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To the Holy Syrian Icons, The Syrian children.....

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Table of figure:

Figure 1 Akathist icon, Yussef al-Mussawir, 1667, 48x 58, Museum of Sursock, Lebanon. .58	
Figure 2 The scheme of Annunciation icon, John of Damascus church, Damascus, 1865, 51.7x67.6cm, Ne'met Nasser Homs.	72
Figure3. The scheme of Annunciation, Beautiful Great, Sydnaia, George Monastery, Joseph Elian.	72
Figure 4 The scheme of Dormition of the Virgin icon, Sydnaia, 17 th	76
Figure 5 The scheme of Crucifixion icon, 1708, cat.44.....	78
Figure 6 Scheme of Jerusalem city, the Ascension icon, 1718, Aleppo, cat.25.	80
Figure 7 Scheme of presentation (meeting) icon, Aleppo, 1714, cat.7.....	82
Figure 8 The scheme of The Entry to Jerusalem, 1685, Latakia, Cat.19.....	83
Figure 10 the Scene 8; The Magi see the divinely moving star, Akathist, Aleppo, 1714.	84
Figure 9 the arched door of the Dormition church, Aleppo. (Ward, 2017)	84
Figure 11 The scheme of Sydnaia proskynetaria. Cat.64.	90
Figure 12 The scheme of Jerusalem, Saydanaiya proskynetaria, 1738-9, Saydanaiya Monastery.	91
Figure 13 The scheme of Hama proskynetarion. cat.66.	101
Figure 14 The central section, Jerusalem city and Holy Sepulchre, Proskynetaria, Ma'lula Monastery, 1827	108
Figure 15 The scheme of Ma'lula proskynetaria, 1827.	109
Figure 16 st George and scenes of his tortures, 40x51.5, private collection, Ne'meh Al Halabi, 1666. (After Agemain, 1993).....	115
Figure 17 St George rescuing the princess and the servant boy and scenes of his life, 75x89, Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, unknown iconographer, 19 th . (After DGAM Archives).116	
Figure 18 The scheme of Annunciation icon, Latakia, 1687.....	128
Figure 19 The scheme of three scenes, Akathist icon, Aleppo, 1714.....	129
Figure 20 The scheme of Annunciation icon, Sydnaia, 19 th	130
Figure 21 The scheme of Annunciation icon, 19 th , Georg Monastery, Al Homeyra.....	131
Figure 22 The scheme of Last supper, the schema the eighteenth century, Dormition Lady church.....	132
Figure 23 The scheme of Pentecost, the eighteenth century, the Lady-Orthodox church, Idleb.	135
Figure 25 The ciborium of altar, Catholic Syriac Mar Asia church, Aleppo.....	139
Figure 24 The ciborium of altar, Maronite church, Aleppo.....	139
Figure 26 The scheme of the entry of Lady in the Temple, Aleppo, 1718.....	140
Figure 27 The sanctuary, the Orthodox Dormition Lady church, Aleppo.....	141
Figure 28 The altar in the Holy of holies, St John of Damascus church, Damascus.	141
Figure 29Bema looking east, Basilica of the Holy Cross, Resafa. (After Loosley, 2012)	143
Figure 30 The apse, and the Synthronon, Basilica of the Holy Cross, Resafa. (After Loosley, 2012)	144
Figure 31 The scheme of Thomas Sunday icon, 1734, Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia,...	145
Figure 32 Simple dome. (Runciman, 1933).....	147
Figure 33 Simple dome of bath, detail of Forty Martyrs icon, Cat87.....	147

Figure 34 The scene 20th, Akathist, 1714, Aleppo.....	147
Figure 35 Compound dome with drum. (Runciman, 1933).....	147
Figure 36 The scheme of saint Simon Stylites the younger icon, Aleppo, 17th.....	149
Figure 37 The column with capital, Al adelia Mosque, 1544.A.D, (Othman, 2009)	149
Figure 38 The ambo, detail from the icon of the Elevation of the Venerable Cross, the eighteenth century, Saint Nicolas church, Latakia. Cat.3	150
Figure 39 Small round building, perhaps the Holy Sepulchre, Syria, A.D 500, Museum of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, in Denmark.....	153
Figure 40 The Holy Sepulchre Church, Jerusalem city, proskynetarion, Thekla Monastery-Ma'lula, tempera on canvas, Jerusalem school. (After DGAM Archives).....	156
Figure 41 Key index to the drawing of the Holy Sepulchre in icon-maps of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries	157
Figure 42 Key index to the drawing of the Holy Sepulchre in icon-maps of nineteenth century.	157
Figure 43 Al- Haram era, the Dome of the Rock, Al-Aqsa Mosque, Sydnaia proskynetarion, 1738-9, Sydnaia Monastery.	160
Figure 44 The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem city, the Entry into Jerusalem icon, details of Cat.22.....	160
Figure 45 Al-Aqsa Mosque, Sydnaia proskynetarion, 1738-9, Sydnaiya Monastery.	160
Figure 46 Al- Haram era, the Dome of the Rock, the fountain, Al-Aqsa Mosque, Ma'lula proskynetarion, Ma'lula monastery. 1827.	160
Figure 48 The sketch of Sinai Monastery (Shackley, 128).....	162
Figure 47 Sinai Monastery, details from Cat.66.....	162
Figure 49 Monastery of the Cross, detail from Sydnaia proskynetaria. Cat.64.....	164
Figure 50 Jaffa port, Sydnaia proskynetarion, 1738-9, Saydanaiya Monastery.	169
Figure 51 Jaffa port, Ma'lula proskynetarion, 1827, Ma'lula Monastery.	169
Figure 52 The scheme of Nativity icon, the eighteenth century, Saint Nicola church, Latakia.	183
Figure 53 The scheme of Entry to Jerusalem icon, Idleb, 18th.	214
Figure 54 The scheme of Ascension icon, Aleppo, 1718.	221
Figure 55 The scheme of Birth of St. John the Baptist icon, Latakia, 1743.....	239
Figure 56 The scheme of Last Judgment icon, Aleppo, 1708. 1. The Diesis, 2. Apostles, 3. Saints, 4Moses and the Jew people, 5. Adam and Eve kneeling, 6 the sea, 7. The Heavenly Jerusalem, 8. The five women, 9. Saint peter and saints, 10. The dead, 11. The graves, 12. The monster, 13. Hell.....	267
Figure 57 The scheme of Virgin of the Immaculate Conception icon, Aleppo, 1744.....	270
Figure 58 The scheme of Akathist, 1714, Dormition Lady church, Aleppo.	272
Figure 59 The scheme of Hodegetria and Akathist icon, Al Homeyra, 1765.....	283
Figure 60 The scheme of icon of two scenes, Sydnaia, 19 th	287
Figure 61 The scheme of Sts Peter and Paul icon, 1735, Latakia.....	304
Figure 62 scheme of St Demetrious icon , the seventeenth century, Hama.....	316
Figure 63 The scheme of Beautiful Gate, 1685, Al Homeyra.	318
Figure 64 The scheme of Forty Martyrs icon, Aleppo, 18 th . A: the forty martyrs, B: the bath, C the frozen lake.....	340

Tables

Table 1 the icons in the Archives of DGAM	19
Table 2 the situation of the Syrian churches which contain Melkite icons.	21
Table 3 Melkite icons and their situation.....	24
Table 4: Table of Annunciation icons, Syria, dating 17 th -18 th	75
Table 5 The icons of St. George in Syria, dated from 1685 to the first quarter of the Nineteenth century.....	123

Table of catalogue

Cat. 1 The Nativity of Mary, the eighteenth century, in situ in Saint Nicolas church, Latakia, tempera on wood, 30x40 cm, the iconographer; unknown. After DGAM Archives.....	183
Cat. 2 The nativity of Mary, Nineteenth century, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.....	185
Cat. 3 Elevation of the Venerable Cross, The eighteenth century, in situ in church of the church Saint Nicolas, Latakia, tempera on wood, 41x69.5 cm, the iconographer; unknown, (AfterDGAM Archives).....	186
Cat. 4 The Entry of Lady in the Temple,1718, in situ in church of the church Dormition Lady, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 67x90 cm, the iconographer; Hanania Al Halabi, (After Rand,2011).....	188
Cat. 5 The entry of Lady in the Temple, 1761, the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 34x44cm, the iconographer; unknown, (After DGAM Archives).....	190
Cat. 6 The entry of Lady in the Temple, 1773, the Lady-Orthodox church, Idleb, tempera on wood, 60x75cm, the iconographer; Aleppo school. (After Rand.2011).....	191
Cat. 7 The Presentation, 1718, in situ in church of the church Dormition Lady, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 67x90 cm, the iconographer; Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand 2011).....	192
Cat. 8 The Presentation, 1733, in situ in the Church of Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, tempera on wood, 34x43cm, the iconographer; Hanna Al-Qudsi. (After, DGAM Archives)	194
Cat. 9 The Presentation, 1734, in situ in the Our Lady Church, Latakia, tempera on wood, 34x43cm, the iconographer; Hanna Al-Qudsi. (After DGAM Archives)	196
Cat. 10 The Presentation, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church of The Lady -Orthodox, Idled, tempera on wood, 56x71cm, the iconographer; Aleppo School. (After Rand 2011) ..	198
Cat. 11 The Presentation, the eighteenth century, was in situ in the church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 37x48cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives.	199
Cat. 12 The Presentation, 1810, in situ in the church Forty Martyrs, Homs, tempera on wood, 34x50.50, the iconographer; Unknown. Courtesy: Forty Martyrs church.....	200
Cat. 13 The Presentation, 1814, in situ in the church Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	201
Cat. 14 The Annunciation,1687, in situ in the church of St George Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 70×54 (74.5×58.5) cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives.)..	203

Cat. 15 The Annunciation, 1731, Forty Martyrs, Armenian church, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 24x30cm the iconographer; Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)	205
Cat. 16 The Annunciation, The eighteenth century, in situ in the church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 38x48cm the iconographer; unknown.(After DGAM Archives)..	206
Cat. 17 The Annunciation, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas - Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 59x84cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (AfterDGAM Archives).....	207
Cat. 18 The Annunciation, the nineteenth century, in situ in the church Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.....	209
Cat. 19 The Entry to Jerusalem(palm Sunday), 1685, in situ in the church Saint George - Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 58.5 X 74 cm, the iconographer; attributed to Ne'met Allah Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)	211
Cat. 20 The Entry to Jerusalem(palm Sunday), the eighteenth century, the church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 32x48 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).....	213
Cat. 21 The Entry to Jerusalem(palm Sunday), the eighteenth century the church the Lady-Orthodox, Idleb, tempera on wood, 56x70 cm, the iconographer; Aleppo school. (After Rand.2011).....	214
Cat. 22 The Entry to Jerusalem, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas - Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 30x40 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).....	216
Cat. 23 The Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), the nineteenth century, in situ in the monastery of saint George, Homeyra, tempera on wood, 34x45 cm, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school. (After DGAM Archives).	218
Cat. 24 The Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), the nineteenth century, in situ in the monastery of saint George, Homeyra, tempera on wood, 34x45 cm, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school. (After DGAM Archives).	219
Cat. 25 The Ascension, 1718, in situ in the Dormition Lady church, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 70.5x98.5cm, the iconographer; Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand 2011).....	221
Cat. 26 The Pentecost, the eighteenth century, in situ in the Lady-Orthodox church, Idleb, tempera on wood, 60x75cm, the iconographer; aleppo school. (After Rand 2011).	223
Cat. 27 The Pentecost, 1753, in situ in the Forty Martyrs church, Homs, tempera on wood, 50x66cm, the iconographer; Girgis Al Halabi. (After Rand 2011).	224
Cat. 28 The Pentecost, 1778, in situ in Church of Sydnaia Monastery, Sydania, tempera on wood, 38.5x49 cm, the iconographer; deacon Joseph son Michael Elian. (After Zayat, 1987).	226
Cat. 29 The Dormition, 1641, in situ in the church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 42x65cm, the iconographer; Attributed to Youssef AL Halabi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate	228
Cat. 30 The Dormitio, the seventeenth century, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, the iconographer; unknown. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	230

Cat. 31 The Dormition, 1764, in situ in the monastery of St. George- Al Homeyra, tempera on wood, 39x52.5cm, the iconographer; Son of priest Michael Elian Al Shami. (AfterDGAM Archives).....	232
Cat. 32 The Dormition, the eighteenth century, private collection, George Antaki, tempera on wood, 73.5x96cm, the iconographer; Attributed to Noamat Allah Al Halabi. (private collection)	233
Cat. 33 The escape to Egypt , 1740, in situ in church of the church Sts Constantine and Helena, Yabrod, tempera on wood, 31x37.5 cm, the iconographer; Michael of Damascus. (After La Croix & Emery .2009).	235
Cat. 34 The escape to Egypt, the eighteenth century, it was in situ in church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 60x77cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	237
Cat. 35 Birth of St. John Baptist, 1734, in situ in church of the church The Lady –Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 41.5x49 cm, Hanna Al-Qudsi. (AfterDGAM Archives).....	238
Cat. 36 Birth of St. John Baptist, 1743, in situ in church of the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 41x49.5 cm, Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	239
Cat. 37 Birth of St. John Baptist, the eighteenth century, in situ in Dormition church, Aleppo, tempera on wood. (After Rand.2011).	240
Cat. 38 The Tabernacle(last supper), 1797, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, from wood, Deacon Joseph Elian. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	241
Cat. 39 Last supper, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 25x40 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	243
Cat. 40 Last supper, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 26x(34-22.5) cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).....	244
Cat. 41 Last supper, the eighteenth century, in situ in the monastery of St. George- Al Homeyra, tempera on wood, 36x51cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	245
Cat. 42 Last supper, the eighteenth century, in situ in church of Dormition Lady, tempera on wood, 47x68 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	246
Cat. 43 Whashing of Feet, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 26x (34-22.5) cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (AfterDGAM Archives).....	247
Cat. 44 The Crucifixion, 1708, in situ in Dormition church, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 70x80cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).	248
Cat. 45 The Crucifixion, 1713, in situ in the church Saint Andrew-Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 49x68 cm, the iconographer unknown, the iconographer; Unknown. (AfterDGAM Archives).....	250
Cat. 46 The Crucifixion, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 30x40 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	252

Cat. 47 The Crucifixion, the nineteenth century in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	254
Cat. 48 Lamentation of Christ, the eighteenth century, in situ in the lower church of St George Monastery, Al Homeyra 36x50 cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	255
Cat. 49 Thomas Sunday, the seventeenth century, in situ in Dormition Church, Aleppo, 45x45 cm, Attributed to Hanania Al Halabi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	257
Cat. 50 Thomas Sunday, 1719, in situ in Dormition Church, Aleppo, 65x86 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand 2011).	258
Cat. 51 Thomas Sunday, 1733, in situ in The Lady –Orthodox Church, Latakia, 33.5x43.5 cm, Hanna Al-Qudsi. (After DGAM Archives).	260
Cat. 52 Thomas Sunday, 1734, in situ in Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, 35x43cm, Hanna Al-Qudsi. (After DGAM Archives).	261
Cat. 53 Thomas Sunday, the eighteenth century, in situ in The Saint Nicolas -Orthodox Church, Latakia, 30x40 cm, Attributed to Hanania Al Halabi. (After DGAM Archives).	262
Cat. 54 Thomas Sunday, the eighteenth century, in situ in the Lady of Entry Church, Hama, 30x48 cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	263
Cat. 55 The Lady of spring, 1735, in situ in the upper church of St George Monastery, Al Homeyra, 38.5x48.5 cm, the iconographer unknwon. (After DGAM Archives).	264
Cat. 56 The Lady of spring, 1743, in situ in the Lady orthodox church, Latakia, 32x42.5, Issa Al Qudsi. (AfterDGAM Archives).	265
Cat. 57 The Lady of spring, the eighteenth century, in situ in Saint Nicolas -Orthodox church, Latakia, 35x41, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	266
Cat. 58 Last Judgment, 1708, in situ in the Armenian Forty Martyrs Church, Aleppo, 250x300 cm, Ne'mett Allah Al and his son Hanania AL Halabi. (After Rand.2011).	267
Cat. 59 Last Judgment, 1708, in situ in the Armenian Forty Martyrs Church, Aleppo, 250x300 cm, Ne'mett Allah Al and his son Hanania AL Halabi. (After Rand.2011).	270
Cat. 60 Akathist, 1714, in situ in Dormition Church, Aleppo, 86x65.5 cm, Ne'mett Allah Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).	272
Cat. 61 Hodegetria and Akathist, 1765, in situ in the lower church of St George Monastery, Al Homeyra 68,6x91 cm, Girgis Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).	283
Cat. 62 Icon of two scenes(The entry of Lady in the Temple, The nativity of Mary), the nineteenth century in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	287
Cat. 63 Icon of four scenes(Tomah Sunday, Ascension, Sts Peter and Paul, Cosmas and Damian), the beginning of nineteenth century in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	289
Cat. 64 proskeyntarion, the icon with the topography of the Holy land , 1738-39, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on canvas, 90x125 cm, the iconographer; Issa Al Qodsi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	290

Cat. 65 proskeyntarion, the icon with the topography of the Holy land, 1748, was in the Lady of entry church, Hama, tempera on canvas, 80x123cm, the iconographer: unknown. (After DGAM Archives).....	292
Cat. 66 proskeyntarion, the icon with the topography of the Holy land, 1827, St Thekla Monastery-Ma'lula, tempera on canvas, 80x120 cm, the iconographer: Jerusalem school. (After DGAM Archives).....	294
Cat. 67 Saint Simon Stylites the younger Before 1667, in situ in the Dormition church, Aleppo, 78.5x116 cm, Attributed to Yousef AL Halabi. (After Rand.2011).....	296
Cat. 68 The Ascension of the Prophet Elijah, the Seventeenth century, Saint George –Orthodox Church, Latakia 34x40 cm, Aleppo School. (After DGAM Archives).	299
Cat. 69 St John Baptist and scenes of his life, the eighteenth century, in situ in the Dormition church, Aleppo, 72.5x102.5cm, Attributed to Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).....	300
Cat. 70 Beheaded of Saint John the Baptist, 1767, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, 81x111cm, The Iconographer: deacon Joseph son Michael Elian. (After Zayat, 1987).	302
Cat. 71 Sts Peter and Paul, 1735, in situ in Saint George –Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on canvas, 51x68 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After DGAM Archives).	304
Cat. 72 SS Peter and Pau, The eighteenth century, in situ in the upper church of St George Monastery, Al Homeyra 33.5x48 cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	306
Cat. 73 Sts Peter and Paul, The eighteenth century, was in situ in the Lady of Entry church, Hama, 38x49 cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	307
Cat. 74 SS Peter and Paul, the nineteenth century, in situ in the Saint George –Orthodox Church, Latakia, 24x29cm, the iconographer; unkown. (After DGAM Archives).	308
Cat. 75 St Peter in the prison, 1811, in situ in the upper church in the St George Monastery, Al Homeyra, 25x33.5 cm, Michael Polychronis school. (After DGAM Archives).	309
Cat. 76 Jacob's ladder, 1765, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, 83x113.5cm, Silvestre Of Antioch. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.....	310
Cat. 77 John Climax, 1811, in situ in the Sydnaia monastery, Sydnaia, temper on wood, 45x63 cm,Michael of Crete. (After, La Croi&Emery, 2006).	312
Cat. 78 St. Barbara, 1714, the church of Dormition Lady, Aleppo, 44x64cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)	314
Cat. 79 St Demetrious , the seventeenth century, was in The Lady of Entry church, Hama, 86x119cm, Aleppo school.(After DGAM Archives).....	316
Cat. 80 Beautiful Gate(George and Demetrious), 1685, the lower church in the St George Monastery, Al Homeyra, 85x120 cm, Nomaat Allah Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).....	318
Cat. 81 St George combating the dragon, 1706, in situ in the church of Dormition Lady, Aleppo, 60.5x70.5cm, Noamat Allah Al Halabi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.....	321
Cat. 82 St George combating the dragon, 1706, in situ in the church St. Elias of Maronite, Aleppo, 99.2x142.8 cm, Noamat Allah Al Halabi. (After, La Croix&Emery, 2006).	323
Cat. 83 St George combating the dragon, 1717, the Armenian Forty Martyrs church, Aleppo, 100x139 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. .(After Rand.2011).....	325

Cat. 84 St George combating the dragon, rescuing the princess, 1765, the Sydnaia monastery, Sydnaia, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, Silvestre Of Antioch. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	327
Cat. 85 St George and scenes of his life, the eighteenth century, was in the Entry Lady church, Hama, 40x51cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).	329
Cat. 86 Theodore and scenes of his tortures, 1734, Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, 66x81 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)	330
Cat. 87 The Forty Martyrs, 1706, the church of Dormition Lady, Aleppo, 36x45cm, Attributed to Ne'met Allah Al Halabi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.	333
Cat. 88 The Forty Martyrs, 1732, the lower church in the St George Monastery, Al Homeyra, 54x64 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After, Rand.2011)	335
Cat. 89 The Forty Martyrs, the eighteenth century, the Lady-Orthodox church, Idleb, 72x90 cm, tempera on wood, Aleppo school, (After DGAM Archives).	337
Cat. 90 The Forty Martyrs, the eighteenth century, the Lady-Orthodox church, Latakia, 35.5x46 cm, tempera on wood, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives)	338
Cat. 91 The Forty Martyrs, the eighteenth century, the church of Dormition Lady, Aleppo, 36x47cm, Aleppo school. (After DGAM Archives).....	340

Contents

Acknowledgments.....	3
Table of figure:	4
Tables.....	6
Table of catalogue.....	6
Contents	11
Abstract.....	16
Introduction.....	17
1. Historical Introduction.....	25
1.1 Syria During the Ottoman Period, Aleppo And Damascus.....	25
1.2 Christian Communities In Syria During Ottoman Period.	31
1.2.1 Millet System.....	34
1.2.2 Melkite Church during Ottoman period.	36
2. Melkite Art During 1650-1825.....	46
2.1 The Reasons of Melkite Renaissance Of Icons.....	46
2.2 The Melkite Art During 17-18 Centuries.	58
2.3 Melkite Icons Features.	63
3. Analysis of Various Icons and the Architectural Background	67
3.1 Analysis of Narrative icons	67
3.1.1 The Annunciation.....	68
3.1.2 The Dormition.....	76

3.1.3	<i>The Crucifixion</i>	78
3.1.4	<i>The Ascension:</i>	79
3.1.5	<i>The Presentation into the Temple</i>	80
3.1.6	<i>The Entry To Jerusalem</i>	83
3.2	Analysis Of <i>Proskynetaria</i> Icons.	85
3.2.1	<i>The Proskynetarion As A Pilgrimage Object:</i>	85
3.2.2	<i>The Prototype Of The Proskynetaria:</i>	87
3.2.3	<i>Proskynetaria In Syria</i>	88
3.3	Analysis Of Individual Icons, Saint Georg Icon As An Example.....	112
3.3.1	<i>The Architectural Background In The Vita Icons Of St George And Passion Scenes</i>	114
3.3.2	<i>The Architectural Background On The Typical Scenes Of St George</i>	117
4.	Reverse Perspective and architecture in Melkite icons	124
4.1	Reverse perspective meaning	125
4.2	Analysis of Various Melkite Icons.....	126
4.2.1	<i>The Annunciation</i>	127
4.2.2	<i>The Last Supper</i>	132
4.2.3	<i>The Pentecost</i>	133
5.	The Architectural representations at background and foreground of Melkite icon.....	138
5.1	The architectural elements and the local architectural impacts.....	138
5.1.1	<i>Ciborium and Altar</i>	139
5.1.2	<i>Bema or Synthronon</i>	142
5.1.3	<i>Apse and Dome</i>	145
5.1.4	<i>Columns</i>	148
5.1.5	<i>Ambo</i>	150
5.1.6	<i>Fountains and Basins</i>	151
5.2	Architectural scenes	152
5.2.1	<i>The representations of historical buildings</i>	152
5.2.2	<i>The representation of monastery</i>	161
5.2.2	<i>The representations of cities in Melkite icons</i>	165
	The results.....	172
	The conclusion.....	173
	Glossary of Terminology	176
	Appendices.....	180
	The catalogue.....	183
1-	Nativity of Mary, 18 th C, Latakia.....	183
2-	Nativity of Mary, 19 th C, Sydnaia.....	185

3-	Elevation of the Venerable Cross, 18thC, Latakia.....	186
4-	Entry of Lady in the Temple, 1718, Aleppo.	188
5-	Entry of Lady in the Temple, 1761, Hama	190
6-	Entry of Lady in the Temple, 1773, Idleb.....	191
7-	The Presentation into the Temple, 1714, Aleppo.	192
8-	The Presentation into the Temple, 1733, Latakia.	194
9-	The Presentation into the Temple, 1734, Latakia.	196
10-	The Presentation into the Temple, 18 th C, Idleb.....	198
11-	The Presentation into the Temple, 18thC, Hama.	199
12-	The Presentation into the Temple, 1810, Homs.....	200
13-	The Presentation into the Temple, 1814, Sydnaia.....	201
14-	The Annunciation, 1687, Latakia.....	203
15-	The Annunciation, 1731, Aleppo.	205
16-	The Annunciation, 18thC, Hama.....	206
17-	The Annunciation, 18 th C, Latakia.	207
18-	The Annunciation, 19 th C, Sydnaia.	209
19-	The Entry into Jerusalem, 1685, Latakia.....	211
20-	The Entry into Jerusalem, 18 th C, Hama.	213
21-	The Entry into Jerusalem, 18 th C, Idleb.....	214
22-	The Entry into Jerusalem, 18thC, Latakia.....	216
23-	The Entry into Jerusalem, 18 th C, Al Homeyra.....	218
24-	The Entry into Jerusalem, 19 th C, Sydnaia.....	219
25-	The Ascension, Aleppo, 1718.	221
26-	The Pentecost, 18 th C, Idleb.	223
27-	The Pentecost, 1753, Homs.....	224
28-	The Pentecost, 1778, Sydnaia.	226
29-	The Dormition Of The Virgin, 1641, Hama.....	228
30-	The Dormition Of The Virgin, 17thc, Sydnaia.	230
31-	The Dormition Of The Virgin, 1764, Al Homeyra.	232
32-	The Dormition of the Virgin in Private Collection, 18 th Century.....	233
33-	The flight into Egypt, 1740, Yabrod.	235
34-	The flight into Egypt, 18thC, Hama.....	237
35-	Birth Of St. John The Baptist, 1734, Latakia.....	238
36-	Birth Of St. John The Baptist, 1743, Latakia.	239
37-	Birth Of St. John The Baptist, 18 th Century, Aleppo.	240

38-	The Tabernacle (Last Supper), 1797, Sydnaia.	241
39-	Last Supper, 18thc, Latakia.....	243
40-	Last supper, 18thC, Latakia.....	244
41-	Last Supper, 18thC, Al Homeyra.	245
42-	Last Supper, 18thC, Aleppo.	246
43-	Washing of Feet, 18thC, Latakia.....	247
44-	The Crucifixion, 1708, Aleppo.	248
45-	The Crucifixion, 1713, Latakia.	250
46-	The Crucifixion, 18 th century, Latakia.	252
47-	The Crucifixion, 19 th century, Sydnaia.	254
48-	Lamentation of Christ, 18thC, Al Homeyra.	255
49-	Thomas Sunday, 17thC, Aleppo.	257
50-	Thomas Sunday, 1719, Aleppo.	258
51-	Thomas Sunday, 1733, Latakia.	260
-52	Thomas Sunday, 1734, Latakia.	261
53-	Thomas Sunday, 18thC, Latakia.	262
54-	Thomas Sunday, 18thC, Hama.....	263
55-	The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring, 1735, Al Homeyra.....	264
56-	The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring, 1743, Latakia.	265
57-	The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring, 18thC, Latakia.....	266
58-	Last Judgment, 1708, Aleppo.....	267
59-	Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, Aleppo, 1744.	270
60-	<i>Akathist</i> , 1714, Aleppo.	272
61-	Hodegetria And Akathist, 1765, Al Homeyra.....	283
62-	Icon Of Two Scenes, 19thc, Sydnaia.	287
63-	Icon Of Four Scenes, 19thc, Sydnaia.	289
64-	The Proskeyntarion, 1738-39, Sydnaia.	290
65-	The proskeyntarion, 1748, Hama.	292
66-	The Proskeyntarion, 1827, Ma'lula.....	294
67-	St Simeon Stylites The Younger, 17thc, Aleppo.	296
68-	The Ascension Of The Prophet Elijah, 17thc, Latakia.....	299
69-	St John Baptist And Scenes Of His Life, 18 th C, Aleppo.....	300
70-	Beheaded Of St John The Baptist, 1767, Sydnaia.....	302
71-	SS Peter And Paul, 1735, Latakia.	304
72-	SS Peter And Paul, 18thc, Al Homeyra.	306

73-	SS Peter And Paul, 18thc, Hama.....	307
74-	SS Peter And Paul, 19thc, Latakia.	308
75-	St Peter In The Prison, 1811, Al Homeyra.....	309
76-	Jacob's Ladder, 1765, Sydnaia.	310
77-	John Climax (Climacus), 1811, Sydnaia.	312
78-	St Barbara, 1714, Aleppo.	314
79-	St Demetrius, Hama, 17 th	316
80-	The Beautiful Gate (Sts George and Demetrius), 1685, Al Homeyra.....	318
81-	St George Combating The Dragon And Rescuing The Princess, 1706, Aleppo.....	321
82-	St George Combating The Dragon And Rescuing The Princess, 1706, Aleppo.....	323
83-	St George combating the dragon, rescuing the princess, 1717, Aleppo.....	325
84-	St George Combating The Dragon, Rescuing The Princess, 1765, Sydnaia.	327
85-	St George And Scenes Of His Tortures, 18thc, Hama.	329
86-	St Theodore And Scenes Of His Tortures, 1734, Latakia.	330
87-	The Forty Martyrs, Aleppo, 1706.....	333
88-	The Forty Martyrs, Al Homeyra, 1732	335
89-	The Forty Martyrs, Idleb, 18thc	337
90-	The forty Martyrs, 18thC, Latakia.	338
91-	The forty Martyrs, 18thC, Aleppo.....	340
	References.....	342

Abstract

To put it in the simplest of terms: in the beginnings of the seventeenth century, the Melkite renaissance had begun during domination Ottoman by the religious framework of Islam, in Syria, and especially in Aleppo. Where Aleppo has restored the art of icon in Melkite church that took a remarkable place in the history of the post-Byzantine art. In this dissertation I discuss the architecture in Melkite Art utilizing 91 icons as a case study. These icons will be catalogued and explained one by one. I will begin by talking about the relationship between architectural backgrounds and the depicted subject which will be divided into three types; narrative, the proskynetaria, and individual icons. In the next section I will be discussing the Reverse perspective, and how the Melkite artist used it. In the latter part, which is the main goal of this dissertation, the focus will be the types of architectural representations, questioning the way in which the Melkite artist depicted architectural elements such as domes, bema, columns, etc. Discussing how they represented historical buildings such as the Holy Sepulchre, monasteries, and to conclude general thoughts about the repetition of architectural elements in Melkite art in Syria during the Ottoman period.

Introduction

Melkite Religious art has been of increasing interest to art historians in recent years and new attempts are being made to define its characteristic features and to evaluate it through modern art historical approaches. The result has been a greater appreciation for the aesthetic values of Melkite art and deeper sympathy with its objectives. Nearly 50 years ago Virgil Ganda, a Romanian scholar, attributed the term “Melkite icons” to the icons that were produced in the See of the Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria Patriarchates. His source was the derisive expression “Melkite” used by heretic Nestorian Christians to refer to communities which remained loyal to the Byzantine State Church after the early theological disputes over the nature of Christ. It was used when he was a consultant for an exhibition of icons from Lebanese and Syrian collections produced by the Sursock Museum of Beirut in May 1969.

As early as the 15th century, under the reign of Mehmet the Conqueror, icons have been imported, especially from Crete. The renewal of shapes and colors in icon production done in Syria, first at Aleppo, drawing inspiration from Greece and the Balkans then from Islamic and Ottoman art around the second half of 17th century.

This dissertation grew out of my earlier book and master thesis on the Aleppo school of Icons. The conviction grew on me that the Melkite art deserved a study of its own. Not that there are no books or studies about it—the pictorial art of the Melkite living under the rule of the Ottoman period has been made the subject of a separate study— but the architecture in Melkite art has not yet been systematically studied in any depth, for it is generally assumed that Melkite art departs from the accepted language of post-byzantine¹ iconography only occasionally and incidentally.

An icon could be a mosaic, or a coin; it could be elaborate or simple, one of a kind or mass produced.² The word “icon”, in our search, is associated with a portrait of a holy figure on wood panel, painted with tempera.

The sources for the study of the architecture of the Melkite icons in Syria are the portable paintings, which can broadly be divided into two heads: Icons of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, which can again be subdivided into two broad heads, Aleppo school’s icons, and the icons of independent artists. The second head is the icons of the first quarter of the nineteenth century. These icons are at churches in Syria, hanging on the walls of churches and on the iconostasis³, also there are some missed icons that exist in the archives of DGAM.

¹ The term “post-Byzantine” is used by many Byzantinists to indicate the work of artists Greek, Syrian, sirbian, which was done after 1453. They have accepted that the conquest of Constantinople by Mehmet II on May 20, 1453, was a date of exclusively historical significance and limited import as far as the continuity of the Byzantine artistic tradition is concerned.

² Kurt Weitzmann, *The icon: Holy images--sixth to fourteenth century* (New York: G. Braziller, 1978) 13ff.

³ It is a lattice screen of marble or wood that is decorated with icons and that, in byzantine churches, separates the sanctuary and the altar from the main body of the church. The two part are linked by three doors: two side doors and the so-called Beautiful Gate, or Holy door, in the middle. Erwin Fahlbusch and G. W. Bromiley, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity. Editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et Al.]; Translator and English-Language Editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley; Statistical Editor, David B. Barrett* (2 vols., Grand Rapids, Mich., Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001-2008) 648

Apart from these icons, which are the most important source material for the study of the architectural scenes, there is another type of material which is also as important as these portable paintings. There are icons that exist in different places in private holdings that are important to this study. But a study of these icons, isolation might not be enough to identify some features of architecture properly unless we have to refer to the icons which were signed by family of Youssef Al- Halabi, and they are existing in Lebanon. For a proper understanding and appreciation of the architectural elements and scenes of these icons in Syria we must refer to these icons in Lebanon; especially those which are existing at Balamand monastery, St John Baptist at Al- Khinshara, and private collections. These groups were chosen because these monasteries were culturally and religiously connected with Aleppo city, as well as there having been many monks from Aleppo at these monasteries.

In Aleppo city, the important churches are Orthodox, Maronite, and Armenian. Additionally, there are icons of the Aleppo school in the private collections of Aleppo's houses such as the George Antakya collection and the Edvin Khori collection.

- (1) Aleppo city: I visited Aleppo city, Gdeydé (the new) Quarter, and there are four churches, with icons of Aleppo school, for instance; The Dormition Lady of orthodox church, Forty Martyrs of Orthodox Arminian Church, the Lady church of Catholic, and St. Elias of Maronite church.
- (2) Hama and Idleb Cities: there is the Church of the Lady of Entry and Church of the Lady at Idleb, both of which belong to the Orthodox Church.
- (3) Latakia City: there are five Orthodox churches; Orthodox Archbishopric, St. George, St. Nicolas church, the lady church, and St. Andrew church.

Reference will be made to the icons in Sydnaia churches near to Damascus and Monastery of St. George at Al Homeyra near to Homs. These icons are no doubt the most important and dependable source material for this study, because they are situated in the places belonging to the area of study. The other place where the icons of Aleppo can be found is the church of Forty Martyrs at Homs, and there are many icons in Lady Church at Dair Atyah.

The literary- religious background of the icons can be studied through the following texts, which seem to have given the major guidance to the iconographies.

- (1) The liturgical texts of the Orthodox church are replete with references to the iconic types and different writings pertaining to Christ and many of the Saints.

There are numerous liturgical texts dating to the 17th and 18th centuries, like The *Horology* "Book of Hours," containing the fixed texts of the services of the Daily Cycle. The *Synaxarium* is the collection of short lives of saints and some ecclesiastic events.

- (2) Travel Literature of church and ecclesial manuscripts contain veritable source materials for the interpretation of the themes.

The most important of these texts is “Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch,” written by his Attendant archdeacon, Paul of Aleppo, in Arabic.⁴

It is clear from the outside that my argument is based mainly on icons of the eighteenth century, in other words, it presents iconographical school of this art. It intends to convey an idea of Melkite icons scrutinized in their historical context. The Melkite art has been of increasing interest to art historians in recent years and new attempts are being made to interpret its character.

The region	Icon
Aleppo	86
Damascus	228
Deir Atia	60
Hama	125
Homeyra	57
Idleb	45
Latakia	75
Ma'lula	81
Qara	36
Rif Damascus	65
Swyda and Daraa	24
Sydnaia	90
Tartuos	140
Yabrod and Nabek	85
The Archives of icons in DGAM	1197

Table 1 the icons in the Archives of DGAM

From the *the table 1* it emerges that the archives of icons in DGAM has about 1197 icons which spread in all of Syria, both in churches and monasteries. These icons belong to many different iconic schools, Melkite, Russian and Greek, dated between 17th and 19th centuries. They are very diverse in both depicted themes and measurements. Thus, for studying the Architecture at the Melkite icons in Syria from the middle of seventeenth until the beginnings of nineteenth centuries, we omit every icon that does not belong to Melkite art and does not date to our studied period between 1650-1830, then after observing all these icons, we found 220 icons. In

⁴ Paul was born in 1627; His father, Patriarch Macarius. He inherited the love of study and research. He was ordained a reader by his father, then bishop of Aleppo, in the Cathedral of St. Mary at Damascus after his pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Shortly afterwards, on 17 February 1644, Paul was married, he was 17 years old. On 21 November of the same year, he was promoted archdeacon of Aleppo, Damascus and all the Patriarchate of Antioch. Paul spent all his life with his father, he was his companion in all his travels and his appointed historian. He died on July 1669, on his return from the second voyage from Macarius to Russia, a month after their arrival in Georgia. The fact is attested in a letter from Macarius to Patriarch Joseph of Moscow, dated the same day. Athanase III Dabbas causes him to die poisoned on June 22 vs. of the same year 17 Joseph Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Eglise melchite du Ve au XXe siècle* (1 vol., Louvain: Peeters, 1979) 219

the end, there are 91 icons Melkite icons that have architectural backgrounds and date to our studied period.

The present work will focus on the following 91 icons in the catalogue. My study on the iconography of these icons will argue in favor of the thesis that there is a relationship between Melkite art and the local architecture of Aleppo and Syria.

Before studying the architecture in Melkite icons, the icons will have been classified by; the name of icon, the name of the church, the dimensions, the dating, and the iconographer. Moreover, the situation of each of them, whether they are existing, destroyed or stolen, has been classified, keeping in mind that the majority of churches has been destroyed as a result of the Syrian crisis, *see table. 2*; (27) icons were stolen and the fate of roughly (46) is unknown. See table.3.

Moreover, this catalogue of icons has the explanations for 92 icons, then drawing schemes of (32) icons to clarify the architectural scenes and elements. This assists in demonstrating how Melkite iconographers represented architectural backgrounds and foreground in Melkite art. This dissertation will fall into five various lengths chapters, the first two chapters are dedicated to understanding the renaissance of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century Melkite communities in Syria.

The third chapter will deal with architectural backgrounds of Melkite icons. By analyzing various icons within the catalogue, the architectural backgrounds can be understood. Three types of icons can be observed; narrative, proskynetaria and individual icons. Some icons have an architectural background or just an architectural element that forms the scene of the event or refers to it. So, there is clearly some relationship between the icons and architecture scenes. Take the festal icon for instance, an architectural scene or at least, just an architectural element like a column, wall, etc. must be visible. The painted topic and its context shape one another and changes in both the topic and architecture can bring profound changes the scene. Therefore, when artists chose the topic of the icon, they need to use architecture elements to define the space and the intended location. Thus, for discussing that, the fifth chapter will be devoted to the analyzing these architectural features in Melkite Art.

In addition, a full chapter, the fourth, is devoted to the perspective drawing largely on the work of other scholars, a repertory is analyzed various icons which illustrated by reverse perspective, as well as of those portraying narrative scenes. These narrative icons will be as follows; the Annunciation, the Last Supper, and the Pentecost icons.

The fifth chapter will be devoted to the analyzing the architectural elements and the scenes in Melkite icons. As soon as we begin to look at the architectural scenes and elements in that light, we can realize both richness and the vast amount of freedom that the Melkite artist put at our disposal. The better we know and understand, as from inside, the creative power of Melkite artists which has manifested itself in the architectural forms we have inherited. Concluding, as the results indicates, Melkite architectural scenes can be classified into three broad categories, Generic representations, representations of specific architectural and symbolic representations.

The goal of this thesis is to explore the representations of architecture in Melkite art. The thesis's field of research encompassed the icons of archives DGAM, and some icons from private collections.

N	State	Church	church situation
1	Aleppo	Dormition Lady	Destruction of the church's stones
2	Aleppo	Forty Martyrs	Physical damage to the building + theft of its contents
3	Aleppo	St. Elias- Al Hamidiah	fine
4	Aleppo	St. Elias of Maronite	Physical damage to the building + theft of its contents
5	Aleppo	Catholic cathedral church	Damage to the building
6	Hama	the Lady of Entry	fine
7	Hama	The Lady (Syrian)	fine
8	Homs	St. George- Homeyra	fine
9	Homs	Forty Martyrs	Severe damage to the building
10	Idleb	the Lady-Orthodox	Armed attack + the destruction of all crosses and icons + theft of 11 registered archaeological icons + the destruction of all crosses and icons + theft of 11 registered archaeological icons
11	Latakia	Saint Nicolas -Orthodox	fine
12	Latakia	Orthodox Archbishopric	fine
13	Latakia	Saint Andrew- Orthodox	fine
14	Latakia	The Lady -Orthodox	fine
15	Latakia	Saint George -Orthodox	fine
16	Rif Dimashq	Sydnaia Monastery	fine
17	Rif Dimashq	Sts. Constantine and Helena, Yabrod	Physical damage to the building
18	Rif Dimashq	St Thekla Monastery-Ma'lula	fine
19	Rif Dimashq	Hagia Sophia- Sydnaia	fine
20	Rif Dimashq	Lady Church-Dair Atyah	fine
21	Rif Dimashq	St. George Monastery-Sydnaia	fine

Table 2 the situation of the Syrian churches which contain Melkite icons.

N	the name of icon	Date	The situation of icon
1	The nativity of Mary	18thC	restored
2	The nativity of Mary	19thC	need to restoration
3	Elevation of the Venerable Cross	18thC	need to restoration
4	The entry of Lady in the Temple	1718	unknown fate
5	The entry of Lady in the Temple	1761	missing
6	The entry of Lady in the Temple	1773	stolen
7	The presentation	1714	unknown fate
8	The presentation	1733	need to restoration
9	The presentation	1734	need to restoration
10	The presentation	18thC	stolen
11	The presentation	18thC	missing
12	The presentation	1810	need to restoration
13	The presentation	1814	need to restoration
14	The Annunciation	1687	need to restoration
15	The Annunciation	1731	unknown fate
16	The Annunciation	18thC	restored
17	The Annunciation	18thC	need to restoration
18	The Annunciation	19thC	need to restoration
19	the Entry into Jerusalem	1685	restored
20	the Entry into Jerusalem	18thC	missing
21	the Entry into Jerusalem	18thC	stolen
22	the Entry into Jerusalem	18thC	need to restoration
23	the Entry into Jerusalem	19thC	need to restoration
24	the Entry into Jerusalem	19thC	need to restoration
25	The Ascension	1718	unknown fate
26	Pentecost	1753	need to restoration
27	Pentecost	18thC	stolen
28	Pentecost	1778	need to restoration
29	The Dormition	1641	restored
30	The Dormition	17thC	restored
31	The Dormition	1764	need to restoration

32	The Dormition	18thC	need to restoration
33	The escape to Egypt	1740	restored
34	The escape to Egypt	18thC	missing
35	Birth of St. John Baptist	1734	need to restoration
36	Birth of St. John Baptist	1743	need to restoration
37	Birth of St. John Baptist	18thC	unknown fate
38	the Tabernacle(last supper)	1797-1798	need to restoration
39	The Last supper	18thC	need to restoration
40	The Last supper	18thC	need to restoration
41	The Last supper	18thC	need to restoration
42	The Last supper	19thC	unknown fate
43	Washing the Feet	18thC	need to restoration
44	The Crucifixion	1708	unknown fate
45	The Crucifixion	1713	need to restoration
46	The Crucifixion	18thC	need to restoration
47	The Crucifixion	18thC	need to restoration
48	Lamentation of Christ	18thC	need to restoration
49	Thomas Sunday	17thC	unknown fate
50	Tomats Sunday	1719	unknown fate
51	Thomas Sunday	1733	need to restoration
52	Thomas Sunday	1734	need to restoration
53	Thomas Sunday	18thC	need to restoration
54	Thomas Sunday	18thC	missing
55	The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring	1735	need to restoration
56	The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring	1743	need to restoration
57	The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring	18thC	need to restoration
58	the Last Judgment	1708	unknown fate
59	the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception	1744	unknown fate
60	Akathist	1714	unknown fate
61	Icon of two scenes	19th C	restored
62	Icon of two scenes	19th C	restored

63	Hodegetria and Akathist	1765	need to restoration
64	The proskynetarion	17thC	need to restoration
65	The proskynetarion	1748	missing
66	The proskynetarion	1827	unknown fate
67	Simon, who is from the miraculous mountain	before 1667	unknown fate
68	Ascension of the Prophet Elijah	17thC	need to restoration
69	St John Baptist and scenes of his life	18thC	unknown fate
70	the Beheaded of Saint John the Baptist	1767	restored
71	Sts Peter And Paul	1735	need to restoration
72	Sts Peter And Paul	18thC	need to restoration
73	Sts Peter And Paul	18hC	missing
74	Sts Peter And Paul	19thC	need to restoration
75	St peter in the prison	1811	need to restoration
76	Jacob's Ladder	1765	need to restoration
77	john Climacus	1811	restored
78	St Barbara	1714	unknown fate
79	St Dimitri	17thC	missing
80	the Beautiful Gate (George and Dimitri)	1685	restored
81	St George combating the dragon	1706	unknown fate
82	St George combating the dragon	1706	unknown fate
83	St George combating the dragon	1717	unknown fate
84	St George combating the dragon	1765	need to restoration
85	St George and scenes of his tortures	18thC	missing
86	Theodore and scenes of his tortures	1734	need to restoration
87	The Forty Martyrs	1706	unknown fate
88	The Forty Martyrs	1732	restored
89	The Forty Martyrs	18thC	stolen
90	The Forty Martyrs	18thC	need to restoration
91	The Forty Martyrs	18thC	unknown fate

Table 3 Melkite icons and their situation.

1. Historical Introduction

The following pages examine the political, religious and commercial environment in which the Arabic speaking Christians lived during Ottoman period. These factors produced a rich soil for a burst of Christian artistic activity, which would be called Melkite Renaissance.

At the beginning of this academic work I will be dividing my research material into two sections: the first section gives a panoramic history of Syria within its modern political borders. The second section elaborates on Christian communities during the Ottoman period and the Melkite community in Aleppo.

1.1 Syria During the Ottoman Period, Aleppo And Damascus

What is new and what is traditional in the history of Syria during the Ottoman sultanate, especially the years; 1650-1825? By understanding this period of history, that of Aleppo, will clarify the framework for the assessment of the social, economic and political characteristics of the age. Thus, revealing some of the aspects emerging of the Melkite icon in Aleppo that spread later too many cities and villages such as Damascus, Latakia, Hama and Homs. Moreover, it is essential for the Levant or so called Bilād al Shām history to be considered as two main periods: the first is when the empire was at its peak during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the second, is when the empire weakend and was described as the sick man. Throughout the Ottoman period geographical Syria and northern Iraq were linked both culturally and economically. They also shared similar political experiences. Three major caravan cities – Aleppo, Damascus and Mosul – dominated the region and after some initial indecision, the Ottomans created three provinces⁵, centered on each.⁶ Bilād al Shām was divided in three (*iyala/iyalat, pashalik*)⁷ in 1529; Aleppo, Damascus, and Tripoli.⁸ Saida (Sidon) became the second town in southern Bilād al Shām after Damascus and was closely connected to it. As the port city of Damascus and its hinterland, the *wali*⁹ of Sidon became dependent on the *wali* of Damascus.¹⁰

⁵ In Bilād al Shām, the Ottomans changed some of the administrative provinces in it, and they established Ayyala Sidon, Beirut and Safad, along with the three large Ayles such as Aleppo, Sham, and Tripoli. Ayyala consisted of the following Sanjak: Antioch, Orfa, Manbeg, Maara, Adna, Kulz, Saheremik, Musayaf, Birecik, Turkmen, Aleppo and Azaz. While Ayala al-Sham included: Jerusalem, Gaza, Nablus, Ajloun, Lagoon, Tadmur, Karak and Shobak, finally Ayyala of Tripoli consisted of Sanjak Hama, Homs, Salameh, Jabla, Lattakia, and the Hoson. Sahar Hanafi, *The commercial relations between Egypt and Greater Bilad Al Sham in the 18th century* (History of Egyptians, Egyptian General Book Authority, 2000) 14

⁶ Bruce Masters, *Semi-autonomous forces in the Arab provinces* (ed. Kate Fleet, Suraiya Faroqhi and Reşat Kasaba; The Cambridge history of Turkey, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008-2013) 186–206, at 189

⁷ in the 17th 18th centuries the synonymous eyalyt became the preferred use Gustav. Bayerle, *Pashas, begs and effendis: A historical dictionary of titles and terms in the Ottoman Empire / Gustav Bayerle* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1997) 166

⁸ The province of Tripoli in Syria established in 1593. *ibid.*, 153

⁹The governor-general of vilayet. By the eighteenth century the term vali replaced *beglerbegi*. *ibid.*, 164

¹⁰ Stefan Weber, *Space, Urban Institutions and Society in Ottoman Bilad al-Sham The Making of an Ottoman Harbour Town: Sidon/Saida from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (ed. Abdul-Karim Rafeq and Peter Sluglett; THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST ON: Syria and Bilad al-Sham under Ottoman rule; The Ottoman Empire and its heritage politics, society and economy v. 43, Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2010) 177–239, at 187

The boundaries of the *ilayets* were not stable.¹¹ In the seventeenth century, the military and administrative structure of the Syrian provinces changed significantly in comparison with the Ottoman golden age.¹² Although, Syria was divided into two provinces, with Aleppo and Damascus as their respective capital cities,¹³ in 1624 the sultan acknowledged Fakhr-al-Din as lord of the Arab lands from Aleppo to the borders of Egypt, under Ottoman suzerainty.¹⁴ The main challenge to Istanbul's authority in seventeenth-century Lebanon came from the Ma'n dynasty who claimed the Druze emirate. In the early eighteenth century, the dynasty's fortunes were in decline and the political future of southern Lebanon, uncertain. The major Arab cities of the Empire such as Cairo, Aleppo, Damascus, Tunis, and Algiers – overall grew and prospered in the period between the crises of the early seventeenth and the late eighteenth century, notwithstanding the inevitable occurrence.¹⁵ Damascus held the prestige both for having once served as Islam's capital under the Umayyad (681±750) and as the principal starting point for the annual pilgrimage caravan to the holy city of Mecca. It would be reasonable, therefore, for the sultans to recognize Damascus's regional position by naming its governor as the paramount governor of Syria. But events would prove that decision short sighted.¹⁶ The economy of Damascus flourished in the eighteenth century, but this prosperity was not total and not everyone shared in it equally. It was never able to play the same role that Aleppo had once played in regional trade because it was always susceptible to the depredations of the Bedouin. They attacked the hajj caravans, but also, the trade caravans bringing goods from Mount Lebanon and the Biqa' to Damascus. Caravans from as far away as Palestine and Basra were also subject to raids.¹⁷ So it was in a less favorable position than Aleppo or Cairo.

¹¹ In August 1516 the Ottoman Sultan Selim I defeated the Mamluk on the plain of Marj Dabiq, near Aleppo, and quickly conquered Syria. Then he swept quickly through the Levant, taking Aleppo (August 28), Hama (September 19), and Damascus (September 27), in each case being welcomed by the local populations and governors Donald E. Pitcher, *An Historical Geography of the Ottoman Empire: From earliest times to the end of sixteenth century* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972) 105, Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey: The rise of modern Turkey, 1808-1975 / Stanford J. Shaw, Ezel Kural Shaw* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) 84 Amnon Cohen et al., *The Ottoman Middle East: Studies in honor of Amnon Cohen / edited by Eyal Ginio and Elie Podeh* (The Ottoman Empire and its heritage; VOLUME 55) 93

¹² The boundaries of the elayets were not stable, such that, for example, in the eighteenth century the district of Jerusalem was for some time removed from the province of Damascus and put under the direct authority of the Sublime Porte. At the head of each province was the beylerbey (governor, Arabic wali) with the title of pasha. To prevent separatist tendencies, pashas were changed quite often, so they were in a hurry to squeeze as much money as they could out of their province as soon as possible. The pasha had broad military and administrative powers, having under his command the local administrative apparatus and armed forces. The rulers of sanjaks, sanjak-beys, enjoyed much the same absolute authority over their own territories.

¹³ Kafescioglu (1999, p 70)

¹⁴ PHILIP K. HITTI, *Syria: A Short History* (New York: MacMillan & Co Ltd, 1959) 221

¹⁵ From the perspective of the Ottoman provinces, André Raymond has attempted to show this. Khaled El-Rouayheb, "Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century,"

¹⁶ Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman and Bruce A. Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul / Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters* (Cambridge studies in Islamic civilization, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 21

¹⁷ Mohannad al-Mubaidin, *Aspects of the Economic History of Damascus during the First Half of the Eighteenth Century: Syria and Bilad al-Sham under Ottoman Rule Essays in honour of Abdul Karim Rafeq*, eds. Peter Sluglett, Stefan Weber, 43 v, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010 (ed. Peter Sluglett and Stefan Weber; 43 v; The Ottoman Empire and its heritage politics, society and economy; Leiden: Brill, 2010), at 146

At a distance from the great land and sea trade routes, Damascus had no easy access to the Mediterranean and had no extensive “hinterland.” Nevertheless, the city turned to its advantage the ottoman occupation, which led, as we have already seen, to considerable development of the pilgrimage, with Damascus as one of its rallying centers.¹⁸ The local families such as the al’Azm family can take much of the credit for implementing these reforms effectively: by encouraging some economic practices and discouraging others, they reversed the negative economic trends that had set in earlier.¹⁹ The province of Damascus was controlled for much of the eighteenth century by the al-‘Azm household, whose members benefited financially from the office of governor. But, as the Iranian silk trade contracted, Damascus lost importance to the province of Sidon and its commercial port of Acre, where Sheikh Dahir al-‘Umar held sway from the 1740s.²⁰ In the nineteenth century it was an important trading, manufacturing and agricultural center. Damascene merchants traded with other Ottoman regions such as Aleppo, Iraq, the Hejaz, Palestine and Egypt. The finer Damascene products, especially textiles, found markets in these major Ottoman cities. Damascus's agricultural hinterland fed not only the local population but also provided surpluses for provisioning the pilgrimage caravan that departed annually from Damascus for Mecca.²¹ Damascus was the point of departure for the annual pilgrimage caravan, whose regular success was decisive for the legitimacy of Ottoman rule. Aleppo remained the commercial hub for all trade coming from Iran and eastern Anatolia in addition to the Hejaz and much of Europe. Bilād al Shām was the nexus for all the other Arab regions under Ottoman rule.²²

Aleppo became the capital of a *wilyet*, which corresponded to the *niyba* of the Mamluks and whose governors had the rank of *mrirn*.²³ Thus, it has converted from border city into central city.²⁴ It remained as such during the Ottoman period under a domination of Ottomans. For a good part of this period it was, regarding population and economic activity, the third city of the Empire after Istanbul and Cairo. Conquest of a trading city like Aleppo, allowed the Ottoman state to expand its options for commercial control and exploitation and to limit the options of its competitors.²⁵ Aleppo was an Ottoman city. It had its part in a project for developing the sultan’s power, being integrated within a particular model of territorial and political

¹⁸ André Raymond, *the Ottoman conquest and the Development of the Great Arab twons: Arab cities in the Ottoman period Cairo, Syria, and the Maghreb*, Aldershot Hampshire Great Britain, Burlington Vt: Ashgate/Variorum, 2002 (Aldershot Hampshire Great Britain: Ashgate/Variorum, 2002), at 27

¹⁹ Al-Mubaidin, *Aspects of the Economic History of Damascus during the First Half of the Eighteenth Century* (as in note 17), at 153

²⁰ Caroline Finkel, *Osman's dream: The story of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1923 / Caroline Finkel* (London: John Murray, 2005 (2006 printing)) 9912-9913

²¹ James A. Reilly, “Women in the Economic Life of Late-Ottoman Damascus,” *Arabica* 42 (1995) 79–106, at 79

²² Thomas Philipp, “Bilād al-Šām in the Modern Period: Integration into the Ottoman Empire and New Relations with Europe,” *Arabica* 51 (2004) 401–18, at 407

²³ C. E. Bosworth, *Historic Cities of the Islamic World* (Brill, 2007) 10

²⁴ Jean Sauvaget, *Alep: Essai sur le développement d'une grande ville syrienne, des origines au milieu du XIXe siècle. Texte* (P. Geuthner, 1941) 210–11

²⁵ Palmira J. Brummett, *Ottoman seapower and Levantine diplomacy in the age of discovery* (SUNY series in the social and economic history of the Middle East, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) 148

organization.²⁶ At the start of the seventeenth century two major challenges to Aleppo's prosperity emerged; the first was locally based, brought on by the rebellion of the Kurdish chieftain Ali Janbulad.²⁷ The second was unleashed by Shah Abbas (1587±1629) who sought to divert Iranian silk away from the Ottoman Empire, his ideological enemy.²⁸ In 1639, al Zai'm had welcomed sultan Murat in Aleppo.²⁹

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, changes took place in the central government in Istanbul, where the influence of the Sultan family shifted to a group of senior civil servants in the prime minister's offices or around them. There were Arab and Persian persons in this group as well as Turkish. The second change was the emergence of local ruling groups in the regional capitals that managed to control and use the tax resources of the provinces to form their own army. This was the situation in most states, including Anatolia and Europe, except for those that were easily accessible from Constantinople and nearly through to the Arab states. Aleppo remained under direct control, while in Damascus and Mosul some local families began to gain control during later generations.³⁰

During the eighteenth-century Aleppo experienced much upheaval. Violent factional strife, bitter religious disputes, economic crises, and a succession of frightful famines and plagues left few people unaffected.³¹ Aleppo, like most of main cities of Bilād al Shām; Tripoli, Homs, Hama and Damascus, was controlled by the Al-'Azm family from 1724-1804. Thus, Bilād al Shām was ruled by this family.³² More than Damascus, Aleppo was characterized by diversity, by tolerance and by a cross-fertilization of cultures; its inclination to all forms of exchange went beyond that of most other cities in the Empire and marked out its destiny.³³

Out of the chaos, Dahir al- 'Umar, who had started off as a tax-farmer for the Ottomans in the Galilee, rallied his Sunni kinsmen of the Ziyadina clan to exert control over the disparate Druze and Mitwalli Shia clans of Mount 'Amel in modern south Lebanon. By the middle of the century, he could openly defied both Damascus and Istanbul.³⁴ The Ottoman authorities developed complicated relations with the ruler of Safad, Sheikh Dahir al- 'Umar. In 1740, the sheikh of Galilee extended his rule over the northern part of the Palestinian coast. Under his

²⁶ Jean-Claude David, *Aleppo: from the Ottoman Metropolis to the Syrian City* (ed. Attilio Petruccioli et al; The City in the Islamic World; Handbook of Oriental studies. Section 1, The Near and Middle East v. 94, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008) 329–56, at 330

²⁷ Members of the Janbulad family had served as hereditary governors of Kilis since 1571. In 1603, a member of the family, Huseyn Janbulad, had, by force of arms, established himself as Ottoman Governor-General of Aleppo. Two years later, when Jigalazade Sinan Pasha had ordered him to serve on the Iranian campaign, he stayed in Aleppo. Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650: The structure of power / Colin Imber* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 74

²⁸ Eldem, Goffman and Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West*, 29–30

²⁹ كحالة، جوزيف الياس، البطريرك مكاريوس الزعيم: عصره حياته مؤلفاته. (trans. تقديم المطران بولس يازجي واعداد ونشر الاب جوزيف شابو، حلب: المكتبة السريانية 57 (2007) ،

³⁰ M. Ruthven and A. Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples: Updated Edition* (Faber & Faber, 2013) 313–14

³¹ Abraham Marcus, "international journal of Iddle east studies: privacy in eighteenth-century Aleppo," 18 (1986), 167.

³² Nābulusī (1999, p 364)

³³ David, *Aleppo: From The Ottoman Metropolis To The Syrian City*, 330

³⁴ Masters, *Semi-autonomous forces in the Arab provinces*, 195

rule, the city of Acre became the largest port of the Levant and a powerful fortress. In 1771, during the Russian–Ottoman war of 1768–74, Sheikh Dahir al-‘Umar cooperated with the defector ruler of Egypt, Bulutkapan (‘Cloud-snatcher’) Ali Bey, who had fallen away from the empire and the command of the Russian fleet operating in the Mediterranean during the Russo–Turkish War of 1768–1774. He embarked upon a campaign to conquer Syria, carefully justifying his conduct as a defensive measure.³⁵ Dahir’s dominion became a quasi-state with its own economy, administration, and army, and the sheikh conducted a completely independent foreign policy for years while remaining in open rebellion. Not once did the allied forces defeat the Ottoman pashas³⁶, and in 1772, ‘Ali Bey’s army captured Damascus. In 1773 and 1774, Russian troops occupied Beirut. On the second occasion, they held it for an extended period. After the war, the Ottoman governor in Beirut began to persecute local Christian merchants. “Among them were some,” the chronicler wrote, “that he executed by impaling, hanging by the ribs and by the neck. He treated them so severely on account of denunciations by slanderers alleging that they committed crimes during the war with the Russians.”³⁷ Christian chronicles describe the 1770s as the most difficult period in the memory of the generations then alive. The Russo–Turkish War, internecine conflict between Janissary oaks, the atrocities of Bedouin bandits, the campaigns of the rebellious Egyptian Mamluk ‘Ali Bey and his ally Dahir al-‘Umar, and the Ottomans’ suppression of Dahir’s uprising all primarily affected the civilian population, including, of course, the Christians. The records of these years in the Damascus chronicle of Mikha’il Brayk³⁸ is a continuous lamentation about the disasters of the Christians, prayers to God for mercy, and curses upon rulers, including Dahir.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Syria was gradually and unevenly integrated into a Eurocentric world economy. The European commercial activities brought numbers of local Christians into contact with Europeans. This group benefited economically from European trade relations. Increasing European political influence in the Ottoman Empire eventually also provided some informal protection to this economically rising group of local Christians.³⁹

At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, the Ottoman Empire found itself militarily involved more than once in European battles, first against Napoleon and then against the British.⁴⁰

³⁵ Amnon Cohen, *Palestine in the 18th century: Patterns of government and administration* (Uriel Heyd memorial series, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1973) 52

³⁶ Pasha, Lord: Ottoman title from beglerbegis of province and vezirs of divan. Bayerle, *Pashas, begs and effendis*, 132

³⁷ Constantin A. Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831* (Jordanville NY: Holy Trinity Moantery, 2016) 2002

³⁸ Hayat e. EID BUALUAN, “Mikha’il Breik, a Chronicler and Historian in 18th Century Bilad Al-Sam,” *Parole De L’orient* 29 (1996), http://documents.irevues.inist.fr/bitstream/2042/35274/1/po_1996_257.pdf

³⁹ Thomas Philipp, *image and self-image of the syrians in Egypt: From the Early Eighteenth century to the Reign of Muhammed Ali: Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire The functioning of a plural society / edited by Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis*, eds. Bernard Lewis, Benjamin. Braude, 2 vols., New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982 (ed. Bernard Lewis and Benjamin. Braude; 2 vols; ; New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982), at 168–69

⁴⁰ Cohen et al., *The Ottoman Middle East*, 10

In the nineteenth century, the Ottoman state itself took on a new form through bureaucratization and the curbing of local autonomies. This was better to for the administration of its far-flung domains, in keeping with the demands of modern statehood within the emerging international system.⁴¹

Muhammad Ali Pasha took over the Ottoman Empire believing that his help against the Greek rebels⁴² entitled him to the Syrian provinces of the sultan. He sent his son Ibrahim Pasha against the Ottoman Empire in 1832. Conquering Acre, Damascus, and Aleppo, the Egyptian army won another major victory at Konya in central Anatolia and seemed poised to capture Istanbul (as Russia had been just three years before). During the 1830s, He controlled a section of southeast Anatolia and most of the Arab provinces and, in 1838, threatened to declare his own independence. The Ottomans attacked his forces in Syria but were crushed and again rescued, this time by a coalition of Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia (but not France). These powers stripped Muhammad Ali of all his gains – Crete and Syria as well as the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina – leaving him only hereditary control of Egypt as compensation.⁴³

The occupation of Syria and Palestine by Ibrahim Pasha marks the period in question: it was between 1830 and 1840, under Egyptian rule. Attracted to modernism and profoundly marked by the West, the first administrative reforms were attempted and applied, with conscription and the levying of new taxes. During the same period, the authorities recognized Catholic bishops as representatives of their communities and allowed them to build and rebuild their churches; this allowed Catholic communities to raise extensive and wealthy places of worship.⁴⁴ Ibrahim Pasha's Egyptian occupation, temporarily removed Aleppo from Ottoman administration. It placed a heavy financial burden on the population through the taxes which were imposed, but, here as elsewhere, it opened a new chapter in the history of this city.⁴⁵ Finally, Syria underwent revolutionary change during the Egyptian occupation that put an end to the political fragmentation of Syria. The coastal areas were opened to an unprecedented wave of European trades, travels, and missionaries; and effected the de jure emancipation of Syrian Christians from the discriminatory aspects of Muslim law.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Donald Quataert, *The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914: An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, eds. Halil İnalcık, Donald Quataert, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994 (ed. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert; ; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), at 762

⁴² Another hallmark event of the nineteenth century, the 1821–30 Greek war of independence, clearly illustrates the central role of international politics in the revolts against the sultan. After failing to suppress the Greek rebels, Sultan Mahmut II in 1824 invited Muhammad Ali Pasha to intervene with his powerful fleet and army. He did so with great success and the Greek rebellion appeared to be over. But in 1827, the combined British, French, and Russian squadrons annihilated the Egyptian navy at Navarino and three years later, the 1830 Treaty of London acknowledged the formation of a new state, in the southern area of modern Greece. idem, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (2nd ed; New approaches to European history, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 56.

⁴³ Ibid., 56–58.

⁴⁴ David, *Aleppo: From The Ottoman Metropolis To The Syrian City*, 348

⁴⁵ Bosworth, *Historic Cities of the Islamic World*, 12

⁴⁶ Robert M. Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim society: An interpretation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University press, 1970) 69

1.2 Christian Communities In Syria During Ottoman Period.

The study of the history of this community might help us shed light on the wider context in which Melkite artists lived and functioned. A look at their social and cultural traditions that they practiced in relationship to the Syrian social surrounding especially in Aleppo city, can help us understand the influences of the late Ottoman period.

We know that according to Jason Goodwin, at least thirty-six different peoples lived within the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁷ In accordance with Islamic law, Ottoman subjects were divided into two board classes: Muslims and *zimmi* (Arabic *dhimmi*. protected people). All non-Muslims who had submitted themselves to the authority of Ottoman state and paid taxes were consequently entitled to protection of their lives and property and the right to practice their own religion.⁴⁸ Some Christian residents in the cities of the empire were rich enough through their trade and did not need protection except from the local authorities for whom they were advisers and close secretaries.⁴⁹

The Christian emigrants from the West, when they left their native villages to Bilād al Shām in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were unlikely aware of the possibility of contact with their coreligionists. But the effects of the interaction between the two would be profound. At the start of the Ottoman period, the Europeans resident in the Bilād al Shām were few and resigned to trade within the framework of the existing political and commercial institutions. Most of these early traders were Italians, but Frenchman, Catalans, and even the occasional German also found their way to the Muslim port cities of Bilād al Shām.⁵⁰ In Hama, for example, Christians lived somewhat in the shadow of their co-religionists in Homs. The latter town was the seat of an Orthodox bishop, and one of Homs's churches was (and is) the proud custodian of the Virgin's waistband, a relic that attracted pilgrims and visitors. Moreover, since early Christian times a cult had developed around a local Homs saint. The Christian churches of Hama boasted no comparable attractions.⁵¹

There was a movement of Christians away from rural areas⁵², with the possible exception of Mount Lebanon, and a transformation of the Christian population in the region from a largely rural one to one that was increasingly urban. Flight from the land was a reality for Muslim peasants of the Fertile Crescent as well, as the countryside became unstable in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries due to tribal incursions into formerly agricultural lands. There was a difference, however. The Muslim population was still overwhelmingly rural at the end of the nineteenth century; the same could not be said for the Christians. Everywhere in Bilād al Shām the Christians were becoming, like their Jewish neighbors, an urban population, leaving only

⁴⁷ Jason Goodwin, *Lords of the horizons: A history of the Ottoman Empire* (New York, N.Y.: Picador, 2003) 192

⁴⁸ Ronald C. Jennings, *Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus and the Mediterranean world, 1571-1640* (New York, London: New York University Press, 1993) 132

⁴⁹ Souad Slim, *The Middle East and North Africa, II: Christians in the Ottoman Empire and in Bilad Al-Sham* (The Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2016), at 462

⁵⁰ Masters (2001, p 68)

⁵¹ James A. Reilly, *A small town in Syria: Ottoman Hama in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Oxford, New York: P. Lang, 2002) 59

⁵² Rural Syria is studded with the ruins of churches, monasteries, villas, houses, and stables, and with the remains of entire villages and small towns, all dating from the fourth to the end of the sixth century

pockets of Christian villagers scattered across the rural landscape. This pattern of an increasing urbanization contrasts sharply to that which occurred in the same period in Egypt where the Copts⁵³ were under-represented in the population of Cairo in the eighteenth century and were still largely rural in their choice of settlement.⁵⁴ The neighborhoods were divided according to their religious or ethnic composition. Most of the Sunnis were living in neighborhoods in towns and village. Some of Christian farmers lived elsewhere and most of them and Jews people lived in cities and they worked in certain trades, crafts, and professions.⁵⁵ The court records taken together from the various Arab cities give us a relatively positive picture of intercommunal relations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although we must remember the caution that non-Muslims may have been reluctant to bring charges in cases involving physical attacks against them. Such residential clustering was necessitated for Jews by the Talmudic injunction that they live within a limited walking distance from their synagogues⁵⁶ and in many cities only one existed. The emergence of predominantly Christian quarters, however, supports the hypothesis of a psychological distancing between the different religious communities that led them to cluster together residentially with their coreligionists even when the law did not require it. But even those neighborhoods that were overwhelmingly populated by either Jews or Christians often housed a few Muslim families. as was the case of the predominantly Christian quarter of Bab Tuma in Damascus or the Jewish quarter of Bahsita in Aleppo. Jews and Christians might share residential quarters and work place with Muslims, but they were seldom, if ever, included in the collective “we” in the consciousness of their Muslim neighbors.⁵⁷

Beside the changes in politics which have been discussed above, there were also changes in culture and knowledge of local Christians. This came about through the spreading of Catholic missionaries⁵⁸, some of which existed since the fifteenth century, and the development of Christian culture in Arabic language. Economically, there was a broader participation of a diverse array of European trading partners.⁵⁹ The activities of Melkite merchants in Egypt gave added impetus to the commercial links between Egypt, Syria and the European markets, helped

⁵³ The adjective Coptic is derived through Arabic from the Greek “agyptios” (Egyptian). The Egyptian Arabs used it to designate anything which, in contrast to themselves, was “native” Egyptian: population, religion, language, costumes. Angelo I. Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend* (Cambridge, UK: J. Clarke & Co, 1992)

⁵⁴ Bruce A. Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world: The roots of sectarianism / Bruce Masters* (Cambridge studies in Islamic civilization, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 60

⁵⁵ Omar A. A. Omar, *History of the Arab Orient, (1516-1922)* (Beirut: Arab Renaissance House, 1985) 61

⁵⁶ Is a Greek term meaning “gathering, conventicle”, used first nuphilo (15-10B.C.A.D.45-50), then Josephus (ca.37-ca.100). The Hebrew equivalent is bet ha kenaset, meaning “community house”, or “house of the assembly”. Erwin Fahlbusch and G. W. Bromiley, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity. Editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et Al.] ; Translator and English-Language Editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; Statistical Editor, David B. Barrett* (5 vols., Grand Rapids, Mich., Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001-2008) 264

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

⁵⁸ Latin missionaries frequently obtained *firman*s or *berats* (edicts) in their favor, thanks to French Ambassador to the Porte, the authority from whom they enjoyed their ambiguous “protection”. Vincenzo S.I. 1.-2. Poggi, “Christians in the Second Ottoman Era (17th Century) / Vincenzo Poggi,” (2005), at 666

⁵⁹ *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient: Conditions of Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean An Appraisal of Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Documents from Aleppo* ed. R. Murphey 38.

to bankrupt the European trading houses still trying to continue business in the chaotic late eighteenth century, and expanded the reach of Egyptian and Syrian merchants to India and Italy through their establishment of trading companies in India, Livorno, Trieste, and even Marseille.⁶⁰ Christians and Jews became more important in the life of cities of the Ottoman Empire as a result of the Ottoman Empire's financial policy and the growth of trade with Europe. Christian merchants in the Bilād al Shām, had one of the most direct contacts between Europe and the Ottoman world, and worked with European communities in many Arabic cities in Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. Thus, under the Ottomans, Christian merchants played important roles in trade within and among the Arab provinces. In addition, Armenians⁶¹ were particularly active in the overland trade with Iran and India. During the eighteenth century, as France and Britain became increasingly important commercial forces in the region, more and more Christian merchants engaged in trade with Europe as well. In Egypt, Copts served the Ottoman governors and the provincial grandees as financial officers.⁶²

Interestingly, Muslim merchants from either side of the frontier rarely traveled between the two often warring states.⁶³ During this period, in all the cities of Arab world, Muslims and non-Muslims worked together in many of the trade guilds and went as a collective unit to voice guild concerns before the court, although the names of Muslims were always listed first in such depositions. But if there were any Muslims in a guild, the head (*sheikh*) was invariably a Muslim, even if the membership were overwhelmingly non-Muslim as in the case of the guilds of silk weavers in Aleppo and Damascus.⁶⁴

Thus, by the eighteenth century, these merchants had found partners and helped growing numbers of non-Muslim merchants to obtain certificates (*berats*) granting them the capitulatory privileges which foreign merchants had, namely lower taxes and thus, lower costs. In 1793, some 1,500 certificates were issued to non-Muslims in Aleppo alone.⁶⁵ The resident consuls were themselves often heavily involved, either as hidden or overt partners, in many commercial transactions.⁶⁶ The installation of the European merchants had naturally been profitable to their habitual intermediaries: the Jews and more especially the Christians. The latter in addition, by acting as dragomans for the consulates, were able to obtain diplomas of immunity.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Al-Mubaidin, *Aspects of the Economic History of Damascus during the First Half of the Eighteenth Century* (as in note 17), at 157

⁶¹In the ottoman period Armenian emigrants first arrived in Aleppo in the second half of the 16th century, from Cilicia. Toward the end of the same century another group came from Julfa in Armenia. In the sixteen and seventeenth centuries there were periodic migrations of ecclesiastic and laymen from the town of Karkarh. The emigrants in the middle of seventeenth century were principally from Sasun. Avedis K. I. Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Domination / by Avedis K. Sanjian* (Harvard Middle Eastern Studies; 10, Cambridge, UK: Harvard University Press, 1965) 46

⁶² William Lancaster and Fidelity Lancaster, *People, land and water in the Arab Middle East: Environments and landscapes in the Bilād ash-Shām / William Lancaster and Fidelity Lancaster* (Studies in environmental anthropology; v.2, Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 1999) 31

⁶³ Eldem, Goffman and Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West*, 33

⁶⁴ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 33

⁶⁵ Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*, 129

⁶⁶ *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (ed. Murphey), 38

⁶⁷ Bosworth, *Historic Cities of the Islamic World*, 12

This relationship between the Christian communities and the Ottoman was organized by Millet system, which will be discussed in the next section.

1.2.1 Millet System

The first instance of the Ottomans having to rule many Christians was after the conquest of Constantinople by Sultan Mohamed the Conqueror in 1453. Constantinople had historically been the center of the Orthodox Christian world, and still had a large Christian population. As the empire grew into Europe, more and more non-Muslims came under Ottoman authority. To deal with these new Ottoman subjects, Mohamed instituted a new system, later called the millet system. Millet comes from the Arabic word for “nation”⁶⁸, indicating that the Ottomans considered themselves the protectors of multiple nations. Each religious group was considered its own millet, with multiple millets existing in the empire. For example, all Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire were considered as constituting a millet, while all Jews constituted another millet. Hence, the term does occasionally refer to Christians and Jews.⁶⁹ The population of the Empire was organized in half a dozen ecclesiastically-governed autonomous communities-the Sunni Muslims⁷⁰, the Eastern Orthodox Christians, the Gregorian Monophysite⁷¹ Armenians⁷², “All non-Chalcedonian Christians” as Syrian Jacobites and the Egyptian Copts.⁷³ The Jews, and so on-which were all intermingled with one another geographically and were each coextensive with the whole territory of the Empire.⁷⁴ Thus, the Christianity in the Ottoman Empire was divided into additional sectarian subcategories.⁷⁵ The Greek Orthodox, for their part, found themselves reckoned within the patriarchate of Constantinople, which became their sole channel of communication with Ottoman state. The

⁶⁸ The Arabic form of the word (*milla*) was used in the court records of Aleppo in the seventeenth century to designate Christians or Jews generically, but it lacked the precise meaning it would later acquire. Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 61

⁶⁹ Benjamin. Braude, *Foundation Myths of the Millet System /: Christians & Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Benjamin. Braude, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc, 2014 (ed. Benjamin. Braude; ; Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc, 2014), at 66

⁷⁰ “Sunni” a Muslim who belongs to dominant “orthodox” Muslim group who accepted the legitimacy of the first four caliphs. Bayerle, *Pashas, begs and effendis*, 147

⁷¹In opposition to the conclusion of the Council of the Chalcedon (451), view Christ as having one divine nature after the incarnation, not two. Arising in the fifth century as a movement against Chalcedon, the Monophysite became a potent force in Eastern theology and politics. Erwin Fahlbusch and G. W. Bromiley, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity. Editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et Al.] ; Translator and English-Language Editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; Statistical Editor, David B. Barrett* (3 vols., Grand Rapids, Mich., Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001-2008) 637

⁷² The Armenian Church, which recognizes only the first three ecumenical councilical –Nicea (325), Constantinople (381) and Ephesus (431), considers that the essentials of dogmas of Christianity have been formulated in those three councils. Manoushag. Boyadjian, “The Rise of Eastern Churches and Their Heritage: The Armenian Church: cultural role and heritage / Manoushag Boyadjian,” (2005), at 366

⁷³ Now called the Syrian Orthodox Church. From the seventeenth century onwards the history of the Syrian Orthodox Church has been a struggle between a romansising party and one opposed to all union. Anthony O’Mahony, *Syriac Christianity in the modern Middle East* (ed. Michael Angold; The Cambridge History of Christianity; Cambridge History of Christianity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 511–36, at 512

⁷⁴ Joseph Toynbee, “Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,: The Ottoman Empire in World History,,” 99 (1955), 122.

⁷⁵ J. Nielsen, *Religion, Ethnicity and Contested Nationhood in the Former Ottoman Space* (Brill, 2011) 79

patriarchate of Antioch did not appreciate having to deal with the state solely through the rival patriarch there.⁷⁶ The Millet i Rum or Greek millet in the Ottoman Empire, embracing as it did all the Orthodox Christian subjects of the sultan, reflected in the microcosm of the ethnic heterogeneity of the empire itself. It contained Serbs, Romanians, Bulgarians, Vlaches, Orthodox Albanians, and Arabs, while the strictly “Greek” Element itself, although firmly in control of the millet through its stranglehold over Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Holy Synod⁷⁷, and the higher reaches of the Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy, was by no means homogeneous.⁷⁸

It had been inherited by the Ottoman Empire from the successor-states of the Arab Caliphate. It was the constitutional device through which the Islamic governments gave power to the Prophet Muhammad's ruling, in the Qur’an, that Jews and Christians were, like Muslims, “People of the Book”.⁷⁹

But how did this system work? Each millet was allowed to elect its own religious figure to lead them. In the case of the Orthodox Church, the Orthodox Patriarch⁸⁰ (the Archbishop of Constantinople) was the elected leader of the millet. The leaders of the millets were allowed to enforce their own religion’s rules on their people. Islamic law (*Shariah*) had no jurisdiction over non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. In addition to religious law, millets were given freedom to use their own language, develop their own institutions (churches, schools, etc.), and collect taxes.⁸¹ The Ottoman sultan only exercised control over the millets through their leaders. The millet leaders ultimately reported to the sultan, and if there was a problem with a millet, the sultan would consult that millet leader. Theoretically, the Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire also constituted a millet, with the Ottoman sultan as the millet leader.

⁷⁶ Kenneth Cragg, *The Arab christian: A history in the Middle East* / Kenneth Cragg (1st ed., Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991) 117

⁷⁷ The word “synod” Gr. Synodos, “on the way together” was common already in classical Greek. In the apocryphal it occurs in prot.Jas.15.1 and is parallel to “synagogue”. It refers to church bodies that meet regularly and that, through duly authorized members, advise the church on matters of faith, order, and government. Fahlbusch and Bromiley, *The encyclopedia of Christianity. editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett, 273–74*

⁷⁸ Clogg (1982, p 185)

⁷⁹(people to whom a holy scripture had been revealed by the same One True God who had revealed the Qur’an to Muhammad Arnold J. Toynbee, “The Ottoman Empire in World History,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 99 (1955) 119–26

⁸⁰ In the early days of the Christians church, any bishop might be given the honorary title “patriarch”, but from the middle of the fifth century, after the ending of the Jewish patriarchate, Greek usage reserved the title as a fixed hierarchical one from the bishop of the most important metropolitan churches, initially Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch. Then Constantinople come to be ranked second and Jerusalem fifth. Erwin. Fahlbusch, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and David B. Barrett, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity / editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett ; foreword, Jaroslav Pelikan* (4 vols., Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2008) 88

⁸¹ In June 1650 patriarch of Antioch, Al Za’im, had to deal with some Greeks of Gaza who came to him complaining against the exaggeration of some taxation on the part of the Ottomans. They had declared themselves at the point of passing to Islam, following the example of other confreres, who found it impossible to pay the *kharage*, and who renounced their Christian faith. Abdallah. Raheb, *CONCEPTION OF THE UNION IN THE ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH (1622 - 1672): HISTORICAL PART* (Beirut: [s.n.], 1981) 81

Christian churches were not to have crosses or bells or look prettier than the most wretched mosque.⁸² Christians were not allowed to ride horses or to serve in the army.⁸³ Christians were free to engage in what was considered to be offensive behavior in Muslim eyes, as long as it was behind the walls of their homes. But they were not at liberty to offend Muslim senses or sensibilities in any public space.⁸⁴

The millet system did not last until the end of the Ottoman Empire. When the liberal *Tanzimat*⁸⁵ were passed in the 1800s, the millet system was abolished, in favor of a more European-style secularist government. The Ottomans were forced to guarantee vague “rights” to religious minorities, which in fact limited their freedoms. Instead of being allowed to rule themselves according to their own rules, all religious groups were forced to follow the same set of secular laws. Russell⁸⁶ wrote that while the Christians often complained of being singled out by the authorities for oppression, they were in fact no more the target of venial behavior on the part of the city's officials than were the Muslims. The attention they did draw was usually the result of their internal squabbling. Russell added that they were “liable to suffer from the insolent petulance of their Turkish neighbors. Official Ottoman correspondence dealing with the non-Muslims of the empire in the early nineteenth century consistently affirmed that non-Muslims were organized into three officially sanctioned millets: Greek Orthodox, Armenians, and Jews. Moreover, the millets in the nineteenth century were hierarchically organized religious bodies with a decidedly political function.⁸⁷ Thus, among the Ottoman millet system, Christians were no longer considered as *Zimmi* but *ra'aya* (flock, subjects), they were not treated as individuals, but as community groups.

1.2.2 Melkite Church during Ottoman period.

“Melkite” today is used only for that Eastern Catholic Church that belongs to this tradition and whose patriarch unites his person with the three patriarchates. This dissertation deals primarily with the Antiochian Patriarchate and the name “Melkite” is employed in its historical meaning, as referring to the unique tradition which is today the common heritage of the Melkite Catholic Church and of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch.

⁸² Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 1798

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 1804

⁸⁴ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 35

⁸⁵ “Reorganization”, the period of Political Reforms in Ottoman history that began with the proclamation of basic human rights in Golann Park in 1839. The Constitution of 1876 gave legal recognition to the Council of ministers to administer all important matters of state. A Year, in 1877, ‘Abdu ‘l-Hamid II (1876-1909) suspended the Constitution. Bayerle, *Pashas, begs and effendis*, 153

⁸⁶ Alexander Russell and Patrick Russell, *The natural history of Aleppo: Containing a description of the city, and the principal natural productions in its neighbourhood together with an account of the climate, inhabitants, and diseases, particularly of the plague* (London: Printed for G.G. and J. Robinson, 1794) 41–42

⁸⁷ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 61

1.2.2.1 Melkite meaning

Firstly, the origin of the Melkite appellation must be discussed. The term “Melkite”⁸⁸ derives from the Semitic meaning “king”, or, in this specific case, “emperor⁸⁹”. This name debuted to those who adhered to Jerusalem and Alexandria, the Council of Chalcedon of the Council was officially recognized By the Byzantine emperors those who were favored to have been the imperial party represented the minority in the Alexandrian Patriarchate, while it was stronger in the Antiochian and in that of Jerusalem. This term was commonly applied to members of these patriarchates before the Islamic conquest.⁹⁰ They were often called *ar-Rum*, that is, the Romans, or the Byzantines, by Arabic-speaking Muslims and Christians alike, meaning the Greek Orthodox church of Byzantium.⁹¹ The constant tradition of the Melkites⁹² themselves brings them back to the disputes aroused in the East by the acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon. Chalcedonians were synonymous with Melkites, which itself designated the partisans of the Orthodox emperors of Byzantium. The first attestation of this word in Arabic is that which is found in Masudi, a Muslim writer of the tenth century.⁹³ Theologically, these Christians accepted the definition of Christ’s nature promulgated by the Council of Chalcedon, that Christ was both fully human and fully divine in one nature. They remained in communion with the church of Constantinople after the cities and lands in which they resided came under Islamic rule. The patriarchs who governed them in Antioch⁹⁴, Jerusalem, and Alexandria were appointed by Constantinople, and the appellation given to the community by its rivals.⁹⁵

⁸⁸ See; E. A. Livingstone and F. L. Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) 1067

⁸⁹ Edward G. Farrugia, *Encyclopedic dictionary of the Christian East* (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 2015) 1249

⁹⁰ John A. McGuckin, *The encyclopedia of Eastern Orthodox Christianity* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011) 19 and 157.

⁹¹ Sidney H. Griffith, *The church in the shadow of the mosque: Christians and Muslims in the world of Islam / Sidney H. Griffith* (Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the ancient to the modern world, Princeton, N.J., Woodstock: Princeton University press, 2008) 139

⁹² There is an Arabic text, anonymous, written in a fairly colloquial style, and seventeenth century manuscript—Saint Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, B12202—copied in 1642 by the famous Arab Orthodox writer Paul of Aleppo, the author of the celebrated account of the travels of his father, the Patriarch of Antioch Macarius III Ibn al-Za‘im (r. 1647-1672), this text argues that the Melkites are so called not on account of their affiliation with an earthly king (the Byzantine emperor), but because of their faithfulness to the Heavenly King, God Himself. Alexander Treiger, “Unpublished Texts from the Arab Orthodox Tradition (1): On the Origins of the Term Melkite; and On the Destruction of the Maryamiyya Cathedral in Damascus,” *Chronos revue d'histoire de l'Université de Balamand*. (2014) 7–37

⁹³ Cyrille Charon, “L’origine ethnographique des Melkites (fin),” *Échos d'Orient* 11 (1908) 82–91, at 90, http://www.persee.fr/docAsPDF/rebyz_1146-9447_1908_num_11_69_3724.pdf

⁹⁴ In size and importance, Antioch in Syria was the third city of Roman Empire. As appears from Acts, a Christian community existed there from almost the earliest days, and it was here that the disciples of Christ were first called ‘Christians’ (Acts 11: 26) Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 78

⁹⁵ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 49

However, “the Melkite identity”⁹⁶ did not take shape until after the Islamic conquest.⁹⁷ Melkite refers to the Chalcedonian Christian community within the Dar al-Islam, which was quick to adopt Arabic as the language of apologetic and catechesis.⁹⁸

1.2.2.2 Melkite church

Trying to understand any trend out of a historical setting can easily lead to a distorted view of the matter. The same is true for the legacy of Melkite artists.

The Melkite (Greek Orthodox)⁹⁹ Christians had communities in Syria (also in Egypt), who spoke Arabic, known as Arab Orthodox Christians.¹⁰⁰

These Arabic-speaking Orthodox Christians called themselves simply the Rum.¹⁰¹ a collective noun which could mean alternatively “Byzantines,” “Anatolians,” “Greeks,” or “Orthodox Christians”.¹⁰² Alternatively, in Syrian Arabic, Rum could also mean “Ottomans,” in addition to the other possible meanings. So it could be said that the Slavic, Romance-speaking, Anatolian, and Arab “Melkite” Christians as “Rum” and to incorporate them in the “Millet-i Rum,” to some degree, was not their own choice, but rather it was the result of the Ottomans’ Islamic worldview and the aspirations of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.¹⁰³ The official self-designation among these communities is nevertheless Greek Orthodox in English and Rūm

⁹⁶ In ethnic or linguistic terms, this group has been subdivided into two clearly-differentiated sectors: the Greek-speaking Rūm and the mal (a) kiyyūn or suryānē that spoke Arabic and/or Syriac and shared with the Rūm – among other things– the Byzantine liturgical corpus. These were therefore two distinct communities, which – despite their shared faith – represented two distinct human, cultural and linguistic situations; contact between the two weakened as the Arab/Syrian groups lost touch with the Byzantine world and grew remote from the events unfolding in the imperial capital, Constantinople. Juan P. Monferrer-Sala, “Between Hellenism and Arabicization. On the formation of an ethnolinguistic identity of the Melkite communities in the heart of Muslim rule,” *Al-Qantara* 33 (2013) 445–73, at 450

⁹⁷ S. H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton: Harvard University Press, 2010) 137–39.

⁹⁸ See S.H. Griffith, “Melkites”, “Jacobites” and the Christological controversies in Arabic in third/ninth-century Syria’, in *Syrian Christians under Islam: The first thousand years* ed. David Thomas 9–55.

⁹⁹ Most of the Christians of the Arabic-speaking lowlands at the time of the Ottoman conquest were Greek Orthodox by tradition with the Patriarch of Antioch, resident in Damascus by the sixteenth century at the latest, serving as their primate and spiritual leader. Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 49

¹⁰⁰ By the end of the first half of the second/eighth century these Melkites of the Islamic world were well on the way to the achievement of a communal identity of their own, an identity which was on the one hand signified by their early adoption of the Arabic language, and on the other hand highlighted in the expression of their religious ideas in Arabic by a distinctive theological discourse which was in many ways conditioned and shaped by the confessional vocabulary of Islam. *Syrian Christians under Islam* (ed. Thomas), 16

¹⁰¹ Alexander Treiger and Samuel Noble, *An anthology of sources: The Orthodox church in the Arab world, 700-1700*, DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014 (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014), at 6

¹⁰² For more details about Greek Orthodox from Ottoman until now; Sotiris Roussos, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the Middle East: Eastern Christianity in the modern Middle East*, eds. Anthony O'Mahony, Emma Loosley, London: Routledge, 2010 (ed. Anthony O'Mahony and Emma Loosley; Culture and civilization in the Middle East 20; London: Routledge, 2010)

¹⁰³ Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 1842

Orthodox (i.e. Byzantine/Roman) in Arabic, and sometimes Arab Orthodox.¹⁰⁴ While Melkite is the term adopted by the branch within this community, which broke away from the Orthodox Church and entered into communion with Rome in the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁵

Since the Orthodox Church was divided into four Patriarchates, each Patriarch was appointed the head of the Orthodox community within the area of the respective Patriarchates.¹⁰⁶ During the Mamluk¹⁰⁷ and early Ottoman centuries, the connection between Antioch and Constantinople was attenuated.¹⁰⁸ By the time, the Melkite Patriarchate of Antioch had undergone several centuries of comparatively independent ecclesiastical and, such as it was, cultural development.¹⁰⁹ Thus, the Ottoman conquest restored the four patriarchates to a unitary temporal power and once more exposed the three lesser sees to Constantinople after almost 900 years of relative independence.¹¹⁰ One of the earliest interactions between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Eastern Patriarchates following the Ottoman conquest of Syria and Egypt regards the pilgrimage of Jeremiah of Constantinople to the Holy Land.¹¹¹

Despite the isolation of the Christian communities of the Levant, their position could not help but be affected by the vicissitudes of political life in the empire and changes in the Ottomans' position toward the Orthodox.¹¹² The Latin were well aware that attempts to convert Muslims would result in the execution of the converts and proselytizers alike and so concentrated their efforts among the empire's diverse Christian peoples.¹¹³ The seventeenth century witnessed a great revolution in the Ottoman Empire's relations; both with its Western Christian adversaries and with its Eastern Orthodox Christian subjects.¹¹⁴ The Maronite College was established in Rome in 1584 to train seminarians from the Ottoman Arab lands to spread the Roman version of Christian dogma back home. The establishment of the Congregation De Propaganda Fide by Pope Gregory XV in 1622 further invigorated the mission in the East.¹¹⁵ In the seventeenth century Syrian Christians "had arrived at something of cooperation allowing the Arab

¹⁰⁴ In English, the Arab Orthodox are inaccurately called either "Greek Orthodox—though they are neither ethnic Greeks nor necessarily Greek-educated—or 'Antiochian Orthodox'...", see "The Arabic Tradition", *The Orthodox Christian World* (ed. A. Casiday; London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 89–104, and pp. 92–93.

¹⁰⁵ R. M. Haddad, "On the Melkite Passage to the Unit: The Case of Patriarch Cyril al-Za'im (1672–1720)", in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society* vol. 2 (eds. B. Braude and B. Lewis; New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), pp. 67–90.

¹⁰⁶ *Middle Eastern Studies: The Church and Landed Property The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem* ed. Katz Itamar and Kark Ruth 391

¹⁰⁷ For more details about Melkite during Mamluk period see; Scott Parker, *The Indigenous Christians of the Arabic Middle East in an Age of Crusaders, Mongols, and Mamluks (1244-1366): Thesis Submitted for the Doctorate of Philosophy under the Supervision of Professor Jonathan Harris* (London: Royal Holloway College, University of London, 2012)

¹⁰⁸ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 49

¹⁰⁹ Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim society*, 21

¹¹⁰ Idem, "Constantinople over Antioch, 1516—1724: Patriarchal Politics in the Ottoman Era," *J. Eccles. Hist.* 41 (1990) 217–38, at 218

¹¹¹ Hasan Çolak, "Relations between the Ottoman central administration and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria: 16th-18th centuries" (University of Birmingham, 2013) 60

¹¹² Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 1664–66

¹¹³ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 70

¹¹⁴ Joseph Toynbee, "Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,," 123.

¹¹⁵ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 70

Orthodox and the Maronite¹¹⁶ Catholics to face the Muslim authorities as a united front.¹¹⁷ The Melkites were eager to establish good relations with the Latin missionaries, not least because this offered the possibility of a better education for the young, besides that of translating and printing books. This was particularly true at Aleppo; a cosmopolitan city opens to intellectual exchanges. The authorities of the Eastern churches were not suspicious as they entrusted their parishioners to the new missionaries, often conversing with them and seeing in them a revival and expansion of their churches. These negotiations and theological discussions between the Eastern ecclesiastical hierarchies and the Catholic missionaries led to the formation of Eastern communities united to Rome: Chaldeans in Diyarbakir in 1713, and Syriac Catholics in Aleppo with André Akhidjian since 1659.¹¹⁸ Thus, this activity resulted in the founding of the Uniate churches Syrian and Greek in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹¹⁹ The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were known in missionary history as the golden era of the Latin missions in the East.¹²⁰

Consequently, some Melkite priests and bishops were sent to Rome, often in secret, but without abandoning their Church. Such an attitude had its justification in the fact that between Rome and the Antiochian Patriarchate no official rupture had taken place. Therefore, one could consider the subjects of the Antiochian Patriarchate as still in communion with Rome, a Prelude to the union with Rome. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the situation of the Eastern churches changed. The weakening of the Ottoman Empire allowed European interference to have more influence on the local Christian populations. In 1683, Euthymius Saifi¹²¹, a suburb

¹¹⁶It is the only Eastern Church that preserved its tradition and yet made full union with Roman Catholicism. From the days of the Crusades it has been in unbroken communion with Rome. It is organized as a patriarchate. Fahlbusch and Bromiley, *The encyclopedia of Christianity*. editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett, 598-597

¹¹⁷ Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim society*, 24

¹¹⁸ By the middle of the eighteenth century, there existed a parallel Catholic hierarchy to that of the traditional clergy in every Eastern rite church. The rituals changed little, but the new 'Uniate' churches pledged their fealty to the pope in Rome and gained a connection to Catholic Europe. In this way, the Melkite Catholic Church split from the Greek Orthodox in the see of Antioch, the Chaldean Catholic Church grew out of the Nestorians, the Armenian Catholic Church from the Apostolic Church and so on. All of these churches were illegal by the sultans' writ, but local Muslim authorities were often amenable to bribery and the sultans' commands were not universally applied. Pockets of newly minted Catholics flourished in the port cities of Palestine and Lebanon, in Aleppo and even on the sultan's doorstep in Istanbul, where Armenian merchants doggedly supported the Catholic cause, often at great expense to their treasure and lives. Bruce Masters, *Christians in a changing world* (ed. Kate Fleet, Suraiya Faroqhi and Reşat Kasaba; The Cambridge history of Turkey, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008-2013) 272–80, at 277–78

¹¹⁹ K. HITTI, *Syria*, 219

¹²⁰ In 1615 there were only one or two Franciscans sent by the Customs of Jerusalem not only to serve the needs of the Christians, but also to exhort them to succor the Holy Places by their alms 68 On December 20, 1622, On the 10th of January following, Propaganda assigned it to the Capuchins as a field of action; They settled there in 1626, then they swarmed Damascus (643) p. They were soon followed by the Carmelites at Aleppo in 1627, Mount Carmel in 1630; The Jesuits had settled in Aleppo in 1625, Damascus in 1640, Sidon in 1640, Tripoli and Aintūra in 1657. Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Eglise melchite du Ve au XXe siècle*, 56

¹²¹ Overseer and pastor in the Christian Church. The Greek *episkops*, from which the English word "bishop" is derived, was a secular term. Everett

of Tyr and Sidon, converted to Catholicism,¹²² and in 1701, secretly by *Propaganda Fide*, to spiritually guide the Catholic Melkites in the Antiochian Patriarchate.¹²³ In other words, the Roman authorities had agreed to permit Euthymius Saifi, head of the Western party and metropolitan of Sidon¹²⁴, to enjoy the title of bishop of Melkite Catholics.¹²⁵ Aleppo and the port cities of Tyr and Sidon became the chief centers of Roman Catholic¹²⁶ activity in the Levant. Thus, there were three centers where the Catholic Melkites were the majority, the Eparchy of Tyr and Sidon, Damascus, and Aleppo.¹²⁷

In the Balamand Monastery of North Lebanon in 1705, monks under the spiritual direction of the Jesuits felt it difficult, given the connections to Rome in the vicinity, to go on living in that community. So, they decided to move to the Monastery of Suayr (Lebanon), where they founded a new religious congregation known as 'suayrite. On his part, Bishop Euthymius had founded the Holy Savior Monastery, whence originated another Congregation: the Salvadorian Order. These two Congregations are the breeding ground for priests and bishops of Catholicism.¹²⁸ Sultan Ahmet's government gave its *berat* to Sylvester¹²⁹ and his choice was the beginning of a succession of Greeks in the Antiochian patriarchate which lasted until the end of the nineteenth century. Sylvester took advantage of the support he had received from the Greek Orthodox, the Ottoman civil authorities and the Melkites of Aleppo, who resented the high-handed action of the Damascenes in holding the patriarchal elections without consulting them.¹³⁰

A lasting schism¹³¹ developed within the church which resulted in rival hierarchies, both claiming to represent the authentic traditions of their church. On one side, the partisans of Rome believed in communion with the Western church; on the other, partisans of Constantinople

¹²² Edmond I.-I. Préclin, Luigi Mezzadri and Eugène I.-I. Jarry, *Le lotte politiche e dottrinali nei secoli XVII e XVIII (1648-1789) / di E. Préclin e E. Jarry* (Storia della Chiesa [dalle origini ai giorni nostri]; 19, Torino: Editrice S.A.I.E, 1991) 701

¹²³ Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and sultans: The church and the Ottoman Empire 1453-1923 / Charles A. Frazee* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 199

¹²⁴ The Melkites of Sidon appear to have comprised most of the owners, or operators under French ownership, of the smaller vessels playing the route between the Syrian port, notably Sidon, and the Egyptian port of Damietta Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim society*, 40

¹²⁵ Frazee, *Catholics and sultans*, 199

¹²⁶ The term "Roman Catholic church" is a specific designation of the church that is in union with the bishop of Rome, known also as the patriarch of the West and the Roman pope. Fahlbusch, Bromiley and Barrett, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity / editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett ; foreword, Jaroslav Pelikan*, 713

¹²⁷ Elias B. Skaff, *The Place of the Patriarchs of Antioch in Church History / by Patriarchal Exarch Elias B. Skaff* (Newton Centre, Massachusetts: Sophia press, 1993) 322

¹²⁸ Farrugia, *Encyclopedic dictionary of the Christian East*, 1250

¹²⁹ had born at Cyprus in 1696, 28 years old when he was elected Cyril I.-I. Korolevskij, Nicholas J. v. g.-m. I. Samra and John. Collorafi, *Christian Antioch / by Cyril Korolevsky ; translated by John Collorafi ; edited by Bishop Nicholas Samra* (Fairfax, VA: Eastern Christian Publications, 2003) 157

¹³⁰ Frazee, *Catholics and sultans*, 201

¹³¹ The period from roughly 1725 to 1850 was a time of recovery from the trauma of schism. since most of their lay and clerical elite had passed to the Uniait was largely under the control of Greek prelates appointed directly by the ecumenical see that a partial recovery was effected Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim society*, 63

urged union with the East as the sure guarantee of orthodoxy.¹³² In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, under Roman tutelage, the Melkite community saw strong Latin theological and liturgical influence. This process only began to be reversed in the late nineteenth century with Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Orientalism Dignitas* of 1894.¹³³ The schism of 1724, occurred during a time of rapid social change in the Middle East, marked by a significant break with the past for both Catholic and Orthodox communities. Orthodox chroniclers of the eighteenth century continued to label their own faction the Rum and the other "Catholics" (ta'ifa kathulikiyya) or more commonly, "those who follow the religion of the Franks." Catholic authors appropriated the collective Rum for themselves and labeled their opponents simply "heretics" (al-aratiqa)¹³⁴

To conclude, the Patriarchate of Antioch remained faithful despite the attraction of Constantinople, affirming its independence from this siege and maintaining bonds of communion with Rome when the political conjunctures allowed it.¹³⁵ Following a succession of crises and divisions between the Damascene and the Aleppian Orthodox people, the Catholics elected Cyril Tanas¹³⁶ patriarch in Damascus. He chose his headquarters in Sidon in 1724. The Aleppines recognized and inducted the Greek Orthodox patriarch sent by the ecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople. From then, the duplication of bishoprics would be perpetual.

Consequently, from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, Western missionaries succeeded in bringing some Middle Eastern Christians into communion with Rome and established a number of so-called "Eastern Catholic" churches.

Hence, few events in the history of the Christian Orient have had such lasting importance as those which led to a division in the Antiochian Melkite church in the early eighteenth century. The evidence provided above suggests that the community's identity or traditions were entirely absorbed by their surroundings. The Ottoman period, with the political, economic, and social conditions that it fostered, provided the Melkite community with opportunities to integrate with Syrian society at large.

1.2.2.3 The Christians in Aleppo city:

In the beginning of the seventeenth century the population of Aleppo was about 280,000-290,000 people, including about 30,000-35,000 Christians.¹³⁷ Whatever their actual numbers, the growth of the population of Christians and Jews in Aleppo is all the more impressive as the total number of people living in the city remained relatively constant after the middle of the seventeenth century, i.e. approximately 100,000 inhabitants.¹³⁸ Among the cities of Syria,

¹³² Frazee, *Catholics and sultans*, 199

¹³³ The Arab Orthodox of the Patriarchate of Antioch would remain under a series of ethnically Greek patriarchs until 1899. Treiger and Noble, *An anthology of sources* (as in note 101), at 38–39

¹³⁴ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 50

¹³⁵ J. Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Eglise melchite du Ve au XXe siècle: Contribution à l'étude de la littérature arabe chrétienne* (2 vols., Peeters, 1989) 7

¹³⁶ the nephew of the bishop of Sidon Al-Aftimus Sayfi.

¹³⁷ Abraham Marcus, *al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ 'ashīyat al-ḥadāthah: Ḥalab fī al-qarn al-thāmin 'ashar* (1st ed., Ḥalab: Shu'ā' lil-Nashr wa-al-'Ulūm, 2009)

¹³⁸ Andre Raymond, "The Population of Aleppo in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries according to Ottoman Census Documents," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16 (1984) 447–60, at 447–60

Aleppo had the largest percentage of Christians, and to it quickly came the Franciscans who were there since 1571, the Capuchins, Jesuits, and Discalced Carmelites.¹³⁹ Visitors to Aleppo, for example, whether Simeon of Lviv in the seventeenth century, Alexander Russell in the eighteenth century, or Rabbi Hillel in the early nineteenth century, all reported Aleppo's Muslim population as being tolerant toward the believers of other faiths, intermingling with them without any overt hostility.¹⁴⁰

The Christian quarter of Gdeydé¹⁴¹ was probably built around a church or a Syrian chapel and the Armenian church of the Forty Martyrs, Adjoining an Orthodox church and a Maronite, arranged around the same courtyard Than the Armenian church. Gdeydé contains very few Muslim *waqfs* and Never been inhabited by Muslims. It has no water supply, and District depends for its daily services of the facilities of the district Muslim contiguous.¹⁴² Christians built many houses, there are Aleppo's finest seventeenth- and eighteenth-century houses flourished due to the patronage of a rising bourgeoisie.¹⁴³ I.e., Ghazaleh House, 17th-century building.¹⁴⁴ Architecturally, Aleppo houses are courtyard houses built of white limestone, and the main feature of these houses and Damascus houses is the windowless and undecorated appearance of the house's outer façade.¹⁴⁵ The houses of Rich Christian families were near churches, while the collective habitats of poorer people were on the peripheries.¹⁴⁶

The Christian clergy regularly issued orders prohibiting overnight visits outside the family circle and the participation of women in customary ceremonies celebrated outside the city, including funerals. They insisted that proper segregation of the sexes be maintained at weddings, and that mothers cease taking their boys along with them to the baths.¹⁴⁷

Nowhere in the Ottoman Arab lands was the innocence of Europe on the native Christian population more visible in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than in the city of Aleppo. The continual presence of both Western missionaries and merchants in the city served as the backdrop for most of the major skirmishes fought between the defenders of the old religious dispensation and those who would welcome the new. Aleppo's central position in the trade networks of the Levant also made possible the rise of the region's first Christian mercantile bourgeoisie. The two developments were, in fact, closely linked.¹⁴⁸

¹³⁹ Raheb, *CONCEPTION OF THE UNION IN THE ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH (1622 - 1672)*, 59

¹⁴⁰ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 37

¹⁴¹ the name which means "the new" is quoted from the fifteenth century.

¹⁴² Jean-Claude David, "L'espace des chrétiens à Alep. Ségrégation et mixité, stratégies communautaires (1750-1850)," *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* (1990) 150–70, at 154

¹⁴³ Tülay Artan, *Arts and architecture: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839 the cambridge history of Turkey*, ed. Suraiya N. Faroqhi, Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006 (ed. Suraiya N. Faroqhi; volume 3; Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), at 464

¹⁴⁴ Sauvaget, *Alep*, 51

¹⁴⁵ Domestic architecture also flourished in other provincial towns such as Hama, Tripoli, Jerusalem and Damascus, and many fine houses still survive in the coastal towns of Syria and Palestine as well as in the mountains of Lebanon. Artan, *Arts and architecture* (as in note 143), at 471

¹⁴⁶ David, *Aleppo: From The Ottoman Metropolis To The Syrian City*, 344–45

¹⁴⁷ Marcus, "international journal of Iddle east studies," 169.

¹⁴⁸ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 71

Court records of Aleppo provide evidence, that Anatolian Armenians and Christians from Aleppo were also involved in the trade; traveling to Iran on their own, or as agents for Muslim investors in Aleppo.¹⁴⁹ From the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries the Armenian magnates, originally of Julfa, occupied a leading place in Aleppo's international commerce and exercised almost absolute control over the community's affairs.¹⁵⁰ New factories were opened near the Venetians, who in 1548 had brought their consulate and their commercial headquarters, the French in 1562,¹⁵¹ the English in 1583, and the Dutch in 1613 also opened their consulates and trading offices. Although the population of Aleppo was involved in trade to some extent, the commercial activity was largely dominated by the European trading communities based in the city.¹⁵² Dr. Russell¹⁵³ wrote in the eighteenth century that only Christians would travel from Aleppo on trading ventures, as Muslims preferred to stay at home.¹⁵⁴

Until the middle of the eighteenth century, Aleppo remained the main market of the whole East, astride two commercial streams, and at the end of the nineteenth century, it remained a very active trade center.¹⁵⁵ Merchants from throughout the Empire visited the city of Aleppo bringing linen cloth and rice from Egypt, coffee from Yemen, dried fruits and silk cloth from Damascus, mohair from Ankara, and woolens from both Mosul and Salonika.¹⁵⁶ Aleppo was, in turn, renowned for the quality of olive oil available in its markets and its by-product, soap, was exported as far afield as Cairo and Istanbul. It also had a reputation for the high quality of its *alaja* cloth, a satin mixture of cotton and silk.¹⁵⁷

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Christians aligned with Rome had become a very substantial majority among the Christian population in Aleppo. Conflicts erupted, often violently, amongst the new communities and the old, disrupting established balances. This can especially be said for those defining the status and space of Christians who were protected in a Muslim city.¹⁵⁸ The city benefited from the newly created markets and secured trade routes that its integration into the Ottoman Empire provided. Internal trade grew as the hinterland of

¹⁴⁹ Eldem, Goffman and Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West*, 33

¹⁵⁰ Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Domination* / by Avedis K. Sanjian, 261

¹⁵¹ Some Antiochian Patriarchs began to grow discontented with the Ottoman provincial administration and needed to establish contacts with the external dynamics, which they found in the French court. The first Antiochian Patriarch to write to the French King was Euthymius of Chios (1635-1648), while his successor Macarius Za'im composed three letters addressing the French King Louis XIV of which only two had been sent, in 1653 and 1663, and the other one, written in 1671, presenting a refuting Calvinism could only be sent by his grandson Cyril Za'im. Çolak, "Relations between the Ottoman central administration and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria: 16th-18th centuries," 79

¹⁵² Hawting (1989)

¹⁵³ Alexander Russell, eighteenth-century English resident Eldem, Goffman and Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West*, 17

¹⁵⁴ Russell and Russell, *The natural history of Aleppo*, 56

¹⁵⁵ Raymond, *the Ottoman conquest and the Development of the Great Arab towns* (as in note 18), at 20

¹⁵⁶ We learn from the city's Islamic court records that there were resident merchant communities in the city from North Africa, India, and Bukhara, as well as the Europeans and the Iranian Armenians. The Indian community, in particular, seems to have received a degree of official recognition from the Ottoman state. Eldem, Goffman and Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West*, 34

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 35

¹⁵⁸ David, *Aleppo: From The Ottoman Metropolis To The Syrian City*, 347

the city broadened to encompass an area including Diyar bekir and Mosul, while its position on international trade routes made it an important center of caravan trade in the Eastern Mediterranean. By the end of the century Aleppo had become the major commercial center in the area, and the third largest city of the empire after Istanbul and Cairo.¹⁵⁹

Aleppo surpassed all Ottoman cities, including Istanbul, and became a major market for the whole of the world and a crossroads of international trade between the Arabian Gulf, Istanbul, and the eastern Mediterranean where trade and economy had flourished since the sixteenth century AD. It was only through the security and stability imposed by the Ottoman authority that Aleppo became a commercial attraction.¹⁶⁰ Forty families of merchants (from Lebanon or Baghdad) settled in Al-Arba'in alley in Gdeydé neighborhood in Aleppo after the campaign of Sultan Murad IV in 1638. As well as a large number of English, French, Italian, Austrian and Venetian tourists and travelers. Trade and the creation of a Christian bourgeoisie. Aleppo was at the end of the sixteenth century the leading commercial linking the Fertile Crescent with Western Europe. The inhabitants of Aleppo, alone among the fabled caravan cities of the interior Fertile Crescent, had embraced the presence of the Europeans living among them. That reality created both opportunities and challenges which gave the city's Christian inhabitants a historical trajectory unique among the Ottoman Arab cities until the nineteenth century when European influences became pervasive everywhere.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Cigdem Kafescioglu, "'In the Image of Rum': Ottoman Architectural Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Aleppo and Damascus," *Muqarnas* 16 (1999) 70, at 71

¹⁶⁰ Laurant d'Arvieux, the French consul in the city in 1683, estimated France imported a million livers of goods from Aleppo, while England's trade amounted to six million. This total trade volume for France was further reduced to only 400,000 livers in value by 1700. Eldem, Goffman and Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West*, 34

¹⁶¹ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 71–72

2. Melkite Art During 1650-1825

This chapter dedicated to Melkite iconography and its features. Even if the Melkite art has been continuing until the end of nineteenth century, our study particularizes those icons dated to “1650-1825”.

Even if the collapse of Byzantine Empire by Ottomans in 1453 A.D that did not end the life of the Orthodox Church and her heritages. On the conquered territories traditional artistic and publishing centers were strengthened and new ones set up. This was accompanied by intense activity in icon-painting workshops, scriptoria and printing books. Then with the expansion of the Ottoman Empire in Bilād al Shām and Egypt, the four historic patriarchates of Orthodox, patriarchates of Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Constantinople came together under the same political government. Despite persecution and abuses perpetrated by the local governors or the central authorities, the development and progress of the cultural and religious development of the Christian communities is observed in Bilad al-Sham. We have to keep in mind that during the seventeenth century, the Ottoman Empire's Eastern Orthodox Christian – in Bilād al Shām called Melkite–subjects now turned away from an already decadent Ottoman way of life to an already progressive Western way of life from which they were no longer alienated by Western religious fanaticism.”¹⁶²

2.1 The Reasons of Melkite Renaissance Of Icons

During the late sixteenth century, Melkite church attested a cultural resurrection, which it is possible to call the “the Melkite proton-Renaissance”. it was stimulated by various internal and external factors- the establishment of the relatively stable and tolerant Ottoman rule in Bilād al Shām; an activation of political and cultural contacts of Melkites with Greek and other peoples of the Greek Orthodox civilization; an increasing influence of the Catholic church on the Middle eastern Christians.¹⁶³ It is difficult to understand how for centuries an entire people lost the ability to express themselves through visual art.

The revival of the Melkite iconography in Aleppo is attributed to the religious, cultural and economic renaissance experienced by the Melkite community in the middle of the seventeenth century. Even if during 17th, the Oriental Christians were nearly as unfamiliar with pictures as Muslim were,¹⁶⁴ it was probably the Christian painter who was called in to decorate the house of the Muslim noble, and men of wealth in the Christian community also probably had their houses decorated in a similar fashion.¹⁶⁵ The practice of decorating the interior walls of a house with paintings has had a long tradition in the East, and it did not die lands conquered by the Arabs, despite the condemnation of the art of painting by Muslim, and it was in the Christian

¹⁶² Arnold J. Toynbee, “The Ottoman Empire in World History,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 99 (1955) 119–26, at 124

¹⁶³ Constantin A. Panchenko, “a "Melkite Protonaissance", a Forgotten Cultural Revival of the Melkites in the Late 16th Century,” *Parole De L'orient* 39 (2014), at 135

¹⁶⁴ Carsten-Michael. Walbiner, “*Images Painted with such Exalted Skill as to Ravish Senses ...*”: *Pictures in the eyes of Christian Arab travellers of the 17th and 18th centuries / Carsten Walbiner* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2003) 17

¹⁶⁵ The Christian motifs are: two angels, the Virgin and Child, the last supper, the sacrifice of Abraham and the dance of Salome. Jutta M. Schwed, “THE BERLIN ALEPPO ROOM: A VIEW INTO A SYRIAN INTERIOR FROM THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE,” *Studies in Conservation* 51 (2013) 95–101, at 96

community that this artistic tradition would be most likely to be kept alive and carried on. On the wooden walls of the house, the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, from Aleppo are painted various incidents from the Old and New Testament, e.g. the sacrifice of Isaac, the daughter of Herodias dancing before Herod, the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus, Jesus in the Temple, and the Last Supper.¹⁶⁶ Whether the owner was Muslim or Christian, there are no differences in the design or the decorations.¹⁶⁷

Keep in mind that the tradition of icon painting was interrupted. This gap lasted about three centuries, with only a few exceptions, Melkite icons from before the sixteenth century have not generally been preserved. Only a handful of icons have come down to us even from the sixteenth century, most of which were imported from Greek lands,¹⁶⁸ because during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Cretan school presents itself most important in the orthodox art of dogmatic purity, of the level of quality and the force of expansion attachment to the best traditions Constantinople of the Palaeologist era¹⁶⁹, as distinctive features, the and restraints the attitudes and gestures sort of classicism in the composition still calm and under Turkish domination, will continue to exercise a different art, but one where the decorative elements sometimes integrate Rococo-Turkish. The island of Crete was the main center of icon painting in the post-Byzantine period, of great significance for the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean, which formed part of the Venetian Republic from 1210-1669.¹⁷⁰ The developed self-awareness these artists, as also society's high regard for them, which relates to the tradition of Byzantine culture, gave rise to practice widespread in Crete by which an artist left his name on icons painted by him. This practice was also supported by the attitude of Western painters of this time, who signed their works. From 15th to 17th centuries about 240 names of Cretan artists have come down to us.¹⁷¹

Moreover, the Greek icons which could have served as models decorated the churches and the Melkite monasteries. This remark allows us to argue that the choice of the model was a question of taste, while it depended on the diffusion of these models in the region. The foregoing considerations concern only the seventeenth-century icons in which the will of Melkite painters to produce icons of Greek character is discerned, which gives a special value to this genre.¹⁷² Besides importing icons from the Orthodox world, there were Greek iconographers who were

¹⁶⁶ Thomas W. 1.-1. Arnold, *The Old and New Testaments in Muslim Religious Art / by Thomas W. Arnold* (The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy; 1928, London: Publ. for the British Academy, 1932) 9–10

¹⁶⁷ Sauvaget, *Alep*, 399

¹⁶⁸ Agnès-Mariam d. La Croix and François-Xavier Emery, *Icone arabe* (Milano: Jaca Book, 2009) 30–33

¹⁶⁹ Landscapes broadened out into painterly panoramas with rugged rocks and a high horizon, into which small, decorative figures were loosely inserted. Irmgard. Hutter, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art / Irmgard Hutter; foreword by Otto Demus ; transl. by Alistair Laing* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1971) 168 For more details see *ibid.*, 166–79

¹⁷⁰ *A History of Icon Painting: Sources, traditions, present day / Lilia Evseyeva, Natalia Komashko, Mikhail Krasilin, Luka (Golovkov), Elena Ostashenko, Olga Popova, Engelina Smirnova, Eanna Yakovleva, Eirina Yazykova ; translated by Kate Cook* (Moscow: Grand-Holding Publishers, 2002) 97

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 99

¹⁷² Manolès 1.-1. Chatzédakês, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines: Icônes grecques, melkites, russes, Collection Abou Adal*, ed. Georges Abou Adal, Genève: Skira, 1993 (ed. Georges Abou Adal ; Genève: Skira, 1993), at 54

working in Syria. “Silvia Ajajman” says that “Greek icons may have moved from Greek islands through the travellers or the bishops, or they were painted in the Antiochian Patriarchate by Greek iconographers who resided in Syria, or by their Syrian pupils”.¹⁷³ Alongside, it can be assumed that the Syrian artists made trips to Venice, most likely to the Greek islands, as well as to the island of Cyprus, whose relationship with the Antiochian Patriarchate has increased with the help of its Cypriot-born Patriarch, Sylvester.¹⁷⁴

The second reason was literary Renaissance; the linguistic arabization¹⁷⁵ of the Melkite community of Syria that showed a somewhat different pattern, unlike the physically isolated mountaineer Maronite, who even today retain their Syriac, the Melkite seem to have adopted Arabic as their principal liturgical tongue before the seventeenth century.¹⁷⁶ Keep in mind that in Syria, Iraq, Arabia, Egypt and North Africa, most of the population spoke dialects of Arabic with, above them, a Turkish-speaking elite.¹⁷⁷ For the Orthodox living in the countryside, the Syriac language¹⁷⁸ embodied the ritual and vernacular forms with which they were familiar.¹⁷⁹

The myriad lexical possibilities provided endless opportunities for ethnic misidentification by all those who were outside the community.¹⁸⁰ Unlike their coreligionists in Anatolia who wrote their Turkish vernacular using the Greek alphabet, Orthodox Arabs/Melkite wrote their vernacular in the same script as did their Muslim neighbors.¹⁸¹ Evliya Çelebi¹⁸², the inveterate traveler of the seventeenth century who usually took great interest in describing the various ethnic groups he encountered, could visit Damascus and Aleppo without mentioning that there were any non-Muslims in either city. He did, however, express surprise that the Rum/Melkite of the Lebanese port cities spoke not Rumca (Greek) but Arabic.¹⁸³

¹⁷³ S. Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*: *Icones Melkites*, ed. Virgil Candea, Beyrouth: Musée Nicolas Sursock, 1969 (ed. Virgil Candea; ; Beyrouth: Musée Nicolas Sursock, 1969)

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, at 50–51

¹⁷⁵ That happened also in liturgical music, in Aleppo during the mid-eighteenth century, the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious liturgies all were based on the same Arabic melodic system (makam). Such linguistic and musical interpenetrations demonstrate communities in constant and intimate contact rather than groups sealed off from one another. Donald Quataert, “The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922. Second Edition. eBook-EEen,” at 181

¹⁷⁶ Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim society*, 20

¹⁷⁷ Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650*, 2

¹⁷⁸ The history of development of Syriac and the various Aramaic dialects is still more complex and difficult to estimate in the twentieth century Aramaic only continued to be spoken in a few areas: in the mountain of Kurdistan, in the Tur Abdin around Urmiya and in the plains of Mosul, as well as in a few villages to the north of Damascus, notably Ma'lula. Françoise Micheau, *Eastern Christianities (eleventh to fourteenth century): Copts, Melkites, Nestorians and Jacobites* (ed. Michael Angold; The Cambridge History of Christianity; Cambridge History of Christianity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 371–403, at 391

¹⁷⁹ Asad Rustum, *Kanīsat Madīnat Allāh Anṭākiya al-‘Uẓmā [The Church of the City of God, the Great Antioch]* (3 vols, Beirut: Al Maktabat al Bulisiyyah, 1988) 44

¹⁸⁰ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 50

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 49, Treiger and Noble, *An anthology of sources* (as in note 101), at 6

¹⁸² For general view of his travels see Evliya Çelebi, Robert Dankoff and Sooyong Kim, *An Ottoman traveller: Selections from the Book of travels of Evliya Çelebi* (London: Eland, 2011)

¹⁸³ Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 28

Since Melkites had already spoken the Arabic language¹⁸⁴, it was needed to translate liturgical books from Syriac or Greek to Arabic. Karma¹⁸⁵ inaugurated his profession by the translation of the liturgy books from Greek sources. He sought to rid the liturgical books of heresies that he considered as having been introduced by translations made from the Syriac language. Thus cultural renaissance began to be witnessed by Christian's community, during the reign of this Bishop, who was proponent of writing and art.¹⁸⁶

Since he was an interpreter and a writer, he used his writing and liturgical translations as skilled calligraphers, as well as being a calligrapher. The foundation of the school in the home of Karma in January 1629, the Jesuit Father Jerome Queyrot had thirty-four students; all were Greeks with the exception of one Maronite.¹⁸⁷

A group of educated young people gathered around him to work in the field of education, translation, and copying. These young people were Hanna Ibn al-Za'im, and others. We know that a tiny minority could read in what long had been and largely remained an oral Ottoman culture: in 1752, for example, the largest library in the city of Aleppo contained only 3,000 volumes. At the time, Aleppo held thirty-one Muslim –madrasa¹⁸⁸– schools, altogether educating perhaps hundreds of students. Among females, extremely few could read, a far smaller proportion than among males.¹⁸⁹

Ibn Karma's activity was not limited to copying¹⁹⁰ and translation,¹⁹¹ his work included iconography.¹⁹² Patriarch Macarius Al-Halabi speaks about his works: "From the beginning of his episcopal era, he began to build, consolidate and adorn his church with the icons, and the divine books." For this reason, he brought with him from Jerusalem "Meletius of Chios"¹⁹³,

¹⁸⁴ Greek would soon give place to Arabic, so that by the ninth century, at least in Muslim territories, Melkite scholars had partially ceased to write in Greek. Micheau, *Eastern Christianities (eleventh to fourteenth century)*, 390

¹⁸⁵ From Hama, his name was Abdul Karim Karmeh, his father; Horan, his mother; Sadaat. He was a monk in Saba monastery in Palestine, he learned Greek language. Backing to Aleppo, he became a metropolitan of the city of Aleppo, in 12/02/1612 till 1634. Then in 03/04/1634 he became patriarch of Antioch until his death in the beginnings of 1635.

¹⁸⁶ Rand Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon* (Damascus: Ministry of Culture- Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums, in print) 14

¹⁸⁷ Raheb, *CONCEPTION OF THE UNION IN THE ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH (1622 - 1672)*, 62

¹⁸⁸ Establishment of learning where the Islamic sciences are taught; a college for higher studies. During the tenth and eleventh centuries madrasa was devoted to teaching law; the other Islamic sciences and philological subjects were optionally taught. John L. Esposito, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World / John L. Esposito, editor in chief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) 184

¹⁸⁹ Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*, 168–69

¹⁹⁰ Karma copied, the vat. Arab. 401, Kitab al-firdaws al-agl was transcribed by 'Abd al-Karim when he was a monk in the convent of St. Michael in Jerusalem in 7112 (1604 AD). Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Eglise melchite du Ve au XXe siècle*, 86

¹⁹¹ 1612 karma had translated three books from Greek to Arabic. جوزيف الياس, كحالة, البطريرك مكاريوس الزعيم, 31

¹⁹² Joseph Nasrallah, *Notes et documents pour servir à l'histoire du patriarcat melchite d'Antioche, Jerusalem, Beyrouth*, (Bayrouth 1955) 143–44

¹⁹³ Meletius of Chios (the future Patriarch of Antioch Euthymius III al-Saqizi) was renowned as an icon painter and began his ecclesiastical and artistic career in the Palestinian Mar Saba. 1653-1647. iconography and monk in

who played an important artistic role as a brilliant iconographer and he learnt some of the young Aleppines as “Joseph Al Musawwir”. a large number of Christians, especially Melkites from Hama and its villages, Homs, Antioch and others came into Aleppo,¹⁹⁴ thus since the beginning of the seventeenth century the largest Christian denomination in Aleppo.

Karma was the first one in Aleppo who gave permission to European missionaries working, 1629.¹⁹⁵ The Franciscans had had a permanent mission in Aleppo since 1560, and the Jesuits came in 1627. Other orders had also missions in Aleppo: Capuchins, Carmelites, etc.

After Karma, patriarchate would continue his work in bringing the Melkite liturgy¹⁹⁶ and *synaxarion*¹⁹⁷ into close conformity with the practice of Constantinople—a process that resulted in a sort of “cultural amnesia” of the Arab Orthodox past. Though over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries both Arab Catholics and Arab Orthodox continued to read, copy, and study manuscripts of texts from the earlier Arab Christian tradition, many of these texts eventually became forgotten.¹⁹⁸

Al Za‘im followed the precedent set by Karma¹⁹⁹ in maintaining close relations with the Catholic missionaries in Syria and even allowing them to preach in his churches and hear confessions from the Orthodox faithful—thus inadvertently paving the way for the momentous

S. Saba Monastery, he was called to damscus for painting, then became patriarch with the name of Eutimo III Enrico Morini, *Il patriarcato Melchita di Antiochia tra XVI e XVII secolo: Partecipazione alla comunione ortodossa e rapporti con la chiesa di Roma: Dal Mediterraneo al Mar della Cina L'irradiazione della tradizione cristiana di Antiochia nel continente asiatico e nel suo universo religioso*, ed. Luciano Vaccaro, Città del Vaticano, Gazzada, Città del Vaticano, Gazzada: Libreria Editrice Vaticana; Fondazione ambrosiana Paolo VI, 2015 (ed. Luciano Vaccaro; Storia religiosa euro-mediterranea 2; Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana; Fondazione ambrosiana Paolo VI, 2015), at 379–80

¹⁹⁴ Mikhâ'il a.-d. Brayk, *The Facts of the History of the Patriarchs of the Antiochian Church, Inquiry: Nayla Taqi al-Din Qaiedbe* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, 2006) 149

¹⁹⁵ البطريرك مكاريوس الزعيم, كحالة، جوزيف الياس 28

¹⁹⁶Vocabulary: derived from Greek through Latin calque, etymologically the term liturgies means public service and its uses in Ancient Greek were very varied, since the sense of: religious service” was not, by a long way, the most common. The byzantine rite, linked to Antioch and having considerable affinities with the Antiochian Syrian rite, is that which was formed in the imperial city Constantinople, New Rome. This rite knows the anaphora of St \basil and that of St John Chrysostom. Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend*

¹⁹⁷ Meletius’s revision of the *Synaxarion* was an especially stark break with the Arab Orthodox tradition, as it effectively suppressed the unique character of Antioch’s church calendar, replacing it with that of Constantinople. See: Jean-Marie Sauget, *Premières recherches sur l’origine ET les caractéristiques des synaxaires melchites (XIe–XVIIe s.)* (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1969). Note in *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World, 700 - 1700: An Anthology of Sources* ed. Samuel Noble, Alexander Treiger and Ephrem Kyriakos 35

¹⁹⁸ Treiger and Noble, *An anthology of sources* (as in note 101), at 39

¹⁹⁹ Born in Hama (Syria) in 1572 to the family of a priest who died when he was still a child, Meletius, whose given name was ‘Abd al-Karim, went as a youth to the Monastery of Mar Saba in Palestine. After spending two years there and mastering Greek, he was called back to Syria where he served as a deacon and then as a priest. After being consecrated as metropolitan of Aleppo in 1612, he oversaw the revision of nearly all the major liturgical texts as well as the Bible. This was done on the basis of printed Greek liturgical texts that he generally followed slavishly, despite the assurances in many of his writings that he also consulted a variety of Arabic and Syriac liturgical manuscripts

schism that was to tear the Church of Antioch apart half a century later (1724). During his episcopate which lasted twelve years, the city of Aleppo witnessed the blossoming of its Christians and the breathtaking activity of the Latin missionaries. Father Queyrot was so enthusiastic that he proposed to open a seminary in Aleppo.²⁰⁰ According to the account of this Father, Za‘im was a weaver before becoming metropolitan of Aleppo.²⁰¹ Following Meletius Karma’s example, Macarius not only sought to inspire his flock through his teaching and to improve their material conditions, but he also set out to deepen their knowledge of Christianity. He made a voyage to Jerusalem in 1642²⁰², with 60 persons from Aleppo.²⁰³

Macarius was a very prolific writer who left a large body of translations, excerpts, and commentaries, many of which were based on Greek works of Byzantine and post-Byzantine authors. Following Meletius Karma’s example, Macarius not only sought to inspire his flock through his teaching and to improve their material conditions, but he also set out to deepen their knowledge of Christianity.²⁰⁴

Because of extremely harsh taxes imposed on Christian populations by the Ottomans, as well as the Ottoman practice of demanding exorbitant bribes in exchange for approval of new patriarchs and bishops, resulted in a constant state of financial ruin for the Christian. The need for outside funding as well as assistance in raising the level of education among the clergy and the laity would become a major impetus for the patriarch al Zai‘m make two trips to the Orthodox world, Russia via Constantinople, Wallachia, Moldavia, and Ukraine, from 1652 to 1659, and 1664 to 1669 to collect funds. In 1654, the Patriarch of Antioch, Macarius came to Moscow²⁰⁵ with a request for alms. Before leaving Moscow, Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich gave Patriarch Macarius several chrysobuls.²⁰⁶

In order properly to preserve their religious and social standing, Syrian Christians were in critical need of liturgical books in Arabic. They therefore required printing capacities, as well as political help in their relationship with the Ottoman state and with the patriarch of Constantinople. Patriarchs of Antioch traditionally turned for help to their Orthodox brethren-

²⁰⁰ Raheb, *CONCEPTION OF THE UNION IN THE ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH (1622 - 1672)*, 80

²⁰¹ SOCG, vol. 195, fol. 599r

²⁰² there is a note " the book was copied in 1668, and patriarch Macarius had traveled to get some money, in the end of the manuscript there is a description of voyage of Macarius to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Orthodoxos Ekklesiastiki Ekklēsiastiki. جامعة ا. ق. ا. و الأنطاكية. مركز ا. ا. ا. بيروت) الارثوذكس (1988) 26

²⁰³ مطبعة القديس بولس :حريصا ,تحقيق قسطنطين باشا . (trans) نخبة من سفرة البطريرك مكاريوس الحلبي , الحلبي . بولس ب. م 50

²⁰⁴ Nikolaj Serikoff, *Patriarch Macarius Ibn al-Za‘im: The Orthodox church in the Arab world, 700-1700 An anthology of sources*, eds. Alexander Treiger, Samuel Noble, DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014 (ed. Alexander Treiger and Samuel Noble; ; DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014), at 236

²⁰⁵ Macarius Al Za‘im he had traveled to Moscow, he described the iconostases there maybe he took some thoughts of building the iconostases, his sons mentioned when they visited Monastery of Trinity near Moscow, he described the iconostasis of the church, which consisted of three doors F. C. Belfour, *The travels of Macarius, patriarch of Antioch* (pt. 5, Printed for the Oriental translation committee, and sold by J. Murray, 1834) 140

²⁰⁶ Yuri Pyatnitsky, “A Byzantine Cloisonne Triptych in the State Hermitage Museum: from the Monastery of Saydnaya to St Petersburg,” 95

in faith, whose common Byzantine heritage warranted a proper understanding of their affairs and a prompt fulfillment of their needs.²⁰⁷

During his stay and stops, Macarius was accompanied by his son Deacon²⁰⁸ Paul, by the painter Yussef al-Mussawir and by many other notables, who were fluent in Greek and the languages of the countries visited; their job was to collect information and religious data of all sorts.²⁰⁹ On this journey, the scholar J. Leroy highlights great importance on the re-flourishing of icons and their spread in the Antiochian church.²¹⁰ Greek learning and Greek speech were not a frequent phenomenon in seventeenth-century Syria. The lack of basic ecclesiastical knowledge was so dramatic that years later Macarius commissioned his well-educated son, archdeacon²¹¹ Paul of Aleppo²¹², to translate into Arabic seminal books on Greek and Byzantine history.²¹³

During his anti-Patriarchate, Athanasius al-Dabbas,²¹⁴ also traveled to the Principalities²¹⁵ between 1700 and 1705 several times and received the support of Constantine Brâncoveanu²¹⁶ to establish an Arabic printing house in Aleppo,²¹⁷ printing the divine liturgy book and

²⁰⁷ Ioana Feodorov, *Paul of Aleppo: The Orthodox Church in the Arab World, 700-1700 an Anthology of Sources*, eds. Samuel Noble, Alexander Treiger, Ephrem Kyriakos, DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois Univ. Press, 2014 (ed. Samuel Noble, Alexander Treiger and Ephrem Kyriakos; Orthodox Christian series; DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois Univ. Press, 2014), at 253

²⁰⁸ Servant, minister, the rank in the Christian ministry next below the presbyter (priest) and bishop. Livingstone

²⁰⁹ Slim, *The Middle East and North Africa, II*, 460

²¹⁰ J. LEROY, "L'icone des stylites de deirBalamand (Liban)," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph, Beyrouth* XXXVIII 1962, at 333–58

²¹¹ A cleric having a defined administrative authority delegated to him by Bishop in the whole or part of the diocese. The territory assigned to him is known as an –archdeacon of Lindsay. Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 97

²¹² Paul of Aleppo (ca 1627-late 1660s) was a clergyman, an archdeacon. He was born in Aleppo to the family of the Patriarch of Antioch, Macarius. In 1654-1656, he accompanied Patriarch Macarius on his journey and left extensive notes about it. His writings are devoted to the natural landscape, customs, and rites of peoples, and some descriptions of the monasteries and churches, civil and religious ceremonies, political events etc.

²¹³ Serikoff, *Patriarch Macarius Ibn al-Za'im* (as in note 204), at 237

²¹⁴ He went to Jerusalem, he had become a monk in saba monastery, renamed as paisios or prokopious, learned greek language, then became priest. from manuscript of Oriental library, Beirut 1778, N32.

فايز فريجات المخلصي، "البطريك اثناسيوس دباس: بقلم المطران جرمانوس فرحات (+)1732"، مجلة الوحدة في الإيمان، مجلة دينية ومسكونية (1974)، at 203

²¹⁵ The Metropolitan Youakim of Bethlem was the first Christian Arabs who travelled to Eastern Europe (1582-1585) and opened a period of political contacts between the Middle Eastern Christians and the Danubian principalities, Ukraine and Russia. Panchenko, "a "Milkite protonaisce ", a forgotten cultural revival of the Melkites in the late 16th century," 134

²¹⁶ Ioana Feodorov, *The Romanian Contribution to Arabic Printing: Impact de l'imprimerie et rayonnement intellectuel des Pays Roumains*, Bucharest: Biblioteca Bucureștilor, 2009 (Bucharest: Biblioteca Bucureștilor, 2009)

²¹⁷ Çolak, "Relations between the Ottoman central administration and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria: 16th-18th centuries," 82

orologion in 1700.²¹⁸ The first press with Arabic characters²¹⁹ in the East made its appearance in 1702 at Aleppo through the initiative of him. In 1720 it was moved to Lebanon on account of opposition to its use among conservative Orthodox Christians.

As it was mentioned before, the Catholic missionaries would flock to all cities: Capuchins, Jesuits, Dominicans, and Carmelites throughout the East would encourage the Eastern churches to recognize the authority of Rome. Various monastic orders established themselves in Bilad al-Sam from Aleppo to Jerusalem. By the middle of the seventeenth century they were wide spread: Terra Santa of the Franciscans had stations in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Rama, Bethlehem, Acre, Nazareth, Sidon, Tripoli, Harissa, Damascus, Aleppo, and Alexandretta. The Jesuits were found in many of the same places and in Mt Lebanon, as were the Carmelites and the Capuchins.²²⁰ The Catholic current ran so strong in the early eighteenth century that the patriarch of Antioch, Cyril V Zai'm, was always careful to keep on good terms with the Maronite, the Latin missionaries in Syria and the French consuls.²²¹ Thus connection with the Rome was a factor of the Renaissance during the eighteenth century.²²²

The third reason was the movement of architectural activity; in most rural areas of Syria, there was no need for new church buildings, because of recall the urbanization, reduction in the number of Christians, and the abolition of dioceses in rural areas.²²³ Sometimes the organizers of construction works attempted to circumvent shari'a restrictions, relying on the distance from Ottoman administrative centers or taking advantage of a period of unrest when the Muslim judiciary was paralyzed. However, such ventures often ended badly for Christian bishops and architects, for instance, in 1759, the pasha of Damascus imprisoned Patriarch Sylvester and his vicar Michael Tuma, levying them with a fine of fifty sacks for having arranged two years earlier for the illegal repair and decoration of the Church of Saints Cyprian and Justina, which located near to the Patriarchate.²²⁴ The ecclesiastical organization of the Christians also constantly suffered from the greed of the Ottoman pashas, for example, in the beginning of the seventeenth century had arrived to Aleppo a priest (Karma) from Metropolitan of Hama asking the ottoman authorities to reduce the taxis.²²⁵ The costs for the construction and repair of churches were particularly expensive, because for any improvements, it was necessary to get permission from Istanbul, which entailed the payment of bribes to local and central authorities and to chancellery officials. At times, receiving the appropriate *firman* was more expensive

²¹⁸ Morini, *Il patriarcato Melchita di Antiochia tra XVI e XVII secolo: Partecipazione alla comunione ortodossa e rapporti con la chiesa di Roma* (as in note 193), at 388

²¹⁹ It was only in the early 17th century that the entire range of Melkite service books was systematically translated from Greek into Arabic. Kate LEEMING, "The Adoption of Arabic as a Liturgical Language by the Palestinian Melkites," *ARAM Periodical* 15 (2003) 239–46, at 239 K. HITTI, *Syria*, 219

²²⁰ Philipp, "Bilād al-Šām in the Modern Period," 412

²²¹ Frazee, *Catholics and sultans*, 199

²²² Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Eglise melchite du Ve au XXe siècle*, 62

²²³ Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 9431–33

²²⁴ Mīkhā'il G. Burayk, *Tārīkh ḥawādith al-Shām wa-Lubnān, aw, Tārīkh Mīkhā'il al-Dimashqī* (2nd ed., [Bayrūt]: Dār Qutaybah, 1981) 59, 76.

²²⁵ كحالة، جوزيف الياس، البطريرك مكاريوس الزعيم 29،

than the repairs themselves.²²⁶ During the first three centuries of Ottoman rule were not marked by any vibrant construction activities on the part of Middle Eastern Christians.²²⁷

The monasteries of Inner Syria along the line from Damascus to Aleppo are ancient, even Byzantine constructions that for the most part lay in ruins, with only a few of them supporting life. The Assad Rostrum indicates to the monasteries and churches that were existing during Patriarch Macarius travels²²⁸ (1648-1649), this tour was conducted to inspect the affairs of the parish, the collection of donations and the good deeds. They are the monastery of Our Lady of Sydnaia and the monastery of Mar Gorges Al-Homeyra, Monastery of saint Thekla²²⁹ and finally Monastery of Saints Sarkis and Bacchus in the vicinity of Ma'alula.²³⁰ In Damascus, When Meletius received the caretaker in the name of Aftimus III, the monk Meletius summoned the monastery of St. Saba to Damascus and asked him to decorate the cathedral.²³¹ During 1757 there were consolidation work, restoration of the sanctuary, and repair of the interior paving and fountain. Collapse of the church due to the earthquake of 1759, then the reconstruction between 1779 and 1791.²³² While in Aleppo, as a starting point must be emphasized that the city was the third city in the Ottoman Empire, Aleppo was a major metropolis of some 120,000 people²³³, the administrative capital of an Ottoman province, a renowned center of trade and industry, and a seat of culture, learning, and luxury, it was of course hardly representative of all regional communities. But precisely because of the elaborate and dynamic character of its society the city can conveniently display the effects of many factors on local conditions. Its highly differentiated population, which included a large body of non-Muslims ²³⁴(some 20,000 Christians and 4,000 Jews), lived in a world where sharp contrasts of lifestyle and personal circumstances were common, and the vagaries of nature, the marketplace, and human pursuits governed daily existence. Aleppo, was noted for a number of large religious centers which were founded by rulers of the city or wealthy notables. These major institutions were initially funded by large endowments. Aleppines also dedicated *awqaf* to a wide variety of smaller charitable objects.²³⁵ During the sixteenth century, the building of the great trading premises took place in the economic center of the town, which the inhabitants

²²⁶ Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 1775–81

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 9361–62

²²⁸ Paul Of Aleppo, Archdeacon 1654-1666, *Travels of macarius: Patriarch of antioch* ([Place of publication not identified]: Nabu Press, 2010)

²²⁹ زيّات حبيب (دار المشرق العربي) الديارات النصرانية في الإسلام، نصوص ودروس، 1999) 143 it was visited in 1642.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 155–56 in 1642, it was visited.

²³¹ Rustum, *Kanīsat Madīnat Allāh Antākiya al- 'Uzmā [The Church of the City of God, the Great Antioch]*, 454

²³² Architecture Religieuse du Patriarcat Orthodoxe d'Antioche, "University Of Balamand Lebanon," accessed August 26, 2017, <http://home.balamand.edu.lb/english/ARPOA.asp?id=15316&fid=270>

²³³ Whatever the actual numbers of Christians, the growth in the population of Christians and Jews in Aleppo is all the more impressive as the total number of people living in the city apparently remained relatively constant after the middle of the seventeenth century. See: Andre Raymond, "The Population of Aleppo in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries according to Ottoman Census Documents," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16 (1984) 447–60, 447-60.

²³⁴ Marcus, "international journal of Iddle east studies," 167

²³⁵ For more see Roded, Ruth, Great Mosques, Zāwiyas and Neighborhood Mosques: Popular beneficiaries of Waqf Endowments in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Aleppo, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 110, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1990), pp.32-38

called “the city-Al Medina”. The city was extended towards the south during the course of about 40 years by successive stages that the history of the great *waqqf* allows us to trace.²³⁶ While before this period, Christians who had come out from the city within the walls or immigrants began to develop the quarter that took the name of Gdeydé, the new, or Saliba, cited by Ibn al-Shihna in 1421, around churches which had no doubt been old monasteries outside the walls. These quarters, chiefly inhabited by Christians, were being developed up to the second half of the nineteenth century.²³⁷ There were major churches in the area of Gdeydé - outside the walls, which are long-standing: such as the Maronite Cathedral (1455), the Armenian Cathedral (1483)²³⁸, the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in the 15th century and the Syriac Cathedral in 1510.²³⁹ Over time, the churches underwent restoration; the Armenian Cathedral was rebuilt in 1639, and the Church of the Lady of the Greek Orthodox Church was built on the remains of the older church. Meletius Karma built a new metropolitan’s residence in Aleppo “with great amenities, solid construction, high walls ... and strong foundations,” as Paul of Aleppo described it.²⁴⁰ Although, the city of Aleppo passed through crisis: numerous indicators, like activity in establishing great *waqfs* and constructing “public” monuments, were negative; there was, rather, continued construction of buildings that were more modest and designed especially for the sphere of private activity: large dwelling houses (where it is possible to date these) and textile *qisariyyas*. Even in times of crisis the metropolis continued to develop.²⁴¹ Mid-eighteenth-century Aleppo provides a well-documented, strikingly clear example of residential patterns according to wealth and not religion. Here we know both the patterns by quarter and even who lived in the particular houses of the quarter. In this carefully studied case, no quarter was inhabited by only a single religious community. And, names could be deceiving: hence, the so-called Jewish quarter of Aleppo held only part of its Jewish population while many Muslims called the neighborhood home as well. The Kurdish quarter at the time in fact was empty of Kurds; none remained from the original Kurdish settlement there in the medieval Mamluk era.²⁴²

The monasteries of the coast, mainly in Tripoli and ‘Akkar, were more numerous and their founding in most cases already belonged to the Ottoman era.²⁴³ Orthodox monasteries also flourished in the rural area around Tripoli, Matn (central Lebanon), and Syria (Ma‘lula, Sydnaia, El-Hosn). During this period, a crucial transformation in the Ottoman Empire, touching its administrative and fiscal organization took place.²⁴⁴ The Melkite church restored

²³⁶ Raymond, *the Ottoman conquest and the Development of the Great Arab twons* (as in note 18), at 22

²³⁷ David, *Aleppo: From The Ottoman Metropolis To The Syrian City*, 333

²³⁸ the Armenian of Aleppo always sought to maintain the most cordial relations with the other christian communities, but the fact that their churches were adjacent made occasional friction unavoidable Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Domination / by Avedis K. Sanjian*, 264

²³⁹ منشورات المديرية العامة للآثار والمتاحف: دمشق) حلب القديمة, فايز الحمصي, 1983) 57, Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon*, 94

²⁴⁰ Paul Of Aleppo, Archdeacon 1654-1666, *Travels of macarius*

²⁴¹ David, *Aleppo: From The Ottoman Metropolis To The Syrian City*, 329

²⁴² Quataert, “The.Ottoman.Empire.1700-1922.Second.Edition.eBook-EEEn,”

²⁴³ Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 4566–69

²⁴⁴ Slim, *The Middle East and North Africa, II*, 463

the monastery of Balamand, which was renewed in 1603.²⁴⁵ In the early 18th century, the monastery of St. John the Choueir was built in the outlying area of the Choueir. The renovation of the Sidon/ Saida church was completed in 1690 AD, in addition to the construction of the monastery of the Savior in 1711.

Regarding Stylistic typologies of the Orthodox churches of Antioch, There are many churches dated to Middle Ages period, with style roman Syro-Libano, there shapes are arched parallelepiped, built by limestone, like Monastery of Balamand.²⁴⁶ Other churches have a Vernacular style in arcades, dated until the 14th century, in the Hauran until the 18th century. The “pre-modern “type dated to 14-18th century. Levantine syncretism dated to 18th century-1940, its map is a hall or basilica under dome. The materials are limestone, sandstone, basalt, wood, and red tile from Marseille. For example, the cathedral of Damascus, Forty martyrs in Homs²⁴⁷, and Lady church at Aleppo.²⁴⁸

The smaller village churches are single nave churches with a barrel vault and a protruding apse.²⁴⁹ This simple construction is found in Syria and Palestine as early as the fifth and sixth centuries.²⁵⁰ Therefore, some new churches and old once, needed to Iconostasis.²⁵¹

Concluding, construction activity in Syria was chiefly limited to refurbishing and reconstruction. The reason for this, on the one hand, was that the shari‘a ban on the construction of new and expansion of old churches was maintained.²⁵² On the other hand, the difficult economic situation of many Christian communities made constructing church buildings a scarcely feasible task. Opportunities for large-scale church construction were rare, and as a consequence, Christian architects’ lack of experience sometimes had tragic consequences.²⁵³

²⁴⁵ Rustum, *Kanīsat Madīnat Allāh Anṭākiya al-‘Uzmā [The Church of the City of God, the Great Antioch]*, 34

²⁴⁶ Architecture Religieuse du Patriarcat Orthodoxe d'Antioche, “University Of Balamand Lebanon.”

²⁴⁷ The most prominent Christian building in Homs, the antique city of Emesa, is the Greek Orthodox church of st Mar Elian, local miracle saint, whose remains are preserved in a marble sarcophagus in south apse. The present church was erected in 1843 and renovated in 1970. Mat Immerzeel, *Identity puzzles: Medieval Christian art in Syria and Lebanon / M. Immerzeel* (Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta; 184, Leuven, Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2009) 71

²⁴⁸ Architecture Religieuse du Patriarcat Orthodoxe d'Antioche, “University Of Balamand Lebanon,” accessed August 26, 2017, <http://home.balamand.edu.lb/english/ARPOA.asp?id=2764&fid=270>

²⁴⁹ Erica C. Dodd, *Medieval painting in the Lebanon* (Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients; Bd. 8, Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2004) 21

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ The increasingly important role of the iconostasis in Eastern Churches reached a high point in association with an artistic development referred to as “post Byzantine” art. This period was not only the physical dimensions of iconostasis reached an unprecedented scale but their pictorial content acquired a level of complexity that may be thought of as competing with the painted mural program of church interiors. at times, and especially in areas under Ottoman domination, the iconostasis could, and on occasion did, replace the mural paintings together. Slobodan Ćurčić, *Architecture as icon: Architecture as icon Perception and representation of architecture in Byzantine art / Slobodan Ćurčić and Evangelia Hadjistryphonos ; with contributions by Kathleen E. McVey and Helen G. Saradi*, eds. Slobodan Ćurčić, Evangelia Chatzētryphōnos, Kathleen E. McVey, Hélène Saradi, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Art Museum, 2010 (ed. Slobodan Ćurčić, Evangelia Chatzētryphōnos and Kathleen E. McVey; Saradi, Hélène; ; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Art Museum, 2010), at 29

²⁵² Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 9361–65

²⁵³ Ibid., 9439–40

I have argued about Melkite icons which emerged and flourished in the first half of the eighteenth century till beginnings of nineteenth centuries as a result of a combination of factors that coincided at that time. Also, about the factors of emerging and developing their features. In arguing for this view, I gave more consideration to the local and regional historical contexts in which Melkite artists lived and worked. Sufficient attention was paid to the Al musawwir family. Their power and wealth allowed them to patronize many projects on behalf of the Christian community, including a cultural and artistic renaissance that saw most churches and monasteries restored and rebuilt. The movement was accompanied by a parallel artistic renaissance that included icons, and manuscripts. The Melkite- Christian market thus created a growing number of Iconographers and craftsmen to meet this increasing demand for artistic works and the growing number of religious buildings.

Thus, Syria experienced an artistic flowering period. Icons produced in workshops here during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were an expression of a post-Byzantine Christian Arab artistic phenomenon called the “Melkite renaissance”. Multiple eras can be identified as times of “cultural infusions,” associated with the names Meletius Karma, Macarius al-Za‘im, then the Patriarchs of Antioch Athanasius III al- Dabbas and Sylvester. The church during their professions attested prosperity in translation and manuscript copying, the painting of icons and illumination works.

2.2 The Melkite Art During 17-18 Centuries.

Aleppo has restored the art of icon which took a remarkable place in the history of the post-Byzantine art. The first known iconographer for us is Joseph Al Mussawir, which considered the founder of Aleppo's family.²⁵⁴ Melkite iconographers had developed a new visual language considered as continuation of the Byzantine tradition with Islamic influences. Although every iconographer has a particular style of drawing, Melkite icons have distinguished with three features; as follows: forms of faces and bodies of characters, Oriental decorations, and inscriptions with narration writings in the Arabic language.

The birth of an Aleppo school of art in the early 17th century coincides with an important cultural revival experienced by the Melkite community of the city.²⁵⁵

The first of local icons date back to the 17th century.²⁵⁶ At each signed works in Arabic the painter: "Youssef Al musawwir" which means Joseph the iconographer, as a symbol of the extraordinary creativity over the Chalcedonian- Melkite Syrian-Palestinian. The master of this post-Byzantine Arab icon is also the founder of a family, from which four painters will come



Figure 1 Akathist icon, Yussef al-Mussawir, 1667, 48x 58, Museum of Sursock, Lebanon.

from father to nephew Ne'met Allah, Hanania and Girgis. Youssef Al musawwir is the son of Haji Antonius, son of Raa'd Aleppian.²⁵⁷ The Name of his family remains unknown. He was born in Aleppo in the late 16th century. He was a colleague of Hanna Za'im and other young people had gathered around the bishop Meletios Karma to make translations. He was a deacon in 1650 and received the priestly ordination between 1650 and 1653. We know nothing more about his life, apart from the name of two of his children. The first is the priest Ne'met who as we will see that he will work as painter. The second is Zechariah.²⁵⁸ He is a talented copyist, translator, composer and miniaturist. His oldest work as far as us is the Book of Psalms of the Prophet David, which he copied in his elegant calligraphy and signed: "son of Antonius disciple of master Patriarch Kyr Aftimus, completed it on

²⁵⁴ S. Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites: Icônes grecques, melkites, russes*, Collection Abou Adal, ed. Georges Abou Adal, Genève: Skira, 1993 (ed. Georges Abou Adal ; Genève: Skira, 1993), at 172

²⁵⁵ Rand Abou Ackl, *The Art of the icon in Aleppo school from the mid-seventeenth century until the end of the eighth century AD.: A research project prepared for the master's degree in classical archaeology and Arabic and Islamic archaeology* (Damascus: Damascus university, 2010-2011)

²⁵⁶ Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 171-72

²⁵⁷ Sylvia V. Agémian, "Yüsuf al-Halabi, peintre melkite du XVIIe siècle," *Revue roumaine d'histoire de l'art. Sér. beaux-arts* (1981) 5

²⁵⁸ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites''* (as in note 173), at 144

December 21, 1641.²⁵⁹ He knew Homer's language, and wrote in Arabic with the grammar of his contemporaries, copied and decorated manuscripts with splendid miniatures,²⁶⁰ i.e. the liturgical Psalter illustrated with 33 colored miniatures.²⁶¹

Although his style maintained very close to Greek art rather than creating, he was indeed the founder of the school of Aleppo and the first Melkite painter. The changes of production of Aleppian icons which perpetuate from one generation to the next, perfectly correspond to those suffered by the icon of modern times.²⁶² Thus, his works show loyalty to the Greek tradition: the icon follows its aesthetic standards and obeys the traditional norms that make it the image of Scripture. In his icons, there are no colored borders; he didn't use oriental decorations. Usually he continued to use Greek inscriptions. Some of his personages are wearing the Arabian turban and apparel which abounding with golden streaks. The icons of Yusuf al-Musawwir are characterized by subtle white spots on the forehead. The Anastasis and Akathist Hymn icons²⁶³ are typical models of post-Byzantine iconography. In the first one, only the dedication is in Arabic, while Inscription in Greek. In the second icon, the painter depicted the famous Hymn known by Akathist²⁶⁴, he depicted the twenty-four "verses" in 24 small icons arranged around King David icon in the center: the inscriptions are written in Greek and Arabic. Nineteen icons with the signature of Yusuf al-Musawwir are preserved from the years 1645 to 1647.

Thus, Youssef can be counted as one of the artists of the post-Byzantine style, but hardly the best of them, and considered to be the founder of the Aleppo school.

The priest Ne'met al-Musawwir (active 1675–1722) inherited Youssef, father's vocation. The little is known about his life. He was born before the end of seventeenth century and died after 1724²⁶⁵. His production was so immense that no big church in Syria or Lebanon devoid of one of his icons. He was ordained *kassis*- pastor- later in 1694, while his father was a priest. Ne'met's artistic production dates to 1666-1724.

During his artistic career he developed two methods of painting. Firstly, he tended to be nostalgic for traditional Cretan painting, so that his icons did not distinguish much from any contemporary Greek icon, see; Cat.80 While the second period, after 1692, he painted the icon with oriental features.²⁶⁶ Cat.58, Cat.82**Error! Reference source not found..**

²⁵⁹ Abou Ackl, *The Art of the icon in Aleppo school from the mid-seventeenth century until the end of the eighth century AD.*, 115

²⁶⁰ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 30

²⁶¹ Ioana Feodorov, "The Arabic Psalter, facsimile edition of Manuscript A 187, The Petersburg Arabic Illuminated Psalter from the collections of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg Branch), 2005," *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, 46, nr. 1-4, 2008, p. 481-484, at 481

²⁶² Mahmoud Zibawi, *Oriente cristiani: Senso e storia di un'arte tra Bisanzio e l'Islam* (Milano: Jaca, 1995) 95

²⁶³ V. Căndea and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes: Icones Melkites*, ed. Virgil Candea, Beyrouth: Musée Nicolas Sursock, 1969 (ed. Virgil Candea; ; Beyrouth: Musée Nicolas Sursock, 1969), at 130–33pl.2

²⁶⁴ A hymn in twenty–four stanzas to the Virgin attributed to the sixth century poet Romanos Melodies, continued to be sung in full at least once a year: on Saturday of the fifth week of Lent. Michael Angold, *Eastern Christianity* (The Cambridge history of Christianity; v. 5, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 148

²⁶⁵ Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon*, 111

²⁶⁶ S. Agemain, "Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724," *Berytus. Archaeological studies* 39 (1991) 189–242

Ne'met, in turn, has inherited models of Yusuf, using them several times in his miniatures and some of his icons as Akathist icon, painted in 1714, Cat.60.²⁶⁷ He was perhaps the most productive painter, also it is rare to find the large churches of Syria and Lebanon that does not have one of his icons. The style of Ne'met contrasts sharply with that of his father's more graphic quality and rigid lines. His best work, in our opinion, is an icon of Saints Symeon the Elder and the Younger (1699, Balamand).²⁶⁸ The most famous of his works is the Last judgment icon; Cat 85, is painted by him and his son, Hanania.

The third painter of Aleppian family was Hanania, the deacon Hanania al-Musawwir, son of the *kassis* Ne'met Allah of Aleppo. We do not know if the nickname of *Shammas* "the deacon" given to him means that he really had access to the order of the diaconate or whether it was an honorary title that was a habit of attribute to men of culture during this period²⁶⁹, such as *Shammas Abdallah Zakher*.²⁷⁰

Hanania was born at the end of the 17th century and lived in Aleppo and died after 1740. The first icon that he painted alone was the "Crucifixion" in the Dormition church in Aleppo, see; The last icon that we know is the icon of "Jesus Christ the High Priest" dates to 1771.²⁷¹

In the beginning of his activity, Hanania inherited from his father's style, i.e. icon of Saint George combating the Dragon, Cat.83, which is a copy of his father's icon of St. Georg in the Church of Mar Elias Maronite in Aleppo city, Cat.83. Collaboration between Hanania and her father makes it difficult to assign icons to one of them, especially when they are not signed. The art of Hanania differs from that of the father for the following aspects: less genius, more sweetness, sometimes a certain clumsy, which results in a kind of coldness or immobility; softer dresses: reduced of the ornamentation, Cat.4, 7. Finally, growing influence of the West in the choice of subjects and iconographic style, Cat.15, 68.²⁷²

Girgis son of Hanania at Musawwir was considered the most popular painter in the second half of the eighteenth century; his icons are almost innumerable. Hardly, in fact, we find its icons outside the Catholic churches.²⁷³ He was a deacon, like his father, we do not know if the deacon's title assigned to him indicated as an ecclesiastical degree.²⁷⁴ His activity was from 1744 until 1777.²⁷⁵ About his style, we can recognize two periods; the first one where the faces of characters are well-defined and the protoplasm is clear, as icon of the Virgin of Immaculate Conception; Cat.59 The second period is characterized by a very dark protoplasm that together

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 208

²⁶⁸ Căndea and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 140–46pl.6.

²⁶⁹ S. Agémian, "Oeuvres d'art melkites dans l'église arménienne des Quarante Martyrs d'Alep," *Etudes arméniennes. Annales de l'Association Libanaise des Universitaires Arméniens, Beyrouth* (1973) 91–113

²⁷⁰ he was perhaps the most popular author of this era, He was the inventor of the first Arabic printing press in Lebanon, in the Convent of San Giovanni Choueir G. Chammas and C. Francou, *Compendio di storia della Chiesa orientale e soprattutto Melkita* (LIR, 2013) 104

²⁷¹ Alexi Nassour, *Aleppian School of Iconography: Thesis for a Master's Degree in Theology, supervision of Metropolitan d. Paul Yazji, University of Balamand, John the Theological Seminary* (University of Balamand: University of Balamand, John the Theological Seminary, 2001)

²⁷² Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 53

²⁷³ Ibid., La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 31

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon*, 115

with the lights, which give a great intensity to the faces, Cat 27.²⁷⁶ Because of the large number of orders, he sometimes sacrificed quality to production. He had returned to the obsoleted illustrations in the margins and the techniques of decoration that Hanania has neglected partly, see; Cat.61. Aleppo's families offered to the monastery of Balamand a range of icons painted by three generations of painters from the El-Mussawir family. And we know that its iconostasis²⁷⁷ was created in Macedonia in the late seventeenth century.²⁷⁸ Monks came to settle in the monastery from the beginning of the seventeenth century, and an aisle of the monastery was named after them, the Aleppian' apartment.²⁷⁹

The activity of the Aleppo School lasted until the late 18th century with continuity and abundance. Shukrallah Ibn Yoakum from Aleppo,²⁸⁰ Kirill's al-Dimashki (1745-1790)²⁸¹ and an anonymous painter belonging to the Basilian religious order adhered to Ne'met's physiognomic types, general ornamentation and the characteristic green and red borders that mark the Aleppo School of painters.

Outside the Aleppo School, there were several independent Melkite craftsmen, the 18th century represents the climax of Melkite Christian art, there were a lot of independent artist who developed their own styles which different from Aleppo school. They didn't depend on Aleppo school style, most of these painters work in the Qalamun region like; Youssef Ibn Elian, Issa Qudsi Cat.56, 65. Another famous painter, Hanna al- Qudsi, (see, Cat. 8,9,51,52), who painted during the early 18th century, did mostly restorations and reproductions of earlier works, including some of Ne'met's. he was working in Syria and Lebanon between 1721 -1742 and stayed in Aleppo for a long period. His own works are closer to traditional icon painting.²⁸² Mikhail al-Dimashki, who worked in Damascus about the same time as Hanna al-Qudsi did in Jerusalem, painted traditional icons of a popular nature with elements taken from western painters.

The third iconographer, Sylvester²⁸³, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, his works are

²⁷⁶ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 56

²⁷⁷ The iconostasis in its classical form is a high screen completely obscuring the sanctuary from the congregation in the nave. It is decorated with icons permanently fixed in place. These, set out in five rows, reveal the divine dispensation. In the topmost row are the patriarchs with the prophets below them. Underneath the prophets are the festival icons and below these is the great Deesis, where the virgin, the Baptist and other saints turn towards Christ the Judge to intercede for mankind. On the doors are represented the Annunciation, and either side are two icons usually of the Pantocrator and of the Virgin and Child. A number of variants are possible according to elaborateness of the iconostasis and local custom. Christopher Walter, *the origins of the Iconostasis: Studies in Byzantine iconography* (Collected studies series; CS65, London: Variorum, 1977) 251

²⁷⁸ Souad A. Slim, *Balamand Histoire et patrimoine* ([Beyrouth]: Dar en-Nahar, 1995) 82–83

²⁷⁹ Slim, *The Middle East and North Africa, II*, 461

²⁸⁰ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 57

²⁸¹ Abou Ackl, *The Art of the icon in Aleppo school from the mid-seventeenth century until the end of the eighth century AD.*, 136

²⁸² See; Nassour, Alexis (Deacon): *The School of Aleppo iconography*, Study prepared to Degree in theology, supervision Metropolitan. Paul Yazigi, Balamand University, John of Damascus Institute of Theology. 2001, p.17. (In Arabic).

²⁸³ Sylvestre (27 Sept. /8 Oct. 1724 13/24 Mar. 1766) we know very little about his life before his elevation on the throne in Cyprus, according to tradition, his patriarchal father. He was taken would be Greek and his mother Maronite. A good scholar, Athanasius Dabbas, who watched over an encyclical, chose at first as archdeacon (a

strictly Byzantine in form. Cat.76, 84. Very little about him, born of an orthodox father and a Maronite mother, 1696-1766, spent his youth in Mount Athos²⁸⁴ and Constantinople.²⁸⁵ In spite of his struggle against Cyril Tanas and his peregrinations, he did find time to paint. He offered to St. Nicolas Orthodox church in Tripoli and the church of the Monastery of Sydnaia some of his most beautiful icons. In Syria and Lebanon, six icons are attributed to him.²⁸⁶

With the beginning of nineteenth century, Michael the Cretan–Michael Polychronis– who considered the biggest influence on Melkite art and the most important iconographer had worked and his impact would be weak during Jerusalem school period.²⁸⁷ He was working during 1809-1821 in Syria and Lebanon.²⁸⁸ He Greek Orthodox painter was born in Crete, son of the famous Cretan painter; Polycharnos de Candi (+1810) who worked in Sinai and Jerusalem. Michael depicted many icons for iconostasis of big churches, he had many disciples.²⁸⁹ In the East his nickname was Al-Kriti, “Cretan”. In the catalogue, eight icons; 2, 13, 24, 47, 62, 63, 75, 77 dated between 1811 and the first half of nineteenth century. His work was a true synthesis between Baroque, post-Baroque style and Arab-Christian art.²⁹⁰ He had a unique style in painting, the faces are well-defined, halfway between Western realism and iconographic expressionism. His chromaticity derives from that of the Crete school, but it differs from the introduction of characteristic colours of Islamic art such as black and green pistachio. The school of Michael distinguished using suitable specific gradations as Italian style.²⁹¹ Michael Polychronis has designed some icons as jewels, his skill in surface processing and imitation of precious materials are unparalleled, and therefore the garments of precious fabrics are woven with gold, embroidered with sumptuous motifs in which all the resources of the imagination are at the service of extraordinary creativity. Michel borrows from Castrophylacas the way of drawing the shape of clothes which cascading as waterfall, and the taste of nature or the shape of his plants and, he borrows Italian architectures, the way of painting the horses. Finally, he used to depict the characters in rounded faces and the beautiful

detail borrowed from Jeremiah by Papadopoulos Sylvester accompanied Athanasius in all his wanderings.) Celu attempted the archbishop before the refusal Sylvestre was the companion of the Patriarch in his journey to Constantinople, and from there he set out for the Athos to perfect himself in the painting of the icons, and we find him there again In 1724. Athanasius Dabbas, dying, appointed him to succeed him, and as soon as Constantinople received the letters of Athanasius, in which he declared that he abdicated in favor of Sylvester, he was recalled to the Holy Mountain, and sacrificed patriarch September 27, 1724, a week after the enthronement of Cyrille Tanas, he entered his eparchy at Aleppo only on 5/16 Nov. 1725, bearing a patriarchal Jeremiah of Constantinople dated November 1724, presenting it to his flock, and condemning Tanas and all the coryphae of the Catholic cause Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Eglise melchite du Ve au XXe siècle*, 84

²⁸⁴ The “Holy Mountian”, the peninsula which projects into the Aegean Sea from the coast of Macedonia and terminates in Mount Athos has long been entirely of monasteries of the E. Orthodox Church. Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 122

²⁸⁵ Skaff, *The Place of the Patriarchs of Antioch in Church History / by Patriarchal Exarch Elias B. Skaff*, 324

²⁸⁶ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites* (as in note 173)

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 58, 68

²⁸⁸ Ibid., at 58

²⁸⁹ Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon*, 188

²⁹⁰ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 159

²⁹¹ Eadem, *Icones arabes: Mystères d'Orient / présentation et commentaires de Agnès-Mariam de la Croix ; photographies de François-Xavier Émery* (Méolans-Revel: Éditions Grégoriennes, 2006) A14

hands with rolled up fingers. Jean Cornaros who transmits to Michel the golden complexions, the red hair and gives him the usage of garlands and baroque thrones.²⁹² The fabrics that painted by Michel remind us of Italian velvet of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Therefore, Michael Polychronis became the privileged witness of the diversity of the post-byzantine art.

2.3 Melkite Icons Features.

Melkite icons differ from Greek and Russian icons more in detail and treatment of subjects than in general form. What are the characteristics of a Melkite icon? Scholars determined these characteristics to allow us to distinguish it from Greek, Russian, or other areas of eastern Christian art. General traits and others of specific periods of time, like decoration, the faces and bodies of the figures—physiognomies—, the frequency of certain themes from local life and, of course, Arabic inscriptions.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, the artists were faithful to traditional prototypes²⁹³, which sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish their creations from those of contemporary Greek painters.²⁹⁴ Already, Bilād al Shām had long been a crossroads for traditions – Greek, Byzantine, Ottoman, Western – and numerous Arab Christian denominations, Orthodox/Melkite, Nestorian²⁹⁵, Maronite, Armenian. Begging with post-byzantine influences, artistic links related the Melkites to the post-Byzantine Greek world, particularly Crete²⁹⁶, which, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, functioned as the “hub of a great intermingling of Western and Eastern Christian representations”.²⁹⁷ Post-Byzantine artists responded to the new taste for European cultural and artistic products which had begun to infiltrate the Ottoman sphere of influence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the influence of such Cretan trends on the work of Melkite icon painters in Syria was highlighted by mat Immerzeel.²⁹⁸

While, from the beginning of the 18th century, the tendency to locate faces, to impose an oriental decoration is manifested, following the general trend of individualization of the art of the icon. It is at this time that a true grammar of the oriental faces is built up, taken over throughout the century and whose origin goes back to Ne’met.²⁹⁹

²⁹² Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 119

²⁹³ There are 8 icons of *Abou Adal* collection dated to 17th attributed to Melkite painters. Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 172

²⁹⁴ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 97

²⁹⁵ The so-called Nestorians, who called themselves the East Syrian or from political standpoint, the Persian church, derived primarily from Christianity on the Tigris. After a treaty with Emperor Jovian (363-64) the final loss to the romans of the city of Nisibis and the flight of refugees to Edessa, the church continued its development outside the Roman Empire. Fahlbusch and Bromiley, *The encyclopedia of Christianity. editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett, 721–23*

²⁹⁶ Cretan schools were the most important phenomenon in post-Byzantine art. M. Chatzidakis, *Lumières de l'Orient chrétien: Icônes de la Collection Abou Adal [publ. à l'occasion de l'exposition au Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève du 12 décembre 1996 au 4 mai 1997]*, Bayrouth: Art et Patrimoine [u.a.], 1997 (Bayrouth: Art et Patrimoine [u.a.], 1997), at 34–35

²⁹⁷ Mattheus Immerzeel and Antoine Touma, *Syrische iconen: Collectie Antoine Touma [tentoonstelling in het Museum voor Volkenkunde te Rotterdam van 29 november 1997 tot en met 19 april 1998]* ([Gent]: Snoeck-Ducaju & zoon, 1997) 24

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 76–77

²⁹⁹ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 97

Yusuf was greatly influenced by the learned literary and historical preoccupations of his own contemporary religious figures. Yusuf included in his icons an abundance of scenes taken directly from these hagiographies.³⁰⁰

Melkite icons are designed by the artist to present for local people and to be close to their understanding, we can see themes from local life.³⁰¹ The artists were influenced by their local communities in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine, when they chose themes to depict. There fore, local saints and some legends are typically oriental. St. George, whose legend says –as we will talk about it next– “His battle with the dragon was near Beirut” see 3.3.2 The Architectural Background On The Typical Scenes Of St George, St. Saba, who headed a monastic order outside Jerusalem, i.e. Cat. 64, 65, 66, St. Simeon Stylites on the pillar, near to Aleppo, in Syria for 40 years, Cat. 76, St. John Climax, Cat.77 St. Mary the Egyptian, *Cat.66* the Virgin Mary in the Garden of Jesse, and the Prophet Elias beheading the priests of Baal.

Therefore, the Melkite artist painted the heads of the saints in oval shapes, and black beards and hair.³⁰² Their eyes were almond-shaped as well, see Cat.4, 33, Which allows us to say that all the faces painted by Melkite artists have Arabized complexions, Cat. 49. Additionally, the faces of men and angels a more natural oval to the faces and a softer expression than in the Byzantine icon.³⁰³i. e, Cat.25, 30.

The bodies are fuller and rounder with less of the modeling which is characteristic of traditional icon,³⁰⁴ i.e., Cat.38, 49, 58. Our artists have treated in the same way all the personages as the angels and the holy persons that leads to make them more look like locals. For examples; St George holds sword, Cat. 82, 83. Marie who has just been born sleeps in a rocking cradle that is still made in Syria and Lebanon, Cat.1, 2. Also, you can see this cradle also in icons of the Nativity of St John the Baptist Cat. 35, 36, 37. The Melkite artist depicted Abraham wearing the Arabic costume, Cat.78, the contemporary furniture, see: cat.1, 2, 4 and daily household objects, Cat.18, 19 were depicted in Melkite art.

Sometimes, motifs of baroque and rococo origin were integrated into traditional post-Byzantine compositions to create what is sometimes termed a ‘Turkish rococo’ style.³⁰⁵ The icons of the late 17th and early 18th centuries cannot be understood without at least a general idea of the artistic currents of the time, when the dominant style was baroque. The use of sculpture on the façades of buildings, both three dimensional and relief, gave them visual semantic. Individual buildings and even whole complexes conformed to set decorative pattern. In addition to biblical figures, there were sculptures of characters from history and mythology.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁰ Ibid., at 138

³⁰¹ Ibid., at 54

³⁰² Abou Ackl, *The Art of the icon in Aleppo school from the mid-seventeenth century until the end of the eighth century AD.*, 159

³⁰³ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 99

³⁰⁴ Abou Ackl, *The Art of the icon in Aleppo school from the mid-seventeenth century until the end of the eighth century AD.*, 128–35

³⁰⁵ Tania C. Tribe, “Icon and narration in eighteenth-century Christian Egypt: The works of Yuhanna al-Armani al-Qudsi and Ibrahim al-Nasikh,” *Art History* 27 (2004) 62–94, at 70

³⁰⁶ Lyudmila Milyayeva, *Icons* (1st ed., New York: Parkstone International, 2014) 157

Thus, from the beginning of the eighteenth century, there was a growing European influence on the works of Melkite artists. However, it is not clear whether it is possible to speak of direct borrowings from Baroque³⁰⁷ painting or whether the Arabs through Greek iconography, which experienced the same Western influence, received Baroque elements. Baroque and Rococo styles have been existed in architecture of houses in Aleppo, for example; the windows of Ajek-Pash House are framed with carved stone of baroque and rococo styles, and this house is near the Jasmine gate in the Gdeydé Quarter, 1757.³⁰⁸

Furthermore, the ornamentation of Melkite icons is a clear Orientale inspiration: the taste for ornamentation is a phenomenon that extends to all the icons of the eighteenth century and which corresponded to a general taste. Therefore, the Melkite painters would dedicate themselves to work in the icons with this ornamentation to cover surfaces by using the rules which come from Islamic art as floral shapes, leaves of plants and geometric motifs. This kind of decorations is Ne'met's invention. Therefore, the monochrome gilded background would be covered with the arabesque. These decorations come from the inscription of the carpets and the painted woodwork which covered the walls and ceilings of the beautiful mansions with the ceramic coatings. Thus, it could to say that Melkite art is distinguished by an abundance of decorative elements that make certain icons resemble pieces of jewelry. Although, there are some icons are not decorated, i.e., Cat. 45, 81. Basically, those dated to the 19th-century are often simple in the extreme, *Cat. 13, 24, 47, 75*.

The works of the school of Aleppo is distinguished by this decoration, aspiring to the harmony of form and color through meticulous work and the utmost refinement. Curled leaves, lotus flowers, grenades of lilies, tulips, and palms spread out on the bottoms, the halos, the clothes; rounded medallions or in the form of stylized lily flowers encircle the inscriptions. The Melkite icons of the early eighteenth century have very varied backgrounds (Cat. 7, 40, 88), but by the middle of the century they are systematized and have rolls of branches around florets (Cat.10, 21, 26, 27) symmetrically (one can still see a grid on the bottom) or in a more flexible way. Moreover, the frames of icons characterized by rectangular strips with trilobed ends and alternately red and green.³⁰⁹

The inscriptions are often in Greek and in Arabic, sometimes Armenian. The inscriptions of dedication take on a distinctly Arabic literary flavor. The name of saints or the name of depicted subject on icons is very important, St John of Damascus, for example, wrote that “material things are granted divine grace because of the name of the one depicted” and similarly that objects bearing God's name are not venerated” for their own sake, but because they are vessels of divine power. Theodore of Stoudios, another prominent iconophile, stressed that one could

³⁰⁷ The ornate style of art and architecture which flourished in Italy during the 17th and early 18th cents, and spread throughout mainland Europe, esp. in France and Spain. By means of complex spatial geometry, a harmonious richness of decoration and unreserved appeal to the emotions, it sought to infuse new life and religious feeling into the cold rigidity of the later Renaissance. Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 160

³⁰⁸ Sauvaget, *Alep*, 394

³⁰⁹ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 45–46

not distinguish between a man and his name.³¹⁰ During the seventeenth century, the Greek inscriptions dominated on the Melkite icons with some Arabic inscriptions, Cat. 34, 54. Keeping in mind that the Arabic liturgical books were translated since Karma's works, as we mentioned before. Generally, in the icon, the Greek and Russian inscriptions are brief, while those on Melkite works are long and ornamented. For example, an icon of St. Spiridon given to a Rumanian church in 1749 by Sylvester, the Patriarch of Antioch, has not only the giver's name and the occasion but blessings and salutations covering about one-fourth of the icon.³¹¹ The signature, gifting, the names of saints and the title of icons are in Arabic or Greek. For example, an icon of the Presentation, 1714, Aleppo, Cat.7, has the Signature and Gifting in Arabic: "Al-Maqdisi Joseph [...] son of Gabriel endowed this venerable icon to the Lady church at guarded Aleppo for Greek Orthodox group at the presidency of the master kyr kyr Athanasius. And that [...] One thousand seven hundred and fourteen of the incarnation³¹² the pastor Ne'met Allah Mussawir." The catalogue has 60 icons whose inscriptions in Arabic.

The dedication of the icons was in Arabic which starts by "The weak slave endowed this bless icon...." Also, the Melkite artist has signed his name in Arabic: By poor hand, or by humble.³¹³

In conclusion, one of the ways in which we can understand how the context had an impact on Melkite's work is to consider it neither as being entirely in the Byzantine tradition nor as entirely a result of living in Islamic community, because neither of these interpretations can provide us with a fair picture of the complexity that was contained in their works. Rather, it would be more appropriate to appreciate these artistic productions as a manifestation of this rich and complex relationship. Melkite community in Syria was well integrated with the local social contexts they lived in, and they followed the local customs and traditions that Syrian in general followed. To this, they added their own visions and experiences. Thus, architectural scenes in Melkite icons can best be understood in this vein.

³¹⁰ Robert S. Nelson, *Image and Inscription: Pleas for Salvation in Space and Devotion: Art and text in Byzantine culture*, 1st ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (1st ed; ; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), at 101

³¹¹ Căndea and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 189–90p1.50

³¹² Existence in flesh. As the expression of a Christian doctrine, incarnation refers to the belief that the eternal Word of God existed in the flesh as a human being after being born, through the power of the Holy Spirit, from the Virgin Mary. Everett I. Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity / edited by Everett Ferguson* (2nd ed; Garland Reference Library of the Humanities; 1839, New York: Garland Publishing Co, 1997) 567

³¹³ To know more about the importance of the Arabic descriptions in Melkite icons, please see: Abou Ackl, *The Art of the icon in Aleppo school from the mid-seventeenth century until the end of the eighth century AD.*, 174–84

3. Analysis of Various Icons and the Architectural Background

In the past two chapters, I have stressed Melkite Iconography during the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries and emphasized what is called the Melkite renaissance. It turned out that Melkite community, especially in Aleppo had attested iconographic renaissance with family of Joseph Al Mussawir. This chapter deals with architectural background³¹⁴ on Melkite icons by analysis of various icons of the catalogue. To gain greater precision concerning the local and dynamic aspects of architectural scenes in Melkite Art, I will divide them into three types; Narrative type, *proskynetaria*, and personal icons. The categorization of the icons based on the architectural scenes as a background among other significant features, will be my methodological attempt in this chapter to make the basis of a proper art historian analysis of such remarkable art.

3.1 Analysis of Narrative icons

Understanding the Narrative type³¹⁵ of the Melkite Icons is based on the analysis of the Biblical scripture itself, in addition to deciphering the artistic elements composition, in particular the architectural background and perspective which is clearly heavily influenced by Local Ottoman Levantine and Byzantine architecture.

Hence it is necessary to stare at the biblical (canonical gospel), Apocryphal³¹⁶ (non-canonical Gospels) and Hagiographic text.³¹⁷ For narrative icons, we have at our disposal the Annunciation, the Dormition, the Ascension, the Crucifixion, and the Presentation into the Temple. I have no intention of describing each of these icons here— I already have done in the catalogue – But it is important to talk about the prototype of each the depicted topic and the Melkite tradition iconography.

³¹⁴ The last decades of the thirteenth century to the early fourteenth century, was distinguished by a preoccupation with plasticity and the corporeality of the human form, the quasi three-dimensional architectural elements of the background, and the concern for the correct rendering of spatial relationships between figures and their setting Maria G. Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images: Byzantine material culture and religious iconography (11th-15th centuries)* / by Maria G. Parani (The medieval Mediterranean, 0928-5520; v. 41, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003) 274

³¹⁵ Ancient works of art, for example on Trajan's Column, already used linear narrative structures, chronologically linking the scenes of a large pictorial cycle. This tradition was continued in late antiquity in large-scale works such as the third-century cycle at Dura-Europos with scenes from the Old Testament, the mosaic decorations at Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, at the beginning of the fifth century, and Sant' Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna in the sixth century. B. Fricke, "Tales from Stones, Travels through Time: Narrative and Vision in the Casket from the Vatican," 2014, 233

³¹⁶ The hidden things. The biblical books recited by early church as a part of Gk. Version of the Old Testament, but not include Heb Bible, being excluded by the non-Hellenistic Jews from their canon. Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 83

³¹⁷ The Christian, during early period, did not have to create their cycles outright, beginning with a reading of the Gospels and lives of the saints; they had only to adapt the typological cycles in constant use around them to Christian stories. André Grabar, *Christian iconography: A study of its origins* (Bollingen series; XXXV, 10, Princeton N.J.: Princeton University press, 1980, 1968) 104

3.1.1 The Annunciation

The earliest known painting of the Annunciation of Mary appears in the Catacombs of Priscilla in Rome. Art historians estimate that it was rendered as early as the second but no later than the fourth century A.D.³¹⁸ Turning to Melkite Art, around of 32 icons have been archived in the DGAM archives. Choosing these icons for exemplification of feast type has done. I have chosen ones from different cities, and different iconic schools. These icons are presented here in chronological order in the Table 4, three notes may be made about these icons.

- I. The first one is called” Mary is at the well” which explains the setting of the Narrative.
- II. The second places Mary in her house, and by far this setting is the most prolific of typical scenes.
- III. While in the third type she is depicted holding a roll (scroll or roll; a rolled-up piece of parchment or paper), sitting beside a Lectern (from the Latin *lectus*, past participle of *legere*, “to read”) is a reading desk, with a slanted top, usually placed on a stand or affixed to some other form of support, on which documents or books are placed as support for reading aloud, as in a scripture reading, lecture, or sermon).

3.1.1.1 The Typical scenes of Melkite Annunciation

Let us consider three typical scenes of the Annunciation taken from Melkite icons.

1. Mary at the well

In which the angel appears³¹⁹ to the Virgin as she stands at the spring according to “The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew”.³²⁰ At the spring to fetch water when the angel Gabriel approaches her.³²¹ In Early Christian art the Annunciation at the well appears rarely.³²² In Middle Byzantine art the subject is equally rare, and when it appears the iconography is somewhat different.³²³ The well is a man-made well-head; the virgin may kneel or walk, and the angel still approaches from behind, but now he flies. This version of the iconography remained current through the Palaeologue period.³²⁴ She stands (Akathist, Aleppo, 1714, Cat.60,³²⁵ and Akathist and

³¹⁸ Tammy L. Montgomery, *Angel in annunciation and synchronicity: Knowledge and belief in c.g. jung* ([Place of publication not identified]: Lexington Books, 2015) 15

³¹⁹ E. Baldwin Smith, *Early Christian Iconography* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1918) 11–13

³²⁰ J. K. Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives* (New Testament tools and studies, 0077-8842; v. 34, Leiden: Brill; Biggleswade Extenza Turpin [distributor], 2006) 89

³²¹ The iconography of this image appears early. David R. Cartlidge and J. K. Elliott, *Art and the Christian Apocrypha* (London: Routledge, 2001) 78

³²² For the pilgrim’s flask see André I.-1. Grabar and Denise. Fourmont, *Ampoules de Terre Sainte: (Monza-Bobbio) / André Grabar ; photographies de Denise Fourmont* (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1958)pl.31.

³²³ Thomas F. Mathews, *the Annunciation at the well: a metaphora of Armenian monophysitism: Art and architecture in Byzantium and Armenia Liturgical and exegetical approaches / Thomas F. Mathews* (Collected studies series; CS510, Aldershot: Variorum, 1995) 346

³²⁴ The name of a Byzantine Greek family, which rose to nobility and ultimately produced the last ruling dynasty of the Byzantine Empire

³²⁵ There is Akathist icon, painted by Yousef Al Halabi, see André Grabar, *Icones Melkites: Les Icones Melkites*, ed. Virgil Candea, Beyrouth: Musée Nicolas Surssock, 1969 (ed. Virgil Candea; ; Beyrouth: Musée Nicolas Surssock, 1969)N.2

Immaculate, Hama, 1777) or sits (Akathist and Hodegetria, Homeyra, 1765, Cat.61), the Virgin, in the last icon, is depicted sitting. The landscape of the city and her house appear in the background. While, in the foreground appears the well. This type would be confined to depicting of the first verse of Akathist icons in Melkite art.

2. Mary at the house

This motif represents the episode of Gospel.³²⁶The seventeenth-eighteenth centuries Annunciation shows the arrangement as following; The Virgin is portrayed standing, sitting, or kneeling in front of (outside) ecclesiastical buildings symbolizing the Temple and the house of Virgin.³²⁷ This type of composition had already originated in Byzantine art, and it was particularly frequent in Melkite art of the eighteenth century. There are numerous Annunciations showing the Virgin and Gabriel in the foreground, front of the architectonic structures. By mid of nineteenth century, this exterior type would be depicted rarely, then it was replaced by interior type, in which the event takes place inside the house inside the chamber. For example; icon of Annunciation, 1731, Aleppo, Cat. 15, the angel and the Virgin both kneel.³²⁸

3. Mary reading at the house

In apocryphal account, Mary holds a book, (Pseudo-Matthew 6). As I mentioned before, the third typical scene depicts the lectern before her, is a reference to her reading.³²⁹ This typical scene persists in the West.³³⁰ Here, Mary's occupation at the Annunciation began to shift from her working on the temple veil to an emphasis on her learning.³³¹ The oldest surviving icon is in Latakia, church St George, dating to 1687, Cat.14.

3.1.1.2 The representations of architecture in Annunciation

In General, the Christian Iconography scenes never take setting indoors, instead the buildings facades are used as backgrounds as indication of the location of the event or theme. One can see this norm in the iconic depiction of the Annunciation. Interiors were unknown, a canopy or cupola sufficing to indicate that the event had taken place indoors.³³² From the twelfth century, the architecture began to appear more and more often in monumental painting of the Annunciation.³³³ In the decoration of churches Byzantines, artist usually illustrated only the

³²⁶ Susan von Rohr Scaff, "The Virgin Annunciate in Italian Art of the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance", *College Literature* 29 (2002) 109–23, at 114

³²⁷ the angel appears to the Virgin as she kneels at the well according to the account in the Pseudo-Matthew E. Baldwin Smith, *Early Christian Iconography*, 11–13

³²⁸ Western type, probably derived from the Pseudo- Bonaventur, see David M. Robb, "The Iconography of the Annunciation in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *The Art Bulletin* 18 (1936) 480–526, at 485

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Cartlidge and Elliott, *Art and the Christian Apocrypha*, 80

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Tamara T. Rice, *Russian Icons*. (London: Spring Books, 1963) 23

³³³ Hélène PAPANASTAVROU, "L'idée de l'Ecclesia et la scène de l'Annonciation. Quelques aspects ", *Δελτίον Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας* 21 (2011) 227–40, at 234

second and final Annunciation scene, but extensive cycles they also included the first Annunciation by the well.³³⁴

By observing the Table 4, the Melkite Annunciation icons have two types of the background; the first one has an architectural background, in which there are buildings or architectural elements like columns, arches, doors, spring, and walls. While, the second type has no architectural elements, just it is about a gilded background.³³⁵ This background it would be persistent after the mid of nineteenth century. The flat gilded served as a background of icons for several centuries since byzantine art.³³⁶

1. The well

The well, or the spring was represented in the iconographic depictions of Akathist icons which consist of twenty-four scenes, the first three scenes represent the annunciation events. The first one³³⁷ represents Virgin announced by archangel at the well. In icon of “Hodegetria and Akathist”, Al Homeyra 1765, *Cat.61*, Girgis has illustrated as follows, Virgin receives the annunciation by angel near to the spring, out of the city of Nazareth that depicted on the mountains as buildings and rotunda.³³⁸ Historically, according to Eastern Orthodox belief³³⁹ is where the Virgin Mary was drawing water at the time of the Annunciation,³⁴⁰ the church is located over an underground spring.³⁴¹ We know that during eighteenth century, under the rule of Dahir al-‘Umar, it was rebuilt again.³⁴² 17th-century, Francesco *Quaresmi*³⁴³, the Italian writer and Orientalist, tells that this church was not visible above ground, but that the top of the vault of a subterranean chamber that has remained intact was at ground level. Historically,

³³⁴ Henry Maguire, *Art and eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton, N.J., Guildford: Princeton University press, 1981) 47

³³⁵ The gilded background indicated the sacredness of the scene, and absolute, universal faith the gold is the symbol par excellence of God’s glory: in the gilded background, which is pure light, the absence of shadow alludes to the absence of time, and in turn, the absence of time alludes to eternity.

³³⁶ (Rohr Scaff 2002, 112)

³³⁷ “An Archangel was sent from Heaven to say to (the Mother of God: Rejoice!)”.

³³⁸ The background of Armenian Annunciation consist of a high wall, elements of a city-scape appear including the Virgin’s house on the right that breaks through the upper frame. Mathews, *the Annunciation at the well: a metaphor of Armenian monophysitism*, 343

³³⁹ According to Greek Orthodox tradition, the Annunciation took place while Mary was fetching water from the spring situated directly under this richly frescoed, 17th-century church (other denominations hold that she was at home during the Annunciation). The barrel-vaulted crypt, first constructed under Constantine (4th century CE), shelters Nazareth’s only year-round spring, a place everyone in the village obviously visited often. Check out the centuries-old graffiti carved around the outside doorway. Chad Fife Emmett (1995). *Beyond the Basilica: Christians and Muslims in Nazareth*. University of Chicago Press. p. 81.

³⁴⁰ Abbot Daniel describes a church located at this site between 1106- 1108, as follows: “Then we left this town and went a little way to the north east where we found a wonderful well which was deep and very cold, and to reach the water you must go deep down on a stairway. And above this well there is a church dedicated to the Archangel Gabriel, and it is round.” Denys Pringle, *the Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: L-Z* (Cambridge University Press, 1998) 141

³⁴¹ In 1106, Russian pilgrim Daniel mentions this church built above a well and dedicated to the angel Gabriel. Barry Cunliffe, *The Holy Land: Oxford Archaeological Guides* (Oxford University Press, 2007) 424

³⁴² Veselin Kesich and Lydia W. Kesich, *Treasures of the Holy Land: a visit to the places of Christian origins (Illustrated ed.)*. (St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1985) 32–33.

³⁴³ Pringle, *the Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem*, 141

the source of water of Mary's well lay further back, about 162 yards northwest. A shrine was built close by, this sanctuary known as St. Gabriel's, now forms the crypt of the present Greek Orthodox Church. The present church was begun in 1767.³⁴⁴ According to Eastern Orthodox belief is where the Virgin Mary was drawing water at the time of the Annunciation, the church is located over an underground spring.³⁴⁵ Despite existing of the church in Nazareth, it has never been depicted in Melkite art– the catalogue or the icons that I have seen– therefore we can conclude that the Melkite artist depicted the well without the St. Gabriel church.

2. The Church of Annunciation, the house of Virgin:

The house-church³⁴⁶ is old iconographic theme, it was *kiosk (Edicule)*³⁴⁷ during Late Antiquity Christian representing the house of Virgin, in which the Announcement of Virgin had happened. In early byzantine imagery, the house of the Virgin became assimilated with the church,³⁴⁸ by another words the building, sometimes recalls the topography of the holy places, when the form of a basilica, probably the church that was erected on the site of Mary's house in Nazareth. It is the same when the architectural plan becomes more complex and it appears that a second building connected or not to the first, recalling perhaps the remains of St. Joseph or second Basilica of Nazareth built on its location and attested both by *Etheria* (380) by *Arculf* (670).³⁴⁹ While in the middle byzantine period³⁵⁰ emphasis was placed on the house of the virgin itself, with the church returning to prominence in the twelfth century. This is then expanded to include not just the houses and /or church but other buildings as well, to evoke the town of Nazareth.³⁵¹ There can also be another depiction of a home and a church the first represent the house of St. Joseph³⁵² and the church represent the basilica in Nazareth.

³⁴⁴ Gerard Bushell, *Churches of the Holy Land* (London: American-Israel Publishing Company Limited, 1969) 19–20

³⁴⁵ According to Greek Orthodox tradition, the Annunciation took place while Mary was fetching water from the spring situated directly under this richly frescoed, 17th-century church (other denominations hold that she was at home during the Annunciation). The barrel-vaulted crypt, first constructed under Constantine (4th century CE), shelters Nazareth's only year-round spring, a place everyone in the village obviously visited often. Check out the centuries-old graffiti carved around the outside doorway. Fife E. Chad, *Beyond the Basilica: Christians and Muslims in Nazareth* (University of Chicago Press, 1995) 81

³⁴⁶ The "house" is existed in "Protev. 12:3–13:1" and Ps-Matthew 10:1 See; Protev. 12:3–13:1 3E Day by day her womb grew, and Mary was afraid and went into her house and hid herself from the children of Israel....., Joseph came from his buildings and entered his house and found her with child. C see; Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives*, 42.

³⁴⁷ In Italian language, *edicola*, see Muzi M.G., L'iconografia dell'Annunciazione, "Theotokos" 4 (1996) 496.

³⁴⁸ Lucy-Anne Hunt, "The Fine Incense of Virginité: A late twelfth century wall painting of the Annunciation at the Monastery of the Syrians, Egypt," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 19 (1995) 182–233, at 182

³⁴⁹ PASTAVROU, "L'idée de l'Ecclesia et la scène de l'Annonciation. Quelques aspects," 231

³⁵⁰ The late 7th-century Insular Latin text *De Locis Sanctis* describes two large churches in the centre of Nazareth. One is the Church of the Annunciation. The other was near it, set above a vaulted crypt with two tombs (tumuli in Adomnán's Insular Latin) either side of a "house". Ken Dark, "The byzantine church of the nutrition in Nazareth rediscovered," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 144 (2013) 164–84, at 177

³⁵¹ Hunt, "The Fine Incense of Virginité," 182–83

³⁵² The famous painting that depict the house of Joseph, is the arch of Santa Maria Maggore, Rome, depicts Joseph, issuing from his house has his doubts removed by angel Walter

Historically, since the seventeenth century, the site of the Annunciation has belonged to the Franciscan Custody³⁵³ of the Holy lands.³⁵⁴

Pictorially, this subject also was illustrated in a different way; some elements of architecture that frame the scene often have a symbolic value.³⁵⁵ In Melkite art, the house had been represented by the two-house churches, or one house with dome or with gable roof. Some icons have a rotunda and two buildings with sloping roofs. Thus, in the Annunciation scene, the idea of house-church can be expressed using different iconographic details, Figure.3. From the mid of nineteenth century, this house-church has been replaced by the chamber of Mary, Figure.2.



Figure 2 The scheme of Annunciation icon, John of Damascus church, Damascus, 1865, 51.7x67.6cm, Ne'met Nasser Homsî.

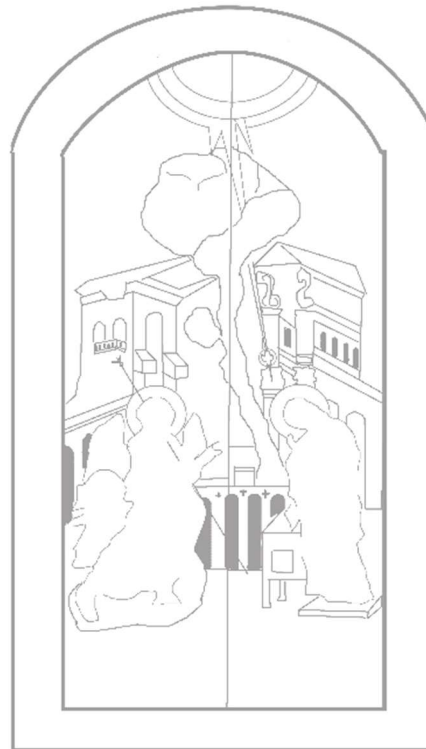


Figure3. The scheme of Annunciation, Beautiful Great, Sydnaia, George Monastery, Joseph Elian.

3. The garden imagery of paradise

The garden that is represented the paradise, depicted as a wall and some plants, tree, or just a vase.³⁵⁶ In some example, the garden is walled by arches and columns, or it might be a barrier.

³⁵³ The first Franciscan arrived in the Holy Land shortly after the establishment of the order in the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth century Pope Clement VI bestowed the title "Guardians of the Holy Places" on the Franciscans serving in the province of the Holy Land Masha

³⁵⁴ In 1620 the Franciscans were permitted to buy back the ruins of the church of the Annunciation thanks to the benevolence of the Druze emir Fakhr-a-Din II (1591–1635). With the approbation of another Muslim rebel, Daher el Omar, they built a church in 1730 which was demolished in 1955 to make room for the new basilica which was dedicated in 1969. Masha Halevi, "the politics behind the construction of the modern church of the Annunciation in Nazareth," *The Catholic Historical Review* 96 (2010), at 424–25

³⁵⁵ PASTAVROU, "L'idée de l'Ecclesia et la scène de l'Annonciation. Quelques aspects," 231

³⁵⁶ In the western Art, the lilies themselves are a comparatively late convention, since up to the thirteenth century the flowers in the vase might be of any kind, their presence indicating that the Annunciation took place in the

The earliest surviving of this motif is the eighth-century fresco in the church of S. Maria at *Castelepiro*, in Lombardy. Trees can be found in the Background of several other Byzantine Annunciation scenes of the eleventh century, in some twelfth century paintings the trees were replaced by the flowers, or even whole gardens.³⁵⁷

Finally, the goal of the foregoing paragraph was to demonstrate the important of the representation of the architecture of Annunciation scene in the Melkite art from the mid of the seventeenth to the beginnings of the nineteenth centuries. The conclusion shows that there are two types of Annunciation scenes, which correspond to two successive stages in the story of Annunciation as told in the Book of James.³⁵⁸ According to this popular apocryphal account, the Angel first called out to the Virgin as she was filling her pitcher at a well. Mary was started by the voice and fled into her house without replying. There she set down her pitcher of water and took up the purple thread that she was spinning for the veil of the temple. As she was spinning, the Angel appeared a second time and spoke to her again. Annunciation of Melkite art was very diverse, varying in details and iconographic versions, various at the first of seventeenth century and becoming frequent from the mid of nineteenth century. Melkite artists follow the Byzantine artist by illustrating the two Annunciation scenes; one in the well, and the second is depicting Mary in her house.

N	location	Church	Topic	Dimensions(cm)	Date	Iconographer
1	Homs	St George monastery, Homeyra	the Beautiful Gate	88x129	1685	Ne'meh Al Halabi
2	Latakia	Saint George	Annunciation	59x74	1687	unknown
3	Aleppo	Dormition Lady	Akathist	86x65.5	1714	Ne'meh Al Halabi
4	Aleppo	Forty Martyrs	Annunciation	24x30	1731	Hanania Al Halabi
5	Idleb	The Orthodox Lady church	four scenes	49x60	1753	Girgis Al Halabi
6	Homeyra	St. George	Hodegetria and Akathist	68,6x91	1765	Girgis Al Halabi

spring. Later they came to symbolize the chastity of the Virgin, and their representation without stamens. W. G. Constable, "A Florentine Annunciation", *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 43 (1945) 72–76, at 72, while the vase of flowers is usually portrayed in terms as simple and dignified as the Gospel story itself. E. Baldwin Smith, *Early Christian Iconography*

³⁵⁷ Maguire, *Art and eloquence in Byzantium*, 48

³⁵⁸ The Protevangelium of James (PJ) is one of the most important and influential of the apocryphal gospels. It represents the earliest written elaboration of the canonical infancy narratives that has survived Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives*, 48

7	Hama	the Lady of Entry	Akathist and virgin immaculate	59x123	1777	Girgis Al Halabi
8	Aleppo	The Lady Catholic church	Annunciation	45x58	1848	unknown
9	Damascus	John of Damascus	Annunciation	51.7x67.6	1865	Ibrahim son of Ne'meh Nasser homsi
10	Damascus	John of Damascus	the Beautiful Gate		1866	unknown
11	Rif Dimashq	Sydnaia Monastery	Annunciation		1873	youhanna saliba
12	Rif Dimashq	St Michael, Qara	Annunciation	30x40	1875	unknown
13	Damascus	St George, Bab Muosalla	Annunciation	44.4x72	1887	unknown
14	Hama	the Lady of Entry	Annunciation	38x48	18thC	Unknown
15	Latakia	Saint Nicolas	Annunciation	59x84	18thC	unknown
16	Idleb	The Orthodox Lady church	four scenes	45x56	18thC	unknown
17	Rif Dimashq	St George monastery, Sydnaia	the Beautiful Gate		18thC	Joseph Elian
18	Damascus	St George, Bab Muosalla	Annunciation	82x109	19thC	Nicola Theodori
19	Damascus	St George, Bab Muosalla	Annunciation	24x29	19thC	unknown
20	Damascus	Orthodox patriarchate	Annunciation	22x27.5	19thC	unknown
21	Damascus	Orthodox patriarchate	Annunciation	35,5x27	19thC	unknown
22	Damascus	Orthodox patriarchate	Annunciation	55x58	19thC	unknown
23	Aleppo	St George church, Salibieh	Annunciation		19thC	unknown

24	Damascus	Lady of Dormition-zaitoun	Annunciation	39x52	19thC	unknown
25	Hama	the Lady of Entry	Annunciation	36x48	19thC	unknown
26	Homs	St George monastery, Homeyra	Annunciation	32x47.5	19thC	unknown
27	Homs	St George monastery, Homeyra	Annunciation	32x47.6	19thC	unknown
28	Rif Dimashq	St George church, Orna	Annunciation	38x54	19thC	unknown
29	Tartous	St Michael, safita	Annunciation	37x55	19thC	unknown
30	Rif Dimashq	Constantine and Helen, Yabrod	Annunciation	42x57	19thC	unknown
31	Rif Dimashq	Sydnaia Monastery	Annunciation		19thc	unknown
32	Aleppo	The Lady Catholic church	Annunciation		19thc	unknown

Table 4: Table of Annunciation icons, Syria, dating 17th-18th.

3.1.2 The Dormition

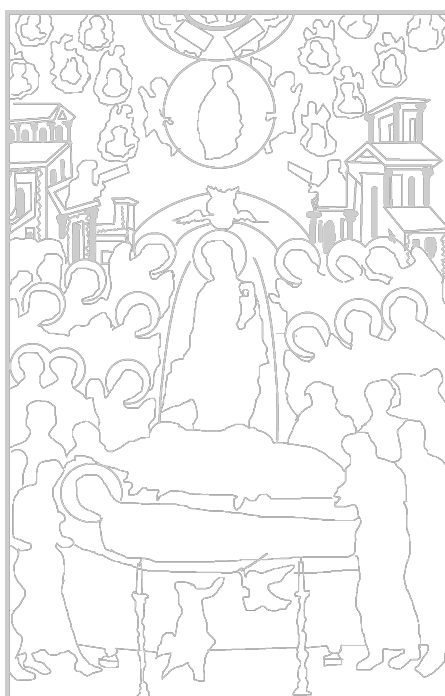


Figure 4 The scheme of Dormition of the Virgin icon, Sydnaia, 17th.

The commemoration of the death of Mary became more prominent in the church year, being fixed on 15 August. This festival day is much depicted in Melkite art. Before looking at Melkite icons, we need to consider the narrative on which they were based. The essential elements in the story are as follows: The archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary when she was praying at the Sepulchre of Christ in Jerusalem and told her she was about to die. She went to Bethlehem, where she was staying with three virgins, and she prayed to Christ. She asked him to bring John to her and all the other immediately arrived in a cloud from the city and subsequently all the other were ported to her bedside. For protection both the Virgin and her visitors' house in were miraculously transported to her own morning of the day of her death, Jesus came to her and received her soul. Some of the apostles embraced her feet hoping to gain blessing from the contact. When the funeral procession was on its way to the tomb in the garden of Gethsemane the Jews attacked it; one of them called Jephonias, grabbed the bier- but an angel cut off his hands and left them hanging in the air. This miracle of divine protection converted him to belief in Mary as the mother of God and his hands were restored to his arms. The body Mary was placed in the tomb. After three days, Jesus returned, and the angels took up her body to Paradise where reunited with her soul. The iconographic combination of the Dormition and the Assumption is a creation of the post-Byzantine period.³⁵⁹

³⁵⁹ Pantelis. Magoulas and Stelios. Papadopoulos, *Icons of the Holy Monastery of Pantokrator / directing editor, Stelios Papadopoulos ; photographs [by] Pantelis Magoulas* (Mount Athos: Holy Monastery of Pantokrator, 1998) 233

In Melkite church, there are two types of this event. The first type where the action takes place in two worlds³⁶⁰: Cat. 31, the earthly and the heavenly. Earthly depicts the Assumption of Mary³⁶¹, the heavenly depicts the Ascension and her meeting with the Son, who during the meeting is taking her soul in his arms, in the form of the child. According to a legend the twelve apostles were present at the moment Mary died: Peter and Paul, Simeon Zelotes, Philip, Evangelist John the Theologian, Luke, Matthew, James son of Zebedee, Mark, and Andrew. Also, Hierolathy Dionysius the Areopagite³⁶², Bishop of Athens and Hieromartyr Hierotheos the Bishop of Athens, this composition appeared since 10th-11th centuries.³⁶³ While the second type beside this composition, the miraculous transportation of the Apostles is shown in the top of the Icon, Cat. 29, 30, 32. In the Guide of Dionysius, the event of Dormition takes place in front of houses.³⁶⁴

In the background, there are two groups of buildings, the right group has four buildings, one of them is a polygonal building refers to Sepulcher church. At the left three buildings represent the town of Gethsemane.³⁶⁵ In the icon attributed to Ne'met, at the background, just two buildings.³⁶⁶ In the Dormition icon, from 16th century, the scene is farmed by abstract Byzantine buildings joined by low wall.³⁶⁷ These buildings represent Mary's house and the Temple of Jerusalem, the destination of the procession.³⁶⁸ Generally, it could conclude that the architecture background of Dormition in Melkite art represents the location of this event, Gethsemane and in some cases Jerusalem city by depicting the Sepulchre Church. The comparison shows the ways in which Melkite artists were able within a traditional art to manipulate the representations of architecture at their disposal.

³⁶⁰ There are many traditions of Dormition, for more see; Stephen J. Shoemaker, *Ancient traditions of the Virgin Mary's dormition and assumption* (Oxford early Christian studies, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

³⁶¹The belief that the Mary having completed her earthly life, east in body and soul assumed in to heavenly glory. The doctrine of the corporal assumption was first formulated in orthodox circles in the W. St. Gregory of Tours (d.594) Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 117

³⁶² Writer probably of Syria origin who studied at Athens and whose attempt to synthesize Christian theology and Neoplatonist philosophy greatly influenced medieval Christian mysticism and theology. Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity / edited by Everett Ferguson*, 335

³⁶³Ludmila. Wratislaw-Mitrovic and Nikolaj L. 1.-1. Okunev, *La dormition de la Sainte Vierge dans la peinture médiévale orthodoxe / L. Wratislaw-Mitrovic et N. Okunev* (Prague: Imprimerie de l'État, 1931) 1–3

³⁶⁴ Monaco c. 1.-c. 1. Di Dionysios Fournà, Sergio 1.-1. Bettini and Giovanna. Donato Grasso, *Canone dell'icona: Il manuale di arte sacra del Monte Athos (sec. XVIII) / Dionisio da Furnà ; con una nota di Sergio Bettini ; [trad. di Giovanna Donato Grasso ; rev. editoriale a cura di Massimo Angelini]* (Simbolica; 15, Savona: Pentàgora, 2014) 202

³⁶⁵ See icon, pl.25, painted by Girgis Hanania, icon La Croix and Emery, *Icônes arabes*, A.56-57pl.25, See icon 87, Attributed to Girgis Al Halabi Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), 267, pl.87, see also icon 31, Cândia and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 171–72pl.31

³⁶⁶ Ibid., at 158–59pl.17

³⁶⁷ Kurt Weitzmann, *Feast Day Icons: 15th - 17th century. New Grecian Gallery, Nov. 1973-Jan. 1974 / catalogue designed and printed by Lund Humphries, London & Bradford* (London: New Grecian Gallery, 1974) pl.40

³⁶⁸ Alfredo Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church* (A guide to imagery, Los Angeles, Calif.: Getty; Garsington Windsor [distributor], 2006) 154

3.1.3 The Crucifixion

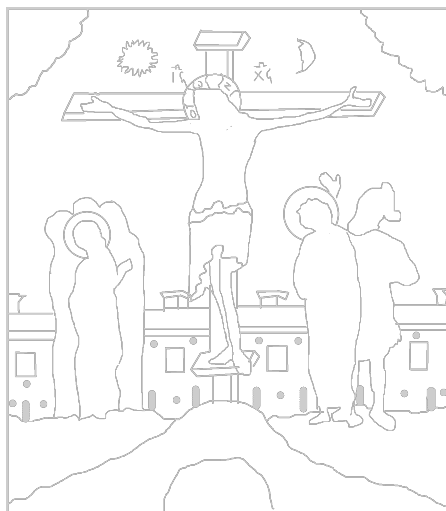


Figure 5 The scheme of Crucifixion icon, 1708, cat.44

Let us examine the Crucifixion topic. Behind the rock of Golgotha, the walled city of Jerusalem³⁶⁹ can be seen spread out on the low horizon or high, see: Cat.44, 45, 46. The symmetrical composition of the Crucifixion reproduces an iconography established in fifteenth-century Cretan icons.³⁷⁰ Sometimes the wall is duplicated,³⁷¹ as in the Crucifixion icon in Sydnaia Monastery, dated to 19th century, Cat.47, the painter who belongs to Michael Polychronis School depicted on the background not only the city walls of Jerusalem, but the entire walled city of Jerusalem with many buildings. The architecture background behind the Cross represents the wall of Jerusalem, it is already to be found on the panel of St, Sabina (VI). This detail not only corresponds to historical truth but expresses at the same time a spiritual precept: just as Christ suffered outside the confines of Jerusalem. The Crucifixion in an open place denotes the cosmic significance of the death of Christ, which “purified the airs” and freed the entire universe from the domination of the demons.³⁷² This detail corresponds to historical truth, as John says 19:17. Like all criminals in those days, Jesus suffered outside the walls.³⁷³

As usually, in icon, the event is outdoors, and it seems to display historical accuracy by placing Golgotha with the cross bearing the crucified Christ just outside the city walls of Jerusalem.

³⁶⁹ The earliest depiction of the crucifixion in Christian art in the wooden door of the main entrance of S.Sabina church, Romw Hugo I. Brandenburg and Arnaldo. Vescovo, *Ancient Churches of Rome from the Fourth to the Seventh Century: The dawn of Christian architecture in the West / Hugo Brandenburg ; photographs by Arnaldo Vescovo* (Bibliothèque de l'Antiquité Tardive; 8, Turnhout: Brepols, 2004) 176

³⁷⁰ N. M. Chatzēdakē and Constantine Scampavias, *Byzantine and post-Byzantine art* (Athens: The Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos Foundation, 2007) 246

³⁷¹ As example: In icon of 17-18 century, Asia minore(?).Chatzēdakēs, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 162pl.50

³⁷² Léonide A. 1.-1. Ouspensky and Vladimir N. 1.-1. Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons / by Leonid Ouspensky and Wladimir Lossky ; translated by G.E.H. Palmer & E. Kadloubovsky* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary Press, 1982) 181

³⁷³ Russell M. Hart, *The icon through Western eyes* (Springfield, Ill.: Templegate Publishers, 1991) 99

While this could be a plausible way of reading what is depicted, one must note that the wall is shown without any indication of buildings behind it, as was the standard approach to depicting cities in Byzantine art. Taking this into account, it seems more plausible that the wall itself alludes not to the earthly, but the heavenly Jerusalem, against which the crucifixion is symbolically rendered.³⁷⁴

3.1.4 The Ascension:

Firstly, I briefly examine Icons of Ascension and make a preliminary analysis of certain features of their style and subject matter, relating this to their architectural backgrounds.

Towards the end of the fourth century a separate feast of the Ascension on the fortieth day did emerge in a number of places including Antioch, Nyssa, and north Italy and become almost universal early in the fifth century.³⁷⁵ In the Lucan version of the Ascension of Jesus the whole group of apostles (save, of course Judas and Matthias) witness the event. While in the Acts of John 102 and the *Apocryphal* of James this is not the case. In the former, John is isolated from the other disciples and, in the latter, Peter and James are given special instructions, apart from the other disciples. There is no specific mention of the Virgin Mary's presence at the Ascension in the early literature. The church obviously assumed that she should have been there. There are few Ascension scenes beginning with the early Middle Ages in which Mary is not present, usually she stands *orans* in the midst of the disciples with Jesus rising in a mandorla³⁷⁶ (almond shape aura) above the group. This holds true in the case of both Ascension types, that is, the disappearing type in which only Jesus' feet are seen at the top of the frame, and the full-figure type.³⁷⁷ In the Guide of Dionysius, the event of the Ascension takes place on the Mount of Olives.³⁷⁸

The Ascension icons in Melkite art trace the traditional icon which falls naturally into two zones, an upper heavenly part and a lower earthly part.³⁷⁹ The blessing gesture by Christ with his right hand is directed towards the earthly group below him and signifies that he is blessing the entire Church. In the left hand he may be holding a Gospel or a scroll, signifying teaching and preaching.³⁸⁰ In some Ascension, the depictions of Apostle Paul and the Virgin Mary may be present. Given Paul converted to Christianity after the Ascension, and that the New Testament does not directly place the Virgin Mary at the Ascension, these depictions represent “the Church” rather than the specific individuals.³⁸¹

³⁷⁴ Ćurčić, *Architecture as icon* (as in note 251), at 25

³⁷⁵ Paul F. 1. Bradshaw and Maxwell E. 1. Johnson, *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts and Seasons in Early Christianity* / Paul F. Bradshaw and Maxwell E. Johnson (Alcuin Club Collection; 86, London: SPCK, 2011) 74

³⁷⁶ A. Andreopoulos, *Metamorphosis: The Transfiguration in Byzantine Theology and Iconography* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005) 83

³⁷⁷ Cartlidge and Elliott, *Art and the Christian Apocrypha*, 133

³⁷⁸ Di Dionysios Fournas, Bettini and Donato Grasso, *Canone dell'icona*, 150

³⁷⁹ Irene Earls, *Renaissance art: A topical dictionary* / Irene Earls (New York, London: Greenwood, 1987) 27

³⁸⁰ Léonide Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The meaning of icons* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999) 197

³⁸¹ André Grabar, *Christian iconography: a study of its origins* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University press, 1968)

In Cat.25, there is no figure of the Virgin. Jesus at the middle of down part of icon on the mountain, in frontal position, flanked on either side by 6 disciples who are depicted smaller than him. they point and gaze toward each others and some of them toward the heaven. In the upper part, there is bearded elder, front of him dove. In background, there are olives trees and group of walls and some bouldings represent Jerusalem city.

Inside the city, *figure.6*, I think that Hannaia depicted the church of the Holy Sepulchre on the right side. And this city is full of gabled buildings. It is hardly necessary to point out that this icon is unique and the Ascension is very rarely represented like that



Figure 6 Scheme of Jerusalem city, the Ascension icon, 1718, Aleppo, cat.25.

3.1.5 The Presentation into the Temple

Before talking about the architectural background of the Presentation into the Temple, it must be borne in mind that the feast of the “*Hypapante*” continued to be celebrated in the East at the same time that the Feast of Purification and Presentation was being observed by the Western church.³⁸² This feast comes after forty day of the Nativity, since the prescribed interval for the woman to be purified after childbirth.³⁸³ In the sixth century, the feast day was adopted in Constantinople, where it saved the city from the plague; in the seventh century the feast would arrive in Rome. In Melkite church, as in byzantine church, this meeting of Simeon with the infant Christ which commemorated the festival known as “*Hypapante*”. In all our icon of the

³⁸²the character and emphasis of the religious festival celebrating the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and the Purification of Mary changed through the centuries, developing from the Eastern feast in honor of the Meeting of the infant Christ with Simeon at the Temple in Jerusalem, to the Western feast in honor of the Blessed Virgin and her purification, an event that, according to St. Luke, occurred simultaneously with the Presentation of the Child in the Temple. Dorothy C. Shorr, “The Iconographic Development of the Presentation in the Temple,” *The Art Bulletin* 28 (1946) 17–32, at 19

³⁸³ Matthew 1:25, Luke 2:21–38. Ps-Matthew 15, Arabic 5–6 J. K. Elliott and M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A collection of apocryphal Christian literature in an English translation / J.K. Elliott* (1993) 91

catalogue, the old Symeon³⁸⁴ holds the infant in a tender embrace. At the same time the child shows his anxiety by looking back and reaching with one hand for his mother while Mary raising her hands to holding her boy, in one icon of the catalogue, Homs, 1818, Mary makes a gesture of grief which foreshadows her mourning at the Crucifixion.

All pictorial representations –in these studied icons– of the scene known as the Presentation of Christ into the Temple are based on the Gospel according to Luke. The Evangelist tells how when the days of Mary's “purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished,” his parents brought the Christ Child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.³⁸⁵ Luke's narrative account of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple is specific and detailed.³⁸⁶ We know, for instance, where the ceremony took place, who the protagonists (the key character) were and what their reactions were to the central event. It remained for the artist to decide which moment of the narrative should be represented.

The action takes place in the foreground of the composition bears immediate spatial relationship to the altar of the temple. The altar is represented covered with ciborium.³⁸⁷ In some Presentation scenes the altar is placed in the center of the background to emphasis that the icon represents the Meeting with Simeon.³⁸⁸ The altar occupies an important position in the Presentation, the ciborium and her ten columns could be seen only of alter. The main characters are Mary and Joseph, and Simeon who is holding Jesus.

The theme of the temple is developed in the liturgy and iconography of the presentation. It is the temple rebuilt by Zorobabel, less glorious than that of Solomon. ³⁸⁹

3.1.5.1 Hama Presentation and circular domed temple:

The domed circular or polygonal structure as a representation of the temple had been part of Byzantine iconography and had infiltrated the west as Byzantine works made their way into Europe. ³⁹⁰ By the thirteenth century, the circular domed shape had become a formula in Italian art, one often based on Byzantine sources, maps and seals, and/or travelers' descriptions.³⁹¹

³⁸⁴ The earliest recorded portrayal of Symeon holding the Christ Child was in the church of the Virgin of the Source in Constantinople, which the Emperor Basil I, together with his corulers Leo and Constantine, restored after 869 Henry Maguire, “The Iconography of Symeon with the Christ Child in Byzantine Art,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1980) 261–69, at 261

³⁸⁵ Luke 2:22-39.

³⁸⁶ J. R. Porter, *The Illustrated Guide to the Bible* (Oxford University Press, 1998) 157

³⁸⁷ Ouspensky and Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons / by Leonid Ouspensky and Wladimir Lossky ; translated by G.E.H. Palmer & E. Kadloubovsky*, 168

³⁸⁸ Maguire summarizes that the image of Symeon holding Christ is first recorded in descriptions of churches which were decorated in the ninth century. And he emphasizes that the earliest examples of the motif which still survive and which can be securely dated belong to the first half of the eleventh century. In the second half of the twelfth century the motif became extremely popular and was imbued with a high degree of sentiment; it continued as an established type in the iconography of later Byzantine art. Maguire, “The Iconography of Symeon with the Christ Child in Byzantine Art,” 264

³⁸⁹ Ouspensky and Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons / by Leonid Ouspensky and Wladimir Lossky ; translated by G.E.H. Palmer & E. Kadloubovsky*, 153

³⁹⁰ P. Berger, *The Crescent on the Temple: The Dome of the Rock as Image of the Ancient Jewish Sanctuary* (Brill, 2012) 159

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 123

The Presentation in the Temple furnished the opportunity to oppose two groups of figures right and left of the center, which is occupied by the Child.

The circular domed temple is pictured in the left of Hama Presentation, where the Presentation of Jesus in the temple is taking place. The Dome stands up of two drums with windows. I believe that this figure represents the Dome of the Rock, by comparison with the same representations in Cat.22.

3.1.5.2 Aleppo Presentation and classical form of the Temple



Figure 7 Scheme of presentation (meeting) icon, Aleppo, 1714, cat.7.

The foreground is formed by a relatively wide ground on which three persons move toward Simeon who stands on a bench: The Virgin, the prophetesses Anne, And St. Joseph, from the right to left. This ground seems to rise up toward the spectator. The bench which is marked by slanting lines. Between Simeon and behind the Virgin, rises Alter with Canopy which drawn in isometric perspective.

The background with its vertical lines is quite striking, the canopy that stands on Hexagonal building, are drawn in reverse perspective; at the left, the temple is drawn with sloping roof and marked by slanting lines. In order to close off the background at the middle and reach between the buildings at the background, the painter had drawn a wall.

3.1.6 The Entry To Jerusalem



Figure 8 The scheme of *The Entry to Jerusalem*, 1685, *Latakia*, Cat.19

The geometric structure³⁹², here, is grid type, which consists of nine equal squares. All icons of entry to Jerusalem in the catalogue are Byzantine type³⁹³; the historical type which faithfully follows the Gospel accounts and translates into pictorial form the event with all its figure as related in the New Testament. By observing them, the general structure of background can be introduced. Christ's entry into Jerusalem with his disciples takes place in a rich landscape, which extends into the background, and in front of the wall of the city Christ “on the foal of a donkey” advances to the right and is placed on the left of the composition accompanied by a dense group of apostles. Developed in the background is a landscape with rocky mountains, in which projects, on smaller scale, a walled city, Jerusalem with numerous buildings behind the walls, occupies a conspicuous position of the composition.

³⁹² Egon Sendler, *Icon: Image of the invisible elements of theology, aesthetics and technique* (Oakwood Pubns edizione., 1988) 99–101

³⁹³ In the ninth century, it is fully developed, with all twelve apostles represented. E. Baldwin Smith, *Early Christian Iconography*, 127–28

The gate of the city is tall and has a cimecircal arch, in Latakia icon, it is decorated by *Ablaq*, islamic decoration technique that is a derivative by the ancient Byzantine art.³⁹⁴ this kind of dicorations appears also in the maingate of the cities depicted in the icon, see: Figure. 9,10.



Figure 9 the Scene 8; The Magi see the divinely moving star, Akathist, Aleppo, 1714.



Figure 10 the arched door of the Dormition church, Aleppo. (Ward, 2017)

A multitude of Jews, gesticulating animatedly, comes forth from the gate and proceeds in front of the walls. In all icons of the catalogue, there are a representation of walled city, Jerusalem. Just one icon, Cat.21, this characterized by two cities, Jerusalem, “Bethphage”.³⁹⁵ And On the left bottom another city maybe represents a fountain depending on another icon that has this motif and dated to 15th century³⁹⁶, as a built fountain.

Finally, the Narrative icons come from the feast Cycle, which celebrate the principle episodes of the life of Christ and Virgin, there are thirteen major celebrations of the year, celebrated together by the universal Church. At the Centre of the year is Easter. Thus, “narrative icons depicted events embodying a multiple history at once literal and figurative” as Gregory’s treatise says.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁴ Petersen, Andrew. "Ablaq". Dictionary of Islamic Architecture. Digital Library. Retrieved January 28, 2012

³⁹⁵ Luca, 19: 29-34.

³⁹⁶ Chatzēdakē and Scampavias, *Byzantine and post-Byzantine art*, 194pl.132

³⁹⁷ Moshe Barasch, *Icon: Studies in the history of an idea* (New York: New York University Press, 1992) 228

3.2 Analysis Of *Proskynetaria* Icons.

Continuing our examination of architectural backgrounds that attempt an interpretation of architectural scenes, we will leave the narrative icons and turn to a consideration *proskynetaria* of the Holy Land and Jerusalem, icon-maps. The text tradition of the *proskynetaria* starts in the thirteenth century and goes up to the eighteenth century, while the first traveler's account known to us was written by Epiphany Hagioplitēs after the year 638; the genre comes to an end with the works of paisios Hagiapostolites and Jacobs Meloites in the second half of the sixteenth century.³⁹⁸ Hence, icons are often described as “windows on heaven”, as images setting the faithful in direct communication with Christ, the Mother of God, and their saints. Renaissance geographers similarly described maps as windows on the world, allowing the observer to visualize from above what the human eye could not otherwise grasp in its entirety.³⁹⁹ Abraham Ortelius, the author of the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1570), the first printed atlas, referred to his maps as “charts being placed as if they were certain glasses before our eyes.”⁴⁰⁰ During the Ottoman period, pilgrims⁴⁰¹ to the holy places in Palestine never turned with empty hand. The Melkite workshops in Jerusalem had produced many souvenirs where the *proskynetaria* were among them.

3.2.1 The *Proskynetarion* As A Pilgrimage Object:

As mentioned before that the inhabitants of the Ottoman territory were surprisingly mobile. Pilgrimages followed traditional routes since time immemorial, and the pilgrims called themselves *hajjis* but insisted on their Eastern Orthodox identity, from the East and the West continued to visit the Holy Land and the established poll-tax, introduced by the Mamluk, was retained. At the same time, Christian pilgrims were left free to practice their individual religious rites, though the laws directing the behavior of pilgrims were still in force.⁴⁰² Keeping in mind that the first mentions of Christian *hajjis*—mostly clerics and monks—date from the sixteenth century.⁴⁰³ During the centuries of the Ottoman administration of the Holy Land, the rights and privileges of the various Christian churches represented in Jerusalem and especially in the church of the Resurrection/ the Holy Sepulchre were often disputed, especially between the Greeks, the Armenian and the Latin (Franciscan).⁴⁰⁴ The Ottoman inherited from previous Muslim dynasties not only political control of the holiest Christian shrines in Jerusalem, but

³⁹⁸ Andreas Külzer, “Byzantine and early post-Byzantine pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to Mount Sinai,” 150–51

³⁹⁹ Veronica Della Dora, “Windows on Heaven (and Earth): The Poetics and Politics of Post-Byzantine “Cartographic Icons,”” *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 38 (2012) 84–112, at 85

⁴⁰⁰ David Woodward, *Art and cartography: Six historical essays / edited by David Woodward* (The Kenneth Nebenzahl, Jr, lectures in the history of cartography, Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1987) 88

⁴⁰¹ Traditionally, Christian culture—both in the east and west—offers no social rewards to pilgrims to the Holy Land. The chief reason is that, unlike Judaism and Islam, Christianity makes no demand for such a pilgrimage. Pilgrims are driven to Jerusalem only by personal initiative and see it as a purely spiritual pursuit of piety, penance, and salvation. Valentina Izmirlieva, “Christian Hajjis—the Other Orthodox Pilgrims to Jerusalem,” *Slavic Review* 73 (2014) 322–46, at 325

⁴⁰² Otto Meinardus, “Notes on the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Century Pilgrimages to the Holy Land,” *Eastern Christian Art* 2 (2005) 79–82, at 79

⁴⁰³ Izmirlieva, “Christian Hajjis—the Other Orthodox Pilgrims to Jerusalem,” 323

⁴⁰⁴ Otto F. A. Meinardus, “17th century Armenian Proskynetaria of Jerusalem: Series Byzantina, 3,” (2005) 35–52, at 35

also the “Manual” for ruling over them according to Islamic norms.⁴⁰⁵ Very early, the *proskynetaria* served as pictorial records of property rights and privileges. These rights, though often disputed, were affirmed by the Sublime Gate in Constantinople by the arrangements of the *stauts quo* ⁴⁰⁶ of 1517 and by Treaty of Paris in 1856. Lastly, *proskynetaria* served as a pious memento for a pilgrimage to the Holy Places.

In order to provide those Orthodox pilgrims with meaningful objects of commemoration of their pilgrimage, Melkite workshops of icons in Jerusalem produced a topographic representation of the Holy Land, called *Proskynetaria*, (Προσκυνητάρια), *proskynetarion* in the singular. The earliest painted *proskynetaria* known were products of the post-Byzantine period, initiated in some Greek *scriptorium*⁴⁰⁷, arguably close to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, thus belonging to the so-called Melkite (Rumi) cultural environment. So, these *proskynetaria* are a type of “eulogies”, from the Greek word meaning “the act of blessing”⁴⁰⁸.

Proskynetaria are, in essence, an illustrated color map of the holy sites, easily transportable when rolled inside metal tubes. To facilitate transport, *proskynetaria* were painted on linen that could be rolled up or folded.⁴⁰⁹ The oldest known example is dated to A.D.1704 and is preserved in the museum of Saumur in France. However, *proskynetaria* appearing in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Persia bear inscriptions in the Arabic and Greek languages. We can also encounter works written only in the Greek language.⁴¹⁰ Some scholars⁴¹¹ maintain that the painted *proskynetaria* are Greek.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁵ Oded Peri, *Christianity under Islam in Jerusalem: The question of the holy sites in early Ottoman times / Oded Peri* (The Ottoman Empire and its heritage; v. 23, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2001) 155

⁴⁰⁶ Eventually in 1757 *firman* that defined the rights of the six communities in this and other Holy Places was issued by the Porte to restore order. It defined three major communities, Armenian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox and Latin (represented by the Franciscans). These enjoy rights of residence and individual chapels, together with a condominium over certain parts of the church, in particularly the Edicule itself, as they succeed one another in celebrating their liturgies by day and by night. The *firman* further defined three minor communities, Abyssinians, Copts and Syrians, with rights in certain chapels and on certain days only, and certain ceremonies on great festivals. The rights of the communities were determined also about ornaments, and above all about repairs, which, with cleaning, were held to prove exclusive possession to the community carrying out the work. This *firman* was renewed in 1857, and recognized by the British Mandatory Government in 1922, by the Jordanian Government in 1948, and explicitly again by the Israeli Government in 1967, see, G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, “The Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem: History and Future,” *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1987) 187–207, 189.

⁴⁰⁷ Zuzana SKALOVA, “A Holy Map to Christian Tradition,” *Eastern Christian Art* 2 (2005) 93–103, at 100

⁴⁰⁸ Yuri PIATNITSKY, “Pilgrim's Eulogias from the Holy Land in the Hermitage Museum Collection, St Petersburg,” *Eastern Christian Art* 2 (2005) 105–19, at 105

⁴⁰⁹ Mat Immerzeel, “Proskynetaria from Jerusalem. Souvenirs of a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: Series Byzantina, 3,” 3 (2005) 9–24, at 23

⁴¹⁰ As well as the churches of Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. Waldemar Deluga, *Panagiotafitika: Greckie ikony i grafiki cerkiewne* (Biblioteka tradycji Seria 2; 80, Kraków: Collegium Columbinum, 2008) 70

⁴¹¹ SKALOVA, “A Holy Map to Christian Tradition,” 99

⁴¹² Skalova maintains that the Communities of the Rumi or Melkites, not necessarily always ethnic Greeks but adhering to the Greek Orthodox Church, also lived dispersed in the Near East among the arabophone Syrians, Copts and other minorities. *ibid.*, 96

3.2.2 The Prototype Of The Proskynetaria:

As it said above, the *proskynetaria* are icons painted on wood, or on cloth (canvas). Also, it was a type of certificate.⁴¹³ The two documents obtained in the Holy Land serve this legitimizing purpose, the first of these certificates is a “charter of remission,” “indulgence”, was a letter of indulgence and general views of the famous places of pilgrimage,⁴¹⁴ and the second type is a *proskynetarion*. Additionally, illustrated guides which were also called *proskynetaria* were printed in Europe from the seventeenth century onwards for Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox pilgrims. European topographic images may have inspired Palestinian icon painters to develop a similar model for their clients: thus, we might say that the *proskynetaria* can be read as the results of processes of hybridization between Orthodox and Western visual traditions.⁴¹⁵ Another opinion suggests that possibly the direct prototype of the *proskynetaria* was a composition prepared in the form of a fresco or a large painting, made by a local artist. This suggestion is supported by a vast collection of wall paintings, in the Maar Saba monastery, similar to *proskynetaria*.⁴¹⁶

The technique of the *proskynetaria* attests that it emerged from workshops familiar with the quick naqqash production of icons on canvas; they were conceived in a Greek, post-Byzantine environment, obviously fulfilling multiple functions.⁴¹⁷ As it is mentioned before, there were two documents-certificates; maybe the prototype of *proskynetaria* is an “indulgence” which must have been some large print on paper or cloth, reproducing the view of the Holy City of Jerusalem.⁴¹⁸ And there is another prototype of *proskynetaria* such as portable altar cloths (*antimensia*), traditionally painted or printed on textile, into the corners of which holy relics were sewn. *Proskynetaria* portability makes it akin to this group of religious articles, keeping in mind that only a few *proskynetaria* are identical. The manufacture of *proskynetaria* would resemble the copying industry of a *scriptorium*, which would have used books, prints, illustrated Bibles and guides as models.⁴¹⁹

Melkite painters represented maps and holy icons in the same time to depict the Palestine topography. But what happens when the two merges into a single image? These images do not conform to the standard Orthodox iconography and have thus been generally treated as isolated

⁴¹³ Documentary proof that their holders had been in the Holy Land and therefore earned the right to be called *hajjis*, these “icon certificates” served as visible proof of the *hajjis*’ new status and as signs of the collective blessing they brought back from their pilgrimages. Izmirlieva, “Christian Hajjis—the Other Orthodox Pilgrims to Jerusalem,” 339

⁴¹⁴ Printed on large single sheets with decorative borders, these documents were issued by the Patriarch of Jerusalem from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century, the practice being officially codified by the 1727 *ibid.*, 336–37

⁴¹⁵ Immerzeel, “Proskynetaria from Jerusalem. Souvenirs of a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land,” 18

⁴¹⁶ Waldemar Deluga, “Latin Sources of 18th and 19th Centuries „Proskynetaria”,” *APULUM* vol. 51 (2014) 39–47, at 40

⁴¹⁷ SKALOVA, “A Holy Map to Christian Tradition,” 97

⁴¹⁸ Dorē Papastratou, *Paper icons: Greek orthodox religious engravings 1665-1899. Vols 1 & 2* (2, Athens: Papastratos S.A, 1990) 544–59, SKALOVA, “A Holy Map to Christian Tradition,” 97

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 100

cartographic or devotional “curios.”⁴²⁰ Orthodox prints and icons on paper and cloth were widely used as models for paintings.⁴²¹

Thus, in addition to universally accepted Orthodox religious themes, we notice several distinct traditions, which have their origin in the piety of the Orthodox Christians of Jerusalem and are particularly related to Jerusalem and its environments. And in order to provide Orthodox pilgrims with a meaningful object of commemoration of their pilgrimage, Melkite artists in Jerusalem produced pictures of various sizes painted on canvas, which portray the Holy City and the principal Orthodox pilgrimage sites, as well as those Orthodox traditions, which were intimately connected with, and highly esteemed in Jerusalem.

3.2.3 Proskynetaria In Syria

Concerning to Antioch church, Meletios Karma – Metropolitan of Aleppo– when he was an adult, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Places with his friend Barlaam⁴²² and became a monk in a monastery in Jerusalem where he remained two years.⁴²³ Also under the episcopate of his successor Meletios Zai’m, a great number of his faithful made a pilgrimage to the Holy Places of Jerusalem, with 60 persons from Aleppo.⁴²⁴ There, Patriarch Theophanes hastened to receive them with “all attention and all honor.” In Jerusalem, the metropolitan of Aleppo met the Catholicos, Maximos of Georgia, who accompanied him to Damascus and Aleppo, in May 1642 Zai’m was on such good terms with his patriarch that the patriarch ordered him to celebrate the Divine Liturgy pontifically and to preach in his place in the Cathedral of Damascus.⁴²⁵ So it could be supposed that these Christians from Syria had brought many of souvenirs such *proskynetaria*, or at least they had encountered these kind of icons in Jerusalem or Bethlehem. Paul of Aleppo (son of al Zai’m) visited the Trinity Lavra of St Sergio near Moscow in 1655, he noted in the Trinity Cathedral of the monastery “large icons striking the mind with the art of execution: all of Jerusalem with all the churches, monasteries, and holy places inside and outside of it, the representation of the entire Mount of Zion and Mount Athos”.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁰ Della Dora, “Windows on Heaven (and Earth),” 86.

⁴²¹ Papastratou, *Paper icons*

⁴²²This Barlaam became a monk of St. Saba in Jerusalem and then later went from St. Saba to Jassy, which Macarius of Aleppo visited on January 25, 1653, cf. *Radu*, p. 4, and p. 160 ff. See Raheb, Abdallah, conception of the union in the orthodox patriarchate of Antioch (1622 - 1672), historical part, Beirut, 1981, p.36.

⁴²³*Kilzi* = L. Kilzi, Life of the Patriarch of Antioch Euthymius Karma the Hawawite written by his disciple Patriarch Macarios of Aleppo (in Arabic: according to Manuscript No. 24 of Deir esh-Shir, Lebanon) in *Al-Maçarrat* 1913, pp. 41-47; 81-89; 137-144. See Raheb, Abdallah conception of the union in the orthodox patriarchate of Antioch (1622 - 1672), historical part, Beirut, 1981, p.36.

⁴²⁴البطريرك مكاريسوس الزعيم، كحالة، جوزيف الياس 61

⁴²⁵ Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Eglise melchite du Ve au XXe siècle*, 88, Raheb, *CONCEPTION OF THE UNION IN THE ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH (1622 - 1672)*, 80

⁴²⁶ Note.53, Paul of Aleppo 1898, 30. In Yuri PIATNITSKY, “Pilgrims’ Eulogias from the Holy Land in the Hermitage Museum Collection, St Petersburg,” *Eastern Christian Art in its Late Antique and Islamic* 2 (2005) 105–19, at 115

According to Mar Immerzeel⁴²⁷, there are 5 Proskynetaria/icon-maps in Syria, but the archive of the DGAM (1973, Entry Lady Church, Hama) mentions an icon-map as number 40, but in the archive of 2006, there is no mention of it. Thus, they are as follows:

1. Hama: Entry Lady Church, 1748, (DGAM, 1973, no.40)
2. Ma'alula: Monastery of Saint Thekla, church; 19th C. (Immerzeel 1999, no. 31).
3. Ma'alula: Monastery of Saint Thekla, church; 19th C. (Immerzeel 1999, no. 32).
4. Sydnaia: Monastery of Our Lady, church; 1838 [1833?]; signed Isa al-Qudsi (Immerzeel 1999, no.33), but Immerzeel has dated this icon to 1733-38, and we know that Isa al Qudsi was working during the eighteenth century, for example he painted icon of St Basil,⁴²⁸ in Hama, N.63, dated to eighteenth century by Elias Al Zayat.⁴²⁹
5. Damascus: Collection Antoine Touma; 19th C. (Immerzeel 1997a, no.47; Immerzeel 1997b, 249, fig.10; Immerzeel 1998b, 9, photo 21; Immerzeel 1999, no. 34).
6. Damascus: private collection; 1881 (Immerzeel 1998a, 67-68, 70-72, Fig.6; Immerzeel 1999, no. 35).

All these icon-maps are similar, or there are differences of the architecture representations between the proskynetarion of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century? I should like to demonstrate this point by choosing three particular and clearly defined icons and showing its development during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

3.2.3.1 Sydnaia *Proskynetarion*

Sydnaia *proskynetarion*, figure.11, is *in situ*, in the church of Sydnaia monastery, situated about 30 kilometers north of Damascus. *Proskynetarion* is known for Sydnaia's nuns and visitors as "Kharetat al mousafer"⁴³⁰ "the map of traveler" traveler here indicates to the pilgrim/ *hajji* of Holy Land One of the most remarkable icons of the monastery, dated to 1738-9⁴³¹, was painted by Isa Al Qudsi. We know a little about the iconographer, who was working alongside Aleppo School as an independent iconographer and developing his own style. Only the name of the pilgrim, called Magdalena, can be deciphered.⁴³² If this date is precise, this icon has survived the earthquake of 1759, whereas the church was damaged during it and restored three years

⁴²⁷ Mat Immerzeel, with co-operation of Waldemar Deluga and Magdalena Lapata, "Proskynetaria inventory: Series Byzantina, 3," 3 (2005) 25–34, at 28

⁴²⁸ Commonly called the Basil the Great, for more detail see; William S. 1.-1. Smith and Henry 1.-1. Wace, *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrines: Being a continuation of "The dictionary of the Bible" / edited by William Smith and Henry Wace* (London: John Murray, 1887) 282–97

⁴²⁹ Elias Zyat, *Syrian icon: exhibition and symposium, sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism in the Syrian Arab Republic, the National Library of Assad, in Damascus, 20-30 September, October, 1987, short guide. (in Arabic)*. (Damascus 1987)N.25

⁴³⁰ The author gratefully acknowledges the Monastery of Sydnaia and the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch for their permission to photograph this icon.

⁴³¹ Mat Immerzeel, "Proskynetaria from Jerusalem," 24

⁴³² Immerzeel, "Proskynetaria from Jerusalem. Souvenirs of a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land," 24

later.⁴³³ Brayk⁴³⁴ tells us that the church of Sydnaia was built in 1762.⁴³⁵ Since both of icon and map are often described as “windows”, the first ones as “window of heaven”, and the later as “window on the theatre of the world”,⁴³⁶ thus the icon “Kharetat al mousafer”, in Sydnaia monastery, has both of these descriptions for icon and map. Sydnaia proskynetarion is a good preserved, behind the glass. Although there are many of cracks and much loss of paint.

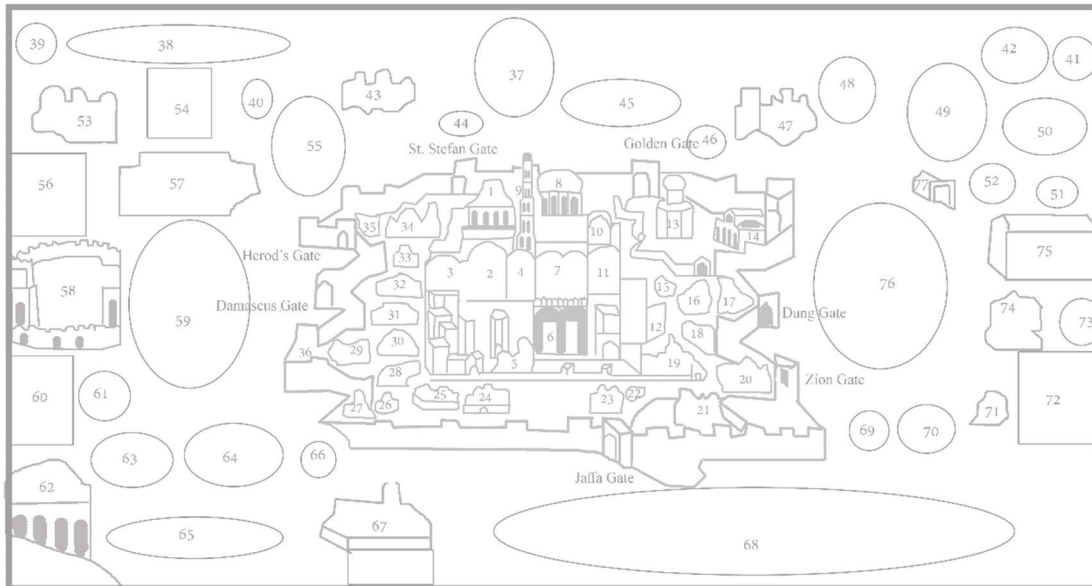


Figure 11 The scheme of Sydnaia proskynetaria. Cat.64.

37. The site of Baptism 38. Sea of Galilee 39 symbol of Evangelist (maybe Luke) 40 Jesus Prayer in Gethsemane 41. Symbol of Mathew (the Angel) 42.the Dead Sea 43. The Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives. 44. Jesus enters Jerusalem 45. Three fathers of Church (The Three Hierarchs) 46. Jesus and Marta 47. Lazarium (al Azariah) 48. Mt. of Temptation 49. Monastery of Sinai 50. Monastery of St. Saba 51. Bethlehem. 52. Siloam 53. The Annunciation (Nazareth) 54 the Dormition of Theotokos 55 Jesus on the throne 56. St. Mary the Egyptian 57. St. Mary's Tomb 58 Heavenly Jerusalem 59 Jesus the tree and his disciples 60 St. George 61. Beheaded St John the Baptist 62. Jaffa 63. Jacob's Well 64.two angels 65 The Legend of Lot 66. Symbol of Evangelist 67. Monastery of the Holy Cross 68. The legend of Tree of the Holy Cross 69. symbol of Evangelist 70 The flight into Egypt 71. Maybe St. George Monastery 72. St Demetrious 73. Prophet Elijah 74. Elijah's Monastery 75. The Church of Nativity 76.the Tree of Jesse

Jerusalem city is depicted as a medieval fortress, filled exclusively with Christian *loci sancti* and rendered invincible by its fortified walls. Outside stretches the timeless holy landscape, its horizon marked by the river Jordan or by the Mediterranean Sea. The landscape of the Holy Land is studded with more religious scenes, marking Old and New Testament sites, sometimes enlivened by scenes from the pilgrimage; From time to time in the *proskynetaria* there are the

⁴³³ Idem, “The Monastery of Our Lady of Saydnaya and Its Icon,” *Eastern Christian Art* 4 (2007) 13–26, at 19

⁴³⁴Born at Damascus, 18th, orthodox clergy. Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Eglise melchite du Ve au XXe siècle*, 314–15

⁴³⁵ Mikhâ'il a.-d. Brayk and Constantin. Bacha, *Histoire du pays de Damas de 1720 à 1782 / par le père Michel Breik (damascain) ; editée et annotée par le père Constantin Bacha* (Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire du Patriarcat Melkite d'Antioche; 2, Harïssa, Lubnân: Matba`at al-qiddîs Bûlus, 1930) 74

⁴³⁶ Della Dora, “Windows on Heaven (and Earth),” 85

symbols of the four Evangelists. Deluga says that: “this refers to the tradition of putting such elements in *antimensia*, which in the modern times very often assume a graphic form. In the 17th and 18th centuries, *antimensia*, which until then had had only liturgical functions, started to be used also as memorabilia of a church consecration. They were not only placed on altars, but also put into frames and hung in Orthodox churches”.⁴³⁷



Figure 12 The scheme of Jerusalem, Saydanaiya proskynetaria, 1738-9, Saydanaiya Monastery.

The Holy Sepulchre: 1.the Rotunda 2.the Tomb 3.the chapel of Constantine and Helen 4. Patriarch holds candle to light it by lamp 5. Jesus ordaining his brother James next to the Chapel of James 6.the Entrance and stairs, and the Chapel of the Franks 7.the Stone of Unction 8.the dome of Catholicon 9. The bill tower 10. The chapel of Abraham 11. The chapel of Golgotha 12.the Cave of invention of the Cross.

Out of the Holy of Sepulchre: 13. The Dome of the Rock 14. Al Aqsa 15. The Place of Judgment 16. Monastery of St. George 17.the Jewish Quarter 18? 19. The Church of St. John the Baptist 20. The Armenian Cathedral of St. James 21. The citadel and Tower of David 22. Monastery of St. Thekla 23. Monastery of St. Pelagia 24. Monastery St. Demetrious 25. Monastery of St. Nicholas 26. Monastery of St. Basil 27. The Church of St. Theodore near the Casa Nova 28. Monastery of St. George. 29. Monastery of St. Catherin 30. Monastery of St. the Archangel 31. Monastery of St. Euthymius 32. Monastery of St. Panagia (Sydnaia) 33. The Pretorius 34. The House of Joachim and Anne 35. Deir el Adas, 36?

1. Jerusalem City:

For a detailed description of the city of Jerusalem, we are going to follow the numbers given on the elements on the scheme of Jerusalem, it is important to divide this scheme, Figure.12, as follows:

The Holy Sepulchre, which includes the events and buildings:

1. The Rotunda: on the left part of the church, represented by two arches; inside one of them, the figure of the Christ rising from his grave. Behind him there is an Edicule. Keep in mind

⁴³⁷ Deluga, “Latin Sources of 18th and 19th Centuries „Proskynetaria”,” 44

that in 1808⁴³⁸, the fire had damaged the dome of the Rotunda causing it to collapse and smashing the Edicule's exterior decoration. During 1809–1810 the Rotunda and the Edicule's⁴³⁹ exterior were rebuilt by architect Nikolas Ch. Komnenos of Mytilene in the current Ottoman Baroque style.

2. The Tomb

3. The chapel of Constantine and Helen

4. The Patriarch holding a candle to light it. (Receiving and giving the Holy Fire).⁴⁴⁰ The Holy fire, *Lucernarium*, on Easter Saturday, is the miraculous lightning of lamp in the Sepulchre itself from which all candles and lamps were lit for the Holy Sepulchre and other churches throughout the city.⁴⁴¹ The depiction of this fire appeared in the Syriac Rabbula Gospel's miniature arguable that shows the appearance of the Holy fire in visual form as early as the sixth century.⁴⁴²

5. Jesus ordaining his brother James next to the Chapel of James, standing in front of the Orthodox patriarchate complex.

6. The entrance and stairs, and the Chapel of the Franks: To the right of the bell tower can be found the Holy Sepulchre's double-arched entrance, the left door is open, while the right one is closed as is the case to this day. To the right, there is a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows – known as the Chapel of the Franks.

7. The Stone of Anointment: Over the doorway is a representation of Jesus being anointed on the Stone of Anointment, which is indeed located just beyond the entrance. The Stone of Anointment is also known as the “red stone” (perhaps the name was also conferred for Christ's blood. Hence, the red marble, with streaks of white running through it, would have commemorated the commingling and sacred blood.⁴⁴³

8. The dome of the Catholicon: Above this scene is the compound's main hall, the domed Catholicon – site of, inter alia, the *omphalos* that allegedly marks the center of the world.⁴⁴⁴

⁴³⁸Ouster out, Robert, *Architecture as Relic and the Construction of Sanctity: The Stones of the Holy Sepulchre*, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (Mar, 2003), p.5.

⁴³⁹ The Dome above the Edicule constructed in 1808-10 had to be entirely rebuilt in 1868-70. This stood well until 1949, when it caught fire. see G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, “The Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem: History and Future,” *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1987) 187–207, at 195

⁴⁴⁰ According to the testimony of pilgrims, in the seventeenth century, Greeks, Copts, Ethiopians, Armenians, Georgians and Nestorians still received the Holy Fire from the Greek Orthodox patriarch, who distributed it to the other Christians. From the thirteenth century onwards, the Latins abstained from this ceremony Meinardus, “Notes on the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Century Pilgrimages to the Holy Land,” 80

⁴⁴¹ Lucy-Anne Hunt, *Eternal Light and Life: a Thirteen -Century Icon from the Monastery of the Syrian. Egypt, and the Jerusalem Pascal Liturgy: Byzantium, Eastern Christendom and Islam Art at the Crossroads of the Medieval Mediterranean*, London: Pindar press, 2000 (London: Pindar press, 2000), at 150

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, at 151

⁴⁴³ Mary A. Graeve, “The Stone of Unction in Caravaggio's Painting for the Chiesa Nuova,” *The Art Bulletin* 40 (1958) 223–38, at 228

⁴⁴⁴ While the world in Islamic thought was, as Ahmad ibn Qasim describes the World, in 1642 “Know that in the past the ancients divided the world into four quarters, each with its own name. They gave the name of Europe to the interior part that is near the North Pole, from the Black Sea to the farthest end of al-Andalus. In this quarter is the world-famous and renowned city, the greatest of cities according to all knowledgeable peoples and religions: Constantinople, may God almighty protect it and preserve it for Islam as long as the world continues . . . Anything

There are two thrones; one is the Antiochian Throne, and the other the throne of Jerusalem.⁴⁴⁵
9. The bell tower: It is located between the two domes, in the center of the Church, portrayed with five stories. Here, the tower is depicted without the dome; we already know that the tower is anachronistically drawn to its full height, whereas an earthquake damaged the top of this structure in 1546, and in 1554, the year in which the bell tower of the basilica was deprived of its steeple.⁴⁴⁶

10. The chapel of Abraham:

11. The chapel of Golgotha:⁴⁴⁷ Jesus on the cross flanked by two persons, who are to be identified as his mother Mary and John the Beloved.

12. The Cave of invention of the Cross, and the Tormented Christ with a reed figure, three crosses inside the cave. this figure of Christ refers to the Latin motif.⁴⁴⁸ This topic is known in devotional Latin graphics⁴⁴⁹, while in Melkite icons of Syria it appeared at the beginning of the 19th century, as in the icon of “Tormented Christ” in Saydnaia monastery, dated to the beginning of the 19th century, and belonging to the school of Michael of Crete.⁴⁵⁰ It is also called “ecce Homo”⁴⁵¹ (inscription: IC XC), Jesus is wearing a purple *kolobion*, is barefoot with his hands bound in front, a crown of thorns on his head.

Out of the Holy of Sepulchre:

Al-Haram Area: separated part by a wall, which opens into the center of the city through two gates, probably the Bab Al-Hadid and Bab Al-Qattanin

13. The Dome of the Rock: topographically is on the same axis as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

that is not inhabited by Muslims belongs to Christians N. I. Matar, *Europe through Arab eyes, 1578-1727* (New York, Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2009) 201

⁴⁴⁵ There were three types of throne in Byzantine art: Thrones with a flat, rectangular back. This type appears in Early Byzantine pictorial context but is rare in Middle and Late Byzantine religious images. The second type is thorn with a flat backrest and curved top. This type was in use already during the Early Byzantine period and continues to appear in artistic context during the following centuries. The abbot's wooden throne and the royal marble throne belong to this category. The third one is with curved back. This type becomes common in artistic contexts from the 13th century. Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 165–66

⁴⁴⁶ Around 1170 was added, when the crusaders began to refurbish the church in a Romanesque style. J. Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land: An Oxford archaeological guide from earliest times to 1700 / Jerome Murphy-O'Connor* (5th ed; Oxford archaeological guides, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 54 Harry W. Hazard, *The art and architecture of the Crusader states* (A history of the Crusades; v. 4, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977) 37 Piccirillo Michele, the role of the Franciscans in the translation of the sacred spaces from the holy land to Europe, in *New Jerusalem: Heterotopy and iconography of sacred spaces*, ed. By Alexi Lidov (Moscow: Indirik, 2009), p378

⁴⁴⁷ The place of crucifixion was the Calvary or Golgotha, the Τόπος του κρανίου (Place of the Skull) mentioned without further specification by all the Evangelists as if it were a well-known locality. Kenneth John, Conant, *The Holy Sites at Jerusalem in the First and Fourth Centuries A.D.*, *Proceedings of the American philosophical Society*, American Philosophical Society, Vol. 102, No. 1 (Feb. 17, 1958), p. 16.

⁴⁴⁸ Deluga, “Latin Sources of 18th and 19th Centuries „Proskynetaria”,” 43

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Agnès-Mariam d. La Croix and François Zabbal, *Icons arabes: Art chrétien du Levant exposition présentée à l'Institut du Monde Arabe du 6 mai au 17 août 2003 / ouvrage dirigé par Agnès-Marian de la Croix et François Zabbal* (Meolans-Revel: Ed. Grégoriennes, 2003) 86n.57

⁴⁵¹ Márta Nagy, “Demeter Hadzi's Proskynetarion in Jaszbereny,” *Series Byzantina* 4 (2006) 39–54, at 42

14. Al-Aqsa: Traditionally, since the Crusaders' era, Christians associated Mary with the site of this Mosque, as well as the early Christian maps.⁴⁵²

Unfortunately, most of the Arabic inscriptions are illegible, so the names of the monasteries can be reconstructed based on the comparison between Sydnaia *proskynetaria* and the *proskynetarion* in the Church of ss. Peter and Paul of the Red Sea Monastery of St. Antony⁴⁵³ and the map that is part of a large icon in the chapel of Saint George's Monastery in the Old City of Jerusalem, (1735)⁴⁵⁴.

15. The Place of Judgment, which joins the Haram ash-Sharif, where Christ appeared before Herod Antipas (Luke XXIII: 7)

16. Monastery of St. George, which is nowadays situated in the Hârat al-Bashiti, near the Jewish Quarter⁴⁵⁵, between Jaffa Gate and the Haram ash-Sharif. The church was lately renovated.⁴⁵⁶

17. The Jewish Quarter

19. The Church of St. John the Baptist: in this *proskynetarion*, beside the figure of the monastery, the Arabic inscription refers to "Dair Al-Arman", the Armenian monastery, which is situated off the Christian Quarter Street.

20. The Armenian Cathedral of St. James, the son of Zebedee. It is located to the right of, and just below Zion Gate, which should be identified with the Armenian Quarter, by comparing it with the icon at the St. George Monastery in Jerusalem (1735).⁴⁵⁷ The Armenian Cathedral of St James was built by the Armenian community on a site in their quarter which was identified as the burial place of the first bishop of Jerusalem, St James the Minor. This was also traditionally the place where the head of St James the Major (the Apostle) was buried after his beheading by Herod Agrippa in AD 44.⁴⁵⁸

21. The citadel and Tower of David: near Jaffa Gate. The tower has since the middle ages served as the city's Citadel.

22. The Church of St. Thekla, which is situated on the roof of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.

23. Monastery of St. Pelagia

24. The Church of St. Demetrious, which stands on the site of the ancient Hospice of St. Saba. The church is part of the buildings of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.

25. The Church of St. Nicolas, which is situated next to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.

26. Monastery of St. Basil: The Church of St. Basil, opposite to the Collège des Frères in the Christian Quarter, appears on a mediaeval list of churches.⁴⁵⁹

27. The Church of St. Theodore near the Casa Nova

⁴⁵² Rehav Rubin, "Iconography as Cartography: Two Cartographic Icons of the Holy City and its Environs," *Τετράδια Εργασίας* 8 (2013) 347–78, at 360

⁴⁵³ Otto Meinardus, "Greek Proskynitaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," *Studia Orientalia Christiana* 12 (1967) 309–41, at 312AI

⁴⁵⁴ Rehav Rubin, "Greek-Orthodox maps of Jerusalem from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," *e-Perimetron* 8 (2013), at 118–20

⁴⁵⁵ This monastery is depicted also in "Jerusalem map in the Munich manuscript", *ibid.*, 111

⁴⁵⁶ Meinardus, "Greek Proskynitaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 328

⁴⁵⁷ Rubin, "Iconography as Cartography:," 365

⁴⁵⁸ Adrian J. Boas, *Jerusalem in the time of the crusade Society: landscape and art in the Holy City under Frankish rule* (London and New York: the Taylor and Francis London and New York, 2001) 126, See Acts 12:2.

⁴⁵⁹ Meinardus, "Greek Proskynitaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 329AI

28. Monastery of St. George.
29. Monastery of St. Catherin at Hârat al-Haddadin.
30. Monastery of St. Archangel, “Mar Michael” in Arabic inscription
31. Monastery of St. Euthymius: situated in Sayyida Road in the Christian Quarter, rebuilt in 1965.⁴⁶⁰
32. Monastery of St. Panagia (Sydnaia) situated west of the Church of the Resurrection, Arabic inscription: Dier Al-Saideh (the Lady Monastery)
33. The Praetorian: or the fortress of Antonia. For the Christians it is the prison of Jesus.
34. Mary’s birth place: Arabic inscription near the figure “Bait Youakem w Youhanneh” “the House of Joachim and Anne”.
35. Deir el-Adas: Significant Christian building activity occurred near the Via Dolorosa. It is a small Greek convent which is in the Muslim Quarter north of the Al-Haram area.⁴⁶¹

2. Outside Jerusalem:

The Sydnaia icon, Cat.64, depicts the Holy Places beyond the City Wall, from the river Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea, represented here in the left bottom corner by Jaffa port.

37. The site of the Baptism, and the scene of the Baptism. This site was a very important location to visit by the pilgrims during the Ottoman period. Keep in mind that the people considered hajjis “pilgrims” only those who had bathed in the Jordan River, received a certificate from the Patriarchate, bought a “*proskynetaria*”, and saw the Holy Fire.⁴⁶² Joseph Al Mussawir had written an article “25n” about the Holy fire, in Greek language in the al Majmoua al latif.⁴⁶³
38. Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberias) and Jisr Banât Ya'qūb
- 39 Symbol of an Evangelist (maybe Luke)
- 40 Jesus’s Prayer in the Gethsemane.
41. Symbol of Matthew (the Angel)
42. The Dead Sea
43. The Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives.

The Church is portrayed with a central dome flanked by two towers. In 1178, the Church of the Ascension was transformed into a mosque. The Greeks celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the courtyard of the mosque on the day of the Feast of the Ascension. Keeping in mind that the Church of the Ascension located outside the walls of the city on the Mount of Olives. This was the traditional site where Christ rose to heaven after the Crucifixion. In 614, a circular-plan Byzantine church on the top of the Mount of Olives was destroyed by the Persians, under the Crusaders a new church was constructed on the site in two stages. First an octagonal aedicule

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid. AI, AII, AIII

⁴⁶¹ Y. Ben-Arieh, “The Growth of Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 65 (1975) 252–69, at 259

⁴⁶² Izmirlieva, “Christian Hajjis—the Other Orthodox Pilgrims to Jerusalem,” 332

⁴⁶³ البطريرك مكاريوس الزعيم، كحالة، جوزيف الياس، 106

(without the present dome which is of later date) was constructed over the rock on which was preserved the footprint of Christ. Later a larger octagonal church was built around it, enclosing the aedicule.⁴⁶⁴

44. Jesus enters Jerusalem

45. The Three Hierarchs.

46 Jesus and Marta, when she meets him outside the village.

47. Lazarium (al Azariah) Bethany, and The Church of the Sepulchre of Lazarus. Its Arabic name el-Azariyeh preserves the Greek *Lazarion*, “the place of Lazarus”. By the end of the fourteenth Century the original entrance to the tomb of Lazarus had been turned into a mosque. The Muslims also venerated the raising of Lazarus and at first permitted Christians to continue their liturgical visits. When this became progressively more difficult the Franciscans cut the present entrance to the tomb between 1566 and 1575,⁴⁶⁵ then they erected the new church.

48. Mt. of Temptation: The Temptation⁴⁶⁶ of Christ in the Wilderness of Judaea.

49. Monastery of Sinai

50. Monastery of St. Saba: in the wadi an-Nar. Among the buildings, we can identify the Church of the Annunciation. On the left side of the monastery, there is the Tower of *Eudoxia*, also known as the Tower of St. Simeon Stylites.⁴⁶⁷ A monk on the roof of the tower holds a rope. Maybe he is ringing the bells announcing the arrival of food at the *lavra*.⁴⁶⁸

51. Bethlehem

52. Siloam, and the blind man whom Jesus, according to the New Testament, healed at this location. The waters of Gihon still flow from the Virgin’s Fountain⁴⁶⁹ to the Pool of Siloam. The memory of the miracle of Siloam caused the waters of the pool⁴⁷⁰ to be considered sacred to Christians. In early Christian and early Byzantine iconography, the scene is compressed to a dialogue between Christ and the blind man in which hand gestures indicate that the healing of the eyes is being depicted. ⁴⁷¹ Siloam is still found today in that part of Jerusalem known as

⁴⁶⁴ Virgilio Corbo, *Ricerche Archeologiche al Monte Degli Ulivi*, Jerusalem 1965, pp. 115–25

⁴⁶⁵ Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land*, 152.

⁴⁶⁶ The term reformation shaped the use of the German term *Anfechtung*, which is often translated as Eng. “temptation”. There is no clear equivalent for it in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin. For more details see; Fahlbusch and Bromiley, *The encyclopedia of Christianity*. editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett, 335–36

⁴⁶⁷ Died 459, born before 400 on the Syria-ilica border, a shepherd, he lived two years with some nearby ascetics and ten years in the monastery of Eusebanes at Teleda. Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend*

⁴⁶⁸ See A I, AII, AHI. Meinardus, “Greek Proskynitaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt,” 320

⁴⁶⁹ Barbara Baert, *Lavit et venit videns: The Healing of the Blind Man at the Pool of Siloam* (ed. Bianca Kühnel, Galit Noga-Banai and Hanna Vorholt; Visual constructs of Jerusalem; Cultural encounters in late antiquity and the Middle Ages vol. 18, Turnhout: Brepols, 2014) 23–34, 23.

⁴⁷⁰ The pool of Siloam is mentioned already in Isaiah, also in the New Testament, 8. 6: “Because this people have refused the waters of Shiloah that flow gently

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 25

the City of David, outside the city walls. This pool survives to the present day, surrounded by a high stone wall with an arched entrance to Hezekiah's tunnel⁴⁷² which was discovered in the 19th century. The pool is depicted with an arched entrance, like in the Hama *proskynetaria*⁴⁷³ while in the *Zakynthos* Map-Icon, the Siloam Pool is depicted as a cave with the stairs and the outflow of water.⁴⁷⁴

53. The Church of the Annunciation, and scene of Annunciation: the church is surrounded by two tall buildings. The Church was erected in 1787.

54. The Dormition of the Theotokos icon.

55. Jesus on the throne

56. St. Mary the Egyptian receiving the Eucharist from St. Zosimas in the desert east of the Jordan.

57. St. Mary's Tomb in Gethsemane, which since 1757 is shared by the Greeks and the Armenians. The church was built by the Crusaders around the year 1130. The *proskynetarion* portrays the staircase leading to the underground tomb.

58. Heavenly Jerusalem, the Paradise, represented by a walled city. There are Ibrahim and the right hand thief. And there are four rivers going out from the city. The oldest example of the heavenly Jerusalem is in the background of the mosaic of s. Pudenziana, above of the golden-roofed portico in the background, the buildings of Heavenly Jerusalem are depicted as an allusion to the end of days predicted in the Revelation of St. John.⁴⁷⁵ Another example comes from the church of nativity.⁴⁷⁶

59. Jesus the tree and his disciples, the vine tree.

60. St. George

61. St John the Baptist beheaded

62. Jaffa: Although the inscription of Jaffa's name is unreadable, but by comparison with the *proskynetarion* of the Church of St. Shenute in Old Cairo, 1767⁴⁷⁷, it must to be Jaffa harbor.

⁴⁷² Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron say that the tunnel dated before Hezekiah. "An unavoidable historical conclusion of this study is that the hewing of the Siloam Tunnel cannot be attributed to Hezekiah. This project was carried out under one of the Judahite kings who predated him, probably during a period as early as the days of Jehoash. When Hezekiah was facing the threat of an Assyrian siege, the Siloam Tunnel had already been functional for several decades. See Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron, "The Date of the Siloam Tunnel Reconsidered," *Tel Aviv* 38 (2011) 147–57, 154. And before them John Rogerson and Philip R. Davies were argued. See; John Rogerson and Philip R. Davies, "Was the Siloam Tunnel Built by Hezekiah?," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 59 (1996) 138–49

⁴⁷³ And also in A I, AII, AIII, BI, I n Meinardus, "Greek Proskynitaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 320

⁴⁷⁴ Rehav Rubin, "e-Perimtron: Greek-Orthodox maps of Jerusalem from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," 8 (2013), at 115

⁴⁷⁵ Brandenburg and Vescovo, *Ancient Churches of Rome from the Fourth to the Seventh Century*, 142

⁴⁷⁶ Robert. Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture / R. Milburn* (Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, 1988) 217

⁴⁷⁷ Meinardus, "Greek Proskynitaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 314A III

Babraj supposes that pilgrims arrived at the port of Jaffa with such sailing ships.⁴⁷⁸ Jaffa did not reclaim its position as Jerusalem port for pilgrims until the beginning of 15th century.⁴⁷⁹

63. Jacob's well⁴⁸⁰, Jesus and the woman of Samaria⁴⁸¹: Sychar village, in the fourth century, when two visitors to the land, Eusebius⁴⁸² and the Bordeaux Pilgrim, both mention a Sychar, distant from Shechem. Also, the abbot Daniel (1106-1107) speaks of "the hamlet of Jacob called Sychar. Jacob's well is there, near this place, at half a vest away, is the town of Samaria."⁴⁸³

64. Two angels, maybe Michael and Gabriel.

65-68. The Story of the Tree of Life and the Cross of Christ⁴⁸⁴, The idea of the relationship of these two woods goes back to the second century. A version of the story speaks of a twig of the Tree of Life, which was given to Seth and which he planted at the head of Adam's grave, where it was watered by Lot.⁴⁸⁵ The devil appearing in a variety of forms interfered and drank the life-giving water for the tree. Solomon ordered the tree to be cut down to be used for his palace, but the tree could not be felled. According to another version, the tree was cut down by Hiram for the building of the Temple but was rejected and became part of the bridge across the Cedron, where it was recognized by the Queen of Sheba. The queen, who had a vision seeing the Redeemer hanging from that wood, refused to cross the bridge. The Queen of Sheba saw the wood in the court-yard of Solomon's Palace and prophesied that someone would hang on this wood, whose death would bring to the end of the kingdom of the Jews. Solomon ordered the tree to be hidden in the deepest part of the earth, at which place the pool of Bethesda originated. Here, not only the Angel of the Lord troubled the water, but the therapeutic quality of the water was also attributed to the power of the wood. When the Passion of Christ approached, the wood came to the surface of the water, and the Jews used it for the Cross. This story, of which there are several versions, appears in the various forms on many *proskynetaria*.

Here, Lot is in front of a "person" when he confessed, then there is the scene of the watering of the tree, and Lot who waters the tree of life. Lot appears as an old man with a long grey

⁴⁷⁸ Nagy, "Demeter Hadzsi's Proskynetarion in Jaszbereny," 42

⁴⁷⁹ Grouiand, Henri, Pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre at the Dawn of the Renaissance, in *Treasure of the Holy Sepulchre*, Silvana Editoriale Spa, Milan, 2013, p. 39.

⁴⁸⁰ Bushell, *Churches of the Holy Land*, 87-91

⁴⁸¹ Beside to Samaritan woman at the well, the idea that the salvation of God may be readily symbolized by the refreshing power of water receives artistic expression in pictures of the Baptism of Christ or Moses striking the rock. Robert. Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture / R. Milburn* (Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, 1988) 66

⁴⁸²Eusebius of Caesarea, (260-c.339), Bishop and historian, He played a major part at the first council of the church at Nicaea in 325. Donald M. 1.-2. Nicol, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire / Donald Nicol* (London: Seaby, 1991) 37

⁴⁸³ G.A Smith, *The Historical Geography of Holy Land: Especially in Relation to the History of Israel and of the Early Church* (New York and London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1901) 370

⁴⁸⁴ Meinardus, "Greek Proskynetaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 321-22

⁴⁸⁵ Symbol of the just man who, by living uprightly among sinful people, devers to escape the destruction of Sodom, first appears in the hypogeum of Via D.Compagni (c.320-360) in Rome, Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend*

beard, wearing a green garment. He is watering the tree with three branches from a jar. “And the devil is drinking water from Lot” (Arabic inscription: Lot when is watering [...] the Devil). To his left there is a white horse, holding a jar. To his right a devil appears.

The story is continuing when Solomon came (inscription: the king) and cut the tree off. To his left he is pointing at the bough of the three-branched tree that a man is just cutting off the tree to use it for the building of the king’s church. After this scene, three servants are carrying a branch resembling an elongated wooden board on their shoulders.

66. Symbol of an Evangelist

67. Monastery of the Holy Cross: In front of Jerusalem stands the Monastery of the Cross, which is indeed located west of Jerusalem, by comparison with the icon from Saumur.⁴⁸⁶

69. Symbol of an Evangelist

70 The flight into Egypt

71. Maybe St. George Monastery

72. St Demetrius

73. Prophet Elijah⁴⁸⁷

74. Elijah’s Monastery: despite the absence of an inscription indicating the name of the complex (buildings and walled square), called it Monastery of Elias, because the painter Issa depicts it near Bethlehem on the map, and there is an icon of the Prophet Elias (it can be read in the Arabic inscription: Mar Elias) next to the convent. This monastery is indeed located on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road and it commemorates the site where, according to tradition, Elijah rested during his flight from the vengeance of Jezebel (1 Kings 19).⁴⁸⁸

75. The Church of the Nativity: The large basilica on the adjacent mountainside is the Church of the Nativity, behind the Basilica: there are buildings representing Bethlehem. This depiction gives the impression that Bethlehem is graphically located in the eastern section of the city as in real. The painter has borrowed some Latin themes; Joseph is depicted kneeling in front of the shed as Mary does. Keep in mind that this church is the only church throughout the Holy land preserved practically in this original form since Byzantine times.⁴⁸⁹

76. The Tree of Jesse.

Our proskynetarion is not seen as a survey of topographical reality and visualization of landscapes and places, but as a multipurpose religious souvenir from the Holy Land. Maybe the pilgrim “Magdalena” used this proskynetarion, “Kharetat al mousafer”, as a tool of

⁴⁸⁶ Rubin, “Greek-Orthodox maps of Jerusalem from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,” 121–22

⁴⁸⁷ Gk. Form, Elias, 9th century B.C, traditionally held to be the greatest Hebrew prophet, and certainly a forerunner of the classical prophets (Amos, Isaiah, etc.) Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 539

⁴⁸⁸ Pnina Arad, “The Proskynetarion from the Monastery of the Holy Cross and the map of the Holy Land.,” *Eastern Christian art*. (2009), at 1, <http://worldcatlibraries.org/wcpa/oclc/887084654note.4>

⁴⁸⁹ Peri, *Christianity under Islam in Jerusalem*, 7

orientation and self-positioning as well as souvenir. She came to Sydnaia monastery, the second important pilgrimage place after Sepulchre church, she endowed it to the convent. This proskynetarion covers a wider part of the Holy Land, from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea to the West until the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River, and the Dead Sea to the East. This icon has the Zigzag-Patterned Wall of Jerusalem. It might be inferred that it depicts Jerusalem and the Holy Land in numerous visual elements of Old and New Testament narratives, related with the life and activity of Christ in Palestine, also related to apocryphal stories. These images range compositionally around a large panel depicting the interior of the Holy Sepulchre – Anastasia church – where a representation of the central pilgrimage event – the Descent of the Holy Fire – constitutes both the visual and the semantic center.

3.2.3.2 Hama Proskynetarion

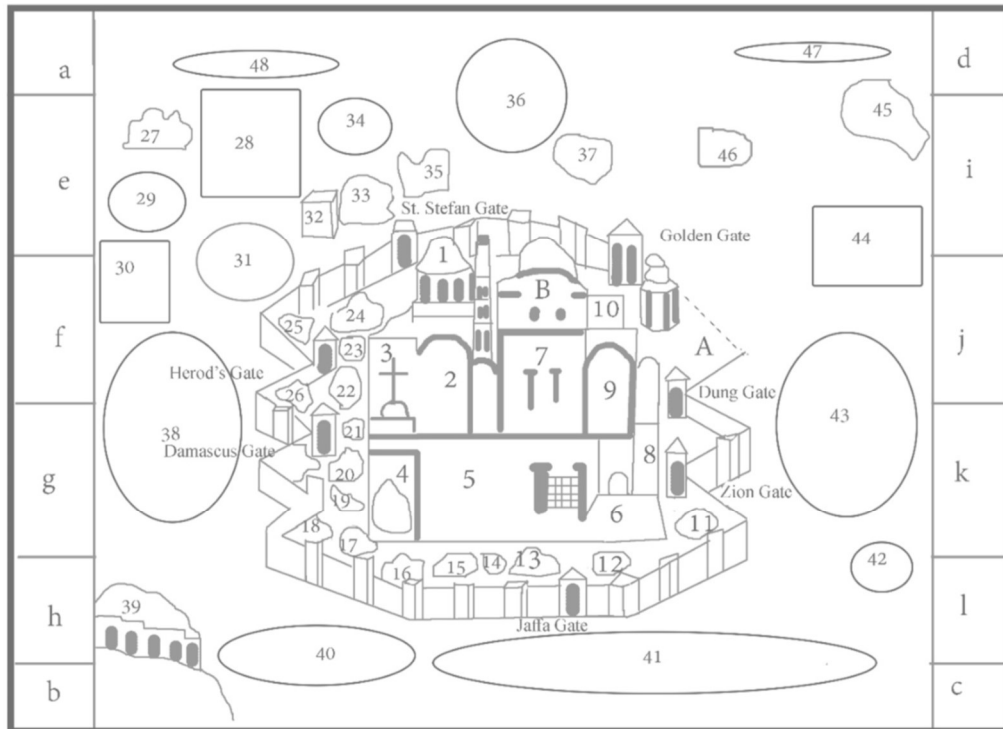


Figure 13 The scheme of Hama proskynetarion. cat.66.

B: The Holy Sepulchre: The dome of Catholicon 1. The Rotunda and the bell tower 2.the Tomb 3. The chapel of Constantine and Helen 4. The stone of Tomb 5. The Entrance and of Tomb and patriarch of Jerusalem receives the Holy fire 6. The Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows “Chapel of the Franks” and the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross. The Stone of Uncion 8. Jesus Christ 9. The chapel of Golgotha 10. The chapel of Abraham.

A: Out of the Holy of Sepulchre: The Dome of the Rock, the Haram ash-Sharif, 11. The Armenian Quarter? 12. David’s Tower, the Citadel 13. Monastery of St. Thekla 14. Monastery of St. Pelagia 15. Monastery of St. Nicholas 16. Monastery of St. Demetrious 17. Monastery of St. Basil 18. The Church of St. Theodore near the Casa Nova 19. Monastery of St. George 20. Monastery of St. the Archangel 21. Monastery of St. Euthymius 22. Monastery of St. Panagia (Saydanaiya) 23. The Pretorius 24. Mary’s birth place 25. Deir el Adas 26. Monastery of St. Theodoroi? 27. The site of Annunciation Nazareth 28. The Dormition 29 the cave where Baruch slept 30. St. Mary the Egyptian 31. Jacob’s Well 31? 32 and 33. St. Mary’s Tomb, 34, site of Agony: Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, 35 Mount of Olives 36 the site of Baptism 37 Lazarium (al Azariah) 38 the Tree of Jesse 39. Jaffa 40. The Legend of Lot 41. The legend of Tree of the Holy Cross 42. Elias Monastery 43. Jesus the tree and his disciples 44. The Church of Nativity 45. Monastery of St. Saba 46. Siloam 47. The Dead Sea 48. Sea of Galilee

a. b. c. for Evangelists d. Matthew e. St. Basil f. St. John Chrysostom g. St. George h. St. George i. St. Spyridon j. St. Athanasius k. St. Charalampos l. St. Demetrius.

Hama *proskynetaria* is not in situ, the entry to the Lady's Church in Hama, (size: 80x123.2 cm). This icon is painted with oil on canvas, and it is framed. It shows the zigzag walled city with its seven gates. This icon divides the Holy City into three regional sections, the Church of the Resurrection, the Islamic buildings, and the surrounding area (churches, monasteries, Armenian, and Jew neighborhoods).

This map, figure.13, divided into three different parts, the first one is icons of Saints, we shall give them letters, the second and the third parts, are given numbers from 1 to 48; the first part is Jerusalem city with the Holy Sepulchre, the third part is the buildings and events (icons) outside the wall.

- I. Buildings inside the wall: 1-26
- II. Buildings and events outside the wall: 27-48
- III. Icons of saints: a-l

The Buildings Inside The Wall: 1-26

The city faces eastwards and is surrounded by a zigzag wall, which contains seven gates: Jaffa Gate, to the west; (south of the map), Damascus Gate and Herod's Gate, to the north; Stephen's Gate and the Golden Gate to the East;(northern wall in the map), Dung Gate and Zion Gate to the south (right of the map). The layout of the *proskynetarion* brings to mind the traditional map of the Holy Land. However, beyond similarities in outline – showing the country oriented to the east, with the Mediterranean shore to the bottom, appears Jaffa city, to the left side. The Jordan River and the mountainous desert on the horizon – the upper part – and a large and detailed depiction of Jerusalem in the center.

A: Outside The Holy Sepulchre: (11-26)

The section to the right inside the wall, (the northern eastern part) which is separated from the rest of the city by a wall – in this map, we cannot see the gates of this wall, but in Sydnaia-map, there are two gates – represents the Muslim Quarter. The remarkably realistic depiction of the Dome of the Rock emphasizes the fact that the Moslems ruled the city, but the Dome of the Rock appears relatively insignificant when compared to the Holy Sepulchre. It produces a clear sense of dissonance and duality. This was not uncommon and other Christian sources engender similar discordant notes.⁴⁹⁰ These tensions were rooted in and reflected the permanent conflict experienced by the icon's artist, and Christian authors in general, between the desire to celebrate Christian ideology and emphasize Jerusalem's Christian traditions, while ignoring the city's Moslem government and residents and, conversely, the reality of having to live under Islamic rule and the frustration of knowing that the Temple Mount and its Mosques were the center of the city's Islamic religious life.⁴⁹¹ Throughout Islamic history, Muslim authorities confiscated many Christian churches and Jewish synagogues turning them into mosques or

⁴⁹⁰ Rubin, "Iconography as Cartography:" 361

⁴⁹¹ Idem, *Ideology and Landscape in Early Printed Maps of Jerusalem Perspective: Ideology and Landscape in Historical, Essays on the Meanings of Some Places in the Past*, ed. Alan R. H. Baker, 1st ed., Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006 (ed. Alan R. H. Baker; 1st ed; Cambridge studies in historical geography 18; Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006), at 15–30

other religious institutions.⁴⁹² When the Ottomans arrived in Jerusalem after 250 years of Mamluk rule, not much of its Christian past and character remained. The Ottomans received Jerusalem as a ready-made Muslim city.⁴⁹³

11. The Armenian church of St. James, The Armenian Quarter.
12. David's Tower and the Citadel, and the lower wall is full of small buildings.
13. Monastery of St. Thekla
14. Monastery of St. Pelagia
15. Monastery of St. Nicholas
16. Monastery of St. Demetrius
17. Monastery of St. Basil
18. Monastery of St. John the Theologian (modern St. Salvador)
19. Monastery of St. George
20. Monastery of St. the Archangel: The Church of the Archangel was in the possession of the Serbians during the middle Ages. The church is situated in St. Francis Street.⁴⁹⁴
21. Monastery of St. Euthymius
22. Monastery of St. Panagia (Sydnaia)
23. The *Pretorius*
24. Mary's birth place
25. Deir el-Adas
26. Monastery of St. Theodore, near the Casa Nova.

B: The Holy Sepulchre: (1-25)

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is depicted in high detail and occupies most of the area inside the wall. It is shown in cross section, exposing the church's interior from a southern view point. A bell tower, in the center of the church's image, divides it into two significant parts.

1. The Rotunda: The left (west) part of the Church contains Jesus's burial site, represented by a round structure covered by a truncated dome.
2. The Tomb: beneath which sits the monument marking Jesus's tomb. This map has embellished the Rotunda with an image of Christ rising from his grave.
3. The chapel of Constantine and Helen inside: inside the Rotunda and directly above Jesus's burial cave, there is a small edifice, marked by a cross. The Chapel of Constantine and Helen lies to the left of the Rotunda. The Chapel belongs to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, whose monks still pray there today.⁴⁹⁵
4. The stone of the Tomb, the patriarch of Jerusalem receives the Holy fire.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹² Arthur S. Tritton, *The Caliphs and their non-muslim subjects a critical study of the covenant of 'Umar* (London: Cass, 1930) 37–39

⁴⁹³ Peri, *Christianity under Islam in Jerusalem*, 65–66

⁴⁹⁴ Meinardus, "Greek Proskynitaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 329AI, AII, A III.

⁴⁹⁵ Rubin, "Iconography as Cartography:" 362

⁴⁹⁶ Henry Maundrell, the chaplain to the English Levant Company's trading post in Aleppo who came to Jerusalem in 1696, witnessed the miracle first-hand on April 3 of that year and considered the spectacle insane. "The Latin take a great deal of pains to expose this ceremony as a most shameful imposture and a scandal to the Christian

The right part of the church contains the following edifices:

The compound's main hall, the domed Catholicon – site of, inter alia, the *omphalos* that allegedly marks the center of the world

5. The main entrance to the church, built as a double gate during the Crusader era, is accurately drawn, with its right (eastern) half blocked by a solid wall. The right door was closed by Saladin, as is the case to this day. The other door has been entrusted to the custody of two Muslim families.⁴⁹⁷
6. The Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows, the chapel of the Franks. The stairs to the right on the outer facade lead to a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows – known as the Chapel of the Franks – which was used to give access directly to the Calvary. Directly beneath it, there is an oratory dedicated to St. Mary of Egypt. And a staircase at the bottom of this area leads down to the cave, the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross, where Helen is said to have discovered the cross.

A two-story structure consisting of three vaulted chapels. The most venerated part, the Chapel of Crucifixion, has its eastern side laid upon the natural rock which, according to Christian tradition, is the actual spot where the Cross was placed. Adjoining this chapel from south is another one memorializing the scene of Christ's Nailing to the Cross. Both chapels are built on the upper level of Golgotha. A third chapel, built on the lower level right beneath the Chapel of Crucifixion, is dedicated to the memory of Adam, the skull of whom is purported by Christian tradition to be buried under the Rock of Crucifixion.⁴ No canonizing tradition has been associated with the vault beneath the Chapel of Nailing to the Cross, which is therefore used as mere sacristy.⁴⁹⁸

7. The stone of anointment: it can be seen above the entrance, which in reality is located just beyond the entrance.
8. Jesus Christ
9. The Chapel of Golgotha: to the right of the stone, it is identified by the figure of Jesus on the Cross, flanked by Mary and John.
10. The chapel of Abraham: above the Golgotha chapel, dedicated to the Sacrifice of Isaac. This chapel is a part of the neighboring Monastery of Abraham, which abuts the Holy Sepulchre to the east.⁴⁹⁹

The buildings and events outside the wall: (27-48)

The icon also features three types of representations outside Jerusalem:

The cities and sites:

27. The site of Annunciation, Nazareth,

religion,” he remarked, “but the Greeks and Armenians pin their faith upon it and make their pilgrimages chiefly upon this motive. Izmirlijeva, “Christian Hajjis—the Other Orthodox Pilgrims to Jerusalem,” 334

⁴⁹⁷ Meinardus, “17th century Armenian Proskynetaria of Jerusalem,” 48

⁴⁹⁸ Peri, *Christianity under Islam in Jerusalem*, 3

⁴⁹⁹ Rubin, “Iconography as Cartography:,” 363

29. The cave where Baruch slept: located to the left side of the city, this legend is an apocryphal tradition of the Old Testament.⁵⁰⁰ By the 18th century, the legend was in a cave in a large quarry, north-east of Damascus Gate, traditionally known as the Court of the Guard. The cave is known, alternately, as Jeremiah's Cave and Baruch's Cave.⁵⁰¹

31. Maybe Jacob's well.

33. St. Mary's Tomb: to the left of Mount of Olives, and near the icon of the Dormition.

34. Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane.

35. The church of Ascension on the Mount of Olives.

36 The site of Baptism,

37 Lazarium (al Azariah).

46. Siloam: The Tunnel of Siloam (533 m.) and the man born blind on his way to the Pool of Siloam, (John 9:1–14).⁵⁰²

47. The Dead Sea

48. The Sea of Galilee

39. Jaffa

Icons And Legends:

28. The Dormition, 30. St. Mary the Egyptian.

38. The Tree of Jesse: Mary with twelve prophets and kings in medallions.

40. The Legend of Lot

41. The legend of Tree of the Holy Cross

43. Jesus the tree and his disciples

C: Monastery and churches:

42. Elias Monastery

45. Monastery of St. Saba, which lies to the right of the City.

Icons Of Saints: (A-L)

The Hama icon is framed by outer panels, except for its bottom and upper sides. Each of the corners is dedicated to one of the four Evangelists: Matthew in the form of an angel, Mark as a lion, John as an eagle, and Luke as an ox. To the left and right there are saints, who can be compared with the similar figures on the Binaki icon;⁵⁰³ it would appear that these figures might be identified as follows: e. St. Basil, f. St. John Chrysostom(ca.347-407)⁵⁰⁴, g. St. Gregory, h. St. George i. St. Spiridon, j. St. Athanasius (295/300-373), k. St. Charalampos, l. St. Demetrius.

40, 41:

⁵⁰⁰The Book of Baruch, a book of the Apocrypha to which is attached the 'epistle of Jeremy, the two together, with Lamentations, forming appendices to **Book of Jeremiah**. Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 165

⁵⁰¹ Rubin, "Iconography as Cartography:," 377note.37.

⁵⁰² The *Siloam Pool* of the Gospel of John, one and the same with the *Solomon's Pool* in Josephus, which is also the pool discovered by Reich and Shukron in the southeastern part of the city. see Yoel Elitzur, "The Siloam Pool — 'Solomon's Pool' — was a Swimming Pool," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 140 (2008) 17–25, 22.

⁵⁰³ Rubin, "Greek-Orthodox maps of Jerusalem from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," 126

⁵⁰⁴ John of Antioch, surnamed Chrysostom, Golden-mouthed, was a bishop of Constantinople and the greatest preacher of patristic era. Erwin

62. The port of Jaffa situated at the left bottom corner of the *proskynetaria*, by the sea; in the harbor we notice a pilgrims' ship.

44. The Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem. In front of the basilica, there is the Nativity. It is the only church throughout the Holy Land preserved practically in its original form since Byzantine times.⁵⁰⁵

The Gates Of Jerusalem:

Most of the city wall seen today was rebuilt in the sixteenth century.⁵⁰⁶ By comparison between the Hama and Sydnaia *proskynetaria* with maps with a zigzag-patterned wall of Jerusalem, it is possible to know the names of Jerusalem's gates, which are seven:

1. Stephen's Gate⁵⁰⁷ (Bab Sitt Marym)⁵⁰⁸ is leading to the Gethsemane and the Tomb of the Holy Virgin. To the north side, St. Stephen's Gate leads to the Olives Garden and is used by the pilgrims on their way to the Via Dolorosa.
2. The Golden Gate (Bab al-Rahmah): according to tradition, Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem through this gate. In 629 A.D., Emperor Heraclius⁵⁰⁹ entered the City through this gate returning the Holy Cross. It was closed by the Turks in 1530. In most of the *Proskynetaria* of Melkite icons, the Golden Gate is painted as a door with two shutters, and we knew that this gate consisted in the Crusader period of two wooden doors in both the inner and outer portals, covered, as were the other city gates, with iron plates.⁵¹⁰
3. The Dung Gate⁵¹¹, over the stables of Solomon's Temple. It leads to the Valley of Siloam and the road to Bethlehem.
4. The Gate of Zion⁵¹² in the eastern side, opens into one of the towers of the city-wall, built by Suleiman the Magnificent, which was constructed over another medieval tower.⁵¹³
5. Suleiman the Magnificent set six gates in his wall, and it is obvious that all were planned by the same hand; a straight or slightly curved joggled lintel, above which is

⁵⁰⁵ Peri, *Christianity under Islam in Jerusalem*, 7

⁵⁰⁶ J. Boas, *Jerusalem in the time of the crusade Society*, 48

⁵⁰⁷ Suleiman called the east gate of the city Bab el-Ghor, 'the Jordan Valley Gate', but this name never took root. An earlier gate on roughly the same spot was called St Stephen's Gate, and this was the name that remained among the Christian communities Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land*, 21

⁵⁰⁸ Meinardus, "Greek Proskynetaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 327

⁵⁰⁹ 610-41, probably of Armenian descent, he was the son of the governor of Carthage, to whom the people of Constantineople appealed for rescue from tyranny of the Emperor Phokas. In 622 he led his own army to fight the Persians and drove them out of Asia Minor. At the end of 627, he overwhelmed the Persian army in a great battle at Nineveh. The Persian king was deposed, and his son made peace with the Emperor, restoring Armenia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt to Byzantine rule. In 630. He personally replaced the Cross in the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Nicol, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire / Donald Nicol*, 48

⁵¹⁰ J. Boas, *Jerusalem in the time of the crusade Society*, 63-64

⁵¹¹ The Arabic name is Bab el-Maghreb, 'the Gate of the Moors', because Muslim immigrants from North Africa settled in that part of the city in the C16. Jews called it the Dung Gate after a gate in the south wall of Nehemiah (Neh. 2: 13). Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land*, 21

⁵¹² In Arabic it is known as Bab Nabi Daud, 'the Gate of the Prophet David', because his tomb is located, according to legend, on Mount Zion. *ibid.*, 18

⁵¹³ J. Boas, *Jerusalem in the time of the crusade Society*, 56

an Arabic inscription, is set slightly inside a higher broken arch. Only Herod's Gate, Damascus Gate, Jaffa Gate, and Zion Gate retain their original L-shaped entry.⁵¹⁴

6. Jaffa Gate, (Bab al-Khalil) in the south side of the map. The only one on the west side of the city, while in the Proskynetaria, it usually is in the south side.
7. Herod's Gate⁵¹⁵ only opened once a year, in the left side.
8. Damascus Gate, (Bab al-Amud) or the Gate of the Column, the basic center of communications.

We notice that these two *proskynetaria* are portrayed as a "hagio-topographical *proskynetarion*" and the city walls in these two *proskynetaria* take the form of a polygon, with sides drawn in a zigzag pattern.⁵¹⁶

3.2.3.3 Ma'lula Proskynetaria

As happened in eighteenth century, also in the nineteenth century, Jerusalem continued to be the pilgrim's major destination for visitors to the holy places in Palestine. In the second half of the nineteenth century the topographic elements almost entirely disappeared.⁵¹⁷ Specimens from this period are typified by a sort of patchwork of different icons, which have a central section focusing on the Church of the Resurrection in common, flanked by scenes related to the Virgin at one side, and to Christ at the opposite side.

It is a monumental picture that shows Jerusalem with the church of the Sepulchre, surrounded by topographic images, biblical scenes, apocryphal episodes, and martyrdoms of saints. This painting dates from 1827, it is 80x120 large, and its compositions are schematic. For identification, it is based on the similar scenes mentioned in the literature and on the inscriptions, which are here in Greek. The composition of the Ma'lula *proskynetarion* is extremely developed. Structurally the item can be divided into two clearly separated units: the central section represents the city of Jerusalem, and the lower and upper sections represent the Holy Land and scenes of the Old and New Testaments.

⁵¹⁴ Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land*, 13

⁵¹⁵ The official name of this gate is Bab ez-Zahr, 'the Flowered Gate'. It got its present name only in the sixteenth Century or seventeenth century because pilgrims believed a Mamluk house inside near the Franciscan Monastery of the Flagellation to be the palace of Herod Antipas. The original entrance is in the east face of the tower. It was at this point that the Crusaders first established a bridgehead on the walls at noon on 15 July 1099. See *ibid.*, 14

⁵¹⁶ For more detail about this type see the *proskynetaria*, A I, A II, A III, Meinardus, "Greek Proskynetaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 312 For Zigzag type see Rubin, "Greek-Orthodox maps of Jerusalem from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," 117–20

⁵¹⁷ Mat Immerzeel, "Proskynetaria from Jerusalem. Souvenirs of a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: Series Byzantina, 3," 3 (2005): 23.

The Central Section:

As mentioned before, the element common to all *proskynetaria* is the Church of the Sepulchre (Anastasis) surrounded by various scenes. Actually, the center of the icon is a square shape that contains the Holy Sepulchre, which is represented in the innermost area, while Jerusalem, figure.14, is depicted in the right upper corner to represent the Islamic Quarter, in which there are figures of the Dome of the Rock, a fountain, and Al-Aqsa. In other words, the central part of this painted *proskynetaria*, within the perimeter of square, which represents the walls of Jerusalem, is constituted by the interior of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; this is not a real city image, nor does it look alike the one in an icon kept in Sydnaia, because it is more schematic. A similar view may be seen in the same monastery in Ma'lula, and in the nineteenth century *proskynetaria* of a private collection in Damascus,⁵¹⁸ in which Jerusalem city is flanked by themes related to building, to the Easter liturgy, biblical events, and martyrdoms, crucial matters of the Christian doctrine and other sites of interest to pilgrims.

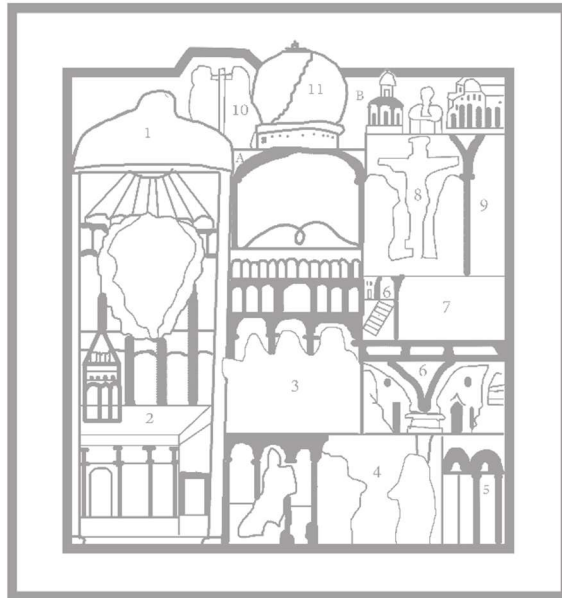


Figure 14 The central section, Jerusalem city and Holy Sepulchre, *Proskynetaria*, Ma'lula Monastery, 1827

A: The church of Holy Sepulchre

1. The Rotunda
2. The Tomb
3. The Stone of Anointment
4. Giving the Holy Fire, and a miracle?
5. The Entrance
6. The Cave of invention of the Cross and stairs
7. The chapel of Abraham
8. The icon of Crucifixion
9. The chapel of Golgotha
10. The chapel of Constantine and Helen
11. The dome of the Catholicion

B: Jerusalem

From left to right: The Dome of the Rock, Fontana, and Al Aqsa

The Surrounding Section

Apart from the images mentioned above, the *proskynetarion* is divided into many polygons and bands. It has further cycles relating to the creation and Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise, and the other relates with Christ, with the Stations of the Cross. Below the wall of the

⁵¹⁸ Deluga, *Panagiotafitika*, 199N. B42

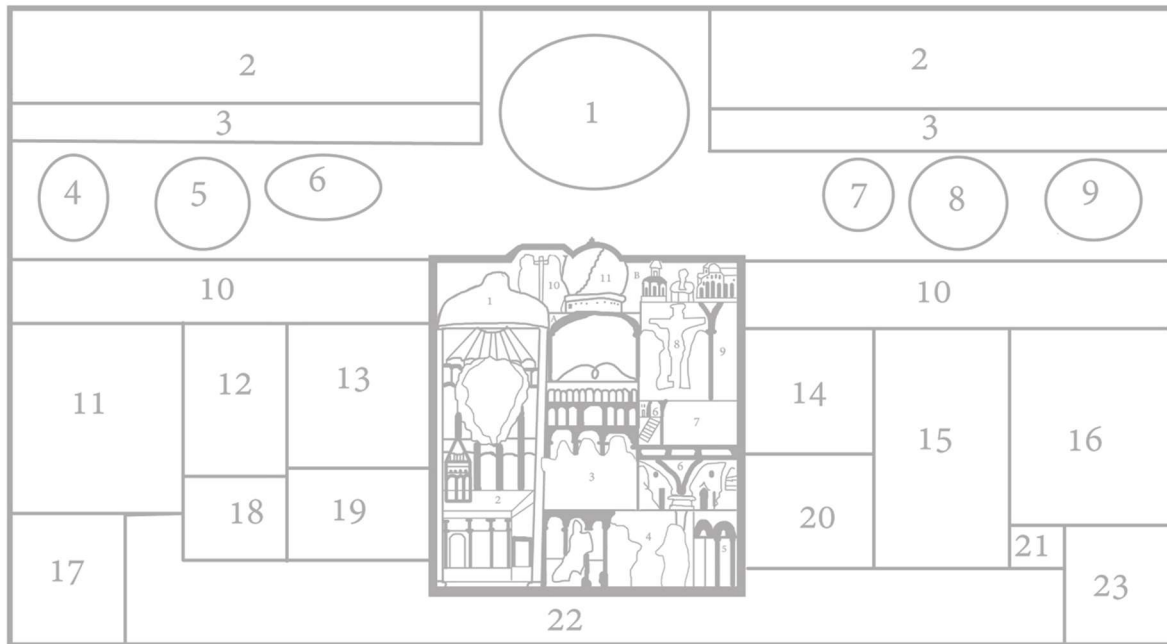


Figure 15 The scheme of Ma'lula proskynetaria, 1827.

city, there is an elongated file representing the story of the Tree of Life and the legend of Lot, and Mary of Egypt encountering Saint Zosimas.

We shall give numbers, from the top to the bottom, figure.15.

1. The Judgment. The Day of Judgment was frequently painted, representing the culmination of God's plan.⁵¹⁹ This motif can be encountered in another icon in Ma'lula.
2. Fathers of churches and four icons of Adam and Eve
3. Twenty icons of prophets
4. Ascension
5. The Dormition of the Theothokos
6. Annunciation
7. Jesus at the mountain
8. The Baptism
9. Monastery of Saint Saba: The ascetic-saint is standing inside the monastery; his figure is on an even larger scale than the city. He is wearing the attire of monks. On the right of this monastery, the tower built by the Empress Eudoxia⁵²⁰, in which he lived his ascetic life. The tower is depicted in the distance, to indicate that it was 3.5 km away from the tower. The wall of the monastery, with its constructions, is depicted slightly

⁵¹⁹ Deluga, "Latin Sources of 18th and 19th Centuries „Proskynetaria”,” 43

⁵²⁰ (422 – c. 493) was a Roman Empress, daughter of Eastern Roman Emperor Theodosius II. Her husbands included the Western Roman Emperors Valentinian III and Petronius Maximus.

from a bird's-eye view.⁵²¹ The tower outside the monastery is known as the "Women's Tower".⁵²²

10. Stations of the Cross: twelve small medallions with representations of the Stations of the Cross.
11. Sunday of Orthodoxy
12. Lady of Spring: the Mother of God as the Source of Life.
13. Mount Athos⁵²³: on the left-hand side Mount Athos, as seen from the sea, the western and eastern part of Mount Athos;⁵²⁴ on the mountain nearly 10 monasteries.
14. Monastery of Sinai This *proskynetarium* includes elements related to the cult of three most important places for the Orthodox: Sinai, Jerusalem and Athos. On the right-hand side there is the Sinai, with images of the Virgin of the burning bush, Moses, and saint Catherine.
15. The church of Bethelhem and Nativity : this section occupies the right side of Jerusalem, but between them there is the representation of the Sinai Monastery. In the entrance, there are suspended sanctuary-lamps.⁵²⁵ In front of the basilica, there is the Nativity scene. Inside the basilica, there is the Star. Behind the crib, the ox and the ass.
16. Jesus Christ: on the right-hand side of the *proskynetarion* there is a figure of the Tormented Christ with a reed; St. George
17. Beheading of St John the Baptist
18. The stoning of St. Stephen
19. The Ascension of Prophet Elijah
20. The signature and dating
21. Jaffa, Monastery of the Holy Cross, The Legend of Lot and the Tree of the Holy Cross, St. Mary the Egyptian. A ship on water with white sails, anchors near to walled city, in which there are buildings; among them a domed church appears distinctly. Above the composition, the name of the town can be seen: Jaffa.
22. St. Demetrious

⁵²¹ The bird's eye-view, which has had a very long history in art and is common for instance in ancient Egyptian art, is rather straightforward to understand in visual term Clemena Antonova, "On the Problem of "Reverse Perspective": Definitions East and West," *Leonardo* 43 (2010) 464–69, at 464

⁵²² Meinardus, "Greek *Proskynitaria* of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt," 320

⁵²³ In northern Greece, the Mount Athos, the center of the orthodox faith, enjoyed an indisputable prestige in all areas of religious life; the most renowned artists of and of Macedonia, whose works, inspired by the painters on the spot, served as examples in the Orthodox world in the 17th century, and mainly in the 18th century. And it is precisely this circulation of painters traveling in small groups that makes it difficult to define precisely the art of each of the regions, especially as painters circulated ideas, techniques and varied manners. Chatzêdakês, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 51

⁵²⁴ There is a map depicts Mount Athos in the same view of Athos, dated to 1770, see N.39, Rehav Rubin, "One city, different views: A comparative study of three pilgrimage maps of Jerusalem," *Journal of Historical Geography* 32 (2006) 267–90

⁵²⁵ In Roman Catholic churches the sanctuary light is the hanging light that shines costly before the altar, where the reserved sacrament is kept in the tabernacle. Fahlbusch, Bromiley and Barrett, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity / editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett ; foreword, Jaroslav Pelikan*, 845

The representations of architecture in the context of the Holy Land objects, from small pilgrimage souvenirs to monumental pictorial portrayals of the Holy Lands as a whole, associated with the beginnings of Christianity within the territory that became known as the Christian Holy Land.⁵²⁶ During the Ottoman period the Holy Land has always played an important role in the thoughts of the oriental Christian. The sacred places and the territories surrounding them, held ideological significance. The *proskynetaria* are not seen as surveys of topographical reality and visualizations of landscapes and places, but as multipurpose religious souvenirs from the Holy Land. Maybe pilgrims used them as tools for orientation and self-positioning as well as souvenirs. *Proskynetaria* can be interpreted as a statement to affirm the authority of the Greek Orthodox Church on the Holy Land. It might be possible to say that the development in the milieu of the post-Byzantine tradition was associated with the most important places of worship of the Eastern Church. *Proskynetaria* were a typical art souvenir. So, they are related to the Holy Sepulchre, as well as to evangelical events, related with the life and activity of Christ in Palestine, also related to apocryphal stories.

They were replaced by graphic souvenirs from pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and then by postcards and photos.⁵²⁷ This section examined three *proskynetaria*, which depict many of the holy sites in the Holy Land, as well as in Jerusalem and its immediate surroundings. Two of them, dating from the 18th century, and the third one dated to the 19th.

It might be inferred that the *proskynetaria* depict Jerusalem and the Holy Land in numerous visual elements of Old and New Testament narratives. These images range compositionally around a large panel depicting the interior of the Holy Sepulchre – Anastasia church – where a representation of the central pilgrimage event – the Descent of the Holy Fire – constitutes both the visual and the semantic center. Thus, the iconographic program of the *proskynetarion* echoes the ritual program of the pilgrimage itself. *Proskynetaria* of eighteenth century are shown in a diagonal bird's-eye view of the walled city of Jerusalem. In the middle of the city stands the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which occupies most of the area depicted between the walls. Within the city limits, the Great Church is surrounded by monasteries, churches, and shrines, all of which are depicted as relatively small structures. Outside the wall are more venerated places; some are near Jerusalem, while others are further away. These *Proskynetaria* include Orthodox pilgrimage sites in the Holy Land, with some Islamic places.

In sum, Melkite *proskynetaria* represent Christ, Virgin, and saints, etc. also beside biblical scenes, such as stations in the life of Christ (the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Baptism, the Transfiguration, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and so on). This latter category of narrative icons served as *loci memoriae* meant to “bring back the memory of a past moment of sacred history, and to catch a glimpse of what promised to come.”⁵²⁸ The biblical places, in general, could be the subject of *proskynetaria*. Towards the end of the 19th century, the quality of

⁵²⁶ Slobodan Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon: Perception and representation of architecture in Byzantine art / Slobodan Ćurčić and Evangelia Hadjistryphonos ; with contributions by Kathleen E. McVey and Helen G. Saradi* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Art Museum, 2010) 309

⁵²⁷ Deluga, “Latin Sources of 18th and 19th Centuries „Proskynetaria”,” 44–45

⁵²⁸ Clemena Antonova, *Space, time, and presence in the icon: Seeing the world with the eyes of God / Clemena Antonova ; with a preface by Martin Kemp* (Ashgate studies in theology, imagination and the arts, Farnham: Ashgate, 2010) 86.

religious paintings made in Jerusalem plummeted. *Proskynetaria* ceased to be painted at the beginning of the 20th century.

3.3 Analysis Of Individual Icons, Saint Georg Icon As An Example.

The Church doctrine is expressed through its liturgical life. Macarius embarked on a program of revising and translating the liturgical books, some of which had already existed in various Arabic versions, while others were available in Greek or Syriac.⁵²⁹ There is a script (about two folios in the original script) written by the Patriarch of Antioch Macarius Ibn al-Za'im, is called "Explanation in Arabic of the Meaning of Some Greek names of the Saints."⁵³⁰ It provides explanations of the names of 191 saints celebrated by the Orthodox church of Antioch through the church year (running from September to August).

Representations of architectural scenes or elements were introduced in the portrayal saintly figures as attributes distinctive either of certain categories of saints, as St. George with architectural scenes, or like Saints Peter and Paul, St. Barbara⁵³¹, St. Catherine⁵³² holding architectural element which indicates to the symbol of the saint.⁵³³ Some time in Byzantine art, the symbol of the church, or the city, is held by the hands of an emperor, i.e. mosaic of in the southwest vestibule of St. Sophia, showed two emperors Constantine the Great and Justinian anachronistically offering the city of Constantinople and the church of Sofia to the Virgin and Child, ninth century A.D. This means that the city and church had a special protection of the Virgin.⁵³⁴

By observing the catalogue, the riding cavalier is ubiquitous. The icons of our groups depict St. George, Theodore, etc. suggest that there must once have been at least once mounted horseman⁵³⁵ in every one of the churches. Among the riding saints in the catalogue, there are 46 icons of St. George. Portrait icons also have their roots in pre-Christian art, notably in the

⁵²⁹ Serikoff, *Patriarch Macarius Ibn al-Za'im* (as in note 204), at 237

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, at 238

⁵³¹ There is no historical evidence that she existed, but veneration became common from the seventh century. Michael J. I. Walsh, *Dictionary of Christian Biography / edited by Michael Walsh* (London: Continuum, 2001) 132

⁵³² Saint, Martyr. Legend coming from a number of tenth-century sources say that as a result of protesting to the emperor Maxentius about persecution of Christians she was tortured on the wheel and decapitated in 305. *ibid.*, 283

⁵³³ Where the models of buildings in the hands of their patrons are a trope in the late antique church apses. Maria C. Carile, *Memories of Buildings? Messages in Late Antique Architectural Representations: Images of the Byzantine world Visions, messages and meanings studies presented to Leslie Brubaker / edited by Angeliki Lymberopoulou*, eds. Leslie Brubaker, Angeliki Lymberopoulou, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011 (ed. Leslie Brubaker and Angeliki Lymberopoulou; ; Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), at 16

⁵³⁴ Robin. Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and Its Icons / Robin Cormack* (London: George Philip, 1985) 161–63

⁵³⁵ In his conclusion, Immerzeel suggests that "most of horsemen found in Lebanon and Syria were painted during the heyday of church decoration in the thirteenth century before the rise of Mamluk power from 1260 onwards. Mat Immerzeel, "Holy Horsemen and Crusader Banners," *Eastern Christian Art* 1 (2004) 29–60, at 53

official portrait of the Emperor, the *lauraton*. Even after Christianity had become the state religion, this form continued to be venerated for some time.⁵³⁶

This paragraph examines the Melkite icons that depicting of Saint George during three centuries from the seventeenth century until the beginnings of the nineteenth century A.D. it points to the appearance of architectural scenes and elements and investigates convergence and difference of the architectural types of icons of Saint George. In other words, it is main attention to discuss the connection between the types of cycles of St George and their architectural feature based on insights from recent the catalogue.

As it is known that Macarius Al Zai'm embarked on a program of revising and translating the liturgical books, some of which had already existed in various Arabic versions, while others were available in Greek or Syriac.⁵³⁷ He translated and wrote a Hagiographies of many saints, especially local saints as Saint George. Joseph Al Halabi had worked under care of Macarius in the field of translation and copying and graphic miniatures and icons.⁵³⁸ The Melkite Christians surrounded themselves with their saints, especially St George. There are a lot of churches and monastery of this Saint at most of Christian towns and bigger cities in Syria.⁵³⁹ The first iconographer of Melkite iconography who represented Saint George is Joseph al Halabi. He depicted icon of Hodegetria and twelve saints surround her, in 1650A.D, St George is depicted as a soldier, mounting on a white horse, wearing military clothing, killing the dragon by shaft.

We now turn to icons of st George, a large number of them have been catalogued,, the most common are his interrogation, some tortures, notably crushing between stones, scraping, the wheel, the lime pit, the iron shoes, the cauldron, execution and some miracles, the resurrection of the dead, the resurrection of the ox, destruction of idols and the rescue of the princess from the dragon. His childhood is no represented.

Choosing icons for exemplification is an invidious task. I have chosen ones from different churches, differing iconic schools.

They are presented here in chronological order. These icons have been chosen because, there represent most of st George icons during this studied period, and they are belonging to many churches and monastery in Syria, also there are some of icons are in monasteries or private collections in Lebanon, which are so important for this study.

⁵³⁶ Kurt I.-I. Weitzmann et al., *Icons from South Eastern Europe and Sinai / Kurt Weitzmann, Manolis Chatzidakis, Krsto Miatev, Svetozar Radojčić ; [translated from the original Ikone sa Balkana, by R.E. Wolff]* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968) x

⁵³⁷ Serikoff, Nikolaj, Patriarch Macarius Ibn al-Za'im, in; *The Orthodox church in the Arab world, 700 - 1700* (ed. Noble, Treiger and Kyriakos), 237

⁵³⁸ Edilbi, Bishop Novitts, the family of Al mousawer, brochure of the Archdiocese of Greek Catholic, Aleppo, N4, 1987, p.p.105.

⁵³⁹ One sanctuary in Syria merits a detailed presentation. It is that at Ezra (Zorava) H.C, Butler, *Early Churches in Syria*, Amsterdam, 1996, p.122.

3.3.1 The Architectural Background In The Vita Icons Of St George And Passion Scenes

Before speaking of the representations of the architecture in Vita icon of st George, it should to definition this idiom, the designation *vita*⁵⁴⁰ refers to the representation of events from the life of the saint around the frame of the icon, in two vertical strips to the sides of the central iconic figure, around three sides, or surrounding the saint with an extensively narrated sequence on all four sides. the figure of the saint in the center is always larger in scale than used for narrative scenes around him or her, but the saint can be represented full or bust length, with typical iconic formality or, unusually, with saint turning away from the viewer to engaged Christ who appears in the upper right-hand corner.⁵⁴¹Therefore, “Vita icon” is as a type of narrative art that follows different rules from narrative literature. In the realm of literature, a feast day, whether celebrating a saint or an important event in the life of Christ or the Virgin, called for a biography or a panegyric sermon, elaborated with appropriate rhetoric⁵⁴² and drama, to be read out once a year on the occasion that was being celebrated. In art, however, the images were potentially visible all at the same time and all year around. Consequently, they were coded according to the relative status of their subjects and adapted to the continuing devotional needs of their viewers. Thus, while the texts might in each case be rich with a variety of earthly incident and drama, the works of art depicting the same stories were not necessarily so. The texts always had the potential to provide artists with the inspiration for specific details, but the choice of whether to illustrate those details was both a theological and a functional one, dictated by the particular role played by the subject of the image in manifesting the doctrine of the church and in satisfying the expectations of the viewer.

Several observations may be made about these cycles in Melkite art. The first concerns their structure. Basically, the cycles correspond to the *passions*; in other words, they belong to the *gener of contes* (the English word tale has not quite the same connotations; it is better translated by folk story). It should to emphasize that the vita icons are popular in the post-Byzantine period.⁵⁴³ The effect of litany can be found for example, 1666, biographical icon preserved at private collection, Lebanon, where several of the st George’s tortures⁵⁴⁴ are presented according to the same formula, though they are carefully distinguished by the Arabic inscriptions.⁵⁴⁵ If we read the scenes around the frame of the icon, starting in a clockwise direction from the top left- hand corner, row by row, we see that each torture of the saint follows

⁵⁴⁰ dating perhaps to seventh-eighth century, the oldest example is vita icon of saint Marina, frontal saint stands in the center, and two register of vita scenes, of which two martyrdom scenes are still legible, can be seen on the upper and left hand farme. Glenn Peers, *Sacred shock: Framing visual experience in Byzantium* / Glenn Peers (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004) 80

⁵⁴¹ (2004) 79

⁵⁴² As the art of speaking well, rhetoric reflects on the efficacy and persuasiveness of speaking or writing, the suitability of its form, and in content, its ethical basis and its aptness for situation and hearers or readers. Fahlbusch, Bromiley and Barrett, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* / editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett ; foreword, Jaroslav Pelikan, 691

⁵⁴³ Nancy P. Ševčenko, “The "Vita" Icon and the Painter as Hagiographer,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 53 (1999) 149–65, at 150

⁵⁴⁴ Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 221–23pl.67

⁵⁴⁵ There is an icon of st Theodor, 1637(?)*ibid.*, at 192–95pl.58

a like pattern, with the saint in the center being flanked by two symmetrical executioners, where he be beaten with whips, buried with a pit of caustic lime, crushed under the stone, broken on a wheel. The artist omits many of the distinctive details given in the written Lives; thus, he shows the angel who miraculously cured George's wounds after he had been broken on the wheel, nor the angel who accompanied the saint and protected him while he was in the pit of lime.

These small icons are depicting scenes of martyrdom of St George; as follows

- 1- front of two kings
- 2- At the detention
- 3- Torture by wheel
- 4- Lime furnace (miracle)
- 5- The destruction of ideals
- 6- The resurrection of the death
- 7- The resurrection of the bulls
- 8- At the temple of ideals (miracle)
- 9- Torture by whips
- 10- the decapitation ⁵⁴⁶



Figure 16 st George and scenes of his tortures, 40x51.5, private collection, Ne'meh Al Halabi, 1666. (After Agemain, 1993)

These cycles devoted to St. George lay stress on the tortures overcome by the saint one by one, and, once more, award little space to the recounting of his miracles. The scenes of St George's tortures are accompanied by others which illustrate his helping miracles, such as killing of the dragon, the resurrecting of a dead man, and the restoring to life of a poor farmer's ox. The biographies of St George reported that he was placed in a pit of lime for three days but emerged from it alive. Several writers claimed that like Christ, Saint George was finally put to death on a Friday. ⁵⁴⁷

In 1701, Ne'met has depicted icon of st George that is like icon 1666. Also, an icon was existed at the Lady of Entry Church in Hama⁵⁴⁸, unfortunately missing since 1982. The same ordering of the scenes. at the same church, the Archives of DGAM mentions an icon depicts St George in his tortures, but the locations of his tortures where locate by row up and row down of the main scene, each row consists of five small scenes, also this icon is missing.⁵⁴⁹ In 1751, Girgis al Halabi depicted vita icon of st George⁵⁵⁰, consisting of eight scenes⁵⁵¹;

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., at 221

⁵⁴⁷ Henry Maguire, *The Icons of Their Bodies: Saints and Their Images in Byzantium* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2000) 186

⁵⁴⁸ N.116, Archives of icon, DGAM archives, Damascus, Entry lady, Hama.

⁵⁴⁹ N.43, Archives of icon, DGAM archives, Damascus, Entry lady, Hama.

⁵⁵⁰ pl.27 pl.27 Agemian s. Gandia .v, "Descriptions des icônes," (1969) 128-96, at 167

⁵⁵¹ There is icon consist of 18 scenes, depicted by *Georges Castrophylacas*, dating to eighteenth century, St George Monastery, Al Homeyra.

- 1- front of the king
- 2- At the detention
- 3- The resurrection of the bull (miracle)
- 4- Torture by wheel
- 5- The resurrection of the death (miracle)
- 6- Lime furnace
- 7- The destruction of ideals
- 8- The decapitation

At 19th century, Latakia, Orthodox Archbishopric, an icon, Figure 17 St George rescuing the princess and the servant boy and scenes of his life, 75x89, Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, unknown iconographer, 19th. (After DGAM Archives). depicts twelve scenes surrounding the central scene of George rescues the princess, these scenes are depicting st George in his tortures. These scenes are similar of cycles of George of Ne'met al Musawwir, but there are three scenes more of this cycle, where st George is depicted make two miracles (with the widow, the saint with the swindler, and when he is wearing the hot iron shoes)

During the nineteenth century, the Melkite artists changed in some way these cycles with adding some new scenes as in icon of 1870, depicts cycle St George rescues the princess and four scenes of his tortures, with the new scene titled by "Front of two kings and he drinks the poison". In 1898, the priest Basil Jacob Al bramiky, added five scenes to st George tortures to be eleven scenes surrounding the main scene, these scenes are depicting two miracles, the scene depicting the vision of St George, and new scene of his torture.



Figure 17 St George rescuing the princess and the servant boy and scenes of his life, 75x89, Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, unknown iconographer, 19th. (After DGAM Archives).

In Melkite icons, we cannot find the torture on the wheel is depicted alone. However, in George's martyrdom the wheel was an instrument of laceration; knives were placed below, occasionally above or on the wheel.

It could to say that the vita icons of st George in Melkite iconography focus on his tortures more than his miracles. That is not weird in iconography, because in byzantine art, these icon cycles emphasize-as had Passion cycles from the beginning of Christian time-what the saint

did with his life, rather than the wonders he performed after his death. For these illustrated vitae are not miracle collections, but models for earthly behavior that will lead to a place in the heavenly kingdom⁵⁵²

The main scene of st George vita icons could depict st George slaying the dragon or rescuing the princess and the servant boy or just rescuing the princess.⁵⁵³

3.3.2 The Architectural Background On The Typical Scenes Of St George

The life of St George was depicted with relative frequency in Byzantine art. In his manner of presentation, the biography of St George (also Nicholas) shared some similarities, for both to be more schematic and less detailed than depictions of the life of Christ. But with respect to content, the life of Saint George had different characters; the stress with St George was put on his repeated tortures and miraculous survivals, and the miracles performed by Saint George in aid of others were not omitted from the visual record.⁵⁵⁴ So in this following text, the disruption of the representations of the architecture will be examined by dividing them according to the subject.

3.3.2.1 St George Slaying The Dragon.

The theme of St George on horseback slaying the dragon was popular among Byzantine artists.⁵⁵⁵ The earliest certain picture of Saint George killing a dragon is in the church of Saint Barbara, Soganli, Cappadocia (1006 or 1021).⁵⁵⁶ St George was represented on horseback, usually in the company of St Theodore. It seems that in some icons when they were represented to gather they were invariably killing a dragon by shaft. St George is not on a horseback without a dragon, but without a princess are numerous. St George was never represented in Syria killing a man.⁵⁵⁷ In Early Byzantine art, horseman st George appears in two versions, the earliest where he is killing a person, and the second where he kills a dragon. We have Poetry of St George, tells his story, this poetry is Arabic language, known as « Girgis and the Dragon ». ⁵⁵⁸ It is difficult to speak of Arab Orthodox hagiography⁵⁵⁹ of St George separately from Byzantine hagiography, because of both Middle Eastern Orthodox Christians and Byzantines had been bequeathed a shared tradition and had grown to maturity together.⁵⁶⁰ The hagiography: was translated by Al Zai'm in 1638.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵² Ševčenko, "The "Vita" Icon and the Painter as Hagiographer," 151

⁵⁵³ There is icon of st George, vita, 1721, Hanna al Qudsi, restored by Michael of Cretan, 1817. This a icon is a copy of work of Ne'meh al Halabi, in Balamand, Gandia .v, "Descriptions des icônes," 181–82

⁵⁵⁴ Maguire, *The icons of their bodies*, 186

⁵⁵⁵ Maria Vassilaki, "A Cretan Icon of Saint George," *The Burlington Magazine* 131 (1989) 208–14, at 210

⁵⁵⁶ Kenneth M. Setton, "Saint George's Head," *Speculum* 48 (1973) 1–12, at 2, before this icon, J. B. Aufhauser claimed that the legend of St George as a dragon-slayer first appears in Byzantine and European art and literature of the twelfth century, and allegedly has no antecedents in Syrian, Arabic, and Coptic hagiographic texts. See *ibid.*

⁵⁵⁷ At least for icons, which I have seen.

⁵⁵⁸ Antoine Hebby, *The sacred images or the icons* (Beirut 1989)

⁵⁵⁹ Greek term for writing graph about saints hagioi, to inspire remembrance and imitation of their lives and deeds. Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity / edited by Everett Ferguson*, 507–8

⁵⁶⁰ Lamoreaux, John C., Hagiography, *The Orthodox church in the Arab world, 700 - 1700* (ed. Noble, Treiger and Kyriakos), 112

⁵⁶¹ البطريرك مكاريوس الزعيم, كحالة، جوزيف الياس، 87

There are some icons depict st George on his horse killing the dragon, ⁵⁶² while after the eighteenth century this type would be rare.⁵⁶³ In these icons, it could to observe that St George is here dressed in military uniform: a short tunic with long sleeves and a cuirass with gold ornamentation which has a single row of leather “wings” on the saint's upper arms. He is wearing hose or tightly fitting pantaloons; some time without, and boots resembling bandages tied around his legs. A red chlamys knotted at chest-level extends behind him as he rides forward. In his right hand holds a spear which he is plunging into the mouth of the dragon, with red wings. The dragon's tail is wound around the hind legs of the horse, which rears up backwards in fear; its tail is knotted, or the dragon's tail is around the legs of the horse without knocked. On the upper right corner of the icon the hand of God is shown blessing the saint. The landscape setting of the composition consists of two diametrically opposed rocks, or just golden background.

3.3.2.2 St George Rescuing The Princess.

Walter says that Saint George received his renewed notoriety, not so much by killing a dragon but by rescuing a princess.⁵⁶⁴ The scene of torture on the wheel, probably in the twelfth century, began to be replaced by the rescue of the princess as George’s typical scene, sometimes being represented on icons as the central scene, with other biographical scenes placed around it.⁵⁶⁵ The earliest account of this miracle, which was not posthumous like those in the collections of *Miracula*, is in a Georgian manuscript, Patriarchal library, Jerusalem, cod.2, dating from the eleventh century.⁵⁶⁶ The iconographical type, once established with st George on horseback, the princess next to him (in some byzantine icons, she is leading the dragon) and the citizens of Lasia looking on from the ramparts, in some cases. It was a regular exploit, both of Antique heroes and of early Christian saints, to protect mankind against obnoxious beasts.⁵⁶⁷

In Melkite icon, Cat.81,82.83, the scene of rescuing the princess was so beloved. The folk tale of St. George which separated during this period has mentioned that st George rescued a princess from the dragon. This depiction would be so famous during the eighteenth century. In the catalogue, Ne’met depicted this folk tale of Saint George⁵⁶⁸, 1706, Cat.28. This theme repeated with workings of his successors, like his son, Hanania in 1743⁵⁶⁹ and Ne’met Nasser Al Homsî.

St George, here, symbolized by his killing of the dragon, the attacker of the city, which represented here as the tower, but not at all our icons, the princess stands up the mountain,

⁵⁶² Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254)

⁵⁶³ Prof. Al Zayat mentions an icon of four scenes, in private collection in Italy, depicts St George slaying the dragon, dating to 18th. Elias Al Zayat, “Icon of Antioch,” *the history of Antioch Orthodox Church, the particularity* (1999) 257–70

⁵⁶⁴ Christopher Walter, “The Origins of the Cult of Saint George,” *Revue Des Études Byzantines* 53 (1995) 295–326, at 321, http://www.persee.fr/doc/rebyz_0766-5598_1995_num_53_1_1911

⁵⁶⁵ Idem, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition* (Burlington, VT.: Ashgate, 2003) 140

⁵⁶⁶ Walter, “The Origins of the Cult of Saint George,” 321

⁵⁶⁷ Idem, “The Thracian horseman: ancestor of the warrior saints?” (1989) 657–73, at 661–62

⁵⁶⁸ An icon depicts this them surrounded by 10scenes of his torture, dated in 1701, by Ne’met. Cându and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 146–48pl.7

⁵⁶⁹There is an icon of four scenes, attributed to Ne’meh al-Musawwir one depicted this theme, icon N.8, Immerzeel and Touma, *Syrische iconen*, 25

Cat.81, or just in the right of foreground. While up the city, there are three persons, the king holding keys of the city to give them to the saint after rescuing the princess.

3.3.2.3 St George Holding the Sword And The Dragon.

As we know from last studies⁵⁷⁰, Melkite iconographers had drawn st George while rescuing the princess holding sword by his right hand. In Melkite iconography, there are many saints are depicted holding the sword as Archangel Michael, Saint Barbara and Prophet Elijah.⁵⁷¹ This type of depicting saint George has emerged with works of Ne'met Al Halabi, and still existed with works of his sons; Hanania, and his grandson Girgis and other iconographers who have been working during eighteenth century, as kirillos al Dimashqi.

The first Melkite iconographer known who depicted this type was Ne'met al Halabi,⁵⁷² with keeping in mind that there is an icon painted by unknown iconographer dated to 1705 in Yabrod, at the Constantine and Helena church.⁵⁷³ There are a lot of copies of this type of icon: for example; in 1706, at Maronite Church of Mar Elias in Aleppo, the forty martyrs in Aleppo, 1706, painted by Hanania, and there is icon, dating to eighteenth century, in the church of Lady in Idleb⁵⁷⁴, attributed to Girgis Al Halabi. This composition combines the post-byzantine tradition with models of Aleppo school. With typical face of this school, full armor, which decorated with oriental ornaments, he is holding sword as Arabic warrior to kill the devil that was dead and poked by shaft.⁵⁷⁵ Crowned by Jesus or some angles, and in the foreground, on the left there is the cave, which the legend says that "In the seventeenth century still were shown to travelers about a mile from Beirut a very deep cave where the dragon lived".⁵⁷⁶

3.3.2.4 St George The Rescuing The Servant Boy (Captive).

The fourth and much repeatedly subject since the end of eighteenth century and turned to be the typical scenes or attributes of Melkite icons of St George. In fact, the rescue the captive was an already an iconographical type in the Byzantine epoch.⁵⁷⁷ Twelfth or thirteen centuries in Georgia. Admittedly representations of the subject were more frequent after Turkish occupation.⁵⁷⁸ Also, an example comes from Mar mussa Al Nabk, layers 1, 3 in the nave.⁵⁷⁹ Another example from Lebanon, Badhheidat, st George mounts the horse rescuing the boy.⁵⁸⁰ The name of captive depends on local legend that is copied at some manuscripts, manuscript

⁵⁷⁰ S. Agemain, "Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites: exposition organisée par le Musée Nicolas Sursock du 16 mai au 15 juin," (1969), *ibid.*

⁵⁷¹ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173)

⁵⁷² Agnès-Mariam de la Croix et Mahmud Zibawi, *Commentaries des icônes*, in *ICÔNES ARABS: Art Chretien Du Levant*, Editions Gregoriennes, 2003, A 44.

⁵⁷³ Archives of icon, DGAM archives, Damascus, Constantine and Helen, Yabrod.

⁵⁷⁴ *Damascus* F17S12 Archives of icon, pl.19, Lady Church, Idleb

⁵⁷⁵ the Syrian manuscript with a miniature of Saint George holding a lance and shield, once placed in the eighth or ninth century, must, it seems, be reallocated to the twelfth or thirteenth century Walter, "The Origins of the Cult of Saint George," 318

⁵⁷⁶ Gandia .v, "Descriptions des icônes," 150

⁵⁷⁷ Walter, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition*, 130

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁹ Immerzeel, *Identity puzzles*, 65

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 102

of Sydnaia-6,⁵⁸¹ is Girgi son of Laon. This manuscript tells about “The story of Saint George and the Dragon”: “We write these Miracle that had been done by George, in the city of Beirut in the days of infidel King Datanos at King Datanos days in the city of Beirut⁵⁸² and that in some years the dragon came to them, he was scary and has destroyed all the people, trees, animals ...” 583manuscript 158⁵⁸⁴ (642) Mjmuo’, copy 17th or 18th century. This type is so rare in the Melkite icons, we have just two icons, N.26-27 see the Table 5 That depict servant boy behind st George, while he is combating the dragon, these icons dating to eighteenth century. It could to say that this theme emerged from the type which depicts st George slaying the dragon.

3.3.2.5 St George Rescuing The Princess And Servant Boy.

This kind of depicting of st George was very famous during the eighteenth century, with works of Ne’met and Hanna Al Qudsi.⁵⁸⁵In the table of icons, Table 5, an icon of this matter which painted by unknown Melkite artist. Even if it is missing, but we can observe the follows: in his right hand holds a spear which he is plunging into the mouth of the dragon, with wings, also the dragon's tail is wound around the hind legs of the horse, which rears up backwards in fear upper right corner of the icon the hand of God is shown blessing the saint. The landscape setting of the composition consists of two diametrically opposed rocks, upon the right rock, there is a princess, behind the horseman, there is a boy holding pitcher. By comparison with icon of st George slaying the dragon, dating to 1666, it could suggest that this type of Melkite icons of st George “develop from st George slaying the dragon”.

And with other iconographers like patriarch of Antioch Silvestre, icon of st George, Cat.84, dating 1765. And this type it would be the dominated scene since the middle of nineteenth century, practically with works of Jerusalem school of icons; with its artists as Mikhail Muhanna Qudsi and John Saliba Qudsi and Nicola Theodori Qudsi, Isaac Nicola of Jerusalem, the priest Basile Jacob Albramiky, and others.

In this section, we have seen many of factors that controlled the representations of architecture in George’s icons. The visual narratives of the saints were defined in relation to other. We draw from two folk tales and icons which appear to promote cult st George as a warrior in Melkite religious life. The cycles of St George were various at the first of seventeenth century but became frequent from the second half of eighteenth century, and it declares that the

⁵⁸¹ Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East of Greek Orthodox, *the monastery of Sydnaia Patriarchal: Description of books and manuscripts* (Damascus1986,) 18

⁵⁸² This city was represented many time in icons of George rescuing princess or/and servant boy.

⁵⁸³ Suad Salim, *Description of the manuscripts, Arabic manuscripts in the Antiochian Orthodox monasteries in Lebanon: Part II: Monastery of Our Lady of Balamand*, (Balamand University: Department of Documentation and Studies Antioch,, 1994) 125–26

⁵⁸⁴ قصة القديس جاورجيوس والتنين "نكتب هذه العجيبة الذي عملها في مدينة بيروت في أيام الملك الكافر داتانوس وذلك في أيام الملك داتانوس في مدينة بيروت الحكما وانه في بعض السنين خرج عليهم تنين مريع مخيف وكان قد أباد جميع الناس والأشجار والحيوانات..." مخطوط 158(642)مجموع، نسخ إما في القرن 17 أو 18. المخطوطات العربية في الأديرة الأرثوذكسية الإنطاكية في لبنان: مرجع سابق، ص 125-126.

⁵⁸⁵ Also, there is an icon of four scenes, one of them depicts st George in this matter. Cândia and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 161pl.19 another icon of five scenes, dated to 1735 by Hanna Al Qudsi. Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 258pl.83

architectural background was in most icons a city-tower. Furthermore, Vita icons of st George lay stress on the tortures overcome by the saint one by one, and, once more, with depicting some of his miracles, every scene has architectural background, the architectural representations of the ramparts refer to Lasia or Beirut.

In summary, we may draw the following general conclusions. Continuity in the representation of architecture in background of Melkite icon was a familiar and the architectural background, in turn, was very varied. Melkites inherited the rich complex of architectural backgrounds also they innovated some representations of architecture from their imaginations and their cultural environment. The analyzing of some icons and dividing them into three categories; Narrative type, *proskynetaria* icons, and personal icons I can explain during next two chapters the revers perspective and the architectural representation in Melkite art.

	State	Location	The icon of St George	Dimensions (cm)	Date	iconographer
1	Homs	St. George- Homeyra	the Beautiful Gate (George and Demetrious)	85x120	1685	Ne'meh Al Halabi
2	Aleppo	Dormition Lady	the rescuing the princess	60.5x70.5	1706	Ne'meh Al Halabi
3	Aleppo	St. Elias of Maronite	holding the dragon and sword	99.2x142.8	1706	Ne'meh Al Halabi
4	Rif Dimashq	Lady church-Daier atiah	the rescuing the princess and the boy	23x32	1716	Unknown
5	Aleppo	Forty Martyrs	holding the dragon and sword	100x139	1717	Hanania Al Halabi
6	Rif Dimashq	St. George church, Jadeite Artouz	the rescuing the princess and the boy	22x28	1737	Unknown
7	Al Swyda'	Church St George	the rescuing the princess	53.5x38	1743	Hanania Al Halabi
8	Rif Dimashq	Sydnaia Monastery	the rescuing the princess and the boy		1765	Silvestre Of Antioch
9	Rif Dimashq	Hagia Sophia-Sydnaia	the rescuing the princess	27x36	1785	Cyril of Damascus
10	Rif Dimashq	Monastery George-Sydnaia	the rescuing the princess and the boy		1826	Unknown
11	Rif Dimashq	St. George church, Jadeite Artouz	the rescuing the princess	55x75	1865	Unknown
12	Rif Dimashq	St. George- Jadeite	the rescuing the princess	55x75	1865	Ne'meh Nasser Homs
13	Homs	St. George- Homeyra	scenes of his life	84x121	1870	Nicola Theodori Qudsi
14	Homs	St. George- Homeyra	the rescuing the princess and the boy	48.5x71.5	1886	Unknown
15	Latakia	St George church	scenes of his life	97x142.5	1898	The priest Basil Jacob Bramiky
16	Rif Dimashq	Mar sarkis-Qara	the rescuing the princess		18thC	Unknown
17	Idleb	the Lady-Orthodox	the rescuing the princess and the boy	48x58	18thC	Unknown
18	Hama	the Lady of Entry	the rescuing the princess and the boy	37x47	18thC	Unknown
19	Hama	the Lady of Entry	scenes of his life	99x134	18thC	Unknown
20	Hama	the Lady of Entry	scenes of his life	40x51	18thC	Unknown
21	Idleb	the Lady-Orthodox	holding the dragon and sword	36*29	18thC	Unknown
22	Hama	the Lady of Entry	holding the dragon and sword	57x79	18thC	Unknown
23	Idleb	the Lady-Orthodox	rescuing the princess	24*30	18thC	Unknown

24	Idleb	the Lady-Orthodox	rescuing the princess	41.5x51	18thC	Unknown
25	Hama	the Lady of Entry	rescuing the princess and servant boy	60x95	18thC	Unknown
26	Latakia	Orthodox Archbishopric	rescuing the servant boy	92x113	18thC	Unknown
27	Idleb	the Lady-Orthodox	rescuing the servant boy	23x25	18thC	Unknown
28	Idleb	the Lady-Orthodox	slaying the dragon	36x29	18thC	Unknown
29	Idleb	the Lady-Orthodox	slaying the dragon, icon four scenes	44x57	18thC	Unknown
30	Rif Dimashq	St George-Bludan	the rescuing the princess		19thC	Unknown
31	Rif Dimashq	Lady church-zabadani	the rescuing the princess	25x34	19thC	Unknown
32	Rif Dimashq	St Elias- Qatana	the rescuing the princess and the boy	26x32	19thC	Unknown
33	Rif Dimashq	St George-Erna	the rescuing the princess and the boy	53x73	19thC	Unknown
34	Rif Dimashq	Elias church-zabadani	the rescuing the princess and the boy		19thC	Unknown
35	Rif Dimashq	Takla church, Daria	the rescuing the princess and the boy		19thC	Michael Al Qudsi
36	Rif Dimashq	Takla church, Daria	the rescuing the princess and the boy		19thC	Unknown
37	Rif Dimashq	St. George church, Jadeite Artouz	the rescuing the princess and the boy	24x26	19thC	Unknown
38	Damascus	st George church, Bab mousalla	the rescuing the princess and the boy	34x43	19thC	Unknown
39	Rif Dimashq	Hagia Sophia-Sydnaia	the rescuing the princess and the boy	52x70	19thC	Unknown
40	Latakia	Orthodox Archbishopric	scenes of his life	75x89	19thC	Unknown
41	Rif Dimashq	St. George church, Erbin	scenes of his life	52x98	19thC	Unknown
42	Rif Dimashq	St George-Erna	slaying the dragon	21x26	19thC	Unknown
43	Rif Dimashq	Lady church-zabadani	slaying the dragon		19thC	Unknown
44	Rif Dimashq	St. George church, Jadeite Artouz	slaying the dragon	18x24	19thC	Unknown
45	Hama	the Lady of Entry	slaying the dragon	17x22	19thC	Unknown
46	Rif Dimashq	Mar sarkis-Qara	slaying the dragon		19thC	Unknown

Table 5 The icons of St. George in Syria, dated from 1685 to the first quarter of the Nineteenth century.

4. Reverse Perspective and architecture in Melkite icons

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the use of reverse perspective in Melkite icons and why it may have been employed. Its emphasis is upon the interpretation of evidence provided by the icons as the Annunciation, the Last supper and the Pentecost icons. The Byzantine icon is characterized by a summary of perspectives, the view from above, or bird's eye-view, is combined with the frontal view.¹ Elements such as the surroundings and architecture, which contribute to the environment, function as scenery for the person or event, and a building is often seen from different angles at the same time. This inconsistent perspective gives the elements a flat quality and counteracts the illusion of depth. The object is not to create a realistic impression; on the contrary, it is to lead the thoughts towards an existence that is “without end”. To show that the icon refers to a transcendent dimension, inverse perspective is used. This is done by making the objects farthest away the largest and the closest ones the smallest. Following this principle, a rectangular footstool² would be depicted as smaller at the front than at the back.³ Furniture, and features of the landscape are represented in direct and inverse perspective.⁴ It is not solely used in icons and Byzantium Art, but Chinese Art and Japanese art and some Cubist paintings also use it, furthermore, that most surprising, “children regularly make use of reverse perspective constructions in their drawings”.⁵ There is no philosophical or historical source to explain why.⁶ Although known in Byzantine art,⁷ we are not sure if it was used in Melkite icons. Unfortunately, there are no specialized studies of it in Melkite art, although during the preparation of my thesis in Master, I found some attempts to study geometric structures and reverse perspective have been examined in some examples without concluding any results.⁸

¹ Antonova, “On the Problem of "Reverse Perspective": Definitions East and West,” 464

²In byzantine the footstool from a purely utilitarian object evolved into a symbol of high rank and one of the insignia of the emperor. In the Classical and Roman worlds, it was principally used as a step for mounting onto high couches and seats and for resting one's feet once seated. The association of the footstool with the throne was only natural since the throne was “the high seat par excellence”. Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 170

³ Solrunn Nes, *The Mystical Language of Icons* (USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005) 20

⁴ Margaret E. Kenna, “Icons in Theory and Practice: An Orthodox Christian Example,” *History of Religions* 24 (1985) 345–68, at 358

⁵ Footnote on pg. 105 On Images: Their Structure and Content, Issue 70, by John V. Kulvicki

⁶ Sendler, *Icon*, 126

⁷ As the name of reverse perspective indicates, the technical conception of reverse perspective is historically later than that of linear perceptive. In fact, scientific research in this area of iconology has only been carried out since the beginning of the 20th century. Up until this time, the icon begin a liturgical image, remained intimately tied to Orthodox religious life. idem, *The icon: Image of the invisible* ([Place of publication not identified], London: Oakwood; Cassell, 2000) 126

⁸ Abou Ackl, *The Art of the icon in Aleppo school from the mid-seventeenth century until the end of the eighth century AD.*, 160–67

4.1 Reverse perspective meaning

The term of “reverse perspective”¹ refers to the construction of pictorial space in icon art² and perspective is the projection of lines of space and of bodies onto a plane.³ Sometimes, it is described as “hieratic and anti-illusionistic”.⁴ Unlike linear perspective, the reverse perspective takes account of an inner, psychological factor (centering on the process of memory) which influences perception.⁵ So it is “directly connected with the dynamics of the viewing position: the form of reverse perspective is the result of the summarizing of the viewer’s perception under the conditions of a multiplicity of viewpoints, that are themselves the result of the dynamics of the viewing position”.⁶ This term as the simultaneous representation of different planes of the same image on the picture surface, regardless of whether the corresponding planes in the represented objects could be seen from a single viewpoint.⁷ This perspective is, in some ways, an opposite of linear perspective as Kemp says⁸, while another opinion announces that it cannot be defined in relation to other perspective systems because the reasoning and philosophy behind it constitute an alternative way of seeing the world; In her paper, Antonova⁹ draws attention to the still highly problematic use of the term and thus suggests that far from

¹ Reverse perspective (“inverse” or “inversed” are also used) - the English equivalent of the German umgekehrte Perspektive, a term first used by Oskar Wulff. It usually refers to the principle of constructing space in the Byzantine and Byzantine icon. The present article outlines six different definitions of reverse perspective, some of them mutually exclusive: 1. the inner view thesis, first proposed by Wulff, suggests that the viewer of an icon is as if drawn inside the pictorial space of the image and thus adopts the viewpoint of the central figure of the representation. From this inner point of view, space functions according to the laws of natural vision in the sense that objects that are further away look smaller and those that are closer appear larger. 2. According to the scenography thesis, also put forward by Wulff, the proportions of the figures in Byzantine and Byzantine images located above eye level and/or on curved surfaces are adjusted in such a way as to look “right” to a viewer on the ground. This artistic practice, backed scientifically by Euclid’s Optics, goes back to classical antiquity. 3. The hierarchical size thesis was advanced by Karl Doehlemann as an alternative to Wulff’s ideas. It suggests that the size of figures in an icon depends on the hierarchical importance of these figures (i.e. the more important ones are represented as larger in scale than the less important ones, regardless of their respective distance from the viewer). 4. The optical view thesis is based on the belief that space in the icon is true to the way natural vision functions under certain conditions (for instance, in viewing at oblique angles). 5. Russian scholars have proposed that space in the icon can be interpreted as a visual analogue of non-Euclidean geometry. This view is very little known in the West. It relies on an analogy between the curved space of non-Euclidean geometry and the frequent depiction of objectively straight lines as curved in icon art. 6. Another idea, promoted in Russian scholarship, is that space in icons is constructed according to the principle of supplementary planes, that is, icons frequently depict aspects of an object that cannot be seen simultaneously from a fixed position. Antonova, “On the Problem of “Reverse Perspective”: Definitions East and West,” 469

² Antonova, *Space, time, and presence in the icon*, 29

³ Sendler, *The icon*, 119

⁴ Harold Osborne, *The Oxford companion to art* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970 (1984 [printing])) 856

⁵ Antonova, *Space, time, and presence in the icon*, 35

⁶ *Ibid.*, 42

⁷ The single-point perspective system was invented by the architect Brunelleschi. Since a fully developed, rationalized space does not appear in painting until the trinity, Brunelleschi’s invention should perhaps be dated to around 1424-25, although the actual development of single-point perspective must have taken place over some time. John T. Paoletti and Gary M. Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy* (London: L. King, 1997) 204

⁸ Kemp et al., *Space, Time, and Presence in the Icon* (Routledge, 2016) 105

⁹ Antonova, “On the Problem of “Reverse Perspective”: Definitions East and West,”

being “a small matter”. The notion of the whole imbues the representation of space, where the image of the exterior is fused with the image of the interior space.¹

The reverse perspective² does not show in a realistic manner what exists, it does not stand for something else and it does not imitate. Instead, it reconciles the difference between the material sign and the abstract representation through the anthological participation.³ Applied to the iconographic structure, perspective theory changes and receives a new, unusual meaning, specific only to this structure. The icon emerged in the absence of the rules of painting realism. Instead of the homogenous, rationally constructed and illusory space of the painting, the icon proposed a reverse perspective, which nullifies the inner self centering process of both the artist and the beholder.⁴ P. Florenski, said that “each part of the iconographic representation, though drawn according to the rules of linear perspective, has “its own perspective center”, “its own visual angle”, “its own horizon” The drawing is represented in such a manner that the eye can look at its composing elements and see different things from different angles.⁵

As I have already stressed, however, the purpose of perspective is to give a certain spiritual impulse, to focus the attention on reality, from this point of view, Florenski⁶ has the distinct merit of having discovered and elaborated on the truth that painting, like other plastic arts, rely fundamentally on geometry. And he mentions that the reverse perspective is not simply a failed or misunderstood version of the linear perspective, but an original way of encompassing the world, which should be held as a mature device, independent of representation.

4.2 Analysis of Various Melkite Icons

The various schools by the time did not use this kind of perspective with the same rigor even though it was present everywhere. Egon sandler emphasizes that in the beginnings of Christian art and up to the iconoclastic period, “we see only the simplest forms of reverse perspective, but we never see spatial depth”.⁷ This spatial depth appears only later during the classical

¹ Evangelia Hadjityrphonos, *presentations and representations of symbolic interperations of early christian and byzantine architecture: Architecture as icon Perception and representation of architecture in Byzantine art / Slobodan Ćurčić and Evangelia Chatzētryphōnos ; with contributions by Kathleen E. McVey and Helen G. Saradi*, eds. Slobodan Ćurčić, Evangelia Chatzētryphōnos, Kathleen E. McVey, Hélène Saradi, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Art Museum, 2010 (ed. Slobodan Ćurčić, Evangelia Chatzētryphōnos and Kathleen E. McVey; Saradi, Hélène; ; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Art Museum, 2010), at 144

² We basically lack a theory for an important aspect of an art form which has been around for more than a thousand years, has deeply influenced the whole of European medieval art and has endured in the face of Renaissance perspective to become a symbol of Eastern Orthodox spirituality. Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1986) 29

³ Vasile Cristescu, “THE REVERSE PERSPECTIVE IN THE ORTHODOX ICONOGRAPHY ACCORDING TO P. FLORENSKI,” *European Journal of Science and Theology* (2009), at 41

⁴ The relatively few studies, devoted to the problem of “reverse perspective” are mostly by Russian authors. I will be referring to the following works Pavel Florensky’s “Reverse Perspective” (read in 1920), Lev Zhegin’s *Iazik zhivopisnogo proizvedeniia* (The Language of the Work of Art) (1970) and Boris Uspensky’s *The Semiotics of the Russian Icon* (1971) Kemp et al., *Space, Time, and Presence in the Icon*, 129

⁵ Cristescu, “THE REVERSE PERSPECTIVE IN THE ORTHODOX ICONOGRAPHY ACCORDING TO P. FLORENSKI,” 42

⁶ *Ibid.*, 43

⁷ Sandler, *Icon*, 127

period of Byzantine art, at the time of second Paleologan renaissance that we see the great richness of possibilities associated with reverse perspective. To understand this kind of perspective, and how is used in Melkite icons the analysis of some narrative icons as an example can help understand how natural space can be expressed in the scheme of inversed perspective. In the following descriptions, we are going to use the “left” and “right” in an order as if the spectator is taking position of the figured persons in the icons.

4.2.1 The Annunciation

The discussion will revolve around architectural backgrounds of the Annunciation in Melkite icons, dating from mid of seventeenth century to the beginnings of nineteenth century A.D. The conclusion can be drawn that the Annunciation icons were depended on depiction of the architectural backgrounds to emphasis that the event takes place at the real place as the house of Virgin and Nazareth city.

I'm going to examine representations of architecture in annunciation icons of Melkite art in Syria -during the Ottoman period (17-19) centuries. Keeping in mind that the feast cycle was stabilized by the tenth century even if the date of its emergence is uncertain.¹ The Melkite church year begins in September, following Jewish and Byzantine precedent. Annunciation is one of the most venerated Twelve Feasts, celebrated on March 25.

Let us now look at some icons of Annunciation to see how reverse perspective was actually put to work. These Melkite icons belong to difference iconic schools, dated between seventeenth century and nineteenth century. Therefore, four icons will be chosen which are characteristic of their periods.

4.2.1.1 The Annunciation, 1687, Latakia.

The space of this icon, *figure.18*, is marked by slanting lines, below feet of the chair and the base of the lectern, and the top of ciborium and the arcade. In other words, the space of this icon stops behind the arcade and blends into the golden background.

The lines of the house of Mary, the polygonal building inside the circular wall, move opposite direction. We look down on the roof of wall drawn in reverse perspective. The need arises to combine the various positions and aspects into one synthetic image. Thus, the image treated by reverse perspective does not represent one single aspect of the figure (as with linear perspective), but a synthesis of several aspects. The very obvious and frequently observed

¹ Anna D. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The making of an image* / Anna D. Kartsonis (Princeton, N.J., Guildford: Princeton University press, 1986) 16

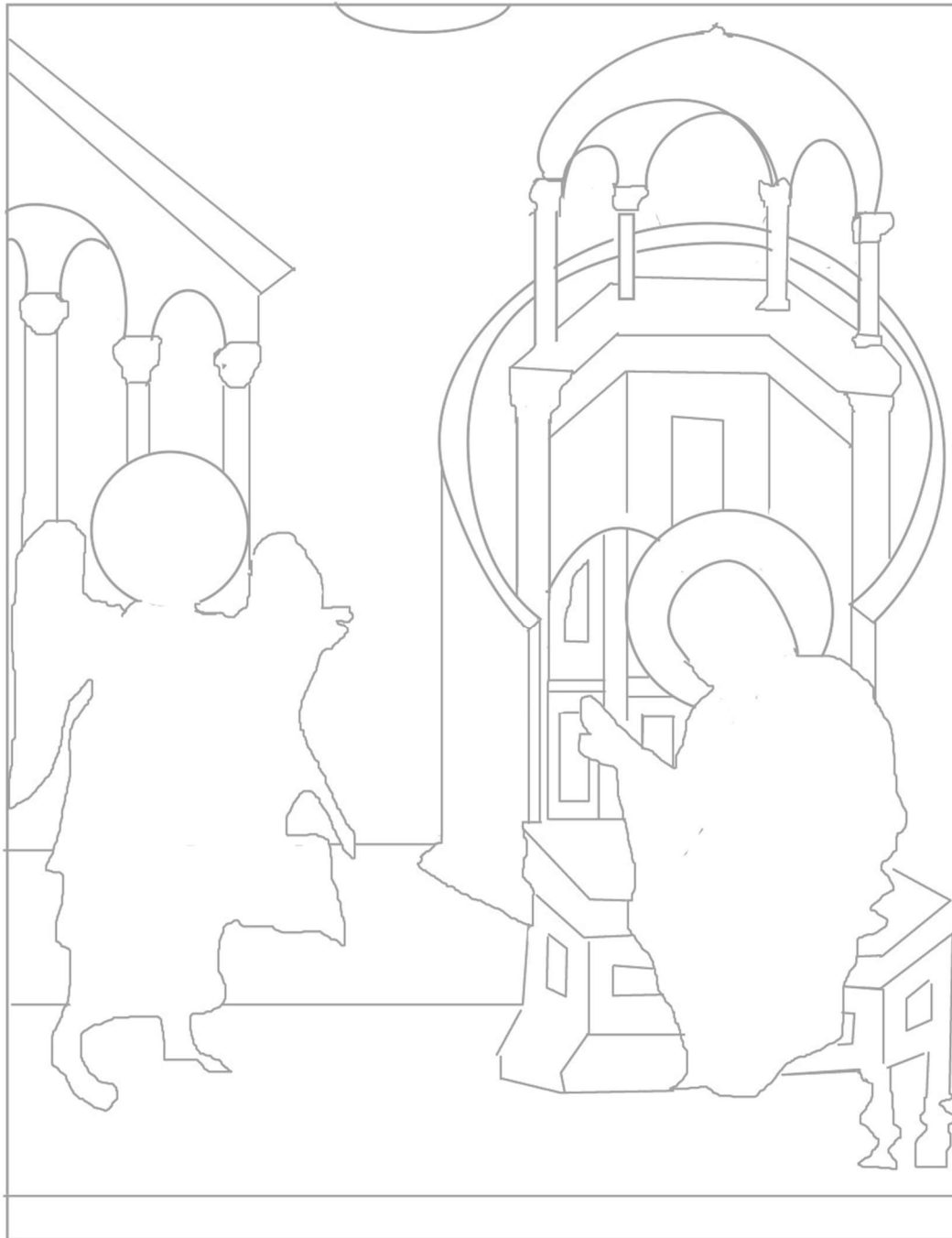


Figure 18 The scheme of Annunciation icon, Latakia, 1687.

perspective deformations are the result of this process. Several views that cannot be seen at the same moment overlap in a single representation. To achieve such a view would have required movement in time of the beholder, the image, or both.

In this icon, the space does not follow Euclidean laws. There is no absolute point of view of the beholder. The various viewpoints represent different aspects of the ciborium and of reality at large. Further, reverse perspective takes into consideration the double view produced by the

two eyes, a fact disregarded by linear perspective. A further characteristic of the beholder is that he/she is no longer assumed to occupy a fixed position.¹

The foreground in the Byzantine Art is important than the depth, this slight depth is created by the different dimensions of the objects and the movement of the people. In this icon, it seems to rise up toward the spectator, an impression accentuated by chair and lectern drawing in slightly reverse perspective. The same phenomenon occurs, for example, the book is depicted lateral but at the same time we can see two of the sides. The foreground is indicated by the two pedestals. The lines of the wall of temple move in the same direction. Behind the angel, we look down of the roof of a porch drawn in reverse perspective.

4.2.1.2 The Akathist, 1714, Aleppo.

As we know that the first half of the text of Akathist Hymn conveys the Infancy story from the Annunciation to the Presentation in the Temple.² The well occurs in the reverse perspective, we can see the upper part of it, Figure.19. The main characteristic of this scene is to give the

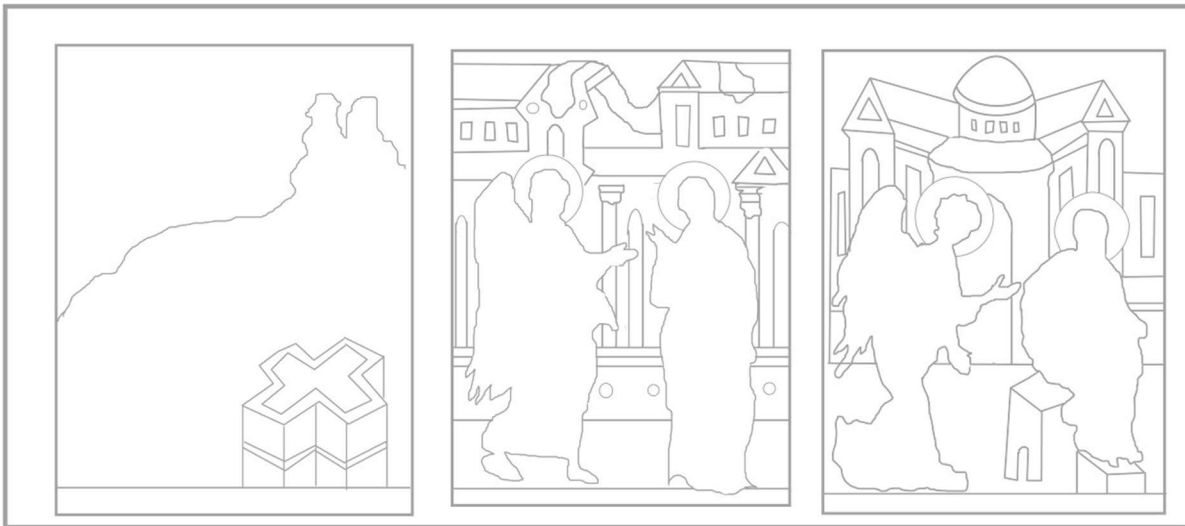


Figure 19 The scheme of three scenes, Akathist icon, Aleppo, 1714.

impression that it only has a background. The Virgin and the person who is right to her, float in the air in front of the mountains.

The second scene, Ne'met Allah Al Halabi had traced the idea which refusing the "box-space". And in order to indicate that action was taking place inside the building, a red veil was suspended from the top of the right building, to the structure on the left. The refusing of the "box-space" contains in the third scene, the space is marked by slanting lines, below the footstool and above the top of domed structure and the roofs of flanking buildings. The reverse perspective becomes especially explicit in the depiction of architecture. This effect is again due to the perspective treatment.³

¹ Antonova, *Space, time, and presence in the icon*, 35

² Angold, *Eastern Christianity*, 148

³ Antonova, *Space, time, and presence in the icon*, 40

4.2.1.3 The Annunciation, 19th, Sydnaia.



Figure 20 The scheme of Annunciation icon, Sydnaia, 19th.

This icon is one of nine icons placed in the apse of the church of Sydnaia monastery, depicted by Michael of Crete or by one of his disciples, Cat.18.

It represents the Archangel Gabriel visiting Virgin Mary, he is standing on a cloud, indicating to the sky, while he is holding by left hand a roll with Arabic inscriptions. The tent is accompanied by a Mary, which represents a decorative element connected with the theophany nature of the event, and it is borrowed from the existing iconographic language at Old Testament. Against the golden background, there are a column with two arches. Here, *Figure.20*, the column which is treated by reverse perspective does represent several aspects. In the foreground of the icon, we can see reverse perspective in drawing the paved floor, which seems to rise up toward the spectator.

4.2.1.4 The Annunciation, 19th, Al Homeyra.

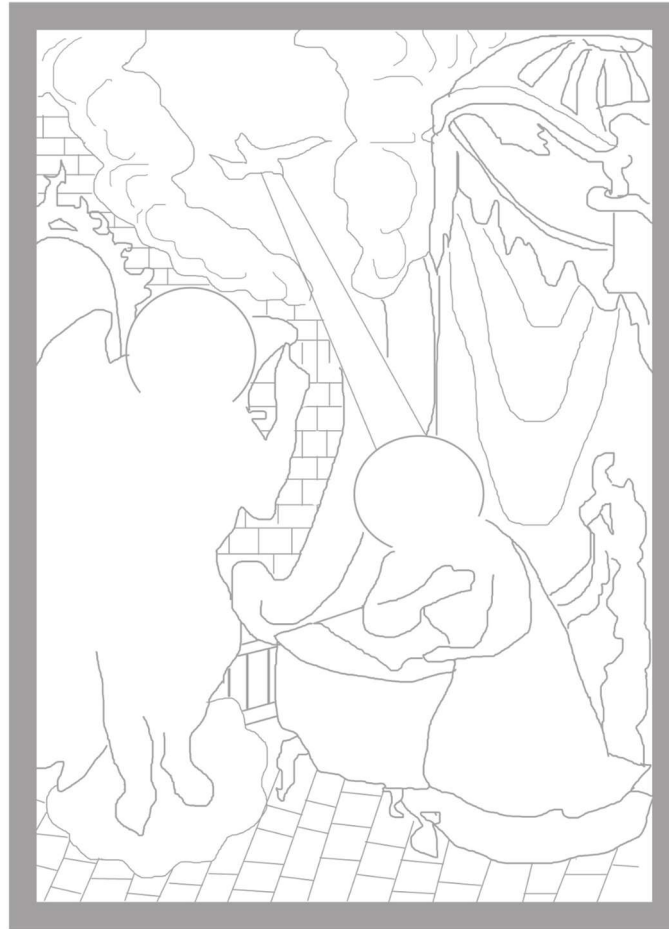


Figure 21 The scheme of Annunciation icon, 19th, Georg Monastery, Al Homeyra.

Although this icon doesn't belong to our study period, but it would make a good example of the changes in the depiction of reverse perspective during the nineteenth century. As I mentioned above, the icons of Annunciation have changed from depicting the action of annunciation outside the building into inside building, inside the house of Virgin, following the western art.¹ Architectural elements as wall, column, door and windows. All these elements refer to the event of Annunciation is depicted inside the house of Mary, at her chamber.² The foreground is depicted in reverse perspective, Figure.21.

¹For more details about meaning of the house of Mary in the Western Art see; Carol J. Purtle, "Van Eyck's Washington Annunciation: Narrative Time and Metaphoric Tradition," *The Art Bulletin* 81 (1999) 117–25

²But the normal Italian setting was either fantastic ecclesiastical architecture, an open portico, or a room with a portico, the Angel being placed in the portico. Sometimes a domestic interi- or was suggested by introducing the Virgin's bed and other domestic appurtenances; but separation of the picture space into compartments was maintained. W. G. Constable, "A Florentine Annunciation," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 43 (1945) 72–76, at 72

4.2.2 The Last Supper



Figure 22 The scheme of Last supper, the schema the eighteenth century, Dormition Lady church.

The Last Supper is ancient theme of Christian iconography.¹ Two tall buildings linked by a wall represent to “the attic”.² The round table in Last Supper scene comes from Syria and adopted later in occidental iconography.³ While other icons, the table is rectangular shape, icon dated to 1722⁴ that also appears in Last supper icon, Cat.38. in Sydnaia Monastery, depicted by The Pastor Joseph, son of Priest Michael Elian in 1797. These tables appearance in Middle Byzantine contexts, especially, in dining scenes, may be called exceptional. They already become more common in the Late Byzantine Painting, though not in representations of the last supper.⁵

The background of this event is varied. As an example, Cat.42,⁶ complex consist of three buildings gives an undeniable boost to the composition. On the foreground, the pavement is divided to squares depicted in reverse perspective, also the complex itself depicted in revers

¹ Christopher. Walter, *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church / Christopher Walter ; pref. by Robin Cormack* (Birmingham Byzantine Series; 1, London: Variorum Publications, 1982) 184

² Bushell, *Churches of the Holy Land*, 119–25

³ Gabriel Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'évangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles d'après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont-Athos* (2nd ed., Paris: E. de Boccard, 1960) 309

⁴ Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 256pl.82, La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 76

⁵ Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 175

⁶ There is an icon dated to 1722 and attributed to Hanna Al Qudsi, looks like our icon. Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254)pl.82

perspective, which is reflected in the event that takes place outside, the roofs of the buildings are seen by observer, and thus reverse perspective becomes particularly evident in the representation of architecture. Finally, the disciples are surrounding the table, the main personages, Christ, in the middle, John, Peter, Andrew, Mathew, Jacob and Simeon are bigger than frontal disciples. This treatment of drawing of characters appears also in icons Cat.39,40, 41, this is a kind of reverse perspective.

4.2.3 The Pentecost

Pentecost celebrated on the 50th day after Easter the disciples are seen seated in a semi-cycle.¹ The earliest references to Pentecost in Christian sources are to what is obviously the Jewish feast; the Feast of Weeks, rather than specifically Christian one (Acts 2.1; 20.16; Cor. 16.8).² The iconography of Pentecost presents the classic group portrait of the early Christian community. The mother of God, present at the Ascension, is absent in icons of Pentecost up until the seventeenth century.³ Dionysius⁴ doesn't mention the Virgin Mary in this event.⁵ In Melkite icons of Pentecost, most of them depict the figure of Mary, Cat.26, 27, one icon no has Virgin Mary, Cat.28. Although the gathering of the apostles remained the subject of the story, the upper room in which they had come together – the cenacle – gained importance both visually and symbolically.⁶ Thus we can say, here, that the space in this icon does not follow Euclidean laws (first premise). There is no absolute point of view of the beholder (second premise). The various viewpoints represent different aspects of the object and of reality at large. Further, reverse perspective takes into consideration the double view produced by the two eyes, a fact disregarded by linear perspective (third premise). A further characteristic of the beholder is that he/she is no longer assumed to occupy a fixed position (fourth premise).⁷ Ultimately, but still before the end of the ninth century, the semicircle of apostles in the Eastern iconographical tradition assumed the form of a horseshoe.⁸

The composition of the icon, with the apostles seated in a horseshoe arrangement, recalls the icon of Christ teaching in the Synagogue.⁹ In Pentecost icon, usually in the background are

¹ Stuart I. Robinson, *Icons of the Great Feasts / Stuart I. Robinson* (London: Loizou Publications, 1998) 24

² Bradshaw and Johnson, *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts and Seasons in Early Christianity / Paul F. Bradshaw and Maxwell E. Johnson*, 69

³ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 151

⁴ This Painter's manual was written on Mount Athos, roughly between 1730-and 1734. This manual provides detailed information concerning the production of drawings on tracing paper, and also of a specific type of imprinted cartoon. *From Byzantium to El Greco ; Greek Frescoes and Icons: Royal Academy of Arts, London 27th March - 21st June 1987 / ed. by Dr. Myrtili Acheimastou-Potamianou ; english translation by Dr. David A. Hardy* (Atene, Grecia: Greek Ministry of Culture, 1987) 54

⁵ Di Dionysios Fournas, Bettini and Donato Grasso, *Canone dell'icona*, 159

⁶ Christopher. Walter, *L'iconographie des conciles dans la tradition byzantine / Christopher Walter ; préf. par André Grabar* (Archives de l'Orient chrétien; 13, Paris: Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, 1970) 209–202

⁷ Antonova, *Space, time, and presence in the icon*, 35

⁸ C. A. Chavannes-Mazel, *Paradise and Pentecost: Reading Images and Texts Medieval Images and Texts as Forms of Communication Papers from the Third Utrecht Symposium on Medieval Literacy, Utrecht, 7-9 December 2000 / Edited by Mariëlle Hageman and Marco Mostert*, eds. Mariëlle Hageman, Marco Mostert, Turnhout, Great Britain: Brepols, 2005 (ed. Mariëlle Hageman and Marco Mostert; Utrecht studies in medieval literacy 8; Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), at 125

⁹ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 151

two edifices.¹ When the presentation of space is achieved by the construction of buildings with two wings, it is clear that they conform to the laws of conventional perspective. Buildings with symmetrical side wings create the illusion of space.²

The inverse perspective applied to the figures contrast with the attempt to render the bench by western perspectival rules. The abstract curve described by the bench in the upper portion of the icon terminates in a realistic in the foreground.³ The apostles are represented in inverse perspective their figures grow bigger as they recede from the foreground.⁴

It is, however, also the classical way of rendering a gathering. It is reminiscent of the semicircular bench, common in classical and early Christian pictures as e.g., in the scene of the Last Supper in the Rossano Gospels, in the Vienna Genesis, and in the mosaic of the S. Apollinaire Nuovo in Ravenna.⁵

A pillar between them symbolizes the axis of the world, in an allusion to the cosmic significance of the event.⁶ The Byzantine artist delivers a comparable message without attempting to portray actual space. The wall in Byzantine icon, in some sense, separates the earthly from the heavenly realms, but does so symbolically rather than pictorially.⁷

In this scene, the icon is the opposite of a Renaissance painting; it is not a window to through which the mind must go to have access to the world represented. It is rather a place where a presence is encountered. In the icon, the represented world shines out toward the person who opens himself to receive it. Thus, the space itself becomes active instead of the observer who in fact is acted on.⁸ In this icon, we can see that reverse perspective is directly connected with the dynamics of the viewing position: the form of reverse perspective is the result of the summarizing of the viewer's perception under the conditions of a multiplicity of viewpoints, that are themselves the result of the dynamics of the viewing position".⁹

The people and objects are often not placed in a "proper" order according, to distance and dimension but simply set side by side according to principle of composition and according to the meaning which the objects have in the painted scene. There is, thus no depth inside the

¹ Gaetano Passarelli, *Non solo colore: Icone e feste della tradizione bizantina* ([Roma]: Nova millennium Romae, stampa 2013) 288

² This feature becomes quite general in the Ducento, and which exemplifies this tendency. oystein hjort, "Oddities" and "Refinements" *Aspects of Architecture space and Narrative in the Mosaics of Kariye Camii: Interaction and isolation in late Byzantine culture Papers read at a colloquium held at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 1-5 December 1999 / edited by Jan Olof Rosenqvist*, ed. Jan Olof Rosenqvist, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute; London distributed by I.B. Tauris, 2005 (ed. Jan O. Rosenqvist; Transactions, 1100-0333 13; Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute; London distributed by I.B. Tauris, 2005), at 29

³ There is an icon of North Russian, early 17 century Weitzmann, *Feast Day Icons*, pl.39

⁴ Ouspensky and Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons / by Leonid Ouspensky and Wladimir Lossky ; translated by G.E.H. Palmer & E. Kadloubovsky*, 207

⁵ Chavannes-Mazel, *Paradise and Pentecost* (as in note 629), at 124

⁶ Zuzana SKALOVA and Stephen Davis, "A Medieval Icon with Scenes from the Life of Christ and the Virgin in the Church of Abu Seifin, Cairo," *Bulletin De La Société D'Archeologie Copte* 39 (2000), at 224

⁷ Ćurčić, *Architecture as icon* (as in note 251), at 25

⁸ Sendler, *Icon*, 126

⁹ Antonova, *Space, time, and presence in the icon*, 42

representation; space is reduced, and it extends out toward the spectator.¹ In this way, the focus is reserved; the lines come out from the inside of the image and move toward the spectator. In the foreground, a sort of underground opens up from which a prisoner priest² emerges as king and crown on his head. According to the Painting Manuals, the prisoner symbolizes the Cosmos or the Universe.³ Finally the golden background creates a uniform and infinite space, like the sky, which becomes the container of everything.⁴

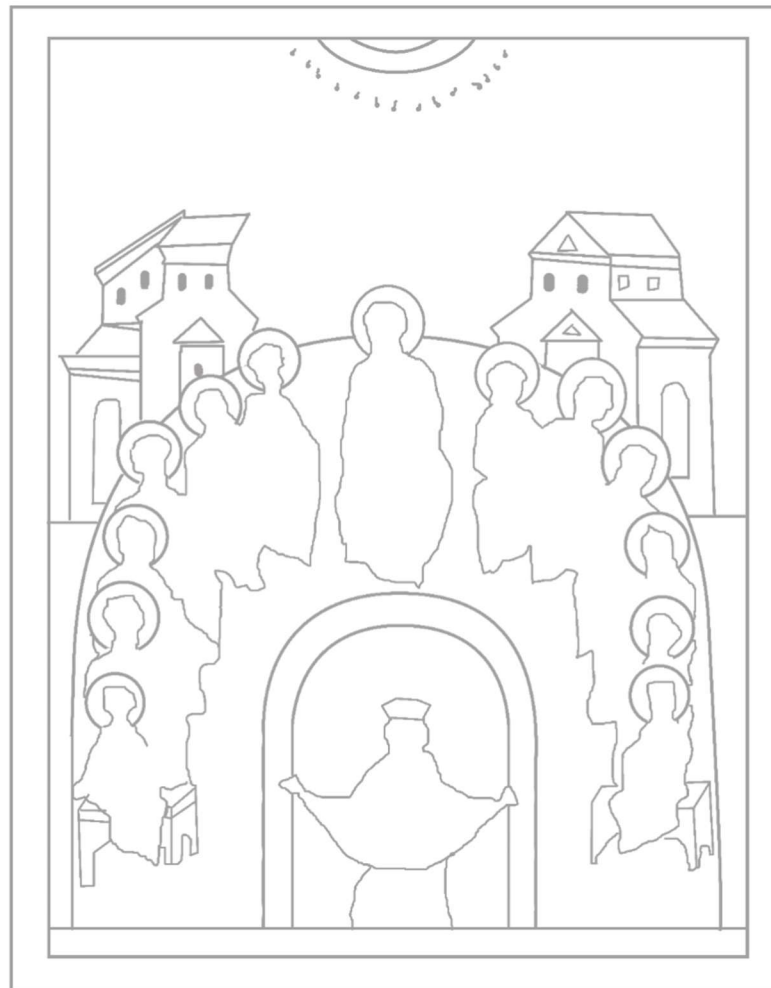


Figure 23 The scheme of Pentecost, the eighteenth century, the Lady-Orthodox church, Idleb.

¹ Sendler, *Icon*, 126

² In the late Byzantine period the multiple personifications of the nations, tribes and languages were often replaced by a single male figure in imperial costume, the personification of the Cosmos. Even at this late a period when Byzantium was but a minor state, the idea of Christianized *oikumnene* was best expressed by the timeless image of a Byzantine emperor. Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 42

³ Georges Gharib, *Le icone festive della chiesa ortodossa* (Milano: Editrice Ancora, 1985) 211

⁴ Sendler, *Icon*, 145

“Everything [on the icon] loses its usual disorderly aspect, everything becomes a harmonious structure: the landscape, the animals, and also the architecture. Everything that surrounds the saint bows with him in a rhythmic order. Everything reflects the divine presence and is drawn—and also draws us—towards God. The representations of the earth, the world of vegetation, and the animal world in the icon are not intended to bring us close to what we always see around us—a fallen world in its corruptible state—but to show us that this world participates in the deification of man”.¹

Finally, I would like to propose a hypothesis, which, however, requires some additional information. This hypothesis of the prominent characteristics of the inverse perspective in Melkite iconography:

1. Melkite icons and notably in icons of Aleppo School and ones of the eighteenth century, were distinguished by existing of very little spatial depth. There is no three-dimensional illusion, depth, or bodies. The space is often limited to the foreground and closed off toward the background by a secondary scene containing buildings or landscape
2. In Melkite Art, the represented event in the icon takes place in the foreground, as byzantine art did before. ²
3. By enlarging the proportions of the people in the background, they seem to belong to the foreground.
4. Architectural elements and objects, seats, lecterns, etc., are drawn either in isometry or reverse perspective. Their sides are thus bent forward and even the parts normally invisible are represented. In order to avoid the representation of the interior of a building which would necessarily require depth, the scenes always take place outside the building. The landscape of rocks is shown with same principle of forward movement. In all constructions, the vertical is rigorously preserved. The artist attempts to examine the object he depicts from various points of view, enriching his observation with new aspects of reality, and acknowledging them as more or less of equal meaning.³
5. In the nineteenth century, most of Melkite icons had been depicted without background, and the event takes place inside the house of Mary, that means they accepted the idea of “box-space”, which was refused by Byzantine art.⁴
6. Perspective is not an isolated aspect of a work art. But is surrounded to the composition and especially to the very idea of the work.
7. Artists working in the Byzantine style, like all medieval painters before the fifteenth century, knew nothing of strict, mathematical pictorial space.⁵

¹ Daniel B. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox theology: A contemporary reader The Meaning and Content of the Icon*, (trans. Leonid Ouspensky, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1995) 60

² *The icon: Image of the Invisible*. ed. Fr. Steven Bigham 135

³ P. A. Florenskii and Nicoletta Misler, *Beyond Vision: Essays on the Perception of Art / Pavel Florensky ; Compiled and Edited by Nicoletta Misler ; Translated by Wendy Salmond ; Editor, Nicoletta Misler* (London: Reaktion, 2002) 267

⁴ *The icon* (ed. Fr. Steven Bigham), 129

⁵ Martin Kemp fixes the time of Brunelleschi's construction somewhere before 1413 (Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art*, (London and New Haven, 1990), p. 9). Antonova, *Space, time, and presence in the icon*, 30

8. Formal elements, such as calligraphy and arabesques, are inventions with local signifying value. But geometric decoration uses universal forms, and reflects the very characteristics of the space that surround us.¹

To speak of a more intense architectural features directed elements and scenes we need more detailed search telling how the architectural background was depicted. This type of depiction will be the subject of our next chapter.

¹ Jean-Marc Castéra, Françoise Peuriot and Philippe Ploquin, *Arabesques: Decorative Art in Morocco / Jean-Marc Castéra ; Photos by François Peuriot Et Philippe Ploquin* (Paris: ACR, 1999) 84

5. The Architectural representations at background and foreground of Melkite icon.

The fifth chapter will deal with the architectural elements and scenes on Melkite icon. Historically, the representation of architecture became increasingly complicated during the second half of the thirteenth century, there is the emergence of dissonances, or dislocations.¹

The architectural backgrounds and foregrounds of the Melkite Art have never been made the subject of a separate study. Among those Melkite icons, we may distinguish two main groups of architectural features deriving from different types. Architectural elements and the second one is architectural scenes. This chapter considers architectural elements and scenes to talk about architecture reflections on Melkite icons during this period.

5.1 The architectural elements and the local architectural impacts.

The present section focuses on the sources of inspiration for the architecture on Melkite icons by dealing with the occurrence of a number of architectural elements, which requires interpretation. Should their presence be understood as reflecting the impact of Byzantine cultures on Melkite material culture or should it be attributed to the imitation by Melkite artists of post-byzantine artistic models? Did contact with the artistic traditions of the Cretan art,² neither of which was adverse to the representation of contemporary material culture, have a modifying influence on the traditional attitude of Byzantine religious art in this respect? In general, however, the influence of western art on Melkite iconography was limited during the second half of seventeenth century and this is not because of lack of awareness in Syria of recent accomplishments in the West but because of what appears to have been a conscious choice to ignore them. By contrast, representations of Islamic architecture were much common after 1699, with works of Ne'met.

What is striking about the representations of architecture in the Melkite art is not the fact of their occurrence, but their consciousness and attention with which structural details have been depicted, especially in the case of columns and capitals. The images of these elements may be understood as realistic details introduced to underline the factual dimension of the events represented. This seems to hold true especially in the case of the representation of the architecture elements in the scenes.

¹ Hjort, "*Oddities*" and "*Refinements*" *Aspects of Architecture space and Narrative in the Mosaics of Kariye Camii* (as in note 632), at 29

² In Central Greece and Northern Greece, under Turkish domination since the mid-fifteenth century, art evolved under quite different conditions. If art in Crete was cultivated in a bourgeois milieu and almost exclusively in large cities, the religious art practiced in the country occupied by the Turks was mainly practiced outside cities, in villages often specialized in specific artistic domains. This situation, which necessarily implied a change in the artist's own status, was not without consequence on the quality of production. The monasteries of Mount Athos and, to a lesser extent, the Meteora monasteries, attracted the most renowned painters of the island region as a high culture area for the decoration of their old and new churches. Cretan artists went to the monasteries of northern Greece to decorate the walls of churches and refectories, much larger than those of what led to the enrichment of the repertory icon Crete, graphic and the development of their style of painting of easel to the scale of the monumental painting. But they continued to paint icons for these churches. Chatzêdakês, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 49

5.1.1 Ciborium and Altar



Figure 24 The ciborium of altar, Catholic Syriac Mar Asia church, Aleppo.



Figure 25 The ciborium of altar, Maronite church, Aleppo.

Firstly, the ciborium³, a canopy made of a dome raised on four columns and placed above the altar of a church, is a characteristic object in the church. Accordingly, in the fourth century, an ancient pagan custom was adopted, in other words, the placing of a baldachin or ciborium over the altar. This was carried on four pillars; in the East it took the form of a cupola and hence its name *kibwpion*, a cup; in the West it was more usual to have a conical or pyramidal roof.⁴

As an example; the famous high ciborium was which covered the tomb of Christ in Jerusalem, according to the description and plan of Paul Lucas, who published his voyage to the Holy Land in 1714.⁵ For example; the ciborium of the Syrian Catholic⁶ Mar Asia church.⁷

³ Two meaning first one a chalice shaped vessel, with a lid, used to contain the Sacramental Bread of the Eucharist. And this term also applied to the canopy resting on four pillars over the altar of Christian basilicas and other churches. Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 535

⁴ John G. I. Davies, *The Origin and Development of Early Christian Church Architecture / J.G. Davies* (London: SCM Press, 1952) 89

⁵ Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 332

⁶ A body of Uniat Christians descended from the Syrian Orthodox. In the latter part of the 16th cent. Relations were established between the Syrian orthodox church and the Papacy, which led to some conversions in the 17th cent., and the election of a Catholic, Andrew Akijan, to the see of Aleppo in 1656. Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 1571

⁷ “Aleppo – Syrian Catholic Church of Saint Asia al-Hakim الكاثوليك السريان الحكيم اسيا حلب” accessed October 12, 2017, <http://www.syriaphotoguide.com/home/aleppo-syrian-catholic-church-saint-asia-al-hakim-%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A8-%D9%83%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B3%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84/>



Figure 26 The scheme of the entry of Lady in the Temple, Aleppo, 1718.

Secondly, the altar, the use of altars by Christians in the second century was denied by the pagans, who considered that this affirmation substantiated their repeated accusations of atheism.⁸ Since the bema of the church was the throne of Christ, altar was easily assimilated to a throne.⁹

In icon of the presentation, usually, an altar surmounted by a ciborium appears as a background to say that you are in the whole temple, in the form of a presbytery, of course, a Byzantine church.¹⁰

In the catalogue, by observind the icons of presentation, these following icons have a ciboriums, (*Cat. 7,8,9,10,12*), except two icons don't have this kind of architectural element, it could because they came from two churches that have no ciborium surmounted the altar, the church of entry Lady of Hama, and the second one is Sydnaia church, see (*Cat.11, 13*).

⁸ Davies, *The Origin and Development of Early Christian Church Architecture* / J.G. Davies, 84

⁹ Walter, *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church* / Christopher Walter ; pref. by Robin Cormack

¹⁰ Passarelli, *Non solo colore*, 184



Figure 28 The altar in the Holy of holies, St John of Damascus church, Damascus.



Figure 27 The sanctuary, the Orthodox Dormition Lady church, Aleppo.

Each church in Early Byzantine era (basilical church) has altar that is often located midway along the chord of the apse. There is often a raised bema or platform extending forward from the apse into the nave that, together with the area of the apse, forms the sanctuary. This sanctified area is cordoned off by a chancel screen, supported by upright chancel posts set into the ground.¹¹

¹¹ Bernard Mulholland, *The early Byzantine Christian church: An archaeological re-assessment of forty-seven early Byzantine basilical Church excavations primarily in Israel and Jordan, and their historical and liturgical context* / Bernard Mulholland (Byzantine and neohellenic studies; vol. 9, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014) 25

5.1.2 Bema or Synthronon

In this section, I will consider the representation of bema and Synthronon in cross-cultural interchange between the Byzantine and Christian Melkite in ottoman era by analyzing Pentecost icons. The question naturally arises whether, in Melkite art, we have to call this element a bema or synchrony. Bema¹², architecturally, called for the horseshoe shaped nave platform.¹³ While in the early churches of Constantinople the bema included just the main apse.¹⁴ For this study, I used the first meaning. In Syria, there are many examples of bema, for example, the one in the Basilica of Al Resafa,¹⁵ also one in the center of the church of at Seleucia Pieria.¹⁶ In addition, it should be noted that in early Christian Syrian churches have the office of readings and prayers everywhere performed on a bema, which regularly occupies the center of the nave.¹⁷ Beside to all the sites on the limestone massif in Syria only a handful possess the horseshoe-shaped¹⁸ platform in the nave.¹⁹ It should to recognize between the bema in Greek tradition and Syrian one, in the last one it locates in front of the iconostasis and in the nave of the church, while in Greek tradition, at the Holy of Holies inside the apse. Emma Loosley²⁰ suggests some hypothesis about the function of the bema: The role of the bema in the Liturgy of the Word, it was used for benedictions and prayers, reading Old Testament, New Testament (Epistle and Gospel), Homily²¹, Proclamations and litanies. The second role was in the Divine Office, the third one in the service for the consecration of the Myron, the forth one is in the service for the reception of a bishop.

¹²The word bema is found in Greek and Armenian literature as well as in the Syriac sources. Many early Syriac Christian texts are translations from Greek originals. To the Greek-speaking tradition the bema (βήμα) refers to the area before the sanctuary in the eastern half of the church. Emma Loosley, *The architecture and liturgy of the bema in fourth- to-sixth-century Syrian churches* (Texts and studies in Eastern Christianity; volume 1, leiden. Boston2012) 57.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ During the middle and late Byzantine periods (824–1204/61 and 1204/61–1453, the cross-in-square type was the most common after the ninth century. the bema “tripartite sanctuary” was one of three elements of the churches beside of the naos; and the narthex. Vasileios Marinis, *Defining liturgical space: The Byzantine World*, eds. P. Stephenson, P.H.H.S.H.H.P. Stephenson, Taylor & Francis, 2010 (ed.P. Stephenson and P.H.H.S.H.H.P. Stephenson; Taylor & Francis, 2010), at 287

¹⁵ W. E. Kleinbauer, “The Origin and Functions of the Aisled Tetraconch Churches in Syria and Northern Mesopotamia,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973) 89–114, at 95

¹⁶ Ibid., 91

¹⁷ Allan Doig, *Liturgy and architecture: From the early church to the Middle Ages / Allan Doig* (Liturgy, worship, and society, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008) 27

¹⁸ There is bema, in Martyr-shrine of St Babylos, Kaoussie, suburb of Antioch, which raised of compressed horseshoe form, in the nave. Robert Milburn, *Early Christian art and architecture* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1988) 127

¹⁹ Loosley, *The architecture and liturgy of the bema in fourth- to-sixth-century Syrian churches*, 8

²⁰ Ibid., 115–16

²¹ In Christian usage, a discourse given on a biblical text for a congregation as part a service of workshop. The Greek word *holilia* meant “company” or “conserve” but also “instruction” or “lecture”; it could designate the instruction that philosopher gave his pupils in familiar conversation. Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity / edited by Everett Ferguson*, 539–40

Ichnographically, all explaining of the Pentecost icon consider the shape of seat the Apostles in Pentecost icon is semicircle²² or a curved shape, the apostles seated in a horseshoe arrangement, recalls the icon of Christ teaching in the Synagogue.²³

Christopher Walter discusses about the Cenacle and says, “expect in the iconography of Pentecost an attempt to portray the room on the floor”.²⁴ Instead of a semicircle or a curved row of apostles, the West seems at times to prefer a rounded composition for Pentecost, with groups of apostles sitting in a circle or facing the crowd.²⁵

Keep in mind that an architectural setting was added to the iconography of Pentecost during ninth century. Although the gathering of the apostles remained the subject of the story, the upper room in which they had come together – the cenacle – gained importance both visually and symbolically.²⁶



Figure 29Bema looking east, Basilica of the Holy Cross, Resafa. (After Loosley, 2012)

²² It is important to note that the groups of apostles are aligned on a slightly curved ground. According to Weitzmann, the semicircle derives from the mosaic in the cupola of the church of the Twelve Apostles in Constantinople Kurt 1.-1. Weitzmann, Hugo 1.-1. Buchthal and Herbert L. 1. Kessler, *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination* / Kurt Weitzmann ; edited by Herbert L. Kessler ; with an introduction by Hugo Buchthal (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1971) 261

²³The concept of the bema as a raised platform for the purpose of reading scripture to the faithful appears to have been adopted by early Christians soon after it was included as an accepted element of synagogue architecture and this is illustrated by the presence of bemata in both the synagogue and house-church in Dura-Europos. Loosley, *The architecture and liturgy of the bema in fourth- to-sixth-century Syrian churches*, 62, Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 151

²⁴ Walter, *L'iconographie des conciles dans la tradition byzantine* / Christopher Walter ; préf. par André Grabar, 209

²⁵ Chavannes-Mazel, *Paradise and Pentecost* (as in note 629), at 128

²⁶ *Ibid.*, at 124



Figure 30 The apse, and the Synthronon, Basilica of the Holy Cross, Resafa. (After Loosley, 2012)

The definition of the synthronon which represents the throne of Christ, the structure of nine steps.²⁷ The Synthronon designates in Greek the semi-circular bench which, in the early Christian churches (from the fifth century), is arranged in or before the apse, behind the bema.²⁸ It is C-shaped clergy bench Sigma. It is reserved for the clergy and may have several tiers, in which case only the highest is used. These elevated synthronon are frequently provided with an underpass which runs along the wall of the apse, the function of which remains undetermined: this is the case, for example, at St. Irene or at St. John the Theologian at Ephesus.²⁹ In episcopal churches, the bishop's cathedra is placed at the top and center of the Synthronon: the bishop then sits in the midst of the clergy like Christ in the midst of the apostles. While the Syrian synthronon was often situated on the bema facing the west end of the church.³⁰ Finally, although all the interpretations of the Pentecost icon assign the representation of this architectural element to synthronon, I suggest that this represents the bema which refers to the third one in the service for the consecration of the Myron, in other words the ascending of the Holy Spirit or indicates to the forth role which was in the service for the reception of a bishop. I can draw a conclusion that seated/architectural element in the Pentecost icons is bema because it has in these icons a horseshoe shaped.

²⁷ Nicholas N. Patricios, *The sacred architecture of Byzantium: Art, liturgy and symbolism in early Christian churches* / Nicholas N. Patricios (Library of classical studies; 4, London: I.B. Tauris, 2014) 392

²⁸ Synthronon is a bench for clergy warped round the inside the apse, especially in the churches of Constantinople in the fifth and sixth centuries. Doig, *Liturgy and architecture*, 61

²⁹ Born at Amida early in the 6th c., John was ordained deacon at the monastery of Mar Ydsuhanna in Amida, in 529. He died after 585. Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend

³⁰ Paul C. Finney, *The Eerdmans encyclopedia of early Christian art and archaeology, Volume 2* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Comapny, 2017) 554

5.1.3 Apse and Dome

The apse has always had a double meaning. On the one it meant a “*zotheca*”, which is something like a loading for images. On the other hand the apse is an image of grotto, hence the names “*antrum*” or “*psalis, apsis*”.³¹ A semicircular or polygonal end to a chancel. This was a universal feature of the primitive basilica type of church architecture, adapted from the model of Roman public buildings.³² In the earlier period apses often hosted statues; these were nearly totally replaced by mosaics from the beginning of the fourth century on.³³

The apse in the icons of “Tomah Sunday”, the event of the Sunday of Thomas is recorded in the John 20:19-29. Following the Crucifixion and burial of Christ, the disciples were gathered in a room with the doors closed and locked for fear of the Jews. This icon depicts Christ and his disciples in front of architecture background, the event takes place inside the room, although it is depicted outside the room, outside the space, even if the even has taken place inside the room, here in the icon, the event occurs outside, all the persons stand outside and in front of the architectural background, which consists of two arches and central dome to represent the Room and the wall with some arched windows that appears the wall which represents wall of Jerusalem, in three icons of the catalogue. While in Hama icon, the iconographer has illustrated behind this.



Figure 31 The scheme of Thomas Sunday icon, 1734, Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia,

The dome turned out to be the most spectator architectural feature in the Byzantine Church.³⁴ The sublime space that seems to explain a sail opening up against the wind, resting on arches and piers, and with closely spaced windows around its base, gives the appearance that the dome floats on a ring of light.³⁵ Ottoman architecture is unique in the Islamic world to its unswerving

³¹ Beat Brenk, *The Apse, the Image and the Icon: An Historical Perspective of the Apse as a Space for Images*. (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2010) 14

³² Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 93

³³ Brenk, *The Apse, the Image and the Icon.*, 14

³⁴ The main contribution of Byzantium to architecture was the secret of the balancing the dome over square, the outcome of requirements of the new world. It is in church architecture that we can best watch the development; Churches of a single square or polygonal chamber became, with the adaption of the dome to the square, a fashionable design. Steven Runciman, *Byzantine civilisation* (London: Arnold, 1933) 260

³⁵ Patricios, *The sacred architecture of Byzantium*, 51

fidelity to a single central idea that of the domed square unit.³⁶ The most famous building covered with domes is the Assad Basha Khan which is a square building covered with eight small domes and a large central dome supported on marble columns.³⁷

The dome in Melkite art refers to an important building, a church, and in some cases to represent the Holy Sepulchre Church. There are many types of dome representations in Melkite art, some of them came from byzantine architecture as the simple dome³⁸ and compound. The simple dome appears for example in the icon of forty martyrs, Aleppo, Figure.33. The compound dome with drum appears in the twentieth scene of Akathist, Cat.60, “Every hymn is defeated”, in the background, there is a building represents domed church, its dome rests on drum as byzantine dome, figure.34.³⁹

In the icon of Cat.61, the first scene, Nazareth is non-walled city, just domed structure, maybe refers to the Annunciation church. This simply depicted element, for a symbolic purpose, repays close attention. The earthly and heavenly realms are symbolized by domes, vaults, and arches to the point that the symbolic view of the dome has contributed to the evolution of domed architecture and construction. Christian tradition regards church building as a sacred creation since it is implemented in imitation of God as the ultimate creators.⁴⁰

³⁶ Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic art and architecture* (World of art, London: Thames and Hudson, 1999) 257

³⁷ Andrew Petersen, *Dictionary of Islamic architecture* (London, New York: Routledge, 1996) 61

³⁸ In the simple dome, the dome and pendentive were in one, while in the compound dome, especially before the fall of Constantinople, the dome was raised upon a cylindrical wall or drum. Compound dome with drum Cecil. Stewart and Frederick M. 1.-1. Simpson, *Early Christian, Byzantine and Romanesque Architecture / by Cecil Stewart* (Simpson's History of Architectural Development; 2, London: Longmans Green & Co, 1954) 51–52

³⁹ This type dated from eleventh century till fourteenth century. *ibid.*, 52

⁴⁰ Hadjistryphonos, *presentations and representations of symbolic interperations of early christian and byzantine architecture* (as in note 603), at 124

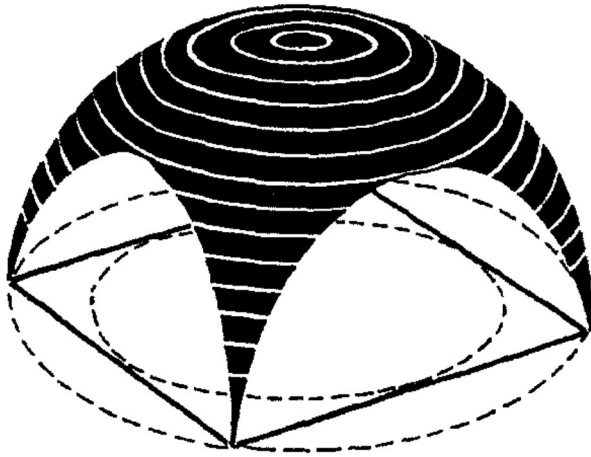


Figure 32 Simple dome. (Runciman, 1933)

)



Figure 33 Simple dome of bath, detail of Forty Martyrs icon, Cat87.

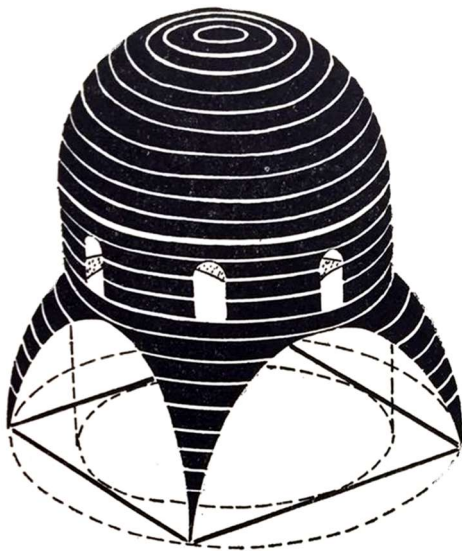


Figure 35 Compound dome with drum. (Runciman, 1933)

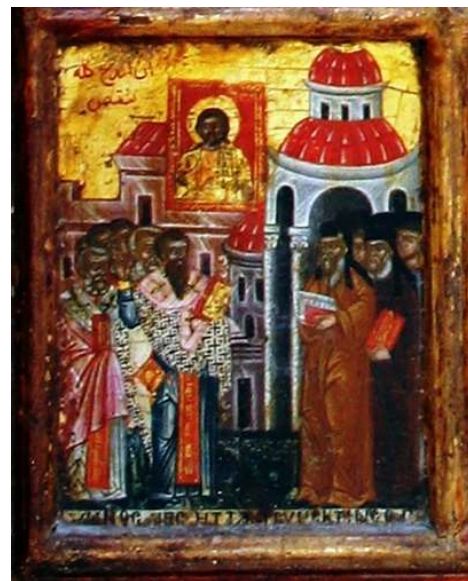


Figure 34 The scene 20th, Akathist, 1714, Aleppo.

5.1.4 Columns

The most famous column which is depicted in Melkite icons is Sam'an column. The Monastery of Simeon Stylites⁴¹, 60 kilometers northwest of Aleppo, was already deserted in the Ottoman period, but it apparently remained in fairly good condition. According to the testimony of Paul of Aleppo, the metropolitan of Aleppo would regularly go there on pilgrimage accompanied by Christians and serve liturgy in the monastery's cathedral church.⁴² And we know that the story of this saint is rewritten by the Metropolitan Meletius Karma. Tracing the depictions of this column in Melkite Art, the oldest depiction is in Abou Adel collection, dated to 1637(?)⁴³, in the same collection, there is an icon of Saint Simeon Stylites and Simeon the younger, attributed to Josef Al Musawwir, 1666.⁴⁴ Ne'met Al Musawwir depicts a copy of this icon, dated to 1699 in Balamand monastery.⁴⁵ Before 1667 Ne'met depicted an icon of Saint Simeon Stylites the younger, Cat.67. The site of Wondrous Mountain is dedicated to the pillar ascetic St. Symeon Stylites the Younger. Parts of the pillar and its pedestal along with a southern staircase have survived. The pillar was framed by open octagon.⁴⁶

The stylites' pillars stood near monasteries or villages, were usually ten to twenty meters high, and were equipped with a balcony, parapet, and roofing.⁴⁷ Another famous column is the column of the "Angel", which mentioned by *Quarsmi*, 1626.⁴⁸

The columns in iconography can be interpreted as the following: "The stylite also competed with imperial authority, for the saint's living body took the place of the effigy of the triumphant emperor on a column. As a healer, the stylite was a master of spirits, chasing a way or shackling the demons of disease."⁴⁹

⁴¹ For more details see Cyril A. Mango, *Byzantine architecture* (History of world architecture, New York: H. N. Abrams, 1976, 1974) 79–87

⁴² Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 4727–30

⁴³ Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 190–92pl.57

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, at 216–18.pl.66

⁴⁵ V.Candea and S. Agémian, *Discriptions Des Icônes: Icônes melkites exposition organisée par le Musée Nicolas Sursock du 16 mai au 15 juin 1969 ...*, ed. Musée Nicolas Sursock, Beyrouth 1969 (ed. Musée Nicolas Sursock ; Beyrouth, 1969), at 140–46.pl.6

⁴⁶ Finney, *The Eerdmans encyclopedia of early Christian art and archaeology, Volume 2*, 708

⁴⁷ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 336

⁴⁸ Bellarmino O.F.M. 1.-1. Bagatti, Raphael O.F.M. Bonanno and Eugenio O.F.M. Alliata, *Excavations in Nazareth / Bellarmino Bagatti, with the collaboration of Eugenio Alliata ; translated by Raphael Bonanno* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. Collectio Maior; 17, Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 2002) 29fig.2.

⁴⁹ Bissera V. Pentcheva, *okimki: Space, ritual, and the senses in Byzantium / Bissera Pentcheva* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010) 17



Figure 37 The column with capital, Al adelia Mosque, 1544.A.D, (Othman, 2009)

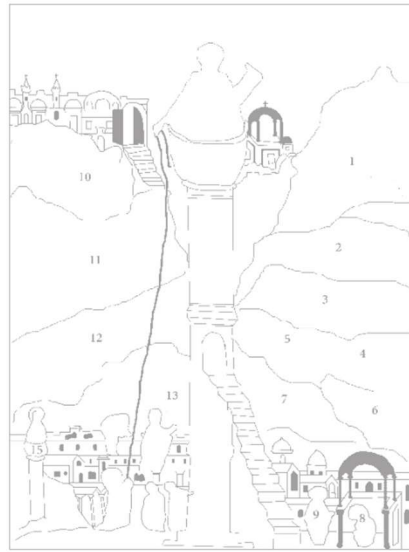


Figure 36 The scheme of saint Simon Stylites the younger icon, Aleppo, 17th

5.1.5 Ambo



Figure 38 The ambo, detail from the icon of the Elevation of the Venerable Cross, the eighteenth century, Saint Nicolas church, Latakia. Cat.3

The term ambo is used to delineate smaller platforms resembling the contemporary pulpit.⁵⁰ A raised platform for the liturgical reading of lessons and the delivery of announcements; pulpit. The ambo derived its name from the fact that, it had had to be ascended by flight of steps. It was usually built of white marble and richly decorated with ornamental panels. In the fourteenth century the Ambo gradually fell out of use and was largely superseded by simpler pulpits.⁵¹ An Ambo⁵² is usually, large enough to hold only one or two people and is not located in the center of the nave as with the bema. Both the Ambo and the *bema* have been linked with the sanctuary by a ceremonial walkway.⁵³ Originally there was only one, but later two were built, one for the Epistle and one for the Gospel, on the S. and N. sides respectively.⁵⁴ Its primary use was for the reading of the lessons out the Bible, less commonly for sermons. In the Byzantine liturgy, the Gospel Book was carried from the altar to the Ambo and back again. From the time of the Byzantine emperor Maurice⁵⁵ at the end of the sixth century, the emperors were crowned in the ambo of the church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. ⁵⁶ Keep in mind that the ambo was used for other major events in the liturgical life of the Church; “for instance, the exaltation of the Cross was celebrated at the ambo. Also, from the Ambo anathemas were proclaimed, and even secular announcements were sometimes made”.⁵⁷ Ichnographically, Elevation the cross icon, Cat.3 on ambo the patriarch who elevates the cross stands on it. This ambo is detected as an elongated a consisting of symmetrical staircases joining a central

⁵⁰ Loosley, *The architecture and liturgy of the bema in fourth- to-sixth-century Syrian churches*, 9

⁵¹ Patricios, *The sacred architecture of Byzantium*

⁵² The Ambo of Santa Maria in Cosmiden, 12th century, Rome Giovanni B. 1.-1. Giovenale, *La basilica di S. Maria in Cosmedin / di G.B. Giovenale* (Monografie sulle chiese di Roma; 2, Roma, Italia: Sansaini, 1927) 30

⁵³ Loosley, *The architecture and liturgy of the bema in fourth- to-sixth-century Syrian churches*, 9

⁵⁴ Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 49

⁵⁵ Born in 539, his home town of Arabissus in eastern Cappadocia, a place of no distinction in earlier centuries of Roman rule. Michael

⁵⁶ Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity / edited by Everett Ferguson*, 41

⁵⁷ Loosley, *The architecture and liturgy of the bema in fourth- to-sixth-century Syrian churches*, 61

platform. This type was predominant in Greece.⁵⁸In Icon of Michael Polychronis, in Tripoli, an Ambo erects in front of apse of a church.⁵⁹

5.1.6 Fountains and Basins

The element of water has fundamental significance in most religions in Syria, in Judaist, Christianity, and Islam. During ottoman Period, public baths and fountains are important urban elements in many cities, like Aleppo and Damascus. The elements of water had a significant position in Mosques, buildings, roads, etc. The biblical sources for this watery imagery are found in the Old as well as the New Testament. From there come the river and streams (Psalms 46:4), the 'fountain sealed' and the well (Song of Songs 4:12, 15), the living water (John 4:10–11), and the water of life in the new, heavenly city of Jerusalem (Revelation 22:1, 17).

Usually, the representation of fountain was used to refer to Theotokos, Mary, is famous and variety, like the icons of Lady of spring, see Cat.55,56,67, and the icons of immaculate Mary which depicted with symbols from the Old and New Testaments, the wall and fountain, for example icon of Virgin of the immaculate, Aleppo, Cat.59. The shape of our fountains is rectangular, polygonal. In medieval Aleppo; for example, the pools were either rectangular or octagonal.⁶⁰

In the catalogue, there is a specific representation of historian fountain, which is connected with Islamic culture, Ablution fountain, known as Al-Ka'as, which means the chalice, and in the Ma'lula icon, Cat.66, it is depicted as the cup located between Al Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock. In conclusion, the representations of architectural elements are generic, specific, and symbolic representations.

⁵⁸ Paul C. Finney, *The Eerdmans Encyclopedia of early Christian art and archaeology, Volume 1* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017) 46–47

⁵⁹ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 166

⁶⁰ Yasser Tabbaa, *Constructions of power and piety in medieval Aleppo* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997) 152

5.2 Architectural scenes

With completely different approach from that of the previously discussed architectural elements. Sometimes, the Melkite artists preferred to turn to older artistic prototypes rather than to contemporary daily life for inspiration for such details. Here we would like to make a few observations in the representation of some specific buildings, historical complex Monasteries, churches, etc., and the depiction of cities or ports in the icon.

5.2.1 The representations of historical buildings

While carrying out the survey of representations of buildings in Melkite art, I noticed a concentration of interesting examples in monuments located either in Jerusalem. These monuments are dated to the beginning of seventeenth and the early of nineteenth centuries. The concentration of such representations may be understood as a manifestation of realistic tendencies unique to Melkite art.

To understand this case needs to examine the Historical landmarks more closely in terms of architectural style, and artistic elements, and within the broader framework of artistic creativity in Jerusalem at the time. Comparisons with some contemporary building which have come to us from Jerusalem become important in this respect.

Representations of architecture as memory and model are also found in late antique artefacts.⁶¹ One of the more significant aspects of representation of architecture in byzantine art, and directly related to its aesthetic perception as being predominantly, if not excursively, of spiritual value, is the denial of the relevance of physical scale. The buildings, especially churches, are depicted in all art media as being of the same size or even smaller than human beings. Since churches, symbolically speaking, were understood as houses of God, this seeming paradox becomes perfectly clear.⁶² The role of the representation of architecture in the observer's meditations on the Holy Places and events must, for the time being, remain a matter for speculation.⁶³

5.2.1.1 The Holy Sepulchre Church

The goal of Christian pilgrims to the holy land has always been the Holy Sepulchre, the supposed tomb of Christ on the hill of Golgotha and the place of the relics of the Holy Cross were found. In his biography of Constantine⁶⁴Eusebius called the church of the Holy Sepulchre “the New Jerusalem, facing the far-famed Jerusalem of olden time”.⁶⁵ The Church of the Holy

⁶¹ Carile, *Memories of Buildings? Messages in Late Antique Architectural Representations* (as in note 533), at 23

⁶² Ćurčić, *Architecture as icon* (as in note 251), at 13–14

⁶³ Hjort, "Oddities" and "Refinements" *Aspects of Architecture space and Narrative in the Mosaics of Kariye Camii* (as in note 632), at 41

⁶⁴ Constantine Valerius Constantinus was the son of Constantinus Chrorus and Helen and was born in the 280s at Naissu, Nis. He was Baptized on his deathbed and died near Nikomedia on 22 May 337. To the pagans he became a god. The Christians venerated him as the Thirteenth Apostle and a Saint. Nicol, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire / Donald Nicol*, 24–25

⁶⁵ *Eusebius. Vita Constantini 3.25 / Trans. J. Wilkinson, Egeria's Travels* (3rd ed., Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 2002), 144.



Figure 39 Small round building, perhaps the Holy Sepulchre, Syria, A.D 500, Museum of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, in Denmark.

Sepulchre which called by Orthodox tradition; the Church of the Resurrection and by Arab Christians gave it the equivalent name, *Qiyyaama*.⁶⁶

It is a chaotic group of buildings, over which dominated the half-ruined bell tower of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and two domes, the rotunda of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Greek Church of the Resurrection (the Catholicon) adjacent to the rotunda to the east. The entrance into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was from the south side. Immediately behind it was the marble slab Stone of Anointing.⁶⁷

The church may also be interpreted as the center of the world, for it quickly became such for Christian pilgrims and for Constantine's religious policy in the empire.⁶⁸

The church Historians usually⁶⁹ cite Constantine the Great's massive program of building as evidence of that emperor's great devotion to his new faith.

In early Christian iconography, for resurrection icon, they depicted the rotunda flanked by Mary and the angel, one of the best known example is a mosaic in S. Apollinaire Nuova in

⁶⁶ In the fourth century, Jerome had used the term, "the Lord's Sepulchre", which, along with "the Holy Sepulchre", was to become the standard Latin usage. From the beginning, the great church was described as a "basilica", in Constantine's letter to Macarius, by Eusebius, and by the Bordeaux pilgrim. A basilica was an imperial hall and came to be used for the great hall-churches sponsored by Constantine. More surprisingly, the bishops assembled for the consecration in 335 called it the *martyrium*, which was the standard word for a martyr's shrine, and would more naturally have been used to describe the tomb or the rotunda around it. The use of the term does confirm the speculation that the rotunda around that Tomb had not been built at first, so that it was natural to see the basilica as the *martyrium* or shrine-church. Later writers used a variety of terms, with a preference for "the church (or basilica) of Constantine". The Bordeaux pilgrim in 333 called the church a *dominicum* built by order of the emperor. This was presumably a Latin version of the regular Greek word for a church, *kyriakon*. In the 380s, Egeria several times used phrases such as "in the great church which Constantine built behind the cross". Surprisingly, as well as calling the rotunda the Anastasis, she called it a "basilica", although it was not in the least like the halls from which great churches were being developed. Clearly, the vocabulary was still very fluid. Just before 700 *Adomnan* spoke of "the basilica built with great magnificence by King Constantine", adding "it is also called the martyrium"—so the name had stuck for a long time. It should be remembered that Anastasis is simply the Greek word for "resurrection", and it became the standard word for pictorial depictions of it, and for icons of what in the West would be called "the descent into hell", a very popular theme of Eastern art. See Colin Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West: From the Beginning to 1600* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005) 33–34

⁶⁷ Religious application of olive oil, from cooking to cult, almost every aspect of life in the Greco-Roman world involed the use of oil. Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* / edited by Everett Ferguson, 56–57

⁶⁸ William Telfer, "Constantine's Holy Land plan," *Studia patristica*, I Part 1 (1957) 696-700., 696-700

⁶⁹ Eusebius of Caesarea in this essay gives the initiative Constantine, claiming that the emperor was "motivated by the Spirit of the Himself" to rescue the site of the Resurrection from the oblivion to which evil had consigned only parts of his work remain, and mostly invisible today. H. A. Drake, "The Return of the Holy Sepulchre," *The Catholic Historical Review* 70 (1984) 263–67, at 263

Ravenna, dominated by the Rotunda, which is entirely classical in appearance.⁷⁰ Also during the middle age, the representation of the church was continuing, i.e., the Three Maries at the Sepulchre, a walrus ivory relief made at Cologne in the second of the XII century, where the central architectural feature represented the ciborium of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which was built by the crusaders in the twelfth century.⁷¹

In *proskynetaria* icons, the church of the Holy Sepulchre is presented from a southern vantage point using a quasi-architectural cross section. This approach offers a view of the compound's layout and even some of its internal spaces. In icons of seventeenth -eighteenth centuries, at the center of the Church is a bell tower, which was constructed around 1170,⁷² when the crusaders began to refurbish the church in a Romanesque style.⁷³ This tower is anachronistically drawn to its full height, as an earthquake damaged the top of this structure in 1546, and in 1554, the year in which the bell tower of the basilica was deprived of its steeple.⁷⁴ For the first time, a bell tower of five stories – approximately 160 feet – was erected by the Spanish architect Jordano, in 1167 over the chapel of St. John the Evangelist in the southwest corner.⁷⁵ We can see a Model of the Holy Sepulchre eighteenth Century at Museum of *the Studium Bcum Franciscanum*, Jerusalem.⁷⁶ From a graphical standpoint, the belfry constitutes an axis that divides the compound in half; though, the tower is located west of center.⁷⁷ While in the *Proskynetaria* of nineteenth century, there is now bell tower. On the left wing, the truncated conical dome of the Rotunda can be seen, beneath there is Jesus' tomb⁷⁸, Aedicule. And we know that in 1555 the aedicule enshrining the Sepulchre was entirely rebuilt, and again repaired in 1728. The original timber dome of the Anastasis was likewise entirely rebuilt in 1719.⁷⁹ All the catalogue's maps have embellished the rotunda with an image of Christ rising from his grave. To the left of the compound is an assortment of buildings that are part of the Orthodox Patriarchate's complex. Specially the chapel of Constantine and Helen, whose images are painted thereon. But in icon-map of Hama, 1748, there is no this chapel, although it is in icon-map of Sydnaia, 17th. The last one contains a scene of Jesus ordaining his brother

⁷⁰ Grabar, *Christian iconography: a study of its origins*, 124

⁷¹ William H. Forsyth, "The Easter Sepulchre," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 3 (1945) 163, at 165

⁷² Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome, *The Holy Land, An Oxford Archaeological Guide from Earliest Times to 1700*, Oxford University Press, 2008, p.54

⁷³ Hazard, *The art and architecture of the Crusader states*, 37

⁷⁴ Piccirillo, Michele, the role of the Franciscans in the translation of the sacred spaces from the holy land to Europe, in *New Jerusalem: Heterotopy and iconography of sacred spaces*, Ed. By Alexi Lidov (Moscow: Indirik, 2009), p378.

⁷⁵ "Tiffany L Burke, Architect," accessed October 30, 2016, <http://www.tiffanylburke.com/essays.php>

⁷⁶ Piccirillo, Michele, the role of the Franciscans in the translation of the sacred spaces from the holy land to Europe, in *New Jerusalem: Heterotopy and iconography of sacred spaces*, Ed. By Alexi Lidov (Moscow: Indira, 2009), p378.

⁷⁷ This tower is located to the left of the façade. It is currently almost half its original size.

⁷⁸ In the *Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine*, Eusebius states that the Tomb of Christ was covered with earth and paved with stone, upon which was constructed a temple of Venus. Eusebius, *The life of the blessed Emperor Constantine, in four books, from 306 to 337 A.D* (The Greek ecclesiastical historians of the first six centuries of the Christian era, I, London: S. Bagster and sons, 1845) 137

⁷⁹ Emerson H. Swift and William Harvey, "Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem. Structural Survey, Final Report," *American Journal of Archaeology* 40 (1936) 289, at 290

James as the first bishop of Jerusalem in the front portion of the Church, next to the eponymous Chapel of James.

To the right of the bell tower can be found the Holy Sepulcher's double-arched entrance, Figure.41. As is the case to this day, the right (eastern) half of the portal is sealed with stones. To the right, there is a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows – known as the Chapel of the Franks. Over the doorway is a representation of Jesus being anointed on the Stone of Unction,⁸⁰ which is indeed located just beyond the entrance? Above this scene is the compound's main hall, the domed *Catholicon* – site of, inter alia, the *omphalos* that allegedly marks the center of the world? In icon-map of Sydnaia, there are two thrones; one is Antiochian Throne, and the throne of Jerusalem.

Over the doorway is a representation of Jesus being anointed on the Stone of Unction, it is also known as the “red stone” (perhaps the name was also conferred for the Christ's blood. Hence, the red marble, with streaks of white running through it, would have commemorated the commingling and sacred blood. Mentioned probably since at least the tenth century on, where the sacred corpse was placed for these preparations.⁸¹ It locates inside the entrance (Stone of Anointing), which tradition believes to be the spot where Jesus' body was prepared for burial by Joseph of Arimathea, this tradition is mentioned by the Italian Dominican pilgrim Riccoldo da Monte di Croce in 1288, and the present stone was only added in the 1810 reconstruction.⁸²

The Stone of Unction is depicted, at Sydnaia proskynetarion, under two arches. We can find this depiction in Hama proskynetarion. While, at -Ma'lula proskynetarion, in the center of the church is the *catholicon* up in the dome, inside it is iconostasis, beneath are three arches and a representation of Jesus being anointed on the Stone of Unction? in the two icon of 17-18th centuries, over the doorway is a representation of Jesus being anointed on the Stone of Unction, which is indeed located just beyond the entrance and above this scene is the compound's main hall, the domed *Catholicon*, while in Ma'lula icon, the scene of the Stone is over the Holy Sepulcher's double-arched entrance and the scene of patriarch emerging from the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, holding the candles which has miraculously been lit from Christ's Tomb. The second half of 19th century, there is no representation of the Stone of Unction.

⁸⁰Mentioned from probably at least the tenth century on, was where the sacred corpse was placed for these preparations. the earliest detailed accounts of it are found in two Greek sources 1- the history of Nicolas Connate (ruled, 1143-1180), written during the stone came to Constantinople 2- the other Greek author, Cinnamus, gives details of Stone's early history. Graeve, “The Stone of Unction in Caravaggio's Painting for the Chiesa Nuova,” 228

⁸¹the earliest detailed accounts of it are found in two Greek sources: the history of Nicolas Choniate (ruled, 1143-1180), written during the stone came to Constantinople, the other Greek author, Cinnamus, gives details of Stone's early history. *ibid.*

⁸² Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land*, 56–59

Further to the right, one can clearly see the Chapel of Golgotha⁸³ and the chapel of Crucifixion⁸⁴, as Hama map, Figure.13, or just one chapel like Sydnaia map. The other works feature Jesus on the cross flanked by two persons, who are to be identified as the Mary and John the Beloved. Atop the Golgotha is the Chapel of Abraham the Patriarch, which marks the place of the Binding of Isaac. Beneath the Crucifixion scene is a building that is reached from the Church's main plaza by an ascending, Crusader-era staircase. Also, to the right is a thick cluster of buildings. In the maps from Sydnaia Monastery and Hama church, a staircase at the bottom of this area leads down to the cave where Helena is said to have discovered the cross, the Cave of invention of the Cross.

We can conclude that there are two general formats for drawing the Church of the Holy Sepulchre the first one with bell tower is dated to seventeenth-eighteenth centuries, while the second one which without bell tower and it is abbreviated from the first one. These topographical icons can be read as the results of processes of hybridization between Orthodox and Western visual traditions.



Figure 40 *The Holy Sepulchre Church, Jerusalem city, proskynetarion, Thekla Monastery-Ma'lula, tempera on canvas, Jerusalem school. (After DGAM Archives).*

⁸³ ⁸³ The place of crucifixion was Calvary or Golgotha, the Τόπος του κρανίου (Place of the Skull) mentioned without further specification by all the Evangelists as if it were a well-known locality. Kenneth John, Conant, *The Holy Sites at Jerusalem in the First and Fourth Centuries A. D., Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, American Philosophical Society, Vol. 102, No. 1 (Feb. 17, 1958), p.16.

⁸⁴ Eusebius does not mention the Calvary or the Cross, but Cyril of Jerusalem, in his letter of 351 to the Emperor, says that the discovery of the Holy Cross was due to the piety of Constantine (t887), though the Emperor's mother Helena was perhaps in Jerusalem, visiting the site, at the time. Possibly the supposed Holy Cross ("a piece of a poor tree, less valuable than most trees are," according to Gregory of Nyssa) was found in a cistern, where the water would have preserved it. The present Chapel of the Invention of the Holy Cross is beyond the quarry mentioned above, which seems rather distant (about 40 meters or 130 feet) from the Calvary, especially since there is a cistern just east of Calvary itself. The find and the mode of identification are not satisfactorily reported. Kenneth J. Conant, "The Original Buildings at the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem," *Speculum* 31 (1956) 1–48, at 2

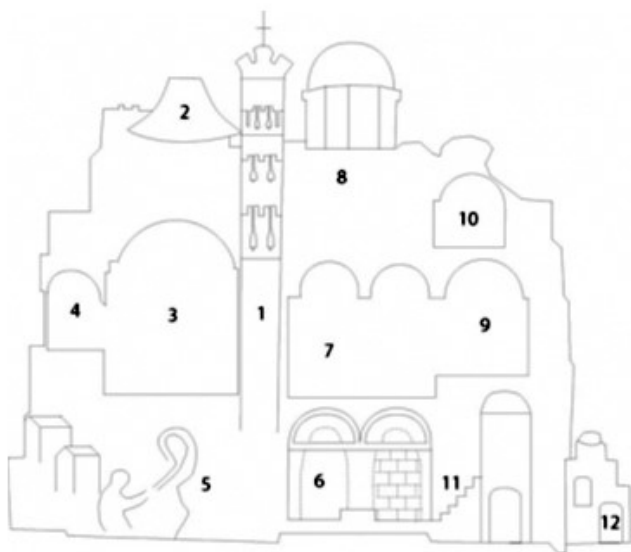


Figure 41 Key index to the drawing of the Holy Sepulchre in icon-maps of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

1. The Bell-tower
2. The Rotunda
3. The Tomb
4. The chapel of Constantine and Helen
5. Jesus ordaining his brother James
6. The Entrance
7. The Stone of Uncction
8. The dome of the Catholicon
9. Chapel of Golgotha
10. The chapel of Abraham
11. Stairs and the Chapel of the Franks
12. The cave of the invention of the Cross



Figure 42 Key index to the drawing of the Holy Sepulchre in icon-maps of nineteenth century.

1. The Rotunda
2. the Tomb
3. the Stone of Uncction
4. Priest?
5. The Entrance
6. the Cave of invention of the Cross and stairs
7. the chapel of Abraham
8. the icon of Crucifixion
9. the chapel of Golgotha
10. the chapel of Constantine and Helen
11. the dome of Catholicon.

5.2.1.2 The Church of Nazareth

The site of the Annunciation has belonged since the seventeenth century to the Franciscan Custody⁸⁵ of the Holy.⁸⁶ Improving relations by the 18th century allowed the Franciscans to acquire the Basilica. They have maintained a Christian presence here ever since. This church is built on one of the most sacred places for the Christian world. According to the New Testament, and Apocryphal text⁸⁷, this is where the angel Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary that she would bear the son of God (Luke 1:26). One of Tancred's first concerns on becoming Prince of Galilee in 1099 was to erect a church above the cave in the center of the city. Dedicated to the Annunciation, it was visited by the Russian pilgrim Daniel in 1106; every corner of the cave is related to something in the daily life of the Holy Family.⁸⁸

In 1620 the Franciscans were permitted to buy back the ruins of the church of the Annunciation thanks to the benevolence of the Druze emir Fakhr-a-Din II (1591–1635). With the approbation of another Muslim rebel, Daher el Omar, they built a church in 1730, the church had three naves, with very narrow lateral ones.⁸⁹ This church was demolished in 1955 to make room for the new basilica which was dedicated in 1969. Mikhâ'il Brayk in his book says that: "In 1763, the Bishara church, Annunciation, was built."⁹⁰

The church of Nazareth is depicted by two types of representations, symbolic and specific representations. The first category appears in annunciation icons depicted as a building without cupola in all of Annunciation icons, while the second type of representations are in topography icons of Jerusalem and Holy land, Cat.65,66,67, and in some icons of Akathist, Cat.61.

5.2.1.3 The Dome of Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque

The Dome of the Rock—a monumental Islamic commemorative structure built in the seventh century by the Islamic conquerors of Jerusalem, is dated in the year 72 AH/AD 691-2, There is no record of any other important building built with an octagonal shape⁹¹ anywhere in the

⁸⁵The first Franciscan arrived in the Holy Land shortly after the establishment of the order in the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth century Pope Clement VI bestowed the title "Guardians of the Holy Places" on the Franciscans serving in the province of the Holy Land. Halevi, Masha, the politics behind the construction of the modern church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, *The Catholic Historical Review*, Vol. 96, No. 1 (January 2010), Catholic University of America Press, p.28.

⁸⁶ Halevi, Masha, the politics behind the construction of the modern church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, *The Catholic Historical Review*, Vol. 96, No. 1 (January 2010), Catholic University of America Press, p.27.

⁸⁷ The Gospel of the Birth of Mary or the Libellus de natiuitate sanctae Mariae (Geerard, Clavis 52) (Mary 9:1) 1L at that time that is as soon as she arrived in Galilee, the angel Gabriel was sent to her by God to tell her of the conception of the Lord and to explain how it was to happen and its manner. On entering her home he filled the room where she was with an immense light . . . C, see Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives*, 29.

⁸⁸ Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land*, 424

⁸⁹ Bagatti, Bonanno and Alliata, *Excavations in Nazareth / Bellarmino Bagatti, with the collaboration of Eugenio Alliata ; translated by Raphael Bonanno*, 129

⁹⁰ Brayk and Bacha, *Histoire du pays de Damas de 1720 à 1782 / par le père Michel Breik (damascain) ; editée et annotée par le père Constantin Bacha*, 76

⁹¹ The octagonal shape, which has been pointed to as an Islamic quality, its "eight-ness" suggestive of the eight principal gates of paradise. N. J. Johnson, "Paradisiacal imagery in early Islamic art" (National Library of Canada = Bibliothèque nationale du Canada, 1998) 43

Islamic world during this period of a thousand years.⁹² In the eyes of Islam, the Temple Mount was the most sacred area in Jerusalem, and the third in its holiness in the world. Non-Muslims were not even permitted to enter it.⁹³ Its architecture follows in the tradition of the great Christian martyrdom and is closely related to the architecture of the Christian sanctuaries in Jerusalem, one of which commemorated the Ascension of Christ.⁹⁴

By observing the catalogue, the reorientations of the Dome of the Rock is depicted as a central building and domed structure. In the Entry into Jerusalem icons Cat.19,20,22,23, and in the Presentation icon Cat.12, also we have found the representation of this dome in the icon of Ascension, Cat.25. While in the proskynetaria icons, it occupies the upper right corner of Jerusalem city. In the Islamic as much as in the Christian structure, the central plan crowned by a dome was adopted as a visual articulation of a spiritual journey.⁹⁵ The dome, along with its more transient precursor the tent-canopy, was associated with the heavens in both the Hellenistic-Roman and Ancient Persian worlds.⁹⁶

The depiction of the church of Sepulchre occupies the major part of Jerusalem city, while in fact, the visual competition between the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is a “defining tension of the topography of Jerusalem,” mainly because they each reside in the highest echelon of sacred space for their respective faiths.⁹⁷ The Dome of the Rock is on axis with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Dome shares the same architectural design and nearly the same dimensions as the centrally planned section of the Church.⁹⁸ The Dome of the Rock was also once used as a church, the *Templum Domini*, during Jerusalem’s Crusader period in the eleventh century. The structure is so visually arresting that its religious function is transcended by its physical presence.⁹⁹ When constructed, the Dome was intended to be the physical manifestation of the superiority and legitimacy of Islam, proof of the Islamic state’s stability and authority over Jerusalem.¹⁰⁰

⁹² RINA AVNER, “THE DOME OF THE ROCK IN LIGHT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONCENTRIC MARTYRIA IN JERUSALEM: ARCHITECTURE AND ARCHITECTURAL ICONOGRAPHY,” *Muqarnas* 27 (2010) 31–49, at 31

⁹³ Rehav Rubin, *Ideology and landscape in early printed maps of Jerusalem: Ideology and landscape in historical perspective Essays on the meanings of some places in the past*, eds. Alan Reginald Harold Baker, Gideon Biger, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006 (ed. Alan R. H. Baker and Gideon Biger; Cambridge studies in historical geography; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), at 22

⁹⁴ Oleg Grabar, “The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem,” *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959) 33–62, at 41

⁹⁵ Theresa Grupico, “The Dome in Christian and Islamic Sacred Architecture,” *The Forum on Public Policy* (2011), at 3

⁹⁶ E. Baldwin Smith, *Early Christian Iconography*, 85

⁹⁷ Simon Goldhill, *Jerusalem: City of Longing*. (2nd ed., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009) 47

⁹⁸ Oleg Grabar, *The shape of the holy: Early Islamic Jerusalem / Oleg Grabar ; with contributions by Mohammad al-Asad, Abeer Audeh, Said Nuseibeh* (Princeton, N.J., Chichester: Princeton University press, 1996) 104–9

⁹⁹ For more detail *ibid*.

¹⁰⁰ Grabar, “The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem,” 33–62



Figure 43 Al- Haram era, the Dome of the Rock, Al-Aqsa Mosque, Sydnaia proskynetarion, 1738-9, Sydnaia Monastery.



Figure 44 The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem city, the Entry into Jerusalem icon, details of Cat.22



Figure 45 Al-Aqsa Mosque, Sydnaia proskynetarion, 1738-9, Sydnaiya Monastery.



Figure 46 Al- Haram era, the Dome of the Rock, the fountain, Al-Aqsa Mosque, Ma'lula proskynetarion, Ma'lula monastery. 1827.

Since the Crusaders' era, Christians associated Mary with the site of this Mosque, as well as the early Christian maps,¹⁰¹ the representation of the Aqsa Mosque could be found in the icon, in the catalogue, this building is depicted as an edifice which has the facade of seven arcs in the Ma'lula *proskynetarion*, *Figure.46.* or four arcs in Sydnaia, Cat.61.

5.2.2 The representation of monastery

The monastery was one of the most vivid features of medieval Christendom. It was the model of an ideal world order, a "righteous" and divine organization. For medieval people the monastery was not only the prototype of perfect social structure but was also believed to be a model of the heavenly world, the embodiment of New Jerusalem.¹⁰² During Ottoman period, information about the monasteries of the Patriarchate of Antioch is much scarcer than information about the Palestinian monasteries.¹⁰³ The monasteries are divided into two groups depends on the geographical regions. The monasteries of Inner Syria along the line from Damascus to Aleppo are ancient, even Byzantine constructions that for the most part lay in ruins, with only a few of them supporting life. The monasteries of the coast, mainly in Tripoli and 'Akkar, were more numerous and their founding in most cases already belonged to the Ottoman era.

The architecture of the monastery can be defined in terms of zones: The zone of worship which is the church, the residential zone for eating and sleeping, and the third zone is the work zone.

In iconography, the depiction of monastery is so frequented, the monastery complex, with its churches towers, belfries, cells and service buildings, formed a coherent and symbolic image of the triumphant Holy City.

5.2.2.1 Sinai Monastery

The monastery lies in the Wadi ed-Deir ("The Valley of the Monastery") below a shoulder of Mt. Sinai. It is a fortified monastery which continuously inhabited since the 4th century.

The icon of topography the Holy Land shows Sinai next to the figure of Jerusalem, at the right, inside square. According to the Old Testament, Moses, who has been watching over his sheep, approaches the Burning Bush; the angel Gabriel appears in the Bush and call the prophet, the angels-in this icon, is depicted behind the bush, detail taken from the Biblical text (Ex.3:2) the Virgin Mary is shown within the bush, painted half-length with the Christ child in front her. The miraculous event is rendered deep in the evilly where the Sinai Monastery was later built, enclosing the sacred site of the bush within its walls. The monastery itself behind the Bush¹⁰⁴, Cat.66 on the upper left side of the icon, the Holt Summit or Mount Moses. This icon do not

¹⁰¹ Joshua. Prawer and Haggai. Ben-Shammai, "The history of Jerusalem: The early Muslim period, 638-1099," Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1996, 59

¹⁰² Olga Polyakova, *the architecture of Russia as seen through her icons: Architectural scenery in the icons: Russian cities and monasteries as portrayed in 16th-19th centuries icons the Kolomenskoye Museum collection – 2006* (Moscow: Basic Element, 2006) 69

¹⁰³ Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 4551–52

¹⁰⁴ The Melkite took their doctrine from byzantine, whom understanding of history was dominated by prefiguration, or what Saint John of Damascus called skiagraphia. The events that were to happen in the New Testament had already been announced, though in veiled form, in the Old Testament. The Burning Bush, for example, foreshadowed the Mother of God. Della Dora, "Windows on Heaven (and Earth)," 87

depict Mount Saint Catherin but depicts the saint Catherin¹⁰⁵ on front of her Monastery. A particularly important part of the icon is the portrayal of the Sinai Monastery, which had to be symbolic figure, and could to be based on real life models. Keep in mind that by the eighteenth century, the topographic iconography of Sinai had become a symbol, almost a “seal” for the autonomous monastery.¹⁰⁶ The monastery is depicted as big wall with sloping blue roof, this wall has one hall that refers to main Gate of the monastery. And we already know that the monastery has a fortress and from AD 600 to 1920 people and supplies were drawn in on baskets suspended on 10m long ropes from a windlass in the north wall.¹⁰⁷ Behind the wall, there are buildings, one can clearly discern one aisled structure, and maybe it is the mosque which is built within the Sinai monastery possibly in the eleventh century. Behind it stands a tower, which is mosque’s minaret. Beside the mosque, there is a building, which it should to be the *Katholikon*. There is a dome, which refers the dome of monks’ cells. Sinai monastery has a special position in Melkite church, in Damascus, there was a small church in the Antioch patriarchate, which was dedicated to Saint Catherin and belonged to Saini Monastery, therefore, Sinai became “iconic” in both the metaphorical and the literal sense of the word: as beacons of Orthodoxy to which the faithful across the empire turned their eyes and souls and as unusual subjects of holy icons.¹⁰⁸

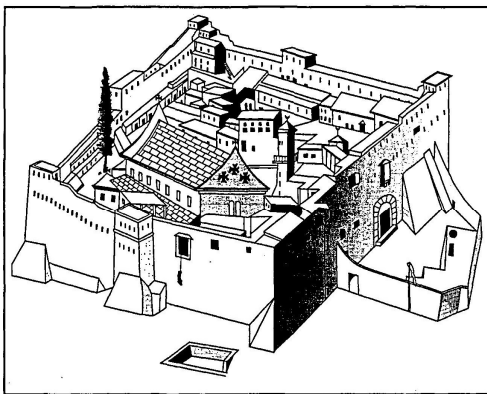


Figure 3. St. Katherine's Monastery (after a drawing produced by Misr Sinai)

Figure 47 The sketch of Sinai Monastery (Shackley, 128)



Figure 48 Sinai Monastery, details from Cat.66

¹⁰⁵ She was the daughter of a local ruler in Alexandria, Egypt, who died as a martyr for the faith at the beginning of the fourth century. The earliest surviving accounts of her life, written in Greek probably in the seventh and eighth centuries, provide the following narrative. For more details see Nancy Sevckenko, “The Monastery of Mount Sinai and the Cult of Saint Catherine,” *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557). Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*

¹⁰⁶ Della Dora, “Windows on Heaven (and Earth),” 102

¹⁰⁷ Myra Shackley, “A golden calf in sacred space?: The future of St Katherine's monastery, Mount Sinai (Egypt),” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 4 (1998) 124–34, at 125

¹⁰⁸ Della Dora, “Windows on Heaven (and Earth),” 86

5.2.2.2 Mar Saba Monastery, the Lavra

The Great Laura (the monastery of Mar Saba), which overhangs the steep cliffs of the Kidron Valley midway between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, is one of only a few Byzantine monasteries in the Judean Desert that is still active today (another is the monastery of St. George in Wadi Qelt, mentioned earlier). The conversion of most of the population to Islam, combined with a lack of security, led to the decline and abandonment of most of the desert monasteries in the centuries following the Muslim conquest.¹⁰⁹ The Lavra is located on a desolate mountain range 15 K.m to the north of Jerusalem, not far from the Dead Sea. The monastery had a reputation throughout the Antiochian Patriarchate; Saint Saba's reverence attracted many of the Melkite to this monastery - which was truly a religious center. The role of this monastery in the history of Eastern Christian civilization is similar to that of Sinai and Mount Athos.¹¹⁰ Meletius, whose given name was "Abd al-Karim" went as a youth to the Monastery of Mar Saba in Palestine.¹¹¹

The monastery itself resembles a fortress, also cleaving to the mountain over a deep chasm. It was one of the few churches in the Middle East that had a cross on its dome and bell tower. The construction of the bell tower by Serbian monks in the seventeenth century. The tower itself was an entire monastery complex with its own church.¹¹² Within in the monastery there are seven or eight churches, including the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Theotokos, which was rebuilt in the fourteenth century.¹¹³

As a result of religious and cultural importance of Saba Monastery, Map-icons have a representation of this monastery.

¹⁰⁹ Jodi Magness, *The Byzantine (Early Christian) Period (313–640 C.E.)* (ed. Jodi Magness; *The Archaeology of the Holy Land: From the Destruction of Solomon's Temple to the Muslim Conquest*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) 333–48, at 343

¹¹⁰For more details about Mount Athos during ottoman period see Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, *Mount Athos and the Ottomans c. 1350–1550* (ed. Michael Angold; *The Cambridge History of Christianity*; Cambridge History of Christianity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 154–68

¹¹¹ *The Orthodox church in the Arab world, 700 - 1700* (ed. Noble, Treiger and Kyriakos), 35

¹¹² Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 9400–9402

¹¹³ Bushell, *Churches of the Holy Land*, 185

5.2.2.3 Monastery of the Cross



Figure 49 Monastery of the Cross, detail from *Sydnaia proskynetaria*. Cat.64

This monastery is linked with the legend of Holy Cross, Dair al-Musallabeh, in Arabic. It was founded by King Tatian (466-499) and rebuilt by Justinian. It was sacked by the Arabs in 1099 but restored in 1644 by the King of Georgia. The Georgian Monastery of the Cross did serve as a mosque for 30-40 years.¹¹⁴ The Monastery commemorates the traditional site of the Tree of Life from which the Cross of Christ was made.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the representation of this Monastery in Melkite art is only in *proskynetaria*, Cat.64, 65, 66.

The cathedral church with a small dome and surrounded by a series of windows was built in the eleventh century and restored and repainted in the 1640s.¹¹⁶ It has kept its crusader character with the usual, beautifully vaulted ceilings and high dome above altar.¹¹⁷

In all *proskynetaria* in the catalogue, the representation of Monastery of the Cross locates in south of Jerusalem, while the *proskynetaria* in situ in the Monastery of the Holy Cross accentuates the centrality of the monastery rather than of the city or the tradition of the Holy Wood, apparently in order to integrate the monastery itself into the principal narrative of faith.¹¹⁸

Concluding that most of the images of monasteries are represented as walled monastery, which reminds us in the medieval concept of urban or monastic walls as the boundary of between the inner “cosmos” and the outer “chaos”.¹¹⁹ Some of these representations are generic without names or any inscriptions, while the others are specific representation.

¹¹⁴ Peri, *Christianity under Islam in Jerusalem*, 68

¹¹⁵ Meinardus, “Greek Proskynetaria of Jerusalem in Coptic Churches in Egypt,” 321

¹¹⁶ Panchenko, *Arab orthodox christians under the ottomans 1516-1831*, 4271–72

¹¹⁷ Bushell, *Churches of the Holy Land*

¹¹⁸ Arad, “The Proskynetarion from the Monastery of the Holy Cross and the map of the Holy Land.,” 3

¹¹⁹ Polyakova, *the architecture of Russia as seen through her icons*, 69

5.2.2 The representations of cities in Melkite icons

At this point of my argumentation I ought to speak about the image of the city in Melkite art. In other words, this section discusses about the image of the cities in the Melkite art during Ottoman period focusing on icons from the Archives of DGAM in Syria.

In Christian iconography depictions of cities appear in the catacombs early on. They illustrate biblical narrative and depict the cities where the action occurred. Depictions of cities may also stand for a heavenly Jerusalem.¹²⁰ These representations are included in biblical scenes in catacombs and in murals in churches depicting scenes from the old and New Testaments.¹²¹ In some Russian icons, the Moscow Kremlin lies at the saint's feet. One can admire the panorama of Veliky Ustyug, shown from a bird's-eye view, in the icon of SS. Prokopius and John of Ustygu. The architecture of Medieval Novgorod, including its Kremlin, holy savior church on Ilyina Street, and many administrative buildings, is meticulously represented in the border scenes which illustrate the miracle of the icon called “the Virgin of the Sign”.¹²²

Historically, the development of the great Arab towns in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the result of two main factors. The first there was the economic growth resulting from the creation of a huge intra-Empire market, the reality of which we have tried to demonstrate. Cities like Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo which we have most favorably situated on the borders of three continents could play the role of redistribution centers for the Empire and around the Mediterranean world. The second factor was the presence in the capitals of the provinces of a large class of persons with a high level of consumption of luxury goods. This was the caste established to insure the protection and proper administration of the provinces;¹²³ The question may well be asked about the cities in Syria during this period. During the beginning of Ottoman period, the walls of the cities in the Bilād al Shām, lost their function for defense from the enemy, because of the invention of the cannon. While the Syrian towns owe their location and longevity to the availability of water, and their location along ancient routes of trade and communication.

The subject her is the city itself, with the entirety of its churches, bell towers, houses and other buildings. The icons' compositions vary. The cities among Bilād al Shām, already were Islamic cities during previous periods, full of masques and many Islamic building as madrasa, etc. During Ottoman period, many buildings were being constructed by sultans themselves or donators, whether Pashas or wealthy people.

¹²⁰ Hélène Saradi, *The Byzantine city in the sixth century: Literary images and historical reality* / Helen G. Saradi (Athens: Distributed by the Society of Messenian Archaeological Studies, 2006 (Athens Perpinia Publications)) 120

¹²¹ Eadem, *Space in Byzantine Thought: Architecture as icon Perception and representation of architecture in Byzantine art* / Slobodan Ćurčić and Evangelia Hadjistryphonos ; with contributions by Kathleen E. McVey and Helen G. Saradi, eds. Slobodan Ćurčić, Evangelia Chatzētryphōnos, Kathleen E. McVey, Hélène Saradi, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Art Museum, 2010 (ed. Slobodan Ćurčić, Evangelia Chatzētryphōnos and Kathleen E. McVey; Saradi, Hélène; ; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Art Museum, 2010), at 79

¹²² Polyakova, *the architecture of Russia as seen through her icons*, 15

¹²³ Raymond, *the Ottoman conquest and the Development of the Great Arab twons* (as in note 18), at 23

In icon “Christ and the woman of Samaria”, late 15th century, there are two walled cities of western aspect, Jerusalem and Samaria, it could to say that these two cities come from Tuscan Landscapes.¹²⁴

There were no Christian signs as crosses up of domes and towers. The exteriors of Islamic structures appear as imposing pyramidal masses of cascading domes, punctuated by slender minarets. The mosques consist of central domed spaces flanked by subsidiary areas covered with smaller domes. Keeping in mind that the forms of Minarets in Ottoman period was polygonal.¹²⁵ A Lutheran and Catholic tower rose in the Christian quarter of the city, which was higher than the Muslim minarets that had dominated the early church of the Holy Sepulchre.¹²⁶

5.2.2.1 The city of Jerusalem

Jerusalem was neither a major commercial entrepot nor a provincial capital, in 16th Western Palestine, or the southwestern part of the province of Damascus, was divided at the time into four main districts (sancak)¹²⁷: Gaza, Lajjun (the northern valleys), Nablus and Jerusalem.¹²⁸

The *beylerbeylik* (region) of Damascus was composed of 15 small administrative units known as sancak, while the Sancak-i Kudüs-i Şerif (Province of Jerusalem) was divided into a number of nahiyes (subdistricts), whose boundaries changed several times during Ottoman rule.¹²⁹ Most of the city wall seen today was rebuilt in the sixteenth century¹³⁰ in March 1219, al-Mu‘azzam ‘Isâ¹³¹ destroyed the walls of Jerusalem, leaving them in a ruined state in which they remained until the rebuilding by the Ottoman Sultan, Sulaimân the Magnificent between 1537 and 1540–41. This destruction was extensive, involving the dismantling of towers and sections of both the main wall. The citadel, however, remained intact.¹³²

The representation of Jerusalem city in Melkite icons is in many types depends on the subject icon; the proskynetaria, the crucifixion icon, the entry into Jerusalem, finally heavenly Jerusalem in Last judgment.

The main character of these representations is walled city.¹³³ Keep in mind that the Jerusalem city is indeed walled city which is reflected in Proskynetaria icons. Jerusalem city is depicted as a medieval fortress, zigzag form in the eighteenth century’s icons, while during the nineteenth century the city would be depicted as square or rectangular. In the Entry into

¹²⁴ Chatzēdakē and Scampavias, *Byzantine and post-Byzantine art*, 198pl.133

¹²⁵ Mahmoud F. Rifai, *Aleppo between history and engineering* (Aleppo: Aleppo University, 1996) 62

¹²⁶ Oleg Grabar, *Islamic Jerusalem or Jerusalem Under Muslim Rule* (ed. Attilio Petruccioli et al; *The City in the Islamic World; Handbook of Oriental studies. Section 1, The Near and Middle East v. 94*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008) 317–28, at 325–26

¹²⁷ “Baaner”, the basic administrative unite of the Ottoman Empire. Bayerle, *Pashas, begs and effendis*, 140

¹²⁸ Dror Zeevi, *An Ottoman century: The district of Jerusalem in the 1600s / Dror Ze’evi* (SUNY series in medieval Middle East history, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996) 11

¹²⁹ R. Mazza, *Jerusalem: From the Ottomans to the British* (I.B.Tauris, 2009) 12

¹³⁰ J. Boas, *Jerusalem in the time of the crusade Society*, 48.

¹³¹ Saladin’s nephew, the governor of Damascus.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 45

¹³³ The representations of city-castles mentioned in historical narrative. Saradi, *Space in Byzantine Thought* (as in note 770), at 84

Jerusalem icons; the city is also depicted as walled city with a doorway, main gate, and numerous buildings behind the walls. In the icon of entry into Jerusalem, Dionysius in his guide mentions “a fortress” as a background¹³⁴, the walls of Jerusalem appear in crucifixion icons without depicting the entire city or buildings inside it. Often the scene of the Crucifixion is delimited by a wall, symbolizing the walls of Jerusalem. A historical reality, with a profound spiritual meaning.¹³⁵ But with Michael Polychronis School, the representations of the city would be depicted as white walled which has many buildings would be depicted, Cat.47.

The image of Jerusalem city also appears as symbolic art in the Last Judgment icons. The gates and walls that delineated celestial space and heavenly Jerusalem with the symbolic numbers seven or twelve clearly draw on Jewish tradition, while at the same time recalling city.¹³⁶ Various persons populate the garden. The enclosure is depicted as a fortification, with rampart. The waters of the four rivers of paradise flow from four apertures on the front. The Gate of Heavenly Jerusalem is a frequented motif from 5th-7th church mosaic in Rome and Ravenna.¹³⁷ The prototype appeared in the mid-4th.c apse mosaic of Old St. Peter’s in Rome. Its walls are shown containing the Garden of Eden, from which issue the Four Rivers of Paradise, Cat.59, the imagined heavenly Jerusalem offered the faithful the ultimate architectural glimpse into the invisible and uncountable heavenly realm, confirming the enduring iconographic role of architecture within the long tradition of Byzantine art.¹³⁸

5.2.2.2 The city of Nazareth

The representation of Nazareth¹³⁹ is very frequently in iconography. This city is where Jesus was raised in¹⁴⁰, and lived there until about 30 years of age. Nazareth was on a major road from the coast to Syria and only a few miles from the culturally diverse city of Sepphoris, which was being rebuilt at this time. According to the Gospel of Luke¹⁴¹, Nazareth was the home village of Mary as well as the site of the Annunciation. According to the Gospel of Matthew, Joseph and Mary resettled in Nazareth after returning from the flight from Bethlehem to Egypt.

¹³⁴ Di Dionysios Fournas, Bettini and Donato Grasso, *Canone dell'icona*, 145

¹³⁵ Heb. 13: 10-15

¹³⁶ Saradi, *Space in Byzantine Thought* (as in note 770), at 94

¹³⁷ Finney, *The Eerdmans Encyclopedia of early Christian art and archaeology*, Volume 1, 325

¹³⁸ Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 309

¹³⁹ The Arabic name for Nazareth is an-Nāṣira, and Jesus (Arabic: يَسُوع, Yasū‘) is also called an-Nāṣirī, reflecting the Arab tradition of according people an attribution, a name denoting whence a person comes in either geographical or tribal terms. In the Qur'an, Christians are referred to as naṣārā, meaning "followers of an-Nāṣirī", or "those who follow Jesus"

¹⁴⁰ St. Bernard of Clairvaux described Nazareth, the Virgin’s home at the time of the Annunciation, as ‘flower. Hunt, “The Fine Incense of Virginitly,”

¹⁴¹ The Annunciation Contained in: Luke 1:26–38, Protevangelium 11:1–3, Ps-Matthew 9, Mary 9 PapCair 10735, Liber Flavus Fergusiorum 42–44 (cf. ‘J’ Compilation 33–34) “In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.” (Luke 1.26f)... “In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ... And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.” [Luke 2.1ff]

However, some modern scholars also regard Nazareth as the birthplace of Jesus.¹⁴² The ancient Nazareth probably hung a little higher up the hill.¹⁴³ At the end of the seven century, Arculf saw two “very large churches”, one in the center of the city on the site of the house where Jesus was brought up, the other on the site of the house where Mary received the angel Gabriel. In the Ottoman period the village stayed small and the inhabitant hostile to Christians always.¹⁴⁴ Several representations of the life of Mary and the birth and childhood of Jesus in Melkite icons reveal significant parallels to the so-called Christian apocryphal writings. Some have the scene set indoors, in a room in which Mary piously reading a book or weaving; others have her out of doors, carrying a water-pitcher at a well. Parallels in art to the Protevangelium¹⁴⁵ 11:1 and 11:2–3 as well as to Ps-Matthew¹⁴⁶.

As it mentioned before that the *proskynetaria* were drawn in traditional iconic style and offer expressly spatial representations of sacred places in Jerusalem and the Holy Land.¹⁴⁷ Sometime, Nazareth city is represented with the entirety of its churches, bell towers, houses and other buildings, also it is shown from a bird's-eye view.¹⁴⁸ In the icon-map in Sydnaia monastery, 1738-39, *Cat.64* **Error! Reference source not found.** the city of Nazareth is represented as two buildings flanking of polygonal edifice, with dome. The site of the scene in *proskynetarion* locates on the upper left side of the Jerusalem city, near to Jordan River. The cartographic rendering of the entire Holy Land was organized thus: Jaffa to the west (below), the Jordan River to the east (above), Jerusalem at the center, Nazareth to the north (left), and Bethlehem to the south (right), in other words, the Church’s orientation did not accord with the other sites on the map. All the subsequent paintings followed the archetype of this cartographic outlook; the pattern of the early eighteenth-century icon in Saumur.¹⁴⁹

In *Cat66.*, the scene of annunciation has replaced of the representation the city, and its site is still on the upper left of Jerusalem city. Thus, city of Nazareth in *Proskynetaria* goes beyond

¹⁴² John P. Meier, *A marginal Jew: Rethinking the historical Jesus / John P. Meier* (Anchor Yale Bible reference library; v. 4-5, v. 1-v. 3, v. 4-: Doubleday, 1991) 216; Bart D. Ehrman, *Jesus: Apocalyptic prophet of the new millenium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 97; E. P. Sanders, *The historical figure of Jesus* (London: Allen Lane, 1993) 85.

¹⁴³ George A. Smith, “The Home of Our Lord's Childhood,” *The Biblical World* 8 (1896) 435–44, at 438

¹⁴⁴ Bagatti, Bonanno and Alliata, *Excavations in Nazareth / Bellarmino Bagatti, with the collaboration of Eugenio Alliata ; translated by Raphael Bonanno*, 20

¹⁴⁵ The term “Protevangelium” first gospel was coined in the 17th century but not much used today. It describes an understanding of Gen.3:15 in terms of salvation history, according to which it is the kernel of gospel declaration. Also this term has a second meaning as the modern title of an epochal infancy gospel, the book of James. Fahlbusch, Bromiley and Barrett, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity / editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett ; foreword, Jaroslav Pelikan*, 399–400

¹⁴⁶ Matthew 9:1 IM and on the second day, while Mary was at the fountain to fill her pitcher, the angel of the Lord appeared to her, saying, ‘blessed are you, Mary; for in your womb you have prepared a habitation for the Lord. For, lo, the light from heaven shall come and dwell in you, and by means of you will shine over the whole world.’ B see Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives*, 29.

¹⁴⁷ John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus: The Roots of the Problem and the Person*, Vol. 1, Doubleday 1991, p.216; Bart D. Ehrman, *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p.97; E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, Penguin 1993, p.85.

¹⁴⁸ As Zakyntos icon is a map-icon of Jerusalem. Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 310–11

¹⁴⁹ Rubin, “Greek-Orthodox maps of Jerusalem from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,” 128

the purely literal and narrative and endorses the topographical location of the city. The depictions of the Nazareth city follow the conception of sacred space which is geographic territory, or it may be more limited nature such as a building: a synagogue, church, monastery or “holy site”.¹⁵⁰

5.2.2.3 Jaffa port



Figure 50 Jaffa port, *Sydnaia proskynetarion*, 1738-9, Saydanaiya Monastery.

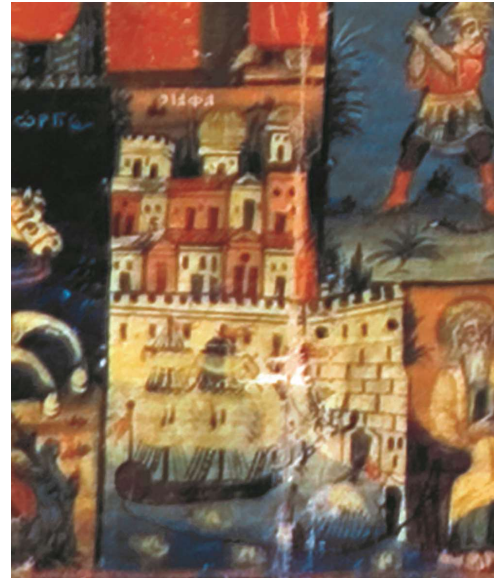


Figure 51 Jaffa port, *Ma'lula proskynetarion*, 1827, Ma'lula Monastery.

Jaffa, Haifa¹⁵¹, Acre are recorded in the Ottoman registers of that century as ordinary «villages» (karye).¹⁵² Throughout the first century of Ottoman rule¹⁵³, the sources only mention one ship that tried to anchor off Haifa, that of Rauwolf, and even that it was only there out of necessity.¹⁵⁴ The most important harbor for pilgrims was Jaffa because of its sort distance to Jerusalem.¹⁵⁵ It had always been regarded as its most natural port. Although there were pilgrims who took the overland route to arrive in Jerusalem, most of those who wanted to visit the Holy

¹⁵⁰ A. Houtman, M.J.H.M. Poorthuis and J. J. Schwartz, *Sanctity of Time and Space in Tradition and Modernity* (Brill, 1998) 2

¹⁵¹ From the beginning of the seventeenth century, as well as the growth of commercial relations between Europe and Palestine, there was an increase in the number of ships visiting Haifa. Alex Carmel, *Ottoman Haifa: A History of Four Centuries Under Turkish Rule / by Alex Carmel ; Translated into English by Elias Friedman ; Preface by Jakob Eisler* (Library of Middle East history; v. 2, London: I. B. Tauris, 2011) 13

¹⁵² Amnon Cohen, “Ottoman Rule and the Re-Emergence of the Coast of Palestine (17th -18th centuries),” *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 39 (1985) 163–75, at 163, http://www.persee.fr/docAsPDF/remmm_0035-1474_1985_num_39_1_2072.pdf

¹⁵³ By reviving their trade relationships with the Mamluk Empire, the port bases belonging to Italy’s trading cities in the Levant were not methodically destroyed after the fall of Saint-Jean d’Acre. Only Jaffa had to some extent been spared. Jaffa did not reclaim its position as Jerusalem port for pilgrims until the early of 15th century. Henri Grouiand, *Pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre at the Dawn of the Renaissance.: Treasure of the Holy Sepulchre*, Cinisello Balsamo Milan: Silvana, 2013 (Cinisello Balsamo Milan: Silvana, 2013), at 39.

¹⁵⁴ Carmel, *Ottoman Haifa*, 12

¹⁵⁵ Külzer, “Byzantine and early post-Byzantine pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to Mount Sinai,” 157

Places preferred to come by sea. This was not only true for the European pilgrims¹⁵⁶, both Christians and Jews, but also for those coming from Ottoman territory, e.g. Istanbul or Tripoli.

Encouraging the ongoing flow of pilgrims was not just a religious service provided by the Muslim authorities to their coreligionists, but it also had a more beneficial dimension. It contributed to the local economy by an influx of funds in return for services rendered, goods consumed or simply as pious donations to the various religious communities and institutions in Jerusalem. These pilgrims would disembark in Jaffa and proceed therefrom to Jerusalem where they spent some time, then they would leave and return to Jaffa from which port their boats would take them back home.¹⁵⁷ The representation of Jaffa port is very frequent in the proskynetaria icons, located in the left lower part. It is titled by the Arabic or Greek name of the city, and some anchored ships, figure.50,51.

5.2.2.4 Port of Beirut

In some icons of st George, the river of Beirut, the Nahr Beirut delimits with the castle the field of battle, not far from which Saint George would have overthrown the dragon. For the legend places Bayreuth as the place of battle, more precisely between the river and the city (Du Mesnil du Buisson, 1925, pp. 251 ff.). The Lord of Anglure passing on the spot in 1395, wrote: "Outside Bayreuth, about a place, is the place where St. George occupies the serpent. And in this place, he has a chapel and outside the church, very close to the wall, is the place where the serpent was occupied" (Anglure, 1878, p.10). In 1697, Henry Maundrell describes "the broad river of Beirut and on the other side a flat field which is said to have been the theater where St. George fought the dragon. In memory of this feat, a small chapel was erected in the square originally dedicated to the Christian hero, but and today it is converted into a mosque"¹⁵⁸ and Joseph Besson in the seventeenth century "About a mile from the city of Beirut, towards the north, we see a cave in which, a formidable dragon was concealed (according to the common claim of the country).¹⁵⁹ The church of St George, to the east of Beirut on the spot where the saint was believed to have defeated the dragon. "The local tradition of st George slaying the dragon is confirmed from the eleventh century onwards".¹⁶⁰ The battle with the dragon took place in the Bay of St. George, near Beirut. Melkite painters of the nineteenth century often portrayed the port of Beirut in the battle scene of St George.¹⁶¹ Thus, there are some observations; in all Melkite icons of the seventeenth until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the representation of the port was not existed, there are just the representation of the cave, the spot of killing the dragon, and the representation of unknown rampart, which represents unnamed city, Although the tradition of Melkite church tells that the city was Beirut.

¹⁵⁶ In 1654, thanks to the friendly Emir Fakhr Ed din, Fransiscans cam to stay, their main interest was in receiving pilgrims who entered the Holy Land through the harbor. Bushell, *Churches of the Holy Land*, 72

¹⁵⁷ Cohen, "Ottoman Rule and the Re-Emergence of the Coast of Palestine (17th -18th centuries)," 165

¹⁵⁸ Henry 1.-1. Maundrell, *A journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem in 1697 / Henry Maundrell ; with a new introduction by David Howell* (trans. David Howell, Henry 1665-1701. Account of the author's journey to the banks of the Euphrates at Beer and to the country of Mesopotamia Maundrell; Khayats oriental reprints; no.3, Beirut: Khayats, 1963) 50

¹⁵⁹ Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 284

¹⁶⁰ Immerzeel, *Identity puzzles*, 122

¹⁶¹ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites''* (as in note 173), 217,219pl.87,92

5.2.2.5 Sychar

In the fourth century, when two visitors to the land, Eusebius and the Bordeaux Pilgrim (the latter about A.D 333), both mention a Sychar, distant from Shechem.¹⁶² The abbot Daniel (1106-1107) speaks of “the hamlet of Jacob called Sychar. Jacob’s well is there, near this place, at half a vest a way, is the town of Samaria.”¹⁶³

The scene of the vision of Jacob in the book of Genesis depicted in 1765 icon in Sydnaia Monastery, shows Sychar as a small city, which has one small wall, with a some of houses. The houses have roofs pitched into directions. It could be concluded that the architectural representation is specific type, because the name of Sychar appears near the scene.

It can be concluded that on icons such features were used to identify the place where the event occurred—a church, a house, a town: as Leonid Ouspensky has noted,¹⁶⁴ it acts only as a background, so that the event does not occur in the building, but in front of it. This is because the very meaning of the events that the icons represent is not limited to their historical place, just as they surpass the moment of time when they occurred.

- ❖ Cities are sometimes depicted with specific buildings, as Nazareth city.
- ❖ Several details are rendered with impressive accuracy and realism? The map-icon depicts Christian Palestine, where cities were not simply road stops for pilgrims, but constituted in themselves monuments of Christians
- ❖ Most of cities are represented as a walled city with main doors.
- ❖ Jerusalem city is always depicted as Zigzag-walled city with seven doors and towers in proskynetaria of the eighteenth century.

¹⁶² Smith, *The Historical Geography of Holy Land*, 369

¹⁶³ Ibid., 370

¹⁶⁴ Leonid Ouspensky, *The Meaning and Content of the Icon* (ed. Daniel B. Clendenin; Eastern Orthodox Theology: A Contemporary Reader; 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 33-63.: Baker Academic, 2003) 33–63, at 61

The results

- ❖ The Typical scenes of Melkite Annunciation are three: Mary at the well, at the house, and when she is reading.
- ❖ The representations of the architecture of Melkite Annunciation scene correspond with two types of Annunciation scenes, in the well, and in her house. The architectural backgrounds are various at the first of seventeenth century and becoming frequented from the mid of nineteenth century.
- ❖ There are two types of Dormition icons with differences in architectural backgrounds.
- ❖ The walls in crucifixion icons represent the city of Jerusalem.
- ❖ The representations of temple in the presentation icons are a circular domed and classical form with slopping roofs.
- ❖ Melkite Entry into Jerusalem icon follows the Byzantine type, and the representation of the walled city, Jerusalem, occupies a prominent position.
- ❖ *Proskynetaria* icons maybe were used by pilgrims as orientation tools and self-positioning as well as souvenirs.
- ❖ *Proskynetaria* were as pilgrimage objects and used as Christian propaganda to affirm the authority of the Greek Orthodox Church on the Holy Land. They are related to evangelical events and some apocryphal stories in Palestine. The iconographic program of the *proskynetarion* echoes the ritual program of the pilgrimage itself.
- ❖ The architectural representations of proskynetaria icons are Jerusalem city, the Holy Sepulchre, Holy Sites, churches, and monasteries.
- ❖ The representations of architecture in George's icons were various at the first of seventeenth century but became frequent from the second half of eighteenth century, and the architectural background was a city-tower which represents the ramparts of Lasia or Beirut.
- ❖ The event in Melkite icon takes place in the foreground, outside the building.
- ❖ Melkite artists didn't use the reverse perspective in the same rigor.
- ❖ The representations of architectural elements in Melkite art are very multifarious; ciborium, altar, apse, dome, column, and fountain.
- ❖ The representation of the architectural element in Pentecost icons is a bema.
- ❖ The representations of fountain were used to refer to Theotokos, Mary. And in specific representation connects with Islamic culture, Ablution fountain.
- ❖ The dome in Melkite art refers to an important building like a church or in some cases the Holy Sepulchre Church.
- ❖ Sam'an column is a specific and symbolic representation in Melkite art.
- ❖ Melkite icons contain many representations of historical building as the Holy Sepulchre and the church of Annunciation in Nazareth city.
- ❖ The architecture representation of Islamic buildings; the Dome of the Rock and Aqsa Mosque are depicted in the *Proskynetaria* icons of the eighteenth century.
- ❖ The domed building in Entry into Jerusalem icon represents the Dome of the Rock.
- ❖ The representations of Jerusalem city in Melkite art are three types, generic without the inscription of its name in the entry into Jerusalem icons, specific representation in *Proskynetaria* icons, and symbolic in Last Judgment icon.

- ❖ The representations of cities are in two types; specific and generic representations.
- ❖ Most of cities are represented as a walled city with main doors.
- ❖ Jerusalem city is always depicted as Zigzag-walled city with seven doors and towers in *proskynetaria* of the eighteenth century.

The conclusion

It has recently that there are local architectural impacts on the Melkite icons, a proper understanding of Melkite art in its development and its connection with architectural, historical and social has not yet been fully achieved. The present study is an attempt remedy this deficiency. Melkite art is treated functionally. The enquiry is centered on its architectural scenes. Moreover, the dissertation attempts to trace the development of Melkite art and established the connection with the architectural factors only within the historical context.

The historical background of the Melkite society in Bilād al Shām as well as in the city of Aleppo was delineated in the first chapter. It was shown that Melkite renaissance during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was distinguished by Arabic literature rebirth, construction of churches and monasteries and finally by fine art.

In the course of the study, much evidence has been abducted in favor of the view that the 17-18 centuries were a watershed in the history of Melkite art. The use of the term “renaissance” in the history of Melkite art exemplifies the danger inherent in applying concepts useful in studying periods in which content is subordinate to style, to others in which style is subordinate to content. In Syria during the last two centuries of Ottoman rule the most important commercial activities concentrated in the major economic centers, Aleppo and Damascus and other cities on the Coast of Mediterranean Sea, Tyr and Sidon. In these cities the urban middle and upper classes became the main bearers of culture. The development of intellectual life followed, and bore fine resulted in literature, and in the visual arts, particularly icons.

I have attempted to identify the stylistic currents, in our discussion, which is most useful in shedding light on the problems to be solved; other local stylistic currents and sub-currents certainly also be identified in the broad context of architectural scenes in Melkite art. The obvious conclusion which was drawn from an analysis of most significant features of Melkite icons is that the importance of background in it to determine the space of the presented event. In order to achieve greater accuracy concerning the representing of the architecture on backgrounds in the Melkite Art, I have divided the icons into three types; Narrative type, *proskynetaria* icons, and individual icons. Depending on this division, the conclusions of architectural background as following:

- a- The Narrative type: consequently, of various subjects that depend on the biblical (canonical gospel), Apocryphal (non-canonical Gospels) or Hagiographic texts. Their architectural backgrounds are various and different.
- b- The *proskynetaria* icons: the representations of architecture connect with Holy Land, the sacred places and the territories surrounding them. Indeed, all sacred places contributed a sense of harmony and continuity to a given locality in the eyes of Jews, Christians, and Muslims, who, though emphasizing their own holy sites, recognized the holiness of sites to devotees of other faiths. Devotees of all faiths perceived that shrines, wells, caves, and places of worship were sacred because of the occurrence of some

miracle there, the appearance of a saint, or the performance of ritual acts.¹ They depict many architectural scenes related to the Holy Sepulchre, evangelical events, the life and activity of Christ in Palestine and some apocryphal stories location, cities, monasteries.

- c- Individual icons: the architecture representation on the background of the individual icon as Saint Georg for example, is changeable, variety.

Melkite icons are characterized by existing of very little spatial depth where the event in the icon takes place in the foreground. The Melkite artists had used the reverse perspective when they depicted the architectural background. The perception and representation of architecture which depended on reverse perspective, however, differ sharply from our visual expectations, largely on account of our visual training, which is strongly dominated by the legacy of Renaissance art and theory.

Concluding, the architecture in Melkite art during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries depends most heavily on the generic characteristics of their form. These however, provide limited clues about what is represented. We can find that also in Byzantine Art, where the “identity” of what is depicted may depend on other factors, such as the context, but not on specific verbal confirmation. No inscription appear that could reveal what we are looking at; the subject is only what we may think it is.² This category of representation called generic representations. In the context of it, church architecture is the most readily discernible. The context of a subject in which architecture appears may also be helpful in determining the identity of a building, even when its form seems totally unrecognizable in terms of what is represented.

Generic example: icon of Birth of John the Baptist, icon of annunciation, icon of the Presentation of the virgin in the Temple, icon of the Dormition of the Virgin, icon of the Forty Martyrs, icon of the flight to Egypt.

Most Melkite icons that we have or observed during doctorate period have representations of architecture which don't have inscriptions, whether in Arabic or Greek languages. While the icons with the topography of the Holy land have a lot of representations of architecture such as; buildings, churches, monastery, geographic regions, and cities. Because of the purpose of these icons is religious guide for pilgrims and where the focus was on the most important of all holy sites; the Holy Sepulchre itself.

Unlike the generic category, representation of specific architectural and conglomerate (urban or monastic) form does not show much. The places identified by the inscription. In the catalogue, there is no representation for specific building whether a church or monastery outside the *proskynetaria* category, although we can encounter this kind of representation in some icons that depict Sinai with scenes and figures from its sacred history. Their specificity is revealed primarily by virtual of written evidence-labels- inscribed upon them.

Specific examples: representation of the church of The Holy Sepulchre, Monastery of Sinai, the Tower of the prophet David in the Virgin of the immaculate icon, Cat.95

In *proskynetaria* icons, there are many examples of this category as the Holy Sepulchre Church, the church of Nazareth, the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosques. Beside to many

¹ Josef W. Meri, *The cult of saints among Muslims and Jews in medieval Syria* (Oxford oriental monographs, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) 14

² Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 157

representations of monastic buildings as Sinai, Mar Saba, the cross monasteries. And this category includes the representations of the cities, as Nazareth and Sychar. Also, the representation of the port of Beirut and Jaffa port.

The third category that we have encountered during this study, Symbolic representations. Here, recognizable architectural forms were used, but not necessarily in terms of their conventional or established meaning. In other words, these representations have a heavenly meaning which are depicted by architectural elements. The symbolic conceptions of certain distinctive forms display a wide variety of scale and functional applications. At the same time, representational aspects of architecture, from a certain point of view, may appear sharply reduced. Therefore, symbols—architectural elements— were employed not to inform as historical view, but only to support the viewer in their spiritual experiences. The bema, for example, in Pentecost icons, has spatial meaning the upper room. The ciborium became a powerful symbol of heaven on earth, in the Presentation into the Temple icon, where the canopy made of a dome raised on four columns and placed above the altar of a church. The Dome has the same meaning, connected with heavenly sphere, in icons of saints Peter and Paul. Another architectural element that is depicted in Melkite art and connected with local Stylites saints and Aleppo region, the Sts Simone the Elder and the younger. Finally, the depiction of the Heavenly ladder. The fourth category of architecture representations is the depiction of Jerusalem. The *proskynetaria* that created as souvenirs for wealthy pilgrims in the 18th-19th centuries, and beside to their role in remind their owners of their pilgrimage, they used as focal points of expulsive monastic or even private worship at home and linked with the Holy City itself. The wall of Jerusalem in the icon of Crucifixion, and Ascension icon refers to Jerusalem city. While in the Last Judgment icon, its walls are shown contenting the Garden of Eden from which send out the Four Rivers of Paradise. The depiction of Jerusalem appears also in the Entry into Jerusalem icon, imagined as a highly regular fortified enclosure, and contains the Holy Sepulchre Church.

Thus, “representation of architecture” means an image of an element, building, complex, city, or location.

Glossary of Terminology

Akathist: literally ‘not sitting down’: in other words, a processional hymn, of Byzantine origination. Today the most famous of all Akathist, and usually what is meant by this term, is the great early seventh-century hymn to the Blessed Virgin. It has twenty-four stanzas saluting the Virgin as the ‘Unwedded Bride’, and so is also known as the Chairetismoï (salutations). Progressive quarters of the whole hymn are sung in church on each Friday of Great Lent, and on the last Friday of Lent the whole composition is sung to commemorate her miracle of saving the city of Constantinople in 626.

Altar: (Greek: hieron). The easternmost area in an Orthodox church that corresponds to the Western ‘sanctuary’, behind the icon screen and in which the Holy Table is found.

Ambon: Greek term for the raised platform or podium on the north side of the solea, in front of the iconostasis, from where the priest or deacon chants the Gospel, and delivers the homily. It corresponds to the Western pulpit.

Analogion: A wooden stand in church. It can carry the book of Scriptures, or an icon.

Anastasis: The Resurrection of Christ as an event within, and transcending, history; and also signifying the principle of Christ’s abiding energy and rule of his heavenly and earthly church (the Resurrection presence).

Anointing: it is the ritual act of pouring aromatic oil over a person's head or entire body.

Apocalypse: any prophetic revelation or so-called End Time scenario, or to the end of the world in general.

Apostle: (Ἀπόστολος, apostolos, “someone sent out”, e.g. with a message or as a delegate) were, according to the Synoptic Gospels and Christian tradition, disciples (followers) whom Jesus of Nazareth had chosen, named, and trained to send them on a specific mission.

Archimandrite: from the Greek for ‘head of the sheepfold’. Originally the title of a leading monastic abbot, it has tended to become an honorary rank in the church for senior monastic priests.

Bishop: a priest of high rank who is in charge of the priests of lower rank in a particular area.

Canon: Greek word for ‘rule’, ‘standard’, or ‘measure’. It is used in the church in several fashions. First to signify the canon of Sacred Scripture, the list of books regarded as inspired writings. Secondly, it is a term for a long-hymned form, such as is still used in the structure of Outros, or Matins. Thirdly it is a term that is commonly used to describe the disciplinary regulations attached to the episcopal synods or ecumenical councils (or sometimes the patristic writings on disciplinary matters, such as the canons of St Basil). These rules, or canons, have been gathered together over the centuries to form the rule book to guide the church’s discipline. They are regarded as very authoritative, but not infallible in so far as they applied to particular historical circumstances and need adaptation to changes of conditions. They can be altered by other ecumenical councils if these are ever held again in the future. In the meantime, the Canons are applied according to the discretion of the ruling bishop in a diocese, or the episcopal synod.

Censer: (Greek: thymiato). The equivalent of the Western thurible. A metal lidded bowl hung on chains for the burning of incense during the liturgy. The chains have twelve bells attached, symbolic of the preaching of the apostles.

Eucharist: A sacrament recognized by all branches of Christianity. Commemorates the Last Supper of Christ with the sharing of bread and wine.

Evangelismos: The feast of the 'evangelizing' of the Blessed Virgin (the bringing to her of Good News). It corresponds to the Western feast of Annunciation (25 March).

Halo: in Christian art and symbolism, a circle or disc of light around the head. It was used in the Hellenistic period for gods and demi-gods and later for Roman emperors and was not adopted by Christians until the 3rd or 4th centuries. In modern Catholicism, a halo is permitted only for saints.

Holy Table: (Greek: Hagia Trapeza). The Eucharistic table, corresponding to the 'altar' of the Western Church. Inside the Holy Table are always found the relics of the saints. The Holy Table is consecrated with profound ceremonies when the church is founded, and after that point is only touched by the ordained clergy. All the ordained who come into the altar area prostrate full length three times and kiss the Holy Table before doing any other task. The Holy Table is also seen as the throne of God on earth, the divine presence especially occupying the 'High Place' immediately behind and above the easternmost face. Whoever walks here must mark themselves with the sign of the Cross as they do so. From ancient times no 'dead thing' was allowed to touch the altar, and so today almost all Gospels, permanently laid on the Holy Table in all Orthodox churches, are covered in brass or gilt, not in leather.

Iconostasis: Large screen, usually carrying many icons, which divides off the altar from the temple nave. Behind the iconostasis will be found the Holy Table, and a side altar to the north wall, where the Prothesis rite is celebrated, as well as a sacristy (diakonikon) to the south wall where the vestments and service books are kept.

Incarnation: In traditional Christianity is the belief that the second person of the Trinity, also known as God the Son or the Logos (Word), "became flesh" by being conceived in the womb of Mary, also known as the Theotokos (Birth-giver to God) or "Mater Dei" (mother of God).

Immaculate Conception: the terms refers not, as is sometimes supposed, to the conception of Christ in the womb of Mary (represented in art as the Annunciation), but to Mary's immunity from original sin. According to this view, Mary was conceived without sin and thus never knew the human condition.

Liturgy: The word in the Greek Old Testament (LXX) for public worship of God. It is used in the church to signify the solemn services celebrating the mysteries: predominantly the Eucharist, but also the other great mysteries such as baptism and confession. Other church services, such as the recitation of the hours, are not liturgical in this strict sense.

Narthex: The porch of a church. In ancient times it was used as a gathering place for the catechumens and penitents who were not allowed to attend the actual celebration of the Eucharist. Some large churches also have an outer porch or exonarthex.

Nous: Nous (adj. 'noetic') is the Greek Christian term for the spiritual element of creation. The nous in a human being can best be translated as 'spiritual intellect'. The other two constitutive parts of humanity, for ancient Christian anthropology, are the psyche (the soul or the emotive

part of the spiritual being) and the sarx (the material and bodily aspect of a person). The Fathers understood humans to be partly noetic and partly material, with the soul moderating the other respective spheres of action. They understood the angelic order to contain wholly noetic beings, and they are often called the noetic creation.

Palm Sunday: The feast of Christ's Entry into Jerusalem is celebrated on Sunday before Easter and is the beginning of the Maundy week. In Eastern Christianity it is one of the Twelve Great Feasts.

Passion of Christ: (Latin *passio*, "suffering"). The crucifixion of Jesus and the events leading up to it.

Patriarch: (Gk. "father ruler") generally, an early biblical figure such as Abraham or one of the "church fathers" of the early Christian church. Specifically, the spiritual leader of a major city in Eastern Orthodoxy. The Patriarch of Constantinople is the Eastern counterpart of the Catholic pope.

Patriarchate: An autonomous and autocephalous ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the Orthodox Church of great antiquity or national importance that is headed by a patriarch. In ancient times there were five patriarchates in Orthodoxy (Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem). Today there are the four remaining Eastern patriarchates, together with the four more recent patriarchates of Russia, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania.

Royal doors: Sometimes referred to as 'beautiful gate'. Predominantly meaning today the main entrance into the altar through the centre of the iconostasis. The royal doors carry the icons of the Evangelismos (Annunciation) and the four evangelists. They are normally kept closed, and only opened during the progress of the Great Mysteries. When the Eucharist is being celebrated only the bishop or priest will pass through the royal doors which are seen as the gateway to heaven. Their opening, during the course of the liturgy, is a symbol of how the gate to paradise has been laid open by the presence of Christ in the mystery.

Second Coming: (sometimes called the Second Advent or the Parousia) is a Christian and Islamic belief regarding the future return of Jesus Christ after his incarnation and ascension to heaven about two thousand years ago.

See: (from Latin, "seat"). City in which a bishop's cathedral is located.

Stations of the Cross: Series of 14 events in the Passion of Christ, beginning with his condemnation and ending with his body being laid in the tomb. The stations are a popular subject of public and private devotion in Catholicism, especially during Lent.

Tabernacle: (Greek: artophorion). A receptacle (often elaborately figured in the shape of a church with towers) used to reserve the Eucharistic gifts in the altar, for use in the communion of the sick, or in the liturgy of the presanctified. Temple (Greek: naos). Normal word in use among the Orthodox for the church building.

Tanzimat: reorganization; the name for the Ottoman reforms of the nineteenth century.

Theotokos: Title of the Blessed Virgin signifying ‘Mother of God’, since her child was truly God. The title was defined as necessary to true faith in Jesus at the Council of Ephesus in 431. Triodion Liturgical period between the Sunday of the publican and pharisee and ‘cheese-fare Sunday’ preceding Lent. It is also the word (meaning ‘Three Odes’) that designates the liturgical book that contains the different hymns and prayers for the moveable feasts leading up to Pascha.

Typikon: Rule of liturgical procedure; or the rule which a monastic house observes. Also, the book of liturgical instructions which outlines how each service ought to be conducted.

Appendices

I. The Ottoman sultans, 1603-1839.

1. Ahmed I (1603-1617)
2. Mustafa I (1617-1618 and 1622-1623)
3. Genc Osman II (1618-1622)
4. Murad IV (1623-1640)
5. Ibrahim (1640-1648)
6. Avci Mehmed IV (1648-1687)
7. Suleiman II (1687-1691)
8. Ahmed II (1691-1695)
9. Mustafa II (1695-1703)
10. Ahmed III (1703-1730)
11. Mahmud I (1730-1754)
12. Osman III (1754-1757)
13. Mustafa III (1757-1774)
14. Abdulhamid I (1774-1789)
15. Selim III (1789-1807)
16. Mustafa IV (1807-1808)
17. Mahmud II (1808-1839)

II. The Melkite Patriarchs of Antioch from 1604-1850, Orthodox Church of Antioch.

1. Dorotheus IV (or V) Ibn Al-Ahmar (1604–1611)
2. Athanasius II (or III) Dabbas (1611–1619)
3. Ignatius III Atiyah (1619–1634)
4. Cyril IV Dabbas antipatriarch (1619–1628)
5. Euthymius II (or III) Karma (1634–1635)
6. Euthymius III (or IV) of Chios (1635–1647)
7. Macarius III Zai'm (1647–1672)
8. Neophytos of Chios (1673–1682)
9. Athanasius III Dabbas (first, or antipatriarchal, reign) (1685–1694)
10. Cyril V (or III) Zai'm (antipatriarchal reign 1672–1694, 1694–1720)
11. Athanasius III Dabbas (second reign) (1720–1724)
12. Sylvester (1724–1766)
13. Philemon (1766–1767)
14. Daniel (1767–1791)
15. Euthymius V (1791–1813)
16. Seraphim (1813–1823)
17. Methodius (1823–1850)

III. The Melkite Patriarchs of Antioch after the schism 1724, Catholic Melkite Church.

1. Cyril VI Tanas (1724.10.01 – death 1759.07.08)
2. Athanasius IV Jawhar first term (1759.07.19 – 1760.08.01)
3. Maximos II Hakim, (1760.08.01 – death 1761.11.15)
4. Theodosius V Dahan, (1761.12.24 – death 1788.04.10)

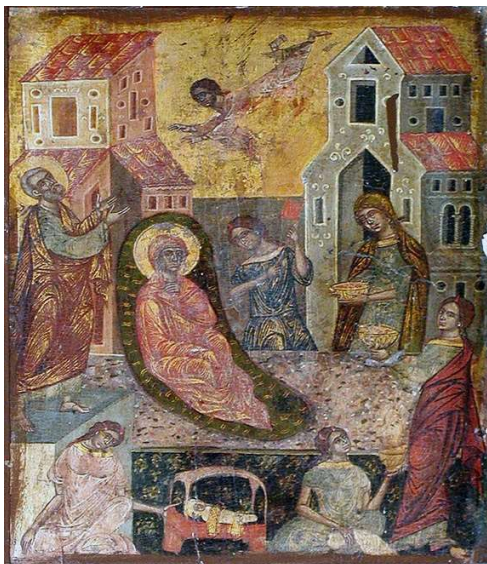
5. Athanasius IV Jawhar second term (1788.05.05 – death 1794.12.02)
6. Cyril VII Sijaj (1794.12.11 – death 1796.08.06)
7. Agapius II Matar (1796.09.11 – 1812.02.02)
8. Ignatius IV Sarrouf (1812)
9. Athanasius V Matar (1813)
10. Macarius IV Tawil (1813–1815)
11. Ignatius V Qattan (1816–1833)
12. Maximos III Mazloun (1833–1855)

IV. Roman Catholic Popes

1. Leo XI (1605)
2. Paul V (1605-21)
3. Gregory XV (1621-23)
4. Urban VIII (1623-44)
5. Innocent X (1644-55)
6. Alexander VII (1655-67)
7. Clement IX (1667-69)
8. Clement X (1670-76)
9. Blessed Innocent XI (1676-89)
10. Alexander VIII (1689-91)
11. Innocent XII (1691-1700)
12. Clement XI (1700-21)
13. Innocent XIII (1721-24)
14. Benedict XIII (1724-30)
15. Clement XII (1730-40)
16. Benedict XIV (1740-58)
17. Clement XIII (1758-69)
18. Clement XIV (1769-74)
19. Pius VI (1775-99)
20. Pius VII (1800-23)
21. Leo XII (1823-29)
22. Pius VIII (1829-30)
23. Gregory XVI (1831-46)

The catalogue

1- Nativity of Mary, 18th C, Latakia.



Cat. 1 *The Nativity of Mary, the eighteenth century, in situ in Saint Nicolas church, Latakia, tempera on wood, 30x40 cm, the iconographer; unknown. After DGAM Archives*



Figure 52 *The scheme of Nativity icon, the eighteenth century, Saint Nicola church, Latakia.*

The orthodox liturgical cycle begins in September. The first major feast to be celebrated is the Birth of Virgin Mary on 8th September.¹ The full title of the feast is “The Birth Our Mostly Holy Lady the Theotokos”. About the birth of Mary, the bible is silent. The traditions upon which the feast and its icons are based have come down to us in the second-century apocryphal book of James which is also known as the *Protevangelion*. Iconographically, the birth of the Virgin is depicted in composition established in fifteenth-century Cretan painting, with identical iconography to that encountered also in the scene of the Birth of Saint John the Baptist in a series of fifteenth-century wall painting in Cretan monuments, as well as in icons of the second half of the fifteenth century.² Here, our icon, the eighteenth-century one shows Anne³ sitting on a mattress, a similar way to how Mary herself reclines in icons of Christ’s Nativity ; decorative pattern on the mattress cover, she wears a red garment. Around her five midwives in various poses, almost seeming to move about, two of them preparing to wash infant Mary, one of them holds a bowl and the other a towel, while

¹ John Baggley, *Festival icons for the Christian year* (London: Cassell, 1999) 11

² Chatzēdakē and Scampavias, *Byzantine and post-Byzantine art*, 214

³ Her name not found in the Bible, and the legend for her life occur already in the Protevangelium of James (2nd century). a church was erected at Constantinople in her honor by the Emp. Justinian I(d.565) and relics and pictures at Rome (s. Maria Antiqua)date Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 71

a midwife holds the cradle⁴ with infant Mary lying on it. Beside to the female portrayed spinning next to Anne.⁵ On a platform, the standing Joachim receives the vision about the birth of Mary.

In the background are stylized architectural elements. The reverse perspective of the architectural forms is clear in the building on the left side of the icon, which consists of three sloping roofs, Also, the decorative features of the architecture are more clearly articulated, with what looks like a Basilica with three aisles, covered by red sloping roofs; this building has an arched entrance.

⁴ Wooden rocking cradle whose two uprights are connected by long molded handle, this kind of cradle is still made of a young in and in Lebanon; V.Candea and S. Agémian, *Discriptions Des Icônes* (as in note 694), at 180

⁵ This the female attendant portrayed spinning next to cradle of the child in Late Byzantine representations of the Birth of the Virgin, Parani thinks that her presence should be associated with the predilection of the art that period for secondary genre themes. Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 212

2- Nativity of Mary, 19thC, Sydnaia.



Cat. 2 The nativity of Mary, Nineteenth century, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate

This icon depicts apocryphal accounts of the Mary's Nativity.⁶ In the standard iconographical depiction of the birth of Mary, her mother Anne lies on a bed instead of couch, while her husband, Joachim, stands and rises his hands to receive a vision from an angel; women bring gifts while the serving women get ready to bathe the child.⁷ Nonetheless, there is an unusual element in architectural background, instead of a long building like the previous icon, it could to see behind Joachim, a building stands on two columns, the vision of him takes place in front of this building that has three rectangular windows, surrounded by wall which has three arched windows, overlooking into garden. It could to be noted that the architecture type is close to local type of Sydnaia Monastery.⁸

- The inscription: in Greek Η ΓΕΝΝΗΣΗ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ= the Nativity of Theotokos, and in Arabic .[مولد السيدة] Nativity of Lady.

⁶ Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives*

⁷ This motife comes from waging Jesus Child. Jonas Nordahgen, "Studies in Byzantine and Early medieval painting: the origin of the washing of the child in the nativity scene," (1990) 326–31

⁸ This function will appear in all Michael Polychronis school icons

3- Elevation of the Venerable Cross, 18thC, Latakia.



Cat. 3 Elevation of the Venerable Cross, The eighteenth century, in situ in church of the church Saint Nicolas, Latakia, tempera on wood, 41x69.5 cm, the iconographer; unknown, (AfterDGAM Archives)

The feast of the Universal Exaltation of Precious and Life-Giving Cross has its origins in the dedication of the church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem and in the discovery of the true Cross at Golgotha.⁹ According to legend formulated in the late fourth century, the true Cross was discovered in Jerusalem by Helen.¹⁰ It was an elderly Hebrew by the name of Jude who showed her that the Cross was buried where the temple of Venus stood.

The icon tells the story of the finding of the Cross and of its Exaltation.¹¹ The Bishop St Macarius of Jerusalem is seen raising the Cross in the upper part of the icon, on large marble ambo has two stairs, whilst next to him stand St. Helen, behind this building, shown to his left. The Cross is

⁹ Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 583, Baggley, *Festival icons for the Christian year*, 111

¹⁰ (250-330), Helena, later known as Flavia Julia Helena Augusta, mother of Constantine the Great, was credited after her death with having discovered the fragments of the Cross and the tomb in which Jesus was buried at Golgotha, for more detail see: A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire I, A.D. 260-395* (Cambridge 1971) pp. 410 f., Helena no. 2. Helena's name is associated in the history of the Church with the legend that she found the True Cross on which Jesus was crucified.

¹¹ Ouspensky, L., Lossky, V., *The Meaning of Icons*, tr. G.E.H. Palmer and E. Kadloubosky, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, New York, 1982, p. 149.

surrounded and venerated by many clergy and lay people. The Discovery and Raising the true cross is enriched with novel elements that accentuate the picturesque character of the scene.

In the background, to the left there is a domed structure, which stands on two arches; the architectural background behind the bishop elevating the cross must represent the basilica of the Resurrection built by Constantine: it is the memory of the ancient “festival of dedication” preserved in the iconography.¹² . In the frontal icon, the scene represents how they discovered the Cross.¹³

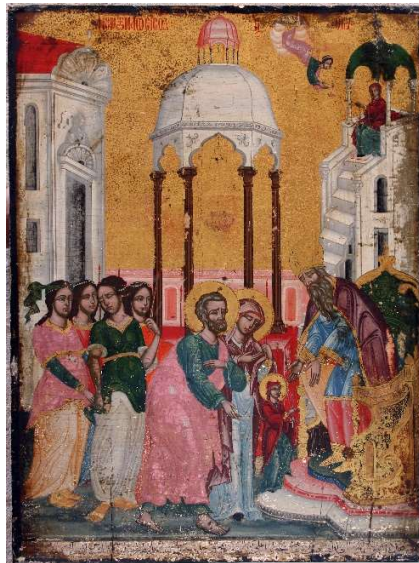
- Inscriptions: in Greek. “(ΥΨΩΣΙΣ) ΤΟΥ ΤΙΜΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΖΩΟΠΟΙΟΥ ΣΤΑΥΡΟΥ” = “The Elevation of the Precious Cross”.¹⁴
ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΥ= Saint Macarius. ΑΓΙΑ ΕΛΕΝΗ = Saint Helen, [.] λα τονς= Jude

¹² Ouspensky and Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons / by Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky ; translated by G.E.H. Palmer & E. Kadloubovsky*, 150–51

¹³ Bagley, John, *Festival Icons for the Christian Year*, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000, pp. 111-115.

¹⁴ See Constantine Cavarnos, *Guide to Byzantine iconography* (Boston, Mass.: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1993) 51

4- Entry of Lady in the Temple, 1718, Aleppo.



Cat. 4 The Entry of Lady in the Temple, 1718, in situ in church of the church Dormition Lady, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 67x90 cm, the iconographer; Hanania Al Halabi, (After Rand, 2011).

The Entry of Lady in the Temple is one of the great twelve feasts of liturgical calendar of Byzantine church. Celebrated 21st November.¹⁵ The account of the Entry is found in the apocryphal *Protevangelium of James* (PJ), with a few added details in the Pseudo-Gospel of Matthew, a Latin text, called *The Book about the Origin of the Blessed Mary and Childhood of the Savior* (PM).¹⁶

The icon is one of an iconostases of the Dormition church at Aleppo, and is one of three icon painted by the same iconographer, Hanania Al Halabi, at the same year, 1718. On this well-preserved version, the younger Mary is accompanied to the temple by her parents, Joachim and Ann, with a company of four maidens holding lighted tapers, the procession¹⁷. Keep in mind that the scene takes place in the temple, in front of the altar covered by a canopy. The priest, Zacharias, stands on the Ambo¹⁸, opens his arms to receive Mary who is climbing the stairs toward the high priest, who awaits her within the Holy of Holies, defined by a red altar and a tall canopy. To represent a later portion of the narrative, the Virgin is represented again, to the right and on a

¹⁵ Robinson, *Icons of the Great Feasts / Stuart I. Robinson*, 6–7

¹⁶ Maura Hearden, Virginia M. Kimball, *Mary for the Love and Glory of God: Essays on Mary and Ecumenism*, 2011, p64.

¹⁷ Passarelli, *Non solo colore*, 146

¹⁸ The scene is depicted by iconography thus: The interior of a temple with an ambo at the left or right side. Cavarnos, *Guide to Byzantine iconography*, 56

different level, seated at the top of a flight of steps under a smaller canopy, where she turns toward an angel who brings her food.

The architectural background is handsome and carefully worked out. Three buildings presented against a wall which is straight. The white color on the buildings is characteristic. The faultless drawing, luminous colors, flexible folds of drapery, and the larger faces all of these are features of Hanania Al Halabi's drawing. The Holy of the holies is depicted where the Virgin remained until her betrothal to Joseph.¹⁹ This building is shown as a kind of throne, raised up on a series of steps and covered by canopy. This canopy is smaller and more discrete than the central canopy, and supported by small and slim columns

- Signature and Gifting:

In Arabic:

" أوقف هذه الأيقونة المكرمة العبد الضعيف يوسف ابن جبرائيل على كنيسة السيدة بمحروسة حلب في رئاسة الأب السيد البطريرك كير كير اثاناسيوس الأنطاكي. صورها بيده الفانية العبد الضعيف حنانيا ابن القس نعمة الله ابن الخوري يوسف سنة الف وسبعماية وثمانية عشر للتجسد". كير كير اثاناسيوس وذلك .. سنة الف وسبعماية وأربعة عشر للتجسد.. .. حنانيا ابن قسيس نعمة المصور".

"The weak slave Joseph son of Gabriel endowed this venerable icon to Lady church at guarded Aleppo at the presidency of the Father, master kir kir Athanasius of Antioch. It was painted by his mortal hand, the poor slave, Hanania son of the pastor Ne'met Allah"

- Inscriptions: in Greek, Η ΕΝ ΤΩ ΝΑΩ ΕΙΣΘΑΔΩ ΤΗΝ ΘΥ = Presentation of the Lady into the Temple.²⁰

¹⁹ Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 178cat.11

²⁰ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 67

5- Entry of Lady in the Temple, 1761, Hama



Cat. 5 The entry of Lady in the Temple, 1761, the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 34x44cm, the iconographer; unknown, (After DGAM Archives)

Although this icon is lost, and there is only photo of it in the DGAM archives, I have chosen it. The central theme of this icon is the Holy of Holies in the Temple which is about to receive a blessing far superior to any of its former blessings. The priest Zacharias, the father of St. John the Baptist, receives Mary with outstretched hands at the gates of the Temple, Mary is shown as a small child, standing before Zacharias with her arms reaching up to him. Usually Saints Joachim and Anne, (unfortunately preservation is very bad) accompanied by virgins (left) of Jerusalem, carrying torches in procession, also appeared.

In the upper center portion of the icon, the Virgin is seated on the steps of the Holy of Holies. An angel is there, attending to the one chosen by God to carry Jesus into the world. Because of the story recounts that she ascends fifteen steps and enters the temple, where she grows and is cared for by angels who feed her the “bread of Heaven”.

- Inscription: in Greek, Η ΕΝ ΤΩ ΝΑΩ ΕΙΣΟΔΩ ΤΗΝ ΘΥ = the Entry of Lady to the Temple.

6- Entry of Lady in the Temple, 1773, Idleb



Cat. 6 The entry of Lady in the Temple, 1773, the Lady-Orthodox church, Idleb, tempera on wood, 60x75cm, the iconographer; Aleppo school. (After Rand.2011)

As previous icons, the Entry of Mary child takes place in the temple in front of the altar. The iconic elements of this icon are similar to an icon in the Lady Church at Aleppo, of 1718.

To the right, Zachariah the Priest welcomes the young Mary and those who have taken her to the Temple accompanied by a procession of young girls carrying candles. The girls stand in the back of Mary's family. In the center stand Joachim and Anne; their left hands point towards Zachariah welcoming their child into the Temple.

The background includes another figure of Mary high up in the Holy of Holies where she is being fed by an angel. This building is depicted as a stair, and at the top there is a canopy on smaller columns. The buildings relate to each other by the wall. Another canopy which is bigger, stands upon altar, placed on four smaller columns, characterized by four Corinthian capitals to the left there is a building consists with a tall entrance, a red slopping roof.

- Iconographer: Unknown probably Girgis Al Halabi.
- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

"أوقف هذه الأيقونة [المقدسة...] المسيحيين [.....] الأب البطريرك دانييل سنة 1773.."

[...] endowed this blessed icon [...] Christians, [...] the Father Patriarch Denial, 1773

7- The Presentation into the Temple, 1714, Aleppo.



Cat. 7 The Presentation, 1718, in situ in church of the church Dormition Lady, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 67x90 cm, the iconographer; Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand 2011)

From the iconostasis of the Dormition Church in Aleppo and painted by Hanania Al Halabi, 1714. Ichnographically, the old Simeon²¹ holds the infant in a tender embrace, standing on white platform, while Mary makes a gesture of grief which foreshadows her mourning at the Crucifixion, and at the same time the infant shows his anxiety by looking back and reaching with one hand for his mother.²² According to the surviving evidence, Byzantine artists made an important change in the iconography of the Presentation after the end of the iconoclastic controversy in the ninth century.²³

At the background, to the right a hexagonal building is a two storied tower topped by a ciborium, this building has a stair, and two arched windows, while to the left side there is a building with red gabled roof, with big arched door. Between these two buildings a green canopy over an altar²⁴, standing on four pillars, with Corinthian capitals, a pink curtain is draped over the left among these

²¹ The Presentation in the temple contained in: Matthew 1:25, Luke 2:21–38, Ps-Matthew 15. Arabic 5–6. see Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives*, 94-98.

²² The meeting of Simeon with the infant Christ which the early Greek church commemorated with the Festival known as Hypapante. Shorr, “The Iconographic Development of the Presentation in the Temple,” 17

²³ Henry Maguire: *The Iconography of Simon with the Christ in Byzantine Art*, in Henry Maguire, *Rhetoric, nature and magic in Byzantine art* (Variorum collected studies series; CS603, Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998) 261.

²⁴ The Holy Table, this a simple, schematic way of representing a temple. Constantine

capitals. Behind them is a white wall with arched windows, representing the wall of the temple of Jerusalem.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

"اوقف هذه الأيقونة المكرمة المقدسي يوسف ... ابن جبرائيل على كنيسة السيدة بمحروسة حلب لجماعة الروم الأرثوذكس في رياسة الأب السيد البطريرك كير كير اثناسيوس وذلك .. سنة الف وسبعماية وأربعة عشر للتجسد.. .. حنانيا ابن قسيس نعمة المصور".

Al-Maqdisi joseph [...] son of Gabriel endowed this venerable icon to the Lady church at guarded Aleppo for Greek Orthodox group at the presidency of the master kyr kyr Athanasius. And that [...] One thousand and seven hundred and fourteen of the incarnation, the pastor Ne'met Allah Mussawir.

- Inscriptions: in Greek Η... ΠΑΝ ..ΤΗ = Η ΠΑΠΑΝΤΗ= the visiting

8- The Presentation into the Temple, 1733, Latakia.



Cat. 8 The Presentation, 1733, in situ in the Church of Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, tempera on wood, 34x43cm, the iconographer; Hanna Al-Qudsi. (After, DGAM Archives)

The Presentation of Jesus at the Temple, which falls on February 2nd, celebrates an early episode in the life of Jesus, one of the twelve Great Feasts called *Hypapante* ('Meeting' in Greek). In the Melkite Church, it is known as the "Feast of the Presentation of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ in the Temple".

The icon painted in 1733 by Hanna Al-Qudsi, one year after he painted another icon with the same subject in 1734. The painted event is described in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 2:22–40) that forms a usual component of extensive cycles of the Life of Christ and of the Life of the Virgin. The icon, here, concentrates on the moment of the meeting with Simeon, typically shown at the entrance to the Temple.

The background includes three building; the canopy²⁵, to the right circular building looks like a tower with stairs, and to the left, building with red sloping roofs, depicted by inversed perspective. Between them is a canopy covering an altar, standing on four tall pillars, with Corinthian capitals. There is wall stretching from the right and to the left of the icon, which covers the bases both tower and the gabled building.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic:

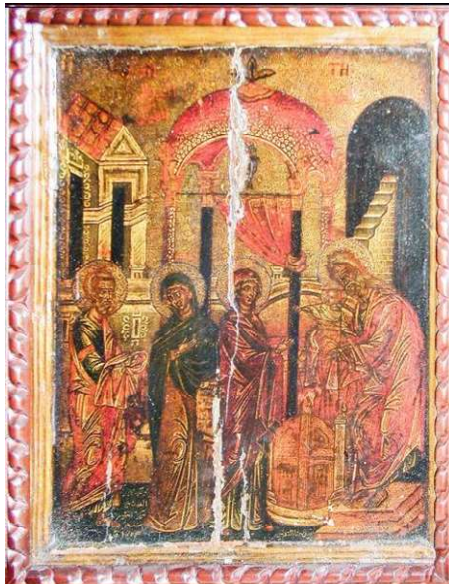
وكان المهتم الخوري موسى كريش من مال الكنيسة سنة 1733 بيد حنا القدسي.

²⁵ Rice, David & Tamara: *Icons and Their History*. Y.: The Overlook, 1974.

Khouri Moses Creech was interested; it is from money of the church in 1733. By hand of Hanna Qudsi.

- the inscriptions: in Greek Η ΠΑΠΑΝΤΗ = the visiting

9- The Presentation into the Temple, 1734, Latakia.



Cat. 9 The Presentation, 1734, in situ in the Our Lady Church, Latakia, tempera on wood, 34x43cm, the iconographer; Hanna Al-Qudsi. (After DGAM Archives)

Historically, the first representation of the Presentation of Christ to the temple is found on a mosaic in Santa Maria Maggiore (5th century) and on an enameled cruciform reliquary in the Laterano Museum (end of 5th or beginning of 6th century).²⁶

In this icon, the scene unfolds against an architectural background consisting of two narrow buildings and a large central canopy supported by four slim pilasters called the ciborium covers an altar. A pair of Royal doors forms the entrance to the Holy of Holies. The buildings are joined by a wall which serves also as an enclosure for the altar two buildings area. The red curtains of ciborium are knotted to the right. The iconography of Simeon holding Christ seems to have become increasingly popular in Byzantine art during the second half of the twelve.²⁷ This icon traces this kind of iconography, Mary has just handed her son to Simeon who is holding the baby. Joseph and the Prophet Hanne followed Mary.

In the background to the right, there is black tower with five brown stairs, while to the left, is a building which covered by a red sloping roofs, with a tall doorway. The foreground of this icon is

²⁶ Ouspensky, L., Lossky, V., *The Meaning of Icons*, tr. G.E.H. Palmer and E. Kadloubosky, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, New York, 1982, p. 168.

²⁷ Maguire, "The Iconography of Symeon with the Christ Child in Byzantine Art," 263

so narrow. The building to the right is a one storied tower with stairs, and two arched windows. While to the left side there is a building with a red gabled roof, and tall arched door.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic:

"أوقف هذه الأيقونة جرجي الطحان على كنيسة السيدة سنة 1734 للتجسد. بيد حنا القدسي"

“Girgi Al Tahhan Al Qubersi (Cypriot) endows this icon on the Lady Church in Latakia year 1734 of incarnation. By hand of Hanna Al-Qudsi.”

- Inscriptions: in Greek Η ΠΑΠΑΝΤΗ = the visiting
In Arabic: Hanna, Simeon, Joseph, the entry lord into the temple

10- The Presentation into the Temple, 18th C, Idleb.



Cat. 10 The Presentation, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church of The Lady - Orthodox, Idleb, tempera on wood, 56x71cm, the iconographer; Aleppo School. (After Rand 2011)

A small icon is properly part of the twelve Great Feast on the iconostasis of the Church of the Lady Orthodox - Idleb. Unfortunately, all icons were stolen during the civil war in Syria, 2014.

It is surrounded by a golden ornamental framework, lacunae exist along the middle of icon, with some black places, near the upper left side as result of candle flames. This motif is traditional in iconography, the scene takes place in front of the altar, the elder Simeon is carrying the Child and standing on the stairs of temple, while Mary is front of him, behind her St. Joseph, holding the vow and the prophet Anne. This icon dated to 18th century, and it may be attributed to Girgis al Halabi, according to comparing to an icon of him dated to 1763.²⁸

At the background, the wall which has arched windows stretches between two building depicted by reverse perspective. The Ciborium raises upon the altar.

²⁸ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 84

11- The Presentation into the Temple, 18thC, Hama.



Cat. 11 The Presentation, the eighteenth century, was in situ in the church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 37x48cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives.

Small icon was properly intended for the series of the twelve Great Feast on the iconostasis of the Entry Lady in Hama, unfortunately many of these icons were destroyed because of the collapsing of the old church in 1982.²⁹ This icon, painted on a panel, shows considerable paint loss along the panel; lacunae exist along the right edge, with a larger area of chipped paint near the middle right side, which indicates a stress in the panel. The scene takes place in front of altar. Simeon stands leaning forward on the step holding the Infant in his hands covered with a cloth. Jesus extends his hands to his mother. Behind the Virgin appear Joseph holding two doves, and the prophetess Anne. The background is filled with finely elaborated architecture in perfect perspective; a part of the temple with its copula and two edifices, all building collected by a wall. The legend with the title of the icon is written in Arabic and Greek; “دخول السيد الى الهيكل”, “the entry of the Lord into the temple”, and “ΤΗ ΗΓΑΓΙΑΝ” = the visiting.

²⁹ Abdo NAjjar, “Le tré de l'eglise grecque orthodox de Noter-dam Hama (en arabe),” *Chronos, Revue d'histoire de l'Université de Balamand* (2017), at 141

12- The Presentation into the Temple, 1810, Homs.



Cat. 12 The Presentation, 1810, in situ in the church Forty Martyrs, Homs, tempera on wood, 34x50.50, the iconographer; Unknown. Courtesy: Forty Martyrs church.

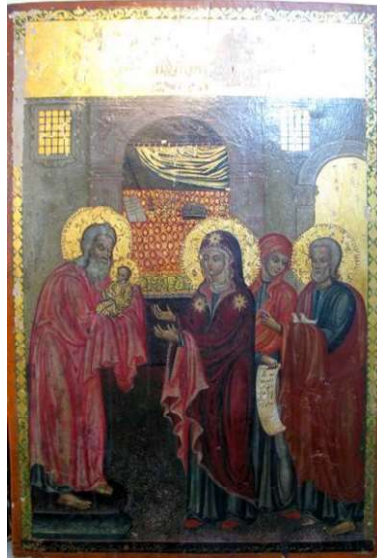
A small icon from the Forty Martyrs church in Homs dating from 1810. The event, the Presentation is depicted under a carved arch. The icon, with the inscription Η ΥΠΑΠΑΝΤΗ (The Presentation in the Temple). The representation illustrates the passage from the gospel of Saint Luke (2, 22-38), according to which the parents of Christ took the newly born infant to Jerusalem to be blessed in the temple, following the Law of Moses. the scene takes place in the temple where Simeon holds the Boy, while Mary in front of him, followed by Joseph and Prophetess Anne.

The background is full of architectural elements; a red ciborium surrounded by two buildings connected with each other by a red cloth to indicate that the action takes place inside a building. Keeping in mind that the red veil³⁰ was suspended from the tops of various structures.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic, [.....]1810.

³⁰The veil of the Temple as a symbol of the Incarnation was employed in several different ways in Byzantine art and culture, attesting to, and further enchanting, the familiarity of the public with theological significance. Maria Evangelatou, *the purple Thread of the Flesh: the theological connections of a narrative iconographic element in Byzantine images of the Annunciation: Icon and word, the power of images in Byzantium: studies presented to Robin Cormack*, ed. Antony Eastmond, Aldershot, Hants, England, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003 (ed. Antony Eastmond; ; Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003), at 265

13- The Presentation into the Temple, 1814, Sydnaia.



Cat. 13 The Presentation, 1814, in situ in the church Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

one of nine icons which are in the apse of the church of Sydnaia monastery depicted by the disciples of Michael of Crete or by him, the Entry to Jerusalem, the Crucifixion, the Presentation, the Epitaphios, the Nativity, the Annunciation, the Birth of John Baptist, the Baptism, Jesus Christ in front of Pilate.

The old Simeon – to the left side of icon– holds the infant in a tender embrace, stands on ornamental black footstool, while Mary rises her hands to receive her son. She is followed by Joseph and the Prophetess Anne who holds a roll which has an Arabic inscription “this Boy who holds the sky and earth”

The scene of the “Presentation” takes place in front of the wall– two windows and an arched doorway– which is a part of the temple instead of the altar and the canopy. There are a niche and an altar inside, the golden curtains are knotted to the right to show the alter-table, which on it symbols of Suleiman Temple, Candlestick

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic;

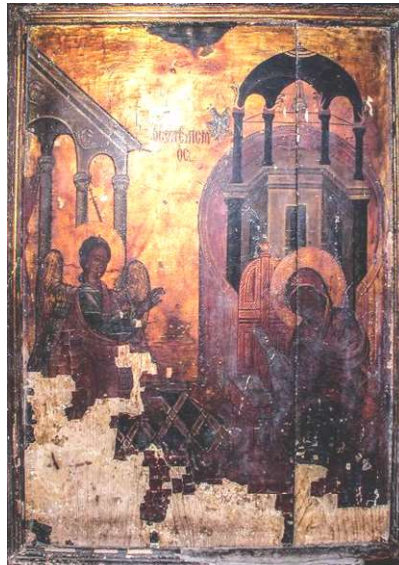
"اذكر يا رب عبيدك المسيحيين الذين اعتنوا بمصروفهم في تصوير هذه الأيقونة من تجار تصالونيكية سنة اربع وثمانماية
والف في زمان رئاسة المطران كيريوس جيراسيموس على كرسي صيدنايا"

“O Lord, mention Christians servants who cared (by their money) in portraying this icon, Thessalonians traders in 1814 in the time of the presidency of Bishop Kirios Gerasimos³¹, Bishop of Sydnaia”.

- Inscriptions: In Greek Τη Ηγαγια = the visiting.
In Arabic: "هذا الصبي الذي يشدد السماء والأرض", “this Boy who holds the sky and earth”

³¹ For more information about Bishops of Sydnaia, see; Habib. Zayat, *Histoire de Saidanaya / par Habib Zayat* (Wathâ'iq târîkhiyyah lil-kursi al-malki al-antâkî; 3, Harîssa, Lubnân: Matba`at al-qiddîs Bûlus, 1932)

14- The Annunciation, 1687, Latakia.



Cat. 14 The Annunciation, 1687, in situ in the church of St George Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 70×54 (74.5×58.5) cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives.)

The subject matter of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of Luke (I: 26-38) and in the Apocryphal Gospels³²

In icon painting no scenes ever shown take place indoors; the façades of the buildings in which they are supposed to have occurred are used instead to form their backgrounds. The Annunciation is one of the scenes which is always presented in this manner.³³ In this icon the Virgin seats on a chair³⁴ and her head appears to be inclined. The complex, circular architecture in the background has a door, and inside it building which has a three polygonal shape, and over it a canopy supported by four small columns. This complex appears in icon of saint George passions, Abo Adel collection, 19th, which refers to the church that “the believers build a church and but in it the organs of the martyr”.³⁵ This complex is depicted by reverse perspective, where “The icon often shows parts and surfaces which cannot be seen simultaneously”³⁶ In front of the Virgin the Archangel Gabriel blesses her. In the background of him a gallery with three columns and two arches.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

³² E. Baldwin Smith, *Early Christian Iconography*, 13–14

³³ Talbot, Tamara, Russian icon, 29

³⁴ The seat of the Virgin, who is often depicted resting her feet on a footstool, is covered with an imperial cushion. At times the seat becomes an actual throne. We frequently see an aedicule with a gable above it, suggesting the idea that the Virgin is the “dwelling place” of the Most High, and the symbol of the Church itself.

³⁵ Chatzêdakês, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 280p1.94.

³⁶ Florenskiï and Misler, *Beyond vision*, 201

" قد اوقف هذه الايقونة المكرمة [...] السيد البطريرك كير ناوفيطس [...] على كنيسة القديس جاوارجيوس بمحروسة اللاذقية في وكالة الحاج عيسى [...].

This blessed icon has been endowed by the Patriarch Kyr Naufitous [...] to the church of Saint George at the Guarded Latakia, in the proxy of AL haji Issa

- Inscription: in Greek O EYANΓEΛIΣMOΣ= the Annunciation

15- The Annunciation, 1731, Aleppo.



Cat. 15 The Annunciation, 1731, Forty Martyrs, Armenian church, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 24x30cm the iconographer; Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)

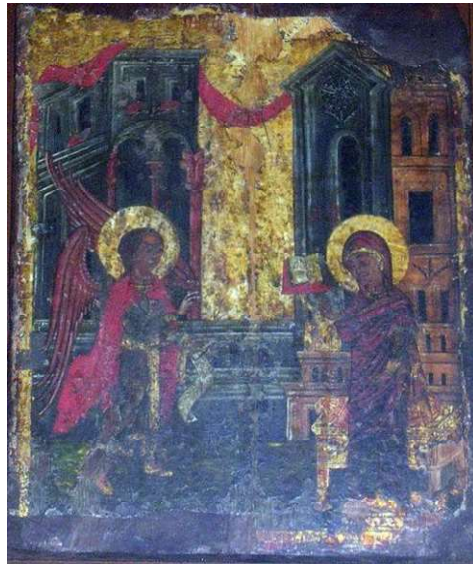
The scene of the Annunciation³⁷ takes place in front of a lower arched portico that represents the garden, and high architectural structure represents the house of Mary. Gabriel, holding a lily and Mary are on their knees facing each other. There is a previous example of this positioning dated from the 12th century. It was to become even more popular, thanks also to the “Meditations on the Life of Christ” by the Pseudo-Bonaventura written at the end of the 13th century, which described Mary kneeling at the moment of giving her consent (“fiat”), followed immediately by the Archangel Gabriel. On his knees, Gabriel inclines his head toward Mary in a gracious bow. His gesture, his arms are crossed, and his eyes are lowered as though Mary is so beautiful that he does not quite dare to look at her.

The structure-tower is distinguished by semi barrel. Gilded background above, green trees.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic "بيد الفقير حنانيا وهي برسم الأخ آكوب ولد نرسيس سنة 1731 للتجسد".
“By hand of the humble Hanania and it is entrusted the Brother Aagop (Hagop) son of Narsis.1731 of the incarnation.
- Inscription: in Arabic: “الحبل الإلهي”, “Divine pregnancy”.

³⁷ Gharib, *Le icone festive della chiesa ortodossa*, 73–75

16- The Annunciation, 18thC, Hama.



Cat. 16 The Annunciation, The eighteenth century, in situ in the church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 38x48cm the iconographer; unknown.(After DGAM Archives).

This icon is attributed to Greek painter by Elias Al Zayat.³⁸ It represents the episode of Gospel when the Archangel Gabriel announces to Mary that she was to become the mother of Jesus. The Archangel Gabriel and Mary are engaged in a conversation, which eventually leads to the Virgin's acceptance of Gabriel's promise.³⁹ The Virgin is portrayed standing in the porch of an ecclesiastical building symbolizing the Temple, to the staff of which she was attached as a kind of Jewish vestal, and the Archangel approaches her from the outside.⁴⁰ The background is painted gold and like Gabriel and Mary's halos. At the background, building behind Mary represents the temple. She stands upon a podium, behind here a throne. Another building with arched faced can be found in the left side of the background. To indicate that the event takes place inside, a red cloth draped over part of these two buildings.

- Inscription: in Greek, but illegible.

³⁸ Zyat, *Syrian iconpl.*68

³⁹ See Luke1:35

⁴⁰ Erwin Panofsky, "The Friedsam Annunciation and the Problem of the Ghent Altarpiece," *The Art Bulletin* 17 (1935) 433–73, at 433–73

17- The Annunciation, 18th C, Latakia.



Cat. 17 The Annunciation, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 59x84cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (AfterDGAM Archives).

Two standing figures are facing each other, one with unexpanded wing and heralding a message, the other a young woman listening attentively to the message. The iconographic depiction of story of the Annunciation shows three movements.⁴¹ First is the appearance of the Archangel Gabriel and his greeting. Second it depicts the perplexity of the Virgin. Not only does she consider her vow to virginity but also the law of nature. Third is her concern, the slightly bowed head, the raising of her hand in acceptance or obedience. The Holy Spirit is indicated by the shaft of divine power coming from the top of the icon, one ray of light.⁴²

The representation conforms in every respect to the models prevailed in traditional Cretan painting. It has preserved its simplicity at the same time as the rigorous symmetry.⁴³ The painter repeated, without making any major modifications, the conventional architectures connected by a wall pierced with niches which rise behind the personages.

In the background, two facing buildings, the left one ends with a reddish pergola from which hangs a purple veil, symbol of the good news that is announced.⁴⁴ This tower has a roofed loggia on

⁴¹ Ouspensky and Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* / by Leonid Ouspensky and Wladimir Lossky ; translated by G.E.H. Palmer & E. Kadloubovsky, 172–73

⁴² Laverdiere, Eugene, *the Annunciation to Mary: A Story Of Faith*, Luke 1:26-38.

⁴³ See; Chatzêdakês, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 244pl.77.

⁴⁴ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 68

consoles.⁴⁵ While the right one is in the form of porch surmounted by a structure of coverage. These two edifices are tight between two low walls, in the frontal one there are elongated arches. There is similar icon dating to 1719, in Lebanon, in it has architectural background depicted by reverse perspective.⁴⁶

- Inscriptions: in Greek, Ο ΕΥΑΝΓΕΛΙΣΜΟΣ= the Annunciation

⁴⁵ Sophoklēs Sophokleous, *Cyprus, the Holy Island: Icons through the centuries, 10th - 20th century [the catalogue of the exhibition at] the Hellenic Centre, London, 1 november - 17 December 2000 / [editor in chief Sophocles Sophocleous]* (Leukōsia: A.G. Leventis Foundation, 2000) 203pl.38

⁴⁶ If the conventional architecture betrays errors of perspective (the openings of the buildings), the characters are represented more happily without exceeding the level of an honest work. V.Candea and S. Agémian, *Discriptions Des Icônes* (as in note 694), at 154fig.12, Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254)pl.77

18- The Annunciation, 19th C, Sydnaia.



Cat. 18 The Annunciation, the nineteenth century, in situ in the church Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

The earliest renderings of the Annunciation of Mary were, no doubt, attempts to depict the gospel accounts of the incarnation of Christ. Subsequent artists built upon the more rudimentary archetypal elements of the earliest of these depictions, translating them, ultimately, into Christian liturgy.⁴⁷

This icon is one of the nine icons that placed in the apse of the church of Sydnaia monastery depicts the visiting of Archangel Gabriel to Mary. The archangel stands on a cloud indicating the sky by his right hand and holding with the left a roll with Arabic inscriptions: “The Holy Spirit will come over you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you”. The Virgin Mary is sitting bowing her head and with her crossed hands. Behind her, a piece of furniture instead of the Temple, and refers to her room, that occurred since the beginning the 19th century. Against the golden background, there is a column with two arches represent to the garden. In the foreground of the icon, there is a paved floor goes forwards the viewer, painted by reverse perspective. All of our icons of Annunciation don’t depict spinning moment.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Montgomery, *Angel in annunciation and synchronicity*, 18

⁴⁸ A smaller number of Annunciation images place particular emphasis to the purple thread in the Virgin’s hands. Evangelatou, *the purple Thread of the Flesh: the theological connections of a narrative iconographic element in Byzantine images of the Annunciation* (as in note 845), at 266

- Inscriptions: in Greek, Ο ΑΡΧΑΓΓΕΛΟΝ ΓΑΒΡΙΗΛ = archangel Gabriel

In Arabic “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you”. And in Arabic and in Greek Languages; the Annunciation [...] of the Theotokos (Mother of God) "بشارة السيدة والدة الإله"

19- The Entry into Jerusalem, 1685, Latakia.



Cat. 19 *The Entry to Jerusalem (palm Sunday)*, 1685, in situ in the church Saint George -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 58.5 X 74 cm, the iconographer; attributed to Ne'met Allah Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)

The portable icon for the Sunday of Palms with the Entry into Jerusalem belonged to the epistyle of an iconostasis from the church of Saint George – Orthodox, Latakia, attributed to Ne'met Allah Al Halabi. Jesus entering to Jerusalem, occupies the foreground of the icon, sitting on a donkey, which is moving to the right.⁴⁹ His head is turned to face the company of disciples, headed by Peter, who is talking and gesticulating. Behind them rises the Mount of Olives, where an olive tree is behind the two disciples with a donkey. In front of the city gate of Jerusalem stands a host of Jews, hailing Christ's arrival. The gate of the city is decorated by *Ablaq*⁵⁰ which is inspired by Islamic decoration technique that is a derivative by the ancient Byzantine art, whose architecture used alternate sequential runs of light colored ashlar and darker colored orange brick. This kind of the door is a typical architecture of entrance, white and black stones.⁵¹

Next to the donkey a boy holds a palm branch, while another boy is taking off his clothes, and between them a boy butts his clothes on the ground. A person climbs the palm tree in order to get a branch. Projecting above the city wall is the façade of a brown coloured building with a red gable roof,

⁴⁹ In the most Byzantine depictions of the Entry, Christ turns his head neither toward the crowds coming from Jerusalem, nor toward the disciples following behind him, but stares straight at the viewer. The rider does not hold the reins of his mounts, but in his left hand he holds a scroll, while his right hand is raised before his chest, in a gesture of address, his knees are spread apart, but his feet are close together, the one slightly lower than the other Maguire, *Art and eloquence in Byzantium*, 72

⁵⁰ Petersen, Andrew. "Ablaq". Dictionary of Islamic Architecture. Digital Library. Retrieved January 28, 2012

⁵¹ Agemain, "Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724," 200

represents the church of Anastasis (Resurrection). Behind it there are a lot of buildings and triangular domes, and two towers (4 storeys)

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

وكان [المهتم] بهذه الأيقونة المكرمة الحاج [.....] وكافة المسيحيين بمحروسة اللاذقية وقف على كنيسة القديس جاورجيوس [.....].

The pilgrimage Issa was interested in working this blessed icon and all the Christians in the saved Latakia, they endowment on St. George church in the second year of presidency of metropolitan kyr Ignatius, 1685.⁵²

- Inscriptions: in Greek KYPIAKH H BAIOPHOPOΣ = Palm Sunday

⁵² Ibid.

20- The Entry into Jerusalem, 18th C, Hama.



Cat. 20 The Entry to Jerusalem (palm Sunday), the eighteenth century, the church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 32x48 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

The Palm Sunday Gospel (John 12:1-18) makes clear the causal links between the raising of Lazarus and the triumphal of Jesus into Jerusalem. It also makes clear the intimate connection linking the whole series of events that take place between the raising of Lazarus and the death and Resurrection of Jesus himself.⁵³

This unpublished small icon was properly part of the series of the twelve Great Feast on the iconostasis of the Entry Lady in Hama, unfortunately as I mentioned before that most of church's icons destroyed in 1982.

The composition is divided into two symmetrical parts by a tree, in the center, that reaches up the height of the wall of Jerusalem and of the olive mountain. Jesus mounts a donkey, the twelve apostles behind. The citizens of Jerusalem come to greet him, waving palm fronds. They wait in front of the city gates, with the city being symbolized by wall surrounding several buildings; there are two towers stylized as Ottoman minarets. In the tree which rises in the middle of the icon, a child is busy climbing up to cut off branches to strew the ground before the passage of the pageant.

- Inscription: in Arabic, "Hosanna in the highest!", "أوصانا غي الأعلي",

⁵³ Baggeley, *Festival icons for the Christian year*, 94

21- The Entry into Jerusalem, 18th C, Idleb.



Cat. 21 The Entry to Jerusalem(palm Sunday), the eighteenth century the church the Lady-Orthodox, Idleb, tempera on wood, 56x70 cm, the iconographer; Aleppo school. (After Rand.2011)



Figure 53 The scheme of Entry to Jerusalem icon, Idleb, 18th.

The iconography of the feast goes back to the fourth century. The village to the left of the Mount of Olives is Bethpage, between Bethany and Jerusalem, where disciples untie the ass's colt, at Christ's command.⁵⁴ The icon shows Jesus sitting on a donkey, sitting astray, entering Jerusalem, takes place in a rich landscape, which extends into the background, and in front of the wall of the city. He is giving a blessing with His right hand His disciples, who are on the left side of the icon and the people rejoicing at His arrival are on the right side. They greet Jesus with palm branches and lay down their cloaks for Him to ride over them. Jerusalem is shown behind the crowd. The background of the icon is gilded and decorated by twigs, leaves and flowers.

This icon is characterized by the representation three cities, we can recognize one of them by name, Jerusalem, with numerous buildings behind the walls, occupies a conscious position on the right of the composition. Another city, at the top of the mountain, characterized by walls, a domed building, and a building, which has a red slopping roofs, this city is "Bethphage".⁵⁵ Developed in the background is a landscape with Rocky Mountains, in which projects, on smaller scale, a walled

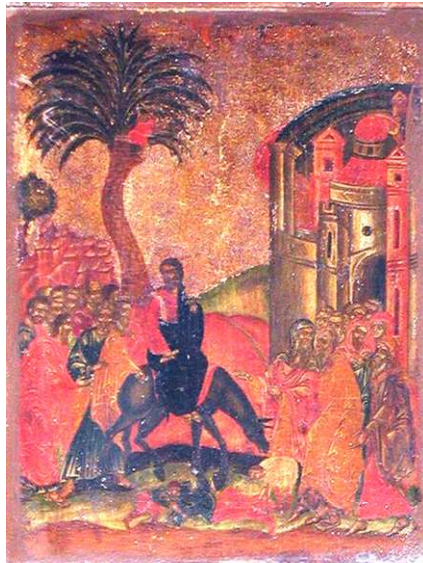
⁵⁴ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 130

⁵⁵ Luca, 19: 29-34.

city. On the left bottom another city, but this motif appears in icon of 15th century⁵⁶, as a built fountain, so we suppose that it is fountain.

⁵⁶ Chatzēdakē and Scampavias, *Byzantine and post-Byzantine art*, 194pl.132

22- The Entry into Jerusalem, 18thC, Latakia.



Cat. 22 The Entry to Jerusalem, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 30x40 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

In the Icon of the Feast of Palm Sunday, Christ is the central figure, depicted seated on a donkey as He enters Jerusalem, a fulfillment of the prophecy found in Zachariah 9:9.⁵⁷

Christ is blessing with His right hand, and in His left hand is a scroll, symbolizing that He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah, the Anointed One who has come to redeem us from our sins and break the power of death. The donkey, one of the animals that were considered unclean according to the Law, is symbolic of the inclusion of all peoples of all nations in the new covenant that will come through the death and Resurrection of Christ (Isaiah 62: 10-11).⁵⁸

On the right, the disciples accompany Jesus in His Triumphal Entry. The city of Jerusalem is walled. Steep rocks stand behind the characters, evoking the Mount of Olives. Their mass is counterbalanced by the city of Jerusalem, represented by several edifices surrounded by walls: in the center there is a large structure surmounted by a dome; this traditional element of the Holy City

⁵⁷ Mary and Orthodox Eastern Church., *The Lenten Triodion* (South Canaan Pa: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, 1994) 58-59.

⁵⁸ Ouspensky and Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons / by Leonid Ouspensky and Wladimir Lossky ; translated by G.E.H. Palmer & E. Kadloubovsky*, 176-78

represents, anachronistically, the Dome of the Rock.⁵⁹ In the foreground are children who greeting Christ with palm branches and laying these and their garments on the ground before Christ. The wall of Jerusalem, by using the reverse perspective changes from straight line into curve.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ V. Cârdea and Musée Carnavalet, *Icônes grecques, melkites, russes: Collection Abou Adal* (Abou Adal, Skira, 1993) 106

⁶⁰ Sendler, *Icon*, 137

23- The Entry into Jerusalem, 18th C, Al Homeyra



Cat. 23 The Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), the nineteenth century, in situ in the monastery of saint George, Homeyra, tempera on wood, 34x45 cm, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school. (After DGAM Archives).

This icon is one of the group of icons inside the Holy of Holies at the Monastery of Saint George Al Homeyra, depicted by the school of Michael of Crete. One of the major events of the last days of Jesus Christ's earthly life – the Entry of Christ into Jerusalem – is described fully in all four Gospels (Matthew 21: 1-11; Mark 11: 1-11; Luke 19: 28-40; John 12: 12-19).

The essential compositional elements are the images of the Mount of Olives in the left part and the city in the right. The city being symbolized by wall encircling domed buildings and gable construction- basilica. The architectural representations are depicted by reverse perspective. In the tree which rises in the middle of the icon a child is climbing to see the procession. Christ is shown followed by a group of the apostles. He is greeted by the crowds of people whom stand front of arched gate of the city, he blesses them and in His left hand is a scroll. In the bottom part of the composition represents the child rejoicing at the coming of Jesus. This icon shows the donkey's feet, climbing up the cloth. The city of Jerusalem symbolized by castle which has long arched doorway. Signature and Gifting: on the bottom of framework, illegible signature

- Inscription: in Arabic “أحد الشعانين” Palm Sunday, and in the Greek; Η ΒΑΙΟΦΟΡΟΣ = the Palm.

24- The Entry into Jerusalem, 19th C, Sydnaia.



Cat. 24 The Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), the nineteenth century, in situ in the monastery of saint George, Homeyra, tempera on wood, 34x45 cm, the iconographer; Michael Polychronis school. (After DGAM Archives).

One of the nine icons which are in the apse of the church of Sydnaia monastery, depicted by the disciples of Michael of Crete or by himself, see; Cat.13, 189, 47.

This scene takes place out of Jerusalem's gates where the Jews had gathered to celebrate Passover. A child is breaking off branches from the tree. In this icon, the tree looks more like the local trees (maybe olive trees) found there than the foliage of Jerusalem. To the left of the background are two palm trees, in front of the mountain (Olives Mountain). Lofty buildings and the church of the Holy Sepulchre rise above the fortifications. The iconic scheme of the panel is composed of two distinct groups of figures. Jesus and his disciples from the group on the left side of the composition, while the right group consists of Jerusalemites. In the foreground is a child figure who butts his garments on the way of Jesus riding side-saddle on an ass, leads the left group. The ass is brown with its head lowered towards the ground.

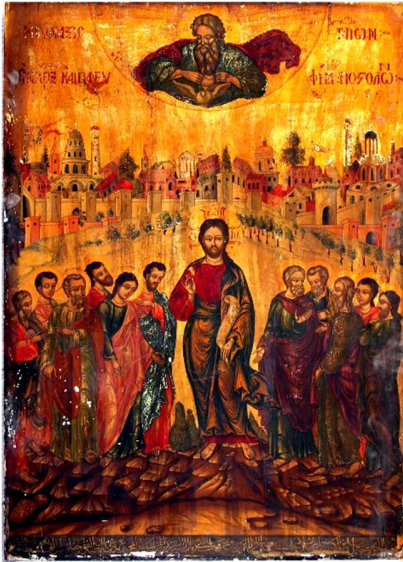
The city of Jerusalem occupies the background's right half, while the other half is occupied by a mountain, the Mount of Olives. Jerusalem is represented as a walled city built by white stones with an arched gate. The wall is battlements, and the space within filled with structures of all sorts; some with tiled gable roofs, one with a tiled value and another with a flat roof and a column. But what dominates are two domed buildings near to two gabled buildings- basilica churches, with

four towers. Usually, the main building inside the walled city identified as the Holy Sepulchre or the temple of Solomon.⁶¹

- Inscription: in Arabic “Palm Sunday, Hosanna in the highest”

⁶¹ Maria Vasilakē, *An Icon of the Entry into Jerusalem and a Question of Archetypes, Prototypes and Copies in Late and Post-Byzantine Icon-Painting: The painter Angelos and icon-painting in Venetian Crete*, ed. Maria Vasilakē, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009 (ed. Maria Vasilakē; Variorum collected studies series CS892; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), at 289

25- The Ascension, Aleppo, 1718.



Cat. 25 *The Ascension, 1718, in situ in the Dormition Lady church, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 70.5x98.5cm, the iconographer; Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand 2011).*

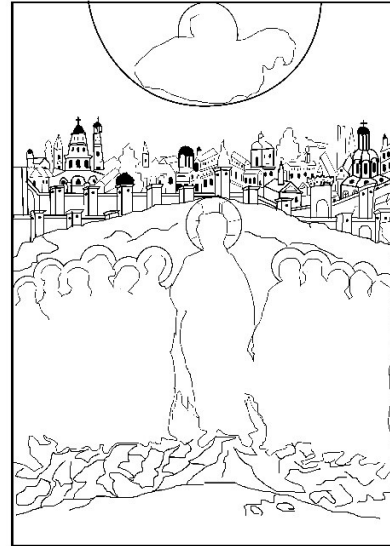


Figure 54 *The scheme of Ascension icon, Aleppo, 1718.*

The feast of the Ascension⁶² was not among the earliest established by the church; it was celebrated at first as an independent feast, but in general was in conjunction with the Pentecost.⁶³ At the highest point of Olives, above the grotto of the Elona (olive grove), stands the Chapel of the Ascension (today a mosque), which marks the spot where Christ rose into the sky before the astonished eyes of his apostles.⁶⁴ This icon doesn't depend on the Byzantine type⁶⁵. This Evangelical event⁶⁶ takes place out of the city of Jerusalem on the Olives Mountain. Jesus and his

⁶² Early writers such as Origen, Tertullian, and Cyprian mention only Easter and Pentecost. It is only from the end of the fourth century that we find positive reference to the ascension either as a separate feast-day, or as a part of the Pentecostal celebration. The separate feast-day of the Ascension must have been established between 380 and 430 A.D. the year 380 is the date of the *Peregrinatio Etheriae* in which a very interesting account of the Ascension and Pentecost celebrations is given, the other date, 430, marks the death of Augustine, who describes the Ascension as among the feasts universally observed. The end of the fourth century or the beginning of the fifth may be regarded as the time when the Ascension assumed independent significance. For more see,

⁶³ T. D. Ernest, "American Journal of Archaeology: The iconography of the Ascension," (1915) 277–319, at 277. The early date of around 400 attributed to the Munich Ivory identifies it as one of the first images to address the subject, see John Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (2nd ed; The Pelican history of art, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979) 20–21.

⁶⁴ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 150

⁶⁵ that inherited most of the Syro-Palestinian types, and modified them in the direction of greater realism and fidelity to the canonical or apocryphal accounts

⁶⁶ Only in Mark, Luke and the Acts of the Apostles do definite account of the episode: Mark, xvi, 19, Luke, xxiv, 50–51, and Acts, I, 9–12. In the apocryphal gospel of Nicodemus we find the following references: First Greek from xiv:

apostles are standing on the mountain. In the upper part of the icon, there is elder man represents God.⁶⁷ The Virgin is not represented as usual in the icons in Aleppo iconography: Jesus stands at the center, on the mountain front facing, flanked on either side by 6 disciples who look smaller than Him. They point and gaze toward each other and toward Him.

In the background, there are olives trees, double walled city represents Jerusalem. it could to recognize three domed buildings; two of them has a cross at the top of the dome, and it might be identified with the resurrection church (Anastasis). And this city is full of gabled buildings. The upper part of the icon features a bearded elder, in front of him a dove. It is hardly necessary to point out that this icon is unique and the Ascension is very rarely represented like that.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

أوقفها الخوري جبرائيل بن تادرس أصلان على هيكل الرسل القديسين بمحروسة حلب، في رئاسة السيد البطريرك كير كير أثناسيوس المحترم وهي بيد العبد الفقير حنانيا ابن القس نعمة مصور سنة 1718.

The priest Gabriel son of Tadros Asslan endowed it to the saint apostles altar at guarded Aleppo at The Presidency of Esquire master kyr kyr Athanasius patriarch. By hand of the humble slave, Hanania son of the pastor Ne'met Mussawir 1718.

“ And while Jesus was speaking to his disciples we saw him taken up into heaven.” Ibid. xvi; “ While he yet sits on the Mount Mamlich and teaching his disciples, we saw a cloud overshadow both he and his disciples and the cloud took him up into heaven, and his disciples lay upon their faces upon earth.” The second Greek form, xiv:”... and having thus spoken, he went up into heaven” Ibid, xvi:”... we saw Jesus alive on the Mount of Olives and going up into heaven.” Latin form, xiv:”.. We saw him taken up into heaven.”. Ibid, xvi:”... and he went up into heaven and his disciples prayed upon their faces on the ground.” Ernest, “American Journal of Archaeology,” 278.

⁶⁷ For more details about the depiction of God the Father in iconography see; Steven. Bigham, *The Images of God the Father: In Orthodox theology and iconography and other studies* / Fr. Steven Bigham ; drawings by Alain Vallée (Torrance, California: Oakwood Publications, 1995)

26- The Pentecost, 18th C, Idleb.



Cat. 26 The Pentecost, the eighteenth century, in situ in the Lady-Orthodox church, Idleb, tempera on wood, 60x75cm, the iconographer; aleppo school. (After Rand 2011).

Pentecost Feast is a great feast of the church observed fifty days after Resurrection, celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit. The iconography of the icon is interesting that follows the Byzantine scheme. This event takes place in the upper room where the Apostles had gathered to receive the Holy Spirit. It depicts the apostles and Virgin Mary sitting on large horseshoe shape, looks like a bema; all the apostles have the same size, only the Virgin is depicted in bigger size.

At the bottom, another horseshoe shape includes an elderly king and crowned as a symbol of earthly authority – i.e. he represents all the peoples of the world, rather than the whole of creation. He is sitting “in darkness and in the shadow of death” (Luke 1:79) and is aged to show the corruptibility of the world. Yet he also carries a cloth containing scrolls representing the apostolic teaching (it can be compared with the scrolls held by the Apostles in the icon itself and “the meaning of objects held by saints in icons”).

In the background there are two buildings⁶⁸ with sloping red roofs, representing the upper room, decorated with a floral decoration; also, the frame is decorated with rectangular and floral decorations. The inverse perspective is applied to the figures contrast with the attempt to render the bench by western perspectival rules.

⁶⁸ As it was mentioned before, Passarelli, *Non solo colore*, 288

27- The Pentecost, 1753, Homs.



Cat. 27 The Pentecost, 1753, in situ in the Forty Martyrs church, Homs, tempera on wood, 50x66cm, the iconographer; Girgis Al Halabi. (After Rand 2011).

The icon for the feast of Pentecost is also called the Descent of the Holy Spirit⁶⁹, as it is a depiction of the event described in the Book of Acts (Acts 2:1-4) when the Holy Spirit descended as tongues of fire upon the Apostles gathered together and enabled them to preach in different languages.

The presence of the Apostle Paul in the icon, even though at that time he had not yet converted on the road to Damascus, hints that this icon is more than a purely historical picture. The gathering, then, is a representation of the Church. The Apostles and the Virgin⁷⁰ are seated in a horseshoe shape, representing a unity and harmony similar to that found in the icons of the Holy Trinity. A semi-circle is different from a full circle, and it is used so that we as observers are drawn into the unity.

Below the Apostles, in the center-bottom of the icon, there is an elderly king that is depicted inside a black background, it is hardly to see him. The elderly king is a symbolic figure of the World (Cosmos). The black background around him symbolizes “the darkness of sin and the shadow of death” that surround the world.

Two buildings behind the Apostles, in the background are representing the upper room where the Apostles gathered at the time of the Pentecost (Acts 2).

⁶⁹ This feast was originally a Hebrew feast of thanksgiving encompassing seven weeks. For the history of Pentecost, see John T. Gunstone, *The Feast of Pentecost. The great fifty days in the liturgy*. (Pp. 102. Faith Press: London, 1967)

⁷⁰ The Virgin was depicted in the most ancient iconography, Passarelli, *Non solo colore*, 286

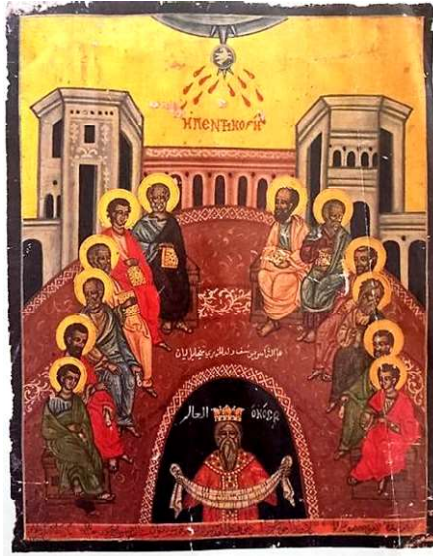
- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

[أوقف هذه الأيقونة المقدسة].....وأولاد المرحوم...على كنيسة الأربعين [شهيد]....عمل جرجس بن حنانيا
[المصور]سنة 1735 [للتجسد]

[...] have endowed this venerable icon, Girgis Hanania son has depicted it by his mortal hand at 1753.⁷¹

⁷¹ Zyat, *Syrian iconpl.13*

28- The Pentecost, 1778, Sydnaia.



Cat. 28 The Pentecost, 1778, in situ in Church of Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnania, tempera on wood, 38.5x49 cm, the iconographer; deacon Joseph son Michael Elian. (After Zayat, 1987).

The 12 Apostles are depicted in the same size and seated at the same level, facing each other as an indication of equality, harmony and unity. Being the leaders of the Church, St. Peter and St. Paul are seated at the top of the semicircle as an indication of their hierarchical position in the Church. In the icon we see the Evangelists holding the Gospels, symbolizing their witness to Christ. The rest of the Apostles are depicted holding in their hands open scrolls, symbolizing the teaching authority given to them by Christ.

Along the same lines, at the bottom of icon, there is an image of something not reported in the Act of the Apostles. It appears to be a tomb with a king standing in the blackness of the interior. He holds a white cloth. The king personifies the great multitude of people gathered in Jerusalem for the holy day. The image is called “Cosmos” and the dark place in which the king stands represents the whole world which had formally been without faith and had suffered under the weight of Adam’s sin. The red garment the king wears symbolizes pagan or the devil’s blood sacrifices, and the crown he wears signifies sin which ruled the world.

The striking aspect of the Pentecost Icon is the empty space in the middle, between the Apostles Peter and Paul. This central seat is a place of honor, the “Teacher’s Seat” around which the Apostles are gathered. Why is it empty? Because it is the seat Christ should be sitting in, who has

ascended physically into Heaven. The throne⁷² as a symbol of the Trinity⁷³ was occasionally introduced in Middle Byzantine representations of the Pentecost.⁷⁴

Above the Apostles, there is a semicircular shape out of which 12 bright rays of tongues of fire are radiating and descending on the Apostles.

Two buildings connected with each other by a wall. The architecture is decorated with grey and white tracery to simulate bas-relief, in some cases, this architecture background maybe represent a Greek theater décor.⁷⁵ It represents the upper room where the Apostles were gathered at the time of Pentecost (Acts 2).

The architecture occupies the full width of the icon and creates the background against which the numerous of group of the Apostles stands out.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic; عمل الشماس يوسف ابن ميخائيل اليان
The work of Deacon Joseph son Michael Elian.
أوقف هذه الأيقونة المباركة [...] ابن [...] على هيكل القديس خريستوفوروس داخل كنيسة القديس
جاوارجيوس في سيدنايا سنة 1778.
This blessed icon was being endowed by [...] son of [...] to the temple of st
Christophoros inside the St George Church at Sydnaia, year 1778.⁷⁶
- Inscription: in Greek; Η ΠΕΝΤΗΚΟΣΤΗ= Pentecost, ο κόσμος= the World, in
Arabic: The World, العالم.⁷⁷

⁷²An 'empty' throne on which are displayed, in different combinations, a gospel-book, the cross, sometimes surmounted by the crown of thorns, the spear, the sponge, a crown, and the dove, was introduced in the iconographic schemes of the bema and the dome of certain Middle and Late Byzantine churches. Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 195

⁷³This motif appears on the triumphal arch of S. Maria Maggiore which shows the empty Throne. Grabar, *Christian iconography: a study of its origins*, 115

⁷⁴ Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 196

⁷⁵Pentecost icon, 16th century, Crete. Manos Chatzidakēs, *Les icones dans les collections suisses: Genève 14 juin - 29 septembre 1968, Musée Rath / introductions: Manolis Chatzidakis et Vojislav Djurić* (Genève: Musée d'art et d'histoire, 1968)pl.16

⁷⁶ Eqlimandous Al Halabi, 1731-1784, Catholic Bishop of Sydnaia, and Orthodox Bishop was Erothous, 1744-1765? Barnaba from 1779-1803, see Zayat, *Histoire de Saidanaya / par Habib Zayat*, 225, 233, 234

⁷⁷ In the older icons, instead of this symbolic representation of the world and the Apostolic teaching, there are shown men of various races, dressed in peculiar clothes over them is written: People, Races and tongs Constantine Cavarinos, *Guide to Byzantine iconography: Detailed explanation of the distinctive characteristics of Byzantine iconography* (1, Boston, Mass.: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1993-<2001>) 209

29- The Dormition Of The Virgin, 1641, Hama.



Cat. 29 The Dormition, 1641, in situ in the church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 42x65cm, the iconographer; Attributed to Youssef AL Halabi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate

This icon adopts the traditional iconographical model, where based on an apocryphal account of the Virgin's death, different versions of which were known in the east and the west. This feast known in the East⁷⁸ also as the feast of the Falling Asleep of Mary, and in the West as the Assumption, the holy day was observed in Syria Palestine from at least the 4th-5th c.⁷⁹

The scene takes place in the open air, flanked by two buildings; each of them features a low tower and a red flat roof that rises above its door. The buildings' roofs are seen by the observer because of using the reverse perspective. The Virgin is lying on the decorated bier, the Apostles surround her, and there is an orb including Jesus who bears the soul of His mother. The miraculous transportation of the Apostles is shown at the top of the icon, though the main scene depicted the icon is the funerary procession itself. The Apostles are shown adoring the body of the Virgin, St. Paul standing at her feet; St Peter at Her head with an incense burner in his hand. Together with the Apostles there are several bishops – indicated by the white sashes with crosses they wear – and women. The bishops traditionally represented are James, the brother of the Lord, Timothy,

⁷⁸ In the east, the doctrine of the Assumption of the BVM, also called the Dormition or “Falling Asleep,” is embraced, but unlike in the Roman Catholic Church, it is not an official dogma. See Shoemaker, *Ancient traditions of the Virgin Mary's dormition and assumption*.

⁷⁹ Michael Prokurat, Alexander Golitzin and Michael D. Peterson, *Historical dictionary of the Orthodox Church* (Religion, philosophies, and movements; no. 9, Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 1996) 129

Heirotheus, and Dionysius the Areopagite, who first recorded the story of the Dormition in the 2nd century AD.⁸⁰ The women are Sephora, Abigail, and Jael, along with other members of the church in Jerusalem. In the foreground of the icon there is the Archangel Michael severing the impious hands of Athonios.

Inscription: Greek inscription =ΙΣ ΧΣ, and Κοίμησις Θεοτόκου means Dormition of Theotokos.

⁸⁰ Ouspensky and Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons / by Leonid Ouspensky and Wladimir Lossky ; translated by G.E.H. Palmer & E. Kadloubovsky*, 213–314

30- The Dormition Of The Virgin, 17thc, Sydnaia.



Cat. 30 The Dormitio, the seventeenth century, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, the iconographer; unknown. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

The scene is dominated by the richly decorated bier upon which the Virgin is lying, her head resting on a rectangular pillow toward the left side of the composition. In front and below a lighted candle stands and the episode of Jephonias is enacted. Behind the bier, Christ appears in a radiant almond, holding her soul in the form of a swaddled infant in His hand. Gathered around the bier are the mourning Apostles: the group to the right is led by Paul and includes five Apostles, while the group to the left is led by Peter, holding an incense burner. Behind the Apostles there are four characters, maybe saint Dionysus Areopagite and James the brother of Jesus. Behind the pier stands St John, between two saints, bowed in an attitude of reverence, also another of these two saints has the same attitude.⁸¹

Flanking the almond, there are nine Angels and one Seraphim, there is also a group of women. On the gold background the Assumption of Theotokos is shown and, below on the right and left, angels hold cloud in which the half-length figures of the Apostles can be seen.

In the background there are two tall complex building: one is a three-aisled basilica with red sloping roofs. Each building has a balcony in which standing saint, who wear turbans and hold

⁸¹the Dormition Virgin icon with scenes and saints on the farne, 15th century, on the vertical sides are full bodies figuries of saints cosmas Maiumas ,left, and John Damascenus with characteristic oriental turba, holding long scrolls unrolled downwards. Chatzēdakē and Scampavias, *Byzantine and post-Byzantine art*, 114, cat.104

scrolls, Saint John of Damascus⁸², and the poet Cosmas.⁸³ They bring the scene into relief, focusing the viewer on the sacred content of the moment depicted.⁸⁴

The upper part of the icon, the Virgin in the almond-shaped. Above the Virgin the gates of Heaven stand open, ready to receive the Virgin, surrounded by the Apostles depicted as bust shapes on clouds held by an Angel.

- Inscription: in Greek ΚΟΙΜΗΣΙΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ= The Dormition of the Mother of God, ΜΗΡ ΘΥ, ΙΣ ΧΣ, ΟΩΝ, and some sentences at books and rolls.

⁸² Theologian and saint, (c.675-c.750) he was the son of a rich Christian father who served the Arab Caliphs in Damascus, a position which John inherited. About, 720 he became a monk in the monastery of St Saba near Jerusalem and stayed there for the rest of his life. Nicol, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire* / Donald Nicol, 62

⁸³ Also mentioned in the Guide of Dionysius, Di Dionysios Fournas, Bettini and Donato Grasso, *Canone dell'icona*, 203

⁸⁴ Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 182pl.13

31- The Dormition Of The Virgin, 1764, Al Homeyra.



Cat. 31 *The Dormition, 1764, in situ in the monastery of St. George- Al Homeyra, tempera on wood, 39x52.5cm, the iconographer; Son of priest Michael Elian Al Shami. (After DGAM Archives).*

The icon follows the first type of the Dormition, see 3.1.2 The Dormition, the traditional iconography of the subject. The virgin is extended on a bier surrounded by the Apostles and two bishops. Peter incenses the bier and Christ stands behind the bier holding the soul of the Virgin in his hands. He is surrounded by Seraphims and cherubim. The apocryphal story of Athonios⁸⁵, a fanatical Jew, whose hands were cut off by the angel for seeking to touch the funeral couch of the Virgin is represented in the foreground. The beams of Paradise project from the arc of heaven. Homeyra icon, has composition typically simplified. The background is two buildings linked together by wall; they are similar with red sloping roofs, comprising two storeys, refer to Gethsemane. The golden frame is decorated with floral motif.

- Signature and Gifting:

الحاج يوسف [...] ولد الخوري ولد الخوري ميخائيل اليان الشامي

The pilgrim Joseph [...] (Boy) Son of priest Michael Elian Al Shami.

- Inscriptions: in Greek: ΚΟΙΜΗΣΙΣ [ΤΗΣ] ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΣ “Dormition of the Theotokos”, and in Arabic = “[The Dormition of the Mother of God” نياح والدة الإله

⁸⁵ Weitzmann, *Feast Day Iconspl.*41

32- The Dormition of the Virgin in Private Collection, 18th Century.



Cat. 32 The Dormition, the eighteenth century, private collection, George Antaki, tempera on wood, 73.5x96cm, the iconographer; Attributed to Noamat Allah Al Halabi. (private collection)

The icon of the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos shows her on her deathbed, surrounded by the Apostles. Christ is standing in the middle, looking at His mother. He is holding a small child dressed in white, representing the soul of the Virgin Mary. With His golden garments, the Angels above His head, and the almond surrounding Him, Christ is depicted in His divine glory. The posture of the Apostles direct attention toward the Theotokos. To the left, Saint Peter incenses the body of the Theotokos. To the right Saint Paul bows low in her honor.⁸⁶ Together with the Apostles there are several bishops, and women. The bishops traditionally represented are James, the brother of the Lord, Timothy, Heirotheus, and Dionysius the Areopagite. They are shown wearing episcopal attire. The women are members of the church in Jerusalem (four women).

In front of the bed of the Theotokos there are two candles, between them there is the scene of cutting the hands of Jew Iefonia by an angel.⁸⁷ Above the candle there is the body of Virgin Mary. Standing over His mother is Christ holding her most pure soul. Above Christ the gates of heaven stand open, ready to receive the Mother of God.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ La Croix and Emery, *Icônes arabes*, A45

⁸⁷ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 64

⁸⁸ It could be compared with the icon of Herni collection V.Candea and S. Agémian, *Discriptions Des Icônes* (as in note 694), at 158–59fig.17

The scene occurs in a fantastic setting: two separate buildings can be seen, behind the group of Apostles, women, and bishops in the foreground, which creates a shallow stage for the action. The building to the right, with a red rooftop, and barrel vault. The far left of the icon shows a building with red sloping roof.

- Iconographer: before it was attributed to Ne'met Al Halabi,⁸⁹ but later Attributed to Yuhanna Ibn Abdel Masih.⁹⁰
- Inscriptions: in Greek: ΗΚΟΙΜΗCΙC ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΣ Dormition of Theotokos.

⁸⁹ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173), at 159

⁹⁰ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 64

33- The flight into Egypt, 1740, Yabrod.



Cat. 33 The escape to Egypt , 1740, in situ in church of the church Sts Constantine and Helena, Yabrod, tempera on wood, 31x37.5 cm, the iconographer; Michael of Damascus. (After La Croix & Emery .2009).

This icon takes us into the biblical narrative⁹¹, and beyond it by means of tales that were told in other early stories.⁹² The scene takes place during the flight into Egypt: in the middle, there is the Virgin, seated on a beast of burden and holding the Christ child, who is swaddled. The Virgin looks towards Him, behind Her Joseph, who is following them; he carries on his shoulder a stick and holds by his left hand a wicker-basket. In front of them the Archangel Gabriel holding a spear to protect them. The three figures are heading toward a walled city with an arched gate.

In the background, a city with colored houses points to Egypt, the place of refuge. On the gate, the iconographer writes in Arabic: “the Gate of Egypt”.⁹³ So the architectural representation is generic type. Within, the city is densely built; a tall, domed structure resembles a church, and is clearly

⁹¹ The flight into Egypt is a biblical event described in the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 2:13-23).

⁹² Arabic 10–25 Bb “He was wondering about how to set out on his journey and morning came before he had gone very far. He approached a great city where there was an idol to which all the other idols and gods of the Egyptians offered gifts and vows. A priest stood before this idol, ministering to it, and who, as often as Satan spoke from the idol, reported it to the inhabitants of Egypt and its territories. This priest had a son, three years old and beset by many demons. The child made many speeches and utterances; and, when seized by the demons, tore his clothes, and whilst naked, threw stones at the people. There was also a hospital in that city dedicated to the idol and, when Joseph and the Lady Mary came into the city, they went into it. The citizens were very afraid. All the chief men and the priests of the idols came together to the idol and said to it, ‘What agitation is this that has arisen in our land?’. Elliott and James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 116

⁹³ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 122

visible among the buildings, although there is another domed building, but not of the same height. This icon is characterized by the gold background. Above are heavenly radiances, below and inscriptions written red in Arabic in red colours:

" لما اشرقت يانور الحق بمصر، [...] ظلام الباطل وذلك ان اصنامها اذا لم تحتل ان تثبت نحوه قدرتك يامخلص سقطت وانهوت".

O light of truth when you have brightened in Egypt, the darkness of vanity was dispersed in fact her idols were not enduring to remain in front of your power, O Savior, they succumbed and broken down."⁹⁴

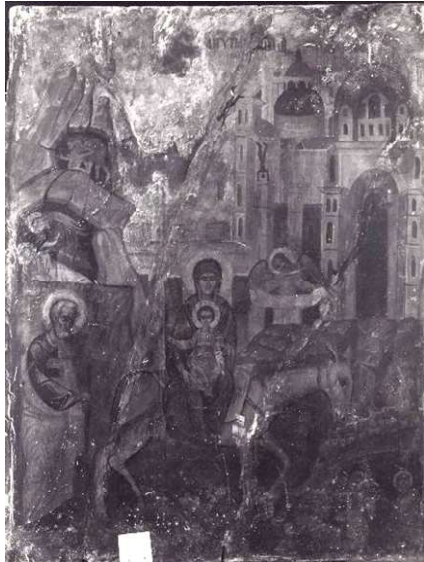
This event also occurs in the twelfth strophe of the Akathist Hymn which reinforces that this motif "The Idols Falling from the Walls of the temple" arrives from paraphrases within the Syrian tradition.⁹⁵

- Signature and Gifting: work of Michael of Damascus.
- Inscriptions: in Arabic Saint Joseph
In Greek: MHP ΘΥ.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ This motif has hardly appeared before the Paleologan era. See Anne Karahan, *Byzantine holy images: Transcendence and immanence the theological background of the iconography and aesthetics of the Chora Church* / by Anne Karahan (Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta; 176, Leuven, Walpole MA: Peeters, 2010) 164–65

34- The flight into Egypt, 18thC, Hama.



Cat. 34 The escape to Egypt, the eighteenth century, it was in situ in church the Lady of Entry, Hama, tempera on wood, 60x77cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

The icon tells a fuller story of the flight into Egypt and incorporates many other events which happened after the event of Christ's birth itself. The Flight into Egypt shows Mary, Christ, Joseph all escaping. Mary rides the donkey, on her lap Jesus infant.⁹⁶ The child raises his right hand, while with the other hand he holds the scroll. The gods of the Egyptians tumble from their places of honor, while an Angel holds a scroll to guide them, and leads the cortege on its way. As mentioned before, the icon draws on the Protevangelium of James as one of its sources, this act of Joseph, protecting the Christ child is the final scene of this icon, and one of the last acts of Joseph recorded in the Holy Scripture. As such, this is how we honor and remember the Righteous Joseph. At the right bottom of this icon, there is another precious detail of the flight into Egypt, depicting the Joseph is talking with the angel at a cave. Another detail appears in the left upper of the icon depicts St Joseph sleeping in the cave and an Angel who wakes him up, telling him to go to Egypt.⁹⁷

In the background, in the right zone that devoted to a walled city with a tall gate; represents to Egyptian city where inside the walls are a domed building and a ciborium.

Inscription: in Greek, but illegible. This icon is now missing.

⁹⁶ The flight to Egypt 1- an angel tells joseph to go to Egypt. Matthew 2:13, Ps-matthew 17:2, Arabic 9, 2-the journey to Egypt, Matthew 2:14–15, Ps-matthew 17:2, Joseph 8, Arabic 9, 3- miracles performed by jesus on the way to Egypt and in Egypt, Infancy thomas (latin) 1–2, Ps-matthew 18–24, Arabic 10–25, Leabhar breac 126–138. Elliott and James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 105–23

⁹⁷ Matthew 2:13 also in Apocryphal books like: Arabic 9

35- Birth Of St. John The Baptist, 1734, Latakia.



Cat. 35 Birth of St. John Baptist, 1734, in situ in church of the church The Lady –Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 41.5x49 cm, Hanna Al-Qudsi. (AfterDGAM Archives).

The icon is titled in Arabic and Greek languages; Η ΓΕΝΝΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΥ (the birth of the Precursor) and in Arabic “مولد يوحنا المعمدان” “the Birth of John the Baptist”. The rigorously balanced composition of the birth of John the Baptist is flanked at the sides by two tall buildings are joined with each other by a wall which has a sloping red roof and three arched grided windows: Zachariah stands in front of the arched edifice. In the middle,

The building, to the right, has an arched entrance, a little red dome is on the top. The edifice to the left appears from the foreground of the icon and extends to the background; two storeys high and has a sloping red roof. Through on it, Zachariah stands and receives the vision by flying Angels appearing from the sky. There are five girls, two of them standing behind the coach, attending to the mother, below and in front of her; a girl washes the child and a small girl pours water inside the basin, another small handmaiden holds the cradle. The icon has a golden background, and green ground.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

أوقف هذه الأيقونة المباركة...كنيسة السيدة...1734....م. بيد حنا القدسي

“Endow this blessed icon [...] Lady church [...] 1734, by Hanna Al-Qudsi”.

- The inscription: in Greek, Η ΓΕΝΗΣ ΤΟ ΠΡΗΜΟΣ: The birth of the Previous.

36- Birth Of St. John The Baptist, 1743, Latakia.



Cat. 36 Birth of St. John Baptist, 1743, in situ in church of the church Saint Nicolas - Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 41x49.5 cm, Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).



Figure 55 The scheme of Birth of St. John the Baptist icon, Latakia, 1743.

The icon depicts The Nativity of St John Baptist according to the Gospel (Luke. 1: 5) when the righteous parents of St John the Baptist, the Priest Zachariah and Elizabeth⁹⁸, lived in the ancient city of Hebron. They reached old age without having children. Once, St Zachariah was serving in the Temple at Jerusalem which represented here by the tall building on the left side, he saw the Archangel Gabriel. He predicted that St Zachariah would father a son, who would announce the Savior, the Messiah, awaited by the Old Testament Church. Elizabeth is reclining on her bed and two nurses are performing the ritual washing of John in a font. There is only one visitor bringing a gift. On the foreground two women are washing the infant John and a woman carrying a cradle. The icon itself is painted in the traditional technique of egg tempera on wood and the icon is surrounded by a decorated frame.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic:

"أوقف هذه الأيقونة المباركة الياس...المطران كيركيفورس.... 1743 مسيحية"

Elias [...] endowed this blessed icon [...] the Metropolitan kyr (κύριος) Kivors [...] 1773 Christian (Year).

- Inscriptions: in Greek, Η ΓΕΝΗΣ ΤΟ ΠΡΗΜΟΣ: The Previous birth

⁹⁸ The mother of John the Baptist and cousin of Mary. Feast day in the East 5 Sept, and in the West in 5 Nov. Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 540

37- Birth Of St. John The Baptist, 18th Century, Aleppo.



Cat. 37 Birth of St. John Baptist, the eighteenth century, in situ in Dormition church, Aleppo, tempera on wood. (After Rand.2011).

In this standard iconographical depiction of the birth of John the Baptist, his mother Elizabeth lies in a bed while her husband, the priest Zachariah stands and incenses; women bring food while the serving women get ready to bathe the child. Stylistically, the icon is very close to the 18th Century Aleppo art.

Furthermore, this icon depends on a geometric structure, the grid and the circle, divided into nine squares. The building to the left extends in three vertical squares, a little red lobed dome is on its top, it has two storeys, the first one is lower, it has an arched entrance; at the upper storey stands Zachariah who receives the vision and is talking with an Angel. To the right, a building looks like an entrance more than a building proper. In the background, a red wall extends between two buildings.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic:

[...] أوقف هذه الايقونة المباركة لكنيسة كلز .17[...].

- [...] endowed this blessed icon to the Church of Keles⁹⁹, [...] – 17[...].
- The inscription: in Greek Η ΓΕΝΗΣ [ΤΟ ΠΡΗΜΟΣ] :The Previous birth

⁹⁹ The city was in the state of Aleppo, during the Ottoman period, now it is in Turkey.

38- The Tabernacle (Last Supper), 1797, Sydnaia.



Cat. 38 *The Tabernacle(last supper), 1797, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, from wood, Deacon Joseph Elian. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.*

This tabernacle ¹⁰⁰ is an ornamented receptacle for the consecrated Eucharistic element.¹⁰¹ It stands on the altar, in which are preserved the Holy Gifts (the Body of Christ, saturated with His Blood), reserved for giving communion to the sick¹⁰², and to others at times when it is not lawful to celebrate the Liturgy.

Nice rectangular box, in situ in the Lady Church of Sydnaia, has two depicted surfaces, the one is depicting the last supper, dated to 1797. And the second depicts Jesus as a child in the chalice¹⁰³, surrounded by two seraphims, dated to 1798. The central icon is depicted in a door of the Tabernacle, surrounded by red and black framework, then gold framework surrounds them and continues to surround all the face of tabernacle. The Last Supper is the final meal that, in the Gospel accounts, Jesus shared with his Apostles in Jerusalem before his Crucifixion.¹⁰⁴ Also called

¹⁰⁰ As far as the name is concerned it was called “*miskan*” in Hebrew, which means “*the dwelling place*”, as if god wished it known that his tent resides among our tents, so that every heart is opened to him, and turned into a dwelling for him. Using this word differs from using it in the old testament, for more see Virgil W. Rabe, “The Identity of the Priestly Tabernacle,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 25 (1966) 132–34, at 132–33, E. Friedman, Richard, The Tabernacle in the Temple, *The Biblical Archaeologist*, The American Schools of Oriental Research, Vol. 43, No. 4 (Autumn, 1980), pp. 241-248

¹⁰¹ Fahlbusch and Bromiley, *The encyclopedia of Christianity. editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett*, 299; Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 1573

¹⁰² Prokurat, Golitzin and Peterson, *Historical dictionary of the Orthodox Church*, 200.

¹⁰³ A particularly important religious in the Jewish passvor meal, were normally of glass, but also of silver or gold, is closely linked with the wine of the Eucharist. Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend*

¹⁰⁴ “Last Supper. The final meal Christ with His Apostles on the night before the Crucifixion.” Livingstone and Cross, *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, 958.

in Antiochian church, the Mystical Supper, it was in the Upper Room sharing the Passover meal with the Twelve that Jesus gave a radically new meaning to the food and drink of the sacred meal. Scene of the Mystical Supper depicts the event in a straight-forward manner, as described in the Gospels: Christ and the twelve apostles are seated at a long table, the earliest type of rectangle table appears in churches in Cappadocia (10th century).¹⁰⁵ John rests on Jesus' bosom; leans over the shoulder of Christ and Judas dips his hand in the dish, revealing him to be Christ's traitor. Christ seats on the throne, rises his hand for blessing. The table is rectangular.¹⁰⁶ The background is golden background.

- The Date: 1797-1798.
- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic:
" قد أهتم بهذا البيت للقربان المقدس الخوري حنا الرئيس يومئذ ولد رزق الله الاملح؟، داخل هيكل السيدة بدير صيدنايا المقدس، قاصداً بذلك الاجر والثواب من الملك الوهاب وذلك في سنة 1798."

The priest Hanna son (Walad)¹⁰⁷ of Rezeq Allah Al Amlah, the abbot That day, was interested in this house of Holy Communion [tabernacle], the inside of the Lady temple at the Holy Sydnaia monastery, asked the reward from the God, in the year 1798.

In the other side on the icon of Last supper:

[...] Joseph son of Priest Michael Elian had depicted it by his moral hand, year 1797.

- The iconographer: Joseph son of Priest Michael Elian
- Inscriptions: in Arabic العشاء السري = the Mystical Supper
The name of Apostles [from left to right]

توما، برثلماوس، سمعان القناني، يعقوب بن حلفي، متي، بطرس، يوحنا الحبيب، تداوس، اندراوس، يعقوب بن زبدي، فيلبس، يهوذا الدافع

Thomas, Bartholomew, Simeon, James son of Alphaeus, Matthew, Peter, John the Beloved, Thaddeus, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, Philip, Judas the Payer [Judas Iscariot]

In Greek ΙΣ ΧΣ, Ο ΩΝ

¹⁰⁵ Vardan Devrikyan, *Last Supper from Armenian Tradition to Leonardo* (Yerevan: Tigran Mets Pub. House, 2008) 15

¹⁰⁶ This appeared before in icon dated to 1727, painted by Hanna Al Qudsi. La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 76

¹⁰⁷ Non-Muslim men were further set apart from their Muslim contemporaries by the scribes in both Aleppo and Damascus who recorded their patronymic as "walad", for example, Jiris walad Tuma (George, son of Thomas), as opposed to the "ibn" reserved for Muslims, for example, Muhammad ibn Hasan. In an interesting contrast, Arabic-speaking legal clerks indiscriminately recorded Muslim, Jewish, and Christian women as "bint" (daughter). Dead Muslims were referred to as the "deceased" (mutawaffa) while dead non-Muslims had simply "perished" (halik) Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world*, 32

39- Last Supper, 18thc, Latakia



Cat. 39 Last supper, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 25x40 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

As we know that the images of last supper are divided into two iconographical groups-historical and liturgical.¹⁰⁸ Here, in this icon which belongs to the historical one that stresses the imminent betrayal, where Judas appears somewhat in the center of actions stretching out his hand towards the table. Christ is the central figure at the table. Saint John the Beloved [Evangelist, Theologian] is seated at Christ's left; as the youngest of the disciples, depicted as beardless young. The disciples seated¹⁰⁹ around round table where the candles, the main meal and plates are on it.

The background is four arches which stand on four columns, up the arches there are four rectangular windows refer to the upper room.

- Inscriptions: in Geek: Ο ΜΙΣΤΙΚΟΣ ΔΙΠΝΟΣ = the Mystical supper.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸The liturgical scene stresses on the sacrament of Eucharist, Judas is not portrayed see, Devrikyan, *Last Supper from Armenian tradition to Leonardo*, 12–13

¹⁰⁹ For more detail how they seated around the table in the last supper, see Haupt, Paul, *The Last Supper*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, The Society of Biblical Literature, Vol. 40, No. 3/4 (1921), pp. 178-180.

¹¹⁰ This icon is generally referred to by the heterodox and not a few Orthodox as “the last supper”.Cavarnos, *Guide to Byzantine iconography*, 29

40- Last supper, 18thC, Latakia.



Cat. 40 Last supper, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 26x(34-22.5) cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

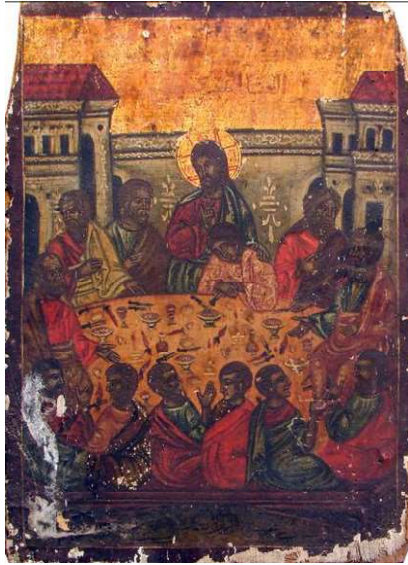
The scene follows the same iconographic canons as the preceding icon. The icon of Last Supper shows Christ telling his disciples: “one of you will betray me” (John 13:21). Peter invites John to ask Christ who the traitor is.¹¹¹

The icon depicts the last meal of Christ with his disciples in the “Upper Room” before been arrest. Christ is the central figure at the table. The chalice containing the Precious Blood of Christ is on the table. He is talking with Apostles, like Peter. The Evangelist, Saint John the Beloved, is seated next to Christ, as the youngest of the disciples, he is depicted as beardless. He receives in his left hand a piece of the Body of Christ; another morsel is on the table before Christ. The right side of icon, Judas Iscariot who is dipping his hand into the dish (Matthew 26:20-25).

- Inscriptions: in Geek: Ο Μυστικός Δείπνος (the Mystical supper)

¹¹¹ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 133.

41- Last Supper, 18thC, Al Homeyra.



Cat. 41 Last supper, the eighteenth century, in situ in the monastery of St. George- Al Homeyra, tempera on wood, 36x51cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

The title “The Mystical Dinner” of this icon refers to the mystical reality of the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. Christ is the central figure in this icon and is the only one who is depicted has a halo, and big scale, while the disciples who are in the foreground are smaller than who are near to Jesus who holds his right hand, not straight up as in traditional blessing position. Saint John the Beloved seated at Christ's right; as the beardless youngest of the disciples. Judas Iscariot the Betrayer is; traditionally he is depicted dipping into the dish (Matthew 26:20-25).¹¹²

In the background, two buildings with red slopping roofs, between them there is a wall. I believe that it represents Jerusalem. Two doorways leading to the left building which in fact are on two lateral sides. This effect is again due to the perspective treatment. The reverse perspective is used in drawing the personages, where the artist depicts the important figures bigger than secondary, even if they are in the background.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic[...أوقف هذه الأيقونة المباركة...].
[... Endowed this blessed icon,]
- Inscriptions: in Arabic. “The Mystical Dinner”.

¹¹² Andriy Lesiv, “The Gestures of Judas Iscariot in “The Last Supper” Icons from 15th – 18th Century’s in Ukrainian Art,” *The international journal of humanities & social studies* 3 (2015), at 147

42- Last Supper, 18thC, Aleppo.



Cat. 42 Last supper, the eighteenth century, in situ in church of Dormition Lady, tempera on wood, 47x68 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

In this icon of the Last Supper, Christ and the Twelve Apostles, including Judas, are seated around the rectangular table in the upper room. All of them except Jesus don't have a halo. Laid on the table are the bread and wine for their meal. The larger cup before Christ which he is blessing is the chalice. From the ninth century, a lamp or candle was shown on the table to indicate the time and place of the Supper. The two candles are in our space - in front of, and below, the icon. Judas lays his hand down on the bread a common gesture.¹¹³

The buildings are complex but elegant and excellent go up on the bottom, giving an undeniable boost to the composition. Even if the event occurs out of this doomed room, but somehow it reflects the kind of room was famous in Aleppo's houses, called Qa'a that has a rectangular structure, surmounted by a cupola, i.e., Wakil house.¹¹⁴

There is an icon attributed to Hanna Al-Qudsi, 1722, in Abo Adel collection¹¹⁵, I believe that this icon is a copy of Adel's icon.

- The inscription: in Greek Ο Δείπνος Ο Μυστικός (the Mystical supper)

¹¹³In Ukrainian Art, it is often depicted in icons "the last supper" from the 17th -century *ibid.*, 148

¹¹⁴Schwed, "THE BERLIN ALEPPO ROOM," 95

¹¹⁵Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 256pl.82

43- Washing of Feet, 18thC, Latakia.



Cat. 43 Whashing of Feet, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 26x (34-22.5) cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (AfterDGAM Archives).

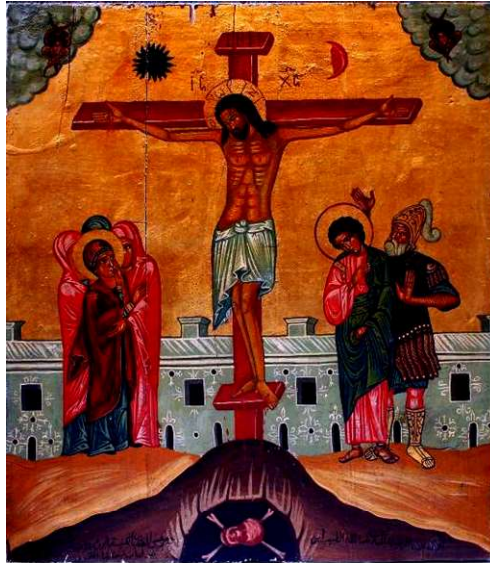
The Byzantine liturgy of Holy Thursday commemorates the Washing of the Feet, the Last Supper, Christ's prayer in the garden, and Judas's betrayal. The icon of the washing of Feet icon captures Peter's gesture: "Not My feet only, but also my hands and my head" (John 13:9).¹¹⁶ This icon is one of the upper part of iconostasis in St Nicolas church in Latakia. Under the arch in relief, surrounded by a raised frame, is painted a scene of washing of Feet. The former is set in the interior of a building whose arches stand on a pillar form the background of the scene. Christ is shown full-length, girded by a *lentium*. He is talking with peter, when Peter, shown being the first to have his feet washed.

The pillar divides this scene into two parts where the apostles are into two separated groups. And it gives an impression of the scene that takes place in the upper room. The background is decorated with golden flowers and branches.

- Inscription: in Greek [.ΟΝΤΙ....]=? the Washing".

¹¹⁶For more details about the types of Washing Feet, see Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'évangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles d'après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont-Athos*, 310–25

44- The Crucifixion, 1708, Aleppo.



Cat. 44 *The Crucifixion*, 1708, in situ in Dormition church, Aleppo, tempera on wood, 70x80cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).

The representation of Christ dead on the cross properly materialized some time around the end of the seventh century.¹¹⁷ Jesus Christ is nailed to the Cross at the hands and feet on a hill, outside of the city walls, which can be seen in the background. At the foot of the Cross stands Jesus' Mother, grieving with the other women, left stands the young Apostle John and one of the Roman centurions. Jesus Himself bears the spear-wound on His right side, gushing blood and water. His head is bowed, His eyes are closed; He has breathed His last (Mk 15:37; Jn 19:30). At the top the sun is shown black, and the moon is shown blood-red. The solar eclipse at Christ's Crucifixion is described in the Gospels, yet Peter, quoting a prophecy of Joel, also affirms that a lunar eclipse occurred, which would have caused the moon to turn red (Joel 2:31; Acts 2:19-22). Personifications of the sun and the moon belong to the earliest representations of the Apocalyptic Vision¹¹⁸ and were developed from ancient associations with the gods and princes, symbols of eternal power.¹¹⁹ The Gospels tell that the Crucifixion took place outside the Jerusalem city in the Golgotha. In this icon, the wall of Jerusalem appears in the background, depicted as a low wall.

¹¹⁷ Kartsonis, *Anastasis*, 40

¹¹⁸ "Apocalypse" became a recognized genre in the Christian era, but several pre-Christian Jewish works are now recognized as pertaining to the same genre. An apocalypse may be defined as "genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality that is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation. Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* / edited by Everett Ferguson, 73-74

¹¹⁹ Dodd, *Medieval painting in the Lebanon*, 56

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic;

" أوقف هذه الأيقونة المباركة نعمة الله الطبيب ابن جرجس الغضبان لكنيسة الروم بحلب سنة 1708، بيد الفنانة حنانيا المصور.

Ne'met Allah the Doctor son of Jirjis al Ghadban endowed this blessed icon to Rum (Melkites-Greek) Church in Aleppo, 1708 by mortal hand of Hanania Al- Mussawir.

- The inscriptions: ΙΣ ΧΣ, Ο ΩΝ.

45- The Crucifixion, 1713, Latakia.



Cat. 45 The Crucifixion, 1713, in situ in the church Saint Andrew-Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 49x68 cm, the iconographer unknown, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

According to the Gospels, the death of Christ occurred in Jerusalem, where he had gone to celebrate the feast of Passover with his disciples. The representation of the Crucifixion is taken place out of the city of Jerusalem, that represented by wall with two arched windows, the cross is flanked by a group of women, and at the right of icon two persons, John and roman solder. Jesus is depicted on the cross, his eyes closed.¹²⁰ The background of the icon is gilded, the cross divided the icon into two parts, the cross erects upon a little hill, cave inside it, the skull of Adam,

The crucifixion is rigidly symmetrical, and composed of two groups: The Virgin with the Holy Women on one the side of the cross; Sint John, the Centurion on the other. In the center, on the Hill of Calvary, that is represented by small cave, Christ on the cross; His head is bowed, His eyes are closed.. The sturchure of the compostion, with the symmertrically arranged groups either side of the Cross, is absoulty balanced and reproduces the well-known model of the icon of Niloasos Ritzos.¹²¹

¹²⁰ At all the icons of crucifixion, the eyes of Christ are always been closed, unlike that belong to fifth century, where his eyes wide open, Grabar attributes the visual insistence on Christ's liveliness to the use of the crucifixion during the early Christian period as a symbol of the Resurrection rather than as a reference to the reality of the Death of Christ. Grabar, *Christian iconography: a study of its origins*, 132

¹²¹ Chatzēdakē and Scampavias, *Byzantine and post-Byzantine art*, 376

This icon emphasizes Christ's victory over death. Christ's body is shown limply attached to the cross, his arms bent at the shoulders and his legs turned, pushing his hip slightly outward. His head falls forward against his right shoulder. The Virgin and Saint John mourn his passing, and underneath the foot support. By the foot of the cross is earth crevice - earth interior - with a skull inside. It is a skull of Adam, the first man

The composition unfolds against the gilded background, there is wall as usual, the Jerusalem walls. Just there is a black line divides the icon into two part the background and the foreground. The composition, in which the figures and their features, as well as the geometric drapery, are rendered with precision and confident brushwork, is distinguished by strict symmetry and restrained rendering of sorrow, which is registered intensely on the countenances of virgin, Mary Magdalene, and John, by knitted eyebrows and deep triangular shadows under the eyes.

- The inscription: in Greek, ΙΩ = John, Η ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΝ = the Crucifixion of Christ.

46- The Crucifixion, 18th century, Latakia.



Cat. 46 The Crucifixion, the eighteenth century, in situ in the church Saint Nicolas -Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on wood, 30x40 cm, the iconographer; Unknown. (After DGAM Archives). .

The image of Crucifixion was relatively late comer in Christian Art.¹²² The icon takes place one the Golgotha: The iconographical form of Golgotha is the rock. Golgotha was perceived as the earth center, the geographical and religious center. Since IX century a skull and bones had appeared inside the Golgotha¹²³. N.V. Pokrovsky considered that this skull originally was only a symbol of the death won by a cross, a symbol of a victory over a death. But during later period the understanding of this skull as Adam's skulls was fixed. The Golgotha is represented near to Jerusalem that is represented here by the wall. In many icons a cave is shown beneath the cross in which lies the skull of Adam. This traditional deatil showing the blood of Christ falling into the grave of Adam, expresses visually the truth that Christ's death is redemptive for the whole of humanity.¹²⁴

According to Jon 19:30 Christ before the death has bent a head. In the ancient Crucifixions representing living Christ, the head inclination sometimes is not present, but in this icon the

¹²² One of the fifth century London ivories offers the first example of this scene. Christ is depicted on the cross, his eyes wide open, his body fully erect and entirely unaffected by the rigors of his passion. For more see Kartsonis, Anna, D., *Anastasis; the Making of an image*, Princeton university press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1986, p.33.

¹²³ N. V. Pokrovskii, *The Gospel in the monuments of iconography, mostly Byzantine and Russian* (St. Petersburg [Russia]: Appanage Press, 1892) 441

¹²⁴ Baggley, *Festival icons for the Christian year*, 108

iconographer depicted the head of Christ is inclined to the right. Christ is crucified upon the cross naked except loin cloth, green bandage.¹²⁵ To his left, at the foot of the cross, is the virgin accompanied by holy women; to the right St John is accompanied by the faithful centurion Longinus.

Inscriptions: in Greek ΙΣ ΧΣ = Jesus Christ, ΟΩΝ = «I am that I am»

Η ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΝ= the Crucifixion of Christ

¹²⁵ You can find the long clothes (*colobium*) in monuments of VI or X centuries. The bandage began to prevail since XI century, and from XII century crucified was represented only in bandages.

47- The Crucifixion, 19th century, Sydnaia.



Cat. 47 *The Crucifixion, the nineteenth century in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.*

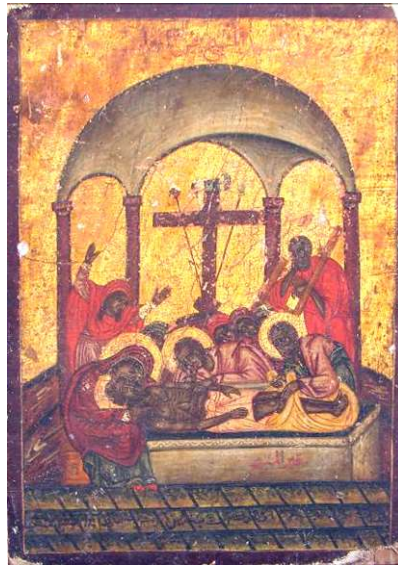
In the central part, against an architectural background, is the Cross with the crucified Jesus Christ, flanked by the figures of the Holy Mother and John.¹²⁶ The three figures was not new; in the earlier period it had been reserved.¹²⁷ In the center, on the Hill of Calvary, that is represented by cave, Christ hangs on the cross; to his right and left stand Mary, his mother, and John, the Beloved Disciple. The composition is projected against a background of a short wall, that shows some of buildings of the city, representing the city of Jerusalem, while the entire scene is framed by a golden border ornamented with plants leaves. The iconographer had represented the nature by depicting the ground tends to realistic mountain. The duplicated wall includes many buildings. The unsigned icon, which is closely akin in its iconography and style to the Michael of Crete school, dating to 1810-1820. I suggest that this icon was painted in the beginning of nineteenth century.

- Inscriptions: in Greek ΙΣ ΧΣ = Jesus Christ, ΟΩΝ = «I am that I am», ΙΩ = John, Η ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΝ = the Crucifixion of Christ
And in Arabic: صلب المسيح المخلص, the crucifixion of Christ the Savior.

¹²⁶ There is an icon for paying at the internet, looks like this icon, <http://www.prices4antiques.com/Icon-Arabic-Christian-Melkite-Crucifixion-with-Mother-of-God-22-inch-D9687174.html>

¹²⁷ Weitzmann et al., *Icons from South Eastern Europe and Sinai* / Kurt Weitzmann, Manolis Chatzidakis, Krsto Miatev, Svetozar Radojčić ; [translated from the original *Ikone sa Balkana*, by R.E. Wolf], XXXIII

48- Lamentation of Christ, 18thC, Al Homeyra.



Cat. 48 Lamentation of Christ, the eighteenth century, in situ in the lower church of St George Monastery, Al Homeyra 36x50 cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

The Lamentation¹²⁸ of Christ is a very common subject in Christian art from the High Middle Ages to the Baroque.¹²⁹ This scene portrayed Mary mourning over the body of her son, between its deposition from the cross and its placement in the tomb. The earliest surviving depictions of the Lamentation belong to the eleventh century.¹³⁰ The word of “*threnos*” is Greek for lamentation. In the iconography this is the illustration of the moment following the descent from the cross, Jesus before the burial. After Jesus was crucified, his body was removed from the cross and his friends mourned over his body. Scene shows Christ lying in the tomb is been surrounded by his mother, she cradles the head of the dead Christ, St. John the Beloved, Nicodemus who shrouded Jesus, behind them stands st Joseph of Arimathea, holding the Ladder, while Mary Magdalene throws up her hands and arms, rises them in a position mourning. The other women are professional mourners or “Wailing Women” who tear their clothes and loosen their hair in grief.

All these persons with the cross of Christ are under the ciborium, which stands on four columns. The foreground of icon is paved ground, while the background is gilded. In the icon depicts the same object, 19th century, at the back ground there is arcade, which lend to the scene a sort of

¹²⁸Also called epitaph, this icon looks like Cretan icon, see Antoine Lammens, *Les Icônes byzantines et post-byzantines grecques: viages de l'icone*, Paris: paris musées, 1996 (Paris: paris musées, 1996), at 58

¹²⁹ Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian art* (1st ed; 2, London: Lund Humphries, 1972) 178

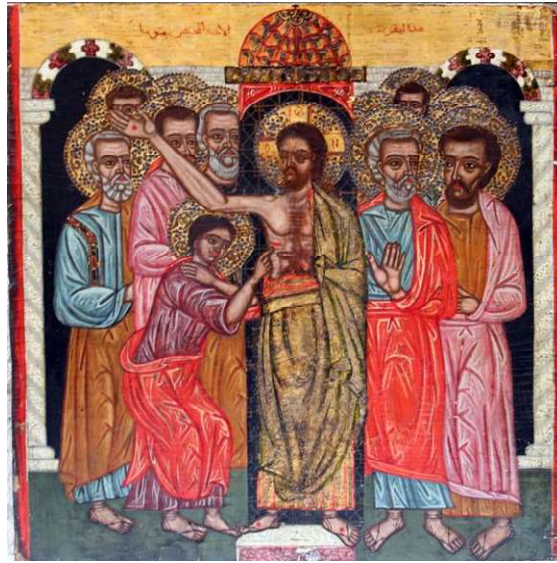
¹³⁰ Maguire, *Art and eloquence in Byzantium*, 101–2

intimate sanctity.¹³¹ In the background is a landscape, the cross on the mountain. The tomb of the Christ is titled by Arabic words. I believe that the ciborium represents the Sepulchre church.

- Signature and Gifting : There are some words are illegible
- Inscriptions: in Arabic. in Arabic قبر المسيح = Christ's tomb
صورة نزول السيد المسيح عن الصليب = the Picture of the descent of the Christ from the cross.

¹³¹ Alexandra Bersch, Agnès-Miriam d. La croix and Christiane Riemann, *Der Glanz Des Christlichen Orients: The Splendour of Christian Orient = Baha' Al-Sharq Al-Masihi* (Frankfurt am Main: Ikonen-Museum, 2002) 60

49- Thomas Sunday, 17thC, Aleppo.



Cat. 49 Thomas Sunday, the seventeenth century, in situ in Dormition Church, Aleppo, 45x45 cm, Attributed to Hanania Al Halabi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

This event is recorded in the Gospel of Saint John 20:19-29. Following the Crucifixion and burial of Christ, the disciples were gathered in a room with the doors closed and locked for fear of the Jews. On the evening of the Sunday after Passover, Jesus Christ entered the room and stood in their midst, greeting them with the words, "Peace be with you." (v. 19) He showed the disciples his hands, feet, and side. (v. 20)

This icon depicts Christ standing during the eleven disciples on the footstool. He has appeared to in the upper room, and he is inviting Thomas to come and examine his hands and his side. Thomas is reaching out to touch the side of Jesus, while Jesus open his arm to show them his scars.

In the background, a red lobbed dome flanked by two arches decorated by Ablaq (Arabic: أبلق; particolored; literally "piebald").¹³²

- Inscriptions: in Arabic;

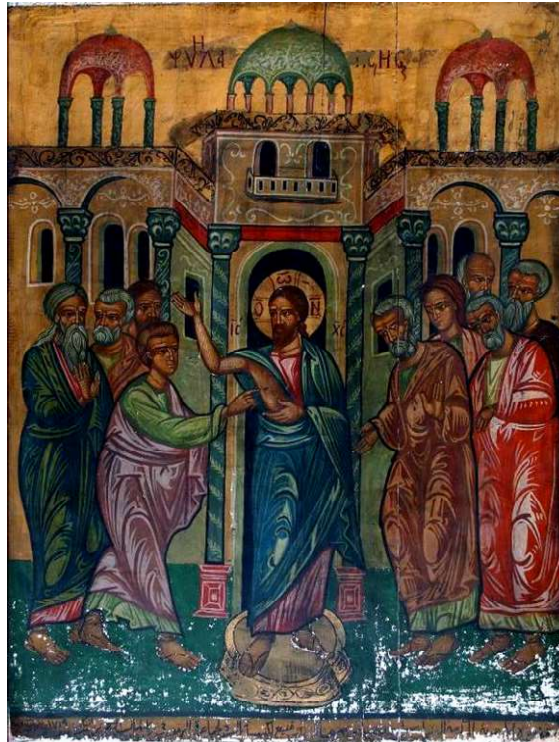
This icon for Sunday Thomas = هذه أيقونة الأحد المختص بتوما

In Greek: ΙΣ ΧΣ, ΟΩΝ.¹³³

¹³² Hillenbrand, *Islamic art and architecture*, 146.

¹³³ Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian iconpl*.124; La Croix and Emery, *Icônes arabes*, A80

50- Thomas Sunday, 1719, Aleppo.



Cat. 50 Thomas Sunday, 1719, in situ in Dormition Church, Aleppo, 65x86 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand 2011.)

The Christ is in the middle of his disciples, in the axis of Him standing on a footstool, in front of the closed door of a building with three facades that rhythm of high columns and that surmount arms and discovers its bald flank so that Thomas can touch him and check his doubts on the Resurrection. The representation faithfully adheres to the Gospel text: Eight days later the disciples were again in the house and Thomas with them. (John 26-27)

This icon is a similar with an icon of Abou Adal, collection, (pl.78).¹³⁴The architecture of the background takes part majesty of the scene by structuring the composition of its severe and elegant lines. Upon these structures, there are three ciboriums. It also gives testimony, among others, on the quality of the models that the artists of Aleppo had at their disposal in their workshop

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

أوقف هذه الأيقونة المكرمة الشمساس [...] يوحنا الشهير [...] الكنيسة السيدة لجماعة الروم في رئاسة السيد البطريرك
أثناسيوس سنة 1719. بيد [...] حنانيا [...].¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 248pl.78

¹³⁵ Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon*pl.82

John who known as [...] had endowed this blessed icon, the lady church of the rum [Melkite, Greek orthodox] group, at the time of the presidency master patriarch Athanathios, 1719, by hand [...] Hanania, [...].

- Inscriptions: in Greek: Η ΨΗΛΑΦΗΤΙΣ, ΙΣ ΧΣ, ΟΩΝ

51- Thomas Sunday, 1733, Latakia.



Cat. 51 Thomas Sunday, 1733, in situ in The Lady –Orthodox Church, Latakia, 33.5x43.5 cm, Hanna Al-Qudsi. (After DGAM Archives).

After His Resurrection, Jesus appeared to His Disciples stands on the upper step of stair, entered a locked room, and showed them His wounds. Then He ate and drank with them, proving that He was not a ghost or a phantom, but that He was really Jesus the Christ, in the flesh. Behind the upper room, appears a wall, represents Jerusalem. The iconography of the episode has remained essentially unchanged since its earliest depictions.¹³⁶ Christ at the center, in front of the closed doors of the building, shows his wounds to Thomas, who approaches in fear. To the left and right, the apostles look on in admiration and astonishment. The building in which the apostles are gathered suggests the form of a three aisled church, with lobed dome in the upper.

- Signature and Gifting:

"أوقف هذه الأيقونة المباركة جرجي الطحان عن كنيسة السيدة في اللاذقية عن روحه وروح والديه سنة 1733 للتجسد. بيد حنا القدسي".

“Endow this the blessed Icon Girgi Altahaan *alqubresy* (Cypriot) to Lady church in Latakia for his soul and the soul of his parents, year 1733 of incarnation by hand Hanna Al-Qudsi”.

- Inscription: in Greek Η ΨΗΛΑΦΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΩΜΑ = touch of Thomas.

¹³⁶ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 148

52- Thomas Sunday, 1734, Latakia.



Cat. 52 Thomas Sunday, 1734, in situ in Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, 35x43cm, Hanna Al-Qudsi. (After DGAM Archives).

The Thomas Sunday is described in the Gospel (John 20:19-31), which recounts the story of Christ appearing to the Apostle Thomas to dispel the latter's doubt about the Resurrection.

This icon is like an icon, Cat.51, both painted by Hanna al Qudsi. By comparison; the both have the same composition, and distributing of the characters, but this icon has twelve disciples instead of eleventh. About architectural background, both have the same architectural elements as lobed dome in the upper of icon it is inspirits from Islamic domes. In the background, there is a wall which represent Jerusalem city.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic:

وكان المهتم الخوري موسى كريش من مال الكنيسة سنة 1734. بيد حنا القدسي

“Khouri Moses Creech was interested it is from money of the church in 1734. By hand of Hanna Qudsi”.

- Inscription: Η ΨΗΛΑΦΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΩΜΑ= Sunday of Thomas

53- Thomas Sunday, 18thC, Latakia.



Cat. 53 Thomas Sunday, the eighteenth century, in situ in The Saint Nicolas - Orthodox Church, Latakia, 30x40 cm, Attributed to Hanania Al Halabi. (After DGAM Archives).

This icon is so similar with the two last icons of Hanna Al Qudsi, this icon is Signed and dated in the bottom of it, but illegible. We suggest that attributed to Hanna Al Halabi by comparison this icon with others icon of him. Because it has many iconographical properties and decoration features of Hanania Al Halabi painting, as nature of facing of characters, and the shape of their bodies.

The upper room in which the apostles are gathered suggests the form of a three aisled church, with lobed dome and two gabled roofs. The city of Jerusalem is symbolized by the wall in the background.

- Inscription: Η ΨΗΛΑΦΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΩΜΑ= Sunday of Thomas

54- Thomas Sunday, 18thC, Hama.



Cat. 54 Thomas Sunday, the eighteenth century, in situ in the Lady of Entry Church, Hama, 30x48 cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

This small icon was properly part of the series of the twelve Great Feast on the iconostasis of the Entry Lady in Hama, unfortunately most of these icons are destroyed during the year of 1982. This icon is distinguished by depicting the Virgin next to Christ, and the architectural background which symbolized to Jerusalem.

Jesus stands in the center of the upper room, locked room, which includes three closed doors, every door has arc. At the background there are Jerusalem, we can recognize the big dome in the center represents the temple of Jerusalem, next her rise two towers-minarets. Behind this dome, crenelated wall represents the walls of Jerusalem. The building in which the apostles are gathered suggests the form of a three doomed aisled church.

- Inscription: in Greek, but illegibly. This icon right now is missing.

55- The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring, 1735, Al Homeyra.



Cat. 55 The Lady of spring, 1735, in situ in the upper church of St George Monastery, Al Homeyra, 38.5x48.5 cm, the iconographer unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

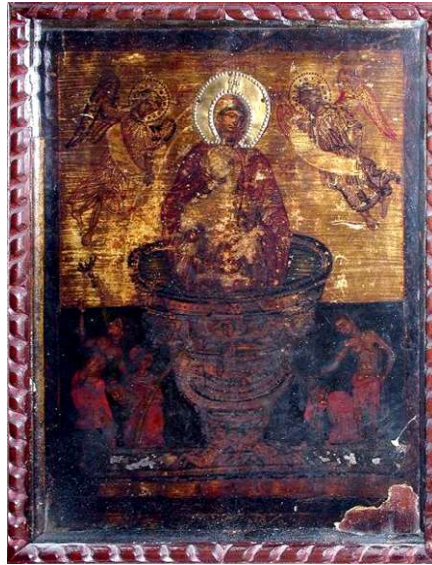
The theme is linked a famous monastery of Constantinople and a miracle that determined its foundation. According to *Nicephorus Kallistos*, author of the office and syntax of the feast celebrated on the Thursday of the first week of Pentecost, Emperor Leo Thrace (457-474)¹³⁷, arrived in Constantinople as a private soldier, marsh of the Golden Gate a blind man who asked for water. At this moment the future Emperor heard the Virgin say that the water was near him; she ordered him to sprinkle the eyes of the blind man with this miraculous water and to find a church in his honor. The miraculous source was the object of a veneration on the part of different people. It was attributed to the cure of all the diseases and infirmities known to the Byzantine Middle Ages (fevers, hemorrhages, abscesses, blindness, deafness, paralysis, etc.) also the resurrection of the dead. The sanctuary of the Life-giving spring stands near ancient sleimbra Gates of Constantinople at a spot now known as Bakili. ¹³⁸ Virgin emerges half-length, facing the spectator, within a gold cup placed in the center of fountain. She holds child, two angles flank them, at the lower part of icon there are people coming to get the healing and to become cure. The burgundy frame is decorated by floral motifs. Around the hexagonal -shaped basin stand some characters as Emperor, with his courtiers, while on the right are Patriarch with his bishops.

- Inscriptions: in Greek: Μρ Θv

¹³⁷ He was a firmly Orthodox supporter of the rulings of the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Nicol, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire* / Donald Nicol, 72

¹³⁸ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 193

56- The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring, 1743, Latakia.



Cat. 56 The Lady of spring, 1743, in situ in the Lady orthodox church, Latakia, 32x42.5, Issa Al Qudsi. (After DGAM Archives).

The service of the Theotokos of the Life-giving spring has a direct connection to the church dedicated to the Zoodochos Pege in Constantinople and was composed by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos in the early fourteenth century.¹³⁹ This icon which is endowed to Saint Georg church, now in the Lady church depicts this service; the Virgin, in the frontal position, emerges from a baroque fountain, blesses and embraces the Child, surrounded by two angels, and is sitting on the more elevated of two basins, the living water from the more elevated basin flows into a larger marble basin below, which is in the shape of a rectangle and the sick gathered to be healed below.

Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

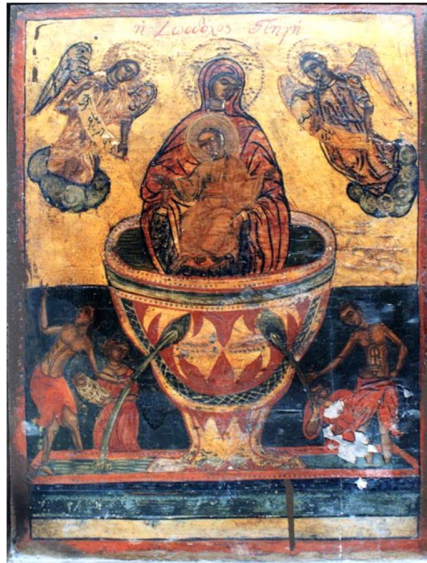
" هذه الأيقونة المباركة وفقاً على كنيسة القديس جيورجوس من ماله بمحروسة اللاذقية عمل عيسى القدسي
سنة 1743 مسيحية"

“This blessed icon is prebend to the church of Saint George, from his (Endowment) money, at the guarded Latakia. Work of Issa Al-Qudsi.”

- Inscription: in Greek ΜΗΡ ΘΥ, Μ, Γ, η Ζωοδόχος Πηγή

¹³⁹ Helena Bodin, *‘Rejoice, spring’: the Theotokos as fountain in the liturgical practice of Byzantine hymnography* (ed. Brooke Shilling; Fountains and water culture in Byzantium, Cambridge, United Kingdom, New York, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 246–64, at 247, La Croix and Emery, *Icônes arabes*, A73

57- The Mother of God of the Life-giving Spring, 18thC, Latakia.



Cat. 57 The Lady of spring, the eighteenth century, in situ in Saint Nicolas -Orthodox church, Latakia, 35x41, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

Virgin Mary with her child are standing within a stone chalice. Flanked by two angels holding scroll, the right on is written; “Rejoice O Unwedded Bride”, the second scroll; “Hail Mary”. At the water there are people suffering from different diseases, passions and mental illnesses. All of them drink the water and receives cure.

There is no architectural background in all these three icons, while in 1818, Michael Polychronis painted icon dedicated to Theotokos of Spring¹⁴⁰ has architectural background; three edifices with copula, surrounded by two bell towers. In some Greek icons, the representing of the city of Constantinople is depicted on the background, e.g. an icon dated to 18th century.¹⁴¹

- Signature and Gifting: illegible.
- Inscriptions: in Greek: η Ζωοδόχος Πηγή

¹⁴⁰ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 168

¹⁴¹ Chatzêdakês, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 154pl.46

58- Last Judgment, 1708, Aleppo.



Cat. 58 Last Judgment, 1708, in situ in the Armenian Forty Martyrs Church, Aleppo, 250x300 cm, Ne'mett Allah Al and his son Hanania AL Halabi. (After Rand.2011).

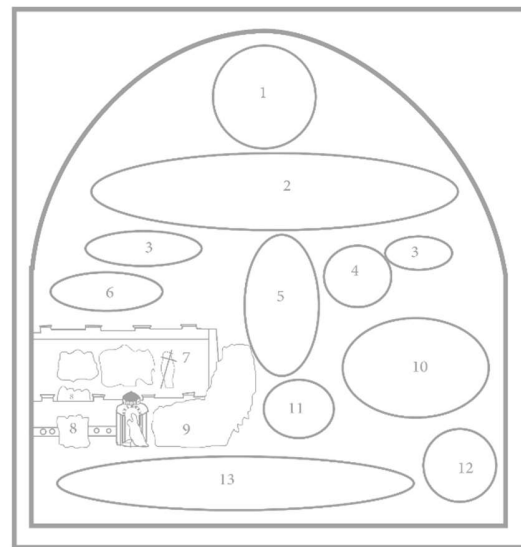


Figure 56 The scheme of Last Judgment icon, Aleppo, 1708. 1. The Diesis, 2. Apostles, 3. Saints, 4. Moses and the Jew people, 5. Adam and Eve kneeling, 6 the sea, 7. The Heavenly Jerusalem, 8. The five women, 9. Saint peter and saints, 10. The dead, 11. The graves, 12. The monster, 13. Hell.

The Last Judgment is one of the most important themes in Christian art. It is a combination of various Biblical stories from the Old and New Testament, and the Gospels unified into a single picture. The last Judgment is not a narrative scene.¹⁴² Monumental and complex depictions of the Last Judgment are not only found in the Orthodox tradition. One of the most famous and largest in Western art is by Michelangelo, on the back wall of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. In Christianity, this idea is linked with the second coming of Christ.¹⁴³ The doctrine is tersely formulated in the Nicene Creed¹⁴⁴, which says that Jesus ‘will come again to judge the living and the dead.’ the most extensive account of this notion in the gospels can be found in chapter 25 of the gospel of Matthew.

In 1694, Ne'met al Halabi has depicted big icon of Last Judgment for the Balamand monastery¹⁴⁵, in 1708, he depicted another icon with helping with his son, Hanania to make big icon to Armenian

¹⁴² Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 213

¹⁴³ John-Paul Himka, *Last Judgment iconography in the Carpathians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009) 17.

¹⁴⁴ The council of 325. Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend*

¹⁴⁵ Cădea and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 134–38pl.31.

Church in Aleppo.¹⁴⁶ The Last Judgment includes a variety of complex symbols and imagery which need to be separated to fully understand. This example, like all the best depictions of this subject, presents a complete, harmonious and integrated whole of these complicated events.

This iconographic schema has remained faithful in its main lines to the Byzantine type iconographic.¹⁴⁷ On close observation, you will note details of the story piece by piece. Starting at the top, here the enthroned Christ occupies the upper of the composition, his right outstretched in a gesture of acceptance of the Elect, while rejecting with his left hand those who have been condemned to hell. He is surrounded by virgin and saint John the Baptist. This theme also occurs in icon of Judgment at Balamand monastery, painted by Ne'met Allah in 1694.¹⁴⁸ Christ is surrounded by the Cherubim and Seraphim. Going back to medieval paintings, this apocalyptic vision has survived in seven churches in Lebanon.¹⁴⁹ This theme, rooted deeply in Early Christian iconographic traditions in the East, has ancient liturgical sources connected with the first liturgy of James.¹⁵⁰ It was represented in the Rabbula Gospels, A.D 568. Flanking the central group of figures, to the right and to the left of the Diesis we see the seated apostles (six on each side) holding books with inscriptions on the theme of the Last Judgment. They are shown in accordance with the epistle of Paul (1 Cor. 6:2-3) and the apocalyptic vision of the 24 elders, as recorded in Revelation 4:4; 4:10; 5:8, 13-14; 11:16-17; and 19:4; and under them saints awaiting the Last Judgment divided by six groups. Philip and Thomas, the two youngest of the disciples would generally head the procession at the far left and right. Peter and Paul were placed in the center, followed by the four evangelists and Andrew conforming to the hierarchy.

Illustrations of the works of mercy appear in this icon, these are the works of mercy mentioned in the gospel of Meatfare Sunday.¹⁵¹ 'This is a natural addition to the icon of the Last Judgment. Perhaps its inclusion represents the influence of Western iconography, but one need not posit this to explain the motif's presence in the icon. Every scene of these six works of mercy, there is a building has red slopping roof or arched roof.

Observe other motifs typical of Byzantine Last Judgment iconography: Adam and Eve kneeling at the "Throne Prepared;" a hand holding the pan of a scale, upon which is depicted a naked men representing a human souls facing the Last Judgment. The visual element in this icon is the fire river, and the left the Heavenly City.

¹⁴⁶ Like other Christian groups, the Armenian settled in not only the Salibiya and J but also the Hart Sis and Hart-Zibbal quarters of the city. Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Domination / by Avedis K. Sanjian*, 47

¹⁴⁷ Agemain, "Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724," 204

¹⁴⁸ Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*' (as in note 173), pl.3

¹⁴⁹ They are Mar Mitri, Hamatura, Raskida, Karfra Shleiman, Bahdeidat, Mar Sim'an and Qassuba. Dodd, *Medieval painting in the Lebanon*, 32

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 33

¹⁵¹ for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me' (mt 25:35-6).

The heavenly Jerusalem found its most extensive New Testament elaboration in revelation.¹⁵² The Mother of God is depicted sitting on a throne her feet placed on a footrest. Flanking the throne and leaning toward her are two angels, they stand in front of the Mother of God with their arms folded to receive a benediction, alongside three of the patriarchs seated: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (thus constituting Abraham's Bosom). Abraham's Bosom and the Enclosed Garden are crucial symbols in the representation of Paradise; beginning in the 17th century it became standard form to represent both elements in Last Judgment icons.¹⁵³ Also we can see five women represent the wise virgins and out of the city another five women represent the Foolish virgins.¹⁵⁴

On the front of frontal facade of heavenly city, there is an image of a door into Paradise, through which the apostle Peter, holding the keys to Heavenly Jerusalem and leading the procession of the apostles and righteous. This door is depicted in Ablaq style.

- Signature and Gifting: in Armenian and Arabic languages:

وكان المجتهد بعمل هذه الأيقونة المكرمة المقدسي كركور الشماع ابن المقدسي كراييد بالمقام الكهنة المسيحيين إلى كنيسة الأربعين شاهد المعظمين في مدينة حلب المحروسة، فيسأل كل من نظرها يترحم على والديه ويطلب له المغفرة من الله تعالى وذلك بتاريخ سنة 1708 المسيحية، صورها بيده الخاطئة قسيس نعمة الله ابن خوري يوسف المصور وابنه حانينا فيسأل كل من نظرها يدعي لهما بالغفران وذلك بتاريخ سنة سبعة الاف ومايتين وستة عشر لابينا ادم عليه افضل التحية والسلام.

The diligent of working this blessed icon was Al Maqdisi Karkour Alshama' Ibn al-Maqdisi Crabid in this temple, priests of Christians at the church of forty Martyrs in the guarded city of Aleppo, he asks everyone who watches it to pray for mercy on his parents and asks him for forgiveness from God, that on the year 1708,

In Arabic: the priest Ne'met Allah son of the pastor Joseph Al Mussawir and his son Hanania Al Mussawir, they ask everyone who watches it for forgiveness, the year seven thousand and sixteen of our father Adam by the best greetings and peace.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Himka, *Last Judgment iconography in the Carpathians*, 43

¹⁵³ In Mar musa's Last Judgment, through the influence of the Crusades the three patriarchs was depicted, in original Byzantine and Western variants of the Last Judgment only Abraham was depicted. see Mat. Immerzeel, "Medieval Syrian Orthodox Church Decoration: Deir al-Surian and Deir Mar Musa / Mat Immerzeel," (2010), at 235–36

¹⁵⁴ This old subject in iconography appears in the Gospel of Rossano, see Grabar, *Christian iconography*, 90

¹⁵⁵ Agemain, "Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724," 207

59- Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, Aleppo, 1744.



Cat. 59 Last Judgment, 1708, in situ in the Armenian Forty Martyrs Church, Aleppo, 250x300 cm, Ne'mett Allah Al and his son Hanania AL Halabi. (After Rand, 2011).

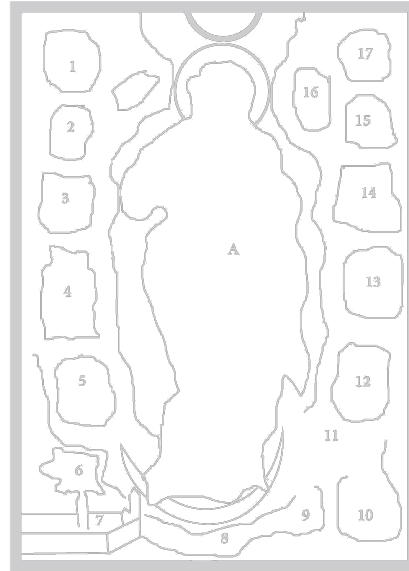


Figure 57 The scheme of Virgin of the Immaculate Conception icon, Aleppo, 1744.

Mary's Immaculate Conception¹⁵⁶ became church dogma only in 1854, but the idea goes back to the middle Ages.¹⁵⁷ Its popularity derives from Mary's traditional role as mediator between God and man.¹⁵⁸ And the standardized iconography of the image of it, based on the Woman Clothed with the sun from the Apocalypse, developed in Renaissance and especially Baroque periods.¹⁵⁹ The doctrine of the Virgin Immaculate Conception moved to the Aleppo, and most of Syria by the

¹⁵⁶ For the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, see; Edward D. O'Connor, ed., *The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception* (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1958) the earliest representation of the Immaculate Conception-is found in a manuscript produced around the first decade of the eleventh century in the Benedictine monastery of New Minster, Winchester, England. See Buffer, T., Horner, B., *The Art of the Immaculate Conception, Marian Studies, Volume 55*, 2004, p.187.

¹⁵⁷ During the seventeenth century, the age-old controversy about the Immaculate Conception reached a peak, resulting not only in outpourings of tracts on the subject by supporters and opponents, but even in physical violence. Hosts of paintings representing the Immaculate Conception were produced, especially in Spain, and new iconographies to articulate the subject were invented. Helen Hills, "Iconography and Ideology: Aristocracy, Immaculacy and Virginity in Seventeenth-Century Palermo," *Oxford Art Journal* 17 (1994) 16–31, at 16

¹⁵⁸ Howard Hibbard, "Guido Reni's Painting of the Immaculate Conception," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 28 (1969) 18, at 24

¹⁵⁹ Leslie Ross, *Medieval art: A topical dictionary / Leslie Ross* (Westport, Conn., London: Greenwood, 1996) 128.

Catholic Missionaries, especially after the second half of seventeenth century, where in 1708 Clement XI extended the feast of the Immaculate Conception to the whole church.¹⁶⁰

Girgis Al Halabi depicts the virgin stands in the centre surrounded by symbols of the Virginity,¹⁶¹ symbols of the Old Testament, such as the gate of heaven, and a bowl honeydew, Tower of David, the moon and closed garden.¹⁶² Where at Italy in seventeenth-century, Immaculate Conception of tended to be treated more metaphorically. Images of the Virgin personifying her immaculate conception were not common; iconography was drawn from Song of Songs, such as the moon and the sun, a closed garden; and the spotless mirror.¹⁶³ The compromise between the Western and the Byzantine conception is charming and the effects of contrast are pleasant: the parts of the body very dark, the tunic red and the dark blue of the coat with black designs, are lit by the orange scarf and stand out against the golden background.¹⁶⁴

Rare icon which depicts different themes together. Girgis Al Halabi merges two different subjects; eastern (*Akathist*) and western (Immaculate Conception). While in the east the Immaculate Conception theme was been depicted with Girgis Al Halabi, where the Byzantine iconography in Syria had started to deteriorate and most of Melkite iconography tended to depict the icon as if it is a Western painting,¹⁶⁵The west the Immaculate Conception was a trendy them in iconography.¹⁶⁶ Finally, we are in front of an icon very influenced by the Western imagery while the face, the decoration of the clothes following the Melkite iconography of the eighteenth century.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

"صورها بيده الفانية الفقير جرجس ابن حنانيا المصور سنة 1744"

[...] it was depicted by mortal hand of the humble Girgis son of the Hanania Al- Mussawir, 1744.

- Inscriptions: in Arabic; David Tower, O beautiful are not you defect, The Temple of God, the Closed Door, [...] Prophet [...].

¹⁶⁰ The Catholic Encyclopedia (New York, 1910), vol. VII, p. 680. Thompson, H., The Catholic Cults of the Virgin Mary, The American Journal of Theology, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Jul., 1906), The University of Chicago Press, P.493

¹⁶¹ Another icon of the same painter dated in 1762, see V.Candea and S. Agémian, *Descriptions Des Icônes* (as in note 694), at 170–71 fig.30, La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 80

¹⁶² Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon*, 151.

¹⁶³ Hills, "Iconography and Ideology," 16

¹⁶⁴ Cândia and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 171

¹⁶⁵ Edilbi, Bishop Novitts: "the family of Al Mussawir", brochure of the Archdiocese of Greek Catholic, Aleppo, N4, 1987, p.21.

¹⁶⁶ The famous work that depicts this theme, he Immaculate Conception, by Guido Reni. About 1623. Oil on canvas. Hibbard, "Guido Reni's Painting of the Immaculate Conception," 18–32

60- Akathist, 1714, Aleppo.



Cat. 60 Akathist, 1714, in situ in Dormition Church, Aleppo, 86x65.5 cm, Ne'mett Allah Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	25	13	14
15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24

Figure 58 The scheme of Akathist, 1714, Dormition Lady church, Aleppo.

The *Akathist* is “the oldest continuously performed Marian hymn used in the Orthodox Church¹⁶⁷ Akathist hymen¹⁶⁸ to the Holy Mother of God was composed, according to some researchers, attributed to George Pisides¹⁶⁹, or patriarch Sergius¹⁷⁰ of Constantinople (+638), “as a thanksgiving and praising hymn to the Mother of God for the protection of Constantinople from the Persian and Avar siege in 626, which was attributed to the miraculous intervention of the Mother of God, who was also the patron of the Byzantine capital city”.¹⁷¹ Others claim that it was produced ‘well before 626’, in the 5th or 6th century even, as a liturgical hymn honoring the Annunciation, the author probably being Romanos the Melodist (ca. 490-560).

¹⁶⁷ Vasiliki Limberis, *Divine Heiress: The Virgin Mary and the creation of Christian Constantinople* / Vasiliki Limberis (London: Routledge, 1994) 90

¹⁶⁸ The Akathist Hymn consists of twenty-four strophes: twelve short ones (*kontakia*) and twelve long ones (*oikoi*).

¹⁶⁹ G. M. Proxorov, “A Codicological Analysis of the Illuminated Akathistos to the Virgin (Moscow, State Historical Museum, Synodal Gr. 429),” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972) 237, at 239

¹⁷⁰ First mentioned as author in a XIIIth. Leena M. Peltomaa, *The image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathistos hymn* (The medieval Mediterranean, 0928-5520; v. 35, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2001) 27

¹⁷¹ Ion Vicovan, “European Journal of Science and theology: Theological Significance of the Akathistos Hymn From Moldavia Monastery,” 2 (june,2006) 51–68, at 54

By the tenth century, however, a feast of the Akathist¹⁷² had been established, on the fifth Saturday of Lent. The name “Akathist” signifies that during the singing of the hymn all had to stand.¹⁷³ This hymn also was known for Antioch patriarchate. As regards the Akathist hymn¹⁷⁴, which is extremely well-known in the Orthodox world at Ottoman Empire, we should mention that the Aleppo Iconographies adopted it and preserved its theological meaning, yet they also gave it special, local meaning, by the addition of original exquisite elements., they use the narrative image, the purpose of which is to tell the story (typically in sequences of consecutive episodes illustrating the Old and New testaments, or the life of saints), This usage is no stranger to the icon in general, Where this has happened previously in the fifth century, where Byzantine art uses both the narrative and symbolic one.¹⁷⁵

The *Akathist* Hymn is an extensive lyric poem, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, Because the Mother of God had played a special role in defending the Christians and this fact was embraced by all the Christians in the East, the Akathist hymn did not remain confined to worship, it also became part of church painting, its iconographic representation being traceable until the 11th century. It was first illustrated with miniatures¹⁷⁶, then by icons and embroidery, finally by mural painting.¹⁷⁷

Like icon of Akathist depicted by Joseph Al Halabi¹⁷⁸, our icon is divided into 25 small icons (5x5). The Akathist Icon consists of the scenes in the 25 small icons (the middle icon is depicted David) are keyed to the 24 sections of the Akathist Hymn, which in the Byzantine traditions of Orthodoxy is sung in parts inserted into Small Compline on the first five Fridays of Great Lent. Each one of these sections, in its original Greek text, begins respectively with a letter of the Greek alphabet. The twenty-four scenes are grouped in the same order in the central figure of King David, with the usual inscriptions in Greek part of the images and taken in Arabic on the golden

¹⁷² Ionuț Mavrighi, “The Akathistos hymn,” *Proceedings in ARSA - Advanced Research in Scientific Areas* (2012)

¹⁷³ Egon Wellesz, “The “Akathistos”. A Study in Byzantine Hymnography,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 9 (1956) 141, at 143

¹⁷⁴Between the ninth century and the fall Constantinople, the literary embellishments of church sermons and hymns, like Akathist, gradually led artists to expand their iconography and change their style, continuously transferring new elements from the literary to the visual repertoire, and finally translating the simple Gospel narrative into full-scale rhetorical descriptions. Maguire, *Art and eloquence in Byzantium*, 109–10

¹⁷⁵ Lyn Rodley, *Byzantine art and architecture: An introduction / Lyn Rodley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 55

¹⁷⁶ The Akathist had an important role in the elaboration of metrological icons. A certain type of icons developed in close connection with the strophes of the hymn. The fourteenth century illuminated manuscript Synodal Gr. 429, today in the State Historical Museum, Moscow, had for each stanza an illumination, probably based on older models. The first sixteen of them, corresponding to the historical part of the Akathist depict scenes of Virgin’s life, while other six are doxological icons. V. D. Lixaceva, “The Illumination of the Greek Manuscript of the Akathistos Hymn (Moscow, State Historical Museum, Synodal Gr. 429),” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972) 253, at 257

¹⁷⁷ Vicovan, “European Journal of Science and theology,” 55

¹⁷⁸ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 37, V.Candea and S. Agémian, *Discriptions Des Icônes* (as in note 694), at 130–34fig.2

backgrounds. The faithful replica of the icon signed by being in the collection Henri Pharaon around the 1969: no. 2

Ne'met has inherit Yusuf models, using them repeatedly as evidenced this icon.¹⁷⁹ The twenty-four scenes are grouped in the same order around the central figure of King David, with the usual inscriptions written in Greek in the lower part of the images and taken again in Arabic on the golden backgrounds, which adds a few “modern” elements, in the Baroque style for the crowning of a building or the framing of a door Ornamented with alternately white and black stones, it is noteworthy that this dichromic decoration does not appear on the icon of Yusuf, it is due to Ne'met's brush alone. By following scrupulously, the pontiff he had at his disposal, Ne'meh went so far as to reproduce, on the last stage, the unfolded roll on which Yusuf had left, in Greek, His signature, while Ne'met signed in Arabic, writing his name after the dedication, in the traditional margin reserved at the bottom of the panel.¹⁸⁰

Scene 1: An Archangel was sent from Heaven to say to (the Mother of God: Rejoice!)

A “An angel of the first quire was sent from heaven, to say to the Mother of God the “Hail Mary”; and beholding Thee, O Lord, taking upon Thee corporeal substance, he was astonished, and stood crying to her with incorporeal voice, saying: "Hail . . .”

The first scene of the Akathist painting depicts this meeting between the angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary with two persons. The angel, represented on the left upper side, appears to bless and greet with Mary. The angel wears a long-gilded vestment. His attitude expresses movement. Mary, the central character in the scene, is depicted standing at the well, looking wonderingly to the Angel. The scene takes place by a well, in a garden.

Scene 2: Seeing herself to be chaste, the holy one says boldly to Gabriel:

B “The holy one, beholding herself in chastity, space boldly to Gabriel: "The riddle of thy words seemed incomprehensible by my mind; how speaks thou of generation by seedless conception, crying "Alleluia "?”

The idea expressed in this section of Akathist is the Mary's disbelief. Indeed, she has already asked the angel: “How can you speak of a birth from a seedless conception?” The virgin is seen standing, behind her there is a portico with baldachin. Her head is slightly bowed, the left hand lowered, while the right hand high to greet the angel, who represented on the right side, appears to be Standing opposite her, with golden large wings, and his left leg forward the other.

Scene 3: Seeking to know knowledge that cannot be known:

¹⁷⁹Akathist icon depicted by Youssef Agemain, *Introduction à l'étude des icônes melkites*'' (as in note 173)pl.2

¹⁸⁰ Agemain, “Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724,” 209

Γ “Seeking to know knowledge unknowable, the Virgin cried to the ministrant: “How is it possible for a son to be born from virgin bowels? Tell thou me ". To whom he space in fear, yet crying thus: “Hail...”

In this scene, the dialogue between the Angle and Mary is continuous, but she is sitting at a chair, while the Angle is standing behind her and she turn her head to talk with him, whom he holds a thin flowery staff – “a symbol of virginity and supernatural birth’ – in his left hand, while with the right he blesses Mary”.¹⁸¹

Scene 4 the power of the Highest then overshadows the Virgin for conception:

Δ “The Power of the Highest straightway overshadowed her that knew not man, unto conception, and revealed her womb of fair fruit as a fertile field for all that would reap salvation, singing “Alleluia ”.”

This scene takes place under semi sphere, Mary is represented standing and opening her hands and with a white curtain behind, held up by two virgins, while three rays descend from heaven upon her.

Scene 5: Having received God in Her womb, the Virgin hastens to Elizabeth:

Ε “Bearing God in her womb, the Virgin hastened to Elizabeth, whose babe, straightway, recognizing her salutation, rejoiced and with leaping as with singing cried to the Mother of God “Hail . . .”

The scene depicts the meeting of Mary with Elizabeth.¹⁸² In this depiction of the meeting, the Mary is on the right, while Elizabeth is on the left, both standing and Elizabeth kisses Mary. The scene denotes intimacy, closeness, affection, as they are seen embracing.¹⁸³

Scene 6: Having within a tempest of doubting thoughts

Ζ “Virtuous Joseph, distressed within by doubting thoughts, was troubled, beholding thee a maiden, and suspecting thee, blameless Virgin, of a stolen wedlock; but having learned from thee of thy conception by the Holy Spirit, he said, Alleluia”.

The scene illustrated the ‘thoughts’ or suspicions of the righteous Joseph¹⁸⁴ and the forgiveness of the Holy Virgin Mary. They are shown standing facing each other, Mary to the right, the righteous Joseph to the left. Both have their hands raised, which represents their dialogue.

Scene 7: The angels are proclaiming Christ's coming in the flesh:

¹⁸¹ Vicovan, “European Journal of Science and theology,” 56

¹⁸² luke1.39-56

¹⁸³ Mary travels to Elizabeth, see *Protev. 12:2 a*. And Mary rejoiced and went to Elizabeth her kinswoman and knocked on the door. C Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives*, 37.

¹⁸⁴ For more detail about MARY’S PREGNANCY AND ITS EXPLANATION, THE EXPLANATION TO JOSEPH Matthew 1:18–24, Protevangelium 12:3–14:2, Ps-Matthew 10–11, Mary 10:1–3, Joseph 5–6, Liber Flavus Fergusiorum 47–51 (cf. ‘J’ Compilation 36–45) see, *ibid.*, 42-48.

H “The angels praised the coming of Christ in the flesh, and the shepherds heard; and running as to a shepherd, they behold Him as a spotless lamb, pastured in Mary's womb, and give praise to her, saying “Hail...”

There are four angels who represent the hosts of angels who sang the well-known hymn: “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests!*” (Luke 2.14) to the lower of the scene there are three shepherds with their sheep and some angels, who are the shepherds mentioned in the Bible (Luke 2.1-20).

8. Scene 8: The Magi see the divinely moving star

⊕ “The Magi contemplated the star that foreran God, and followed in its light, and holding to it as to a beacon, sought thereby a mighty king; and having approached the Inapproachable, they rejoiced and cried to Him “Alleluia” ...”

Three adorations of the Magi were one of the most popular motifs in early and medieval Christian art, the motif was attested as early as the 3rd century in catacomb painting as well as a Roman sarcophagus and developed towards the end of the 4th century into a cycle of pictures although the adoration scene continued to be used independently.¹⁸⁵ The journey of the three Magi is depicted in the upper of this scene. The scene is based on the account in Matthew’s Gospel 2.1-2. The scene depicts the magi on horseback, between mountain settings. There are two horses, the third hasn't depicted. An angle is painted in the top area. The Magi are of different ages (very young, mature and old), an image of the stages in human life. The early Christian iconography almost unanimously represents the magi men in Oriental more precisely Parthian clothing, but in Middle Ages magi were portrayed differently and often took on local customs of dress. And later, maybe with turbans.¹⁸⁶

In the lower part of the scene there is a cave, there are in the bottom right side there are two women, the midwives .They are preparing to bathe the Infant Jesus in a tub filled with water, and Mary is sitting while Joseph is standing near her.

9. Scene9: The sons of the Chaldees saw in the hands of the Virgin

I “the sons of the Chaldeans saw in the Virgin’s hands Him Who fashioned man with the hand, and knowing Him to be the Master, although He wore the image of a servant, hastened to honor Him with gifts, and cried to the blessed among women " Hail”.

This icon depicts the theme of the adoration of the magi. The three magi are represented standing in front of the Mother and her son. In their outstretched hands, they each hold a box containing the gifts they offer to the Infant. The Mother of God is seated, holding the Infant. Jesus, her hand extended, “in a token of acceptance of the magi’s gifts and veneration”. In the background is the edifice in Baroque style.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁵ Andres Hultgard, “Being Religious and living through the Eyes: The Magi and the star: the Persian Background in Texts Background and iconography;” (1998) 215–25, at 215

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 218

¹⁸⁷ Agemain, “Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724,” 208

The theme of the adoration of the magi is one of the oldest and most widely spread. The oldest representation of the scene is found in a fresco in the St. Peter and Marcellinus catacomb in Rome, dating from the 9th century.¹⁸⁸

In the background are building and a wall with big door, represent the house, this house is mentioned in both of Gospel and Apocryphal.¹⁸⁹

Scene 10: - Having become God-bearing heralds, the Magi returned to Babylon

K “The Magi, having become harbingers of God, returned to Babylon, and, accomplishing Thine oracle, proclaimed Thee, O Christ, to all men, and abandoned Herod for one devoid of sense that knew not how to sing "Alleluia.”

The scene deals obviously with the return of the magi (Matthew 2.12), a scene that is more rarely depicted, and the earliest representation dating from the 10th century. (Vicovan, 2006, p. 61) The scene includes three Magi riding their horses, and one of them was painted one half, in the background, there is Walled city.

Scene 11: You dispelled the darkness by shining in Egypt the light of truth.

Λ “Thou didst light in Egypt the lamp of truth, and didst cast out the darkness of deceit; for the idols thereof fell, enduring not Thy might, O Savior; and they that were saved from them cried out to the Mother of God, "Hail . . .”

The Icon title is the flight to Egypt, as recounted in the Gospel of Matthew, (2.13-21). The content of this icon differs from the biblical story, in that it presents the fall of the idols from the walled city, a symbol of Egypt, which located to the right of this scene. The Mother of God, holding the Infant Jesus, travels on the back of a black horse, while Joseph is behind, talking with her. This scene.¹⁹⁰ Like the previous one, also dates from the 10th century. As was the case with other scenes, this one has been variously depicted, sometimes on the basis of apocryphal gospel accounts.

Scene 12: Simeon was about to depart this age of delusion

M “To Simeon, ready to depart from the present age of guile, thou wast delivered, an Infant, but wast revealed to him as Perfect God; wherefore he was amazed at Thine Ineffable Wisdom, and cried, "Alleluia . . .”

This scene refers to the Presentation of Jesus, 40 days after His birth (Luke 2.25-42). In the center of the scene, to the left, the Righteous Simeon is represented holding the Infant. The Infant Jesus holds his right hand towards his Mother and the left towards the Righteous Simeon. Mary, depicted

¹⁸⁸ Vicovan, “European Journal of Science and theology,” 61

¹⁸⁹ See the adoration of Jesus after his birth Contained in: Matthew 2:1–12, Protevangelium 21.Ps-Matthew 16, Arabic 7–8, Leabhar Breac 87–92:2, (92:3–96:2) Elliott, *A synopsis of the apocryphal nativity and infancy narratives*, 88-89.

¹⁹⁰ Vicovan, “European Journal of Science and theology,” 62

to the right, has both her hands outstretched, ready to receive the Infant. Behind her there. The earliest representation of this scene dates from the 11th century.

Scene 13: The Creator showed us a new creation when He appeared to us who came from Him.

N “The Creator showed to us, the creatures made by Him, a new creation; He sprouting from an unseeded womb and preserving it unstained as it was; in order that we should extol it, beholding the marvel, crying "Hail . . .”

The scene deals obviously with the adoration of the people, is very similar to the depiction of adoration of the magi, scene 9. Mary is sitting, with her hands raised in an attitude of prayer.

In some icons instead of depicting this scene, is depicted Jesus at the age of twelve year, laying the first foundations of the new creation in the minds of the doctors in the Temple.¹⁹¹

Scene 14: Having beheld a strange Nativity, let us estrange ourselves from the world

Ξ “When we behold the strange Birth, let us become strangers to the world, transferring our minds to heaven; for to this end High God appeared upon the earth-humble man, willing”

This scene depicts a group of people indicate to the child, who Swaddled in a cave, and at the upper, there is Mary laying out the cave.

Scene 15: Wholly present were the Inexpressible Word among those here below, yet in no way absent from those on high

O “The uncircumscribed Word was wholly with them that are below and in no wise absent from Them that are above; for the condescension was divine and was not change of place; and the birth was from a virgin possessed of God, and she heard these words, " Hail.”

This icon refers to although the incarnation of the Son of God out of the Virgin Mary, He did not distance Himself from God the Father and the Holy Spirit. This scene depicts Jesus seated on a throne. In the middle, above which there is the Jesus also and flanked between two seraphim.

Scene 16: All the angels were amazed at the great act of your incarnation

Π “All the generation of angels was amazed at the great work of Thine Incarnation; for they saw Him Who is inapproachable as God, Man approachable by all, dwelling among us and hearing from all "Alleluia ".

The scene refers to the glorification of the Redeemer by the heavenly hosts. According to the Akathist prayer, which is based on the Gospel and the worship texts, the angels expressed their amazement at and their admiration because the sacrament of salvation was revealed and fulfilled. In the cave, there are Mary and Jesus child who is swaddled, and above the image of the cave, on either side, there are many of angels pray.

Scene 17: The most eloquent orators mute as fish:

P “We see the orators, the men of many words, dumb as fish before thee, O Virgin; for they know not how to answer the question, “How remainest thou a virgin and yet didst avail to bear a son ? " But we, amazed at the mystery, cry out in faith, “Hail . . .”

¹⁹¹ G. Eumorfopoulos, “An Icon Illustrating a Greek Hymn,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 35 (1919) 102–5

The idea behind this scene is that the miracle of the Savior's incarnation out of the Holy Virgin Mary is a mystery that goes beyond the laws of nature, making even those 'who are most eloquent unable to speak'. The icon represents the Mother of God seated on a throne, with Jesus as a child at her chest, with his arms lifted and stretched outside for blessing and protection. Two orators are depicted, without auras. Their attitude and gestures express respect, veneration and amazement at the unutterable mystery of the Incarnation.

The two orators dumbfounded hold their speeches rolled tight in their hands. If they were delivering them the rolls would appear in falling scrolls. The 'P' is just above the head of the seated Virgin., Virgin Mary is standing on a footstool and behind him is a wall joining two pavilions, which delimit the composition left and right. The elements constituting the architectural structures are themselves complex.

Scene 18: Desiring to save the world, He that is the Creator of all.

Σ "Willing to save the universe, the Disposer of all came for its sake, His Self-sent Messenger, and being, as God, our Shepherd, for our sake He appeared in our likeness as Man, for, like calling to Like, He hears, being God, " Alleluia "."

This scene depicts Emmanuel is lying on the ground, whose hands are extended in a blessing gesture to bless the animals and a person who represents the world.

Scene 19: A bulwark art you to virgins, O Virgin Mother of God.

T "Thou, O Virgin, Mother of God, art a wall to virgins and to all them that flee to thee; for the Maker of heaven and earth prepared thee, immaculate, and dwelt in thy womb and taught all to call on thee, "Hail . . ."

The stanza asserts that the Mother of God is the protectress of virgins. In the center of the icon, there is the Mary as a protective gesture, her hands outstretched towards the two groups; the left is a group of Virgins, the second is male group.

The Virgin is standing on a footstool and behind her is a curved wall, maybe is a niche, creates an impression of three-dimensionality.

Scene 20: Every hymn is defeated

Υ "Every hymn fails that strives to attain the multitude of Thy many mercies, for if we offer Thee, O Holy King, odes innumerable as the sand, yet is our labor in no wise worthy of the gifts that Thou hast given to us who cry to Thee, "Alleluia ".

There are groups of Church hierarchs and priests without auras, dressed in ceremonial vestments, holding books in their hands. Over the centuries, this scene too has been depicted in two ways. In the older version, Jesus Christ is sitting, holding the Gospel in his hand, being flanked by the hierarchs and melodists. Jesus Christ, represented as Pantocrator, in small icon hanging on the wall, blesses a group of hierarchs.

Scene 21: A shining lamp appearing to those in darkness

Φ “We see the holy Virgin, a shining beacon, appearing to them that sit in darkness; for she kindled the Immaterial Light, and leads all to divine knowledge, enlightening the mind with radiance, honored by the cry, "Hail . . .”

The scene consists of a dark cave. In the cave, some people kneeling. In outside of the cave there is the Mother of God standing, and in her left hand she is holding a large candle, and with her right hand she is trying to help the people, who in the cave. The current scene is an intimation of the. This idea¹⁹² and probably along with the influence of an apocryphal text talking about the Virgin’s descent into hell has engendered the representation of Holy Mary imploring her Son to be merciful towards those in hell. It is possible that this idea and its representation to be inspired by scenes of the Savior's descent into hell.

Scene 22: When who wanted pays the debt of humans.

X “The Redeemer of all men's debts, purposing to give grace from the ancient penalties, did of His Own Self dwell among them who had ceased to dwell in His grace, and having rent the and writing, He hears from all, “Alleluia”.

This scene represents the stanza 22 in the hymn;" Wishing to bestow His grace, He that forgives the ancient debts of all mankind came of His own will to dwell among those who departed from His favor; and tearing up writ of indebtedness, He hears from all ":where the Christ standing and tearing up a paper in two parts, which represented Written instrument. In the dark cave, at lower scene, there are two groups of people kneeling. Adam and Eve, apparently, sit below in the darkness of ancient transgression watching the redemption of their race.

Scene 23: “While singing to Thine Offspring, we all praise Thee O Theotokos”

Ψ “Singing of thy Babe, we all raise hymns to thee, Mother of God, as a living temple, for the Lord Who holds all things in His Hand, dwelt in thy womb, and hallowed and glorified thee, and taught all to cry to thee, "Hail”.

Mary is seated on an imperial throne and there are two large groups of characters, fronted by priests and hierarchs, all dressed in ceremonial vestments. The author of the hymn, drawn on left, offering his work, as the mouthpiece of all conditions of men, standing behind him, to Christ, and to the Virgin as the living temple of God, symbolized by the red drapery stands on four columns.

Scene 24: O all-praised Virgin Mother.

Ω “All-praised Mother, who didst bear the Most Holy Word of all the Holy, receive our present offering, and deliver us all from all evil; and redeem from future chastisement those who cry together, "Alleluia'.”

¹⁹² Vicovan, “European Journal of Science and theology,” 66

In the last stanza dedicated to the Mother of God, Hodegetria, she is praised and glorified as intercessor. The faithful are shown quit literally venerating this specific icon, Hodegetria.¹⁹³ In the background of the picture there is a small church. Above the podium, the Mother of God is depicted with the Infant Christ. In front of the podium there are many of the characters there are hierarchs and priests wearing ceremonial vestments

David plays the harp: (at the center of icon)

This scene is new in the Akathist icon, Joseph innovated it, and then Ne'met Allah adopted.

- Signature and Gifting: The Deacon Farag Allah son of Aiat and Deacon Ne'met Allah endowed, this venerable icon to guard our Lady (the Lady) church, in Aleppo for Greek Orthodox group at The Presidency of master [kir Athanasios]. It was depicted by pastor Ne'met Allah Moussawir 1714.¹⁹⁴
- The Inscriptions: In Greek
 - 1- ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ ΠΡΩΤΟΣΤΑΤΗΣ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΘΕΝ = An Archangel was sent from Heaven to say to (the Mother of God: Rejoice)!
 - 2- ΒΛΕΠΟΥΣΑ Η ΑΓΙΑ ΕΑΥΤΗΝ ΕΝ ΑΓΝΕΙΑΙ = the Saint was Beholding herself in very purity.
 - 3- ΓΝΩΣΙΝ ΑΓΝΩΝΑΙ= Seeking to know the incomprehensible knowledge.
 - 4- ΔΥΝΑΜΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΥΨΙΣΤΟΥ ΕΠΕΣΚΙΑΣΕ = The power of the Most High then overshadowed (the Virgin),
 - 5- ΕΧΟΥΣΑ ΘΕΟΔΟΧΟΝ Η ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΣ ΤΗΝ = Carrying God in her womb, (the Virgin hastened to Elizabeth)
 - 6- ΖΑΛΗΝ ΕΝΖΟΘΕΝ ΕΧΩΝ = The Joseph Boggle within surprised
 - 7- ΗΚΟΥΧΑΝ ΟΙ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΕΣ ΤΩΝ =The Shepherds heard the.
 - 8- ΘΕΟΔΡΟΜΟΝ ΑΣΤΕΡΑ ΘΕΩΡΗΣΑΝΤΕΣ =When magi saw the Star moved by God,
 - 9- ΙΔΟΝ ΠΑΙΔΕΣ ΧΑΛΔΑΙΩΝ ΕΝ ΧΕΡΑΣΙ = The Sons of Chaldees saw in (the Virgin's) hands
 - 10- ΚΗΡΥΚΕΣ ΘΕΟΦΟΡΟΙ ΓΕΓΟΝΟΤΕΣ =The Magi become God-bearing heralds,
 - 11- ΛΑΜΨΑΣ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΑΙΓΥΠΤΩ ΦΩΤΗΣΜΟΝ= Having shed the light of truth in Egypt.
 - 12- ΜΕΛΛΟΝΤΟΣ ΣΥΜΕΩΝΟΣ = when Simeon was waiting for
 - 13-

¹⁹³ Nancy P. Ševčenko, *Art and liturgy in the later Byzantine Empire* (ed. Michael Angold; The Cambridge History of Christianity; Cambridge History of Christianity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 127–53, at 148

¹⁹⁴ Agemain, “Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724,” 208

- 14- ΝΕΑΝ ΕΔΕΙΞΕ ΚΤΗΣΙΝ ΕΜΦΑΝΙΣΑΣ = The Creator displayed
 15- ΞΕΝΟΝ ΤΟΚΟΝ ΙΔΟΝΤΕΣ= we have seen this strange birth
 16- ΟΛΟΣ ΗΝ ΕΝ ΤΙΣ ΚΑΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ = The Infinite Word was wholly present with those on earth
 17- ΠΑΣΑ ΦΥΣΙΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΩΝ ΚΑΤΕΠΛΑΓΗ = All angel-kind was amazed (by the great deed of Your Incarnation)
 18- ΡΗΤΟΡΑΣ ΠΟΛΥΦΘΟΓΓΟΥΣ ΩΣ= Eloquent orators (we see the best of speakers become as mute as fish in your regard)
 19- ΣΩΣΑΙ ΘΕΛΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ = when the Creator of All desiring
 20- ΤΕΙΧΟΣ ΕΙ ΤΩΝ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩΝ = You are a fortress of the virgins
 21- ΥΜΝΟΣ ΑΠΑΣΣΗΤΤΑΤΑΙ = all the hymns are defeated
 22- ΦΩΤΟΔΟΧΟΝ ΛΑΜΠΑΔΑ = Theotokos is a lamp
 23- ΧΑΡΙΝ ΔΟΥΝΑΙ ΘΕΛΗΣΑΣ = When he wanted to
 24- ΨΑΛΛΟΝΤΕΣ ΣΟΥ ΤΟΝ ΤΟΚΟΝ = Whilst praising your Offspring
 25- Ω ΠΑΝΥΜΝΗΤΕΣ ΜΗΤΕΡ= O Mother worthy of all praise.

In Arabic: some Arabic inscriptions on several of the scenes are readable and others are not.

1- ملاك متقدم السما قانلا، . . . 9- ... الفتيان الكلدانيين. . . 71- كل طبيعة الملائكة ذهلت، 18- اننا نرى الخطاباء،
 . . . 22- ان المديح كله ينقص، 23- اننا نرى البتول القديسة، 24- لما اراد موفي ديون البشر، 23. نحن اذا ما
 رتلنا لميلادك . . . 25- يا ذات كل سبج.

- 1- The Archangel [was sent from] Heaven said
 9- [...] the sons of the Chaldees [...].
 17- All angel-kind was amazed.
 18- We see the Orators [...].
 22- All the hymn is defeated.
 23- we see the virgin the saint.
 24- When he wanted pays the debt of humans.
 26- O Mother worthy of all praise.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian iconpl.* 72

61- Hodegetria And Akathist, 1765, Al Homeyra.



Cat. 61 Hodegetria and Akathist, 1765, in situ in the lower church of St George Monastery, Al Homeyra 68,6x91 cm, Girgis Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011.)

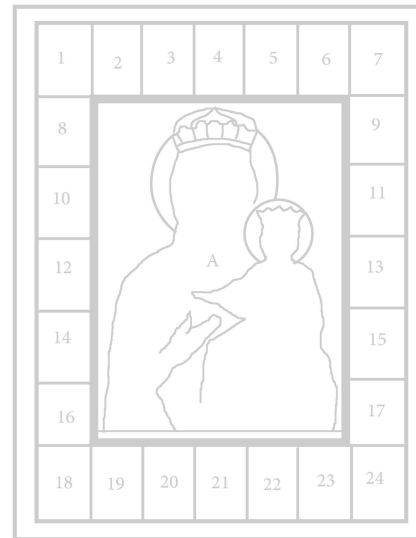


Figure 59 The scheme of Hodegetria and Akathist icon, Al Homeyra, 1765.

Virgin Hodegetria was one of the most important cult images in Constantinople¹⁹⁶.. The icon of the Hodegetria¹⁹⁷ is mentioned for the first time in the tenth century. But the image way goes as far back as the ninth century.¹⁹⁸ The icon, however, endured as one of the most popular images of the post- Byzantine world because its purposes transcended its protective role Usually the icon of Hodegetria represents Theotokos holding the Child Jesus on her left side while pointing to Him with her right hand, as a symbolic representation of the religious text: “I am the way and the truth and the life” (John 14.6). The Virgin is wearing a dark red maphorion trimmed with orange and golden lines on which there are three stars on the head and the shoulders – the marks of the Virgin. The Child is blessing with His right hand, on the left hand holding a rolled scroll. He is wearing himation with gold striations and Chiton. The Virgin is crowned by two angels.

¹⁹⁶ Bishop Eustathios of Thessaloniki (1110-1198), for example, demurred on any need for imperial defense: “The Hodegetria, the protectors of our city, will be enough, without anyone else, to secure our welfare Annemarie Weyl Carr, “Court Culture and Cult Icons,” in H. Maguire and Dumbarton Oaks, *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204* (Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2004) 97

¹⁹⁷ The tradition identified in the evangelist Luke the first official portrait of the Virgin and Child, although the author of the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, who is a doctor, knew the Virgin only after the death of Christ and already at an advanced age. Alfredo Tradigo, *Icone e santi d'Oriente* (I dizionari dell'arte, Milano: Electa, 2004) 169

¹⁹⁸ *Memory & Oblivion: Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art held in Amsterdam, 1-7 September 1996* ed. Wessel Reinink and Jeroen Stumpel 701–8

The hymns, since the Late Byzantine era the church decoration continued to be enriched by ever more developed Eucharistic themes (e.g. Christ clad as High priest), along with expanded Passion cycles, calendar cycles and above all the illustrations of hymns such as the Akathist, a sixth century hymn to the Virgin and of individual psalms.¹⁹⁹ Girgis Al Halabi depicted 24 smaller icons, which are surrounding the central icon- Hodegetria icon. We know that the Akathist Hymn is an extensive lyric poem, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, Because the Mother of God had played a special role in defending the Christians and this fact was embraced by all the Christians in the East, the Akathist hymn did not remain confined to worship, it also became part of church painting, its iconographic representation being traceable until the 11th century. It was first illustrated with miniatures, then by icons and embroidery, finally by mural painting.²⁰⁰ This hymn also was known for Antioch patriarchate and the Melkite iconographies had depicted this hymn in icons, they use the narrative image, this usage is no stranger to the icon in general, where this has happened previously in the fifth century, where Byzantine art uses both the narrative and symbolic one.²⁰¹

Each one of these scenes has a letter of the Greek alphabet and Arabic number.

1. An Archangel was sent from Heaven to say to (the Mother of God: Rejoice!)
2. The Saint is Seeing herself to be chaste, the holy one says boldly to Gabriel:
3. Seeking to know knowledge that cannot be known
4. The power of the Highest then overshadows the Virgin for conception:
5. Having received God in Her womb, the Virgin hastens to Elizabeth:
6. Having within a tempest of doubting thoughts
7. The angels are proclaiming Christ's coming in the flesh:
8. The Magi see the divinely moving star
9. The sons of the Chaldees saw in the hands of the Virgin
10. Having become God-bearing heralds, the Magi returned to Babylon
11. You dispelled the darkness by shining in Egypt the light of truth.
12. Simeon was about to depart this age of delusion
13. The Creator showed us a new creation when He appeared to us who came from Him.
14. Having beheld a strange Nativity, let us estrange ourselves from the world
15. Wholly present were the Inexpressible Word among those here below, yet in no way absent from those on high
16. All the angels were amazed at the great act of your incarnation
17. The most eloquent orators mute as fish:
18. Desiring to save the world, He that is the Creator of all.
19. A bulwark art You to virgins, O Virgin Mother of God.

¹⁹⁹ Nancy Sevecenko, *Art and Liturgy: The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, eds. Robin Cormack, John F. Haldon, Salma Khadra Jayyusi, Oxford University Press, 2012 (ed. Robin Cormack, John F. Haldon and Salma K. Jayyusi; Oxford University Press, 2012), at 734

²⁰⁰ Vicovan, "European Journal of Science and theology," 55

²⁰¹ Rodley, *Byzantine art and architecture*, 55

20. Every hymn is defeated
21. A shining lamp appearing to those in darkness
22. When who wanted pays the debt of humans.
23. "While singing to Thine Offspring, we all praise Thee O Theotokos"
24. All-praised Virgin Mother.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic:

"كان المهتم في وقفية هذه الأيقونة المكرمة الخوري جرجس الحلبي على دير القديس جاورجيوس المكنى بالحميرة في رياسة السيد البطريك كيركير سيلسبتروس الانطاكي، صورها بيده الفانية جرجس ابن حنانيا المصور الحلبي سنة 1745 مسيحية."

the priest Girgis of Aleppo was interested in endowment this venerable icon for Saint George Monastery, nicknamed Al- Homeyra, in precedency of the master Patriarch kyr kyr Sylvester of Antioch, Girgis son of Hanania Al Mussawir Al- Halabi has painted it by his mortal hand, 1745 A.D.

- Inscriptions: in Greek; □ O ΩN .MHP ⊕Y

And in Arabic, they are like the Arabic inscriptions of Akathist at Lady Church in Aleppo. There are Arabic numbers and Alphabet of Greek.²⁰²

1. إن الملاك المتقدم أرسل من السماء ليقول لوالدة الإله افرحي.
2. إن القديسة لما رأت ذاتها في غاية النقاوة هتفت بالملاك...
3. إن البتول قد التمسست ان تعلم من الخادم علم ما لا يُعلم.
4. إن قوة العلي ظللت..... .
5. لما كان للبتول بطن قابل للإله (بادرت)الصبابات.
6. إن يوسف العفيف لما رآك حبلى.....تخبر في داخل مندهلاً
7. سمع الرعاة الملائكة يسبحون لحضور المسيح بالجسد.
8. إن المجوس لما رأوا كوكباً مسيراً من الله اتبعوا نوره.
9. لما رأى فتیان الكلدانيين في يدي البتول الذي جبل البشر.
10. إن المجوس لما توشحوا بالله وصاروا كارزين و(عادوا...)
11. لما أشرقت يا نور الحق بمصر (طردت) ظلام الباطل.
12. لما كان سمعان منتظراً أن يتقل من هذا الدهر.
13. إن الخالق لما ظهر....صرنا خلقة جديدة

²⁰² Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian iconpl.*105

14. إذ قد رأينا ولادة غريبة فلنتغرب عن العالم.
15. إن الكلمة غير (المحضور كان بجملته مع السفليين).
16. إن الطبيعة الملائكية اندهشت بأسرها من (تأنسك العظيم).
17. إننا نرى الفصحاء الواسعي النطق.
18. لما اراد مزين الكل (أن يخلص العالم قدم إليه).
19. إنك (يا عذرى) سور (للعنارى ولكل المبادرين إليها).
20. (إن المديح كله يفتقر)
21. (إننا نرى البتول مصباحاً حاوياً النور)
22. (لما أراد قاضي ديون)
23. (إننا نرتل لميلادك)
24. (يا ذات كل تسبح أيتها الأم البتول)

62- Icon Of Two Scenes, 19thc, Sydnaia.



Cat. 62 Icon of two scenes (The entry of Lady in the Temple, The nativity of Mary), the nineteenth century in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

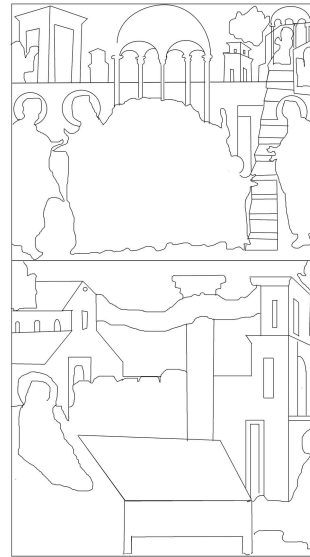


Figure 60 The scheme of icon of two scenes, Sydnaia, 19th.

This icon is one of icons of iconostasis, exists in the left of the royal door. This icon divides into two scenes, the upper one depicts the Entry of Lady into the Temple, and the second is The Nativity of Mary.

The Nineteenth –century icon of the Birth of Mary, shows Anne sitting up on mattress of bed; she wears a red garment up the blue vestment. Next to her four midwives-visitors, and Joachim next a column. The position of Joachim next to Anne is very extraordinary. In the right corner, a midwife looks after enfant Mary that lying on the cradle.

In the background are stylized architectural elements. At the left, there is a building looks like Basilica of the three corridors, covered by red and black sloping roofs. This edifice represents the temple. At the right of icon, a two stores building.

The iconographer, here, he gathers two episodes in the same icon, the Nativity of Mary, in the bottom, then the Entry into the Temple, at the upper part. The Entry scene is ordinated horizontally, takes place in the temple, in front of the altar, covered by a canopy. The priest opens his arms to receive the Mary, and behind her a group of women. Behind the procession of Virgins, a scene of conversation between Joachim and Anne.

To the right and on the different level, Mary seats at the top of steps under a smaller canopy, where she turns toward an angel who brings her food. The background of this icon consist of this canopy and a wall runs from the virgin's canopied space to a building at the left that has two tall entrances. Behind the wall, there are two towers.

- Inscription: in Greek; Η ΕΝ ΤΩ ΝΑΩ ΕΙΣΟΔΩ ΤΗΝ ΘΥ = Entry The Lady to the Temple.
 - Η γέννηση της Θεοτόκου= the Nativity of Theotokos
 - In Arabic: the Nativity of Lady = (ميلاد السيدة)

63- Icon Of Four Scenes, 19thc, Sydnaia.



Cat. 63 Icon of four scenes (Thomas Sunday, Ascension, Sts Peter and Paul, Cosmas and Damian), the beginning of nineteenth century in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, Michael Polychronis school. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

The Melkite iconographer had been gathered four icons in one. Here we can find Thomas's Sunday, Ascension, Sts Peter, Paul, Cosmas and Damian, in the same icon. This icon is in situ in the Holy of Holies inside the Church of Sydnaia Monastery.

Thomas's Sunday depicts Christ standing front of building, in the midst of the eleven disciples on the door step. He has appeared to in the upper room, Thomas is reaching out to touch the side of Jesus, while Jesus open his arm to show them his scars.

The building represents the upper room with red doom, and two small windows. Consequently, wit could suggest that this room represents a domed church.

- Inscription: in Greek; Η ΨΗΛΑΦΗCIC ΘΩΜΑ = Touching of Thomas
In Arabic [أحد] توما الرسول = [Sunday] of Apostles Thomas

64- The Proskeyntarion, 1738-39, Sydnaia.



Cat. 64 proskeyntarion, the icon with the topography of the Holy land , 1738-39, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on canvas, 90x125 cm, the iconographer; Issa Al Qodsi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

The icon is a good preserved, behind the glass although there are many of cracks and much loss of paint. The composition is painted with warm, colorful representation of the Holy land, showing scenes from the Christological²⁰³ cycle integrated into their geographical setting together with historic towns, pilgrimage sites, churches, and monasteries. Most of the sites are named by inscriptions, unfortunately they are illegible. Most of the space within the walled city is occupied by the church of the resurrection, the most important Christian pilgrimage moment in Jerusalem. It is rendered in cross to reveal the interior depictions of Old Testament and New Testament scenes, including the sacrifice of Abraham, the Crucifixion, the Deposition, and the patriarch receiving the Holy light. The city's main buildings and monuments are arranged around the central complex and rendered in conventional perspective. The city is surrounded by smaller biblical, apocryphal, and hagiographical scenes, many of them labeled- inscribed. The inscriptions are written in Arabic

The overall composition adheres to a description of the Holy Land as recorded in pilgrims' guidebooks known as *proskynetaria*, with which it is linked in terms of the style of the depictions,

²⁰³Is systematic reflection on the basis and significance of the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ, along with its expression and application throughout the history of the church? It has long been a classic part of theological teaching. It seeks to fashion explicit statements that can be tested and used in close connection with other central areas of Christian doctrine. Erwin Fahlbusch and G. W. Bromiley, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*. Editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et AL.] ; Translator and English-Language Editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; Statistical Editor, David B. Barrett (1 vol., Grand Rapids, Mich., Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001-2008) 458

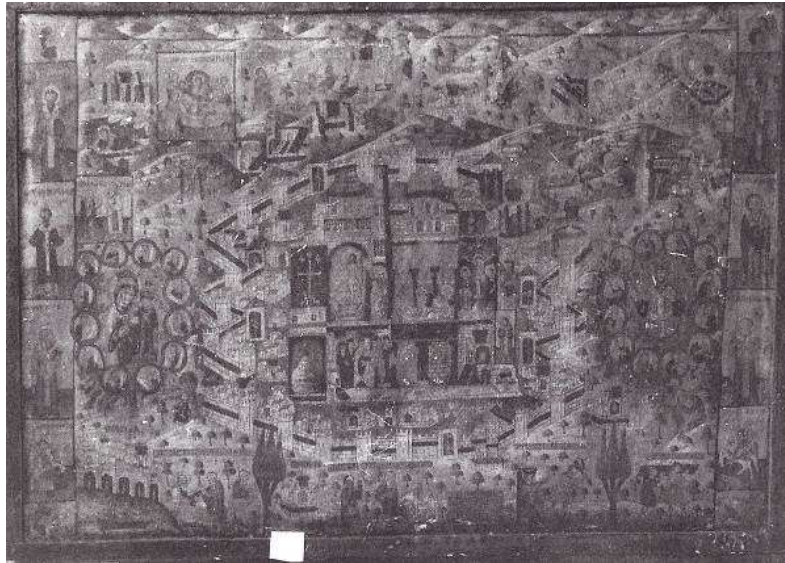
the conventional, two-dimensional rendering of buildings, and the insistence on standard iconography in the presentation of the scenes.

The iconography on the right side of the composition is related to the Virgin. In the middle of this portion, the tree of Jesse. The left side is related to Christ.

- Date: 18thC century, 1738-39.²⁰⁴
- Arabic and Greek inscriptions: see **3.2.3.1 *Sydnaiia Proskynetarion***

²⁰⁴ Immerzeel, "Proskynetaria from Jerusalem," 24

65- The proskeyntarion, 1748, Hama.



Cat. 65 proskeyntarion, the icon with the topography of the Holy land, 1748, was in the Lady of entry church, Hama, tempera on canvas, 80x123cm, the iconographer: unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

A representation of Palestine, bordered at the top by mountains and the river Jordan; the walls of Jerusalem dominating the center, enclosing holy locations where Biblical events occurred, the interior of the Rotunda of the Resurrection including the Crucifixion of Christ on Golgotha with the Sacrifice of Abraham directly above, to the left, under a canopy with hanging oil lamps, the Embalment of Christ, next the Patriarch emerging from the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, holding the candles which had miraculously been lit from Christ's Tomb, followed by the actual Resurrection, adjacently the Cross. the landscape around the walls scattered with representations of other Scriptural episodes, notably Christological scenes, for example the Baptism at the top and the Nativity to the right; the Holy City flanked by portraits of the Mother of God surrounded by Old Testament Prophets and Christ the Vine; the side borders portraying images of Church Fathers²⁰⁵ with Sts. George and Demetrius on the first row to the left and right respectively; the four corners depicting the Apocalyptic Personifications of the Evangelists, the Hama icon is framed by outer panels. Each of the corners is dedicated to one of the four Evangelists: Matthew in the form of an angel, Mark as a lion, John as an eagle, and Luke as an ox. On the left panel are

²⁰⁵ Since the eight century, a church father is a teacher living within the first seven centuries (eight among the Greeks) whose teaching the church has recognized a Fahlbusch and Bromiley, *The encyclopedia of Christianity. editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett, 521*

Basil, John Chrysostom, and Gregory, while the right pays homage to Spyridon, Athanasius, and Charalampos.

Like all the icons in our group, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre commands the majority of the city's space. Outside of Jerusalem city, To either side of this compound are large renderings of the legend of Lot and the crucifix tree.²⁰⁶ The Monastery of the Cross marks the traditional spot where this sacred tree grew. On the bottom left-hand corner are a few ships anchored off the coast of Jaffa. Above the port city is the Mother of God surrounded by Old Testament Prophets, above it Zosimos feeding Mary Aegyptica. The next representations are of Baruch sleeping in the cave and Mary's Tomb, icon of Dormition. Between the Mount of Olives and Bethany, the artist depicts Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River. To the right of Jerusalem are one site that is indeed located to the city's south: the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

- Inscription: in Arabic and Greek, illegible

²⁰⁶ According to this particular narrative, Abraham gave Lot the seedling of a tree—a cross between a cedar, palm, and olive tree—that originally sprouted from Adam's grave. Lot was instructed to plant the seedling and nourish it with water from the Jordan River, in order to atone for his incestuous relations with his daughters. Every time Lot returned from the Jordan, the devil sought to thwart his plans by drinking the water. In the end, though, Lot bested the devil and the tree soared. Rubin, "Greek-Orthodox maps of Jerusalem from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," 126

66- The Proskeyntarion, 1827, Ma'lula.



Cat. 66 proskeyntarion, the icon with the topography of the Holy land, 1827, St Thekla Monastery-Ma'lula, tempera on canvas, 80x120 cm, the iconographer: Jerusalem school. (After DGAM Archives).

Big icon, we don't know if it is in situ right now or not. It depicts the Holy lands and divided into main three part, and in the center another part represents the church of the resurrection, "The Holy Sepulchre" and Jerusalem.²⁰⁷

The church of the Holy Sepulchre is presented from a southern vantage point using a quasi-architectural cross section. This approach offers a view of the compound's layout and even some of its internal spaces. At the center of the Church is the catholicon up it the dome, inside it is iconostasis, beneath is a representation of Jesus being anointed on the Stone of Unction. On the left wing, can be seen the round dome of the Rotunda, with an image of Christ rising from his grave. Under of the lower part of the church of Holy Sepulchre is a story of unknown saint is depicted there. There is no bell tower that is anachronistically drawn to its full height, as an earthquake damaged the top of this structure in 1546.²⁰⁸ To right of this part is be found the Holy Sepulcher's double-arched entrance, over the doorway is the cave where Helena is said to have discovered the cross. A top the cave is the Chapel of Abraham the Patriarch, which marks the place of the Binding of Isaac, there is icon depicts it. To the up, one can clearly see the Chapel of Golgotha, Jesus on the cross flanked by two persons, who are the Theotokos and John the Beloved. Beneath the Crucifixion next to the Chapel of Abraham the Patriarch scene is a building that is

²⁰⁷ It is maintained in Căndea and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 209

²⁰⁸ Rubin, "Greek-Orthodox maps of Jerusalem from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," 109

reached from the Church's main plaza by an ascending, Crusader-era Staircase.²⁰⁹ Out of the Holy Sepulchre, inside the Jerusalem city, inside the square wall, are the Dome of the Rock, fountain, and complex buildings maybe refer to Al- Aqsa, the mosque's façade with colonnade and six arches.

The scene outside of Jerusalem city, large scene of the legend of Lot and the crucifix tree. There is building looks like steares referes to The Monastery of the Cross, on the right sid are Zosimos feeding Mary Aegyptica. On the left of this legend dipicting is a a ship anchored off the coast of Jaffa, that depicted as a walled city, contains domed buildings. At the lowere corneres of this icon, are Demetrious and George.

The upper part depicts the story of creation and many of saints flanking by Jesus and his Apostles, which are a part of Judjment scene, the twelve profhets under the upper part, the third part depicts from the left to the right; the Acenction, The Dormition, the Annunciation, The baptism, Sanit Saba and his Monastery. The fourth part represents twelve cercles depict the Passion of the Christ²¹⁰, while the fifth part depicts the lady of Spring, The Holy Mountain, Monastery of sinai, the Nativity and Nativity church²¹¹, and The Extreme Humiliation.²¹² The six part depicts the Beheaded of Saint John the Baptist, martyrdom of Stephan, the Ascension of Elijah,

- Signature and Gifting: in Greek; C [χέρι] [ΠΡΟΣ ΚΑΝΣ ΔΠΑΝΑΙΔΤΑ] illegible
- Inscription: in Greek.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ The passion of Christ would be repeated motif in this kind of icons after mid of nineteenth century. See icon of Typography of Holy land 19th. La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 178

²¹¹ It is a Constantine's church, it was almost square G.T Armstrong, *Constantine's Churches. Symbol and Structure.: Art, Archaeology, and Architecture of Early Christianity*, ed. Paul Corby Finney, New York, London: Garland, 1993 (ed. Paul C. Finney; Studies in early Christianity v. 18; New York: Garland, 1993), at 11

²¹² Christian virtue of lowering oneself. Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity / edited by Everett Ferguson*, 547–48

67- St Simeon Stylites The Younger, 17thc, Aleppo.



Cat. 67 Saint Simon Stylites the younger Before 1667, in situ in the Dormition church, Aleppo, 78.5x116 cm, Attributed to Yousef AL Halabi. (After Rand.2011).

He called also Simeon, who is from the miraculous mountain, near Antioch of Syria.²¹³ The eastern Orthodox communities venerated two Stylites saints sharing the same name. Saint Simeon the Elder introduced the custom of standing on a column-pillar as a distinctive form of monastic asceticism in the fifth century. In the sixth century, his feats were emulated by Saint Simeon the Younger, his follower, lived in the 6th century AD (521-597) near Antioch.²¹⁴

This icon depicts Saint Simeon surrounded by fifteen scenes showing episodes from his life and miracles.²¹⁵ The column-pillar consists of three drums, opened door in the second level, exterior stairway. The saint wears monastic cloak and veil, holding a parchment, he stands on a platform. A balcony projects on the right of platform, with ciborium, supported on four colonnettes, upon the ciborium, there is a cross. This edifice is baroque style.²¹⁶

The *vita*, consisting of fifteen scenes from the life and miracles of Simeon, from when St John the Baptist announced to his mother Martha, in the left side, the saint on the small column, consists of one store, one he was a child (six years old), we can recognize a city with a wall behind him,

²¹³ Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend

²¹⁴ Finney, *The Eerdmans encyclopedia of early Christian art and archaeology, Volume 2*, 707–8

²¹⁵ La Croix and Emery, *Icones arabes*, A42

²¹⁶ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 39

maybe it is Antioch, or Samandağ (or Sūwaydīyah) is a town, at the mouth of the Orontes River on the Mediterranean coast, near 25 km from the city of Antioch.

In the right of the icon, scene of the Annunciation of st Martha, mother of st Simeon, she is at structure, ciborium, supported by four colonnettes, behind this scene, there is wall and two buildings, and maybe it is Antioch.

In the background, on the left side, there is a walled city, even if the name of this city is not known by the inscriptions, I think this architecture representations indicate to the city where this saint lived, by other words, it represents Antioch.

- Inscriptions: in Arabic;

ان اهل نينوى سمعوا بالخسف ووعيد الزلازل من اجل الهفوات وذلك بواسطة يونان ابان دلايل القيامة بالحوت فتضرعوا بالتوبة والندامة لكن مثل اولايك يصرخ شعبك مع الاطفال فارثي في تأديبنا لاجل قيامتك ذي الثلاثة ايام وارحمنا).

The people of Nineveh had heard of landslides and intimidation of earthquakes, for peccadilloes and then by Jonah the prophet during Signs of Resurrection, with whale. Supplicate repentance and remorse. But like those, your people cry with children, lament us in the discipline for a three-day Resurrection and have mercy on us.

1. لما أسقطوا الشياطين الرجل من الشجرة والقديس باسط يديه تحته.

1. When the devils have dropped the man from the tree and the saint is opening his hands underneath.

2. الأعور، الأكتع، الأبرص، المقعد.

2. One-eyed, one-armed, the leper, the paralyzed.

3. لما قطع البربري رأس الضرير، الرجل السقيم، الألق.

3. When barbaric beheaded the blind, puny man, lame.

4. الرجل [وجد نفسه في خطر مميت] واستجار بالقديس.

4. The man found himself in mortal danger and he seeks refuge Saint

5. تلاميذ القديس وقد وضعوا عصاته على السقما فشفوا .

5. disciples of the saint have put his stick-on puny persons, the have been cured

6. الأخرس المجنون.

6. The Crazy Dumb.

7. المجنون

7. The mad man.

8. القديسة مرته.

8. Saint Martha

9. لما ظهر يوحنا المعمدان لمرثة أم القديس.

9. When John the Baptist appeared St. Martha; mother of saint.

10. لما أقام القديس المايت.

10. When the saints appeared to death man.

11. المنذر الذي كان يحارب الروم والنار منحدره عليه بصلاة القديس وروح الاقتدار بيده جمرة نار ليضرب بها.

11. Mondher, who was fighting the Byzantines and fire descended on him, by praying of saint and the spirit [...] In his hand a cinder of fire to hit them.

12. البطريرك.

12. The patriarch

13. الضريير.

13. The blind.

14. الضريير، المرأة [المعتوها]، الموجوعة اسنانه. الأحدب، الصبي المولود أعمى، نازفة الدم، الأمرأة العديمة اللبن، مرثا [...] تناولته طعاماً.

14. The Blind, Women moron, person who has pain teeth, Hunchback, the boy who born blind, bleeding blood woman, the woman without milk, Martha [...] is feeding him

15. وهو ابن ستة سنين واقفاً على عامود صغير.

15. When he was six years standing on a small column.²¹⁷

²¹⁷ Sylvia V. Agémian, "Tradition byzantine et notes arabes dans l'art de Yusuf al-Halabi," *Revue roumaine d'histoire de l'art* (1976) 25; Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian iconpl.* 122

68- The Ascension Of The Prophet Elijah, 17thc, Latakia.



Cat. 68 The Ascension of the Prophet Elijah, the Seventeenth century, Saint George – Orthodox Church, Latakia 34x40 cm, Aleppo School. (After DGAM Archives).

The icon is divided into three unequal parts.²¹⁸In the upper part, larger one is depicted the Ascension of the Prophet Elijah to heaven. The prophet, in an animated stance, is seated in a flaming, golden chariot which is emerging from clouds and being pulled by horses. Middle, his disciple Elisha²¹⁹ is depicted with his back turned to the viewer, seizing Elijah's mantle. On the left, on a smaller scale is the secondary episode of a waking up the prophet from the angel. In foreground scenes from the Life of the prophet are depicted conversing with the widow who is offering him water and bread and then, in another scene alongside the first, riding the king of Ahab in the chariot.

In the foreground, there are two architectural constructions; the first one locates on the right, represents the house of the widow. The house consists of big arch stands on two columns. The left building represents the palace of Ahab, consist of three stores.

- Inscriptions: in Arabic; Elisha.

²¹⁸ This division appeared also in icon of Yabrod, dated to 1734, see La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 128

²¹⁹ Who came from Abel-mehola and was at work in the second half of the ninth century B.C., was leader of the community of prophets centered at Gikal near Jericho. Fahlbusch and Bromiley, *The encyclopedia of Christianity. editors, Erwin Fahlbusch ... [et al.] ; translator and English-language editor, Geoffrey W. Bromiley ; statistical editor, David B. Barrett*, 82

69- St John Baptist And Scenes Of His Life, 18th C, Aleppo



Cat. 69 St John Baptist and scenes of his life, the eighteenth century, in situ in the Dormition church, Aleppo, 72.5x102.5cm, Attributed to Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).

The story of Herod's feast was recounted, with slight variations, by Mathew and Mark in their Gospels. Josephus²²⁰ also recorded the death of John the Baptist but he gave as Herod's reason for having him executed that he was a dangerous and subversive dangerous. Josephus knew well the complex marriage relationship of Herod's family. He expressed his disapproval of Herod's marriage with Herodias. He also attributed to Herodias's daughter by her previous marriage the name of Salome. She was never, in fact, called by the name in New Testament and Byzantine tradition.²²¹

the first scene shows Birth of saint john the Baptist, the background of it, is building represents the house of his family, and at the right of this scene, Zachariah ridding the bible and sitting up on step of the stair the sanctuary, that is represented by dome and arch.

The second scene represents the father of John the Baptist at the Sanctuary, that represented by alter and gabled building, and a group of people are standing out in building represents the temple.

The third scene: Salome is represented kneeling and dressing imperial dress, behind the scene of beheaded of Saint John the Baptist by executioner (swordsman). At the background, shown building represents the prison where was Saint John.

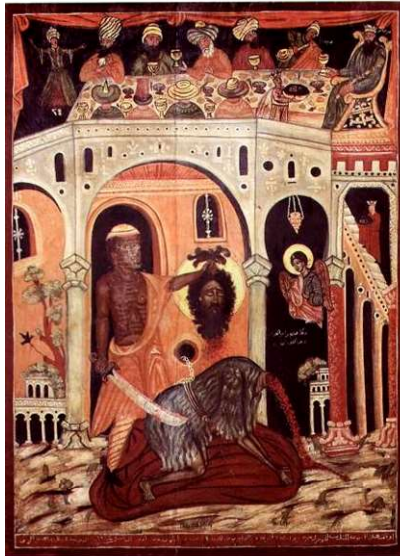
²²⁰ (ca.A.D35-100), Jewish priest, military leader, and historian. Josephus ben Matthis, later known as Flavius Josephus, wrote works essential for the study of first-century history. Ferguson, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity / edited by Everett Ferguson*, 630–31

²²¹ Christopher Walter, *Pictures as Language: How the Byzantines Exploited Them* (London: Pindar press, 2000) 321

At the fourth scene (at the right), Herod in imperial dress, is seated at table with his guests, and Salome stand front of him. At the background of the feast of Herod, white building with gabled roof refers to palace of Herod.²²²

²²² Chatzédakês, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 250pl.79

70- Beheaded Of St John The Baptist, 1767, Sydnaia.



Cat. 70 Beheaded of Saint John the Baptist, 1767, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, 81x111cm, The Iconographer: deacon Joseph son Michael Elian. (After Zayat, 1987).

Sunday (September 11) is the commemoration of the Beheading of John the Forerunner in the churches which follow the old calendar. The icon above is 1767, carrying the inscription: “Commemoration cut the head of John the Baptist”, Herod, Herodias”.²²³

This icon is divided to three scenes; the first one is at foreground represents the beheaded of John the Baptist, in the background shows the feast of Herod, on the right between these scenes, Salome holds the head of the saint by a plate.

In the center John is shown bowed over and executed by sword of black swordsman who hold the head of saint with his hair. Above him an angel. To the right Herodias’ daughter, Salome holds the head and climbing the stairs. The combination of chronological events all shown “at once” is a common feature of icons.

The beheaded of St John takes place front of the palace of Herod, at the upper part of icon, the icon depicts the scene of Feast of Herod. While the Guests and Herod are eating and drinking sitting on the table, Herodias’ daughter is depicted two time, once front of Herod, holding the Head

²²³ متحف دمشق، بين الكتابة والصورة: نماذج من المخطوطات والإيقونات في سورية (الأمانة العامة لإحتفالية دمشق عاصمة الثقافة العربية، 2008)،

of Baptist, and at the left of icon, dancing front of Herod's guests. This composition was known since the fifteenth century, Cretan icons.²²⁴

- Signature and Gifting: the priest Girgis [...] endowed this blessed icon [...] Commemoration of John Baptist in the church Sydnaia , to ask pay and reward, 1767, work the deacon Joseph son Michael Elian
- Inscriptions: in Arabic "Commemoration cut the head of John the Baptist", Herod, Herodias.

²²⁴ Chatzédakès, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 163pl.51

71- SS Peter And Paul, 1735, Latakia.



Cat. 71 Sts Peter and Paul, 1735, in situ in Saint George –Orthodox, Latakia, tempera on canvas, 51x68 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After DGAM Archives).



Figure 61 The scheme of Sts Peter and Paul icon, 1735, Latakia.

This icon in situ, painted by Hanania Al Halabi in 1735; St-Peter and St-Paul as pillars of the Church. The icon has a beautiful presentation of the Apostles Peter and Paul that shows both Apostles standing together supporting the model of the universal Church which reveals an altar covered with the usual objects of the Eucharistic ritual. The Apostle Paul, the great missionary of the early Church, is holding a Gospel book, while the Apostle Peter offers a blessing with his right hand. At the top of the church there is Jesus Christ depicted as bust figure, rising his hand to bless. The composition is traditional, solidly organized around the model supported by the apostles who slightly turned three quarters.²²⁵

The church is a domed building with three arches. Alter is inside the church, on it there is a chalice. The domed church is centralized. Hanna's goal was not depicting a church was known during his period, he copied this kind of this church from Cretan icons, like one in Galleria dell'Accademia Belle Arti, Florence.²²⁶ The common model of the church is to be found in many icons on the same object, together with the typology of the posture of the Apostles and the presence of Christ, who give them His blessing with both hands.

The background is in the lower part is a dark green ground, while the gold background above lights the symbols and the faces of the church leading Apostles.

²²⁵ Lammens, *Les Icônes byzantines et post-byzantines grecques* (as in note 943), at 5419

²²⁶ Ćurčić, *Architecture as icon* (as in note 251), at 30

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

"أوقف هذه الأيقونة المباركة... على هيكل... بحراسة اللاذقية... بيده الفانية العبد الضعيف حنانيا ابن القس
... [endow this blessed icon on altar [...] in saved Latakia [...] by his Mortal hand,
the Slave weak Hanania Al-Mussawir. [...]

72- SS Peter And Paul, 18thc, Al Homeyra.



Cat. 72 SS Peter and Pau, The eighteenth century, in situ in the upper church of St George Monastery, Al Homeyra 33.5x48 cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

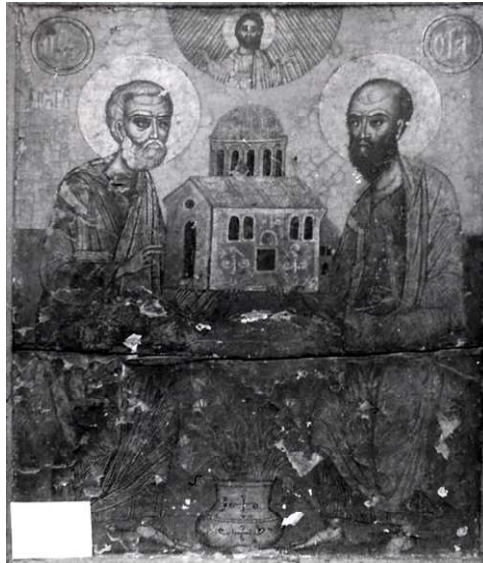
This icon in situ, in the upper church of Saint George inside the holy of holies at the upper church, and it represents Peter and Paul standing and holding structure of Church, while Peter bearing the Keys of church, Paul holding the Gospel. In the icons of Sts Peter and Paul, the two apostles are shown jointly holding a central planned domed church in the middle of the composition.²²⁷

This church is a domed building, the dome from the outside is lobed in shape stands on drum, which stands on red dome that in turn, bases on three arches and four columns. Inside the church under the dome there is something like alter but isn't so recognizable.

- Inscriptions: in Greek and Arabic = Saint Paul, Saint Peter.

²²⁷ Ibid.

73- SS Peter And Paul, 18thc, Hama.



Cat. 73 Sts Peter and Paul, The eighteenth century, was in situ in the Lady of Entry church, Hama, 38x49 cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

This icon is one of missed icons where were of the iconostasis at the Lady of entry church in Hama. Unfortunately, we don't have a colored picture of this icon. Our icon depicts St-Peter and St-Paul as pillars of the Church, are holding miniature model of a church. In the upper semicircle represents the heaven, inside it depicted Bust figure of Jesus, blessing them, flanked by two Mandorla, in side it some Greek letters. Under the church and between peter and Paul, there is vase of plants. The construction of the church characterizes with a dome and her drum, which has arched windows, the roof is slopped. The relationship to real architecture cannot be denied because of the general shape of this church was known during the ottoman period in rural area.

- Inscription: Greek inscription Πέτρος = Peter.

74- SS Peter And Paul, 19thc, Latakia.



Cat. 74 SS Peter and Paul, the nineteenth century, in situ in the Saint George – Orthodox Church, Latakia, 24x29cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

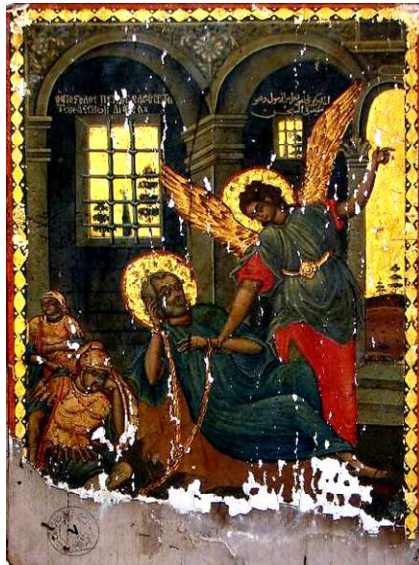
This icon in situ, in the church of Saint George in Latakia, dated to the beginning of nineteenth century.

This icon depicts Saints Peter and Paul as the pillars of the church, they are standing holding the church, while Peter Apostle holds with right hand the Keys of the church, and Peter holds a books represents his letters to the churches.

The construction of the church represents the Ecumenical church, this building has one red dome, and up her there is ciborium which stands on the dome by four columns. The drum of the dome has five windows. The church is shown with one large arched entranceway and two windows. This icon supports the ideas about these saints as great pillars of the Church. The background is in the lower part is a dark red, in contrast of the golden background above which lights the symbol and the faces of the Apostles.

- Inscription: Greek Ο ΙΑΓΙΟΙ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΙ, ΠΕΤΡΟΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΣ = the saint apostles, Peter, Paul.

75- St Peter In The Prison, 1811, Al Homeyra.



Cat. 75 St Peter in the prison, 1811, in situ in the upper church in the St George Monastery, Al Homeyra, 25x33.5 cm, Michael Polychronis school. (After DGAM Archives).

One of icons²²⁸ which were depicted by the school of Michael of Crete, in situ in the Holy of Holies at older church of St George monastery of Al Homeyra.

This icon depicts the moment of awakening of Saint Peter by the Angel, while the soldiers are sleeping. Peter is sleeping while he is tied by two chains. The angel is holding his hand and guiding him to flee by indicating him to the open door.

In the background, two arches represent the prison, which has two windows. While the prison is a little dark, the exterior is bright thanks to the use of gold leaves, while, in the account of Act which refers that the fleeing of st Peter was in the dark.²²⁹

The situation of this icon is good, but the lower part is missing.

- Inscriptions: in Arabic and Greek; the angel rescues the Apostle Peter while he is tied at the prison.

²²⁸ There is another icon depicts the Baptism, dated to 1, July, 1811, in the same church.

²²⁹ Act 12: 1-8.

76- Jacob's Ladder, 1765, Sydnaia.



Cat. 76 Jacob's ladder, 1765, in situ in the Sydnaia Monastery, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, 83x113.5cm, Silvestre Of Antioch. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

Icon in situ at the Sydnaia church, Sydnaia Monastery. It is one of two icons depicted by Sylvester and endowed by him.

The icon depicts Jacob when “He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.” (Genesis 28:12). Here, the ladder stands on the earth and reaches to Heaven. Angels are seen climbing and coming down the ladder. Near it there is a tree represents “The plain of Mamre”. The Ladder is shown cutting through the Icon, ascending from the bottom right, to the top left, and separating the Heavenly from the worldly.

With His right hand “Christ the old days” blesses and holding a globe in His left hand. At the right side of the scene is shown St Jacob lying near to the well. In his left hand he holds stick.

The village of Sychar appears at the left side of the icon, at the foreground, titled in Arabic, "قرية سوخار".

- The Date: 1765.²³⁰
- Iconographer: Sylvester (1724–1766)
- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic;

صور هذه الأيقونة الفقير سيلقيستروس البطريرك الانطاكي، وأوقفها على دير سيدتنا والدة الاله الكلية الطهر، في سنة 1765.

²³⁰ In the time of Bishop of Sydnaia, Erothiois, Zayat, *Histoire de Saidanaya / par Habib Zayat*, 233

“The humble Sylvester, the patriarch of Antioch has depicted these icons and he endowed it on Holy Sydnaia monastery of our lady mother of God, The full of purity at year 1765”.

- Inscription: in Greek; Η ΚΗΜΑΣ ΗΝ ΕΙΔΕΜ Ο [...]ΠΙΑΧ
In Arabic; town of Sychar, Father of the Fathers Israel.

77- John Climax (Climacus), 1811, Sydnaia.



Cat. 77 John Climax, 1811, in situ in the Sydnaia monastery, Sydnaia, temper on wood, 45x63 cm, Michael of Crete. (After, La Croix & Emery, 2006).

John Climax²³¹ lived in solitude on Mount Sinai for a long and wrote what is known as the Climax-“Spiritual Ladder” (Scala Paradisi)²³², consisting of thirty chapters, or “rungs,” in which he described the degrees of spiritual ascension to moral perfection. The Climax had enjoyed a remarkable popularity during the middle Ages, and its fame was by no means confined to the East.²³³

In situ in the Sydnaia monastery, Sydnaia, temper on wood, Michael of Crete. This icon of the Vision of the Heavenly Ladder is one of a three icons were depicted and signed by Michael of Crete; the Mary of Egypt and the Nativity. Maybe they comprised part of the iconostasis for Church of Sydnaia Monastery at Sydnaia. It is dedicated in Greek by golden letters, to Antioch Patriarchate, and it dated in 1811 by Arabic language.²³⁴ The Heavenly Ladder, composed by Saint John Climax, the sixth-century abbot of the monastery at Sinai, envisioned the monastic life as a

²³¹ Monk and theologian, he became a monk towards the end of the sixth century and present forty years as a hermit in the desert before becoming abbot of the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai. His most famous and influential work was his *Ladder of Divine Ascent* or *Klimax*. Nicol, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire* / Donald Nicol, 62

²³² This work became favorite reading among the Byzantine monks, serving as a guide to the attainment of ascetic and spiritual perfection A. A. Vasil'ev, *History of the Byzantine Empire 324-1453 Vols 1 and 2* (S.l.: U of Wis Pr, 1971-1973) 185

²³³ Walter Dennison, Charles L. Freer and Charles R. Morey, *Studies in East Christian and Roman art* (University of Michigan studies. Humanistic series; v. 12, New York, London: The Macmillan Company; Macmillan and Company, limited, 1918) 2

²³⁴ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 161

series of vices to overcome and virtues to be gained as a process of ascending a ladder to heaven. The metaphorical ladder became a physical entity in illustrations of the text, beginning as early as the tenth century. The heavenly ladder was first painted as an icon in the twelfth century.²³⁵ For him, the concept of a ladder connecting heaven and earth inevitably brings up the problem of how the gulf separating heaven and earth, material and divine, can possibly be bridged. He wants to know the means by which such a connection can be made. It seems he also is troubled by the idea that the immaterial God can be fixed at the top of the material ladder.

Here the ladder is placed diagonally across the pictorial field. At the left the John stands front of arched building with dome, represents monastery.²³⁶ He is holding stick and exhorting the monks, who already climbing the ladder to kip climbing up. The ladder has been stood on the ground, with its steps reaching up into heaven.

At the top, on the right, is Jesus Christ, holds opened book, blessing who is arrived to the heaven, this book is written in Greek: **“come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon” Matthew 11, 18-29a)**²³⁷. And to the right, close to his mouth, appear the following words in Arabic, drawn from the treatise written by John under the title of “Climax of Ladder: “for it has been this vanity which has resulted with the exception of the other causes, in making them fall from the heavens. We are now called upon to pray. Perhaps it will come to pass that we climb the heavens by humanity if will not by the workings of other virtues” another word escapes the mouth of the saint, this time written in Greek, and resuming the spirituality of the desert: “progress in your virtue until your spirit rises in the practice of contemplation”.²³⁸

Five monks (one of them is nun), who have embarked on their ascent to heaven are shown on the ladder itself, while one monk tempted by black demon, fall prey to his vices. One angel gives the first monk who reached to the heaven the crown, another monk appears to be assisted by angel. At the bottom of the ladder, another monk looks to the monk who is fall in to the hell, but he stretches out his hands and grasps the rungs. At the right, the red mouth of hell gapes within a dark cave.

- Signature and Gifting: in Greek; work of Michael of Crete, in 1811.
- Inscription: in Greek; come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon” Matthew 11, 18-29a)
“Progress in your virtue until your spirit rises in the practice of contemplation”,

In Arabic: saint Climax of Ladder.

²³⁵ Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 306

²³⁶ In the miniature of the Heavenly Ladder, Freer Miniature, 7th century, we see the saint standing before his monastery. in Dennison, Freer and Morey, *Studies in East Christian and Roman art*, 17

²³⁷ Bersch, La croix and Riemann, *Der Glanz des christlichen Orientspl.*49

²³⁸ Ibid.pl.49

78- St Barbara, 1714, Aleppo.



Cat. 78 St. Barbara, 1714, the church of Dormition Lady, Aleppo, 44x64cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)

Like what happened in the early Christian period, during the formative centuries in which the new church struggled for toleration and official recognition, women saints were in fact quite numerous, that happened during the first 17th century and later, when the Macarius Al Za'im translated and wrote the stories of Saints; most of these early saints were virgin martyrs, many of them executed during the persecutions of the third and early fourth centuries, such as Barbara, Catherine, and Theodora of Alexandria, and Euphemia of Chalcedon.²³⁹

Many of repentant harlots and women disguised as monks, on the other hand, seem to be the factious products of local legend and hagiographical tradition; they are of uncertain date and sometimes cannot even be placed in any define geographical context. Most famous of prostitutes who, in modern terms, became a "born-again Christian" was Mary of Egypt, who underwent a conversion experience in Jerusalem. Subsequently she withdrew in to the Judean desert where she spent forty-seven years living as a hermit under conditions of extreme privation and utter isolation.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ بالنسبة لرفاتها، يذكر البطريرك مكاريوس الزعيم أن جسدها نقله الملوك المسيحيون من بعلبك إلى مدينة القسطنطينية وبقي هناك. ثم لما أمن الروس بالمسيح في زمن الإمبراطور البيزنطي باسيليوس الثاني (976-1025م). وأزوج هذا الملك أخته لفلاديمير، أمير كييف، أعطى باسيليوس أخته رفات القديسة بربارة هدية. فأخذتها معها إلى كييف. ويقول البطريرك مكاريوس أن الرفات موجودة في دير القديس ميخائيل خارج مدينة كييف. وأن جسدها باق على حاله. ناقص منه بعض الأعضاء. ويقول إنه شاهد الرفات هناك وتبرك بها.

²⁴⁰ Alice-Mary M. Talbot, *Holy women of Byzantium: Ten saints' lives in English translation* (Byzantine saints' lives in translation; 1, Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996) 65–93

St. Barbara is among the most popular Christian saints in the East and West. She was locked in a tower by her pagan father, the rich Dioscuros from Nicomedia (today's Izmir in Turkey), who was envious of his beautiful young daughter. While he was travelling, Barbara converted to Christianity and eventually was beheaded by her own father.

The saint stand on the person-sultan of Ottoman; wearing clothes Sultans and a man's headdress, the turban, consisting of a long length of cotton or silk wound around a cap. She holds the cross by right hand and the sword by the other to pick him.

In the background, the building-tower²⁴¹ with two windows represents the tower in which she was imprisoned.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

”أوقف هذه الأيقونة المكرمة المعلم شكر الله البنا وحرمة نوريه عن روحهم وروح والديهم لكنيسة السيدة بحلب، في رئاسة

الأب البطريرك كير أنثاسيوس [...] بيد العبد حنانيا ابن القس نعمة الله ابن الخوري يوسف [...] 1714

the Teacher (Muallem) shaker Allah Al Banna and his wife Nouriea endowed this venerable icon to souls of them and to the soul of their parents , for Dormition Lady Church in Aleppo , at The Presidency of the master kyr kyr Athanasius[...]. By the hand of a slave Hanania son of pastor Ne'met Allah son of the Priest josph [...] 1714

- Inscriptions: in Greek Η ΑΓΙΑ ΒΑΡΒΑΡΑ = the Saint Barbara.²⁴²

²⁴¹ In the church of saint councils, Sydnaia, icons of Barbara in bust figure, holds her symbol, the tower with three windows. see La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 103

²⁴² Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon*, pl.75

79- St Demetrius, Hama, 17th



Cat. 79 St Demetrius , the seventeenth century, was in The Lady of Entry church, Hama, 86x119cm, Aleppo school. (After DGAM Archives).

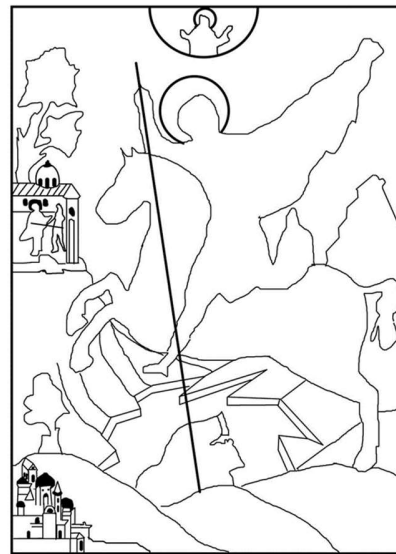


Figure 62 scheme of St Demetrius icon , the seventeenth century, Hama

For Oriental Christians, as well as for Byzantinists, Demetrius is certainly a most fascinating saint. His *Myron* became notorious, and no doubt contributed largely to his acceptance as universal saint, but unlike st George, he never cut much ice in the West.²⁴³ Development and spread his cult were quite original. He was primarily, and for long almost exclusively, the protector of Thessaloniki and its citizens.²⁴⁴

This exceptionally fine icon depicts saint Demetrius, one of the most popular saints in the Christian Orthodox world and the patron saint of Thessaloniki, (in 7th).²⁴⁵ The composition combines the post-byzantine tradition and Aleppian models, this icon depicts him as soldier killing the Bulgarian king (skyloyannis) kaloyan.²⁴⁶ Unfortunately this icon is destroyed after 1982, but we have a photo of it by white and black. The icon was made at the middle of the seventeenth. The depiction of mounted military saints was a common theme in both Byzantine and post-Byzantine art, the icons of the well-known mounted military saints Demetrius, and George being particularly common.²⁴⁷ The renowned young saint was the scion of an aristocratic family in Thessaloniki, where served as an officer in the Roman army. He was a Christian who was intensely involved in supporting the

²⁴³ Walter, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition*, 67

²⁴⁴ Walter, "The Origins of the Cult of Saint George," 310

²⁴⁵ Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend*

²⁴⁶ Ćurčić, *Architecture as icon* (as in note 251), at 35

²⁴⁷ Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 326pl.134

still-banned new religion of Christ and for this reason was arrested and martyred in about A.D.305, during the reign of Emperor Galerius.

With his face, like another face painted by the Al Halabi family, full armor, he is depicted riding proudly to the left, killing a person who riding in the cave, mount in nice harness, behind the saint, person, who is the Bishop, Cyprianos. The saint grasps his lance and the reins of his horse. In the foreground, the fortress, the mountain, and the city, the city that is depicted here, I think that it represents Thessaloniki or Sirmium, because he belongs to Thessaloniki or Sirmium.²⁴⁸ Here the representation type is generic maybe this city represents Hama. There is no name, the city here is walled with an arched gate, and in the interior of the city are some buildings with domes and one edifice which has gable roof.

The martyrdom of Saint Demeter has taken its place in the composition, though on a reduced scale: the saint is seen on the left, pierced by a spear of a soldier, standing in front of a two-stories building the bathing establishment of Thessaloniki. In the background, a building maybe a church where st Demetrious is buried in.

In the foreground, the city is depicted as poor city without walls, with some buildings, and houses, there is a dome, may be for a church. On the up of the icon there is semicircle, in it, Jesus Christ blesses the saint, bust figure.

- Inscription: in Greek ΑΓΙΟΣ ΔΙΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ= Saint Demetrious.

²⁴⁸ Walter, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition*, 67–72

80- The Beautiful Gate (Sts George and Demetrious), 1685, Al Homeyra.



Cat. 80 Beautiful Gate(George and Demetrious), 1685, the lower church in the St George Monastery, Al Homeyra, 85x120 cm, Nomaat Allah Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011).

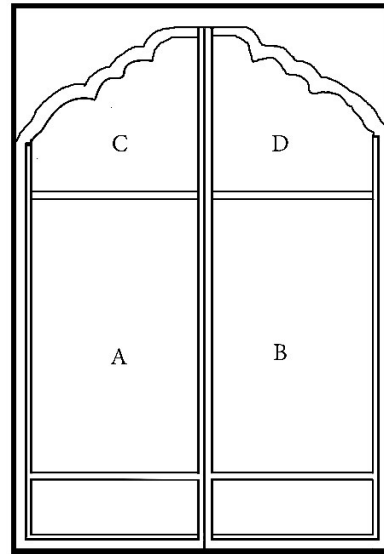


Figure 63 The scheme of Beautiful Gate, 1685, Al Homeyra.

The icon of the Royal Doors, originally placed at the center of the iconostasis in the lower church in the St George Monastery, now occupies the angle between the iconostasis and the north wall of the church. The royal door is the central door on the church screen through which only the priest may pass at the prescribed moments in the holy service. The represents the entrance to the kingdom of God. This door is sacred and is kept closed. Only during the Divine Liturgy does the priest open it to gain access to the sanctuary, where he consecrates the bread and wine.²⁴⁹

This Wooden Door locates at the lower church of George monastery at Al Homeyra near to Homs. Decorated by floral motifs, like roses. Above the arch of the gate is the scene of the Annunciation, which traditionally prefigures the transition between the old and new worlds and so is in the very center of the church, at the separation of nave and sanctuary. Traditionally the wings of the royal doors bear an image of the Annunciation, sometimes placed above portraits of four evangelists. The spatial conception and structural arrangement of Annunciation art functioned to keep Mary and Gabriel apart.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 14

²⁵⁰ The earliest depictions extending through several centuries showed both figures motionless against a shallow “spaceless” background. The result was a timeless locale beyond human dealing that presented a sacred moment of truth. The flat gilded field of Byzantine art, for example, served as a backdrop for several centuries of religious icons. Susan von Rohr Scaff, “The Virgin Annunciate in Italian Art of the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance,” *College Literature* 29 (2002) 109–23, at 112

Below, the liturgy is symbolized by six bishops against a golden background, standing upon a red band that represents the earth. The figures have lost their clarity but are identified by inscriptions²⁵¹: On the left are Spiridon, Gregory Nazianzus²⁵², and Nicholas; on the right, Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, and probably Athanasius. Each holds the Bible in one hand and makes the sign of blessing with the other. Each hierarch is characterized by traditional iconography. Spiridon wears a pointed woolen shepherd's bonnet; Gregory Nazianzus has a large grey beard divided in the middle; St Nicholas, a wide forehead and light, grey hair; Basil, a long, pointed brown beard; and Chrysostom, hollow cheeks, large forehead, and short hair. In fact, the date and origin of the iconographical type of George rescuing the princess can be accurately placed. The earliest account of this miracle, which was not posthumous collections of *Miracula*, is a Georgian manuscript, Patriarchal Library, Jerusalem, cod.2 dating from the eleventh century, there is an alternative tradition, equally unhistorical, is that the incident occurred in Beirut.²⁵³

Even if there is no direct reference to his having been a warrior,²⁵⁴ and the only signs of his military status are that he wore a Chlamys²⁵⁵ and carried a sword, he is regularly described simply as a martyr-or rather than a megalomartyr.²⁵⁶ Saint George her is depicted as warrior killing the dragon by his lancer, mountains a white horse, behind him, there is a boy holds pitcher.

In the background, two mountains: on the right one, the princess stands up it, at the left, the kings and his wife, the parents of the princess, up the building represents the town or the city, this city is depicted as arcade consists of three columns. In the foreground, in the left, the cave of dragon.

The lower part is occupied by the two great martial compositions of St George and St Demetrius, the warrior saints on horseback. This icon shows two angels crown George.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic;

²⁵¹ Agemain, "Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724," 198

²⁵² (c.330-c.389), theologian and saint, born near Nazianzus in Cappadocia in Asia Minor, he was the son of a convert to Christianity who became Bishop of Nazianus. He was educated at Caesarea, Alexandria and Athens, where he made friends with Basil. Nicol, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire / Donald Nicol*, 46

²⁵³ Walter, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition*, 140

²⁵⁴ The earliest hagiographic texts that speak of martyrs (Members of this group include Theodore Tyron, George the five martyrs of Sebaste, Sergios and Bakchos, Hieron, Merkourios,) as soldiers date from the sixth and seventh centuries, as do the first images of them in military attire.

²⁵⁵ The Chlamys was a long cloak that opened at the wearer's right side and was fastened on the shoulder by a fibula. Introduced in the time of Alexander the Great, the garment was known in ancient Rome as the *paludamentum*, and was worn by emperors and senior officers, especially commanders of the *Praetorium*. No later than the second century AD, the first of these wore *chlamydia* of a purple color, the last in red. Also adopted in Roman times was the custom of depicting this category of dignitaries and gods in military uniform with a chlamys thrown over their shoulder Byzantium adopted the Chlamys as an element of official imperial attire, which was worn during various festivals in the capital, and also during military exercises. P. Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints* (Brill, 2010) 255–56

²⁵⁶ Walter, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition*, 118–19

"اوقف هذا الباب المكرم داود ابن المرحوم الخوري توما وأولاده الياس وجبرائيل والمقدسي بولس وتوما على دير القديس جاورجيوس المكنى بدير الحميرا في رئاسة الحاج افرام سنة 7193. صورها بيده الفانية"...

- David (Dawod) son of the deceased priest Tomah and his Children; Elias and Gabriel and Al Maqdisi Paul and Tomah have endowed this venerable Door to George Monastery, who is Nicknamed as Al Homeyra Monastery in the presidency of Al Hajj (Pilgrim) Ephraim, 7193 of Adam, asked the Reward from the God, by moral hand of Ne'met [...] son of Joseph Al Musawwir has depicted it. 7193 to Adam. [...] has painted it by his mortal hand.²⁵⁷
This calligraphy is destroyed, and doesn't exist right now, during the restoration at London in 1968.²⁵⁸
- Inscriptions: in Greek;
Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ = The Great Martyr St. George.
ΑΓΙΟΣ ΔΙΜΙΤΡΙΟΣ = Saint Demetrius.
ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΟΣ = Athanasius, ΚΥΡΙΑΙΟΣ = Cyril
ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΣ = Nicolas. ΒΑΣΙΛΙΟΣ = Basil
ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΣ = Gregory ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΣ = Chrysostom.

²⁵⁷ Agemain, "Ne'meh al-Musawwir, peintre melkite, 1666-1724," 199

²⁵⁸ Ministère du Tourisme en Syrie, Icones De Syrie, Exposition ET Symposium, Al Assad Library, 20-30/10/1987, pl.6.

81- St George Combating The Dragon And Rescuing The Princess, 1706, Aleppo.



Cat. 81 St George combating the dragon, 1706, in situ in the church of Dormition Lady, Aleppo, 60.5x70.5cm, Noamat Allah Al Halabi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

Although, Eusebius recorded the name of one hundred and twenty men and fifteen women, martyrs in Palestine, who carried off the crown of winning athletes in the sacred games of religion, he didn't mention George name.²⁵⁹ In the iconic art, Saint George usually shown beardless warrior and shorter and curly hair.²⁶⁰ Cumont considered that the saint George of the earliest *life* could at least be affirmed to have been a soldier.²⁶¹ In the subsequent revised version out to render the narrative more plausible.²⁶² The more spectacular prodigies were eliminated. George's passion was situated in the reign of Diocletian (Ca.240-316)²⁶³ instead of that of a mythical king Dadianus. George was firmly established as a soldier, although he was not endowed with military career. This version, found in Vatican *grace*.166, ff272-8(BHC, 271,272), was presented as signed by an

²⁵⁹ Eusebius, *histoire ecclésiastique III, Les Martyrs de Palastine XI28*, edited G. Bardy, Paris 1958, p.126

²⁶⁰ Henry Maguire, *The icons of their bodies: Saints and their images in Byzantium / Henry Maguire* (Princeton, N.J., Chichester: Princeton University press, 1996) 186.

²⁶¹ Franz. Cumont, "La plus ancienne légende de Saint Georges," *Revue de l'histoire des religions annales du Musée Guimet* 1936 (1936) 6–51, at 16.

²⁶² For more details about st George legends, see John E. Matzke, "Contributions to the History of the Legend of Saint George, with Special Reference to the Sources of the French, German and Anglo-Saxon Metrical Versions," *PMLA* 17 (1902) 464–535

²⁶³ Was born in Dalmatia about 240.from poor family. for more information about Diocletian, see Roger Rees, *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy* (Edinburgh University Press, 2004)

eyewitness, Pasicarates, on 23 April. Senator called Gentius and his mother was, *Polychronia*, a Christian who brought him up as a believer. His father was Cappadocian pagan.²⁶⁴

The triumph of Saint George, great martyr of Christian and patron saint of the farmer in the orient, is symbolized by his killing of the dragon, the attacker of the city, which represented here as the tower, the princess stands up the mountain at the right.

The splendid icon is painted primarily in gold, red, and white: gold for the ground and saint's richly ornamented Saddle, white for the horse, and brown for the city-castle, cave and the mountain. The city is consisting of three stores, and two doors and many windows.

- inscriptions: in Greek Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΕΓΑ... ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ

²⁶⁴ According to the earliest preserved, 10th-C. Version of the legend of George, he was the grandson of John, the governor of Cappadocia, and son of Kira Theognosta, daughter of the doux of Diosopolis (Lydda) (or according to another version, the son of Anastasius from Cappadocia and Theobasta from Lydda). Despite his young age he commanded a formation of five thousand troops, equivalent in numbers to a legion (see the English translation of the Coptic text by WALLIS BUDGE, p. 57, and also 33-4); meanwhile in the Syrian text he appears as tribune of the army serving in Cappadocia, see the summary in WALLIS BUDGE, p. 50, on the basis of the English translation by J.E. Matzke, "Contributions to the History of the Legend of Saint George", vols.1-2 in Publications of the Modern Language Association, vol. 17 (1903) this note from Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints*, 56

82- St George Combating The Dragon And Rescuing The Princess, 1706, Aleppo.



Cat. 82 St George combating the dragon, 1706, in situ in the church St. Elias of Maronite, Aleppo, 99.2x142.8 cm, Noamat Allah Al Halabi. (After, La Croix&Emery, 2006).

This exceptionally fine icon depicts Saint George, one of the popular saints in the oriental Christians, Orthodox or catholic, and the patron of many their churches in Syria. The composition combines the post-byzantine tradition with models of Aleppo school. With typical face of this school, full armor, which decorated with oriental ornaments, he is holding instead of shaft to killing the dragon, a sword as Arabic warrior to kill the devil that was dead and poked by shaft.²⁶⁵ The saint gasps the dragon on the middle upper of the icon, the bust of Jesus Christ blesses him during the clouds, and two angels crown the saint. The foreground, at the left there is the cave, which the legend says that “In the seventeenth century still were shown to travelers about a mile from Beirut a very deep cave where the dragon lived”.²⁶⁶ In the background, on the left there is the tower represents the castle of the princess escaping into during the arched wooden door. The hand of an expert miniaturist is evident in each detail of this icon: the exceptionally finely drawn and decorating of the arched door, and the upper walls of city, the horse, saddle, and the panoply of Saint George. Ne’met, in this work, is still divided between the post-byzantine style of his father and the oriental one, which will impose later.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ La Croix and Emery, *Icônes arabes*, A44

²⁶⁶ Cândia and S. Agémian, *Descriptions des icônes* (as in note 263), at 150

²⁶⁷ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 52

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic; the Gifting which is not clear for reading but the signature was read; by hand of the pastor Ne'met son of Priest Josef Al Mussawir, 1706 (A.D)

83- St George combating the dragon, rescuing the princess, 1717, Aleppo.



Cat. 83 St George combating the dragon, 1717, the Armenian Forty Martyrs church, Aleppo, 100x139 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)

St George was represented on horseback, usually in the company of St Theodore. It seems that in some icons when they were represented to gather they were invariably killing a dragon. St George is not on a horseback without a dragon, but without a princess are fairly numerous, St George was never represented in Syria killing a man.²⁶⁸ We have Poetry of St George, tells his story, this poetry is Arabic language, known as « Girgis and the Dragon ».²⁶⁹ It is difficult to speak of Arab Orthodox hagiography of St George separately from Byzantine hagiography, because of Both Middle Eastern Orthodox Christians and Byzantines had been bequeathed a shared tradition and had grown to maturity together.²⁷⁰

The history of the Church is full of posthumous appearances of Christ's Saints, who not only appear as messengers, but also to protect and work miracles for Christians struggling on earth. The rescue of a princess and town from the ravaging of a reptilian beast is one miracle attributed to St George. Various versions exist, beside to the city of Beirut, the most widespread concerns a town called Silene, or Lasia (a Mythical Place).²⁷¹ Near a lake in Libya. In the lake lived a creature variously described as a dragon, a giant serpent, or even just a crocodile. The beast prevented the

²⁶⁸ At least for icons, which I have seen.

²⁶⁹ Heby, *The sacred images or the icons*

²⁷⁰ *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World, 700-1700 an anthology of sources* 112

²⁷¹ La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 52

inhabitants of Silene from drawing water easily from the lake and generally terrorized the town. Being pagan, the superstitious townspeople were under the misapprehension that offering young virgins, chosen by lot, as sacrifice to the monster would keep the town safe. Inevitably, the lot fell to the king's daughter and despite the pleas of the ruler, his daughter was sent to the lake. Icons of the miracle also often show a crown being brought down from heaven and placed on George's head by an angel. This is a copy of icon St. George, Maronite Church in Aleppo, shows a crown being brought down from heaven and placed on George's head by two angels. The Martyr George on horseback, receiving the blessing of Christ from above.

The artist's mastery of composition and decoration, the meticulous attention to detail, and the use of bright, luminous colors bear witness to the spirit of characteristic of Aleppian art.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic;

اوقف هذه الأيقونة المقدسي كركور ابن المقدسي كرابيد لكنيسة الأربعين شاهد (شهيد) بمحروسة حلب صورها بيده الفانية العبد الضعيف حنانيا ابن القس نعمة ابن الخوري يوسف المصور سنة 1717 للتجسد. "بالإضافة إلى باللغة الأرمنية: "الأيقونة هي ذكرى من المقدسي كريكور وأبيه المقدسي قره بيت مهداة لكنيسة الأربعين شهيد سنة 1717 مسيحية، صورها حنانيا ابن نعمة الله من أبناء الروم سنة ... آدم بكنيسة الأربعين. أمين.."

Al Maqdisi Karkour son of al-Maqdisi Crapid endowed this icon, to church of holy forty martyrs in the city of guarded Aleppo, the weak slave Hanania son of the pastor Ne'met son of Joseph the Priest Al Mussawir in 1717 of Incarnation has depicted it by his mortal hand

In Arminian: the icon is a memory from Al Maqdisi Gregory (krikor) and his father al-Maqdisi Qarah Bet, is presented to Forty Martyrs church in 1717, Hanania son of Ne'met Allah, sons of al-Rum (Greek- Orthodox) [...] Adam. At Forty Church, Amine.²⁷²

- The inscriptions: in Greek

Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΜΑΡΤΗΣ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ Ο ΤΡΟΠΑΙΟΦΟΡΟΣ

= Saint George the great victorious.

²⁷² Abou Ackl, *The Art of Aleppian icon*, pl.77

84- St George Combating The Dragon, Rescuing The Princess, 1765, Sydnaia.



Cat. 84 St George combating the dragon, rescuing the princess, 1765, the Sydnaia monastery, Sydnaia, Sydnaia, tempera on wood, Silvestre Of Antioch. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

The much repeatedly subject since the end of eighteenth century and turned to be the typical scenes or attributes of Melkite icons of St George is Saint George rescuing the servant boy (captive). In fact, the rescue the captive was an already an iconographical type in the Byzantine epoch.²⁷³ Twelfth or thirteen centuries in Georgia. Admittedly representations of the subject were more frequent after Turkish occupation.²⁷⁴ The name of captive depends on the legend that is copied at some manuscripts, like manuscript of Sydnaia-6²⁷⁵, is Girgi son of Laon. This manuscript tells about "The story of Saint George and the Dragon": "We write these Miracle that had been done by George, in the city of Beirut in the days of infidel King Datanos at King Datanos days in the city of Beirut and that in some years the dragon came to them, he was scary and has destroyed all

²⁷³ Walter, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition*, 130

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁵ Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East of Greek Orthodox: *Description of books and manuscripts*, the monastery of Sydnaia Patriarchal, Damascus, 1986, p.18.

the people, trees, animals ..." ²⁷⁶ manuscript 158 ²⁷⁷ (642) Mgm', is copied in seventeenth century or eighteenth century.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic; this Holy icon is depicted by The participate Sylvester of Antioch and he endowed it on Holy Sydnaia monastery of our lady mother of God, The full of purity at year 1765
- Inscription: in Greek; Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΜΑΡΤΗΣ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ = Saint George the great.

²⁷⁶ Souad Slim, *Description of the manuscripts, Arabic manuscripts in the Antiochian Orthodox monasteries in Lebanon*, 2 vols., Monastery of Our Lady of Balamand, Department of Documentation and Studies Antioch.; Université de Balamand, 1994 (2 vols; ; Monastery of Our Lady of Balamand, Department of Documentation and Studies Antioch.; Université de Balamand, 1994), at 125–26

²⁷⁷ In Arabic Manuscript at Sydnaia Monastery, Syria:

قصة القديس جاورجيوس والتنين "تكتب هذه العجيبة الذي عملها في مدينة بيروت في أيام الملك الكافر داتانوس وذلك في أيام الملك داتانوس في مدينة بيروت الحكما وانه في بعض السنين خرج عليهم تنين مريع مخيف وكان قد أباد جميع الناس والاشجار والحيوانات..." مخطوط 158 (642) مجموع، نسخ إما في القرن 17 أو 18. المخطوطات العربية في الأديرة الأرثوذكسية الإنطاكية في لبنان: مرجع سابق، ص 125-126.

85- St George And Scenes Of His Tortures, 18thc, Hama.



Cat. 85 St George and scenes of his life, the eighteenth century, was in the Entry Lady church, Hama, 40x51cm, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives).

This icon was at the Lady of Entry Church in Hama, unfortunately missing since 1982. One observation may be made about this icon concerns its structure. Basically, the icon corresponds to the *passions*; in other words, it belong to the folk story. It can be found for example, in 1666,²⁷⁸ biographical icon preserved at private collection, Lebanon, where several of the saint's tortures are presented according to the same formula, though they are carefully distinguished by the Arabic inscriptions. If we read the scenes around the frame of the icon, starting in a clockwise direction from the top left- hand corner, row by row, ten small icons are surrounding st George. These small icons depict the scenes of martyrdom of St George; as follows.²⁷⁹

- 1- front of two kings
- 2- At the detention
- 3- Torture by wheel
- 4- Lime furnace (miracle)
- 5- The destruction of ideals
- 6- The resurrection of the death
- 7- The resurrection of the bulls
- 8- At the temple of ideals (miracle)
- 9- Torture by whips
- 10- the decapitation

²⁷⁸ Agemain, *les Icônes Melkites* (as in note 254), at 221–23pl.67

²⁷⁹ The same cycle of Ne'met al Halabi's icon, 1701, V.Candea and S. Agémian, *Discriptions Des Icônes* (as in note 694), at 146fig.7. La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 44

86- St Theodore And Scenes Of His Tortures, 1734, Latakia.



Cat. 86 Theodore and scenes of his tortures, 1734, Orthodox Archbishopric, Latakia, 66x81 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After Rand.2011)

St. Gregory of Nyssa²⁸⁰, speaking in the church of St Theodore the martyr, compared the colored pictures on the walls to “a book endowed with speech,” and added the famous phrase, “for painting, even if silent, knows how to speak from the wall,”²⁸¹ a soldier, died a martyr at Amasea and was buried at Euchatia in Pontus, where his tomb became a place of pilgrimages, famous from 4thc.²⁸²

This icon is depicted St. Theodor²⁸³. The main theme, the saint, dragging the dragon, is apparently interpolated in the life of St. Theodore.²⁸⁴ It occupies, however, the main place in its cult. “There

²⁸⁰ (C.335-c.394), he was the brother of Basil the Great and friend of Gregory of Nazianus and became Bishop of Nyssa in Capadocia about 372. He attended the Council at Constantinople called by the Emperor Theodosius I in 381. Nicol, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Byzantine Empire* / Donald Nicol, 46

²⁸¹ Maguire, *Art and eloquence in Byzantium*, 1

²⁸² Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* / produced By the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and edited by Angelo Di Berardino; translated from the Italian by Adrian Walford, with a foreward and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend

²⁸³ Theodore Stratelates (in Greek, Στρατηλάτης, translated as ("the General" or "Military Commander"), also known as Theodore of Heraclea) is a martyr and Warrior Saint venerated with the title Great-martyr in the Eastern Orthodox Church, Eastern Catholic and Roman Catholic Churches. His earliest known Life was written down by Niketas David of Paphlagonia as late as the ninth century. See Piotr L. Grotowski, *Arms and armour of the warrior saints: Tradition and innovation in Byzantine iconography (843-1261)* / by Piotr L. Grotowski ; translated by Richard Brzezinski (The medieval Mediterranean peoples, economies and cultures, 400-1500; v. 87, Leiden: Brill; Biggleswade Extenza Turpin [distributor], 2010) 117

²⁸⁴ The Tiron's beard having a single point, while that of the Stratelates has two. This distinction was maintained with remarkable consistency from the eleventh century to the fifteenth century, in post byzantine art, the distinction was not always respected. Walter, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition*, 65

was a dragon in the neighborhood of Euchaita, which killed many people. One day, Theodore, passing by, saw him leave his mark; he rushed upon him in the name of Christ, and killed him".²⁸⁵ He mounts his horse and killing the dragon²⁸⁶ to rescue the girl (princess?), the army chief is surrounded by scenes of his life, torments and death. Every scene is surrounded by decorated frame with floral decoration.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic: Salem Wald (son) of Mansour endowed the venerable icon to his soul and soul of his parents, and to saving his son. For Georg church on Guarded Latakia at the chief ship of the Bishop mister Nicephorus. The weak slave Hanania, son of the priest blessed the Aleppo homeland and Orthodox doctrine, at the year 1734 of carnation.
- Inscription: in Greek
 - Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ= St. Theodore
 - 1) =When they put him in the fire ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΦΟΤΙΑΝ
 - 2) = When burned the temple of ΑΝΑΦΤΕΙ ΤΟΝ ΝΑΟΝ ΤΩΝ ΗΛΟΤΩΝ idols
 - 3) = When the Ο ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΕΦΑΝΙΚΕ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΦΙΛΑΚΗΝ Christ appeared to him in the prison.
 - 4) pped) arrested in front of the = when he was (sto ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΑ King
 - 5) When they beheaded Η ΑΣΟΤΟΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ =ΠΑΡΟΥΣΙΑΖΕΤΑΙ him.²⁸⁷
 - 6) ΣΥΜΒΟΥΑΕΒΟΥΝ ΤΟΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΑΝΑ ΦΟΝΕΥΣΗ ΤΟΝ ΑΓΙΟΝ = When they persuaded the king to call Saint.
 - 7) = When (the saint) ΦΕΝΕΤΑΕ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΥΙΝΟΝΤΟΥ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΩΣ appeared to the bishop in the dream. He suggested to him to replace the usual food with a dish of boiled wheat.²⁸⁸
 - 8) = Marvel of Saint ΘΑΥΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ
 - 9) = When he cured the human (person). ΙΑΤΡΕΥΕΙ ΤΟΝ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΝ
 - 10) =When he ΕΛΕΥΘΙΡΩΝΕΙ ΤΟΝ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΝ ΑΠΟ ΤΟΝ ΛΕΟΝΤΑ saved the (person) human from lion.
 - 11) Illegible words, but the scene depicts the saint when he is saving the boy, maybe refers to rescuing the child who had been sold as a slave to the Ishmaelites.

²⁸⁵ H. Delehay, *Les légendes grecques des saints militaires* (Roman History, A. Picard, 1909) 20, 77-89

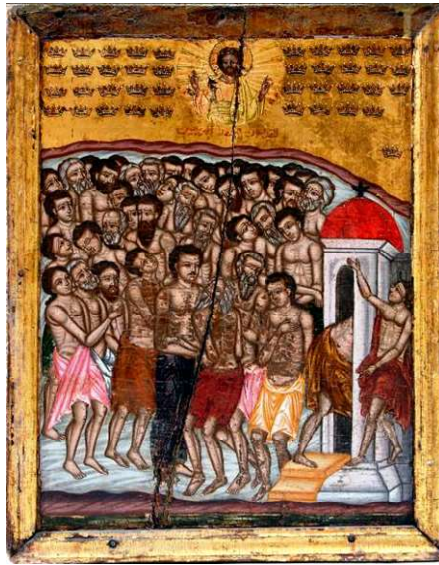
²⁸⁶ The prodigy of killing the dragon is recounted briefly in BHG, 1764, dated to 754. Walter, *The warrior saints in Byzantine art and tradition*, 47-48

²⁸⁷ he was crucified and then beheaded in Herakleia during the reign of Licinius, see Grotowski, *Arms and armour of the warrior saints*, 117

²⁸⁸ This item appears also in icon dating 1636. See Chatzêdakês, *les Icônes Byzantines et PostByzantines* (as in note 172), at 195

12)= When they tied him to the timber. ΔΕΣΜΙΝΟΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΞΥΛΟΝ

87- The Forty Martyrs, Aleppo, 1706



Cat. 87 The Forty Martyrs, 1706, the church of Dormition Lady, Aleppo, 36x45cm, Attributed to Ne'met Allah Al Halabi. Courtesy: Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate.

In the year 313 St Constantine the Great issued an edict granting Christians religious freedom, and officially recognizing Christianity as equal with paganism under the law. But his co-ruler Licinius was a pagan, and he decided to stamp out Christianity in his part of the Empire. He decided to remove Christians from his army, fearing mutiny. One of the military commanders of that time in the Armenian city of Sebaste was Agricola, a zealous champion of idolatry. Under his command was a company of forty Cappadocian, brave soldiers. When these Christian soldiers refused to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, Agricola locked them up in prison.

Above in the sky Christ is depicted, surrounded by heavenly circle. One of the other side of him there are golden crowns, under him is the inscription: “القديسون الشهداء الاربعون”

At the right hand of the composition is a stylized tower- domed building with an arched entrance, this is a bathhouse to which one of the forty Martyrs escaped, unable to endure the torment of the frozen waters.²⁸⁹ The oldest Melkite icon of forty Martyrs is dated to 1637.²⁹⁰

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic

²⁸⁹ La Croix and Emery, *Icons arabes*, A79; Bersch, La croix and Riemann, *Der Glanz des christlichen Orients*

²⁹⁰ Agemain, *les Icons Melkites* (as in note 254), at 188pl.56

أوقف هذه الأيقونة [.....] على كنيسة السيدة لجماعة الروم [...] حلب [...] وذلك سنة 1706. تنسب إلى نعمة الله المصور .

[...] endowed this icon to [...] for Lady church of (rum) Greek Orthodox Aleppo [in The Presidency] at 1706, [...].

- Inscriptions: in Arabic, “القديسون الشهداء الاربعون” The forty Martyrs.

88- The Forty Martyrs, Al Homeyra, 1732



Cat. 88 *The Forty Martyrs*, 1732, the lower church in the St George Monastery, Al Homeyra, 54x64 cm, Hanania Al Halabi. (After, Rand.2011)

St. Basil, in the introduction to a sermon on the forty martyred soldiers of Sebaste. This passage is worth quoting in full, for it played an important role in later Byzantine writing on art. Basil explains that he will “show to all, as if in a picture, the prowess of these men. For the brave deeds of war often supply subjects for both speech writers and painters. Speech writers embellish them with their words, painters depict them on their panels, and both have led many on to acts of bravery. For what spoken narrative presents through hearing, this silent painting shows through imitation.”²⁹¹

In Byzantine iconography there is one important and striking exception to the general indifference of the martyrs to their suffering. From the tenth century onward there survives a series of remarkable portrayals of the forty Martyrs, which are highly unusual among byzantine scenes of martyrdom for their graphic portrayal of the torture of the victims. According to tradition, the forty saints were soldiers who met their death by being exposed in midwinter to freeze beside a lake in lesser Armenia.²⁹² Several middle Byzantine depictions of the forty martyrs of Sebaste, for example, stand out as visual metaphors of the church, made of “hard and strong spiritual stones.”²⁹³

One of the guards set to keep watch over the martyrs beheld at this moment a supernatural brilliancy overshadowing them and at once proclaimed himself a Christian, threw off his garments, and joined the remaining thirty-nine. Thus, the number of forty remained complete. At daybreak,

²⁹¹ Maguire, *Art and eloquence in Byzantium*, 1

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 36

²⁹³ Ćurčić et al., *Architecture as icon*, 18

the stiffened bodies of the confessors, which still showed signs of life, were burned and the ashes cast into a river.

The “Forty Martyrs of Sebastia” adds new hagiographic details to the known prototype. Condemned to freeze to death in an icy pool, the witness-martyrs form a single body. To the right, one of them, unable to stand the torture any longer, renounces martyrdom and goes into a building. On the upper side, a pagan soldier touched by grace prepares to join the assembly of martyrs. The action continues on the upper level. Behind the crowd of saints are several figures: the bodies of the martyrs crammed on a cart, a dying saint carried by his mother, and finally, a brazier on which the bodies of the holy martyrs are being consumed.²⁹⁴

On the right side of the icon, the bath tower, with red sloping roof with arched entrance.

- Signature and Gifting: in Arabic
اوقف هذه الأيقونة المكرمة .. على دير القديس جاورجيوس المكنى بالحميره في رئاسة الأب .. سنة 1732
"للتجسد. صورها بيده الفانية حنانيا ابن قسيس نعمة الله الحلبي
[...] have endowed this venerable icon, to the monastery of George which is called al-Homeyra at presidency of the father [...] 1732 of incarnation, Hanania son of pastor Ne'met Allah Al- Halabi has depicted it by his mortal hand.
- Inscriptions: in Arabic "the Great saints, martyrs forty".

²⁹⁴ Hanania brows these motifs from his father Ne'met, see icon of Forty Martyrs in Balamand Monastery. La Croix and Emery, *Icone arabe*, 46

89- The Forty Martyrs, Idleb, 18thc

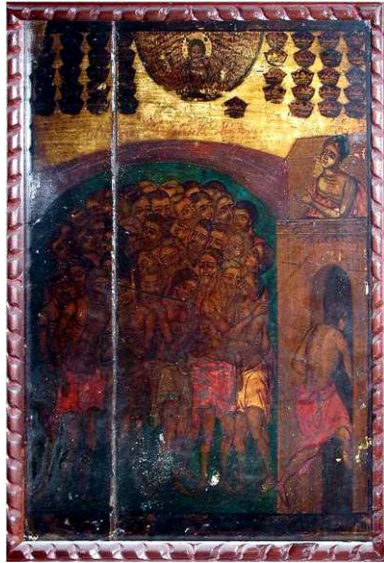


Cat. 89 The Forty Martyrs, the eighteenth century, the Lady-Orthodox church, Idleb, 72x90 cm, tempera on wood, Aleppo school, (After DGAM Archives).

This icon involves forty soldiers who had openly confessed themselves Christians who were condemned by the prefect to be exposed naked upon a frozen pond near Sebaste on a bitterly cold night, so that they might freeze to death. Among the confessors, one yielded and, leaving his companions, sought the warm baths near the lake which had been prepared for any who might prove inconstant.

This icon is divided in to two parts the lower is scene of sinking of the Martyrs in the lake and entry the person to the bath. In the upper part, we see the golden background, which is decorated by floral ornamentals, and in the middle of upper part there is Jesus who is overlooking from the half circle, and there are forty crowns flank of him.

90- The forty Martyrs, 18thC, Latakia.



Cat. 90 The Forty Martyrs, the eighteenth century, the Lady-Orthodox church, Latakia, 35.5x46 cm, tempera on wood, the iconographer; unknown. (After DGAM Archives)

A group of Roman soldiers whose martyrdom in 320 for the Christian faith is recounted in traditional metrologies, the forty who refused to renounce their faith, were ordered by Emperor Licinius to be exposed naked on a frozen lake near Sebaste, where they froze to death.²⁹⁵ In the upper part of the icon we see Christ in a semicircle, raising his both arms in blessing, and there are forty golden crowns. On the right, there is a building with a domed roof and an arched entrance, representing the bathhouse where one of the forty martyrs escaped, unable to endure the torment of the frozen waters; in the legend, a guard converted on the spot and took his place.

The work of a competent craftsman, the icon's colors and details characteristic of the beginning of the eighteenth century suggest that it was depicted by Issa Al Qudsi. Above in the sky, Christ is depicted, surrounded by heavenly radiance. On the other side of him is the Arabic inscription, 'شهداء المسيح الاربعين' (The Forty Martyrs of Christ). Christ is lowering forty martyrs' wreaths to the soldiers from Sebaste suffering in his name. On the right side of the icon, a building represents the bathhouse where one of the forty martyrs escaped.

- Signature and Gifting:

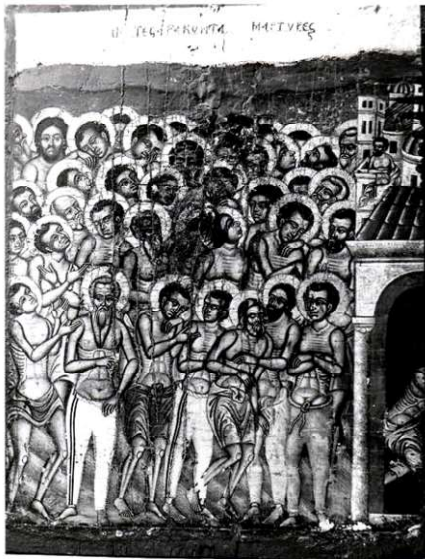
أوقفها الفقير موسى ولد إبراهيم خلاص عن روحه وروح والديه....

²⁹⁵ Tradigo, *Icons and saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, 279

The humble Moussa son of Ibrahim endowed it, for his soul and the soul of his parents
[.....].

- Inscription: in Greek " many Greek inscriptions are not clear but may be mean
"Άγιοι Τεσσεράκοντα"

91- The forty Martyrs, 18thC, Aleppo.



Cat. 91 The Forty Martyrs, the eighteenth century, the church of Dormition Lady, Aleppo, 36x47cm, Aleppo school. (After DGAM Archives)

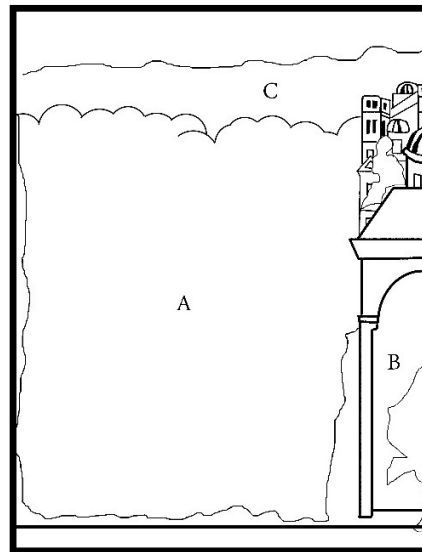


Figure 64 The scheme of Forty Martyrs icon, Aleppo, 18th. A: the forty martyrs, B: the bath, C the frozen lake.

The Forty

Martyrs of Sebaste are the most popular of Orthodox martyrs' depictions which began to appear relatively early, and there are two main iconographic types. One of them is found most often in monumental painting and involves a series of portraits (life size, half figured or depicted as busts in medallions) in which the saints are shown as either soldiers or martyrs. Much more popular is the second type²⁹⁶, seen in the well- preserved icon, which in the Dormition church at Aleppo, this type depicts the forty martyrs in the freezing waters of the lake, half naked, some of saints are already fainting from the cold, but their companions support their heads above the water. Above the sky the inscription is written, U [...] [EXAPAKONT?]ΣΑΡΑΝΤΑ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΕΣ = THE Forty Martyrs

The work of a competent craftsman, this icon contains features of Aleppo school. Above in the sky Greek inscription, the Forty Martyrs of Christ, on the right side of the icon, is a gabled building with arched entrance. This building is a bathhouse where one of the Forty Martyrs escaped, behind it there are domed buildings.

²⁹⁶ Ćurčić, *Architecture as icon* (as in note 251), at 14

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