

# Byzantine Images

I. sweet / Materiality and the Religious Impulse / Fall 2008

## Review Early Christian Art

### Structuring Concepts/Questions

- the impact Byzantine rulers and imperial culture had on Christian art.
- theologies governing the use of images (iconophiles and iconoclasts)
- Icons: definition, authority of images and devotional function
- Emerging and various images of the Virgin Mary
- the theological and artistic challenges of describing the nature(s) of Jesus Christ
- who originated Christian Byzantine images (describe the artists and patrons)

Terms: tessera, *eikon* (icon), Triumph of Orthodoxy, *Hodegetria*, *Theotokos*, *acheiropoietos*, *Eleousa*

## The Byzantine Empire

### *Map of Byzantium*

- Byzantium was the original name of Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul in Turkey). Constantinople was the capital of Constantine's Roman Empire, thus historians refer to this era/area of the Roman Empire as the Byzantine Empire.
- the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire shifted dramatically over more than a millennium.
- Scholars differ as to the 'end' of the Byzantine Empire – most point to the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century with the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks.
- Christianity was first legalized by Constantine in 313, then declared the official religion of the Holy Roman (Byzantine) Empire. The Imperial underwriting of Christianity had an enormous impact on both the theology of the faith and its images.
- Byzantine art – especially icons – continue to be made and used in the same manner established in the early centuries of Christianity. Today however, icon use is principally a devotional practice associated with the Eastern Orthodox and Russian Orthodox faiths.

## Mosaics

*Interior view Capella Palatina, Palermo, Sicily 12<sup>th</sup> ce*

*Tessera images*

- Mosaic medium dates from the 4<sup>th</sup> bce or possibly earlier. It was well-known to the Romans who used them to decorated floors and walls. 6<sup>th</sup> ce Christians don't originate this form, they adapt it as they did wall painting and sculptural media.
- Mosaics were constructed of hundreds or thousands of *tessera* small pieces of ceramic tile, stone or richly colored glass, set into an adhesive applied on the wall.
- *tessera* were set at a slight angle (not flush with the wall) catching light as cut jewel does, so mosaics of glass glitter in even dim light.
- Mosaics are very resilient and can clearly last millennia with minor maintenance. (**Permanent**)

*Christ and saints, view of the katholikon of Hosios Loukas, 11<sup>th</sup> ce*

- Mosaics are generally much larger (**Imperial/monuments**) than early Christian works and are undertaken by trained mosaicists (**commissioned by wealth**)
- These wall pieces differ from the catacomb paintings because the images often draw on imperial imagery, are commissioned by the Emperor, and may include portraits of emperors with religious figures.
- Thus medium, scale and the training of the creators suggest that Christianity is no longer a fledgling spiritual practice, but a strongly emerging faith, backed by money and royal influence.
- Similar to catacomb imagery, early Byzantine art does not employ the crucifixion, though during the iconoclastic period, crosses displaced figurative images

## Apse Mosaics at San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy, 544 ce

*Interior views of the altar of San Vitale*

Mosaics often appeared as a 'skin' on the interior of a church – the objective was to cover an entire area of the structure with glittering and colorful mosaics.

Doing so created a heavenly, 'other-worldly' space that contrasted starkly with ordinary life.

San Vitale was constructed as a martyrium church (memorial to a martyr) to St. Vitalis who was martyred. The mosaics were commissioned by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian.

*Interior views of the apse ceiling – Christ flanked....*

***Christ flanked by angels, St. Vitalis and Ecclesius , mosaic, 525***

The mosaic depicting Christ portrays:

a still beardless Jesus, similar to the images seen in the catacombs -- the convention begun by early christians continues into the early Byzantine era.

Christ, the Judge of the World is 'enthroned' – imperial.

is flanked by the Bishop Ecclesius (the only one without a halo) holds a model of San Vitale church identifying him as the founder of the building.

St. Vitalis receives the crown of martyrdom from Christ

***Interior views of the apse ceiling – Christ flanked.... And Justinian***

***Court of Justinian, mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna,***

Justinian, the central figure.

He is offering an expensive paten (for the Eucharistic bread) to the church.

His halo and jeweled garments/crown indicate he is Christ's regent on earth.

He is joined by the archbishop Maximianus on the right.

between the archbishop and Justinian appears Julianus Argentarius, a banker

On Justinian's left is Belisarius, a military commander.

The youth to the far left represent the strength of Justinian's rule

The deacon's represent the authority of the church.

The four principle figures are unique in portraiture, suggesting that the artist had models to work from. The rest are filled in with generic types.

***Abraham cycle, lunette mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna Italy***

Sarah, the barren wife of Abraham, overhearing the three visitors promise a child to Abraham (Gen. 17-18) on the left side of the lunette

the sacrifice of Isaac on the right. God's hand stays Abraham's sword with the ram waiting at the side (Gen. 22).

This is a reference to the sacrifice of God's son, Jesus and the Eucharist

*View of Christ flanked apse / Theodora's court / Abel and Melchizedek*

*Court of Theodora, mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna,*

Theodora and her retinue present a chalice (for the Eucharistic wine) to the church.

The three magi embroidered on the hem of her skirt associating the gifts of Justinian and Theodora with more biblical gift-givers and ultimately referring to the Incarnation and Eucharist

**The Eucharistic Theme in the Imperial portraits**

*Court of Theodora and Court of Justinian images*

The plain gold background behind Justinian evokes the actual nave of the church – suggesting that the party are preparing to process into the church

The background in Theodora's image suggests the entry from the side of the church (the fountain was located in the church yard/atrium where celebrants would gather to process into the church)

The suggestion of procession in the images, along with the media of the Eucharist depict an imminent celebration of the mass, populated notably by the Emperor and Empress, linking their roles on earth to the church and Christ.

*The Sacrifices of Abel and Melchizedek, lunette mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy*

Continuing the Eucharistic theme:

Opposite the lunette with the mosaics from Abraham's life is a mosaic of Abel and Melchizedek (referencing two different Old Testament figures) making their sacrifices and sharing a church altar with bread and wine.

These mosaics flank the altar where the priest would have celebrated the Eucharist. Both images refer to sacrifice and the Eucharist.

In an essay, Edward Kessler quotes the following 4th century prayer which explicitly links the biblical figures in the mosaic during the liturgy of the Eucharist:

"Be pleased to look upon these offerings with a gracious and favourable countenance, accept them even as you were pleased to accept the offerings of your just servant Abel, the sacrifice of Abraham, our patriarch and that of Melchizedek, your high priest - a holy sacrifice, a spotless victim."

### ***Sacrificial Lamb with Angel, dome mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna Italy***

Punctuating the Eucharistic theme:

Located in the ceiling of the presbyterium, over the altar, is the mosaic of the "tent of heaven."

This mosaic presents a haloed lamb in a new way-- not as the faithful in the 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm

This lamb symbolizes Christ as the sacrificial lamb.

Orant angels support the Lamb Triumphant surrounded by garland of four seasons which suggests Paradise.

Christ = lamb was widely used as another attempt to develop an iconography or symbol/sign referring to Jesus Christ.

### **The Problem of Christ : Theologically**

In the early Byzantine era, 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> ce, the matter of Jesus' nature and depiction was a central issue of discussion among emperors and theologians alike.

The Theological Question: What was the nature of Jesus? Half God and Half Human?

#### **Arius's view of Jesus:**

The Logos (the Word or Wisdom or Christ) was the agent used by God in creation

That the Logos (Christ) existed before the Incarnation, but was made by God.

God was more powerful and ranked higher than the Logos (Christ)

The Logos took the form of man and God bestowed divinity on him in advance

Thus while Jesus nature was divine, he was not of the same nature as God because he was made.

Arius stressed Christ's humanity

#### ***Baptism of Jesus, Aryan Baptistery, Ravenna, Italy, 6<sup>th</sup> ce***

The figures in procession follow St Peter and St. Paul, meeting in the center at a throne/altar where a jewelled cross is placed.

#### ***Detail, Baptism of Jesus, Aryan Baptistery, Ravenna, Italy, 6<sup>th</sup> ce***

God the Father is represented as a kind of pagan river god **OR** the pagan river god is a personification of the

River Jordan where Jesus (still beardless as in the earliest Christian images) was baptized by John the Baptist

The Holy Spirit as a dove descending on Jesus

#### ***Detail, Baptism of Jesus, Aryan Baptistery, Ravenna, Italy, 6<sup>th</sup> ce***

This image, thus strongly points to Jesus Christ's human nature by presenting him in all anatomical correctness.

#### **Athanasius view of Jesus:**

Only one who created the world could save it. A being whose nature was human could never complete this task.

Thus Jesus Christ, must be of the same nature/matter as God

Jesus was begotten of God in the Incarnation

A reality of Christian art is that, throughout history, it required artists to be familiar with the prevailing theological ideas and/or to interpret them visually. Thus the responsibilities of artists in defining and depicting orthodox theological often complex mystical ideas has been enormous.

Athanasius view stressed Christ's divinity

At the Council of Nicaea, 325, Athanasius' view was ultimately adopted as orthodox.

Thus the Nicæan Creed reads:

We believe in...one Lord Jesus Christ  
the Son of God  
the only-begotten of the Father  
God from God  
light from light  
true God from true God  
begotten, not made,  
of one substance with the Father...

### **Mosaics of St. Sophia, Constantinople**

Unlike the images of the catacombs, the selection and implementation of images at St. Sophia were carefully organized from the 'top' of Byzantine society – the emperor, the higher clergy and the court -- in this respect it documents the religious ideas and beliefs of the elite.

#### **Iconoclasm**

The conflict between iconophiles and iconoclasts was a continuing tension that emerged almost simultaneously with the development of Christian images.

Between the 8 – 9<sup>th</sup> centuries the question of icons came to a head in Byzantium.

Cormack: “the argument was Christological: an icon of Christ either depicted his humanity alone, or both his humanity and divinity and so either separated his human nature from his divine nature or confused the two.”

The easy solution was to resort to the Eucharist as the only true image of Christ (in the manner articulated by Duffy in last week's seminar text)

*Virgin and Child, St. Sophia (today it is the Hagia Sophia mosque) Constantinople, 867*

*Mosaic in situ*

*Detail of mosaic – mary's face*

This mosaic is of great importance because it vividly depicts Byzantine iconoclasm of the eighth and ninth centuries.

The original apse was decorated with a Virgin and child. It was replaced with a cross during iconoclasm.

After iconoclasm, the cross was removed and the Virgin and Child was restored.

This was the first image erected in St. Sophia, following the defeat of iconoclasm and **The Triumph of Orthodoxy of 842**.

At the homily delivered on the occasion of its consecration, Photius addressed the image in this way:

“Just as speech is transmitted by hearing, so a form through sight is imprinted upon the tablets of the soul, giving to those whose apprehension is not soiled by wicked doctrines [iconoclasm] a representation of knowledge concordant with piety....The Virgin is holding the Creator in her arms as an infant. Who is there who would not marvel, more from the sight of it than from the report?”

The image has an inscription (not visible here) referring to the iconoclasts as heretics: “The images which the heretics had cast down from here, pious emperors have set up again.”

Mary in this image appears as *Theotokos*, in Greek “God-bearer” or “One who gives birth to God”. This term is used primarily by the Eastern Orthodox faith.

*Theotokos* images (Mary facing the viewer directly, holding infant Jesus) typologically refers to the Incarnation – God made human.

This image is imperial influence – Mary sitting on a kind of throne, upright, like an empress

***Emperor mosaics in situ: St. Sophia, Constantinople (left) Christ, Constantine IX and Zoe and (right) Virgin, John II Komnenos, and Eirene,***

***Christ, Emperor Constantine IX and Zoe, 11<sup>th</sup> ce, mosaic, St. Sophia, Constantinople***

The mosaic is located in a private imperial area

Zoe, the empress, a daughter of Constantine VIII, was the conduit through which imperial power passed, either through adoption or marriage.

The original mosaic recorded a donation to St. Sophia by Zoe and her then husband, Romanos III. The couple were depicted flanking Christ, Romanos on Christ’s right side holding a bag of coins and Zoe on the left, her head lower than both men’s heads, holding the contract of the gift.

Later, when she married a second time (to Constantine IX), the imperial couple made another donation to the St. Sophia, that donation too was memorialized – though it was done by chipping out the name and face of Romanos III and replacing it with Constantine IX’s.

What is interesting is that all three faces were chipped out and replaced. This makes sense for the emperor, but less sense for Christ and Zoe. Scholars have proposed that in keeping with Byzantine ideas about figurative images, that changing the faces was a pictorial strategy to create a new ‘gaze’ in Jesus focused specifically on the new imperial couple.

Remarkable about this image is the insertion of imperial figures in the same pictorial context/space as holy figures – Jesus and Mary.

***Virgin and Child, John II Komnenos, Eirene, and Alexios, 12<sup>th</sup> ce, St. Sophia, Constantinople***

This piece is interesting because it places the Virgin Mary centrally in the composition – a place previously occupied by Jesus.

**Summary: Links between Imperial culture and Christian images**

rulers were involved in the question of Christ's divinity and humanity, calling councils to discuss theological issues (the Council of Nicaea was one).

Emperors and Empresses insert themselves into religious images associating themselves with Christ

Iconic images of Mary and Jesus appear in 'enthroned' contexts or in the upright, formal manner of the court portraits of Justinian and Theodora at San Vitale

The rich luxury of mosaics suggests imperial patronage

**What is an Icon?**

The word *icon* derives from the Greek word *eikon* for "image" and includes all kinds of images.

scholars' use of the word *icon* generally refers to specifically Byzantine-era panel paintings created in the Byzantine tradition depicting a sacred subject. The image functions specifically as a ritual or devotional object.

The earliest Byzantine icons date from the 6<sup>th</sup> ce, but it is clear they existed before this.

The first icons took the form of portraits; while the faces appear emotive, but they lack clear facial *expressions*.

icons were, and continue to be, created to instill in the devotee a sense of stillness and timelessness

Icons are not 'painted' they are *written*. Neither are they 'viewed', they are *read*.

**The Problem of Christ : Artistically**

The Artistic Question: what was the proper manner in which to depict Christ? Was this appropriate or possible?

Artists had represented Christ through the fish and the Good Shepherd and a lamb.

John of Damascus: God, being invisible, inconceivable and limitless could not be represented. However, he argued that because God had, through Christ, become man, Christ could and *must* be depicted in human form for the sake of man's salvation. Thus the defense of the images was based largely upon the doctrine of the Incarnation, if one took Jesus to be a 'depiction' of God.

And the question of representing Christ's humanity raised other problems – mainly tension between human-generated (profane) images used to represent the divine nature of Christ.

Again, Duffy points out that one solution was to limit the image of Christ to the Eucharist.

### Another Solution: *Acheiropoieta*

#### ***Shroud of Turin, Vatican Veronica veil***

Another solution was a specific type of icon: *acheiropoieta*, meaning “not made by human hands.”

The Vatican Veronica veil and the cloth we know as the shroud of Turin are examples of this type of image.

Images of divine or mystical origin and as such are viewed as authentic and accurate.

#### ***Image of Edessa (detail and in reliquary)***

Another *acheiropoieta* was the Image of Edessa, a holy relic consisting of a square or rectangle of cloth upon which a miraculous image of the face of Jesus was imprinted — the first icon ("image").

#### ***Abgar of Edessa with Mandyllion, 10<sup>th</sup> ce, St Catherine, Sinai, Egypt***

According to the legend, King Abgar of Edessa wrote to Jesus, asking him to come cure him of an illness. Abgar received a letter from Jesus, declining the invitation, but promising a future visit by one of his disciples. Included with the Jesus' letter to Abgar was a likeness of Jesus, impressed into cloth.

#### ***Mandyllion icon, 16<sup>th</sup> ce, Russia***

#### ***Mandyllion icon, 14<sup>th</sup> ce, Russia***

Using these images as models and sources for icons, the divine and miraculous powers of *acheiropoieta* were imparted on copies.

Buttressing the use of *acheiropoieta*, the Quinisext Council of 692 (called by Justinian II) decided, among other theological concepts that:

“We ordain that from now on Christ our God...be set up, even in images according to His human character, instead of the ancient Lamb.” (canon 82)

Related to the authority of these images were another similar image – the portrait of the Virgin Mary painted by St. Luke, the apostle.

#### ***St. Luke painting the Virgin and Child, El Greco, 16<sup>th</sup> ce***

Images of the Virgin Mary gained their authority from the belief that St. Luke the evangelist and apostle had painted an image of Mary and Jesus.

Images of Mary became critically important as another sign that pointed toward Christ and particularly the Incarnation.

The Incarnation would have been impossible without Mary.

So while *she* appears to be represented in icons, the contemplative devotee will quickly be reminded of and meditate on the mystery of the Incarnation.

### Icon Use

***St. Nicholas, 13<sup>th</sup> ce, St. Catherine Monastery, Sinai, Egypt***

A popular Byzantine saint,

He makes a blessing gesture with his right hand and holds a jewel-studded bible with his right.

The images of Christ and Mary allude to an episode during the Council of Nicaea, when Bishop Nicholas inappropriately slapped the condemned Arius (champion of the Aryan belief in Christ's humanity) in the presence of the Emperor.

He was stripped of his office, but later restored through the efforts of Christ and Mary.

Icons were made both for community/public use in churches, hung over city gates as well as being made for personal devotional use.

The icon 'reader' approached the icon understanding that the materials and image are not worshipped, but the *prototype* (John of Damascus calls it the *archetype*) behind the image became manifest through representation. Thus icons brought forth the subject of the image.

The spiritual practice employing icons as a devotional aid is called *proskynesis*. And involves placing candles about the base of the icon and prostrating oneself before the image.

The icon 'reader' was advised to participate intimately with the image, not merely observe it as a work of art. strive to identify with it and participate in its world.

Believers valued copies of icons for the power and authority they derived from the original. The authenticity of each image *depended* on its resemblance to the original. (Tradigo)

### Icon Writing Technique

Plotinus (3<sup>rd</sup> ce) wrote an aesthetic code which icon painters of Byzantium emulated in their works:

The artist was to discard the physical and sensuous appearance of the saint.

To reject the illusionistic devices of natural lighting, perspective and modeling of the saint's 3-dimensional form. (these devices suggest a flesh-and-blood figure *in the world* – not an other-worldly being)

The artist was to refine away all fleshy matter until the saint became a transparent, weightless shell, until the body was distilled into a pure form to contemplate. He proposed 4 means of establishing the aesthetics of Byzantine icons:

- (1) Bring the object close to the viewer to facilitate contemplation (the portrait format)
- (2) Employ pure color to portray pure form

- (3) Employ symmetrical composition to establish a sense of stability and permanence
- (4) Place the subject frontally, facing the viewer directly to invite contemplation.

Prayer and contemplation begin and end each step of the icon writing process.

Everything involved in the writing of a liturgical icon has spiritual meaning tied to Scripture and reveals different levels of manifestation of God's Presence within the iconographer.

- Selecting wood on which to write the icon: The board's vertical dimension is symbolic of the Tree of Life and its horizontal dimension represents the Tree of Knowledge; together they are a reminder of Paradise. The grain of the wood must run vertically in order to receive the Spirit from Heaven.
- Sealing of the wood and application of linen: The wood is sealed and the linen cloth is applied. The linen cloth is symbolic of the shroud of Jesus.
- Application of 10 or more coats of gesso: The gesso represents the rest or state of non-action before Creation; a state of pure potential. .
- Application of gold leaf: gold leaf is adhered to the clay through the breath of the iconographer. The gold is symbolic of our spiritual nature and the breath symbolizes the Spirit breathed into Adam (Genesis 2:7,) the breath of Life.
- First layer of tempera colors: This layer of gritty, earthy colors is dark and dense. This layer symbolizes the chaos of creation without consciousness of God.
- Each subsequent layer of paint is symbolic of another spiritual concept. These are the concepts the icon writer meditates on while engaged in each step of the writing.
- Sealing of the icon. Text is added and the icon is quickly taken to the place of installation. A blessing is given to the icon by a priest (if the work will be installed in a church). This blessing establishes a connection between the image of the person depicted and its prototype. It establishes a connection between the icon and its prototype; thus, transforming the icon into a perfect instrument for prayer and contemplation. This is the time when one can truly say that the icon has become a window to Heaven.
- Icon writers do not sign their work. They become conduits for the sacred; they are not artists in the modern sense.

### *Miracle of St. Michael, 12<sup>th</sup> ce*

“The [paint] remarkably has represented the invisible, the form of the bodiless chief of the angels, This achievement means that the earthly viewer of icon can direct the mind to a higher contemplation. The viewer can directly venerate the archangel. With this perception of the features of the archangel in the mind, the viewer trembles as if in his actual presence. The eyes [of Michael] encourage deep thoughts, through art and its colours the innermost prayer of the viewer is passed to the image.” 6<sup>th</sup> ce poem by Agathias

***Christ Pantocrator 84 X 45.5 cm. encaustic. 6th century. Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, Egypt***

- frontal view and timeless quality.
- Bejeweled book cover -- the Gospels
- Halo of gold leaf and punched.
- Large eyes are a hallmark of most icons as the eyes are the window of the soul
- Christ as Teacher: the gesture of Christ's right hand is not the gesture of blessing, but the orator's gesture. "With his hand he makes the 'orator's gesture' which indicates that he is speaking, or that he has the right to speak."

The history of this image is that it may have been modeled on a *acheiropoieta* image and/or a text indicating describing Christ's appearance.

Being thus based on 'authentic' information, this image of the bearded Christ with brown eyes, shoulder-length brown hair may be the earliest form of this depiction which has remained popular. (Cormack p. 25-26)

***Image of 6<sup>th</sup> century pantocrator and 20<sup>th</sup> ce pantocrator***

The link between these two images suggest the nature of the tradition of icon writing – figures are copied, minor changes in the background can be added – but the figure never deviates from the source.

The power and authority comes from its lineage with an original. In a sense there is a spiritual quality handed down, like genes between mother and child, from icon to icon.

**Virgin Mary Imagery**

No image appears more in early Byzantine icons than the Virgin and Child.

***The Virgin Hodegetria, 14<sup>th</sup> ce***

The letters on the left and right in this particular image appear to be an adaptation of the usual inscription that occupies this position in other Hodegetrias: Greek letters referring to "Mother of God."

The **Hodegetria** (Greek: literally: "She who shows the way").

Hodegetria refers to the Hodegon Monastery in Constantinople, which has such an icon.

depicts (1) the Virgin Mary holds Christ on her left arm and (2) gestures toward him with the elongated fingers of her right hand, showing that he is the way to salvation, (3) while his right hand forms a gesture of blessing.

Other typical features of the Hodegetria:

Usually her index and middle fingers are joined to refer to the two natures of Christ, and the thumb locks over the other fingers to signify the Trinity.

A starburst on one or both shoulders and on the part of the blue mantle that covers the forehead.

The fringe on the mantle indicates imperial status, as does the throne that is occasionally included in the image.

The Virgin Mary's direct gaze is also a key feature of the Hodegetria type.

***The Virgin Hodegetria, 14<sup>th</sup> ce***  
***El Greco St.Luke painting Virgin Mary***

The Hodegetria was believed to have originated by St. Luke who was said to have painted a portrait of the Virgin while she was alive. Thus there was authority in the original image that passed on to copies made of it.

***The icon of the Black Madonna, 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> century, Chestchowa, Poland and with oklad***

A hodegetria image

This icon was reputedly painted by St. Luke the evangelist and apostle

Several times in its history, looters have tried to steal or destroy the image – the slashes on her face, according to legend were inflicted when invading soldiers tried to remove her from the church at Jasna Gora and found her impossible to move; frustrated one of them slashed the icon's face.

It is reputed to have been responsible for numerous miraculous cures and answered prayers.

***Virgin and Child, portable mosaic icon, 13<sup>th</sup> ce Monastery of St. Catherine of Sinai, Egypt***

This is a variation on the *hodegetria*. Contrary to that form, (1) the virgin holds Jesus in her right arm and points with her left. (2) She does not look directly at the icon reader, (3) her body is turned to her right rather than her left.

The use of tiny tessera was intended by the artist to suggest painting rather than mosaic,

***Virgin of Vladimir, Moscow, Russia, 12<sup>th</sup> ce***

depicts a stylized and melancholy Virgin – perhaps foreshadowing her suffering at Christ's Passion.

It is known as the *Eleousa* “the compassionate” or “merciful”

This pose – holding the infant Jesus close to her face, expressed her compassion –for Jesus, but more so for the faithful.

The stylization of the face removes it from earthly, human representation and creates a timeless look – which stresses her divinity.

***Virgin and Child with Angels, St. Theodore and St. George, encaustic, 6<sup>th</sup> ce., Monastery of St. Catherine of Sinai, Egypt***

*Theotokos* image: frontal, enthroned virgin, God-bearer. Imperial portraying not Mary per se, but her status/role in salvation

St. Theodore bearded on the left side,

youthful St. George on right side.

Hand of God blessing directing above Mary's head;

this work depicts Mary as looking to the side (unusual – may not be a devotional work, or the entry into the icon is through the saints, not Mary)

***Virgin Flanked by St. Felix and St. Adautus, 528 c, fresco, C. Commodilla, Rome,***

A *Theotokos* image.

St. Felix on the right;

St. Adautus on the left, sponsoring the widow Turtura, in whose honor this fresco was commissioned by her son.

Turtura devotedly offers an open scroll to the Virgin.

This image like the previous one draws on imperial visual representation

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- the impact Byzantine rulers and imperial culture had on Christian art.
- theologies governing the use of images (iconophiles and iconoclasts)
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- who originated Christian Byzantine images (describe the artists and patrons)

## Terms

tessera

*eikon* (icon)

*Theotokos*

*Eleousa*

*Hodegetria*

Triumph of Orthodoxy

*acheiropoietos*

## Mosaics

*Interior view Capella Palatina, Palermo, Sicily 12<sup>th</sup> ce*

*Christ and saints, view of the katholikon of Hosios Loukas, 11<sup>th</sup> ce*

*Interior views of the altar of San Vitale*

*Christ flanked by angels, St. Vitalis and Ecclesius, mosaic, 525*

*Court of Justinian, mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna,*

*Abraham cycle, lunette mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna Italy*

*Court of Theodora, mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna,*

*The Sacrifices of Abel and Melchizedek, lunette mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy*

*Sacrificial Lamb with Angel, dome mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna Italy*

*Baptism of Jesus, Aryan Baptistery, Ravenna, Italy, 6<sup>th</sup> ce*

## St. Sophia, Constantinople

*Virgin and Child, St. Sophia (today it is the Hagia Sophia mosque) Constantinople, 867*

*Christ, Emperor Constantine IX and Zoe, 11<sup>th</sup> ce, mosaic, St. Sophia, Constantinople*

*Virgin and Child, John II Komnenos, Eirene, and Alexios, 12<sup>th</sup> ce, St. Sophia, Constantinople*

## **Icons / Panel Paintings**

### Acheiropoieta

*Shroud of Turin, Vatican Veronica veil*

*Image of Edessa (detail and in reliquary)*

*Abgar of Edessa with Mandylion, 10<sup>th</sup> ce, St Catherine Monastery, Sinai, Egypt*

*Mandylion icon, 16<sup>th</sup> ce, Russia*

*Mandylion icon, 14<sup>th</sup> ce, Russia*

*St. Luke painting the Virgin and Child, El Greco, 16<sup>th</sup> ce*

*St. Nicholas, 13<sup>th</sup> ce, St. Catherine Monastery, Sinai, Egypt*

*Miracle of St. Michael, 12<sup>th</sup> ce*

*Christ Pantocrator 84 X 45.5 cm. encaustic. 6th century. Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, Egypt*

## **Virgin Mary Icons**

*The Virgin Hodegetria, 14<sup>th</sup> ce*

*El Greco St. Luke painting Virgin Mary*

*The icon of the Black Madonna, 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> century, Chestchowa, Poland and with oklad*

*Virgin and Child, portable mosaic icon, 13<sup>th</sup> ce Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, Egypt*

*Virgin of Vladimir, Moscow, Russia, 12<sup>th</sup> ce*

*Virgin & Child with Angels, St. Theodore & St. George, encaustic, 6<sup>th</sup> ce, Monastery of St. Catherine, Sinai, Egypt*

*Virgin Flanked by St. Felix and St. Adauctus, 528 c, fresco, C. Commodilla, Rome,*

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