The Iconography of Sanctuary Doors from Patmos and its Place in the Iconographic Program of the Byzantine Iconostasis

By

Georgios Kellaris

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Department of Art history

McGill University

March, 1991

Montréal, Québec, Canada

ABSTRACT

The iconostasis is the most characteristic feature of the Orthodox Church. The metaphysical conception of the space of the church prompted its emergence, and the mystical interpretation of the Liturgy determined its evolution. These aspects were reflected in the iconographic program of the iconostasis. The sanctuary doors are the only part of the Patmian iconostases bearing figurative decoration. The study of the themes on the doors reveals an iconographic program with strong liturgical character. Furthermore, this program encompasses the entire range of the mystical symbolism pertaining to the iconostasis. The analysis indicates that the doors are instrumental in the function of the iconostasis as a liturgical device aiming at a greater unity between the earthly and the divine realms.

RÉSUMÉ

L'iconostase est un élément indispe.. ible de l'Église Orthodoxe. La raison de sa naissance se trouve dans la conception métaphysique de l'éspace ecclésiastique et sa évolution a été determiné par l'interprétation mystique de la liturgie. Ces aspects sont reflétés par le programme iconographique de l'iconostase. Dans les iconostases de Patmos la porte est la seule section où se trouve des décorations figuratives. L'étude de thèmes trouvé sur ces portes révèle un programme iconographique de caractère liturgique. De plus, ce programme contient tous les aspects du symbolisme mystique attaché à l'iconostase. Cet analyse des oeuvres patmiennes suggère que les portes étaient instrumentales par rapport à la fonction de l'iconostase comme un appareil liturgique qui réunit le royaume divin et terrestre.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my profound gratitude to Professor G. Galavaris for the suggestion of the topic, and inspired guidance throughout this project. His extreme patience, and ceaseless support have been greatly appreciated. To the Department of Art History I am obliged for an enlightening and stimulating course of study, as well as for facilitating my sojourn here in every possible way.

I am also thankful to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for financial assistance in the award of the Max Binz Fellowship.

From the many friends in Greece who facilitated my access to publications, I am particularly indebted to Ms. E. Gerontakou, Ms. A. Oikonomou, and Ms. E. Vasileiou. I thank them all sincerely.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to my devoted friend, Monika Tsakanika. The completion of this study would have been impossible without her assistance and unconditional support.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The illustrations included here have been reproduced from the following publications:

Figs. 2, 6, 13-19, 23, 28-29, 31-34, 36, and 39-41 from M. Chatzidakis, *Icons of Patmos*, Athens, 1985.

Figs. 3, 5, 7, 12, 24-27, and 30 from Ch. Koutelakis, *Woodcarved templa of Dodecanesos until 1700*, Athens, 1983.

Figs. 8-11 from P. Vocotopoulos, "Les miniatures d'un manuscrit Crétois de 1600", *D.X.A.E.* period 4, vol. XIII (1985-1986), pp. 191-208.

Figs. 4 and 35 from *Patmos, Treasures of the Monastery*, Athens, 1989.

Fig. 1 from C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture*, New York, 1976.

Fig. 20 from A. Grabar, "Deux notes sur l'histoire de l'iconostase d'après des monuments de Jougoslavie", *Zbornik Radova Byzantoloskog Instituta* 7 (1961), pp. 13-22.

Figs. 20, and 37-38 from K. Fatourou, *Patmian Architecture. The Church of the Holy Apostles as a Typical Example of Patmian Style*, Athens, 1962.

Fig. 42 from C. Stornajolo, *Miniature delle Omilie di Giacomo Monaco e dell'Evangeliario Greco Urbinate*, Rome, 1910.

The drawing of the fig. 22 is based on a photograph in S. Pelekanides "Byzantine bema-door from Mount Athos", *Archailogikê Ephemeris* 96 (1957), pp. 50-67.

ABBREVIATIONS

Chatzidakis, *Icons*:	M. Chatzidakis, Icons of Patmos, in Greek, Athens, 1977; in English, Athens, 1985. The quotations refer to the English edition.
Chatzidakis,"L'évolution":	M. Chatzidakis, "L'évolution de l'icône aux 11e 13e siècles et la transformation du templon", *Actes du XVe Congrès International d'Etudes Byzantines*, Athens 1976, vol. I, pp. 333-366.
D.X.A.E.:	*Deltion tes Christianikes Archeologikes Etaireias*, Athens.
Galavaris, *Elvehjem Centre*:	G. Galavaris, *Icons from the Elvehjem Centre*, Madison, 1973.
Grabar, "Deux notes":	A. Grabar, "Deux notes sur l'histoire de l'iconostase après des monuments de Jougoslavie", *Zbornik Radova Byzantoloskog Instituta* 7 (1961), pp. 13-22.
Lazarev, "Trois fragments":	V. Lazarev, "Trois fragments d'épistyles peintes et le templon byzantin", *D.X.A.E.* period 4, vol. IV (1964-1965), pp. 117-143.
Koutelakis, *Templa*:	Ch. Koutelakis, *Woodcarved Templa of Dodecanesos until 1700* (in Greek with English summary), Athens, 1983.
Millet, *Recherches*:	G. Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'Evangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles d'après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont Athos*, Paris, 1916, reprint, Paris, 1960.
RbK:	*Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* ed. By Klaus Wessel and Marcel Restle, 4 vols., Stuttgart 1966-1990.

INTRODUCTION

For centuries the iconostasis has been an indispensable feature of the Orthodox Church particularly in the spatial organization of the place of worship, as well as in the performance of the Liturgy. It has repeatedly attracted the attention of scholars mostly from the point of view of its origin and evolution as well as its contribution to the development of the Orthodox rite. The focus of these discussions is usually on the typology of the forms or the decoration of the entablature, at the expense of other parts of the iconostasis, most noticeably the sanctuary doors. Isolated examples of sanctuary doors have been published either in general works dealing with portable icons, or in works referring to iconostasis as a whole. This thesis is an attempt to address the significance of the sanctuary doors in understanding the function of the iconostasis.

The choice of Patmos was determined upon many reasons. As a monastic community and a pilgrimage site, the island of the Apocalypse, has been enjoying enormous reverence in the Orthodox world and in all of Christendom. The material itself was a determinant factor. The Patmian iconostases have been preserved in great numbers and come from the "golden age" of the island (15th-17th centuries). They consist of a cohesive ensemble of first quality works of art which were produced by one of the most important artistic centres of the time, namely Crete. The cohesiveness of the material gives the student the opportunity to observe a broad range of solutions given to various problems. Most of the

iconostases survive in their totality and, in this respect, are a fine set for a comprehensive study of the sanctuary doors.

The accessibility of the material was not a less important factor for this choice. The profound knowledge of M. Chatzidakis has been poured into an exemplary publication of the *Icons of Patmos* (Athens, 1985), where a number of sanctuary doors have been included. Apart from the discussion of the icons themselves, the book is also valuable for its introductory chapters with an erudite account on the historical background of the monastic community and on matters of artistic production. The book of Ch. Koutelakis, *Woodcarved Templa from Dodecanesos* (Athens, 1983), although concentrating more on the sculptural decoration of the iconostases, is extremely useful for the student to obtain a complete picture of the entire program of each iconostasis.

The present study focuses on the iconographic repertory of the Patmian sanctuary doors and the importance of the Liturgy in the formation and arrangement of this program. A great part of the choreography of the mass revolves around the doors of the iconostasis. The symbolism of this choreography found its pictorial representation on the doors. In this context problems of date, style and artistic attribution have, therefore, been left out of the discussion. Spatial limitations also dictated the inclusion of the published material only.

The Patmian iconostases belong to a late period, and presuppose ideas which were exploited throughout the long history of the evolution of the iconostasis. For this reason it was considered wise in the first chapter to briefly outline the evolution of its forms, and of the basic symbolism attached to it.

The second chapter concentrates on the characteristics of the Patmian iconostases (the forms and the arrangement of the decoration). With regard to certain peculiarities attention is drawn to the problem of the workshops responsible for the execution of the iconostases.

Against this background, then follows the discussion of the iconographic themes of the sanctuary doors themselves. Particular emphasis is placed on the liturgical aspects of the iconography, and on the relation between the subject matter and the space where it is depicted.

In the concluding chapter the repertory of the bema doors is examined with regard to the importance of the iconostasis in the spatial arrangement of the church, the character of the Liturgy, and the actual performance of the sacrament.

CHAPTER ONE

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ICONOSTASIS[1]

When adopting the basilican plan, the Christians also took over the hierarchical arrangement of the space. The apse was reserved for the New Emperor (Christ) and his administrators, the bishop and the clergy with appropriate sitting arrangement as shown in the *synthronon* and the episcopal throne. Architecturally this distinction was made clear by either elevating the floor of the apse by a few steps, or by enclosing the sanctuary with a low balustrade (a row of pillars with slabs in between) in straight or π-like shape. The central opening of the balustrade was emphasized either by a prostoön or an arch.[2]

By the end of the 4th or the beginning of the 5th century the chancel barrier took the form of a portico. Colonnettes were added to the top of the pillars supporting an horizontal beam. The space between the pillars was closed by low slabs (fig. 1). In the 6th century monolithic columns replaced the pillars and colonnettes. According to literary sources and contemporary monuments this arrangement facilitated the closing of the upper part of the intercolumnar spaces with curtains (vela).[3] At certain moments during the Liturgy (the reciting of the *Anaphora* i.e. the thanksgiving prayer in the Mass) the veils would be drawn in order to hide

---

[1] For an excellent account of the history of the iconostasis, see M.Chatzidakis, "Ikonostas", *RbK* III, cols. 326-353.

[2] *RbK* III, col. 328.

[3] *RbK* III, col. 328-9.

the sanctuary. This change can be considered the turning point in the history of the iconostasis.[1]

As part of the architecture the sanctuary screen received aniconic ornamentation, taken from the repertory of the Early Christian symbols, namely the sign of the cross, christograms and staurograms, vine and acanthus scrolls, peacocks and the like.[2]

The earliest evidence of figurative decoration on the sanctuary screen dates from the 6th century. According to Paul the Silentiary, in his *Ekphrasis of the Church of Hagia Sophia* in Constantinople (ca. 546), medallions with the figures of Christ, the Angels, the Apostles, the Prophets, and the Virgin decorated the architrave of the luxurious, silver covered screen.[3] Similar figures in marble reliefs also decorated the

---

[1] This change originated in the Syrian rite of the Liturgy according to which the sacrament is "most fearful" to behold (*phrikodestaton* according to St.Cyril of Jerusalem, ca.348). The veil was introduced,therefore, to remove the dread of the Holy from the faithful. The idea rapidly gained ground in the Byzantine rite, too. More on this change in Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* ,2nd ed. London, 1945, 2nd reprint, New York, 1983, pp.480ff.. For a brief account on the evolution of the Byzantine Liturgy, see Hugh Wybrew, "The Byzantine Liturgy from the Apostolic Constitutions to the present day" in *The Study of the Liturgy*, ed. by Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, SJ, London, 1978, pp.208-219.

[2] For the symbolic character of the Early Christian ornamentation see Lazarev, "Trois fragments", p.125 n.2.

[3] The obscurity of the poetic text has given ground to a long discussion about the exact form of the screen. The location of those medallions, their form and arrangement, has also been widely disputed along with the question whether or not they formed a specific iconographic program. The restoration proposed by S.G. Xydis ("The Chancel Barrier, Solea, and Ambo of Hagia Sophia", *Art Bulletin* 29, 1947, pp.1-24, esp. pp. 1-11) has since been taken as the basis for any further suggestion (e.g. K. Kreidl-Papadopoulos, "Bemerkungen zum justinianischen Templon der Sophienkirche in Konstantinopel", *Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 17, (1968), pp. 279-289).

screen of another Constantinopolitan church, that of St. Polyeuctes.[1]

During the Iconoclastic Controversy (8th and 9th centuries) the decoration of the screen, and of the entire church was dominated by aniconic motifs. These motifs outlived the crisis and were incorporated into the ornamental repertory of the Byzantine art.[2]

The challenges of the Iconoclasm on a theological level resulted in liturgical changes which were adequately served by a chancel barrier of the portico-type.[3] After the triumph of the icons (843), figural representations returned to the sanctuary screen and formed specific iconographic programs with dogmatic significance. The holy figures mentioned by Paul the Silentiary on the screen of Hagia Sophia are now arranged into a *Deësis*; that is, Christ in the centre, flanked by the Virgin and St. John the Baptist who turn towards Him (*trimorphon*). This central nucleus is often expanded with the addition of Apostles, Evangelists, and other saints (*Great Deësis*).[4] The figurative decoration turned the architrave into the most important part of the iconostasis and the term *templon* has been used ever since with reference to the entire

---

[1] *RbK* III, col.330.

[2] See Lazarev, "Trois fragments", pp.123-125 for the continuation of the iconoclastic themes in later times as well as for the differences between pre-and post-iconoclastic decorative motifs.

[3] Cf. *RbK* III, col. 330, and Chatzidakis, "L'évolution", p.333.

[4] The absence of the Prophets from the Middle Byzantine *Deësis* is due to the liturgical aspects of the New Testament which increasingly gained importance at the expense of Old Testament themes (K. Weitzmann, "Die byzantinischen Elfenbeine eines Bamberger Graduale und ihre ursprüngliche Verwendung" in *Studien zur Buchmalerei und Goldschmiedekunst des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Karl Hermann Usener*, Marburg/Lahn 1967, p.19 (reprinted in K. Weitzmann, *Byzantine Book Illumination and Ivories*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1980).

screen.[1] This importance is eloquently manifested by the variety of luxurious materials used for the decoration of the architrave and it is attested to by actual fragments of Middle Byzantine templa.[2]

Eventually the representations became independent from the structure and the painted wooden panel (*the icon*) became the most common medium. It was easier to produce an icon than to carve a figure on stone. At the same time, by using the icon, it was easier to multiply the registers into a multi-storied iconostasis.[3] Along with the increase of the registers a new iconographic program with complicated symbolism was developed based on the Great Feasts of the Church, all relating to the life of Christ, known as the *Dodecaorton* (Twelve Feasts).[4] The introduction of the *Dodecaorton* onto the epistyle of the iconostasis must have already occurred in the 10th

---

[1] The Greek word *templon* derives from the Latin "templum", i.e. the horizontal beam of the roof, Lazarev, "Trois fragments", p.120-121; for the names used for the sanctuary screen *RbK* III, cols. 326-27.

[2] For an extensive account of literary sources and actual monuments with bibliographical references, see *RbK* III, cols. 331-337 and *passim.*

[3] The Byzantine templa never had more than two registers of icons on the epistyle, and even then the case is quite rare. In the Slavic churches the templon rises quite high, hence the multiplication of the registers (M.Chatzidakis, "Epistylion-icons from Mount Athos"(in Greek), *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol. IV (1964-1965), pp. 384 note 4, and 385 note 5).

[4] In Byzantine art the number of Feasts, and the choice of the scenes vary from monument to monument and from period to period (M. Restle, "Dodekaortion" *RbK* I, cols. 127-1214; K. Weitzmann, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century", *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Oxford 1966*, pp. 217-8, 221, 222; and K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons; I: From the Sixth to the Tenth Century*, Princeton, 1976, pp. 90 and 93. In the Russian iconostases the number and the topics of the *Dodecaorton* icons is almost standard (L. Ouspensky-V. Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, Boston, 1952, reprint, New York, 1983, p. 63; Galavaris, *Elvehjem Centre*, p. 7 and Cat. nos. 2-6, and 12).

century as shown by some early pieces in Sinai.[1]

From the mid 11th to the mid 13th centuries the iconographic programs unfold on the epistyle of the iconostasis either in different registers (one register for the *Deēsis* and one for the *Dodecaorton*), or combined in one register with the *Deēsis* in the centre surrounded by scenes from the *Dodecaorton*. Scenes from the Life of the Virgin or of a saint can take the place of the *Dodecaorton* surrounding the central *Deēsis* as is indicated by some icons in Sinai. These epistyle-icons are believed to have decorated iconostases of chapels dedicated to the Virgin or the depicted saint. The usual format consists of a few long, narrow wooden panels placed along the epistyle with painted or carved arches separating the individual scenes. Probably in the 12th century the individual topics started to appear on separate panels.[2]

The themes and their combinations are the result of a comprehensive theological program relating directly to the Liturgy.[3] The mystical mind of the Byzantines saw, in the church, the revelation of the Divine Economy both on a microcosmic and macrocosmic level; this union of the cosmic levels was re-enacted in the celebration of the Liturgy, and this union sought to be expressed in the decoration of the building as a whole as well as its parts.

In this context, the *Deēsis*, apart from its eschatological character,

---

[1] Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-93; Chatzidakis, "L'évolution ", p.338.

[2] For examples and bibliography in all those cases see *RbK* III, cols. 338-341.

[3] For the liturgical character of the iconographic themes and the programs see, Weitzmann, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting", pp. 222-223, and *passim*.

also has a strong liturgical connotation relating directly to the supplications addressed to the Lord during the mass.[1] The scenes of the *Dodecaorton* are the highlights of the plan of the Divine Dispensation. The combination of the two themes in one register expresses the soteriological character of the Liturgy. The same idea applies to the *Deësis* with scenes from the Life of a saint or the Virgin.[2]

Despite the changes in the program, the templon continued to have its Early Christian portico-like form with the veils hanging in the intercolumnia.[3] The next decisive step in the evolution of the iconostasis was the use of icons to fill in the intercolumnar spaces. The starting point of this evolution is sought in icons represented on the pillars separating the central part of the sanctuary from the Prothesis and the Diakonikon. These icons usually depicted Christ and the Virgin-Paraklesis

---

[1] For the *Deësis*, see Thomas von Bogay, "Deesis und Eschatologie", in *Polychordia. Festschrift Franz Dölger zum 75. Geburtstag*, Amsterdam, 1966, pp. 59-72, and *Id*, "Deesis" in *RbK* I, cols. 1178-1186; also the articles of Christopher Walter, " Two Notes on the Deësis" in *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* XXVI (1968), pp. 311-336, and "Further Notes on the Deësis" *ibid.* XXVIII (1970), pp. 161-187 (both reprinted in Ch. Walter, *Studies in Byzantine Iconography*, London: Variorum Reprints 65, 1977). Both scholars de-emphasize the eschatological character of the *Deësis*. This aspect will be further explored in Chapter IV.

[2] *RbK* I, col.340, Chatzidakis "Epistylion-icons from Mount Athos", p. 383, and Chatzidakis, "L'évolution", p. 346.

[3] The decoration of the veils was highly influenced by the ornamental repertory of the East. It has been suggested that the rage of the iconophile patriarch Nicephorus addresses the embroidered animal motifs on the veils. Many of these animal motifs continued to decorate the veils in the Middle Byzantine period (Lazarev, "Trois fragments", p. 125 and 134). The ornamentation of the veils is thought to have influenced the decorative motifs on the chancel slabs, as well (N. Labrecque, *Histoire de l'évolution de l'iconostase Russe*, Ph.D. diss.: Université de Montréal, Montréal 1977, p.79-80). For the problem of veils with sacred figures see Grabar, "Deux notes", p. 16.

(Virgin of Intercession)[1] while other famous and miraculous icons of the Virgin or the patron saint could also be represented. Enclosed in carved frames to single out their importance, these icons received the veneration of the faithful (proskynesis-icons). The same themes appear later (in the 14th century) on the icons filling the intercolumnar spaces of the iconostasis. However, the time and the place that the transfer of these icons from the pillars onto the iconostasis took place has been disputed.[2] Lazarev argued that in Byzantium this change prevailed around the middle of the 14th century, and he considers the closing of the iconostasis as a result of the Hesychastic movement (end 13th-14th centuries).[3] Grabar also suggested a date into the 14th century for the transformation of the templon into an iconostasis, though he seems to admit that the process could have started earlier (late 12th century).[4] Chatzidakis, on the other hand, has argued in favour of an earlier date, in fact as early as the 11th century, based on literary evidence. His arguments and examples from the 12th century can not be easily disregarded.[5]

---

[1] In this type the Virgin is represented standing and turning toward Christ, usually with an open scroll in one hand while the other is raised in supplication; she intercedes to her Son for the salvation of mankind (S. Der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* XIV (1960), pp. 77-86.

[2] The issue has been addressed by Grabar ("Deux notes"), Lazarev ("Trois fragments"), and Chatzidakis (*RbK* III, coll. 326-353, and "L'évolution").

[3] Lazarev, "Trois fragments", p. 135ff.

[4] Grabar, "Deux notes", p.22. Lazarev, too, did not exclude this possibility ("Trois fragments",p.134-5).

[5] The majority of the cases that Chatzidakis discusses ("L'évolution", pp.340-343) come from templa in masonry. The fact that those examples imitate portable procession icons seems to justify the assumption that the actual portable icons must have found their way in the inter-

For the present discussion it is sufficient to point out that by the beginning of the 14th century the development of a third register with proskynesis-icons filling the intercolumnia appears to have been quite widely spread. A certain iconographic program started to take shape focusing on the figures of Christ, the Virgin, John the Baptist and the patron saint, or other saints venerated in the area that the church was located.

Another feature of the templon, the crowning cross, seems also to have undergone similar transformations by the end of the middle Byzantine period. The use of a cross on top of the templon is well attested for the pre-iconoclastic period. However, the post-iconoclastic crosses also developed figurative decoration relating appropriately to the Passion Cycle. The scenes could be painted either on the cross itself (e.g. a late 12th-century cross from Sinai) or on panels attached to the cross.[1]

The Late Byzantine templa of the Paleologan period (13th century and later) saw the crystallization of iconographic programs that emerged in the previous phase. Characteristic of the Paleologan examples is their tendency towards greater height which is apparent in all three registers. This tendency will culminate in the Russian iconostases of the 15th and

---

columnia of the templon earlier. His attribution of two icons from the Church of Arakos at Lagoudera (Cyprus) to the original wooden templon of the late 12th century could also be supported by the opinion of Lazarev that the first such icons must have appeared in wooden templa (Lazarev, "Trois fragments",p.142).

[1] K. Weitzmann. "Three Painted Crosses at Sinai" in *Kunsthistorischen Forschungen, Otto Pächt zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*, Salzburg 1972, pp. 23-35. The latter format appears regularly on Italian crosses of the 13th century which presuppose Byzantine models (Chatzidakis, "L' évolution", p. 353).

16th centuries where, apart from the greater height of the icons (the *Deësis*-register of the Kremlin Annunciation in Moscow by Theophanes the Greek in the year 1405 reaches the height of 2.10m), two additional registers were added above the Dodecaorton (the tier of the Prophets and the tier of the Patriarchs), and completely closed the sanctuary.[1]

The limited financial capabilities of the Byzantine state during the last phase reflected on templa in the use of less luxurious materials. Marble was still in use, but templa in masonry and in wood, which until that time had been used in peripheral monuments, now more frequently appear in the centres.[2] These templa in humble materials were in need of additional decoration, being it painted or carved ornaments.

In the Post-Byzantine period wood became the medium par excellence for the templon.[3] The addition of colour and woodcarving creates a more fitting frame for the incorporated icons than the marble. The gilding of the woodcarving gave a new glow to the mundane material. By now the iconostasis had become a complete architectonically structured façade framing the icons. Despite the greater height, it always retained a classical balance keeping the vertical and the horizontal axes in proportion.

With the fall of Constantinople other areas assumed the leading role of the capital and became the new artistic centres. One of the earliest

---

[1] These tendencies have been attributed by Russian scholars to the influence of the Hesychastic movement; for this, and the evolution of the Russian iconostasis in general, see Labrecque, *Histoire de l'évolution de l'iconostase Russe*, p. 144-145, and *passim*.

[2] For the Late Byzantine templa see *RbK* III, cols. 345-347.

[3] For the Post-Byzantine material see *RbK* III, cols. 349-353.

and most influential for the Post-Byzantine period was the island of Crete. Artists, who fled the capital under the advance of the Turks, sought refuge in Crete which was enjoying greater artistic freedom and prosperity under Venetian rule. These artists fruitfully continued the Paleologan tradition merging the achievements of the European art along the way. The masterful combination of the two traditions sealed the artistic production of the island (to the point that modern art historians coined the term "Cretan School"), and created original works of art equally sought after by the Latins as well as by the strongholds of the Orthodox faith (e.g. Mount Athos, Sinai, Patmos, Meteora).[1]

The long evolution of the sanctuary screen from the chancel barrier to the closed iconostasis found its most reverent admirers and most confident innovators in the hands and minds of the Cretan artists.

---

[1] After the capture of the island of Crete by the Turks (1669) the Cretan artists will move to the islands of the Ionian Sea (still under Venetian rule) where they will form another centre of production of iconostases, very influential for the Greek Mainland.

CHAPTER TWO

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PATMIAN ICONOSTASES

For nine hundred years the Monastery of St. John the Theologian[1] on the island of Patmos has been in the front line of political and spiritual history of the Eastern Mediterranean. Founded in the year 1088 by the monk Christodoulos upon the issue of an imperial decree (chrysobul), it became a highly venerated pilgrimage site throughout the Christian world. The favour and the largesse of rulers and laymen amassed invaluable treasures in the Monastery.[2] The same centuries which established its fame as the "Mount Athos of the island world",[3] also claimed their fair share on those treasures. Inventories and other documents remain the only evidence of the losses, which are more deplorable the farther we regress in time. The Byzantine iconostases are to be counted among the losses. From a handful of icons dated in the period 1088-1453 only four can be identified as iconostasis-icons[4]

The iconostases under discussion belong to the Post-Byzantine period. During that time the Monastery of St. John the Theologian enjoyed two phases of great economic prosperity: the first at the end of the 15th and

---

[1] For reasons of convenience hereafter the monastery is referred to as Monastery of the Theologian.

[2] On the treasures see *Patmos, Treasures of the Monastery*, ed. by A.D. Kominis, Athens, 1989.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 14.

[4] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 22.

the first decades of the 16th centuries (approximately between 1470 and 1530); the second in the last decades of the 16th until the middle of the 17th century (roughly between 1570 and 1640).[1] The affluence of these years allowed the monastery to undertake the commission of templa for the chapels and churches on the island. From the first period only two templa have survived today, one in the church of St. George "Aporthianon" and another in the Church of Christ "Demarchias".[2] Sets of proskynesis-icons, however, prove that at least four more templa have existed.[3] The majority of the Patmian templa (thirteen examples) belong to the second phase (1570-1640) when many new chapels and churches were built for which iconostases had to be ordered.[4]

Form and decoration

Despite their chronological difference, both groups of iconostases present the same articulation of the forms and borrow from the same ornamental repertory. Almost all the iconostases are carved in wood[5] and

---

[1] The prosperity of the first phase was a result of privileges granted to the Monastery and its property by the rulers of the area (Venetians, Hospitallers of Jerusalem) and the Patriarchate of Constantinople (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 24). The wealth of the second phase is due to the commercial ingenuity of the Patmians who exploited the political circumstances, as well as to the reaffirmation and extension of the privileges (*ibid.*, pp. 27-28). For the privileges bestowed upon the Monastery at different times by various authorities see in brief H. Glykatzi-Ahrweiler, "Historical background" in *Patmos, Treasures of the Monastery*, pp. 11-14.

[2] Unless otherwise indicated the names refer to localities.

[3] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 23.

[4] In the first phase of prosperity the Monastery mostly undertook renovations and embellishments of existing buildings.

[5] There are also fourteen completely painted iconostases known from

are of small dimensions because of the limited space available in the chapels and the churches.

Slender pillars divide the iconostases into four or five vertical sections (figs. 2 and 3). There are two arched openings: one for the Royal door in the centre and one for the Prothesis door on the left[1]. Proskynesis-icons fill in the two or three remaining sections. The opening of the Prothesis door is usually closed with a curtain; more rarely a painted door is also encountered. The opening of the Royal door is closed with a low bema door.[2] Quite often narrow rectangular icons appear on the tympana above the doors.

Horizontally, the iconostases are articulated by four superimposed zones in the following sequence from the bottom up: chancel slabs, proskynesis-icons, epistyle, and crucifix at top centre.

In the first zone the pillars between the chancel slabs were usually painted with floral or geometric motifs (Chapel of Christodoulos, Church of Zoodochos Pighi-the Source of Life, fig. 3). Floral motifs started appearing on the slabs themselves from the middle of the 16th century (Chapel of the Trinity in the Monastery of the Holiest of Holies, fig. 27; Church of the Holy Apostles).[3]

Patmos (Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 59 note 18). Their decoration appears to be similar to the woodcarved ones (*ibid.* p. 60; Fatourou, *Patmian Architecture. The Church of the Holy Apostles as a Typical Example of Patmian Style* (in Greek with French summary), Athens, 1962 pl. 14a).

[1] The iconostasis of the church of the Holy Apostles has only one opening due to the small dimensions of the church.

[2] The term *Royal door* is used here to indicate the entire central opening of the iconostasis, while the term *bema-door* is used with reference to the actual door.

[3] Koutelakis, *Templa*, pp. 117-118. The author maintains that icons of

In the second zone the pillars between the proskynesis-icons are usually decorated with elaborate carved ornaments. In some cases the carved decoration is confined to the jambs of the Royal door while on others the ornament is painted or missing altogether. In two examples, icons are painted in small carved panels set at the basis of the pillars which separate the proskynesis icons (Chapel of the Virgin in the Monastery of the Theologian, Chapel of St. Luke in the Kathisma[1] of the Annunciation, figs. 2 and 5).

The epistyle comprises four registers of relief decoration. The motifs vary from one iconostasis to another but the most common scheme is the following (fig. 4): In the first register from the bottom, pairs of heraldic birds picking a flower are arranged left and right of a central medallion with a cross; in the second register, large acanthus leaves are

---

saints and hierarchs as well as scenes from the New Testament were also represented on the chancel slabs. The examples, however, upon which this observation is based present dating problems: He states (*ibid.* p. 29) that the icons on the chancel slabs in the church of Christ "Demarchias" are later than the iconostasis, without indicating any date, or whether they replaced earlier ones. As for the Chapel of the Virgin (Monastery of the Theologian), the icon of St. James was placed on the slab in the 19th century taken from another iconostasis (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, no. 98, p. 136 note 1). The iconostasis of the Church of SS. Basil and Thalalaios is a very late one (end of 17th or beginning of the 18th century). The last iconostasis is also the only Patmian example mentioned by Koutelakis to have representations from New Testament, surprisingly leaving unnoticed the icons of Mary's Presentation in the Temple and of Christ-Anapeson on the slabs of iconostasis in the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos (Monastery of the Theologian). Old Testament scenes (Prayer of Abraham, and Sacrifice of Isaac) have been sketched on the chancel slabs of the templon in Mary's Presentation in the Temple (an icon of 1580-90 by Michael Damaskinos, fig. 40), but there is not conclusive evidence as to whether the icon imitates real iconostases or that these themes have been included for dogmatic reasons.

[1] *Kathisma*: a small dependence of a monastery rented for life by one or more monks.

carved, paratactically arranged, left and right of a central motif (rosette, coat of arms, vase, etc.); the third register, slightly projecting, forms a cornice with shell-like niches carried on consols. The bottom side of the cornice is decorated with a scroll motif, while perforated ornaments appear on the front side between the consols; floral motifs fill in the spandrels between the niches. In the fourth, top, register a scroll motif springs out of a central vase.

The fourth zone of the iconostasis is called *pyramid* and consists of a large crucifix, often flanked by the Virgin and St. John the Evangelist on separate icons. From the 16th century the joining parts between the cross and the icons took the form of marine-like creatures.

The repertory of the carved ornaments is indeed very rich combining traditional Byzantine motifs (e.g. vine scroll, acanthus leaves, vases, eagle) and decorative elements very popular in the West during the Late Gothic and Renaissance periods (e.g. tracery in the arches of the sanctuary doors, sculpted angels, dancing genii, bacchic masks).[1]

Peculiarities of the Patmian iconostases and their possible sources

Taking into account the evolution of the iconostasis (Chapter I) the Patmian iconostases present a certain peculiarity which has puzzled scholars, namely the absence of the *Deēsis* and the *Dodecaorton*. Although a solution is difficult to reach, we will outline the problem and suggest a few hypotheses.

The absence of the *Dodecaorton* is a common phenomenon in Post-

---

[1] For the variations of the motifs, their origin and symbolism, see Koutelakis, *Templa*, Chapter IV, pp. 132-169.

Byzantine iconostases made for chapels. The strong liturgical connotations of the Twelve-Feast Cycle made this iconographic theme almost indispensable for the iconostases of parish churches and of the catholika (abbey churches). But in the chapels this iconographic theme was not necessary since the Liturgy is performed there only on the saint's day (i.e. once a year). The theme of the *Deësis*, on the contrary, is regularly featured on the epistyle of the Post-Byzantine iconostases, both in churches and chapels, at least until the end of the 16th century.[1] In Patmos, however, the *Dodecaorton* has been omitted from the iconostases of both parish churches (e.g. Church of the Virgin-Eleïmonetria-the Merciful Virgin, Church of Hypapantê of Malandrakis-Christ's Presentation in the Temple, Church of Christ "Demarchias", Church of SS. Basil and Thalalaios) and in catholika (e.g Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi-the Source of Life, Church of St. George "Aporthianon").[2] The only example of a *Dodecaorton* in Patmos appears on the iconostasis of the Chapel of St. Luke in the Kathisma of the Annunciation (fig. 5). As for the *Deësis*, it appears only on painted iconostases (two examples are mentioned: one in the Chapel of the Cross in the Monastery of the Theologian (fig. 6), and in the Chapel

---

[1] Galavaris, *Elvehjem Centre*, p. 7. Chatzidakis ("L'évolution", p. 346) maintains that in the monastic centres the *Deësis* continued to appear until the end of the 18th century.

[2] The iconostasis of the Church of St. George "Aporthianon" is the original templon of the catholikon of the Monastery of the Theologian. It does not have the *Dodecaorton* and the *Deësis* zones and its epistyle is one register short (the tier with the acanthus leaves is missing). The templon suffered mutilations when it was transferred to the Church of St. George (Koutelakis, *Templa*, pp.67ff.). The mutilations, however, pertain to the sides and the bottom of the iconostasis. Even if the *Dodecaorton* zone had been eliminated during the transfer, some of the icons should have been preserved elsewhere. Dodecaorton-icons are generally very scarce in Patmos (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 35).

of St. Eustace in the Church of St. George "tou Syphantou").[1]

The conspicuous absence of the *Deēsis* and the *Dodecaorton* becomes even more striking when one takes into consideration the prominence of the aniconic decoration on the elaborately carved epistyles. The consistency of this particularity in the Patmian iconostases led scholars to investigate the issue of manufacturing centre(s) responsible for the iconostases.

Based on similarities in form and the decorative repertory it was concluded that the iconostases of the second phase were manufactured in a limited number of workshops, and that they imitated those of the first phase.[2]

Western decorative motifs betrayed a manufacturing centre in close contact with the repertory of the Italian Renaissance,[3] and pointed towards Crete. This attribution was attested by the zone of the shell-like niches which is a characteristic of the Cretan iconostases.[4] Lately, documentary evidence has come to support this attribution on stylistic

---

[1] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 140.

[2] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 35. The works of the first phase (icons and iconostases) were generally used as models for the later works (*ibid*, pp. 34, 126 and *passim*). For the conservatism of the monastic centres such as Patmos regarding the iconography and style of the commissioned works, see Chatzidakis, "Les débuts de l'école crétoise et la question de l'école dite italogrecque", in *Mnemosynon Sophias Antoniadi*, Venice 1974, pp. 210-211 (reprint in Chatzidakis, *Études sur la peinture post-byzantine*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1976). In the commissions of iconostases the form and the decoration were decided by the client (M. Kazanaki, "Religious Woodcarving in Candia during the 17th century. Notarian Documents (1606-1642)" (in Greek), *Thesauresmata* 11 (1974), p. 256).

[3] Koutelakis, *Templa*, pp. 154-157.

[4] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 35.

grounds. Unfortunately, the names of the masters are not mentioned. There is only one reference to a certain "master painter Ioannes Delousas" from Chania who could possibly be responsible for one of the iconostases.[1] Most of them were manufactured in Crete and sent to Patmos in parts where they were assembled in the chapels[2]. Some were also carved *in situ*.

The commission of iconostases (and icons) from Cretan workshops is direct evidence of the excellent artistic production on the island of Crete. Those workshops could, and did, satisfy the demanding clientele of the strongholds of Orthodoxy,[3] and, thus, established almost a monopoly in the commissions of those centres. On the other hand, these commissions not only indicate the financial capabilities of the Patmian monastery, but also the refined taste of the monastic community for works of art of the highest quality.[4]

The artistic developments in Crete reached the Patmian Monastery through a network of direct and indirect channels of communication.[5] Most important among these was the Monastery's rich metochi[6] at Stylos near

---

[1] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, pp. 29-31.

[2] Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 63 note 13 and p. 81; K. Fatourou, *Patmian Architecture*, pp. 33-34.

[3] Patmos, along with the other strongholds to which the Cretan workshops catered (Mount Athos, Holy Lands, Sinai), was used to high quality works of art through its direct contact with the imperial workshops during the Byzantine period.

[4] A large number of icons today preserved on the island were painted by the most prominent Cretan painters. The absence of names for the masters who executed the iconostases perhaps is due to the fact that they were so well-known, so that there was no need to mention their names in the account books (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, pp. 23, 29, 32).

[5] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, pp. 28-32.

[6] *Metochi*: an extraterritorial possession of a monastery, whether a

Chania. It was this metochi which was in contact with the Cretan artists on behalf of the Patmian Monastery.[1] During the last decades of the 16th and the early decades of the 17th century the artistic orientation of the Monastery towards Crete was intensified due to the eminent figure of the Cretan Nicephorus Chartophylax. A man of great humanistic knowledge and well versed in the spiritual currents of his time, Nicephorus became the abbot of the Monastery of the Theologian. Although he was later appointed metropolitan of Laodicea, he did not leave Patmos. He is responsible for the foundation of several chapels and churches (among them the Chapel of St. Luke in the Kathisma of the Annunciation, the Chapel of the Cross in the Monastery of the Theologian, and the church of the Holy Apostles). He kept close contacts with Crete and some of the most famous icons reached Patmos possibly through his connections. The most important of the indirect channels was the city of Venice. Monks travelling to the Serenissima would commission or purchase works from Cretan painters working there.[2]

Examined within this context the iconostases of Patmos acquire a greater importance, because they supplement our knowledge of the artistic production of Crete.[3]

---

dependent cell or an estate, usually with its own church or chapel.

[1] The importance of this metochi is proven by the fact that the flourishing periods of the Patmian monastery coincide with the periods of privileges granted to the metochi by the Venetian duke of Crete (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, pp.23-24 and 28).

[2] Cretan artists working in Venice have been recorded only after the beginning of the 16th century (Chatzidakis, "Les débuts de l'école crétoise et la question de l'école dite italogrecque", pp. 173-4).

[3] Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 160.

Nevertheless, the identification of the manufacturing centre did not help to elucidate the issue of the particularities of the Patmian iconostases. Actual monuments and documentary evidence show that the seventeenth-century Cretan iconostases not only regularly included the *Dodecaorton* and the *Deësis*, but they had expanded their iconographic program with the addition of the zone of the *Prophets* above the *Dodecaorton*.[1] Because this documentary evidence refers to the artistic production of Candia (today Herakleion), one could consider the possibility of another manufacturing centre in the island, namely Chania. There are, indeed, some elements that support this hypothesis: The only master mentioned by name, Ioannes Delousas, comes from Chania. If the assumption that he is responsible for the iconostasis of the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos is correct,[2] then one could assume that other iconostases might also have been commissioned from workshops in the area of Chania. Another feature, which also raises the question of a possible attribution to workshops from Chania, is the form of the sculptural ornament in the upper part of the bema doors which is different from the mainstream Cretan (read, Candian) type.[3] This hypothesis could possibly accommodate the exceptional cases of the Chapel of St. Luke (with *Dodecaorton*) and the Chapel of the Cross (with *Deësis*) by assuming that their founder, Nicephorus Chartophylax, turned to Candian workshops for their execution.

---

[1] Kazanaki, "Religious Woodcarving", pp. 252-255.

[2] Koutelakis, *Templa*, pp. 80-81.

[3] Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 121.

There are, however, two serious shortcomings in this argument. First, the earliest example from Patmos, the iconostasis of the Church of St. George "Aporthianon" (fig. 7), which became the model for later works, has been accredited to a workshop from Candia.[1] Secondly, the study of the icons of Patmos confirmed the artistic orientation of the Monastery towards Candia, and not towards Chania, as it would have been expected due to the vicinity of the Monastery's metochi at Stylos. The reason for this preference has been explained to the superiority of the Candian workshops.[2]

Beyond the issue of the workshops, it is imperative to point out that the decisive factor in all those commissions was the client. He was, to a certain extent, responsible for the format and the iconographic program of the iconostasis. His decision was based upon a model that the master presented to him or upon the fame of an actual iconostasis which the client wanted copied.[3] It was, therefore, the Monastery in Patmos which opted for, and persisted on, this type of iconostasis.

While we do not know the theological background which supported this innovation, it is, however, natural to assume that the Monastery's option for this type should lean on an authority which weighed heavily on the opinion of the monks.

If the theological interpretation eludes our attention, a little more light can be shed on the question as to where this interpretation was

---

[1] Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 70.

[2] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p.24.

[3] Kazanaki, "Religious Woodcarving", pp. 256 and 271.

first applied, and then disseminated to Patmos. Five miniatures from a manuscript in the Vatican collection (Vat. gr.2137, folios 4r, 5r, 6r, 10r, 11r, figs. 8-11) depict iconostases similar to those of Patmos. The manuscript is dated precisely to the year 1600 and was written for the Monastery of Our Lady of Gethsemanê. According to Vocotopoulos the manuscript was written and decorated in Crete, and the monastery, which it was destined to, was located outside Candia.[1] The minuteness with which the decorative details of the iconostases have been executed leaves no doubt that the artist must have imitated actual works. Regardless of whether or not these actual iconostases came from Western or Eastern Cretan workshops,[2] the fact remains that this type of iconostasis did exist in Crete. Furthermore, it does not seem to have been an *unicum*, if we judge by the variations of the iconographic program of the iconostases depicted in the miniatures.[3]

The absence of the *Deēsis* and the *Dodecaorton* should not give the impression that the Patmian iconostases are incomplete. Rather, on the contrary, they are complete entities. The balance between the vertical and

---

[1] P.L. Vocotopoulos, "Les miniatures d'un manuscrit Crétois de 1600" (in Greek with summary in French), *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol. XIII (1985-1986), pp. 191-192. The Monastery of Our Lady in the village Gethsemanê outside Candia has been recorded in documents from the beginning of the 14th until the end of the 16th century. The miniatures illustrate an unidentified text regarding a vision of the Liturgy (*ibid.* p. 196).

[2] Vocotopoulos attributes the manuscript to the Candian atelier of George Klontzas (Vocotopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 206).

[3] The proskynesis-icons, as well as the rectangle icons on the tympana above the Royal doors, vary from one miniature to the other. Even the sculptural decoration of the epistyle is not consistent. While the zone with the acanthus leaves appears regularly, the iconostasis on fol. 4r does not have the shell-like niches, and on fol. 6r these niches appear underneath the zone with the acanthus leaves.

the horizontal axis, the well-proportioned ornaments, and the sense of rhythm in their arrangement result in an harmonious ensemble. The addition of colour and the gilding[1] work together to set off the icons which share the same strong colours and the golden background. The effect is much more impressive in chapels which lack any other kind of decoration. Within the austere surrounding of those chapels, in the dim light of the oil-lamps and the flickering of the candles, the glowing surfaces of the screen turn the iconostasis into the spiritual focus of the sacred space.

[1] The gilding is not necessarily contemporary with the construction of an iconostasis; it can be added later. The same remark is also valid for the *pyramid*.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SANCTUARY DOORS

ROYAL DOORS

a) General Characteristics

Although there are many variations, all the examples of the bema-doors do follow a general scheme. The typical Patmian bema-door consists of two valves. The upper part when closed takes the form of a high pointed double arch. Branches of acanthus-scroll unfold along the outline of the arch forming two palmettes and emphasizing the pointed pick (fig. 12).

Only three bema-doors deviate from this scheme of sculptural decoration. In the bema-door of the Church of St. George "Aporthianon" (fig. 13) the crowning floral decoration forms a round arch around the pointed trefoil of the door.

In the old bema-door of the Church of Christ "Demarchias" (fig. 16) the sculptural decoration at the top is missing altogether. A plain border in relief follows the graceful curves of the double arch. Uncharacteristically for Patmos, however, sculptural decoration appears on the lower part of the valve. A spiral column with base and capital in the middle and two half-columns at the edges divide, the lower part into two compartments. Round arches bridge the column with the half-columns which are, in turn, surmounted by triangular pediments on top. The pick of each triangle is crowned with a fleur-de-lys and the background between the pediments is filled in with carved foliage.

A plain border in relief is also the only sculptural decoration in the third example, the bema-door of the Chapel of the Cross in the

Monastery of the Theologian (fig. 18).[1]

The first two examples are the earliest known from Patmos. They date respectively to the second half and last decades of the 15th century while the typical scheme appeared in the last decades of the 16th century. Although in both the early and late examples the sculptural repertory is heavily influenced by Late Gothic models,[2] it seems that there was a greater variety in the 15th century than in the years around 1600 when the fixed scheme is repeated almost invariably.

The vertical axis of the door is decorated with a narrow band between the two valves. The usual motif carved on the band is the rope-like motif, often with rosettes at the ends and in the middle.[3] Other motifs also occurring is the rinceau and units of small leaves and flower buds.[4] The top of the band is formed into a cross, either simple with the arms broaden into medallions, or foliated.[5] The only figural representation

---

[1] We should recall that the iconostasis of this chapel is painted and lacks sculptural decoration altogether.

[2] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, pp. 61, 86.

[3] The motif appears in its simple form in the Chapel of St. Luke in the Kathisma of the Annunciation (fig. 5), Chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of the Holiest of Holies (fig. 27), Chapel of the Cross in the Monastery of the Theologian (fig. 18), Church of the Holy Apostles, and combined with rosettes in the Church of the Virgin "Diasozousa"-the Saviour (fig. 12), Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi (fig. 3), and the Church of the Virgin "Eleïmonetria".

[4] E.g. on the bema-doors of the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos in the Monastery of the Theologian (fig. 25), the Chapel of St. Anne in the Monastery of the Apocalypse (fig. 26), the Church of Christ "Demarchias", and of the Church of St. George "Aporthianon" (fig. 15). (Koutelakis describes the latter example as "leaves of artichoke": *Templa*, p. 28).

[5] The cross with medallions at the end of the arms appear in the Chapel of St. Anne in the Monastery of the Apocalypse (fig. 26), Chapel of the Holy Forty Saints in the Monastery of the Hypapantê, Church of the Holy Apostles, Church of the Virgin "Diasozousa" (fig. 12), Chapel of the

appears in the bema-door of the Church of St. George "Aporthianon"; a sculpted bust of the Prophet David, crowned and holding an open scroll, springs off from the calyx of a flower on top of the band (fig. 14).

b) The iconographic themes

The painted decoration on the door is arranged in two zones. In the upper zone the Annunciation is represented with the archangel Gabriel on the left valve and the Virgin on the right. Two standing saints are represented in the lower zone, one on each valve.[1]

i. The Annunciation

This theme has been traditionally featured on the bema-doors since the Middle Byzantine period.[2] With regard to the posture of the Virgin, two iconographic types are encountered on the Patmian doors.

Cross in the Monastery of the Theologian (fig. 18), Chapel of St. Luke in the Kathisma of the Annunciation (fig. 5), Chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of the Holiest of Holies (fig. 27) where on the arms of the cross are inscribed the letters IC XC N K (Koutelakis *Templa*, p. 36). In the case of the bema-door of the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos (Monastery of the Theologian) (fig. 25) a Crucifix is painted on the cross and busts of saints on the upper three medallions. Foliated crosses decorate the top of the band in the Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi (fig. 3), Church of the Virgin "Eleïmonetria", and in the Catholikon of the Monastery of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis. A scene of the Crucifixion is painted on the foliated cross of the bema-door of Christ "Demarchias" (Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 29).

[1] There are two exceptions in this general iconographic scheme. The Annunciation is missing on the bema-door in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity (Monastery of the Holiest of Holies). On the right valve of the old bema door of the Church of Christ "Demarchias", two saints have been depicted on the lower zone (the original complete door had, therefore, four standing figures).

[2] See *infra*, Chapter IV, p. 77.

Standing Virgin

This is the predominant type in Patmos. It is represented on one of the earliest bema-doors, that of the Church of St. George "Aporthianon" (fig. 15). On this door the subject matter (Annunciation with the Virgin standing) is found in its most elaborate version and, it was used as a model for the later examples.

The Virgin stands on a footstool in front of a backless seat with two cushions. She is clad in a dark green tunic and a cherry red maphorion which tightly envelopes her right arm leaving only the open hand free. In her left hand she is holding the spindle and the yarn. The gesture of her right hand and the inclination of the head indicate her acceptance. From a segment of sky at the pick of the double arch, rays of light are directed towards Mary amidst which a medallion with a dove represents the Holy Ghost. The archangel Gabriel is approaching from the left in vigorous strides. He is dressed in a dark green tunic with golden *clavi* and a cherry-red mantle. In his left hand he holds a sceptre while his right is extended in a gesture of speech.

The figures stand in front of an elaborate architectural background. Behind a low wall with towers rise four higher buildings, two on each valve. The ones at the sides are lower than the figures while the ones in the centre are higher, thus conforming to the triangular composition. Porticoes supported by columns or pillars with classicizing capitals articulate the facades of the buildings. The architectural forms are embellished with masks, lion heads, and palmettes.[1] Despite its affinities

---

[1] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 61. It seems, however, that in three instances there are representations of busts of figures on the architectural background (in a medallion on the pediment of the building

with the Paleologan imaginative architectural settings, this background has been assessed as "not particularly Byzantine"[1] in the way the figures are represented standing on a terrace overlooking the architecture. Two details of the background should be singled out because they appear quite frequently in representations of the Annunciation. The first is a red veil hanging from the roof of the building to the left of the Virgin and rests on an isolated column with a classicizing pillar. The second is a large-eared flower-pot standing on a low tower next to the Virgin.

This iconographic type of the Annunciation, with minor differences regarding the colour of the garments and the details of the architectural background, appears on most of the bema-doors in the island.[2]

An interesting detail has been included in the Annunciation on the bema-door of the Chapel of the Cross (Monastery of the Theologian). To the left of the standing Virgin a seated young maiden is depicted spinning (fig. 19).

---

to the left of the angel, on the tympanum of the building behind the angel, and on the triangular pediment of the building behind the Virgin).

[1] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 61.

[2] Chapel of St. Anne in the Monastery of the Apocalypse, Chapel of the Holy Forty Saints in the Church of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis, Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi, Church of the Virgin "Diasozousa", Church of the Virgin "Eleïmonetria", Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos in the Monastery of the Theologian where the artist actually has copied the composition from the door of the Church of St. George "Aporthianon" (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 69). We may safely assume that the same composition decorated the upper zone of the bema-door in the Church of the Holy Apostles (today overpainted with brown oil colour) based on the fact that the lower part of this door copies the iconography of the lower part of the door in the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos (see *infra*, p. 45f.).

Seated Virgin

The right valve of the old bema-door of the Church of Christ "Demarchias"[1] (fig. 17) is the only example representative of this type.

The Virgin is seated on a backless throne with two cushions resting her feet on a footstool. She raises her right hand in front of her chest showing the palm in a gesture of obedience while her left extends away from the body holding the purple yarn with the spindle hanging down. Her tunic is modelled in dense striations organically corresponding to the parts of the body. The short maphorion imitates Frankish brocade decorated with golden fleur-de-lys on a black background.[2] A Byzantine bookstand appears on her left with a book displaying the text of Mary's consent (Luke, I,38): "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word."

A large, square two-storied building supported by pilaster-buttresses dominates the background. Its top floor is pierced by arched windows

---

[1] Today the valve is kept in the New Sacristy of the Monastery of the Theologian. There is some vagueness as to which iconostasis this door belonged. The iconostasis of the Church of Christ "Demarchias" is dated to the first half of the 16th century and it is posterior to the proskynesis-icons of Christ and the Virgin; it was built to accommodate these icons which date from around 1500. The rectangular icons on the tympana of the Royal and Prothesis doors were made for the present iconostasis and they date from the middle of the 16th century. The present iconostasis has its own bema-door similar to the Patmian examples of around 1600. It has been assumed that the door to which the valve in question belonged was destroyed for some reason (fire, wood-moth, etc.) and that it was replaced by the present bema-door (Koutelakis, *Templa*, pp. 71-73, esp. p. 72 note 37). Despite the author's reluctance to accept the existence of an earlier iconostasis, the early date of our right valve (1480-1500) suggests the existence of a late 15th century iconostasis to which the proskynesis-icons and the bema-door were affixed, and which was probably destroyed for the same reasons accounting for the loss of the left valve of the door.

[2] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 86.

decorated with a purely Gothic tracery. On top of the first floor's corner-buttress stands a pot with red flowers. Above the building's facade the dove of the Holy Ghost flies down. At the lower corner, connected to the main building, is depicted an arcaded loggia supporting a roof-garden.

These two types of Annunciation scenes derive from different iconographic traditions. The standing and gesticulating Virgin is a creation of the Byzantine thought-world while the seated and spinning Virgin is of Syro-Palestinian origin.[1]

The Annunciation consists one of the most fundamental doctrines of Christianity, the Incarnation of the Word. The dogmatic importance of this episode is reflected in a very prolific patristic literature. The reaction of the Virgin to the salutation is a recurrent topic in the commentaries by the Fathers of the Church upon which the painters referred themselves in order to shape the iconographic scheme.[2]

The standing Virgin was an expression of Mary's prudent reaction in this extraordinary situation, and emphasizes the qualities for which she was chosen to become the instrument of the Incarnation. The seated Virgin, on the other hand, was a more narrative illustration of the apocryphal text and stressed the more human aspect. Following the spirit of the time, one or the other type became the predominant at different periods.[3]

---

[1] Millet, *Recherches*, p. 68.

[2] Millet, *Recherches*, pp. 68, 73, 81.

[3] During the 12th century, for instance, when human sentiment was introduced in the Byzantine iconography, the more human, seated Virgin became the predominant type (Millet, *Recherches*, pp. 71, 73; *id.*, "Quelques rerpésentations byzantines de la Salutation angélique", *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique*, XVIII (1894), p. 480; K. Weitzmann, *The Icon*, London, 1978, pl. 27, p. 92).

The gestures were also very carefully thought in order to illustrate the psychological state of the Mother of God. The hand in front of the chest is a sign of hesitant but active involvement in the comprehension of the salutation, while the inclination of the head illustrates the final consent upon which the Word was incarnated.[1]

Many of the narrative details mentioned in the apocryphal texts were incorporated into the iconography of the theme because of their dogmatic importance. Thus, the spinning of the purple and the motif of the spinning maiden are indications of Mary's virginity after her betrothal to Joseph.[2]

The architectural background was also developed primarily from the narrative of apocryphal texts. The humble house of the Virgin was transformed into a basilica alluding to the actual topography of the Early Christian Nazareth. Patristic and hymnographic literature in turn imbued those topographical notions into doctrinal symbolism. The basilica of the Annunciation at Nazareth became a metaphor for the Church (the *Ecclesia Mater*) which was founded upon the Immaculate Conception and Nazareth, on the whole, transcended into the celestial city which was opened to mankind through the Incarnation.[3] In the late Middle Ages, however, the

---

[1] Millet, *Recherches*, p. 70; Ouspensky-Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, p. 172.

[2] The spinning of the purple is given in the apocryphal Gospel of James, IX, 1-6. For the motif of the spinning maiden and its origin, see Millet, *Recherches*, pp. 89-91, and J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire Byzantin et en Occident*, vol. II, Brussels 1965, p. 152.

[3] For the architectural background and its symbolism see Millet, *Recherches*, pp. 88-89, and J. Fournée, "Architectures symboliques dans le thème iconographique de l'Annonciation" in *Synthronon, Art de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age* (Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques II),

architectural background, although it retained the general symbolic meaning, became more and more elaborate with imaginative details following the taste of the period for the decorative.[1]

However, the icon of the seated Virgin mentioned above is based on a Western interpretation of Eastern models. The iconographic scheme was brought over from the Palestinian coast by the Crusaders in the 12th century and it was transformed to comply with the spirit of Chivalry developed in the West.It is exactly that spirit that radiates from the icon in question with the Virgin Mary looking like a Frankish princess in her Gothic castle devoted to prayer, and to the study of the Scriptures.[2]

Western iconographic schemes and stylistic trends were familiar to Cretan artists (like the painter of this icon) through works of art coming from Italy or produced in Crete by Venetian artists for the local Catholic community. Since the beginning of the 15th century the Cretan artists, along with traditional Byzantine works, also produced compositions in the 14th-century Late Gothic style to meet the demands of the Catholic clientele. In the Byzantine works, however, Western elements were confined to decorative details fully integrated into the predominant Byzantine iconography and style.[3]

There is, however, one example in Patmos where the Annunciation has

---

Paris 1968, pp. 225-235, hereafter quoted as *Synthronon*.

[1] Millet, *Recherches*, p. 89; Fournée, *loc. cit.*, p. 229.

[2] For the Virgin's erudition in biblical texts, which the Western iconographers favoured, see Millet, *Recherches*, p. 73, and J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge*, vol. II, pp. 128-134.

[3] M. Chatzidakis, "Les débuts de l'école crétoise et la question de l'école dite italogrecque", pp. 197-199 and *passim*.

been replaced by another representation. On the upper part of the second bema-door of the Church of Christ "Demarchias", the Virgin and the Angel are portrayed in busts coming out of clouds and turning towards each other. In her right arm Mary is holding the Child who seems as if He is seeking refuge in His mother's arms while looking back at the angel (fig. 20). The composition strongly recalls the type of the Virgin known as "the Virgin of the Passion."[1] Along with the suffering of the Mother of God for the hardships laying ahead that is stressed in this type,[2] there is also a strong connection with the Incarnation. The inscription which usually accompanies the composition refers to the virginity of Mary even after she gave birth ("the Undefiled") and the subsequent epigram explicitly links this theme to the Annunciation.[3]

ii. The Saints

In the lower part of the Patmian bema-doors, as mentioned above, appear figures of standing saints. This is not a new idea in the

---

[1] In the type of the Virgin of the Passion Mary usually holds the Child in her left arm. There is, however, at least one example from the beginning of the 16th century where the composition is reversed (*Byzantine Art, An European Art*, Ninth Exhibition held under the Auspices of the Council of Europe, Zappeion Exhibition Hall, April 1st-June 15th 1964, Catalogue, Athens, 1964, no.222, p. 263 and plate). In our case the reversed compositional scheme must have been also dictated by the usual placement of the Virgin on the right valve. Koutelakis (*Templa*, p.29) refers to the scene as "Annunciation".

[2] G. Galavaris, *The Icon in the life of the Church*, (Iconography of Religions, XXIV, 8), Leiden, 1981, p. 12.

[3] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, no.16, pp. 67-68. In a loosen translation the epigram reads:

> "The one who previously announced the *Salve* to the most purest is now bringing forth the Symbols of the Passion. Christ, on the other hand, having assumed mortal flesh, stares at them in timidity, out of fear of death."

iconographic program of the bema-doors. Already in the late 9th century, a manuscript illustration shows that such a program was in use. In the representation of a bema-door on fol. 452r. of the Codex Parisinus gr. 510 four standing figures are depicted on equal panels (fig. 21). Based on their number and on later examples Grabar suggested that they might stand for the four Evangelists.[1] Furthermore, a late 10th century bema-door from Mount Athos decorated with ivory intarsia presents one panel with the image of St. John Chrysostom (fig. 22). The other three missing panels are believed to have represented three hierarchs -- most likely St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory Nazianzenus, and St. Athanasios or St. Nicholas.[2]

The Hierarchs

The subject of the Evangelists does not appear in any of the Patmian bema-doors. The hierarchs, however, do appear on the right valve of the old bema-door of the Church of Christ "Demarchias" (figs. 16 and 23). St. Basil and St. Nicholas are represented standing and dressed in bishop's vestments. St. Basil, portrayed in the typical manner with dark hair, and dark, long, pointed beard, wears a white-greyish *sticharion*, embroidered *epitrachelion* and *epigonation*,[3] a *polystavrion phelonion* and a white *omophorion* with golden crosses. He raises his right hand in a gesture of

---

[1] Grabar, "Deux notes", p. 15, fig. 3. Representations of the four Evangelists appear regularly on the Russian bema-doors (Galavaris, *The Icon in the life of the Church*, p. 5; Ouspensky- Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, p. 66).

[2] S. Pelekanides, "Byzantine bema-door from Mount Athos"(in Greek), *Archeologhikê Ephemeris* 96 (1957), p. 52, pl. 13 and fig. 4.

[3] Chatzidakis (*Icons*, p. 87) suggests that the last two vestments imitate Venetian fabrics.

blessing. With his left hand, covered under the *phelonion* and the *omophorion*, he holds a closed leather-bound book. The same stance and gesture has been followed in the representation of St. Nicholas, except for the monochrome *phelonion* and the black crosses on the *omophorion*. The facial features of the saint follow the established iconography with the bald head framed by the white, short, and thick beard, but the expression of the face lacks a certain air of nobility.[1] In spite of the hierarchs' frontal depiction, the artist has tried fine and subtle ways to break a monotone, paratactic composition. The hem of their *sticharia* indicates that they are slightly turned towards one another thus forming a self contained group. On the contrary, their gazes diverge from each other. St. Nicholas stares straight ahead and slightly to the right, while St. Basil looks to the left. We should assume a symmetrical arrangement for the two hierarchs on the missing left valve, most likely St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory Nazianzenus.[2]

The inclusion of St. Nicholas among the greatest hierarchs of the Church is to be explained by the exceptional veneration of this saint in the Christian world and particularly in Patmos.[3]

---

[1] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 51.

[2] In a strict symmetrical arrangement, St. John Chrysostom rendered in the established type (dark hair, and short,thin, pointed, dark beard) would stand next to the figure of St. Basil, while St. Gregory with a thick white beard would stand on the far left complementing the figure of St. Nicholas on the far right.

[3] For the veneration of St. Nicholas see N. P. Sevčenko, *The Life of St. Nicholas*, Torino, 1983, pp. 19-24 and 159-162. Some of the earliest and most beautiful icons from Patmos represent St. Nicholas. Cf. also the Pala in the Church of St. Nicholas in Bari, attributed to Andreas Ritzos, with St. John the Theologian and St. Nicholas flanking the Virgin of the Passion, and a similar triptych by Emmanuel Tzanes with the same saints flanking the Virgin of Tenderness, which reached the Patmian monastery

The early Fathers of the Church who formed the group of hierarchs were the ones who set the frame and systematized the rules of the Christian life on all its levels (spiritual, ritual, practical). It is in this sense that they are linked to the Incarnation. It was upon the heavenly tidings, uttered by the Incarnated Logos, that the Church was founded and it was the hierarchs who laid out the plan of the kingdom of God on earth.[1]

This relation between the hierarchs and the Incarnation has been already pictorially rendered in Middle Byzantine monuments. A miniature from the Psalter Pantocratoros cod. 49 (fol 4v., last quarter of the 11th century) represents, in the upper zone, the Virgin and the Child flanked by St. John the Baptist and archangel Michael while the standing figures of St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Gregory the Theologian occupy the lower zone. A similar composition pointed out by Der Nersessian appears on another Psalter (Berlin cod. gr. 3807, fol. 2v., end of 11th, or, more probably beginning of the 12th century). Only here the Virgin is standing between two archangels and St. Gregory has been replaced by St. Nicholas of Myra. The inscription on the latter miniature explains the relation between the figures:

> "They took their position beside the Mother in awe of the Logos, the generals of the incorporeal souls. The foremost prelates, all three of them, holding the inspired books in their hands."[2]

---

from Russia (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, nos. 1, 5, 8, 148, and pl. 203a).

[1] It is interesting to notice that in the Russian bema-doors, where the Evangelists are depicted underneath the Annunciation, the Fathers of the Church and the Liturgists are represented on the jambs of the Royal door (Ouspensky-Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, p. 66).

[2] S.Der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection", p. 77 and note 4, fig. 4. For the Pantocratoros cod. 49

It is important to notice that this iconographic scheme follows models in monumental art.[1] In the 11th century the hierarchs became the standard iconographic theme for the decoration of the lower part of the apse. Their relation to the Incarnated Logos was further emphasized towards the end of the next century. At that time they face the centre of the apse where Christ-Amnos is represented and they hold open scrolls with texts referring to the Eucharist, i.e. participating in the celebration of the sacrament (officiating hierarchs).[2]

This theological context also applies on the representation underneath the Annunciation on the bema-doors as it can be seen on the new bema-door of the church of Christ "Demarchias" (fig. 24). Here the two hierarchs turn in three quarter view toward the centre, and bend slightly forward holding open scrolls in their hands. On the right valve one can recognize St. Basil, and the one on the left seems to represent St. John Chrysostom, i.e. the authors of the two most important Liturgies of the Eastern Church.[3] The notion of officiating hierarchs becomes clearer in

---

(today in Dumbarton Oaks Collection) see, K. Weitzmann, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh century", pp. 210 and 214.

[1] K. Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

[2] G. Babic, "Les discussion christologiques et le décor des églises byzantines au XIIe siècle: Les évêques officiants devant l'Hétimasie et devant l'Amnos", *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* vol. 2, 1968, p. 383-386, and M. Emmanuel-Gerousi, *The Frescoes of the Church of St. Demetrios at Makrychori and of the Church of the Dormition of the Virgin at Oxylithos in Euboea* (in Greek), Ph.D. Thesis: University of Athens, Athens, 1984, pp. 28-31, and 197 with extensive bibliography.

[3] Koutelakis (*Templa*, p. 29) wrongly identifies them as Peter and Paul. For examples of bema-doors with representations of the hierarchs (usually St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil) see *ibid*, p. 122 note 17, and p. 99.

conjunction with the "Virgin of the Passion" represented in the upper zone of this bema-door (see, *supra*, p. 36).

Peter and Paul

The iconographic theme of the foremost of the Apostles is a frequent one in the decoration of the bema-doors on the island.[1] They are represented standing and turning towards one another. Peter, always on the left valve, is holding a scroll and the keys of Paradise in his left while his right hand is raised in a gesture of speech. In one instance (Catholikon of Zoodochos Pighi, fig. 3) he is holding the model of a church. Paul, on the right valve, is holding a book in his left hand.

The two Apostles are considered the corner-stones of the Universal Church which was founded upon the Incarnation. Seen as the main pillars of Christianity, they were often represented on the eastern pillars of the church-building, hence they were transferred to the bema-doors.[2] They were the ones who revealed the truth to the world,[3] the messengers who carried

---

[1] Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi, Church of the Virgin "Eleïmonetria", Catholikon of the Monastery of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis, Chapel of St. Eustace in the Church of St. George "tou Syphantou", Chapel of St. Luke in the Kathisma of the Annunciation.

[2] Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 121 note 16. The idea is explicitly rendered in a group of icons where the two Apostles are holding a model of a church (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, no. 128, p. 156, pl. 170). It seems that the representation of St. Peter holding a model of a church on the bema-door of the Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi might have been taken from this iconographic context but instead of splitting the image on the two valves, the artist preferred to paint it as an attribute of St. Peter probably following the Gospel's text (Matthew, XVI,18): "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church."

[3] A very instructive example of this notion is to be seen on a triptych in the Elvehjem Art Centre (Madison) dated in the middle of the 16th century. In the central panel is represented the *Deësis* and on the wings the *Dodecaorton*. On the exterior of the wings are depicted Peter and

out the Lord's invitation of the people to the heavenly banquet.

Local Patron Saints

Out of the iconographic theme of Peter and Paul a local version was developed with St. John the Theologian replacing St. Paul. It appears on the bema-door of St. George "Aporthianon" (fig. 13). On the left valve of the door St. Peter appears in the usual stance of three quarter view to the right holding a scroll and the keys in his left hand, while the right arm is wrapped in the mantle with the hand coming out in a gesture of speech. On the right valve stands St. John the Theologian in three quarter view to the left, the head bending slightly forward and looking out at the beholder. With the inkpot under his left armpit and the stylus in his right hand he holds a jewel-studded book which is shown half opened on the first page of his Gospel. Accurately enough, the artist[1] has depicted only fragments of the text as it would have been seen in a half open book. These details emphasize the scholarly character of the saint and complement the profound wisdom expressed in his facial features.[2] The full length figure of St. John was developed most likely out of an iconographic scheme which represented the saint in half length figure.[3] The expansion

---

Paul turning towards each other. Closed, the triptych gives the impression of the bema-door which, when opened, reveals the work of Divine Dispensation (Galavaris, *Elvehjem Centre*, no. 1, pp. 37-50 with plates).

[1] Chatzidakis (*Icons*, p. 61) ascribes the door to the Cretan painter Andreas Ritzos or his atelier.

[2] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 62.

[3] On the types of St. John the Theologian and their origin and dates, see Chatzidakis, *Icons*, nos. 2 and 12.

into a full length figure created some problems in the composition of the bema-door. Peter's comfortable striding and gesture of speech (which would have been counter-balanced by a pendant St. Paul) could not be matched with a figure of a striding and gesticulating writer. The artist preferred, instead, to slightly impair the composition in order to retain the solemnity of the self-contained form of the Evangelist.

The representation of St. John the Theologian in the place of St. Paul can be easily understood because St. John is the patron saint of the Monastery and of the island.[1] Patron saints appeared early in the iconography of the bema-doors, especially in chapels dedicated to them.[2] The patron saint was believed to have taken special interest in protecting and spiritually guiding the congregation of his church, and in that sense he was more intimately related to them. His life is a tested and tangible example to reach and be united with God[3] and he constantly intercedes for the faithful who invoke his name. In short, he, too, is a pillar of his church. Our icon is fortuitously instructive about this notion in the sense that the patron saint has taken the place of one of the corner-stones of the Christian Church.

On a group of bema-doors,[4] both Peter and Paul have been replaced by

---

[1] We should keep in mind that the iconostasis and the bema-door were transferred in the Church of St. George "Aporthianon" from the Catholikon of the Monastery of the Theologian.

[2] Cf. for instance, a twelfth-century bema-door from the Chapel of Moses in Sinai decorated with the figures of Moses and Aaron (Chatzidakis, "L'évolution", p. 355, figs. 18 and 19; also Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 61.

[3] H. Frances, *Portraits of Patrons in Byzantine Religious Manuscripts*, M.A. Thesis: McGill University, Montréal 1987, p.13.

[4] These are the bema-doors of the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos in the Monastery of the Theologian, of the Chapel of the Holy Forty Martyrs

the patron saints of the monastic community of Patmos, namely St. John the Theologian (the patron saint of the island) and Hosios Christodoulos (the founder of the monastery) (fig. 25). In this iconographic theme the minor compositional shortcomings of the previous one (SS. Peter and John the Theologian) have been corrected. On the left valve, clad in himation and an ample mantle, stands St. John in three quarter view to the right. Following the iconographic type of the Byzantine Evangelist,[1] he bends forward holding a jewel-studded book with both hands that is half open on the first page of his Gospel.[2] Pendant to St. John on the right valve is a representation Hosios Christodoulos, identified by the inscription: "Our Father and Founder Hosios Christodoulos". Dressed in an himation and the monk's brown tunic and with the head covered by a cowl, he holds a model of a church[3] in his right hand which he offers to the Apostle. In his left hand he holds an open scroll with a prayer accompanying the offering. The text of the prayer is composed in archaicizing language and reads in translation:

---

in the Monastery of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis, of the Church of the Virgin "Diasozousa" (fig. 12), and of the Church of the Holy Apostles.

[1] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 70.

[2] In one case (Chapel of the Holy Forty Martyrs, Monastery of Hypapantê of Malandrakis), a bust of Christ looking down and blessing the evangelist is depicted in the upper right corner of the panel. The remark is based on the illustration published by Koutelakis (*Templa*, pl. 10b). Chatzidakis (*Icons*, p. 129) does not mention the figure of Christ in the discussion of the bema-door.

[3] The model is believed to represent the actual catholikon of the Monastery at the time of the erection of the chapel (the chapel is located in the South-West corner of the narthex of the Catholikon). On the accuracy of the representation and the date of the Chapel see Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 70, and Ch. Bouras, "Architecture" in *Patmos. Treasures of the Monastery*, pp. 28-29.

> "I offer to you, apostle, with all the other monks this church that I have built for you; and you, I beg, do not cease to protect them and act for their benefit."

The language of the prayer betrays a highly educated person and it is similar in style with the dedicatory inscription of the Church of the Holy Apostles which is a foundation of Nicephorus Chartophylax.[1] This leads to the conclusion that the composer of the prayer should be Nicephorus himself, and, furthermore, that he should be responsible for the iconographic type, too.[2] The scholarly atmosphere of the composition complies with the character of Nicephorus and his efforts to revive the humanistic studies with the collection of manuscripts and books and, in this attempt, he could be seen as the second founder of the revived Monastery.[3] The iconographic theme is the most appropriate for the bema-door of the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos as it represents the patron saint of the catholikon (St. John) and the patron saint of the chapel (Hosios Christodoulos). Since the iconostasis of the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos is considered earlier than the one in the Holy Apostles,[4] it seems that this bema-door served as the model for the bema-

---

[1] For the inscription see K. Fatourou, *Patmian Architecture*, p. 5. For Nicephorus Chartophylax, see *supra*, p. 22.

[2] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 70 note 2.

[3] See Fatourou, *Patmian Architecture*, p. 7, and Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 31. Cf. also that the founder Hosios Christodoulos was very eager in promoting the collection, study, and production of manuscripts (Ch. Diehl, "Le trésor de la bibliothèque de Patmos au commencement du 13e siècle", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* I (1892), pp. 496ff.; D. Mouriki and N.P. Sevcenko, "Illuminated Manuscripts" in *Patmos. The Treasures of the Monastery*, p. 277). It is interesting to notice that the prayer written on the scroll of Christodoulos on the bema-door of the Holy Apostles could apply almost verbatim to Nicephorus as the founder of this church.

[4] Chatzidakis (*Icons*, p. 69) dates the door of the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos around 1600; Koutelakis (*Templa*, pp. 79-80) related this

door of the Holy Apostles. This iconographic theme, however,was not invented *ad hoc* for the Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos; it had been used earlier on the bema-door of the Chapel of the Holy Forty Martyrs (Monastery of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis).[1]

The theme of St. John and Hosios Christodoulos perfectly illustrates the point already mentioned about the inclusion of the patron saints in the iconography of the bema-door.[2] The patron saint is being asked to lead the monks for their benefit, i.e. to the kingdom of God. The new element which is added here, though, is the notion of the intercession. The donor proïfers the church to the patron saint on behalf of his fellow monks. Being a saint himself, however, and having already reached unity with God, he does not include himself in the intercession. He is, however, concerned that his fellow monks also make it through the Gate of heaven, and asks the patron saint to keep a watchful eye, so that the monks would not be caught idle and foolish, and be locked out.[3]

Patron Saints of Donors

The inclusion of the donor's patron saint in the iconography of the bema-door is to be explained in the same context as in the case of the

---

iconostasis to an entry in the account book of the Monastery and suggested the precise date of 1602. The iconostasis of the Church of the Holy Apostles has been dated the earliest after 1603 when the building was completed and probably around 1607 (Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 81-82).

[1] Chatzidakis (*Icons*, p. 129) dates the bema-door in the years 1580-1590.

[2] See *supra*, p. 42.

[3] Cf. that the parallel parable of the Ten Virgins decorates the wall of the esonarthex of the Catholikon of the Monastery of the Theologian.

patron saint of the church. Three Patmian bema-doors may be presented as examples of this theme.

An inscription on the iconostasis of the Chapel of St. Anne (Monastery of the Apocalypse) refers to a renovation of the chapel by the contribution of two monks, Germanus and Parthenios. They have been identified with Parthenios Pankostas, abbot between 1602-1606 and 1610-1612, and the monk Germanus from Kos. Full length representations of their patron saints, Germanus patriarch of Constantinople and Parthenios Metropolitan of Lampsacos (Asia Minor), decorate the lower zone of the bema-doors[1] (fig. 26). Their frontal position and their bishop's vestments are similar to that of the hierarchs, according to the status of the two saints. The inclusion, however, of Parthenios of Lampsacos, which is a very rare theme in icons,[2] clearly indicates that the figures have been chosen because of their relation to the donors. In commissioning and offering the iconostasis as an act of piety, the donors seek to be awarded salvation.[3] With the representation of their patron saints on the door leading to the sanctuary, the donors invoke the power of the saints to assure them the entrance to the heavenly kingdom. On another level, the iconostasis being a work to be seen in public, the donor's piety sets an

---

[1] The door is overpainted but the figures retain their identity. For the inscription, the identification, and the activities of the donors see Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 112.

[2] The hierarch of Lampsacos is repeated once again on a proskynesis-icon of the iconostasis of the Chapel of the Taxiarchs in the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi, which is a foundation of Parthenios Pankostas (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, pp. 112 and 144).

[3] H. Frances, *Portraits of Patrons in Byzantine Religious Manuscripts*, p. 21-22.

example for the others to emulate.

The iconographic themes of the other two bema-doors include in this group (bema-door of the Chapel of the Cross in the Monastery of the Theologian, bema-door of the Chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of the Holiest of Holies) are quite unusual as far as the choice of the standing saints is concerned and, for the former at least, it has been suggested that the choice should be associated to the founders of the chapel or the donors of the doors.[1]

In the Chapel of the Cross, underneath the Annunciation on the left valve St. Artemios is represented (fig. 18) full length in a relaxed position. He is dressed in military attire and turns his head to the right. He holds a spear in his right hand and in his left a small round shield. His armour is completed by a bow, a quiver, and a helmet hanging from his left shoulder. A huge sword hangs diagonally behind the saint from his right hip to this left foot.[2] The busts of two figures appear in miniature form in the upper corners of the panel. On the left side the Prophet Jeremiah is depicted slightly turned towards the right holding a scroll with the text:

"He will not be considered Our God, others..."

The small bust on the right upper corner represents St. Steven.

On the right valve stands the Prophet Daniel. Frontal, and in his

---

[1] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 134.

[2] For the iconography of St. Artemios see M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *The Monastery of Hagios Nikolaos ton Philanthropinon and the First Phase of the Post-Byzantine Painting* (in Greek with English summary), Athens, 1983, p. 98.

typical "Persian attire,"[1] he raises his right hand in a gesture of speech. In the other hand he holds a scroll with the text:

> "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." (Daniel, 2,44)

The inclusion of these holy figures in one composition is, indeed, peculiar to say the least. The suggestion to associate the choice of the saints to the founders of the chapel[2] or the donors of the doors, as Chatzidakis himself admitted,[3] is an hypothesis. For lack of a plausible alternative this explanation should tentatively be accepted. It would be useful, nevertheless, to examine the relation of each figure to the iconography of the entire bema-door.

The appearance of the two Prophets (Jeremiah and Daniel) would not be surprising, as the correlation of the Prophets and the Annunciation is very common in Byzantine iconography[4].

---

[1] "Daniel", *RbK* I, col. 1114.

[2] The foundation of the chapel has been traditionally accredited to Nicephorus Chartophylax on the basis of a later source (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 132 note 2).

[3] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 134.

[4] Cf. the sculpted bust of David on top of the bema-door of St. George "Aporthianon"; a bema-door in the Byzantine Museum of Athens (T. 737, 15th century) where above the Annunciation appear the busts of the Prophets Isaiah and David and two smaller busts of St. Nicholas and St. Andrew -- the patron saint of the church and the patron saint of the donor (*From Byzantium to El Greco, Greek Frescoes and Icons*, Exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, 27th March-21st June 1987, Catalogue no. 53, pp. 122 and 183-4); the bema-door in the chapel of St. Tryphon in the Monastery of Chilandar on Mount Athos (c. 1620) with busts of the Prophets David and Solomon above the Annunciation (G.Babic, *Icônes*, Zagreb 1987, no. 54, p. 28 and colorplate). The representations of the two king-prophets of the Old Testament is very appropriate for the iconography of the Royal Door. Cf. also the specific iconographic theme of the Prophets surrounding the Virgin and Child commenting upon the Immaculate Conception known as "The prophets Above" (K. Kalokyris, *"The Mother of God in the Iconography of the East and the West* (in Greek), Thessalonike, 1972, pp.

The texts on the scrolls of the prophets in our icon, however, differ from the ones commonly found, referring to the virginity of Mary. The text on Jeremiah's scroll refers to the denial of Christ's divinity by the Israelites and Daniel's text, on the establishment of the heavenly kingdom. Taking into account that the icon is located in the chapel dedicated to the Holy Cross, the texts might make more sense. The holy figures on the left valve comment upon the idea of martyrdom for the faith in the effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice. Jeremiah points out to the fact that the divinity of the Son of Man was not recognized and that he was led to Calvary and Death on the Cross. St. Steven, likewise, was the first after the One to suffer martyrdom for his faith.[1] St. Artemios is also a martyr,[2] for whose iconography the *Hermeneia* stipulates that he should be rendered in the same facial type as Christ.[3] To this notion of martyrdom for the faith, then, Daniel's figure and text come as re-assurance that this

---

191-194, and Chatzidakis, *Icons*, nos. 113 and 115).

[1] *Acts*, 6 and 7. Steven is often depicted on the sanctuary doors, usually on the door of the Prothesis or the Diakonikon, along with the other saint deacon, Philip (Galavaris, *Elvehjem Centre*, p. 10); cf. also the representation of two young deacons on the lower part of the bema-door in the Chapel of the Virgin (Monastery of the Theologian) which is a work of the 18th century (Koutelakis, *Templa*, pp. 26,65).

[2] St. Artemios in the 16th century was represented as a martyr as well as a military saint; the latter was the common type in the Paleologan period. The huge sword in his iconography might allude to his martyrdom (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *op. cit.*, p. 98 note 862). For the cult of St. Artemios as a doctor saint see L. Réau, *Iconographie de l'Art Chrétien*, vol. III,1, Paris 1948, p. 114 with bibliography.

[3] M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *op. cit.*, p. 98 note 860. This stipulation has, indeed, been followed in our icon, but even more so on another icon in Patmos where the saint has been depicted with the head of Pantocrator (the icon represents St. Basil, St. Peter and Paul, and St. Artemios; it is dated between 1580-1590, and has been attributed to Michael Damaskinos; Chatzidakis, *Icons*, no. 61, pp. 103-4, pl. 38).

sacrifice will be rewarded with resurrection[1] and union with God in heaven. This interpretation, then, may explain the compositional schema with three figures gathered on one valve while only one figure (Daniel) decorates the other one; the left valve reflects the sacrifice and the right the reward. The choice of Daniel is quite appropriate since he personally experienced deliverance while being tortured for his faith.[2] Interestingly enough, the double meaning of Death and Resurrection has also been followed in the proskynesis-icon on the iconostasis of the chapel of the Cross where the Crucifixion has been combined with the Anastasis (Descent into Hell).[3]

More should be said about the depiction of St. Artemios in such a conspicuous scale. His facial resemblance to Christ should be, I think, the key point, but he is not the only saint to be portrayed in this way.[4] Why, then, a predilection for St. Artemios? Beyond the suggestion that this selection may have to do with the founders or the donors, it should be pointed out that the representation of the saint is not an *unicum* in

---

[1] The verb in the Greek text is "anastesei" (will resurrect).

[2] Representations of Daniel can be interpreted in many different ways according to the iconographic context within which he appears. Among others, Daniel can be seen as a prototype of the Martyrs or, as a prefiguration of Christ's resurrection (*RbK* I, col. 117).

[3] The Anastasis has been inserted into the lower left corner of the icon of the Crucifixion. Both scenes are contemporary and by the same artist. Chatzidakis' opinion that the Anastasis has been included "perhaps a substitute for the Christ icon which has been omitted from the iconostasis does not conflict with the suggested interpretation here (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, no. 91, pp. 132-33).

[4] St Niketas, also a military saint and a martyr, is represented with a face like Christ's according to the *Hermeneia* (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *op. cit.*, p. 98 note 872).

Patmos. We already mentioned the icon with four saints by Michael Damaskinos.[1] To this, we should add the existence of a chapel dedicated to St. Artemios in the Monastery of the Apocalypse.[2]

Even more peculiar is the program on the bema-door of the Chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of the Holiest of Holies (fig. 27). The Annunciation has been omitted altogether.[3] Each valve is decorated with a representation of a frontally standing saint: St. Agapios on the left, and St. Irene on the right. Both saints appear very rarely in Byzantine art,[4] and their inclusion could perhaps be related to the founders or the donors.

I have purposely left the discussion of the bema-door of the Chapel

---

[1] *Supra*, p. 50 note 3. Once again the inclusion of the saint in the icon is quite perplexing which led Chatzidakis to the conclusion that "these four saints were chosen for no specific reason" (*Icons*, p. 104). Also to be noticed is the fact that both icons where St. Artemios is depicted are connected directly or indirectly with Nicephorus Chartophylax (*ibid.*, p. 32).

[2] The chapel belongs to the type of the domed mausoleum (although "primitively built"), a type very frequent in Patmos around the end of the 16th and in the first half of the 17th centuries (Fatourou, *Patmian Architecture*, p. 22).

[3] The theme of the Incarnation, however, is strongly alluded to in the proskynesis-icon of the Theotokos, who is represented in the type of "The Prophets Above" (*supra*, p. 49 note 4).

[4] I know only one representation of St. Agapios, a wall painting on the groin-vault of the North West chapel in the Catholikon of Hosios Lukas (Th. Chatzidakis-Bacharas, *Les peintures murales de Hosios Loukas; Les Chapelles Occidentales*, Athens 1982, p. 82, figs. 34, 35). St. Irene wearing the imperial crown should be most likely identified with Irene the younger (the Byzantine Empress Irene the Athenian): *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed by E.Kirscbaum, W. Braunfels et al., Rome, Freiburg, Basel, Vienna, vol. VII, 1974, col. 4-5. To the representations mentioned there should be an addition of an icon with Crucifixion and busts of saints from Sinai (mid 13th century, by a French artist), where St. Irene is depicted pendant to St. Catherine (Weitzmann et al., *The Icon*, New York, 1982, p. 211).

of the Virgin in the Monastery of the Theologian (fig. 2) for last because it poses a set of different problems. The iconostasis of this chapel is the only one precisely dated by an inscription. It dates to the year 1607. The sculptural and painted decoration of its bema-door is, however, incompatible with the iconostasis and has been dated to the 18th century. At the base of the pillars separating the proskynesis-icons are small panels with the following themes (from right to left): the Virgin, the archangel Gabriel, St. John the Theologian and Hosios Christodoulos. In other words, the themes of the panels repeat the iconographic program of a bema-door (like the one in the adjacent Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos). This repetition led Koutelakis to the conclusion that the iconostasis was built without a provision for a bema-door. Instead, the iconography of the door was represented on the small panels.[1]

Once more, similar panels occur in the iconostasis of the Chapel of St. Luke in the Kathisma of the Annunciation (fig. 5) with representations of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Theologian. They often appear in iconostases of the Cretan School or of its orbit of influence both in the 17th and 18th centuries, presenting a variety of iconographic themes.[2]

Summing up the discussion on the iconography of the Patmian bema-doors, it should be pointed out that the themes represented on them cover almost the entire repertory usually found on the bema-doors (Annunciation

---

[1] Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 126. It is, however, hard to explain such an intentional omission when the iconostasis has many other secondary features.

[2] Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 127. It has been suggested that the icons on these panels had the same function as the proskynesis-icons, i.e. to be venerated and kissed by the faithful (P. Vocotopoulos, "Les miniatures d'un manuscrit Crétois de 1600", p. 203).

with Hierarchs, Peter and Paul, Patron Saints, and Patron Saints of the Donors) along with original compositions which might have been the fruit of great theological minds of enlightened abbots (Chapel of the Cross). Nevertheless, two rather common themes, the Annunciation alone and the combination of the Annunciation with the Evangelists, have been excluded from the repertory of the Patmian bema-doors. It seems that practical reasons dictated their omission. In most of these churches the iconostasis is the only decorated part.[1] It was, therefore, reasonable to combine more than one theme on the bema-door of a small iconostasis. As I shall explain later, the representation of the Evangelists were omitted because they were considered as a repetition of the Annunciation.[2]

THE PROTHESIS-DOORS

In general, Prothesis-doors are not very frequent in the churches presently under discussion. The opening of the Prothesis is usually closed by a curtain. Their rarity should be explained by the small dimensions of the churches, in many of which, the prothesis is a simple niche to the left of the apse. A Prothesis-door appears in only five churches,[3] and in all the examples it is decorated with a representation of archangels[4].

---

[1] It has been suggested that many of these churches were not meant to receive frescoes or any other kind of elaborate iconographic program (Fatourou, *Patmian Architecture*, p. 12).

[2] See *infra*, Chapter IV, p. 78.

[3] Church of Christ "Demarchias", Catholikon of the Monastery of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis, Chapel of the Holy Forty Saints in the same monastery, Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi, Church of SS. Basil and Thalalaios.

[4] There is confusion in the literature as to which archangel is represented where. Koutelakis (*Templa*, pp. 29, 122, 129) mentions only the

On the prothesis-door in the Catholikon of the Monastery of Hypapantê (fig. 28) Gabriel is depicted in frontal position holding a spear in his left hand and a chalice in his right. He wears a short tunic, a long and broad mantle, and black leggings decorated with chrysographies. The mantle is bound on his left shoulder and falls back in a swelling billow. From a golden chain a huge sword embellished with fine ornaments hangs diagonally arranged from his right hip to his left foot. A crown fastened to the back of the head by two ribbons with floating edges decorates the rich hair. The treatment of the attire and ornaments betray an artist well at ease with both the Cretan and the Western forms, and gives an air of aristocratic nobility to the figure.[1]

On the Prothesis-door of the Chapel of the Holy Forty Martyrs in the same Monastery, Gabriel is represented in a different iconographic type. Turning in three quarter view to the left he appears in full military attire (cuirass and helmet, fig. 29). In his right hand he holds the sword downwards while with his left he raises a cup.[2]

The same iconography has been followed for the archangel Michael on the Prothesis-doors in the Church of Christ "Demarchias" (fig. 24) and in the Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi (fig. 30). In addition, he steps on a half naked human being crawling on the ground. Michael appears here as the escort of the souls at the hour of death (*angelos*

---

archangel Michael. In one case (Catholikon of the Monastery of Hypapantê) the archangel is identified by inscription as Gabriel. Chatzidakis (*Icons*, p. 129) also identifies as Gabriel the archangel on the Prothesis-door in the Chapel of the Holy Forty Saints in the same Monastery.

[1] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 138.

[2] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 129.

psychopompos) accordingly seeing the soul of the dying man either to heaven or hell.[1] In these two last doors a semi-circle of heavens opens up above the head of the angel. In the midst of a starry sky appears a bust of Christ-Emmanuel with arms extended. He blesses with his right hand and holds the sphere (discus) in his left.

Representations of the archangels are common on the doors of the Prothesis and the Diakonikon.[2] As leaders of the heavenly powers they are quite appropriately represented as guardians of the holy precinct of the sanctuary.[3]

As watchful guards of the sanctuary they ward away the sacrilegious and the uninitiated. Their gesture of holding the chalice explicitly relates the representations to the Eucharist. The Prothesis is where the oblates are prepared for the consecration on the altar. It is through the Communion, this mystical *theophagia*, that the faithful becomes *entheos* (i.e. united with God) and thus invincible. It is the blood of Christ's sacrifice which conquered Death. It is through the acceptance of the sacrifice of the Incarnated Logos that the soul escapes death and re-unites with the Eternal God.

---

[1] Sometimes the dying man is identified with Alexander the Great, and Michael lifts up the soul (infant in swaddling clothes) in his left hand (G. Galavaris, "Alexander the Great Conqueror and Captive of Death: his Various Images in Byzantine Art", *RACAR* XVI,1 (1989), pp. 17-18

[2] G.Galavaris, *Icons from the Elvehjem Centre*, p. 10.

[3] It is in this role, and in this context, that Gabriel appears in military attire similar to Michael's (*Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. II, 1968, cols. 75-76).

TYMPANUM ICONS

The Patmian iconostases often include small rectangular icons on the tympana of the Royal and Prothesis doors. Their study in relation to the sanctuary doors is not, however, dictated by the location alone. These icons complement the meaning of the iconographic themes on the doors like visual commentaries.

In the wide repertory of subject matters eucharistic themes are the most common as they directly relate to the actual Sacrament performed behind the iconostasis.

The eucharistic theme *par excellence* is the Last Supper which refers to the establishment of the Sacrament by the Lord Himself. The scene is usually depicted on the tympanum of the Royal door,[1] but it can also be placed above the Prothesis door as in the Church of SS. Basil and Thalalaios.

On the tympanum of the Royal door in the church of Christ "Demarchias" (fig. 31) the composition is arranged around the long C-shaped table. In the middle of the table Christ is represented enthroned accompanied by six apostles on each side seated on a bench. All the persons are identified by inscriptions except Judas, whose identity is easily recognized by his standard iconographic type reclining forward and stretching to reach the large ball with the fish. The rest of the Apostles react reservedly to the drama of the moment. Christ protectively puts his

---

[1] On the Russian bema-doors the Communion of the Apostles is represented above the Annunciation, the Communion of the Bread on one valve, the Communion of the Wine on the other (Ouspensky-Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, p. 66, and pl. on p. 65: Galavaris, *Elvehjem Centre*, p. 10; Galavaris, *The Icon in the Life of the Church*, pl. XXXII).

left hand on the back of John; He is blessing with the right and turns slightly to the left as if talking to Peter. Small loaves of bread, two bowls of fruit, a bottle, a candlestick and various utensils are spread on the table. Around the table stretches a long decorated towel so that all the guests can use it.[1] Two tower-like buildings frame the scene at the top corners.

Important to notice is the historical anachronism in the composition with the inclusion of the two Evangelists (Luke and Mark) which clearly indicates that it is not the narrative aspect of the event that the artist intended towards, but the liturgical. The two Evangelists who were not present at the Last Supper are included in the composition in order to stress the testimonial and doctrinal validity of the Gospels.

The Old Testament's prefiguration of the Last Supper was seen in the episode of the Hospitality of Abraham.[2] This icon is usually placed on the tympanum of the Prothesis door,[3] and more rarely on the tympanum of the Royal door.[4]

---

[1] Chatzidakis *Icons* p. 95. For the use of this type of towel in banquet scenes throughout the Early Christian and Byzantine art, see D. Mouriki, "The Representation of the Hospitality of Abraham on an Icon of the Byzantine Museum" (in Greek), *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol. III (1962-1963), p. 93 note 5.

[2] The combination of the Hospitality with the Sacrifice of Isaac explicitly emphasizes the eucharistic connotations of the episode; e.g. the mosaic of San Vitale (F.W. Deichmann, *Frühchristliche Bauten und Mosaiken von Ravenna*, Wiesbaden, 1958, pl. 315).

[3] Church of Christ "Demarchias", and in the Chapel of the Virgin in the Monastery of the Theologian.

[4] This is the case with the Chapel of the Holy Forty Martyrs in the Monastery of Hypapantê of Malandrakis, as well as at the Church of SS. Basil and Thalalaios (on the Royal door of the Chapel of St. Basil). The latter building is a twin church, a very common type in Patmos (for the church and the iconostasis, see Koutelakis, *Templa*, pp.37-38, and 88-91;

In the icon of the Church of Christ "Demarchias" (fig. 32) the angels are seated around a rectangular table the front of which is decorated with a carved arcade.[1] They hold sceptres in their left hand while the right rests on the table. Various utensils and food are depicted on the table. Parts of the long decorated towel are shown in front of each angel. Abraham and Sarah are represented on either side of the central angel serving the guests. Two tower-like buildings frame the icon at the top corners.

The unfolding of the scene within a rectangular composition (instead of a more semi-circular one) along with changes in the iconographic details, is characteristic of a type formed in the second half of the 14th century. The clarity of the composition, the simplicity of the architectural background, as well as the serenity of the figures have been related to the Hesychastic movement.[2] This Paleologan type was taken over by the Cretan artists. Indicative of the post-Byzantine date is the inscription on the icon: "the revelation of the Trinity," instead of the earlier "The Holy Trinity"[3] which, however, also continues to be in use.

The scene of the Hospitality is very often represented in the area of the sanctuary, and especially in the Prothesis. As Dufrenne points

---

for the Patmian twin churches, see Fatourou, *Patmian Architecture*, pp.14f.).

[1] For this kind of table in the scenes of the Hospitality of Abraham see D. Mouriki, "The Representation of the Hospitality of Abraham on an icon of the Byzantine Museum", p. 93.

[2] D.Mouriki, *loc. cit.*, pp. 92-99.

[3] In Greek "Hê zoarchikê tes Triados Phanerosis" instead of the earlier "Hê Haghia Trias" (Mouriki, *loc. cit.* p. 104ff).

out,[1] it is related with the theological problem as to whom Christ's sacrifice was offered: to God the Father or the three persons of the Trinity.[2] After the Iconoclasm, the Hospitality comes to emphasize the double nature of Christ. The representation in the Prothesis is very interesting for the dogmatic aspects. In a way it complies with the significance of the representation of Christ-Emmanuel on the Prothesis door. It signifies that the sacrificed Christ was the same person with the pre-existing, pre-incarnated Logos while further emphasizing the mystical aspect of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

The most frequent theme on the tympana of the Patmian Royal doors is that of Christ-*Amnos* or *Epitaphios Threnos* (Lamentation).[3] The theme of the Lamentation was developed under strong liturgical influences out of narrative accounts on the Entombment of Christ.[4]

In one of the earliest Patmian icons with the representation of the Lamentation (fig. 33),[5] the dead, shrouded Christ lies on the lid of a

---

[1] S. Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques des églises byzantines de Mistra*, (Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques IV) Paris 1970, p. 53.

[2] For the theological problems and their impact on the monumental iconography, see Babic, "Les discussion christologiques et le décor des églises byzantines au XIIe siècle", pp. 368-386.

[3] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 35. The theme appears in the Chapel of the Virgin in the Monastery of the Theologian, in the Chapel of the Cross in the same Monastery, in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of the Holiest of Holies, and in the Church of SS Basil and Thalalaios.

[4] For the development see K. Weitzmann, "The Origin of the Threnos" in *Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed by M. Meiss (*De Artibus Opuscula* XL) New York, 1961, vol I (text) pp. 476-490, vol. II (album) pp. 161-166.

[5] Today in the Treasury of the Kathisma of the Annunciation, the icon dates from around 1500, and it is believed to have been executed for the tympanum of a Royal door (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 72).

sarcophagus. He is naked except for the loincloth and his body is bent the same way as it appears in Paleologan Crucifixions. The Virgin, leading the mourning women, stands on the left bewailing above His head. Counterbalancing them on the right side are depicted Joseph who holds with veiled hands the feet of the Lord and John who bends to kiss His hand. Behind them Nikodemus is grasping his face in grief. Two angels flying amidst a starry sky cover their faces with veils in a gesture of despair. Most important, however, for the content of the theme represented is the inclusion in the foreground of two files of angels converging in process towards the centre. They wear deacons' vestments and four of them hold liturgical fans (*ripidia*). The two angels in the centre hold the cross, the lance and the sponge. Chatzidakis pointed out the strong liturgical aspects of the icon and its dependence upon the embroidered *epitaphioi*.[1] The icon in question is, in fact, a fine example of the belief that the performance of the Sacrament and the Liturgy is a re-enactment of the Divine Liturgy held in heaven and that during the Mass, the earthly and heavenly world come together. The deacon-angels holding fans imitate the actual deacons around the altar[2] who used to carry these kind of *ripidia*. The lance with which the priest uses to extract the *Amnos* from the oblates signifies the actual spear piercing Christ's side. The picture in other

---

[1] *Ibid*; *Epitaphios* (or *aër-epitaphios*) is the cloth which covers the chalice and the patten on the altar. Later this embroidered cloth was used for the Litany of Good Friday; to the bibliography mentioned there M. Theocharis "Church Gold Embroideries", *Patmos. Treasures of the Monastery*, pp. 185-217 should be added.

[2] The deacons during the Great Entrance and the performance of the Sacrament on the altar wear their *oraria* crossed in front of the chest imitating the wings of the angels.

words is a mystical illustration of the Sacrament. Christ lies on the tomb exactly as the *Amnos* lies on the patten. Both are to be sacrificed.

On the tympanum of the Royal doors in the Chapel of the Virgin (fig. 34) and in the Chapel of the Cross (both in the Monastery of the Theologian) the composition of the *Epitaphios Threnos* is much simpler. Christ lies naked (except for the loincloth) on the shroud and on the red-brick slab of the tomb.[1] Smaller in scale and on both ends of the slab stand the Virgin and John in the same manner as in Crucifixion scenes.[2] Part of a mountain is visible behind each of them. In front of the slab features a basket with tools and a vase for the myrrh.

This composition is also influenced by embroidered *epitaphioi* (e.g. fig. 35).[3] The representation on the textile is that of Christ-*Amnos* (Christ-the Lamb). It is a liturgical, rather than a narrative theme. In essence it depicts the Divine Liturgy with the two archangels dressed as deacons and officiating like real deacons around the altar. Christ is the Mystical Lamb offering His body for salvation of humankind and ultimately for the Glory of God through His victory over Death (hence the name *"King of Glory"* for the dead Christ, especially in the type of *The Man of Sorrows*).[4] In our icons the Virgin and John have replaced the angels thus

---

[1] For the red-brick slab see Millet, *Recherches*, p. 498-9.

[2] Chatzidakis, *Icons*, pp. 131 and 134-5.

[3] The *epitaphios* was donated to a metochi or the Monastery in 1460 by Matthew, metropolitan of Myra (Theocharis, "Church Gold Embroideries", p. 191.

[4] For the theme of *The Man of Sorrows* and its connotation see S. Dufrenne, "Images du décor de la Prothèse", *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, XXVI (1968), pp. 297-310.

combining the liturgical with narrative elements.[1] Nevertheless, Mary and John are not represented in their usual narrative manner lamenting over the dead Christ but, rather, as they appear in Crucifixion scenes. Despite the inscription "*The Epitaphios Threnos*" on both icons, it is not the narrative, but the liturgical eucharistic theme of Christ-*Amnos* that is represented here.[2] Finally, the basket with the tools and the vase for the myrrh are reminders of the bodily suffering of Christ and allusions to his human nature.[3]

This iconographic type, therefore, materializes in utter simplicity one of the most complex and mystical doctrines of the Church, the quintessence of the entire Liturgy.

These liturgical aspects become clearer when compared with a more narrative rendering of the *Epitaphios Threnos* in an icon in the Catholikon of the Monastery of the Hypapantê (fig. 36).[4] In the foreground figures

---

[1] Cf. Millet, *Recherches*, p. 500; Theocharis, *loc. cit.*, p. 191-2.

[2] It is important to mention that in the act of the donation recorded in the books of the Monastery (Patmos, codex no. 75), the metropolitan Matthew refers to his donation as the "*amnos* of gold" (M. Theocharis, *loc. cit.*, p. 191). The eucharistic meaning of such a representation of the *Epitaphios* is explicitly rendered in a 12th century fresco from Samari, Messenia where, above the dead Christ, reads the inscription: "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him" (John, 6, 56) (Millet, *Recherches*, p. 499).

[3] Cf. the representation of the *Epitaphios Threnos* in St. Anne of Trebizonde is inscribed "hê theosomos taphê" (the entombment of the divine body). The double nature of Christ, and the twofold meaning of the Sacrament (i.e. Christ sacrificed and God triumphator) finds a verbal expression in the inscription accompanying the Threnos on the Stroganov enamel: "Christ is exposed and God is partaken" (Millet, *Recherches*, p. 499 note 4).

[4] There seems to be a certain confusion as to the location of the icon. It is considered to have been a tympanum icon for the Royal door (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 165). Today the tympanum of the Royal door is decorated with a representation of Christ's Presentation in the Temple

the open red-marble sarcophagus whose long side is decorated with three coffered panels. A lion-head in relief with a cricket in its mouth is depicted in each panel and is used as a handle. Emerging from inside the sarcophagus, Joseph raises his arms to receive the dead Christ. The Virgin holds the upper body of Christ in her lap and with her left hand lifts His head next to hers while lowering Him into the grave. St. John and Nikodemus are holding Christ's legs. Behind these five nimbed figures a crowd of women are portrayed mourning the dead Lord in various gestures of grief. One on the left end and one behind the Virgin are shown standing with open arms while Mary Magdalene is depicted kneeling on the right side grasping her hands above the head in a gesture of despair. Three more women are seated on the ground around the sarcophagus. The one on the left counterbalances the figure of Joseph while two others, one on either side and shown from the back, stare into the open grave. Above the crowd hover four flying angels with veiled hands. Three of them are holding the Symbols of the Passion (from left to right: the first angel holds the three nails, the second the lance and the sponge, and the third the cross with the crown of thorns). Two mountain peaks are shown at the top corners. The ground is decorated with plants and flowers rendered in a monochromatic, almost calligraphic, way which strongly recalls embroidered floral motifs.

Such a crowded composition with a large number of mourning women is quite frequent in 14th century Italian monuments. It has been suggested

---

(see *infra*, p. 66f.). Koutelakis (*Templa*) gives contradictory information regarding the location. On p. 91 he says that the icon is located on the tympanum above the Prothesis-door, while on p. 130 he mentions that the representation depicts the Vision of Peter of Alexandria.

that our icon makes use of an iconographic type which must have been formed in Crete sometime during the 15th century under Italian influences.[1] Although an extensive narrative account of the episode is given in apocryphal sources,[2] one should be aware that those accounts found their finest expression in liturgical texts such as the *encomia* of the Holy Saturday.[3] It was the close relation with these texts that allowed the borrowings to be incorporated into the iconographic type.

The theme of the Vision of St. Peter of Alexandria, which appears on the tympanum of the Prothesis door in the Catholikon of the Monastery of the Hypapantê, also belongs to the eucharistic cycle.[4]

St. Peter, Patriarch of Alexandria (300-311), was persecuted in the time of Diocletian. He was imprisoned and decapitated in Nikomedeia. While in prison he had a vision of Christ[5] appearing to him as a young man (Emmanuel type) on the altar with His chiton torn by Arius, the initiator of the first heresy, who is usually depicted prostrated at Peter's feet

---

[1] On stylistic ground the icon has been related to the work of the Cretan painter Constantinos Paleocapas and has been dated accordingly to the time in which he was active (1620-1645) (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 165).

[2] The larger number of the mourners may be alluded to in Luke 23, 56.

[3] There are striking similarities between our icon and the texts quoted by Millet (*Recherches*, p. 490; especially "Montagnes et vallons boisés, multitude des hommes, pleurez et gémissez avec moi, la mère de Dieu"). It is interesting to notice that the plants on the icon have been rendered in oblique alignments on the slope of the mountains as if they were illustrating the "vallons boisés".

[4] Koutelakis, *Templa*, pp. 124 and 130.

[5] *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. VIII, 1976, col. 175. Unfortunately, I could not consult the fundamental publication of G. Millet, "La vision de Pierre d'Alexandrie" in *Mélanges à Charles Diehl*, II, Paris, 1930, pp. 99-115)

asking for mercy.[1]

The representation of Christ-Emmanuel on the altar is similar to the depiction of *Melismos* (Christ-Emmanuel lying on the paten to be sacrificed by the officiating Fathers of the Church). In this context Peter is represented as an officiating hierarch. At the same time his impending martyrdom makes him a figure parallel to Christ in His double role as the Great Archpriest and Christ-*Amnos*. The inclusion of the defeated prostrating Arius is intended to comment on the refusal of the Communion to the heretics.[2]

These eucharistic aspects rendered the theme appropriate for the Prothesis where it appears from the 13th century on.[3] In the light of this interpretation it is not difficult to notice the similarities with the two other themes decorating the opening of the Patmian Protheses mentioned above, i.e. the Hospitality of Abraham and St. Michael claiming the soul of the dying man under the blessing Emmanuel.

A few tympanum icons, however, escape the cycle of the eucharistic themes *per se*. In the Catholikon of the Monastery of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis (fig. 37) and in the Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi (fig. 38), the tympana of the Royal doors are decorated with Christ's Presentation in the Temple.

On both icons the centre of the composition is occupied by the altar

---

[1] S. Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques...de Mistra*, p. 54.

[2] *ibid.*, p. 55.

[3] *ibid*, p. 54, and G. Babic, *Les Chapelles Annexes des églises byzantines: fonction liturgique et programmes iconographiques* (Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques III), Paris, 1969, pp. 136-7.

under a *ciborium*. On the altar-table there is a closed book with a glass-lamp hanging over it. On the right stands Symeon bending slightly forward and holding the Child in veiled hands. On the left side of the altar stands Mary with her hands extended and Joseph proffering the doves. Both turn towards Symeon. Between Christ's earthly parents the prophetess Anne, her body turning towards the right but her head turned in the opposite direction, looks out at the beholder. She points to Christ with one hand and in the other she holds an unfolded scroll with the text: "This child fastened heaven and earth". The two icons differ slightly in the architectural background. While both compositions are framed on either side by a building, in the icon of the Monastery of Hypapantê two more architectural elements have been added between the altar and the groups. On the left of the altar soars a timber-roof building with an arched opening while on the right side a similar, but lower one, bears a stout pillar with an elaborate capital on top of the roof. On the capital stands a flower-pot while a low wall links all the buildings together.

All these elements appear in the same theme on two other icons from Patmos (figs. 39 and 40).[1] In the arrangement of the figures the artists of the tympanum-icons seem to have followed the first icon with the more distinct grouping and not the more evenly spread composition as in the icon of Damaskinos. On the tympanum of the Catholikon of Zoodochos Pighi the artist had the space to merge the architectural background of these

---

[1] The first icon is located in the Hegoumeneion of the Monastery of the Theologian and is dated in the end of the 15th century; the second is part of a two-register icon in the Kathisma of the Annunciation painted by Michael Damaskinos and dated between 1580-1590 (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, pp. 77-78 and 102-103 respectively).

two icons into one.

The prominence of the altar on the tympanum-icons is another important difference from the other two examples with the same theme (figs. 39 and 40). The full view of the altar unobstructed by any screen is not something unusual in the iconography of the scene.[1] One could also reasonably add that the width of the icon forced the artist to a distinct, paratactic arrangement of the elements. Damaskinos, however, in his icon spread the figures evenly in front of the altar. The artist of the tympanum icon in the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi, on the contrary, clustered the figures into tight groups and put the emphasis on the altar, which, including the buildings in the background, occupies half the width of the composition. I believe that beyond the solution of a compositional problem, the artist did intend to put emphasis on the altar itself and, consequently, on the Sacrament. Mary extends her hand to receive the Child.[2] From the form of the altar it is obvious that the scene takes place in a Christian church. In this respect, it is hard to disregard the compositional similarities of this icon with a Communion scene. The Word of God (book on the table) incarnated ard blessed in the hands of the priest (Symeon and Child) is proffered back co the people which proceed serenely with pure heart (Joseph offering the doves) and confessing faith in the Child's divinity (prophetess Anne).[3] Of course, all these narrative

---

[1] For the iconography of the theme see K. Wessel, "Darstellung Christi im Tempel", *RbK* I, cols. 1134-1145, and D.C. Shorr, "The Iconographic Development of the Presentation in the Temple", *Art Bulletin* XXVIII (1946), pp. 17-32.

[2] The interpretation of the gesture in Kalokyris, *The Mother of God in the Iconography of the East and the West*, p. 154.

[3] It is interesting that the text on Anne's scroll relates very

elements had been, for a long time, part of the iconography of the theme. It is their arrangement in conjunction with other prominent elements (the altar and the location of the icon) that brings about this notion. The artist exploited and put emphasis upon the liturgical aspects inherent in the theme.

As for the choice of the scenes, it is to be pointed out that they decorate the tympana of churches which are dedicated to the Virgin, and one of them specifically to the *Presentation in the Temple* (Catholikon of the Monastery of Hypapantê). In this sense these icons can be compared to the icon of the patron saint which, as we saw (*supra*, p. 11), became a standard feature of the iconostasis.

In the same cycle (i.e scenes from the life of the patron saint) two tympanum icons with a representation of the *Dormition of the Virgin* (one over the Prothesis door in the Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi, and one over the Prothesis door in the Chapel of the Holy Forty Martyrs in the Monastery of the Hypapantê)[1] should be included.

Similar is the case of the tympanum icon with a representation of St. Anthony and St. Theoktiste of Lesbos, above the Prothesis door of the twin Church of St. Anthony and St. Aikaterina (fig. 41).[2] Both are represented half length figures. St. Anthony is depicted in a frontal manner and dressed with the monastic *schema*, the head covered by the cowl

---

closely to the text of the Genesis referring to the creation of the firmament, thus alluding to the pre-existence of the Incarnated Logos.

[1] Koutelakis, *Templa*, p. 130.

[2] The icon is dated between the years 1530 and 1570 and is related to the artistic tendencies of the workshop of Theophanes the Cretan (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 93).

and a cross hanging from his neck. With both hands he holds an unfolding scroll where it is written: "I saw the traps of the Devil (spread on the earth)". On his right, turning towards him, is St. Theoktiste of Lesbos as an old woman with sagging face and dishevelled hair.[1] A dedicatory inscription in red capital letters mentions the name of the donor: "Prayer of the servant of God, Anesia the nun".

The presence of two ascetics is hardly anything surprising in a monastic milieu like the one of Patmos. This is particularly true of the depiction of St. Anthony since he is one of the patron saints of the church. In the light of the dedicatory inscription, the inclusion and the stance of St. Theoktiste do not create any difficulty either. She is to be seen as the patron saint of the donor, the nun Anesia, interceding on her behalf to the Father of the anachoretes, St. Anthony the Great.

The inclusion of this icon in the program of a sanctuary door is nothing new as we already have seen with the representations of the patron saints of the donors on bema-doors,[2] and on the tympana of the doors.[3]

The choice of the tympanum of the Prothesis door as a place for the icon, may not have been accidental. The text on the scroll of St. Anthony refers to his awareness of the entrapments set by the Devil and his

---

[1] St. Theoktiste is a local saint of Patmos. According to her *Life* (which has borrowed heavily from the *Life of St. Mary the Egyptian*) she withdrew to the deserted island of Patmos where she lived in solitude. Shortly before her death she met a lonely hunter who gave her Holy Communion (Chatzidakis, *Icons*, p. 96).

[2] Chapel of St. Anne in the Monastery of the Apocalypse.

[3] Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi (Royal and Prothesis doors), Catholikon of the Monastery of the Hypapantê (Royal door), and Chapel of the Holy Forty Martyrs in the same monastery (Prothesis door).

avoidance of them through the purification of the desert. The warning against the temptations of the Devil is a recurrent topic in the iconography of the Prothesis-door (cf. Guard Archangels, Peter of Alexandria over Arius). Furthermore, the need for purification is verbally expressed during the performance of the Sacrament as the liturgist asks the faithful to shed off any earthly desire or preoccupation in order to receive the King of All.[1] St. Anthony and St. Theoktiste, then, are presented as examples of this purification and total devotion. In the case of St. Theoktiste, her life long purification prepared her for the Communion and union with God (death and sainthood).[2] This is exactly how the faithful are supposed to proceed in order to receive Communion and union with God.

In conclusion, the iconographic repertory of the Prothesis-doors and the tympanum icons shows the preponderance of the eucharistic themes, and strong liturgical aspects in general. Even when non-eucharistic topics are used, these aspects may not be altogether lacking.

So far the discussion has been focused on the individual themes in relation to their location and to the Liturgy. It is now necessary to place the entire ensemble of the sanctuary doors within the iconostasis taking into account its liturgical importance.

---

[1] Hymn just before the Great Entrance and the transfer of the oblates from the Prothesis to the altar.

[2] Note that the most common, if not the only, narrative episode from the Life of St. Mary the Egyptian (the model of Theoktiste) is her receiving holy Communion from St. Zosimas.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MEANING OF THE SANCTUARY DOORS WITHIN THE ICONOSTASIS

The iconographic themes which were discussed in the previous chapter (Annunciation with saints on the bema-doors, Archangels on the Prothesis-doors, and a large number of predominantly Eucharistic themes on the tympana) form an elaborate repertory which indicates the great importance of the sanctuary doors. This importance can only be understood in conjunction with the function of the doors within the iconostasis during the performance of the Liturgy.

The practical purpose of the doors is, obviously, to give access to the sanctuary through the iconostasis. However, as it was discussed in the first chapter, the emergence of the sanctuary screen was due to the metaphysical conception of the space of the church. Its development into an iconostasis was also determined by the mystical aspects of the Liturgy.

The symbolic interpretation of the parts of the church and their decoration is a recurrent topic in the patristic literature[1]. More helpful

---

[1] To mention briefly some of the best known sources until the 10th century: Description of the Cathedral of Tyros by Eusebius (*The History of the Church*, trans. by G.A. Williamson, Penguin books, 1965, 5th reprint, 1986, pp. 393-401, esp. p. 397); a 6th-century Syriac hymn for the Cathedral of Edessa (A. Dupont-Sommer, "Une hymne syriaque sur la Cathédrale d'Edesse", *Cahiers Archéologiques* II (1947), pp. 30-39; and A. Grabar, "Le témoignage d'une hymne syriaque sur l'architecture de la Cathédrale d'Edesse au VIe siècle et sur la symbolique de l'église chrétienne", *ibid.*, pp. 41-67); the Xth Homily of the Patriarch Photios on the Church of the Virgin (of Pharos?), and the two sermons of the emperor Leo VI on the Church of the Magistros Stylianos Zaoutses and on the Church of the Monastery of Kauleas (J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, "Théophanies-visions auxquelles participent les Prophètes dans l'Art Byzantin après la Restauration des Images", *Synthronon*, p. 135 with

in our discussion are two later texts, not only because they are chronologically closer to our iconostases, but because of their extensive and explicit accounts of performance of the Liturgy, its symbolism, and the symbolic interpretation of the space of the church. The first text is a treatise *On the Holy Temple and its Consecration* by Symeon, archbishop of Thessalonica (+ 1429/30);[1] the second is a *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* by Nikolaos Cabasilas (1320/23- 1390's).[2]

According to Symeon, the tripartite division of the church alludes to the Trinitarian nature of God. The church is a micro-universe. The narthex and its lower parts correspond to the earth and any specimen of unintelligent life. The upper part of the naos stands for the visible heaven and the lower, for paradise. Finally, the sanctuary is a *typos* for what exists beyond heaven, the realm of the invisible God. Within the sanctuary the altar is the throne of God whereupon seated He receives the glorifying praise of the heavenly powers. The officiating archpriest plays the role of Christ, and the rest of the officiants represent the apostles, the archangels and the angels. The souls of the saints participate along with the angels. Symeon explains this symbolic association of the earthly figures with the inhabitants of heaven "because there is one and the same Church above and below, since God came and appeared among us, and was seen by us, and he carried everything through for our benefit; and there is one

---

bibliography).

[1] *De Sacro Templo, PG.* CLV, cols 305-361.

[2] *Sacrae Liturgiae Interpretatio, PG.* CL, cols. 368-492; English translation: Nicholas Cabasilas, *A commentary on the Divine Liturgy,* transl. by J.M. Hussey and P.A. McNulty, 1960, 4th reprint, London, 1978.

and the same thing the sacred ceremony of the Lord and the communion.... And this is celebrated at the same time above and below. Except that there [above] [it is celebrated] without screens and symbols; here [in the house of God on earth], on the contrary, through symbols because we are enveloped in this heavy and perishable load of flesh."[1] He hastens to add that the altar also indicates the tomb of Christ as well as the sacrament through the Passion. The Saviour on the altar rests on his throne as God and is sacrificed as human.[2]

Within such a conception of the space, then, comes the symbolism of the iconostasis:

> "The cancelli manifest the difference between the world of mind and the world of the senses, and it is like a firmament separating the world of mind from the world of the matter; and the columns in front of the altar of Christ are the pillars of His Church, and they preach about Him and support us. Hence the epistylion [cosmetes] above the columns reveals the fellowship in love and the union in Christ of the saints on earth with the saints in heaven. Hence the icon of the Saviour is placed in the middle above the epistylion among the icons of the Mother of God, and of the Baptist, and of the Angels, and the Apostles, and the Saints; [these icons] teach that Christ exists in heaven among his saints, and He also exists with us now, and that he will come again. But the cancelli also indicate that the sanctuary is the tomb of Christ, as the Holy altar stands for the grave, and the sanctuary [the space around the grave] for the tomb [funerary monument]."[3]

The twofold meaning of the sanctuary, as the heavenly kingdom and the tomb of Christ, complies with the double nature of Christ and his role both as victim and officiant. These ideas go back to Early Christian times. The sanctuary screen, therefore, and later the iconostasis, is the

---

[1] *PG.* CLV, cols. 337D-340C.

[2] *Ibid.* col. 340C-D.

[3] *Ibid.* col. 345C-D.

border of the heavenly kingdom and the precinct of the tomb of Christ.

Both these ideas were visually rendered in the symbolic repertory of the Early Christian chancel slabs and the Early Byzantine sanctuary screen. In the later Byzantine and Post-Byzantine period the idea of the sanctuary screen being the wall of the heavenly city is also alluded to in the representation of the *Holy Mandylion*,[1] either above the key of the triumphal arch, or above the Royal door, as in the iconostasis in the Catholikon of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi (fig. 3).

The symbolic reference to the heavenly city led in the course of centuries to the choice of themes grouped around the *Deësis*, arranged in a hierarchical order which pictorialized the celestial hierarchy. Symeon's account in the 15th century simply reiterates a *locus communis* in the Christian thought.[2] Furthermore, the notion that the sanctuary denotes the kingdom of heaven also explains the representation of the archangels as defenders of the gates of heaven (cf. Patmian Prothesis-doors). It is important to recall here that the leaders of the celestial powers defend and are represented in, the lateral entrances.

The central gate of the sanctuary, the Royal door, was granted an exceptional importance from the very beginning. Even when the sanctuary

---

[1] The *Holy Mandylion* is the symbol of the Divine Incarnation. Depending on which figures accompany it, it emphasizes either the human (Joachim and Anne) or the divine nature (archangels) of Christ. In monumental art it appears in places where the figure of Christ Pantocrator used to be depicted and has the same multi-faceted meaning as the symbol of the Cross and the Throne of *Hetoimasia* (S. Papadaki-Oekland, "The *Holy Mandylion* as a New Symbol in an Ancient Iconographic Schema" (in Greek with English summary), *D.X.A.E.* period 4, vol XIV (1987-88), pp. 283-296. Cf. also A. Grabar, *La sainte Face de Laon. Le Mandylion dans l'art orthodoxe*, (Seminarium Kondakovianum II), Prague, 1931).

[2] *PG.* CLV, col. 340A and C.

screen had the form of a low balustrade in the Early Christian and Early Byzantine periods, exceptional care was taken to emphasize the monumentality of the Royal door either by the form of a *prostoön* or by a triumphal arch.[1]

By the Middle Byzantine period the significance of the Royal door was pictorially manifested in the representation of the Annunciation on the bema-door. The earliest extant example appears on a miniature in the *Homilies of James Kokkinovaphos* from the 12th century (Codex Vaticanus gr. 1162, fol. 90r., fig. 42).[2] The association of the theme with the location is the most appropriate in visually rendering the dogma of the Incarnation of the Logos. God assumed human nature and entered the world of matter. With the same token human nature regained access to the heavenly kingdom. The mystery of the Incarnation of the Logos through the Virgin was alluded to in many of the Old Testament prophesies. But the association of the Incarnation with the gate and the Eucharist was almost explicitly rendered in the words of Ezekiel (44, 1-3) referring to the eastern gate of the sanctuary which had been entered in by the Lord and shall remain shut until the prince will enter it again to eat bread before the Lord.[3]

---

[1] Chapter I, p. 1.

[2] Grabar, "Deux notes", p. 15, fig. 4. Reasonable arguments have been brought forth in favour of an earlier date (11th, or even 10th century), but they all lack the support of factual evidence; the earliest surviving bema-doors with Annunciation date from the 13th century (*ibid.*, p. 17; Pelekanides, "Byzantine bema-door from Mount Athos", p. 51; Chatzidakis, "L'évolution", p. 354; K. Weitzmann, "Fragments of an early St. Nicholas triptych on Mount Sinai", *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol. IV (1964-1965), pp. 17-18, fig. 13).

[3] For the association of the Incarnation with the Gate, see K. Weitzmann, *ibid.*; G. Babić, "L'image symbolique de la 'Porte Fermée' à Saint-Clément d'Ohrid", in *Synthronon*, pp. 145-151; and K. Kalokyris, *The Mother of God in the Iconography of the East and the West*, pp. 187-188

Related to the concept of the Incarnation is the work of the four Evangelists, hence their representation in the *Homilies of Gregory* (Codex Par. gr. 510, fol 452r., fig 21). The inclusion of Evangelists on the bema door in combination with the Annunciation (for instance, on the later Russian bema-doors) is to be seen as an additional comment: the Evangelists are witnesses of the Incarnation and the ones who unveiled the Word of God to mankind, but not the instruments of the Incarnation as the Virgin was. Hence their presence was not always imperative. This is the case of the Patmian bema-doors where the Annunciation alone was sufficient to encompass the dogmatic importance of the Incarnation so that less obvious aspects could also be included.

The association of the Annunciation with the entrance of the sanctuary was a standard feature in the decoration of this area where it continued to be depicted on the pillars supporting the apse or, on either side of the triumphal arch.

The Annunciation and the Evangelists are directly related to the doctrine of the Incarnation and God's plan for man which, in human terms, were declared in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. At the beginning, in the apostolic era, this celebration was a simple ceremony.[1] Its development into an elaborate rite which encompassed all arts, including music and choreography, aimed at re-enacting mystically and presenting through the arts the great mystery of the Christian faith. An iconographic

---

with further textual references.

[1] G.Galavaris, *Bread and the Liturgy. The Symbolism of Early Christian and Byzantine Bread Stamps*, Madison, Milwaukee, & London, 1970, p. 4.

program of decoration was developed which was to serve this re-enactment.[1] This program was centered, as the liturgy was, around the Incarnation, the early life of Christ, His suffering and His Resurrection -- all, however, represented outside time. Byzantine commentators of the liturgy stress these events and point to the symbolism of the various acts which corresponded to these episodes and to the architectural parts of the church which have been given symbolic meaning.[2] Cabasilas in the 14th century summarizes all this clearly[3] and re-iterates the dogmatic importance of the Twelve Great Feasts (*Dodecaorton*) which have their visual counterparts in the decoration and in the actual performance of the liturgy -- all stressing the redemptive work of Christ. The *Dodecaorton*, then, on the epistyle of the iconostasis repeats and sums up the entire program of decoration. The Dormition of the Virgin, which usually concludes the series, is the eye-witnessed fulfillment of the promise for our bodily resurrection and union with God on the last of days.[4]

Cabasilas, however, in discussing the various liturgical acts, repeatedly emphasizes the predominance of their metaphysical aspects and the fact that every one of these acts reflect the totality of the mystery as if they were the surfaces of a prism reflecting, from different angles, one and the same picture.

---

[1] For the development of the iconographic programm the best but not complete account is O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration*, London, 1948.

[2] K. Kallinikos, *The Christian Church and the Rituals Performed therein* (in Greek), Athens, 1969.

[3] Hussey-McNulty, p. 52.

[4] For the cycle of the Dormition of the Virgin, K. Kalokyris, *The Mother of God in the Iconography of the East and the West*, pp. 126-140.

With reference to the iconostasis themes with which we are concerned, the actions regarding the Prothesis, i.e. the preparation of the gifts for the sacrifice, bear a very close relation to Christ's Passion. The priest uses the lance to extract the *Lamb*, the principal bread particle from the Eucharistic loaf, and pours warm water along with wine into the chalice (alluding to the piercing of the side of Christ) and the gifts are covered by the *epitaphios*. God, however, who suffered on the Cross is both the Infant in the manger and the pre-existing Logos, the eternal Almighty.[1] The themes, therefore, which we saw depicted on the Prothesis-door and the tympanum above it (e.g. Hospitality of Abraham, Christ-Emmanuel, Vision of Peter of Alexandria, Entombment) are pictorial expressions of this interpretation.

Throughout the mass the faithful ask for the help and intercession of the saints. The evocation of the saints reveals the double nature of the sacrifice (eucharistic and supplicatory). "The saints are the reason for thanksgiving; for in them the Church finds that which she seeks and obtains that for which she has prayed -the kingdom of heaven." "They are the ambassadors of humankind in heaven; the colony of the Church in heaven, the factual proof of our heritage of the Divine kingdom." The saints are the members of the Church who have already reached perfection. Hence their power to intercede to the Lord for the salvation of "those who are still running the race to gain the crown."[2]

The portrayal of all the categories of saints (liturgists, hierarchs

---

[1] Hussey-McNulty, p. 41.

[2] Hussey-McNulty, pp. 40 and 84.

military saints, doctor saints, monks, anachoretes, etc.), therefore, is a pictorial manifestation of the different paths to reach sainthood.[1] These separate paths, arranged according to the celestial hierarchy, are represented in the *Great Deësis* on the epistyle of the iconostasis.

The intercession of the saints,[2] however, presupposes a judgement. Cabasilas leaves no doubt about that:

> "For their (the faithful's) petition is for mercy. This is the supplication of the condemned who have no possible defence and no justification to put forward; they make this one last appeal to the judge, counting on obtaining what they ask not because it is just but because of his love for mankind."[3]

And he explains how the mediation of the saints on our behalf can be of great help by quoting James: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."[4] The eschatological aspect of this judgement is obvious in many ways. The communion itself and our union with God, for which we ask the assistance of the saints, is a *typos* of the final judgement on the Last of days, when we will return to the heavenly kingdom in eternity.

This judgement, however, no matter how fearful, is welcomed by the faithful because they know that it is a judgement motivated by love, and not by revenge. They will be heard by a fair but merciful judge who has suffered along with, and for, them.[5] The same love of God, which binds the

---

[1] Ouspensky-Lossky, *The meaning of Icons*, p. 64.

[2] For the intercessory aspect of the *Deësis* see *supra*, p. 9 note 1.

[3] Hussey-McNulty, p. 45.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

judgement.

The foundation of the heavenly kingdom is good judgement and justice. God's plan to save humankind was to bring them back to a community of justice. The Incarnated God entered this world and was subjected to the unjust rules of peril and Death. His triumph over Death shows the power of justice. The faithful's quest for redemption is, therefore, a quest for good judgement and justice which God offers out of His love for man.[1]

The proof that the judgement is motivated by love is the acceptance of the saints in the divine kingdom, namely the sanctuary, wherein they had been depicted since the Early Christian period.[2] They are the proof that God is within the reach of human possibilities, and they show us the way to enter His realm (representations of the saints on the bema-doors).

We see, therefore, that the themes which were included in the repertory of the iconostasis had their source in the decoration of the sanctuary in general[3] which also formed the nucleus of the themes developed in the iconographic program of church decoration. As the iconostasis was gaining height and was closing the bema, the themes of the apse were also transferred to the iconostasis. This was more than a repetition, so that the congregation could see the scenes hidden away. It was to sum up the visual aspect of the liturgy, which the faithful had seen on the walls and vaults of the church, and to stress the fact that

---

[1] Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

[2] For this see Ch. Ihm, *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei vom vierten Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des achten Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden, 1960.

[3] J. Lafontaine-Dosogne *Les programmes iconographiques...de Mistra*, p. 50; and S. Pelekanides, "Byzantine Bema-Door from Mount Athos", p.52.

the faithful were not cut off from the kingdom of God but that they still participated and enjoyed the divine citizenship granted by God himself. Regardless of its height or the amount of space that it hid, the iconostasis carried out what it was set out to do from the very beginning: to protect the faithful from the horrible aspect of the Sacrament (of what is beyond the potentialities of the human perception) without estranging him from the love of God. This repetition inside and outside the sanctuary made clear the two levels of the Liturgy, the visible and the invisible.

In conclusion, it is important to point out that the practical function of the sanctuary doors -- to give access to the sanctuary -- was fully used by the iconographers to visually assert the way to reach God. The iconography of the entire iconostasis aims to that end. It is mentioned above that the iconostasis becomes the spiritual focus of the space as exactly the race for the crown becomes the focus of the faithful. Within this context the sanctuary doors are the focus of the entire iconostasis. The Patmian sanctuary doors are a superb example of this notion. Being almost the only part of the iconostasis to receive figural decoration they epitomize all the metaphysical aspects attached to the screen since its very emergence. They prove that the iconostasis exists not to hinder, but to facilitate the access.

Above all the study of the sanctuary doors of Patmos shows in a specific way the great impact which the Liturgy had upon the iconography of the doors, both in the choice and the rendering of the themes, and in a general way the importance of the doors for a comprehensive understanding of the role of the iconostasis in the Orthodox Church.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acheimastou-Potamianou, Myrtali. *The Monastery of Hagios Nikolaos ton Pilanthropinon and the First Phase of Post-Byzantine Painting* (in Greek with English summary), Athens, 1983.

Babić, Gordana. "L'image symbolique de la 'Porte Fermée' à Saint-Clément d'Ohrid", *Synthronon*, pp. 145-151.

----------. "Les discussions christologiques et le décor des églises byzantines au XIIe siècle. Les évêques devant l'Hétimasie et devant l'Amnos", *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 2 (1968), pp. 368-386.

----------. *Les Chapelles Annexes des églises byzantines: fonction liturgique et programmes iconographiques (Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques III)*, Paris, 1969.

Bogay, Thomas von. "Deesis und Eschatologie", *Polychordia. Festschrift Franz Dölger zum 75. Geburtstag*, Amsterdam, 1966, pp. 59-72.

----------. "Deesis" *RbK* I, cols. 1178-1186.

Byzantine Art, An European Art, Catalogue of the Ninth Exhibition held under the Auspices of the Council of Europe, Zappeion Exhibition Hall, April 1st - June 15th 1964, Athens, 1964.

From Byzantium to El Greco, Greek Frescoes and Icons, Catalogue of Exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, 27th March-21st June 1987.

Cabasilas, Nikolaos. *Sacrae Liturgiae Interpretatio, Patrologia Greca*, CL, cols. 368-492 (English translation: Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, trnsl. by J.M. Hussey and P.A. McNulty, 1960, 4th reprint, London, 1978).

Chatzidakis, Manolis. "Epistylion-icons from Mount Athos" (in Greek), *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol. IV (1964-1965), pp. 377-400.

----------. "Les débuts de l'école crétoise et la question de l'école dite italogrecque", *Mnemosynon Sophias Antoniadi*, (Library of the Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies of Venice, 6), Venice, 1974. pp. 169-211 (reprinted in Manolis Chatzidakis, *Études sur la peinture post-byzantine*, London: Variorum Reprints 52, 1976).

----------. "Ikonostas" in *RbK*, vol. III, cols. 326-353.

----------. "L'évolution de l'icône aux 11e-13e siècles et la transformation du templon", *Actes du XVe Congrès International d'Études Byzantines*, Athens, September 1976, vol. I, pp. 333-366.

----------. *Icons of Patmos*, (Greek edition) Athens, 1977; (English

translation) Athens, 1985.

Chatzidakis-Bacharas, Théano. *Les peintures murales de Hosios Loukas: Les Chapelles Occidentales*, Athens, 1982.

Demus, Otto. *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration*, London, 1948.

Der Nersessian, Sirarpie. "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 14 (1960), pp. 71-86.

Diehl, Charles. "Le trésor de la bibliothèque de Patmos au commencement du 13e siècle", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* I (1892), pp.488-525.

Dix, Gregory Dom. *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 2nd ed. London 1945; 2nd reprint, New York, 1983.

Dufrenne, Suzy. "Images du décor de la Prothèse", *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* XXVI (1968), pp. 297-310.

----------. *Les programmes iconographiques des églises byzantines de Mistra*, (Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques IV),Paris, 1970.

Dupont-Sommer, A. "Une hymne syriaque sur la Cathédral d'Edesse", *Cahiers Archéologiques* II (1947), pp. 30-39.

Emmanuel-Gerousi, Melita. *The Frescoes of the Church of St. Demetrios at Makrychori and of the Church of the Dormition of the Virgin at Oxylithos in Euboea* (in Greek), Ph.D. Thesis: University of Athens, Athens, 1984.

Eusebius. *The History of the Church*, transl. by G.A. Williamson, Penguin Books, 1965, 5th reprint 1986.

Fatourou, Kanto. *Patmian Architecture. The Church of the Holy Apostles as a Typical Example of Patmian Style* (in Greek with French summary), Athens, 1962.

Fournée, Jean, "Architectures symboliques dans le thème iconographique de l'Annonciation", *Synthronon*, pp. 225-235.

Frances, Henri. *Portraits of Patrons in Byzantine Religious Manuscripts*, M.A. Thesis: McGill University, Montréal, 1987.

Galavaris, George. *Bread and Liturgy. The Symbolism of the Early Christian and Byzantine Bread Stamps*, Madison, Milwaukee & London, 1970.

----------. *Icons from the Elvehjem Centre*, Madison, 1973.

----------. *The Icon in the Life of the Church*, (Iconography of Religions, XXIV, 8), Leiden, 1981.

----------. "Alexander the Great Conqueror and Captive of Death: His

Various Images in Byzantine Art", *RACAR* XVI, 1 (1989), pp. 12-18.

Grabar, André: "Le témoignage d'une hymne syriaque sur l'architecture de la Cathédrale d'Edesse au Vie siècle et sur la symbolique de l'église chrétienne", *Cahiers Archéologiques* II (1947), pp. 41-67.

----------. "Deux notes sur l'histoire de l'iconostase d'après des monuments de Jougoslavie", *Zbornik Radova Byzantoloskog Instituta* 7 (1961), pp. 13-22.

Ihm, Christa. *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei vom vierten Jahrhuhdert bis zur Mitte des achten Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden, 1960.

Kallinikos, K. *The Christian Church and the Rituals Performed therein* (in Greek), Athens, 1969.

Kalokyris, Konstantinos. *The Mother of God in the Iconography of the East and the West* (in Greek), Thessalonike, 1972.

Kazanaki, Maria. "Religious Woodcarving in Candia during the 17th century: Notarian Documents (1606-1642)" (in Greek), *Thesauresmata* 11 (1974), pp. 251-283.

Koutelakis, Charis. *Woodcarved Templa of Dodecanesos until 1700* (in Greek with summary in English), Athens, 1983.

Kreidl-Papadopoulos, Karoline. "Bemerkungen zum justinianischen Templon der Sophienkirche in Konstantinopel", *Jahrbuch des österreichischen byzantinischen Geselschaft* 17, (1968), pp. 279-289.

Labrecque, Nathalie. *Histoire de l'évolution de l'iconostase Russe*, Ph.D. Diss.: Université de Montréal, Montréal, 1977.

Lafontaine-Dosogne, Jaqueline. "Théophanies-visions auxquelles participent les Prophètes dans l'Art Byzantin après la Restauration des Images", *Synthronon*, pp. 135-143.

----------. *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'empire Byzantin et en Occident*, vol. I: Brussels, 1964, vol. II: Brussels, 1965.

Lazarev, Victor. "Trois fragment d'épistyles peintes et le templon byzantin", *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol IV (1964-1965), pp. 117-143.

Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie, ed. by Engelbert Kirschbaum SJ and Wolfgang Braunfels, vol.I-VIII, Rome, Freiburg, Basel, Vienna, 1968-1976.

Millet, Gabriel. "Quelques représentations byzantines de la Salutation angélique", *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique* XVIII (1894), pp. 453-483.

----------. *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'Évangile aux XIVe, XVe et*

XVIe siècles d'après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont Athos, Paris, 1916, reprint Paris, 1960.

Mouriki, Doula. "The Representation of the Hospitality of Abraham on an Icon in the Byzantine Museum" (in Greek), *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol. XIII (1962-1963), pp. 87-114.

Ouspensky, Leonid and Lossky, Vladimir. *The Meaning of Icons*, Boston, 1952, reprint New York, 1983.

Papadaki-Oekland, Stella. "The *Holy Mandylion* as a New Symbol in an Ancient Iconographic Schema" (in Greek with English summary), *D.X.A.E.* period 4, vol XIV (1987-88), pp. 283-296.

Patmos. Treasures of the Monastery, ed. by Athanasios D. Kominis, Athens, 1989.

Pelekanides, Stylianos. "Byzantine bema-door from Mount Athos" (in Greek), *Archailogikê Ephemeris* 96 (1957), pp. 50-67.

Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst, ed. by Klaus Wessel and Marcel Restle, 4 vols., Stuttgart, 1966-1990.

Réau, Louis. *Iconographie de l'Art Chrètien*, 3 vols., Paris, 1955-1958.

Restle, Marcel. "Dodekaortion", *RbK*, I, cols. 1207-1214.

Sevčenko, Nancy Paterson. *The Life of St. Nicholas in Byzantine Art*, Torino, 1983.

Shorr, Dorothy C. "The Iconographic Development of the Presentation in the Temple", *Art Bulletin* XXVIII (1946), pp. 17-32.

The Study of the Liturgy, ed. by Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, SJ, London, 1978.

Synthronon. Art et Archéologie de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age (Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques II), Paris, 1968.

Symeon of Thessalonike: *De Sacro Templo*, *Patrologia Greca*, CLV, cols. 305-361.

Vocotopoulos, Panayotis L. "Les miniatures d'un manuscrit Crétois de 1600" (in Greek with summary in French), *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol. XIII (1985-1986). pp. 191-208.

Walter, Christopher. "Two Notes on the Deësis", *Revue des Études Byzantines* XVI (1968) pp. 311-336 (reprint in Christopher Walter, *Studies in Byzantine Iconography*, London: Variorum Reprints 65, 1977).

----------. "Further Notes on the Deësis", *Revue des Études Byzantines*

XXVIII (1970), pp. 161-187 (reprint in Christopher Walter, *Studies in Byzantine Iconography*, London: Variorum Reprints 65, 1977).

Weitzmann, Kurt. "The Origin of the Threnos", *Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. by Millard Meiss (*De Artibus Opuscula* XL), New York, 1961, vol. I (text) pp. 476-490, vol. II (album) pp. 161-166.

----------. "Fragments of an early St. Nicholas triptych on Mount Sinai", *D.X.A.E.*, period 4, vol. IV (1964-1965), pp. 1-23.

----------. "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century", *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, 1966*, pp. 207-224.

----------. "Die byzantinischen Elfenbeine eines Bamberger Graduale und ihre ursprüngliche Verwendung", *Studien zur Buchmalerei und Goldschmiedekunst des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Karl Usener*, Marburg/ Lahn, 1967, pp. 11-20, (reprinted in Kurt Weitzmann, *Byzantine Book Illumination and Ivories*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1980).

----------. "Three Painted Crosses at Sinai", *Kunsthistorischen Forschungen, Otto Pächt zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*, Salzburg 1972, pp. 23-35.

----------. *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons; vol I: From the Sixth to the Tenth Century*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1976.

----------. *The Icon*, London, 1978.

Weitzmann, Kurt., Alibegasvili, Gaiané., Volskaja, Aneli., Chatzidakis, Manolis.,; Babic, Gordana., Alpatov, Michail., and Voinescu, Teodora. *The Icon*, New York, 1982.

Wessel, Klaus. "Darstellung Christi im Tempel", *RbK* I, cols. 1134-1145.

Xydis, Stephen G. "The Chancel Barrier, Solea, and Ambo of Hagia Sophia", *Art Bulletin* 29 (1947), pp. 1-24.

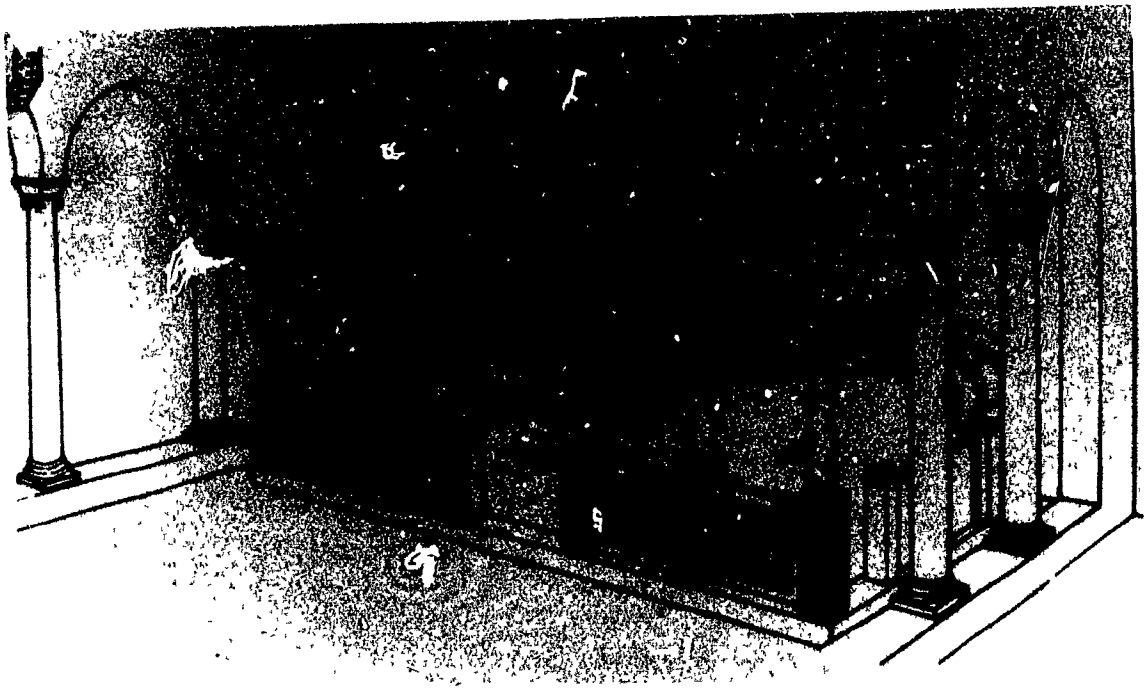

Fig. 1.
Lesbos, Anhendelli basilica, reconstruction of the bema (after A. Orlandos).

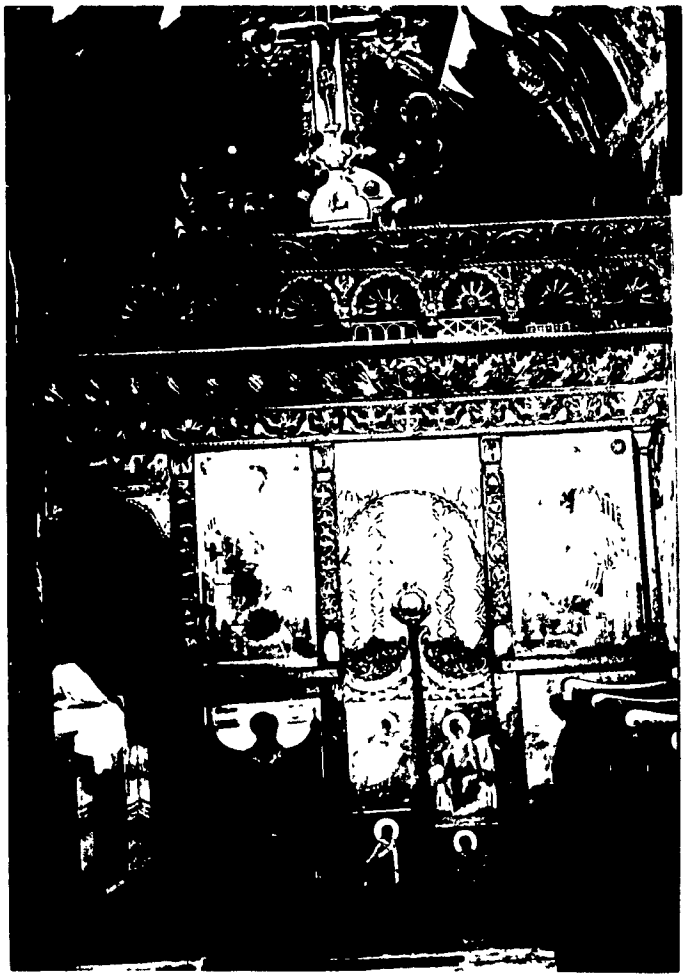

Fig. 2.
Patmos, Monastery of St. John the Theologian, Chapel of the Virgin; iconostasis, 1607.

Fig. 3. Patmos, Monastery of Zoodochos Pighi, Catholikon; iconostasis, 1600-1617.

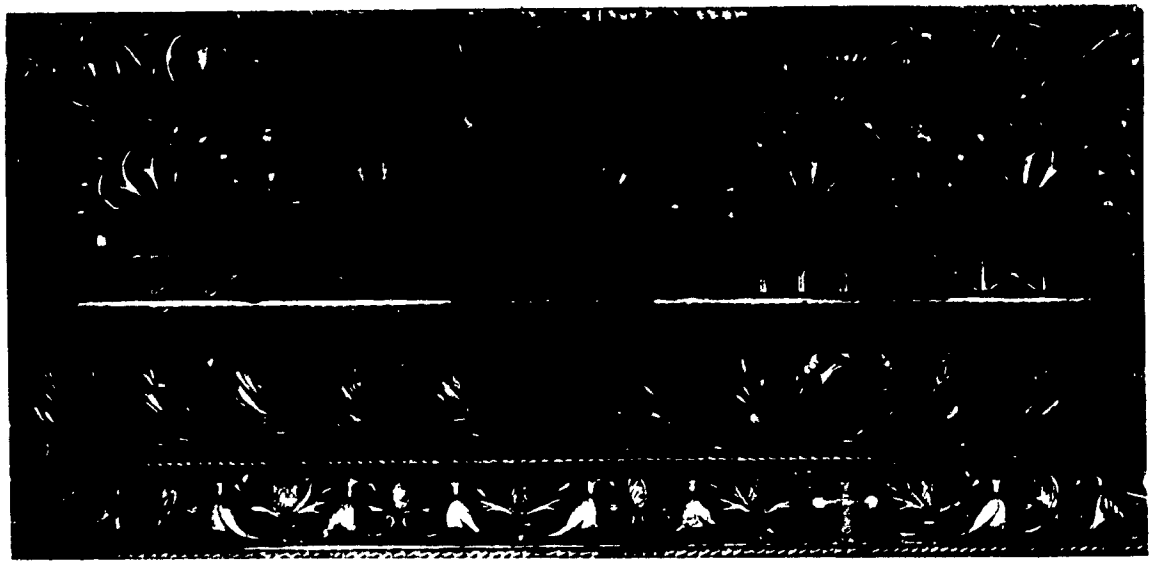

Fig. 4. Patmos, Monastery of the Theologian, Chapel of the Virgin; detail from the epistyle of the iconostasis, 1607.

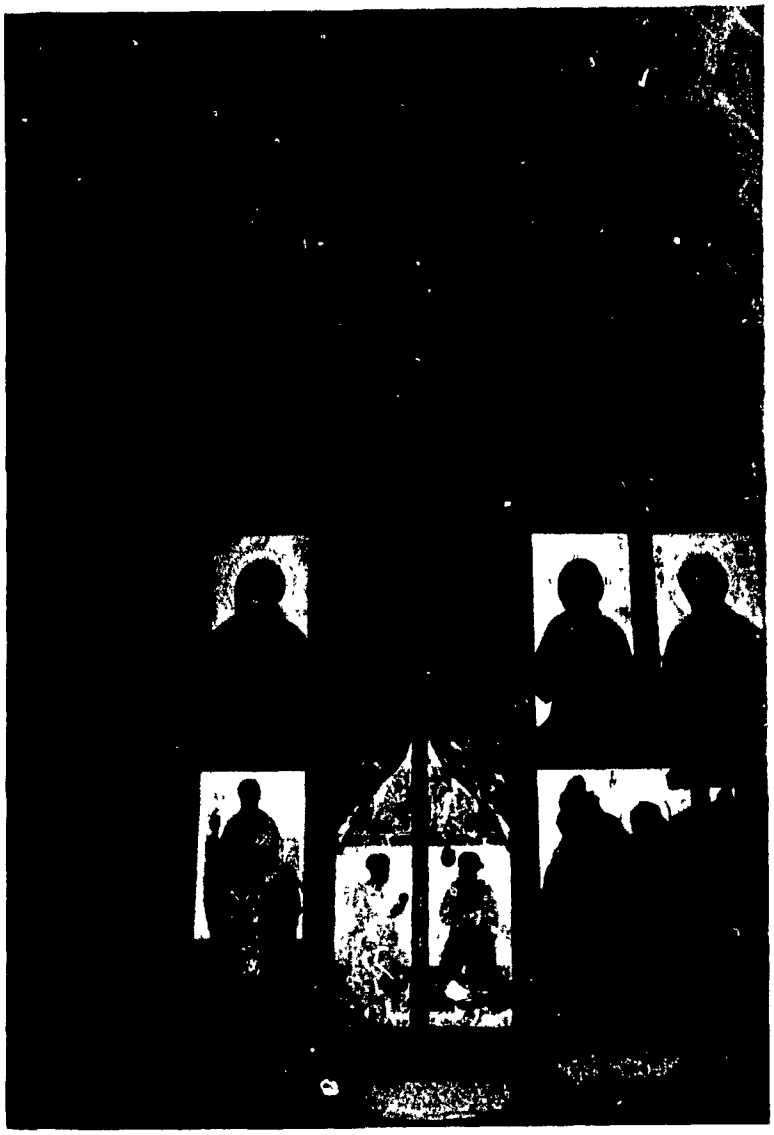

Fig. 5.
Patmos, Kathisma of the Annunciation, Chapel of St. Luke; iconostasis, c.1613

Fig. 6.
Patmos, Monastery of St.John the Theologian, Chapel of the Cross; iconostasis, central part of the *Deēsis*, 1600–1610.

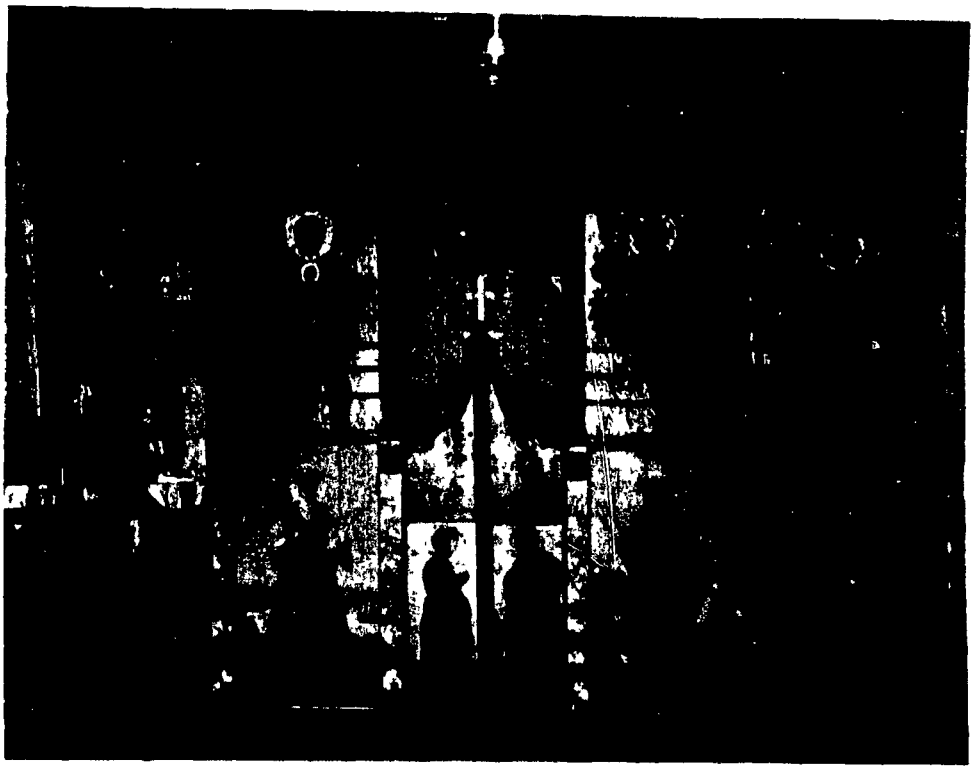

Fig.7.
Patmos, Church of St. George "Aporthianon";iconostasis, end of the 15th century.

Fig. 8. Codex Vaticanus gr. 2137, fol. 4r., 1600.

Fig. 9.
Codex Vaticanus gr. 2137,
fol. 5r., 1600.

Fig. 10.
Codex Vaticanus gr. 2137,
fol. 6r., 1600.

Fig. 11.
Codex Vaticanus gr. 2137,
fol. 10r., 1600.

Fig. 12.
Patmos, Church of the Virgin
"Diasozousa"; beme-door,
ca. 1600.

Fig. 13. Patmos, Church of St. George "Aporthianon"; bema-door, second half/end of 15th century.

Fig. 14. Detail of fig. 13: Bust of David.

Fig. 15. Detail of fig. 13: Annunciation.

Fig. 16. Patmos, Monastery of St. John the Theologian, New Treasury; Right valve of a bema-door, 1480-1500.

Fig. 17. Detail of fig. 16: the Virgin of the Annunciation.

Fig. 18. Patmos, Monastery of St. John the Theologian, Chapel of the Cross; bema-door, 1600-1610.

Fig. 19.
Detail of fig. 18: the Virgin and the spinning maiden.

Fig. 20. Patmos, Church of Christ "Demarchias"; upper part of the bema-door, first half of 16th century.

Fig. 21. Codex Parisinus gr. 510, fol. 452r., ca. 880.

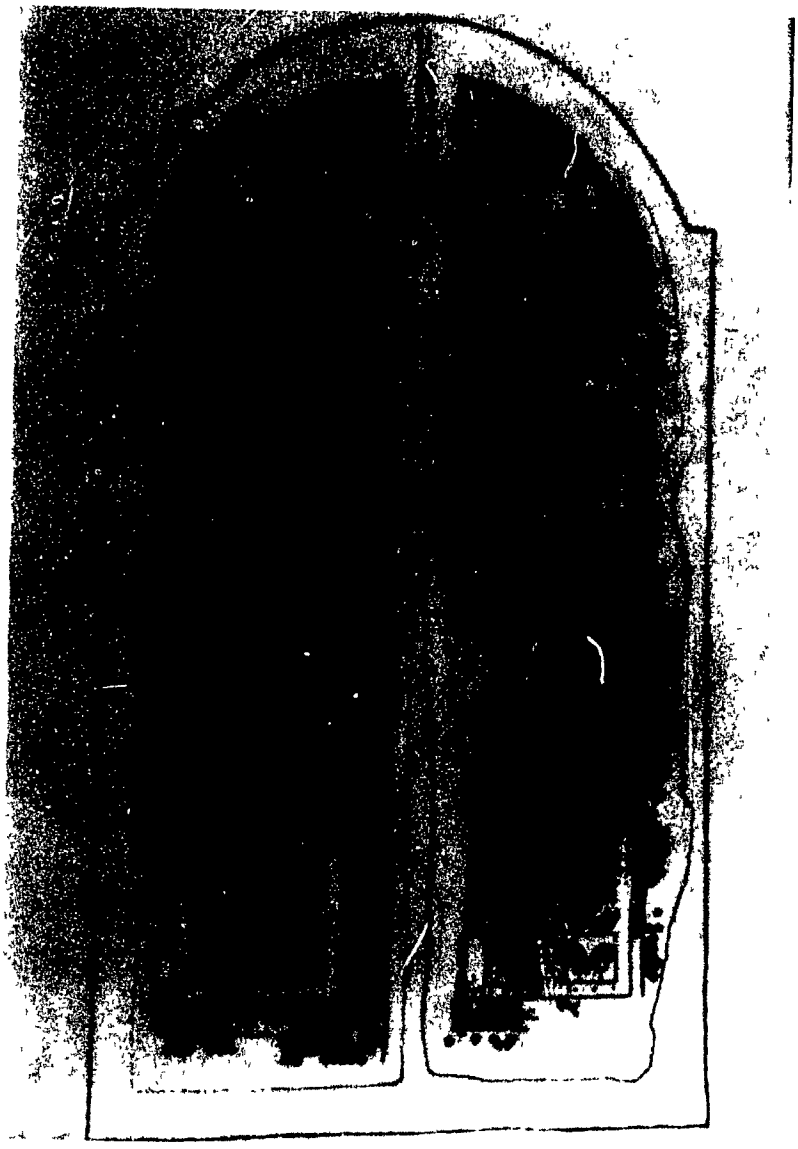

Fig. 22. Mount Athos, Protaton; Byzantine bema-door with ivory intarsia (drawing), late 10th century.

Fig. 23. Detail of fig. 16: hierarchs.

Fig. 24. Patmos, Church of Christ "Demarchias"; iconostasis, first half of the 16th century.

Fig. 25.
Patmos, Monastery of St. John the Theologian, Chapel of Hosios Christodoulos; bema-door, ca. 1600.

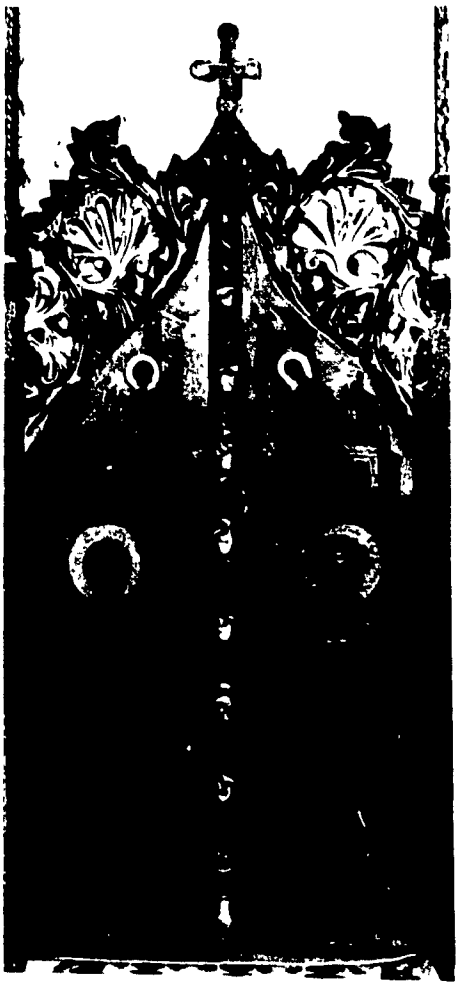

Fig. 26.
Patmos, Monastery of the Apocalypse, Chapel of St. Anne; bema-door, ca. 1600.

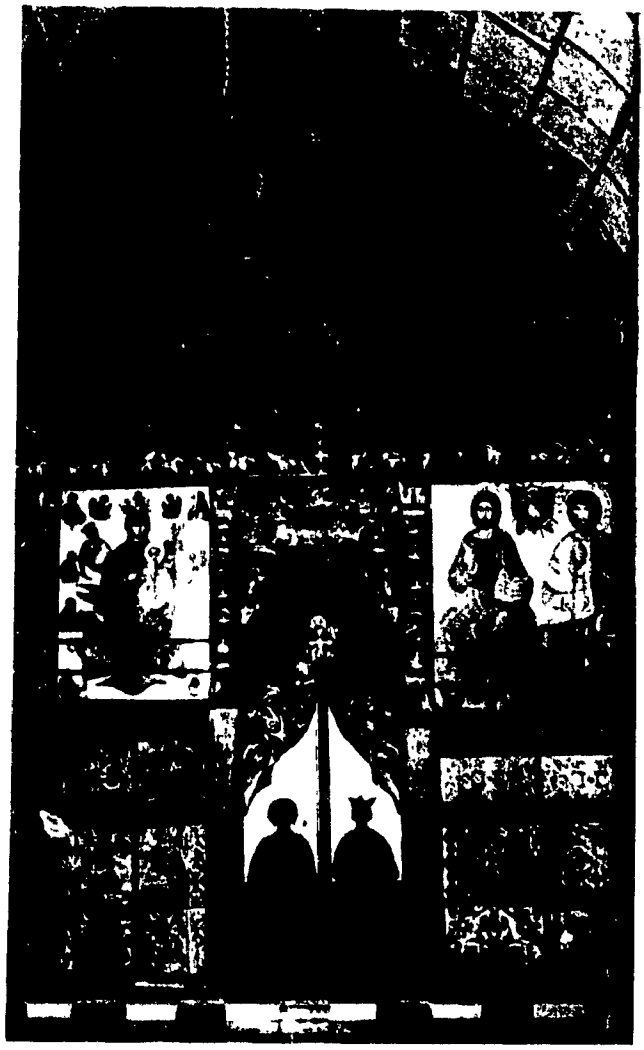

Fig. 27.
Patmos, Monastery of the Holiest of Holies, Chapel of the Holy Trinity; iconostasis, ca. 1613-23.

Fig. 28.
Patmos, Monastery of Hypapantê of Malandrakis, Catholikon; Prothesis door, Archangel Gabriel, 1610-1630.

Fig. 29.
Patmos, Monastery of Hypapantê of Malandrakis, Chapel of the Holy Forty Martyrs; Prothesis-door, Archangel Gabriel (detail), 1580-1590.

Fig. 30.
Detail of fig. 3.: Prothesis door, Archangel Michael, ca. 1600-1617.

Fig. 31. Patmos, Church of Christ "Demarchias"; tympanum-icon above the Royal door, Last Supper, mid. 16th century.

Fig. 32. Patmos, Church of Christ "Demarchias"; tympanum-icon above the Prothesis door, Hospitality of Abraham, mid 16th century.

Fig. 33. Patmos, Kathisma of the Annunciation, Treasury; tympanum-icon of a Royal door, Epitaphios Threnos, ca. 1500.

Fig. 34. Patmos, Monastery of St. John the Theologian, Chapel of the Virgin, tympanum-icon above the Royal door, Epitaphios Threnos, 1607.

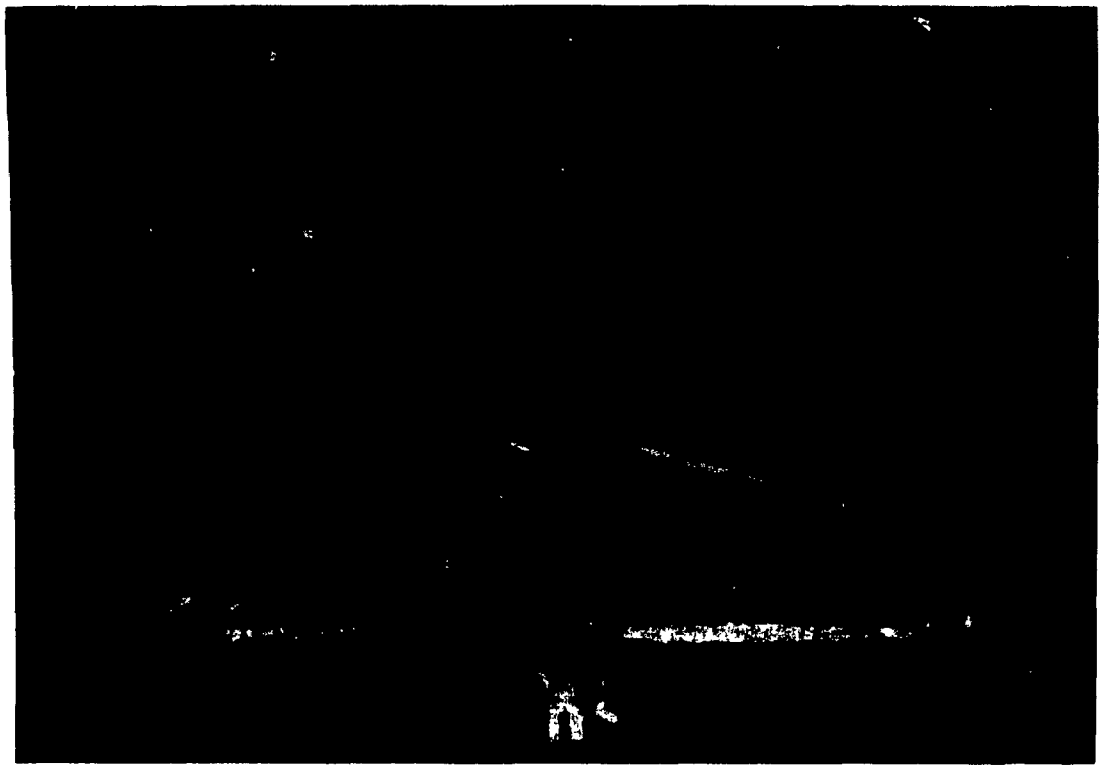

Fig. 35. Patmos, Monastery of St. John the Theologian, Treasury; embroidered epitaphios, 1460.

Fig. 36. Patmos, Monastery of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis, Catholikon; tympanum-icon, Epitaphios Threnos, ca. 1620-1645.

Fig. 37. Patmos, Monastery of the Hypapantê of Malandrakis, Catholikon; tympanum-icon above the Royal door, Presentation of Christ in the Temple, ca. mid 17th century.

Fig. 38. Detail of fig. 3: tympanum-icon above the Royal door, Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

Fig. 39. Patmos, Monastery of St. John the Theologian, Hegoumeneion; icon, Crist's Presentation in the Temple, end of the 15th century.

Fig. 40. Kathisma of the Annunciation; icon, Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple and Presentation of Christ in the Temple 1580-1590.

Fig. 41. Patmos, Twin Church of St. Anthony & St. Aikaterina, tympanum-icon above the Prothesis door, St. Anthony & St. Theoktiste of Lesbos, 16th century.

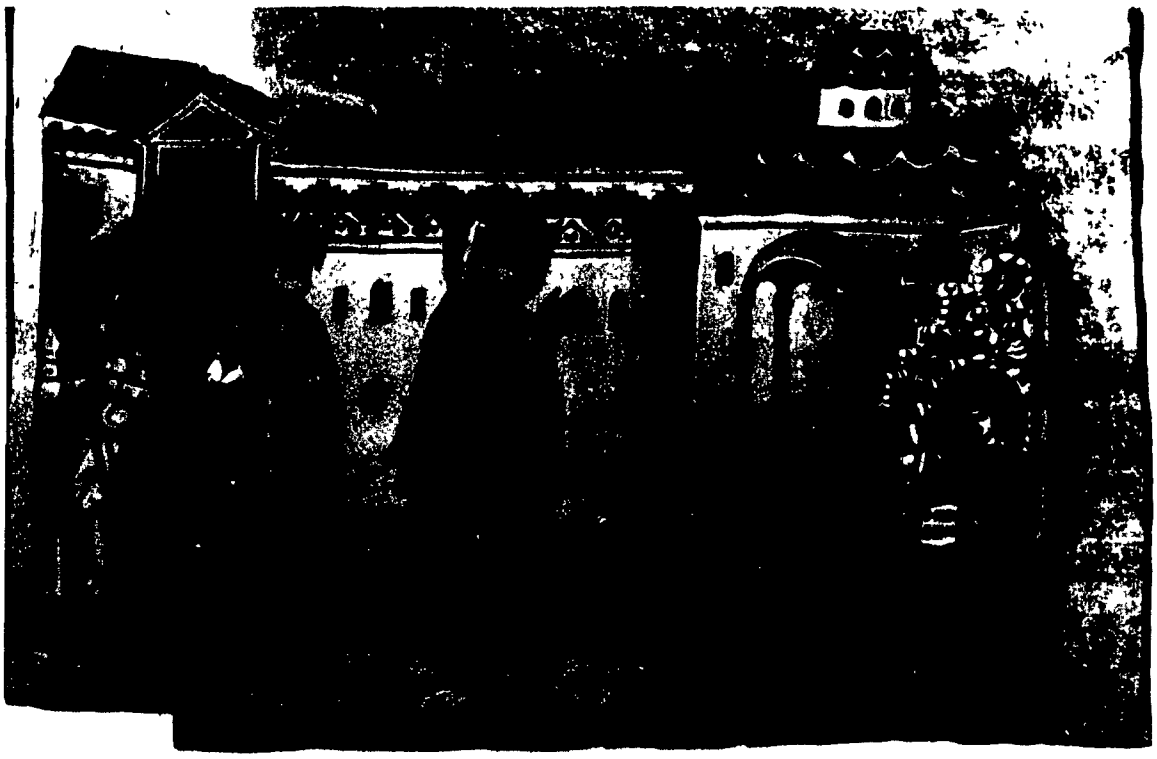

Fig. 42. Codex Vaticanus gr. 1162, fol. 90r., 12th century.