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OVERVIEW ON ICONOPHILE AND ICONOCLASTIC ATTITUDES TOWARD
IMAGES IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND LATE ANTIQUITY

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Abstract: This study offers an overview of the opposing attitudes towards the image worship in the Early Christianity and the Late Antiquity. It shows that a dichotomy between creation and veneration of images on one side and iconoclastic tendencies on the other side persisted in the Christian tradition throughout the first seven centuries. While the representations of holy figures and holy events increased in number throughout the Byzantine Empire, they led to a puritanical reaction by those who saw the practice of image worship as little removed from the anthropomorphic features of polytheistic religious cults. Hence, as the role of images grew so did the resistance against them, and the two contrasting positions in the Christian context initiated the outbreak of the Iconoclastic Controversy, when the theological discourse concerning icons became ever more subtle, culminating in the development of the iconophile and iconoclastic teachings on the holy images. Both the iconophile and the iconoclasts based their apologia on passages from the Synoptic Gospels, evidence of the artistic tradition as well as florilegia or systematic collections of excerpts from the works of the Fathers and other ecclesiastical writers of the early period in support of their claim; much of this evidence is surveyed in this paper, although the Iconoclastic Controversy is not analysed.

Key Words: iconophile, iconoclast, icons, theology of images, early Christianity, late antiquity, second commandment, aniconic and iconic worship, Iconoclastic Controversy, patristics.

When a civil war was instigated over the icons it became obvious that Christians began to question the cultural and religious significance the public use of images had developed up to the eighth century. But, it was after all not the image as such but its veneration that brought up the long conflict of iconoclasm and divided Byzantine society. During this controversy two parties formed (iconophiles and iconoclasts) which fought to accumulate an extensive selection of patristic and historical evidence in support of their cause. Appeal to church fathers that had defended the aniconic Christian worship from pagan attacks, was a major aspect of the arguments made by the opposers of images in support of their positions. Thus, a *florilegia* of patristic quotations was compiled to give credence to their particular anti-image arguments, which assert that the veneration of images was 'an incursion of pagan practices into the church', which contradicts the earlier aniconic Christian tradition.¹

Similarly, the Byzantine defenders of images gathered evidence in support of their own cause, and managed to considerably weaken the position of their opponents. Moreover, they managed to substantiate the theory that Christian veneration of images existed from apostolic times. This claim has proven to be one of the most important arguments they had to defend; one that still raises debates amongst many scholars in the field. In fact, it has often been stated that the patristic and historical evidence from the first eight centuries of the Christian era reflects an all-or-nothing attitude towards images: either images should be encouraged, or they should be removed. To study these two opposing views in Christian context before the eighth century is important, since the diverse views towards use of images in worship were brought into a glaring contrast during the Iconoclastic Controversy.

Iconoclastic Tendencies in Christianity

The first references to images can be encountered in the Bible. It is evident that the Second commandment given by Yahweh to Moses in the Old Testament Decalogue prohibited production and worship of graven images and likenesses. (Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 5:8). Nevertheless, already in the Old Testament, God offered to Israel visions (*theophanies*) and ordained or permitted the making of images that pointed symbolically toward salvation by the incarnate Word: such as the bronze serpent (Numbers 21), the Ark of the Covenant, and the cherubim.² The Second commandment was a 'preventive medicine' given to Israelites, who were surrounded by the anthropomorphic features of pagan religious cults and were under a constant danger to imitate their idolatrous practices.³ In reality this prohibition did not prevent Judaism itself from developing images and symbols as can be seen from the excavation of *Dura-Europos*. The archaeological evidence of *Vigna Randanini* and *Villa Toronia* in Rome has confirmed that Jews decorated their objects with artistic

representation of birds and emblems. The most interesting evidence came from the sarcophagus of a Jew whose profession was: a 'painter of living things'.⁴

Aside of references to images in synoptic Gospels, in the first two hundred years of its existence Christianity grew in popularity pushing out the old notions of the Greek and Roman pantheon and replacing them with the pantheon of the Christian Trinity and Saints. However, the new religion was engaged in a struggle against idolatry, and simultaneously it strove to eliminate those elements of pagan culture that threatened the Christian world-view.⁵ Also, being conditioned by its social environment, the early Christian theologians objected to representational sacred art, particularly to any depiction of the Deity.⁶ They harboured the suspicion that such cult would lead simple people astray, in that they would mistake the image for what it represents. Accordingly, aniconic worship was defended and promoted. It was, however, 'natural that believers, who came out of Judaism...should bring over with them into the new dispensation the same attitude, and that they should maintain this feeling so long... surrounded and threatened by heathens who worshipped images'.⁷ The dangers of idolatry were evidently very real so long as pagan cults were practised everywhere outside the Church, and Christians were naturally inclined to adopt an iconoclastic rigorous attitude.

The opposition to pagan practices and early Christian fear of idolatry led Christian authors Tertullian, Origen, Clement of Alexandria and Justin Martyr to write apologies in condemnation of polytheistic rituals.⁸ In addition, the early church took as one of its first tasks to edify new believers (neophytes) to avoid all idols and images and to redirect their worship from the creatures to the Creator.⁹ Thus, already in the second century the unknown author of the *Epistle to Diognetus*, written to the highly ranked pagan, Diognetus, described the Christian life as spiritual. With this objective he restated the arguments against idolatry and idol worshippers, but at the same time distinguished idols from real gods.¹⁰

In the same period, Christian apologist Athenagoras of Athens denounced the use of man-made forms for the representation of the divine. Athenagoras remarked that the pagan images were superfluous arts, created from 'matter and stone by humans'.¹¹ Latin apologists Arnobius and Lactantius held the same view on the cult statues.¹² They ridiculed pagans for their reverence to gods fashioned out of matter, which was beneath their respect.¹³ St. Ignatius of Antioch, one of the first Christian ecclesiastical writers, likewise instructed that since 'nothing that is visible is good', an image cannot be regarded as having any kind of value, considering that it is a 'perceptible creation'.¹⁴

Under the influence of Platonic depreciation of sense-perception, the Alexandrine school of theology represented by Clement of Alexandria and Origen opposed the use of images. Clement of Alexandria, in particular, held that it was distasteful to use beauty for service of false gods.¹⁵ He saw

true love of beauty as reaching out beyond the things of sense towards the True God. In his *Paidagogos* addressed to Christians, he discouraged the use of religious symbols and pictures.¹⁶ He maintained that objects of art made in the likeness of man were inadequate to represent the divine because they were far removed from the reality and truth.¹⁷

Origen, similarly, defended the aniconic Christian worship by borrowing statements previously used by pagan writers in opposition to the image cult.¹⁸ The arguments he made use of portrayed the cult of images as a 'foolish and inappropriate form of worship, one that degraded the very gods it sought to honour by likening them to base material, shaped by mere craftsmen'.¹⁹ He stated that the true images and cult-statues were those who, to the best of their ability, 'became imitators of Christ' following the paragons of virtue and contemplating God in a pure heart.²⁰

Fear of idolatry was the foundation of the arguments of Justin Martyr's *Apology*. The examination of his arguments could be summarised by the following: idolatry used anthropomorphism which was not fitting to the divine; the images were soulless and dead, made of the same component as dishonourable objects, possessing the names of demons and their forms, which were works of man's hands.²¹ Those who worship images, he says, transfer their worship from God the maker to the things he makes, and so fall into the abyss of polytheism. It is an important circumstance that these arguments, in contrast to the Old Testament prohibition, literally interpreted at least, were directed specifically against the practice of representing divinity in material form.

About this same time Tertullian in North Africa mentioned, only to condemn it fiercely, the Christian custom of drinking from glasses adorned in gold leaf with the figure of the Good Shepherd (it should be understood that these were not Eucharistic chalices but vessels made for convivial occasions, such as marriage feasts and funeral banquets).²² By this furious denunciation of a harmless religious picture Tertullian may be classified as an utter opponent of religious art. Thus, faithful to early Christian attitudes to images, he expressed unquestionable opposition and hostility to production of images and idolatry.²³ Tertullian argued that one might commit idolatry without making use of idols, because every sin is a form of idolatry.²⁴ Consequently, he regarded idolatry as an offence done to God, and those who served false gods as adulterers of truth, since all falsehood was adultery. The idolaters deceived God, by 'refusing Him and conferring to others'.²⁵

In the light of the foregoing observations it is clear that in the first centuries of the Christian era, while the Church was still under persecution, Christian apologists dealt extensively with image worship, which was idolatrous, but did not consider the legitimate Christian use of images as such.²⁶ The term image for these fathers meant two things: it denoted the humanity made in the 'image of God' and Jesus Christ as 'the

Image of the Father'.²⁷ An idol, on the contrary, was perceived to be a representation of something which does not exist, such as human with the head of a dog or a human with the body of a fish. St. Paul may have been thinking of such works of the imagination when he said that 'an idol is nothing in the world' (I Corinthians 8, 4).

A clear distinction between creators of images and worshippers of idols was made in the text from the *Egyptian Didascalia* mentioned by Murray.²⁸ Moreover, one of the earliest fathers to distinguish between an idol and an icon was Origen, who affirmed that the idol is a figure or entity, which does not exist in reality; an image on the other hand is real because it is based on the existing archetype.²⁹ Theodoret of Cyrhus³⁰ similarly insisted upon the ontological distinction between icon and idol and proclaimed that 'God forbids adoration of idols not images'.³¹ According to him, an idol is a form of something without substance, for example tritons and centaurs. An image, on the other hand is a form of subsisting things, for example, the stars, moon, and men.³²

Another text that shows how Christians distinguished between images and idol comes from the local Council of Elvira, held at the Roman city of Illiberis in southern Spain (300-306). The famous *Canon 36* deals with images in Christian churches by proclaiming that 'there should be no pictures in church building, lest what is revered and adored be painted on the walls' (*Picturas in ecclesia esse non debere, ne quod colitur et adorabitur in parietibus depingantur*).³³ It reflects a fear, so it is argued, that the introduction of images into the church would tempt Christians to not only bow down and serve them but to substitute the image for the divine, and thus to fall into idolatry.³⁴ Both Bevan³⁵ and Grigg³⁶ claimed that the canon forbade only painting of images on the church walls (frescoes). On the contrary, Harnack insisted that this regulation strictly prohibited the use of all types of pictures and representations.³⁷ Ouspensky argued that the church in Spain aimed with this rule to protect 'what was revered and worshipped' from indignity.³⁸ Analysing Canon 36 from Elvira, Murray concluded that 'it is not well known and can only be guessed what lies behind the Council's statement due to the lack of information regarding the original circumstances'.³⁹ We must recognise, however, that for whatever reason the synod of Elvira made a decision to iridate the painting of images on the church walls, it did not affect the Christians of subsequent centuries to make a use of images within the churches.

The dispute about the religious value and significance of the sacred art form and the works of man's hands proceeded among the Christians in the subsequent centuries, when the new religious-imperial art developed. There is a further anti-image strain in early Christian thought, which has its roots in the spirituality of the monastic father, laid upon the discarding of the sensible forms and images in prayer.⁴⁰ This particular form of prayer became a dominant issue in the writings of Evagrius Ponticus in the fourth

century and in the Byzantine hesychast tradition. The opposition to image worship can also be found in the writings of Eusebius and Epiphanius.⁴¹

Under the influence of Hellenistic philosophy and the Christian contemplative tradition, mainly through ascetics such as Evagrius Ponticus (345-399), an iconoclastic current developed in the fourth century, closely connected with the practice of imageless prayer. This prayer was designed to guide the ascetic in his ascending way into the union with God, teaching him to avoid all concepts and images, thus objecting to the use of anthropomorphism.⁴² The shredding of images in prayer, which Greek monks aimed to achieve, was met with resistance from the Egyptian monks. When one of the Coptic monks was urged to refrain from using an image of Christ in his worship, he immediately rejected that idea on the grounds that without the use of the image of God in prayer, he would not have anyone to adore or worship.⁴³ This story is recorded by Cassian in his *Collationes*, and is utilised by him to illustrate what he considered to be an inferior type of prayer.⁴⁴

But that being said, perhaps one should point out that the practice of imageless prayer does not necessarily entail the rejection of visible images. This is confirmed by the fact that many followers of the ascetic and hesychast tradition, such as St. John Climacus and in the fourteenth century St. Gregory Palamas, were supporters of the image cult. Gregory Palamas wrote a treatise in which he examined the second commandment in the Old Testament Decalogue and at the same time encouraged Christians to venerate images.⁴⁵

Apart from the Greek ascetics, there was a further anti-image strain in early Christian thought, as could be seen from the writings of Eusebius of Caesarea and Epiphanius of Salamis. Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, was the first author to debate the subject of images in his works, although somewhat ambiguously.⁴⁶ In his letter to Constantina, sister of the emperor Constantine, Eusebius severely rebuked the empress for requesting him to provide her with a picture of Christ. He also rejected the legitimacy of making representation of Christ on the grounds that Jesus had two natures, the divine and human. In reality, Eusebius' opposition to Christian images was based upon his heterodox teaching on the doctrine of the Person of Christ. Namely, he was linked to Arian heresy 'which lowered to created matter the super-substantial being of the Logos'.⁴⁷

In another of his works, Eusebius described without a word of criticism the act of image worship amongst the Christians.⁴⁸ He recorded in *History* that in the town of Peneas at Caesarea Philippi, Christians revered an image of Christ, which was erected as a sign of gratitude by the woman who was healed at Capernaum of an issue of blood (Mat. 9, 20-23; Mark 5, 25-34). From the portrayal of the statue given by Eusebius, it was later insinuated that this image was in fact pagan in origin, created as a tribute of the healing miracle of Asclepius.⁴⁹ In spite of all this, which was natural

in the 'panegyrist of Constantine', one might conclude that Eusebius was a resolute opponent of Christian art.⁵⁰

One of the most disputed iconoclastic episodes written in the fourth century came from a letter written by Epiphanius (315-413) to John, bishop of Jerusalem. Epiphanius himself described his act of tearing a curtain with figured representation, which stood at the entrance of a Palestinian Church.⁵¹ He also wrote, in his Testament, that rather than adorning the walls of churches with pictures of the apostles and saints, Christians should follow the commandments and tend to a virtuous life. These fragments were regarded as spurious by the iconophile fathers of the eighth and ninth centuries who claimed that the iconoclasts had confused the anti-image writings of a certain Epiphanides with those of Epiphanius, an orthodox bishop of Cyprus.⁵² This iconophile view is supported by the fact that disciples of Epiphanius, an orthodox bishop, decorated his place of burial with religious pictures.⁵³

It is known that Augustine (354-430) was skeptical of the 'appeal of the senses in religion'.⁵⁴ He referred to language and music as 'the pleasure of the ears' and mentioned the Christian religious pictures in this context, which indicated deprecation.⁵⁵ Augustine was aware that aesthetic appeals were used in the Christian religion as means to lead to divine realities, but he also knew that they could distort one's mind and soul from the apprehension of the Divine beauty.⁵⁶ He did not, however, single out the homage to pictures for condemnation; he condemned only idolatrous practices associated with images, as in the case of the Christians who linked the cult of images with the cult of tombs (*sepucrorum et picturarum adoratores*).⁵⁷

Relative depreciation of the visible images in Christian worship is also found in the writings of Asterius of Amaseia (400 A.D.). In the Homily of the rich man and Lazarus,⁵⁸ Asterius advised Christians to 'sell their robes with representations of Gospel scenes and to pay honour to the living images of Christ'.⁵⁹ This Homily was originally addressed to rich people who enjoyed wearing expensive robes decorated with the images of the saints in order to declare themselves as followers of Christianity, while on the other hand, being unmerciful and unwilling to assist poor Christians. But Asterius wrote another homily, *In Laudem Euphemiae*, in which he described appreciatively pictures he had seen of her martyrdom.⁶⁰ So Asterius, Bishop of Amaseia in Pontus, cannot be ranked decidedly on either side of the image debate.

Despite the literary objections towards image worship, the only recorded destruction of icons in the Eastern provinces of the empire occurred in the fifth century. In 488 Xenaïas (Philoxenus), Monophysite bishop of Hierapolis in Syria (d. 523), declared by the Orthodox to be Manichaean, prohibited religious pictures of the Virgin, saints and angels in his diocese.⁶¹ Still, none can discard the possibility that Monophysite hesitation in the face of a thorough-going Chalcedonian

anthropomorphism left an impression on iconoclastic thinkers (implicit in the *Peusis* or *Inquires* of Constantine V).

In the sixth century, the Latin and Greek theologians had a different understanding of the meaning and purpose of the icon. For the West a representation of a holy person or event remained a means of instruction, although the West knew also the wonder-working icon. Letters of Pope Gregory addressed to Serenius of Marseilles are a classic example about the role of images and the way they were perceived by the western authors in the sixth century.⁶² Bishop Serenius, who destroyed all images in his diocese after he found his flock paying homage to them, was criticised by the Pope shortly after the incident. Gregory advised Serenius to allow painting of images in the church as they have profound influence for the illiterate; 'paintings are books for those who do not know their letters, so that they take the place of books, especially among pagans'.⁶³ This attitude will be summarised in the *Libri Carolini* where it is stated that the Greeks place all their hope on the icons whereas the Latins venerate the saints in their relics or even in their vestments.⁶⁴

The Council of Trullo (692) officially defined for the first time, the fundamental notion and character of holy images. The same council gave reference to the dogma of the Incarnation, sustaining the use of images and ordered that biblical symbols used in the first centuries of Christianity be replaced with direct portrayal of the truth they prefigured.⁶⁵ The text of *Canon 82* stated that Christ 'should be represented in human form and not in the form of the ancient lamb'.⁶⁶ It is apparent that the Council transformed the Christian worship, purifying it from Hellenistic influence and understanding of the art of symbolism. In other words, the Council wished to authenticate the change from symbol to image.⁶⁷ From this time on, dogmatic inscriptions were added to the icons, 'as if the Church feared that the subjects represented might be misunderstood or remain unknown'.⁶⁸

Shortly after the Council of Trullo certain iconoclastic tendencies developed. They were probably due to certain practices that occurred among the aristocracy and clergy in the seventh century. In the seventh century embroidered images representing saints decorated the ceremonial robes of members of the Byzantine aristocracy. It was not unknown for priests to remove paint from icons to mix it with elements of the Eucharist, and sometimes the liturgy itself was celebrated on an icon instead of an altar.⁶⁹ It may well have been practices such as these which prompted some members of the clergy to question where the icon cult was leading.⁷⁰

One should also mention that during the time of the increased use of icons in Christianity other religions paid their attention to aniconic worship. The rise of Islam in the seventh century gave impetus to ancient iconoclastic tendencies inherent in Judeo-Christian traditions.⁷¹ A complementary political parallelism presents itself in the endorsement of

anthropomorphism by authorities of Islam, in an effort to bind religious ideology to political power.⁷² Thus the decision of the Caliph Abd-al-Malik in 699 to replace his portrait on the coinage with verses from the Qur'an is one of the first attempts by a secular power to present itself as arbiter of anti-image religious doctrine.⁷³ Furthermore, an ascetic iconoclastic movement arose in the Armenia at the end of the sixth and beginning of the seventh century in which Jewish argument against idolatry was used against the orthodox.⁷⁴ The appearance of Armenian sect of Paulicians in the Byzantine Empire coincided with the heights of the iconoclastic crisis, during the reign of Constantine V.⁷⁵

The Jewish antipathy to Christian images was often asserted in seventh, and eighth century Byzantine literature, though the archaeological evidence from the wall paintings in the synagogue of *Dura Europos* shows that prior to the sixth century more relaxed attitudes towards images prevailed both in Palestine and in the diaspora. At any rate, it is commonly accepted that Jews and Judaistic sects of Sabbatians and Novatians felt significant aversion for the cult of relics and veneration of created things.⁷⁶ Thus, there were no representations in the Jewish religion after the sixth century, and in Zoroastrianism fire became the sole icon.⁷⁷

Iconophile Attitudes towards Images

Contrary to the custom *vox populi* and the lack of clear data about appearance of icons prior to the first centuries of the Christian era, Byzantine tradition insists that images existed from the beginning of Christianity. In fact, many fathers and historians were witnesses of their use.⁷⁸ This tradition testifies that the sacred image is above all an undeniable witness to the Divine Incarnation. When God became man, God became visible and representable in the person of the Son (John I, 18). 'To deny that Christ is the only perfect Icon of the Father is to deny that He is not only perfect man, but also Perfect God'.⁷⁹ The Church tradition also confirms that the first icon of Christ appeared during his lifetime. It is the so-called image 'not made of human hands, which was sent to King Abgar of Edessa in order to cure him of leprosy. Of equal value are the traditions connected to the icons of Theotokos (Hodigitria and Eleusa) painted by the first Christian iconographer, the Apostle Luke.⁸⁰ Theodore, historian from the fifth century, mentioned that Eudocia, wife of the emperor Theodosius II, gave one of the icons of the Theotokos painted by St. Luke to her sister in law Pulcheria.⁸¹ The historical account of this episode has been desputed by James and Mango.⁸²

The art of the Catacombs preserves the memory of an early period when Christian painters shied away from portraying Christ unquestionably under the impact of the Old Testament prohibition (Exod.

20, 4). The earliest representation of the resurrection of Lazarus in the Cappella Graeca, to take only the most striking example, shows the tomb of Lazarus, the dead Lazarus, the risen Lazarus and one of his sisters, but not Jesus Christ Himself, who had performed the miracle.⁸³ 'Later painters representing this subject as well as others in the Roman Catacombs freed themselves from such scruples, but the early Christian artists mainly used symbols to express certain ideas about Christ'⁸⁴ The Lamb and the Good Shepherd, Pisces, Orpheus and the vineyard tree were all symbolising Jesus. Other representations followed later like the anchor, laurel, pigeon, the cross, Alpha and Omega symbols.⁸⁵

Written evidence also testifies that the cult of images existed in apostolic times. One such testimony was found in the Acts of John, presented in a Manichaean canon of the Apocryphal Acts called *The Journey of the Apostles*.⁸⁶ The apocryphal acts indicated that one of the disciples of St. John the Evangelist, by the name of Lycomedes venerated an icon of the saint with flowers and candles, during the saint's lifetime.⁸⁷ However, the author of the manuscript does not fail to mention how the apostle disallowed the representation of himself and the veneration of his portrait, because it could never show his true likeness.⁸⁸ For the apostle, the art of the portraiture had no real value because it only represented the exterior of the human being 'the fleshly image' and 'dead likeness of the dead'.⁸⁹

Another reference to images came from the second-century Gnostic sect of Carpocratians, who exercised a form of image worship. They placed the pictures of Christ 'among the images of the Greek philosophers like Pythagoras and Plato' and practised pagan rituals before his image.⁹⁰ Similarly, accordingly to the admittedly questionable account in the *Historiae Augusta*, the emperor Alexander Severius (208-235) positioned in his private oratory (lararium) images of Abraham and Christ before those of other renowned persons like Orpheus and Appolonius of Tyana.⁹¹

Further references to Christian religious representations in the literature of this period were some critical remarks by Tertulian on images of the Good Shepherd on chalices⁹² and Clement of Alexandria's list of symbolic subjects suitable for representation on seals.⁹³ The later passage is somewhat in contrast to Clement's hostile attitude towards images in general⁹⁴ and thus illustrates the dichotomy, which began to manifest itself in the early third century between the visibly increased practice of image worship and the opposition that this development had provoked.

The most important documentation for the existence of images in the early Church, however, came from the historian, Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea (265-340). Eusebius' testimonies are valuable since he was personally hostile to icons. He stated in his *Ecclesiastical History* that he had seen many icons of Jesus the Saviour, of Peter and Paul, painted in the earlier centuries and preserved up to his days.⁹⁵ Correspondingly, in the *Vita Constantini* Eusebius spoke of the pictorial representation of the

Good Shepherd and Daniel in the lion's cave, with which Constantine adorned the fountains in the public square of Constantinople.⁹⁶

As early as the third century a whole series of pictures drawn from the Old and New Testaments appeared in the Roman Catacombs. 'The primary purpose of these paintings was "argumentative:" it was meant to demonstrate, by way of historical reminders, the hope of resurrection and of a future life, by illustration either of suitable episodes in the biblical narrative (resurrection of Lazarus), or of the sacraments (the Baptism and Eucharist), or of Christian symbols (the Fish, the Good Shepherd)'.⁹⁷ Stevenson studied some of the most used scenes in these monuments which were the representations of the Old Testament, pictures of the Fall, patriarch Noah, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, the book of Jona, Job, Daniel and the lions, Moses, as well as pictures of orant (catacomb of Thrason), pictures of apostles and the Lord himself (catacomb of Peter and Marcellus).⁹⁸

Subjects from the history of Israel including Judges, Moses' life in Egypt, and healing miracles can hardly be found in the catacombs and sarcophagi. It is the same with the scenes representing judgment and condemnation.⁹⁹ This is most likely due to the hope that early Christians had for eternal life and salvation from death.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, there was an absence of symbols which signified suffering, such as the cross, the crucifixion and the death of Christ. There was instead emphasis on the deliverance, peace and resurrection, themes that were relevant to the era of the persecution of the Christians in the first three centuries.

In spite of the considerable resistance towards the images, by the fourth century the Cappadocian fathers mention religious images in terms of their educational value as well as acknowledging the power of images to evoke a strong reaction in the viewer. The veneration of such icons included practices used by Christians and pagans in the Emperor cult, such as placing candles, incense, and wreaths before the images.¹⁰¹ The next step was the momentous redefinition of the holy,¹⁰² for already in the fifth century icons were set up in the churches and were also the subject of serious religious reflection. The reciprocal gaze of the saint seemed especially meaningful, as by gazing in the eyes of the icon one could transmit prayers directly to the saint.¹⁰³

The end of the persecution and the Christianisation of the empire gave a fresh stimulus to Christian art. According to Hunt,¹⁰⁴ Eusebius suggested that the 'Peace of the Church' and Constantine's 'Edict of Tolerance' opened the doors to incredible activity in the creation of the new Christian images. In the beginning Constantine gave the initiative for creation of new religious figuration that was equivalent of the image-sign. He adopted the monogram Chi-Ro (monogram for Christ) after his vision of the Holy Cross in the sky. After the revelation of the Tomb from which Christ had risen from death, Constantine built the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and rescued some of the biblical places from pagan desertion,

e.g. the oak of Mamre, the city of Christ's nativity at Bethlehem.¹⁰⁵ In the first years of his rule only a few small biblical images were placed in the mausoleum of the emperor's daughter Constantina (Santa Costanza - Rome). In the later period more frescoes, portraits and holy images were present e.g. the frescoes of the palace of Trier and statues of Daniel in the Lion's Den and the Good Shepherd.¹⁰⁶ Constantine apprehended Christianity through the personality of Jesus Christ and as a result, in the imperial art the image of Christ became the most common subject. Christ was represented as a monarch who is the most powerful on earth and in heaven; He is enthroned on the seat of gold, makes the sign of benediction, and rules over death.¹⁰⁷ Every scene is inspired from the life of Christ, the apostles and the Virgin Mary. The other characteristic in these images is the presence of decoration in the actual scenes, crown and jewelry. The aureole was added to the actual figure of majesty. Most of the artists from this period used abstract ideas due to the Christological and dogmatic problems that occurred in the empire after the Peace of the Church, especially Arianism.

Secular and religious art combined references to the interconnection between Church and state, and the Byzantine emperor cult provided a model for the common image cult.¹⁰⁸ The emperor image cult, which existed among Romans since the time of Augustus, was exceptionally promoted among Christians after the Emperor Constantine. The emperor himself was raised to the level of the Supreme ruler, guided by Christ with the role to bring peace and justice into the world.¹⁰⁹ The Emperor's liturgical and administrative privileges assigned him the role of guardian over the Church.¹¹⁰

The image of the emperor was seen as a substitute for the emperor's real presence. People all over the empire worshipped the imperial image; it had a legal and religious inclination.¹¹¹ The imperial portraits also had a role in the insignia of the army and in the protocol of imperial appointments and administration. Moreover they had a recognised function as legal protectors of the ordinary citizen; *ad statuas confugere* was a traditional right of any person seeking the protection of Imperial law.¹¹² Miraculous properties were associated with the image of the emperor, as in the case of story told by John the Stylite about the miracle associated with the statue of the emperor at Edessa in 496.¹¹³ The veneration of the emperor's image consisted of a procession around the city where Christians were expected to show their loyalty to the Emperor by expressing devotion.¹¹⁴ It is interesting to note that during the iconoclastic controversy the legitimacy of the emperor image cult was never questioned.

By the end of the fourth century pictorial representation became common in the Christian Church and the shyness which was observed in the earlier three centuries was no longer present. Themes taken from the Old and the New Testament decorated church walls vividly expressing

facts and giving a meaning to the great feasts established in that era, in memory of the past.¹¹⁵ Alongside the representation of events in the Bible, images of the apostles and saints also appeared. Shrines of the Saints were decorated with many images representing the sufferings of the martyrs.¹¹⁶ The cult of the cross was also in full swing and it was considered a natural thing for Christians to make *veneration* before the sign of the Passion.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, in the second half of the fourth century, under the influence from the Cappadocian fathers and their contemporaries St. John Chrysostom and later St. Cyril of Alexandria the didactic value of visual imagery in the Church, was promoted.¹¹⁸ As a result many Church fathers replaced the old secular art unfit to instruct the new converts in religious doctrines with the new type of pictures illustrating stories from the New and Old Testament, and those representing the bravery of the martyrs.¹¹⁹ To name but one example: St. Nilus of Sinai instructed the Prefect Olympiodorus to decorate a newly built church with scenes from the Holy Scriptures,¹²⁰ and the western author Paulinus of Nola (353-431) did the same with the churches he constructed.¹²¹ Also, St. Basil the Great, a pronounced iconophile, in his *Seventeenth Discourse* on the day of celebration of the martyrdom of Balaam, called on all prominent painters to depict the martyr's victorious conflict with suffering.¹²²

Furthermore, St. Gregory of Nyssa (330-395) and St. John Chrysostom (347-407)¹²³ mentioned the power of visual images to evoke a strong reaction in the viewer'. St. Gregory of Nyssa, for instance, expresses sensitivity while looking at the depicted scene from the Old Testament, the sacrifice of Isaac.¹²⁴ The Syrian, John of Chrysostom, also in the fourth century, is said to have had a picture of St. Paul, which, 'while he read Paul's epistles he would gaze at it intently, and would hold as if it were alive, and bless it, and direct his thoughts to it, as though the apostle himself were present and could speak to him through the image'.¹²⁵ Much of the evidence relates that the development of the cult of the image in the fourth and fifth centuries was closely connected with the development of dogma in the Christian Church. In the fourth century, the Church was involved in Trinitarian controversies and dealt with many heresies concerning the true divinity of Christ. St. Athanasius, one of the leading Christian apologists of the fourth century, in the *Oratio Contra Arianos*,¹²⁶ used the parallel of the emperor and his image to describe the relation between the Father and the Son in Trinitarian theology. He declared that 'just as there are not two emperors because we speak of the emperor and emperor's image, similarly when we speak of the Father and the Son we do not state that there are two Gods, but that they share a common essence'.¹²⁷ The same parallel can be found in a passage from Epiphanius of Cyprus (315-403), and St. Basil the Great, who takes up the imperial cult for a suitable analogy for discussing the identity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Once Christological and Trinitarian dogma were established, the representation of Christ increased. However, the 'typological portrait'¹²⁸ of the Son of God was fixed gradually because of the theological implications inherent in the lack of a written description of Christ's appearance in the New Testament. The early Christian interest in the theophanic Christ rather than in the historical Jesus gave the early Christian portrait an idealised image of Him as philosopher, Good Shepherd, Orpheus and Hermes.¹²⁹ Also due to the fact that there are only two descriptions of the physical appearance of Christ in the New Testament, that of the Transfiguration and that of the Resurrection (Matt. 26, 46-49; Mark. 9, 28-36), Jesus was represented by the early Christians as having a 'polymorphous form' of a child, adult and old man.

The iconography of Christ in the fifth century settled on two different prototypes: the beardless young man with short curly hair; and the bearded figure with long straight hair.¹³⁰ The prototype of Pantocrator (Jesus Christ as bearded man with long hair, whose gaze is directed to the Christian viewer) prevailed, and the long-term dispute among the holy fathers regarding the physical characteristics of Christ was settled and the basic characteristics of Christ were reproduced through the ages in images used for devotion and worship.

The reign of Emperor Justinian (527-65) marked a turning point in art, which culminated in the 'masterpiece of art' the Church of Hagia Sophia (Holy Wisdom), decorated with fine Byzantine mosaics.¹³¹ At that time mosaics were held in much greater esteem than frescoes or paintings on wood. Among the best surviving mosaics from this period are those from Ravenna depicting the Emperor Justinian in his court. The official court art developed for the glorification of both the emperor and the Church. Meanwhile larger size figures appeared above the altar. The earliest surviving icons from that period were painted in the encaustic technique¹³² and were found in the St. Catherine monastery in Sinai. In the sixth century icons could be seen at the very sanctuary of the church, on the *templon* [a barrier separating the nave from the sacraments at the altar].¹³³

An abstract form of Christian art appeared at the end of the sixth century, which intended to point out the internal spiritual state of the depicted person. Icon meaning and function was transformed in a new direction, to 'contemplation of the higher realities'.¹³⁴ It attempted to represent the spiritual world through the material, the invisible through the visible, thus taking the character of a sacrament.¹³⁵

One of the functions of religious images was not only to satisfy the individual needs of the Christians but also to serve a wider need of society, faced by disasters, injustices and uncertainty. There were private and public icons serving in a variety of contexts, including the function of *palladia* and *apotropaia* for cities and armies in war times. The first public

icons, including the image of Christ from Camuliana, appeared in the context of the wars with Persia in the late sixth century, when they were publicly paraded.¹³⁶ The Emperor Heraclius placed the image of the Virgin at the head of his campaign against Phocas.¹³⁷ Among the military, when Constantinople was under a siege in 629, the icon of the Virgin Mary was carried around the 'walls of defence' to ward off a joint assault of Avars and Persians.¹³⁸ It was believed that the Virgin Mary appeared to the soldiers and intervened in the conflict by saving the city from destruction. After that miracle, icons of the Virgin were deployed in procession around the city and were publicly venerated by both Christians and the emperor.¹³⁹

Images were also venerated for their healing and miraculous cures, especially those icons that were 'not made by the hand of man'. In this context, prior to the period of iconoclasm, there is a proliferation of miracle stories connected with the icons. The stories where an image acts or behaves as a subject itself without any intermediary substance are not uncommon.¹⁴⁰ The most dramatic example of a miracle performed by the active role of the icon is recorded in the Miracles of St. George.¹⁴¹ According to the text, the Saracen soldier who tried to hurl a missile at the image of the saint was struck in the heart by the same weapon which miraculously returned from the icon.¹⁴²

The belief in the magical efficacy of certain representations is also worth noting. In the Miracles of St. Cosmas and Damien, the author relates the story of a diseased woman who was cured after scraping some paint from the icon of St. Cosmas and Damien.¹⁴³ Resting on this issue, it is worth noting that these legends were also used in support of the image in the eighth and ninth centuries, when opposition against the icon shook the foundation of the Byzantine Empire, taking the form of a civil war, the iconoclastic controversy. The iconophiles argued that the countenance of Christ on his own icon was an epiphany, because the first icon ever to come into existence was made miraculously.¹⁴⁴

The cult of the holy man as a living icon, which originated in the fourth century, received enormous power in sixth and seventh century Byzantium.¹⁴⁵ Gibbon attributed this cult to the decline of the Greek civilization in the Near East.¹⁴⁶ Holy men were usually mediators and authorities in clarifying spiritual matters; they were apprehended as being closer to God, and as a result became a medium capable of communicating divine powers. These holy men had the role of the exorcist in whose presence demons trembled.¹⁴⁷ Their image imprinted on clay tablets, given as a blessing to the visitors and spiritual children by the Stylites of Syria, could also eliminate famines and droughts, exorcise evil spirits and relieve maladies.¹⁴⁸ This would soon lead to the belief that images and relics are possessed of holy force, which gives them the character of a sacrament.

The mesmeric power of icons can be gauged by the fact that the attention was focused on the supernatural grace lurking within the icon and by the emotional impact that religious images had upon the spiritual state of Christians, as can be seen in the life of St. Theodore of Sykeon (d. 613), who encountered an icon of Christ at the church of St. John the Baptist which produced dew.¹⁴⁹ Similarly, Paul the Silentiary, the sixth-century poet, by gazing in the eyes of the depicted Christ on a cloth saw Him as 'preaching His immortal words'.¹⁵⁰ Moorhead, using a text from Agathias, described that 'a certain man, who stood before the representation of the Archangel, under the impression that the Archangel was present before him, trembled and was filled with fear'.¹⁵¹

An abstract form of Christian art appeared at the end of the sixth century, which intended to point out the internal spiritual state of the depicted person. Icon meaning and function was transformed in a new direction, to 'contemplation of the higher realities'.¹⁵² It attempted to represent the spiritual world through the material, the invisible through the visible, thus taking the character of a sacrament.¹⁵³ An important figure in the development of the image worship was Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite,¹⁵⁴ who discussed the implications of the view that God can only be assessed through images. While he presented this as a linguistic dilemma, he also considered the imagery commonly used of God (in the Old Testament) in more visual terms. According to Dionysius, human hierarchy is filled with visible symbols, which are superior forms of representation because they are dissimilar to God who is transcendent and indescribable.¹⁵⁵ It might be important to note that here Dionysius is not concerned with what we call icons, but rather with the much more fundamental question of knowledge of God.¹⁵⁶

Hypatius of Ephesus also employed this theory in the sixth century. From his *Miscellaneous Inquiries* addressed to Julian of Atramyntion evidence could be collected about the official attitudes of the Church and clergy towards religious images in the capital Constantinople.¹⁵⁷ He writes that material images are symbolic 'aids for the initiated, which guide them towards the intelligible beauty'.¹⁵⁸ At the same time, in the West, the didactic and educational value of images was mentioned by Gregory the Great.¹⁵⁹ The symbolic-anagogical function of the images presented 'in a light acceptable to Christians' is also present in the writings of John of Thessalonika which were cited in the proceedings of the Seventh Ecumenical Council of 787 as well as in the theological treatises of Leontius, Bishop of Neapolis, who wrote the *Life of John the Almsgiver*, Patriarch of Alexandria (7th century).

The seventh century is known to have been a difficult period for the Byzantine Church and state, due to the outbreak of the Monothelite controversy (concerning the will of Christ), Saracen invasions, and the loss

of some provinces from the Empire. In this period the icon was not only used in private devotions, but in society in general.¹⁶⁰ Icons were used to intercede for individuals and for communities. They provided personal protection to people; they healed the sick, and performed other miraculous tasks for the faithful.¹⁶¹ This attitude towards images which persisted in the proceeding centuries resulted in the fundamental crisis in Christian visual representation during the eighth and ninth centuries that defined the terms of Christianity's relationship to the painted image.¹⁶²

Conclusion

It is clear that church father always harboured the suspicion that image cult would lead simple people astray, in that they would mistake the image for what it represents. Nevertheless, they took advantage of the opportunity to make the object of religion tangible and visible to people, since the realm of theology properly was alien to many Christians. Hence, from the time of the apostles until the third century, the Christianity was forced to define its own character in a distinctive way under the pressure of Judaism on the one hand and pagan culture on the other.

By the time Christianity became the official religion of the Byzantine Empire, the increasingly coherent and sophisticated Christian art developed and the basic compositional schemes became well established.¹⁶³ Upholding the sacred theology associated with the Christian tradition, the Byzantine church developed a set of strict canons, or rules, of representation and the definition of symbols, colours, how the divine and the scriptures should be depicted. Thus, iconography was purposely regulated and structured to ensure it would honestly and accurately present the Holy Scripture and a sound interpretation of it.

Although the representations of holy figures and holy events increased in number, they led, not surprisingly, to a puritanical reaction by those who saw the practice of image worship as little removed from the anthropomorphic features of polytheistic religious cults. Such fears were, at least partially, justified. Not only the average uneducated believer but also often the churchmen themselves could not always understand the theological intricacy of the dogma.

As the role of images grew, so did the resistance against them, and the opposition to Christian art continued to make itself heard until the eve of the Iconoclastic Controversy when the theological discourse concerning icons became ever more subtle, culminating in the iconophile and iconoclastic theologies of the eighth and ninth centuries. Both iconophile and iconoclasts based their apologia on passages from Synoptic Gospels, evidence of the artistic tradition as well as *florilegia* of texts and passages from patristic fathers, some of them were mentioned in this paper.

Notes:

¹ Giovanni Domenico Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 12-13 (Florence, 1767 repr. Graz, 1960); Mansi XIII, 273CD; Daniel J. Sahas, *Icon and Logos: Sources in the Eight Century Iconoclasm* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1986).

² Lazar Puhalo, 'On Types and Icons', *Canadian Orthodox Missionary* 7 (December 1997):1-7.

³ Dino J. Geanakoplos, *Byzantium* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 42.

⁴ Charles Murrey, 'Art and the Early Church', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 28, 2 (1977): 303-345.

⁵ Viktor Nikitich Lazarev, *Istorija Vizantiskoj Zivopisi* (Moscow: Gozudarstvenoe Izdatelstvo Iskustvo, 1947), 38.

⁶ John Wright, 'The Concept of Mystery in the Hebrew Bible: An Example of the Via Negativa', *Prudentia-Conference on Negative Theology*, held at St. Paul's College, University of Sydney (22-24 May 1981), 13-35.

⁷ Charles Joseph Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, vol. V (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1896), 261-361.

⁸ Frank Dixon McCloy, 'The Sense of Artistic Form in the Mentality of the Greek Fathers', *Studia Patristica* 9 (1966): 69-74.

⁹ Murray, 'Art and the Early Church', 304-310.

¹⁰ *Epistle to Diognetus*, 2.1-10, *Patrologia Graeca* II, 1159 ff.

¹¹ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Imago Dei: Byzantine Apologia for Images* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 56.

¹² Augustus Reifercheid, *Arnobii (oratoris) Adversus Nationes (or Gentes) Libri Septem*, *Corpus Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vol. 4 (Vienna: Academy of Vienna Press, 1875), 6.

¹³ Robert Grigg, 'Aniconic Worship and the Apologetic Tradition: A Note on Canon 36 of the Council of Elvira', *Church History* 45 (1976): 428-433.

¹⁴ Thomas G. Elliott, 'Constantine and the Arian Reaction after Nicaea', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 43, 2 (1992): 169-76.

¹⁵ Hans von Campenhausen, *Tradition and Life in the Church*, trans. Arthur V. Lithedale (Philadelphia: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1968), 175.

¹⁶ Clement of Alexandria, *Paidagogos*, III, 12, 1; PG 8, 661-665.

¹⁷ Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus*, X, 98, 3.

¹⁸ Origen, *Contra Celsum* 3, 15; PG 11, 937-940.

¹⁹ Origen, *Contra Celsum* 1, 5; 7, 62; PG 11, 664-668.

²⁰ Robert Crigg, 'Aniconic Worship and the Apologetic Tradition: A Note on Canon 36 of the Council of Elvira', *Church History* 45 (1976): 428-433; 428.

²¹ Henry Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and Classical tradition: Studies in Justin, Clement, and Origen*, vol IV (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 13-192.

²² Walter Lowrie, *Art in the Early Church* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 196.

²³ Tertullian, *De Idololatria*, IV, 1, VII, 1-2; trans. Jan H. Waszink, *Tertullian: De Idololatria* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1987).

²⁴ Keneth Parry, *Depicting the Word: Byzantine Iconophile Thought of the Eight and Ninth Centuries* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 45.

²⁵ Jan H. Waszink and J.C.M. van Winden, 'Idolum and Idolatria in Tertullian', *Vigilae Christianae* 36 (1982): 103-140.

- ²⁶ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Imago Dei: Byzantine Apologia for Images*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 61.
- ²⁷ Mother C. E. Putham, 'The Image as Sacramental', *Sobornost* 5, 2 (1966):79-83.
- ²⁸ Murrey, 'Art and the Early Church', 320.
- ²⁹ Origen, *Homiliae in Psalmos*, PG 12, 353-354 and 17, 16c.
- ³⁰ Theodoret of Cyrrihus, *Quaestiones in Octateuchum*, PG 80, 263.
- ³¹ Denis Bell, 'Holy Icons: Theology in Colour', *Sacred Art Journal* 15, 1 (Spring 1994): 5-12.
- ³² Irwen M. Resnik, 'Idols and Images: Early Definitions and Controversies', *Sobornost* 7, 2 (1985): 35-52.
- ³³ Council of Elvira, *Canon* 36; Mansi II, 11; The Latin text has been subject to various interpretations.
- ³⁴ Grigg, 'Aniconic Worship and the Apologetic Tradition', 430.
- ³⁵ Edwyn Bevan, *Holy Images: An inquiry into Idolatry and Image-Worship in Ancient Paganism and in Christianity* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1940), 92.
- ³⁶ Grigg, 'Aniconic Worship and the Apologetic Tradition', 431.
- ³⁷ Adolf Harnack, ed. *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den Erster drei Jahrhunderten*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs Edition, 1906), 321.
- ³⁸ Leonid Ouspensky, *Theology of the Icon*, 2 vols. (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1992), 16.
- ³⁹ Murray, 'Art in the Early church', 318.
- ⁴⁰ Gerald E.H. Palmer et al, trans. and ed. *The Philokalia: Complete Text*, vol. I-V (London, 1979).
- ⁴¹ Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1972), 16-43.
- ⁴² George Florovsky, 'The Anthropomorphites in Egyptian desert', in his *Aspects of Church History* (Belmore: Belmont Mass, 1975), 89-96.
- ⁴³ Parry, *Depicting the Word*, 5.
- ⁴⁴ Parry, *Depicting the Word*, 6.
- ⁴⁵ Palmer, *The Philokalia*, vol. IV, 327.
- ⁴⁶ Stephen Gero, 'The True Image of Christ: Eusebius's Letter to Constantia reconsidered', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 32 (1981): 461-70.
- ⁴⁷ Nikephoros I of Constantinople, *Antirrhetici Tres Adversus Constantinum*, Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 100-534; *Antirrheticus* 12; PG 100, 561.
- ⁴⁸ Constantine-Cyril, *Vita*, VII, 8; *Constantine-Cyril: Vita* (Zagreb: Radiovi Staroslovenskog Instituta, 1960).
- ⁴⁹ Norman N. Baynes, 'Idolatry and the Early Church', *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1955), 121.
- ⁵⁰ Lowrie, *Art in the Early Church*, 11.
- ⁵¹ Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1972), 41-43.
- ⁵² Nikephoros, *Epiphanidis Confutatio* 318-25; Jean B. Pitra, ed. *Spicilegium Solesmense Complectens Sanctorum Patrum Scriptorumque Ecclesiasticorum Anecdota Hactenus Opera*, vol. IV (Paris, 1852-8), 292-380; John of Damascus; *Oration* I, 25; Kot. 3, 116-117; Bonifatius Kotter, ed. *Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1975).
- ⁵³ Gilbert Dagron, 'Holy Image and Likeness', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45 (1991): 23-33
- ⁵⁴ Augustine, *Confessions* X, 33, 7; 49, 50.

⁵⁵ Ernst Kitzinger, 'Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm', *Art of Byzantium and Medieval West* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1976), 157-207.

⁵⁶ Augustine, *Confession*, X, 34&53: Augustine, *Confessions* (New York: Penguin Books, 1961), 241, 252.

⁵⁷ It is from Augustine that we first hear in unambiguous terms of Christians worshipping images (Augustine, *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae* I, 34; PL 32, 1342); see also Murray, 'Art in the Early Church', 325.

⁵⁸ Cornelis Datema, ed. *Asterius of Amaseia: Homilies I-XIV* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971); see also PG 40, 168B.

⁵⁹ Asterius of Amaseia, *Homily of the Rich Man and Lazarus*, PG 11, 169B.

⁶⁰ Asterius of Amaseia, *St. Euphemia Martyrdom*, PG 11, 308A.

⁶¹ Paul J. Aleksander, *The Patriarch Nikephoros of Constantinople: Ecclesiastical Policy and Image Worship in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 44.

⁶² Pope Gregory I, *Letter to Serenus of Marseilles-599; Epistulae* 9, 208

⁶³ John Moorhad, 'Byzantine Iconoclasm as a Problem in Art History', *Parergon* 4 (1986): 1-19.

⁶⁴ Leonid Ouspensky, and Vladimir Lossky, *Theology of the Icon*, 2 vols. (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1992), 169.

⁶⁵ Leonid Ouspensky, 'Icon and Art', *Christian Spirituality* 16 (1985): 382-393, 397.

⁶⁶ Ouspensky, *Theology of the Icon*, 69.

⁶⁷ Leonid Ouspensky, and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), 29.

⁶⁸ Panayotis A. Mischelis, 'Byzantine Art as Religious and Didactic Art', *paper read at the 13th International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, held at Oxford (September, 1966), 151.

⁶⁹ Panayotis A. Mischelis, 'Byzantine Art as Religious and Didactic Art', 340.

⁷⁰ Parry, *Depicting the Word*, 8.

⁷¹ Gerald R. Hawting, *The Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam: From Polemic to History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁷² John Meyendorff, 'Byzantine Views on Islam', *Dumbarton Oaks Paper* 18 (1964): 115-132.

⁷³ Edward J. Martin, *A History of The Iconoclastic Controversy* (London: The Macmillan Co., 1930), 23.

⁷⁴ Paul J. Alexander, 'An Ascetic Sect of Iconoclast in Seventh Century Armenia', *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honour of Albert Matthias Friend* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 151-160.

⁷⁵ Stephen Gero, 'Notes on Byzantine Iconoclasm in the Eighth Century', *Byzantion* 44, 1-2 (1974): 23-42, 34-5.

⁷⁶ Aleksander Akexakis, 'The Dialogue of the Monk and Recluse Moschos Concerning the Holy Icons, An Early Iconophile Text', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 52 (1998): 187-224.

⁷⁷ Parry, *Depicting the Word*, 9.

⁷⁸ Leonid Ouspensky, 'Icon and Art', *Christian Spirituality* 16 (1985): 382-393.

⁷⁹ George Turpa, 'Icons: Aids in Spiritual Struggle', *Sacred Art Journal* 5 (January / March, 1984): 39-58

⁸⁰ Ouspensky, *Theology of the Icon*, 38.

⁸¹ Nikodim Kondakov, *History of Theotokos*, vol. II (Petrograd 1915), 154.

⁸² Cyril Mango, 'The origins of the Blachernai shrine at Constantinople', *Acta XIII Congressus Internationalis Archaeologicae Christianae*, vol. II (Vatican City, 1998), 61-76; Liz James, 'The Empress and the Virgin in early Byzantium: Piety, Authority and Devotion', *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 145-52.

⁸³ Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephoros*, 2.

⁸⁴ Alexander Schmemmann, 'Byzantium, Iconoclasm and the Monks', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 3, 3 (1959): 18-34.

⁸⁵ James Stevenson, *The Catacombs* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978); also Carl M. Kaufmann, *Handbuch der Christlichen Archaeologie* (Paderborn: University of Toronto Libraries, 1922), 113-41.

⁸⁶ Ouspensky, 'Icon and Art', 385

⁸⁷ Andei Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A Study of its Origin* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1968), 85-86.

⁸⁸ Von Campenhausen, *Tradition and life in the church*, 182.

⁸⁹ Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, 67.

⁹⁰ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* IV, 1, 22; K. Lake, and J.E.L. Oulton, *Eusebius: Ecclesiastical History* trans. (London: Heineman Press, 1949-1953).

⁹¹ Aelius Lampridius (attr.), *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, ed. and trans. Magie David, Loeb Classical Library (New York: GP Putnam's Sons, 1924), 29.

⁹² Hugo Koch, *Die altchristliche Bilderfrage nach den Literarischen Quellen* (Goettingen, 1917), 9f.

⁹³ Ibid. 14ff; Clement of Alexandria makes another reference to images in *Stromateis*, VII, 11; PG 9, 488; trans., William Wilson, *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A. D. 325*, vol. XII (New York: T. & T. Clark, 1869), 451.

⁹⁴ Clement of Alexandria, *Paidagogos* III, 12, 1; PG 8, 661-665.

⁹⁵ *Ecclesiastical History*, VII, 18; PG 20, 690.

⁹⁶ Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 3, 48f; see also Murray, 'Art and the Early Church', 330.

⁹⁷ Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, 1.

⁹⁸ Stevenson, *The Catacombs*, 113-141.

⁹⁹ Gertud Schiller, *Iconography of the Christian Art*, vol. I (New York: Graphic Society, 1972), 3-7.

¹⁰⁰ Paul V.C. Baur, *The Excavation at Dura-Europos, Fifth Session* (New Haven, 1934), 254-288.

¹⁰¹ Leslie Barnard, *The Graeco-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), 61-63.

¹⁰² Prior to the fourth century, Christianity was conditioned by a strictly spiritualised and transcendental understanding of God and holiness in general, which rejected totally not only any image of Christ, but all 'material' and sensible intermediaries, and, with them, all sacred images. In addition, in the first centuries of the Christian era, while the Church was still under persecution, Christian apologists maintained that only a limited number of symbols or objects are invested with the idea of the holy i.e. the Cross, the Eucharist and the Church building. Also, the term image (*eijkwvn*) according to these fathers had two meanings: it denoted the humanity created in the 'image of God' and Jesus Christ as 'the Image of the Father.'

¹⁰³ Leslie W. Barnard, *The Graeco-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974), 61-63; see also Ernest Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images before Iconoclasm', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954): 87-150.

¹⁰⁴ Edward D. Hunt, 'Constantine and Jerusalem', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997): 405.

¹⁰⁵ Edward D. Hunt, 407.

¹⁰⁶ Ioli Despina Kalavrezou, 'Image of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary Became Mater Theou', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 165-173.

¹⁰⁷ Schiler, *Iconography of the Christian Art*, 9.

¹⁰⁸ Margaret E. Kenna, 'Icons in Theory and Practice: an Orthodox Christian Example', *History of Religions* 24, 4 (1985): 344-359.

¹⁰⁹ Leslie W. Barnard, 'The Emperor Cult and the Origins of the Iconoclastic Controversy', *Byzantion* 43 (1973): 13-29; see also Helmut Koester, *History, Culture And Religion of the Hellenistic Age*, vol.1, Fortress Press (Philadelphia: de Gruyter, 1982), 32-36.

¹¹⁰ Barnard, 'The Emperor Cult', 26

¹¹¹ Besancon, *The Forbidden Image*, 110.

¹¹² Barnard, 'The Emperor Cult', 25.

¹¹³ John Wortley, 'Iconoclasm and Leipsanoclasm: Leo III, Constantine V and the Relics', *Byzantinische Forschungen* 8 (1982): 243-279.

¹¹⁴ Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images before Iconoclasm', 87-150

¹¹⁵ H.C. Gotsis, *The Secret World of the Byzantine Icons* (in Greek), 2 vols. (Athens: Apostolic Diaconate, 1971, 1973), 1:11

¹¹⁶ Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 36.

¹¹⁷ For Asterius of Amaseia, see Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images before Iconoclasm', 90.

¹¹⁸ Paul Michelis, 'Byzantine Art as Religious and Didactic Art', *paper read at the 13th International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, held at Oxford (September, 1966), 150.

¹¹⁹ According to Lessley Brubaker, before 680, in the Orthodox east, the sacred portraits – what we now usually call icons – remained largely commemorative, honouring the memory of the saint portrayed or, in the case of *ex voto* imagery, thanking the saint himself or herself for interceding with Christ on the donor's behalf; Leslie Brubaker, 'Icons before Iconoclasm?', *Morfologie sociali e culturali in europa fra tarda antichità e altomedioevo*, Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo 45 (Spoleto, 1998), 1215-54; Leslie Brubaker, 'Representation c 800: Arab, Byzantine, Carolingian', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 19 (2009): 37-55.

¹²⁰ Nilus of Sinai, *Epistulae*, PG 79, 577.

¹²¹ Ouspensky, *Theology of the Icon*, 59.

¹²² Basil the Great, *Seventeenth Discourse: Commentarium in Isaiam Prophetam* I; PG 30, 132 A.

¹²³ Parry, *Depicting the Word*, 1.

¹²⁴ Gregory of Nyssa; *On Divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit*, PG 46, 572C

¹²⁵ John of Damascus, *Oration I*; PG 94, 1277C

¹²⁶ Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* 3, 5; PG 26, 332A; See also John of Damascus, *Oration III*, 114, Kot. 3, 191

¹²⁷ John of Damascus, *Oration III*, 114; Kot. 3, 191

¹²⁸ In one's view the 'typological portrait' satisfies the theological implications inherent in the lack of a written description of Christ (it is cultural influence

rather than historical influence which dictated how Christ and the apostles should be depicted). The early Christian portrait does not seek to capture the exact likeness of the person depicted. Although it may be based initially upon the individual features of an historical person and it is essentially an idealised image; see Parry, *Depicting the Word*, p. 6; and Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, p. 62-66.

¹²⁹ Alain Besancon, *The Forbidden Image*, trans. Jane M. Todd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 110.

¹³⁰ Grabar, *Byzantine Iconoclasm*, 33-38.

¹³¹ Cyril Mango, 'The Apse Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 19 (1965):113ff.

¹³² Guillem Ramos-Poquí, *The Technique of Icon Painting*, (Wellwood: Search Press Ltd., 1990), 7.

¹³³ Thomas F. Mathews, *The Art of Byzantium: Between Antiquity and the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 43-71.

¹³⁴ Grabar, *Byzantine Iconoclasm*, 64.

¹³⁵ Kitzinger, 'Byzantine Art', 45.

¹³⁶ Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 114-115.

¹³⁷ Barnard, *The Graeco-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, 55.

¹³⁸ Avril Cameron, 'Images of Authority: Elites and Icons in Late Sixth-Century Byzantium', *Past & Present* 84 (1979): 3-35.

¹³⁹ Peter Charanis, 'Social, Economic and Political life in the Byzantine Empire', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 8 (1962-63): 53-70.

¹⁴⁰ Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images before Iconoclasm', 107.

¹⁴¹ Leslie Brubaker has raised important questions over miracle stories such as these in the context of Iconoclasm and Iconophile views; See Leslie Brubaker, 'Icons before Iconoclasm?', *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*, 45 (1998): 1215-54.

¹⁴² Alexsander Kazhdan, and Henry Maguire, 'Byzantine Hagiographical Texts as Sources on Art', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45 (1999): 1-22.

¹⁴³ *Miracles of St. Cosmas and Damien*; Mansi III, 68.

¹⁴⁴ George Galavaris, 'The Icon in the Life of the Church', in *Iconography of Religions* 24, 8, Institute of Religious Iconography (Leiden: State University Groningen, 1981), 2.

¹⁴⁵ Peter Brown, 'A Dark-Age Crisis: Aspects of the Iconoclastic Controversy', *English Historical review* 346 (1973): 1-34.

¹⁴⁶ Edward Gibbon and William G. Smith, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1963), 37.

¹⁴⁷ Peter Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Religious Studies* 59 (1971): 80-101.

¹⁴⁸ Theodore of Sykeon, *Vita*, in *Three Byzantine Saints: Contemporary Biographies of St. Daniel the Stylite, St. Theodore of Sykeon, and St. John the Almsgiver*, ed. Elizabeth Dawes, and Norman H. Baynes (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1977), 155.

¹⁴⁹ Theodore of Sykeon, *Vita*, in Elizabeth Dawes and Norman Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints: Contemporary Biographies* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1977), part. 8.

¹⁵⁰ Robert S. Nelson, 'The Discourse of Icons, Then and Now', *Art History* 12 (1989): 144-157.

- ¹⁵¹ John Moorhead, 'Byzantine Iconoclasm as a Problem in Art History', *Parergon* 4 (1986): 1-19.
- ¹⁵² Grabar, *Byzantine Iconoclasm*, 64.
- ¹⁵³ Kitzinger, 'Byzantine Art', 45.
- ¹⁵⁴ Leslie W. Barnard, 'The Bible in the Iconoclastic Controversy', *Theologische Zeitschrift* 32 (1976): 78-84.
- ¹⁵⁵ Pseudo Dionysius the Areopagite, *De Caelesti Hierarchia*, 140D; Colm Luibheid, and Paul Rorem, trans. *Dionysius the Areopagite: The Complete Works*, Classics of Western Spirituality Series (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 149.
- ¹⁵⁶ B. Teitelbaum, 'The Knowledge of God', *Eirenikon* 3, 1 (Fall 1982): 40-47.
- ¹⁵⁷ Paul J. Alexander 'Hypatius of Ephesus: A Note on the Image Worship in the Sixth Century', *Harvard Theological Review* 45 (1952): 177-84.
- ¹⁵⁸ Alexander "Hypatius of Ephesus", 180.
- ¹⁵⁹ Lessly Brubaker and John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, C.680-850: A History* (Cambridge, 2011), 45.
- ¹⁶⁰ Cameron, 'The Language of Images', 1-42.
- ¹⁶¹ Lessly Brubaker and Robert Ousterhout, ed. *The Sacred Images East and West*, Illinois Byzantine Studies IV (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 6.
- ¹⁶² Charles Barber, *Figure and Likeness: On the Limits of Representation in Byzantine Iconoclasm* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 13-37.
- ¹⁶³ Puhalo, 'On Types and Icons', 3-6.

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