

OXFORD, MAGDALEN COLLEGE, MS. GR. 3:
ARTISTIC PRACTICE, BYZANTINE DRAWINGS AND MOBILITY
IN MEDITERRANEAN PAINTING AROUND 1200

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Few drawings linked to pictorial practice survive from the 12th century. The innumerable cycles of wall paintings that once covered churches in the Mediterranean are not accompanied by sets of sketches or cartoons that act as guides or better enable us to understand the secrets of their artistic creation. Many scholars even discount the suggestion that models or copies were a part of Romanesque and Byzantine painting practice. In their opinion, 12th century painters used mnemotechnical methods – essentially visual memory triggered by oral instruction, in marked contrast to Renaissance practice.¹ However, Magdalen College, Oxford MS. Gr. 3 has the capacity to dispel one's doubts as to 11th or 12th-century model books.

The codex contains a partial copy of John Chrysostom's *Homilies on Genesis* (Homilies 31-67) and was probably made at Constantinople during the 11th century. By the 12th century the manuscript was in Cyprus, as is indicated by the *scholia* in the margins of folios 120v-123v (Homily 44) which date to the second half of the 12th century. It is highly likely that by the end of that century over 100 drawings had been completed in pen in the margins of most of the folios. Moreover, there is evidence that the book was in use during the Venetian mandate in the island (1489-1571), as a number of additional drawings and *scholia* appear to have been made in the late 15th century. The Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1570-1571 probably lies behind the book's migration to the West. Its present binding carries the initials G. K., a known Oxford book-binder documented in the second half of the 16th century. The manuscript then entered the Library of Magdalen College in Oxford around 1600, where it remains.²

This peculiar and understudied collection of drawings raises the controversial question of whether there were Byzantine model books and, if there were, whether they might have been circulating the West around 1200. As Irmarg Hutter has pointed out, three painters – Painter A, B and C – were involved in illuminating Magdalen

MS. Gr. 3, each of whom had access to a set of models or *exempla* of wall paintings and icons dating to the late 12th and early 13th centuries in Cyprus. Hutter also emphasised that most of the Oxford drawings have not been copied directly from paintings but from tracings or cartoons,³ methods often employed by Byzantine masters in their own work, as is well documented in the *Painter's Manual of Dyonisius of Fourna*.⁴ It is obvious that the draughtsmen responsible for these drawings in the margins of the manuscript didn't reproduce the scale of their possible models, whether those models were tracings or cartoons. They made free-hand copies from something known as *ἄνθιβόλα*, *patrones* or patterns, which was probably available in their own workshop and they reduced its monumental scale to the size that suited the pages of the codex. For this reason the Magdalen manuscript may rightly be called a *Musterbuch*, a sort of working tool for a group of wall and icon painters who used these tracings and cartoons as a compositional model from which to sketch varied figures on the margins of the codex. Their apparently isolated and random distribution throughout the manuscript, and the fact that these depictions were not finally coloured, allows us to visualise something of the original *ἄνθιβόλα* and assess their reception by a creative monumental painting workshop. Most of the sketches of Painter A, whose work is characterized by slender, gently animated figures [1], are closely related to the work of the painter Theodore Apeudes at two sites in Cyprus: the monastic churches of Hagios Neophytos at Paphos, particularly the tiny founder's cell within the early *Enkleistra* [2], dated to 1182-1183, and Panagia tou Arakou, at Lagoudhera, dated to 1192.⁵

To this extent, the so-called *ἄνθιβόλα*, *patrones* or patterns were important in both the making of the drawings of the manuscript and in that of the above-mentioned wall-paintings. In the first case, the patterns were an inspirational model for the drawings, in the second they acted as a genuine prototype to be transferred into the



wall. In recent years, Maria Andaloro, Serena La Mantia and Marcell Restle have happily drawn attention to the early use of patterns or *sagome* in Byzantine art, such as the examples of the paintings of Küçük Tavsan Adası (6th-7th century), Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome (8th century), and the paintings and mosaics of Hosios Lukas (11th century). They were probably made in different materials, such as parchment, papyrus and even paper, and it is very likely that their respective workshops had access to a variety of drawing tools from the *ἄνθιβόλα* – a sort of flexible tracing paper – to the *patrones* or rigid patterns through which it was possible to reproduce the shape of a figure or object on the wall.⁶

Moreover, it is very probable that the Oxford manuscript was kept at a monastery in Cyprus that was in contact with the monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai, or at least with Sinaitic *metochia*. Painter B, whose style emphasises volume and who employs *sfumato* effects, seems to have been aware (directly or indirectly) of the magnificent collection of the icons of Sinai. His depiction of Saint Catherine wearing the Crusader cross on her robe (f. 49v) reminds us of a celebrated icon dated to the early 13th century in the monastery on Mount Sinai.⁷ More intriguing are the drawings depicting the *Deesis* on folios 10v [5] and 11r [3]: these truly seem to be taken from a cartoon deriving from the contemporary panels of the *Grand Deesis* at Sinai [4].⁸ Most notably, the figure of Saint John the Baptist was reversed with regard to the others, demonstrating that the model for the representation in Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3 was not an actual artwork but a tracing or cartoon [5]. A further example, I believe, reinforces this privileged relationship with the Sinai models: both the isolated warrior saint in *proskynesis* (f. 219r) [6] (Painter B) and the series of angels in worship (ff. 234v, 240v, 312v) [7] (Painter A) could be compared with very similar figures depicted in an icon of the Archangel Michael with donor at Sinai (ca 1200) [10].⁹

Both references to Cypriot painting and icons from Mount Sinai are very interesting points to consider. In my opinion, beyond her formal and iconographic analysis, Hutter didn't sufficiently take into account the very peculiar context of the island between 1183 and 1200, and in particular the emerging figure of the sainted-monk Neophytos (1134-1214).¹⁰ It is likely that Magdalen College MS. Gr. 3 is related to the saint himself, and to his artistic and intellectual en-



4. Sinai, The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, icon, Virgin from Grand Deesis, Sinai, ca 1200 (By permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt).

5. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 10v, Painter B, drawing of Saint John the Baptist from a Deesis (the figure was reversed with regard to the model), Cyprus, 1183-1192 (© The President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford).

6. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 219r, Painter B, drawing of a warrior saint in proskynesis, Cyprus, 1183-1192 (© The President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford).

terprises. Neophytos collected a number of important manuscripts for the monastery he founded (initially simply known as the *Enkleistra* – or enclosure) near Paphos, most of them works of ecclesiastical literature. As Catia Galatarioutou pointed out, the works of Saint John Chrysostom were among the favourite readings of the saint, especially, his *Homilies on Genesis*, of which two copies have been identified (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Cod. Gr. 605; Cod. Coisl 65).¹¹ I have recently looked at the Paris, BnF, Gr. 605 (*olim* Colbert 864). This manuscript, which was probably made at Constantinople during the 11th century and contains the Homilies 5-32 on Genesis by John Chrysostom, belonged to the library of Neophytos in the *Enkleistra* (f. 341v).¹² By its contents, size – mm 313 x 232 (original mm 333 x 242) –, division of the text in two columns and ornamentation it could have perfectly been the twin of Magdalen College, Oxford MS. Gr. 3 (mm 312 x 230; original mm 334 x 248), which – for including the Homilies 31-67 – seems to be a continuation or second volume of the Paris manuscript. In my opinion, Neophytos could acquire both manuscripts in order to have a complete edition of the John Chrysostom's *Homilies on Genesis*. The enthusiasm shown by Neophytos for the



writings of this Orthodox church father is probably related to his own life of self-sanctification. He learnt how to read and write at the age of twenty in the monastery of Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsovendês (Cyprus), whose library was probably rich in Chrysostom's works, and years later could provide books for the library of his cell in Paphos. Like Saint John Chrysostom himself, Neophytos withdrew to a cave before being ordained priest and was later an outstanding preacher, able to denounce the abuse of authority by political leaders.¹³ Furthermore, the brief marginal notes made by a 12th-century

Front page:

1. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 134v, Painter A, drawing of a woman saint, Cyprus, 1183-1192 (© The President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford).

2. Paphos (Cyprus), Hagios Neophytos (*Enkleistra*), cell, north wall, mural paintings, Theodore Apeudes, Deesis, detail of the Virgin and Neophytos kneeling at Christ's feet, 1182-1183 (photo Author).

3. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 11r, Painter B, drawing of the Virgin and Christ from a Deesis, Cyprus, 1183-1192 (© The President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford).

7. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 312v, Painter A, drawing of an angel in worship, Cyprus, 1183-1192 (© The President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford).



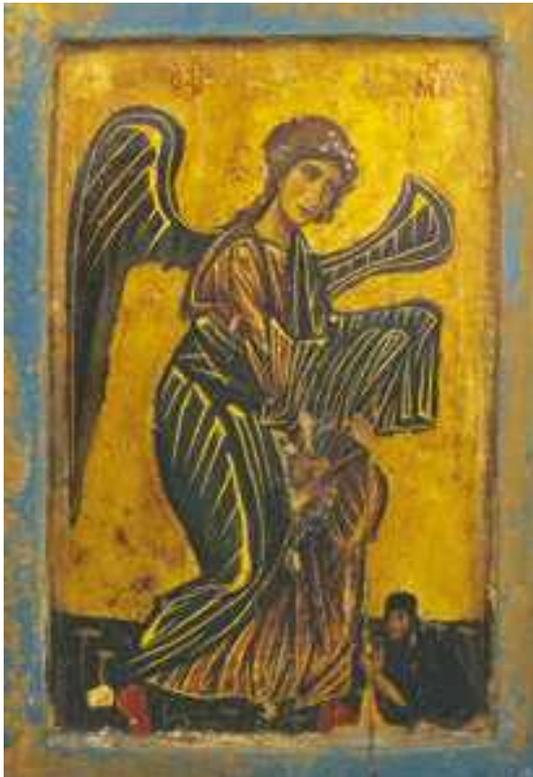
8. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 136r, Painter A, drawing of the Samaritan woman, Cyprus, 1183-1192 (© The President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford).



9. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 149v, Painter C, drawing of the Abraham's bosom (Abraham with the soul of Lazarus), Cyprus, 1183-1192 (© The President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford).



10. Sinai, The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, icon, archangel Michael with donor monk, Sinai, ca 1200 (By permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt).



11. Lagouthera (Cyprus), Panagia tou Arakos, naos, south wall under the dome, mural paintings, Theodore Apsoudes, Virgin Arakotissa flanked by angels of the Passion, 1192. Notice the detail of the angel's wing where the fresco was scraped away in order to insert patches of fresh plaster to give the effect of relief (photo Author).





hand on folios 120v-123v in the Oxford manuscript were intended to underline the content of Homily 44: God protects good men such as Abraham or Lot from the destruction (Sodom and Gomorrah) but condemns the wicked; He is merciful with the elect, such as the women from Samaria and praises the chastity of Joseph. In the margins of the same glossed Homily and those that immediately follow, the artists drew the same subjects: Christ and the Samaritan woman (Homily 44) (ff. 135v-136r) [8], Abraham's bosom and Joseph (Homily 45) (ff. 149v and 158r) [9] as well as Zachariah and Elizabeth (Homily 48) (ff. 178r and 179r) in allusion to the promise to the elderly Sarah that she would become pregnant.¹⁴ This correspondence between text and image changes our perception of the sense of the drawings in the manuscript, and poses once again the question of its original use. Until recently, I rather sympathised with Robin Cormack's analysis of the Oxford codex. Disagreeing with Hutter, Cormack argued that the Oxford manuscript was not a *Musterbuch* or Model-Book, but a means whereby artists practiced their work.¹⁵ As such, it is not a collection of models created so that a workshop might

scale up the designs for use in monumental commissions, but simply a sketchbook intended to improve the skills of the individual artists. Drawing was a means of refining their work as well as stimulating their memory. This explanation fitted with the apprehension that the late 12th-century 'sketches' were unrelated to the contents of the manuscript. However, given that in some instances text and image are related, this is potentially misleading.

How can we explain such a quantity of images and their obvious relationship with the cycles at the *Enkleistra* (Paphos) and Lagoudhera? As far as the paintings of the *Enkleistra* are concerned, the cell and *bema* were completed and signed by a painter called Theodore Apseudes in 1183.¹⁶ In my opinion 'Apseudes', which in Greek means 'who doesn't lie', is probably a monastic epithet rather than a surname, suggesting that the painter was reliable and trustworthy. His classical court style distinguishes him as a first-class Byzantine painter from Constantinople who had travelled to Cyprus. Besides the murals he also painted two icons for the *Enkleistra* that are currently displayed in the monastery: Jesus Christ *Philanthropos* and the Virgin Eleusa.¹⁷ Moreover, both

12. Paphos (Cyprus), Byzantine Museum, icon of Panagia Theoskepasti (*Hodegetria Dexiokratousa*), Kato Paphos, Cyprus, ca 1190 (photo Author).

13. Paphos (Cyprus), Hagios Neophytos (*Enkleistra*), bema, mural paintings, Theodore Apseudes, portrait of Neophytos escorted by the archangels Michael and Gabriel, 1182-1183 (photo Juan Antonio Olañeta).

14. Lagouthera (Cyprus), Panagia tou Arakos, sanctuary, center of the reveal of the apse arch, mural paintings, Theodore Apseudes, Mandylion, 1192 (photo Juan Antonio Olañeta).



15. Lagouthera (Cyprus), Panagia tou Arakos, north bay, under dome, lintel over north door, mural paintings, Theodore Apseudes, the Holy Tile, 1192 (photo Juan Antonio Olañeta).



the second phase of Lagouthera paintings and the two icons that were kept in the church until 1970 have been confidently attributed to him.¹⁸ As an itinerant painter, like Theophanes the Greek or Andrei Rublev,¹⁹ Theodore Apseudes worked on both small-scale icons as well as on large-scale commission for painting a church. One technical detail of his work noticed by David and June Winfield – the way in which areas of completed fresco were scraped away in order to insert patches of fresh plaster [11] might be interpreted as an attempt to create relief surfaces for hands, halos and garments in the manner of Cypriot stucco-relief icons, such as the icon of Panagia Theoskepasti in Kato Paphos (ca 1190) [12].²⁰

With regard to the Oxford manuscript, it must be emphasised that the relationship between text and image is closest when it comes to the figures in the margins of Homilies 44-48, related to the story of Abraham and its interpretation. The hand

of Theodore Apseudes can be identified in the so-called painter A (Christ and Samaritan woman, Joseph, Elizabeth, Zachariah) (ff. 135v-136r, 158r, 178r, 179r), while one of the figures of the series, Abraham's bosom (f. 149v) [9], must be attributed to Painter C, who was probably a different artist fully integrated within the Apseudes' workshop.²¹ This last is the model for the three portraits of Neophytos in the paintings of Enkleistra. In the *Deesis*, he is kneeling at Christ's feet; in the *bema*, he is at the very top of the ceiling escorted by archangels Michael and Gabriel [13]; and, finally, he is shown in the *naos*.²² In all depictions he resembles the Abraham of Magdalen College MS. Gr. 3, f. 149v: an old man, with a full white beard and a drooping moustache, deep-set large brown eyes and flowing hair.

This direct link between the saint monk, one of God's elect like Abraham, his painters, and the illumination of Magdalen College MS. Gr. 3 is enormously helpful in developing our understanding of how a medieval painting workshop operated. The rest of the numerous figures in the book are nothing like so closely linked to the text, but are to the painting cycles of *Enkleistra* and Lagouthera. After all, both the book and the walls of his cell were surfaces where his sanctity was imprinted. The paintings and the drawings, which were also probably made between 1183 and 1192, were part of the same project. Following Cormark's mnemotechnical view, the artists could practice or sketch in the manuscript some of the compositions they would go on to use at a monumental scale, and could memorize them through their drawings, as Ludovico Geymonat has pointed out regarding the so-called *Musterbuch* of Wolffenbüttel.²³



However, the Oxford manuscript seems to reflect something more complicated than this. It suggests there was a direct relationship between the *auctor intellectualis* and recipient of the programme – Neophytos – and the painters, but that the painters might then redeploy some of these same compositions at another place, like Lagoudhera. Indeed, at Lagoudhera there is proof of the use of cartoons. Unexpectedly for a Byzantine master, the specular images of the *Mandyllion* and *Keramion* (or Holy Tile) were created following a single pattern: the *Mandyllion* [14], whose structure is simply repeated

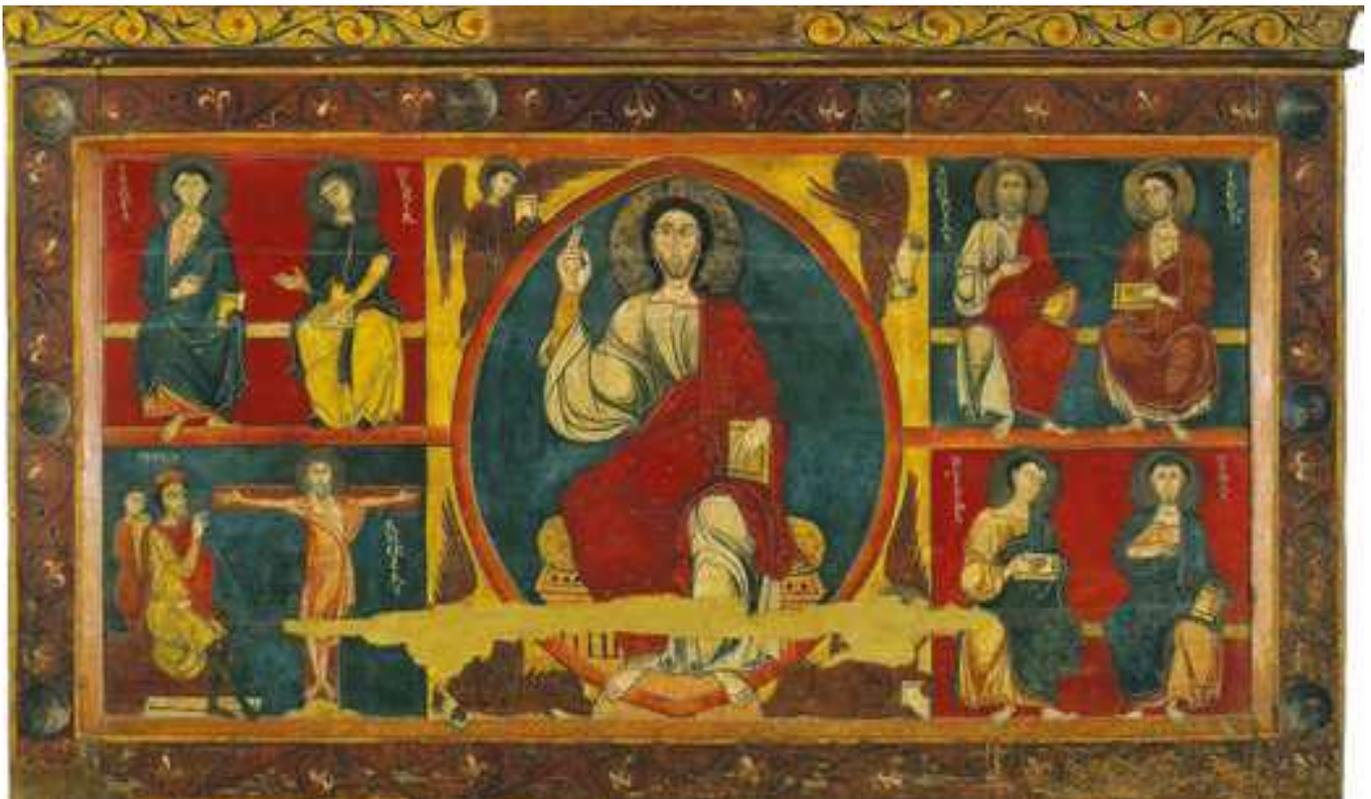


without inverting the image to depict the *Keramion* [15], as usually happened in Byzantine art. The same thing happened in the Oxford manuscript where the figure of Saint John the Baptist (f. 10v) [5] was reversed in a scene of *Deesis*.

As such, the Oxford manuscript seems to reflect both the artist's desire to practice drawing before painting, and the coeval existence of patterns circulating through a workshop. This point is important here, because, in my opinion, Painter A, whose compositions relate to monumental art, is a potential key to an understanding of the transmission of styles and compositions in contemporary painting and mosaic across the Mediterranean. His angel in a position of worship (Magdalen College MS. Gr. 3, f. 312v) [7], for example, resembles the depiction of angels conserved in the mosaics of the main aisle of the basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem (ca 1167-1169), created by the Syrian deacon, *Basilios Pictor* [16].²⁴ Likewise, the busts of the ancestors of Christ – in the same mosaics – seem to announce the style of the miniatures of a *Book of Prophets* now in Oxford (New College MS. 44 – see in particular the Prophet Jeremiah on f. 68v) [17], which was produced at the end of the 12th century either in Constantinople or in Cyprus.²⁵ In this respect, it is worth reminding ourselves that an international workshop operated at

16. Bethlehem, basilica of the Nativity, central nave, north clerestory, *Basilios Pictor*, mosaic depicting an angel in procession, 1167-1169 (photo Author).

17. Oxford, New College MS. 44, f. 68v, *Book of Prophets*, miniature of Jeremiah, Constantinople or Cyprus, end of the 12th century (© The Warden and Scholars of New College, Oxford).



Bethlehem, which acted as a genuine crossroads among Greek (Ephraim), Syrian (*Basilus Pictor*) and Latin artists, whose styles, and compositional strategies merged to form an amalgam of the artistic traditions of Eastern Mediterranean at that time.²⁶

Similarly, on the other side of the Mediterranean, the mysterious Master Alexander's workshop – responsible for altar frontals of Sainte-Marie d'Oreilla [18], Saint-Genis-des-Fontaines (known through a 19th-century drawing) and Sant Andreu de Baltarga (MNAC 15804) [19]



20. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Magister Alexander's workshop, altar frontal from Sant Andreu de Baltarga (Baixa Cerdanya), upper register, right side, detail of the incision on the plaster to draw Saint James (the Apostle's drapery, ca 1203-1210 (© MNAC-Calveras/Mérida/Sagristà).

21. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Magister Alexander's workshop, altar frontal from Sant Andreu de Baltarga (Baixa Cerdanya), detail of Saint John the Apostle and Virgin Mary, ca 1203-1210 (upper register, left side) (© MNAC-Calveras/Mérida/Sagristà).

and whose activity in Catalonia can be dated between 1195 and 1210 in the vicinity of the Benedictine abbeys of Saint-Martin-du-Canigou and Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa – is likely to have used preliminary drawings as a result of the earlier training of its principal painter in Cyprus.²⁷ Both Baltarga and Oreilla betray typically Byzantine features, which probably came from parchment folios or cartoons. That cartoons or model drawings were used can be deduced from the incisions made by the artist on the plaster layer prior to painting [20]. The workshop seems indeed to employ Byzantine drawing techniques, using circles for both in the full and the three-quarter faces [21]. In addition, the fine, elongated heads and necks of the figures, along with their asymmetrically modelled faces, point directly to the types of facial composition used in Komnenian painting [22-23], as in the contemporary painting from Santa Maria di Cerate (Apulia),²⁸ or in its previous assimilation in the scriptorium of the Holy Sepulchre around 1135-1140 (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS McClean 49, f. 73v).²⁹

The conquest of Cyprus by the Latins in 1191 under Richard the Lionheart effectively transformed the social structure of the island provoking the impoverishment of most of its Orthodox population.³⁰ This is the context that might have seen an initial migration of Byzantine and Crusader artists to the Western Mediterranean – a process that would have been preceded by the conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin in 1187.³¹

The artistic personality of Master Alexander, alien to Catalan panel painting traditions, might be the result of something similar. It is likely

he was from Cyprus, and quite possibly raised in the orbit of the workshop of Theodore Apseudes. He probably arrived in Catalonia at the end of 12th century. To ensure and reinforce his peculiar training, he gathered together some tracings or cartoons before setting out. Subsequently, many of these tracings and cartoons were used and reproduced by his new team of collaborators in the workshop he established in Catalonia. Moreover, the striking incidence of his signature – 'Magister Alexander' – was unprecedented in Catalonia, where all previous 12th century panel painting had been anonymous.³² His signature could be read, as was the case with Theodore Apseudes in Cyprus, as proof of his foreign background and self-confidence. Indeed, certain iconographic details point directly to a Byzantine *milieu* for the painter. Firstly, the lock of hair on the left side of Christ's forehead in Oreilla [24] and Baltarga [25] is a direct reference to the face on the Holy Tile (*Keramion*), or the imprint on the *Mandyllion* of Christ.³³ Moreover, the depictions of the Evangelists as scribes writing upon their scrolls at Oreilla brings to mind Komnenian Gospel Books, such as that made in Constantinople ca 1100 and now in Florence (Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Plut. 6.23, f. 100v).³⁴ One further feature, I believe, reinforces this Byzantine background: the scrolls inhabited by birds made in stucco-relief along the frame of the frontal of Oreilla [26]. This is unique in Catalan panel painting and is reminiscent of the carpet-pages of certain Byzantine manuscripts like that of a Gospel Lectionary produced in Constantinople ca 1100 now in Venice (Istituto Ellenico, MS IE 2, f. 3v).³⁵

Front page:

18. Oreilla (Conflent), Sainte-Marie, Magister Alexander (?), altar frontal, ca 1195 (photo Author).

19. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Magister Alexander's workshop, altar frontal from Sant Andreu de Baltarga (Baixa Cerdanya), ca 1203-1210 (© MNAC-Calveras/Mérida/Sagristà).

22. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 189r, Painter B, drawing of Saint John the Apostle, Cyprus, 1183-1192 (© The President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford).



23. Squinzano (Apulia), Santa Maria di Cerrate, apse entrance, right wall, mural paintings, Sainted deacon, late 12th century (photo Svetlana Tomeković).



24. Oreilla (Conflent), Sainte-Marie, Magister Alexander (?), altar frontal, detail of Christ's face, ca 1195 (photo Author).



25. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Magister Alexander's workshop, altar frontal from Sant Andreu de Baltarga (Baixa Cerdanya), detail of Christ's face, ca 1203-1210 (© MNAC-Calveras/ Mérida/Sagristà).



Finally, with regard to Oreilla, the materials used in the panel are striking. The surface combines sheets of painted parchment with what seems to be gold leaf. Moreover, golden lines articulate some of the drapery [27], while on the central figure fake gems modelled in plaster decorated the clothes [18]. The artist was attempting to emulate precious metals, enamels and gems in

the manner of Byzantine book covers, like those of the *Skeuophylakon* Lectionary, in the Grand Lavra at Mount Athos (ca 1100).³⁶ This interest in creating a multiplicity of surface effects at Oreilla is indebted to the aesthetics of contemporary icon painting, whose kinetic qualities, as Bissera Pentcheva pointed out, were intended to suggest the presence of the divinity.³⁷ Both



26. Oreilla (Conflent), Sainte-Marie, Magister Alexander (?), altar frontal, detail of the vivid inhabited scrolls with birds made in stucco-relief along the upper frame, ca 1195 (photo Author).

27. Oreilla (Conflent), Sainte-Marie, Magister Alexander (?), altar frontal, detail of the drapery of an apostle with traces of the technique of the chrysographia, ca 1195 (photo Author).

those painted icons adorned with chasing, and the brilliant icons of this period (see the icon of the Annunciation at Sinai of ca 1167), possess this same dynamic transcendence. This is clear at Oreilla, but then disappears with the Baltarga frontal. We are unaware of why this may be so, though I do wonder whether Master Alexander died after making the Oreilla and Saint-Génis frontals.

It seems that from the beginning *Magister Alexander* had his own workshop into which he recruited a number of local artists. This is probably the only way that an icon painter would have been able to familiarise himself and adjust to the tastes and expectations of Catalan patrons, particularly in terms of format, structure and theme. This strikes me as the most plausible explanation for the Oreilla frontal, a work it is still otherwise difficult to classify. It is very likely that Master Alexander's knowledge of Komnenian art derived from a Cypriot training, and was progressively tempered by local traditions so as to produce more assimilated panel paintings, such as can be seen in the altar frontal from Sant Andreu de Baltarga (MNAC 15804) [19].

How this process of assimilation was effected is unclear. However, there are certain trails that ought to be explored if we are to get closer to understanding with any subtlety the nature of artistic relations between East and West around 1200. The striking similarity between the faces of the apostles in Oreilla and Baltarga and those drawn in the margins in the Byzantine copy of John Chrysostom's *Commentary on Genesis* (Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, f. 189r)



[21-22] is on the face of it a surprise. To pursue this intriguing issue further, it is necessary to raise the controversial question of whether Byzantine model books or drawings might have been circulating in the West at this date. We should reconsider as well the role played by Catalonia – a land open to the Mediterranean – in the making of the Mediterranean Art around 1200. Works such as the altar frontals from Baltarga and Oreilla deserve a place in any larger discussion of the nature and consequences of Byzantine and Crusader Art for Western Art, wherein the travelling artist and models seem to have developed a major role.³⁸

NOTES

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¹ For the discussion of this topic in Byzantine and Romanesque art, see especially R. CORMACK, *Painter's Guides, Model-Books, Pattern-Books and Craftsmen: or Memory and the Artist?*, in *L'artista a Bisanzio e nel mondo cristiano-orientale*, a cura di M. Bacci, Pisa 2007, pp. 11-29; L. GEYMONAT, *Drawing, Memory and Imagination in the Wolfenbüttel Munsterbuch*, in *Mechanisms of Exchange: Transmission in Medieval Art and Architecture of the Mediterranean, ca. 1000-1500*, edited by H.E. Grossman, A. Walker, Leiden-Boston 2013, pp. 220-285. See also the classic study by R.W. SCHELLER, *Exemplum. Model-Book Drawings and the Practice of Artistic Transmission in the Middle Ages (ca. 900- ca. 1470)*, Amsterdam 1995, especially pp. 383-393.

² For a general description and study of the manuscript, see H.O. COXE, *Catalogus codicum mss. collegii B. Mariae Magdalenaee*, Oxford 1882, p. 2; I. HUTTER, *Corpus der Byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften. Band 5.1. Oxford College Libraries*, Stuttgart 1997, pp. 71-89; EAD., *The Magdalen College Musterbuch. A Painter's Guide from Cyprus at Oxford, in Medieval Cyprus. Studies in Art, Architecture, and History in Memory of Doula Mouriki*, edited by N.P. Sevchenko, C. Moss, Princeton 1999, pp. 117-146.

³ «It is obvious that these drawings were not copied from wall paintings or icons but, at least indirectly, from tracing or cartoons such as the seventeenth-century cartoons with mirror images of the Anastasis and the Baptism in Benaki Museum. The drawings at Oxford prove that this technical aide for copying, documented from the fifteenth century on, preserved from about 1600, and described by Dyonysios of Fournà, had been practiced since at least the twelfth century», HUTTER, *The Magdalen College Musterbuch*, p. 128. For drawings or intermediate transfer patterns (*anthivola*) in the Benaki Museum in Athens see SCHELLER, *Exemplum. Model-Book Drawings*, pp. 388-389, n. 21, fig. 243 (with bibliography) as well as the recent and wonderful study made by M. VASSILAKI, *Working Drawings of Icons Painters after the Fall of Constantinople. The Andreas Xyngopoulos Portfolio at the Benaki Museum*, Athens 2015, in part. pp. 17-31. Furthermore, M. Vassilaki had previously pointed out in her analysis of the Cretan painter Angelos Akonantos' will (1436) the use of τεχνιάσματα and σκιάσματα in his workshop (*The hand of Angelos, an*

icon-Painter in Venetian Crete, edited by M. Vassilaki, The Benaki Museum, Athens 2010, p. 112).

⁴ See the chapter 9 entitled *How to make a copy*, in *The Painter's Manual' of Dyonysios of Fournà*, edited by P. Hetherington, London 1974, p. 5.

⁵ HUTTER, *The Magdalen College Musterbuch*, pp. 120-121. For the wall painting of the hermitage of Hagios Neophytos at Paphos, see C. MANGO, E.J.W. HAWKINS, *The Hermitage of St. Neophytos and its Wall Paintings*, «Dumbarton Oaks Papers», XX (1966), pp. 119-206; I. KAKOULLI, C. FISCHER, *An Innovative Noninvasive and Nondestructive Multidisciplinary Approach for the Technical Study of the Byzantine Wall Paintings in the Enkleistra of St. Neophytos, Cyprus*, published on www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/project-grants/2008-09/kakoulli-and-fischer; A. PAPAGEORGIOU, *The Monastery of Agios Neophytos. History and Art (A Short Guide)*, Nicosia 2005, pp. 16-32. With regard to the Lagoudhera wall paintings, see the bibliography at note 18 under. Conversely, Tania Velmans prefers to underline the Western influence on the drawings in Magdalen College MS. Gr. 3 in connection with the «*style mixte du XIIIe*», in which «*les artistes byzantins avaient vu beaucoup plus d'oeuvres latines qu'auparavant et la présence des Croisés à Constantinople, ainsi que dans d'autres centres culturels de l'Empire, n'avait pas été sans laisser de traces*»: T. VELMANS, *Le dessin à Byzance*, «Fondation Eugène Piot. Monuments et Mémoires», LIX (1974), pp. 137-170: 148, 167.

⁶ M. ANDALORO, *Archetipo, modelli, sagome a Bisanzio, in Medioevo: i modelli*, «Atti del II Convegno internazionale di studi di Parma, 27 settembre-1° ottobre 1999», a cura di A.C. Quintavalle, Milano 2002, pp. 567-580; EAD., *Gli Atlanti della memoria. La memoria delle immagini e le immagini della memoria*, in *Medioevo: immagine e memoria*, «Atti del XI Convegno internazionale di studi di Parma, 23-28 settembre 2008», a cura di A.C. Quintavalle, Milano 2009, pp. 564-577; S. LA MANTIA, «*Santi su misura: la parete di Paolo I a Santa Maria Antiqua, in L'VIII secolo: un secolo inquieto*», «Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Cividale del Friuli, 4-7 dicembre 2008», a cura di V. Pace, Friuli 2010, pp. 149-161; M. RESTLE, «*Ἀνθίστολα-Πατρὸνι in der Byzantinischen und Postbyzantinischen Malerei?*», «*Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*», s. IV, XXII (2001), pp. 281-286 (In memory of Manolis Chatzidakis, 1909-1998); VASSILAKI, *Working*, pp. 17-31. For the discussion of this phenomenon in the Western Art, see: B. ZANARDI, *Projet dessiné et "patrons" dans le chantier de la peinture murale au Moyen Âge*, «*Revue de l'Art*», CXXIV (1999), pp. 43-55.

⁷ For this icon, see: P. CHATTERJEE, *Saint Catherine and Scenes from Her Life*, in *Holy Image. Hallowed Ground. Icons from Sinai* (exhibition cat., Los Angeles, The J.P. Getty Museum, November 14th 2006- March 4th 2007), edited by R.S. Nelson, K.M. Collins, Los Angeles 2006, pp. 264-265 (cat. nr. 55).

⁸ For a comparison with the Sinai Crusader triptych icon, see VELMANS, *Le dessin à Byzance*, p. 148. See also: B.V. PENTCHEVA, *Virgin and Christ from Grand Deesis*, in *Holy Image. Hallowed Ground*, pp. 182-184 (cat. nrr. 24-25).

⁹ For this icon, see: C. BARBER, *Archangel Michael with Donor Monk*, *ibid.*, pp. 150-151 (cat. nr. 12).

¹⁰ C. GALATARIOTOU, *The Making of a Saint. The Life, Times and Sanctification of Neophytos the Recluse*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 13-16; N. COUREAS, *The Foundation Rules of Medieval Cypriot Monasteries: Makbairas and St. Neophytos*, Nicosia 2003, pp. 25-50; A. JAKOVLEVIC, *Cyprus: Byzantine Churches and Monasteries, Mosaics and Frescoes*, Nicosia 2012, pp. 112-116.

¹¹ GALATARIOTOU, *The Making of a Saint*, p. 23.

¹² With regard to Paris, BnF, Gr. 605, see: H. OMONT,

Inventaire Sommaire des Manuscrits Grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale, I. Ancien Fonds Grec. Théologie, Paris 1886, p. 105; P. AUGUSTIN, *Codices Chrysostomici Graeci. VII. Codicum Parisinorum. Pars Prior*, Paris 2011, p. 54; K. KRAUSE, *Die illustrierten Homilien des Johannes Chrysostomos in Byzanz*, Wiesbaden 2004, pp. 75-81.

¹³ Neophytos first discovered what became his cave in Paphos on 24 June, 1159. He worked to widen this natural space until 1160, when it became the *enkleistra* or enclosure (meaning it enclosed Neophytos). In 1170 bishop Basil persuaded Neophytos to be tonsured as a priest and to take up one disciple. See GALATARIOU, *The Making of a Saint*, pp. 14-15, 205-225. During his life, Neophytos discussed and denounced in writing the major military and political events which took place in Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean – hence his resentment of usurper ruler of Cyprus, Isaac Komnenos (1184-1191), his passionate defence of the principal of Cyprus forming an integral part of Byzantium, his hostility to the Latin mandate in Cyprus after 1191, and his laments over the loss of Jerusalem in 1187 and fall of Constantinople in 1204, GALATARIOU, *The Making of a Saint*, pp. 205-243, 263, 269. Saint John Chrysostom (347-407) – a possible *alter ego* for Neophytos – led an ascetic life and became a hermit before being ordained as a deacon in 381. When he was made archbishop of Constantinople, John did not hesitate to denounce the empress, Aelia Eudoxia, for her extravagance. As a result he was deposed and banished by a Synod in 403. It is not by chance that in one of his panegyrics, Neophytos mentions these facts while making favourable references to «King Onorios» of Rome and pope Innocent, who «rebuked the Emperor Arkadios and empress Eudoxia for their behaviour towards St. John Chrysostom». See GALATARIOU, *The Making of a Saint*, p. 26.

¹⁴ Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3, ff. 117v-144v (Homily 44), 145r-160v (Homily 45), 178v-187r (Homily 48). For the edition of the *Homilies* of John Chrysostomos, see: *Sancti Patris Nostri Johannis Chrysostomi Homiliae in Genesim*, 44, 45, 48, in *Patrologia Graeca*, LIV, edited by J.-P. Migne, Paris 1862, coll. 405-422, 434-443

¹⁵ CORMACK, *Painter's Guides*, pp. 24-26.

¹⁶ On the north wall of the cell, beneath the Supplication or Deesis, there is the inscription which mentions the name of the painter: «The Enkleistra (...) was painted completely by the hand of Theodoros Apsoudes in the year 6691 indiction 1 (AD 1183)». On the left side of this text, Saint Neophytos is depicted kneeling and holding the right foot of Christ. See PAPAGEORGIOU, *The Monastery of Agios Neophytos*, p. 30; MANGO, HAWKINS, *The Hermitage of St. Neophytos*, pp. 197 and 206; GALATARIOU, *The Making of a Saint*, p. 129. In his *Typicon*, Neophytos wrote that in the twenty-fourth year of his confinement (1159-1183): «the hermitage was fully furnished (painted)», *The Rule of Neophytos the Recluse*, chapter 5, in COUREAS, *The Foundation Rules of Medieval Cypriot Monasteries*, p. 139.

¹⁷ MANGO, HAWKINS, *The Hermitage of St. Neophytos*, pp. 160-62; PAPAGEORGIOU, *The Monastery of Agios Neophytos*, pp. 54-55, figs. 27-28; ID., *Icons of Cyprus*, Nicosia 1992, pp. 14-19, figs. 8-9.

¹⁸ I am referring to the icons of Christ and of the Virgin Arakiotissa, now in the Byzantine Museum of the Foundation of Archbishop Makarios III, in Nicosia: PAPAGEORGIOU, *Icons of Cyprus*, pp. 19-20, figs. 10-11; D. and J. WINFIELD, *The Church of the Panaghia tou Arakos at Lagoudera, Cyprus: The Paintings and Their Painterly Significance*, Washington 2003, pp. 319-322.

¹⁹ For the profile of the itinerant and polyvalent painter in Byzantium and Russia, see M. ALPATOV, *The Icons of Russia*, in *The Icons*, edited by K. Weitzmann, London 1982, pp.

237-252; L.A. BELJAEV, *Andrei Rublev: the invention of a Biography*, in *L'artista a Bisanzio*, pp. 117-134.

²⁰ D. and J. WINFIELD, *The Church of the Panaghia tou Arakos*, pp. 318, 322-325.

²¹ According to I. Hutter three painters made the marginal drawings of the manuscript at the end of the 12th century. The earlier two, Painter A and B, shared most of the stylistic features of Theodore Apsoudes, while the third, so-called Painter C, was characterized by his vigorous *ductus*, the grave intensity of the expression of the figures and their inherent monumentality (HUTTER, *The Magdalen Codex Musterbuch*, pp. 118-119). In my opinion, all of them are coeval and participated both in the illustration of the codex and in the painting of the enkleistra.

²² MANGO, HAWKINS, *The Hermitage of St. Neophytos*, p. 129; GALATARIOU, *The Making of a Saint*, pp. 130-133, figs. 6-9.

²³ CORMACK, *Painter's Guides*, pp. 24-26; GEYMONAT, *Drawing, Memory and Imagination*, pp. 579-582.

²⁴ P.B. BAGATTI OFM, *Gli antichi edifici sacri di Betlemme*, Jerusalem 1956, p. 81; S. DE SANDALI, *Corpus Inscriptionum Crucesignatorum Terrae Sanctae (1099-1291). Testo, traduzione e annotazioni*, Jerusalem 1974, p. 203; B. KÜHNEL, *Crusader Art of the Twelfth Century. A Geographical and Historical or an Art Historical Notion?*, Berlin 1994, pp. 57-58, fig. 50; L.A. HUNT, *Art and Colonialism: The Mosaics (1169) and the Problem of the 'Crusader' Art*, «Dumbarton Oaks Papers», XLV (1991), pp. 69-85: 74-75, figs. 2 and 10; J. FOLDA, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land 1098-1187*, New York 1991; D. PRINGLE, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. A Corpus. I. A-K*, Cambridge 1993, p. 141; M. ANDALORO, *Dalla Terrasanta alla Sicilia*, in *Il cammino di Gerusalemme*, a cura di M.S. Calò, Bari 2002, pp. 463-474; R. MENNA, *Immagini e scritture nei mosaici della chiesa della Natività di Betlemme*, in *Il cammino di Gerusalemme*, pp. 647-658.

²⁵ Although Hutter suggested that Oxford New College MS. 44 was probably made in Cyprus at the end of the 12th century (HUTTER, *Corpus der Byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften. 5. 1. Oxford College Libraries*, p. 139), John Lowden prefers to locate it in Constantinople around the year 1200 (J. LOWDEN, *The Illuminated Prophet Books. A Study of Byzantine Manuscripts of the Major and Minor Prophets*, London 1988, pp. 26-32, 83-84, fig. 69). See also: H.O. COXE, *Catalogus codicum mss. Collegi Novi*, Oxford 1882, pp. 11-12.

²⁶ To this regard, see my recent study on the depiction of the Erytrea Sibyl – a genuine Western Medieval subject – on the lost mosaics on the counter-facade of the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Besides, the figure was part of a Tree of Jesse, a typically Western iconography as well: M. CASTIÑEIRAS, *Vox Domini, el órgano medieval del Museo del Studium Biblicum Franciscanum de Jerusalén y la perdida Sibila de la iglesia de la Natividad de Belén*, «Ad Limina», V (2014), pp. 63-82.

²⁷ I first proposed this peculiar 'biography' for *Magister Alexander*, in the *Digital Index of Artists Magistri Cataloniae: Alexander, Magister* (www.magistricataloniae.org). His signature on the lost altar frontal from Saint-Génis-des-Fontaines reads «MAGISTER ALEXANDER: ISTA OPERA FECIT» and was positioned, in a frieze dividing the panel into two registers, to either side of the central *mandorla*. The appearance of the frontal is known from a drawing made by L. DE BONNEFOY, *Epigraphie Roussillonnaise*, Perpignan 1868. Subsequent to Bonnefoy's publication there have been numerous attempts to reconstruct Master Alexander's career and workshop. See W.W.S. COOK, J. GUDIOL I RICART, *Pintura e imaginaria románicas*, Madrid 1980, p. 142; M. DURLIAT, *L'atelier du Maître Alexandre en Roussillon et en Cerdagne*,

«Études Roussillonaises», I (1951), 103-119; ID., *Deux nouveaux devants d'autel du groupe de Maître Alexandre*, *ibid.*, pp. 385-394; J.F. RÀFOLS, *Diccionario Biográfico de Artistas de Cataluña: desde la época romana hasta nuestros días*, III, Barcelona 1954, p. 284; J. FOLCHI I TORRES, *La pintura romànica catalana sobre fusta*, Barcelona 1956, p. 170; W.W.S. COOK, *La pintura romànica sobre tabla en Cataluña*, Madrid 1960, p. 20; J. SUREDA, *La Pintura Romànica a Catalunya*, Madrid 1981, pp. 359, 388; J. AINAUD, *La pintura catalana. La fascinació del Romànic*, Geneva-Barcelona 1989, pp. 100-101; R. ALCOY, J. DOMENGE, *Frontal de altar de Orellà*, in *Cataluña medieval* (catálogo de la exposición, Barcelona, 20 mayo – 10 agosto 1992), dirigido por J.M. Martí Bonet, Barcelona 1992, pp. 148-150. A large number of other works have also been attributed to Master Alexander, such as the frontals of Baltarga, Oreilla, Ribesaltes (Abegg-Stiftung Museum, Riggisberg), that of the Suntag Collection in Barcelona, and the canopy of La Llagona. Yvette Carbonell-Lamothe has rightly highlighted the likely origin of the Oreilla painter in Cyprus, and an artist likely to have been active during the early years of Lusignan control (after 1192). She goes on to suggest that Master Alexander may have arrived in the Western Mediterranean thanks to Eudoxia, a Byzantine princess, who married William VIII of Montpellier in 1174. See: Y. CARBONELL-LAMOTHE, *Les devants d'autels peints de Catalogne: bilans et problèmes*, «Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa», V (1974), pp. 71-86; EAD., *Le devant d'autel peint d'Oreilla*, in *De la création à la restauration: travaux d'histoire de l'art offerts à Marcel Durliat pour son 75^e anniversaire*, Toulouse 1992, pp. 285-291.

²⁸ According to M. Falla Castelfranchi, the apse paintings in Santa Maria di Cerrate are an example of the late-12th-century dissemination in Southern Italy of Late Komnenian painting then widespread in Cyprus (Perachorio and Lagoudhera) and Byzantine Macedonia (churches of Hagioi Anargyroi and Hagios Nikolaos Kasnitze in Kastoria and Saint George in Kurbinovo). See M. CASTELFRANCHI, *Pittura monumentale bizantina in Puglia*, Milano 1991, pp. 123-137. However V. Pace, on the basis of late records certifying the presence of Greek painters in the Salentine peninsula, prefers a later date for the Cerrate paintings, of between 1220 and 1235. See: V. PACE, *La chiesa di Santa Maria delle Cerrate e i suoi affreschi*, in *Obraz Vizantii*.

Sbornik statei v cest' O. S. Popovoi, pod redakciej A.V. Zakharova, Moscow 2008, pp. 377-398.

²⁹ H. BUCHTAL, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Oxford 1957, pp. 14-23; FOLDA, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098-1187*, pp. 159-163.

³⁰ GALATIRIOTOU, *The Making of a Saint*, pp. 43-44, 201-205.

³¹ «There is no doubt there were major changes and developments in the artistic production, the artistic patronage, the functions of the art, the economics of the art, the audience, and the reception of the art in the Latin Kingdom from 1187 to 1291 compared with the years 1098-1187», J. FOLDA, *Crusader Art in Holy Land, from the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre, 1187-1291*, Cambridge 2005, p. LXVI.

³² M. CASTIÑEIRAS, *Illuminant l'altar: artistes i tallers de la pintura sobre taula a Catalunya*, in *Pintar fa mil anys. Els colors i l'ofici del pintor romànic*, dirigido por M. Castiñeiras, J. Verdaguier, Bellaterra 2014, pp. 17-51.

³³ For the *Mandyion* and *Keramion*, see A. TRADIGO, *Icone e Santi d'Oriente*, Milano 2004, pp. 235-239. For broader considerations of the replication of sacred likenesses see *Intorno al Sacro Volto. Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI-XIV)*, a cura di A.R. Calderoni Masetti, C. Dufour Bozzo, G. Wolf, Venezia 2007.

³⁴ J. LOWDEN, *The Jabaris Gospel Lectionary. The Story of a Byzantine Book*, New York 2009, pp. 53-63, 65, fig. 70.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 80, fig. 91.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18, fig. 17.

³⁷ B. PENTCHEVA, *The Performative Icon*, «The Art Bulletin», LXXXVIII (2006), pp. 631-655.

³⁸ For further information about this artistic process and the interchange between Catalonia and the Holy Land at a political or commercial level in the second half of the 12th century, see my recent contributions: M. CASTIÑEIRAS, *Bizanci, el Mediterrani i l'art de 1200 a Catalunya*, «Síntesi. Quaderns dels Seminaris de Besalú», II (2014), pp. 9-26; ID., *Catalan Panel Painting around 1200, the Eastern Mediterranean and Byzantium, in Romanesque and the Mediterranean: Patterns of Exchange across the Latin, Greek and Islamic Worlds, c. 1000-c. 1250*, «Transactions of the II International Romanesque Conference of the British Archaeological Association, Palermo, 16-18 April, 2012», edited by R. Bacile, J. McNeill, London 2015, pp. 299-328.

OXFORD, MAGDALEN COLLEGE, MS. GR. 3:

PRATICA ARTISTICA, DISEGNI BIZANTINI E MOBILITÀ NELLA PITTURA MEDITERRANEA
INTORNO AL 1200

Manuel Castiñeiras

Gli studi più recenti sui disegni eseguiti alla fine del XII secolo nei margini di una copia del *Commento sulla Genesi* di san Giovanni Crisostomo (Oxford, Magdalen College, MS. Gr. 3) hanno ravvivato la controversa questione sulla circolazione all'epoca di libri di modelli bizantini in entrambe le sponde del Mediterraneo. A mio avviso, il manoscritto di Oxford è una buona prova dell'esistenza di modelli che cir-

colavano negli *atelier* così come della volontà dell'artista di disegnare prima di dipingere. Alcuni di questi disegni somigliano molto allo stile e all'iconografia dei pittori attivi in questi anni o poco dopo in Terra Santa, al Sinai e in Catalogna. Questo ci permette di riconsiderare il ruolo svolto dalla Catalogna – una terra aperta al Mediterraneo – nella costruzione dell'arte mediterranea intorno al 1200.