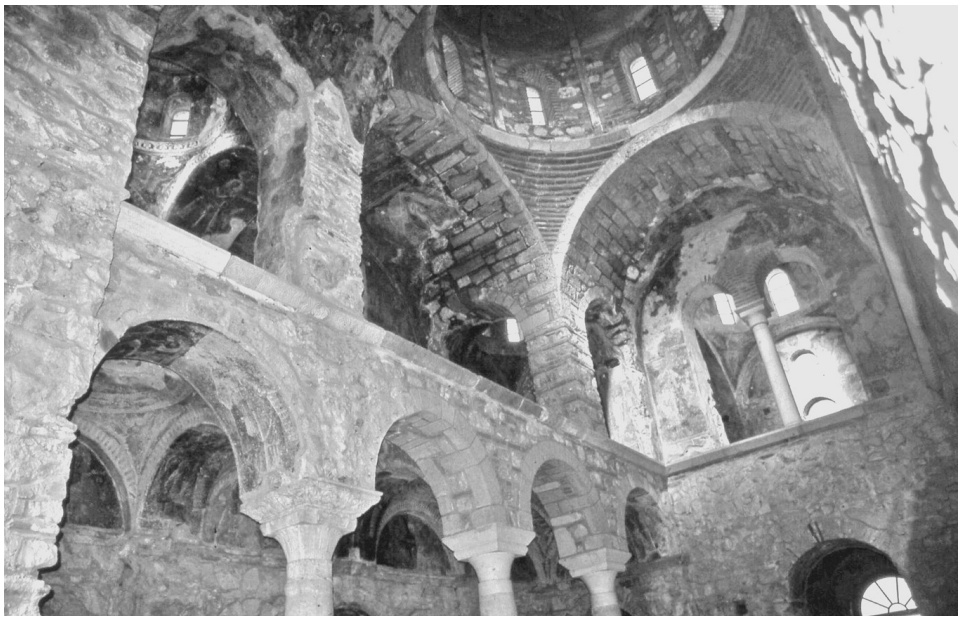


Fig. 1.7 Church of the Virgin Hodegetria, 1311 (completed), interior view, Mystras. Photo: Lyn Rodley.

Travelling artists also took the artistic environment of the Palaiologan period to areas outside the empire itself, particularly to the Kingdom of Serbia, to the north-west in the Balkans, which thrived as the Byzantine Empire declined. Having been brought into Christendom in the twelfth century, the Serbian ruling class took up much of the material culture and the cultural patterns of Byzantium: they founded monasteries, with churches painted with programmes in the Byzantine manner.[66] Such ties did not preclude military conflict, but in the Palaiologan period there was a truce when, in 1299, after 15 years of expansion into Byzantine territory, Uroš II Milutin of Serbia (1282–1321) married Simonis, the daughter of Andronikos II (a union negotiated by Theodore Metochites). Work done for Milutin in the first quarter of the fourteenth century is close to the Byzantine canon in both architecture and decoration and includes the monastery of Staro Nagoričino, decorated in 1317 by two painters from Thessalonike who signed their work: Michael Astrapas and Eutychios.[67] It is evident from this survey that in the

[66] D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth. Eastern Europe, 500–1453* (London, 1971), pp. 443–53.

[67] P. Milković-Pepek, *L'Œuvre des peintres Michel et Eutych* (Skopje, 1967).

Palaiologan period a good deal of uniformity in the arts existed because peripatetic artists served a patron class that was itself mobile.

Late Palaiologan Contacts with the West

In the second half of the fourteenth century the nature of Byzantine contacts with the west reflected the imminent peril of complete loss of the empire. Byzantine diplomacy focused increasingly on securing western aid against the Osmanlı Turks, now established in Bursa and ready to march on Constantinople itself.[68] In 1365 and 1370 Manuel (later Manuel II Palaiologos), son of John V Palaiologos, toured the courts of Europe, asking for aid and sometimes getting it, as when Charles VI of France sent a naval force to Constantinople in 1399. Some in the west themselves felt threatened by the Turkish advances and Sigismund of Hungary mounted a crusade against the Ottomans in 1396. That the Turks posed a real threat to eastern Europe was evident later, when in 1456 Sultan Mehmet II besieged Belgrade (unsuccessfully) and in 1521 Süleyman I captured it – but for the nations further west the threat of Ottoman invasion must have seemed distant. With the empire shrinking steadily, virtually the only bargaining piece of any interest to the west still held by the threatened Byzantines was the offer of reuniting Christendom after centuries of separation. An attempt at this was made at the Council of Ferrara/Florence in 1438/39 when a delegation from the Byzantine court, headed by the emperor John VIII Palaiologos (r. 1425–48) and including the Patriarch of Constantinople and other senior clerics, met representatives of Pope Eugenius IV.[69] A document of union was drawn up and signed, but was met with derision when the Byzantine delegation returned to Constantinople; the Church remained divided. The Council thus failed in its mission, but it did provide stimulus for art: members of the Byzantine delegation were sketched by Pisanello (*c.*1395–1455) (and probably other artists) and provided models for 'eastern' subjects in some later Renaissance art.[70]

After the failure of the Council of Florence, one of the delegates, Basileios Bessarion (1403–1472), archbishop of Nicaea, returned to Italy and became a cardinal in the Catholic Church, acquiring a pan-European reputation as

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[68] The city was besieged by Beyazit I in 1394 and would probably have been lost to him had he not had to divert his resources to fight the Mongol Timur Leng in 1401: McCarthy, *The Ottoman Turks*, pp. 50–51.

[69] The Council was diverted from Ferrara to Florence in order to avoid an outbreak of plague. *ODB*, vol. 2, p. 783.

[70] For Pisanello's drawings: *Faith and Power*, pp. 527–32 (no. 318). Two of the Magi in Benozzo Gozzoli's fresco in the chapel of the Palazzo Medici Riccardi in Florence (painted between 1459 and 1462) appear to depend on such a source, though they are not portraits of members of the Byzantine delegation: C.A. Luchinat (ed.), *The Chapel of the Magi* (London, 1994), pp. 127, 181.

a scholar, numbering Erasmus (1466–1536) among his friends.[71] Bessarion was just one of many who left the declining Byzantine Empire to settle in Europe, most often in Italy.[72] The Byzantine Greeks were an important aspect of east–west cultural interchange during this twilight of the Byzantine Empire, bringing with them to the west not only works of Byzantine art but their Greek language, a highly marketable commodity in a society embarked upon a renaissance of classical scholarship.[73] Bessarion spent much of his time in Rome, but also had close ties with Venice, a port of entry for many émigrés who felt at home in a city where there had been a substantial colony of Byzantine Greeks since the twelfth century (Venice also had strong contacts with former Byzantine territories, such as Crete, which had been under the Serenissima's rule from the early thirteenth century[74]). Manuel Chrysoloras, a scholar of Constantinople and part of the entourage of Manuel II when he visited Italy in 1390, was a few years later invited to teach at the university of Florence and was until his death in 1415 an important contributor to the intellectual life of Europe, a translator of the Greek texts essential to the development of Renaissance humanism.[75]

The Byzantine visitors and émigrés brought treasures in their luggage, as had other travellers down the ages. Bessarion had a fine reliquary of the True Cross, of traditional Byzantine form: a rectangular box with a sliding lid that, when raised, reveals a cross-shaped support for the splinters of the holy relic.[76] He donated the reliquary to a Venetian confraternity where it was housed in a special cupboard with doors painted by Gentile Bellini (*c.*1429–1507): a surviving panel shows Bessarion and two confraternity members venerating the relic (Figure 1.8).[77] A silver-gilt reliquary casket now in the Treasury of San Marco in Venice is perhaps also associated with Bessarion: it is embellished with figures of Saint Eugenios and three other saints of Trebizond, Bessarion's birthplace, and could have been an elegant diplomatic gift for Pope Eugenius, who convened the Council of Ferrara/Florence.[78] Tradition has it that an icon known as the Holy Face of Genoa was a gift in 1362 from John V Palaiologos (r. 1341–91) to Leonardo Montaldo, the

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[71] *ODB*, vol. 1, p. 285.

[72] J. Harris, *Greek Emigrés in the West* (Camberley, 1995), pp. 16–24.

[73] D.J. Geanakoplos, 'Italian Renaissance thought and learning and the role of Byzantine émigré scholars in Florence, Rome and Venice: a reassessment', in *Constantinople and the West* (Madison, Wis., 1989), pp. 3–37.

[74] See Chapters 3 and 4.

[75] N.G. Wilson, *From Byzantium to Italy: Greek studies in the Italian Renaissance* (London, 1992), pp. 8–12.

[76] The tenth-century Limburg reliquary is the most famous of this type: J.M. Wilm (ed.), 'Die Limburger Staurothek', *Das Münster*, 8 (1955): pp. 201–40.

[77] The Schola Grande di Santa Maria dei Battuti della Carità. For bibliography: *Byzantium*, pp. 444–5 (no. 253).

[78] *The Treasury of San Marco, Venice* (Milan, 1984), pp. 201–3.



Fig. 1.8 Gentile Bellini, *Cardinal Bessarion and Two Members of the Scuola della Carità in Prayer with the Bessarion Reliquary*, 1472–73, egg tempera with gold and silver on panel, National Gallery, London. Photo: National Gallery Picture Library.

Italian Captain of the Genoese colony in Constantinople, who on his death in 1384 left the icon to the church of Saint Bartholomew of the Armenians in Genoa. The icon purports to be the *mandylion*, one of the most sacred relics of the Byzantine Empire: an image of the face of Christ imprinted on cloth by Jesus himself when King Abgar of Edessa asked him for help. In the frame 10 embossed narrative squares tell the story of this miraculous image, captioned with Greek inscriptions. Two more very similar 'holy face' icons were venerated in Rome and Paris, making this subject a Byzantine import almost as popular as the miracle-working icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria*.[79]

All these items are associated with relics, which must to some extent account for their preservation. Other works associated with the Byzantine émigrés were perhaps treasured for their rarity alone, especially when their materials or techniques of manufacture were new to the western eye. This would apply to the early fourteenth-century miniature mosaic icon of Saint Theodore that may have been yet another gift from Bessarion, this time to Saint Peter's in Rome.[80] The icon is very small (9 x 7.4 cm), using minute tesserae applied with great skill (by an artist with superb eyesight, perhaps aided by a magnifying lens) and probably came from a workshop associated with the court of Constantinople in the early fourteenth century.[81] An even more sumptuous example of this demanding technique, of similar date, is the miniature mosaic diptych icon now in Florence, with 12 New Testament scenes, which is said to have been left to the Florence Baptistery in 1394 by Nicoletta di Antonio Grioni, widow of an official at the court of John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347–54).[82]

Although the items of this influx of Byzantine material into Renaissance Europe were evidently treasured, they do not appear to have had significant stylistic impact on the arts of the west. Bellini's cupboard door reproduces the form and iconography of Bessarion's True Cross reliquary (which survives for comparison) with meticulous accuracy, but the small scenes of the Passion in the reliquary frame are painted in his own, naturalistic style, losing their Byzantine stylizations. This is true in general of borrowings from Byzantine art during the Renaissance period: in the many western copies of Byzantine subjects (the *Mandylion* image; the Virgin *Hodegetria*; the *Man of Sorrows* image of the dead Christ) borrowing is confined to iconography, and the image is translated into the naturalistic styles of the Renaissance.[83]

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[79] G. Wolf, C. Dufour Bozzo and A.R. Calderoni Masetti, *Mandylion. Intorno al Sacro Volto, da Bisanzion a Genova* (Genoa and Milan, 2004). For the convoluted history of the *mandylion*: *ODB*, vol. 2, pp. 1282–3.

[80] *Byzantium*, p. 436 (no. 224).

[81] A. Effenberger, 'Images of personal devotion: miniature mosaic and steatite icons', in *Faith and Power*, pp. 209–12.

[82] *Faith and Power*, pp. 219–20 (no. 129); the icon has a fifteenth-century frame of silver and enamelwork.

[83] For western versions of the *mandylion* and its offshoot, Veronica's veil: G. Finaldi et al., *The Image of Christ* (London, 2000), pp. 75–103; for the Man of Sorrows: *Faith and Power*,

Post-Byzantine Art

The Byzantine Empire came to an end with the fall of Constantinople to Mehmet II Fatih in 1453 but Christian Orthodoxy and many aspects of Byzantine culture did not perish. Whether a matter of enlightened government, or simply practical expediency, Ottoman rule incorporated religious tolerance and a multicultural empire. Christians were permitted to keep their faith and its accoutrements (and, of course, the Ottoman Empire gave refuge to the Jews who were evicted from Spain in 1492 by Ferdinand and Isabella). The number of Christians in the Ottoman Empire did steadily diminish, because social and professional advancement was often aided by conversion to Islam, but there were still populous Greek-speaking, Christian communities throughout Greece and Anatolia until the population exchange of 1923, attendant on the Turkish independence movement led by Kemal Atatürk, and the monasteries of Athos continued to function throughout the Ottoman period. The term 'post-Byzantine' recognizes this continuity of Byzantine religious and social life after the demise of the empire itself. In practical terms, it means that there was still a market for Byzantine material culture: new church building may have declined, but maintenance of existing fabric and its decoration continued, as did the need for liturgical goods, including icons. An example of post-Byzantine continuity in church art is seen in the several monasteries of Meteora, each one built on top of a natural column of rock rising above the fertile Thessalian plain that provides the lands needed to support life even for the unworldly. This monastic colony was founded in the mid-fourteenth century, by a monk who took the name Athanasios, in homage to the tenth-century founder of the famous monastic presence on the Mount Athos peninsula.[84] Later, with the companionship and patronage of John Uroš Palaiologos, Despot of Thessaly, he founded the monastery of the Transfiguration (Great Meteoron) and at least four more monasteries were in place by the end of the fourteenth century.[85] The monasteries continued to function within the Ottoman Empire and saw a revival phase in the first half of the sixteenth century when several of them received fine painted decorations by artists either from the island of Crete, or working in their style. Painting in the monastery of Saint Nicholas Anapausas, done in 1527, was by one of the most famous of them, Theophanes Strelitzas (Theophanes the Cretan, also called Bathas), who later worked in monasteries of Mount Athos.[86]

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pp. 556–7 (no. 330) and pp. 559–60 (no. 332); for the *Hodegetria*: ibid., pp. 573–4 (no. 342) and pp. 582–4 (no. 349).

[84] G. Speake, *Mount Athos: renewal in paradise* (New Haven and London, 2002).

[85] N. Nikonanos, *Meteora* (Athens, 1987).

[86] M. Chatzidakis, 'Recherches sur le peintre Théophane le Crétois', *DOP*, 23–4 (1969–70): pp. 309–52; M. Chatzidakis and E. Drakopoulou, 'Στρελίτζας-Μπαθάς Θεοφάνης', in *Έλληνες Ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση (1450–1830)*, vol. 2 (Athens, 1997), pp. 381–97.

Theophanes' place of origin is significant: Crete, under Venetian control, became an important centre for post-Byzantine art, some of its artists developing styles that absorbed components of western art.[87] Surviving contracts show that icons were produced in large quantities in Cretan workshops – as many as 200 and 300 at a time – so there was evidently a vigorous market for them.[88] Some contracts give instructions for icons to be finished 'in the Latin fashion' and while exactly what this means is not specified – it may refer to style, iconography or perhaps just the use of Latin, rather than Greek inscriptions – it does suggest that not all the icons were destined for the post-Byzantine Greek communities. There must have been many western households, especially in Italy, where some family members had Orthodox origins and clung to the customs of the old faith while publicly embracing the new one.[89]

Byzantine art therefore outlived the fall of Constantinople. Its contribution to the arts of Renaissance Europe was necessarily limited to some subject matter and iconography, because its style was antithetical to the pursuit of naturalism understood to govern the aesthetic of classical antiquity. Nevertheless, Byzantine art was an aspect of the Renaissance world, its survival closely linked to that of the Orthodox Church and the cultural tolerance of the Ottoman Empire. It remained a part of a society more complex in its tastes than Vasari and other chroniclers of the classical revival would recognize.[90]

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[87] A. Lymberopoulou, 'Late and post-Byzantine art under Venetian rule: frescoes versus icons, and Crete in the middle', in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 351–70.

[88] C.M. Richardson, K.W. Woods and M.W. Franklin (eds), *Renaissance Art Reconsidered: an anthology of primary sources* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 371–3 (no. 3.5.3); A. Lymberopoulou, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', in *Viewing Renaissance Art*, pp. 192–206.

[89] A letter of Frederick III of Sicily (1272–1337) tells the story of a Greek woman who converted to Catholicism on her marriage to a Catalan and her return to Orthodoxy when he died 14 years later: D. Jacoby, 'Foreigners and the urban economy in Thessalonike, ca. 1150–ca. 1450', *DOP*, 57 (2003): pp. 85–132 (esp. p. 86).

[90] For Vasari's views on the Byzantine style: Richardson et al., *Renaissance Art Reconsidered*, pp. 376–8 (no. 3.5.7).



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Byzantine Art and Early Italian Painting*

Hans Bloemsma

Introduction

Byzantine art and artefacts had a great appeal for late medieval and early Renaissance Italian culture. The reasons for this fascination are diverse. Icons, relics, manuscripts and ivories were valued as venerable objects with miraculous powers; they were prized for their technical extravagance and their costly materials; and they offered the possibility to appropriate the prestige of the Byzantine Empire through its art.[1]

The Byzantine influence on Italian art of this period is reflected in terms such as 'Italo-Byzantine' and '*maniera greca*', used to describe the style of Italian works from the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The orientation towards Byzantium did not mean, however, that contemporary Italian artists were merely under Byzantium's magic spell and that their interest in Byzantine art resulted in 'an endless repetition by unimaginative Italian craftsmen of stale and outworn Byzantine formulae' – as Ernst Kitzinger once phrased it.[2]

* I would like to thank Ernestine Lahey and Diana Norman for their comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

[1] Important studies on this topic include: E. Kitzinger, 'The Byzantine contribution to western art of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', *DOP*, 20 (1966): pp. 25–48; J. Stubblebine, 'Byzantine influence in thirteenth-century Italian panel painting', *DOP*, 20 (1966): pp. 85–101; O. Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West* (London, 1970); H. Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990); R. Nelson, 'The Italian appreciation and appropriation of illuminated Byzantine manuscripts, ca. 1200–1450', *DOP*, 49 (1995): pp. 209–35; A. Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship: changing modes in the Italian response to Byzantine artifacts, ca. 1200–1750', *DOP*, 49 (1995): pp. 237–67; A. Derbes, *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy: narrative painting, Franciscan ideology, and the Levant* (Cambridge, 1996); W.D. Wixom, 'Byzantine art and the Latin west', in *The Glory of Byzantium*, pp. 434–49.

[2] Kitzinger, 'The Byzantine contribution', p. 45.

On the contrary, research has shown that the appropriation of eastern models was carefully calculated to meet the specific needs of the Italian context.[3]

This chapter focuses on one of the most pressing artistic problems facing artists of the later Middle Ages and early Renaissance: how to create images that would involve the viewers emotionally in the depicted events and arouse their empathy. In their search for more vivid and evocative images – a search that was inspired by corresponding changes in religious experience – Italian artists made good use of the solutions that Byzantine art had to offer in terms of human expression and plastic design.

The appropriation of dramatic means and forms from Byzantium in early Italian painting is manifest in countless works of art from the period. The intention here is not to offer an exhaustive survey of the ways in which Italian artists made use of expressive Byzantine models. It is rather to concentrate on a small but representative selection of works made in geographically and chronologically separate locations: the mosaics on the west vault of the central dome in San Marco in Venice, dated around 1200; the works of Giunta Pisano and the Master of Saint Francis made around 1250; and Duccio's paintings of the beginning of the fourteenth century. By focusing on these works three key moments in the process of cultural exchange between Byzantine and early Italian art will be analysed. The aim is to show the different ways in which, at different times and in different places, Italian artists turned to Byzantium in their ambition to create a pictorial language that was both human and expressive.

Before discussing the individual works, it is worth considering the ways Italian artists came to have knowledge of Byzantine art. Given the close visual relationship between Byzantine and early Italian art, it is surprising to find that there is so little evidence of how the artistic contacts between the two areas were maintained. It is generally assumed that a considerable number of Byzantine images must have been available to Italian painters as loot of the Fourth Crusade, brought back after the pillaging of Constantinople in 1204.[4] Even though the shipping of relics and reliquaries to the west is well documented, sources are remarkably silent when it comes to a possible large-scale export of Byzantine ivories, illuminated manuscripts and icons.[5] In fact, the Crusader armies seem to have shown little interest in and respect for icons: many were disfigured, broken and trampled upon, while others were burned as firewood

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[3] H. Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum in Mittelalter: Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion* (Berlin, 1981); Belting, *Bild und Kult*, pp. 391–456; Derbes, *Picturing the Passion.*

[4] See, for instance, J. Folda, 'Crusader art', in *The Glory of Byzantium*, p. 390. See also Chapter 1, pp. 14–17.

[5] M. Bacci, 'Pisa bizantina: alle origini del culto delle icone in Toscana', in A.R. Calderoni Masetti, C. Dufour Bozzo and G. Wolf (eds), *Intorno al Sacro Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI–XIV)* (Venice, 2007), p. 63. See also H. Belting, 'Die Reaktion der Kunst des 13. Jahrhunderts auf den Import von Reliquien und Ikonen', in idem (ed.), *Il medio oriente e l'occidente nell'arte del XIII secolo* (Bologna, 1982), pp. 35–53; Nelson, 'The Italian appreciation and appropriation'; Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship', pp. 239–48.

or used to make chairs.[6] The exception were icons reputed to be of great age and capable of performing miracles, such as the icon of the Virgin *Nikopeia* (called *Nikopoios* by the Byzantines – 'she who brings victory'), which was seized by the Crusaders during the siege of Constantinople and taken to Venice.[7]

Art historians have also put forward the theory that icons, ivories and manuscripts could have come to Italy as diplomatic gifts, through Italian commercial transactions in the eastern Mediterranean, or through religious orders that were active in the region.[8] Recent research has stressed the role of the Franciscans – who were active in Constantinople as well as in the territories occupied by the Crusaders, such as the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, Lusignan Cyprus and Venetian Crete – in the spreading of Byzantine imagery.[9] While such activities were certainly taking place, it is difficult to assess their impact because of the relatively small number of Byzantine images that can be documented in Italy during the thirteenth century.[10]

Italian artists could also have been familiar with developments in the east through model books or collections of drawings. This would explain the strong similarities between certain Italian works and Byzantine wall painting from the period. Examples of such books and drawings have survived – the so-called 'model book' in the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Germany, and a sheet with drawings in the Augustinermuseum in Freiburg are the best-known examples – but similarly their number is too small to support the claim of a widespread practice.[11]

Another possibility is that of travelling artists. Vasari already suggested that Greek artists were active in Italy, a suggestion that has been repeated by other art historians since, but the scale of their presence in thirteenth-century Italy has been difficult to establish.[12] The same goes for the alternative option of Italian

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[6] Bacci, 'Pisa bizantina', p. 63.

[7] Belting, *Bild und Kult*, pp. 228–9; Bacci, 'Pisa bizantina', p. 63.

[8] Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship', pp. 239–48; A. Weyl Carr, 'Byzantines and Italians on Cyprus: images from art', *DOP*, 49 (1995): pp. 339–57; Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, pp. 24–7; A. Derbes and A. Neff, 'Italy, the mendicant orders, and the Byzantine sphere', in *Faith and Power*, pp. 449–61. See also Chapter 1, pp. 9–12.

[9] Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*; Derbes and Neff, 'Italy, the mendicant orders, and the Byzantine sphere'.

[10] Nelson, 'The Italian appreciation and appropriation', p. 212; Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship', p. 244; Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, pp. 181–2 (n. 11).

[11] On model books: 'Models and model-books', in *ODB*, vol. 2, pp. 1386–7; R.W. Scheller, *Exemplum: Model-book Drawings and the Practice of Artistic Transmission in the Middle Ages (ca. 900–ca. 1470)* (Amsterdam, 1995); *The Glory of Byzantium*, pp. 482–4. See also the remarks by Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, p. 209 (n. 77); V.M. Schmidt, 'Anne Derbes, Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy', *Simiolus*, 26 (1998): p. 119 (review).

[12] G. Vasari, *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. R. Bettarini and P. Barocchi (6 vols, Florence, 1966–87), vol. 2, pp. 69–74; H. Belting, 'The "Byzantine" Madonnas: new fact about their Italian origin and some observations on Duccio', *Studies in the History of Art*, 12 (1982): pp. 7–22; R. Nelson, 'A Byzantine painter in Trecento Genoa: the *Last Judgment* at S. Lorenzo', *ArtB*, 67 (1985): pp. 548–66.

artists travelling east, especially to the territories occupied by the Crusaders. Wall paintings, icons and illuminated manuscripts show that western artists were active in Constantinople when it was under Latin rule from 1204 to 1261 and in Acre, the capital of the Latin Kingdom in the Holy Land.[13] Also, it has been proposed that artists such as Giunta Pisano (d. *c.*1260) and Duccio (*c.*1255/60–1319) made trips to the Levant.[14] A direct contact with eastern pictorial ideas would explain the Byzantine element in their work, but in the absence of documentary evidence proposals along these lines remain mere speculation.

It is possible that a combination of all the aforementioned possibilities allowed Italian artists to acquire knowledge of Byzantine art. The precise manner remains nevertheless unclear. In the end, the most convincing evidence that Italian artists possessed such knowledge are the images they produced: a careful examination of late twelfth- and thirteenth-century Italian painting demonstrates that their makers were fully conversant with contemporary developments in the eastern Mediterranean. Stylistic and iconographic elements are reproduced with such precision that there can be little doubt that Byzantine models were somehow available to Italian artists.[15]

Venice around 1200

It is generally thought that the appropriation of a new, more expressive Byzantine artistic language began in central Italy around 1250.[16] Venetian artists, however, began to make use of the latest expressive formulae from Constantinople already by the end of the twelfth century.[17] It is not surprising to find Venetian artists at the forefront of this development: as a result of the

[13] On wall paintings: C.L. Striker and Y. Dogan Kuban (eds), *Kalenderhane in Istanbul: the buildings, their history, architecture and decoration* (Mainz, 1997), pp. 128–42. On icons: K. Weitzman, 'Crusader icons and la "Maniera greca"', in H. Belting (ed.), *Il medio oriente e l'occidente nell'arte del XIII secolo: Atti del XXIV Congresso internazionale di storia dell'arte* (Bologna, 1982), pp. 71–7; A. Weyl Carr, 'East, west and icons in twelfth-century Outremer', in V.P. Goss (ed.), *The Meeting of Two Worlds: cultural exchange between east and west during the period of the Crusades* (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1986), pp. 347–59. On manuscripts: J. Folda, *Crusader Manuscript Illumination at Saint-Jean d'Acre, 1275–1291* (Princeton, 1976); D.H. Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis* (Cambridge, 1998). On Crusader art in general: J. Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land: from the third Crusade to the fall of Acre, 1187–1291* (Cambridge, 2005). See also Chapter 1, pp. 12–17.

[14] On Giunta: L. Bellosi, *Cimabue* (New York, 1998), p. 60; M. Burresi and A. Caleca, 'Pittura a Pisa da Giunta a Giotto', in eidem (eds), *Cimabue a Pisa: la pittura del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), p. 72. On Duccio: J. White, *Art and Architecture in Italy, 1250–1400* (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 297; F. Deuchler, *Duccio* (Milan, 1984), p. 24.

[15] See Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, p. 182 (n. 11), for a similar conclusion.

[16] See, for instance, ibid., p. 2.

[17] On developments in twelfth-century Byzantine art: Belting, *Bild und Kult*, pp. 292–314; R. Cormack, *Byzantine Art* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 145–85.

close political and economic ties that existed between the two cities, Byzantine art had been incorporated into the visual culture of Venice for centuries.[18]

No monument illustrates the Venetian desire to emulate the wealth and prestige of Byzantium better than the basilica of San Marco. Modelled on the emperor Justinian's sixth-century church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, San Marco is decorated with mosaics inspired by and comparable to the most conspicuous decorations of the Byzantine Empire.[19] It is among these mosaics, on the west vault of the central dome, that we encounter the expressive language of twelfth-century Byzantine art.[20] The identity and origins of the artists responsible for these mosaics, which are dated to the 1190s, are unknown. According to Otto Demus – whose *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice* is still the most authoritative account of the San Marco mosaics – a large local workshop was active in San Marco by the late twelfth century.[21] This workshop was led by masters who had first-hand knowledge of developments in Byzantine art. It is possible that some of these masters came from Byzantium – the few names of mosaicists in Venice known from documents are all Greek – but there are no further sources to support such claims.[22] What is beyond doubt, however, is that the artists working on the west vault were up-to-date with the most recent Byzantine ideas and techniques.

The mosaics on the west vault illustrate seven scenes from the Passion of Christ. In particular the two monumental narratives that dominate the vault – the *Crucifixion* and the *Anastasis* – show knowledge of expressive means and forms that had developed in twelfth-century Byzantine art (Figure 2.1). The energetic, forward-moving stride of Christ in the *Anastasis* has close parallels in a number of twelfth-century Byzantine images.[23] The tormented expressions on some of the faces in this mosaic, too, are related to Byzantine examples.[24] Similar exaggerated expressions are characteristic of a number of late twelfth-

[18] D.M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: a study in diplomatic and cultural relations* (Cambridge, 1988).

[19] The church of the Holy Apostles was demolished in 1461 to make way for the Fatih Camii: A. Wharton Epstein, 'The rebuilding and decoration of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople: a reconsideration', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 23 (1982): pp. 79–92; K. Dark and F. Özgümüş, 'New evidence for the Byzantine church of the Holy Apostles from Fatih Camii, Istanbul', *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 21 (2002): pp. 393–413. On the history and decoration of San Marco: O. Demus, *The Church of San Marco in Venice: history, architecture, sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1960); O. Demus, *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice* (2 vols, Chicago, 1984).

[20] On the discussion below, see also H. Bloemsma, 'Venetian crossroads: east and west and the origins of modernity in twelfth-century mosaics in San Marco', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 31 (2010): pp. 299–312.

[21] Demus, *The Mosaics of San Marco*, vol. 1, pp. 291–2.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., p. 206.

[24] Ibid, pp. 288–9.



Fig. 2.1 *Anastasis*, *c.*1180–90, mosaic, central dome, west vault, San Marco, Venice. Florence. Photo out of copyright (Photographic Collection, The Warburg Institute).

century Byzantine paintings, the best known among which are those in the church of Saint George in Kurbinovo, dated by an inscription to 1191.[25]

How innovative the visual language of the narratives on the west vault is becomes apparent when it is compared to that of the mosaics on the south vault of the same dome. These mosaics, dated to the first quarter of the twelfth century, depict the *Temptation of Christ*, the *Entry into Jerusalem*, the *Last Supper* and the *Washing of the Feet* (Figure 2.2).[26] Even if we take into account that the scenes on the south vault have a more stately subject matter, these early twelfth-century narratives look more stripped down and hieratic in comparison to the scenes on the west vault, displaying a minimum of narrative detail and very little variation in the attitudes and the expressions of the figures. Spatial effects and overlapping figures are avoided and all parts of the narratives are clearly visible.

[25] On these paintings: L. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo: Les Fresques de Saint-Georges et la peinture byzantine du XIIe siècle* (Brussels, 1975).

[26] Demus, *The Mosaics of San Marco*, vol. 1, pp. 94–108.

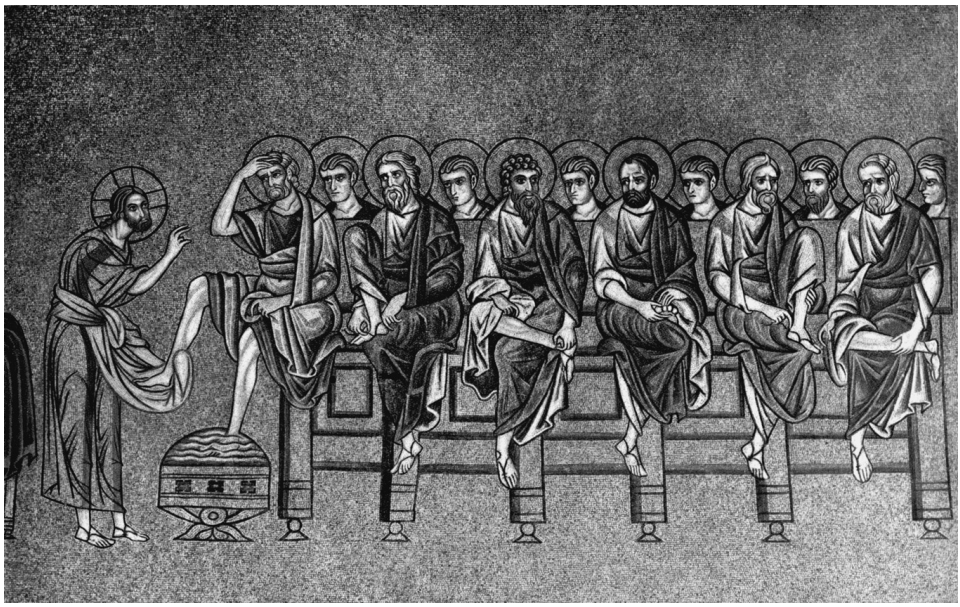


Fig. 2.2 *The Washing of the Feet*, *c.*1110, mosaic, central dome, south vault, San Marco, Venice. Florence. Photo out of copyright (Photographic Collection, The Warburg Institute).

The differences between the mosaics on the two vaults are all the more remarkable when we realize that they are part of the same decorative programme: a historical sequence with the central events from the Life of Christ.[27] It is conceivable, of course, that the artists who worked on the west vault merely followed the most recent developments in Byzantine art and that therefore the difference between the west and the south vaults simply reflects those developments. The Venetian artists, however, did not merely copy, but rather reworked the Byzantine models. On the south vault, the few expressive details that can be found in similar Byzantine works have been toned down even further.[28] On the west vault, on the other hand, the artists have emulated upon the comparable Byzantine scenes by emphasizing the expressive character of the images. The best example of such a change is the chain of imploring hands of the figures to the left of Christ in the *Anastasis* (Figure 2.1). So much attention has been given to this dramatic motif that it threatens to upset the symmetry of the scene.

[27] Ibid., pp. 255–6.

[28] Demus (ibid., p. 103), saw this as a specific 'will to form' of the Venetian artists, aimed at subordinating the compositions to the demands of iconographic clarity.

Thus, the different ways in which the San Marco mosaicists have made use of Byzantine models on the two vaults suggest an intentional change in the way the biblical stories are presented. While the few expressive elements that could be found in the Byzantine models for the south vault have been suppressed to depict the stories as clearly and factually as possible, the emotional character of the models for the west vault has been stressed and in certain cases even enhanced in order to depict the stories as dramatic and vivid events.

It is tempting to see the changes in the Venetian mosaics as the reflection of a growing need for a more subjective and emotional involvement on the part of the viewer. Yet, one has to be careful in drawing such conclusions. The emergence of a more expressive language in late-medieval Italian art does not mean that earlier images did not evoke emotional responses. Already in the fourth century Saint Gregory of Nyssa wrote of an image of the *Sacrifice of Isaac* that he 'could not walk by the sight of it without shedding tears'.[29]

Thus, the affective appeal of the mosaics on the west vault of San Marco does not by definition indicate some kind of change on the part of the viewer. A twelfth-century text by Bernard of Clairvaux, however, suggests theologians thought the humanity of Christ needed to be emphasised to convey the message of the Gospel to a human audience:

> I, a man, describe him to men according to the human form that he adopted in order to reveal himself with the maximum of esteem and love; 'made lower than angels', he came out of his chambers like a Bridegroom and pitched a tent in the sun. I present him as attractive rather than sublime, as God's appointed servant and not a remote deity, as the one whom the Spirit of the Lord anointed and sent 'to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken, to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year favourable to the Lord.[30]

Bernard's text cannot, of course, be taken as evidence for the existence of a need for less exalted, more human images in the Veneto at the end of the twelfth century. Texts expressing such a need do not exist in Italy for this period. The

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[29] C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: sources and documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1972), p. 34.

[30] Bernard de Clairvaux, *Sermons sur le cantique* (5 vols, Paris, 1998), vol. 2, pp. 174–6 (sermon 22, 3): 'ipsum saltem hominem homo hominibus loquor secundum eam formam in qua, ut se manifestum nimia sua dignatione et dilectione praeberet, minoratus ab angelis in sole posuit tabernaculum suum, tamquam sponsus procedens de thalamo suo. Suavem magis quam sublimem, et unctum, non altum loquor, qualem denique Spiritus Domini unxit et misit evangelizare pauperibus, mederi contritis corde, praedicare captivis indulgentiam et clausis apertionem, praedicare annum placabilem Domino.' Translation taken from Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Song of Songs* (2 vols, Kalamazoo, Mich., 1976), vol. 2, pp. 15–16. Another fragment from the same passage is cited in H.W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), pp. 82–3. This same fragment, incorrectly translated and without reference to the precise passage, is also cited in H. van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300–1500* (London, 1994), p. 52.

demand for images that are adjusted to the viewer's emotions and that actively seek to encourage a subjective experience is explicitly formulated only in the thirteenth century. Both Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) and Bonaventure (1221–74) stress the need for images that are not just instructive and memorable, but that will above all stimulate the emotions.[31]

Yet, already in the late twelfth century, a more personal and emotional religious experience was disseminated and popularized in northern Italy by itinerant preachers and religious groups such as the Humiliati – a lay pietist movement centred in Lombardy and the Veneto whose members lived a life centred on preaching and evangelical poverty.[32] Also, recently introduced changes in meditational literature and liturgical chants might have had an influence on the expectations of the faithful. Cases in point are hymns and meditations related to Mary's *Compassio*.[33] These texts describe in great detail Mary's inward and outward suffering at the foot of the cross. An important feature is that they explicitly invite the faithful to contemplate Christ's Passion through the intermediary of his mother. Relating these emotional meditations and hymns to the mosaics on the west vault in San Marco might bring us closer to the way these mosaics were experienced. This late twelfth-century evidence suggests that a need for a more personal, emotional spirituality may indeed have been an important stimulus for artistic change in the Veneto at this stage.

Further evidence is provided by a series of four monumental frescoes in the crypt of the cathedral of Aquileia, 100 kilometres north-east of Venice. These frescoes, dated to the late twelfth century, depict the *Crucifixion*, the *Deposition*, the *Lamentation* and the *Dormition of the Virgin*.[34] The *Deposition* and the *Lamentation* especially display a heightened degree of emotion, which has close parallels in twelfth-century Byzantine art, such as the paintings in Saint Panteleimon in Nerezi dated 1164.[35] Possibly the artists in Aquileia had direct knowledge of these or similar paintings; more likely they drew their inspiration from drawings or from the nearby mosaics on the west vault in San Marco.[36]

Thomas Dale has pointed out the close relationship between the outward drama re-enacted in the Aquileian frescoes and the hymns and meditations related to Mary's *Compassio* mentioned above.[37] According to him, the four monumental scenes in Aquileia are visual equivalents of this contemporary devotional literature. Like these texts, they invite the viewer to meditate on

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31 D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images: studies in the history and theory of response* (Chicago, 1989), pp. 162–7; H. Feld, *Der Ikonoklasmus des Westens* (Leiden, 1990), pp. 63–9.

32 F. Andrews, *The Early Humiliati* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 38–63.

33 T. Dale, *Relics, Prayer and Politics in Medieval Venetia: Romanesque painting in the crypt of Aquileia Cathedral* (Princeton, 1997), pp. 60–65.

34 On these paintings: Dale, *Relics, Prayer and Politics*, pp. 57–65.

35 On these paintings: I. Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi: architecture, programme, patronage* (Wiesbaden, 2000).

36 Dale, *Relics, Prayer and Politics*, pp. 24–31.

37 Ibid., pp. 60–65.

Christ's suffering and Mary's co-suffering. The expressive visual language developed in Byzantium during the twelfth century enabled the Aquileian artists to depict the Passion in an affective manner and complement through their expressive visual language the meditational exercises of the faithful.

Pisa and Assisi around 1250

The paintings in Aquileia and the mosaics in Venice mark an important moment of change in the way religious images were made to communicate with their audiences. The developments in the Veneto precede those in central Italy by several decades. Around the fourth decade of the thirteenth century Umbrian and Tuscan artists, too, began to make use of Byzantine models to appeal to the viewer's emotion.

The best-known example of this process of transformation is the gradual replacement of the iconographic type of the *Christus triumphans* on painted crosses by that of the *Christus patiens*. Whereas the former type presents the victorious Christ gazing out with his body and head held upright, the new type shows the dead Christ with eyes closed and his body swayed to the left – an iconography that was already established in Byzantine art but that was new to Italy. It seems that the Byzantine type was introduced in central Italian art by Giunta Pisano in the crucifix commissioned in 1236 for the San Francesco, the mother church of the Franciscan order in Assisi.[38] Giunta's original cross is lost, but a number of surviving works by the artist show how he looked to Byzantine art for guidance in expressing Christ's suffering and death with an unsparing directness (Figure 2.3).

A need for depictions that offer the viewer such poignant images of suffering is suggested by contemporary devotional texts. Franciscan writings of the period show the same focus on Christ's human sacrifice and encourage readers to identify with his pain.[39] The *De meditatione Passionis Christi per septem diei horas libellus* by Pseudo-Bede, identified as a Franciscan writing around the mid-thirteenth century, gives us an idea of how the contemporary viewer might have looked at these crucifixes: 'It is necessary that when you concentrate on these things in your contemplation, you do so as if you were actually present at the time when he suffered'.[40]

The typological and iconographic changes in monumental crucifixes are accompanied by even more revolutionary stylistic innovations. Again Giunta seems to have led the way. In his earliest surviving work, the crucifix in Santa Maria degli Angeli in Assisi, dated to the 1240s, the body of Christ is essentially

[38] Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum*, pp. 218–24.

[39] Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, pp. 16–24.

[40] Freedberg, *The Power of Images*, p. 171. For a discussion of the date and authorship of Pseudo-Bede's text: Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, pp. 193–4 (n. 65).

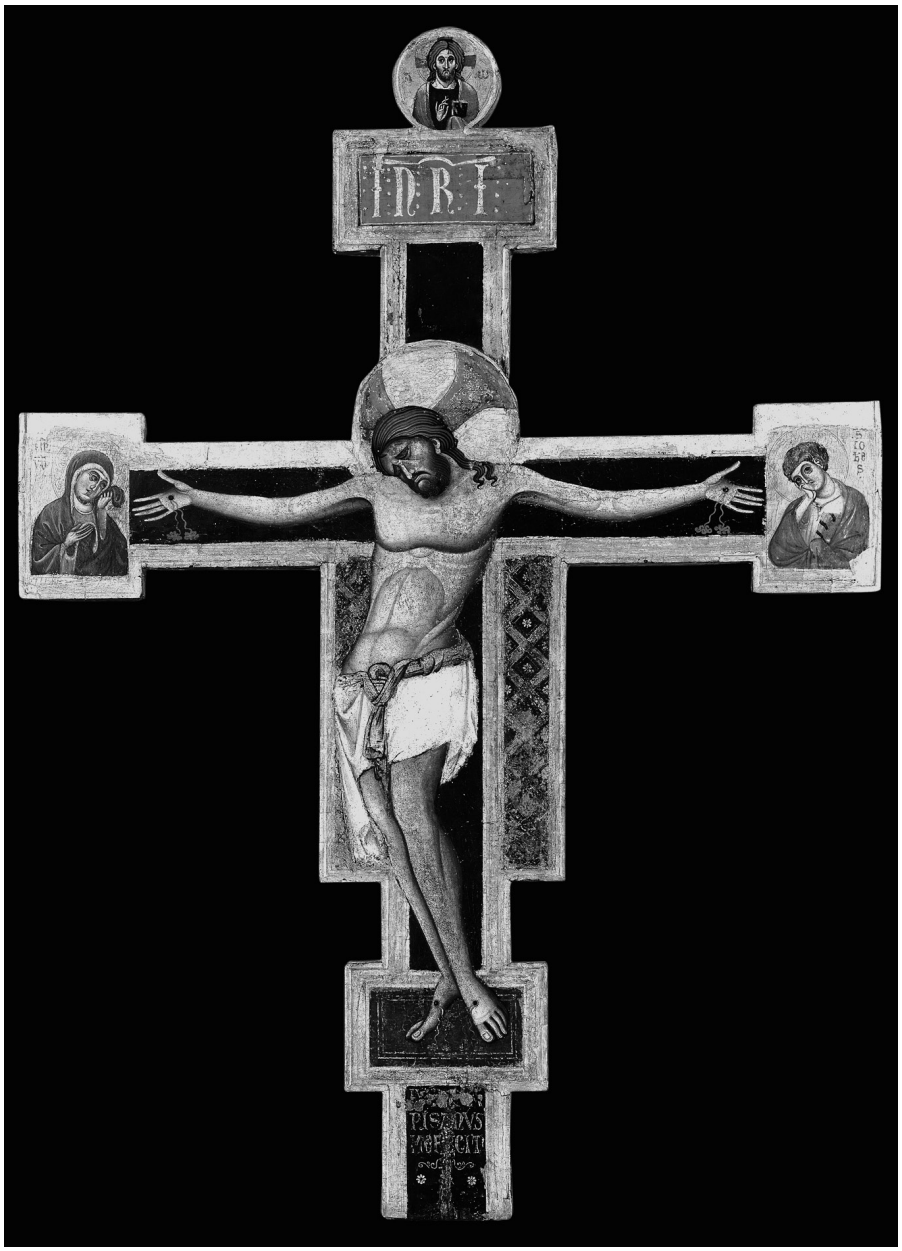


Fig. 2.3 Giunta Pisano, San Ranierino Crucifix, *c.*1250, tempera on panel, Museo Nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa. Photo: © Mondadori Electa / The Bridgeman Art Library.

flat and linear. Yet, in his so-called San Ranierino Crucifix, dated around 1250, a more substantial plasticity of modelling is introduced (Figure 2.3).[41] Although the anatomy of Christ's body is still treated with clear definition and its various sections are sharply delineated, the areas within these linear demarcations are carefully modelled with a subtle use of shading. The result of this modelling is a much more pronounced three-dimensional presence of Christ's body, infusing the image with an increased sense of humanity.

We can trace the same stylistic development in narrative painting of the time. An example is the Passion cycle in the Lower Church of San Francesco in Assisi, dated to the early 1260s and attributed to the Master of Saint Francis.[42] This cycle contains the *Disrobing of Christ*, the *Crucifixion*, the *Deposition* and the *Lamentation* (Figure 2.4 and Colour Plate II), all inspired by or modelled on Byzantine iconographic sources.[43] The cycle is placed opposite another by the same artist with scenes from the Life of Saint Francis. In this way, not only the Franciscans' special devotion to the Passion is made explicit, but also Saint Francis's identification with and likeness to Christ, so central to Franciscan ideology.

The cycle is badly damaged. Despite its poor condition, the three-dimensional form of the figures in the individual scenes is still evident. Particularly areas that have been well preserved, such as the group of women on the left in the *Lamentation*, show monumental figures dressed in voluminous robes (Figure 2.4). These figures are tightly grouped together, not only making the composition fuller and more solid, but also suggesting an idea of three-dimensional space.

Traditionally, the stylistic changes in the work of Giunta Pisano and the Master of Saint Francis have been interpreted either as a first break with the Byzantine tradition or as breathing a new life into Byzantine iconographical models. On closer inspection, however, these changes manifest a strong resemblance to stylistic developments in Byzantine art of the thirteenth century.[44] In fact, developments in Italian and Byzantine art appear to have influenced each other at this time, particularly in the territories occupied by the Crusaders in the eastern Mediterranean, where an exchange of artistic ideas was inevitable. Regarding the presence and influence of western works and artists in the Levant, Robin Cormack has spoken of the 'westernization'

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[41] M. Boskovits, 'Giunta Pisano: una svolta nella pittura italiana del Duecento', *Arte Illustrata*, 55–6 (1973): pp. 339–52; idem, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence, 1993), pp. 76–82 and 100 (n. 193); C. Lamberti, 'La croce di San Ranierino', in *La chiesa di San Ranierino* (Pisa, 2009), pp. 32–6.

[42] On these paintings: S. Romano, 'Le storie parallele di Assisi: il Maestro di S. Francesco', *Storia dell'arte*, 44 (1982): pp. 63–81; S. Esser, *Die Ausmalung der Unterkirche von San Francesco in Assisi durch den Franziskusmeister* (Bonn, 1983); G. Bonsanti (ed.), *La Basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi* (Modena, 2002), pp. 117–20 and 324–43.

[43] Ibid.

[44] T. Velmans, *Byzanz: Fresken und Mosaike* (Zurich, 1999), pp. 179–99.

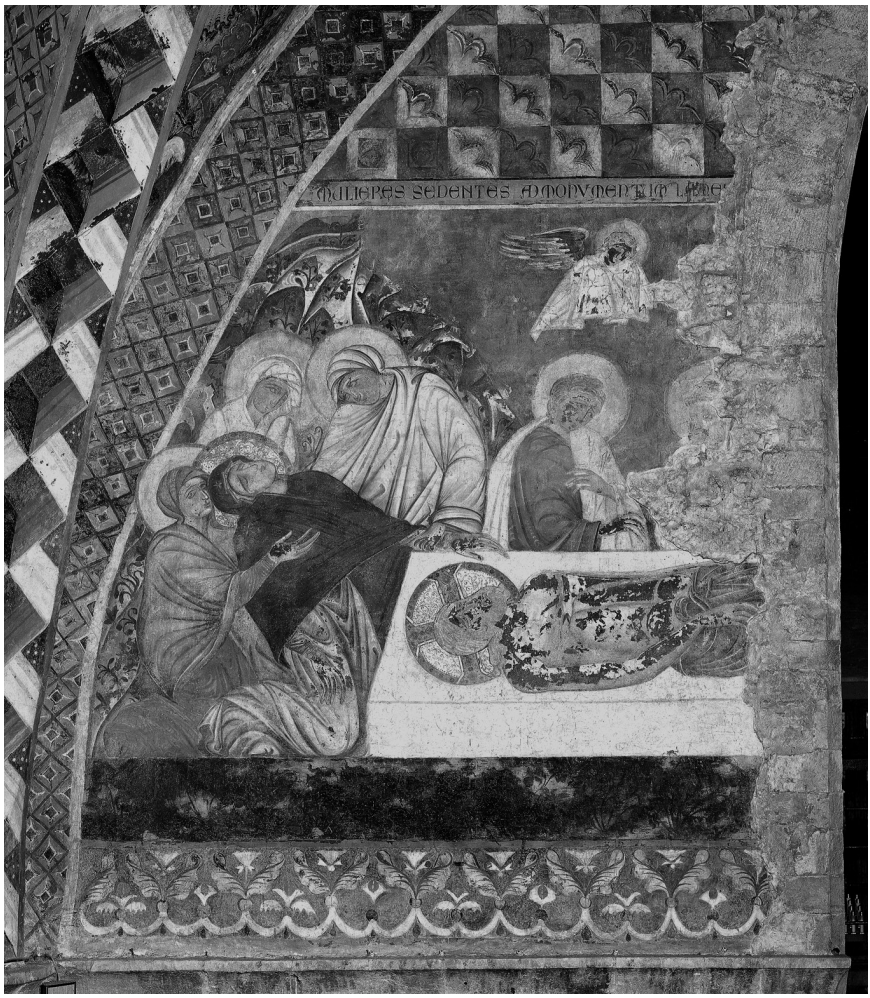


Fig. 2.4 Master of Saint Francis, *The Lamentation* (Colour Plate II).

of Byzantine art during this period.[45] Cormack stresses that, while Byzantine artists appropriated western ideas and techniques, western artists working in the eastern Mediterranean adopted elements from their Byzantine counterparts at the same time.[46] The mutual influences were sometimes so strong that the origins of the maker of a work can be difficult to determine.

[45] Cormack, *Byzantine Art*, p. 192.
[46] Ibid., pp. 188–92.

Well-known examples of such works are the so-called Crusader icons in the monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai and a number of manuscripts made between 1250 and 1291 in Acre, the capital of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, including the one known as the Arsenal Bible, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, and a missal nowadays preserved in the Museo Capitolare in Perugia.[47]

Miklos Boskovits and Serena Romano have pointed out the stylistic similarities between these icons and manuscripts and the works of Giunta Pisano and the Master of Saint Francis.[48] It is likely that Giunta had direct knowledge of the developments in the Levant. Pisa is considered the great gateway of Byzantine influence for central Italy in this period. The city had close and direct commercial relations with the Byzantine world and the Crusader states and it is not unlikely that Pisan merchants brought home works of art from their journeys east.[49] It has even been suggested that Giunta went to the Holy Land himself, having travelled there aboard a Pisan ship, but evidence for this is lacking.[50] The Master of Saint Francis could have been exposed to recent innovations in the eastern Mediterranean through the work of Giunta, whose activity and influence in Umbria are well documented.[51] It is also possible that the Master had direct knowledge of the innovative trends in the art of the Levant through his Franciscan patrons who were very active in Byzantium and the Crusader states. It is not inconceivable that some contemporary manuscripts or other works of art from the east were present in Assisi at an early stage.[52]

The stylistic innovations in Italian painting are thus closely related to contemporary developments in the art of the eastern Mediterranean. The function of these changes seems to have been similar in the east and in the west. As Tania Velmans has observed, the plastic style that Byzantine artists began to produce in the early thirteenth century should be seen as a belated reaction to the introduction of expressive motifs in the twelfth century.[53] As a result, images were brought closer to the everyday experience of the viewer not only through expressive postures, gestures and facial expressions, but also through a more three-dimensional depiction of the figures.

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47 See above, n. 13. On the Arsenal Bible: Weiss, *Art and Crusade*, pp. 81–195; on the Perugia missal: A. Caleca, *Miniature in Umbria. I: La Biblioteca Capitolare di Perugia* (Florence, 1969), pp. 79–81.

48 Romano, 'Le storie parallele', pp. 69–71; Boskovits, 'Giunta Pisano', p. 348.

49 M.L. Ceccarelli Lemut, 'Economica e società. Le attività commerciali e produttive e i protagonisti dell'economia cittadina', in M. Burresi and A. Caleca (eds), *Cimabue a Pisa: la pittura del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), pp. 21–4; M. Bacci, 'Pisa e l'icona', in ibid., pp. 59–64.

50 See above, n. 14.

51 J. Cannon, 'Giotto and art for the friars: revolutions spiritual and artistic', in A. Derbes and M. Sandona (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 110.

52 See above, n. 9. See also Romano, 'Le storie parallele', pp. 70–71.

53 Velmans, *Byzanz: Fresken und Mosaike*, pp. 182–92.

In analogy to the situation in Byzantium, we can also speak of a development in two phases in Italian art. First, starting with the mosaics and paintings in the Veneto discussed above, artists began to emphasize the dramatic and emotional features of the biblical stories. The introduction of a more voluminous style in the work of Giunta Pisano and the Master of Saint Francis marks the beginning of a second period. The spectator's involvement in the images is now stimulated not only by iconographic details, but also by the increased corporeality of the depicted figures. Style was thus put in the service of function in an attempt to present the biblical stories as subjective and convey human experiences that would encourage the empathy of the faithful.[54]

Siena around 1300

The art of Giunta Pisano and the Master of Saint Francis opened up a period when the appropriation and adaption of Byzantine models reached its peak. In the second half of the thirteenth century Italian artists drew extensively on the art of the eastern Mediterranean, both stylistically and iconographically, to create expressive and vivid representations that made an affective appeal to the viewer. In doing so, artists seemed to follow the instructions of Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas to produce images that evoke an emotional response. To achieve this end Italian painters also increasingly started to explore other artistic traditions, especially the art of classical Rome and that of Gothic France.[55] The influence from these latter traditions became predominant after the turn of the fourteenth century. While Italian artists continued to use elements from Byzantine iconography, stylistically they began to move away from the *maniera greca*.[56] In the paintings of Giotto and his followers, Gothic and classical principles started to dominate to the extent that they made the Byzantine elements obsolete.

An intriguing exception is the art of Duccio. His career was, as Hayden Maginnes has put it, 'a long and meaningful dialogue with the art of Byzantium'.[57] This dialogue is evident in Duccio's inventive use of Byzantine

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[54] Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum*, p. 37; D. Blume, 'Die Argumentation der Bilder – Zur Entstehung einer städtischen Malerei', in H. Belting and D. Blume (eds), *Malerei und Stadtkultur in der Dantezeit: Die Argumentation der Bilder* (Munich, 1989), p. 15.

[55] Bellosi, *Cimabue*, pp. 66–93; M. Seidel, '"Il crocifixo che fece Giotto": questions of style', in M. Ciatti and M. Seidel (eds), *Giotto: the Santa Maria Novella crucifix* (Florence, 2002), pp. 73–7; W. Tronzo, 'Giotto's figures', in Derbes and Sandona, *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto*, pp. 63–75.

[56] On the continuing iconographical tradition: Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, passim; L. Kouneni, 'A Byzantine iconographic type of Virgin and Child in Italy: the Pelagonitissa Virgin re-examined', *Arte Cristiana*, 95 (2007): pp. 1–8.

[57] H.B.J. Maginnis, *Painting in the Age of Giotto: a historical reevaluation* (University Park, Pa., 1997), p. 77.

iconography and figure types as well as in the emotional power of his work.[58] Seeking to explain his intimate knowledge of contemporary Byzantine painting, scholars have suggested that the Sienese artist may have travelled to the eastern Mediterranean.[59] Others have pointed to Sienese commercial activities in the Levant as a route via which Byzantine models could have become available in Siena.[60] Others still have argued that Duccio must have been in contact with travelling artists from the east working in Italy.[61] Whatever the means – and again documentary evidence is missing – it is clear that Duccio had a good knowledge of contemporary Byzantine art.

Duccio's *Maestà*, made for the Duomo in Siena and finished in 1311, is one of the most innovate paintings of the early fourteenth century, showing, for instance, Duccio's growing understanding of pictorial space and human form (Figure 2.5).[62] In the front panel Mary, the saints and the angels wear voluminous, free-falling robes that give a clear indication of the bodies underneath. Their faces have become more natural through a careful modulation of light and shade. As a consequence, the graphic separation into parts, still somewhat present in Duccio's earlier work, has disappeared almost completely. Duccio has also succeeded in placing these three-dimensional figures in a believable spatial setting: the kneeling patron saints occupy a clearly delineated space, the angels lean on and bend over the throne and the Virgin is securely framed within the throne's marble structure.

Despite all these innovations, the *Maestà* appears outmoded when compared to Giotto's revolutionary works of the same period. Its 'old-fashioned' character is usually attributed to Duccio's adherence to Byzantine stylistic conventions, as can be seen in the facial types and the two-dimensional arrangement of the rows of saints and angels flanking the Virgin's throne. John White, for instance, has written of Duccio's refusal to abandon the Byzantine principles that were cast aside by Giotto, calling the artist 'an adventurous conservative'.[63] More recently Luciano Bellosi has referred to Duccio's 'loyalty' to the Byzantine tradition, asserting that the Sienese master, confronted with the radical innovations in contemporary art, 'wanted to reaffirm, almost polemically, his relationships with a grand artistic tradition that had stood at the basis of his formation and with which it seemed unjust to break completely'.[64]

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[58] Belting, *Bild und Kult*, pp. 414–22.

[59] See above, n. 14.

[60] A. Derbes, 'Siena and the Levant in the later Dugento', *Gesta*, 28 (1989): pp. 195–7.

[61] Belting, 'The "Byzantine" Madonnas'.

[62] On the *Maestà*: D. Norman, *Siena and the Virgin: art and politics in a late medieval city state* (New Haven, 1999), pp. 22–43; G. Ragionieri, 'Duccio di Buoninsegna. *Maestà*', in A. Bagnoli (ed.), *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico* (Milan, 2003), pp. 212–22 (with further references).

[63] White, *Art and Architecture in Italy*, pp. 293 and 303.

[64] L. Bellosi, 'Il percorso di Duccio', in A. Bagnoli (ed.), *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico* (Milan, 2003), p. 125. My translation.



Fig. 2.5 Duccio, *Maestà* (central panel, front), 1308–11, tempera on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library.

But suggestions of 'refusal' and 'loyalty' venture into psychological and biographical explanations that are highly problematic with regard to artists from this period. A more productive way of approaching the problem is to ask if Duccio's continued interest in the Byzantine tradition can be linked to the meaning of the painting. In a recent publication, Keith Christiansen has suggested that Giotto, in his quest for a vivid evocation of the visible world, sacrificed many of the otherworldly aspects associated with the Byzantine tradition.[65] Duccio, on the other hand, had remained within that tradition to explore a realm that is human and approachable yet at the same time divine and transcendent. As a result, contemporary viewers were made aware that they were not standing before an earthly woman, as might have been the case with Giotto's *Ognissanti Madonna,* but were instead in the presence of the Queen of Heaven.[66]

Christiansen thus interprets the old-fashioned, Byzantine look of the *Maestà* as a purposeful choice by Duccio intended to enhance the spiritual meaning of the painting in the face of the ever-increasing verisimilitude of Giotto's art. Unfortunately, there are no contemporary sources to support the idea that Duccio, his patrons or any of their contemporaries were concerned about an increase in realism in painting; such concerns are not voiced until the end of the fifteenth century when Savonarola criticized contemporary artists for

[65] K. Christiansen, *Duccio and the Origins of Western Painting* (New York, 2008), p. 39.

[66] Ibid. On the *Ognissanti Madonna*, dated *c.*1310: J.I. Miller and L. Taylor-Mitchell, 'The Ognissanti Madonna and the Humiliati Order in Florence', in Derbes and Sandona, *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto*, pp. 157–75 (with further references).

making their pictures so suggestive of this world that there was no room left for an evocation of the supernatural.[67]

Savonarola's objections, however, were part of a millennium-old debate about the use of images in the Church. Ever since the early Middle Ages theologians had discussed the potential danger of the sensuality of art.[68] Opponents to religious imagery had warned that viewers were likely to confuse the work of art with its divine prototype and were in danger of falling into idolatry. Defenders of images countered these claims by stating that the sensual experience of the physical object enabled the viewer to rise to the realm of the spiritual. As the author of an eighth-century letter, once attributed to Gregory the Great (540–604), maintained: 'We do no harm in wishing to show the invisible by means of the visible'.[69]

Throughout the Middle Ages artists had used a wide range of devices to ensure that their images could bridge the gap between the worldly and sacred spheres – that is, that the responses stimulated by the images encouraged a spiritual ascent and not an idolatrous adoration of the material object.[70] Even in Giotto's *Ognissanti Madonna* the gold background and the difference in scale between Mary and the other figures make it clear to the viewer that, despite the revolutionary naturalism, the woman represented is more than an ordinary part of this world.[71] Nevertheless, in the fourteenth century the need for images that could convey the sacred content seems to have come into conflict with expectation of expressive and human representation. Or, as Klaus Krüger puts it, the more the image constituted itself as a vivid evocation of reality, the less it was capable of opening up a view into a higher, metaphysical world.[72]

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[67] M.B. Hall, *The Sacred Image: Titian, Tintoretto, Barocci, El Greco, Caravaggio* (New Haven, 2011), pp. 41–3. On similar concerns in German texts from this period: B. Decker, 'Reform within the cult image: the German winged altarpiece before the Reformation', in P. Humfrey and M. Kemp (eds), *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 97–8.

[68] Freedberg, *The Power of Images*, pp. 161–8; H.L. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing: picturing God's invisibility in medieval art* (Philadelphia, 2000), pp. 104–48; K. Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren: Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit in Italien* (Munich, 2001), pp. 11–27.

[69] Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*, p. 121. For similar statements from the thirteenth century: K. Faupel-Drevs, *Vom rechten Gebrauch der Bilder im liturgischen Raum: Mittelalterliche Funktionsbestimmungen bildender Kunst im rationale Divinorum Officiorum des Durandus von Mende (1230/1 – 1296)* (Leiden, 2000), p. 395.

[70] Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*. For examples from early modern times: J. Hamburger, 'Seeing and believing: the suspicion of sight and the authentication of vision in late medieval art and devotion', in K. Krüger and A. Nova (eds), *Imagination und Wirklichkeit: Zum Verhältnis von mentalen und realen Bildern in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit* (Mainz, 2000), pp. 47–69; Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier*; Hall, *The Sacred Image*.

[71] On other devices used by Giotto: Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*, pp. 19–20.

[72] K. Krüger, 'Medium and imagination: aesthetic aspects of Trecento panel painting', in V.M. Schmidt (ed.), *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento* (New Haven, 2002), pp. 71–2. See also Hamburger, 'Seeing and believing', pp. 48–9.

One of the ways in which fourteenth-century artists tried to solve the tension created by these two divergent demands on religious painting was by bringing into play earlier, hieratic modes of representation associated with Byzantine art.[73] An example of such an attempt can be seen in the *Assumption of the Virgin* attributed to Lippo Memmi and dated *c.*1340 (Figure 2.6). Krüger has shown how this painting makes use of a highly complex visual arrangement aimed at the integration of spatial illusionism with two-dimensional pictorial organization.[74] The ascending Virgin, painted in a frontal view against a golden background, appears as the spatial centre of a group of angels surrounding her. She also forms the centre of a two-dimensional circular form, accentuated by the lower edge of the heavenly arch and by the heads of the angels below her. Thus, while the Virgin is seen rationally situated in terms of space and time, she simultaneously appears to be outside any spatially determinable organization. According to Krüger, this oscillation between three-dimensional illusion and two-dimensional abstraction is intended to affect the viewer. Through the closeness of the figures in the lower section, the viewer is invited into the painting's three-dimensional construction, while at the same time being made aware that in reality the event takes place beyond all visibility and spatial imagination.

This use of two divergent pictorial modes – one illusionistic and one abstract – within a single representation can be seen in many fourteenth-century paintings, including some of the century's most famous pieces, such as Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi's *Annunciation* in the Uffizi in Florence from 1333 and Orcagna's altarpiece for the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella in Florence, dated 1354–57.[75] As painting was evolving into an illusion of physical reality, works such as these seem to reveal the counterbalancing demand to reveal within the image the timeless truths of the divine world.[76]

Duccio's *Maestà* succeeds in doing this in a masterful way. In the contrast between its naturalism – the growing awareness of space, the soft modelling of the faces and the robes – and its retention of abstracting tendencies that find their origin in Byzantine art, the painting is at once approachable and beyond

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[73] On the retrospective tendencies in fourteenth-century art: M. Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951); B. Cole, 'Old and new in the Early Trecento', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz*, 17 (1973): pp. 229–40; H. van Os, 'The Black Death and Sienese painting', *ArtH*, 4 (1981): pp. 237–49; D. Norman, 'Change and continuity: art and religion after the Black Death', in eadem (ed.), *Siena, Florence and Padua: art, society and religion, 1280–1400* (2 vols, New Haven, 1995), vol. 1, pp. 177–95; Maginnis, *Painting in the Age of Giotto*, pp. 164–91; Krüger, 'Medium and imagination'; V.M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: panel paintings for personal devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), pp. 141–60; J.B. Steinhof, *Sienese Painting after the Black Death* (Cambridge, 2006).

[74] Krüger, 'Medium and imagination', pp. 68–9.

[75] On the *Annunciation*: Maginnis, *Painting in the Age of Giotto*, pp. 127–9; on the Strozzi Altarpiece: Norman, 'Change and continuity', pp. 183–7.

[76] Ibid., p. 186.

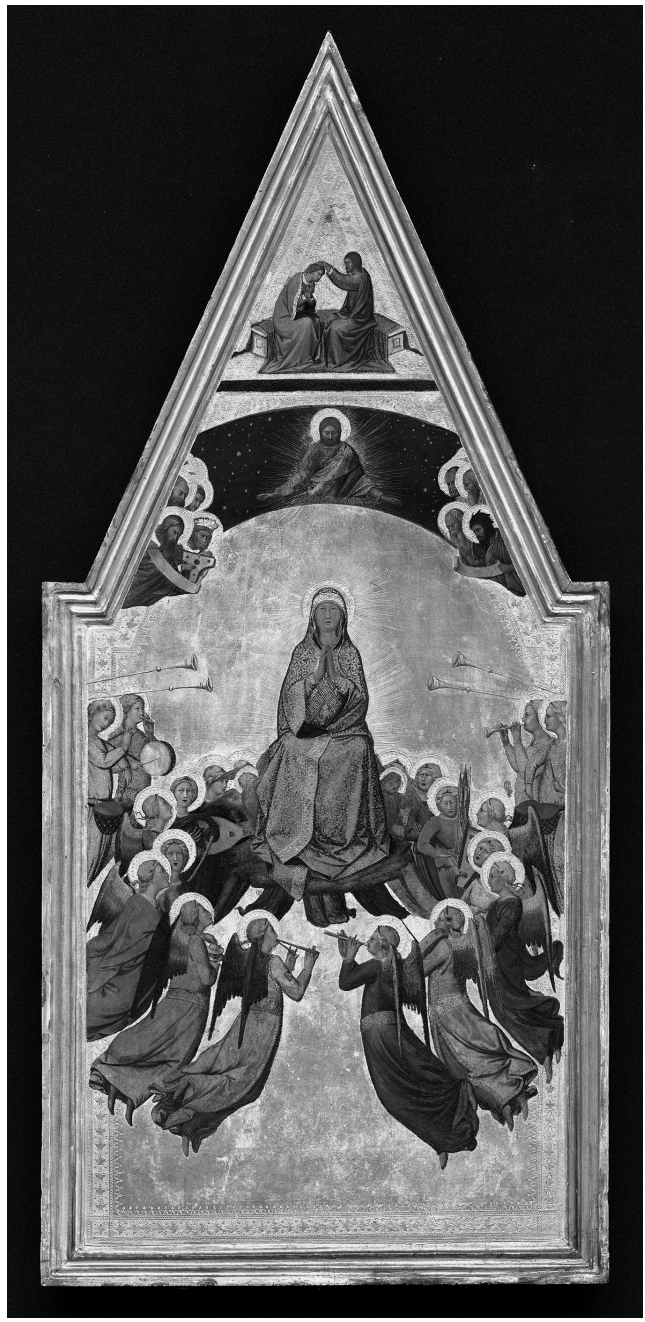


Fig. 2.6 Lippo Memmi (attr.), *Assumption of the Virgin*, *c.*1340, tempera on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Photo: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen – Alte Pinakothek, München; owner: Wittelsbacher Ausgleichsfonds.

common human experience. As such, it visualizes the artistic paradox facing early fourteenth-century artists, a paradox that is nowhere clearer than in the expression of the Virgin's face where distance and aloofness, on the one hand, and intimacy with the beholder, on the other, are held in exquisite balance.

The *Maestà* confronts us with a dramatic change in the meaning of Byzantine art within the context of early Italian painting. Duccio's work marks the end of a tradition of Italian artists who turned to Byzantine art in their ambition to represent biblical figures and stories more vividly and evocatively. At the same time it signals the beginning of a new tradition that paradoxically used Byzantine forms and conventions as a pictorial mode to enhance the sacred qualities of religious painting. The Byzantine tradition now became an alternative pictorial approach available to artists, one they could bring into play in order to emphasize the higher, spiritual reality of their works.

A sermon by the Dominican friar Giordano da Rivalto, held in Florence in 1306, demonstrates that the Byzantine tradition could be seen in such a way at the beginning of the fourteenth century.[77] In this sermon, Giordano attributed a great importance to 'old pictures from Greece' – that is, Byzantine images that went back to prototypes created by Christ's contemporaries. According to him, such works had an authority comparable to that of Holy Scripture. The use of 'old-fashioned' Byzantine conventions was thus a very effective means of giving contemporary painting something of the canonical holiness of Greek icons.

There is, of course, a difference between Duccio's Byzantinism and that of Lippo Memmi, Simone Martini and Orcagna. The Byzantinism of these latter artists is located in their use of hieratic pictorial means, such as frontality and two-dimensionality. Duccio's adherence to the Byzantine tradition, on the other hand, is more comprehensive. Despite the many innovative and even revolutionary aspects of the *Maestà*, its style should be situated within the context of the *maniera greca*, the collective style in which the majority of thirteenth-century Italian artists worked. This is most obvious in the faces of the figures, which look unmistakably Byzantine – unlike Lippo, Simone and Orcagna's figures, which if anything would have to be labelled Gothic or Giottesque. Yet, although Lippo and other fourteenth-century artists adopted Giotto's new figure style, they followed Duccio in making creative use of the archaism of the Byzantine tradition. It seems that Duccio may have been the first to make use of this old-fashionedness as a solution for the paradox inherent in the ever-increasing verisimilitude of contemporary art. It was Duccio's great discovery that a tension between innovation and tradition

[77] A. Cutler, 'La "questione bizantina" nella pittura italiana: una visione alternativa della "maniera greca"', in C. Bertelli (ed.), *La pittura in Italia: L'Altomedioevo* (Milan, 1994), pp. 335–6; Cannon, 'Giotto and art for the friars', pp. 108 and 257 (n. 15); Derbes and Neff, 'Italy, the mendicant orders, and the Byzantine sphere', p. 460.

enabled the viewer to experience, within a painting that presented itself as a vivid evocation of the visible world, a higher, spiritual reality.

Conclusion

In this chapter three significant moments of change in the relationship between Byzantine art and early Italian painting have been analysed. These moments laid bare the dynamics of these interactions. Late-medieval and early Renaissance artists never passively replicated Byzantine formulas, but actively appropriated those elements – stylistic, iconographic or compositional – that served their or their patrons needs. We have seen, first, how Italian artists began to make use of the dramatic postures, gestures and facial expressions that find their origins in twelfth-century Byzantine art in their search for a pictorial language that was both vivid and emotional. This adoption of expressive models first manifested itself in the Veneto, a region that since long had close contacts with the Byzantine Empire.

A second stage began half a century later, when artists from central Italy started to use the expressive Byzantine means and forms to present the different stages of Christ's Passion as events to be subjectively and emotionally engaged with. At the same time, and importantly, the range of expressive means was further extended. Giunta Pisano and the Master of Saint Francis brought stylistic elements such as volume and space into play to create persuasive images that brought about a more subjective communication between representation and audience. However, these stylistic innovations – that would have far-reaching effects on the development of Renaissance painting – do not mark a radical break with the Byzantine tradition. On the contrary, they were closely related to developments in the art of the eastern Mediterranean.

Duccio's *Maestà* opened up the last period of change. His work made clear that an interchange with Byzantine painting was no longer necessary; at least, not as far as it was related to further enhancing the humanity and expressiveness of Italian painting. Here the new style of Giotto led the way. Duccio, however, demonstrated how Byzantine art could remain productive on an entirely different level. Byzantine means and forms now became an alternative mode available to artists to counter the ever-increasing realistic tendencies of contemporary painting. This did not mean that artists choosing to adopt this mode necessarily continued to work in the *maniera greca* – most of them did not. But they employed the hieratic qualities associated with Byzantine art to endow their images with an air of mystique and timeless remoteness. The paintings of Lippo Memmi, Simone Martini and Orcagna show how fruitful and meaningful the use of this hieratic Byzantine mode could be within the context of early Renaissance art.

The dynamic character of the interactions between Byzantine art and early Italian painting demonstrate that east and west were less of two separate worlds than is sometimes suggested. Above all, it reveals the important and enduring role of Byzantine art within the context of late-medieval and early Renaissance culture. This role changed over time but certainly did not come to an abrupt end in the early fourteenth century. Way beyond the heyday of the *maniera greca* Italian artists were well aware of the artistic potential of Byzantine art and made successful use of it in their work.



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Regional Byzantine Monumental Art from Venetian Crete*

Angeliki Lymberopoulou

Introduction

> … during the present century, in the year 6836, when Crete is ruled by the great Venetians our masters, this present church of the great archangel Michael of the heavenly hosts was made with the expenses and contributions by Theotokis Kotzis and Manuel Melisourgos and Nikitas Sideris and Demetrios and their children. Pray for me the sinner Ioannis who happened to be the/a painter. Amen.[1]

This inscription is situated in the middle of the south wall in the church of the Archangel Michael in the village of Kavalariana on the outskirts of Kandanos, in the province of Selino, which forms the southern part of the prefecture of Chania in western Crete (Map 2). The Byzantines counted their years from the creation of the world, which they set 5,508 years before the Incarnation; since the indication (called 'indiction') which specified the year precisely is unknown in this case, the year mentioned in the inscription translates as 1327/28.[2] By that time the island had long ceased to be part of the Byzantine Empire, which was undergoing its last era, known as the Palaiologan period

* I would like to thank my dear friend and colleague, Prof. Dr Vasiliki Tsamakda, as this paper has evolved through the very fruitful (and occasionally animated) discussions we have had over the years.

1 A. Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael at Kavalariana: art and society on fourteenth–century Venetian-dominated Crete* (London, 2006), p. 171, nn. 87–9 and pp. 194–5, nn. 2–4 (where the Greek text is provided with notes on the translation and earlier bibliography), pl. 28 (on p. 301 and p. 366 [in colour]). For a discussion on the donors mentioned in the inscription: ibid., pp. 204–17.

2 For Byzantine chronology and indictions: *ODB*, vol. 1, pp. 448–9 and vol. 2, p. 993 respectively.

(1261–1453).[3] Instead, Crete had been ceded to the Venetians in 1204, in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade, which saw Constantinople captured by Latin troops and its territories divided among the conquerors.

The Venetians had to fight a war with the Genoese, who also staked a claim on the island. The Serenissima's rule on Crete officially started only in 1211, when the Genoese threat had been removed.[4] The island held an extremely important position for these two cities whose wealth and prosperity relied on maritime trade with the Near East, and the Venetians ensured that they got their hands firmly on what proved to be their most precious possession in the Mediterranean basin. Initially, the native population, of Greek origin and belonging to the Greek Orthodox faith, rejected, objected and rebelled against their conquerors, who were Latins and adhered to the Roman Catholic Church. The two groups regarded each other as heretics; in fact, the religious differences formed by far the most substantial gap between them.

The prevailing opinion is that, as long as Constantinople remained in Byzantine hands, the Cretans remained hostile towards the Venetians; and that it was only after the fall of the empire's capital to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, during the post-Byzantine period, that the native Cretans finally accepted their fate and the inevitability of Venetian rule.[5] Within this picture, the Kavalariana inscription, obviously predating the fall, is puzzling and could be used to support this opinion only as an exception that proves the rule.

Presently, over 800 churches survive on the island and the majority of them date from the period of the Venetian domination.[6] It is true that the Kavalariana inscription, which praises the Serenissima's rule on the island is, indeed, unique within the time frame of this dominion (1211–1669), which is divided into two distinctive periods, the Byzantine (1211–1453) and the post-Byzantine (1453–1669). Other inscriptions mention the Palaiologan emperors in Constantinople at the time the respective churches were decorated.[7] The latter inscriptions have been used as evidence supporting the aforementioned opinion – that the native Cretans remained hostile to the Venetian colonists until the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Although such

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[3] For the Byzantine Empire under the Palaiologan dynasty: see Chapter 1, pp. 19–30.

[4] For a summary of the historic circumstances on the island during its Venetian domination: Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, pp. 4–10 (with earlier bibliography).

[5] Ibid., p. 198 and n. 20.

[6] The standard publication for the number of churches on Crete is G. Gerola and C.E. Lassithiotakis, *Τοπογραφικός Κατάλογος των Τοιχογραφημένων Εκκλησιών της Κρήτης* [*Elenco topografico delle chiese affrescate di Creta*] (Herakleion, 1961), where 845 churches are listed. The actual number of surviving churches is actually higher: O. Gratziou, *Η Κρήτη στην Υστερη Μεσαιωνική Εποχή. Η μαρτυρία της εκκλησιαστικής αρχιτεκτονικής* (Herakleion, 2010), p. 93 and n. 2.

[7] For a list of these inscriptions and relevant bibliography: Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, pp. 195–8.

references to Byzantine imperial rule survive in slightly larger numbers than the unique formula employed at Kavalariana, their total amount is barely significant: 11 out of a total of 850 surviving churches and approximately 381 surviving inscriptions.[8] The majority of these 11 inscriptions can be found in the prefecture of Herakleion, relatively close to the capital of Crete (which the Venetians called Candia, present-day Herakleion).[9] The people from this region probably had more contact with Constantinople and would have been aware of historical events, such as the changing of an emperor. Significantly, the one inscription referring to Byzantine rule in the faraway province of Selino, where Kavalariana is also situated, has got the name of the reigning emperor wrong.[10] Conversely, however, relations between Venetians and Cretans were much more intense in the capital and its surrounding areas, and one might have expected Venetian-friendly inscriptions to be found here and not in the far south-west of the island.

The aim of this chapter is to re-examine the evidence of fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century monumental decoration on Crete in the light of the issue of cultural exchange (or the lack thereof) between Venetians and the native Cretans. The distinctive Byzantine character of the Cretan frescoes dating from before the fall of Constantinople has been used as part of the argument to support a non-interaction between the two social groups on the island prior to 1453. However, a closer inspection reveals that the monumental art from this period bears witness to a social and cultural shift, aided by economic development, which gradually replaced the initial hostility of the natives towards the Venetians that characterized the relationship between the two groups during the thirteenth century. Furthermore, they demonstrate some shared Christian concerns regarding the afterlife – despite the deep religious divide that separated the two groups of the island's inhabitants. In other words, the Cretan frescoes prefigure the subsequent emergence of post-Byzantine Cretan Renaissance art and culture.

The Social Context

When discussing the contact between the two populations on Crete, it is important to make a distinction between their social interaction and their

[8] Figures based on G. Gerola, *Monumenti veneti nell'isola di Creta* (Venice, 1932), vol. 4, pp. 390–595.

[9] Six (basically more than half) of these inscriptions are situated in the prefecture of Herakleion; two are found in Siteia; one in the prefecture of Rethymnon; and one is situated in the prefecture of Chania, in the same province where the Kavalariana inscription is also found, that of Selino (Map 2). An eleventh is displayed in the Historical Museum of Crete at Herakleion, but with no further information on its provenance: Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, pp. 195–8.

[10] Ibid., pp. 196–7.

religious beliefs. The social interaction developed early and took place on many levels of society in the form of mixed marriages, trade, business and other transactions of an economic nature down to cloths and kitchenware.[11] Social boundaries became progressively permeable and there was, perhaps, an increasing degree of tolerance. The last serious uprising against the Venetians on the island, the famous Revolt of Saint Titus (1363–67), during which the native inhabitants and Venetian colonists joined forces against the central government in Venice (and lost – among other things – their heads), finished almost a century before the fall of the Byzantine capital.[12]

At the same time, the religious boundaries remained rigid and inflexible. Even the post-Byzantine Unionist movement, supported by an endowment of the Greek cardinal Bessarion, failed miserably and the preachers who reached Crete with the purpose of promoting it were hated by both the Orthodox and the Catholic residents.[13] In other words, a religious divide still existed after the fall of Constantinople, at the time when the improvement in the relationship between Cretans and Venetians is undisputed. Is it not possible, therefore, that the inscription in Kavalariana – rather than being an exception that proves the rule that the Cretans did not like the Venetians – was an exception to the rule that no written reference ought to be made to the heretical Venetians within the sacred context of a Greek Orthodox church?[14]

Despite the religious differences, it is highly likely that regional Greek Orthodox Cretan churches were frequented also by Catholics, primarily owing to the shortage of both Catholic priests and churches in the Cretan

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[11] Ibid. pp. 198–204 (with references to earlier bibliography). See also A. Lymberopoulou, 'Fish on a dish and its table companions in fourteenth-century wall paintings on Venetian-dominated Crete', in L. Brubaker and K. Linardou (eds), *Eat, drink, and be merry (Luke 12:19): Food and Wine in Byzantium. Papers of the 37th Annual Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies in Honour of Professor A.A.M. Bryer* (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 223–32.

[12] Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, pp. 7–8 and nn. 21–2. After 1367 there is no mention of *guerra publica occurente* ('open war') in Venetian documents between the natives and the colonists. Nevertheless, outbreaks continued well into the sixteenth century but were localized and clearly not considered a serious threat: Chr. A. Maltezou, 'Η Κρήτη στη διάρκεια της περιόδου της Βενετοκρατίας (1211–1669)', in N.M. Panagiotakis (ed.), *Κρήτη: Ιστορία και Πολιτισμός* (Herakleion, 1988), pp. 126–9.

[13] I. Mpolanakis, *Εκκλησία και Εκκλησιαστική Παιδεία στη Βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη* (Rethymnon, 2002), pp. 50–54. See also Z.N. Tsirpanlis, *Το Κληροδότημα του Καρδιναλίου Βησσαρίωνος για τους Φιλενωτικούς της Βενετοκρατούμενης Κρήτης (1439 – 17ος αι.)* (Thessalonike, 1967).

[14] It is unlikely that the inscription was of a purely diplomatic nature related to trade (see below), as in this case one would have expected diplomatic references to the Venetians to have occurred in more than one church. It is likely, however, that this inscription could be regarded as an expression of the initial stages of a social dialogue between the two groups of the island's inhabitants, as manifested in the second half of the fourteenth century with the Revolt of Saint Titus mentioned above.

countryside.[15] The issuing of decrees by Venetian authorities prohibiting Catholics to attend mass within Orthodox edifices indicates that this practice did, indeed, take place, otherwise the authorities would not have felt the need to take an official stand against it.[16] Furthermore, certain of these small regional churches include some telling western stylistic and iconographic details in their programme, such as raised haloes (Figure 3.1 and Colour Plate III), portraits of the popular Catholic saint Francis,[17] and the apostle Saint Bartholomew holding his flayed skin over his shoulder (Figure 3.2 and Colour Plate IV), which follows the Catholic tradition for his martyrdom, since according to the Greek Orthodox Church he was crucified.[18]

The church of Saint Pelagia in Ano Viannos, Herakleion, dated to 1360,[19] illustrates this point, since it includes a number of important iconographic details which point to a 'western' influence and presence: the church includes a massive Crucifixion on its west wall (exceptionally for Cretan church construction the entrance is not situated in this wall, but rather in the south wall) with the fainting Virgin supported by her companions and the centurion on horseback (Figure 3.3 and Colour Plate V); Saint Bartholomew with his flayed skin among a gallery of typically Orthodox saints (Saint Mamas, who was a pastoral saint particularly popular on Crete,[20] and Saint Anthony – Figure 3.2 and Colour Plate IV); Saint Christopher carrying the Christ Child on his shoulder, a popular iconographic type in the west, but not in Byzantine iconography prior to the post-Byzantine tradition (Figure 3.4);[21] a lady with western attire among the crowd in the entry to Jerusalem;[22] and a layperson sitting on the ground and playing a string instrument underneath the transverse arch (Figure 3.5 and Colour Plate VI).

This latter figure is unique because apart from donor portraits no other lay figures are included in a Cretan Byzantine iconographic programme. It has

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[15] On the presence of Catholic priests in rural Crete: Ch. Gasparis, 'Οι Κούναβοι στα Μεσαιωνικά Χρόνια, 13ος–15ος Αιώνας', in Aik. K. Mylopotamitaki (ed.), *Ελτύνα, Sconavi, Κούναβοι. Από τα Αρχαϊκά στα Νεότερα Χρόνια* (Kounavoi, 2007), p. 104.

[16] Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, p. 9 and nn. 28–30.

[17] Ibid., pp. 202–3 (with references to earlier bibliography). See also Chr. Ranoutsaki, 'Απεικονίσεις του Φραγκίσκου της Ασίζης στις εκκλησίες της Κρήτης', in M. Andrianakis and E.G. Kapsomenos (eds), *Πεπραγμένα Ι' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Χανιά, 1–6 Οκτωβρίου 2006)* (Chania, 2011), vol. B3, pp. 111–34.

[18] A. Xyngopoulos, 'Περί μίαν Κρητικήν Τοιχογραφίαν', *Κρητικά Χρονικά*, 12 (1958): pp. 335–42.

[19] I. Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete* (Leiden, 2001), pp. 111–14 (no. 39) (with earlier bibliography).

[20] A. Marava-Chatzinikolaou, *Ο Άγιος Μάμας* (Athens, 1995).

[21] C. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 214–16.

[22] R. Theocharopoulou, 'Ο Τοιχογραφικός Διάκοσμος του Ναού της Αγίας Πελαγίας Βιάννου', in *Πεπραγμένα του Ζ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου* (Rethymno, 1995), vol. B1, pp. 285–305, Pl. ΞΑ, 6.



Fig. 3.1 *Archangel Michael on Horseback* (Colour Plate III).



Fig. 3.2 *Saints Bartholomew, Mamas and Anthony* (Colour Plate IV).

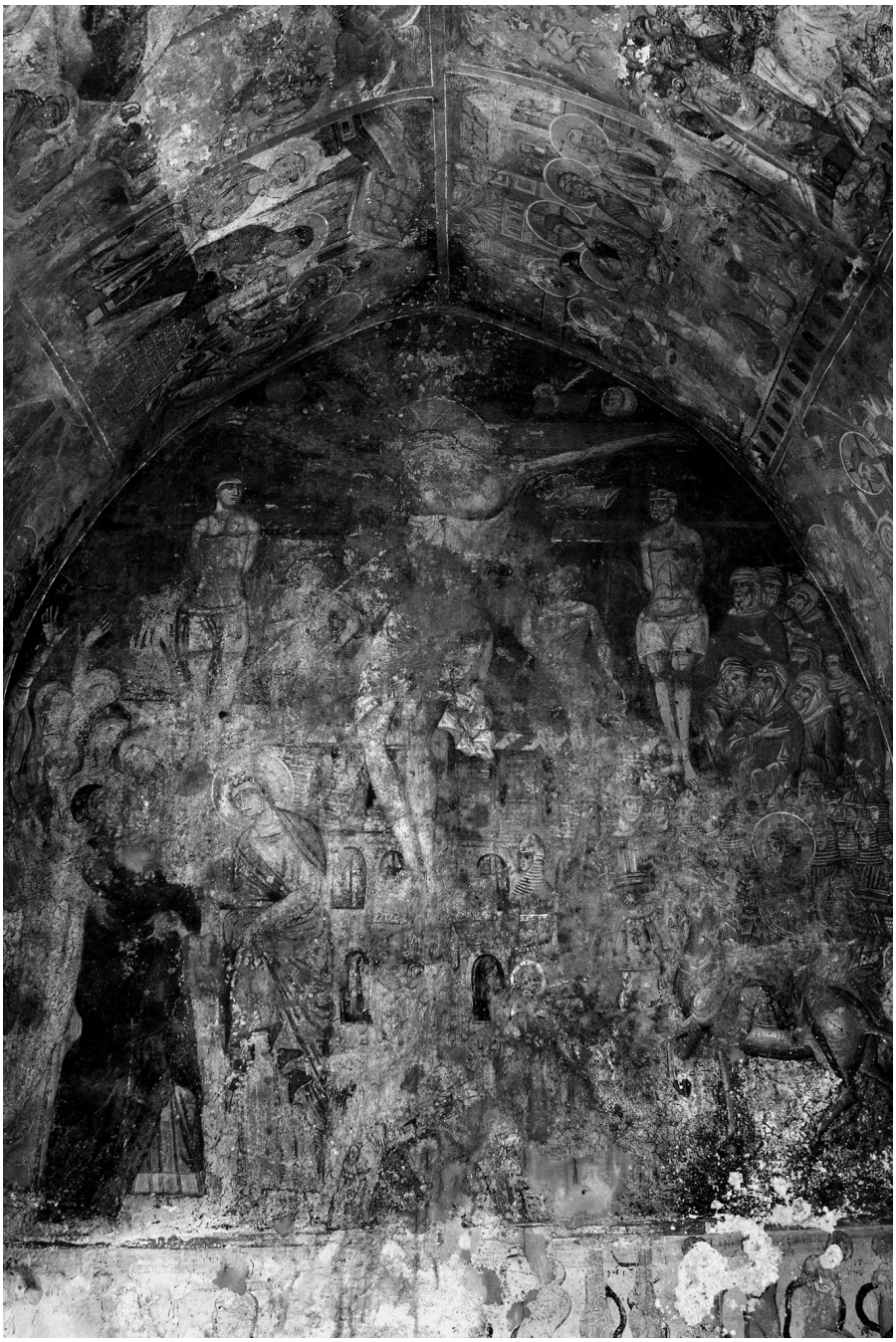


Fig. 3.3 *Crucifixion* (Colour Plate V).

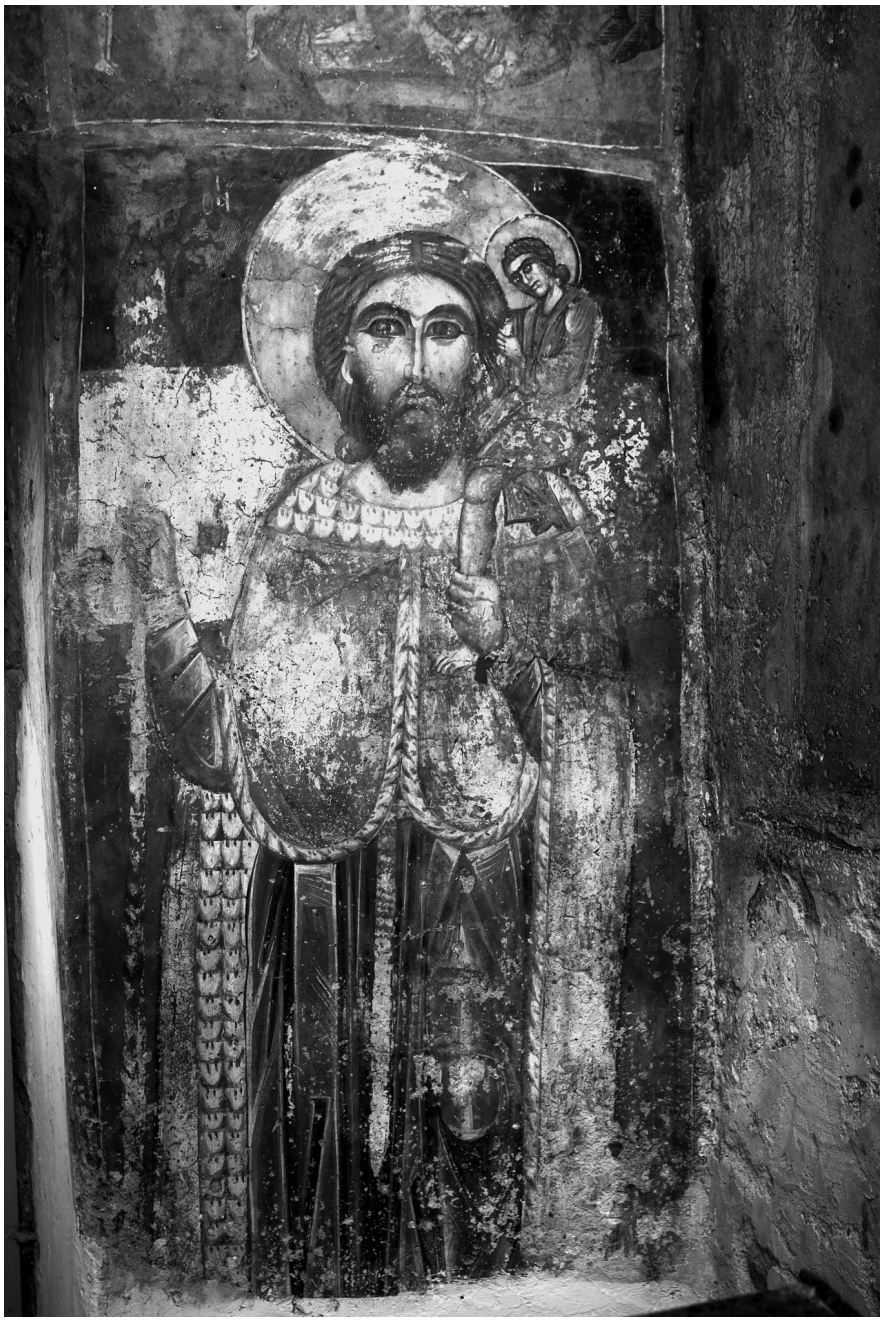


Fig. 3.4 *Saint Christopher carrying the Christ Child on his Shoulder*, 1360, wall painting, south wall, church of Saint Pelagia, Ano Viannos, Herakleion, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Fig. 3.5 *Musician* (Colour Plate VI).

been suggested that his presence is somehow connected to Saint Pelagia, who led a rather sinful life before becoming a saint.[23] However, the possibility of the lute player being an independent figure, unrelated to the religious iconography but rather alluding to local secular life and customs cannot be excluded.[24]

The central-eastern part of Crete, where the church of Saint Pelagia is situated, is relatively close to the capital, Candia (Map 2). Candia was not the only major city on the north coast line of the island, but it was the main economic and artistic hub during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.[25] Other major cities with ports existed on Crete, such as Chania (Map 2); archival evidence dated to the first half of the fourteenth century proves that Candia and Chania communicated via the sea.[26] However, the city of Chania was under-populated and underdeveloped during the fourteenth century and it is highly doubtful that it would have nurtured and sustained serious artistic activity.[27] Furthermore, archival evidence shows that some Constantinopolitan painters travelled from the capital to Candia.[28] It is possible that these Constantinopolitan masters, as well as other more skilful and talented artists based in Candia itself, were approached by and received commissions from people in the nearby regions, while other artists of lesser artistic ability (and credentials) were pushed away from the capital and further to the western and south-western parts of the island.

What is remarkable, however, is that it is in these western regions, and specifically in the regions of Selino (where the Kavalariana church is situated) and of Amari (Map 2), that we find the highest monumental decoration activity

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[23] Ibid., pp. 299–300. See also Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings*, p. 113.

[24] The string instrument has been interpreted as a lute; on its use on Venetian Crete: Theocharopoulou, 'Ο Τοιχογραφικός Διάκοσμος του Ναού της Αγίας Πελαγίας Βιάννου', pp. 299–300 (with relevant footnotes). M. Vassilaki, 'Καθημερινή Ζωή και Πραγματικότητα στη Βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη: Η Μαρτυρία των Τοιχογραφημένων Εκκλησιών', in St. Kaklamanis, A. Markopoulos and G. Mauromatis (eds), *Ενθύμησις Νικόλαου Μ. Παναγιωτάκη* (Herakleion, 2000), pp. 72–3 (with relevant footnotes), also suggests a similar function for this figure. In some surviving examples of the Nativity, shepherds are depicted sitting on the ground playing a wind instrument, similarly alluding to pastoral pastimes; see, for example: A. Drandaki (ed.), *The Origins of El Greco: icon painting in Venetian Crete* (New York, 2009), p. 13, fig. 3.

[25] See Chapter 4.

[26] Ch. Gasparis, 'Οι θαλλάσσιες μεταφορές μεταξύ των λιμανιών της Κρήτης (1326–1360)', *Πεπραγμένα του ΣΤ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου* (Chania, 1991), vol. B, pp. 67–101.

[27] Ch. Gasparis, *Catastici Feudorum Crete Catasticum Chanee, 1314–1396* (Athens, 2008), p. 79.

[28] Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, p. 185 and n. 136. See also M. Constantoudaki–Kitromilides, 'Viaggi di pittori tra Constantinopoli e Candia: documenti d'archivio e influssi sull'arte (XIV–XV sec.)', in Ch. Maltezou, A. Tzavara and D. Vlassi (eds), *I Greci durante la venotocrazia: Uomini, spazio, idée (XIII–XVIII sec.). Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi. Venezia, 3–7 dicembre 2007* (Venice, 2009), pp. 709–23; M. Vassilaki, 'From Constantinople to Candia: icon painting in Crete around 1400', in eadem (ed.), *The Hand of Angelos: an icon painter in Venetian Crete* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 58–65.

on the whole of Crete: Selino has one church per 3.09 km^2, while Amari is a close second with one church per 4.01 km^2. None of the remaining 18 Cretan regions can match these statistics (see Appendix 1 at the end of this chapter).

Process of Church Building and Decoration

Whether close to the capital or far away in the rugged and mountainous area of Selino, once the decision had been taken to erect a church, its patrons had to go through a similar process:

1. *Construct the edifice*. From an architectural point of view, the majority of the regional Cretan churches are small, single-aisle buildings with a barrel-vaulted roof. They can have between none and three supportive transverse arches and none to four blind arches along the elongated north and south walls. The entrance is usually situated in the west wall, and the sanctuary is always placed at the east side.[29] Nevertheless, their construction required some skill and professional builders were probably involved in their erection, using mostly local material for the bulk of the architecture. Carved stone for door jambs, lintels, ornaments and sometimes window frames were imported from non-local quarries.[30]
2. *Find a painter to provide the fresco decoration*. The possibility that in certain cases some time could have elapsed between the erection of the church and its decoration cannot be excluded.[31] Furthermore, a number of these buildings pre-existed and were renovated with wall paintings, as some of the surviving inscriptions suggest. While some skilled builders may have lived even in the small rural communities on Crete, it is unlikely that these same communities were the permanent residence of artists and painters. Even if we allow for a small number of local priests who could have acted as painters in the area, as attested

[29] While there are exceptions regarding the location of the entrance door, such as the church of Saint Pelagia at Ano Viannos, where the entrance has been placed in the south wall, the orientation of the Cretan churches towards the east is observed faithfully. This observation is based on field trip research carried out within the frame of the Leverhulme International Networks Project *Damned in Hell in the Frescoes of Venetian-dominated Crete (13th–17th centuries)* (see below, n. 71). For an overview of Cretan church architecture: K. Gallas, *Mittel- und Spätbyzantinische Sakralarchitektur der Insel Kreta: Versuch einer Typologie der kretischen Kirchen des 10. bis 17. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1983); Gratziou, *Η Κρήτη στην Υστερη Μεσαιωνική Εποχή*, esp. pp. 93–125.

[30] O. Gratziou, 'Cretan architecture and sculpture in the Venetian period', in Drandaki (ed.), *The Origins of El Greco,* pp. 20–21; Gratziou, *Η Κρήτη στην Υστερη Μεσαιωνική Εποχή*, pp. 93–125 and passim.

[31] Gallas, *Mittel- und Spätbyzantinische Sakralarchitektur der Insel Kreta*, p. 23.

> by some surviving inscriptions, most artists would have preferred to live in places where they could attract a larger potential clientele, could easily obtain professional materials, and further their knowledge through contact with colleagues.[32]

The creation of the church programme was probably the outcome of discussions between the patron(s) and the painter, with the standard Byzantine iconographic cycle providing the starting point. For example, a representative decoration of the sanctuary includes either Christ Pantokrator (alone or as part of a *Deësis*, where he is flanked by the Virgin to the left and Saint John the Baptist to the right)[33] or the Virgin in the conch of the sanctuary apse, underneath which are represented the Officiating Bishops (occasionally including the *Melismos*, with some examples depicting the dismembered Christ Child in the paten, a visual re-enactment of the Eucharist);[34] the Annunciation figures on both sides of the triumphal arch with (usually) the Hospitality of Abraham above (or, occasionally, the *Mandylion*) and underneath the deacons Stephen and Romanos accompanied by other Church Fathers, Saints Titus (archbishop of Crete) and Eleutherios, both very popular on the island, frequently included among them. In the nave we usually find a selection of scenes from the Life of Christ (Nativity, Presentation to the Temple, Baptism, Raising of Lazarus, Entry to Jerusalem, Betrayal, Kyrenaios / The Road to Calvary, Crucifixion, Harrowing of Hell, Holy Women at the Tomb).[35] A number of Cretan churches include the subject of the Last Judgement and/or scenes representing damned in Hell and their punishment (see below). Unlike the sanctuary, where each scene is usually allocated a specific place, the position of scenes in the nave varies enormously. In theory, the cycle unfolds clockwise from the top corner where the south wall meets the sanctuary and concludes

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[32] A. Lymberopoulou, 'Fourteenth-century regional Cretan church decoration: the case of the painter Pagomenos and his clientele', in P L. Grotowski and S. Skrzyniarz (eds), *Towards Rewriting?: new approaches to Byzantine art and archaeology* (Warsaw, 2010), pp. 159–75 (esp. pp. 166–7); eadem, 'Late and post-Byzantine art under Venetian rule: frescoes versus icons, and Crete in the middle', in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium* (London, 2010), pp. 351–70 (esp. p. 356); V. Tsamakda, *Die Panagia-Kirche und die Erzengelkirche in Kakodiki: Kunst- und kulturgeschichtliche Analyse byzantinischer Malerei Kretas im 14.Jh.,* (Vienna, 2012). For inscriptions mentioning priests as artists: K.D. Kalokyris, *Αἱ Βυζαντιναὶ Τοιχογραφίαι τῆς Κρήτης. Σύμβολη εἰς τήν Χριστιανικήν Τέχνην τῆς Ἑλλάδος* (Athens, 1957), pp. 53–6.

[33] Sometimes, the Baptist can be replaced with the patron saint of the church; see, for example: Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, p. 145, figs 88 and 107 on pp. 334 and 344 respectively; Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings*, p. 65.

[34] Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, p. 39 and n. 102. In the church of Saint John the Baptist in Axos, the Christ Child is depicted lying on the paten and being pierced.

[35] This cycle is usually referred to as the *Dodekaorton* – or Twelve Feasts. They follow the liturgical calendar and are the most popular feasts from the Life of Christ, highlighting his Incarnation and Passion, basically the salvation of mankind according to Christian belief: A. Lymberopoulou, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', in *Viewing Renaissance Art*, pp. 171–206 (esp. pp. 179–84).

at the bottom corner where the north wall meets the sanctuary; however, this sequence is rarely observed in practice.[36] In the nave, there could also be a selection of scenes related to the patron saint (e.g. the Archangel Michael, Saints George, John the Baptist, Nicholas, etc.). In cases where the church includes a cycle from the life of the patron saint whose iconography was rare or even unique (e.g. Saint Constantine, Saint Pelagia), the painter probably borrowed elements from life cycles of other popular saints.[37] In the lower level of the nave we also find a gallery of saints – namely the popular military saints George, Demetrios, Theodore Teron, Theodore Stratelatis; the doctor saints such as the twins Cosmas and Damian, Panteleemon and Anastasia. Local saints such as the Ten Saints of Crete,[38] Saint John the Hermit,[39] or saints with local importance such as Saint Mamas holding a little lamb or goat (Figure 3.2 and Colour Plate IV; Crete to the present day has much livestock and, as we shall see, cheese was one of the three main trade products of the island in the Venetian period) may also occur. Saint Constantine with his mother, Saint Helena, holding the True Cross between them, are depicted frequently as well. Among the female saints regularly included on the walls of Cretan churches are Catherine, Irene, Kyriaki, Marina, Paraskevi, Photeini and Anastasia (mentioned above with the doctor saints). Prophets (David, Solomon, Daniel, etc.) are usually placed on the transverse arches.[40]

Cases presenting a unique cycle of a saint's vita or unique scenes raise the question of the knowledge of sources, of their availability to patrons and painters, and of the decision process on the specifications of the decorative programme. For example, in the church dedicated to Saint George at Lampini,

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[36] Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, p. 124 and nn. 599, 600. O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: aspects of monumental art in Byzantium* (London, 1948), still remains an excellent source for comprehending the basic system of Byzantine monumental decoration.

[37] For example in the scene depicting the birth of Saint Constantine, in the church of Saint George and Saints Constantine and Helena in the village of Pyrgos, in the province of Monofatsi in the prefecture of Herakleion, dated 1314/15, the detail with the bathing of the baby is probably based on similar birth scenes of saintly persons, such as that of the Virgin: Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings*, p. 38 and fig. 28. See also M. Vassilaki, 'Εικονογραφικοί κύκλοι από τη ζωή του Μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου σε εκκλησίες της Κρήτης', *Κρητική Εστία*, 4/1 (1987): pp. 60–84. For Saint Pelagia: Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings*, p. 113.

[38] They tend to be divided into two groups of five placed on the north and south sides of transverse arches. The Ten Saints of Crete – Theodoulos, Satornilos, Euporos, Gelasios, Eunikianos, Zotikos, Pompios, Agathopous, Vasileidis and Euarestos – were imprisoned, tortured and subsequently killed in 250 CE because they refused to sacrifice in the Temple of Tychi in Gortyna: Th. Detorakis, *Οἱ Ἅγιοι τῆς Πρώτης Βυζαντινῆς Περιόδου τῆς Κρήτης καί ἡ σχετική πρός αὐτούς Φιλολογία* (Athens, 1970), pp. 53–94.

[39] Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, pp. 106–7 (with relevant references).

[40] For a detailed analysis of Cretan iconographic programmes: Spatharakis, *Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete*, pp. 269–351.



Fig. 3.6 *Saint George delivering the Boy from Syria* (Colour Plate VII).

in the area of Spili, province of Hagios Vasileios, prefecture of Rethymnon, dated to the late fourteenth / early fifteenth century, we find a unique image among the scenes from the Life of the patron saint, George (Map 2, and Figure 3.6 and Colour Plate VII). Referring to one of Saint George's most popular posthumous miracles, it illustrates the moment when a young boy from Mytilene, who had been taken prisoner on his island and was brought to Crete by the Saracens, was returned safely to his mother on the saint's feast day (see Appendix 2 for the miracle's full narrative). The specific scene is relevant both within the smaller (i.e. a church dedicated to Saint George) as well as the larger (i.e. Crete) topographical frame. However, this is a unique representation because this popular miracle is commonly depicted in the form of the saint carrying a young boy behind him on his horse (Figure 3.7 and Colour Plate VIII). The visual evidence of the scene at Lampini demonstrates a good knowledge of the textual source: it depicts the moment the boy was reunited with his mother, at the dinner table his parents had laid out on the feast day of the saint, and with the astonished guests in the background – all elements specifically mentioned in the narrative.[41] However, the inscription

[41] The first visual example of this narrative is considered to be the icon depicting *Saint George and the Boy from Mytilene* in the British Museum, London, dated to the mid-thirteenth century: R. Cormack, *Icons* (British Museum, 2007), pp. 69–85. It is possible that



Fig. 3.7 *Saint George and the Boy from Mytilene* (Colour Plate VIII).

of the scene names 'Syria' as the place of origin for the young boy and not Mytilene, the Greek island mentioned in the source which includes the details depicted here. The delivering to freedom of a young male captive from Syria also features among the posthumous miracles of Saint George, but the narrative of this miracle is different from the rescue of the boy from Mytilene (see Appendix 3 for the miracle's full narrative). Furthermore, unlike the abbreviated versions of the popular miracle of Saint George, where the boy is usually depicted holding a glass of wine he was about to serve to his captor at the moment of his rescue (Figure 3.7 and Colour Plate VIII), in the fresco in the church at Lampini the boy seems to be holding a jar or a jug. This is in accordance with the narrative concerning the young man from Syria, whose task in captivity was to bring water and to cut wood.

It is clear that the Cretan scene draws on two posthumous miracles of the saint: while the visual representation describes the rescuing of the boy from Mytilene (the more relevant with the Cretan context), its inscription and the iconographic detail of the jug refer to the rescuing of the boy from Syria. This in its turn suggests that there was a tradition on the miracles in the area. The confusion in this particular painting could be explained in two different ways: either the tradition was oral and blurred, or the inscription was copied wrongly from the available source.[42] The narrative of the miracle of the rescue of the boy from Mytilene is directly associated with historical circumstances on Crete: the capture of the island by the Saracens (Arabs) in the ninth century offers a *terminus post quem* for this narrative. Nikephoros II Phocas (r. 963–69) reclaimed Crete for the Byzantine Empire in 961 and it is possible that such narratives became popular shortly after that date to reflect the emperor's strategically important reconquest.[43] It is hardly surprising that narratives directly and indirectly related to Cretan history, would have been well known and widespread on the island. Saint George's popularity is attested by the large number of churches dedicated to him on Crete – a number rivalled only by the number of churches dedicated to the Virgin.[44] These, invariably, include cycles from the Life of the saint, predominantly from his martyrdom.[45] Therefore, it would be safe to assume that the inclusion

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the artist, in order to create this new visual iconographic type of the saint, based himself on and modified the popular depiction of Saint George killing the dragon (for an example, Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, fig. 37 on pp. 306 and 36), with the lying dragon substituted for the landscape elements in the British Museum icon.

[42] In the twelfth-century Skylitzes chronicle (Codex Vitr. 26–2), for example, there are instances where captions have been copied wrongly from the text: V. Tsamakda, *The Illustrated Chronicle of Ioannes Skylitzes in Madrid* (Leiden, 2002), pp. 13–14.

[43] D. Tsougarakis, 'Η Βυζαντινή Κρήτη', in N.M. Panagiotakis (ed.), *Κρήτη: Ιστορία και Πολιτισμός* (2 vols, Herakleion, 1987), vol. 1, pp. 339–61.

[44] Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, pp. 142 and 144 respectively.

[45] See, for example, Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings*, pp. 12–13, 33–5, 36–9, 53–5, 60–62, 63–6, 148–52, 153–5, 185–9, 202–6, 217–18.

of such a unique scene in the programme was specifically requested by the patron(s) when the cycle was commissioned and that the painter created the scene based on the narrative and his 'image bank' of other visual examples.[46]

Once the painter had been commissioned he had to reach the community where the work had to take place. This could have been achieved either by sailing around the island to the nearest port and then walk to the destination, or by walking or travelling, probably by donkey (since both horses and mules were expensive and also difficult to obtain on the island), following established paths.[47] Either choice involved a long and perilous trip. The diary of Cristoforo Buondelmonti (*c.*1385–1430), a Florentine Catholic friar who travelled extensively on Crete at the beginning of the fifteenth century, allows us to reconstruct that he went around Crete at an average speed of 14 kilometres per day.[48] Even if we assume that Buondelmonti was delayed by sightseeing and therefore allow the coverage of some extra kilometers per day, it would still have taken quite a few days for the painters to reach the villages where they had to work, especially those in the southernmost rugged regions (situated some 60 to 80 kilometres from the centre of the main cities on the north).[49] The painters would have probably been slowed down themselves by transporting their professional materials, such as pigments and the special plaster – different from ordinary plaster – that was used for painting in fresco, materials which would undoubtedly not have been available locally.[50]

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[46] Such examples could include Herod's Feast in Panagia Kera, in the village of Kritsa in the province of Hagios Nikolaos in the prefecture of Lasithi, dated to the late thirteenth / early fourteenth century: M. Borboudakis, *Panaghia Kera; Byzantinische Fresken in Kritsa* (Athens, n.d.), fig. 31; K.K. Mylopotamitaki, *Ο Ναός της Παναγίας Κεράς Κριτσάς* (Herakleion, 2005), pp. 93–5, no. 40. A similar assumption was made for the creation of the iconographic type of Saint George and the Boy from Mytilene (see above, n. 41).

[47] Lymberopoulou, 'Regional Cretan church decoration', p. 167 and nn. 38–9.

[48] *Cristoforo Buondelmonti: Descriptio insulae Crete et Liber insularum, cap. XI: Creta*, ed. M.A. van Spitael (Herakleion, 1981), pp. 46–52.

[49] On 1 April 1833 the English traveller Robert Pashley, as part of his Cretan travels, reached Chania from Perivolia Rethymnou, a distance of *c.*64 kilometres, in 12 hours (R. Pashley, *Ταξίδια στην Κρήτη*, trans. Daphni G. Gontika [2 vols, Herakleion, 1994], vol. 1, pp. 245–6). On 17 February 1907 the newspaper *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* (pp. 1–2) reported the shipwreck of the Austrian *Imperatrix* on the west coast of Crete in the area of Elafonisi. It mentioned that a local of the Elafonisi area brought the news to Chania, having walked the distance of approximately 74.8 kilometres in 15 hours (almost two-thirds of a day). According to the calculations based on Buondelmonti's account, a fourteenth- / fifteenth-century artist would have covered the same distances in four and a half and just over five days respectively. Considering that Pashley was a leisure traveller, that the Elafonisi local acted as a messenger with the sole purpose of communicating the news of the shipwreck, and that the painters travelling in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century rural Crete would have also had to carry with them the means of their trade on donkeys and mules over rough terrain, a speed of 14 kilometres per day seems plausible. I would like to thank Mr Mick McTiernan for providing the information regarding Pashley and the Austrian shipwreck.

[50] Lymberopoulou, 'Regional Cretan church decoration', p. 170.

From what we know about medieval and Renaissance workshops, they seem to have been small family businesses.[51] From fourteenth-century Crete, too, there is evidence of family members working together on church commissions.[52] It is highly likely that Cretan painters were working together with their fathers, sons, brothers, nephews or cousins and that the skills of their profession was passed from one family generation to the next. The idea of such collaborations is supported by the fact that, as mentioned above, it seems unlikely that the painters would have relied on finding somebody locally to assist with the execution of the frescoes for the churches situated in small villages with very few households and inhabitants. Furthermore, the possibility that painters were travelling alone is equally unlikely. Long-distance trips involved many dangers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Companionship was probably always advisable in case of accidents, illnesses and other incidents that could befall less fortunate travellers during such journeys.

At the same time, and reflecting the size of the communities these churches were accommodating, the edifices themselves are of modest dimensions. Evidence concerning the size of the workforce involved in church decoration is rare, not only from Venetian Crete but also from other, better-documented areas such as Renaissance Italy. A telling example, however, can be found in the detailed notebooks of the minor fifteenth-century Florentine painter Neri di Bicci (1419–91). In 1452/53 Neri di Bicci was engaged in the fresco decoration in Santa Trinita in Florence,[53] where he was commissioned to decorate the chapel of the Spini family. In this chapel, two walls and the segment of the wall above the entrance arch had to be covered in fresco. The total surface area of these walls amounts to approximately 150 square metres.[54] Neri used only one single assistant to complete the job. By comparison, the frescoed interior of the church of the Archangel Michael at Kavalariana in Selino, the dimensions of which are representative for the churches in the island, has a total surface area of approximately 100 square metres, two-thirds the size of the chapel Neri had to paint.[55] Given the relatively modest dimensions of the majority of the Cretan churches, it is improbable that the painters on Crete would have needed to employ more than one skilled assistant/apprentice for the work on their churches.[56] The restricted available space provides further support in favour of a smaller workshop.

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51 D. Bomford et al., *Art in the Making: Italian painting before 1400* (London, 1992), p. 10.

52 Lymberopoulou, 'Fourteenth-century regional Cretan church decoration', pp. 168–70. On Cretan workshop practices, see also Tsamakda, *Die Panagia-Kirche und die Erzengelkirche in Kakodiki*, pp. 128-31, 239-41, 245-51.

53 A. Thomas, *The Painter's Practice in Renaissance Tuscany* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 89.

54 Lymberopoulou, 'Regional Cretan church decoration', p. 168 and n. 42.

55 Ibid., n. 44.

56 For a discussion on Cretan workshops and attribution: Tsamakda, *Die Panagia-Kirche und die Erzengelkirche in Kakodiki*, pp. 245–51.

The Role of Trade in Monumental Decoration Activity

The commissioning of church decoration required not only established and relatively safe routes in order for the painters to be contacted in the first place and then for them to travel to the distant villages, but also money. The presence of thriving trade guarantees that both these requirements would be met. We know that the Venetians on Crete predominantly traded wheat from the rich plains of Kisamos (prefecture of Chania) and of Messara (prefecture of Herakleion, in the province of Pediada); wine from all over the island (but the best quality obtained in the regions of Malevizi and Tememos), which was exported as far as London; and cheese, from the livestock (Map 2).[57] The famous Cretan olive oil entered the trade market relatively late, at the end of the fifteenth century, so it would not have played any role during the period under consideration here.[58]

The production and trade of Cretan wood has received little attention so far in the bibliography. Yet, its role in rural church decoration activity may have been rather important. Was wood among the raw materials that the Venetians harvested on Crete for building, shipbuilding, heating and (during the post-Byzantine period) for the extensive icon production? This is a question that requires further research. Although it has been suggested that the current landscape, typically associated with the island – woodless, rugged, rocky, barren with vineyards and olive trees – reflects that of Byzantine Venetian Crete,[59] surviving evidence could challenge this opinion. Firstly, as mentioned above, the ubiquitous olive groves did not become part of the Cretan landscape until the post-Byzantine period. Secondly, Buondelmonti offers information which suggests that, during the time he visited the island, Crete had more substantial forestation of cypresses and pine trees compared to the present day, at least around the area of the White Mountains (Map 2).[60] The existence of cypress is corroborated by late fifteenth-century travellers, such as Felix Farbi and the pilgrim Jean Adornes.[61]

Recently, Olga Gratziou has suggested that fourteenth-century archival evidence, which provides information that wood was imported from Venice

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[57] Lymberopoulou, 'Regional Cretan church decoration', p. 163 and nn. 14–18. See also Chapter 4, pp. 106–8.

[58] Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, p. 199 and n. 22.

[59] O. Rackham and J. Moody, *The Making of the Cretan Landscape* (Manchester, 1996), p. 132. See also Gratziou, *Η Κρήτη στην Υστερη Μεσαιωνική Εποχή*, p. 33.

[60] *Buondelmonti*, p. 214. See also K. Bayer, *Cristoforo Buondelmonti. Liber Insularum archipelagi. Transkription des Examplars Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Düsseldorf Ms. G 13, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Wiesbaden, 2007), p. 17.

[61] For Felix Fabri: *Fratris Felicis Fabri Evagatorum in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem*, ed. C.D. Hassler (3 vols, Stuttgart, 1843–49), vol. 3, p. 280; for Jean Adornes: J. Heers and G. de Groer, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte (1470–1471)* (Paris, 1978), p. 159. See also Chapter 4, p. 130 for goods made of cypress on the island.

to Crete, suggests that the Cretan forests, during the early part of the century, were not yet being exploited.[62] This evidence, however, indicates only that Crete was importing heavier wood, such as oak and fir, which do not grow on the island and are much more suitable than cypress and pine for building and shipbuilding. In fact, the document that Gratziou refers to concerns the building of the church of Saint Nicholas of the Dominicans in Chania in 1320.[63] Archival evidence testifies to the fact that Crete was both importing special timber and exporting/using its own.[64] The latter is confirmed once more by the testimony of the Florentine friar Buondelmonti. While visiting Loutro, situated in the south-western part of the island (Map 2), Buondelmonti described how local peasants were throwing trunks of cypress in the river Massala, which then reached the sea, a custom indicative of wood trade.[65] Furthermore, on 19 July 1414 the Venetian Senate ordered the Venetian authorities on Crete to be stricter with their licences for the exploitation of wood on the island, particularly of cypress, while in the following years the Senate was concerned about the deforestation of Crete.[66] The maritime republic of Venice was in need of oak, fir and larch for shipbuilding – all types of wood that Crete was unable to provide. However, the local timber of cypress and pine would have been perfectly suitable for heating, carpentry and (later) for the extensive icon production. The majority of the surviving Cretan icons are painted on cypress; indeed, once this wood has been identified in an icon datable to either the late or the post-Byzantine period, the standard assumption is that it was manufactured on the island.

The high church decoration activity in the south-western part of the island (see Appendix 1) strongly suggests an economic growth in the area during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which would have enabled such commissions. With the olive trees, which currently dominate the Cretan

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[62] Gratziou, *Η Κρήτη στην Ύστερη Μεσαιωνική Εποχή*, p. 40.

[63] Ibid., n. 54.

[64] F.C. Lane, *Venetian Ships and Shipbuilders of the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1934), p. 219; A. Dunn, 'The exploitation and control of woodland and scrubland in the Byzantine world', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 16 (1992): p. 258 and n. 78; idem, 'The control and exploitation of the arboreal resources of the late Byzantine and Frankish Aegean region', in S. Cavaciocchi (ed.), *L'uomo e la foresta secc. XIII–XVIII. Atti della 'Ventisettesima Settimana di Studi' 8–13 maggio 1995* (Florence, 1996), pp. 483 and 484.

[65] *Buondelmonti*, pp. 117–18. I would like to thank Dr Paul Hetherington for his advice and help regarding the information found in Buondelmonti on Cretan forestation and wood trade. It is not clear where the river Massala was situated; no river or place by that name exists today. On the changes on the rivers and water flow on Crete: O. Rackham and J. Moody, *Η Δημιουργία του Κρητικού Τοπίου* (Herakleion, 2004), pp. 56–8. That a practice as described by Buondelmonti did take place in the Sfakia area is probably confirmed by the fact that until recently wood was still being cut and processed at the south end of the Samaria gorge and was thrown into the sea in Hagia Roumeli (Map 2). I would like to thank Mr Kanakis Gerolimakis and Mr Konstantinos Lymperopoulos for providing this information.

[66] F. Thiriet, *La Romanie vénitienne au Moyen Age: Le développement et l'exploitation du domaine colonial vénitien (XIIe–XVe siècles)* (Paris, 1959), p. 416.

landscape, not present in the Selino area until the early sixteenth century and with the best wine being exported from the present-day prefecture of Herakleion, the production of cheese and, possibly, of wood trade are strong contestants for providing a degree of affluence to the residents.[67]

Religious Differences and the Issue of Hell

As mentioned above, the religious divide between Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholics was probably the largest gap to bridge during the long coexistence of the native Cretans and the Venetians over the span of four and a half centuries. Even this divide should be put in perspective, however. Stephanos Xanthoudidis claims that 'semo Veneziani e poi Christiani' ('we are first Venetians and then Christians') was something mentioned often by Venetian representatives.[68] While this position was probably more a cultural and ethnic one rather than official governmental policy, it did prompt Venice to oppose the Pope in religious issues on the island. For example, in 1320 the Serenissima, basing its position in part on the rights that the Byzantine emperors had on the island in the past and insisting that these rights had been passed on to the Doge, became involved in a controversy with the Latin archbishop of Crete over the monastery of Pala in Herakleion.[69] Venice clearly attempted to weaken the position of the Latin archbishop (and infuriated the Pope in the process), because being in charge of the monastery was regarded as evidence that the Venetians were now the rightful successors to the former Byzantine rulers of the island. Clearly, this worldly consideration, which may have also have carried some weight with the natives, was more important for the Venetian authorities than upsetting the Holy See.

However, even if we were to accept that all else failed in the thorny issue of religious affiliation between the two groups on the island, there was an indisputable common ground that they both shared: Heaven and Hell. While in the Roman Catholic Church there is the notion of Purgatory, where souls linger before their final destination is decided,[70] a concept unknown to the Greek Orthodox faith, they both shared the belief that good people who

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[67] For further thoughts on this issue: Lymberopoulou, 'Regional Cretan church decoration', pp. 163–4. See also Thiriet, *La Romanie v*énitienne, pp. 322–3; Ch. Gasparis, *Land and Peasants in Medieval Crete, 13th–14th c.* (Athens, 1997), p. 84 (in Greek); Gratziou, *H Κρήτη στην Ύστερη Μεσαιωνική Εποχή*, pp. 108–9.

[68] St. Xanthoudidis, *Ἡ Ἐνετοκρατία ἐν Κρήτη καί οἱ κατά τῶν Ἐνετῶν Ἀγῶνες τῶν Κρητῶν* (Athens, 1939), pp. 155–6.

[69] Chr. Maltezou, 'Byzantine "consuetudines" in Venetian Crete', *DOP*, 49 (1995): pp. 269–80. See also Tsirpanlis, *Το Κληροδότημα του Καρδιναλίου Βησσαρίωνος*, pp. 27–8; Gratziou, *H Κρήτη στην Ύστερη Μεσαιωνική Εποχή*, pp. 193 and 225.

[70] E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: traditional religion in England, c.1400–c.1580* (New Haven and London, 1992), pp. 338–76.

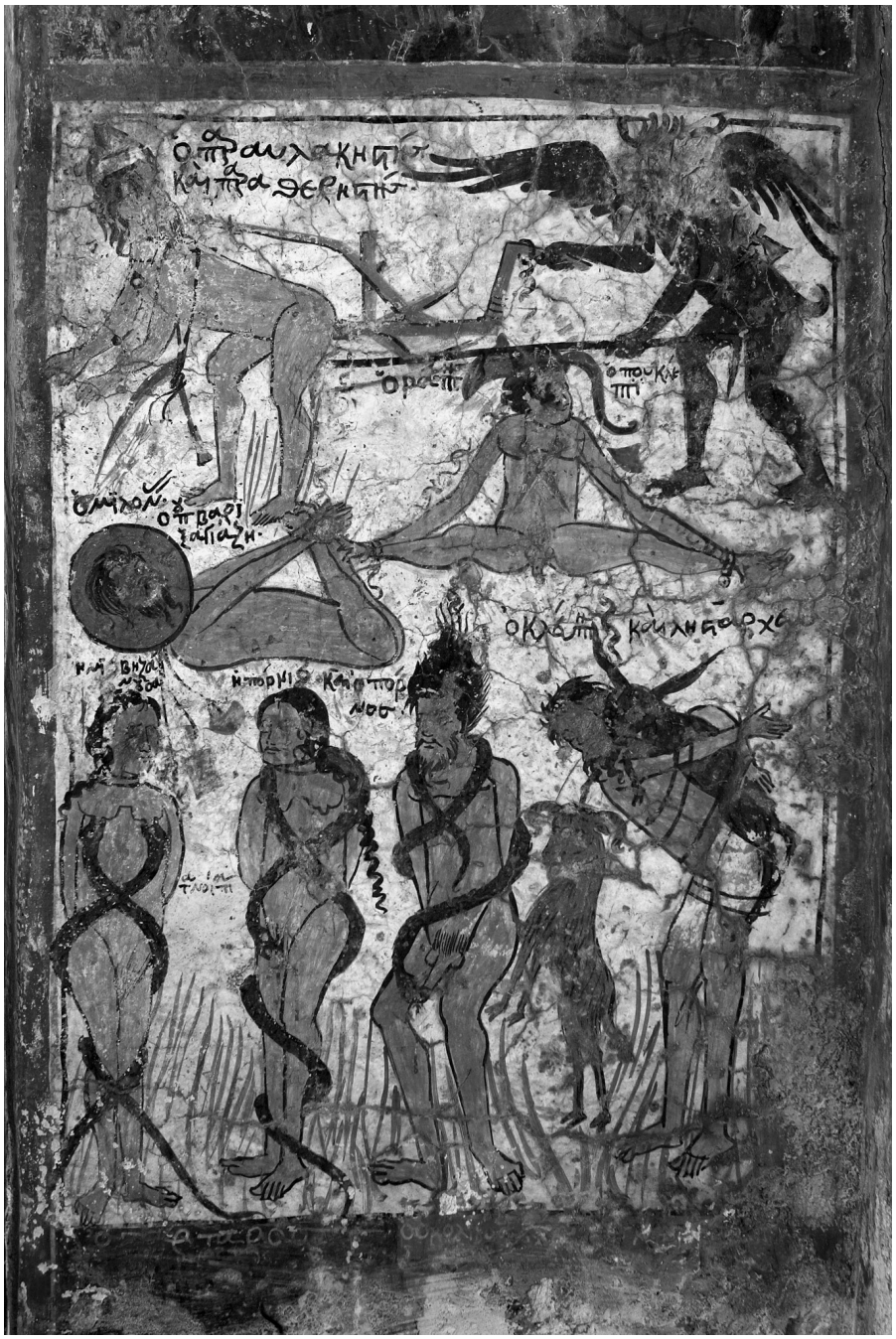


Fig. 3.8 *Punishments of the Damned in Hell* (Colour Plate IX).

perform good deeds go to Heaven, while bad people who harm others and do not live according to the rules and regulations dictated by the Christian beliefs end up in Hell living in eternal red-hot flames and darkness and enduring tortures and torments inflicted on them by devils and demons (Figure 3.8 and Colour Plate IX).

The representation of Hell and the torments and punishments of the damned are a very important part of Cretan monumental iconography. At least 10 per cent of the surviving programmes in Cretan churches include such scenes.[71] While the iconography of Hell was developed within the context of the Last Judgement, in certain Cretan churches, quite unusually so compared to other areas outside the island, Hell scenes exist independently from this iconography. This probably underlines the importance that the visualization of such scenes played within the given cultural and religious environment. As Figure 3.8 demonstrates, the visual description and graphic details of what will happen in the afterlife to those who commit sins borders on the disturbing in some cases. Cretan society seems to have been very clear on which sins earned one a place in Hell: stealing water (still a cause of friction when it comes to watering trees in rural Crete),[72] the tailor and the grocer who cheat their customers, those who sleep on a Sunday instead of going to church, the woman who does not breastfeed her babies, those who fornicate, those who commit adultery.[73] The inclusion of these sinners as damned in Hell in a rather large number of cases testifies to the importance that the Cretan rural society placed on their prohibition.

In their vast majority, the tortured laymen and women do not bear any characteristics that could identify them as either Greek or Venetian.[74] However, at least six of these Cretan Hell scenes include western clergy burning in the eternal flames – these are:

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[71] These form the core of the Leverhulme International Networks Project *Damned in Hell in the Frescoes of Venetian-dominated Crete (13th–17th centuries)*, which started on 1 October 2010 and involves an international team of nine members: Vasiliki Tsamakda, Charalambos Gasparis, Annemarie Weyl Carr, Athanasios Semoglou, Rainer Warland, Dionysios Stathakopoulos, Rembrandt Duits, Diana Newall and the author of this chapter. The aim of the project, which will last until 30 September 2013, is to gather all the visual evidence from Crete, analyse and assess it from an iconographic, stylistic, historic, cultural and archival point of view. The team will also place the material in the wider context of the representation of Hell scenes in Cyprus, Cappadocia, mainland Greece and the Balkans and, finally, Italy.

[72] Gasparis, *Land and Peasants*, pp. 84, 105–110.

[73] Detailed images will be available in the database of the Leverhulme International Networks project (see above, n. 71), which will be hosted by The Open University and is currently under construction.

[74] Vassilaki, 'Καθημερινή Ζωή', p. 65, nn. 17, 18 and figs 7 and 8 suggests that one male and two female Venetians, identifiable by their headgear, are included in the flames of Hell in the church of Saint Paraskevi, in the village of Episkopi, in the province of Pediada, in the prefecture of Herakleion (see no. 6 in the list)

1. Saint John the Baptist in the village of Deliana in the province of Kisamos in the prefecture of Chania, dated to the late thirteenth / early fourteenth century (Map 2, and Figures 3.9a and b and Colour Plates X and XI).[75]
2. Saint John the Evangelist in the village of Asfentiles in the province of Selino in the prefecture of Chania, dated 1330(?).[76] (Map 2)
3. Saint John the Baptist in the village of Kritsa in the province of Merambello in the prefecture of Lassithi, dated to the second half of the fourteenth century (Map 2 and Figure 3.10 and Colour Plate XII).[77]
4. Church of Christ the Saviour in the village of Potamies in the province of Pediada in the prefecture of Herakleion, dated after 1375.[78]
5. Saint Prokopios in the village of Livada in the province of Selino in the prefecture of Chania, dated to the 1390s.[79] (Map 2)
6. Saint Paraskevi in the village of Episkopi in the province of Pediada in the prefecture of Herakleion, dated to the second half of the fifteenth century (or later).[80] (Map 2)

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[75] In Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, p. 109 (no. 818), the church's wall paintings are referred to as 'almost all destroyed'. Indeed, they were discovered in the late part of the twentieth century under a thick layer of whitewash by the 28th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities of Crete, the body responsible for churches in the Cretan prefectures of Chania and Rethymon: Vassilaki, 'Καθημερινή Ζωή', p. 78 and n. 48. The existing iconographic programme of the church strongly suggests that it was dedicated to Saint John the Baptist as opposed to Saint John the Evangelist as claimed in the literature.

[76] S.N. Maderakis, 'Η Κόλαση και οι Ποινές των Κολασμένων σαν Θέματα της Δευτέρας Παρουσίας στις Εκκλησίες της Κρήτης', *Υδωρ εκ Πέτρας*, 1 (1978): pp. 204–12; Bissinger, *Kreta*, p. 101 (no. 62). Tsamakda, *Die Panagia-Kirche und die Erzengelkirche in Kakodiki*, figs 117 and 118.

[77] Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, p. 84 (no. 565); Maderakis, 'Η Κόλαση και οι Ποινές των Κολασμένων', pp. 212–17, figs 8, 9A; M. Borboudakis, K. Gallas and K. Wessel, *Byzantinisches Kreta* (Munich, 1983), pp. 434–5 (date given 1370); Bissinger, *Kreta*, pp. 177 (no. 145) (date given 1370); Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete*, pp. 133–6 (no. 46) (date given 1389–90).

[78] Chr. Ranoutsaki, *Die Fresken der Soteras Christos-Kirche bei Potamies: Studie zur byzantinischen Wandmalerei auf Kreta im 14. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1992), pp. 154 (date), fig. 36. The reproduction of the scene is not very good here: below and to the right from the angels seen on the upper left pushing the sinners to Hell, a bearded figure wearing a western bishop's mitre can be discerned. It should be noted that beards are not customary for western clergy; this could either suggest that the artist represented this figure according to the customs of the Orthodox clergy or that the western clergy in this area may have adopted some of the customs of their Orthodox peers in order to make themselves more approachable to local faithful.

[79] G. Gerola, *Monumenti veneti nell'isola di Creta* (3 vols, Venice, 1908), vol. 2, p. 342 (no. 14); Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, p. 45 (no. 189); K.E. Lassithiotakis, 'Εκκλησίες της Δυτικής Κρήτης. Δ' Επαρχία Σελίνου, αρ. 101–126', *Κρητικά Χρονικά*, 22 (1970): pp. 368–70 (no. 115); Maderakis, 'Η Κόλαση και οι Ποινές των Κολασμένων', pp. 117–236; Bissinger, *Kreta*, p. 205 (no. 183).

[80] Gerola–Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, p. 78 (no. 499); Vassilaki, 'Καθημερινή Ζωή', pp. 63–5 and n. 16. N. Chatzidakis, *Icons of the Velemezis Collection*, (Thessalonike, 1997), p. 178, gives 1516 as the date for the wall paintings, which place them in the post-Byzantine



Fig. 3.9a *Angels pushing Greek Orthodox Heretic Clergy into Hell* (Colour Plate X).



Fig. 3.9b *Western Friars in Hell* (Colour Plate XI).



Fig. 3.10 *Damned in Hell* (including western friars) (Colour Plate XII).

These examples have been used as arguments to support the opinion mentioned at the beginning of this chapter – that the native Cretans hated intensively their Venetian conquerors – and have been interpreted as a form of visual propaganda against the colonists.[81] Before we jump to conclusions, however, we need to examine the evidence more closely.

In the church of Saint John the Baptist at Deliana (Figures 3.9a and b and Colour Plates X and XI), which is considered the first of the six examples mentioned above, the eastern part of the scene is occupied by angels pushing sinners into the flames. Inscriptions in this part identify one of the groups as OI APEI[ANOI] (the Arians) – the followers of the arch-heretic Arius who had claimed that Christ was not coeternal with God the Father.[82] In the right half of the scene, a group of western clerics, identifiable by their habits and their tonsure, are in the proximity of a hellish monster with three heads and are probably destined to be devoured, just like Judas who is already held in its deadly embrace.[83] The western clerics have been identified as Franciscans, but their habits do not display any specific characteristics to identify them as such with certainty (e.g. the habits are composed of two different coloured parts as opposed to the single brown habit of the order, chosen by Saint Francis to symbolize the earth, and they lack the customary cord with the three knots around the waist); they nevertheless display details that could be part of the Franciscan habit (e.g. a protruding cowl ending in a pointed tip).[84] However, it is likely that the painter's intention was to depict members of

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era. See also M. Chatzidakis, 'Les débuts de l' école crétoise et la question de l' école dite italogrèque', in *Μνημόσυνον Σοφίας Αντωνιάδη* (Venice, 1974), pp. 204, 209.

[81] See, for example, ibid., pp. 78–9.

[82] *ODB*, vol. 1, pp. 167, 172; K. Parry (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 97, 252.

[83] I would like to thank the late Julian Chrysostomides (†2008) and Dr Charalambos Dendrinos for their help with the reading of the inscriptions in this part of the wall painting. The inscriptions read:

East (left) part of the scene:

a. ΠΟΡΕΒΕ<σ>ΘΕ ΑΠ ΕΜΟΥ / ΟΙ ΚΑΤΗΡΑ-/ΜΕΝΟΙ / ΗΣ ΤΟ ΠΗΡ / ΤΟ ΕΘΝΙ/-[ΚΟΝ]

("ΠΟΡΕΥΕΣΘΑΙ ΑΠ' ΕΜΟΥ ΟΙ ΚΑΤΗΡΑΜΕΝΟΙ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΠΥΡ ΤΟ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΝ" [instead of "ΕΞΩΤΕΡΟΝ"]; Matthew 25:41: 'depart from me, ye cursed, into the pagan [instead of "everlasting"' fire')

b. OI APEI[ANOI] (the Arians)

West (right) part of the scene:

c. Ο Α<Ν>ΤΗΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ / ΔΕΥΤΕ Η / ΦΗΛΗ / ΜΟΥ ΗΣ <Σ>Τ[ΟΜΑ]ΤΟΣ (?)

(Ο ΑΝΤΙΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΔΕΥΤΕ ΟΙ ΦΙΛΟΙ ΜΟΥ ΕΙΣ ΣΤΟΜΑΤΟΣ (?); The Antichrist, / Come, my friends, in the mouth <of the serpent?>)

d. Ο ΙΟΥ-/ ΔΑΣ (Judas)

[84] See, for example, the painting of Saint Francis by the thirteenth-century artist Margarito of Arezzo, in the Pinacoteca Comunale in Montepulciano: F. Caroti, *Guida turistica di Montepulciano* (Montepulciano, 1969), p. 17. I would like to thank Dr Donal Cooper for providing this comparative material.

the Catholic clergy in general sense rather than those of the Franciscan order specifically: during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the chasuble the Catholic clergy wore when they performed the liturgy had a rather large hood (which was much reduced in later times). The artist either misunderstood the habits of the western clergy he saw or, working from memory, he based his representation of the front part of the habits on what must have been the more familiar to him Orthodox attire. The *epimanikia* (indicating something worn on the sleeves) seen on the wrists of all three figures, as well as the finishing on the front part of the habit, are certainly part of the robes of Orthodox rather than those of Catholic priests.[85]

In the church of Saint John the Baptist at Kritsa (Figure 3.10 and Colour Plate XII) western friars bearing a tonsure, who have also been identified as Franciscans, are placed in hell accompanied by at least two Latin bishops.[86] Here, too, members of the Orthodox clergy and a number of Byzantine officials, visible in the background, share the hellish space. Interestingly, less than one kilometre away in this same village, the church of the Panagia Kera is situated, which is one of the four Cretan churches to include a portrait of Saint Francis among its gallery of Orthodox saints.[87] Shall we assume that the residents of this village were divided between Venetophiles and anti-Venetians? Or could it be that the inclusion of western friars burning in Hell is not, after all, connected with anti-Venetian propaganda on the island?

As was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there can be little doubt that the Orthodox and the Catholics regarded each other as heretics. There can also be little doubt that, according to Orthodox belief, heretics along with other sinners and traitors – the worst of them all being Judas, who betrayed Christ and became the epitome of treachery[88] – belong in Hell. The Catholic attitude towards sinners and traitors was not different, however. In the first

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[85] I would like to thank Father Peter of the Catholic cathedral of the Dormition of the Virgin and Brother Nikolaos of the Franciscan monastery of the Capuchin monks in Chania. The information provided in the text is based on Brother Nikolaos's personal and unpublished archive and I am grateful to him for sharing his research with me during our meeting on 3rd September 2011 in the aforementioned church of the Virgin in Chania. Brother Nikolaos also informed me that the first evidence we have for a Catholic bishop residing in Chania is from 1282: Marino Jeremia resided in Kasteli Chanion where the Catholic cathedral dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin was situated. The Catholic bishop and clergy were stationed there until 1645, when Chania fell to the Ottomans.

[86] Vassilaki, 'Καθημερινή Ζωή', p. 76; A. Derbes and A. Neff, 'Italy, the mendicant orders, and the Byzantine sphere', in *Faith and Power*, pp. 453–4. Maderakis, 'Η Κόλαση και οι Ποινές των Κολασμένων', p. 215, erroneously claims that popes and cardinals are depicted here.

[87] See above, n. 17. Saint Francis was accepted by the Orthodox Cretans: Ranoutsaki, 'Απεικονίσεις του Φραγκίσκου της Ασίζης', p. 112. He is nevertheless mainly associated with the Catholic Church.

[88] Matthew 26:47–56; Mark 14:43–52; Luke 22:47–53; John 18:1–11. See also *ODB*, vol. 2, pp. 1077–8.

decade of the fourteenth century, Giotto depicted friars in Hell, seen at the bottom right corner in the Last Judgement in the Arena Chapel.[89] Another famous fresco where friars are placed in Hell is the Last Judgement in the Camposanto at Pisa, painted around the fourteenth century.[90] The most important contemporary literary description of Hell contains a number of references to friars as well. Dante Alighieri (d. 1321) spent the last 20 years of his life composing his *Divine Comedy*, in the first book of which the poet visits Hell in the company of the classical Roman poet Virgil (70–19 BCE). Members of the clergy guilty of sinful acts are frequently encountered among its inhabitants.[91] The treacherous Judas is placed in the ninth and lowest circle of Dante's Hell.[92] A number of existing illuminated manuscripts of the *Divine Comedy* illustrate its narrative, including a multitude of scenes of sinners in hell receiving their fitting punishments, for example the avaricious and the prodigal pushing stones,[93] usurers and sodomites on burning sand in a rain of fire,[94] and among the sodomites a prominently placed bishop.[95] A three-headed monster, similar to the illustration of Cerberus in Dante,[96] also features at Deliana (Figure 3.9b and Colour Plate XI).

The suggestion here is not that the residents of rural Crete were familiar with Giotto's and Dante's works. Rather, the Cretan depictions of Hell demonstrate a similar attitude towards the afterlife, based on shared Christian beliefs,[97] as well as shared attitudes towards corrupt religious officials. Furthermore, it would be equally legitimate to question the understanding of these frescoes by their contemporary audience: Would the Orthodox congregation have perceived these scenes specifically as visual anti-Venetian propaganda? Or would their observation have reinforced the opinion that the Venetians and their Catholic clerics, just like all heretics and sinners, belong in Hell? And would the possible Catholic congregation that may have frequented some of these churches have

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89 G. Basile (ed.), *Giotto: Gli affreschi della Cappella degli Scrovegni a Padova* (Milan, 2002), pp. 399, 428–9.

90 C. Baracchini and E. Castelnuovo (eds), *Il Camposanto di Pisa* (Turin, 1996), fig. 71.

91 See, for example, Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy. Inferno*, trans. and commentary C.S. Singleton (2 vols, London, 1971), vol. 1, pp. 70–71 (canto VII, vv. 46–8); pp. 160–61 (canto XV, vv. 110–14; referring to Andrea de' Mozzi, a bishop of Florence between 1287 and 1295: vol. 2, p. 271); vol. 1, pp. 282–91 (canto XXVII, vv. 67–129).

92 Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 364–5 (canto XXXIV, vv. 61–3).

93 Holkham Hall, Library of the Earl of Leicester, MS 514, p. 10 (Italian, third quarter of the fourteenth century): P. Brieger, M. Meiss and C.S. Singleton, *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy* (2 vols, Princeton, 1969), vol. 2, fig. 107b; New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 676, fo. 12v (Italian, late fourteenth century): ibid., fig. 108a; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS lat. 4776, fo. 23r (Florentine, *c.*1390–1400): ibid., fig. 112b.

94 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS lat. 4776, fos. 53r and 56v (Florentine, *c.*1390–1400): ibid., figs 186b and 191b.

95 Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 597, fo. 114r (Pisan, *c,*1345): ibid., fig. 185c.

96 Ibid., fig. 317b (manuscript as in n. 90, fo. 231r).

97 See also Chapter 1, pp. 10, 17, 33.

perceived these paintings as polemical towards their rule or rather as a reminder that all sinners (including their own Catholic clergy) end up there?

Conclusions

It would be impossible to argue that the cross-cultural interaction between the native Cretans and the Catholic Venetians was as close in the rural regions as it was in the main urban centres in the north. At the same time, I believe it is equally difficult to reject any form of interaction outside the main centres, especially if there was a lively trade in products from the Cretan countryside. The Venetians had settlements in the regions such as a fortress on the coast of Selino, in Palaiochora, which they built in 1282 and where a Venetian official resided, and a fortress in Sfakia, which they built in 1374 (Map 2).[98] Furthermore, evidence demonstrates the presence of western farmers in rural Crete.[99] Clearly, the Venetians had established control over the remote rural areas. The evidence also indicates there was an extensive trade in local produce. The intensive church decoration activity apparent in the regional areas of Crete testifies to the welfare this trade brought to the regions and suggests a degree of social interaction. Social and economic forms of collaboration would have been easier to establish than agreement on religious issues. Yet, even the decoration of the Cretan churches, while adhering to the Byzantine tradition, contains elements that make it difficult to reject the notion of a dialogue between the two sets of inhabitants. And while they regarded each other as heretics, they nevertheless shared a common ground, that of Christian beliefs and morals, which dictated a similar attitude to life and the afterlife. This common ground and the intensified relations between the two groups after the fall of Constantinople, predominantly in the island's main urban centres, undoubtedly contributed to the rise of the hybrid icon during the post-Byzantine era.[100] The workshops formed to meet the demand for monumental decoration in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries would have facilitated the organization of icon workshops in post-Byzantine Crete, which often sustained a large-scale production, including icons destined for export to western Europe.[101]

The interaction between the Cretans and the Venetians during the fourteenth century helped towards the development of a mixed/multiethnic 'Cretan

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[98] Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, p. 200; eadem, 'Regional Cretan church decoration', p. 163.

[99] Gasparis, 'Κούναβοι', pp. 99–106.

[100] See Chapter 4.

[101] A. Drandaki, "Between Byzantium and Venice: icon painting in Venetian Crete in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries', in eadem, *The Origins of El Greco*, p. 14. The organization of the Cretan artists in the Guild of Saint Luke, took place in the sixteenth century: ibid., p. 17.

identity'. The first traces of this development can be found in the frescoes of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. During the fifteenth century, however, the market for wall paintings in rural churches shrunk and painters switched to icon production, which became their predominant output in the post-Byzantine era. The Byzantine tradition was strong both in Cretan wall painting and icons; however, the portability, wider dissemination and the fact that they were not only made for the strict context of the church made icons more flexible as a medium to reflect the bi-cultural Cretan identity. And while it was probably the adherence to tradition that led Vasari to reject Byzantine art,[102] it is the approach to and reworking of this tradition in post-Byzantine hybrid Cretan icon painting that adds a different dimension to European Renaissance culture.

[102] C.M. Richardson, K.W. Woods and M.W. Franklin, *Renaissance Art Reconsidered: an anthology of primary sources* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 376–8 (no. 3.5.7). See also Chapter 6, p. 159, n. 5.

Appendix 1

The following list provides a calculation of Cretan church density per prefecture and per province. Its limitations are the following:

1. The church count is based on G. Gerola and C.E. Lassithiotakis, *Τοπογραφικός Κατάλογος των Τοιχογραφημένων Εκκλησιών της Κρήτης* [*Elenco topografico delle chiese affrescate di Creta*] (Herakleion, 1961). The catalogue lists 845 churches; however the number of surviving churches is certainly higher (see above, n. 6). Furthermore, it is not specific to the period under discussion in the chapter, but rather covers Cretan churches built and decorated up until the seventeenth century (however, the number of newly decorated churches drops substantially after the second half of the fifteenth century).[103]
2. A number of churches, especially in the main cities on the north coast and in Paracandia, the area around the capital of Crete, Candia (Herakleion), has been lost due to urban redevelopment. Since the focus in this chapter is on regional Cretan church decoration, the aforementioned loss does not have a great impact on the outcome of the calculation.
3. Since 1 January 2011 the Greek government has implemented the so-called Kallikratis Plan on the geographical division of the municipalities of Greece. The following list, however, follows the older division (in place until 31 December 2010), which corresponds better to the original Venetian system (also followed in the Gerola-Lassithiotakis catalogue).

[103] See Introduction, p. 5, n. 10.

Taking into consideration the aforementioned limitations, Rethymnon seems to be the prefecture with the greatest church density (1 church per 8 km^2),[104] while the province with the largest church density by far is that of Selino in the prefecture of Chania (maximally 1 church per 3.09 km^2).

General

The island of Crete has four prefectures and 20 provinces (see Map 2). This geographical division (with minor changes) is based on the administrative system the Venetians introduced on the island in the fourteenth century.[105] It covers 8,336 km^2, is 260 km long and 60 km wide (at its widest point).

Prefecture of Chania

The western prefecture of the island has five provinces: Apokoronas, Kisamos, Kydonia, Selino and Sfakia. It covers 2,376.8 km^2 and has 253 churches[106]: 1 church per 9.39 km^2.

The province of **Apokoronas** covers 323.1 km^2 and has 21 churches[107]: 1 church per 15.38 km^2.

The province of **Kisamos** covers 566.1 km^2 and has 60 churches[108]: 1 church per 9.43 km^2.

The province of K**ydonia** covers 617.9 km^2 and has 16 churches[109]: 1 church per 38.61 km^2.

The province of **Selino** covers 369.1 km^2 excluding the island of Gavdos and 402.1 km^2 including the island of Gavdos and has 130 churches[110]: 1 church per 2.83 km^2 excluding Gavdos and 3.09 km^2 including Gavdos.

The province of **Sfakia** covers 467.6 km^2 and has 26 churches[111]: 1 church per 17.98 km^2.

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[104] It is possible that the churches in the area of Parakandia, had they survived, might have tipped the balance to the prefecture of Herakleion.

[105] Lymberopoulou. *The Church of the Archangel Michael*, p. 5.

[106] Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, pp. 22–50 (nos. 1–232) and 108–110 (nos. 810–826). To the total of 249, at least four other churches should be added: C.E. Lassithiotakis, 'Εκκλησίες της Δυτικής Κρήτης. Εισαγωγή Ε'. Επαρχία Σφακίων. Επιλεγόμενα. Πίνακες', *Κρητικά Χρονικά*, 23 (1971): p. 122 and n. 550.

[107] Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, pp. 28–30 (nos. 59–78); Lassithiotakis, 'Εκκλησίες της Δυτικής Κρήτης', p. 122, n. 550 and pp. 152–4.

[108] Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, pp. 22–6 (nos. 1–47) and 108–9 (nos. 810–819); Lassithiotakis, 'Εκκλησίες της Δυτικής Κρήτης', p. 122, n. 550 and p. 152–3.

[109] Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, pp. 26–7 (nos. 48–58) and 109–10 (nos. 820–824).

[110] Ibid., pp. 30–46 (nos. 79–206) and 110 (nos. 827–9).

[111] Ibid., pp. 46–50 (nos. 207–32).

Prefecture of Rethymnon

The western central prefecture of the island has four provinces: Amari, Hagios Vasileios Mylopotamos and Rethymnon. It covers 1,496.4 km^2 and has 187 churches[112]: 1 church per 8 km^2.

The province of **Amari** covers 277.7 km^2 and has 69 churches[113]: 1 church per 4.01 km^2.

The province of **Hagios Vasileios** covers 354.3 km^2 and has 45 churches[114]: 1 church per 7.87 km^2.

The province of **Mylopotamos** covers 468.9 km^2 and has 39 churches[115]: 1 church per 12.02 km^2.

The province of **Rethymnon** covers 397.5 km^2 and has 34 churches[116]: 1 church per 11.69 km^2.

Prefecture of Herakleion

The eastern central prefecture of Crete has seven provinces: Kainourgio, Malevizi, Monofatsi, Pediada, Pyrgiotissa, Temenos and Viannos. It covers 2,641.22 km^2 and has 314 churches[117]: 1 church per 8.41 km^2.

The province of **Kainourgio** covers 573.761 km^2 and has 49 churches[118]: 1 church per 11.70 km^2.

The province of **Malevizi** covers 333.365 km^2 and has 27 churches[119]: 1 church per 12.34 km^2.

The province of **Monofatsi** covers 450.389 km^2 and has 58 churches[120]: 1 church per 7.76 km^2.

The province of **Pediada** covers 432.784 km^2 and has 80 churches[121]: 1 church per 5.40 km^2.

The province of **Pyrgiotissa** covers 157.122 km^2 and has 16 churches[122]; 1 church per 9.82 km^2.

The province of **Temenos** covers 234.671 km^2 and has 37 churches[123]: 1 church per 6.34 km^2.

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112 Ibid., pp. 50–69 (nos. 233–413) and 110–111 (nos. 827–32).
113 Ibid., pp. 62–9 (nos. 345–413).
114 Ibid., pp. 57–62 (nos. 300–344).
115 Ibid., pp. 53–7 (nos. 264–99) and 110–11 (nos. 830–32).
116 Ibid., pp. 50–53 (nos. 233–63) and 110 (nos. 827–9).
117 Ibid., pp. 69–82 (nos. 414–546), 86–101 (nos. 574–742) and 111–12 (nos. 833–44).
118 Ibid., pp. 87–92 (nos. 590–638).
119 Ibid., pp. 69–71 (nos. 414–37) and 111 (nos. 833–5).
120 Ibid., pp. 92–7 (nos. 639–95) and 112 (no. 814).
121 Ibid., pp. 76–82 (nos. 474–546) and 111–12 (nos. 837–43).
122 Ibid., pp. 86–7 (nos. 574–89).
123 Ibid., pp. 71–6 (nos. 438–73) and p. 111 (no. 836).

The province of **Viannos** covers 459.128 km^2 and has 47 churches[124]: 1 church per 9.76 km^2.

Prefecture of Lassithi

The eastern prefecture of Crete has four provinces: Ierapetra, Lassithi, Merambello and Siteia. It covers 1,823 km^2 and has 95 churches[125]: 1 church per 19.18 km^2.

The province of **Ierapetra** covers 394.8 km^2 and has 22 churches[126]; one church per 17.94 km^2.

The province of **Lassithi** covers 130 km^2 and has no churches.[127]

The province of M**erambello** covers 512 km^2 and has 28 churches[128]; 1 church per 18.28 km^2.

The province of **Siteia** covers 786.32 km^2 and has 45 churches[129]: 1 church per 17.47 km^2.

[124] Ibid., pp. 97–101 (nos. 696–742).
[125] Ibid., pp. 83–5 (nos. 547–73), 101–7 (nos. 743–809) and 112 (no. 845).
[126] Ibid., pp. 101–3 (nos. 743–64)
[127] The catalogue does not include any churches for this area.
[128] Gerola-Lassithiotakis, *Elenco topografico*, pp. 83–5 (nos. 547–73) and 112 (no. 845).
[129] Ibid., pp. 103–7 (nos. 765–809).

Appendix 2

A.J. Festugière (ed.), *Saint Thècle Saints Côme et Damien Saints Cyr and Jean (Extraits) Saint George* (Paris, 1971), pp. 313–15 (no. 9). (Translation from French: Angeliki Lymberopoulou)

Another miracle (on the boy from Mytilene who was taken prisoner)

The miracle which took place in Mytilene was astonishing. On this island [Mytilene, also known as Lesbos] there is a very famous church dedicated to the great saint and martyr George. As customary, every year on the saint's feast day a large crowd climbed up to the church to celebrate. One evening at the time the celebrations were taking place, the Saracens of Crete attacked the inhabitants of the island. They tied up and captured all those who were in the church. Most of those who were outside managed to escape; still, some were captured by the Saracens and were taken to Crete. Among those there was a young boy who was offered to the emir by his captor.

When it was time again for the glorious martyr's feast day, the boy was about to serve the emir. His parents, who never stopped believing, [and] whose heart was not hardened by the fact that they had lost their son, had placed their hope on the Saviour and thanked the saint, [and] after having celebrated Saint George's feast, went (as they used to) to call their dinner guests. In the meantime, the mother of the boy returned to the church and she was there alone. She fell to the ground and was insisting and begging the saint to deliver her son from captivity, with the help and the grace of almighty God. The saint, quick to help and not despising the tears of the woman, went to Crete in a flash and brought the boy back to his parents safe and unhurt. By the time the boy's mother had finished her prayer, the dinner

was ready and her husband suggested praying to ask for protection and help from the saint, while the cupbearers were getting ready to serve the wine. Then, with God's grace, a miracle took place, unheard of and extraordinary, almost unbelievable for those who are not familiar with the miraculous works of God: but if somebody looks at Habakkuk and considers how he was carried by an angel in a wink of an eye from Jerusalem to Babylon [Daniel 14:33ff.], then this miracle here, too, in my opinion is not unbelievable.

At the same moment when the boy had poured wine into the cup and was about to give it to the emir on Crete – what a miracle! – he found himself offering the wine to his mother in Mytilene. When they saw him the guests were astonished and they were asking him where he had been, from where he came, how he arrived there among them. The boy replied: 'I had refilled a goblet with wine to give it to the emir on Crete, when suddenly I was lifted by a radiant man, I sat on his horse holding with one hand the cup [and] with the other the back of the horse, and here I am, as you can see, among you.' By these words and by his presence all were astonished by this extraordinary spectacle. And they got up from the table and spent the night chanting hymns in recognition of almighty God.

Appendix 3

Ibid., pp. 276–8 (no. 3) (Translation from French: Angeliki Lymberopoulou)

Other miracle regarding a young man who was taken away from Syria

One day an army of Saracens invaded Paphlagonia[130] and they took many prisoners and assembled a great amount of spoils. Among the prisoners was a young man who was a member of the clergy in Saint George's martyrium situated in the village of Phatris. All the prisoners were taken to the infidel leader of the army; some of them were massacred, others were taken into slavery. The young man, because he was more beautiful than the others, was placed in the service of the leader.

Every time the master of the young man came to his premises, he tried to persuade him to denounce his Christian faith. Despite the fact that he never managed to succeed, however, he never delivered the young man to the executioner, but instead he gave him a position among his private servants: he sent him to assist in the kitchen and he gave orders that the young man was to bring water and to cut wood. And the young man, considering how he used to serve the martyr [i.e. Saint George] but now he was sadly enslaved by untrustworthy men, implored the saint with tears asking him to have pity on him and on his misery and to give him a helping hand because he was in need of the saint's aid.

The young man could not stop crying; however, his trust in the saint was growing every day. One evening on his way to his bed, while crossing the courtyard he heard somebody calling him by his name. 'Who are you, Sir?'

[130] An ancient area situated on the Black Sea coast of north-central Anatolia.

asked the young man. The other answered that he knew him and that he wanted to see him. Astonished because the man had seen him while being outside, the young man half-opened the courtyard door without hesitation. He saw a young man of splendid beauty on a horse. He greeted him and he wanted to know exactly how he had managed to recognize him. But the other, as if to kiss the young man, bent down from his horse, grabbed him, lifted him up, and placed him at the neck of his horse. He loosened the reins of the horse and he took off really fast. After a while, the young man was taken down from the horse, and led by the hand was brought to a house. The other man kissed him and disappeared. The young man was left confused and astonished by this incident; he fell asleep without knowing either where he had arrived or the place of the house in which he found himself.

At dawn a man entered the house holding a lamp; the young man saw him, got up and went to meet him. But as soon as the other man saw him dressed in an attire typical of the Saracens, he got scared and, assuming that he was a thief, he got upset and started screaming. Similarly, the young man seeing that the other was dressed in priest's clothes and was, therefore, a Christian was surprised and he, too, started screaming. People came running, caught the young man and they demanded to know who he was, from where and how he had managed to get inside since all the doors were locked. Shaking he narrated to them the whole incident. And while listening to the narrative of the young man, their faces were covered in tears as they started observing him: just like him, they were all part of the clergy in the saint's martyrium. While they recognized that he truly was the person who he was claiming to be, they praised the Lord who accomplished such miracles via his martyr saint and explained to the young man that 'truly, this is the church of Saint George the martyr from which you were taken prisoner'. After he returned home [and] he was finally reassured that what had happened to him had happened for real, they all started crying and praising the Lord, and from that moment on the young man always proclaimed the miracles of the great martyr.



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Candia and Post-Byzantine Icons in Late Fifteenth-century Europe*

Diana Newall

Introduction

The Venetian period on Crete (1211–1669) was distinguished by artistic developments which connected the Orthodox and Byzantine worlds with Roman Catholic western Europe and the Renaissance. From the late thirteenth century European architectural forms came to the island – for example, Gothic building techniques were incorporated into Latin and Orthodox churches.[1] By the early fifteenth century there were more than a thousand small Orthodox churches in the rural villages, decorated with Byzantine art forms and iconography.[2] In the fifteenth century art production was centred on the capital Candia (modern Herakleion) with many painters and new forms of icons emerging to meet the demands of the city's cosmopolitan

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1 M. Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies Architecture and Urbanism* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 132–35; D. Newall, 'Art, artist, patron, community in Venetian Crete (1200–1450)', (Ph.D. thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 2006), pp. 58, 67, 132; O. Gratziou, 'Cretan architecture and sculpture in the Venetian period', in A. Drandaki (ed.), *The Origins of El Greco: Icon painting in Venetian Crete* (New York, 2009), pp. 19–27; O. Gratziou, *Η Κρήτη στην ύστερη μεσαιωνική εποχή. Η μαρτυρία της εκκλησιαστικής αρχιτεκτονικής* (Herakleion, 2010), pp. 21–53.

2 Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, pp. 102–20 and app. 2. For a discussion of rural church decoration, see Chapter 3.

and multiethnic population.[3] In the sixteenth century Cretan artists travelled into Europe, notably Domenikos Theotokopoulos – El Greco (1541–1614), who visited Venice and Rome before settling in Toledo, Spain in 1577.[4] For many centuries Cretan art and artists played a significant role in the cultural interactions between the Orthodox sphere and western Europe.

Surviving icons produced on Crete during the Venetian domination demonstrate the stylistic and iconographic traditions of Byzantine Orthodoxy, especially from the late Palaiologan period (1261–1453).[5] Art produced on Crete after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 has been classified as post-Byzantine, along with art from other regions of the former Byzantine Empire such as Mount Athos (under Ottoman rule between 1453 and 1912).[6] The *'Painter's Manual'* compiled by Dionysios of Fourna on Mount Athos between *c.*1730 and 1734, describes the ways of painting Orthodox art in the post-Byzantine period, including 'How to work like the Cretans'.[7] Fourna articulates the

[3] R. Cormack, *Painting the Soul: icons, death masks and shrouds* (London, 1997), pp. 167–217; A. Lymberopoulou, 'The Painter Angelos and post-Byzantine art', in *Locating Renaissance Art*, pp. 174–210; eadem, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', in *Viewing Renaissance Art*, pp. 170–206; A. Drandaki, 'Between Byzantium and Venice: icon painting in Venetian Crete in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries', in *The Origins of El Greco*, pp. 11–18; M. Vassilaki, 'From Constantinople to Candia: icon painting around 1400', in eadem (ed.), *The Hand of Angelos: An Icon Painter in Venetian Crete* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 58–65; eadem, 'The art of Angelos', in ibid., pp. 114–23; N. Chatzidakis, 'The legacy of Angelos', in ibid., pp. 124–33; A. Lymberopoulou, 'Late and post-Byzantine Art under Venetian Rule', in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium* (Chichester, 2010), pp. 351–70.

[4] J.H. Elliot, 'El Greco's Mediterranean: the encounter of civilisations', in D. Davies (ed.), *El Greco* (London, 2003), pp. 19–29; X. Bray and L. Oliver, 'Chronology', in ibid., pp. 32–41. Selected bibliography for El Greco: Nicos Hadjinikolou (ed.), *El Greco of Crete, Proceedings of the International Symposium held on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the artist's birth, Iraklion, Crete, 1–5 September 1990* (Herakleion, 1995); N.M. Panagiotakes, *El Greco: The Cretan Years,* trans. J.C. Davis, preface Nicos Hadjinicolaou, ed. Roderick Beaton (Farnham, 2009); N. Hadjinicolaou, 'Early and late El Greco', in *The Origins of El Greco*, pp. 29–37; A. Lymberopoulou, 'From Candia to Toledo: El Greco and his art', in K.W. Woods (ed.), *Art and Visual Culture 1100–1600. Medieval to Renaissance,* (London, 2012), pp. 283–325**.**

[5] Artists could be Cretan-born or not, e.g., from Constantinople: Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, pp. 195–9; Vassilaki, 'From Constantinople to Candia', pp. 58–65. See also Chapter 3, n. 28.

[6] A.A. Karakatsanis (ed.), *Treasure of Mount Athos* (Thessalonike, 1997), p. 14; D.D. Triantaphyllopoulos, '"Byzance après Byzance": post-Byzantine art (1453–1830) in the Greek Orthodox world', in G. Kakavas (ed.), *Post-Byzantium: The Greek Renaissance: 15th–18th century treasures from the Byzantine & Christian Museum* (Athens, 2002), pp. 3–27.

[7] P. Hetherington, *The 'Painter's Manual' of Dionysius of Fourna: an English translation, with Commentary, of cod. gr. 708 in the Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library Leningrad* (London, 1974), ii, p. 1 and section 101(57), p. 12. The *Manual* was first published in Paris in 1845, partially in English in 1891, and then in a revised version in 1909. Parts of the 1845 version were found to have been fabricated, but the section titled 'How to work like the Cretans' appears in the version published by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus (ed.), *Διονυσίου τοῦ ἐκ Φουρνᾶ, Ἑρμηνεία τῆς Ζωγραφικῆς Τέχνης καί αἱ κύριαι αὐτῆς ἀνέκδοτοι πηγαί, ἐκδιδόμενη μετά προλόγου νῦν τό πρῶτον πλήρης κατά τό πρωτότυπον αὐτῆς κείμενον* (St Petersburg, 1909), p. 34 (section 50).

concept of an unbroken continuity and tradition within Orthodox Christian art from its earliest origins, at the time of Christ, into modern times.[8] This continuity reflects the spirituality embodied within Byzantine and post-Byzantine icon painting, which is rooted in the role of imagery in Orthodox doctrine, most powerfully articulated by eight- and ninth-century iconophile writers.[9] Post-Byzantine art produced on Crete during the Venetian period has its place in the continuity of Orthodox visual and spiritual traditions. But it also reflects a response to new interactions and changing demands within the broader Christian community on the island and in Europe.

This chapter explores post-Byzantine art – icons in particular – on Crete when cultural interaction between the Orthodox sphere and the western European Renaissance was particularly strong. If the development of art on Crete is viewed as an evolution from the local to the transnational, pivotal developments took place in the second half of the fifteenth century when hundreds of Cretan icons were exported to western Europe.[10] This chapter considers the context in which icons were painted and traded, the factors which contributed to their demand in Europe, and the prominence of artists working in Candia on the international stage by the end of the fifteenth century.

The importance of contracts written by notaries in Candia specifying large orders for icons in the 1490s has long been recognized.[11] In order to understand the context in which they arose and explore the possible reasons for their creation, a range of evidence beyond the details of the contracts themselves will be considered, centred around three questions. Firstly, what

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[8] Ibid., p. 4 (section 44).

[9] For example, texts in support of images by John of Damascus and Theodore of Studios. Selected bibliography on icons and iconoclasm: M. Barasch, *Icon: studies in the history of an idea* (New York and London, 1992, 1995), pp. 183–289; H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: a history of the image before the era of art*, trans. E. Jephcott (Chicago and London, 1994), esp. pp. 144–63; L. Brubaker and J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, c.680–850: the sources – an annotated survey* (Farnham, 2001); L. Brubaker, 'Icons and iconomachy', in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium* (Chichester, 2010), pp. 323–37; L. Brubaker and J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, c.680–850: a history* (Cambridge, 2011).

[10] M. Cattapan, 'Nuovi Elenchi e Documenti dei pittori in Creta dal 1300 al 1500', *Thesaurismata*, 9 (1972): pp. 211–13; M. Chatzidakis, 'Les débuts de l'école cretoise et la question de l'école dite italoque', in *Μνημόσυνον Σοφίας Αντωνιάδη* (Venice, 1974), p. 181; M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, 'Taste and the market in Cretan icons in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries', in M. Acheimastou-Potamianou (ed.), *From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek frescos and icons* (Athens, 1987), pp. 51–3; N. Chatzidakis (ed.), *From Candia to Venice: Greek icons in Italy, 15th–16th centuries* (Athens, 1993); Cormack, *Painting the Soul*, pp. 167–8; Lymberopoulou, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', pp. 169–206.

[11] The 1499 contracts were first published in Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti', pp. 211–13, trans. in C.M. Richardson, K.W. Woods and M.W. Franklin (eds), *Renaissance Art Reconsidered: an anthology of primary sources* (Milton Keynes and Oxford, 2007), pp. 371–3 (no. 3.5.3); Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, 'Taste and the market in Cretan icons', pp. 51–3, was the first to draw attention to the existence of large contracts for icons from 1497 but the location in the archives and detail of the contracts remains unpublished,. See also Lymberopoulou, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', pp. 187–92.

was the position of Crete and Candia within the wider sphere of Europe in the fifteenth century? This explores the commercial, military and conceptual position of Crete for both Venice and western Europe and provides the frame in which to analyse and situate the artistic developments. Secondly, what were the circumstances of icon production in Candia and the artistic links to western Europe? Demand for Cretan icons beyond their original Orthodox context depended on their appeal to people of Latin faith – Roman Catholics – in Candia and more widely across Europe. Surviving icons painted in Candia in the second half of the fifteenth century demonstrate forms which hybridized Orthodox and western characteristics.[12] Most of the fabric of Venetian Candia has been lost, due to extensive twentieth-century urban redevelopment, but many Cretan icons – at least 340, dated between 1400 and 1525 – survive in Europe, Egypt, the USA and Russia.[13] These, and other visual and textual sources, can be used to reconstruct aspects of the city and its art and provide the context for the artistic developments through the late fifteenth century.

Thirdly, what drew Cretan icons into Europe? Most Cretan icons exported to Europe have been lost and only very few can be linked to an original context.[14] With such limited specific contemporary evidence, it may be impossible to trace the precise destinations of Cretan icons but a range of other sources are available to explore the reasons for their production and acquisition. For example, accounts of pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land, the cult of the Virgin, and other fifteenth-century developments provide support for assessing the market and demand for Cretan icons in Europe.

Crete and Candia in Europe

In the late fifteenth century Candia was the Venetian Republic's most important seaport in the eastern Mediterranean.[15] Ottoman encroachments in the region continued after the capture of Constantinople in 1453 with territorial gains and war with the Venetians in 1463–79 and 1499–1502. The capture of Negroponte (modern Euboea) in 1470 sent shockwaves through Italy and Europe, bringing

[12] N. Chatzidakis (ed.), *Icons from the Cretan School (15th–16th centuries)* (Athens, 1983); M. Borboubakis (ed.), *Icons of the Cretan School (From Candia to Moscow and St Petersburg)* (Herakleion, 1993); Vassilaki, *The Hand of Angelos*.

[13] This claim is based on a survey of published catalogues and references to Cretan icons cited in footnotes of this chapter.

[14] S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 11–24, outlines the destructive impact of events from the Reformation to World War II presenting a dismal picture of loss which in some cases amounted to 75 per cent. It is perhaps not surprising that icons painted on wooden panels, and possibly their records, are hard to find.

[15] D. Jacoby, 'Candia between Venice, Byzantium and the Levant: the rise of a major emporium to the mid-fifteenth century', in Vassilaki, *The Hand of Angelos*, pp. 38–47.



Plate I Icon of the *Deësis* and Five Saints, late thirteenth century, tempera and gold on wood, monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai. Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Plate II Master of Saint Francis, *The Lamentation*, c.1260, fresco, Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi. photo: Alinari / The Bridgeman Art Library.



Plate III *Archangel Michael on Horseback*, fourteenth century, wall painting, north wall, church of Michael Astratigos, Kakodiki, Selino, Chania, Crete, detail showing Archangel Michael's relief halo. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate IV *Saints Bartholomew, Mamas and Anthony*, 1360, wall painting, north wall, church of Saint Pelagia, Ano Viannos, Herakleion, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate V *Crucifixion*, 1360, wall painting, west wall, church of Saint Pelagia, Ano Viannos, Herakleion, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos.
© Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate VI *Musician*, 1360, wall painting, north wall, church of Saint Pelagia, Ano Viannos, Herakleion, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos.
© Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate VII *Saint George delivering the Boy from Syria*, fourteenth–fifteenth century, wall painting, north wall, church of Saint George, Lampini, Hagios Vasileios, Rethymno, Crete. Photo: Rembrandt Duits.



Plate VIII *Saint George and the Boy from Mytilene*, fourteenth century, wall painting, north wall, church of Saint George, Plemeniana, Selino, Chania, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate IX *Punishments of the Damned in Hell*, 1372/73, wall painting, west wall, church of Saint Paraskevi, Kitiros, Selino, Chania, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate X *Angels pushing Greek Orthodox Heretic Clergy into Hell*, early fourteenth century, wall painting, south wall, church of Saint John the Baptist, Deliana, Kisamos, Chania, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate XI *Western Friars in Hell*, early fourteenth century, wall painting, south wall, church of Saint John the Baptist, Deliana, Kisamos, Chania, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate XII *Damned in Hell* (including western friars), 1353/54, wall painting, west wall, church of Saint John the Baptist, Merambello, Kritsa, Lassithi, Crete. Photo: Diogenes Papadopoulos. © Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Vasiliki Tsamakda.



Plate XIII Andreas Ritzos, icon with the monogram *IHS* (Jesus Hominum Salvator), second half of the fifteenth century, from Crete, egg tempera on wood, priming on textile, Byzantine and Christian Museum (inv. no. BXM 01549), Athens. Reproduced with the permission of the Byzantine and Christian Museum.



Plate XIV Andreas Ritzos or Nikolaos Ritzos or Nikolaos Tzafouris (attr.), Triptych with the *Madre della Consolazione*, Saints Peter and Paul embracing (left) and Saints Daniel of Padua (right wing , right) and Stephen or Lawrence (right wing, left), late fifteenth century, Crete (Candia?), painting on wood, Private Collection, Photograph by Bruce White, Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Plate XV *Virgin and Child Hodegetria*, first half of the fourteenth century with fifteenth-century western additions, tempera on wood with silver-gilt revetment, Cathedral Treasury, Liège. © KIK-IRPA, Brussels.



Plate XVI *Christ Pantokrator*, third quarter of the twelfth century, miniature mosaic, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence. Photo out of copyright. (Photographic Collection, The Warburg Institute).

into sharp relief the challenges facing the Latin world from the Ottomans.[16] At the front line of defence, Crete's strategic position was increasingly critical for Venice and Europe.[17] The Senate expressed its concern for the safety of Crete after the fall of Negroponte, on 16 October 1470:

> Our island of Crete needs to be fortified, as it is the head of our state in the east, for the preservation of all the patricians and the *popolani*, who live there and the rest of our state, as all understand. And adequate promises to this end will have to be made.[18]

In 1480 the Turks occupied Otranto, in southern Italy, and besieged Rhodes, but Venice's acquisition of Cyprus in 1489, through the marriage of King James II (r. 1464–73) to the Venetian Caterina Cornaro (1454–1510), reinforced its position on the access routes to Syria and the Holy Land.[19] Ottoman defeat of Venice off Corfu in 1499 and the subsequent military campaigns, however, resulted in the Republic's loss of territories along the west coast of mainland Greece. Lepanto (Naupaktos) fell on 29 August 1499, Modon (Methoni) on 9 August 1500 followed shortly by Navarino (Pylos) and Coron (Koroni).[20] This undermined Venice's pre-eminent naval position in the region and left only the castles of Monemvasia and Nauplion under their rule on the mainland Morea (the Peloponnese) (Map 1b).[21]

The maintenance of Venice's merchant and naval fleets depended on the arsenals of Candia and Chania, the second largest city in western Crete, for shipbuilding, fitting out and provisioning.[22] The island's population was also among many of Venice's colonies which provided sailors and military manpower, especially archers, both Cretan and Venetian, from the mid-

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[16] M. Meserve, 'News from Negroponte: politics, popular opinion, and information exchange in the first decade of the Italian press', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 59/2 (2006): pp. 440–80.

[17] K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204–1571. II: The Fifteenth Century* (4 vols, Philadelphia, Pa., 1978), vol. 2, pp. 303–6.

[18] Ibid., p. 306; Original text: 'Munienda est Insula nostra Crete: que est caput status nostri levantis: pro conservatione tot nobilii et populoze in ea existent et reliqui status nostri sicut omines intelligent. Et propterea faciende sunt vallide promissiones.' Senato Secreti Registri 24, fo. 149r [153r].

[19] Ibid., p. 258.

[20] Ibid., pp. v and 518–22.

[21] F. Lane, *Venice: a maritime republic* (Baltimore, 1973), pp. 146–8; B. Doumerc, 'An exemplary maritime republic', in J.B. Hattendorf and R.W. Unger (eds), *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 151–65.

[22] *Canon Pietro Casola's pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the year 1494*, trans. M.M. Newett (Manchester, 1907), pp. 202–3 and 312–17; reference to weapons from Crete 'Arnold von Harff (1496–1499)', in D. Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'La Crète sous la domination vénitienne et turque (1322–1684). Renseignements nouveaux ou peu connus d'aprés les pélérins et les voyageurs II', *Studi veneziani*, 15 (1973): p. 501; Lane, *Venice*, p. 160; D. Jacoby, 'Cretan cheese: a neglected aspect of Venetian medieval trade', in E.E. Kittell and T.F. Madden (eds), *Medieval and Renaissance Venice* (Urbana and Chicago, 1999), pp. 49–68; Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, pp. 66–9.

fifteenth century.[23] During the latter part of the century Venice constantly strengthened the walls and began new fortifications for the cities on Crete against the threat of Ottoman attack.[24]

Fifteenth-century Crete and Candia were equally important to Venetian trade in agricultural goods and commodities including wine, grain, fruit, cheese, wood, wax, cotton, honey and birds of prey.[25] In 1420 the diplomat and Venetian trader Emmanuel Piloti stated that great quantities of these goods were shipped to Alexandria for sale.[26] Candia was one of the main transit seaports on the trade routes to the east through Alexandria and Beirut.[27] Between 1451 and 1498, 340 Venetian galleys plied the Beirut and Alexandria routes, which included a stopover in Candia.[28] The merchants who traded in the city were local – Venetian, Cretan or Jewish – and of other nationalities, including German, Spanish, Italian, Sicilian, former Byzantine Greeks, Flemish and even Ottoman Turks in the latter part of the century.[29] Ships from other countries, such as from Sicily (1430s) and from Catalonia (1440s),

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[23] Lane, Venice, p. 160. In the records of foreigners from Greek Venetian colonies in Venice between 1440 and 1500, over a hundred were sailors and nearly 25 per cent of these came from Crete: B. Imhaus, *Le minoranze orientali a Venezia: 1300–1510*, trans. M. Andriolli (Rome, 1997), pp. 435–75. There are records of sailors, ships and soldiers being obtained from Crete for Venice's military defences from before the fall of Constantinople: Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, vol. 2, pp. 21, 27–9, 37, 111–12, 247, 291 and 302; military personal are mentioned: P.-H. Dopp (ed.), *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti sur le passage en Terre Sainte (1420)* (Louvain and Paris, 1958), p. 133; 'Emmanuel Piloti – 1420', in D. Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'La Crète sous la domination vénitienne et turque (1322–1684). Renseignements nouveaux ou peu connus d'aprés les pélérins et les voyageurs I', *Studi veneziani*, 9 (1967): p. 553; 'Jacques le Saige – 1518', in ibid., pp. 565–8; Doumerc, 'Examplary maritime republic', p. 151.

[24] E. Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1983), pp. 447; M. Georgopoulou, 'The meaning of the architecture and urban layout of Venetian Candia: cultural conflict and interaction in the late Middle Ages', Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1992, pp. 111–19; C. Tzobanakis, 'Νέα στοιχεία για τη Βυζαντινή οχύρωση του Χάνδακα και για τις προσθήκες και τροποποιήσεις που πραγματοποίησαν οι Βενετοί από τον 13ο έως το τέλος του 15ου αι. στον Βυζαντινό οχυρό περίβολο της πόλης', in *Πεπραγμένα του Η' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Ηράκλειον, 1996)*, vol. B2 (Herakleion, 2000), pp. 305–20.

[25] Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, pp. 39, 254; Jacoby, 'Cretan cheese'; idem, 'Candia between Venice, Byzantium and the Levant'. Fruit: *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 312; 'Hans Werli – 1483', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', p. 560; 'Philipp Ludwig de Hanau – 1484', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs II', pp. 488–9. Birds of prey: 'Georges Lengherand – 1485–86', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', p. 561.

[26] Dopp, *Traité d'Emmanuel Piloti*, pp. 158–9; 'Emmanuel Piloti – 1420', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', p. 553.

[27] Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, pp. 39, 252, 312, 351.

[28] Ibid., p. 351.

[29] Turkish merchants: Felix Fabri, *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, trans. A. Stewart, Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, vols 7–10 (London, 1896–97), pp. 21–22; Flemish and Spanish merchants: 'Georges Lengherend – 1485–86', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', p. 561; Jewish merchants: *Fratris Felicis Fabri Evagatorium in Terræ Sanctæ, Arabiæ et Egypti peregrinationem*, ed. C.D. Hassler (3 vols, Stuttgart, 1843–49), vol. 3, p. 285. Casola describes the large amount of trade goods carried on the pilgrim vessels and how members of the ship's

stopped in Candia en route through the Mediterranean.[30] Furthermore, Crete is included in a list of authorized stopping points in the eastern Mediterranean for Florentine galleys of 1447.[31] It had a thriving market where international merchandise was traded and stored. By the early sixteenth century these included grain from North Africa, Turkish Oriental carpets from the Ottoman Empire and spices from Alexandria. By the end of the fifteenth century Candia was renowned for craft goods, carpentry, furniture-making, musical instruments and shipbuilding.[32]

Beyond Venice, Crete and Candia were prominent within the western European consciousness primarily for wine, which was exported throughout the continent.[33] There are records of Cretan wine, known as Candian, Malmsey or Muscatel, as far afield as Poland and England.[34] Pilgrim travel accounts make numerous references to it and on his first visit to Candia in 1480 the Dominican friar from Ulm Felix Fabri described the city:[35]

> [Candia] is one of the best and richest of seaports and is full of all manner of good things; the speciality of the place, however, is the Cretan wine, which we call Malvoise, which is renowned throughout the world ….[36]

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company could carry their own merchandise for trade: *Casola's Pilgrimage*, pp. 155–9 and N.M. Newett, 'Introduction', in *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 58.

[30] Ashtor, Levant Trade, p. 356. Georges Lengherand, Mayor of Mons (d. 1500), who passed through Candia in 1485/86, mentions ships from Spain collecting wine to be taken to Flanders: V*oyage de Georges Lengherand, mayeur de Mons en Haynaut, à Venise, Rome, Jérusalem, Mont Sinaï & Le Kayre, 1485–1486*, ed. Godefroy Ménilglaise (Mons, 1861), p. ix; Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', pp. 560–61. For more discussion of Spanish and Flemish links to Crete, see Chapter 5, pp. 152–5.

[31] M.E. Mallett, *The Florentine Galleys in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1967), p. 65.

[32] 'Jacques le Saige – 1518', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', pp. 565–8; 'Arnold von Harff (1496–99)', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs II', p. 501; Ashtor, Levant Trade, p. 466.

[33] Ibid., p. 410; Jacoby, 'Candia between Venice, Byzantium and the Levant', pp. 41–3.

[34] J.W. Spargo, 'Clarence in the Malmsey-Butt', *Modern Language Notes*, 51/3 (1936): pp. 166–73; F.W. Carter, 'Cracow's wine trade (fourteenth to eighteenth centuries)', *The Slavonic and East European Revie*w, 65/4 (1987): pp. 537–78.

[35] H.F.M. Prescott, *Jeruslaem Journey: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1954), p. 13; Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', pp. 553–64; Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs II', pp. 471–578.

[36] *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, p. 33. 'Est enim optimus et pinguissimus maris portus omnibus mundi bonis abundans: praecipue tamen ibi est vinum Creticum, quod nos nominamus malphaticum, in toto mundi notum, et omnia sunt ibi in bono foro', in *Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, vol. 1, p. 48. D. Jacoby, 'Mediterranean food and wine for Constantinople: the long-distance trade, eleventh to mid-fifteenth century', in E. Kislinger, J. Koder and A. Külzer (eds), *Handelsgüter und Verkehrswege: Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. bis 15. Jahrhundert): Akten des internationalen Symposions Wien, 19.–22. Oktober 2005* (Vienna, 2010), pp. 127–47, discusses the name 'Malvoise' for wine as coming originally from Monemvasia, presenting strong evidence for the establishment of 'malvoise' vines on Crete from around the 1330s and for the high-quality, considerable expansion of trade and popularity of Cretan 'malvoise' wine through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. On the subject, see also Ch. Gasparis, 'Μαλεβίζι. Το όνομα, η αμπελοκαλλιέργεια

As Fabri prepared to set out on his second pilgrimage with a group of aristocrats in April 1483, the pilgrim galley master served Candian wine as an inducement to sail with him.[37] Fabri's account suggests that 'Malvoise' wine was customarily served to passengers on the Venetian fleet.[38] Erhard Reuwich's woodcut panoramic representation of Candia (Figure 4.1), published in the 1486 pilgrimage account of Bernhard von Breydenbach of Mainz (d. 1497), shows barrels prominently situated on the seafront, which most probably contained the local wine.[39] It is possible that the barrels were used to visually link Candia to its famous wine. Jacoby estimates the shipment of wine from Candia to Constantinople towards the end of 1452 was 891,000 litres.[40] In 1494 Canon Pietro Casola of Milan states that 'not less than sixty thousand *botte* of malmsey and muscatel are sold every year', which would be approximately 45,000 litres.[41] In 1512 Domenico Trevisan itemized 50,000 barrels of wine exported and a further 50,000 barrels consumed on the island.[42]

Descriptions of Crete in fifteenth-century travel accounts often refer to the ancient, classical and mythological heritage of the island. Cristoforo Buondelmonti travelled around the island in 1419/20 to see the sites described in the classical writings including the works of Strabo (active 44 BCE – *c.*21 CE), Pliny the Elder (23–79 CE) and Diodoros (*fl.* 44 BCE).[43] Crete's classical and antique origins were well known within humanist and educated circles in Europe – the 'kings of Crete' (the classical gods reinterpreted as a royal lineage) were a popular mythological topic from the medieval period.[44] Fabri

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και τα κρασιά στον 13ο και 14ο αιώνα', in Ilias Anagnostakis (ed.), *Μονεμβάσιος Οίνος – Μονοβασ(ία) – Malvasia* (Athens, 2008), pp. 147–58.

[37] *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, p. 85.

[38] Ibid., p. 88.

[39] F. Timm, *Der Palästina-Pilgerbericht des Bernhard von Breidenbach und die Holzschnitte Erhard Reuwichs. Die Peregrinatio in terram sanctam (1486) als Propagandainstrument im Mantel der gelehrten Pilgerschrift* (Stuttgart, 2006), p. 160, suggests the barrels might contain olive oil. This product, however, was not a major export item until the sixteenth century. For the development of olive oil production on Crete: Ch. Gasparis, 'Η ελιά και το λάδι. Παραγωγή και εμπόριο στη μεσαιωνική Κρήτη (13ος–14ος αιώνας)', in *Ελιά και Λάδι.Τριήμερο Εργασίας, Καλαμάτα, 7–9 Μαΐου 1993* (Athens, 1996), pp. 151–8; A. Lymberopoulou, *The Church of the Archangel Michael at Kavalariana: art and society on fourteenth-century Venetian-dominated Crete* (London, 2006), p. 199 and n. 22. See also Chapter 3, p. 79.

[40] Jacoby, 'Candia between Venice, Byzantium and the Levant', p. 42.

[41] In *Casola's Pilgrimage*, pp. 202–3, n. 1, Newett gives a botte as equal to 751.170 litres.

[42] Listed in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', p. 564. For an account of Trevisan's ambassadorial journey to Egypt 1511/12 and other activities: Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, vol. 2, pp. 27–33, 64–5, 72, 205–13.

[43] *Cristoforo Buondelmonti Description Insule Crete et Liber Insularum, cap. XI: Creta*, ed. M.-A. van Spitael (Herakleion, 1981); D. Tsougarakis, 'Some remarks on the "Cretika" of Cristoforo Buondelmonti', *Ariadne*, 3 (1985): pp. 88–108.

[44] Fabri's referencing of Pliny, Plato and Diodoros in his description of ancient Crete in *Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, vol. 3, pp. 271–8, echoes other humanist accounts of the region, for example in an address by Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo, Bishop of Zamora, to Cardinal Bessarion on the fall of Negroponte to the Turks in 1470: J. Chance, *Medieval Mythography*

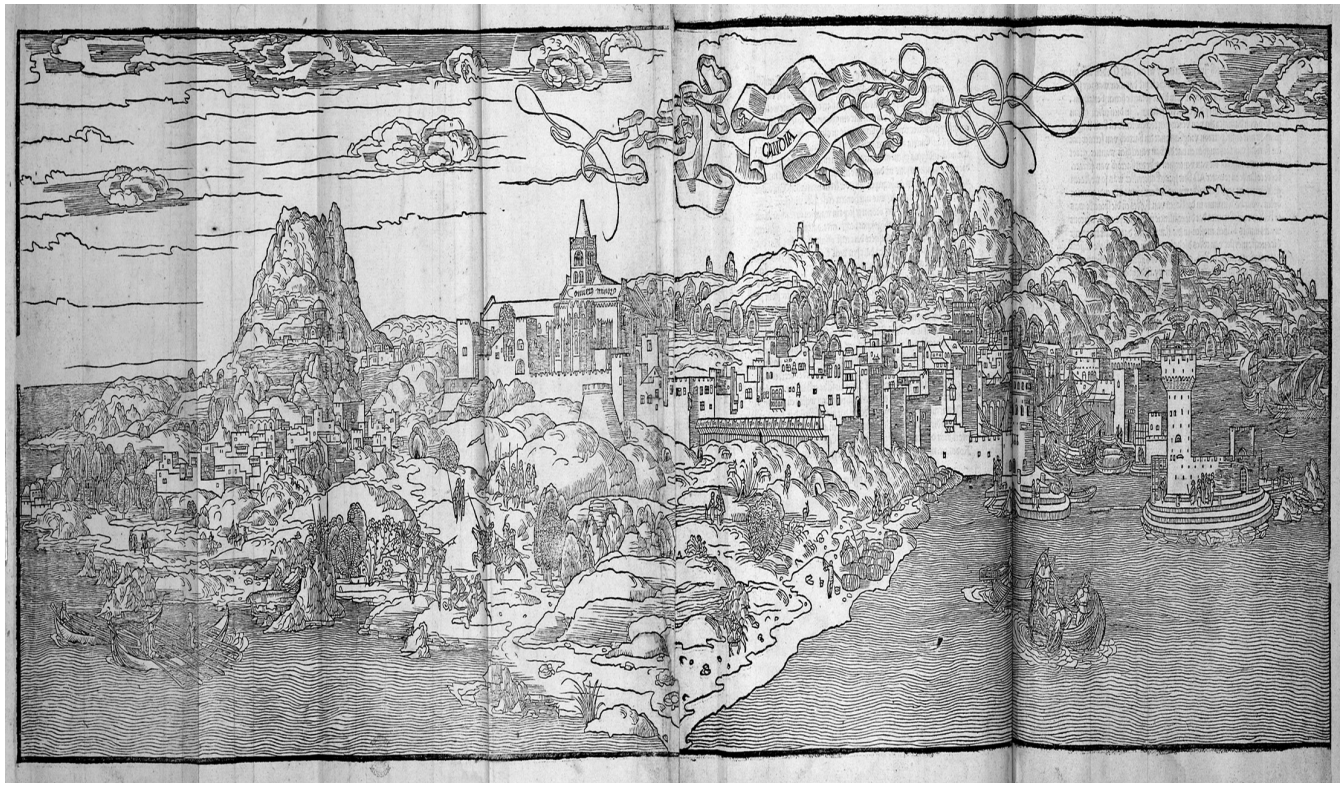


Fig. 4.1 Erhard Reuwich, *View of Candia*, 1483/86, woodcut, Berhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam*, The British Library, London. © The British Library Board (IB 340, The View of Candia).

began the travel account of his 1483 journey with a description of his world-view.[45] At the centre was the Mediterranean surrounded by Europe, Africa and Asia. He explicitly includes Crete in Europe in his description and later recounts Crete's mythological legends and classical origins. Fabri describes Crete's connection to the birth of Jupiter (Zeus), Daedalos and the Labyrinth of the Minotaur, among other mythological narratives.[46] This world-view would soon be designated the 'Old World', after the discovery of the 'New World' in 1492, but in the fifteenth century the 'world' was centred on the Mediterranean, with Crete and Candia definitively part of Europe.

Fabri also included Crete within the continent's Christian heritage describing the New Testament account of Saint Paul's visit to Crete on his way to Rome, and his subsequent Epistle to Titus.[47] According to tradition, Saint Titus had been appointed as the first bishop of Crete by Saint Paul and subsequently became the patron saint of the island. From at least the beginning of Venetian rule, Candia's cathedral church was dedicated to Saint Titus and contained the relic of his head.[48] This and the head of Saint Barbara were visited by the pilgrims passing through Candia to gain the Papal indulgences associated with them.[49] Antonio da Crema lists the holy relics in the Franciscan church in Candia in 1486, including an arm of Saint Simon the Apostle, a cross made from wood from the True Cross, stone from the column where Christ was beaten, a painting of the Virgin by the hand of Saint Luke and metal from Jerusalem's Golden Gate.[50] For fifteenth-century pilgrims visiting sacred sites on their journey to the Holy Land, Candia offered relics and churches for the pursuit of their religious objective.

Venice's control of the traffic to the Holy Land by the fifteenth century meant that almost all the pilgrim vessels stopped in Candia. The number and origin of the pilgrims can only be estimated but they spanned all social classes from high ranking royalty, aristocrats, civic figures and clergy to priests,

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from Roman North Africa to the School of Chartres, AD 433–1177 (Florida, 1994), pp. 162–3; Meserve, 'News from Negroponte', pp. 461–2.

[45] *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, p. 115.

[46] *Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, vol. 3, pp. 270–78. 'Louis de Rochechouart – 1461', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs II', p. 477, also mentions these legendary associations.

[47] *Acts 27:6–22; The Epistle of Paul to Titus*; Eusebius, *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine*: Book 3.4, trans. G.A. Williamson, rev. and ed. A. Louth (Harmondsworth, 1965; revised edn, 1989), p. 67. *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 201, also mentioned this when he described the church of Saint Titus in Candia.

[48] G. Gerola, *Monumenti veneti nell' isola di Creta* (3 vols, Venice, 1905–08), vol. 2, pp. 40–41; M. Georgopoulou, 'The topography of Chandax, capital of Crete in the Second Byzantine Period (961–1204)', *Cretan Studies*, 4 (1994): pp. 111–112, n. 71; eadem, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, p. 109; *The Itineraries of William Wey*, ed. and trans. F. Davey (Oxford, 2010), p. 66.

[49] *Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, vol. 3, p. 287; Georgopoulou, Venice's Mediterranean Colonies, p. 113, n. 14; Itineraries of William Wey, pp. 66, 90.

[50] Antonio da Crema, *Itinerario al Santo Sepolcro*, ed. G. Nori (Pisa, 1996), p. 140.

monks, laymen and women.[51] Pilgrims would have come from across Europe – including England, Ireland, France, Burgundy, Spain, Portugal, Flanders, the German states, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary and the Italian city states. In the late fourteenth century three galleys were regularly authorized to carry around 100 to 150 pilgrims each year, averaging 345 pilgrims per year through the 1380s and peaking at over 600 pilgrims in 1384.[52] In the 1440s the Venetian Senate established a five-year monopoly for three galleys carrying a minimum of 35 pilgrims each on two journeys a year (the Easter and August voyages).[53] Felix Fabri talks of two galleys leaving for the Holy Land in 1483, one of which was captained by Agostino Contarini (1430/31–1500/01).[54] Contarini probably sailed his galley, the *Contarina*, on the August voyage every year from 1479 to 1496.[55] The 43 surviving pilgrim travel accounts written between 1458 and 1498 cover 24 out of the 41 years.[56] In 1494 Casola says 170 pilgrims travelled on his vessel.[57] Based on this evidence, an estimated 300–600 pilgrims a year travelled in the early fifteenth century, reducing to 150–250 by the last decades. Not surprisingly, many accounts written by fifteenth-century pilgrims describe Candia and Crete among the experiences of their journey.[58] They describe the city as beautiful with a good harbour, large houses, palaces and gardens while others mention the city's unsanitary waste disposal.[59]

The account produced by Bernhard von Breydenbach in 1486, the *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* (*Pilgrimage in the Holy Land*), from his travels in 1483, was innovative because he planned to print it.[60] He commissioned Erhard

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[51] The so-called 'John Earl of Exeter and relative of the King of England' travelled with Roberto da Sanseverino nephew of the Duke of Milan and other high ranking individuals in 1458: Newett, 'Introduction', in *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 7. Fabri, in *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, pp. 10–11, also discusses who went on pilgrimages and mentions two pilgrim women who he met on his way to board ship in Venice. Women are also mentioned in *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 161.

[52] Ibid., pp. 32–8.

[53] Ibid., 69–76. Some unauthorized freelance pilgrim business was transacted in 1442.

[54] *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, pp. 83–4. Fabri sailed on a *bireme* in 1480 and a *trireme* in 1483: ibid., p. 126.

[55] Newett, 'Introduction', in *Casola's Pilgrimage*, pp. 98–9.

[56] N. Schur, *Jerusalem in Pilgrims' and Travellers' Accounts: a thematic bibliography of Western Christian itineraries, 1300–1917* (Jerusalem, 1980), p. 141.

[57] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 161.

[58] Newett, 'Introduction', in *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 5; Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I' and 'Voyageurs II'; D. Jacoby, 'Christian pilgrimage to Sinai until the late fifteenth century', in R.S. Nelson and K.M. Collins (eds), *Holy Image – Hallowed Ground: Icons of Sinai* (Los Angeles, 2006), p. 85. For a full list of travellers' accounts of the Holy Land: Schur, *Jerusalem in Pilgrims' and Travellers' Accounts*, esp. pp. 115–41.

[59] For example 'Pero Tafur – 1435–1439', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', pp. 553–4. See also *Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, vol. 3, p. 284; *Casola's Pilgrimage*, pp. 201–2.

[60] Von Breydenbach's was not the first printed pilgrimage journey; the account of Johannes Turcher's travels in 1479 were printed in Nuremberg in 1482: Newett, 'Introduction' to *Casola's Pigrimage*, p. 96; R. Röhricht, *Deutsche Pilgerreisen nach dem Heiligen Lande* (Innsbruck, 1900), pp. 156–8.

Reuwich of Utrecht to accompany him and produce woodcuts which could be reproduced with the printed text. The book contained panoramic views of Venice, Parenzo (Poreć), Corfu, Modon, Candia (Figure 4.1), Rhodes and the Holy Land including Sinai; a representation of the Holy Sepulchre; likenesses of locals encountered (Greeks, Jews and Turks), exotic animals, foreign alphabets and words. In the following 36 years the *Peregrinatio* was published in 12 editions, probably several thousand copies in total,[61] suggesting it offered popular access to knowledge of the eastern Mediterranean. Frederick Timm has argued that the *Peregrinatio* was produced as propaganda against the Muslims who controlled most of the region and for political promotion of von Breydenbach with his German royal patron.[62] The inclusion of the extensive imagery would have given the account more immediate impact. The views of the cities have greater panoramic detail and topographic accuracy than earlier, schematic fifteenth-century city views, such as Buondelmonti's.[63] They were precursors to increasingly detailed city plans, such as Jacopo de' Barbari's *Venice* (1500), utilizing the woodcut technique and topographic panoramas.[64]

The Candia view became the model for future representations of the city through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as in the *Civitates orbis Terrarum* (1575) (Cities of the World).[65] This suggests that the view of Candia provided an important and representative model, which was widely disseminated through Europe from the 1480s.[66] The importance of the

[61] Latin and German: Mainz, 1486; German: Augsburg 1488 and Speier c.1505; Flemish: Mainz, 1488; French: Lyons, 1488 and 1489/90, Paris 1517 and 1522/23; Latin: Speier, 1490 and 1502; Spanish: Zaragoza, 1498. H.W. Davies, *Bernhard von Breydenbach and His Journey to the Holy Land, 1483–4: a bibliography* (London, 1911; reprinted Utrecht, 1968), p. xxxii. S.H. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, revised by John Trevitt (London, 1955, 1961 and 1996), pp. 62–5, estimates a production of 200 copies per 'average edition' in the fifteenth century.

[62] Timm, *Der Palästina-Pilgerbericht des Bernhard von Breidenbach*, pp. 355–62.

[63] Map of Constantinople: Cristoforo Buondelmonti, *Liber insualrum archipelagi*, British Library, ms Arundel 93, fos. 154v–155r; map of Candia: Cristoforo Buondelmonti, *Descriptio insulae Candiae*, Firenze Biblioteca Medicae Laurenziana, ms Plut. 29.42, c. 17 [1429].

[64] R. Goy, *Venice: the city and its architecture* (London, 1997), p. 39. The original woodcuts of Jacopo Barbary's *View of Venice* are in the Correr Museum, Venice.

[65] G. Braun and F. Hogenberg, *Civitates orbis Terrarum: De Praecipus, Totius Universi Urbibus, Liber Secundus* (6 vols, Cologne, 1572-1617), vol. 2, no. 53. For the importance of von Breydenbach's views for Braun's work: S. Füssel, 'Natura sola Magistra – the evolution of city iconography in the early modern era', in Georg Braun Francis Hogenberg, in idem (ed.), *Cities of the World (1572–1617) (Civitates Orbis Terrarum)* (London and Cologne, 2008), p. 8.

[66] Timm, *Der Palästina-Pilgerbericht des Bernhard von Breidenbach*, pp. 160–66, proposes that von Breydenbach commissioned Reuwich to collect existing images probably in Venice to provide a basis for the woodcuts and not to make sketches on the journey, as had been previously thought. He points out that neither von Breydenbach's account nor Fabri's, who went on the same journey for his second pilgrimage in 1483, talk of visiting Candia either on the outward or return journey. However, analysis of the view suggests it contains many accurate features, as Timm has described, and its popularity in later centuries confirms its importance. H. Lehmann-Haupt 'Book illustration in Augsburg in the fifteenth century',

Reuwich images is established by other copying – his representation of the Holy Sepulchre provided an accurate image of the shrine which was used as the design for churches and replicas in the early sixteenth century.[67] The depiction of Sinai, within the panorama of the Holy Land, was also highly influential on representations of the Holy Mountain in the sixteenth century.[68]

In von Breydenbach's book, Reuwich's panorama of Candia (Figure 4.1) occupies a fold-out on four leaves compared to Venice on eight leaves, the Holy Land on six, Rhodes and Modon on four, and Parenzo and Corfu on two leaves. The respective sizes may represent the relative importance of these cities to late fifteenth-century Europe. The Muslim cities of Cairo and Alexandria, in Egypt, though visited during the travels, were not represented separately suggesting a promotion of Christian sites in the region.[69] The intended audience of the *Peregrinatio* consisted of the kings, princes, aristocrats and scholars of Europe, providing a degree of vicarious involvement in the sacred endeavour and visual models for the Christian places visited.[70]

As a consequence, Candia was a familiar city in the eastern Mediterranean for the fifteenth-century traveller, sea captain, sailor, merchant, ambassador and pilgrim. The port provided a measure of safety against stormy seas and the Ottoman navy, certainly an opportunity to drink good wine and carry out trade. Crete had been part of the Venetian Empire for nearly 300 years and was well established within the western European community. The fall of Constantinople and Negroponte, and the continued encroachments of the Ottomans, placed Crete on the frontier as one of the last Greek, formerly Byzantine, territories in Christian hands.

Candia in the Fifteenth Century

Since the Venetians established their colony in 1211, Candia grew from a small Byzantine capital to a thriving early-modern seaport.[71] The late fifteenth-century views of the city (Figures 4.1 and 4.2) can be analysed in the context of

Metropolitan Museum Studies, 4/1 (1932): p. 16, fig. 4.2, suggests the woodcuts were used as models for the painted city views included in Conrad Grünenberg's manuscript of his travels in 1486. See also Timm, *Der Palästina-Pilgerbericht des Bernhard von Breidenbach*, pp. 355–62.

[67] C.S. Wood, Forgery, *Replica, Fiction: temporalities of German Renaissance art* (Chicago and London, 2008), pp. 51–3.

[68] Jacoby, 'Christian Pilgrimage to Sinai', pp. 85–7.

[69] Timm, *Der Palästina-Pilgerbericht des Bernhard von Breidenbach*, pp. 357–8. These cities were located on the plan of the Holy Land which stretched from Sidon on the Syrian coast (modern Lebanon) to Alexandria in Egypt and included Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai. For a full reproduction of this plan: http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/detail/ODLodl~14~14~82810~136772:Map-of-the-Holy-Land--Bernhard-von-

[70] Ibid., p. 361.

[71] Jacoby, 'Candia between Venice, Byzantium and the Levant', pp. 38–47; R. Gertwagen, 'The Venetian port of Candia, Crete (1299–1366): construction and maintenance', in I.



Fig. 4.2 Conrad von Grünenberg, *View of Candia, Pilger ins Heilige Land*, 1487, Badische Landesbibliothek, Cod. St. Pap. 32, BL. 19v–20r, Karlsruhe. Reproduced with permission of Badische Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe.

the city's topography and layout (Map 3).[72] Both views look southwards at the walled city from the sea and with the hill behind to the east (left), but Conrad von Grünenberg's (Figure 4.2) provides greater detail of the buildings within the walls. Some buildings in the city centre are identified by notations – the arches of the arsenal near the entrance to the harbour and the large building of the Judaica to the west.[73] Although Grünenberg's overall topography is

Malkin and R.L. Hohlfelder (eds), *Mediterranean Cities: historical perspectives* (London, 1988), pp. 141–58.

[72] This map has been built up from analysis of the development of the city through the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, pp. 36–99 and 180–82. I am very grateful to Christina Unwin for producing this plan.

[73] The location of the Judaica is of note as it was probably outside city walls in the fourteenth century: Gertwagon, 'The Venetian port of Candia', pp. 141–58. However, by the seventeenth century it was located within the walls, as listed in Werdmüller's plans of 1666/68.

more schematic than Reuwich's (Figure 4.1), the differentiation of buildings provides an opportunity to consider the city's layout in more detail.[74]

As both views show, the city centre was enclosed by fortifications which the Venetians had developed from the original walls dated to the middle Byzantine period.[75] The city had expanded considerably beyond these confines during the fourteenth century into extensive suburbs to the south, the *burgo Candide* (burg), and east, in Marula. The full extent of the city to the south and west cannot be determined because new fortifications which surrounded the suburbs during the sixteenth century probably destroyed property at the city boundary.[76] Fourteenth-century expansion may have slowed as a result of successive plagues but the needs of travellers and sailors may have ensured some growth during the fifteenth century.[77] The city and the suburbs probably covered about 40–45 hectares by 1500 which would be comparable to medium-sized Italian cities such as Rimini or Pisa.[78] Using average population densities for the period, Candia's residents could have been between 8,000 and 10,000 with a Latin element between 1,000 and 1,500.[79]

The early fourteenth-century *catasticum* describes gardens, fields and vineyards within the burg – travellers described them as 'beautiful'.[80] Houses

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[74] Communication with Irena Benyovsky Latin, Hrvatski institut za povijest (Croatian Institute of History), Zagreb, who works on urban development in Croatia, confirmed that Grünenberg's plan of Zadar was a relatively accurate representation of the city.

[75] N. Platon, 'Πάλιν περί τόν βυζαντινόν τεῖχος τοῦ Χάνδακος', *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 4 (1950), pp. 353–60; idem, 'Νέα στοιχεία διά τήν μελέτην τοῦ βυζαντινοῦ τείχους τοῦ Χάνδακος', *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 6 (1952), pp. 439–59; Tzobanakis, 'Νέες πληροφορίες για το βυζαντινό οικισμό του Χάνδακα'; Georgopoulou, Venice's Mediterranean Colonies, pp. 45–50 and n. 22; Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, p. 38. The period commonly referred to as middle Byzantine covers the years between the end of Iconoclasm and the restoration of images in 843 and the capture of Constantinople by the troops of the Fourth Crusade in 1204. For Crete, which was recaptured from the Arabs in 961, the period is slightly shorter.

[76] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 201; Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, p. 83. Topographically accurate plans of the city were drawn up after the new fortifications were complete including: Domenico Rossi da Este, 'Città vecchia di Candia, 17 August 1573', (Biblioteca Marciana, Ms. It. VI, 188 [10039]); Marco Boschini, 'Città di Candia', *Il Regno tutto di Candia* (Venice, 1651), c. 23; Zorzi Corner, Città di Candia' (1625) (Biblioteca Marciana, Ms. It. VI, 75 [8303]); General Werdmüller, 'Pianta della città di Candia', 1666–68 (Zürich Zentralbibliothek, T 76, act. 28); Vincenzo Coronelli, 'Pianta della real fortezza e città di Candia', in *Città, Fortezze, Isole e Porti principali d'Europa* (Venice, 1689) (Civico Museo Correr, M. 32484). See also Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, pp. 33–42.

[77] Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Communtiy*, pp. 180–83.

[78] Ibid., p. 66. See also J. Cox Russell, *Medieval Regions and their Cities* (Newton Abbot, 1972), p. 64.

[79] This ratio of Cretans to Venetian fits with the ratio of Orthodox to Latin churches, taking account of different church capacities: ibid., pp. 97–9.

[80] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 201; Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', p. 557; Z. Tsirpanlis, *'Κατάστιχο Ἐκκλησιῶν καί Μοναστηριῶν τοῦ Κοινοῦ' (1284–1584). Συμβολή στή μελέτη Πολιτείας καί Ἐκκλησίας στή βενετοκοατούμενη Κρήτη* (Ioannina, 1985), pp. 194, 228–9, 260.

were built in 'the Eastern fashion' with flat roofs and terraces, visible in both Reuwich's (Figure 4.1) and Grünenberg's views (Figure 4.2). The centrally located ducal palace and chapel of Saint Mark, with an adjoining square and market, would have provided a focus for the community.[81] Processions through the city may have centred on the square; one such event, mentioned by Casola, included icons and crucifixes being paraded after an earthquake.[82] Saint Mark's had a bell tower which can be seen in both city views. Grünenberg's view has two towers (left of centre), one round with crenulations and the other a square tower with battlements, just in front of a low building with multiple side windows which could be Saint Mark's. Reuwich's view has a square tower in the city centre. The prominent Latin churches and monasteries in the city were frequently mentioned in the pilgrim accounts, including the Saint Titus Cathedral. This was probably an impressive cross-in-square Byzantine church with a large central cupola or dome built sometime after the reconquest of Crete from the Arabs by Nikephoros Phocas in 961. Unsurprisingly, it was appropriated by the Venetians and adapted over the centuries. It may be the domed church to left-of-centre in Grünenberg's city view. Grünenberg uses curved stripes to signify domed or hemispherical roof surfaces, for example on the church on the hill behind the city. This reinforces the hypothesis that Saint Titus was a domed Greek-style church rather than an aisled basilica at this time.[83]

Within the walls there was a Dominican monastery dedicated to Saint Peter Martyr (dated to the mid-thirteenth century) close to the sea to the north-west, and a Franciscan monastery dedicated to the patron saint of the order (dated to the late thirteenth century with later enhancements), located at the edge of the urbanized area to the east.[84] In Reuwich's view, the Franciscan monastery is visible as a large basilica with Gothic features dominating the eastern walls (Figure 4.1). The crenulated apse visible in Reuwich's view is comparable to those of the Franciscan churches of Santa Croce in Florence, San Fermo in Verona and Santa Maria in Aracoeli in Rome, all dating from the late thirteenth to early fourteenth centuries.[85] In the burg there was a Benedictine

[81] Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, pp. 94–100.

[82] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 200. A sixteenth-century illustration of the square by George Klontzas shows the procession of the Corpus Domini taking place with icons, religious banners and heraldic flags in *Istoria ab origine mundi* (Biblioteca Marciana, Mc. Graec. VI, 22 [1466], fo. 134v) reproduced in Georgopoulou, Venice's Mediterranean Colonies, p. 98.

[83] For a detailed discussion of the possible architecture of the church of Saint Titus: Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, pp. 112–16; Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, pp. 42–5.

[84] Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, pp. 132–42; Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, pp. 61–8.

[85] I am enormously grateful to Dr Donal Cooper for pointing out this architectural link. C. Bolgia, 'Il coro medievale della chiesa di S. Maria in Aracoeli a Roma', in A. Cadei et al. (eds), *Arte d'Occidente: Temi e metodi* (3 vols, Rome, 1999), vol. 1, pp. 233–42; E. Neri Lusanna, 'La pittura de Trecento in Santa Croce', in T. Verdon (ed.), *Alla riscoperta delle chiese di Firenze. 3, Santa Croce* (Florence, 2004), pp. 33–6; G. Trevisan, 'L'architettura

establishment, an Augustinian monastery dedicated to the Saviour, a Servite monastery dedicated to Saint Paul and two hospitals with churches, Saint Anthony and Saint Maria Cruciferorum. Casola describes the cathedral of Saint Titus as 'very beautiful' and the church of Saint Francis as being 'most beautiful' with a 'most beautiful choir with three rows of stalls beautifully carved'.[86] As the skill of carpenters and woodworkers was renowned in Candia by the end of the fifteenth century, it is possible that the choir was a fine work of local craftsmen.[87]

Casola used 'beautiful' and 'very beautiful' extensively to describe the places he visited, but he was not indiscriminate. For example, he was not impressed by the cathedrals in Brescia and Corfu.[88] In contrast, he described the Doge's palace in Venice as 'the most beautiful in Italy' ('la più bella de Italia'), praising its decoration (marble, porphyry and carving) and 'magnificence' ('magnifica'), saying it 'is of such a nature that one is never weary of looking' ('de tal natura che non pono satiare l'homo de vedere, et iudicio mio').[89] He was impressed by fine workmanship and skilful, extensive decoration – mentioning the 'very beautiful' ('molto bella') sixth-century mosaics of the Euphrasian basilica in Poreć but also describing a grain mill in Corfu as a 'beautiful contrivance'.[90] It is possible to infer, therefore, that Casola saw high quality decoration in the buildings and churches in Candia, even if, as he noted, they appeared to be 'houses begun and not finished, because they have flat roofs'.[91]

Candia contained numerous small single-aisled Orthodox churches within the narrow medieval streets almost certainly extensively decorated with Byzantine frescoes. The main Orthodox church of Our Lady of the Angels, located just outside the southern gate (Map 3), was described by Casola as

(secolo XI–XIV); in P. Golinelli and C.G. Brenzoni (eds), *I santi Fermo e Rustico: un culto e una chiesa in Verona: per il XVII Centenario del loro martirio (304–2004)* (Verona, 2004), pp. 169–83.

[86] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 201; Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, pp. 133–4. Casola was quite a connoisseur of choir stalls commenting on them frequently in the different churches he visited, praising fine carving, gilding and inlaid work, for example in San Giovanni e Paolo, Venice (p. 138); monastery of Sant'Elena, Venice (p. 134); Sant'Antonio, Padua (p. 122). These were completed by Lorenzo Canozzi in 1470: A. Crowe, G.B. Cavalcaselle and T. Borenius (eds), *A History of Painting in North Italy, Venice, Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Ferrara, Milan, Friuli, Brescia from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1912), pp. 369–72.

[87] 'Jacques Le Saige – 1518', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', p. 565. Seven carpenters mentioned in the fourteenth-century wills: S. McKee (ed.), *Wills from Late Medieval Venetian Crete, 1312–1420* (3 vols, Washington, DC, 1998), vol. 1, pp. 7–10 (no. 8), pp. 212–13 (no. 166), vol. 2, pp. 501–2 (no. 384), pp. 566–7 (no. 438), pp. 846–7 (no. 667) and pp. 936–7 (no. 744). The shipbuilding industry would also have fostered woodworking skills in Candia.

[88] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, pp. 119, 186.

[89] Ibid., p. 127; *Viaggio a Gerusalemme di Petro Casola*, ed. A. Paoletti (Alexandria, 2001), p. 86.

[90] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, pp. 163, 185; Viaggio a Gerusalemme, p. 117.

[91] Ibid., p. 202.

a 'beautiful chapel' mentioning that masses were said there in both Greek and Latin.[92] There was a dependency of the Orthodox monastery of Saint Catherine's on Mount Sinai in the burg, probably built around 1200. Fabri places the monastery on a hill outside the city but seventeenth-century plans locate it close to the walls near the city's southern gate.[93] The site of the monastery and other properties on the island had been assigned to Sinai just before the Venetians settled on Crete in 1211 and papal documents from the first decades of the thirteenth century confirmed their title.[94] A list of Orthodox churches in the suburbs compiled in 1320 also describes an imperial monastic foundation dedicated to the Virgin Mary dated from the middle Byzantine period.[95] In both Reuwich's and Grünenberg's views, a domed church is visible on the hill to the south of the walled city (Figures 4.1 and 4.2) which might be either Saint Catherine's or the imperial monastery.[96]

By the fifteenth century, the resident population of Candia had social, ethnic, economic and religious diversity with the Latin and Orthodox communities living side by side in shared urban spaces. Although there might have been segregation earlier in the colonial period, through the fourteenth century new Latin and Greek churches were closely juxtaposed. There had been intermarriage and close interaction between the Venetian Roman Catholic and Cretan Orthodox groups in the city since the early fourteenth century.[97] Although Fabri decries it, he talks of the close relationship between the two communities and the tolerance of the Greek faith in the city.[98] Casola describes a joint procession in 1494, following an earthquake, with Greeks and Latins carrying 'many large figures, painted on wood. There were crucifixes, and figures of Our Lady and other saints' – probably one of these painted figures was the important Mesopanditissa icon from Saint Titus.[99]

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[92] Ibid.

[93] *Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, vol. 3, p. 282; 'Hans Werli – 1483', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', pp. 559–60; for a discussion of the development of Saint Catherine's in Candia: Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, pp. 45–51.

[94] Ibid. See also Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, pp. 176–7.

[95] Tsirpanlis, *Κατάστιχον*, pp. 200–201; Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, pp. 39–41, 85–8.

[96] Grünenberg claims it was dedicated to Saint Anastasia: Timm, *Der Palästina-Pilgerbericht des Bernhard von Breidenbach*, p. 163. However, this does not match the probable location and style of a fourteenth-century church of that dedication: Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Communtiy*, p. 278 (church no. 120). Werdmüller's city plan locates Saint Anastasia in the western suburbs: Georgopoulou, 'Architecture and urban layout of Venetian Candia', p. 253.

[97] S. McKee, 'Households in fourteenth-century Venetian Crete', Speculum, 70 (1995): pp. 27–67; eadem, 'Women under Venetian colonial rule in the early Renaissance: observations on their economic activities', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 51/1 (1998): pp. 34–67; eadem, *Uncommon Dominion Venetian Crete and the Myth of Ethnic Purity* (Pennsylvania, 2000).

[98] Felicis Fabri Evagatorium, vol. 3, p. 286; H.F.M. Prescott, *Once to Sinai: the further pilgrimage of Friar Felix Fabri* (London, 1957), p. 228.

[99] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, pp. 199–200; M. Theochari, 'On the dating of the icon Mesopanditissa', *Praktika tes Akademias Athenon*, 36 (1961): pp. 270–82.

Intermarriage of Venetians and Cretans created a new social group with both Latin and Orthodox allegiances, including, for example, the Cretan Kalliergis and Ialina land-owning families.[100] It is likely that individuals from this group were enthusiastic about the Union of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, which was signed in Florence in 1439, offering the potential for reconciling divided loyalties.[101] In addition to the Venetian patricians and other Latin colonists, and the indigenous Orthodox Cretans, there were minority communities of Armenians and Jews.[102] Travellers' accounts mention the prominence of the Jewish community and their involvement in trade and Grünenberg's city view identifies the Jewish ghetto to the right of the harbour.[103] The multiethnic society in Candia provided the context for artists to develop new forms of religious imagery and icons. The resident population had a range of devotional needs spanning traditional Latin and Orthodox practices, and the multiethnic concerns of the intermarried and Uniates. To this must be added the economic and devotional requirements of the visiting merchants and pilgrims, who would have had their own demands for religious imagery.

Artistic Production in Candia

Icon production in Candia in the fifteenth century has been studied since the 1960s when records of artists' activities from the Cretan archives in the Archivio di Stato di Venezia were first published.[104] Archival material continues to provide a rich source for research but many documents relating to artists and their practices remain unpublished.[105] The surviving icons from the fifteenth century have also been extensively catalogued, while recent exhibitions

[100] McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, pp. 71–83.

[101] For the Ferrara/Florence Council, see Chapter 1, pp. 30–31.

[102] Twenty-four Jews are recorded in the wills surviving from the fourteenth century; see, for example: McKee, *Wills*, vol. 1, pp. 170–71 (no. 134), pp. 265–7 (no. 205) and vol. 2, pp. 781–2 (no. 615). A senate document discusses arrangements for Armenian refugees on Crete in 1363: B.G. Kohl (ed.), *The Records of the Venetian Senate on Disk, 1335–1400* (New York, 2001), Senato (ASV), Deliberazioni, Misti. Registri 31 (28 April 1363 – 10 July 1366), fo. 15r, 8 June 1363 (Kohl no. 2212) and fo. 23r, 1 July 1363 (no. 2235).

[103] *Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, vol. 3, p. 285; 'Mariano da Siena – 1431', in Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, 'Voyageurs I', p. 553.

[104] M.I. Manoussakas, 'Ἡ διαθήκη τοῦ Ἀγγέλου Ἀκοτάντου (1436), ἀγνώστου Κρητικοῦ ζωγράφου', *DChAE*, 4/2 (1960–61): pp. 139–52; M. Cattapan, 'Nuovi documenti reguardanti pittori Cretese dal 1300 al 1500', in N. Panagiotakis (ed.), *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Β' Διεθνοῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου* (4 vols, Athens, 1968), vol. 3, pp. 29–46; Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti'; idem, 'I pittori Andrea e Nicola Rizo da Candia', Thesaurismata, 10 (1973): pp. 238–82; idem, 'I pittori Pavia, Rizo, Zafuri da Candia e Papadopulo dalla Canea', *Thesaurismata*, 14 (1977): pp. 199–238.

[105] Of the 132 artists listed as active on Crete from 1300 to 1500 by Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti', only documents for about 20 have been published.

and publications have expanded and consolidated our understanding of early Cretan icon painting.[106] However, there are still questions about the circumstances of production, the nature of artistic links with Europe, the social context and stages of icon development, especially later in the century. This section explores factors linking the art and artists of Candia to Venice, Italy and Europe and considers some of the possible mechanisms and outcomes of artistic endeavour which reflect these connections.

Angelos (*fl.* 1420s–1450) was the first Cretan painter we can identify who signed his icons and painted in both Byzantine and western styles.[107] His ability to drawn on Palaiologan and Venetian styles is apparent in some of his works. For example, *Saint Theodore Teron* (Figure 4.3) follows Byzantine iconography but also shows delicate gold filigree patterning on the armour and a striking physicality which was drawn from Venetian models.[108] Furthermore, the soft painterly folds of the cloak are comparable to robes painted by Jacobello del Fiore (*fl.* 1394, d. 1439) in Venice (Figure 4.4).[109] Thus visual evidence demonstrates Angelos's links to both Byzantine and Venetian artistic traditions, but his life and heritage also bridged the two cultures.

The will of Angelos Akotantos (registered 1457), generally accepted as the Angelos of the signed icons, refers to his many close links to the Orthodox community in Crete and Candia and his planned journey to the Byzantine capital, Constantinople, in 1436.[110] Sympathy for the Uniate cause has been suggested by a group of works, signed by or attributed to Angelos,

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[106] Major exhibitions and selected bibliography on Cretan icons: Chatzidakis, 'Les débuts de l'école crétoise et la question de l'école dite italoque' (reprinted in: M. Chatzidakis, *Études sur la peniture postbyzantine* [London, 1976]); idem, 'La peinture des "madonneri" ou "vénéto-crétoise" et sa destination', in *Venezia centro di mediazione tra Oriente e Occidente, secoli XV–XVI: aspetti e problemi. Atti del II convegno internationale di storia dell civiltà veneziana (1973)* (2 vols, Florence, 1977), vol. 2, pp. 675–90; Chatzidakis, *Icons from the Cretan School (15th – 16th Centuries)*; M. Acheimastou-Potamianou (ed.), *Affreschi e icone dalla Grecia, Palazzo Strozzi 16 settembre-16 novembre 1986* (Athens, 1986); eadem (ed.), *From Byzantium to El Greco*; eadem (ed.), *Holy Image, Holy Face: icons and frescos from Greece* (Baltimore, 1988); Borboubakis, *Icons of the Cretan School*; Chatzidakis, *From Candia to Venice; Faith and Power*; R.S. Neslon and K.M. Collins (eds), *Holy Image - Hallowed Ground; Byzantium*; K. Milanou, Ch. Vourvopoulou, L. Varnopoulou and A.-E. Kalliga, *The Painting Method of a Fifteenth-century Cretan Painter* (Athens, 2008); M. Vassilaki, *The Painter Angelos and Icon-painting in Venetian Crete* (Farnham, 2009); *Byzance: Pracht und Alltag* (Bonn, 2010); Vassilaki, *The Hand of Angelos*.

[107] Drandaki, 'Between Byzantium and Venice', p. 11 and bibliography in n. 1, discusses Nikolaos Philanthropinos, who was from Constantinople, worked on Crete and in Venice, but none of his work is identifiable. See also Vassilaki, 'From Constantinople to Candia', p. 115.

[108] Angelos painted numerous icons with this style of armour: M. Vassilaki, 'St Phanourios: cult and iconography', in *The Painter Angelos*, pp. 81–110; Vassilaki, *The Hand of Angelos*, pp. 136–9 (nos 17–18) and pp. 168–9 (no. 33).

[109] Newall, *Art, Artist, Patron, Community*, p. 195.

[110] Richardson et al., *Renaissance Art Reconsidered*, pp. 224–8 (no. 2.5.1); Vassilaki, *The Painter Angelos*, pp. 3–15; M. Kazanaki-Lappa, 'The will of Angelos Akotantos', in Vassilaki, *The Hand of Angelos*, pp. 104–13.



Fig. 4.3 Angelos, *Saint Theodore Teron slaying the Dragon*, second quarter of the fifteenth century, egg tempera on wood, priming on textile, Byzantine and Christian Museum (D. Loverdos Collection, inv. no. BXM 13059), Athens. Reproduced with the permission of the Byzantine and Christian Museum.



Fig. 4.4 Jacobello del Fiore, Triptych with the *Madonna della Misericordia* and Saints John the Baptist (left) and John the Evangelist (right), *c.*1415, tempera on panel, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. © 2012. Cameraphoto/Scala, Florence – Photo Scala, Florence – courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali.

representing the Embrace of Saints Peter and Paul.[111] However Angelos's links to the Latin community, although identified by Manoussakas in 1961, have received less attention.[112] His Venetian cognomen (Acotantos, Acotanto, Aqotantos or Acoitanto) could be suggestive of Latin heritage. The first notable figure of that name was the monk Pietro Acotanto who died in Venice in 1187 and was beatified for his work with the poor in 1759/60.[113] A number of representations of him, made shortly after his beatification, are recorded

[111] A. Lymberopoulou, 'The Painter Angelos and post-Byzantine art', p. 196; Vassilaki, *The Painter Angelos*, pp. 111–35.

[112] Manoussakas, 'Ἡ διαθήκη τοῦ Ἀγγελου Ἀκοτάντου (1436)', pp. 139–40; Vassilaki, *The Painter Angelos*, p. 132.

[113] P. Rizzi, 'Pietro Acotanto', in A.M. Ghisalberti (ed.), *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, 1960), vol. 1, p. 159.

in the notary documents of Pietro Gradenigo (1695–1776).[114] His statue is still present on top of the eighteenth-century façade of the church of San Rocco, Venice (Figure 4.5).[115]

One of the Venetian concession documents for Crete (1222) refers to a Michael Acotanto, who received a *milites* – land tenancy on the island in return for mounted military support..[116] This was the more valuable of the two types of land allocations and would have only been assigned to a Venetian, possibly a patrician.[117] The presence and status of the Acotanto family in Venice through the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries is confirmed in Venetian archival documents and the cognomen appears in the lists of patrician families from 1290.[118] Manoussakas noted several individuals with that cognomen in the Cretan archives of the late thirteenth century and a 'Iohannis Acotanto of Sithia' is mentioned in a will of 1384.[119] The combined evidence of Angelos's Venetian cognomen with that of his Orthodoxy as testified in his will, suggest that the artist's descended from the union of a Venetian *feudatory* and an Orthodox woman.[120] This dual heritage may explain his possible sympathy for the Uniates and his combining of Venetian and Byzantine traditions in his painting, in response to the artistic demands and needs of his contemporary multiethnic society.[121]

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[114] Pietro Gradenigo, *Notizie d'arte tratte dai Notatori e dagli Annali del N. H. Pietro Gradenigo*, ed. L. Livan (Venice, 1942), pp. 75–6 (Document C. 102, 4 August 1761); pp. 130–31 (Document C. 152t, 28 February 1765 [1766]); p. 198 (Document C.30, 26 August 1770).

[115] G. Allen, *Venice* (London, 1898), pp. 107–12.

[116] 'Et tu, Michael Aquotanto, de confinio sancte Agnetis, habere debes militiam unam' ('And you, Michael Acotanto, of the confines of Saint Agnes, you ought to have one milities'): G.L.F. Tafel and G.M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig, mit besonderer Beziehung auf Byzanz und die Levante. Vom neunten bis zum Ausgang des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts* (3 vols, Vienna, 1856–57), vol. 2, p. 240 (doc. 263).

[117] C. Maltezou, 'Ἡ Κρήτη στή Διάρκεια τῆς Περιόδου τῆς Βενετοκρατίας (1211–1669)', in N. Panagiotakis (ed.), *Κρήτη: Ἱστορία καί Πολιτισμός* (2 vols, Herakleion, 1988), vol. 2, pp. 110–11; McKee, Uncommon Dominion, pp. 34–5.

[118] W. Dorigo, *Venezia romanica: la formazione della città medioevale fino all'età gotica* (2 vols, Venice, 2003), vol. 1, p. 57, vol. 2, pp. 654, 660, 701, 790–93, 798–9, 928–39, 973 and 978. The family resided in Sancti Apostoli, San Margarito and San Barnaba, San Angelo Raffaelo, San Pietro Castello and San Provolo: S. Chojnacki, 'In search of the Venetian patriacate: families and factions in the fourteenth century', in J.R. Hale (ed.), *Renaissance Venice* (London, 1973), p. 73.

[119] Manoussakas, 'Ἡ διαθήκη τοῦ Ἀγγελου Ἀκοτάντου (1436)', pp. 139–40; McKee, Wills, vol. 2, pp. 990–91 (no. 787).

[120] For a discussion of intermarriage and ethnic relationships in fourteenth-century Candia: McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, pp. 57–132.

[121] After Angelos's death, Cretan archival documents suggest his family continued in Candia to the end of the century: M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, 'The Painter Angelos Akotantos: new biographical details from unpublished documents', in M. Aspra-Vardavaki (ed.), *Λαμπήδων: Αφιέρωμα στη Μνήμη της Ντούλας Μουρίκη* (Athens, 2003), pp. 499–508; Vassilaki, *The Painter Angelos*, pp. 93–6 and 345–8; Kazanaki-Lappa, 'The will of Angelos Akotantos', p. 108. During my research in the Archivio di Stato di Venezia I have also found documents referencing Angelo Acontando, possibly a relative (*NdC, busta* 272,



Fig. 4.5 *Beato Pietro Acotanto*, 1765–71, sculpture, façade of San Rocco, Venice, 1765–71. © Diana Newall.



Fig. 4.6 Andreas Ritzos (attr.), Virgin of the Passion with Saints John the Evangelist (left) and Nicholas (right), 1451, tempera on panel, church of Saint Nicholas, Bari. Photo: Centro Studi Nicoliani, Basilica di San Nicola, Bari, Italy, with assistance from St Nicholas Center, www.stnicholascentre.org.

Although there is no evidence that Angelos travelled to Venice, one artist did so during his lifetime, the Constantinopolitan Nikolaos Philanthropinos, who is recorded as a mosaicist there in 1435.[122] There is evidence of artistic links between Crete and southern Italy, and possibly Sicily. A tripartite icon attributed to Andreas Ritzos and painted in 1451 for the church of Saint Nicholas in Bari (Figure 4.6) demonstrates that there was knowledge of and a demand for Cretan art among southern Italian patrons.[123] Cattapan has also suggested that an Antonello da Messina, who is referenced in the archives as a resident of Candia in 1445/46, could be the well-known Italian artist; the sources, however, do not specifically mention his profession and the identification will therefore have to remain tentative.[124] Nevertheless, the presence of a foreigner from Sicily in Candia, confirms shipping connections between the two places.[125]

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fo. 7r, 13 August 1492) and a Georgius Acotanti, son of Johannes, possibly his brother's son (*NdC*, *busta* 272, fo. 72r, 11 December, 1492).

[122] Vassilaki, *The Painter Angelos*, pp. 47–8.

[123] Cattapan, 'I pittori Andrea e Nicola Rizo da Candia', p. 269; Lymberopoulou, 'The Painter Angelos', p. 203; Chatzidakis, 'The Legacy of Angelos', pp. 124–5.

[124] P. Zampetti, *A Dictionary of Venetian Painters* (5 vols, Leigh-on-Sea, 1969), vol. 1, pp. 17–18; Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti', p. 206 ; idem, 'I pittori Andrea e Nicola Rizo da Candia', pp. 244–5, n. 10; F. Sricchia Santoro, *Antonello e l'Europa* (Milan, 1986), pp. 11–16; Cormack, *Painting the Soul*, p. 182, n. 36. I am grateful to Dr Donal Cooper for sharing with me his view regarding the uncertainty of the identity of Antonello da Messina in the Cretan archival sources and therefore the presence of the famous artist in Candia.

[125] See above, n. 30.

Later in the century, Latin patrons in Candia were commissioning works from Italian artists. In 1470 George Pellegrino painted an altarpiece containing an image of the Crucifixion for Lauro and Mandalucie Querini for the Latin church of Saint Jerome in the burg of Candia.[126] In 1480 '*Nicolaus de Philipo Lippi florentinus*', ostensibly the son of the Florentine artist Filippo Lippi (1406–69), was carrying out a commission for Giovanni di Giovanni de Franceschi of Venice.[127] Although the available evidence for Italian artists in Candia is limited so far, this suggests that artistic practice in the city followed contemporary Italian and Venetian art forms as well as Byzantine and post-Byzantine. By the sixteenth century, works of Venetian artists were present in the city, including by Giovanni Bellini (*c.*1426–1516) and Palma Vecchio (1480–1528).[128]

The evidence for Latin patronage of icons in Candia increases through the second half of the fifteenth century. Andreas Ritzos, who, like Angelos, appears to have Venetian heritage, painted a number of icons for Latin patrons.[129] Most notable is the *IHS* icon (Figure 4.7 and Colour Plate XIII), the emblem of Saint Bernardino of Siena who supported the Union of Churches, which represents both Orthodox and Latin forms of the Resurrection within the letters.[130] The icon was described as a treasured possession of the Veneto-Cretan Andrea Cornaro in the early seventeenth century and at least one branch of the Cornaro family in Candia had Venetian and Orthodox ancestry.[131]

A group of icons depicting the Virgin of the Passion from the fifteenth century, most signed or attributed to Andreas Ritzos, demonstrate how the developing of icons for Latin patrons emerged. The central panel of the tripartite icon of Saint Nicholas (Figure 4.6) shows the Virgin and Child flanked by two angels carrying the instruments of the passion and Christ looking anxiously at a Latin inscription referring to his mortality

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[126] Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti', p. 231 (no. 33). A church of that dedication is recorded on Werdmüller's city plan in the burg (1666–68), listed by him as no. 77: Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, app., pp. 265–8. G. Gerola, 'Topografia delle chiese della città di Candia', *Bessarione*, 22/1–4 (1918): p. 267, identifies the Latin church of Saint Jerome as a Franciscan establishment. George Pellegrino was still living in the burg of Candia in December 1484 when he transacted business involving wine must (unfermented grape juice; *NdC*, Notary Giorgio Sinadino, *busta* 272, fo. 17r).

[127] Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti', p. 234. There is no mention of a second son in the Filippo Lippi's biography although there is some claim that he married the mother of Filippino Lippi after the latter's birth, which could allow for the possibility of another child: J. Ruda, *Fra Filippo Lippi Life and Work with a Complete Catalogue* (London, 1993), p. 40. The artist may have simply used the name to gain commissions.

[128] Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies*, p. 134.

[129] Cattapan, 'I pittori Andrea e Nicola Rizo da Candia', pp. 239–41.

[130] Ibid., p. 272 (no. 10); Cormack, *Painting the Soul*, pp. 206–9; M. Acheimastou-Potamianou (ed.), *Icons of the Byzantine Museum of Athens* (Athens, 1998), pp. 132–7 (no. 37); *Faith and Power*, p. 485 (no. 295); Lymberopoulou, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', pp. 171–3.

[131] McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, pp. 64–6; Richardson et al., *Renaissance Art Reconsidered*, pp. 370–71 (no. 3.5.2).



Fig. 4.7 Andreas Ritzos, icon with the monogram *IHS* (Jesus Hominum Salvator) (Colour Plate XIII).

and fear of the Passion.[132] Cattapan lists four more icons signed by Ritzos with identical iconography and the Latin inscription in Fiesole (now in Florence), Parma, Dalmatia and Princeton.[133] There are several more examples of this iconography without the inscription, some attributed to Ritzos, dated through to the end of the fifteenth century, including in the churches San Fantino and San Nicola da Tolentino in Venice; in London, Athens and Russia.[134] The icon in San Fantino was presented by the Pisani family before 1485, so it may have been brought back to Venice by Giovanni

[132] Qui primo candidissime gaudium indixit / Prehindicat nunc passionis signacula / Carmen vero XPS mortalem indutus / Timensque letum talia pavat cernendo. Cattapan, 'I pittori Andrea e Nicola Rizo da Candia', p. 267; A. Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst* (Vienna, 2010), pp. 82–6.

[133] Cattapan, 'I pittori Andrea e Nicola Rizo da Candia', pp. 266–70.

[134] Ibid., pp. 273–7; M. Acheimastou-Potamianou (ed.), *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* (Athens, 1985), pp. 118–19 (no. 117); Borboudakis, *Icons of the Cretan School*, p. 402 (no. 40) and pp. 437–8 (no. 86); Chatzidakis, *From Candia to Venice*, pp. 28–9 (no. 1) and 42–7 (nos. 6 and 7).

Pisano, who was Duke of Candia between 1475 and 1477.[135] Later icons of the *Virgin of the Passion*, probably not by Ritzos, have an inscription of similar meaning in Greek, for example in Patmos (*c.*1500), in St Petersburg (sixteenth century) and in Moscow (seventeenth century).[136]

Ritzos has been credited with developing this form of the subject and the Bari panel suggests this happened early in his career, around 1450.[137] The *Virgin of the Passion* has been discussed by Johannes Tripps as a popular subject for religious imagery in Europe in the fifteenth century with examples by Nikolaus Gerhaert (active 1460–73), Luca della Robbia (1399/1400–1482), Hans Holbein the Younger (1497–1543) and Michelangelo (1475–1564).[138] The genesis of the Ritzos variant of the *Virgin of the Passion* may therefore have originated to meet the devotional demands of Roman Catholic patrons, hence the Latin inscription. Versions of the icons by Ritzos with no inscription may have been suitable for Greek Orthodox patrons while the variant with the Greek inscription probably developed later. Ritzos signed his icons in Latin 'Andreas Rico de Candia Pinxit' ('Andreas Rico of Candia painted this') both suggesting and self-consciously aiming at western patronage beyond the island. In contrast, surviving examples of Angelos's signatures are in Greek without referencing Candia.[139] This could be indicative of the esteem Cretan icons and their Candian painters were held on the European stage at this time.

Evidence from the pilgrim travellers' accounts in the 1480s and 1490s provide insights into the developing market for icons in Candia. Felix Fabri's begins his second account in 1483 with a detailed description of life on board a pilgrim galley. He describes the observance of Mass taking place three times a day during the voyage:

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[135] Ibid , pp. 28–9 (no. 1). For an outline of the political system during the Venetian period on Crete: Chr. Maltezou, 'The historical and social context', in D. Holton (ed.), *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 17–47. See also F. Cornaro, *Creta Sacra: sive de episcopis utriusque ritus Graeci et Latini in insula Cretae* (2 vols, Modena, 1971), vol. 2, p. 395.

[136] The Greek version of the inscription is: 'Ο ΤΟ ΧΑΙΡΕ ΠΡΙΝ ΤΗ ΠΑΝΑΓΝΩ ΜΗΝΥΣΑΣ ΤΑ ΣΥΜΒΟΛΑ ΝΥΝ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΘΟΥΣ ΠΡΟΔΕΙΚΝΥΕΙ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΔΕ ΘΝΗΤΗΝ ΣΑΡΚΑ ΕΝΔΕΔΥΜΕΝΟΣ ΠΟΤΜΟΝ ΔΕΚΟΙΚΩΣ ΔΕΙΛΙΑ ΤΑΥΤΑ ΒΛΕΠΩΝ', ('The one who previously hailed the Virgin / Now the symbols of the Passion shows / Christ robed Himself in mortal flesh / Looks at them apprehensively in fear of death.') M. Chatzidakis, *Εικόνες τῆς Πάτμου: Ζητήματα Βυζαντινῆς καί Μεταβυζαντινῆς Ζωγραφικῆς* (Athens, 1977), p. 68 (no. 16); Borboudakis, *Icons of the Cretan School*, pp. 338–40 (no. 7) and p. 413 (no. 59).

[137] Ibid., p. 339.

[138] J. Tripps 'Nikolaus Gerhaert interpretiert ein italobyzantinisches Thema: Die Dangolsheimer Muttergottes', *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 41 (1999): pp. 25–35.

[139] The wording of the Latin inscription may also stress the icons' Candian heritage with the inclusion of 'Candidissime'. 'Candide' was how Candia was often termed in Latin documents, but it also translates as 'dazzling white'. This possible pun on the Latin spelling of the city appears to have been understood, since *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 202, makes a witty reference to it: 'When I remember that the city is called Candia, with this horrible smell, I think the name must have been applied for antiphrase.'

> First in the early morning at sunrise, when one of the servants of the captain, standing aloft on the top of the castle, commands silence with his whistle, after which he lifts up a wooden board, whereon is painted the Blessed Virgin, holding her child in her arms, on beholding which all kneel, and say the Ave Maria, and other prayers if they choose.[140]

The mass at the eighth hour involved a makeshift altar with a chest covered with a cloth, candlesticks, a figure of the Crucifixion and a missal, although that service did not have the Eucharist.[141] Finally at sunset, the company sang *Salve Regina* and the image of the Virgin was shown again. The 'Virgin with the Child in her arms' could easily be describing icons produced on Crete, such as a *Virgin of the Passion*, a *Madre della Consolazione* (see below) or a *Hodegetria*-type panel.[142]

This ritual of worship met the religious needs of the pilgrims but it may also have been practised more widely in the Venetian fleet. It seems plausible to suggest that some religious ceremony, possibly involving sacred imagery, was standard on commercial and military vessels. Many Venetian galleys were built and fitted in Candia during the fifteenth century, so these painted images, crucifixes and candlesticks could have been made on Crete.[143] Fabri notes early in his account that everything in Candia was cheap suggesting an economic incentive to use Cretan devotional items.[144] The supply of religious items to these ships may have fuelled the trade in icons and spread Cretan imagery widely amongst sailors, merchants and pilgrims.

These panels of the Virgin and Child would have been portable and although it is difficult to judge what dimensions this meant, calculations can be made based on the dimensions of surviving icons:[145]

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[140] 'Primo mane in ortu solis, tunc enim aliquis de servis domini patroni, stans in alto ante castellum, imperat fistula silentium, quo facto eergit tabulam, in qua depicta est beata Virgo puerum tenens in ulnis; quam cuncti videntes genua flectunt, et Ave Maria dicunt, et alias orations si placet.': *Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, vol. 1, p. 128; trans. in *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, p. 140.

[141] Casola refers to mass taking place at 'about the eighth hour before midday'. I am grateful to Sara Schechner from Harvard, for clarifying the timekeeping system on the Venetian fleet in the fifteenth century. The timing of religious observances onboard the pilgrim ships would have been according to canonical hours, where daylight and darkness were each independently divided into 12 hours, with hours counted from sunrise and sunset respectively. Owing to the slippage of the Divine Office prayer and mealtimes, by the fifteenth century the timing of the mass referred to by Casola would have taken place slightly before midday. For general details on medieval timekeeping: S. Schechner, 'Astrolabes and medieval travel', in R. Bork and A. Kann (eds), *The Art, Science and Technology of Medieval Travel* (Aldershot, 2008), p. 210.

[142] For this important Byzantine iconographic type, see Chapter 1, p. 17.

[143] On wood production and trade on the island, see also Chapter 3, pp. 79–81.

[144] *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, p. 33.

[145] Based on the average seasoned and dry density of cypress wood of 510 kg/cu.m. http://www.simetric.co.uk/si_wood.htm

- A small size of 22 cm x 19.5 cm x 1 cm (429 cubic cm) would weigh 220 grams.
- A medium size of 36 cm x 29 cm x 2 cm (2,088 cubic cm) would weigh 1,065 grams.
- A large size of 60 cm x 52 cm x 3 cm (9,360 cubic cm) would weigh 4,774 grams.

Probably only panels within the range of the small and medium sizes would be portable given the weight. Casola describes the size of large cases ('cassi') used by sailors on board ship as approximately 1.2 x 1.2 metres which would easily accommodate small and medium panels.[146] Of the surviving Cretan icons of the Virgin and Child dated *c.*1450–1525, over a third are small–medium sized and a significant number of these have indications of Latin patronage – inscriptions, iconography, saints or styles of representation.[147] Meeting the demand for panels and devotional items for the fleet could have encouraged mass-production of icons.

Pilgrims passing through Candia talked of the shops in which devotional items were for sale. Pietro Casola, who visited the city twice, on the way to and from the Holy Land in 1494, was shown around by Don Nicolo de Domo, 'doctor-in-law, our good Milanese, who does excellent business in Candia'.[148] He visited shops, warehouses and markets saying that the local Candiots 'rejoiced at the opportunity of selling a quantity of malmsey and muscatel, many cheeses, and many articles made of cypress wood'.[149] He mentions these three products several times and towards the end of his visit Don Nicolo took him to see the work in cypress wood. His description suggests that there were many different types of goods made of cypress including 'articles of devotion painted in cypress wood'.[150] It is not difficult to imagine a shop full of devotional items – many sizes of icons of the Virgin and Child, the saints and feast scenes; perhaps some small triptychs (Figure 4.8 and Colour Plate XIV) similar to those which are referred to in a 1499 contract of Nikolaos Ritzos, son of Andreas.[151]

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[146] Based on Newett's measurement conversions in *Casola's Pilgrimage*, pp. 155 and 159.

[147] The number of surviving icons depicting the Virgin and Child is at least 133, over a third of the total; just under half are within 10 per cent of the small and medium size ranges and two-thirds of these have suggested Latin patronage.

[148] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 316.

[149] Ibid., p. 315.

[150] Ibid., pp. 316–17.

[151] Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti', pp. 213–14 (no. 9) (*NdC*, Notary Giorgio Cumno, *busta* 31 fo. 207v, 11 September 1499); M. Vassilaki, 'Commissioning art in the fifteenth-century Venetian Crete: the case of Sinai', in Chr. Maltezou. A. Tzavara and D. Vlassi (eds), *I Greci durante la venetocrazia: Uomini, sazio, idée (XIII–XVIII sec.). Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Venezia, 3–7 dicembre 2007* (Venice, 2009), pp. 741–8 and 839–43.

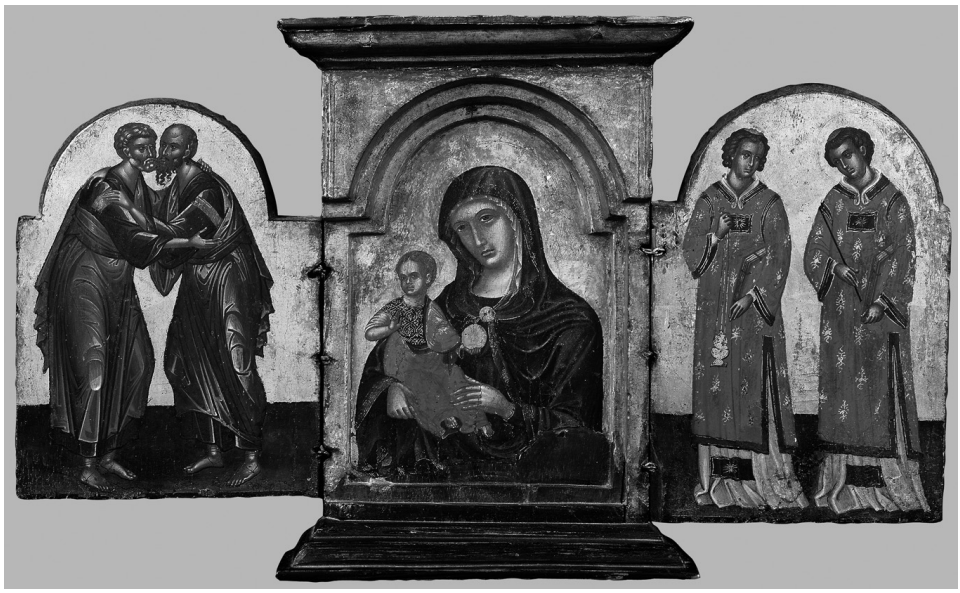


Fig. 4.8 Andreas Ritzos or Nikolaos Ritzos or Nikolaos Tzafouris (attr.), Triptych with the *Madre della Consolazione*, Saints Peter and Paul embracing (left) and Saints Daniel of Padua (right wing, right) and Stephen or Lawrence (right wing, left) (Colour Plate XIV).

The contract records for 1499 show how painters and carpenters worked together on commissions. For example, the carpenter Giorgio Sclavo appears in several contracts working with Miguel Foca (*fl.* 1493–1505), who owned a shop on the Ruga Maestra, the main street in Candia.[152] In June he appears to provide Foca with panels in three sizes presumably for a large order of icons which subsequently Foca and other painters were contracted for in July.[153] As has been discussed extensively elsewhere, those icons were of the Virgin to be painted either *in forma a la latina* or *in forma greca* perhaps corresponding respectively to the surviving *Madre della Consolazione* (Figure 4.8) and more traditional Byzantine forms (Figure 4.6). Casola alludes to other devotional items, possibly crucifixes or candlesticks and refers to the type of image

[152] Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti', pp. 206 and 211 (no. 9) (*NdC, busta* 31, fo. 187v, 18 June 1499; ibid., fo. 200v, 23 August 1499; and ibid., fo. 202v, 30 August 1499).

[153] Cattapan, 'Nuovi elenchi e documenti', pp. 211–13 (nos 6–8) (NdC, busta 31 fos. 191r–v, 4 July 1499); for a translation: Richardson et al., *Renaissance Art Reconsidered*, pp. 371–3 (no. 3.5.3). See also M. Constantoudaki, 'Οί Ζωγράφοι τοῦ Χάνδακος κατά τό πρῶτον ἥμισυ τοῦ 16ου αἰῶνος οί μαρτυρούμενοι ἐκ τῶν νοταριακῶν ἀρχείων', *Thesaurismata*, 10 (1973): p. 317 (no. 17); Lymberopoulou, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', pp. 188–92.

as painted in the 'ancient style'.[154] This term could refer to icons following traditional Byzantine forms or following contemporary Italian modes of representation such as the hybrid iconographic type of the *Madre della Consolazione*, as seen in the central panel of the triptych (Figure 4.8).[155] It has been proposed that the *Madre della Consolazione* was developed by Nikolaos Zafuris (died by 1501) in the late fifteenth century.[156] His artistic activities from 1487 to 1501, coincide with the time when Casola was perusing devotional works in Candia.[157] After spending time looking at the articles for sale, Casola bought some for a few ducats '[f]ollowing the example of other pilgrims'.[158] This suggests that pilgrims often bought devotional items in Candia, so some of the hundreds produced in the 1490s may have serviced this trade.

Casola's description of cypress goods trade and the archival records of contracts confirm that devotional business was very successful in the early 1490s. What was available for sale aimed to please all types of customers – Latin pilgrims looking for a devotional memento of their sacred journey; those provisioning ships in the arsenal; the local Orthodox and Latin populace and religious establishments for their devotional and liturgical needs; and possibly merchants and travellers looking to take icons home for personal devotional use, for their local church or to sell at their local market.

Cretan Icons in Western Europe

The development of the icon trade in Candia through the second half of the fifteenth century and their export in the 1490s needs to be considered in the wider context of western Europe. Although records of Cretan icons in Europe have largely been lost, their attraction to Roman Catholics can be assessed in relation to other artistic and devotional trends in the period.

The most significant influence must be the late medieval Marian cult which flourished across Europe into the early sixteenth century, before Reformation radicals began to question her role in Christian theology.[159] For

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[154] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 317; 'de quele devocione a l'antiqua', Viaggio a Gerusalemme di Pietro Casola, p. 254.

[155] For a discussion on the issues of interpreting this term, see Chapter 6, p. 160.

[156] A. Lymberopoulou, 'The *Madre della Consolazione* icon in the British Museum: post-Byzantine painting, painters and society', *JÖB*, 53 (2003): pp. 239–55; eadem, 'The Painter Angelos and post-Byzantine art', pp. 206–9; eadem, 'Audiences and markets for Cretan icons', pp. 189–92.

[157] For a full bibliography, see Lymberopoulou. 'The *Madre della Consolazione*', p. 241, n. 8.

[158] *Casola's Pilgrimage*, p. 317. For types of money and exchange rates during this period, see R. Duits, 'Art, class and wealth', in *Viewing Renaissance Art*, p. 56.

[159] D. MacCulloch, 'Mary and the sixteenth century', in R.N. Swanson (ed.), *The Church and Mary* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 191–217; B. Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic piety, 1500–1648* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 23–45.

example, inventories from the early sixteenth century in Germany suggest that pre-Reformation churches might have contained up to 20 images of the Virgin, especially those which represented her relationship with her son.[160] The growth in the demand for representations of the Virgin and Christ involved not only Cretan art but also imagery across late fifteenth-century Europe, including Florence, Rome, Venice, southern Germany and Flanders.[161] In addition to bespoke artworks, printed depictions of the Virgin and Child became popular and widely available.[162] The development of single-sheet woodcut prints in the fifteenth century allowed for mass-produced religious images which would have fuelled individual devotional practices.[163] These may have encouraged the demand for other intimate devotional representations such as the icons from Candia.

In describing the panel paintings on sale in Candia in 1494, Pietro Casola describes them as 'the ancient style'. There are problems in interpreting what this might have meant, but Christopher S. Wood and Alexander Nagel have recently explored concepts of antiquity in fifteenth-century Europe.[164] They suggest ways in which representations in the fifteenth century might have gained and maintained significance and credibility through a reinterpretation of their ancient credentials.[165] However, the general popularity of Marian imagery may be a more powerful incentive for acquiring icons. They discuss the popularity of Virgin and Child reputedly painted by Saint Luke, such as the miraculous Byzantine icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria*, which provided the model for different types of Cretan icons representing the holy mother and her son.[166] Many examples of the Saint Luke image were present in western Europe, especially Rome, and an association with such highly venerated representations may have made Cretan icons popular.[167] Although the specific appeal of the 'antique' character of Cretan icons may be difficult to prove, their

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[160] Ibid., p. 23.

[161] For example, R. Goffen, 'Icon and vision: Giovanni Bellini's half-length Madonnas', ArtB, 57/4 (1975): pp. 487–518; M.W. Ainsworth, '"À la façon grèce": the encounter of Northern Renaissance artists with Byzantine icons', in *Faith and Power*, pp. 547–8.

[162] A. Nagel and C.S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York, 2010), pp. 21–8; Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction*, pp. 95–9.

[163] D.S. Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 1–23.

[164] A. Nagel and C.S. Wood, 'Interventions: towards a new model of Renaissance anachronism', in *ArtB*, 87/1 (2005), pp. 405–15; idem, 'What counted as an "antiquity" in the Renaissance?', in *Renaissance Medievalisms*, pp. 53–74; idem, *Anachronic Renaissance*. For a discussion of their studies, see Chapter 6, p. 160.

[165] Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, pp. 109–22.

[166] See Chapter 1, p. 17 and Chapter 5, p. 136.

[167] C.E. King, *Representing Renaissance Art, c.1500 – c.1600* (Manchester, 2007), pp. 147–51. It is interesting to note that one of the artists Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, pp. 109–22 identify as interested in Eastern icons is Antonello da Messina. See also Chapter 5.

iconography and subject matter was clearly in harmony with other western Virgin and Child imagery of the period.

Conclusion

Studies into Cretan icons and artists in the fifteenth century have explored aspects of their links to the Byzantine sphere and the Orthodox tradition of the post-Byzantine era. By the fifteenth century, however, Crete was fully integrated into Venice's Maritime Republic and had become firmly located within western Europe. Artistic production in Candia demonstrates both its strong Byzantine heritage and the impact of western European patrons and customers. The second half of the century saw radical changes in modes of production from the bespoke sacred Orthodox imagery of Angelos, through the tailored icons for Latin patrons by Andreas Ritzos, to an extensive range of mass-produced devotional works, including icons *in forma a la latina* and *in forma greca*, in the 1490s. This progress cannot be separated from the artistic and devotional developments in western Europe. The flourishing, even to excess, of the Marian cult into the early sixteenth century, with its many forms and media of imagery, may well have driven the successful expansion of Cretan icons of the Virgin and Child and promoted demand for individual devotional imagery. Through these mechanisms, post-Byzantine art of fifteenth-century Crete brought the spiritual resonance of Byzantine art to Renaissance Europe.

5

Byzantine Icons in the Netherlands, Bohemia and Spain during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

Kim Woods

Introduction

In the catalogue of the major exhibition *Byzantium: Faith and Power*, Maryan Ainsworth produced a ground-breaking exploration into Byzantine icons in northern Europe, touching also briefly on Spain.[1] Her principal focus was on the ways in which Netherlandish painters adapted iconographic models derived, however indirectly, from icons. The aim of this chapter is to explore further some of the issues arising from Ainsworth's work relating to the value placed on icons in northern Europe and Spain. Firstly, how crucial in the acquisition, veneration and copying of icons was their reputation as paintings derived from prototypes by the evangelist Saint Luke? Secondly, is there firm evidence to connect icons with aspirations to launch a crusade against the Ottomans? Or are there other reasons why icons might be appreciated: as souvenirs of pilgrimage, or even for their distinctive artistic approach, so different from conventions of fifteenth-century painting in northern Europe and Spain? These questions will be addressed here in relation to three very different territories: the Prague of Charles IV (r. 1346–78), the fifteenth-century Burgundian Netherlands and, briefly, the Spain of Isabella of Castile (r. 1474–1504).

[1] M.W. Ainsworth, '"À la façon grèce": the encounter of northern Renaissance artists with Byzantine icons', in *Faith and Power*, pp. 545–93.

By the Hand of Saint Luke

On a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1481, Jan Aertz of Mechelen in the Burgundian Netherlands stopped en route in Candia on Crete, as many pilgrims did, and recorded seeing there a painting 'after the hand of Saint Luke'.[2] This was almost certainly the much-venerated *Hodegetria* icon known as the Virgin *Mesopanditissa*, then in the cathedral of Saint Titus in Candia and now in Santa Maria della Salute in Venice.[3] The legend that physician and Gospel writer Saint Luke was also an artist who recorded the authentic appearances of both the Virgin and Christ may be traced in literature at least as far back as the eighth century, and images that were associated with this legend came to be prized in both Latin and Orthodox territories increasingly for their miraculous properties as well as their claims to authenticity.[4]

During his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1485/86, the mayor of Mons, Georges Lengherand, recorded visiting the church of Saint Dominic in Nicosia in Cyprus, where they kept a relic of the hand of Saint Luke with which, Lengherand states, he painted three images of the Virgin.[5] There were favourite contenders for these 'real' paintings by Saint Luke, one of which, the Virgin *Kykkotissa*, was also to be found on Cyprus in the monastery of Kykkos. The *Hodegetria*, the most widely renowned of the contenders from the Hodegon monastery of Constantinople, was destroyed in 1453 when the Ottomans captured the city.[6] The Spanish pilgrim Pero Tafur saw this image on his return from the Holy Land in 1437, and wrote an enthusiastic account of it.[7] The icon of the *Virgin and Child* in the cathedral treasury at Liège (Figure 5.1 and Colour Plate XV), recorded in 1489 as an image painted by Saint Luke, is a copy, however indirectly, of the *Hodegetria*.[8] There were also many other icons that were alleged to be by Saint Luke: in his account of the 1470 pilgrimage he shared with his father, the Bruges diplomat Anselm Adornes (1424–83), Jean Adornes claimed that Saint

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[2] D. Hemmerdinger Illiadou, 'La Crète sous la domination vénitienne et lors de la conquète turque (1322–1684)', *Studi Veneziani*, 15 (1973): pp. 489–90. I owe the idea of looking at pilgrims' accounts to Dr Diana Newall.

[3] M. Georgopoulou, 'Late medieval Crete and Venice: an appropriation of Byzantine heritage', *ArtB*, 77/3 (1995): pp. 479–96 (esp. pp. 487–95).

[4] M. Vassilaki, 'With the paintbrush of the evangelist Luke', in eadem (ed.), *Mother of God: representations of the Virgin in Byzantine art* (Athens, 2000), pp. 79–89, traces the legend back to Saint Andrew of Crete. See also R. Maniura, 'The icon is dead, long live the icon: the holy image in the Renaissance', in A. Eastmond and L. James (eds), *Icon and Word: the power of images in Byzantium. Studies presented to Robin Cormack* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 87–103.

[5] M. de Ménilglaise (ed.), 'Voyage de Georges Lengherand, mayeur de Mons en Hainaut, à Venise, Rome, Jérusalem, Mont Sinai et le Kayre, 1485–6', *Société des bibliophiles belges séant à Mons*, 19 (1861): p. 109.

[6] M. Bacci, 'The legacy of the Hodegetria: holy icons and legends between east and west', in M. Vassilaki (ed.), *Images of the Mother of God: perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium* (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 321–31. See also Chapter 1, p. 17 and n. 29.

[7] M. Letts (ed.), *Pero Tafur, Travels and Adventures 1435–39* (London, 1926), pp.141–2.

[8] *Faith and Power*, pp. 252–3 (no. 150).



Fig. 5.1 *Virgin and Child Hodegetria* (Colour Plate XV).

Luke painted no fewer than 13 images, adding that their party had seen a good number of these in various places including Molfetta and Trani, in Italy.[9] (Map 1a) Pilgrim Jan Aertz also noted a painting by the hand of Saint Luke placed on the tomb housing his relics in the monastery of Saint Justina in Padua.[10] Ulrich

[9] J. Heers and G. de Groer, *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte (1470–1471)* (Paris, 1978), pp. 394, 395, 413.

[10] E. Neefs, 'Un voyage au XVe siècle', *Revue Catholique*, 35 (1873): p. 321; Bacci, 'Legacy of the Hodegetria', pp. 327–8.

Leman (1440–1504) from St Gallen saw another image attributed to the hand of Saint Luke in a Greek monastery at Saydnâyâ near Damascus which he said was so old fashioned that it was hard to recognise in it a painting of Our Lady.[11] Netherlandish pilgrim Betrandon de la Broquière (d. 1459), travelling in 1432/33, also visited Saydnâyâ and regarded the image with scepticism as a money-making venture.[12]

To the average western European Catholic it was Rome that was the Holy City, the centre of Christendom and a focus of pilgrimage in its own right in addition to attracting pilgrims en route for the Holy Land. Several icons reputed to be by the hand of Saint Luke were to be found in Rome. It was these that Catholic Europeans were most likely to be familiar with and copy. The various accounts of pictures by the hand of Saint Luke in Rome underline their importance as miracle-working images, sometimes advertised by explanatory plaques displayed next to them, as appears to have been the case, for example, with the Santa Maria Maggiore and Aracoeli icons (see below).[13]

The *Golden Legend*, one of the most read devotional books of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, claims that Gregory the Great (Pope 590–604) combated the plague in Rome by processing around the city with a painting of the Virgin Mary reputed to be by the hand of Saint Luke.[14] This was identified as the icon of the *Virgin and Child* known as the *Salus Populi Romani* in Santa Maria Maggiore, which Gerhard Wolf dates to the late sixth or early seventh century.[15] This was thought to possess both the capacity to work miracles and an authenticity derived from Saint Luke and his sacred models. As late as 1530 Margaret of Austria (1480–1530) is reported to have made provision for a copy to be made of this icon for the high altar of her monastic foundation at Brou in France.[16] The second image reputed to be by the hand of Saint Luke was that of the *Sorrowing Virgin* kept in Santa Maria in Aracoeli, now known to be a copy of an even older and much less accessible icon in San Sisto.[17] Pilgrim Georges Lengherand, visiting Rome en route for Jerusalem, described the Aracoeli picture as the first image ever to have been made of the Virgin.[18] A copy of this painting was placed in the cathedral of Mechelen; there were also

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[11] R. Röhricht and H. Meisner, *Deutscher Pilgerreisen nach dem Heiligen Lande* (Berlin, 1880), p. 105.

[12] G.R. Kline, *The Voyage d'Outremer by Brandon de la Broquière* (New York, 1988), pp. 39–40.

[13] F.J. Furnivall (ed.), *The Stacions of Rome and the Pilgrims Sea Voyage* (London, 1887), pp. 16–17; C. Eveleigh-Woodruff (trans.), *A XVth Century Guide-book to the Principal Churches of Rome compiled c.1470 by William Brewyn* (London, 1933), pp. 46–50.

[14] W.G. Ryan, *The Golden Legend: readings on the saints* (2 vols, Princeton, 1995), vol. 1, p. 174.

[15] G. Wolf, 'Icons and sites: cult images of the Virgin in medieval Rome', in Vassilaki (ed.), *Images of the Mother of God*, pp. 31–7.

[16] M. Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche, Duchesse de Savoie* (Lille, 1927), p. 147, n. 3. Bruchet omitted to supply a reference and the document has proved difficult to trace.

[17] Wolf, 'Icons and sites', pp. 39–41.

[18] Ménilglaise, 'Voyage de Georges Lengherand', p. 72.

versions in the church of Sint Salvator in Bruges, and in the provincial church of Reimerswaal.[19] (Map 1a) The church of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome also owned a much later painting of the *Virgin and Child* with more dubious claims to the status of icon, let alone the authorship of Saint Luke, but to which an indulgence was attached in 1478.[20] In his guidebook to Rome of *c.*1470, Englishman William Brewyn claimed it was given to the church by Gregory IX (Pope 1227–41) to promote devotion to the Virgin.[21] A copy of this icon was to be found, for example, in Teistungenburg bei Duderstadt in Westphalia, demonstrating its status.[22] (Map 1b) The *Virgin and Child* at Santa Maria Nuova was also sometimes said to have been painted by Saint Luke.[23] Netherlandish pilgrims Coppart de Velaines of Tournai (1423) and Lengherand of Mons also attributed to the hand of Saint Luke an icon of Christ kept in the so-called Sancta Sanctorum in Saint John Lateran.[24] Pero de Tafur described this half-length painting in some detail, adding:

> They say that Our Lady begged Saint Luke, who was a famous painter, to paint this picture after the death of her Son, and he consented and painted it. It is indeed an object of the greatest devotion … It shows well the figure of Our Lord, his age and colour and all that he was, and there is a mole on the left cheek as an emblem of his humanity …[25]

Images by the hand of Saint Luke occur sufficiently frequently in northern European or Spanish pilgrims' accounts to suggest that they constituted one of the attractions of the pilgrim route. Their potency was more widely accessed through copies: in the words of Hans Belting 'the replica was a witness of the original and aroused the same hope as the latter'.[26] This is nowhere more evident than in the Prague of the deeply pious Charles IV, for whom icons appear to have assumed an importance not so much out of direct contact with nearby Orthodox territories, as out of enthusiasm for Catholic prototypes in Rome allegedly by the hand of Saint Luke. Although familiar to students of Bohemian art, these examples deserve to be more widely known.

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[19] Ainsworth, '"À la façon grèce"', pp. 547–8.

[20] J. Koerner, *The Moment of Self-portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago, 1993), p. 470, n. 108; A. Nagel and C.S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York, 2010), p. 109 and fig. 11.1.

[21] *A XVth Century Guide-book*, p. 41.

[22] J. Hamburger, 'The Liber Miraculorum of Unterlinden: an icon in its content setting', in R. Ousterhout and L. Brubaker (eds), *The Sacred Image East and West* (Urbana and Chicago 1995), p. 157.

[23] Wolf, 'Icons and sites', p. 28.

[24] Ménilglaise, 'Voyage de Georges Lengherand', p. 65; J. Paviot, 'Le pèlerinage du tournaisien Coppart de Velaines en terre sainte 1423–4 et 1431–4', in L. Nys and D. Vanwijnsberghe (eds), *Campin in Context: peinture et société dans la vallée de l'Escaut à l'époque de Robert Campin. 1375–1445* (Valenciennes, 2007), p. 294.

[25] *Pero Tafur, Travels*, p. 39.

[26] H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence* (Chicago, 1994), p. 441.

Charles owned a version of the icon of the Aracoeli *Sorrowing Virgin*, variously claimed to have been acquired during a visit to Rome in 1355 for his coronation as Holy Roman Emperor, or during a later trip of 1368/69 during the pontificate of Urban V (Pope 1362–70).[27] Three early copies surviving in Prague carefully preserve the pose of the original but adapt it for their new audience. For example, one version from the treasury of Saint Vitus Cathedral (Figure 5.2) shows the Virgin with a distinctively dark complexion found in some ancient icons though not in the Aracoeli icon itself.[28] The image is translated into the iconographical and formal conventions of Bohemia: the softer, three-dimensional style and the distinctively Bohemian detail of the splashes of blood on the Virgin's clothes which she was said to have received at the foot of the cross.[29] The cast gesso relief background seems to have been done independently from the figure and is certainly not derived from the original Aracoeli icon; it is, however, characteristic of the painted decoration at Karlštejn (see below).[30]

The icon of the Virgin and Child at the church of Augustinian Monastery at Brno (Figure 5.3) is reputed to have been given by Charles IV to the original Augustinian monastery of the Virgin and Saint Thomas in the city, consecrated in 1356. It was moved to the current church in 1783, when the Augustinians took over the building from the Cistercian convent founded in 1322 by the widowed Bohemian Queen Elisabeth.[31] It was revered as an image of Saint Luke and is a version of the famous *Salus Populi Romani* in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, although the Virgin's complicated clasped hands in the Rome prototype have been simplified.

The *Virgin and Child* from the chapel at the Royal Palace of Charles's successor, Wenceslaus IV (1361–1419), at Březnice is another Bohemian copy, but it offers crucial information about a further icon by the hand of Saint Luke imported into Bohemia again probably at the time of Charles IV. An inscription on the back reads: 'this glorious image of the Virgin Mary procured by the most serene prince, Lord of the Romans Wenceslas most illustrious king of Bohemia was painted to resemble the image that is kept in Roudnice which Saint Luke painted with his own hand. Anno Domini 1396.'[32]

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[27] O. Pujmanová, 'Studi sul culto della Madonna di Aracoeli e della Veronica nella Boemia tardomedievale', *Arte Cristiana*, 80 (1992): pp. 243–64; B.D. Boehm and J. Fajt (eds), *Prague, the Crown of Bohemia*, 1347–1437 (New York, 2005), p. 148 (no. 28).

[28] Ibid.

[29] Pujmanová, 'Studi sul culto della Madonna', pp. 354–5, 259–60.

[30] M. Frinta, 'Pastiglia appliqué decoration at Karlštejn Castle: continuity of procedure', in J. Fajt (ed.), *Court Chapels of the High and Middle Ages and their Artistic Decoration* (Prague, 2003), p. 76.

[31] For its Cistercian history: K. Benešovská, 'The royal house at Brno and its chapels', in ibid., pp. 185–93. M. Frinta, 'The Kykkotissa and her variants: in search for Italian painters on Cyprus', in P.W. Wallace (ed.), *Visitors, Immigrants and Invaders in Cyprus* (Albany, 1995), p. 108, n. 17, claims the icon came from San Eustorgio in Milan, as part of the shared loot of Frederick Barbarossa and Vladislav II in 1160.

[32] Translation from Boehm and Fajt, *Prague, the Crown of Bohemia*, p. 216.



Fig. 5.2 Copy of the Aracoeli Virgin, 1355, tempera on panel, Treasury of Saint Vitus Cathedral [Metropolitní Kapitula u Sv. Vita], Prague. © Prague Castle Administration; Photo: Jan Gloc.



Fig. 5.3 *Virgin and Child Hodegetria*, second half of thirteenth century, tempera on panel, church of the Augustinian Monastery, Brno. Photo: Jiri Krejci.

The Březnice icon, and therefore by implication the lost Roudnice panel, is a version of the Virgin *Kykkotissa*, the famous icon kept in the monastery of Kykkos on the island of Cyprus which, as we have seen, was supposed to be one of the images painted by Saint Luke. Reputedly brought from Constantinople by Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118) around the turn of the twelfth century, the icon has not been seen for centuries, but copies show the Virgin with a patterned outer veil which also slips off the head slightly, and the Christ Child with a patterned white robe, both details seen in the Březnice icon.[33] The design has been reversed, however, which suggests tracing at some point in the history of the various copies. The lost Roudnice icon came from the Castle chapel and is believed to have been a gift from the Lusignan dynasty of Cyprus.[34] Yet an indulgence associated with the icon dating from 1358 shows that its presence in Roudnice antedated by some years the visit of Peter I of Lusignan to Prague in 1363/64, formerly thought to be the occasion of its donation.[35]

The importance of icons believed to be by the hand of Saint Luke at the court of Charles IV begs the question of whether these icons had a part to play in the decorative scheme of Charles's most famous artistic enterprise: the chapel of the Holy Cross at Karlštejn near Prague (Figure 5.4). Founded in 1357 and consecrated in 1365, its unusual series of 129 half-length figures of saints, knights and kings

[33] For the Virgin Kykkotissa: K. Weitzmann, 'Icon painting in the Crusader kingdom', *DOP*, 20 (1966): pp. 51–83 (reprinted in idem, *Studies in the Arts at Sinai: Essays by Kurt Weitzmann* [Princeton, New Jersey, 1982], pp. 325–86 [Essay XII]). See also D. Mouriki, 'Thirteenth-century icon painting in Cyprus', *The Griffon*, 1–2 (1985–86), p. 27, n. 63.

[34] Boehm and Fajt, *Prague, the Crown of Bohemia*, pp. 216–17 (no. 81).

[35] Frinta, 'The Kykkotissa', p. 108, n. 17; Peter's visit was thought to have been the occasion of the gift by J. Myslivec, 'Česka Gotika a Byzanc', *Umeni*, 4 (1970): pp. 333–49.

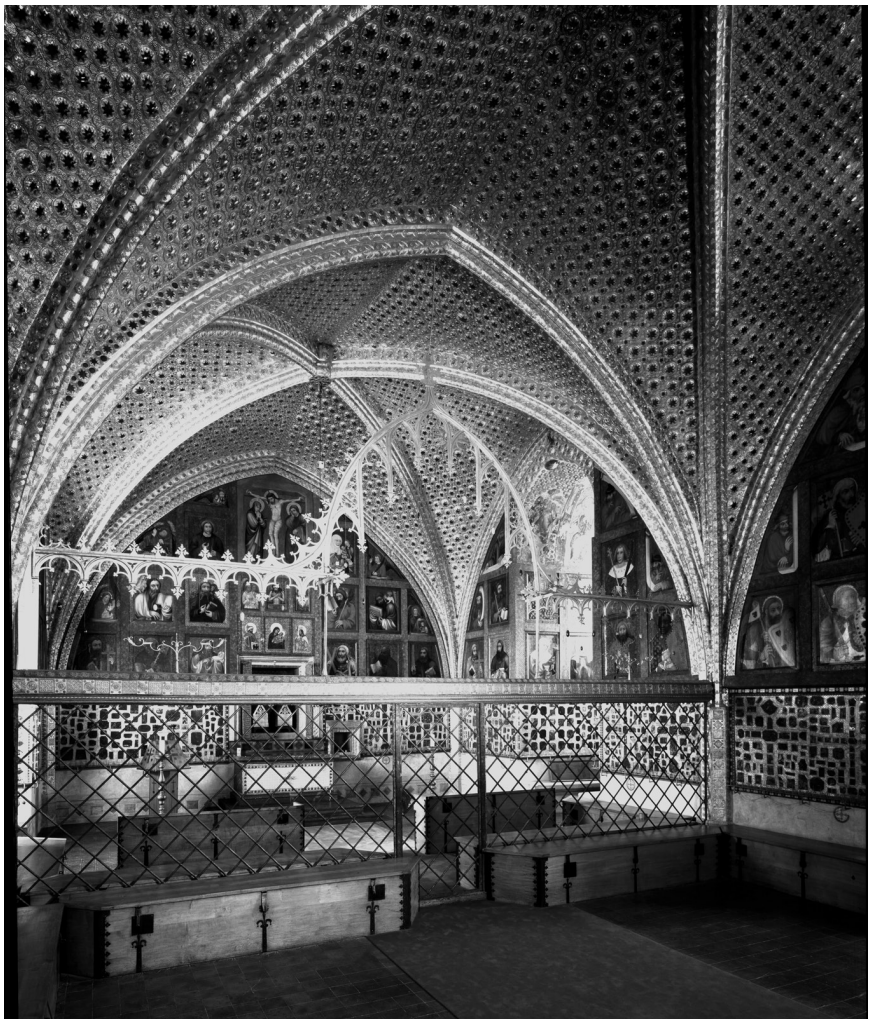


Fig. 5.4 Chapel of the Holy Cross, founded 1357, consecrated 1365, Karlštejn, Prague. Photo: Radovan Boček.

were painted on panel by Master Theodoric (*fl*. 1359–67), who was rewarded for this work in 1367.[36] As early as the end of the thirteenth century the writer on church ritual Durandus identified the half-length format as characteristically Greek.[37] While interpretations of the Holy Cross Chapel

[36] J. Fajt and J. Royt (eds), *Magister Theodoricus, Court Painter of Emperor Charles IV: decorations of the sacred spaces at Castle Karlštejn* (Prague, 1997), p. 29.

[37] J.M. Neale and B. Webb, *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments: a translation of book one of Rationale Divinorum Officiorum by W.Durandus, Bishop of Mendes* (Leeds, 1843), p. 54.

have varied widely, a few authors have associated it with the Byzantine sphere.[38] The chapel of the Holy Cross impresses first and foremost not as an icon gallery but as a series of reliquary busts in the less conventional medium of painting instead of sculpture, but almost all with their inlaid relics, and most represented gazing at the altar where the relics of Christ's Passion were kept. The reliquary bust had a long tradition in western European art, most famously in the Goldene Kammer in the church of Saint Ursula in Cologne, where the seventeenth-century arrangement of the busts in multiple rows in a single room may reflect an earlier, similar scheme.[39] As Olga Pujmanová has pointed out, however, it is more difficult to account for the choice of a half-length rather than a bust-length format in the Holy Cross Chapel, and for the use of paintings rather than sculpture.[40] That the much-venerated half-length paintings 'from the hand of Saint Luke' might have played a role in this choice should perhaps not be ruled out.

The other extraordinary aspect of the Karlštejn chapel paintings is the gesso backgrounds with their cast relief patterns, which were deliberately adopted at some point after the start of this scheme although it remains somewhat uncertain when, and how much of, the cast relief decoration is original.[41] This sort of background dates back to the mid-twelfth century in western Europe, but it is also a technique known in icon painting particularly associated with Cyprus and with 'Crusader' icons.[42] In both traditions, it is thought to have evolved as a substitute for metal decoration or revetments. The western tradition of cast relief backgrounds is thought to antedate its use in icons, so, if anything, the movement is west to east and not vice-versa, but, at the very least, this constitutes a shared technique or 'community

[38] A. Legner (ed.), *Die Parler und der schöne Stil, 1350-1400: Europäische Kunst unter den Luxemburgern* (5 vols, Cologne, 1978), vol. 3, p. 226.

[39] O. Pujmanová, 'On the sources of inspiration of the art at the court of Charles IV', in Fajt, *Court Chapels*, p. 89.

[40] Ibid., p. 90.

[41] Z. Grohmanová, 'Research of the panel paintings in the Chapel of the Holy Cross at Karlštejn Castle', in *Magister Theodoricus*, pp. 517–18; H. Blochová, 'The mediaeval art technology of the painted decoration of Karlštejn Castle', in Fajt, *Court Chapels*, pp. 269–78; Frinta, 'Pastiglia appliqué'.

[42] J. Nadolny, 'The technique and use of gilded relief decoration by northern European painters, *c*.1200–1500', Ph.D Thesis, Courtauld Institute, University of London, 2000, ch. 19; eadem, 'The gilded tin-relief backgrounds of the Thornham Parva retable and the Cluny frontal', in A. Massing (ed.), *Painting and Practice: the Thornham Parva retable: technique, construction and context of an English medieval painting* (London and Turnhout, 2003), pp. 179–88. See also D. Talbot Rice, 'Cypriot icons with plaster relief backgrounds', *JÖB*, *Festschrift Otto Demus*, 31 (1972): pp. 269–78; M.A. Frinta, 'The puzzling raised decorations in the paintings of Master Theoderic', *Simiolus*, 8 (1975): pp. 49–68; idem, 'Raised gilded adornment of the Cypriot icons and the occurrence of the technique in the West', Gesta, 20 (1981): pp. 333–47; Mouriki, 'Thirteenth-century icon painting', pp. 32–3. Thanks also to Dr Nadolny and Lynne Harrison for their help on this matter.

of culture', as Mojmir Frinta puts it.[43] Whether familiarity with Cypriot or Crusader techniques played a part in establishing this decorative scheme at Karlštejn remains a matter of debate. While Jilleen Nadolny views cast relief backgrounds essentially as pertaining to a western European tradition, Frinta pointed out that certain cast motifs at Karlštejn recur in Cypriot icons and elsewhere.[44] The lost Roudnice Virgin, now believed to have been in Bohemia at least since 1358, may have been Cypriot in origin, and one of the Cypriot copies of the Virgin *Kykkotissa* has a chequerboard-like relief background that resembles the kind of backgrounds found in some of the Karlštejn paintings.[45] The reasons why one of the Prague copies of the Aracoeli Virgin was also endowed with a cast relief background may be attributed equally to either northern traditions or the traditions of icon production.

In the end, the case for icons playing a part in the formulation of the Holy Cross Chapel paintings at Karlštejn appears relatively insecure compared with the traditions of the Catholic west, but it should probably not yet be entirely dismissed.

Icons and the Crusading Ideal in the Netherlands

Installed in Cambrai Cathedral in 1451, the so-called 'icon' of the Virgin and Child known as 'Notre-Dame de Grâce' in (*c.*1340; Figure 5.5) was consistently described as having been made by Saint Luke in the acts of the cathedral chapter, although confusingly it resembles none of the Roman prototypes described above, and its model has yet to be identified.[46] Jean Wilson suggested, however, that the painting and its copies constituted part of a campaign to launch a crusade for the liberation of Constantinople, captured by the Ottomans in 1453, and that it was the 'eastern' appearance of the painting that made it so suitable for such fund-raising.[47] Since Ainsworth

[43] Frinta, 'Pastiglia appliqué', pp .68–81; Nadolny, 'The gilded tin-relief backgrounds', p. 179.

[44] Frinta's thinking developed between 1975, when the technique was associated with western Europe and Master Theoderic; 1981, when the technique was associated with Crusader icons; and 2003, when the Cypriot icons constitute one element in the 'continuity of procedure'. Blochová, 'Medieval art technology', p. 276 and V. Fromlová, 'The exceptional nature of the painting of Magister Theodoticus', in Fajt, *Court Chapels*, p. 301, also appear to retain a role for icon techniques in the Karlštejn backgrounds.

[45] A. Papageorgiou, *Byzantine Icons of Cyprus* (Athens, 1976), p. 83 (no. 29; the correct entry for this icon in provided on p. 78 for no. 27).

[46] Ainsworth, '"À la façon grèce"', pp. 582–6.

[47] J.C. Wilson, 'Reflections on St Luke's hand: icons and the nature of aura in the Burgundian Low Countries during the 15th century', in *The Sacred Image East and West*, pp. 132–46 (esp. pp. 140–41).



Fig. 5.5 The Cambrai Madonna (*Notre-Dame de Grâce*), ***c.***1340, tempera on panel, Cambrai Cathedral, France. © KIK-IRPA, Brussels.

took up Wilson's argument in 2004, the evidence of two new publications demands a review of these arguments.[48]

'Notre-Dame de Grâce' belonged to Canon Fursy de Bruille (d. 1450), later archdeacon of Valenciennes, who had acquired it in Rome from his employer, Cardinal Jean Allarmet of Brogny (d. 1426).[49] He brought the painting back from Rome in 1435.[50] After Fursy's death it was installed in the Trinity chapel close to his grave.[51] As an image from the hand of Saint Luke, it quickly took on a public cult importance and a confraternity was founded in honour of the Virgin and Saint Luke in 1453, attracting funds from patrons as illustrious as Louis XI of France (1423–83).[52] The fact that the confraternity's feast day fell on the feast of Saint Luke underlines the status of the image, like those analysed above, as made by the hand of the evangelist.[53]

In April 1454 the chapter agreed to pay Bruges painter Petrus Christus for three copies of this image made for the Count of Etampes, John of Burgundy, the cousin of Philip the Good, third Valois Duke of Burgundy and the Netherlands.[54] According to Jean Wilson, these copies and a further 12 painted images of the Virgin commissioned from Hayne of Brussels between June 1454 and June 1455 were associated with the crusading impulse emanating from the Feast of the Pheasant in February 1454, at which the Count of Etampes and others pledged themselves to a crusade against the Ottoman Turks.[55] It is certainly true that Philip the Good maintained a strong interest in the Holy Land and the struggle against the Ottomans: it was crusading ideals that prompted the foundation of the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1430. Pilgrim Georges Lengherand recorded that Philip had financed a hostel in Jerusalem for pilgrims intending to visit Mount Zion, and had also sent to Jerusalem a complete chapel of wood, the installation of which was forbidden by the occupying authorities.[56]

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[48] M. Maillard-Luypaert, 'D'une "ymage de Notre Dame", l'autre genèse et origines de la dévotion à Notre-Dame de Grâce de Cambrai au 15e siècle', in C. Vincent and J. Pycke (eds), *Cathédrale et pèlerinage aux époques médiévales et moderne: reliques, processions et dévotions à l'église-mère du diocèse* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2010), pp. 175–97 (I would like to thank Dominique Vanwijsberghe for drawing my attention to this article); F. Cambier, 'A propos du triptyque de l'abbaye Saint-Aubert à Cambrai et de Haine de Bruxelles: Relecture des sources d'archives', in L. Campbell, J. Van der Stock, C. Reynolds and L. Watteeuw (eds), *Underdrawing and Technology in Painting: Rogier van der Weyden in Context* (Leuven and Paris, 2012), pp. 108–11. (I would like to thank Father Cambier for discussing his paper with me by email).

[49] Maillard-Luypaert, '"ymage de Notre Dame"', pp. 177–8.

[50] Not in 1440, as has been believed, since Fursy de Bruille was evidently back in the Low Countries in time to attend the Peace of Arras in 1435; Cambier, 'A propos du triptyque', pp. 108–11.

[51] Maillard-Luypaert, '"ymage de Notre Dame"', p. 178.

[52] J. Houdoy, *Histoire artistique de la Cathédral de Cambrai* (Paris, 1880), p. 71.

[53] Maillard-Luypaert, '"ymage de Notre Dame"', p. 180.

[54] M.W. Ainsworth and M.P.J. Martens, *Petrus Christus* (New York, 1994), pp. 195–6.

[55] Wilson, 'Reflections on St Luke's hand', pp. 132–46.

[56] Ménilglaise, 'Voyage de Georges Lengherand', pp. 115, 126, 130 and p. 228 n. 102.

The coincidence of the dates of the Feast of the Pheasant and the commission of the three copies of the Cambrai *Virgin and Child* and, indeed, the person for whom they were intended is striking, but there are also problems with the argument. As an Italo-Byzantine image known originally to have come from Rome rather than Constantinople, and with abbreviated Latin inscriptions rather than Greek, there is no obvious reason why it should have served as a visual metaphor for the plight of the Greek Church.[57] Greek was used at the Feast of the Pheasant to identify the plight of Byzantium, for example in the image of a naked woman attached to a pillar, swathed in a veil with Greek lettering and defended by a lion.[58] The earliest recorded instance of the Cambrai painting being carried in a procession in 1455 was to combat the plague, not to ferment a crusade.[59]

Although it was the Count of Etampes who had prompted the copies to be made, it was the chapter that paid for them, which may suggest religious rather than specifically crusading business. As a warden of the cathedral and a relative of the bishop, the Count of Etampes may have been hoping to raise funds for the cathedral from local families. One surviving copy of the painting in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, recasts the icon in a distinctively Netherlandish style; it contains coats of arms that may be those of the local Sandelin family and a Latin inscription taken from the Office of the Virgin, firmly associating it with western liturgical practices.[60] Francis Cambier has pointed out that the payment for the 12 images of the Virgin was recorded in the accounts associated with liturgical expenses and that they seem to have decorated six double-sided banners cited in the same account; crucially, they are never described as copies of the image by Saint Luke, and may well have been standard Netherlandish-style paintings of the Virgin.[61]

Several copies of the so-called 'Notre-Dame de Grâce' of Cambrai do in fact survive, but they testify to its continuing cult rather than to its possible association with crusading activities. The primary interest in these icons was arguably because they were reputed to be by the hand of the evangelist and painter Saint Luke, not necessarily because they were associated with the plight of Byzantium.

There were, however, paintings in the collection of the dukes of Burgundy that do seem to have been connected with the concept of a crusade to assist territories under threat from the Ottoman Turks. At least two icons and two

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[57] Maillard-Luypaert, '"ymage de Notre Dame"', p. 180 points out, however, that priests processing to the chapel of the Trinity sang before the image a hymn associated with the Greek Church, albeit one also used in the western tradition during the Middle Ages.

[58] A. Brown and G. Small, *Court and Civic Society in the Burgundian Low Countries* (Manchester, 2007), p. 44.

[59] Maillard-Luypaert, '"ymage de Notre Dame"', p. 184.

[60] Ainsworth, '"A la façon grèce"', p. 586.

[61] Cambier, 'A propos du triptyque', pp. 108–11.

Greek reliquary plaques were listed in the 1420 inventory of the collection of Philip the Good.[62] A *Deësis* triptych, described as 'à la façon Grèce' had a silver frame with half-length figures described as made in Venice. These three paintings are preceded in the inventory by a painting of the *Virgin and Child* which also had a silver frame made in Venice, but was not described specifically as 'à la façon Grèce'. Philip's inventory also includes a classic half-length Virgin 'de l'ouvraige de Grèce', also with a metal revetment containing images this time firmly described as Greek. One of the reliquary plaques was of gold and contained relics of the True Cross with Greek lettering on one side and a double cross on the other; the second was of silver, again with Greek lettering and contained the bones of a saint.[63]

Philip became Duke unexpectedly in 1419 after the assassination of his father John the Fearless. These icons and reliquary plaques must surely have been inherited from John. In the 1390s a plan was made for a crusade to be fought jointly by John's father, Philip the Bold, together with the Dukes of Lancaster and Orléans. In the event, the crusade was waged in Hungary, which was then the frontier against the Ottomans. It was led not by Philip the Bold but by John and Sigismund of Hungary. It was an unmitigated disaster, and in 1397 John was taken captive and ransomed. John and his companions eventually started for home on 23 January 1398. A couple of weeks earlier, on 8 January, John was presented with four 'tableaux de chapelle' by an ambassador from Constantinople at Conegliano just to the north of Venice.[64] It seems extremely likely that the Greek triptych and the single-panel icon in Philip the Good's inventory constituted part of this diplomatic gift or all of it depending on whether the triptych counted as one or three items. There may have been time between receipt of this gift and John's departure for the hasty making of the Venetian frame of the *Deësis* and the one other painting of the Virgin not described as Greek, or the frames may have been supplied with them.

These diplomatic gifts appear to have been part of an ongoing campaign on the part of Manuel II Palaiologos (r. 1391–1425) to solicit help for Byzantium against the Ottoman threat: Manuel himself was appealing for help in Paris at the same time. John appears to have taken the opportunity of a meeting with Manuel in France in 1400 to make a reciprocal gift of a picture ('tableau').[65] Whether these icons were regarded as metaphors for the plight of the Orthodox Church or simply as diplomatic gifts remains uncertain, but their history does suggests that their presence in the 1420 inventory reveals little

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[62] L. de Laborde, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne: Etude sur les lettres, les arts et l'industrie pendant le XVe siècle et plus particulièrement dans les Pays-Bas et le duché de Bourgogne* (3 vols, Paris, 1849–52), vol. 2, pp. 240 and 265.

[63] Ibid., p. 256 (nos. 4188–9).

[64] J. Paviot, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade et l'Orient (fin XIVe siècle–XVe siècle)* (Paris, 2005), p. 50, n. 20.

[65] Ibid., p. 52.

about John's personal taste still less about Philip's. None of these works is listed in the inventory of Charles the Bold, suggesting that they were not regarded as dynastic heirlooms sufficiently prized to be handed on.

'À la façon Grèce'

In 1497 and 1499 large consignments of Cretan icons of the *Virgin and Child* were apparently being exported to western Europe – some specifically to Flanders.[66] It remains uncertain why they appealed to a Catholic market, however. It is possible that their attraction was as mass-produced copies of icons 'by the hand of Saint Luke', but the commissioning documents do not actually describe them in these terms. Did their artistic approach matter to their potential market? Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood have suggested that the appeal of the icons lay in their 'authoritative design, a sovereign and styleless appearance, an overall effect of temporal immunity', and that 'their strangeness only measured the distance of the modern western church from a pure and primitive Christianity'.[67] It is very difficult to find specific evidence that the religious aesthetic of icons appealed to fifteenth-century northern European viewers, however.

Anselm Adornes owned a painting by Van Eyck (*c.*1395–1441) and is known to have had a very sophisticated grasp of visual culture, judging by the furnishing of the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges, which he founded as a sort of commemoration of his 1471/72 journey to Jerusalem. It appears to have contained no icons, however. The fact that Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa (1401–64) sent the abbot and monks of the monastery at Tegernsee an icon might constitute evidence of an aesthetic preference and, famously, he based his theological treatise *De visione Dei* around the experience of looking at an icon of Christ.[68] There is no way to be sure, however, that this was a Greek icon as opposed to an Italian painting done in the manner of an icon. He made no comments about its authority or purity of style, and in the same text he also commended the very different art of Rogier van der Weyden (1399/1400–1464). In using the icon as an extended metaphor to demonstrate that, just as we look, we are also seen by God, this characteristically Roman Catholic meditation encouraged a conventional ascent from the material (the picture) to the spiritual.

As we have seen in both Prague and Cambrai, copies of icons made for a Catholic market resembled the artistic conventions of their new contexts

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[66] M. Acheimastou-Potamianou (ed.), *From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek frescoes and icons* (London, 1987), p. 51; C.M. Richardson, K.W. Woods and M.W. Franklin, *Renaissance Art Reconsidered: an anthology of primary sources* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 371–3 (3.5.3).

[67] Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 105.

[68] J. Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa's Dialectical Mysticism: text, translation and interpretive study of* De Visione Dei (Minneapolis, 1985).

as much as that of their prototypes. The early fourteenth-century Byzantine *Hodegetria* icon in the cathedral treasury at Liège (Figure 5.1) was completely over-painted and four plaques have been added to the original silver revetment. This may reflect the contemporary concern for the upkeep of images, evident in the regular repainting of statues, for example, or even suggest that fifteenth-century viewers thought that the icon needed updating to resemble more closely the Netherlandish painting of their own time they were used to. Whichever is the case, the over-painting demonstrates eloquently that it was the format and its alleged originator Saint Luke that was important. It is difficult to maintain that the precise style or artistic approach of an icon mattered when it was hidden under fifteenth-century repaints.

Pilgrims to Jerusalem would almost certainly have encountered the contrasting visual culture of the Byzantine Church in Jerusalem itself or en route in Candia, Cyprus or, for earlier pilgrims, even Constantinople itself. Some made the additional journey to Saint Catherine's Monastery at Sinai, where they would also have had the opportunity to study icons. The observations of most fifteenth-century pilgrims were restricted to images by the hand of Saint Luke, the allure of which appears to have been second only to relics. The extent to which written pilgrims' accounts commented on Byzantine art varied. Ruy Gonzalez Clavijo, envoy of Henry III of Castile, visited Constantinople during a trip to Timur in 1403–06. He requested a tour of the famous churches and enthused at length about the mosaics and other works of art.[69] Pero Tafur also commented positively on mosaics in Constantinople.[70] Yet Betrandon de la Broquière, although clearly curious about Orthodox ritual – he described waiting all day in the Hagia Sophia to see how they did things – appears to have been immune to its art.[71]

There is a third, less palatable point to be made in relation to the possible aesthetic appeal of icons to northern European Catholics. The Orthodox Church was officially regarded as schismatic and Byzantium was even considered by some to be treacherous because John V (r. 1341–91) and Manuel II had both been vassals of the Ottoman overlord Murad.[72] Clavijo objected less to the Armenian Church than to the Greek, which he considered to 'hold many errors'.[73] While Pero Tafur, who himself was of Greek descent, showed genuine sympathy for the plight of the Greek people, Betrandon de la Broquière revealed a deep-seated prejudice against the Greeks:

> for all that I spent time with the Greeks and was in contact with them and did business with them, I found more friendship among the Turks, and would

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[69] G. le Strange (trans.), Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerland, 1403–6* (London, 1928), pp. 61–85.

[70] *Pero Tafur, Travels*, pp. 139–40, 142.

[71] Kline, *Voyage d'Outremer*, pp. 99–100.

[72] J. Harris, *Greek Emigrés in the West, 1400–1520* (Camberley, 1995), pp. 39-40. See also Chapter 1, p. 30.

[73] Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerland*, pp. 113–15.

> sooner trust myself to them than to the Greeks. It seems to me that they do not like Christians who are loyal to the Church of Rome. The pledges that they have since made,[74] I think were made more from poverty and hunger than from love for the Church of Rome. I was told that shortly before I arrived, they had reached the point of damning the Pope who had held a general council in which they were declared schismatics and damned and that they were a race of slaves.[75]

Most sinister of all, he offered advice in case 'some prince or other might want to undertake the conquest of Greece and go even farther if necessary', something he was convinced the papal legate whom he encountered wished to do.[76] Betrandon wrote his account on the request of Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy and the Netherlands, and may well have been his spy. Jacques Paviot has suggested that at this time it was the restoration of the Latin Empire that some in authority aspired to, not that of Byzantium.[77] This anti-Greek prejudice may well have impeded an appreciation of the religious aesthetic of icons, at least at this date.

The situation in Spain, however, may have been different. The inventory of Queen Isabella of Castile (r. 1476–1504) made after her death in 1504 reveals that she owned eight paintings described as 'de grecia' or 'de las de grecia'.[78] All but two were icons of the *Virgin and Child*: one appears to have been a standard single panel; two had unpainted shutters; one had shutters with *Saint Michael* and the *Annunciation*; one had shutters with *Saints Michael and John the Evangelist*. The double presence of the Archangel Michael, charged with weighing the souls on Judgement Day, may indicate a preoccupation with the afterlife. It is possible that at least some of the triptychs constituted an adaptation of the icons for western liturgical use. The *Virgin and Child* and *Saint Catherine* 'de las de greçia' may have been a diptych or just two distinct panels. The last was a *Virgin and Child* in a cloud surrounded by four scenes and a burial scene with two angels and a queen. This last description refers to a surviving icon which, together with one of the triptychs with plain shutters, was transferred to the Capilla Real in Granada, the final burial place of Isabella and her husband, Ferdinand.[79]

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[74] Presumably regarding reunification at the Council of Ferrara/Florence; see Chapter 1, pp. 30–31.

[75] Kline, Voyage d'Outremer, p. 95.

[76] Ibid., pp. 146 and 168.

[77] Paviot, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade*, p. 290 (esp. Introduction and Conclusion).

[78] F.J. Sanchez Canton, *Libros, Tapices y Cuadros que coleccionó Isabel la Católica* (Madrid, 1950), p. 173 (no. 68), p. 176 (no. 131), p. 177 (nos. 132, 134), p. 178 (no. 142), p. 183 (no. 189), p. 184 (no. 201).

[79] E. Motos Guirao, 'Acerca de algunos objetos 'Bizantinos conservados en la capilla real de Granada', in P. Badenas and J.M. Egea (eds), *Oriente y occidente en la edad media influjos bizantinos en la cultura occidental* (Vitoria, 1993), pp. 227–46. Motos Guirao does not specify which of Isabella's 1505 icons this is, however. Although impossible to prove, the transfer of an icon to the burial place of Isabella and Ferdinand may reflect a more personal relationship between owner and icon as observed in practices in the Orthodox Church:

Two of the representations it includes, *Moses Receiving the Law* and the *Death of Saint Catherine*, were common themes (for obvious reasons) in icons from Saint Catherine's Monastery in Sinai. According to Motos Guirao, monks from Saint Catherine's visited the Spanish court, and Saint Peter Martyr was sent as an ambassador to the Sultan of Egypt, overlord of Saint Catherine's.[80] Hieronymus Münzer, travelling in Spain in 1494/95, met two monks in Madrid, one Franciscan and one of the Sinai order of Saint Basil and whom Münzer heard celebrate the mass in Greek. Both were envoys of the Sultan, and came bearing presents.[81] Any of these scenarios might have presented occasions for the diplomatic gift of the icon to the Queen just as John the Fearless had received such gifts a century or so earlier.[82]

The fact that at least two icons from Isabella's collection were sent to Granada and one icon of the *Virgin and Child* was inherited by her daughter Joanna suggests that particular value was attached to them.[83] Significantly, none is stated to be an image by the hand of Saint Luke, so this value may have been for their own sake. Links between the Iberian Peninsula and Greek territories had existed for centuries. Both Basileios Bessarion (1403–72) and George of Trebizond (1395–*c.*1472/73) had contacts in Castile;[84] here the fall of Constantinople in 1453 appears to have had a particularly profound effect, and in 1488 Isabella's husband Ferdinand offered aid to Greek refugees.[85] As early as 1480 there was a chair of Greek at the university of Salamanca. It is therefore possible that here there was a greater receptivity to Byzantine visual culture.

Greeks in the West

Philip the Good's court painter Jan van Eyck famously signed at least three of his paintings in pseudo-Greek letters, with the transliterated motto of the

A. Lymberopoulou, '"Pro anima mea", but do not touch my icons: provisions for private icons in wills from Venetian-dominated Crete', in D. Stathakopoulos (ed.), *The Kindness of Strangers: charity in the pre-modern Mediterranean* (London, 2007), pp. 71–89.

[80] Guirao, 'Acerca de algunos objetos', p. 243.

[81] M. Tarayre (ed.), *Jérôme Münzer, Voyage en Espagne et au Portugal (1494–5)* (Paris, 2006), p. 180.

[82] For icons as diplomatic gifts, see pp. 3, 7, 10, 39, 149, 153, 155, 172.

[83] J. Ferrandis, *Datos documentales para la historia del arte Español III, Inventarios reales, Juan II a Juana la Loca* (Madrid, 1943), p. 231; Sanchez Canton, *Libros*, p. 177 (no. 132).

[84] For Bessarion, see Chapter 1, pp. 30–31; for George of Trebizond: *ODB*, vol. 2, pp. 839–40.

[85] G. Morocho Gayo, 'Constantinopla: historia y retorica en los cronistas Alonso de Palencia y Pedro de Valeria', in Badenas and Egea, *Oriente y occidente*, pp. 153, 159, 163, 168.

artist ΑΛΣ ICH XAN ('Als ich kan', or 'As I can').[86] The letters may be partially Greek, but the language is the artist's native Dutch. Van Eyck could certainly not have copied this precise sentence from the inscription on an icon, but with a little help he could have worked out some letters, perhaps even from one of the Greek works of art in Philip the Good's own collection. Instruction from a Greek speaker is not out of the question. Most Greek expatriates recorded in the Low Countries arrived after the fall of Constantinople, but the exiled prince of Vlaquie in Thessalonike received money from the Burgundian court and the city of Bruges in 1426, and there were probably other visitors.[87]

Despite the international clientele of Bruges, and the fact that artists are known to have come from German, Spanish and Italian territories to work there, it is not until the 1480s that craftsmen from the Greek world are documented in Bruges with certainty, and even then, not painters but woodworkers. In 1480 and 1481 Jan Greic and Joris Greic, filius Degradens, both became citizens of Bruges, a prerequisite to entering the guilds. Both were from Crete and both were said to be 'scrijnwerkers' or the sort of joiners who might make tracery and ecclesiastical furniture.[88] How is this curious immigration to be explained?

Cretan joiners were evidently quite renowned. Working exclusively in cypress wood, their shops were to be found in the main street of Candia and many pilgrims were tempted by their wares. Several Jerusalem pilgrims' accounts recording a stop in Candia mention these cypress goods including Georges Lengherand in 1485/86, just a few years after the two Cretan joiners settled in Bruges.[89]

The two Cretan joiners in Bruges may have simply produced the kind of souvenir items that pilgrims purchased on Crete, like the chests, desks and screens that the pilgrim Bishop of Saintes in France commented on in 1461.[90] Alternatively, they might have been producing specifically religious items like paternosters, mentioned by another French pilgrim, Jacques Lesaige, in 1518, or carved crucifixes.[91] Whatever they were accustomed to carving, it is not

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[86] The three are the Virgin and Child with a Fountain (Antwerp, Museum voor Schone Kunsten: http://www.kmska.be/en/collectie/highlights/Madonna_fontein.html); the supposed Self-portrait (London, National Gallery: http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-van-eyck-portrait-of-a-man-self-portrait) and the Portrait of Margaret van Eyck (Bruges, Groeninge Museum: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jan_van_Eyck_-_Portrait_of_Margareta_van_Eyck_-_WGA7618.jpg).

[87] Paviot, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne, la croisade*, p. 277. See also Harris, Greek Emigrés, p. 19.

[88] R.A. Parmentier, *Indices op de Brugsche Poorterboecken* (2 vols, Bruges, 1938), vol. 2, pp. 1479–96.

[89] Ménilglaise, 'Voyage de Georges Lengherand', p. 101, n. 83. See also Chapters 3, pp. 79–81 and Chapter 4, pp. 130–32.

[90] Louis de Rochechouart, in Hemmerdinger Illiadou, 'La Crète sous la domination Vénitienne', p. 477.

[91] *Voyage de Jacques Le Saige, de Douai à Rome, Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, Venise, Jérusalem et autres Saints Lieux* (Douai, 1851), p. 82; Ménilglaise, 'Voyage de Georges Lengherand', p. 101, n. 83.

likely that cypress wood would have been exported to Bruges just to supply two carvers from Candia, and it was the cypress wood that constituted part of the attraction of Cretan goods. Jean Adornes judged the cypress trees of Crete worth commenting on.[92] As early as 1405 the inventory of Margaret of Flanders, wife of Philip the Bold, included tables made of cypress wood, though not necessarily made in Crete.[93] It could simply have been that there were too many souvenir makers in Candia and, perhaps, encouraged by Netherlandish pilgrims calling at Crete en route for the Holy Land, that the two decided to seek their fortune in the Low Countries, and try their hand at carving oak, which was substantially harder to work with than their native cypress.

Conclusion

The value placed on images by the hand of Saint Luke constituted a shared characteristic of both western Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy. Such images formed an important part of the tradition of potent, miracle-working images of late-medieval Catholicism, and their aesthetic appeal as works of art was strictly subordinated to their religious significance. Those copies they gave rise to in northern Europe were hybrid Catholic images. Even where icons can be shown to have been associated with crusading impulses it remains very uncertain whether their status as diplomatic gifts also implied a deeper significance as visual metaphors for the plight of the Orthodox Church. While there is ample evidence for the fascination of icons believed to derive from the hand of Saint Luke, there is relatively little evidence for the response of northern European viewers to the contrasting visual culture of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine world. Some individuals including Queen Isabella and, perhaps, Nicholas of Cusa may have placed value on the distinctive aesthetic of icons from the Byzantine Church. The vigorous trade in Cretan icons documented in 1497 and 1499 may conceivably indicate a burgeoning interest in Greek art towards the end of the century, but it might also conceivably document the mass export of versions of the ever-popular copies of images said to be by the hand of Saint Luke.

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92 Heers and de Groer, *Itinéraire*, p. 159. See also Chapter 3, p. 79 and n. 61.

93 C. Dehaisnes, *Documents et extraits divers concernant l'histoire de l'art dans la Flandre, l'Artois et le Hainaut avant le XVe siècle* (Lille, 1886), pp. 875 and 903.



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6

Byzantine Icons in the Medici Collection

Rembrandt Duits

Introduction

Among the more surprising items owned by the Galleria Nazionale del Bargello in Florence is a rather splendid Byzantine icon of *Christ Pantokrator* (Figure 6.1 and Colour Plate XVI).[1] It is executed in a technique generally referred to as miniature mosaic: tiny mosaic tesserae embedded in wax or mastic on a wooden panel – a cabinet-sized cousin of the monumental mosaics for which Byzantium is famous.[2] It is not the type of work visitors to the Bargello might anticipate to find in a museum in a Renaissance city. In fact, the presence of the icon among so many treasures of the Renaissance in Florence meant that the piece was not even recognized as Byzantine when it first came to the Bargello in the nineteenth century.[3] Even less expected is perhaps the notion that this Byzantine work once had pride of place in the art collection of those notorious champions of the Renaissance, the Medici. We associate the Medici collection with antique cameos and Italian Renaissance painting and sculpture; more recently, it has been recognized that they also

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[1] On the Bargello Pantokrator: L. Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze. Dipniti toscani del secolo XIII. Scuole bizantine e russe dal secolo XII al secolo XVIII* (Rome, 1958), pp. 79–80; I. Furlan, *Le icone bizantine a mosaico* (Milan, 1979), pp. 53–5; A.-A. Krickelberg-Pütz, 'Die Mosaikikone des Hl. Nikolaus in Aachen-Burtscheid', *Aachener Kunstblätter*, 50 (1982): pp. 9–141 (esp. pp. 77–9); O. Demus, *Die byzantinischen Mosaikikonen*. 1: *Die grossformatigen Ikonen* (Vienna, 1991), pp. 34–8**;** *Eredità del Magnifico* (Florence, 1992), pp. 133–4; *Byzantium*, p. 436 (no. 225).

[2] On miniature mosaic icons: Furlan, *Le icone bizantine a mosaico*; Krickelberg-Pütz, 'Die Mosaikikone des Hl. Nikolaus'; Demus, *Die byzantinischen Mosaikikonen*; A. Effenberger, 'Images of personal devotion: miniature mosaic and steatite icons', in *Faith and Power*, pp. 209–14.

[3] See below, n. 102.

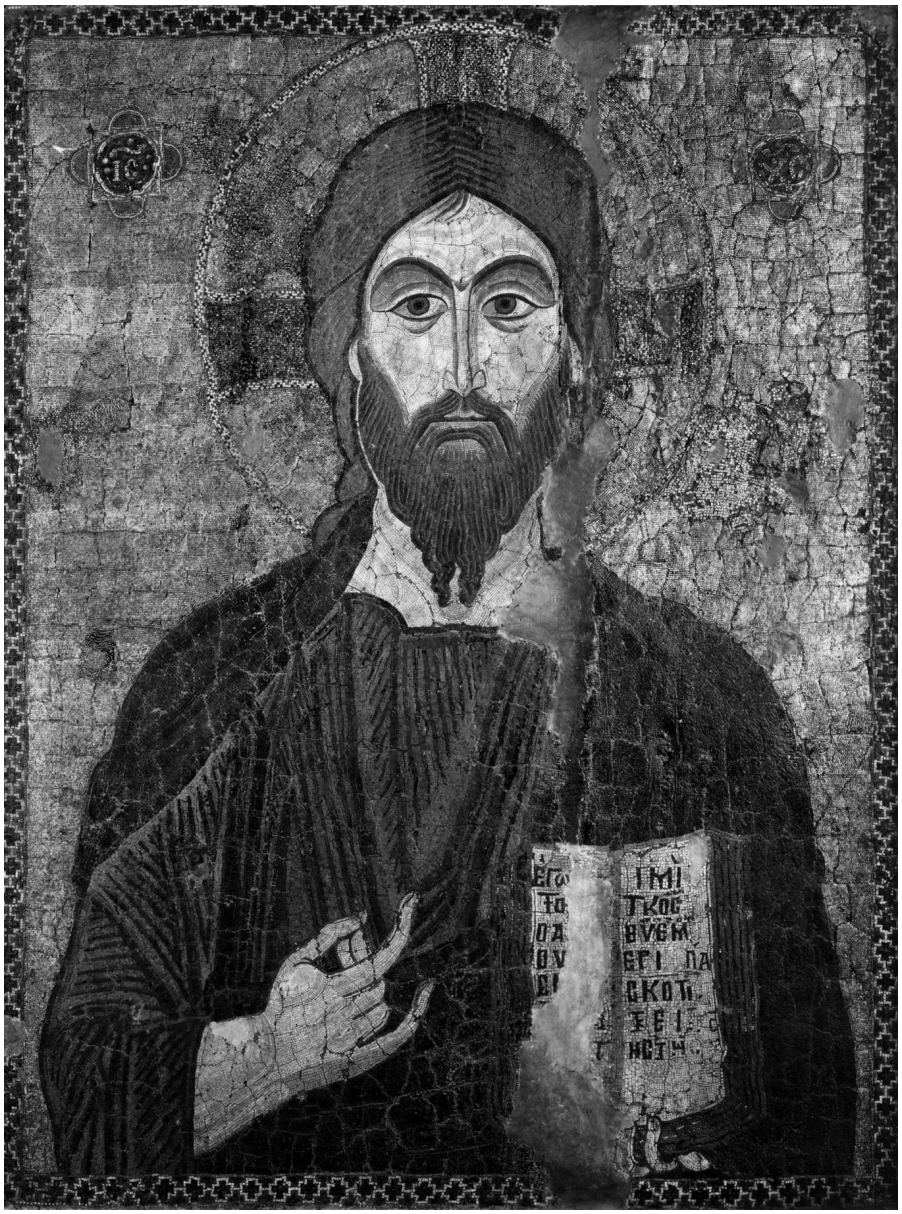


Fig. 6.1 *Christ Pantokrator* (prior to modern restoration) (Colour Plate XVI).

had a predilection for contemporary paintings from Flanders,[4] but Byzantine art falls well outside the scope of our perception of Renaissance tastes – shaped as that perception is, no doubt, by the narrative of Giorgio Vasari's *Lives*, in which the *maniera greca* stands for everything a self-respecting Renaissance artist would seek to avoid.[5] So great is the inconsistency that scholars have repeatedly dismissed the Medici interest in the Pantokrator icon and other similar works they owned as a mere taste for exotic curios.[6]

The sheer size of the Medici icon collection seems to contradict such an interpretation, however. One might expect a collector to possess three or four exotic curios, but in 1492 the Medici household contained at least 17 Byzantine icons in different media. In the late nineteenth century Jacob Burckhardt argued that these icons must have been devotional items obtained by earlier generations of the Medici family and passed on as family heirlooms.[7] Yet, successive inventories show that the Medici were in fact building up their icon collection during the second half of the fifteenth century. F.W. Kent, in a passing comment, claims Byzantine miniature mosaics were 'associated with great wealth'.[8] The valuation of icons in fifteenth-century inventories is in fact neither low nor exceptionally high compared to other artefacts; but, more importantly, as Thorstein Veblen has argued, tokens of wealth purchased by the rich generally conform to established patterns of taste and are rarely gathered indiscriminately.[9] Laurie Fusco and Gino Corti, in their detailed study of the activities of Lorenzo the Magnificent as a collector, point to the location where most of the miniature mosaics and other icons were kept within the Medici

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[4] P. Nuttal, *From Flanders to Florence the impact of Netherlandish painting, 1400–1500* (New Haven and London, 2004), pp. 105–17.

[5] In the Life of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano, Vasari speaks of 'that old Greek manner, coarse and without proportion' [*quella maniera greca goffa e sproporzionata*], and in the Life of Giotto he says that the artist 'became so good at copying nature that he abandoned completely that coarse Greek manner and revived the modern and good art of painting' [*divenne così buon imitatore della natura che sbandì affatto quella goffa maniera greca, e risuscitò la moderna e buona arte della pittura*]: Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori. Nelle redazioni del 1550 e* 1568, ed. R. Bettarini and P. Barocchi (6 vols, Florence, 1966–), vol. 2 (testo), pp. 59 and 97.

[6] *Eredità del Magnifico*, p. 133: '… questo tipo di produzione, apprezzato prevalentemente per la sua esotica preziosità, non certo per la sua qualità artistica'; Effenberger, 'Images of personal devotion', p. 212: 'secular admirers and owners of Byzantine mosaic icons or other smaller objets d'art would have valued these foreign genres primarily as curios'; C.B. Fulton, *An Earthly Paradise the Medici, their collection and the foundations of modern art* (Florence, 2006), pp. 179–80: 'Greek icons and mosaic panels were valued as exotic artifacts …' (Fulton also acknowledges the possible spiritual dimension of the Byzantine works).

[7] Burckhardt's remarks can be found in his essay 'Die Sammler', written during the 1890s and published posthumously in 1898: J. Burckhardt, *Das Altarbild. Das Porträt in der Malerei. Die Sammler* (Munich, 2000), p. 292.

[8] F.W. Kent, *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificenc* (Baltimore and London, 2004), p. 41.

[9] T. Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Harmondsworth, 1994), esp. pp. 74–5.

palace and conclude that Lorenzo 'must have appreciated these mosaics since he kept most of them in his study along with his most precious objects'.[10]

The reluctant tone of this statement suggests scholars still find it difficult to picture Lorenzo the Magnificent as an admirer of Byzantine icons. Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood have recently tried to make this picture fit better within the traditionally accepted framework of the Italian Renaissance. Following on from an observation made by Anthony Cutler in 1995,[11] they argue that Byzantine icons were actually seen as 'antiquities' at the time, according to a definition of this term that was broader and less precise than the one in use today.[12] Their principal piece of evidence is a letter written by Cardinal Jacopo Ammanati in 1468, in which he speaks of 'images of saints of ancient work imported from Greece, which they call icons over there.'[13] Unfortunately, the meaning of the adjective 'ancient', *antiquus*. in this context is not straightforward; in another fifteenth-century source in which an icon is described as 'depicta antique', the phrase seems to mean 'painted in the old manner' rather than referring to classical antiquity.[14] Furthermore, collecting Byzantine icons never seems to have gained the same level of popularity as collecting antiquities in general. Surviving documents indicate there were two or three major collections of icons in Quattrocento Italy (of which the Medici collection was one) and a handful of cardinals who owned one or two icons each – hardly enough to speak of an 'icon vogue', as Nagel and Wood do.[15] And, crucially, Nagel and Wood do not explain how the 'maniera greca' of Byzantine icons could have been associated with classical antiquities in the fifteenth century, only to become the hallmark of the medieval decline of classical antiquity in Vasari's *Lives* a mere 50 years later.[16]

In this chapter the place and function of the Byzantine icons in the Medici collection will be reassessed using the available historical documentation (and

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[10] L. Fusco and G. Corti, *Lorenzo de' Medici, Collector and antiquarian* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 74.

[11] A. Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship: changing modes in the Italian response to Byzantine artifacts, ca. 1200–1750', *DOP*, 49 (1995): pp. 237–67 (esp. p. 251).

[12] A. Nagel, 'Authorship and image-making in the monument to Giotto in Florence cathedral', *Res*, 53/54 (2008): pp. 143–51 (esp. p. 147); A. Nagel and C.S. Wood, 'What counted as an "antiquity" in the Renaissance?', in *Renaissance Medievalisms*, pp. 53–75 (esp. p. 60); eidem, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York, 2010), pp. 107 and 128.

[13] Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship', p. 251: 'imagines sanctorum operis antiqui ex Graecia allatis, quas illi iconas vocant.' See also Nagel, 'Authorship and image-making', p. 148; Nagel and Wood, 'What counted as an antiquity', pp. 59–60; eidem, *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 101.

[14] R. Duits, '"Una icona pulcra": The Byzantine icons of Cardinal Pietro Barbo', in P. Jackson and G. Rebecchini (eds), *Mantova e il Rinascimento italiano: Studi in onore di David S. Chambers* (Mantua, 2011), pp. 127–42 (esp. pp. 135–6).

[15] Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 109.

[16] Nagel and Wood, 'What counted as an antiquity', p. 61 and *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 105, repeatedly note the role Vasari played in dissociating Byzantine icons from the Italian Renaissance but do not clarify how this new approach to Byzantine art came about.

with the Bargello Pantokrator as a recurring motif). The reassessment will show that, rather than conforming to the standard model of the Renaissance as the self-conscious revival of antiquity, the Medici taste for icons forces us to question some of the basic assumptions made in the study of Renaissance art, aesthetics and patronage.

The Medici Icons

The documentation of the Medici icon collection connects it to the three most prominent members of the family from the fifteenth century: Cosimo the Elder (1389–1464), Piero the Gouty (1416–69) and Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449–92). Their three generations span the period when the Medici firm – a conglomerate including a bank as well as silk and wool manufacturing operations – reached the peak of its success (around the middle of the century), when the Medici became established as the dominant political players in the Republic of Florence (from 1434 onwards) and when they began to project themselves as princes in all but name, erecting a large town palace, staging quasi-courtly spectacles and building up a significant collection of art and antiquities.[17] Cosimo was the principal architect of this dynastic development and Lorenzo perhaps its most brilliant exponent.

The first mention of Byzantine icons in the Medici household dates from 1463, when '10 panels in the Greek style' were registered among the possessions of Piero the Gouty in the Medici palace in Florence.[18] It is not clear whether these items had been collected by Piero himself or had been passed on to him by his father Cosimo. Two later inventories present more detailed information on the Medici icon collection as it developed during the fifteenth century. The first of these is the post-mortem inventory of Medici valuables made in January 1465, five months after the death of Cosimo the Elder.[19] It is a list of precious objects grouped roughly according to type, which includes a total of 12 items identified

[17] On the Medici firm: R. De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397–1494* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963). The classic study on early Medici politics is N. Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici, 1434 to 1494* (Oxford, 1997). The bibliography of Medici art patronage is extensive; general studies include: R. Fremantle, *God and Money. Florence and the Medici in the Renaissance, including Cosimo I's Uffizi and its collections* (Florence, 1992); F. Ames-Lewis (ed.), *The Early Medici and their Artists* (London, 1995); Fulton, *An Earthly Paradise.* On the individual Medici of the fifteen h century: A. Beyer and B. Boucher (eds), *Piero de'Medici "il Gottoso" (1416–1469). Kunst im Dienste der Mediceer – Art in the service of the Medici* (Berlin, 1993); D.V. Kent, *Cosimo de'Medici and the Florentine Renaissance the patron's oeuvre* (New Haven, 2000); Kent, *Lorenzo de' Medici and the Art of Magnificenc* .

[18] M. Spallanzani (ed.), *Inventari Medicei 1417–1465. Giovanni di Bicci; Cosimo e Lorenzo di Giovanni; Piero di Cosimo* (Florence, 1996), p. 119 (fo. 21v): '10 tavolette alla ghreca'.

[19] Ibid., pp. 137–61.

either with the phrase 'tavola greca' (nos 1–2, 5–6, 8–13 and 16 in the Appendix; descriptions marked 'A') or, in one case, 'tavola alla greca' (no. 7).

The second document is the post-mortem inventory of the Medici household made at the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492.[20] This inventory lists a wide range of objects in the Medici palace in Florence (and other family dwellings) room by room. It includes 12 items, the descriptions of which match those of the 12 icons listed in 1465 (nos 1–2, 5–13 and 16 in the Appendix; descriptions marked 'B').[21] Only one of these is specifically identified as a Greek work, 'lavoro grecho' (no. 12), while two others are described as having either Greek script (no. 11: 'llettere greche') or Greek-style ornamentation and script (no. 5: 'trafori e lettere.. lavorato alla grecha') on their silver-gilt frames. In addition to these 12, the 1492 inventory contains a further five or possibly six items that can also be interpreted as Byzantine icons (nos 3, 4, 14, 15, 17, 18). Only one of these is actually qualified as a 'Greek work' (no. 17: 'opera grecha'); the others are either combined with a Byzantine piece in a single entry in the inventory (nos 14 and 18) or executed in carved steatite or miniature mosaic (nos 3, 4 and 15), media which were hardly, if at all, used in western Europe.

All the icons registered in 1465 were fitted with silver or silver-gilt revetments ('ornata d'ariento').[22] One panel (no. 1) was described as 'bound' or 'wrapped' in silver-gilt, 'legata in ariento dorato', which signified, perhaps, that its revetment covered a larger part of the panel's surface than those of the other works.[23] The 1492 inventory describes the revetments in greater detail. It refers to them in terms of a 'frieze' of silver or silver-gilt (e.g. no. 2: 'una fregiatura d'ariento dorato'), which suggests they were applied around the edges of the panels, like frames, as in a number of surviving examples.[24] These frames exhibited a variety of decorations, including punchwork patterns (nos 2, 5, 8, 9 and 11: 'trafori'), leaves (nos 2, 6, 8 and 10: 'fogliami'), Greek script (no 11: 'llettere Greche'), figures of saints (e.g. no. 1: 'mezzi santi') and scenes from the Life of Christ (e.g. no. 2: 'storie di Cristo'); the figures and scenes were either modelled in silver relief (nos 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, and 16) or rendered in enamel (no. 2: 'smalti') or mosaic (no. 11). The description of one of the icons

[20] M. Spallanzani and G. Gaeta Bertelà (eds), *Libro d'inventario dei beni di Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Florence, 1992). The 1492 inventory survives only in a copy made in 1512, when the Medici returned to Florence after a prolonged period of exile (see below).

[21] Not all authors agree the 12 icons listed in 1465 were all still present in 1492. Fulton, *An Earthly Paradise*, p. 180, claims there are 11 matching descriptions in the two documents; Fusco and Corti, *Lorenzo de' Medici*, p. 74, are even more cautious and list only seven or eight matches.

[22] On revetments: J. Durand, 'Precious-metal icon revetments', in *Faith and Power*, pp. 243–58.

[23] The adjective phrase 'legato in oro' [set in gold] was also used for cameos: Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d'inventario*, pp. 142–3.

[24] See, for instance, Effenberger, 'Images of personal devotion', p. 232.

(no. 16) also refers to an extra revetment in the form of a silver crown, which had been put on the head of the figure in the image (identified as God the Father in the entry, but in all likelihood Christ[25]), suggesting an element of religious veneration.[26]

Of the five or six additional works recorded in 1492, two had silver-gilt, frame-like revetments as well (nos 3 and 4). One further panel was described as made completely of silver and enamel (no. 15: 'tutta d'ariento e smaltate'), with the figures of Saints Peter and Paul on either side and a full-length image of Christ in mosaic in the centre. The entries for the two or three remaining pieces (nos 14, 17 and 18) do not refer to revetments at all, which may indicate the icons did not have them.[27]

The majority of the icons registered in 1465 (nine out of 12) were miniature mosaics. Seven of these were described with the phrase 'mosaic panel' (nos 5–6, 8–12: 'tavola … di musaico'); two further works did not have their materials specified in 1465, but were qualified as 'mosaics' in 1492 (nos 7 and 12). Miniature mosaics are thought to have been produced exclusively for the circles of the Byzantine court in Constantinople, between the middle of the twelfth and the early decades of the fourteenth centuries.[28] Some of the early surviving examples are fairly large and coarse and may have been intended for the templon (the barrier between nave and sanctuary) of a Byzantine church, but most are small, refined works for private devotion. The Medici mosaics, with their precious-metal frames, appear to have belonged to the latter category.

The three non-mosaic icons that had entered the Medici collection by 1465 were each executed in a different medium. One was a painted panel (no. 16). Another was described as made of fine stone (no. 2: 'di pietra fine'), further qualified as 'soapstone' ('pietra talcho') in 1492; this piece was undoubtedly carved in steatite, a soft, light-green sedimentary stone that was used as a medium for small icons from the tenth century onwards.[29] The third work presents a problem. It was claimed to have been made of ebony (no. 1: 'ebano') and the 1492 inventory states that it was 'carved in relief' ('intagliato di relievo'). Wood-carving was practised for the decoration of church furniture

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[25] See below, n. 32.

[26] See, for example, the silver-gilt revetment in the shape of a crown which Lorenzo the Magnificent donated to the cult image of Santissima Annunziata in 1465: E.M. Casalini, *Michelozzo di Bartolommeo e l'Annunziata di Firenze* (Florence, 1995), p. 85.

[27] The inventory of the collection of Cardinal Pietro Barbo (1417–71), begun in 1457 but with later additions, includes icons with as well as icons without revetments: Duits, '"Una icona pulcra". It is not certain, however, that the absence of references to revetments in some of the icon entries of the 1492 Medici inventory meant that the icons in question did not have them. In one case (no. 13 in the Appendix), the description of an icon in the 1465 inventory mentions a silver revetment, but the entry for the same work in the 1492 inventory does not.

[28] See above, n. 2.

[29] I.D. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite* (Vienna, 1985); Effenberger, 'Images of personal devotion', pp. 213–4.

in Byzantium,[30] but not, as far as can be established, for the manufacture of icons, and ebony does not seem to have been a widely used material in Byzantine art. This icon was also the one which, in 1465, was described as 'bound in silver-gilt', and may have had a more extensive form of revetment than the other pieces. It is therefore conceivable that the 'relief' mentioned in 1492 was actually sculpted in silver-gilt as part of the revetment and the 'ebony' was merely a dark wooden support.[31]

The additional icons listed in 1492 included two further works executed in steatite (nos 3 and 4, each described as made of soapstone, 'di talcho'), one mosaic icon (no. 14), one miniature mosaic set in silver (no. 15, as mentioned above), and one or two painted panels (nos 17 and 18).

The subjects of the Medici icons present a cross-section of popular Byzantine iconography. The list of 1465 includes two images of Christ (nos 13 and 16),[32] two of the Virgin and Child (nos 2 and 7, the former surrounded by images of the 12 apostles[33]), two of Saint John the Baptist (nos 5 and 11), one of Saints Peter and Paul (no. 8),[34] one of Saint Peter alone (no. 12), one of Saint Michael (no. 1) and one of Saint Nicholas (no. 10).[35] One of the two images of Christ was a 'half-length image of the Saviour' (no. 13: 'una ½ figura del salvatore') in miniature mosaic. This work, appraised at 100 florins in the inventory, was by far the most expensive of all the icons (for prices, see below). It is quite likely that it was in fact the Pantokrator icon now in the Bargello, with which

[30] See, for instance, the fifteenth-century carved wooden lecterns – with figurative scenes – preserved in the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos: A. Kararkatsanis (ed.), *Treasures of Mount Athos* (Thessalonike, 1997), pp. 264–5.

[31] The icon may have resembled one currently in the treasury of the basilica of San Marco in Venice, with an image in silver-gilt relief mounted on a wooden panel – and coincidentally also depicting Saint Michael: H.R. Hahnloser (ed.), *Il tesoro di San Marco* (2 vols, Florence, 1965–71), vol. 2, pp. 25–7 (no. 17) and Pl. XXI.

[32] The second image of Christ (no. 16) was also the only painted icon present in 1465. Although no piece with a precisely matching description was recorded in 1492, it is safe to assume the painted half-length image of God the Father listed among the icons in 1492 (no. 16 B: 'una mezza fighura d'Iddio Padre fatta di penello') must have been the same work. Images of God the Father did not exist in traditional Byzantine iconography, but a heavily bearded Christ could have been mistaken for God the Father by a western viewer.

[33] No. 2 was carved in steatite but its composition probably resembled that of a surviving miniature mosaic of the Virgin and Child surrounded by the 12 apostles last recorded in a private collection in Brussels: Krickelberg-Pütz, 'Die Mosaikikone des Hl. Nikolaus', p. 86.

[34] This work was described as 'two full-length figures' ('2 figure ritte') in 1465, but the entry of 1492 specified that it depicted Saints Peter and Paul. Fusco and Corti, *Lorenzo de' Medici*, p. 74, too, accept that these two descriptions refer to the same work.

[35] It is likely that icon of Saint Nicholas listed in 1465 was identical with the one described as depicting 'a saint' ('un sanoto') in the inventory of 1492. Fusco and Corti, ibid., give the two descriptions as a possible match.

this chapter began (Figure 6.1), allowing us to trace Medici ownership of this particular work back till at least 1465.[36]

The list of 1465 also contains two narrative icons: one depicting the Annunciation (no. 9) and one identified as a Last Judgement (no. 6). The latter was represented exceedingly rarely in Byzantine icons and it is likely that the work in question actually showed another subject, which merely looked like a Last Judgement to a western audience.[37] One possible candidate is the Ascension, the standard Byzantine iconography of which shows Christ enthroned in glory above the Virgin and the apostles (Figure 6.2).[38] A second option is the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia – Roman soldiers from the 12th Legion, stationed in Armenia, who converted to Christianity and were condemned to stand naked on a frozen lake until they died from exposure or recanted their faith. The veneration of the Forty Martyrs was widespread in the territories of the Orthodox Church but virtually unknown in the west.[39] The early Byzantine iconography of the theme shows Christ enthroned in heaven above a mass of writhing naked bodies, which a western viewer unfamiliar with the subject might well have interpreted as the resurrected dead (Figure 6.3).[40]

The 1492 inventory added three images and two or three narrative pieces to the existing list. The first of the new images was a small mosaic 'head of Christ' (no. 14) that was registered together with the large 'head of Christ' thought to have been the Bargello Pantokrator (no. 13).[41] The second was also an image of

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[36] The Bargello Pantokrator has been associated with the larger of 'two heads of Christ' rendered in mosaic that were registered in the Medici palace in 1492: Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, p. 79, accepted by Fusco and Corti, *Lorenzo de' Medici*, p. 74. A connection with the 'half-length image of the Saviour' from the 1465 inventory has not been made before. In fact, Fulton, *An Earthly Paradise*, p. 180, argues instead that the expensive 'half-length image of the Saviour' was the only icon from 1465 not to be recorded again in 1492.

[37] There are only three known painted icons of the Last Judgement that pre-date the fall of Constantinople, all of them belonging to the collection of the Saint Catherine's Monastery in Sinai: N. Patterson Ševčenko, 'Images of the Second Coming and the Fate of the Soul in middle Byzantine art', in R.J. Daly (ed.), *Apocalyptic Thought in Early Christianity: Holy Cross Studies in Patristic Theology and History* (Grand Rapids, 2009), pp. 250–72. An eleventh-century ivory panel with this subject is presently housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London: http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O94171/panel-the-last-judgement/

[38] I thank my co-editor, Angeliki Lymberopoulou, for this suggestion.

[39] W. Braunfels (ed.), *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* (8 vols, Rome, 1968–76), vol. 8, cols 550–54. The entry lists only one western depiction of the scene: the early eight-century fresco in Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome.

[40] There is a surviving mosaic icon of the Forty Martyrs in the collection of Dumbarton Oaks, but it belongs to a later iconographical type in which the representation of Christ above the martyrs is reduced to a hand pointing down from the sky: Krickelberg-Pütz, 'Die Mosaikikone des Hl. Nikolaus', pp. 90–92; Effenberger, 'Images of personal devotion', pp. 224–5 (no. 133).

[41] The association of its larger companion with the Bargello Pantokrator is in fact the main reason to assume that this small mosaic 'head of Christ', too, may have been a Byzantine work. Fusco and Corti, Lorenzo de' Medici, p. 74, too, list the 'small head of Christ' among the Byzantine mosaics. Fulton, *An Earthly Paradise*, p. 180, on the other hand, claims that both mosaic heads of Christ must have been contemporary Florentine works. This position

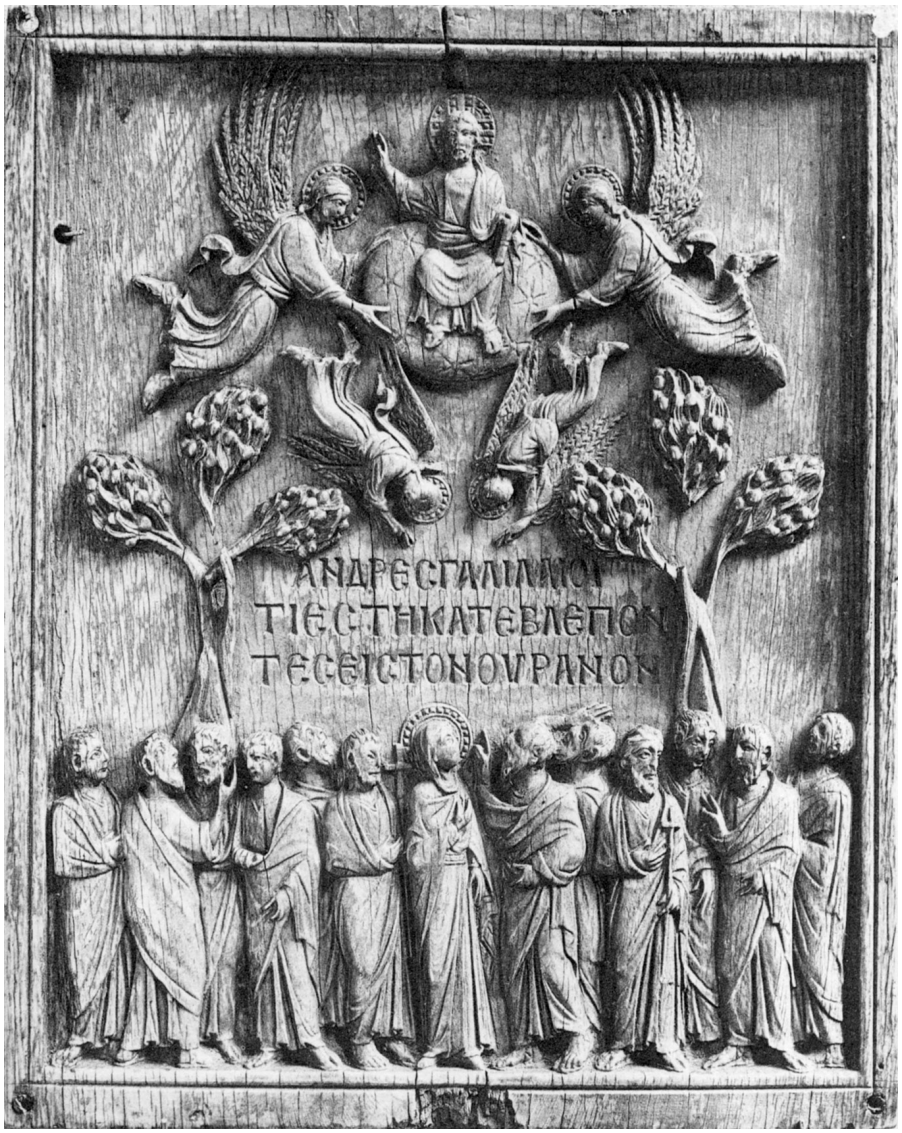


Fig. 6.2 *Ascension*, tenth century, ivory, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence. Photo out of copyright (reproduced from: Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.–XIII. Jahrhunderts* [2 vols, Berlin, 1934], vol. 2, Plate 58).

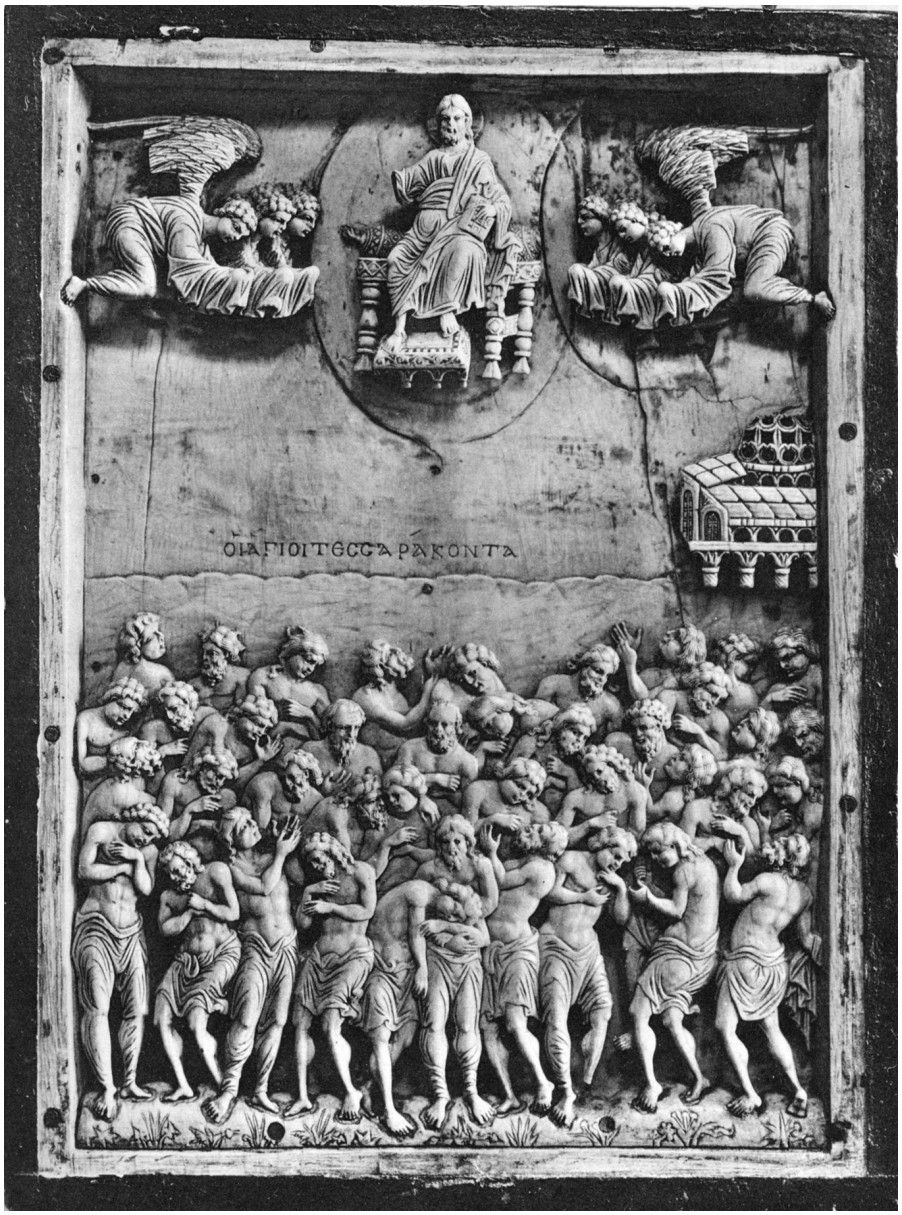


Fig. 6.3 *Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia*, tenth century, ivory, formerly Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich Museum. Photo out of copyright (reproduced from: Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.-XIII. Jahrhunderts* [2 vols, Berlin, 1934], vol. 2, Plate 3).

Christ, this time depicting him full-length (no. 15: 'una fighura d'uno Cristo.. ritta').[42] The third new image showed the Virgin and Child surrounded by 16 compartments with half-length figures, probably of saints (no. 3).

The first of the new narrative works recorded in 1492 was a steatite icon described as 'a panel and a half' (no 4: 'uno quadro et mezo') with 18 scenes from the Life of Christ. The phrase 'a panel and a half' suggests it may have been a composite work, consisting of two separate icons put together in a single frame by a Byzantine or Italian collector. One of these may have been a cycle of the so-called Twelve Feasts (principal events from the Life of Christ plus the Dormition of the Virgin, each linked to a feast day on the liturgical calendar),[43] the other a wing of a diptych showing half of the traditional Feasts cycle.

The second new narrative icon was a painted panel of the Annunciation identified as 'a greek work' (no. 17). Its inventory entry combined it with another painted panel depicting the Agony in the Garden (no. 18). It has been suggested that this latter panel, too, may have been of Byzantine origin.[44] If this was indeed the case, the work was almost certainly Cretan. The Agony in the Garden, which did not form part of the traditional Byzantine cycle of liturgical feasts, was a rare subject for an independent icon in Byzantium.[45] In Venetian Crete, however, the iconography seems to have been adopted under western influence. The panel in the Medici collection could have resembled a painted icon now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna, thought to have been made on Crete during the fifteenth century (Figure 6.4).[46] The panel shows three successive scenes from the episode of Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane: Christ praying to God the Father to 'let this cup pass', Christ kneeling before an angel presenting a chalice, and Christ berating his disciples, who had fallen asleep during his absence. The text of Christ's prayer to God the Father is inscribed on the panel in Latin, suggesting the icon was painted for a western rather than a Greek Orthodox

is difficult to maintain if we accept that the half-length Christ registered in 1465 was the Bargello Pantokrator, for if the latter work was in the Medici collection at that time, it must still have been there in 1492, and the larger of the two heads of Christ is the only item in the 1492 inventory that matches its description.

[42] Its iconography was probably comparable to that of two surviving mosaic icons in Mount Athos and Galatina: Krickelberg-Pütz, 'Die Mosaikikone des Hl. Nikolaus', p. 64, Pls 32 and 33.

[43] The work would have been comparable, in that case, to the fourteenth-century steatite panel with Twelve Feasts currently in the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos: Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, pp. 217–18 (no. 149). On the Twelve Feasts: C. Cavarnos, *Guide to Byzantine Iconography* (2 vols, Boston, 1993) vol. 1, p. 123.

[44] Fulton, *An Earthly Paradise*, p. 180, n. 130.

[45] On the Agony in the Garden: M. Vassilaki, 'Some observations on early fifteenth-century painting in Crete', in eadem, *The Painter Angelos and Icon-painting in Venetian Crete* (Farnham, 2009), pp. 203–24; M. Vassilaki (ed.), *The Hand of Angelos: An Icon Painter in Venetian Crete* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 84–5.

[46] Vassilaki, 'Some observations'; Vassilaki, *The Hand of Angelos*, pp. 84–5.



Fig. 6.4 *The Agony in the Garden*, *c.*1400, tempera on wood, Pinacoteca Nazionale (inv. no. 332), Bologna. Su concessione del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali.

client. It cannot be proven, but it is an interesting concept that the Medici may have owned a similar contemporary Cretan icon.

Other Owners of Icons

The 17 or 18 icons registered in the Medici inventory of 1492 formed the second largest documented collection of Byzantine art in fifteenth-century Italy. By far the largest, consisting of no fewer than 37 pieces, belonged to Cardinal Pietro

Barbo, the later Paul II (Pope 1464–71), and was recorded in an inventory dated 1457, with many later additions in the cardinal's own hand.[47] Another large collection must have been owned by the Greek Cardinal Bessarion, who donated seven Byzantine works to Saint Peter's in Rome between 1454 and 1466, including at least three miniature mosaics.[48] Smaller groups of icons were also registered among the possessions of Cardinal Ludovico Trevisan (1401–65), whose collection included two or three 'old Greek panels with silver revetments' at his death in 1465,[49] and Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga (1444–83), who left 'two old Greek panels, one with the crucifixion and one with Our Lady' at *his* death in 1483.[50]

The private ownership of Byzantine panels in Italy – as distinct from the icons that were venerated publicly in churches, such as the *Salus Populi Romani* in Rome[51] – may have started among those who had dealings with the imperial court in Constantinople prior to the fall of the city to the Ottomans in 1453. A well-known miniature mosaic diptych of the Twelve Feasts, now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence, was donated to the Florentine Baptistery by the Venetian widow Nicoletta da Grioni in 1394; Nicoletta's late husband had been in the service of the Byzantine emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347–54) and was reportedly given the work as a reward.[52] Interestingly, the trend may not have remained restricted purely to the circles of wealthy collectors. The painter Gentile Bellini bequeathed a mosaic panel of the Virgin to the Scuola di San Marco at his death in 1506;[53] given the fact that the production of miniature mosaics was an almost exclusively Byzantine art form, this panel, too, may well have been a Greek icon – possibly acquired when Bellini visited Constantinople to paint the portrait of Mehmet II in 1479.

Icons and Other Pictures on Panel

The small groups of icons in the Trevisan and Gonzaga collections appear to have been the only two-dimensional images these cardinals had in their

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47 Duits, 'Una icona pulcra'.

48 E. Müntz, *Les Arts à la cour des papes pendant le XVe et le XVIe siècle* (3 vols, Paris, 1878–82), vol. 2, p. 298, n. 1; Duits, 'Una icona pulchra'.

49 R. Bagemihl, 'The Trevisan collection', *The Burlington Magazine*, 135/1085 (1993): pp. 559–63 (p. 563 [fol. 106]): '[due or] tre tauolette antiche greche fornite d'ariento'.

50 D.S. Chambers, *A Renaissance Cardinal and his Worldly Goods: the will and inventory of Francesco Gonzaga (1444–1483)* (London, 1992), p. 164, no. 598: 'Doe anchonette grece vechie: una cum un crucifixo e l'altra cum Nostra Donna'.

51 G. Wolf, *Salus populi romani Die Geschichte römischer Kultbilder im Mittelalter* (Weinheim, 1990).

52 Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship', pp. 245–6. See also Chapter 1, p. 33.

53 G. Ludwig, 'Archivalische Beiträge zur Geschichte der venezianischen Malerei', *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 24 (Beiheft) (1903): pp. 1–109 (esp. p. 13): 'Item dimitto scole mee Saneti Marci meum quadrum Sancte Marie de musaico'.

possession. Pietro Barbo, on the other hand, owned five non-Byzantine panels. One of these was probably a contemporary Italian painting, as it included a donor portrait of the cardinal himself.[54] Two others were of unspecified origin,[55] and the remaining two may have been contemporary Flemish works – images of saints set in landscapes with a wealth of background detail that was more characteristic of the Flemish than of the Italian pictorial tradition around the middle of the fifteenth century.[56] Barbo already owned these five panel paintings in 1457, when his inventory was first drawn up. The later additions to the document in his own hand do not record any further acquisitions of non-Byzantine panels. His icon collection, on the other hand, expanded from an initial set of two in 1457 to the above-mentioned total of 37 pieces, suggesting that this was the type of work in which he was most actively interested (see also the next section on Provenance).

Among the fifteenth-century collections that included icons, the Medici collection was the only one in which Byzantine panels were significantly outnumbered by Italian paintings and, depending on the method of counting, also by Flemish ones. By 1492 the Medici owned at least 50 Italian (predominantly Florentine) painted panels and a further 13 Italian paintings on canvas, as well as four fifteenth-century Flemish panels and 38 other Flemish paintings on canvas.[57] In terms of total numbers, the icons thus came in third place as an 'ethnic' group of pictures in the Medici collection. Works on panel, however, were more expensive and prestigious than those on canvas,[58] and in terms of the number of works on panel, the icons formed the second largest group.

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[54] This work appears to have been a two-sided panel with the Annunciation on one side and the Adoration of the Magi, including Barbo's portrait, on the other – probably a small work for private devotion: Müntz, *Les Arts à la cour des papes*, vol. 2, p. 202: 'Item una alia acona lignea depicta, cum Virgine Maria, Joseph et puero, et tribus magis, et persona domini Cardinalis; a parte posteriori est annunciatio; que ancona est ornata de argento deaurato in circuitu ejus, cum quatuor armis ipsius Rmi domini Cardinalis, et est valoris 8 ducatorum.'

[55] Ibid. p. 205: 'Item una alia acona antiqua lignea, depicta, cum Virgine Maria et puero; in lateribus sanctus Jacobus, sancta Catherina, cruxifixus et alii sancti, et est valoris 2 ducatorum' and 'Item una alia acona lignea, depicta, cum facie Salvatoris coronam spineam in capite habentis, et est valoris 5 quarlenorum'.

[56] The one was a Saint John the Baptist in the wilderness with 'cities, people, animals, mountains, etc.', the other a Saint Jerome with 'mountains, forests, trees, bodies of water, and birds': Müntz, *Les Arts à la cour des papes*, vol. 2, pp. 205–6: 'Item una alia acona lignea, cum figura sancti Johannis Baptiste in heremo existentis, ubi sunt depicte parve civitates, homines animalia, montes et similia, et est valoris 2 ducatorum auri' and 'Item una alia acona lignea, depicta, cum figura beati Jeronimi, cum montibus, silvis, arboribus, aquis, et avibus, et est valoris 5 ducatorum'.

[57] The figures are based on Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence*, p. 106. The total number of Italian paintings is likely to have been higher as there was also a group of anonymous paintings, many of which must have been from Italy and probably from Florence.

[58] Ibid.

Provenance

Most of the icons in the Medici collection appear to have been older works, which probably had their first owners in the Byzantine Empire. It is not known how these pieces came to the west and ended up in the hands of the leading family of Florence. One suggestion that has been made is that icons were presented to the Medici as diplomatic gifts during the Council of Ferrara/Florence in 1438/39, but it is unlikely such an exchange would have involved more than one or two works.[59]

It has also been speculated that icons must have come to Italy after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, either carried by refugees or sold by Ottoman plunderers.[60] Another possibility is that icons were given to westerners who assisted in the defence of the Byzantine capital. On the back of the sixteenth-century ebony frame of the Bargello Pantokrator, the name 'Jacopo Tedaldi' is inscribed in a contemporary hand.[61] It can hardly be coincidental that this was the name of a Florentine merchant who had fought on the walls of Constantinople, is known to have been evacuated from the city after the fall, and left us an account of the siege.[62] Perhaps the inscription preserves the memory that it was this merchant who originally brought the miniature mosaic from Constantinople to Italy and then sold it to the Medici. Yet, although the fall of Constantinople may have brought about an influx of icons into Italy and the Medici collection was certainly growing in the decade or so after the fall, it also expanded by another 50 per cent after 1465, which would be more difficult to explain as a direct impact of the Ottoman conquest.[63]

A third idea that has been put forward is that the Medici acquired some of their icons from other Italian collectors, notably Pietro Barbo.[64] Indeed, when Barbo – by then Pope Paul II – died in 1471, Lorenzo the Magnificent obtained a number of items from his collection as a repayment for papal debts, but

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[59] On the icons as diplomatic gifts: Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, p. 79; *Eredità del Magnifico*, p. 133. See also Chapter 1, p. 20. Cardinal Barbo, who was also involved in the Council as a member of staff of his uncle, Eugenius IV (Pope 1431–47), owned only two icons when his collection was first inventoried in 1457; these are the only two works he could have acquired as diplomatic presents at the event: Duits, 'Una icona pulchra'.

[60] The importance of the fall of Constantinople for the migration of Byzantine artefacts to Italy is discussed in Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship', pp. 250 and 252–3.

[61] Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, p. 79. Marcucci implausibly interprets the inscription as an attribution to master Jacopo Torriti (active *c.*1270–1300), who had worked on the ceiling mosaic of the Florentine Baptistery in the late thirteenth century.

[62] On Tedaldi: A. Pertusi, *La caduta di Constantinopoli* (2 vols, Milan, 1976), vol. 1, pp. 172–3.

[63] The Barbo collection grew much more spectacularly in the decade after the fall – from the two works recorded in the initial version of his inventory in 1457 to 37 by 1464, the year of his accession to the papal throne, when he is thought to have stopped making additional entries in the document: Duits, 'Una icona pulchra'. Dr Angeliki Lymberopoulou suggested to me that the fall of Mystras to the Ottomans in 1460 may have caused a further influx of icons from Byzantium into Italy.

[64] Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 107.

there is no evidence the selection included icons.[65] Only two of the new pieces registered in the Medici collection in 1492 potentially match items listed in the Barbo inventory: the small 'Head of Christ' (no. 14) could be identical with a miniature mosaic Christ Pantokrator among Barbo's icons,[66] and the steatite icon described as 'a panel and a half' with scenes from the Life of Christ (no. 4) could be the one described in Barbo's inventory as showing 'many miracles and stories of our lord, and his death and burial'; the latter work was also one of the more expensive icons in Barbo's collection and thus may have been an attractive piece for the Medici to obtain.[67]

An option that has not been explored is that the icons were purchased through trade – perhaps because the notion of an active acquisition of Byzantine art does not accord with the modern idea of what Renaissance collectors would have coveted. No documents pertaining to a trade in icons in Renaissance Italy have been uncovered, but if such a trade existed, it would almost certainly have run through Venice, the traditional port of transit for Byzantine artefacts travelling to western Europe.[68] The Florentine sculptor and architect Filarete (*c.*1400–*c.*1469), who visited Venice in 1449 and 1458,[69] mentions he saw Byzantine miniature mosaics there. In his treatise on architecture, completed in 1465, he discusses various examples of the medium of mosaic, stating:

> I have also seen small panels of it in Venice that came from Greece. They were masterfully done and were very small and they say they were made of egg-shell. If this is true, I do not know how they were done, [but] they were noble things and most nobly done.[70]

It is worth noting that all the documented fifteenth-century Italian owners of icons mentioned above had ties to Venice. Two of them, the Cardinals Trevisan and Barbo, were of Venetian origin. Cosimo de' Medici spent a year in exile in the Serenissima in 1433/34.[71] Cardinal Gonzaga is documented to

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[65] Fusco and Corti, *Lorenzo de' Medici*, pp. 6–10.

[66] It is also possible that this icon from the Barbo collection is in fact the Christ Pantokrator panel which Barbo's successor, Sixtus IV (Pope 1471–84), gave to the Count of Chimay in the Hainaut and which is still in Chimay today: Duits, 'Una icona pulchra', pp. 136–7.

[67] Ibid., p. 139, App. no. 7: 'una icona greca de lapide, in qua sunt sculpta multa miracula et opera domini nostri, et mors et sepultura, ornato argento deaurato, valoris 70 ducatorum'.

[68] Cutler, 'From loot to scholarship', pp. 240–42.

[69] J.R. Spencer, 'Filarete and the Cà Del Duca', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 35/3 (1976): pp. 219–22 (esp. p. 219).

[70] Antonio Averlino detto il Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, ed. A.M. Finoli and L. Grassi (2 vols, Milan, 1972), vol. 2, p. 672: 'Honne veduto ancora in tavola piccola in Vinegia, venuta di Grecia, fatta motlo solennemente, e molto minuti, i quali dicono essere fatti di guscia d'uova. Se vero è, non so come sieno fatte, sono degna cosa e degnissimamente fatte.'

[71] On Cosimo's ties to Venice and his cordial reception there during his exile: D. Kent, *The Rise of the Medici Faction in Florence, 1426–1434* (Oxford and New York, 1978), pp. 305–8.

have ordered artefacts from Venice while residing in Mantua.[72] It is possible that the Medici and other collectors acquired Byzantine icons in a similar fashion, buying them on the Venetian market via agents.

Prices

In both the 1465 and the 1492 inventories, the entries for the Medici icons included financial valuations. Their value ranged from 20 to 100 gold florins in 1465 and from less than 20 to 80 florins in 1492. With a few exceptions, the same works were given a lower appraisal in the 1492 than in the 1465 inventory, but the exclusive gold florin became more expensive compared to the common currency of the silver *lira* during the intervening period, so the actual value of the objects may have remained the same or even increased.[73] The lower appraisals of 1492 may in fact be an indication that the valuations were, to a substantial degree, based on the weight of the silver in the revetments of the icons. Indeed, the one or two painted icons without revetments that were registered in 1492 (nos 17 and 18) were given much lower valuations than the works with revetments: 6 florins for a set of two painted panels.

The price range given for the icons in 1465 puts them in a bracket that was above that of gold rings (valued at between 7 and 60 gold florins, the more expensive ones bearing stones[74]) but under that of antique cameos set in gold (valued at between 50 and 300 gold florins[75]). By 1492 the bracket of the gold rings had dropped in value similar to that of the icons (the prices of rings now ranging from 10 to 30 florins[76]) but that of the cameos had risen (30–800 florins[77]), possibly as an indication of the increasing rarity value of these items on the collectors' market.[78] The 1465 inventory does not include any contemporary panel paintings, but the 1492 inventory allows for a comparison. Their value was quite similar to that of the icons, ranging from 5 florins for a small tondo of the Virgin and Child attributed to Fra Angelico (*c.*1395–1455) (perhaps a so-called *desco da parto*, or 'birth tray')[79] to 100 florins

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72 Chambers, *A Renaissance Cardinal and His Worldly Goods*, p. 84.

73 In 1465 the exchange rate of the gold florin and the silver *soldo* (1/20 of a *lira*) was 1:82 and in 1492 it had risen to 1:116, an increase of more than 40 per cent: R.A. Goldthwaite and Giulio Mandich, *Studi sulla moneta fiorentina (secoli XIII–XVI)* (Florence, 1994), pp. 95 and 98 (values of money of account).

74 Spallanzani, *Inventari medicei*, p. 142.

75 Ibid., p. 143.

76 Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d'inventario*, pp. 40–41 (fos. 21r–21v).

77 Ibid., pp. 36–9 (fos. 18r-20r).

78 It has also been suggested Lorenzo may have inflated the value of some of the objects in his collection – but this is difficult to prove without a detailed comparison with market prices: Fusco and Corti, *Lorenzo de' Medici*, pp. 198–202.

79 Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d'inventario*, p. 57 (fo. 31r).

for a large tondo of the Adoration of the Magi, attributed to the same artist and with an elaborate gilt frame.[80]

Given the lack of documented sales of icons in Renaissance Italy, it is impossible to say whether the inventory valuations of the icons reflected actual market prices. It is significant, however, that they are consistent with the valuations of the icons in the Barbo inventory, in which icons with precious-metal revetments were appraised at between 15 and 110 papal ducats (similar in value to the Florentine gold florin) and icons without revetments at between 2 and 8 ducats.[81] Furthermore, the valuations of contemporary Italian paintings in the 1492 Medici inventory *do* seem to be related to contemporary sales prices. In the second half of the fifteenth century, small paintings such as *deschi da parto* sold within a range of 1–10 florins and a standard-size altarpiece with gilt frame cost around 100 florins.[82]

Locations and Functions

The room-by-room arrangement of the 1492 Medici inventory allows us to determine the locations of the icons within the household and speculate about their possible functions. The great majority of the works (nos 1–12, 15 and 16) were located in Lorenzo the Magnificent's private study, or *scrittoio* – a small space on the first floor, at the end of the flight of rooms that constituted Lorenzo's apartment within the palace.[83] The *scrittoio* was the treasure house of the family, home to all their most valuable objects, including pieces of French medieval goldsmith's work, antique cameos and priceless hardstone objects (most notably the Hellenistic sardonyx libation dish now known as the Tazza Farnese, valued at the extravagant sum of 10,000 florins).[84]

A rare representation of the interior of a Renaissance private study perhaps comparable to Lorenzo's *scrittoio* suggests some of these precious objects would have been stored in cupboards that formed part of a desk along the lower part of the wall, while others were displayed on shelves higher up (Figure 6.5). While the 1492 Medici inventory does not provide information on how the icons were kept in the *scrittoio*, the list of icons in the earlier Barbo

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[80] Ibid., p. 12 (fo. 6r). This is the so-called Cook tondo now in the National Gallery of Art in Washington. http://www.nga.gov/fcgi-bin/tinfo_f?object=41581

[81] Duits, 'Una icona pulcra'.

[82] On deschi da parto: J. Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven, 1999), pp. 64–80 (esp. pp. 72–3 and 77); on painting prices: Rembrandt Duits, *Gold Brocade and Renaissance Painting: A Study in Material Culture* (London, 2008), pp. 81–90.

[83] L. Syson, 'The Medici Study', in M. Ajmar-Wollheim and F. Dennis (eds), *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (London, 2006), pp. 288–93.

[84] For examples of goldsmith's work: Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d'inventario*, pp. 43–4 (fos. 23r-23v); for cameos see, n. 77 above; for the Tazza Farnese: Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d'inventario*, p. 36 (fo. 18r).



Fig. 6.5 Master of the Serafonte Hamilton, *Donato Acciaiuoli in his Study, c.*1480, from Donato's translation of Leonardo Bruni's *Florentine History*, illumination on vellum, Biblioteca Nazionale, B.R. 53, fo. 11r, Florence. Photo out of copyright (Photographic Collection, The Warburg Institute).

inventory is arranged in a way that suggests a form of display, possibly on shelves, interspersed with pieces of silverware.[85]

Their inclusion among the *scrittoio* treasures indicates that the icons were objects of a certain status. Interestingly, the only other works on panel to share this status were three 'foreign', that is, non-Florentine paintings. A selection of Florentine paintings and sculpted reliefs was kept in the so-called *anticamera* that, coming from the main apartment, led up to the *scrittoio*, but the *scrittoio* itself contained only a small *Judith and Holofernes* attributed to the Paduan artist Squarcione (*c.*1395–1468), a *Saint Jerome in his Study* attributed to the Flemish master Jan van Eyck (*c.*1395–1441) and a *Portrait of a Lady* attributed to

[85] Duits, 'Una icona pulcra', pp. 132–4.

his compatriot Petrus Christus (*c.*1410/1420–1475/76).[86] The fact that the icons were in the company of these works suggests that, apart from their value as precious artefacts, their 'foreign' status may also have added to their prestige in the eyes of a fifteenth-century viewer.

Only three of the icons the Medici owned in 1492 were not in the *scrittoio*. The two above-mentioned miniature mosaic 'heads of Christ' (nos 13 and 14) were both located in the *camera* of Lorenzo's apartment and the painted *Annunciation* (no. 17) was in the *camera* of Lorenzo's son Piero. The *camera*, in a Renaissance household, was a room that combined the functions of a stately bedroom and a drawing room for the reception of guests in an intimate setting.[87] Works of art in the *camera* would have been seen by a larger audience than the Florentine paintings in the *anticamera* and the exclusive treasures of the *scrittoio*. It is interesting that one of the artefacts Lorenzo chose to impress the guests in his *camera* was probably the Bargello Pantokrator (no. 13; Figure 6.1), which, judging by its valuation in the 1465 inventory, was the most expensive icon the Medici possessed.

The *camera* was also a place for objects for private devotion; even in lesser houses, it usually contained an image of the Virgin and Child and perhaps of a patron saint.[88] The fact that the Medici kept icons in two different *camere* is one of the clearest indications that Byzantine icons may have been used as items of household devotion in Renaissance Italy – especially the inexpensive painted *Annunciation* in Piero's room, which is unlikely to have been purely an object of display.

Taste

The Medici inventories discussed here are legal documents produced by notaries and therefore do not contain any personal information regarding the relation between the collectors and their objects. The inventory of Pietro Barbo's collection, on the other hand, describes a number of icons in a hand that has been identified as that of the cardinal himself (in an extension to the original document of 1457, which was drawn up by a notary, as mentioned above). Interestingly, the entries in question contain a number of subjective terms that are not often found in inventories, most notably the adjective 'beautiful' – *pulcra*. Its use suggests a degree of aesthetic appreciation, even though we cannot be entirely sure what Barbo meant when he used the term

[86] Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d'inventario*, pp. 51–2 (fo. 28r).

[87] On the *camera*: Brenda Preyer, 'The Florentine casa', in Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis, *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, pp. 34–49 (esp. pp. 40–45).

[88] See, for instance, the panels of the Virgin and Child and the medical Saints Cosmas and Damian in the *camera* of the Sienese doctor Bartolo di Tura: C. Mazzi, *La casa di maestro Bartolo di Tura* (Siena, 1900), p. 270.

'beautiful' and whether he referred to the quality of the craftsmanship or the style of the images.[89]

The Medici, who were collecting icons at the same time as Barbo, would surely have shared some of the latter's tastes. It is worth noting that the two Byzantine miniature mosaics in the *camera* of Lorenzo the Magnificent's apartment in the Medici palace (nos 13 and 14) were in the company of a small series of mosaic panels probably made by Florentine craftsmen.[90] These works appear to have been commissioned by Lorenzo, as one of them was a portrait of his son Giuliano (1479–1516).[91] Another, an image of Saint Peter, has been tentatively identified with a mosaic head of the apostle attributed to Domenico Ghirlandaio in the Bargello (Figure 6.6; if this attribution is correct, it is striking how coarse this work is compared to Byzantine miniature mosaics; the Florentines obviously did not have the same degree of experience with the medium of mosaic as Byzantine craftsmen).[92] It is tempting to think that these mosaic panels – oddities in the artistic production of late fifteenth-century Italy – were inspired by the Byzantine miniature mosaics the Medici owned. If so, it would seem that Lorenzo was commissioning works that matched pieces in his existing collection more than the aspirations of contemporary artists, as no further production of small mosaic panels emerged from Florentine workshops in the decades following Lorenzo's death in 1492.[93]

Aftermath

The 1492 inventory was made just two years before the first period of Medici hegemony in Florence came to an end. In 1494 the family was expelled from the city amid the tumult of an invasion by the French army under King Charles VIII (r. 1483–98), en route to conquering Naples. There are different accounts of what happened to the objects in the Medici collection at this point, but it seems that some of them were looted as the family palace was sacked by the mob, others were confiscated by the Florentine government, and yet others

[89] For a more extensive discussion of Barbo's use of aesthetic terms: Duits, 'Una icona pulcra', pp. 135–6.

[90] Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d'inventario*, p. 27 (fo. 14r).

[91] Ibid., p. 27 (fo. 14r): 'Uno tondo di musaicho, entrovi la 'mpromta di Giuliano di Lorenzo'.

[92] *Eredità del Magnifico*, pp. 134–5 (no. 118). See also Fulton, *An Earthly Paradise*, p. 180. The work is not included in recent catalogues of Ghirlandaio's oeuvre, which suggests not all experts agree with the attribution: J.K. Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan* (New Haven and London, 2000).

[93] The famous Florentine hardstone mosaics used for the decoration of furniture do not appear before the second half of the sixteenth century: A.M. Massinalli, *Hardstones: The Gilbert Collection* (London, 2000), p. 9.

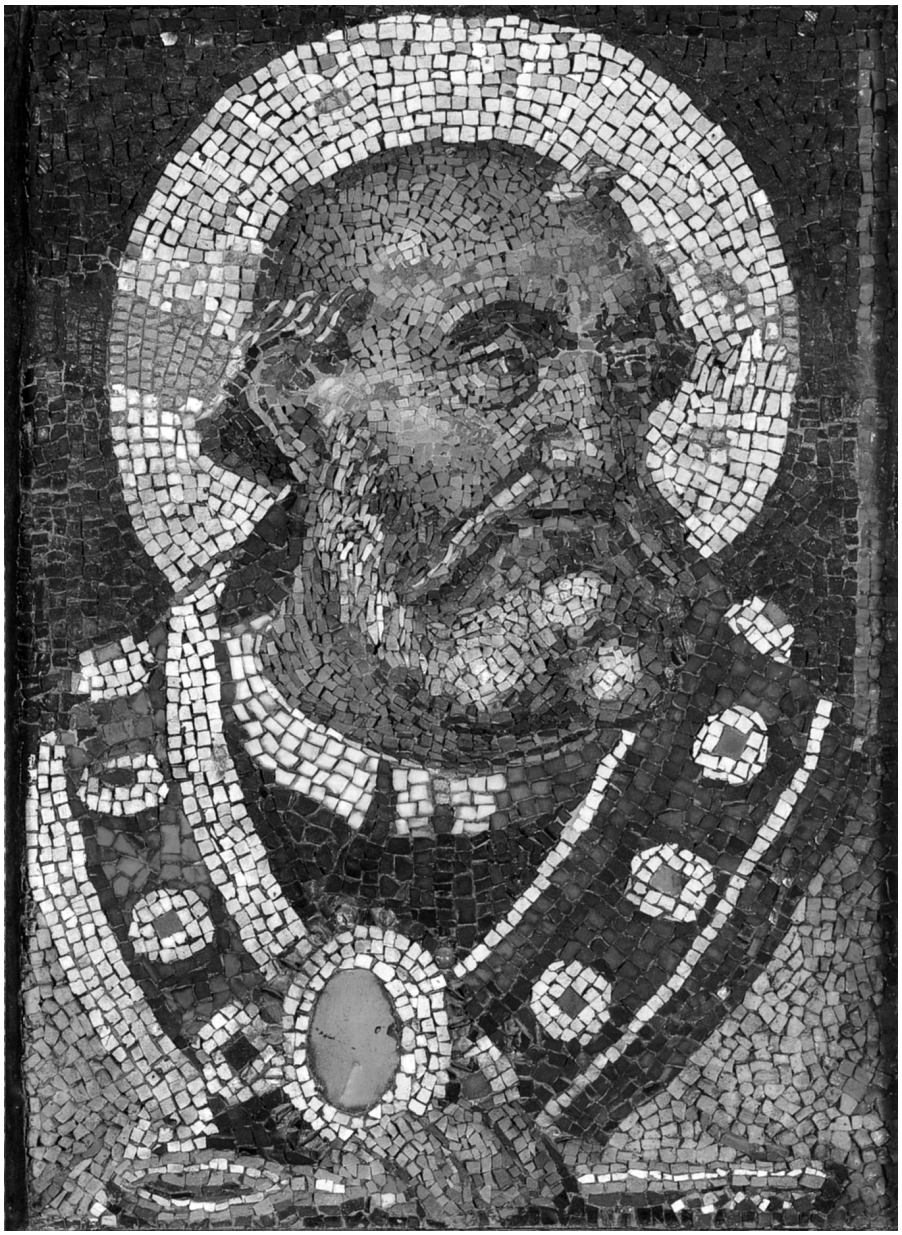


Fig. 6.6 Domenico Ghirlandaio (attr.), *Saint Peter*, 1480–85, mosaic on panel, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence. Photo out of copyright (Photographic Collection, The Warburg Institute).

were taken along by the Medici on their flight, or smuggled out to them by their partisans who remained behind in Florence.[94]

The majority of the Medici icons simply disappeared without a trace. One miniature mosaic was recorded among the Medici artefacts confiscated by the government in 1495.[95] This 'Salvatore di musaicho' was valued at the modest sum of 10 florins and is likely to have been the small 'head of Christ' registered in the *camera* of Lorenzo's apartment in the Medici palace in 1492 (no. 14). Given its low price, the work probably did not have a precious-metal revetment. During the year 1495 the Signoria twice tried to offer it to Charles VIII of France as part of a diplomatic present, but their envoys failed to reach the king on both occasions. It may have been returned to the Medici upon the restoration of their power in Florence in 1512.

In 1516 a 'relief of the Virgin Mary with twelve figures' was listed among the property of Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino (1492–1519), the grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who apparently made efforts to retrieve some of his family's lost treasures.[96] This may have been one of the steatite icons recorded in the earlier Medici inventories, which included a steatite relief of the Virgin and Child with the 12 apostles (no. 2). In the 1516 inventory the relief was preceded by 'two images of the Saviour'.[97] It is conceivable that the first of these was the 'Salvatore di musaicho' that had been confiscated by the Signoria, and the second none other than the Bargello Pantokrator we have encountered throughout this chapter (Figure 6.1).

The steatite relief and the small 'head of Christ' do not reappear in later documentation. The Bargello Pantokrator, however, was registered again in 1589. The Medici had by then become Grand Dukes of Tuscany and between 1581 and 1584 had created an art gallery using the top floor of the governmental office building that had been designed for them by Giorgio Vasari – the Uffizi. The list of the contents of this gallery made in 1589 includes a work that can be identified with the Pantokrator icon: 'a Christ in mosaic, with an ebony frame', placed in the so-called Tribuna, the octagonal room where the most prestigious works of the grand-ducal collection were exhibited.[98] The icon had clearly lost its original silver-gilt revetment and had been given a contemporary frame – the same ebony frame the Bargello Pantokrator still has today.

The next reference to the Pantokrator can be found in a description of the Uffizi gallery made in 1783, after the Medici dynasty had come to an end (1737) and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany had passed to the house of Habsburg-Lorraine. The description mentions 'The Bust of the Saviour, holding a book

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94 Fusco and Corti, *Lorenzo de' Medici*, pp. 159–72.

95 Ibid., pp. 164–5 and 366 (doc. 254).

96 Ibid., p. 383 (doc. 294): 'i imagine di rilievo con una Vergine Maria et dodici figure'.

97 Ibid., pp. 173 and 383 (doc. 294): 'ii imagine con 2 Salvatori'.

98 A. Gotti, *Le gallerie di Firenze* (Florence 1872), p. 328: 'Un Cristo di musaico, in adornamento d'ebano.'

in his left hand. In old mosaic.'[99] Two places further down the list, there is also an intriguing entry for 'Several small Greek mosaic Panels of different sizes, with the images of various saints'. [100] Perhaps some of the mosaic icons of saints from the fifteenth-century collection had remained in the possession of the Medici after their expulsion in 1494 or had been returned to them upon the restitution of their power and were still in the Uffizi in the late eighteenth century. It is not clear what happened to these panels afterwards.

The Pantokrator icon was transferred from the Uffizi to the Bargello in 1865.[101] By now, it had become attributed to the fourteenth-century Florentine painter Gaddo Gaddi (active 1312–30), who Vasari tells us used to make small mosaic panels out of fragments of eggshell.[102] No other Byzantine icons that survive today can be connected to the former Medici collection.[103] Only a miniature mosaic *Annunciation* in the Victoria and Albert Museum has a provenance vague enough to allow for speculation (Figure 6.7). It is believed to have been bought in Italy during the first half of the nineteenth century and, although this cannot be proven, it is possible that it is in fact the mosaic icon of the Annunciation once registered in the Medici inventories (no. 9). [104]

Conclusion: Icons and Tastes

The analysis of the Medici inventories presented above makes it clear that the lone Pantokrator miniature mosaic found in the Bargello today is not in the Renaissance city of Florence by accident. It is the sole survivor of a much larger collection of Byzantine icons the Medici built up during the second half of the fifteenth century. The Bargello Pantokrator was probably the largest and most prestigious panel of this collection. In the 1465 Medici inventory it was described along with the other 'Greek panels' the Medici possessed at that time. By 1492 it was physically separated from the other icons; while the latter were kept in the treasury of Lorenzo the Magnificent's private study, the Pantokrator was in Lorenzo's stately bedchamber, which suggests

[99] F. Zacchiroli, *Description de la galerie royale de Florence* (Florence, 1783), part 3, p. 103: 'Le Buste du Rédempteur, tenant un livre dans la main gauche. En mosaïque antique.'

[100] Ibid., pp. 102–3: 'Plusieurs petites Tables grecques-mosques d'une grandeur differente, avec les images de quelques saints.'

[101] Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, p. 79.

[102] Vasari, *Le vite*, vol. 2 (testo), p. 83. The Pantokrator icon was also listed as a work by Gaddi in a seminal article on Byzantine miniature mosaics by E. Müntz, 'Les mosaïques byzantines portatives', *Bulletin Monumental*, 52 (1886): pp. 223–40 (esp. p. 240).

[103] In most cases, the known provenance of the works excludes a connection with the Medici: Krickelberg-Pütz, 'Die Mosaikikone de Hl. Nikolaus'; Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*.

[104] Krickelberg-Pütz, 'Die Mosaikikone de Hl. Nikolaus', p. 128, n. 261 and the 'object historical note' on the V&A website: http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O93208/mosaic-the-annunciation/.



Fig. 6.7 *Annunciation*, early fourteenth century, miniature mosaic, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo out of copyright (Photographic Collection, The Warburg Institute).

a more personal relationship between collector and object, perhaps one of a devotional nature, but possibly also one of aesthetic appreciation as Lorenzo seems to have commissioned mosaic panels from contemporary Italian artists to complement his Byzantine piece. At the same time, the work was no longer described as a 'Greek' panel, but simply as a mosaic. In fact, none of the later inventory descriptions mentions its Byzantine origin. By the nineteenth century it had become attributed to a fourteenth-century Florentine master based on a remark by Vasari.

The change in attribution may have been more than a mere error of connoisseurship. Terms used in inventories often had a bearing on the value of the listed artefacts. The foreign provenance of the icons in the Medici collection almost certainly added to their value as collectors' items, and during the second half of the fifteenth century the association with the lost empire may have been a romantic touch that increased this particular value even further. From 1500 onwards, though, the fall of Constantinople was no longer an event within living memory. The sixteenth century also saw the codification of Renaissance art history as a tradition that deliberately moved away from a style defined as the 'maniera greca' in Vasari's *Lives*. By the end of the sixteenth century the Greek origin of the work was therefore almost certainly no longer a virtue. Yet, the Pantokrator icon was too spectacular a piece simply to be discarded, as is evident from its display in the most prominent room of the Uffizi gallery, alongside masterpieces of the Florentine Renaissance.

The dissociation of the icon from its Byzantine origin was taken even further in the nineteenth century, when Vasari had become the prime source of knowledge of Renaissance art and the contents of the Uffizi gallery appear to have been interpreted almost as a set of illustrations to the *Lives*. Subsequent art history writing has distanced itself from such Vasarian attributions, but it seems that Vasari's aesthetic preconceptions have been more difficult to shed. Modern scholars still appear to have a problem accepting that a Byzantine icon could have been a prized possession for such an archetypal Italian Renaissance patron as Lorenzo the Magnificent.

The case of the Bargello Pantokrator demonstrates – not for the first time, as the re-evaluation of the status of Flemish painting in fifteenth-century Italy has had to overcome the same obstacle – that it is dangerous to use Vasari as a retrospective guide for the development of Renaissance tastes prior to the sixteenth century. The aesthetic of Lorenzo the Magnificent's collection appears to have been one of precious materials and patient craftsmanship, which had more in common with the aesthetic of earlier courtly collections than with the era of Michelangelo and Vasari.[105] Refined works such as

[105] This argument has been put forward in M. Belozerskaya, *Rethinking the Renaissance: Burgundian arts across Europe* (Cambridge, 2002). See also Duits, *Gold Brocade and Renaissance Painting*.

Byzantine miniature mosaics and steatite icons fitted perfectly in this pattern. Seen through fifteenth-century eyes, they were, as Filarete put it, 'noble things and most nobly done'.[106]

At the same time, it is worth noting that Byzantine icons met with the appreciation of collectors, and conceivably also fulfilled a devotional function, during a period when Florentine art was already moving in a very different direction. The discrepancy calls into question the often tacitly made assumption of harmony between the tastes of patrons, the demands of religion, and the style of contemporary artistic production. The example of the Medici icons clearly shows that patrons and artists could each have their own separate set of aspirations.

[106] See above, n. 70.

Appendix

The Byzantine icons listed in the Medici inventories of 1465 (descriptions marked 'A') and 1492 ('B'), grouped according to type (E = Ebony; S = Steatite; M = Mosaic; P = Painted panel). The descriptions are taken from the following editions:

(1465) Marco Spallanzani, *Inventari medicei* (Florence, 1996)
(1492) Marco Spallanzani and Giovanna Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d'inventario* (Florence, 1992).

Where appropriate, references to the comprehensive study of Lorenzo the Magnificent as a collector by Laurie Fusco and Gino Corti, *Lorenzo d' Medici: collector and antiquarian* (Cambridge, 2006) have also been included.

Ebony

[1] [E1]
(A) Una tavola greca con uno santo Michele, d'ebano legata in ariento dorato f.20
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143
(B) Una tavoletta quadra chon uno sam Michele Agnolo intagliato di rilievo chon uno fregio intorno d'ariento dorato chon otto mezzi santi
[together with two silver and crystal spoons: f.20]
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 47

Steatite

[2] [S1]

(A) Una tavola greca di pietra fine con Nostra Donna et xii apostoli ornata d'ariento (f.25)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 377 #1

(B) Una tavoletta di pietra talcho, intagliatovi nel mezzo una Nostra Donna chol banbino in chollo, ritta, e una fregiatura intorno di detto pietra, intagliatovi diritto xii Apostoli di mezo relievo a meza figura epiù una fregiatura d'ariento dorato chon più fogl[i]ami et trafori e con 4 compassi di mezzo relievo ne'chanti intagl[i]ati smalti 4 mezze figure di 4 Vangelisti e più storie di Cristo negli altri compassi di detto fregio (f.40)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 47; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379, erroneously identified as #6

[3] [S2]

Una tavola di mezzo braccio o più chon uno quadro in mezo d'una Nostra Donna ritta e uno bambino in chollo e dua agnoletti e santi dallato, intagliato di mezzo rilievo di talcho una freg[i]atura intorno a detto quadro chon 16 quadrature, intagliatovi drento meze fighure e di mezo rilievo, parte di talcho e parte d' ebano e un' altra freg[i]atura d' ariento dorata di trafore con otto quadri in luogho di chompassi d'ariento smalatati, dentrovi più santi (f.40)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 48

[4] [S3]

Una tavoletta larga ¾ ½ di braccio chon uno quadro et mezo di talcho chon 18 quadrature, drentovi intagliato di mezzo relievo la storia di Cristo, una freg[i]atura intorno d'ariento dorato, una allacciatura, compassi et quadri (f.40)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 49

Mosaic

[5] [M1]

(A) Una tavola greca di musaico con santo Iohanni Baptista intero ornata d'ariento (f.20)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 377 #2

(B) Un'altra tavoletta quadra, dentrovi uno san Giovanni Battista di musaicho fine, fregio atorno di trafori e lettere d'ariento dorato lavorato alla grecha (f.25)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 47; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379 #3

[6] [M2]
(A) Una tavola greca di musaico ornata d'ariento col Giudicio (f.30)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 377 #3
(B) Una tavoletta, suvi una storia del Giudicio, di musaicho chon fregiatura d'ariento intorno con più fogliami di mezo relievo, otto chompassi drentovi meze fighure di mezo rilievo (f.20)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 48; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379 #10
[7] [M3]
(A) Una tavola alla greca con una Nostra Donna ornata d'ariento (f.35)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143
(B) Un'altra tavoletta minore, drentovi una Nostra Donna ritta di musaicho um pocho guasta, chon fregiatura intorno d'ariento dorata, compartita di fili chon otto chompassi chon mezze fighure e di mezzo relievo (f.20)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 47; Fusco and Corti: p. 379 #6
[8] [M4]
(A) Una tavola greca con 2 figure ritte di musaico ornata d'ariento (f.50)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 377 #4
(B) Un'altra tavoletta dentrovi 2 fighure ritte di musaico, uno Santo Piero e uno santo Pagholo chon una fregiatura intorno d'ariento dorato chon fogl[i]ami et chompassi di traforo (f.40)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 48; Fusco and Corti: p. 379 #8
[9] [M5]
(A) Una tavola greca di musaico con una Anuntiata ornata d'ariento (f.40)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 377 #5
(B) Una tavoletta di mezo braccio, drentovi una Nuntiata di musaicho con fre[i]atura atorno d'ariento dorato chon otto chompassi di traforo chon fighure di mezo rilievo (f.40)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 48; Fusco and Corti: p. 379 #11
[10] [M6]
(A) Una tavola greca di musaico con uno santo Niccolò ornata d'ariento (f.50)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143; Fusco and Corti: p. 377 #6
(B) Un'altra tavoletta di br. 2/3 chon una fighura di musaicho drento uno sanoto, una fregiatura atorno d'ariento dorata chon più fogliami et 12 chompassi chon mezze fighure e di mezzo rilievo di santi (f.30)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 48; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379 #9
[11] [M7]
(A) Una tavola greca di musaico con uno mezzo santo Iohanni ornata d'ariento (f.60)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 377 #7
(B) Un'altra tavoletta maggiore, dentrovi una fighura di san Giovanni Battista, da mezzo in su chon isghuancio e fregiatura d'ariento traforato e a llettere greche chon 10 chompassi di meze fighure di musaicho (f.80)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 47; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379 #4

[12] [M8]
(A) Una tavola greca di musaico con uno santo Piero ornato d'ariento (f.50)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 377 #8
(B) Un'altra tavoletta maggiore di br. 2/3 in che è dentrovi una fighura di santo Piero da mezzo in su di musaicho, fregiatura intorno d'ariento dorato chon 10 chompassi, entrovi più storiette di rilievo, lavoro grecho (f.30)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 47; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379 #5
[13] [M9]
(A) Una tavola greca con una ½ figura del salvatore ornata d'ariento (f.100)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 144
(B) Dua quadri, …uno grande, entrovi teste dua di Christo, di musaicho (f.–)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 27; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379 #2
[14] [M10]
Dua quadri, uno picholo… entrovi teste dua di Christo, di musaicho (f.–)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 27; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379 #1
[15] [M11]
Un'altra tavoletta tutta d'ariento e smaltate, fregiatura et chompassi, dua fighure in detto fregio, uno San Piero e uno santo Paolo, una fighura d'uno Cristo in mezzo e ritta, di musaicho (f.30)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 48; Fusco and Corti: pp. 74 and 379 #7

Painted Panels

[16] [P1]
(A) Una tavola greca con Nostro Signore dipinto ornata d'ariento (f.40)
Spallanzani 1996: p. 143
(B) Un'altra tavoletta di br. 3/4 con piano e fregiatura d'ariento co trafori schuati (sic) lavorati di filo e nella fregiatura lavorato in detto modo 12 compassi, fighure di rilievo e storia di Cristo, nel mezo una mezza fighura d'Iddio Padre fatta di penello, corona di rilievo di detto ariento (f.60)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 48
[17] [P2]
Una tavoletta dipintovi una Nuntiata, opera grecha
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 80
[together with]
[18?] [P3?]
Un'altra tavoletta, dipintovi storia di Cristo di Monte Uliveto (f.6)
Spallanzani and Bertelà 1992: p. 80

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