

The background of the cover is a close-up photograph of an ancient icon. It features a face, likely of a religious figure, with dark, curly hair and a halo. The icon is set against a dark, textured background with a prominent vertical cross. The overall color palette is warm, with shades of brown, gold, and black.

NANO CHATZIDAKIS

ICONS

THE VELIMEZIS COLLECTION

BENAKI MUSEUM



BENAKI MUSEUM

ICONS

THE VELIMEZIS COLLECTION

Catalogue raisonné

NANO CHATZIDAKIS

THE J.F. COSTOPOULOS FOUNDATION

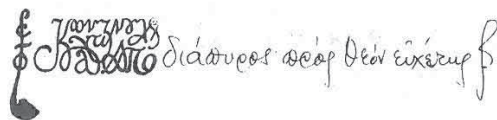
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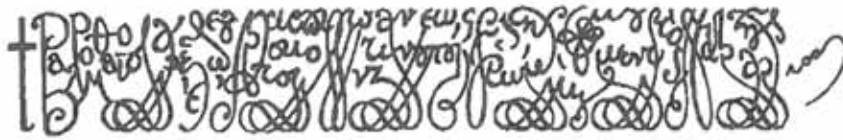
THESSALONIKI 1997 CULTURAL CAPITAL OF EUROPE



BARTHOLOMEW BY THE MERCY OF GOD
ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE, NEW ROME,
AND ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH



PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE
Fervently praying to God



To the children of the Mother Holy Great Church of Christ and the beloved of my Mediocrity who will come into communion with this present publication, may God grant grace and peace.

The value of the holy icons and indeed those of the splendid Byzantine period, wherever these are kept and treasured, is known to all and confirmed both for our Holy Orthodox Church and for Christian art in general.

For our Orthodox Church the art of icon-painting, which flourished in particular among the Orthodox Greek people, has constituted over the centuries a liturgical expression of the faith as well as of the icon-painters.

The conservation and study of the holy icons is always a worthy offering to the Church and to art, and in this sense the Mother Holy Great Church of Christ and our Mediocrity personally greet with joy the enhancing of the seventy-two holy icons of the Postbyzantine period in the Velimezis Collection.

In particular we greet the initiative of the Benaki Museum in organizing the 'voyage of the icons' in the Velimezis Collection to the cities of European countries, beginning from the city of Thessaloniki, within the framework of events held there as Cultural Capital of Europe for the year 1997.

In reiterating congratulations from the bottom of our heart to each of the many distinguished collaborators on this new and thoroughly commendable initiative and offering of the Benaki Museum, which promotes especially the Orthodox ecclesiastical art of icon-painting, we bestow on all our heartfelt paternal and patriarchal blessing, and express the certainty that this Exhibition will meet with the response it deserves from the Orthodox people and from the wider admirers of the specific wealth of Orthodoxy and all those cultivated in the arts, Greek and foreign.

May the grace, the peace, the light and the infinite mercy of our Lord Jesus, God Incarnate, be with you always.

29 December 1996

Διάκουρος οὐρανίου
Διάκουρος οὐρανίου

The publication of the *catalogue raisonné* of the Emilios Velimezis Collection completes the worthy initiative of the Benaki Museum to exhibit this important Collection in Thessaloniki, 'Cultural Capital of Europe 1997' and then in Germany, Switzerland, Portugal, Italy and the United States of America.

I commend this double initiative of the directorate of the Benaki Museum as an outstanding event. In exhibiting the Velimezis Collection in Greece and abroad, and publishing the scholarly Catalogue in two languages, it presents to an international public splendid achievements of the art of icon-painting, which developed in the bosom of the Orthodox Christian Church.

Congratulations are due to all who have contributed to the success of this noble goal.

KONSTANTINOS STEFANOPOULOS

President of the Hellenic Republic

As Mayor of Thessaloniki and President of the Organization for the Cultural Capital of Europe 'Thessaloniki 1997', the Arts programme of which included the Exhibition of Postbyzantine Icons in the Velimezis Collection, held in the Museum of Byzantine Culture, I wish to thank warmly all the representatives of the Benaki Museum involved in organizing this very successful Exhibition, as well as in publishing the excellent *catalogue raisonné* of the icons in the Collection.

It was an honour for our city, a pre-eminently Byzantine city, to present such treasures, at once expressions of Orthodox faith and high quality works of art. Moreover, the tour of the icons in the Collection to major European cities will promote abroad aspects of Greece's singular Byzantine Civilization.

KONSTANTINOS KOSMOPOULOS

Mayor of Thessaloniki

President of the Organization for the Cultural Capital of Europe
'Thessaloniki 1997'

The Postbyzantine icons in the Velimezis Collection found in the Museum of Byzantine Culture a temporary but welcoming home and launched – together with other events – the first phase of ‘Thessaloniki 1997’, Cultural Capital of Europe. The reassembling and exhibiting of the Collection led to the discovery of an early work by Domenikos Theotokopoulos concealed within it, as the penetrating research of Professor Nano Chatzidakis, continuing the work of Manolis Chatzidakis, has shown.

The whole venture was achieved mainly thanks to the endeavours of Christos Margaritis and the Director of the Benaki Museum, Professor Angelos Delivorrias, in collaboration with the 9th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities and the personnel of the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki.

The icons in the Velimezis Collection are visible proof of the continuity between the Byzantine and the Neohellenic world, embodying the multiple influences of an art that always had dual foundations: aesthetic and theological.

I offer my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to all those who have contributed to publishing the Catalogue and preparing the Exhibition.

EVANGELOS VENIZELOS

Minister of Culture

It is a pleasure indeed to salute this publication of the *catalogue raisonné* of the icons in the Emilios Velimezis Collection, which brings these important works to a wider audience.

With the restoration, study and publication of the Velimezis Collection, which was exhibited for the first time in January 1997, in the Byzantine Museum of Thessaloniki, a dream has come true. And it has come true thanks to the love, faith and action of the members of the collector's family, first and foremost among them Mr Christos Margaritis, who worked with admirable energy and enthusiasm, inspired by this dream.

The Collection created by Emilios Velimezis comprises 72 icons of the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, 16 of which were donated to the Benaki Museum by the collector in his lifetime and by his family after his death. According to the Byzantinist Professor Nano Chatzidakis, who has studied this Collection, it includes an icon by El Greco.

The A.G. Leventis Foundation, which I am honoured to represent, is especially happy to have contributed to the publication of this book and so promoting the Hellenic cultural heritage.

Warm congratulations on behalf of the A.G. Leventis Foundation and myself personally to all those who contributed to making the dream come true, and particularly to Professor Angelos Delivorrias, Professor Nano Chatzidakis, Byzantinist, Mr Stergios Stasinopoulos, head of the Conservation Laboratory in the Benaki Museum, and Mr Christos Margaritis.

The Emilios Velimezis Collection can now be enjoyed by the Greek and the international public.

Athens 7 February 1997

ACHILLES G. EXARCHOS
The A.G. Leventis Foundation

In sponsoring the publication of this Catalogue the J.F. Costopoulos Foundation expresses its interest in cataloguing, conserving, exhibiting and enhancing the Byzantine and Postbyzantine icons in the Emilios Velimezis Collection. Not only have we followed all stages of locating, conserving-cleaning, photographing and studying the icons in the Collection, we have also esteemed the endeavours of the specialists and the high quality work of the responsible personnel of the Benaki Museum.

Our desire to support the publication of the Catalogue is consistent with our general policy of sponsoring research, scientific and cultural projects mainly concerned with issues of national and historical significance.

The icons in the Emilios Velimezis Collection, which embark on their 'voyage' from the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki, are a global plenipotentiary of Greek Culture. This fact makes their mission all the more necessary and important. We are confident that in Orthodox Christian countries and in the world at large, these icons will convey their message through the diptych Christianity-Greek Byzantine Civilization, not merely as devotional objects but as indisputable works of art.

Those who worked on the Emilios Velimezis Icon Collection deserve warm congratulations on the admirable results of their long and laborious efforts. Initiatives such as this will always enjoy our willing support every step of the way, both inside and outside metropolitan Greece.

KATERINA KOSKINA

The J.F. Costopoulos Foundation

*The Benaki Museum project to reassemble, conserve, study and publish
the Icons from the Velimezis Collection*

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PREFACE

The Benaki Museum is distinguished as one of the foremost Greek organizations active in the effort to preserve and to protect the cultural heritage of Hellenism. After all, a large, if not the largest, part of its treasures — its very substance — is due to the contribution of the social body. I refer specifically to the almost daily gifts of family heirlooms and humble monetary offerings, to the much rarer donations of precious *objets d'art* or even coherent collections, and bequests of substantial properties.

As an expression of gratitude to the ideal of collecting, or rather as a declaration of faith in its importance, the Benaki Museum has decided to reassemble a private collection of the inter-war years, that had subsequently been dissolved. It has done so to document the historical truth about the need for collecting, an issue largely unexplored, and to reinstate the role of the collector, so often misconstrued in Greece. In selecting the little known case of Emiliios Velimezis the Museum honours a host of benefactors of the Greek state, of whom we mention indicatively Antonios Benakis and Helen Stathatou, John Gennadios, Dionysios Loverdos, Damianos Kyriazis and Alexandra Choremi, Dori Papastratou, Demetris Economopoulos and Euripides Koutlidis, Georgios and Eleni Tsakyroglou, Voula Papaioannou, Vasilis Kyriazopoulos, Nelly Seraidari and Dolly Goulandris.

Alas, the idea behind the reassembling of the Velimezis Collection is interwoven with a serious threat. I speak of the perilous situation in which the tradition of benefaction, whose roots can be traced back to Antiquity and whose culmination was the generous public endowments of the nineteenth century, has recently been placed. Please excuse my dramatic tone. Today this tradition is in jeopardy not from the gradual loss of interest in the common good, but from the measures harboured in new, impolitic legislation on private collections; from a vision of dubious clarity that vitiates the citizen's interest and from centralizing-bureaucratic goals that seek to transform the state into a vast, omnivorous storeroom for the accumulation, or rather abrogation, of the heritage of the past.

Emiliios Velimezis (1902-1946), a close collaborator of Antonios Benakis (1873-1954), formed an interesting Collection of Postbyzantine icons, dating from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century and originating from various regions of Greece. Of the 72 works now located from this Collection, among them several signed creations by famous artists, 16 were donated to the Benaki Museum, while the rest were dispersed in smaller private collections. With the reassembly of the nowadays fragmented unity, thanks to the willing support of his heirs, the systematic conservation of the pieces and, primarily, the conscientious scholarly study of all the works in the Collection, valuable new evidence has been acquired on ecclesiastical painting after the Fall of Constantinople (1453).

The importance of the Velimezis Collection was first noted by the Academician Manolis Chatzidakis when, in 1943, as the then young director of the Benaki Museum, he decided to prepare the *catalogue raisonné*. Due to the collector's sudden death in 1946 this remained incomplete. Forty-five years were to elapse

before study of the collection was begun anew by the Byzantinist Nano Chatzidakis, and another five years of intensive research passed until the moment of an extremely exciting discovery: the recognition of an early work by Domenikos Theotokopolos.

Apart from the special significance of adding another work to the corpus of Theotokopoulos's creations and apart from the historical and artistic importance of many other works, the Collection as a reconstituted whole embodies the interests of an era that was seeking out the component elements of Hellenic consciousness and investigating the problems of Greece's historical identity. It is not fortuitous that Emilios Velimezis's preferences as a collector were engendered within the Greek community in Alexandria, certainly influenced by the ideological orientations of the most turbulent period of Modern Greek history. Nor is their final aesthetic crystallization fortuitous, with the gathering of the icons in Athens, focus of the accumulated problems of the Greek mainland. The 'restoration' of the Collection thus transfers us to the climate of an age when the pious gleaning of artistic testimonies of the past reflected Greek society's agonized concern with its self-determination.

When Athens was declared the first European City of Culture, in 1985, the Benaki Museum organized a major exhibition on the dynamic — one might say erotic — relationship between Greece and the Sea. So vital was the message of this event that two years later the Museum was asked to send the same exhibition to Amsterdam, as part of the celebrations for its enhancement as City of Culture of the old continent. So there was no question that the Benaki Museum would honour Thessaloniki, when it took up the baton as Cultural Capital of Europe in 1997. Just as there was no question that it would make every possible effort to ensure that the echo of the message in Thessaloniki would resound in other countries of Europe and in America. So the exhibition of the Velimezis Collection, which was inaugurated on 29 January 1997 in the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki, will continue its 'voyage' to Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France, Spain and Portugal, as well as the United States of America, to pass on the values of some of the basic ideas underlying its organizational infrastructure.

The reassembling, conserving and studying of the icons in the Velimezis Collection would never have been realized without the constant moral support of Manolis Chatzidakis, who saw a long outstanding scientific obligation of his put in order, or rather a personal desire fulfilled. It would never have been realized without the intellectual input of Nano Chatzidakis, without the time and effort she expended on studying the material. It would be remiss not to praise Stergios Stasinopoulos and his colleagues, who conserved and restored the icons in an exemplary manner, as well as Makis Skiadaressis, for the splendid quality of his photographs. From 1991, when preparations began, until 1997, when the Exhibition was presented in Thessaloniki, the project has enjoyed the unbridled support of the trustees and the personnel of the Benaki Museum, and primarily of Electra Georgoula who was responsible for the general coordination. The project would surely have floundered were it not for the substantial economic support of a pleiad of sponsors, whose names are listed on a separate page, together with our warmest thanks. It would never have been possible to mount the Exhibition in Thessaloniki without the helpful cooperation of the Organization for the Cultural Capital of Europe 'Thessaloniki 1997', nor without the friendly welcome extended by Eutychia Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou and all the staff of the Museum of Byzantine Culture in

Greece's second city: we express our gratitude to them. Thanks are also due to the commendable collaborators Angelos Dendrinos, Alexandros Karakasis, Antonis Lignos and Stelios Bergeles for the design, lighting, constructions and transport of the Exhibition respectively.

Lastly, the publication of the *catalogue raisonné* of the Velimezis Collection owes much to many. I mention especially the responsible editing of the Greek texts and correcting of the proofs by Loula Kypraiou, the authoritative English translation by Alexandra Dumas and the inspired aesthetic of Nikos Kostopoulos in the concept and layout of the book.

However, animating spirit of this venture from first to last was Christos Ph. Margaritis, who offered his energy, his persistence and above all his enthusiasm.

January 1997

ANGELOS DELIVORRIAS

Director
of the Benaki Museum



ON THE WORTHY COLLECTOR EMILIOS VELIMEZIS

Emilios Velimezis was the man in the next-door office. He worked in the office of the Museum's president, Antonios Benakis, to which my office, that of the Museum's director, was adjacent. Both were in the basement of the Benaki Museum. Our cohabitation from 1939 onwards, and indeed during the dark years of the German Occupation, was amicable and harmonious even though we had different duties, he as private secretary to the founder, donor and president of the Benaki Museum, I as former scholarship-holder and new director of the then embryonic Museum, closed and with empty galleries, yet with a full complement of custodians and cleaners.

This long acquaintance with Emilios Velimezis, until his premature death in 1946, gave me the opportunity of appreciating his virtues. In addition to his excellent professional qualifications, he was an exceptionally kind, warm and honest person, with a strong sense of loyalty to and responsibility for his paternal family. He had an innate sense of beauty in everything and evidently harboured some literary ambitions. He and his brother, better known by his *nom de plume* Kostis Velmyras, had written a play that received an Academy of Athens award endowed by Emmanuel Benakis. Moreover, Velimezis was essentially the author of the first detailed guide to the Benaki Museum (1934), written in elegant purist Greek (*katharevousa*) with notable precision in the terminology, descriptions and instructions. The objects had been identified by others, more specialized to do so.

What I was not aware of for some time was his secret passion: like Antonios Benakis and others, he too had an icon collection. To be sure we often talked about icons, but it was only later that I realized that these conversations were aimed at filling out his knowledge on the subject. One day in 1943 he proposed that I write the catalogue of his collection, a proposal to which I readily agreed since I then had plenty of time available. In any case it would be written in the afternoons and evenings in the Museum library, which was well stocked with the necessary bibliographical aids. The years 1943 and 1944 were critical for the fate of Greece, when we were all anxious in different ways. Emilios Velimezis was less than enthusiastic that the texts I brought him were written in vernacular Greek (*demotiki*).

For me the study of his Collection was a pleasant and profitable occupation. It gave me the opportunity of investigating a host of iconographic issues that had hardly concerned me before and to comprehend the relationship of the icons to the scriptures: the Old and New Testaments, and other later texts, *synaxaria* and liturgies. For the first time I came up against the practical problems of describing and ordering the material, as well as of drafting a scholarly text in vernacular Greek. In those days the only guide for problems of dating was the catalogue of the icons in the Benaki Museum, prepared by Andreas Xyngopoulos in 1935, but this was insufficient since no methodological system of assessing technical traits in painting, then based solely on Kontoglou's observations, had yet been devised. I soon realized that I had to develop a personal method, which later — enriched — proved very useful. It was based on a combination of technical observations, vested in certain trends in the evolution of stylistic and Western influences, as well as on the ascertainment of the existence of different contemporaneous trends. This work was helped by the variety of subjects and the variety of categories of icons, which mirrored the kinds of material circulating in the Athenian market in the 1930s.

As to the provenance of the icons, Velimezis's suppliers were those who supplied icons to all the collections formed in Athens in that period. Apart from the Benaki Museum, these were the collections of Alexandra Choremi, Dionysios Loverdos, Spyros Loverdos, Helen Stathatou, Demetrios Sisilianos, N. Zervoudakis, Makkas, Saroglou and others. The main supplier was Theodoros Zoumboulakis, who kept a humble antique shop in Edward Law street, visited at noon by eponymous customers, as well as by Andreas Xyngopoulos, then Ephor of Byzantine Antiquities, who thus kept informed of movement in the market. Antonios Benakis was not among the *habitués*, since Zoumboulakis gave him first option on very good pieces. Zoumboulakis had sold him the Adoration of the Magi with the signature 'Χείρ Δομηνίκου' (*hand of Domenikos*) and many other outstanding works. Zoumboulakis had also offered Ambassador Sisilianos

the icon of Saint Luke painting the Virgin, with the same signature of Domenikos. Fortunately this work was among the icons that Sisilianos, President of the Society of Philotechnoi (lit. 'art-lovers'), donated to the Museum. Although the collector was not sure that Domenikos was Theotokopoulos (see *Greek Icon-painters after the Fall*, 78-79), after the removal of Pelekasis's overpaintings the author, then director of the Museum, vouched for the icon's authenticity in a relevant article. The inexhaustible source from which Zoumboulakis and other antique dealers, such as Kytikas and Martinos, drew icons was primarily Zakynthos. The island's numerous churches housed a unique wealth of icons, most of which had been brought there from Crete after the fall of Candia to the Ottomans in 1669, and many of its noble families had important collections of icons too.

It is worth outlining briefly the mechanisms of supply. The local *cognoscente* of the state of affairs in Zakynthos was Anastasios Papayannopoulos, who appeared in Athens as 'unique expert' and adviser to collectors, and who, as I soon found out, arbitrarily created values in the Athens icon market. I came across him in the Benaki Museum, declaring his opinion in writing on the icons it had bought (1934), but after I came on the scene he never set foot there again. His collaborator was the 'distinguished artist' Demetrios Pelekasis, a Zakynthian painter and conservator of icons, son of the painter Spyros Pelekasis, who 'knew recipes of early painters'. He had a summary and destructive method of conserving icons: instead of removing the blackened varnish patiently and methodically, he burnt it off with alcohol and then painted in the damaged areas thus created. He had no qualms about adding signatures as well, often to order, so deceiving many of the earlier collectors and scholars: in particular Alexandre Embiricos, who in the chapter on the painter Emmanuel Tzanfournaris in his book, *L' école crétoise...*, Paris 1967, refers only to icons with forged signatures. Characteristic is a chance meeting I had with Pelekasis, in the Dionysios Loverdos Museum, on which he had collaborated officially: 'Tell me, Mimis, now that we're alone, which icons you've added a signature too, to save us the trouble of finding out'. Clearly insulted, he puffed out his chest and answered disarmingly: 'I'm an artist and I do my job. You're an archaeologist, find them!'. I had acquired considerable experience in detecting forged signatures and had learnt Pelekasis's palaeographic hand, which was always the same.

I am not implying that all the icons in the Velimezis Collection came from Zakynthos or that all were purchased from Zoumboulakis. There were other antique dealers, as well as private individuals who came to the Museum to offer their icons. I merely hope that the foregoing remarks will shed some light on the practices and habits of the collectors of the period.

The study of this material was not without some surprises. One particularly moving moment was when I was confronted by an icon of which there was an old photograph in my family archive. Its history was as follows: one of my forebears, Archimandrite Parthenios Kelaidis, had served in flourishing expatriate Greek communities in Italy — Trieste and Leghorn (Livorno) — where he sought the help of powerful local figures in resolving the 'Cretan Question'. Believing that the solution had been achieved when the Cretan State was granted autonomy and Prince George installed as High Commissioner in 1898, he had given the said prince the icon of the Miracle of the Holy Girdle, signed by the well-known painter Emmanuel Tzanes (Cat. no. 31). Chance had brought this family heirloom once again into my hands. But chance also brought the prince to the Museum, which he visited with his wonderful wife, Princess Maria

Bonaparte, I think in 1949. While guiding them round I mentioned the icon's provenance. As soon as Prince George heard the name of the original donor he exploded, declaring in his raucous voice: 'Parthenios the rogue'. Parthenios was among those instrumental in bringing about his expulsion from Crete in 1906. You would have thought he was there in front of him.

The Collection also included an icon with an unusual, Catholic subject, in an early Renaissance style, difficult to discern since it was in poor condition. I confess I had not paid it particular attention, for it bore no resemblance to anything I then knew. Although its owner was angry that I did not accept it was a work by El Greco, he never told me about the painter's signature that existed on it, half hidden beneath the varnish layers in very small capitals, as has now been demonstrated (see text of Cat. no. 17). When, after Emilios's death in 1946, the family decided to honour his memory by donating to the Benaki Museum those works in his Collection that I considered worthy of inclusion in its Collections, I did not select this 'Italian' painting. Again it is a twist of fate that fifty years on I am writing the prologue to the Catalogue of this Athenian Collection, prepared by my daughter — for my own texts had grown old —, so as not to interrupt family tradition, and that one of the results of her new study is that this work is the *pièce de résistance* of the Collection; it is now confirmed that the amateur collector was indeed right in considering it a creation of Domenikos Theotokopoulos.

Athens, December 1996

MANOLIS CHATZIDAKIS

Emeritus Director of the Benaki Museum
Academician

THE PROJECT TO REASSEMBLE,
CONSERVE, STUDY AND PUBLISH
THE EMILIOS VELIMEZIS ICON COLLECTION

It was in June 1991, while returning from Siphnos with Professor Angelos Delivorrias, that we discussed the Velimezis Collection for the first time. He listened to me with his enthusiastic and always encouraging smile, so initiating a series of efforts which have now produced their first fruits. The Icon Collection was formed by Emilios Velimezis (1902-1946), second son of Ioannis Velimezis (1859-1934), Chairman of the Appeal Court Judges, and Eugenia Velimezi (1883-1971), née Iordanidis. A close collaborator of Antonios Benakis, initially in Alexandria and subsequently in Athens, Velimezis was privy to the great connoisseur's endeavours to create his collections and to organize the museum intended to house them, assisting him in his manifold task. Concurrently Velimezis developed a personal interest in collecting and in 1935 began forming his own collection of Postbyzantine icons.

His penchant for collecting was encouraged from the outset by his siblings, the poet Konstantinos Velimezis (1898-1960), better known by his *nom de plume* Kostis Velmyras, father of Vanna Velimezi-Kaloutsi, the economist Theodoros Velimezis (1905-1979), founder and subsequent director of the 'Ionian' insurance company, and Sophia (1920-1986), who married the civil engineer Photios Chr. Margaritis and had two sons, me and my brother Emilios, who was christened by Antonios Benakis. Emilios Velimezis continued to buy icons until his untimely death. He registered his acquisitions with the Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities and commissioned Emil Saraf to photograph them, Demetrios Pelekasis to restore some and the woodcarver Priamos to make the frames. In 1943 Velimezis asked the Byzantinist Manolis Chatzidakis, then director of the Benaki Museum, to prepare the scholarly study of the Collection.

Imbued with the ideals of social benefaction, Emilios Velimezis made important donations to the Benaki Museum, to churches (Hagios Dionysios o Areopagitis and Hagios Emilianos on Skouze hill) and to charitable institutions. With his sudden death in 1946 his work remained unfinished: several of the icons in his Collection, by then there must have been about 90 in all, had not been photographed, others were unframed and the *catalogue raisonné* was not completed. As a gesture of respect for him his grief-stricken mother and the families of his brothers and sister decided to make a gift to the Benaki Museum. They consulted with Antonios Benakis and he and Manolis Chatzidakis chose those icons they wanted for the Museum, in addition to the ones that Emilios Velimezis had already donated while alive.

In 1988, thanks to the efforts of Emilios Velimezis's heirs, many of the icons in the Collection were photographed anew by Platon Rivellis and, later, Alexandros Pappas. In June 1991 the Benaki Museum decided to embark on the reassembly, conservation and study of the Collection. Angelos Delivorrias assumed responsibility for organizing the project and the collaborators were chosen. The onus of research and scientific documentation was shouldered by Professor Nano Chatzidakis. Stergios Stasinopoulos, head of the Benaki Museum laboratories, and his colleagues began the difficult job of cleaning and conserving the icons, while Makis Skiadaressis, with his well-known sensitivity, took the final photographs of these, and their details. Lastly, the undersigned, a production engineer then in the higher echelons of a bank, drew up the organizational and financial plans for the project.

Individual tasks were planned in such a way as not to interfere with the normal functioning of the Benaki Museum, while at the same time utilizing its experience and facilities in all sectors. The necessary finances were secured by the parallel organization of offsets for potential sponsors, donors and benefactors, individual and corporate. Within this framework the participation of sponsors was not confined to just offering monetary support. With the scientific and technical contribution of the project's collaborators the sponsors publish calendars and cards, organize cultural events on their own premises, drawing subjects from the icons in the Collection or from works in the project. The list of sponsors is indicative of the wide spectrum of interest shown by individuals, companies and foundations.

The educational programmes department of the Benaki Museum, headed by Niki Belesioti, designed – in collaboration with Stergios Stasinopoulos – three museum-cases concerned with icons in the Collection, while also organizing special programmes in schools. The laboratories of the Benaki Museum, on the responsibility of Stergios Stasinopoulos, helped produce an educational CD-ROM on the processes of cleaning and conserving the icons, which we believe is the first multi-media program in this sector world wide. So the respected wish of my mother, who all her life followed in the footsteps of my grandmother-teacher Kalomoira Chr. Margariti, was fulfilled.

All the educational material and the *catalogue raisonné* of the Collection will accompany the tour of the Exhibition of icons in Greece and abroad over the next few years. This 'voyage' began from Thessaloniki. The Catalogue and the CD-ROM will be distributed in accordance with the recommendations of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Holy Archbishoprics of Greece and America, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the J.F. Costopoulos Foundation, the A.G. Leventis Foundation and the Bodossaki Foundation, and the Organization for the Cultural Capital of Europe 'Thessaloniki 1997'.

I take this opportunity of thanking the president and members of the board of trustees of the Benaki Museum, its enlightened director Professor Angelos Delivorrias, his collaborators Irene Geroulanou, Electra Georgoula, Maria Diamanti, Anastasia Drandaki, Demetrios Droungas, Stergios Stasinopoulos and all those working in the conservation laboratory of the Museum, as well as the distinguished Professor Nano Chatzidakis.

With all due respect I express my gratitude to the Most Reverend Metropolitan of Philadelphia

Meliton, the Hellenic Minister of Culture Professor Evangelos Venizelos, the Academician Manolis Chatzidakis, the President of the A.G. Leventis Foundation Mr Konstantinos Leventis and its representative Honorary Ambassador Mr Achilles Exarchos, the President of the J.F. Costopoulos Foundation and Chairman of the board of the Alpha Credit Bank Mr John Costopoulos, the General Director of the Bodossaki Foundation Mr Demetrios Vlastos, the lawyer Mr Christos Petropoulos, the journalist Ms Eleni Bistika, the director of the National Art Gallery Professor Marina Lambraki-Plaka, the President and Vice-president of the Organization for the Cultural Capital of Europe 'Thessaloniki 1997' Mr Konstantinos Kosmopoulos and Mr Demetrios Salpistis respectively.

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Thanks for their advice and direct contribution at every stage of the project are due to Milena Apostolaki, Katerina Gerodimou, Marlena Georgiadou, Popi Gontikaki, Aikaterini Dellaporta, Maria Kazanaki-Lappa, Katerina Koskina, Chrysoula Kyriakopoulou, Ivy Nanopoulou, Anna Lefki Charitou, Cornelia Chatziaslani-Boura, Maria Chatzinasiou and Emmanuel Kasdaglis, Demetrios Katsikis, Demetrios Kapsomenos, Panayotis Kostopoulos, Kostas Manolis, Demetrios Papanayotou, Alexandros Pappas, Nikolaos Prochoris, Platon Rivellis, Makis Skiadaressis, Yannis Souriadakis, Nikos Frangakis.

It would be remiss of me not to stress the very valuable suggestions and assistance of the late Nikos-Gabriel Pentzikis and our beloved Melina Mercouri.

Lastly, I express my deep gratitude to the present owners of the works, who entrusted them to the Benaki Museum in the context of this project.

Respecting the wish of the Velimezis and Margaritis families to commemorate discreetly the creative spirit of their forebears – educationalists, writers, lawyers, physicians, technocrats – and their Christian love of their fellow men, I have worked wholeheartedly on the 'Project to reassemble, conserve, study and publish the Emiliós Velimezis Icon Collection', drawing strength from the support of my respected Angelos Delivorrias, my dear Spyros Vlassopoulos and Evangelos Nomikos, and of course of my father, brother and other relatives.

I humbly dedicate the 'Project' to the memory of those members of our family no longer with us.

CHRISTOS PHOTIOU MARGARITIS



1. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Passion of Christ*, 1566, Cat. no. 17 (photograph by Emil Saraf, before 1943).

FOREWORD

THE STUDY OF THE VELIMEZIS COLLECTION

Emilios Velimezis, like many educated Greeks of his day, responded to the turn of interest towards the Byzantine past and formed his Collection of icons during the years when he was a collaborator and personal friend of Antonios Benakis, from 1934 until his sudden death in January 1946. It is not known exactly when he started his Collection, but on 5 February 1938 he submitted a typewritten list declaring the possession of 40 icons to the Ephor of Byzantine Antiquities in Athens (see Appendix IB, Fig. 272). A list written in his own hand, recording ten icons with their purchase price in sovereigns, also exists (see Appendix IA, Fig. 271). Of the icons mentioned in both these documents noteworthy is that of the Passion of Christ by Domenikos Theotokopoulos (Cat. no. 17). It is number 21 in the typewritten list, entered without the name of the painter as: 'Descent from the Cross (Christ upheld by three angels. With integral frame. Dimensions with frame 68 x 0.38. Dimensions of central oval representation 0.33 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 0.26 $\frac{1}{2}$)', while in the handwritten list it is number 10, recorded as: 'Descent from the Cross [see photographs] by Theotokopoulos. Cretan period around 1560-1570. 1200 (sovereigns)'.

The purchase price of the icon of the Passion (1200 sovereigns) is extremely high in comparison with that of the other icons in the list, which does not exceed 200 sovereigns: for example, the three icons from the epistyle (nos 2, 3, 4 = Cat. no. 24) cost 200 sovereigns altogether, and an icon of the Dormition of the Virgin, oval with an integral frame (no. 8), which has not been located, was also bought for 200 sovereigns. Noted in the same list is the icon with the Akathistos Hymn (no. 6 = Cat. no. 14), which is dated to the sixteenth century and was purchased for 150 sovereigns.

Emilios Velimezis soon realized that the icons in his Collection should be studied, and in 1943 he asked the then young director of the Benaki Museum, Manolis Chatzidakis, to prepare the catalogue of them. This was delivered in a 70-page typewritten text in 1945. I cite a relevant note made by M. Chatzidakis in 1958, prefacing one later copy of the catalogue: 'The catalogue of the icons was prepared during the years 1943-1945, according to the wish of the collector. It was to be published, but the connoisseur's sudden death prevented this taking place. Since then the most important icons have come into the possession of the Benaki Museum and are included in the supplement to the Museum's catalogue. The rest, the catalogue of which follows, have ceased to constitute one collection. The text of the catalogue remains as compiled initially, without updating the bibliography since it will no longer be published in this form. The series of photographs is incomplete, because the photographing had not been finished when the collector passed away'.

After the collector's untimely death in January 1946 his family commemorated his friendship with Antonios Benakis by donating icons from his Collection to the Benaki Museum. Fifteen were chosen in all, on the advice of Manolis Chatzidakis (inv. nos B.M. 3722-3736, Cat. nos 8, 9, 12, 13 and 33, 18, 26,

31, 32, 38, 39, 40, 50, 51), among them the signed icon of the Miracle of the Holy Girdle by Emmanuel Tzanes (Cat. no. 26), as well as icons now ascribed to Theophanis (Cat. no. 12) and Michael Damaskenos (Cat. no. 18). Two of the icons of the gift were later imitations and were chosen deliberately in order to prevent them being passed off as authentic works.

Chatzidakis's catalogue covers 48 icons in chronological order. Unfortunately not all of them have been located (they are cat. nos M.Ch. 1, 11, 12, 20, 25, 27, 28, 34, 36, 44, 45), while others not included in that catalogue have been added to the Collection (see Concordances on pp. 468-470). The icons donated to the Benaki Museum are noted in a separate typewritten catalogue compiled in the same period as the first, 1945, and found in the collector's archive. This catalogue (M.Ch.a) is untitled and without continuous numbering of pages. It includes nine entries of icons with disordered numbering, one of which (no. 31, Saint Gobdelaas) was not donated to the Museum and has not yet been located. Ten icons from the Collection that were donated to the Benaki Museum are also listed in an unpublished typewritten catalogue of the icons in the Benaki Museum (Supplement II), compiled by Manolis Chatzidakis around 1958 (M.Ch.B.M.). The concordance of the numbers of these catalogues is given in the Table on pp. 468-469.

The *catalogue raisonné* which follows includes 72 icons in all: 36 from the M.Ch. catalogue, 8 from the M.Ch.a catalogue and 28 that had not been studied before. As is to be expected, after a lapse of forty-five years Manolis Chatzidakis's original catalogue required updating. His research on Postbyzantine painting in general as well as on Cretan painting and Domenikos Theotokopoulos in particular, had radically transformed the framework for studying the art of the icons in the Collection and in the light of this revision of the original text was required. Nevertheless, certain excerpts were considered apposite for inclusion in the new Catalogue. The accuracy and vitality of the descriptions in refined vernacular Greek, the perspicacity and precision of the stylistic and iconographic observations of the then young Byzantinist, which are frequently based on unpublished personal research, aptly enrich the present volume. Their selection was not easy and I hope I have not faltered under the burden of this responsibility.

The Benaki Museum entrusted me with the study of the icons in 1992, whereas their conservation by the very experienced Stergios Stasinopoulos was begun in 1994. My research often led me to conclusions that imposed new datings. With great pleasure I also ascertained that certain icons in the Collection could be attributed to some of the most important Cretan painters; the icon of the Adoration of the Magi (Cat. no. 15) with the lovely Venetian woodcarved frame was ascribed to Angelos Pitzamanos, that of the Raising of Lazarus (Cat. no. 12) has all the traits of the art of Theophanis and the representation of Saint Andrew (Cat. no. 18) belongs to the circle of Michael Damaskenos. It also emerged that a few icons constitute interesting examples of the development of the iconography of Cretan icons around 1500 and in the early sixteenth century; Saint Nicholas enthroned (Cat. no. 6) provides one of the earliest examples of the iconography of the enthroned hierarch in Cretan painting. The same is true of the icons of Saint Alexios (Cat. no. 7), Saint Paraskevi (Cat. no. 16) and the Akathistos Hymn (Cat. no. 14), while the enthroned Virgin (Cat. no. 11) is a splendid early sixteenth-century work.

However the most exciting path of my research was that which led me to the discovery of an early work of rare power and beauty, the icon of the Passion of Christ by Domenikos Theotokopoulos (Cat. no. 17). Emiliios Velimezis already owned it in 1938 and believed it was an authentic creation of the great Cretan master, but none of those who had seen it shared his view, as Manolis Chatzidakis vividly recalls in his preface. Moreover, as far as I know, no one had actually read the signature that existed in its lowest part and is visible in Emil Saraf's photograph taken before 1943. At that time scholars were highly circumspect in acknowledging a work by Domenikos Theotokopoulos as authentic, particularly since documentary evidence of the painter's Cretan period was non-existent. Furthermore, the singularity of the art of this icon in relation to the other two known early icons by Theotokopoulos constituted an insurmountable obstacle to attributing the icon of the Passion to his hand. An additional reason for the reservations of those earlier and later scholars who saw the icon was the fact that after World War II the tendency to ascribe to Theotokopoulos early Italian icons with forged signatures or even completely forged works, acquired alarming dimensions (cf. Chatzidakis (1963) 1990, 117). Lionello Puppi mentions in his 1995 article (Puppi 1995, 34) that he had seen countless such forgeries during the 1950s and 1960s. As I studied the icon after its cleaning in 1995, which enhanced the quality of the colours, all the stylistic traits of the Cretan painter's genius, in an early form, were gradually revealed, verifying every working hypothesis I posited. Even more exciting was the moment when the results of my research were confirmed, as I discerned the barely legible, half-effaced signature ΔΟΜΗΝΙΚΟΥ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ ΧΕΙΡ in an old photograph by Emil Saraf, in the Velimezis archive, which was shown to me in July 1996. The iconographic study of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century icons has demonstrated that Zakynthos was the provenance of several of them, such as Emmanuel Tzanes's icon of Saint Nicholas (Cat. no. 30), which bears the coat of arms of Nikolaos Sigouros, scion of the noble family of Zakynthos, the Deesis with the Virgin and Saint George by the painter Leos, 1649 (Cat. no. 35), the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist (Cat. no. 37), the Crucifixion (Cat. no. 38), the Descent from the Cross (Cat. no. 39), the Adoration of the Shepherds (Cat. no. 50), the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist (Cat. no. 51) and the icon of Saint Spyridon by Nikolaos Kallergis (Cat. no. 46). The study of the local art of Zakynthos and especially of Nikolaos Kallergis led me to attribute two unsigned icons to his workshop, the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple and the Annunciation (Cat. nos 47 and 48 respectively). So the collection includes three icons by this notable Zakynthian painter who evidently copied important icons by Cretan painters that were in Zakynthos (see Introduction and Cat. nos 17, 46, 47, 48), among them Domenikos Theotokopoulos's icon of the Passion of Christ (Cat. no. 17), on bema doors in churches in Zakynthos, and the Annunciation from the Modena triptych in the small icon of the Annunciation (Cat. no. 48). Lastly, the appeal of Theotokopoulos's art in Zakynthos is confirmed eloquently by Demetrios Pelekasis's Head of Christ 'Study upon Theotokopoulos', 1920, a copy of the head of the dead Christ from the icon of the Passion (Cat. no. 71).

Through the study of the icons in the Collection the relationship between the icons of Zakynthos and works by Domenikos Theotokopoulos present on the island emerges clearly. This relationship is confirmed by the investigation of the provenance of the icons of the Passion (Cat. no. 17) and the



2. *The Crucifixion*, late 17th-early 18th century,
Cat. no. 38 (photograph by Emil Saraf, before 1943).



3. *Saint Alexios*, c. 1500, Cat. no. 7
(photograph: Emil Saraf, before 1943).



4. *Saint John the Baptist*, early 16th century,
Cat. no. 10 (photograph by Emil Saraf, before 1943).



5. *The Dormition of the Virgin*, second half of 17th
century, Cat. no. 36
(photograph by Emil Saraf, before 1943).

Annunciation (Cat. no. 48) as well as of Saint Luke the Evangelist and the Adoration of the Magi in the Benaki Museum, as discussed in the Introduction. By applying the method of seeking out the models, of comparing and of excluding other influences I have been able to locate copies of eight different works by Domenikos Theotokopoulos in the local painting of Zakynthos in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These copies belie the existence of their models on the Ionian island many years before they appeared in collections in Athens or abroad.

The Catalogue of the icons in the Velimezis Collection comprises a series of separate studies on each icon, presented in approximately chronological order. However, their study through successive approaches revealed different small groups of icons that are linked through a chain of iconographic and stylistic correlations, even though they belong to different periods. For this reason the Catalogue can be read in multiple ways. The entry on Theotokopoulos's icon of the Passion of Christ (Cat. no. 17) should be read in conjunction with the introductory chapter, as well as with the entry on the icon of the Annunciation (Cat. no. 48) and that on the Head of the dead Christ, by Demetrios Pelekasis (Cat. no. 71). The entry on the icon of Saint Nicholas, around 1500 (Cat. no. 6), can be read in parallel with those on the eighteenth-century icons of Saint James (Cat. no. 45) and Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46), with which its iconography is connected. The multiple possible correlations between a large number of icons of different periods, which are connected on the basis of their iconographic models or their style, suggests that these affinities are real and due to the transmission of models among artists living in a common area, the evidence points to Zakynthos. Thus in this Catalogue certain issues concerning the special development of local workshops on the island are raised but by no means resolved.

The icons in the Collection had been conserved by Demetrios Pelekasis, using the method discussed in the Introduction. Excerpts from an unpublished text by Pelekasis (written before 1946) on the conservation of icons, found in the archive of Emiliios Velimezis, are included in Appendix II at the end of the book. Stergios Stasinopoulos, conservator at the Benaki Museum, with a team of young collaborators, restored the painted surface of the icons after removing earlier overpaintings and the blackened varnish. A brief report on their conservation practices is given in Appendix III. Some icons in the donation from the Collection to the Benaki Museum had been conserved earlier by Photis Zachariou, Kali Milanou and Stergios Stasinopoulos, while others, in private collections, have not been examined in the laboratory at all. Relevant information is given in the entry for each icon.

I wish to thank my father Manolis Chatzidakis for entrusting me with the new treatment of his original catalogue of the icons in the Velimezis Collection and for allowing me to incorporate excerpts from his text in my book. I thank him too for his patient support when he was the first to hear of the results of my research on the icon by Theotokopoulos. Thanks are also due to the relatives of the collector, Ms Vasiliki Th. Velimezi, Ms Vanna Kaloutsi-Velimezi and Mr Emiliios Ph. Margaritis, for entrusting me to study the icons collected by their beloved Emiliios I. Velimezis, and most of all to Mr. Christos Ph. Margaritis, son of Emiliios Velimezis's sister, Sophia Margariti, who dedicated himself to this project.

I am deeply grateful to Angelos Delivorrias, director of the Benaki Museum, for ensuring the necessary

framework for this scientific publication; without his constant care and warm support this task would never have been realized.

Thanks are addressed to the organizing committee of the VIII International Congress of Cretan Studies and especially its chairman Professor Nikolaos Panayotakis († 1997) for allowing me to communicate the results of my research on the icon by Theotokopoulos at its fourth session, in Herakleion, on 12 September 1996. I am grateful too to those colleagues for their enthusiasm and emotion immediately after my communication to the Congress. Particular thanks are due to many friends and colleagues who have assisted me while studying the icons in the Collection and particularly that by Theotokopoulos: the heads of the Library and the Photographic Archive of the Max Planck Institute (Biblioteca Herziana) in Rome, who facilitated my research during my brief stay in October 1996; Professor Jean-Pierre Sodini and Janick Durand, director of the Département des Objets d'Art in the Louvre, who granted me access to the Service de Documentation of the Département de Dessins in the Louvre, and its hospitable director Madame Scart; Professor José Alvarez-Lopera of the University of Madrid for the useful discussions during his short stay in Athens in November 1996; the art historian Alexandros Xydis for his long-standing trust in me and for his sincere interest in the discovery of the icon by El Greco; Professor Angeliki Laiou, director of Dumbarton Oaks, for her bibliographical assistance and Professor Stavros Thomadakis for his pertinent advice on the equivalence of the drachma and the sovereign in the 1930s; the book historian Konstantinos Staikos for assisting my bibliographical inquiries; Martyn Saunders who sought in London, on my behalf, a photograph of the terracotta relief plaque in the former Antoine Seilern Collection.

During my visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, in early March 1997, I had helpful discussions with Keith Christiansen, curator in the Department of European Painting, Laurence Kanter, curator of the Robert Lehmann Collection and Susan Boorsch of the Department of Prints and Drawings. I thank them all cordially, as well as Charles Little, curator of the Department of Medieval Art. I am also grateful to the photographic department of the Metropolitan Museum and Heather Lemonedes for sending photographs so promptly. To Mahrugh Tarapor, associate director for exhibitions in the Metropolitan Museum and of course to its director, Philippe de Montebello, I express sincere thanks for their hospitality. Lastly, special thanks to Professor David Davis of University College London, for his trust and for our friendly discussion on El Greco several years ago, at Herakleion Crete in 1990, and to Nicos Hadjinicolaou, Professor of Art History at the University of Crete, who invited me to take part in the Conference 'El Greco of Crete' in Herakleion, Crete, in 1990, which gave me the opportunity to gain another insight into the problems of studying the great Cretan master's work.

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as for providing photographs. I also thank my one-time colleague and now director of the Byzantine Museum in Athens, Chrysanthi Baltoyanni for our discussion on certain Heptanesian icons in the Museum and the Loverdos Collection. I thank Petros Protonotarios for indicating to me the work by Demetrios Pelekasis with the Head of the dead Christ.

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My two sons, Demetris and Niketas, patiently participated in my endeavours, endowing me with those most precious gifts of love and care.

June 1997

NANO CHATZIDAKIS



INTRODUCTION

The Velimezis Collection and the first icon collections

Criteria of selection. Eponymous painters

The turn of interest towards the art of Byzantium and the forming of the first icon collections are associated with the more general intellectual concern with affirming the national identity, that emerged in the late nineteenth century and was a predominant ideological current after the Greek defeat in Asia Minor, in 1922. Within this context the Byzantine Museum and the Loverdos Museum opened in 1930, and the Benaki Museum was inaugurated the following year, 1931.¹

The Byzantine Museum housed icons and other religious heirlooms (*keimelia*) belonging to the Christian Archaeological Society, mainly collected by its founder (1884) Georgios Lambakis, Reader in Byzantine Archaeology and secretary to Queen Olga, from gifts and donations he received during his tours of churches and monasteries throughout Greece.²

The Benaki Museum was founded by the great benefactor Antonios Benakis, son of a leading family in the Greek community in Egypt. Its collections included a large number of icons; 82 were published in 1936 and 1939 in the Catalogue by Andreas Xyngopoulos, Professor at the University of Thessaloniki.³

In the same period Dionysios Loverdos, from the Ionian island of Cephalonia, founder of the Popular Bank, created the Loverdos Museum, in which 590 Postbyzantine icons were exhibited. This museum closed soon after the founder's death, in 1934.⁴ The main nucleus of the Loverdos Collection, nowadays housed in the Byzantine Museum, Athens, was the Alexios Kolyvas icon collection, formed as early as 1889, which included 184 works that were shown in a major exhibition in the Zappeion in 1912.⁵

Other eminent members of Athenian society were forming icon collections at this time. The

ambassador Demetrios Sisilianos started his collection in 1915 and published his book on Greek icon-painters in 1935.⁶ Helen Stathatos formed a collection of icons and woodcarvings which she later donated to the Benaki Museum and the Gennadius Library.⁷ Christianos Lambikis and the physician Ioannis Katsaras were among the collectors who donated their icons to the Byzantine Museum, while the greater part of the Sisilianos Collection was later added to the Pavlos Canellopoulos Collection.⁸ Last but not least, during this period Emilios Velimezis, collaborator of Antonios Benakis, was forming his Collection, which numbered 40 icons by 1938.

The icons in these collections display a uniformity, both in the criteria of selection and the state of conservation, which will be discussed below. The preference for sixteenth-century Cretan icons and, primarily, for seventeenth- to nineteenth-century icons of Heptanesian art, frequently with pronounced Western influences, is obvious. The criteria for purchasing these icons were formed on the advice of a circle of 'experts', referred to in the introduction to the Catalogue of the Loverdos Collection, published by A.A. Papayannopoulos-Palaios in 1946, on the basis of a manuscript drafted by his father, Anastasios Papayannopoulos.⁹ Dionysios Loverdos is said to have formed a circle 'of specialist artists and experts, of true art-lovers, which he consulted each time ... outstanding among whom are the distinguished artist, painter and continuer of the icon-painting tradition, Demetrios Pelekasis, and the pioneer in the study, dissemination and exact interpretation of this art, unique expert, Anastasios Papayannopoulos'.¹⁰ Demetrios Pelekasis (1881-1973), painter, icon-painter and icon-conservator, son of the painter Spyridon Pelekasis, was a member of a well-known Zakynthian family. An autodidact expert in Heptanesian painting and curator of the Loverdos Museum (1924-1934),¹¹ Pelekasis also had a close relationship with Emilios Velimezis, as will become apparent below.

The aesthetic preferences of the collectors' advisers reflect a more general trend current among researchers in Byzantine art and connoisseurs who considered that Heptanesian painting with Italian influences could elevate Greek art to the level of Western European painting. Following the trail blazed by Panayotis Doxaras in his treatises *Τέχνη ζωγραφίας* (*Art of Painting*) and *Περί ζωγραφίας* (*On Painting*), 1720 and 1726 respectively,¹² this renewal of interest in the national identity and tendency to adapt Byzantine tradition to European models was already apparent in the late nineteenth century when Ludwig Theirsch's drawings were exhibited in the Zappeion (1891).¹³ It was further reinforced by Spyridon de Viazis's booklet entitled «Ἡ ζωγραφικὴ ἐν Ἑλλάδι» (*Painting in Greece*), in which he writes: 'In whatever icons we have seen of Cretan painters and even the best of them, we have observed only occasionally some better colouring and more accomplished rendering of the highlights of the faces and in the volumes which are distinguished more prominently (than in the strictly Byzantine style)'. The Cretan icon-painters are not examined in his study because he believed that only the Heptanesian ones of «ἐλευθέρας τέχνης» (literally 'liberal art') merited attention, 'since our aim is only to deal with the

renaissance of Greek painting and of the painters who created in Greek art and bore the most splendid fruits'.¹⁴ Later, Zacharias Papantoniou (1915),¹⁵ Demetrios and Nikolaos Kaloyeropoulos (1926),¹⁶ Demetrios Sisilianos (1935)¹⁷ and others praised not only the great sixteenth-century Cretan painters but also, and more fulsomely, the representatives of Heptanesian painting of 'liberal art'. Not only were Damaskenos, Lambardos and Klontzas considered brilliant and exemplary painters but also artists better known to the local communities of the Ionian Islands, such as Stephanos Tzankarolas, Emmanuel Tzanfournaris, Philotheos Skoufos, Ilias, Ioannis and Leos Moskos, Demetrios Nomikos and especially Panayotis and Nikolaos Doxaras, Nikolaos Koutouzis and Nikolaos Kantounis.

Zakynthos was dubbed the 'Florence of the East', while Papantoniou extolled its local painting as the 'Preraphaelite era of Heptanesian art'.¹⁸ Nikolaos Kaloyeropoulos described Ilias Moschos as 'a Christian Praxiteles in humanity',¹⁹ Papantoniou called the painter of the bema doors in the Phaneromeni church 'the Praxiteles of Christianity' and Koutouzis and Kantounis 'the Calvos and Solomos' of painting, likening them to the national poets.²⁰ Photos Politis wrote in the newspaper *Politeia*, in 1926, that the art of Tzankarolas and Paviar 'should be the model for the young when they seek refuge in foreign parts'.²¹ Works of Heptanesian painting by Nikolaos Koutouzis and Nikolaos Kantounis were also included in the first major collections of icons, such as the Alexios Kolyvas Collection: fifteen of their works were presented in the major exhibition of the collection in the Zappeion, in 1912.²²

Recent research on Cretan painting has shown that the signatures on many of the icons in the above collections were forged and indeed that in numerous cases these had been added to Cretan icons of a much earlier period, the fifteenth century.²³ This phenomenon is explicable if we consider the fact that the state of research at that time did not permit the correct dating of the earlier Cretan icons, which were thus neglected and of no commercial interest.

Moreover, these icons had been extensively overpainted during their conservation by a common technique, as can be ascertained from their uniform condition: large areas of damage on the gold ground, alteration of the blue paint which is almost black, effacement of the white highlights and the intermediate hues. The destroyed surfaces are frequently painted in and restored, while most of the icons have the same brownish tone due to the same type of deterioration of the varnish. The testimony of Adamantiou (1908) on the state of the icons of Zakynthos is telling: 'the portable icons or oil-paintings are varnished, or worse, are cleaned with boiled oil'. For this reason he proposes: 'a draft of a circular on prohibiting alterations and renovations of works of art', in which he writes the following: 'When an icon is varnished or is smeared with boiled oil or is mixed up with paints, it may become lovelier but it is no longer old. It can teach us nothing and is completely useless for the archaeologist and historian who wants to study the earlier life of the nation or the land'. And he concludes: 'It is prohibited ... 2) To varnish old icons or to clean them with oil; 3) To renovate icons in any way or to paint them with a brush. In general any work on

them whatsoever'.²⁴ Adamantiou's pleas were obviously not heeded, since many icons in collections have successive layers of overpaintings.

The tradition of restoring old icons was continued with 'improvements' by the sole eponymous conservator of icons in these collections, Demetrios Pelekasis.²⁵ The respectable artist had invented his own method of cleaning the icons, using fire and acid to remove the blackened varnish layers²⁶ and, unfortunately, along with them sections of the gold ground and the painted surface, mainly the highlights and the subtle hues. He then filled in the gaps thus created and 'rectified' whatever seemed to him to be painted unsatisfactorily, while on many of the icons he had conserved forged signatures have been detected. In a typewritten text on his method, found in the archive of the Velimezis Collection, the materials he used and his method of conservation with flame from a spirit lamp and acids are recorded analytically (see Appendix II).²⁷ Nowadays his interventions, which gave the icons a uniform aspect, are all too clear to the naked eye.

«Δομένικος γρέκος, ίσπανός» (*Domenikos Grekos, Spaniard*). *The fortune of his first icons*

21

The posthumous fortune of Domenikos Theotokopoulos's name in Greece is unknown.²⁸ Almost certainly his place of origin was soon forgotten. Indeed whereas Panayotis Doxaras in his first treatise, *Τέχνη ζωγραφίας*, 1720, which includes a list of the most important painters in the world, cites the Cretan painters Angelos and Michael Damaskenos along with their place of origin and their style: «Κὺρ Ἀγγελος, κρητικός εἰς τὸ ρωμέϊκον» (*Kyr Angelos, Cretan, in the Greek [style]*), «Μιχαὴλ Δαμασκηνός, κρητικός, εἰς τὸ ρωμέϊκον» (*Michael Damaskenos, Cretan, in the Greek [style]*), he mentions Theotokopoulos as «Δομένικος γρέκος, ίσπανός» (*Domenikos Grekos, Spaniard*)(!),²⁹ evidently because neither his Greek surname nor his Cretan origin were known any longer.

The Cretan painter's name returns, taking an important place in the Greek bibliography, when he is mentioned for the first time in the nineteenth-century texts on the history of painting, by Andreas Moustoxydis (1843) and Konstantinos Sathas (1868); nevertheless its reading is incorrect. His Christian name Domenikos (Domenico) is Hellenized to Kyriakos, while his surname is misread as Theoskopolis.³⁰ In Europe too Theotokopoulos's name appears with variations. Only Demetrios Vikelas (1894) and Karl Justi (1897) read the name Domenikos Theotokopoulos correctly.³¹

Although Domenikos Theotokopoulos is accorded an outstanding place in the above studies on Byzantine and Neohellenic painting he was never regarded as a model for Greek icon-painters. Nor was his work projected as an exemplar for Greek painting. Nevertheless, in 1913 De Viazis wrote in the periodical *Pinakotheki*: 'if Theotokopoulos had gone down to Crete after his studies in Venice, or come to the Ionian islands, and indeed to the capital Corfu, the brush would have been free, the imagination free. He would not have been in a foreign environment among the

Inquisitors, but among Greeks and he would have been enhanced as father of the modern Greek school on the basis of the Italian'.³²

It should be added that at the time these remarks were made no one knew that Theotokopoulos had in fact begun his career in Crete as an icon-painter. Indeed no icon by Theotokopoulos was known until 1934. No work of the Cretan period in Theotokopoulos's life was known in Greece until two icons appeared in the market, in the hands of the antique-dealer Theodoros Zoumboulakis. Both were sold in the same year, 1934; one of Saint Luke the Evangelist, to the collector Demetrios Sisilianos, and the other of the Adoration of the Magi, to Antonios Benakis, who had just opened his Museum.³³ At that time the attribution of the icons to the Cretan painter was dubitable. Whereas the dealer was certain of the authenticity of the signatures, which were of the same type *χείρ Δομηνίκου*, and of their attribution to Theotokopoulos, the purchasers themselves were not convinced that he was correct. Before buying the icon of the Adoration of the Magi, Antonios Benakis had sought expertise from the art-historian August L. Mayer, who recognized it as an authentic work and published it in a short article in 1935.³⁴ Demetrios Sisilianos, however, still had his doubts about the icon of Saint Luke when he published his book *Ἑλληνες ἁγιογράφοι μετὰ τήν Ἀλωσιν* (*Greek Icon-painters after the Fall* [of Constantinople]), 1935, where he speculates on its attribution, recording it in two different entries, one for the painter Domenikos and the other for Domenikos Theotokopoulos.³⁵ Not long afterwards, Rodolfo Pallucchini made the chance discovery of the triptych that had lain forgotten in a cupboard in the Galleria Estense in Modena, which he published in 1937.³⁶

The exceptionally high price Velimezis paid for the icon of the Passion of Christ (Cat. no. 17) and the fact that it is entered in his handwritten list as a work by Theotokopoulos,³⁷ suggest that when the collector purchased it, before 1938, he had no doubt about either its authenticity or the identity of its painter. Moreover, the presence in the Velimezis Collection of a work by Demetrios Pelekasis of the Head of the dead Christ (Cat. no. 71), painted in 1920, inscribed on the back as a *σπουδή πάνου στό Θεοτοκόπουλο* (*study upon Theotokopoulos*) — a copy from the icon of the Passion (Cat. no. 17) — leads to the conclusion that this icon by Theotokopoulos was known to the 'expert', conservator and icon-painter as an authentic work several years before 1934, the year in which the two other signed icons by the great Cretan painter became known to specialist scholars.

As Mertzios notes, from 1868 until 1921 the confusion regarding recognition of the artistic value of Theotokopoulos's works is closely associated with the relatively low price at which his first seven paintings were sold in Europe.³⁸ Concerning the price of his first icons in Greece, the relevant documents preserved in the Benaki Museum show that the icon of the Adoration of the Magi was bought by Antonios Benakis in 1934 for 104,000 drachmas, a sum equivalent to 119.82 sovereigns, according to the mean price of the sovereign.³⁹ Another document, preserved in the archive of the Velimezis Collection (Appendix I), shows that at about the same time — certainly



6. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos, Saint Luke the Evangelist, 1560-1567. Benaki Museum (photograph after conservation in 1956).*



8. *Saint Luke the Evangelist, 17th century. Loverdos Collection, Byzantine Museum, Athens.*

7. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos, Saint Luke the Evangelist, 1560-1567. Benaki Museum (photograph before conservation in 1956).*

before 1938 — the icon of the Passion of Christ was purchased by Emilios Velimezis for 1,200 sovereigns, a sum equivalent to 1,104,240 drachmas. This was an extremely high price in comparison with that of the icon of the Adoration of the Magi, which was closer to the market price of other icons recorded in Velimezis's handwritten list, which range from 150 to 200 sovereigns. It is worth noting that the mean price of the gold sovereign in 1934 was 867.9 drachmas while in 1938 it was 920.2 drachmas, that is there was no great fluctuation.⁴⁰ Obviously the icon of the Adoration of the Magi was sold to Antonios Benakis at a relatively low price, on account of its questionable attribution to the great Cretan painter.

The provenance of the icons in the collections. The voice of the icons from Zakynthos

The significance of the artistic and intellectual life of Zakynthos in the formation of the first private icon collections, and especially in the circulation of the icons by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, can be better understood if we consider that those who first expressed a lively interest in the monuments and the icons by Greek religious painters originated from this Ionian island; the local historians and writers Panayotis Chiotis, Gerasimos Mavroyannis, Nikolaos Katramis, Spyridon De Viazis and Leonidas Zois, who published a host of articles on these subjects in the local Zakynthian press, and literary and art journals, already from the late nineteenth century. Furthermore, it is not fortuitous that one of the first collectors of icons, Alexios Kolyvas, hailed from Zakynthos.⁴¹ Certainly the efforts initiated in 1882 to found the Zakynthos Museum were consistent with the views of those who regarded this small island not only as the 'Florence of the East' but also as the bastion of the artistic heritage of Hellenism.⁴² Lastly, it should not be forgotten that the two most important connoisseurs of the period, A. Papayannopoulos and D. Pelekasis, were among the foremost members of the island's society and that their expertise had a decisive influence on the icon market.

The preference for Heptanesian art can be clearly seen in the icons of the Athenian collections. Konomos, in one of his later books (1988), records a large number of Heptanesian icons originating from Zakynthos and nowadays in the collections of the Benaki Museum and the Byzantine Museum as well as in the Loverdos Collection.⁴³ Moreover, significant Cretan icons also found their way from Zakynthos into the Athenian collections, among them the icon of Saint Luke the Evangelist by Domenikos Theotokopoulos.⁴⁴

The phenomenon is explicable if we take into account the situation prevailing on the island in the early decades of the twentieth century, where illicit trade in antiquities was so widespread that its echo reached the ears of the Greek parliament. In response to a report by the secretary of the Prefecture of Zakynthos, Georgios Mazarakis, the General Ephorate of Antiquities sent Adamantios Adamantiou, Professor of Byzantine History at the University of Athens and first director of the Byzantine Museum, Athens, to Zakynthos, in spring 1908, in order to rescue the



9. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *Angel*.
Detail from the icon of Saint Luke
the Evangelist (see Fig. 6).



10. Nikolaos Kantounis (1767-1834),
The Annunciation. Zakynthos Museum.



11. Nikolaos Koutouzis (1741-1813),
The Annunciation. Zakynthos Museum.

art treasures and to found a local museum.⁴⁵ Adamantiou notes in his Report: 'The archaeological objects of the island that were in the churches and monasteries spoken of above were until now plunder for the wardens and priests, if they were self-seeking, and for their whims if they were indifferent or ignorant. Consequently there is systematic theft from churches and monasteries and wholesale destruction and damage of these objects due to indifference ... the owners of the churches treated the vessels and icons in these as if they were vessels and icons in their own home. Selling, altering and destroying them'.⁴⁶ Similar testimonies of clandestine dealings in antiquities are frequently encountered in Zakynthian newspapers of the period.⁴⁷ This situation was exacerbated by earthquakes and ensuing conflagrations, and reached its peak with the bombardment of the town during the German Occupation (1941-1944) and the catastrophic earthquakes of 1953. The wretched toll was the loss of a very large number of icons and other works, all valuable testimonies on the art of Zakynthos. In the periodical *Ἑπτανήσια καὶ Φύλλα* (*Heptanesian Pages*) of 1959 Konomos notes that apart from the churches and the religious heirlooms destroyed, over ten private collections of paintings that existed before the 1953 earthquakes and conflagration were decimated. His relevant assessment is revealing: 'what was not destroyed by the earthquakes and fires was smuggled out in trade and enriched the private collections'.⁴⁸

One of the leading suppliers of icons at this time was the antique-dealer Theodoros Zoumboulakis. In the light of the above, it is worth noting here that according to information in the inventories of the Benaki Museum he had stated that the provenance of the icon of Saint Luke the Evangelist, by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, was Zakynthos, whereas the icon of the Adoration of the Magi was said to come from an island in the Aegean.⁴⁹ It is worth taking a closer look at these two works in order to check the credibility of the information on their provenance.

As Manolis Chatzidakis has shown in his study,⁵⁰ the icon of Saint Luke the Evangelist (Fig. 6) constituted the model for a series of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century icons. Among these the seventeenth-century icon in the Loverdos Collection (Fig. 8) confirms the direct copying of one icon from the other.⁵¹ In fact, if we compare this icon with that by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, as preserved in an old black-and-white photograph taken prior to its conservation in 1956 (Fig. 7),⁵² it is clear that crude restorations and overpaintings on the evangelist's face and upper body had been made to the Theotokopoulos icon in the past, copying the figure of Luke from the icon in the Loverdos Collection. This similitude belies the co-existence, in a much earlier period, of both icons in the workshop of the same painter-conservator on Zakynthos. Lastly, the presence of the icon of Saint Luke the Evangelist in Zakynthos is confirmed by the testimony of other paintings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the representation of the Annunciation in icons by Nikolaos Koutouzis and Nikolaos Kantounis (Figs 10, 11), as well as in a series of other works of the same theme and analogous art, there is a remarkable resemblance between



12. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Adoration of the Magi*, 1560-1567. Benaki Museum.



13. Nikolaos Kallergis (?) (1699-1747), *The Adoration of the Magi*. Solomos Museum, Zakynthos.



14. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Adoration of the Magi*, 1567-1577. Private collection, Lausanne.



15. *The Adoration of the Magi*, 18th century. Zakynthos Museum.

the angel in this scene and the angel in the icon of the Evangelist Luke (Fig. 9).⁵³ The pose is exactly the same, since they appear on high in heaven, frontal with the leg flexed and bared. The likeness is so striking that there is no doubt about the copying from the model of Theotokopoulos's icon. The hypothesis of direct copying is validated by the unique, as far as I know, rendering of the angel in this pose in Postbyzantine painting⁵⁴ and, further, by the fact that it only appears in works by Zakynthian painters. However, as is apparent from the study of the icon of the Annunciation (Cat. no. 48), which I ascribe to Nikolaos Kallergis, the above representations of the Annunciation by Zakynthian painters are linked in parallel with another work by Theotokopoulos, analogous to the Annunciation in the Prado and in Barcelona, as well as in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection (Figs 230, 231). It seems that these painters combined two different models from works by Theotokopoulos that existed in their immediate environment. So, according to the above, the provenance of the icon of Evangelist Luke is confirmed as Zakynthos and its appeal in the art of the island is ascertained.

The appeal of the Benaki Museum icon of the Adoration of the Magi (Fig. 12)⁵⁵ in the local art of Zakynthos was comparable. In another work by the same circle of Zakynthian painters, the Adoration of the Magi in the Zakynthos Museum, from the church of Hagios Antonios Andritsi (Fig. 15),⁵⁶ despite the differences in the arrangement of the composition and the Virgin's pose, which as we shall see originates from another work by Theotokopoulos, significant correspondences exist. Observed in this scene is an assemblage of common features consisting of the second, kneeling king in reddish mantle, the frontal horse and the standing black king, frontal with deep green mantle, all in exactly similar poses to those they have in the Benaki Museum icon; to these we can add the smaller kneeling figure with a metallic cuirass, in back view but with the face turned towards the beholder, that is in the same pose as the figure of the soldier in the Adoration of the Magi in the Benaki Museum; lastly there is correspondence in setting the scene in front of a massive ancient ruin with columns and arches. Each one of these elements is also encountered in sixteenth-century engravings which have already been recorded as sources for Theotokopoulos's Adoration of the Magi.⁵⁷ However, the way in which they are combined is the innovation of Theotokopoulos, and for this reason the only explanation for the assemblage of correspondences noted above is that they constitute a direct copy from the icon now in the Benaki Museum.

As far as the figure of the Virgin and Child is concerned, it recurs, exactly the same but in reversed pose, in another icon by Theotokopoulos of the same subject, now in a private collection in Lausanne (Fig. 14).⁵⁸ There too an analogous figure approaches the Virgin from the right, closing the composition just as in the Zakynthos icon.

Another icon of the Adoration of the Magi, earlier — mid-eighteenth century — and in a conservative style akin to that of Nikolaos Kallergis, in the Solomos Museum in Zakynthos (Fig. 13),⁵⁹ displays remarkable similarity to the Benaki Museum icon in the pose of the Virgin and



16. Nikolaos Koutouzis (?) (1741-1813),
Christ on the Cross. Zakynthos Museum.



17. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *Christ on the Cross*, 1567-1577. Private collection
 (Christie's, New York, 1997).

Child, of Joseph who stands behind leaning on his staff in the same way, and even of the first king genuflecting before the holy infant. Lastly, the broad marble dais on which the Virgin rests her feet is the same in both works. As far as I know, the icon in the Solomos Museum is in this respect the sole example in which so many iconographic similarities to the icon in the Benaki Museum are gathered.

I believe that all the iconographic affinities noted above bear silent witness to the one-time presence in Zakynthos not only of the Benaki Museum icon of the Adoration of the Magi but also, most probably, of that in the collection in Lausanne. The presence of this second icon in Zakynthos is corroborated by additional similarities in the rendering of the first kneeling king and the pose of the third standing one in the Solomos Museum icon, to the standing king on the left in the Lausanne icon, while the second king in the icon in Zakynthos holds the gift for the infant Christ in exactly the same way, in both hands, as the king approaching from the right in the Lausanne icon; further, the scale and rendering of a camel in the background left is analogous with that encountered in the work in Lausanne. Lastly, no less significant is the similarity in the depiction of the small nude angels that appear amidst the illumined clouds in the sky. These iconographic affinities with the Lausanne icon are so overt that they can only be interpreted as direct copies from this model. According to the above, the Zakynthian painter of the icon in the Solomos Museum, following the custom of painters of the period, combined two different models of icons by Domenikos Theotokopoulos that were then available to him.

An echo of the Lausanne icon is also ascertained in a late eighteenth-century work by a Zakynthian painter of 'liberal art', the Adoration of the Magi from the church of Hagios Dionysios, a work attributed to Nikolaos Doxaras,⁶⁰ which shows a notable correspondence in composition.

To summarize, this brief survey has shown that both the icons by Domenikos Theotokopoulos that appeared on the Athenian market in 1934 came from Zakynthos. This verifies the antique-dealer's information on the icon of Saint Luke the Evangelist and negates that on the icon of the Adoration of the Magi, which was presumably intentionally misleading. In any case the similar condition of both these icons, with considerable damage to the painted surface, loss of intermediate tints, damage to the ground and a uniform brown tone, indicates a common method of conservation by the same person.

A third icon should be added to these two from the island of Zakynthos, that of the Passion of Christ (Cat. no. 17), since, as the study below reveals, its art is likewise echoed in the local painting of the island during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Moreover, from the similarity of its condition to the two icons in the Benaki Museum it is concluded that all three works by Theotokopoulos were conserved by the same Zakynthian artist. In the light of the above we can safely assume that all three icons had a common fortune from Zakynthos until their acquisition by Athenian collections.

The investigation of the provenance of the early icons by Theotokopoulos, as well as the study of the icons of the Passion (Cat. no. 17) and the Annunciation (Cat. no. 48) in the Catalogue that follows, leads easily to the conclusion that a significant number of icons by Domenikos Theotokopoulos constituted the model for the local painting of Zakynthos during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

This phenomenon should be examined in relation to the methods of icon-painting, for the copying and recomposing of elements from earlier works was already an established tradition in the fifteenth century. This tradition was continued by the painters of Zakynthos, such as Nikolaos Kallergis as well as those who followed the 'liberal art' of the West. Well-known are Nikolaos Kantounis's endeavours to copy works by Nikolaos Koutouzis, who held him at a distance, while his works are often difficult to distinguish from those of his master.⁶¹ This ability of copying was deemed praiseworthy, as can be ascertained from De Viazis's (1891-1892) comments on Nikolaos Koutouzis: '... he had a special love of beauty and art in copying, rendering in the copied works most graceful schemes, a different pose, adding or subtracting persons from the model, so that his copies appeared as his own works ...'.⁶² In order to understand the extent and importance of this phenomenon it is pertinent to enumerate the works by Theotokopoulos of which copies were located in Zakynthos at different stages of my study of the icons in the Velimezis Collection.

1. Saint Luke the Evangelist; Cretan period, pre-1567. Benaki Museum (donated by Demetrios Sisilianos, 1956). The icon was bought by Demetrios Sisilianos in 1934 from the antique-dealer Theodoros Zoumboulakis and donated to the Benaki Museum in 1956.⁶³ First publication: Sisilianos 1935 (cf. Introduction, 47ff., Figs 6-11).
2. The Adoration of the Magi; Cretan period, pre-1567. Benaki Museum. Bought by Antonios Benakis from the antique-dealer Theodoros Zoumboulakis in 1934.⁶⁴ First publication: Mayer 1935 (cf. Introduction, 49ff., Figs 12-15).
3. The icon of the Passion of Christ-Pietà (Cat. no. 17); end of Cretan period, 1566. Emilios Velimezis Collection, bought before 1938.⁶⁵ First presentation: N. Chatzidakis, September 1996 (see Cat. no. 17, Figs 134-137).
4. Triptych; Cretan-Venetian period, pre-1570. Modena, Galleria Estense (from where it was stolen recently). Discovered by chance in a cupboard in the Galleria Estense by the then director, Rudolfo Pallucchini, who published it in 1937 (cf. Cat. no. 48, Figs 224-229).⁶⁶ The history of the triptych's provenance, as narrated by Pallucchini, completely precludes the possibility of its presence in Zakynthos. It is located in 1806 in the catalogue of the Ercole d'Este Collection, which was formed from inheritance of the Obizzi Collection (late seventeenth century) in the Padua region.⁶⁷ Nevertheless the contemporaneous copying of three representations of the triptych by Zakynthian painters during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries cannot be accidental, while the copying of these subjects from some other works, copies of Theotokopoulos, that are unknown or were destroyed in the successive



18. Nikolaos Kallergis (?) (1699-1747), *Angel with the Holy Mandylion*, bema door from the Pantokrator church. Zakynthos Museum.



19. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *Saint Veronica*, from the church of Santo Domingo el Antiguo, after 1577. Maria Luisa Caturia Collection, Madrid.

disasters that struck the island, cannot be ruled out. It would also be interesting to re-examine the information on the triptych's provenance.

5. The Annunciation. Uncertain identification with an icon after the model of the Annunciation in the Prado, from the painter's Roman period, such as the works in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection and in Barcelona (former Muñoz Collection)⁶⁸ (cf. Cat. no. 48, Figs 230-231). The subject occurs in a representation of the Annunciation by Nikolaos Koutouzis (Fig. 11) which, as noted above, has adopted the form of the angel from the icon of Saint Luke the Evangelist.
6. The Adoration of the Magi; assigned to the Italian period. Private collection in Lausanne (Fig. 14)⁶⁹ (cf. Introduction, 49, Figs 13-15). The icon's provenance is unknown; Wetthey notes that the work was first published by the Milanese restorer and picture vendor Cavaggioli in 1955, who mentions Ginetto Bonomi as its previous owner, and adds 'but the latter informs me that he never owned it'.⁷⁰ A variation of the same iconography is encountered in the Adoration in the Museo Lazzaro Galdeano in Madrid.⁷¹ The Madrid icon formerly belonged to the Kieslinger Collection in Vienna and was considered to be a work by Marascoli; in 1937 it belonged to the Kleinberger Collection in Paris. First publication: Mayer 1939.⁷²
7. Saint Veronica. Although the subject is only known in works of the painter's Spanish period

(Fig. 19),⁷³ it is quite possible that Theotokopoulos had already worked on it in an earlier period, perhaps while still in Crete, since it was known to Cretan painters around 1500.⁷⁴ As far as I know, the only analogous representation, with the angel in place of Saint Veronica, is encountered in Zakynthos (Fig. 18) (cf. Cat. no. 17, 218).⁷⁵

8. The recently published Crucifixion (Fig. 17), which is assigned to the painter's Roman period, post-1570-1577, should be added to this group. The icon was sold at auction by Christie's in New York, on 31 January 1997. Its provenance is unknown, as stated in the catalogue: '... nothing is known of its history before it entered the collection of the present owner in 1989...'.⁷⁶ First publication: L. Puppi 1990.⁷⁷ From the series of Crucifixions of 'liberal art' encountered in Zakynthos,⁷⁸ the representation on an oval icon in the Zakynthos Museum⁷⁹ (Fig. 16) displays remarkable affinity to the Christie's icon, both in the pose of the body and the head of Christ, virtually in profile, and in the rendering of the dark sky with clouds, as well as of the landscape with the buildings of a city drawn in miniature low down in the background, as in the work by Theotokopoulos. In my opinion this similitude bespeaks the copying of the work by the Zakynthian painter.

It is quite clear from the above that those works by Theotokopoulos that were known to the Zakynthian painters have certain additional common traits. With the exception of the three works of the Cretan period, they all belong to the Italian period of his life and nothing is known of their history or provenance before 1937. The locating of so many similarities to works by Zakynthian painters in such a large number of Domenikos Theotokopoulos's works⁸⁰ can hardly be mere coincidence. In view of Theotokopoulos's habit of copying his works, often with variations, the possibility that copies of these works once existed on Zakynthos and have been lost subsequently in the earthquakes and fires cannot be discounted; however, I believe that the hypothesis that the original works existed on the island is reinforced significantly by the fact that the history of their provenance is elusive before 1937.

There is a strong possibility that at least the early icons by Theotokopoulos were brought to Zakynthos by some pre-eminent Cretan family, such as that of the painter Nikolaos Kallergis which settled on the Ionian island after the fall of Rethymnon to the Ottomans in 1644.⁸¹ This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that Nikolaos Kallergis evidently copied more than one of Theotokopoulos's icons — the icon of the Passion of Christ, the Annunciation in the Modena triptych (?), Saint Veronica (?) and the Adoration of the Magi (?). However we cannot preclude the possibility that some other Cretan families were linked with Domenikos Theotokopoulos and had ties with Zakynthos, such as the family of Luca Miani,⁸² whose wife was connected with the noble Sigouros family, and later the family of Georgios Sideris, mentioned in the Libro d'Oro of Zakynthos in 1670⁸³ (if this family is identified with that of the well-known cartographer and friend of Theotokopoulos). But these contingent problems are beyond the bounds of this Catalogue.

So whereas it can be considered certain that icons from the Cretan period of Theotokopoulos's life were transferred to Zakynthos by families of Cretan refugees, the question of how works attributed to his Italian period reached the island is raised. If we rule out the possibility of Theotokopoulos residing temporarily on the island before his departure for Spain, the possibility that these works were sent from Italy to Crete or Zakynthos, either by himself or by their owners, should be examined.

It has been established above that the painters of Zakynthos were copying Theotokopoulos's works during the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, that is in a period when the reappraisal of his art by the distinguished painters and connoisseurs of the day had not yet begun in Europe. In Greece his name had passed into obscurity, since in 1720 Panayotis Doxaras referred to him as a 'Spanish' painter (!); nevertheless his art still appealed to its only appreciative receptors, the painters of Zakynthos, who adapted it – depending on their personal abilities – to the aesthetic demands of their public, because as De Viazis writes, the Heptanesian painters 'imitated the Italians more, but imparted a somewhat Byzantine cast'.⁸⁴ The island's best painters, first the traditional Nikolaos Kallergis and later the exponents of 'liberal art', possibly Nikolaos Doxaras, Nikolaos Koutouzis and Nikolaos Kantounis, as well as other anonymous painters, transferred to their own local idiom the rare art of the models that had attracted them. They used them in their work, unwittingly copying the creations of one of the world's paragon painters.⁸⁵

The character of the Velimezis Collection

The character of the Velimezis Collection is no different from that of the larger icon collections, of the Benaki Museum, the Byzantine Museum and Dionysios Loverdos. The majority of icons are by Cretan painters who worked in Crete or in the Ionian Islands after the capture of the major Cretan cities by the Turks (Rethymnon 1644, Candia 1669). Several works are by painters from local workshops in Zakynthos and the other Ionian islands. The Collection also includes a few notable seventeenth- and eighteenth-century icons from workshops of Central and Northern Greece, as well as some representatives of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Heptanesian naturalism.

The earliest icons in the Collection date from the second half of the fifteenth century and were painted in Cretan workshops. Outstanding among these are the Virgin Hodegetria (Cat. no. 1), in an iconographic type established in Palaeologan art, the Virgin of Tenderness (Glykophilousa) (Cat. no. 2), product of an accomplished workshop close to Andreas Ritzos, and the small Virgin of Tenderness (Cat. no. 3) with influences from Italian art. Among the very rare themes of the period are the Triumph of Orthodoxy (Cat. no. 5) and the Akathistos Hymn (Cat. no. 14), which belong to different late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century workshops. The iconography of the

Triumph of Orthodoxy, the same as that encountered in an icon in the British Museum, is rendered in a conservative style, while that of the Akathistos incorporates Western influences similar to those observed in a small group of early sixteenth-century icons. The more pronounced Western influences in the icon of the Adoration of the Magi (Cat. no. 15) permit its attribution to Angelos Pitzamanos. The icons of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (Cat. no. 9) and the Entry into Jerusalem (Cat. no. 8), in the Benaki Museum, as well as the larger ones with the enthroned figures of Saint Nicholas (Cat. no. 6) and the Virgin (Cat. no. 11) are assigned to Cretan workshops.

One of the most important icons in the Collection is that of the Raising of Lazarus (Cat. no. 12), which displays traits of the art of the major Cretan painter Theophanis Strelitzas Bathas. The icon of Saint Matthew, in the Benaki Museum (Cat. no. 13), is from a closely related workshop. Traits of the art of Michael Damaskenos can be recognized in the icon of Saint Andrew, in the Benaki Museum (Cat. no. 18). The icons of the Head of the Virgin (Cat. no. 19), Christ Great High Priest (Cat. no. 20) and the Head of Christ Pantocrator (Cat. no. 21) are works from conservative Cretan workshops of around 1600.

Included in this group of sixteenth-century Cretan icons is the masterpiece of the Collection, which my research has revealed to be by the hand of Domenikos Theotokopoulos. This icon of the Passion of Christ-Pietà with three angels (Cat. no. 17), within an integral gilded, woodcarved tabernacle frame, constitutes a landmark in the creative course of the great Cretan painter, for in it are expressed dynamically for the first time the unique features of his personal style, heralding the art of his maturity in Spain.

Seventeenth-century Cretan painting is represented by three significant works by Emmanuel Tzanes. Dating from different periods of his life, they give us an insight into his remarkable ability both as a copier of earlier models, such as the Pietà, 1657 (Cat. no. 29) and Saint Nicholas standing, 1683 (Cat. no. 30), and as a creator of new iconographic themes, such as the Miracle of the Holy Girdle (Cat. no. 31). Continuers of the tradition of Cretan painting in the Ionian Islands produced the icons of Saint Catherine (Cat. no. 26), Saint Demetrios (Cat. no. 27), the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Cat. no. 33) and Saint Gobdelaas (Cat. no. 32). Stronger Italian influences, due to the use of Western engravings as models, are evident in the Descent from the Cross, in the Benaki Museum (Cat. no. 39), and the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist (Cat. no. 37), which is attributed to a local workshop on Zakynthos.

Noteworthy among the eighteenth-century icons are those by Konstantinos Kontarinis (Cat. nos 44, 45). The art of the Heptanesian painters, which often verges on the picturesque with emphasis on decorative details and the use of vibrant colours, is represented by the icons by the Zakynthian painter Nikolaos Kallergis: the signed Saint Nicholas (Cat. no. 47), the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple (Cat. no. 47) and the Annunciation (Cat. no. 46), which is a copy of the Annunciation painted by Domenikos Theotokopoulos in the Modena triptych. The graphic

elements are more pronounced in other icons by Zakynthian painters, such as the Adoration of the Shepherds (Cat. no. 50) and the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist (Cat. no. 51), both in the Benaki Museum, as well as the Dormition of the Virgin (Cat. no. 55) and the Lamentation (Cat. no. 56).

The Collection also includes a few interesting icons from Northern Greek workshops. Of importance is the epistyle of an iconostasis, preserved in three pieces (Cat. no. 24). Dated 1627/28, its art is similar to that encountered in churches in the Kastoria and Veroia region. Fascinating for their picturesqueness are the icons by the painter Ioannis from a workshop on Mount Athos, 1778 (Cat. no. 61) and the painter Demetrios Zoukis from Kalarrytes, 1781 (Cat. no. 62).

Lastly, the Collection also includes three works attributed to well-known Zakynthian painters in the 'liberal art'. The Virgin and Child (Cat. no. 68) is ascribed to Panayotis or Nikolaos Doxaras, while the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Cat. nos 69, 70) are attributed to Nikolaos Koutouzis. It was considered expedient to include in the Catalogue the work with the Head of the dead Christ, painted by Demetrios Pelekasis in 1920 (Cat. no. 71), because, as the inscription on the back confirms, it is copied from the icon by Theotokopoulos (Cat. no. 17).

The condition of the icons in the Velimezis Collection is the same as that of a host of icons in the Loverdos Collection, the Byzantine Museum, the Benaki Museum, the collections of Demetrios Sisilianos, Helen Stathatos and others. There is extensive damage on the gold ground, a uniform brown tinge to the varnish and an alteration of the blue paint which is almost black. In some icons there are the same type of overpaintings, as well as forged inscriptions of the painter's name, the date or the donor's name, to the same degree as encountered on icons in the large collections of this period. The signatures of Michael Damaskenos (Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Cat. no. 33), Georgios Klontzas (Saint Catherine, Cat. no. 26), Ioannis Moskos (Saint Paraskevi, Cat. no. 16 and the Dormition of the Virgin, Cat. no. 36), the dedicatory inscription with the name Ioakeim Lambardos (Dormition of the Virgin, Cat. no. 41) and the priest Kouloumbis (Dormition of the Virgin, Cat. no. 55) are forged, as are the signatures of Konstantinos Kontarinis (Descent from the Cross, Cat. no. 49) and Ioannis Kairophylas (Descent from the Cross, Cat. no. 40), all familiar names to the admirers of Heptanesian painting. In two icons, Emmanuel Tzanes's Pietà (Cat. no. 29) and Leos's Deesis (Cat. no. 35), laboratory examination has demonstrated that these overpaintings covered earlier, genuine signatures.

The condition of the icons and the forged names of the painters reinforce the suggestion that they were conserved by the same painter, icon-painter and conservator, Demetrios Pelekasis. Moreover, in addition to works by Pelekasis (see Cat. no. 71) Emilios Velimezis possessed a typewritten text by him on his own special method of conserving icons (see Appendix II).

The selection of the icons acquired by the collector was determined by several factors that are

connected with the re-evaluation of Postbyzantine painting at the time, in accordance with prevailing aesthetic perceptions, which were not without ideological overtones, as noted above. The preference for Heptanesian works is consistent with the aesthetic ideals of the connoisseur circles of this period, which particularly esteemed contrived imitations of Italian art. The collector's sound judgement in purchasing the icon of the Passion of Christ by Domenikos Theotokopoulos should be appreciated within this context.

The icons in the Velimezis Collection represent, together with the different workshops of the painting of Crete and the Ionian Islands, the aesthetic preferences of the collector and furthermore the dominant taste of his time.

NOTES

1. My research on the subject of the formation of the first private collections started after I participated in the transfer and exhibition of the Loverdos Collection in the Byzantine Museum, 1979-1980 (see *Exhibition of Wall-paintings from Episkopi, Evrytania and Icons in the Loverdos Collection*, 1980, 17-30). I gave a lecture on this subject to the Society for the Study of Modern Hellenism 'Mnemon', on 25.2.1981, while at the IInd Congress of Greek Archaeologists, in November 1980, I had presented a communication on the problem of forged signatures on icons in the Loverdos Collection.
2. Lambakis 1908. Soteriou 1924. See also Chatzidakis 1974 (Byzantine Museum), 333. *Exhibition for the Centenary of the ChAE* 1985, 5-7 (M. Chatzidakis).
3. Chatzidakis 1974 (Benaki Museum), 365-367. Delivorrias 1980, 13-18. Xyngopoulos 1936. Xyngopoulos 1939.
4. Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1946, 5-12; see also Kaloyeropoulos 1926, 32ff.
5. Alexios Kolyvas (1848-1915) was Secretary General of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical and Public Education and Royal Commissioner to the Holy Synod. A man of literary aspirations and a newspaper publisher in Zakynthos and Athens, he began forming his icon collection in 1889. It was exhibited in the Zappeion, Athens, in 1912, on the occasion of the first conference of Orientalists, and later formed the nucleus of the Dionysios Loverdos Collection. See *Exposition Congrès Orientalistes* 1912. Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1946, 8-9 (see related comments in the periodical *Pinakotheki* 1915, 93 and 430).
6. Sisilianos 1935. In his book, Demetrios Sisilianos (born 1880, senior diplomatic consul in Smyrna, Paris, Budapest and Washington) describes among others Stephanos Tzankarolas as 'a superb and renowned painter' (Sisilianos 1935, 40).
7. Andreas Xyngopoulos published the catalogue of the collection in 1951. It included 29 icons and woodcarvings. Xyngopoulos 1951, γ'-δ'.
8. Kaloyeropoulos wrote about these collections. Kaloyeropoulos 1926, 31-33.
9. See n. 4.
10. Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1946, 8. (The excerpts quoted are freely translated from the rather pompous purist Greek (*katharevousa*): «εἰδικευμένων καλλιτεχνῶν καὶ ἐμπειρογνομόνων, ἀληθῶς ἐραστῶν τῆς τέχνης, οὓς συνεβουλεύετο ἑκάστοτε..., μεταξύ τῶν ὁποίων διεκρίνετο ὁ διαπρεπὴς καλλιτέχνης, ζωγράφος καὶ συνεχιστὴς τῆς ἀγιογραφικῆς παραδόσεως Δημήτριος Πελεκάσης καὶ ὁ πρωτοπόρος ἐν τῇ μελέτῃ, διαδόσει καὶ ἀκριβεῖ ἐρμηνείᾳ τῆς τέχνης ταύτης, μοναδικὸς ἐμπειρογνόμων, Ἀναστάσιος Παπαγιαννόπουλος»).
11. Demetrios Pelekasis, son of the painter Spyridon Pelekasis, wrote studies on Heptanesian painters and contributed to the founding of the Zakynthos Museum (see article in the *Μεγάλη Ἑλληνικὴ Εγκυκλοπαιδεία*, in which it is noted that from 1906 he was involved 'in reshaping the true Byzantine art', see also Konomos 1976, 134ff.). See below nn. 26, 42; also bibliography in Cat. no. 71 as well as Appendix II.
12. The 1726 manuscript was published by Spyridon Lambros in 1871 (reprint 1968). On the 1720 manuscript see Kyriakou 1982 and below n. 29.
13. Lambakis 1891.
14. De Viazis (1902), 1968, 10-11; the only Cretan painter mentioned in this study is Emmanuel Tzanes, who is considered a painter of the Byzantine School and a pupil of Doxaras (op. cit., 43). (The excerpts are freely translated from *katharevousa*: «Ὅσας εἰκόνας εἶδομεν τῶν Κρητῶν ἀγιογράφων καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν καλλιτέρων, παρετηρήσαμεν μόνον καλλίτερον ἐνίστε χρωματισμὸν καὶ δὴ τεχνικώτερον τὸν φωτισμὸν τῶν προσώπων καὶ εἰς τὰς προεξοχὰς διακρινόμενον ἐπιφανέστερον (τῆς αὐστηρᾶς βυζαντιακῆς τεχνοτροπίας).» And on «ἐλευθέρας τέχνης»... «σκοπὸν ἔχομεν νὰ πραγματωθῶμεν περὶ τῆς ἀναγεννήσεως τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς ζωγραφικῆς, καὶ τῶν ζωγράφων, οἵτινες ἔδρασαν ἐν τῇ ἑλληνικῇ τέχνῃ καὶ ἀπέφεραν τοὺς ἀγλαότερους καρπούς»). Spyridon De Viazis was born in Corfu in 1849 but lived most of his life in Zakynthos, where he died in 1927. A local historian and prolific writer, he published over one thousand articles and studies (see Dinos Konomos's foreword to De Viazis 1902, reprint 1968).
15. Zacharias Papantoniou (1877-1940), director of the National Art Gallery, was Prefect of Zakynthos (1912-1927). See Papantoniou 1915, 231-240, in which he examines 'Byzantine art beautified and Italianesque in Crete' («ὁβ-

- ξαντινήν τέχνην ἐξωραϊσμένην καί ἰταλοτροποῦσαν ἐν Κρήτῃ»).
16. Demetrios Kaloyeropoulos, founder of the periodical *Pinakotheki* in 1901, writes in his article on the Heptanesian School in the *Εγκυκλοπαίδεια Ἐλευθερουδάκη*, 1929: '... but while the art was being reborn in Italy, Byzantine art in Greece was in decline, until the Heptanesian School appeared during the 17th century. The first seeds of this art appeared in Corfu, but it developed in Zakynthos'. Nikolaos Kaloyeropoulos, author of the book *Νεοελληνική Ζωγραφική*, 1926, was secretary of the National Art Gallery and assistant director of the Byzantine Museum.
 17. See n. 6.
 18. Pelekasis 1927, 143. Pelekasis 1915, 144.
 19. Kaloyeropoulos 1926, 12.
 20. Papantoniou 1915, 231-240.
 21. Newspaper *Πολιτεία*, 23 March 1926.
 22. See n. 5.
 23. For example, forged signatures of Michael Damaskenos, Stephanos Tzankarolas, Emmanuel Tzanfournaris, Emmanuel Tzanes, Theodoros Poulakis, Philotheos Skoufos, Emmanuel Lambardos and Ilias Moskos have been detected in the Loverdos Collection. Forged signatures of Michael Damaskenos, Emmanuel Tzanes, Emmanuel Tzanfournaris and Philotheos Skoufos have been noted on 15th century Cretan icons in the Benaki Museum (see passim *Exhibition of Wall-paintings from Episkopi, Evrytania and Icons in the Loverdos Collection*, 1980, 21-30. N. Chatzidakis 1983, nos 25, 26, 11, 23 (in no. 8 it is erroneously noted that the forged signature is of Emmanuel Tzanfournaris instead of Stephanos Tzankarolas).
 24. Konomos published the report much later, in 1963 (Konomos 1963, 94-96). Among the icon restorers in Zakynthos was the painter and icon-painter Panayotis Plaisas Nikas (born 1862), see Flemotomos 1990, 198.
 25. See n. 11.
 26. He began his technical studies in 1906, as he himself states in the text included in the publication *The Painter D. Pelekasis and his Work*, n.d. (1928?), no p. no. See also article by N. Kaloyeropoulos in the newspaper *Αστραπή*, 18 May 1921 (Konomos 1976, 138).
 27. See Appendix III.
 28. The fortune of his name in Spain and his reception in Greece during the 19th century, after Andreas Moustoxidis published his first article, 'Kyriakos or Domenikos Theoskopis', in the periodical *Hellenomnemon* 5 (1843), 271-276 (biography according to Lanzi, Ticozzi, Pacheco and Palomino), has been presented with verve by Mertzios 1966 and Hadjinicolaou (*El Greco of Crete* 1990, 56-108, particularly 60ff.). See also n. 29.
 29. «Δομένικος γρέκος, ἰσπανός»: in a Zakynthian idiomatic type of uncertain origin, perhaps the Hellenized version of the Italian Greco (*Graikos* — with the accent on the last syllable — was the usual word for a Greek in Ottoman times). As far as I know this is the first reference to his name in a Greek text (*Παναγιώτη Δοξαρά, Τέχνη Ζωγραφίας, χειρόγραφο της Μαρκιανής Βιβλιοθήκης*, 1720, 3); it is cited in a note to an article by Kyriakou 1982, 222, n. 38. A. Moustoxidis gave the first partial publication of the manuscript in the Biblioteca Marciana, in the periodical *Hellenomnemon* 1 (1843), 22-28, 32-35. Mertzios is the first to mention this citation by Doxaras, but without reference (Mertzios 1966, 6). It would be extremely interesting to find Doxaras's source. The name Greco occurs in the manuscript of the biography by Mancini (1621-1624), see Xydis 1959, 218-225, and in Palomino (1724), see Hadjinicolaou 1990, 60, n. 10.
 30. For the misreadings of the name see Mertzios 1966, 5; Hadjinicolaou 1990, 64. See also the titles in the relevant Greek bibliography from 1843 till 1882, in *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 415.
 31. Hadjinicolaou 1990, 60-61. Mertzios 1966, 5-6. Justi 1897. Vikelas 1894.
 32. De Viazis 1913, 154 (freely translated from *katharevousa*: «ἂν ὁ Θεοτοκόπουλος μετέβαινε μετά τὰς ἐν Βενετίᾳ σπουδὰς του εἰς τὴν Κρήτην, ἢ ἤρχετο εἰς τὴν Ἑπτάνησον, καὶ δὴ εἰς τὴν πρωτεύουσαν Κέρκυραν, θὰ ἦτο ἐλεύθερος ὁ χρωστήρ, ἐλευθέρα ἡ φαντασία. Δὲν θὰ εὗρίσκετο εἰς ξένον περιβάλλον μεταξὺ τῶν ἱεροεξεταστῶν, ἀλλὰ μεταξὺ Ἑλλήνων καὶ θὰ ἀνεδεικνύετο πατὴρ τῆς νεωτέρας ἐλληνικῆς σχολῆς ἐπὶ τῇ δάσει τῆς ἰταλικῆς»). It should be noted that the great Italian painters such as Tintoretto, Titian, Veronese and Tiepolo are given an important place in these studies. Nevertheless, Theotokopoulos's work influenced some of Photis

- Kontoglou's paintings, as pointed out by Karakatsani 1975, 27, Hadjinicolaou 1982, 55-58, figs 17, 20, 21, 23 and Zias 1991, 37 and passim, figs 44, 45, 61, 95, 187, 235. Kontoglou admired Theotokopoulos and believed that the origin of his art was Byzantine, but in later years he considered that most of his works were spoilt by the spirit of the Italian Renaissance (Hadjinicolaou 1990, 68. Zias 1991, 58, n. 6).
33. Relevant information in the Museum archive: Adoration of the Magi purchased from Th. Zoumboulakis, 104,000 drachmas, 26 April 1934; Evangelist Luke purchased by D. Sisilianos from Zoumboulakis who brought it from Zakynthos. Donation to the Museum 7/12/1956. See also Chatzidakis (1956) 1990, 109-112. Chatzidakis 1963 (1990), 116-117.
 34. According to Manolis Chatzidakis, Antonios Benakis paid a lower price because he was unsure about the work's authenticity, until he received Mayer's expertise (Mayer 1935).
 35. Sisilianos 1935, 78: 'Is the icon in my collection by Ioannis Domenikos or is it an early work by the great Domenikos Theotokopoulos painted in Crete ...?' and 88: 'An icon of medium dimensions in the Sisilianos Collection, depicting the Evangelist Luke painting the Virgin, on wood, in egg tempera and on a gold ground, bearing the signature *Χεῖρ Δομηνίκου* is a work by him'.
 36. Pallucchini 1937.
 37. Cf. above 31 and Appendix I.
 38. Mertziotis 1966, 7.
 39. See n. 33.
 40. All the information concerning the equivalence of the drachma to the sovereign was kindly provided by my friend Professor Stavros Thomadakis.
 41. See n. 5.
 42. As mentioned by Zois and Konomos (Zois 1934, 38; Konomos 1967, 8-11) the move to found a museum on Zakynthos was started by Panayotis Chiotis in 1882. The General Ephorate of Antiquities began realizing it towards the end of 1908; in 1919 it was housed in the Pantokrator church in Saint Mark's Square; Demetrios Pelekasis played a valuable role in setting up the Museum before the catastrophic earthquakes in 1953 (Konomos 1976, 139).
 43. Konomos 1988, passim.
 44. See n. 33.
 45. The Report was published in *Heptanesian Pages* Δ', no. 3, 1963, 91-119. See also Konomos 1967, 8-10.
 46. *Heptanesian Pages*, Δ', no. 3, 1963, 93-94. (Freely translated from *katharevousa*: «Τὰ ἀρχαιολογικά ἀντικείμενα τῆς νήσου, τὰ ἐν τοῖς ναοῖς καὶ μοναῖς κατακεῖμενα, περὶ ὧν εἶπον ἀνωτέρω, ἦσαν μέχρι τοῦδε λεία τῶν ἐκαστοτε ἐπιτρόπων καὶ ἱερέων, ἐάν οὗτοι ἦσαν ἰδιοτελεῖς, καὶ τῶν ἰδιοτροπιῶν αὐτῶν, ἐάν ἦσαν ἀδιάφοροι ἢ ἀμαθεῖς. Ἐκ τούτου συνέβη σύλῃσις συστηματικὴ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαιοκαπήλων, ναῶν καὶ μονῶν, καταστροφὴ καὶ δῶλῶν παντὶ τῶν ἀντικειμένων, τούτων ἀδιαφορίας»).
 47. See protests of D. Pelekasis, A. Papayannopoulos-Palaios, G. Mazarakis and L. Zois in the periodical *Pantognostis*, B', 15 April 1923, no. 4, 58.
 48. Konomos 1959, 229. See also Konomos 1988, 27ff. and passim. See also earlier comment by D. Pelekasis: 'in many other houses there were many masterpieces that the antiquity thieves smuggled out. Some now adorn the salons of the newly-built villas of the *nouveaux riches* in the capital' (Pelekasis 1927, 118, freely translated from *katharevousa*).
 49. See above n. 33, information in the Museum archive. The information on the provenance of the Adoration of the Magi from an Aegean island is examined by Xydis 1964, 68-70.
 50. Chatzidakis (1988) 1995, 135-141, figs 16, 17, 18. For the icon see Chatzidakis (1956) 1995, 109-115. Wetthey 1962, II, 246, no. X-400, attributes the icon to one Master Domenikos, an opinion rejected by Chatzidakis and recent researchers, see Chatzidakis (1963) 1995, 115-125. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 49, 55-56. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides in *El Greco of Crete* 1990, no. 2, 146-149. For the iconographic sources and the dissemination of the theme in Postbyzantine painting see *El Greco of Crete* 1990, no. II, 118-123 (N. Chatzidakis). See also Cat. no. 17, 220, n. 7.

51. Chatzidakis (1988) 1995, 138, n. 6, fig. 17.
52. A black-and-white slide from Manolis Chatzidakis's archive. The icon was conserved in the Benaki Museum by Photis Zachariou after its donation in 1956, and recently by Stergios Stasinopoulos (Stasinopoulos 1988).
53. Zakynthos Museum: 1. (no. 259) From the church of Hagios Spyridon Flambouriaris (Konomos 1961, fig. on p. 51. Charalambidis 1978, fig. 18. Konomos 1988, fig. 87). 2. Provenance unknown, from a ruined church (Hagios Nikolaos Kalogreon?) (Konomos 1964, fig. on p. 89. Charalambidis 1978, fig. 42. Konomos 1988, 124, fig. 104). 3. From the Evangelistria church (Konomos 1964, fig. on p. 89). See also an icon of the Annunciation from the Chrysopigi church (Konomos 1961, fig. on p. 61. Charalambidis 1978, fig. 34). See also Donor with angel (Konomos 1961, 62 and fig. on p. 62. Konomos 1988, fig. 110). See also Cat. no. 48, 367, Figs 230, 231. The angel in Theotokopoulos's icon is copied from an engraving by G.B. d'Angeli, as Maria Constantoudaki-Kitromilides noted in *El Greco of Crete* 1990, no. 2, 148, fig. 1.
54. See also M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides's observation in *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 148.
55. Mayer 1935. Chatzidakis (1950) 1995, 43ff., 101 ff., figs 19-22. Xydis 1964. *El Greco of Crete* 1990, no. 3, 150-154 (M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides). Wetthey's view that this is a work of one Master Domenikos, Wetthey 1962, I, fig. 36, II, 165, was rejected by Chatzidakis (1963) 1995, 115ff., and later scholars. See *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 150ff. (M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides). See also Cat. no. 17, 220, n. 7.
56. Lydakis 1976, 33, fig. 20. For the church see Konomos 1964, 90.
57. All Theotokopoulos's representations of the Adoration of the Magi are connected iconographically, see Pallucchini 1937, 10ff. Xydis 1964, 68ff. *El Greco in Italy*, 1995, no. 37, 288-293 (N. Hadjinicolaou), no. 39, 302-311 (J. Alvarez-Lopera). For the kneeling shepherd see also the Adoration in the Buccleuch Collection, Wetthey 1962, I, fig. 10, II, no. 24, 26-27. First published in 1898 as a work by Girolamo Bassano; for the related bibliography see op. cit., 27.
58. Wetthey 1962, I, 166, no. X-3, II, fig. 41; he ascribes it to 'Master Domenikos', as he does for most of Theotokopoulos's early works. Alexandros Xydis also questions the attribution (Xydis 1964, 70, n. 1). José Alvarez-Lopera re-examines the panel with convincing arguments and considers the work authentic, see *El Greco in Italy*, 1995, 302-311, fig. 1.
59. Unpublished; I am most grateful to the archaeologist Katerina Demeti for giving me a photograph of the icon. *Heptanesian Pages*, A', 1, 1977, 8, no. 42.
60. Gift of the Domenegini family. Konomos refers to expertise by Marinos Kalligas, Konomos 1988, 116, fig. 84.
61. See passim Konomos 1974, 170, n. 8. On the painter see also Cat. nos 69-70, p. 424ff., n. 1.
62. De Viazis 1891-92, 436-442 (freely translated from *katharevousa*: «...είχε δέ ιδιαιτέραν φιλοκαλίαν καὶ τέχνην περί τήν ἀντιγραφίην, ἀποδίδων εἰς τὰ ἀντιγραφούμενα ἔργα χαριέστατα σχήματα, στάσιν διάφορον, προσθέτων δέ προσέτι ἢ ἀφαιρῶν πρόσωπα ἐκ τῶν πρωτοτύπων, οὕτως ὥστε αἱ ἀντιγραφαὶ τοῦ ἐφαίνοντο ἴδια ἔργα...»); see also Mavroyannis 1894, 201: 'Kantounis not only studied the works of Koutouzis but also copied many of them'.
63. Chatzidakis (1988) 1995, 135-141, figs 16, 17, 18. See also *El Greco of Crete* 1990, no. II, 118-121 (N. Chatzidakis) and no. 2, 149, fig. 2 (M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides). For the icon see additional bibliography above n. 50. For the works from Zakynthos see above, n. 53.
64. For the icon see bibliography above, n. 55.
65. See 216-217, figs 136-137. The subject of the angel turned three-quarters with the thigh bared was also used by Michael Damaskenos and is diffused in Heptanesian painting. Cf. Cat. no. 17, 220, nn. 10, 11, 12.
66. See bibliography, Cat. no. 48, 366-367, nn. 8, 26.
67. Pallucchini 1937, 5.
68. Wetthey 1962, I, figs 17, 13, 14, II, nos 37, 38, 39, pp. 32-33. The icon in the Museo del Prado is known to have been in Spain already in the 18th century, cf. Cat. no. 48, 369, n. 32. The icon in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection was first published by Venturi 1927, 252-255. The Barcelona icon was first published by Legendre and Hartmann in 1937. For these three works see bibliography in Cat. no. 48, 368, n. 9.
69. See bibliography for the icon above, n. 58.

70. Wethey 1962, II, no. X-3, 166, with bibliography.
71. Wethey 1962, II, no. X-2, 165-166, I, fig. 40; attributed to 'Master Domeniko'. José Alvarez-Lopera presents convincing arguments that it is an authentic work. See *El Greco in Italy* 1995, no. 39, 302ff.
72. Mayer 1939, 28; see relevant bibliography *El Greco in Italy* 1995, 311 (J. Alvarez-Lopera).
73. See bibliography in Cat. no. 17, 266, n. 88.
74. Tsigaridas 1996, 241. Cf. Cat. no. 17, 266, n. 88.
75. The subject also occurs on the prothesis door of the Panagia church in the village of Belousi (Konomos 1961, fig. on p. 84) and the prothesis door in the Zoodochos Pegi-Hagios Ioannis Gouzeli church (recorded by Adamantiou in 1908, Konomos 1963, 115).
76. *Christie's* 1997, no. 217, 245-255, fig. 1.
77. *Opus Sacrum* 1990, 148-149, no. 25 (L. Puppi).
78. Icons with cut outline, that are attributed to Nikolaos Koutouzis, see Konomos 1961, fig. on p. 54 and fig. on p. 86. See also Konomos 1962, 22-23.
79. Konomos, 1988, 127, fig. 124.
80. The Dormition of the Virgin, in Syros, is not included in these works even though iconographic affinities were noted with the Dormition of the Virgin Cat. no. 36, which probably comes from Zakynthos (see below, 309, Figs 184, 185). An even greater iconographic affinity is ascertained with the Dormition of the Virgin by Ilias Moskos, 1698, in Cephalonia (*Cephalonia* I 1989, fig. 129, p. 92). However, none of the original elements, of Italian origin, in Theotokopoulos's icon – the model for which is traditional – are adopted in the icons cited (for the icon in Syros see Cat. no. 17, 220, n. 7).
81. For the painter see bibliography in Cat. nos 17, 46, 47, 48, pp. 217-219 and 348-369.
82. A Venetian nobleman mentioned in a document of litigation with Domenikos Theotokopoulos for an unknown reason (5 November 1566), published by Nikos Panayotakis (Panayotakis 1995, 138-139). His wife was Marietta Koresi, niece of Pegi Koresi who was the wife of Konstantinos Sigouros, a most influential member of the noble Zakynthian family (see Cat. no. 30, 278-280). Konstantinos's nephew became the local saint, Dionysios (Draganigos Sigouros) (Zois 1963, 165-166, 585-589).
83. Konomos 1970, 63: 'Sideris Georgios, doctor, feudatory in Crete'. In 1568 Domenikos Theotokopoulos sent drawings from Venice to the cartographer Georgios Sideros (Zorzi Sidero), then in Herakleion (Constantoudaki 1975-1976, 68-71). These were evidently two different persons.
84. De Viazis 1902, 11 (freely translated from *katharevousa*: «ἐμμήθησαν περισσότερον τοὺς ἰταλοὺς δίδοντες ὁμῶς χροιάν τινα θυζαντιακήν»).
85. It is perhaps not fortuitous that in a period when re-evaluation of his art had not yet begun, El Greco's works inspired great painters such as Velasquez and Goya, and that the later rediscovery of his work was initiated by art critics and painters, such as Théophile Gautier, Delacroix, Manet, Cézanne and Picasso. There is an extensive bibliography on this subject. See in particular Brown 1982 and Alvarez-Lopera 1987, as well as collected studies by E. Harris, P. Klein, N. Hadjinicolaou, E. Foundoulaki, in *El Greco of Crete* 1995.



THE ICONS

1

THE VIRGIN HODEGETRIA

45.5 x 35.4 x 2.1 cm

Second half of 15th century

The Virgin is portrayed in the type of the Hodegetria with the Christ-Child on her left arm. Both figures are in three-quarter pose and turned towards one another in mystical commune. The Virgin's head is inclined slightly and her right hand is in a gesture of supplication towards Christ who holds a furled scroll in his left hand and blesses with his bent right. The Virgin's purplish red maphorion covers her head and leaves a deep triangular opening revealing her deep blue dress with gold band round the neck. The gold ornaments on the maphorion are limited to the usual star on each shoulder and one off-centre on the head. The maphorion covers the right arm uniformly, without the overfolds which in most cases permit the addition of gold fringing.¹ Christ's grey blue chiton with random motifs is girdled with a red sash with gold striations, passing round the waist and over the shoulders to form two vertical bands. The

20. *The Virgin Hodegetria, second half of 15th century, Cat. no. 1.*



ochre himation with gold striations leaves the chiton exposed to the thighs and only covers Christ's legs; despite the damage, traces of the crossed feet are discernible.

The Virgin's face is well drawn with finely arched eyebrows, a long slim nose and a small mouth with thin lips. The outlines of the elegant tapering fingers are firmly drawn.

The face of the Christ-Child is similarly refined, differing from the normal iconographic type of the infant with rounded features. He has a high forehead, barely puffed cheeks and a small chin. Top left there are traces of inscriptions on the damaged gold ground.

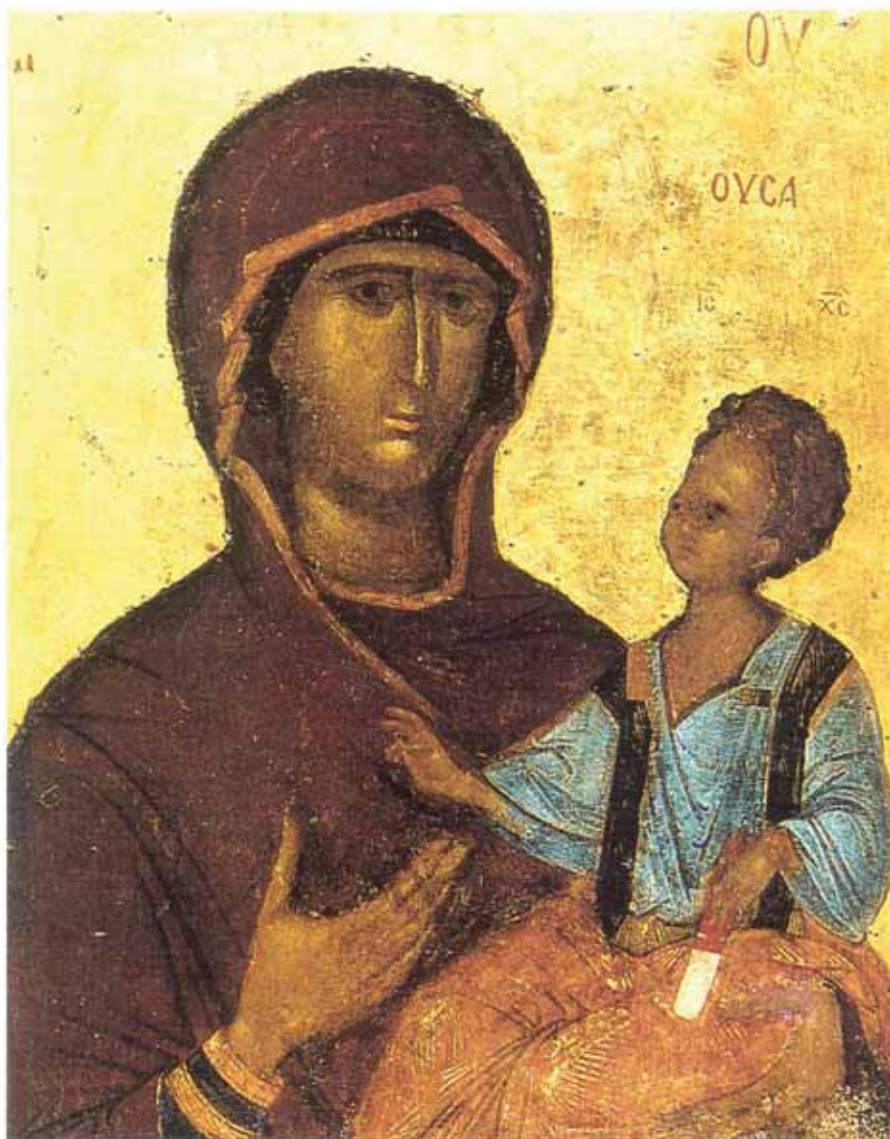
The position of the Virgin and Child is consistent with the iconographic type in the famous icons of the Virgin 'Perivleptos' and 'Psychosostria' in Ochrid, which was widely diffused in Cretan icons from the fifteenth century onwards, the mid-fifteenth century icon in Corfu and the icons by Andreas Ritzos being outstanding examples.² However, Christ's attire, with the himation swathed low around the waist, leaving the chiton exposed, belongs to another group of icons known from a few splendid Palaeologan examples such as the Eleousa in the Athonite Monastery of Chilandari (first quarter of 14th century)³ (Fig. 22) and the 'Perivleptos' in the Zagorsk Museum (second half of 14th century),⁴ (Fig. 23) which reproduce the type of some miraculous icon in Constantinople.⁵ Another icon of the Virgin, in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow (second half of 14th century),⁶ belongs to this group, although the Virgin's left hand is in a different pose, resting on Christ's leg. The same model is interpreted in a different manner and with minor deviations in two interesting double-sided icons in Rhodes (mid-14th century) and Kos (14th-15th century);⁷ it differs not only in the position of the Virgin's right hand, which touches Christ's leg, but also in that of Christ's left hand, which hangs down. Divergences from the model of our icon are also apparent in the magnificent icon of the Virgin 'Alethini', in Patras (late 14th century),⁸ in which the Virgin's right hand passes under Christ's legs, while he holds the scroll with a bent hand, as in the Chilandari icon. Nevertheless, a constant iconographic trait in these three icons and ours is the way in which Christ's himation is arranged, exposing the chiton on the upper body.

Of these representations of the Virgin and Child, ours has the greatest number of traits in common with the iconographic type of the Chilandari icon. Not only are the pose and relationship of the two figures — turned towards one another — the same, but also the type of Christ's dress with the himation fallen around the waist, the position of the Virgin's right hand in intercession, as well as the way in which Christ holds the scroll with his left hand bent.

M. Acheimastou-Potamianou ascertained that the icons in Rhodes and Kos reproduce the same iconographic type as an icon in the Museo Correr, Venice, which is ascribed to a fifteenth-century Venetian-Byzantine painter,⁹ while Chr. Baltoyanni, adding further examples, suggests that Rhodes in the time of the Knights of Saint John was the centre from which this type was diffused.¹⁰

21. *The Virgin Hodegetria, second half of 15th century, Cat. no. 1, detail.*





22. *The Virgin Hodegetria*, 14th century.
Chilandar Monastery.

The iconographic type of our icon also occurs in works by sixteenth-century Cretan painters. An icon of the Hodegetria exhibited for auction in London¹¹ uses it with minimal modifications: the Virgin's hand rests on Christ's knee and Christ holds the scroll differently, as in the Rhodes icon, two venerating angels appear on high, as in the Virgin 'Alethini', while the gold fringes on the Virgin's maphorion are due to the elaboration of the model by a good sixteenth-century Cretan painter. The Hodegetria on the reverse of the sixteenth-century icon of the Crucifixion, in the Byzantine Museum (no. T. 157), should also be attributed to an analogous Cretan model.¹² The same model is followed by the painter of the Virgin 'Pammakaristos', which is dated to the second half of the sixteenth century, on the back of a double-sided fourteenth-century icon of the Hodegetria, in



23. *The Virgin Hodegetria*, 14th century.
Zagorsk Museum.

Veroia.¹³ The prototype of this representation, which like our icon follows that in Chilandari, is interpreted in the artistic idiom of northern Greece.

Lastly, the same type is also used in an interesting icon from Cyprus, work of a gifted early sixteenth-century painter, with obvious influences from Western art, primarily in the soft rendering of the flesh and the drapery.¹⁴ In this representation the Virgin's right hand holds Christ's body in check, passing under his legs, as in the Virgin 'Alethini' in Patras,¹⁵ but a deviation is observed in Christ's scroll, which is open.

The style of our icon bears several traits recognized in fifteenth-century Cretan painting. The well-drawn facial features and especially the Virgin's long fingers recall the icons by Andreas Ritzos, in Florence and Parma.¹⁶ The austere drapery

and the lack of a decorative gold fringing on the Virgin's maphorion bind it with earlier traditions.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the morphology of the maphorion and of Christ's garments, with the rectilinear folds, is a characteristic feature of fifteenth-century Cretan painting, though without the strict geometric development seen in the works of Andreas Ritzos and later painters. The modelling of the flesh in warm tones with dense, finely executed brushstrokes and warmer brownish red on the cheeks belies connections with Palaeologan tradition, as encountered in icons by the painter Angelos, of the first half of the century, as well as others in Crete.¹⁸ Even so, the refined facial features of both figures indicate a barely perceptible distancing from these models, as well as from icons of the Virgin and Child attributed to their workshops. All these characteristics, which endow the icon with the texture of a wall-painting, lead to a date in the middle rather than at the end of the fifteenth century, and to a workshop of an accomplished artist equally familiar with Palaeologan tradition and Cretan painting. It is well known that in Crete during the first half of the fifteenth century the art of wall-painting developed to a high standard alongside that of icon-painting; the Palaeologan tradition was assimilated creatively by painters who decorated churches, as attested by the wall-paintings in the churches at Sklaverochori, of the Panagia at Kapetaniana (1401), Valsamonero and Embaros (1436/7), as well as at Apano Symi Viannou, by Manuel Phokas (1453).¹⁹ This is the context to which the art of the painter of our icon, who adopted the Constantinopolitan model, can be obviously assigned.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'The icon is painted on wood with fine gesso preparation on linen. Outlines and details are incised. In general it is in good condition but is rather worn in places. The wood was spliced to the right. The icon is framed by a later red band, clumsily painted.'

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. See further example Cat. no. 2.
2. For the type as well as collected examples see Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 6, 13-14, fig. 6; see also Cat. no. 4.
3. *Chilandar* 1978, fig. 71.
4. *Bizantij* 1991, no. 56, 232-233, with bibliography.
5. See relevant article by G. Babic, 'Quelques observations concernant l'icône de la Vierge Kosinita', in the volume (in press) in memory of D. Mouriki, as cited by Baltoyanni 1994, 235 n. 13.
6. *Bizantij* 1991, no. 78a, 245-246 with bibliography.
7. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, nos 82, 89, pp. 79, 88 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou).
8. Acheimastou-Potamianou 1995a, 471ff., fig. 1.
9. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, 88.
10. Baltoyanni 1994, 233ff., 236-237, nos 66-67, pls 128-132.
11. *Sotheby's* 1987, no. 297.
12. Soteriou 1931, 78, fig. 34. Baltoyanni attributes the icon to the workshop of Frangos Katelanos (Baltoyanni 1991, 23 and 1994, 30-31, fig. 16). The Virgin's right hand is in the same

gesture of intercession as in our icon.

13. Archaeological Museum no. 117. *Byzantine Art - European Art* 1964, no. 221. Papazotos 1980, 167ff. Papazotos 1995, fig. 133.
14. From the church of the Panagia Katholiki, see Sophocleous 1994, no. 45, 99, colour plates on pp. 177-179.
15. See above n. 8.
16. See N. Chatzidakis 1993, 42-46, nos 6, 7, with previous bibliography.
17. See *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, nos 149, 156.
18. See good photographs. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, nos 139, 142.
19. Cf. Chatzidakis 1969-70, 335-337. Borboudakis, Gallas, 1983, figs 75, 77, 78, 130-139, 289, 364-367, 429-432. Borboudakis 1988, 231ff. and Borboudakis 1992, 375-399.

2

THE VIRGIN OF TENDERNESS

42.8 x 34.4 x 1.8 cm

Art of Andreas Ritzos

Second half of 15th century

The Virgin is portrayed to the waist, turned in three-quarter pose towards the Christ-Child, whom she holds in her left hand while supporting his little left hand with her right, in an attitude of intercession. Christ's cheek touches his mother's face, while his right hand, holding a closed scroll, is lower down, at the level of his knees and next to his mother's hand. The bare sole of his right foot with the loosened sandal projects from behind his left leg. The Virgin wears a deep red maphorion with gold border band and gold fringing on the shoulder. Christ wears a dark blue chiton cinched at the waist by a red sash, and an ochre himation. All the garments are embellished with meticulously drawn, dense, delicate gold striations. The flesh is modelled with firm brushstrokes in warm brown tones and light pink on the cheeks, while close white parallel highlights enhance the volumes over the whole surface. The ground is gold and the haloes with double incised outline and no incised decoration are damaged. Traces of a red cross are visible on Christ's halo and ghosts of the red letters of the inscription *IC XC* are discernible on the gold ground.

In the relationship of the two heads the iconographic type of the Virgin and Child in our icon follows the Byzantine model of the Glykophilousa or Eleousa.¹ However, in the relationship of the hands and the pose of Christ's crossed legs, with loosened sandal on one foot, it is linked with the model of the Virgin 'Amolyntos' or the Virgin of the Passion, as established by the fifteenth-century Cretan masters, in particular Andreas Ritzos.² The new iconographic type that emerged from the combination of the two different models appears in a large series of Cretan icons, the most splendid example of which is the icon ascribed to Andreas Ritzos, at Trani in Italy (Fig. 25).³ The similarity of the iconographic

24. *The Virgin of Tenderness, art of Andreas Ritzos, second half of 15th century, Cat. no. 2.*





25. Andreas Ritzos, *The Virgin of Tenderness*, second half of 15th century. Trani.

type is evident as much in the attitudes and the facial type of the two figures, as in the relationship and position of the hands, and the pose of Christ's feet with the loosened sandal. There is even correspondence in the colours. The deep blue of Christ's chiton should be stressed in particular, since this is only very rarely encountered in the large series of late fifteenth-century icons with the same iconography but from a different workshop, such as the icon in the Canellopoulos Museum,⁴ where the execution seems cruder, without the gold striations on the fabrics, and even in two icons in the Byzantine Museum, T. 71 and T. 78.⁵ In representations with the same iconography it is more usual for Christ to wear a white chiton, as in the icon of the Virgin in the Eleousa Monastery on the Island in the lake of Ioannina,⁶ of the Glykophilousa in the Gouvernetou Monastery, Crete⁷ and icons in Patmos and Brescia,⁸ of slightly later date.

The accomplished painting and expert technique of our icon display close affinity with works by Andreas Ritzos. The drawing is flawless, the brushstrokes are precise, forming the calligraphic facial features and the neat geometric planes on the drapery, while the colours are vivid and have the limpidity of enamel. The modelling of the flesh is strikingly similar to that on an icon in Florence, in which, in good photographs published recently, the technique of the tiny highlight flecks on the foundation is exactly the same,⁹ although their direction is different. The iconographic and stylistic affinities of our icon with icons by Andreas Ritzos permit its assignment to a workshop associated directly with this great Cretan painter.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon on a single panel of wood. In very good condition; only the gold ground has suffered in cleaning. Damage at the top has been restored with keromastic (bees' wax and mastic). Fine gesso directly on the wood. Outlines and details lightly incised.'

The icon was conserved before 1945. There was a fine red border on the gold ground that had been overpainted sometime in the past in orangey-red. On the gold ground traces of a previous overpainting in red and blue. See also Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. E.g. see Grabar 1975; Tatić-Djurić, 1976; Thierry 1976.
2. Cf. M. Chatzidakis 1974, 180ff.
3. *Icone di Puglia* 1988, no. 44, fig. on p. 80, 139, with previous bibliography; for the type see also Baltoyanni 1994, 153 and for examples see Cat. no. 3, 80-83.
4. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 41, pls 69, 75 (34 x 45 cm), late 15th century.
5. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 42, pl. 86, late 15th century; no. 49, pl. 85, 16th century.
6. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 119.
7. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 135 (M. Borboudakis).
8. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 45, pl. 34. N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 40, 164-165; see also other examples Baltoyanni 1994, nos 39-49.
9. See N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 6, 42-44, with previous bibliography; Baltoyanni 1994, pl. 15, figs 18-20.

26. *The head of the Virgin*, detail of icon Cat. no. 2 (infrared photograph).



3

THE VIRGIN OF TENDERNESS

20.4 x 14.9 x 1.8 cm

Second half of 15th century

The Virgin, shown to the waist and turned three-quarters left, holds the Christ-Child in her arms; she supports his back with her left hand, while her right passes under his legs. Christ embraces his mother and touches her face with his cheek; his right hand passes round her neck, where the tips of his little fingers are shown, while the left is extended on her shoulder. Red-lettered inscriptions top right and left: *MHP ΘΥ, IC XC*. The Virgin's maphorion is deep red with geometric folds on the surface covering her body and softer ones, forming a deep curve after the Western mode, on the section falling between the arms. Her headdress is dark blue with lighter shades in the angles of the folds. The broad border band of the maphorion, decorated with intricate pseudo-Cufic motifs, belongs in the same tradition. Christ wears a dark blue (oxidized, almost black) chiton with a red sash girdling the waist and passing over the shoulders in two perpendicular bands; his himation falls low around the waist, leaving the



chiton exposed but covering his legs. The feet project above the Virgin's right forearm; the right one with bare sole is tucked under the left, since the sandal with very fine gold thongs is loose and dangles at a distance below his mother's hand. The deep blue chiton, the red sash and the ochre himation with rich drapery and tiny overfolds, are embellished with dense gold striations.

The modelling of the faces is soft and uniform, the warm brown tones forming smooth planes, as in Italo-Cretan icons. However, the passionate expressions, the rounded volumes on the cheeks and especially on the wide, round chin, reveal affinity with earlier Palaeologan models, such as the Italicizing Virgin and Child in the Benaki Museum.¹ There is simple, finely punched decoration on the small haloes and the entire surface of the gold ground is patterned with broad-leafed volutes, a manner of decoration that places our icon among the early examples of Italo-Cretan painting. Foliate volutes are more usually encountered on haloes of icons in this group, and only rarely on the gold ground. Rather simply executed volutes on the ground are known from a few icons of the second half of the fifteenth century, such as one in a private collection in Athens.² On other icons of the late fifteenth century the incised decoration of the ground describes simpler geometric motifs as in the icon of the Madre della Consolazione type in the Historical Museum, Moscow,³ in which there is decoration in radiate arrangement, and in icon T. 224 in the Byzantine Museum, where there is a lozenge ornament.⁴ On this last icon the haloes of both figures are likewise small and bear analogous simple punched decoration, as is the case in another fifteenth-century icon in a private collection in Athens.⁵ The freely executed decoration on the haloes and ground of our icon is ascertained in several early Italo-Byzantine or Italo-Cretan icons, such as the Virgin in the Benaki Museum,⁶ as well as those just cited in a private collection in Athens,⁷ in the Byzantine Museum (no. T. 224)⁸ and an icon in the Ekonomopoulos Collection.⁹ The icon of the Glykophilousa reproduces a type established in Cretan iconography, that combines traits alluding to the iconography of the Passion, as it appears in the widely diffused types of the Virgin of the Passion¹⁰ and the 'Kardiotissa'.¹¹ Three icons of a similar type are located in Naxos,¹² the Lichačev Collection¹³ and a collection in Antwerp.¹⁴ Not only are the pose and relationship of the figures identical in every respect, but also the deep blue chiton on Christ. These icons differ from each other stylistically, however, in their degree of association with Byzantine tradition and manner of assimilation of Western influences.

Although our icon cannot be assigned to a specific workshop, it is most closely related to the Glykophilousa in the Lichačev Collection,¹⁵ mainly because the two traditions are blended to a considerable degree. Both icons combine the Byzantine-style geometric drapery on the garments with the finely worked, gold pseudo-Cufic motifs on the border band, a characteristic feature of Italo-Cretan icons. An additional similarity can be ascertained in the Western-style treatment of the flesh — with much softer modelling in our icon — and in the soulful



expressions, with the Virgin's eyebrows less arched and the eyes with dilated pupil gazing upwards.

An analogous combination of contrasting traditions is ascertained on comparing our icon with the Virgin 'ton Chionon' in the Catholic church on Naxos,¹⁶ where the modelling of flesh on the faces is achieved through soft tonal transitions, as in our icon, yet the features are consistent with Palaeologan tradition. Other traits common to both icons are the passionate expression and the distance between the index finger and the other digits on the Virgin's left hand.

A variation of this type occurs in those icons in which Christ, in the same position, holds an open scroll with the inscription *Πνεῦμα Κυρίου...* (*Spirit of the Lord...*), in his lowered right hand, as in two in the Lichačev Collection.¹⁷ Each of these icons belongs to a different phase of the fifteenth century and displays a different degree of Italian stylistic influence. They have a further trait in common with our icon, the dark blue of Christ's chiton, suggesting that this is a colour widely used in icons with Italian influences¹⁸ and only occasionally in traditional representations of the Virgin and Child.¹⁹

To conclude, our icon follows an iconographic type established in fifteenth-century Cretan painting, which is also known from very early works, such as the Virgin 'ton Chionon' in Naxos. Its style is closely related to these early works, as well as to others displaying more pronounced influences from Italian painting, as known in a series of Italo-Cretan icons. Our icon can be attributed to a Cretan workshop of the second half of the fifteenth century, which although conversant with Italian modes of painting had not yet moved away from Palaeologan tradition.

CONDITION Quite good; the wood is damaged at the edges.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 20, 86, pls 39-40. *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1993, no. 43, 222 (M. Vassilaki).
2. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 58, pl. 110.
3. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 41 (I. Kyzlasova).
4. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 35, pl. 65.
5. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 66, pl. 128.
6. Baltoyanni 1994, pl. 39.
7. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 66, pl. 128.
8. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 35, pl. 65.
9. Baltoyanni 1994, no. 45, pl. 80.
10. See passim, icon Cat. no. 2, with bibliography.
11. For the pose of Christ seen from the back, as well as the red sash, a sartorial element of the iconography of the Anapeson, see N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 1, 17.
12. In the Catholic church of the Panagia ton Chionon (15th century), Baltoyanni 1994, no. 32, 136-137, pl. 60.
13. Italo-Cretan icon (second half of 15th century), in which the iconographic type's reference to the Passion is confirmed by the presence of two little angels with the symbols of the Passion,

Lichačev 1906, 131, fig. 8.

14. *Golden Light* 1988, no. 59, 88-89. *After Byzantium* 1996, no. 9.

15. Baltoyanni 1994, pl. 8.

16. See n. 12.

17. See further examples, Lichačev 1906, 132, 136-137, figs 10, 11.

18. For examples see N. Chatzidakis 1993, nos 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 37. Baltoyanni 1994, nos 68-73, pp. 75-83, pls 137-147 and 148-174.

19. See examples in icon Cat. no. 2, 74-76.

4

THE VIRGIN HODEGETRIA

39 x 32 x 1.8 cm

Late 15th century

The Virgin, shown to the waist and turned three-quarters right, holds the Christ-Child in her left arm, while the right is bent in front of the chest in a gesture of intercession. Christ, turned towards his mother, blesses with his right hand and holds a closed scroll in the left. The Virgin's maphorion is dark red, Christ's chiton deep blue and his himation dark ochre with dense gold striations. The figure of the Virgin is broad, as in Italicizing Madre and her maphorion forms linear folds on the shoulder and softer ones of parallel curves between the two arms. At the height of the neck and the shoulder it widens rather clumsily and disproportionate to the part of the body it covers.

Christ is clad in traditional garments, a chiton and a himation covering the left shoulder, both embellished with dense gold striations. However, the deep blue of the chiton appears more often in representations in the Western style.¹ The Virgin's face is badly damaged, but the features can still be distinguished, as well as the soft modelling of the flesh in a more or less uniform colour, in the manner of Italo-Cretan icons. The treatment of the flesh is rather simple, as apparent on the cylindrical neck and the right hand, which is quite flabby. Christ's face, with its neat, carefully drawn features and melancholic aspect is consistent with Byzantine tradition. The haloes have simple punched volute ornaments.

The iconographic type of the Hodegetria in our icon is very popular in Cretan painting, where it is encountered in a large number of icons. Among the best known are those by Andreas Ritzos, in Rome and Trieste,² who most probably established the type in Cretan painting. However, in these icons Christ's chiton is not deep blue as in ours. There are several icons that could be assigned to analogous Cretan workshops.³ As in our icon their common trait is the simplistic handling of colour and the discreet merging of Western elements in the traditional iconographic formula. The icon's affinity with earlier Byzantine painting suggests a date before the end of the fifteenth century.

CONDITION A vertical crack passes through the Virgin's face. Damage to the drawing and paint on the faces of both figures. The icon has not been conserved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. See icon Cat. no. 2, 76.

2. Hagedorn 1976, 240, figs 12, 13. Bianco-Fiorin in N. Chatzidakis 1993, nos 8-9, pp. 46-50, with previous bibliography.

3. See examples in the Historical Museum, Moscow, *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, nos 32, 33; Baltoyanni 1994, no. 60, pls 112, 113.



5

THE TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY

36.4 x 31 x 1.9 cm

Circa 1500

The subject of the icon is the Restoration of the Holy Images at the end of the Iconoclasm in 843, celebrated on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. The letters ΔΟΞΙΑ have survived from the inscription (ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΙΑ) top right. The representation, which is divided into two registers, includes all the iconographic features of the type, which is established in a considerable number of Postbyzantine works. There is extensive loss of the painted surface on the figures and the gold ground, due to previous conservation.

In the upper register, at the centre, the large icon of the Virgin Hodegetria is placed on a stand draped with a red cloth embroidered in gold with the motif of the cross. It is held by two young, winged figures in long sticharion, red and deep reddish brown respectively, who appear from behind the pedestal.¹ At the top of the icon a white cloth covers the edge of the frame and falls in tiny folds at the sides. On the left, Empress Theodora and King Michael are identified by relevant inscriptions: ΘΕΟΔΩΡΑ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΕΙΡΑ, ΜΙΧΑΗΛ ΠΙΣΤΟΤΕ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ. They are clad in red imperial raiment with loros and crown, and hold a cross, now destroyed.²

On the right, Patriarch Methodios and Bishop Theodore, whose names can be read in the infrared photograph, where the letters ΘΟΔΙΟC, ΘΕΟ, are discernible. The names of the two monks who follow are now illegible. In the lower register, at the centre, two monks, probably Theophanis the Confessor and Theodore the Studite, hold an icon of Christ Pantocrator between them. Because the inscriptions naming the saints are effaced in this register, the proposed identification is based on the infrared photograph where some letters are





31. *The Triumph of Orthodoxy*, early 15th century. Byzantine Museum, Athens.

discernible, as well as other representations of the scene with inscriptions, referred to below. Depicted at the far left is Saint Theodosia, holding a small icon of Christ painted on a red ground.³ Beside her stand three anonymous monks. The third, in mid-calf-length habit and analavos, can probably be identified as Saint Ioannikios. To the right of Theodore the Studite is a hierarch with the inscription *APC*, possibly Arsenios. Next to him stand three monks and a fourth appears behind them. The iconography of the subject derives from litany scenes of the icon of the Virgin, such as at Vlacherna in Arta, at Dečani and on an embroidered textile in Moscow,⁴ in which figures of worshippers are ranged around the icon of the Virgin. The earliest known example of the Triumph of

32. *The Triumph of Orthodoxy*, c. 1500, Cat. no. 5 (infrared photograph).



Orthodoxy is an icon in the British Museum, dated to around 1400 and attributed to a Constantinopolitan workshop (Fig. 31).⁵ Its resemblance to our icon in every iconographic detail is striking. Very few differences are observed in the gold embroidery on the cloth covering the pedestal of the icon of the Virgin and in the cruciform motifs on the sakkos of Patriarch Methodius and the phailonion of the bishop in the lower register. The resemblance is even more remarkable because it extends to the dimensions of the wooden panels, which are virtually the same (the icon in the British Museum is 39 x 31 cm). The iconographic similarities point if not to the copying of one icon from the other at least to the use of a common *anthivolon* (working drawing). Stylistically the two works differ, however, and the rendering of the facial features and the details of the decoration of the vestments is simpler in our icon. Even so, the range of colours is common to both; dominant are the brownish grey tones of the monks' habits and the bright red of the imperial raiment, the angels' garments and the cloth draped on the stand of the icon of the Virgin. The icon of the Virgin is identical in both representations, rendering the Mother of God holding her Child, in the type of the frontal Hodegetria with Christ, also frontal, outstretching his right hand in blessing; the iconography was established in fifteenth-century Cretan painting by icons such as the Hodegetria by Andreas Pavias, now in Rome.⁶ This element and some other traits, such as the rinceaux bands on the cloth over the stand of the icon of the Virgin and on the vestments of the hierarchs in the British Museum icon, which appear as decorative motifs on the bier in fifteenth-century icons of the Dormition of the Virgin, permit the icon's attribution to an early fifteenth-century Cretan workshop. The stylistic difference between the two icons is due to different workshops and possibly to a time interval too.

The Restoration of the Icons is a subject encountered in both icons and wall-paintings of the sixteenth century. Among the best examples from the first half of the century are the Benaki Museum icon that bore the forged signature of Emmanuel Tzanfournaris,⁷ a composition including more figures, and the authentic icon by Emmanuel Tzanfournaris (1570/1575-c. 1631), in the Greek Institute, Venice.⁸ It also occurs on two icons of the second half of the sixteenth century in the Tsakyroglou Collection, although the rendering is different and simpler.⁹ To these examples of more popular art should be added an eighteenth-century Melchite icon by the painter Hanna.¹⁰

The subject is widespread in the wall-paintings of Mount Athos too, where Theophanis, in the Lavra Monastery (1535) and the Monastery of Stavronikita (1545-1546),¹¹ reverses the figures represented in each of the two registers, while later, in the Docheiariou Monastery (1658), the scene is limited to just one register.¹² It is clear that the British Museum icon remains the sole one closely related to ours. The similarity in iconography hints at the coexistence of the two painters in the same place and offers a possible explanation of the fact that their iconographic types are identical. Unfortunately the bad condition of our icon

precludes further observations on its style, which could secure a more precise dating. For all the above reasons its attribution to a conservative Cretan workshop, reproducing fifteenth-century models at the end of that century or slightly later, seems quite possible.

CONDITION Damage to the painted surface, particularly the white highlights and details on the garments, is due to previous conservation of the icon.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. According to N. Patterson-Ševčenko 1991, 48, these are idealized figures of the members of the brotherhood that honoured the icon.
2. For representations of Theodora see Katselaki 1995, 129-138.
3. For the iconography of the saint see Galavaris 1994, 313ff., fig. 2.
4. N. Patterson-Ševčenko 1995, 47ff., figs 1, 2, 3.
5. *Byzantium* 1994, 129-131, no. 140 (R. Cormack).
6. Hagedorn 1977, 209ff., pls 11, 12a, 13a. N. Chatzidakis 1993, 160, no. 39.
7. Xyngopoulos 1951, 9-10, no. 6, pl. 6; see recently A. Drandaki 1996, 183.
8. Chatzidakis 1962, 96, no. 63, pl. 48.
9. Vasilaki-Karakatsani 1980, nos 74, 75, p. 70.
10. *Icones grecques, melkites, russes* 1993, 262-263, no. 84.
11. Millet 1927, pl. 131.2. Chatzidakis 1986, fig. 123.
12. Millet 1927, pl. 228.1; see also wall-painting in Hopovo (1608), Tatić-Djurić, 1995, 557, fig. 14.

6

SAINT NICHOLAS ENTHRONED

65 x 49 x 2 cm

Circa 1500

“The saint sits on a low gold-ornamented throne, without back, on a cylindrical red cushion with gold braid and tassels. He wears prelatic vestments: a white omophorion patterned with red crosses, a light brown sakkos of gold-embroidered Italian tissue. Beneath the sakkos is the stole with gold representations of saints and the corresponding epigonation. The sticharion is light blue. The saint blesses with his right hand and in his left holds an open gospel book wherein the inscription in fine black capitals: *I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture*’ (John 10:9).

In the upper corners, in miniature, Christ left offers a gospel book and the Virgin right an omophorion. Above the saint’s right shoulder, traces of an inscription: *[O AΓΙOC] NIKO[AAOC]*... The representation of Christ and the Virgin should be associated with the miracle mentioned in the later *synaxaria*: at the First Ecumenical Council the saint hit Arius, for which Constantine unfrocked him; but during the night Christ and the Virgin appeared to him and presented him with the gospel book and the omophorion, emblems of prelacy. The modelling of the head is exceptionally careful; a few illumined planes are emphasized with extremely fine white flecks on the brownish olive foundation. The lips are red and a red line enlivens the eyelids and the tip of the nose. This detail, which was used in Byzantine painting proper, is encountered in only a few icons, mainly of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, purely Cretan ... Saint Nicholas of Myra is represented in the established type described also in the Painter’s Manual: “an old man, bald, with rounded beard”. The forehead is swollen exaggeratedly while in earlier icons, such as the fourteenth-century mosaic icon in the Monastery of Stavronikita, as well as in later ones, the high brow in conjunction with the short white beard, though in more natural proportions, are characteristic of the saint.’ *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

The saint’s face (Fig. 35) does not present the familiar features of Saint Nicholas, which are repeated in exactly the same type in fifteenth-century icons, such as that by Angelos in Corfu,¹ as well as in other later ones.² He has a lean bony visage, swollen cheekbones, a triangular chin and a broad high forehead furrowed with wrinkles. This difference is even more surprising because the presence of Christ and the Virgin above leaves no doubt about the saint’s identity, even supposing that the inscription with his name was





34. *The Three Hierarchs*, c. 1500.
Saint John Chrysostom, detail.
 Loverdos Collection, Byzantine
 Museum, Athens.

erroneous. However, although the saint's face here is at variance with all other known examples its shape and features are close to those of another hierarch, Saint John Chrysostom, the only differences being the colour of the hair, which is brown, and the type of beard, which is short and sparse. Indeed comparison with the face in two more or less contemporary icons of the Three Hierarchs, in the Loverdos Collection in the Byzantine Museum (Fig. 34) and in Zakynthos,³ convinces us of the confusion in the model used. The similarities to the figure of Chrysostom in the icon in the Loverdos Collection extend to the stylistic rendering too: the features are described with deft, steady brushstrokes on the deep brown foundation, in the manner of fifteenth-century Cretan painters. The way in which the saint's large, wide, almond-shaped eyes are painted is consistent with the art of this period, analogous with those in fifteenth-century Palaeologan icons, such as that of the Hodegetria from Anatoli in Crete,⁴ and the icons from



35. *Saint Nicholas, detail of icon*
Cat. no. 6.

the circle of Angelos or of Andreas Ritzos, such as Christ Great High Priest and an icon of the Virgin, in Patmos;⁵ even the well-drawn ears confirm this approach, since they recall figures from icons by the painter Angelos or from his workshop.⁶ The soft drapery on the garments, in particular the sticharion with the curvaceous folds that bring to mind a comparable rendering in two icons of Saint Nicholas in a private collection in Athens and at Piana degli Albanesi in Sicily,⁷ should be attributed to the art of fifteenth-century Cretan iconographers who received influences from Italian painting. Similarly the decoration of the pale rose sakkos with a few random gold palmettes is reminiscent of that on the maphorion of Italianate Madre around 1500.⁸ The other elements of the representation perhaps point to a slightly later date. For example, whereas the type of the low, gold-ornamented throne without back is known from the enthroned Virgin of the type of the Madre della Consolazione, around 1500, in the Historical Museum,



36. Michael Damaskenos, *Saint John Chrysostom enthroned*, second half of 16th century. Metropolitikon Megaron, Corfu.

Moscow,⁹ the freely drawn gold monochrome figures of the prophets on the base and even the tassels on the cushion are not known in fifteenth-century icons. Even so, it should be noted that the figure in gold monochromy was not unknown in early Cretan art, since the painter Angelos used it to decorate the epigone of Saint Nicholas in the Corfu icon.¹⁰ Furthermore, the throne's semi-hexagonal projecting base as well as its roseate hue allude to representations of marble thrones with corresponding base and footstool, such as that in the icon of Christ Enthroned, in Zakynthos, again by Angelos,¹¹ as well as in most sixteenth-century Western-style icons, such as the *Virgin Enthroned*, by Ioannis Permeniatis, in the Museo Correr, Venice;¹² lastly, this type is more widespread in the seventeenth century, as in the icons of the apostles in the church of the Pantokrator, Corfu.¹³ That the model of our icon was a prestigious work is corroborated by the fact that Michael Damaskenos used it to render John Chrysostom enthroned in the Corfu



37. *Saint Nicholas enthroned*, c. 1500,
Cat. no. 6.

icon¹⁴ (Figs 36, 37). The low throne without back, the seated figure of the hierarch with his hand raised in blessing and the way in which he holds the open gospel book on his left knee reproduce the iconographic traits of our icon exactly. The only differences are in secondary elements, such as the rectangular wooden footstool and the phailion with multiple crosses (*polystavrion*), while the richer decoration of the garments is a distinctive trait of Damaskenos's art. The similarity in the facial features of the two different saints is remarkable, while the type of lettering in the inscription and its arrangement in five lines in the gospel book (the text here comes from the next verse in Saint John's gospel, 10: 11) are analogous. It seems that in this icon too Damaskenos returns to early, fifteenth-century, models as he was wont to do in his icons with a single figure: Christ Pantocrator, the Virgin Hodegetria, Saint John the Baptist, Prophet Elijah and Saint Anthony.¹⁵ The type was widely used for rendering the figure of the

enthroned hierarch in the late sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth century. The model of our icon can be seen in an icon in London, work of a conservative late sixteenth-century painter,¹⁶ who, like Emmanuel Lambardos, copied a fifteenth-century model. In both icons the pose of Saint Nicholas, with the open gospel book resting on his left knee, the type of low throne without back, the type and coloration of the vestments, as well as details such as the tassels at the ends of the cushion and the projecting semi-hexagonal marble base of the throne are the same. Nevertheless the painter translates the Western traits of the model into the traditional Cretan style: the soft drapery on the sticharion is here formed by angular, geometric folds and the figures in gold monochromy on the throne and the stole have been replaced by simple gold striations. Lastly, the saint's physiognomy follows the established type.

This type is encountered unchanged, yet in a different style, in two late sixteenth-century icons in a private collection in the Lebanon, of Saint Nicholas and Saint Athanasios.¹⁷ Variations of it, often enriched, exist in the icon by Konstantinos Palaiokephalos in the Gonia Monastery, Crete (1637)¹⁸ and by Theodoros Poulakis in Corfu,¹⁹ as well as in several eighteenth-century icons from the Ionian Islands.²⁰ It therefore seems that our icon cannot be later than the beginning of the sixteenth century, while there are many elements that argue for an earlier date, in the second half of the fifteenth century. The extensive damage to the painted surface prevents a more accurate definition of the workshop and the date.

To conclude, the icon of Saint Nicholas provides the earliest known example of one iconographic type of an enthroned hierarch, which was later widely diffused in Cretan painting.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'The icon is painted on a panel with fine gesso. The outlines are lightly incised. It is in good condition except that the gold ornaments are somewhat effaced and most of the gold ground has flaked off'.

Damage from previous cleaning of the icon, on the flesh, the garments and the gold striations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 7, fig. 86.
2. Cf. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, nos 107, 122, 123, 150, 168. N. Chatzidakis, 1983, nos 33, 53. Vassilaki 1994a, 229ff., figs 1-5.
3. Icon in the Loverdos Collection: *Affreschi e Icone* 1986, no. 78, 129 (N. Chatzidakis); icon in Zakynthos: *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 133, 130 (16th century) (P. Vocotopoulos).
4. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 149 (M. Borboudakis).
5. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 15, pl. 19, no. 37, pl. 30.
6. See passim Saint Phanourios and the Embrace of Peter and Paul, in Patmos, Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 69, 116-117, pl. 27 and no. 74, 122-123, pl. 45.
7. Cf. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 33 and Lindsay-Opie 1991, pl. 144.
8. See examples N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 24, fig. on p. 113, no. 29.

9. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 39 (I. Kyzlasova).
10. See n. 1.
11. For other examples see *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, no. 191, 111 (15th century). From *Byzantium to El Greco* 1987, no. 33, 101, 168. This feature originates from 14th-century Italian painting, such as works by Paolo Veneziano (Virgin enthroned, see Berenson 1968, I, figs 9, 10, 11).
12. N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 32, 134-136.
13. Vocotopoulos 1990, figs 271-278.
14. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 21, 110-113, figs 22, 110-113.
15. E.g. see Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 79-80, n. 2. Vocotopoulos 1985, 398. Vocotopoulos 1990, figs 20, 21, 24; see also below Cat. nos 10, 13, 18, pp. 120, 147, 231ff.
16. *The Temple Gallery* 1992, no no., col. photo. on back page.
17. *Icones grecques, melkites, russes* 1993, no. 14, 82-83, no. 15, 84-85; see also icon in Bari, *Icone di Puglia* 1988, no. 70, 176.
18. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 167 (M. Borboudakis).
19. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 88, fig. 243; see also icon in *Sotheby's* 1988.
20. See below Cat. no. 46.

7

SAINT ALEXIOS

21.3 x 16.2 x 1.4 cm

Circa 1500

The saint is portrayed standing, frontal, his right hand on his chest in a gesture of respect and his left holding a small cross. He wears a light brown, knee-length chiton with short sleeves. The head is disproportionately large, with short bushy beard and long hair, while the face has well-drawn features and an intense expression. The saint is painted against a gold ground, most of which has been destroyed; in the lower part, in front of the foreground, are a small house in an enclosure, drawn in outline, left, and a low hill, right. Left and right, traces of an inscription in red capital letters: ΑΛΕΞΙΟΣ Ο ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ (*Alexios the man of God*).

Chatzidakis remarks in his catalogue: 'The aristocratic saint, who forsook his betrothed and his wealth to live as a mendicant even in his own mansion, is not common in Byzantine painting. ... In an eleventh-century menologion from the Athonite Monastery of Kastamonitou, there is for 17 March a miniature depicting him on his death bed with the Emperor Onorius taking from his hands the paper on which he had written his life and origin.¹ On page 51 of a seventeenth-century manuscript of a painter's manual, in the Benaki Museum, no. 35, an ink drawing of Saint Alexios has been added in the left margin by a later hand.'²

There are no known Byzantine icons of Saint Alexios as a single figure,³ whereas he appears quite often in Postbyzantine wall-paintings, depicted in accordance with the instructions in the Painter's Manual by Dionysios: 'like John the Baptist, with pointed beard'.⁴ In the Philanthropinon Monastery he is shown full-bodied and wearing the same type of short brown chiton, as he is later in the Docheiariou Monastery (1568).⁵ He is also encountered in medallions in the church of Hagios Nikolaos at Vitsa (1618/1619) and the church of the Panagia of the archon Apostalakis, in Kastoria.⁶ Saint Alexios is known from fifteenth-century Italian painting too, with analogous short tunic and cross.⁷ In a late seventeenth-century icon by Stephanos Tzankarolas, in Corfu, he is presented in a different iconographic type, with torsion of the body, standing, clad in a long chiton and a himation.⁸

Our icon provides, as far as I know, the earliest representation of the saint in icon-painting and its iconography heralds the known examples in sixteenth-century wall-paintings. Despite the damage to the painted surface, the fine, careful drawing is distinguished on the few folds and the pale highlights on the edges. These traits, which are not encountered in later Cretan painting, point to a date around 1500.



38. *Saint Alexios*, c. 1500, Cat. no. 7.

CONDITION The gold ground, the modelling and the highlights on the flesh have been damaged in a previous cleaning.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. In the Historical Museum, Moscow, fol. 269v, Treneff 1911, 8, pl. IX, 43; see *Glory of Byzantium* 1997, no. 56, 101-102. For the saint's life see Doukakis 1981, 302-314.
2. The codex is a *keimelion* from the Exchange of Populations of Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor Fund.
3. For the iconography see *Lexikon* 5, 1973, cols 90-95.
4. *Hermeneia* 1909, 166 and 294.
5. *Monasteries on the Island in the Lake of Ioannina* 1993, fig. 216, Millet 1927, pl. 241.2.
6. Tourta 1991, 166, pl. 92. Pelekanidis 1953, pl. 243.
7. Kaftal 1978, 26, no. 10, fig. 39.
8. Vocotopoulos 1990, 160, fig. 301.

8

THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3723

35.2 x 28.2 x 2.6 cm

Circa 1500

Christ comes, seated on a white ass, followed by his disciples who seem to emerge from a cave at the foot of the Mount of Olives; he proceeds left, as the Jews come forth from the city of Jerusalem to welcome him. Jesus beholds and blesses them, while before him a child with his back to the viewer extends his hands in salutation. Between Christ and the Jews is a tall tree, up which three children have scrambled and lop off branches; in red lettering on the gold ground above the buildings at the centre: *Η ΒΑΙΘΟΦΟΡΟΣ*.

The composition of the Entry into Jerusalem developed considerably in thirteenth- to fifteenth-century wall-paintings, being enriched with figures and episodes that enhanced its pictorial aspect. The representation here is restricted to the essential elements. Christ's disciples form a close-knit group with no particularly distinctive facial features. Of the host of children which often filled the representation with delightful scenes, only one child appears here, his lively movement indicating that he is chanting "Hosanna". The colt nibbles the branch held by the child; this picturesque detail already exists in the ninth-century Paris codex 510, is repeated countless times in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century works, and persists in sixteenth-century wall-paintings. The tree in which another three children cut down branches leans to the right, filling the space between the mountain and the city. The group of Jews emerging from Jerusalem is arranged to convey a sense of depth; the front three are full-bodied figures, two old men and a woman (who will have originally held an infant, now overpainted), and only the heads of the others behind them are visible. Here too we observe the restrained austerity in number and movement ascertained in the corresponding group of disciples; only the Jew to the fore opens his arms in an expansive gesture of welcome. The city above is a quaint complex of towers,





40. *The Entry into Jerusalem, detail from a two-register icon, second half of 15th century. Patmos.*

houses and porticoes developed upwards. Characteristic is the tondo with relief bust over the gateway, typical of the predilection for Hellenizing details in the Palaeologan era. It is encountered more rarely in the sixteenth century too. ... The colouring of the icon is also of interest. The overall tone is warm and muted, without sharp contrasts. The foreground, the mountain right and the city left constitute a neutral field in shades of grey, on which there is a decorative interplay of a few colours: Christ and his entourage are rendered in sombre hues such as greenish blue, deep red and light brown, that blend in unity, while the Jews are in vivid, gaudy colours, juxtaposed in contrived contrasts: cinnabar covers a large surface, variegated with white and dark green, to denote the motliness of the mob. The pale grey of the city is enlivened by the black door and window frames and the red roofs. Characteristic is the reddish brown shadow of the Mount of Olives, which complements its grey-green cast. Gold is used sparingly, attesting the artist's sensitivity: fine parallel lines on the bark of the tree trunk and some of the ground above. In general the great interdependence of colour tones creates a unified chromatic impression. ... There is very little emphasis on plasticity in the Entry into Jerusalem. The deep folds of the garments are rendered in a darker hue of the basic colour and the prominent areas are denoted by soft white lines. The artist avoids using strong lines on the flesh, which he models with delicate shadows and one or two tiny highlights.

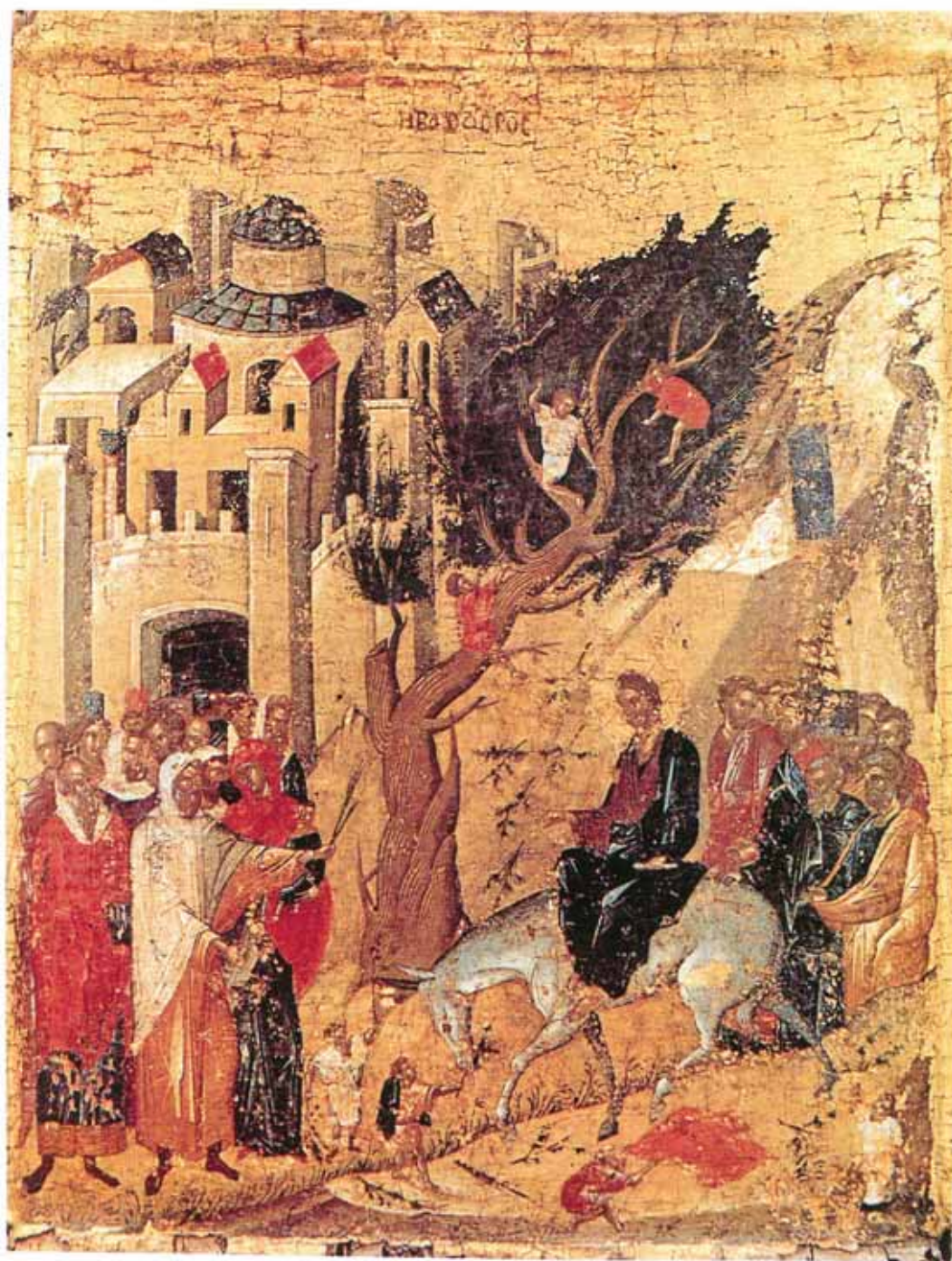
This fine icon displays a deep sense of measure and calm movement, an expressive use of colour and a rhythmical articulation of shapes. The composition is organized with simple means: The tortured tree which disrupts the symmetry, the charming child straddling it and binding together the whole composition, the variety stimulated by the contrast between the modest and troubled right side and the high and rigid left, bespeak an accomplished painter who is master of his expressive media. This is confirmed by the perfect technical execution.' *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

The work follows the iconography established in fifteenth-century Cretan icons, as Vocotopoulos ascertained in his study.¹ In the catalogue of the exhibition of Cretan icons in the Benaki Museum I dated it around 1500, paralleling it mainly with an icon of identical iconography and similar style in the City of Athens Museum (Fig. 43).²

There are two different iconographic types of the Entry into Jerusalem in fifteenth-century Cretan painting.³ One is many-figured and its principal characteristic is the turn of Christ's body and head in the opposite direction to the ass on which he rides towards Jerusalem; displaying iconographic and even stylistic affinity with the wall-paintings in the Pantanassa at Mystras and the church at Sklavenochori, this type is represented among others by the icon in the Canellopoulos Collection.⁴ As is deduced from the representation on the border of the icon signed by Nikolaos Ritzos, in Sarajevo, this iconography was established – as were the other border scenes – by Andreas Ritzos in a coherent composition that is also encountered on the two-register icon in Patmos, of the second half of the fifteenth century (Fig. 40).⁵

The painter of our icon follows a different iconographic type, again characterized by the pose of Christ, whose body is turned and faces ahead, in the same direction as the donkey. The apostles appear behind a rock and in front of a large triangular opening, while the group of Jews includes a woman with an infant, to the fore, and Judas in profile, turning away his bare head, at the left. The prototype, in which the tree has the same type of trunk and foliage, and the poses of the children lodged in its branches are common, must have been fully crystallized in fifteenth-century *anthivola* (working drawings), as is borne out by the constant repetition of all the compositional elements in a series of fifteenth-century icons.

Vocotopoulos located the earliest example of this iconography in an icon in Williamstown, which he dates to the late fourteenth-first quarter of the fifteenth century and assigns to a Constantinopolitan painter.⁶ He attributes the icon in Lefkada to a Cretan painter of the third quarter of the fifteenth century (Fig. 41).⁷ Among the first examples of the Cretan iconography of this type, more closely affined to the Lefkada icon, is a splendid icon in a private collection in London, published by Maria Vassilaki⁸ who attributes it to the same late fourteenth-century Constantinopolitan painter as the Williamstown icon.



41. *The Entry into Jerusalem*,
second half of 15th century.
Public Library Collection,
Lefkada.

A fair number of examples are cited in the aforementioned studies, including fifteenth- and sixteenth-century icons in Zakynthos, Sinai and Hungary as well as wall-paintings by Xenos Digenis and Theophanis.⁹ Of these the Sinai icon is one of the most faithful copies of the type, the work of an outstanding Cretan painter of the second half of the fifteenth century, whereas the Zakynthos icon¹⁰ could be dated in the first half of the sixteenth century. The icons in the Esztergom Museum, Hungary and in the Zakynthos Museum,¹¹ with their simplified iconography, diminutive figures and disproportionately high buildings, are dated around 1600.

42. *The Entry into Jerusalem*, c. 1500,
Cat. no. 8, detail.





43. *The Entry into Jerusalem*,
c. 1500. Museum of the
City of Athens, no. 655.

Theophanis knew and used both iconographic types of the Entry into Jerusalem. In the wall-paintings in the Monastery of Stavronikita he adopted the type of the Lefkada icon,¹² while his other depictions of the theme, in the icons of the Dodecaorton in the Lavra and Stavronikita monasteries, rely on the type in the icon by Nikolaos Ritzos.¹³

As noted above, the icon in the Velimezis Collection (Figs 39, 44), together with that in the City of Athens Museum (Fig. 43), belongs to this series. It uses the model of the London and Lefkada (Fig. 41) icons, with minor differences in the

44. *The Entry into Jerusalem*,
Cat. no. 8, detail.



buildings. These merit attention because they also reveal a misunderstanding of the model, possibly by a restorer of the icons in earlier times, since there is considerable damage in this area of them: 1. The central building with the dome of the church of the Resurrection is transformed into a gable-roofed building in the icon in the City of Athens Museum, while in our icon the dome is shifted incongruously to the background right, between two flat-roofed buildings. 2. The vaulted roof of the building that extends into the background left has not just been abolished in the icon of the City of Athens Museum, but replaced by two other, smaller ones. 3. The wall with battlements in the background has also been abolished in both icons, as is the case in the icons of the other type of the Entry into Jerusalem, that used by Nikolaos Ritzos.¹⁴ All the other buildings remain the same, while the well-drawn grisaille bust above the gateway is conspicuous.

It is worth mentioning a few other differences in our icon, in secondary elements of the composition: 1. The porch to the right of the central gateway is lower than the left, as if unfinished. 2. The number of children has been drastically reduced. There is only one child at the centre, with his hand outstretched and holding a branch that the donkey grabs with its mouth; the lower part of the body is effaced due to the damaged wood in this small area. In contrast to other known icons, there is no child in the right section, in the foreground under the colt. 3. The stance of the donkey's hind legs differs: they are not in a stride, as in all the other icons of this iconographic type, but in a position of standing still, as is usual in the other iconographic type of the Entry into Jerusalem, by Nikolaos Ritzos.

It is thus clear that our icon is more closely affined to the one in the City of Athens Museum (Fig. 43), both in the use of a common model and in the misapprehension of it. There are additional stylistic similarities too; small carefully executed planes on the flesh and the drapery, firm accomplished drawing and, last, muted colours relieved by the bright red of the garments and roofs. Later than the Lefkada icon and lacking the excellence and elegance of the one in Sinai, both icons can be securely dated before the work of Theophanis, since they still preserve traits of late fifteenth-century Cretan painting, perhaps *circa* 1500.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'The icon is painted on a thick panel of cypress wood with integral, raised, narrow frame. It is in good condition and virtually intact, excepting a light overpainting of the red maphorion of the woman next to the tree. The frame was gilded in a later period.'

1996: The icon was restored by Renos Koutsouris in 1946. It was conserved and all overpainting removed by Stergios Stasinopoulos in 1993. In good condition with minor damage to the painted surface in various places; this is due to a previous cleaning of the icon using fire, which destroyed the highlights and in some cases the modelling of the faces; low down in the centre and on either side of the join between the two boards, as well as on the slightly raised frame, the painting has been destroyed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY *BCH* LXVIII-LXIX (1944-45), 424. *Zygos* 1975, nos 13, 5, 8ff. (late 16th century). Vocotopoulos 1977-79, 317-318. N. Chatzidakis 1983, 37. *Ikonen, Krems* 1993, no. 34, 229, pl. 19 (G.M. Lechner), no bibliography. Vassilaki 1994, 280.

NOTES

1. Vocotopoulos 1977-79, 317-318. See also N. Chatzidakis 1983, 37 and Vassilaki 1994, 288ff.
2. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 12. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 28, 37.
3. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 76-77. Vocotopoulos 1979, 309ff. Vassilaki 1994, 271ff.
4. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 27. *From Byzantium to El Greco* 1986, no. 50, 181-182 (N. Chatzidakis).
5. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 25, 76-77, with other examples, pls 23, 202; see also Vocotopoulos 1979, 314ff., pls 120-122, with other examples. Vassilaki 1994, 284, figs 11-12 (*anthivolon* in the Benaki Museum); see colour plate of the icon by Nikolaos Ritzos in Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, fig. on p. 321.
6. Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, 314ff., pls 116, 118.
7. Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, 309ff., pls 117, 119. See also colour plate in *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 125.
8. Vassilaki 1994, 271-284, figs 2, 3, with erroneous caption.
9. Vocotopoulos 1977-79, 316ff., pls 120, 122 (Zakynthos, 16th century), 121 (Sinai, second half of 15th century). Vassilaki 1994, 280ff. *Ikonen, Krems* 1993, no. 33, 229, pl. 20.
10. Vocotopoulos 1977-79, fig. 120.
11. Vocotopoulos 1977-1979, fig. 122.
12. Chatzidakis 1986, 65, fig. 89.
13. Chatzidakis 1969-70, figs 39 and 74.
14. E.g. see Patmos icon, Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 25, 77, pl. 23, and n. 5 above.

9

THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3732

42.6 x 31.9 x 1.4 cm

Early 16th century

Elizabeth, enveloped in a deep blue maphorion, sits up in the bed left, while at the centre three maidservants bearing offerings approach from behind a large, rectangular wooden table laid with various vessels. Right, seated on a low stool, the prophet Zacharias, in red cloak and prophet's cap, writes on a tablet: *ΙΩΑΝΝΗC ΕCΤΕ* (τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ) (*His name is John*; Luke 1:63). Left, at the foot of Elizabeth's bed, is the infant in the wooden cradle, the nursemaid beside it seated on a low stool, spinning and rocking it with her foot. The scene is set outside a city wall, in front of which are two buildings, each with a red gold-embroidered cloth spread on the roof. Standing in the doorway of the left building is the figure of Elizabeth, in deep blue maphorion, in a scene of Embrace with an unbearded figure in red cloak. Visible in the doorway of the right building is a red curtain (*velum*) drawn aside. Projected against the gold ground behind the wall, are the finely drawn leafy branches of a tree.

The iconography of the scene is established in fifteenth-century Cretan painting, in icons¹ and wall-paintings in important churches, such as Valsamonero and Sklaverochori,² where the same type is used, with minor modifications, both for the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist and the Nativity of the Virgin. According to the classification proposed in my relevant study on the crystallization of the theme in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Cretan painting,³ our icon belongs in the first group, which includes such significant works as the icons of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, in the Byzantine Museum, Athens (Fig. 46) and the Hermitage, and of the Nativity of the Virgin, in Munich, Sinai and the Canellopoulos Museum.⁴ Our icon's relationship with this group is apparent not only from the iconography but also the style; common to all is the arrangement of the protagonists around the rectangular table. The poses, gestures and dress faithfully reproduce the model of the Hermitage icon of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, while the buildings in the background resemble more closely those in the icons of the Nativity of the Virgin, in Munich, Sinai and the Canellopoulos Museum.⁵ An additional similarity with the above icons is the presence of the scene of the Embrace inside the building left. The same iconography is also encountered in sixteenth-century works, such as an unpublished icon of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, in the Zakynthos Museum (Fig. 47), which includes the Embrace and the Annunciation to Zacharias.⁶ In the episode of the Embrace in our icon, the identification of the second unbearded figure as Zacharias poses a problem, since he is usually portrayed

45. *The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, early 16th century, Cat. no. 9, Benaki Museum.*





46. *The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist*,
second half of 15th century.
Byzantine Museum, Athens.

bearded and wearing a prophet's cap, as in the icons of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist in the Zakynthos Museum and the Loverdos Collection.⁷ This episode, which occurs more often in representations of the Nativity of the Virgin,⁸ was possibly misconstrued by the painter of our icon, who instead of the Embrace of Zacharias and Elizabeth, appropriate to the subject, depicts the Embrace of Saint Anne and Elizabeth, a scene with analogous iconography and better known from the cycles of the life of Christ, the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist.⁹ In this case, if the choice was a conscious one then we can assume that the two corresponding representations of the Nativity are linked not only typologically but also conceptually with this scene.

Awareness of the iconographic correlation of the two scenes is also apparent from a text (in mis-spelt vernacular Greek) by an eighteenth-century icon-painter, preserved on a sheet of paper with a drawing of the scene of the Nativity of the Virgin and mentioned by Chatzidakis in his unpublished catalogue of the icons in the Benaki Museum:¹⁰ 'written in the hand of the artist himself, on the back of a sheet of paper with an ink drawing of the Nativity of the Virgin (mid-18th century), kept in the Benaki Museum, is the following instruction: "you do the same for the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, except that there where Joachim sits you put Zacharias writing 'His name is John' and wearing a prelate's vestment".'

Despite the damage to the painted surface of our icon, the serious mien of the figures, the well-drawn garments with tiny folds and the colours — the dominant tone of deep blue alternating harmoniously with the bright red on the pillow of Elizabeth's bed, the third maidservant's dress and Zacharias's cloak, as well as the cloth spread on the roofs of the two buildings and the curtain in the right one — are all clearly discernible.

As noted at the beginning, the painter of this icon copies the established iconography of a group of fifteenth-century Cretan icons, in accordance with the manner of Cretan workshops, whose products are distinguished by the quality of the coloration, the gentle rendering of the drapery and the adroit drawing of the buildings in the background. In comparison with the icons of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, in the Byzantine Museum and in the Hermitage, the figure of Zacharias, the cradle and the nursemaid are depicted on a considerably smaller scale, while Zacharias is also placed slightly lower down. Moreover, the tonal gradations in the modelling of the faces and the flesh in general are lacking in subtlety. All the above traits lead to a slightly later dating, possibly in the early sixteenth century.

CONDITION The icon had been overpainted on damaged parts of the gold ground, on large areas near the frame and on a vertical crack towards the bottom. Conserved in 1983.

BIBLIOGRAPHY *BCH* LXVI-LXIX (1944-45), 242. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 51, 56-59. N. Chatzidakis 1983a, 138, cat. no. 3, 141-145, 168ff., pl. I, fig. 6.

NOTES

1. N. Chatzidakis 1983a, 127ff.
2. N. Chatzidakis 1983a, 154-158, nos 16-18, figs 15-17.
3. N. Chatzidakis 1983a, 141-144.
4. N. Chatzidakis 1983a, nos 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, pp. 128-137, 144-150, figs 1-4, 5, 7, 8, 10.
5. From Hagios Nikolaos tou Molou, no. 253 (53.5 x 41 cm); the table is laid with a white cloth, as in the 15th-century icon in the Byzantine Museum (see N. Chatzidakis 1983a, 167, 170ff., pl. I, element 3, figs 1, 20). An icon of the Entry into Jerusalem comes from the same iconostasis, see Vocotopoulos 1977-79, fig. 120. To the catalogue of the icons with related iconography, published in my study (N. Chatzidakis 1983a), some other icons with the same iconography can be added: Nativity of the Virgin, 16th century, in the Hermitage (*Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 9); Nativity of the Virgin, on the wide border of an icon of the Virgin in the Zakynthos Museum (Baltoyanni 1994, no. 52, pl. 92); Nativity of the Virgin, 17th century, in the Historical Museum, Moscow (*Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 44 - I. Kyzlasova); Nativity of the Virgin, 17th century, in a many-figured composition with various secondary episodes, in Corfu (Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 71, 102, fig. 200). See also the much more complex representation on an icon in the Bologna Museum, Angiolini-Martinelli 1984 no. 6, 51-55, and on the triptych by the painter Stylianos, in the Abou Adal Collection (N. Chatzidakis 1996, 47, fig. on p. 46).
6. N. Chatzidakis 1983a, nos 5, 6, 8, pp. 146-150, figs 7-10.
7. Xyngopoulos 1956, pl. 40.1. N. Chatzidakis 1983a, no. 4, 145.
8. N. Chatzidakis 1983a, 138, pl. I, element 13A, 144ff., cat. nos 3-10, 13-21, 28, 31-34, figs 7-11, 14, 15, 18.
9. See *passim* bibliography in the icon of the Akathistos Hymn (stanza V), Cat. no. 14, 151, 163, n. 7, Fig. 71.
10. Chatzidakis, *Catalogue of Icons in the Benaki Museum*, n.d., 45, n. 6.



47. *The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist*, 16th century. Zakynthos Museum.

10 SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

30.5 x 20.7 x 2.2 cm

Early 16th century

The saint stands on a low rock, turned three-quarters towards Christ who appears in bust and blessing within a gold-rayed, blue segment of heaven in the top right corner. The Forerunner has large, light brown wings with dense gold striations, turning to deep blue near the body. He wears a deep blue sheepskin (*meloti*) and a light brown himation swathed around his body. His bared right arm is raised towards Christ in a gesture of speech, while in his left hand he holds an open scroll with the inscription: *ΟΡΑC ΟΙ(Α) ΠΑCΧΟΥ/[CΙΝ Ω] Θ(ΕΟ)Υ ΛΟΓΕ ΟΙ / ΠΤΑΙCΜΑΤ(ΩΝ) ΕΛΕΓ/ΧΟΙ ΤΩΝ [ΒΔΕΛΙΚΤ(ΕΩΝ)] / [ΕΛΕ]ΓΧΟΝ [ΚΑΙ] ΓΑΡ ΜΗ / ΦΕΡΩΝ Ο ΗΡΩΔΗC / ΤΕΤΜΗ[ΚΕΝ ΙΔΟΥ] / ΤΗΝ Ε[ΜΗΝ] ΚΑΡ(ΑΝ) C(ΩΤ)ΕΡ* (See, Word of God, what the censors of disgusting transgressions suffer. For see Saviour, Herod, unable to stand censure, cut off my head).

Bottom left is an axe propped against a leafy tree and right is the saint's nimbed, severed head within a precious, low-footed bowl. The landscape includes two low, steep, triangular rocky mountains of different height, left and right, as is common in many fifteenth-century icons of single, standing saints.¹ The gold ground has been destroyed completely and previous conservation of the icon using fire has spoilt the original texture of the colours. As in other icons in the Collection (Cat. nos 7, 14, 15, 16, 17, 35, 45), traces of gold are preserved sporadically, being more distinct near the outlines of the rock and the figure of the saint, particularly below the hair and wings.

A later nominative inscription, *Ο ΑΓ(ΙΟ)C ΙΩ(ΑΝΝΗC) Ο ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜ(ΟC)*, in black letters above the left wing, was removed in recent conservation. The saint's face is modelled meticulously with close, dark brown brushstrokes and tiny white highlights, in a miniature vein (Fig. 50). The treatment of the drapery of the himation, with multiple overfolds in smaller geometric planes illumined by firm, off-white brushstrokes at the edges, is analogous. The shaggy blue fleece is likewise assiduously executed. The painter displays exceptional skill in applying the gold striations, which are dense and well-drawn on the wings, the segment of heaven, the tree trunk and the bowl.

⁴⁸ *Saint John the Baptist, early 16th century, Cat. no. 10.*





49. *Angelos, Saint John the Baptist, first half of 15th century. Byzantine Museum, Athens.*

'The ascetic type of Saint John the Baptist, lean, haggard, tall, clad in the fleece, as portrayed here, from the sides, with the face turned three-quarters, with the characteristic flexure of the waist and knees, must have been removed from the scene of the Baptism. Also from the Baptism is the detail of the tree with the axe, symbolizing the Forerunner's words: "And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees" (Matthew 3:10). However Saint John is never winged in the Baptism, whereas he is in frontal representations of him: "Behold the lamb of God". The wings symbolize his role as Christ's messenger, in accordance with Malachi's prophecy (3:1), repeated in Matthew (11:10).' *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

The earliest known representation of Saint John the Baptist with wings is at Arilje (1296/7),² while the saint's severed head in the vase features in the Palaeologan iconography of both the Beheading of Saint John and the Finding of his Head.³ The iconographic type of our icon constitutes a judicious combination of elements encountered in earlier representations of the saint, such as in two icons, of the twelfth and the thirteenth century, in Sinai,⁴ in the late fourteenth-century Munich psalter,⁵ and in two icons, of the fourteenth and the fifteenth century, in the Historical Museum, Moscow, in which he appears without wings, as in a Cretan icon in the Louvre.⁶ The type was crystallized by Angelos, as studies referring to the Cretan painter's work have shown;⁷ the characteristics first registered in two signed icons of his now in the Byzantine Museum⁸ and the Malines Museum, Belgium,⁹ were diffused in a series of works from the fifteenth century onwards¹⁰ and subsequently adopted by the great Cretan masters, such as Michael Damaskenos in an icon in Zakynthos,¹¹ Emmanuel Lambardos in an icon in Corfu,¹² Emmanuel Tzanes in an icon in the Canellopoulos Museum,¹³ Victor in a triptych in Sinai¹⁴ and in all probability Philotheos Skoufos in an icon in Paros.¹⁵

50. *Saint John the Baptist, early 16th century, Cat. no. 10, detail.*



51. Stylianos the priest, *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, early 16th century. detail. Paphos Museum, Cyprus.



The text of the inscription is based on earlier related ones.¹⁶ It too was crystallized by Angelos and repeated exactly in later Cretan icons.¹⁷

Our icon reproduces the model established by Angelos exactly, excepting minor deviations in details such as the addition of a second tree in the landscape right and the absence of the long-handled cross that John normally holds on the gold ground — most probably due to the damage to the ground in this area.¹⁸ Stylistically, however, it bears little resemblance to the Palaeologan style of Angelos's icons and is closer to later Cretan works of distinctly conservative character, such as Emmanuel Lambardos's icon in Corfu, which is of about the same dimensions.¹⁹ Apart from the common iconographic type both works display the same miniature execution of the flesh and garments, though with notable variations in our icon where the drapery is less rigid. The close brushstrokes on the flesh and the restricted coloration in subdued tones in our icon contribute to the impression of a different workshop, closer to the art of the fifteenth century. The above traits suggest that it predates Lambardos and was perhaps painted in the early sixteenth century.

Of significance for our icon's inclusion in the early sixteenth-century workshops is comparison with a signed icon by the painter Stylianos 'priest' in the Paphos Museum, Cyprus,²⁰ which possibly dates from around 1500 (Fig. 51). There the Forerunner is represented in the scene of the Beheading, with the same artistic characteristics and a similar miniature manner of rendering the flesh and the shaggy blue fleece.

Even closer to our icon is the sixteenth-century icon in the Hermitage,²¹ of the same iconography but smaller dimensions (24.8 x 17.8 cm) and in excellent condition. The quality of its execution and the dexterity in the almost miniature treatment of the

flesh and garments, with firm drawing and brilliant colours, are comparable to those of our icon, with corresponding differentiations from the works by Lambardos. Although it is not possible to date these works with certainty, they reveal that the subject was adopted by accomplished painters distinguished for their excellent technique and proficiency at miniature rendering.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon painted on a walnut panel with fine gesso. The outlines incised lightly and stressed by a fine black line. In very good condition; only the gold ground has been erased completely, as well as the gold striations on the wings.'

The gold ground of the icon was damaged in previous cleaning, the painted surface is in quite good condition and the gold striations on the wings are now clearly visible, after the recent conservation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Cf. N. Chatzidakis 1983, 11.
2. Cf. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1976, 128.
3. Cf. Chatzidakis 1988, 90-91, figs 1-7.
4. Chatzidakis 1978, 90-91, figs 4-5.
5. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1976, 131, fig. 9.
6. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1976, 136, fig. 11. Vocotopoulos 1990, 78. *Bizantij* 1991, nos 53 and 112. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 64, 415-416 (I. Kyzlasova).
7. See N. Chatzidakis 1983, 10 and 18.
8. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 2, 18. Acheimastou-Potamianou 1991, 105ff.
9. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1976. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 2.
10. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1976. N. Chatzidakis 1983, nos 2 and 39; the catalogue is extended by Vocotopoulos 1990, 77-78 and Acheimastou-Potamianou 1991, 109, nn. 17-18. To it can be added early 16th-century icons in the Hermitage (*Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 14 - Y. Piatnitsky) and a late 16th-century icon in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow (*Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, nos 64 and 88 - I. Kyzlasova, O. Etinhof), as well as a 17th-century one in the Byzantine Museum, Athens (*Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1993, no. 16, 201 - M. Acheimastou-Potamianou).
11. Chatzidakis 1981, 313, 360. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 139, 135-136 (M. Chatzidakis).
12. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 52, 77-78, fig. 171.
13. Ascribed by Drandakis, see Drandakis 1962, 126-127, pls 57-58.
14. *Sinai* 1990, 131ff., fig. 101 (N. Drandakis).
15. Mitsani 1996, no. 13, 38.
16. See Lafontaine-Dosogne 1976, 142, 143.
17. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 2, 18.
18. In the icon by Angelos in the former Chatzidakis Collection, in the Byzantine Museum, as well as in other icons, the landscape includes a small partridge-wood pigeon; it is absent from the smaller icon of the same subject, in the Malines Museum, see Acheimastou-Potamianou 1991, 108ff.
19. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 52, 77-78, fig. 171 (28.5 x 20.5 x 1.8 cm).
20. Papageorgiou 1991, fig. 99. A second signed work of miniature character by the painter Stylianos is the triptych that includes *inter alia* two scenes from the life of Saint John the Baptist (N. Chatzidakis 1996 and *Lumières de l'Orient* 1996, no. 9, 50-51, fig. on p. 30).
21. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 14 (Y. Piatnitsky).

11

ENTHRONED VIRGIN AND CHILD

88 x 70 x 2 cm

Early 16th century

The enthroned Virgin, in frontal pose, holds the Christ-Child at the centre of her body, her right hand touching his right foot and her left supporting his left shoulder. Her left leg is projected to the fore, while her right is drawn behind and raised. She wears a dark red maphorion and a blue dress, of which part of the sleeves and large areas over the legs are left uncovered. The overfolds of the garments form large geometric planes in three successively lighter shades, becoming almost white at the edges. On the gold ground the red-lettered inscription: *MP ΘΥ Η ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΕΛΠΙΣ*. (*Mother of God the Hope of All*). Next to Christ's head, above the maphorion, in gold lettering: *ΙC ΧC*. In the middle, left of the throne, in red capitals and cursive letters, the inscription: *ΧΕΙΡ ΚΑΛΙΝΙΚΟΥ ΜΟΝΑΧΟΥ* (*Hand of Kalinikos monk 1640*).

The Christ-Child's frontal pose is enlivened by torsion and *contrapposto*; he turns his head right and gazes downwards, while his legs point left. He blesses with his raised right hand, while in his left, outstretched and lowered slightly, he holds an open scroll with the inscription in black capitals: *ΠΝ(ΕΥΜ)Α Κ(ΥΠΙΟ)Υ Ε/Τ ΕΜΕ / ΟΥ ΕΙΝΕ/ΚΕΝ ΕΧΠΙ/σέ μας* (*Spirit of the Lord God is upon me Because the Lord has anointed me*) (Isaiah 61:1). His white, embroidered chiton with vertical gold clavus is girdled round the waist with a broad red sash: the left leg is bared up to mid-thigh. The ochre himation with gold striations covers the shoulder, arm and leg on the right side, leaving most of the chiton exposed.

The wide-backed throne is painted in warm ochre with gold striations, while the woodcarved decoration is shown in monochromy. On its base are two small pillars with lion-head ornaments and low on its back small, expressive mask-motifs, most skilfully drawn in profile. The pillars either side of the back have foliate finials, while the turned colonnettes and reticulation on its highest part are finely worked with gold striations on the deep blue ground. The Virgin sits on two gold-embroidered cushions, one red with gold tassels each side and the other greenish blue. Above the throne, on either side, is an angel in bust, with the hands covered by a pale rose himation and the head bowed in supplication towards the Virgin (Fig. 54).

The enthroned Virgin and Child in this icon follows traditional models in





53. Angel, detail of icon Cat. no. 11.

iconography and style, and no direct Western influences are apparent. The Virgin's face, strictly frontal (Fig. 55), is oval with a long nose, a small red-lipped mouth and wide open eyes which are relatively small and round — rather than the usually large and almond-shaped; slightly asymmetrical, the left eye smaller than the right, they are framed by deep brown shadows up to the arched eyebrows, reproducing the model of the enthroned Virgin and Child by Andreas Ritzos in Patmos (Fig. 55).¹ The flesh is worked on the deep brown foundation with dark shadows near the outline, on the line of the nose, the chin and the neck, and calligraphic white highlights describing sparse parallel arcs below the eyes and small oblique lines at the centre of the forehead, on the chin, the nostrils and above the upper lip. Christ has a high forehead, neat features concentrated around the fleshy nose, full cheeks and a well-drawn right ear.

The type of the enthroned Virgin and Child is consistent with that established for the decoration of the sanctuary apse in important Byzantine churches, the most splendid example being the ninth-century representation in Hagia Sophia at Constantinople.² The most notable examples of this type in icons appear in the work of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Cretan painters, the best-known being the icon by Andreas Ritzos in Patmos³ (Fig. 56). Indeed Ritzos's icon is considered the likeliest prototype for a series of later icons in Patmos⁴ and elsewhere, such as the one in Livorno (16th century)⁵ and that by the painter Daronas in Cephalonia (late 16th-early 17th century).⁶

The painter of our icon used a different model for the Christ-Child, which differs from other portrayals in pose, attire and the open scroll.

The *contrapposto* in Christ's figure recalls his analogous pose in the arms of the Virgin when she is represented as the Source of Life in fifteenth-century icons. The icon by Angelos in the Hodegetria Monastery, Crete,⁷ is the most famous example, but it is also encountered on icons in Patmos (1510-1620), Sinai⁸ and a private collection in Holland.⁹ However, in none of these works does Christ hold an unfurled scroll.

The inscribed open scroll derives from fourteenth-century Italian painting and also occurs in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century icons of the so-called Adriatic-Byzantine School.¹⁰ More widely diffused in a series of icons in the type of the Madre della Consolazione,¹¹ it sometimes features in icons of the Virgin of Tenderness¹² and is observed occasionally in Virgins in the type of the Hodegetria, as in two icons, in Cyprus and Ravenna, in which Christ is turned sideways towards his mother;¹³ a closer example in terms of iconography, with Christ in frontal pose, is observed in an icon in a private collection in Athens,¹⁴ in which the Virgin and the Christ-Child are depicted with more 'Byzantine' characteristics, as in ours. Another related variant of the enthroned Virgin and Child is the Virgin Lambovitissa by Emmanuel Tzanes, in the Loverdos Collection in the Byzantine Museum, Athens,¹⁵ in which Christ sits on a cushion right, in the Virgin's embrace, and holds an open scroll. In this composition of Western character — the Virgin is

54. The Virgin and Christ, detail of icon Cat. no. 11.





55. Andreas Ritzos, *The Virgin enthroned*, second half of 15th century. Monastery of Hagios Ioannis o Theologos, Patmos.



56. Andreas Ritzos, *Christ enthroned*, second half of 15th century. Monastery of Hagios Ioannis o Theologos, Patmos.

in the type of the *Madre* and the throne is high, marble and with shell-shaped back — Tzanes most probably used early fifteenth-century models, as he did in other icons.¹⁶

An analogous iconographic type of the enthroned Virgin and Child, enriched with the symbols of the Evangelists, is encountered in a small icon signed by Emmanuel Tzanes, in Sinai.¹⁷

The shape, type and decoration of the Virgin's throne are particularly interesting since they combine diverse elements known in fifteenth-century Cretan icons. Its shape differs from that of the marble throne in Andreas Ritzos's icon in Patmos, yet displays affinity with the wooden throne in the partner icon of Christ¹⁸ (Fig. 56) and, even moreso, with that of the Virgin in the Hermitage,¹⁹ which is also depicted in later icons of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²⁰ Common traits in this throne are not only the shape and type but also the decoration, with lion-heads on the little pillars of the base, the profile busts on the back and the foliate finials on the side supports.

All these ornaments are present in an icon of the *Deesis* in the Viannou Monastery, Crete, by Angelos,²¹ who probably introduced this type of throne into Cretan painting.²² Our icon has an additional trait in common with the prototype of Angelos's throne: the two cushions, which only occur in the Viannou icon and its counterpart, signed by the same painter, in the Canellopoulos Collection.²³



57. *The Virgin enthroned, 1600-1610.*
Chapel of the Timios Stavros, Monastery
of Hagios Ioannis o Theologos, Patmos.

The arrangement of the upper section of the back of the throne is peculiar in our icon; an additional reticulated motif with relief colonnettes is describe in monochromy on the deep blue ground. This decoration with relief colonnettes is encountered in seventeenth-century icons, in which the base of the throne reproduces Angelos's model in the Viannou Deesis, such as in icons in Patmos,²⁴ as well as in an icon of Christ enthroned, in Ioannina.²⁵ These works most probably copy an earlier, fifteenth-century, model, which is however unknown. Apart from our icon that of the Virgin from the chapel of the Timios Stavros in Patmos is also closely related to this hypothetical model. In the Patmos icon, a work of a good, early seventeenth-century Cretan painter who, as has been ascertained, remained faithful to earlier models (Fig. 57),²⁶ the throne has the same type of lion-heads on the base and mask-motifs on the back, as well as a row of colonnettes in its upper section, which are clearly formed under a relief arcade. The assumed existence of a common model for both icons is reinforced by the presence of two different-coloured cushions, which are in any case encountered in other icons with a wooden throne.²⁷ However, minor divergences from the original model occur in the decoration of the upper section with palmettes and foliate motifs, that belong to the decoration of the corresponding part of the marble throne of the Virgin in the icon by Andreas Ritzos. This freer interpretation of the model in our icon is consistent with other traits of its style already ascertained, and

distinguish it stylistically from the known works by fifteenth-century painters.

In summary, the painter of our icon was familiar with the work of the great fifteenth-century masters Andreas Ritzos (figure of the Virgin and indeed her facial features) and Angelos (type of decoration of the wood-carved throne with two cushions; the peculiar decoration of the back of the throne with the additional lattice motif also belongs to a possible, yet unknown, work by these painters). The figure of the Christ-Child, the result of an amalgamation of iconographic details known from contemporary icons, is likewise taken from the same or an analogous hypothetical model.

Thus, although our icon evidently combines in an innovative composition elements established in fifteenth-century Cretan icons, the specific model of its iconography, which must have been crystallized in the painting of this period, has not been located. The painter of our icon, an accomplished artist faithful to the traditions of Cretan painting, adopted the model confidently while adding his own, notable personal touch.

The icon's style differs from the known works of fifteenth-century painters. The rendering of the Virgin's garments with broad folds and copious overfolds seems looser and the colours lack the lustre and limpidity characteristic of fifteenth-century icons. The artful precision in modelling the flesh bespeaks a personal idiom, particularly apparent in the rendering of the angels and the roseate hues of their himatia. The depiction of the throne is very close in character to fifteenth-century Cretan painting, especially in such details as the mask-motifs on the back, attesting not only the painter's considerable technical ability but also his creative assimilation of the teachings of Palaeologan art. An analogous penchant for decorative elements of this type has been noted in the works by Theophanis.²⁸

All these remarks enhance the personal style of the painter, who belongs to the generation of Cretan artists that followed fifteenth-century traditions in a slightly later period.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon painted on a panel with fine gesso. Outlines and details incised. In very good condition.'

The uneven writing of the inscription with the name of the painter and the date does not permit us to consider it genuine. Moreover the date of the icon (1640) is at variance with the art. The icon has not been conserved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 10, pl. 12; see good photograph-detail, Vocotopoulos 1994, pl. 201.4.
2. Th. Chatzidakis 1981, 101-103, figs 1-4.
3. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 10, 60, pl. 12; see also icons in the Benaki Museum and Moscow (Vassilaki 1994, 325ff., pls XXXII.1, 190.11 and 192.5); icon in the Hermitage (*Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 2, 330-331 - Y. Piatnitsky); icon in an Athenian collection (Baltoyanni 1986, no. 32).
4. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 87, 130-133, pl. 138 (*circa* 1607), no. 90, 132-133, pl. 142, no. 101,

- 139 pl. 150 (by Emm. Lambardos?), no. 106, 141, pl. 156, no. 116, 148, pl. 164, no. 117, 148-149, pl. 164, no. 118, 149, pl. 190.
5. N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 20, 96-97.
6. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 148, 144-145 (M. Chatzidakis).
7. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 117 (M. Borboudakis).
8. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 158, pls 75 and 204B.
9. *Important Icons* 1977, no. 15.
10. Hodegetria from Rutigliano and Monopoli, see *Icone di Puglia* 1988, nos 23, 24, p. 61 (col. photo.), 120-121; the text is a different excerpt from Saint John's gospel (7:12).
11. See examples and bibliography Chatzidakis 1974, 201-202 and footnotes; see also icons in Ravenna, *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, no. 33, 40, col. pl. on p. 43 (15th century), no. 34, 41 (early 16th century), no. 19, 36 (16th century), no. 29, 39 (16th-17th century), and in the Byzantine Museum, Athens (Baltoyanni 1994, no. 76, pls 153-154).
12. Icons in the Lichačev Collection, see Chatzidakis 1974, 202; also in icons in the Nikolenko Gallery, Paris, and in the Byzantine Museum, Athens (*Icones* 1975, no. 5 and Baltoyanni 1994, no. 76, pls 153-154).
13. Talbot-Rice 1937, no. 31, 213, fig. XIX. *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, no. 18, 35.
14. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 116, 116 (F. Kalafati). Kalafati 1994, 158ff., figs 1-3.
15. Σ.Α. 400, Xyngopoulos 1956, pl. 58.2. Vocotopoulos 1990, 108, 115, 125 notes that the date 1684 is not genuine; see also copy of it by Konstantinos Tzanes, op. cit., no. 86, 124-125, fig. 56, where other 18th-century examples are noted; see also an icon in a private collection in Holland (17th-18th century), *Important Icons* 1977, no. 16.
16. See Cat. nos 29, 30.
17. Dimensions 125 x 106 cm (1651), *Sinai* 1990, 131, fig. 97 (N. Drandakis).
18. Cf. further examples, Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 60-61, n. 2.
19. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 2, 330-331 (Y. Piatnitsky).
20. See e.g. icons in Patmos, Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, nos 86, 90, 100-101, 116, 117, 114, 118.
21. See N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 4, 19. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 157 (M. Borboudakis).
22. Andreas Ritzos is known to have acquired *anthivola* (working drawings) of Angelos's icons, see Cattapan 1973, 246-247, 251, 262; Chatzidakis 1974, 175.
23. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 5, 19-22.
24. See examples Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 86 130, pl. 139 (1607), no. 90, 132, pl. 142 (1600-1610), no. 100, 148, pl. 151 (by Emm. Lambardos?), no. 106, 141, pl. 156 (1610-1630), no. 117, 148, pl. 164 (1620-1630), no. 114, 147-148, pl. 165 (1628).
25. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 153, 150 (17th century) (D. Triantaphyllopoulos).
26. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 90, 132, pl. 142.
27. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, nos 90, 100, 114 as well as the icon in Ioannina, see above n. 25.
28. Chatzidakis 1986, 77-78, figs 12-15. For the origin of mask-motifs (*mascherone*) from a Renaissance repertoire see Constantoudaki-Kitromilides 1991, 277ff., pl. 136α-η.

12

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3724

37.3 x 25.8 x 2 cm

Theophanis, *circa* 1546

‘Christ, tall and slender, enters left, extending his right hand in blessing towards Lazarus. His disciples form a pyramid behind him, apparently emerging from a cave in a contorted rock. Before Christ are Lazarus’s sisters, Mary prostrate and Martha kneeling. Right, Lazarus “bound hand and foot with graveclothes” (John 11:44), comes forth from the hewn doorway of the cave that was his tomb; in front of him bows an unbearded servant, holding the two ends of the winding sheet, while beside him another servant, bent over, puts down the gravestone. Between and behind the two rocks, which cross at the centre of the icon, the Jews form a group that extends as far as Bethany, the town denoted by the corner of a low wall. The Jew in front covers his mouth with one hand — a sign that “there is a stench” (John 11:39) —, while pointing in amazement with the other at the miracle enacted before his eyes; the aged Jew next to him makes the same gesture. On the gold ground in red capitals is the badly erased inscription: *Η ΕΓΕΡΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΛΑΖΑΡΟΥ* (*The Raising of Lazarus*).

In terms of iconography the icon is identified with Athonite representations of the Cretan School. The only difference from the Raising of Lazarus in the Lavra Monastery (1535) is that there the group of Jews does not move towards the right gateway of Bethany but towards a second gateway, left — a negligible detail. The only variation in the Raising of Lazarus in the Hagios Pavlos Monastery (chapel of Hagios Georgios, 1555) is that there Lazarus bends his head, as he does in the Pantanassa.

... I believe that the original source of this composition should be sought in Palaeologan tradition, as manifest in the wall-paintings of the Perivleptos (14th century) and the Pantanassa (first half of 15th century) at Mystras. In the sixteenth century the complex composition is curtailed to its main elements, the secondary scenes are limited and there is an avoidance of excess detail. The principal elements, which again occur at Mystras, are these: Christ and the women are identical in the Perivleptos. In the Pantanassa the disciples emerge from a cleft in the rock, just as in all the Cretan wall-paintings on Mount Athos and in our icon, except that at Mystras a gate and battlement have been built at this opening. The servant, characteristically bowed in front of Lazarus to loosen the bands of the winding





59. *The Raising of Lazarus, two-register icon, second half of 15th century, detail. Monastery of Hagios Ioannis o Theologos, Patmos.*

sheet, is in the same pose — except that he does not turn his head — and relationship to Lazarus; however, instead of holding the bands he lifts up the stone with another servant. The man holding the stone in our composition, with one arm above and the other under it, occurs in exactly the same pose and position in the *Perivleptos*. The Jew covering his nose stood next to the corpse in earlier Byzantine compositions, with one hand over his nose and the other holding a band of the cerements: he is in this position in the *Pantanassa*, but has let go of the band in order to extend his hand towards Christ; by the sixteenth century this figure has passed to the other side of the rock and heads the group of Jews; in our icon he is a young man; in the Hagios Pavlos Monastery he is old, like the other Jews. Lastly, the Jews' astonishment is registered in the same way in the *Perivleptos* too. All these features point to the close affinity between sixteenth-century Cretan iconography and fourteenth- to fifteenth-century Palaeologan.

... The colouring of the icon is particularly interesting; there is an evident desire for unity, though this is not so successfully achieved as in the "Entry into Jerusalem" (Cat. no. 8). The foreground is green; Christ's himation is green too, slightly more bluish in tone; behind him Peter's chlamys is ochre with reddish shading, while that of the other elderly disciple is light green; of the women, the garment of the prostrate one is pale ochre with roseate shading and of the kneeling one pure green; the servant beside her, holding the bands, is clad in red (bright cinnabar) with a greenish band on the neck, while the other, holding the stone, is in light ochre with the same band on the neck; in the group of Jews red cinnabar dominates, combined with a little green; the two rocks are deep ochre with brown shadows and white highlights; the wall of Bethany is grey-green; the ground is gold, the mouth of the caves and the opening of the gateway are black.

The main colours of the icon are ochre, green and bright red, in harmonious synthesis: the warm ochre used for the ground combines well with the wheaten faces and the golden sky,

creating a uniform mellow impression, in which the red and green nevertheless retain their autonomy.

...The modelling of the flesh has that same softness observed in the "Entry into Jerusalem"; the white highlights are even fewer here; the drapery is more elaborate and seems to have been arranged to achieve a more natural rendering of the body; even so there is a certain stiffness, particularly on Christ, whereas the treatment of the garments of other figures, primarily Peter, is freer. ...Our remarks on the rendering of space in the "Entry into Jerusalem" are equally applicable to the Raising of Lazarus; those elements that could denote the third dimension — such as the two groups developed in depth, the two rocky mountains that cross, the figures behind the rocks and the perspective of the wall — clearly preserve their symbolic value, that is they reveal that the action takes place at different levels, yet without any special effect to give the illusion of space. ...The composition is sedulously structured. The central axis is emphasized by the angle of the wall, while the two vertical figures of Christ and Lazarus balance each other at the sides, as do the two high mountains which converge symmetrically. Cold, static symmetry has been avoided by simple means and the composition has a distinct cadence, full of spirituality.

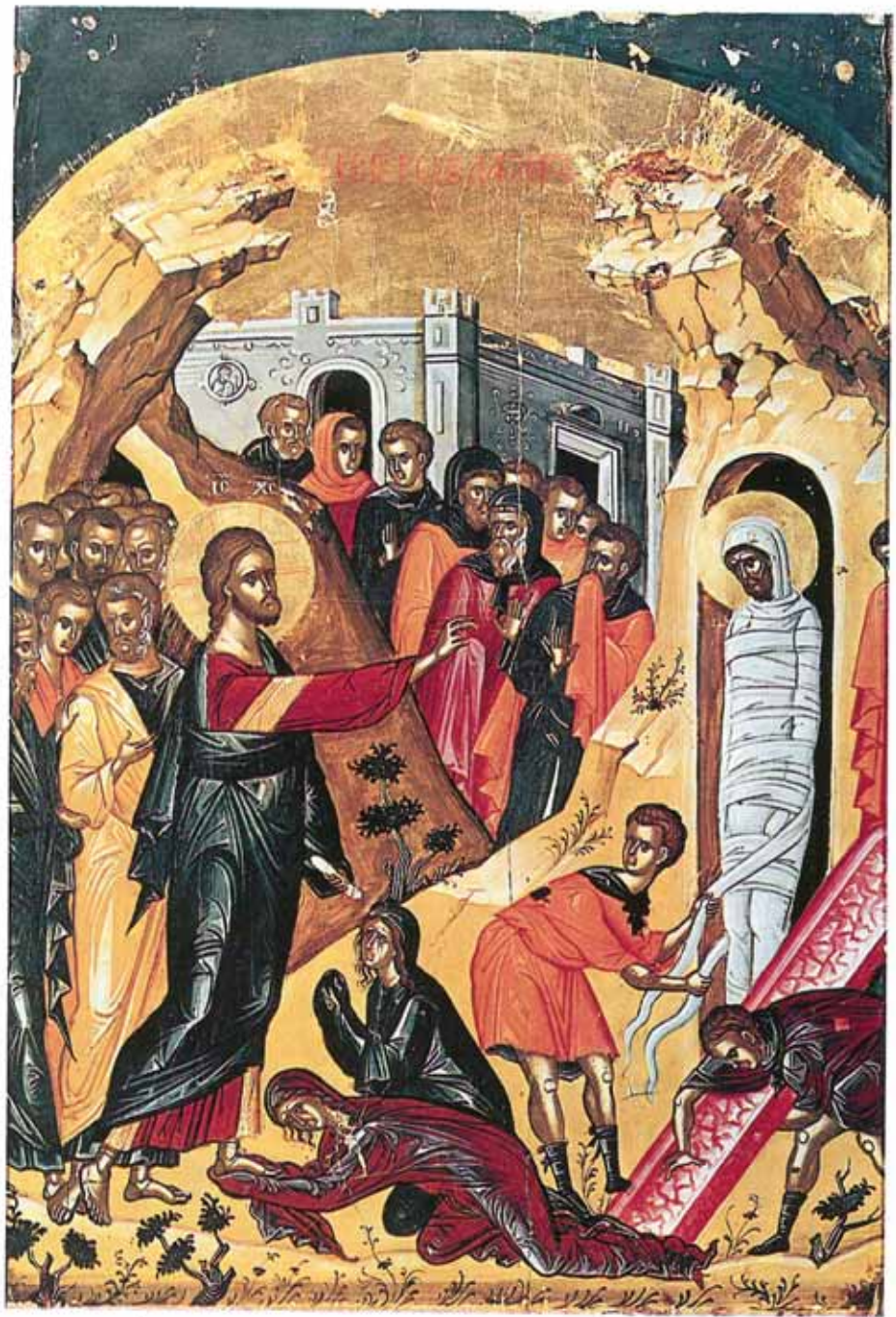
... The Raising of Lazarus is distinguished by the economy in its iconography, the compactness of its composition with its calm, rhythmical movement, its exquisite coloration.

... From these observations on iconography and form we can conclude that the Raising of Lazarus is related iconographically to the 'Cretan' painters of the first half of the sixteenth century, but is closer stylistically to monuments of the late fifteenth or the early sixteenth century, products of Veneto-Cretan workshops. Consequently this notable icon can be dated in the first half of the sixteenth century and attributed to a leading Cretan workshop.
Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.

The icon has an immediately preceding iconographic parallel in the Cretan two-register icon in Patmos, of the second half of the fifteenth century, which comprises the Entry into Jerusalem and the Raising of Lazarus (Fig. 59).¹ There are some minor variations: the group of Jews in front of the walls is smaller, as is the group of disciples on the left, Mary Magdalene's maphorion is deep red, the walls have only one gate, the landscape is bare with sparse vegetation and no trees. The representation of the Raising of Lazarus on the bema door of the Gouvernetou Monastery in Crete, in which the wall is developed and has a second gate, probably dates to the same period.²

These icons are not the only early examples of the Cretan iconography of the Raising of Lazarus. It is also encountered in a late fifteenth-century icon in the Loverdos Collection, with the forged signature and date, Ioannis Kyprios (1587),³ and on an unpublished icon of around 1500, in a private collection in Athens. Noteworthy too is the extremely elegant rendering of the subject on an icon in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, of the second half of the fifteenth century, in which the Cretan iconography is enriched with additional figures in engaging poses, within a blossoming landscape.⁴

Our icon differs in style from the works cited. After its recent conservation the

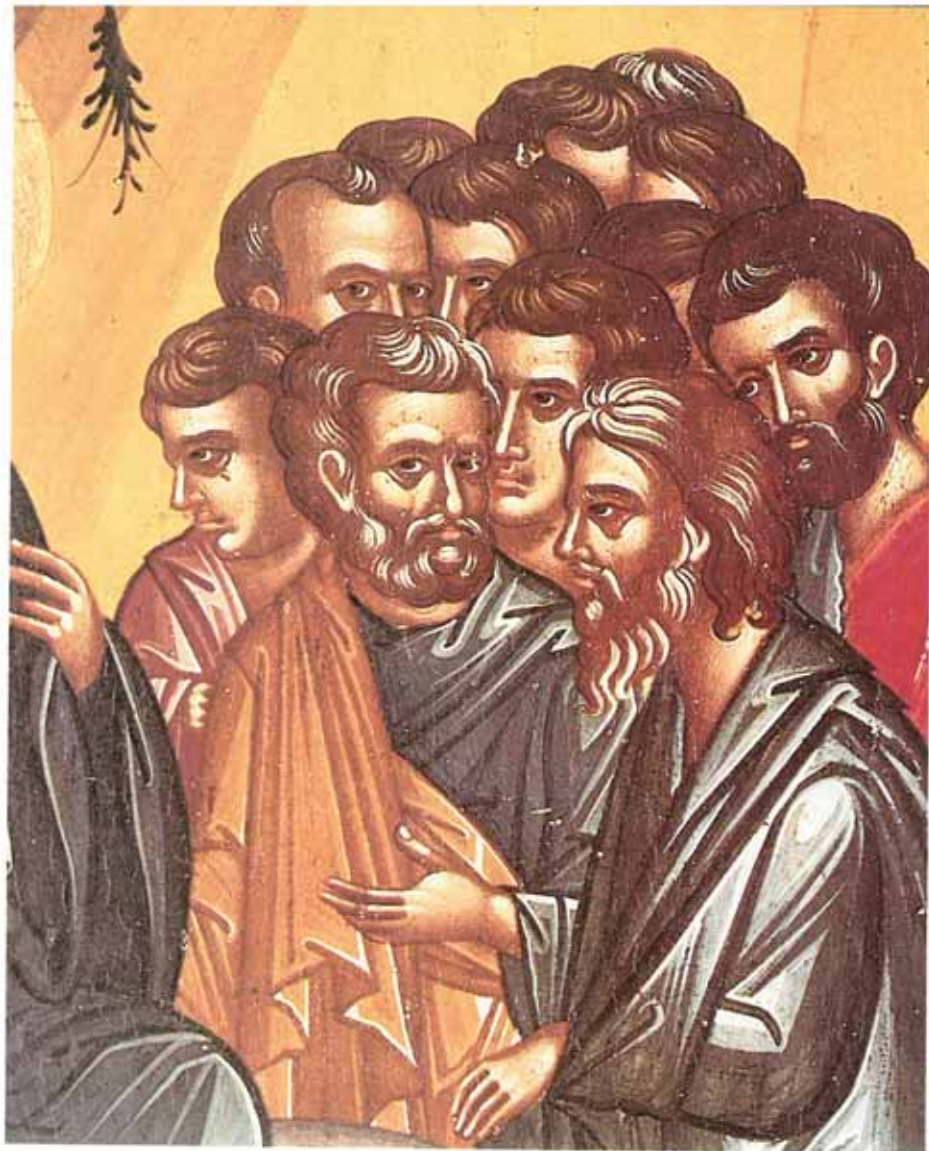


60. Theophanis, *The Raising of Lazarus*, 1546. Monastery of Stavronikita.

61. Theophanis, *The Raising of Lazarus*, Cat. no. 12, detail.

colours and drawing can be better appraised, allowing us to reach definite conclusions on the identity of its painter. The more restrained poses, the more compact modelling and the simpler rendering of the slopes of the rocks point to a slightly later date, in the sixteenth century, and impose comparisons with the work of Theophanis. The Cretan painter repeats the fifteenth-century model, condensing the groups which constitute solid forms between the two pyramidal, prismatic mountains that rise and enclose the composition, in the wall-paintings in Hagios





62. Theophanis, *The Entry into Jerusalem*, 1546, detail. Monastery of Stavronikita.

Nikolaos Anapafsas, the Lavra Monastery and the Monastery of Stavronikita, as well as in the icons of the Dodecaorton in the last two Athonite monasteries.⁵ However, it is the icon from the Dodecaorton in the Monastery of Stavronikita (Fig. 60) which bears a unique stylistic resemblance to ours. Comparison with the Athonite icon⁶ leaves no doubt that the same *anthivolon* was used for both works and that they were executed by the same painter (Figs 60, 61). The flawless, firm and lively drawing, the confident handling of the pigment, the faces with the same features and anxious expressions, the small planes of the flesh with the few white highlights, as well as the proportions of the body, the slender figure of the advancing Christ, and the close-packed groups of disciples and Jews, display a remarkable affinity to the icon in the Monastery of Stavronikita; even the painted arch at the top of the icon is common: it is the same shape, though of different colour, thus confirming that our icon was also part of the Dodecaorton from the epistyle of an iconostasis. The icon's attribution to Theophanis is further affirmed by its striking similarity to another Dodecaorton icon, from the epistyle in the Lavra Monastery, the *Entry into Jerusalem*, as is easily ascertained from comparison with a colour photograph (Figs 62, 63).⁷ In this icon the group of disciples following Christ in both scenes includes three figures with like features: Andrew, in profile with long white beard, converses with Peter, who turns his head behind, and

63. Theophanis, *The Raising of Lazarus*, Cat. no. 12, detail.



between them stands a young unbearded apostle.⁸ The discrepancies are minimal and due to the simpler character of the composition in our icon.

We know that Theophanis painted the Dodecaorton on the epistyle of the iconostasis in the Lavra Monastery, the Stavronikita Monastery and the Iviron Monastery. From the last the Raising of Lazarus and the rest of the first six scenes have not been located.⁹ However, here too there are obvious similarities with the figure of Peter and even with groups of apostles from other surviving scenes, such as the Denial of Peter, the Last Supper and the Washing of Feet,¹⁰ as well as differences in the proportions of the bodies, which are more attenuated in our icon and the Stavronikita icons. E. Tsigaridas compares the epistyle of the Iviron Monastery with the wall-paintings in Hagios Nikolaos Anapafsas (1527) and the icons in the Monastery of Stavronikita (1546), and concludes that the first is later than the last.¹¹ The dating of our icon, as well as its inclusion in Theophanis's *oeuvre*, could be based on comparison with the above known epistyles. In iconography and style our icon is certainly more closely related to that in the Monastery of Stavronikita (wall-paintings in the katholikon, 1546). Indeed, the similarities are so significant that they dictate its dating in the same period and within a very short interval. At the same time, certain stylistic similarities with the epistyle of the Iviron Monastery, and especially with that of the Lavra Monastery (wall-paintings in the katholikon, 1535), suggest that the painter had not yet moved away from his earlier models.

To conclude, I believe that no objections can be raised to the attribution of our icon to Theophanis and to its dating *circa* 1546. Just one question arises, however, concerning its possible provenance and the fate of the other icons of the epistyle to which it originally belonged. The dimensions of our icon are of no help in this respect, since the work is much smaller than those on the other known epistyles in the Lavra Monastery 64 x 46 cm, in Stavronikita 54 x 37 x 2.5 cm, and in Iviron 45-46 cm high.¹² If the church from which it comes was on Mount Athos, a valid supposition since Theophanis was living there during those years (1535-1552) and quite possibly participated in the decoration of other churches,¹³ we can perhaps hope that it will be located some day, as well as the other icons of its iconostasis.

Note An iconographic type like that of Patmos can be seen on an icon in the catalogue of the exhibition of icons held at Krems, Austria, with the mistaken indication that it comes from the Greek Institute in Venice and is a work of Benediktos Emborios.¹⁴ However, the inventory number and the dimensions of the icon by Benediktos Emborios are different, although it follows the type of our icon with the painter's characteristic style.¹⁵ The icon exhibited at Krems, work of a proficient Cretan painter and in no way related to Emborios's icon, can be dated to the first half of the sixteenth century. Last, this model is repeated in icons produced in Greek mainland workshops during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁶

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon on a panel of hard wood, without overpainting; deep crack from bottom left to about the middle of the icon. Light crackling on the painted surface.' 1996: Preserved in excellent condition. Fully conserved by St. Stasinopoulos in the Benaki Museum Laboratory, July 1995.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, 312, fig. 337 (the caption to fig. 337 erroneously states that the icon is in the Byzantine Museum, Athens. In the colour plate the red arched frame at the top of the icon has been cut off). Chatzidakis 1986, 65.

NOTES

1. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 25, 76, 77, pl. 23. See also the Raising of Lazarus in the 15th-century icon with the 'Rejoice highly favoured one' in the Byzantine Museum, Chatzidakis 1986, 65, fig. 1.
2. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 136, 492 (M. Andrianakis). Andrianakis 1986, 48-50; dated to the 16th century.
3. Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1936, no. 576, 79. Xyngopoulos 1936, pl. 42.1.
4. *Byzantine Art - European Art* 1964, no. 181 with previous bibliography (45 x 32 cm).
5. Cf. observations in Chatzidakis 1969-70, 324, figs 9, 38, 73, and Chatzidakis 1986, 65, fig. 88. See wall-painting in the Lavra Monastery, in Millet 1927, pl. 124.1. For the painter see Chatzidakis 1969-70, Chatzidakis 1986, 35-39 and Chatzidakis 1997.
6. *Stavronikita* 1974, no. 10, 78, fig. 20 (A. Karakatsani), dimensions 54 x 37 x 2.5 cm.
7. Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, fig. 330 (detail), 331.
8. See detail, Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, fig. 330; these figures are repeated in all the icons of this type.
9. Tsigaridas 1992, 185-207. From the epistyle of the Protaton (1542) only the icons of the Great Deesis have survived, Chatzidakis 1969-70, 326-327.
10. Tsigaridas 1992, fig. 28, 22-24.
11. Tsigaridas 1992, 201.
12. Tsigaridas 1992, 185, n. 1
13. 1535 Lavra; 1542 Protaton; 1540 Koutloumousiou; 1546 Stavronikita; 1552 Meteora, Metamorphosis (Chatzidakis 1969-70, 322, 327, 339ff.).
14. *Ikonen, Krems* 1993, no. 32, pl. 18, 228 (G. Lechner); mentioned as inv. no. 41 and dimensions 55 x 36 cm.
15. Chatzidakis 1962, inv. no. 209 (60 x 47.8 cm).
16. *Icones suisses* 1968, nos 36 and 37.

13

SAINT MATTHEW

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3735

50.7 x 41.2 x 0.6 cm

Double-sided icon, side A (see Cat. no. 33)

Mid-16th century

The representation was revealed on the back of the icon of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple,¹ during its conservation by Stergios Stasinopoulos, in the Benaki Museum laboratory in 1976.

The evangelist Matthew is portrayed to the waist, his face and body in three-quarter pose left. He has a long white beard, fleshy red lips and a long nose modelled with dark brown brushstrokes, its tip stressed by a fine red line. The upper part of the icon, the saint's left eye and cheek are destroyed. An inscription in white capitals on the blue ground: *Ο ΑΓ(ΙΟ)C ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟC*.

Matthew is clad in a chiton in pale shades of brownish rose decorated by a broad vertical band with ochre highlights imitating gold striations. The dark green himation covers the left shoulder and arm, but not the left part of the chiton, and is swathed around the right forearm. The saint blesses with his free right hand, bent in front of the chest with the palm outwards and the thumb joined to the little finger, forming a large curve. In his left hand he holds from below an open gospel book with the inscription: *ΒΙΒΛΟC / ΓΕΝΕCΕ/ΩC Ι(ΗCΟ)Υ / Χ(ΙCΤΟ)Υ ΥΙΟΥ... /.../ ΑΒΡΑ/ΑΜ. ΑΒ/ΡΑΑΝ / ΕΓΕΝ/.../*, which corresponds to the opening verses of his Gospel (*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of / David, the son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac*). The lower section of the icon, at the height of the hand, is badly damaged but it is surmised from the surviving part of the representation that his left hand was covered by the himation. The white pages of the gospel book, with fine capital letters, bow at the sides, their edges forming a solid red strip; a metal clasp on the binding is visible top right. The ground of the icon is deep blue and the saint's halo gold.

It is deduced from the existing representation that the original panel of the icon

64. Saint Matthew, art of Theophanis, mid-16th century, Cat. no. 13.

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ΕΓΓΕΝ





65. Christ Pantocrator, 14th century.
Church of Saint George of the Greeks,
Venice.

has been cut on all four sides. The painting extends to the very edges of the wood, without a painted border, while the halo is cut off at the top and the last letter of the legend with saint's name is likewise cut at the left side. However, the original icon was not much bigger and it can be assumed that the evangelist was portrayed to the waist from the outset.

The waist-length depiction of the evangelist Matthew indicates that the icon belongs to the group of icons of the apostles (*Apostolika*) of the Great Deesis. The most famous series of such icons from the Palaeologan era are preserved in the Chilandari Monastery and in Cyprus (Chrysaliniotissa);² of the splendid Postbyzantine examples the icons by Theophanis in the Monastery of Stavronikita (circa 1546) and the Protaton (1542), and by Euphrosynos (1542) in the Dionysiou Monastery³ are cited. There are icons of the apostles from the Great Deesis in the church of the Taxiarchis at Kampiello, Corfu, most probably works by Michael Damaskenos, which are copied in the unpublished, as far as I know, *Apostolika* in the Antivouniotissa and the Hodegetria church on that island.⁴ An icon with busts of the twelve apostles, in the Canellopoulos Collection, most probably belonging to

the circle of Michael Damaskenos (Fig. 139), is related to these representations.⁵ The iconographic type followed in portrayals of Matthew varies, whereas his facial features remain constant: short white hair and long, thick white beard, with differences in the width of the face and beard.⁶ In the large Palaeologan icon in Ochrid the saint is shown standing, turned sideways in three-quarter pose and holding a half-open gospel book;⁷ the same iconographic type was used in the icons of the apostles in Chilandari (14th century) and in the Hagios Neophytos Monastery, Paphos (1544), where the evangelist is depicted to the waist.⁸ Matthew follows a different iconographic type in our icon. The head is in three-quarter pose, as in the Ochrid icon, yet the body is frontal. The arrangement of the drapery, the way in which he holds the gospel book and the gesture of blessing all correspond to this frontal pose, which does not occur in earlier icons of the evangelist. On the contrary, it is encountered in the established iconography of Christ Pantocrator frontal. The examples are numerous and begin from the twelfth century with the icons in Hagios Neophytos and the Panagia Moutoullas in Cyprus;⁹ in the fifteenth century it was used by the great painters Angelos and Andreas Ritzos in icons of the enthroned Pantocrator, as well as in a splendid icon from their circle, in a private collection in Athens, recently published by Maria Constantoudaki; there Christ is portrayed in bust.¹⁰ The model was copied by Theophanis in the icon in the Lavra Monastery and by Michael Damaskenos in an icon in the Metropolitikon Megaron, Corfu.¹¹

There is, however, an important difference in our icon: the himation is swathed around the right forearm, leaving only the hand in blessing exposed, while in all the above examples the arm is bare. This iconography follows a different model, established in another series of Byzantine and Cretan icons, in which Christ blesses with the palm inwards. We shall call these two types (A) and (B). To the best of my knowledge the earliest example of type (B) is the icon of Christ Pantocrator on the iconostasis of the church of Saint George of the Greeks, in Venice (Fig. 65),¹² which seems to have been the model for the icon by Thomas Bathas at Barletta near Bari,¹³ that in the Spelaiotissa, Corfu,¹⁴ as well as for the icon by Ioannis Permeniatis, in Kastoria,¹⁵ and of Christ in Ioannina, of the same period.¹⁶ Vocotopoulos has moreover noted that this iconographic type is also known in Athonite wall-paintings, of the fourteenth-fifteenth century in the Chilandari Monastery and later in the Monastery of Stavronikita, work of Theophanis, and the Dionysiou Monastery (1557).¹⁷ However a variant of type (B) that is closer to our icon was followed in sixteenth-century Cypriot icons, such as that by Ioseph Chouris in the katholikon of the Hagios Neophytos Monastery, Paphos, dated 1544 (Fig. 66),¹⁸ and the contemporary icon in the Nicosia Museum,¹⁹ in which Christ blesses with the palm outwards and the little and the fourth finger joined to the thumb.

It is a fact that the hand covered by the himation and blessing is more frequently encountered in monumental painting, in representations of the Pantocrator in the dome or the sanctuary conch in churches of the Byzantine period, such as Daphni,



66. *Joseph Chouris, Christ Pantocrator, 1544. Monastery of Hagios Neophytos, Paphos, Cyprus.*

and Cefalù and Monreale in Sicily, to mention only the most important examples. Theophanis used the same model in the dome of the katholikon of the Monastery of Stavronikita, the Monastery of the Metamorphosis at Meteora and the Molyvokklesia,²⁰ as did the Kontaris brothers in Epirus.²¹ The rest of the characteristic traits of the Pantocrator in the dome differ, however, since the gospel book is closed and the hand blesses with the palm inwards.

Thus the new iconography of Matthew in our icon arose from the merging of two other earlier, established types, of Saint Matthew and of Christ Pantocrator type (B), with the slight shift of the left arm and the corresponding adaptation of the drapery. It takes the hand in blessing from type (A) and the arm covered by the garment from type (B). It is pertinent to remark here that the iconography of the Pantocrator is a constant exemplar for portraying saints. From the host of relevant examples it is worth mentioning that another evangelist, Luke, in a fourteenth-century icon in Rhodes,²² cleaves faithfully to type (A) of Christ Pantocrator. Even though no contemporary icon of Matthew in the corresponding type is known, it is quite possible that the model of his frontal iconography dates from this period.

So, in our icon the evangelist Matthew is portrayed according the model of Christ (B), with a slight deviation in the manner of blessing since the saint's hand is not



67. Saint Matthew, art of Theophanis, mid-16th century, Cat. no. 13.

turned inwards but outwards, as is the case in type (A). However it differs from this in the fingers joined to the thumb, for in our icon it is the little finger whereas in the other examples it is only the fourth finger or both the fourth and the little. It seems that in our icon model (A) has been misinterpreted with regard to this detail.

From the known representations of saints in bust the closest in iconography to ours is encountered in the series of icons of the apostles from the Deesis in the Corfiote church of the Taxiarchis, which is attributed to Michael Damaskenos.²³ The evangelist Matthew is portrayed with the same distinctive features, short hair and a luxuriant, long white beard, but frontal,²⁴ while the arrangement of the himation follows type (A) of Christ Pantocrator, as in the icon in the Metropolitikon Megaron;²⁵ he holds the open gospel book from below with the right hand, which is covered by the himation as in our icon, while an additional common trait is the rendering of this open codex with the well-penned majuscule inscription. Impressive in both icons is the correct perspective of the bulky book, with greyish hues at the edges of the white pages, so that they seem to curve, and the solid red strip formed by them when closed. Analogous care in conveying the volume of a book and the curving surface of the folio is observed in earlier works, such as the



68. Theophanis, head of Saint Matthew, wall-painting, c. 1546. Monastery of Stavronikita.

icons by Angelos and Andreas Ritzos,²⁶ as well as the icon of Saint Nicholas Cat. no. 6 (Fig. 33).²⁷ The evangelist Luke from the Corfiote series follows the very same iconography.²⁸

As we have seen, our icon follows the second version of the iconography of Christ Pantocrator (type B), with the hand in blessing swathed in the himation. Despite many differences, correspondence with this type can be seen in another icon from the Taxiarchis series, in which the evangelist Mark is presented receiving the gospel book with his right forearm covered by his himation,²⁹ although his pose is different, since he is turned three-quarters. Comparison of the icons from the Great Deesis in the Taxiarchis church with our icon readily reveals the similarity in composition of common models as well as the difference in style, which is very conservative in our icon. In Vocotopoulos's opinion³⁰ the Corfu icons belong to the early work of Damaskenos (after 1571) and most probably copy early models established in fifteenth-century Cretan painting, as is the case with other works by



69. Head of Saint Matthew, detail of icon Cat. no. 13.

him in this period.³¹ Consequently the similarities noted are due to the use of a common conservative model, while the painter of our icon does not seem to have been influenced by the art of the great Cretan master.³²

The style of our icon is closer to the work of conservative Cretan painters who, like Theophanis, were working in mainland Greece. Its iconography was not adopted in the known depictions of the apostles in the series of the Great Deesis in the Protaton, the Lavra Monastery and the Monastery of Stavronikita.³³ Even so comparison with a wall-painting by Theophanis in the Monastery of Stavronikita,³⁴ in which Matthew (Figs 68, 69) is depicted full-bodied, seated, turned in three-quarter pose and holding an open scroll, while the gospel book rests on the lectern beside him, is useful. The distinctive traits as well as the coloration of these representations correspond: light purple chiton with broad, vertical clavus and green himation. A stylistic analogy is apparent in the modelling of the facial features with firm brushstrokes in a few tones, the long fleshy nose and the white beard, as well as in the correct perspective rendering of the open codex which rests

on the lectern,³⁵ while the perspective rendering of the seemingly wafting unfurled scroll is a hallmark of Theophanis's art, like the scrolls held by the prophets in the same monument.³⁶

Matthew's imposing stature in our icon, the geometric development of the drapery, the firm brushstrokes and the limited gradations of colour recall figures of standing saints with corresponding three-quarter turn of the body, in the refectory and the chapel of the Prodomos in the Monastery of Stavronikita,³⁷ as well as in the refectory of the Lavra Monastery.³⁸ In contrast, the treatment of the long white beard brings to mind earlier works by Theophanis in Hagios Nikolaos Anapafsas.³⁹ The deep blue ground that imparts the texture of a wall-painting is not unknown in earlier icons. It could be due to the lack of gold but in no way affects the quality of the painting. In a fine fifteenth-century icon in Corfu the scene of the Crucifixion is painted on an identical ground with the inscriptions in white letters,⁴⁰ while in another large icon — perhaps a prothesis door — probably of the same period, Saint Anthony is depicted full-bodied and frontal against a deep blue ground.⁴¹ A deep blue and red ground is also encountered in a fourteenth-century icon of Saint Anthony in the Benaki Museum,⁴² as well as in other icons with single saints in bust, from the sixteenth century and later.⁴³

It thus seems that the Velimezis icon can be assigned to a conservative, mid-sixteenth-century workshop possibly associated with the work of Theophanis.

As stated at the beginning, the icon was intended to be placed along with others on the iconostasis of a church. This view is reinforced by the representation on the back, with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Cat. no. 33) painted beneath an arch.⁴⁴ Presumably in a secondary use, a century later, the icon was again placed on the epistyle of an iconostasis — perhaps of the same church — that now included the Dodecaorton. It was probably then that the original wooden panel was cut to accommodate the icon to the new iconostasis.

CONDITION During conservation by St. Stasinopoulos in the Benaki Museum, 1975, the painted surface of the icon was removed and transferred to a new panel. Saint Matthew was cleaned. The signature of Damaskenos on the other face of the icon (Cat. no. 33) was shown to be forged. There is considerable damage to the saint's face and head as well as lower down at the level of the left hand and in the left bottom corner. See Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. See Cat. no. 33.
2. *Chilandar* 1978, fig. 81. *Icons from Cyprus* 1976, nos 23-25, pp. 68-73. Papageorgiou 1991, 66-69, figs 44-46.
3. See Chatzidakis 1964-65, 380-387. Chatzidakis 1973, cols 330, 332, 337, 339, 338, 340 with previous bibliography; see also Chatzidakis 1956, 273-291, pl. KΓ' 2, KΔ' 2, KE' 2, KZ' 2. Chatzidakis 1969-70, 325-327, figs 63-67.
4. Vocotopoulos 1990, 54-56, nos 29-38. Vocotopoulos 1985, 395.
5. Having ascertained similarities with works by Damaskenos, I had previously dated this icon earlier, to the early 16th century, Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 15; see Vocotopoulos 1990, 56, n.

13. The earlier, late 15th-century, icon of the evangelist John, in the Benaki Museum, could belong to a series of icons of the apostles (*Apostolika*), *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1993, no. 52 - M. Vassilaki.
6. See also *Hermeneia* 1909, 150 'an old man with long beard'.
7. Djurić 1961, no. 7.
8. *Chilandar* 1978, fig. 81. *Icons from Cyprus*, 1976, no. 46, 118-119.
9. See collected bibliography in Chatzidakis 1995, 487ff., where an icon with the same iconography, from Sinai, is presented, op. cit., fig. 3.
10. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides 1994, 253ff., pl. A', with numerous other examples of the type and bibliography.
11. Chatzidakis 1969-70, fig. 45. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 19, 42, fig. 21. See also an icon in the Loverdos Collection (Xyngopoulos 1956, pl. 39.2).
12. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 1, 4-6, pl. I.
13. Chatzidakis 1977b, 244ff. *Icone di Puglia* 1988, no. 66, 95, col. photo. on 153-154, with previous bibliography.
14. Vocotopoulos 1990, 68-69 with numerous examples and previous bibliography, figs 158-159.
15. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 179, 530-531 (E. Tsigaridas). See also N. Chatzidakis 1992, 735-739 and N. Chatzidakis 1993, 14, fig. 5 and 134-144 with bibliography.
16. Acheimastou-Potamianou 1994, 8, fig. 13. The icon is ascribed along with others to a painter in Ioannina who followed Cretan models.
17. Vocotopoulos 1990, 68-69. Chatzidakis 1986, fig. 2.
18. *Icons from Cyprus* 1976, no. 37, 100. Papageorgiou 1991, 163-164, fig. 112.
19. *Byzantine Museum, Nicosia* 1983, no. 114, fig. 23.
20. Chatzidakis 1986, fig. 20. Chatzidakis 1969-70, figs 86, 108.
21. Metamorphosis church, Veltsista, see Stavropoulou-Makri 1989, figs 42a, 43a.
22. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 82, 79-82 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou).
23. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 33, fig. 143.
24. As in the bust of the same apostle in an icon in the Canellopoulos Collection, see Vocotopoulos 1990, 54-56. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 15.
25. See above n. 11.
26. See above n. 10.
27. See also above 92ff., Fig. 33.
28. Vocotopoulos 1985, 396, fig. 13; in a private collection in America.
29. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 34, fig. 37.
30. Vocotopoulos 1985, 398-399.
31. See also Cat. nos 6, 10, 18.
32. It is perhaps worth noting that the dimensions of the icons in the Taxiarchis are similar to those of our icon, see Vocotopoulos 1990, nos 31-37 (51.2-52 x 43-44.5 cm).
33. No icon of Matthew has survived from this series, as far as I know. For the painter see Cat. no. 12, n. 5.
34. Chatzidakis 1986, fig. 33.
35. See also the gospel book held by Luke, Chatzidakis 1986, figs 33, 36.
36. Chatzidakis 1986, figs 26-32, see also fig. 34.
37. Chatzidakis 1986, figs 206, 207, 209, and especially fig. 221: Saints Andrew, Peter and Paul.
38. Chatzidakis 1969-70, fig. 29.
39. Chatzidakis 1969-70, fig. 12: Saint Anthony; see also other frontal figures in the Molyvokklesia and the refectory of the Lavra Monastery, op. cit., figs 25-28.
40. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 5, 11-13, figs 7, 78-80.
41. Chatzidakis 1974, fig. 20.
42. *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1994, no. 45, 224 (A. Drandaki).
43. See Cat. no. 22, with other examples.
44. See Cat. no. 33, 290-292, fig. 173.

70. The Twenty-four Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn, early 16th century, Cat. no. 14.



14

THE TWENTY-FOUR STANZAS OF THE AKATHISTOS HYMN

41 x 62.5 x 1.5 cm

Early 16th century

The Akathistos Hymn, one of the outstanding and most popular works in Byzantine hymnography, is chanted in full during the service of the Chairetismoi (Salutations to the Virgin) on the fifth Friday of Lent. A poetical composition, classed among the encomiastic hymns known as *kontakia*, the Akathistos lauds the graces of the Virgin and is most probably attributed to the sixth-century hymnographer Romanos Melodos.¹ It comprises twenty-four stanzas (*oikoi*) forming an acrostic with the twenty-four letters of the Greek alphabet. The first twelve stanzas are narrative in character, referring to events from the Annunciation to the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. The last twelve are glorifications of Christ and the Virgin, with symbolic references to dogma, the Trinity and the mystery of the Incarnation. The hymn's name (Akathistos means literally 'not sitting') is associated with the siege of Constantinople by the Avars in 626, when, according to the literary sources, the citizens stood chanting to the

Virgin, beseeching her to intervene and protect the capital of Byzantium from its foes.²

The hymn is developed on the icon's rectangular surface in four registers of six scenes, painted on a uniform gold ground that forms a fine, narrow, almost square border around each (10.5 x 10.5 cm) (Figs 70-71). Reading begins top left, where the first stanza (A) is illustrated, and continues in horizontal arrangement to the final stanza (Ω) bottom right.

The cycle begins with three scenes of the Annunciation, which illustrate the first three stanzas. The pose and movement of the Virgin and the Archangel are different in each, as are the garments.³

In the first stanza (A): *'A leading angel was sent from heaven to say to the Virgin: "Hail" ...'* (Fig. 72), the archangel approaches in lively movement with torsion of his body, while the Virgin, seated on a low throne, expresses surprise with her two hands raised. This iconographic type appears in the sixteenth century, in the codex illuminated by Georgios Klontzas, in the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice.⁴

In the second stanza (B): *'The holy lady, seeing herself to be chaste, spoke boldly to Gabriel ...'* and the third (Γ): *'The Virgin, yearning to grasp a knowledge unknowable ...'* (Figs 72, 73), the classical elegance in the pose of the two standing figures, the Angel and the Virgin Mary, facing one another and conversing in front of a roseate wall, brings to mind their depictions in fifteenth-century Cretan icons, by Nikolaos Ritzos in Sarajevo, from the workshop of Andreas Ritzos with the Virgin and Angels, in the Benaki Museum, in an icon in Recklinghausen and one by the painter Stylianos (Fig. 80).⁵

The fourth stanza (Δ): *'Then the power of the All-highest overshadowed her, planning the conception ...'*, is rendered with the enthroned Virgin before a red curtain drawn back by four angels, as established mainly in the Postbyzantine period.⁶

The Visitation, with the central group of two slender, dark-clad female figures, the Virgin and Elizabeth, in embrace, is a faithful rendering of stanza V (Ε): *'The Virgin, holding God in her womb, hastened to Elizabeth ...'*, with a theme already known from the cycle of the Dodecaorton.⁷ The sixth stanza (Ζ): *'Joseph, a prudent man, was troubled within himself by a tumult of cares and doubts ...'* is illustrated by a scene from the apocryphal cycle of the Virgin's life. Joseph gesticulates towards the Virgin who stands stationary opposite him.⁸ The next three scenes also belong to the Christological Cycle, reproducing the iconography of episodes in the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi, as known in Cretan icons from the fifteenth century onwards.⁹ The seventh stanza (Η): *'The shepherds heard the angels singing of the incarnate presence of Christ ...'* is represented by the scene of the Nativity (Fig. 74). The Virgin sits on the ground outside the cave beside the manger. Joseph, below, also sitting, converses with two shepherds, while on high right an angel appears behind the cave and announces the Nativity to a shepherd boy sitting atop a rocky mountain. The Journey of the Magi in the next scene accurately conveys the content of stanza VIII (Θ): *'The Wise Men saw a star moving towards God, and followed its lustre ...'* (Figs 74, 75). The three Magi, on galloping steeds, point animatedly to the star leading them to the cave, outside which the Virgin with the Christ-Child in her







72. *The Annunciation, Stanzas II and III, detail of icon Cat. no. 14.*

arms sits awaiting their arrival. Stanza IX (I): *'The sons of the Chaldaeans saw ...'* refers to the Adoration of the Magi (Fig. 76). The Virgin left, on a low throne, and Joseph standing behind her, receive the three kings. The first, an old man, kneels and the two younger ones stand, while the two horses with harness appear behind them right. In the tenth stanza (K): *'The wise men became heralds, bearing the message of God ...'*, the Magi are depicted in front of a building with pyramidal roof, preparing to depart.¹⁰ The content of the eleventh stanza (Λ): *'By flashing the light of truth in Egypt you banished the darkness of error ...'* is expressed by the scene of the Flight into Egypt from the cycle of the Life of Christ (Fig. 77).¹¹ Joseph, with the infant Christ on his shoulders, walks ahead of the Virgin who rides on a donkey. Stanza XII (M): *'When Symeon was about to depart from this life of deceit ...'* is illustrated by the scene of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Fig. 77).¹²

The composition of the scenes for the second part of the Akathistos displays greater originality. For the thirteenth stanza (N): *'The Creator revealed a new creation, and showed it to us, his creatures. He made it flourish from a womb without seed ...'*¹³ the nucleus of the Ascension is adopted. The brilliant figure of Christ, in a himation with gold striations, appears within a red mandorla upheld by two angels. On the ground below apostles and hierarchs in two symmetrically arranged groups gaze up at him. Stanza XIV (Ξ): *'And let us, seeing this strange birth, estrange ourselves from the earth ...'*¹⁴ is illustrated in a manner close to the Assumption (Metastasis) of the Virgin, the difference being that the Virgin within the clouds holds the infant Christ in her arms, while on earth stand two groups of apostles and saints. In the next stanza, XV (O): *'The unbounded Word was complete among men below ...'*¹⁵ (Fig. 78) the format of the preceding scene is adapted to the new content by substituting the figure of Christ for that of the Virgin, while groups of apostles and hierarchs stand on the earth. In the sixteenth stanza (P): *'All the orders of the angels were astounded*

73. *The angel from Stanza II, detail of icon Cat. no. 14.*





74. *The Nativity and The Journey of the Magi, Stanzas VII and VIII, detail of icon Cat. no. 14.*

at the great act of the incarnation ...¹⁶ (Fig. 78), the different orders of angels are inventively presented glorifying Christ who sits resplendent in a gold himation on a throne formed from red-winged seraphim, his feet resting on the winged *rotae*. Smaller seraphim emerge from behind Christ's gold halo and all the figures appear in clouds. The representation is crowned by a small seraph with expressive face and six red wings with gold striations, appearing from a fiery, star-spangled sky surrounded by small white clouds. The seventeenth stanza (P): '*Before you, mother of God, we see wordy orators as voiceless as fish ...*'¹⁷ (Fig. 79) is illustrated with the Virgin and Child standing at the centre under a ciborium, in front of the walls of the city; flanking them left and right are orators distinguished by their peculiar hats. A scene which is a variation of the Resurrection is linked with stanza XVIII (Σ): '*He who set all things in order came to the world of his own will, wishing to save it ...*' (Fig. 79).¹⁸ Christ, turned sideways, outstretches his hand to one standing and one kneeling figure, which occupy the positions of Adam and Eve in the iconography of the Descent into Hell (Anastasis). Behind Christ stands an angel in red imperial raiment, like the prophet-kings in the border scenes on the icons in the Benaki Museum and by Nikolaos Ritzos in Sarajevo.¹⁹ The depiction used for the next stanza, (T): '*Virgin mother of God, you are the defence of virgins ...*'²⁰ follows the type of stanza XVII (P), except that the Virgin and Child are surrounded by two groups of young women. In stanza XX (Y): '*All hymns are defeated ...*'²¹ Christ is portrayed within a deep blue mandorla flanked by red seraphim. He turns right to converse with hierarchs and cantors in tall hats. The standing Virgin and Child is repeated at the centre, as the Kyriotissa, in stanza XXI (Φ): '*We see the holy Virgin as a lamp full of light ...*'²² Flanked by two angels holding a red curtain, as in stanza IV (Δ), and kneeling figures, the Mother of God stands in front of two mountains with caves.

75. *The Magi on horseback from Stanza VIII, detail of icon Cat. no. 14.*







The text of stanza XXII (X): *'The Redeemer of all mankind wished to cancel our old debts ... and having torn up the parchment he hears from them all'*²³ is faithfully illustrated with Christ at the centre, standing, frontal and holding a scroll torn in two. The buildings behind him derive from the iconography of the Doubting of Thomas,²⁴ while the male figures on the right sit and those on the left genuflect. In the twenty-third stanza (Ψ): *'We sing your giving birth ...'*²⁵ the Virgin with the Christ-Child in her arms stands beneath a ciborium and turns right towards a group of hierarchs in front of a lectern with an open book. Lastly, in stanza XXIV (Ω): *'O mother hymned by all ...'*²⁶ the Virgin appears in bust with Christ at the centre and both hands outstretched (orans), like the Vlachernitissa, within a red mandorla amidst the clouds. On the earth below two groups of hierarchs and monks stand in an attitude of intercession (deesis).

77. *The Flight into Egypt and The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Stanzas XI and XIII, detail of icon Cat. no. 14.*

The earliest examples of illustration of the Akathistos Hymn are known only from monuments of the Palaeologan era, in the late thirteenth and the fourteenth century (Olympiotissa at Elassona, the Panagia ton Chalkeon, Hagios Nikolaos Orphanos),²⁷ while the number of churches proliferated from the fifteenth century and during the period after the Fall of Constantinople, particularly in the regions of Macedonia, Central Greece, monasteries on Mount Athos (Lavra, Docheiariou), in the Peloponnese (Mystras), the islands, Crete (Valsamonero), Cyprus and even Serbia and Romania (Voronet, Moldovița, Humor).²⁸ The iconography of the scenes in these monuments displays considerable diversity; it is crystallized in the Painter's Manual by Dionysios of Fournas, in the late eighteenth century.²⁹ Illuminated manuscripts, which are only known from the second half of the fourteenth century onwards, must have played a seminal role in the diffusion of the

76. *The Adoration of the Magi, Stanza IX, detail of icon Cat. no. 14.*



78. *Christ in clouds and Christ with angels, Stanzas XVI and XVII, detail of icon Cat. no. 14.*

illustrated cycle. Significant among these are the codex in the Historical Museum, Moscow (no. 429),³⁰ produced in a Constantinopolitan scriptorium around 1370, and the codex in the Escorial Library, Madrid (cod. R.I.19),³¹ most probably from an early fifteenth-century Cretan scriptorium.

The earliest known icon is in Skopelos³² and probably dates from the first half of the fifteenth century, while other known icons date mainly from the sixteenth century and after (icons in the Iviron Monastery, in the chapel of Hagios Eustathios, and in Ioannina).³³ The illustration of the stanzas of the Akathistos in these manuscripts and icons usually surrounds a central figure of the Virgin and follows a different model from that of our icon, particularly for the second part of the Hymn. An icon of the Akathistos without the central figure of the Virgin, in which the iconographic rendering of the scenes is similar to ours, exists in the Eleousa Monastery on the Island in the lake of Ioannina.³⁴ Its careful art of miniature character could be assigned to a seventeenth-century Cretan painter. Analogous iconographic types are found in the representations of the stanzas of the Akathistos in an icon by Ioannis Kastrophylakas, painted in the seventeenth century and overpainted in 1845, in the Hodegetria Monastery, Crete, with the enthroned Virgin and Child at the centre.³⁵ An icon in the Vallianoi Collection in Cephalonia features a similar arrangement of the scenes and iconography of the twenty-four stanzas to the Cretan one.³⁶ Other icons with the stanzas of the Akathistos are known in Cephalonia, but these follow a completely different iconographic model, as in an icon by Stephanos Tzankarolas, 1700,³⁷ while a mixed iconography is encountered in an early eighteenth-century icon by Ioannis Karydis.³⁸

In the Velimezis icon, as in the icons in Ioannina and Cephalonia, which are later, the twenty-four scenes of the Akathistos Hymn constitute an independent



composition and do not surround a central representation of the Virgin. The iconography of the first part of the Hymn (I–XII) follows established models which the painter borrows from the illustrated cycles of the life of Christ or of the Virgin, from the Annunciation to the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. Greater emphasis is placed on the scenes of the Annunciation (I, II, III) and the Nativity, which includes three episodes with the Annunciation to the Shepherds (VII), the Journey (VIII) and the Adoration of the Magi (IX).

The pictorial rendering of the second part of the Hymn displays greater originality in comparison with the established iconography of the scenes of Christ or the Virgin. The poetic allusions to dogma offer scope for creating new compositions which vary from monument to monument. In our icon there is a tendency to enhance Christ or the Virgin as the central figure of the composition, frequently within a mandorla (XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XX, XXIV).

Of exceptional interest is the combination of iconographic models of different origin in each scene. Some compositions use models of fifteenth-century painting, such as the Annunciation and the Anastasis illustrating the second and the eighteenth stanza respectively (Figs 72, 73, 79).³⁹ In the scenes of the second part of the Hymn the figure of Christ within a mandorla upheld by two angels (XIII) recalls the Metastasis of Saint John the Theologian in late fifteenth-century Cretan icons, such as that in the Monastery of Stavronikita, which can be dated around 1500, and one in the Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow.⁴⁰ In other scenes the iconography is closer to sixteenth-century works with overt influences from Italian models. In the scene of the Annunciation (I) (Fig. 72) the torsion in the archangel's movement is of Western origin and is analogous to that used later by Georgios Klontzas in the manuscript in the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice.⁴¹

79. *The Virgin with orators and The Anastasis, Stanzas XVIII and XIX, detail of icon Cat. no. 14.*

80. Stylianos the priest, *The Annunciation and The Nativity*. Triptych, early 16th century, detail. Abou Adal Collection, Lebanon.



The spirited movements of the galloping horses in the Journey of the Magi (VIII) (Figs 74, 75) are encountered in the illuminated manuscript in the Escorial,⁴² while the landscape of verdant hills and trees originates from a Western model. The composition of the Adoration of the Magi follows models current in early sixteenth-century Italo-Cretan painting, as seen in icons in the Benaki Museum, the A. Tsatsos Collection and the Ekonomopoulos Collection.⁴³ For stanza IV, with the enthroned Virgin before the red *velum* held by two angels, an iconography associated with the cult of the Virgin's mantle in the West is adopted, in the type of the *Mater Misericordiae*.⁴⁴ The Nativity (VII) takes place outside the cave in a landscape of low, gently sloping, brown rocks, exactly as in the icon by the painter Stylianos in the Abou Adal Collection; in this same icon the scene of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (XII)⁴⁵ (Figs 77, 81) is also encountered, in an identical iconography, different from that established during the fifteenth century.⁴⁶ Some scenes from the second part of the cycle display distant kinship with the Cycle of the Akathistos painted by Theophanis in the refectory of the Lavra Monastery. However, the differences far outnumber the possible similarities.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, worthy of note are the affinities with established iconographic types of the Ascension in stanza XIII, the Anastasis (Descent into Hell) in stanza XVIII and the Doubting of Thomas in stanza XXII.

The excellent technique of the many-figured compositions with their diversity of poses and expressions, particularly in the tiny figures of Christ in the Presentation in the Temple (XI) and the Flight into Egypt (XII), or the figures of the little angels and the fiery seraphim in stanzas XIII, XV, XIX, bespeak an accomplished miniaturist. The pastel colours, purple, rose, pale green-blue, ochre and light brown alternate with vivid red, and as in fifteenth-century Cretan icons the delicate colour

combinations on the small folds of the garments are exquisite: purple-red with blue-white and brown-olive green with off-white. The scenes are sometimes enacted in front of an architectural background, a wall with narrow openings (stanzas I, II, III, V, VI, XVII, XXII, XXIII), sometimes in front of rocky caves, when the text demands (stanzas VII, XVIII, XXI), and sometimes in a Western-style landscape of rolling hillocks (VIII, XI, XIII, XIV, XV, XXIV). Effacement of the original painting and earlier overpainting and retouching in several scenes in no way diminish the high quality of the miniaturist's art. His skilful rendering of detail on the expressive faces and the garments is close to the Palaeologan tradition of the Escorial manuscript, while the undulating landscape and the background buildings reveal a painter of Cretan origin receptive to the trends of contemporary Italian art. The rendering of the human figure is reminiscent of analogous figures of miniature character in icons such as the Transfiguration, in the Byzantine Museum, and Christ with the Woman of Samaria, in the Canellopoulos Museum, which are ascribed to Nikolaos Tzafouris, as well as with icons including a series of small scenes, such as that of the Virgin with border scenes, in the Canellopoulos Museum, possibly by Angelos Pitzamanos,⁴⁹ and the icon of Saint John the Baptist with scenes from his life on the border, in Bologna.⁵⁰ Moreover the already noted similarities with certain scenes from the triptych by the Cretan painter Stylianos lead to the same period and artistic milieu. Although these icons follow the conservative fifteenth-century tradition, there is a comparable assimilation of Italian models of the fifteenth and the early sixteenth century. In the light of these traits, our icon is assigned to this group of icons dated from around 1500 to the early decades of the sixteenth century.

As ascertained above, the iconographic model of our icon is fundamentally different from that of the earliest known icon of the Akathistos, in Skopelos, whereas it was followed in most scenes by the Cretan painters of the icons in the Hodegetria Monastery, Crete, in Cephalonia and on the Island in the lake of Ioannina. So the Velimezis icon is the earliest and most splendid extant example of an iconography that was crystallized in Crete in the early sixteenth century and diffused through the work of the great Cretan painters, who thus provided the iconographic models for future generations.

CONDITION The icon is damaged in several places and has been overpainted in at least two phases. During recent conservation the later overpaintings were removed and only those which satisfactorily covered completely destroyed sections of the original painting were left. See Appendix III.

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NOTES

1. For the Akathistos Hymn see Myslivec 1932, 97-130. Wellesz 1956, 141-174. Trypanis 1968, 17-39. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 648ff. Pätzold 1989.
2. See Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, and relevant bibliography, as in n. 1.
3. *Hermeneia* 1909, 147. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 671ff. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 42-49.



81. Stylianos the priest, *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple*. Triptych, early 16th century, detail. Abou Adal Collection, Lebanon.

4. See bibliography in Cat. no. 48, 360ff., n. 1.
 5. See Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 9 and N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 18, 47. N. Chatzidakis 1996, 42, fig. 46.
 6. *Hermeneia* 1909, 148. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 674-677, fig. 39. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 49-54, figs 39, 104, 111, 135, 159, 183. See also Kalokyris 1972, 195, pls 273-284.
 7. *Hermeneia* 1909, 148. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 677-678. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 54-55.
 8. *Hermeneia* 1909, 148. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 678-679. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 55-56.
 9. *Hermeneia* 1909, 148. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 679-684. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 56-59. On the Adoration of the Magi see also below n. 43.
 10. *Hermeneia* 1909, 148. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 684-687. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 66-68.
 11. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 687-689. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 68-71.
 12. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 689-690. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 71.
 13. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 72-75.
 14. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 75-77.
 15. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 77-82.
 16. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 82-87.
 17. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 87-89.
 18. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 90-94.
 19. See below n. 48.
 20. *Hermeneia* 1909, 149. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 94-95.
 21. *Hermeneia* 1909, 150. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 96-100.
 22. *Hermeneia* 1909, 150. Xyngopoulos 1933, 324ff. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 100-104.
 23. *Hermeneia* 1909, 150. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 104-108.
 24. For the iconography see Cat. no. 42, 332.
 25. *Hermeneia* 1909, 150. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 108-113.
 26. *Hermeneia* 1909, 150. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 113-116.
 27. Constantinides 1982, 503ff. Xyngopoulos 1974, 61-77. Tsitouridou 1978, 107-121. See also Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 649ff.
 28. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, 654ff. with bibliography. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, 15ff. Kalokyris 1972, 194-202.
 29. *Hermeneia* 1909, 147-202.
 30. Prochorov 1972, 237-252. Lichačeva 1972, 253-262.
 31. Velmans 1972, 131-165. See also Chatzidakis 1974, 169-211.
 32. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 99, 99-100 (M. Acheimistou-Potamianou).
 33. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1984, pl. 9, fig. 22. Chalkia 1983, 211ff. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 164, 165 (E. Chalkia).
 34. Xyngopoulos 1933, 331, 330, fig. 16. *Monasteries on the Island in the Lake of Ioannina* 1993, fig. 604.
 35. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 120, 478-477 (M. Borboudakis). Icon of the Virgin Galaktotrophousa surrounded by the Akathistos Hymn, painted by Georgios Kastrophylakas in 1748, see Kalokyris 1972, pl. 281.
 36. *Cephalonia I* 1989, 62, fig. 76 the scenes frame a central representation of the Virgin enthroned.
 37. *Cephalonia I* 1989, 33-40, figs 8-33; see also Konomos 1966, 77, fig. 48; on p. 17 an icon of the Akathistos Hymn in the Hagios Gerasimos Monastery is cited. In the Phaneromeni on Zakynthos there was an icon of the Akathistos Hymn by Demetrios Nomikos, 1654, which was burnt in the 1953 earthquake, see Xyngopoulos 1933, fig. 14; Sisilianos 1935, 160-161; Konomos 1988, 86.
 38. *Cephalonia II* 1994, 161, fig. 307.
 39. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 18, 29-30. See also above 151 and Cat. no. 48, 360ff.
 40. *Stavronikita* 1974, no. 26, 128-129; the icon is dated to the late 16th century (A. Karakatsani).
- The same iconography on a contemporary triptych in the Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow, see

- Vassilaki 1994, 330ff., pls 190.10, 191.13, 192.15-16; M. Vassilaki notes the relationship between the Assumption of the Virgin and the Ascension of Christ, op. cit., 332ff. See also *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 69, 420-421 (G. Sidorenko).
41. Panselinou 1992, pl. 247, with other examples, pl. A' and pl. 247. See also here Cat. no. 48, n. 1.
42. Velmans 1972, fig. 10.
43. See N. Chatzidakis 1992, 717-720, and Baltoyanni 1986, no. 24, pls 28-29.
44. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 41, 48.
45. N. Chatzidakis 1996, 50-51, no. 9.
46. See below Cat. no. 33, 290.
47. Aspra-Vardavaki 1992, figs 108-131; see also Docheiariou Monastery, op. cit., figs 132-155.
48. Chatzidakis 1974, 186, 203, pls IH', ΛΔ'. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 48, p. 55.
49. *Affreschi e Icone* 1986, 122-124 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou). N. Chatzidakis 1993, 90, 104, 106, 107, fig. 11.
50. N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 18, 88-91.

15

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

39 x 32 x 1.5 cm

Art of Angelos Pitzamanos (born 1467-1532)

The rectangular icon is mounted in a gilded, carved wooden frame with arched top, in the type of a small tabernacle. The Virgin, sitting left, bends over the Christ-Child in the basketry manger in front of her and with both hands lifts up the edges of the white cloth on which he lies. She wears a bright red dress and a deep green mantle, while her hair is covered by a white flimsy veil that falls behind. Joseph stands behind her, turned left yet looking towards the Christ-Child, his hands clasped in prayer.

The first king, aged with white beard, is shown kneeling; only his head appears behind the second, portly king in the foreground, who proceeds conspicuously, almost frontal with torsion of the body, holding the precious gift, a metal vessel like a censer, in his raised right hand. He is clad in Turkish costume: a long rose-coloured kaftan with horizontal black stripes, a deep green-blue mantle with pale green shadows, like that of the Virgin, and the typical turban. The third king can be seen behind the Virgin's head, offering his gift.

The scene takes place in front of a building with a large arched opening (a Roman ruin) on the left, while a landscape of rolling hills below a blue sky spreads out on the right. The painted surface has been damaged in an earlier cleaning using fire; the modelling of the faces, the colours of the garments and part of the landscape in the background have been effaced; the deep blue colour has also been altered. This damage reveals the preliminary sketch of the composition.

The scene follows known models of Italian Renaissance art, as is the case in many sixteenth-century Italo-Cretan icons, the most important examples being the icon by Ioannis Permeniatis, formerly in a private collection and now in the Benaki Museum, the icon in the Tsatsos Collection and the icon by Emmanuel Lambardos.¹ The arrangement of the figures, the garments, especially the Turkish costume of the second king, and the landscape in the background are all characteristic features of this iconography. Our icon is, however, quite distant from the models of these works and evidently has more in common with a series of icons in a popular style, dispersed in collections and museums in Italy — in Ravenna, Bologna, Trieste and elsewhere.² Frequently the common prototype in these works is the Adoration of the Shepherds and the Adoration of the Magi by



83. *The Virgin and the infant Christ*, detail of icon Cat. no. 15 (infrared photograph).



84. *The Adoration of the Magi*, art of Angelos Pitzamanos (1467-1532), Cat. no. 15.

Jacopo Bassano (1540-1565).³ In our icon the figure of the Virgin sitting on the ground, bending over the Christ-Child lying in a basketry manger and holding the edges of the white sheet, is taken from the Adoration of the Shepherds, while other figures are borrowed from the Adoration of the Magi:⁴ Joseph, standing left and turning his head towards the Virgin, and the kings, in particular the standing turbaned one with the incense burner, but also the bearded old man kneeling in adoration. Among these figures noteworthy is the standing king in Turkish costume, who is depicted full-bodied and raising the hand with the precious gift in two late sixteenth-century icons of the Adoration, in Cremona and the Vatican Museum.⁵ There is an even closer portrayal of the black king on an icon in Cyprus. He wears a white kaftan with horizontal black stripes and raises his right hand holding a censer. The old king also kneels, as in our icon.⁶ The mannerist, torsional pose of the standing king (*figura serpentinata*) is





85. Angelos Pitzamanos, *The Virgin with Christ and Saint John*, 1532. Hermitage, Saint Petersburg.

reminiscent of a work by Marcantonio Raimondi, depicting a triumph of a Roman emperor (*circa* 1509), which Theophanis used as a model for the scene of the Ascent to the Cross in the wall-paintings in the Lavra Monastery.⁷ The prophetess Anna has an analogous pose in the Patmos icon of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, painted by Michael Damaskenos, thus renewing the fifteenth-century iconographic prototype.⁸

All the above iconographic traits lead to Italo-Cretan painting of the late fifteenth and the early decades of the sixteenth century. Among the contemporary depictions a greater affinity, primarily stylistic, is observed with some icons by Angelos Pitzamanos. Born in Crete around 1467 and a pupil of Andreas Paviar from 1482 until 1487, Pitzamanos renewed the earlier Italian tradition of his master and following the later currents of Italian painting developed his own personal style; he and his brother Donatos left their native isle and painted icons in the region of Dubrovnik on the Dalmatian coast (1518) and at Otranto in Italy.⁹

The icon of the related theme of the Adoration of the Shepherds, in the Lichačev Collection in the Hermitage,¹⁰ though differing from ours in the composition, the pose and position of the figures, resembles it in other respects; the manner of painting the Virgin, in analogous attire and relaxed pose, with gentile movements, refined facial features, that are clearly visible in the infrared photograph, and smooth flesh is common to both works, as are the arched opening of the Roman ruin and the low hills below the blue sky in the background.

86. *The Adoration of the Magi*, art of Angelos Pitzamanos, Cat. no. 15, detail.



There is an even greater resemblance to the two icons painted by Angelos Pitzamanos at Otranto in Italy, in 1532 (one is in the Hermitage (Fig. 85) and the other in the Split Archaeological Museum).¹¹ In these works, in which the Virgin and Child is represented with Saint John the Baptist beside her, there are similarities in the Virgin's face, which is the same shape and has the same finely drawn features, in the mantle which envelops her body in broad, soft folds, and in the white veil covering her hair (Figs 85, 86). Also common are the more general, uncohesive organization of the composition in space, with a slight indifference to the harmony of proportions and movements, and the preference for pale colours on the garments as well as the distant landscape in the background. All the above correlations indicate that the icon of the Adoration could be attributed to the circle of Angelos Pitzamanos. Its poor condition does not permit assessment of its painterly values as a whole, it does however expose the preliminary design, which is better discerned in infrared photographs (Fig. 83) and reveals a freedom in rendering movement, especially of the Christ-Child in the manger, and an expressiveness on the faces, particularly of Joseph and the first two kings.¹² The gilded woodcarved frame of the icon is in the form of a small tabernacle with arched opening and flat entablature supported by two piers or engaged columns, now lost (Fig. 88). The flat surfaces are decorated with relief shoots, leaves and flowers issuing from a vase (kantharos?). The self-same type of frame, with the same relief ornaments, is known in the Venice region from the first third of the sixteenth century (Fig. 87).¹³ The remarkable likeness of these carved wooden frames attests their common provenance, while the presence of a comparable type of carved frame with more elaborate decoration, on a fifteenth-century Cretan icon of the Madre de la Consolazione, at Petra, Mytilene,¹⁴ confirms their circulation in Crete from early on.

According to the above, it is clear that the icon of the Adoration of the Magi was mounted in a contemporary frame, totally in keeping with its Italicizing style.

CONDITION The icon had been cleaned previously using fire, which has spoilt the colours and left only the foundation on the faces. The two lateral piers or columns on the frame have been destroyed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. On the scene see N. Chatzidakis 1992, 713-741, with examples and related bibliography.
2. Angiolini-Martinelli 1982, nos 123, 124, 125, 125.1, 131, pp. 78, 79, 80. Angiolini-Martinelli 1994, no. 10, 67, fig. on p. 66. *Pittura su tavola* 1975, nos III, VII.
3. *Da Tiziano a El Greco* 1993, no. 53, fig. on p. 171, Verona, G. del Giardino Collection.
4. *Da Tiziano a El Greco* 1993, no. 57, figs on pp. 177, 178, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection.
5. Bianco-Fiorin 1992, 79 and figs 11, 12. On the Turkish costume and its dissemination in Italo-Cretan icons of the Adoration of the Magi see N. Chatzidakis 1992, 731-732.
6. Papageorgiou 1992, no. 94, 142. Sophocleous 1994, no. 56, 105, fig. on p. 190 (an analogous rendering of the scene is also encountered in an unpublished icon in the Zakynthos Museum).



87. Frame, early 16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.2112), New York.



88. Frame of the icon of the Adoration of the Magi, Cat. no. 15.

7. Chatzidakis 1986, fig. 198β. See also M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides 1991, 271-281, 273ff., pls 132-134.
8. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 60, 102-103, pl. 39, 115.
9. Chatzidakis 1974, 196-197, pl. ΚΣΤ'; 1. Bianco-Fiorin 1984, 89-94, fig. 5.
10. *Kollektioni N.P. Lichačeva* 1993, fig. 269.
11. *Kollektioni N.P. Lichačeva* 1993, fig. 270. Bianco-Forin 1984, fig. 5. See also the icon of the Visitation in the Walters Art Gallery, which has been published recently, Vassilaki 1990, 86-92.
12. A preliminary design has been ascertained on Domenikos Theotokopoulos's icon of the Adoration of the Magi, in the Benaki Museum, see Stasinopoulos 1988, 12ff., figs 1-4, 6-7.
13. Newbery, Bisacca, Kanter 1990, 46-47, nos 15-17.
14. Baltoyanni 1994, 295-296, no. 84, pl. 185.

16

SAINT PARASKEVI AND SCENES FROM HER LIFE

41.7 x 33 x 1.3 cm

Second quarter of 16th century

The saint is depicted waist-length and in frontal pose at the centre of the icon. She holds a long-handled Crucifix in the right hand and in the left her severed head and an unfurled scroll which bore an inscription, now erased (it had been overpainted later with *ΑΓΙΟC, ΑΓΙΟC, ΚΥΡΙΟC ΚΑΒΑΛΘ* *Holy, holy, Lord of Sabaoth*). Both the saint's heads are nimbed by a halo with punched vegetal decoration. Twelve scenes arranged around the central figure illustrate the miracles and martyrdom of Saint Paraskevi as narrated in her *Vita*.¹ In the bottom left corner of the central panel is the forged inscription in black capital letters: *ΧΕΙΡ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΜΟΣΚΟΥ* (*Hand of Ioannis Moskos*). Right and left of the saint's head, in red capitals: *Η ΑΓΙΑ ΠΑΡΑΚΕΥΗ*. In the bottom right corner of the last scene, of the beheading, the inscription: *ΔΕΗ(ΣΙ) ΤΟΥ ΔΟΥΛΟΥ ΤΟΥ [ΘΕΟΥ ...] Ζ* (*Supplication of the servant of God ...Z*). The painted surface and gold ground were damaged by previous conservation and subsequently retouched. The overpainting was removed in recent conservation

89. *Saint Paraskevi and scenes from her life, second quarter of 16th century, Cat. no. 16.*



and the preliminary incised design used by the painter is clearly visible, especially in the scenes surrounding the saint.

The saint's facial features and attire, with a dark reddish brown maphorion covering her head, are the same as those depicted in a large number of icons from the fourteenth century onwards,² such as in Veroia,³ the Benaki Museum, London⁴ and Patmos, in which she holds a cross.⁵

The presence of the Crucifix in our icon is associated with the Lord's Passion, which is alluded to symbolically in earlier representations of Saint Paraskevi in which she holds an icon of the Man of Sorrows.⁶ This type, in which Saint Paraskevi (i.e. Friday) is sometimes identified with Good Friday, occurs often in icons in Cyprus from the fourteenth century onwards.⁷ Saint Paraskevi holding the Crucifix as in our icon is encountered in a seventeenth-century icon in Ravenna,⁸ in which she is portrayed full-bodied and holding a palm frond in her left hand, without the other iconographic traits of the type of our icon.

The Crucified Christ is a recurring element in the iconography of other saints too, such as Saint Catherine in a series of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century icons, such as those by Ieremias Palladas and Emmanuel Lambardos.⁹ Saint Barbara also holds the Crucifix in a seventeenth-century icon in Cephalonia.¹⁰ Lastly, in several icons from the seventeenth century onwards the Virgin, in the type of the 'Lypemeni' or Lamenting, also holds the Crucifix.¹¹

The saint holding her severed head can be included in the series of representations of 'kephalophoros' saints, such as Saint George, who is always depicted in profile in the examples known to date.¹² Saint Catherine is shown in three-quarter pose and holding her severed head in a good seventeenth-century Cretan icon in the Latsis Collection, in which she is framed by six scenes from her life.¹³ In a late sixteenth-century icon in the Piana degli Albanesi,¹⁴ Saint Sophia is represented in a type analogous with Saint Paraskevi, in frontal pose, holding a platter with the heads of her three daughters in the left hand and a cross with long handle in her right.

The figure of Saint John the Baptist, depicted in frontal pose and holding his severed head, already established from the Palaeologan era, can be considered the model of these representations; the earliest known example at Arilje is dated 1296.¹⁵ The frontal pose of Saint Paraskevi in our icon is most probably modelled on some corresponding representation of the Forerunner. This hypothesis is strengthened by the even greater similarity between the Saint Paraskevi in our icon and the representation of Saint John the Baptist in a late sixteenth-century icon in Patmos, in which not only the frontal pose of the two saints is common but also the way in which they hold the severed head in the same hand as the unfurled scroll.¹⁶

It is thus ascertained that Saint Paraskevi is depicted here in an iconographic type of a kephalophoros saint that derives from earlier Palaeologan representations of Saint John the Baptist in frontal pose. It differs from equivalent representations of other saints, such as Saint Catherine and Saint George, who are usually shown in three-quarter pose.



90. Saint Paraskevi and scenes from her life, second quarter of 16th century, Cat. no. 16 (infrared photograph).

The subject of Saint Paraskevi holding her severed head is known in wall-paintings as well as panel icons.¹⁷ She appears in frontal pose and holding a platter with her severed head in her raised right hand in a wall-painting in the church of Hagios Nikolaos at Kastoria,¹⁸ as well as in the church of the Evangelistria, 1690, at Nymphes in Corfu,¹⁹ whereas she is frontal and holding her severed head in the left hand in a small early seventeenth-century icon in the Tsakyroglou Collection.²⁰ In an interesting seventeenth-century icon in Siphnos, in the church of the Panagia Ouranophora, the saint is framed by scenes from her life,²¹ but is portrayed in a different type, without the Crucifix, full-bodied and turned to the right, like Saint Catherine in the Latsis Collection. In a later icon in Thessaloniki, with eight scenes from the life of Saint Paraskevi,²² she is depicted at the centre of the bottom zone, waist-length, frontal and holding her severed head in the left hand, as in our icon. Lastly, in an early nineteenth-century icon in

the church of Hagia Paraskevi at Monopolata, Cephalonia, the homonymous saint is presented full-bodied, frontal, holding her severed head together with a scroll and surrounded by four scenes from her life.²³

The scenes surrounding the central figure of Saint Paraskevi in our icon comprise an extremely interesting ensemble in which the narrative element dominates. They read from left to right horizontally: 1) The saint before Aetios. 2) The saint in gaol. 3) The whipping of the saint. 4) The torture of the burning helmet that the soldiers placed on the head of the enthroned saint. 5) The saint in a cauldron converses with the emperor. 6) The saint slays the dragon. 7) The saint's torture on a wheel. 8) The saint, tied by her hair to a post, is burnt with candles. 9) The saint in the cauldron converses with the angel descending from heaven. 10) The saint converses with the emperor, portrayed kneeling, in an episode associated with his baptism. 11) The saint in front of the altar rejects the idols. 12) The beheading of the saint.

The cycle of scenes from the Life of Saint Paraskevi is included in the *Hermeneia* where nine basic ones are described.²⁴ One of the earliest extensive cycles in Postbyzantine Cretan painting is in the wall-paintings at Episkopi Pediados (1516), which includes *inter alia* scenes encountered in our icon, such as the saint before the emperor, the saint in gaol, the torture by whipping, the torture in the cauldron and the final martyrdom by decapitation.²⁵ However, there is no iconographic affinity with these scenes, since the compositions are few-figured and incorporate Western elements, mainly of the Late Gothic period, which are not encountered in our icon. Equally sterile is comparison with the scenes depicted in the fifteenth-century icon in London;²⁶ on account of damage, only the last scene with the saint's torture in a cauldron can be recognized.

The Siphnos icon²⁷ has six scenes in common with ours, though in different iconographic types. Placed either side, they are read vertically from top to bottom: 1) The saint before the emperor (1). 2) The torture of the helmet (4). 3) The saint in the cauldron (5). 4) The saint being whipped (3). 5) The saint slays the dragon (6). 6) The beheading of the saint (12).

Lastly, scenes of the saint's life that follow a different model from our icon occur in several later, eighteenth-century, icons of folk style, in Thessaloniki,²⁸ in a private collection in Switzerland²⁹ and elsewhere.

Certain scenes from the saint's life constituted autonomous subjects in Cretan icons. An early sixteenth-century icon in Switzerland presents the first scene of the cycle — the saint's appearance before the emperor³⁰ — with different iconography in the poses of the figures and the rendering of the buildings. The scene of the beheading of Saint Paraskevi is encountered as an autonomous subject in a later icon by Michael Damaskenos,³¹ who created a new iconographic type that was repeated by Victor (1654).³² In this new type the executioner is shown frontal with marked torsion and *contrapposto* of the body, and the hand brandishing the sword on high, while a host of animated figures participate in the scene. The iconographic type of the beheading from the period just before this



91. The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, detail of an icon of Saint John the Baptist and scenes from his life, early 16th century. Museo Civico, Bologna.



92. *The Beheading of Saint Paraskevi, detail of icon Cat. no. 16 (infrared photograph).*

innovation, known from the wall-paintings of 1516 in the church of Hagia Paraskevi Pediados, Crete, differs significantly; it follows the iconography of the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, as shown in an icon in the Dionysiou Monastery,³³ in which the executioner is portrayed strictly frontal, without torsion of the body, with the hand holding the sword raised high above his head.

In our icon the scene differs both from the model crystallized in early Cretan painting and that established later by Michael Damaskenos's icon. The painter of our icon follows a different model in which the executioner is represented in side view, holding the sword in the hand raised in front of his chest, with marked torsion of the body (Fig. 92). This sideways pose is encountered in the scene of

the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist in early sixteenth-century icons, on the border of the icon of Saint John the Baptist, in Bologna (Fig. 91), as well as in the triptych by the painter Stylianos 'priest' in the Abou Adal Collection.³⁴ The figure of the executioner in these representations derives from the corresponding figure of a soldier from the Massacre of the Innocents in an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi,³⁵ which, as Chatzidakis has shown, was widely diffused in this period.³⁶ It was the model for the corresponding scene painted by Theophanis in the Lavra (1535) and Stavronikita (1546) monasteries, and copied in an *anthivolon* (working drawing) in the Benaki Museum, as well as in a seventeenth-century icon in the Lavra Monastery.³⁷

The above comparisons indicate that the iconographic model of the scenes of the life of Saint Paraskevi in our icon differs not only from the known fifteenth-century depictions but also from the later ones of Damaskenos's day. The scene of the beheading displays greater affinity with early sixteenth-century icons of the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, just as the frontal depiction of Saint Paraskevi at the centre is linked with the earlier iconography of the Forerunner. Unfortunately the icon's poor condition precludes further observations on its style, since in most cases the damage extends to the outlines and the figures seem to be clumsily drawn; however, where the preservation is better it is noted that the scenes are executed with the precision of a miniature, apparent in the incised preliminary design and the illumination of the drapery planes with tiny white highlights (scenes 1, 4), as well as the finely drawn features of the figures (scenes 1, 2, 5), and even the mask above the cauldron of torture (scenes 5, 9). This at once detailed and discreet treatment is quite close to the manner of the Cretan painters of the early decades of the sixteenth century in the icons already cited. Nevertheless, the compositions with many figures in vigorous motion (scenes 3, 7) point to a later period.

The scenes unfold in front of tall, well-drawn buildings with rose or blue walls (scenes 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10) and a floor of alternating rose and white square tiles (scene 3). Buildings of the same type and colours are encountered in the icon of Saint John the Baptist in Bologna, in the triptych by the painter Stylianos in the Abou Adal Collection, in the icon of the Akathistos Hymn in the Velimezis Collection (Cat. no. 14, Fig. 151), as well as in the Italo-Cretan icon attributed to Angelos Pitzamanos, in the Canellopoulos Museum.³⁸ Apart from the similarity in the rendering of the buildings, the relationship of scale between the buildings and the human figures is analogous in these icons.

The pastel colours with ample use of blue and rose, and the lively movements evidently belong to a common repertoire of early sixteenth-century icons, in which characteristics of contemporary Italian painting are just perceptible. The painters of these icons are poised between two periods, since certain details in the rendering of the flesh and the drapery are still close to earlier, fifteenth-century, Cretan painting. These stylistic traits can be seen in our icon of Saint Paraskevi, which has the additional element of the punched decoration on the halo in

common with fifteenth-century icons. The art of our icon overall is consistent with this new current of Cretan painting which, though continuing fifteenth-century tradition, introduces Renaissance elements, to an ever increasing degree, mainly through the use of engravings such as those by Marcantonio Raimondi, which enjoyed wide circulation on the island. This current, already apparent in the opening decades of the sixteenth century in the art of Theophanis, prepared the way for the acceptance of mannerism by painters such as Michael Damaskenos, who renewed Cretan painting in the second half of the century. The triptych by the painter Stylianos and the icons of the Virgin with scenes from her life in the Canellopoulos Museum, of Saint John the Baptist in Bologna, and of the Akathasistos Hymn (Cat. no. 14), cited above, are considered the best examples of it. The icon of Saint Paraskevi has all the stylistic prerequisites for inclusion in this circle of icons. The iconographic singularities in the rendering of the central subject, as well as of the scenes on the border, and the resemblance to fifteenth-century works, permit a dating in the early decades of the sixteenth century, while the many-figured compositions with vigorous movement indicate that the icon is a later example of this group of early sixteenth-century icons.

CONDITION Previous cleaning using fire has largely destroyed the colours, the gold ground, the outlines of the figures and the background buildings. The incised preliminary design can be clearly seen. See also Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. *Hermeneia* 1909, 207, 26 July: 'Saint Paraskevi (executed) by a sword'; 286-287: 'The saint's tortures'.
2. On the saint's iconography see *Hermeneia* 1909 and *RbK* 2, 1971, s.v. Heilige, col. 1087ff. (A. Chatzinikolaou). *Lexikon* 8, 1976, 118-120. Koukariis 1994, 74-105.
3. Papazotos 1995, no. 99, 200, nos 115-116, pp. 216-217, no. 128, 230.
4. *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1993, no. 42, 221 (A. Drandaki). *Byzantine, Greek and Russian Icons* 1979, no. 43, figs 70-71; see also below n. 26.
5. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 99, nos 56, 57, pls 48, 110, 112; see also icons in the Ekonomopoulos Collection (Baltoyanni 1986, nos 48, 64, 99, pls 55, 137, 156).
6. It has been maintained that in these representations the Virgin mourning the dead Christ was depicted originally: Kalokyris 1972, 81-85, n. 2 with relevant bibliography, pls 93a-β, 96. The earliest known representation of the saint as an allegory of Good Friday is in the codex Par. gr. 510, Omont 1929, pl. XLIII. See also Koukariis 1994, 35ff.
7. See *Icons from Cyprus* 1975, 66 no. 22 and 152 no. 63; Papageorghiou 1991, 62-64, fig. 41; Sophocleous 1994, 98, fig. on p. 174 and no. 42.
8. Inv. no. 4501, *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, no. 146, 90.
9. See relevant bibliography in the icon of Saint Catherine, Cat. no. 26, 256 and also N. Chatzidakis 1993, 178, 179, 181, 183, nos 42, 46.
10. *Cephalonia I* 1989, 64, fig. 83.
11. In particular it is diffused in icons, often of Italo-Cretan art, see Rizzi 1972, nos 4, 31, 88. *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, no. 149, 91. Baltoyanni 1986, 114, no. 236, pl. 211. Mary Magdalene also

- holds the Crucifix in an eighteenth-century icon that copies an Italian model in the Benaki Museum, Xyngopoulos 1936, 97, no. 76, pl. 51A.
12. For the resemblance to the iconography of Saint John the Baptist, as well as for collected examples, see Walter 1992, 694-703, pls 374-380. Noteworthy is the fact that the sources on the martyrdom of Saint George do not mention that he carried his severed head, Cf. Charalambidis 1986, 367.
 13. *After Byzantium* 1996, no. 28.
 14. Lindsay-Opie 1991, 301, pl. 145. A 17th-century icon of Saint Eudokia, in frontal pose and carrying her severed head, is mentioned in the catalogue of the Loverdos Collection (Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1936, 37, no. 240).
 15. See in connection Lafontaine-Dosogne 1978, 121-144, fig. 8 and Walter 1989, 85-86; see also Cat. no. 26, 256.
 16. In this icon Saint John the Baptist also holds the cross in the same hand (see Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 124, no. 77, pl. 133), while in earlier representations Saint John the Baptist holds an unfurled scroll and a long-handled cross in the same hand (see *Exhibition for the Centenary of the ChAE*, 1985, 33, no. 20. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 68-69, no. 18, pl. 85, 84, no. 35, pls 96 and 201).
 17. For the spread of her cult in Byzantium, in Bojana, Zemen, Berende see Grabar 1928, 118, 193, 250; see also Subotić 1971, 89ff., 102ff., 131ff. Koukias 1994, 42-62: 17 ensembles with 14th to 15th-century wall-paintings are recorded, 13 of which are in Crete.
 18. Pelekanidis 1953, pl. 247B. Tourta, 1991, 197-198 with bibliography.
 19. *Holy Metropolis of Corfu* 1994, fig. on p. 71. In the same church, Saint Artemios holds a Crucifix, op. cit., fig. on p. 71.
 20. Karakatsani 1980, no. 47, 58.
 21. Dimensions 108 x 82 cm. Aliprantis 1979, 19, and personal observations.
 22. See Tourta 1992, 607, pl. 342; dated to the 18th century it is an overpainting on a 12th-century icon of the Virgin.
 23. *Cephalonia II* 1994, 177-178, figs 347-350; a bema door of the same art in this church is signed 'Demetrios the Cretan, 1815'.
 24. *Hermeneia* 1909, 286-287.
 25. Chatzidakis 1974, 204, 209, pl. ΑΓ' 1. The cycle includes 20 scenes from the saint's life. Koukias 1994, 58-62.
 26. See above n. 4; Saint Paraskevi is portrayed to the waist; at the bottom of the icon three badly damaged scenes from her life. The saint's torture in a cauldron is discernible in the last scene. The icon, of 15th-century date, is assigned to a good workshop in Northern Greece.
 27. See above n. 21.
 28. Tourta 1992, 607, pl. 342; closer to folk art and dated in the 18th century; see also n. 21 above.
 29. *Icones suisses* 1968, no. 133. Saint Paraskevi with twelve scenes from her life is encountered in an icon in the Loverdos Collection (55 x 70 cm), in the Byzantine Museum (Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1946, no. 494, 69, 18th century). An icon of Saint Paraskevi and four scenes from her life (33 x 43 cm), is mentioned in the same collection (Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1946, 47, no. 299), and an icon of the Beheading of Saint Paraskevi with eleven scenes from her life and the signature 'hand of Philotheos, 1661' (40 x 47 cm) (Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1946, 47, no. 301).
 30. *Icones suisses* 1968, no. 13.
 31. Cf. Vocotopoulos 1990, 137, fig. 326.
 32. Vocotopoulos 1990, 137, fig. 325. See also Victor's icon of the Martyrdom of the Ten Saints (1668), in Corfu, with a beheading of similar type, Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 93, 136-137, figs 254-255.
 33. See related examples in wall-paintings. Chatzidakis 1974, 204-205, pl. ΑΓ' 1, 2 and n. 25 above.
 34. N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 18, 88-91. N. Chatzidakis 1996, figs 1, 2 and on p. 46.
 35. Cf. N. Chatzidakis 1993, 88-91, no. 18.

36. Chatzidakis 1949, 150ff., figs 1, 2. Chatzidakis 1969-70, 331 and nn 82, 83, figs 101, 103.
37. Chatzidakis 1940, fig. 3. Chatzidakis 1969-70, 331, fig. 101. The executioner has the same pose in the beheading of Saint Barbara, in the refectory of the Lavra Monastery, Millet 1927, pl. 143.2.
38. For the small group of icons cf. n. 34 above and the icon of the Akathistos Hymn, Cat. no. 14, 163, 164, and nn. 48, 49, 50: see also *Affreschi e Icone* 1986, no. 76, 122-124 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou).

17

THE PASSION OF CHRIST - PIETÀ WITH ANGELS

33.5 x 26.5 x 2.5 cm, with frame: 68.7 x 45 cm

Domenikos Theotokopoulos, Crete, 1566

The icon is in the form of a small tabernacle. The main subject is painted within an ellipse inscribed in a rectangle (Figs 1, 93). Three angels holding an outspread white shroud uphold the lifeless Christ, portrayed at the centre, upright and turned three-quarters right. His nimbed head with eyes closed droops downwards in profile (Figs 101, 104-105), while his hair falls freely on the forehead and shoulders. His body follows an almost perpendicular axis to the knees, where both legs bend and cross behind obliquely. The arms, parallel with the body, are relaxed in pose; the right hand is twisted at the wrist with the palm closed and turned backwards; the left, slightly apart from the body, is lightly supported at the wrist by the angel on the right. The shroud, with its broad irregular folds, covers Christ's body around the thighs, like the loincloth.

The middle angel, with both wings outspread, holds up Christ's body from the armpit. His right hand is covered by the winding sheet while the left holds an edge of it and grasps Christ's forearm from above (Figs 95, 104, 105, 106). He wears a chiton with multiple folds, in shades of rose and deep violet, pinned by a brooch on the shoulder. His wings are painted in roseate violet to almost white brushstrokes, with deep blue at the centre which has been altered by the old conservation and is now almost black. The two angels at the sides are depicted lower down, each at a different level.

The angel on the left is higher, full-bodied and holds the white shroud in both









96. Domenikos Theotokopoulos,
The Passion of Christ, 1566, Cat. no. 17
(photograph before recent conservation).

97. Domenikos Theotokopoulos,
The Passion of Christ, Cat. no. 17
(infrared photograph).



◀ 94. Domenikos Theotokopoulos,
The Passion of Christ, 1566, Cat. no. 17
(photograph by Emil Saraf, before 1943,
in which the painter's signature is visible).

◀ 95. Domenikos Theotokopoulos,
The Passion of Christ, 1566, Cat. no. 17.

hands which are extended towards Christ (Figs 95, 102, 107). He wears a short, reddish, sleeveless chiton cinched tightly at the waist by a wide, deep blue sash that flutters behind, a white chemise with rolled-back sleeves, leaving his sturdy forearms bare, and a long dark blue chiton, slit and exposing the bare right thigh and the lower leg with the high Roman sandal. His wings are painted in shades of rose, from almost red to almost white, and deep blue at the centre.

The angel on the right appears from the waist upwards, behind the sarcophagus, his head slightly lower than that of Christ. In the left hand he holds the edge of the shroud that spreads out in front of his body (Figs 101, 103). He wears a dark blue chiton with long sleeves, tightly girdled at the waist with a pale rose sash which passes in front of the left shoulder, spreads behind the head and billows upwards in bright shades of deep rose; the same sash, in red, is wound around the neck and tied in front on the chest. At the same point the dark blue tip of his wing is visible, with marginal touches of white.

The painting in the lower right part of the icon is badly damaged. Nevertheless, the incised traces of a rectangular, marble sarcophagus drawn in lateral perspective (Figs 97-99) are clearly discernible. Its rose-reddish brown colour is



preserved in places and incisions hereabout also indicate the fall of the folds of the now effaced shroud.

The entire scene was painted on a gold ground which was badly damaged in previous cleaning using fire, as is the case with most of the icons in the Collection (Fig. 95). Some traces of it have survived, mainly near the outlines of the figures, and it is clearly visible below the faces of the angels and at the edges under their wings (Fig. 106), where the paint layer has flaked. The paint on the sarcophagus and part of the shroud has been lost, while the blue of the garments and the angels' wings has acquired a blackish tone, due to the previous method of cleaning. The damage has revealed the coat of reddish bole on the off-white gesso layer; the incised preliminary design is also visible, as is the case in many Cretan icons.¹

Prior to its recent conservation (1995), the icon with its frame had a uniform deep brown tone due to the darkened varnish (Fig. 98). Indeed, as noted in the Introduction, its general state of preservation belied its common fortune with the two other early icons by Theotokopoulos, in the Benaki Museum — Saint Luke the Evangelist and the Adoration of the Magi —, which came from Zakynthos and were conserved by Demetrios Pelekasis.²

98. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Passion of Christ*, Cat. no. 17 (infrared photograph).

99. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Passion of Christ*, Cat. no. 17 (drawing of the incised design).

101. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos.*
Christ and the right angel, detail of icon
Cat. no. 17.

The icon was already in this state when Emilios Velimezis submitted his typewritten declaration of ownership to the Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities in 1938, as is apparent from the photographs taken at the time by Emil Saraf. Preserved in the Emilios Velimezis archive (Figs 1, 94), these are four sepia prints (12 x 17 cm) and six large-format negative plates of the same dimensions. On careful scrutiny of one of these photographs (Figs 94, 100), a long inscription in capital letters can be made out at the very bottom of the scene, below Christ's feet, following the curve of the elliptical border. The letters ΔΟΜΗΝ[ΙΚΟΥ] ΘΕΟΤ[ΟΚ]ΟΠΟΥΛ[Η] or λ[ο]υ ΧΕΙΡ. can be discerned. The ligatures of *ov*, in small letters, are placed above the capital Π and beside the letter Α, which is not clearly legible and could be either capital or cursive.

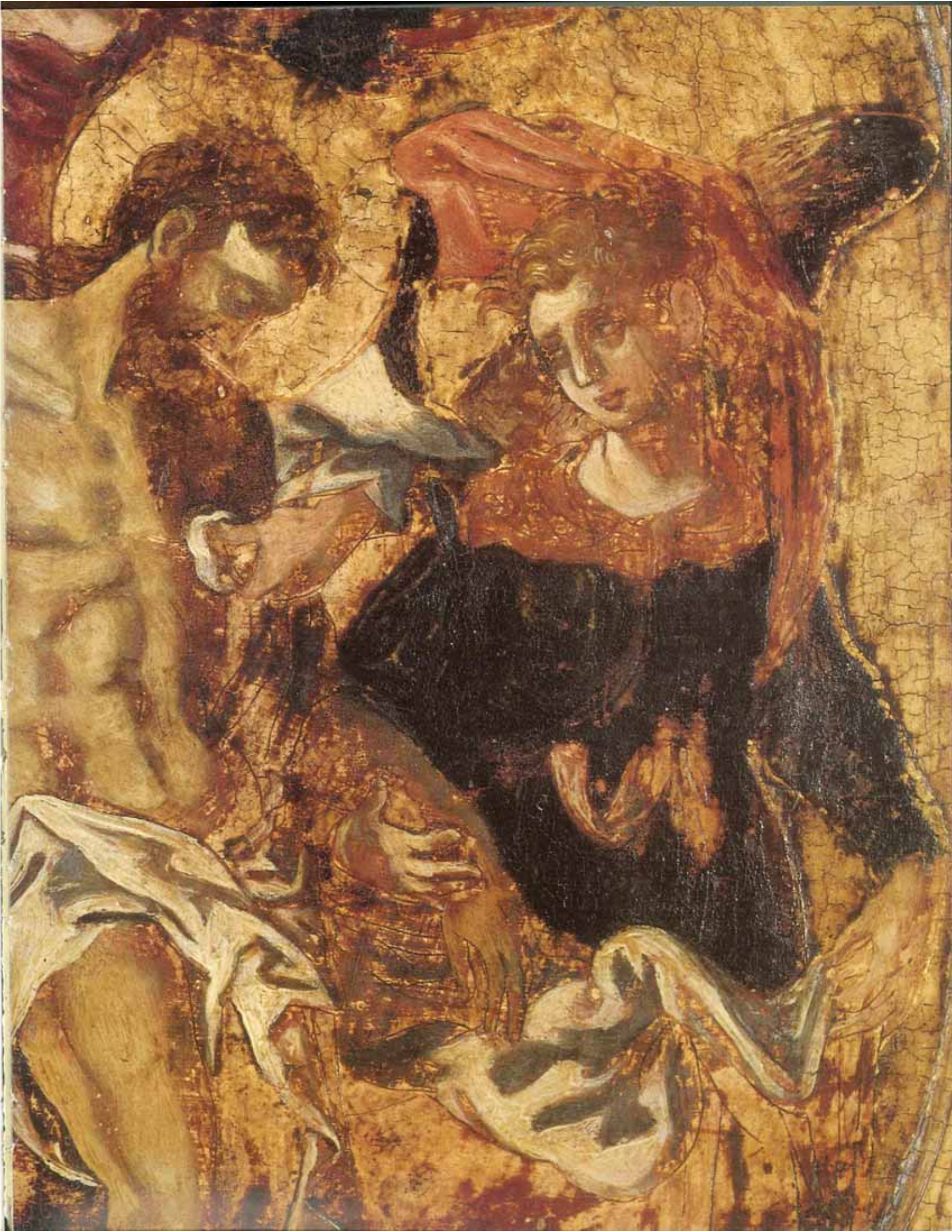
The capitals in the inscription are of the same type as in other early icons by Domenikos Theotokopoulos. As Manolis Chatzidakis has noted, the painter imitated these from printed books with a certain unsteadiness in the writing. There is corresponding uniformity in the letters of even height and the abbreviation of *MH* is the same as that used in the icons of Saint Luke, the Adoration of the Magi and the Modena triptych (ΧΕΙΡ ΔΟΜΗΝΗ/ΚΟΥ).³ The lettering of the surname is similar to that encountered in the Dormition of the Virgin, in Syros (ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ), while that of the cursive abbreviations of *ov* is similar to the script of his surname in the Expulsion of the Merchants from the Temple, in the National Gallery Washington, with the signature ΔΟΜΗΝΙΚΟΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ ΚΡΗΤ.⁴



100. The signature of Domenikos
 Theotokopoulos discernible in a detail
 of Emil Saraf's pre-1943 photograph.







◀ 102. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos,*
The left angel, detail of icon Cat. no. 17.

◀ 103. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos,*
Christ and the right angel, detail of icon
Cat. no. 17.



104. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos,*
The head of Christ and the middle
angel, detail of icon Cat. no. 17
(infrared photograph).

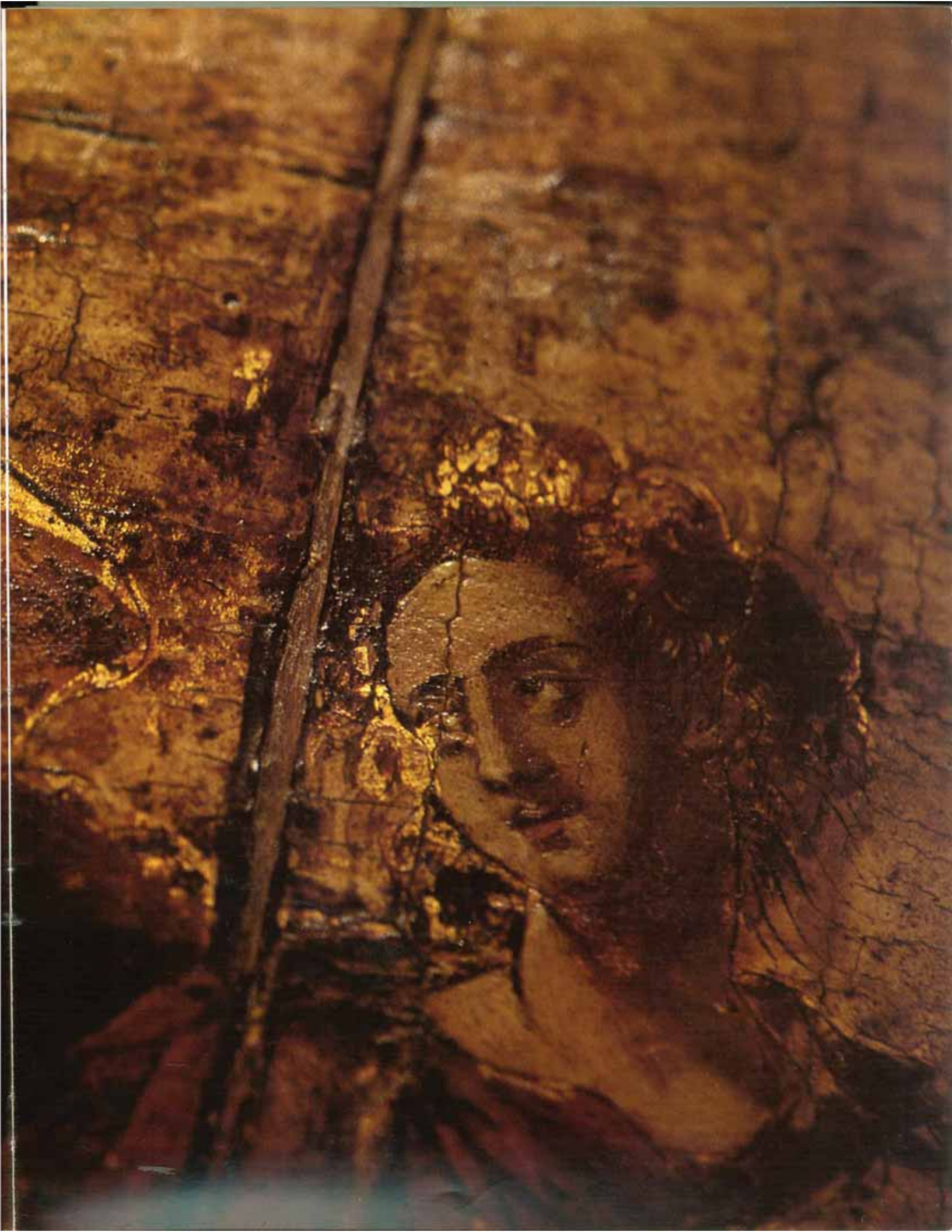
105. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos,*
The head of Christ and the middle
angel, detail of icon Cat. no. 17.

There is also correspondence with these inscriptions in the use of the Byzantine formula for the signature: *χειρ* + name in the genitive (*hand of ...*),⁵ except that here the word *χειρ* is placed after the painter's surname. This reversed type of signature is also an innovation in comparison with those signatures of Theotokopoulos known to date. Nevertheless, the type is consistent with the formulae used by other Cretan painters at that time. The painter Georgios Klontzas signs *Γεωργίου χειρ Κλόντζα τὰδ' ἐγγράφη...* on the Patmos triptych and Michael Damaskenos signs *Δαμασκηνοῦ Μιχαήλ χειρ* in the icons of the Baptism and Saints Peter and Paul, in the church of Saint George of the Greeks in Venice.⁶

As mentioned in the Introduction, at the time our icon appeared on the antiques market no icon bearing the surname of Theotokopoulos was known nor had any









107. Domenikos Theotokopoulos,
The left angel, detail of icon Cat. no. 17.

108. Two angels from the Baptism,
detail of the Modena triptych, c. 1567.
Galleria Estense, Modena.

◀ 106. Domenikos Theotokopoulos,
The middle angel, detail of icon
Cat. no. 17 (photograph in daylight).

studies on the type of his signatures been made. It is, therefore, quite impossible that some forger of the pre-War period would have invented such a signature. The signature is no longer visible to the naked eye, but traces of the letters can be discerned in infrared and ultraviolet photographs taken before the recent conservation in 1995 (Figs 97, 98).

The icon's technique and some traits of its iconography reveal its attachment to Cretan painting and its particular relationship to the earliest known icons by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, Saint Luke the Evangelist and the Adoration of the Magi, in the Benaki Museum, as well as the Dormition of the Virgin, in Syros.⁷

1. The gold ground stuck to the thin layer of gesso with reddish bole, a technical trait of icons, is used in the icons of Saint Luke (Fig. 6) and the Syros Dormition (Fig. 184).

2. The incised preliminary design used in a large number of icons by Cretan painters was used by Theotokopoulos in part of the icon of Evangelist Luke with the representation of the icon of the Virgin. The artist keeps to this design, varying only certain details, as is the case in the Adoration of the Magi (Fig. 15), the Syros Dormition, and Evangelist Luke, in which there is a preliminary design



in wash. The dynamism of the freehand incision recalls a later ink drawing by the artist, in the Jovellanos de Gizon Institute, Spain,⁸ with the apostles from the Prayer in Gethsemane, in a rendering quite close to the Byzantine iconography of the subject.

3. The dimensions of the panel (68.7 x 45 cm with the frame) are remarkably similar to those of the Syros Dormition (61.4 x 45 cm) and to several other icons, such as the Dormition of the Virgin (Cat. no. 54, 69 x 45.8 x 2.5 cm). Its width is the same as the Adoration of the Magi, in the Benaki Museum (45 cm). These similarities do not seem to be fortuitous and are probably due to the painter's preference for works of this size when he was still in Crete, where several icons had one side of more or less the same length (about 45 cm), as for example Cat. nos 1, 19, 34, 41, and others in the Velimezis Collection. Moreover the comparable dimensions of our icon of the Passion and that of the Syros Dormition reinforce this hypothesis.⁹

4. Another trait common to the icon of the Passion and other early icons by Theotokopoulos is the preference for the warm reddish tone, which shades gradually to a lambent orangey rose. It recalls the tone of the mandorla in which

109. Agostino Veneto, *The Virgin with two angels*, engraving, early decades of 16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund 1949 (49.97.20), New York.

110. Marcantonio Raimondi, *Candlestick*, engraving, early decades of 16th century.



111. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The middle angel*, detail of icon Cat. no. 17.

the monochrome angels appear in the Syros Dormition, and even the corresponding tones in the central complex of the Virgin and Child in the Adoration of the Magi in the Benaki Museum, as well as in the angel from the icon of Evangelist Luke (Figs 14, 6, 9 respectively). Furthermore, the colours used in the icon of the Passion are consistent with those in Cretan icons with various shades of red, white and deep blue on the gold ground.

In addition to these technical similarities to Theotokopoulos's early works our icon displays a significant iconographic similarity. The left angel with bared leg to the fore (Fig. 107) is rendered after an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi (Fig. 110), which, as Fatourou-Hesychakis has already pointed out, was used by Theotokopoulos for the candlestick with female figures, in front of the Virgin's bier in the Syros Dormition (Fig. 184), as well as in the Modena triptych (Fig. 108).¹⁰ Correspondence is also noted in the long chiton girdled tightly high on the waist, as well as in the flowing drapery. This type of angel with bared thigh was apparently diffused in other early sixteenth-century Italian engravings and used by other Cretan painters in a Byzantine-type version, as seen in an icon of the Holy Communion, in Corfu, which is ascribed to Michael Damaskenos and which constituted the model for a series of analogous representations on Corfiote iconostases in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,¹¹ and further, in two seventeenth-century icons of Saint Luke painting the icon of the Virgin, in the Zakynthos Museum, as well as on woodcarved iconostases and icon frames in Zakynthos.¹²

Lastly, the recourse to some classicizing models, well known as *topoi* (reference points) in Byzantine iconographic tradition, should not be overlooked. A similar



112. Angel from the scene of the Three Maries at the Tomb, 1235, Mileševa.

arrangement of the three angels, a symbolic allusion to the Holy Trinity, is encountered in the scene of the Hospitality of Abraham (Old Testament Trinity), while an even greater resemblance can be ascertained to the angel in the scene of the Three Maries at the Tomb, as known from codex 587 in the Dionysiou Monastery (11th century) and the wall-paintings at Mileševa (1235) (Figs 111, 112), as well as from the wall-paintings in Hagios Georgios at Apostoloi Pediados, a splendid example of Palaeologan painting in Crete, in which there is a similar *contrapposto* of the head of the angel gazing upwards and a corresponding rendering of his outspread wing.¹³

So it emerges from the foregoing remarks that the icon of the Passion is linked with the icons of Theotokopoulos's Cretan period in many ways: in technique, size and coloration. However, it differs radically from these in the treatment of the paint. It moves away from the Byzantine technique with the dark foundation and the tiny white highlights, as well as from the schematic rendering of the drapery observed on figures in the Syros Dormition and the icon of Saint Luke. It is equally distant from the Italicizing rendering with the smooth modelling of the flesh and the soft fall of the draperies in the Adoration of the Magi, in the Benaki Museum. So the work is detached dynamically from both the Byzantine and the Italian tradition of sixteenth-century painting.

The pigments in the icon of the Passion are thick and lavishly worked with deft, dense brushstrokes (*impasto*). Different colour tones are mixed together in a unique manner. The white winding sheet takes on greyish blue hues, from which violet reflections emerge. The colours on the angels' garments and wings give the



113. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *Angel, detail of the Annunciation*, c. 1570. Museum del Prado, Madrid.



114. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *Christ, detail of icon Cat. no. 17*.

impression of combining countless shades of red, from deep brick and bright red to palest rose and rose-violet. Christ's body is modelled in cold grey-blues and deep copper-green tones intermingled with brushstrokes of light brown, while the flesh on his face has a deathly pallor. In contrast, the angels' flesh emits a warm vitality, modelled in translucent roseate white hues and deeper brownish red to light brown on the face of the angel left.

The treatment of colour in the icon of the Passion reveals that this is a work in another class, with a different, unique style. The fluid rendering of the vibrating human body, without distinct outline, is also a fundamental trait of the great art of Domenikos Theotokopoulos. The dead Christ with the muscular torso and sturdy limbs recalls an analogous depiction of Christ in the Pietà in the Johnson Collection (Fig. 118).¹⁴ Our icon is connected with this work in numerous ways. The lifeless Christ at the centre is supported and surrounded by three figures, as in the icon of the Passion. His body is in a corresponding pose, collapsing with the legs bent behind, and the face is in profile. The Virgin appears behind Christ at the centre, like the angel at the centre in the Passion, her upturned head gazing heavenwards. So it is deduced that this small work (21 x 20 cm), which is assigned to the painter's Roman period, constitutes a more mature version of the theme that Theotokopoulos first painted in the icon of the Passion of Christ.

A full development of the Cretan painter's early artistic vision is encountered in the High-Altar of Santo Domingo el Antiguo in Toledo (1577),¹⁵ where the Holy Trinity is depicted in the upper part (Fig. 119). There is correspondence in the composition, with God supporting the deceased Christ at the centre, flanked by angels, and in Christ's pose with the legs bent at the knees and crossed behind. An additional correspondence is observed in the rendering of Christ's right hand which twists backwards at the wrist. Further similarities should be noted in the ecstatic faces of the angels and the face of God who gazes downwards, like the left angel in our icon.

The striking affinities in the three works by the Cretan painter reveal the successive treatment of the same theme in different periods. Indeed so strong are the relations between these three works that we venture to suggest that the icon of the Passion constitutes the first stage in the treatment of a great artistic vision, which Theotokopoulos executed on a grand scale in the receptive milieu of Toledo.

The stylistic similarities can in fact be extended to a series of other works by Domenikos Theotokopoulos from his Roman period. There is an analogous rendering of the dead Christ's flesh and limbs in the Crucifixion in the Marañon Collection and that in the recent exhibition at Christie's (Fig. 17). The drapery on the angel's chiton in the Annunciation in the Prado,¹⁶ is comparable to the winding sheet surrounding Christ's body in the icon of the Passion (Figs 113-114), which falls in broad, irregular, perpendicular folds. Primarily, however, the countenances of the angels in the icon of the Passion, imbued with a warm

radiance and expressing different emotional states (Figs 102-106), herald those that recur constantly in the great master's work in Spain, and indeed in some of his most powerful compositions. Not only in the first work he painted in Toledo, the Holy Trinity for the High-Altar in Santo Domingo el Antiguo (1577), but also in later ones, such as the Virgin with Saints Martina and Agnes, Mary Magdalene, Saint Veronica, the Burial of Count Orgaz and the woodcarving of the Miracle of Saint Idelfonso.¹⁷

Lastly, the compositional axes of the icon of the Passion (Fig. 115), with the symmetrical articulation along intersecting diagonals arising from a point off-centre and low down, creating a lozenge shape at the centre, corresponds with the canvas Theotokopoulos used in the Johnson Pietà (Fig. 116), and in its exact copy on a larger scale, now in the Hispanic Society of America, as well as in some of his most mature and accomplished works in Spain, such as the Virgin with Saints Martina and Agnes, and Saint Martin in the National Gallery, Washington, in which Marinelli distinguishes 'il gioco romboidale delle stesse diagonali'.¹⁸ Also discernible in these works, and in our icon, is the grid of two parallel horizontal and vertical axes forming a narrow, upright parallelogram in the middle. In addition the same low, off-centre point and diagonal axes are noted in the Crucifixion in the Prado.¹⁹

The profound knowledge of the canons of perspective in the icon of the Passion indicates that Domenikos Theotokopoulos was trained in an environment that espoused the Italian painters' approaches to the problem and that he had formulated his own personal solutions to it. These inquiries were not in fact unknown to Cretan painters in the first half of the sixteenth century, as I pointed out in my study on the icon of the Adoration of the Magi (Ioannis Permeniatīs, before 1523), in which devices proposed in Alberti's treatise were used, as well as perspective grids analogous to those applied by Paolo Ucello.²⁰ This knowledge of perspective in the icon of the Passion should be linked with Theotokopoulos's early interest in applied architecture, which is expressed for the first time in this icon's frame, as we shall see below.

All the foregoing observations show clearly that the icon of the Passion marks the birth of the great painter's personal style, the style that led him to cast off established conventions and presages his maturity far beyond the familiar routes of Byzantine and Italian painting. At the same time it is the kernel that nurtured some of the culminant creations he was to produce ten years hence, in the land where the 37-year-old Cretan found hospitality and recognition. For these reasons I believe that the icon of the Passion is his first small masterpiece.

Remarks on the iconography

The icon presents an independent subject that epitomizes the Passion of Christ, as in the Man of Sorrows of Orthodox iconography; in Italian painting it is



115. Drawing of the perspective axes in Domenikos Theotokopoulos's icon of *The Passion of Christ*, Cat. no. 17.



116. Drawing of the perspective axes in Domenikos Theotokopoulos's *Pietà*, Hispanic Society of America, New York (Sandro Marinelli, 1995).



117. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Passion of Christ*, 1566, Cat. no. 17.



118. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *Pietà*, c. 1570. John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia, USA.

frequently called *Pietà* with angels and considered a scene for private devotions, an 'Andachtsbild'.²¹ The theme is known in Western art from the fourteenth century, Donatello's relief in the church of Saint Anthony (Santo) in Padua being an outstanding example.²² It was particularly popular in German art where the central subject — a frontal angel with outspread wings holding the dead Christ — is encountered in fifteenth-century woodcuts (Fig. 120) and paintings, such as the work by Peter Hopfer (1460-1470).²³ It is also widely known in fifteenth-century Venetian painting, with small angels as *putti* and the dead Christ, half-length, emerging from a sarcophagus, his arms in a similar position to that in our icon of the Passion; the *Pietàs* by Giovanni Bellini in London, in the San Vincenzo Ferreri polyptych in Venice, and in Rimini,²⁴ as well as Antonello da Messina's *Pietà* in Madrid, in which the twist of Christ's right hand at the wrist is observed.²⁵ Even greater similitude is noted in a drawing of Giovanni Bellini's *Pietà* in the Rennes Museum,²⁶ in which Christ is portrayed in the Virgin's embrace, full-bodied in front of the sarcophagus, the body upright and the legs bent at the knees and crossed behind, exactly as in our icon.

The similarities between the icon of the Passion and the Holy Trinity in Toledo (Figs 117, 119), noted above, bespeak the use of a common model, such as Dürer's engraving of 1511 (Fig. 121), which Cossío had indicated in 1909 as the



119. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Holy Trinity*, 1577, from the church of Santo Domingo el Antiguo, Toledo. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

model of this scene.²⁷ There are obvious correspondences in Christ's pose, in the way in which he is held by God-the Father and flanked by the angels. Even the faces of the angels resemble those of the central and the right angel in the icon of the Passion, while the figure of God in Dürer's engraving is surprisingly like the figure of the left angel in our icon (Fig. 102). The similarities with Dürer's work also extend to another engraving, of 1506, in which two angels with corresponding poses and facial expressions hold the Holy Mandylion.²⁸ Lastly, in Dürer's series of engravings of Adam and Eve there is correspondence with the figure of the lifeless Christ in the rendering of the head in profile, in the pose and gesture of Eve or of Adam too, figures that had in any case been used as a model for the



120. *The Dead Christ upheld by an angel*,
15th-century German woodcut.

121. Albrecht Dürer, *The Holy Trinity*,
engraving, 1511.



same theme in the Modena triptych.²⁹ Even more closely related is the figure of the dead Christ in profile, as depicted in an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi in the Albertina, Vienna (Fig. 123), in which he is in horizontal pose in the scene of the Virgin's Lamentation.³⁰

The iconographic affinity of our icon with engravings by Dürer and Marcantonio Raimondi has already been noted. However, the closest iconographic precedent for the icon of the Passion occurs in an engraving by Agostino Veneto, of 1516, after a lost painting by Andrea del'Sarto (Fig. 122).³¹ The angel with outspread wings at the centre holds in his bare arms Christ's lifeless body in a winding sheet, in exactly the same way. Christ's legs are crossed and bent, and his hands are in a similar pose to our icon, while the incline of the head is reversed. This engraving is the only one, as far as I know, in which the central subject of the dead Christ held by the angel is flanked left by an angelic figure, as in the icon of the Passion. Angels with corresponding expression, pose and attire are portrayed in two other engravings by Agostino Veneto, in which the Virgin (Fig. 109)³² is flanked by two angels in analogous garb, with the bare leg projecting beneath the chiton, after Raimondi's model (Fig. 110), as in the left angel in the icon of the Passion. The

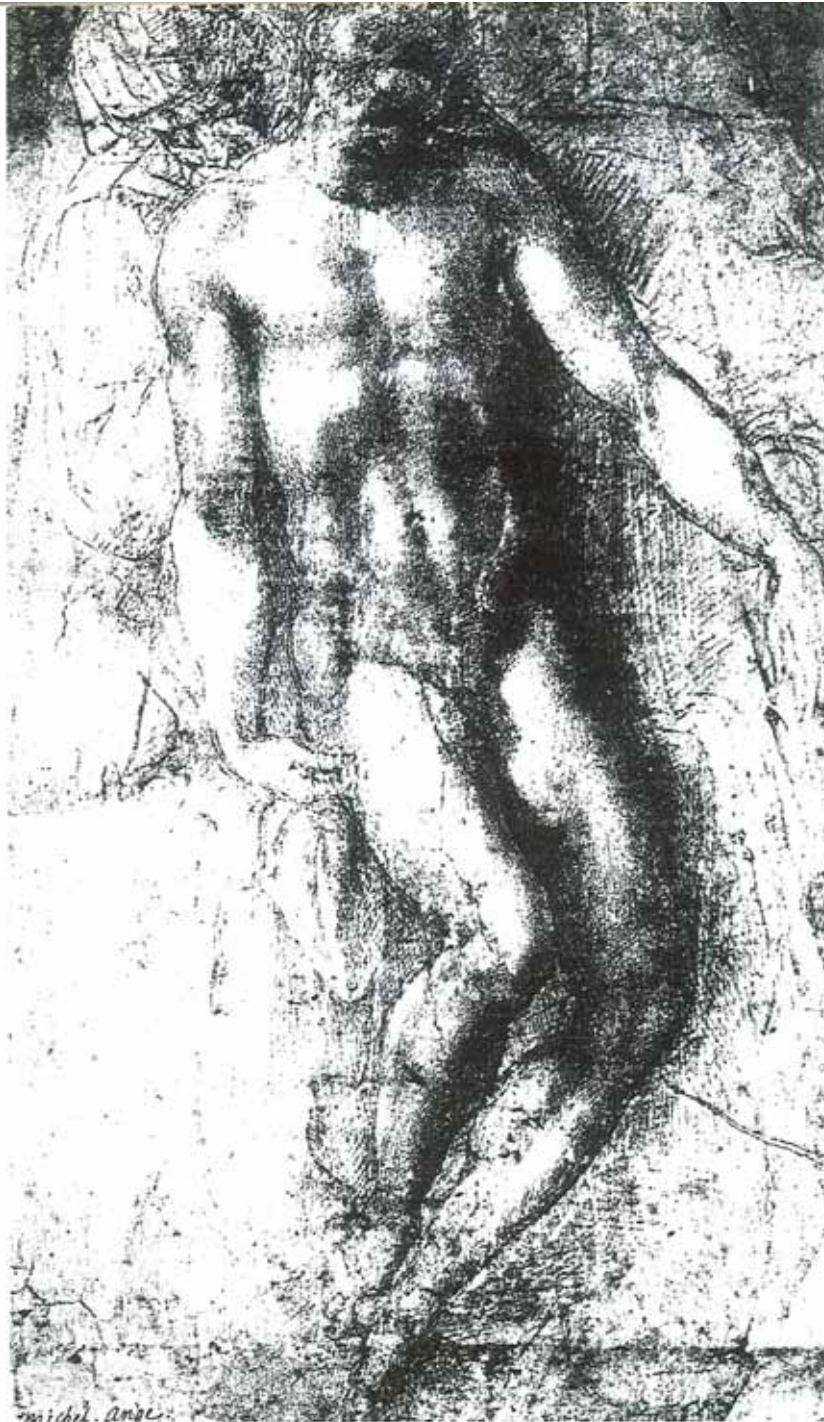


above similarities to the works by Dürer, Agostino Veneto and Marcantonio Raimondi can be added to others, which are easily recognized, such as Michelangelo's *Pietà* for Vittoria Colonna, a subject widely diffused in engravings from the mid-sixteenth century and which was also the model for the *Pietà* in the Johnson Collection.³³

The dates of circulation of the engravings by Dürer, Marcantonio Raimondi and Agostino Veneto, as well as of the engravings of the *Pietà* for Vittoria Colonna, permit the hypothesis that Theotokopoulos was acquainted with these models while he was still in Crete: the influence of Michelangelo on another of Theotokopoulos's Cretan works, the icon of the *Dormition*, in Syros, has already been noted by Fatourou-Hesychakis.³⁴ The striking similarity of the figure of the dead Christ, and especially the rendering of his right hand, with the drawing by Michelangelo in the Albertina (Figs 124, 125), which is associated with the *Pietà* in the National Gallery, London,³⁵ reinforces the relationship of the icon of the Passion to the great Italian artist's work. There is an analogous arrangement of the figures around Christ in the National Gallery painting and a corresponding projection of the bare leg beneath John's chiton on the left. The examination of

122. Agostino Veneto, *Christ upheld by an angel*; engraving after Andrea del Sarto, 1516. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund 1949 (49.97.13), New York.

123. Marcantonio Raimondi, *The Virgin's Lamentation*, engraving, early decades of 16th century. Albertina Graphische Sammlung, Vienna.



124. *The Dead Christ*, Albertina
Graphische Sammlung, Vienna.

the frame of the icon of the Passion below brings new evidence to bear on the role of Michelangelo's work in forming the Cretan painter's personality as an artist.³⁶ As we have seen, the model for the scene in the icon of the Passion was created on the basis of the early sixteenth-century engravings by Marcantonio Raimondi, Agostino Veneto and Dürer. However, the central theme of Christ supported by the angel is repeated in a small, relief terracotta plaque attributed to the Flemish painter Bartholomeus Spranger (Antwerp 1546 - Prague 1611) and dated around 1585, and in mirror image in an engraving by Hendrik Goltzius (1587) (Fig. 128) after a drawing sent by Spranger from Prague.³⁷

125. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos*,
Christ, detail of icon Cat. no. 17.

The same type and rendering of the dead Christ as in Goltzius's engraving features in at least two works by Giulio Clovio, the Pietà drawing in the Louvre





126. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos,*
The Passion of Christ, 1566, Cat. no. 17.

and the Pietà copied in an engraving by Cornelis Cort in 1566 (Fig. 127).³⁸ The head is in the very same type of profile, the pose of the naked body with the hands falling loosely downwards is exactly similar and there is a corresponding twist of the palm of one hand and support for the wrist of the other. This model is also encountered in earlier works, such as Schiavone's engravings and paintings, which were models for the scene of the Entombment in other works by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, such as the small Entombment in the Stanley Moss Collection,³⁹ in the Niarchos Collection and elsewhere.⁴⁰

The notable iconographic similarities to works by Giulio Clovio, Theotokopoulos's patron in Rome, as well as the simultaneous presence in the Eternal City of the two painters, Spranger (1566-1575)⁴¹ and Theotokopoulos (1570-1572?), both protégées of the same eminent Croatian painter and miniaturist Giulio Clovio, under the aegis of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, suggest that Spranger drew his theme from this artistic milieu. The possibility that the two painters actually met is strengthened by a further coincidence: it is well known that during his sojourn in Rome Spranger copied several of Giulio Clovio's paintings,⁴² while in late 1569 and 1570 he undertook major works in the Villa Caprarola, where Domenikos Theotokopoulos



127. Cornelis Cort, *The Lamentation*; engraving after Giulio Clovio, 1566. Albertina, Graphische Sammlung, Vienna.

128. Hendrik Goltzius, *Dead Christ upheld by an angel*; engraving after Spranger, 1587.

most probably worked as an assistant in the very same period, early in 1570.⁴³ So it is not impossible that the successful, official painter of the Pope adopted a subject brought by the young Cretan painter Theotokopoulos, the '*pittore a carta*' of the painters' guild in Rome, who was then limited to painting small surfaces, awaiting recognition and commissions for large projects.⁴⁴ Certainly the iconographic affinities between the works of Giulio Clovio, Spranger and Domenikos Theotokopoulos point to the common ground of their iconographic preferences.

It is clear from the remarks on technique and iconography that the icon of the Passion was painted in Crete prior to Theotokopoulos's departure from his native isle in 1567/68, whereas Giulio Clovio's model had circulated in an engraving in 1566. Thus it is possible that while he was still resident on Crete, Theotokopoulos was acquainted not only with the engravings by Agostino Veneto (1516), Dürer (1506, 1522) and Michelangelo (*Pietà* for Vittoria Colonna), but also that of Cornelis Cort (1566). Moreover, the possibility that Theotokopoulos made interim visits to Italy, before his final move from Crete in 1567/68, cannot be precluded. This hypothesis, also proposed by Panayotakis,⁴⁵ is supported by the wide range of 'Roman' influences in the icon of the Passion.



129. Lateral altar designed by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, church of the Hospital of Saint John the Baptist extra muros, 1608. Toledo.



130. High-Altar designed by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, church of Santo Domingo el Antiguo, 1577-1579. Toledo.



131. Vasari, design for an altar, c. 1500. Musée du Louvre. Département des Arts Graphiques.



132. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Passion of Christ*, 1566, Cat. no. 17.



133. Portal frame in the Hypapanti church, 17th-18th century. Machairado, Zakynthos.

The frame

The icon is painted on a large rectangular panel which forms an integral frame in the shape of a tabernacle, crowned by a broken-arched pediment (Figs 1, 93, 132). Smaller, carved fillets have been attached to the panel to form a kind of relief porch, comprising two engaged columns set on a small, separate pedestal, while an analogous pedestal – oblique rectangular – with parapet is placed below the larger, central part of the icon. A horizontal cornice with mouldings of differing depth crowns the engaged columns and upholds a broken arched pediment decorated with mouldings. The entire frame is gilded, but the engaged columns are decorated with a white stem with flowers on a reddish ground, while a gold stem motif is projected upon a deep blue ground low down on the central parapet. Analogous painted ornaments are encountered on early fifteenth-century Italian frames and in prints of Renaissance character, such as an example printed by Soncino 1507.⁴⁶

The type of frame in the shape of a tabernacle with broken pediment, usually of triangular shape, is diffused in Italian art from the early sixteenth century.⁴⁷ However, the broken-arched pediment constitutes an innovation of our frame since, as far as I know, there are no other icons with a frame of this shape in either Cretan or Italian art of this period.⁴⁸ Michelangelo established the broken-arched pediment in the sepulchral monument of the Medici in Florence and his design for the Porta Pia (1561-1564), while Vignola used it later in the Villa Farnese in Rome (1570).⁴⁹ The form of the broken-arched frame of our icon is encountered in engravings and drawings from the early sixteenth century. Noteworthy is the use of such a frame in a drawing by Agostino Veneto and in a design by Vasari (1511-1574) for an altar, around 1550 (Fig. 130),⁵⁰ which is remarkably like our icon. It is encountered in a more complex form in engravings of the Pietà for Vittoria Colonna, which, as mentioned above, circulated widely in the middle of the century,⁵¹ while analogous broken arches adorn more composite frames of sansovino type in a series of small paxes of the middle of the century, which also copy the same subject.⁵²

However, the shape of the frame of our icon is connected most closely of all with the altars that Theotokopoulos designed in Toledo, for Santo Domingo el Antiguo, when he undertook his first major commission in 1577, and later for the Hospital of Saint John Tavera (Figs 129, 130).⁵³ Its arrangement is analogous, with lateral columns on pedestals, cornices with successive mouldings, and the characteristic broken arch, as are the proportions of the parts, which are based on the treatises of the great architects whom Theotokopoulos evidently admired – judging from the volumes recorded in his library – Vitruvius, Sebastiano Serlio, Palladio and Vignola, who, as other scholars have noted, influenced his designs for the above altars.⁵⁴ These similarities indicate that the icon of the Passion

offers not only the nucleus of the composition but also the *modello* of the architectural frame that Theotokopoulos designed several years later, in 1577, for the High-Altar of Santo Domingo el Antiguo in Toledo. So it is deduced that the icon of the Passion is the first known work in which Theotokopoulos, like the other great artists Bellini and Dürer,⁵⁵ designed the frame of the icon he was commissioned to paint; the result is bold, original and inventive.

The possibility that the frame of the icon of the Passion was designed in Crete gains credence from the fact that portal surrounds and wall fountains of comparable form exist there, as at Rousospiti and in the Attali Monastery at Bali,⁵⁶ with broken-triangular pediment. They are also found in Zakynthos, where the broken-arched pediment enjoyed wide distribution in secular and ecclesiastical architecture during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as in Hagios Loukas or in the Hypapanti church at Machairado (Fig. 133).⁵⁷ The use of Sebastiano Serlio's designs in Crete from the late sixteenth century has already been pointed out in the studies by Kando Fatourou-Hesychakis and Jordanis Dimakopoulos,⁵⁸ while elements of the architecture of Sebastiano Serlio, as well as of Vignola, and indeed from the church of Gesù, have been located in seventeenth-century churches on Zakynthos.⁵⁹ The widespread use of these models in monuments in Crete and Zakynthos confirms their currency, in all probability before the arrival of Cretan refugees in Zakynthos. It also allows us to consider Domenikos Theotokopoulos as a pioneer in introducing the new orders to his homeland. Moreover, from the publication dates of the relevant architectural books catalogued in his library in Spain, it can be assumed that he was aware of these works — and possibly owned them — at the time he was living in Crete.⁶⁰ Lastly, the similarities of the frame of the icon of the Passion to the drawings by Agostino Veneto and Vasari, in conjunction with the corresponding iconographic similarities to the engravings by Agostino Veneto for rendering the subject of the Pietà with angels, indicate clearly not only the time frame but also the artistic milieu in which Domenikos Theotokopoulos obtained his models in Crete.

The integral wooden frame with the oval form enclosing the representation in the icon of the Passion is an innovation encountered in only a few Cretan works, such as icon Cat. no. 72 (Fig. 270). Both features occur in the frame of the Holy Mandylion from the High-Altar of Santo Domingo el Antiguo (Fig. 130), which too was designed by Theotokopoulos, as relevant studies, that also note the Byzantine-Cretan origin of the subject, have demonstrated.⁶¹ The oval tondo, though not unknown in Italian art (mainly in portraits in printed books of the mid-sixteenth century, such as the volume by Paulus Jovius), is known in very few examples of Cretan icons with Italian influences, such as an icon of the Dormition, within a finely wrought Renaissance frame of the second half of the sixteenth century, in the Greek Institute in Venice, and in eighteenth-century icons from the Ionian Islands, such as the Descent from the Cross Cat. no. 49 (Fig. 234).⁶²

This brief quest for the models for the frame of the icon of the Passion leads to the conclusion that while he was still in Crete Theotokopoulos created a work that is consummately original, for both its time and place.

'Un quadro della Passione ... dorato'

The icon with its frame heralds the art of Theotokopoulos's maturity, while its technique permits its assignment to the Cretan period of his life. The last known work of this period is the as yet unidentified icon mentioned in the document of 26 December 1566 from the Venetian archive of the Duke of Crete, discovered and published by Maria Constantoudaki in 1976.⁶³ According to the document *'maistro Domenego Theotocopoulo depentor'* offered for auction *'un quadro della Passione del Nostro Signor Giesu Christo, dorato'*, for the high price of seventy ducats. All the information given has been analysed in detail in Constantoudaki's invaluable publication and Nikos Panayotakis's exhaustive study (1986). Both scholars agree that this was most probably an icon with frame, painted on a gold ground,⁶⁴ and Panayotakis further suggests that the work was not a large one.⁶⁵ The identity of the icon's subject has also been discussed. It was initially presumed that the scene depicted the Crucifixion,⁶⁶ but later proposals converged on the Man of Sorrows⁶⁷ and most probably in an Italo-Cretan style.

All the characteristic traits of our icon permit its identification with the icon mentioned in the document. The type of our icon with woodcarved frame is appropriate to the name *'quadro'*, a term frequently used in contemporary Italian documents to denote by synecdoche the icon together with its frame.⁶⁸ The gilding of both the ground and the carved wooden frame merits the description *'quadro dorato'*. Lastly, the suggestion that the subject is the Man of Sorrows is confirmed by that of our icon, a symbolic scene of Christ's Passion from Western iconography, equivalent to the Orthodox theme of the Man of Sorrows, which is encountered in a series of Italo-Cretan icons.⁶⁹ In my opinion the use of the wider term *'Passione del Nostro Signor Giesu Christo'* reflects the author of the document's difficulty in naming a subject that was then unusual in both Orthodox iconography and Italo-Cretan icons. Lastly, our icon with its gold ground and gilded frame, and the unique quality of the painter's innovative art, could have commanded a price far in excess of that of other painted works in Candia, as was the case with the icon in the document.⁷⁰ This suggestion is enhanced by the painter's reputation in Candia at that time; Panayotakis notes that he was 'one of the most famous, perhaps the most famous, of the many painters in Crete, a mature artist who set off with the ambition of conquering Italy and Europe'.⁷¹ The significance of our icon's style should be added to these arguments, for it represents a landmark in the development of the Cretan painter's personal style, which can be associated indirectly with his departure in 1567/68. Here, for the first time, Domenikos Theotokopoulos breaks



134. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Passion of Christ*, 1566, Cat. no. 17.

135. Nikolaos Kallergis, *Dead Christ upheld by an angel*. Royal door from the church of the Panagia tou Tsouroufli, 1732. Zakynthos Museum, no. 124.



loose from the traditions of both Byzantine and Italian painting, and embarks on the quest for a milieu in which he can realize his artistic visions.

It is safe to say that the purchaser of the icon of the Passion, when it was auctioned in Candia in 1566, was a highly cultured individual, extremely sensitive to the timbre of great art and furthermore very affluent. The Western subject of the work suggests that he was a Catholic or someone inclined towards Western dogmas. There was indeed a circle of prosperous burghers, educated connoisseurs, in Crete at that time, who assembled in the first Academy of Vivi in Rethymnon,⁷² and the purchaser of the icon of the Passion may well have belonged to this or an analogous circle. His name remains unknown. Antonios Kallergis (1521-1555), the bibliophile, collector of paintings and icons, who had been taught Greek and Latin by the Dominican friar Desiderio dal Legname, was no longer alive at that time.⁷³ However, his brother Matthaios, the powerful nobleman who was assassinated for political reasons in 1572, was still active.⁷⁴ The possible connection of Theotokopoulos with the Kallergis family has been shown by the recent comparative studies of the titles of books recorded in the two libraries, of Antonios Kallergis in Crete and of Domenikos Theotokopoulos in Spain.⁷⁵ These hypotheses are strengthened by the examination of the icon's fortune, discussed below.



The fortune of the icon of the Passion

The central subject of the icon of the Passion is unknown in Cretan icons, as far as I know. On the contrary, it is encountered in a large number of works in the local art of Zakynthos, in the Ionian Islands, from the eighteenth century, and indeed on the Royal Door of churches, flanked, as in Theotokopoulos's icon, by angels on the lateral bema doors. The subject was introduced by Nikolaos Kallergis in the church of the Panagia tou Tsouroufli (1732) (Fig. 135), which is the earliest known example of this iconography.⁷⁶ The theme is also encountered on the Royal Door in other eighteenth-century churches, such as Hagios Charalambos sto Potami (1743), most probably a work by Nikolaos Kallergis, the Panagia Langadiotissa at Ano Gerakario and Hagia Marina in the village of Faya,⁷⁷ as well as in another six churches on Zakynthos which are recorded in the old Report by Adamantiou (1908), mentioned in the Introduction: Hagios Spyridon Flambouriaris, Hagios Konstantinos at Kipoi, Hagia Aikaterini Grypari, Zoodochos Pegi, Estavromenos and the Hagioi Tessarakonta.⁷⁸ Two possibly nineteenth-century works in the Zakynthos Museum storerooms are identified with some of the icons in Adamantiou's Report.⁷⁹ In the surviving representations the similarity to the central theme of the icon of the Passion even extends to the expression of the upward-gazing angel. Analogous similarity with the left angel in

136. The Dead Christ on the Royal door and two angels on the bema doors, late 18th century. Iconostasis in the church of the Kyria ton Angelon, Zakynthos.



137. Nikolaos Koutouzis (1741-1813),
The Virgin lamenting the dead Christ.
Church of the Analipsis, Zakynthos.

the icon is noted on the bema door of the diakonikon in the church of the Kyria ton Angelon (Fig. 136),⁸⁰ a late eighteenth-century work in which the angel, turned leftwards, appears with the bare thigh projecting from the folds of his chiton; even his face has a similar expression, as he looks downwards with his eyes almost closed. As far as I know the subject was not diffused in the other Ionian Islands; it is encountered very rarely on Lefkada, as in the bema door in the church of Hagios Spyridon (*circa* 1748), which is ascribed to Tomazo Tzen, a Cretan painter who had previously lived on Zakynthos.⁸¹ The establishment and dissemination of the subject in so many churches on Zakynthos leads to the conclusion that this is a local tradition peculiar to the island. This tradition could be associated with the presence there of Theotokopoulos's icon of the Passion and the appeal it held among the the island's painters.

Frantzeskos Kallergis, father of Nikolaos and scion of the famous Cretan family, is known to have fled to Zakynthos after the Turks captured Rethymnon in 1645: this is mentioned by Marinos Tzanes Bounialis in his narrative poem 'The Cretan War'.⁸² The fact that it was Nikolaos Kallergis (1669-1747) who introduced this iconography in Zakynthos and that his method of working involved the copying of earlier Cretan icons — like his father Frantzeskos —,⁸³ permits the hypothesis that the icon of the Passion was in his family's possession while they were still in Crete. This view is reinforced not only by the social and economic status of Frantzeskos Kallergis, who was a priest, *referendarios* of Zakynthos and founder of the family church of Hagia Anna (1701), but also by the fact that he owned a substantial library, as did one of the most illustrious members of the Kallergis family in Crete, Antonios Kallergis.⁸⁴ It can be supposed that together with the books Frantzeskos brought with him when he left Rethymnon in 1645, he would also have brought important icons in his possession; this was certainly the case with other Cretan refugees who brought very important Cretan icons to Zakynthos, such as the priest and icon-painter Michael Agapitos.⁸⁵ Lastly, it should be noted that the name Frangiskos (Frantzeskos) existed in the Kallergis family, since this was the name of Antonios's elder brother, who died young (1517-1537).⁸⁶

The hypothesis that Nikolaos Kallergis's family brought the icon of the Passion from Crete to Zakynthos is further supported by the conclusions drawn from the study of the icon of the Annunciation (Cat. no. 48); there is compelling circumstantial evidence that another work by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, the Annunciation as on the Modena triptych, was in the hands of Nikolaos Kallergis. Lastly, the striking similarity between the angel holding the Holy Mandylion, on the bema door of the diakonikon from the church of the Pantokrator (Fig. 17),⁸⁷ a work by the same painter, and the Saint Veronica holding the Holy Mandylion, as rendered in a series of works by Theotokopoulos in his Spanish period (Fig. 19),⁸⁸ perhaps adds another work by the great Cretan painter to those owned by this minor-painter and admirer in Zakynthos.

The figure of the dead Christ upheld by the angel in the icon of the Passion is echoed with minor variations in other works by Zakynthian painters 'of liberal art', in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century, such as the Lamentation by Nikolaos Koutouzis, from the church of the Analepsis (Fig. 137) and the Descent from the Cross, from the church of Hagios Andreas tou Avouri (1825) by Nikolaos Kantounis.⁸⁹ It is also encountered in the Prayer on the Mount of Olives, from the church of the Akathistos, and in the figure of Mary Cleophas in the Zakynthos Museum.⁹⁰

The icon of the Passion constitutes a landmark in the artistic development of Domenikos Theotokopoulos. It offers new evidence on the formation of his creative personality in Crete and provokes a reassessment of his life and *oeuvre*. Its study has shown that the time-frame for the influences he received from Italian art while still in Crete should be widened impressively, while his rare talent, which has already spread its wings, shines forth with magnificent vitality in this early work.

PROVENANCE Crete-Zakynthos. It was purchased by the collector as an authentic work by Domenikos Theotokopoulos probably between 1934 and 1938. For the provenance of the icon and the history of its acquisition see Foreword 31, Introduction 43ff., Cat. no. 71 and Appendix I.

CONDITION Conserved sometime before 1946, by Demetrios Pelekasis. Cf. Introduction, 51 and Cat. no. 71. See also Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished. The icon was not included in Manolis Chatzidakis's catalogue (1943-1945) (see Introduction 31-33). It had been declared to the Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities in 1938, but had never been considered an authentic creation by Domenikos Theotokopoulos (see Manolis Chatzidakis's testimony, p. 22). First communication by the author of the present Catalogue, «Γνωστό - άγνωστο έργο ζητιζού ζωγράφου», (Known-unknown work by a Cretan painter), presented at the VIIIth International Congress of Cretan Studies, Herakleion, Crete, September 1996 (unpublished).

NOTES

The presence of the icon of the Passion imposes re-examination of the contribution of the Cretan period to the formation of Domenikos Theotokopoulos's personality as an artist. These problems will be examined in detail in the monograph I am preparing, to be published by the Benaki Museum.

1. E.g. see Cat. nos 2, 16, 27 and below p. 198, n. 7. On the condition of the icons in the Collection see Introduction, 41-42, 57.
2. Cf. Introduction, 41-42, 51.
3. Cf. Chatzidakis (1964) 1990, 149-151, n.1, where Wethey's views are refuted, figs 46, 48, 47. On the icons see n. 7.
4. Washington, National Gallery. Wethey 1962, II, 68, no. 104, figs 3 and 386. Chatzidakis (1964) 1990, 152.
5. Chatzidakis (1964) 1990, 149-153.
6. Chatzidakis (1964) 1990, 149-153; the painter Euphrosynos signs *γραφέω; θύτον τεύξεν χρίσ...* in 1542. Chatzidakis 1987, 241.
7. a) Evangelist Luke, dimensions 41 x 33 cm *ΧΕΙΡ ΔΟΜΗΝΙΚΟΥ*, 1560-1567. Benaki Museum. Repainted and conserved by Demetrios Pelekasis before 1935. New cleaning by Ph. Zachariou in April 1959 'the paste was removed and the linen remained' (Museum index card). Linen. Gold on ground. Free preliminary design and incision on the icon of the Virgin (Chatzidakis

- 1956, 4-5; N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 49; see also Introduction, n. 50; *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 146-149, 331-333 no. 2 (M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides) with previous bibliography). Stasinopoulos 1988, 17-18, figs 1-5.
- b) Adoration of the Magi, dimensions 40 x 45 cm. *ΧΕΙΡ ΔΟΜΗΝΙΚΟΥ*, 1560-1570. Benaki Museum. 'The work has been painted on a piece of wood in secondary use, part of a door or an old chest'. Free preliminary drawing, without incision (Mayer 1935, 205-207; see also Introduction, n. 55; *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 150-154, 334-337 no. 3 (M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides) with previous bibliography). Stasinopoulos 1988, 17-18, figs 1-5.
- c) Dormition of the Virgin, in Syros, 61.4 x 45 cm. *ΔΟΜΗΝΙΚΟΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ Ο ΔΕΙΞΑΣ*, Pre-1567. Gold ground, linen, preliminary drawing in a free hand. The icon was discovered by G. Mastoropoulos in 1983. It was conserved by Stavros Baltoyannis (Mastoropoulos 1983, 53; *Exhibition for the Centenary of the ChAE* 1984, no. 21 (M. Chatzidakis); *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 142-145, 329-330, no. 1 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou); see St. Baltoyannis, unpublished paper presented at the 1st Conference of Greek Conservators, November 1988; Acheimastou-Potamianou 1995, 29ff., figs 5-9, 17). On the Dormition in Syros see also Chatzidakis 1987 and Chatzidakis 1990. On the technique of Cretan icons see recently Milanou 1993, 36-46, fig. 3. For the incised preliminary design see also the icons of the Virgin Hodegetria (Cat. no. 1), Saint Paraskevi (Cat. no. 11), Saint Demetrios (Cat. no. 27), the Transfiguration (Cat. no. 34), the Deesis by Leos (Cat. no. 35).
8. Unfortunately the drawing has been lost, Perez-Sanchez 1969, 76-77, no. 486, fig. 146. Gudiol 1990, no. 21, fig. 28.
9. For the dimensions of the above icons see n. 7. Pertinent observations on the small size of Theotokopoulos's early icons have been made by Alexandros Xydis (Xydis 1964, 68-70 and Xydis 1995, 154).
10. Fatourou-Hesychakis 1995, 46ff., 65-66, figs 2, 3, 6, 21, 22. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides 1995, 102-103, figs 4, 5, 6. The type was also used in the Modena triptych, Fatourou-Hesychakis 1995, 65-66, figs 20, 21.
11. Cf. Vocotopoulos 1986, 149ff., figs 1-6, 9, 20. On the icon painted in the art of Michael Damaskenos, in Corfu, see Vocotopoulos 1990, 59-61, no. 39, fig. 40.
12. Personal observations. Both icons are in the Zakynthos Museum; the first has been published, see Konomos 1964, fig. on p. 61, the second is unpublished. See also an early 16th-century example, Constantoudaki 1974, pl. AB'.
13. For the Hospitality see e.g. a 16th-century icon in a private collection, Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 26. For the scene of the Two Marias at the Tomb see *Treasures of Mount Athos*, I, 1973, fig. 274 (fol. 167). Radojčić 1963, pl. IX. I thank Maria Borboudaki who studied the wall-paintings in Hagios Georgios at Apostoloi Padiados for her Master's dissertation at the University of London, 1996, and provided me with the unpublished photograph.
14. Pietà in the John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA, dimensions 22.9 x 20 cm (1570-1572), Manzini - Frati, *Opera Completa* 1978, no. 99a-b, 92. The same theme in the Pietà of the Hispanic Society; see Wethey 1962, nos 101, 102, figs 19, 20. For the sources of the iconography see below nn. 15 and 30.
15. For the Holy Trinity from the High Altar in Santo Domingo el Antiguo see Cossío (1908), 1984, II, figs on pp. 64, 75, 76. Wethey 1962, Cat. no. 2, fig. 50. See also *El Greco of Toledo* 1982, no. 7, 300-301, pl. 23, with previous bibliography; for the reconstruction of the Altar see *El Greco of Toledo* 1982, 150ff., figs 74-80 (Alfonso G. Perez-Sanchez); Mann 1986, 23-45. For the iconography see also above n. 14 and below n. 34. Both representations have been associated with a work by Federico Zuccaro, which also circulated in an engraving by Alberti (see recently Dillon 1995, 247, fig. 17).
16. Gudiol 1990, no. 21, fig. 28. Xydis 1995, 149, fig. 18. Ioannides 1995, 205, fig. 9. *Christie's* 1997, 254-255, no. 217. The Annunciation in the Prado, *El Greco in Italy*, 1995, 315-321, no. 40 (J. Alvarez-Lopera) with previous bibliography; see also Cat. no. 48, nn. 9 and 32.
17. E.g. see Wethey 1962, no. 17, 12-13, fig. 115, no. 75, figs 183-184, no. 259, fig. 304, no. 123, figs 88, 89, 92, no. 86, figs 105, 355.

18. Marinelli 1995, 356, figs 18, 19. For diagonal mannerist compositions see also Wethey 1962, vol. I, 22-23. The knowledge of perspective here must be examined in connection with Theotokopoulos's architectural interests which, as examination of the frame of the icon of the Passion has shown, were already manifest while he was still in Crete, see above 214ff. and n. 50.
19. Marinelli 1995, figs 7, 8, 18, 19, 20.
20. N. Chatzidakis 1992, 726ff., drawing 1.
21. The title of the scene has not been established in Greek terminology, because it is not encountered in Orthodox iconography except on bema doors in Zakynthos during the 18th and 19th centuries. Since these are without inscription, the name given to the scene by those who have recorded these icons varies. Sometimes it is called 'Descent from the Cross' and sometimes 'Dead Christ upheld by angels', see below n. 78. For the iconography of the subject see Panofsky 1927 and Belting 1981, 105ff.; see also Schiller 1968, vol. 2, figs 758, 759, 761, 763-766.
22. Donatello, 1446-1447, Padua, Coffey 1987, fig. 87. Goffen 1989, 13, fig. 8. For the Pietà in Italy see Belting 1985.
23. *The Illustrated Bartsch*, 163, 1990, 305, 306. See also Schiller 1968, 2, fig. 765 and collected examples above in n. 21. Other German works in which an angel is depicted behind Christ: 1. Work by Meister Franke, c. 1425, in Leipzig (Coffey 1987, fig. 181); 2. Triptych-Reliquary, c. 1380-1390 (Coffey 1987, fig. 92 = Belting 1985, fig. 32); 3. Reliquary from Montalto (Coffey 1987, fig. 95 = Belting 1985, fig. 33). For other examples of this art and this period, see Coffey 1987, figs 93, 94 and Panofsky 1927, 261, fig. 20 (Hans Memling, 1474) and figs 19-25.
24. There are numerous examples, such as a 15th-century work by Vitale da Bologna, in which the Virgin holds Christ by the armpits (Goffen 1989, fig. 25). The angels are frequently *putti*, whereas Christ is normally portrayed in front of a sarcophagus, see e.g. Goffen 1989, figs 53, 59, 60, works by Giovanni Bellini and Antonello da Messina. On the subject of the Pietà in the works by Giovanni Bellini see also Coffey 1987, in which the theme's origin from ancient art and its connection with representations of Achilles bearing the dead body of Patrocles, on a Hellenistic vase (fig. 193), is examined. The iconographic antecedents of the scene are given, noteworthy among which are the following: Bellini, San Vincenzo Ferreri, Rimini and London (Coffey 1987, 307ff. fig. 184, 324 ff. fig. 189, 349ff. fig. 194. Ghiotto - Pignoli, *Opera Completa* 1969, no. 56B, pl. XIV, nos 70, 69). See also the Pietà by Antonello da Messina in the Museo Correr, Venice (Coffey 1987, fig. 191; Sciascia, *Opera Completa* 1967, no. 53, pl. XLIII).
25. Sciascia, *Opera Completa* 1967, no. 49. The similarity is also noted by Trapier 1958, 8 and De Salas-Marias 1992, 39, n. 22. Michelangelo's statue of Lorenzo dei Medici has also been considered as a model for Christ's hand, which turns backwards in the Holy Trinity in Toledo (Cossio (1908), 1984, II, pl. 19, 1, fig. on p. 76.1).
26. Tietze - E. Tietze-Conrat 1944, 89, no. 321 - dates c. 1480. See also an analogous Pietà in the Academia of Venice, Tietze - E. Tietze-Conrat 1944, no. 323, 89; see also Ames-Lewis 1981, 119 (ascribed to Mantegna), figs 104, 105.
27. *The Illustrated Bartsch* 10, 1, 1980, 217, no. 122 (141) and 10, 2, 1981, 400-401 other examples; this engraving was reproduced in a large number of copies by later engravers too. The first comments on the models of the Holy Trinity in Santo Domingo el Antiguo being from Dürer and Michelangelo's Pietà, were made by Cossio (Cossio (1908), 1984, vol. II, pl. 19, 1, 2, 3; see also above n. 15).
28. *The Illustrated Bartsch* 10, 1, 1980, 22, no. 25 (47), and 10, 2, 1981, 70-72 other examples. This engraving has been considered a model for the rendering of the subject of the Mandylion in the icon from the same Altar in Santo Domingo el Antiguo (*El Greco of Toledo* 1982, no. 8, 181, pl. 33, dimensions 77 x 55 cm, Madrid, private collection). The subject's Byzantine origins, noted by Lydie Hadermann-Misguich (Hadermann-Misguich 1987, figs 10-11 and *eadem* 1995, 399-340), can be supported by additional examples of Cretan icons with a woodcarved frame, where the subject of the Mandylion held by angels appears on the upper part as on an iconostasis (an unpublished one in Zakynthos and others of later date, see e.g. Konomos 1977,

- 4, no. 4 and no. 6. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 39, pl. 30, no. 69, pl. 48). I found Theotokopoulos's exact model, in which angels as *putti* hold the Mandylion, in engravings with representations of altars by Daniel Hopfer (1470-1536) (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 17, 1981, 94 and 121).
29. Vassilaki 1995, 128, figs 9, 10; see also *The Illustrated Bartsch* 10, 1, 1980, 9, no. 1 (30) and 10, 2, 1981, 10-14; see also an engraving by a continuer of Dürer, the poses of the figures are reversed, op. cit., 10, 1, 268, nos 1, 173 and 10, 2, 442. For the influence of Dürer on Theotokopoulos's work see Kitaura 1989, 143ff. and Xydis 1995, 141ff.
30. *The Illustrated Bartsch* 26 (14), 1978, I, 51, no. 35A (40).
31. Unfinished relief and drawings, after 1538, De Tolnay 1953, 45ff., n. 3, figs 1, 14, 15 and De Tolnay 1971, 61062, figs 340-358. In De Tolnay's opinion Domenikos Theotokopoulos is the only artist who understood the Pietà for Vittoria Colonna in depth and was inspired not only by the synthesis but also by the spirit of Michelangelo's work in the Pietà in the Johnson Collection (De Tolnay 1953, 61 and De Tolnay 1971, 64). See also Salas 1968, 22, nn. 19, 20. De Salas - Mariás 1992, 38, nn. 17 and 18. See also collected examples of copies in De Tolnay 1953, 45-46, n. 3. For engravings by Nicolas Beatrixet, 1547 and Giulio Bonasone, 1546 see op. cit., 45, n. 3, 59, figs 2 and 3). See also De Tolnay 1971, 63, figs 341, 342, 343. The influence of Bonasone's engravings on Theotokopoulos's work has already been noted (see recently *El Greco in Italy*, 1995, 320 - J. Alvarez-Lopera).
32. For Michelangelo's drawings in Candia see Fatourou-Hesychakis 1995, 59, n. 32.
33. *Dessins italiens de l'Albertina de Vienne* 1975, 56. De Tolnay 1978, 81. That the work in London was used as the model for the Holy Trinity in Toledo was first suggested by Cossío (Cossío (1908), 1984, II, pl. 19, 2, fig. on p. 75.3).
34. For the subject see above n. 31 and Ioannides 1995, 199ff. See also the exhaustive study by Kitaura 1995, 145-164. Theotokopoulos is not the only Cretan painter to have received influences from Michelangelo's work. At the VIII International Congress of Cretan Studies (11-9-1996) Maria Kazanaki presented the very important miniatures in the manuscript by Markos Bathas, illustrating a text by Plotinos, with multiple influences from this Italian artist (Kazanaki-Lappa 1996, 191).
35. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Elisha Wittelsey Collection, 1949, Freedberg 1963, vol. 1, 33-34, fig. 12. This engraving is considered an influence of Dürer's Holy Trinity and its significance for Theotokopoulos has been pointed out by Salas - Mariás 1968, 54, n. 21, see also Salas - Mariás 1992, 28, n. 21. Andrea del Sarto was interested in rendering the nude body in three-quarter pose, as apparent from the large wall-painting with the Baptism, in the Chiostro dello Salzo, Florence (Freedberg 1963, 2, 15-17, figs 12 and 70) and a drawing in Melbourne (op. cit., fig. 69 and Dean 1986, 24), as well as other works by him, such as the Descent from the Cross, in Florence (Galleria Pitti, Freedberg, op. cit., no. 58, 123-128, fig. 144. See also a drawing in the Louvre, no. 1715, Freedberg 1963, 1, 67ff., fig. 14).
36. Landau and Parshall 1994, 131-133, 269, figs 130-131, in which the problem of copies of engravings is discussed. Agostino Veneto frequently copied engravings by Marcantonio Raimondi (op. cit., 131-133).
37. Formerly in Antoine Seilern's private collection in London (dimensions 22.1 x 16.7-18.5 cm); see Rezníček 1968, I, 370-375, II, pl. CLXX. For the painter Spranger see e.g. Benezit 1976, IX, 757. *Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers* 1964, V, 111. *Dictionnaire de la peinture flammande et hollandaise* 1989, 390-393. See also Henning 1987. For Goltzius's engraving: dimensions 32.8 x 25.1 cm, see Strauss 1977, 2, 436-437. *The Illustrated Bartsch* 3, I, 1980, 240, no. 273 (83). Many prints of the engraving circulated. For Hendrik Goltzius see Hirschmann 1921. Rezníček 1961. Broeder 1972. Strauss 1977. *The Illustrated Bartsch* 3, I, 1980 and 3, II, 1982.
38. *L'oeil du Connoisseur* 1992, no. 29, 67-68. *The Illustrated Bartsch* 52, 1986, 106 (88-I (100), see also a variation on pp. 110, 111. Like Theotokopoulos, Giulio Clovio copied works by Michelangelo, see Monbeig-Goguel 1988, 37-47. For Cornelis Cort's (1536-1578) acquaintance with Giulio Clovio before 1570 and their collaboration see recently *Fiamminghi a Roma* 1995, no. 58, 142-143. Theotokopoulos used this and other engravings by Cornelis Cort, see Xydis

- 1995, 151-152, figs 9, 12, 26, 27, 28. Noteworthy is the correspondence in pose and movement with the figure of Adam in an engraving after Dürer's model of Adam and Eve, see above n. 29.
39. The Entombment, Stanley Moss Collection, New York, dimensions 51.5 x 42.9 cm (*El Greco in Italy*, 1995, 322 with bibliography, no. 41, fig. on p. 323 - J. Milicua). The work is close in date to the Modena triptych and slightly later than the Last Supper in Bologna. It is considered to be a copy of an engraving by Parmigianino (op. cit., fig. 1), as well as by Schiavone (op. cit., 324). Apart from the correspondence in the subject and the overall bright orangey yellow tone, two secondary but significant traits are linked with our icon: 1. The marble sarcophagus, which does not exist in Parmigianino's drawing (op. cit., 322) is the same as the sarcophagus in the icon of the Passion of Christ; it is placed obliquely and has the same faded rose colour and simple geometric outline. 2. In the group of the three Maries, which is a creation of Theotokopoulos (Steinberg 1974, 324), the arrangement of the three heads is reminiscent of that of the angels in the icon of the Passion. See also Kitaura 1995, figs 1, 2.
40. Wethey 1962, I, fig. 95, no. 103, The Entombment on a wooden panel: Paris, dimensions 36.5 x 28 cm (Steinberg 1974, fig. 88, 474ff.) and another three works with the same subject, in Madrid, Seville and an auction at Christie's 1965 (Steinberg 1974, 474 with bibliography, figs 87, 90, 91). Dated c. 1576-1578, obviously influenced by Michelangelo. The vertical figure of Christ in the Florence Pietà is placed in a horizontal position (op. cit., 477).
41. For Spranger's sojourn in Rome see above n. 37; see also recently *Fiamminghi a Roma* 1995, 32-47 especially 35-36 and 435, no. 30 (Bert W. Meijer). He worked on wall-paintings and pictures together with Giulio Clovio, in the court of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, and collaborated on the decoration of the Villa Caprarola in early 1570, cf. *Fiamminghi a Roma* 1995, 341 and 439, n. 66. For Theotokopoulos's sojourn in Rome see Trapier 1958, Wethey 1984 and Robertson 1995, 215ff. and 1995a, 39ff.
42. Scholars mention that during his stay in Rome he was influenced and copied works, among others, by Giulio Clovio. Reznicek, 1968, 372. *Fiamminghi a Roma* 1995, 341; see also above nn. 37 and 41.
43. Wethey assumes that Theotokopoulos would have only worked as an assistant in early 1570 (Wethey 1984, 172 and 5). Although his visit there is considered certain, his participation in the decoration is open to question, see Robertson 1995, 215ff., 224, n. 24 and Brown 1982, 81. The first known portrait painted by Theotokopoulos in Rome is of Giulio Clovio (Wethey 1984, 173ff, fig. 1 and Robertson 1995a, 42ff., figs 2-3).
44. Giulio Clovio, in his letter of recommendation to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, of 16 November 1570, refers to Domenikos Theotokopoulos as 'un giovane candiotto', while in the document of the painters' guild in Rome he is mentioned as a 'pittor a carta'. Cf. Wethey 1984, 171ff., n. 4. with previous bibliography, and Robertson 1995, 222, n. 32 for a different interpretation of the term. The lack of large-scale works by Theotokopoulos in Italy is indirect evidence of his limited acceptance by the circles of the great painters of the day. For this reason the role of Giulio Clovio, who supported him from the outset, deserves particular appreciation cf. Wethey 1962, I, 28-29, Robertson 1995, 215ff. and 1995a, 39ff.; see also Monbeig-Goguel 1988, 43. El Greco received his first large commission to decorate the Altar of Santo Domingo el Antiguo while he was residing in Rome, before 1577, see recently *In Search of El Greco* 1990, 19, no. 18; Wethey 1984, 176-177; Mann 1986, 1-23; Robertson 1995a, 54; Hadjinicolaou 1995a, 72.
45. Panayotakis 1986, 96.
46. Frontispiece of a book by the Jewish printer Gershom Soncino, Fano 1507 (*Art of the Printed Book* 1974, fig. 33). The Cretans were able to obtain books published in Venice, as well as in other Western European cities, probably through Greeks — and particularly Cretans — living abroad (see Fatourou-Hesychakis 1982, 132; Panayotakis 1986, 81, n. 1). We note here that the list ought probably to include Constantinople, where the first book was printed in a Jewish printing house in 1503/4 or 1493/4 (Offenberg 1969, 96-112, pl. 4). I wish to thank Mr Kostas Staikos for providing me with the related bibliography. On Theotokopoulos's library see below

- nn. 49, 59 and 75.
47. For this issue see Newbery, Bissaca, Kanter 1990, 22, with other examples of the dissemination of the 'classical' style in those years. Frames of the same type, of 'naiskos' shape with triangular pediment, were diffused early in the 15th century; in this period frames with a more complex, pedimental crowning device combining the semicircle with the triangle, also appeared (op. cit., 20ff., figs 14, 15, 16). These frames frequently have a representation of the Man of Sorrows on the tympanum of the triangular pediment (op. cit., fig. 16, frame c. 1470). An architectural frame in the shape of an altar with 'classical', broken triangular pediment is encountered in the mid-16th century (Private collection in New York, dimensions 25 x 18 inches, Heydenryk 1963, 52-53, fig. 47).
48. I warmly thank Laurence Kanter of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, for the relevant discussion I had with him. The broken-arched pediment appears in more composite ornaments, such as in the engravings of the Pietà for Vittoria Colonna and the bronze pax, see nn. 31 and 52, and Cat. no. 72, 436ff.
49. Funerary monument of the Medici (1520-1534), Porta Pia in Rome (designs of 1561-1564) and in the Sforza chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore, c. 1560-1573 (cf. Heydenreich - Lotz 1974, 258, 260, fig. 85; Goldscheider 1953, figs 144-147, 203, 216). In Theotokopoulos's library there was a copy of Vignola's *Regola delle cinque ordini d'architettura* in 32 tavole, the edition published in Rome in 1562 (see in connection Mariás - Bustamante 1981, 27, n. 26: 'Vignola ..., con varios papeles de trazas'. On the architect and painter Vignola see Heydenreich - Lotz 1974, 267ff.) It has also been noted that Theotokopoulos was in Rome during the same years and that in certain paintings he was influenced by Vignola's designs for the façade of the church of Gesù (Pavon 1962, 213-215; Trapier 1958, 78-79, who has noted the influence in the Healing of the Blindman, in Parma, Trapier, op. cit., figs 4, 5). This façade was soon imprinted on medallions issued by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese in 1568 and 1575 (Davis 1989, nos 8, 9, pp. 44ff., 47). It should be added here that the church of Gesù was also used as a model in Zakynthos (see below n. 59). Pavon notes that Vignola was in Rome at the same time as Domenikos Theotokopoulos. The influence of Vignola and Vitruvius is also noted by Mariás - Bustamante 1981, 27, 56-73, where El Greco 'architecto' is also examined (op. cit., 17-43). See also Puppi 1984, 142ff. and below n. 60.
50. *Raphael, Autour des dessins du Louvre* 1992, no. 150, 348 (Agostino Veneto), Monbeig-Goguel 1972, nos 290, 298, pp. 201, 202 (Vasari); *Polypptyques* 1990, 113-115 (C. Monbeig-Goguel).
51. See above n. 30, De Tolnay 1953, figs 3, 4.
52. For this subject see De Tolnay 1953, 58-59, figs 17, 18. See also the Scene of the Flagellation on two bronze relief plaquettes in Cleveland, and a Pietà in Oberlin, which was set in a similar frame (pax), all works by Moderno (Galeazzo Mondella?) from Northern Italy, who was working in Rome in 1506 (Wixom 1975, nos 33-34; Newbery, Bissaca, Kanter 1990, 54, no. 25). See also other examples *Renaissance plaquettes* 1994, no. 37 (Entombment), 47, 48 and no. 57 (Entombment), 64 and no. 96 (Entombment, 97 and no. 56 (Pietà), 63 and no. 68, 73.
53. Wethey 1962, I, 66ff., figs 361, 382, 383, 384 and II, 3ff., 19ff.
54. Scholars note the originality and the difficulty of locating an exact model for the Altar designed by Theotokopoulos for the church of Santo Domingo in Toledo (Wethey 1962, I, 67-68 'very advanced indeed and moreover, highly original'). The Altar of Saint Barbara in the church of Santa Maria Formosa, in Venice (c. 1510), has been considered a more closely related model (Wethey 1962, I, 82-83, 112 and Soehrer 1961, 20-21, pl. 33; the author considers that El Greco introduced this type of tripartite Altar in the church of Santo Domingo). See also Mariás - Bustamante 1981, 25 and in general 17-43, 63-64, 84-85, 91, 103, Martín González, 1984, 115ff. See also below n. 60.
55. Drawing of the Pietà by Jacopo Bellini with the dead Christ to the waist, in a frame with triangular pediment, in the Louvre (*Le Christ à la colonne* 1993, 72, fig. 54). Drawing by Dürer for the frame of his painting of the Holy Trinity, after a commission in 1507 (see Heydenryk 1963, figs 38 and 39). The frame is in the form of a tabernacle with arched pediment, that is of analogous form to the frame of our icon. Nevertheless, an arched frame recurs on a large

- number of tabernacle frames c. 1500.
56. Dimakopoulos 1970, 333, 339, pl. ΠΘ', fig. 18, *Venetian Monuments of Rethymnon* 1980, 51, fig. 26. Psilakis 1994, 192-193, fig. on 193.
 57. Zivas 1970, 103ff., figs 225, 226, 227, 229, 231, 239, 240, 243, 244.
 58. Fatourou-Hesychakis 1982, pls 21-22, 29, 30, 35, 36, 39. Dimakopoulos 1971, 209ff. and 1972, 23ff.
 59. In the church of the Skopiotissa, which was completed in 1638, influence of Sebastiano Serlio, see Mylona 1984, 102ff., figs 3, 6, pl. 7. In the church of the Hagia Triada in Chora influence from Vignola's façade of the church of Gesù, Zivas 1970, 111, figs 84, 186, 187.
 60. The books on architecture in his library, which were examined by Marias - Bustamante 1982, 48ff., are recorded as follows: Sebastiano Serlio, Italian edition of 1560 (op. cit., 49); Vignola, 1562 edition (op. cit., 49); Palladio, *Edizio princeps*, 1570 (op. cit., 49); Vitruvius with commentary by Daniele Barbaro, 1556 edition (op. cit., 50ff., 56-73). The first editions of Sebastiano Serlio, before their widespread reprints in 1584 and 1619, in Venice, had already been published in that city in 1557, 1559 and 1561 or 1578, while the first edition with engravings had circulated in Lyon in 1551. On the editions of Serlio see Brunet 1860 (1966), V, cols 304-305. Sebastiano Serlio designed a similar cornice with mouldings to that on the icon of the Passion of Christ, after the prototype by Vitruvius (Sebastiano Serlio, third book, vol. I, 1978, fig. on 103, no. G): frontispieces within a broken-arched frame are encountered in the fourth and seventh books by Serlio (op. cit., vols I, II, 1978); a design for a door from the fourth book is of analogous form (op. cit., vol. I, 1978, 158, 169). For the circulation in Crete of the earlier editions of Serlio with wood-cuts see pertinent observations by Fatourou-Hesychakis 1982, 117, and mainly 126, 127, 132-133, 136. On Theotokopoulos's architectural interests see Martin González 1958; Marias - Bustamante 1981, α, 27; Martin González 1985, 125, 130, 131, 132. For Theotokopoulos's library see also below n. 72.
 61. Dimensions 77 x 55 cm, Madrid, private collection, see *El Greco of Toledo* 1982, no. 8, 181, pl. 33. The Holy Mandylion was original placed below the Holy Trinity and above the Assumption of the Virgin, see reconstruction of the altar in *El Greco of Toledo* 1982, 150ff., figs 74-80 (Alfonso G. Pérez Sánchez). On the iconography see above n. 28. On Cretan icons with an integral wooden frame see icon frame Cat. no. 72, nn. 11, 12.
 62. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 95, 115, pl. 54. For oval icons from the Ionian Islands see Cat. no. 49, n. 1; see also Cat. no. 72.
 63. Constantoudaki 1975-76, 57-71 and Constantoudaki 1975, 294-296. Panayotakis 1986, 19-27.
 64. Constantoudaki 1975-76, 61 and Constantoudaki 1975, 298-299: 'The execution of an icon on a gold ground (quadro ... dorato) is a traditional trait of Byzantine painting'. Panayotakis 1986, 19: 'a painting of his with gold ground (quadro ... dorato) representing the Passion of Christ'.
 65. '... its characterization as a simple quadro does not seem to indicate that it was a painting of unusually large dimensions' (Panayotakis 1986, 23).
 66. Constantoudaki 1975-76, 61 and Constantoudaki 1975, 299: 'it is possible that this succinct title implies the climax of his Passion, the Crucifixion'. Panayotakis 1986, 19-20: 'it represented the Passion of Christ, that is in all probability the Crucifixion'.
 67. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides 1995, 97: 'that is probably the "Man of Sorrows" rather than the Crucifixion'. See also Baltoyanni 1995, 95, who proposes the identification of the icon with the Man of Sorrows, on a 16th-century Italo-Cretan icon in a composite frame of sansovino type, in Patmos. (The frame of this icon is included in Grimm 1978, 78, fig. 126, who considers it the work of a Venetian province and dates it to the 17th century. See also three other examples of the same type, the closest being the frame in the Pollak Collection, London (op. cit., fig. 125). See also Grimm 1981, no. 126, fig. 122.
 68. Constantoudaki 1973, 377, 'quadri, the use of the term by synecdoche to denote paintings and especially icons was ... common'. Constantoudaki 1975, 298-300: 'quadro, quadro, xάδpо, xάδpо'.
 69. For icons of the Man of Sorrows with half-length figure of the dead Christ see Chatzidakis 1974, 184-185, pls 1A' 2, 3, 1E' 1, 2. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 88-89, no. 40, pl. 101. The angels

- are usually shown on a very small scale, see e.g. Tzafouris's Man of Sorrows, in Vienna, and an icon in a private collection in London (Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, 322-323; Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 8; *From Byzantium to El Greco* 1987, no. 61). See also icons of the Man of Sorrows with Christ upright and frontal, in Cyprus; from the church of Hagios Loukas in Nicosia (dimensions 83 x 40 cm), 15th century (?), Papageorgiou 1991, fig. 71, 115; from the Panagia church, Palaiochori (dimensions 99 x 67 cm) by the painter Philippos (op. cit., 115, fig. 70); from the church of the Chryseleousa at Strovolo (op. cit., 115).
70. The value of the work was estimated by two painters: the well-known painter Georgios Klontzas and the otherwise unknown priest Yannis De Frossego, at 70 and 80 ducats respectively, and it was sold for 70 ducats. See relevant comments on the high price, which equalled that of a painting by Tintoretto in Constantoudaki 1975-76, 59, 62, Constantoudaki 1975, 296, 300, and Panayotakis 1986, 19-20, 23.
71. Panayotakis 1986, 25.
72. Panayotakis 1974, 232ff.
73. Panayotakis 1968, 53ff. and Panayotakis 1988, 176.
74. Panayotakis 1968, 55ff.
75. In a communication presented at the VIII International Congress of Cretan Studies (12-9-1996) M. Hesychakis mentioned that 30 titles of books in Antonios Kallergis's library coincided with those in Theotokopoulos's library in Spain and considers the relationship between Theotokopoulos and the Antonios Kallergis family obvious. K. Fatourou-Hesychakis pointed out the same relationship in her communication. See Hesychakis 1996 and Fatourou-Hesychakis 1996.
76. Chatzidakis 1965, 47ff., fig. 16 on 50. Konomos 1967, fig. 4. Rigopoulos 1994, 51-53, no. 21.
77. I visited the unpublished churches in August 1996, thanks to the hospitality of the head of the 6th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities Myrto Georgopoulou, the director of the Zakynthos Museum Zoe Mylona and the archaeologist Katerina Demeti. Rigopoulos gathered together the examples in a concise publication, Rigopoulos 1994, 55, no. 24 with previous bibliography. For the iconostasis in Hagia Marina at Faya see Konomos 1964, fig. on 115 and Zivas 1970, fig. 191. On the churches see Konomos 1964, 113-115, 139.
78. For Adamantiou's Report see Introduction, 47. Hagios Konstantinos at Kipoi: 'in the prothesis the Descent from the Cross, Christ upheld by angels' (Konomos 1963, 109). Hagios Spyridon Flambouriaris: 'in the prothesis Christ being taken down from the cross by a very graceful angel holding the Saviour from the armpits with both hands' (op. cit., 111). Zoodochos Pigí: 'The Descent from the Cross. An angel holding Christ from the armpits' (op. cit., 116). Estavromenos church: 'Angel holding Christ' (op. cit., 116). Church of the Hagioi Tessarakonta: 'on the Royal Door Christ and an angel' (op. cit., 17). The icon in Hagia Aikaterini tou Grypari is mentioned by Pelekasis, *The Muses* 1920, no. 652, 2-3: 'on the Royal Door is depicted a strange, italicizing Descent from the Cross', and by Konomos 1964, 118-119: 'doors: angel holding the Lord'.
79. I wish to thank Katerina Demeti, archaeologist in the Zakynthos Museum, who investigated this in the Museum storerooms.
80. Konomos 1964, fig. on 131.
81. Rontoyannis 1974, 316 'for the one and only time in Lefkada', figs 90, 91.
82. Konomos 1964, 14-15. Zois 1963, 254. For the painter see also Cat. no. 46, n. 16, Cat. no. 47, Cat. no. 48, 360ff.
83. See Cat. no. 48, 360ff., where the copies by Nikolaos Kallergis are discussed. See also Introduction, 49, 54.
84. For Antonios Kallergis's library see Panayotakis 1968, 54, as well as above n. 75.
85. Michael Agapitos was also a Classicist, a theologian and a collector of valuable codices, as mentioned in his will of 1702. Among the icons he brought to Zakynthos were Angelos's Christ Pantocrator and Michael Damaskenos's Saint John the Baptist, Konomos 1968, 13-14. The possibility that other families (Luca Miani, Georgios Sideros) brought icons by Domenikos Theotokopoulos from Crete to Zakynthos is discussed in the Introduction, 54-55.

86. Panayotakis 1968, 47.
87. Now in the Zakynthos Museum, unpublished. Konomos 1964, 15.
88. For the representations of Saint Veronica that Greco painted in Spain see Wethey 1962, II, 148-149, nos 6A, 70, 71, 282, 283, 284, figs 68, 69, 70, 71. The origin of the theme is found in a triptych in the Lavra Monastery on Mount Athos, presented at the VIII International Congress of Cretan Studies by Efthymios Tsigaridas and dated c. 1500 (Tsigaridas 1996, 241). The subject is known in engravings by Dürer (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 10, 1, 1980, 133, no. 38 (120) and 10, 2, 1981, 295); see also a copy by Marcantonio Raimondi (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 27 (14), 1978, no. 606, 1, 292), as well as by other earlier German painters, such as Shongauer (1445-1450) (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 8, 1980, 272, no. 66 (149)). It has been noted that Theotokopoulos used other engravings by Shongauer, see Xydis 1995, 145, fig. 10. The angel's pose and the way in which he holds the Mandylion on the bema door of the iconostasis in Zakynthos is closer to Theotokopoulos's works than any other model.
89. In the Lamentation the pose of the dead Christ is the same, as are the proportions of his body, and so is the pose of the Virgin behind him (Charalambidis 1978, fig. 21). In the Descent from the Cross, apart from the dead Christ, the faces and expressions of the lateral figures are similar, as are the diagonal axes of the composition (Lydakis 1977, 161, figs 5, 6, Konomos 1964, fig. on 112. See also Lydakis 1976, 37, fig. 30).
90. Konomos 1964, fig. on 138, Charalambidis 1978, fig. 24, Lydakis 1976, 38, fig. 32.
For the presence of Theotokopoulos's early icons on Zakynthos and their influence on local painting see Introduction, 47-55 and Cat. nos 48 and 71. In Spain, during the years when El Greco was an obscure painter, his work was admired by the great painters Velasquez and Goya, while his rediscovery and re-evaluation during the 19th century was started by artists and critics. I am most grateful to José Alvarez-Lopera for the relevant discussion I had with him. For this subject see Alvarez-Lopera 1987, and Brown 1982 and 1984, 29ff. See also Foundoulaki 1995, 567ff.

18

SAINT ANDREW

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3722

29.3 x 26.2 x 2.5 cm

Art of Michael Damaskenos, *circa* 1570

'Head and part of the chest of the apostle, in frontal pose, with high gold cross on the left shoulder. He wears a pale red chiton with roseate highlights and a few white flecks, over which is a green himation with yellow highlights and dark green shadows. The shadows of the face are brown — the colour of the foundation — highlighted in rose with a very few white flecks. A fine red line just below the eyes and nostrils, and red lips. The hair and beard are painted on the foundation with fine grey, white and brown brushstrokes. The ground is gold. An inscription in red capitals: *O A(ΓΙΟ)C ΑΝΔΡΕΑC*.

The thin, elongated, finely worked cross, the schematic rendering of the wavy hair, the facial features with close-set eyes, narrow forehead and broad cheeks, are all characteristic of the saint. The modelling of the face is vaguely Byzantine, though softer and more natural, while in the folds of the garments the rhythmical principle of Byzantine drapery has been abandoned for a more naturalistic effect.

The technique of the icon is excellent. The colours are preserved fresh and bright, as if still wet, and this lovely work overall gives the impression of having been executed in splendid and luxurious materials.

Saint Andrew, as he is now, is the remnant of a larger icon which will have presented him

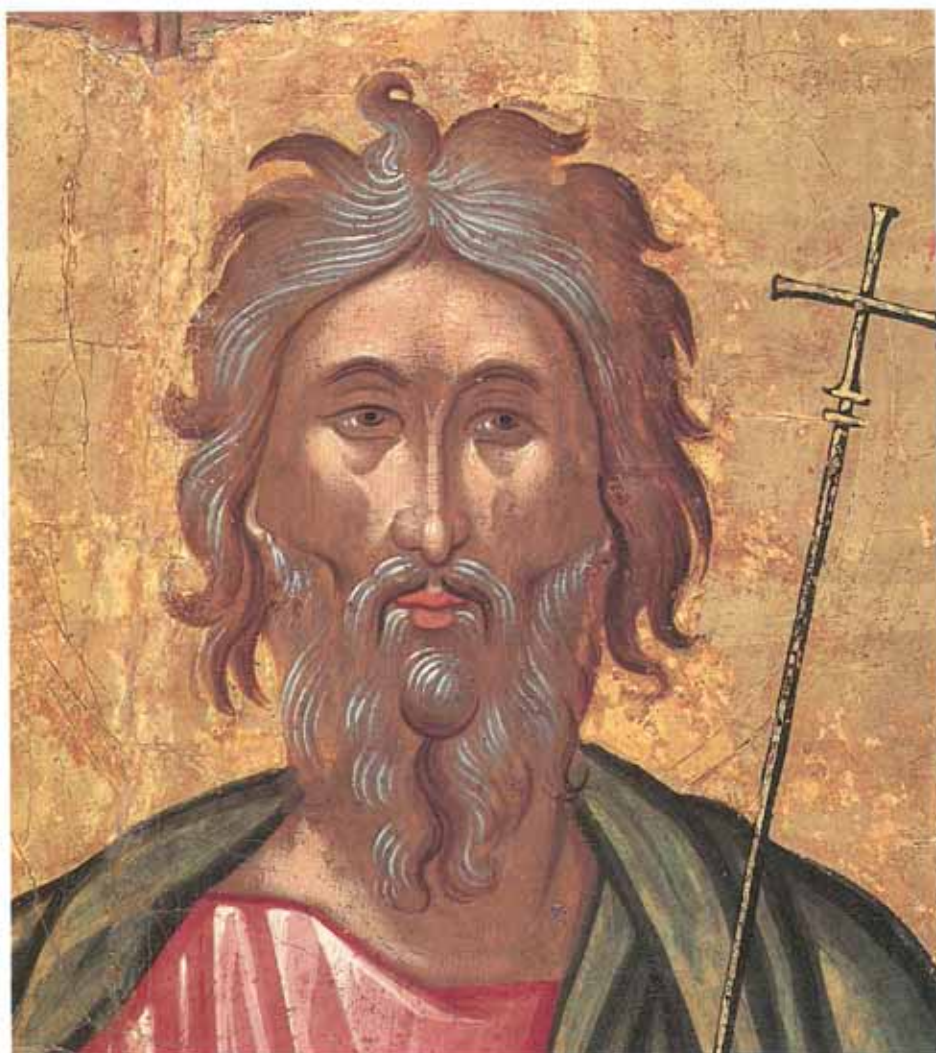




139. *The head of Saint Andrew. Detail of an icon with the busts of the twelve apostles, art of Michael Damaskenos, second half of 17th century. Pavlos Canellopoulos Collection, Athens.*

full-bodied. The painted surface below had been destroyed before it arrived in the hands of the collector, who was obliged to cut it off. The thick panel has cracked in the lower part from top to bottom, but has been skilfully joined. The gesso is on linen. The gold ground is effaced in only a few places. The outlines are incised.' *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

The figure of the frontal apostle with white hair crowning the face, dishevelled with straggling wispy ends as in Saint John the Baptist, and a long white beard is represented in the usual iconography established for him in Byzantine and Postbyzantine painting;¹ whether in bust or full-bodied, the saint holds a closed scroll or, more often, a cross with long handle. The colours of the garments are as a rule red-rose for the chiton, green for the himation. Saint Andrew is represented standing, frontal and without cross in the sixteenth-century icon in the Temple Gallery, London.² He appears in bust to the waist,



140. The head of Saint Andrew, detail of icon Cat. no. 18.

without cross, in the icon from the Great Deesis by Theophanis in the Monastery of Stavronikita,³ as well as in a seventeenth-century icon in Ravenna⁴ and an icon in the Ekonomopoulos Collection.⁵ He is portrayed standing in three-quarter pose, with similar facial features and in a green himation, in the Deesis by Ioannis Apakas, around 1600, in Patmos.⁶

These specific traits of the apostle's face and garments are encountered in two icons that are securely attributed to Michael Damaskenos or his milieu, and come from the known series with the Great Deesis from the Hypapanti church⁷ and the church of the Taxiarchis, at Kampiello in Corfu.⁸ In the icon from the Great Deesis in the Hypapanti church the saint is painted frontal, his body slightly turned, holding a cross with long handle, as in our icon, while in that in the church of the Taxiarchis he holds a closed scroll. In these icons the saint's face, modelled with greater plasticity, bears an anxious expression; in our icon the overall softer and calmer rendering is more reminiscent of figures of other apostles from the same series, such as the frontal Matthew or Luke.⁹ Their faces have the same

fleshy nose, deep shadows under the eyes and on the cheeks, soft modelling in rose on the deep brown foundation and brilliant white highlights on the prominent planes as in our icon. Furthermore, the colour tones and the combinations of reddish rose with deep green on the fabrics of Saint Mark's garments¹⁰ correspond to those in our icon.

Our icon's affinity with the *oeuvre* of Damaskenos is also apparent if it is compared with the bust of Saint Andrew in the small icon with the Twelve Apostles, in the Canellopoulos Collection (Figs 139, 140), which is confidently attributed to his workshop.¹¹ Despite the minor differences, since the apostle's forehead is narrower in our icon and the hair and beard seem to be more simply drawn with white lines — they have perhaps suffered some damage during cleaning —, an analogous quality is easily ascertained in the colour and drawing, as well as in the modelling of the flesh with the peculiar highlights on the broad plane of the cheek near the nose, forming a rhomboid finial which intrudes into the other round, prominent, highlighted plane on the cheekbone.

Above all, however, the workmanship of Damaskenos is recognizable in our icon in his unique personal style, evident in the sweep of the brushstroke, firm yet fluid in places, as well as in the quality of the colour which shimmers in the light. All bespeak the hand of the great sixteenth-century master; the rose on the chiton that seems to glimmer with the translucent white highlights and the green on the himation with the discreet gold-green highlights; as well as the modelling of the flesh with the smooth volumes and gentle transitions on the deep brown foundation, with brushstrokes that pale into rose and white.

The original dimensions of our icon are not known. If it represented a full-bodied standing saint, as is assumed from Chatzidakis's description (1945), then it does not belong to a series of the Great Deesis, like the above icons in Corfu, but to another class of icons by Michael Damaskenos with standing frontal saints, such as his Saint Anthony in the Municipal Cemetery, Corfu.¹²

Saint Andrew not only features in icons of the Great Deesis but also in a splendid, signed icon by Damaskenos, with his Crucifixion upside down, in the Byzantine Museum.¹³ In a small, possibly seventeenth-century, icon in Ravenna, Saint Andrew is represented standing, frontal, holding a long-handled cross and an unfurled scroll, in a scene of martyrdom, while he occurs in different types in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century icons in Cephalonia.¹⁴

CONDITION Very good.

BIBLIOGRAPHY *BCH* LXVIII-LXIX (1944-45), 424.

NOTES

1. *Hermeneia* 1909, 151, 'an old man with curly hair, forked beard, holding a cross and a rolled scroll'.
2. *Temple Gallery* 1974, no. 9, 43, col. photo on p. 25; the icon has been transferred to a new panel and is dated to the second half of the 15th century.

3. Chatzidakis 1969-70, fig. 63.
4. Baltoyanni 1986, 38, pl. 46.
5. Inv. no. 4478 (38 x 28.2 cm); *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, no. 159, 96, col. pl. on p. 101.
6. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 118-119, pl. 70.
7. It belongs to the circle of Damaskenos, Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 49, 72-73, figs 165-166 (62 x 45 cm).
8. The icon is now in a private collection. The series is certainly attributed to Damaskenos, Vocotopoulos 1990, 55, fig. 136a.
9. Vocotopoulos 1985, 393, 395-396, fig. 13. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 33, figs 143, 146.
10. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 34, 58, fig. 37.
11. See above Cat. no. 13, n. 5.
12. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 24, figs 124-126.
13. Inv. no. T. 2120 (49 x 40 cm). *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1994, no. 5, 188-189 (Chr. Baltoyanni).
14. Inv. no. 4482, (24 x 23 cm). *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, 99, 15th century, and Gelis 1986, figs on pp. 5, 15, 128.

19

HEAD OF THE VIRGIN

45 x 34.7 x 1.7 cm

Circa 1600

The head of the Virgin is depicted to just below the neck, turned in three-quarter pose and bowed slightly. She wears a deep red maphorion with gold border band and a deep blue dress with similar band round the neck. The headband is the same dark blue. The flesh is modelled in brownish tones forming dark shadows surrounding the face around the mouth, down the nose and on the eyelids. The cheeks, the forehead, the bridge and axis of the nose, and the chin are emphasized by a small plane of tiny, fine parallel white lines. The facial features are defined by firm brushstrokes with great precision, revealing the hand of a most accomplished painter.

The Head is projected against the gold ground of the icon, leaving a thin gold border at the sides and below as a frame. On the gold band bottom right are traces of the letters: *XEIP EMANOY*. If the signature is genuine, which is equivocal, the name could be Emmanuel.

The icon with the Head of the Virgin presumably belongs to a composition of Deesis, with Christ as the central figure,¹ a subject established by Emmanuel Lambardos.² There are analogous icons with the Head of the Virgin in the Byzantine Museum, Athens (no T. 156), in a private collection in London and in the Greek Institute, Venice,³ while one of the best examples is in Padua.⁴

Our icon, with its flawless technique, probably comes from the same workshop as those in the Byzantine Museum and the London collection, and also dates from the same period, around 1600.

CONDITION Very good with slight damage to the red band in the lower section, where traces of the letters of some inscription are visible.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Cf. Cat. no. 21, 298.
2. Two painters of this name are known, mentioned 1587-1631 and 1632-1644, see Kazanaki-Lappa 1981, 216-217, nos 36-37; Vocotopoulos 1990, 75, 148; N. Chatzidakis 1993, 176.
3. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 30. Chatzidakis 1962, 112, no. 89.
4. N. Chatzidakis 1993, 30-31, no. 2; the catalogue entry was written before conservation of the icon for exhibition in the Museo Correr, Venice; after conservation my proposed date should be shifted to a much later period and the icon most probably attributed to Emmanuel Lambardos.



20

CHRIST GREAT HIGH PRIEST

28.5 x 23 x 1.7 cm

Circa 1600

Christ is depicted to the waist, frontal, in the vestments of the High Priest. He blesses with his right hand, while holding an open gospel book with his left; from the surviving letters there was evidently an inscription on the left page: *'My kingdom is not of this world'* (John 18:36) and on the right: *'Take, eat; this is my body ... which is broken for many for the remission of sins'* (Matthew 26:26). Next to Christ's right shoulder are traces of an inscription in red capitals: *BACIAEYC TΩN BACIAEYONTΩN* (*King of Kings*) and next to his left, traces of another inscription: *KAI METAC APXIEPEYC* (*and Great High Priest*).

Christ's rose sticharion is embellished with bejewelled maniples. His blue sakkos has a gold border band, studded with precious stones. The paler blue omophorion, with white illumined planes, is decorated with gold crosses. On the head is a semicircular ochre mitre also encrusted with gems. The waist-length representation of Christ most probably derives from the full-bodied figure of Christ enthroned, in similar dress and pose, on an icon by Michael Damaskenos in Corfu.¹

The earliest and most significant prototype of Christ Great High Priest in half-figure appears on the despotic icon in Patmos, which Chatzidakis attributes to the workshop of Andreas Ritzos.² Another important example is an icon from the same workshop in the Gonia Monastery, Crete.³ The same iconographic type of Christ was reproduced by great painters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as Emmanuel Lambardos⁴ and Ieremias Palladas in an icon akin to ours, now in Russia,⁵ while the type is disseminated in a large number of Cretan icons.⁶ The theme's origin in more complex representations of the Palaeologan era, known from examples in Lesnovo and the Perivleptos at Mystras, has been noted in all the related studies.⁷

The Velimezis icon is painted in radiant colours with harmonious combinations of blue and pale rose on the sacerdotal vestments, the outlines are firm and the flesh is modelled with tiny parallel white highlights on the dark brown foundation. For



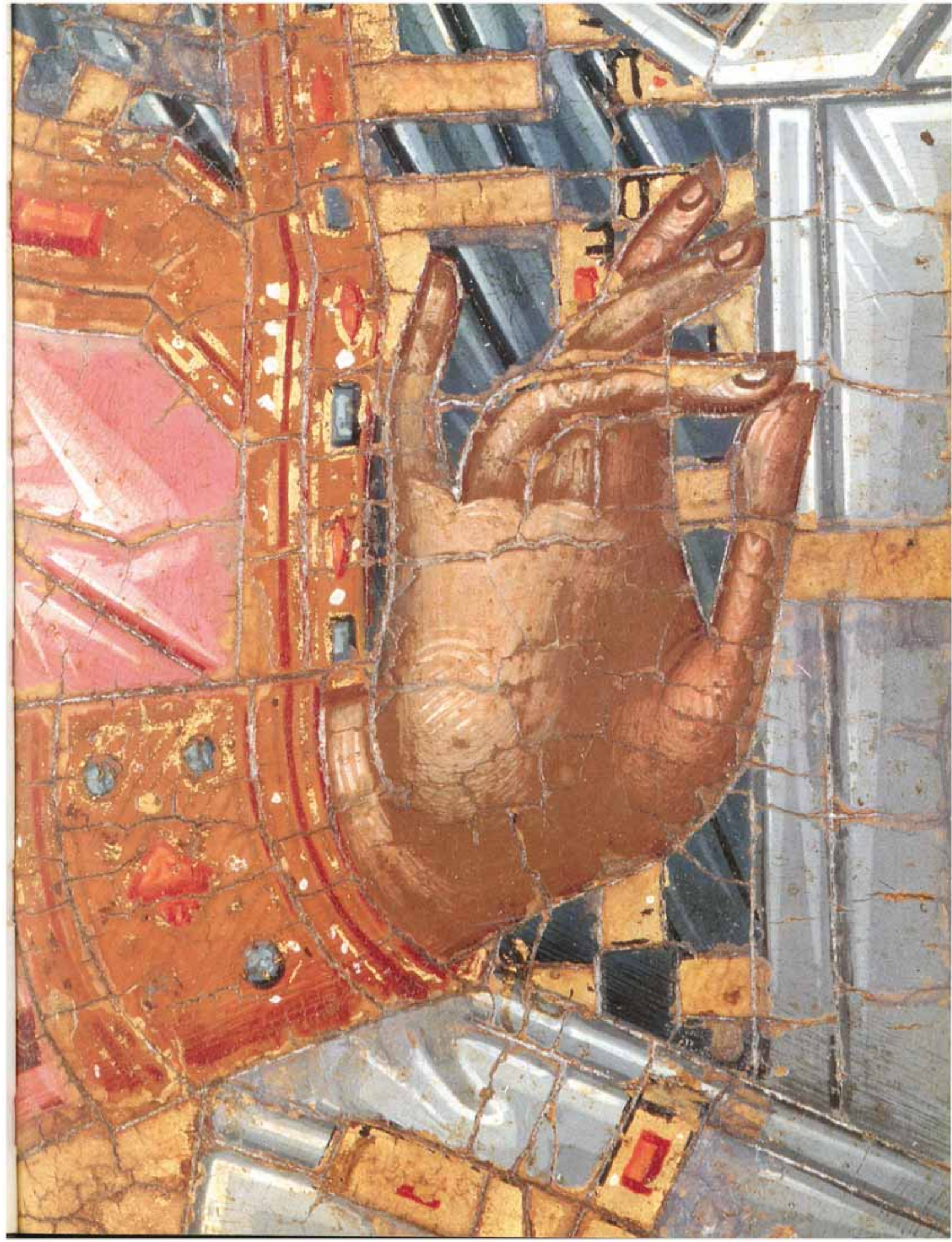
these reasons it is assigned to a milieu of conservative early-seventeenth century painters, such as Emmanuel Lambardos and Ieremias Palladas, who cleave faithfully to the tradition of the fifteenth-century Cretan masters.

CONDITION Quite good.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 22, 44-45, fig. 23.
2. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 15, 66-67, pls 19, 83.
3. *Icons from the Prefecture of Chania*, 1975, no. 7, fig. 34.
4. Vocotopoulos 1990, nos 50, 67, pp. 76, 97-98, figs 169, 177; the last icon was formerly attributed to Emmanuel Tzanes.
5. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 57, 412 (I. Kyzlasova).
6. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 19, 33, pl. 15B. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 102, 139-142, pls 152-153. *Sotheby's* 1988, nos 413, 414, art of Emmanuel Lambardos; see also Vocotopoulos 1990, 76.
7. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 66-67. Papamastorakis 1994, 67-76.



21 HEAD OF CHRIST

14.5 x 11.5 x 1 cm

Circa 1600

A very small icon depicting only the head of Christ to just below the neck, frontal. Of his vestments the purple chiton and dark blue himation are visible. The hair falls behind asymmetrically from a central parting, in parallel wavy lines. The facial features are described with precision in tiny brushstrokes and the modelling of the flesh is carefully executed. On the crossed halo in red letters the inscription: *O WN (The Being)*. Top left, traces of the inscription: *IC*.

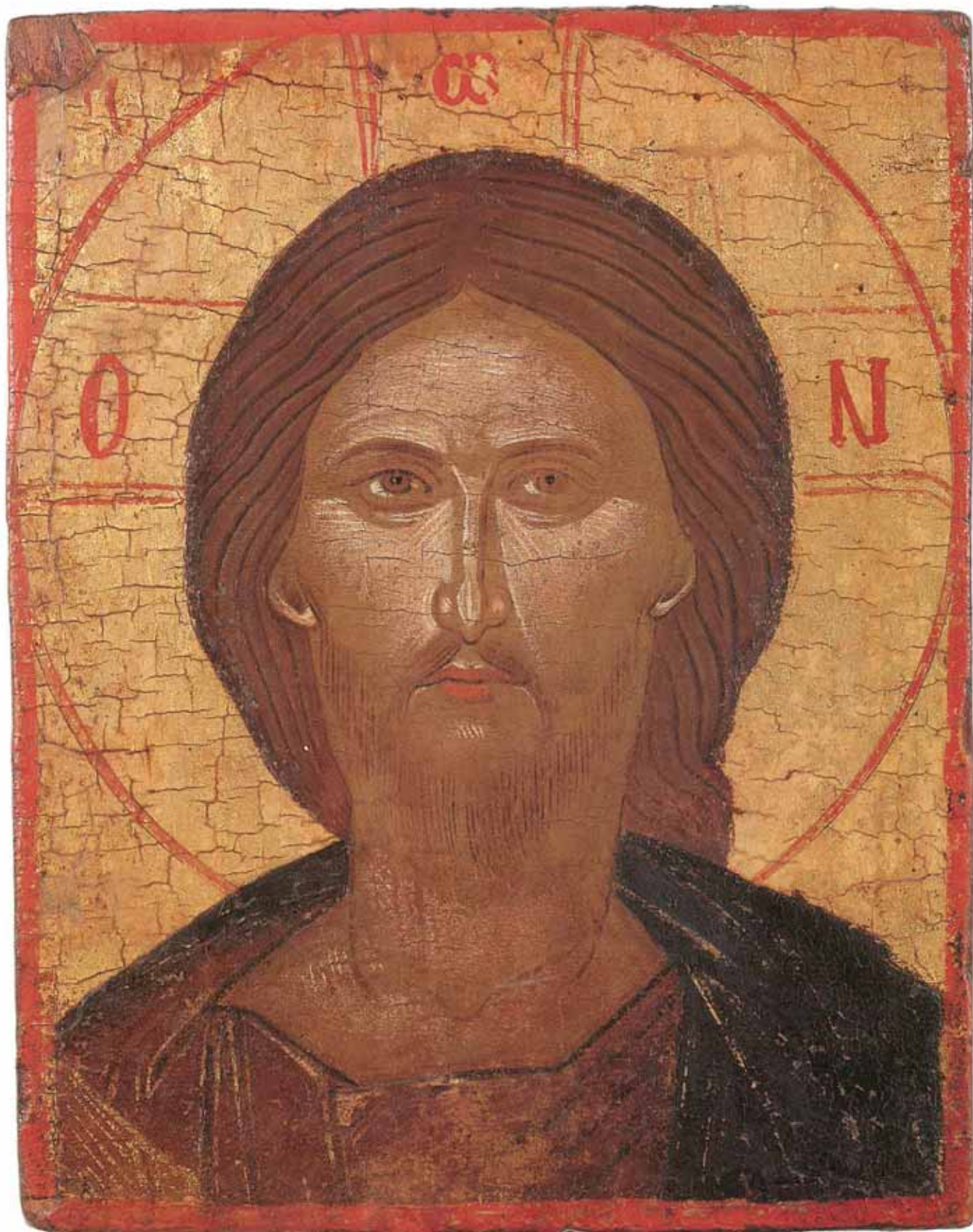
The origin of the iconography of only the head of Christ, as well as of other single saints, can be traced back to much earlier examples in the Byzantine period. On a late twelfth-century icon at Tver¹ the Head of Christ is rendered with stylistic traits of contemporary Byzantine icons, such as the Virgin Hodegetria on the double-sided icon in Kastoria. On a thirteenth-century icon in Sinai,² the Head of Saint George is painted in a comparable manner, except that the saint turns sideways, obviously because he formed part of a Deesis group. Our icon reproduces the established iconography encountered in a large number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century icons. In all probability the type was diffused with the icons by Emmanuel Lambardos, an example of which can be seen on the painted iconostasis in the icon of Saint Menas, in the Greek Institute, Venice.³ The icon of the Head of Christ is usually accompanied by icons of similar type with the Head of the Virgin and of Saint John the Baptist in a composition of Deesis.⁴ An icon by Emmanuel Lambardos in the Byzantine Museum (no. T. 2103) represents the Head of Christ in the type of the Pantocrator, while there are similar icons in the Benaki Museum,⁵ Russia⁶ and collections in Britain;⁷ of excellent technique, most of them are attributed to Emmanuel Lambardos and dated around 1600; the type was used later by Emmanuel Tzanes in an icon in the Historical Museum, Crete.⁸ Our small icon follows these models and probably dates to the same period.

CONDITION Very good, although the colours are faded and the gold dull.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Smirnova 1994, 299-302, pl. 170.
2. Sinai 1990, 116, fig. 57.
3. Chatzidakis 1962, 83, no. 54, pl. 43.
4. See N. Chatzidakis 1993, 176, no. 43 and Cat. no. 19, 234.
5. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 17, 32, pl. 14.
6. *Post-Byzantine Painting* 1995, no. 14.
7. *Sotheby's* 1988, no. 413 (30 x 24.5 cm) and no. 414 (28 x 22 cm).
8. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 171, 524-525 (M. Borboudakis).



22

SAINT ANTHONY

15 x 10.2 x 1 cm

Circa 1600

Saint Anthony is portrayed to the waist, frontal, in the usual monk's garb of a brown habit and a blue cowl. He has a long wavy beard and small eyes with brown shadows, gazing askance. In both hands he holds an open scroll bearing the inscription in black capitals: *ΗΔΩΝ ΕΓΩ ΤΑΣ ΠΑΓΙΔΑΣ ΤΟΥ ΔΙΑΒΟΛΟΥ*. (*I saw the devil's traps*). The figure is projected against the light blue ground and the halo painted in two different shades of ochre. A red-lettered inscription right and left of the saint's head: *Ο ΑΓ(ΙΟ)C ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟC*. The austerity of the colours, from which gold is excluded entirely, is in keeping with the simplicity of the treatment of the drapery, with carefully applied straight or curved black brushstrokes, framed by others in white.

Saint Anthony is one of the most popular saints in Cretan icon-painting; his figure is encountered in a series of icons from excellent workshops, of the late fourteenth century in Corfu, of the fifteenth century in the Byzantine Museum and elsewhere.¹ Likewise well known are his representations on works by great painters. He is presented full-bodied in the icon by Andreas Paviar, in the Charokopos Collection, Cephalonia, and on the border of Andreas Ritzos's icon in Tokyo,² and in bust on the border of the Virgin enthroned, in the Benaki Museum,³ from the workshop of Andreas Ritzos, and in the icon by Michael Damaskenos, in the Byzantine Museum.⁴

Of these icons those with the same iconography as ours, with the saint holding in both hands an open scroll with inscription, are the fourteenth-century icon in Corfu, where he is full-bodied, the border of the Benaki Museum icon, with the same text, and the icon by Damaskenos in the Byzantine Museum, where he is depicted to the waist. A few more examples should be added to these, namely





146. Saint Anthony, c. 1500. Lichačev Collection, Hermitage, Saint Petersburg.

small icons of the saint to the waist, with the same iconography, which are much closer to the type of our icon. On an early fifteenth-century icon in London⁵ only the text of the inscription differs, and on an icon in the Lichačev Collection in the Hermitage, around 1500,⁶ the text is the same as on the London icon and the cowl is a different colour, white with black horizontal stripes. On an icon in the Historical Museum, Moscow, the text of the scroll is identical.⁷ Lastly, an early seventeenth-century icon in the Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna,⁸ not only presents the same iconography and the same text in the inscription, but also the same blue-green colour of the ground.

Thus the painter of our icon follows an iconography of fifteenth-century Cretan icons which was also widely diffused in the next century. However, the style lacks the precise drawing of the Cretan works, while the quality of the materials belies a humble workshop in which gold was not available. Nevertheless, this very small icon displays a notable sensitivity in the transitions from illumined to shaded planes on the face, the symmetrical arrangement of the drapery on the habit and

the geometric white highlights at the edges, qualities that bespeak the use of some good Cretan model. The painting of the halo in two shades of ochre offers a clue to the location of the workshop, since this is quite commonplace in much earlier works from Northern Greece, such as the fourteenth-century icon of Christ Wisdom of God from the church of Hagia Sophia, Thessaloniki.⁹ The blue-green ground is known in a few icons of Saint Anthony by Cretan painters already from the fifteenth century¹⁰ but is more frequent in icons of single saints from Mainland workshops of the sixteenth-seventeenth century, such as those of Saint Spyridon and Saint Nicholas in the Ekonomopoulos Collection.¹¹

The painter of our icon transfers quite satisfactorily a good Cretan model to a small surface, with great diligence and few means. The conservatism of the model and the conscientiousness of the painter make a more exact dating difficult, but it should not be later than the period around 1600.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon painted directly on a thin panel, without gesso preparation. In good condition; incised outlines. On the back, a red cross.'
The icon has not been cleaned or conserved. Painted surface in good condition with slight flaking on the bridge of the nose.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 2, 3, figs 2, 66 with other examples, no. 24, 47-48 with additional examples, figs 24, 124-126. Chatzidakis 1974, 337, fig. 20; see also Byzantine Museum icon no. T. 176, *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1994, no. 7, 191-192 (Chr. Baltoyanni).
2. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 19, 30-31. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, pl. 201.
3. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 18, 29-30.
4. *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1994, no. 7, 191-192 (Chr. Baltoyanni).
5. *Sotheby's* 1987, no. 360 (col. phot.), circa 1400 (24.5 x 16.8 cm).
6. Lichačev 1906, no. 110, pl. LXXIII. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 13, 348-349 (Y. Piatnitsky) (29.8 x 23.4 cm).
7. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 35, 397-398.
8. No. 216, Angiolini-Martinelli 1984, no. 13, 81, fig. on p. 80 (25 x 19.5 cm).
9. *From Byzantium to El Greco* 1987, no. 20, 85, 159-160 (N. Chatzidakis), with relevant examples; see also no. 27, 93, 163 (M. Chatzidakis). For the icons in Kastoria and Veroia see recently Tsigaridas 1995.
10. See icon of the Crucifixion, in Corfu, above 148-149 n. 40; see also Cat. no. 13, 149, nn. 41-43, with related bibliography.
11. Baltoyanni 1986, no. 44, 43, pl. 41 (25 x 18.3 cm), no. 74, 56, pl. 39.

23

TRIPTYCH: DEESIS AND SAINTS

32.5 x 46.4 x 1.5 cm. Closed: 32.5 x 23 cm

Early 17th century

On the central panel, on an ochre ground, is a scene of Deesis below a plain woodcarved arch that forms a high archivolt on the roughly carved, parallelogram entablature adorned with an angel in bust with open wings. At the centre Christ seated on a throne, holds an open gospel book and blesses. At the sides the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist in a pose of intercession. The deep blue of Christ's himation and the Virgin's dress is embellished with dense gold striations, which are also discernible on the plain woodcarved throne. John's chiton and deep blue himation are appropriate to his status as a prophet. On the left wing are two saints in bust: Saint Cosmas above and Saint Nicholas below. On the right wing, Saint Damian and Saint Charalambos in corresponding positions.

The scene of the Deesis on the central panel is usual in a large number of triptychs that were used for private devotions from the sixteenth century onwards. The iconography of the subject frequently follows Nikolaos Ritzos's icon of the Deesis, in Sarajevo,¹ as is the case here. Among the best examples of this kind of triptych, with the same iconographic type for the central theme, is that in the City of Athens Museum and another of similar art in the Benaki Museum.²

The painting of the triptych is skilled; this is apparent in the faceted treatment of the drapery and in the finely drawn gold striations variegating Christ's himation and the Virgin's dress. The archangel on the face of the arch also has impeccably drawn open wings with gold striations. The faces with their lively expressions are painted with dark shadows around the eyes and on the cheeks, while the carefully drawn drapery forms small geometric planes. The artless woodcarving on the entablature of the triptych as well as the ochre ground point to a workshop in Central or Northern Greece, while the quality of the painting bespeaks a good iconographer active in mainland Greece in the early seventeenth century.

CONDITION Quite good with slight damage to the painted surface and the left section of the entablature of the middle panel.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, pl. 202.

2. *From Byzantium to El Greco* 1987, no. 69, 138, 195. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 53, 76, pl. 39.



24

EPISTYLE OF AN ICONOSTASIS, IN THREE PIECES

- a. Christ, 31.8 x 29.8 x 3.5 cm
- b. Saint James, 30 x 27.5 x 3.8 cm
- c. Saints Luke and Simon, 31.5 x 54.5 x 3.8 cm

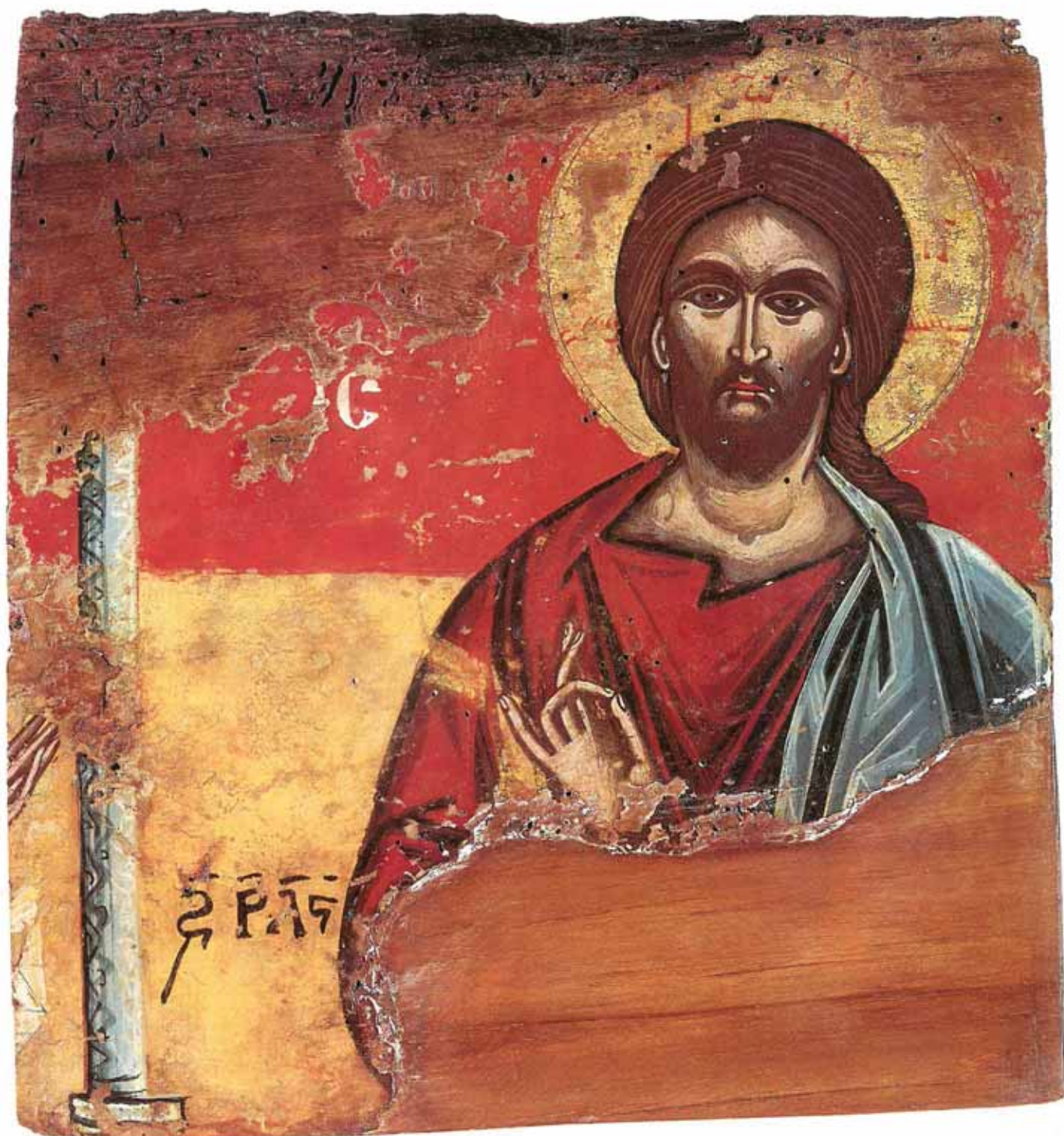
1627/8

Three integral parts of the epistyle of an iconostasis on a single panel, with the Great Deesis: only the figures of Christ and three apostles, James, Luke and Simon, all waist-length, are preserved. Each figure is depicted beneath a painted arch supported by colonnettes veined in imitation green marble. In the spandrels a painted floral ornament. The apostles are projected against a bichrome ground: bright red above and yellow ochre below.

a. Christ is portrayed in frontal pose, clad in a red chiton and a blue himation with vertical yellow clavi. He blesses with his right hand, palm outwards, while the gospel book in the left has been completely destroyed. Beside him, left, the date in black *ΖΡΑϚ* (7036 = 1627/8) and part of the hand of the apostle depicted in the adjacent representation. Christ's halo, with incised outline, is gold with a cross marked lightly in red, in which the letters *Ο ΩΝ* (*The Being*) are inscribed.

b. Saint James, with thick brown hair and sparse beard, turns left, with his head in three-quarter pose and the body frontal, like the evangelist Matthew in the sixteenth-century icon Cat. no. 16. He wears a deep blue chiton with pinkish white clavi and a deep red himation that falls on the right shoulder and swathes round the right arm, while his hand points towards the left; the himation also covers the left part of the body leaving the left hand holding a closed scroll free. On the red ground in white capitals the inscription: *Ο ΑΓΙΟC ΗΑΚΟΒΟC*.

c. Saint Luke is represented with his head turned three-quarters left. He has a





149. Epistyle of an iconostasis in three pieces: Christ, Saint James, Saint Luke and Saint Simon, 1627/8, Cat. no. 24a-c.

lean face, short hair with characteristic tonsure, a short beard, and holds a closed gospel book in both hands. He wears a blue chiton, like James, and a deep red himation covering only the left arm. On the red ground the inscription in white capital letters: *Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΛΟΥΚΑΣ*. Next to him is Saint Simon, turned in the opposite direction, towards the right. He wears a red chiton and a deep blue himation. In his left hand he holds a closed scroll and with the right points right. On the gold ground in white letters is the inscription: *Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΣΙΜΩΝ*.

The apostles are represented turned sideways, in different direction. Simon's pose corresponds to James's and both turn towards the central figure of Christ. So the likely position of the parts of the epistyle can be reconstructed: at the centre the figure of Christ, left the part with saints Luke and Simon and right Saint James. The colours in the icons are clear and bright, in three basic tones: red, blue and ochre. Blue and red alternate on the garments. The ochre haloes projected against the red area of the ground harmonize with the ochre used in the lower section. The flesh is modelled with dense dark brown and off-white brushstrokes, while pronounced darker brushstrokes define the outlines and the wrinkles on the forehead, as on the face of Simon.

This technique, with the frugal coloration and particularly the combination of red, blue and ochre, is characteristic of a large number of icons from Kastoria and



Veroia. Icons of the same type, from an epistyle on a single piece of wood with polychrome ground, are not unknown in churches in Macedonia, Kastoria and Veroia.¹ The figures of Christ and the saints are also linked stylistically with these epistyles, since they display analogous schematic rendering of their features. Strikingly similar is the epistyle in the church of Hagios Vlasios at Veroia, *circa* 1360,² in which the figures of the apostles are painted on a uniform ochre ground without arcade. Saint James in our icon can be compared with the homonymous saint on this epistyle, in which he appears in corresponding pose, turned three-quarters, and with the same facial features. Further, the apostles on an iconostasis beam, with comparable schematization, occur in an icon in a private collection in Switzerland.³ An epistyle of exactly the same type with figures painted on a red ground, 1638/9, was presented in a recent paper on icons in the Kastoria region.⁴ Lastly, analogous schematic rendering is encountered in an icon of four apostles, in bust, in a private collection in Switzerland, with corresponding bichrome ground, orangey red above and green below.⁵

The figure of Christ in a small icon from the church of Prophetis Elias in Veroia, of a good workshop of an earlier period,⁶ is almost identical to that in our icon, with greater plasticity in the modelling of the flesh and the drapery. The facial features are prominent with dark shadows around the eyes and at the beginning

of the beard. The drawing of the fingers is similar and the drapery of the chiton and the himation arranged in the same way. The same drawing of the characteristics and in particular the blessing hand with the thumb joined to the fourth finger, is observed in another icon of Christ, dated 1643, from the church of Hagios Georgios in Veroia.⁷

Our epistyle's connection with this region is further confirmed by the obvious similarity to certain wall-paintings in the area of Veroia. In Hagios Georgios of archon Grammatikos the figure of the Gregory Palamas presents the same characteristics as the figures of the apostles in the Velimezis icon and, moreover, the letters in the accompanying inscriptions are of the same type, particularly in the writing of the date which virtually coincides: ΖΡΑΣ' (1629).⁸ It may be assumed that the painter of our epistyle, of 1627, followed a model existing in one of the earlier churches in the region.

CONDITION Part (a) is badly damaged top left and bottom right, where the wood has been destroyed completely. The colours are preserved in good condition. On part (b) the painting is damaged in the upper part of the surround and low down right on the saint's hand. The colours are preserved in good condition. On part (c) damage to the painting in the middle and left on the figure of Saint Luke has destroyed part of his neck. Minor damage top and bottom near the frame.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. *Holy Image, Holy Space* 1988, no. 37, 198 (M. Chatzidakis). Papazotos 1995, nos 83-88, pls 184-189; 15th-century epistyle on a single piece of wood with scenes of the Twelve Great Feasts below an arcade, from a church in Veroia. Tsigaridas 1995, 395, fig. 4; 15th-century *Apostolika* on a single board with alternating green and ochre ground, from Kastoria.
2. Papazotos 1995, nos 48-52, pls 146-150.
3. The epistyle was cut in three sections, *Icones suisses* 1968, no. 40.
4. Kakavas 1996, 34.
5. *Icones suisses* 1968, no. 113.
6. Papazotos 1995, 151, fig. 53.
7. Papazotos 1995, no. 135, pl. 236.
8. Papazotos 1994, 191, pl. 103β.



152. *Saint Procopius, early 17th century, Cat. no. 25.*

25 SAINT PROCOPIUS

55.5 x 37 x 2.5 cm

Early 17th century



151. *Saint Demetrios, detail of an icon with six figures of saints, early 16th century. Byzantine Museum, Athens.*

‘Procopius, a young, unbearded, handsome warrior, is presented standing, frontal, in full panoply. He wears a short, red, sleeved tunic to mid-thigh length, and a brown cuirass over it. His dark green cloak is tied on the right shoulder and falls behind it. The legs, in embroidered leggings, are bound with reddish bands below the knees. His bow hangs from one shoulder and his shield from the other, while the quiver is fastened on one side of his waist and the scabbard on the other. At his side hangs a gold cross from a chain passed over the shoulder. In the right hand he holds an upright spear and in the left the drawn sword pointing downwards. The ground at thigh level is rose-violet, veined like marble, which is more clearly visible in the lower part. The remaining ground and the integral relief frame are embellished with broad leaves and flowers in gilded plaster. The halo is also in gesso relief, as are the two tablets with the inscription in capitals: *Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΡΟΚΟΠΙΟΣ*.’ *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

Procopius is one of the most popular soldier-saints.¹ He appears in the wall-paintings in the Protaton,² and the Chilandari Monastery,³ where he is depicted standing, in analogous attire but without the cuirass, and has the same facial features. His figure in our icon is even more reminiscent of the soldier-saint in an early fifteenth-century icon of Saint Demetrios, in Belgrade, who holds a drawn sword pointing downwards in the same manner.⁴ Saint Procopius is portrayed in bust, with similar features, in a late fourteenth-century icon in Veroia.⁵ He has an analogous relaxed pose and analogous garments in the wall-paintings by Theophanis in the Monastery of Stavronikita.⁶ The type is repeated in the wall-paintings of the Philanthropinon Monastery on the Island in the lake of Ioannina and the Varlaam Monastery at Meteora.⁷

The figure of the soldier-saint in our icon, with the slim legs bound with bands and standing on a marble floor, recalls the soldier-saints in a fifteenth-century icon in the Byzantine Museum (Fig. 151).⁸ An analogous marble floor is also encountered in a late sixteenth-century icon of Saint John the Theologian in the Byzantine Museum.⁹





153. *Saint Paraskevi*, 17th century. Hurez Monastery Museum, Wallachia.

The saint's short hair falls behind the ears and the facial features are prominent and well-drawn on the smooth surface of the flesh. His calm expression, softly modelled, seems distant from the painting of mainland Greek workshops.

The relief decoration with gold foliate motifs on the ground and frame in our icon, is a characteristic device of icons in Romania. Numerous icons with analogous relief vegetal decoration are known from the sixteenth century in the Humor Monastery and the Suceava region, such as Christ, with a Greek inscription, and Saint Paraskevi (Fig. 153).¹⁰ Relief decoration also occurs on an icon of Saint Nicholas, 1643, with Greek inscription,¹¹ on a seventeenth-century icon of the Virgin with the prophets,¹² as well as an icon of Saint Nicholas with a Greek signature of the painter Demetrios Moschos, 1722, and an Arabic inscription at the side.¹³ In these works the soft modelling with the smooth almost rose surface of the flesh, the finely drawn facial features, the dulcet expression and the raised eyebrows are the same as in our icon of Saint Procopius. Furthermore, an illustrated sketch book of the painter Radu Zugravu, of the second half of the eighteenth century, which includes figures of standing soldier-saints in similar poses and of comparable bodily proportions, is of Wallachian provenance.¹⁴

The Velimezis icon was produced by a competent and technically skilled painter fully conversant with the art of workshops in Moldavia. The uniform of the soldier-saint, which is drawn with great precision and attention to detail, as well as the harmonious colour combinations, reveal acquaintance with models of Palaeologan art on Mount Athos, as well as with works from sixteenth-century Cretan workshops. The quality of the painting of this icon points rather to an early period, probably the beginning of the seventeenth century.

CONDITION Very good. A vertical crack has not damaged the painting.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. *Synaxarium*, col. 808. *Hermeneia* 1909, 157.
2. Millet 1927, I, pl. 53.2.
3. *Chilandar* 1978, fig. 60.
4. Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, 142, fig. 298.
5. Papazotos 1995, no. 47, 145.
6. Chatzidakis 1986, fig. 165.
7. Acheimastou-Potamianou 1983, 99, n. 879 with other examples, pls 61 and 84.
8. Chatzidakis 1969, 68, 77, fig. 48.
9. Chatzidakis 1969, 39, 73, fig. 14.
10. Voinescu, in Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, 376, figs 394 and 400.
11. *Romanian Icons* 1993, no. 9, 55.
12. *Icones suisses* 1968, no. 197.
13. *Sotheby's* 1989, no. 413.
14. Voinescu 1978, figs 12, 49.

154. *Saint Procopius*, Cat. no. 25, detail.



26

SAINT CATHERINE

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3726

22.4 x 18.4 x 2.1 cm

Second quarter of 17th century

The young and 'very beautiful' saint is seated like a princess on a throne with cushion. She wears a red, gold-embroidered dress with a bejewelled royal loros in gold and her shoulders are covered by a mantle embroidered with gold eagles and lined with white ermine. On her head is a crown, while her hair is gathered into a red, gold-embroidered headdress. She holds a red cross in the left hand, while leaning on the wooden wheel with the nails of martyrdom, and holding a palm branch in the right. Beside her, left, is a low lectern embellished with standing female figures sketched in gold, personifications of the sciences. Upon it is an open book, below it are other volumes, a compass and an inkwell, and to the right an astronomer's globe and books. The figure of the saint is projected against the gold ground on which there are faint letters in different shades of red, from two inscriptions presumably of different date: *ΑΓ ΚΑ* and *Η ΑΓΙΑ Ν*. Bottom right, on gold, a badly written forged signature in black: *ΧΕΙΡ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ ΚΛΟΝΤΖΑ* (*Hand of Georgios Klontzas*).

This type of Saint Catherine is diffused in a large number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century icons, the most important of which are those by Ieremias Palladas, Silvestros Theocharis and Emmanuel Lambardos, which established the specific iconographic type in seventeenth-century art.¹ In iconography our icon is most closely related to the icon by Emmanuel Lambardos in the Benaki Museum, and to that in the Greek Institute, Venice;² the only difference is the absence of the Crucifix and the related inscription. Stylistically our icon is closer to that of Saint Catherine by Silvestros Theocharis, in Patmos (1630-1640).³ The figure of the saint is carefully painted with attention to detail but with a simpler rendering of the decorative motifs. In all probability it was produced in an analogous workshop of the same period.

CONDITION The icon bears the forged signature of Georgios Klontzas. Conservation in the Benaki Museum laboratory. Cleaned by Papavranousi, 1978. Authenticity of the signature examined by K. Milanou, 1993.

BIBLIOGRAPHY *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, 544 (mentioned by A. Drandaki).

NOTES

1. For bibliography and other examples see Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 121, pl. 128. Vocotopoulos 1990, 149. N. Chatzidakis 1993, nos 44 and 46, pp. 178, 182.
2. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 195, 121, 143-144. N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 44.
3. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 72, 121, pl. 128.



27

SAINT DEMETRIOS ON HORSEBACK

50 x 34.5 x 2 cm

Mid-17th century

Saint Demetrios is depicted mounted on a red horse turned right; the galloping steed raises its two forelegs frontally, while turning its head backwards. The saint is also turned towards the right with a corresponding twist of the body to the front. With the spear held high in his raised right hand and steadied by the left he slays Skyloyannis, lying on the ground. The corpulent male figure wearing a turban was repainted rather ineptly — his feet are very large — in a slightly later period, as was the rocky landscape left. The soldier-saint wears a chased gold cuirass and a deep blue cloak that billows out to the right behind his head. In the background left, behind the rocky mountain the well-drawn buildings of the city of Thessaloniki appear, among them a large, domed church and an edifice with elevated minaret. There is lavish punched, foliate decoration on the gold ground. The painting follows a skilfully incised preparatory drawing on the gesso, which is clearly distinguishable in the infrared photograph (Fig. 157).

The facial features, modelled with tiny brushstrokes and few highlights, the intricate decoration of the cuirass and the punched ground are of careful workmanship (Fig. 158). The counterpoise of the movements, the attitude of the soldier-saint and the galloping horse with raised forelegs, are borrowed from a model by Georgios Klontzas with Saint George slaying the dragon, in the Benaki





157. *Saint Demetrios on horseback, detail of icon Cat. no. 27 (infrared photograph).*

Museum.¹ Minor differences are observed in the position of the horse's head, which faces forwards, and the saint's head, which is turned behind. The type is widely disseminated in a large number of icons for both soldier-saints. It was used by Michael Damaskenos in an icon in Corfu,² and later by Silvestros Theocharis in an icon after a reversed *anthivolon* (working drawing).³ Particularly popular during the second half of the seventeenth century, it is encountered in icons of Saint George by Emmanuel Tzanes, in the Benaki Museum (Fig. 159), in the Byzantine Museum and with a minor variation in an icon of Saint Demetrios in the Loverdos Collection, also in the Byzantine Museum,⁴ as well as in icons by Theodoros Poulakis, in Corfu.⁵ Tzanes's type of Saint George is encountered exactly the same in small icons in Moscow and in a collection in London,⁶ in





159. Emmanuel Tzanes, *Saint George*, second half of 17th century. Benaki Museum.

which the pose of the horse and the saint is repeated with just a slight deviation in the position of the latter's head, which usually gazes straight ahead rather than downwards. The rendering of the rocky landscape is the same too, while there is analogy in the buildings with domes and minarets in the city depicted in the background.

Noteworthy among the icons of this type are two of Saint Demetrios, in Cephalonia; one in the Hypapanti church, of the Gerakis family,⁷ in which the horse stands still but Skyloyannis lies on the ground, his costume and features as in our icon; the other, in Hagios Nikolaos stous Soularous,⁸ in which the poses of the equestrian saint and Skyloyannis are the same as in our icon.⁹

The soft modelling of the flesh in our icon, with smooth planes and a few small white highlights on the prominent parts, recalls that by Silvestros Theocharis in Corfu. Comparable similarities with Theocharis's art are ascertained in the meticulous decoration of the saint's cuirass and in the drawing of the buildings in

the city. Lastly, the punched vegetal decoration on the gold ground, imitating ornaments encountered in fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Italo-Cretan icons,¹⁰ links our icon with earlier traditions. In the light of the above observations, the icon could be ascribed to a painter associated with the workshop of Silvestros Theocharis and dated to the mid-seventeenth century. Skyloyannis and the rocky landscape were painted in a later period, perhaps in the eighteenth century.

CONDITION Damage on the gold ground and overpainting low down on the figure of Skyloyannis, which was not removed in the recent conservation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1994, no. 62, 241-242 (A. Drandaki).
2. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 26, 50-51, figs 29, 30.
3. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 56, figs 181-182.
4. Boura 1994, 361-364, figs 2, 3.
5. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 91, 133, figs 181-182, with numerous other examples; see also no. 133, figs 208, 322.
6. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, 413-414, no. 60 (I. Kyzlasova). Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 41, fig. 23.
7. *Cephalonia I* 1989, no. 143, fig. on p. 99.
8. *Cephalonia II* 1994, fig. 119.
9. See also other icons in Cephalonia by Andreas Karantinos and others (*Cephalonia I* 1989, nos 136 and 144).
10. See related examples, Cat. no. 3, 80.

28

SAINT PETER

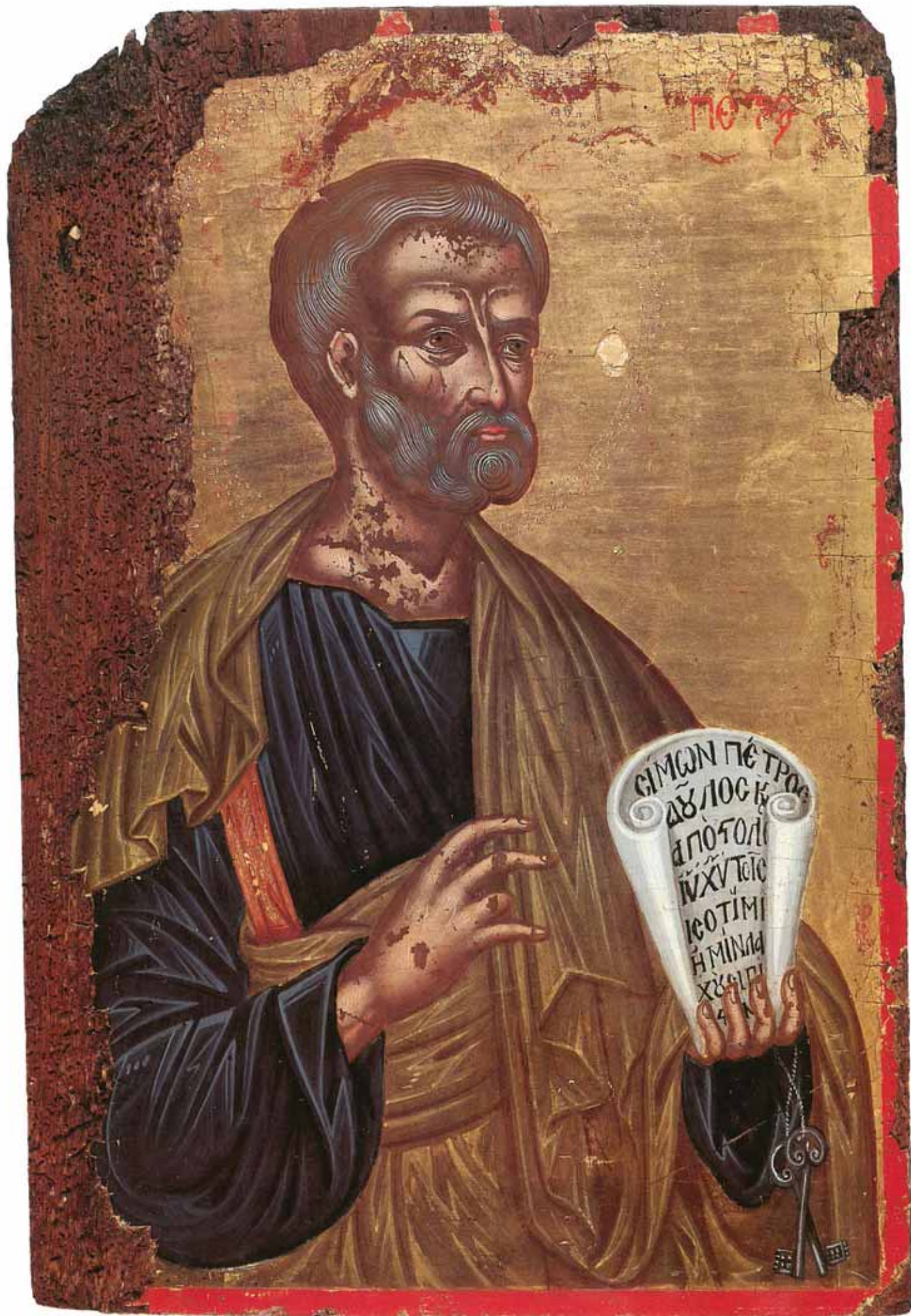
49 x 34 x 1.8 cm

Mid-17th century

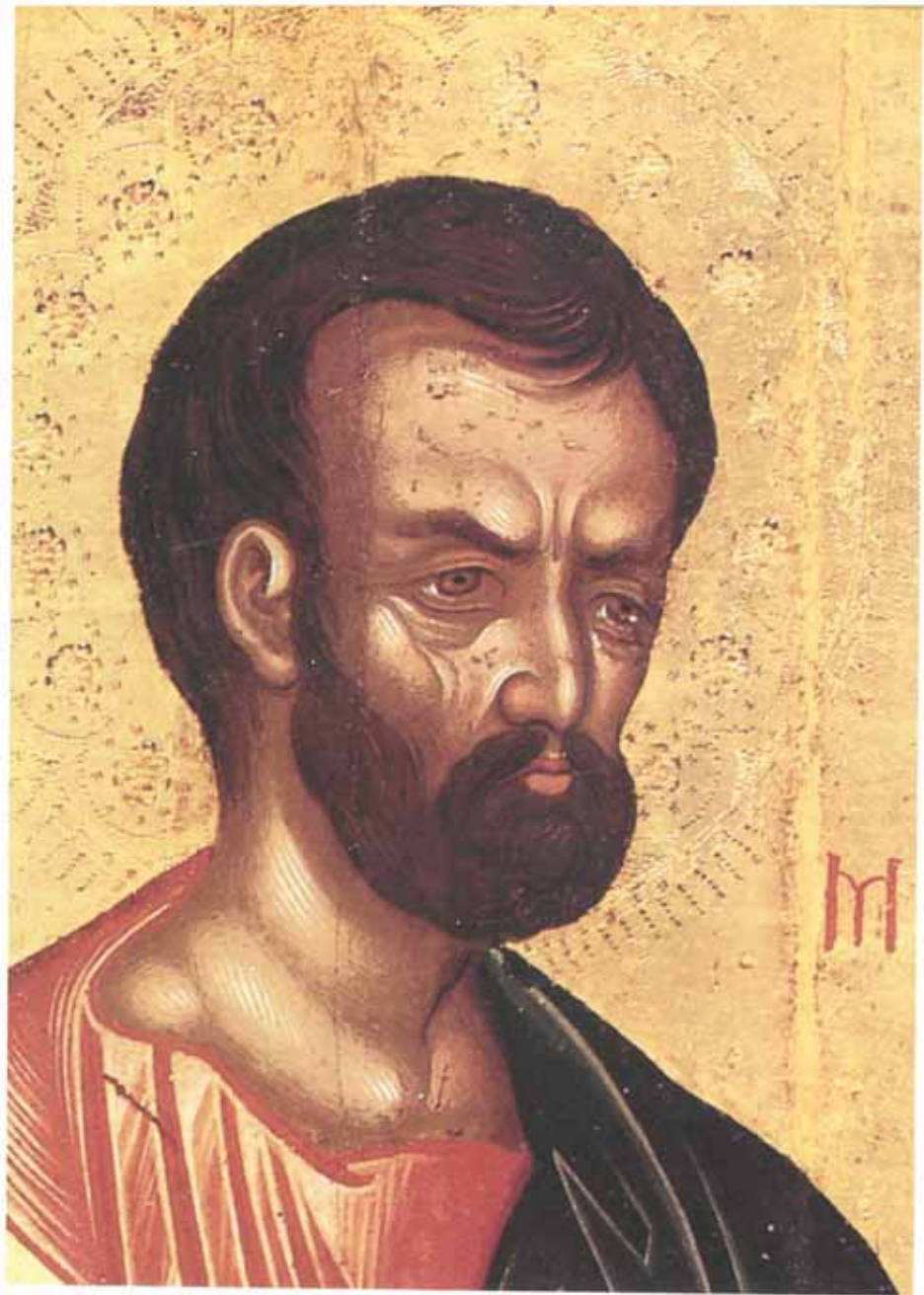
Saint Peter is portrayed against the gold ground, waist-length and turned three-quarters right. In his left hand he holds an open scroll, in the form of a *rhypidion*, with the inscription: *ΣΙΜΩΝ ΠΕΤΡΟΣ ΔΟΥΛΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟ- CΤΟΛΟΣ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ ΤΟΙΣ ΙΚΟΤΙΜΙΑΣ ΗΜΙΝ ΛΑ... ΧΟΥΣΙΠΛ...* (*Simon Peter servant and apostle of Jesus Christ ...*) and a pair of keys; his right hand blesses with the fourth finger bent. His face is painted with the familiar distinctive features — a marked frown, white curly hair and short round beard.¹ He wears a deep blue chiton with vertical red clavus and a brown himation wound round the waist and covering the left arm.

The figure of the apostle holding an open scroll in the form of a *rhypidion* derives from an iconography established in fifteenth-century Cretan painting and is encountered among the representations framing the icon of the Virgin with Angels, in the Benaki Museum;² it is known however from the Palaeologan era, as in the icon in the British Museum.³ The same type was used by the great sixteenth-century painters such as Theophanis, in an icon in the Protaton, and Michael Damaskenos, in an icon in Corfu, as well as Ioseph Chouris in a Cypriot icon from the epistyle of an iconostasis, of 1544.⁴ The only difference between our icon and the known examples is the text in the inscription in the scroll, which does not follow the First Epistle of Peter (1:3ff.) *‘Αδελφοί ...’*.⁵

On the basis of style our icon cannot be assigned to any of the known Cretan or Mainland Greek workshops of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It displays greater affinity to two seventeenth-century icons of the apostles in the Historical Museum, Moscow, of more or less the same dimensions (Fig. 161).⁶ The soft modelling of the flesh on the face is similar, while the wrinkles on the brow are drawn in a markedly linear manner; another characteristic device in these icons is the calligraphic rendering of the hair and beard with parallel wavy lines. The meticulous, linear treatment of the drapery and the fine lettering of the inscription in the scroll likewise bespeak a penchant for the calligraphic. Lastly, common to these icons is the simple yet careful design of the punched decoration on the border of the saint's halo. Our icon, with its painstaking technique bears the imprint of the painter's personal style and was produced in a workshop related to and perhaps contemporary with Emmanuel Tzanes.



ΣΙΜΩΝ ΠΕΤΡΟΣ
ΑΥΛΟΣ Κ
ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟ
ΙΟΥ ΤΕ
ΚΕΟΤΙΜΙ
Η ΜΙΝΔΑ
ΧΩΡΙ
4



161. Saint Mark, 17th century.
Kremlin, Moscow.

CONDITION Very good apart from damage to the wood and painting in the left section.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. For the iconography see Weitzmann 1983.
2. N. Chatzidakis 1983, 29-30, no. 18.
3. *From Byzantium to El Greco* 1987, 156-157, no. 16 (R. Cormack).
4. Chatzidakis 1956, 283ff., pl. KZ; Vocotopoulos 1990, 57, with other examples, no. 31, fig. 140. *Icons from Cyprus* 1976, 110, no. 42. Papageorgiou 1991, 116ff.
5. The text is not included in his service (*akolouthia*), see *Menaion for June* 1972, 198-209.
6. Saint Mark and Saint Luke (47.55 x 35 cm and 48.5 x 36 cm respectively); see *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, 434-435, nos 83, 84 (I. Kyzlasova - N. Markina). *Post-Byzantine Painting* 1995, no. 64, 222 (Saint Mark).



ΣΙΜΩΝ Γ
ΛΟΓ

29

PIETÀ

53.7 x 46.7 x 2.3 cm

Emmanuel Tzanes, 1657

The Virgin, seated on a rock, holds in her arms the lifeless body of Christ, lying almost horizontal. On the left and turned towards her stands Saint John the Theologian, while on the right, in corresponding pose, is Joseph of Arimathea, holding a white winding sheet in both hands. The Virgin wears a deep red maphorion and a blue dress, John a pale rose himation and a deep blue chiton, and Joseph a grey-blue chiton and himation. The rock is brownish white adorned with delicate blossoming shoots. At the bottom of the icon, in red capital letters on the gold ground, the inscription: *XEIP EMMANOYHA IEPEQC TOY TZANE* (*Hand of Emmanuel Tzanes, priest*), and on a smaller scale the date: *AXNZ'* (1647). Laboratory examination by Stergios Stasinopoulos has confirmed the authenticity of the signature, which had been overpainted in red sometime in the past, as is the case with the icon of the Deesis, by the painter Leos, Cat. no. 34.





164. Petros Klados, *Pietà*, 15th century.
Santa Fosca, Venice.

The rendering of the Lamentation in our icon constitutes the Byzantinizing version of the *Pietà*, a common theme in Italian painting, that was established and disseminated in Cretan icons from the fifteenth century onwards, the best known examples being the icons by Andreas Pavias in Rossano and from the circle of Nikolaos Tzafouris in the Benaki Museum.¹ The depiction of the subject in the Byzantine manner, as in our icon, is reproduced in many icons from the late fifteenth century onwards. The late fifteenth-century icon by the painter Petros Klados, in the church of Santa Fosca in Venice (Fig. 164),² is the earliest known example of this iconographic type that assembles in its composition figures deriving from three different scenes of the cycle of Christ's Passion:³ Christ and



the Virgin from the Lamentation, Saint John from the Crucifixion and Joseph from the Descent from the Cross. The sixteenth-century icon in the Musei Civici, Padua is a conscientious copy of Petros Klados's work,⁴ while seventeenth- and eighteenth-century icons in the Greek Institute in Venice, in Bologna, the Benaki Museum, Mount Athos and Belgrade, are variations of it.⁵

In our icon Emmanuel Tzanes follows Petros Klados's model. The similarities extend to the colours of the garments, the treatment of the drapery, even to Christ's Italicizing, almost diaphanous white loincloth; a minor difference is observed in the rendering of Christ's body, which is in a more conservative Byzantinesque art in Tzanes's icon. In style too Tzanes follows the fifteenth-century model; the faces and Christ's body are painted with firm outlines, while the deep brown foundation is highlighted by tiny, parallel white lines. The drapery is arranged in angular planes, devoid of Italian influence which is only perceptible in the softer folds of Christ's loincloth. Extreme conservatism is apparent in several of Emmanuel Tzanes's works, which frequently copy fifteenth-century prototypes; it is to be seen in the icons of Saint Spyridon, 1635, in the Museo Correr, Venice, and Saint Anthony, 1645, in Corfu, which are assigned to the painter's Cretan period, as well as in the later icons of Saint Nicholas, 1683 (Cat. no. 30) and the Virgin Kardiotissa in Venice.⁶ Other signed icons by Tzanes in a

*165. Pietà, second half of 16th century.
Musei Civici, Padua.*

remarkably conservative vein, such as the Descent into Hell (Anastasis) and Christ in Glory, 1648, date from the time of his sojourn on Corfu.⁷

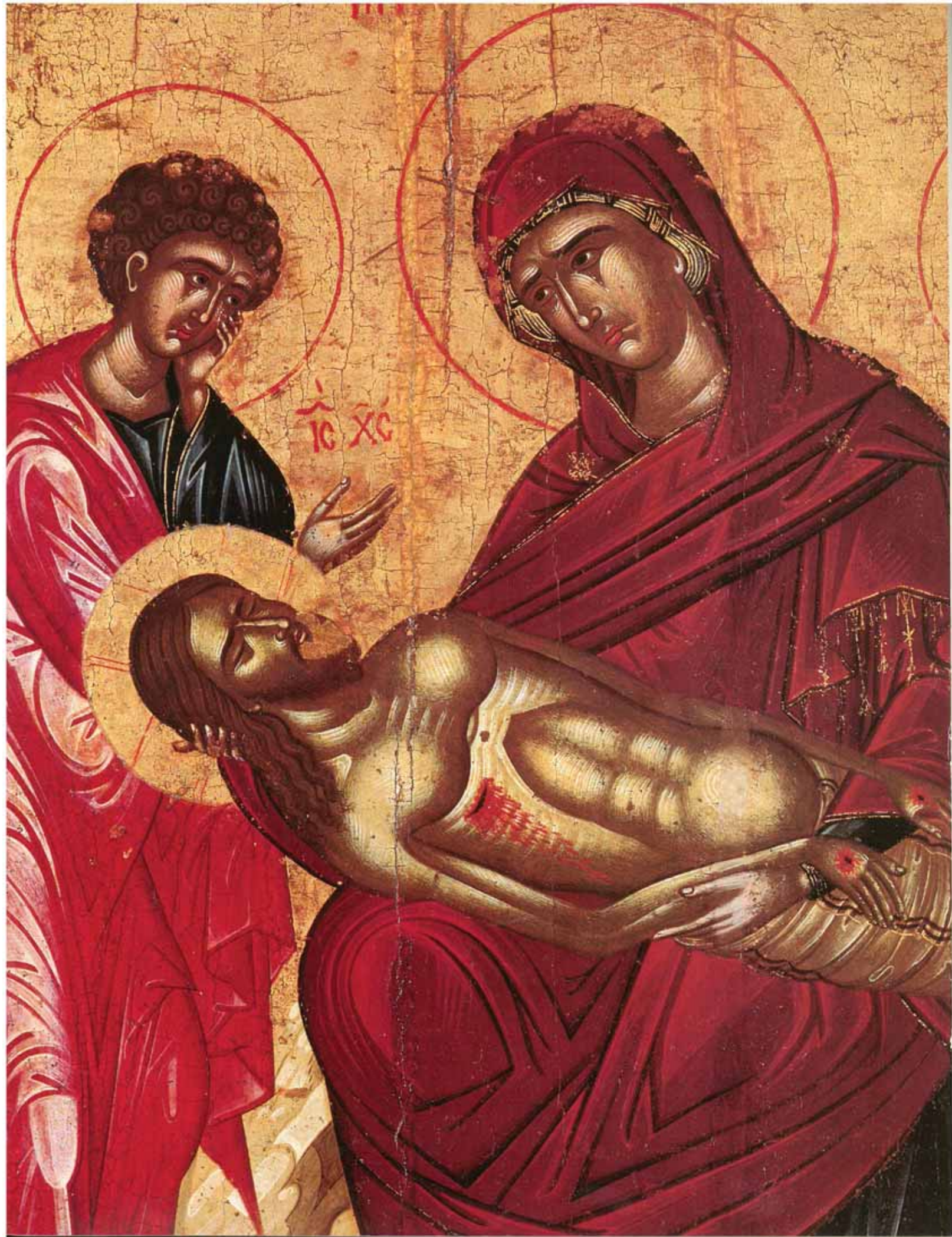
The date 1657 on our icon falls in the three-year interval (1655-1657) when Emmanuel Tzanes's whereabouts are uncertain: he may have still been on Corfu, since the first testimony of his presence in Venice is in March 1658.⁸ However, the imitation of the earlier model of Petros Klados's icon, which was probably in Venice from the early sixteenth century,⁹ perhaps indicates his earlier arrival in the Serenissima, as Mertzios suggested.¹⁰ Considering the diffusion of the fifteenth-century model in sixteenth-century icons, such as the Padua icon, it is quite feasible that Tzanes had seen other icons of similar iconography and art in the region, without of course ruling out the possibility that he was acquainted with analogous icons while living in Crete or even Corfu.

CONDITION Very good. Laboratory examination by Stergios Stasinopoulos showed that the signature had been repainted sometime in the past. See Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Chatzidakis 1948, 471, no. 4. Vocotopoulos 1990, 106 (it was not included in the list of Tzanes's works because the author could not check the authenticity of the signature at that time).

NOTES

1. E.g. see N. Chatzidakis 1993, 32.
2. N. Chatzidakis 1993, 32-35, no. 3, with bibliography and other examples.
3. See N. Chatzidakis 1993, 32, and Kalafati 1995, 140ff.
4. N. Chatzidakis 1993, 32, 34 and 152, no. 36.
5. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 153, 159. Angiolini-Martinelli 1984, 57ff., no. 7, fig. on p. 15. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 30, 43-44, pl. 22 (forged signature of Emmanuel Tzanes). Tatić-Djurić 1979, 551-569, fig. 1. Unpublished icon on Mount Athos, in M. Chatzidakis's photographic archive.
6. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 72, 108-110, figs 50-51. See Cat. no. 30, 276ff., nn. 3-6, and Vocotopoulos 1990, 106-107, 114-115.
7. *Holy Metropolis of Corfu* 1994, figs 132 and 133. See also an icon of the Virgin Amolyntos, 1635, *East Christian Art*, 1987, no. 62, 76.
8. Vocotopoulos 1990, 106. Drandakis 1974, 37, n. 8.
9. See N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 3, 34.
10. Mertzios 1939, 242.



30

SAINT NICHOLAS

90 x 37 x 1.8 cm

Emmanuel Tzanes, 1683

The saint is portrayed standing and frontal, clad in the vestments of a prelate. He holds a closed gospel book in his left hand and blesses with his raised right one. Top left and right are Christ offering the gospel book and the Virgin the omophorion (pallium), respectively. On the gold ground, next to the head, the inscription: *O AΓΙOC NIKOΛΑOC*. The halo has punched decoration of random volute leaves and rosettes, in rather simple, almost extemporary technique, as is the case in Tzanes's earlier works.¹ The saint wears a grey sticharion and a reddish phailonion, embroidered with gold crosses inscribed in squares and with a bluish green lining. The white omophorion is decorated with four large gold-embroidered crosses. Likewise gold-embroidered is the stole, visible below but badly damaged over its entire surface. Faintly discernible on the diamond-shaped maniple is a miniature figure of Christ drawn in gold.

The saint stands on dense white clouds. In a narrow zone beneath, a miracle at sea is depicted, which has not survived intact because the lower section of the icon has been sawn off. Only the upper part of the scene is discernible: the blue-green sea and the billowing white sails of a galley, its masts with fluttering red pennants. Beside the saint's feet and above the clouds are the inscriptions, right: *XEIP EMMANOYHA IEPEΩC TOY TZANE* (*Hand of Emmanuel Tzanes, priest*) and below: *ΔΕΗCIC TOY ΔΟΥΛΟΥ TOY ΘΕΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ CΙΓΟΥΡΟΥ ΑΧΠΓ* (*Supplication of the servant of God Nikolaos Sigouros, 1683*). Left is the coat of arms of the Sigouros family, with the initials *NS*.²

The iconographic type of Saint Nicholas in our icon is crystallized in wall-paintings and large-format icons in the twelfth century³ and recurs in fifteenth-century painting, as apparent from the icon in Corfu painted by Angelos,⁴ where the saint is depicted in the very same pose and vestments, differing only in the decoration of the phailonion with crosses. Angelos's icon, which must have been brought to Corfu by Cretan refugees after the fall of Candia (Herakleion), may well have been the model used by Emmanuel Tzanes, who frequently copied established types of great fifteenth-century painters.⁵ Corresponding figures of



prelates, of markedly conservative character, occur in icons by Tzanes in the Museo Correr, Venice (Saint Spyridon, 1636) and Corfu (Saint Gregory Palamas, 1654).⁶ In these, as in our icon, the bishops wear a cross-embroidered phailonion and the face is painted with the familiar small, parallel brushstrokes in a firm hand. Saint Nicholas's facial features display even greater affinity with the technique of earlier icons, of the painter's Cretan period, such as Saint Anthony (1645), in Corfu.⁷ The clouds in our icon are depicted with greater naturalism, devoid of linearity, as is the sea with the ship in the nautical scene lower down.⁸ This icon is the latest known dated work by Emmanuel Tzanes, executed in 1683 when he was 73 years old. There is nothing surprising in the conservatism of its style, for as Vocotopoulos has pointed out the Rethymnian painter reverts on other occasions to his old conservative style; in the icon of Saint Anthony (1645) he follows the style of the icon of Saint Spyridon (1636), so that there is homogeneity in the pair of works painted for the same dedicator.⁹

These two icons of single saints had border scenes from the life of the saint, as did the icon of Saint Nicholas by Angelos. It can be assumed, by analogy, that the same type of biographical scenes will have surrounded our icon. This assumption is reinforced by the presence of the miracle at sea in its lower section and also by the fact that the sides were sawn off some time in the past and a corded wooden frame added, which was removed in recent conservation. The dimensions of the icons of Saint Anthony and Saint Spyridon, 100.5 x 73 cm,¹⁰ are little different from those of our icon, taking into account the fact that the panel has been sawn off on all sides. According to the aforesaid, Saint Nicholas belongs in a group of large-format icons by Tzanes in which saints are presented single and frontal, and surrounded by scenes from their life. The stylistic similarities between these icons, which date from different phases of Tzanes's life, indicate that the painter adhered constantly to the types he used, depending on the commissions.

Tzanes painted this icon for its dedicator Nikolaos Sigouros, as declared in the votive inscription accompanied by the family coat of arms. The Sigouros family was one of the leading noble families of Zakynthos (Zante), as its armorial bearings attest.¹¹ It rose to distinction by equipping galleys and supporting the Venetians in martial campaigns. A scion of the Sigouros family, Draganigos Sigouros, was the subsequent Saint Dionysios (local saint of Zakynthos), while other members were renowned for their role in the naval battle at Lepanto (Naupaktos).¹² Leonidas Zois notes among them Nikolaos, son of Hector, who is mentioned in a document of 1599;¹³ he was a Knight of Saint Mark who fitted out galleys and was distinguished 'in peace and war'; another document mentions Nikolaos a syndic, who was slain in 1656 during a naval engagement in the Dardanelles.¹⁴ Lastly, a document refers to Nikolaos Sigouros or Kalonas, censor and judge in 1683,¹⁵ the only one who can be identified with the dedicator of the icon of Saint Nicholas, since he was the only one alive in that year, 1683.

The painter's contact with the aristocracy of Zante is attested also by an earlier icon of the Virgin of the Passion (Amolyntos), bearing the dedicatory inscription of the

168. Emmanuel Tzanes, *Saint Nicholas*,
Cat. no. 30, detail.



Andreas Kalonas family and dated 1641,¹⁶ while Nikolaos Katramis's information concerning Tzanes's residence on the island has not been confirmed.¹⁷

The appeal of Emmanuel Tzanes's work on Zakynthos is in any case ascertained from much earlier; the wall-paintings in Hagios Georgios 'tsi Kalogries', 1669, include Saint Gbodelaas in the new iconographic type introduced by Tzanes in painting and diffused by his engraving that accompanied the printed text of the saint's service (*akolouthia*), in 1661.¹⁸

The date 1683 on our icon shows that Emmanuel Tzanes received the commission for it while he was still resident in Venice, since he is known to have been vicar in the church of Saint George there until 1685.¹⁹ During this interval the painter maintained his connections with Corfu, where there are other icons produced in his Venetian period.²⁰ The icon of Saint Nicholas reveals that he also retained links with one of the foremost families of Zakynthos.

CONDITION Overpainted in several places where the paint and the gesso have been destroyed. A corded woodcarved frame had been added in a later period. It was probably then that the lower part of the representation of the marine scene was sawn off. See Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Chatzidakis 1948, 472, no. 12.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos.

NOTES

1. See remarks on Tzanes's haloes, Vocotopoulos 1990, 106.
2. See Rizo-Rangabé 1927, fig. on p. 242.
3. E.g. see the icon in Hagios Nikolaos tis Stegis, Cyprus, *Icons from Cyprus* 1975, 52, no. 15.
4. Vocotopoulos 1990, 16-17, no. 7, fig. 86; see also the representation on the border of the icon by Andreas Ritzos in Tokyo, Chatzidakis 1985, pl. 201.
5. See Cat. no. 29, 268ff.
6. Drandakis 1962, 17-24, pl. 1. Vocotopoulos 1990, 119-120, no. 81, fig. 56; there is also a large icon of 1605 with the saint in the same type, in Chalkidiki, *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, 148-150, no. 150.
7. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 72, 108-110, figs 50-51.
8. For miracles at sea see Mitsani 1994, 152-168, pls 35-44.
9. Vocotopoulos 1990, 109-110.
10. Vocotopoulos 1990, 110, n. 7.
11. Rizo-Rangabé 1927, 242ff.
12. Zois 1963, 585-589.
13. Zois 1963, 586.
14. Zois 1963, 587.
15. Zois 1963, 587. For members of the family named Nikolaos see also Rizo-Rangabé 1927, nos 30, 33, p. 247, no. 72, 250, no. 119, 251-252.
16. Konomos 1964, 22. Konomos 1988, 69. The Kalovas family from Rethymnon was entered in the Libro d'Oro of the Zakynthian nobility in 1631.
17. Katramis 1880, 341; see also Konomos 1988, 67-68, with related bibliography.
18. See below Cat. no. 32, 286-289, n. 11.
19. Drandakis 1974, 37-38. Vocotopoulos 1990, 104.
20. Vocotopoulos 1990, 107.

169. Emmanuel Tzanes, *Saint Nicholas*, 1683, Cat. no. 30. Detail showing the painter's signature, the coat of arms and the dedicatory inscription.



31

THE MIRACLE OF THE HOLY GIRDLE

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3728

30.9 x 23 x 1.9 cm

Emmanuel Tzanes, second half of 17th century

'In the middle two women steady the suffering Queen Zoe, while on her left the Patriarch takes the Holy Girdle from the Sacred Chest ('Αγία Σορός) and places it upon the sick empress. On her right King Leon kneels, his hands joined in supplication. A host of figures are gathered around these three protagonists: women, young deacons in tunica alba holding a large candle, other clerics and soldiers with long lances. In front of this anxious group, on an obliquely placed, wide, deep purple table, the gold case of the Girdle, 'ἡ ἁγία καὶ σεβασμία σορός' (the holy and venerable relic). In the foreground, a large candle and an incense burner placed on the paved floor. The scene takes place inside the church of the Panagia Chalkoprateion, as the inscription on the cornice of the semicircle records: ὁ ἐν τοῖς Χαλκοπρατείοις σεβάσμιος οἶκος τῆς Ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου (within the Chalkoprateia, revered house of the Most Holy Mother of God). In the half-vault of the semicircular sanctuary, on a gold ground, is the Virgin orans, with Christ in her lap blessing with both hands, flanked right and left by two adorant angels. The result of the miracle of the Sacred Girdle is revealed by three small black devils fleeing upwards left, releasing the queen from her affliction.

Below left, the inscription in small black letters:

Χεὶρ / Ἐμμανουήλ / (ἰ)ερέως τοῦ / τζάνε (Hand of Emmanuel Tzanes, priest).

Above, in small, cursive red letters on a gold strip, the inscription:

Θαῦμα γερονός διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῆς τιμίας ζώνης

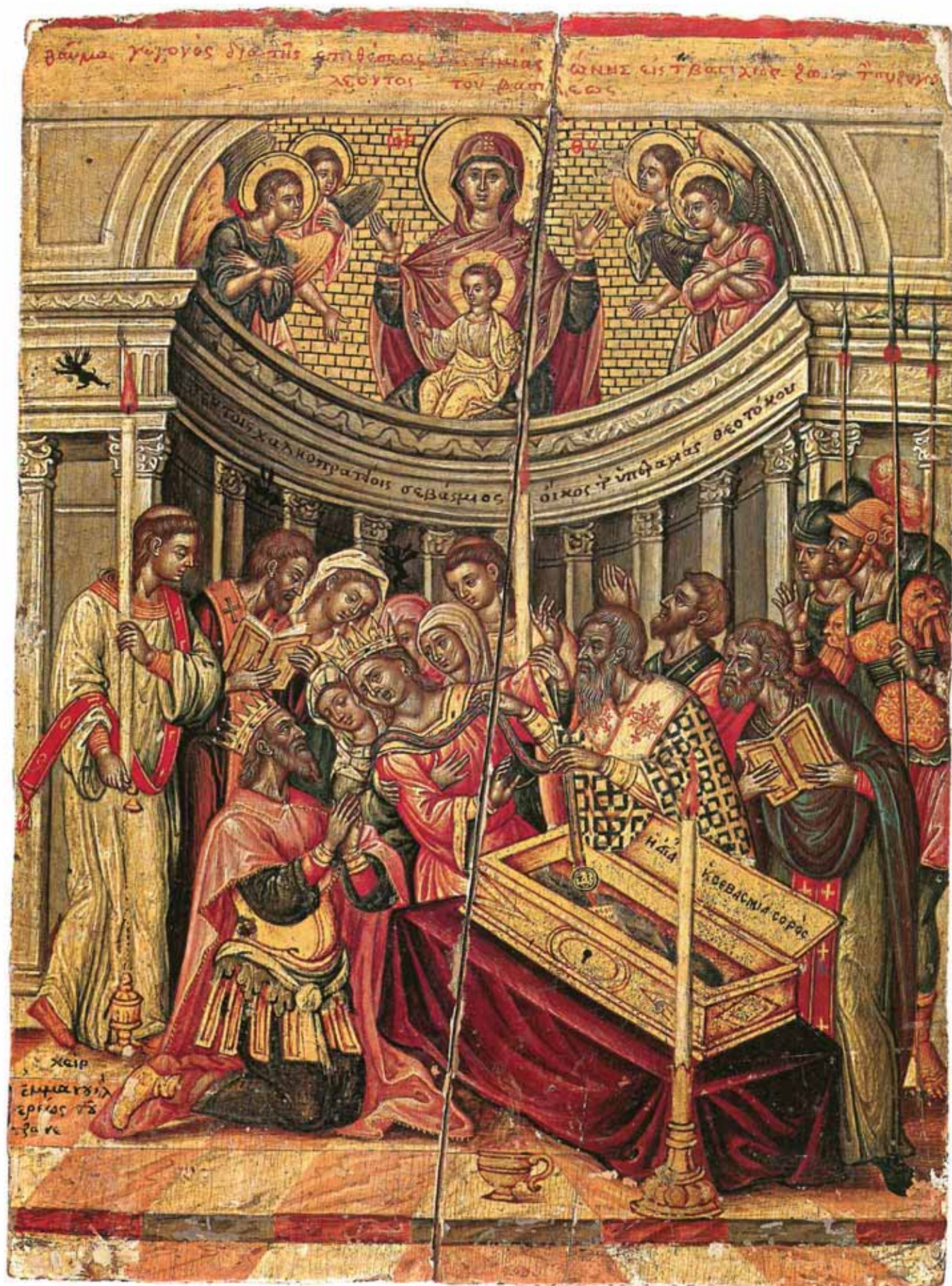
εἰς τὴν βασιλεύσαν ζώην τὴν σύζυγον / λέοντος τοῦ βασιλέως.

(Miracle wrought by placing the holy girdle on Queen Zoe the wife of King Leon).

The miracle represented here is celebrated by the Church on 31 August. The *Synaxarium*¹ relates in great detail how Queen Zoe, second wife of Emperor Leon the Wise, saw in a vision that she would be released from the unclean spirit if the Holy Girdle of the Virgin were placed upon her. This holy relic had been kept since Justinian's reign in the church of the Chalkoprateion, inside the Sacred Bier that Arkadios had made for it.² The case was first opened by Leon, 'and the holy girdle was found as if newly woven, shining, having a seal of a gold bulla and a codicillus ...'. Tzanes's representation is an accurate illustration of the narration in the *Synaxarium*.

No earlier icon of this subject is known in Byzantine and Postbyzantine art. The Benaki Museum icon of the Miracle of the Holy Girdle,³ which is attributed to Theodoros Poulakis, is later than Tzanes's, since Western influences are more pronounced and it is

170. Emmanuel Tzanes, *The Miracle of the Holy Girdle*, second half of 17th century, Cat. no. 31. Benaki Museum.



less closely reliant on the *Synaxarium*; moreover its composition is based on the famous painting of the Dormition of the Virgin, by an anonymous, fifteenth-century German artist.⁴ Thus it is surmised that Emmanuel Tzanes created this new composition, just as he created the type of Saint Gobdelaas [see Cat. no. 32].

... The subject of the Gift of the Virgin's Girdle to Thomas is a popular one in North Italian art, because the Catholics believe that this precious relic was kept in the Prato cathedral in Florence.⁵ It is possible that through his icon the priest Tzanes sought to declare Orthodoxy's special link with the Holy Girdle, the true one, which was kept by the emperors. Orthodox Christians believe that the relic is nowadays housed in the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos, to which it was presented by the Serb Prince Lazaros I (1372-1389).⁶

The iconography of the work is not related to any Byzantine tradition. The composition brings to mind Tintoretto's large painting of the miracle of Saint Agnes, in Santa Maria dell'Orto in Venice.⁷ The analogies are evident in the kneeling figure, the figures bent over in curiosity left and right, the crammed crowd, the comparable gestures of the queen in the icon and an elderly figure in Tintoretto's canvas, the edifice in the background and the arched top. Other traits bespeak a more general Italian influence, such as the elegant *contrapposto* in the young deacon's gait, the voluptuous females, the downcast gazes, as well as the attempted naturalistic rendering of the garments and the different levels, with the steps, the oblique table and the naturally illumined semicircle. Nevertheless, the Greek elements are preponderant: apart from the Byzantine style of the figures of the Patriarch, the priest beside him and the group of the Virgin with Angels, the articulation of the composition in general vouches for Tzanes's adherence to a Byzantine conception of symmetry around the central axis, here created by the Virgin with the queen and the two overlying heads, of the woman and of the deacon carrying the candle. The modelling is achieved with the familiar conventional illumination which here remains essentially Byzantine, despite the chiaroscuro in the semicircle and some shadows on the ground. The polychromy and the use of certain tones, such as deep cerise, are not sufficient to qualify Tzanes's coloration as Venetian, because he does not understand, or rather does not want to understand, the canons of Venetian painting regarding the relationship between light and colour.

This original icon is executed in excellent technique and the colours are as lustrous as if they were fresh, increasing its unusual brightness.

...Tzanes uses a comparable composition in his representation of the Nativity of the Virgin, in an icon of similar dimensions, in the Loverdos Collection.⁸ The handling of the Italian elements, the meticulous modelling, the brilliant colours, even the form of the paved floor, bear witness to the stylistic unity in these two icons, which also have the same type of minuscule signature ...'. *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

The icon's relatively small size also reveals the painter's ability as a miniaturist, known from other small icons, such as Saint George, in the Byzantine Museum and the Benaki Museum, or the triptych in the Canellopoulos Collection.⁹

The creative reworking of the Italian model and the absolute mastery of

technique permit the inclusion of the icon of the Holy Girdle among the best works of a creative period, when Tzanes introduced new themes into the iconography of icons.¹⁰

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon on a panel of hard wood, cracked down the middle from top to bottom. Otherwise the icon is in very good condition and no varnish has altered the brilliance of the colours. The outlines are incised. On the back, a seal in sealing-wax: globus crucifer surmounted by a crown.'

The icon is in excellent condition.

PROVENANCE The icon belonged to the Cretan Archimandrite Parthenios Kelaidis, who acquired it in Trieste and subsequently donated it to the High Commissioner of Crete, Prince George, in 1899 (Kelaidis 1930, 189-190. Cf. also Tomadakis 1947, 149, no. 50, pl. IA').

BIBLIOGRAPHY Tomadakis 1947, 149, no. 50, pl. IA'. Chatzidakis 1948, 471, no. 50.

Notes

1. See *Synaxarium*, cols 935-936. *PG*, cols 117, 813. Doukakakis 1891, 461-464.
2. For the Hagia Soros see Ebersolt 1921, 54ff.
3. Xyngopoulos 1936, 78, pl. 41A.
4. Kunstle 1926, 572, fig. 321. Rigopoulos 1979, 144, 174, 202, no. 82, pl. 162, fig. 174. Poulakis even follows this model, in the arrangement of the central figures, in another of his icons, that of the Conception of Saint Anne, in the Byzantine Museum, Rigopoulos 1979, fig. 154.
5. Kunstle 1926, 582ff. See also Cavedoni 1842, 321-354.
6. See Smyrnakis 1903, 437-439. Rammos 1948, 11-16. Dolger 1943, 270, pl. 169.
7. See Venturi, IX, 4, fig. 487. Fosca 1929, pl. XLV. Von der Bercken 1942, pl. 107. Tietze 1948, fig. 27.
8. Chatzidakis 1948, 473, no. 19 (it is not included in the catalogue of the Loverdos Museum, Papayannopoulos-Palaos 1946).
9. Chatzidakis 1953, pl. XVIII. Drandakis 1962, 106-110, pls 45, 46a-b. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 40.
10. Emmanuel Tzanes also introduces a new iconography for familiar themes, such as Saint Gbodelaas and Saint Theodora, see Xyngopoulos 1957, 234. Drandakis 1962, 35. Katselaki 1995, 134-138. See also Cat. no. 32, nn. 4-6.

32

SAINT GOBDELAAS

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3727

20.7 x 15.6 x 2.3 cm

Emmanuel Tzanes, second half of 17th century

'The young Persian saint is portrayed to mid-thighs, standing in a sophisticated pose. His head is turned three-quarters left, with a reddish gold plumed diadem on his golden hair. The prince's shoulders are covered by a gold-embroidered silk (?) mantle, tied in front in a knot and falling behind in full elegant pleats. Under this is a gilded cuirass chased with finely wrought floral motifs, worn over a deep green tunic with gold dots. The sleeves are embellished with gold cuffs; the right hand gently holds a cross, while the left rests on the heart. Around the waist is a narrow sword belt.

The technique is exceptionally careful and refined. The influence of Italian Baroque is apparent in the opulent garments characteristic of the Eastern prince, the gentility of the pose with the cinched waist, unusual in Byzantine painting, the affected attitude of the hands and the musing gaze which is not directed at the beholder. All these convey the impression of a theatrical hero rather than a modest and militant saint. A more specific model for Tzanes's creation could be sought in Tintoretto's Saint Ursula, in the chapel of the Ospedale, Venice, as an example of a type current in Renaissance and Baroque painting.¹ We believe that the unsigned icon is not by Emmanuel Tzanes himself, but by an accomplished painter less imbued with the spirit of tradition, perhaps one of his pupils ...' *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

Saint Gobdelaas (Abd Allah) 'true son of Saborios, King of the Persians' was converted to Christianity and martyred for his faith; his feast is celebrated on 29 September.² The earliest known representations of him are sixteenth-century wall-paintings of the School of mainland Greece, in the monasteries of Philanthropinon, Varlaam (1548) and elsewhere, in a completely different iconography of Byzantine type.³

Emmanuel Tzanes wrote the '*Akolouthia of the Great Martyr Saint Gobdelaas the Persian the polyathlos*', out of personal gratitude to the saint for saving his dying brother Frangias, and printed it in Venice in 1661.⁴

Andreas Xyngopoulos, in his 1947 study of Emmanuel Tzanes's contribution to the creation and development of the iconography of Gobdelaas, ascertained that the painter created the new type of the saint which appeared in the publication of his *akolouthia* (1661) and circulated in a wood-cut not long afterwards (1663) (Fig. 172).⁵ Drandakis in 1962 published a signed icon by Emmanuel Tzanes, of 1655, and proposed dating the creation of the new iconographic type six years earlier, that is to the period when Tzanes was still in Crete.⁶





172. *Saint Gobdelaas, engraving by Emmanuel Tzanes, 1661.*

Saint Gobdelaas is represented by several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century painters, usually following the 1661 engraving. The examples cited by Xyngopoulos in 1947 are extended by Vocotopoulos in his study of the icon of the full-bodied saint, in Corfu.⁷ Of these comparanda, our icon displays iconographic affinity with the icon in a private collection in Venice (1655)⁸ in the downward position of the right hand, the cross and the crown, although it differs in the position of the left hand, which bends on the chest. Our icon differs from the type of the 1661 engraving⁹ mainly in the position of the right hand, which bends upwards, and in the direction of the gaze; it resembles it however in the barely perceptible turn of the thighs and in the simpler decoration of the cuirass with cruciform pattern. Of the many known icons of Saint Gobdelaas, that most closely related in iconographic type to ours is the one in the Arvanitidis Collection (1676), in which the saint's hand is outstretched downwards.¹⁰ It differs from this work in the decoration of the cuirass, for instead of the cupids familiar in Tzanes's

icons, it is geometric as in the engraving.

In comparison with the signed icons by Tzanes certain differences are observed in the quality of the drawing and the modelling of the flesh. The paint surface has been damaged in previous cleaning that has altered the colours of the flesh on the hands and face. Nevertheless, it can be clearly discerned that the drawing of the ornaments is looser, the drapery of the garments simpler and the flesh, here modelled with dense white lines, softer. All these traits indicate that the icon belongs to the circle of works influenced by the painter, in the second half of the seventeenth century.

The presence of Saint Gobdelaas in the wall-paintings of Hagios Georgios 'tsi Kalogries', 1669,¹¹ confirms the early dissemination of Tzanes's iconography in Zakynthos. Noteworthy too is the fact that the *akolouthia* of Saint Gobdelaas was included in a work published by Athanasios the Kretan and edited by the hieromonk Athanasios Tsangaropoulos 'from Zakynthos' in 1693.¹² Lastly, there was another analogous icon of Saint Gobdelaas in the Velimezis Collection, with the signature ΠΟΙΗΜΑ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥ ΕΥΤΕΛΟΥΣ ΙΕΡΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΤΖΑΓΚΑΡΟΛΟΥ (*Work of the humble priest Stephanos Tzankarolas*), in an iconographic type closer to the engraving.¹³

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'The icon is painted on thick, hard wood with fine gesso. The outlines and some details are incised. The condition is very good. Most of the gold ground is lost.'

The gold ground of the icon and the outlines were damaged in previous cleaning and there is blackening of the colours on the hands and face.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Chatzidakis 1947, 472, no. 13. Drandakis 1962, 35-37, n. 6. Vocotopoulos 1990, 153-154, n. 15.

NOTES

1. Fosca, pl. XLVI. See Xyngopoulos 1947, fig. 4.
2. *Synaxarium*, col. 89, 13-14. See also Nikodemos Hagioreitis 1868, vol. I, 83-87.
3. See Xyngopoulos 1947, 476-477, pl. ΚΔ', fig. 3. Acheimastou-Potamianou 1983, 104-105. Vocotopoulos 1990, 153, 154 and n. 60. See also *Hermeneia* 1909, 159, 193, 271.
4. Legrand 1894, II, 129-133.
5. Xyngopoulos 1947, 468-486, pls ΚΓ'-ΚΗ'.
6. Drandakis 1962, no. 3, 33-39, especially p. 35, pl. 9α-β; the icon is in a private collection in Venice.
7. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 122, 152ff., fig. 292, with other examples.
8. Drandakis 1962, 33-39, no. 3, pl. 9α-β.
9. See n. 5.
10. Xyngopoulos 1947, 481-482, pl. ΚΣΤ', fig. 6.
11. Chatzidakis 1956, 14, fig. 1. 12. Xyngopoulos 1947, 479, n. 30.
13. Chatzidakis 1945, no. 25, 44-44α. Xyngopoulos 1947, 484, pl. ΚΗ', fig. 7.

33

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3735

50.7 x 41.2 x 0.6 cm

Double-sided icon, side B (see Cat. no. 13)

Last quarter of 17th century

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple is depicted beneath a painted arch resting on red marble columns. The device framing one of the basic scenes in the life of Christ indicates that the icon adorned the epistyle of an iconostasis in a church. Simeon, left, in a pale rose himation covering both hands, holds the infant Christ, ready to deliver him to the Virgin who approaches from the left, in a deep red maphorion, with her arms outstretched. Behind her is Joseph, in a light brown chiton and a rose-coloured himation like Simeon, holding two pigeons. Behind and between them is the prophetess Anna in a dark bluish green maphorion, holding an open scroll with the inscription: *TOYTO TO BPEΦOC OYPANON KAI ΓHN ECTEPEΩCE* (*This child consolidated heaven and earth*). The scene takes place inside a church indicated by the a ciborium upheld by four columns, over the sanctuary which is enclosed by a semicircular screen of green marble entered through a woodcarved bema door decorated with figures of apostles in monochromy. A large lamp hangs from the canopy. Bottom right, on the base of the pedestal on which Simeon stands, in black capital letters, the forged inscription: *XEIP MIXAHA ΔAMACKHNOY KPHTOC* (*Hand of Michael Damaskenos, Cretan*).

The scene follows an iconography crystallized in fifteenth-century Cretan painting, as in the icon in Patmos¹ and in the border scenes on the icon by Nikolaos Ritzos in Sarajevo.² The type was disseminated in a large number of icons by Theophanis who used it in Hagios Nikolaos Anapafsas (1527) and in an icon in the Monastery of Stavronikita.³ Among the most important examples of this type in the second half of the sixteenth century are the icon by Michael Damaskenos in the church of Saint George of the Greek Community in Venice,

173. *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple* (reverse of double-sided icon Cat. no. 13), second half of 17th century, Cat. no. 33. Benaki Museum.



as well as the icon in the Greek Institute in that city, which is attributed to Georgios Klontzas.⁴

Comparison with the early model reveals the absence of the lateral buildings, only a part of which is visible, and the addition of a checkered floor and the figures of the apostles in monochromy on the bema door.

All these traits, in conjunction with the ponderous proportions of the figures, the stressed outlines on the geometric drapery and the facial features, and the rich coloration lead to a workshop close to the style of certain icons by Emmanuel Tzanes, such as the Doubting of Thomas, in the Greek Institute in Venice, or the scenes in the triptych in the Canellopoulos Collection.⁵ However the skilled technique and characteristic modelling of the flesh with the dense, parallel white lines that distinguish most of Tzanes's works are lacking from our icon. In accordance with the above, it is the work of a painter who followed conservative models, most probably in the Ionian Islands, and can be dated to the last quarter of the seventeenth century.

On the other side of the icon there was a representation of the evangelist Matthew (Cat. no. 13), of an earlier period and different workmanship; as mentioned already, it was used to adorn the epistyle of an iconostasis. It is worth noting that in its second use, in a considerably later period, the icon once again adorned the epistyle of an iconostasis.

CONDITION The representation of the evangelist Matthew on the other side of the panel was removed during conservation in the Benaki Museum in 1976 (see Cat. no. 13). The icon is in good condition with slight damage near the frame. The signature of Michael Damaskenos is forged. See Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, no. 26, 77-78, pl. 24.
2. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, pl. 202.
3. Chatzidakis 1969-70, fig. 70; see also other examples Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, 78 and n. 5.
4. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 40, 63-64, pl. 29 and no. 53, 81, pl. 40. See also a late 16th-century icon in the parish of Spilia, Crete, *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 161, 515-516 (M. Borboudakis).
5. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 115, 137, pl. 62. Drandakis 1962, pls 45-46. For the painter see above Cat. nos 29, 30, 31.



34

THE TRANSFIGURATION

44.5 x 34.4 x 2 cm

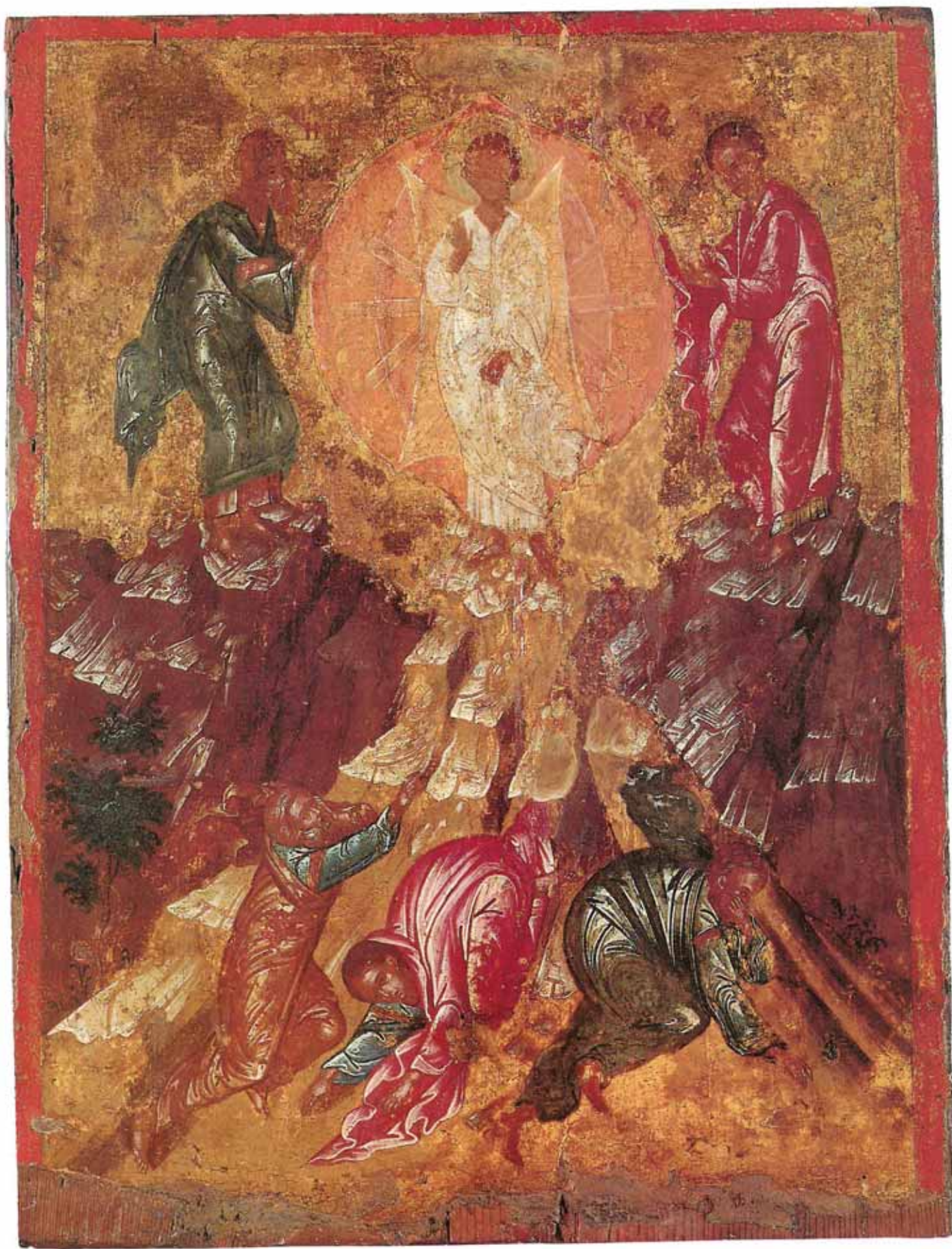
Second half of 17th century

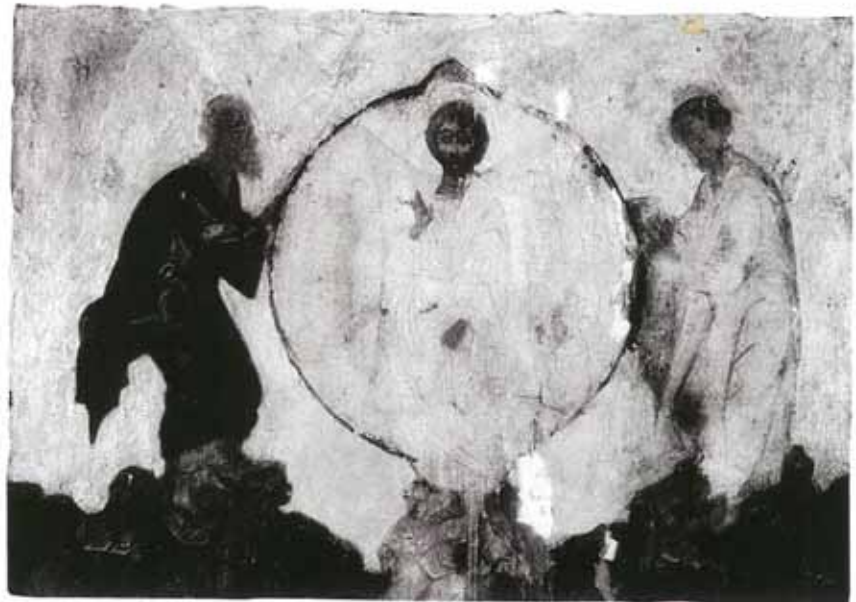
Christ is portrayed in frontal pose and holding an open scroll, his palm outwards in a gesture of supplication. Clad in a white chiton and himation, he stands on top of a steep mountain within a light rose circular mandorla inscribed with elliptical geometric motifs and white rays (Figs 176, 177). Two prophets, standing on separate rocky mountains at the same height as Christ, touch the edge of the mandorla with their hands. Left, Prophet Elijah, in brown chiton and greenish himation, holds his right arm with his bent left hand. Right, Moses holds a book — the tablets of the Law — in both hands, which are covered by his reddish himation. At the top, on the badly effaced gold ground, are faint capital letters, left white and right red; the original inscription in red capitals was revealed after conservation: *H METAMOPΦΩCIC* (*The Transfiguration*).

On the foothills of the mountain are the three apostles, in animated poses conveying astonishment, in accordance with the narration in Matthew (17:1-6): *'And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid'*. Peter, left, half-kneeling, raises his head and gazes at Christ, making gestures of amazement; he touches his cheek with his left hand and thrusts his right upwards (Fig. 178). James, right, turns his back on the scene as he falls to the ground, hiding his face with his left hand. John, in the middle, kneels and falls prostrate on the ground with both arms outstretched, also turning his back on the Transfiguration. Peter wears a blue chiton and a red himation; John a blue chiton and a brown himation, like Moses; James a deep blue chiton and himation, like Prophet Elijah. The rocks of the mountain are painted in different colours, the central one light brown and the two lateral ones deep purple. The edges on the abrupt summits are painted with deft, broad white brushstrokes.

The icon combines two important models of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Cretan painting.¹ In the upper part, which includes Christ and two prophets, the fifteenth-century model, known in an icon of the same size from the Stathatos Collection,

175. *The Transfiguration, second half of 17th century, Cat. no. 34.*





176. Christ, Moses and Prophet Elijah, detail of icon Cat. no. 34 (infrared photograph).

now in the Benaki Museum, and an icon in the Tsakyroglou Collection, is followed.² The poses, the gestures, even the arrangement of the drapery, as well as the round shape of the mandorla, are the same, while a minor divergence is observed in Christ's right hand, which in our icon has the palm outwards instead of blessing: there are also differences in the colour of the mandorla, which is rose instead of the deep blue used in the Benaki Museum icon,³ and in the pose of Moses who is shown standing here instead of walking.

The lower part of the composition is taken from another model. There are significant differences in the attitudes and gestures of the apostles, while the episode of Christ's arrival and departure with his disciples is omitted. The closest model for this part, as well as for Moses's pose, is encountered in works by Theophanis. In an icon in the Lavra Monastery (1535)⁴ the poses of Peter and James are exactly the same as in our icon, whereas the pose of John is the same as in the fifteenth-century icon in the Benaki Museum. However, in the Lavra icon the arrangement of the drapery and the pose of Moses, without the tablets of the Law, are different. On the contrary, in the icon of the same subject in the Monastery of Stavronikita⁵ Moses is portrayed in similar type, with the tablets, while the poses of all the other figures differ. Affinity in the poses of the three apostles is encountered in the wall-paintings in the Stavronikita Monastery,⁶ where even the rocks of the mountain are drawn in the same way. On account of damage in the upper section of this wall-painting, where Christ and Prophet Elijah are represented, no conclusions can be drawn on the model used for them. Moses is depicted in a different pose, however, walking upon the mountain top. It seems that the painter of our icon combined the earlier fifteenth-century model for rendering Christ and Prophet Elijah, and the later models of Theophanis (1535 and 1547) for rendering the apostles and Moses.



As far as the poses of the apostles are concerned, that of Peter is exactly the same, even in the gesture, as in an icon from Constantinople (*circa* 1600), in the Benaki Museum,⁷ while the poses of John and James are similar with minor deviations in the position of the hands. The poses and gestures of the three figures in the upper part of the icon are different. In the Velimezis icon the drapery on the garments of Christ and the prophets follows the manner of fifteenth-century Cretan painting, as does their iconography. On the contrary, the drawing on the figures of the apostles lacks the clarity and precision of fifteenth-century painters and the drapery is rendered with thicker lines, stronger white highlights and broader colour planes. The formation of the landscape with the faceted rocks is also softer and more loosely drawn, belying a later period. The icon might have been repainted some time in the past by a painter who was true to tradition. However, it is more likely that the work constitutes a synthesis of a painter who remained faithful to early models, as is usual in works by Victor, Ilias Moskos and several other good artists of the second half of the seventeenth century.

Stylistically some traits in our icon are comparable to those observed in an icon of the Nativity by Ilias Moskos, in the Benaki Museum (1658).⁸ Despite the important difference of Moskos's Italianate composition, the likeness is apparent in the undulating planes of the steep rocks of the cave and the conservative rendering of the figure of Joseph, who resembles Peter in our icon of the Transfiguration.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'The icon is of thick wood with fine gesso preparation on fine linen. The upper part of the icon has been repaired, particularly Christ's face, while the body is untouched. There are also repairs on the prophets and the rocks. The lower part with the apostles is virtually intact. In the bottom left corner barely discernible traces of an inscription, which was erased in cleaning.'

The icon had overpaintings, mainly in the upper part, which were removed during recent cleaning. The traces of the signature discerned by Chatzidakis are just visible in the infrared photograph. Various numbers have been written in ink on the back of the icon in a recent period. See also Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. For the iconography see Millet 1916, 216ff. and 226ff., figs 187-197.
2. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 26, 36-37, with bibliography and other examples.
3. In a 15th-century icon in the Gonia Monastery, Crete, Christ's palm is turned outwards; however, there are important differences in other elements of the composition (see *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 165, 519 (M. Borboudakis).
4. Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, fig. 332.
5. Chatzidakis 1969-70, fig. 72.
6. Chatzidakis 1986, fig. 87.
7. *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1994, no. 64, 245-246 (A. Drandaki).
8. Xyngopoulos 1951, no. 8, 11, pl. 8. *Treasures of Orthodoxy* 1994, no. 67, 248-249 (A. Drandaki).



35

DEESIS: CHRIST, THE VIRGIN AND SAINT GEORGE KEPHALOPHOROS

40.5 x 31 x 2 cm

Leos (Moskos?), 1649

'In the middle, Christ stands in frontal pose, clad in a deep green toga and holding the globe in his left hand. Right, the Virgin turns towards Christ, with expression and pose of intercession, wearing a deep green dress with dark red maphorion. Left, Saint George, a comely knight, in corresponding pose to the Virgin, holds his severed head in his right hand and lance in the left; his mantle and cuirass are red with gold ornaments. The ground is gold. Above Christ, amidst blue-green clouds, God, the Ancient of Days, with arms outstretched in blessing, and below him, in a circle, the Holy Spirit as a dove. In the clouds, small heads of winged angels.

On the green foreground, left of Christ's feet, the date *AXMΘ* (1649) and right the signature: *[X]EI[P] AEOY* (*Hand of Leos*), in elegant red capitals.

The icon is of particular interest for its style and technique. The influence of Italian painting is abundantly clear in the colours, the facial expressions, the tall bodies and the soft folds of the garments; even in the Virgin's headdress, not to mention the blue-green clouds and the little angels. However, Leos paid great attention to modelling the heads and hands in the so-called Cretan manner, with calligraphic white highlights on the dark foundation.

So he manages to create a highly personal style, for although in the combination of the two heterogeneous elements the Italian dominate, the manner in which this is achieved is different from that of E. Tzanes or Th. Poulakis, the two painters who had the greatest influence on their contemporaries. In Tzanes's work the spirit was more attached to tradition and in Poulakis's imagination played a bold role. From the three known works by Leos — who should not be confused with the later Leos Moschos (see Xyngopoulos, *Catalogue*, 39) — it seems that he tried to combine the different manners in a serene and noble style, executed with conscientious craftsmanship.' *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

The icon follows an established Byzantine iconography of the Deesis that comprises three standing figures with Christ in the middle.¹ An analogous composition occurs in an early sixteenth-century icon in Princeton, with the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist interceding on either side of Christ, and in an earlier, fifteenth-century, Cretan icon in Sinai with Saint Phanourios in the position of Saint George, the similarity extending to the

179. *Leos (Moskos?), Deesis, 1649, Cat. no. 35.*



military uniform of the soldier-saint.² The three-quarter pose of Saint George kephalophoros in our icon is known in a series of Cretan icons in which, however, he is portrayed alone in an attitude of intercession.³ The Western-style rendering of Christ blessing and holding the translucent orb, characteristic attribute of the Lord in Italian painting, is encountered in the illustration used by Panayotis Doxaras in his book *Τέχνη Ζωγραφίας* (*Art of Painting*) (1720), now in the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice.⁴ Noteworthy is the fact that Domenikos Theotokopoulos painted Christ in this type in his Apostle series, in Spain.⁵

In a manuscript by the painter Panayotis Plaisas (after 1912), in the Estavromenos church in the town of Zakynthos, an icon is accurately recorded as: 'having the Everlasting Father above, Jesus Christ below and on either side the Virgin and George holding his severed head'. The description also notes that it bore the signature *A.X.M.Θ. ΧΕΙΡ ΑΕΟΥ* (...).⁶ Zois describes the same icon in 1920: 'in 1648, it is clearly seen from his signature (Ilias Moskos) on a Trimorphon. Above, God in clouds and the Holy Spirit and Saint John the Baptist holding his severed head, of pure Cretan art ... as follows: *AXMΘ ΧΕΙΡ ΑΕΟΥ*'.⁷ The icon's identification is confirmed by a third description, given by Sisilianos: 'in the church of Estavromenos in Zakynthos a medium-size icon representing Christ standing, blessing and holding a globe. Right of Christ the Virgin, standing and interceding and left of him Saint George, without horse, holding his severed head. Above these three figures appears the Ancient of Days, blessing. It bears the date 1649 and is of refined and noble art'.⁸ There is thus no doubt that our icon should be identified as that described in the Estavromenos church in Zakynthos. This identification confirms the authenticity of the signature and the date, which laboratory examination showed had been repainted over an earlier signature. There is a signature of the same formula: *ΧΕΙΡ ΛΕΟΥ ΑΓΓΟΥ* (1648) on an icon of the Dormition of the Virgin, in the Loverdos Collection.⁹

Information on the painter Leos Moskos is somewhat confused. The suggestion that Ilias and Leos Moskos are one and the same person seems improbable,¹⁰ for it is known from notarial documents (1649-1690) that Leos originated from Rethymnon and worked in Zakynthos and Venice. Signed works by him date from 1648 to 1675.¹¹

Unfortunately damage resulting from previous conservation of the icon has spoilt the painted surface and blackened the colours over a large area. Nevertheless it is possible to discern the elegant poses, the delicate modelling of the flesh on the facial features and the miniature-style rendering of the angels in the clouds, as well as the meticulous development of the landscape in the background, with low hills and trees. Visible in the infrared photographs (Figs 180, 182) is the skilfully incised preliminary design, particularly on the faces with their passive expression, large eyes and characteristic wrinkle on the forehead. The above traits, indicative of an accomplished painter and adroit miniaturist, are even more apparent in an icon of the Last Judgement, of exceptional mastery, signed by Leos Moskos in 1653.¹² Despite the





181. Saint George kephalophoros, c. 1600.
Hermitage, Saint Petersburg.

damage and the altered colours on our icon, a comparable care in the rendering of details is observed, while the military uniform of Saint George is the same as that of Archangel Michael, especially the short tunic slit on the thighs and the high boots.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon on a thin panel that has warped, causing a slight split in the middle of the painted surface. Otherwise very well preserved. Dimensions 40.5 x 31.5.' A previous cleaning of the icon using fire has destroyed the painted surface and spoilt the colours, which have acquired a uniform blackish tone. See also Appendix III.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos, Estavromenos church.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

The icon is described but not identified by Zois 1920, Sisilianos 1935, 152, Konomos 1988, 71-72, and Rigopoulos 1990, 50-52.



182. *Leos (Moskos?)*, *Deesis*, detail of icon Cat. no. 35 (infrared photograph).

NOTES

1. See Mouriki 1968, 13-28. *Holy Image, Holy Space* 1988, no. 67, 152 and 223.
2. *Sinai* 1990, fig. 78 (N. Drandakis); the icon is attributed to the painter Angelos, see also *op. cit.*, fig. 84, the same theme with Saint Nicholas in place of Saint George.
3. See Walter 1992 and icon of Saint Paraskevi, Cat. no. 16, 182 nn. 17-23.
4. Kyriakou 1982, pl. H', 216-218.
5. Wethey 1962, I, cat. no. 113; II, 1962, fig. 203.
6. Flemotomos 1990, 203ff.
7. Pelekasis 1920, nos 654-655, p. 1. See also correct observations in Flemotomos 1990, 203-205.
8. Sisilianos 1935, 152. See also Konomos 1988, 71-72.
9. Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1946, 23, no. 97, *Dormition of the Virgin* (37 x 46 cm) (1648). As far as I know the authenticity of the signature has not been confirmed.
10. Pentogalos 1974, 34-51. Konomos 1988, 69-78.
11. Chatzidakis 1962, 125, nn. 2, 148. Chatzidakis (1977) 1875, 169. Chatzidakis 1997, with previous bibliography.
12. *After Byzantium* 1996, no. 40.

36

THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN

57.5 x 39.2 x 2 cm

Second half of 17th century

Christ, at the centre, in frontal pose, holding the Virgin's soul as a swaddled new-born infant, turns his body slightly right while gazing down at the Virgin lying on the bier. He stands against an elliptical blue-grey mandorla, within which are four angels drawn in grisaille and a little seraph at the apex. Two angels hold candlesticks with candles and two hold open scrolls with inscriptions; on the left one, in black capitals: *ΤΙΣ ΑΥΤΗ Η ΥΠΕΡΒΑΘΑ ΤΑ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΓΕΛΩΝ*; on the right, barely legible traces of letters: *Ν...ΘΑ...ΒΟC*. The apostles approach the Virgin's bier, followed by two women right and a hierarch and a woman left. In front of the bier are a high candlestick and, on a smaller scale, the episode with Jephonias and the angel. Above the bright mandorla is the Assumption of the Virgin, who appears in clouds held by two angels. With her right hand she offers the Girdle to the apostle Thomas, who approaches on a cloud a little lower down, in accordance with the apocryphal Latin text.¹ To left and right, two tall, narrow, two-storey buildings with arcade and balcony of Renaissance character. At the bottom of the icon, on the gold ground, a forged inscription in red capital letters: *ΑΧΠΑ' ΠΟΙΗΜΑ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΜΟΣΚΟΥ (1684, work of Ioannis Moskos)*.

183. *The Dormition of the Virgin*,
second half of 17th century, Cat. no. 36.



The development of the composition around the figure of the Virgin at the centre follows a Palaeologan model, known from a fifteenth-century icon in the Canellopoulos Museum.² Christ is shown with the four angels and the seraph within the elliptical mandorla, and the apostles are ranged about the bier in similar order. Analogous iconographic formats that incorporate the Assumption of the Virgin, as in our icon, are encountered in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Cretan icons: an icon in the Greek Institute, Venice, whose prototype is the Dormition of the Virgin by Andreas Ritzos, in Turin,³ and an icon in the Benaki Museum,⁴ which also includes the arrival of the apostles in clouds. The frontal pose of Christ in *contrapposto* as well as the elliptical mandorla with the angels holding high candlesticks are rendered in the same way in our icon, in monochromy. In style too the painter of our icon apparently imitates fifteenth-century models, mainly in the treatment of the drapery with small planes carefully highlighted at the edges. Nevertheless, the much looser drawing on the angels' faces, with the heavy eyelids, as well as the form of the buildings in the background, are traits of late seventeenth-century painting. Georgios Klontzas used an analogous iconographic type, with regard to the arrangement of the central figures and the addition of the Assumption of the Virgin, in two icons, in Kos and in the Sinai Monastery (Fig. 186).⁵ In these works

184. Domenikos Theotokopoulos,
The Dormition of the Virgin, 1560-1567.
Hermoupolis, Syros.



the great Cretan painter enriches the iconographic type with several secondary figures and high two-storey buildings with balconies similar to those in our icon, though of much simpler form. The miniature rendering of the Virgin in the clouds is closely linked to Klontzas's art, as are the attenuated figures of the two apostles beside her bier. These figures also recall the two apostles, with corresponding elongated proportions and similar pose and attire, in the icon of the Dormition of the Virgin by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, in Syros (Figs 184, 185).⁶

It is thus apparent that the painter of our icon not only draws on excellent quality fifteenth- and sixteenth-century models, which he handles successfully, but also applies the techniques of good Cretan painters. The result of this fusion of iconographic models and styles of two different periods is an art of retrospective character which can be detected in icons from the Ionian Islands in the second half of the seventeenth century, such as the Transfiguration (Cat. no. 34), although this follows a more conservative prototype.

The style of the icon of the Dormition of the Virgin, with its well-drawn attenuated figures of the apostles and the miniature figures in the clouds near the top, is closer to the icon of the Deesis by the painter Leos (see Cat. no. 35), which has analogous well-drawn figures with tiny highlights on the flesh and a

185. The Dormition of the Virgin, second half of 17th century, Cat. no. 36, detail.





186. Georgios Klontzas (?),
The Dormition of the Virgin. Monastery
 of Hagia Aikaterini, Sinai.

comparable preference for miniature rendering in the supplementary scenes in the clouds near the top. According to the above, our icon must be the work of a painter employing similar methods and following corresponding early models.

In 1957 Xyngopoulos refers to an icon of the Dormition of the Virgin, signed by Ioannis Moskos 'formerly in the possession of Th. Zoumboulakis'.⁷ The simplistic style of icons bearing the authentic signature of Ioannis Moskos, in the Byzantine Museum⁸ and Corfu,⁹ differs radically from the more sophisticated art of our icon¹⁰ and confirms that the signature is forged.

CONDITION A previous conservation of the icon destroyed the modelling of the flesh and part of the decoration of the building left, as well as the gold ground. The gesso, traces of gold and the incised preliminary design are discernible, as in other icons in the Collection.

PROVENANCE The Theodoros Zoumboulakis Collection (?) (Xyngopoulos 1957, 316); perhaps from Zakynthos, like the icon Cat. no 54.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. For the Virgin's Girdle see Cat. no. 31, 282-285.
2. *From Byzantium to El Greco* 1987, no. 23, 161-162 (N. Chatzidakis), with related examples; for the interpretation of the representation see Baltoyanni 1991, 353-372.
3. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 16, pl. 14, Chatzidakis 1974, 177, pl. Z'. N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 14, 70-73.
4. *El Greco of Crete* 1990, no. 1, 114-117 and 314-315 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou).
5. Acheimastou-Potamianou 1985-86, 125ff., figs 1-10.
6. *El Greco of Crete* 1990, no. 1, figs 1-3 and pp. 143, 329-330, Acheimastou-Potamianou 1995, 29ff., fig. 3. For this similarity see commentary in the Introduction, 61, n. 80.
7. Xyngopoulos 1957, 316.
8. Dormition of the Virgin, dated 1713, no. T. 1529, and Saint Spyridon in the Loverdos Collection (Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1936, no. 64).
9. 'In Thee Rejoice', Vocotopoulos 1990, fig. 304.
10. For the painter see Xyngopoulos 1957, 315-317, with information that should be re-examined see also Vocotopoulos 1990, 161, 162, no. 30, fig. 304.

37

THE BEHEADING OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

33.5 x 42 x 2 cm

Second half of 17th century

The moment just after the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist is shown. The executioner, turned three-quarters towards the left, grips his drawn sword in the lowered left hand while in the outstretched right he holds the saint's severed head, ready to place it on the platter held by the standing figure of Salome opposite. He wears the uniform of a Roman soldier, with a laminated cuirass and a red cloak entirely covering the right arm and falling to the ground. Salome is distinguished by her regal raiment: a coronet on her head, a long rose chiton with a shorter deep blue one over it, embroidered on the shoulder, and a purple mantle tied high on the shoulder. At the left, a woman turned three-quarters right advances and looks down at John; her body is wrapped completely in a deep blue mantle, leaving only the lower part of her long rose dress exposed. Saint John, headless and lying on the ground, is viewed from the side, turned towards the left. He wears the fleece and a long chiton covering him completely.

The scene is set inside the prison, indicated by a uniform stone wall with two arched, barred windows on the right and a larger arched gateway on the left. Two of Christ's bearded disciples peer in from behind the railings. Visible through the left window is another building with a smaller window from which a male figure looks down. Beyond the gateway, in the background, is a landscape of rolling hills. The scene is surrounded by a wide gold band on the upper part of which is an inscription in well-written red capitals: *Η ΑΠΟΤΟΜΗ ΤΗΣ ΣΕΒΑΣΜΙΑΣ ΚΕΦΑΛΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΤΙΜΙΟΥ ΕΝΔΟΞΟΥ Κ(ΑΙ) ΠΡΟΦΗΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΒΑΠΤΙΣΤΟΥ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ* (*The severing of the revered head of the holy, glorious and Prophet Forerunner and Baptist John*).

ΕΠΙΤΟΜΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΒΕΛΜΙΑΣ ΕΛΦΕΤΕΣ ΤΑΙΝΣ ΛΑΟΙΣ ΣΤΕΡΕΟΤΕΡΑ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΕΡΑ





188. *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, second half of 17th century. Zakynthos Museum, no. 390.



189. *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, 18th century. Zakynthos Museum, no. 133.

The iconography of the scene differs from that established by the icons of Michael Damaskenos, Theodoros Poulakis and other painters in the Ionian Islands, in which the preparation for the Beheading is depicted.¹ A description of the Beheading in the version showing the scene after John's decapitation, as in our icon, is given in the Painter's Manual by Dionysios: '... a short distance from the palace the prison with barred windows and outside this the Forerunner beheaded lying on the ground, and the executioner holding the (severed) head in the hand places this on a platter held by the maiden in front of him; and a little way yonder the apostles Andrew and John interring his body in the tomb'.² In this description the episode of Herod's Banquet is added to the scene, in which a servant 'who is seen from a window to the height of the chest and the arms' participates, as in our icon. Iconographic elements in common with those in our icon occur in an engraving of the same theme by J. Sadeler.³ The executioner, who holds the Forerunner's severed head, is in exactly the same pose, the only difference being that he is portrayed half-naked in the engraving whereas he wears the uniform of a Roman soldier in our icon. The position, pose and dress of the other figures differ, however. In our icon Salome stands opposite the executioner and not beside him, while she is arrayed as a Byzantine princess and not half-naked; John's headless body is turned sideways and not placed obliquely, while he wears the fleece and a long mantle covering his whole body instead of being half-naked. Nevertheless, the model of Sadeler's engraving appears exactly the same in icons in Cephalonia⁴ as well as in a late eighteenth-century icon in Zakynthos (Fig. 189).⁵

The painter of our icon adapted the Western model to the demands of traditional art. He dressed the figures in garments usual in earlier Cretan icons and gave the faces, such as those of the two disciples behind the railings, features familiar from

sixteenth-century Cretan painting. Although the intermediate tones have been erased, it seems that the flesh is modelled with small brown brushstrokes and white highlights on the prominent planes. The folds of the drapery, especially on the garments of Salome and of the approaching woman enveloped in her deep blue mantle, are drawn adroitly with white lines describing geometric shapes and delicate white highlights at the edges. The same dexterity is apparent in the drawing of the executioner's uniform with the laminated cuirass. Last, the pose and garb of Saint John the Baptist belong to the most conservative models of fifteenth-century Cretan painting.⁶

Both iconographic types of the Beheading were diffused in Zakynthos, where Damaskenos's iconography is encountered, as in icon Cat. no. 51 (Figs 238, 239),⁷ and an iconography like that of our icon, as in an eighteenth-century icon in the Zakynthos Museum, which is part of a series of scenes, from the church of the Hagio Pnevma Gaitaniou (Fig. 188).⁸ The iconographic model of this icon is exactly the same as ours, except that it is used in reverse. The poses, the garments, the colours and the details of the building with the barred windows are identical, attesting a stylistic affinity too, with analogous mingling of Western and traditional elements; the broad gold band with the extended inscription in capital letters is also common to both. The above similarities bear indirect witness to our icon's provenance from the same island, while its stylistic traits point to a period perhaps later than that of the icon from the church of the Hagio Pnevma Gaitaniou. Lastly, the manner and the position of the long inscription in capital letters in our icon recalls analogous inscriptions in icons by Theodoros Poulakis and Stephanos Tzankarolas.⁹ The painter of our icon with his personal style was surely a contemporary of these artists.

CONDITION Good, though damaged on the painted surface due to the previous method of cleaning.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos (?).

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. See icon of the Beheading, Cat. no. 51, 378-380, with related bibliography.
2. *Hermeneia* 1909, 177.
3. Rigopoulos 1979, pl. 151, fig. 163.
4. *Cephalonia* I 1989, fig. 211, 126. *Cephalonia* II 1994, fig. 118. Rigopoulos 1979, pl. 150, fig. 162.
5. Zakynthos Museum, unpublished.
6. See icon by the painter Stylianos, in Cyprus, Cat. no. 10 (Fig. 51) and other examples, in which the saint's head has not been severed, Chatzidakis 1974, 204-205, pl. ΑΓ', 1, 2.
7. See Cat. no. 51, 378-380, n. 1.
8. Unpublished (no. 390).
9. Rigopoulos 1979, pls 14, 22, 23, 25, 27, 86, 87. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 128, 160, fig. 64.

38

THE CRUCIFIXION

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3730

41.2 x 33 x 2.5 cm

Late 17th century

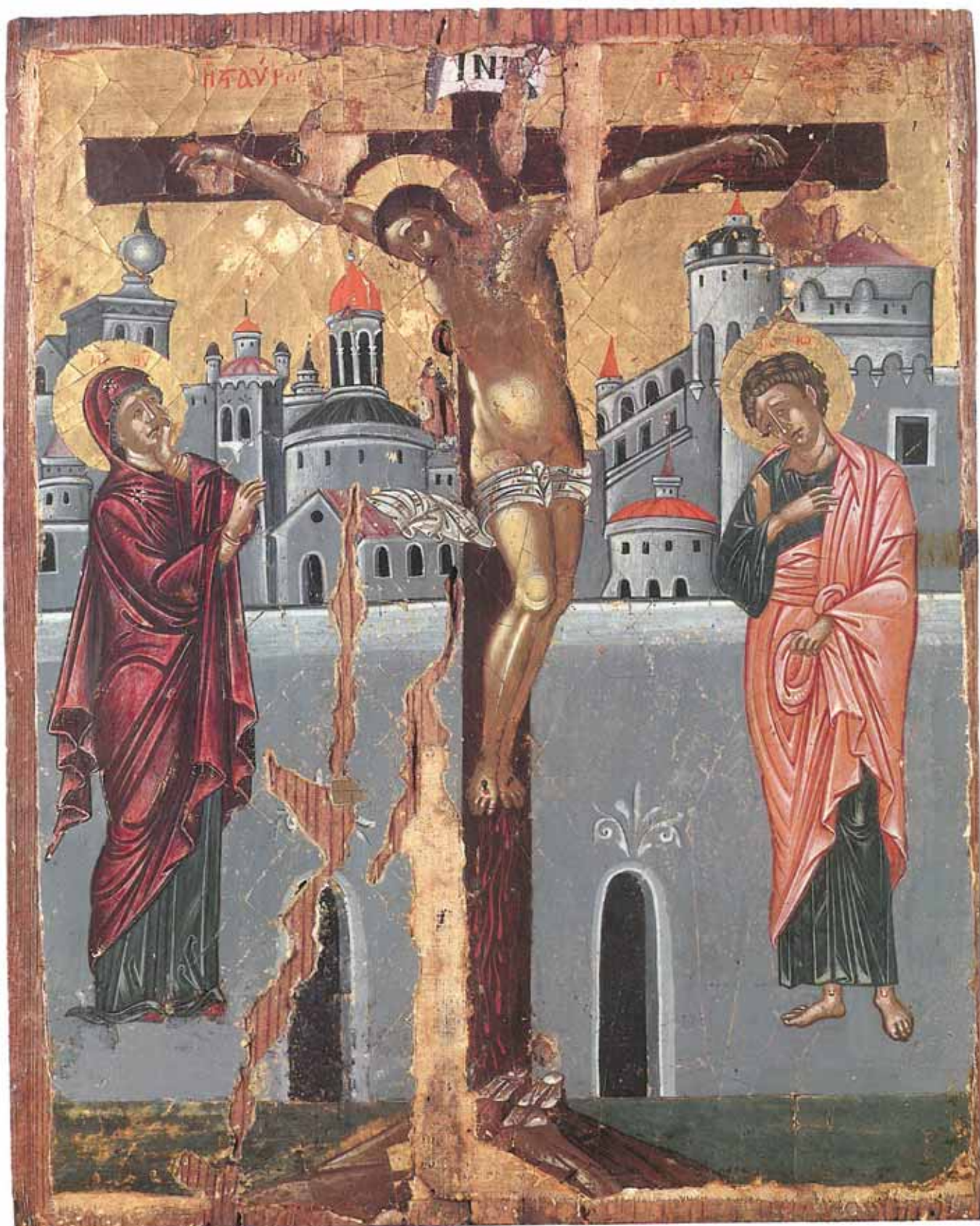
Christ is depicted on the Cross, with a narrow loincloth tied low round the hips. His body, strongly inclined to the left, hangs from the bar of the Cross with the arms outstretched. The Virgin left and Saint John right are portrayed in attitudes of restrained grief, according to traditional models of fifteenth-century art, known from the icon by Nikolaos Ritzos in Sarajevo¹ and even more from the icon from the same workshop in the Benaki Museum.² The Virgin raises her right hand towards Christ and touches her cheek with the left. Saint John, in relaxed stance, brings his right hand onto the chest and holds the edge of his himation with the left.

There is marked plasticity in the rendering of the flesh on Christ's body, particularly in the abdominal area, and dark shadows on the thorax. The faces of the Virgin and Saint John are modelled in a similar relief manner, the deep shadows around the eyes heightening the troubled and mournful expression. The Virgin's deep red maphorion and blue dress, and John's pale rose himation and blue chiton are painted with strictly geometric folds, consistent with the most conservative tradition. The figures are projected against a wall, behind and along which extend the buildings of the city of Jerusalem; diverse edifices with various roofs, domed churches and towers painted in monochromy, with an attempt to convey perspective and volume (Figs 190, 192). The ground is gold, and top left and right is an inscription in red capitals: *H CTAYPQCIC TOY XPICTOY* (*The Crucifixion of Christ*). On the Cross is the titulus with *INBI* in black letters.

During recent conservation the overpainting on the lower part of the icon was removed. This represented a zone of green foreground on which the Virgin and Saint John stood; now they seem to hover in front of the walls.

The nearest model for this iconography is encountered in an icon by Konstantinos Palaiokapas (1638) in the Gonia Monastery, Crete.³ Our painter seems to have copied the three central figures of this many-figured composition faithfully, even in details such as Christ's loincloth, which is tied in the same way and flutters in

190. *The Crucifixion*, late 17th-18th century, Cat. no. 38.





191. *The Crucifixion*, late 17th century.
Zakynthos Museum, no. 268.

the wind. The Virgin and Saint John also follow the conservative rendering of this earlier prototype. An additional trait common to both icons is the large number and comparable arrangement of the buildings of Jerusalem in the background. The combination of the Crucified Christ in the same Western-type pose and the Virgin and Saint John in a traditional manner occurs in several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century icons. The city with its assorted buildings in the background is often added to these representations. The most important are the icons by Theodoros Poulakis, in the Brussels Museum⁴ and the Abou Adal Collection in the Lebanon,⁵ where Christ's body is, however, in perpendicular position, as in J. Sadeler's engraving.⁶

Konstantinos Palaiokepas may well have been aware of such engravings when he painted the icon dated 1638 in the Gonia Monastery, Crete, which is the earliest known example of this iconography. On a fine icon dated 1673, in the Dories Monastery, the main figures appear just the same, but the buildings in the background of the composition are omitted.⁷ A similar model was followed by the painter of a late seventeenth-century icon in the Ekonomopoulos Collection,⁸ with a three-figured composition of the Crucifixion before the walls of Jerusalem yet without the buildings of the city. Lastly, the three figures in exactly the same poses feature in other seventeenth-century icons in Cephalonia, Zakynthos (Fig. 191) and the Benaki Museum.⁹ In these icons with a comparable fusion of Western and traditional models in the composition, Christ on the Cross is exactly the same, while the restrained attitudes of the Virgin and Saint John, who are painted in accordance with conservative models, are similar. Lastly, noteworthy is the fact that the well-drawn buildings of the city, with the careful rendering of volume in monochromy, are also encountered in the icon of the Descent from the Cross with the forged signature of Ioannis Kairophylas, Cat. no. 40 (Fig. 195). The similarities between our icon and all those cited above indicate that it too belongs to an analogous late seventeenth-century workshop in the Ionian Islands.

CONDITION Quite good with slight damage on the borders and at the centre, which had been restored and overpainted. A zone of foreground in the lower part of the icon had also been added. All the overpaintings were removed in recent conservation by K. Milanou in the Benaki Museum laboratory, 1977.

BIBLIOGRAPHY *Kunst der Ostkirche* 1977, no. 90, 148-149.

NOTES

1. Chatzidakis (1977) 1985, pl. 202.
2. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 18, 29-30.
3. Millet 1916, 453-455, fig. 480. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 166, 520 (M. Borboudakis).
4. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 42; the icon is ascribed to Poulakis.
5. *Lumières de l'Orient chrétien* 1996, no. 18, 66-67 (N. Chatzidakis).
6. Rigopoulos 1979, 34-36, fig. 71, pls 65-66.
7. *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, nos 166, 155, pp. 520 and 510 (M. Borboudakis).
8. Baltoyanni 1986, no. 90, 62, pl. 63.
9. *Cephalonia* I 1989, fig. 272 and II, 1994, fig. 203. Zakynthos Museum, unpublished, no. 268. Xyngopoulos 1951, no. 21, pl. 19.



39

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3729

38.2 x 28 x 1.8 cm

Late 17th - early 18th century

'Represented is the moment when the disciples begin to take down the body of Christ. Nicodemus, left, up a ladder and leaning against the cross, has removed the nail from the right hand, which he lowers carefully, while Joseph, also up a ladder, tries to remove the nail from the left hand. Lower down on the same ladder another elderly disciple holds Christ's body from the waist and legs, while on the other side John, on a rung of a third ladder, embraces the lifeless Christ, whose head rests tenderly against his own. Below, three women surround the fainting Virgin, while Mary Magdalene, bends and reverently holds Christ's feet.

The representation is framed by a painted arch that rests on two columns. Above the cross the titulus with the inscription *INBI*.

This composition belongs to a new type of the Descent from the Cross created (in Crete?) in the seventeenth century and based on an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi, after a drawing by Raphael (1510-1520). The new type differs from that usually encountered from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, both in the moment depicted and in the dramatic disposition. That this new type was quite widely diffused in its day is evident from the fact that there is an identical icon, in every detail excepting the colours, in the Byzantine Museum.

The colours of the Descent are splendid. Red, rose (lie de vin) and orange dominate, combined with a little greyish green and deep green. No attempt is made to orchestrate these into a unity: each tone is virtually independent of that juxtaposed, excepting some attention to the matching of complementary colours; and yet the coloration overall is imbued with a richness and limpidity, as if of enamel, that plays harmoniously upon the gold ground.

The icon has been painted with great care, particularly the drapery and the faces of the male figures, while a slight ineptness is observed on the women. The modelling of the faces has become rather harsh on account of subsequent chemical alterations; that of the garments is achieved with lines in a deeper hue and well-drawn white highlights.' *Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945.*

The fact that this representation is painted beneath an arch upheld by two columns, indicates that it probably comes from the epistyle of an iconostasis, like the icons of the Entry into Jerusalem, Cat. no. 8, the Raising of Lazarus, Cat. no. 15 and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Cat. no. 33.

As Chatzidakis pointed out in his study in 1940, this composition belongs to a type of the Descent from the Cross created in Crete in the seventeenth century and





194. *The Descent from the Cross*, late 17th century. Museum of the City of Athens, no. 654.

based on an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi that copies a Raphael drawing (1510-1520).¹ This type is repeated in an icon in the Byzantine Museum,² while it is noted that the earliest icon with this Westernizing rendering of the theme is a work by Ioannis Apakas, around 1610, in the Lavra Monastery.³ To the later examples should be added the icon in Patmos,⁴ as well as the icon of late seventeenth-century date in the City of Athens Museum (Fig. 194).⁵ In the Patmos icon the model of our icon is reproduced exactly, while in the one in the City of Athens Museum Raimondi's original engraving is copied more faithfully, with a minor variation in the pose of Christ's body and in the order of the figures around the Virgin, from which Mary Magdalene is omitted.

The colours of the icon are preserved in good condition. Red, rose and orange dominate, alternating with deep green and deep blue. The drawing stresses the outlines and the flesh is modelled with dark shadows that contrast with the light tones of the smooth prominent planes.

Our icon displays stylistic affinity with several late seventeenth-century works from the Ionian Islands, such as the icon of the Descent from the Cross in the Byzantine Museum,⁶ while there are analogous stylistic traits in the icon of the Crucifixion Cat. no. 38 (Fig. 190), that could be attributed to the same workshop. In both icons there is a similarity in the rendering of the human figure, a correspondence in the bodily proportions, the treatment of the flesh and the colour tones. It is also noteworthy that both use iconographic models encountered in icons by Ioannis Apakas.⁷

According to the above, the Velimezis icon was probably produced by a painter working in the Ionian Islands in the late seventeenth or the early eighteenth century.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'The icon is painted on wood with the usual fine gesso. Incised outlines and details. Preservation good. Christ's loincloth has been overpainted and the gold ground retouched locally.'

The icon is in good condition. The overpainting was removed during its conservation.

PROVENANCE Ionian Islands.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Hatzidakis 1940, 156-157, fig. 8. Chatzidakis 1947, 38-44, pl. H', 1. Chatzidakis, *Catalogue of icons in the Benaki Museum*, n.d., no. 18, 76-78. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, 169-172 (M. Chatzidakis).

NOTES

1. Hatzidakis 1940, 154-159, 156-157, figs 6 and 8.
2. Hatzidakis 1940, 157, fig. 9.
3. Hatzidakis 1940, fig. 7. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, 169 (M. Chatzidakis). Chatzidakis 1981, 365 (col. photo.).
4. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 172, 169-172 (M. Chatzidakis).
5. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 36, fig. 20.
6. See above n. 2.
7. See Cat. no. 38, 316-318.

40

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3725

59.9 x 46.5 x 2.1 cm

Late 17th-18th century

Below the large arms of the Cross, the Virgin and Joseph of Arimathea support the lifeless body of Christ. The Virgin, standing on a stool left, behind Christ, embraces him and caresses his face. Joseph, standing on a ladder right, behind the Cross, holds him at the waist, while John, by his side, bows and clasps Christ's hand. In corresponding pose left is one of the women accompanying the Virgin, while behind her stand two other women with mournful expression. Below right, Nicodemus, kneeling and holding pliers, prepares to remove the nails from Christ's feet. The scene takes place in front of a high wall reaching half-way up the composition. Behind project the bulky, well-drawn buildings of Jerusalem, among them two churches and a tower. In red letters on the gold ground below the arms of the Cross, the inscription: *Η ΕΠΟΚΑΘΗΛΟΣΙC ΤΟΥ Χ(ΡΙCΤΟΥ)*. Bottom left, in white capital letters the forged signature: *ΧΕΙΡ ΚΑΙΡΟΦΥΛΑ ΙΩΑΝ. α.χ.* (*Hand of Ioan. Kairophylos 1600*).

The colours of the icon are slightly faded and muted tones prevail in harmonious combinations. The Virgin wears a green dress and dark red maphorion, and John a light pink himation. The garments of the woman clasping Christ's hand, Joseph and Nicodemus are in pale ochre.

The scene of the Descent from the Cross in this icon follows a traditional fifteenth-century model, as encountered in the Benaki Museum icon with the Virgin and angels, from the workshop of Andreas Ritzos (Fig. 196).¹ This composition recurs with minimal variations in the work of sixteenth-century Cretan painters, as in the wall-paintings by Theophanis in the katholikon of the Lavra Monastery (1535) and other later Athonite wall-paintings, such as those in the Xenophontos Monastery (1544).² Although for the composition of our icon





196. *The Descent from the Cross*, detail of the icon by Andreas Ritzos, *The Virgin with angels and scenes from the life of Christ*. Benaki Museum.

the painter follows the established fifteenth-century Cretan model, for the buildings in the background he adopts later models of Italian painting observed in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Heptanesian works, such as the icon of the Crucifixion Cat. no. 38 (Figs 190, 192), and that of Saint Alexander by Konstantinos Kontarinis Cat. no. 43 (Fig. 202).

Chatzidakis noted the identical iconography in an icon in the former Loverdos Museum;³ the resemblance extends to all the details and even to the background buildings, although the colouring is richer and its composition more compact. Nowadays in the Byzantine Museum, it is possibly the work of a Cretan painter of the first half of the seventeenth century and might have served as a model for the painter of our icon. Chatzidakis also mentions another icon, in a more simplistic mode, in exactly the same iconographic type, the only difference being the addition of the two larvae. In the Pavlos Canellopoulos Collection, it bears the signature: *XEIP AEOY MOCKOY -AXEZ'* (Hand of Leos Moskos 1667).⁴

The painter Ioannis Kairophylas is mentioned as a teacher of religious painting in contracts dated 1589 and 1594, in Zakynthos, published by Leonidas Zois (1911), who notes that no works by him have survived.⁵ In a later article (1923),⁶ Zois mentions that he had seen an icon on which he read the inscription: *χειρ Ἰωάννου Καίροφύλακος -αχ'* (1600), but records neither its subject nor its whereabouts. The similarity in the formula and date of the signature to that of our icon, the only difference being the addition of the suffix (-κος) to the name, suggests, that the two works are possibly one and the same.⁷ However the foregoing examination of the iconography and the style of our icon points to a date later than the

period of Kairophylas's activity. Indeed, as we have seen, the painter of our icon enriches the conservative, fifteenth-century Cretan models with elements encountered in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century icons from the Ionian Islands. His use of subdued colours, the careful though rather loose drawing and the dulcet expression on the faces permit association with analogous Heptanesian workshop of this same period.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon on a flat walnut panel, very well preserved. Light cracks in the wood cause anomalies on the painted surface. In two places the colour has flaked off due to swelling.'

The icon is in very good condition. It was consolidated by Photis Zachariou in December 1957. During recent conservation (1996) laboratory examination showed the signature to be forged. See also Appendix III.

PROVENANCE Ionian Islands, Zakynthos (?).

BIBLIOGRAPHY Chatzidakis, *Catalogue of Icons in the Benaki Museum*, n.d., no. 7, 25. Delivorrias 1980, 70-71.

NOTES

1. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 18, 29-30 with bibliography.
2. Chatzidakis 1969-70, figs 19-20. Millet 1927, II, pl. 117.2, with the difference that Joseph appears behind the ladder which is propped up behind the Cross.
3. Chatzidakis, *Catalogue of Icons in the Benaki Museum*, n.d., 29 'identical down to the last detail in composition and coloration, though it was probably painted by another hand'. Papayannopoulos-Palaos 1946, no. 477, of smaller dimensions (44.5 x 33.5 cm).
4. Chatzidakis, *Catalogue of Icons in the Benaki Museum*, n.d., 29.
5. Zois 1911, 71.
6. Zois 1923, no. 27, 108. See also Zois 1963, 249.
7. There is a forged signature *χειρ Ἰωάννου Καροφύλα τοῦ Κρητός ἀρχ.* (1603) on an icon of the Annunciation, of good, early 16th-century Cretan art, in the Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3713. It was acquired in 1943 and is not included in Xyngopoulos's Catalogue. See *BCH* LXVIII-LXIX (1944-45), 424.

41

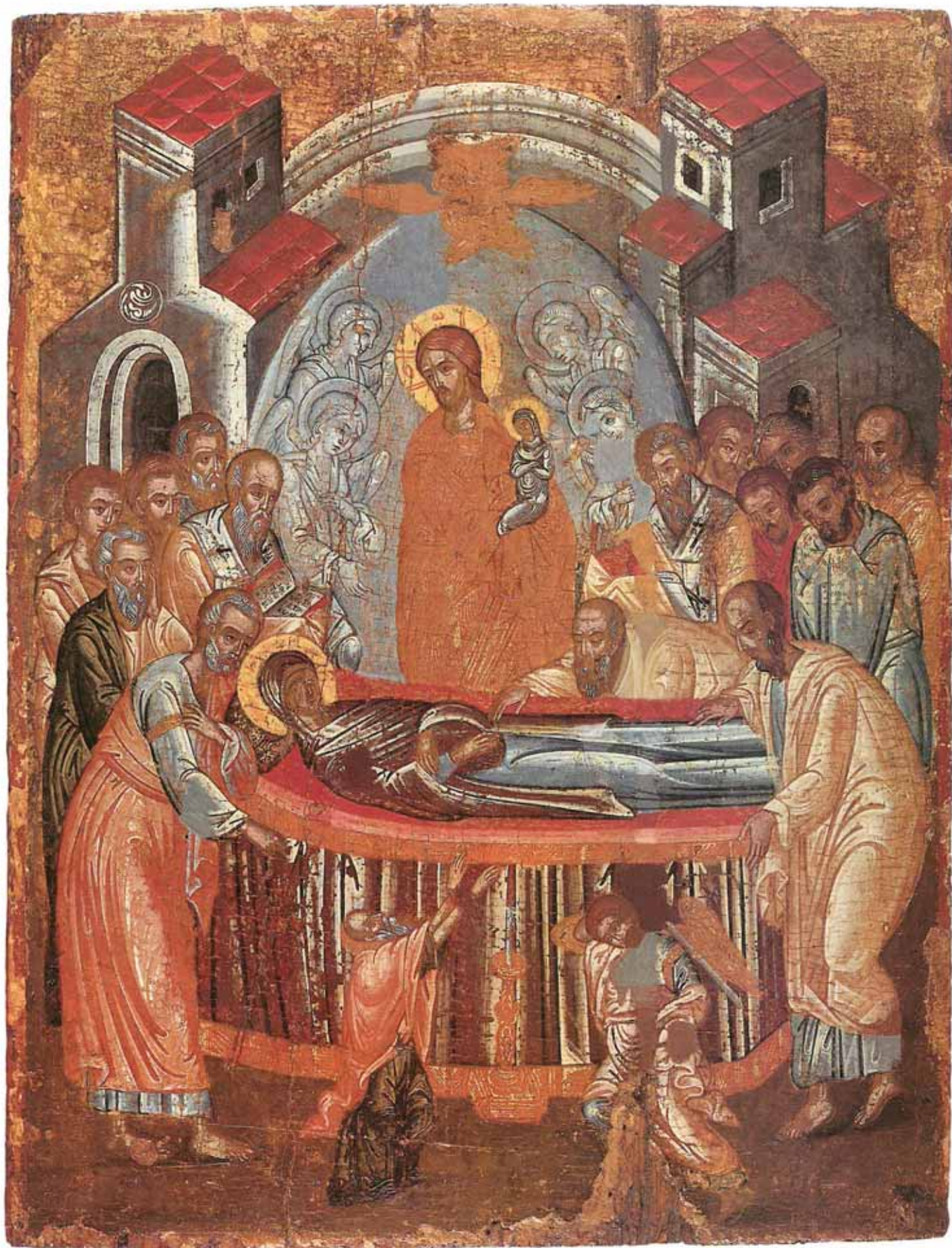
THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN

57.5 x 44.5 x 2 cm

Late 17th-18th century

Christ, frontal yet turned slightly left, holds the Virgin's soul, represented as a little girl completely enveloped in a blue maphorion. He appears in an elliptical mandorla with four angels and a seraph at the top, painted in monochromy. Flanking the Virgin's bier are the apostles and two hierarchs. Depicted in front of it are a candlestick with candle and the incident of Jephonias and the angel. In the background right and left, two buildings with flat roofs at different heights are linked by a semicircular wall. On the left, exactly below the foot of the bier, a forged inscription in white capital letters: *ΔΕΗCIC ΙΩΑΚΕΙΜ ΑΑΜΠΑΔΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΡΗΤΟΥ* (*Supplication of Ioakeim Lambardos the Cretan*).

The Dormition of the Virgin is depicted in a conservative iconographic type without secondary episodes, consistent with the model of certain fifteenth-century Cretan icons, such as the Dormition in London, attributed to Andreas Ritzos (Fig. 198),¹ of Palaeologan origin, as known from the Dormition in Florence.² Common elements of the model are the synoptic presentation of the principal theme of the Dormition, the appearance of angels in monochromy within the mandorla and the presence of the seraph at its apex.³ In these icons the similarity extends to the flat-roofed buildings linked by a semicircular wall in the background. This model is propagated,





198. Andreas Ritzos, *The Dormition of the Virgin*, second half of 15th century. Private collection, London.

with minor variations, in other icons too, such as one in the Canellopoulos Museum and another in the City of Athens Museum, of fifteenth century date,⁴ as well as a seventeenth- to eighteenth-century icon in the Zakynthos Museum.⁵ It also constitutes the nucleus of the more complex depictions of the scene in the icons by Andreas Ritzos in Turin and the Greek Institute, Venice,⁶ where four angels appear inside the mandorla, as in our icon.

The painter of the Velimezis icon meticulously follows the fifteenth-century Cretan model in every detail, and seeks no originality. Even his style imitates conservative fifteenth-century Cretan models, without Western influences. Nevertheless the figures are squat and the drawing slack, describing broad planes on the drapery, while the colours combine shades of blue and rose, with few intermediate hues. The icon is the work of a local workshop of the late seventeenth or the eighteenth century, which had access to good Cretan models.

CONDITION Quite good, with slight damage from previous conservation.

PROVENANCE The name of Ioakeim Lambardos, forged on the icon, is known only from a contract published by Zois in 1923,⁷ which mentions that the painter Ioakeim Lambardos would undertake the decoration of the church 'ton Logotheton' in Zakynthos. This fact permits the hypothesis that the signature was added by Demetrios Pelekasis and, furthermore, that the icon's provenance is Zakynthos.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Baltoyanni 1991, 353ff, pls KA' and 175.
2. Baltoyanni 1991, 353ff., pl. 175. See also Vocotopoulos 1995, 132, 216, fig. 111 (colour).
3. For the iconographic symbolism see Baltoyanni 1991, 362ff.
4. *Holy Image, Holy Space* 1988, 123, 202-203, no. 42 (N. Chatzidakis). *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 95, 92-93 (N. Chatzidakis).
5. Unpublished, exhib. no. 120, personal observation.
6. See above Cat. no. 36, 311, n. 3.
7. Zois 1923, 183. Chatzidakis 1956, 18, n. 27. The identification of the painter as Ioannis Lambardos, proposed by Xyngopoulos, does not seem probable, see Xyngopoulos 1936, 32.

42

THE DOUBTING OF THOMAS

43.4 x 30.3 x 2 cm

Late 17th-18th century

Christ appears on a stepped pedestal, in front of a building with a vaulted-roofed porch. He raises his right arm, revealing the wound on which Doubting Thomas places his finger. The apostles, ranged in two groups left and right, witness the scene. On the gold ground in red capital letters, the inscription: *Η ΨΥΛΛΑΦΙCΙC* (*The Touching*). The composition follows an established model in Cretan painting, possibly of the fifteenth century,¹ which occurs in the sixteenth century too, as in the icon by Frangiskos Sarakinopoulos, in the Greek Institute in Venice,² and Theophanis's icon for the epistyle of the iconostasis in the Monastery of Stavronikita,³ with a minor variation in Christ's pose, the scrolls and the type of building; a variation in the poses of the apostles following Thomas left and Peter right is also observed.

Exactly the same model, in which the poses of all the apostles correspond and the arrangement of the façade of the building, with a porch upheld by two columns with Corinthian capitals, is similar, is encountered in a fine seventeenth-century Cretan icon in the Ekonomopoulos Collection,⁴ while a series of icons in Zakynthos, dated from the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,⁵ displays even greater affinity (Fig. 199). The execution of our icon indicates a painter of a later period who follows conservative sixteenth-century models in the drawing and the treatment of the drapery, yet the faces echo the art of late seventeenth-century Cretan painters, such as Theodoros Poulakis, especially in the figures of the apostles. The similarity of our icon to those in Zakynthos also points to its provenance. Moreover, the sculpted decoration of the porch suggests an artist working in the Ionian Islands. Inscribed on the pedestal in black capital letters is the signature: *ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΚΟΥ* *αρχη* (of Demetrios Nomikos 1658), in all probability forged. It is however difficult to compare our icon with others by this painter, since the authenticity of his signature is doubtful. The art of our icon cannot be connected to that of the Lamentation (Cat. no. 56), which bears a signature of the same painter.⁶

CONDITION Quite good. The vertical crack down the middle has caused some damage. The icon has not been conserved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos.

NOTES

1. *After Byzantium* 1966, no. 5, 32-35, early 16th-century icon.
2. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 9, 22-23, pl. 11; see also another signed work by the painter, N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 42, 174-175; for the painter see Constantoudaki 1977, no. 21, 172. Mentioned 1569-1578, died before 1582.
3. Chatzidakis 1969-70, fig. 79.
4. Baltoyanni 1986, no. 82, 59-60, pl. 61.
5. Unpublished, in the Zakynthos Museum.
6. Probably forged, cf. Cat. no. 56, 392-394.



199. *The Doubting of Thomas*, late 17th-18th century. Zakynthos Museum, no. 361.

200. *The Doubting of Thomas*, late 17th-18th century, Cat. no. 42.



43

SAINT ALEXANDER AND SCENES OF MARTYRDOM

37 x 27.5 x 2.2 cm

Konstantinos Kontarinis (1699-1738)

The icon, painted on a uniform gold ground, is divided into two registers. In the upper register Saint Alexander stands upright, holding a cross in his right hand and a palm branch in his left. He wears a short red chiton and an open red cloak falling behind his back. His calves are bound with off-white bandages highlighted in gold. Above, within a wide semicircle defined by white clouds, appear the winged heads of angels and the full-bodied figure of Christ, seated and blessing with both hands outstretched. The saint stands on a deep red foreground rendered as a rectangle set in the gold field. Close to his feet is the artist's signature, in black cursive letters: *χειρ κωνσταντίνου του κονταρήνη* (*hand of Konstantinos Kontarinis*). Towards the top, in red lettering on the gold ground is the inscription: *ὁ Πρωτομάρτυς Ἀλέξανδρος* (the Protomartyr Alexandros). Represented in the lower register is an episode from the saint's life, according to his Synaxarion: 'Alexander was brought first to the place of judgement and was unable to stand upright, because he suffered from gout, and so together with Kronion, his own man, they were set on camels and were paraded in ignominy



ΕΙ ΗΝΕΓΚΑΣ ΡΟΥΣΟΙ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΒΑΛΓΙΑΣ· ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕ ΔΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΘΕΡΑΠΕΙΑΝ ΗΜΗ,
ΣΕΔΥΣΟΜΕΝ ΤΑΥΤΗΣ ΚΑΘΩ ΜΕΤΕΤΕΧΝΗΣ· ΣΗ ΜΕΣΤΙΑ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΔΕΣΠΟΤΩΝ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ

about the market place. Afterwards ... and finally lime, afire and boiling, was poured upon them ...'.¹ Saint Alexander evidently cured gout, and because of this virtue the icon was dedicated to him, as declared in the related inscription, written in black capitals on a broad painted tablet within a Renaissance-type gold frame: *EΙ ΚΑΙ ΗΝΕΓΚΑΣ ΝΟΥΣΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΔΑΛΓΙΑΣ ΕΞ ΔΥΣΩΠΩ ΤΑΥΤΗΣ ΚΑΤΩ ΜΕΤΕΧΗΚΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕ ΔΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΘΕΡΑΠΕΙΑΝ ΗΔΗ / ΧΗ ΜΕCΙΤΙΑ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΔΕCΠΟΤΗΝ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ* (And even thee bring the illness of gout and I partaking of this affliction, Alexander, give cure through thy supplication to the Lord of All). He is shown mounted on a camel held by two soldiers, in front of a building with a group of Roman soldiers to the left. On the right, in a landscape of rolling hills, the scene of the saint's martyrdom in a pit of quick lime is depicted on a smaller scale. The saint projects half-naked from the pit, while soldiers gesticulate at him. In the background the buildings of a city are precisely drawn in monochromy.

The Saint Alexander in our icon is not included among the homonymous saints described in the Painter's Manual by Dionysios² and is not known from any other icon. The iconography of the scene follows faithfully the description of the hagiographer Nikodemos Synaxaristis, which seems to be the sole source for this unusual composition. The originality of this graphic scene is comparable to that observed in Konstantinos Kontarinis's votive icons, which are distinguished for the vivid rendering of some biographical scenes, such as the miracle of the rescue of his son Nikolaos (1718), in the Stathatos Collection, and the miracle of Saint Lucian (1708) in an icon in Corfu.³

A large number of signed works by Konstantinos Kontarinis (1699-1738), a painter working in Corfu, have survived in various regions, in museums and collections in Greece and abroad.⁴ His models can often be located in icons by Emmanuel Tzanes, whose technique he imitates in the linear modelling of the flesh with parallel white highlights. Like other painters of his day, such as Tzankarolas, he adopted themes from Western iconography, as in our icon. Noteworthy is the fact that Saint Alexander has analogous facial features and exactly the same pose as Saint Alexios in an icon by Tzankarolas in Corfu.⁵ In all probability the phonetic affinity of the two names led Kontarinis to use an already existing model for portraying Saint Alexander, since it seems that his iconography was never actually formulated.

The execution of the icon differs considerably from Kontarinis's familiar technique, which is characterized by firm drawing and linear highlights on the flesh, as seen in Saint Antypas (Cat. no. 44, Fig. 203). This is perhaps due to the miniature nature of the scenes here, which are encountered in other icons of this period. In particular, the diligent drawing of the city in the background, with the perspective rendering of the buildings, is reminiscent of an analogous depiction in the Descent from the Cross (Cat. no. 40, Fig. 195).

202. Konstantinos Kontarinis, *Scenes of martyrdom and dedicatory inscription, detail of icon Cat. no. 43.*

CONDITION Good, though slight damage on the highlights of the painted surface, particularly the flesh and the drapery.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Nikodemos Hagioreitis 1868, vol. I, 172.
2. *Hermeneia* 1909, 160, 272 and passim.
3. Xyngopoulos 1951, 19-20, no. 18, pl. 17. See Vocotopoulos 1990, 163 and no. 131, fig. 305.
4. See Vocotopoulos 1990, 163; see also Cat. no. 44, 338-340.
5. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 128, fig. 301.



44

SAINT ANTYPAS

34.6 x 23.4 x 1.8 cm

Konstantinos Kontarinis, 1738

The saint is portrayed as 'an old man with long white beard',¹ seated on a large, carved and gilded, wooden throne. He wears a red sticharion and green phailonion with broad folds in ochre tints. In his hands is an open gospel book with the inscription in cursive lettering: *'I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal ...'* (John 10:9-10). The throne, modelled on the Baroque thrones of Tzanes, is lavishly decorated: at the ends of the ridge of the back, recurving volute leaves, topped by two small eagles. The decoration on the base is original and intricate, with *putti* embracing sea monsters. Low down on the green ground left, the signature in black letters: *XEIP KONSTANTINOU TOU KONTARINI 1738* (Hand of Konstantinos Kontarinis 1738) and right: *ΔΕΙCΙC TOY ΔΟΥΛΟΥ TOY ΘΕΟΥ ΜΙΧΑΗΛ ΣΠΑΝΟΥ* (Supplication of the servant of God Michael Spanos). Left and right in red capitals: *Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΑΝΤΙΠΑΣ*.

Saint Antypas cured toothache, as the Athonite hagiographer Nikodemos Hagioreitis records in a *megalynarion*: 'Having your venerable icon, thrice-blessed Antypas, as fortified bastion, I resort to it in all dangers and am relieved of toothache'.² His description is included in the Painter's Manual and his characteristics are repeated just the same in the few known icons of him. On the earliest of these, a thirteenth-century icon in Sinai,³ Antypas is represented in bust with the same long white beard, he appears in exactly the same type on a much later icon in the Monastery of Stavronikita, an eighteenth-century product of a local workshop.⁴ Kontarinis also depicts him with the same facial features, together with Saint Achilleios and Saint Andrew, on an icon in the Loverdos Collection.⁵

ΟΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΤΗΣ

ΑΝΤΙΠΑΣ



1738

ΧΑΡΑΓΜΑΤΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΟΥ

ΔΕΙΞΙΣ ΞΕΝΑΝΤΩΝ ΣΤΟΧ ΜΑΧΑΛ ΕΠΑΝΟΝ

In our icon the painter apparently follows analogous iconographic models to those used by Emmanuel Tzanes. This is deduced from the manner in which he paints the face (Fig. 204), hair and beard with parallel white lines, tiny but firmly drawn, as well as from the elaborate throne.⁶ Comparable figures of an enthroned hierarch occur in other eighteenth-century icons, such as those of Saint James the Less (Cat. no. 45) and Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46).

So far the latest known dated works by Konstantinos Kontarinis were two icons of 1732, in the Kalligas Collection and the Christian Art Collection, Lefkada.⁷ Our icon of 1738 is now his last known dated work.

CONDITION Excellent. No previous conservation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. *Hermeneia* 1909, 268.
2. Nikodemos Hagioritis 1868, 358.
3. Weitzmann 1978, 40, pl. 39. On the iconography see *Lexikon* 5, 1973, col. 201 and *Hermeneia* 1909, 268.
4. *Stavronikita* 1974, fig. 44 on p. 123.
5. Xyngopoulos 1956, pl. 69.1. On the iconography of the enthroned hierarch see also Cat. nos 6 and 46.
6. On the decoration of the thrones see Katselaki 1994, 463ff.
7. Vocotopoulos 1990, 163.

Ὁ ΔΙΣ



Εγώ εἰ
ἡ θύρα
μοῦ εἰν
ἐσέλθης
φῶς τῶν
κρίσεως
σέ τῶν

45

SAINT JAMES THE LESS

27.8 x 20.7 x 1.8 cm

Early 18th century

The saint, seated on a throne with cushion, holds an open gospel book and the patriarchal crosier in his left hand, while blessing with his outstretched right. He wears a white sticharion patterned with red and black flowers and a green phailonion with red quatrefoil crosses and a red lining. The foliate ornament on the base of the throne was repeated on the back, the greater part of which has been destroyed. On the gold ground, two angels in clouds gesture towards the saint. This area of the icon is considerably effaced due to previous cleaning by use of fire, which affected the saint's face and the figures of the two angels, who held scrolls with inscriptions, now destroyed. The scrolls can be seen clearly in the infrared photograph (Fig. 206), while the saint's features are more distinct: he has a long white curly beard and long hair falling behind on the shoulders. Towards the top is the inscription in cursive: ὁ ἅγιος Ἰάκωβος ὁ ἀδελφόθεος (*Saint James the Adelphotheos*).

Saint James 'Brother of God', son of Joseph and first Bishop of Jerusalem,¹ is depicted according to the description in the Painter's Manual, as 'an old man with long beard'.² However, his facial features are reminiscent of Saint Nicholas: the white hair is arranged in the same manner on the forehead and temples, while the beard seems to be divided into two sections, the upper thicker and rounded, as on Saint Nicholas.





206. *Saint James enthroned, early 18th century, Cat. no. 45 (infrared photograph).*

It seems that the characteristics of James were not crystallized in icon painting as they were for other saints. In the earliest known icon of the Adelphotheos, 1600-1610, in Patmos, he is portrayed in bishop's vestments and enthroned, as in our icon, but with different facial features: short black hair and a long beard.³ His physiognomy is different again in the icon by Emmanuel Tzanes, 1683, in the Greek Institute, Venice,⁴ where he has thick white hair and a long forked beard, and in an icon by Stephanos Tzankarolas, in the Benaki Museum, he is shown standing, full-bodied, with a long black beard.⁵

The saint's frontal pose in our icon is the same as that in Tzanes's icon. This attitude originates from the Cretan model of the enthroned hierarch, around 1500, as recognized in the Cretan icon of Saint Nicholas Cat. no. 6.⁶ The painter of our icon is even more faithful to this model, particularly in the arrangement of the drapery on the sticharion and phailion, as well as in the position of the epigonation and the epitachelion. The only differences are the addition of the polychrome motifs on the vestments and the Baroque form of the throne with the volute leaves, quite different from the type of throne in Tzanes's icon but encountered on icons from his workshop in Corfu.⁷

The same type of enthroned hierarch is followed by other painters in the Ionian Islands in the early decades of the eighteenth century, such as Konstantinos Kontarinis in his icon of Saint Antypas (Cat. no. 44) and Nikolaos Kallergis in his icon of Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46), which also includes angels with inscribed scrolls.

The copying of a model by Tzanes and the conservative rendering of the saint's characteristics, as far as can be discerned, recall the art of Konstantinos Kontarinis, who, moreover, frequently uses cursive lettering in his signature, as on the icon of Saint Antypas Cat. no. 44. The cursive inscription of the saint's name on our icon is consistent with this painter's manner, but because of the damage it is difficult to decipher the other distinctive traits — firm drawing, linear rendering — of his art. Lastly, the tiny polychrome floral motifs on the archiepiscopal vestments bring to mind the preferences of one of Kontarinis's contemporaries, the Zakynthian painter Nikolaos Kallergis,⁸ who presented Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46) in a corresponding iconography.

The lower part of the icon at the base of the throne, where the painter's signature normally appears, has been completely destroyed. The icon of Saint James is the work of a Heptanesian painter of the early eighteenth century, who like Konstantinos Kontarinis followed the models established by the icons of Emmanuel Tzanes.

CONDITION Rather poor. Considerable damage from previous cleaning, on the modelling of the saint's face, on the figures of the angels and the gold ground. Greater damage at the bottom, near the border.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos (?).

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Feast day 23 October, see *Hermeneia* 1909, 262.
2. *Hermeneia* 1909, 151.
3. Chatzidakis 1985, no. 98, 139-140, pl. 47, of 1600-1610, with relevant bibliography on the saint and his ordination on 139-140, n. 2.
4. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 114, 135-136, pl. 60.
5. Xyngopoulos 1936, 63-64. Chatzidakis mentions that there was an icon of the same subject, signed by Emmanuel Tzanes, 1668, in an Athens antique shop in 1950 (Chatzidakis 1962, 136, n. 2).
6. For the iconography and its diffusion see above 97-99 and nn. 16-20.
7. See Vocotopoulos 1990, nos 107-118, pp. 148-152, figs 271-278.
8. See Cat. no. 46, 346-353 with bibliography.

46

SAINT SPYRIDON AND SCENES FROM HIS LIFE

44.4 x 34.6 x 2.9 cm

Nikolaos Kallergis, 1744

Saint Spyridon is portrayed enthroned, wearing a white sticharion and a greenish blue phailonion with tiny black crosses and a red lining. The plain throne, without back, stands on a red and white checkered floor. Flanking the saint, on the same scale, two full-bodied angels on clouds turn towards him. They hold lighted candles and open scrolls with inscriptions of hymns; left: *ΧΑΙΡΟΙC ΤΡΙΜΥΘΟΥΝΤΟC Η ΚΑΛΛΟΝΗ* (*Rejoice thou the Beauty of Trimythous*), and right: *ΧΑΙΡΟΙC ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑC ΩΝ Ο CΟΦΩΤΑΤΟC* (*Rejoice thou being, the wisest of Corfu*). Left and right of the saint, in red capital letters: *Ο ΑΓΙΟC CΠΥΡΙΔΩΝ Ο ΘΑΥΜΑΤΟΥΡΓΟC* (*Saint Spyridon the Miracle-worker*). Six scenes from the saint's life are depicted, three in the upper and three in the lower part of the icon. At the bottom of the icon the painter's signature is distinguished in red capital letters on the gold ground: *ΑΨΜΔ' ΧΕΙΡ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ. ΚΑΛΕΡΓΗ.* (1744. *Hand of Nikolaos Kalergis*).

The reading of the scenes commences top left: 1. The saint stops the heavy rain (Figs 207, 209). Saint Spyridon prays on his knees, looking up at the sky filled with dark clouds. In the background a landscape with picturesque details and the buildings of a city. Above, the ominous black clouds and the downpour that ceases after the saint's miraculous intervention are painted with accuracy and simplicity. 2. The saint steps on Arius (Figs 207, 210). The saint is depicted standing and conversing with a group of clerics making vigorous gestures. Arius lies fallen on the ground. 3. The saint transforms the snake into gold (Figs 205, 211). The saint, standing, holds the snake in his right hand, in front of a kneeling man. Behind him is a rich landscape with various buildings. 4. The saint appears in the king's dream (Fig. 212). The saint stands upright left, inside a chamber where the king is asleep in a Renaissance canopied bed, covered with luxurious bedspreads, while a small angel appears beside him. 5. The relic of Saint Spyridon (Fig. 213). Depicted in a conspicuous position in the central panel, below the



enthroned figure of the saint, the relic is under a baldachin in front of a large, embroidered hanging, within a space defined by a low, columned balustrade in perspective. High up, in red capital letters, the inscription: *ΑΕΙΠΑΝΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΣΠΥΡΙΔΩΝΟΣ* (*Relic of Saint Spyridon*). 6. The saint raises the king's daughter (Fig. 214). The saint stands upright left and blesses the king's daughter, who arises from inside a large marble sarcophagus.

The scenes are painted according to an Italicizing model, as seen mainly in the rendering of the colourful landscape with the blue sky, the buildings and the furniture, such as the canopied bed. They are characterized by a charming polychromy and an expressive vitality, a softness in the modelling of the flesh and a looseness in the treatment of the drapery. All are projected against the gold ground of the icon, which simultaneously forms a uniform frame around each, as observed in Theodoros Poulakis's icon of Saint Nicholas with Scenes from His Life, in Corfu.¹ The painter follows this same model for the type of the signature as well, in red capital letters, very low down.

Spyridon, who originated from Cyprus and later became patron saint of Corfu, to where his miraculous relic was translated,² is painted on a large number of icons with the same facial features. He has a long white beard and wears the characteristic knitted cap, as described by Dionysios in his Painter's Manual: 'Saint Spyridon, an old man with long, forked beard, wearing a cap', and 'an old man with rush-like and forked beard'.³ He is more frequently shown in bust, while one of the earliest examples of him enthroned is an icon in Paros, work of a Cretan painter of the second half of the fifteenth century.⁴ The enthroned saint in our icon reproduces the established iconography of the enthroned hierarch, as known from a large number of Postbyzantine icons.⁵ The scenes from the saint's life are often added on the borders of icons from the sixteenth century onwards. One of the earliest is the icon by Emmanuel Tzanfournaris (1595), in the Greek Institute, Venice,⁶ which was the model for the icon by Theodoros Poulakis, in the Benaki Museum.⁷ On an icon of a standing Saint Spyridon by Emmanuel Tzanes, in the Museo Correr, Venice,⁸ scenes from his life are arranged vertically down the sides, while in an icon of the enthroned hierarch, in the Loverdos Collection, now in the Byzantine Museum, with the signature of Ioannis Moskos, the scenes are arranged horizontally above and below, as in our icon.⁹

Of the eight scenes from Saint Spyridon's life described by Dionysios only two are included in our icon, the first and the third, and their iconography seems to observe the instructions in the Painter's Manual: 'the saint, kneeling, with arms and eyes raised to the sky, and rain clouds above and around him' (first scene) (Fig. 209) and 'Houses and inside the doorway a poor man stretching out his hand ..., and the saint standing outside the door gives him the golden snake' (third scene) (Fig. 211).¹⁰

All the scenes on our icon are encountered in that by Emmanuel Tzanfournaris, but their iconography differs significantly, indicating that Nikolaos Kallergis followed a different model. Different again is the iconography of the scenes in the aforementioned icons by Theodoros Poulakis, Emmanuel Tzanes and Ioannis Moskos.





209. *Saint Spyridon stops the heavy rain,*
detail of icon Cat. no. 46.



210. *Saint Spyridon steps on Arius,*
detail of icon Cat. no. 46.

The representation of the saint's relic is also included in the cycle of biographical scenes (Fig. 213), although it constituted an independent iconographic subject. It is encountered as such in an appreciable number of later icons in Corfu, where the veneration of the miraculous relic spread after 1532, and even more so with the circulation of the saint's printed *akolouthia*, after his miraculous intervention in the siege of Corfu by the Turks in 1716.¹¹ One of the earliest and best examples of the iconography of the subject is in an icon by Theodoros Poulakis, in Patmos.¹² The depiction of the relic in Kallergis's icon displays affinity with regard to the decoration and the position of the reliquary, in front of a hanging embroidered with flowers, with a late seventeenth-century Heptanesian icon in the Kosmetatos Collection.¹³ The two full-bodied angels holding large lighted candles, beside the relic in the Kosmetatos icon, are transposed in our icon to the central panel, flanking the commemorated saint.

Scenes from the life of Saint Spyridon are widely disseminated in icons and engravings of the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century,¹⁴ though again the iconography differs considerably from that of our icon. The only scene in common is the saint's miracle with the snake, as in the icon in Stemnitsa (1771), and an eighteenth-century engraving in a private collection in Corfu, where Spyridon stands in front of a kneeling male figure,¹⁵ most probably following Dionysios's description.

The cycle of scenes from the life of Saint Spyridon in the Velimezis icon apparently differs from cycles encountered in icons by most of the known



sixteenth- and seventeenth-century painters, such as Emmanuel Tzanfournaris, Emmanuel Tzanes and Theodoros Poulakis. Nikolaos Kallergis draws on some other pictorial cycle of the saint, of Western provenance, as yet unknown.

Nikolaos Kallergis, of whom works are known from 1699 to 1747, was one of the most prolific painters on Zakynthos.¹⁶ Scion of a Cretan family, he was the son of the prosperous priest and painter Frangiskos Kallergis, who left Rethymnon after it fell to the Ottomans in 1645 and settled on Zakynthos, where he had a private church, Hagia Anna, in the town and an important library that he bequeathed to his daughter. A wall-painting with Saint Spyridon, signed by Nikolaos Kallergis, has survived from the church of Hagia Anna and there are several signed icons of his in Zakynthos as well as in museums and collections in Athens. He painted diverse categories of icons, large despotic icons and bema doors for the iconostasis, as well as icons with scenes from the Life of Christ. Apparently Kallergis preferred to copy old icons, which he did systematically. This is suggested by the condemnation of his father for copying the miraculous icon of the Virgin Anaphonetria, in the homonymous monastery in Zakynthos, and by the fact that Nikolaos copied icons by great Cretan painters, brought to Zakynthos by Cretan refugees. Among these are some very important works, such as the icon of Saint Theodore by the painter Angelos (Figs 232-233), the fifteenth-century icon of Saint George standing and slaying the dragon, in the Zakynthos Museum, the icon of the Passion of Christ, by Domenikos Theotokopoulos (Cat. no. 17) (Figs 134-135), and the icon of the Annunciation (Cat. no. 48) from the Modena

211. Saint Spyridon transforms the snake into gold, detail of icon Cat. no. 46.

triptych¹⁷ (Figs 224-225). Kallergis's style is often conservative in character, particularly when he copies earlier icons, while in those icons in a miniature genre more often follows the Western models of the iconography. His works are distinguished by their precise drawing, chromatic sensitivity and picturesque details, particularly in the secondary scenes surrounding single saints.

All these traits of his art visible in the icon of Saint Spyridon are observed in another *vita* icon by Nikolaos Kallergis, of Saint Charalambos with Scenes from His Life, 1728, in the Zakynthos Museum.¹⁸ Both icons are identical in the depiction of the enthroned hierarch as well as in the drawing and coloration of the small biographical scenes projected on the gold ground in exactly the same way. Analogous elements of the painter's graphic style are encountered in an unsigned icon of Saint Nicholas with Scenes from His Life, in Cephalonia,¹⁹ as well as in the icons of the Annunciation (Cat. no. 48) and the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple (Cat. no. 47), which I attribute to the same cycle of works of miniature character. Our icon of 1744 is one of the latest known dated works by Kallergis.

CONDITION Very good.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 88, fig. 243; see also an icon by Christodoulos Mariettis, 1677, op. cit., fig. 337.

212. Saint Spyridon appears in the king's dream, detail of icon Cat. no. 46.

213. The relic of Saint Spyridon, detail of icon Cat. no. 46.



2. Vrokinis 1973, 307-310.
3. *Hermeneia* 1909, 154. For the saint's iconography see *Lexikon*, 8, 1976, cols 387-389.
4. Mitsani 1996, no. 1, 14-15.
5. E.g. see the icons of Saint James the Less (Adelphotheos) (Cat. no. 45) and Saint Antypas (Cat. no. 44), by Konstantinos Kontarinis, with related bibliography.
6. Chatzidakis 1962, no. 62, 94-95, pls 46, 47.
7. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 38, 57-59, pl. 29.
8. Drandakis 1962, 17-24, pl. 1.
9. Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1936, no. 64, 22.
10. *Hermeneia* 1909, 181-182.
11. See Chatzidakis 1972, 172, nn. 1, 2, 3, 5 with related bibliography. See also Katselaki 1994, 470-481ff. and nn. 48-53, figs 10-12. Bitha 1995, 164ff.
12. Chatzidakis 1977 (1985), no. 50, 169, pl. 188.
13. Katselaki 1994, 470ff., fig. 10.
14. For other Corfiote examples of Saint Spyridon see Bitha 1995, 151ff., figs 1, 6-10.
15. Bitha 1995, figs 1, 6-8.
16. For the painter see Chatzidakis 1956a, 15, fig. 3. Chatzidakis 1975a, 263. Chatzidakis 1987, 1, pp. 98, 125. Xyngopoulos 1957, 324. Triantaphyllopoulos 1985, A', 364. Also Rigopoulos 1994 and 1994a, 283-287. Chatzidakis 1997. See also Cat. nos 47-48 and n. 17 below.
17. See Introduction, 49, 51-52, 54-55, Figs 13, 18, 19, Cat. no. 48, 362ff., with further examples. I gave a first synoptic presentation of the results of my research in a communication entitled «Γνωστό άγνωστο έργο κρητικού ζωγράφου» at the VIIIth International Congress of Cretan Studies, Herakleion, 9-14 September 1996. These findings will be published in detail in a monograph I am preparing on this subject.
18. Dimensions: 59 x 46 cm. Chatzidakis 1956, 16, n. 13. Konomos 1967, 30. Konomos 1967a, 26-27. Kreidl-Papadopoulos 1970, 110, fig. 88. Rigopoulos 1994a, 34-35, fig. 2.
19. From the iconostasis of the church of Hagios Nikolaos ton Livathenadon, at Lixouri, see *Cephalonia II* 1994, 44-45, figs 36-39.



214. Saint Spyridon raised the king's daughter, detail of icon Cat. no. 46.

47

THE PRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN IN THE TEMPLE

24.4 x 18.4 x 2 cm

Nikolaos Kallergis (?) (1699-1747)

The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple is depicted in a type that combines elements of Byzantine iconography with Western stylistic traits. On the left is the Virgin as a girl, accompanied by her parents Anne and Joachim making animated gestures. The three are flanked by young girls holding lighted candles and dressed in colourful Western garments. At the entrance to the temple, Symeon stands erect in pontifical vestments, with tiara and crosier. A maiden from the retinue approaches left, her sophisticated attitude somewhat ineptly conveyed. The scene takes place before the temple, which is shown as an arcade in front of a high wall. At the top of a staircase to the left, between two columns and below a red curtain drawn aside, is the little Virgin, turned towards the angel descending from heaven in a cloud and offering her the bread. The seven-wick lamp and a small censer can be discerned within this space. On the gold ground of the icon traces of a now erased inscription in capital letters are discerned: *EICOAOC*. The incised preliminary design and an incised wavy line on the borders are also visible. The icon is notable for the precise drawing and the harmonious combination of light colours. The youthful faces with roseate cheeks have fine neat features, while the countenances of Joachim and Symeon have a livelier, troubled expression and wrinkled brow. There is a restrained gentleness in the poses and gestures. The garments are painted in alternating hues of rose, blue, pale green and yellow. The deep blue arcade and the paler blue-grey part of the temple with the staircases are projected against the backdrop of the pale rose wall, while the floor is painted a deeper shade of this colour.

All the above elements of the icon are reminiscent of works by Nikolaos Kallergis,¹ particularly the small biographical scenes surrounding the icon of Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46, Figs 207-214) and of Saint Charalambos, dated 1728, in the Zakynthos Museum.² On these is encountered a corresponding miniature rendering of the scenes as well as a corresponding polychromy in similar tones. Kallergis's art is recognizable particularly in the painting of Joachim's anxious

215. Nikolaos Kallergis (?) (1699-1747),
*The Presentation of the Virgin in the
Temple*, Cat. no. 47.





216. Nikolaos Kallergis, *Angel*, detail of icon Cat. no. 46.

visage, in the group of girls accompanying the Virgin (Figs 215-217) and in the miniature scene of the young Virgin with the angel inside the sanctuary, which recall similar figures from the border scenes on the icon of Saint Spyridon. The mingling of traditional and Western elements, the naivety and immediacy of the drawing, as well as the quality of the coloration are common to both works. Further similarities are apparent in the rendering of the chief priest (Fig. 218) and Saint Spyridon (Fig. 219), as well as of the female figures (Figs 217, 221), with the Virgin (Fig. 223) in the icon of the Annunciation Cat. no. 48 (Fig. 220), which I attribute to the same painter.

Nikolaos Kallergis is distinguished for the variety of styles he adopts in his painting, depending on the size of the icon. For despotic icons and bema doors of the iconostasis³ he prefers a pronounced linear style, imitative of Byzantine, while in small works⁴ he comes closer to Western models, with smooth modelling of the

217. Nikolaos Kallergis, *Young girls from the Virgin's retinue*, detail of icon Cat. no. 47.





218. Nikolaos Kallergis (?), *The high priest*, detail of icon Cat. no. 47.

flesh, soft drapery and a wider range of colours. These remarks suggest that our icon of the Presentation of the Virgin should be attributed to the hand of this painter and included in his group of works of miniature character, such as the icon of Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46).

The theme of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple is encountered in a different composition, which nevertheless follows an analogous Western model, in another icon by Nikolaos Kallergis, dated 1738, in Zakynthos;⁵ the girls in the Virgin's retinue wear similar Western costumes and Symeon appears in pontifical tiara, while the Western-type buildings are different in form.

Comparable compositions in the Western idiom also occur in later icons by other eighteenth-century painters, at Vanato on Zakynthos⁶ and in Cephalonia,⁷ where the same Western model is set inside a traditional-type temple.



219. Nikolaos Kallergis, *Saint Spyridon*, detail of icon Cat. no. 46.

CONDITION Very good. The incised preliminary design is visible.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos (?).

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. For the painter see Cat. no. 46, nn. 16, 17, and Cat. no. 48, 363-365.
2. See Cat. no. 45, n. 18.
3. Konomos 1988, figs 62, 63. Rigopoulos 1994, figs 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.
4. Rigopoulos 1994, figs 2, 5, 11. See also an icon of similar art, possibly by the same painter in Cephalonia, *Cephalonia II* 1994, 44-45, figs 36-39.
5. Chatzidakis 1967, 27. Rigopoulos 1994, no. 9, 37, fig. 5. Rigopoulos 1994a, 286, pls XXI-XXIII.
6. Charalambidis 1978, fig. 6.
7. *Cephalonia I* 1989, fig. 262.

48

THE ANNUNCIATION

23.5 x 18.2 x 1.4 cm

Nikolaos Kallergis (?) (1699-1747)

The angel advances impetuously from the left in wide stride, with torsion of the body and an animated gesture with his right hand raised heavenwards. In his left hand, brought in front of the chest, he holds the lily. On the right the Virgin is seated on a low throne with cushion and without back. Turned three-quarters towards a simply decorated Renaissance-type lectern, in side view, she reads an open book, her hand placed on the pages.

The scene takes place on a terrace with low balustrade; in the background left is a landscape of rolling green hills; on the right, behind the Virgin, below the sloping roof supported by three columns, is a canopied bed with the curtain drawn aside. On the gold ground an inscription in red capitals: *O EYATTEAISMOC THC Θ(EOTO)K(O)Y* (*The Annunciation to the Virgin*). Next to the Virgin the initials *MP ΘY* and *Γ* above the archangel's halo.

The drapery of the garments is schematically rendered, while the long, youthful faces are modelled with rounded planes.

Elements of the iconography of the setting are encountered in Cretan icons of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries painted following models in Western prints. For example, the canopied bed and the drawn curtain appear in one of the miniatures in the Marciana codex by Georgios Klontzas,¹ yet the poses of the

220. Nikolaos Kallergis (?) (1699-1747),
The Annunciation, Cat. no. 48.





221. Nikolaos Kallergis, *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, Cat. no. 47, detail.

Virgin and the archangel differ. A depiction of the Annunciation in a corresponding environment, in an engraving by Dürer, was perhaps the model of this composition.² In an icon by Theodoros Poulakis in the Museo Correr, Venice³ not only is the same type of bed encountered but also the same terrace with balusters; however, here too the poses of the figures are completely different. The model of Poulakis's icon is represented in Sadeler's engraving of Gabriel's Mission to the Virgin.⁴ Emmanuel Tzanes used an analogous model for the setting in an icon in Ioannina,⁵ in which the poses of the angel and the Virgin differ, since they follow traditional Cretan models.⁶ A similar iconography also occurs in an eighteenth-century Western-style icon in the Benaki Museum.⁷

In all the works mentioned above, by Klontzas, Tzanes and Poulakis, the canopied bed and the terrace with low balustrade are features rendered in the same manner as in our icon. On the contrary, in these examples the rendering of the Virgin and the archangel is different, while the affinity of these figures in our icon with the representation encountered in another work, by the greatest of all the Cretan painters, the Modena triptych by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, is considerable. The painter of our icon reproduces the model of the Annunciation in the local — Zakynthian — Byzantinesque idiom (Figs 224, 225).⁸ Despite the difference in style, there is correspondence in the angel's pose, with the torsion of the body, and even his attire, with the many-folded, long white chiton and the second, shorter, sleeved one, in rose picked out in pale mauve, tied tightly just above the waist, as in the angels in the icon of the Passion of Christ (Cat. no. 17) (Fig. 107). Also related is the manner of painting his face in profile and the position and shape of his wings. Our icon is further linked with the Modena triptych by the pose of the Virgin in front of a lectern, which is reproduced exactly except for the position of her head which inclines slightly towards the book in our icon. Lastly, the type, form, simple decoration and side view of the lectern with the open book are the same in both works.

Similarities in the pose of the Virgin and the type of the lectern are observed with other known icons of the Annunciation by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, in the Prado (Fig. 230), in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection and in its copy in Barcelona.⁹ There are, of course, minor divergences in the figure of the Virgin, which has neither the elegance nor the grace of the Virgin in the Modena triptych, as well as in the exact position of the lectern. Of the three examples cited, our icon is most closely related to the Modena triptych.

When the triptych was first published in 1937, Pallucchini showed that the model for the figure of the archangel in this work, and in the Annunciation in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, was Caraglio's engraving of 1537, which copies a drawing by Titian.¹⁰ However the pose, movement and gesture of the Virgin are completely different in Caraglio's engraving; the model for the rendering of her figure in Theotokopoulos's works was indicated by Alvarez-Lopera in 1995, in engravings by Bonasone and Ghisi.¹¹ Ghisi's engraving was used, moreover, as a



222. *The Annunciation*, 18th century.
Solomos Museum, Zakynthos.

model for rendering the angel in the Annunciation by other Cretan painters, such as Georgios Klontzas in the Marciana codex and Ilias Moskos in an icon of 1675, in the Byzantine Museum, Athens.¹² A large number of later icons in a more popular Heptanesian art clearly follow Western models for rendering the scene of the Annunciation yet do not resemble our icon,¹³ while in some late eighteenth-century icons of mediocre art in Ravenna,¹⁴ the poses of the archangel and Virgin copy Caraglio's engraving.

Our icon's typological difference from Caraglio's and Ghisi's engravings, that is from the models Theotokopoulos used for the representation of the subject of the Annunciation, as well as its difference from later icons known, confirms the hypothesis that its painter copied the representation directly from that of the Modena triptych. Albeit the copy of Theotokopoulos's composition in our icon is executed in the simplistic manner of a provincial painter who endeavours to give the Western composition a more 'Byzantine' character. Nevertheless, it preserves the correspondence in the elongated proportions of the body and the relations between the figures, as well as the character and the general aspect of the model. The style of our icon has traits distinctive of the art of Nikolaos Kallergis, as known from the icons of Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46) and the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple (Cat. no. 47), which are characterized by an analogous miniature rendering of the figures, rich colours and graphic details in the



223. *The Virgin*, detail of icon Cat. no. 48.



224. Nikolaos Kallergis (?) (1699-1747), *The Annunciation*, Cat. no. 48.

225. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Annunciation*. Detail of the Modena triptych, c. 1567. Galleria Estense, Modena.

setting.¹⁵ The figure of the Virgin resembles the young faces of the maidens in the Virgin's retinue in the icon of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple (Cat. no. 47) and especially the girl at the far right who folds her arms in a similar manner on the chest (Figs 221, 223); the simplistic linear rendering of the drapery on the archangel's garments is likewise similar to that on the dress of the girls. The type of bed with canopy and curtain is painted in the same way as in the scene of the king's dream in the icon of Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46) (Fig. 212). The balusters are drawn in the same manner as the small colonnettes in front of the saint's relic in that icon (Cat. no. 46) (Fig. 213). The colour tones correspond, since the same blue-grey is used in the landscape of the Annunciation and in the first and third scenes of the miracles of Saint Spyridon (Figs 207, 209), in which the little clouds are also painted in a similar manner. The above observations lead to the conclusion that the icon of the Annunciation was painted by Nikolaos Kallergis and belongs to the same cycle of his works as Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46) and the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple (Cat. no. 47). Moreover, the subject seems to have been established in Zakynthian painting, since it is encountered in identical rendering in another contemporary icon in the Solomos Museum, Zakynthos (Fig. 222).¹⁶

It further emerges that Nikolaos Kallergis had copied not only Domenikos Theotokopoulos's icon of the Passion (Cat. no. 17) but also the representation known to us from the Modena triptych. To Nikolaos Kallergis's copies of earlier important icons that had been brought to Zakynthos by refugees from Crete,



another two works by him in the Zakynthos Museum can be added: Saint Theodore (Fig. 233) and Saint George the Dragon-slayer from the church of the Panagia tou Tsouroufli. These are characterized by the same style¹⁷ and their respective models are Saint Theodore by Angelos, in the Loverdos Collection (Fig. 232), which was formerly in Zakynthos, and Saint George standing and slaying the dragon, in the Zakynthos Museum.¹⁸

It seems that Nikolaos Kallergis had inherited the practice of copying earlier Cretan icons from his father, the painter and priest Frantzeskos (or Frangiskos), who had painted an exact copy of the icon of the Virgin from the Anaphonetria Monastery, as attested in a decision of the Proveditore of Zakynthos, Jacobus Corner, on 8 June 1677: '... it has come to our notice that while the same icon is in the church of the Holy Apostles, the most reverend vicar Frangiskos Kallergis, who was also a painter, has dared to copy this in the same size most faithfully. Believing that this is unbecoming and harmful to the original, we order, with all due respect, that the copy of the icon be brought to the Anaphonetria Monastery and remain beside the original, without it ever being possible to take it away'.¹⁹ The icon of the Annunciation not only adds another work to the copies made by Nikolaos Kallergis, it also constitutes indirect evidence of the presence of another work by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, in all probability the Modena triptych itself, in Zakynthos, and indeed in the hands of the same painter.²⁰

The hypothesis that the Modena triptych was once in Zakynthos is reinforced by the testimony of other works by Zakynthian painters that copy another two of its

226. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Baptism*. Detail of the Modena triptych, c. 1567. Galleria Estense, Modena.

227. Nikolaos Kantounis (1767-1834), *The Baptism*. Zakynthos Museum.



228. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos, The Adoration of the Magi. Detail from the Modena triptych, c. 1567. Galleria Estense, Modena.*

229. *Nikolaos Koutouzis (?) (1741-1813), The Adoration of the Shepherds. Zakynthos Museum.*



scenes: the Baptism and the Adoration of the Shepherds. In two paintings of the Baptism ascribed to Nikolaos Kantounis (1767-1834) (Fig. 227),²¹ the pose of Saint John the Baptist and of Christ is the same, as well as the pose and the small number of angels; a further common element is the warm yellow light in the cloudy sky, in which the dove appears, all distinctive traits of the iconography of the triptych. In the Baptism in the Zakynthos Museum in particular (Figs 226, 227), the rendering of the first angel with the bare leg, a figure which, as has been noted, only Theotokopoulos introduces into the iconography of the scene, is identical.²²

In the Adoration of the Shepherds by Nikolaos Koutouzis (1741-1813), in the Zakynthos Museum (Figs 228, 229),²³ the composition and the pose of the Virgin and Child, the kneeling shepherd and the shepherd leaning on his crook are analogous. In the Adoration of the Shepherds by Nikolaos Kantounis there are corresponding similarities in the poses and even an attempted imitation of the warm yellowish light.²⁴

The copying of three basic scenes from the Modena triptych in the above three works by Zakynthian painters in the same period provides evidence of the triptych's probable presence on the island before it found its way to Italy. Most scholars have regarded this outstanding piece as the first known work by Theotokopoulos after his arrival in Venice in 1567-1568.²⁵ However, Chatzidakis in 1987 and Puppi in 1995 included it in the *oeuvre* of the painter's Cretan period, while Vassilaki in 1990 and 1995 posed the question of the place of its creation.²⁶



I believe that on the evidence presented here there is no obstacle to assigning the triptych to the Cretan period of the great artist's life. Furthermore, the presence of the icon of the Passion of Christ (Cat. no. 17), by stimulating a reconsideration of previous views on the painter's early *oeuvre*, may confirm this work's inclusion in the same period on the basis of its style.²⁷

The influence of Theotokopoulos's representations of the Annunciation extends to the later local painting of Zakynthos.²⁸ In the Annunciation by Nikolaos Koutouzis, from the church of Hagios Spyridon Flambouriaris,²⁹ the figure of the Virgin in front of the low lectern has exactly the same pose (Figs 230, 231). Other elements in common are her garments and the passionate expression on her face as she gazes upwards. However, the Virgin here has none of the gentleness, elegance and grace of the refined Virgin in the Modena triptych and in its copy by Nikolaos Kallergis; on the contrary, she has the features of a more mature woman with stout body and round face, as in the Annunciation in the Prado (Fig. 230), in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection and in Barcelona.³⁰ Lastly, the form of the lectern in the Prado icon of the Annunciation is encountered in another icon of the subject by Nikolaos Kantounis, in the Zakynthos Museum (see Introduction, 47, Fig. 10).³¹

Of these three icons the one in the Prado is the earliest and has been assigned to the Italian period of the Cretan painter's life (1575), while its presence in Spain is attested already from the nineteenth century.³² However, given the similarities noted, the presence of this icon — or an exact copy of it³³ — in Zakynthos may be considered very probable.

230. Domenikos Theotokopoulos, *The Virgin. Detail of The Annunciation*, c. 1570. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

231. Nikolaos Koutouzis (1741-1813), *The Virgin detail of The Annunciation*. Zakynthos Museo (see Fig. 11).



In summary, the icon of the Annunciation here ascribed to Nikolaos Kallergis constitutes a further minor example of the appeal that the work of the then unknown great painter, Domenikos Theotokopoulos, had in the local art of Zakynthos. At the same time it also reveals the presence of its model, in all probability the Modena triptych, on the island, in the hands of the painter Nikolaos of the Cretan Kallergis family.

CONDITION Very good.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Panselinou 1992, 475, pl. 247a-β. Paliouras 1977, 167-168, fig. 52. See an analogous model in icons of the Annunciation in the Athens School of Fine Arts, dated 1636, and the Greek Institute Venice, cf. N. Chatzidakis 1993, no. 48, 188-189.
2. *The Illustrated Bartsch* 10, 1, 1980, 114; 10, 2, 1981, no. B19, 262-263. Marcantonio Raimondi follows a similar type (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 27, 1978, no. 587, II, 273).
3. Mariacher 1957, 196-197, inv. no. 533. Rigopoulos 1979, fig. 3.
4. Rigopoulos 1979, fig. 4.
5. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1986, no. 169, 167; see also the Annunciation in the triptych by Emmanuel Tzanes, in the Canelopoulos Collection, Drandakis 1962, 115, pl. 46β.
6. For the poses of the archangel and the Virgin see above (Cat. no. 14, 151, 164, n. 5, Fig. 72).
7. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 60, 81ff., pl. 42γ. There is correspondence in Gabriel's attire, with the two chitons girdled around the waist. The landscape in the background is encountered in an earlier Western model of the scene, by Girolamo da Santa Croce (1497-1544), see Berenson 1968, I, fig. 578.
8. Pallucchini 1937, pl. II. *El Greco of Crete* 1990, no. 4, 172-175, 344-346 (M. Vassilaki), with earlier bibliography. See also Vassilaki 1995, 119ff.
9. For the icon in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection (former Contini-Bonacossi) see Wethey 1962, II, 32, no. 37, I, fig. 17. For the icon in the Prado see Wethey 1962, II, 32, no. 38, I, fig. 13, and recently *El Greco in Italy* 1995, no. 40, 315-321, 510-517, figs on pp. 313-315 (J. Alvarez-Lopera), with previous bibliography. See also the identical icon in Barcelona, Wethey 1962, II, 32-33, no. 39, I, fig. 14.
10. Pallucchini 1937, 6, fig. 3. *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 174, fig. 3 (M. Vassilaki). *El Greco in Italy* 1995, 318, fig. 3 (J. Alvarez-Lopera).
11. Ghisi's engraving is a copy of a work by an earlier artist, see *El Greco in Italy* 1995, 320, figs 4 and 5 (J. Alvarez-Lopera). The Virgin's pose is also encountered in an engraving by Goltzius, after a work by Martin de Vos (*The Illustrated Bartsch* 3, 1, 1980, no. 294 (89), 261; 3, 2, Commentary, 326). This engraving, which has not been noted so far, does not constitute a secure chronological criterion for the introduction of the theme into the painting of these icons, but it does constitute confirmation of the dissemination of the theme and of this typology in 17th-century European art. A copy of the central theme of Theotokopoulos's icon of the Passion of Christ is also observed in another engraving by Goltzius, see above Cat. no. 17, 207 and Fig. 128.
12. *Arte y Culto, Después de Bizancio* 1995, no. 2, 20 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou). In the same icon Moskos follows the model of Caraglio's engraving for rendering the figure of the Virgin.
13. Karakatsani 1980, figs 365-367. *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, no. 115, 73.
14. *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, nos 113-114, pp. 71-72, nos 116, 116, 1, pp. 73-74.
15. For the painter see above Cat. no. 46.
16. The icon is unpublished. I am grateful to Katerina Demeti for providing me with a photograph.
17. Personal observations. They come from the same church as the bema door with Christ upheld by an angel, which copies the central theme of the icon of the Passion of Christ (see above Cat. no.

- 17, 217ff., Fig. 135).
18. The transfer of Angelos's icon of Saint Theodore from Zakynthos to Athens is attested by Konomos 1988, 54. On the icon see N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 8, 24. The icon of Saint George is from the church of Hagios Demetrios tou Kolla, Konomos 1988, fig. 51.
19. De Viazis 1899, 236-238; see also Konomos 1988, 82. The document is cited by all those who have studied these painters. See relevant bibliography Cat. no. 46, 347ff.
20. See Introduction, 49, 54, and Cat. no. 17, 217ff.
21. For the Baptism in the Modena triptych see recently *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 168-171, 343-344, fig. on p. 169 (M. Vassilaki). For the Zakynthian representations see Charalambidis 1978, figs 35 and 44, Konomos 1988, figs 106, 86.
22. Konomos 1988, fig. 106. The angel from the Baptism in the Modena triptych does not exist in Battista del Moro's engraving, which Theotokopoulos used as a model, see Dillon 1985, figs 4, 5. For Theotokopoulos's models and his inventiveness see recently *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 168-171, 343-344 (M. Vassilaki).
23. From Hagios Spyridon Flambouriaris, 1790-1800. Konomos 1988, fig. 88. Charalambidis 1978, fig. 19. Whereas all Domenikos Theotokopoulos's representations of the Adoration are linked iconographically (see Pallucchini 1937, 7ff. and *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 160-163, fig. on p. 161, see also figs 1-8 (M. Vassilaki); see also *El Greco in Italy* 1995, 302ff. (J. Alvarez-Lopera) the model most closely related to the Zakynthian works is to be found in the Modena triptych. There is another icon of the Adoration of the Magi, of 18th-century date, in the Solomos Museum (Fig. 13). Of analogous art to that of Nikolaos Kallergis's icons, this icon is remarkably similar to another work by Theotokopoulos in a private collection in Lausanne (see *El Greco in Italy* 1995, no. 39, s. fig. 1 (J. Alvarez-Lopera). Cf. Introduction, 49, Fig. 14.
24. Konomos 1988, fig. 123, fig. 102. Charalambidis 1978, fig. 43, see also fig. 85. The kneeling shepherd in these works – even more like the shepherd in the Adoration in the Buccleuch Collection, Wethey 1962, I, no. 24, 26-27, II, fig. 10.
25. See above n. 8.
26. Chatzidakis 1987, 312. Puppi 1995, 32-33. *El Greco of Crete* 1990, 172-175, 344-345 (M. Vassilaki). Vassilaki 1995, 119ff.
27. The subject is too wide to examine in the context of the present Catalogue.
28. Charalambidis 1978, figs 18, 42. Konomos 1988, figs 104, 110. The figure of the archangel in these works is copied from another icon by Domenikos Theotokopoulos at that time in Zakynthos, the icon of Saint Luke the Evangelist, as noted in the Introduction, 47, n. 53, Figs 9-11.
29. Zakynthos Museum, no. 259. Charalambidis 1978, fig. 18. On the painter see bibliography below, Cat. nos 69-70, 420ff., n. 1.
30. See bibliography in n. 9.
31. Charalambidis 1978, fig. 42. Konomos 1988, 124, fig. 104. See Introduction 47, n. 53.
32. It was purchased by the Prado Museum in 1868 from Dona Conception Parody. For the dating of the icon see recently *El Greco in Italy* 1995, no. 40, 315-321 (J. Alvarez-Lopera). For other datings and the provenance see Wethey 1962, I, no. 38, 32. See also above n. 9 and Introduction 53, n. 67.
33. For Theotokopoulos's habit of copying his own works, such as the Annunciation, see passim Wethey 1962, II, 31ff.

232. Angelos, Saint Theodore Teron, first half 15th century. Byzantine Museum, Athens.

233. Nikolaos Kallergis (1699-1747), Saint Theodore Teron. Zakynthos Museum.

49

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

48.8 x 34 x 2 cm

Mid-18th century

The Cross is projected obliquely against the gold ground, flanked at the level of its arms by three men on two ladders removing the lifeless body of Christ. Their strenuous movements convey the effort required to support the heavy corpse, which flops over at the waist and dangles in front of the ladder. Lower down, a kneeling male figure, perhaps Joseph of Arimathea, spreads out a white winding sheet to receive the body, while another man, with white beard, wearing a turban, a white cloak and high red boots, turns towards the Cross. On the right is the kneeling Virgin, her hands clasped in prayer, while on the left a woman covers her face with her cloak.

The icon is elliptical, a shape known in a few Postbyzantine icons, such as that of the Passion of Christ by Domenikos Theotokopoulos (Cat. no. 17), as well as in later, eighteenth-century ones of the Baptism and the Anastasis in Corfu.¹ Towards the bottom, on the white sheet at the base of the Cross, is an inscription in black letters: *ΧΕΙΡ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ ΚΟΝΤΑΡΙΝΗ* (*Hand of Konstantinos Kontarinis*). The type of the signature is strikingly similar to genuine signatures of Konstantinos Kontarinis;² it has the same calligraphic precision and could be considered authentic. However, laboratory examination has shown that it is written on top of a later overpainting.

The Western character of the many-figured composition is obvious in the attempted perspective rendering, with foreshortening of the figures around the obliquely placed Cross. However, the scene does not follow known iconographic models familiar from other Westernizing icons of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as the Flemish engraving used by Theodoros Poulakis in an icon in Cephalonia,³ and the prototype of the painting by Rosso Fiorentino (1494-1540) at Volterra (1521), which was repeated later by Daniele da Volterra⁴ and is encountered in an icon at Vanato, Zakynthos⁵ as well as in an icon of Saint Methodios, from the circle of Konstantinos Kontarinis, in Corfu.⁶



The composition of our icon is painted after a work by the French artist Le Brun (1619-1690), known from prints by his friend and contemporary the engraver Audran (1639-1684);⁷ it was thus diffused in seventeenth-century French painting.⁸ The affinities are mainly concentrated in the lower part of the composition, where the Virgin is portrayed in a similar attitude of prayer, with a woman beside her, and another woman expresses her grief by covering her face with her hands, as in our icon. It is interesting to note that Panayotis Doxaras in his treatise *Περί ζωγραφίας* (manuscript Athens 1724) recommends among other things the prints of 'Charles Le Brun from France' as a model for young painters.⁹ Doxaras's work was modelled on Du Fresne's French edition of Da Vinci's treatise, a favourite manual in Le Brun's Academy in Paris.¹⁰ The adaptation of Le Brun's prototype of the Descent from the Cross is achieved by rendering it in the characteristic Byzantine style. The outlines are bold and the drawing has a certain sophistication, imitating the technique of icons by Tzanes and Poulakis. The facial expressions are exaggerated, while the dense calligraphic folds of the drapery recall a comparable style in an icon of Saint John the Baptist by Georgios Vidales, (1666), in the Loverdos Collection in the Byzantine Museum, Athens.¹¹ Our icon, with its more vivid colours, was probably produced in a related workshop on Zakynthos.

CONDITION Very good. Slight damage at the edges top and bottom, which had been overpainted; this was removed in the recent cleaning. The incised preparatory design on the gesso can be clearly seen. See also Appendix III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Kalogeropoulos 1926, fig. facing p. 104, Xyngopoulos 1956, 318, n. 5. Vocotopoulos 1990, 163.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos. Athens, the Theodoros Zoumboulakis Collection, where Kalogeropoulos locates it in his 1926 publication.

NOTES

1. The icon of the Baptism in a traditional style akin to that of Kontarinis's conservative works, Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 126, fig. 295, and the icon of the Anastasis in a purely Western style of the late 18th century, *Holy Metropolis of Corfu* 1994, fig. 212.
2. See passim Cat. nos 43 and 44.
3. Rigopoulos 1979, pls 154, 155. *Cephalonia* 1 1989, fig. 235.
4. Venturi 1979, fig. 105.
5. Work of an unknown painter of the late 18th century, Charalambidis 1978, 32ff., fig. 8 and 33ff., fig. 9.
6. The scene is represented on the saint's epigone. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 136, fig. 314.
7. Cf. Mâle 1932, 282. The engraving is in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes (Ed 68, Da 35, fol. 82). Lebrun's work is in the Rennes Museum; for the painter e.g. see Benezit 1961, V, 459ff.
8. E.g. see Mâle 1932, 282, fig. 164 (work by Jouvenet, 1697, in the Louvre).
9. Lambros 1871, 27. Procopiou 1939, 102-103, 112.
10. Doxaras illustrates his handbook with his own copies of works by Poussin. Procopiou 1939, 103ff., pls 8-9. Kyriakou 1982, 219, 223, pls 1Δ', 1Ε'.
11. Chatzidakis 1987, 191. Konomos 1988, 83, fig. 44.



50

THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3733

30.9 x 39.3 x 1.8 cm

Art of Apostolos Krezias, second half of 18th century

The Adoration of the Shepherds is represented within the wide mouth of a central rocky cave. The kneeling Virgin stretches her hand and holds the white sheet on which the naked Christ-Child lies in a basketry manger. On the right, three praying angels gather near him, while the three sprightly Shepherds and a woman in a red dress with white puffed sleeves and a broad-brimmed hat approach. At the back are the two animals, the ox and the ass, and Joseph standing behind the Virgin. At the sides, in a landscape of low hills, two secondary episodes are depicted on a smaller scale: left the Journey of the Magi, who proceed on horseback, and right the Annunciation to the Shepherds, who converse with two angels appearing high in the sky amidst white clouds. Beside the shepherds are their flocks of white sheep, grazing and drinking water from a brook.

The icon formerly bore the forged signature of Theodoros Poulakis, which was removed when it was cleaned by Photis Zachariou in 1960.¹ The entire central composition copies in exact detail a model in a Flemish engraving by J. Sadeler.² In an icon of the Nativity, by the Zakynthian painter Apostolos Krezias, 1750, in the Metropolitikon Megaron, Zakynthos,³ there is an analogous development of the landscape and a correspondence in the scale of the central theme, set inside the cave; this correspondence extends to the miniature manner of painting the

236. *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, second half of 18th century, Cat. no. 50. Benaki Museum.



Journey of the Magi in the landscape; additional similarities are ascertained in the stylistic rendering, with particularly careful drawing, especially in the secondary scenes, as well as the coloration, notably the gradual shading of the brown tones on the sides of the central crag and in the landscape. These affinities in composition and style indicate a dependence of Apostolos Krezias's icon on the evidently earlier and more complete composition of ours. Apostolos Krezias painted a large number of icons in Zakynthos (dated works by him, most of them unpublished, from 1750 till 1790),⁴ which are outstanding for the immediacy of the narration, the high quality technique and the calligraphic precision in rendering decorative motifs. The Adoration of the Shepherds, in a different iconographic type with a much richer composition and extravagant poses and gestures, is presented in an icon by Stephanos Tzankarolas, in the National Art Gallery, Athens.⁵

CONDITION Cleaned and consolidated by Photis Zachariou in April 1960

PROVENANCE Zakynthos

BIBLIOGRAPHY *BCH* LXVIII-LXIX (1944-45), 424. Xyngopoulos 1956, 25, n. 1. Embiricos 1967, 222-224, fig. 115. Rigopoulos 1979, no. 77, pls 143, 145, figs 155, 157.

NOTES

1. The icon is referred to as a work of Poulakis by Xyngopoulos (Xyngopoulos 1956, 256, n. 1) and Embiricos (Embiricos 1967, 222-224, fig. 115). Rigopoulos does not consider it to be by Poulakis (Rigopoulos 1979, 172, no. 77).
2. *Albertina* LXXVII, fasc. 4, fol. 87, no. 335. Rigopoulos 1979, pl. 44, fig. 156. For the iconography of the Adoration of the Shepherds see above Cat. no. 15, 166-168.
3. Konomos 1988, fig. 71.
4. Konomos 1988, 26 and 106.
5. Kalligas 1984, 57-58, figs 15, 16.



51

THE BEHEADING OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

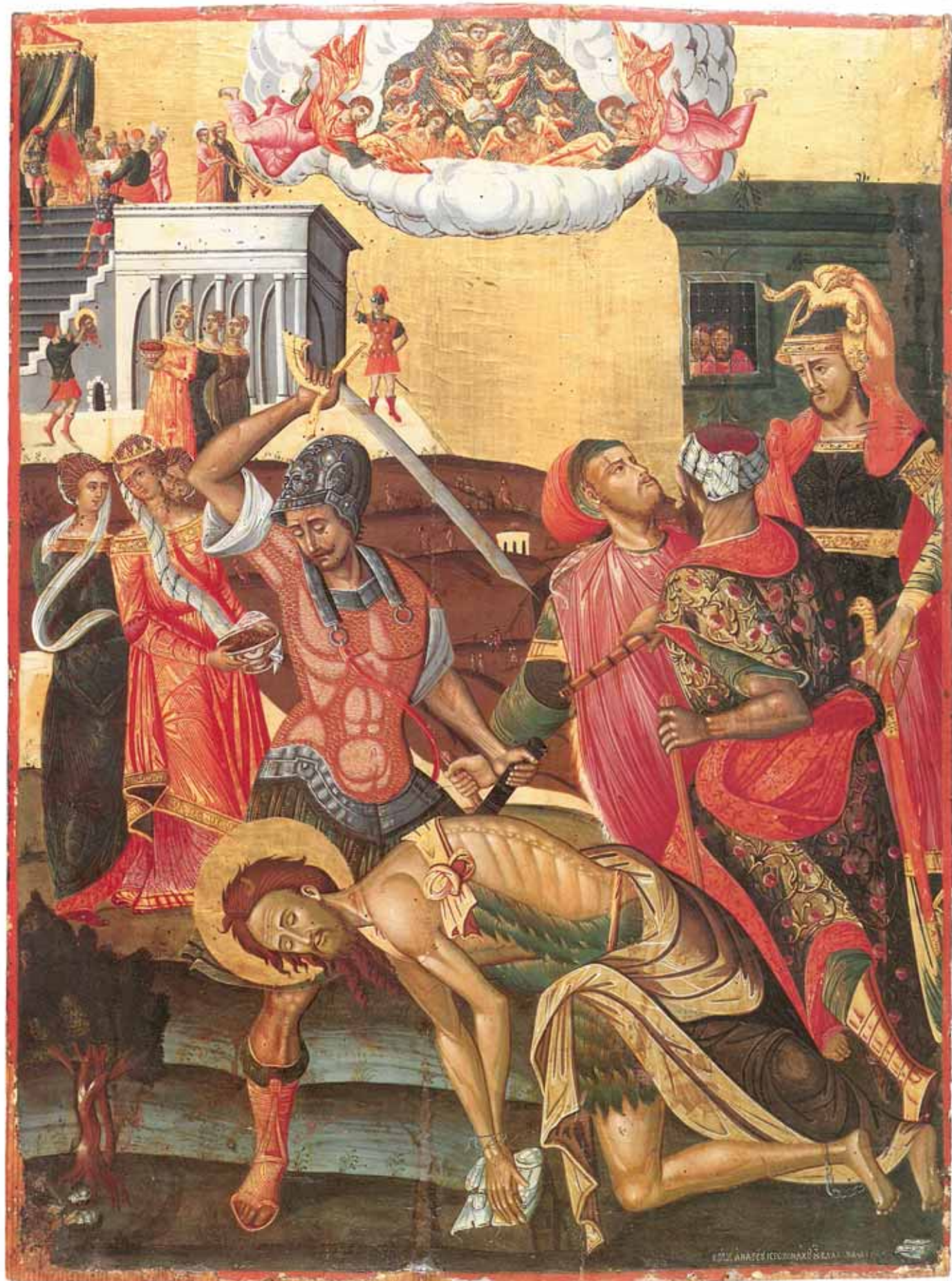
Benaki Museum, inv. no. 3731

90.5 x 68 x 2.5 cm

Second half of 18th century

Saint John is depicted at the centre, turned left and kneeling on the ground, his naked torso bent downwards. Behind him stands the executioner, in frontal pose, holding a sword in his right hand raised above his head. On the right two soldiers clad in rich, gold-embroidered uniforms, converse with Herod who stands behind them, wearing a Roman helmet and a red cloak. In the background left, on a smaller scale, Salome approaches holding the empty bowl, she is flanked by two noblewomen of her retinue attired appropriate to their status. Higher up, left, are secondary episodes depicted on a smaller scale: the bringing of the severed head to Salome and Herod's banquet on the terrace of a Renaissance building. On the right, the prison with two male figures peering out of the barred window. At the top of the icon a wide opening of heaven with white clouds, in which a choir of angels appears. Bottom right, an inscription in white capitals ΚΟΠΟC ΑΝΔΡΕΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΟΝΑΧΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΛΛΑΝΑ .ΑΨΔ' ([by the] effort of Andreas Kallanas hieromonk 1704). The painter is not known from other works and the authenticity the signature is doubtful.

The iconography indicates that the painter belonged to the group of Heptanesian artists who reproduced one of the favourite subjects of the great sixteenth- and seventeenth-century masters. Indeed the scene here follows the prototype created by Michael Damaskenos in the icon in Corfu,¹ which was copied with minor variations by several good seventeenth-century painters, such as Victor (1660) and Theodoros Poulakis, in icons in Zakynthos² and Bari. An analogous rendering is encountered in an icon by Philotheos Skoufos in Corfu (1665),³ while similar iconography is also observed in an icon dated to the second half of the eighteenth century, in the church of Hagios Nikolaos ton Xenon in Zakynthos.⁴ Our icon is even more closely related to this last work in the arrangement of the different secondary episodes and their linear and graphic rendering, with emphasis on the decorative elements. The rich colours and firm drawing, the calligraphic execution of the secondary episodes as well as the penchant for ornamental details point to the same artistic environment, in which the painter followed established models with simplicity and immediacy.



CONDITION Very good. It is not certain whether the signature is authentic.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos (?).

BIBLIOGRAPHY Spiteris 1952, fig. 5. Delivorrias 1980, 75, fig. 65. Vocotopoulos 1990, 52-53, n. 14.

NOTES

1. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 27, 51-53, fig. 32, with bibliography on the subject.
2. Chatzidakis 1962, 87, n. 3. Konomos 1964, 22. *Icone di Puglia* 1988, no. 73, 100, 158. Vocotopoulos 1990, fig. 323. See icon by Poulakis in the Byzantine Museum, Soteriou 1931, 21. Rigopoulos 1979, 76-77, 160-161, pl. 107.
3. Vocotopoulos 1990, no. 97, 141, fig. 262; see also 52-53, 141 with many examples.
4. Konomos 1988, fig. 57.



52

PROPHET ELIJAH AND SAINT BASIL

39 x 31.5 x 3 cm

Second half of 18th century

Prophet Elijah sits outside a cave, left, holding a book and outstretching his hand, his head tilted slightly upwards, from where a little black crow descends. Saint Basil, right, in frontal pose and bishop's vestments, holds a gospel book and blesses with his right hand. In the background is a skilfully drawn landscape of precipitous rocky mountains. There is a decorative disposition combined with flawless execution in the hierarch's cross-patterned phailonion with a reddish lining variegated with floral motifs. Further distinctive traits of the artist are the meticulous modelling of the flesh, with dense wrinkles creating a troubled expression, and the finely punched motifs on Saint Basil's halo.

The iconographic type of Prophet Elijah outside the cave, although analogous to that established in fifteenth-century Cretan icons,¹ which Michael Damaskenos followed later in the Monastery of Stavronikita,² differs significantly in the pose of the saint, who gazes ahead, and even more in his stylistic rendering, not least of the facial features. His face here is leaner with thin eyebrows and the beard is longer and pointed.

These observations do not permit us to assign our icon to a specific workshop. The competent artist with his personal style, characterized by a predilection for the decorative and calligraphic, most probably worked in a provincial centre in the eighteenth century.

CONDITION Quite good. The icon has not been conserved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. See Chatzidakis 1985, nos 29, 30, pp. 80-81, pls 25, 93.

2. Stavronikita 1974, 130, p. 48.



53

THE VIRGIN OF KYKKOS

31.5 x 25.4 x 1.8 cm

18th century

On the gold ground of the icon, the Virgin is depicted to the waist holding the Christ-Child right, to whom she turns in three-quarter pose. Her left arm is passed under his legs, while she clasps his fore arm with her right hand. The Virgin wears a red maphorion with gold border band and gold embroidery. Her halo bears punched decoration of broad volutes. Christ is clad in a short, blue, sleeveless chiton. Both figures are painted with strong features and dark shadows around the eyes and the outline of the face. The loosely drawn folds on the drapery hint at a Western model.

The iconographic type of the Virgin and Child in our icon corresponds to that of the famous icon of the Virgin of Kykkos, from the homonymous monastery in Cyprus.¹ It appears in icons from the twelfth century,² but is more widely diffused in late Postbyzantine icons³ as well as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century prints.⁴ In these representations the poses of the Virgin and Christ are repeated exactly as in our icon, while Christ normally holds an open scroll.⁵ Closer to our icon is one in the Kykkos Monastery, dated 1757,⁶ in which the similarity in the poses of the two figures even extends to the closed scroll held by Christ.

The iconographic and stylistic traits of our icon display affinity with those of eighteenth-century works of a more popular art. The punched decoration on the halo and the gold embroidery on the Virgin's maphorion, reminiscent of Italian models, point to an eighteenth-century island workshop.

CONDITION Quite good. Previous conservation has damaged the modelling and the blue colour, which is much altered.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Tatić-Djurić 1990, 199-207 (in Greek), 209-220 (in French). Hadermann-Misguich 1991, 197-204.
2. Weitzmann 1984, 149-151. Hadermann-Misguich 1991, 197ff., pls 101-102, 106. Weyl Carr 1994, 239ff.
3. Cf. Gratziou 1994, 317ff.
4. Papastratou 1986, II, nos 539-543, pp. 504-509. Gratziou 1994, 317ff., figs 3, 5, 7.
5. Gratziou 1994, figs 2-5, 7-11.
6. Gratziou 1994, fig. 1.



54

THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN

69.5 x 45.8 x 2.4 cm

18th century

The Virgin lies on her bier, behind which Christ stands in frontal pose, within a bright mandorla flanked by two angels, clouds and with a small seraph at the top, all in blue-grey monochromy. At each side, on a disproportionately small scale is a two-storey building with gable roof, while in the landscape in the background is the apostle Thomas. He advances with his hand outstretched towards the Virgin, who appears holding the Girdle, upon clouds upheld by two angels, in the middle of the gold ground. Towards the top are clouds surrounding a segment of heaven with gold rays. In general outline the iconographic model of the Dormition of the Virgin Cat. no. 36 (Fig. 183)¹ is repeated here, painted in a simplified manner and enriched with a landscape in the background. The figures are rendered in a perfunctory manner, with prominent features and clumsy movements. The buildings are simpler, imitating, on a much smaller scale, those in the icon of the Dormition of the Virgin Cat. no. 36. Unfortunately previous conservation has destroyed the modelling of the flesh and altered the colours of the icon, which must have been painted in a local workshop in the Ionian Islands, possibly Zakynthos.

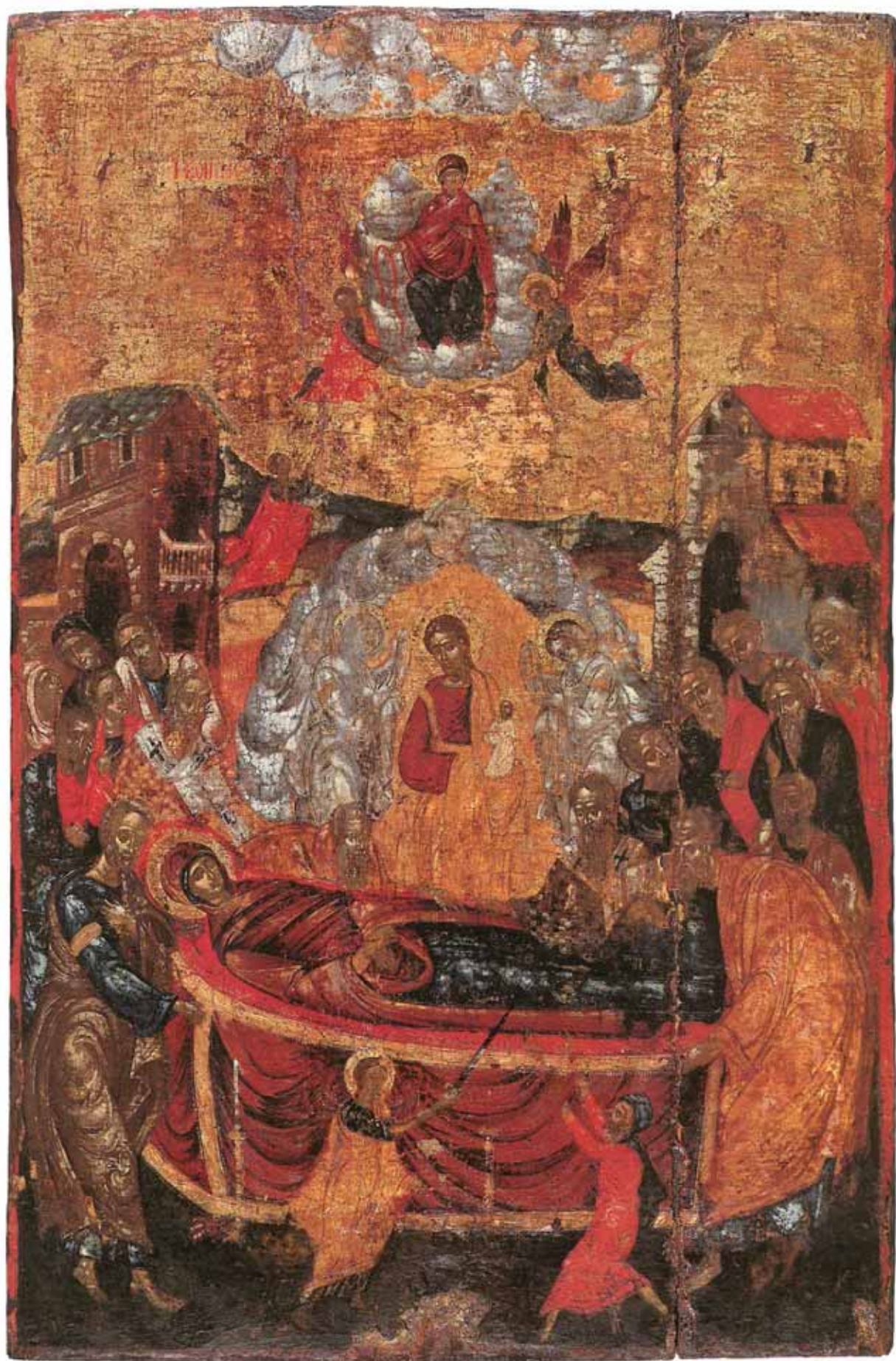
CONDITION Previous conservation of the icon has destroyed the intermediate tones, the modelling on most of the faces and altered the colours.

PROVENANCE The same as icon Cat. no. 36, possibly from Zakynthos.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. For the iconography see Cat. no. 36, 306-311.



55

THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN

55 x 37.5 x 2 cm

18th century

Christ, at the centre in frontal pose, holds on his right side the Virgin's soul as a swaddled infant. The Virgin lying on the bier is surrounded by the apostles, hierarchs and other figures who usually participate in the scene. Christ appears in a dark mandorla crowned by a red-winged seraph, within which are four angels holding lighted candles. In front of the bier the angel in vigorous movement has just cut off the hands of Jephonias, who falls down backwards. The scene is represented on a red and green checkered floor, in front of a landscape in which two events relating to the Dormition of the Virgin take place. Left, on a hill visible behind a building, the kneeling Virgin receives the message of her death from the angel, and right the apostles stand around her empty tomb, next to the town of Gethsemane. High up at the centre, within a semicircular segment of heaven, is the Holy Trinity – Christ, the Ancient of Days and the Holy Spirit. On either side of Christ's mandorla the apostles arrive within clouds, executed in grisaille. On the gold ground there are red-lettered inscriptions. At the centre: *H KYMHIC THC Θ(EOTO)KOY* (*The Dormition of the Virgin*); above, near the red border: *H AΓIA TPIAC* (*The Holy Trinity*) and below, between the red border and the floor: *XEIP KOYΛOYMPH IEPEΩC TOY EK PEΘIMHC, AXI* (*Hand of Kouloumbis priest from Rethymnon, 1610*), which laboratory examination has shown to be forged.

The icon is an enriched version of the Dormition of the Virgin Cat. no. 36 (Fig. 183). The central theme is reproduced in a picturesque and simplified manner, while the figures within the mandorla are painted in vivid colours.

A comparable development of the landscape with secondary episodes relating to the Dormition of the Virgin occurs in a large late seventeenth-century icon in the Monastery of Hagios Andreas at Milapidia, Cephalonia.¹ However, the closest model to our icon is found in works by Theodoros Poulakis, in Cephalonia, the

243. *The Dormition of the Virgin*,
18th century, Cat. no. 55.



Byzantine Museum and a private collection in Athens.² In these icons Poulakis copies the prototype used in an icon by the painter Ambrosios Emboros from Chania, now in Kos, dated 1625.³ Several similarities are observed in the arrangement of the figures of the central subject and, primarily, in the presence of the city right, with buildings of virtually identical form painted in monochromy, as well as an analogous depiction of the building left, with flat roof. Lastly, the episode of the angel with Jephonias in our icon is painted in exactly the same manner, in the figures' poses and garments, as in the icon by Poulakis in the Byzantine Museum,⁴ although there the city with its walls is not shown. Icons of this group obviously constituted the model for the picturesque composition of the Dormition of the Virgin in our icon.

The clear drawing, the strong outlines, the bright colours and the graphic details in the background scenes are the distinctive traits of our painter's art. The faces are oval with raised eyebrows and heavy eyelids, as frequently observed in icons by Theodoros Poulakis. Here, however, the outlines are thicker and the shadows deeper, more closely affined to the art of eighteenth-century icons produced in Asia Minor. The immediacy of the narration is even more striking in the episode of Jephonias, who is dressed as a Roman soldier and with lively movements is about to fall to the ground. According to the above, our icon is assigned to a local provincial workshop of the eighteenth century.

The letters in the signature, though in red capitals as in the other inscriptions, are slightly larger and less firmly written, while the date 1610 is not consistent with either the style of the icon or the painter Gerasimos Kouloumbis, as known from the bema doors of the iconostasis in Hagios Demetrios tou Kolla, dated 1719, now in the Zakynthos Museum.⁵ These large-scale works with their clear drawing and strong colours do not permit positive comparison with our smaller icon of the Dormition, in a more popular art, while they confirm the suggestion that the signature is forged.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'The icon is painted on wood with fine gesso on linen. Outlines and details incised.'

The icon has not been conserved previously and is in very good condition. See also Appendix III.

PROVENANCE The forged signature of a painter known only from icons in Zakynthos suggests that the icon is from that island and that the signature was added by Demetrios Pelekasis.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Konomos 1966, fig 31; see also *Cephalonia* I 1989, figs 226-230.

2. Rigopoulos 1979, pls 77-79, 106 and 138.

3. Acheimastou-Potamianou 1988, 142f., 144ff., figs 11, 15, 16, 17, 18.

4. Rigopoulos 1979, no. 21, p. 103ff., pl. 138.

5. Personal observation; see also Konomos 1967, 17. Sisilianos 1935, 67 and 119.



56

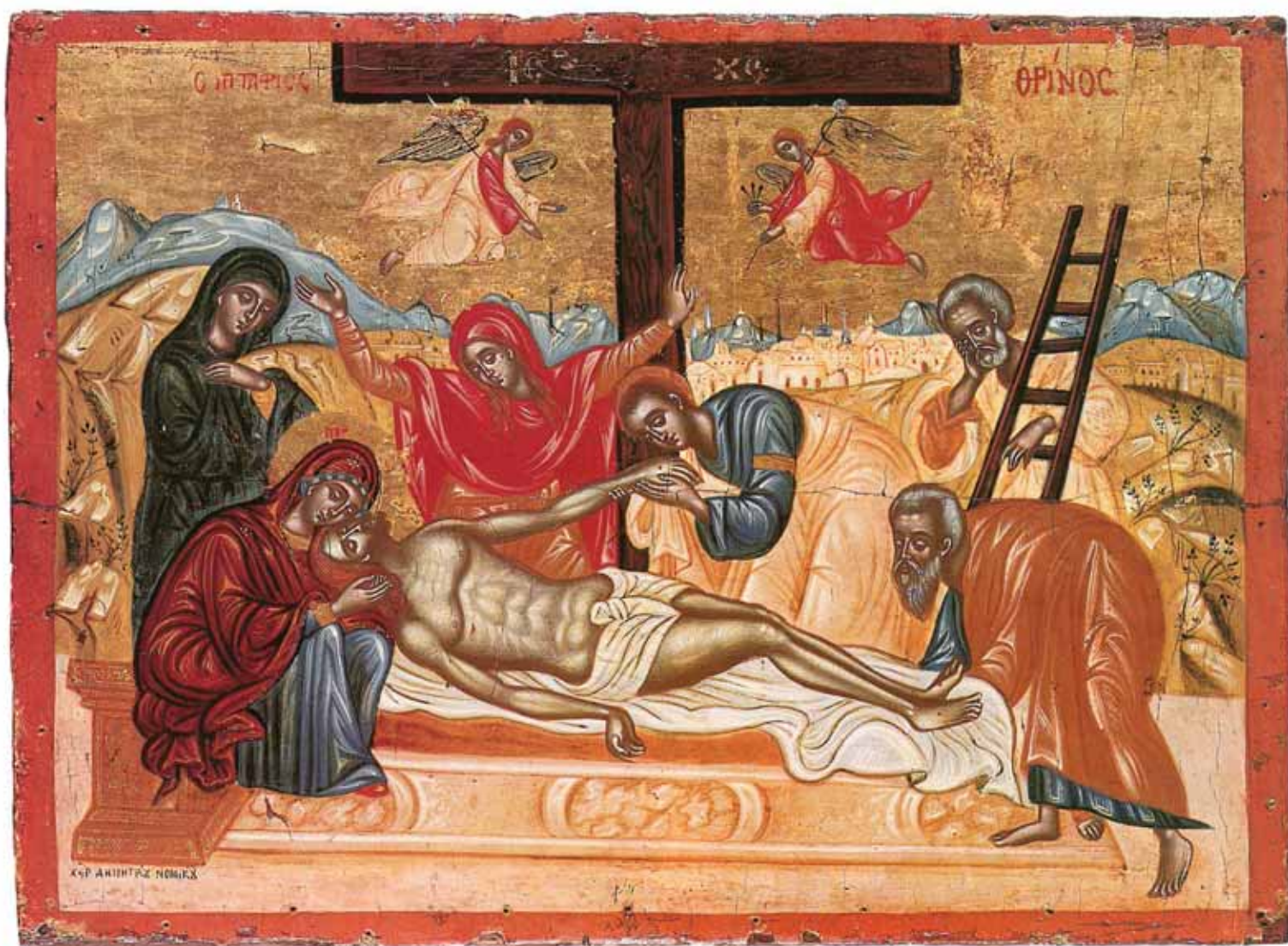
THE LAMENTATION

27.5 x 37.7 x 2 cm

18th century

Christ lies on a rose-coloured marble sarcophagus, while the Virgin sits at his left, holding his head in her embrace. Left, a woman with mournful countenance stands behind the Virgin. At the centre, in front of the large Cross, John stoops to grasp the hand of the lifeless Christ and Mary Magdalene grieves with both hands raised heavenwards. Right, Joseph bends over and prepares to wind the deceased in the shroud, while behind him Nicodemus holds the ladder. Below the arms of the Cross, two angels hold the symbols of the Passion, the lance, the sponge and the three nails. The scene takes place before an elaborate landscape of brown and blue hills, amidst which are the monochrome buildings of the city, across its whole extent. On the gold ground in red capital letters, the inscription: *Ο ΕΠΙΤΑΦΙΟΣ ΘΡΙΝΟΣ*. Bottom left, in black capitals: *ΧΕΙΡ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΚΟΥ* (*Hand of Demetrios Nomikos*).

The icon reproduces an iconographic type known from earlier works of Byzantine origin, such as the early fifteenth-century icon in Sinai.¹ In both icons the pose and position of the principal figures in the composition are the same; the Virgin sits at Christ's head, John bends and holds his hand, and Joseph, likewise bending over, holds his feet. The position of Mary Magdalene differs; she stands at the left side in the Sinai icon, where the woman stands behind the Virgin in ours. The Byzantine prototype of Mary Magdalene with raised arms, standing at the centre behind Christ and in front of the Cross, is encountered in the wall-paintings in the Refectory of Patmos, around 1200, as well as in a codex of 1322-1340, in Oxford.² The affinity with these Byzantine models extends to the depiction of the scene in front of the Cross, which stands within a rocky landscape before the walls of Jerusalem. An analogous arrangement is observed in later icons, with Mary Magdalene, hands raised, standing at the centre in front of the Cross, as in a late eighteenth-century icon in a popular style, in the Ekonomopoulos Collection.³



Our icon has stylistic traits in common with the Dormition of the Virgin, bearing the forged signature of Kouloumbis, Cat. no. 55. There is the same preference for varied colouring, simple drawing and pronounced outlines; the faces are rendered in the same manner, with the same features and heavy eyelids; a similar type of miniature depiction of the monochrome buildings in the background is ascertained.

The signature of Demetrios Nomikos appears on a few icons of miniature character in a different style from that of our icon.⁴ In all probability the signature here is forged, just like the signature of Kouloumbis on the icon of the Dormition Cat. no. 55 (Fig. 243). The development of the landscape of rolling hills in the background of both works frequently appears in icons of the Dormition of the Virgin, in Zakynthos and Cephalonia.⁵ In the light of the above, both the Velimezis icons must come from the same island.

CONDITION Very good. No previous cleaning.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos (?)

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. *Sinai* 1990, 202, fig. 75 (N. Drandakis).
2. Spatharakis 1995, figs 6, 9.
3. Baltoyanni 1986, no. 169, 97, pl. 167.
4. Icon with scenes of the Dodecaorton, 1607, and icon of the Relic of Saint Spyridon, in the Loverdos Collection in the Byzantine Museum (Papayannopoulos-Palaios 1946, no. 305, 48 and no. 560, 74). For the painter see Xyngopoulos 1956, 323ff.
5. See further examples and bibliography Cat. no. 55, 388-390.



57

THE LAMENTATION

34 x 49.5 x 2.7 cm

18th century

The lifeless body of Christ lies inside a rose-coloured marble sarcophagus. The Virgin sits at his head and embraces him with both arms. Mary Magdalene stands behind her, grieving with both hands raised toward heaven. Behind the sarcophagus, at the centre, John bowed low, is shown from the side. On the right Joseph, in the same pose as John, holds the edges of the winding sheet. Behind him stands Nicodemus, leaning on the ladder, his head poked between two rungs. Left the Holy Women lament, one tearing her loosened hair.

The scene takes place in front of the hill of Golgotha, on which the three crosses stand beneath a blue sky spangled with yellow stars, with the sun left and the moon right. Above, two small angels in bust appear from heaven and below, in front of the sarcophagus, the basket with Nicodemus's tools and a small metal vase.

The icon follows an established model of fifteenth-century Cretan painting, as encountered in an icon in Recklinghausen and one in Santorini.¹ Its formation can be detected in Palaeologan painting, since it occurs — with variations in the position of the figures — in a codex of 1322-1340, in Oxford, and an early fifteenth-century icon in Sinai.² The fifteenth-century model is disseminated in a large number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century icons,³ while Emmanuel Lambardos repeated it, also imitating the style of that period, in an icon from Siphnos,⁴ in the Byzantine Museum.

The painter of our icon renders the old Cretan model in a picturesque and decorative manner. The representation, with its bright colours and confident drawing, has that vitality and immediacy characteristic of eighteenth-century folk painting.

CONDITION Very good. The icon has not been conserved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 4, fig. 4. *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* 1985, no. 126, 124 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou).
2. Spatharakis 1995, 435-441, fig. 9. *Sinai* 1990, fig. 75 (N. Drandakis).
3. See also *Icons of Cretan Art* 1993, no. 78; *Visages de l'icone* 1995, no. 22, 58.
4. Chatzidakis - Babić 1982, fig. on p. 362.



58

THE PRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN IN THE TEMPLE AND SAINT CATHERINE

37.8 x 47.8 x 2.6 cm

18th century

The Presentation of the Virgin is depicted in front of a building denoting the interior of a temple. At the centre is the sanctuary with the ciborium supported by four high, slim columns. The young Mary is accompanied by Anne and Joachim, and girls with lighted candles. Zacharias welcomes her with open arms. In a separate two-storey building to the left the Virgin, seated on a low throne beneath a ciborium, receives the angel approaching from the right. On the left behind Zacharias is the full-bodied, frontal figure of Saint Catherine, completely unconnected with the scene. Her presence is probably linked with the name of the icon's dedicator.

The representation is painted on the now badly damaged gold ground; above the ciborium is a long inscription in red capital letters: *H EN TΩ NAΩ EICOΔOC THC Θ(EOTO)KOY*. The figures of the saints are accompanied by inscriptions in white capitals: *H AΓIA AIKATEPINA, O ZAXAPIAC, ANNA, IQAKEIM*.

The composition follows the model of fifteenth-century Cretan painting,¹ which is widely diffused in icons and wall-paintings. Here the conservative painter has copied it with careful drawing, harsh modelling of the flesh with deep shadows, restrained rendering of the drapery and diligent attention to detail. These traits, together with a pronounced ineptness in the composition, indicate that the icon was produced in a provincial Helladic workshop in the eighteenth century.

CONDITION Quite good with damage to the gold ground and the building on the right.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. N. Chatzidakis 1983, no. 3, 18-19 with further examples.



59

TWO-REGISTER ICON: DEESIS AND SAINTS

45 x 32.4 x 3 cm

18th century

The icon is divided into two registers by a thin red band. In the upper register below an ogee arch — imitating the conch of a church — is a scene of Deesis with Christ enthroned at the centre, flanked by the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist.¹ On the spandrels of the arch, on two pedestals, angels with hands crossed on the chest participate in the intercession. On the base of these pedestals two full-bodied, frontal hierarchs, on a much smaller scale: Saint Spyridon left and Saint Nicholas right.

In the lower register Saint George and Saint Demetrios are depicted in two separate sections, linked in the middle above by an angel in bust within clouds, offering each a martyr's wreath. The two soldier-saints are represented on horseback in mirror image. Saint George, left, slays the dragon and Saint Demetrios, right, kills Skyloyannis, as in the triptych of the Virgin the Unwithering Rose, Cat. no. 60.

The icon is painted in vivid colours, while the figures are carefully drawn with deep shadows on the faces and the garments of Christ, the Virgin and the Forerunner. The work is assigned to a provincial Helladic workshop perhaps related to that which produced the icon of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, Cat. no. 58.

CONDITION Good. Slight damage to the gold ground. The icon has not been conserved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1.* For the subject see Cat. nos 23 and 35, pp. 246, 300ff.



60

TRIPTYCH: THE VIRGIN THE UNWITHERING ROSE AND SAINTS GEORGE AND DEMETRIOS

34.5 x 24.7 x 2 cm. Closed: 34.5 x 19.5 x 2 cm

1754

On the central panel of the triptych the Virgin, crowned and clad in a red mantle decorated with gold flowers, sits inside a large vessel-like rose. She holds a rose in her right hand and the Christ-Child in her left. Dressed in imperial raiment with gold loros and crown, he holds a globus crucifer in the right hand and an ear of wheat in the left. On either side of the Virgin's head is an angel in bust, each holding in one hand the end of a large band bearing the inscription: *POΔON TO [AMAPAN]TON [XAIPE H] MONH BAACTHCACA TO [MHAON TO EYOCMON]*, and in the other a smaller open scroll with the inscription, left: *CTAXYN H BAACTHCACA TON...*, and right: *OPΘPOC ΦΩTEINOC XAIPE H*. Projected against the dark, almost black, ground, left, are a flower vase, a star and a small house, and against the brown foreground an altar table and two cypress trees. On the right, in corresponding position are the ear of wheat, the seven-wick lamp, a censer, a ladder and the date written in white: 1754. On the left wing is Saint George mounted on a white horse and slaying the dragon. On the right wing is Saint Demetrios on a red horse, killing Skyloyannis with his spear.

The icon illustrates a verse in the Akathistos Hymn and the symbolic depictions are referred to in the canon of the hymnographer Joseph. The subject of the Virgin in the type of the Unwithering Rose was widely disseminated from the eighteenth century onwards.¹ Among the icons reproducing the iconographic type of ours the earliest and most closely related example occurs in an icon by the painter Demetrios from Southeastern Thrace, dated 1703.² The composite iconographic type of our icon with similar symbols on the ground is repeated in an icon in Ravenna, in which the likeness extends to the arrangement of the little angels with scrolls flanking the Virgin.³





251. Triptych. *The Virgin the Unwithering Rose and saints*. Benaki Museum.

The Virgin is depicted with the same iconography in a triptych of like type in the Benaki Museum (Fig. 251),⁴ in which the wood-carving of the frame is similar too and there is analogous decoration with saints on the side wings;⁵ similar wood-carving on the central panel and an analogous rendering of the two equestrian military saints, George and Demetrios, are encountered in a triptych in a private collection in Switzerland, in which the Dormition of the Virgin is the central theme.⁶ These triptychs of similar dimensions are stylistically akin and were perhaps produced in the same workshop, though not by the same painter. Their art, recognized in a series of icons from Northern Greek workshops, is characterized by a predilection for polychromy and the decorative, a naivety in drawing and a simplistic rendering of the various symbols in the field.

CONDITION Very good.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Pallas 1971, 224-238. Gouma-Peterson 1994, 331-346, figs 1, 2, 8, 9, 10. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 71, 95, pl. 49B.
2. Paskaleva 1981, no. 82, 224, dedicated by Anastasios Paraspholdilos.
3. *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, no. 53, 48.
4. Xyngopoulos 1936, no. 72, 96, pl. 50A (21.5 x 30.5 cm).
5. A comparable formation of the wood-carving occurs on a triptych in the Benaki Museum of much better workmanship, see *Holy Image, Holy Space* 1988, no. 79, 235-236 (L. Bouras).
6. Dimensions: 26.6 x 32 x 2.8 cm, see *Icones suisses* 1968, no. 109; see also op. cit., no. 1324, a late 18th-century triptych with the same type of the Virgin the Unwithering Rose.

252. *The Virgin the Unwithering Rose*. Central panel of the triptych Cat. no. 60.



61

THE VIRGIN GALAKTOTROPHOUSA THE 'SPELAIOTISSA'

45 x 37.5 x 3.4 cm

Ioannis, 1778

The Virgin is depicted to the knees and seated. In her right arm she holds the Christ-Child whom she is about to suckle. She wears a dark red maphorion with broad gold border band over a dark green dress embellished with gold striations and gold embroidery on the sleeves. Christ is clad in a blue short-sleeved chemise and swathed with a red himation with gold striations. On the gold ground in red capitals is the inscription: *M(HTH)P Θ(EO)Y H CΠHΛAIΩTICA* (*Mother of God, the Spelaiotissa*). At the bottom is an explanatory inscription: *ΑΝΤΙΤΥΠΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΙΚΟΝΟΣ ΟΠΟΥ Ο ΙΕΡΟΣ ΛΟΥΚΑΣ ΙCΤΟΡΗCΕΝ ΤΗΣ ΥΠΕΡΑΓΙΑC Θ(EOTO)ΚΟΥ ΗΤΙC ΕΝ ΤΩ ΜΕΓΑΛΩ CΠΗΛΑΙΩ ΕΥΡΙCΚΕΤΑΙ* χειρ το 1778 (*Copy of the icon in which the holy Luke painted the Most Holy Theotokos, that is to be found in the Mega Spelaion, hand Io, 1778*).

The iconographic type in this icon, known from the Byzantine period¹ reappears occasionally in sixteenth-century Cretan icons and more frequently in later periods.² There is a large number of icons of the Galaktotrophousa: around forty, in Italicizing style and dating from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, are recorded in Ravenna.³

The surname 'Spelaiotissa' for the icon of the Virgin denotes its association with the icon venerated in the Mega Spelaion Monastery. Moreover, the use of the term *ἀντίτυπον* (copy) in the text of the inscription indicates that it reproduces one of the prints circulated by this monastery in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century.⁴ A mid-nineteenth-century engraving of the Virgin

253. Ioannis. *The Virgin Galaktotrophousa the 'Spelaiotissa'*, 1778, Cat. no. 61.



ΩΡ

ΘΥ

ΙΣ ΧΙ

ΩΡ

ΕΝ ΤΗ ΤΟΥΤΩ ΚΟΙΝΩ ΟΙΕΡΕΣ ΛΥΚΑΙΣ ΤΩΡ ΣΕΝΤΟΡΕΣ ΤΑ ΧΕΡΗ ΝΤΕ ΤΟ ΜΕΓΕΣΝΑΛΙΩΩΡ ΕΚΕΤΑΙ. ΧΙ ΡΩ ΜΤΥ Ε-



254. *The Virgin Galaktotrophousa*, engraving, mid-19th century. Dori Papastratou Collection.

Galaktotrophousa, from Mount Athos (Fig. 254),⁵ as well as others of the Virgin of the evangelist Luke, in the type of the Hodegetria with the Christ-Child lying in her arms, as in our icon, feature similar inscriptions *ἀντίτυπον τῆς ἰστορηθείσης ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀποστόλου Λουκᾶ* (*copy of that painted by the apostle Luke*), the same inscription is found in an engraving of 1814 from the Karakalou Monastery on Mount Athos and engravings of 1834 and 1835 from other monasteries.⁶ In all the above examples and in our icon, the Virgin is plumpish with a round face, smooth flesh and large eyes, a fact that confirms the connection between the models used in those prints and our icon. It seems that this manner of rendering the Virgin Galaktotrophousa is not unknown in other icons of the period. Our icon is related in every respect to that of the Virgin Galaktotrophousa by the painter Makarios from Galatista, dated 1784, in the Byzantine Museum.⁷ The figure of the Mother and Child is similarly rendered, while a long inscription of the same type appears in the corresponding position, on a horizontal gold band at the bottom.

The common stylistic traits in these two icons indicate that the painter of our icon, Ioannis, must have learned his art in the same workshop as Makarios from Galatista.⁸ This workshop, which was established at Karyes on the Holy Mountain

and executed wall-paintings in the katholika of Athonite monasteries, is known to have extended its activities into other regions, even including Attica, while a series of 40 *anthivola* (working drawings) of these painters has been found in the Benaki Museum collection.⁹ However, icons of comparable art are also encountered earlier, such as an icon dated 1703, by the painter Demetrios from Southeastern Thrace, in Sophia.¹⁰

It is difficult to identify the Ioannis who painted our icon with one of the twenty-two at least recorded painters of this name who were active in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹¹

CONDITION Excellent.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. E.g. see Lazarev 1938, 27-36.
2. Th. Chatzidakis 1982, no. 28.
3. See *Icone di Ravenna* 1979, nos 71-110.
4. The earliest known engraving was made in Venice in 1780, see Papastratou 1986, II, no. 544, 510; for other later copies see op. cit., nos 544-547.
5. Papastratou 1986, I, no. 90, 114 (Galaktotrophousa). The Virgin is rendered in analogous iconography in the engravings, Papastratou 1986, I, nos 83-90, pp. 111-114.
6. Papastratou 1986, I, nos 91-94 (copy of the icon by Saint Luke).
7. Chatzidakis, *Byzantine Museum* 1969, 49, 51, fig. 28.
8. Chatzidakis 1987, p. 108; see also n. 12.
9. Bouras - Tsigakou 1984, 50-56.
10. Paskaleva 1981, no. 82, 224-225; for the painter Demetrios see Chatzidakis 1987, 270, no. 25; there are icons by him in Andros and Kythnos.
11. Chatzidakis 1987, nos 55-76, pp. 333-339.

62

TWO-REGISTER ICON: DEESIS AND THREE SAINTS

42 x 33.5 x 2.5 cm

Demetrios Zoukis, 7 June 1781

The icon is divided into two equal parts. In the upper register Christ, at the centre, holding an open gospel book in his left hand and blessing with his right, is flanked by the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist with hands crossed on the chest in a gesture of intercession. All three figures are portrayed to the thighs, projected against a pale rose-coloured ground and a deep blue sky with white clouds, in which are the inscriptions: ΜΗΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΥ, ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ, ο πολυέλεος, Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ Ο ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΣ. In the gospel book the inscription: ΤΑΥΤΑ / ΕΝΤΕΛΛΟ/ΜΑΙ ΥΜ/ΙΝ ΙΝΑ / ΑΓΑΠΑ/ΤΕ ΑΛΛΗ/ΛΟΥΣ ΕΙ / Ο ΚΟΣΜΟΣ / ΥΜΑΣ ΜΙ/ΣΕΙ, ΓΙΝΩ/ΣΚΕΤΕ ΟΤΙ / ΕΜΕ ΠΡΩ.

In the lower register are three saints to the knees, against the same type of ground with blue sky and clouds. From left to right, Saint Nicholas, Saint Athanasios and Saint Julitta holding the little Saint Kerykos in her arms. Low down, between saints Athanasios and Julitta, is a red minuscule inscription: χείρ δημητρίου ζούκη από καλαρυτίες, 1781, Ιουνίου ζ' (*Hand of Demetrios Zoukis from Kalarrytes, 1781, June 7*). Our icon is strikingly similar to an unsigned icon dated 1792 in the Museo Civico, Livorno,¹ with an analogous representation of the Virgin and figures of saints, the same decorative disposition and even the same type of clouds with angels.

Demetrios Zoukis is a well-known painter from Kalarrytes in Epirus, dated works by whom are noted from 1774 to 1808. He produced wall-paintings at Meteora and Kalambaka in 1782 and 1784 as well as icons in Meteora, Epirus and Thessaly.² Zoukis belongs to the particular local school of painters originating from Kapesovo, Linotopi and Kalarrytes that worked in Northern and Central Greece. His icon is characterized by good technique, careful drawing, rich colours and a simplistic rendering of traditional models in a manner verging on the vitality of folk art.³

CONDITION Very good with slight damage at the bottom near the border.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Chatzidakis 1987, 296-297.

NOTES

1. Dell'Agata 1978, no. 40, 98.
2. Chatzidakis 1987, 296-297.
3. Cf. Chatzidakis 1987, 109-113.



63

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

36 x 24.6 x 1.6 cm

18th century

The saint, depicted to the waist beneath a painted arch resting on two columns, is barely visible on the gesso preparation. In frontal pose and wearing the vestments of a prelate, a polystavrion phailonion and an omophorion with three crosses, he blesses with his right hand while holding a closed gospel book in the covered left. The face is lean, the hair short and the beard short and sparse, as usual in representations of Chrysostom from Byzantine times.

The colours have been spoilt by previous cleaning and the intermediate tones lost. The off-white highlights remaining on the drapery indicate that the artist conscientiously followed conservative models of sixteenth-century Cretan painting. The saint's face seems to have been painted with rather loose, fine white lines, which indicate a date not earlier than the eighteenth century.

CONDITION Manolis Chatzidakis, 1945: 'Icon painted on wood with a fine preparation. A few incised outlines can be discerned.'

Previous cleaning has considerably damaged the painting. See Appendix III.



64

SAINT JAMES ENTHRONED

21.4 x 16 x 1.5 cm

Late 18th century

Saint James, the first Patriarch of Jerusalem, is portrayed enthroned in the vestments of a prelate, drawn on the gold ground in a few colours. His halo is defined by punched stars, while small, punched cruciform motifs decorate the ground on the upper part of the icon, near the border, and the lower at the level of the base of the throne. The saint's face, with long, pointed black beard, has been badly damaged and is so blackened, perhaps by previous conservation, that his other features are barely visible. Nevertheless, it clearly differs from that of the icon Cat. no. 45, whereas the type of the enthroned hierarch follows the same model, even to the form of the back of the throne.¹ The checkered floor is encountered in the icons of Saint Spyridon (Cat. no. 46) and the Dormition of the Virgin (Cat. no. 55).

This small icon, work of an eighteenth-century Heptanesian painter, copies the established models in a summary and simplistic manner.

CONDITION Quite good, except for considerable damage on the face.

PROVENANCE Ionian Islands.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. For the iconography of the saint cf. Cat. no. 45.

Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ

ΙΗΣΟΥΣ



ΕΙΜΕΝ ΔΙΕΜΑ
ΟΚΕΤ ΕΝ ΤΗ
ΩΣΙΜ ΕΙΣΕΝ
ΗΟΥ ΟΗΟ

65
SAINT NICHOLAS

32 x 26.8 x 2 cm

19th century

Depicted in bust, in frontal pose, the saint wears a pale rose phailonion and a white omophorion decorated with gold crosses in relief. In his left hand he holds a gold-bound gospel book on which the scene of the Crucifixion is painted, and with his right he blesses. The halo is adorned with gilded leaves also in relief. On the deep blue ground an inscription in white capital letters: *O ATIOC NHKOAAOC*.

The icon is executed with great care in rendering the smooth surface of the flesh on the face and the right hand. The flabby face with its mellow expression, the soft drapery and the vegetal ornaments in gesso relief on the halo are traits of early nineteenth-century art in the Northern Balkans.

CONDITION Good except for some damage in the upper section, where part of the saint's halo has been destroyed.

258. *Saint Nicholas, late
18th-19th century, Cat. no. 65.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.



66

THE VIRGIN OF VLADIMIR

29.3 x 26.2 x 2 cm

19th century

The Virgin is depicted in the type of the Glykophilousa with Christ on her right arm, which was widespread in Russia, being modelled on the famous original icon which was brought from Constantinople to Vladimir in the twelfth century. The Virgin, in a red maphorion with intricately decorated border band, holds the Child, in a long chiton embellished with dense gold striations, who embraces her with both arms. The figure is painted against a ground filled with blue-green clouds, as in the icon by Demetrios Zoukis (Cat. no. 62, 410, Fig. 255). There are Russian inscriptions within painted tablets. The quality of the painting indicates a quite good workshop of the early nineteenth century.

CONDITION Quite good. The icon has not been conserved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.



67

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST AND SCENES FROM HIS LIFE

44 x 30.5 x 2 cm

9 May 1800

The Forerunner is depicted standing and in frontal pose, within the narrow rectangular section at the centre, framed by ten scenes from his life with accompanying small-lettered inscriptions. The episodes read from top to bottom on the left and from bottom to top on the right: 1. *The angel's annunciation to Zacharias*, 2. *Elizabeth's embrace*, 3. *The nativity of Saint John the Baptist*, 4. *Elizabeth departs to ...*, 5. *The angel takes the Forerunner into ...*, 6. *Voice calling in the wilderness*, 7. *The baptism of Christ*, 8. *The saint controls the king*, 9. *The beheading of ... Saint John the Baptist* and 10. *The finding of the holy head of Saint John the Baptist*. On the border of the fifth scene, near the feet of the central figure of Saint John, is the date: 1800. μαΐω θ' (1800. May 9).

Painted in a simplistic, summary manner, in bright colours, the scenes have a vitality, immediacy and naivety characteristic of folk art. A large number of icons in a similar art were given as mementoes to pilgrims to the Holy Land, and are nowadays found throughout Greece, in churches, homes and collections.¹ Analogous icons, heirlooms of the traditional culture, were widely disseminated throughout the Balkan lands in the nineteenth century.²

CONDITION Very good.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. E.g. see *Icones suisses* 1968, no. 112.

2. E.g. see Paskaleva 1981, no. 93, 246-247, no. 94, 248-249. Mitsani 1996, no. 33, 78-79, an Asia Minor icon of 1833, now in Paros.



68

VIRGIN AND CHILD

45.7 x 34.5 x 2.2 cm

Panayotis or Nikolaos Doxaras (?) (1662-1729 and 1700-1725)

The Virgin holds the semi-recumbent Christ-Child in her right arm, his head resting on her shoulder. Portrayed frontally with lowered eyelids, she reads the book in her left hand. Christ holds a cross in his left hand and a half-bitten apple in his right. The colours, rich in texture, are warm and lambent on the flesh, harmonizing with the light green tone of the mantle. Angelos Procopiou ascribes this icon to Nikolaos Doxaras (Kalamata 1700-1706 - Zakynthos 1775) and cites a painting by Annibale Carracci in Dresden as its model.¹ The subject of the Virgin with Christ holding an apple is also known from works by Giovanni Bellini.² Although Konomos publishes a photograph of this icon as a work by Nikolaos Doxaras,³ it was first published by Nikolaos Kaloyeropoulos in 1926 as an early work by Panayotis Doxaras (1662-1729).⁴

Marinos Kalligas published a portrait of the Virgin with eyes closed, of similar art and size (43 x 32 cm), in the National Gallery Athens, and ascribed it to Panayotis Doxaras.⁵

Despite the prevailing confusion concerning the works attributed to Zakynthian painters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the previous comparisons indicate that the icon belongs to the circle of works by Panayotis or Nikolaos Doxaras.⁶

CONDITION Good. The icon is painted on canvas. It was removed from its original frame sometime in the past and stuck to a new, thin panel with plywood backing (D. Pelekasis). In the photograph published by Kaloyeropoulos (1926) a larger part of the original painting is shown.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Kaloyeropoulos 1926, fig. facing p. 152. Procopiou 1939, 148. Konomos 1988 I, 116, fig. 83.

NOTES

1. Procopiou 1939, 148ff. For the painter see op. cit., 123-133. Charalambidis 1978, 36-42. Chatzidakis 1987, 278, with previous bibliography.
2. Ghiotto - Pignati, *Opera Completa* 1969, nos 28, 31.
3. Konomos 1988, 116, fig. 83.
4. Kaloyeropoulos 1926, fig. facing p. 152: 'a rare, early work by P. Doxaras, housed in the Melissinos residence in Zakynthos and representing the Virgin saying prayers (17th century) ([photograph] provided by Mr D. Pelekasis)'. The signature of D. Pelekasis, appears in the photograph. It had obviously been written on the negative plate. For the painter see Chatzidakis 1987, 280-281 with previous bibliography.
5. Kalligas 1984, 59-61, fig. 17. See also Misirli 1993, fig. on p. 23.
6. See also the Adoration of the Magi, which Marinos Kalligas ascribed to Nikolaos Doxaras, from the church of Hagios Dionysios, Zakynthos, Konomos 1988, 116, fig. 84.



262. *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, workshop of Nikolaos Koutouzis, late 18th-19th century, Cat. no. 70.



69-70

THE PRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN IN THE TEMPLE THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

33 x 24 x 1.5 cm and 33 x 23.8 x 1.8 cm

Art of the Ionian Islands, Nikolaos Koutouzis (?) (1741-1813)

In the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* the high priest, in papal tiara, stands before the temple portal and receives the Virgin with outstretched arms. She kneels as she climbs the stairs and turns her back towards her mother who accompanies her on the left. Saint Anne's face, seen in profile, has a worried look. On the right an elderly figure viewed from the back points to the young Mary with



263. *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, art of Nikolaos Koutouzis (1741-1813), Cat. no. 69.

his right hand. A little higher up a young deacon emerges from behind a column. In the Presentation of Christ in the Temple a high priest in the same papal vestments as in the Presentation of the Virgin, Cat. no. 69, stands in front of the portal of the temple and extends his hands to receive the offering from Joseph, who stands at the right side, leaning on a high staff; a young noblewoman with earring carries a large basket containing the fledgeling doves. Left, the Virgin cradles the naked Child in her arms. A young deacon holding a gospel book and a lighted candle stands next to the high priest.

Both icons are sections of a larger series with scenes from the life of Christ and of the Virgin. Not only are they executed in the same technique and palette, they are also of the same dimensions, which are probably the initial ones since in the icon of the Presentation of Christ the original canvas is preserved on the side struts of the frame. The scenes take place before the portal of the same temple. There is correspondence in the figures of the high priest and the deacon, who are clad in the same garments

and have the same features; also similar is the elderly figure of the mother, who is depicted in both icons in profile with a troubled expression. In both representations the painter follows models from Italian painting in iconography and style. A uniform warm, brown tone dominates the icons, which is due in large part to alteration of the old varnish; distinguished are the muted shades of bluish green on the Virgin's maphorion, the warm red on Joachim's mantle in the Presentation of the Virgin as well as the pale rose on the high priest's garments in both works. The flesh is rendered with light brushstrokes on the head of the aged Joachim in the Presentation of the Virgin and of Joseph in the Presentation of Christ, as well as on the face of the young girl with the doves in the latter. The treatment of the flesh is more careful on the face of the Virgin in the Presentation of Christ and of Anne in the Presentation of the Virgin, with warm brownish tones forming shadows and so imparting a dramatic expression. The varied hues of the garments bespeak a sensitive handling of colour and small white brushstrokes have been used to convey the texture of their fabrics. This quite good quality painting displays affinity with works by well-known Zakynthian painters, Nikolaos Doxaras, Koutouzis and Kantounis.¹ Some resemblance could be noted between the figure of the Virgin holding the recumbent nude Christ-Child in her arms and the Virgin and Child, Cat. no. 68 (Fig. 258), which has been ascribed to either Panayotis or Nikolaos Doxaras (Kalamata 1700-1706 - Zakynthos 1775).² An analogous scale of warm tones is encountered in the Nativity of the Virgin by Nikolaos Koutouzis, in the Zakynthos Museum.³ A similarity can also be ascertained in the painterly treatment of Anne's face with its strong modelling, its prominent, slightly masculine, features and dramatic pathos, and even in the round face of the midwife, in profile, like the young maidservant in the Presentation of Christ in our icon. Analogous too are the pronounced features in Koutouzis's portraits, particularly the one of the Lady with the Gloves, in the National Art Gallery, Athens.⁴

These similarities are perhaps not sufficient to ascribe the icons to Nikolaos Koutouzis, but they permit the assumption that they issued from his workshop, where the other Zakynthian painter, Nikolaos Kantounis, received his first lessons in painting. Moreover, the works attributed to these two painters are frequently of similar style, such as the Descent from the Cross (1825), from the church of Hagios Andreas tou Avouri and from the church of Hagios Georgios tsi Kyprianas,⁵ as well as the Entombment in the Zakynthos Museum and in the Solomos Museum, Zakynthos.⁶

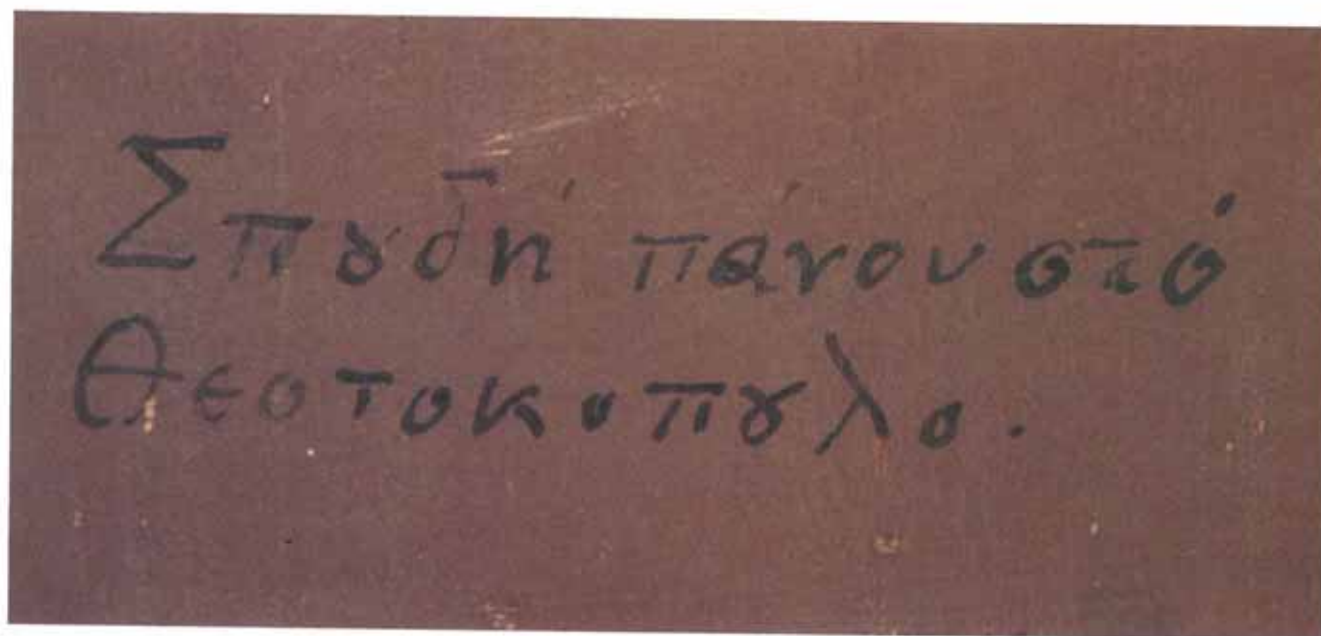
CONDITION Good. Both works, painted on canvas, have been transferred to a thin wooden panel sometime in the past, most probably by D. Pelekasis.

PROVENANCE Zakynthos.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. For Nikolaos and Panayotis Doxaras see Cat. no. 68 and n. 1. Numerous articles have been written on Nikolaos Koutouzis by local, Zakynthian, historians, see collected bibliography in Procopiou 1939, 149 ff. and Charalambidis 1978, 46ff. For Nikolaos Kantounis see Procopiou 1939, 167ff., with previous bibliography, and Charalambidis 1978, 55ff. See also Kalligas 1984, 61-67. Misirli 1993, 23, 26, 28, 29, and Lydakis 1976, 161, 200. For the appraisal of their art at the time the Velimezis Collection was formed see Introduction, 40-41. The information on the works of these painters should be re-examined. There is no extensive study of their work as yet.
2. See Cat. no. 68 and n. 1.
3. Lydakis 1976, 200, fig. 1 in colour. Charalambidis 1978, 51, fig. 86 notes the dramatic pathos in Koutouzis's works.
4. Kalligas 1984, 61, fig. 18. See also the Lady with Diadem, in the National Art Gallery, Misirli 1993, 26, and his Self Portrait, *op. cit.*, 28-29.
5. Konomos, 1964, p. 112 and pp. 116-117. Lydakis, 1976, fig. 6.
6. Charalambidis 1978, figs 45 and 92. Lydakis 1976, fig. 5. See also the icon of the Virgin with Saint Anne, in the Solomos Museum, and the Flight into Egypt, in the Zakynthos Museum, Charalambidis 1978, figs 78 and 77 respectively.



71

HEAD OF CHRIST WITH CROWN OF THORNS

σπουδή πάνου στο Θεοτοκόπουλο (study upon Theotokopoulos)

22.5 x 19.7 x 1 cm

Demetrios Pelekasis (1881-1973)

The icon portrays Christ in bust with the crown of thorns, his head bowed and eyelids closed. On a metal label on the frame, in capital letters Δ.Σ. ΠΕΛΕΚΑΚΗΣ 1920.¹ On the back of the panel, in black minuscule letters: *σπουδή πάνου στο Θεοτοκόπουλο* (study upon [i.e. after] *Theotokopoulos*). The word *πάνου* and the expression *σπουδή πάνου* (study upon or study after) are idioms of local Zakynthian writers, as encountered in the title of an article by Dinos Konomos in the periodical *Επτανησιακά Φύλλα*, (*Heptanesian Pages*) of the year 1951: *Σολωμικά, Μερικές σκέψεις πάνου στο «όνειρο»*.² (*On Solomos, Some thoughts upon 'The Dream'*).

There is a remarkable similarity between the Head of Christ and Christ's head in the icon of the Passion (Cat. no. 17). Both are in profile, have correspondingly closed eyes, the same rendering of the hair and are painted in analogous colour tones. This resemblance to the model by Theotokopoulos is not fortuitous, as is confirmed by the revealing inscription on the back of the icon. Pelekasis repeated this study in another small signed icon in a private collection in Athens (Fig.

264. Demetrios Pelekasis, 'Study upon Theotokopoulos', inscription on the back of icon Cat. no. 71.

265. Demetrios Pelekasis, *Head of Christ*, 1920, Cat. no. 71.





266. *Domenikos Theotokopoulos, The head of Christ, detail from the icon of The Passion of Christ, Cat. no. 17.*

267. *Demetrios Pelekasis, Head of Christ, 1920, Cat. no. 71.*

268),³ in which the likeness to Christ in the icon of the Passion extends even to the copper-green colour of the flesh and the manner of painting the tendons of the neck.

These similarities show that the icon of the Passion of Christ (Cat. no. 17) was the model that Demetrios Pelekasis consciously copied before 1920. The proposed identification of the model of the Pelekasis icon with the icon of the Passion is further corroborated by the fact that at the time there was no published work by Theotokopoulos with an analogous rendering of Christ's head.⁴

Consequently, two conclusions can be readily drawn. The first is that some time before 1920, that is in a period when no icon by Domenikos Theotokopoulos was yet known,⁵ Pelekasis was aware that the icon of the Passion is a work by the great Cretan painter. The second is that the icon of the Passion was in his hands before 1920; he either owned it or, more likely, had been commissioned to restore it. As we have seen (Cat. no. 17, 189) the method of the previous conservation can be attributed to him. The Zakynthian painter's well-known ties with his native island, where he enjoyed considerable respect and reputation, permit the hypothesis that he knew the icon of the Passion while it was there. This hypothesis is strengthened by a remark on the naming of the depicted scene, in the typewritten list of the Velimezis Collection submitted to the Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities in 1938



(See Appendix IB, 438, Fig. 272). The scene is recorded as the 'Descent from the Cross (Christ upheld by three angels)', that is similar to the name given to the analogous scene by Adamantiou in his 1908 Report on the churches of Zakynthos discussed in the examination of the icon of the Passion, Cat. no. 17.⁶ An additional conclusion is that it is no mere coincidence that both works, the original by Theotokopoulos and the copy by Pelekasis, were in the hands of the same collector, Emilius Velimezis, who, moreover, also owned the manuscript with instructions for conserving icons according to Demetrios Pelekasis's methods (See Appendix II).

The above conclusions immediately raise the question: How did Pelekasis know that the icon of the Passion is a work by Theotokopoulos? The most plausible supposition is that the signature visible in the pre-War photograph was then clearly legible.⁷ However if this were so, the fact that Emilius Velimezis made no mention of it either in his declaration to the Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, in 1938, or to the scholar studying his collection, Manolis Chatzidakis, or even to one of his close and beloved relatives, yet he confidently proclaimed to all that the icon was by El Greco, remains inexplicable.⁸ Moreover, it is evident from a list written in his own hand (Fig. 271) that Velimezis bought the icon for a very high price as an authentic work by Theotokopoulos.⁹ Certainly none of the above had read the signature, possibly because it was half erased and hidden under the blackened layers of varnish. In this

268. Demetrios Pelekasis, *Head of Christ*. Private Collection.

269. Demetrios Pelekasis, *The back of icon Cat. no. 71.*

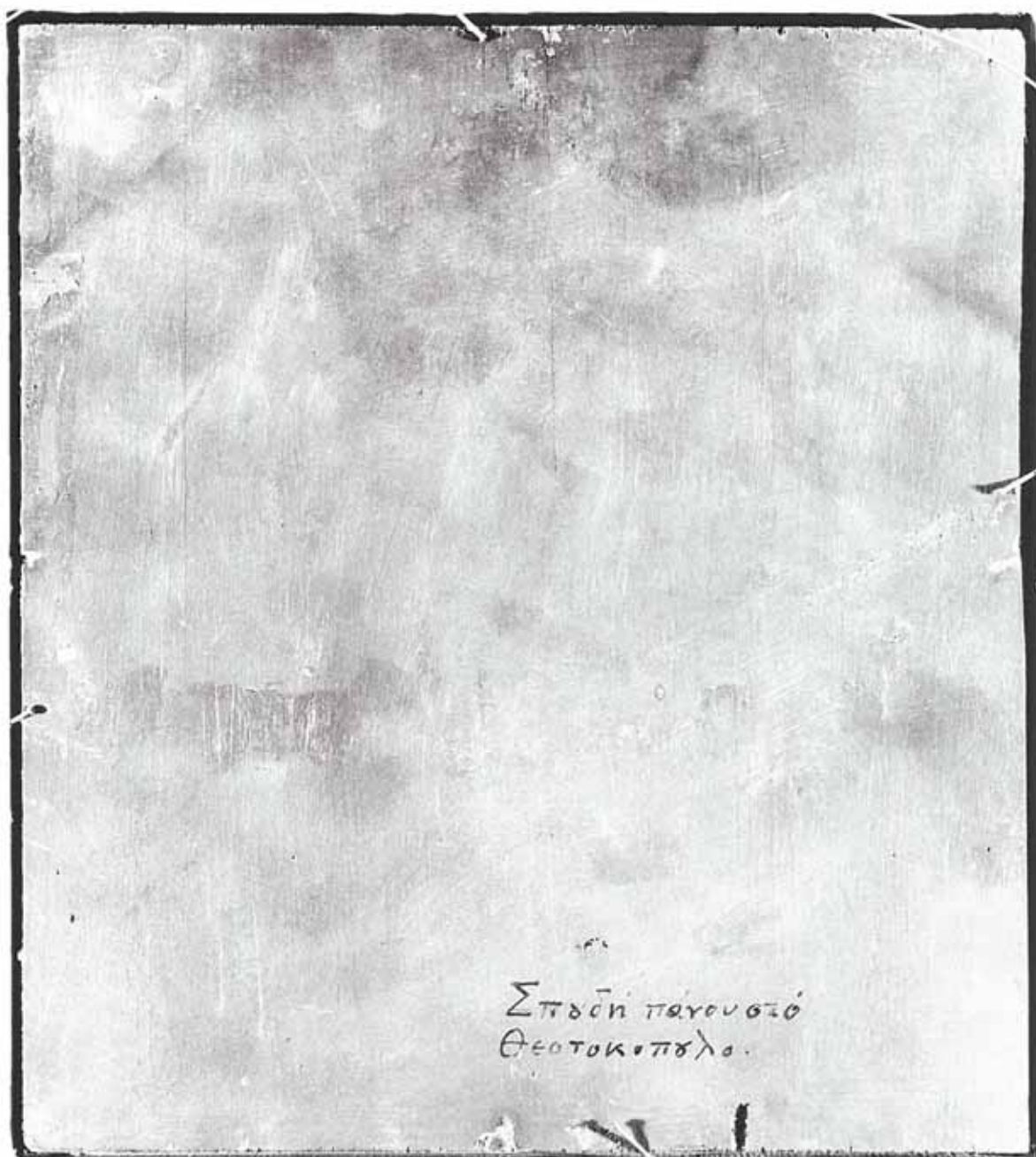
case we cannot preclude the possibility that the Zakynthian painter Demetrios Pelekasis knew the name of the painter of the icon of the Passion from some local oral tradition preserved by the icon's successive owners on the island, who, like Nikolaos Kallergis, may have been painters. In the years when the fame of the exiled Cretan master lay in oblivion, painters were the only appreciative receptors of the powerful art of his icons.¹⁰

CONDITION The colours are blackened, especially on the face.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. Zois 1936, no. 957, 2. See also Konomos 1970, 56. Konomos 1976. *The Painter D. Pelekasis and his Work*, publ. Pysos, Athens n.d. (1928?), with texts by Marinos Sigouros and the painter himself, as well as 'Postbyzantine studies' by the painter. See also Pelekasis's essay *Byzantine Icon-Painters, Art Critique on the Works of the Cretan Ilias Moskos (1649-1684)*, printed by Paraskevas Leonis, Athens 1933. See also Introduction, 40-41, n. 11 and Appendix III.
2. The article was written by the owner and editor of the periodical, Dinos Konomos, and signed 'Ιστοριοδίφης', see *Heptanesian Pages* 16 (1951), 260.
3. Unpublished. Dimensions 0.07 x 0.055 cm.
4. The mantle Christ wears here is found on full-bodied representations of him in the scene of the Elkomenos, known as 'Ecce Homo', which adorn the Royal Door of the iconostasis in Heptanesian churches (Konomos 1964, 90, and Charalambidis 1978, figs 96-102). Christ in representations is as a rule frontal with the head bowed, whereas the Head here is in profile. For the iconographic parallels for the icon of the Passion see Cat. no. 17, 203ff.
5. The first two icons, the Adoration of the Magi and Saint Luke the Evangelist, were sold by the antique-dealer Theodoros Zoumboulakis in 1934, see Introduction, 43, 45.
6. 'Descent from the Cross, angels holding Christ' (Adamantiou 1920, 109) and 'Angels supporting the Lord' (Konomos 1966, 118). See Cat. no. 17, 226, n. 78.
7. See Cat. no. 17, 189-190, Figs 94, 100.
8. See Foreword by Manolis Chatzidakis, 26.
9. See Introduction, 41, 43, 45 and Appendix IA, 438.
10. For Theotokopoulos's fame see Introduction, 54-55, 62, no. 54ff. For copies of his works by Zakynthian painters see Cat. no. 17, 217-219 and Cat. no. 48, 362ff.



72

WOODCARVED ICON FRAME

54.5 x 32.5 x 2.5 cm and 24.5 x 17 cm (icon)

Frame: 17th century

Icon painted by Demetrios Pelekasis (1881-1973)

The elliptical icon is integral with the carved wooden frame. The surface of the wood is covered with a fine layer of gold leaf on which is painted the scene of the Nativity of Christ, with several secondary episodes, a work by Demetrios Pelekasis who was in the habit of copying old icons of miniature character. A comparable style is encountered in his manuscript miniatures representing Theophilos and Theodora, and Theodora on horseback, as well as in his icons of the Anastasis (Descent into Hell), the Last Night of the Repentance and the Kissing the hand of the Bishop of Zakynthos-Cephalonia Gerasimos Loverdos.¹ The woodcarved frame, in good condition, was gilded and embellished with colours. Its decoration includes a vegetal ornament with rinceaux and acanthus leaves, in various shades of pale blue, terminating in little roseate flowers. The top is surmounted by two heraldic griffins each placing one leg on a crown. Traces of whitish pigment are preserved on their body and they wear a wide rose garment. Acanthus leaves on the upper part of the frame, intertwine to form broken arches. On the lower part is a mask of an elderly figure with moustache and beard. The elliptical frame with its lavish carved and painted decoration recalls in shape and griffin ornaments Italian frames of around 1500, such as a mirror frame from Siena,² and other frames of rectangular shape from the regions of Venice and Florence in the first half of the sixteenth century.³ The mask (*mascherone*) at the base of the frame is

270. Woodcarved frame, 17th century, and the Nativity by Demetrios Pelekasis (1881-1973), Cat. no. 72.



reminiscent of an analogous figure in Renaissance reliefs on fountains in Crete, such as at Pentamodi, in the village of Rousospiti and in the Vrontisiou Monastery, as well as the Rimondi fountain,⁴ which originate from corresponding relief ornaments on monuments in Venice from the mid-sixteenth century onwards.⁵ The *mascherone* on our icon frame is uniquely similar, not only in features but also in expression, to the mask on a well-head in the Palazzo Ducale, Venice.⁶

Woodcarving is known to have flourished in Venetian-occupied Crete and examples of it have survived in a large number of monuments.⁷ Our woodcarved frame was produced in a Cretan workshop and I believe that its workmanship and motifs point to an early seventeenth-century date. It is from this period that relevant documents confirming the practice of ecclesiastical woodcarving in Candia have survived.⁸ However, the lack of such testimonies for previous periods does not mean that this craft was not practised earlier. On the contrary, the documents indicate the existence of a long tradition on the island,⁹ while several woodcarved frames of exceptional craftsmanship are preserved on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century icons, such as the one on the Adoration of the Magi (Cat. no. 15).¹⁰

The carving of the frame on the same wood as the icon is encountered in the icon of the Passion of Christ by Domenikos Theotokopoulos (Cat. no. 17) as well as in an unpublished sixteenth-century Italo-Cretan icon of the Assumption of the Virgin, in the Solomos Museum, Zakynthos, with intricate woodcarved decoration.¹¹ Furthermore, the oval shape, together with the elaborate woodcarved upper and lower parts, evokes the decoration on Italian mirrors.¹² The original subject painted on the elliptical icon is not known.

CONDITION The original painting of the icon has been completely destroyed and replaced by a painting on gold by D. Pelekasis. The woodcarved frame is in very good condition, save for slight damage to the upper part where the head and part of the left leg of the left griffin have been cut. The colour preserved in places was revealed in recent conservation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Unpublished.

NOTES

1. *The Painter D. Pelekasis and his Work*, publ. Pyrsos, Athens n.d. (1928?). See also above Cat. no. 71, n. 1.
2. Newbery, Bisacca, Kanter 1990, no. 54, 80-81.
3. Newbery, Bisacca, Kanter 1990, nos 18, 19, pp. 48, 49.
4. Dimakopoulos 1970, 322ff., pl. ΠΒ', fig. 1, pl. ΠΔ' figs 5, 6.
5. Dimakopoulos 1970, pl. ΠΗ', figs 14, 15, 16 and pl. ΠΘ', figs 19, 20. For the diffusion of similar decorative motifs in Crete during the first half of the 16th century see Constantoudaki - Kitromilides 1991, 271ff., n. 2.
6. Dimakopoulos 1970, 335, pl. ΠΗ', fig. 14.
7. Cf. Fatourou 1982.
8. Kazanaki 1974, 251ff.
9. Kazanaki 1974, 251-252.
10. Cf. Cat. no. 15.
11. Konomos 1977, no. 1, 4, 'vaulted' icon, see also Demetis 1987, 41.
12. Newbery, Bisacca, Kanter 1990, no. 54, 80-81. For elliptical icons see Cat. nos 17 and 49.

APPENDICES
BIBLIOGRAPHY
ABBREVIATIONS
INDEXES

APPENDIX I

A. HANDWRITTEN LIST OF ICONS BELONGING TO EMILIOS VELIMEZIS

The manuscript is a list of 10 icons in the Velimezis Collection. Recorded, with some corrections, are the measurements, date, name of the painter and purchase price in gold sovereigns. At the bottom of the page is a bill in smaller numerals, which presumably concerns prices of icons. These are difficult to identify because they are not in the same order as the prices of the icons in the list. The last entry, 1200, most probably refers to the icon by Theotokopoulos, no. 10. The meaning of the entry -do- alongside icons nos 3, 4, 5, 6 and 9 is not known.

The manuscript includes icons that were declared to the Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities in the list of 5 February 1938. Consequently it was probably compiled sometime between 1934 and 1938.

REMARKS: No. 1: The Virgin Hodegetria by Ilias Moskos is included in the Chatzidakis catalogue, 1945, no. 1, but has not been located.

Nos 2, 3, 4: The three pieces of the epistyle are included in the Chatzidakis catalogue, 1945, see Cat. no. 24a-c and Table on pp. 464-465.

No. 5: The icon of Saint John Chrysostom is not included in the Chatzidakis catalogue, 1945. The dimensions of the icon do not correspond to Cat. no. 63. Obviously this is another icon which has not been located.

No. 6: See Cat. no. 14.

No. 7: The icon is not included in the Chatzidakis catalogue, 1945. The Collection includes an icon of the same shape and subject, an imitation of an early icon, probably executed by D. Pelekasis, in a woodcarved frame, perhaps made by Priamos.

No. 8: The oval icon of the Dormition of the Virgin is not included in the Chatzidakis catalogue, 1945, and has not been located.

No. 9: The icon is not included in the Chatzidakis catalogue, 1945. Its dimensions do not correspond to Cat. no. 47. Obviously it is another icon which has not been located.

No. 10: The icon is not included in the Chatzidakis catalogue, 1945. It is obviously the icon by Domenikos Theotokopoulos, Cat. no. 17.

B. TYPEWRITTEN LIST OF ICONS BELONGING TO EMILIOS VELIMEZIS

This is the typewritten declaration of ownership of the icon collection, submitted by Emilios Velimezis to the Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities and dated 5 February 1938. Ephor of Byzantine Antiquities at the time was the Byzantinist Andreas Xyngopoulos, Professor at the University of Thessaloniki and author of the catalogue of the icons in the Benaki Museum (1936).

REMARKS: Thirteen icons in this list have not been located, namely nos 2, 9, 14, 15, 16, 20, 24, 25, 29, 35, 36 and 37.

Nos 16, 23, 24 and 31 correspond to nos 5, 2, 9 and 4 in the handwritten list A. For the other correspondences see Table on pp. 464-465.

Noteworthy is the fact that the date of the works is not given, nor is the name of the painter of the signed works no. 6 (see Cat. no. 61, Ioannis, 1778), no. 17 (see Cat. no. 62, Demetrios Zoukis, 1781), no. 21 (see Cat. no. 17, Domenikos Theotokopoulos), no. 22 (see Cat. no. 35, Leos, 1649), no. 34 (see Cat. no. 29, Emmanuel Tzanes, 1657), no. 39 (see Cat. no. 46, Nikolaos Kallergis, 1744).

Last, the icon of Saint James (no. 3 in the handwritten list A) is not declared, while the other two icons from the same epistyle (no. 3 = 23 and no. 4 = 31, see Cat. no. 24 a-c) are.



271. *Handwritten list of icons, Emilios Velimezis (1938?-1946).*

*Ev 'Aphonic, 75 50 telephone ion

Πρὸς τὸν Αἰχιδιμον Κόριον

ΕΡΕΥΝΑ ΤΩΝ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΩΝ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΤΗΤΩΝ

ENTAYOA

κῶνις ἔσθου.

Αναγνώων τὴν τιμὴν τὴν δολάρω ὅτι κατέβη κατὰ πλήρη κοριζήματα
τῆς ἀκολουθοῦσης Πίνδρας Μεταπολιτευτικῆς τέχνης, ἐπίσκοποι μέντας προσωρι-
νῶς ἐν τῇ αἰσίᾳ τῆς μητρὸς μου Κερίας Πόθενίος Γ. Βελιμέζη, ἡποὺ δισ-
μύων, ἔτοι :

- 1) ΚΕΦΑΛΗ ΘΕΩΤΟΚΟΥ, ἀισοτέλειον 0,44½ X 0,34½.
 - 2) ΚΕΦΑΛΗ ΘΕΩΤΟΚΟΥ, ἀισοτέλειον 0,28 X 0,23.
 - 3) ΙΝΟΤΕΣ ΝΗΛΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΥΣ, ἀισοτέλειον 0,29 X 0,23.
 - 4) 24 ΟΙΚΟΙ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΩΤΟΚΟΥ, ἀισοτ. 0,41 X 0,62.
 - 5) ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΕΤΡΟΣ, ἀισοτ. 0,49 X 0,33.
 - 6) ΘΕΩΤΕΛΟΣ ΓΑΛΑΤΟΓΕΝΕΙΑ (ΣΥΝΑΜΙΛΙΣΤΑ), ἀισοτ. 0,44½ X 0,37.
 - 7) ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ, 0,59 X 0,37½.
 - 8) ΑΓΙΟΣ ΛΑΜΠΟΣ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΥ, ἀισοτ. 0,21 X 0,19.
 - 9) ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΣ, ἀισοτ. 0,70 X 0,54.
 - 10) ΑΓΙΟΣ ΓΩΒΑΛΑΛΑ, ἀισοτ. 0,279 X 0,20½.
 - 11) ΑΝΑΤΑΛΙΣ ΛΑΤΑΦΟΥ, ἀισοτ. 0,37 X 0,26.
 - 12) ΑΓΙΑ ΑΙΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΗ, ἀισοτ. 0,32 X 0,18.
 - 13) ΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΝΑΙΛΑ ΚΑΙ ΝΑΙΛΙΝΑ (;), ἀισοτ. 0,39 X 0,30.
 - 14) ΑΓΙΟΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΥ, ἀισοτ. 0,29½ X 0,20.
 - 15) ΠΕΝΤΗΚΟΣΤΗ, ἀισοτ. 0,30 X 0,20½.
 - 16) ΑΓΙΟΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΧΡΥΣΟΚΟΜΟΣ, ἀισοτ. 0,35½ X 0,24.
 - 17) ΚΙΣΗΝ ΠΑΡΙΣΙΟΝ, ὅπου μὲν τὸν Χριστὸν ἐν μίᾳ τῇ θεοτόκῳ καὶ τοῦ Ἀγίου Ἰωάννου τὸν Προφῆτην, ὅπου δὲ ἐξ ἑρσιπάρων πρὸς τὴν περὶ τὸν Ἄγιον Ἰωάννην, τὸν Ἄγιον Ἀθανάσιον, καὶ τὴν Ἄγιαν Ἰουλίαν κακοποιῶν τὸν Χριστὸν ὡς ἄνθρωπον βρέφος, ἀισοτ. 0,40 X 0,31.
 - 18) ΑΝΟΚΑΝΑΒΑΣΙΣ, ἀισοτ. 0,38½ X 0,27.
 - 19) ΑΝΟΚΑΝΑΒΑΣΙΣ, ἀισοτ. ΝΙΚΑΗ 0,58 X 0,45.
 - 20) ΑΝΟΚΑΝΑΒΑΣΙΣ, ἀοκίθεος οὐρανοῦ, ἀισοτ. 0,48 X 0,32.
 - 21) ΑΝΟΚΑΝΑΒΑΣΙΣ (ὁ Χριστὸς ὑπερασπασμένος ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀγγέλων, μετὰ τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ κτίσεως, ἀισοτ. μετὰ κτίσεως 0,68 X 0,36, ἀισοτ. κατὰ τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν 0,33 X 0,24).
 - 22) ΚΙΣΗΝ ΠΑΡΙΣΙΟΝ τὸν Χριστὸν ἐν μίᾳ τῇ θεοτόκῳ καὶ τοῦ Ἀγίου Γεωργίου, ὁμοῦς, ἀισοτ. 0,40 X 0,31½.
 - 23) ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ἐξομῶν, ἀισοτ. 0,31 X 0,30.
 - 24) ΒΙΣΟΛΙΑ ΘΕΩΤΟΚΟΥ, ἀισοτ. 0,37 X 0,47.
 - 25) ΘΕΩΤΟΚΟΣ ΓΑΛΑΤΟΓΕΝΕΙΑ, ἀισοτ. 0,32 X 0,23.
 - 26) ΒΑΙΟΝΟΚΟΣ, ἀισοτ. 0,34 X 0,19.
 - 27) ΣΥΛΛΕΙΜΕΝΟΣ ΘΕΩΤΟΚΟΥ, 0,23½ X 0,17½.
 - 28) ΒΙΣΟΛΙΑ ΘΕΩΤΟΚΟΥ, ἀισοτ. 0,24 X 0,17½.
- (ἡ Συνέχισις ἑπομένη).

- [illegible]

Πεν' ἑξα' ἐξ' ἑπτα' τιμῆς

ATHANASIOS I. BRAININIS

272. Typewritten list of icons in the *Emilios Velimezis* Collection (5 February 1938).

APPENDIX II

TYPEWRITTEN TEXT BY DEMETRIOS PELEKASIS

This is an unsigned typewritten text that belonged to Emiliios Velimezis before 1946. The acquisition of this document should be seen as consistent with Emiliios Velimezis's wider interest in Byzantine painting. It gives instructions on the technique of cleaning icons (pp. 1-3), on polishing (pp. 3-4), on checking forged signatures on old icons (p. 6) and even on 'preparing an indelible signature' (p. 7), as well as on 'preparing a patina on icons', both old and new! (p. 8); lastly, it gives instructions on 'preparing the wood for painting with egg tempera', '... if we want to paint on an old icon, that is to use its old wood [panel] to make a new icon' (pp. 11-12). The spontaneity of the instructions (e.g. p. 13, 'then we rub the brush on the forehead (to fluff out the hairs) and dab it lightly on the gold in order to lift it up and apply it to our surface, to which it sticks') and the technical knowledge of the text's author, whose work in this field too is known, give away his identity. Velimezis had in any case entrusted the conservation of the icons in his Collection to the Zakynthian painter Demetrios Pelekasis and owned works executed by him.

Recipe for a mixture for cleaning icons

1/2 oka of methyl alcohol (green)

3 drams of ammonia

5 drams of shellac (pure)

15 grammes of citrol essence

Stir and leave to blend for one hour. Shake the bottle well before use.

How to use

We test whether cleaning is possible by squeezing soaked cotton wool onto a small area, without rubbing. If the patina is light and the cleaning fluid effective then we soak a cloth and apply it to the icon like a compress. We leave the cloth for an hour, wetting it with cleaning fluid once or twice.

We avoid rubbing with soaked cotton wool. If the patina remains in places then we squeeze cleanser on it locally, or even pure alcohol, and set alight, extinguishing it immediately and squeezing cleaning fluid again right away.

Great care is required for one to distinguish whether the dark spot is patina or dark shading on the icon. To verify this we examine through a magnifying glass whether the dark spot is raised or smooth.

As a rule the use of fire should be avoided, because it creates blisters. If the use of fire creates a blister we immediately squeeze alcohol on it, relight the flame, extinguish it 3 seconds later and apply a piece of waxed paper to it, over which we pass the little iron (heated in the flame of a spirit lamp) a couple of times. If the blister is not ironed out the first time then we squeeze alcohol again, set it alight and repeat the ironing in the same way.

When the patina is not removed by fire either, then we take a small penknife and scrape the patch very lightly, without pressure, after first wetting it liberally. We check with the magnifying glass whether the area we are going to scrape is patina and not shadow.

When we clean a miniature icon then we place it upright in a basin and spray it with cleaning fluid. When this has dried we spray it again. Then we test at one edge, by rubbing lightly with cotton wool, to see if it has softened well, and then we spray copiously with cleanser. The dirt then trickles with the rinse into the basin and the icon is cleaned without us touching it.

If salts have formed on the surface of the icon, like a shelly crust, then we take sulphuric acid and dipping the tooth of bone comb in it we drip a drop on the patch

of salts and fiddle with it, spreading it and rubbing it lightly with the bone comb-tooth until the salts dissolve and the paint appears. Then we squeeze cleanser over it and gently wipe off the remains of the salts with the cotton wool. If there are dense dirty salts (with earth), then we take 5 grammes of calcium fluoride mixed in 7 grammes of sulphuric acid, and produce fumes that dissolve the earth. In this case we isolate the rest of the icon with wax. We remove the wax afterwards using a penknife and any remains with turpentine.

NOTE: If one burns oneself with sulphuric or any other acid, smear the affected area with ammonia immediately.

The stains from incense are removed as follows: We apply cleaning fluid, we set it alight and after it has softened we scrape it lightly with a penknife, removing the remains with turpentine.

If during the course of cleaning we want to see exactly what the cleaned part reveals in clarity and colours, we squeeze lemon juice on it, which is neutralized however in a few minutes. It is used, so to speak, as a temporary tonic, like an aspirin.

Polish

This polish is used for icons painted in egg tempera technique.

The recipe is as follows:

Sandarac (gum)	15 drams
Pure alcohol	30 drams
Yellow mastic	15 drams

We dissolve the ingredients in a bain-marie, that is by placing the bottle in a pan of boiling water.

To polish the cleaned icon:

- 1) We dip a broad brush in this mixture and pass it quickly over the dry icon. We leave it to dry a little and
- 2) We dab the surface here and there with the finger dipped in cooking oil. Then
- 3) We use the following fluid:

White shellac (sold by Xanthakis) mixed with shellac (black) in liquid state, in proportions of 2 parts white to 1 part black.

NOTE: In order to dissolve black shellac we put it in sufficient green methyl alcohol to cover it and shake. We then add more methyl alcohol until it becomes slightly runnier than oil.

We soak a piece of cotton wool in this shellac solution, twist it in a clean cloth and tap it gently, then we fold the cloth a second and a third time so that the surface with which we shall rub the icon is not very wet, but is only dampened with our fluid. Then we smear it over the surface of the icon in circular movement, in such a way as to cover the same place twice straight away.

When we see that the surface of the icon is sticky and prevents smooth polishing, we apply a few more light dabs of cooking oil with the finger and repeat the polishing. We repeat this polishing process 3-4 times and the icon is then ready.

Testing signatures and paints

In order to check the authenticity of a signature on icons overpainted in egg tempera technique, we examine carefully with a good magnifying glass whether the crackling present generally over the surface of the whole icon is also observed on the part where the signature is, or on the part where we want to see whether there is overpainting.

We also examine whether the ends of the bars of the letters in the signature are pointed or are suspiciously sharp or whether they are regular, given that the genuine old letters do not have points, since these have been blunted and rounded by time.

The best test is made with a pin. That is with its point we pierce lightly one of the letters of the signature, or some other place if we want to test whether the paint is old or new. If it is soft then the signature is recent. If it is hard there are indications that the paint is old and therefore genuine. However, when the icon is varnished we must be careful to pierce the paint and not the varnish layer, because then our diagnosis will not be accurate. In order to test and to clean the signature on an icon overpainted in egg tempera technique: We squeeze cleaning fluid on it and in two minutes we rub lightly with cotton wool. If it resists than we rub a little harder. Lastly, we dip the cotton wool in a little hot water and squeeze lightly as we draw it over the signature. If the signature is fake it is erased.

The above does not apply to oil paint. We test with the pin. It is more difficult to confirm the authenticity of the signature on oil paintings because the oil penetrates the pores of the canvas and forms something solid with the body of the rest of the paint.

Preparing an indelible signature

On icons painted in egg tempera technique.

The signature is made with watercolour pigments and egg, in proportion 3 parts pigment and 1 part egg. It is better to prepare the egg and paint mixture beforehand than to dip the brush gradually in the egg. The mixture is prepared in little shells, in the above proportion. The egg must be fresh, if possible laid the same day, and we should not leave it to go stale (as in the summer for instance when we should renew it twice a day). When we say egg we mean only the yolk.

NOTE: Because, as we know, in time the egg sets and becomes hard (as for example the Easter eggs which we keep in the icon case for years, and which become yellow and hard as amber), it is a fact that when a signature with egg is applied to an icon it is completely indelible after eight years, at least as indelible as the rest of the surface of the icon, so that it cannot be removed by the test described above.

Testing the icon with the ultraviolet lamp

As is well known, with this lamp any overpainting shows up in a different colour from the rest of the surface. But in order to deceive examination with the lamp we act as follows: We take a pinch of silver nitrate, dissolve it in a little water in a cup and sprinkle a little gum Arabic powder, enough to make it the consistency of honey. We daub the icon with our fingers dipped in this mixture. So the surface of the icon acquires a certain dark patina which deceives examination with the lamp.

Now, in order to remove this patina, if we wish, we put 5 drops of ammonia and 5 drops of potassium bromide in a glass of hot water and rinse the icon with cotton wool steeped in this fluid.

Preparing patina on icons

If the icon is new and we want to give it a patina so that it looks old, then before acting as described below, we first cover it with a coat of gum Arabic, using our fingers.

If the icon is old but we nevertheless want to give it a patina, then we act as described below without coating it with gum Arabic.

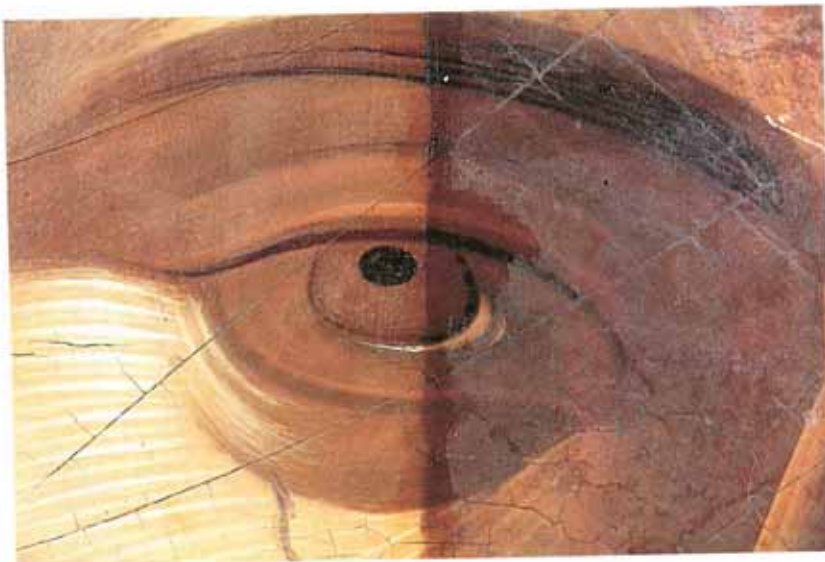
The patina is made as follows:

We take pure shellac (black) dissolved and add a little brown and a little red aniline, as well as very, very little green (to mellow the red tone), and we shake it so that the mixture darkens slightly (not much). We add as much of each aniline as the ash from a long puff on a cigarette, and less of the green.

We spray the icon with this mixture, using a blow pipe, and then in order to combine

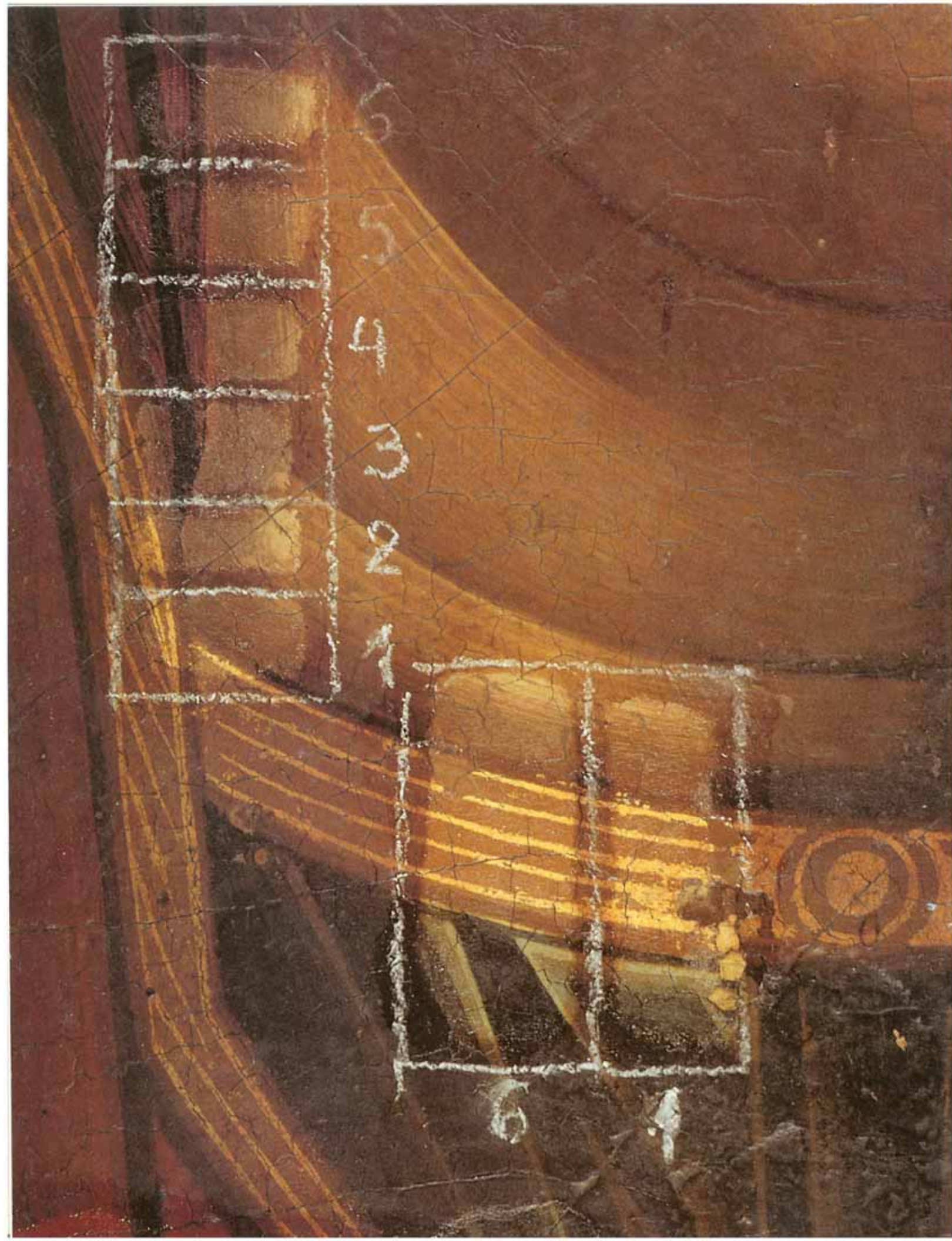
this sweat we dry it by passing it over the flame of a spirit lamp (not very close). When it is dry we take a little white and a little black watercolour pigment and we combine them in a proportion so as to imitate perfectly the colour of dust, we dissolve them in water and with this mixture smear the surface of the icon with the fingers. Then we rub the surface with a clean cloth and the icon has taken on the colour of the patina.

This patina is removed, if we want, with our cleaning fluid, in exactly the same way as the genuine patina is removed.



THE CONSERVATION OF THE ICONS
IN THE VELIMEZIS COLLECTION

STERGIOS STASINOPOULOS
Conservator of paintings
Benaki Museum



*I. Saint Nicholas, Cat. no. 30.
Detail of the area with the problem of poor
cohesion of the gesso and the paint layers
with the wooden panel.*



In the autumn of 1991 I had the opportunity of seeing the greater part of the Velimezis Collection for the first time, and immediately realized both the importance of these icons and the problems they presented. When the conservation project began in February 1994 my first concern was to create the necessary infrastructure to ensure top quality work in the very short time available.

The criterion for selecting collaborators was consensus of opinion on the conservation processes. The basic nucleus was drawn mainly from my former pupils, several of whom work in the Benaki Museum as well as for other bodies. So initially, in addition to my old colleague Lenia Pharmakalidou, conservator at the Ministry of Culture, the conservators Lena Vranopoulou, Charis Grammatikos, Alexandra Kalliga, Nikolaos Smyrnakis, conservators in the Benaki Museum, were recruited. This team was responsible for researching, documenting and conserving the most important and most difficult works in the Collection.

These colleagues were joined later by Chrysa Vourvopoulou and Vasiliki Nikolopoulou, conservators in the Benaki Museum, Katerina Kakousiou, Vasilis Broumas, Elisabet Nadali and Sophia Doulberi, free-lance conservators, and Maria Louisa Pasko, collaborator with the Benaki Museum. This second team completed conservation works at an intensive pace until July 1996.

I thank them all for their contribution and ideal collaboration, without which it would have been well nigh impossible to complete this task.

A. ORGANIZING THE LABORATORY

A basic issue which had to be faced immediately was the reorganization of the laboratory to provide the infrastructure for conserving such a large number of works and to secure the required workspace and equipment for each conservator. To this end the following works were undertaken:

- Four places were arranged for cleaning varnish, each equipped with a fume extractor, a stereomicroscope, instruments and appropriate chemicals.
- An extractor was installed for removing insecticide fumes and varnishes with an air-compressor.
- The laboratory was equipped to take and develop photographs, especially photographs through the stereomicroscope, as well as to photograph and examine works in ultraviolet and infrared light.
- A fully equipped carpentry workshop was set up in order to cope with the problems of the wooden panels of the icons.
- A suitable area was arranged for the aesthetic restoration of the icons.
- An archive of negatives, photographs, slides and X-rays was created.

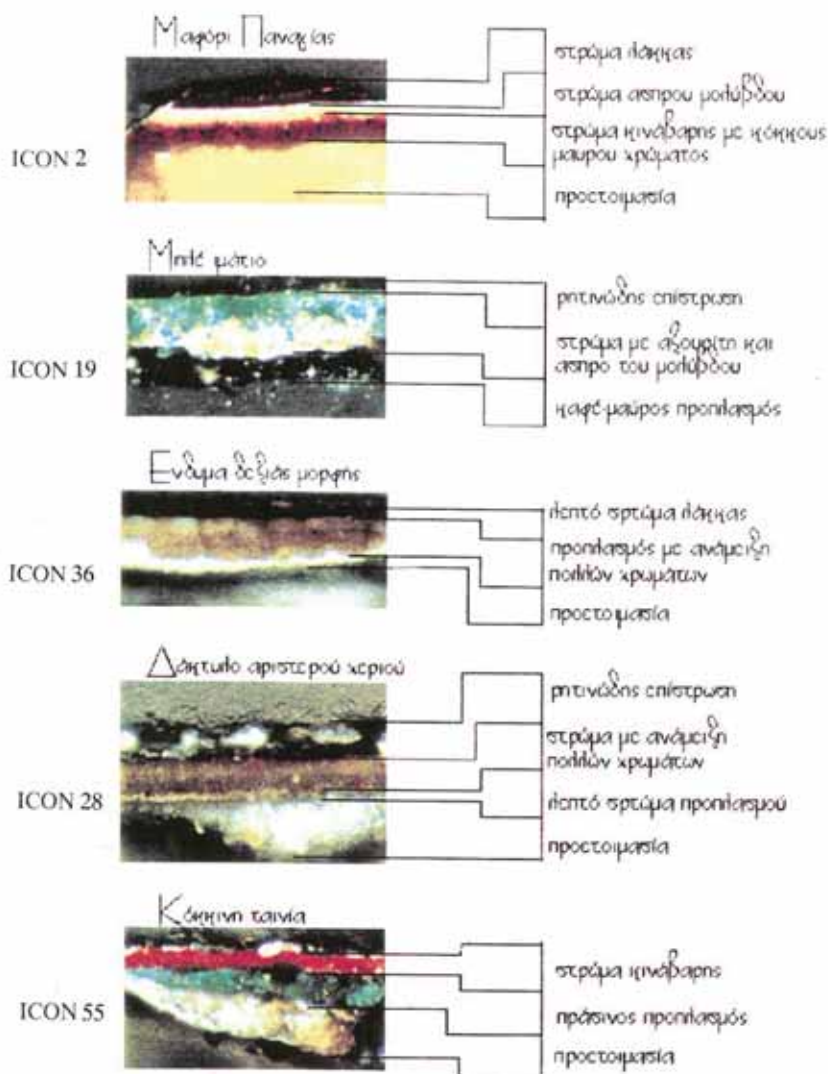
In parallel, in order to archive and document the conservation works a special, 11-page computer data card was designed, in which each colleague was able to enter details of his/her work.

B. RESEARCH

Fourteen icons that presented special problems were chosen initially for research. Various methods were applied to discover the causes of damage, the overpaintings, the forged signatures, and to investigate the condition of the works etc. All the problems were recorded and on the basis of the evidence collected the final documented decision on the processes of conservation required was taken.

The following research methods were used:

- Initial photographing and macrophotographing of the works in black-and-white film and diapositives (Fig. 1), in order to record and document the damage as well as all the elements that should be removed during the conservation process.¹ Total number of black-and-white photographs: 230. Total number of diapositives: 1300.
- Microphotography in diapositives through the stereomicroscope² in order to detect mainly forged inscriptions and signatures, varnish layers etc. Total number of diapositives: 80.



2. Sections through paint layers from various icons.



3. *The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn*, Cat. no. 14. Detail of an area with numerous overpaintings. Ultraviolet photograph.

4. *The Dormition of the Virgin*, Cat. no. 55, detail. Infrared photograph in which the original drawing is visible.

5. *Saint Nicholas*, Cat. no. 30. X-ray with detail of the area, as in Fig. 1, in which losses of the painted surface and the gesso are visible, as well as traits of Tzanes's technique.

6. *The Passion of Christ*, Cat. no. 17. X-ray of the work in which the impasto of the pigments is visible, especially on the frame where the decoration is difficult to discern even after cleaning, on account of oxidization of the paint.

- c. Cross-sections of the layers of paints and preparation, of dimensions approximately 0.8 x 0.8 x 0.6 mm. After complex and laborious processing, these sections (Fig. 2) were observed and photographed through the stereomicroscope at a magnification of 80 to 200 mm. Total number of sections: 60.
- d. Cross-sections of the grain of the wooden panels in order to ascertain the species of wood.
- e. Examination and photographing in ultraviolet light (UV fluorescence) (Fig. 3) in order to detect problems invisible to the naked eye³ etc.
- f. Photographing in reflected ultraviolet light in order to study the texture of the painted surface.⁴
- g. Photographing in infrared light in order to detect damage (Fig. 4) beneath the surface of the varnish and in the lower layers of the painting, or to investigate the existence of a preliminary sketch.⁵
- h. X-raying of the works presenting special problems. On account of the penetration of the X-rays, it is possible to detect problems or various elements in the original layers of paint, in the preparation or in the wooden panel (Figs 5, 6). Sixteen icons were X-rayed.⁶



C. CONDITION OF THE ICONS - DAMAGE

The Collection was formed during the inter-war years, when icons were bought mainly from the antique-dealers Ioannis Martinos and Theodoros Zoumboulakis, very often at the suggestion of Demetrios Pelekasis, who had frequently made interventions to these works. Pelekasis was a painter and iconographer of some merit, a 'cognoscente' of Byzantine art and extremely adept at restoring damaged or even destroyed icons and enhancing their 'oldness',⁷ usually be adding the signature of some well-known icon-painter too.

The works in the Collection displayed several common characteristic interventions, some that had been made before their purchase in order to 'beautify' them and others made much earlier. So the problem of the interventions was one of the most serious we had to face.

7. *The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn*, Cat. no. 14. Detail with numerous and extensive overpaintings.



8. *The Virgin of Tenderness*, Cat. no. 3. The damaged wooden panel impregnated with coloured wax and reinforced with two heavy iron battens.

The earlier interventions, which usually began a few years after the work was painted and continued until the early twentieth century, included attempts to remove the varnish, usually with unfortunate results: widespread overpaintings, interventions to the wooden panel with new battens, sticking with fish glues and 'butterfly'-shaped dowels, nails etc., as well as additions of varnishes, mainly oil-based (Fig. 7). In many cases the very drastic cleaning methods of the inter-war years had caused loss of the paint surface. However the old varnish remained in places. The varnish over the gold was usually scraped off by mechanical means and after retouching the paint or primarily overpainting, a fresh layer of yellow varnish made from shellac, sandarac and common rosin, or in the better case mastic,⁸ was applied. Quite barbarous interventions to the wooden panel are also observed in this period. The old wooden battens were usually replaced with metal ones, that were screwed on, or with new ones of beechwood, which is quite heavy, screwed or glued on (Fig. 8).⁹

As the cases described above indicate, it was not always easy to decide on the processes of conservation to apply. The problems focused particularly on cleaning off the old varnish, removing the overpaintings, consolidating, repairing the damage to the wooden panel and last, restoring the works aesthetically.

D. CONSERVATION

1. Cleaning off the varnish

During this process three different situations were encountered:

- The rare, happy coincidence of the original varnish surviving without any intervention.
- The addition of varnish or other material (oils etc.) on top of the original.¹⁰
- The uneven and usually aggressive removal of the varnish locally, with some consequent loss of paint layers.

In each case cleaning off the varnish demanded special research to find the

9. *The Head of the Virgin*, Cat. no. 19.
Test cleanings.



10. *Saint Nicholas*, Cat. no. 30.
Test cleanings.

appropriate mixture of solvents and the best way of applying them (Figs 9, 10). A major role in the choice of the most suitable solvent, apart from experience, is played by the combination of various scientific methods in order to determine precisely the point of solubility of the varnish and the binder.¹¹ When the varnish has lost its natural properties the aesthetic result is altered considerably. Thus efforts should be made to remove it, provided this can be done safely, in order to reveal the quality of the colours, particularly when a work by an important painter is concerned. This was the principle followed here.

2. Removal of overpaintings

Many of the icons in the Collection had overpaintings covering damaged areas but also part of the authentic painting. In most cases these were badly executed, although some, particularly the later ones, were better. All the overpaintings, even the earliest, covering the original painting were removed and only those on damaged areas were left, provided they belonged to the earliest period. In general the later overpaintings were removed, with very few exceptions that were decided on in each case.¹²

3. Consolidations

One of the main issues that had to be confronted on the icons with later interventions was to investigate the state of the paint layers and varnishes with regard to the penetration of the consolidating material. As far as possible the works were consolidated after cleaning. On the contrary, in cases where the binder had weakened, the paint was impregnated-consolidated as the cleaning progressed.

The kind of fixatives used previously (waxes, fish glues, leather glues etc.) also created major problems for consolidation. Very often the earlier materials do not combine with those that ought to be used today (e.g. wax, used previously, does not combine with acrylic emulsions).

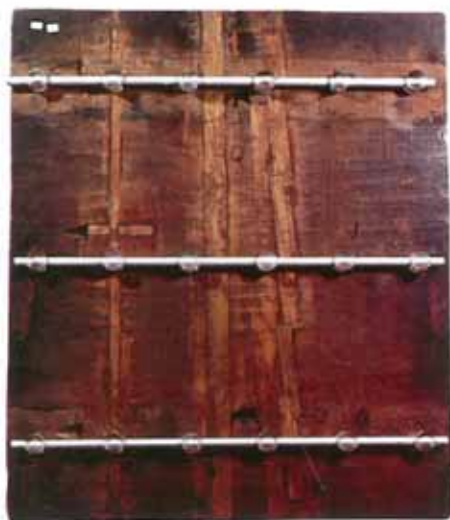
4. Repairing damage to the wooden panel

Rusted nails, screws

The nails used originally to join the panel to the battens or the planks of the panel to each other, as well as those used in early interventions, were generally large, handmade ones which rust easily causing cracks in the wood. Despite the fact that the nails are part of the icon's history, in most cases these had to be removed in order to restore the wooden panel. The same applies to later nails and screws.

Cracks

Cracks are a consequence of the poor quality of the wood or the construction of the battens. In several icons the interventions were mainly attempts to stick the cracks together, using animal glues earlier and vinyl ones later.¹³ In these cases the now classic process of removing the wood along the crack and replacing it with small fillets of wood (parquetry) was followed.



11. *The Pietà*, Cat. no. 29.
Carpentry work-battens.

Battens

The construction of the wooden panel of an icon with battens usually presents problems. Its first consequence is the frequent appearance of cracks in the work. During the course of later interventions the original battens had been removed from many icons (usually by sawing through the nails with a metal blade) and had been replaced by iron ones, that were screwed on, or by thick beechwood ones, very often glued on and screwed to an already weakened panel. In several cases the construction of new battens had been accompanied by an attempt to flatten the icon.¹⁴

All the battens (old or new additions) that had caused significant damage to the panel and the painting were removed. However, because the environmental conditions of the works were not stable and there was danger of the wooden panel bowing or warping, in some cases various types of movable battens were constructed, the majority of aluminium on perspex supports (Fig. 11). The use of such constructions was limited.

Intervention to the wooden panel

It was not necessary to replace the wooden panel on any of the icons in the Collection, despite its bad state in some works. Only local interventions, filling in gaps or replacing previous additions of beechwood¹⁵ with balsa wood, were made.

Insect control - Impregnation of the wood

In general there were no indications of living organisms in the wood of the icons. However, many icons had been badly affected by xylophagous insects. In these cases preventive insect control measures were taken and the panel was impregnated with synthetic resins of different hardness or elasticity as the case required, in order to reinforce it.

5. Aesthetic restoration

The way in which the overpaintings were dealt with, wherever they covered areas of paint loss, has already been mentioned.

In cases where there were no overpaintings on damaged areas or where these had been removed, whole or partial restoration was decided upon.¹⁶ Where the loss of paint and preparation was total, the area was first primed with gesso and then retouched with paint matching the surrounding surface in tone and colour. Where there was only loss of paint this was restored by applying a transparent glaze on the preparation, which essentially darkened its white tone, so as not to mar the aesthetic effect. The materials used for the aesthetic restoration were acrylic resin with powdered pigment.

E. PARTICULAR OBSERVATIONS ON ICONS

Knowledge of the icons' condition before conservation, of the problems encountered, the interventions made etc., is useful when studying them. So this chapter gives brief information on the icons presenting special problems.

The Virgin Hodegetria (Cat. no. 1)

Observations:

- Loss of sections on the upper and lower parts of the icon.
- Waxes and overpaintings in areas where the original paint surface has been lost.
- Overpaintings on the upper and lower parts of the icon, and over the entire red border. On the border two paint layers were observed over the original; an orange one underneath and a red one on top. These layers were removed.
- Cracks due to the poor preparation on the Virgin's maphorion.
- Damage from the nails that held the metal revetments, which were presumably removed during the previous conservation. There are 95 tiny holes, in five of which the little nails are preserved.

The Virgin of Tenderness (Cat. no. 2)

Observations:

- Two layers of gold on the gold ground. Beneath the later layer of gold a very thick layer of bole (Fig. 12) in comparison with the earlier gold, which was glazed.
- Very good preservation of the earlier gold from the Virgin's left shoulder and below, in comparison with the upper part of the gold ground, which has suffered damage.
- Remnants of a layer of blue paint on the gold ground.
- Loss of paint and destruction of much of the gold ground due to rubbing.
- Loss of sections on the Virgin's hand and on the nails.
- Later red border framing the work.
- Overpaintings with fillers on the upper part and bottom right. The fillers obviously consist of wax mixed with plaster of Paris and pigment, giving an ochre appearance. Overpaintings also exist on the Virgin's maphorion, the gold ground and the red border.
- Coat of green oil paint on the back of the work (later intervention).

During the previous conservation of the work, the conservator scraped off the blue paint, thus destroying the gold under it as well as the original red border with the white line that the painter used as a frame for the work. The silver revetments were also removed from the haloes and arms, as the nails that remained on the painting attest. The gold of the haloes was not overpainted (blue) on account of the metal revetments.

It should be noted that the painter originally used brown paint (coarse red with black) for the Virgin's maphorion and after applying the white highlights to the garment, covered it with a lac glaze, which was removed in places (to a limited extent) in the previous conservation.

During the present conservation, after chemical cleaning of the painted surface and the gold ground, it was decided to remove the later gold and expose the earlier. The task was performed mechanically and no solvents were used except water, which helped to soften the later bole and facilitated its removal. The red borders framing the icon were also removed because they were later and badly executed.



12. *The Virgin of Tenderness*, Cat. no. 2.
Detail of the gold ground.
Discernible are the second layer of gold leaf
with bole and traces of the blue overpainting.



13. Saint Paraskevi, Cat. no. 16.
Carpentry work-battens.



14. The Passion of Christ, Cat. no. 17.
Photograph before conservation.
Detail of the area in which there was
a signature in the past.

The Triumph of Orthodoxy (Cat. no. 5)

Observations:

- Later overpaintings with thick brown-black brushstrokes and binder, perhaps varnish, on the faces and garments, which also covered damage and highlights. The overpaintings were removed during conservation.
- Significant losses along the bottom, the right side and on the periphery, as well as along the length of the cracks (where there are overpaintings and wax).
- Mediocre and locally poor bonding with the preparation. Detachments.
- Three lengthwise cracks: two straight down the centre and the third on the right.
- Fourteen large nails from the old battens and eight small ones from the later battens.

Saint Paraskevi with scenes from her life (Cat. no. 16)

Observations:

- Forged signature of Ioannis Moskos in black paint over the later varnish. The signature and the inscription on Saint Paraskevi's scroll in the central representation were not removed. The inscription *Η ΑΓΙΑ ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ* on the ground over the gold dust is also recent.
- Traces of a probably genuine inscription on the representation bottom right.
- Very extensive overpainting on the flesh, garments and landscapes, covering the considerable damage (Fig. 13).

The Passion of Christ - Pietà (Cat. no. 17)

During the preliminary research no trace of the artist's signature appeared. Considerable interventions had been made to the work in the past, especially the drastic cleaning which mainly destroyed the finer layers of paint, the foundation modelling and the fine brushstrokes ((Fig. 14).

The work is painted on a panel primed with gesso but without linen and has an integral frame to which small additions of other wood have been made. There is a deeply incised sketch.

The paint layer is quite thick, especially on the highlights. There is a pronounced crack at the centre of the panel down the grain of the wood.

Head of the Virgin (Cat. no. 19)

Observations:

- The varnish (Fig. 15) covers uniformly both the original painted surface and the overpaintings, and was therefore applied after these.
- Traces of a signature in the bottom right section of the icon, on the gold leaf. The signature disappeared when the varnish was scraped off the gold ground. A ghost of the destroyed letters is discernible on the gold, which is well preserved in this area, whereas the bole has been exposed all around.
- Traces of red letters from an inscription, top left and right.
- Drawing with broad primary and fine secondary brushstrokes in black paint,



15. *The Head of the Virgin, Cat. no. 19.*
Detail of cleaning her eye.

16. *Christ, Cat. no. 24a.* Visible is
the addition made in the past to the
bottom right part of the icon.

17. *Saint James, Cat. no. 24b.*
Restoration of the rotten wooden panel.

visible on the damaged areas of the eye and the green himation (macrophotograph), and under the foundation of the face. They can also be seen in the infrared photograph.

- Losses around the periphery of the work, especially at the four corners and down the right side.

Christ (Cat. no. 24a)

Observations:

- Losses, greater in the top left corner and lesser in the top right and around the periphery of the icon.

The piece of wood that had been inserted later and the fish glue with which it had been stuck (Fig. 16), and which had impregnated the wood of the icon, were removed. The wooden panel was repaired in the bottom right corner with balsa wood, placed in layers and glued. The wood was supported by four wooden pegs (two 8 mm and two 4 mm).

Saint James (Cat. no. 24b)

Observations:

- Use of the cloth, presumably for protection, only on one part of the icon, the bottom left corner.
- Filling in with coloured wax in an attempted aesthetic restoration, at the top and bottom, and around the periphery of the icon. Where the preparation has been lost the gap had been filled in with wax, which is also encountered in places on the ground of the icon.
- The whole surface of the panel has been badly damaged by xylophagous insects, with resultant weakening of the wood, which has been reinforced with fish glue at various times (Fig. 17).

Saint Demetrios on horseback (Cat. no. 27)

Observations:

- Gesso relief decoration on the ground.
- Extensive overpaintings which were removed.
- Losses at the points of the nails, along the cracks, at the centre of the right edge and to a lesser extent on the icon's periphery.
- Wax and filler with colour along the length of the cracks, as well as high up at the centre where there is loss due to nails.

Saint Peter (Cat. no. 28)

Observations:

- The word *XEIPOC* is legible, but not the name of the painter. The traces of black paint, bottom left, are what remained of the signature after previous conservation.
- Losses on the surface, especially on the green cloak, from previous conservation and after drastic chemical cleaning. Areas where there were paint losses had been restored with fillers and wax.
- Loss of a large part of the left side of the icon and a smaller area above, as

well as right and left. Almost all the red band and part of the gold missing from the upper part. Similar losses locally over the entire right side.

- Swollen sections on the green cloak, bottom right, caused by a nail.
- Subsidence at the edges on account of the rotten wood.
- Acute problem from xylophagous insects in the bottom left part. Loss of the top left corner of the wood which had been filled in during previous conservation with sawdust and glue, probably epoxy. The problem is apparent on the rest of the wooden panel too.

Pietà (Cat. no. 29)

Observations:

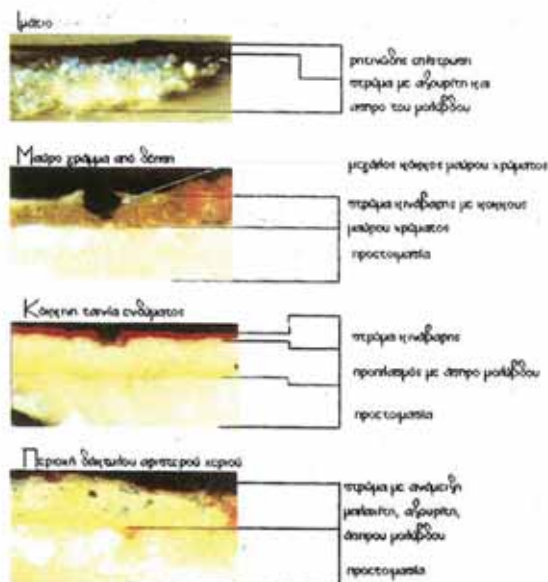
- Genuine signature of Emannuel Tzanes that follows all the craquelure of the paint surface, even that earlier than it.
- Inscriptions written twice in red paint.
- Small areas of flaking around the heads of the figures (on the hair of John and Joseph, and on the Virgin's maphorion).
- Extensive cracks, mainly on the gold ground of the icon.
- Four cracks down the large panel. Two large cracks extend down its entire height, reaching to the paint surface. The other two start from the top of the icon and are 7 and 14 cm long respectively. Warping of the larger of the broken pieces of the large panel.
- Overpaintings extending over the filler in the cracks, on the flaked areas (around the heads of the figures), on Christ's jaw and beard, on the Virgin's maphorion (where all the highlights were retouched in orange paint), on the red border and the inscriptions (repainted in red).

Saint Nicholas (Cat. no. 30)

Observations:

- Genuine signature of Emmanuel Tzanes and inscription, under the existing varnish and following the craquelure of the paint and the preparation (Figs 18, 19). The coat of arms is also under the existing varnish and follows the superficial crazing. However, the signature, the inscription and the coat of arms are all painted faintly; the paint is not as solid as on the rest of the work and is more like a kind of glaze (Fig. 20).
- Large sections of losses, particularly on the periphery, in the upper right section and left of the figure of the saint, as well as down the length of the epitachelion and on the lower part of the cloud.
- Extensive detachments of the preparation and paint over the entire surface of the work, as well as swelling locally. The phenomenon is exacerbated by the wax filler applied some time in the past over most of these sections.
- In several places this wax has been coloured and is tantamount to overpaintings.
- Considerable problems of cohesion due to the weakening of bonding with the preparation.
- Extensive crazing and limited flaking which has led to loss of some of the preparation.
- Filler on all the large areas of loss and a rather thick layer of wax, which in

20. Saint Nicholas, Cat. no. 30. Sections through the painted surface.





18. Saint Nicholas, Cat. no. 30.
Photograph of the icon before conservation.

19. Saint Nicholas, Cat. no. 30.
X-ray of the icon.

21. Saint Nicholas, Cat. no. 30.
Detail of cleaning.

22. Saint Nicholas, Cat. no. 30.
Detail of cleaning.

23. Saint Nicholas, Cat. no. 30.
Carpentry work-battens.

almost all cases coats a significant part of the work. The wax and the filler have been applied in two successive layers. All the filler was removed.

- Consolidation of the outlines of the icon and of large sections of losses with water-soluble glue (possibly fish glue) (Fig. 23).
- The empty space surrounding the icon indicates that a frame had been nailed to the wooden panel. For some unknown reason this frame was removed and replaced by a new one, in relief. Some pieces of this later frame had been repaired. During conservation the frame was removed because it was considerably later and not in keeping with the character and style of the icon.

The Transfiguration (Cat. no. 34)

Observations:

- Traces of black letters on the foreground bottom left.
- Loss of the paint surface due to chemical cleaning and rubbing, damage to the faces in the upper register and the whole figure of Christ (only the foundation is preserved).
- Quite large losses of sections of the painting at the centre and along the bottom side.
- Overpainting of the red band in black, later filler of very hard gesso, applied in two phases, and extensive retouching of the paint (all the lower part, the rocks, Christ's mandorla, the faces and the highlights on the garments), also covering adjacent areas of the original painting.
- Poor bonding with the panel around the effaced areas of the painting and at the bottom of the icon.

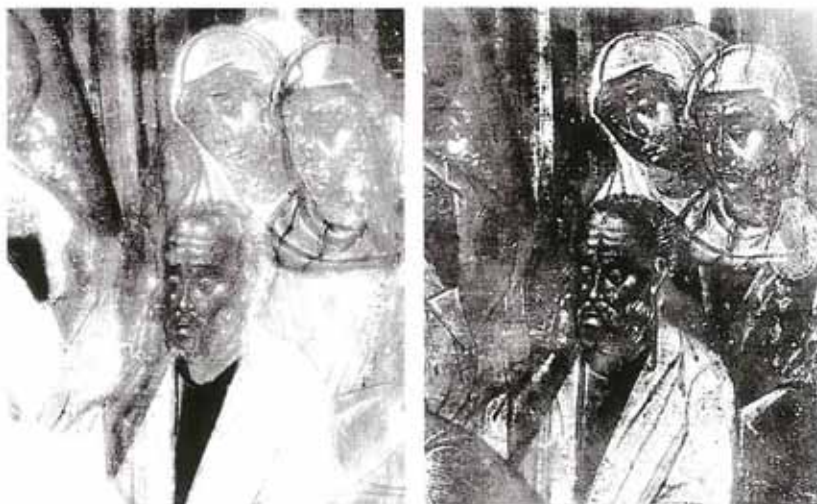
The Deesis (Cat. no. 35)

Observations:

- Signature: *A.X.M.Θ [X]EIP AE...*, which has been written twice (two layers of red paint).
- Overpaintings: a. Two layers on the red band. b. With green paint on the blue chitons of the Virgin and Christ, and in the foreground. c. With brown paint on the hair of the figures. These overpaintings were removed during conservation.
- Further filler and overpaintings belonging to two phases:
 1. Earlier intervention: Covering of damage to the blue-green himatia of Christ and the Virgin with fine hard gesso and overpainting. Dark reddish brown band all round with filler over the original orangey red, overpainting in places on the foreground and filler in the nail holes around the heads. Thick coat of varnish preserved in places.
 2. Later intervention: Covering of damage along the cracks with filler and retouching of the paint. New filler in the nail holes and overpainting in bronze powder and brown on the hair. Orange layer of a border band all round.
- Quite extensively affected by xylophagous insects, particularly on the two lateral sections.
- Six nails on the two battens, four on the head of each figure from metal haloes (?), and another twelve on the ground around the heads of the figures.

24. *The Dormition of the Virgin*, Cat. no. 36.
Detail, infrared photograph.

25. *The Dormition of the Virgin*, Cat. no. 36.
Detail, photograph in daylight.



The Dormition of the Virgin (Cat. no. 36)

Observations:

- Forged signature: *ΑΧΜΑ' ΠΟΙΗΜΑ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΜΟΚΚΟΥ*, written later covering damage, the gold dust imitating the original gold leaf, and even the preparation. The signature was not removed.
- Extensive loss of the paint layers due to flaking from the preparation on small surfaces, densely aligned. The paint has been restored in most of these

- places with water-soluble pigments (Figs 24, 25).
- Complete destruction of the green foreground.

The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist (Cat. no. 37)

Observations:

- Limited overpaintings on some damaged areas, selectively, with material resembling highly oxidized varnish (ground - building).
- Local losses of superficial layers, mainly on the ground, the flesh and the garments of the male figure.
- Very fine crazing over the entire surface as well as small vertical cracks beginning from the top and bottom.
- Two vertical, lengthwise swellings on the right side of the icon, corresponding to one batten. Swelling at about the centre of the icon, on the wall of the building.

The Dormition of the Virgin (Cat. no. 41)

Observations:

- Later, forged dedicatory inscription of Ioakeim Lambardos covering the crazing of the original paint layer.
- Extensive losses along the length of the cracks in the wood and in some places. The missing sections have been filled with gesso or wax along the cracks, on the perimeter, as well as at random on the paint surface. Remains of old oxidized varnishes preserved in places.

Saint James the Less (Cat. no. 45)

Observations:

- Later and remnants of earlier (not the original), highly oxidized varnish that covered damaged areas.
- Extensive losses on the perimeter of the icon, mainly on the bottom and the right side, where there is filler and restoration.
- Cutting of the icon along the bottom.
- Extensively affected by xylophagous insects.
- Weakening of the wooden panel.

The Descent from the Cross (Cat. no. 49)

Observations:

- Loss of sections mainly on the edges of the icon. At the of the bottom part the loss had been covered with wax and overpainted. On the wax filler the forged signature of Konstantinos Kontarinis, which has been kept.
- Swollen sections mainly at the points of the nails.
- Mechanical damage, pitting caused by blows to the bottom part.
- Gesso filler on gaps in the preparation at the centre of the icon.
- Gesso filler around the periphery of the icon, as well as at the centre towards the top.
- Removal of gesso filler existing on the perimeter of the icon, without restoration.

The Dormition of the Virgin (Cat. no. 54)

Observations:

- Extensive overpaintings over the entire surface, pronounced on the ground in the lower section, on the greens and blues, on the garments of the apostles and on the buildings. Notable overpainting on the faces, which was not removed.
- Wax filler applied locally, mainly on the cracks and the lower part of the work, intended to reinforce and consolidate the flaked sections.

The Dormition of the Virgin (Cat. no. 55)

Observations:

- Later signature *χειρ Κουλουμπή ιερέως τοῦ ἐκ Πεθύμνης ΑΧΙ*, which is not recorded in the X-ray. It is faintly visible in the infrared photograph and covers cracks in the work. The signature is not in the same hand as the letters of the title and it became apparent later that some letters were on top of the varnish.
- Extensive remains of varnish, presumably the original, locally over the entire surface, as well as remains of a layer of lac, mainly on the bier and on the garments of the Virgin and Christ.
- Localized losses mainly on the periphery of the work, as well as a small crack in the lower section.

The Lamentation (Cat. no. 56)

Observations:

- Possibly a genuine signature *χειρ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ ΝΟΜΙΚΟΥ*. After research using various methods there were no indications that the signature is not authentic, even though it is not entirely convincing.
- Removal of one of the two original battens and placement of two later ones with screws.
- Eight nails across the length and width of the frame on the paint surface.

Two-register icon: Deesis and two saints (Cat. no. 59)

Observations:

- Loss of original paints and considerable loss of gold ground.
- Flaking of paint from the gold ground. Losses on the dragon's leg in the representation of Saint George and just below.
- Extensive overpainting, mainly on the ground and less on the garments of Saint George and Saint Demetrios, on the tail of the left horse and on the letters.

Two-register icon: Deesis and three saints (Cat. no. 62)

Observations:

- Genuine signature preserved: *χειρ Δημητρίου Ζούκη από Καλαρρύτες 1781*.
- Silver patterns on the maphorion and the chitons, as well as on the gospel books, the stoles and the epigonatia. In some places the varnish was quite thick and highly oxidized, mainly on the border band and the Virgin.
- Considerable paint losses caused by previous cleaning of the paint surface.
- Textile in the joins of the wood.

26. The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn,
Cat. no. 14. Photograph taken before
conservation.



F. THE CONSERVATION OF THE ICON

The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn (Cat. no. 14)

1. The icon (Fig. 26) was one of the most difficult dealt with in the laboratory. The numerous interventions with fillers, overpaintings, gilding with bronze powder, coloured wax, nails and many other materials had significantly altered the icon's original aspect and its aesthetic and technical restoration was imperative.

Its restoration required extensive research on the work beforehand, in order to detect and record the interventions, the damage and the painter's technique.

2. All the research methods mentioned in chapter C were applied. Macro-photographs were taken of the icon, using panchromatic film, and diapositives. Photographs were taken through the stereomicroscope for details of painting at small magnifications (12-24 mm), as well as for processed cross-sections of painting at large magnifications (100-200 mm). The cross-sections were taken from the following points (Fig. 27):

Stanza V: Elizabeth's green mantle.

Stanza V: pink house.

Stanza XI: greenish white building

Stanza XIV: hand of the male figure left of the mandorla.

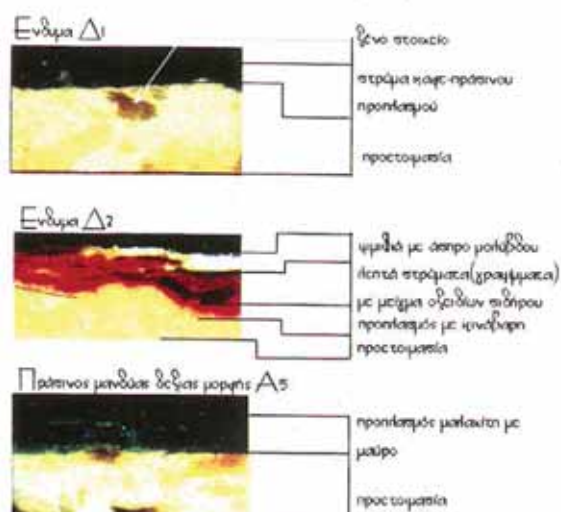
Stanza XVIII: lac on the right figure.

Stanza XIX: orange garment from damage left.

Stanza XIX: green garment.

Stanza XX: red garment.

Detailed infrared and ultraviolet photographs were also taken, and lastly two X-ray plates that cover the entire work (Fig. 28).



27. The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn,
Cat. no. 14. Sections through the painted surface.



28. *The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn*, Cat. no. 14. X-ray of the right side of the icon. Visible are the batten, the nails and the missing areas of the painted surface that have been overpainted.



29. *The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn*, Cat. no. 14. Detail from two stanzas showing the extent of the intervention.

Research revealed the following:

Overpaintings were observed over the entire surface of the icon, on the highlights and especially on the faces. Large-scale interventions were observed on several stanzas, as in virtually the whole scene of Stanza XI, in which the original painting is not preserved, and Stanza XVII in which half the representation is overpainted. Considerable interventions were also noted on stanzas I, II, III, IV, VI, XII, XXIII, XXIV.

Interventions with filler and numerous overpaintings also existed on stanzas V, VIII, IX, XI, XIII, XIV, XVII, XXII.

These interventions date from at least two different periods. To the first, which must be quite early (Fig. 29), are attributed the more tasteful restorations of the paint on damaged areas, that usually cover a large part of the surrounding paint as well. This intervention may have been preceded by an attempted cleaning that caused further damage to the paint surface. It was completed by varnishing the work on top of the remnants of the old varnish. The second intervention was probably made before the end of the nineteenth century. It involved mainly gildings with false gold leaf (bronze powder), which had oxidized and created a green coat (rust) where it was used, local overpaintings on the highlights and varnishing. During this intervention, or possibly a third in the early twentieth century, areas of damage were filled in with coloured wax and the wooden battens were replaced by metal ones. The old battens were removed by sawing through the nails.

The following observations were made on the paint surface:

- Dessication on the lower part of Stanza XIX, at a point where there was filler and overpainting, and not the original paint.
 - Flaking over the entire icon, acute in stanzas XIX and XX.
 - Swollen sections on account of the nails in stanzas VII and XIII.
 - Losses of large sections of paint and preparation in stanzas VII, XIX, XXIII.
3. After studying the results of the research, the conservation was planned. The most important problem that emerged clearly was the removal of the varnish layers and the overpaintings, which is how the conservation began (Figs 30, 31). The R. Feller test was applied to the J.P. Teas triangle in order to determine the solubility first of all of the new varnish (51 N). For the new varnish the solvent Toluene 25% + Cellosolve 75% with N 51.5 was used. This solvent was chosen because it removed the varnish without removing the overpaintings. The cleaning was done with cotton-wool swabs and the assistance of a mechanical aid (scalpel), with continuous monitoring through the stereo-microscope (Fig. 32).

Preservation of the overpaintings was quite difficult to achieve, for which reason cleaning progressed very slowly, without the use of compresses. Even so the overpainting tended to flake in stanzas XI and XIX, on account of the solvent, but it was successfully consolidated with a 20% solution of Primal AC33 in water.

In those places where there was no overpainting and the original paint was covered by remains of early resin (wherever this had not been removed in the previous conservation) and later varnish, the remnants were removed with Toluene 50% + Pyrrolidone 50%. This cleaning was executed on a few

30. *The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn*,
Cat. no. 14. The icon with the bottom
part cleaned. Photograph in daylight.

31. *The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn*,
Cat. no. 14. The icon with the bottom part
cleaned. Ultraviolet photograph.



32. *The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn*,
Cat. no. 14. Detail of cleaning.



33. *The Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn*,
Cat. no. 14. Carpentry work-battens.

sections of the icon and mainly on the gold ground, sections of which were overpainted with gold paint (bronze powder). The gold paint was removed from the ground with a mixture of Toluene 50% + Pyrrolidone 50%. Where the gold paint was on top of preparation or filler it was removed with the same solvent and mechanical means.

The overpaintings were removed only in those places where the original painting was preserved. These were located from the diagnostic photographs and the X-ray which showed up the losses of the original painting. The overpaintings were removed mainly by mechanical means (scalpel), with constant monitoring through the stereomicroscope. This was quite easy because the overpainting was on filler that covered the original painting and the varnish. In some places Toluene 25% + Cellosolve 75% or water was used in addition to mechanical means. Water was also used to remove part of the filler that covered the gold ground in the upper section of the icon (stanzas I, II, III). The test cleanings showed that the final mixture is also effective in removing the resin and does not remove the overpaintings, which was important for this icon, since we wanted to keep some parts as they are.

After cleaning the paint and the preparation were consolidated carefully with acrylic resin (Plextol 500) and by pressing locally on the areas that presented a special problem, while in other areas a heated spatula was used. The sections of paint loss around the periphery, which were vulnerable to continuous damage were reinforced by rimming with Lascaux adhesive wax. In order for the restoration of the wooden panel to proceed safely, the painted surface of the icon was protected with Eltoline paper and SCMC. First the metal battens were removed, exposing the sawn off nails, which were also removed. Then the cracks were restored with cross-section parquetry.

The relatively large size of the icon and the condition of the wooden panel necessitated mechanical support with battens. In the end three movable aluminium battens supported on perspex cylinders were placed on the back (Fig. 33).

Lastly, aesthetic restoration was mainly carried out on the minor damage, since the earlier interventions were preserved. In some cases the edge of the wood remained clean after cleaning. Additions were made with acrylic resin (Paraloid B72 15% + diacetone alcohol + ethyl alcohol) and powdered pigment.

G. THE CONSERVATION OF THE ICONS IN THE VELIMEZIS DONATION TO THE BENAKI MUSEUM

Some of the particular problems encountered in the conservation of certain icons in the Velimezis donation to the Benaki Museum are noted.

34. *Saint Matthew, Cat. no. 13. The icon during the stage of removing the filler that covered it.*

35. *Saint Matthew, Cat. no. 13. The icon after conservation.*



Saint Matthew (Cat. no. 13)

This icon (Figs 34, 35) was discovered in late 1975. In the course of re-exhibiting the icons in the Museum, I was asked to help to hang them. While trying to figure out how best to hang the icon of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Cat. no. 33), I noticed that the back of its wooden panel was covered with a thick filler and that in some damaged areas of this paint could be seen.

After elementary research — given that the Museum laboratory did not then have the necessary equipment — it was ascertained that a painted representation existed under the filler and that the icon was double-sided. The filler was then removed and the figure of Saint Matthew revealed. The icon had been cut off top and bottom in order to achieve the dimensions desired by the painter of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, who was not Damaskenos, since the signature on the work was shown to be forged; it had been written on top of the original one as well as the later varnish, with little dots to give the impression of an eroded signature. The varnish was then cleaned off.

As soon as the icon's importance was realized, the problem of how to exhibit it arose, since the scene of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple already existed on the other side.

The prevailing view at that time was to separate the two icons so that each be exhibited individually. They were separated by slicing the wooden panel into two parts of equal thickness, which were then supported by movable aluminium battens on perspex bases. Perhaps the problem would have been confronted differently today.

The Descent from the Cross (Cat. no. 40)

The icon presented two essential problems: extremely thick varnish which was difficult to dissolve, and a badly constructed panel resulting in many cracks. There were also several later interventions and an obviously forged signature of K. Kairophylas, which was written on top of the varnish and the damage. This icon, like some others in the Velimezis donation, was conserved recently so that it could be studied better for publication.

COLLABORATORS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE CONSERVATION OF THE ICONS

Argyros Vasilis: Cat. nos 18, 43.
 Broumas Vasilis: Cat. nos 24, 29, 47, 48, 56.
 Doulberi Sophia: Cat. nos 7, 21, 24, 29, 46, 49, 60, 67.
 Grammatikos Charis: Cat. no. 27.
 Kakousiou Katerina: Cat. nos 1, 24, 48, 56, 62, 63, 64, 65.
 Kalliga Alexandra: Cat. nos 10, 16, 17, 25, 29, 36, 37, 54.
 Milanou Kalypso: Cat. nos 26, 38.
 Nadali Elisabet: Cat. nos 44, 46, 58, 59, 61.
 Nikolopoulou Vasiliki: Cat. nos 3, 6, 20, 34, 46, 49, 60, 67.
 Pasko Maria Louisa: Cat. nos 24, 48, 49, 53, 56, 67, 72.
 Pharmakalidou Lenia: Cat. nos 1, 2, 14, 15, 28.
 Smyrnakis Nikolaos, Cat. nos 12, 17, 30, 55.
 Vourvopoulou Chrysa: Cat. nos 32, 40, 41, 59, 61, 72.
 Vranopoulou Lena: Cat. nos 5, 16, 19, 34, 35, 41, 45, 51, 72.

NOTES

1. This method revealed various problems on the following icons:
 Cat. no. 6: Thick varnish layers which had been scraped locally in a bad previous cleaning.
 Cat. no. 2: Filler, gildings and overpaintings on the gold and a second layer of gold.
 Cat. no. 16: Numerous overpaintings and gildings.
 Cat. no. 54: Numerous overpaintings, mainly on the faces.
 Cat. no. 7: Local interventions and oxidations of the paint.
 Cat. no. 24b: Old filling in with coloured wax.
 Cat. no. 29: A large crack which had caused the painting to shift (on the halo).
 Cat. no. 5: Numerous overpaintings, wax, problems of bonding with the wooden panel, highly oxidized varnish locally.
2. Microphotography revealed problems in the following works:
 Cat. no. 34: problem of poor bonding of the paint layer with the wooden panel.
 Cat. no. 19: Thick varnish, crazing (craquelure) on the varnish and the paint. The varnish on the ground had been scraped off in previous conservation, resulting in the destruction of the signature at the bottom right of the icon. The signature is discernible on the gold preserved here but is not legible.
 Cat. no. 16: Forged signature of Ioannis Moskos.

- Cat. no. 29: Genuine signature of Emmanuel Tzanes.
 Cat. no. 56: Genuine signature: *χειρ Δημητρίου Νομικοῦ*.
 Cat. no. 49: Forged signature of Konstantinos Kontarinis written over the damage.
 Cat. no. 44: Genuine signature: *χειρ Κωνσταντίνου Κονταρίνη 1738*.
 Cat. no. 55: Forged signature: *χειρ Κωνσταντίνου Κονταρίνη 1738*.
 Cat. no. 62: Genuine signature: *χειρ Δημητρίου Ζούνη*.
 Cat. no. 46: Genuine signature: *χειρ Νικολάου Καλλιέργη ΑΨΜΑ*.
 Cat. no. 41: Forged dedicatory inscription of Ioakeim Lambardos.
3. With this method various problems invisible to the naked eye were detected in the following icons:
 - Cat. no. 14: Overpaintings, bad application and uneven surface of the varnish.
 - Cat. no. 2: Overpaintings and gildings on the gold ground in different periods.
 - Cat. no. 19: Thick varnish which obscured all features in the icon.
 - Cat. no. 16: The forged signature was obvious.
 - Cat. no. 49: The varnish was so thick that nothing else could be seen except the test cleanings.
 - Cat. no. 28: The quantity of varnish and wax was detected.
 - Cat. no. 5: The wax was clearly visible.
 - Cat. no. 58: The overpaintings were detected.
 - Cat. no. 17: A difference was detected between the woodcarved and the painted part. The painted part had been varnished excessively and cleaned drastically in the past, while the frame had not been touched.
 4. This method showed up the difference in texture between the authentic paint surface and the overpaintings in Cat. no. 14.
 5. Cat. no. 19: The overpaintings on the damaged areas, the drawings and the sketch were enhanced, as well as the painter's technique.
 - Cat. no. 16: The later intervention on the faces was ascertained.
 - Cat. no. 55: The original drawing in the detail of the city, painted with a brush, showed up. The forged signature on the work was not recorded.
 - Cat. no. 5: Despite the very thick varnish, the painting and the preliminary sketch showed up clearly.
 6. Cat. no. 34: The nails of the battens, the gaps in the painting and the preliminary sketch were visible.
 - Cat. no. 14: The gaps in the painting were detected.
 - Cat. no. 19: The clinch nails joining the two planks of the panel, as well as the battens showed up. Damage on the Virgin's neck, not visible to the naked eye, was observed.
 - Cat. no. 16: The construction of the wooden panel, the incised sketch, the battens, the nails, and the cloth stuck to the panel showed up.
 - Cat. no. 36: The old nails of the battens, sawn off and rusted, can be seen. Loss of paint on Christ's halo and rusting of the nail were observed, while the clinch nails joining the two planks of the panel can be seen.
 - Cat. no. 29: Large and small cracks, knots in the wood, nails, battens, cracks in the painting, a rusty nail and the clinch nail that once joined the two planks of wood were detected. It seems that the painter used second-hand wood.
 - Cat. no. 28: The cross on the back of the panel and not held by Saint Peter became visible.
 - Cat. no. 41: The serious problem of the crack and the construction of the frame became apparent.
 7. Cat. no. 72: Fake craquelure by incising the paint was observed.
 8. Cat. no. 58: Excessively thick varnish on Joachim's head.
 9. Cat. no. 20: Restoration bottom right by adding a piece of wood, after the damage had been squared off.
 - Cat. no. 28: Rimming with wax, rotten wood, filler of fish glue mixed with sawdust.
 10. Cat. no. 6: Very thick layers of varnish. Previous cleaning during which the varnish layers had been scraped off locally.
 11. Cat. no. 54: Classic example of cleaning by the old method, with some areas excessively cleaned and others on which the original varnish remained.
 - Cat. no. 49: After the varnish was removed the painter's technique was revealed.

- Cat. no. 62: Characteristic example of a previous selective cleaning, in which the light areas have been cleaned, whereas on the area of the Virgin's garments, which present considerable difficulties, no attempt has been made to remove the varnish.
12. Cat. no. 24: During cleaning the overpaintings were removed and the original paint revealed.
13. Cat. no. 24a: Extensive restoration of the wood some time in the past. New balsa wood was inserted, cut to the size of the damaged parts.
Cat. no. 24b: The damage to the back of the panel was repaired by inserting balsa wood and wood filler.
Cat. no. 3: Prior to conservation there were iron battens on the panel, excessively heavy for such a small work. There was also abundant use of wax filler.
14. Cat. no. 16: On account of the thinness of the icon, battens were placed to hold together the three planks of its panel.
15. Cat. no. 20: Restoration of the bottom right part of the icon by adding wood after squaring off the damage.
Cat. no. 24a: An earlier restoration of the wood was replaced by inserting new wood cut to the size of the damage. Problems to the painting caused by humidity.
16. Cat. no. 14: The old retouchings on the paint were kept, the later ones were removed and minimal restorations were made on small areas of damage.

TABLE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN CATALOGUE NUMBER
AND NUMBERS IN EARLIER LISTS AND CATALOGUES

S U B J E C T	Cat. no	V.L.	V.R.	B.M.	M.Ch.	M.Ch.a	M.Ch.B.M.
Virgin Hodegetria	1	16			16		
Virgin of Tenderness	2	12			2		
Virgin of Tenderness	3	41			35		
Virgin Hodegetria	4						
The Triumph of Orthodoxy	5	210					
Saint Nicholas enthroned	6	10			6		
Saint Alexios	7	22	8		19		
The Entry into Jerusalem	8	2	26	3723		2	8
The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist	9			3732			10
Saint John the Baptist	10	21	14		17		
Virgin enthroned	11	14			10		
The Raising of Lazarus	12	3	11	3724		3	9
Saint Matthew	13			3735			
The Twenty-four Stanzas of the Akathistos Hymn	14	9	4		8		
The Adoration of the Magi	15	204					
Saint Paraskevi and scenes from her life	16	18			14		
The Passion of Christ - Pietà	17	216	21				
Saint Andrew	18	1		3722		1	1
Head of the Virgin	19	13	1		3		
Christ Great High Priest	20	8	3		7		
Head of Christ	21	7			5		
Saint Anthony	22	43			18		
Triptych with Deesis and two saints	23	222					
Epistyle of an iconostasis	24a-c	25a-c			9		
Saint Procopius	25	45	7		38		
Saint Catherine	26	6	12	3726		6	5
Saint Demetrios on horseback	27	35			29		
Saint Peter	28	49	5				
Pietà	29	27	34		23		
Saint Nicholas	30	29			24		
The Miracle of the Holy Girdle	31	28		3728		28	16
Saint Gbdelaas	32	30	10	3727		30	17
The Presentation of Christ in the Temple	33			3735			4
The Transfiguration	34	4	32		4		
Deesis	35	37	22		31		
The Dormition of the Virgin	36	19			13		
The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist	37	38			32		
The Crucifixion	38	39		3730	33		
The Descent from the Cross	39	32	18	3729	26	32	18
The Descent from the Cross	40	5	19	3725		5	7
The Dormition of the Virgin	41	211					
The Doubting of Thomas	42	218					
Saint Alexander	43	47			40		

S U B J E C T	Cat. no	V.L.	V.R.	B.M.	M.Ch.	M.Ch.a	M.Ch.B.M.
Saint Antypas	44	48			41		
Saint James the Less	45	36			30		
Saint Spyridon	46	201	39				
The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple	47	203	28				
The Annunciation	48	202	27				
The Descent from the Cross	49	46	20		39		
The Adoration of the Shepherds	50			3733			
The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist	51			3731			
Prophet Elijah and Saint Basil	52	24	13		21		
The Virgin of Kykkos	53	212					
The Dormition of the Virgin	54	20			15		
The Dormition of the Virgin	55	50			42		
The Lamentation	56	44			37		
The Lamentation	57	51	30		43		
The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple - Saint Catherine	58	215	24				
Deesis and two saints	59	217					
The Virgin the Unwithering Rose and saints	60	55			47		
Virgin Galaktotrophousa	61	205	6				
Deesis and three saints	62	56	17		48		
Saint John Chrysostom	63	26	16		22		
Saint James enthroned	64	221					
Saint Nicholas	65	207					
The Virgin of Vladimir	66	219					
Saint John the Baptist	67	220					
Virgin and Child	68	209	40				
The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple	69	224					
The Presentation of Christ in the Temple	70	225					
Head of Christ	71	230					
Woodcarved frame	72	214					

Key

Cat. no. = number in the present Catalogue.

V.L. = number in the list in the archive of the Velimezis Collection.

V.R. = number in Emīlios Velimezis's registration with the Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, 1938.

B.M. = number in the Benaki Museum inventory.

M.Ch. = number in Manolis Chatzidakis's catalogue (Chatzidakis 1945).

M.Ch.a = number in Manolis Chatzidakis's supplementary catalogue of certain icons donated to the Benaki Museum. Typewritten text, untitled and without continuous numbering of the pages, prepared in 1945; it includes nine icons not in numerical order, one of which (no. 31, Saint Gobdelaas) was not donated to the Museum and has not been located.

M.Ch.B.M. = number in the catalogue of icons in the Benaki Museum (Chatzidakis, *Catalogue of Icons in the Benaki Museum*, n.d.).

ICONS IN THE VELIMEZIS COLLECTION THAT HAVE NOT BEEN LOCATED

I. MANOLIS CHATZIDAKIS CATALOGUE, 1945

	M.Ch.	V.L.	V.R.
1. Virgin Hodegetria	1		
2. Pentecost	11		15
3. Virgin Hodegetria	12		
4. Saint Gerasimos the ascetic	20		
5. Saint Gobdelaas	25	31	
6. The Baptism	27		
7. Saint George on horseback	28		
8. Head of the Virgin	34	40	2
9. The Crucifixion	36		
10. Pietà (Virgin Threnodousa or Lypemeni)	44	52	35
11. Virgin Hodegetria	45	53	38

II. LIST OF ICONS REGISTERED BY VELIMEZIS (V.R. 1938)

1. V.R. 9 = All Saints.
2. V.R. 23 = Christ blessing.
3. V.R. 25 = Virgin Galaktotrophousa.
4. V.R. 29 = Five saints.
5. V.R. 36 = Saint Matthew the Evangelist.
6. V.R. 37 = Saint Luke the Evangelist.

III. VELIMEZIS LIST

1. V.M. no. 8 = The Dormition of the Virgin, oval with frame.
2. V.M. no. 9 = The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple.

IV. WITHOUT CATALOGUE NUMBER

1. = The Visitation.
2. = Archangel Michael.

BIBLIOGRAPHY - ABBREVIATIONS

BCH = *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*.

CahArch = *Cahiers Archéologiques*.

DOP = *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*.

JÖB = *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik*.

AAA = *Αρχαιολογικά Ανάλεκτα* εξ Αθηνών.

ΑΔ = *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον*.

ΑΕ = *Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς*.

ΔΧΑΕ = *Δελτίον Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*.

ΕΕΒΣ = *Επιτηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών*.

ΚρητΧρον = *Κρητικά Χρονικά*.

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