LIBRARIES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

Icons from the Elvehjem Art Center.

Galavaris, George; Elvehjem Art Center

Madison, Wisconsin: Elvehjem Art Center, University of Wisconsin, 1973

https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/NY5LLTELKS5UZ8D

http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/InC/1.0/

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

728 State Street | Madison, Wisconsin 53706 | library.wisc.edu

GEORGE GALAVARIS

ICONS

FROM THE ELVEHJEM ART CENTER

ICONS

from The Elvehjem Art Center

by George Galavaris

The Elvehjem Art Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Icons

from the Elvehjem Art Center

Published 1973

The Elvehjem Art Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Copyright © 1973

The Regents of the University of Wisconsin System

All rights reserved

This project is supported by a grant

from the National Endowment for the Arts

in Washington, D.C., a federal agency.

Designed by Richard Hendel

Printed in the United States of America

Contents

Foreword: How the Collection Was Formed

The collection of icons at the Elvehjem Art Center is a rich group of painted panels illustrating the persistent painting tradition of Byzantium. Most of the icons in the museum's collection were published in *The Joseph E. Davies Collection of Russian Paintings and Icons Presented to the University of Wisconsin* (New York, 1938), but they have never been subjected to scholarly research until now. Two of the finest examples of icon painting in this catalogue are the gifts of Joseph Bradley, but the greatness of this group of icons is due primarily to the gift of Joseph E. Davies, alumnus and benefactor of the University of Wisconsin. Professor George Galavaris' critical study of the Elvehjem Art Center icons is published in this catalogue, which is enriched by chapters placing icons in their historical, literary, and popular contexts. The Elvehjem Art Center is grateful to Professor Galavaris for his study and expertise that makes this catalogue possible.

The donor of the Davies icons was a colorful political figure, confidant of several Presidents of the United States, and devoted friend of the University. Joseph Edward Davies was born in Watertown, Wisconsin, November 29, 1876. He graduated *cum laude* from the University of Wisconsin with Phi Beta Kappa membership in 1898. In 1901 he received his law degree and established his practice in Watertown, marrying Emlen Knight of Ashland in 1902. After a four-year term as district attorney for Jefferson County, he moved to Madison, became a specialist in trial litigation, and began a political career that was to span fifty years.

Woodrow Wilson was Davies' life-long idol. After serving as Chairman of the Wisconsin Democratic party in 1910, Davies moved to Washington along with President Wilson in 1913. In 1915, he was appointed Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission. Declining President Wilson's offer of ambassadorships to Russia and Italy and appointment as Governor-General of the Philippines, Davies concentrated on developing a lucrative law practice, except for an unsuccessful attempt in 1918 to win a United States Senate seat in Wisconsin. His law firm

specialized in corporations and mergers (the controversial Ford Stock Valuation Tax case in 1925 was won for Davies' clients), earning him wealth and prestige.

Davies' first marriage was dissolved, and in 1935 he married Marjorie M. Post, one of the world's richest women. In 1937, President Roosevelt appointed Davies, who was then Vice-Chairman of the Democratic party, Ambassador to the U.S.S.R.; thus, he became the second American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, following William C. Bullitt. As ambassador, Joseph Davies was deeply interested in the Russians, eager to discover the country, and enthusiastic in his encouragement of Soviet-American relations.

Leaving Moscow in 1938, Davies served as Ambassador to Belgium (1938–1940). Prior to distinguished service in World War II as Cordell Hull's assistant, special envoy of President Roosevelt to Stalin (1943), and Ambassador to the Potsdam Conference (1945), Davies wrote his best-seller book urging support of Russia, *Mission to Moscow* (1942). Honored by many universities with degrees, Davies was especially fond of his alma mater, returning frequently for talks and visits. He died at his palatial home, Tregaron, in Washington, D.C., May 9, 1958.

The important collection of icons given to the University of Wisconsin by Joseph Davies was formed during his ambassadorship to the Soviet Union, 1937–1938. Prior to his collecting icons, Davies acquired a notable group of Soviet "socialist-realist" paintings and donated them to the University in 1937. In a letter to University President Clarence A. Dykstra, February 10, 1938, Davies wrote:

Upon my return to Russia in the summer [of 1937], I decided to procure a collection of primitives—icons—to add to this collection [i.e., the Soviet paintings given in 1937]. Through the assistance of the Soviet government, I procured approximately twenty icons. They were selected by the most notable experts in Russia connected with the Tretyakof Gallery. These icons were selected from museum pieces, and had been exhibited in the Kremlin, Tretyakof, and other galleries in the Soviet Union. I was particularly fortunate in being able to purchase them from the government . . .

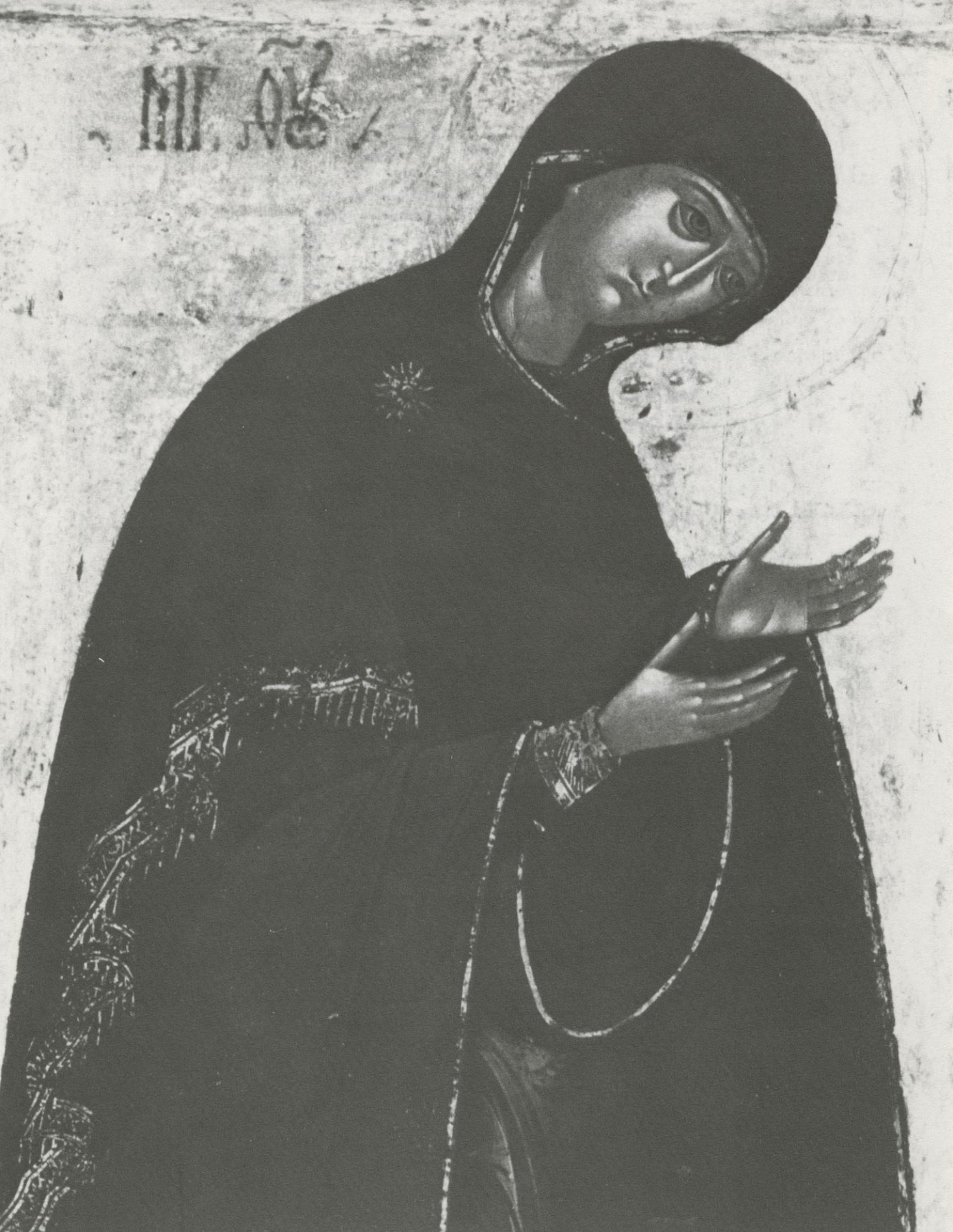
I think that it can be said conservatively that it is probably the most distinctive and valuable single collection of icons outside of Russia.

At the Regents' meeting, March 8–9, 1938, President Dykstra "presented a communication [presumably the Davies letter of February 10, 1938] from Ambassador Joseph E. Davies, offering a gift of a collection of icons if they could be properly housed within the next three or four years, and to loan them for exhibition purposes during the commencement period of 1938." That June, the Russian paintings and icons were shown at the Memorial Union and since that time, except for occasional exhibitions away from the University, the icons have remained in Madison as Ambassador Davies' gift.

By 1967, the icon collection was stored in Bascom Hall, where it had been housed pending transfer to the Elvehjem Art Center, then under construction. In that year, a careful study of the icons was made to determine their conservation-restoration requirements. A program for their treatment was developed, and conservators noted for their specialization in treating wood-panel icons were commissioned with the delicate and costly task of cleaning, repairing, and preserving the icons that form this impressive collection. We are grateful for the care and talents of Mr. Carroll Wales and Mr. Constantine Tsaousis, conservators, for their efforts in preserving these paintings. Much of the important work of restoration was undertaken by our Conservator-Craftsman, Henry A. Behrnd. Other staff members involved in various stages of preserving, exhibiting, or cataloguing the icons were: Curator Arthur R. Blumenthal, Registrar John S. Hopkins, and Curatorial Assistant Carlton E. Overland. Photography of the icons was done by David M. Spradling. Typing and secretarial assistance were undertaken by Ruth A. Jackson and Niki M. Hicks.

The Elvehjem Art Center gratefully acknowledges the grants for conservation that have contributed to the preservation of this collection: President's Unassigned Fund, Humanistic Foundation, Anonymous Funds, and general conservation funds provided the Elvehjem Art Center by the College of Letters and Science. The National Endowment for the Arts generously granted funds for the preparation and publishing of this catalogue.

Millard F. Rogers, Jr.
DIRECTOR



Preface

Some years ago I had the good fortune to be a Visiting Professor in the Department of Art History of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, which at the time had its quarters in Bascom Hall. What exerted a spell on me right from the beginning was the rumor that somewhere in the basement was a treasure house. My friends spoke mysteriously of treasures with the sole intent of exciting my imagination; I think the instigator of all this was Professor Frank Horlbeck. But the day came when Millard F. Rogers, Jr., Director of the Elvehjem Art Center (the museum was under construction at that time), guided me to the "underground" realm. It was as if I had entered a subterranean Roman vault and was confronted with startling pictures, miraculously preserved. I said "pictures" but actually it was the Holy that appeared in this appropriate setting of semi-darkness. The Holy here had the forms of icons, holy images, panels—windows through which one could see the Heavenly. The faces in the icons were dim, dark, and tarnished; some had suffered cracks, while others had become a feast for worms. And yet the piercing eyes in these faces were so much alive! I dared not touch these treasures, for I remembered that, once in a monastery in the East, a monk had told me not to touch a holy icon if my hands were not holy. Millard did not ask me such a question. He was simply anxious to protect them, to do all in his power to rescue them from the ravages of time. What I said then and what Millard replied I can remember no longer. But I do remember that I was told that the melancholy faces which kept staring at us had once belonged to a man who had learned to love them, Joseph E. Davies.

It was much later, after these holy portraits had found a new home in the splendid Elvehjem Art Center (and I must confess that something of the Holy is here lost), that Millard wrote to me in a letter of my excitement that memorable day and asked me whether I would be willing to write the catalogue of the collection. My answer you have in your hands now. It is born from my conviction that no one icon is like another. Because of its uniqueness, each icon and each collection of

icons deserve special consideration. Each icon makes a contribution to our understanding of the Holy.

I hope that the interested student and patient visitor will profit from my long introduction, and that the scholar will find material helpful to his work in the catalogue entries, which have been kept as brief as possible without leaving out essential content. In arranging the material, I have followed a chronological sequence; but, within the limits of each century, the icons are in an order which, as far as possible, corresponds to that of the icons on the iconostasis—starting from the upper rows and proceeding to the lower ones. It was thought advisable to give the Greek and Slavonic inscriptions in translation only, with the exception of one or two instances involving questions of identification, where a transliteration is also cited.

I am greatly indebted to many friends in this continent and in Europe who have helped me in writing this book. My special thanks are offered to: Professor Frank R. Horlbeck who made possible my coming to the University of Wisconsin, and Millard F. Rogers, Jr., who invited me to undertake the task, to the entire staff of the Elvehjem Art Center and especially to Arthur R. Blumenthal, John S. Hopkins, and Henry Behrnd, who facilitated my work in many ways.

For discussions, suggestions, all kinds of generosity, and patience, I thank: Mrs. Jean Connolly, the Rev. Cameron Cairns, both graduate students of mine, and Miss Sabine Kurth, Montreal; Madame Nina Beaulieu, Paris; Dr. Manfred Gross, Munich; Dr. Manolis Chatzidakis, Athens; Professor Michael Petrovich, Madison, Wisconsin; Professor Kurt Weitzmann and Dr. Joseph Weitzmann-Fiedler, Princeton, New Jersey.

Mr. Heinz Skrobucha, the curator of the Ikonen-Museum in Recklinghausen, West Germany, kindly discussed the material with me, did everything possible to facilitate my work in his museum, and read the manuscript of the actual catalogue. He improved the work with valuable suggestions. I offer to him my heartfelt thanks.

For advice and many other kindnesses, special thanks are also due to Mr. Wilfried Schlagbauer, Munich. For library facilities and friend-

liness, I am obliged to: Professors Hans-Georg Beck, Marcell Restle, Klaus Wessel and the Institut für Byzantinistik of the University of Munich; Professor Willibald Sauerländer and the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Munich.

Most of the work was done while I enjoyed a sabbatical year away from teaching. For this I am grateful to McGill University, especially to my department, and the Canada Council which made the year possible through a leave-grant.

G. G.

Bibliography and Abbreviations

This bibliography is not an attempt to include all works available on the subject. It lists works which were found most useful in the preparation of the text. Additional items appear in the introduction and notes. The interested reader will find more complete bibliography in a number of books listed below.

Alpatov	Mikhail V. Alpatov, *Altrussischen Ikonenmalerei* (Dresden, 1958, 1962).
Alpatov, Brunov	Mikhail V. Alpatov, Nikolai Brunov, *Geschichte der altrussischen Kunst*, 2 vols. (Augsburg, 1932).
Alpatov, Dačenko	Mikhail V. Alpatov, Olga Dačenko, *Art Treasures of Russia* (New York, n.d.).
Antonova, *Korina*	Valentina I. Antonova, *Drevnerusskoe iskusstvo v sobranii Pavla Korina* (Moscow, 1966).
Antonova, Mneva	Valentina I. Antonova, Nadazhda E. Mneva, *Gosudarstvennaia Tret'iakovskaia gallereia. Katalog drevnerusskoi zhivopisi XI–nachala XVIII V.V.*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1963).
Benz	Ernst Benz (ed.), *Russische Heiligenlegenden* (Zurich, 1953, paper-back edition, Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1963).
Bolshakova, *Tretyakov*	L. Bolshakova, E. Kmenskaya, *State Tretyakov Gallery, Early Russian Art* (Moscow, 1968), in Russian and English.
Byzantine Art	*Byzantine Art, an European Art, Catalogue 9th Exhibition of the Council of Europe*, 2nd ed. (Athens, 1964).

Chatzidakis, *Collections suisses*	Manolis Chatzidakis e.a., *Les icônes dans les collections Suisses* (Bern, 1968).
Chatzidakis, *Epistylion*	———, "Icônes d'architraves provenant du Mont Athos," *Deltion christianikes archeologikes hetaireias*, per. 4, 4 (1964), timetikos G. Sotiriou, (Athens, 1966), pp. 377–403.
Chatzidakis, *Euphrosynos*	———, "O zographos Euphrosynos," *Kretika chronika*, 10 (1956), pp. 276–281.
Chatzidakis, *Icône byzantine*	———, "L'icône byzantine," *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte* (Fondazione Giorgio Cini), vol. 2. (Venice, 1959), pp. 11–40.
Chatzidakis, *S. Georges*	———, *Icônes de Saint-Georges des Grecs et de la Collection de l'institut Hellénique de Venise* (Venice, 1962).
Chatzidakis, *Théophane*	———, "Recherches sur le peintre Théophane le Crétois," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 23, 24 (1969, 1970), pp. 309–352.
Demus, *Paläologenstils*	Otto Demus, "Die Entstehung des Paläologestils in der Malerei," *Berichte zum XI inter. Byzantinisten-Kongress* (Munich, 1958).
Djurić, *Yougoslavie*	Vojilav J. Djurić, *Icônes de Yougoslavie* (Belgrade, 1961).
Eckhard, *Engel*	Thorvi Eckhard, *Engel und Propheten*, 2nd ed. (Recklinghausen, 1959).
Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*	Victor H. Elbern, *Ikonen aus der frühchristlich-byzantinischen Sammlung staatlich Museen preussischer Kulturbesitz-Berlin* (Berlin, 1970).
Embirikos, *École crétoise*	Alexandre Embirikos, *L'école crétoise, dernière phase de la peinture byzantine* (Paris, 1967).

Evdokimov	Paul Evdokimov, *L'art de l'icône* (Bruges, 1970).
Felicetti-Liebenfels	Walter Felicetti-Liebenfels, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Ikonenmalerei* (Olten, 1956).
Felicetti-Liebenfels, *Russ. Ikonenmalerei*	———, *Geschichte der russischen Ikonenmalerei* (Graz, 1972).
Galavaris, *Gregory*	George Galavaris, *The Illustrations of the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus*, Studies in Manuscript Illumination, 6 (Princeton, 1969).
Galavaris, *Elijah-Nativity*	———, "The Fiery Ascent of the Prophet Elijah," and "The Nativity" in *Man and His World, Inter. Fine Arts Exhibition* (Montreal, 1967), pp. 368–371.
Galavaris, *Stars of the Virgin*	———, "The Stars of the Virgin: an Ekphrasis of an Icon of the Mother of God," *Eastern Churches Review*, 1 (1967, 1968), pp. 364–369.
Gerhard, *Welt*	Heinz Paul Gerhard, *Welt der Ikonen*, 3rd ed. (Recklinghausen, 1970).
Gouma-Peterson, *Crete, Venice*	Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "Crete, Venice, the 'Madonneri' and a Creto-Venetian Icon in the Allen Art Museum," *Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin*, 25 (1968), pp. 53–86.
Grabar, *Iconoclasme*	André Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantine, Dossier archéologique* (Paris, 1967).
Grabar, *Martyrium*	———, *Martyrium, Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1943, 1946, reprinted 1971).
Grabar, *Iskusstve*	Igor Grabar, *O drevnerusskom iskusstve* (Moscow, 1966).

Grabar, Lazarev, *Russ. Kunst*	Igor Grabar, Victor N. Lazarev, Victor S. Kemenov, *Geschichte der russischen Kunst*, 4 vols. (Dresden, 1957–1960, 1965).
Hamilton, *Russia*	George H. Hamilton, *The Art and Architecture of Russia* (London, 1954).
Hammerschmidt, *Symbolik*	Ernst Hammerschmidt e.a., *Symbolik des orthodoxen und orientalischen Christentums* (Stuttgart, 1962).
Iamschikov	Saveliji V. Iamschikov, *Old Russian Painting, Recent Discoveries* (Moscow, 1965), in Russian and English.
Kjellin	Helge Kjellin, *Ryska ikoner i svenk och nork ägo* (Stockholm, 1956).
Klosińska, *Ikonen aus Polen*	Janina Klosińska, *Ikonenmuseum Recklinghausen, Ikonen aus Polen*, exhibition catalogue (Recklinghausen, 1966).
Kondakov, *Russian Icon*	Nicodim P. Kondakov, E. P. Minns, *The Russian Icon* (Oxford, 1927).
Kondakov, *Russ. Ikona*	Nicodim P. Kondakov, *Russkaja ikona*, 4 vols. (Prague, 1928, 1929, 1931, 1933).
Kreidl-Papadopoulos	Karoline Kreidl-Papadopoulos, "Die Ikonen im Kunsthistorischen Museum in Wien," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, 66, n.s. 30 (1970), pp. 49–134.
Lazarev, *Novgorod*	Victor N. Lazarev, *Novgorodian Icon-Painting* (Moscow, 1969).
Lazarev, *Rublev*	———, *Andrej Rublev* (Moscow, 1966).
Lazarev, *Theophanes*	———, *Theophanes der Grieche, und seine Schule* (Vienna, Munich, 1968).

LcI	*Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, 4 vols. (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1968, 1970–1972).
Likhachev	Nikolai P. Likhachev, *Materialy dlija russkago ikonopisanija*, Atlas, 2 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1906).
Michelis, *Aesthetic*	Panayotis A. Michelis, *An Aesthetic Approach to Byzantine Art* (London, 1955, reprinted 1964).
Millet, *Iconographie*	Gabriel Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'évangile*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1960).
Mouratov	Paul Mouratov, *L'ancienne peinture russe* (Paris, 1925).
Nyssen, *Zeugnis des Bildes*	Wilhelm Nyssen, *Das Zeugnis des Bildes im frühen Byzanz* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1962).
Onasch, *Icons*	Konrad Onasch, *Ikonen* (Gütersloh, 1961; also in French and English: Paris, London, 1961).
Onasch, *Ikonenmalerei*	———, *Die Ikonenmalerei* (Leipzig, 1968).
Ouspensky, Lossky	Leonid Ouspensky, Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* (Boston, 1952).
Ouspensky, *Théologie*	Leonid Ouspensky, *La théologie de l'icône dans l'église orthodoxe*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1960).
Papageorghiou	Athanasios Papageorghiou e.a., *Schätze aus Zypern*, exhibition catalogue (Munich, 1968).
RbK	Klaus Wessel, Marcell Restle (eds.), *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* (Stuttgart, 1966–).

Rice, *Icons*	Tamara Talbot Rice, *Icons* (London, n.d.).
Rice, *Russian Icons*	———, *Russian Icons* (New York, 1963).
Rice, *Russian Art*	———, *Russian Art* (West Drayton, Middlesex, 1949).
Ristow, *Baptism*	Günther Ristow, *The Baptism of Christ* (Recklinghausen, 1967).
Ristow, *Geburt*	———, *Die Geburt Christi* (Recklinghausen, 1963).
Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*	Boris Rothemund, *Handbuch der Ikonenkunst*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1966).
Schweinfurth, *Russ. Malerei*	Philipp Schweinfurth, *Geschichte der russischen Malerei im Mittelalter* (Hague, 1930).
Skrobucha, *Botschaft*	Heinz Skrobucha, *Die Botschaft der Ikonen* (Recklinghausen, 1961; English translation: London, 1963).
Skrobucha, *Gestalt*	———, *Von Geist und Gestalt der Ikonen* (Recklinghausen, 1961; English translation: New York, 1961).
Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*	———, *Ikonen, Haus der Kunst, München*, exhibition catalogue (Munich, 1969).
Skrobucha, *Maria*	———, *Maria, russische Gnadenbilder* (Recklinghausen, 1967).
Skrobucha, *Meisterwerke*	———, *Meisterwerke der Ikonenmalerie* (Recklinghausen, 1961).
Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.*	———, *Ikonenmuseum Recklinghausen*, catalogue (Recklinghausen, 3rd ed., 1965; 4th ed., 1968).
Skrobucha, *Russ. Heilige*	———, "Zur Darstellung russischer Heiliger in der Ikonenmalerie," *Kirche im Osten, Studien zur osteuropäischen.*

	Kirchengeschichte und Kirchenkunde, 4 (1964), pp. 9–32.
Skrobucha, *Sammlung Popoff*	———, *Ikonenmuseum Recklinghausen, Sammlung Popoff* (Recklinghausen, n.d.),
Smirnova, *Zhivopis*	Engelina S. Smirnova, *Zhivopis Obonezhia, XIV–XVII V. V.* (Moscow, 1967).
Sotiriou, *Sinai*	Georges and Maria Sotiriou, *Icônes du Mont Sinaï*, Vol. 1 (Plates), Vol. 2 (Text) (Athens, 1956, 1958; in Greek with French summary).
Trenkle	Elisabeth Trenkle, *Liturgische Geräte und Gewänder der Ostkirche* (Munich, 1962).
Troubetzkoi, *Ocherka*	Prince Evgueny Troubetzkoi, *Tri ocherka o russkoi ikone* (Paris, 1965); the work was written in 1917; a German translation of one of the essays appeared as *Die religiöse Weltanschauung der altrussischen Ikonenmalerei* (Regensburg, 1927).
Tschizewskij, *Nikolaus*	Dmitrij Tschizewskij, *Der hl. Nikolaus*, 2nd ed. (Recklinghausen, 1957).
Voyce, *Medieval Russia*	Arthur Voyce, *The Art and Architecture of Medieval Russia* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1967).
Weitzmann, *Bamberger Graduale*	Kurt Weitzmann, "Die byzantinischen Elfenbeine eines Bamberger Graduale und ihre ursprünglische Verwendung," *Studien zur Buchmalerei und Goldschmiedekunst des Mittelalters; Festschrift Karl H. Usener* (Marburg, 1967).
Weitzmann, *Early Icons*	———, Manolis Chatzidakis, e.a., *Icons from Eastern Europe and Sinai* (London, 1968).

Weitzmann, *Icon Painting*	———, "Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 20 (1966), pp. 50–83.
Weitzmann, *St. Nicholas*	———, "Fragments of an Early St. Nicholas Triptych on Mt. Sinai," *Deltion christianikes archaeologikes hetaireias*, per. 4, 4 (1964), timitikos Sotiriou (Athens, 1966), pp. 1–23,
Winkler, *Heilige*	Martin Winkler, *Ikonen, Heilige und Heiligenleben* (Recklinghausen, 1957).
Wulff, Alpatov, *Denkmäler*	Oskar Wulff, Mikhail Alpatov, *Denkmäler der Ikonenmalerei* (Hellerau-bei-Dresden, 1925).
Xyngopoulos, *Schediasma*	Andreas Xyngopoulos, *Schediasma istorias tes threskeutikes zographikes meta ten alosin* (Athens, 1957).

Icons: Their Development and Technique

The art of portraiture has a special place in the Greco-Roman world. In markets, libraries, theaters, and baths, there were portraits of the emperor, state officials, great authors, playwrights, poets, and philosophers. In private homes, there was always a gallery of ancestors.[1]

Portraits found their way into Christian art. Whenever a holy figure was shown by itself and was not part of a specific biblical scene, it was given the authenticity of a portrait as far as possible. At least a definite type of the person in question was created which could not be altered by later generations.

Portraits in this general sense were first placed on the tombs of the martyrs, then, after the triumph of Christianity, they decorated the walls and apses of the great basilicas. An independent image of this kind and a complete painting in itself was the icon, in Greek *Εἰκών*. When placed at eye level, the icon made possible a personal communication between the represented holy figure and the viewer. Tapers were placed in front or beside them. They were decorated with flowers and sometimes covered with transparent veils.[2] Standing in front of such an image and gazing at its large, wide-open eyes, the beholder could contemplate the holiness of the represented figure. Through such contemplation, one could arrive at a state of prayer, this being how the veneration of the icon began. Other icons, however, did not portray holy figures exclusively but episodes from the Old and New Testaments, the Life of the Virgin Mary, or the deeds and sufferings of the saints. These "descriptive" icons taught the believer the meaning of the scenes; they had a didactic purpose.

1. For the portrait in antiquity, see, in general, Wladimir de Grüneisen, *Le portrait, traditions hellénistiques et influences orientales* (Rome, 1911).
2. The use of veils for covering an icon was developed along with the cult of icons; to this day it is associated with an especially venerated icon. See: Chatzidakis, *Icône byzantine*, p. 12.

The execution of these portable portraits or scenes has certain techniques in common. They were made on wooden panels in a rather elaborate way. First, the surface of the panel was smoothed and the back strengthened by the insertion of wedges into slots. The front surface of the panel was covered with a layer of gesso—a mixture of plaster of Paris and animal glue. Often this layer was covered by canvas rubbed or glued over the gesso. On top of the linen, several thin layers of glue mixed with powdered chalk or alabaster dust were applied, each layer cleaned down and polished. On this shiny surface, the outlines of the picture were traced with a stylus. In Russia, they were usually sketched in red paint. Models for the images were found in painters' guides, such as the Greek *Hermeneia* and the Russian *Podlinnik*, of which examples have survived.[3] Before the panel received the paint, the background was applied—generally a gold leaf, although the Russians sometimes preferred silver or a red background. When the background was ready, the painter devoted himself to painting the figure or the scene with colors made fluid with a water and egg medium called *tempera*.[4] The pigments used were mainly earth colors known in antiquity, and the paint was applied in several thin layers. Faces were executed from a dark base to lighter colors, a tradition going back to Greek portraiture. Highlights were accomplished in two ways, either by applying lighter colors to a darker base or vice versa. After the paint had dried, it was sealed with boiled linseed oil or olive oil. The shortcoming of this varnish was that it almost never dried, with the result that it attracted dust which eventually blurred the image on the panel. The smoke of the burning candles and the use of incense added to this effect, and, in the end, gave the darkened panel an air of mystery.[5] In some of the earliest icons that have survived from the fifth and sixth centuries, coming largely from the monastery of St.

3. Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, p. 55; Gerhard, *Welt*, p. 214; Andreas Xyngopoulos, "Icons," in *Byzantine Art*, p. 229.

4. In Russia, the egg-tempera colors were diluted with Kvas, a kind of beer. See: Gerhard, *Welt*, p. 214.

5. For a detailed description of this technique in English, see Ernest T. DeWald, *Italian Painting, 1200–1600* (New York, 1961), pp. 575–578; for other technical details, such as types of wood used, canvas, varnish, the so-called olifa, and further bibliography, see Gerhard, *Welt*, pp. 212–216; Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, p. 22; Onasch, *Ikonenmalerei*, pp. 78–102.

Catherine on Mt. Sinai, the color vehicle was wax liquefied by heat, a technique known as *encaustic*. It was known in antiquity and used mostly for works painted on marble and wood.[6] Sometimes more precious materials were used, such as the mosaic technique. In such examples, the tesserae, which are all very small in size, created a rich texture with luminous effects. This, as Weitzmann has suggested, was the result of a desire to improve on the material splendor of the icon. Silver, gold, enamel, and ivory were also used, but such icons were usually imperial donations intended for marble iconostases.[7]

The Christian painters found their techniques and material in the portraiture, private or official, of late Hellenistic and Roman times. The imperial portrait, the *lauraton*, usually a painting on canvas or wood and an accepted object of worship associated with the cult of the emperor, contributed to the veneration of icons.[8] More particularly, the icons are closely connected with the images painted with encaustic colors, which, in late Imperial times in Egypt, had been placed on the embalmed bodies of the dead. They are known as the Fayum portraits because many of them were found in the cemeteries of Fayum, southwest of the Nile Delta.[9]

Icons were primarily produced for use in church, for carrying in processions (the latter generally were painted on both sides of the board), and for use at home. In the beginning, they were objects of veneration; gradually, they became cult objects. This change in

6. Weitzmann, *Early Icons*; Hilde Zaloscer, *Porträts aus dem Wüstensand* (Vienna, 1961), pp. 2off; Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, p. 19; Marcell Restle, "Enkaustik," *RbK*, 2, cols. 144–152.
7. Two highly important studies on Byzantine mosaic icons are by Otto Demus, "Byzantinische Mosaikminiaturen," *Phaidros*, 3rd ser., 3 (1947), pp. 190–194; O. Demus, "Two Palaeologan Mosaic Icons in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 14 (1960), pp. 110–119; see also, Sergio Bettini, "Appunti per lo studio dei mosaici portabili bizantini," *Felix Ravenna*, 46 (1938), pp. 7–39. Several examples were exhibited in Athens, Byzantine Exhibition; see *Byzantine Art*, nos. 161–171; Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, p. 188. For ivory icons, the studies by Kurt Weitzmann are fundamental; see: *Bamberger Graduale*, pp. 11–20, with earlier bibliography.
8. Grabar, *Iconoclasme*; Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantine* (Paris, 1936), passim.
9. Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, pp. 16–20; Chatzidakis, *Icône byzantine*, pp. 15–16.

attitude most probably derived from the early Christian cult of relics, or of objects found near the tomb of a martyr, or of objects believed to have been touched by him. There was a representation of the figure of the martyr on the containers of his relics, and, in the course of time, the representation became a cult object just as the relics themselves. By the sixth century, the use of icons was widespread, not only for private devotions, but also for placement at crossroads or in wayside shrines, a custom that continues to this day in the Orthodox world. There were icons which were reputed to perform miracles. Some of these were considered not to have been made by human hands, while others, it was believed, contained sacred dust. The icon "not made by human hands" was thought to have been created by some mystical contact with the original like the impressions of the face of Christ upon the cloth. The images with the sacred dust were supposed to have contained something of the body of the original. In either case, such icons were considered relics, and the cult of relics gave impetus to the cult of icons which reached its height in the eighth century. In turn, it led to a reaction against them—the Iconoclastic Controversy, which forced the iconophiles to defend the icons theoretically and resulted in the formulation of the meaning and theology of the icon. The struggle ended in 843 with the victory of the iconophiles. When the icons were restored to the columns of the chancel barrier, called the *iconostasis* or *templon*, their *anastylosis*, or restoration, took place.[10]

In 988, more than a century later, the Russians were converted to Christianity by the Byzantines. Vladimir, the Great Prince of Kiev, took from Constantinople the Christian faith and its art. The Russian Church followed the Byzantine pattern in its development, the Byzantine ritual was taken over, and the ecclesiastical hierarchy was established along Byzantine lines. Greek masters came from Byzantium to build and decorate churches in Kiev with mosaics and paintings. One of the earliest churches to survive was that of St.

10. For forms and types of icons in general, see Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, pp. 173–178, with bibliography; for the development of their cult, see Grabar, *Martyrium*, 2, pp. 346ff; Johannes Kollwitz, "Zur Frügeschichte der Bildvererhung," *Römische Quartalschrift*, 48 (1953), pp. 1ff; Ernst Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 7 (1953), pp. 1–34; Grabar, *Iconoclasme*.

Sophia whose foundation stone was laid by Yaroslav in 1036. It is considered to be the epitome of the Byzantine style in Russia. No other early buildings were as elaborate or extensive as this. Some magnificent monasteries, however, were built a little later, surviving to this century and playing an important part in the religious life of the country. One of them was the Monastery of the Caves, the Pecherskaya Lavra, a building in cruciform plan, built by Greek architects near Kiev in 1073. It came to be one of the greatest fortresses of holiness in all Russia, a center of ascetic life and ideas, and one of the most important cultural centers. It was in this monastery that most of the icons in the Elvehjem Art Center collection were formerly held. The building was destroyed in the last war. These icons then are among the rich relics that for centuries witnessed the piety and devotion of Russian pilgrims, the extent of which one can imagine in reading works of Russian literature, Dostoevski in particular.

The chronicles report that Vladimir received his baptism at Cherson (Korsun) by the Crimea, and that he carried back to Kiev, among other items, some icons, crosses, and books. He hung the icons inside the first church he founded and dedicated to the Virgin, the Dessiatinnava Church (986–996), which has not survived. More icons came from Byzantium or were made by Byzantine artists, the same ones who created the mosaics and paintings inside these early churches, until a time came when local artists learned the art and pursued it in a manner that revealed certain national characteristics. Legend has it that the earliest native icon painter was the blessed Alimpi, who learned the art of icon painting from Greek masters who came from Constantinople by " Divine Providence . . . in order to paint the church of the Monastery of the Caves," near Kiev. Eventually, the native masters led to the creation and development of regional schools of icon painters.[11]

11. For legends related to the Monastery of the Caves and the legend of Alimpi, the icon painter, see Benz, 1963, pp. 24ff, 63ff, 101ff, 108ff. For a short account of the Church in Russia, see Albert M. Ammann, *Abriss der ostslavischen Kirchengeschichte*, 1950; cf. Dmitrij Tschizewskij, *Geschichte der altrussischen Literatur im 11. 12. und 13. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1942); for Russian art, see Grabar, Lazarev, *Russ. Kunst*; in English, Hamilton, *Russia*; Rice, *Russian Art*; Voyce, *Medieval Russia*.

The Iconostasis

Written sources and monuments show that, in the early Christian churches called basilicas, the seats for the clergy and the bishop's cathedra were set apart from the area for the congregation. In the case of a large hall, the seat of the bishop was placed in an apse or exedra with the seats for the presbyters arranged on either side in one or more step-like rows in the form of an amphitheater. Although there have been numerous other dispositions of these elements (particularly in Syria and Africa before 400), the altar, which served both as table and as altar for the celebration of the eucharist, usually was placed in front of the cathedra. This area, known in the West as the *presbyterium* and in the East as the *bema*, was railed off from the rest of the church at an early date by a very low type of balustrade, which at first was made of wood or metal, sometimes gilt or silver-plated, and later of marble. This form of a screen has been preserved in the Latin church to this day. It consisted of small pillars, usually with a finial on top, and between them marble slabs. The designs on them, perforated or in relief, were either ornamental or contained symbols such as the cross, vases with vine leaves in scroll-like fashion, or the Lamb of God. Sometimes carved inscriptions on these marble slabs gave the names of the benefactors of the church or those for whose salvation these offerings were made. The screen had the form of a three-sided rectangle with a doorway in the center.

In the second half of the fifth century, the low balustrade was changed. Small columns were placed above the pillars, carrying a light architrave, an *epistylion*. Thus, a kind of pergola was formed, that is, a colonnade that separated the bema from the rest of the church. The pergola was open and one could see what happened behind the bema during the mass, for no icons were placed between the columns whose height did not exceed six or seven feet. Other changes occurred later, of which the most important was the one that took place in the second half of the sixth century. The screen was extended along the

entire width of the church and included the two side-chapels that flanked the main bema, the *prothesis* on the right and the *diakonikon* on the left. Thus, the screen became straight, a form that has been preserved to this day in the Orthodox Church. When this occurred, the screen had two side doors as well, corresponding to the side chapels. Liturgical reasons prompted the changes; but also the hypothesis has been put forward by scholars that the new disposition recalled the proscenium of the ancient Greek theater in its classical form. Several examples of these early chancel screens have survived which are typical of the Middle Byzantine period. They contribute to the study of the development of the icon screen, which has become clear recently thanks to the works of G. and M. Sotiriou, A. Orlandos, M. Chatzidakis, V. N. Lazarev, and K. Weitzmann.

From written sources, we know that even before the ninth century there were screens in Constantinople churches made of silver or gold with icons of Christ or the *Deësis*—that is, a representation of Christ flanked by Mary and John the Baptist who intercede for humanity—made in enamel. In other instances, there were icons made in mosaics that were placed on the columns or pillars of the screen. We have actual examples from the ninth century on the architraves of marble screens. The representations in these examples are incised on the marble but other techniques were also used. After the eleventh and twelfth centuries, relief or incised decoration with a composition of the *Deësis* or holy figures becomes less frequent. It is possible that such a change was due to the preference for icons painted on long wooden panels, which, in turn, were placed on top of screens made of marble or wood. These long painted panels were in use in the tenth and eleventh centuries, as the study of existing icons has shown. Their themes were either a Great *Deësis*—that is, to the three figures of the *Deësis*, those of the apostles were added—or the twelve great feasts of the Church (the Annunciation, Nativity, Presentation, Baptism, Transfiguration, Raising of Lazarus, Entry into Jerusalem, Crucifixion, Descent into Hell, Ascension, Pentecost, Dormition of the Virgin), which had a dogmatic and liturgical character. The long painted panels with more than one figure on them were to form a special category of icons which have survived to this day in the Greek world, although the theme of the Great *Deësis* itself disappeared from the iconostasis at the end of the sixteenth century.

In the twelfth century, separate square panels for each feast made their appearance, according to present-day evidence. They were placed on the *epistylion* of the screen and began to play an important part in church ceremonies. Literary sources suggest that on the day of a certain feast the relevant icon was taken down from the *epistylion* and placed on a stand—the *proskynetarion*—so that reverence could be rendered to it by the congregation, a custom that has continued to the present, especially in monastic communities.

Regardless of the types of icons or themes used in Greek iconostases, or whether there were one or two rows of icons placed upon them, the fact is that the Byzantine iconostases were low. They were never high enough to create a wall of icons that completely separated one part of the church from the rest. This, as Chatzidakis has pointed out, was due to the Greek sense of measure that was preserved by the Byzantines.[1] For them, the iconostasis was only a screen and did not divide the church. The apse of the bema, with its monumental representation of the Virgin in fresco or in mosaic, formed part of the iconographic cycle of the church decoration. The unity of its cycle and its meaning, therefore, would have been disturbed by a high *templon*. High *templa* appeared in the Greek church only in the sixteenth century and became common under the influence of Baroque art. Before then, the apse was visible and invited the worshipper to the altar, which was never completely hidden. The icon screen, the iconostasis, was never a barrier in the sense of a wall. It was rather an image of a gateway that led from the earthly to the divine. This is why the most important part of the theme of the iconostasis is played by the *Deësis*, the Church's prayer of intercession for the believer, and by the traditional subject for the Royal Doors, the Annunciation, which symbolizes the dogma of the Incarnation. When the Door is opened, the believer sees the inner sanctuary and becomes a witness to the mystery of the communion and, through the sacrament, eventually a participant in the divine.[2] This interpretation is clearly stated in the various mystical treatises on the meaning of the church building and its

1. Chatzidakis, *Epistylion*, p. 385.
2. For a discussion of the concept of a passage through a closed door and its association with the Annunciation, see Weitzmann, *St. Nicholas*, pp. 17–18.

decoration written by Byzantine theologians, of which the following passage by Symeon of Thessalonica (died 1429) is an example:

The cancelli manifest the difference between the world of mind and of the senses . . . 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 . . . The holy bema symbolizes heaven, the rest of the church the heavenly realm. But also the holiest bema manifests the superterrestrial realm.*[3]

The aesthetic unity of the building would then reflect its symbolic unity. In this respect, the iconostasis is part of the total impact that a pilgrim felt on entering a Byzantine church, as the following account of an anonymous pilgrim to Mt. Sinai, probably dating to the sixteenth century, indicates:

The holy monastery is situated between three mountains and has a most beautiful and renowned church; it has a roof covered with lead and twelve marble columns, most beautiful. The columns contain the relics of all saints that are in the Book of Saints, and who are commemorated throughout the year. Each column has an icon with all saints—their lives are told in every detail—martyrs and hieromartyrs, archpriests, and priests, holy men and holy women. Also there are represented [in the icons] *all the orthodox kings and the lawless kings, that is the rulers and administrators who tortured the holy martyrs. There are also all the instruments of torture with which the martyrs were tortured and which have a long history. The columns which contain the holy relics are sealed with golden seals from the time of the Emperor Justinian who built this monastery. Inside the holy bema are representations in mosaic; the Transfiguration of God and our Lord Jesus Christ; and on the doors of the holy bema there are all-golden icons with all-golden columns, that is, they adorn the front part of the iconostasis;* [they are] *most beautiful; the Great Archpriest, our Lord Jesus Christ, and His All-Holy Mother, the All-Glorious Mother of*

3. *PG*, 155, cols. 345, 704, 708; also, Sergei N. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church* (Clayton, Wis., 1964).

God, and Moses who saw God, and the saint and megalo-martyr Catherine . . . .[4]

The description indicates the type of icons that were placed on the lower part of a Greek iconostasis on either side of the Royal Doors.

The case is different with Slavic countries and Russia in particular. The iconostasis, made of wood, attained a great height very early. It nearly reached the ceiling of the church, becoming a wall with icons. In Russia, as Lazarev has suggested, this was due to the abundance of forests in which the artist could find all the wood he needed. This change meant the "ascendance" of the icon over the fresco. By necessity, however, there were more rows of icons now arranged around the thematic nucleus which came from Byzantium. This was the *Deësis* and the Twelve Church Feasts. New rows of icons were added in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and eventually an order was established.

On either side of the Royal Doors, there are icons of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the patron saint to whom the Church is dedicated. Over the Doors is the Communion of the Apostles, and, on the actual Doors, the Annunciation, the Four Evangelists or two of the Greek Fathers to whom liturgies were ascribed. On the doors of the *prothesis* and *diakonikon*, there are icons of the Archangels or other Saint-deacons. Four tiers of icons are on the *epistylion*. The very top tier contains small icons of the Forefathers of Christ; the tier below has icons of Prophets, with the Virgin of the Sign in the center (cf. Cat. no. 15). The next tier is that of the Twelve Church Feasts (cf. Cat. nos. 2–6, 12), and the last, the *Deësis* tier, contains larger icons comprising the Great *Deësis* with Christ enthroned in the center and flanked by the Mother of God, John the Baptist, Archangels, Apostles, Fathers of the Church and Saints (cf. Cat. nos. 8–11).

The lower part of the iconostasis is often provided with columns—this had become common since the seventeenth century—which bear

4. Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus (ed.), *Pravoslavnoe Palestenckoe Obshchetvo*, 16 (St. Petersburg, 1896), pp. 32, 33 (Greek text with a translation into Russian); the English translation is mine taken from the manuscript of my book *Time and Eternity, Themes of East Christian Civilization.*

gilt and sculptural decorations in wood. The Russian iconostases are most renowned for their richness; the icon screen in the cathedral at the Kremlin is justly famous.

The expansion of the *Deësis* theme in the Russian iconostasis meant also an expansion of its symbolism. The *chin* symbolizes the Church's intercession by prayer. But the Church was not possible without the Incarnation of Christ; witnesses of his becoming man are the feast icons of the next tier. His Incarnation was foretold by the prophets who occupy the third row. The prophets and the patriarchs of the Old Testament (last tier) foreshadowed the Church of Christ. The two upper rows are then connected with the prefiguration of the Church in the Old Testament. The link between the two Testaments is provided by the icon of the Virgin of the Sign which declares the Incarnation of Christ. The entire symbolism of the Church, as it is known from the mystical writings of Orthodox theologians, is to be found in the iconostasis: the Church under law, the Church under grace, and the Kingdom to come—the prayer of Church alluding to this.

However, the iconostasis and its symbolism did not remain confined within the walls of the church. In homes throughout the Orthodox world, there was a special place for the icons. Among them were icons that reflected the iconostasis. The Greeks favored the triptych. It was popular in Byzantine times, but it became even more popular in post-Byzantine times (cf. Cat. no. 1). The reason for this popularity, as Weitzmann has pointed out, was not a question of aesthetics or utilitarianism. A triptych resembled in form the Royal Doors of the iconostasis. When the triptych was closed, it provided the believer with the same feeling he experienced when he stood in front of the closed doors of an iconostasis. The opened triptych simulated one's seeing through the Royal Doors into the inner part of the sanctuary with the altar, where the Sacrament was performed; thus, one contemplated the meaning of one's participation in the divine. It must be added that very often subjects depicted on triptychs relate to iconostases.[5]

In Russia, the church iconostasis is often reproduced in the form of a polyptych of miniature size; this is especially true from the sixteenth

5. Weitzmann, *St. Nicholas*, p. 23.

to the nineteenth century (cf. Cat. no. 13). In these portable iconostases, whether for use at home or for traveling, the lowest part, the actual "wall" of the icon screen, is missing. But then the images of Mary and Christ and of the patron saint always have a place in the icon corner of a Russian home.

Bibliography

Schweinfurth, *Russ. Malerei*, pp. 237–241; Anastasios Orlandos, "Glypta Mouseiou Thebon," *Archeion ton byzantinon mnemeion tes Ellados*, 5 (1939, 1940), pp. 126–128; Stephanos G. Xydis, "The Chancel Barrier, Solea, and Ambo of Hagia Sophia," *Art Bulletin*, 29 (1947), pp. 1ff. (with bibliography); Chatzidakis, *Euphrosynos*; Sotiriou, *Sinai*, 2, pp. 100–114; Mirjane Corović-Ljubinković, "Quelques icônes de la vieille iconostase de Gračanića datant du XIV siècle et le problème de l'iconostase haute au Moyen-Age en Serbie," *Zbornik du Musée National*, 1958, 2, pp. 135–152; also, by the same, *Les bois sculptés du Moyen-Age dans les régiones orientales de la Yougoslavie* (Belgrade, 1965), with French summary; Weitzmann, *St. Nicholas*, pp. 1–23; Victor N. Lazarev, "Trois Fragments d'Epistyles peintes et le Templon Byzantin," *Deltion christianikes archaeologikes hetaireias*, per. 4, 4 (1964), timitikos Sotiriou (Athens 1966), pp. 117–143; Chatzidakis, *Epistylion*; Weitzmann, *Bamberger Graduale*; Charles Delvoye, "Bema," *RbK*, 1, cols. 583–599; Kurt Weitzmann, *Ivories and Steatites*, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, 3 (Washington, D.C., 1972), pp. 43ff, pl. 4, no. 21.

Theology of the Icon and Popular Piety

The meaning of the icon was derived from a way of life defined in the writings of the Church Fathers. In the beginning Christianity had expressed doubts about the validity of representation and the use of images in places of worship. Paganism was still alive and the fear was strong among the early Christians that a representation might be changed into an idol; thus, *iconoclastic* tendencies were expressed. At the same time, there was strong support for the use of images, for in them the Fathers recognized "a usefulness," a didactic purpose. In many instances, the icon was placed on a higher level than the word, for it transmitted the meaning of the word more powerfully and thus made the teaching of the Church more effective. It recalled the represented persons and their deeds and led one to imitation of a martyr, serving to console the relatives or pupils of the departed holy man; or it was a means of perpetuating a saint's presence, immortalizing his figure. In this way, an iconography of saints and martyrs came into being that has survived almost unchanged throughout the Orthodox world. The features of these saints were based either on tradition or on icons on which, it was believed, the face of the holy figure was miraculously imprinted.

Later, these portraits became cult objects and, by the end of the sixth century, the cult of icons replaced the cult of relics. It became imperative to have dogmatic justification for the magical properties which the masses had attributed to icons. This justification was not achieved on the basis of the usefulness of the icon, but on the basis of the transcendental concept of its relation to the divine world, which in turn was built upon principles of Neoplatonic philosophy adopted by the Church Fathers. These principles are extensively stated by the great defender of the icons, John of Damascus (ca. 676–754), in his essays on holy images. He justifies the icon because of the doctrine of the Incarnation. Like the gospels, the icon bears witness to Christ's incarnation—his becoming man. Icons make visible that

which is not visible; they are witnesses of the redemption of matter declared by the Incarnation.

The icon is a "likeness rendering the features of the prototype from which, however, it differs in some respects." It partakes of the holiness of the prototype, being a product of illumination, according to the Neoplatonic theory of emanation. It is identical with it according to its essence, but it differs from it according to its *hypostasis.* The relation of the icon to the prototype is the same as that of Christ to God the Father.

Both the similarity and the difference are essential in the concept of the icon. Unless the icon resembles the prototype, that is, unless it is essentially a portrait of the represented holy figure, grace does not descend upon the matter. The difference from the prototype is also important. For the represented person must be placed in a different world, away from the world of appearances.

These principles have been fundamental for the art of icon painting, and, in a general way, for the concept of Byzantine iconography and aesthetics. The first principle means adherence to created types of holy figures or scenes which are repeated unaltered through the centuries. The second precept implies the creation of a dematerialized style that leads the onlooker to the world of divine reality.

As these ideas were further developed by later writers, a theology of the icon was crystallized and formed an important part of the doctrine of the Orthodox Church. According to this theology, the icon was placed within the scheme of the Incarnation, Redemption, and Deification of man.

The transcendental and omnipresent God has assumed flesh, has dwelt among men, has conversed with them and has been seen by them. Through his Incarnation, the Word of God "being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of the Father's person" (Hebrews 10:13) has revealed to the world the image (the icon) of the Father whom no man has seen (John 1:18). Christ, then, has revealed to mankind the "icon" of the Father.

The icon of God exists as well within man, who, therefore, has only seen God in Christ, but also carries within himself the image of God.

Man is "created in the image and likeness of God." According to the Greek Fathers, this means that from the very first moment of his creation man has been imprinted with the icon of God, which is not destroyed by sin. Man can communicate with, know, and see God since he is God's image. If man realizes this and pursues his communication with God through the image, he obtains the divine likeness, that is, he is assimilated with God through virtue. To acquire the likeness means that man is deified, he becomes God by grace. What exactly the likeness of God is was shown by Christ, the God-Man, who now becomes the prototype for man who accepts the road to his deification.

The concept of image and likeness dominates the relationship between man and God, and it is at the very heart of the Orthodox Church. The whole question of man's redemption depends on his image relationship with God. Christ came to earth so that man could be renewed in the image of Jesus and changed into his likeness (II Corinthians 3:18). From the moment the Orthodox Christian accepts this, he begins his search for a manifestation of the divine glory of which St. John speaks in the first chapter of his Gospel. Inseparable from this glory is the redemption of matter. God took flesh, assumed the material body and showed that matter can be made "spirit-bearing." If flesh becomes a vehicle of the spirit, matter could give form to the invisible and make it apparent to human eyes, and wood and painting could do so also.

The relation between the icon and the image of God which man carries within himself has remained a part of the writings of the Orthodox Church down to this century. As late as 1908, the Russian archpriest John Sergieff of St. Andrew's Cathedral at Cronstadt in Russia expressed this view clearly. In his meditations, recorded in his diary and published under the title *My Life in Christ*, he sees the concept of the image as a central point in the process of creation: the heavenly powers are images of the supernatural, life giving unity; the Son is the living image of the Father; man is created in the image of God; God continues to create God-like images; the icons correspond to the images of God. In the final analysis, this means that images of the image of God participate in its divine character:

Every image of the Saviour is His image, most worthy of reverence, shining in the soul of every true Christian. . . The Lord . . . desires to be

formed in us . . . . But how can I form Christ in my heart if I do not first represent Him sensibly before my eyes? Thus we have images of the Saviour, of the Mother of God, and others . . . . Heaven itself replies to us from the icons, as the Lord in olden times replied from the mercy-seat in the Hebrew tabernacle; many of them shine by miracles.[1]

These ideas were not confined to the writings of the theologians. They found a place in the hymnography of the Church and in rites pertaining to icons. But their finer theological aspects had little effect on the masses. People have continued to this day to consider the icons "the most venerated of all objects in the Orthodox Church."[2] Whether the icons are on the lower part of the iconostasis, on icon stands, or in the home, they are kissed, prayed to, adorned with flowers and veils, and receive offerings. They can even control life, for, since the divine was present in and through the icons, the attribution of supernatural powers never ceased. Icons could protect the individual against sickness, prevent disasters, and save cities from the hands of the enemies; most cities in Byzantium and Russia claimed a miraculous icon under whose protection the city was placed (cf. Cat. nos. 7, 15). The miracle-working icon is one of the most powerful motifs of popular piety. The meaning of the icon in everyday life finds varying expression in works that manifest the culture of the people. Poets and novelists are aware of the significance of the icon, but the extent of this awareness cannot be fully explored here. It can only be suggested with a few examples.

In a curious, long Greek poem containing elements that spring from the soul of the people and entitled *Lament for Constantinople* (probably of the sixteenth century), the icons are witnesses of the loss of the Byzantine capital. Yet, being bearers of the divine, the icons return to their ultimate source, the heavenly realm:

Where are the holy icons? Where is our Lady the Hodegetria, the Lady of the World? [The Hodegetria is a special icon portraying the Virgin

1. Erast E. Goulaeff (trans.), *My Life in Christ* (extracts from the diary of the Archpriest John Sergieff of St. Andrew's Cathedral, Cronstadt, Russia; London, 1897), pp. 488–489.
2. Andreas Xyngopoulos, "Icons," in *Byzantine Art*, p. 227; for the social and cultural aspect of the icon, see Onasch, *Ikonenmalerei*, pp. 107–128.

standing and holding the Christ Child on one arm.] *They said that all relics and icons ascended into heaven; the holy relics . . . were taken by angels to the throne of the Lord, and this is true for, as vessels of the Lord, the icons and the relics . . . were taken . . . to the king of Glory.*[3]

A second example shows another aspect of the significance of the icon for the life of the individual. The most beautiful and loved possession of man is compared to an icon in a Greek ballad from Rhodes, a love poem, probably of the fourteenth century, where the poet compares his beloved to a special icon:

Thou art Our Lady's imaged form, worn on the Emperor's bosom, and foreign princes honour thee, and chieftains magnify thee.[4]

One can follow the theme of the icon in everyday life in Greek literature from the Byzantine time to the present, and contemporary Greek literature contains some very fine examples of the theme. But the interested reader must pursue this for himself. Instead, we would like to suggest some of the theme's manifestations in Russian literature.

In every part of the Orthodox world, even in the poorest of houses, icons have a place. In Russia, icons have a special corner in the house, the "beautiful corner," called *kranyi ugol.* The role the icons play from this place was not forgotten by Russian authors, especially those of the nineteenth century. Turgenev, who seems to ignore icons completely in his writing, is the one exception.

The "beautiful corner" plays a part in an extraordinary work of a religious nature, written anonymously in Russian in the nineteenth century and discovered in manuscript form in one of the monasteries of Mt. Athos. Entitled *The Way of a Pilgrim*, it narrates events in Russia prior to 1861 and presents the wanderings of a pilgrim in his quest for the meaning of inner prayer, or prayer of the heart. In one

3. Adolf Ellissen (ed.), *Analekten der mittel- und neugriechischen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1857), p. 122. The translation is mine, taken from my book, *Themes of East-Christian Civilization.*
4. Translated by Henry F. Tozer, in "Medieval Rhodian Love-Poems," *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1 (1880), p. 311.

episode, it describes how the pilgrim accepted hospitality; as he entered the house, he saw and admired "the beautiful icons of Christ, of his Mother and the blessed saints," [5] and venerated them as generations of believers had done. Pushkin, in his *Boris Godunov*, presents Pimen writing his chronicle in his cell by the light of an icon-lamp.[6]

But, above all, it is Dostoevski who, with his sinners, provides us with the most telling examples. Icons are part of the setting of an act or participants of the act itself. In the *Brothers Karamazov*, for example, Alyosha remembers his mother in the act of prayer before an icon which almost becomes her leitmotif in the novel. Veneration of the icon is an expression of personal religious feelings. Fyodor Pavlovitch Karamazov "was far from being religious; he had probably never put a penny candle before the image of a saint." Icons still continue to bestow grace upon the believer and are means of communication with the divine. When Father Zossima preaches the love of God and hears the confession of a sinner, he makes the sign of the cross three times over the sinner. Then he places upon him a small, special icon that was around his neck so that power may be bestowed upon the contrite person. Grace is said before the holy icons. Icons play their part in religious ceremonies. Dmitri Karamazov is eager to stress the fact that his betrothal to Katya took place with great ceremony "with icons." Icons are a token of man's gratitude for the love of God. Father Ferapont's cell was a peasant's hut, but "it looked like a chapel, for it contained an extraordinary number of icons with lamps perpetually burning before them—which men brought to the monastery as offerings to God." The icon accompanies man in his life-journey and at the end it seals man's lifeless breast. "Alyosha gazed for half a minute at [Father Zossima's] coffin, at the covered, motionless dead man that lay in the coffin, with the icon on his breast and the peaked cap with the octangular cross on his head." [7]

Neither Dostoevski nor any other writer presents or discusses the icon as a work of art—that is, only for its aesthetic beauty. Even Nikolai

5. Reginald M. French (trans.), *The Way of a Pilgrim* (London, 1954), pp. 81–83.
6. Aleksander S. Pushkin, *Boris Godunov* (Philip L. Barbour trans., New York, 1953), p. 53.
7. Feodor Dostoevski, *The Brothers Karamazov* (Constance Garnett trans., London, 1912), pp. 13, 18, 22, 34, 83, 117, 138, 143, 162, 168, 378, and passim.

Leskov, who has devoted some fine pages to icons, follows this trend. As far as works of art are concerned, these writers favor works by Western European masters. This is true in particular for Dostoevski, who prefers masters of the European Baroque, such as Jacob van Ruisdael, Anthony Van Dyck or the Italian Renaissance master, Raphael.[8] Various reasons have been proposed to explain these preferences of Russian writers. The Westernization of Russia in the time of Peter the Great is one of them. But the most important reason is that icons have always been considered a means of communication with the Divine, objects of cult and devotion, whose nature derived from a way of life.[9] Leskov has emphasized this idea in a very beautiful story entitled *The Sealed Angel*, dealing with the ideas of the old believers. In the story, the icon is considered to be a holy relic preciously preserved by the people. This relic, however, controls their lives; when an official takes this holiest of their icons, the icon of an angel, seals it with varnish and thus desecrates it, the entire congregation is afflicted with an eye disease. Their icon, their precious angel, has become blind and the believers too become blind.[10]

Icons remained objects of religious devotion. Down to the end of the nineteenth century, for example, the icon of the Mother of God Iverskaya, a copy of the famous icon in the monastery of Iveron on Mt. Athos, which had been sent to Moscow in 1648, and for which Czar Alexis Mikhailovich built a small chapel, was taken almost daily through the streets of Moscow in a carriage driven by six horses. The people worshipped it because it was an icon with miraculous powers.[11] This attitude toward icons in general is further attested to by a well-known episode in the life of Goethe in the early part of the nineteenth century. Goethe wished to learn something about the icons he had seen in the Orthodox chapel in Weimar. He applied to Maria Pavlovna, Archduchess of Saxe-Weimar, who was born a great princess of Russia. She was unable to furnish the poet the desired information, since she received no help from the famous Russian

8. I am grateful to Princess Zenaida Troubetzkoi, who let me read the manuscript of her article "Dostoevski et la Peinture."
9. Troubetzkoi, *Ocherka*, p. 155.
10. Nikolai S. Leskov, *Works*, 4 (Johannes von Günther trans., *Gesammelte Werke*, 6 vols, Munich, 1950–1956).
11. Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, p. 235.

historian Nikolai Karamsin or from the Academy of Petersburg to which she had turned. One must agree with Elbern that the entire nineteenth century did not understand the aesthetic beauty of the icons, even though research on them had already begun.[12]

This situation changed in the early part of this century when the restoration and cleaning of icons were begun. The Russian public became aware of the aesthetics of icons after an exhibition of old Russian art in 1913, while Westerners were exposed to it at the first exhibition of the Lickatchev collection of icons held in Paris in 1906, part of an exhibition of paintings in the Salon d'Automne organized by Sergei Diaghilev. Today, at last, we are able to see icons as aesthetic entities.[13]

The aesthetic awareness, however, does not detract from the other meanings of the icon outlined earlier. All these aspects have found a place in twentieth-century Russian literature. A series of poets—not to mention novelists, from Aleksander Blok to Anna Akhmatova, have borrowed images from Russian iconography and used them to add depth and beauty to their visions. It is not possible to discuss their imagery in detail here; we can only give a few illustrations.

Blok, the greatest Russian Symbolist poet (died 1921), in a poem entitled "Behind the Coffin," describes a realistic scene, a funeral procession in which the bride accompanies the body of her betrothed to the grave. The realism modulates into a series of symbols. According to custom, an icon is placed on the coffin. The poet has chosen an image of the Mother of God: "Soothe my sorrows." As the procession goes through the dusty roads, the icon is covered by the dust raised by the feet of the living. The bride "arrayed herself in a bridal veil against the dust and awaited another Bridegroom." The icon, then, is the symbol of forgetfulness, and, on another level, it is the reality of grief and a new life—either in this world or the

12. Hans Wahl, "Goethes Anstoss zur russischen Ikonenforschung," *Jahrbuch der Goethegesellschaft*, n.s., 10 (Weimar, 1948) p. 221; Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, pp. 58, 235; Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, pp. 6, 7.
13. Troubetzkoi, *Ocherka*, pp. 153, 154.

next. It has soothed the sorrows and has healed the wound. It is the icon in which the two realities commingle.

The "magic" aspect of the icon has fascinated Velimir Khlebnikov (died 1922), the founder of the Russian Futurist movement. One of his characters, in his poem "Three Sisters," is "bewitched by the God of men's ancient icons." But the aesthetic aspect of the icon, its mystic beauty, and even its technique are recalled by Eduard Bagritsky (died 1934), when he tells us that he likes "the ancient soot on the austere icons."

Anna Akhmatova (died 1966), one of the greatest Russian poets dealing with the mysteries of human life in this century, never forgot the icon. It has a place in the religious imagery of her early work. In unforgettable lines, she swears by "the miracle-working icon" never to return to her lover again. The icon is the witness of the outcry of a humiliated woman; it is also the metaphysical presence which gives her strength and sanctifies her vow. In her poem "July 1914," describing the ravages of war, she uses images that stem from Russian piety. One of them is the one-legged passerby who foresees the apocalyptic catastrophes which are to come (recalling the Russian *yurodivyi*, Cat. no. 17) and offers the consolation: "The Mother of God will spread a white veil over our great sorrows." Here one recognizes a direct reference to the iconography of the Virgin of the Mantle (Cat. no. 7). In her "Requiem," which was first published in Munich in 1963, in the section referring to the arrest of N. N. Punin, Akhmatova's close friend, the poetess affirms the old custom of kissing the icon. When the arrested was taken away and the children cried, "the candle swam by the icon stand./The cold of the icon on your lips." Here the kissing of the icon is not an act of devotion mechanically performed, but a communication with the source of divine and receiving grace.

It is a symbol of strength and submission in a world that has denied its gods and forgotten that power is not a substitute for grace.[14]

14. All quotations cited here are from the splendid translations of the poems found in Dimitri Obolensky (ed. and trans.), *The Penguin Book of Russian Verse* (Harmondsworth, 1965), pp. 266–267, 286, 318–321, 401; and Richard McKane (trans.), *Anna Akhmatova: Selected Poems* (Oxford, Harmondsworth, 1969), pp. 17, 93.

These examples are but inadequate illustrations of the use of icon imagery in modern Russian poetry. The icon retains its power for evoking mysteries. It continues to express the metaphysical truths of the human condition.

The Beauty of Icons

The emphasis placed upon the religious and spiritual function of the icon in reality did not deprive it of its beauty. But this beauty was always seen within the concept of the Holy, set apart from the ordinary. Rainer Maria Rilke perceived this in his trip to Russia. In one of the *Stories of God*, which sprang from his Russian experiences, he had the old Timofei, who died singing, say to his son: "You are still very young, and so I have not told you the most beautiful *bylini* [oral heroic poem], in which the words are like icons and not at all to be compared with ordinary words . . . ." [1] It is in this sense that icons are also considered to be works of art; their beauty is that of God's plan for man. And this is what Dostoevski means when he says: "Beauty will save the world." [2]

The position and definition of the icon within the Holy and the role it played in the deification of man determined its visual means of expression—that is, its style. On the one hand, the represented person must be seen as a portrait, but one which nevertheless is removed from reality. The result is a dematerialized style determined by certain laws of rhythm imposed upon the movement of lines and the composition. There is an indifference to human anatomy; the body is spiritualized. The lack of volume in the forms gives to the figures the immaterial quality of unearthly visions. The forms of nature are subjected to the laws of the spirit animated by profound faith. The denial of physical reality to the body is further stressed by the unreality of the color scheme, the treatment of light, and the denial of actual, physical space. The light on the faces and bodies is not naturalistic. It is there to stress the inner light of the represented holy figure. Physical space is irrelevant to the world of eternity, so

1. Rainer M. Rilke, *Stories of God* (M. D. Herter Norton trans., New York, 1963). The reader should be cautioned against the translator's notes-commentary found in this book.
2. Troubetzkoi, *Ocherka*, p. 155.

the figures stand against an overall gold or neutral background which suggests the uncreated light of God, the light of heaven.

It is through such elements that the icon can function. The transfiguration of man and of the universe can be portrayed by "trespassing" on the physical phenomena. The style of the icon represents the transfigured state of beings and things. The depiction of the transfigured person, whether it be Christ, Mary, or a saint, must accord with this state. Anything suggestive of the flesh and of human nature as corruptible is contrary to the character of the icon. To put it differently, the forms are of this world and at the same time of another world. So the likeness and difference form a dialectic antinomy which makes the icon a participant of the world of the spirit and of the world of man.[3]

In Byzantium through the course of centuries, the style of the icon, closely associated with the development of monumental painting and with book illumination, remains faithful to its Hellenistic sources and to the tradition of the portrait. Icon painting, in spite of fluctuations, has never died, but has continued to reflect the humanistic spirit of Hellenism which has persisted in all periods, even down to the present in Greece.

The significance of the human figure—a characteristic of Hellenism—takes on another dimension in the post-Byzantine masters, especially those of the Cretan School known today thanks to the writings of Chatzidakis and Xyngopoulos. This is not a return to the classical ideal which has always nourished Byzantine art, but rather it is related to the Italian Renaissance which the Greek masters came to know in Venice, especially in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (cf. Cat. no. 1). Chatzidakis is right, however, in saying that one must not think of the icon painters as borrowing Italianate forms and elements, but instead one should speak of a common classical "artistic will."[4]

3. Chatzidakis, *Icône byzantine*, pp. 1–40, esp. p. 15; André Grabar, "La Représentation de l'Intelligible dans l'art byzantin du Moyen Age," *Actes du VI^e Congrès international des études byzantines*, II, Paris, 1948, pp. 127ff; Otto Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration* (London, 1947), p. 10; Michelis, *Aesthetic*, p. 133; Gerardus van der Leeuw, *Sacred and Profane Beauty* (London, 1963), pp. 173–176; Onasch, *Ikonenmalerei*, pp. 18–28, 44–47.
4. Chatzidakis, *Icône byzantine*, p. 40; Michelis, *Aesthetic*, p. 194.

The Russian icon, based on the same doctrinal sources as the Byzantine and the same theological dogma, has derived from the Byzantine icon and formed a branch of it—but a very special one. The Russian sensibility and temperament after the fifteenth century gave a very different expression to the same iconographic subjects. The mysticism of the Slavs and their unique sense of rhythm are better expressed in abstract qualities, in a linearism, in a love of ornamentation—even hills are changed into ornaments—(cf. Cat. nos. 2, 4), in flat forms, and in intense and complimentary colors (cf. Cat. no. 15) and in their bold contrasting. When the Byzantine tradition penetrates once more, as is the case in the School of Moscow after the fourteenth century, one again sees changes in form and color scheme.

The earliest icons that have survived are those produced in the Novgorod workshops, which reached their height at the end of the fourteenth and in the fifteenth centuries. Works of this school are recognized for their strong personages, unmixed colors and pulsating tones of blazing vermilion, their bold design, and confident hand.

Research has produced evidence of other schools in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in northern centers such as Tver, Pskov, Suzdal, Rostov, and other places. Their products are not always clearly discernible, because absolute stylistic criteria have not as yet been established. In fact, the distinction of schools is one of the most controversial problems of icon painting. Contacts between various masters, traveling from one place to another, and the exchange of influences often resulted in works of mixed character. The question of schools of icon painting remains to be fully clarified, above all, from the point of view of artistic expression.[5]

In the sixteenth century, Novgorod ceased to be a significant artistic center. Some of its artists moved to northern Russia. Others journeyed to up-and-coming Moscow. In either case, they made a contribution to the art of painting of both areas. The style that prevailed in northern provinces in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has certain "archaistic" elements. Simplicity in composition, organization

5. Cf. Gerhard, *Welt*, pp. 218–219; Felicetti-Liebenfels, *Russ. Ikonenmalerei*, passim.

of compositional elements with decorative effect, sometimes the use of solid colors, stylization of figures and the presence of a linear rhythm characterize works painted in the so-called "northern manner" (cf. Cat. nos. 4–6). Their style certainly contrasts with the graceful, calligraphic type of painting—a mixture of the tastes of court, aristocracy, and rich merchants, predominant in seventeenth-century Moscow.

Moscow began to develop as a center of art in the fourteenth century. In this development, Byzantine art played a significant role. In 1344, Greek masters were called upon to decorate the Moscow Cathedral with frescoes. Shortly before the end of the century, the great Theophanes the Greek, who had already worked in Novgorod and whose actual activities and artistic stations on his journey from Constantinople to Russia are known from contemporary documents, arrived in Moscow. With him, the art of Moscow was to borrow heavily from the Byzantine art of the Palaeologue period. He was the master of the Russian Andrei Rublev, and the two of them were the creators of the Russian iconostasis as we know it today. The next great master, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, was Dionysius, whose works reflect an emphasis on emotion. He showed a preference for a more elaborate presentation of the subject and portrayed elegant and graceful figures, displaying a miniature-like delicacy in the modeling of the faces. These characteristics pointed the way to new paths in Russian icon painting with the addition of other factors. At about that time, there appeared in Moscow a large number of Western religious etchings which provoked the interest of painters. Then came a fire which devastated Moscow in 1547 and had a far-reaching consequence for icon painting. Since many icons were destroyed, the Czar was obliged to borrow icons and artists from other centers. It was then that the Russian equivalent of an academy of fine arts took form in a workshop which was established in the Palace of Arms by Ivan the Terrible (1533–1584). Many beautiful icons were produced here.

It is to this period and the following years of the School of Moscow that many of the icons in the Elvehjem collection may be ascribed. The icons of Moscow are characterized by the profusion of detail and by their muted colors, from blood reds and yellows to browns with

black shadows, and by an extensive use of gold for the garments. The faces are round and soft (cf. Cat. nos. 9–11). A miniature-like quality of modeling becomes very predominant. The school lacks the fiery temperament of earlier styles. It tends to be more aristocratic. By this time, the development of personal patronage was taking place, and numerous icons were executed for such patrons, thus giving importance to the individual. Icons made for such patrons—particularly for home use or for private chapels which continued to be produced in later years—usually depict local saints with whom the patron had some connection (cf. Cat. no. 19). So the repertory of art changes.

The same school at the Palace of Arms and artists working for a family of merchant princes, the Stroganovs, were permeated with Western ideas. Eventually, these influences led first to a Byzantinized interpretation of Western religious art in the seventeenth century, and finally to a decline of the art of icon painting. Icons were no longer inspired by grace, or marvelous religious revelations born out of prayers and tears. Icons were born out of dexterity, and the lack of religious experience was hidden by the addition of gold and silver metal frames and covers.[6]

The seventeenth century marks the end of old Russian art and the beginning of modern times. From then on, painters created religious paintings in the Western manner. The archangel Michael was represented as another Prince Potemkin and Christ as an ordinary man. In 1709, Peter the Great issued a decree which distinguished icon painting from "secular" painting. Such a distinction caused the art of icons to disappear in favor of an art that rejected divine reality for the sake of terrestrial reality (cf. Cat. nos. 20, 21).

The painting of icons lessened with the result that, in the nineteenth century, the needs of the people for icons could not be met. This marked the appearance of the *oklad-* or *risa*-icons (only faces and hands were painted while the figures and backgrounds were often left unpainted and covered by a metal plaque or *risa*, usually commercially produced) and of the commercial devotional images and icon prints

6. Troubetzkoi, *Ocherka*, p. 155; Gerhard, *Welt*, pp. 215, 216.

which could be glued on a wooden board. The tarnished visage of the icon in its shining gold or silver casing becomes the image of the Church imprisoned in its secular splendor.

But, in spite of long years of neglect and misuse, there are signs today that the art of icon painting is not yet dead, as it has been taken up again by monks in some, still existing, Russian monasteries.

Role of the Artist

The meaning of the icon and the distinction of schools of icon painting pose the problem of the artist's role. Icons are not signed. Only after the fall of Constantinople (1453) in post-Byzantine times are painters' signatures found on Greek and Russian icons. Nevertheless, the function of the painter is notable. It is his task to penetrate the truth of the theme and to invent different means of expression for subjects which fundamentally remain the same through the centuries. Within this tradition, however, there is a great deal of freedom. For the iconography of Eastern Church art, as Muratov states, is as profuse as that of ancient Greek religious statuary. The artist could discover endless new motifs within the old established theme. But certain presuppositions are necessary for this which make the artist's task a very difficult one. He has to be a "transformed person" in order to be able to present in his work a transfigured being and a transfigured universe.

This was made clear in the ceremony of the painter's inauguration into the art of painting, described in the *Painter's Guide*. The ceremony began with the *troparion*, or chant, of the festival of the Transfiguration, the great event by which Christ revealed His glory to His disciples. The prayer that followed included the meaning of the icon and its relation to the concept of the Incarnation. God was asked to illumine and inspire the soul, heart and mind of his servant (the painter), and to guide his hands to draw out immaculately and excellently his form. It continued:

. . . the form of thy likeness, of thy immaculate Mother and of thy saints for thy glory and for the beauty of thy Church and the remission of sins of those who render relative adoration to their images and kiss them with piety, rendering the honor to the prototype. O Lord, redeem him [the painter] *from any demonic influences, who advances in thy way*

through the intercession of thy Holy Mother and of the glorious Apostle and Evangelist Luke and all the saints . . .[1]

Unless the soul of the painter is illumined and his hands are directed by God, his creations cannot present the world of truth. This belief, found in many legends of saints created around the concept of the "divine origin" of the icon, is not simply a theory of art but a manifestation of the belief of the Eastern Christian in the reality of the purifying fire of the love of God. It is echoed in a story by Nikolai Gogol entitled *The Portrait*.

In this story, Gogol writes of a devout painter who wishes to introduce into his works the Prince of Darkness, whom he finds in a mysterious person, a money-lender. While he paints the devil, a transformation occurs. The painter becomes "possessed," acquiring the characteristics of his sitter; when he submits his picture, the judges reject it because they find that the holy persons too have demonic expressions. Gradually, the painter realizes that his brush has been the tool of the devil and he can no longer paint. It is only after purifying himself in the wilderness by mortifying his flesh and strengthening it by the living grace of prayer that he can paint again, producing "a miracle of art" in an icon of the Nativity. "All the brethren," the narrator of Gogol's story says, "fell on their knees before the new icon and the Father Superior, deeply moved, said, 'No man could ever produce such a picture with the aid of human art alone; a holy divine power has guided your brush and the blessing of Heaven rested upon your labours'."[2] We do not know whether or not Gogol uses the Nativity scene as a symbol of man's rebirth. Whatever the reason, the fact is that the painter in his story can paint the Holy only when he becomes holy. Then, and only then, can he represent the state of incorruption of which Paul speaks (I Corinthians 15:49, 50).

1. Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus (ed.), *Dionysiou hieromonachou ek Fourna, Hermeneia zographikes* (St. Petersburg, 1909), pp. 5, 7, the translation is mine; also, Troubetzkoi, *Ocherka*, passim. For sociological questions on the icon-painter and a discussion of Maxim Gorky's icon-workshop in his autobiographical writings, see Onasch, *Ikonenmalerei*, pp. 115ff.
2. Nikolai V. Gogol, *Tales of Good and Evil* (D. Magarshack trans., London, 1949), pp. 112–113.

Made by the hands of a painter who had to transform himself and acquire the sight of the spirit, the icon is an *existence*, which has transcended appearances. It belongs to the world of truth. It is a testimony of man's deification, of man's transfiguration. In the icon, all that belongs to man is transformed into divine light, the light of the body of the transfigured Lord.

Catalogue

Exhibitions

The icons contained in this catalogue were exhibited as follows:

Nos. 1–12, 15–22 in:	Madison, University of Wisconsin Union, *The Joseph E. Davies Collection of Russian Paintings and Icons Presented to the University of Wisconsin*, June, 1938; Milwaukee, Art Institute, *Gift of Russian Icons for the University*, October, 1938.
Nos. 3, 9–11, 18 in:	Milwaukee, State Fair Park, *Masterpieces of Art in the Wisconsin Centennial Exhibition*, August 7–17, 1948.
Nos. 1–3, 9, 10, 15 in:	Madison, University of Wisconsin Union, *Masterpieces of Art from the Collections of the University of Wisconsin and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, June 15–July 8, 1949.
Nos. 4, 5, 12 in:	Beloit, Wisconsin, Beloit College, December 2, 1950–January 15, 1951.
Nos. 3–7, 9–11, 15, 17, 20–22 in:	Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Paine Art Center, *Icons*, December 6, 1964–January 28, 1965.


ΜΡ ΘΥ
ΙC
ΧC
ΔΕΥΤΟΙΕΥΤΗΝΙΗΤΟΥ
ΛΟΓΙΜΕΝΥΜΑΣΜΕΝΗ
ΤΟΥΠΑΤ ΗΜΙΝΕΙΑΣ
ΡΟΣΜΟΥ ΚΑΕΙΛΙΑΝ
ΑΓΡΟΜΟ ΚΑΤΑΒΟ
ΜΗΣΑΤΕ ΛΗΣΚΩΜ

Number 1

1. Triptych with Great *Deësis* and *Dodekaorton*

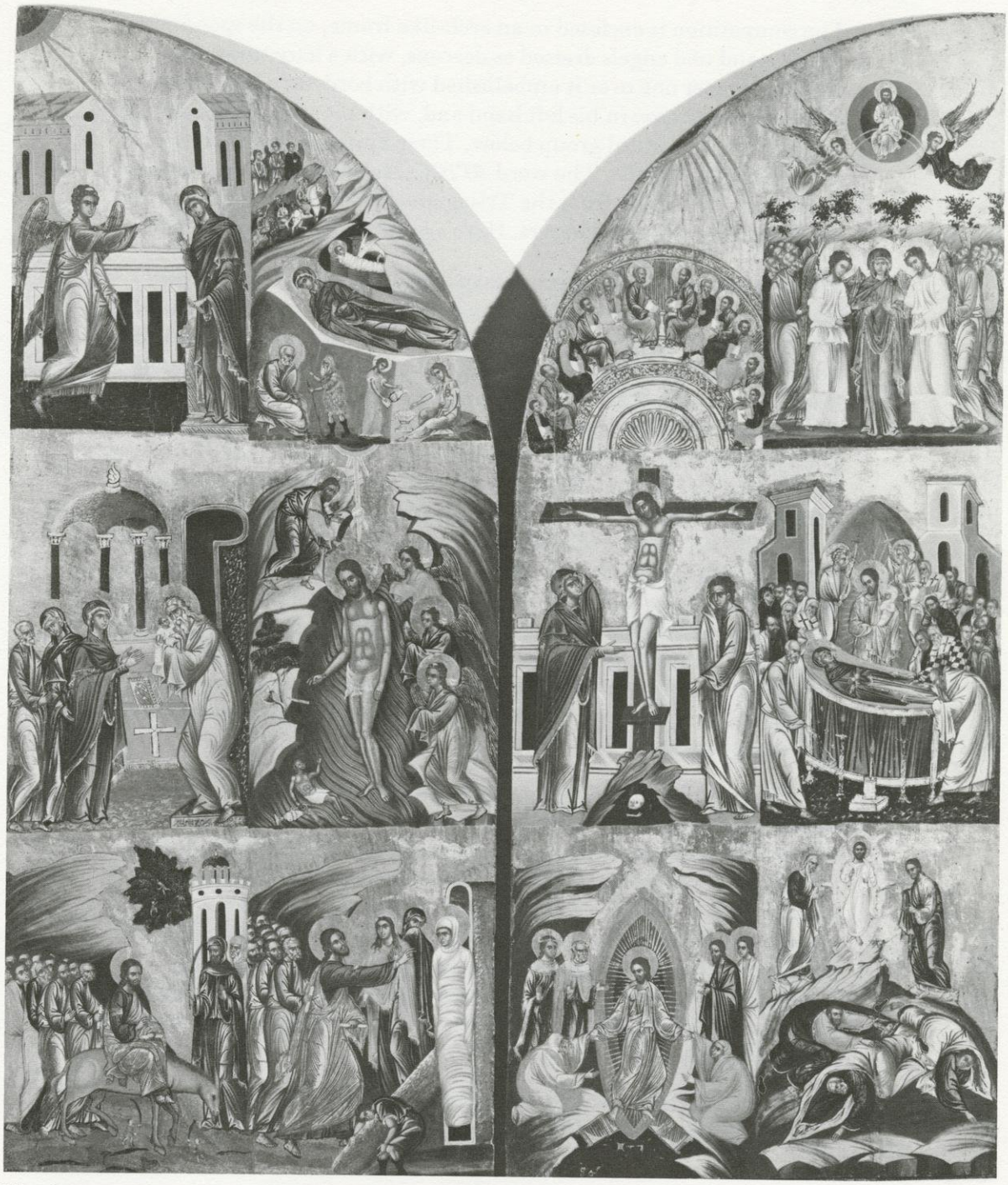
Greek, ca. 1534–1549
Tempera on wood
Central panel: 50 × 41 3/4 inches (127 × 106.2 cm.)
Left wing: 47 × 19 1/2 inches (119.4 × 49.5 cm.)
Right wing: 46 7/8 × 19 1/2 inches (119 × 49.5 cm.)
Provenance: Pecherskaya Lavra, Kiev
Acc. no. 37.1.1

The central panel depicts a composition known as a *Deësis*. Christ is seated on a gold throne, furnished with a red and an olive-green cushion, his feet resting on a gold footstool. He is dressed as an archpriest with a jewel-studded miter on his head and royal *parapendoulia* hanging from the sides. His chasuble is in ivory-white tones with umber and gray folds. It is decorated with a cross pattern. He is blessing with his right hand and supports an open Gospel with his left. The text written on the book is in Greek, and reads in translation as follows: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34) A large cross-nimbus, adorned with floral motifs, is embossed behind the head of Christ.

He is flanked by the Virgin Mary to his right, and John the Baptist to his left. Both are standing, inclined towards Christ in a pose and gesture of intercession. Mary wears a deep-red, wide mantle with golden fringes (a kind of broad scarf or veil which covers head and shoulders, known as a *maphorion*), a blue robe, and red shoes. John is dressed in a deep-green mantle—the folds are in a lighter olive-green color—and a red-orange tunic underneath; he wears sandals. Mary's and John's nimbi consist of gold embossed rays in the form of un-equilateral triangles and stylized flames between them, set against a gold hatching. John and Mary each stand on a brown platform, a dais, which is placed on an olive-green ground against a gold background. Beneath the feet of Christ, there is a papal coat of arms, identified correctly by the late Erwin Panofsky as belonging to Pope Paul III (1534–1549).[1]

1. The *Annuario Pontificio* and the *Enciclopedia cattolica* are the sources for determining the authenticity of papal coats-of-arms; see Leonard van Matt and Hans Kühner, *The Popes* (London, 1966), pp. 232–233.

Number 1



Number 1

The composition is enclosed in an arch-like frame, on the spandrels of which stand two angels dressed as deacons, with a long tunic and another shorter one over it embellished with borders in gold. Each holds a gold *ripidion* in his left hand and, with his other hand, swings a censer over the central group below. Their nimbi are adorned with engraved spiral motifs. The word *ΑΓΙΟϹ* (Holy) occurs twice on their red *oraria*. It is taken from the Trisagion of the liturgy and is written vertically in gold capital letters. Here again the background is gold.

The two wings of the triptych, when open, represent twelve great feasts—a *dodekaorton*—arranged in three registers and in the following sequence, beginning from the upper registers: (*left wing*) the Annunciation; the Nativity, which includes the Journey of the three Magi and the Bathing of the Child; the Presentation of Christ in the Temple; the Baptism of Christ, including a personification of the Jordan and an axe by a tree referring to John's preaching (Matthew 3:10); the Entry into Jerusalem; and the Resurrection of Lazarus; (*right wing*) the Pentecost, without the usual personification of the Cosmos in the center; the Ascension, with Mary in the center flanked by two angels in white with gray folds, and the apostles on the sides; the Crucifixion, with Christ, Mary, and John the Evangelist; the Dormition of the Virgin; the Anastasis or Descent into Hell, with Christ raising up the kneeling Adam and Eve on either side; and the Transfiguration. Each scene is represented without a border, with buildings as settings or stylized landscapes, as required by the iconography, painted against a gold background.

The iconography of the represented subjects is known from other Byzantine and post-Byzantine monuments. The colors have an enamel-like lucidity and range from vermilion red to deep red, and from light to deep blue. Gold is reserved for the nimbi and the embellishment of drapery and angels' wings. The gold of the background is sparkling; the warm brown and ochre of the hills, and the light blue of the buildings, with red roofs and capitals with gold finials, harmonize or contrast with the background. For the indoor scenes, as in the Annunciation, for example, the artist has attempted to imitate floors.

On the reverse of the wings, one sees the Apostle Paul to the right and the Apostle Peter to the left advancing towards one another. Paul, in

an ivory-white himation with folds in brown and red, reflecting the colors of the garments of Christ, and a blue tunic, holds a scroll in his left hand and a sword, symbol of his martyrdom, in his other hand.

Peter, wearing an ochre himation with olive-green and umber folds and a blue tunic, holds a scroll in his left hand and the keys to Paradise in his right. The keys are tied in a red band, exactly as the keys are on the papal coat-of-arms in the main panel. Both apostles have nimbi similar to those of Mary and John, each wearing sandals and standing on an olive-green ground against a sparkling, golden background. The movement unifies the composition. Another ingenious device eliminates the actual division of the panels in the center: the gold handle of Paul's sword is painted over the dividing line.

The iconographic theme of the *Deësis* is an old one in Byzantine art. It constitutes a pictorialization of the prayer of intercession in the liturgy. Mary, the vehicle of the Incarnation, and John the Baptist, the witness of the Incarnation, intercede for humanity. The theological significance of the theme takes various forms. Its precise meaning here will be discussed below. In representations of the theme, Christ is either standing or seated. The second position is more common in the period which follows the fall of Constantinople.[2] The depiction of Christ as the great archpriest appears in the fourteenth century either in isolated representations or in compositions of the *Deësis* itself.[3]

The angels depicted on the corners of the central panel have parallels in other Deësis icons; at times they are substituted by two prophets.

2. Doula Mouriki, "A Deësis Icon in the Art Museum," *Record of the Art Museum, Princeton University*, 27, 1 (1968), pp. 13–28, with older bibliography and examples. For more recent discussions, see Th. von Bogyay, "Deësis," *RbK*, 1, cols. 1178–1186; Christopher Walter, "Two Notes on the Deësis," *Revue des études byzantines*, 26 (1968), pp. 311–336 (When these articles appeared, my book on *Gregory* was in press and they could not be included in my discussions and references); Kreidl-Papadopoulos, pp. 66, 95, with bibliography and illustrations.
3. For instance, in the apse of the *diakonikon* in Lesnovo; cf. Vladimir R. Petković, *La peinture serbe du moyen-âge*, 1 (Belgrade, 1930), pl. 126; Andreas Xyngopoulos, *Mouseion Benaki, Katalogos ton eikonon* (Athens, 1936), p. 33. For the vestments, see the latest on the subject, T. Papas, *Studien zur Geschichte der Messgewänder im byzantinischen Ritus* (Miscell. Byzant. Monacensia, 3, Munich, 1965).

The Greek words on the *oraria*, which are original, appear in portrayals of angels or deacon-saints in icons of the early sixteenth century.[4]

The iconography of the feast pictures on the inside of the wings is that known from other Byzantine and post-Byzantine monuments. The Annunciation follows works of the fourteenth century, especially in the movement of the archangel and the stance of the Virgin, an iconography repeated in sixteenth-century icons. The best parallel is an icon from a *dodekaorton* in the monastery of the Grand Lavra on Mt. Athos. The Nativity, which includes the Journey of the Magi, also follows Palaeologan prototypes; once more, parallels are found in sixteenth-century icons, above all, in those attributed to Theophanes the Cretan. If such an icon is compared to the scene on the triptych, it is clear that the artist has omitted part of the composition—namely, the Annunciation to the Shepherds and the shepherd musician—in order to comply with the limitations imposed upon him by the frame.[5]

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, showing Christ in the arms of Simeon, follows an iconographic type which has prevailed since the fourteenth century and became prominent in the art of the sixteenth century. Parallels in sixteenth-century icons are many, but, once more, iconographically the composition comes close to an icon from the same set of the *dodekaorton*. Not only are the stances of the figures similar, but also the architectural setting, including the apse which Simeon stands in front of.[6]

In the next scene, Christ's Baptism, the artist follows much older prototypes, which are common, however, in sixteenth-century Greek art.[7] The Entry into Jerusalem adheres also to known renderings, but the Raising of Lazarus has elements not found in Eastern iconography of Byzantine or post-Byzantine times. Mary and Martha are not at the feet of Christ. Instead they stand by the open tomb of Lazarus. As Millet has shown, this is found in Western monuments.[8]

4. Chatzidakis, *Collections suisses*, nos. 11, 61; Chatzidakis, *S. Georges*, no. 6, pl. 5.
5. Millet, *Iconographie*, pp. 78, 93ff; Chatzidakis, *Théophane*, figs. 34, 35; for the twelve feasts see Marcell Restle, "Dodekaortion," *RbK*, 1, cols. 1207–1214.
6. Chatzidakis, *Théophane*, fig. 36; for other examples, see Xyngopoulos, *Benaki*, no. 51, pp. 74, 75 with earlier bibliography.
7. Millet, *Iconographie*, pp. 170ff; Chatzidakis, *Théophane*, fig. 37.
8. Chatzidakis, *Théophane*, fig. 74; Millet, *Iconographie*, pp. 249, 255ff, fig. 229.

The remaining scenes follow, in their iconography, works of late Byzantine and post-Byzantine art. The placement of the angels in the foreground on either side of Mary in the Ascension scene is not a common rendering, but it does appear in Byzantine works of art.[9] The scene of the Anastasis, with Christ standing on the broken gates of Hell lifting Adam to his right and Eve to his left, is the type of symmetrical composition described in the *Hermeneia* and which was formalized after the fall of Constantinople.[10] It should also be pointed out that the costumes of the angels are not those commonly found in Greek iconography. For examples, the two folds around the waist of the angels in the Ascension scene constitute an Italian element, as do the gold bands which suggest two different pieces of garment, one on top of the other. These motifs are found with variations in works of Fra Angelico and other Italian masters.[11]

The physiognomies of the apostles, on the outer face of the wings, are those accepted by tradition. However, Paul's attribute of the sword is a Western element, highly unfamiliar in Byzantine iconography. It is found in works made in the West, or in works with a strong Western influence, such as in an icon in Sinai of the Crusader period and in an earlier psalter and New Testament manuscript in Sinai, codex 2123, dated 1242. Here, a long sword appears leaning against the frame in the picture of Paul. It is of special importance to note that Professor Weitzmann considered the icon and these miniatures as products of a Venetian atelier.[12] The form and the punching of the nimbi of the principal figures is Italian. Their form is rare but not unique. The combination of rays and flames is found nearly the same in Italian works as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[13]

9. Sotiriou, *Sinai*, 1, fig. 93; cf. Klaus Wessel, "Himmelfahrt," *RbK*, 2, cols. 1224ff.
10. Gabriel Millet, *Monuments de l'Athos*, 1, *La peinture* (Paris, 1927), pls. 121, 1, 197, 1.
11. John Pope-Hennessy, *Fra Angelico* (London, 1952), pls. 21, 38.
12. Weitzmann, *Icon-Painting*, p. 65, fig. 31; Weitzmann, *Illustrated Manuscripts at St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai* (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1973), pp. 24–25, fig. 33. Professor Weitzmann discussed the triptych and these miniatures with me in a letter. I should like to thank him here once more.
13. For examples, see: the Virgin and Child by Carlo da Camerino of the Bologna School, fourteenth century, reproduced in Dorothy Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), type 9, 2;

The conclusion that can be drawn from the discussion of the iconography is that the work follows renderings current in sixteenth-century Greek works, but with some Italianate elements. The iconography then supports the sixteenth-century date, which is actually that given by the coat-of-arms on the triptych, posing the question of its localization which necessitates a detailed discussion of the style.

Some stylistic diversities are seen in the central panel. The figures flanking Christ in the *Deësis* scene are elongated; they have a silhouette-like slenderness and a certain *élan* in their stance. On the contrary, the figure of Christ is disproportionately heavy. His small head is contrasted to the heavy, lower part of his body, which is formed as if to reproduce Christ's miter. The different tones of white, however, alleviate to a certain extent this impression of heaviness. The draperies of these figures are rich in folds which are treated geometrically. Around the shoulders and arms, there are curved lines but the pleats found within these areas are rectilinear and rigid. Their volume is rendered by juxtaposition of dark and light tones of the same color, red and dark red, light and dark blue, and the use of white, placed in parallel lines. This is most noticeable in the mantle of the Virgin. Another characteristic is the sudden breaking of the fold under one of the knees in order to suggest movement or the bending of the knee. While, in the case of Mary and John, the drapery falls over part of the feet, Christ's garment folds over at the hem, a very specific element found in works of the middle sixteenth century and at times more successfully rendered.[14]

The modeling of the faces, done in tones of warm red and brown with green shadows, is achieved by large luminous surfaces consisting of several very fine white highlights, best observed in the face of Christ. On John's face, the lighted areas are smaller and create greater

---

taroc cards of the Lombard School, first half of the fifteenth century, also works of Stefano da Verona or da Zevio (here in the form of a mandorla around God the Father), in Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, 7 (The Hague, 1923–1938), fig. 113; also, in frescoes by Saturnino de Gatti (?) in Aquila, Church of the Blessed Antonia, reproduced in George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting*, 2 (Florence, 1965), pp. 115, fig. 130.

14. Chatzidakis, *S. Georges*, pp. 21, 22, no. 8, pl. 6.

contrasts so that the wrinkles are stressed. John's hair is rendered in a series of thick, wavy lines in umber tones, while Christ's beard is finer and softer. The lips of all three are painted in red, the upper lip in a stronger tone—a technique applied to all figures of the side panels also. The line marking the neck of Christ is found in other Greek works of the sixteenth century, but here it has an almost "mathematical" sharpness, clearly dividing the head from the body. The feeling is that the artist either did not understand its artistic function or exaggerated it to comply with the geometric approach evident in the figure-style. It recalls similar renderings in some Greek icons probably painted in Venice in the first half or middle of the sixteenth century.[15]

Certain uncommon elements are found in the composition. The two side figures, raised on a dais, are in the foreground, while the enthroned Christ is placed in the middle-ground of the composition in order to provide room for the papal coat-of-arms and, at the same time, create a feeling of space. Possibly under the influence of Italian painting, the artist has attempted some perspective, as in the rendering of the throne, with obvious discrepancies in the execution, and in the expansion of the olive-green ground into the gold background. Some Italianate idioms are found also in the color scheme. While the colors of Mary are purple over blue, customary with Cretan painters, the colors of John are reversed, green over red as used by sixteenth-century Cretan painters who had been penetrated by Italianisms. The faces of the angels on the arch are rounder, the angularity of the drapery is softer, the lines are finer and subtler, but the expression recalls the principal figures below.

In comparing the principal figures of the central panel to those of the two apostles, certain similarities and differences become evident. The figures of the apostles are heavier and do not have the elongation of the figures on the central panel; their feet are firm on the ground. The principle of the geometrical, linear treatment of the drapery is similar, but more exaggerated in its execution. The design is energetic, forceful, and bold; the lines are sharp and thick. The broken zig-zag, brown contours of the figures are stronger here than in any other part of the triptych. The extreme linearism and the subjection of the folds to a

15. *Ibid.*, nos. 19, 22, pl. 10.

geometric rhythm in general remind one of works done by Greek artists about the middle of the sixteenth century in Venice.[16]

The faces of the apostles are painted similarly to the face of John the Baptist, but, once more, with greater exaggeration. The contrasts between light and dark areas are stronger here; the effect reflects the dematerialized light that illuminates Palaeologan faces and which was carried down to the middle of the sixteenth century through the works of the great Theophanes the Cretan. The linear treatment, however, is so strong that a closer relation to Theophanes' work cannot be suggested.[17]

The same hand is recognizable in the *dodekaorton* scenes. The overall treatment of the drapery shows the same mannerisms (compare, for example, Peter in the Ascension scene with the large figure of Peter on the left wing, or the Virgin's folds to those of hers in the *Deësis* scene). The angularity of lines, however, is less exaggerated here (compare, for example, the two principal apostles in the Dormition scene). The faces follow the same principles encountered in the *Deësis* scene, but with greater simplification. The faces of Mary, angels and Christ are characterized by soft modeling, most noticeable in the Raising of Lazarus. The faces of the apostles and other personages are treated in a system of sharp highlights that constitute a simplification of the system followed in the larger faces of John the Baptist, Peter, and Paul. Certainly the small size of the figures has necessitated the simplification of the general stylistic principles. Other features are noticeable because they are independent of this justification: Christ's face in every scene is distinguished by a low forehead, in contrast to a high forehead which is depicted in the Transfiguration. Simeon's figure also stands out for its heaviness which reflects a good model of the art of the Palaeologan period.

Yet such differences are not unusual in works of the same master, as the works of Theophanes himself prove.[18] The use of different

16. *Ibid.*, no. 26, pl. 12.
17. For contrast, cf. Peter and Paul in icons in the Stavroniketa monastery; see: Chatzidakis, *Théophane*, figs. 64, 65.
18. *Ibid.*, figs. 72, 73.

models can explain this diversity; this seems to be the case with the unknown master of the triptych. Possibly his models were icons of a larger size. In copying them, the artist was forced by the lack of space either to omit or cut down figures, as he has done in the Anastasis and Dormition, or to eliminate parts of the composition, as with the Nativity and probably with the Raising of Lazarus. The rocky hill with the tomb of Lazarus, normally found in works of the sixteenth century, does not appear here.

Hills, architectural backgrounds, basilica-like buildings, ciboria with Greek capitals, finials, and acanthus leaves are common in Greek works of the sixteenth century.[19] One important characteristic is the inclination of the hills, arch-like, towards the center of the composition and their flame-like effect. The first element is found in works of Theophanes and his school, in which, however, the rocks still retain their solidity. The flame-like effect appears in works of Italian masters; for example, Giovanni di Paolo (compare *St. John in the Desert*, in the Art Institute of Chicago) and later in Greek works produced in Venice. A close example is an icon of the Anastasis, now in San Giorgio dei Greci, Venice, probably executed there by a pupil of the painters Damascenus or Klotzas, which Chatzidakis dates at the end of the sixteenth century. However, the figure style and, above all, the drapery style are different in each case. The icon lacks the geometric linearism of the triptych, which definitely points to an earlier date.[20]

The stylistic analysis places the work in the middle, rather than the early part, of the sixteenth century. While it confirms the date given by the coat-of-arms (1534–1549), it narrows its limits to between 1540 and 1549. However, the discussion of style has not proven the provenance of the work. At that time, icon masters worked in Crete, Greece, the Dalmatian coast, and Italy, in particular Venice, whose Greek colony made the City of the Canals the principal European center for Greek studies and the meeting place of scholars and artists at the end of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century.[21] In general,

19. *Ibid.*, fig. 70.
20. Ernest T. DeWald, *Italian Painting, 1200–1600* (New York, 1961), p. 339, fig. 18.3; Chatzidakis, *S. Georges*, no. 86, pl. 59.
21. For the development of Byzantine painting after the fall of Constantinople; see Xyngopoulos, *Schediasma*; for the Cretan School, which is a post-Byzantine

works of these areas have many characteristics in common. Nevertheless, comparisons made above revealed greater affinities of the triptych with works done in Venice than in Greece. If the results of the discussion of the iconography are now considered, Venice becomes the most likely place of its origin. In all probability, it is the work of a master who worked in Venice and who was able to combine the Greek tradition with Italianate elements, as so many other masters of the time had done prior to the coming of Damascenus. A number of names of Greek artists working in Venice at the time are known, but insufficient works have been identified so far to enable one to relate the triptych to a specific artist.[22]

Icons in the form of a triptych have a long history in Byzantine art, and were common during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so that the present one is not an exception.[23] It remains, however, unique because of the presence of the papal coat-of-arms, the suggested provenance, and the richness of its theological ideas. There is no doubt that the triptych belonged to Pope Paul III. Panofsky, who saw the work in 1955, made the suggestion that it may be a gift of the Greek Church to the Pope as a token of gratitude for his interference on their behalf in their dispute with the Latin Church, which took place in Venice. If this fascinating idea could be substantiated, then the proof for the provenance of the icon would be furnished, for it would be natural for the Greeks of Venice to have commissioned one of their artists to paint the work. Unfortunately, Panofsky's suggestion cannot be proven. Anyone who reads of Pope Paul's role in the arts is astonished

---

manifestation, the works of Chatzidakis are fundamental, see *S. Georges*, pp. xxxvii, with references to his earlier works, of which the most important is his *Euphrosynos*, and, more recently, his *Théophane*. See also Gouma-Peterson, *Crete, Venice*, with excellent references, and, more recently by her, "The Dating of Creto-Venetian Icons: A Reconsideration in Light of New Evidence," *Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin*, 30 (1972), pp. 12–21. Cf. Kreidl-Papadopoulos, pp. 58ff. The cultural importance of the Greek colony in Venice is thoroughly discussed by Deno Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), and *Byzantine East and Latin West* (New York, 1966).

22. Chatzidakis, *S. Georges*, pp. 17, 18.

23. See the sixteenth-century triptych with a Great *Deësis* in Berlin, and the triptych by Klotzas in Venice and Patmos in Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, no. 1, p. 15; Chatzidakis, *S. Georges*, pl. 39; *Patmos- Parousia, Monastery of St. John Theologian* (Patmos, 1968), color reproduction on the cover.

by his humanistic education. He was one of those popes who, in their hours of leisure, "delighted in Greek and poetry." Considered one of the great patrons of the Vatican Library, he made searches abroad for rare Latin and Greek manuscripts, as among the Maronites of Lebanon in 1542 and in southern Italy in 1548. He entrusted the restoration of Greek manuscripts in the Vatican Library to Greeks, and had close connection with the Greek scholar Nicholas Sophianos, who dedicated works to the Pope. In light of all this evidence, it is not surprising at all if Paul III had a Greek triptych in his collection, made specifically for him.[24]

The text of the Gospels (which Panofsky suggested may refer to the exalted position of the Pope) is not original. It was painted over (this is true also for the inscriptions identifying the main personages) at another time, probably in the eighteenth century when the triptych passed into Russian hands, not an unusual event with portable objects. It is possible that it repeats the earlier, original text, which occurs often in representations of Christ Pantocrator, or in a *Deësis*. Its contents cannot, therefore, be related exclusively to the Pope. Nor should one attempt to interpret the presence of the two apostles as an indication of an agreement between the Latin and the Greeks, each one of the apostles representing one of the Churches. The theme is common and appears in Byzantine icons of this, earlier, and later periods. A specific historical event need not be related necessarily to the meaning of the icon.[25]

The two apostles have always been considered the founders of the Universal Church. And here, as in other cases, the Church of the New Testament is represented by the great events of the Incarnation, the Great Feasts. The Universal Church, which in the liturgy glorifies the Lord and celebrates his coming (the censering angels singing the

24. Ludwig Pastor, *The History of the Popes*, 12, 3rd ed. (London, 1950), pp. 523ff, 547.

25. For examples, see Sotiriou, *Sinai*, 1, figs. 157, 217 (icons of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries); for later examples, a *Deësis* by Nikolaos Ritzos, now in Sarajevo, and an icon in the Calligas collection, Athens, see Djurić, *Yougoslavie*, no. 52 with bibliography; Embiricos, *École crétoise*, fig. 124; also the *Deësis*-icon in Nicosia, Cyprus, reproduced in Papageorghiou, no. 183; cf. Kreidl-Papadopoulos, pp. 90–93.

Sanctus refer to this), joins the Mother of God and John the Baptist in prayer for mankind. In this Great *Deësis*, the Church intercedes so that everyone may be included among the blessed, who are invited by Christ to inherit the Kingdom of God prepared for them from the foundation of the world. The iconographic elements conveying these theological ideas are found in other icons of the period. But no other single example of a Great *Deësis* is known to me which comprises all elements found in the present work.[26] One can only find as parallels two rows of icons, a Great *Deësis* and a series of feast pictures in an iconostasis which most likely has been the unknown master's model. Such a comparison gives another dimension to our understanding of the triptych, which emerges as work worthy of a papal owner.

The Elvehjem Art Center triptych is a remarkable piece; and when more works of that period become available and better known, it will take a special place among them. The triptych, after cleaning and restoration, is in excellent condition. The central panel, which was severely damaged because of the separation and worm infestation of three wooden planks on which it was painted, was removed and transferred to a balsawood and masonite support.

26. Usually a Great *Deësis* on icons, in addition to the principal figures, includes Church fathers and saints, apostles, or angels. For examples, see Sotiriou, *Sinai*, 1, figs. 193, pp. 213–217; Athanasios Papageorghiou, *Ikonen aus Zypern* (Munich, Geneva, Paris, 1969), pp. 78ff, 109; also, notes 23, 25 above.

2. The Nativity

Russian (Moscow School?)
Late 16th or early 17th century
Tempera on wood
35 × 28 3/4 inches (88.9 × 73 cm.)
Provenance: Chludov Monastery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.2

The representation follows the traditional iconography of the Nativity theme, as developed in the Middle Byzantine period under the influence of the liturgy and the festival cycle.[1] The nucleus of the composition is formed by the Mother of God who is dressed in a terracotta-red mantle reclining on a mattress originally painted in red. Behind Mary and in a yellow-ochre crib lies the infant Christ. The ass and the ox watching over him are painted in white and dark brown, forming a beautiful contrast to the darkness of the cave. At the same time, they reflect the color of the doll-like, elongated infant who is not wrapped in swaddling clothes but in a simple white garment. This is an interesting iconographic detail found in other Russian icons of the sixteenth century.[2] The Three Magi, dressed in olive-green, light and dark blue, and terracotta robes, approach the crib from the right. On the opposite side stands an old shepherd in dark-blue garb. He is pointing to the star appearing in the sky, between the peaks of two jagged hills framed by adoring angels painted in dark blue-green, red, and brown.

The pensive Joseph is wrapped in an olive-green himation and sits on a rock on the left side in the foreground. The bathing of the Christ child takes place next to Joseph, in the center, and a young shepherd blowing a horn stands to the extreme right. The maid, pouring the dark blue water into a basin, strikes a forceful note in her vermilion robe. Stylized trees in terracotta-brown and bushes drawn in wavy

1. For the iconography and meaning of the Nativity composition, see: Millet, *Iconographie*, pp. 93ff; Ristow, *Geburt*; Galavaris, *Gregory*, pp. 82ff, with bibliography; Galavaris, *Elijah-Nativity*, no. 176; for more complete bibliography see "Geburt Christi," *LcI*, 2, cols. 101ff.
2. See, for example, an icon in the Popoff collection in Recklinghausen-Ikonen-museum, inv. no. 855, reproduced in Skrobucha, *Sammlung Popoff*, p. 29.

Number 2

black lines are scattered between the figures on the rocky hills painted in dark yellow-ochre. The sky above the hills is in gold. Gold, now flaked, was also used for the outer frame, the narrow inner border of the panel being painted in a dark, olive-green color.

There is a simplification in the rendering of the figures, a linear treatment most noticeable in the striking profiles. These figures reflect the faces of Russian peasants. The symmetrical arrangement of the elements in the composition finds parallels in icons of the Moscow School of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century.[3] The landscape, the stylized bushes drawn in a graphic manner and the spiral motifs on the edges of the rocks, however, reflect the Novgorodian tradition.[4] On the other hand, the colors lack the vibrancy and strength of Novgorodian works and make an attribution of the icon to this school impossible. The terracotta-red and the blue are heavy. The brown faces are rather monotonous in their expression, the bodies are flat, and the drawing is over-simplified. These stylistic characteristics point to an artist who was aware of the artistic trends in Moscow, but was also familiar with the "Northern manner" of painting.[5]

The size of the icon indicates that it must have come from the festival tier of an iconostasis of a medium-size church. The icon has been restored and is in good condition. A crack in the center and another one in front of the angel on the right have necessitated minor retouchings in those areas.

3. Examples in Skrobucha, *Meisterwerke*, pls. XLVI, XLVIII; Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 244.
4. Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, no. 9, icon of the seventeenth century.
5. Cf. the graphic style of an icon in the "Northern Manner" reproduced in Antonova, *Korina*, fig. 80; for the landscape, cf. another icon in a private collection in Brussels, reproduced in Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*, no. 203.

Number 3

3. Christ's Descent into Hell

Russian (Moscow School)
Early 17th century
Tempera on wood
12 1/2 × 11 1/2 inches (37.7 × 29.2 cm.)
Provenance: Chludov Monastery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.10

Christ is portrayed in the center of the icon within an oval, bluish aureole of light, made transparent by golden rays issuing from him. He wears radiant garments of brown hues, the thin rays being painted in gold. He is trampling on the broken doors of Hell. With his right hand, he raises Adam from a gray sarcophagus. Adam, dressed in a dark, olive-green chiton with white highlights and a deep-red himation, gazes at Christ. Eve, below and to Adam's left, wearing a vermilion-red garment, rises with hands joined in prayer. A fragment of the door of Hell painted in gold is seen beside her. It balances another one on the opposite side. Behind Adam, coming out of the dark cave of Hell and partially hidden behind one another, are the Old Testament saints. In his left hand, Christ holds part of a broken scroll, the rest being held by the dark-greenish figure of Satan, who, depicted in dark gray, emerges out of the mouth of Hell on the extreme left of the composition. Three other small demons are in the mouth of Hell.

The scene takes place in the depths of the earth, in a gaping dark abyss, shown as an opening between stylized rocks of brown and ochre with irregularly placed highlights. Similar rocks appear on the left and central part in the foreground. The jagged rocks in the upper part of the composition are set against an ivory sky which originally was yellow ochre. This must also have been the original color of the frame of the picture.

Following the apocryphal story of Nicodemus, New Testament allusions to the subject (Acts 11:14–39; I Peter II:19), and texts of divine services like the Easter Canon of John of Damascus, the theme declares Christ's victory over Hell, the deliverance of Adam, and the preaching of the Gospel in Hell so that salvation in Christ may be possible for those who died before the Incarnation. This is not the

historical representation of the Resurrection of Christ known from the narrative of the Gospels. It is the Descent into Hell, or the Harrowing of Hell, known in extant Byzantine examples since the eighth and ninth centuries. In the middle Byzantine period, the theme developed variations; it is seen in monumental art, manuscripts, and icons.[1]

In Russian icon painting, the most predominant variation is that of Christ lifting Adam from the grave, with Eve being either next to him in prayer or represented to the left of Christ, balancing the figure of Adam on the opposite side.[2] Christ can have a cross in his hands or a closed scroll. The demons are portrayed in the foreground in the gaping abyss, usually chained by angels, an iconography known since the Late Byzantine period.

The Elvehjem Art Center icon does not follow one specific type and herein lies its originality. It seems that the artist has blended two different models. One portrays Christ lifting up Adam with Eve rising beside Adam. Another depicts Christ lifting Adam and Eve on either side of him. The figure of Eve found in the second model was replaced by Satan and the motif of the broken scroll was introduced. These changes, suggested here, become clear if this icon is compared to others of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[3]

Usually, the gates of Hell are shown in the form of two crossed doors. The artist of the Elvehjem icon has multiplied this element by adding two more door-leaves—one partly hidden by Eve—whose form and ornament recall doors of iconostases depicted in seventeenth-century Russian icons.[4] The representation of Hell as the open mouth of a monster is also found in late Russian icons, and is related to representa-

1. See Galavaris, *Gregory*, pp. 70ff with bibliography; also "Auferstehung Christi," *LcI*, 1, cols. 201ff.
2. For examples, see Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 188; Onasch, *Icons*, pl. 39.
3. Cf., for example, a Moscow icon of the first half of the seventeenth century in West Berlin, an icon of the Cretan school of the same date in East Berlin, and a late sixteenth-century Moscow icon in Recklinghausen; Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, pl. 21; Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, fig. on p. 71; Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), fig. 244.
4. See Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), nos. 50, 347.

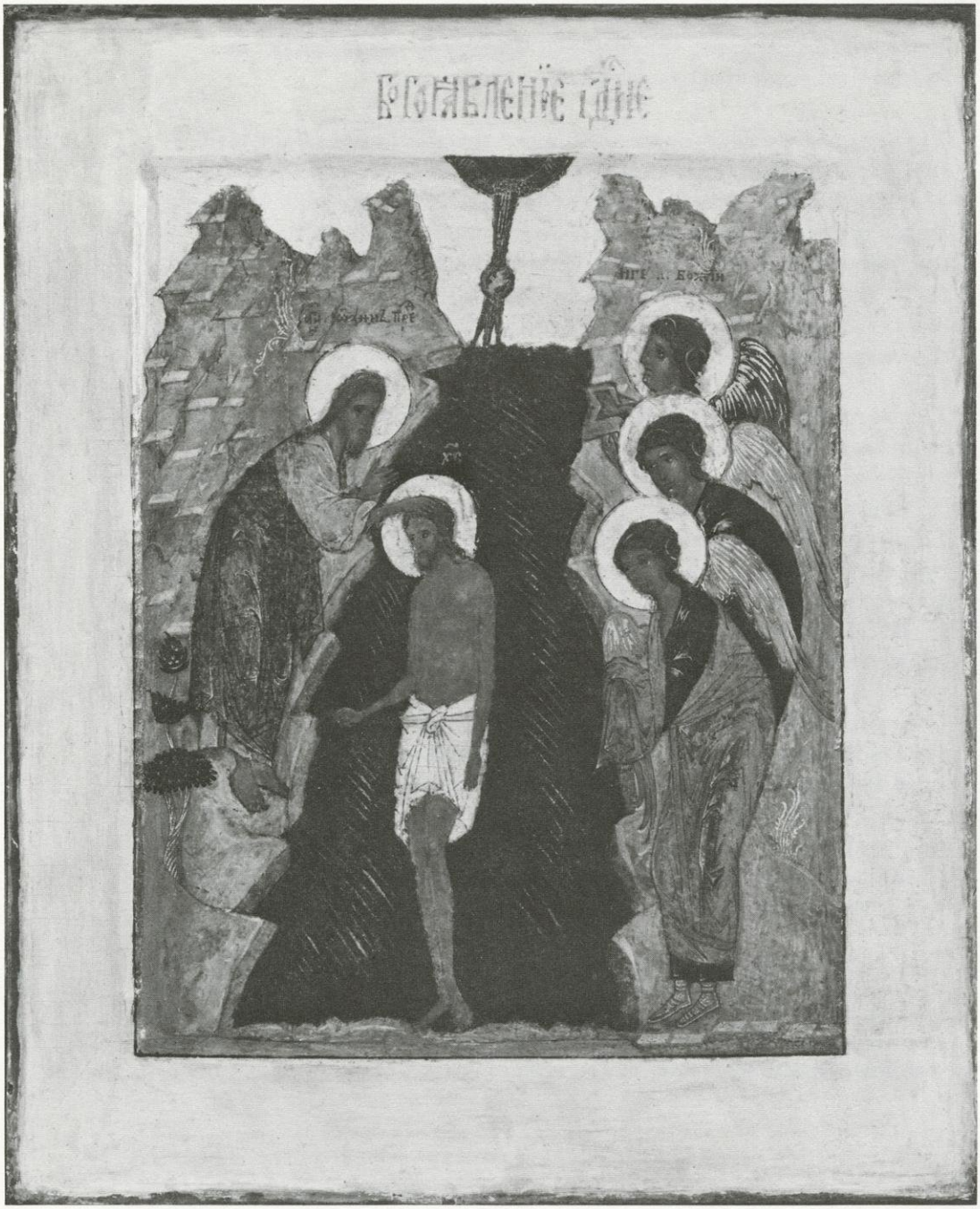
tions of the Last Judgment.[5] It is also found in early seventeenth-century icons depicting the theme of Christ's Presentation in the Temple, where it also has a symbolic significance.[6]

These iconographic comparisons suggest the attribution of the icon to the early part of the seventeenth century and probably to the school of Moscow. The style supports this conclusion. The irregular highlights on the brown faces with the stress on the cheekbones, a reflection of the followers of Daniil Chernyi, Rublev's companion, the use of gold for Christ's draperies and the doors, and the somber colors—all point to an artist who followed the main principles of the school of Moscow at the turn of the sixteenth century.[7]

The icon is also important for its concepts. It is richer in meaning than other icons with the same theme portraying Christ holding a scroll, symbol of his preaching in Hell in accordance with the words of Peter (I Peter 3:19): "He went and preached unto the spirits in prison." This icon does not simply render Christ's deliverance of Adam and the righteous ones from the bonds of Hell, which is the main theme of the divine service on Holy Saturday in the Orthodox Church. Here, rather, Christ tears asunder, breaks the bonds of Hell—the "sentence" that condemned men to everlasting Hell.

The icon is in very good condition. There are no inscriptions. Christ's nimbus is restored and so are the sky and the frame. Once the icon must have had a metal cover, a *basma*, which covered the border and the sky, as traces of nail holes are still visible. The format and size suggest that originally the icon may have been part of the festival tier of a chapel iconostasis, possibly coming later into private hands, at which time it received a metal frame.

5. See the icon in Autenried, Germany, reproduced in Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, p. 157; cf. Klaus Wessel, "Hades," *RbK*, 2, cols. 946ff.
6. See the icon in Berlin, Moscow School, Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, no. 10, p. 20; other examples in Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.
7. Cf. Rice, *Russian Icons*, p. 20, and pl. XLIII.



Number 4

4. The Baptism of Christ

Russian (Northern manner)
Late 16th or early 17th century
Tempera on wood
13 1/2 × 11 1/4 inches (34.3 × 28.6 cm.)
Provenance: Pecherskaya Lavra, Kiev
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.9

The Baptism of Christ is depicted with the traditional Byzantine iconography. The elongated body of Christ in umber color is immersed in the dark blue waters of the Jordan, which seems to break out of a rocky, jagged landscape of brown-earth tones with highlights painted in gray and greenish colors. Christ wears a white loin cloth. He blesses the waters with his right hand. John the Baptist, in a brown tunic and olive-green himation, stands on the left bank of the river. He leans over Christ, places his right hand on his head, and lifts up his left hand with outstretched fingers and thumb, a gesture of readiness and devotion or, according to other interpretations, a gesture expressing John's awe, as suggested by Syrian and Greek texts.[1] Near the feet of John is a stylized dark brown tree, a reference to the preaching of John, who is often accompanied in other icons by an axe. Opposite the Baptist, on the other side of the river bank, stand three angels, one behind the other. They are bowing to Christ, worshipping him. The first angel wears a dark-green tunic and a vermilion himation. A dark-green robe is also worn by the second angel. Their wings in lighter brown tones are adorned with golden lines. The flesh tones for all figures are burnt umber with touches of warmer brown and greenish lines. They have no brilliancy. Their hair is of a similar color but darker in tone. Inscriptions, in full or abbreviated, naming the persons are in terracotta-red or cinnabar-red.

On the upper part of the composition and against an ivory-white sky, retouched, there is a segment of sky of two different hues of dark green

1. Ristow, *Baptism*, p. 16; for a discussion of the iconography, see Millet, *Iconographie*, pp. 170ff; for recent bibliography and new material, see Galavaris, *Gregory*, pp. 87ff; also "Taufe Jesu," *LcI*, 4, cols. 247ff.

from which rays emanate. They include a medallion with the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove descending upon the head of Christ. The dove, in accordance with the Gospels, points to the arrival of Christ and identifies him as the Son of God who had re-opened the heavens for man.[2]

The ivory-white frame of the icon is not of the same date as the central panel. The icon was transferred and inserted into a new panel at a later date, at which time the inscription on top identifying the subject was written (see below Cat. nos. 5, 6). Traces of gold leaf appear on the nimbi and the sky and on parts of the frame. Possibly this was added when the restoration of the panel took place.

2. Ristow, *Baptism*, p. 17; Ouspensky, Lossky, pp. 167, 168.

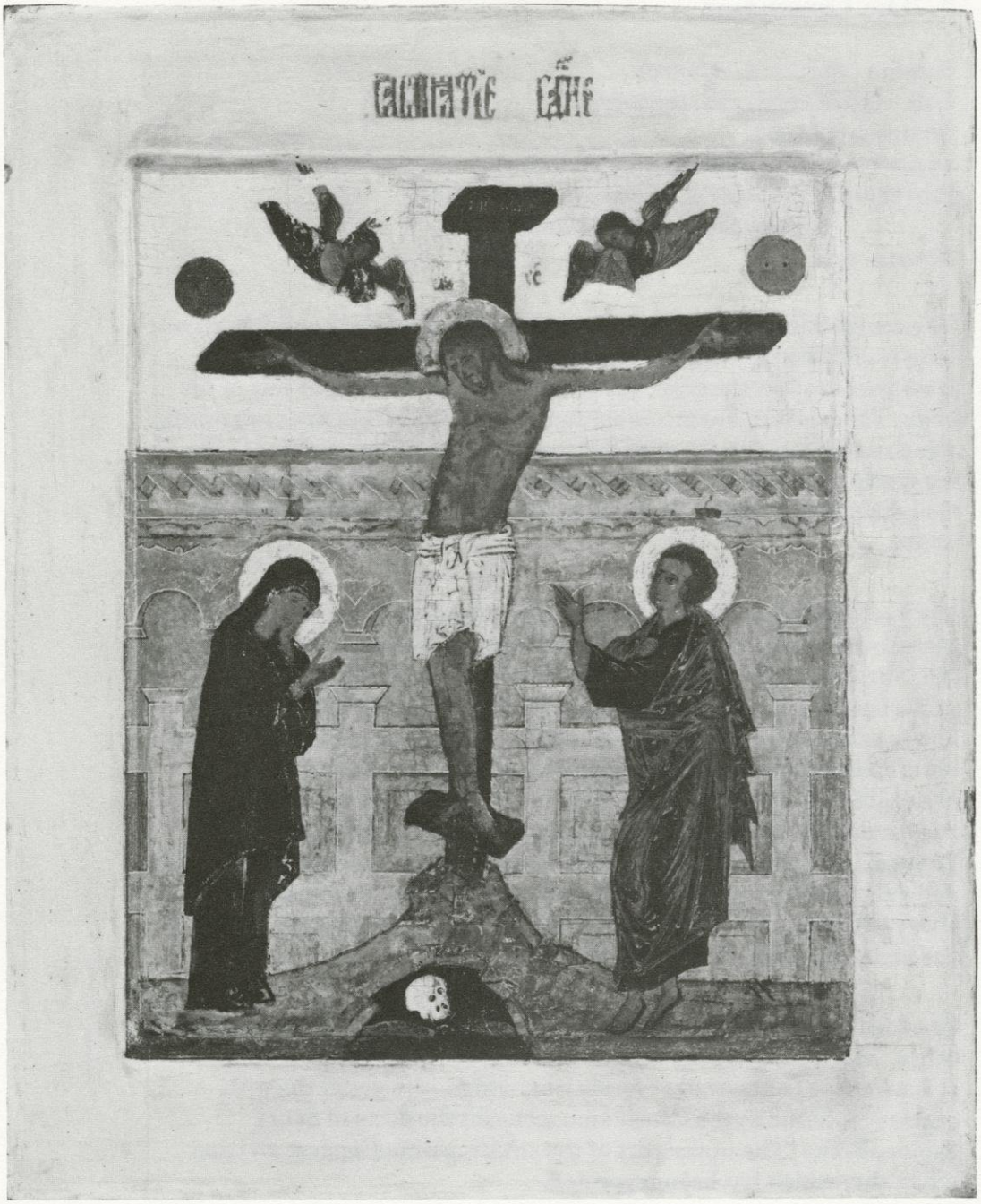
5. The Crucifixion

Russian (Northern manner)
Late 16th or early 17th century
Tempera on wood
13 9/16 × 11 1/4 inches (34.5 × 28.6 cm.)
Provenance: Probably Pecherskaya Lavra, Kiev
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.11

The composition here is abbreviated to its essential parts and follows a long-established iconographic tradition. The crucified Christ is portrayed dead on the cross. His head is turned to the right side of his body. The body, in burnt-umber tones with still darker hues suggesting some anatomical details, with its bleeding wound, also inclines to the right side. The cross is erected on the olive-green, rocky summit of Golgotha, below which, in a dark cavern, is Adam's skull painted in white.

Mary is standing on the left touching her cheek with her left hand in a gesture of sorrow, and with her right hand she points to her crucified son. She wears a dark purple mantel with a dark blue-green tunic underneath. John the Evangelist, the beloved disciple of Jesus, stands on the other side of the cross. He is dressed in a dark-green tunic and a vermilion-red himation lined in green. His right hand lies on his breast, his left points to Christ. The colors of the drapery, the linear treatment, and the flesh tones recall corresponding elements in the Baptism icon, Cat. no. 4. Two half-figure, mourning angels in vermilion and dark-green garments with occasional gold lines are represented above the cross. The angel on the left has been retouched. The sun and the moon complete this part of the composition.

The scene takes place against an architectural background of yellow ochre, which is conceived of in an ornamental, rhythmical manner. It is meant to be the wall of Jerusalem, which, already in the fifth century, is found in the Crucifixion scene on the doors of Santa Sabina, Rome. The upper part of the cross is painted against an ivory-white sky, which has been repainted.



Number 5

The composition is balanced and sober. The figures of Christ and the Virgin are elongated, the latter being portrayed in silhouette form. By comparison, the figure of John, also in silhouette, is somewhat heavier and the folds of his drapery are more decorative than functional, lacking organic unity. The linear treatment predominates with an overall decorative effect seen particularly in the rendering of the background. The ornamental and rhythmical values of the composition can best be understood if the icon is compared to other examples depicting the theme.[1]

The dogmatic meaning of the theme and the place that the cross holds in the ritual of the Church is too well known to be discussed here. It should be pointed out, however, that while the principal figures derive from the accounts of the Gospels, the mourning angels point to liturgical influences upon the iconography of the Crucifixion. The skull of Adam comes from an apocryphal source which stated that Adam was buried under Golgotha, "the place of the skull" (John 19:17). Its adoption by Christian iconography was to stress the dogmatic meaning of the scene. The Crucifixion means not only victory over death, but, specifically, the redemption of the first Adam by the blood of Christ who is the new Adam (Romans 5:12–21; I Corinthians 15:22, 45–49).[2]

The icon is in good condition. At some unknown time, the central part was transferred and inserted into a new panel. The inscription on top in red, identifying the subject, was added as well as gold leaf to the sky and the nimbi. Only traces of this gold are visible today. The sizes of both the outer frame and of the central panel are nearly identical with those of the Baptism icon, Cat. no. 4.

1. Cf. a sixteenth-century icon in Oslo reproduced in Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 182; another one in Onasch, *Icons*, pl. 106; for the iconography of the Crucifixion, see, Millet, *Iconographie*, pp. 396ff; also "Kreuzigung Christi," *LcI*, 2, cols. 606ff.
2. For the meaning of the theme, see Alois Grillmayer, *Der Logos am Kreuz* (Munich, 1965) with earlier bibliography; Hans Biederman, *Die Passion* (Recklinghausen, 1958); cf. also Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 184.

Number 6

6. Pentecost

Russian (Northern manner)
Late 16th or early 17th century
Tempera on wood
13 9/16 × 11 1/2 inches (34.5 × 29.2 cm.)
Provenance: Possibly Pecherskaya Lavra, Kiev
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.12

The descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–13), commemorated by the Church on the day of the Feast of Pentecost, is depicted here in its usual iconography which became current in the middle Byzantine period.[1] The twelve apostles, identified by inscriptions in red and arranged in a semicircle, are seated on a *synthronon* painted in light olive-green. Peter and Paul are facing one another at the top. Between them is an empty seat, the place of the invisible head of the Church, Christ. The apostles hold scrolls in their hands, symbolic of their gift of the Holy Spirit. They are dressed in tunics and himatia, which range from vermilion-red to red-brown, burnt umber, yellow-ochre, green, and blue-green. The flesh tones are dark brown with green touches and occasional tones of warm red. Below, enclosed in the semicircle at the center of the composition, is a personification of the cosmos. An old man dressed in a dark purple imperial garb wears a crown of gold and holds in his hands a light-yellow cloth with twelve folded, white scrolls on it. An inscription in Church Slavonic, written against a dark background, reads in translation as follows:

A man made in the image of God is now possessed by the sins of Adam. The entire world is plunged into the darkness of disbelief. Before this, man was clothed in a royal mantle; now he wears Satan's. The imperial crown is on the man because sin reigns in the world. In his hand, man holds the priestly veil which is the fruition of knowledge and enlightenment of the world.

Two rectangular towers, one on either side, and parts of walls complete the background of the composition. They are painted in olive-green

1. For bibliography, see "Pfingsten," *LcI*, 3 cols. 415ff.

of a darker tone than the green of the semicircle, terracotta-red and brown, against an ivory-white sky. The background is a later restoration; the segment of sky with rays of light descending upon the apostles, found in other Pentecost icons and indicating the baptism of the Holy Spirit, is no longer there. Probably during the same restoration, gold leaf was added, of which some traces are visible. The color and the treatment of the faces and drapery are similar to those of the two icons described above, Cat. nos. 4, 5.

Although the icon follows the traditional iconography and expresses the ecclesiological meaning of the festival of the Pentecost, it has a special interest because of the inscription explaining the role of the personified cosmos. The present inscription shows some important variations from the published literary versions which are known to us, especially from seventeenth-century sources, in that the crown of sin is identified with the imperial crown while the symbol of enlightenment becomes a priestly veil. The implications of these associations, pointing to a specific conflict between Church and State, cannot be discussed here.[2]

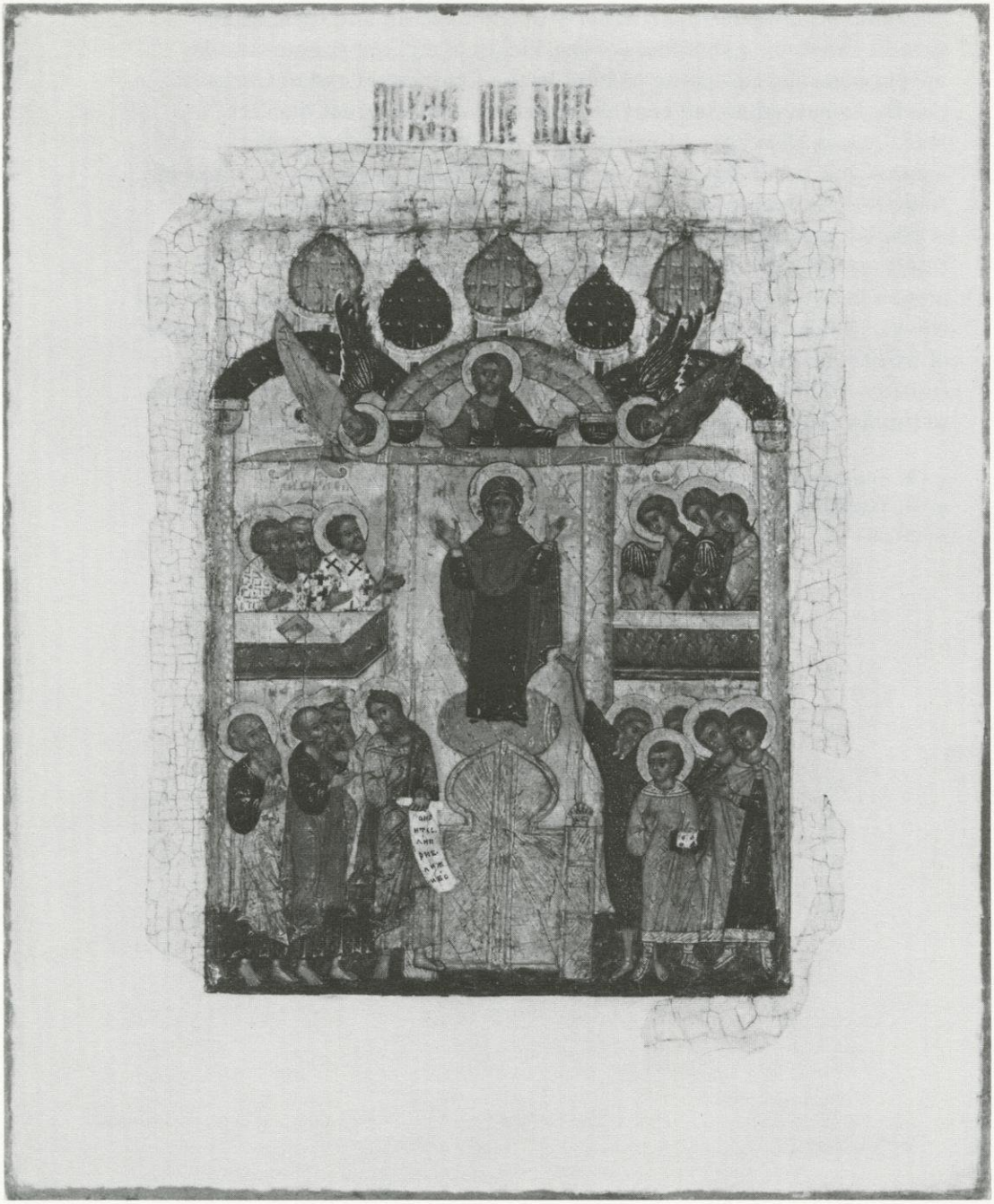
The icon has been cleaned and restored. It has been inserted into a panel sometime after its completion and, likewise, the inscription on top identifying the subject is later. The panel is also nearly identical in size to the two others; the minor discrepancies are of no significance since all three panels are inserts.

All three icons (Cat. nos. 4, 5, 6) are related stylistically to one another. They have common characteristics in the color tones and in the treatment of faces and drapery. A common stylistic feature, a very specific one, is to be seen on the faces which have been painted ochre with green and umber shading; two white lines have been painted at the corner of the eye, a white point on the nose and chin, and one or two similar lines on the neck. The eyes are bead-like and the feet are drawn in a dark, thick contour. The function of the folds is unclear, tending to be decorative. This is especially true of the Baptism and Crucifixion panels. These similarities indicate that all three icons are products of the same hand. Some of these characteristics are also found in another icon in the collection, Cat. no. 7, but the differences point to a another artist trained, however, in the same manner of painting.

2. Cf. another version translated and quoted in Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 209.

The elongated figures, particularly in the Baptism and Crucifixion panels, the sloping shoulders of the Virgin Mary, her silhouette-like appearance, the tip-toeing of John in the Crucifixion and of Christ in the Baptism scenes—all are reflections of works of great masters, Rublev and Dionysius in particular.[3] But other elements argue against any possibility of the attribution of these works to the School of Moscow. For example, the stance of John in the Crucifixion scene, notwithstanding his tip-toeing position, is uncertain; the overall linear-graphic treatment, the regularly jagged hills with the use of arrows between the horizontal highlights, and the dark-green colors and the vermilions point to a relation with the so-called "Northern manner" of painting in the second half of the sixteenth or early seventeenth century.[4] These three icons probably formed part of a set that belonged to the festival tier of an iconostasis of a chapel or small-size church.

3. Cf. relevant examples in Onasch, *Icons*, figs. 107, 108, 110.
4. Cf. Wulff, Alpatov, *Denkmäler*, figs. 78–79; Onasch, *Icons*, figs. 77, 104, and below, no. 7.



Number 7

7. The Virgin of the Mantle *(Pokrov)*

Russian (Northern manner)
Late 16th century
Tempera on wood
13 1/2 × 11 1/8 inches (34.3 × 28.3 cm.)
Provenance: Pecherskaya Lavra, Kiev
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.8

This icon represents a miracle that took place in Constantinople in the tenth century, accounted in the *Life of St. Andrew the Fool in Christ.*[1] Andrew (died 956) and his disciple Epiphanius received a vision in the Blachernae Church, where the mantle, or *maphorion*, and the girdle of the Virgin were preserved. The miracle is described briefly as follows: A woman, accompanied by apostles and saints, proceeded towards the center of the church in great majesty. After she had prayed in front of an altar, she took off her veil and, holding it, spread it over all those present in the church. Although only Andrew and his disciple saw the vision, everyone felt Mary's invisible protection. The Church, in order to commemorate the event of the invisible protection of the Mother of God, established the Festival of the Mantle, in Russian *Pokrov*, to be celebrated on the first of October.

Unknown in Byzantine iconography, the theme was popular in Russian art and was considered to represent the ideal image of the Church uniting all the faithful in prayer.[2] In the present rendering, the Virgin is seen standing on a small dark-red cushion, which hovers in the air. In earlier and more accurate representations of the theme, the cushion is a small cloud. Mary wears a dark-purple mantle over a dark blue-green tunic. Two angels flying downwards hold a dark-red

1. *PG*, 111, cols 848–849. A study of the *Life of St. Andrew the Fool* is being prepared by Professor John Wortley of the University of Manitoba; cf. "A Note on the *Vita Sancti Andreae Sali*," *Byzantion*, 39 (1969), pp. 204–208.
2. Louis Petit, *Bibliographie des acolouthies grecques* (Brussels, 1926), pp. 148ff; R. D. Lathoud, "Le thème iconographique du 'Pokrov' de la Vierge," in *L'art byzantin chez les slaves, 2ème recueil dédié à la memoire Th. Uspenskij* (Paris, 1932), pp. 302ff; Wulff, Alpatov, *Denkmäler*, pp. 154–156; for further bibliography, see Onasch, *Icons*, no. 5, p. 349.

veil, stretching it out in a straight, horizontal line above and behind Mary. In other versions, the veil billows over Mary. The horizontality of and the ornaments on the present veil suggest a variant in which a bishop's *omophorion* takes the place of the veil. The unknown artist of the Elvehjem Art Center icon may have had such a model. In the center and to the right above the Mother of God is a half-figure of Christ blessing with his hands. His garments are of the same color as those of Mary. On his nimbus is the inscription, *O ΩH*, "He Who Exists."

The vision occurs in the sanctuary of a church which no longer echoes Constantinople, as do earlier versions. The church reflects Russian architecture in its domes. The Virgin is hovering behind the Royal Doors of the iconostasis, which are in the foreground and are depicted in ochre-brown tones and adorned with gold lines which suggest rays of light. Four columns supporting three arches divide the sanctuary into three compartments. Mary and Christ stand in the central compartment, the angels on the upper part of the side compartments, and, below, on the left are the three hierarchs, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom. They stand praying in what seems to be the prothesis, behind a marble table on which there is a closed Gospel book. The inscription above them (*Lik Svjatitelei*, the "Holy Hierarchs") indicates that the three hierarchs represent the order of priesthood, as they do at times on icons of the Last Judgment. On the opposite side behind a balustrade, the half-figures of three angels (*Lik Angel*, the "Holy Angels") with their hands covered by their robes adore the Virgin. They represent the celestial hierarchy. Outside the sanctuary and in the foreground on the left is a group of apostles, indicated as such by an inscription, headed by John the Baptist, who holds an open scroll with the following text: "Repent ye, for the Day of Judgment is at hand." On the right side is a group of saints of which two are clearly distinguished. The old man with the shaggy beard is Andrew the Fool. He points out his vision to a figure on his left, who is dressed in a brown-red tunic and holds an open book in his left hand. The inscription on his halo (*Raman*) identifies him as Romanos Melodos, Romanos the Melodist. Behind him stands St. Epiphanius, Andrew's disciple (a nimbed head with an inscription). Fragments of an inscription (*Lik Mutch*[*enik*]) above the two young saints at the extreme right (are they Sts. George

and Demetrius?) identify them as martyrs. Parallels for the groups of saints and inscriptions are found in icons of the Last Judgment. All nimbi are in gold and are original. The front figures stand on a dark ground. With the inclusion of the order of martyrs, the image of the Church in prayer, symbolized by the composition, is now more complete.[3]

The depiction of Romanos Melodos is not related to the narrative of the miracle. A celebrated hymn-writer of the sixth century, according to tradition, Romanos was inspired by the Mother of God in composing his Christmas *kondakion* in the Blachernae Church. The Greek Church celebrates his saint's day on the first of October, the day of *Pokrov* in the Russian Church. His portrayal, therefore, in the *Pokrov* scene is the result of the influence of the rite and the festival cycle upon iconography. In more complete versions of the *Pokrov* theme, Romanos appears in the center of the composition standing on an ambo.[4]

A comparison of this icon with others depicting the miracle in greater detail shows that its composition is a reduced version of a fuller model. The simplification, however, was not the work of this particular master. A reduction of the composition to its essentials has already occurred in earlier icons. The detail of Christ blessing the veil with Mary standing under it relates to old Russian iconography, as found on the doors of the Suzdal Cathedral which dates from the last quarter of the thirteenth century.[5] Iconographically, our icon is similar to a fifteenth-century icon assigned by Kondakov to the Novgorod School.[6] Both icons depend on the same model but are not products of the same school. Neither the colors nor the figure style of this icon are those of Novgorod. Here, the brown ochre which forms the background and the red and dark-green colors are muddy. The treatment of the figures suggest a miniature-like style, as does the use of gold lines for the drapery. The light on the tip of the nose constitutes a recollection of

3. Desanka Milošević, *The Last Judgment* (Vaduz, 1964), pp. 38ff and fig. on p. 2.
4. For examples, see Onasch, *Icons*, no. 5; Ouspensky, Lossky, fig. on p. 155.
5. Schweinfurth, *Russ. Malerei*, fig. 87; Wulff, Alpatov, *Denkmäler*, pp. 154–156, fig. 63; cf. Onasch, *Icons*, no. 21.
6. Kondakov, *Russ. Ikona*, 2, fig. 35; for another Novgorodian icon with the same subject, see Kjellin, p. 100, pl XXXII; also Smirnova, *Zhivopis*, fig. 24.

Novgorodian works. But the bodies, with their narrow foreheads and their round, bead-like eyes, find their stylistic parallel in sixteenth-century works, especially those belonging to the second half of the century painted in the "Northern manner." [7]

The icon has been cleaned and is in a fair state of preservation. The ivory-colored frame and the inscription on top identifying the subject are not of the same date as the panel. The icon, for reasons of preservation, was transferred to a new wooden panel at an unknown date. The original panel, before it was transferred to the new frame, was covered partly by a *basma* extending over the frame and the sky of the composition as the still-visible traces of nails prove. When the metal casing was removed and the icon inserted into a new panel, gold leaf was added to the sky, now almost obliterated. These observations were fully confirmed when the icon was x-rayed at the University of Wisconsin.

7. Kondakov, *Russ. Ikona*, 2, fig. 41; Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 191.

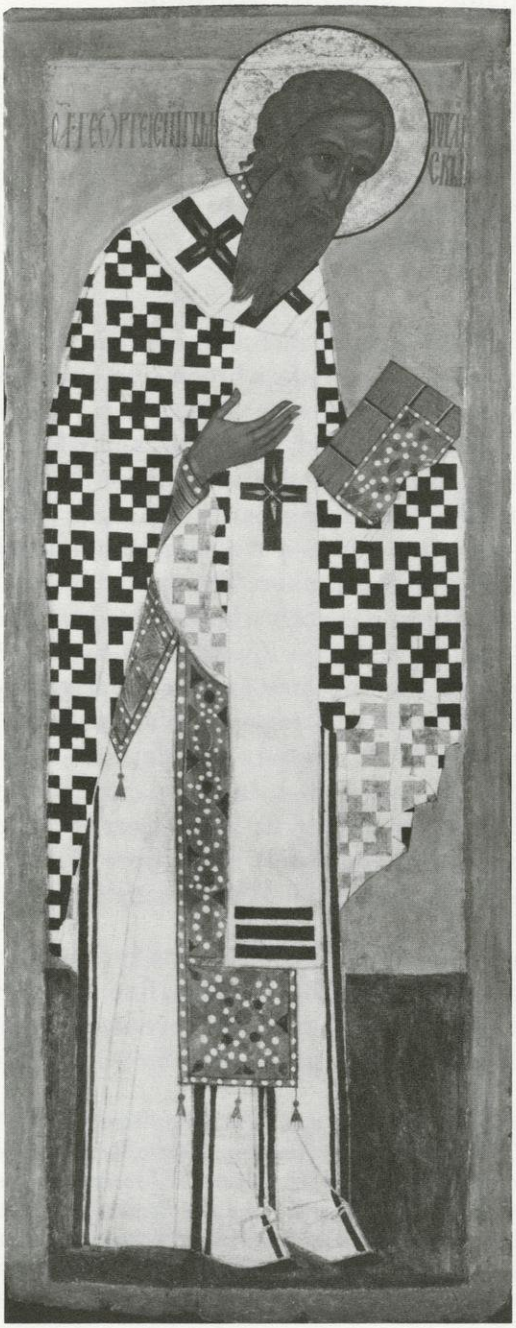
8. Saint George, Bishop of Mytilene

Russian (Rostov Veliki?)
Late 16th century
Tempera on wood
43 1/2 × 17 inches (110.5 × 43.2 cm.)
Provenance: Pecherskaya Lavra, Kiev
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.4

The icon depicts a bishop in an inclined pose. His white *omophorion* and chasuble are adorned with dark brown and black crosses. Under the chasuble in the center, one sees the ochre *epitrachelion*, the brocaded stole, painted with red, dark-blue, and white jewels. Part of the *epigonation*, also in ochre, is shown under his right arm. He holds a jewel-studded Gospel. His hands and beard are painted in dark brown, but his face was repainted at a later period, at which time gold leaf was applied to the nimbus. The saint stands on a dark olive-green ground against an ochre background on which is written in cinnabar red: *O ag[ios] Georgija Episkop Mitulinskago* (St. George, Bishop of Mytilene). The linguistic form of the inscription is that found in the *Podlinnik* of the Stroganov School under April 9, while in today's Russian calendar, he appears as Meletinskij. His depiction in the painter's manual is somewhat similar to ours. In the Greek and Russian Church, he is venerated for his support of the iconophiles during the Iconoclastic Controversy in the time of Leo the Isaurian (717–741), and for his dedication to the precepts of Christian life.[1]

The precise representation of the vestments and the drawing of the ear, which seems to follow an older design, find parallels in other Russian icons of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. A late sixteenth-century date seems probable.[2] It is difficult to

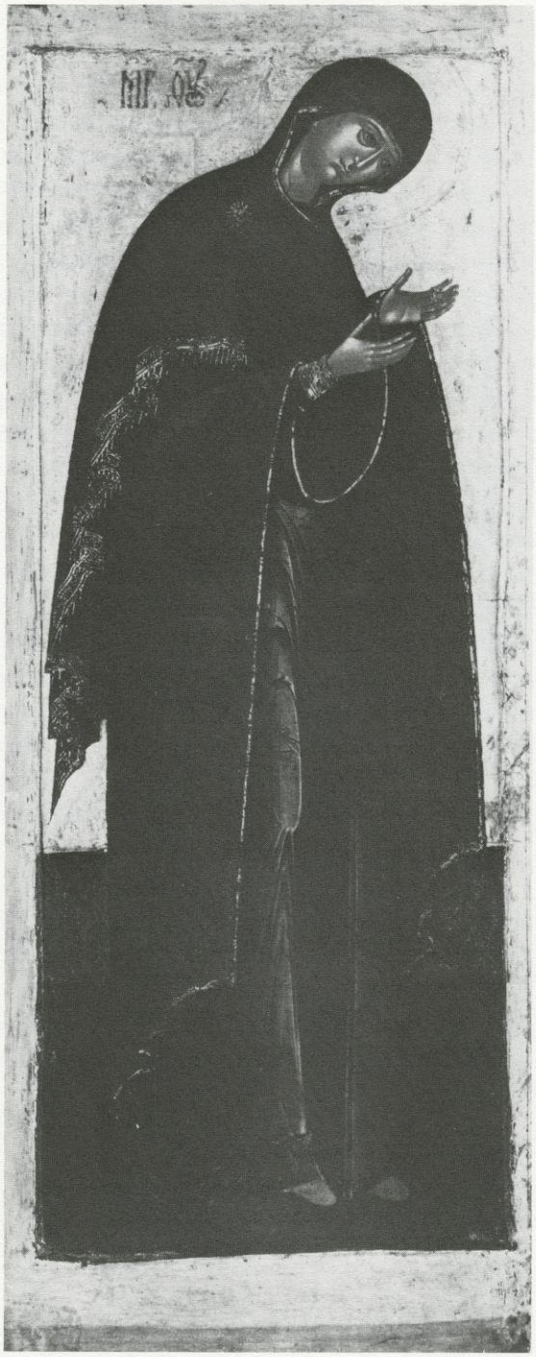
1. I owe the deciphering of the inscription to Heinz Skrobucha, whom I thank warmly. For St. George of Mytilene, see Hans-Georg Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, vol. 12, part 2, 1, Munich, 1959), pp. 559–560. For a new facsimile edition of the Stroganov-Podlinnik, see, *Ikonenmalerhandbuch der Familie Stroganow* (Munich, 1965).
2. See examples in Antonova, Mneva, 2, no. 482, fig. 27; Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), nos. 68, 191; Skrobucha, *Sammlung Popoff*, no. 43; Rice, *Russian Icons*, p. 35, pl. XXIX.



Number 8

determine the workshop of this icon. The interest taken in the vestments, the monumentality of the figure and the abstract qualities of the body (the structure of which is lost under the garments) are characteristics of the Novgorodian tradition of icon painting. But the colors do not have the vibrant tones characterizing works of that school.[3] The green and red-brown tones reflect icons of Pskov of the sixteenth century, yet the design lacks the dynamism of compositions found in such icons.[4] According to Heinz Skrobucha, the icon may perhaps be attributed to the area of Rostov Veliki or Yaroslav. Rostov was one of the oldest cities of Russia and an old metropolitan see; and Yaroslav, formerly the center of a school of painting which flourished during the first third of the thirteenth century, was still growing as a commercial city in the seventeenth century. The lightness of tone on the whole and the elegance of line would have supported such an attribution if the icon were not repainted.[5] Ignoring the impersonal expression of the face, which is a later restoration, the general effect is one of grandeur; the icon is a fine example of the effective use of ornamental patterns, of coloristic contrasts in black and white, and of harmonious combinations in ochre, brown, and red. George of Mytilene is not often represented in East Christian art and his presence here may reflect the development of a local cult. Probably the icon originally was part of the *Deësis* tier of an iconostasis in a small church. It has been cleaned and restored and, apart from the retouchings which belong to the earlier history of the icon, the panel is in excellent condition.

3. Novgorodian icons in Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 391; Rice, *Russian Icons*, p. 35, pl. XXIX; Gerhard, *Welt*, pls. XXII, XIII, and fig. 41; Kjellin, pl. V; Onasch, *Icons*, fig. 51; Lazarev, *Novgorod.*
4. Cf. examples in Onasch, *Icons*, figs. 66, 68.
5. Voyce, *Medieval Russia*, pp. 246ff; cf. earlier icons attributed to the Rostov area in Iamschikov, nos. 18, 20, 29. Mr. Skrobucha has expressed his opinion in a letter to this writer, but has not seen the original and cannot be positive.



Number 9

9. The Virgin Mary

Russian (Moscow School)
Early 17th century
Tempera on wood
27 3/4 × 10 3/4 inches (70.5 × 27.4 cm.)
Provenance: Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.6

10. St. John the Baptist

Russian (Moscow School)
Early 17th century
Tempera on wood
27 1/2 × 11 1/2 inches (69.9 × 29.2 cm.)
Provenance: Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.7

11. St. John Chrysostom

Russian (Moscow School)
Early 17th century
Tempera on wood
27 3/4 × 12 1/8 inches (70.5 × 30.8 cm.)
Provenance: Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. No. 37.1.5

The Mother of God, represented full-length, stands slightly inclined facing to the right. She wears a dark-purple, gold-bordered *maphorion* with a gold fringe over the right arm. A star decorates her right shoulder.[1] Her robe under the mantle is a bluish-green with white highlights, suggesting the body underneath. Her hands are posed in a gesture of prayer. The background and the frame are gold. The usually abbreviated inscription identifying her is in dark red. The ground on which Mary stands is painted in a dark and light mixture

1. For the meaning of the star, see: Galavaris, *Stars of the Virgin.*

Number 10

Number 11

of brown and green. The brown seems to be the result of repainting. The condition of the icon is excellent. Some parts of the frame have been retouched.

St. John the Baptist (his inscription is in cinnabar against the gold background) is the pendant to the icon of the Virgin Mary. He is facing to the left. He does not wear raiment of camel's hair, as in other representations, but a green mantle with an orange-red tunic underneath, highlighted in white, and sandals. He makes a gesture of prayer with the left hand and blesses with his right. The manner of blessing, by which the thumb touches the two last fingers instead of only the fourth, is not unusual in Russian icon painting.[2] His long umber hair falls over his shoulders, his beard is shaggy. Ground, background, and frame are similar to those in the icon of the Virgin. The present condition of the icon is excellent. The lower part of the panel has been sawed off and slightly shortened at some unknown date.

St. John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople (died 407) and writer of one of the liturgies used in the Orthodox Church, is depicted standing in an inclined pose facing to the right. He wears bishop's vestments and his name is inscribed in red on the upper left of the gold background. His white *omophorion* is adorned with three black crosses on top and three horizontal black bands (topped by three circles) at the bottom. Crosses and ornaments are decorated with gold. His *sakkos* is a magnificent example of an episcopal robe. In cinnabar red with gold hems, it is adorned with blackish green crosses in medallions. The lower rim of the *sakkos* and the borders are ivory-white with a rosette-like ornament, richly decorated with gold. Its light-green lining harmonizes with the gold of the borders. The tunic under the *sakkos* is in lemon-yellow, decorated with black bands and highlights in white. It falls lightly over the bishop's red shoes.[3] He blesses with his right hand and holds a jewel-studded Gospel in his left, which is partly covered by a vermilion cloth. The pages of the book are in dark olive-green. The face of the saint is painted in brown with

2. Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 133; Chatzidakis, *Collections suisses*, pl. 167.
3. Similar vestments are found on St. John Chrysostom of the Royal Doors of an iconostasis in the Tretyakov Gallery attributed to the Moscow School of the sixteenth century. Here, the *sakkos* breaks in similar fashion over the bishop's red shoes. For a reproduction, see Rice, *Icons*, pl. 53.

strong highlights in white in the form of parallel lines. His hair and beard are painted in umber combined with black. His facial features are less ascetic than those found in Byzantine and early Russian portraits of him. They resemble, rather, those found in seventeenth-century icons.[4] The background, ground, and frame of the icon are similar to those in the previous panels. The icon's condition is excellent, although the gold of the background has flaked in this case more than in the other two pieces. The cut slats on the back, for the insertion of the wedges, are identical in all three icons.

A study of the style of these icons shows that they were made by the same hand. The rendering of the facial features and the brown tones of the flesh with white highlights are similar in all three. The Baptist's ascetic face is accentuated by strong highlights creating patterns, whose rhythm is found also on the faces of the other two figures. The Virgin's face has greater plasticity; here the highlights are more diffused. These differences—that is, the exaggeration on the one hand and the softness on the other—reveal an artist who attempts to differentiate the man of the desert, the prototype of the great Christian anchorites, from the compassionate, tender Mother of God. The way the hands are painted and the style of the drapery are similar in all three figures. The predominant manner is linear; verticality is stressed. Folds are indicated by a series of straight, parallel black lines or by broad curves. The highlights on the drapery, suggesting the volume of the body underneath, and the folding of the robes over the feet are similar. In the case of John Chrysostom's vestments, the effect of the gold combined with red, black, and brown is one of grandeur.

The background in all three icons is gold and the ground is painted in two different tones of greenish brown, which creates a feeling of space behind the standing figures. This is also characteristic of works by Rublev, whose tradition these icons reflect.

The exactitude of the vestments, the role played by the gold in the ornamentation and the painted jewels on the robes clearly show that

4. Gerhard, *Welt*, pl. XXII; Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*, no. 266; for the iconography of this saint, see Otto Demus, "Two Palaeologan Icons in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 14 (1960), pp. 11ff.

these icons were made by an icon painter of the Moscow School in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century.[5] More specifically, the highlights under the eyes and over the brows relate to icons of this school made in the early seventeenth century, a date which I propose for these icons.[6] Their closest stylistic parallel is found in an icon, portraying a *Deësis*, published by Kondakov.[7] The Elvehjem Art Center icons, however, are of a higher quality. The faces are more expressive, the sloping shoulders recalling the tradition of Rublev; the figures have monumentality and the colors luminosity. All this makes these icons superb examples of the art of Moscow in the early part of the century. The inclined pose, the nearly identical sizes and the position of the wedges reinforcing the backs of the panels show that the icons were part of the *Deësis* tier of an iconostasis of a medium-size church.[8]

5. Skrobucha, *Sammlung Popoff*, pp. 27, 55.
6. Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), nos. 63, 91–93, 325; Skrobucha, *Meisterwerke*, pl. LVII.
7. *Russ. Ikona*, 2, pl. 105.
8. Cf. an iconostasis of the Moscow School exhibited in Munich, Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*, no. 209.

12. The Nativity

Russian (Northern manner)
ca. 1600–1650
Tempera on wood, embossed silver *oklad*
on the frame and silver halos
15 1/4 × 12 1/2 inches (38.7 × 31.7 cm.)
Provenance: Chludov Monastery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.23

The representation of the Nativity follows an established tradition, which differs, however, in many respects from Cat. no. 2 depicting the same theme. The various episodes are centered around the Mother of God, who, wearing a dark purple mantle, reclines on a vermilion-red pallet. She is facing to the right. Beside and above her, the painter has portrayed the infant Christ in a manger which is placed in front of a dark cave. An ox painted in light red and an ass in white, partly concealed by the heads of Christ and an angel, are seen against the dark entrance to the cave. Two angels with covered hands, a sign of reverence, adore the Christ Child. They are dressed in dark-brown himatia and vermilion tunics. On the upper right corner of the composition, coming from behind the rock, another angel bows deeply and announces the good tidings to a shepherd who plays a horn. The angel wears a dark-brown tunic and a vermilion-red himation. The Journey of the Magi is shown on the opposite side. Guided by the star, shown between the mountain peaks in the center, the three kings ride on white and brown horses. Only two horses are visible. Their fluttering cloaks are painted in vermilion red and dark green. On the lower part of the picture and on the right is the Bathing of the Child. One of the midwives, dressed in vermilion robes, pours water into a basin. The pensive Joseph, separated from the central group since he is not the father, is wrapped in an olive-green mantle and sits on a rock to the left. Before him, in the guise of an old, bent shepherd, stands the devil tempting him, an episode which had its origin in the Apocrypha. In the middle of this lower part of the composition, amidst stylized rocks painted in dark-brown colors with white highlights, is a white goat grazing. Stylized trees and bushes painted in dark brown are scattered between the figures and complete the composition. The green sky seems to have been repainted.

Number 12

The assembly of the various different episodes into one image under the impact of the liturgy goes back to the Middle Byzantine period, though many of the iconographic elements seen here were developed later. Most important are the adoring angels. The beginnings of this motif are found in miniature paintings and monumental art of the Middle Byzantine period. But one must examine Byzantine monuments of the fourteenth century to see angels depicted separately from the group of singing angels bringing good tidings, kneeling or flying towards the Child in adoration.[1] Later, in post-Byzantine art in Greece and the Slavic lands, other details were added under the influence of the liturgy and the apocryphal writings, of which one is the disguised devil. Iconographically, the Elvehjem Art Center icon relates to a fifteenth-century icon attributed to the School of Novgorod, but represents a simplified version of it. The adoring angels are reduced to two, the singing angels have been omitted, and only one of the shepherds has been kept.[2] However, the model used for the icon must have included the musician-shepherd not appearing in the Novgorod icon.

Stylistically, our icon shows a mixture of traditions. While the vermilion red recalls the Novgorod School, the muddy purple, the very dark brown with yellowish and greenish highlights for the rocks, the extreme dark-brown flesh tones, the green-gray sky, the angularity of the figures, the graphic treatment of the drapery, and the type of dispersed composition—all point to the "Northern manner" of painting. The best stylistic parallel to the icon is a house iconostasis in Recklinghausen ascribed to the middle of the seventeenth century.[3] The earlier years of the century, however, seem a more likely attribution for this icon. The silver nimbi and the crown of Mary, decorated with a scroll motif in filigree filled with enamel paste (now nearly lost), and the attractive, embossed gilt-silver frame with a similar, yet more complex scroll-motif, seem to be of a somewhat later date.[4] The icon has suffered several cracks. Originally a *basma* covered the sky also; it has been removed and the nail holes are filled.

1. Ristow, *Geburt*, figs. no. pp. 40, 48, 54; see also above, Cat. no. 2, note 1.
2. Skrobucha, *Meisterwerke*, pl. XLII.
3. Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 45; for colors only, cf. also a sixteenth-century "Northern" Russian icon in Onasch, *Icons*, fig. 76.
4. For somewhat similar crowns in other icons, see Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 76; Rice, *Russian Icons*, pl. XLVI.

13. Portable Iconostasis (Polyptych)

Russian (Moscow School)
ca. 1650–1700
Tempera on wood (fifteen panels, inserted in metal frames)
Central panel: 6 7/8 × 3 11/16 inches (17.5 × 9.4 cm.)
Each of the fourteen side panels: 6 7/8 × 1 3/4 inches (17.5 × 4.5 cm.)
Gift of Joseph C. Bradley
Acc. no. 62.4.2

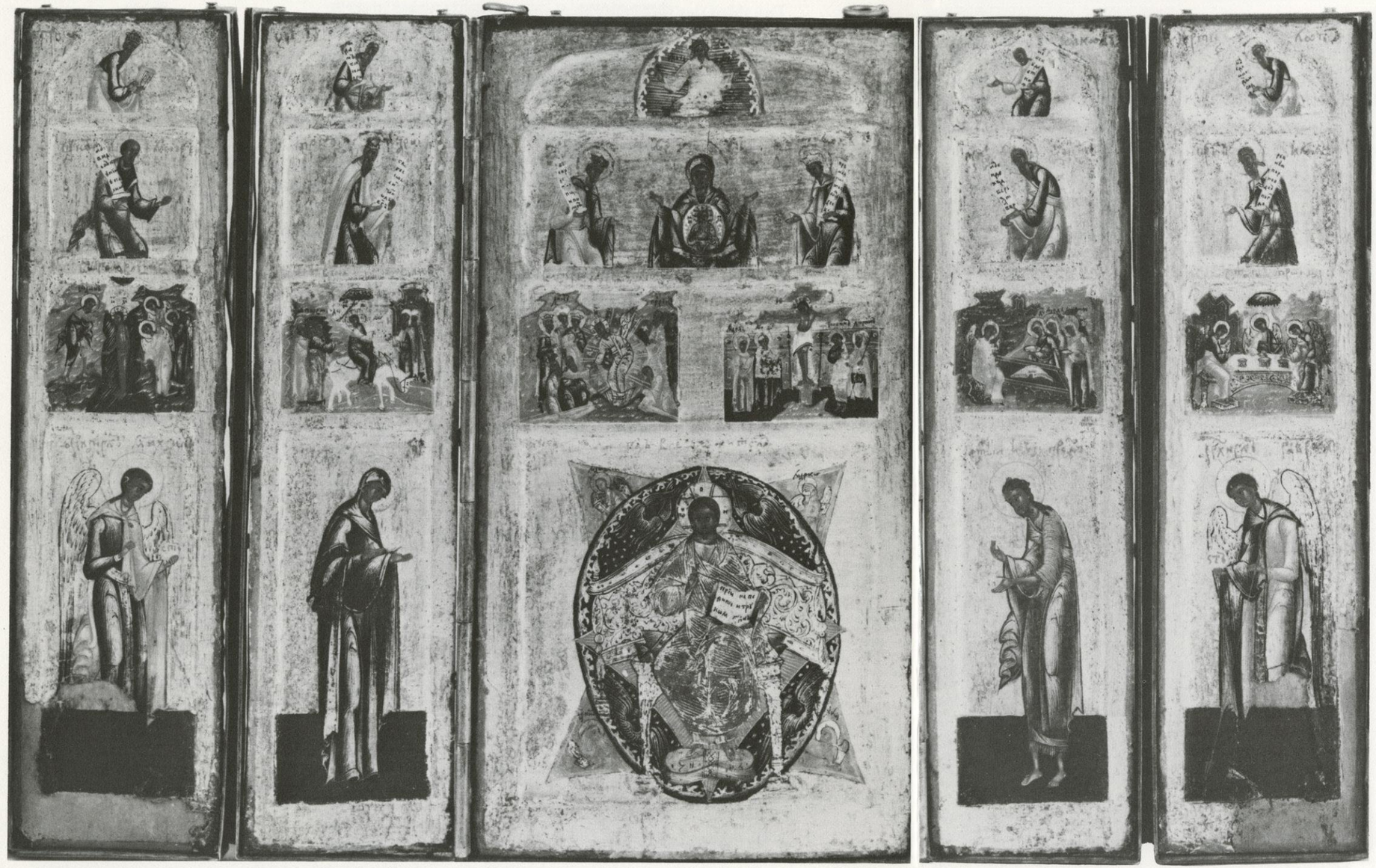
This folding, miniature polyptych consists of fifteen panels, each one set into a bronze frame, and reproduces in its themes the upper part of a church iconostasis. Each panel is divided into four registers containing the ancestors of Christ, prophets, feast pictures and a *Deësis* tier. The first or upper row represents a series of Old Testament patriarchs as ancestors of Christ; they were once identified by inscriptions, which are now illegible, except for Jacob, Lot, and Noah (who carries the ark in his hands). All are depicted in three-quarter length, holding scrolls in their hands and inclined towards the central figure of Christ, who is portrayed as the "Ancient of Days" in an aureole of light, surrounded by a festoon of clouds. He blesses with his hands, and a many-sided star is drawn within his nimbus. The paint has flaked off in parts of his garment and gold leaf is visible underneath. The second tier contains images of Old Testament prophets, also depicted in three-quarter length, but larger in size than the figures of the upper row. They are in the following sequence: left of the central panel, from left to right: Malachi, Joel, Daniel, unidentified prophet, Isaiah, Moses, Zechariah; right of the central panel, from left to right: Ezekiel, Elijah, Jeremiah, Sirach, Habakkuk, Elisha (?), Samuel. All hold open scrolls in their hands with texts from their prophecies, except Samuel who holds the "horn of oil" (I Samuel 16:1–13). In addition to the scroll, Moses carries the Burning Bush (Exodus 3:2–4), symbolic prefiguration of the Virgin Birth, and Malachi points to a sickle. They are all bowing towards the central panel, portraying the Virgin of the Sign, or *Blachernitissa* (see Cat. no. 15), who is flanked by David on her right and Solomon on her left. Both wear crowns and hold scrolls.

The third tier is that of the church festivals represented in sixteen scenes in the following sequence, from left to right: the Birth of the Virgin, the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, the Baptism of Christ, the Entry of Christ into Jerusalem (the paint here is flaked in some areas and the gold ground is visible), the Descent into Hell and the Crucifixion (both are in the central panel; the Crucifixion, in addition to Mary and John, includes another Mary, Longinus, the spear and the lance on either side of the cross), the Three Marys at the Tomb of Christ, the Holy Trinity (in the form of three angels—taken from the theme of the hospitality of Abraham, Genesis 18), the Resurrection of Lazarus, the Transfiguration, the Elevation of the True Cross in the presence of Constantine and Helen, the Ascension of Christ, and the Dormition of the Virgin. Inscriptions in red identify the scenes and the principal persons in each case. The arrangement of the feasts does not follow the sequence of the church festival cycle, but this is not unusual in portable iconostases of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[1]

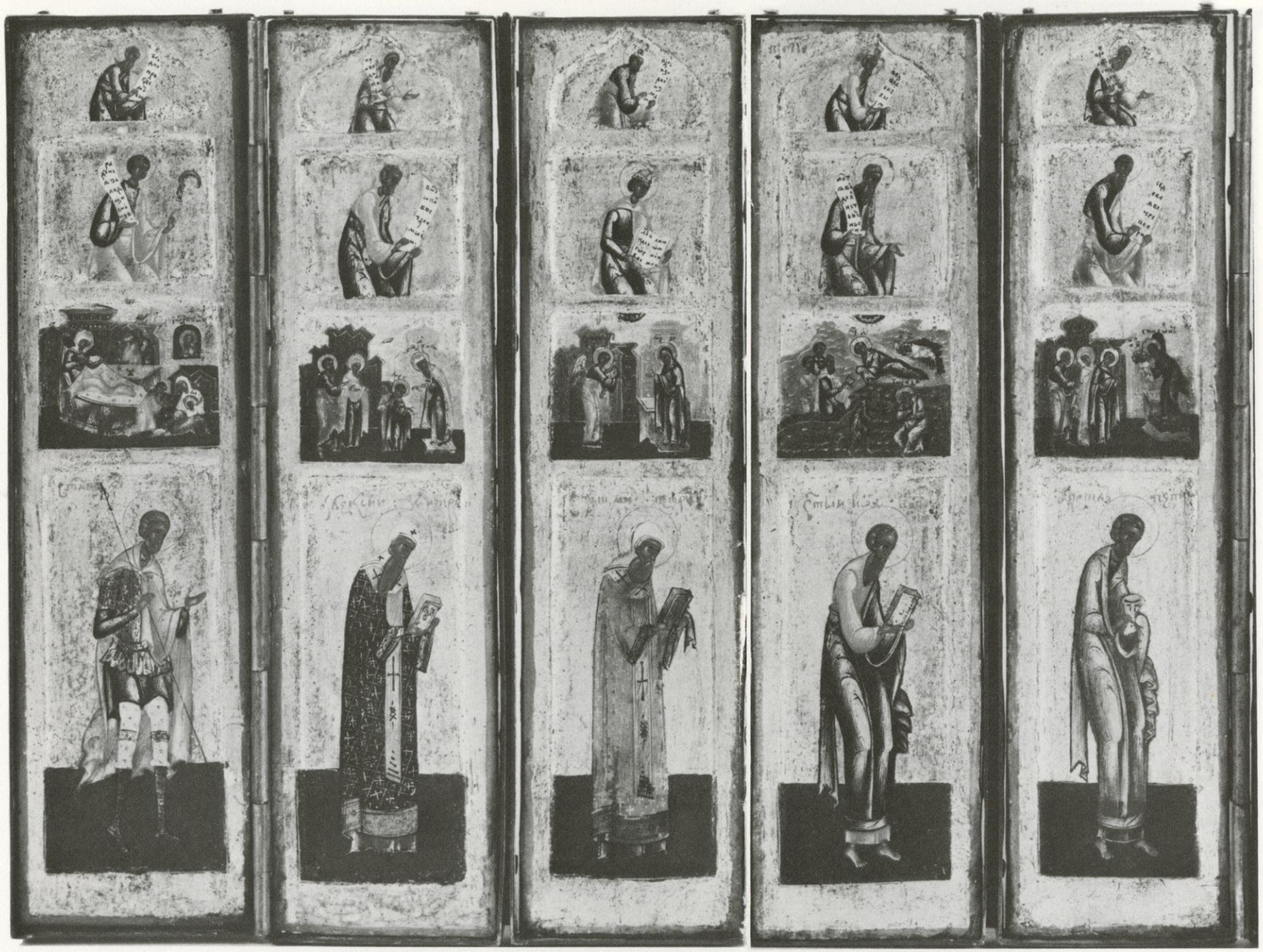
The last row is that of the *chin* of the iconostasis and contains a developed *Deësis* whose participants are identified as follows, from left to right: the great martyr Menas, Metropolitans Alexis (died 1378) and Peter (died 1326) of Moscow and of all Russia, St. John the Theologian, Apostle Peter, Archangel Michael with sceptre and globe, the Mother of God, Christ in Glory (in the central panel), St. John the Baptist, Archangel Gabriel, Apostles Paul and Matthew, Moscow Metropolitans Jonah (died 1461) and Philip (died 1569), and the martyr Artemi(?).

The enthroned Christ in the central panel is surrounded by an aureole of light, which forms an octagonal star by means of two curved squares with an oval mandorla between them. This type of glory is found in late Byzantine art. Dotted with stars, it includes cherubim, representatives of the world of angels that surround the throne of God, and the symbols of the four evangelists, identified by inscriptions as follows: the angel, symbol of Matthew, is on the upper left part; the eagle, here associated with Mark, is on the opposite side: the ox, symbol of Luke, is below and to the right of the viewer; and the lion,

1. See Ouspensky, Lossky, pp. 60-63.



Number 13
center



Number 13
left

Number 13
right

identified here as John, is on the opposide side.[2] These symbols are nimbed and carry Gospels.

The iconography of the individual scenes or figures is that established by tradition and known from other examples.[3] The predominant colors are gold, gold-brown, deep red, light and dark green, with gold hatching for the drapery. The figures are distinguished by their elongation, their elegance, the precise articulation of the folds, the suggestion of volume, and the precision in rendering details. The persons included in the feast pictures do not measure more than three-quarters of an inch yet their detailed execution is remarkable. The flesh is dark brown with strong modeling done in white parallel lines of extreme minuteness.

Figures and scenes are painted on gold leaf which has been applied to each panel, forming the background, while in the feast pictures the landscape and architectural settings are in brown, green, and red. The ground on which the figures stand is dark green. Inscriptions are in red, but not all are legible. The entire work is of high quality and striking for its finesse and delicacy. Stylistically its closest parallel is found in parts of an iconostasis in Recklinghausen of the middle of the seventeenth century and ascribed to the Moscow School.[4] However, a certain schematic rendering and dryness in the figure-style suggest a later date between 1650 and 1700. An additional reason for this dating is provided by the iconography, and has been brought to this writer's attention by Skrobucha. Representations of the four Moscow metropolitans as a group in icons occur after the middle of the seventeenth century. The development of this theme is probably related to the translation of the relics of Metropolitan Philip to Moscow in 1652. Of course, he had been venerated before that event, especially in the Soloveckij Monastery from which he came and where his relics were translated from the Otroč Monastery. Although there may have been

2. The association of symbols and evangelists is discussed in my forthcoming book on the *Illustrated Prologues of the Byzantine Gospels.*
3. See Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1965), no. 41; in *Cat.* (1968) it appears as no. 45; Ouspensky, Lossky, pp. 60–63; Rice, *Icons*, pp. 41–44.
4. Skrobucha, *Sammlung Popoff*, p. 36; cf. also another related example in a private collection in Munich reproduced in Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*, no. 258; it is dated to the second half of the century.

icons of him produced in the icon workshop of the Soloveckij Monastery, he was not represented with the other Moscow metropolitans.

Portable iconostases made for the new class of well-to-do army officers are common in Russian art of the sixteenth century and especially of the seventeenth century. Not all of them reproduce all the tiers of a church iconostasis; often the upper row is missing.[5] It is obvious that this polyptych, apart from being a splendid example of its kind, occupies, because of its completeness, a special place among extant portable iconostases.

The polyptych was once in poor condition; parts had been damaged by candle flames (the lower parts of the archangels). Each panel was once covered on the back with purple velvet. It has recently been cleaned and restored. The metal cases, used as covers when the polyptych is closed, bear a cut design; that of the central panel forms a wreath and a patriarchal cross.

5. Chatzidakis, *Collections suisses*, no. 146; cf. also another iconostasis of same date and school in a private collection reproduced in Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*, no. 209. Another interesting example, which includes the Royal Doors as well and is ascribed to the Moscow School, ca. 1600, is in the National Museum, Stockholm; it is not, however, a polyptych, but a single panel. See Kjellin, p. 157, fig. 20.

Number 14

14. Portable Triptych with Great *Deësis*

Russian
ca. 1650–1700
Tempera on wood (three panels, inserted in metal frames)
Central panel: 3 3/16 × 2 7/16 inches (8 × 6.2 cm.);
Left wing: 3 3/16 × 2 9/16 inches (8 × 6.5 cm.);
Right wing: 3 1/8 × 2 1/2 inches (7.9 × 6.4 cm.)
Gift of Joseph C. Bradley
Acc. no. 62.4.1

This folding triptych portrays a Great *Deësis* (cf. Cat. no. 1). Christ is seated on a wide throne, which must have been originally red-brown in color. He rests his feet on a red footstool. With his left hand he holds an open Gospel, which partly rests on his knee. Mary, with her hands in a gesture of prayer, stands to Christ's right. John the Baptist, in a similar pose, stands on the opposite side. The background of the panels is silver leaf over ochre ground.

On each of the side panels there is a group of four bishops carrying Gospels. They are headed by Archangels Michael and Gabriel, both holding globes. On the basis of their physiognomies and fragments of inscriptions, the group to the right of Christ, led by Archangel Michael, can be identified as follows, from left to right: Sts. Nicholas of Myra, John Chrysostom (died 407), Gregory of Nazianzus (died ca. 390; both John and Gregory were patriarchs of Constantinople), and Basil the Great (died 379). The group on the left of Christ is headed by Archangel Gabriel; traces of his name are still visible. He is followed by the four metropolitans of Mosçow and all Russia: Peter (died 1326), Alexis (died 1378)—their names are still legible—probably Jonah (died 1461), and Philip (died 1569). The first two wear the *klobuk* with crosses, i.e., the white kerchief, and the other two wear the miter, the attributes of the Moscow metropolitan.[1] Each bishop holds a Gospel. Their vestments vary in color from light red to deep brown and dark green. They are adorned with cross patterns or floral motifs. Ornaments and highlights are in gold. The borders of each panel are painted green with a narrow red band along the edge. All three panels are inserted into copper cases.

1. Also of the Bishop Leonti of Rostov; see Skrobucha, *Russ. Heilige*, p. 22.

It is difficult to ascribe this devotional triptych to a specific school. It recalls the calligraphic style of miniaturists, yet the figures are flat and the faces sketchy with bead-like eyes. A comparison with a triptych made in Moscow and dated 1641 (now in a private collection in Paris), with which this work has iconographic points in common, shows that an attribution to this school is doubtful.[2] Its closest stylistic parallel is a house iconostasis in Recklinghausen ascribed to the middle of the seventeenth century and to northern Russia. The floral motifs on the robes of the bishops support this date. They are common in the seventeenth century, particularly during the second half; also the silver background is not unusual in icons of that period.[3]

This triptych, apart from being a good example of a devotional icon, is also of interest from the point of view of iconography. Here the fathers of the Byzantine ("Mother") Church are juxtaposed with the fathers of the Russian ("Daughter") Church. This arrangement is not unusual. It illustrates the idea that both Churches, Constantinople and Moscow, stand on equal terms on either side of Christ.

2. Cf. Ouspensky, Lossky, pp. 104–105; also an earlier "portable" *Deësis*, ca. 1500, of the Moscow School, in the National Museum Stockholm, Kjellin, p. 171, fig. 54.
3. Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 45, reproduced in *Cat.* (1965), as no. 41; for the vestments see icon in Recklinghausen, no. 339, and excellent color reproduction in Tschizewskij, *Nikolaus*, pls. VIII, XIII, XIV; other examples of seventeenth–eighteenth century icons with silver background in Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, no. 31, Skrobucha, *Sammlung Popoff*, p. 79.

Number 15

15. Our Lady of the Sign (*Źnamenie* or *Blachernitissa*)

Russian (Northern manner)
17th century
Tempera on wood
28 × 34 3/4 inches (71.1 × 88.3 cm.)
Provenance: Pecherskaya Lavra, Kiev
Acc. no. 37.1.3

The bust of the Virgin in the attitude of prayer is depicted against an ochre background and in an aureole of dark and light green tones. Wearing a purple *maphorion*, adorned with three stars and a turquoise-blue tunic, Mary carries on her breast a medallion with the figure of Christ Emmanuel. The medallion consists of two concentric circles of light green and blue, dotted with gold stars. The Christ child, dressed in a brown, gold-lined himation, holds a scroll in his left hand and blesses with his right. On his yellow-ochre cruciform nimbus is the usual abbreviated inscription, *O ΩH*, in red.

Outside Mary's aureole of light and on each of the four corners of the icon are six-winged seraphim facing the aureole. Those on the upper left and the lower right corners are painted in cinnabar red; the other two are in dark blue-green with brown and white highlights. The light that surrounds the image of the Virgin is in a shell-like, light-green form within the aureole. The flesh tones are in brown with touches of red. The faces of the seraphim are painted in greenish and reddish tones. A thick, brown contour outlines the nimbi.

The composition follows an older type of icon, seen in earlier Russian examples, which was derived from an image that existed in the Photeinos Chapel of the Blachernae Church in Constantinople. But the Constantinopolitan icon was not the first representation of this type, which has a much older history.[1] In Russia, this type was associated with a highly-venerated icon in Novgorod. When the Prince of Vladimir and Suzdal, Andrei Bogoliubsky, besieged the city of

1. See Kondakov, *Russ. Ikona*, 2, fig. 34, an icon of the sixteenth century; Bolshakova, *Tretyakov*, pl. 77; Antonova, Mneva, 2, no. 56, pp. 124–125; Rothemund, *Ikonenkunst*, pp. 221–222, 230–231; Gerhard, *Welt*, pp. 210–211.

Novgorod in 1170, legend has it that John, the bishop of the city, received instructions in a vision, according to which he carried the *Blachernitissa* icon around the city walls, finally placing it on them. This saved Novgorod from defeat and made Our Lady of the Sign very popular all over Russia; the result was that several icons of the Virgin of Znamenie were made. The Novgorod miracle has been portrayed in various icons, the oldest of which dates from the fifteenth century.[2]

The name "sign" given by the Russians derives from Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive in the womb, and shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Emmanuel." The image of the Sign is then the image of the Divine Incarnation, and as such it is placed in the center of the prophet's story in Russian iconostases. It becomes then the central icon of the Old Testament Church awaiting redemption.[3] The present icon is a variant of the type showing Christ as a half-figure in a medallion; other variants present him full-length with or without a medallion.[4]

The four seraphim emphasize the theological significance given by Isaiah and indicate the impact of the liturgy and hymnography upon iconography. The Virgin stands above the angels since she is more honorable than the cherubim and incomparably more glorious than the seraphim. This icon has a peculiarity rather rare among icons of the Virgin of the Sign. Mary is included in a mandorla of light, so that the glory of the Mother is revealed side by side with that of Emmanuel, her glory being inseparable from the glory of the Divine Child. Yet, the visual rendering of her glory differs from that of her son by the shell-like motif. This appears in other icons of the seventeenth century and it may have symbolic significance.

The style is decidedly graphic. The composition is conceived in terms of large color areas and rhythmical patterns with a decorative effect that makes this icon one of the most beautiful in the collection. In coloring, it recalls a sixteenth-century icon painted in the Northern

2. Kondakov, *Russian Icon*, pp. 66–67.
3. Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 78.
4. Skrobucha, *Maria*, pp. 63–66.

manner, now in the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow. The way the eyes are painted, however, suggests a seventeenth-century date.[5]

The icon is outstanding for its theological significance and its coloristic effect. The brown tones of the flesh and the garments and the cinnabar red for the seraphim are effective contrasts to the dark green and blue. The alternating colors of the seraphim increase the dynamism of the composition and of the aureole of Mary which they seem to carry.

5. Cf. Onasch, *Icons*, fig. 77.

Number 16

16. Elijah in the Desert

Russian (Moscow School)
ca. 1600–1650
Tempera on wood
12 1/8 × 10 7/16 inches (30.8 × 26.5 cm.)
Provenance: Ryabushinski Collection, Rumyantsovski Museum
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
Acc. no. 37.1.14

The prophet is depicted sitting on a red rock in front of a dark-umber cave. He is arrayed in a dark-brown cloak, lined in blue-green, and an olive-green tunic, whose folds are indicated by white highlights. In his left hand, he holds a scroll, the usual attribute of a prophet. He supports his head with his right hand. His powerful face is turned to the right, as he looks upwards. It is strongly lit and contrasts with his light-brown beard and shaggy, tousled hair. Gray lines enrich the hair and beard and recall the description of his appearance as "an hairy man," given in II Kings 1:8. The mountain behind him follows the form of the cave and is painted in yellow-ochre and brown, with white lines accenting the contours of the rocks. Bushes, depicted in dark green with highlights in gold, are found in the lower half of the composition at the entrance and sides of the cave.

The brook, called Cherith, painted in dark blue-green with waves in white, flows diagonally across the lower foreground. The sky is a pale ochre, almost ivory-white, as is the frame. The sky in the upper two corners of the panel has been slightly damaged and retouched. The lines of the hills joining the sky have traces of gold.

The image of the Prophet Elijah was very popular in Orthodox iconography. He was given a special place among the Prophets of the Old Testament and was believed to have power over the elements, especially over fire. His ascension into heaven in a chariot of fire was a theme repeatedly represented in Russian icon painting; it was thought to refer to his witnessing, as did Moses and the Apostles, the revelation of Christ's divine nature at the Transfiguration.

Representations of Elijah in the desert being fed by the ravens (I Kings 17:3–6) and his fiery ascent into heaven were favored by

the people and the artists, who found the chance to introduce some truly Russian elements into these compositions.[1] It is possible that the raven was originally painted in this icon. As it is now, the icon represents Elijah's expectation of the fulfillment of the word of God as described in I Kings 17:2–5: "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did. . . ." The meaning of the icon becomes even clearer if we consider the following passage from St. Basil the Great: ". . . The wilderness received the hermit; . . . the provision for his life's journey was hope in God. . . ."[2] This hope connected with the idea of deliverance, an iconographical theme related to the prophet since early Christian times, is the subject of the icon. In this icon, Elijah is depicted as the servant of the Lord, awaiting the might of his Lord, rather than as the zealous minister of the Lord carrying an open scroll with the words, "I have been very jealous for the Lord Almighty" (I Kings 19:10, 14), which is his usual representation in the *chin* row of iconostases. This icon, then, was not made for an iconostasis but for private devotion.

It is possible that the omission of the usual raven was intended to suggest a specific moment in the life of the prophet and to allude to the later revelation of the manifestation of God in the world, given to the prophet on Mount Horeb (I Kings 19:11–12). This prophecy represented a prefiguration of the Kingdom of God, manifested by Jesus in his Transfiguration on Mount Tabor.

The ivory-white flesh, the smoothness of the modeling (no lines are discernible), the style of the drapery and the brown-ochre hills find parallels in icons made in Moscow in the first half of the seventeenth century. A similar date and locality are most probable for this icon,

1. For examples see Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), nos. 279, 281; Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 143; Galavaris, *Elijah-Nativity*, no. 175; Troubetzkoi, *Ocherka*, p. 119; for bibliography, see Klaus Wessel, "Elias," *RbK*, 2, cols. 90–93.
2. *PG*, 31, cols. 317–320, cited by Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 143; cf. icon in Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, in Onasch, *Icons*, pl. 62.

particularly as the color-tonality has affinities with the products of the so-called Stroganov School.[3]

This icon is in excellent condition. The metal casing, which once surrounded the frame, is now missing. Traces of the nail holes are still visible on the outside of the frame. The holes on the inner part of the frame have been filled. When the metal case was removed, the frame was repainted in its original color.

3. Examples in Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 349; Onasch, *Icons*, no. 144; cf. also nos. 121, 127, 129; Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, no. 15.

Number 17

17. Sts. Basil the Great and Basil the Blessed

Russian (Moscow School)
ca. 1650–1700
Tempera on wood
12 1/2 × 10 1/2 inches (31.2 × 26.7 cm.)
Provenance: Pecherskaya Lavra, Kiev
Acc. no. 37.1.15

The icon represents the two saints adoring the Holy Trinity depicted in the form of the three angels at the top of the composition. The saints are identified by inscriptions, giving names and titles, and their physiognomies. Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea (died 379), represented on the left, is one of the three Cappadocian Fathers, writer of one of the Byzantine liturgies and highly venerated in the Orthodox Church.[1]

His robes are depicted with precision: a long blue-green tunic (*sticharion*) with white highlights; a brocaded stole (*epitrachelion*) with gold borders; a lozenge-shaped *mapula* embellished with pearls and gold ornaments (*epigonation*), partly seen under his right arm; an ivory-white chasuble (*phaelonion*) decorated with black-gilded crosses in medallions, a gold border and light-red lining; and a white pallium (*omophorion*) with black crosses. He holds a richly-adorned Gospel book in his left hand, which rests on a vermilion-red cloth. Basil the Blessed, the Fool in Christ (*Blazhenny Vasili Khristes yourodivyi*) stands opposite him. He is portrayed as a bearded, naked ascetic, whose flesh tones are dark brown with white highlights painted in a series of parallel lines. He is the yourodivyi who was highly venerated by Ivan the Terrible and was often represented naked in Russian art.[2] The

1. For Basil's physiognomy, cf. examples in Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*, no. 266; Bolshakova, *Tretyakov*, pl. 40.
2. Peter Hauptmann, "Die Narren um Christi willen in der Ostkirche," *Kirche im Osten, Studien zur osteuropäischen Kirchengeschichte und Kirchenkunde*, 2 (1959), pp. 27ff; Skrobucha, *Russ. Heilige*, p. 22, et passim. Some contemporary commentators keep confusing St. Basil the Blessed with St. Basil the Great. The error has found a place in commentaries on Rainer M. Rilke's *Stories of God*, in one of which Vasili Blazhenny plays a part. The commentator (see notes on the English translation by M. D. Herter Norton, New York, 1963, p. 132) is at real pains in explaining the epithet "naked" which Rilke uses.

ground on which the bishop and the ascetic stand resembles a carpet with a stylized gold flowers and a black background. The remaining part of the composition and the outer frame of the icon were once covered by an embossed silver *basma*, now removed.

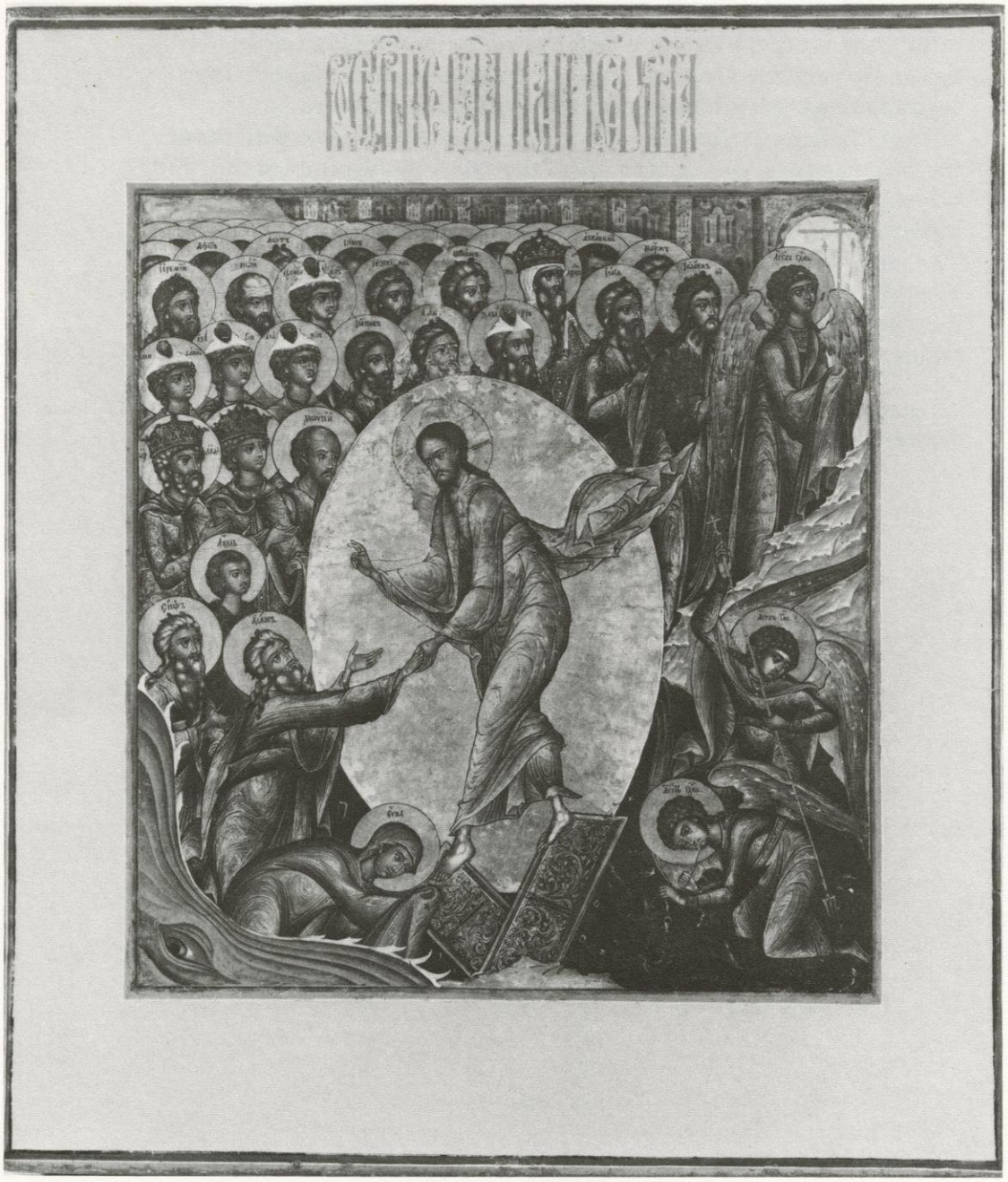
Icons of two saints standing opposite one another and adoring Christ or the Trinity are common in Russian icon painting in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[3] Certain known facts about Basil the Blessed help to establish a *terminus post quem* for the icon. Basil died in Moscow in 1551 or 1552 and was buried in the Cathedral of the Intercession of the Virgin (Pokrovksy Sobor), built under Czar Ivan IV on Red Square in the Kremlin between 1552 and 1560. Basil was canonized in 1588 (August 2 was established as his feast-day), and another altar was consecrated to him in a church which was added to house his crypt on the north-east side of the Cathedral. The Cathedral was now dedicated to him and to the Virgin Mary. The people, however, renamed it "the Cathedral of Basil the Blessed." The year of his canonization cannot be taken as a *terminus post quem* for icons of venerated persons often came into being before their canonization. The year of his death should rather provide this *terminus*.[4]

Parallels for the icon's composition are found in late sixteenth-century icons. The treatment of the face and the anatomy of the saint, however, find their best stylistic correspondence in works of the Moscow School from the middle to the second half of the seventeenth century.[5] The painted gold ornament in the lower part of the composition is of special interest. The practice of filling parts of the panel with ornament was not uncommon in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century icons. It may have developed from the custom of decorating the green ground on which the saints stood with bushes and flowers.[6] Here, however,

3. For examples, see Rice, *Russian Icons*, pl. XXX; Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), nos. 345, 348; Onasch, *Icons*, nos. 129, 131; Antonova, Mneva, 2, pls. 42, 108, 118; Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, no. 23.
4. Veneration of the Fools in Christ was often stronger than that of the Virgin Mary. See Hauptmann, *Narren*, p. 38; Ivan von Kologrivof, *Essai sur la sainteté en Russie* (Bruges, 1953), p. 269.
5. Cf. Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 349; Alpatov, Brunov, 2, fig. 324.
6. Cf. a *Deësis* icon, ca. 1700, in Recklinghausen, Skrobucha, *Sammlung Popoff*, fig. on p. 64; Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, no. 23; Rice, *Russian Icons*, pl. XXX: Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 348.

the green ground is replaced by a sort of "Persian Carpet"; its design reflects the art of the Orient which had penetrated Russian art in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[7] Its presence here supports the suggested seventeenth-century date in its tendency towards great ornamentation, characteristic of the icons of that time. The patterns of the *basma* once on the background of the icon and the nimbi of the saints are somewhat similar to a metal cover on an icon in the Hann collection, for which a seventeenth-century date has been proposed.[8] The same date is probable for the *basma*, but it cannot be determined whether it is exactly contemporary with the panel or not. This icon illustrates very well the direction that Russian icon painting was taking in the second half of the seventeenth century.

7. David Talbot Rice, *Islamic Art* (London, 1965), pls. 211, 247.
8. Rice, *Russian Icons*, no. XLIV.



Number 18

18. The Descent Into Hell

Russian (Moscow School)
ca. 1700
Tempera on wood
13 7/8 × 11 7/8 inches (35.3 × 30.2 cm.)
Acc. no. 37.1.13

The theme is depicted somewhat differently from Cat. no. 3. Here, Christ in golden, flowing garments is represented in an oval mandorla of light, adorned with stars and illumined by rays that emanate from him. He steps on the broken doors of Hell. With his left hand, he raises Adam (depicted on the left side of the composition) and, with his right hand, he blesses him. Eve, at the left foot of Christ, bows in adoration beside Adam. She wears a deep-red mantle, while Adam is dressed in a blue-green himation and a deep-red tunic. Both are coming out of the mouth of Hell, a vermilion-red monster's open mouth, with enormous eyes and white teeth. Adam's descendants and the prophets of the Old Testament rise with him and are represented in tiers behind and above him. Inscriptions on the nimbi, as in the case of Adam and Eve, identify all of them, beginning with the figure standing next to Adam. They are as follows: Seth, Abel, David, Solomon (the latter two wearing crowns and imperial garb with floral motifs), Moses, Mishael (Meshach), Azariah (Abednego), Hananiah (Shadrach), Jacob, Elijah, Zechariah, Jeremiah, Noah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Abraham, Melchizedek, Isaiah, John the Baptist, Japheth, Lot, Shem, Habakkuk, and Nahum. The group of these ancestors of Christ is guided by the archangel Gabriel. He wears a mantle similar in color to Eve's, and holds the instruments of the Passion: the cross, the spear, and the lance—all painted in red. He guides the resurrected to the celestial Jerusalem, portrayed on top of the composition in red and gold. The sky beyond the gate is yellow-ochre while the opposite corner is painted in brown-ochre. Below and to the right of the archangel Gabriel, the archangel Michael (wrongly identified by the abbreviated inscription on his nimbus as Gabriel) in a dark-green mantle and a deep-red cloak, thrusts a spear in the form of a trident into the dark abyss, piercing the invisible Satan. Below this scene, Gabriel (also identified by inscription), wearing a deep-red robe, is chaining Satan, represented as a dark-green, winged monster.

The flesh tones are softly painted in brown with highlights in white, emphasizing the nose and cheeks. The highlights on the drapery and the angels' wings are in gold, as are all the nimbi. The rocks of the landscape are in brown with white highlights. A narrow red band is painted around the central panel and a yellow-ochre frame surrounds the composition, on the top of which is an inscription identifying the subject in a red, florid script. Two narrow green and red bands border the frame.

The iconography recalls other icons ascribed to the Moscow School of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For example, the central theme of the Descent into Hell, and the motif of the ascending prophets and patriarchs occur somewhat similarly in two Easter icons in Berlin. There is also an ornament in Berlin like the one adorning the gates of Hell.[1] In the Berlin example, however, the group of the resurrected is not guided by Gabriel. This motif is found in another example, an icon of around 1700 in the National Museum of Stockholm, where the iconography is different.[2] The artist, by borrowing motifs found in various models, has created a composition which puts a different emphasis on the theme of the Descent into Hell. By descending into the abyss of the earth and freeing Adam and mankind, Christ opened to everyone the gates of Heaven. A new life then began in the celestial Jerusalem.[3]

The artistic language of the icon is expressed by the flowing quality of the line and its dynamic spiral movement, the richness of the gilding in the garments, the softness of the modeling, and the architectural background. Stylistically, the icon finds its best parallels in works of the Moscow School produced in the second half of the seventeenth century. A date of around 1700 therefore seems likely.[4] The condition of the icon is good. Retouchings are evident in the sky; a few cracks in the paint are visible on the left central part of the panel and on the lower right-hand side in front of Gabriel's mouth.

1. Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, figs. 21, 22.
2. Kjellin, fig. 108; cf. also fig. 113 on p. 217.
3. Cf. Ouspensky, Lossky, p. 190.
4. Cf. icon in Tretyakov Gallery of the second half of the seventeenth century reproduced in Onasch, *Icons*, pl. 121.

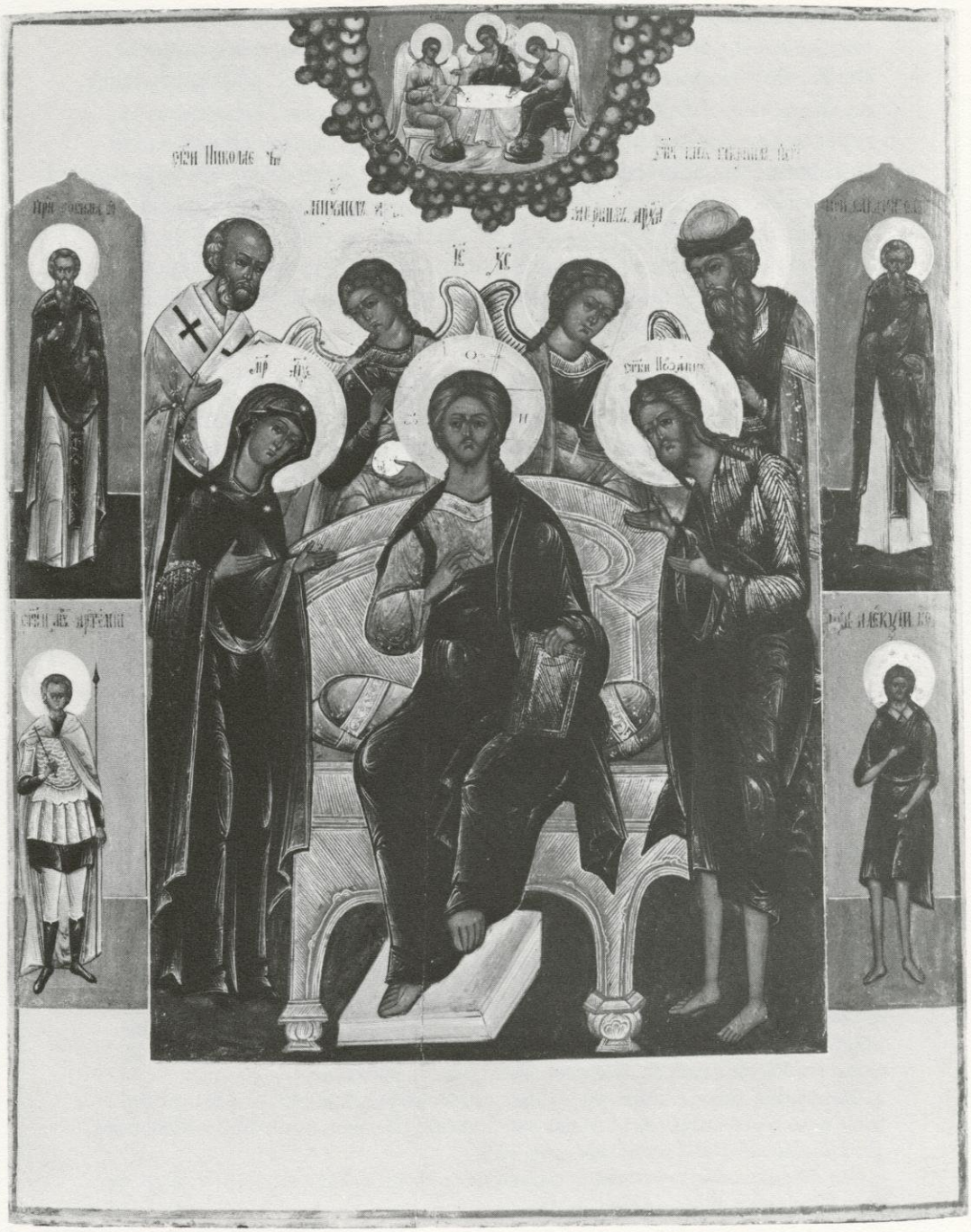
19. Great *Deësis*

Russian
Late 18th century
Tempera on wood with gilt silver *oklad*, now separated
16 1/2 × 13 3/8 inches (41.9 × 34 cm.)
Acc. no. 37.1.16

The principal figures of the *Deësis* are in the foreground of the composition. Christ, seated on a wide throne with two red cushions embellished with gold, holds a Gospel with his left hand and blesses with his right. He wears a dark-green himation with white highlights and a red tunic. He rests his feet on a footstool. Mary stands to Christ's right and John to his left, each making a gesture of intercession. Their garments are in deep purple and green with gilding. Inscriptions identify the other participants. Two archangels in red himatia and dark-green tunics adorned with gold stand behind the throne, Gabriel on Christ's right and Michael on the left, inclined towards the interceding figures in the foreground. St. Nicholas of Myra in bishop's vestments is next to Gabriel on the left side of the picture, and on the opposite side is another saint whose inscription reads: "St. Prince Gabriel [of] Pskov." He stands next to Michael and is depicted wearing a red cap with a dark-brown band, recalling representations of the two princely saints, Boris and Gleb, in earlier Russian icons of the Moscow School.[1] He is dressed in dark-green robes embellished with gold. The principal figures stand on a dark-green ground. The remaining figures are painted against an ochre background. On each side of the frame are two standing saints: in the upper left is St. Zosima Solovecki in abbot's garb; below is the martyr St. Artemi in military dress carrying a spear and a cross; in the upper right is St. Savati Solovecki in abbot's garb; and below is St. Alexis, the Man of God, in a dark-green, short tunic and barefooted. All stand on an olive-green ground. The background is also olive-green for the saints above, but terracotta-brown for those below. In the upper part of the main composition is a representation of the Trinity in the form of three angels dressed in green and red garments and seated at a table. The nimbi are in gold.

1. Bolshakova, *Tretyakov*, pls. 52, 53; Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 348.

Number 19



Number 19

Of the participants in this *Deësis*, Sts. Zosima, Savati, and Nicholas are the most popular in Russian art and piety. Savati was a monk at the Kirilov Monastery who attempted in vain to establish a monastery on the island of Solovetsky in the North Sea in 1392. His effort was repeated by Zosima in 1436, but this time with success. Zosima died as abbot of the Solovetsky Monastery in 1478. Both saints are represented in Russian icons alone or in narrative icons related to the founding of the monastery.[2] The presence of St. Nicholas may be related to the saints if one considers the location of the monastery and the fact that he is the patron saint of navigators. He is often found in representations associated with the Solovetsky saints.[3]

All three saints stand here as representatives of the monastic ideal. The saints below are related to this concept insofar as they represent denial of the world for the sake of Christ and the love of God. St. Artemi, the Great Sufferer, who should not be confused with St. Artemi Verkolski, one of the Fools in Christ (died 1545), gave his life for Christ. Alexis, the Man of God, turned away from the world, achieved communion with God by becoming a Fool in Christ, and found a place in the calendar and icons of the Russian Church.[4] The world, however, had saints who could serve Christ through their works and through their prayers; in the Orthodox Church crowned saints are by no means rare. It is this category which is represented by St. Gabriel the Prince. He was Vsevolod-Gavriil, Prince of Pskov (died 1138). According to the Russian Church calendar, his festival day is on February 11. In addition, the Church celebrates the finding of his relics on November 27, and their translation in 1192 to the Troitski-Sobor of the city of Pskov on April 22. His portrait is known from other earlier icons, as in a fifteenth- to sixteenth-century icon now in the Russian Museum of Leningrad.[5]

2. Winkler, *Heilige*, pp. 71ff; Gerhard, *Welt*, pl. 52; Skrobucha, *Russ. Heilige*, pp. 24ff; Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968) nos. 345–347.
3. See examples in Elbern, *Ikonen-Berlin*, no. 27; Skrobucha, *Meisterwerke*, pp. 269ff, pl. LV; Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*, no. 230; for the life of St. Nicholas on icons, see Weitzmann, *St. Nicholas*; Tschizewskij, *Nikolaus*.
4. Skrobucha, *Russ. Heilige*, pp. 15, 22; and seventeenth to eighteenth century icons with representations of Alexis and Artemis, the Fools in Christ, in Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), nos. 265, 268.
5. See *Messiatzoslov pravoslavny catholique tzerkvi* (St. Petersburg, 1880), pp. 83, 702; Skrobucha, *Russ. Heilige*, p. 11.

The composition is related to various versions of the theme represented in Russian art. However the choice of the saints emphasizes the monastic ideal, the importance of good works and prayer, and the sacrifice of worldly goods for the love of Christ. These are the virtues by which all these saints could stand in front of the throne of God, could be participants, and could intercede to Christ for mankind.[6]

Stylistically, the icon points to a date in the late eighteenth century. The dark-brown tones of the flesh, the calligraphic rendering of the eyebrows and nose, the absence of highlights, the muted red color, the rather melancholy and monotonous expression—all are found in late eighteenth-century icons. More particularly, the grouping of the figures and the style recall an icon of around 1800 in Recklinghausen.[7]

The *oklad* seems to be of a slightly later date, although the ornament on the upper and lower parts of the frame finds its parallel in works of the second half of the eighteenth century in a variety of media.[8] It is made to fit the composition, as the festoon of clouds in the representation of the Holy Trinity shows. It is echoed on the *oklad*.

The icon lacks the freedom and dynamic qualities of earlier icons. The figures seem to be frozen and the faces are repetitious in expression. The work exemplifies the deficiencies of the later icon painters who depended on earlier models—the elongated figures of John and Mary and her silhouette-like appearance are echoes of the great Moscow masters, but these painters were unable to renew an art which had already declined.

The actual wooden panel originally consisted of two pieces glued together. Later, the panel was strengthened by joining the pieces with an S-shaped metal rivet in the upper and lower part. Possibly the *oklad* was added at this time to further secure the panel.

6. Skrobucha, *Russ. Heilige*, pp. 26ff; cf. Aleksander S. Pushkin, *Boris Godunov* (Philip L. Barbour, trans., New York, 1953), pp. 25, 27.
7. Skrobucha, *Sammlung Popoff*, pp. 75 (cf. especially the figure of Christ), 76, 83.
8. Cf. Charles Roll, *Continental Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century* (Toronto, 1964), fig. 50d; A. L. Kaganovich, *Splendors of Leningrad* (New York, 1969), figs. 102–103; Helmuth Th. Bossert, ed., *Geschichte des Kunstgewerbes*, 6 (Berlin, 1935), pp. 176ff.

Number 20

20. The Miraculous Draft of Fishes

Russian (Western manner)
18th–19th century
Tempera on wood
6 1/4 × 6 1/4 inches (15.8 × 15.8 cm.)
Acc. no. 37.1.17

The figure of Christ is the focal point of the composition. He is seated on the prow of a dark-brown boat with ivory-white sails. Dressed in a gold mantle, Christ blesses with his right hand and points to the net with his left. Of the three disciples who are in the ship with him, two attempt to lift the net from the water. The one to the right bows deeply over the edge and drags in the net. His garb is similar in color to that of Christ's. Three other disciples stand on the shore to the left of Christ. The first is dressed in a vermilion tunic, the rest are in green.

In the background there is another sailing boat similar to the principal one. It is sailing towards a distant coast where architectural remains are still visible. The sky in the background is golden and the sea is green, the coast being a darker green.

The theme does not correspond to the narrative in the Gospel of St. John (21:1–12). In this icon, Christ is in the ship and does not stand on the shore as the Gospel specifies. Nor does the icon follow the traditional Eastern iconography.[1] The episode belongs to the appearances of Christ after the Resurrection; it seems to be combined or confused with the episode of Christ calming the storm, where he comes into the disciple's boat (John 6:15–21). The divergence from traditional iconography points to a late date, which is also confirmed by the style.

Although some reflections of the old style persist in the treatment of the faces, new characteristics predominate: the figures are foreshortened, attempts are made to depict the seascape correctly, and the colors no longer contrast. They are fused to create an illusion. These characteristics, together with the form of the ships, betray influences of seventeenth-century European Baroque models, which

1. Cf. Millet, *Iconographie*, pp. 571–576.

became even stronger in eighteenth-century icons. A comparison of this icon with frescoes in the monastery of Kostroma, of around 1685 and depicting Christ preaching from a boat, shows the compositional and iconographic relationships. But the frescoes retain, to a great extent, the stylization and linear treatment of earlier works, elements which are almost absent in this icon. We must, therefore, place the icon within the chronological limits of the next century.[2] The icon is a splendid example of the Westernization of Russian art in the eighteenth century.

2. Igor Grabar, ed., *Istorij russkago isckusstva*, 6 (Moscow, 1910), fig. on p. 493; cf. also a seventeenth- to eighteenth-century icon in Bolshakova, *Tretyakov*, fig. 100.

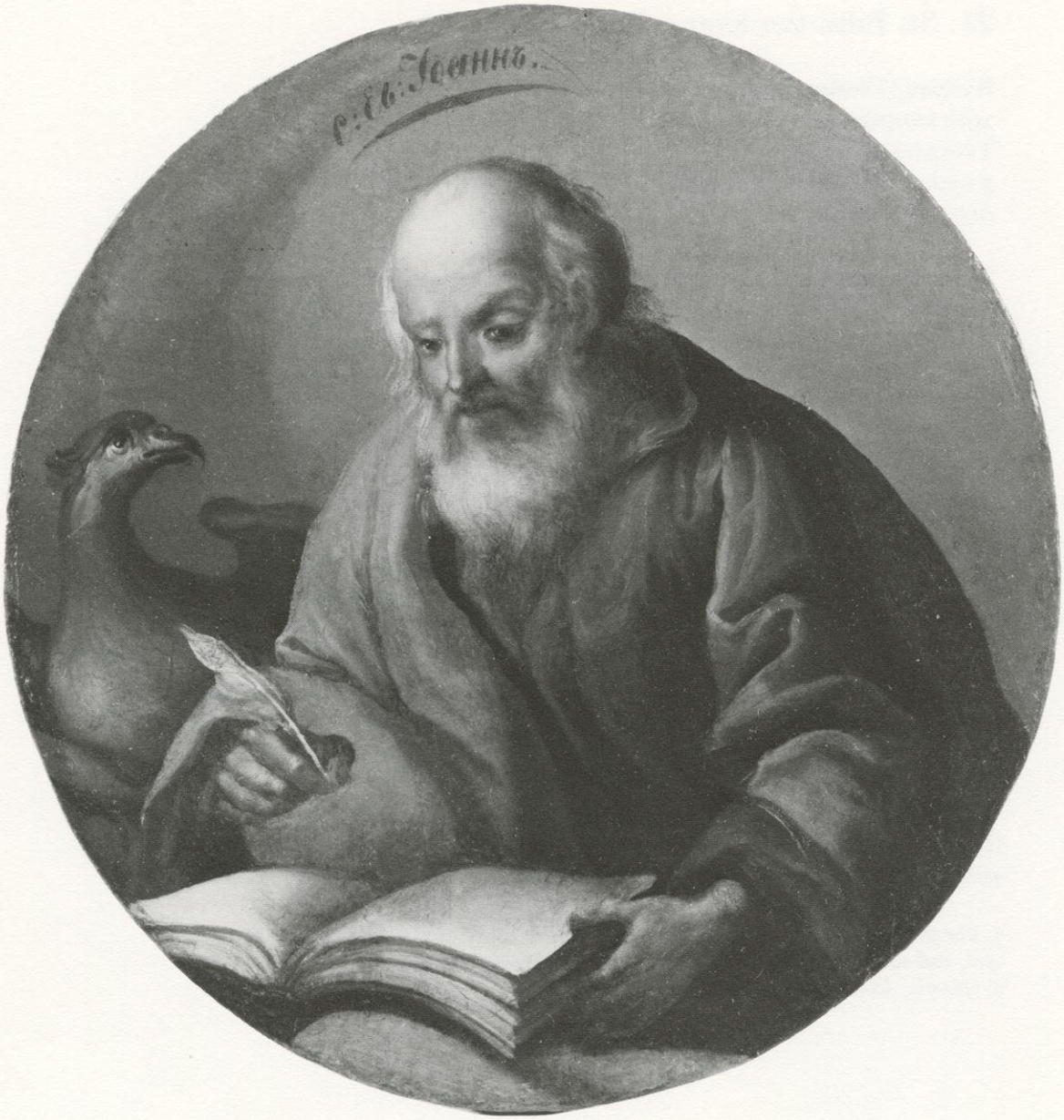
21. St. John the Evangelist

Russian (Western manner)
19th century
Tempera on wood
7 inches diameter (17.8 cm.)
Acc. no. 37.1.19

This manner of portraying St. John the Evangelist is not known in Orthodox Christian iconography. The apostle (his name is inscribed) is depicted absorbed in thought and about to write his Gospel with a feather pen which he holds in his right hand. With his other hand, he holds open a book on the table. An eagle, with beak towards the saint, is on his right side; the eagle is the apostle's symbol and an inspirational motif. The colors are strong but harmonious, blue-green and vermilion-red against a brown background.[1]

Although the panel was made in Russia, its iconography and style are completely Western. The modeling is based on the principles of chiaroscuro. The folds and amplitude of the drapery are Baroque in style and betray the use of a European Baroque model. Western iconography appeared in the repertory of Russian art in the seventeenth century, as two icons now in Moscow show.[2] Traces of the more austere Orthodox style, however, are still seen in these Moscow icons. These traces have completely disappeared in the Elvehjem Art Center icon, which should, therefore, be dated later. This work and Cat. no. 20 show the penetration of Western art influences in Russian art, and the subsequent decline of Russian icon painting.

1. For the eagle, see, in general, George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1955), pp. 13, 224–225, 273, 292, pls. 49, 74.
2. Onasch, *Icons*, no. 139.



Number 21

22. St. Theodore the Tyro

Bulgarian or Serbian? (Western manner)
19th century
Tempera on wood
9 3/4 × 7 1/2 inches (24.8 × 19.1 cm.)
Acc. no. 37.1.18

St. Theodore the Tyro, the Great Sufferer (as the inscription reads) is depicted in three-quarter view in military dress. In his right hand, he holds a shield of gold and gold-brown colors decorated with a shell-like ornament in the Rococo style. In his left, he holds a gold Latin cross and dark-green palm branch, symbol of his martyrdom. The cloak that falls diagonally on his breast is in gold and brown; its large folds reflect the style of Baroque masters. His gold-green helmet has an ornament similar to that of his shield and reflects eighteenth-century models. The saint wears a gold nimbus and stands against a blue-green sky with painted clouds and a cluster of golden rays coming from the upper right-hand corner of the picture. A typical late Baroque, gold-painted frame encloses the composition. The areas between the frame and the border of the panel are painted in deep red.

St. Theodore the Tyro, who served as a soldier (*teron*) in the army of the Emperor Maximian and proved his Christian faith by surviving several tortures, was burnt alive in 306. In the ninth century, the cult of a Theodore Stratelates (i.e., Theodore the General) appeared in Amaseia in Pontus. There is no doubt that he is identical with St. Theodore the Tyro and that the cult of the latter is the oldest. His cult spread into Italy, the Balkans, and Russia, and he became a highly venerated saint together with St. George and St. Demetrius of Thessalonica. As a military saint, he is represented in art in a military uniform which takes various forms. He is often included among the saints in the *chin* of the iconostasis.[1]

The representation of St. Theodore here is far removed from the traditional austere icons of this saint found in Eastern Christian art. The

1. For early representations, see Sotiriou, *Sinai*, 1, figs. 4, 189; 2, p. 21; for the iconostasis, see Skrobucha, *Recklinghausen Cat.* (1968), no. 365.

Number 22

helmet, the folds of the drapery, the modeling of the face, the ornament, and the diagonal lighting and illusionism of the sky are rendered in the Western manner. Although this combination of stylistic elements is found in works produced in various areas of Orthodox Christianity,[2] the painted frame and the colors recall a number of icons made in Bulgaria and Serbia in the nineteenth century. An attribution of the icon to one of these areas is most likely.[3] The work exemplifies the decline of icon painting in Bulgaria or in Serbia, as in Russia. During the Turkish domination, Greek masters were able to move and work in these areas, but in the nineteenth century the forms were oriented towards the West.

2. See Onasch, *Icons*, pls. 149, 151.
3. Skrobucha, *Ikonen-Munich*, no. 388; Svetozar Radojčić, *Icônes de Serbie et de Macédoine*, n.d., no. 103.