More or Less Byzantine? Reflections on an Icon at Sinai

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR
Distinguished Professor of Art History Emerita,
Southern Methodist University

This article has two aims. One is to offer a bird's-eye view of the Byzantine icon as it evolved from the sixth century to the thirteenth, when the great icon collection at the Monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai saw its medieval apogee. The other is to assess one thirteenth-century icon that exemplifies that apogee. It is an icon of the great martyr Marina of Antioch in Pisidia smiting Beelzebub and belongs to the group of close to two hundred 'crusader icons' that survive almost exclusively on Sinai itself. Just what the 'crusader icons' were has been debated since they were first given that name in the 1960s. The article argues that the icon of St Marina, though appearing at first to be Byzantine, was most probably made for a Latin owner, and brings out one of the most fundamental ways in which the purposes assigned to the image by the Greek Church were distinct from those assigned to it by the Roman one.

The monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai harbors one of the world's largest preserved legacies of panel-painted icons from the Byzantine era. Thousands of color photographs of them taken during the research expeditions of the Universities of Michigan, Princeton, and Alexandria between 1958 and 1965 are now being made available online by the Visual Resources Collection at Princeton University.[1] The icons date from the sixth century onward, but they cluster especially in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, partly because panel-painting seems to have escalated in Byzantium itself in this span, but at least as significantly because of historical conditions in the eastern Mediterranean region to which Sinai belonged. Crusades, pilgrimage, and escalating commerce spurred a surge of cultural dynamism in the Christian com-

---

[1] https://www.sinaiarchive.org

munities, which crested in the thirteenth century. This is vividly registered in Sinai's icons, of which close to two hundred are attributed to this century, twice the number preserved from the twelfth.[2] How many of these paintings were actually produced in the monastery, how many were produced elsewhere but for the monastery, and how many only ended up there over time as the artifactual heritage of a turbulent era drained into its protective custody are abiding questions for historians endeavoring to parse the panels' messages. They are multiplex, given the wide range of languages and stylistic variations that converge in them. All of Sinai's panels belong to the Byzantine tradition of the icon, embracing its materials, techniques, iconographic conventions, and sacred subject matter. As such, they epitomize a feature of Byzantium itself, for the empire's cultural hegemony extended far beyond its own borders and remained powerful among Christians throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Yet the panels' nuanced visual variability reflects not just Byzantium alone, but the many locally invested Christian communities with their own histories and identities as well: Syrian, Armenian, Georgian, Egyptian, crusader, Arabic. Much of the scholarship on Sinai's icons has been devoted to singling out particular communities, especially that of the crusaders themselves, because their patronage and even production of icons was an unexpected surprise.[3]

[2] On the icons at Sinai, see especially Georgi R. Parpulov, 'Mural and Icon Painting at Sinai in the Thirteenth Century', in *Approaching the Holy Mountain. Art and Liturgy at St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai*, eds Sharon E.J. Gerstel and Robert S. Nelson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 345–414; Robert S. Nelson and Kristen M. Collins, eds., *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground. Icons from Sinai*, exhibition catalogue, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 14 November 2006–4 March 2007 (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006); and Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land, From the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre, 1187-1291* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) with earlier bibliography, in particular Doula Mouriki, 'Icons from the 12th to the 15th Century', in *Sinai. The Treasures of the Monastery*, ed. Konstantinos A. Manafis (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1990), 102–24; the publications by Kurt Weitzmann cited in note 2 below, and Georges A. Soteriou and Maria Soteriou, *Icônes du Mont Sinaï*, 2 vols., Collection de l'Institut français d'Athènes 100 (Athens: Institut français d'Athènes, 1956).

[3] The crusader icons were first identified by Kurt Weitzmann. See especially his 'Icon Programs of the 12th and 13th Centuries at Sinai', Δελτίον τῆς χριστιανικῆς ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας ser 4, 12 (1984–85): 63–116, and 'Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 20 (1966): 49–83, repr. in Idem, *Studies in the Arts at Sinai* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 325–86, in which many of his other studies are gathered. Then Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land*, assembled and dated those of the icons that he attributed to Latin patronage. More recently, see especially Lisa Mahoney, 'Art and Efficacy in an Icon of St. George', in T*he Eloquence of Art. Essays in Honour of Henry Maguire*, eds Andrea Olsen Lam and Rossitza Schroeder, Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2020), 188–203; Eadem, 'The Frankish Icon: Art and Devotion in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem', in *The Crusades and Visual Culture*, eds Elizabeth Lapina, April Jehan Morris, and Laura J. Whatley (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), 15–34; Rebecca W. Corrie,

But for Byzantinists like me, they pose the converse question: what can we learn from this diverse group about the ongoing life of the icon in Byzantium? How the icons at Sinai are what we call them—Byzantine icons—can only be answered, "variously."

The Byzantine icon is the theologically inflected response of the Constantinopolitan church to the dual nature of the visual image. The image is indelibly bound by recognition to the subject of which it is an image. But it *is* not its subject. It can be its subject's homonym, addressed by the same name, but it is not the same thing and cannot respond for its subject. The medieval churches of both Roman and Constantinople agreed that since divinity worked its will through material beings and events in the world, most centrally in the Incarnation, its history should be proclaimed in material images, but that as man-made things, images could never receive worship. They differed, however, in the utility they assigned to images. Where the Roman church regarded images as instructive and rhetorically affective but not holy, the Greek church maintained that though ineligible to receive worship, appropriately configured images could transmit worship: in its own words, the honor addressed to the image is transmitted to its subject. Inseparable from their subjects in their recognizability, images of holy subjects were embraced in Byzantine doctrine as holy, for they connected viewer and subject.[4] Known simply by the Greek word for image, icon, the

'Sinai, Acre, Tripoli, and the "Backwash from the Levant": Where Did the Icon Painters Work?' in *Approaching the Holy Mountain. Art and Liturgy at St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai*, eds Sharon E.J. Gerstel and Robert S. Nelson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 415–48.

   [4] In the Definition of the Council of Nicaea II: Giovan Domenico Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, new ed., 53 vols. (Paris: H. Welter, 1901-–27), 13: 377–80; Johannes Bernard Uphus, *Der Horus des Zweiten Konzils von Nizäa, 787: Interpretation und Kommentar auf der Grundlage der Konzilsakten mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Bilderfrage* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2004). The validity of speaking about holy images before the Iconoclastic Controversy has been called into question by Leslie Brubaker and John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (c. 650–850): A History* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 286, who write of Nicaea II: 'What was actually achieved, therefore, was neither the restoration of a traditional practice, nor indeed, the triumph of a long-standing tradition. On the contrary, Nicaea marked the establishment of formal and official cult, the observances associated with it, and thus of a new phase in the history of Christian devotional practice in the east Roman world'. By contrast Thomas F. Mathews, with Norman E. Miller, *The Dawn of Christian Art in Panel Paintings and Icons* (Los Angeles, CA: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2016), traces the icon deep into late Antique habits of dedicating tempera-painted wooden panels as votive gifts to revered figures. Of Nicaea II, Mathews writes, p. 214: 'What Nicaea II is imposing is the time-honored religious gesture of dedicating votive offerings. It is the act of offering and dedicating that separates icons from everyday furnishings and places them in that special class of objects called *anatithesthai*, thereby justifying the cultic gestures of worship... The Christian trad of votive offerings was continuous with the ancient custom'

holy image of Byzantium had no Roman doctrinal counterpart. Greek Christians remained aware throughout the medieval centuries that issues about images separated the Greek and Latin churches.[5] These issues concerned worship, not art.[6] Nonetheless, how images work is inextricably bound up with how they look, and the Greek church guarded the appearance of the images to which its members entrusted their prayers. Images of saints and sacred events, centrally those events celebrated in major feasts, settled into readily recognized types. Free-standing sculpture was avoided in favor of two-dimensional media like painting, precious metal, or silk; effects of radiance, luminosity, and color were favored over mass; and compositional strategies developed to intensify the connective bond between the portrayed subject and the viewing eye. These formal characteristics shaped the holy image to the Greek church's own religious practice and sensibility. How, where, and to what extent the Orthodox holy image has ever been adequately understood outside its own church remains a point of sensitivity to this day, making a site like Sinai with its polyglot monastic and pilgrimage clientele especially interesting. The present article addresses an icon recently added to the Princeton site and thus a new-comer to Sinai scholarship (Figure 1). It poses afresh the questions of date, attribution, and interpretation.

Like many of the icons at Sinai, this is a wooden panel of under a foot in height and readily held in the hand; the hook from which it hangs gives a good feeling for its size. In accord with Byzantine custom, the field occupied by the holy subject is lightly recessed, leaving a raised frame around it that both protects the painted surface and helps to focus the viewer's gaze. An icon's frame usually has the same gold as the recessed surface, but, in this case, it is red and spangled with six-pointed stars.

---

[5] As seen in the recurrent inclusion of images in Greek lists of Latin heterodoxies: see Tia M. Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists. Errors of the Latins* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 193–94, inventorying instances of 'they refuse to venerate icons'.

[6] Only in the fifteenth century under the impact of Renaissance sensibility does one finds Greek intellectuals comparing Byzantine and Latin images as art: see Symeon of Thessaloniki in Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 3121453*, Sources and Documents in the history of Art Series (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1972), 253–54, and Gregory Melissinos in Ibid., 254 and Annemarie Weyl Carr, 'Labelling Images, Venerating Icons in Sylvester Syropoulos' World', in *Sylvester Syropoulos on the Politics and Culture in the Fifteenth-Century Mediterranean: Themes and Problems in the Memoirs, Section IV*, eds Fotini Kondyli, Vera Andriopoulou, Eirini Panou, Mary B. Cunningham (Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies 16. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014), 79–106.

Figure 1. Mount Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery. Saint Marina of Antioch smiting Beelzebub. By permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt.
Photograph courtesy of Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expeditions to Mount Sinai.

It is further set off from the gold by its canted recession, which is black with alternating golden lozenges. A yet stronger red color envelopes the portrayed subject, who stands on a narrow band of green against the customary golden ground. She is clearly labeled Ή Ἀγήα Μαρήνα [ἡ Ἁγία Μαρίνα]: St Marina. The label is a requisite component of a Byzantine icon. It identifies its subject as holy—here as Saint—and demonstrates the homonymy of image and subject: of each can it be said that 'this is St Marina'. The saint's dynamic posture is immediately striking. Iconic figures characteristically assume a composed frontality, assuring their viewers of the saint's unencumbered availability to receive prayerful appeal. St Marina's immersion in her action here is intensified by the long diagonal of her focused gaze, which is fixed on her opponent, not her devotee. With its energetic subject and attention-catching frame, the icon verges on being a drama, a picture of a narrative event, not the summative template of a transcendent being that the icon is supposed to be. Yet her upraised hammer falls short of the apex of her gesture's dominant diagonal, giving her combat a suspended quality and thus a degree of iconic decorum. Is this an effort to make an obstreperous motif conform to the icon's presumed composure? A degree of ambivalence hangs over the image. How is it best understood as an icon?

Label and posture leave no question that the subject here is St Marina of Antioch in Pisidia, smiting the demon Beelzebub with a hammer. Beelzebub's name, no less requisite than Marina's own, probably occupied the area of deliberate damage at her right, obliterated lest it summon his presence as Marina's name was called upon to do in prayer. Marina was a great martyr. Her legend reached back to early medieval if not early Christian times and was widely disseminated in both eastern and western Christendom.[7] The oldest version of her Greek *vita, Μαρτύριον τῆς ἁγίας πανενδόξου μάρτυρος Μαρίνης,* is preserved in Paris, BnF, gr. 1470 of 890.[8] The *vita*'s author, Theotimos, claims to

[7] On Marina, see especially Wendy R. Larson, 'The Role of Patronage and Audience in the Cults of Sts Margaret and Marina of Antioch', in *Gender and Holiness. Men, Women and Saints in Late Medieval Europe*, eds Samantha J.E. Riches and Sarah Salih, Routledge Studies in Medieval Religion and Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 23–35; Lois Drewer, 'Margaret of Antioch the Demon-Slayer, East and West: The Iconography of the Predella of the Boston Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine', *Gesta* 32 (1993): 11–20; and Ernst Gamillscheg, 'Die griechische Texte über die heilige Marina', Ph.D. dissertation, Universität Wien, 1974.

[8] Published by Hermann Usener, 'Acta S. Marinae et S. Christophori', in *Festschrift zur fünften Säcularfeier der Carl-Ruprechts-Universität zu Heidelberg* (Bonn: Universitäts-Buchdruckerei von Carl Georgi, 1886), 15–46, online at: https://books.google.com/books?vid=HAR-

have been an eye-witness at the saint's martyrdom in the first century CE. The daughter of a pagan high priest but raised by a Christian nurse, Marina had pledged both her soul and her virginity to Christ. Her beauty aroused the Roman governor, Olybrios, and he demanded her conversion to his pagan gods and her hand in marriage. Her steadfast refusal led to brutal torments and eventually to prison, where psychological trials further tested her resolve. A fearsome dragon appeared in her cell and consumed her, but her faith overcame it and the creature collapsed around her. Taunting it, she called for the real force of evil to show itself, and a black demon materialized before her. Seizing a copper hammer, she bound his limbs and smote him to bloody submission, extracting from him his name, Beelzebub. Thus vanquished, he vanished, and a white dove in a flood of light filled the cell. Thus fortified, Marina remained intractable to Olybrios, and was beheaded on a hill outside the city after a long and urgent prayer promising God's grace on all who supported her, preserved her relics, and called upon her for help.

The Latin version of her story, known as the *Passio Theotimi*,[9] tells much the same story, but names the saint Margaret, not Marina. Margaret, too, pledges herself to Christ but fatally inflames a pagan suitor and suffers both physical and psychic torment before being martyred following an extensive prayer promising grace on those who venerate her. She, too, is gobbled up by a dragon and confronted by the Devil, but there is no hammer or bloody combat. Instead, Margaret's story is dominated by her unscathed escape from the belly of the dragon. Her safe emergence associated her with childbirth. This is felt already in the earliest manuscripts, where her pre-martyrdom prayer includes a blessing on behalf of mothers who invoke her in childbirth, and she remained closely bound to the rituals of childbirth throughout the Latin West. Marina, by contrast, became a paradigmatic virgin martyr and 'bride of Christ', venerated by male and female alike for her militant triumph over Beelzebub.

Marina appears in Byzantine imagery already in the tenth century as a frontal figure with her *maphorion* over her head, holding the cross

---

VARD:HN648M&printsec=titlepage#v=onepage&q&f=false (consulted 27 January 2021).

  [9] Published from the late eighth-century Turin, Biblioteca Reale, MS BN D.V.3, by Boninus Mombrizius, 'Passio Sanctae Margaritae Virginis et Martyris', in *Sanctuarium seu Vitae Sanctorum*, 2 vols. (Paris: apud Albertum Fontemoing, 1910), 2: 190–96.

of martyrdom before her breast.[10] This remained her usual image in later periods. The *maphorion* is often red, singling her out among the female saints in whose company she is often grouped.[11] The monastery at Sinai had a chapel dedicated to Marina,[12] and she figures in several icons there in her red *maphorion*, characteristically paired with another female saint (Figure 2).[13] Except in the icon discussed here, she stands in frontal stasis, as in this thirteenth-century icon at Sinai.

As seen in our icon, however, Marina acquired a second, far more dynamic image. She is the only female saint who acquired such a dynamic icon, and it was adopted above all in monumental painting, especially as an *apotropaion* near entrance doors. A dozen examples survive in Byzantine mural painting; no other known panel-painting of Byzantine date adopts it for the central figure. The ideas embedded in the image are especially visible in its earliest known occurrence in the cycle of 1074–75 in the church of St Merkourios, Corfu.[14] Here Marina stands at the entrance end of the north naos wall, turning to her right both to strike her assailant and to honor the Mother of God, whose figure stands beside her on the north wall. Her militant stance serves to safeguard both the entrance to the church and the access to the Mother of God. It is answered on the opposite wall, where, following two further women saints, it is faced by a panoply of military saints: an equestrian warrior, the Archangel Michael, and two standing generals. For all

[10] See Marvin C. Ross and Glanville Downey, 'A Reliquary of St. Marina', *Byzantinoslavica* 23 (1962): 41–44, fig. 8, an enamel, here assigned to the tenth century, in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; and mural images in Cappadocia including the ninth-century Chapel 3 and Old Tokalı Kilise of the early tenth century in Göreme, the early tenth-century Sümbüllü Kilise, Ihlara, and the late tenth-century Direkli Kilise in Belisırma: Marcell Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, 3 vols. (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969, 2: fig. 82 at Tokalı (farthest left figure); 3: fig. 493 at Sümbüllü (under the arch to the right of the Annunciation).

[11] As Sharon E.J. Gerstel, 'Painted Sources for Female Piety in Medieval Byzantium', *DOP* 52 (1998): 89 and passim [89–111] points out, female saints are characteristically grouped together in Byzantine monumental programs

[12] Weitzmann, 'Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom', 73.

[13] On this icon, see Kristen A. Collins, 'Visual Piety and Institutional Identity', in Nelson and Collins, eds., *Holy Image*, 104, fig. 84 [95–116]; Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land*, 337, fig. 195; Max Immerzeel, 'Icon Painting in the County of Tripoli of the Thirteenth Century', in *Interactions: Artistic Interchange between the Eastern and Western Worlds in the Medieval Period*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 73–83, [67–83]; Weitzmann, 'Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom', 73, fig. 50. Soteriou and Soteriou, *Icônes du Mont Sinai*, 1: 183 reproduce the same icon before later inscriptions identifying the saints as Eirene and Marina had been removed. See also Nelson and Collins, eds., *Holy Image*, fig. 83, an eleventh-century icon with frontal standing figures of Sts Catherine and Marina.

[14] P.L. Vocotopoulos, 'Fresques datées du XIe siècle à Corfou', *Cahiers archéologiques* 21 (1971): 161–62, figs. 13–14 [151–80].
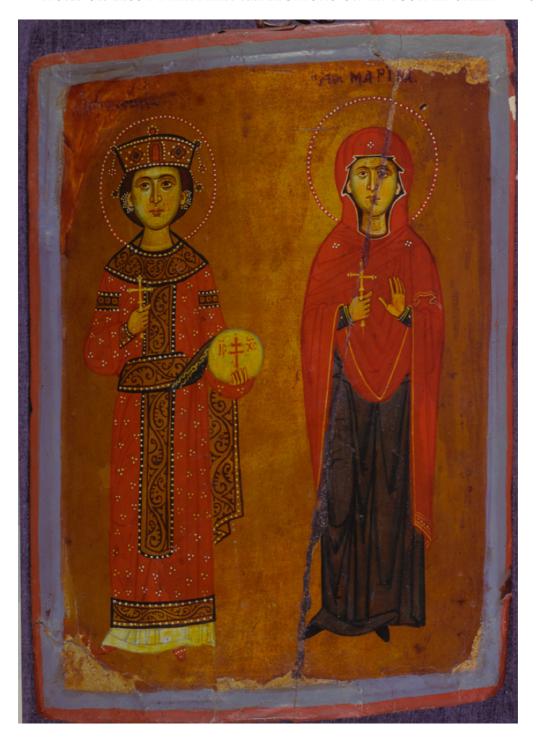
Figure 2. Mount Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery. Saint Catherine and Saint Marina of Antioch. By permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt.
Photograph courtesy of Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expeditions to Mount Sinai.

her militant action, however, Marina is richly clothed in bridal garb. As seen in her bridal clothing and close association with the Mother of God, Marina appears here as a virgin bride of Christ, her militant purity underscored by the sacred warriors. She is associated again with Mary in two later examples: in the thirteenth century cave church of St Marina at Qalamoun, Lebanon, where Marina confronting Beelzebub is paired with the Annunciation, her forward stride paralleling that of Gabriel;[15] and in the White Church at Karan, Serbia, frescoed under Stefan Dušan (1331–55), where Marina smiting the demon takes her apotropaic place beside the entrance, with Mary above the door.[16] She is associated more frequently with the militant St Michael, as seen not only at St Merkourios, Corfu, but in the fourteenth century on the entrance wall at Karlukovo, Bulgaria,[17] on the portal embrasure at SS Constantine and Helena, Ohrid,[18] and in the predella of the Sienese *Mystic Marriage of St Catherine* in Boston.[19] In Kirk Dam Alti Kilise, at Belisırma in Cappadocia, she joins the equestrian St George, echoing the equestrian saint on Corfu.[20] Bridal, protective and aggressive at once, she embodies the power of militant purity. In stark contrast to Margaret, Marina is militant, not maternal.

Marina's militant posture assumed varied forms in art. In Corfu, although she strikes the Devil, she does so discreetly, her hammer held at waist level and her posture only lightly bent. Variants of this form continue to characterize her combat in the three *vita* icons of Marina on Cyprus in which this scene remains at least partially legible.[21] Given

[15] The cave church is currently under investigation by a group from Balamand University in Tripoli, and they will shortly publish a book on it that reassesses its chronology. For earlier study, see Mat Immerzeel, *Identity Puzzles. Medieval Christian Art in Syria and Lebanon*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 184 (Leuven, Paris, Walpole MA: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, 2009), 82–86; Erica Cruikshank Dodd, *Medieval Painting in the Lebanon*, Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients 8 (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2004), 292–306; Ch.-L. Brossé, 'Peintures de la Grotte de Marina près Tripoli', *Syria* 7/1 (1926): 30–45.

[16] Dragan Vojvodić, 'O živopisu Bele crkve karanske i suvremenom slikarstvu Raške', *Zograf* 31 (2006–2007): 138, fig. 3, English summary as 'On the frescoes of the Bela Crkva (White Church) of Karan and the contemporary painting of Raška', 151–52 [135–52].

[17] Drewer, 'Margaret of Antioch', 13, fig. 5.

[18] Ibid., 14, fig. 6.

[19] Ibid., 12-13, figs. 1, 2.

[20] Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, 'Thème iconographique peu connu: Marina assommant Belzébuth', *Byzantion*, 32 (1962): 251–59.

[21] In all of these, the scene with Beelzebub is compressed into a narrow, vertical rectangle in the icon's right-hand frame. In the late thirteenth-century icon from Pedoulas, now in the Byzantine Museum in Nicosia, Marina's left hand is lowered to grasp the dog-headed Beelzebub by the hair while her right crosses her chest to a now-invisible hammer just beyond her left shoul-

Cyprus' close artistic relation with Sinai,[22] one craves a kinship between our icon and images on Cyprus, but the Cypriot variants of Marina's combat are subdued, with the saint reaching across her chest to strike Beelzebub's head. A second variant of Marina's combat shows her standing triumphantly upon the demon's sprawled body. This reflects the *vita*'s statement that she placed her foot on his throat.[23] Seen in the church of Hagia Triada near Kranidi in Greece from 1244,[24] it was known also in the eastern Mediterranean region to which Sinai belonged, for it appears in the Armenian menologion, New York, J. Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M622, fol. 207r, illuminated by Sargis Pidzak at Sis in Cilicia in 1348.[25] But the favored way of depicting the combat was to show the saint with hammer held high, as in the icon at Sinai. Even here, however, her ferocity varies. In Belisırma, Ohrid, and Karlukovo, all from the Palaiologan period, she holds the mallet close to her head, producing a compact, poised form.[26] Elsewhere, however, she holds it away from her body, her raised elbow and forearm creating dramatic, energizing diagonals that are echoed in her bending torso. This dynamic posture is seen in the late twelfth-century frescoes of the church of the Anargyroi in Kastoria,[27] in St George, Kurbinovo, of

der: Athanasios Papageorghiou, *Icons of Cyprus* (Nicosia: Holy Archbishopric of Cyprus, 1992), 54, 55, fig. 34. The relevant scene in the icon in the Museum of the Holy Cross, Kyperounta, also of thirteenth-century date though barely legible, leaves no space for the extended arm of the more dynamic posture: Sophocles Sophocleous, *Icônes de Chypre, Diocèse de Limassol, 12e – 16e siècle* (Nicosia: Centre du patrimoine culturel, 2006), 195, no. 98, 405, pl. 98. The sixteenth-century icon from the Monastery of St John Lampadistis, Kalopanagiotis, now in the Byzantine Museum in Nicosia, shows Marina gripping the dog-headed Devil with her right hand and her left compressed to her body: Athanasios Papageorghiou, *Byzantine Icons of Cyprus*, ed. Doula Mouriki, exhibition catalogue, Athens, Benaki Museum, 1 September–30 November 1976 (Athens: Benaki Museum, 1976), 96–97, no. 35.

[22] See especially Bas Snelders and Mat Immerzeel, 'From Cyprus to Syria and Back Again, Artistic Interaction in the Medieval Levant', *Eastern Christian Art* 9 (2013): 79–106. 79–106.

[23] Usener, 'Acta S. Marinae et S. Christophori', 33.

[24] Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, *Die Kirche der Hagia Triada bei Kranidi in der Argolis (1244): Ikonographische und stilistische Analyse der Malereien* (Munich: Institut für Byzantinistik und Neugriechische Philologie der Universität München, 1975), 204–7, sketch 26, Pl. 26. As in Corfu, her clothes are opulent here, a factor attributed by Kalopissi-Verti, 205, to her being imagined as a princess, but by Vocotopoulos, 'Fresques datées', 161, to her being a bride of Christ. Again, in St Demetrios, Makrychori, of 1303, she is elaborately dressed, raising the hammer frontally as Beelzebub raises his hand to plead with her: Andreas S. Ioannou, *Byzantine Frescoes of Euboea, A' Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Athens: Zygos, 1959), pl. 20.

[25] http://ica.themorgan.org/manuscript/page/99/122661 (consulted 9 March 2020).

[26] See above, notes 20, 18, and 19.

[27] Lydie Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo. Les fresques de Saint-Georges et la peinture byzantine du XIIe siècle*, 2 vols., Bibliothèque de Byzance 6 (Brussels: Éditions de Byzantion, 1975), 2: fig. 124; Eadem, 'Contribution a l'étude iconographique de Marina assommant le de-

1191,[28] and again in the White Church in Karan.[29] It appears also in closer proximity to Sinai, in the thirteenth-century cave church of St Marina at Qalamoun near Tripoli in Lebanon (Figure 3).[30] The version at Qalamoun exploits the pose's dynamism especially effectively, and its painter must have had a very good Byzantine model.

This dramatic version of Marina's combat is likely to have originated in the late twelfth century, at much the same date when it first appears, for this period is known for its expressive dynamism. This implies a late twelfth-century *terminus post quem* for our Sinai icon, and many of the work's other features support such an attribution. The slender,
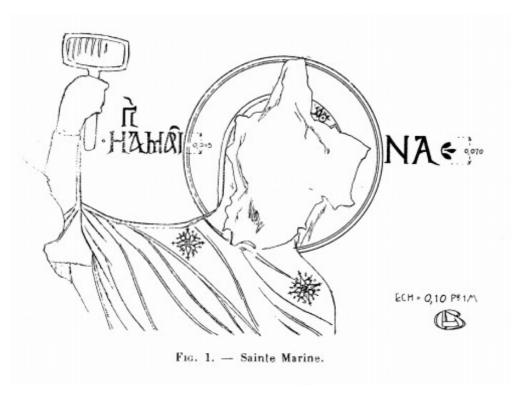

Fig. 1. — Sainte Marine.

Figure 3. Qalamoun, Cave chapel of Saint Marina. Saint Marina smiting Beelzebub. Ch-L. Brossé, "Peintures de la Grotte de Marina près Tripoli," Syria 7/1 (1926): fig. 1.

mon', *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves*, 20 (1968–1972): 268–70 [267–72].
  [28] Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, figs. 121, 123.
  [29] See note 16 above.
  [30] See note 15 above.

supple elasticity of Marina's figure, the fluent ripples of her skirt, and especially the sensitive modeling of her face with its refined proportions, nuanced expression, and focused gaze, all suggest a painter fully conversant with Byzantine painting techniques as they radiated from metropolitan centers in the late twelfth century. His Beelzebub, too, though more static than usual, has the tailed and winged form, with notably few grotesque features, which had characterized Byzantine demons for centuries.[31] His physical robustness has a parallel in the Devil who tempts Christ in the mosaics of Monreale, produced in the late Komnenian period itself.[32] The painter may have been trained in the metropolis; more probably, he was a younger man trained by a master who had left Byzantium in the wake of the Fourth Crusade, for his work reflects developments seen in the icons of the thirteenth century at Sinai. Immediately striking is the painting's color scheme, with its warm play of red and olive green. Marina's bright red and olive garb stands out warmly against the golden ground, and the strongly colored frame radiates around her. More revealingly, red and green also dominate the modeling of her face. The deft modulation of tones to model facial features and give them expression is characteristic of late twelfth-century painting, but the tones here have become perceptibly flushed with color. Basic is the skin tone, a pale, creamy ochre that brings out the colors that model it: the rose of the cheeks, the small, red mouth, the deep, warm swaths of olive that shape the brows and jaw. Played against the pale ochre skin tone, the hues reflect the distinctive dialogue of red and green that Doula Mouriki long ago singled out as distinctive to the thirteenth century.[33] The treatment of the icon's frame reinforces a thirteenth-century attribution. Its band of golden lozenges is a veritable Leitmotif of panels from the crusader period at Sinai, appearing in a dozen published examples; outside of Sinai, it is known only from three late twelfth-century panels on Cyprus that are often

[31] Marginal Psalters include good depictions: see the Theodore Psalter in London, British Library, Add. Ms. 19352, fol. 78r, 88r, 123v at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx-?ref=add_ms_19352; and the Barberini Psalter in the Vatican Library, Barb. Gr. 372, fol. 115v at https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Barb.gr.372 at 115v–116r (both consulted 13 February 2021).

[32] Ernst Kitzinger, *I Mosaici del Periodo Normanno in Sicilia, Fasc. IV: Il Duomo di Monreale, I Mosaici del Transetto* (Palermo: Accademia Nazionale di Science Lettere e Arti di Palermo, 1995), 22, figs. 29, 36–7.

[33] Doula Mouriki, 'A Thirteenth-Century Icon with A Variant of the Hodegetria in the Byzantine Museum of Athens', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (1987): 404, 412 [403–414]; Eadem, 'Thirteenth-Century Icon Painting in Cyprus', *The Griffon* n.s. 1–2 (1985–86): 13 and passim [9–112]

related to Sinai.[34] The use of color rather than gold to fill the frame itself also associates the panel with the thirteenth century. The Marina icon joins a small cluster of icons at Sinai with painted frames, and they all belong to the thirteenth century.[35] A striking example is the well-known small icon of the equestrian St Sergios with a woman in the garb of a Latin lady kissing his foot (Figure 4);[36] it is also true of the image of Sts Catherine and Marina above (Fig. 2). The stars that spangle Marina's frame also point to a thirteenth-century date, for their form—a central dot unattached to six radiating arms—is repeated in two other panels at Sinai assigned to the thirteenth century.[37] Taken together, these factors suggest that the icon of St Marina is the work of a painter well trained in the techniques of late twelfth-century Byzantine painting and conversant with contemporary Byzantine iconographic templates, but also responsive to contemporary stylistic developments of the thirteenth century.

This invites the conclusion that the painting is, precisely, a Byzantine icon, the lively, up-to-date devotional panel of a private individual, or perhaps the pilgrimage gift of such a person to the monastery's chapel of Marina. Two factors, however, cast a shade of a doubt. The first of these is the selection of this dynamic version of Marina's imagery for the subject of a devotional icon. The motif itself, as seen above, is unquestionably Byzantine, well and widely known in Byzantine art. But it is found otherwise only in monumental painting, and it stands out

---

[34] For examples at Sinai see Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land*, figs. 164–76, 187, 194, 262, 266, 267, 289, 359, 364, 379, 401; Mouriki, 'Icons from the 12th to the 15th Century', pl. 65; Soteriou and Soteriou, *Icônes du Mont Sinaï*, 1: fig. 82. The Cypriot examples—the Mother of God Eleousa and Christ Philanthropos of the 1180s at the Monastery of St Neophytos near Tala, and the Mother of God Arakiotissa at the Panagia Arakiotissa in Lagoudera—are by painters are often linked with Sinai: see most recently Christodoulos A. Hadjichristodoulou, 'The Iconostasis, the Portable Icons, and the Wall Paintings of the 17th Century', in *The Church of Panagia tou Arakos*, ed. Anastasios Papageorghiou, Charalambos Bakirtzis, and Christodoulos Hadjichristodoulou (Nicosia: Foundation Anastasios G. Leventis, Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, 2018), 105–6, pl. 147 [103–10]; Papageorghiou, *Icons of Cyprus*, 19 and pls. 8, 9.

[35] See Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land*, figs. 199, 208.

[36] The identity of both painter and patron of this icon has been probed by Lucy-Anne Hunt, 'A Woman's Prayer to St Sergios in Latin Syria: Interpreting a Thirteenth-Century Icon at Mount Sinai', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 15 (1991): 96–145; repr. in Eadem, *Byzantium, Eastern Christendom and Islam. Art at the Crossroads of the Medieval Mediterranean*, 2 vols. (London: Pindar Press, 1998), 2: 78–126. The woman's clothing accords with Latin use, but it is not impossible that she belonged to a well-to-do family of indigenous Christians who were under Latin protection.

[37] Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land*, fig. 382; Mouriki, 'Icons from the 12th to the 15th Century', pls. 63–64.

Figure 4. Mount Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery. Saint Sergios with a Female Donor.
By permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt.
Photograph courtesy of Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expeditions to Mount Sinai.

sharply among the other panel-painted icons not only of Marina herself but of women saints in general. The women saints preserved in icons at Sinai are uniformly still, with frontal postures.[38] This is true even though Sinai's surge of icons belongs to an era and region still strongly shaped by late twelfth-century conventions, of which dynamism is a defining feature. Historically, the Byzantine icon was rooted in sacred portraiture, a form of imagery deliberately set apart from narrative. Events entered it only reticently as sacred scenes like the Nativity or the Ascension began to appear on painted panels.[39] Only gradually over the pre-Iconoclastic period did painting—like the Fathers in their festal sermons—take on the job of formulating iconic images not just of holy persons but holy events. Then the post-Iconoclastic centuries saw the creation of a loose but recognizable corpus of 'feast icons', established iconographic formulae imaging the biblical events at the core of the major liturgical feasts.[40] The first preserved sequences of such 'portraits of events' are in monumental cycles of the first half of the eleventh century;[41] the earliest record of panel paintings with such a 'dodekaorton' or twelve-feast sequence occurs in the foundation document of 1083 for the monastery of the Mother of God *Petriztonitissa* in Bačkovo, Bulgaria, which speaks of panels with the twelve feasts adorning the templon.[42] Sinai then furnishes the first tangible examples of what this

[38] Along with the figures of Marina cited in note 13 above, female saints include the frontal half-length figures of St Phevronia and St.Theodosia in Ibid., pls. 38 and 39, which are especially lovely, but see also Nelson and Collins, eds., *Holy Image*, 263–63, cat. 54 with frontal, standing figures of Sts Nicholas, Sabas, Barbara, and Eirene, and 264–66, cat. 56 with St Catherine and the Mother of God as the Burning Bush; Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land*, figs. 292 and 371 with a frontal St Catherine; and Soteriou and Soteriou, *Icônes du Mont Sinai*, 1: fig. 85 with frontal standing figures of Sts Cosmas, Theodote, Damian, and Panteleimon, and 1: fig. 184 with frontal figures of St Symeon Stylites on his column beside the standing St Barbara. By far the most frequent female figure (indeed, the most frequent figure in the Sinai icons overall) is the Mother of God, but her imagery has its own canons.

[39] See Kurt Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons, Volume One: From the Sixth to the Tenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 31–32, cat. B.10, pl. XIII with the Ascension; 47–48, cat. B.22, pls. LXX-LXXI with shepherds from a Nativity.

[40] On the development of the dodekaorton, see especially Jean-Michel Spieser, 'Le développement du templon et les images des Douze Fêtes', in *Les images dans les sociétés médiévales: Pour une histoire comparée = Bulletin de l'Institut historique Belge de Rome* 69 (1999): 131–64, all with earlier bibliography.

[41] See Hosios Loukas in Stiris, Greece, and St Nicholas of the Roof near Kakopetria in Cyprus: Nano M. Chatzidake, *Hosios Loukas*, trans. Valerie Nunn (Athens: Melissa Publishing House, 1997); Andreas Stylianou and Judith A. Stylianou, T*he Painted Churches of Cyprus, Treasures of Byzantine Art*, 2nd ed. (Nicosia: A.G. Leventis Foundation, 1997), 54–59.

[42] Robert Jordan, trans., '23. *Pakourianos: Typikon* of Gregory Pakourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God *Petritzionitissa* in Bačkovo', in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Docu-*

must have referred to, for it preserves a number of painted beams, made to lie above the epistyle of the templon, bearing scenes of the events celebrated in the great feasts.[43] They range from the very early twelfth to the mid-thirteenth century. Over this span, the feast scenes became progressively more animated, with a mounting physical and expressive energy.[44] The same intensified animation was appearing widely. Creative energy bubbled up in new expressive motifs like the figure of Symeon Christodochos embracing the Christ Child of the Presentation, or the exposure of Christ's humanity through the use of transparent garments in the Presentation and Crucifixion,[45] and yet farther in the addition of new scenes to the dodekaorton, especially scenes belonging to the Passion of Christ.[46] Templon beams even went beyond the dodekaorton to display multiple miracles of particular saints,[47] perhaps a harbinger of the *vita* icons with their barrages of miracle scenes. The heightened expressive energy of these images played in turn into the realm of the portrait icon, animating its images, as seen in absorption of active postures from the Presentation and Lamentation into the images of the Mother of God, and the emergence of the icon of the Man of Sorrows.[48]

ments, ed. John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero, 5 vols. (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 2: 536 [507–63].

[43] Weitzmann, 'Icon Programs,' 64–86; Mouriki, 'Icons from the 12th to the 15th Century', 105–7, pls. 25–27, 31–33; Soteriou and Soteriou, *Icônes du Mont Sinai*, 1: figs. 87-125.

[44] See especially Weitzmann, 'Icon Programs', 70–71 and passim.

[45] See Henry Maguire's study of the Presentation in the temple, 'The Iconography of Symeon with the Christ Child in See especially Byzantine Art', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1980/1981): 261–69; Anne Derbes, *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy. Narrative Painting, Franciscan Ideologies, and the Levant* (Cambridge UK, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[46] See Ibid.; Ioannes Spatharakis, 'The Influence of the Lithos in the Development of the Iconography of the Threnos', in *Byzantine East, Latin West. Art Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. Doula Mouriki et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 435–46; Hans Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages. Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion* (New Rochelle, NY: Caratzas, 1990), 91–129. For a templon beam augmented with additional Passion scenes, see the beam of ca. 1200 in the Byzantine Museum, Nicosia, in Ioannes Eliades, ed., *Κυπριακῷ τῷ Τρόπῳ: The Cypriot Painting of the 13th Century Between Two Worlds*, exhibition catalogue, Nicosia, The Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Cultural Foundation, 19 January–31 July 2017 (Nicosia: Archbishop Makarios III Cultural Foundation, 2017), fig. 18, including both the Lamentation and the Marys seeing Christ on Easter morning.

[47] Weitzmann, 'Icon Programs', 67–69; Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, 'The Posthumous Miracles of St. Eustratios on a Sinai Templon Beam', in *Byzantine Religious Culture. Studies in Honor of Alice-Mary Talbot*, ed. Denis Sullivan, Elizabeth Fisher, and Stratis Papaioannou, The Medieval Mediterranean, Peoples, Economies and Cultures 400–1500 92 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 267–87.

[48] See Hans Belting, 'An Image and Its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1980/1981): 1–17; Annemarie Weyl Carr, 'The Presen-

Given these many forms of animation developed in the later twelfth century and carried on into the thirteenth, it seems easy to view the icon of St Marina as a reflection in the realm of the portrait image of this same animation. At no point, however, did Byzantine art allow narrative animation to take precedence over the devotional accessibility of the subject itself. The dexterity with which dynamism could coexist with iconic fixity in late twelfth- and thirteenth-century devotional panels is illustrated well by a late twelfth- or thirteenth-century icon of equestrian military saints at Sinai (Figure 5). Seen already in Figure 4, the equestrian saint is a vivid case of the era's heightened dynamism, for icons of mounted warriors exploded across the Byzantine world in this era of crusader conquest, their striding mounts a jubilant testimony to an age of cavalry warfare.[49] The tumult and panache of mounted militancy is dramatically captured in this icon of St Menas and his companions, yet the saints themselves are firm in their unshakable frontality. Marina's absorbed attention to Beelzebub diverts her from the icon's devotee.

The second factor creating a shade of doubt is the emphatic frame. It heightens the image's narrative inflection, creating a threshold through which one views saint's absorbed activity as if watching an event rather than seeing a person. Byzantine custom is to suffuse an icon's frame in the same gold as the figure's ground, thus uniting figure and frame in a shared continuity. The holy subject is seen not so much through a frame as enfolded within its own sacred context. When the frame does receive painted adornment, it is first with other holy figures, constituents of the same sacred context and set at intervals like gemstones within the gold. From the late eleventh century we begin to encounter descriptions in the inventories of wealthy monasteries of 'decorated' icons: icons set in frames of precious metal studded with actual gems. These frames were

tation of an Icon on Sinai', Δελτίον της χριστιανικῆς ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας, ser. 4, 17 (1993–94): 239–48 on the relation of the Presentation to the image later known as the Kykkotissa; Sanja Pajić and Rosa D'Amico, *La Theotokos Pelagonitissa. Un'iconografia tra l'Oriente, I Balcani e l'Italia nel medioevo* (Kragujevac, 2015) on the relation of the Lamentation to the image later known as the Pelagonitissa.

49 See especially Mat Immerzeel, 'Holy Horsemen and Crusader Banners Equestrian Saints in Wall Paintings in Lebanon and Syria', *East Christian Art* 1 (2004): 29–60; Sharon E.J. Gerstel, 'Art and Identity in the Medieval Morea', in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, eds Angeliki Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2001), 263–85; Hunt, 'A Woman's Prayer to St Sergios', 96–145.

Figure 5. Mount Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery. Saints Menas, Victor, and Vincentios.
By permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt.
Photograph courtesy of Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expeditions to Mount Sinai.

imposed additions, but visually their radiant material converged with the radiance of the image field. Then in the late twelfth century, icons do begin to appear at Sinai with painted frames. They fall into two types. One, which has been associated specifically with the 'decorated' icons, is the *vita* icon, which surrounds the frontal image of a major saint with a circuit of small scenes filling the frame and recounting that saint's life and/or miracles.[50] Painted in the same colors as the main figure and portraying that figure's own life, the frame in this case functions in the same way as those of the 'decorated' icons, extending the aura of the holy subject into the field around it. The emergence of the *vita* icon has been associated with the polyglot environment of the Levantine world to which Sinai belonged,[51] and it clearly spoke effectively across cultural divides, for it was widely embraced.[52] Its sustained use in Byzantine and post-Byzantine tradition shows that its integrated field, embracing central figure and frame together, answered Byzantine expectations of the holy image. But along with *vita* icons, there are also among the thirteenth-century icons at Sinai examples with frames that are decorative, painted with a bright color, a geometric pattern like the lozenges, or a vine scroll. Here the color serves to set the frame off as a margin distinct from the sacred realm of the central field. More than they unify, these frames form a threshold through which we look into the different environment of the shimmering figural field. They are exemplified not only by our Marina, but by the icons of Sts Catherine and Marina (Figure 2) and of St Sergios (Figure 4) above. What stands out about these panels is the consistency with which they have been identified specifically as crusader, not Byzantine painting, emblematized by St Sergios' Latin-garbed devotee.

What 'crusader' means here has been a persistent question. The term was first applied to art to describe illuminations adorning Latin manuscripts made in the crusader states for crusader use.[53] The illu-

[50] Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, 'Vita Icons and 'Decorated' Icon of the Komnenian Period', in *Four Icons in the Menil Collection*, ed. Bertrand Davazac, The Menil Collection Monographs 1 (Houston, TX: The Menil Collection, 1992), 57–69.

[51] Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, 'The "Vita" Icon and the Painter as Hagiographer', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 53 (1999): 149–165.

[52] Paroma Chatterjee, *The Living Icon in Byzantium and Italy: The Vita Images, Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

[53] Hugo Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).

minations incorporated many features of Byzantine iconography and even style but did so in a piecemeal way that implied not Byzantine but Latin painters. Then when comparably mingled images were found among the icons at Sinai, the same rubric of crusader was applied to them.[54] The icons did not represent a 'style'—already Kurt Weitzmann singled out at least three distinct groups, with a wide aureole of ambivalently related panels beyond—but they were consistent in date, and some were assigned to the same hands or workshops seen the Latin manuscripts. Thus, the warrior saints in Figure 6 have the bulgy cheeks and rolling eyes seen in the illuminations of the Arsenal Bible, the most regal of the crusader manuscripts.[55] The saints' nervous postures and puffy limbs contrast sharply with the closed contours and stolid forms of St Sergios and his devotee in Figure 4. Both icons, however, mingle Byzantine with other features. Given their shared hybridity, Weitzmann lumped them all together, assuming they were all by European painters who had come with the crusader armies, and then settled down to produce locally flavored artifacts for European crusaders, pilgrims, and merchants. Having come from varied places, they responded with greater or lesser comprehension to the Byzantine art around them.

The art around them, however, was not simply Byzantine; it was itself mingled, for the Melkite, Maronite, and varied Miaphysite communities had visual traditions of their own that mingled with the conventions purveyed by painters trained in the Byzantine centers. Spurred by the influx of investment and personnel that came with the crusades, these communities saw a surge in artistic productivity that crested in the thirteenth century. Scholars familiar with this 'Syrian Renaissance' came to challenge Weitzmann's attribution, arguing that the 'crusader' icons should more plausibly be understood as works not by Latin painters, but by local Christian painters working for the new Latin patron class. Especially significant was Lucy-Anne Hunt's probing analysis of the Saint Sergios icon (Figure 4),[56] which she attributed to an indigenous Christian painter from the County of Tripoli, for local Christian painting is still richly attested in the painted churches of the

---

[54] See citation to Weitzmann in note 2 above.

[55] Daniel H. Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom*, 54–67.
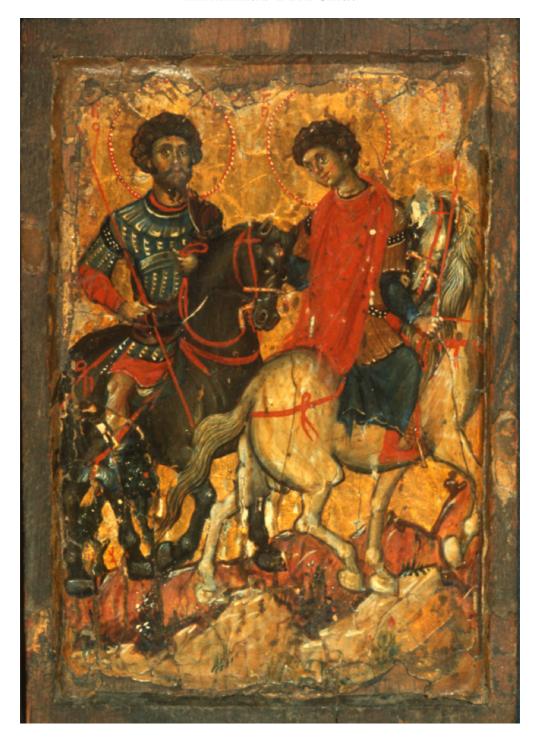
[56] See note 36 above.

Figure 6. Mount Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery. Saint Theodore and Saint Demetrios.
By permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt.
Photograph courtesy of Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expeditions to Mount Sinai.

Lebanon.[57] With the cessation of the civil war of 1975-90, Lebanon's artistic legacy has become better known, and a number of Sinai's icons have been claimed for it,[58] including both Figure 2 and Figure 4 above, and one of the icons with stars like those on our Figure 1.[59] These were claimed as Tripolitan on the basis not of panel-painted icons, of which very few survive *in situ* from the crusader period, but of the frescoes that still adorn many churches of the indigenous Maronite and Melkite Christians. Sacred imagery was as significant a factor in these as in Byzantine churches, often imbued with Byzantine stylistic conventions, at other times more strongly shaped by Syrian ones. With this, the question arises not only of indigenous east Christian painters but of east indigenous Christian patrons. The icon of St Sergios clearly had a patron identified with the Latins; but is there any reason to believe that the icon of Sts Catherine and Marina did? Would it not be more reasonable to assume a bedrock of local patronage? Our own icon poses the same question, for its colorful frame associates it with the icons claimed for crusader Lebanon. Indeed, would Latin patrons even have been drawn to the aggressive militancy of St Marina, whose bloody combat with Beelzebub was not a part of the story they knew through St Margaret?

Among the more interesting facets of the crusader story is the receptivity of Latins to the saints of their new, Byzantine world. St George is an especially notable example,[60] but the visual legacy of the crusader states makes it clear that St Marina, too, was among those whom the crusaders embraced. Thus, Marina is one of the three female saints other than the Virgin Mary who is represented on the nave columns in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.[61] Standing frontally and holding the cross

[57] See Mat Immerzeel, *Identity* Puzzles; Levon Nordiguian et Jean-Claude Voisin, *Châteaux et églises du Moyen Age au Liban* (Beyrouth: Éditions Terre du Liban, 1999); Erica Cruikshank Dodd, *Medieval Painting in the Lebanon*.

[58] See Corrie, 'Sinai, Acre, Tripoli', 415–48; Mat Immerzeel, 'Icon Painting in the County of Tripoli', 67–83; Nada Hélou, 'L'icône bilatérale de la Vierge de Kaftoun au Liban: une œuvre d'art syro-byzantin à l'époque des croisés', *Chronos* 7 (2003): 101–131; Eadem, 'A propos d'une école syro-libanaise d'icônes au XIIIe siècle', *Eastern Christian Art* 3 (2006): 25–35.

[59] See Ibid., figs. 1 and 15; for the stars, see Mouriki, 'Icons from the 12th to the 15th Century', pl. 64.

[60] Mahoney, 'Art and Efficacy', 188–89 and passim; Robin Cormack and Sravros Mihalarias, 'A Crusader Painting of St George: "Maniera greca" or "lingua franca"', *The Burlington Magazine* 126 (1984): 132–41.

[61] Gustav Kühnel, *Wall Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1988), 106–12 and fig. 74.

of martyrdom, she is labeled clearly as both Marina and Margaret. She is also included in a little triptych at Sinai (Figure 7). Dressed in her familiar red *maphorion*, though probably originally labeled Margaret rather than Marina, she joins a St Catherine wearing a very western crown on either side of an enthroned Virgin *Galaktotrophousa* adored by a Latin couple. Both saints turn in petition to Mary, giving them an energy that is echoed in the donor couple's prominently displayed act of veneration below. The panel's patrons had clearly embraced Margaret/Marina in her red-veiled Byzantine form. Even more emphatic is a tiny icon in the Menil Collection in Houston, one of the few crusader-era

Figure 7. Mount Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery. Mother of God Galakrotrophousa with Saint Margaret/Marina, Saint Catherine, and Donor Couple; Annunciation; Scenes from the Passion of Christ. By permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt. Photograph courtesy of Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expeditions to Mount Sinai.

icons that is not preserved at Sinai (Figure 8).[62] Marina is labeled here in Greek in exactly the form—with etas rather than iotas—that also appears in our icon. Her red *maphorion*, white cross, and frontal posture, too, belong to her traditional Byzantine form. Yet her alert face and the energetic ornament of her frame led Jaroslav Folda in his meticulous study to attribute the panel to a Latin devotee, most probably—once again—in the County of Tripoli. Just five kilometers from the city of Tripoli itself, finally, is the cave church of St Marina in Qalamoun, cited earlier. This was founded to honor a different saint named Marina, but her images were balanced by a compelling and dramatic image of her homonym, Marina of Antioch, her hammer held high against Beelzebub (Figure 3). Now almost totally effaced, this image was carefully sketched at the beginning of the twentieth century by Ch.-L. Brossé.[63] The history of the Qalamoun frescoes is complex, as they had been overpainted already in medieval times. But as Nada Hélou points out, the inscriptions were originally in Latin.[64] Only very rarely in the art of the crusader states did Latin displace Greek. Greek was recognized by all as a sacred language, which Latin was not, and it is usually assumed that Latin implies a Latin audience. Current research is confirming Hélou's conclusion: that the chapel was a Latin site.[65] The chapel and the little icon in the Menil Collection are the only images of Marina that we know in medieval Lebanon. Both are attributed to Latin patronage. They confirm that Marina was not only embraced by crusader devotees but embraced by them even in her most dramatic and militant guise. In the County of Tripoli, it is above all in the hands of Latins that she still appears in art. Our icon's Greek subject can in no sense exclude Latin patronage.

The bright color, twinkling lozenges and golden stars of the icon's frame have given it a likely local attribution in the County of Tripoli, but the choice of Marina's posture stands out among the panels shaped for the devotional use of local Christians. The pose itself is a Byzantine

[62] Jaroslav Folda, 'The Saint Marina Icon: *Maniera Cypria, Lingua Franca*, or Crusader Art?' in *Four Icons in the Menil Collection*, ed. Bertrand Davezac, The Menil Collection Monographs 1 (Houston, TX: The Menil Collection, 1992), 106–33.

[63] As in note 15 above.

[64] Nada Hélou, 'Les Chrétiens du Comté de Tripoli: Un modéle de tolerance?' *Early Christian Art* 11 (2017–18): 12 [1–15]; Immerzeel, *Identity Puzzles*, 82–86.

[65] See the publication currently in progress overseen by Lina Fakhoury-Soueid, *Le site de Qalamoun, une méthodologie sur mesure*
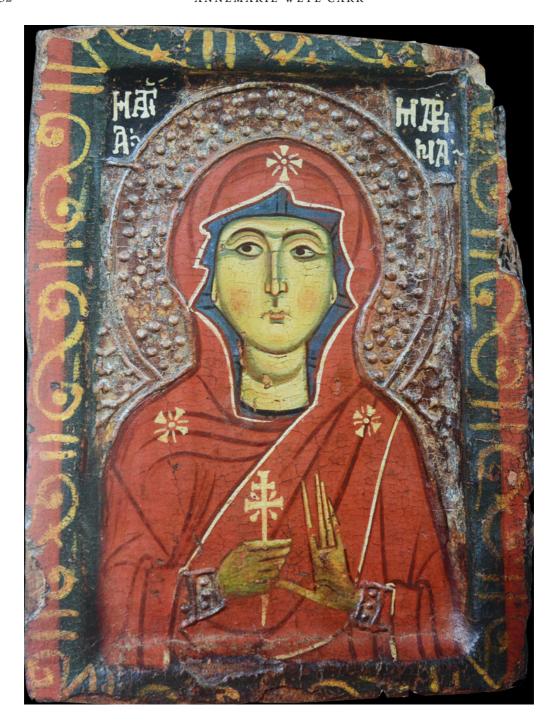
Figure 8. Houston, TX, The Menil Collection. Saint Marina.
The Menil Collection, Houston, photographer Paul Heston.

one and might imply that late twelfth-century Byzantine dynamism had infused even the devotional icon itself with drama. But the panels assigned to Latin patronage here offer a more locally attuned judgment. Be it in the emphasis on the mobile eyes of a frontal face, in the impulsive twist in the saddle of a jaunty equestrian saint, or in the inclusion within the panel of the patron's own act of dedicated veneration, each of these icons has been turned into an image of an event. None of them is just the face-to-face confrontation with the image of a person; something is happening in each. Lisa Mahoney has emphasized the votive character of the Latin icon, and this character is clearly visible in Figures 4 and 7, where the icon not only is a gift of devotion but depicts a gift of devotion. It shows devotion happening. Byzantine donors, too, made their personal devotion visible in their icons—sometimes, though with extreme modesty, by including their portraits in them, but more often by means of the golden frames that enclosed the 'decorated' icons. These were precious, even extravagant, personal gifts from the devotee to the image before them.[66] They were acts of devotion, visible to all who viewed the panel and integrated in their golden radiance with the imaged surface. But they did not thereby turn the icon into the image of a devotional event. In both Figure 4 and 7, a devotional event is happening in the icon. The twisting figure of St Demetrios in Figure 6, too, creates a ripple of casual eventfulness in the image. Again in the icon of St Marina, the image shows something happening. In conceiving its subject not simply as an image but as an event, the icon of Marina joins the icons assigned to Latin patronage. For all its Byzantine technique and iconography, and kinship with the art of regional Orthodoxy, it suggests a Latin owner.

The dramatic posture and slender form of St Marina ally her panel with Byzantium, bespeaking a painter thoroughly conversant with Byzantine imagery and techniques. By contrast, the panel's frame with its lozenges and stars points to the art of crusader Tripoli, where local Christians found their own modes of appropriating styles and iconographic types from the empire. Yet the choice of that dramatic pose for the focus of a devotional icon suggests a Latin, not local Christian patronage. In this triple allegiance, the panel is a vivid example of what

---

[66] Beautifully studied by Ivan Drpić, *Epigram, Art and Devotion in Later Byzantium* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

is now meant by the term 'crusader icon': its most important message lies less in its individual ethnic components than the fact of their intricate intermingling. 'Crusader' is a phase in the life of the Christian Near East. Nonetheless, crusader icons are a record of the Byzantine icon as seen by many different eyes, and the Latin propensity to regard the icon as a form of picture can help to bring out for us its distinctively different function as a transmitter of worship in Byzantium.