

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: MONUMENTS OF A SYNCRETIC SOCIETY
WALL PAINTING IN THE LATIN LORDSHIP OF
ATHENS, GREECE (1204 – 1311)

Monika Hirschbichler, Doctor of Philosophy, 2005

Dissertation directed by: Professor Sharon Gerstel
Department of Art History and Archaeology
University of Maryland

This dissertation focuses on wall painting in the thirteenth-century lordship of Athens, an area roughly corresponding to modern-day Attica, Boeotia and the Argolid in southern Greece. The lordship was established as part of the Latin Principality of Morea in 1205 when, in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade, Frankish forces moved outward from the fallen city of Constantinople to conquer former Byzantine lands. More than twenty monuments painted in the region during the thirteenth- and the first decade of the fourteenth century still preserve all or part of their original decoration. Notwithstanding the informative potential of such an extensive body of evidence, there has been no systematic investigation of the decorative programs in light of the particular socio-cultural conditions of Latin Greece. The present study is intended to fill this gap and begins by outlining the scope of artistic production in the lordship in the years between 1204 and 1311. Addressing Greek- and Latin-sponsored religious and secular programs, the murals

are examined in the context of their multicultural setting. Particular attention is given to social, religious and political ideas as well as to artistic practices that found their way into the art of the period as a result of the socio-cultural environment created by the historical circumstances. Highlighting issues such as Church union, liturgical practice and cultural identity as they are reflected in the paintings, the study attempts to add clarity to the modes of cultural interaction in Frankish Greece. Thus evaluated, the murals disclose a striking range of opinions and responses. They bring to light religious boundaries and reveal attempts at cultural and political re-definition, but they also display points of convergence and mutual recognition. Combined, the painted programs in the Latin lordship of Athens are physical testimonies of a syncretic society whose multicultural factions lived, if not in a state of completely peaceful agreement, at least in a state of pragmatic tolerance.

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(1204-1311)

by

Monika Hirschbichler

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Advisory Committee:

Professor Sharon Gerstel, Chair
Professor Meredith Gill
Professor George Majeska
Professor Steven Mansbach
Professor Sally Promey
Professor Daniel Weiss

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Für Mama und Papa

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AHR</i>	American Historical Review
<i>ABME</i>	Archeion Byzantinōn Mnēmeiōn tēs Hellados
<i>AI</i>	Ars Islamica
<i>ArtB</i>	Art Bulletin
<i>AM</i>	Arte Medievale
<i>BM</i>	Burlington Magazine
<i>BMGS</i>	Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
<i>BSA</i>	Annual of the British School of Athens
<i>BSCA</i>	Byzantine Studies Conference Abstracts
<i>BZ</i>	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
<i>CA</i>	Cahiers archéologiques
<i>DChAE</i>	Deltion tēs Christianikēs Archaeologikēs Hetaireias
<i>DOP</i>	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
<i>EO</i>	Échos d'Orient
<i>EEBS</i>	Hepetēris Hetaireias Byzantinōn Spoudōn
<i>JHS</i>	Journal of Hellenic Studies
<i>JDAI</i>	Jahrbuch des deutschen archaeologischen Instituts
<i>JMedHist</i>	Journal of Medieval History
<i>JMGS</i>	Journal of Modern Greek Studies
<i>JÖB</i>	Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik
<i>JWCI</i>	Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes
<i>MHR</i>	Mediterranean Historical Review
<i>REB</i>	Revue des etudes Byzantines
<i>ROL</i>	Revue de l'Orient latin

INTRODUCTION

The thirteenth century was for Greece a time of conquest and adjustment. It was at this time, in the wake of the Latin conquest of Constantinople that French aristocrats settled in the region as governors over the local Orthodox population. With the replacement of the traditional Byzantine administration by the government of a Frankish invading force, parts of Greece were incorporated into the Crusader states. As had happened during the formation of the first Crusader territories in the Levant, military conquest was followed by cultural interaction and cross-fertilization. To what extent these relations affected socio-cultural patterns in the region remains a matter of scholarly debate. Traditionally, historians have turned to the investigation of written sources in their search for evidence of cultural contact.¹ In the realm of archaeology research has focused on the many remaining buildings from the period in order to discuss the influence of Western construction techniques and aesthetics on Greek masons and to examine issues of

¹ Aneta Ilieva, *Frankish Morea: 1205-1262: Socio-Cultural Interaction Between the Franks and the Local Population* (Athens: Historical Publications St. D. Basilopoulos, 1991). David Jacoby, "The Encounter of Two Societies: Western Conquerors and Byzantines in the Peloponnesus after the Fourth Crusade," *AHR*, no. 78 (1973): 873-906. David Jacoby, "Knightly Values and Class Consciousness in the Crusader States of the Eastern Mediterranean," *MHR* I, no. 2 (1986): 158-86. Jeannine Horowitz, "Quand les champenois parlaient le grec: la Morée Franque au XIIIe siècle, un bouillon de culture," in *Cross Cultural Convergences in the Crusader Period: Essays Presented to Aryeh Grabois on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Michael Goodich, Sophia Menache, and Sylvia Schein (New York: P. Lang, 1995), 111-50.

influence and hybridity.² To date, however, few scholars have investigated the evidence supplied by monumental painting; a neglect that belies the abundant number of monuments that testifies to the continuation and even proliferation of artistic activity under Latin dominion. In Attica, Boeotia and the Argolid alone, more than twenty churches received painted decoration at the time when the area was united under the sovereignty of the Frankish lords of Athens. Established by Othon de la Roche in 1204, the lordship of Athens remained under the control of the same family until the death of Guy II de la Roche in 1308. Guy's half brother Gautier I de Brienne continued the legacy until 1311 when the devastating defeat of the Frankish army by the Catalan Grand Company at Halmyros set an abrupt end to his life and to Frankish dominion over the region.³ Until this point, the lordship of Athens had enjoyed relative, if not uninterrupted, peace and comparative political unity generating an environment that seems to have fostered the construction and decoration of churches at a level unmatched by any of the other Latin-held territories in Greece. As public art that holds the potential for political and social commentary easily recognized by its viewers, the murals of Latin-occupied Greece are a measure of interaction and reaction. Even in the absence of any deliberate message related to the contemporary environment, the patterns of distribution and methods of production can tell much about the conditions under which the murals were

² The most extensive study on the subject remains Antoine Bon, *La Morée Franque; recherches historiques, topographiques et archéologiques sur la Principauté d'Achaïe (1205-1430)* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1969).

³ For discussions of the battle at Halmyros on March 15, 1311 and its devastating effects on the Frankish nobility in Greece see: Peter Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean, 1204-1500* (London; New York: Longman, 1995), 104-7. William Miller, *The Latins in the Levant: A History of Frankish Greece, 1204-1566* (New York: AMS Press, 1979), 226-32.

executed. As elements of daily life, the paintings bring to light points of contact and individualized response that were never deemed important enough for official record keeping. This makes their study valuable to any effort of creating an integrated and balanced picture of an illusive period of history when French was spoken in the palaces of Athens and Thebes.

Notwithstanding the informative potential of such an extensive body of evidence, there has been no systematic investigation of the decorated monuments in light of the particular socio-cultural conditions of Latin-Greece. The present study will begin by presenting a list of monuments decorated in the lordship of Athens in the years between 1204 and 1311 in the effort to illuminate the scope of artistic production in Frankish Greece. Subsequently, the paintings will be examined in light of their Crusader heritage. Particular attention will be given to social, religious and political ideas as well as to artistic practices that found their way into the art of the period as a result of the socio-cultural environment created by the historical circumstances. The goal of this investigation is to add clarity to the modes of cultural interaction in Frankish Greece by introducing a heretofore untapped body of evidence; painted witnesses to the meeting of two cultures.

THE LORDSHIP OF ATHENS: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

But what can I say? The barbarians have outdistanced my narration, flying faster than the quill of my history, and there is no adversary to repulse them. Despoiling Thebes, subduing Athens, and trampling on Euboia, they proceed on their way. More like winged and aerial creatures rather than land forces, flying ahead of my history, they advanced toward the Isthmus...made their way to Corinth ... proceeded to Argos ... and next attacked Achaia...⁴

- Nicetas Choniates

The Frankish conquest of Greece dramatically narrated in this passage by Niketas Choniates was indeed a swift one. Following the fall of Constantinople in 1204, Boniface of Monferat († 1207) set out to claim the territories allotted to him by the newly elected Latin Emperor of Constantinople, Baldwin IX of Flanders (1204-1205).⁵ In 1205 Boniface de Montferrat, who by then had become King of Salonica, moved to conquer the cities of Athens and Thebes. Physically devastated and economically exhausted from recent struggles with Leo Sgouros (d. 1208), a local magnate who had sought to expand

⁴ Nicetas Choniātēs, *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniātēs*, trans. Harry J. Magoulias (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 334-35.

⁵ Originally, Boniface had been offered lands in Anatolia in compensation for his loss in the imperial election. Seeking to exploit the political strength of family bonds, he exchanged the grant for the Kingdom of Salonica which was geographically closer to the realm of his brother in law, the King of Hungary. Harold E. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors: The Chronicle of Morea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 95-96n. 66. Much of the land later conquered by Boniface had actually been allotted to the Venetians. On the division of the former Byzantine empire see: Bon, *Morée Franque*, 52-54.

his territories in the wake of the administrative void left by the capture of the City, the towns had offered no resistance to the renewed onslaught.⁶ Boniface bestowed Athens with its surrounding territories upon Othon de la Roche, his companion in arms.⁷ The son of a Burgundian noble, Othon had taken part in the siege at Constantinople of 1203 and had been closely involved in the political maneuvering following its capture.⁸ Later Othon would be known as the lord of Athens and half of Thebes. The exact circumstances surrounding the addition of Thebes to the realm of Othon are somewhat unclear. It appears that the territory had originally been awarded to the Lombard noble Albertino da Canossa and his brother Rolandino.⁹ After the death of Boniface de Montferrat, the brothers joined a revolt against the Emperor Henry (1206-1216) intended to sever the

⁶ Sgouros never captured Athens, but he burned and looted the lower town in his effort to capture the stronghold of the Acropolis. When the Latins moved into southern Greece in 1204 his holdings reached from the Pass of Thermopylae to the Argolid including the cities of Nauplia, Argos, and Corinth, which he and his successor managed to hold until 1210-1212. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 4-5; Bon, *Morée Franque*, 54-55; Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204-1571*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1976), 22-23. On Sgouros's siege of Athens see: Choniates, *O city of Byzantium*, 332-33.

⁷ Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, 34-35. For a more complete picture of the division of land under Boniface see: Jean Longnon, *L'empire latin de Constantinople et la principauté de Morée* (Paris: Payot, 1949), 75-76; Carl H. F. J. Hopf, *Geschichte Griechenlands vom Beginn des Mittelalters bis auf unsere Zeit*, 2 vols., vol. I (New York: B. Franklin, 1960), 210-11; Bon, *Morée Franque*, 55-56.

⁸ Othon had proven loyal to Boniface de Montferrat throughout the latter's political differences with the Latin Emperor of Constantinople Baldwin I and had secured peace between the two parties by arranging the marriage of the Emperor's brother and successor to Montferrat's daughter. William Miller, *Essays on the Latin Orient* (Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1964), 110-11; Bon, *Morée Franque*, 55-56; Setton, *The Papacy*, 405; Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, 34-35.

⁹ Bon, *Morée Franque*, 68; Setton, *The Papacy*, 28.

feudal bonds between the Kingdom of Salonica and the Latin rulers in Constantinople.¹⁰ Early in 1209 Henry confronted his opponents in Thessaloniki. Having successfully silenced his adversary Umberto II de Biandrate, Henry traveled south to reassert his suzerainty over the region. The population of Thebes greeted its emperor with enthusiastic fervor; an ardor not shared by its sibling lords who refused to yield their stronghold of Cadmea. Yet generous terms for surrender and a display of military resolve soon dissuaded the determination of the Lombards.¹¹ They were allowed to keep their fiefs as Henry's vassals but had to surrender the keys to the Cadmea. It might have been at this point that Othon received Thebes from the emperor.¹² Antoine Bon, following an earlier study by Jean Longnon asserts that it was not until 1211, after Albertino da Canossa had left Greece, that Othon received Thebes to share with his nephew and successor Guy I de la Roche.¹³ With Thebes Othon had obtained the most important hub for trade in the

¹⁰ The revolt was led by Umberto II de Biandrate who had been appointed guardian of Boniface's infant son Demetrius. Despite his responsibility to care for the young heir, Umberto favored Demetrius's half brother, Guglielmo IV of Montferrat whom he wanted to see elevated to the vacant throne of Thessaloniki. Setton, *Papacy*, 27; Miller, *Latins*, 73-74; Lock, *The Franks*, 58-59.

¹¹ Setton, *The Papacy*, 28-29; Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, 73-74; Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 59.

¹² According to Setton, Othon might already have been lord of Boeotia at that time. It has been suggested that Thebes had been given to Othon together with Athens but was later seized by the Lombard rebels. Setton, *The Papacy*, 28n.7, 29.

¹³ Bon calls Longnon's theory "très vraisemblable." Setton, admits that Longnon "might be right," but does not fully comply with the supporting argument. Bon, *Morée Franque*, 68; Setton, *The Papacy*, 28n.7. According to Peter Lock, Othon was lord of Athens by 1210. Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 206.

region; a quality recognized by Guy I de la Roche who later chose the city as the capitol and administrative center of his realm.¹⁴

Around the same time as he acquired Thebes, Othon was able to expand his already impressive holdings into the Peloponnese. Despite his defeat on the mainland, Leon Sgouros had successfully safeguarded the castles of Corinth, Argos and Nauplia against the Latin incursion until his death at Corinth in 1208. By 1210 the three fortresses were still in Greek hands under the command of Theodore Doucas, who was later to become despot of Epiros and emperor of Thessaloniki (1224-1230).¹⁵ Frustrated by the continuing resistance, the prince of Achaia Geoffroy I de Villehardouin (1209-28) called upon the military aid of Othon de la Roche and the duke of Naxos. Knowing that he would need a navy to take Nauplia, Geoffroy also appealed to the Venetians. In exchange for the castles of Modon and Coron with their surrounding lands, Venice sent four fully-equipped

¹⁴ For a discussion of the economic importance of Thebes see Setton, *The Papacy*, 65; Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 106; David Jacoby, "Italian Migration and Settlement in Latin Greece: The Impact on the Economy," in *Die Kreuzfahrerstaaten als multikulturelle Gesellschaft: Einwanderer und Minderheiten im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert*, ed. Hans Eberhard Mayer, *Schriften des Historischen Kollegs, Kolloquien 37* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1997), 97-127.

¹⁵ Theodore Doucas had been appointed to his post by his brother Angelos Doucas. Ferdinand A. Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Athen im Mittelalter*, 3. aufl. ed., 2 vols., vol. I (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1889), 344. The same assertion was also made by H. F. Tozer, without reference to a primary source. H. F. Tozer, "The Franks in the Peloponnese," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* IV (1883): 171. For a short account of Theodore's actions as the despot of Epiros see Donald M. Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros 1267-1479: A Contribution to the History of Greece in the Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 4-5.

galleys for assistance in the capture of Nauplia.¹⁶ The combined effort bore fruit. Corinth surrendered to the Franks sometime between 1210 and 1212 and Nauplia soon followed.¹⁷ Grateful for the military assistance from Athens, Geoffroy conferred the fortresses of Nauplia and Argos upon Othon de la Roche.¹⁸ Included with this generous bequest were

¹⁶ Venice also agreed to assist in the subsequent protection of the Morea with two ships and their crews whose expenses outside wages, had to be covered by the prince of Morea. Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters* (1830-1836; repr. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1965), 406; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 152-53.

¹⁷ These are the dates generally accepted by recent scholarship. They have been established by J. Longnon and A. Bon based mainly on letters from Pope Innocent III written between 1210 and 1212. Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Athen*, 364; Longnon, *L'empire latin de Constantinople et la principauté de Morée*, 115; Bon, *Morée Franque*, 68. The Greek, Italian and the French version of the Chronicle place the fall of Corinth after 1247 under the rule of Guillaume de Villehardouin (1247-1278). Carl H. F. J. Hopf, *Chroniques gréco-romanes inédites ou peu connues* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1873), 435-36; Jean Longnon, *Livre de la conquête de la princée de l' Amorée, Chronique de Morée (1204-1305)*, (Paris: Librairie Renouard H. Laurens successeur, 1911), lines 191-99; Petros P. Kalonaros, ed., *To Chronikon tou Moreos* (Athens: 1940), lines 2791-874; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 154-56. Lurier notes the apparent confusion in the passages relating to the events leading up to the siege of Corinth. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 152n.2, 153-4. For a summary of the Arguments also see: Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, *Die Kirche der Hagia Triada bei Kranidi in der Argolis (1244): ikonographische und stilistische Analyse der Malereien*, vol. 20, *Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia* (Munich: Institut für Byzantinistik und Neugriechische Philologie der Universität München, 1975), 5-6.

¹⁸ Othon also received an annual charge of 400 *hyperpyra*. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 155 n.7. This is commonly interpreted as a gesture of thanks. Lock questions this and interprets it as an attempt on Geoffroy's part to keep the socially superior Othon under his control. Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 88-9. Nauplia and Argos remained under the control of the lords of Athens until 1377 when they were placed under Venetian protection. After considerable political maneuvering and a struggle with the Greek despot of Mistra and the duke of Athens, the Venetians safely established themselves as the rulers of Nauplia in 1389. Kevin Andrews, *Castles of the Morea* (Princeton, N.J.: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1953), 91-92.

also the lands of the Argolid.¹⁹ In its description of the events surrounding the capture of the two strongholds, the Greek version of the *Chronicle of Morea* only mention castles, but in the French version one can read: “Et quant li princes Guillerme fu en possession dou beau castel de Naples, si le donna benignement a messier Guillerme de la Roche, le seignor d’Atthenes, ou tout la cite et le chastel d’Argues avec les appartenances.”²⁰ The “appartenances” mentioned by the Chronicler probably refer to the region surrounding Argos and Nauplia. The inhabitants of the predominantly rural area had already surrendered to the Franks in the early stages of the conquest.²¹ It appears to have been a peaceful process if one is to believe the Chronicle which narrates:

After the Franks had captured the town of Corinth, the Champenois ordered a proclamation drawn up, declaring that those of the towns in the neighborhood of Corinth that would do homage and would receive him for lord would have honor and beneficence, a fine reception; but those who resorted to war would not find mercy. On hearing this, the archons and likewise the commons began to go up, small and great, from the town of Damala and from as far away as Hagion Oros; all who heard of it went with great eagerness and swore to the Champenois to die his slaves; and he received them with great joy.²²

¹⁹ Alfred Morel-Fatio, ed., *Libro de los fechos es conquistas del principado de la Morea compilado por comandamiento de Don Frey Johan Ferrandez de Heredia maestro el Hospital de S. Johan de Jerusalem. Chronique de Morée aux XIIIe et XIV siècles* (Geneva: 1885), verse 212; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 155. The Italian version of the Chronicle does not mention the gift. Also see the Mario Sanudo Toresello’s “Istoria del Regno di Romania” in Hopf, *Chroniques gréco-romanes inédites ou peu connues*, 100; Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Athen*, 364; Longnon, *L’empire latin de Constantinople et la principauté de Morée*, 115, 189; Bon, *Morée Franque*, 70; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 6-7.

²⁰ Longnon, *Chronique de Morée*, verse 200.

²¹ Bon, *Morée Franque*, 487.

²² The capture mentioned here refers to the lower town of Corinth. The castle itself was held by Leon Sgouros who “fled and went up to the castle” where he died in 1208. The Hagon Oros is today called Agionorion. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 112 n.12. Four

That the Argolid had been placed in Othon's care can also be deduced from a passage in the *Libro de los Fechos* which mentions the transfer of six fiefs in the region of Corinth to a "gentil cuallero" who had build a castle in Damala.²³ This unnamed noble can probably be identified with Othon de la Roche, for sometime between 1225 and 1263 Othon's successor Guy I de la Roche conferred Damala to his younger brother Guillaume.²⁴ Coins struck by the later duke of Athens Guillaume I de la Roche (1280-87) and uncovered during archaeological excavations at the Frankish castle at Damala support this interpretation.²⁵

In less than a decade, Othon de la Roche had become μέγας κύριος, or "Great Lord" of a realm that incorporated Athens as well as half of Thebes and stretched across the regions of Attica, Boeotia and the Argolid with the important towns of Argos, Nauplia and Damala. Under the later rule of Guillaume I de la Roche (1280-1287) Othon's lordship became the duchy of Athens and the "Great Lord" could carry the title of duke.²⁶ Even if

versions of the *Chronicle of Morea* are preserved in Greek, French, Aragonese, and Italian. The present study relies on Harold Lurier's translation of the Greek version Codex Havniensis 57 in the Fabricius Collection of the University of Copenhagen that was written around 1388 based on a French prototype composed soon after 1304. For some minor corrections to Lurier's translation see: Peter Topping, review of *Crusaders as Conquerors: The Chronicle of Morea* by Peter Topping, *Speculum* 40 (1965): 737-42.

²³ Morel-Fatio, ed., *Libro de los fechos*, verse 125. Bon, *Morée Franque*, 487. Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 7.

²⁴ Bon, *Morée Franque*, 487.

²⁵ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 7.

²⁶ The *Chronicle of Morea* attributes the acquisition of the title of duke to 1260 and Guy I de la Roche who had requested it from Louis IX after having traveled to Paris to face the legal repercussions of his uprising against the prince of Achaia Guillaume II de Villehardouin. Morel-Fatio, ed., *Libro de los fechos*, 65; Longnon, *Chronique de Morée*,

the last Greek-born Burgundian duke of Athens found his violent end at Halmyros, the political realm he and his predecessors had created outlasted the defeat of 1311. The duchy of Athens continued its existence as such until 1456 when Turkish forces captured Athens and set an end to Latin rule in the most famous of Greek cities.²⁷

Approach

More than a century of uninterrupted Frankish rule left its traces in the intellectual as well as the geographical landscape of the lordship of Athens. The buildings catalogued by Antoine Bon's in his groundbreaking investigation of the physical remains of Latin Greece still testify to the active involvement of the Western lords in the establishment of a

88-92; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 173-74 n.47; Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, 107-6; John Schmitt, *The Chronicle of Morea: To Chronikon tou Moreou: A History in Political Verse, Relating the Establishment of Feudalism in Greece by the Franks in the Thirteenth Century*, 1st AMS ed. (New York: AMS Press, 1979), 224-30. However, official recognition of the title seems not to have occurred until 1280 and might have come from Charles of Anjou, the suzerain lord of Athens. It is Guillaume I de la Roche who first uses the designation *Dux Atenes* on his coinage. Setton, *The Papacy*, 421-22 n.93.

²⁷ After 1311, the duchy of Athens was claimed by the Catalans who ruled under the domain of the Aragonese Kings of Sicily. The period has been studied in depth by Kenneth Meyer Setton, *Catalan Domination of Athens, 1311-1388* (Cambridge, Mass.: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1948). In 1395 Athens came to be placed under Venetian authority only to be captured in 1402 by Antonio Acciaioli, the descendant of a line of Florentine bankers and merchants who had gained considerable wealth and political influence in the principality of Achaëa and the duchy of Athens during the preceding decades. Athens was still in the hands of the Acciaioli family when the Turks captured the lower city of Athens in June of 1456. Setton, *The Papacy*, 472-73. For a discussion of the Acciaioli family and the last years of Latin Greece and a list of Dukes of Athens and the claimants to the title see: Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 130-34, Appendix 2, 331.

defensive and economic infrastructure.²⁸ David Jacoby's and Peter Topping's insightful explorations of the political, legal and economical environment of Frankish Greece have shed light on a vibrant Latin community in close contact with their indigenous subjects and actively engaging in international commerce.²⁹ Revisiting the evidence provided by the *Chronicle of Morea* and other written sources, Aneta Ilieva drew attention to the socio-cultural interactions that governed the period of Franco-Greek cohabitation.³⁰ In light of these intensive efforts to illuminate the political, economical and social mechanisms of Latin Greece, it seems more than surprising, that there has been so little investigative effort directed at the pictorial arts of the period in support of our understanding of this chapter of history. The scholarly neglect of painting in the study of Frankish-Greece can be attributed to two major stumbling blocks: the presumed absence of any Frankish painting and the traditionalism of the cycles that do exist. The first preconception was recently invalidated with the publication of a thirteenth-century Latin-sponsored decorative cycle still preserved in the medieval gate at Nauplia and the recent identification of the painted Church at Merbaka as a Catholic church.³¹ Considering the

²⁸ Bon, *Morée Franque*.

²⁹ Peter Topping, *Studies on Latin Greece A.D. 1205-1715* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1977); idem, *Feudal Institutions as Revealed in the Assizes of Romania, the Law Code of Frankish Greece: Translation of the Text of the Assizes with a Commentary on Feudal Institutions in Greece and in Medieval Europe* (New York: AMS Press, 1980). Jacoby, "The Encounter."; idem, "Knightly Values."; David Jacoby, *Byzantium, Latin Romania and the Mediterranean* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001).

³⁰ Ilieva, *Frankish Morea*.

³¹ Wulf Schaefer, "Das Stadttor von Akronauplia," *Neue Ausgrabungen im Nahen Osten Mittelmeerraum und in Deutschland: Report of the Koldewey-Gesellschaft Symposium 05/19/59-05/23/59 Special Issue* (1959): 18-24; idem, "Neue Untersuchungen ueber die Baugeschichte Nauplias im Mittelalter," *JDAI* 76 (1961): 155-214; Demetrius Pallas,

second obstacle, traditionally, multicultural art in Crusader territories has been defined and recognized by its hybrid style and iconography, its multicultural heritage mirrored in a multifaceted artistic approach.³² At the absence of such “characteristic” markers a painting is simply not considered in terms of its culturally diverse setting.³³

"Europe kai Byzantio," in *Byzantium and Europe: First International Byzantine Conference, Delphi, 20-24 July, 1985* (Athens: 1987), 9-61; Sharon E. Gerstel, "Art and Identity in the Medieval Morea," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. A. E. Laiou and R. P. Mottahedeh (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 263-85; Mary Lee Coulson, "The Church of Merbaka: Cultural Diversity and Integration in the 13th century Peoplonnes" (University of London, 2002), 329; Monika Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings in the Frankish Gate at Nauplia, Greece: A Historical Construct in the Latin Principality of Morea," *Gesta* XLIV, no. 1 (2005): 13-30.

³² The traditional definition of Crusader Art as “presenting a mixture of Byzantine and Western, mostly French and Italian, elements” has already been questioned by Doula Mouriki when she asserted that “the established conventions for the study of Crusader art have so far implied three prerequisites: a) Western patronage, mainly Crusader, b) the production of the works in question on Crusader land and c) Western artists, mainly residents in the Latin states of the Near East ... However, the fact that local, non-Western painters have not been given even the slightest role in the icon making of the Crusader period seems quite puzzling.” Doula Mouriki, "The Wall Paintings of the Church of the Pangia at Moutoullas, Cyprus," in *Byzanz und der Westen: Studien zur Kunst des europäischen Mittelalters*, ed. Irmgard Hutter and Herbert Hunger (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984), 211. Bianca Kühnel and Robert Nelson have also argued for the importance of local craftsman in the production of Crusader Art. Such a shift in focus that calls for a re-definition or at least a broadening of the definition of Crusader Art, a subject that will be discussed later in this study. Robert S. Nelson, "An Icon at Mt. Sinai and Christian Painting in Muslim Egypt During the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," *ArtB* LXV, no. 2 (1983): 201-18; Bianca Kühnel, *Crusader Art of the Twelfth Century: a Geographical, a Historical, or an Art Historical Notion?* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1994), 17, 155-68.

³³ The adverse effects of such an approach have been outlined by Anthony Cutler, "Everywhere and Nowhere: The Invisible Muslim and Christian Self-Fashioning in the Culture of Outremer," in *France and the Holy Land: Frankish Culture at the End of the Crusades*, ed. Daniel H. Weiss and Lisa Mahoney (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 253-81.

In the case of the murals that survive from the lordship of Athens their traditional, local style often tends to mask the markings of hybridity that have become the hallmark of art associated with the Crusades. Only in recent decades have scholars like Doula Mouriki and Sharon Gerstel begun to note the incursion of potentially Latin-inspired elements in the painting of thirteenth-century Greece.³⁴ But what about works without visual markers of intercultural exchange – a category that incorporates most of the monuments under investigation by this study – does their adherence to traditional modes of representation automatically imply a lack of cultural contact? To overcome the difficulties presented by the traditionalism of the monuments in question, it is necessary to acknowledge the fact that outward appearance is only one possible sign of ethnic affiliation. Historical circumstances can open equally telling vistas into the modes of cultural interaction, and traditionalism in appearance has little to say about the actual contacts between the Frankish overlords and the Greek population. Such an interpretive approach calls for a detailed, but also wide-ranging methodology that takes into account the complexity of a multicultural society where interactions are not reduced to a two dimensional pattern of giving and receiving.

In an article entitled “Art and Colonialism: The Mosaics of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (1169) and the Problem of ‘Crusader’ Art,” Lucy Ann Hunt remarks on the “predominantly Western perspective” that presides over the field of Crusader Art and the

³⁴ Doula Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation of the Last Judgement in a Thirteenth Century Fresco at St. George near Kouvaras in Attica," *DChAE* IV, no. 8 (1975-1976): 155-56; Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 263-85.

subsequent over-simplification of cross-cultural interactions.³⁵ Whereas Hunt's concerns are directed towards scholarship of art in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and Cyprus, the issue applies equally to thirteenth-century Greece. To avoid the pitfalls of an undue Western viewpoint and the subsequent undervaluation of some of the evidence, this study will not focus on the issue of influence. Rather, it will be a search for reactions; the latter being characterized by a sense of action and self determination rather than the involuntary and passive acceptance implied by the concept of influence. Here it should be noted that reaction does not necessarily imply adjustment such as the incorporation of foreign elements or the modification of habitual modes of representation. If numerous of the monuments included in this study appear untouched by the encroachment of foreign ideals and practices, their traditionalism in the face of change can be seen to be as strong of a reaction as the appropriation of foreign elements, be it for the purpose of protest or as a sign of conformity or approval. Reactions or the reasons for the absence thereof, are multivalent and have to be assessed on an individual basis taking into account the particular historical, geographical and demographic background of a monument.

With her admonition against an oversimplified methodology, Hunt's article not only warns against an undue Western perspective but also touches on some even more basic issues: how to explain and interpret stylistic, technical, or thematic similarities and differences within a multicultural context without reverting to the potential oversimplification implied by the concept of influence. Relating to the question of how to

³⁵ Lucy-Anne Hunt, "Art and Colonialism: The Mosaics of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (1169) and the Problem of 'Crusader' Art," *DOP* XLV (1991): 69-71.

account for the socio-cultural specificities of thirteenth-century Greece, Aneta Ilieva formulated the matter in terms of adaptation verses interaction, where adaptation is seen as an adjustment to external impulses while interaction merely denotes the presence of such impulses.³⁶ As shall be shown, adaptation was at times a necessary and successful, albeit by no means inevitable, way of dealing with the needs of cohabitation faced by the Frankish and the Greek population. In the context of this study, it shall be used in reference to specific occasions where traditional modes of representation were consciously altered to adapt to the particular circumstances. Less disparagingly charged, the term interaction shall be used for purposes of discussing issues of contact in a more general sense, where the results of socio-cultural exchanges are recognized without predetermining the role of the groups involved as instigators or receptors of cultural impulses. Artistic developments are thus accounted for not merely as the result of external influences but in terms of a bilateral process with the potential for adaptation equally distributed between the Frankish settlers and the local population.

Defining modes of interaction as mutual processes and allowing for the possibility that the monuments bespeak a multitude of reactions or the lack thereof naturally complicates the study of the material. Ethnic affiliations become less distinct. The mere incorporation of a

³⁶ This definition is somewhat at variance with Aneta Ilieva's which sees "adaptation" as the „adjustment of Society as an alive system in conformity with environment with the purpose of self-preservation of the former.“ I see no reason to expand the term into a mere „basic function of culture;” a characterization so wide-ranging as to remove it from the specific intent of this study. Rather, I see adaptation as a natural if not inevitable outcome of cultural interaction; an effect that, as shall be shown, occasionally finds expression in the artistic activities in Frankish Greece. Ilieva, *Frankish Morea*, 45.

presumably foreign element does not necessarily support its interpretation as belonging to a particular cultural group or as a conscious reaction to present circumstances. As shall become evident, the appearance of certain, seemingly Western motifs in thirteenth-century painting in Greece might say more about the development of an increasingly cosmopolitan period style than about local conditions. With this in mind, it is important to note that the value of a certain motif as evidence for cultural interaction can only be determined after a thorough investigation of its provenance, its purpose within the particular context of its setting, and its subsequent interpretation by the audience. As pertains to the study of thirteenth-century painting in Greece, the detailed analysis of particular elements against the background of Frankish settlement is still in its infancy. The first systematic study of one such element, the image of St. George on horseback by Sharon Gerstel has shown the immense promise of such investigations and has illustrated the potential of such images to communicate political as well as social messages.³⁷ Here, of course, one might fall exactly into the habits of research Lucy Ann-Hunt warns of. The very search for these often illusive markers of cultural contact requires a belief in their existence and, subsequently, implies a prejudice. Aside from the impossibility to escape a certain level of pre-existing bias, the belief in the presence of such indicators of contact seems, at present, less detrimental to scholarship than the disregard of their existence. As has recently been argued by Anthony Cutler, “something is lost when a complex object is treated unquestionably as the product of a single society – a monolith within a monoculture – mindless of the many strands that make up its fabric and the multitude of

³⁷ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 263-85.

responses that this very diversity evoked.”³⁸ In reference to painting in Frankish Greece, Cutler’s line of reasoning concludes in the necessity to affirm the socio-cultural intricacies of the region during this particular period and to investigate the monuments accordingly even if they appear untouched by the political and social events surrounding them.

Theoretical Model

The general approach outlined above presupposes an interpretive model that exhibits a high level of flexibility; a model that allows for adaptation and cross-fertilization while acknowledging the basic differences and potential points of conflict between interacting cultural groups. In a recent publication entitled “Syncretism as Mixture and Method” Vassilis Lambropoulos outlined the benefits of such a model in the study of socio-cultural interactions.³⁹ Defining syncretism as “a particular set of critical practices of translation, exchanging, and mingling that serve social groups at a certain period of time,” Lambropoulos draws attention to syncretism as a process in which two basically different socio-cultural systems engage in order to coexist while preserving their indigenous characteristics.⁴⁰ In such a system interaction is possible without amalgamation. Conflicts are not resolved, rather the two cultures coexist in relative peace

³⁸ Cutler, "Everywhere and Nowhere," 253.

³⁹ Vassilis Lambropoulos, "Syncretism as Mixture and as Method," *JMGS* XIX, no. 2 (2001): 221-53.

⁴⁰ Lambropoulos, "Syncretism," 225.

based on a temporary mutual, if unspoken, agreement to disagree. The eventual outcome of this process is not predetermined and can take various forms of which synthesis is only one.⁴¹ Such a theoretical framework is perfectly suited for Frankish Greece where one can observe the process of interaction but not its eventual resolution. David Jacoby essentially describes a textbook syncretic society as outlined by Lambropoulos when he summarizes the situation in the region as follows:

The symbiotic relationship that developed between Latins and Greeks in daily life did not conceal the persistent, only marginally bridged rift, which existed between the two communities, nor their contrasting orientation, with strong Latin links to the West and the Greeks firmly rooted in the Byzantine past.⁴²

Whether the lack of true amalgamation should be attributed to the relatively short lived nature of Frankish/Greek interaction, or whether the eventual dissolution of Latin Greece should be seen of the ultimate resolution of the ongoing syncretic process between the two groups is of no particular relevance to the present study. Such a conclusion, while interesting in view of the further development of Greece, has little to offer in regard to the interactions that did take place. As Lambropoulos notes: "A syncretic study respects the complex tension among the mingling elements, stressing multiplicity not singularity or dualism" and does not presuppose a development into a particular direction.⁴³ Applied to the present investigation into Frankish Greece, the study is not intended to gauge levels of

⁴¹ Lambropoulos, "Syncretism," 231.

⁴² David Jacoby, "From Byzantium to Latin Romania: Continuity and Change," *MHR* 4 (1989): 32. Similar interpretations have been presented by Ilieva, *Frankish Morea*, 244-45.

⁴³ Lambropoulos, "Syncretism," 230.

assimilation or to interpret the historical impact of a century of cohabitation; rather, it investigates the multiple routes by which this process of temporary resolution took place.

Definitions

Before entering deeper into the discussion of the questions at hand, it might be useful to explicate some of the terminology as it is applied in the context of this discussion. The need for definitions points to the inherent difficulty of characterizing historical developments and events. As scholars seek to frame the past in modern terms, they are inevitably faced with the task of applying contemporary vocabulary to illuminate a world far removed from the moral and ethical assessments that inform our present understanding of the terminology. Discussions of socio-cultural phenomena are particularly prone to a culturally conditioned reading where the use of a specific idiom might all too easily be taken for a judgment of value and/or significance.⁴⁴ It is with my own apprehension of semiotic pitfalls that I attempt to eliminate the hazards of arbitrary linguistic definition by entering a short discussion and justification for some of the terminology employed in the present study.

⁴⁴ A case in point is the heated discussion concerning the applicability of the term “colony” in regard to Crusader territories kicked off by Joshua Prawer’s publication of Joshua Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973). The main points of contention and agreement are outlined in Benjamin Z. Kedar, ed., *The Horns of Hattin* (London: Varorium, 1987), 341-66.

Latins and Franks

The Westerners who settled in Greece after the events of 1204 came mainly from Burgundy, Champagne, Flanders, Lombardy and Venice. As the newly established state developed, their ranks were joined by knights and businessmen from northern and central Italy and in 1302 by the Catalans who were to play such a harrowing role in the history of Crusader Greece. Diverse as this group of newcomers was, for the Greeks they were merely “Latins.” Whereas early Byzantines clearly distinguished amongst the different nationalities of their western neighbors, by the twelfth century, the term Latin had come to denote all Western European territories and to classify its peoples as a unified cultural group defined in terms of a perceived commonality in ethnicity, religion, behavior and habits.⁴⁵

The term “Frank” denoted a specific group of Latins roughly relating to people from the regions of modern-day France and, subsequently, the French population of Norman Italy.⁴⁶ In the present study the terms Latins and Franks will be used interchangeably. This is not intended to deny the cultural diversity of the Western settlers, but instead of

⁴⁵ Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 10-11; David Jacoby, "Italian Migration and Settlement in Latin Greece: The Impact on the Economy," in *Byzantium, Latin Romania and the Mediterranean*, ed. David Jacoby, *Variorum Collected Studies Series* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001), 98-99; Alexander Kazhdan, "Latins and Franks in Byzantium: Perception and Reality from the Eleventh to the Twelfth Century," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2001), 84-91.

⁴⁶ Kazhdan, "Latins and Franks," 100. For a short discussions of the Byzantine definition of the term Frank see also: Ilieva, *Frankish Morea*, 22; Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 8-9.

focusing on their differences, it defines them in terms of a common goal: the establishment of a Latin state on the eastern frontier. This approach was also embraced by the author of the Greek *Chronicle of Morea* who clearly indicated the geographic and feudal affiliations of his protagonists when speaking of them individually, but when referring to the Crusader host that assembled before the walls of Constantinople he simply calls them the “army of the Franks.”⁴⁷

Crusader

It might be safely ascertained, that the conquest of Greece had little to do with the pious ideals traditionally associated with the Crusades. A consequence of the capture of Constantinople, it was detached geographically as well as ideologically from the Crusader quest. The Franks were quite aware of this when they sought absolution from the Crusader vows for a year to consolidate their position in the recently captured city from cardinal Peter, papal legate and cardinal priest of St. Marcellus; a politically motivated act to which Pope Innocent III did not take kindly. In a letter to Peter, written on July 12, 1205, a time when Boniface de Montferrat was beginning to claim the territories on the Greek mainland allotted to him, the Pope vented his resentment.

Having, moreover, recently heard and learned from your letter that you dispensed from the vow of pilgrimage and from the duty of the Cross all Crusaders who

⁴⁷ Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 86. It should be noted that just as the Latin conquerors did not belong to a single nationality in the modern sense, so was the population of the mainland Greece and the Peloponnese by no means a cohesive ethnic entity. A large contingent of Slavic settlers had immigrated to the Peloponnese centuries earlier and the several of the larger cities provided homes for thriving Jewish communities. Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, 3-5.

remain the defense of Constantinople from the preceding March to the next, we are unable not to be irritated at you.⁴⁸

For the enraged Pope, the reason for the Crusader's delay was only too clear: "For insomuch as they assumed the emblem of the Cross...that they would cross the sea in relief of the Holy Land [they have] strayed from the path onto an impassable road, they have pursued temporal wages right up to today."⁴⁹ Innocent continued his rebukes in a letter written sometime during the summer of 1205.⁵⁰ Addressed to Boniface de Montferrat, the papal correspondence was composed in answer to a now lost letter in which the King of Salonika must have defended his abandonment of the Crusader vows, for Innocent reiterates that "...you took pains to make it known to us that you solemnly discharged the vow of the Cross with a contrite heart and a spirit faithful to the command

⁴⁸ Othmar Hageneder, ed., *Die Register Innocenz' III*, 8 vols., vol. 8 (Wien: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1964-), 127 (128). The letter might refer to the time between March 1204 to March 1205 or to March 1205 to March 1206. Alfred J. Andrea, *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade, The Medieval Mediterranean* (Boston: Brill, 2000), 98-115. The letter was also included in the *Gesta Innocentii III*, an anonymous work covering the first eleven years of the Pope's reign written in the years of 1204 to 1209. James M. Powell, *The Deeds of Pope Innocent III by an Anonymous Author* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 173-75.

⁴⁹ Hageneder, ed., *Reg. 8*:127 (128). Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 166. Powell, *The Deeds*, 174. Alfred Andrea notes that Innocent's indignation in this letter is in variance with his initial enthusiasm regarding the capture of Constantinople. Apparently news of the crimes committed during the capture of the City somewhat altered the picture of organized and just conquest painted by Baldwin I in his letter to the Pope after May 16, 1204. Also, the death of King Aimeric and his son significantly upset the political balance in the Holy Land and added urgency to the need for military support; support that was unlikely to come with the Latin army busily engaged in the conquest of the immense territories that had come within its grasp with the recent victory. For Boniface's letter and the Innocent's response see: Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 98-115.

⁵⁰ Hageneder, ed., *Reg. 8*:134 (133); Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 168-76.

of the Apostolic admonition.”⁵¹ From the reply it can be discerned that Boniface’s intent had not merely been to justify his involvement in the capture of Constantinople, but that he also sought papal support for his ongoing conquests in the Greek peninsula. Apparently Boniface was apt in his apology, for the Pope did absolve him of the “silent reproaches that thus can be hurled against the Crusaders,” not, however, without a renewed declaration of his displeasure.⁵² Innocent takes pains to list the crimes committed by the Crusaders and refers implicitly to recent developments in Greece when he reminds Boniface that by his oath he actually was

forbidden under threat of excommunication to attempt to invade or violate the lands of Christians, unless, perchance, either they should wickedly impede your journey of another just and necessary cause should present itself to you that would allow you to act otherwise in accordance with the guidance offered by our legate, all of you, having no jurisdiction or power over the Greeks, appear to have rashly turned away from the purity of your vow when you took up arms not against Saracens but Christians, not aiming to recover Jerusalem but to occupy Constantinople, preferring earthly wealth to celestial treasures.⁵³

Reminding Boniface that his recent ventures were in direct contradiction to the guiding principle of the Crusades, Innocent, “having a healthy consideration equally at one and the same time for the Holy Land as well as for the Apostolic See,” was nonetheless willing to overlook the incursion.⁵⁴ With the potential benefits for the Catholic Church to be gained by Western expansion in mind, Innocent instructs the Frankish ruler of Greece to “hold

⁵¹ Hageneder, ed., *Reg. 8:134* (133); Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 171.

⁵² Hageneder, ed., *Reg. 8:134* (133); Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 173.

⁵³ Hageneder, ed., *Reg. 8:134* (133); Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 173.

⁵⁴ Hageneder, ed., *Reg. 8:134* (133); Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 175.

and defend the land that has been acquired and acquire land to be held and defended, ruling in justice the people subject to you, preserving it in peace and conforming in matters of religion...⁵⁵

Thus the Papal blessing for the Frankish sojourn in Greece was bestowed. Moreover, Boniface had succeeded in securing papal support for any future conquests in the region. Important to note is the clear distinction made between the ventures to annex former Byzantine territories to the realm of Western dominion and the quest to the Holy Land. Innocent ends his epistle by insisting that Boniface make a “firm resolution by oath to exert yourself wisely and effectively in relief of the Holy Land ... since it is hoped that through this land that land can be easily recovered.”⁵⁶

The Frankish presence in Greece, then, while clearly the result of the Crusading spirit had turned into an enterprise completely unrelated to any spiritual quest. If the term Crusader continues to be used in this study, it is because the Frankish settlement in Greece occurred as a consequence of a Crusading campaign, not as part of it. This is not to say, that Crusading ideas and ideologies had been discarded. They continued to guide the cultural consciousness of the Frankish inhabitants in Greece and in some instances even infiltrated

⁵⁵ Hageneder, ed., *Reg. 8:134* (133); Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 175-76.

⁵⁶ By “this land” Innocent presumably refers to the Byzantine territories in general. As has been noted by Andrea, Innocent had sadly misjudged the situation. The Latin empire’s need for funds drained resources that otherwise might have been allotted toward the Western cause in the Holy Land. Hageneder, ed., *Reg. 8:134* (133); Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 171-76.

into local culture and practices to leave its traces in several of the monuments to be discussed below.

Settlers

The lack of religious motivation in its formation sets the Frankish Greece apart from the traditional Crusader states in the Levant. Relieved of his Crusader vows, Boniface de Montferrat did not arrive in Greece as the pilgrim as which he would have entered the Holy Land had the Fourth Crusade reached its intended goal. He came to Greece to claim his payment for accepting Baldwin IX of Flanders as the new Emperor of Constantinople. Pope Innocent's qualms regarding the fiscal nature of the operation have already been noted. The pontiff had recognized the campaign as a venture of personal gain that benefited first and foremost Boniface and those loyal to him. This sentiment was plainly expressed by Geoffroy de Villehardouin's († 1218) description of the events leading up to his nephew's involvement in the affairs of Latin Greece in 1204 when Geoffroy I de Villehardouin († 1226-1231) voiced this bold invitation to his countryman, Guillaume de Champlitte († 1228) at the foot of Akronauplia: "I've just come, sir, from a very prosperous land, which is called Morea. Get together as many men as you can and leave this army, and with God's help we'll go and conquer it."⁵⁷ The *Chronicle of Morea* narrates Champlitte's arrival as an agreement between two brothers for the younger one to seek his fortune overseas.

⁵⁷ Geoffroi de Villehardouin and Jean de Joinville, *Chronicles of the Crusades*, trans. Margaret R. B. Shaw (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 113.

And the two brothers agreed that the elder would remain in his country, that of Champagne, and the younger of the two (Sir Guillaume, he was called ...) would find as many armies as he could to take with him, and he would go to Romania to conquer some castles and towns to have as his estates.

Thereupon, he gathered and hired troops ... some taking pay as mercenaries to go to him; others, who were themselves bannerets and who were wealthy men, went with him, each to conquer what he could for himself.⁵⁸

Whereas the Chronicle is not quite accurate in that it seems to confuse Champlitte's arrival with that of Geoffrey I de Villehardouin, the passages convey the sense of adventure but also the prospect and opportunity that motivated the Frankish knights who were to become the new lords of this "prosperous land".⁵⁹

The economic considerations driving the conquest of Greece is more in line with the kind of activities that governed the formation of Venetian Crete which witnessed a similar influx of Westerners in the search of prosperity. Initially also part of Boniface de Montferrat's restitution payment, the island was sold by its new owner to the city of Venice in 1204.⁶⁰ In the centuries of Venetian dominion that followed, the island was under the tight command of its Italian overlords who instated governmental and legal structures that have been compared to later colonial movements.⁶¹ Unlike Crete, which

⁵⁸ Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 107-8.

⁵⁹ Guillaume de Champlitte had participated in the Fourth Crusade and came to the Morea with Boniface de Montferrat. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 108 n.1.

⁶⁰ Maria Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies: Architecture and Urbanism* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 18-19.

⁶¹ For discussions on colonialism in the context of the Crusades see: Joshua Prawer, *The Crusaders' Kingdom: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages* (New York: Praeger, 1972); Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*. For a more detailed consideration of Crete in particular see the recent studies Sally McKee, *Uncommon Dominion: Venetian*

was under the direct control of Venice as part of a tightly woven network of trading posts, Frankish Greece was not subject to any centralized governing body. Subsequently, its social and political structures developed in completely different directions.⁶² The principality of Achaia and its, at times reluctant dependency, the lordship of Athens were governed as independent political entities and acted much more as sovereign states than as a feudal colonies. Particularly the lordship of Athens maintained political, even if not religious and economical, autonomy from their Frankish homeland. Feudal ties were acknowledged and military aid given where required by custom and by law but the connections to the royal, papal and imperial lords in Paris, Rome and Byzantium were often little more than nominal.⁶³ The Frankish knights who subjected Greece to their authority were neither Crusader in the traditional sense or pilgrims, nor were they members of a colonizing force sent by their suzerain to enlarge his dominions. They came as conquerors and they stayed as settlers populating a state whose relative independence they were able to keep at least until 1267 when Guillaume II de Villehardouin (1246-78) was forced to place his realm under the protection of the King of Naples Charles I of Anjou (1266-85).⁶⁴

Crete and the Myth of Ethnic Purity, The Middle ages series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean colonies*.

⁶² Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 86-87. David Jacoby also separates Latin Greece from Crete in his discussion of the social development in the region. He argues that Crete “was entirely in the Venetian orbit and its development, therefore, different in several ways from that to the Greek mainland and the islands in the latter’s vicinity.” Jacoby, "Italian Migration," 98 n.3.

⁶³ McKee, *Uncommon dominion*, 8.

⁶⁴ The treaties of Viterbo, signed in May 1267 decreed that the principality was to pass to the house of Anjou with the death of Guillaume. It should be noted that the lords of

Athens, officially vassals of the prince of Achaia, do not seem to have been in agreement with their lord's decision. Their refusal to pledge fealty to the lords put in office by the Kingdom of Naples after Guillaume's death resulted in decades of internal strife. The conflict between Athens and the rulers of the Morea did not cease completely until the two territories were united in marriage of Guy II to the heiress of the title of princess of the Morea, Mahaut de Florent. Hopf, *Geschichte Griechenlands vom Beginn des Mittelalters bis auf unsere Zeit*, 281-82; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 295. On the position of the lordship of Athens up to 1267 and the treaty see: Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 84-88.

II

ARTISTIC ACTIVITY IN THE LORDSHIP OF ATHENS: A SUMMARY

Da noch eine ganze Anzahl von Denkmälern, vor allem im griechischen Raum, nicht bzw. nur unvollständig publiziert ist, muss das folgende Kapitel ein Zwischenergebnis bleiben.⁶⁵

-Sophia Kalopissi-Verti

Thirty years after its publication, Sofia Kalopissi-Verti's introductory disclaimer regarding the availability of material continues to be obligatory for any discussion of monumental painting in southern Greece.⁶⁶ When visiting the monuments in the region to face the occasional whitewashed wall and to catch tantalizing glimpses of earlier phases of decoration below darkened layers of more recent campaigns, one has the uncanny sense that there exists a plethora of undiscovered material. With the heroic efforts of the local archaeological services to clean and to restore the monuments in their charge, some of this previously unknown material might soon become available. However, even the paintings that have been freed from the disfiguring tinge of past centuries often present, with few

⁶⁵ "Given that a considerable number of monuments, particularly in the Greek regions, are not or only partially published, the following chapter must remain preliminary." English translation by author. Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 302.

⁶⁶ Several years later, Karin Skawran introduced her study of Middle Byzantine painting in Greece in a similar manner: "The material presented here is of a provisional character, as much of what is now visible has not as yet been studied, let alone published. Completeness is out of the question, while continuance of investigation in the churches and the further cleaning of frescoes is constantly bringing new material to light. Karin M. Skawran, *The Development of Middle Byzantine Fresco Painting in Greece* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1982), 1.

exceptions, a less than clear picture of their original appearance or intent. Their fragmentary survival is unfortunately only too frequently matched by their equally patchy publication. In recent decades the situation has been considerably improved thanks to the investigative efforts of scholars who have begun to publish and to catalogue monuments in a systematic fashion. Still, to the present there exists no comprehensive list of dated monuments that moves beyond modern regional boundaries to accord with the political borders in place at the time the buildings were constructed and/or decorated. Keeping in mind the confines imposed by the accident of survival, the present chapter will attempt to provide an overview of monumental painting in the lordship of Athens. For this purpose, works produced in modern day Attica, Boeotia, and the Argolid will be brought together to reflect the administrative coalition of these territories during the greater part of the thirteenth and the first decade of the fourteenth century. With more than twenty structures to consider, it will not be possible to address each one individually. Rather, the focus of this chapter will be on larger issues such as the geographic distribution of the monuments and patterns of donorship as they can be discerned from the surviving evidence. To round off the discussion and to provide a more detailed picture, the chapter is supplemented by an appendix, which presents a list of monuments decorated during the period in question. Names of donors and other relevant information regarding patronage are included where such data is available, and each entry is accompanied by a select bibliography.

The Sources

With references dispersed across almost a century of scholarship and scattered amongst sometimes difficult to access publications, it might be helpful to begin this chapter with a short discussion of some major bibliographic sources. The intent here is not to provide a comprehensive bibliography of the material. Instead it is to briefly summarize the state of research as it can be gleaned from some of the more recently published sources. The available publications can be divided into three categories: articles and monographs introducing individual monuments, studies of regional developments, and investigations of stylistic and thematic trends. Somewhat outside these classifications lies Sophia Kalopissi-Verti's collection of "Dedicatory Inscriptions and Donor Portraits in Thirteenth-Century Churches of Greece."⁶⁷ Its extensive catalogue of inscriptions found in monuments throughout Greece, the detailed commentary and the insightful discussion on patterns of donorship in thirteenth-century Greece make this a basic work of reference for any study of painting in late medieval Greece.

Into the first category listed above fall a number of articles published by Greek scholars in the *Deltion tēs Christianikēs Archaeologikēs Hetaireias*.⁶⁸ For several monuments such as

⁶⁷ Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions and Donor Portraits in Thirteenth-Century Churches of Greece*, ed. Herbert Hunger, vol. V, *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992). For a review of the study see: Robert Ousterhout, "Review," *Speculum* LXIX, no. 3 (1994): 809-10.

⁶⁸ Manolis Chatzidakis, "Byzantines toichographies ston Ōropō," *DChAE* I, no. 4 (1959): 87-107; Doula Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsion tēs Spēlias tēs Pentelēs," *DChAE* IV, no. 7 (1974): 79-119; Mary Aspra-Vardavake, "Hoi byzantines

the churches of St. George at Oropos, the cave at Penteli, the Taxiarches at Markopoulo, the St. Andreas near Kranidi, and the nearby Church of St. John the Theologian these informative, albeit occasionally somewhat parsimoniously illustrated, papers remain the only sources that treat the decoration in a more or less systematic manner. A similar fate is shared by number of churches including St. Nicholas at Kambia, St. Nicholas at Kalamos and St. Demetrios at Saronikos in Attica, all of which have been published only in the form of short articles with varying degrees of detail.⁶⁹

Only a few monuments have received the methodical treatment of a monographic study. One of the most frequently cited works in this category is Sophia Kalopissi-Verti's 1975 publication of her doctoral thesis "Die Kirche der Hagia Triada bei Kranidi in der Argolis (1244): Ikonographische und stilistische Analyse der Malereien."⁷⁰ In this monograph, Kalopissi-Verti provides not only a thorough discussion of the church at Kranidi; she also places the painted program within the stylistic development of thirteenth-century

toichographies tou Taxiarchē sto Markopoulo Attikēs," *DChAE* 4, no. 8 (1976): 199-229; Eleni Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Hagios Nikolaos sto nekrotapheio Kalamou Attikēs nea stocheia," *DChAE* IV, no. 11 (1983): 227-48; Nafsika Pansélinou, "Toichographies tou 13ou aiōna stēn Argolida: Ho naos tōn Taxiarchōn kai ho Hagios Ioannēs ho Theologos," *DChAE* 4, no. 16 (1991-1992): 155-66.

⁶⁹ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsion."; Maria Panagiotide, "Hoi toichographies tēs kryptēs tou Hagiou Nikolaou sta Kampia tēs Boiōtias," *Actes du XVe congrès international d' études byzantines, Athènes - Septembre 1976* II (1981): 597-622; Eleni Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Neōtera apo tē syntērēsē tōn Byzantinōn mnēiōn sta Mesogeia," *Praktika 3 epistemonikēs sznantēses na Attikēs, Kalybia Attikēs 5-8 Noembrē 1987* (1988): 431-444; Georgios N. Aikaterinides, ed., *Mesogaia: History and Culture of Mesogeia in Attica* (Athens: Eleftherios Venezelos Athens International Airport, 2001), 183.

⁷⁰ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*.

Greece.⁷¹ In doing so, she adds and refines Otto Demus' observations on the origin of the distinctive style of the Palaeologan period and offers a very useful overview of the varying tendencies that characterize the painting in the region.⁷² Just a few years later Doula Mouriki published her monograph on the Church of the Savior near Alepochori in Attica.⁷³ The study carefully records the program's layout and places its iconographic choices within the greater Byzantine tradition of church decoration. Included is also a brief survey of monumental painting in thirteenth-century Attica. Pointing to stylistic similarities, Doula Mouriki arranges the programs into several distinct groups and provides a reliable framework for further study. Particularly useful in this regard are the high-quality illustrations that accompany the discussion. Similarly well illustrated is Nafsika Coumbaraki-Panselinou's book on St. Peter at Kalyvia-Kouvara and the Church of the Virgin at Merenta, both in Attica. Her work situates the two monuments firmly within the local traditions of thirteenth-century Attica.⁷⁴ The paintings in the Omorphi Ekklesia in Athens also have received considerable attention. Agape Vasilake-Karakatsane's monograph introduces a sophisticated program that raises many questions concerning artistic practice under Frankish rule. Important for the general understanding of artistic sponsorship in the lordship of Athens is Mary Lee Coulson's dissertation on the

⁷¹ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 302-319.

⁷² Otto Demus, "Die Entstehung des Paläologenstils in der Malerei," *Berichte zum XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongreß, München 1958* IV, no. 2 (1958): 1-63.

⁷³ Doula Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra konta sto Alepochōri Megaridos* (Athens: Get Info, 1978).

⁷⁴ Nafsika Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara et la chapelle de la Vierge de Mérenta: Deux monuments du XIIIe siècle en Attique* (Thessaloniki: Kentron Byzantinon Ereunon, 1976).

Church of the Dormition at Merbaka.⁷⁵ The detail with which the authors have presented their subjects and their discussions of the monuments within the larger framework of Byzantine art make these five studies cornerstones for any investigation of painting in the region.

In addition to studies focusing on individual monuments, there are several publications that provide overviews of regional developments. Attica, with its wealth of historic sites, has attracted the most scholarly attention. Of the regions under investigation, it is the only one for which there exists a more or less comprehensive catalogue of monuments. In 1969 Charalambos Bouras, A. Kaloyeropoulou and R. Andreadi's published the photographic survey, *Churches of Attica*.⁷⁶ The book provides a list of churches in the area including ground plans and short discussions with bibliographies for each monument. The recent construction of a new airport of Athens led to increased interest in Mesogeia, the region east of the capital. The archaeological and cultural history of the area was summarized in a collection of studies published under the title *Mesogaia, History and Culture of Mesogaia and Attica*.⁷⁷ The recently published results from the Methana Survey Project sponsored by the British School at Athens and the University of Liverpool have drawn

⁷⁵ Guy D. R. Sanders, "Three Peloponnesian Churches and Their Importance for the Chronology of Late 13th and Early 14th Century Pottery in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Recherches sur la Céramique Byzantine*, ed. V. and J.-M. Spieser Déroche, *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, Supplément 18* (Athens: École Française d'Athènes, 1989); Coulson, "The Church of Merbaka".

⁷⁶ Charalambos Bouras et al., *Ekklesiēs tēs Attikēs* (Athens: 1969). The English translation was published a year later. Charalambos Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, trans. R. Liddell and M. Burn (Athens: 1970).

⁷⁷ Aikaterinides, ed., *Mesogaia*.

attention to one of the most remote regions of the duchy of Athens: the Methana peninsula at the eastern tip of the Peloponnese that belongs to the modern administrative district of Attica.⁷⁸ The book includes a list of all pre-modern churches that are still in use today. Three of them, the Panayitsa near Megalochori, St. John Theologos and St. Demetrios preserve part of their original decorative programs that have been attributed to the period of Latin rule.⁷⁹ The same three monuments have also been the subject of a recent study by Angeliki Mitsani who ties their decorative programs to the artistic developments in the surrounding regions.⁸⁰

In the effort to integrate the murals of thirteenth-century Greece into the larger picture of Byzantine painting, several of the churches in question found their way into studies intended to trace the move from the Comnenian style of the twelfth to the Palaeologan style of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The two major works in this category, Tania Velmans's *La peinture murale Byzantine à la fin du Moyen Age* and Karin M. Skawran's *The Development of Middle Byzantine Fresco Painting in Greece*, incorporate discussions of several churches from the duchy of Athens.⁸¹ In her extensive catalogue of

⁷⁸ Christopher Mee and Hamish Forbes, eds., *A Rough and Rocky Place: The Landscape and Settlement History of the Methana Peninsula, Greece* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997).

⁷⁹ Mee and Forbes, eds., *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 217- 223, 224-33, 247-48.

⁸⁰ Angeliki Mitsani, "Provincial Byzantine Wall Paintings on Methana, Greece," in *Byzantinische Malerei: Bildprogramme - Ikonographie - Stil: Symposium in Marburg vom 25.-29.6.1997*, ed. G. Koch (Wiesbaden: 2000), 227-44.

⁸¹ Tania Velmans, *La peinture murale byzantine à la fin du Moyen Age*, ed. André Grabar, 2 vols., vol. I, *Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques* (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1977); Skawran, *Development*, 175-76, 178-79, 183-84.

monuments M. Skawran includes short descriptions and relevant bibliographic information for the Attic churches of the Savior at Megara, and the cave at Penteli as well as St. Nicholas at Kambia and St. George at Oropos in Boeotia. Tania Velmans's catalogue, while not as detailed in its descriptions, incorporates more monuments and thus provides a more rounded, albeit far from complete, picture of artistic activity in Greece. Her catalogue includes select bibliographies for Omorphi Ekklesia in Athens, the Church of St. George at Kouvara, St. Peter at Kalyvia-Kouvara, the Church of the Virgin at Merenda, the cave at Penteli, the Holy Trinity at Kranidi, and the Church of St. George at Oropos.⁸² A number of shorter papers on the subject should also not escape mention. Manolis Chatzidakis' "Aspects de la peinture murale du XIIIe siècle en Grèce," Sophia Kalopissi-Verti's "Tendenze stilistiche della pittura monumentale in Grecia durante il XIII secolo" and Doula Mouriki's chronologically somewhat later situated article "Stylistic Trends in Monumental Painting of Greece at the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century" are invaluable for any attempt to trace regional and local stylistic developments in the areas surrounding Athens and Thebes.⁸³

⁸² Velmans, *La peinture murale*, 141-50.

⁸³ Manolis Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale du XIIIe siècle en Grèce," in *L'art byzantin du XIIIe siècle, Symposium Sopoćani 1965* (Belgrade: Faculte de Philosophie, Department de l'histoire de l'art, 1967), 59-90; Doula Mouriki, "Stylistic Trends in Monumental Painting of Greece at the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century," in *L'art byzantin au debut du XIVe siècle: Symposium de Gračanica 1973* (Belgrade: Faculté de Philosophie, 1978), 55-83; Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, "Tendenze stilistiche della pittura monumentale in Grecia durante il XIII secolo," in *XXXI Corso di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina: Seminario Internazionale di Studi su "La Grecia paleocristiana e bizantina" Ravenna, 7-14 Aprile 1984* (Ravenna: Edizioni del Girasole, 1984), 221-253.

The above-mentioned studies and those cited in Appendix II document a period of extensive artistic production, yet none of these publications provides a complete catalogue of monuments in the territories that made up the lordship of Athens, and none discusses the paintings in terms of their particular historical setting in Latin Greece. While the occasional iconographic and stylistic peculiarity is noted, the churches are considered as purely Byzantine. Non-Greek elements are treated merely as the incidental result of the Latin presence without much consideration regarding modes of transmission or possible interpretations for such additions or the absence thereof. A case in point for this approach is Agape Vasilake-Karakatsane's observation of some unusual representations in the Omorphi Ekklesia in Athens

To sum up: the Angel in the western cross vault...is rendered in a technique which chiefly characterizes miniatures and icons attributable to the Crusaders in Palestine in the second half of the 13th century; in that period similar features are met with in purely Byzantine works however. There remains the problem of the derivation of this technique whether, that is to say, it arose from Byzantium, had its origins in the West or, in the last analysis, derived from Byzantine prototypes adapted by the Crusaders. In any case it is a fact that Attica...was held by the Franks in that period.⁸⁴

This statement perfectly sums up the difficulties associated with interpreting potentially non-Byzantine components in Greek painting. At the same time it points towards a new avenue of investigation, one that sees the multivalency of artistic heritage and messages as the very hallmark of artistic production in Crusader-held territories. This avenue, however, remains unexplored in Vasilake-Karakatsane's conclusion, which states that the

⁸⁴ Agape Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Hoi toichographies tes Omorphēs Ekklēsiās stēn Athēna, Tetrada Christianikēs archaiologias kai technēs* (Athens: Christianikē Archaialogikē Hetaireia, 1971), 145.

...appearance of western elements in the Omorphi Ekklesia neither follows any pattern nor is concentrated at any one point so as to be accountable for by instructions from above ... It also shows that there were then in the area western works of art, which the painters had the opportunity of seeing and studying.⁸⁵

There is no intent here to negate the significance and value of this statement. There are few studies that match Vasilake-Karakatsane's detailed and insightful treatment of the material and even fewer that show equal attention to the historical setting that governed the creation of the studied program. Yet it should be noted that the conclusion is one based on a single monument and says little regarding the socio-cultural trends that might have led to the creation of such a stylistically and thematically complex program. More wide-ranging issues of socio-cultural interaction and modes of artistic interchange remain largely untouched.

Such questions are brought to the forefront in only a small number of studies. In 1975, Doula Mouriki published her article on "An Unusual Representation of the Last Judgment in a Thirteenth Century Fresco at St. George near Kouvaras in Attica."⁸⁶ In it she examines the paintings at Kouvaras for their artistic heritage and ideological motivation and interprets the program as an attempt to "smooth out the differences between the local community and the Franks..."⁸⁷ Concentrating on a particular motif, rather than a single monument, Sharon Gerstel remarked on the increased popularity of equestrian saints in

⁸⁵ Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 148.

⁸⁶ Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 145-71.

⁸⁷ Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 169.

monumental painting in thirteenth-century Greece.⁸⁸ Noting non-Greek elements of dress and tracing the proliferation of new or unusual iconography, Gerstel has demonstrated the development of hybrid forms resulting from the cultural contacts in Latin Greece and its bordering regions. Both studies highlight the potential of wall painting as a communicator of political as well as social messages and illustrate the profound insights that can be gained if a program is considered as a product of local conditions and concerns. They also mark the beginnings of an acknowledgment often absent in earlier studies: the admission that the Frankish presence did affect the visual and thematic content of art in the occupied territories in a manner that reflected not merely a painter's momentary interest in the exotic peculiarity of a foreign art, but one that hints at the slow development of a new set of ideologies unique to Latin Greece.⁸⁹

As shown by this very brief overview of the published sources, the studies dealing with the art of thirteenth-century Greece in general and the lordship of Athens in particular still appear as disjointed specks of scholarly attention. With no coherent list of monuments and few attempts to synthesize the information provided by them as a group, the general impression remains one of fragmentation. While individual objects offer invaluable insights into specific forms of development and reactions, it is only the summation of the evidence that can lead to a more general understanding of the extent of activity, which,

⁸⁸ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 263-285.

⁸⁹ Heather Grossman recently argued for the development of a particularly "Moreote" architectural style under Frankish Rule. Heather E. Grossman, "Building Identity: Architecture as Evidence of Cultural Interaction Between Latins and Byzantines in Medieval Greece" (Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2004), 10.

subsequently, may allow for a more precise assessment of the socio-cultural conditions directing their creation.

Geographic Distribution of the Monuments

More than twenty monuments painted in the lordship of Athens during the thirteenth and the first decade of the fourteenth century still preserve all or part of their original decoration. Several more structures are known to have been constructed or restored during the period in question, but their original decoration has either been covered by later campaigns or is no longer preserved.⁹⁰ To the category of paintings no longer extant one might also add murals in the Frankish palace at Thebes that are mentioned in primary sources but no longer survive.⁹¹

⁹⁰ The church at Daphne saw the construction of a Gothic exonarthex after the expulsion of the Orthodox monks in 1207 when the monastery became home to Latin monks of the Cistercian order. Beata Kitsiki-Panagopoulos, *Cistercian and Mendicant Monasteries in Medieval Greece* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 56-62. In a visit to the monastery in 1998, Sharon Gerstel was kind enough to draw my attention to a recently uncovered and as yet undated image of St. George above the north door that might belong to the same period. However, a close examination has not been possible, and it is unclear how the execution of such a painting could be aligned with the strict guidelines of the Cistercian order against figural decoration. The churches of St. Luke the Evangelist in Lambriká (narthex), St. Mary the Virgin at Varabá in Attica and St. Nicholas near Megara have been dated to the Frankish period, but none of them preserves visible evidence of mural decoration contemporary with their construction. Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 86-88, 153-54, 292-93.

⁹¹Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 298.

The geographic distribution of the monuments does not seem to follow a particular pattern (fig. 1). They are scattered more or less evenly across the Greek landscape with three areas of concentrated activity. The first of these is located on the peninsula of Attica south of Athens. The Taxiarches at Markopolou, the Church of the Virgin at Merenta, St. George at Kouvara, St. Peter at Kalyvia-Kouvara, St. Demetrios at Saronikos, St. Mary the Virgin at Varabá and St. Luke at Lambriká all lie clustered together in relatively close vicinity to one other. A similar concentration is found on the Methana peninsula where four churches, St. John the Theologian, St. Demetrios, St. Nicholas and the Church of the Virgin were built in the period of Latin rule over the region. A smaller cluster is located in the immediate environment of Kranidi in the Argolid where one finds the churches of the Taxiarches, St. John the Theologian, and the Holy Trinity.

It is interesting to note that these groupings are nowhere near the main civic and administrative centers of Thebes and Athens. The Boeotian capital of the lordship preserves no tangible remnants of painting, and the city that gave its name to the territory can boast only one thirteenth-century program in its immediate vicinity; the paintings in Omorphi Ekklesia. Most of the monuments that still exist today are associated with small communities in relatively isolated rural areas. If one is to recognize the “clusters” of monuments noted above as signs of increased artistic activity, conditions seem to have been particularly favorable in the outlying areas of the lordship. This phenomenon has long been recognized, and scholars generally attribute it to the relative independence enjoyed by these provincial areas that were located on the outskirts of the Frankish realm, far from the commanding grip of the centralized administration. In the case of Attica it

has been asserted that “during the Frankish occupation Orthodox worship, almost rooted out in Athens, was unhampered in the country districts, and throughout Attica ruined churches were energetically restored.”⁹² Considering that this statement follows shortly after a reference to “the dark days of Roman, Frankish and Turkish rule,” it might be ascertained, that the author insinuates anti-Latin sentiment and resistance among the guiding factors for the increased interest in pious construction.⁹³ A similar undercurrent has been detected by Eleni Ginis–Tsofopoulou who asserts: “Certainly the activity observed in the region at this time should be associated with the fact that the inhabitants of the countryside enjoyed greater freedom than their counterparts in Athens, where repressive measures and restrictions had been imposed, typical of which was the abolition of the Orthodox Metropolis.”⁹⁴ Here, too, it is implied that the active engagement in the creation of painted programs resulted from the wish to emphasize local orthodoxy in the face of foreign despotism.⁹⁵ Ginis–Tsofopoulou, however, does not share the earlier expressed view that characterizes the period of Latin rule as a dark age. In her assessment this particular era of foreign dominion over Greece was “relatively secure and stable with favorable consequences for the life of the inhabitants.”⁹⁶ To what extent the preservation of national and religious identity acted as motivation for church founding, restoration and

⁹² Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 6.

⁹³ Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 5.

⁹⁴ Aikaterinides, ed., *Mesogaia*, 184.

⁹⁵ Kalopissi-Verti compares this form of subtle protest to later reactions to the Turkish occupation of Greece. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 46.

⁹⁶ Eleni Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Late Byzantine Period (13th-15th century)," in *Mesogaia: History and Culture of Mesogeia in Attica*, ed. Georgios N. Aikaterinides (Athens: Eleftherios Venezelos Athens International Airport, 2001), 183.

decoration shall be discussed in more detail later in this study. For now it might be instructive to subject the bases for these assertions - the fact that most monuments are found in relatively remote rural areas - to some scrutiny.

I believe the informative value of the numeric dominance of provincial monuments should be approached with caution. There are a great number of factors that might have contributed to the development of this configuration or skewed the evidence into presenting a picture that says more about modern patterns of settlement and demography than about those of the thirteenth century.⁹⁷ First and foremost, there are those effects of time and human habitation that obliterate the records of the past. These tend to be of higher impact in areas of dense population such as cities where military struggles and the changing needs of the population promote ongoing change. A case in point is the city of Thebes where Nicolas II de St.-Omer (d. 1294), joint lord of Thebes had erected his residence.

With his great wealth and dominions which he held, he constructed the castle of St.-Omer which was in Thebes and he built this castle to be an extremely strong one; he made dwellings within it fit for a basileus. Indeed, he built it and constructed it and inside he covered its walls with murals depicting how the Franks conquered Syria.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Robert Ousterhout also warns of the overinterpretation of the limited data that presents a picture of almost exclusive rural monuments and common sponsors. "Urban and noble foundations often fare less well than isolated and less impressive rural churches. Thus, to view the considerable number of common sponsors recorded in thirteenth-century Greece as a reflection of the political and economic changes of the time... may be overinterpreting the data." Ousterhout, "Review," 809.

⁹⁸ Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 298.

While the *Chronicle of Morea* is not necessarily known for its historical accuracy, it is reasonable to assume that this passage refers to an actual structure. The author may not have been completely attuned to all the facts of his narration, but he also did not make a habit of embellishing his story with elaborations on the artistic exploits of his literary subjects. The uniqueness of this passage, and the author's uncharacteristic specificity in describing the theme of the decoration, make it a generally accepted piece of evidence. The splendid fortress constructed by Nicolas II de St.-Omer (d. 1294), Joint lord of Thebes, survived barely half a century. It was destroyed in 1311 by the victorious Catalans to prevent the forces of the duke of Athens from regaining control over the region.⁹⁹ This act abolished all physical evidence of this urban program.¹⁰⁰ Military necessity also nearly eliminated another example of art in an urban setting. One and a half centuries later, in 1463, the painted gate chamber that marked the entrance to the Frankish castle at Nauplia was filled with soil and rubble and closed off by a massive curtain wall to withstand the Turkish siege.¹⁰¹ The murals were rediscovered only in the last century and provide another instance for artistic activity in Frankish towns.¹⁰² As these examples

⁹⁹ Setton, *Catalan Domination*, 13; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 298; John M. Sharp, ed., *The Catalan Chronicle of Francisco de Moncada* (El Paso: Texas Western Press University of Texas at El Paso, 1975), 218n.7.

¹⁰⁰ Literary evidence is also all that remains from another urban program, albeit outside of the lordship of Athens: the paintings in the archbishop's palace in Patras where the walls are reported to have been adorned with scenes from the capture of Troy. L. Legrand, "Relation du pèlerinage à Jérusalem de Nicholas de Martoni, notaire italien (1394-1395)," *ROL* III (1895): 661.

¹⁰¹ Schaefer, "Das Stadttor," 20.

¹⁰² Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 14-15. For reports on the discovery and a preliminary discussion of the paintings see: Schaefer, "Das Stadttor," 18-24; idem, "Neue Untersuchungen," 155-214.

show, by their very nature as urban settlements, it is difficult to arrive at a clear assessment concerning artistic activity in the cities of the lordship. Consequently, it is problematic to interpret the existing monuments in terms of a rural vs. urban dichotomy based merely on a quasi-statistical evaluation of their numerical prominence.

Still, the facts of preservation remain indisputable, and regardless of what happened in the larger towns and cities, there clearly existed a high level of artistic activity in the more provincial districts. The question remains, however, if this should be seen as a consequence of isolation from the Latin authority. David Jacoby's investigations of the economic conditions in Latin Greece have shown the growing importance of rural areas ensuing from the commercial endeavors of the Western settlers who utilized the agricultural resources of their new homeland to build an extensive local and "trans-Mediterranean" network of trade. "As a result, the whole region experienced an ever stronger economic interaction between the countryside, the cities and maritime trade."¹⁰³

This is echoed in the archaeological evidence. The Boeotia Project, directed by John Bintliff from Durham University and Anthony Snodgrass of Cambridge University, surveyed the south-western regions of Boeotia in the area of Thebes to recover patterns of past settlement.¹⁰⁴ For the period of Frankish settlement they uncovered material that

¹⁰³ David Jacoby, "Changing Economic Patterns in Latin Romania: The Impact of the West," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh (Washington, D. C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 127; Jacoby, "Italian Migration."

¹⁰⁴ John Bintliff, "Frankish Countryside in Central Greece: The Evidence from Archaeological Feld Survey," in *The Archaeology of Medieval Greece*, ed. Peter Lock and G.D.R. Sanders (Oakville, CT: Oxbow Books, 1996), 1-2.

designates an era of stability and growth.¹⁰⁵ A similar conclusion was reached by the Methana Survey Project. Sponsored by the British School at Athens and the University of Liverpool, the findings of the survey counter the heretofore prevailing picture of Methana as a largely isolated and underpopulated peninsula. Pertaining the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the findings outline increased building activity in the area of Megalochori and indicate “that the inhabitants of the peninsula were in a position to follow developments which took place in the rest of the Peloponnese.”¹⁰⁶ Trade relations with Corinth and Athens seem likely at a time when the peninsula had become property of the de la Roche family, an assertion that gains support from the discovery of a hoard of English “short-cross” pennies of c. 1215-1224.¹⁰⁷ Comparable findings regarding medieval rural life have been reported by the Morea Project, an Archaeological survey of secular buildings in the northwestern Peloponnese. In a recent talk on medieval settlements based in part on the survey’s findings, Kostis Kourelis drew a picture of a prosperous rural society engaged in active trade with the surrounding urban centers.¹⁰⁸ Trade and economic development do not happen in a vacuum and the archaeological evidence indicates that the fertile planes of Attica or the southern Argolid might not have been as isolated as often assumed.

¹⁰⁵ Bintliff, "Frankish Countryside in Central Greece: The Evidence from Archaeological Field Survey," 6-7.

¹⁰⁶ Theodore Koukoulis, "Medieval Methana," in *A Rough and Rocky Place: The Landscape and Settlement History of the Methana Peninsula, Greece*, ed. Christopher Mee and Hamish Forbes (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), 94.

¹⁰⁷ Methana became incorporated into the lordship of Athens in 1210/1212 together with the Argolid. Koukoulis, "A Rough and Rocky Place," 92, 95n.82.

¹⁰⁸ Kostis Kourelis, "Fabrics and Rubble Walls: The Archaeology of Danielisâ Gifts," *BSCA* 30 (2004): 26-28.

Surveys such as the Methana and the Morea Project bring to light the insufficient knowledge that exists about medieval rural life and settlement in southern Greece.¹⁰⁹ Among the issues that are in need of further investigation is the question of Latin involvement in provincial affairs. To investigate the approximately twenty painted monuments that are found in the lordship of Athens merely as products of Greek communities is to accept the notion that Latin activity was somehow limited to the confines of an urban setting. The premise that those who migrated to the lands captured by the Crusaders gathered there to live in “secure” urban communities has recently been contested by Ronnie Ellenblum in his book *Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*.¹¹⁰ Challenging the notion that the “the Franks ... confined themselves almost exclusively to the large cities and fortresses and engaged to a very limited extent in agricultural activities,” Ellenblum dispels the urban model of Crusader society. Evidence of 200 Frankish sites the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and detailed studies of individual communities testifies to the Latin’s active engagement in agricultural life and rural settlement.¹¹¹ To what extent these findings can be transferred to Frankish Greece is difficult to assess without a more complete archaeological record. But despite the geographic, chronological and ideological issues that separate Crusader Palestine from

¹⁰⁹ For a detailed discussion of some of the misconceptions see: Kostis Kourelis, "Monuments of Rural Archaeology: Medieval Settlements in the Northwestern Peloponnese" (Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2003), 21-37.

¹¹⁰ Ronnie Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

¹¹¹ For a map of Frankish rural sites in Palestine see: Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement*, Map 1.

medieval Greece, they share the basic ingredients of Western immigrants establishing an economic base in newly acquired territories.¹¹² As has already been argued in the preceding chapter, the Latin presence of Greece was, from its beginning, an act of settlement. And just as has been argued for the Holy Land, it appears unlikely that those who moved to Greece abandoned the “rural way of life” that lay at the heart of Frankish society in their western homelands.¹¹³ The importance of agriculture for the Latin settlers can be gleaned from the feudal law code of the Frankish Morea, the *Assizes of Romania*, which was codified in the early fourteenth century. Concerning the right to make a will, the text reads “that if the grain that [the deceased] caused to be sown...has sprouted, or grapes have been formed, or the olives of the fruits of the trees have been formed...the fruits of the land which have not been harvested belong to the lord or to the heir of the fief.”¹¹⁴ This is not the law of an urban elite removed from the realities of agricultural life. Certainly, a single passage from a book can not be construed as proof for Latin rural settlement, but are we to ignore even the possibility of a development in Greece similar to that found in the Levant simply because the archaeological surveys that could prove or disprove such a hypothesis have not been conducted? This question becomes particularly

¹¹² The highest concentration of rural settlement in the Holy Land was in regions inhabited by local Christian communities. Areas with a largely Muslim population appear to have been less attractive. Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement*, 283-284. Apparently a basic level of religious compatibility was deemed favorable for cohabitation. Equally apparent is the fact that the differences that did exist between the local strands of Christianity and that of the Latins did not greatly affect their ability to cooperate. It seems reasonable to assume that a similar attitude prevailed in Greece.

¹¹³ Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement*, 14.

¹¹⁴ The passage appears under the heading: “How All Freemen Can Make a Will, Stipulating Certain Things.” Topping, *Assizes of Romania*, 38.

poignant if one considers the recent discovery of a late thirteenth- early fourteenth-century farming complex near Spata in Attica for which Eleni Gini-Tsofopoulou has stipulated Frankish ownership.¹¹⁵ Also the Boeotia Project uncovered evidence for Frankish rural settlement when a drought lowered the levels of lake Hylike to uncover a medieval tower surrounded by the remnants of a small, possibly Frankish, community.¹¹⁶ Instructive in this regard, albeit not conclusive, are also the findings of a recent study on the dining habits in Byzantine and Frankish Boeotia.¹¹⁷ Interpreting thirteenth- and fourteenth-century ceramics excavated in the region, Joanita Vroom documents a shift from wide shallow dishes to smaller deep bowls and an increased use of knives as table utensils.¹¹⁸ This gradual alteration may be related to the influx of Frankish settlers and the introduction of Western diet and dining manners. In the context of the present discussion, it is interesting to note, that this shift was observed in Corinth as well as in rural areas.¹¹⁹ Did the inhabitants of the Boeotian countryside merely copy the culinary practices of their urban overlords, or were these changes the result of a more intimate familiarity brought about by Latin rural settlement?

¹¹⁵ "...it is reasonable to assume that this property at Spata belonged to a Frankish landowner." Gini-Tsofopoulou, "Late Byzantine Period," 183.

¹¹⁶ Bintliff, "Frankish Countryside in Central Greece: The Evidence from Archaeological Field Survey," 6.

¹¹⁷ Joanita Vroom, *After Antiquity: Ceramics and Society in the Aegean from the 7th to the 20th Century A. C.; A Case Study from Boeotia, Central Greece, Archaeological Studies Leiden University* (Leiden: Faculty of Archaeology, 2003), 303-334.

¹¹⁸ Vroom, *After Antiquity*, 329.

¹¹⁹ Vroom, *After Antiquity*, 329.

As has been highlighted by Kostis Kourelis, medieval rural settlements have, until recently, gone largely unnoticed in the scholarship.¹²⁰ Furthermore, he points to the difficulties involved in trying to assign labels such as “Frankish” or “Greek” to places of habitation or other structures.¹²¹ At present, we simply don’t know enough of rural life, be it Latin or Greek, in medieval Greece to draw reliable conclusions regarding the presence of Latins in remote areas such as Methana or southern Attica. Subsequently it seems premature to assume the absence of significant interaction between Latins and Greeks for these regions. Finally, it must be noted that the continuation of local religious practice as demonstrated by the churches that remain does not necessarily imply a lack of contact with or political resistance against the Frankish occupants. It may simply be the result of a policy of tolerance as was pledged by Geoffroy Villehardouin and a practical strategy adopted by the Latin Church in the effort to compensate for a lack of personnel in this new outpost of Western Christianity.¹²²

As tempting it may seem to draw general conclusions from the geographic and numeric distribution of the ecclesiastical programs and one secular cycle that remain, at the present state of archaeological investigation this data has little edifying value when it comes to judging political or social intent. Deductions regarding the ideological implications of a program should be made on an individual basis with consideration of its unique qualities and the particular circumstances of its creation. What the number of monuments does

¹²⁰ Kourelis, "Monuments of Rural Archaeology", 21-22.

¹²¹ Kourelis, "Monuments of Rural Archaeology", 34-35.

¹²² Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 132.

provide, however, is evidence for the continuation of a vital community of painters able to devise and execute monumental programs and the presence of a sizeable number of donors in need of their services.

The Patrons

A number of churches in the lordship of Athens preserve inscriptions commemorating the pious donations of their benefactors. The dedications reveal habits of donorship that correspond with developments of the rest of Greece where the social range of patronage had began to expand in the late twelfth century from the “imperial milieu” to include the less eminent strata of common society. The result of political, social and economic changes in the Byzantine Empire, the movement gained momentum in the periods of destruction and rebuilding that followed the Fourth Crusade.¹²³ High church officials, Greek aristocrats, Frankish nobility, priests and local peasants, all had their involvement in the adornment of religious and secular structures across the lordship commemorated in the form of dedicatory inscriptions. Where these written memoranda are absent one can, in some cases, draw upon the intrinsic evidence provided by the paintings themselves or on the occasional literary reference to draw conclusions concerning their sponsors.¹²⁴ For

¹²³ Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 44.

¹²⁴ For a short commentary on the difficulties in establishing a relationship between patrons and their programs see: Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 43.

the purposes of the present discussion it is useful to consider the donors not in terms of their social class, as has been done previously, but in terms of their cultural affiliations.¹²⁵

Greek patrons

The majority of the surviving inscriptions refer to Greek patrons whereby it is not always clear whether their religious affiliations were aligned with their cultural heritage or with their socio-political ambitions. Such is the case with Ignatios, probably bishop of Thermia and Kea, a suffragan diocese of the metropolis of Athens, and in all likelihood abbot of the monastery for which the Church of St. Peter at Kalyvia-Kouvaras in Attica (1231/32) might have served as a *katholikon*. He was one of the bishops who stayed in office after pledging obedience to the Latin Church.¹²⁶ Obedience to Latin authority has also been surmised in the case of Manuel Mourmouras who, together with his wife and children, is named as the donor for the paintings in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Kranidi, Argolid (1244). Manuel is believed to have been one of the local *archontes* who paid homage to the Latins in exchange for “honor and beneficence.”¹²⁷ David Jacoby suggests that he may

¹²⁵ Sofia Kalopissi-Verti had classified the donors mentioned in the inscriptions in terms of laymen and clergymen and monks. Latin donors are not documented in her study. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 28-41.

¹²⁶ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 47-8; Nafsika Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, "Hagios Petros Kalyvion Kouvara Attikes," *DChAE* IV, no. 14 (1987-88): 174-178; Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 38, 60-1 Catalogue A 12.

¹²⁷ This assertion is largely based on the later history of the family when several of its members held important offices in the Latin administration. It is not clear, however, if the Mourmouras named in the fourteenth-century documents are truly the descendants of Manuel. Georgios A. Soteriou, "Hagia Trias tou Kranidiou," *EEBS* III (1926): 375; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 112, 132; Jacoby, "The Encounter," 898; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 2-4; idem, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 34, 64-5 Catalogue A16.

have converted to Roman Catholicism.¹²⁸ Sometime in the third quarter of the thirteenth century, a priest by the name of Leon Kokalakis commissioned the decoration of the monastic Church of the Savior at Alepochori in Attica.¹²⁹ Shared donorship, possibly by members from the local congregation can be assumed for the small Church of St. Demetrius near Kounoupitsa, in Methana (Argolid) which was renovated sometimes in the late thirteenth- early fourteenth century.¹³⁰ Such collective efforts are common in thirteenth-century Greece and are characteristic for the social diversity of donorship at the time.¹³¹

Latin patrons

Latin donorship is less amply documented, but there remains enough evidence to show the Franks' active involvement in matters of painted decoration. Contrary to their Greek subjects, the Western lords expanded their patronage to support religious as well as secular programs. Nicolas II de St.-Omer's destroyed palace of Thebes with its cycle depicting the conquest of Syria is only one example of this practice. At the entrance to the Frankish castle at Nauplia a program was devised that evokes the protective powers of religious figures while asserting Latin dominion. Five coats of arms proclaim Western sovereignty over the fortress and attest to the involvement of some of the most prominent

¹²⁸ Jacoby, "The Encounter," 898. For a different opinion see: Ilieva, *Frankish Morea*, 226.

¹²⁹ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 10, 72; Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 63 Catalogue A 14.

¹³⁰ Mee and Forbes, eds., *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 229; Mitsani, "Methana," 237, 243.

¹³¹ Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 35-7.

figures in the lordship of Athens in the affairs of Nauplia.¹³² If it was a member of the Brienne family, whose coat of arms occupies the most prominent position among the heraldic signs that mark the entrance, an affiliate of the de la Roche clan which ruled the lordship, or some local official responsible for the upkeep of the castle who ordered its gatechamber to be painted can not be determined. It is certain, however, that the program that was commissioned is of Frankish origin and reflects the complex ideological, social and artistic interactions that are generally associated with Crusader Art. Latin involvement in religious donation is attested to by the Church at Merbaka on the plain between Argos and Nauplia which has recently been interpreted as the burial chapel of William of Moerbeke, archbishop of Corinth between 1278 and 1286.¹³³ Only some floral motifs remain of the original decoration, but their appearance and technique is distinctive enough to allow Mary Lee Coulson to ascribe them to Italian painters.¹³⁴ Another example of religious sponsorship is documented by an inscription in the Church of St. George at Karditza (modern Akraiphnion) (fig. 2).¹³⁵ The text commemorates Antoine de Flamenc, lord of Karditza, bailli of Thessaly and great baron of the Morea (1303-1313), whose coat of arms also appears in the gatechamber at Nauplia and who commissioned the restoration

¹³² Three of the heraldic emblems can be identified with some certainty, and all three are directly related to Frankish ruling families of the region. The central shield is associated with Hugh de Brienne, Count of Lecce and bailiff of the duchy of Athens from 1291-1294, or with his son Gautier, the later duke of Athens (d. 1311). Another coat of arms can be linked to Isabelle de Villehardouin, princess of Achaia from 1289 to 1307 or with her daughter, Mahaut (1293-1331), who inherited both title and arms. The third probably belongs to Antoine de Flamenc (1303-1313), lord of Karditza and Bailiff of Thessaly. Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 20-21.

¹³³ Coulson, "The Church of Merbaka", 1, 328-30.

¹³⁴ Coulson, "The Church of Merbaka", 325-26.

¹³⁵ Miller, *Essays*, Appendix 132-134.

of the church.¹³⁶ Today later layers of paint obscure any murals that might have covered the fourteenth-century walls.¹³⁷ Carried out in 1311, the refurbishment might have been Antoine's expression of thanks for his survival of the battle at Halmyros on March 15th.¹³⁸ It marks the end of the flourishing of the Frankish lordship of Athens.

Overview

The cumulative evidence of artistic production in the lordship of Athens shows a relatively high level of activity both on the part of the Greeks as well as the Latins. This statement is somewhat at variance with the prevailing scholarship that treats thirteenth-century painting in Greece largely as a prerogative of the indigenous population. With the inclusion of several urban programs into the overall picture, the model of rural isolation as a driving factor in artistic donation loses credibility and the need for reassessment becomes palpable. Without wholly denouncing the informative value of the numerical prominence of rural monuments, it might be the time to question previous interpretations of this fact of preservation. With archaeological surveys continuously adding to our knowledge of life in Latin Greece and reforming our understanding of rural existence it

¹³⁶ Hopf, *Chroniques gréco-romanes inédites ou peu connues*, 478; Gustave Léon Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l'Orient latin* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1943), 198; Miller, *Essays*, 132-135; Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 122, 218, 372; Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 21.

¹³⁷ Only in some places has the later paint and whitewash been removed to reveal remnants from different campaigns.

¹³⁸ Miller suggests Antoine may have commissioned the work "in pursuance of a vow made before he went into action" at Halmyros. Miller, *Essays*, Appendix 133.

becomes increasingly difficult to read the decoration of these churches merely in terms of a negative reaction, be it conscious or unconscious, to the foreign occupancy. Interesting in this regard are the findings concerning painting in Attica after 1311 as summarized by Ginis–Tsofopoulou: “The examples of painting from the Palaeologan era ... in monuments of the Mesogeia are limited to isolated representations ... and bear witness to the almost total lack of artistic activity during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which fact can be linked with the period of Catalan rule, that violently cut short the artistic floruit observed in the thirteenth century.”¹³⁹ If the thirteenth-century construction and decoration of churches in Attica should be seen as the result of the relative isolation of the area and certain anti-Latin sentiments, as has been suggested, how are we to interpret this artistic hiatus? It does not seem reasonable to assume that it was the result of closer, more affirmative interaction between the local population and this new group of Western conquerors.

At any rate, merely looking at the Greek side is to ignore the second part in the equation: the Latins. With religious as well as secular programs to attest to their interest in the sponsorship of painting, the question arises why are there not more Frankish-sponsored programs? The answer surely lies in a combination of factors. From the paintings at Nauplia and the reference to the murals at Thebes, it can be asserted, that Latin sponsorship pursued different goals than the religiously inspired donations of the local population. As occupants of recently conquered territories the Latins had need to reassert

¹³⁹ Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Late Byzantine Period," 184.

their military and administrative sway. Painting was apparently deemed an appropriate medium for such communications. Unfortunately, and this, too is attested by the history of the two monuments, secular programs intended to assert ownership and sovereignty are the first to fall prey to future generations of conquerors. To use Peter Lock's words as to the scant remnants of Frankish donation: "It would seem loss rather than absence is at stake here."¹⁴⁰ Regarding the decoration of churches for which the inscription at Akraiphnion and the fragments of paint in the Church at Merbaka provide such tantalizing evidence, it must be acknowledged, that at present we don't have a clear picture of what separates a Latin program from an Orthodox one in the culturally mixed setting of a Crusader state.¹⁴¹ In the absence of a clear distinction, the possibility must be considered that religiously specific church decoration may simply not have been as important to the Latin settlers as the establishment of administrative structures that were to ensure the survival of their newly established domains. For a more conclusive assessment of the material and its ideological motivation it is necessary to go beyond issues of numerical and geographic distribution to investigate the programs in detail for potential markers of cultural affiliation or possible signs of deliberate religious distinction.

¹⁴⁰ Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 220.

¹⁴¹ In a recent article on the church of Panagia Phorbiotissa in Asinou, Cyprus, Sophia Kalopissi-Verti discusses aspects of the decoration that might indicate a program directed at both Greek and Latin worshippers. Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, "Representations of the Virgin in Lusignan Cyprus," in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theodokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 305-14.

III

PAINTED DECLARATIONS OF ORTHODOXY

Despite the changes in the political landscape of Latin Greece, the churches in the lordship of Athens were painted in the Byzantine tradition. Seemingly undisturbed by current events, the decorative programs persisted in the Orthodox practice and continued to perform their function in support of the Greek liturgy. Still, the formation of a new political entity and the simultaneous establishment of the Latin Church in the region did not pass the artistic landscape of the lordship unnoticed. A new ecclesiastical hierarchy had been imposed upon the existing structure, and the Greek clergy had to contend with a leadership that subscribed to a different creed and celebrated the liturgy in a different manner. The reactions to the new situation were varied and the line between sanction and condemnation by no means clear cut. While the immediate impact of the political and ecclesiastical coup is best assessed based on the literary sources, over the course of the century its effects found expression in the churches that were decorated under the Latin administration. To examine some of the consequences of the Latin presence and to gauge some individual responses to ecclesiastical policy, the present chapter focuses on a select number of issues: church union and liturgical practice. Both were highly divisive topics that occupied much of the Latin/Orthodox religious polemic of the period. Not surprisingly, the spirit of the deliberations also found its way into the pictorial vocabulary of religious painting. To place the findings into a larger context, this chapter will also contain a short overview of the condition of the Church in the lordship of Athens. It is

only within the greater historical context that the assessment of the programs becomes meaningful as images can be related to recent events and programmatic choices can be investigated in light of official church policy and examined for signs of individual and public response.

Obedient Union?

When the empire of Constantinople was transferred in these days from the Greeks to the Latins, the Church of Constantinople also returned to obedience to the Apostolic See, like a daughter to a mother and a member to a head ... we acknowledge them as brothers, comrades, and friends because, although we hold an office of higher authority over them, still this higher authority does not carry with it dominion but rather servitude.¹⁴²

Not all appreciated Pope Innocent's (1198-1216) promises of fraternal servitude. The Greek metropolitan of Athens, Michael Choniates, for one, saw little promise in his joining the Apostolic See and moved into exile to the Island of Chios where he remained from 1205 until 1217.¹⁴³ After leaving Chios he stayed in exile in Frankish Boudonitza, an independent Latin holding at the northern frontier of the lordship of Athens where he remained until his death sometime after 1220.¹⁴⁴ The vacant seat in Athens was filled with

¹⁴² Letter by Innocent III addressed to the Crusader clergy in Constantinople dated to 21 January, 1205. Hageneder, ed., *Reg.* 7, 203; Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 134.

¹⁴³ For a discussion of Michael Choniates's exile in Chios, see Georg Stadtmüller, *Michael Choniates, Metropolit von Athen: ca. 1138-ca. 1222* (Roma: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1934), 191-205.

¹⁴⁴ The exact year of the metropolitan's death remains a matter of scholarly debate. Georg Stadtmüller dates it to 1222. Stadtmüller, *Michael Choniates*, 205-6, 256; Kenneth M.

the Latin ecclesiastic Bérard whose election was sanctioned by Pope Innocent III on 27 November, 1206.¹⁴⁵ Episcopal desertion must have been widespread in the Latin Empire of Constantinople. In Greece alone the archbishops of Patras, Thebes, Corinth and Thessaloniki chose exile over submission to papal authority.¹⁴⁶ The problem was significant and demanded the formulation of official church policy laid out in a papal letter from 5 August, 1206 to the patriarch of Constantinople, Tommaso Morosini (1205-1211).¹⁴⁷ The pope was mindful of the “revolutionary character of events” and gave instruction to “proceed with greater mildness” with those who abandoned their flock.¹⁴⁸ Only after repeated citations and the threat of excommunication had proven unsuccessful in reminding the apostates of their duties were they to be removed from their posts.¹⁴⁹ This policy of clemency also extended into the lower ranks of priesthood whose members

Setton, "A Note on Michael Choniates, Archbishop of Athens, 1182-1204," *Speculum* XXI (1946): 236.

¹⁴⁵ August Potthast, ed., *Regesta pontificum romanorum inde ab a. post Christum natum MCXCVIII ad a. MCCCIV*, vol. I (Berolini: Prostat in aedibus Rudolphi de Decker; etc. etc., 1874): 2922; Stadtmüller, *Michael Choniates*, 66; Setton, *The Papacy*, 406-7.

¹⁴⁶ Joseph Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy 1198-1400* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1979), 36 n. 64.

¹⁴⁷ Tia M. Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions of Latin Religious 'Errors': Themes and Changes from 850-1350," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. A. E. Laiou and R. P. Mottahedeh (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 128.

¹⁴⁸ Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum, I*: 2867; Setton, *The Papacy*, 410; Powell, *The Deeds*, 189.

¹⁴⁹ Similar instructions were given to the Archbishop of Patras on 19 April, 1205. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum, I*: 2867, 3090; Kenneth Meyer Setton, *Athens in the Middle Ages* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1975), 410 n. 29.

were only to be replaced after “they have been allowed a fitting period of time” to return.¹⁵⁰

Representations of the apostles Peter and Paul

It is not clear how many of the suffragan clergy in the lordship of Athens participated in the ecclesiastical exodus; it is certain that there were those who submitted to the terms of Papal preeminence.¹⁵¹ In 1231/32 a certain Ignatios commissioned the decoration of a monastic Church in Kalyvia-Kouvara which he dedicated to the apostles Peter and Paul.¹⁵² An inscription in the narthex commemorates the donor as “Ἰγνατιος κέκραγα αιταζων ταδε: εκ γης Αθηνων ηγμενος μονοτρο[πος:] γησω(ν) προεδρευων δε Θ(ε)ρμειων Κεω:”¹⁵³ Ignatios, thus, was probably the abbot of the monastery and the bishop of Thermia (= Kythnos) and Kea, a suffragan of the archbishopric of Athens.¹⁵⁴ To be in such an exalted position, Ignatios must have been one of those “devoted and loyal” Greek bishops who were “willing to receive humbly and devoutly consecration” from the Latin patriarch of Constantinople.¹⁵⁵ In this context the double dedication of his church to Peter and Paul, the chief apostles of the Latin and Orthodox Churches can hardly be seen as

¹⁵⁰ Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 2867; Powell, *The Deeds*, 191.

¹⁵¹ Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 36.

¹⁵² Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*; idem, "Hagios Petros," 47-50.

¹⁵³ Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 61. Her transcription varies slightly from the one published a few years earlier by Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, "Hagios Petros," 173.

¹⁵⁴ S. Salaville, "Le titre ecclésiastique de "proedros" dans les monuments byzantins," *EO* XXIV (1930): 416-36; Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, "Hagios Petros," 173, 175; Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 61-2.

¹⁵⁵ Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 2867; Powell, *The Deeds*, 190.

incidental. In particular the reference to Peter as “κρηπὶς ὀρθοδόξων δογμάτων“ suggests an effort to defend Ignatios’s papal allegiances.¹⁵⁶ By identifying Peter in this manner, the inscription proclaims the Orthodoxy of the church he represents. As will be discussed below, the issue of Latin Orthodoxy was hotly contested by some who accused the Catholic Church of heresy. The inscription may have been an attempt to clear Ignatios of such suspicions, for if the teachings of the Latin Church were Orthodox, accepting its authority could not be construed as a betrayal of one’s faith.

Ignatios’s church is not the only one to draw inspiration from the involuntary union of Rome and Constantinople. The representation of the paired chief apostles of the Latin and Greek churches or the accentuation on one of the two is a conspicuous feature in several monuments in the region. In the southern chapel in the cave at Penteli the medallions of St. Callinicus and St. Barnabas from the first half of the thirteenth century were later replaced with portraits of Peter and Paul by some of the same painters that are believed to have been involved in the decoration of the Church at Kalyvia-Kouvara (fig. 3).¹⁵⁷ Flanking the Deesis in the conch of the apse, the pair occupies a prominent position both in terms of visibility and in relation to the intercessory image in their midst. For that reason, Doula Mouriki proposed that the cave chapel might have been dedicated to the two apostles.¹⁵⁸ The proximity of Peter and Paul to the image of the Deesis is not common and recalls the arrangement on a thirteenth-century Crusader icon in the Monastery of St.

¹⁵⁶ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 49; idem, "Hagios Petros," 173; Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 60.

¹⁵⁷ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsiōn," 117-19.

¹⁵⁸ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsiōn," 119.

Catherine at Sinai that has been attributed to a French painter working in Acre (fig. 4).¹⁵⁹ On the panel the two saints appear on the upper most register and augment the traditional tripartite composition. Kurt Weitzmann has traced this arrangement to iconostasis beams where the central Deesis was flanked by images of the apostles instead of the traditional Dodecaorton. While he could only cite one other extant example of such a beam, a Crusader work attributed to an Italian painter, Weitzmann concluded: “nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the program of a beam with the Deesis flanked by apostles is a Byzantine invention.”¹⁶⁰ Regardless of the model, the Crusader painter could have relegated Peter and Paul to share the lower part of the panel with their brethren, a compositional choice that would have eliminated the need to include fourteen instead of twelve apostles to fill the registers below evenly and symmetrically.¹⁶¹ Instead, he chose to elevate the two by placing them next to the sacred trio. With the same effect in regard to the apostles’ status, this augmented Deesis configuration was also adopted as the central image of the Last Judgment on the sanctuary screen in the Church of St. George near Kouvara (fig. 5).¹⁶² Here Peter and Paul flank the central figural group made up of Christ the Judge, the Virgin and John the Baptist. Against the iconographic tradition of Judgment scenes which calls for the twelve apostles to be seated in the register below

¹⁵⁹ Kurt Weitzmann, "Four Icons on Mount Sinai: New Aspects in Crusader Art," *JÖB* XXI (1972): 388-94, fig. 1; Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 155, pl. 92.

¹⁶⁰ Georgios A. Soteriou and Maria G. Soteriou, *Icônes du Mont Sinai*, vol. I (Athens: Institut français d'Athènes, 1956), pl. 117-24; Weitzmann, "Four Icons on Mount Sinai," 281-82.

¹⁶¹ As noted by Weitzmann, the inclusion of Mark and Luke amongst the apostles generally resulted in the exclusion of James, son of Alphaeos, and Thaddaeus. Weitzmann, "Four Icons on Mount Sinai," 388.

¹⁶² Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," pl. 73-76.

Christ, Peter and Paul are depicted standing as first amongst a select group of only six of Christ's followers.¹⁶³ Positioned as they are and by virtue of their scale the two take on the role of chief intercessors on behalf of those being judged.¹⁶⁴ In her study of the program at Kouvara, Doula Mouriki could find only one other example that mirrored this arrangement. It is located in another church in the lordship of Athens: St. Nicholas near Kalamos in north-east Attica.¹⁶⁵

The pairing of Peter and Paul in such exalted positions may be seen as a product of thirteenth-century church policy. In the Deesis icon at Sinai, the French painter endowed Peter with three attributes of status. Instead of holding a scroll or a staff as is common in Middle Byzantine representations, he carries in his left hand a cross staff, a scroll and a set of keys on a large ring. As Weitzmann pointed out, his accumulation of attributes is altogether unusual for a Byzantine context and can only be explained by the Western painter wanting to emphasize Peter's rank as the chief apostle of the Roman Church.¹⁶⁶ Similar considerations might have led to the depiction of the keys in Greek churches decorated under Latin dominion where they may have served as a marker of Peter's papal affiliations. Peter's keys were not unknown in Byzantine painting but they remained a rare occurrence in the East until the thirteenth century when they became a common feature in

¹⁶³ Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 152-53.

¹⁶⁴ Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 169-70.

¹⁶⁵ Only a detail of one of the apostles has been published. Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 360-61, fig. 335; Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Hagios Nikolaos," 227-48.

¹⁶⁶ Weitzmann, "Four Icons on Mount Sinai," 283.

Crusader Art and found their way into monumental painting.¹⁶⁷ In the lordship of Athens they appear in the Last Judgment scenes in St. George (fig. 6) and in the Church of St. Peter in Kalyvia-Kouvara.¹⁶⁸ The keys are also part of Peter's portrait in the nave of Omorphi Ekklesia near Athens (fig. 7).¹⁶⁹ Joined dedications and representations of the chief apostles at Penteli, Kalyvia-Kouvara and Kalamos may have been intended to signal concord in the unified church, a message that could be made explicit by the addition of the keys, the symbol non-plus-ultra of papal authority.

When one finds in Frankish Greece the same emphasis on papal symbolism as in the Crusader panels from the Holy Land, it does not necessarily imply a direct link between the two bodies of work. Rather, the formal similarities should be viewed as parallel developments where painters in different regions augmented known models to answer

¹⁶⁷ Weitzmann, "Four Icons on Mount Sinai," 283. For an early example of Peter holding the keys on an icon in the Monastery of St. Catherine at Sinai see: Soteriou and Soteriou, *Icones du Mont Sinai*, pl. 1. Doula Mouriki also notes the rarity of the motif in Middle Byzantine painting and cites two examples from the twelfth century: one part of an Ascension scene at Kurbinovo, the other an unpublished image in the Church of the Panagia of Arakas at Lagoudera on Cyprus. L. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo: Les fresques de Saint-Georges et la peinture byzantine du XII siècle* (Brussels: 1975), fig. 82; Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 155 n. 30. Linda Safran, too, sees the increased appearance of the keys in portraits of St. Peter in thirteenth-century Byzantine painting as the result of "Western influence." Linda Safran, *San Pietro at Otranto: Byzantine Art in South Italy* (Rome: Edizioni Rari Nantes, 1992), 119. In addition to the icon discussed above, two further thirteenth-century examples of Crusader icons at Sinai have been published in Kurt Weitzmann, "Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom," *DOP* XX (1966): fig. 31; idem, "Thirteenth-Century Crusader Icons on Mount Sinai," *AB* no. 45 (1963): fig. 17.

¹⁶⁸ Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Late Byzantine Period," fig. 10. In the church of St. Peter the apostle holds his keys on the west wall of the nearthex. Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 156; Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, fig. 9.

¹⁶⁹ Peter also holds his keys in the Ascension in the Omorphi Ekklesia on the island on Aegina. Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 155-56.

similar concerns. What unites the icon from Acre, the portraits at Penteli and Athens, the Judgment images at Kalyvia and Kalamos, and the church of Bishop Ignatius is their post-1204 Crusader milieu and, subsequently, an increased tendency, if not the necessity, to deal with the ideological and practical issues of a unified church. With Innocent's policy of unification and the installment of a Latin hierarchy in Greece, the duality of the two main factions of Christianity became an issue of imminent concern, if not for the worshipers, certainly for the clergy who were called to obedience by Rome. If, in the centuries before the Latin conquest, the issue of the *azymes* (the unleavened bread used by the Latins in the Eucharist) had been the focus of ecclesiastical controversy, now it was the topic of papal primacy that became the center of schismatic debate.¹⁷⁰ For Pope Innocent III the issue had been settled with the victory of 1204 that had "transferred the empire of Constantinople from the proud to the humble, from the disobedient to the obedient, from schismatics to Catholics, namely from the Greeks to the Latins."¹⁷¹ A year later in a letter from 19 November, 1205 addressed to Antelm, the archbishop of Patras, Innocent writes of the Church of Constantinople having been "recently restored ... to the obedience of the Apostolic See as to the bosom of her mother."¹⁷² In reality, the matter of papal primacy was far from settled, and the refusal of most of the clergy in Constantinople to submit to a Latin patriarch assured the continuance of the dispute for decades to

¹⁷⁰ Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 128-30.

¹⁷¹ Letter from November 13, 1204 to the "bishops, abbots and other clerics residing with the army of the Crusaders at Constantinople." Hageneder, ed., *Reg.* 7:154; Andrea, *Contemporary Sources*, 116-17.

¹⁷² Hageneder, ed., *Reg.* 8:154 (153); Powell, *The Deeds*, 193.

come.¹⁷³ Ten years after the conquest, in 1214, a group of Greek representatives sustained in front of the Latin Emperor Henry “We are a people of another race [*genos*] and have another head to our church [*archiereus*]; we have submitted to your power, so you may lord it over our bodies, but not our hearts and souls; while we must fight on your behalf in war, we find it impossible nevertheless to abandon our religious rites and practices.”¹⁷⁴ In light of these sentiments church dedications to Peter and Paul or the placement of the two apostles in unusually prominent locations may well have been attempts “at reconciliation between the Orthodox and the Roman Churches” and efforts to “smooth out the differences between the local community and the Franks.”¹⁷⁵

Yet to read all invocations of Peter and Paul in the lordship of Athens as the unequivocal sanction of church union would mean to oversimplify the case. If the increased interest in the two apostles is to be linked to the ecclesiastical merger, it must also be noted that the artistic reactions to it were neither consistent nor unambiguous; in particular Peter’s status as the primary apostle appears to have been a matter of pictorial debate. In the scene of the Metamorphosis in the Omorphi Ecclesia near Athens, he receives an unusual position of supremacy (fig. 8). Instead of arranging the apostles in the order established by the

¹⁷³ For a discussion of the dispute and a summary of the arguments see: Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 33-47; Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 128-30.

¹⁷⁴ Setton, *The Papacy*, 42.

¹⁷⁵ Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 169; Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 61. A similar conclusion was reached by Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 49.

Evangelists, the painter placed Peter directly below Christ between John and James.¹⁷⁶ Agape Vasilake-Karakatsane, who published the murals, notes the similarity to the sixth-century apse mosaic of the Metamorphosis at Sinai where Peter occupies the same central position, but she rightfully rejects any relation between the two images based on the geographic and chronological distance of the two. Rather, she links the placement in Athens to Western models as they survive in Italian and Crusader painting where Peter's centrality betrays the works' Latin outlook.¹⁷⁷ In the case of a thirteenth-century Crusader panel of the Pentecost where the apostles' seating arrangement has been altered by the Italian painter to make Peter the focal point of the composition Weitzmann interprets the unusual centrality of Peter as "Roman propaganda."¹⁷⁸

A somewhat different attitude is apparent in the scene of the above mentioned Last Judgment at St. George where the message of apostolic equality has been tailored to promote a more Hellenic viewpoint (fig. 5). Instead of Peter, who in the traditional line-up of disciples in Judgment scenes sits on the side of the saved, here it is Paul who claims the salient position to the right of Christ. In this manner Peter and Paul received special attention as a pair, but their relative status to each other was altered in favor of Paul.¹⁷⁹

The composition recalls a viewpoint set forth by Nicholas Mesarites in his debate with

¹⁷⁶ Luke 8: 28 lists: Peter, John, James. Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 38-40, 129.

¹⁷⁷ James H. Stubblebine, *Guido da Sienna* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), fig. 10; Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 39-40, 129.

¹⁷⁸ The painting once formed part of an iconostasis beam and has been tentatively attributed to an Italian painter. Kurt Weitzmann, "Thirteenth-Century Crusader Icons on Mount Sinai," *ArtB*, no. 45 (1963): 182-83.

¹⁷⁹ Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 169-70.

then Latin Patriarch of Constantinople on 30 August, 1206. Nicholas who was deacon of Constantinople and later became the metropolitan of Ephesus denied Peter's position as bishop of Rome and argued that Peter was but one of the apostles, whereas Paul had a special position as the apostle of the gentiles.¹⁸⁰ The ideological subtexts of the paintings at Omorphi Ekklessia and St. George indicate a lack of a general consensus concerning the issues of papal primacy. Pope Innocent may have been certain of Rome's position of "higher authority," but even within the relatively small geographical confines of the lordship the relative status of the two churches seems to have been open to interpretation.

Michael Choniates: Saint of conflict?

Even for those who had pledged obedience to papal authority, past days of independence had not been forgotten, and acknowledgments of the new ecclesiastical order did not rule out the commemoration of those who had refused to abandon their Orthodox principles. Bishop Ignatius, for example, left a telling testimony to the continuing admiration of the former leaders of the Athenian Church. On the north wall of the sanctuary of the Church of St. Peter, among the officiating bishop saints, stands Athens' last Orthodox metropolitan, Micheal Choniates (1182-1204) who was compelled to leave his see after it had come under Latin dominion (fig. 9). Throughout his career, the Metropolitan had striven to improve the living conditions for the people in his realm who suffered from the

¹⁸⁰ August Heisenberg, "Die Unionsverhandlungen vom 30. August 1206," in *Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Kaisertums und der Kirchenunion, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse* (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1923), 22-25; Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 33.

avarice of their local administrators.¹⁸¹ In the effort to protect the interests of his city, he did not even succumb to military intimidation and in 1204 successfully defended Athens against the territorial ambitions of Leo Sgouros; an act of courage that was proudly recorded by his historian brother Nicetas Choniates.¹⁸² However, the metropolitan's resolve reached a breaking point a few months later when Athens had again become the target of military ambition, this time that of Boniface of Montferrat. Faced with the violent seizure of his cathedral in the Parthenon and the take-over of secular and ecclesiastic administrative powers on the part of the Franks, he retired from Athens. Yet even in exile the fortune of his titular realm was of constant concern, and in his letters he voiced his discontent with the developments in Greece. Three years after his unhappy abdication he writes: "Alas, but we have been enriched by our misfortunes...for us to be tyrannized over by those of another race and to be subjected, as it were, to the fate of slaves..."¹⁸³ Equally enduring as the metropolitan's attachment to his former domain appears to have been the people's memory of him. This much can be inferred by his depiction in the Church of St. Peter almost two decades after his departure from Athens. In the sanctuary of Bishop Ignatius's church Michael Choniates attends the holy rite together with St. Ignatius Theophoros, St. Athanasius, St. Blasius and other illustrious figures of the Orthodox Church. The halo indicates that the painting was executed posthumously, yet it also gives him the unmistakable air of sanctity despite the fact that he

¹⁸¹ Stadtmüller, *Michael Choniates*, 282; Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 69; Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, 15 n.1.

¹⁸² Setton, *The Papacy*, 21-22; Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, 31-32; Choniates, *O city of Byzantium*, 332-33.

¹⁸³ Lament written in 1208 by Michael Choniates for his Athenian nephew George whose son had been killed by Leo Sgourus. Translated by Setton, *The Papacy*, 23.

had not been canonized.¹⁸⁴ In this manner Michael Choniates was raised to the ranks of the great ecclesiastics of church history and was given a constant position in its hierarchy. His perpetual presence ensured by means of painting that he could occupy in death the position that the Franks had cut short during his lifetime. If Ignatius's dedication of his church to Peter and Paul was intended to strike a conciliatory note, the decoration of the sanctuary seems to indicate a certain level of ambivalence towards the new church order.

A similar duality may be observed in the southern chapel at Penteli for which Doula Mouriki has tentatively proposed a dedication to the two "princes of the apostles."¹⁸⁵ Here the special reverence paid to Michael Choniates can be deduced from the remnants of his portrait on the south side of the naos (fig. 10).¹⁸⁶ The individualized features of the metropolitan with his prominent forehead and elongated nose that are found both at Penteli and at Kalyvia-Kouvara have led to the assertion that these paintings were executed soon after his death, at a time when his appearance, and presumably his deeds, were still vivid in the minds of those who knew him.¹⁸⁷ Considering the history of the prominent ecclesiastic as an avid critic against the Frankish presence, it is tempting to read his inclusion in these two churches as a commentary of sorts on the state of the Greek Church under Latin dominion. But, how is one to interpret the two monuments with their simultaneous exaltation of the representatives of the unified church, Peter and Paul, and

¹⁸⁴ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 69-70.

¹⁸⁵ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsiōn," 117-18.

¹⁸⁶ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsiōn," 96-98, 117, pl. 1, fig. 27.1.

¹⁸⁷ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsiōn," 118; Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 70.

the Orthodox defender of Athens? Did Ignatius evoke Michael Choniates to affirm his own Orthodox allegiances, which may have been put in question by his compliance with Latin authority? Are the two portraits symbols of protest or even resistance against the new order? What evidence do we have that such images were politically motivated at all?

The inclusion of the deceased metropolitan could merely have been the result of personal devotion on the part of a particular individual or community. This last scenario has been proposed for the portrait at Penteli where such individualized imagery could have supported the chapel's funerary function.¹⁸⁸ Such special devotion may also have played a role in the placing of the portrait of another metropolitan in the crypt of St. Nicholas at Kambia. On the south sanctuary wall of the crypt stands Ioannis Kaloktenes, metropolitan of Thebes during the second half of the twelfth-century (fig. 11).¹⁸⁹ As a dependency of the monastery of Hosios Loukas, the monastic community at Kambia shared the close affiliation with the secular and ecclesiastical powers of Thebes.¹⁹⁰ According to the community's *typikon*, the metropolitan of that town had to be commemorated during the liturgy immediately after the emperor and the Patriarch.¹⁹¹ One might wonder what happened to this order when the seat at Thebes was occupied by a Latin bishop. Maybe

¹⁸⁸ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn parekklēsion," 117.

¹⁸⁹ Panagiotide, "Hoi toichographies tēs kryptēs," 615-14, figs. 5-6; Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, "Osservazioni iconografiche sulla pittura monumentale Grecia durante il XIII secolo," in *XXXI Corso di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina: Seminario Internazionale di Studi su "La Grecia paleocristiana e bizantina" Ravenna, 7-14 Aprile 1984* (Ravenna: Edizioni del Girasole, 1984), 218, fig. 10.

¹⁹⁰ Nano Chatzidakis, *Hosios Loukas*, ed. Manoles Chatzidakis, *Byzantine Art in Greece: Mosaics - Wall Paintings* (Athens: Melissa Publishing House, 1997), 11-12.

¹⁹¹ Chatzidakis, *Hosios Loukas*, 12.

the late-thirteenth century invocation of the Ioannis Kaloktenes in the funerary monument was a way to compensate for the temporary absence of an Orthodox metropolitan and to restore the ecclesiastical hierarchy that had been disrupted. Without doubt it reflects that community's close connection to the sea of Thebes and a particular veneration for one of its last Orthodox leaders before the Latin incursion.

Whatever the exact motivation behind the thematic choices at Penteli and Kalyvia-Kouvara, the images of the apostolic pair and of Michael Choniates served a mutual purpose: to support the liturgical drama enacted in the buildings they decorate. Evidently, their efficacy in this task was not hindered by their seemingly opposing connotations. It appears the significance of the two monuments lays not so much in their political commentary as in the fact that two, seemingly contradictory, strands of church history could be combined for a common cause.

When Bishop Ignatius dedicated his church to Peter and Paul while at the same time recalling his ecclesiastical roots, he followed an approach that was advocated by Michael Choniates himself who advised the abbot of Kaisariani: "It is necessary to fully serve your present lords and to carry out that which they deem agreeable, but nevertheless you must remember those who have already died or those who still have some breath in them like ourselves."¹⁹² The pragmatic attitude evident in this passage and in the decoration of the churches at Kalyvia-Kouvara and Penteli was not universally condoned by the Orthodox Church. Those among its ranks who had submitted to papal authority were sternly

¹⁹² Translation by author. Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, "Hagios Petros," 176, 188.

rebuked by the Greek patriarch of Nicaea, Theodore Irenikos (1214-16) in a letter addressed to the people of Constantinople.

You may believe as absolutely true ... the Pope holds the first See and that he is the bishop of Rome, but to have faith in his teaching, a teaching that alienates you from the truth, that casts you into the pit and to spiritual death – that is better said to be the opposite of faith. Therefore, drive far from you anyone who slyly proposes this to you and asks your acceptance.¹⁹³

For Theodore Irenikos the oath of obedience required by Pope Innocent was linked directly to the Orthodox faith. Bishop Ignatius' choice to serve under a papal administration would hardly have met with the patriarch's understanding who insisted: "For how would your faith be preserved and safe-guarded, if you should agree to be one of the pope's faithful." Such uncompromising condemnation is only pertinent if there is someone to be reprimanded. Accordingly, Tia Kolbaba reads Theodore's censure as an indication of wavering conviction on the part of the capitol's citizens.¹⁹⁴ A decade after the Latin establishment in Constantinople there emerged a growing "ambivalence within the Orthodox community," an ambivalence that added fuel to the debate as the defenders of Orthodoxy tried to stem the tide of compromise that had taken a hold of at least part of the population.¹⁹⁵ Although they were executed several years after the Patriarch's letter, the paintings at Kalyvia-Kouvara and at Penteli may be seen as another sign of this willingness to compromise. Whether Bishop Ignatius' dedication of his church to Peter and Paul was merely an act of lip service to his Latin superiors or a sign of true conviction

¹⁹³ Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 40.

¹⁹⁴ Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 129.

¹⁹⁵ Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 40; Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 129.

may never be established, but the result is indicative of a stance more conciliatory and possibly more at one with the daily demands of the faithful than that advanced in the rhetoric of ecclesiastical debate.

On the Proper Form of Sacrifice

The question of papal primacy was not the only topic brought to the fore by Innocent's insistence on church union. Through the confrontation with the creed of Rome, issues of Orthodoxy took on increased importance, not only in Constantinople and Nicaea, but seemingly also in the lordship of Athens. Here the painted programs highlight some of the same issues discussed in the Byzantine capitals and indicate an alertness concerning the doctrines that separated the Orthodox clergy from their Latin superiors. Particularly informative in this regard are the paintings in the sanctuaries. As has been shown by Sharon Gerstel in her monograph "Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary" the apse decoration played a vital part in the performance of the liturgy.¹⁹⁶ As active participants of the sacred rite, sanctuary programs underwent subtle but continual change to meet the needs of the ritual enactment of Christ's life but also to answer dogmatic and, at times, political interests.¹⁹⁷ By the thirteenth century access to the paintings had been restricted to the celebrating clergy, and the program had been

¹⁹⁶ Sharon E. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary* (Seattle: College Art Association in association with University of Washington Press, 1999).

¹⁹⁷ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 78-79.

standardized to a great extent.¹⁹⁸ Still, there was room for modifications to render special tribute to a local saint or to respond to the immediate spiritual concerns of a congregation.¹⁹⁹ The inclusion of the portrait of Michael Choniates has already been discussed in this context, but the sanctuaries in the lordship of Athens also incorporate elements that, in other contexts, have been linked to ecclesiastical debate.

The melismos

As Sharon Gerstel has argued, theological issues were introduced on the walls of the sanctuary particularly at those times “when the Empire was concerned with internal theological debates and was confronted by religious traditions that challenged accepted notions of Orthodoxy.”²⁰⁰ One such result of ecclesiastic uncertainty was the image of the *melismos* as it appears in the apse of the southern chapel at Penteli (fig. 12).²⁰¹ Flanked by four officiating bishops, there lies the Christ Child stretched out on a cloth-draped altar and awaits his sacrifice. The implements of his offering, the chalice and the paten with its asterisk, are placed behind him. Just as the bread on the paten would be concealed by a liturgical cloth that was draped over the asterisk before its miraculous transformation, so is Christ’s midsection covered by a piece of fabric decorated with a cross. The inscription “Ο ΤΡΟΓΟ ΜΟΥ ΤΗΝ ΣΑΡΚΑ ΚΕ ΠΙΝΟ ΜΟΥ ΤΟ ΑΙΜΑ ΜΕΝΗ ΕΝ ΕΜΗ ΚΑΓΟ ΕΝ ΑΥΤ[Ω]” above the recumbent figure repeats Christ’s request to the Apostles to

¹⁹⁸ The process by which the initially open sanctuary and with it the Eucharistic sacrifice became increasingly mystified and segregated from the lay audience had already been completed by the twelfth century. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 5-14.

¹⁹⁹ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 78-79.

²⁰⁰ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 36.

²⁰¹ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsiōn," pl. 23 fig. 1.

partake in his sacrifice and reiterates the liturgical formula uttered by the priest during the Eucharistic rite.²⁰² It was as a consequence of intense theological dispute that the image of the *melismos* was developed.²⁰³ Questions concerning the nature of the offering had plagued the church for centuries. Already in the fifth century there had been those who had suggested the Eucharist was merely a symbolic act.²⁰⁴ Later in the eleventh and twelfth centuries voices arose that questioned whether the sacrifice was offered to the Father alone or to the entire Trinity.²⁰⁵ At the heart of the question lay the transformation of the Eucharistic offerings into the living body of Christ. The official consensus as explained in a fourteenth-century commentary was, that the sacrifice was not “that of the bread, but that of the Body of Christ, which is the substance which lies beneath the appearance of bread.”²⁰⁶ By showing the living Christ reclining on an altar or standing in a paten or chalice, the *melismos* was fashioned to visualize the literal nature of the Eucharistic sacrifice.²⁰⁷ By the inclusion of liturgical implements such as the chalice and the paten the composition pictured the liturgical rite and secured its correct execution.²⁰⁸

²⁰² John (Gospel) 6: 56 “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.” Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsion," 88-89.

²⁰³ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 44-45.

²⁰⁴ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 45-46.

²⁰⁵ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 45.

²⁰⁶ Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, trans. J. M. Hussy and P. A. McNulty (London: S.P.C.K, 1960), 81. Quoted in Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 47.

²⁰⁷ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 40-41, 44.

²⁰⁸ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 40-47.

With the events of 1204 the proper form of sacrifice took on new significance. On May 25, 1205 Pope Innocent III addressed the Latin archbishops and bishops of Constantinople in a letter in which he described how the “Greeks broke the chain of peace and departed from unity” and how “deprived of the spiritual intellect ... they did not throw the leaven out of the house, so that they might feast on the unleavened breads of sincerity and truth, but having kept the leaven of the Old, they ate the body of Christ made with yeast.”²⁰⁹ The charges were not new. The polemics concerning the Latin use of unleavened bread (*azymes*) in contrast to the Orthodox tradition of using leavened (risen) bread in the Eucharist had begun in the eleventh century when the patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Keroularios (1043-58) included the practice among the errors of the Latins.²¹⁰ As Tia Kolbaba has shown, already in the early stages of the discussion *azymes* had become an indicator for heresy.²¹¹ The issue was one of identity. It had arisen during a time when the Empire had expanded into Italy and vast regions in the Middle East and thereby exposed itself to groups that did not easily fit the traditional definition of Orthodox. Faced with a multitude of Christian factions particularly in the regions of Syria and Armenia, the church of the Empire was forced to define itself, and it did so, to a large degree, by formulating points of exclusion.²¹² The use of unleavened bread was a convenient marker. Visible to all who participated in the Liturgy it could be understood as different even by

²⁰⁹ Hageneder, ed., *Reg.* 8:70 (69); Powell, *The Deeds*, 171.

²¹⁰ Tia M. Kolbaba, "Meletios Homologetes 'On the Customs of the Italians'," *REB*, no. 55 (1997): 137-68; Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 121.

²¹¹ Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 125.

²¹² Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 122-26.

those not at one with more intangible theological distinctions.²¹³ In the twelfth century, the *azymes* controversy became the most important issue in Latin-Orthodox relations.²¹⁴ The Crusades had brought urgency to the subject as ecclesiastics such as the patriarch of Antioch, John IV (1089-98) suddenly found his city in the hands of the Crusaders.²¹⁵ From his Latin contacts John concluded: "The principal cause of the division between them and us is in the matter of *azymes*..."²¹⁶

If the early Crusades had brought the Latin Church to the outskirts of the Byzantine Empire, the conquest of 1204 introduced the Latin rite right into the heart of Orthodoxy. Now it was the question of papal authority that overtook all other polemics in importance.²¹⁷ The question of *azymes*, however, remained a close second as the Orthodox clergy had to content with Latin priests celebrating mass on the altars of their churches. Almost thirty years after the conquest, the Latin practice of using unleavened bread had still not found acceptance in the eyes of the Orthodox. In 1232 Pope Gregory tried to defend his church's position in a letter to Germanus, the patriarch of Nicaea. Hoping to convince the patriarch that both, leavened and unleavened bread might be used for the

²¹³ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 58-59.

²¹⁴ Tia Kolbaba contests the argument that the *filioque* had always been the most important point of division between the two churches. She argues that twelfth- and thirteenth- century treatises on the issue were far outnumbered by polemics on *azymes* and papal primacy. Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 130-31.

²¹⁵ Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 126.

²¹⁶ Bernard Leib, *Deux inédits byzantins sur les azymes au début du XII siècle* (Rome: Pontificio Instituto Orientale, 1924), 245. Quoted in Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 126. Also see: Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 58.

²¹⁷ Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 128-30.

Eucharist he wrote “but assuredly simple bread before the sacrifice is bread, but when transubstantiation has been affected by the lord’s words, it is not bread and so cannot be said to be either fermented or unfermented, but rather He is believed to be the real Bread that descends from heaven and gives life to the world.”²¹⁸ Gregory’s plea met with little sympathy. Two years later a group of papal envoys met with Germanus in Nymphaeum. They were eager to settle the point and were frustrated by the Greeks’ continuing refusal to yield. “We see you are wasting time and are trying to avoid our question ... we conclude that you condemn our Sacrament in unleavened bread: 1. because of your writings which are full of this heresy ... 3. because your deeds prove it – for you wash your altars after a Latin has celebrated at them,”²¹⁹ The Greek practice of washing altars that had previously been used for the Latin rite had been going on for decades. It is mentioned in the records of the council that met in the Lateran Palace in Rome on 1 November, 1215 under the heading “On the Pride of the Greeks against the Latins.”²²⁰ The complaint is informative for several reasons. It shows that it was common practice for Latins and Greeks to use the same churches for their services, which may explain the absence of more clearly Latin churches in the lordship of Athens noted in the previous chapter. It also demonstrates how avid some Greek priests were about the proper form of sacrifice. The Latin sacrament was deemed heretical and called for a cleansing of the altar

²¹⁸ Letter by Porphyry Gregory from 18 May 1233 quoted in: A. L. Tautu, ed., *Acta Honorii III (1216-1227) et Gregorii IX (1227-1241)*, vol. III, *Pontificia Commissio ad Redigendum Codicum Iuris Canonici Orientalis: Fontes, Series III* (Rome: Città del Vaticano, 1950), no. 193; Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 65.

²¹⁹ Quoted in Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 69.

²²⁰ J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Consiliorum nova et amplissima Collectio*, vol. XXII (Florence and Venice: 1759-98), 989. Quoted in Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 43-44.

before the Orthodox ceremony could be performed. In this context the image of the *melismos* would have been particularly appropriate decoration. Positioned right behind the altar it reminded the officiating priest of the proper form of sacrifice; a sacrifice in which risen bread made with living yeast was transformed into the living body visualized on the sanctuary wall.²²¹

Such a message would have been especially pertinent in an area like the lordship of Athens, where the Latin rite had become part of daily life at least for those who shared their churches with the Frankish settlers. Aside from Penteli, the *melismos* also appears at Omorphi Ekklessia in Athens and in the Church of the Taxiarches at Marcopoulo.²²² At Penteli it is instructive to consider the image of the living sacrifice in conjunction with the portrait of Michael Choniates. Both emphasize local traditions and remind the Orthodox observer of his ecclesiastical roots and the proper form of worship. Incidentally, both the chapel at Penteli and Omorphi Ekklesia have been noted for their inclusion of Latin elements. It may have been the very impetus that brought about the emphasis on Peter and Paul in the cave chapel and the inclusion of Peter's keys in the Church at Athens, that also lead to the pronouncement of Orthodox practice in the sanctuary decoration. At a time when external forces questioned traditional forms of worship and the definition of Orthodoxy was strained by ecclesiastics who submitted to Latin rule, the *melismos* may have served as a sign of the continuing adherence to the creed of the Greek Church.

²²¹ Sharon Gerstel concludes: "The depiction of the *melismos* as a living child is an implicit defence of the Byzantine practice of using a leavened host." Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 47.

²²² Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsias*, 11; Aspra-Vardavake, "Hoi byzantines toichographies," 201, fig. 106.

Apostolic communion

At Omorphi Ekklessia, the significance of the Eucharist was further elucidated by the inclusion of the communion of the apostles. On the north and south walls of the sanctuary the apostles bend in supplication as they wait to receive the bread and the wine from the hands of Christ who is standing below a ciborium (fig. 13).²²³ A similar arrangement is found in the Church of St. Peter at Kalyvia-Kouvara. On the south wall Peter approaches as Christ offers him a morsel of bread from a large paten that stands on the altar (fig. 14). On the north wall Paul bows in supplication before receiving the wine from the chalice in Christ's hand (fig. 15).²²⁴ With an acute attention to detail, the painter of the Church of the Virgin at Merenta separated the apostle from Christ by a set of low doors in imitation of the chancel gates that closed the sanctuaries to the lay congregation (fig. 16).²²⁵ As Sharon Gerstel has demonstrated, liturgical realism was a prominent feature in many depictions of the apostolic communion.²²⁶ By including familiar items and gestures in the quasi-historical scene, the apostolic communion illustrated the direct link between the biblical Last Supper and the liturgical act.²²⁷ Thus the image of the apostolic communion emphasized the christological origin of the sacrament and thereby validated the actions performed in the sanctuary below.

²²³ Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsias*, pl. 30.

²²⁴ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 63-66, pl. 6-7.

²²⁵ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 129-30, pl. 61-2.

²²⁶ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 51-52.

²²⁷ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 51-52.

Similar to the *melismos*, the apostolic communion visualized the Eucharistic sacrament and promoted its proper execution. Analogous to the portrayal of the living sacrifice are also the theological considerations that lead to an increased popularity of the subject in the Late-Byzantine period. In manuscripts and metalwork images of the communion of the apostles appear as early as the sixth century.²²⁸ They gained importance in the late twelfth century, but it was during the thirteenth and into the fourteenth century when the numbers of monumental depictions of the theme began to rise sharply.²²⁹ Once again it was the issue of *azymes* that necessitated the clarification of the sacrament and advanced the introduction of a new subject onto the walls of the sanctuary. In one of the earliest monumental renderings of the apostolic communion, in the eleventh-century Church of Hagia Sophia at Ohrid, Christ prominently displays a round loaf of risen bread. This emphasis has been linked to the patron of the church, archbishop Leo, who had been an outspoken critic of the Latin use of *azymes*.²³⁰ Two centuries later, the issue had lost none of its divisiveness and Sharon Gerstel has linked the popularity of the apostolic

²²⁸ One of the earliest depictions of the theme is found on the Riha Paten in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection. Marvin C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, vol. I, Metalwork, Ceramics, Glass, Glyptics, Painting (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1962), pl. XI. See also Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 48-49 n. 2.

²²⁹ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 58.

²³⁰ André Grabar, "Les peintures murales dans le chœur de Sainte-Sophie d'Ohrid," *CA* XV (1965): 257-65; John H. Erickson, "Leavened and Unleavened: Some Theological Implications of the Schism of 1054," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* XIV (1970): 155-76; Ann Wharton Epstein, "The Political Content of the Paintings of Saint Sophia at Ohrid," *JÖB* XXIX (1980): 320; Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 59.

communion in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century sanctuaries to the confrontation of the Latin and the Orthodox sacrament at that time.²³¹

At the time the sanctuary of Omorphi Ekklessia was decorated, in the last two decades of the thirteenth century, the union of the churches that had been taken for granted by Pope Innocent III had come and gone. The unification had been officially ratified by both churches at the Second Council of Lyons that had opened 7 May 1274.²³² In reaction to the success of the council, Pope Gregory X wrote that “with the ancient schism cast aside, there should be one dove of the lord, beautiful, perfect; one church indeed equally of Latins and Greeks, united in the unity of the same faith and head.”²³³ The pope’s enthusiastic optimism was not warranted. The union was uneasy at best, and instead of calming tensions it sparked violent debate amongst the Greek clergy. The Emperor of Constantinople, Michael Palaeologus VIII (1258-82) tried to implement the coalition by force. Anti-unionists were castigated, relieved of their ecclesiastical offices and excommunicated.²³⁴ Michael’s death on 11 December 1282 removed the threat of penalty and the union was reversed. Its instigators were put on trial and those who had agreed to abide by the rules of a unified church were punished.²³⁵ Once again it was the Eucharistic

²³¹ Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 58.

²³² For a summary on the council’s sessions see: Setton, *The Papacy*, 112-19; Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 120-41.

²³³ Letter from 28 July 1274. A. L. Tautu, ed., *Acta Urbani IV, Clementis IV, Gregorarii X (1261-1276)*, vol. V, *Pontificia Commissio ad Redigendum Codicum Iuris Canonici Orientalis: Fontes, Series III* (Rome: Città del Vaticano, 1953), n. 53. quoted in Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 141.

²³⁴ Setton, *The Papacy*, 129, 131-32; Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 164-65.

²³⁵ For a summary of events, see Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 182-5.

sacrament that was used as an indicator of collaboration. An edict from the patriarch of Constantinople, Joseph I Galesiotis decreed to suspend “for three months bishops and clerics who have received communion from the Latins, and then inflicting on the laity penalties in accordance with their fault in the same affair.”²³⁶ Similar actions had been taken decades earlier by Patriarch Germanus of Nicaea who had found himself compelled to punish those who had taken part in the Roman liturgy.²³⁷ The actions of the liturgy had become indicative of the conflict between the churches. Any diversions from the Orthodox rite such as the use of leavened bread became markers of heresy.²³⁸

To be sure, the Latin lordship of Athens was far removed from the heated debates in Constantinople. It had not experienced the return of Byzantine rule as had the capital with its re-conquest under Michael Palaeologus on 25 July 1261. When the anti-unionists gained control over the ecclesiastical affairs of Byzantium, the lordship of Athens was still firmly within Frankish hands. Still, it was not completely detached from the process of negotiation. In 1274 William of Moerbeke, the bishop of Corinth served as the chief

²³⁶ Vitalien Laurent, *Les registres des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople: Les registres de 1208 à 1309*, vol. 4 (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1971), 244, no. 1453. Quoted in: Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 182-83; Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 59.

²³⁷ Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 77.

²³⁸ Objections also focused on the chanting of the *filioque* clause of the creed concerning the Holy Spirit “Who proceeds from the Father and the Son” and the commemoration of the pope during mass. Both had been agreed upon at Lyons. Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 135-40.

translator at the Council of Lyons.²³⁹ In this capacity, he must have been acutely familiar with the political and religious issues dividing the two factions. His personal desire for unification may be reflected in the construction of the church named after him. The church at Merbaka was built for the Latin rite but its architectural language is that of the local Orthodox tradition.²⁴⁰ As for the Greek clergy that acted under the supervision of the archbishop of Athens, they could not have been completely oblivious to the subjects that had occupied the intellectual capacities of their Latin superiors and their Constantinopolitan brethren for so many decades. In the Greek Church, the theological conflicts had become intensified exactly at those times when its Orthodoxy was put in question from within. Concerning the issue of *azymes* Tia Kolbaba concludes: “the quarrel about *azymes* and Latins became fierce because it was internal – not a simple matter of “us” versus “them,” but a debate about the very definition of “us.”²⁴¹ The situation in the lordship certainly would have warranted a similar quest for clarity. With their emphasis on Orthodox beliefs concerning the Eucharistic sacrifice and the proper performance of the communion, the programs at Omorphi Ekklesia, St. Peter and the Church of the Virgin at Merenta may be seen as a form of self definition. However, contrary to the unforgiving polemics of a Patriarch Germanus who would only accept a complete rejection of everything Latin, Bishop Ignatius seems to have found a way to define himself within the new bureaucratic structure. He may have held his office in obedience to the Western

²³⁹ Derek Baker, *The Orthodox Churches and the West: Papers read at the fourteenth summer meeting and the fifteenth winter meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1976), 183-211; Coulson, "The Church of Merbaka", 352.

²⁴⁰ Coulson, "The Church of Merbaka", 352.

²⁴¹ Kolbaba, "Byzantine Perceptions," 126.

archbishop of Athens, but the sanctuary of his church accentuates his Orthodoxy. The inclusion of the portrait of Michael Choniates establishes a Greek ecclesiastical lineage, and the depiction of the apostolic communion explicates and justifies the Orthodox tradition followed in his church. A similar approach seems to have been followed in the chapel at Penteli where Peter and Paul prominently reside over a sanctuary that harbors a depiction of Christ's living sacrifice in the form of the *melismos*, an image the significance of which would have eluded most Latins. At Omorphi Ekklesia, the declaration of Orthodoxy is made even more explicit. Combining the communion of the apostles with the *melismos*, the sanctuary depicts the Orthodox rite and emphasizes the living nature of the sacrifice. It does this at a time when the use of anything but the living (risen) offering in the Eucharist had been officially condemned as heretical by the leaders of the Greek Church.

The Latin Church in the Lordship of Athens: “concerning the truth of the business”

If the painted programs in the lordship of Athens do not show a significant shift in religious sentiment, they reflect an attitude of tolerance on part of the Frankish rulership and a highly pragmatic ecclesiastical policy. That “no Frank will force” the Greeks to change their faith “for the faith of the Franks” had been granted to the archons of the Morea already in the early years of the conquest.²⁴² Official church procedure followed a

²⁴² Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 132.

similar policy. Answering a letter of inquiry from the patriarch of Constantinople, Innocent III decreed:

You have also sought to learn from the Apostolic See about the liturgy of the mass and the other sacraments, whether you ought to admit Greeks to conduct these in their usual way, or force them rather to use the Latin rite ... you should keep them in their own rite if they refuse to be summoned by you until the Apostolic See has reached a more mature decision on this question.²⁴³

The realities of daily life demanded a high level flexibility on the part of the Latin Church in its effort to content with the unexpected expansion of its realm. In the case of Latin Greece, the swiftness of events merited unconventional methods. In the initial phases of organization, bishops and clerics were awarded posts without papal consent. This was the case with Antelm, archbishop of Patras (1205-1241). Antelm, possibly a Cluniac monk from Burgundy, had been elected archbishop by the canons of Saint Andrew of Patras. In a letter dated to 19 November, 1205 the prince of Achaia, Guillaume de Champlitte (1205-1209) and the canons of Saint Andrew asked the pope for ratification of the done deed.²⁴⁴ The pope gave his approval, but not without reminding the petitioners of their undue neglect of papal authority:

...we have not ordered what has been done by the same canons to be approved since it was carried out less canonically. Indeed, they also were instituted less canonically, but after having considered equally the necessity and utility and concerning the truth of the business and the status of the land ... we were more certain of the effect of the election.²⁴⁵

²⁴³ Letter dated to August 2, 1206. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 2860; Setton, *The Papacy*, 410; Powell, *The Deeds*, 191.

²⁴⁴ Powell, *The Deeds*, 192.

²⁴⁵ Hageneder, ed., *Reg.* 8:154 (153); Powell, *The Deeds*, 193.

When four years later in 1208 Innocent III placed Athens “under the protection of the Blessed Peter” and ratified its archbishop’s request to implement the “customs of the Church of Paris” in Athens, the time for compromise seemed to have passed.²⁴⁶ But even if Archbishop Bérard equated his city with Paris, overall the latinization of religious practice in the lordship remained limited. While there appear to have been some instances of conversion as has been suggested for Manuel Mourmouras, the donor of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Kranidi, there is not evidence for large scale conversion to Catholicism.²⁴⁷ This, despite the fact that in 1206 Innocent had assured Latin control over the most important episcopal sees with his decree that “in those [churches] in which Greeks are mixed with Latins you should put Latins in charge and prefer them to Greeks.”²⁴⁸ But the efforts to establish a clerical base in support of the ecclesiastical administration met with mixed results at best. In 1207 Othon de la Roche invited the Cistercian monks of Bellevaux to settle in Daphne. The Cistercian establishment in one of the most prominent monasteries of his realm initiated a flourishing of monastic activity in the lordship, but it was to last only until the 1260’s when most Western cloisters were abandoned for reasons that are still not fully understood.²⁴⁹ Around 1210 the same lord of Athens requested Latin priests for each castle and village within his realm that was home

²⁴⁶ Letter from 10 July 1208. Setton, *The Papacy*, 407.

²⁴⁷ Jacoby, "The Encounter," 898.

²⁴⁸ Letter from 2 August, 1206. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I:2860; Setton, *The Papacy*, 410; Powell, *The Deeds*, 190.

²⁴⁹ Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Athen*, 340; Setton, *The Papacy*, 408; Kitsiki-Panagopoulos, *Cistercian and Mendicant Monasteries in Medieval Greece*, 56.

to at least twelve Catholics.²⁵⁰ Whether the pope's approval of Othon's appeal was ever followed up with an actual dispatch of priests is not known. In any case, in those instances that Latin clerics were called to duty in the new ecclesiastical frontier, they did not always share their superiors' enthusiasm for the "ancient glory of the city of Athens."²⁵¹ Some refused to appear personally at the site of their appointed posts and had to be compelled by the pope himself to comply.²⁵² Even if the pope was finally able to convince his reluctant subordinates to assume their posts in person, the lower ranks in the Athenian Church continued to be dominated by the Greek clergy.

The majority of the village priests who catered to the needs of the Greeks-speaking congregations in the lordship were Greek.²⁵³ A papal letter from 13 February, 1209 confirming the property rights of the Church of Athens counts 200 priests in Attica alone.²⁵⁴ The letter probably refers to the *παπαῖδες*, "unbeneficed" priests who served rural villages. They were the largest of three groups of Greek clergy listed by Michael Angold in his recent study of the Fourth Crusade. They were surpassed in rank if not in number by

²⁵⁰ Othon's letter no longer survives. We know of the request from Innocent's answer written on 9 March, 1210. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 3933; Setton, *Athens in the Middle Ages*, 413.

²⁵¹ Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 3654; Setton, *The Papacy*, 407 n.18; Kitsiki-Panagopoulos, *Cistercian and Mendicant Monasteries in Medieval Greece*.

²⁵² Setton, *The Papacy*, 408-09; Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 38.

²⁵³ Setton, *The Papacy*, 411. The need for a Greek speaking clergy was also emphasized by Nicholas Mesaritis in his debates with the Latin Patriarch of Constantinople when he questioned if Greeks were to attend confession and the liturgy with an interpreter. Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 33.

²⁵⁴ Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 3652; Stadtmüller, *Michael Choniates*, 69 n. 3.

the regularly appointed priests and the “Greek clergy of the cathedral churches.”²⁵⁵ The individual groups enjoyed different legal status. All had to pay *akrosticha* to their local lord, but the priests and the *παπᾶδες* were exempt from lay jurisdiction, as well as manorial and feudal service.²⁵⁶ The number of Greek priests in each village who could enjoy these exemptions was set by Pope Honorius III in an epistle from 4 September, 1223 addressed to Othon de la Roche. “In a village of between twenty-five and seventy households there should be two priests with their wives, children and household.” Four priests were deemed appropriate for a village with seventy to one-hundred-twenty-five homes. Should the size of the village exceed this number it could have six priests. Hamlets with less than twenty-five homes were to join with other villages until they had reached the numbers required for two priests.²⁵⁷ These rulings secured the position of the indigenous clergy and assured that in the local parishes worship could carry on relatively undisturbed.

The local Latin clergy seems to have been concerned about the prominence of the Greek clergy in the countryside, and in 1223 Geoffroy de Villehardouin entered an agreement with the papacy that “temporal lords...were not to allow [the unbeneficed clergy] to

²⁵⁵ Angold notes what he calls the “puzzle of how the Greek clergy was ordained” and suggests the bishop of Koron might have taken over the task to ordain Orthodox priests for the Frankish territories. Michael Angold, *The Fourth Crusade: Event and Context*, ed. Julia Smith, *The Medieval World* (New York: Pearson Education Limited, 2003), 175-76.

²⁵⁶ Setton, *The Papacy*, 48, 411; Angold, *The Fourth Crusade*, 175.

²⁵⁷ A similar letter was addressed on the same day to Geoffrey de Villehardouin. Setton, *The Papacy*, 48; Petrus Pressutti, ed., *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, vol. II (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1978): 159 (4480); Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 38.

celebrate the liturgy on their lands against the wish of the Latin clergy.”²⁵⁸ Apparently, Greek village priests were not only allowed to celebrate Mass but had even been encouraged to do so by their Frankish lords.²⁵⁹ Although it can not be established with any certainty, the inclusion of the interdict in the document of 1223 gives the impression that Frankish settlers were attending the Greek liturgy, a habit that developed in several Latin territories that had previously belonged to the Byzantine empire.²⁶⁰ In any case, the agreement indicates a level of uneasiness on the part of the Latin clergy regarding the status of their Greek colleagues and their own standing in the hierarchy.²⁶¹

As to the acceptance of the Latin ecclesiastical hierarchy by the secular population, little is known. There is some anecdotal evidence concerning instances of conflict. For example, in the first decades of the lordship of Athens the inhabitants of Attica had continued their practice of paying a hen and a loaf of bread to the archdeacon of Athens when getting married. When later the archdeacon insisted on monetary payment, the matter was brought to the attention of Pope Gregory IX who on 23 February 1233 ordered the restoration of all funds the archdeacon had obtained in this manner.²⁶² In April 1212 Pope Innocent had been forced to render a less benign judgment, this time in favor of a Latin plaintiff. The archdeacon of Daulia had been beaten by some Greeks during a visit to the village of Gravia. The pope agreed with the insured cleric’s complaint and arranged

²⁵⁸ Angold, *The Fourth Crusade*, 175.

²⁵⁹ Angold, *The Fourth Crusade*, 175.

²⁶⁰ Jacoby, "The Encounter," 898 n. 120.

²⁶¹ Angold, *The Fourth Crusade*, 175-76.

²⁶² Setton, *The Papacy*, 419.

the arrest of the offenders.²⁶³ Apparently, the Greek population remembered the promises made to them at the time of the conquest. When their traditions were jeopardized, they did not hesitate to appeal to the highest authority to receive satisfaction. In the same vein, the status of archdeacon did not command enough respect to protect a Latin cleric from violence against his person.

Despite these instances of contention, it was not the multitude of Greek priests or a dissident population that caused the greatest predicaments for the Latin Church in the lordship of Athens. The most serious tribulations originated from within the Latin ranks. The capture of Greece was for both secular and clerical powers an endeavor of acquisition intended to increase influence and, first and foremost, possessions. Disputes centered on property rights arose already in the early stages of the conquest. The issue was addressed in 1206 in an arrangement between the Patriarch of Constantinople and Emperor Henry directed at regulating the division of church property seized during the conquest.²⁶⁴

...This is the form of the agreement made ... on those things conquered and acquired within and outside of the Empire of Romania ... grants the churches and promises he will give in compensation of their possessions as it is listed below: outside the walls of the city of Constantinople, one fifth part and a tenth of all possessions. ...Of the lands to be conquered in the

²⁶³ Innocent's reply to the complaint is dated 8 April, 1212. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 4424; Setton, *The Papacy*, 413.

²⁶⁴ According to the letter from August 5, 1206 the agreement had been reached between "Benedict, cardinal priest of Santa Susanna, legate of the Apostolic See, and the lord Thomas Morosini, Patriarch of the Holy Constantinopolitan Church on the one side and the lord Henry and the barons and knights on the other on those things conquered and acquired within and outside of the Empire of Romania." Exempt were possessions within the city of Constantinople and holdings along the city walls. Powell, *The Deeds*, 185. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: (2867)

future, God willing, the church will first have the fifteenth before they are distributed to anyone else.²⁶⁵

While the agreement shows that the Catholic Church was to receive at least partial compensation for the loss of its property, its most potent message is the inability of the church to protect its assets against the economic ambitions of the Frankish conquerors. Concerning its holdings in Greece, the papacy succeeded in formulating an agreement with the Frankish leadership that was to safeguard all ecclesiastical rights and property entitlements in the Latin territories. The concordat of Ravennika was signed on 2 May 1210 by, among others, Othon de le Roche.²⁶⁶ With the signing of the treaty the lord of Athens had agreed to relinquish all “church properties, revenues, and rights” and to keep the church free of all “feudal and manorial charges” except for the *akrostichon*, a tax that had to be paid by Latin and Greek clerics alike.²⁶⁷ The concordat’s reissue in 1216 and its confirmation in 1219 by Pope Honorius III is a powerful comment on both its importance, and its ultimate inefficacy.²⁶⁸ If Othon had agreed on honoring the church’s possessions, he made sure to also protect his own. Only months after the concordat Innocent lamented “that the noble Othon de la Roche, the lord of Athens, and other barons and knights of the empire of Constantinople have in common forbidden . . . that anyone in his lifetime should

²⁶⁵ Letter from 5 August, 1206. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum, I*: 2867; Powell, *The Deeds*, 185-86.

²⁶⁶ Setton, *The Papacy*, 39-41 n. 57.

²⁶⁷ Setton, *The Papacy*, 40.

²⁶⁸ The original document of the concordat no longer survives. Its text is preserved in a reissue of the agreement from 23 January, 1216 by Pope Innocent III. The concordat is most often printed from its letter of reaffirmation by Pope Honorius III on 4 September 1223. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum, I*: 7077. For a discussion of the concordat and its later reissues, see Setton, *The Papacy*, 39-41 n. 57.

confer any of his possessions upon churches or that anyone on the point of death should make testamentary bequests to churches.”²⁶⁹ Less than two years later, the agreements concerning church property seem to have been forgotten altogether. With the conquest of Argos in 1212 Othon had seized the treasure of the Church of Corinth, which had been brought to the citadel by its Greek defender Theodore Ducas.²⁷⁰ On 18 May 1212 Pope Innocent III insisted the cache be returned to its proper owner, the Latin metropolitan see of Corinth and warned Othon de la Roche that he held villages, abbeys, churches and other properties of the Church of Corinth “not without peril of his soul.”²⁷¹ Evidently Othon was more concerned about the fiscal needs of his realm than his spiritual well-being, for together with his feudal lord, Geoffrey I Villehardouin, he continued to seize church property. The author of the *Chronicle of Morea* justified the actions of the Frankish lords as a defensive necessity. He describes the situation in his narration of a meeting between Geoffroy, his council, and the representatives of the church.

‘You know, my lord, that the churches hold close to one third of Morea, of the whole principality; they sit and take their ease and give not a thought to the war which we are carrying on with the Romans. Therefore lord, we declare and give you this advice, that you bid them come with arms to help us ... and if they do not do so, seize their fiefs.’ And they (the church officials) all were before him. He asked them for aid, and that all of them help him with troops and armies with weapons, that he might protect the land and attack the castle of Monemvasia. And they answered him that they owed him only honor and homage, as a prince which he was, and they declared that what they had and held, they had from the pope. The prince

²⁶⁹ Letter from 10 July, 1210. Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 4050. Quoted in Setton, *The Papacy*, 412.

²⁷⁰ Setton, *The Papacy*, 36.

²⁷¹ Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 4458. Quoted in Setton, *The Papacy*, 37.

became enraged and ordered that all the lands and fiefs wherein they had holdings be seized ... The bishops excommunicated the prince forever.²⁷²

Regardless of the accuracy of the chronicler's assessment, fact is, that Othon de la Roche and Geoffroy I de Villehardouin were excommunicated for their disregard of church property by the cardinal legate Giovanni Colonna in 1218.²⁷³ Pope Honorius III confirmed the sentence on January 21, 1219, but the interdict on their lands was not to last quite as long as the cardinal legate had intended.²⁷⁴ With an acute understanding of the volatile situation in the Latin territories of Greece the pope lifted the sentence on 4 September, 1223 and, with a healthy dose of optimism, reissued the concordat from 1210.²⁷⁵

From the frequent papal correspondence concerning Frankish Greece one can deduce the importance attributed to the region, but its content also shows a pre-occupation with administrative and corrective measures. The church and the secular powers were competing for the same resources and much effort was spent in asserting tax privileges and property rights. In contrast, little seems to have been done to match the administrative union formulated by Innocent III by a spiritual one. Although Innocent had demanded an oath of obedience from the Greek clergy, he and his successors seem to have held to the initial policy to leave the Greeks within their own rite. The strategy is mirrored in the painted churches, which, despite some acknowledgements of the new hierarchy, continued

²⁷² Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 148-49.

²⁷³ Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 149 n. 97.

²⁷⁴ Setton, *The Papacy*, 47.

²⁷⁵ Potthast, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, I: 7077; Pressutti, ed., *Regesta Honorii Papae III*: (4480). On the conditions of the new agreement, see Setton, *The Papacy*, 48, 414-15.

unwavering in their exaltation of Orthodoxy. If one is to judge from the paintings in the lordship of Athens, it was a juristic union that resulted from Innocent's policies, a union "seemingly without regard to the inner spirit."²⁷⁶

Conflict and Conformity

Theological discussion, church policy and daily necessity, all influenced the content of the painted programs in the lordship of Athens. The *melismos* and the apostolic communion were not new to Byzantine church decoration. Neither was the pairing of Peter and Paul whose common feast day on 29 June can be traced back to the year of 354 C. E..²⁷⁷ It is the primacy given to the images and their emphasis on specific theological issues that hint at a connection between their inclusion in the sanctuary programs and the exceptional circumstances of their historical setting. Despite the fact that, as Sharon Gerstel has suggested, the finer points of the conflicts that raged amongst the theologians in Constantinople and Rome "must have remained obscure to the lower clergy and common laity," this did not preclude the illustration of more obvious points in the church programs. At least some of the churches stress the very issues that were at the heart of the dispute over church union. They profess Greek Orthodoxy at a time when its exclusivity was put in question by the Latins who claimed supremacy over all aspects of church policy. But

²⁷⁶ Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 45.

²⁷⁷ Heinrich Brinkmann, "Die Darstellung des Apostles Petrus: Ikonographische Studien zur deutschen Malerei und Graphik vom ausgehenden Mittelalter bis zur Renaissance" (Dissertation, Friedrich Alexanders Universität, 1936), 36-37.

despite their emphasis on Greek tradition and Orthodox practice, the paintings also show signs of conformity with the new system. This is true not only for those instances where Peter was given the markers of papal authority and elevated above all other apostles. The very existence of large-scale projects such as the decoration of St. Peter in Kalyvia-Kouvara, the Holy Trinity in Kranidi, or Omporphi Ekklessia in Athens implies a certain level of compliance. Projects such as these would never have been possible without the implicit support of the ecclesiastical and/or the secular bureaucracy. It was their willingness to pledge obedience to the Latin Church, whether out of conviction or of necessity that assured the success of donors such as Bishop Ignatius or Manuel Mourmouras and, ironically, secured the continuation of Orthodox worship in the lordship.

IV
COLORFUL IDENTITIES

If the lord wishes ... that we, the race of Romans, shall die his slaves, this we ask, and bid you grant it to us by your oath in writing so that we and our children will have it: that, from now on, no Frank will force us to change our faith for the faith of the Franks, nor our customs and the law of the Romans.²⁷⁸

-Chronicle of Morea

The Lacedaemonian archons who faced their new lord, Geoffroy I Villehardouin, with so much conviction were a conquered people. However submissive they might have been in their subjugation to foreign lordship, undeniably proud of their heritage, they succeeded in their cause to continue life according to accustomed patterns.²⁷⁹ To judge from the paintings discussed in the previous chapter, the Greeks in the lordship of Athens exhibited a similar resolve particularly when it came to asserting their religious autonomy. By insisting on the continuation of their Orthodox ceremonies they distinguished themselves from the Latins. Yet within the same programs that declare a donor's or a community's Orthodoxy, there are also the undeniable signs of Latin presence. Be it in the form of an article of clothing, weaponry or the sudden popularity of a particular motif, the churches of the lordship of Athens wear the marks of their conquerors. The question arises how to read such additions in the context of a community that calls itself the "race of the

²⁷⁸ Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 132.

²⁷⁹ The chronicle continues: "Sir Geoffroy received the words well and he established it for them with oaths and put it in writing." Lurier, *Chronicle*, 132.

Romans,” thus demonstrating an acute awareness of its own group identity.²⁸⁰ Were these elements included as deliberate invocations of Frankish culture or were they merely the inevitable consequence of prolonged cohabitation? This chapter will be dedicated to the identification and interpretation of potential “westernizing” elements and to the issue of cultural identity as it is expressed in the painting of the lordship of Athens in general. The aim is to examine which role, if any, pictorial representation played in the expression and formation of cultural and communal identity in the heterogeneous society that was Frankish Greece.

Wearing the Conqueror’s Clothes: Soldiers in Greek Churches

His baner he desplayeth, and forth rood To Thebes-ward, and al his host
bisyde...And forth he rit; ther is namore to telle. The rede statue of Mars,
with spere and targe, so shyneth in his whyde baner large, That alle the
feeldes glitern up and down; And by his baner born is his penoun Of ful
riche, in which ther was y-bete The Minotaur, that he slough in Crete. Thus
rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour And in his host of chivalrye the
flour.²⁸¹

-Geoffrey Chaucer

With Frankish forces sweeping across the Greek landscape to subdue its strongholds, for many members of the indigenous population iron-clad knights and armed soldiers must

²⁸⁰ In this discussion it is of little consequence if the expression “race of the Romans” accurately recounts the words of the archons or was formulated by the chronicler. In either case it articulates the clear distinction that was drawn between the Greeks and the Franks.

²⁸¹ Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales: Nine Tales and the General Prologue*, ed. V. A. Kolve and Glending Olson, *A Norton Critical Edition* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 27 lines 108-24.

have been the first point of contact with their would-be overlords. Ongoing military conflict and the ideals of chivalry that permeated Frankish culture at the time kept the military element a strong factor in Latin Greece. While it is questionable if the subjects of the real duke of Athens would have described their lords in such florid terms as Chaucer's knight, the Western display of military apparel did leave an impression deep enough to place its mark even in the realm of church decoration. Amongst the traditionally garbed soldiers who act out their roles on the sacred walls there now appear fighters who wear Western protective gear or carry the marks of Frankish nobility on their shields.

Helmets, coifs and chausses

In the scene of the Betrayal in the Church of the Savior at Megara, for instance, Christ is arrested by a soldier wearing a conical helmet with a nasal piece (figs. 17-18).²⁸² The coif which he wears beneath the helmet wraps around his neck and covers part of his chin. Hatch marks in a fishbone pattern indicate that the garment is made of chain mail. This type of head protection has a long tradition in Western military dress. Both the coif and the conical helmet with the nasal piece were already worn by the Normans in their conquest of the British Isles in the eleventh century and remained popular far into the thirteenth century.²⁸³ Their continual use is demonstrated by their frequent appearance in art. For example, in a mid-thirteenth-century *Histoire Universelle* manuscript (Paris, Bib. Nat., MS. fr. 20125) produced in France the tragic hero Oedipus wears a helmet and coif

²⁸² G. Tsimas and P. Papahadjidakis, eds., *Fresques des églises de Meghariki*, 2 vols. (Athens: Copies in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., n.d.), figs. 38, 59.

²⁸³ Claude Blair, *European Armour Circa 1066 to Circa 1700* (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1958), 25-27, 29.

quite similar to the one in the wallpainting (fig. 19).²⁸⁴ Despite the fact that the painter at Megara accurately observed the close, chin-covering fit of the mail coif, he does not seem to have been completely familiar with the garment which is usually attached like a hood to a long sleeved mail hauberk.²⁸⁵ Instead he rendered it as a separate piece of gear worn in curious combination with a sleeveless Byzantine lamellar or mail cuirass. Still, the mail coif is recognizably Western and bears no resemblance to the helmets with mail curtains that were worn by heavy-armored soldiers of the Byzantine army into the fifteenth century.²⁸⁶ On these the mail curtain was attached directly to the helmet and fell loosely onto the shoulders, leaving only the eyes exposed.²⁸⁷

Comparisons with other Byzantine helmets such as the one worn by the soldier holding a torch to the left of Judas in the image at Megara further highlight the distinctiveness of the westernized ensemble (fig. 20). In Byzantine fashion the soldier wears a protective curtain of cloth, which drapes freely behind his neck and offers little protection of his throat. Based on the artistic evidence, this was the most common form of head protection for the Byzantine soldier and can be observed in detail on the late- tenth- or early- eleventh-

²⁸⁴ David Nicolle, *Arms and Armour of the Crusading Era, 1050 - 1350* (London: Greenhill Books, 1999), 282, fig. 741a, 49d, 19b, 16c. For a discussion of this and other related manuscripts see, Hugo Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 70-87; idem, *Historia Troiana: Studies in the History of Mediaeval Secular Illustration*, ed. E. H. Gombrich, *Studies of the Warburg Institute* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1971), fig. 67.

²⁸⁵ Blair, *European Armour*, 27.

²⁸⁶ Maria G. Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images: Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th-15th Centuries)* (Boston: Brill, 2003), 124.

²⁸⁷ H. Stöcklein, "Die Waffenschätze im Topkapu Sarayi Müzesi zu Istanbul - Ein vorläufiger Bericht," *AI I* (1934): fig. 3. Reproduced in Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, fig. 139.

century figure of Joshua on the outer narthex wall of the Church of the Virgin at Hosios Loukas (fig. 21).²⁸⁸ It is only in consequence of the intensified contact with the West during the thirteenth century that mail coifs were added to the military equipment of Byzantium's painted armies. In her study of Byzantine material culture based for the most part on wallpainting, Maria Parani noticed several examples of soldiers wearing mail coifs similar to those found at Megara.²⁸⁹ They all post-date the Frankish conquest of Constantinople and Greece and can be seen as an indication, according to Parani, that the Byzantine army may have actually adopted this type of "westernizing head-gear" during the Palaeologian period.²⁹⁰

The helmets worn by a group of soldiers in the Church of the Savior at Alepochori to the north of Megara are possibly also inspired by the Frankish armies. In the lower right corner of the scene depicting the Women at the Tomb sleep the inattentive guards (figs. 22-23).²⁹¹ Some of them are wearing a small, cap-like helmet that resembles the cervellière or bascinet that became popular in the West in the middle of the thirteenth century.²⁹² Several examples of this head gear, which could be worn over as well as under the mail coif, are depicted in the Morgan Picture Bible (New York, Pierpont Morgan

²⁸⁸ Chatzidakis, *Hosios Loukas*, fig. 5; Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 124, fig. 118.

²⁸⁹ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 125, fig. 92, 130, 142.

²⁹⁰ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 125.

²⁹¹ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, figs. 30, 33.

²⁹² Blair, *European Armour*, 29, 30, fig. 5.

Library, MS. M 638) produced in Paris in c. 1250.²⁹³ On folio 10v the cervellière is worn under the coif which has been pulled back (fig. 24). In a Crusader context cervellières that have been decorated to match the heraldic colors of the soldiers' surcoats appear in the *Histoire Universelle* today in Dijon, France (Dijon, Bib. Munic., MS. 562) which has been dated to 1260/70 and attributed to a workshop in Saint-Jean d'Acre.²⁹⁴ As in the case of the helmet with the nasal piece and the mail coif, the hemispherical scull caps at Alepochori are also matched with traditional Byzantine garb.

A similar infiltration of apparently westernizing elements into the traditional wardrobe of Byzantine soldiers can be observed in the Church of St. Peter at Kalyvia Kouvara; whereby the term "traditional" is applied here mainly in regard to armor as it was depicted in art. Painted armor did not always keep up with developments in martial dress as is illustrated by the centurion observing the Crucifixion on the west wall of the nave; he wears a cuirass of scale armor (fig. 25).²⁹⁵ This type of armor appears in painting throughout the Middle and Late Byzantine periods although in actuality it had fallen out of use in the later period when the more flexible mail armor became an increasingly popular alternative.²⁹⁶ Deviating from the otherwise conservative costume of the centurion is his leg-protection. Under his short tunic he wears dark leggings. A pattern of ochre colored c-shaped lines gives the distinct impression that he is not wearing the traditional

²⁹³ Daniel Weiss, *The Morgan Crusader Bible* (Luzern: Faksimile Verlag Luzern, 1999-1988); William Noel and Daniel Weiss, *The Book of Kings: Art, War, and the Morgan Library's Medieval Picture Bible* (Baltimore: Walters Art Museum, 2002).

²⁹⁴ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 68-87; Nicolle, *Arms and Armour*, 286, figs. 749f, 749h.

²⁹⁵ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, pl. 32.

²⁹⁶ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 104-112.

fabric leggings but mail chausses; these were only used by Western soldiers as early as the eleventh century.²⁹⁷ In painting, mail chausses are standard dress for the soldiers who fight on the pages of the Morgan Picture Bible, and they make their appearance in numerous depictions of battle in all of the *Histoire Universelle* manuscripts from the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.²⁹⁸ In most cases the fact that the leggings are made out of mail is indicated by a pattern very similar to the one in the wallpainting. For example the knight riding in front of a group of elephants in a *Histoire Universelle* produced in Acre c. 1285 (London, British Mus. Add. 15268, fol. 226r.) wears chausses that are rendered with the same short lines that appear in St. Peter and Paul (fig. 26).²⁹⁹ Similar to the mail coif and the helmets discussed above, these pieces of armor are also out of their practical context, for chausses were generally worn in combination with a mail hauberk.

Shields and heraldry

The piece of protective gear that most frequently displays Frankish tendencies in the wallpainting of the lordship of Athens is the shield. There are several aspects of shape and décor that begin to appear in the thirteenth century that can be traced to Western models. Following Byzantine convention, the equestrian St. George on the north wall of the Church of St. John the Theologian near Kounoupitsa on the Methana peninsula carries a

²⁹⁷ Blair, *European Armour*, 28; Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 121.

²⁹⁸ Numerous examples from Northern France and the Crusader states are illustrated in Nicolle, *Arms and Armour*, figs. 49d, 49g, 49s, 49ao, 741a. The depictions of mail chausses in the *Histoire Universelle* manuscripts are too frequent to site all of them. Even a quick glance at Hugo Buchthal's illustrations of the manuscripts provides a good impression of the ever-presence of this feature in Frankish art and combat. Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, pls. 104-136.

²⁹⁹ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, pl. 127c.

large shield (fig. 27).³⁰⁰ As in other examples such as the figure of St. George in the Church of the Savior in Megara, the saint carries the shield on his back (fig. 28). Unlike the great round shield in Megara, however, the one on Methana does not have a curved top, but terminates in a straight edge.³⁰¹ It shares this characteristic with the shield carried by Saint Eustache in the Church of St. John the Theologian near Kranidi (fig. 29). The same type also appears in two equestrian portraits in the Church of the Panagia at Moutoullas on Cyprus which are dated by inscription to 1280 (fig. 30).³⁰² The shield of St. Christopher in the Cypriot church even shares the pattern made up of squares filled with rosettes with the image from Methana. With their flat crest, the shields in the churches near Kounoupitsa, Kranidi and at Moutoullas resemble those used by the Latins as depicted in a thirteenth-century wooden relief icon in the Byzantine Museum in Athens (fig. 31).³⁰³ David Nicolle describes the flat triangular shield with slightly curved sides in the icon as a “standard European type.”³⁰⁴ Comparisons can also be made with the somewhat shorter checkered shields displayed by Sts. Theodore Tiron and George Diasoritis in the second, fourteenth-century layer of decoration in the Church of the

³⁰⁰ Mee and Forbes, eds., *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 221-22, fig. 12.22; Mitsani, "Methana," 234, fig. 5.

³⁰¹ Both Doula Mouriki and Angeliki Mitsani assign a Western origin to this feature. Mouriki, "Panagia at Moutoullas," 193; Mitsani, "Methana," 234. Several examples of the large round-topped shields carried by equestrian saints can be seen in Gerstel, "Art and Identity," figs. 3, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16.

³⁰² Mouriki, "Panagia at Moutoullas," 171, figs. 18-20.

³⁰³ Mitsani, "Methana," 234. For a recent discussion of the icon see: Glenn Peers, "St. George and His Iconic Bodies," in *Sacred Shock: Framing Visual Experience in Byzantium* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004).

³⁰⁴ Nicolle, *Arms and Armour*, 288, fig. 754d.

Virgin at Merenta (fig. 32).³⁰⁵ These resemble most clearly the flat triangular shields that had become the standard in the Frankish military by the late thirteenth century and appear so frequently in Crusader manuscripts. It must be noted at this point that triangular shields were not unknown in Byzantine painting and warfare. Particularly during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, they appear in Thessaloniki as well as in Constantinople.³⁰⁶ However, they differ from the Western type in one significant detail. They are strongly curved to wrap protectively around the body. In painting this curvature is often indicated by a concave top as in the portrait of St. Theodore Tiron in the funerary chapel of the Chora Monastery in Constantinople (1315-1321) (fig. 33).³⁰⁷ There is no indication of such a curvature either in the Methana or in the other westernized shields discussed above. Given the multicultural context of these monuments it seems safe to assume that the shield emulated a new fashion introduced by the Latin immigrants.

Further witnesses to an increasing interest in Frankish fashions are the decorations on some of the shields. In the early twelfth century there began to emerge in the West the use of individualized colors and emblems which eventually grew into a precisely defined system of heraldry.³⁰⁸ The development of armor, particularly helmets that covered ever

³⁰⁵ At the time these paintings were executed, Attica was under Catalan rule. Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 126; Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Late Byzantine Period," 184.

³⁰⁶ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, figs. 137, 146, 148-149.

³⁰⁷ Paul A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, 4 vols., vol. III (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1966), fig. 252; Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 129, fig. 137.

³⁰⁸ For a short discussion on the development of Heraldry see, Brigitte Bedos-Rezak, "Medieval Seals and the Structure of Chivalric Society," in *The Study of Chivalry*:

increasing parts of the body and rendered their bearer unrecognizable had generated the need for some means of identification other than personal recognition.³⁰⁹ If before only the feudal lord's colors were carried into battle on the *gonfanon*, by the mid-twelfth century every noble warrior and knight wore his individual insignia on his shield to assure his recognition but also, in a novel act of genealogical consciousness, to signify his lineage.³¹⁰ This practice was never taken up in Byzantium, but a number of painters in Latin Greece adopted it for their compositions. The flair of Frankish heraldry can be detected in one of the scenes from the life of St. George in the narthex of Omorphi Ekklessia in Athens where a soldier carries a small shield decorated with four crescent moons on different colored fields (fig. 34). The crescent design bears some likeness to several Western shields depicted in the Arsenal Bible (Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS. 5211) which was produced in Acre in 1250-1254 (fig. 35).³¹¹ In another program in the little Church of St. Demetrius near Kounoubitsa on the Methana peninsula, one of the

Resources and Approaches, ed. Howell Chickering and Thomas H. Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1988), 333-48.

³⁰⁹ Bedos-Rezak, "Medieval Seals," 333-34.

³¹⁰ The use of heraldry by the common knight coincided with the increasing importance of knighthood in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century when the originally servile rank of knight became ever more fused, and eventually interchangeable, with the status of nobility. Bedos-Rezak, "Medieval Seals," 333-37.

³¹¹ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, figs. 67a, 80c; Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 29 n.40, figs. 11-12a. In her review of Jaroslav Folda's book *Manuscript Illumination at Saint-Jean d' Acre*, Meredith Parsons Lillich discusses some of the issues concerning heraldry in the Crusader manuscripts. She suggests that the emblems might actually identify some of the painted protagonists as particular individuals involved in the Crusades, and urges for a further investigation of the subject. Meredith Parsons Lillich, "Review," review of *Crusader Manuscript Illumination at Saint-Jean d'Acre*, by Jaroslav Folda, *ArtB* 60, no. 1 (1978).

soldiers behind the centurion in the Crucifixion carries a two-colored shield.³¹² With its vertically halved design the shield recalls a very common Western heraldic device. A telling comparison is found in the lordship of Athens itself where one of the five coats of arms that crown the entrance into the Frankish castle of Nauplia carries the same two-colored arrangement as is seen in the church (fig. 36).³¹³ A similar adaptation of heraldic design occurred in the Crucifixion scene in the Church of the Virgin at Merenta. Here it is the centurion himself who carries a shield decorated in Western style (fig. 37). As noted by Nafsika Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, the polychrome design resembles the chevrons that are frequently found in Frankish coats of arms.³¹⁴ A chevron, for example, marks the emblem that may be linked to Antoine the Flamenc in the aforementioned gatehouse (fig. 38).³¹⁵

Painted sometime between 1261 and 1311 the antechamber at Nauplia houses the most elaborate display of heraldry. The Greek painter who executed the five coats of arms above the western entrance seemed to have been entirely comfortable with the rendering

³¹² Mee and Forbes, eds., *A Rough and Rocky Place*, fig. 12.33; Mitsani, "Methana," 238-39, fig. 7.

³¹³ The shield may have carried some emblem at its center, but the painting is too damaged to recognize any details; thus its owner can no longer be identified. Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 21.

³¹⁴ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, pl. 125c; Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 145 n.3, figs. 73-74; Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," fig. 15.

³¹⁵ Antoine de Flamenc was lord of Karditza, baili of Thessaly, and Great Baron of the Morea (1303–1311). His seal showing the same chevron design was attached to a deed regarding a transfer of property resulting from the coming of age of Mahaut de Hainaut, which he witnessed in 1305. Hopf, *Chroniques gréco-romanes inédites ou peu connues*, 478; Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l'Orient latin*, 198, pl. IX 8; Miller, *Essays*, 132–135; Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 122, 218, 372.

of heraldic insignia, for he produced a thoroughly Western arrangement complete with mantling, helm and crest (fig. 39).³¹⁶ Two more coats of arms were added to the figure of St. George who occupies the greater part of the antechamber's north wall (fig. 40). A red cross on white ground decorates his shield and a second coat of arms is located on the cantle of George's saddle.

A certain affinity with Western arms has also been suggested for the shield depicting a bird holding a snake in its beak that is held by St. George in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Kranidi (fig. 41).³¹⁷ When discussing this detail, Sophia Kalopissi-Verti remarks on the ambiguity of such insignia. She points to the long history of the bird and snake motif in Byzantine art and classifies the emblem as "fictitious" meaning it was not intended to refer to a particular individual.³¹⁸ This holds true not only for the shield in the Holy Trinity but also for those in St. Demetrius, the Church of the Virgin and Omorphi Ekklessia. While their designs recall heraldic emblems, their semblance with actual coats of arms is only superficial. Their painters captured the decorative effects of Frankish insignia but paid little attention to the material accuracy of their renderings. Unlike the coats of arms at Nauplia that are placed on triangular shields, the insignia in the churches adorn shields of the almond-shaped type that appears in Byzantine art as early as the

³¹⁶ This type of arrangement became popular towards the end of the thirteenth century. The type of large cylindrical helmet that tops the shields are generally referred to as "great helm" and were used by knights in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Blair, *European Armour*, 30; Bedos-Rezak, "Medieval Seals," 341-42, 47. For a discussion concerning the identities represented by these five coats of arms see: Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 20-21.

³¹⁷ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 212-13, pl. 27.

³¹⁸ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 212-13.

eleventh century.³¹⁹ While this type also enjoyed great popularity in the West where it appeared simultaneously with its Eastern cousin, by the thirteenth century the triangular shield had largely succeeded its oblong predecessor for purposes of heraldic display.³²⁰ Greek artists can not have been completely unaware of this fact, for there remain several examples where heraldic insignia are matched with the appropriate form of display. Aside from the paintings at Nauplia there exist a number of carved coats of arms found in Andravida and Patras that follow the established Frankish arrangement.³²¹

If the ornamented shields were not intended to commemorate a particular individual or family, what then was the intent of such pseudo-heraldic compositions? Recently Sharon Gerstel has proposed that some of the imagery on coats of arms found in Greek churches may have been intended as markers of cultural identity and political allegiances.³²² Around the year 1300 a painter working in the Church of St. John Chrysostom in Geraki

³¹⁹ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 212 n. 63; Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 127, fig. 122.

³²⁰ Numerous examples in Frankish and Crusader painting dating back to as early as the eleventh century testify to the popularity of the almond-shaped shield in the West and its continuing use by the Frankish armies at least into the late twelfth century. Whether the type originated in the West or in the East is an issue that remains unresolved Nicolle, *Arms and Armour*, figs. 1, 96, 97i, 729a, 730a, 731; Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 127-28.

³²¹ A prominent example of a coat of arms at the church of St. George in the Castle of Geraki which until recently had been associated with Guy the Nivelet, the Frankish lord who the castle sometime in the mid-thirteenth century, has just been re-dated to 1378-1381 by Aspra Louvi-Kizis. A. Van de Put, "Note on the Amorial Insignia in the Church of St. George, Geraki," *BSA* 13 (1906-1907): 283; Antoine Bon, "Pierres inscrites ou armoriées de la Morée Franque," *DChAE* 4, no. 4 (1964-1965): 92-95, fig. 1-3; Aspasia Louvi-Kizis, "To glypto 'proskynetari' sto nao tou Hagiou Geōrgiou tou kastrou sto Geraki," *DChAE* 4, no. 25 (2004): 119-122, 126.

³²² Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 273-80.

utilized Western-style heraldry to mark the political affiliations of some of the figures in the church. Right across the entrance, set off by an arched niche in the north wall and St. George prominently displays a crescent on his round shield (fig. 42). In the barrel vault directly above the equestrian saint one of the sleeping soldiers at Christ's tomb holds onto a shield decorated with a small image of a castle (fig. 43).³²³ Sharon Gerstel has interpreted these two motifs as "signifiers of political allegiance" and linked them to local coinage.³²⁴ A schematic rendering of a castle marked the *denier tournois*, the coinage of Frankish Greece. The crescent can be traced to Byzantine currency from the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118), a time when culture and trade flourished in Byzantine Greece.³²⁵ Using designs derived from Byzantine and Frankish coinage, the painter at Geraki could draw upon the daily experience and numismatic memory of his audience to assign cultural identity to his compositions. In this manner the negligent soldiers were identified as Frankish while George triumphed under the sign of Byzantium, recalling a time when the Empire was still wealthy and its supremacy uncontested.³²⁶ At the time the paintings at Geraki were executed the towns and the regions south of it had been restored to Byzantine rule.³²⁷ Under these circumstances, it comes as no surprise that painters

³²³ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," fig. 9, 15.

³²⁴ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 279.

³²⁵ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 278-79.

³²⁶ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 279.

³²⁷ This happened in 1262 in the aftermath of the defeat at Pelagonia in 1259 where William II Villehardouin and a number of his vassals were captured by John Palaeologos. In return for their release, the sebastocrator was given the castles of Mistra, Monemvasia, Maina and the surrounding regions. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 197-98, n. 79; Denis A. Zakythinou, *Le Despotat grec de Morée: Histoire politique*, ed. Chryssa Maltézou (London: Variorum, 1975), 15-27; Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 83.

would consciously evoke the pre-Frankish era in an effort to re-align the monuments with the Byzantine heritage of the region.

Political and cultural affiliations were even more pronounced at Nauplia. Whilst Geraki settled into the familiar hegemony of the revived Byzantine Empire, the territories of Athens continued under the uncontested rule of their Frankish dukes. In accordance with this political circumstance, the gatehouse asserts Frankish political supremacy and draws on Western artistic traditions. The coats of arms above the entrance evoke prominent names such as Brienne, Villehardouin and Flamenc, all families who were closely involved in the affairs of the lordship of Athens.³²⁸ Western sentiments also guided the depiction of St. George. Instead of a Byzantine crescent he displays a red cross on white ground on his shield. Although the emblem cannot be linked with a specific individual, the sign can be traced to a particular, if loosely defined, set of ideals and principles; it is the insignia of the Crusaders. As such it appears in a number of thirteenth-century Crusader icons at the Monastery of St. Catherine at Sinai.³²⁹ On one of the painted panels St. Sergios displays the sign of the cross not only on the inside of his shield but also on a

³²⁸ Issues concerning the identification of the five coats of arms and the political, cultural and artistic affiliations of the Nauplia program in general have been discussed in detail elsewhere and need not be repeated here. Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 265-68; Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 13-30.

³²⁹ This emblem with all its Crusader affiliations is associated with St. George also in the Golden Legend which states: "St. George appeared ... accoutred in white armor adorned with the red cross." Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine*, trans. G. Ryan and H. Ripperger (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 238. The affinity with the paintings at Sinai has been recognized by Demetrius Pallas and was later discussed by Sharon Gerstel. Pallas, "Eurōpe kai Byzantio," 56-60; Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 268, n. 31. Also see Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 19.

large banner and on the pommel and cantle of his saddle (fig. 44).³³⁰ Somewhat less conspicuous are the *gonfanons* paraded by St. Theodore and St. George on a panel completed by a French painter sometime in the second half of the thirteenth century (fig. 45).³³¹ George's occidental affiliations are further underlined by the second coat of arms on the cantle of his saddle. The small triangular shield may have been intended to commemorate the donor of the image, but the damaged state of the emblem does not allow for any certainty in this regard. Regardless of the specific identification of the emblem, bearing in mind the Frankish sponsorship of the program at Nauplia, the political and cultural sympathies of the hagiographical portrait are unmistakable.

While both the paintings at Geraki and at Nauplia provide crucial evidence for the use of heraldry as markers of cultural and political affiliation in Greek painting, they are not

³³⁰ The panel has been attributed to an Italian, possibly Apulian painter. A similar accumulation of Crusader emblems is found on another Italian production at Sinai, a two-sided icon with Sts. Sergios and Bacchos dated to the last quarter of the thirteenth century Kurt Weitzmann, "Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom," *DOP XX* (1966): 71-72, fig. 49; Kurt Weitzmann et al., *The Icon* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 206, 232; Konstantinos A. Manafis, *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1990), 119, fig. 66; Lucy-Anne Hunt, "A Woman's Prayer to St. Sergios in Latin Syria: Interpreting a Thirteenth-Century Icon on Mount Sinai," *BMGS XV* (1991): 96-145; Gerstel, "Art and Identity," fig. 4-5.

³³¹ Weitzmann originally interpreted these banners as the insignia of the Knights Templar. Weitzmann, "Icon Painting," 79-80, fig. 64. In a later publication, however, he saw the decoration in a more universal sense and identified it as "an emblem for Crusader knights in general." Weitzmann et al., *The Icon*, 204, 206, 220. The Crusader symbolism of the red cross on white ground is further demonstrated by the fact that it appears in a number of thirteenth-century manuscripts from this period where it serves as an identifier for the Crusader troops. Florence, Bibl. Medicea-Laurenziana, MS. Plu.LXI.10, History of Otremer, fol. 336v, Bk. 26, ch. 1 (Louis IX sails for the Holy Land), Paris, Bibl. Natl., MS. fr. 2630, History of Otremer, fol. 22v, Bk. 3, ch. 1 (Crusaders besiege Nicea) and fol. 111v, Bk. 13, ch. 1 (The Crusaders besiege Tyre). Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader Manuscript Illumination at Saint-Jean d'Acre, 1275-1291* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975), fig. 165, 175, 177.

really a fitting paradigm for the other monuments under investigation. The images in Geraki can, in part, be attributed to the political development in the region with its re-affirmation of territorial claims and the subsequent redirection of political dependency towards Constantinople. At Nauplia it is the nature of the monument itself that sets it apart from the religious structures in the area. As secular decoration the Frankish-sponsored paintings fulfilled functions that had little in common with the pious utility of church programs. Were individual commemoration and the declaration of political dominance at the very heart of the gate's purpose, in the churches of the Holy Trinity, St. Demetrius, the Church of the Virgin, and Omorphi Ekklessia, such considerations were immaterial. The discrepancy between the Byzantine shield types and their quasi-Frankish adornment indicates that the painters were intrigued by the ornamental possibilities of the Western way of decorating shields. The utility of heraldic emblems as indicators of personal or cultural identity, while recognized in other contexts, was not exploited. The pseudo heraldic shields that are found in the churches of the lordship of Athens should, thus, be attributed less to political factors than to their painter's general interest in his contemporary material and visual environment.

Impartial soldiers

While the cultural and political environment in the lordship of Athens can be seen as the catalyst for the inclusion of Frankish military apparel in the decoration of Orthodox churches, the Western equipment appeared as a result of and not in reaction to their setting. That is to say, the foreign elements were not included as a negative commentary on the Frankish presence. There is no correlation between the geographic heritage of a

soldier's protective gear and his moral status in the biblical narrative. This assessment mirrors the one reached by Maria Parani who observed representations of Western military costume in paintings from all regions of the Byzantine Empire.³³² To use her own words, Maria Parani "was interested to discover whether such 'foreign' equipment was employed as a means to associate visually those responsible for the suffering of Christ and the Christian martyrs with the enemies of the Byzantine state within the framework of political and religious polemic propaganda."³³³ The result of her query was unequivocally negative. It is simply not logical, she concludes, that low-ranking soldiers would be associated with the enemy by the mere inclusion of some Western equipment, while military saints could sport the same equipment without any injury to their Byzantine identity.³³⁴ What is true for regions under Byzantine rule also applies to the lordship of Athens. It would be difficult to argue that the soldier wearing a mail coif in the Betrayal scene at Megara is any more to blame for the turn of events than his companion in Byzantine head gear on the other side of the composition. It would also be unlikely that St. George would carry a Western shield on the walls of an Orthodox church if such a detail were considered as a sign of moral or political inferiority. Regardless of their costume, the soldiers who perform their duties on the walls of the lordship's churches are not subject to any particular ethnic group other than that assigned to them by the texts they illustrate.

³³² Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 143-44.

³³³ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 143-44.

³³⁴ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 144.

The mere inclusion of a “foreign” element does not automatically imply a wish to affiliate a particular image or figure with a specific group of people. With the influx of Frankish military and civilian culture into Greece, there also arrived unfamiliar visual stimuli that opened new possibilities for artistic representation. Whether through direct observation or in the form of new artistic models, painters now had at their disposal a completely new repertoire of objects from which to choose; and choose they did, selectively and randomly, with much artistic license and little regard for historical accuracy or practicality. Issues of composition and design seem to have played as much a role in this process as the simple adaptation of available models. How multivalent compositions resulting from cultural diversity could be can be illustrated with an example of Crusader Art from the Holy Land. The figure of Goliath on the ivory covers belonging to the Psalter of Queen Melisende carries a shield about which David Nicolle writes: “His large kite-shaped shield ... looks Western European” (fig. 46).³³⁵ Such an attribution would match the patronage of the work, which has been dated to 1136 and linked to the King of Jerusalem, Fulk of Anjou and his Queen Melisende as well as the Western heritage of the artist.³³⁶ At the same time, however, the book covers have been noted for their multiple sources. Western, Byzantine and Islamic models and techniques all came together to shape this luxury item. When David Nicolle identifies “certain Middle Eastern Islamic fashions” in Goliath’s outfit but identifies his shield as Western he highlights the essential

³³⁵ Nicolle, *Arms and Armour*, 278, fig. 729a. For a detailed discussion of the book covers see Kühnel, *Crusader Art*, 63-125, fig. 71; Jaroslav Folda, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098-1187* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 157-58, pls. 6.10a-b.

³³⁶ Folda gives a date of 1134. Kühnel, *Crusader Art*, 82; Folda, *The Art of the Crusaders*, 154.

non-ethnicity of the image. An artist who contrives such combinations is not interested in the cultural affiliations of the individual elements. Insofar as the completed Psalter was a consequence of what Bianca Kühnel calls “the complex artistic identity” of its author, the Western shield held by Goliath might be seen as a reflection of the multicultural context of its creation rather than a deliberate invocation of Frankish or Muslim practice.³³⁷

Cultural identity can also not have been of great concern to the painters who handed triangular shields to equestrian saints dressed in short-sleeved cuirasses, protected a Byzantine’s soldier’s head with a mail coif, or matched mail chausses with lamellar body armor. Such idiosyncrasies are not restricted to the painting in Latin Greece or the other Crusader territories. The numerous images studied by Maria Parani have shown that Byzantine painters frequently treated the arms and armor of their military subjects not as coherent and functional ensembles. Rather, they combined individual elements of gear arbitrarily and sometimes fancifully in order to shape a universal image of a soldier unrelated to a particular region or period.³³⁸ In this effort it seems only natural that painters would mingle century-old artistic conventions with elements from their own daily experience as an artist’s ideas concerning the essence of a particular theme are necessarily shaped by his own perception of the subject. In the lordship of Athens this approach found its clearest expression in the depiction of military saints some of whom began to assume the demeanor and costume of the Frankish knightly class.

³³⁷ Kühnel, *Crusader Art*, 124; Nicolle, *Arms and Armour*, 278.

³³⁸ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 158.

St. George: Protector of East and West

Images of military saints on horseback, and St. George in particular, enjoyed great popularity in the monumental decoration in Latin Greece. In her study of equestrian portraits in the Morea, Sharon Gerstel could list thirty four examples in the churches of the southern Peloponnese alone. She documented a dramatic increase in the frequency of equestrian portraits during the thirteenth century and tied the phenomenon to the protective needs of the politically unstable territory.³³⁹ Particularly the inhabitants of those regions that had returned to Byzantine rule in 1262 relied on the apotropaic functions of the armed saints. Under the constant threat of re-conquest, they beseeched St. George and his companions for protection against their would-be conquerors.³⁴⁰ At the same time and in seeming contradiction with their function several of the saints adopted the fashions of the enemy. In a process of what Sharon Gerstel calls “artistic symbiosis” Western elements of military costume, weaponry and combat techniques had been absorbed into the protective images.³⁴¹

The same development can be observed in territories that remained under Latin control such as the lordship of Athens where there survive a number of equestrian portraits.³⁴²

³³⁹ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 263-85.

³⁴⁰ Christopher Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2003), 134, 284.

³⁴¹ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 279-80.

³⁴² In addition to the examples that will be discussed below, depictions of equestrian saints are also found in the side chapel at Omorphi Ekklessia in Athens. Unfortunately, no images of the portraits at Athens have been published, and I was not granted access to the church when I tried to visit it in June 2005. Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 15-16, 125.

Several of them include features that have been tied to Western traditions and that are shared with equestrian portraits from other Crusader regions. Most of these westernizing details have already been noted in other examples by Sharon Gerstel. It would make little sense to repeat her arguments in detail here. What the images from the lordship of Athens can add to the discussion, is a sense of how widespread these elements were. Furthermore, the examples from the politically stable regions under Athenian rule can serve to illustrate the level of artistic integration that had taken place. In the Church of the Savior at Megara, St. George is seated on his charging horse with his visible leg thrust forward into the stirrup (fig. 28).³⁴³ The popularity of this pose amongst Frankish knights is witnessed by the ample supply of seals left by the Crusaders which show the seal's owners on horseback locking their legs into the forward position to brace against the blow of their attack.³⁴⁴ In his study of medieval equestrian warfare, Bernard S. Bachrach attributed this posture to twelfth-century developments in Western equestrian combat techniques.³⁴⁵ This advance was accompanied by the addition of a raised cantle on the back of the saddle and a wrap-around pommel on the front. They were intended to absorb some of the impact of the attack and to keep the rider from being pushed off the saddle by the force exerted by his lance-thrust.³⁴⁶ Raised cantle, wrap-around pommel and leg pose are also present in

³⁴³ Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 276.

³⁴⁴ Numerous examples of Crusader seals including this pose have been published in Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l'Orient latin*, Pls. VI-IX, XVI-XXI.

³⁴⁵ Bernard S. Bachrach, "Cabalus et Caballarius in Medieval Warfare," in *The Study of Chivalry: Resources and Approaches*, ed. Howell Chickering and Thomas H. Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1988), 195.

³⁴⁶ Bachrach, "Cabalus et Caballarius," 195.

the depiction of St. George in the gatechamber at Nauplia (fig. 40).³⁴⁷ In addition the saddle supports appear in the Church of the Savior at Alepochori (fig. 47) and can still be seen in the damaged portrait of St. George in St. John Theologian near Kounoupitsa which has already been noted for the Western heritage of the saint's shield (fig. 27).³⁴⁸

A further detail that may be traced to Western inspiration is the garment worn below the cuirass by the riding saint in the Church of the Savior at Megara (fig. 28).³⁴⁹ The long garment resembles more the surcoat or *coat armour* worn by Frankish knights than the short tunic typically worn by Byzantine equestrian saints.³⁵⁰ The surcoat flowing in the wind of the charge is a motif that appears frequently in Crusader seals. It can be seen, for example, on the seal of Philippe de Touchy, baili of the Latin Empire of Constantinople and grand admiral of the kingdom of Sicily at the time of his death in 1277 (fig. 48).³⁵¹ In painting it appears on several of the thirteenth-century Crusader panels at Sinai.³⁵² Unlike

³⁴⁷ Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 19.

³⁴⁸ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 42-43, 78, fig. 55. An equestrian portrait of St. George is also to be found in the church of St. Demetrius on Methana. Much of the image in St. Demetrius has been destroyed. Only the dragon and part of the horse's legs are preserved. Mee and Forbes, eds., *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 223, 226, 233, fig. 12.40; Mitsani, "Methana," 234, 237, fig. 5.

³⁴⁹ The same garment is also found in the thirteenth-century Palaiomonastero in Vrontamas, Lakonia and in the somewhat later Monastery of the Forty Martyrs in Lakadaemona. Gerstel, "Art and Identity," fig. 13-14.

³⁵⁰ Blair, *European Armour*, 28-29.

³⁵¹ Philippe and his brother Ancelin de Toucy are mentioned on several occasions in the *Chronicle of Morea*. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 105 n. 93, 223 n. 25, 228-9 n. 37. For this and other examples see Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l'Orient latin*, 181, pl. VIII 6, VII 1-3.

³⁵² Weitzmann, "Thirteenth-Century Crusader Icons," fig. 19; idem, "Icon Painting," 49, 64-65; Weitzmann et al., *The Icon*, 206, 220, 232; Gerstel, "Art and Identity," fig. 4-5.

the Byzantine tunic, however, the surcoat was generally worn over and not under the body armor. The long garment worn by the equestrian saints may be another one of these instances where a novel motif was incorporated into existing models without much regard for its actual appearance or functionality.³⁵³

As culturally diverse as St. George's apparel were those who solicited his protection. As Christopher Walter so fittingly observed, St. George had a wide variety of clients, and the Byzantines were not always at the receiving end of the saint's graces.³⁵⁴ In 1263 he had intervened on behalf of the outmatched Frankish army in the battle at Prinitza where

Some of those who took part in that battle saw and testified that they saw a knight mounted on a white charger, carrying a naked sword and always leading the way wherever the Franks were. And [sic] they said and affirmed that it was St. George and that he guided the Franks and ... gave victory to the Franks.³⁵⁵

But the saint had captured the interest of the West already more than a century before the skirmish at Prinitza, ever since his intervention on behalf of the Crusaders at the battle over Antioch in 1098. His military prowess combined with the fact that his tomb was located at Lydda in the Holy Land made St. George a fitting patron for the Crusaders and

³⁵³ Long tunics also appear in images of standing warrior saints, but they should, according to Maria Parani, be distinguished from the surcoat-like garments in the Crusader images. Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 118 n. 73. Sharon Gerstel and Kurt Weitzmann also associate the long garments worn by some equestrian saints as derived from western fashion. Weitzmann, "Thirteenth-Century Crusader Icons," 71; Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 277.

³⁵⁴ For a summary of St. George's various interventions in battles see Walter, *The Warrior Saints*, 133-34.

³⁵⁵ The village of Prinitza no longer exists. It was located "near the present town of Vyliza, near Olympia." Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 210-11 n. 8.

their territories.³⁵⁶ By the thirteenth century he had become the most popular military saint in Byzantium as well as the West.³⁵⁷ In the lordship of Athens his veneration needs no further confirmation than the imposing images on the church walls. Here, as indicated by his portrait at Nauplia, he was adored by Greek and Frank alike, for protection was needed by both the Greeks who feared a renewed conquest by the Latin forces and the Franks who tried to defend their newly acquired land against the violent claims of its former proprietors.³⁵⁸ In the attempt to gain St. George's support neither side seems to have been particularly interested in the place of origin of his apparel. Within the lordship, it was only at Nauplia that someone felt the need to mark him as representative of a particular segment of the population. The fact that the defender of the Frankish castle wears Byzantine lamellar armor seems to have been of little consequence. The example at Geraki is equally telling. Here St. George, marked by the emblem on his shield as Byzantine, sits astride his horse on a Western saddle in the pose assumed by a Frankish knight. One can only conclude that in thirteenth-century Greece the chivalric ideals exemplified by the dress and pose of equestrian knights had been integrated into local artistic traditions and had lost their direct Western associations.

The Frankish knights who rode across the Greek landscape, paraded on icons from the Holy Land, and charged across the round molds of seals added a new facet to the ideal of

³⁵⁶ Robin Cormack and Stavros Mihalarias, "A Crusader Painting of St. George: 'maniera greca' or 'lingua franca'?" *BM*, no. 126 (1984): 132; Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 267; Walter, *The Warrior Saints*, 133-34.

³⁵⁷ For a thoroughly documented summary of St. George's hagiography, cult, and iconography see Walter, *The Warrior Saints*, 109-144.

³⁵⁸ Further evidence for the veneration of St. George by the Frankish nobility is a donation of 100 hyperperi made by Gautier de Brienne (duke of Athens from 1308-11) five days before his death on 15th March 1311 to the church of St. George in Livadia. Kenneth M. Setton, "Saint George's Head," *Speculum* 48 (1973): 3-4.

equestrian warfare and military prowess. The local painters, whose task it was to create images that were at once timeless and approachable, reacted by incorporating select elements from the new models to amend traditional forms in a manner that met with contemporary expectations. This development should not be seen as some sort of conscious modernization. It is better explained as a natural process of the lasting confrontation with a new military ethos and a new visual vocabulary, a process in which cultural differentiation was not a major motivating factor. With few exceptions, a soldier's Western gear and a saint's knightly apparel were not intended as markers of cultural identity. Considering the freedom with which "foreign" details were incorporated into Byzantine compositions, one might question the extent to which painters were even concerned about the relative "easterness" or "westernness" of their sources. More than conscious invocations of Frankish culture, the Western elements that found entrance into the Orthodox churches of the lordship of Athens were echoes of a historical circumstance that had changed visual experiences and broadened the range of available artistic models.

Constructing a Conqueror's Identity: The Secular Paintings

A more deliberate and consistent manner was adopted by those responsible for the secular programs in the lordship of Athens. The two cycles that are documented in the gatechamber at Nauplia and the castle of St.-Omer at Thebes reveal a very calculated approach to visual communication on the part of their Latin sponsors. They drew upon the full suggestive potential of monumental painting to assert their position and to formulate a

justification for their presence in the region. New, Western modes of representation were imported and merged with local practice into a hybrid blend that reflected the diversity of its audience. Ancient myths and recent history were fused into an unbroken chain of chronology in the effort to shape a firm basis for the present. The Latin sponsored paintings in Frankish Greece are testimony not merely to the meeting of two cultures but to the formation of a new cultural identity, one that could provide moral and legal validation for the unusual conditions in this new dominion.

The legacy of Troy

Outside the lordship of Athens on the walls of the archbishop's palace in Patras there is said to have existed a monumental depiction of the fall of Troy. It is not known when the murals were executed or who commissioned them. The only secure evidence is the testimony of Nicolò de Maroni who saw the murals during his visit of Patras in 1395.³⁵⁹ Considering the subject matter that was described as "the whole history of the destruction of the city of Troy" it is unlikely that the paintings would have existed before 1205 when Patras became the seat of the Latin archbishop, for it is only within the context of Frankish occupation that the murals really make sense.³⁶⁰ Like no other subject, the legend of Troy illustrates the particular brand of historical reasoning that circulated amongst the Franks who lived in the Latin Empire of Constantinople. This is why, despite all uncertainties and despite the fact that they are not in the lordship of Athens, the

³⁵⁹ Legrand, "Relation du pèlerinage," 661.

³⁶⁰ David Jacoby points out that it is actually merely an assumption that the Latin archbishops took up residence in the palace. Who actually lived in the building after the Frankish conquest is not known. Jacoby, "Knightly Values," 170 n. 78.

paintings at Patras are introduced at this point of the discussion. By virtue of their subject matter they serve as a guide into the cultural consciousness of the Frankish minority that had settled in Latin Greece. By illuminating the complex processes by which cultural identity was formulated and shaped in the wake of the great conquest, the murals at Patras can assist in the interpretation of those monuments in the lordship for which reliable evidence does exist.

‘Lord ... we wonder greatly why you are coming here to conquer land from so distant a country. Have you not ... any lands in your own country to support you?’ And my lord Pierre answered: ‘How now!’ said he. ‘Have you not heard how Troy the great was destroyed and by what trick?’ ‘Oh yes!’ ... ‘We have indeed heard it told, but that was a long time ago.’ ‘Well,’ said Pierre, “Troy belonged to our ancestors and those who escaped from it came and settled in the country we come from; and because it belonged to our ancestors, we are come here to conquer land.’³⁶¹

The conversation between the French knight Pierre de Bracheux and John the Vlach is out of sequence in Robert de Clari’s early- thirteenth-century account of the conquest of Constantinople.³⁶² The chronicler inserted the meeting, which is set during the reign of Emperor Henry (1206 - 1216), immediately before his narration of the division of goods after the victory of 1204. Commentators on the chronicle have attributed this literary idiosyncrasy to a certain level of factual carelessness on the part of the author.³⁶³

³⁶¹ Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, trans. Edgar Holmes McNeal (New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1966), 122.

³⁶² The *Conquest of Constantinople* was composed sometimes between de Clari’s return to France in 1205 and 1216, the year of Emperor’s Henry’s death, the last major event related by the chronicler. Clari, *The Conquest*, 4.

³⁶³ Clari, *The Conquest*, 122 n. 128; Teresa Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland in the Historiography of Frankish Greece: The Fourth Crusade and the Legend of the Trojan War," *BMGS XXVII* (2003): 127 n. 23.

Recently, Teresa Shawcross has moved the passage into a more purposeful light. In her study “Re-inventing the Homeland in the Historiography of Frankish Greece: The Fourth Crusade and the Legend of the Trojan War” she outlines the process by which the ancient legends of Troy had become a justification for the violent capture of the City.³⁶⁴ For centuries the Trojan myth had served as the genealogical genesis for the Franks.³⁶⁵ By the eleventh century almost every noble Frankish family claimed descent from those legendary refugees who had escaped the carnage at Troy to found a new civilization in the region known today as France.³⁶⁶ With the events of 1204 the myth that had served to establish illustrious genealogies and to assert political independence from a diverse range of claimants found new utility.³⁶⁷ The Fourth Crusade had brought the Franks back to the homeland of their ancestors. In a convenient act of geographical dislocation Constantinople was equated with Troy, and its capture became an act of belated revenge for the destruction of Priam’s city. In laying claim to the Byzantine Empire, the Franks could finally realize the potential promised by their ancient ancestry.³⁶⁸ At least this is the

³⁶⁴ Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 120-52.

³⁶⁵ Associations between the Franks and the Trojans date back as early as the seventh-century. Some evidence even suggests the idea of Trojan descent originated at the time of the Roman Empire. Hugo Buchthal characterized the resourceful inventions of Trojan family trees as “a *tour de force* of unsurpassed absurdity.” Buchthal, *Historia Troiana*, 3; Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 121 n. 4.

³⁶⁶ Colette Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, trans. Susan Ross Huston (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 226.

³⁶⁷ In the chapter entitled “The Political Uses of the Trojan Myth” Colette Beaune outlined the versatility with which the myth was employed throughout the history of France to answer a variety of political and genealogical needs. Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology*, 226-24.

³⁶⁸ Jacoby, "Knightly Values," 171; Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 121.

interpretation of events as it appears in literary sources such as de Clari's chronicle. De Bracheux's historically oriented reasoning provided validation not only for the cynical Vlach, but also for future generations of skeptics. By placing the passage directly before the division of the Empire amongst the conquerors, the author skillfully pulled together two chronologically separated incidents to formulate a single idea: The Empire of Byzantium belonged to the Franks not merely by right of conquest, but by right of birth.³⁶⁹

This type of reasoning was the result of a very deliberate process of history making. For those Franks who were involved in the affairs of the Crusader states during the thirteenth century, the writing of history was not a simple recounting of events. It was a selective procedure in which episodes in the near and distant past were chosen to explain and to verify the present. What was most important in this process, so Bianca Kühnel in a recent article, was to demonstrate continuity.³⁷⁰ At a time when the future of the Crusader states was all but certain, artful assemblies of historical *exempla* could provide a sense of permanence that had gone missing in reality. The clearest expressions of this approach are the numerous history books produced in Acre in the last few decades before its fall in 1291.³⁷¹ More than half of the twenty-one illuminated volumes that have been attributed

³⁶⁹ Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 131-32.

³⁷⁰ Bianca Kühnel, "The Perception of History in Thirteenth-Century Crusader Art," in *France and the Holy Land: Frankish Culture at the End of the Crusades*, ed. Daniel Weiss and Lisa Mahoney (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 126.

³⁷¹ As Daniel Weiss has demonstrated, not only secular history, but also biblical narrative was employed to affirm the present and to add significance to recent events. Daniel H. Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

to Saint-Jean d'Acre are historical texts.³⁷² The work most frequently illustrated is William of Tyre's *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, also called the *Histoire d'Outremer* in which the archbishop and later chancellor, relates the history of the conquest of the Holy Land.³⁷³ Second in the number of extant manuscripts is the *Histoire Universelle*, a text that relates the history of the world from its creation to the reign of Julius Caesar.³⁷⁴ These histories greatly appealed to the Crusaders who could find precedents for their own actions in the vividly illustrated historical narrative.

Seen in this spirit of historical argumentation, the murals in the palace at Patras may have been intended to validate the Franks' secular and religious dominion by presenting a historical precedent for their territorial claims. In this regard it may also be significant that the most elaborate retelling of the legend of Troy, the Old French *Roman de Troie* composed about 1160-70 by Benoît de Sainte-Maure, is staged in the environs of the Frankish principality.³⁷⁵ In his epilogue Benoît claims as the source for this work a manuscript found in Athens.³⁷⁶ Later adaptations of the story have even more direct links

³⁷² Folda, *Crusader Manuscript Illumination*, 159-65; Jaroslav Folda and P. Edbury, "Two Thirteenth-Century Manuscripts of Crusader Legal Texts from Saint-Jean d'Acre," *JWCI* LVII (1994): 243-49.

³⁷³ William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. Emily Atwater Babcock and A. C. Krey, *Records of Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943); Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 87-93; Folda, *Crusader Manuscript Illumination*, 159-65.

³⁷⁴ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 68.

³⁷⁵ For a summary on the history of the text and an in-depth discussion of its earliest illustrated versions see Benoît de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie*, ed. L. Constans, 6 vols. (Paris: Société des Anciens Testes Français, 1904-1912); Buchthal, *Historia Troiana*.

³⁷⁶ Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 137-38 n. 50.

with the region. A prose version of the *Roman de Troie* from the second half of the thirteenth century and a Greek translation of Benoît's original dated between 1320 and 1390 are believed to have been produced in the Latin Greece.³⁷⁷ The prose version makes specific mention of the Morea and locates the source manuscript in the cathedral of St. Paul in Corinth.³⁷⁸ The Greek translation significantly alters the spirit of the story from a Franco centric tale of chivalry into a story that sides with the Greek-born actors of the legend. Teresa Shawcross has attributed this shift in part to geographic factors. With their conquest, the lords of Latin Greece had inherited the lands of the ancient heroes who had moved against Troy.³⁷⁹ The modifications to Benoît's text may have been yet another attempt to bring the past into closer unison with the present. Another possible sign of this alignment with the ancient history of Greece may be Guy de la Roche's request to Louis IX: "I say, my lord, to your holy majesty, that the seigneurie of Athens, which I have and hold, whoever held it in olden time was called duke; now, let it be by your word and command that from now henceforth I shall be called duke."³⁸⁰ In fact, there existed no precedent for such a title in Athens except in the *Roman de Troie* where a certain

³⁷⁷ de Sainte-More Benoît, *Le Roman de Troie en prose (Ms BN fr. 1612)*, ed. L. Constans and E. Faral, vol. 1 (Paris: É. Champion, 1922); Manoles Papatomopoulos and E. M. Jeffreys, *The War of Troy* (Athens: Morphōtiko Hidryma Ethnikēs Trapezēs, 1996). For a summary of the arguments that have led to these attributions with extensive footnotes concerning the surviving manuscripts see Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 137-48.

³⁷⁸ P. Meyer, "Les premières compilations françaises d'histoire ancienne," *Romania* 14 (1885): 67; Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 137.

³⁷⁹ Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 143-45.

³⁸⁰ Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 174.

Menesteüs, duke of Athens went to war with Agamemnon's forces.³⁸¹ Regardless if the plea to the French king did really take place or was a mere literary invention, the passage indicates that the lords of Athens were, or wanted to be, considered in terms of the legendary history of their realm. That the argument relied merely on a quasi-historical recounting of the ancient tale seems to have been of little concern. In any case, it is unlikely that the title was bestowed merely on the basis of Guy's ambitious request. What is of relevance to the present discussion is the emergence of a pattern also in Frankish Greece where thematically and geographically relevant passages from history were employed to frame the present in the verifying spirit of continuation.

The Crusader heritage

At Thebes it was not the ancient past but the more recent events of the early Crusades that found utility on the walls of the St.-Omer's palace. The conquest of Syria by the Crusading forces was vibrantly narrated by William of Tyre in his *Histoire d'Outremer*. The Latin text was translated into French soon after its completion around 1184 and enjoyed great popularity amongst the Frankish literary elite, a fact confirmed by about seventy remaining manuscripts dating to the thirteenth century alone.³⁸² Most of these codices were decorated with colorful depictions of knightly valor and courtly behavior.³⁸³ With knights clad in thirteenth-century dress, the pictorial cycles invited associations with

³⁸¹ Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 174 n. 47; Shawcross, "Re-inventing the Homeland," 144. See also above Chapter I, n. 29 (fix reference if no. change)

³⁸² William's narrates events up to 1184. He died in 1185. Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 87.

³⁸³ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 88, pls. 130-136.

more current events. The paintings at Thebes may well have derived from one such illustrated text, but this, of course, is nothing more than conjecture. Whatever the particular source of the murals, by the thirteenth century, the stories related in the *Histoire d'Outremer* had become an integral part of the Frankish courtly culture far beyond the borders of the Holy Land. Also the Latin inhabitants of Greece subscribed to the ideals that were embodied in William's narrative, but their bond with the Latin East was based not merely on emotional and ideological empathy. Whatever their individual motives for coming to Greece, as a group the Frankish settlers wanted their presence there to be seen as the natural continuation of the quest for the Holy Land. This sentiment was plainly expressed in the *Chronicle of Morea* which begins with an account of the conquest of Syria. It is also prevalent in the *Assizes of Romania* where the author asserts the integrity of his treatise by tying it to the legal traditions of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.³⁸⁴

Just as the literary prologues, the scenes of the conquest of Syria in the castle of St.-Omer served as the historical and ideological framework for the persons associated with it. Located in the residence of the joint lord of Thebes, the paintings established a direct association between the struggles in the Holy Land and the more recent capture of Greece. More specifically, living in the colorful company of the heroic images, Nicholas II de St. Omer would have been implicitly associated with the contents of the paintings. His own presence in Thebes could thus be construed as the result of a long succession of crusading victories. It might be added that the career of the St.-Omer in the lordship of Athens

³⁸⁴ Topping, *Assizes of Romania*, 17-18; Jacoby, "Knightly Values," 161.

probably only begun after 1208 with the arrival of Nicholas I.³⁸⁵ Nicholas II of St.-Omer himself inherited his position from his father Bela (d. 1258). The paintings of the conquest of Syria might have been intended to make up for the fairly recent establishment of the family in the region by implying a legacy that was intrinsically relevant to its immediate geographical and ideological environment.

No less relevant to their historical setting are the paintings at Nauplia.³⁸⁶ Executed in two campaigns between the years of 1261-1311, the murals freely exploited religious and secular imagery from both Eastern and Western sources in a manner that was distinctly pertinent for thirteenth-century Greece and the lordship of Athens in particular.³⁸⁷ The exceptional character of the murals is easily recognized. Despite the fact that all of the paintings from the first campaign were completed by a Greek hand, they are replete with Western pictorial conventions. The coat of arms above the western entrance and the Crusader sentiments of the equestrian St. George have already been mentioned. Perhaps even more striking is the inclusion of hagiographical portrait types otherwise unknown in

³⁸⁵ Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 15; Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, table 7. Based on his genealogical tables Antoine Bon seems to place St. Omer in Greece already in 1204. Bon, *Morée Franque*, 707.

³⁸⁶ For a detailed discussion of the paintings and a comprehensive bibliography see Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 13-30.

³⁸⁷ The paintings of the second campaign can not be dated with absolute certainty. A secure *terminus ante quem* is provided by a rubble wall that covers part of the murals and was constructed during the Turkish attacks in 1463. Attempts to integrate the paintings into the original programs speak for a dating soon after the completion of the first layer. Also, they are on the same type of very thin plaster as the remainder of the decoration. They may thus be safely considered as part of the overall program. Nothing remains of a third campaign that has been recorded by the original excavator of the monument. Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 15-16, 22.

the East. Flanking the west gate stands St. Christopher carrying the Christ Child, a type unknown in Byzantine art until the late fourteenth century (fig. 49).³⁸⁸ On the south wall, next to a thoroughly Byzantine-looking St. Anthony, stands a characteristically Latin St. James of Compostela (fig. 50). He is identified by his staff, pilgrim's hat, and the scallop shells decorating his hat and pouch.³⁸⁹ Additional telltale signs for the program's affiliation with the ruling minority are the Latin inscriptions that accompany the figures of the first campaign. Unusual for its geographic location is also the small medallion containing the *Agnus Dei*, a motif that had disappeared from Byzantine art after its prohibition by the Orthodox Church in the Council at Trullo (691-692) (fig. 51).³⁹⁰ A Western subtext can further be assumed for the representation of the Ascension in the barrel vault which differs from its Byzantine model through its placement in a city gate and through the absence of witnesses who are customarily included in this scene (fig.

³⁸⁸ The portrait type of St. Christopher carrying the Christ Child, was developed in the southern Alps during the twelfth century. In the East this type found acceptance only in the fourteenth century as a result of Western influence. It remained a rare alternative to popular depictions of the saint as a warrior and to the dog-headed images of the Orthodox pictorial tradition. Gertrud Benker, *Christophorus: Patron der Schiffer, Fuhrleute und Kraftfahrer, Legende Verehrung, Symbol* (Munich: Georg D.W. Callwey, 1975), 46; Mouriki, "Panagia at Moutoullas," 92; Venetia Newall, "The Dog-Headed St. Christopher in Bulgarian Iconography," *Macedonian Studies* IV, no. 1 (1987): 45. For fourteenth-century examples of the Christ-carrying St. Christopher in the East see: Ivan M. Djordjević, "Saint Christophe dans la peinture murale médiévale serbe," *Zograf* 11 (1980): figs. 1-2.

³⁸⁹ The fact that the pilgrim type of St. James does not reappear in Byzantine church decoration indicates that this part of the saint's cult did not find wide acceptance in the East. The Crusader lords of the Morea, however, had a particular devotion to this saint. This is shown, in part, by the dedication of the Villehardouin burial church in Andravida in his name. Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 249; Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 266-67.

³⁹⁰ Rule 82 also prohibits the depiction of any other animal symbolism that is not directly called for by the text of the scriptures. Günter Spitzing, *Lexikon byzantinisch-christlicher Symbole: Die Bildwelt Griechenlands und Kleinasiens* (Munich: Diederichs, 1989), 213-14.

52).³⁹¹ In the slightly later paintings of the second campaign on the north end of the chamber Crusader ideology and the uniquely Frankish sense of selective history gave the impetus for the depiction of a soldier and a cynocephalus from the Romance of Alexander (figs. 53-54).³⁹²

Diverse as these paintings are in terms of their artistic and religious heritage, combined the images coalesce into a remarkable expression of contemporary political and ideological concerns. The prominent display of the coats of arms above the western entrance sets the stage for a powerful message of political dominion. Flanked by the emblems of the princes of Achaia, the Villehardouin and other noble families the insignia of the rulers of Athens is allotted primary status. Associated with either Hugh de Brienne, count of Lecce and baili of the duchy of Athens, including Argos and Nauplia, from 1291 to 1294, or with his son, the duke of Athens Gautier I de Brienne (1308–1311), the emblem declared Athenian dominance.³⁹³ This, at a time when the lordship's long

³⁹¹ In Orthodox churches, the Ascension was traditionally located in the vault above the central sanctuary. In such representations the centrally placed image of Christ is flanked by two groups of witnesses comprised of the Apostles, the Virgin Mary, and, occasionally, angels. In this position over the altar, the Ascension elucidates Christ's Incarnation. In Nauplia, however, the representation of Christ in a mandorla is located in the vault of a gatehouse. In this setting, the representation echoes French practices of church portal decoration.

³⁹² Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 22-23.

³⁹³ Hugh de Brienne never was lord of Athens, but he was in effect the lone ruler of the duchy, because he had married the widowed duchess in 1291 and been appointed the guardian of her son Guy II de la Roche, the young duke of Athens (1287–1308). The *Chronicle of Morea* notes that "Count Hugues de Brienne . . . held sovereignty over the whole territory of the great lordship and had in his wardship Guy de la Roche." Lurier, *Chronicle*, 297; and K. Hopf, *Chroniques Gréco-Romanes* (Paris, 1873), 473
Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 20.

standing tradition of self-determination was under assault. According to custom, the lord of Athens owed fealty to the rulers of Achaia. However, during Hugh de Brienne's years as baili of Athens, relations between the two factions were severely strained. Hugh had repeatedly defied orders from King Charles II of Anjou to pay homage to the prince of Achaia. In 1296 Guy II de la Roche finally paid homage to Florent, but the conflict between the lordship of Athens and the principality did not cease until the two territories were united through the 1305 marriage of Guy II to the princess of Achaia, Mahaut de Hainaut.³⁹⁴ But the five coats of arms did not require a detailed understanding of heraldry or familiarity with the subtleties of feudal politics to communicate their general messages. They would have proclaimed Frankish overlordship to all who raised their eyes to the painted walls on their way into the fortress.

Validation and spiritual support for this authority was provided by the figural decoration of the antechamber. Located below the secular markers of the Frankish ruling families, the saints are called on not only to protect the fortress but also to sanction foreign reign over territories only recently under Byzantine hegemony. Meaningful in this regard are the hagiographical choices that were made. St. Christopher, St. James and St. George were not rendered as prescribed by Byzantine tradition.³⁹⁵ Instead, much care was taken to

³⁹⁴ Hopf, *Geschichte Griechenlands vom Beginn des Mittelalters bis auf unsere Zeit*, 281–282; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 295; Setton, *The Papacy*, 433-34; Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 88.

³⁹⁵ In the past I have discussed these portraits and the other religious images in the antechamber mainly in terms of their immediate function as gate decoration with particular emphasis on their apotropaic powers. For the present discussion I take the liberty to focus on this select group of images to explore the murals as expressions of

underscore their Western identity. St. Christopher carries the Christ Child as the powerful protector of Western travelers and soldiers.³⁹⁶ St. James wears the humble dress of the Latin pilgrims whom he guarded on their way to the holy sites, and St. George carries the insignia of the Crusaders on whose side he was believed to have fought on several occasions.³⁹⁷ It was a holy assembly perfectly suited to support the cause of a ruling class whose immediate ancestors had traveled far from home to participate in the most zealous form of pilgrimage, the Crusades.

A historical dimension was added to the gate in the course of the second campaign which may be considered as nearly contemporary with the initial phase of decoration. Facing each other across the space of the antechamber, stand an unidentified soldier and a club-wielding cynocephalus, a monstrous creature with the body of a human and the head of a

cultural identity. For a discussion of the iconographical and devotional history of all the images see: Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 16-20.

³⁹⁶ On the veneration of St. Christopher as the protector of travelers, pilgrims and soldiers see: Benker, *Christophorus*, 119–24, 141–44. Legend has it that an arrow directed at St. Christopher was miraculously diverted from his body and pierced instead the eye of the enemy king. Voragine, *The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine*, 381–82. The notion that St. Christopher was particularly venerated by medieval soldiers has been contested by Hans-Friedrich Rosenfeld. Hans-Friedrich Rosenfeld, *Der Hl. Christophoros: Seine Verehrung und seine Legende* (Leipzig: Kommissionsverlag Otto Harrassowitz, 1937), 105–07, 419–26.

³⁹⁷ One of the earliest examples showing St. James as a pilgrim is a sculpture in the Camara Santa in Oviedo, Spain (1170–1180). In analogy to the cross worn by pilgrims to Jerusalem, the scallop shell became the standard symbol of a pilgrim to the saint's shrine. Its earliest literary reference is found in a document dated to about 1130. For discussions of the individual elements of a pilgrim's outfit and the development of the cult of St. James, see: Christopher Hohler, "The Badge of St. James," in *The Scallop: Studies of Shell and its Influences on Humankind*, ed. Ian H. Cox (London: Shell Transport and Trading Co., 1957), 59-60, fig. 52; William Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela* (New York: Italica Press, 1993), 7-14, 56-67.

dog. As I have argued elsewhere, the two figures derive their inspiration from the Romance of Alexander which was widely circulated in the medieval West.³⁹⁸ Through its inclusion in the popular works such as the *Histoire Universelle*, the story of Alexander had become an essential part of the historical consciousness of its lay audience.³⁹⁹ The romance resonated particularly with those involved in the Crusades for whom the exotic tales of conquest in foreign lands could provide an illustrious precedent for their own exploits.⁴⁰⁰ The reference to the Romance of Alexander also brought a touch of courtly culture to the antechamber.⁴⁰¹ One of the many interpretations of Alexander's conquests circulating during the Middle Ages posited the ancient ruler as the personification of chivalric virtue. The prologue to the *Historia de Preliis* written in the late twelfth or early

³⁹⁸ Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 23-24. The stories of Alexander and the monstrous races he encountered were a fixed element of the worldview of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Contemporary historians of the Crusades incorporated tales of marvelous animals and races drawn in part from the Alexander Romance into their accounts. R. Wittkower, "Marvels of the East: A Study in the History of Monsters," *JWCI* 5 (1942): 169–80. Geoffrey Chaucer wrote in his *Canterbury Tales*: "The storie of Alisaundre is so commune / that every wight that hath discrecioun / Hath herd somewhat or al of his fortune." Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, lines 641–643; Archipresbyter Leo, *The Romances of Alexander*, trans. Dennis M. Kratz (New York: Garland, 1991), ix.

³⁹⁹ Excerpts from the adventures of Alexander are found in three Crusader manuscripts of the *Histoire Universelle* illustrated in Acre: Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 562 (323) (third quarter of the thirteenth century); Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 10175 (ca. 1270–1280); and London, British Museum, MS Add. 15268 (ca. 1285). Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 68–87, Appendix III, 148–151.

⁴⁰⁰ Interesting in this regard is a literary source from about 863–871, written by Otfried von Wießenburg in which the author claims the Franks as the direct descendants from the soldiers of Alexander. Although no less illustrious than a Trojan heritage, the Macedonian line never seems to have gained wide acceptance amongst the Franks. F. Pfister, *Kleine Schriften zum Alexanderroman* (Meisenheim an der Glan, 1976), 167.

⁴⁰¹ David Jacoby and others have demonstrated that courtly romance and chivalric ideals that were prominent in the medieval courts of Western Europe also played major roles in the lives of the Franks living in formerly Byzantine territories. Horowitz, "Quand les champenois parlaient le grec," 111–150; Jacoby, "Knightly Values," 158–186; and Lurier, *Chronicle*, 18–19.

thirteenth century declares: “It is my purpose that the Latins, who flourish in the glory of warfare, will receive both enjoyment and a pleasing argument for courtly behavior as they read the accomplishments of that man who was the master of warfare and who possessed every noble quality.”⁴⁰² Similar to the paintings that are said to have existed in the archbishop’s palace in Patras, the encounter with the cynocephalus in the gatechamber evoked the ancient past in reference to more recent events. Instead of providing justification, however, the stories of Alexander and his followers served as *exempla* for the secular aspects of the Crusading movement.

Carefully crafted to affirm Latin control over the fortress and the surrounding regions, and to promote values of pilgrimage and chivalry the Nauplia program is in effect nothing less than a self-conscious articulation of cultural identity on the part of the Frankish ruling class. The deliberate selection of saints whose capacities aligned with the goals of militant pilgrimage and the invocation of ancient precedents indicates that more than half a century after the fact, the lords of Athens still defined their identity in the ideological terms of the Crusade that had instigated their rule. It is the same, somewhat affected expression of a Crusader legacy that was also apparent in the paintings at Thebes. “Affected” because, as I have argued in the first chapter of this study, even the original conquerors of Greece were conscious of the fact that their task stood in no real relation to

⁴⁰² Not only the noble but also the average soldier was to find inspiration in the deeds described in the literary work. Leo of Naples specifically addresses this broadened audience in his tenth-century prologue when he writes: “Now subjects by reading and hearing about the battles and campaigns of their fellow soldiers . . . will strive to show themselves more prudent in every good deed, as befits soldiers of Christ.” Leo, *The Romances of Alexander*, 89-99, 135.

the Crusader vow they had taken. What this insistence on a heritage that never really was could provide was a much valued sense of continuance. The lordship of Athens was a young dominion with little in its history to justify Frankish settlement, a problem for its conquerors who came from a society in which social status and ownership was based first and foremost on ancestry and birthright. The legend of Troy could ratify part of the issue by providing ancient validation for the conquest. The Crusades supplied the ideological framework for the new realm, and at the same time imbued Latin Greece with an eminent past by aligning its historical heritage with that of the Holy Land. It is significant that the lords of Athens and Thebes sought their origins in ancient Greek legends and past crusading ventures. It was a legacy crafted to meet the particular requirements of the newly created realm. Its basic ideological underpinnings as they are evident in the paintings at Nauplia, Thebes and Patras were still Western, but geographically and historically it was situated in the East.⁴⁰³ Thus positioned, it allowed the members of the Frankish ruling class to define themselves within their own realms. Theirs was a new, historically validated identity not as the conquerors of a foreign country, but as the rightful heirs of their eastern lands.

⁴⁰³ One could, of course, attribute these historically inspired cycles as a mere reflection of literary taste. The popularity of stories as the *Roman de Troie*, the *Roman de Alexandre* or the *History of Outremer* is surely not to be underestimated. Not much is known about the circulation of books in Latin Greece, but as David Jacoby has suggested courtly literature played an important role in the lives of the nobility of Frankish Greece. Jacoby, "Knightly Values," 165-69. It is the location of the cycles in question that imbues them with political and cultural significance. Whereas it is not known where exactly in St.-Omer's castle the murals were located, given that they found mention in the *Chronicle of Morea* it is likely there were in a location similarly accessible as the reception hall at Patras. As public art, these murals had the potential to communicate a wide range of ideas and ideologies, and I don't believe their sponsors would have chosen these particular subjects had they merely entertaining value. For that they could have picked from a wide variety of other romantic tales of chivalry.

Painted Syncretism

To sum up what role wall painting played in the formation and expression of cultural identity in the lordship of Athens, the initial terms of general inquiry outlined at the onset of this discussion may be refined into a question of intent. Were the paintings in the churches, palaces and castles of the lordship formulated as deliberate expressions of identity, cultural, communal, religious or otherwise? In some cases the answer can be affirmative. Murals like the ones in the gatechamber at Nauplia required someone with a very clear idea of what it meant to be Frankish in Latin Greece, someone who could direct a Greek painter to go beyond his familiar models to devise a program that encapsulated the ideals of the Latin lords and affirmed their supremacy. The Franks who commissioned the paintings at Nauplia, Patras and Thebes were no pawn in the pitiless succession of chronological events, at least not if they could help it. Their history was yet to be written and it was formulated with great care and selection less to record the past than to build a suitable base for the present. In this endeavor, the public art of monumental decoration served as a convenient medium to propagate their view of history and to affirm their political position to a large audience. Concerning the religious monuments the answer is not quite as clear. As has been outlined in the previous chapter, the import of a Latin administrative body and ongoing theological debate might have encouraged the formulation of sanctuary programs that accentuated local Orthodox practice. At the same time, however, it could be shown that there also existed points of convergence apparent in the collaboration of certain ecclesiastics and some details of the church decoration. Similarly, the westernizing elements of dress and military gear highlighted in this chapter

should be seen artistic assimilation rather than calculated references to a particular cultural group. As indicated by some of the sanctuary programs and the examples from the re-Byzantinized territories, culturally specific imagery could be used to uphold indigenous traditions and to re-affirm a shaken regional identity; it just was not employed in this manner very often or very forcefully.

In comparison the self-directed programs of the Frankish ruling class seemed to have been much more concerned with the reinforcement of culturally specific ideas than the pious decoration of the lordship's Orthodox churches. It is, however, an artificial dichotomy that has probably more to do with the objective of the monuments in question than with their cultural affiliation. Monumental decoration stands in direct relation to the purpose of the building it decorates. At Nauplia, for example, the function and location of the program demanded a very clear definition of political, and subsequently, cultural allegiances. In contrast, Byzantine church decoration was inseparably linked with the enactment of the liturgical drama and the needs of individual and communal worship. These limitations of functionality left much less room for explicit expressions of identity, but they also reduced the necessity for such distinctions. An Orthodox church was Greek by definition. Further demarcation needed to occur only in answer to very specific concerns.

In a multicultural society as the one in the lordship of Athens one might expect a quite intricate approach to cultural or communal identity, and the evidence does not disappoint. Distinctions, if made at all, were not always drawn along expected lines. Some boundaries

were clearly defined others were blurred. A monument Frankish in both conception and message might be rendered in the pictorial language of the Greek tradition. Equally, a church program could incorporate Western elements in one part of the decoration while insisting on its Orthodox tradition in others. Boundaries were drawn when the circumstances called for such a differentiation, but at the same time visual forms could cross cultural divides without affecting the basic meaning and function of the overall decoration.⁴⁰⁴ In short, culturally specific images were not always associated with culturally specific meaning. For the purposes of this chapter the East/West, Frankish/Greek dichotomy was a useful tool to define points of segregation and to detect lines of convergence, but in the reality of thirteenth-century painting this duality was much less pronounced. Cultural distinction and integration were two parallel aspects of painting in the lordship of Athens. Together the decorated monuments present the picture of a syncretic environment in which distinct cultural identities were acknowledged and sometimes even accentuated, but where there also existed a climate that allowed for assimilation and non-critical interchange.

⁴⁰⁴ The same tendencies have been observed by Annemarie Weyl Carr in the painting of Cyprus. Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Byzantines and Italians on Cyprus: Images from Art," *DOP* 49 (1995): 357.

V
STYLE

The word that best characterizes the style of the monumental painting in the lordship of Athens is diversity. Comnenian solemnity and rational simplification of composition are as prevalent as emotional expressiveness and detail-oriented narration. Weightless bodies outlined with linear exactness exist side by side with voluminous figures rendered in broad, painterly brushstrokes. Classical simplicity meets with an increased interest in the decorative, and traditionalism merges with a progressiveness that mirrors advances in the great artistic centers of late medieval Byzantium. The paintings exhibit such a variety of approaches that it becomes difficult to speak in terms of development. Instead of linear, chronologically oriented progression one can observe several divergent trends running parallel and various stylistic currents intersecting and sometimes merging into an eclectic mix of traditionalism and inventiveness. Following the picture presented by the monuments themselves, the present chapter will not attempt to fit the paintings into a developmental pattern but will highlight some of the most prominent artistic currents. Stylistic kinships will be noted to address some questions concerning workshop practices and to trace the footsteps of painters who traveled from monument to monument. Finally, the murals will be discussed within the greater setting of thirteenth-century painting. Particular attention will be given to comparisons with other Crusader-held territories to investigate possible connections between the stylistic disposition of paintings in Frankish Greece and their particular socio-political setting.

Major Stylistic Currents

The paintings in the lordship of Athens can be divided into several distinct stylistic groups that are roughly defined by their relative conservatism or progressiveness. I write “roughly”, because most of the monuments are somewhere in between these two poles. The picture of multiplicity that can be observed in a general overview of the monuments continues into the small details of the programs and the individual scenes where old and new currents merge into inventive compositions that may be characteristic for much of thirteenth-century painting in the East.

Outlining the stylistic characteristics of thirteenth-century painting in Attica, Doula Mouriki identified two major groups. The first one is centered around the caves at Penteli, St. Peter at Kalyvia-Kouvara and the decorated sanctuary screen in St. George in Kouvara and is characterized by what Doula Mouriki describes as “a rather strong provincial character [displaying] a close adherence to Comnenian style.”⁴⁰⁵ The second group is exemplified by the frescoes from the Church of St. George at Oropos today in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens, the Church of the Holy Trinity in Kranidi, and St. John Psachna in Euboea.⁴⁰⁶ The murals in this group are marked by a progressive tendency with an inclination towards the monumental style found in late thirteenth and early fourteenth-century painting in artistic centers such as Thessaloniki or Ohrid. This summary categorization leaves a number of monuments that do not fit within these

⁴⁰⁵ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 82-83.

⁴⁰⁶ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 82-83.

divisions. For example, monuments such as the funerary Church of St. Nicholas near Kalamos or Omorphi Ekklesia in Athens merit their own categories as they stand out from the rest either due to the degree to which they display the stylistic tendencies outlined above, or because they display currents that are not found elsewhere in the region. Other cycles such as the paintings at Nauplia have yet to be assigned their place in the overall picture. For the purposes of the present discussion these monuments will be considered as part of the second category with its well-defined stylistic changes, for their segregation would be a purely theoretical one. The painted programs at Kalamos, Athens and Nauplia were as much a part of artistic activity in the lordship of Athens as more modest or less progressive commissions. In effect, they are what define the character of painting in the area. Without them, the region might all too easily be considered as an artistically and culturally isolated backwater. With them, it becomes clear that there existed relatively close ties between the great artistic centers in other parts of the Byzantine Empire and Serbia. They stand witness to the cultural and artistic vitality of the period and give integrity to a body of work that distinguishes itself by its very variety.

Comnenian traditionalism and provincial expressiveness

Painting in the lordship of Athens was slow to react to the artistic developments outside its borders. Its devotion to Comnenian norms has been noted time and again. Describing artistic development in Frankish Attica, Doula Mouriki stated, “the picture of artistic production in the area during the second half of the thirteenth century does not differ essentially from that offered by a study of the monuments of the first half of the century.

A strong conservatism which often verges on stagnation is the rule.”⁴⁰⁷ According to Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, provincialism and conservatism characterized not only the painting of thirteenth-century Attica, but most of the monumental painting in Latin-occupied territories from this period.⁴⁰⁸ The continuing adherence to traditional artistic forms is perfectly illustrated by the paintings in the Church of St. Peter in Kalyvia-Kouvara. Describing the compositional characteristics of the frescoes, Nafsika Coumbaraki-Pansélinou writes: “La sobriété des moyens d’expression et la clarté de la composition aboutissant à un art solennel qui, de ce point de vue, reste dans le goût de l’art ‘classique’ byzantin des XIe et XIIe siècles.”⁴⁰⁹ To achieve this retrospective clarity, most of the larger scenes are symmetrical with figures arranged on either side of a central axis. Movements are contained and emotional expression restrained. Secondary elements such landscape or architectural setting are kept to a minimum.⁴¹⁰ In the scene of the Transfiguration, Christ’s elongated body forms a symmetrical division around which the other figures are evenly distributed (fig. 55). The same rationalism is evident in the scene of the Ascension in which the ascending Christ forms a central axis with the Virgin who observes the event together with the Apostles (fig. 56). Also the Crucifixion follows this

⁴⁰⁷ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 83.

⁴⁰⁸ Kalopissi-Verti, "Tendenze stilistiche XIII secolo," 244.

⁴⁰⁹ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 110.

⁴¹⁰ Vojislav J. Djurić characterizes the classical Comnenian style as follows: “A l’époque classique de la peinture des Comnènes, on soumet des éléments essentiels à l’ensemble de l’image: le nombre de personnages, leurs proportions, leurs gestes, la retombée des plis des draperies, les accords des couleurs, la répartition des masses. La composition, réduite au nombre indispensable de personnages, s’est libérée de la narration et des épisodes pittoresques.” Vojislav J. Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine XIIe et XIII siècles," *Actes du XV^e congrès international d’études byzantines, Athènes - Septembre 1976 I* (1979): 173-74.

strictly hieratic and symmetrical arrangement (fig. 25). Despite the fact that the scene incorporates a multitude of figures, its overall impression is one of calmness and orderliness as the witnesses are placed at some distance from the cross forming two self-contained groups flanking the central image. How different this scene might have been executed is illustrated by the Crucifixion in the nearby Church of the Virgin at Merenta where the sacrifice of Christ is backed by elaborate scenery of architectural structures (fig. 57).

In the figures themselves the taste for traditionalism is expressed in the serene expressions, the linear treatment of the faces and the garments that drape over anatomically indistinct bodies. The modeling that does occur is achieved mainly by the skillful use of line. Thus the highlights on the face of the figure of Michael Choniates (fig. 9) in the *bema* are rendered by thin white lines. Even the curvature of his high cheekbones is suggested by means of outline rather than gradual shading, and the strands of his hair and beard are delineated by evenly spaced strokes of paint. His episcopal garments appear flat with little attention paid to the body beneath. A somewhat different approach was taken by the painter who executed the Doubting Thomas (figs. 58-59). Here the bodies unfold beneath the garments in a much more natural manner and give a more distinct sense of volume. The faces are still strictly linear, but the individual lines are more calligraphic and add a level of expressiveness to the features that is not evident in the portrait of the Athenian bishop.

Both of these examples have been linked to the second and third painting campaigns in the cave at Penteli. The most conspicuous feature the two monuments have in common is the portrait of Michael Choniates, but it is not only their shared interest in the prominent archbishop that connects the frescoes. Stylistically they show such striking similarities that they have been ascribed to some of the same painters that were active in Kalyvia-Kouvara.⁴¹¹ Unfortunately very little remains of the portrait of Michael Choniates, but even the small fragment of the top of his head with its elongated forehead, flattened profile and white highlights is enough to securely establish the stylistic kinship with St. Peter (figs. 9-10). Further parallels are evident in some of the figures in the decorated dome of the north chapel and the apostles in the scene of the Doubting Thomas in St. Peter (figs. 59-60). The prophet Elijah bears an uncanny resemblance with the white-haired apostle in the biblical scene. They share not only the linear treatment of their features but also a certain level of emotional animation that is created by little twisted strands of hair that give the figures a sense of unruliness and passion.

Doula Mouriki sees this expressiveness as a departure from the Comnenian tradition.⁴¹² Indeed a heightened level of emotionalism is one of the most consistent features found in the frescoes under investigation. Although the established norms of eleventh- and twelfth-century painting continue to provide the stylistic and technical basis throughout much of the thirteenth century, there is a distinct move towards a more expressive or human approach to painting. Individual reactions to events that are depicted become more

⁴¹¹ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsion," 112-13, 118-19; Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 116.

⁴¹² Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsion," 118.

distinct. The number of figures is no longer limited to those directly involved in the scenes that are depicted. Additional figures intensify the drama of the stories, and narrative detail adds to the popular appeal and emotional impact of the compositions.⁴¹³

At Kalyvia-Kouvara the multiplication of figures is evident in the aforementioned image of the Crucifixion (fig. 25). On the left side of the composition Mary the mother of James, Mary Magdalene and Salome join the grieving Virgin in her sorrow. On the right side three soldiers witness the event as the centurion points towards the cross proclaiming Christ's innocence. At the foot of the cross, a diminutive figure carries the wine-soaked sponge and another pierces Christ's side with his lance. Flanking the arch in the register below the main scene, the two criminals are shown tied to their crosses. Fit into the narrow space directly below the cross is the Resurrection of the Dead, a scene that appears in Byzantine manuscript illumination as early as the eleventh century but did not enter monumental decoration until the thirteenth century.⁴¹⁴ The same tendency towards densely populated scenes is also evident in the churches of St. Demetrios at Saronikos and the Virgin at Merenta (fig. 57). Similar to the Crucifixion in St. Peter, the scene at Merenta includes a number of witnesses that are not mentioned in the biblical text. Unfortunately, much of the fresco has been destroyed and thus any specific assessment is impossible. The same holds true for the Church of St. Demetrios where removal of

⁴¹³ Lydie Hadermann-Misguich traced this development towards a more poignant treatment of church decoration in her article. L. Hadermann-Misguich, "La peinture monumentale tardo-comnène et ses prolongements au XIIIe siècle," *Actes du XVe congrès international d'études byzantines, Athènes - Septembre 1976 I* (1979): 283.

⁴¹⁴ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 83.

whitewash has revealed fragments of the Entry into Jerusalem in the apse (fig. 61).⁴¹⁵ But even the remaining fragments give a sense of the amplified interest in secondary elements such as the group of observers in the right hand corner of the composition and the elaborate architectural setting of the scene.

Particularly telling in regard to this new attention to narrative detail is the scene of Christ's Baptism at Merenta (fig. 62). Attended by St. John and three Angels, Christ stands in a river populated by different types of aquatic beasts. At his feet rests a diminutive personification of the river Jordan, his bright red hair in disarray as is fit for an antique nature spirit. A small figure, maybe a child, stands at the shores of the river bending forward as if about to leap into the water. With all this added detail, the scene prefigures the more elaborated renderings of this scene that begin to appear in the early fourteenth century in major monuments such as the Afendiko in the monastery of the Brontochion in Mistra decorated between 1311/1312 and 1322 or the Metropolis of Veria from the second decade of the fourteenth century. In her study of the baptismal scenes in these two churches, Doula Mouriki traced a number of marginal themes included in this scene to classical sources. Discussing children involved in different aquatic activities she notes the rarity of such imagery before the thirteenth century. It is only in the Late Byzantine Period that they become more prevalent as part of a wide-ranging revival of antique sources at the time.⁴¹⁶ For Doula Mouriki the addition of narrative detail taken

⁴¹⁵ Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Neōtera apo tē syntērēsē," 437-38, figs. 4-5.

⁴¹⁶ Doula Mouriki, "Revival Themes with Elements of Daily Life in Two Palaeologan Frescoes Depicting the Baptism," in *Okeanos: Essays presented to Ihor Ševčenko on his Sixtieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, ed. Cyril Mango and Omeljan Pritsak,

from antiquity and sometimes from daily life is the pictorial expression of the humanist tendencies that characterize philosophy and scholarly thought in Late Byzantine Constantinople and other cultural centers.⁴¹⁷ Aside from the fact that the murals at Merenta were executed sometime in the mid thirteenth century, i.e., before the Palaeologan school of thought could formulate its humanist theories, they may be seen as early signs of a more personal approach to church decoration, a penchant that Lydie Hadermann-Misguich already recognized in late Comnenian painting from the last decades of the twelfth century.⁴¹⁸ If the attention to secondary detail and narrative elements in monuments such as St. Peter, St. Demetrios and the Church of the Virgin is to be ascribed to, as Doula Mouriki suggests, the sway of popular taste, they nevertheless followed a discernable trend that would reach its climax in the elaborate compositions of the Palaeologan era.⁴¹⁹ Furthermore, the comparatively sophisticated treatment of the Crucifixion at Kalyvia-Kouvara, the inclusion of antique elements in the Baptism at Merenta and the attempt in the same program to place the figures within a clearly defined architectural setting all suggest an awareness of trends outside the borders of the lordship and imply the availability of models that reflected the most current developments in thirteenth-century painting.⁴²⁰

Harvard Ukrainian Studies (Cambridge: Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, 1983), 473.

⁴¹⁷ Mouriki, "Revival Themes," 473-74.

⁴¹⁸ Hadermann-Misguich, "La peinture monumentale tardo-comnène et ses prolongements au XIIIe siècle," 283.

⁴¹⁹ Mouriki, "Revival Themes," 82.

⁴²⁰ Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 161.

This is not to deny a certain level of naïveté in the frescoes. Particularly for those at Merenta it would be inappropriate to highlight its more progressive aspects without acknowledging not only its basic reliance on eleventh- and twelfth-century Comnenian norms but also its relative conceptual simplicity. The painter who rendered scenes like the Nativity at Merenta was not an artisan of highly refined skill (fig. 63). There is no consistency of scale, consequently, the scene appears more like a random assemblage of disparate models than a coherent composition. This sense of uneasy inconsistency permeates most of the compositions and somewhat belies the more sophisticated tendencies of the program. The coexistence of new forms together with traditional modes of representation executed with moderate skill is what characterizes many of the lordship's fresco cycles. It is a provincial style, whereby the adjective "provincial" is not applied in its derogatory sense, but as a term describing an art that is defined by its geographical, social and economical setting. It is the kind of art one would expect of a small church in a rural area built and decorated by locally trained artisans hired with the limited financial resources of an agricultural community. The marked provincial character and popular appeal of the paintings at Merenta set them apart from the frescoes at Kalyvia-Kouvara or Penteli and led Doula Mouriki to assign them to a separate category that is "strongly defined by popular taste"⁴²¹ To this category also belong a number of churches on the Methana peninsula and in the area of Kranidi.

⁴²¹ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 82.

Perched on the edge of a mound overlooking the northern coastline of the Methana peninsula stand the little churches of St. John the Theologian and St Demetrios.⁴²² Only fragments of figures may be discerned under the dirty and flaking whitewash of St. John the Theologian. Their style poses an interesting contrast between the painterly rendering of St. George's face with its shadowy eyes and modeled chin and the linear folds that drape around the legs of St. John (figs. 27, 64). A few hundred feet up the rocky hill, the Church of St. Demetrios preserves much more of its original decoration. The most striking features of the frescoes are the proportions of the figures with their large heads and stubby bodies, a type exemplified by the figure of John in the Crucifixion (fig. 65). Most garments are rendered by means of a stark outline. Only the faces show a certain subtlety of modeling, which together with a sense of volume conveyed by some of the images, places these paintings into the beginning of the fourteenth century.⁴²³ Somewhat more sophisticated are the frescoes in the third church on the peninsula that preserves its Byzantine decoration, the Church of the Virgin on the overgrown mountain above the remote village of Megalochori.⁴²⁴ Here we find again the taste for Comnenian linearity and restraint that was already observed at Kalyvia-Kouvara and Penteli. Compared to the other two fresco cycles in Methana this one was executed with much greater technical

⁴²² For detailed descriptions of the monuments, their architecture and decoration consult Theodore Koukoulis and Marianna Oikonomou, "Hagios Demetrios kai Hagios Ioannes o Theologos," *Peloponnesiaka* 22 (1996-1997): 221-276; Mee and Forbes, eds., *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 219-33; Mitsani, "Methana," 234-41.

⁴²³ Mitsani, "Methana," 241.

⁴²⁴ In his catalogue of churches on the Methana peninsula Theodore Koukoulis refers to a study on the paintings of this church being prepared for publication by Professor Vokotopoulos at the University of Athens. The study is still pending publication as of September 2005. Mee and Forbes, eds., *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 248.

finesse and skill. The pliable drape of the garments and the attention to delicate decorative detail evident in the Evangelist portraits below the dome recall the work in the Church of St. George at Kouvara dated to the fourth decade of the thirteenth century or slightly later (figs. 66-67).⁴²⁵ Based on this comparison and some similarities with the paintings in the late-thirteenth-century frescoes in the Church of the Taxiarches at Markopoulo the murals in the small church at Megalochori have been dated to the second half of the thirteenth century, providing yet another example for the enduring sway of Comnenian painting in the region.⁴²⁶

Also belonging to this group of provincial works of popular style are two churches not far from the Methana peninsula near Kranidi on the southern tip of the Argolid, St. Andreas and St. John the Theologian. Just as the other monuments in this group, the decoration of the two churches is markedly conservative adhering for the most part to twelfth-century models with some indications of more recent developments. In the scene of the Nativity in the Church of St. Andreas the garments of the angels fall in soft folds over the shoulders and arms (fig. 68). While there is a certain painterly quality in the broad strokes of white highlights, the overall treatment seems to be more concerned with the rhythmic flow of the lines than with a convincing modeling of the figure below. This effect is particularly striking in the two of the apostles in the Transfiguration (fig. 69). The oval swirl of folds over St. Peter's right knee has little to do with any anatomical reality. In the pink garment of the apostle at his knees, the white highlights appear more as linear patterns than as

⁴²⁵ Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 169.

⁴²⁶ Mitsani, "Methana," 233-34.

convincing renderings of folds. The same linear highlights are employed for the faces of the standing saints (fig. 70). Together with the ochre colored underpaint the thick strokes of white give the figures a certain rustic quality that characterizes the whole program. Still, the painter or painters who decorated St. Andreas managed to endow the figures with a considerable sense of monumentality and volume that indicates a mid-thirteenth-century date for this monument.⁴²⁷

Not far from the Church of St. Andreas on a small wooded hill stands the Church of St. John the Theologian. Its paintings, while sharing some stylistic characteristics like the ochre skin color and the white highlights with its near neighbor, exhibit a more polished and accomplished version of the style evident at St. Andreas. The differences become immediately apparent when comparing the image of St. John the Baptist from St. Andreas with the portrait of St. John the Theologian in the church named after him (figs. 70-71). In the latter church, the highlights are applied with much more discretion giving an overall appearance of refined restraint. Whereas the theologian's face is still purely linear with no real modeling to speak of, his garments display none of the flat patterning evident in St. Andreas. The fabric is rendered in different shades of red applied with broad brush strokes that generate the distinct impression of mass and volume. The self-possessed calm of the figures in combination with the linear treatment of the faces with their carefully applied highlights recall some of the paintings at Kalyvia Kouvara.⁴²⁸ At the same time there is also a noticeable penchant for delicate decorative detail. The coat of St. Menas and the

⁴²⁷ Pansélinou, "Toichographies," 160, 166.

⁴²⁸ Pansélinou, "Toichographies," 164-65.

tunic of St. Eustace are covered by minutely executed patterns (figs. 29, 72). Their cuffs are rendered as if embroidered, and the book held by John is lavishly ornamented with pearls and other gems. Once more one is reminded of the frescoes on the sanctuary screen in the Church of St. George at Kouvara in Attica. In essence the paintings in the Church of St. John the Theologian are somewhere between the more sophisticated and extensive programs in Attica and purely provincial works such as the Church of St. Andreas or St. Demetrios and St. John the Theologian on nearby Methana.

Although there are points of comparison between the paintings in the Church of St. John the Theologian and those in St. George near Kouvara, the latter monument stands apart from the extremely modest commissions in Methana and Kranidi. The very scale of the church itself implies a much greater financial investment which is also reflected in the relative quality of the frescoes. Its paintings on the upper part of the sanctuary screen have been discussed in detail by Doula Mouriki.⁴²⁹ Concerning their style she notes the strong Comnenian tendencies, something that has also been observed by Manolis Chatzidakis.⁴³⁰ The figures are flat, with much emphasis on the rhythmic patterning of the drapery's folds (figs. 5-6). The slender and comparatively weightless bodies are delineated by the generous use of outline. They stand serenely flanking the central throne forming a strictly hieratic and tightly controlled composition. There are, however also those elements that characterize much provincial painting of the later thirteenth century. There is the aforementioned predilection for decorative elements. There is also a sense of

⁴²⁹ Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 145-71.

⁴³⁰ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 66-67.

expressiveness and emotionalism that may be attributed to more recent changes in popular taste. While the face of Christ was rendered with clear and controlled lines to achieve an austere unaffected appearance, with the faces of the other participants the painter took much more liberty (fig. 73). St. John the Baptist was portrayed by means of clearly visible, quick edgy brush strokes that give a sense of age but also of emotional agitation appropriate to the ascetic preacher (fig. 74). Particularly poignant are the figures of the Damned (fig. 75). With the instruments of their sins tied in torture around their necks they wrinkle their brows in fear, their agony suggested by their tightly clenched lips, the wide open eyes and the dark red shadows under their eyes. Color in general adds to the overall expressiveness of the program as bright red, purple and pink tones contrast with cool yellows and blues and crisp black and white outlines.⁴³¹

A similar level of expressiveness is evident in the decoration of the Church of the Savior near Megara.⁴³² In the scene of the Betrayal the crowded composition and the swirling patterns of folds on the garment of Judas convey some of the emotional upheaval and clamor of Christ's arrest (fig. 17). The detail of Peter cutting the ear off one of the soldiers further demonstrates the painter's interest in conveying the drama of the moment (fig. 76).

It also demonstrates his ability to endow the figures with a distinct sense of volume

⁴³¹ For a more detailed description of the style of the paintings see: Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 164-67.

⁴³² Hélène Grigoriadou and Karin Skawran date the church to about 1200. Vojislav Djurić and Sophia Kalopissi Verti and Doula Mouriki place the paintings into the third quarter of the thirteenth-century, a date which seems much more probable considering the stylistic characteristics of the frescoes. Hélène Grigoriadou, "Peintures murales du XIIe siècle en Grèce" (Dissertation, University of Paris, 1968), 69-141; Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 46, n. 216; Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 225; Skawran, *Development*, 175-76, figs. 319-35; Kalopissi-Verti, "Tendenze stilistiche XIII secolo," 247.

despite his continuing adherence to a more or less linear manner. The squat proportions of the soldiers and the not always successful rendering of movement give this and other multi-figure compositions in the church a distinct provincial flavor that places them with the other monuments discussed above. Somewhat different is the effect of the freestanding saints on the lower registers of the walls. With his massive sloping shoulders and wide torso, St. Theodore shows signs of some of the voluminous monumentality of late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth-century painting (fig. 77).⁴³³ In these figures one can also observe a move away from the linear mode of Comnenian painting.⁴³⁴ The faces of St. Marina and St. George, for example, are modeled by means of shading without the calligraphic outline that is so prevalent in monuments such as St. Peter, St. George, the caves at Penteli or the provincial churches of Methana and Kranidi (figs. 78, 28).

These last few examples link the Church of the Savior to the monument by the same name a few miles north of Megara near Alepochori. St. George and St. Demetrios possess the same bulky physique as St. Theodore at Megara (figs. 28, 79). The equestrian saint's face has been destroyed, but St. Demetrios' round face with its carefully modeled features devoid of outline, his narrow lips and the v-shaped shadow at the bridge of his nose all recall the face of St. Marina. Whereas the frescoes at Megara offer the closest comparison with the paintings at Alepochori, the latter program also shares a number of traits with some of the other monuments noted above. There is the same taste for decorative detail as seen in the lavishly ornamented clothes of the participants in the Feast of Herod that has

⁴³³ Skawran, *Development*, 101.

⁴³⁴ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 56, 81; Kalopissi-Verti, "Tendenze stilistiche XIII secolo," 246-47.

been observed in the Church of St. George in Kouvara and the Church of the Virgin at Megalochori (figs. 66, 67, 80). There is also a similar attention to narrative detail as found in some of the other monuments which becomes apparent in the carefully rendered tableware and the elaborate architectural backdrop in the same scene. On a more general level, some of the paintings exhibit a familiar provincial flair as is demonstrated by the short, doll-like women visiting Christ's tomb at the anatomically unsuccessful rendering of the angel pointing towards the empty sepulcher (fig. 22). Thus, the frescoes at Alepochori combine local, provincial elements with more progressive tendencies such as the increased interest in narrative detail and setting and the voluminous, painterly treatment of some of the figures. Doula Mouriki characterizes the resulting program as a "provincial echo of a 'modern' stylistic trend."⁴³⁵ Indeed, the paintings in the Church of the Savior neither fit completely into the provincial categories outlined above nor do they approach the sophistication of some of the churches that remain to be discussed. Still, by virtue of their very lack of uniformity, they fit firmly within the overall picture of wall painting in the lordship of Athens.

Based on their stylistic characteristics, the churches at Megara and Alepochori have been assigned a date between 1250 and 1280.⁴³⁶ This places them after St. Peter at Kalyvia Kouvara (second quarter of the thirteenth century) and the paintings at Penteli (1233/1234) but before the provincial Church of St. Demetrios near Kounoupitsa on the Methana peninsula (late thirteenth to early fourteenth century). This comes to show that

⁴³⁵ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 83.

⁴³⁶ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 83.

Comnenian traditions as found at Markopoulo or Kounoupitsa continue to co-exist for some time with more progressive trends. This point is supported by two additional monuments both of which, despite their late-thirteenth-century date, carry on many aspects of their stylistic predecessors, the Church of the Taxiarches near Markopoulo and the crypt of St. Nicholas Kambia. There are two divergent trends that are visible in the Church of the Taxiarches near Markopoulo.⁴³⁷ Whereas the use of outline and the linear treatment of the facial features particularly in the figures in the conch of the apse have been described as archaizing, the paintings in the dome display the more painterly and voluminous approach that has also been noted at Alepochori (figs. 81-82)⁴³⁸ Particularly the garments of the prophet Elijah were rendered with the kind of broad sweeping brushstrokes creating the weighty earth-bound figures that have been associated with more progressive works of the late thirteenth century.⁴³⁹

A quite different approach was taken in the crypt of St. Nicholas Kambia near Nea Orchomenos in the northwestern frontier of the lordship of Athens.⁴⁴⁰ Here the elongated elegance of Comnenian painting merges with a painterly approach that carefully models the figures by means of subtly applied shadows and highlights. The debt to Comnenian

⁴³⁷ Aspra-Vardavake, "Hoi byzantines toichographies," 224-25, 228-29.

⁴³⁸ Aspra-Vardavake, "Hoi byzantines toichographies," 229; Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 81.

⁴³⁹ Aspra-Vardavake, "Hoi byzantines toichographies," 229.

⁴⁴⁰ Panagiotide, "Hoi toichographies tēs kryptēs," 597-622; Skawran, *Development*, 178-179, figs. 253-255; Kalopissi-Verti, "Tendenze stilistiche XIII secolo," 249-50. A comprehensive catalogue of the paintings at Kambia, albeit only with low-quality black and white pictures, is available in G. Tsimas and P. Papahadjidakis, eds., *Fresques de l'église de St. Nicolas au Kambia* (Athens: Copies in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., n.d.).

painting is plainly visible in the figure of John Kaloktenes in the apse (fig. 83). The patterning of his garment flattens out the figure and completely denies it any sense of corporeal reality. This stands in considerable contrast to the figure of Saint Euthymios who maintains the elongation of the earlier tradition but departs from it by the rounded modeling of his features (fig. 84). There is a physical presence and weight to this figure that stands in no comparison to the ethereal appeal of the bishop in the apse. Still, even in this saint there is none of the monumentality or looseness of brushwork that will be observed in some of the more progressive monuments in the area. The frescoes of St. Nicholas were executed with much refinement and skill and its traditionalism can not be equated with a lack of ability. Rather, it seems, the painters made a conscious effort to evoke the decoration of another monument, that of Hosios Loukas, the famous monastery of which St. Nicholas was a dependency.⁴⁴¹ The frescoes in the crypt demonstrate that there is no clear, chronologically defined move away from established artistic norms. Painters were not involuntary subjects to inevitable stylistic developments. Depending on their training and abilities, they could consciously choose from a variety of styles to set a monument such as the monastic church at Kambia into its appropriate historical and administrative context.⁴⁴²

⁴⁴¹ The architecture of the crypt of St. Nicholas was conceived as a detailed copy of the crypt at Hosios Loukas. Robert W. Schultz and Sidney H. Barnsley, *The Monastery of Saint Luke of Stiris, in Phocis, and the Dependent Monastery of Saint Nicholas in the Fields, near Skripou, in Boeotia* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited for the British School at Athens, 1901), 68-71. For high-quality color images of the crypt at Hosios Loukas see: Chatzidakis, *Hosios Loukas*, 70-91, figs. 72- 98.

⁴⁴² As noted by Sophia Kalopissi-Verti also the painter who decorated the Church of the Holy Trinity at Kranidi had the ability to work in a variety of styles. Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 307.

While this last example points to the innate difficulties involved in outlining any sort of stylistic development, there are some general observations that can be made about the majority of the paintings discussed so far. Overall, there is increased attention paid to elements that make the sacred scenes more approachable. Compositions become more elaborate and the players more involved in the emotional drama of the scenes. The growing interest in depicting movement and volume adds a physical dimension to the images that gives them an earthbound quality that brings them closer to the observer. This movement that can be observed equally in the more sophisticated programs such as the Church of the Savior at Megara as well as in thoroughly provincial works as the Church of the Virgin at Merenta. It is even more developed in those churches in the lordship that move beyond their local traditions and provincial limitations, the monument that form the second major stylistic grouping of this study.

Progressive monumentality and stylistic cosmopolitanism

There is no clear line of distinction between the monuments characterized above as traditional or provincial expressive and the second, more progressive group. It is more a matter of degree and a question of technical refinement that leads to the differentiation between these two major stylistic currents. If there are several elements in the churches like the ones at Megara and Alepochori that could warrant their inclusion in this category, there also exist a number of reasons why the first monument discussed in this section may be placed with the group above. The murals in the Church of the Holy Trinity at Kranidi have been noted for their reminiscence of late Comnenian style.⁴⁴³ Sophia Kalopissi-Verti,

⁴⁴³ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 307.

who studied the monument in detail for her doctoral thesis, points to the shallow space of the compositions, the limited architectural setting, the flatness of most of the figures and the fractured linear treatment of the drapery as signs for the abiding traditionalism of the frescoes. At the same time the sophisticated color scheme of pale pastels, the subtle modeling with touches of red and green of the faces and the convincing rendering of volume in some of the figures places these paintings apart from most other works discussed so far.⁴⁴⁴ The subdued color palette and the quiet dignity exuded by the central figure in the Hospitality of Abraham give the paintings a sense of classical monumentality comparable in its effect to the paintings such as the angel at Christ's tomb from one of the most important monuments of the first half of the thirteenth century, the *katholikon* of Mileševa monastery (figs. 85-86).⁴⁴⁵ Built under the auspices of the Serbian King Vladislav I and decorated sometime before 1228 by highly skilled painters possibly trained in Constantinople or some other important artistic center, the murals in the monastic church set the stage for later developments in Serbian and Greek painting. In the scene of the Ascension in the vault above the sanctuary the subtle color scheme of purple, pink and pale blue, the monumental scale of the figures, the rhythmic movement of the apostles, which is echoed in the gentle flow of their garments all combine into a unified composition that finds no real comparisons in the local churches (fig. 87). The painter who formulated this arrangement and executed the angel in the Old Testament scene with so much ethereal beauty and poise was not only familiar with models and artistic trends

⁴⁴⁴ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 68; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 307.

⁴⁴⁵ Vojislav J. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken in Jugoslavien* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 1976), 45-50, pls. XVIII-XXI; Tania Velmans, *Byzanz, Fresken und Mosaik* (Zürich: Benzinger Verlag, 1999), 185-86, pls. 76-78.

beyond the borders of Frankish Greece, but also had the training to successfully employ them in his own work. Yet his approach is not uniform, and figures such as the archangels on the lower register of the north wall show his great debt to the Comnenian tradition (fig. 88). Still, there is an undeniable cosmopolitanism in these paintings. The painter's willingness to experiment with outside impulses and his ability to apply them without the awkwardness that is evident in so many of the other paintings in the region places this monument in the same category as the next group of frescoes to be discussed: the salvaged fragments from the Church of St. George at Oropos.⁴⁴⁶

Completed around 1240-1250 the murals from the ruined church at Oropos distinguish themselves by means of their technical quality and the vanguard treatment of the figures.⁴⁴⁷ As seen in the portrait of one of the church hierarchs in the apse, the drapery does not show the flat linearity that characterizes so much of the region's painting. The bishop's pale pink garment is rendered by means of shading created by applying different tones of color rather than by merely adding dark calligraphic outlines (fig. 89). The folds have lost any sense of decorative patterning, and while the heavy fabric obscures most anatomical detail, the weight and volume of the figures is clearly distinguishable. Despite the continuing use of some outline, the faces are carefully modeled to create delicate features such as those of the young deacon saint that used to occupy the wall next to the

⁴⁴⁶ Anastasios Orlandos, "Mesaiōnika mnēmeia Ōropou kai Sykaminou," *DChAE* 4, no. 1 (1927): 25-54; Chatzidakis, "Byzantines toichographies ston Ōropō," 87-107; Velmans, *La peinture murale*, 149; Skawran, *Development*, 184.

⁴⁴⁷ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 67; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 305; Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 82; Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 225.

apse (fig. 90).⁴⁴⁸ With their quiet, three-dimensional monumentality the paintings at Oropos also recall the royal commission at Mileševa and indicate the painter's awareness of recent trends in monumental painting.⁴⁴⁹

The development towards voluminous figures modeled by means of subtle shading is one of the most significant changes that can be observed in thirteenth-century painting. The movement already noticeable in frescoes at Oropos and some of the figures at Kalyvia-Kouvara from the second quarter of the thirteenth century picks up momentum in the following decades. If the figures at Oropos show a move away from the dominant linear style of Comnenian painting, the frescoes in the late- thirteenth-century Church of St. Nicholas at Kalamos completely break with that tradition.⁴⁵⁰ An earlier church constructed at the same site had already received painted decoration in the first decades of the thirteenth century. During the ongoing restoration of the monument, pieces of painted plaster that had been reused as building material for the new church have been uncovered. The fragments reveal paintings that may be placed in the same category as the churches at Kalyvia-Kouvara, Penteli or Merenta (fig. 91).⁴⁵¹ The later construction of a new church and its decoration shows the continuing importance of the site which functions until this day as the funerary church of the nearby village. The decoration of the smaller late-

⁴⁴⁸ Chatzidakis, "Byzantines toichographies ston Ōropō," figs. 38-39.

⁴⁴⁹ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 67; Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 113.

⁴⁵⁰ Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 360-61, pl. XLII, figs. 324-336; Mouriki, "Stylistic Trends," 75; idem, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 83; Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Hagios Nikolaos," 227-48.

⁴⁵¹ Ginis -Tsofopoulou, "Hagios Nikolaos," 227-48.

thirteenth-century church was executed in manner that reflects some of the most avant-garde developments of the time. The strongly built figures, which are modeled purely by means of shading and variation of color, move freely through the deep space of the composition. As in the case of the Archangel from the scene of the Annunciation, the emotional significance of the moment is expressed by means of bold gestures and the agitation of the voluminous drapery that stretches and flutters with the movement of the figure (fig. 92). The overall technique can not be described as anything but painterly with broad, sweeping strokes of color defining form in a manner that allows one to envisage the body of the moving figure below. The faces are round and fleshy, smoothly modeled with outlines used only to define the eyes (fig. 93). It is a style that is not found elsewhere within the lordship of Athens but recalls paintings in Serbia and Macedonia such as those in the Church of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery at Sopoćani completed in 1263-1268 under the auspices of the Serbian king Uroš.⁴⁵² In one of the most famous scenes in the church, the Dormition of the Virgin on the west wall of the *naos* we find the kind of figures whose athleticism, emotional gestures and skillfully modeled drapery seem to have provided the foundation for the angel at Kalamos (fig. 94). An even more persuasive comparison is offered by the image of the Apostle John from the same Serbian church with its painterly approach to rendering the garments and the carefully modeled face with its broad nose and graceful lips (fig. 95). Other comparisons to the style at Kalamos are found in the Church of the Virgin Peripleptos (St. Clement) at Ohrid from (1295) and St.

⁴⁵² Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken in Jugoslavien*, 54-57, pls. XXVI-XXIX; Velmans, *Byzanz, Fresken und Mosaiken*, 189-192, pls. 81-83, figs. 164-68. See also the monograph on the church with sixty color plates Vojislav J. Djurić, *Sopoćani* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1963).

Nicholas at Sušica near Skopje (after 1282-1283), all testifying to the far-reaching experience and cosmopolitanism of the painter who was hired to decorate the little funerary church in the mountains of northern Attica.⁴⁵³

The presence of the great artistic centers can also be felt in the late- thirteenth-century paintings in the Omorphi Ekklesia in Athens. Here in the outskirts of the ancient city a group of painters executed a program that mirrored the most recent developments in Macedonian, Serbian and Constantinopolitan painting.⁴⁵⁴ In their emphasis on three dimensional space and the corporeality of the human figure the paintings at Athens bear a certain resemblance to those in Kalamos, but the means by which these interests are expressed are quite different. The drapery style at Omorphi Ekklesia is much more angular with the individual passages of shadows and highlights faceted into large areas of color. This is, of course, only a very general statement, because the murals in Athens display quite a variety of individual style and approaches. The frescoes may be roughly divided into three stylistic groups corresponding with their location in the *naos*, the narthex and the parekklesion respectively.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵³ Mouriki, "Stylistic Trends," 75. For summary discussions of the churches at Ohrid and at Sušica see: Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken in Jugoslavien*, 67, fig. 42; Velmans, *La peinture murale*, 167-68, 171.

⁴⁵⁴ Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 72-106, 135-147; Mouriki, "Stylistic Trends," 75-76; Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 226.

⁴⁵⁵ Agape Vasilake-Karakatsane has recognized several stylistic subdivisions within these general groups. It would go far beyond the scope of the present discussion to address each one of these groups. For a detailed stylistic analyses see: Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 72-110, 135-47.

Agape Vasilake-Karakatsane finds many points of similarity between the paintings in the *naos* and the frescoes by the painter Manuel Panselinos in the Protaton on Mount Athos which are dated to ca. 1300.⁴⁵⁶ Christ Pantocrator in the central dome at Omorphi Ekklesia shares its physiognomy with the image of Christ from the templon of the Protaton (figs. 96-97). The softly modeled face is full with rounded rosy cheeks. The moustache splits at the center and gives the mouth a slight downward turn that is emphasized by the deep shadow below the lower lip. The beard blends smoothly with the modeling of the cheeks, its downy hair treated more like a shadow than individual strands of hair. Even the stylized v-shaped folds of the neck are rendered in a similar manner. These are aspects of the so-called “Protaton manner,” a term coined by Efthalia Constantinides to describe some major currents in Macedonian painting.⁴⁵⁷ But also the *katholikon* at Sopoćani lends itself for comparison. The woman at the feet of Christ in the Athenian Raising of Lazarus shows a similar conception of form and design as the two women in the apparition of Christ in the Serbian church (figs. 98-100). The genuflecting posture of the women is underscored by their monochrome garments which obscure any anatomical detail and shape the women into compact masses: The painters of both arrangements seem to have taken great interest in the soft rounded forms created by the

⁴⁵⁶ Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 138-39. For the wall paintings in the Protaton see: Gabriel Millet, *Monuments de l'Athos: Les peintures* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1927); A. Xynogopoulos, *Manuel Panselinos* (Athens: Athens' Editons, 1956); B. Todić, "Protaton et la peinture serbe des premières décennies du XIVe siècle," *L'art de Thessalonique et des pays balkaniques et les courants spirituels au XIVe siècle. Recueil des rapports du IVe Colloque Serbo-grec des Sciences et des Arts* (1967): 21-31.

⁴⁵⁷ Efthalia Constantinides, *The Wall Paintings of the Panagia Olympiotissa at Elasson in Northern Thessaly*, 2 vols., vol. I (Athens: 1992), 262-86.

postures as if to articulate in this manner the gentle submission and adoration of these women.

The figure of Christ in the same scene at Sopoćani may be compared to Christ in the Wedding at Cana in the narthex at Omorphi Ekklesia (fig. 101). While the faces in the Serbian church don't belong to the Protaton type, the garment in the banquet scene displays a similar interplay between the generous sweep of the fabric as it is wrapped around the body and the relatively soft flow of its folds. This approach stands in contrast to the treatment of the drapery in another image of Christ in the Mission of the Apostles in the parekklesion (fig. 102). The garments that drape the teaching Christ fold, rather than flow, around the body. Rigidly cut hems terminate above fleshy ankles and the trailing end of the tunic expires into a crisp point. They are the kind of garments that appear in monuments such as the Peripleptos at Ohrid or the King's Church at Studenica built in 1314.⁴⁵⁸ It was in the capable hands of the two Thessalonikian painters who decorated these churches, Michael Astrapas and Eutybios, that the stiffly folding, but uniquely sculptural garments reached their full expressive potential.⁴⁵⁹ In the Dormition of the Virgin at Studenica the anxiety of the sorrowful apostles is accentuated by the edgy agitation and intense coloring of their garments (fig.103). Although the figures in the parekklesion at Omorphi Ekklesia don't have quite the same sculptural quality as those at Ohrid or Studenica, the manner in which the drapery enfolds their bodies, the way in

⁴⁵⁸ Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken in Jugoslavien*, 70-71, pl. XXXII; Sima Ćirković et al., *Studenica Monastery* (Belgrade: Jugoslovenska Revija, 1986), 96-142, figs. 85-113.

⁴⁵⁹ Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken in Jugoslavien*, 71; Ćirković et al., *Studenica Monastery*, 130; Velmans, *Byzanz, Fresken und Mosaike*, 194.

which it clings to the leg, and the stark light/dark contrasts show that they are part of the same trend, a trend that is not only reflected in the art of Macedonia and Serbia but also in some rare examples of late- thirteenth-century Constantinopolitan painting.

Also in the parekklesion of Omorphi Ekklesia is the portrait of an unidentified martyr saint (fig. 104). The voluminous figure stands wrapped in an ample gown; its broad and somewhat stiff folds are modeled in varying tones of color but also by the addition of some very dark shading that throws the drape further into relief. An analogous treatment is found in the late- thirteenth-century murals in the Church of St. Euphemia in Constantinople (fig. 105).⁴⁶⁰ In one of the images from the hagiographical cycle of her life, St. Euphemia sits on a throne wearing a maphorion that enfolds her in much the same manner as seen in Athens. An analogous treatment is found in another group of Constantinopolitan murals in St. Mary Pammakaristos dated to c. 1290 (fig. 106).⁴⁶¹ With its thick neck and slightly hunched posture, the figure of Peter in the Byzantine capitol appears a bit more stout than those seen in St. Euphemia or Omorphi Ekklesia, but the almost tactile stiffness of his garment and the way of modeling it by means of broad strokes of color show that both painters were interested in creating similar effects of volume and three-dimensionality.

⁴⁶⁰ Rudolf Naumann and Hans Belting, *Die Euphemia-Kirche am Hippodrom zu Istanbul und ihre Fresken* (Berlin: Verlag Gebrüder Mann, 1966), 152-170; Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 76-79, 145-46.

⁴⁶¹ Hans Belting et al., *The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) at Istanbul* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1978), 107-11, pl. XIII, figs. 100-112.

Not the art of Constantinople, but again the mode of Studenica and the Peribleptos church served as inspiration for some of the figures in the decorated gate at Nauplia. St. James of Compostela, while wearing the traditionally Western pilgrim's hat, staff and pouch, is dressed in a gown that in its conception recalls the faceted angularity of paintings by Michael and Eutychios Astrapas (fig. 50). The voluminous bulk of the figure and the manner in which the garment bends rather than flows into broad, sculptural folds does not quite reach the almost tangible solidity of form in the work of the Thessalonikan painters as it is found, for example, in the Agony of the Garden in the Peribleptos church, but one can recognize a certain conceptual kinship (fig. 107). The ties with Macedonian art are also evident in the saint's face with its narrow lips, split moustache, and downy beard. In these features together with the outlined eyes, smoothly rounded eyebrows and the line of shadow that cuts straight across the bridge of the nose one can recognize hints of the "Protaton manner" which has also been recognized in some of the frescoes at Omorphi Ekklesia.

Interestingly, in the same monument there are also figures that follow a much more traditional approach. St. Anthony on the same wall displays a linearity particularly in the face that is best compared with frescoes such as the portrait of a deacon saint in St. Peter at Kalyvia Kouvara (figs. 108-109). The painters of both saints relied on delicate brown lines to delineate the facial features with their rounded high cheekbones. The hair of the deacon saint and the beard of St. Anthony are divided into individually outlined strands with some broad lines applied to indicate highlights. Despite the retrospective treatment of the monastic saint at Nauplia, the thin brows that arch evenly above the large, almond-

shaped eyes, and the general physiognomy are almost identical to those of St. James. These points of stylistic overlap show that they were both completed by the same painter. The discrepancies that do exist between these two figures at Nauplia might be explained by the fact that St. James of Compostela was a type completely unknown in the East up to this point.⁴⁶² Without any traditional examples to consult, the painter might have felt freer to exploit new modes of representation in his effort to interpret a Western type in the language of Byzantine painting.

In sum, the murals at Nauplia, Athens, Kalamos, Oropos, and to some degree, Kranidi offer a completely different picture of painting in the lordship of Athens from the one proposed by the more provincial works. There is little left of the conservatism and naïveté that is found in several of the locally inspired fresco cycles. It seems there existed a not unsubstantial number of painters, particularly in the second half of the century, that were well acquainted with the work of their peers in the Byzantine capital and Thessaloniki as well as the administrative and spiritual centers of the flourishing kingdom of Serbia.

Maniera Greca, Lingua Franca and other Crusader mannerisms

In addition to showing their debt to the artistic centers of the Byzantine and Serbian realms, some of the murals in the lordship of Athens evoke the painting of the West or

⁴⁶² In a Crusader setting St. James of Compostela appears in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, but there he appears in his traditional apostolic garb. Only the pilgrims kneeling at his feet wear the scallop shell on their pouches and link him with the cult at Compostela. Gustav Kühnel, *Wall Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Berlin: Gebrüder Mann Verlag, 1988), 40-43, pl. XIII, figs. 20-21; Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings."

bring to mind some stylistic trends found in other Crusader territories. Discussing the image of two standing saints in the blind arch on the east wall of the narthex at Omorphi Ekklesia, Agape Vasilake-Karakatsane notes their kinship to Crusader painting from Palestine and “Italian works painted in accordance with the *Maniera Greca*” (fig. 110).⁴⁶³ This assessment, for which Vasilake-Karakatsane does not really provide significant evidence, is made based on the drapery style of the figure on the left.⁴⁶⁴ Indeed, the treatment of the saint’s garments stands apart from anything else found in the region. There is very little highlighting. The folds are rendered by means of broad lines of shadows that stand in stark contrast to the angular shapes of light. The dark areas are solid color as if painted with a single stroke of the brush. The result is almost calligraphic yet quite effective in creating the illusion of recession and volume. It is a manner that is not found in Byzantine art but finds compelling precedents in the painting of thirteenth-century Italy, particularly in the works related to the school of the Tuscan town of Lucca.

The thick, bold linear shadows and the angular areas of light have been cited as characteristic for the Luccese school of painting associated with the painter Berlinghiero and his sons.⁴⁶⁵ It can be observed in a triptych with Virgin and Child from the third

⁴⁶³ Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 73-74, 134.

⁴⁶⁴ Reference is made to some images published by James Stubblebine and Ferdinando Bologna, but the comparisons are not followed up with any significant discussion Ferdinando Bologna, *Early Italian Painting: Romanesque and Early Medieval Art*, ed. Roberto Longhi, *Italian Painting* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1963), fig. 73; Stubblebine, *Guido da Sienna*, figs. 6, 21, 25, 105, 109.

⁴⁶⁵ Edward Garrison, *Early Italian Painting: Selected Studies: Vol. I. Panels and Frescoes* (London: Pindar Press, 1984), 21.

quarter of the thirteenth century (fig. 111).⁴⁶⁶ The child's garments are rendered with very little modeling or highlighting. Instead, areas of intense color interact with stark lines of shadow. Even closer to the manner found in the Greek painting is a mid- thirteenth-century fresco attributed to Marco da Lucca originally located in Santo Sepolcro in St. Stefano in Bologna (fig. 112).⁴⁶⁷ In this example of Berlingieresque style the shadows, particularly those in the dress of the woman kneeling on the right, form thick dark lines at once delineating and modeling the rolled back sleeves and accentuating the heavy flow of the garment. An analogous approach is visible in several paintings from the Florentine school of the thirteenth century which has been noted for its close stylistic ties with the Berlingieresque school.⁴⁶⁸ A dossal of St. Michael attributed to Coppo di Marcovaldo and dated to ca. 1250-1255 shows the archangel dressed in a pink robe (fig. 113). The folds are indicated by angular lines of shadow that create a striking contrast to the pale color of the fabric. Comparisons can also be made with a triptych from Pisa which has been brought in connection with the school of Coppo di Marcovaldo showing the Virgin and Child flanked by John the Evangelist and John the Baptist (fig. 114).⁴⁶⁹ John's robe on the left wing of the panel falls in sharp folds that are thrown into relief by the stark shadows.

⁴⁶⁶ Cleveland Museum, *European Paintings Before 1500, Catalogue of Paintings: Part One* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1974), 41-42, figs. 15a-15, pl. X; Garrison, *Early Italian Painting*, fig. 7; Luiz C. Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie Centrale* (Paris: Picard, 1987), fig. 85.

⁴⁶⁷ The painting is now on display in the Museum of the Church of St. Stephano. It was part of a cycle of frescoes that was destroyed in 1804 when the Santo Sepolcro was redecorated. Garrison, *Early Italian Painting*, 35.

⁴⁶⁸ Marques, *La peinture du Duecento*, 70-84. For an overview of thirteenth-century painting Florence with images of some of the most representative works see: Angelo Tartuferi, "Pittura fiorentina del Duecento," in *La pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo (Stampado: Electa, 1985), 267-82.

⁴⁶⁹ Garrison, *Early Italian Painting*, 213-15, 19 fig. 4.

Particularly the manner in which the lower half of the sleeve of the right arm folds back in an oblique angle is reminiscent of the drapery at Omorphi Ekklesia. Hereby it should be noted that the fresco exhibits a much freer, more painterly approach than found in any of the Italian works, a difference that may be explained in part by the fact that panel painting calls for a much more precise and controlled handling of paint than is usually the case with large-scale frescoes. Looking at murals in Italy, parallels with the Athenian image can be also detected in the late- thirteenth-century portrait of San Sebastiano in San Sepolcro in Bari which displays the familiar dramatic effects achieved by the bold rendering of stark shadows (fig. 115).⁴⁷⁰

While none of the cited examples offer a direct equivalent with the Greek mural, they serve to demonstrate the Italianate qualities of the saint at Omorphi Ekklesia. The appearance of stylistic characteristics associated with Lucca or Bari in an Athenian church may be seen as a consequence of the close political and economic ties between the lordship and these two cities. As the most important town of the province of Lecce, Bari belonged to the realm of the Kings of Naples. It thus was part of the same political entity as the lordship of Athens, which had been annexed by the Anjou Kingdom in 1267. Additional strength to the ties between the two cities was given by the fact that one of the most powerful rulers of Athens, Hugh de Brienne, was not only regent of the lordship but also count of Lecce and therefore, lord over the city of Bari. The painting of Lecce has been noted for its strong Byzantine tendencies, a characteristic that does not surprise

⁴⁷⁰ Valentino Pace, "Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Puglia, Basilicata e nell'Italia meridionale 'greca'," in *La pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelfranco (Stampado: Electa, 1985), 453, fig. 698.

considering the region's Greek affiliations.⁴⁷¹ In turn, it does not take a great leap of faith to propose that the political bonds between the cities of Bari and Athens may also have had some effect on the artistic production in the Greek city.

Establishing connections between the saint in Omorphi Ekklesia and the painted panels of Lucca is a bit more complex, but in the end no less reasonable than the possibility of artistic interchange between two realms that belong to the same family. The city of Lucca is landlocked. With its access to the sea during the Middle Ages constantly contested by the rivaling city of Pisa, Lucca turned to Genoa for its maritime trade. The two cities frequently joined in mercantile endeavors and are known to have manned a number of ships together.⁴⁷² Genoa supplied the raw materials for the main industry of Lucca: the production of fine silks. The Tuscan city had been producing silk at an industrial scale since the mid-twelfth century. By the early thirteenth century the quality of Luccese silk had reached international renown.⁴⁷³ The success of the city's silk production was further advanced by the events following 1204 which brought several major regions of silk production under Frankish rule simplifying trade considerably by lifting restrictions and tariffs that had been imposed by the Byzantine government. One of these newly accessible areas was Frankish Greece. By way of the ports at Modon, Coron, Clarenza and Patras, Genoese ships supplied Lucca with raw silk, silk cocoons, dyes and silk fabrics produced

⁴⁷¹ Pace, "Pittura del Duecento," 455.

⁴⁷² Garrison, *Early Italian Painting*, 47.

⁴⁷³ David Jacoby, "Silk Crosses the Mediterranean," in *Byzantium, Latin Romania and the Mediterranean*, ed. David Jacoby, *Variorum Collected Studies Series* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001), X, 71-72.

in the region. So important was the city of Lucca as a trading partner for the Principality, that the Luccese measure of weight for silk was adopted as the standard in the Peloponnese and presumably also the lordship of Athens which included the city of Thebes, the most important center of silk production in Latin Greece.⁴⁷⁴ The close involvement of the lords of Athens with the silk trade is testified by a 1240 treaty with Genoa in which Guy I de la Roche grants the Italian city free export of Theban silks.⁴⁷⁵ The path was thus cleared for the continuing growth of the Luccese silk industry which purchased the bulk of the silk exported from Thebes and the rest of Greece. In the effort to facilitate commerce, Genoese merchants settled in Thebes further reinforcing the ties between the lordship of Athens and Tuscany.⁴⁷⁶ From these economic contacts between the two silk-producing cities it could not have been a far step towards artistic interchange.

The saint in Omorphi Ekklesia may be an indication for the forms such exchanges might have taken. That the closest comparisons to the Athenian murals are found in works related directly or indirectly to the school of Lucca and to a lesser degree in the painting of Bari is indicative of the role played in this process by the economic and political ties of the realm. Genoese merchants and settlers might have acted as transmitters for Luccese painting.⁴⁷⁷ At the same time, the Briennes' political involvement in Lecce may have

⁴⁷⁴ Jacoby, "Silk," X, 77.

⁴⁷⁵ At this point the Genoese must have been engaged in trade with Thebes for some time, for the 1240 treaty was merely a renewal of an earlier contract of unknown date. Jacoby, "Italian Migration," 118-19.

⁴⁷⁶ Jacoby, "Silk," X, 77; *idem*, "Italian Migration," IX, 119-20.

⁴⁷⁷ An alluring piece of evidence for a Luccese artists traveling across the Mediterranean is offered by Edward Garrison when he tantalizingly suggests that the painter of the

provided the setting for artistic interchange with the southern regions of Italy. Unfortunately, with the painted saint surviving only in fragmentary condition, it is not possible to make a secure attribution to either the schools of Tuscany or those of Lecce. The Italianate features of the drapery might stem from a Lucchesse painter traveling into an area that must have been well known in his home town, or they may be the work of an artisan from the county of Lecce who had followed his lord into his eastern estates. They also might be the result of a Greek painter experimenting with a style made known to him by panel paintings brought by the Genoese merchants of Thebes or other people traveling between the lordship and Italy.

The willingness and the ability of Greek painters to experiment with different models and new stylistic modes have been observed in connection to the Church of the Holy Trinity at Kranidi.⁴⁷⁸ They are also plainly evident in the murals at Nauplia where the painter had to adjust his Byzantine manner to appropriate new models for the two Western types of St. James and St. Christopher. In keeping with Western tradition, the Nauplia St. James was depicted wearing the scallop shell, the flat pouch, the staff, and the floppy hat that identify him as a pilgrim to his own shrine (fig. 50). Such images began to appear on the Iberian peninsula and France by the mid- to late twelfth century but were never adopted by

Berlinghieresque fresco in Bologna, Marco da Lucca, may have signed on for service in the Genoese fleet to sail against the Venetians. Could the person who volunteered for marine duty be securely identified as the Lucchesse painter, the document would provide another piece of the puzzle how artists could come in contact with foreign painting styles and technique and even be involved in projects far from their home town. Garrison, *Early Italian Painting*, 47.

⁴⁷⁸ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 307.

Byzantine painters outside a Crusader context.⁴⁷⁹ That the novelty of the type might have inspired the painter to also experiment with a new stylistic approach has already been noted. Something similar might have happened with the depiction of St. Christopher whose elongated figure and slender face differs somewhat from the other images in the building (fig. 49).⁴⁸⁰ Depictions of the Christ-carrying St. Christopher are extremely rare in Byzantine art; the painting at Nauplia seems to be the earliest extant representation of its kind on Greek soil. The portrait type of St. Christopher carrying the Christ Child, was developed in the southern Alps during the twelfth century.⁴⁸¹ In the East this type found acceptance only in the fourteenth century as a result of Western influence. It remained a rare alternative to popular depictions of the saint as a warrior and to the dog-headed images of the Orthodox pictorial tradition.⁴⁸² The lack of Greek models provided some difficulties for the Nauplia painter, who endowed the traditionally bearded Christ-carrying saint with a clean, youthful face and gave the Christ Child a scroll to hold rather than the customary book.

This kind of experimentation is also apparent at Omorphi Ekklesia where the Western stylistic affiliations of the Italianate saint are underscored by the other figure in the blind

⁴⁷⁹ One of the earliest examples showing St. James as a pilgrim is a sculpture in the Camara Santa in Oviedo, Spain (1170–1180). Hohler, "The Badge of St. James," 60; Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela*, 66-67.

⁴⁸⁰ These characteristics might also be the result of the narrow curved space available for the figure. Unfortunately the painting is much too damaged and the photographic evidence too scanty to allow for a close assessment of its style.

⁴⁸¹ Benker, *Christophorus*, 46.

⁴⁸² Mouriki, "Panagia at Moutoullas," 92; Newall, "The Dog-Headed St. Christopher in Bulgarian Iconography," 45.

arch. The saint is dressed in an unusual manner, unusual at least for its Greek setting, for the black hooded garment with its white mantle recalls more that of Western monks than the dress of a Byzantine monastic saint. Agape Vasilike-Karakatsane has suggested Dominican dress as the inspiration for the black and white robe.⁴⁸³ Indeed members of that order had settled in the nearby monastery at Daphne. But the habits of Dominican monks as they appear for example in the thirteenth-century Italian vita icon of St. Dominic are generally white with dark overcoats, the exact opposite of what is shown at Athens (fig. 116). There were also Cistercians in the region, but their white habits do not match the fresco either. There are examples of Franciscan monks wearing white liturgical garments over their brown habits, but the white over-garments seem to have closed in the front not leaving the broad strip of dark cloth exposed that is visible in the Greek fresco.⁴⁸⁴ Despite the fact that there are no direct comparisons to the hooded figure at Omorphi Ekklesia, clearly, the painter was looking at sources other than those traditionally used for Byzantine church decoration.

Non-Greek models may also have been involved in the conception of some of the angels in the Athenian church. The two upper-most angels in the scene of the Recumbent Christ and one of the angels in the western cross vault of the parekklesion have both been compared with Crusader painting from Palestine and the Holy Land (figs. 117-118)⁴⁸⁵ Their delicate features, round heads and springy curls exert a whimsical expression that is

⁴⁸³ Vasilike-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 17-18, 125.

⁴⁸⁴ For an example showing Franciscan monks wearing white over-garments see: Marques, *La peinture du Duecento*, fig. 119.

⁴⁸⁵ Vasilike-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 101-02, 143-44.

similar to the angels on folio 183r from the Perugia Missal produced in the third quarter of the thirteenth century in Saint-Jean d'Acre (Perugia, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS. 6) (fig. 119)⁴⁸⁶ They also recall the angels in the Hospitality of Abraham on folio 24v in one of the *Histoire Universelle* manuscripts from Acre dated to c. 1285 (London, Brit. Mus., Add 15268, fol. 24v) (fig. 120)⁴⁸⁷ The figures gathering around the table share the more classical elements of the archangel in the vault. The faces are somewhat less delicate than those in the missal and the angels in the Rebumbent Christ, but they share the softly modeled cheeks and the alert but friendly expression of the archangel. These classical features are also present in a Dodecaorton icon at Sinai which has been attributed by Weitzmann to a French painter and dated to shortly after 1250 (fig. 121)⁴⁸⁸

The same icon invites comparison with another set of paintings in the lordship, the frescoes in the Church of St. Nicholas at Kalamos. Particularly striking in the panel is the alert expression of the angel attending Christ's baptism. The same kind of expression was given to the angel of the Annunciation at Kalamos (figs. 92-93). It is created in part by the eyes that are clearly outlined in black with a small line extending towards the temples and lots of white showing below the pupils. These eyes are considered characteristic for Crusader painting of the thirteenth century, particularly for works produced at Acre.⁴⁸⁹ The kinship of the Kalamos angels with Crusader works becomes even more compelling

⁴⁸⁶ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 48-51; Folda, *Crusader Manuscript Illumination*, 21-22.

⁴⁸⁷ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 68-87, fig. 88; Folda, *Crusader Manuscript Illumination*, 77-82.

⁴⁸⁸ Weitzmann, "Four Icons on Mount Sinai," 289-90; Manafis, *Sinai*, 119, fig. 195.

⁴⁸⁹ Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, 66; Weitzmann, "Thirteenth-Century Crusader Icons," 189; Mouriki, "Panagia at Moutoullas," 200-01; Manafis, *Sinai*, 119.

when considering him side by side with the angel on the left in the Hospitality of Abraham from the London *Histoire Universelle* (fig. 120). Both have the same attentive look, and their lips are rendered with nearly identical thin lines. The narrow rounded chins give the faces a very fragile appearance that is enhanced by the round shape of the head with its artfully arranged curls.

Reminiscent of art from the Holy Land are also the decorative details added to some of the paintings in the lordship. One of the most characteristic features of Crusader painting as it survives in the icons at Sinai and Cyprus is its affinity for decorative effects, especially for patterns imitating pearl ornamentation. Thus the haloes of Christ, John and the attending angels in the Baptism icon at Sinai are framed by a circle of white pearls (fig. 121). In a similar vein, the nimbus of Christ in the Last Judgment in St. George at Kouvara is encircled by a delicate pattern of white dots (fig. 73). This décor is also found in the north chapel at Penteli.⁴⁹⁰ Discussing the paintings in the Church of the Transfiguration in Pyrgi on Euboea dated to 1310, Tania Velmans traced this detail to Italo-Byzantine art of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁴⁹¹ Lavishly decorated nimbi already appear in Byzantine mosaic icons and enamels in the eleventh century, but according to Velmans, it was in Italy, where artistic connections to Byzantium had always been strong, that the pearl-studded nimbus was adopted for monumental painting.⁴⁹² A similar case of artistic reinstatement may have been the pearl diadem that is worn by St.

⁴⁹⁰ Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsion," figs. 1-2.

⁴⁹¹ Tania Velmans, "Deux églises byzantines du début du XIVe siècle en Eubée," *CA* 18 (1968): 199-203.

⁴⁹² Velmans, "Deux églises," 199-203.

George in the decorated gate at Nauplia and in the Church of the Savior at Megara (figs. 40, 28). This feature appears in numerous Crusader icons of warrior saints at the Monastery of St. Catherine at Sinai and has been seen as a marker of Western influence.⁴⁹³ Weitzmann had argued that the pearl diadem worn by warrior saints had “no precedent in Byzantine art.”⁴⁹⁴ In fact, just as the pearl studded nimbus, the pearl diadem already appears in Byzantine paintings dating to the eleventh-century.⁴⁹⁵ With both of these details part of the Greek artistic vocabulary for more than a century by the time they reappear in Greece, it is difficult to assign them any sort of cultural denomination. The pearl decoration in the Greek churches might well have been adopted from Italian monumental painting, but it just as well could have been inspired by local models from the eleventh and twelfth centuries or painting from the Crusader workshops in the Holy Land.

Whether the angels in Athens and at Kalamos and the decorative details at Kalyvia or Nauplia were inspired directly by Italian works or circuitously via the hybrid art from the Crusader East, it is interesting to note that there was no wholesale adoption of these models. The body of the angel in St. Nicholas has nothing in common with the angels in the Acre manuscripts which its face resembles so closely, neither did the painter at Omorphi Ekklesia render all his angels in the same manner. The Italian or Crusader elements in these monuments appear as short quotations rather than coherent statements.

⁴⁹³ Weitzmann, "Icon Painting," 71, figs. 33, 48, 49, 61.

⁴⁹⁴ Cormack and Mihalarias, "A Crusader Painting of St. George," 133-32.

⁴⁹⁵ The pearl diadem also appears in an icon of St. Mercurius; dated tentatively to the tenth century. Manafis, *Sinai*, fig. 11.

Consequently, the non-Greek elements in the paintings are not the result of passive copying but of active selection and innovative integration of new artistic impulses. To widen the scope of the argument, the frequent yet random inclusions of Western elements of dress and military gear also seem to have sprung from the immediate experience of the artisans involved. There is nothing in these frescoes that suggests the direct participation of a Crusader artist. In fact, there is no conclusive evidence of the involvement of non-Greek painters in any of the frescoes in the lordship. If the program at Nauplia shows all the characteristics of a Crusader work it is because its painter reached some of the same artistic solutions as his colleagues in the Holy Land not because he was trained in a Crusader workshop or followed a particular mode. Similarly, the Italianate elements found in Omorphi Ekklesia and the appearance of the manner of Acre at Kalamos seem to be the result of on-the-spot adaptation and re-interpretation of select models made available to the artists thanks to the political and economic ties of the region in which they were active. It seems the average painter working in the lordship made little distinction between the sources of non-Greek origin and those furnished by the indigenous tradition. They were incorporated into the mural programs with much the same experimental spirit as the stylistic innovations that were brought to the lordship from Byzantine territories. Particularly telling in this regard are the frescoes at Nauplia where the Greek painter easily navigated between local practice, the latest trends of Macedonian and Serbian art, and the iconographic requirements of his Latin patrons. Like no other program in the area it demonstrates the elasticity of artistic norms in thirteenth-century Greece.

Workshops and Patronage

The mélange of artistic impulses found in the frescoes of the lordship of Athens highlights the active engagement of local painters but it also makes it difficult to distinguish any clear patterns of artistic practices. Only few of the surviving monuments yield evidence that could hint at the presence of an organized workshop; this despite the fact that the very number of monuments in the region speaks for the existence of some sort of structured artistic community. Agape Vasilaki-Karakatsani postulates the same idea when she comments on the stylistic variety encountered in the paintings in Omorphi Ekklesia and concludes that it “would hardly be logical to suppose that ... so many artists would have been called in for a church so small in extent.”⁴⁹⁶ More explicit support for the activity of at least one local workshop is provided by the donor’s dedication below the window in the south wall of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Kranidi. The inscription carries a rare instance of artistic self-accreditation with the painter John of Athens commenting on his completion of the program in the year of 1244.⁴⁹⁷ Only a year later, the same painter is believed to have executed the frescoes in the Church of St. John Kalybites in Psachna on Euboea.⁴⁹⁸ Based on stylistic similarities with the paintings in Euboea the fragments of the Church of St. George at Oropos have been linked to the same artistic circle. The stylistic and chronological coherence of these three monuments have led Manolis Chatzidakis to

⁴⁹⁶ Vasilaki-Karakatsani, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 148.

⁴⁹⁷ Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 2-3; idem, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 64-65.

⁴⁹⁸ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 68; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 315-17; idem, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 65.

the conclusion that there existed "...un sorte d' école locale d' Athens"⁴⁹⁹ If there existed such a school of Athens in the years between 1240 and 1250, the paintings at Omorphi Ekklesia might be an indicator of its activity at least until the late thirteenth century.⁵⁰⁰ In support of this hypothesis one might note that both the frescoes from the middle of the century and the later murals in the Athenian church have been cited for their receptiveness to progressive elements from Macedonia, Serbia and Constantinople. The continuing access to models representing the most current trends in painting might be seen as an indication of a workshop set on keeping up with developments outside its immediate realm of activity and implementing them in their own commissions.

When considering the possibility of a workshop centered in and around Athens that was active at least until the last decade of the thirteenth century, it is interesting to also note some general similarities of approach between Omorphi Ekklesia and the Church of St. Nicholas at Kalamos.⁵⁰¹ The painters of these two monuments must have undergone a similar kind of training or have had access to a comparable set of models. While there exist significant differences in the stylistic execution of the two programs, they both adopted the heavy, voluminous figures associated with the style of Macedonia and Serbia, and they both exhibit the same sporadic introduction of certain features associated with the school of Acre. This, of course, is not enough evidence to ascribe the two churches to one and the same workshop, but it does point to a common pattern of artistic practice in

⁴⁹⁹ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 68.

⁵⁰⁰ Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*, 148.

⁵⁰¹ Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 360-62.

the region where Byzantine and Crusader models were combined in a like manner into coherent and culturally neutral compositions. In this approach the paintings at Athens and Kalamos are matched, if not surpassed, by another program which might be tentatively ascribed to the hypothetical school of Athens: the frescoes in the gate chamber at Nauplia. Here the easy manner in which the sculptural style of Macedonia and Serbia was merged with the pictorial vocabulary of the West recalls the two standing saints in the narthex of Omorphi Ekklesia. They both show an unbiased approach to foreign style and models and an uncanny willingness on the part of the painter to experiment.

While the frescoes at Nauplia fit nicely within the chronological and artistic setting of a late- thirteenth-century Athenian school, there are also parts of it that recall the practice of another more or less coherent group that might be associated with the activities of a particular workshop. Situated in the second quarter of the thirteenth century, this group centers around the frescoes of the second and third layers at Penteli and those in the Church of St. Peter in Kalyvia Kouvara. The linear qualities of both of these ensembles and the striking similarities in the portrait of Michael Choniates in particular led Doula Mouriki to suggest that the two programs were executed by the same workshop.⁵⁰² As has been observed above, the facial features of some of the saints at Nauplia closely resemble those at Kalyvia-Kouvara. With its remnants of these more traditional strands of painting, Nauplia spans the gap between the Comnenian-inspired approach of these earlier monuments and the forward looking tendencies found in the churches associated with Athens. Whether or not one should see Nauplia as a later development of the school of

⁵⁰² Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsion," 112-13, 119.

Penteli and Kalyvia-Kouvara can not really be determined at this point. With more than forty years separating these monuments from the frescoes in the gatehouse and no programs that could convincingly fill the gap, the connections between them must remain hypothetical. In any case, the approach of the Nauplia paintings match much better the experimental tendencies that had taken root already in the works of Oropos and Kranidi and found their full expression in the later churches in Athens and at Kalamos.

Among the many monuments that remain unattached to a particular workshop traditions there are those that share enough stylistic features to bring them into loose connection with each other. For example the painters of the two neighboring churches of St. John the Theologian and St. Andreas near Kranidi both used the same dark ochre color to render the faces of their figures, and they both display the conservative linear style of the more provincial works in the region. Similar observations can be made concerning the churches on the Methana peninsula. The question is, whether one can really speak of workshops in connection with such small scale monuments. More likely, these fresco cycles are the product of individual resident artisans who were hired to decorate the small commissions of the local patrons. There are, of course, also the larger commissions such as the Church of the Savior at Alepochori and the Church of the Savior at Megara which share a number of stylistic characteristics. But they also exhibit traits that are found in provincial monuments such as the Taxiarches at Markopoulo or the Church of the Virgin at Merenta, none of which are specific enough to attribute them to a common workshop tradition.⁵⁰³ Rather, they share certain characteristics as products of the same period and regional style,

⁵⁰³ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 81.

which was governed to a large degree, by a common tradition of Comnenian painting. In other cases such as the Church of St. Nicholas at Kambia, the style is so closely tailored to re-create the effects of the monastery's mother house of Hosios Loukas, that it creates a stylistic group in and of itself. If these examples don't provide solid evidence for coherent and enduring workshops, they nonetheless stand witness to a vital artistic community in the region that was active throughout the period of Latin rule.

With some painters finding inspiration in the works of their predecessors, others turning to the northern regions of the Byzantine realm in their search for models and both incorporating selective elements from the visual culture of their new overlords, there developed a plethora of individual solutions. The stylistic and qualitative variety found in the painted monuments of the lordship may be attributed to a number of factors some of them political, others socio/economical in nature. For Vojislav Djurić the multiplicity of painting in the region is a sign of the loss of artistic direction; the immediate result of the fall of Constantinople. According to Djurić, the Frankish conquest of the Byzantine realm had disrupted the flow of guiding inspiration from the great artistic centers of the Empire.⁵⁰⁴ This seems to hold true at least for the initial phases after the take-over. Very few of the monuments under investigation in this study were decorated in the early decades of Frankish rule.⁵⁰⁵ However, with the commission of programs such as the second and third campaign in the caves at Penteli, the Church of St. Peter and the Church of the Holy Trinity the second quarter of the century witnessed a spurt of artistic activity

⁵⁰⁴ Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 230.

⁵⁰⁵ In fact, only the first layer of the caves at Penteli has been attributed to the early thirteenth-century.

that did not cease until the first decade of the following century. Considering painting after ca. 1230, then, Djurić's argument only holds true to the extent that Constantinople had lost its position of dominance as the primary supplier for artistic models. With the waning of Constantinople's centralized power under the rule of its Frankish emperors, the centers of artistic invention shifted. Particular in the later half of the century, more and more painters were swayed by the art found in Macedonian and Serbian monuments. Thus, as the churches at Oropos, Kalamos and Athens show, the flow of artistic currents was not cut off. It was merely re-directed away from the capital.

Another aspect to be considered in explaining the stylistic and qualitative variety encountered in the art of the lordship is its socio/economical setting. Studying a wide ranging sample of thirteenth-century dedicatory inscriptions and donor portraits in Greece, Sophia Kalopissi-Verti identified a significant shift in patronage. Beginning with the late twelfth century, small private commissions by donors of limited means and relatively low social status make up an ever increasing part of artistic production. By the thirteenth century, patronage was no longer the domain of high-ranking officials and clergy as village priests, peasants and local communities began to engage in modest acts of sponsorship.⁵⁰⁶ One example of communal initiative is the Church of St. Demetrios on the Methana peninsula where an inscription refers to the donors in the plural form “τους ανακαινίσαντας.”⁵⁰⁷ At Alepochori it was thanks to the support of a priest by the name of

⁵⁰⁶ Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 28-41.

⁵⁰⁷ Mitsani, "Methana," 243.

Leon Kokalakis that the Church of the Savior received its decorative program.⁵⁰⁸ More in keeping with the traditional patterns of donorship are the churches in Kranidi and Kalyvia Kouvara which were sponsored by the local *archontes* Manuel Mourmouras and bishop Ignatios respectively.⁵⁰⁹ Naturally, the financial means at the disposal of the donor as well as the individual aesthetic and intellectual preferences of the intended audience influenced the final appearance of the programs. So can one find a clear distinction between an iconographically and theologically sophisticated program such as that at Kalyvia-Kouvara and the more traditionally inclined functional programs of churches like St. Andreas and St. John Theologian in Kranidi. The most striking example of the correlation between the appearance of a program and its donor is, of course, given by the wall paintings in Nauplia where the Frankish affiliation of the sponsor or sponsors affected every aspect of the frescoes from their thematic content down to their stylistic tendencies. Despite these apparent differentiations, there is no clear correlation between the financial investment of a donor and the relative conservatism or progressiveness of the paintings sponsored by him. A case in point is made by the frescoes in the Church of St. Peter in Kalyvia Kouvara which can boast the comparatively illustrious sponsorship of a local bishop but, for the main part, closely follows established Comnenian norms. The much more modest commission, at least in regard to the monument's scale, at Oropos, on the other hand, displays some of the most progressive stylistic trends of its time. Certainly there were many other factors that contributed to the diverse oeuvre that is thirteenth-century painting in the lordship of Athens. With the Latin conquest the local patterns of the

⁵⁰⁸ Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 10, 72; Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 63.

⁵⁰⁹ Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 60-62, 64-65.

Byzantine administration disintegrated.⁵¹⁰ With centralized power divided up into the more locally oriented structures of the Western feudal system, there seems to have developed a greater necessity or willingness for personal involvement when it came to satisfying private or communal spiritual needs. Whatever the specific mechanisms at play, the overall result was a growing individualism that is apparent not only in the addition of narrative detail and the emergence of certain humanist tendencies but also in the thematic and stylistic individuality found in so many of the decorated monuments.

Development of a Period Style

The lordship of Athens did not stand alone with its stylistic diversity and smaller, individualized commissions. Similar patterns have been observed in other regions under Latin rule as well as in territories that had been returned to the Byzantines after 1261.⁵¹¹ Artistic production in the Venetian duchy of Archipelago, also referred to as the duchy of Naxos, for example, followed a pattern very similar to that of the lordship. With the advent of Venetian rule soon after 1204, the number of painted churches on the Cycladic islands saw a significant increase particularly in small, private donations.⁵¹² The private

⁵¹⁰ Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 46.

⁵¹¹ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 72; Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 227-30; Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 42-43.

⁵¹² Manolis Chatzidakis et al., *Naxos*, ed. Manolis Chatzidakis, *Byzantine Art in Greece: Mosaics - Wall Paintings* (Athens: Melissa Publishing House, 1989), 10, 14; Angeliki Mitsani, "Hē mnēmeiakē zōgraphikē stis Kyklades kata to 13o aiōna," *DChAE* 4, no. 21 (2000): 122.

character of many of the monuments led to the same kind of programmatic and stylistic individualization that has been observed in a number of the monuments in and around Athens.⁵¹³ Analogous observations have been made in discussions of painting on the island of Euboea which was held by the Venetians after 1204 and was re-captured by Byzantine forces in 1276 only to be returned to Venetian sovereignty in 1308.⁵¹⁴ With large parts of the island subject to the archbishopric of Athens, the region stood in close contact with the Frankish realm of that city, a bond illustrated by the involvement of the painter John of Athens in the decoration of the church in Psachna.⁵¹⁵ With artisans traveling between the two duchies it comes as no surprise that the overall picture of painting on the island mirrors that on the mainland. The situation in Crete seems to have been somewhat different. The volatile interactions between the Cretan population and the Venetian administration restricted patronage throughout the thirteenth century. After the treaty of 1299 between the Venetians and the Cretan leader Alexios Kallergis (d. 1321), however, stability returned to the island and artistic activity flourished in a manner comparable to that on Euboea, Naxos and the Greek mainland.⁵¹⁶ Thirteenth-century Cyprus, too, experienced a shift in patronage towards smaller individualized commissions, its painting exhibiting a mix of Comnenian traditionalism, individualistic

⁵¹³ Chatzidakis et al., *Naxos*, 15.

⁵¹⁴ Velmans, "Deux églises," 190-92, 224-25.

⁵¹⁵ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 68; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 315-17; idem, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 65.

⁵¹⁶ K. Kalokyris, *The Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete* (New York: Red Dust, 1973), 25-26; Maria Vassilakis-Mavrakikis, "Western Influences on the Fourteenth Century Art of Crete," *JÖB* 32, no. 5 (1982): 301-11; Manfred Bissinger, *Kreta: Byzantinische Wandmalerei* (Munich: Editio Maris, 1995), 20-21; Ioannis Spatharakis, *Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete: Rethymnon Province*, vol. I (London: Pindar Press, 1999), 4-5.

experimentation and cultural hybridity similar to that found in the lordship of Athens and the other Latin-held islands.⁵¹⁷

With the simultaneous emergence of analogous patterns of patronage and stylistic trends all over the Mediterranean it becomes necessary to address the greater implications of such a spread. What conclusions can one really draw from the fact that, with few exceptions, most of the fresco cycles in these regions have been described as conservative, regressive and provincial? If one accepts Vojislav Djurić's assessment of a "processus de rustification" of Byzantine painting brought about by the violent rupture of artistic ties with Constantinople, one implicitly accepts the notion that artistic development had reached a point of stagnation in the areas in question.⁵¹⁸ Yet even Djurić himself contradicts this idea when he describes the results of the separation from the artistic centers of Byzantium as yielding "des résultants étonnants: abandon des normes classiques propres à la peinture des grands centres; insistance sur la force expressive des traits et harmonie de couleurs intéressante, parfois tout à fait bigarrée."⁵¹⁹ Granted, the painted churches in the lordship of Athens were not the trendsetters of their time, yet it does not seem appropriate to see them merely in terms of uninspired provincialism because they do not consistently follow the developments found elsewhere. While terms such a conservatism or provincialism serve as convenient descriptors for modern scholarship, their utility in defining artistic attitudes is of questionable value. It is by no

⁵¹⁷ A perfect example for this duality are the paintings in the Church of the Panagia at Moutoullas. Mouriki, "Panagia at Moutoullas," 171-213.

⁵¹⁸ Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 226-27.

⁵¹⁹ Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 227.

means certain that the painters of Comnenian-inspired programs such as the ones found at St. Peter at Kalyvia-Kouvara or in the nearby Church of St. George saw their work in terms of its relative conservatism. If the process of artistic production experienced no long-term interruption with the Latin conquest of the region, why should stylistic preferences shift in any radical manner?

In the end it is unproductive at best and deceptive at worst to compare privately sponsored frescoes in small rural communities to royal commissions in Serbia and conclude that one is more progressive than the other. It is simply illogical to expect the same kind of developments in monuments of such different cultural, political and social background. The patterns of small-scale patronage that gained momentum in the thirteenth century resulted in a body of work that really finds no constructive comparisons in monuments outside its social and economical realm. Too great are the differences in purpose and intent between the modest expressions of personal devotion and the often politically motivated commissions that make up the core of most discussions of artistic development. If modern scholarship is in some way dissatisfied, as it seems to be, with the discontinuity of Byzantine art in the thirteenth century, a resolution should be thought in an adjustment of approach not in expressions of qualitative judgments. If one acknowledges areas such as the lordship of Athens, Crete and all the other Latin-held territories as culturally and artistically distinct entities, there disappears the need to fit them into the developmental structure that has been assumed for much of Byzantine art, a structure which in itself is a construct of scholarly hindsight and not conscious artistic direction. At the same time, notions of conservatism and provincialism lose their qualitative significance and attention

can be redirected at the particular characteristics of the painting in these regions. When this approach was applied to the paintings of Cyprus, the thirteenth century emerged as a period of “renewed vitality” and the products of Cypriot workshops congealed, despite their stylistic and thematic diversity, into a definable unit referred to as the *maniera Cypria*.⁵²⁰ To some degree, what is found in the lordship may be the beginnings of the development of such a regionally specific style. The portrait of St. James at Nauplia, the angel at Kalamos and some of the figures at Omorphi Ekklesia may be seen as belonging to a uniquely Greek strand of thirteenth-century art where Western material and artistic culture met simultaneously with the traditionalism of provincial painting and the forward-looking tendencies of Macedonian and Serbian art. There is of course little point in speculating about the possible emergence of a *maniera Athena*, for any burgeoning development was brought to an abrupt end by the adverse effects of the Frankish defeat of 1311 which, for all practical purposes, terminated artistic activity for decades to follow.

Until that point, however, the painting in the lordship of Athens moved in accord with the prevailing trends of other Latin-held territories pointing to the existence of a period style that was not so much defined by the outward appearance of a work, but by a general artistic tendency to incorporate different stylistic and iconographical aspects into

⁵²⁰ The term *maniera Cypria* was coined by Doula Mouriki discussing Cypriot panel painting. Doula Mouriki, "Thirteenth-Century Icon Painting in Cyprus," *The Griffon* NS, no. 1-2 (1985-1986): 9-112. For its applicability to monumental decoration see: Annemarie Weyl Carr and Laurence J. Morrocco, *A Byzantine Masterpiece Recovered, the Thirteenth-Century Murals of Lysi, Cyprus* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), 99-110. An overview of artistic activity in Lusignan Cyprus by Annemarie Weyl Carr will be published later this year in the forthcoming book A. Konnari and C. Schabel, *Lusignan Cyprus: Society and Culture, 1191-1373* (Leiden: forthcoming 2005). I thank Prof. Carr for letting me consult her draft of the chapter.

traditional Byzantine forms. If one encounters similar characteristics in the paintings of mainland Greece, Naxos, Crete as well as Cyprus, it seems more reasonable to attribute them to a prevailing period style, than to accidental parallel developments where painters of varying skill and backgrounds just happened to react in exactly the same manner to a new political situation. This is a conclusion also reached by Sophia Kalopissi-Verti when she wrote “Die noch weite Verbreitung und die verhältnismäßig hohe Qualität der spätkommenischen Kunstrichtung deuten darauf hin, daß es sich nicht bloß um ein provinzielles retardierendes Moment handelt, sondern um den noch in allen Provinzen geläufigen Zeitstil.”⁵²¹ One should add to this the fact that regions such as the Mani that had been returned to Byzantine hegemony in 1261 did not experience a significant shift away from the tried modes of Comnenian painting either. Instead, they exhibit the same pattern of stylistic multiplicity found in those areas that remained under Latin control.⁵²²

When the influences of the great artistic centers such as Thessaloniki or Ohrid do become palpable in the paintings at Oropos, Kalamos or Athens it should be seen as one articulation of this period style. The appearance of Macedonian and Serbian stylistic approaches is an expression of the same willingness to experiment that led to the unprejudiced incorporation of Frankish military gear, Italianate saints and Crusader

⁵²¹ “The wide ranging distribution and the relatively high quality of the late Comnenian style point to the fact that it is not merely a provincial regressive movement but a period style that is still common in all provinces.” Translation by author from Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 302.

⁵²² Sophia Kalopissi-Verti writes, “Jedoch nicht alle befreiten Gebiete weisen eine fortschrittlich Richtung auf, und umgekehrt ist der progressive Stil auch in Gebiete unter Fremdherrschaft eingedrungen. Das Nebeneinander von verschiedenen Richtungen im gleichen Bereich bleibt weiterhin typisch.” Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 306.

models in a number of the monuments in the lordship, even in such provincial works as the Virgin at Merenta. It is also the manifestation of a more international outlook that is evident in much of thirteenth-century painting throughout the Mediterranean. That such a propensity did exist is supported by the fact that the same appropriation of non-Greek visual vocabulary has been observed in the painting of Naxos, Euboea, Crete and Cyprus. Particularly in the later case the international nature of thirteenth-century painting becomes evident as Cypriot artists turned with equal liberty to Italian, French, Syrian and Palestinian models to create the works that are now loosely united under the term *maniera Cypria*. With its multiplicity and willingness to appropriate outside models, the stylistic disposition of paintings in the lordship of Athens and other regions under Latin control outside the Holy Land may be seen as the direct result of the culturally and artistically diverse environment that spread throughout the Mediterranean beginning with the Fourth Crusade and continuing under the ongoing economic ventures of Venice and the continuous settlement of Westerners in the greater region.

CONCLUSIONS

...the principality of the Morea and the duchy of Athens, are all inhabited by Greeks, and although they are obedient in words, they are nonetheless hardly obedient in their hearts, although temporal and spiritual authority is in Latin hands.⁵²³

-Marino Sanudo Torsello

There is an expectation in this assessment by the Venetian traveler Marino Sanudo Torsello -- the expectation that a conquered people should show compliance in all aspects of life not just those within public view. Obedience should be in one's heart not merely in one's words. In Marino's estimation, there is no true deference without complete subjection. Similar expectations can be detected in much of the past scholarship on painting in Frankish Greece, which has gauged impact based on the level of acceptance. This acceptance has been sought in the approximation of local monuments to the Western artistic tradition. When the latter failed to gain the position of prominence one might expect in a situation of conquest and foreign settlement, it was concluded that "Western influences ... are only of secondary importance" or "que le rôle de ces influences ne dépasse pas certains limites. Elles ne sont acceptés, généralement, que dans la mesure où cela peut enrichir le fond de thèmes, et rarement pour enrichir les manières et les

⁵²³ Letter from April 10, 1330 to Bertrand, cardinal bishop of Ostia and Velletri translated by Kenneth M. Setton, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, 2nd ed., vol. 4 (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 58 n.2. Quoted in Weyl Carr and Morrocco, *A Byzantine Masterpiece*, 88; Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean colonies*, 255.

techniques.”⁵²⁴ There is nothing in this study that can or wants to negate these conclusions. If one adds up all those elements that might have been the result of contact with Western culture in the paintings discussed and places them in relation to those of Byzantine origin, the result will be clearly in favor of the latter. Yet such an assessment is unsatisfying nonetheless. In its quantitative factuality, it professes a truth that provides no real answers. It places a quasi-numerical measure on “influence” and estimates cultural impact and, by implication, historical significance based purely on those conscious commentaries plainly visible to today’s audience.

In the preceding study I have tried to move away from this kind of quantitative appraisal towards an interpretative model that evaluates the types of cultural, religious and artistic interactions and reactions that did take place. Subsequently, much attention was paid to the “insignificant” such as subtle statements of religious and cultural self-definition, seemingly random inclusions of Western pieces of military gear and the occasional experimentation with foreign stylistic elements. It might be argued that too much was made of these quantitative insignificant details. Certainly, viewed in isolation, the preference for a particular iconographical model, the introduction of a detail of dress or the appropriation of a particular style in any one of the many churches decorated under Latin rule leaves little room for interpretation. It is the sum total of these elements that shape a pattern of unhurried transformation that indicates intercultural contact and documents change outside the painted walls. Whether or not these changes were of lasting

⁵²⁴ Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 73; Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 83.

effect, culturally, artistically or otherwise has not been considered, and is, in my view quite inconsequential. Rather, assessments have been based on the premise that cultural or artistic impact should not be judged so much based on the lasting consequences of an event than on its immediate effects. In comparison to the centuries of Turkish hegemony over Greece, the period of Latin rule may certainly seem negligible. Also, as a period of foreign occupation Frankish Greece has no place in the formulation of Greece's modern identity which casts itself in the paradigms of its Classical past. Inconsequential as the hundred or so years of de la Roche rule over Athens may appear today, it seems unlikely that those who lived through the Frankish conquest and its aftermath were appreciative of the eventual insignificance of their experiences. In short: for those who built, decorated, walked through, dwelled and worshiped in the monuments discussed here, the thirteenth century was the most significant period in history, for they did not look at it with the judgment of retrospection but with the verdict of immediate physical and emotional experience. It is with this conviction that I have tried to highlight certain aspects of the programs, even seemingly minor ones, to distill those features that are characteristic for the paintings in the lordship not in order to gauge their lasting impact, but to better understand the social, cultural and artistic mechanisms at work during the period in question.

But the Athenians, at least, and the Thebans [under Latin domination] and the Chalcidians and those who dwell along the coast of continental Greece remain at home and have not fled their hearths.⁵²⁵

⁵²⁵ From a letter by Michael Choniates translated by Setton, *The Papacy*, 23.

Maybe the most surprising aspect of the Latin conquest of Greece is the ensuing continuity of local traditions and the apparent increase in artistic activity. Both the local inhabitants and the Frankish settlers contributed to this development. Whereas the greater number of surviving monuments can probably be attributed to Greek sponsorship, new discoveries and re-evaluation of known evidence continues to alter the picture of artistic patronage in the lordship. To those Frankish programs known from written evidence such as Nicolas de St.-Omer's palace at Thebes and Antoine de Flamenc's renovation of the Church of St. George in Karditza, we can now add the painted gatechamber at Nauplia and the Catholic Church at Merbaka. As Mary Lee Coulson has suggested, there probably exists a number of other structures that could be put on this list, churches that bear the marks of Western craftsmanship and style but which scholarship has so-far treated exclusively in terms of architectural influence without considering the possible implications of these artistic choices. The inadequacy of this approach has been demonstrated by the example of the Church at Merbaka which for all practical purposes looks Byzantine but has been convincingly placed within the realm of Latin Catholicism.⁵²⁶ With decades of study based on the assumption of its Orthodoxy, the true complexity of the monument had simply been lost. It is the perfect example of the adverse effects Cutler alluded to when he warned of treating an object from culturally diverse regions as a "monolith within a monoculture."⁵²⁷ In any case, I leave the re-attribution of monuments based on structural evidence to the architectural historians. Concerning the

⁵²⁶ Coulson, "The Church of Merbaka", 357.

⁵²⁷ Cutler, "Everywhere and Nowhere," 253.

painted evidence, it can safely be concluded that the Frankish settlers took an active interest in the artistic embellishment of their palaces, castles and churches.

In addition to balancing the culturally skewed picture of artistic sponsorship in the region, I have also tried to dispel the notion that the relatively great number of monuments surviving in rural areas should be read as a negative commentary on the foreign occupation. The implication behind this view seems to be that, when left in administrative isolation from the Latin authorities, the local inhabitants feel somehow compelled to express their wish for autonomy by means of religious donation. Instead I have argued that the small private structures reflect the particular social and economic conditions of thirteenth-century Greece. Aside from the fact that accidents of survival may present a distorted picture of actual artistic activity, recent archaeological surveys have cast doubt on the isolation of rural areas that has so often been taken for fact. Latin settlers came to the region with the intention to make their fortunes on their recently acquired properties. Accordingly, investments were directed not only towards the defensive but also towards the commercial infrastructure. With agricultural products such as silk forming the bases of the region's economy, rural settlements became an indispensable part of Frankish mercantile endeavors. Pertaining to the small painted churches that appear with increased frequency during this period, it seems more prudent to consider them within this socio/economic setting than in cultural terms. As Sofia-Kalopissi Verti has shown, the thirteenth century saw a shift in patterns of donorship not only in Frankish-held territories, but throughout the cultural realm of Byzantium. While the move towards more modest, private patronage may have been encouraged by the general upheaval following the fall of

Constantinople in 1204, it is a development that had taken root already in the twelfth century as a result of broadly changing political and economic patterns within the Byzantine empire. The construction of individually or communally sponsored monuments might be attributed, in part, to the same kind of emerging humanism and growing sense of individuality that gains momentum in later thirteenth-century painting.

This is not to say that the churches are not in some way a sign also of a growing sense of self-awareness on the part of the indigenous population as Greek Orthodox. Contact with the Latin Catholic element may have served as a catalyst for self definition. Yet self definition does not denote protest. It does not even imply conflict. It merely points to an internal process of demarcation. That cultural and religious demarcation did exist is plainly obvious in the language of the *Chronicle of Morea* which diligently differentiates between the Greeks and the Franks. Despite the clear distinctions that were perceived by both, the indigenous population and the settlers, neither one seems to have felt the need to continuously reiterate their cultural or religious distinctiveness. When boundaries were drawn it was done in regard to very specific concerns. Among the issues demanding clear definition was the Eucharistic rite. Despite the promise of religious freedom, there seems to have existed a not inconsiderable level of anxiety in some factions of the Greek clergy concerning the integrity of Orthodox worship. Heated debate concerning Church union and its liturgical implications highlighted points of divergence. In answer, decorative programs were devised to promote traditional forms of ritual and to ensure the proper execution of the liturgy. The visual transliteration of the Orthodox liturgy on some of the church walls may also have been attempts on the part of the patrons to clear themselves

from the suspicion of heresy and accusations of spiritual neglect in the eyes of those who condemned all who submitted to Latin ecclesiastical leadership. It should be noted, however, that these messages were directed at the officiating clergy. Placed within the confines of the apse, they were inaccessible to the attending congregation. Beyond the steps of the templon, there is little evidence for dogmatic controversy or critical commentary, ecclesiastical, political or otherwise.

Overall, the paintings in the lordship of Athens display not so much the desire for religious or cultural segregation than the attempt at definition within the existing cultural and religious structures. This is true for programs associated with Greek patrons as well as for those attributed to Frankish sponsorship. Bishop Ignatius clearly moved within the Unionist faction by submitting to the Latin Church; a conviction that might have also found expression in his dedication of his church at Kalyvia-Kouvara to Peter and Paul. At the same time, he aligned himself with the indigenous Orthodox tradition exemplified by the portrait in of Michael Choniates in the sanctuary. In sum, the Church of St. Peter is the expression of a uniquely local Orthodoxy that has found its place within the administrative structure of a Latin leadership. In the same vein the Church at Merbaka, conceived, in all likelihood, as the burial site of the Catholic bishop of Corinth casts itself not in the tradition of the Latin church served but in the architectural and spatial language of the local Orthodox faith. Similar to Bishop Ignatios, the builder of Merbaka, too, tried to find means by which to answer the specific demands of the culturally and religiously diverse setting of Frankish Greece. Also, the secular powers tried to find definition by appropriating local traditions and restaging their own past in the geographic environs of

their Eastern realm. Applying a decidedly selective view of history, the patrons of the programs at Patras and at Thebes formulated a past that provided justification for their actions and historical validity to their territorial claims. Care was taken to situate the intellectual construct in the geographical and ethnical milieu of their present environment. Equating themselves with the defenders of Troy or the troops of Alexander the Great, the new lords of Greece did not seek to emphasize their Westernness as such, rather they sought to articulate an indigenous identity as Frankish Greeks. Naturally, this process was accompanied by the introduction of Western ideologies and practices. In terms of painting, this import is most visible in the decorations at Nauplia. But even here, in this most explicit statement of Frankish authority, we find the Western ideology exemplified by the pictorial choices framed in the native visual idiom.

Not all monuments under investigation show conscious attempts at cultural or religious definition. Most are no more and no less than functional religious structures, their programs devised for audiences concerned with their utility in support of the divine service with little consideration of ecclesiastical debate or political maneuvering. When we find isolated elements of Western derivation in a variety of biblical and hagiographical contexts, they should be seen as indicators of artistic interchange rather than some sort of cultural or moral commentary. If there is no clear system in the incorporation of these elements they draw attention to the painter as a guiding factor in the eventual appearance of a decorative program. When one of the soldiers in the Betrayal of Christ is dressed in Western armor, or the guards at Christ's tomb carry Frankish shields, this is surely not the result of a painter following time-honored models. Rather, it illustrates the aesthetic

choices made by the artist and demonstrates a continuous process of artistic innovation that takes into account changes in daily experience as well as newly available prototypes. For certain the popularity of types such as St. George styled as a Western knight do not allow for a negative interpretation of the non-Greek details. It seems much more convincing to see them as examples of what Mary Lee Coulson terms “positive cultural appropriation.”⁵²⁸ There may well have been a level of admiration of Crusader Art in the painter who endowed the angel in the parekklesion of Omorphi Ekklesia with features familiar from Crusader panels, or in the artist of the Annunciation at Kalamos who rendered the face of his angel in the manner of Acre. There also may have been a conscious attempt at affiliation with the Western monastic orders in the introduction of the two Italianate saints in the same church. Whatever the individual motivation for such appropriations, they are not critical and most certainly not accidental.

Discussing painters’ adaptations of non-Greek elements in their programs, Agape Vasilake-Karakatsane concludes “They show clearly that western features of iconography and style had been neutralized in contemporary painting, perhaps because there existed no higher Orthodox ecclesiastical authority in the area to direct the work and cleanse the vocabulary of the painters of the foreign imported elements.”⁵²⁹ I partially agree with this statement in the sense that I also believe that cultural consideration had little impact on the painter’s iconographical choices, and that the relative Westernness of a model had less impact on a painter’s choice than its aesthetic appeal. What I disagree with is the notion

⁵²⁸ Coulson, "The Church of Merbaka", 336.

⁵²⁹ Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsias*, 147.

underlying the second part of the statement, namely that Western “incursions” should be seen as some sort of contamination. It seems to me they are merely part of an artistic process that is based on the exploitation and reinterpretation of a diverse range of pictorial models. It is the same kind of creative procedure that was followed by painters incorporating varying stylistic trends into otherwise unified programs, a process that has been observed in the frescoes at Kranidi and can be plainly recognized in the stylistic multiplicity of monuments such as Omorphi Ekklesia or Kalamos. It is simply not reasonable to expect “iconographic purity” in a group of paintings that displays such stylistic variety as the painted monuments in the lordship of Athens. Rather, the iconographic and stylistic multiplicity evident in the painting in the region should be seen as different expressions of the widening margins of inter-cultural contact and an increased willingness to depart from established norms. That this kind of process seems to have been a general phenomenon in Frankish-held territories throughout the Mediterranean speaks for it being part of a general tendency that might be interpreted if not as a unified period style at least a more or less cohesive period approach.

What is so telling concerning those iconographical and stylistic elements that seem to derive from non-Greek sources is the fact that we can not really observe any conclusive integration into the pictorial vocabulary of the region in general. St. George may be an exception to this rule, for his type undergoes a lasting transformation during the period in question. As for the other details of possible Western origin, there is no consistency in their application. Consequently they continue as more or less random references to a new set of visual experiences and never really converge into a recognizable pattern of

adaptation. They appear as incursions in an artistic conglomerate that never finds resolution into a cohesive whole. There never developed an Athenian equivalent to the *Maniera Cypria*. There are a number of reasons for this, one of them being the near elimination of the Latin ruling body at Halmyros in 1311 which interrupted any sort of ongoing development. In contrast, on the Crusader island the process of assimilation could develop over a much longer period of time to eventually “express the gradual assimilation of different traditions and the progressive osmosis of the ethnic groups resident and active in Cyprus.”⁵³⁰ Also, Cyprus seems to have had the clientele to support the large-scale production of icons. Created, in part, as souvenirs for pilgrims from and to the Holy Land, the painted panels were devised from their inception to cater to very specific aesthetic and spiritual expectations. Consequently the incentives to develop and adhere to a more-or-less unified artistic manner were much greater. Frankish Greece was no hub for travelers, pilgrims and Crusaders. Its artistic clientele were the local population and the second- and third- generation settlers whose traditions were bound to Greece and to their Western homeland. There was simply not the economic base for the type of artistic production we find in Cyprus or the Crusader workshops in the Holy Land. The paintings produced in Frankish Greece are not the lavish manuscripts of Acre and Jerusalem or the icons from Sinai but the art of daily use: frescoes to beautify the newly constructed dwellings, murals to cover the walls of castles, and paintings to support daily worship.

⁵³⁰ Kalopissi-Verti, "Representations," 314.

There also never developed the sort of Crusader aesthetic we find in the painting from the Holy Land. By Crusader aesthetic I am not referring to any sort of unified style, but to the sort of idiom outlined by Bianca Kühnel of a multivalent art that was anchored in the physical presence and the symbolical past of the *loca sancta*.⁵³¹ There were no significant sites of pilgrimage in Crusader Greece, no *loca sancta* for art to gravitate around. Even when we find painting in the lordship of Athens such as the frescoes at Nauplia or Thebes, which might be termed as “Crusader style,” it takes these similarities to the art of the Holy Land from its hybrid character, not from its reference to any sacred sites of pilgrimage. While the painting of the lordship of Athens never demonstrates at the level of consistency of Cypriot or Crusader Art, nonetheless, it is an appurtenance of its setting that navigates between the local traditions and the necessities of a diverse society and reflects the specific patterns of intercultural relations.

The painted cycles discussed in this study express a striking range of religious opinion and cultural identity without any sign of open criticism or significant conflict. If this seems surprising considering the military character of the initial conquest and the profound distrust between the two religious factions it is only so because we tend to expect some sort of resolution, and resolutions concerning issues of faith and political power are rarely arrived at without strife. This, however, we never find in the lordship of Athens, at least not in its painting. The sacred walls of places of worship might simply not have been deemed the right place to carry out any sort of propagandistic rhetoric. Or, as Barbara Zeitler has argued for another multicultural setting in the Mediterranean, the

⁵³¹ Kühnel, *Crusader Art*, 155-68.

visual might simply not have been used much to define cultural boundaries.⁵³² Be that as it may, if we don't find evidence of friction in the paintings, we also cannot detect a true fusion of the two diverging cultures. With its predominantly Greek character and its sporadic yet conscious introduction of Western types, ideas and ideologies the paintings in the lordship provide the visual equivalent of a demographically imbalanced society that exists within the framework of some sort of temporary arrangement. David Jacoby and others have amply documented that the rift between the Latin settlers and the local population in Frankish Greece was only bridged to the point that daily interaction necessitated.⁵³³ To express it in the sentiment of Marino Sanudo Torsello: there was agreement in words but not in the hearts. If these conclusions were arrived at based on studies of the political structures and observations of social behavior, the present study adds a third dimension to these assessments, for what we find in the paintings is a visual expression of the kind of society outlined by Jacoby and criticized by Marino. As physical testimonies of their time the paintings under investigation allow us to observe a process of interaction but not its resolution. They highlight religious boundaries and contain attempts at cultural and political re-definition, but they also display points of convergence and mutual recognition. The art of the lordship of Athens is, if you will, a syncretic kind of art that does not reinterpret or assimilate but accepts the very otherness of the new without really commenting on it. It records interaction without indictment, incorporates without assimilating and implies conflict without resolution. It is the kind of art produced by a

⁵³² Barbara Zeitler, "Art and the Articulation of Cultural Identity in the Thirteenth-Century Levant," in *Art and Identity, CNES Colloquium Series* (Los Angeles: University of California, 2000), 65.

⁵³³ Jacoby, "From Byzantium to Latin Romania," 32; Ilieva, *Frankish Morea*, 244-45.

multicultural society whose factions have agreed to disagree for reasons born in equal parts of pragmatism, necessity and the mutual striving for prosperity.

EPILOGUE

I wish to make known to all that I myself actually saw and heard a great part of what I have told you here ... Another considerable portion of it is based on what I found in a certain book ... I am drawing your attention to this so that those who hear this book read may have full confidence in the truth of what it says I saw and heard. As for other things recorded here, I offer no guarantee for their truth, because I did not witness them myself.⁵³⁴

- Jean of Joinville

⁵³⁴ Villehardouin and Joinville, *Chronicles of the Crusades*.

APPENDIX I

List of Rulers, Patriarchs and Popes 1204-1311⁵³⁵

Dukes of Athens

Otho de la Roche	1205-25
Guy I	1225-63
Jean	1263-80
William	1280-87
Guy II (Guyot)	1287-1308
Gautier I de Brienne	1308-11

Princes of Achaia

William I de Champlitte	1205-9
Geoffrey I de Villehardouin	1209-28
Geoffrey II	1228-46
William II	1246-78
Charles I of Naples	1278-85
Charles II Naples	1285-89
Isabelle de Villehardouin	1289-1307
Florent de Hainault	1289-97
Philip of Savoy	1301-6
Philip of Taranto	1307-1313

Latin Emperors of Constantinople

Baldwin I	1204-5
Henry	1206-16
Peter de Courtenay	1216-17
Yolande de Courtenay	1217-19
Robert de Courtenay	1221-28
Baldwin II	1228-61
John de Brienne	1231-37
Titular Emperors continued until 1346	

⁵³⁵ Lists adapted from Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean*, 330-337

Latin Patriarchs of Constantinople to 1261

(Dates refer to nomination by the Pope and death)

Thomas Morosini	1205-11
Vacancy	1211-15
Gervase	1215-19
Vacancy	1219-21
Mathew	1221-26
Jean Halgrin	1226-27
Simon of Tyre	1227-32
Vacancy	1232-34
Nicholas de Castro Arquato	1235-51
Vacancy	1251-53
Pantaleone Guistiniani	1253-86
Titular appointments continued until 1286	

Popes, 1198-1311

(Dates refer to election and death)

Innocent III	1198-1216
Honorius III	1216-27
Gregory IX	1227-41
Celestine IV	1241
Innocent IV	1243-54
Alexander IV	1254-61
Urban IV	1261-64
Clement IV	1265-68
Gregory X	1271-76
Innocent V	1276
Adrian V	1276
John XXI	1276-77
Nicholas III	1277-80
Martin IV	1281-85
Honorius IV	1285-87
Nicholas IV	1288-92
Celestine V	1294
Boniface VIII	1294-1303
Benedict XI	1303-4
Clement V	1305-14

APPENDIX II

Churches in the Lordship of Athens from c. 1204-1311 with Select Bibliographies

St. Nicholas Kambia near Nea Orchomenos (Boeotia)

Late thirteenth / early fourteenth century

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 122-123)

Schultz and Barnsley, *The Monastery of Saint Luke of Stiris*, 68-71, pls. 58-60; Panagiotide, "Hoi toichographies tēs kryptēs," 597-622; Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 360-61, figs. 327-336; Grigoriadou, "Peintures murales" 170-172, pls. LVIIe-LVIIb; Skawran, *Development*, 178, 179, figs. 352-355.

St. George, Akraiphnion (Boeotia)

1311

For a view of the exterior see: (fig. 124)

Restored under the auspices of Antoine de Flamenc

Unpublished

Palace of St.-Omer, Thebes (Boeotia)

Thirteenth century

Destroyed

St. George, Oropos (Boeotia)

c.1240-1250

Skawran, *The Development*, 184, figs. 439-444; Velmans, *La peinture murale*, 149; Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 225; Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*, 82; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 305; Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 67; Idem, *Byzantines toichographies ston Ōropō*, 87-107, idem, "Medieval Painting in Southern Greece, *Connoisseur* (May 1962), 87; Orlandos, "Mesaiōnika mnēmeia Ōropou," 25-54.

St. Nicolas, Kalamos (Attica)

Two layers, early and late thirteenth century

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 125-126)

E. Gini-Tzofopoulou, "Hagios Nikolaos," 227-246; Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 360-61, figs. 324-336.

Cave chapels at Penteli (Attica)

Early thirteenth century (first group); 1233-34 (second and third group)

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 127-128)

Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 62-63, Skawran, *Development*, 183-184, figs. 430-438; Djurić, "La peinture murale," 681, Velmans, *La peinture murale*, 150; Mouriki, "Hoi byzantines toichographies tōn pareklēsion," 116-119.

Omorphi Ekklesia (Athens)

Late thirteenth century for narthex paintings

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 129-130)

A. Vasilake-Karakatsane, *Omorphēs Ekklēsiās*; Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 226; Velmans, *La peinture murale*, Mouriki, "Stylistic Trends," 75-76, 141.

Taxiarches near Markopoulou, Mesogaia (Attica)

Late thirteenth century (first group); c.1284-1296 (second group)

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 131-132)

Aikaterinides, ed., *Mesogaia*, 184; Aspra-Vardavake, *Hoi byzantines toichographies*, 199-229.

Church of the Virgin, Merenta (Attica)

Mid thirteenth century

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 133-134)

N, Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 123-170, pls. 59-85; Tania Velmans, *La peinture murale*, 145; Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 67.

St. George, Kouvara (Attica)

1240-50 or slightly later (first layer)

Inscription mentions Demetrius Kontós, his wife and son

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 135-136)

Mouriki, "An Unusual Representation," 145-71; Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 159-161, figs. 163-169; Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 66-67, figs. 10-12; Velmans, *La peinture murale Byzantine*, 143.

St. Peter, Kalyvia-Kouvara (Attica)

Second quarter of the thirteenth century

Sponsored by bishop Ignatius

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 137-138)

Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 60-62, Coumbaraki-Pansélinou, "Hagios Petros," 173-88; eadem, *Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara*, 40-123, pls 1-57; Velmans, *La peinture murale byzantine*, 143; Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 66.

St. Demetrios, Saranikos (Attica)

Second half of thirteenth century

For a plan see: (fig. 139)

Aikaterinides, *Megogaia*, 183; Ginis-Tzofopoulou Neōtera apo tē syntērēsē," 437-39, figs. 4-5; Bouras et al., *Churches of Attica*, 90-91, pl. XI, figs. 91-95.

Church of the Savior, near Megara (Attica)

1260-1280

Kalopissi-Verti "Tendenze stilistiche XIII secolo," 247; Skawran, *Development*, 175-176, figs. 319-325. Djurić, "La peinture murale byzantine," 69, XIV, 26.

Church of the Savior, Alepochori (Attica)

1260-1280

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 140-141)

Founded by priest Leon Kokalakis

Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 63; Mouriki, *Hoi toichographies tou Sōtēra*.

Church of the Dormition at Merbaka (Argolid)

1278-1286

For a plan see: (fig. 142)

Build as burial church for William of Moerbeke, archbishop of Corinth (1278-1286)

Grossman, "Building Identity," 109-113; Coulson, *The Church of Merbaka*; Sanders, "Three Peloponnesian Churches," 89-99.

Frankish gate, Nauplia (Argolid)

1291-1311

For a section drawing see: (fig. 143)

Hirschbichler, "The Crusader Paintings," 13-30; Gerstel, "Art and Identity," 266-268, figs. 1, 3; D. I. Pallas, "Europe kai Byzantio," in *Byzantium and Europe: First International Byzantine Conference, Delphi, 20-24 July 1958* (Athens, 1987), 9-61; Schaefer, "Neue Untersuchungen," 196-214; idem, "Das Stadtdoor," 18-24.

St. John the Theologan, near Kranidi (Argolid)

Mid thirteenth century

For a view of the exterior see: (fig. 144)

N. Pansélinou, "Toichographies," 155-166; Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 155.

St. Andreas (Taxiarch) near Kranidi (Argolid)

Mid thirteenth century

For a view of the exterior see: (fig. 145)

N. Pansélinou, "Toichographies," 155-166; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*, 10, n. 61; Chatzidakis, "Aspects de la peinture murale," 155, n.2.

Holy Trinity, Kranidi (Argolid)

1244-5

Sponsored by Manuel Mourmouras and his wife

Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 64-65; Kalopissi-Verti, *Hagia Triada*; D. Feissel and A. Philippidis-Brat, "Inscriptions du Peloponnèse," *Travaux et Mémoires* 9 (1985), no.54, 311; Velmans, *La peinture murale*, 145; Soteriou, "Hagia Trias tou Kranidiou," 193-205.

St. John the Theologian near Kounoupitsa, Methana (Attica)

Third quarter of thirteenth century

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 146-147)

Mee and Forbes, *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 217-23; Mitsani, "Methana," 227-44; Koukoulis and Oikonomou, "Hagios Demetrios kai Hagios Ioannes o Theologos," 221-226.

Church of the Virgin, near Megalochori, Methana (Attica)

c. 1270-1280

For a view of the exterior and a plan see: (figs. 148-149)

Mee and Forbes, *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 228-47; Mitsani, "Methana," 227-44.

St. Demetrios, near Kounoupitsa, Methana (Attica)

Late thirteenth / early fourteenth century

For a view of the exterior see: (fig. 150)

Mee and Forbes, *A Rough and Rocky Place*, 224-33; Mitsani, "Methana," 237-33; Koukoulis and Oikonomou, "Hagios Demetrios kai Hagios Ioannes o Theologos," 221-226.



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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ① St. Nicolas, Kambia | Ⓒ Monastery at Daphne |
| ② St. George, Akraiphnion | Ⓓ Church of the Savior, Megara |
| ③ Palace of St.-Omer, Thebes | Ⓔ Church of the Savior, Alepochori |
| ④ St. George, Oropos | Ⓕ Church of Dormition, Merbaka |
| ⑤ St. Nicolas, Kalamos | Ⓖ Frankish gate, Nauplia |
| ⑥ Cave Chapels, Penteli | Ⓗ St. John Theologian, Kranidi |
| ⑦ Omorphi Ekklessia, Athens | Ⓘ St. Andrew (Taxiarches), Kranidi |
| ⑧ Taxiarches, Markopoulo | Ⓚ Holy Trinity, Kranidi |
| ⑨ Church of the Virgin, Merenta | Ⓛ St. John Theologian, Kounoupitsa |
| Ⓛ St. George, Kouvara | Ⓜ St. Demetrios, Kounoupitsa |
| Ⓜ St. Peter, Kalyvia-Kouvara | Ⓝ Church of the Virgin, Megalochori |
| Ⓝ St. Demetrios, Saronikos | |

1. Map, lordship of Athens with monuments decorated 1204-1311 (drawing: author)

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