



**Byzantine Museum
of the Foundation Archbishop Makarios III**

REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
DEPUTY MINISTRY OF TOURISM

Welcome to the Cultural Centre of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation. We hope that your visit in the Byzantine Museum of our Centre will be a unique and precious trip through time for you. 1500 years of the history and art of Cyprus but also of Europe are ready to be unfolded before your eyes. We wish you a wonderful journey!

The Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation was inaugurated in 1982. It is situated on the ground floor of the building where you are and it is spread out in three big dimensional halls.

The Byzantine Museum presents the richest collection of works of Byzantine art originating from the whole of Cyprus. Its exhibits consist of mosaics, portable icons, wall-paintings, vestments, ecclesiastical utensils and wood-carved parts of iconostases, manuscripts and other. History and Art of Cyprus are unfolding before your eyes: Early Byzantine mosaics, Byzantine and Post Byzantine icons, wall paintings and works of minor art.

Cultural Centre of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation

The creation of the Cultural Centre of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation was an idea of the late Archbishop and President of the Republic of Cyprus, Makarios III; his successor to the Archbishop's Seat Archbishop Chrysostomos I, and the President of the Republic of Cyprus Spyros Kyprianou undertook its fulfillment. The establishing act for the Foundation was signed in 1978. The Cultural Centre of Archbishop Makarios III Foundation consists of the Byzantine Museum, the Art Gallery, the Library and the Publication Department.

Historical Background of the Byzantine Museum

The idea for the establishment of a Pancyprian Byzantine Museum was conceived after the transfer of the administration of Cyprus to Great Britain by the Ottomans in 1878. Few years later, in 1883, the first Archaeological Museum of Cyprus, the Cyprus Museum, had been built. During the same period the smuggling channels of Byzantine antiquities were thriving with the most palpable example being the illegal excavation and smuggling of the two treasures of Lambousa in the currently Turkish-occupied district of Kyrenia. The need for protection of religious monuments and their portable objects was imperative. In 1920 the Holy Synod of Cyprus voted a regulation for the collection, protection and preservation of the monuments of Christian Art. It also stipulated the establishment of a Christian Museum in which the objects would be kept, and its direction by a degree-holder of Christian Archaeology. The first Inventory of Byzantine monuments of the island was made in 1930 by Georgios Soteriou, a professor at the University of Athens, who also proposed the establishment of an Office for Restoration and Preservation of Byzantine Monuments at the Archbishopric.

Thefts and destruction however continued despite the pleas made to the population for preserving the monuments. For this reason, icons and other precious objects began to be collected and maintained in the Archbishopric and in the Bishoprics for protection. The protection of monuments was intensified with the declaration of the independence of Cyprus in 1960, while in 1967 began the organization of a big exhibition abroad with representative icons from the whole of Cyprus, thus creating the first nucleus of icons of the future Byzantine Museum.

In 1972 Archbishop Makarios III decided to establish a Workshop for the Restoration of Icons and Manuscripts at the Monastery of Agios Spyridon in

Tremetousia and to erect the Byzantine Museum next to the Archbishopric Palace. Unfortunately, the Workshop was occupied by the Turkish troops in 1974 and this had as a result the pillage and illegal sale abroad of many icons, manuscripts and other heirlooms originating from the whole of Cyprus. The establishment of the Byzantine Museum was delayed and was fulfilled five years after the death of Archbishop Makarios III.

HALL 1

ICON of Virgin Blachernitissa, Church of Panagia Phaneromeni - Nicosia, 9th century: Location: on the right side of the entrance of the Museum, at the far end.

The small icon of Virgin Blachernitissa originating from the Church of Panagia Phaneromeni in Nicosia dates to the 9th century, the period of Arab raids in Cyprus. In this iconographical type, the Virgin is represented in a frontal position and holds Christ in a circle in front of her. This type appeared for the first time in the Monastery of Blachernes in Constantinople. If you approach the icon you will realise that the figure of Christ is destroyed at a large extent, but the Virgin's figure is distinguished very well. The icon was executed in the encaustic technique, that is to say colours mixed with wax which were placed directly on the painting surface while the wax was still very hot and melting. This technique had been widely used in Egypt for the painting of the Fayum portraits. The iconographical elements of our icon refer to the style of these portraits, such as the big almond eyes of the Virgin.

ICONS of Enthroned Virgin with Carmelite monks from the Church of Agios Kassianos, Nicosia and Agios Nicolaos tis Stegis with donors from the homonym Church in Kakopetria, end of the 13th century

Location: on the right side of the entrance of the Museum

The two big dimensional icons, the Enthroned Virgin with Carmelite donors from the Church of Agios Kassianos in Nicosia, and Saint Nicholas tis Stegis from the homonym Church in Kakopetria, belong to the Late Byzantine Period which coincides in Cyprus with the Period of the Frankish Rule and date to the second half of the 13th century. The two icons present iconographical and stylistic similarities, as well as similarities regarding the technique they were made in: golden leaf, egg-tempera technique and engraved plaster decorations. The sub layer consists of large boards on which a cloth is stuck and parchment above the cloth. The boards are hollowed in order to form wide frames on the two sides and a three-foiled arc under which the Virgin and Saint Nicholas are painted. Both icons are surrounded on either side by dividing panels depicting in the first one, scenes of the miracles of the Virgin, while in the second one, scenes from the life of Saint Nicholas. It is hypothesized that the two icons come from the same workshop due to the intense similarities they present.

The icon of the Virgin presents a strong western character. The Virgin is depicted in the western iconographical type of the Virgin of the Mantle, who is covering - protecting a group of kneeling Carmelite monks under her mantle. The scenes of her life are unknown in the Byzantine art, as they concern miracles of the Virgin of the Roman Catholic Order of Carmelites and are accompanied by Latin inscriptions. The faces of Christ and Virgin are repainted, and can be dated to the 17th century due to their style. On the contrary, the scenes in the wide frames of the icon of Saint Nicholas are usual in the Byzantine art and are accompanied by Greek inscriptions. The inscription of the icon "Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis" is informing us that the icon was made from the beginning for the homonym monastery in Troodos Mountains. The donors are represented in the lower part of the icon. It is a western family that is composed by a steel clad knight with his wife, daughter and horse.

These two icons, the one with Latin and the other one with Greek inscriptions, validate the hypothesis that in the 13th century, there were mixed workshops in Cyprus that painted for both the Greeks and the Latins. At the same time, it is ascertained, that western rulers showed their respect towards the Orthodox Church through subsidies and donations of icons, as it appears in the case of the icon of Saint Nicholas tis Stegis.

ICON of Saint Marina, Church of Agia Marina, Pedoulas, 13th century

Location: Exactly opposite the icon of the Virgin Blachernitissa, in the first dividing panel to the right.

The icon of Saint Marina of the 13th century originates from the church of Agia Marina in Pedoulas and bears relief decorations. Around the figure of the Saint, scenes from her life and martyrdom are depicted in frames. Unfortunately, in many scenes from the life of the Saint, there are extensive deteriorations due to the destruction of the sub layer and the painting on metal leaf. The figure of the Saint presents an intense schematization which is stressed by the red colour on the face and the lack of volume. The icon is characteristic of the artistic production of the 13th century in Cyprus, known as *Maniera Cypria*, a hybrid between the post-Comnenian Byzantine Art and the Art of the Crusaders. The icon is adorned with plaster relief decorations, with floral patterns and lilies (*fleur-de-lis*), symbol of the French Lusignans, Kings of Cyprus.

ICONS of Saint John the Baptist, Church of Panagia tis Asinou, Nikitari, beginning of the 12th century and Panagia Glykofiloussa, Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa, Nicosia, 12th and 16th century

Location: Right side of the first central rhomboid stand

The icons of Saint John the Baptist from the Church of Panagia tis Asinou, and Virgin Glykofilousa from the Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa in Nicosia, date to the 12th century and belong to the post-Comnenian art style, which produced several masterpieces of the Byzantine Art in Cyprus, such as the wall-paintings in the Churches of Panagia tis Asinou, Panagia in Trikomo, Panagia tou Araka, Panagia Afentrika in Koutsoventis, the Enkleistra of Saint Neofytos in Pafos, Agioi Apostoloi in Pera Chorio, Antifonitis and elsewhere. The characteristics of the post-Comnenian art which will also influence the art of the 13th century in Cyprus known as "Maniera Cypria" are detected in the creation of the figures with the big almond eyes and the oblong nose. The icon of Saint John is connected with the first phase of the wall-paintings of Asinou, dating between 1105 and 1106, as it shows essential stylistic similarities with them. On the icon of the Virgin Glykofilousa, only the faces of the Christ and the Virgin are maintained from the phase of the 12th century, while the other parts have been repainted in the 16th century.

The characteristics of the period are particularly obvious in the way with which the face is created, in the expression and the spirituality that the figure breathes, in the arched and oblong nose and in the shades underneath the eyes and lips.

Icons of Christ and Virgin, Church of Panagia tou Araka, Lagoudera, 12th century

Location: Left and right side of the second rhomboid stand

The two big icons originate from the iconostasis of the Church of Panagia tou Araka and are hollowed in the inner part, creating a frame around the central figure. On the icon of Christ, the figures of Saints are depicted in the frame and a dedicatory inscription is also written. When approaching, however, you will see that on the icon of the Virgin the frame is not adorned with figures of Saints but with rhombs and lines. The marks of nails around the head of Jesus emanate

from a metal nimbus, perhaps out of silver or gold, which was not preserved. Initially, the nimbuses and the covers of the icons were made out of precious metal, but after the conquest of Cyprus by the Franks and the awkward economic situation of the Cypriots, the nimbuses were made out of measly materials like plaster, with which they created decorative patterns and they then covered with a leaf of gold, silver or tin. The exterior garment of the Virgin, known as maforion, is decorated with three cruciform stars on the head and shoulders, symbol of her Eternal Virginitly.

The icon of Christ which, as you see, is much better preserved than the one of the Virgin, allows the visitor to distinguish the ability of the artist, who in the case of these icons is believed to be Theodoros Apsevdīs. He is a painter from Constantinople, who signs the wall-paintings in the Enkleistra of Saint Neofytos in Pafos, and to whom are also attributed the wall-paintings of the Church of Panagia tou Araka. On this icon, what is impressive is the use of adversative colorations, cold and warm colours: green-red, red-blue, and metals: silver-gold, which create dynamics and movement, intensified by the calligraphic disposal in the attribution of the hair and beard of Christ. This icon is considered as one of the masterpieces of post-Comnenian art.

Oblong Icons of Christ with Angels and Donors, Saint Eleftherios, Saint Paraskevi from the Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa, Nicosia, 1356 – beginning of 15th Century . Location: Left wall, between the first and second dividing panel

During the 14th century, the contacts with Constantinople are increasing and the Palaeologean art is timidly brought to Cyprus. The three oblong icons, which used to cover the pillars or niches of churches, are characteristic examples of this style. These are commemorative icons, which were made in the memory of the dead, depicted in the lower part of the compositions.

The icon of Christ with Angels and donors, which has the date 1356 on it, is particularly important because it is the only one bearing a date. On the icon, underneath the enthroned Christ, two angels are depicted praying, and further down the donors Manuel and Euphemia Xeros with their dead daughter Maria. This is an icon made in the memory of the dead by her parents. The image of the dead follows the form of the portraits on the gothic burial stones in relief with the absolute frontal depiction of the deceased. The unusual oblong shape of the icon is also to be found in three other icons of the Byzantine Museum, from the Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa in Nicosia. In this Church, dozens of icons had been gathered from many churches of Nicosia that were demolished during the Venetian rule.

The icon is characterized by the modern innovations of the Palaeologean art, which give liveliness and freshness to the composition. The luminous and glossy colours bring out the volume and garment folds, and they softly recreate the bodies of the figures by attributing their psychology with retained sadness. The effort is obvious for attributing the space and the third dimension, like for instance the figure of the enthroned Christ, which is attributed in a three dimensional manner without the depiction of His Throne. The form of the deceased is attributed through the melancholic look with particular assiduity. Her blond hair is decorated with a golden diadem and prependicularia and her neck with a golden cross. She is wearing a dark mantle with golden floral decorations and a luxurious Byzantine orange dress with golden fishes, which shape rhombs and encircling stars. The figure of the deceased Maria reminds similar burial portraits in the Monastery of Chora. The parents of the dead are wearing garments according to the fashion of that time: the mother is wearing a long black mantle which covers the head, a purple headband and a dark red tunic with golden decorations, and the father a black mantle and a purple tunic. Corresponding figures are also to be found on other icons of the Byzantine Museum, such as the Enthroned Virgin from the Church of Panagia Chryssaliniotissa and the fragment

of the oblong icon from the same church, which are exposed in the same room. On both icons, the figure of a young girl standing appears frontally presenting intense similarities with the icon of Maria.

The plasticity of the bodies, the soft folds of the garments of the Christ and angels and the warm colours connect this icon with the also oblong icon of Saint Eleftherios from the Church of Panagia Chryssaliniotissa in Nicosia. The bad restoration that the icon of Saint Eleftherios had suffered in the past does not allow deducting in an absolute way that both works originate from the same workshop. Below Saint Eleftherios young deceased figures are also frontally depicted with their hands in crossways. The icon of Saint Paraskevi was made after the previous icons, and this is explained through its darkest colours. The slender form of the Saint, holding in a medallion in front of her chest the figure of the deceased Christ in the type of "Pieta" is to be identified with the day of Good Friday, and not with Saint Parasceve, the martyr. This is a Cypriot iconographic type corresponding to the iconography of Saint Kyriaki, the personification of the day of Sunday. In the lower part of the icon a deceased figure is also depicted, kneeling in the Supplication position, as he is in Hades together with the dead Christ and prays that the Lord will also resurrect his own soul.

Diptych, Church of Archangel Micheal, Lefkonoiko, 15th -16th century

Location: Second central rhomboid stand

This diptych is one of the few works which survived from the Church of Archangel Michael in the currently Turkish-occupied Lefkonoiko. It was preserved as it had been exposed between 1967 and 1973 in the big international itinerant exhibition "Treasures of Cyprus" and during the turkish invasion of 1974 it was in the Archbishopric. The diptych depicts sixteen scenes from the life of the Virgin and Christ. The iconographical narration begins from the left with the Prayer of the

forefathers Joachim and Anna, the Birth of Virgin Mary, the Presentation of Virgin Mary in the Temple, the Annunciation by the Well, the Birth of Christ, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, the Baptism, the Transfiguration, the Entry of Christ into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, the western type Assumption, the Pentecost, the Dormition of Virgin Mary and the Assumption of Virgin Mary.

Works like this diptych show the ways that the Cypriot Renaissance style developed as this work might have been imported in the island from Venice or any other regions ruled by the Venetians in the 15th century. The strong western elements are the gothic architectural buildings with towers, pointed arches, the one point perspective and others which emanate from the Italian renaissance of the 14th and 15th century.

BILATERAL ICON of the Deposition from the Cross and Panagia Athanasiotissa, Church of Agia Marina, Kalopanagiotis, 1400. Location: On the right of the third central rhomboid stand

The icon of the Deposition from the Cross, dating to the 15th century, is a processional and bilateral one, as on the back side the Virgin Athanasiotissa is depicted, presenting extensive deteriorations. The icon is a characteristic example of the Constantinopolitan art of the Paleologans in Cyprus; however, there are also obvious influences from the western art in secondary matters. In the Paleologean art, the figures are humanized, approaching more towards the classical ideal with the beautiful proportions. The figures are slender and the garments which cover them are attributed with soft colorations showing the shape of the body while the correct placement of the light highlights their volume.

Entry into Jerusalem, Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa, Nicosia, 1546.
Location: third right-wing dividing panel.

The icon of the Entry into Jerusalem, according to the inscription, dates to 1546 and originates from the Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa in Nicosia. It is the established iconography of the subject, but in the case of the icon of the Byzantine Museum, the artist has placed the preliminary drawing vice-versa with the result that the little donkey with Jesus is located on the right of the composition and the town of Jerusalem on the left. The town of Jerusalem is recognized by the circular building in the centre representing the Temple of Salomon. The representation depicts the triumphal entry of Jesus in Jerusalem, seating on a donkey and followed by His disciples. On the left, in front of the walls of Jerusalem, a crowd of Hebrews is depicted welcoming Jesus. Some children on the trees are cutting branches, while some others are laying them on the ground together with their tunics, so that the donkey with the Christ pass above, according to the evangelical reading passage. In the lower part of the icon, the donors are portrayed, a noble family consisting of the parents and their two sons.

Descent into Limbo, Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa-Nicosia, 1563 . Location:
third right- wing dividing panel

On this icon, the Resurrection of the Byzantine type is represented, known as The Descent of Christ into Limbo. The iconography of the representation is based on the Apocryph Gospel of Nicodemus, where is described with many details the Descent of Christ in Hades by the rightful Simeon, who was resurrected together with his two sons.

On this icon, the Christ is depicted in the centre in an elliptic mandorla in front of a big cave. He steps on the broken gates of Hades and he is simultaneously

lifting up Adam and Eve, with both His hands from the open sarcophagi. Behind the forefathers stand the prophets and the righteous. On the left are depicted Saint John the Baptist, Salomon, David and other prophets and Kings from the Old Testament. Lower, in the centre the Devil and Hades are represented enchained. The mandorla of Christ is surrounded by two Angels, out of whom the angel on the right raises the banner of the Resurrection: a white flag with a red cross. At the legs of Jesus next to Adam, the deceased Menoikos Pelecanos is depicted kneeling in the Supplication position, whose family donated the icon in 1563 according to the inscription.

Panagia Odegetria with Angels and Donors, Church of Agios Kassianos- Nicosia, 1529 . Location: fourth right-wing dividing panel

On the icon the Virgin is depicted in the characteristic iconographical type of Hodegetria, holding Christ in her left hand and bringing her right hand in front of her chest. Christ turns his look upon her, blessing and holding a closed scroll. In the corners above the archangels Michael and Gabriel are represented in half-length and with covered hands in the prayer position. The Christ and the Virgin are surrounded by flying cherubim. In a second level in the lower part of the icon, in a green background, a church is depicted that is hold by two Angels. It is a three-aisled church, with a raised central aisle, which has on its eastern side, a high Venetian type tower-like belfry. In the northern side of the Church, the Virgin with Child is represented in the type of Glykofilousa in a blind arch, and underneath the dedicatory inscription of the donor Vavas and his spouse. The couple of the inscription is depicted praying on both sides of the figure of the Virgin, with the characteristic garment of the time. The donors of the icon might also be the donors of a Church of Panagia that has not been preserved to present.

The iconographical type that has been used originates from Italy. It is the Byzantine version of the iconographical theme of "Virgin of Loreto", in which the angels are transporting, in a miraculous way, the residence of the Virgin from Nazareth in Loreto, in Italy.

Icons of the Last Judgment from the Churches of Panagia Phaneromeni in Nicosia and Agioi Anargyroi in Phoini, 16th century.

Location: Southern wall, between the fourth and the fifth left wing dividing panel

The representation of the Last Judgment is organised around the diagonal axis that is formed by the fiery river, which leads to Hell. Above and in the centre Jesus is depicted as Judge, framed by Saint John the Baptist and the Virgin, the apostles and an army of angels. At his legs, the symbols of the Evangelists and the dead are depicted expecting the time of Judgment. Further below, the Preparation of the throne and the righteous are represented. To the right is Archangel Michael, who raises his sword threatening a group of persons; the remaining part is covered by Hell, with the depictions of the Earth, the Sea, the Heaven, the torture of the sinners and the demersal Dragon. To the left, lies the Paradise with Peter the Apostle, being in front of the gate and keeping the keys of Paradise, followed by the righteous. In Paradise, the Virgin is represented in a throne between the Angels, Abraham having in his legs the poor Lazarus and other righteous people, and to the left, the good robber is depicted holding his cross. At the legs of the Virgin is the donor of the icon, the dedicator arch-priest Maximos. Underneath Paradise, its four rivers are represented, while in the level below is the parable of the rich being burned in hell and asking from Abraham to send him some water with the poor Lazarus. To the left, there is a couple that sleeps on Sunday being seized by the devils. In the last level the souls of the damned in hell are depicted, in five chromatically different panels. On these icons, the astonishing combination of colours is impressive, as well as the various western elements, such as the efforts for the attribution of the third

dimension and the anatomy of the body. They strongly remind the influence from the art of Renaissance, with which Cyprus was in contact. In similar way, the representation of the Last Judgment is also structured from the Church of Panagia Phaneromeni in Nicosia. On this icon, what impresses is the depiction of Hell as a Venetian Castle with explicit political messages for the enslaved Cypriots, in the lower part to the right.

Dormition of the Virgin, Church of Archangel Michael Trypiotis - Nicosia, 16th century
Location: fourth left-wing dividing panel (?)

On this icon are depicted the Dormition of the Virgin, the episode of Jephonias and the arrival of the Apostles in cloud. In the central part is the Virgin in her death-bed, Christ is holding her soul in the form of swaddled baby, surrounded by the aura and the angels, the Apostles, the Prelates and the faithful. The episode of Jephonias is represented on the first level with the Archangel Michael, who has cut the hands of the sacrilegious that tried to reverse the bed. Higher, are depicted the Apostles arriving in clouds from the uttermost parts of the world, as well as the Assumption of the Virgin. The donor of the icon is a young man wearing Venetian garments and is represented kneeling on the first level, next to the episode of Jephonias. The astonishing building in the triangular shape at the background, which reminds the Rialto Bridge in Venice, the attribution of the icon's perspective, the bright colours, the naturalistic attribution of the figures and the soft folds of their garments make this work one of the most characteristic examples of Cypriot Renaissance style that flourishes on the island during the Venetian rule.

Saint Nicholas, Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa- Nicosia, 16th century

Location: fifth left-wing dividing panel

The Saint is represented in a strictly frontal position in the golden background, as a dimidiate old man with rounded beard, bald, with intense cheek-bones according to his established iconography, as we know it from the "Interpretation of the Painting Art" of Dionysios from Fourni. The iconographical type of the icon follows the model which was established in the Cretan painting of the 15th century, known through the works of the painter Ritzos. Saint Nicholas is depicted blessing with his right hand in front of his chest, and holding with his left hand underneath the tabard, a closed Gospel with cover. The thickness of the pages of the Gospel is purple, while the cover is oyster-white and is decorated with precious stones and golden lines. The Saint is wearing his Episcopal vestments: a red Phelonion (chasuble), a dark ultramarine Sticharion (rochet), distinguished by the opening in the neck, golden sleeves with crosses and an ash-white omophorion, the feature of episcopal ranking, which is adorned with large black crosses filled with golden colour. On both sides of the Saint's head, the Christ and Virgin with engraved aureole are depicted in a smaller scale, in the golden background, half-length, looking towards the Saint, offering him the symbols of his episcopal position. The Virgin, dressed with a purple maphorion, is offering to the Saint an open ash-coloured Omophorion with three golden crosses, her hands covered under her garment. The Christ is portrayed to the right of the Saint, wearing a purple himation (pallium) and an ochre tunic, enlightened with golden gleams. With his left hand, he holds a closed scroll, while with his right hand stretched towards Saint Nicholas he offers him a closed Gospel.

The careful geometrical precision of the golden gleams of the vestments, the representation of volumes of the face through the harmonious unification of nuances and the technical adequacy, so much for the painting execution, as for the manufacture of the icon, are pleading for the icon's attribution to a Cretan workshop of the 16th century, which imitates the works of Andreas Ritzos.

In the lower part of the icon, the donors are depicted, the parents and their son, with their hands together, in the position of prayer. The males on the left, wear wide-rounded hats and black coats, and the mother on the right side of the icon holds a Rosario and has the head covered with a white knitted headband and a transparent white veil on it. The female donor wears a black large dress with wide opening in front of the chest, which is covered with a white transparent garment, according to the fashion of the first half of the 16th century.

The Annunciation of the Virgin, Church of Panagia Phaneromeni-Nicosia, beginning of the 17th century, work of Emmanuel Tzanfournari

Location: Southern wall after the fifth left-wing dividing panel

The Annunciation of the Virgin is a work of the painter Emmanuel Tzanfournaris, around 1570-1631, from Corfu, who lived and worked in Venice. The great number of Tzanfournaris' icons that have been detected in Cyprus, and the fact that he was married to a Cypriot, leads to the conclusion that the artist from Corfu has worked for some time in Cyprus, mainly in the town of Larnaka, from where originated the family of his wife. The work dates to the first decades of the 17th century, a period during which he was not in Venice, as confirmed by the archival data. The work of Tzanfournaris managed to partly cover the artistic void that had been created, because of the desolation of the island from artists, during the first fifty years after the Ottoman conquest, by renewing the post Byzantine painting of Cyprus with elements of modern Cretan painting.

The iconography of the Annunciation of the Virgin follows an old model that is repeated during the 16th century in Peribleptos in Mystra, in the Koutloumousion Monastery in Mount Athos and elsewhere. The Virgin is depicted in the Supplication position, with both hands raised up to the breast's level, and in an open book that is in front of her is written I DO NOT KNOW PLEASURE

THEREFORE DO NOT TEMPT ME WITH TREACHERY which emanates from the vespers of March 25th. The representation of the open book in the Annunciation is a characteristic western element, like for instance in the Annunciation of Florence of Leonardo Da Vinci. Between the painting of Da Vinci and the icon of Tzanfournaris, there are iconographical similarities, as for example the depiction of the lectern, the posture of the Virgin and the representation of the garden in the background.

The art of Tzanfournaris presents iconographical affinity with that of his teacher Markos Mpathas, and through him with the great Cretan painter Michael Damaskinos. The common characteristic of Tzanfournaris with these artists is the way of introducing and using the Italian naturalistic elements, like for instance the soft folds, the attribution of perspective, the decoration of pieces of architecture and furniture, and other. Despite of these, some drawing weaknesses are detected on the icon, particularly in the attribution of Virgin's legs.

The iconographical model of the icon of the Annunciation is most likely the mosaic representation of the Annunciation in the Church of Saint George of the Greeks in Venice.

Communion of the Apostles from the Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa-Nicosia, end of the 15th century Location: right side of the third central rhomboid stand

In the centre of a room, the enthroned Jesus is depicted behind a holy altar blessing His disciples to the right and left. The calling of the Apostles is stressed with two golden inscriptions that begin from the mouth of Christ and end up in front of the mouth of the Protapostles (Peter and Paul). In the lower corners of the icon coats of arms are depicted with an rampant lion bearing a cross.

Between the two coats of arms the following inscription is written: "SUPPLICATION OF THE SLAVE OF GOD DANIEL, SON OF THE DECEASED BISHOP PETROS, ABBOT OF AMATHOUS". In the post Byzantine art, the iconographical subject of the Communion of the Apostles accepted many influences from the forced cohabitation with heterodox in the Venetian occupied orthodox places: Cyprus, Crete, Aegean, Ionian and elsewhere. In Cyprus, the Communion of the Apostles was depicted in the arches of the Churches, mainly during the Venetian rule, following the type of the double representation of Christ.

The "one point perspective", the garments folds, the intense colorations, the physiognomic similarities of certain figures, the good use of different artistic properties, from the Renaissance and the Byzantines, connect the icon of the Byzantine Museum with the 1502 exactly dated, Italo-Byzantine wall painting of the Communion of the Apostles in Panagia tis Podithou in Galata. The slender figures of the icon compared to the podgiest figures of Podithou, as well as the 1494 dated wall painting of the Communion of the Apostles in Timios Stavros tou Agiasmati, which most probably was influenced by the icon of the Byzantine Museum, are pleading for dating the icon in the last quarter of the 15th century. Unfortunately, the other elements that the icon offers, such as the inscription with the unknown bishop Petros, abbot "of Amathous", and the unidentified coat of arm with the rampant lion bearing a cross, classifying the icon in the Venetian rule due to its renaissance frame, do not give up to present any specific element for a more precise chronology.

Enthroned Virgin between Saints Nicholas and George, Church of Agios Georgios-Vatyli, 16th-17th century . Location: Left side of the third central rhomboid panel

The pillages and slaughters that followed the complete conquest of Cyprus in 1571 by the Ottomans, forced many Cypriot artists and scholars likewise to

abandon the island. At the same period, the forwarding of icons in Cyprus is observed from Crete, the Ionian islands and Venice, like the icon that you are looking at which was made in Venice.

The icon depicts the Virgin and Child in the throne between the Saints George and Nicholas, in the western iconographical type of the Holy Conversation (= SACRA CONVERSATIONE). The donor of the icon is Protopapas Georgios, main priest of the Church of Saint George of the Greeks in Venice, who emigrated there with his family from Cyprus. According to the inscription in an open book between the donors, in the lower part of the icon are depicted apart from Protopapas Georgios, his wife Achelou and his son Aloizios, his brother Frangiskos with his sister-in-law Florentza and his nephew Georgios.

The icon was made in two different phases. The first one, during the 16th century by a post- Byzantine artist painter, close to the style of Michael Damaskinos, and the second one, during the first decades of the 17th century by an artist who paints according to the Italian Renaissance style of the time. The icon has been forwarded after 1604, the date of death of the last mentioned person in the book of donors in the Turkish occupied village of Vatyli.

Wall paintings from Agios Nicolaos tis Stegis- Kakopetria, 14th century.

Location: On the right of the third central rhomboid panel

The detached wall paintings of the apse and the eastern vault of Agios Nicolaos tis Stegis in Kakopetria, belong to the Palaeologean phase of the church and date to the 14th century. When the wall paintings needed to be detached due to humidity problems, a previous layer of wall paintings was revealed underneath, dating to the 11th century. Therefore, the detached wall paintings were

transported in the Byzantine Museum, where they are on permanent display in a specially shaped space.

The wall paintings depict in the semi dome of the apse the Virgin standing in the position of Supplication between the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. On the left side of the vault the Ascension is depicted, and on the right the Pentecost.

In the Ascension, the Christ, who is represented with garments shining from light, rises up to the sky in an elliptic mandorla being hold by four angels. The Apostles are on the ground in two groups around the Virgin. The two olive trees on both sides of the Virgin imply the Mount of Olives.

The representation of the Pentecost takes place in a gallery, where the Disciples of Christ were staying. The disciples are depicted seating on a synthronon, a semi-circular bench with footrest. At the top of the semi-circle the First Apostles Peter and Paul are portrayed. The two rows are supplemented with two disciples, young in age. They are all calm with a sweet expression and a contemplating look and are holding scrolls or books. Between the First Apostles, a vacant seat is distinguished. It is the place for the Christ, the divine head of the Church, which is represented by the Pentecost. In the upper part, the sky is depicted with a segment of a circle. Through this two beams of rays are emitted in a total of twelve, going down towards the Apostles. In the semi-circular vacuum underneath the centre of the synthronon, the figure of an old man is depicted with a crown on his head, rounded beard, holding in his hand a bed sheet with twelve scrolls. The old man represents the World and the twelve scrolls he is holding represent the Universe, where the Word of God will be preached by the Apostles.

HALL 2

EXHIBITION OF ROYAL DOORS

Location: To the right and left of the entrance

A group of royal doors from the 16th until the 20th century present the evolution of wood-carving art from the end of the Venetian rule until the British domination in Cyprus. During the Ottoman rule although the painting of the island is gradually demoted because of the lack of good painters and contacts with the great artistic centres, the wood-carving art is flourishing and is being influenced by elements of the Turkish-baroque and the Ottoman sculpture, such as the decorative pattern of trellis that is introduced during this period. The royal door is the name of the small door constituted from two door shields closing the Entrance to the Holy Bema, and usually has the depiction of the Annunciation of the Virgin. The first Royal Door from the left originating from the Church of Metamorphosis in Kato Moni, belongs to the characteristic style of royal doors of the end of the Venetian rule that will prevail up to the end of the 17th century. Its door shields are shaping a high pointed arc with two-foiled canted ending of the post-gothic type, which is crowned by a medallion with the Holy Handkerchief.

The arc's frame, the medallion and the panels in the lower zone of the Royal doors are adorned with a plant spear, which is attributed in relief and in a flimsy technique, a characteristic example of the woodcarving of the Venetian rule in Cyprus (1489-1571).

The shape of the royal doors with the characteristic pointed arc, the iconographical order and the large diverting plant branches in the arc's frame is to be found in windows so much in Venice as in the Venetian occupied Greek regions during the 15th and 16th century. In the upper zone of the royal gates, the Annunciation of the Virgin is depicted and in the lower one the three Prelates

with Saint Nicholas. A similar decoration is to be found on the royal door of Pavlos Ierographos, dated to 1659 and on the royal door of the 17th century that was repainted during the 19th century.

During the 19th century, the royal doors are representing one more row of prelates, increasing their number in eight, decreasing, however, their height by half. Characteristic examples are the royal door of 1852 and the royal door which was repatriated from Germany in 2008, originating from the Church of Agios Therapon in the Turkish-occupied Agkastina. Another Royal Door belonging to the same period and style originates from the Archbishopric and is decorated with trellis. The royal door, which was also repatriated from Germany in 2009, originating from the Church of the Archangels in the Turkish-occupied village of Pigi in Ammochostos, represents in full length the Archangels Michael and Gabriel on the entire surface of the door shields and diverting plant branches in the arc's frame. Similar royal doors with full-length figures but without wood carved decoration are those with the Apostles Peter and Paul, dating to the 16th -17th century.

Icon of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, Church of Agios Kassianos-Nicosia, 16th century Location: First dividing panel, to the left

Jesus dressed in white, is represented in the centre giving his blessing on the Mount Tabor flanked with the Prophets Elias and Moses. He is surrounded by a round blue mandorla with golden rays emitted by its centre. In the Mount's roots, kneeling Peter is addressing to Jesus, while the brothers Jacob and John are falling terrified, in prostration, in opposite directions.

Of particular interest is the depiction of the donor, in a small inlaid at the legs of Prophet Elias, kneeling in prayer in her room.

Icon of Saint John the Baptist, Holy Archbishopric, 18th century

Location: To the right and left of the entrance

Saint John the Baptist is portrayed winged and en-face, blessing and holding a stick with a cross and a scroll with the inscription REPENT FOR THE TIME OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS NEAR. In a small tree, on the first level to the left, a pickaxe is laid and to the right the head of decapitated John is depicted in a basin in the iconographical type of the Ablation. According to the inscription in the frame, written in red majestic letters, in the lower part of the icon, the icon has been donated by the nun Katelou.

The iconographical type of Saint John the Baptist is repeating a Palaeologean model that was established by the Cretan School with changes in the representation of the head: sometimes it lies on the ground, sometimes it is in the hand of the Baptist as a head-bearer and sometimes it is not depicted at all.

The icon of the Byzantine Museum presents resemblances with the School of Dionysios of Fourná in Mount Athos, who is representing the 18th century movement for returning to the style of the "Macedonian School" of the 14th century. The painter of the icon seems either to know very well the way with which Dionysios works, or to use his preliminary drawings. On the icon are to be found the characteristics of Dionysios' painting work, such as the wide creation of the faces and the garments folds, as well as the effort for the attribution of volumes. So much the stylistic elements of the icon, as the presence on the island at the same time of the monk Matthaïos Koutloumousianos from the Mount Athos (1714, 1730 and 1735) are pleading for the attribution of this icon to a Mount Athos' workshop of the first half of the 18th century.

Fragments from the mosaic representation of the apse of Panagia Kanakaria-Lythrangomi, 6th century

The mosaics of Panagia Kanakaria belong to the early Byzantine period of the 4th -7th century. Mural mosaics of the early Byzantine period were saved up to 1974 in three apses of Cyprus: in the Churches of Panagia Kanakaria in Lythrangomi, Panagia Kyra in Livadia village in Ammochostos district and Panagia Angeloktisti in Kiti. Another badly damaged mosaic was found in one of the small conches of the northern chapel of Kourion Basilica, and is exposed detached in the Museum of Episcopi. Sadly, the mosaic of Panagia Kyra was removed by Turkish smugglers after 1974 and is missing. The representation of Panagia Kanakaria had the same sort, but fortunately several fragments have been repatriated and are exposed in the Byzantine Museum, while others have been confiscated in Germany and will be returned after the trial of the case. However, a small number of fragments have been sold regrettably to private individuals and are missing. The only mosaic representation that has been saved in an apse, in Cyprus, is that of the Church of Panagia Angeloktisti situated in Kiti in the district of Larnaka.

On the representation that existed in the apse of the Church of Panagia Kanakaria in Lythrangomi before 1974, the Virgin was depicted seating on a lyre-shaped throne, holding the young Christ in her lap. The Virgin and Christ were surrounded by a luminous mandorla, a characteristic of divinity, stressing the name of the Virgin as Mother of God and not as Mother of Christ, as the Monophysites called her. That is to say, the dogma is highlighted, as it was established by the THIRD and the FOURTH Ecumenical Council on the two natures of Christ, the Divine and the Human.

The early-Byzantine mosaic representation of the apse of Panagia Kanakaria in Lythrangomi was incorporated and saved up to 1974, in the later phase of the

Church of the 12th century. During the period of Iconoclasm, the mosaic representation appears to be covered with mortar that was revealed in the 20th century. It is the oldest mosaic representation of an apse in Cyprus, which survived on the spot. After the Turkish invasion of 1974, the mosaics were removed by Turkish smugglers as it was proved through court fights in the United States and were illegally exported.

In the conch of the apse, the enthroned Virgin with Christ was depicted flanked by archangels. The subject underlines the dogma of the divine Incarnation and at the same time belauds the figure of the Virgin represented with Christ in a mandorla. In a broad decorative band with an acanthus meander around the composition, thirteen medallions with the busts of the twelve apostles and Christ or a cross were registered. Similar zones with the figures of the Apostles are located in Saint Vitale of Ravenna and in Saint Catherine in Sinai.

Stylistically speaking, the mosaic is between the classicized trend, like for instance in Saint David in Thessaloniki of the end of the 5th century, and the trend for symmetry and strict moulding, like for example in Saint Catherine in Sinai, between 548 and 565. The representation of Kanakaria has been connected with the reconstruction of Salamina after 526 and 527 and has been dated to the first years of the rule of Justinian, between 527 and 565.

The destruction of the mosaic and the repatriation of one of its pieces:

The mosaics were exported from Cyprus by the Turkish smuggler Aydin Dikmen, who removed them with the collaboration of the Turkish occupation army and sold them abroad. In 1985, through the mediation of an art dealer in London, the mosaics of the Apostles Lucas and Bartholomew were brought back to Cyprus. In 1988, the American collector Peg Goldberg bought in Switzerland with the

intervention of a Dutch collector and an American lawyer four fragments of Kanakaria's mosaics from Aydin Dikmen who was presented as their "legal holder" for one million dollars,. She intended to sell them in USA for the sum of twenty million dollars and to give a predetermined commission from the income of the sale to the others, who participated in the transaction. In USA, Goldberg tried to sell the mosaics to Paul Getty Museum in Malibu; the director of the museum, however, informed the Cypriot Authorities. In 1991, following two years of trials, the Federal Court of Indianapolis returned to the Cypriot Authorities the upper half of Christ, the head and part of the chest of Archangel Michael and the medallions with the Apostles Matthew and James in a sordid condition. In 1997, the medallion with the figure of Apostle Thaddeus was repatriated from Germany. The medallion with the figure of Apostle Thomas, the hand of Archangel Michael and the left palm of the Virgin were also found in the possession of the Turkish smuggler in Munich, Germany, and they have not been repatriated yet. The medallions with the figures of Apostles Andrew and Mark and the lower part of Christ are still missing. On display in the museum now are the fragments of the mosaics which were found on the floor of the church following the pillage, the Christ, the Archangel Michael and medallions of the Apostles Matthew, Bartholomew, Luke, Thaddeus and James.

SEMI-CIRCULAR SHOWCASE: Exhibition for the 2000 years of the Church of Cyprus:

The exhibition for the 2000 years of the Church of Cyprus was organised in 1995, on the occasion of the celebrations of Nicosia as European Cultural Capital for September. Here, are presented Episcopal vestments and ecclesiastical utensils, such as Archiepiscopal mitres, Chalices, Patens, crosses, flabella (liturgical fans), censers and other, as well as Gospels with silver gilded covers, embroidered Epitaphs, wood carved crosses and icons, testifying the long history of the Autocephalus Church of Cyprus. The metal Cross from the Church of Saint George at Gourri, is distinguished among the exhibits, dating to the 10th and

11th century. Today, only one medallion is saved at the crossing of the arms of the cross depicting Christ Pantocrator in relief. Another two medallions with the figures perhaps of the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist existed at the edges of the horizontal arm of Christ. High, above, on the vertical arm there is a figure of an angel. A significant example of silversmith and goldsmith during the Venetian Rule is the Holy Chalice from the church of Agios Savvas in Nicosia, which according to the inscription was made in 1501 for the now unknown Monastery of Agios Mamas in Nicosia that is known from written sources.

REPATRIATED WALL PAINTINGS:

In 1997 36 fragments of wall paintings were repatriated which had been stolen from the Katholikon of the Monastery of Antifonitis in Kalograia and had been transported illegally in Munich, Germany by the Turkish smuggler Aydin Dikmen. The same year, the German Police in collaboration with Interpol detected another 300 works of art (wall paintings, mosaics, icons and manuscripts from 50 different churches). The accompanying photographs depict the wall paintings of the Last Judgment and the Stem of Jesse, dating to the 16th century, as they were before the Turkish invasion of 1974, and as they are today after their illegal removal and exportation abroad. On the photograph of the representation of the Stem of Jesse, the fragments that were repatriated are outlined in yellow. The repatriated fragments of the wall paintings are on display in the wooden showcases covered with glass, as they were brought from abroad. When all the fragments will be repatriated from Germany, an effort will be made to restore these two wall paintings.

Permanent exhibition "Hostages in Germany" in the basement exhibition area:

After the occupation of the northern part of Cyprus by Turkey in the summer of 1974, an unusual systematic pillage and destruction of the cultural heritage of the

island, of the archaeological and religious sites began, as well as the theft of every outstanding form of art from prehistoric period up to modern art.

Over 500 churches were looted, destroyed and used for impious goals. The holy places of other dogmas, such as the Maronites, the Armenians, the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, did not even escape from this systematic destruction. The photographic material of the exhibition consists of the icons, the wall paintings, the manuscripts and the mosaics that were found in the apartments of the famous Turkish smuggler of antiquities Aydin Dikmen in Munich, where they were confiscated by the German Authorities following a swoop of Interpol and the German Police, in 1997.

The hearing processes of a case are time-consuming, as the German Court, to which the case was brought, predicated in 2004, that the probative elements that were deposited before the Court were not enough for proving the Cypriot origin of the works in question. The Court was convinced that 169 excluded objects are Cypriot, but today they are still in hostage in the basements of the German Police's Headquarter.

Our confiscated treasures originate from fifty different churches in the Turkish-occupied northern part of the island. In the exhibition photographic material from all the churches is presented, as it was before and after the pillage showing the size of destruction.

The presentation of the big smuggling case by the Turk Aydin Dikmen aims in reminding all that more than twenty thousand works of Christian art of our

country have been stolen and sold illegally by smugglers all over the world and are illegally decorating collections of private individuals.

ICONOSTASIS OF AGIOS NIKOLAOS TIS STEGIS

The iconostasis in two levels is a faithful copy of the iconostasis of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis, in Kakopetria and is made out of oak. The manufacture does not include the royal doors that were located in the Holy Archbishopric, the Crucified Christ, the Lypera, and the icons of Dodekaorton, which existed in the Museum. Two adjacent wood carved pillars were also made apart from the exhibit model on both sides of the iconostasis, in order to support and implement the new iconostasis in the area. On the upper part of the iconostasis, the Cross and Lypera were added, that is to say the figures of the Virgin and Saint John the Evangelist mourning, and underneath the icons of Dodekaorton. The icon of Saint John the Evangelist in the zone below belongs to a painter of the 17th century. All remaining icons, the royal door and the Cross are dated in 1627 and are signed by the painter Pavlos Ierografos, the most significant and most productive painter of the 17th century in Cyprus.