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THE BAČKOVO OSSUARY FRESCOES OF 1074-83

A Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National University.

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The entire thesis is the result of the candidate's own original work.
ABSTRACT

The scarcity of dated fresco cycles from the second half of the eleventh century gives the Bacckoovo murals a place of outstanding significance in the history of Byzantine monumental decorations. Also the Bacckoovo frescoes, as decorations for a monastic ossuary, preserve a very rare type of painting, with such scenes as the "Vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones" encountered for the first time in Byzantine painting on a monumental scale.

Through a close study of the literary sources and inscriptions, a dating of 1074-1083 is established for the first and principle layer of frescoes on both levels of the ossuary. A detailed iconographic analysis of the decorations confirms this dating in the final third of the eleventh century. Likewise certain stylistic parallels, such as with the Psalter and New Testament, Dumbarton Oaks Ms. 3 (olim Pantocrator Cod.49) dated 1084, the fresco cycles of Ag. Chrysostom in Koutsovedi, some of the frescoes at Hosios Lukas, frescoes at Sakli Kilise in Cappadocia and at Ateni in Georgia, all point to this late eleventh century dating for Bacckoovo.

In the light of this redating of the Bacckoovo frescoes, certain major assumptions concerning the nature of the development of Byzantine iconography have to be re-examined. This includes a re-evaluation of the evidence for the emergence of the Melismos composition. There are also some peculiarities of the Bacckoovo iconographic programme which reflect the interests of the Armenian Chalcedonite and Georgian Churches.
Apart from the 1074-83 frescoes, there are also three other relatively minor layers of frescoes from the twelfth to the fourteenth century.
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Preface

In a series of articles Professor André Grabar laid the foundation for any subsequent study of the frescoes of the Bačkovo ossuary. However, in the more than fifty years which have elapsed since his publications a considerable amount of new comparative material has come to light which calls for a fresh re-assessment of the Bačkovo frescoes.

This essay is intended as a detailed analysis of the Bačkovo ossuary murals viewed within their historical and artistic context. The dating of 1074-1083, for the principle layer of decorations, was initially arrived at through an analysis of literary sources and inscriptions and is corroborated by a detailed iconographic analysis and through some stylistic parallels. In the dating and interpretation of the iconography, the conclusions presented here are at variance with those advanced by Grabar and other scholars. In the light of these conclusions, certain major assumptions concerning the development of Middle Byzantine iconography are re-examined. Also a number of saints at Bačkovo are identified for the first time, several new inscriptions are deciphered and new readings are suggested for some inscriptions already published. For the first time an accurate account is offered for the various periods of decoration.

Bačkovo and the Pakurianoi in the last two decades have attracted a considerable number of scholars. Questions concerning the Pakurianoi, their nationality, the Bačkovo typicon and monastery have been the subject of dissertations.
by P.M. Muradyan (1966) and V.A. Arutyunova (1968) and of major publications by Litavrin, Šanidze and Lemerle. While the frescoes of the Bačkovo ossuary have served as the subject for monographs by Vasiliev (1965) and Bakalova (1977). The latter reached me at a rather late stage in the preparation of this essay, but apart from the valuable reproductions and the diagramatic drawings of the frescoes, it contains little new information not already found in Bakalova's earlier articles. On virtually all the main issues of dating, artistic context, function and origins of the frescoes there is little agreement between this essay and Bakalova's book. Similarly, in the identification of saints and the reading of inscriptions there are numerous differences. In the few instances where Bakalova's opinion differs with that of Grabar and is accepted in this essay, it is acknowledged in the text and footnotes, however on numerous minor points where an alternative reading or identification is proposed, Bakalova's suggestions are not always fully discussed.

I thank Professor R. de Bray for his scrupulous and exacting supervision. I also express my gratitude to Dr. R. Cormack for originally suggesting the topic and whose assistance helped me to avoid many errors. Likewise I thank Professor C. Mango, Professor I. Ševčenko, Professor A. Grabar and Mr. D. Winfield who devoted much of their valuable time in sorting out my numerous difficulties and whose stimulating observations helped clarify a number of problems. I thank Dr. A. Moffatt for her assistance and continuous support. I thank Professor D.M. Lang and
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Finally I thank the Australian National University and especially the Faculty of Arts for its generous assistance and patience in seeing through this project.

Unfortunately the book by T.A. Izmajlova, "Армянская миниатюра XI века", Moscow 1979, reached me too late to be incorporated into the text. Her conclusions concerning the nature of Armenian chalcedonite illumination of the second half of the eleventh century, does corroborate my proposed dating for the Bačkovo ossuary frescoes.
CHAPTER ONE
THE BAČKOVO MONASTERY

The river Čepelarska traces a pass through the Rhodope mountains to the city of Plovdiv (Philippopolis). The pass was frequently used in the Byzantine-Bulgarian wars, it was the path of the crusaders and the route taken by the fourth crusade on their way to sack Constantinople. About twenty kilometers from Philippopolis is the narrowest part of this pass near the settlement of Asenovgrad (Stanimaka). At this point, on an outcrop of rock some hundred and thirty metres above the valley floor is the Petritzos or Asen's fortress (Asenovata krepost') with its church of the Panagia. The early history of the Byzantine occupation of the site is uncertain. Coins have been found here from the period of John Tzimisces, and it is quite possible that the site had some form of fortification before the victories of Basil II and the subsequent Byzantine occupation. Under the Comnenes it served as a military outpost, a check on threats to the Imperial capital from the west. In the mid-fourteenth century it was re-captured by the Bulgarians under tsar Ivan Alexander and shortly afterwards lost to the Turks.

The church of "ἡ Παναγία τῆς Πετριτζήτης" was badly damaged in the earthquake of 1904. Its foundation and history are obscure. Grabar, basing himself on the architecture and the very fragmentary fresco remains,
suggested a twelfth-thirteenth century date. Other scholars have more cautiously attributed the church to the period of Byzantine domination of Bulgaria, or the period of the Comnenes (1081-1185). For the purposes of our study it is important to establish the terminus post quem for this church and to determine its relationship to the Bačkovo monastery. The Bačkovo typicon does mention a fortress of Petritzos as a donation to the monastery. It is described as a fortress with its contents and buildings.

It is inconceivable that this detailed inventory would omit a major building such as the Panagia church. The same inventory mentions other fortifications and always specifies any significant buildings, churches and monasteries. It appears that the Panagia church at Petritzos was not in existence in 1083 when the Bačkovo monastery typicon was confirmed. The church was built after this date and there is no reason why we should suspect the existence of a church or monastery at this site at an earlier date.

Following the river bed, eight kilometers from the Asen's fortress lies the monastery of the Theotokos of Petritzos (present day Bačkovo monastery). Despite the claims of Gregory Pakurianos, the author of the Bačkovo typicon, that he founded and built the monastery and had its typicon confirmed in 1083, there is evidence for the existence of a monastery of Petritzos at a considerably earlier period. There has been no comprehensive archaeological investigation of the site to determine whether there existed an earlier monastery on this spot. Within the monastic enclosure no buildings remain that can be
dated earlier than the twelfth-thirteenth centuries and most belong to the seventeenth-nineteenth centuries. The archaeological excavations which have taken place were somewhat haphazard and yielded uncertain results; even these have been poorly published.

In the Georgian monastery of Gelati, a Georgian manuscript (MS Georg 23), has an inscription stating that it was translated from the Greek by one Arsenios working on the instructions of David, a monk from Petritzos. There is a mention of the date January, fifth indiction 6538 (1030 A.D.). This raises the possibility of the Bačkovo monastery existing some 50 years before Pakurianos. Anna Comnena mentions Petritzos as belonging to the Empress Maria, who was the daughter of the Georgian king Bagrat IV (1027-72). Petritzos in this case refers to the fortress rather than to the area of Ivanovo where the monastery was built, however this again suggests an early Georgian presence in the area.

John Petritzos (Ioannis Petritzi) is by far the most important figure to emerge from the Bačkovo monastery. A copious translator and the author of lengthy commentaries on Proclus and Nemesius of Emesa, he played a major role in determining the future of neo-Platonic thought in Georgian philosophy. Kekelidze discusses him as the father of Georgian philosophy and the creator of a Georgian philosophical lexicon. Despite this, there is little certainty in his biographical details, confusion as to which works can be attributed to him and little agreement on who were his distinguished pupils. His date and place of birth are unknown. A late tradition suggests the date 1055,
but an earlier date seems likely. He received his education in Constantinople possibly under Michael Psellos and was a pupil and close associate of John Italos. He is known to have collaborated with Italos in at least one instance. About the year 1076 he returned to Georgia. John Petritzos in his writings complains about persecution by the Greeks for his philosophical studies. Fearing for his life he turned to the Georgians for help, but they met him with hostility unaware of their own ignorance. Finally he found a patron in the Georgian king, David the Builder (1089-1125), and spent the last years of his life at King David's philosophical academy at the Gelati monastery dying in c.1125.

John Petritzos at some time during his career spent several years at the Petritzos monastery, writing and possibly teaching. It was from here that he received his name Petritsi. Marr, referring to Pakurianos' typicon, noted that there is a mention of a seminary (Typicon:31) and from this ingeniously concluded that in 1083 John Petritzos entered the seminary and converted it into a philosophical academy (presumably a precursor of that at Gelati). This suggestion has gained acceptance in literature devoted to John Petritzos and has become a confirmed detail in the philosopher's biography. However, two serious objections must be raised to it. Firstly, the seminary described in Gregory's typicon was built at a monastery of Saint Nicholas. It was intended for six beardless youths who would be instructed by a monastic elder (γηραιόν τινα των ἱερέων) in the scriptures and who would also celebrate the liturgy in the church of Saint
Nicholas. Only after the pupils had grown full beards and were selected for priesthood were they to be permitted to enter the Băčkovo monastery. John Petritzos would seem hardly the ideal candidate for the instructor (a man of 28 from Constantinople) and the envisaged pupils are unlikely material for neo-Platonic philosophers. Surely the site of the only safely attributed academy, that of King David, lay at the Gelati monastery. The second objection to Marr's thesis is the likelihood of the admission of John Petritzos into the monastery under Gregory Pakurianos. John Petritzos' close associate and possibly his teacher, John Italos, would at that time have just been banished from Constantinople by a church synod early in 1082. The trial of the synod was in two parts: the first directed against John Italos, the second against his pupils. The surviving act dealing with the trial (Athos, Dionysiou cod.120 f.711) concludes by forbidding any person to harbour or communicate with Italos or any of his pupils. There is also a reference that the trial of Italos' pupils was held in the presence of Εὐθυμίου τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου πατριάρχου Ἡροδοσολύμων. Alexios Comnenos had participated personally in the first trial dealing with Italos. It is uncertain what provoked the emperor: whether it was doctrinal error and the neo-Platonic tendencies which were interpreted as undermining Orthodoxy, or the philosopher's well known sympathies for his patrons, the Ducas family. In either case it seems unlikely that the faithful servant of Alexios, Gregory Pakurianos, who was then begging for special privileges for his monastery, would have dared to annoy the emperor by installing a disciple of his enemy and by encouraging a neo-Platonic
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academy. Patriarch Euthymius of Jerusalem, who took part in the trial of the pupils of Italos in Constantinople was later to confirm the typicon of Gregory Pakurianos and stayed as the latter's guest in Philippopolis. Again it is difficult to believe that John Petritzos could have been working at the Bačkovo monastery. It appears unlikely that he would have been able to enter the monastery during the lifetime of Gregory Pakurianos (d.1086) and even during the reign of the monastery's protector and benefactor Alexios Comnenos (d.1118). This would place the philosopher's stay at Bačkovo rather late in his career. In that case it is difficult to see how he could have collaborated with Italos under the name of John Petritzos, before having stayed at the monastery after which he was named.

There is an alternative reconstruction of John Petritzos' career. He left Constantinople in 1076, possibly in the wake of pressure directed against his teacher John Italos. This culminated in Italos' first condemnation by the synod in Constantinople in 1076/1077 over the nine theses reputed to be taken from his teachings. John Petritzos then spent the next several years at the Petritzos monastery probably engaged in translations from Greek into Georgian as had been done at the time of his compatriot David of Petritzos, who commissioned a manuscript a generation earlier. With the monastery falling into the hands of Gregory Pakurianos, some time before 1083, John was forced to flee. He suffered the same fate as John Italos, one of persecution by the Byzantine church establishment, the Comnenes and their loyal Georgian servants. This then would be the period of persecution that he complains of in his writings.
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The complete absence of any reference to John Petritzos in the library and archives of the Bačkovo monastery (which date no earlier than the period of the Pakurianoi) does not contradict this reconstruction.

The monastery of Petritzos was probably founded shortly after the annexation of the area to the East Roman Empire under Basil II in 1018. Some time before 1083 it was refounded by Gregory Pakurianos. It was at this time that it was substantially added to or even rebuilt and richly endowed to make it one of the richest monasteries in Thrace. Throughout his typicon Gregory goes to great lengths to stress that the monastery was newly built, a fulfilment of his life-long wish, and founded by him and no-one else. On the question of his own nationality and the nationality of the monastery, Gregory is equally emphatic. He is a Georgian from the noble race of Georgians. The monastery, too, is Georgian and intended for Georgian monks knowing the Georgian language. Greeks were not to be admitted into this Georgian monastery. Petit refers to Gregory as "patriote ardent, presque fanatique". It certainly appears to be a case of "the ktitor doth protest too much". The monastery was probably founded before Gregory and it is most unlikely that he was a Georgian but rather an Armenian chalcedonite.

Both points raise the question of why did Gregory re-establish this monastery. The selection of an area within Bulgaria as the site for a Georgian monastery may seem somewhat unusual. Bulgaria would appear to have lacked the attractions of the Holy Land and Athos, the
common choice for the setting up of monasteries outside the national boundaries. Still, founding of Georgian and Armenian monasteries outside Georgia is not without precedent. From the late tenth century to the early twelfth century there was a major expansion in Georgian monasteries, with important centres established at Athos, Syria, Jerusalem, Sinai and Constantinople. Within this context there is nothing extraordinary in the establishing of a monastery in an area that had been annexed by the Byzantine empire. Georgian monasticism outside Georgia traditionally played a leading role in the Georgian church. Up to the tenth century it was dominated by the centres in Palestine-Jerusalem, with the earliest Georgian liturgy and traditions adopted from there. In the late tenth century and the early eleventh century the emphasis swiftly changed to Iviron on Athos. Within a relatively short period, the Georgian Athonites were responsible for a major hellenization of Georgian orthodoxy. Saints Euthymios (c.955-1028), George (1009-65) and later Ephraim (c.1055-1130) translated from Greek into Georgian a huge corpus of ecclesiastical literature. All three received their education in Byzantium and did much to immerse the Georgian church in the Athonite and Constantinopolitan tradition. The Petritzos monastery continued and developed this process of hellenization with further translations and commentaries. John Petritzos could be termed an "over-hellenizer" in the eyes of the Byzantine church. He was no longer content to restrict himself to the writings of the Church Fathers, but turned to the writings of the pagan philosophers. Following the path of Psellos and Italos, he embarked upon discussions
which appeared to the Byzantine authorities to be outside the bounds of orthodoxy. Although it is now clear that he was not the first Georgian to interest himself in the writings of such neo-Platonists as Proclus, he undoubtedly played the leading role in introducing neo-Platonism into Georgian mediaeval thought. The unpopularity of John Petritzos with the Byzantine authorities may have come to a climax shortly after Alexios Comnenos seized power in 1081. It was at this time that Alexios' claim to the throne was challenged in the Balkans by a Ducas faction headed by a pretender claiming to be Michael VII. The rebels drew their support from the Bulgarians, Serbs and Ragusans.

It was about this time that Gregory Pakurianos probably refounded the Bačkovo monastery and tried to conceal its past. The new typicon for the monastery was taken directly from Constantinople, adopted with a few minor alterations from the typicon of the Greek monastery of All-Saints (μνημείο τοῦ Παναγίου) in the Imperial capital. In the history of Georgian monastic typica, Gregory's occupies an important place. The earliest Georgian typica followed the Palestinian model. The Athos typicon of Iviron represented a major reform in accordance with the Constantinopolitan tradition by the Georgian abbot George the Hagiorite. The Bačkovo typicon, too, is a direct borrowing from Constantinople. However, influences from Iviron are also likely: the Pakurianoi had visited Iviron prior to the refounding of the Bačkovo monastery and later Bačkovo monks retained their contacts with Athos, at times visiting Iviron and sending aid to it. Bačkovo under Pakurianos
faithfully adhered to the tradition of conservative hellenization as did Iviron. Gregory Pakurianos, as an Armenian chalcedonite, whose relatives included Armenian heretics\textsuperscript{45}, would have strictly embraced orthodoxy as interpreted by the Byzantine church in order to avoid any possible suspicion of heresy. As one of the people instrumental in Alexios' seizure of power, and richly rewarded for his services with gifts and the title of Great Domestic\textsuperscript{46}, he could be seen as a loyal supporter of the new emperor. The refounding of the Bačkovo monastery in a troubled area, near a strategic fortress, by a reliable soldier, at a time when the new emperor was consolidating his somewhat shaky grip on the throne, may explain the exceptional freedoms and privileges which the emperor granted to this monastery\textsuperscript{47}.

From Gregory's typicon it is not difficult to see the source from which would be drawn the fifty monks of the monastery. In the introduction to the typicon he describes the composition of the monastery; "we being Iberians and having a thoroughly war-like way of life and having experienced the roughness of life, (are now) drawn into this monastery" isolated from towns and all things inappropriate to monks\textsuperscript{48}. Several times in his typicon Gregory mentions a considerable number of people of his own nationality in his army. For the interests of the Empire he was prepared to spill his own blood, that of his relatives and of his people\textsuperscript{49}. Once he was captured together with a number of relatives who served in the Byzantine army\textsuperscript{50}. Pakurianos, the Great Domestic of the West envisaged his monastery as a place for the retirement of his own Armenian chalcedonites,
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and possibly also for Georgians who served in the Byzantine army under his command. The presence of large numbers of Armenians and to a lesser extent of Georgians in the Byzantine armies of the late eleventh century is well attested in the historical sources. One could expect a fair proportion of them to be chalcedonites and for them an eventual return to a "homeland", now occupied by the Seljuks, would be more difficult. The Bačkovo monastery under Pakurianos was planned to be self-sufficient and independent of all secular and ecclesiastical authority. Vast estates donated by the Pakurianoi were to guarantee the monastery's economic self-sufficiency, while the seminary would supply it with young, suitably trained priests so that it would not have to depend upon other centres. Alexios ensured that the monastery would not be interfered with by outside authorities and safeguards were invented to protect it from the claims of relatives of the Pakurianoi. A separate chapter of the typicon forbade Greeks from becoming monks at the monastery so that it could not be subsequently taken over by them, a fate common to many Georgian monasteries.

In 1905 Marr made a cautious suggestion that in view of the large number of Bogomils and Paulicians in the area of Philippopolis, the question arises whether the Bačkovo monastery may have been given the task of opposing them, for which it received special privileges. He pointed out the existence of a precedent for Armenian chalcedonites being employed to combat the anti-chalcedonites. There also exists a twelfth century Georgian translation, made at the Petritzos monastery, of Euthymius Zigabenos'
anti-heretical treatise. Nikolaev, following in Marr's footsteps, discussed the Bačkovo monastery as an outpost against heretics. Muradyan, and Bakalova, assume that this role for the monastery is an undisputed fact. However, there has been no attempt made to suggest the manner in which the Bačkovo monastery was to be used to combat the heresy. It does not appear likely that the monastery was to take part in any missionary activity. In the typicon there is no mention of such a function or of any such facilities. In the accounts of Alexios Comnenos' attempted eradication of heresy at Philippopolis, there is no mention of the Bačkovo monastery participating in any such way. The typicon goes to considerable lengths to forbid monks to go outside the walls of the monastery and even for the purchase of clothes they were discouraged from travelling to villages. There is little parallel between Armenian chalcedonites converting their fellow Armenian anti-chalcedonites, and Armenian and Georgian orthodox monks being sent out to convert the Paulicians and Bogomils in Bulgaria. The translation of polemical texts such as those of Zigabenos and Niketas Stethatos would be quite compatible with any normal monastery protecting its faithful from outside corrupting forces. There exists no evidence which would link the Bačkovo monastery with any active struggle against the heretics of that region.

Sokolov in 1906 explained the founding of the Bačkovo monastery as an expression of a religiosity which was characteristic of the period, and a desire on the part of the founders to have a place in which to build their tomb. More recently Sanidze also reached the same
By chance, the only part of the monastery which has survived from the period of the Pakurianoi is the monastic ossuary, which was also intended to serve as the resting place for the new ktitors. The inclusion of ktitor's tombs into what would otherwise be a simple charnel house has not been previously encountered in Byzantine burial traditions. However, the number of known, surviving Byzantine ossuaries is so negligible that comments about "traditions" are somewhat arbitrary. The function of some of the surviving examples is also far from clear. Did the arcosolia tombs of the ossuary at Daphni contain only the bones of monks, and were there any tombs in the now destroyed upper church? What was the function of the ossuary at the Brontocheion monastery at Mistra? The Pakurianoi certainly did depart from the tradition of family tombs. They were determined not to create a mausoleum for the use of their relatives. In the typicon, Gregory was careful to point out that no relatives, present or future, could have any claims to the monastery. It is also known that the later Pakurianoi family had to build another monastery which served as the family tomb. The family tombs of the royal and noble classes in Byzantium and in Georgia, such as the church of Holy Apostles and the Kariye Camii in Constantinople, or Mtskhet and Gelati in Georgia, are characterised by their multiple burials.

The ossuary of the Bačkovo monastery lies about 400 metres to the east of the main monastic complex. It occupies a picturesque position and is built into a steep slope of a hill, overlooking a sharp drop and a waterfall below. In plan, the two storeys closely resemble each
other. They are narrow, single nave structures with rounded apses, covered by simple barrel vaults. At each level there is a narthex. The lower storey, which is the crypt, is exposed only on the inaccessible northern cliff side and at the west end where the entrance is situated. Otherwise, the lower storey is completely submerged. It is built of rough, largely unhewn limestone bedded in lime mortar. The narthex opens at the west end with a large rounded arch (3.12m x 2.45m)* and there are two narrow arches in the north walls (the actual openings are 1.57m x 1.10m, but the outside framing mount gives them elongated proportions 5.0m x 1.92m). The naos is an uninterrupted plain barrel vault with three small windows (0.5m x 0.3m) in the north wall. The upper storey is of carefully cut stone arranged with alternating bands of brick work which was so characteristic of the Constantinopolitan school. The entrance into this storey is an arch in the southern wall of the narthex. The roof of the upper storey has collapsed and been replaced with a modern one. Traces in the plaster of a round covering visible at the apsidal end and on the east wall of the narthex, suggest that originally there was a barrel vault similar to that of the lower storey. Generally, the upper storey has a lightness and elegance in contrast with the heavier forms of the crypt. On the west end, the narthex opens in a wide rounded arch (c.35m x 3.24m) above which are three tall windows. The north and south walls of the narthex consist of two (originally open) arches (2.50m x 1.62m). The lateral walls of the upper

* All measurements are in metres with the vertical measurement given first.
storey are decorated with a continuous blind arcade. Engaged columns carry a total of eight arches (average width 1.60m). On each side, the fourth and sixth arches (from the west) are pierced by a small window. A similar system of blind, decorative arches, this time five in number, appears at the apsidal end, where the arches are punctuated by three narrow windows. The decorative architectural features of the exterior do not correspond in any way with the plain forms of the interior.

In 1922, Grabar, in his pioneering study entitled "Bulgarian burial churches", introduced the Bačkovo ossuary to art historical literature. His article constituted the framework for all subsequent discussion of the architecture of the monument. Grabar followed three main lines of argument. Firstly, he pointed out the ossuary's close relationship with the Palestinian/Syrian martyrrium tradition and concluded that it "simply reproduces the early Christian type (p.113)". Secondly, with regard to its exterior decorations, he suggested that the closest parallel that he could find was in a group of Armenian two-storey churches that served a funerary purpose. He somewhat ingeniously made the proposal that Pakurianos considered the church as a "family tomb" (p.122) and may have modelled it on the lost tomb church of Saint Gregory the Illuminator of Armenia. Thirdly, Grabar linked Bačkovo with two other churches in Bulgaria - at Boyana and Asenovata. The group was unified on the strength of four common characteristics: (a) They are all two-storey structures with the upper one used as a church; (b) They all have long, narrow "basilica-like" plans; (c) The lateral walls are externally decorated with a blind arcade; (d) They all have an entrance from
the south side.

The literature devoted to the architecture of the Bačkovo ossuary is voluminous and divides into three main groups that clearly reflect the development of Grabar's three main arguments. Some argue for a Syrian-Palestinian origin and multiply the number of examples. None of the parallels is closer to the Bačkovo ossuary than those already mentioned by Grabar. Brunov advances the Georgian sixth century (?) smaller church of the Holy Cross at Mtskhet as a prototype, despite the fact that the only similarity with Bačkovo is the existence of several tombs in cave crypts beneath it. Finally, several Bulgarian scholars, the most important of whom was Mavrodinov, dismissed the Syrian and Palestinian, Georgian and Armenian prototypes and strongly argued in favour of a Bulgarian origin for the Bačkovo ossuary. The lack of suitable prototypes does not seem to discourage these scholars from adhering to their main argument, that an old national school of Bulgarian architecture was responsible for the "unique type" of the Bačkovo ossuary and that this lay quite outside the mainstream of Byzantine architecture. Surprisingly, it was this last conclusion which was accepted by Bobčev and Dinolov in their monograph devoted to the architecture of the Bačkovo ossuary. In their critical survey of prototypes suggested for Bačkovo in the literature they rightly point out that none is satisfactory. However, to draw from this the conclusion that the building belongs to a unique Bulgarian type is unwarranted. Likewise, their attempt to reconstruct the ossuary complete with a crowning dome over the narthex is not borne out by the existing
archaeological evidence.

Although there exists a considerable literature devoted to the building's architecture, the closest parallel is still the martyria shown on the Coptic embroidery reproduced by Grabar. Even here the comparison is far from ideal. The highly stylized "martyria" border ornament of the embroidery shows a number of two-storey, single nave structures. Only the upper entrance is seen and this is reached by a series of wide steps at the narrow end of the building. The entrance is veiled with a decorative curtain. There is no indication of the existence of a narthex or a rounded apse and the system of entrances differs from that of Bačkovo. While I am not denying the possible connection in early Christian times between monastic ossuaries and two-storey shrines built over the relics of saints or on holy sites, I believe that a fresh glance at the origins of the ossuary tradition may prove fruitful. Temporarily laying aside architectural comparisons, the following picture emerges of this peculiar form of Christian burial.

The practice of a twin burial – the first one to decompose the body and the second to store the bones, entered Christianity from Jewish traditions. The earliest known Christian use of a αυλομάρμερον for the storage of bones possibly belongs to ca. 70 A.D. and is found near Jerusalem. It is in the form of an underground chamber surrounded by several smaller burial vaults (luculi, kōkhim) into which were placed stone caskets (ossuaries) containing the bones of the deceased. The caskets were quite small (0.4m long, 0.25m wide and 0.3m high) and usually contained the bones of only one person. It appears that the body was first
placed into a reusable grave or simply left in the central burial chamber to decompose\textsuperscript{78} and at a later date the bones were transferred to a separate receptacle. There were no distinctive super-structures which marked the existence of these underground chambers.

Many of the Palestinian Christian tomb structures of the fourth to the sixth centuries developed a system of graves, usually lined with stone, in the floor of a subterranean chamber. Into each grave the bones of several people were placed\textsuperscript{79}. Near the monastery of Saint Euthymius at Khan el Aḥmar is the monastic ossuary, probably built in 473, and containing the remains of the founder as well as numerous other people. It is in the form of an underground rectangular chapel (4.75m x 5.90m) with a plain barrel vault\textsuperscript{80}. At a distance of about one hundred and fifty metres east of the monastery of Saints John and George of Choziba at Wādī Qilt, is a cave church (measuring approximately 9m x 7m) which served as an ossuary. In the floor are sixteen stone graves arranged in rows (an arrangement similar to the Bāckovo crypt) and filled with skulls and bones. Other skulls are placed at the sides of the walls. The walls are decorated with various painted crosses and 213 funerary inscriptions which record that the cave was used as a monastic ossuary from the fifth to the tenth centuries\textsuperscript{81}. Near the monastery of Saint Euthymios at Khirbet Mird (Kastellion) is a small ossuary crypt on the south slope of the mountain. It contains eight floor tombs and the walls are decorated with murals showing thirty-one full length standing saints. The saints - mainly monastic fathers from Palestine, Syria and Cappadocia, are painted
in a coarse manner. The poor quality of the painting and the bad state of preservation make any dating difficult, although a date before the monastery's final decline in the mid-fourteenth century seems likely.

The practice of exhuming the body and depositing the bones in a crypt entered the Christian monastic tradition in Northern Africa at an early date, at least by the fifth century, and continues to the present day. It is probable that the practice spread from here to Mount Athos. On the Holy Mountain, each monastery has its ossuary situated a little distance outside the monastic wall. The usual form is a two-storey building with the crypt partly submerged and containing the bones and skulls, while the upper storey is a simple, single nave church. The dating of the Athos ossuaries presents several difficulties. There is no evidence to suggest that any great significance was attached to the ossuary buildings. Unlike the catholicon or the refectory, which were usually monumental buildings with often elaborate decorations, the ossuary was looked upon as something purely utilitarian and was subject to frequent extensions and rebuilding. Placed as they were outside the protective walls of the monastery, they were more exposed to destruction. Among the oldest and best preserved ossuaries on Athos are those at Vatopedi, the Great Lavra and Iviron, but even these in their present form are unlikely to go back to the foundation of the respective monasteries. The process of burial on Athos is recorded in pilgrim accounts. Normally, three days after death, the monk was buried in a simple grave in the grounds around the ossuary. His grave had a wooden marker recording his name, nationality and date of death. He was
buried with funerary rites in accordance with his monastic rank as prescribed in the typica. After three years, his remains were exhumed, the skull washed with wine and taken together with his bones to the upper church of the ossuary. Here a full funerary liturgy was celebrated and his bones were then placed in the crypt below. Later sources mention a decipherment of the after-death state of the deceased according to his bones. If the bones appeared waxlike and emitted a fragrance, the man was holy and beloved by God. White or ivory bones with no evil smell signified an acceptance of the soul by God, while black bones and a foul odour belonged to a sinner. In the last case the bones were re-buried for a forty day period with various prayers and then were exhumed for a second time.

This burial tradition was known in Constantinople and was widespread throughout the Byzantine empire. Ossuaries dating back to Byzantine times have survived at Daphni and at Nea Moni on Chios. The Daphni ossuary is located about two hundred metres south-east of the monastic enclosure, built into the steep hillside. The upper storey is badly damaged, however the lower, the crypt, is almost completely preserved. Here there are six floor tombs for the bones and skulls placed within arcosolia along the lateral walls. As in Bačkovo, the crypt is of unhewn stone while the upper storey was apparently of finely laid stone. At each level at the eastern end there was a rounded apse (Diagram E). Millet reported traces of a fresco of the Virgin with two saints and suggested that the building was contemporary with the catholicon. The ossuary at Chios lies several hundred metres to the west of the monastery and is built into the hillside. Although the building has under-
gone extensive restoration in the twentieth century, the original plan is still apparent (Plate 52). The top storey was a simple, single barrel vault nave, the lower, also a similar barrel vault directly below, with another horizontally placed, smaller barrel vault, at the west end. The present entrance into the crypt from the east, probably belongs to the period of restoration; the extensions to the north wall conceal the original entrance. There is nothing to suggest that the ossuary should not be contemporary with the building of the monastery.

There is also a mention of an ossuary near the Saint Chrysostom monastery in Cyprus. In Armenia, two-storey funerary churches survive from the fifth century and were particularly popular in the tenth and eleventh centuries. This tradition was also known in Georgia. The ninth century church at the village of Bieti lies on the outskirts of the ruins of a monastery and has a semi-submerged crypt with large piles of skulls and bones. At the Horomos monastery not far from Ani, founded by a Georgian in the tenth century, is a two-storey ossuary which probably dates from the thirteenth century. There is no evidence that this method of burial spread as far as Russia or Serbia.

The Bačkovo ossuary belongs to this tradition of monastic charnel houses. It is more rewarding to compare it with existing ossuaries rather than with crypt churches or with family or Imperial tombs. All the ossuaries on Athos, at Daphni and on Chios have the following characteristics in common with Bačkovo. All are two-storey buildings - the upper being a single nave
basilica-like church with a rounded apse, the lower a crypt used for the storage of bones and skulls. In all cases the crypt has a separate entrance from the outside and cannot be entered directly from the upper church (this is rarely the case with crypt churches or martyria chapels). Where there exists a wall around the monastic enclosure, the ossuary is placed some distance outside this. In most cases, the ossuary is built into the slope of a hill or cliff, giving the crypt an appearance of a sepulchre hewn out of rock with only dim lighting inside. In the cases of Daphni, Nea Moni and Bačkovo, all three have the southern side of the crypt built into the hillslope and the northern is exposed to view.
CHAPTER TWO
THE DATING OF THE BAČKOVO OSSUARY FRESCOES IN
LITERARY SOURCES AND IN INSCRIPTIONS

The original manuscript of the "ktitor's typicon" for the monastery dedicated to the "Mother of God of Petritzos" (near the present day Bulgarian village of Bačkovo) has not survived\(^1\). The extant MSS are later copies, probably not earlier than the 12th century and disagree on several crucial details concerning the nationality of the founders Gregory and Apasios Pakurianoii (Bakurianis-dse)\(^2\). They are, however, unanimous on all points of detail concerning the establishment and administration of the monastery. Any attempt to date the building of the ossuary must begin by asking whether this ossuary can be identified with any of the buildings mentioned in the typicon.

The physical description of the monastery and the mention of the component buildings offered in the typicon are laconic and somewhat confusing. If we omit such buildings as the three hostels (ξενοδοχεῖα) for travellers, the seminary and the other buildings which are clearly located outside the monastery, the following picture of the monastic structures emerges. The centre of the complex was occupied by "three churches" dedicated to the Virgin, (τῇ ὑπερευλογημένῃ γυναῖκι Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν τῇ ἀειπαρθένῳ Μαρίᾳ), to John the Baptist and Saint George\(^3\). Some monastic cells were constructed\(^4\) and there was an outer wall\(^5\). There is no
specific mention of a refectory, kitchen or library, but their existence is implied in several places in the typicon. There is also mention of a tomb containing the body of Apasios Pakurianos. The entire monastery was built in a field (γρός) at a place called 'Ἰάννωα. 

The ossuary as it exists today, is a separate two-storey structure found some 400 metres outside the present monastic walls. At each level at the eastern end is a semi-circular apse; the lower contains a Deesis, the upper, an enthroned Madonna and Child between two standing archangels. Is this building one of the three churches or a possible place for the tomb of the founders? Since the typicon specifies the Koimesis as the principal feast of the monastery, critics have been unanimous in identifying the catholicon as dedicated to this feast. Petit and Ivanov mention a principal church of the "Assumption" and two minor churches dedicated to John the Baptist and Saint George. The ossuary has been identified as one of these minor churches and the choice fell on Saint George.

While the typicon mentions three churches and specifies their individual dedications, in other places it speaks of the monastery with its one church. In chapter 1.3 the three churches are referred to as one building for the honour and glory of the Virgin, John the Baptist and Saint George. The Chios Georgian MS of the typicon is even more specific. It refers to the building of the three churches as a cathedral to the glory of God. This distinction is made even more apparent in the chapter on the illumination of the church. Icon lamps were to be lit near the main altar, in front of the icon of John the Baptist at the doors to his chapel and near the icon of
Chapter 27 specifically mentions the chapel of John the Baptist. A priest was to be appointed εν τῷ εὐκτημόρῳ τοῦ ἁγίου βαπτιστοῦ. From this it appears that the catholicon was built as a single building with a main altar dedicated to the Virgin and two chapels with separate altars dedicated to John the Baptist and Saint George.

The archaeological evidence from the 1955 excavations of Bačkovo supports this conclusion. The foundations of only one church were discovered (directly underneath the present catholicon) with evidence for three separate apses: a main apse at the east end and separate apses on the lateral sides. The principle of multiple dedications and separate altars within a single church is found in other examples such as Constantine Lips and Skripou. In the ossuary crypt, on a blocked-in arch on the north wall of the narthex is a 14th century depiction of the Pakurianoi holding a model of a single domed church with two side chapels. Could this be a depiction of their church of the Koimesis, with its chapels of John the Baptist and Saint George? (Plate 41.)

Petit does not identify the tomb mentioned in the typicon with any surviving building. Ivanov mentions the existing ossuary but is uncertain of its date and regards all the frescoes as belonging to the 14th century. He does not associate the ossuary with the tomb in the typicon and mentions that Apasios' remains were brought into the monastery. André Grabar, who visited Bačkovo in 1920, mentions the ossuary and identifies it with the one described in the typicon as containing the tomb of the
founders. Other scholars followed his example.

Recently this position was challenged. It was argued that the tomb of the founder, following the tradition of Byzantine family tombs, was placed within the main church and the ossuary was built for the remains of the monks at some later unknown date.

The typicon is not specific about the location of the founder's tomb. This is despite the fact that the establishment of the monastery seems to have been spurred on by the thought of creating a final "resting place" that would aid in the deliverance of the patron's soul.

Pakurianos states this in the introduction to his typicon:

"... the founder of this most blessed, newly built monastery and ossuary for my resting place ... set up for my succour, redemption and deliverance and also for that of my own blessed brother the magistros Apasios."

The setting up of a monastery with these pious thoughts in mind, was commonplace in the royal and upper circles of Byzantine society. In typica there appears to be a distinction drawn between the tomb for the founder and the ossuary for the monks. Normally the words τάφος or τύμβος refer to the tomb of the patron, while κοιμητήριον is used for that of the monks. In the Pantocrator monastery (Zeyrek Camii) typicon (1136) it is mentioned that between the two major churches was built a small church to serve as the royal family tomb ὃν ὀνομαζον τοῦ ἀρχιστρατήγου Μιχαήλ, ἐν οί καὶ τοὺς τάφους ἡμῶν τεθήκατ εἰς ετυπωσάμην. The κοιμητήριον, for the non-royalty who died in the monastic hospital and for the monks, was built in the monastery opposite, that of Midikarios. The typicon of the monastery of the Kosmosotira (1152) again draws the distinction between the
main τούμβος, its decoration and days of commemoration, and the monks who were to be buried outside the walls\textsuperscript{28}. The typicon of the Euergetis monastery (11th century), mentions a κοιμητήριον for the monks outside τῶν βασιλικῶν πυλῶν and specifies the rites for the burial of the monks\textsuperscript{29}. The typicon of the monastery of Our Lady τῆς βεβαιᾶς ἐλπίδος likewise associates the κοιμητήριον with the burial of monks and not the patrons\textsuperscript{30}. Two conclusions can be drawn from the typica in relation to burials. Firstly, the typica are primarily concerned with the tombs of the patrons and members of their families and these were placed either in the main monastic church or in a special mausoleum church. Secondly, if the burial of the monks is mentioned, it is largely in relation to the proper burial rites and they were to be buried in a humble κοιμητήριον away from the main church and often outside the monastic enclosure.

The typicon of Gregory Pakurianos on the burial of monks is laconic indeed. The deceased monk is to be buried with prayers and song as prescribed by rite and must be commemorated on the third, ninth and fortieth days after death and after one year\textsuperscript{31}. On the death of an abbot, several other commemorative services are added, but similarly there is no mention of the place of burial\textsuperscript{32}. The burial and commemoration of the founders is one of the favourite themes of the typicon. The necessity to commemorate Gregory and his brother is mentioned throughout the text and there is one lengthy chapter devoted specifically to this question\textsuperscript{33}. However, the exact nature and location of the tomb is more difficult to ascertain. The tomb is referred to by three names τάφος, τόμβος, and κοιμητήριον.
The first is used in terms of a tomb in general in the will of Apasios, where he wishes to be buried in the place where his brother builds his monastery, church and tomb:

\[ \text{Evaa } \text{Ananov } \text{auLaOEA~OG } \muou \text{6 rpnyopLOG } \]

The second word for tomb is \text{tyumboz} and is used in the meaning of a coffin or sarcophagus and it was this which was to be placed in the \text{koiwntηριον} or burial house:

\[ \text{agagoptes ton tυmbov toυ οκηνωματος αυτου εις } \]

The Georgian MS is slightly more specific for our purposes - the coffin with Apasios' body was brought to the monastery and was buried in the cemetery church\(^36\). In several places in the typicon it is apparent that the main church with its three altars cannot be identified as the place in which the \text{koiwntηριον} is built. For example, wealth is left for the monastery with its church and for the \text{koiwntηριον}:

\[ \text{hmwn monastηριον kai } \text{thn } \text{en aυt}\overline{e} \text{agian ekklηsiav} \]

The question remains whether this funerary church was built within the monastic walls as in the case of the Pantocrator monastery in Constantinople, or whether it followed the tradition outlined in those typica where the \text{koiwntηριον} was usually built outside the monastic enclosure\(^38\). In the first chapter of his typicon, where Gregory speaks of the intended form of his monastery, he mentions building his tomb in the resting place for monks, away from the main church\(^39\). The surviving ossuary fits
the requirements outlined in the typicon. In the crypt below are fourteen floor tombs, twelve for the bones of the monks in the naos and two for the ktitors in the bema area. There exists no archaeological evidence suggesting an alternative conclusion. The tomb mentioned in the typicon can be identified with the exquisitely constructed and decorated ossuary.

The typicon was completed and signed in December 6592 (A.D. 1083) and countersigned by the Jerusalem patriarch Euthymius who visited Gregory at his Philippopolis estates. It states that the ossuary had been already built and, after its completion, the body of Gregory's brother Apasios was transferred and buried there. It appears likely that the fresco decorations had been completed before Apasios was buried; hence the original layer of fresco cannot be dated later than 1083. The terminus post quem is more difficult to establish. Although there is some doubt whether Gregory founded or re-founded the monastery, the ossuary is specifically mentioned in the typicon as being built by Gregory.

The building of the Bačkovo monastery occurred at a late stage in Gregory's brilliant career. He had been transferred from the East to serve in the West when he was already in his old age. Gregory had previously received estates in the area of Philippopolis under Nicephorus III Botaneiates (1078-81) and possibly the area of Iannova was one of these. The monastery could not have been commenced before the death of Gregory's brother Apasios. The typicon quotes Apasios' will, in which he says that he wishes to be buried wherever Gregory
builds his monastery, but if he does not build it, his wealth should be donated to the church where he is buried⁴⁸. Gregory and Apasios together made a donation to the Iviron monastery on Athos in 1074⁴⁹ and consequently it is unlikely that work upon the Bačkovo monastery had commenced before that. A search for a suitable pause in Gregory's military career in which the building of the monastery could have taken place, attempted by some scholars⁵⁰, is not a particularly fruitful exercise. The supervision of the building of the monastery was entrusted by Pakurianos to a monk, Gregory Vanskos⁵¹, and therefore the presence of the founder was neither required nor likely.

In the upper storey of the ossuary, on the west wall of the church naos (beneath the Koimesis), are depicted six life-size standing saints with scrolls. One of these is identified by its inscription as Saint George the Hagiorite (1009-65) a Georgian abbot at Iviron (Pl. 16). His disciple, Giorgi the Little, wrote his life ca. 1070. Saint George's name is first met in his role as a saint in a Georgian menologium of 1074⁵². Once again the evidence confirms the dating of the construction of the monastery as not earlier than 1074 and its completion as not later than 1083. The fresco decorations of the ossuary would have been executed most likely towards the end of this period.

To date this monument, André Grabar points to an inscription found in the narthex of the crypt, below the composition of the Bosom of Abraham, (Pl. 34c), δέη(σις) τοῦ δούλου [τοῦ θεού κυρία]ρ[οδ] Νεοφύτου ημωμονάχου (Pl. 34d).⁵³ He then refers to a 16th century "memorial" (Bead roll)
which is divided into the categories of donors, bishops, hieromonsks, fathers, monks and laymen. Under the hieromonsks there is only one Neophytoes listed and his name appears fifth from the top. Keeping in mind that the monastery was founded in 1083, the life span of five hieromonsks places Neophytoes at least in the middle of the 12th century. Grabar concludes that Neophytoes was the patron for the frescoes of the crypt and hence the earliest layer of fresco at the Bačkovo ossuary dates from the middle of the 12th century. This documentary dating has not been challenged. It rests, however, on shaky foundations.

The Bead roll of the Bačkovo monastery library is catalogued as MS gr. 50 and dates from the end of the 16th century or possibly the beginning of the 17th century, with several additions from the 18th century and blank pages for future entries. In the list of hieromonsks, as Grabar noted, only one Neophytoes is recorded and, as far as can be established, the list is in chronological order. However, a glance at Neophytoes's neighbours reveals the following time sequence. Two names before that of Neophytoes is the entry of Matthew Ματθαίου ἱερομονάχου who is mentioned as a donor in an inscription of 1601. Immediately before Neophytoes is the name of the hieromonk Parthenius, Παρθενίου ἱερομονάχου, who is also mentioned in the refectory under the year of 1604, in one inscription in the church of the Holy Trinity (1643) and as a donor in MS gr. 82 under the year 1639. Then comes our Neophytoes, Νεοφύτου ἱερομονάχου, of whom we know nothing; he is followed by Anthony, Ἄντωνου ἱερομονάχου, who is mentioned in MS gr. 58, dated 1663, as the hieromonk at this time. From this it is quite
apparent that this part of the commemorative list dates from the 17th century and not from the 12th century as Grabar assumed. Another Bead roll of the mid-17th century, \textit{MS gr. 14359}, has a slightly different order in some names and Neophytops is omitted from it. The only safe conclusion that can be reached is that the name of Neophytos occurring in the fresco inscription does not provide any guidance to the dating of the frescoes themselves.

In 1932 Gošev published an important inscription (Pl.34a) which he discovered in the narthex of the crypt, directly above Grabar's Neophytos inscription. It reads:

\begin{quote}
+ "The upper and lower parts of this most holy church were decorated (or redecorated) by the hand of the painter John Iviropoulos. And you who read this pray for me through the Lord."\textsuperscript{60}
\end{quote}

It differs in character from the Neophytos inscription in several important aspects. While the former is a type of graffito, roughly painted on top of a frescoed surface in small letters, the Iviropoulos inscription is carefully placed within an arch, superimposed on a band of floral ornament, overlooking the entrance into the naos. While the Neophytos inscription does not specify any part of the ossuary and may refer to the single scene, the Iviropoulos inscription claims responsibility for both the upper and lower parts of the church. However, for the dating of the monument the inscription does not provide any firm additional information. Gošev claims a palaeographical similarity between the Iviropoulos and Neophytos inscriptions and dates the former to the 12th century (citing Grabar). He argues that the use of \textit{ἄνο}, \textit{κάτω} and
36.

\[\alpha\nu\alpha\iota\gamma\iota\nu\sigma\omicron\kappa\omicron\upsilon\tau\varepsilon\varsigma\] instead of \[\alpha\nu\omega, \kappa\alpha\tau\omega\] and \[\alpha\nu\alpha\gamma\iota\nu\omega\sigma\omega\omicron\kappa\omicron\upsilon\tau\varepsilon\varsigma\] suggests a non-Greek origin for the artist. Gosev also leaves the question open as to whether the artist could be identified with John Petritzos, who may have lived at the monastery in the 11th or 12th centuries\(^6\). Several objections may be raised to this view. The use of curved breathings, in one instance, the \(\alpha\)-form for the alpha and the general complexity of the abbreviations are not otherwise encountered in the names of saints, feasts and inscriptions on scrolls belonging to the 1074-83 layer. Bearing in mind that the Iviropoulos inscription is superimposed on a separate band of painted ornament, the question arises whether Iviropoulos was indeed the major painter of the ossuary decorations. Perhaps he could be identified with the master of the seated apostles of the Last Judgement on the vault of the crypt narthex, adjoining the Iviropoulos inscription and painted apparently after the collapse of the original vault decorations in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. The palaeographic peculiarities of the Iviropoulos inscription are repeated in the inscriptions on the Gospel books held by the seated apostles. This latter master was also probably responsible for the repainting of the Madonna and Child over the entrance into the upstairs church naos. The substitution of \(\omicron\) for \(\omega\) is quite a common "error" in Byzantine Greek and is attested in the writing practice of both Greeks and non-Greeks. As to the painter's identity, it would appear most unlikely that John Petritzos would refer to himself as Iviropoulos in this inscription and as Petritzos in all others\(^6\). The only points in common
in the biographies of the two people are that they were both called John and at one time in their lives they worked at the Bačkovo monastery.

Xyngopoulos' identification of the artist as a 12th century master from Thessaloniki is supported by little else than the author's fertile imagination. The form 'Ιωάννης ὁ 'Ἰβηροπούλος is simply the hellenization or Greek alternative to 'Ιωάννης ὁ 'Ιβηρος. The word 'Ιβηρος used in 11th century Byzantine sources, as a recent study has shown, has at least five main meanings: a Georgian, a Spaniard, a person from the Iberian theme of the Byzantine empire (mainly Armenians), a Chalcedonian Armenian or a person from the Iviron monastery on Athos. Hence the name cannot be seen as a positive proof of the painter's nationality. The Bačkovo Iviropoulos is not a lonely exception. A certain 12th century Iviropoulos (εὐτυχίου τοῦ 'Ιβηροπούλου) is known from the typicon of the Saint Mamas monastery in Constantinople. Thus neither the Iviropoulos inscription nor the Neophytos inscription gives any direct evidence for the dating of the frescoes of the Bačkovo ossuary.

A third inscription from the Bačkovo ossuary has not survived. It was in Georgian and was recorded in 1896 but by 1912 it had been destroyed. This inscription was on a large framed portrait of Saint George depicted on the west wall of the narthex of the church and read in Georgian: "Saint George of Kašoet" (Pl. 25d). Šanidze has identified Kašoet with an iconographic type of Saint George that was popular in mediaeval Georgia and, despite the fact that the
inscription is now lost and the only copy was made by a person not knowing Georgian, Šanidze palaeographically dated it to the 13th-14th centuries\textsuperscript{67}. This inscription is of some interest for the dating of the different layers of fresco in the ossuary. The layer with the Georgian inscription has largely peeled away in the upper part (or has been restored with cement). Beneath it is revealed an image of Saint George, considerably smaller in size and conforming perfectly in style and execution to the 1074-83 period. Over the edges of this later, superimposed image of Saint George is yet another layer of fresco belonging to the neighbouring niche image of Tsar Ivan Alexander of Bulgaria.

The painted figure of Tsar Ivan Alexander occupies the niche at the west end of the north wall of the church narthex. It is one of the five filled-in niches (three in the church narthex and two in the crypt narthex) and undoubtedly belongs to a later stage in the decoration\textsuperscript{68}. The five niche images are: Gregory and Apasios Pakurianoi, George and Gabriel (ktitores of the monastery of uncertain date), Saints Constantine and Helen, Saint John the Theologian and Tsar Ivan Alexander. All the figures are painted in a similar harsh style in secco and have poorly preserved Greek inscriptions. The figure of Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331-71) provides the terminus post quern for the group. The portrait could not have been executed before the monastery passed into the hands of the Bulgarians, led by Ivan Alexander in 1344, and it is unlikely that it would have been executed after the area fell to the Turks in 1363\textsuperscript{69}. Hence the third period of fresco
39.

decoration of the ossuary can be firmly dated between 1344 and 1363.

The second period of decoration, to which the superimposed image of Saint George with the Georgian inscription belongs, must date between the end of the 11th century and the middle of the 14th century. Saint George, the patron saint of Georgia, appears in the Bačkovo ossuary during a period of intensive Georgian activity at the monastery. None of the purely Georgian antiquities at Bačkovo dates from the 11th century; they appear at a later date between the 12th and 14th centuries. These include the images of Saint George and Saint Theodore, possibly painted by John Iviropoulos, of which at least one had a Georgian inscription. Other indications of a Georgian presence are a large cross with an inscription in Georgian: "Victory of Jesus Christ", a reference by Ansbertus in 1189 to the abbot at Bačkovo as a Georgian and the famous Georgian inscription, dated 1311, on the silver icon mount of the Bačkovo Mother of God. This last inscription suggests the monastery had become a place of pilgrimage for Georgian monks. It was probably at about this period that the Georgian MS of the typicon underwent alterations to remove all references to the Armenians.

From the surviving literary evidence and inscriptions, the following conclusions emerge for the chronology of the fresco decorations at the Bačkovo ossuary. Gregory Pakurianos, as a ktitor of the monastery, built and decorated the ossuary, not earlier than 1074, and completed it by 1083. The work was executed by an excep-
tionally competent master trained in the traditions of Byzantium, who used Greek inscriptions throughout. The ossuary underwent a partial redecoration, probably in the 12th century, and possibly by John Iviropoulos. At this period the Georgians firmly controlled the monastery. With the shift of political power into the hands of the Bulgarians under Tsar Ivan Alexander, himself another ktitor of the monastery, five open arches were blocked in and painted in the period 1344 to 1365. Apart from these three documented periods, several other images underwent re-painting and can only be dated through an analysis of style and palaeography.
CHAPTER THREE

ICONOGRAPHY OF THE 1074-83 LAYER OF FRESCOES AT
THE BAČKOVO OSSUARY: IMAGES OF SAINTS

The frescoes of the Bačkovo ossuary from the point of view of their iconography have long attracted the attention of scholars. As early as 1605 Giacomo di Pietro Luccari noted the existence of a portrait of Tsar Ivan Alexander in the monastery of the Holy Mary in the jurisdiction of Stanimaca in Thrace. Although he does not specify where exactly he saw the portrait 'io ho vedutu nel monasterio', unless there was another similar portrait in the catholicon, it is likely that he is referring to the surviving fresco in the ossuary. This is the earliest and only reference to the ossuary frescoes. Other early accounts which mention the paintings at the monastery relate only anecdotes about the miracle-working icon in the main church. The earliest of these is by Paul Lucas in 1712 and Gerard Cornelius von den Driesch in 1723.

It was not until Grabar's article 'Paintings in the church-ossuary at the Bačkovo monastery' published in 1924, that the iconography of the ossuary frescoes was examined as a whole. In a similar way to his article on the ossuary architecture, the article on the frescoes not only laid the foundation to all subsequent discussion in this area, but remained the definitive work. Mavrodinov largely repeats Grabar's account giving it a decidedly
nationalistic flavour. Lazarev, not having seen the frescoes for himself, largely reiterates Grabar's iconographic outline, but stylistically re-attributes them to Thessalonika. While Bakalova, in her recent study of the frescoes makes several additional footnotes to Grabar's observations.

The 1074-83 layer of frescoes at Bačkovo has a relatively well preserved, coherent iconographic programme. Although the surviving comparative material is limited, some tentative conclusions can be suggested as to the nature and function of the tradition to which the Bačkovo frescoes belong. The most serious losses in the decorations occur in the upper registers and vault of the nave of the crypt and the ceiling vault of the upper storey. Despite this the iconographic programme can be reconstructed with a degree of accuracy.

The iconographic programme falls into two parts - that of the upper church and that of the crypt. Each has a unity and a self-contained quality. The crypt with a Deesis in the apse, a Vision of Ezekiel on the west wall and a Last Judgement in the narthex concentrates mainly on the themes of judgement and the resurrection of the dead. The upper church, with the more conventional apsidal enthroned Madonna with angels and a Koimesis on the west wall and with a feast cycle on the side walls, corresponds more closely to the Middle-Byzantine church iconographic programme. In some ways, the two storeys are linked by an extensive series of saints on each level. I propose to first examine the tradition of saint depictions in ossuaries and their use at Bačkovo, then separately look
The earliest frescoed ossuaries have decorations directly commemorating the deceased whose bones were deposited in them. The ossuary at the monastery of SS John and George of Choziba (Wâdî Qilt, Palestine) has on its walls painted crosses and some 213 funerary inscriptions which suggest that the cave was in use as an ossuary from the fifth to the tenth centuries. Most of the inscriptions appeal for the salvation of the souls of the deceased.

The ossuary near the monastery of St. Euthymios on Khirbet Mird (Kastellion) on its walls has an extensive series of saints. They are shown with haloes, full length, standing frontally, dressed in dark brown monastic robes in a single file around the burial chamber. Mader, who visited the ossuary in 1937, suggested that the frescoes belonged to the period 625 to 638 and were later repainted, possibly as late as the thirteenth century, when the inscriptions were also rewritten. Of the thirty-one saints, Mader was able to decipher and publish twenty-four: Euthymios, Athanasios, Thalilaios, Martirios, Lazaros, Basil, Arsenios, Timothy, Simeon, Paladios, John, Theoktistos, George of Choziba, Abraham, Makarios, Theoktistos, Makarios +390, Moses, Theodosios, Paul the Theban, Isidoros, Arkadios, John and Xenophon. Of the saints whom I have been able to identify none is later than the beginning of the seventh century which suggests that this iconographic programme may belong to the initial pre-conquest period of the monastery. Most of the saints are representatives of Palestinian monasticism, or that of neighbouring Syria and Egypt. These include Euthymios, his companion Theoktistos, Athanasios
the Great, Arsenios, Martirios of Jerusalem, Symeon and Paladius of Antioch, George of Choziba, Makarios the Egyptian and Makarios of Alexandria, Thalilaios of Syria and Paul the Theban. Others who are not of Palestinian origin are related to this area by events in their lives. To this group belongs Xenophon and his sons Arkadios and John, who although originally a family from Constantinople, through various circumstances were reunited as monks of Palestine. For this seventh century programme, there is a conspicuous absence of saints from other monastic centres such as Cappadocia, Asia Minor and Constantinople.

The crypt of the catholicon of the monastery of Hosios Lukas in Phocis, in a similar way to the ossuary of St. Euthymios on Khirbet Mird, served both as the resting place for the saint's tomb and also as the storage area for the bones of abbots and monks of the monastery. There are three sarcophagi in the crypt. One of these appears to have contained the remains of Hosios Lukas, before his relics were transferred to the upper church at a later date. The other two were first thought to be the tombs of the ktitors Romanos II and his wife, but this suggestion has been discarded. The tombs are now thought to belong to the abbots of the monastery, but there is no agreement as to their date or identification. There are four abbots, besides Hosios Lukas, commemorated in the crypt frescoes - three in medallion images - Theodosios, Philotheus and Athanasios, and a fourth - Abbot Basil (?) is shown in full length together with Luke on the west wall. The tombs cannot be attributed to an individual abbot with any certainty. At the west end of the crypt there are three
large vaults which were used for the storage of the bones of the monks, before a new ossuary was built outside the monastery walls early this century to where the bones have now been transferred.

The fresco decorations of the crypt are well preserved and probably date from the last third of the eleventh century. Apart from the scene of Hosios Luke opposite a group of saints at the south entrance to the crypt and another scene of Luke with an abbot on the west wall, the images of saints are restricted to the ceiling (Diag.E). This is divided into ten square bays each containing four medallion bust depictions of saints. Of the forty saints, thirty-four can be identified, mainly through inscriptions. Of these, three are abbots of the monastery, they are shown without haloes and are referred to in the inscription as hosios rather than agios. Of the remaining thirty-one saints, twenty-eight are also encountered in the mosaic decorations of the catholicon (Diag.G). The three saints who I could not find in the mosaic decorations are Anicetos, Photios and Arethas. None of the three martyrs (Anicetos and Photios were martyred under Diocletian in Nicomediae and Arethos was martyr of Najrân) is a local saint and it seems quite possible that they were depicted in the upper church in the now lost mosaics from the row of martyrs (Diag.G, Nos. 27-31). There is no evidence that the choice of saints for this 'ossuary' was influenced by the consideration of a specific funerary iconography, but rather it was a direct borrowing from the earlier iconographic programme of the church above.
The grouping of the saints also is only loosely related to the function of the crypt. Three of the four central bays are occupied by the twelve apostles. In the first eastern pair of lateral bays containing the two unidentified tombs, on one side are the four holy abbots of the monastery: Luke, Theodosios, Philotheus and Athanasios, while on the other side St. Luke of Stiris and the three corresponding name patron saints of the abbots: SS Theodosios, Philotheus and Athanasios. As it is unlikely that the remains of the three abbots were divided between the two tombs, the possibility arises that the tombs may have been reserved for the bones of the successive abbots, while the vaults in the west wall were for the bones of other monks. The practice of storing the bones of abbots separately is found in present day Orthodox ossuaries on Chios, Patmos and in some monasteries on Athos.

The middle three lateral bays - leading from the entrance in the south wall to the saint's tomb near the north wall (Diag.F, No. 17-28) contain medallions of martyrs of the early Church: SS George, Nestor, Merkurios, Arethas, Photios, Vicentios, Anicetos, together with five other unidentified martyr saints. The two west-end lateral bays adjoining the vaults reserved for the bones of monks (Diag.F, Nos. 29-32 and 37-40) on the north side have the monastic leaders Makarios of Egypt, Ioannikios the Bithynian hermit, Sisoes the Great (+429) and one other unidentified saint. In the south-west bay are the holy churchmen Maximos the Confessor, Dorotheus martyr-priest and Abramios priest-hermit. So in this way, the monastic and clerical saints correspond in office to those whose bones are stores beneath
them. The positioning of the apostles may also reflect a conscious attempt to relate the decorations to the function of the crypt. At the mouth of the monastic ossuary vault (the central west end bay) are depicted the princes of the apostles Peter and Paul. These apostles figure prominently in the monastic ossuary tradition with numerous ossuaries dedicated to them on Athos and elsewhere. It is difficult to offer an alternative explanation of why these particular apostles were placed last in the row of the medallions leading from the apse.

For the purposes of investigating the choice of saints in the monastic ossuaries I have decided to restrict the comparative material to Khirbet Mird and Hosios Lukas. Other poorly preserved examples such as the ossuary at Daphni are of limited use. The examination of sepulchral monuments in general such as the mausoleum of the Pantocrator monastery, the frescoes of the crypt of the Odalar Camii, the sepulchral churches of Cappadocia of unknown function, or the parecclesion of Kariye Camii, are beyond the scope of the present study. The limited material examined suggests that the choice of saints was initially restricted to a highly localised commemorative tradition, while by the eleventh century, the internationalism attained by Byzantine monasticism had largely eroded this tradition.

Saints figure largely in the frescoes of the Bačkovo ossuary. There are two large compositions of All Saints flanking the apse in the upper church, while the saints of the Elect dominate the Last Judgement in the narthex of the crypt. Full-length standing saints line the walls on both levels and bust-length figures of saints
in roundels or rectangular frames are found in both apses and throughout the church.

The iconographic programme of the first layer of decorations of the ossuary, originally must have contained at least one hundred and eleven individual saint depictions. They are divided almost evenly between the two levels with fifty-four saints depicted in the crypt and fifty-seven in the upper church. However, it is in the naos of the crypt, the area reserved for the storage of the bones, that saints comprise the entire decorative programme, except for two monumental compositions - the Deesis in the apse and Ezekiel's vision in the valley of dry bones on the west wall. Unfortunately, it is here that the frescoes have suffered greatest deterioration, few of the saints have survived and fewer still have retained their inscriptions.

Below the apsidal Deesis in the crypt is a series of bust-length figures of bishops placed in alternating circular and rectangular yellow frames with alternating red and green backgrounds. The series is shown against a band of dark blue, but there is no sign that the 'imago clipeata' had any painted hooks, rings or nails to give them the illusion of being suspended from the wall\textsuperscript{17} as occurs in the church apse above. In all, there are seven bishops, four of them in circular frames (diameter of each 120cm), the other three in rectangular ones (115x65cm). A similar arrangement is encountered in an undated Cappadocian church, Göreme: chapel 21. Here the apse contains a single monumental Deesis, beneath it are four bishops in circular frames with a vernicle image (Mandylion) at the extreme right appearing as a fifth medallion\textsuperscript{18}. The Göreme chapel
has two wall tombs with their individual carved arcosolia and also five rather large floor tombs. There is also an image of St. Catherine with the donor Anna. De Jerphanion was surprised by the amount of graffiti that this chapel of such modest proportions and with relatively crude frescoes attracted. One can also note, that without exception, the early graffiti in this chapel are of the intercessary plea type of the form "ὅπερ ἔχει τοῖς δούλοις σου" that is also found in the ossuaries at Wâdi Qilt, Khirbet Mird, Hosios Lukas and in Backovo. This is typical of donor inscriptions, but is encountered less frequently in graffiti. There is insufficient evidence on the structure of the Cappadocian monastic communities to argue that Göreme chapel served as a monastic ossuary for the neighbouring Çarıklı Kilise or other churches. However, the apsidal Deesis, the 'imago clipeata' below it (without a row of standing Church Fathers) and the floor tombs are characteristics which this chapel has in common with the Backovo ossuary crypt.

Of the seven bishops in the Backovo crypt apse, five can be identified by inscriptions. The bishops from left to right (Diag.B, pl. 29):

1. Unidentified bishop. The bishop holds a Gospel book in his left hand while the right is raised in a gesture of benediction. His dark brown hair is brushed aside revealing a balding front. He has a longish dark brown beard that comes to a point and wears green robes. The figure is placed in a medallion with a red background. No trace of the inscription survives. Apart from the eyes and a portion of the forehead, the
figure is relatively well preserved. Immediately above the medallion to the right is some seventeenth century graffiti in Armenian reading: 'I Madros(?) son of David wrote this in 1112 [1663]."^{23}

2. Gregory the Illuminator of Armenia(?)

The bishop holds a Gospel book directly in front of him, with his hands concealed by the lower edge of the frame. He has greyish-white hair and a short, wide squarish beard, white in colour. He is dressed in a red robe and is shown against a green background with a rectangular frame. Only 'Γ' from the beginning of the inscription is preserved. The figure has been damaged by water and clumsy restoration with a fragment of the upper part of the face and the lower right hand side of the drapery lost and the colours faded. This figure corresponds to the description of Saint Gregory of Great Armenia in the Hermeneia "Gregory koniotlatugênēs."^{24} The identification is further supported by the fragmentary inscription, which could stand for the beginning of Gregory. The bishop at Bačkovo resembles very closely eleventh century depictions of Gregory of Armenia as in the Menologion B.M. Add. 11870 f.242v, the Theodore Psalter B.M. Add. 19352 f.48r, in the apse of the Panagia Chalkeon in Thessalonika^{26} and the mosaics of Hosios Lukas^{27}. In later depictions, such as the one in the Theotokos Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii), Gregory's beard lengthens and comes to two
distinct points. Armenia's national saint entered the Constantinople Calendar at least by the ninth century and was commemorated on 30 September. He was depicted in the post-iconoclast mosaics in S. Sophia in Constantinople and was included in the Menologium of Basil II. He is mentioned in the tenth century Palestinian-Georgian Calendar (Sin. cod. 34) where his feast days were 10 and 12 October and is depicted in twelfth century Georgian apsidal frescoes at Akhtala and Betania.

3. Parthenios, Bishop of Lampsacus, +318.

The bishop holds a book in his left hand, the other hand is not visible. He has white hair and a white, wide, rounded beard. Dressed in green robes, he is shown against a red background within a medallion. The inscription is well preserved:

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{0} \\
\text{A} \\
\text{P} \\
\text{E} \\
\text{N} \\
\text{0} \\
\end{array}\]

Considerable portions of the face, the right hand and parts of the drapery are lost. The Bačkovo bishop corresponds to the description in the Hermeneia "γέρων πλατυγένης" (old man with wide beard). Parthenios was the bishop of Lampsacus under Constantine I and commemorated on the 7 February in the Greek and Georgian calendars.
He had an oratory dedicated to him in Constantinople. Apart from the menologia the saint is rarely depicted in monumental decorations. He does appear in the 'imago clipeata' on the inner side of the colonnade in Tokali Kilise (New Church).

4. Peter of Alexandria.

The bishop holds a book in both hands directly in front of his chest. He has curly whitish hair and a short round, white beard. He is dressed in a red robe, and is shown against a green background within a rectangular frame. The inscription is well preserved:

Apart from minor damage to the eyes and the lower part of the drapery, the face and figure generally are well preserved. The bishop at Bačkovo corresponds to the Hermeneia description "γέρων στρογγυλογένης". Peter of Alexandria is commemorated both as a bishop and a confessor who struggled against Arianism and died on 24 or 25 November 311. His feast day in the Greek calendar is 25 November, while in the Georgian - 18 April, 7 July, as well as 25 November.

Peter of Alexandria is not encountered particularly frequently in Byzantine monumental art. He is found in the same row of medallions as Parthenios.
in Tokali Kilise and in Gülü Dere Chapel 4 (Ayvalı Kilise) in Cappadocia\textsuperscript{43}, the church of the Saviour at Nereditsa, near Novgorod (1199)\textsuperscript{44}; in Vardzia (main church), Betania and Kintsvisi (in the apse) in Georgia\textsuperscript{45}, and at Cefalù and Monreale in Sicily\textsuperscript{46}.

5. Paul the Confessor.

The bishop holds a book in his left hand and points to it with an open right hand. The top part is largely lost. He has a short, black rounded beard, is dressed in green robes and is shown against a red background within a medallion. The inscription is well preserved:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c}
\textsuperscript{0}P \textsuperscript{1}A \textsuperscript{2}N \\
\textsuperscript{3}A \textsuperscript{4}C \\
\textsuperscript{5}O \textsuperscript{6}M \textsuperscript{7}O \\
\textsuperscript{8}O \textsuperscript{9}A \textsuperscript{10}O \textsuperscript{11}O \textsuperscript{12}O \\
\textsuperscript{13}A \textsuperscript{14}O \textsuperscript{15}O \textsuperscript{16}O \\
\textsuperscript{17}A \textsuperscript{18}O \textsuperscript{19}O \textsuperscript{20}O \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

The top part of the head is severely damaged and minor areas have been lost over most of the figure. In places, rubbing and water damage have lead to very faint colours. The Hermeneia describes bishop Paul as "νέος κοντοδιχαλογένης"\textsuperscript{48}, however at Bačkovo he has a short rounded beard. The Bačkovo type corresponds more to the type in the Menologion of Basil II\textsuperscript{49}.

Paul the Confessor was a mid-fourth century patriarch in Constantinople who opposed Arianism and who was eventually exiled to Kukusus in Armenia. He was martyred in Armenia and is celebrated in the Greek calendar on 6 November.
and on 5 November in the Georgian\textsuperscript{50}. He is rarely depicted in middle-Byzantine monumental decorations - one example is in the twelfth century frescoes in Betania\textsuperscript{51}.

6. Athenogenes, Bishop of Pedahotoia (Armenia). The bishop holds a book with both hands - in front of his chest. He has short, grey-white, slightly curly hair and a broad grey beard that comes to a single point. He is in red garments and is against a green background within a rectangular frame. The inscription reads:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{ccc}
O & AN \\
A & ΘI \\
N & O \\
N & Ι
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

The Bačkovo depiction does not correspond with the description in the Hermeneia "νέος ὀλυγένης"\textsuperscript{53}. Athenogenes was the Armenian bishop of Pedahotoia who was martyred under Diocletian on 16 or 17 July 311. The Greek calendar celebrates his feast on both days, while the Armenian calendar commemorates him on 17 July. In the Georgian calendar Athenogenes is mentioned under 17 July, but his feast is treated as a mobile one, calculated as the seventh Sunday after Pentecost\textsuperscript{54}. Athenogenes had an oratory at an early date at the imperial palace in Constantinople and before 1140 a monastery in that city. Also a monastery dedicated to him in Bithynia\textsuperscript{55}. Apart from Cappadocia, Athenogenes
is rarely encountered in monumental Byzantine art. The Cappadocian examples are the Chapel of the Theotokos, John the Baptist and St. George (Göreme Chapel 9), Göreme Chapel 3, St. Eustace (Göreme Chapel 11), Tokalı Kilise (New Church) - in the same row of medallions as Parthenios and Peter of Alexandria, Tahtalı Kilise (Soğanlı), Karabağ Kilise (Soğanlı), Yılanlı Kilise (Irhala) and Kirk dam altı Kilise (Belisırma). The last example may be of some interest as Kirk dam altı Kilise is the only church in Cappadocia that can definitely be attributed to Georgian patronage. Athenogenes's facial type in the Cappadocian frescoes corresponds to the one found at Bačkovo - grey hair and a broad grey beard and not the type prescribed by the Hermeneia.

7. Unidentified bishop.

The bishop holds a book (almost entirely lost) in his left hand, while the right is raised in a sign of benediction. He has a youthful face, a slight beard and curly hair. Both his hair and his beard are tinged with white. He wears a blue gown and is shown against a red background within a circular frame. No trace of the inscription survives. The bottom part of the image is lost, small areas of the face, including the eyes, have been scratched out and there has been considerable damage from rubbing and water. This bishop generally resembles Gregory of Neo-Caesarea (Thaumaturgos) and is almost identical to the depiction in the
Menologion of Basil II. However, the image is insufficiently well preserved to offer a conclusive identification.

Of the seven bishops depicted in the Bačkovo crypt apse, five can be identified with a degree of certainty. Most of these are relatively obscure bishops, who are not frequently encountered in Middle Byzantine monumental decorations. Three of the five are associated with Armenia: Athenogenes and Gregory the Illuminator are both Armenian bishops, while Paul the Confessor was martyred in Armenia. However, this does not mean that the monastery was necessarily an Armenian one and I have attempted in the choice of examples to show that all three were also commemorated in the Georgian calendar and were included in the apsidal iconographic programmes in Georgian churches. Just as the Georgian church commemorated orthodox Armenian saints, the Armenian chalcedonite church celebrated the Georgian saints. It can be noted in passing that the presence of obscure ethnic or local saints decorating the walls of a chamber where the bones of monks are stored may relate to the archaic tradition of the choice of ossuary saints. In this way it seems probable that at least some of the monks buried here are Armenians.

Apart from the seven apsidal bishops, there are another ten bust-length figures of saints in rectangular frames in the crypt naos. Four of these are bishops and are found two on each lateral wall adjoining the apse. They are slightly larger than those in the apse (each figure measures 126 x 75 cm) and placed on a slightly higher level. The general decorative pattern is main-
tained; the frames are yellow, they have alternating red and green backgrounds and no signs of illusionistic hooks, rings or nails.

North wall (Diag.B, Nos. 8-9, pl. 32).

8. Unidentified bishop.

He is shown holding a book in his left hand, while the right is fully opened and pointing to the book with a similar gesture as does Paul the Confessor. He has white hair, a white chest-length beard that comes to a single point, a straight pointed nose and wears red episcopal robes. He is shown against a green background. There is no trace of an inscription. Except for the eyes, the face is relatively well preserved. The background and drapery have suffered badly through scraping, rubbing, water damage and restoration.


The bishop lifts his right hand in a sign of benediction and supports a book in the other. Dark hair, a middle-length pointed beard, tinged with white, are all that remain from the mutilated face. The colour of the drapery is green and he is shown against a red background. The inscription has not survived. Small areas of the surface are lost including the eyes, parts of the drapery and background. Much of the figure has suffered from water damage.

South wall (Diag.B, Nos. 10-11)

10. Unidentified bishop.

With a veiled left hand the bishop supports the
bottom edge of a book and steadies it with his fully extended right hand. He has light grey receding hair, is dressed in red robes and is shown against a green background. To the left of the figure is the beginning of an inscription "O A[ΓΙΟΣ]...". It appears that the figure has been relatively well preserved until recent times when a rectangular ventilation duct was punched through the wall destroying most of the right hand side of the figure and the lower part of the head.

11. Unidentified bishop.

The surviving fragments - part of a halo, section of the book cover and small area of red background, suggest that there was a second bishop here similar to the arrangement on the opposite wall. The hole punctured through the wall has obliterated most of the figure.

The remaining six rectangularly framed figures are distributed two on the north wall and four on the west. They differ from the preceding eleven figures as none of these are bishops, but are all dressed in dark monastic robes. Otherwise, they follow the same pattern as the other figures.

North wall (Diag.A, Nos. 12-13)

12. Unidentified monastic saint.

Placed above the east-end window, the frame is on a slightly higher level than that of the two bishops closer to the apse. The image is so badly mutilated that it is difficult even to establish its exact dimensions, probably it was marginally smaller than the preceding framed
bishop. The saint has a grey-white beard and is dressed in a dark red monastic garment. He is placed against a red background. Only "δ[αι]οζ" is preserved from the inscription. Most of the lower part of the figure is lost. The face, halo and background are fragmentary and have been damaged by water, scratching, graffiti and restoration.

13. Unidentified monastic saint.

Above the west-end window there are traces of a framed saint image. Only the bottom part of the image is partially preserved showing that the figure is dressed in dark red monastic robes and against a red background. The saint may be holding a bound scroll. There are no inscriptions surviving. The head and upper half of the image are lost, the rest of the figure is badly damaged.

Grabar has suggested that a third framed figure existed above the middle window. This is unlikely. No trace of such an image survives and if one had existed it would have been inconsistent with the pattern of the colour scheme. Throughout the ossuary, on both levels, the colour backgrounds within the frames alternates between red and green, and at no time do two same colours meet. The saint over the eastern window has a red background, while the one above the western window has a green one. Should there have existed another framed figure above the central window, the colour harmony pattern on the north wall would have been disrupted.
West wall (Diag. B, Nos. 14-17, pl. 31)

Within a band of dark blue (120 cm. wide) are four yellow rectangular frames (each 114 x 70 cm.) with alternating green and red backgrounds. The arrangement is similar to that in the apse except that there are no medallions; they are monastic saints and not bishops and hold bound scrolls instead of books.

14. Unidentified monastic saint.

Only a faint trace of the head survives with the features largely undecipherable. The saint wears a dark green monastic garment and is against a red background. In his left hand he holds a bound scroll. The figure is almost totally lost.

15. Unidentified monastic saint.

Apart from a few fragments with traces of green background and dark red drapery, the figure is totally lost.

16. St. Pausikakos, of Synnada in Phrygia\(^{62}\).

The saint has greyish-white, chest-length, pointed beard and grey, longish hair. He is dressed in a dark-red monastic garment and holds a bound scroll in his left hand. The right hand is at waist height, fully opened and pointing upwards in an orans-like gesture. He is shown against a red background. Inscription:

\[\text{\textsuperscript{62}}\]
Pausikakos is a fairly obscure saint from Phrygia, who lived in the seventh century and participated in the struggle against iconoclasm. The Constantinople calendar celebrates his memory on 13 May. I have been unable to find his name in either the Georgian or Armenian calendars and he is not mentioned in Dionysius of Fourna. He is not commonly met in Middle Byzantine painting and is included in the band of medallions in the new church of Tokalı Kilise together with Athenogenes. Except for the face and lower parts of the garment, the figure is well preserved.

17. Unidentified monastic saint.

He has a grey, squarish beard, and short grey hair tinged with white. He is dressed in a dark red monastic robe, holds a bound scroll in his left hand, while the right is lifted in an orans-like gesture. He is shown against a green background. There are no surviving inscriptions, areas of the face are lost and the drapery is badly damaged through water and rubbing.

Standing saints (Diag.B, Nos. 18-24, 25-36, pl. 33)

On both the north and south walls of the crypt naos is a frieze of full-length standing figures. They are slightly larger than life (each figure is about 190 cm. high) and are shown frontally. The surviving fragments suggest that there were seven figures on the north wall and twelve on the south; the difference in number is caused by the three windows which puncture the north wall, compared
Several saints appear to be dressed in monastic garments, one as an abbot, possibly several as bishops and one as a deacon with his censor. On the north wall only the lower areas of drapery survive, while on the south, several heads are imperfectly preserved. Only St. Poimen can be identified (south wall Pl.33). His inscription reads:

\[ \text{ΠΩΜΗ} \]

Only the head and shoulders have survived. Apart from minor damage around the eyes, the face is well preserved. On the forehead he has receding white hair, the nose is straight and slightly elongated, a small mouth and a long white beard, the lower edge of which is lost. This corresponds to the description in Dionysius of Fourna - an old man with a long three-pointed beard\(^6\). Poimen was an Egyptian monastic leader, an anchorite in the desert of Sketo (+ ca. 450) who was celebrated in the Greek and Georgian calendars on 27 August\(^6\). Poimen is included in the mosaics of Hosios Lukas, where he shares a vault with Abramios, John Kalibytes and John Klobos\(^6\); otherwise he is rare in eleventh century monumental depictions.

The surviving fragments suggest a strict frontality for all figures with a background divided into two bands - a lower one of pale olive green (about 60 cm. wide - i.e. to about knee-level) and an upper one of dark blue (about 140 cm. wide). It appears that the nineteen saints were shown as a series of individual portraits, as in the
upper church, and not part of a composition depicting a liturgical service.

In his first publication on Bačkovo, Grabar noted that the large rectangular spaces on the east end of the lateral walls, immediately above the two framed bishops, was occupied by commemorative inscriptions. In 1975 there was no trace of these left.

Prophets (?) (Diag. B, Nos. 37-54).

Immediately above these figures is another band of full-length standing figures on both walls. They are best preserved on the south wall where fragments survive of the drapery suggesting that there were originally nine figures. They are all dressed in rich, flowing robes (seeming to alternate between chlamys and loros), have red slippers and most appear to hold open scrolls. There is a similar two-tone green and blue background as below. On the north wall, fragments survive only at the east end, but seem to repeat the arrangement of the south wall so exactly, as to suggest that another nine figures were also depicted on this wall.

Eighteen figures in a vault holding scrolls and dressed in flowing robes suggest that they may be prophets.

There is no trace of the decorations which occupied the summit of the vault in the crypt.

As in other surviving ossuary decorations - the choice of saints in the Bačkovo crypt includes a mixture of local and ethnic saints with whom the deceased may be identified and a selection of exemplary monastic and
ecclesiastic leaders and teachers.

Upper Church

The apse of the upper church is better preserved than the one in the crypt. There is a single-step synthonon with an episcopal throne, a free-standing stone altar and an elevated bema area. Three windows pierce the east wall, the central one above the episcopal throne (140 x 73 cm.) with two taller, narrower windows - one on either side (north 152 x 70 cm, south 159 x 71.5 cm.).

In the apsidal conch is a large Madonna and Child enthroned between two angels; below is a band of bust-length figures of bishops and the lowest band is occupied by a Melismos depiction. This arrangement is not uncommon in Middle Byzantine apsidal decorations, for example, in Tahtalı Kilise in Soğanlı - the conch is occupied by a prophetic vision, below are some bust-length figures in medallions and below that the Melismos.

At Bačkovo, the main apsidal conch image is separated from the Melismos by a band of dark blue (71 cm. wide) on which are depicted four medallions and four rectangularly-framed bust-length figures of bishops. These images differ from all other representations of saints in Bačkovo in that each frame and medallion has above it a painted ring or diamond-shaped link with a painted nail in the middle (Pl. 3 ). These attachments create the illusion that the images are literally suspended from the wall like a row of icons rather than fresco decorations. In a similar manner, in Etruscan tombs, shields, helmets and weapons are painted together with pegs and
nails to create the illusion of hanging from the walls. At Bačkovo, the painter draws special attention to these attachments. The first and last of the series (Diagram A, Nos. 1 and 8), have elaborate golden diamond-shaped links studded with pearls and coupled to the frames of the icons by painted rings, which in turn are shown as if suspended from painted nails. The other six are shown hanging from a simpler arrangement of two interlinking rings suspended from a nail.

Apsidal bishops (Diagram A, Nos. 1-8, Pls. 3a.-g.)

1. Unidentified bishop
   The face is almost entirely lost due to water damage and only a trace of a squarish white beard remains. As is common with the other bust-length bishops at Bačkovo, he wears a coloured tunic or sticharion, red in this case, gold-embroidered epimanikia studded with pearls and the simple bishop's omophorion with large black crosses. His right hand is raised in a sign of benediction while the left holds a highly ornamented book. There is no trace of an inscription; the rectangular frame has a green background and generally the image is very poorly preserved.

2. Unidentified bishop
   Again, little has survived from this figure. He has a fairly short brown beard, is dressed in a green tunic and is shown in a medallion with a red background. He holds a book in one hand and the other is raised in a sign of benediction. There are no surviving inscriptions and the figure
is faint because of water damage.

3. Unidentified bishop.
This bishop has a brown, single-point beard that is tinged with white. He wears a red tunic with a fanciful epimanikion well preserved on the right hand which is raised in a sign of benediction. The left hand supports a book. He is in a rectangular frame with a green background. A large crack goes down the centre of the figure and the top half is badly damaged by water. There is a faint trace of the lower part of an inscription which to me is illegible.

4. St. James the Brother of the Lord.
Bishops four and five are both placed within medallions which are shown on either side of the central window. The first has a red background, the second a green one.

Bishop James holds a book in his left hand and points to it with the fully extended right hand. He has curly grey hair and a wide grey beard which comes to a single point. He wears a green tunic. The crosses on the omophorion have largely faded and survive in outline only. Apart from some water damage to the face, the figure is well preserved. Inscription:

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\[\sigma\,\varepsilon\,\lambda\,\omega\,\sigma\,\tau\,\iota\,\lambda\,\kappa\,\phi\,\theta\,\epsilon\,\sigma\,\varsigma\]
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\[\sigma\,\varepsilon\,\lambda\,\kappa\,\phi\,\theta\,\epsilon\,\sigma\,\varsigma\]
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The Bačkovo type corresponds with Hermeneia description of "an old man with a long beard"\(^7\), although it should be noted that the "μακρύγενης" in monuments from the Menologion of Basil II to the Protation, Catholicon at Laura on Athos and Nicholas Orphanos in Thessalonika never gets beyond chest-length\(^7\).

James the brother of the Lord was the first bishop of Jerusalem and frequently is placed first in the list of seventy apostles\(^7\). He is commemorated in the Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars on 23 October and sometimes by the Armenian calendar on 30 June\(^7\). He is represented fairly widely in Middle Byzantine monumental cycles including the mosaics of Hosios Lukas (Diagram G, No.55); frescoes in the Cappadocian churches - Tağar and Kokar Kilise at Irhala, the 1105/06 layer at Asinou, twelfth century frescoes in the Chapel of the Virgin on Patmos, twelfth century frescoes in the lower register of the apse at Betaniya in Georgia and twelfth century frescoes at Akhtala in Armenia\(^7\). At Akhtala, St. James is included in the same row as Gregory the Enlightener of Armenia, and although the frescoes are probably of Georgian origin, they are accompanied by Greek inscriptions\(^7\).

St. James was popular both in Constantinople and in the traditional eastern areas of monasticism and had a chapel dedicated to him at the Church of the Mother of God in Chalkoprateia (about 150 m.
north-west of S. Sophia in Constantinople) and an extensive cult in Palestine.


St. Modestos is shown as bald, with a wide longish beard which comes to a point and is dressed in a red tunic. His right hand is raised in a gesture of benediction, while the left, concealed from the spectator, is apparently supporting a book. He is within a medallion with a green background. Parts of the face have been chipped out and the upper part of the figure is damaged by water.

Inscription:

\[\text{Ω} \quad \text{Δ} \quad \text{Ω} \quad \text{ΜΩΣΩΣ} \]

The Baškovo type corresponds to the "bald old man" mentioned by Dionysius of Fourna.

St. Modestos was an early seventh century bishop of Jerusalem, who rose to that position from low-monastic rank and was martyred under Maximian.

He is commemorated in the Greek and Georgian calendars on 17 and 18 December, while according to another tradition the Armenians and Georgians commemorate him together with a Bishop John of Jerusalem on 29 March. He is found in four Cappadocian churches: the new church of Tokali Kilise, Kılıçlar Kuşluk, Göreme Chapel 1 (St. Eustace) and Karabaş Kilise (where he is shown
together with Athenogenes of Armenia), but otherwise is rare in the Middle Byzantine monumental cycles.

6. Unidentified bishop.
The bishop is almost bald, with short, receding locks of hair; the lower half of the face has been badly damaged revealing the remains of a rough, brown, rush-like beard. He holds a book in both hands directly in front of him, is dressed in a green tunic and is shown in a rectangular frame with a green background. Apart from the face, the figure is well preserved. There are no surviving inscriptions.

7. Unidentified bishop.
The figure has receding black hair and broad black beard which comes to a single point. He holds a book in his left hand and the right is raised in a gesture of benediction. He wears a red tunic with well preserved omophorion and epimanikia. He is in a medallion with a green background. Apart from some water damage to the upper part of the face the figure is well preserved. There are no inscriptions surviving.

8. St. Spyridon, Bishop of Tremithus (Cyprus) + c.350.
In the final rectangular frame is Bishop Spyridon, who is shown in a green tunic, with a golden mitre (embroidered black geometric design on it), golden epimanikia and he is placed against a red background. He holds a book in his left hand and points to it with his fully extended right hand. He has a middle-length white beard which comes to
a single point and in this way differs from the "μακροδιά-λογενής" of the Hermeneia. Both eyes have been scratched out and there is some water damage to parts of the halo, otherwise the figure is very well preserved. Inscription:

St. Spyridon was a fourth century bishop in Cyprus whose life is mainly preserved in anecdotes of a legendary nature including the one concerning his participation in the debate aimed against Arius at the first ecumenical council at Nicaea. The Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars commemorate him on 12 December and his cult attracted widespread popularity. Later Spyridon became a favourite of the iconoclasts and is singled out for praise in the Theodore Psalter where the parallel is drawn between Arius and the iconoclast heretics.

St. Spyridon is well represented in Middle Byzantine monumental decorations and examples include the mosaics of Hosios Lukas, Panagia Amasgou, Monagri (Cyprus), Kılıçlar Kilise (Göreme Chapel No. 29); new church of Tokali Kilise and Ayvalı Kilise (Gülü Dere No. 4).
Illusionistically suspended images are not only unusual within the programme of decorations at Bačkovo, but are also rare in the tradition of the 'imago clipeata'. The 'imago clipeata' entered the repertoire of early Christian art probably as a borrowing from Roman funerary practice. Already by the sixth century, they were common in the iconographic programme of Byzantine apsidal decorations as found in S. Vitale, S. Catherine (Sinai) and Panagia Kanakaria. Likewise they retained their commemorative, funerary associations, as for example in the gallery of popes at S. Crisogono and S. Paola fuori le Mura in Rome. What is peculiar about the eight bust-length figures in the Bačkovo apse is the deliberate attempt made to create the illusion that the medallions and rectangles are not simply a geometric subdivision of the wall surface, but actual hanging circular and rectangular icons.

I have been able to find only seven examples of the use of 'imago clipeata' that imitate icons and none of these predates the eleventh century. The earliest is a fresco, with a group of eight rectangular icons with painted hooks, rings and nails, found on the central arch of the ceiling vault in Tahtalı Kilise in Soğanli. The paintings are crude and provincial and are dated by an inscription to 1006 or 1021. The identity of the figures depicted is not completely clear as only three of the inscriptions have survived and a fragment of a fourth. In his analysis, de Jerphanion identifies the subject as the Seven Sleepers - children of Ephesus. The difficulty in explaining why eight figures are shown is overcome by the suggestion that the eighth is their mother or that a different, more ancient...
name list was used. Restle accepts this identification but miscounts and reduces the number to seven. Apart from the difference in numbers, another difficulty which arises with the identification is that two of the three fully preserved names do not correspond with the canonised ones. While "Ἅδωβλίχος" instead of "Ἅιμβλίχος" could be interpreted as a provincial variant, "Ἀνομίδηνος" instead of "Ἀνομυσίος" is obviously a case of two different names. St. Diomedes is well represented in the Constantinople Synaxarium and Dionysius of Fourna provides a suitable iconographic candidate. This leaves only Martinianos who is not unique to the Seven Sleepers, but could refer to a number of other saints. It also remains unclear as to why eight figures in the illusionistic frames, unlike any of the other saints depicted in Tahtlı Kilise, do not have haloes nor the title "agios" in front of their names. So the unresolved problems with these figures are - their identity and whether they are saints or simply commemorative panels and the reason why these particular figures have been singled out to be placed on the illusionistic panels, against green, grey and white backgrounds in one of the most prominent positions in the church.

Chronologically, the second earliest example of the use of the illusionistic 'imago clipeata' is the series of apsidal medallions and frames belonging to the 1074-83 layer of frescoes in the Bachkovo Church apse. The third example is in the north-west chapel of the Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi. The main frescoes at Nerezi are dated by a marble lintel inscription to 1164, while the frescoes in the north-west chapel are by a different master;
they are thought to be contemporary\textsuperscript{93}. The function of this chapel is unknown. An excavation in 1971 failed to find any trace of a tomb, nor is there an altar\textsuperscript{94}. In the chapel there are six rectangularly framed saint images (four on the west wall and two on the north) each measuring 64 x 42 cm. and also one large medallion of St. Tryphon (130 cm. diameter). Two of the saints on the west wall can be identified as SS. Victor and Vikentios, while on the north wall are SS. Blasios and Mamas. It is only on the St. Blasios frame that a nail, ring and string attachment is still visible and some trace can be seen on the frame of St. Mamas. The other four, although well preserved, have no indication that they were painted as suspended illusionistic images. Both Blasios and Mamas are given a distinctly "pastoral" role as protectors of the flocks - each holds a shepherd's crook and Blasios has a ram in his arms\textsuperscript{95}. St. Tryphon also holds a shepherd's crook suggesting that this chapel may have been connected with prayers associated with husbandry.

The fourth example is the thirteenth century series of eight rectangularly framed bust-length figures in the apse of the catholicon at Žiča. The arrangement here is also the closest parallel with Bačkovo. The Bačkovo icons are immediately above the Melismos, at Žiča they are directly below. In both churches there are eight apsidal images, each is shown as if suspended by an elaborate, pearl studded ring which is shown hanging from a painted nail, and in both cases the series are shown against a dark blue background. At Bačkovo and Žiča, all the figures are bust-length depictions of bishops.
holding gospel books. Both series look out at a monumental Koimesis on the west wall and both churches have funerary associations. St. James, the brother of our Lord, is common to both series.

At Ziča, seven of the eight bishops can be identified through their inscriptions. They are SS. Metrophanes, Methodios, Nicephoros, Tarasios, James, the brother of our Lord, Proclas and Phocas. The three bishops grouped together in the centre of the apsidal wall - Methodios, Nicephoros and Tarasios, are all closely linked with the struggle against the iconoclasts. A local oral tradition in Ziča explains the illusionistic icon device in terms of an old tradition where triumphant Orthodoxy placed its champions as painted icons in the apse to signify the victory of the iconoclasts. However this does not explain the inclusion of the four other identified bishops, who considerably predate iconoclasm. It may be significant that no examples of the illusionistic 'imago clipeata' are known from the period before the end of iconoclasm.

One further tentative comparison can be drawn between Ziča and Backovo. Bishop James - found in both churches, is of a very similar type in both depictions. The depiction of St. Nicephoros at Ziča corresponds very closely to the unidentified bishop at Backovo, our No. 6. In both cases it is an old man with a balding forehead with several locks of hair and a brown rush-like beard which corresponds to the "γέρων βουρλογένης" in the Dionysius of Fourna. Likewise St. Tarasios at Ziča is very similar to Backovo bishop No. 3. Both have a mop of whitish-brown
hair and a rather short beard which comes to a single point. Dionysius of Fourna gives only a general description of "an old man with a pointed beard". Although these identifications for the Baćkovo bishops must remain tentative, the parallel is quite interesting.

The fifth example is the so-called "Icons Chapel" in the Kalenderhane in Constantinople. Adjoining the eastern part of the diaconicon is a hall from which leads a western chamber - a rectangular room covered with a half barrel vault. Neither the structural history of this chamber nor its function is clear. Inside the chamber are seven simulated painted representations of rectangularly framed icons showing bust-length figures of male saints. They are arranged: three on the north wall and two each on the south and west walls. The figures on the north wall are identified by their inscriptions as SS. John Climacus, John Damascene and Cosmas the poet. Although no inscriptions survive on the south wall, Striker and Kuban have suggested the names of SS. Anthony and Onuphrius. While the figures on the west wall are almost totally lost. Each frame is shown as if hanging from an iron ring supported by a nail in the wall. The chamber was probably painted towards the end of the thirteenth century.

In the choice of saints for the Icon chapel the emphasis again seems to have been placed on iconoclasts with two of the three positively identified saints, John Damascene and Cosmas of Maiuma, being the two great hymnographers who defended icon worship.
The sixth example, is the bema area of the Taxiarches Metropoleos in Kastoria. Here, there is a series of eight rectangular frames containing bust-length representations of early martyrs and bishops. They are painted above the side arches of the bema area and above each frame is an inverted J-shaped hook which goes over a painted rail running the full length of the apse. The saints are SS. Plato, Porphyrios, Samonas and Abibos on the north wall and SS. Antipas of Pergamum, Eleutherios, Gregory of Neo-Caesarea and Clemes of Rome on the south. The frescoes belong to the 1359-60 layer\textsuperscript{103}.

The final example is even of a later date than the one at Kastoria. On the west wall of the church of the Holy Virgin at Studenica, alongside the famous Crucifixion, survives one of what undoubtedly was a pair, of rectangularly framed painted icons\textsuperscript{104}. The icon is of St. John Calybita and is shown suspended by an ornamental ring and chain from a painted nail. Although the Crucifixion itself dates from the 1208/09 layer, the St. John icon is found in that segment which was re-painted in 1569\textsuperscript{105}. It appears that most of the sixteenth century re-painting followed the iconography of the earlier layer, but in this instance it would be difficult to know if such details as a picture hook were faithfully repeated or invented.

The surviving examples suggest that the 'imago clipeata' as an illusionistic image representing an icon only appeared on church walls in the post-iconoclastic period and did not have a widespread popularity. It is
difficult to conclude if this pictorial form was strictly a decorative device or had originally some historical significance. At least in the earlier examples, this device was used to draw special attention to specific figures who in some instances were active in the struggle against iconoclasm. To place on icons in an apse, champions of icon-worship, may have been a tradition which lies behind the apsidal images at Bačkovo.

Still in the bema area of the upper Church at Bačkovo, on either lateral wall is a recessed, round-headed niche (162 x 65 cm., with the base 104 cm. above floor level), each containing a bust-length figure of a deacon. The wall area surrounding the niche is painted with a blue and white floral pattern on a yellow background. The niche itself is outlined with thick red ochre lines. Within each niche a deacon is shown on a dark blue background and below him are painted two simulated-marble panels.

9. St. Stephen, the deacon protomartyr (Diagram A, No. 9, pl. 5a.)

In the niche in the north wall is St. Stephen. He is shown as a beardless youth with a rounded curly mop of brown hair. He holds a cross in one hand (largely scratched out) while the other hand is draped with red cloth and supports an ornamented pyxis. He is dressed in a white deacon's tunic with a purple collar and a stole over his shoulder. Despite some losses on the face, the figure is well preserved. Inscription:
The Бяково figure corresponds to the beardless youth mentioned in the Hermeneia. This first century Jerusalem martyr was widely celebrated in the Church and had several feast days, the main one being on 27 December and is commemorated on that day in the Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars. St. Stephen is well represented in Middle Byzantine monuments. There is a famous early tenth century relief of him at Aghtamar. He occurs frequently in the monumental decorations of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and examples include Daphni, Hosios Lukas, Nea Moni and the Chapel of the Virgin on Patmos, Vardzia (1184-86) in Georgia and at Tahtlı Kilise in Cappadocia.

10. St. Euplos (Diagram A, No.10)

The figure of St. Euplos on the south wall resembles very closely that of St. Stephen opposite it. Again it is a beardless youth with a brown mop of curly hair holding a cross in one hand and a pyxis in the other. The costume is similar to that of St. Stephen. Inscription:
79.

Iconographically, the type in the Hermeneia is identical to that of St. Stephen\textsuperscript{114}. This early martyr was almost as popular as St. Stephen and in the Greek and Armenian calendars appears on 11 August, while in the Georgian on 12 August. St. Euplos is fairly frequently depicted in eleventh and twelfth century church cycles including Daphni, Vodoča\textsuperscript{116}, the Church of the Holy Anargyroi in Kastoria (where in a similar manner to Bačkovo he accompanies St. Stephen)\textsuperscript{117} and at Vardzia in Georgia\textsuperscript{118}.

Outside the bema area there are another nine bust-length figures of saints. Six of them are on pilasters, three on each lateral wall (Diagram A, Nos. 11-16). None of these figures has survived in its entirety nor has any inscription. With the collapse of the ceiling vault the upper parts of all the figures were damaged. The best preserved are on the south wall and taken together with the surviving fragments on the north it can be reconstructed that the six figures are all warrior saints - holding either weapons or martyr crosses and all are dressed in golden coats of chain mail with blue, green or red cloaks. They are all placed in rectangular frames with alternating red and green backgrounds, which in turn are shown against the deep blue of the pilasters.

The other three bust-length figures are found on the north wall above a large niche. The two outer ones are in rectangular frames with green backgrounds, while the central one is a medallion with a red background. Grabar identified the group as SS. Cosmas, Damian and Panteleimon\textsuperscript{119}. 
SS. Cosmas and Damian (Diagram A, Nos.17,18, Pl.14)
Placed in the outer rectangular frames, no inscriptions have survived accompanying these figures. Grabar's identification is confirmed as each saint holds a lancet - a surgical instrument used chiefly for bleeding and a frequent attribute of SS. Cosmas and Damian¹²⁰. St. Cosmas (on the right) has a short pointed beard, wears a red cloak and holds a lancet in one hand and a closed book in the other. Colours are faint and details are difficult to distinguish owing to water damage. The lower part of the frame is lost - its present measurements are 56 x 46 cm., while the original measurements were 64 x 46 cm. The figure of St. Damian is very faint and the only details discernible are a slightly black beard, the lancet and a red cloak.

He is shown as a beardless youth holding a martyr's cross directly in front of his chest¹²¹. Again the figure is badly faded and paint has peeled away in places. He wears a red tunic and a green cloak. Inscription:

\[ \text{Ἡ Ἐ Ν Τ } \delta \; \alpha \gamma [\gamma \lambda \kappa \omicron \sigma \varsigma ] \; \text{ΠΑΝΤΕΛΕΗΜΩΝ} \]

All three holy physicians were immensely popular both in the East and West¹²². Although all three were commemorated in the Greek, Armenian and
Georgian calendars, nowhere are they commemorated on the same day\textsuperscript{12,13}. Also, while very popular in Byzantine art, the three are not frequently found grouped together as in Bačkovo. Where the three physicians are together, they are usually accompanied by other physicians as in S. Maria Antiqua\textsuperscript{124}, Karanlık Kilise, Karabaş Kilise (Soğanlı) and Direkli Kilise (Belisirama)\textsuperscript{125}, Asinou and St. Clement in Ohrid\textsuperscript{126}.

Apart from the nineteen bust-length figures of saints at least another sixteen full-length saints were included in the original iconographic programme for the naos of the church (Diagram A, Nos. 20-35). Six of these were placed on pilasters, another two at the west end of each lateral wall and six on the west wall, three on either side of the doorway. All sixteen figures share a common two-tone background, with the lower third a dark olive green and the upper two thirds dark blue.

\textbf{20,21. Two unidentified saints.}

The two standing saints on the east-end pilaster on the north and south walls have been totally obliterated. A wooden iconostasis of a late date (dismantled early this century) was attached to the two pilasters and reached up to a height of 293 cm. Only the warrior saint images above this survived the devastation.

\textbf{22,23 SS. Euthymios and Sabbas}

On the centre pilaster on the lateral walls are the two early monastic leaders.
22. St. Euthymios (south wall). (Pl. 21)

He is shown as an old man with a long white beard (almost to the waist) which comes to a single point. He is dressed in the vestments of a monk - a long dark olive green tunic, the scapular and a dark green mantle. His right hand is raised in a gesture of benediction, the left holds a scroll on which is a partly legible inscription. Much of the colour has faded and peeled and the top part of the head is mutilated. The full height of the figure is 180cm. The Bačkovo St. Euthymios does not fully correspond to the bald old man with thigh-length beard mentioned in the Hermeneia. The length of Euthymios' beard grew gradually, in the Theodore Psalter (1066) it is only chest-length, at Bačkovo (1074-83) it reaches the waist-line, while in the Kariye Camii mosaics (c.1320) it is shown in the required position reaching down to the thighs. Inscriptions:

\[ \text{Inscription on scroll:} \]

\[ \text{+ ΑΔΕΛΦΟΙ} \]

\[ \text{Brethren, the arms of the monks are study, prayer, discretion, humility and obedience to God.)} \]

Euthymios was an Armenian, born in Melitene of
Armenian parents. After being ordained a priest in Armenia, he left for Palestine where he spent the following 68 years, dying at the age of 95. St. Euthymios is regarded by the Church as one of the greatest of the monastic fathers of Palestine and as a major Armenian chalcedonite saint. He was a friend of St. Simeon Stylite and his most famous disciple was St. Sabbas. Our most reliable account of his life is by Cyril of Scythopolis written about forty years after the saint's death.

The Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars all commemorate Euthymios on 20 January following Cyril of Scythopolis who mentions his death on 20 January 473. St. Euthymios is frequently encountered in Middle Byzantine monastic iconographic programmes and is included at Hosios Lukas, Nea Moni and Patmos.

23. St. Sabbas (north wall). (Pl.22)

He is dressed in a dark red tunic, with a light-brown scapular and a yellow(?) mantle and closely resembles in stance St. Euthymios on the opposite wall - with one hand raised in benediction, the other holding an open scroll. The head is badly mutilated and appears to have a shortish beard divided into two parts. The figure is much damaged by water, rubbing and scratching and the colours are faded and lost in areas. The figure is 190 cm. high. Inscriptions:

0 ΑΓΙΟΣ ΚΑΒ - ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΕΑΒ ΒΑΣ
The eight line inscription on the scroll is largely illegible. The second last line reads
\[\text{Α ΔΗΛΦ - - 0 H -}\]
which does not correspond with the inscription in the Hermeneia\(^{137}\).

St. Sabbas was the founder of the Grand Lavra in Palestine\(^{138}\) and occupies a key position in Armenian-Palestinian monastic relations. At the Grand Lavra, St. Sabbas helped to organise facilities for the liturgy to be celebrated in Armenian in "ἐν τῷ μικρῷ εὐκατηρίῳ"\(^{139}\) and the Armenians who participated in the building of the catholicon were given special privileges\(^{140}\) and separate parts of the liturgy were to be performed in Armenian, while the Georgians and Syrians were not to perform the liturgy in their native languages\(^{141}\). St. Sabbas is closely linked with his Armenian teacher St. Euthymios.

Again our main source is Cyril of Scythopolis who gives his date of death as 5 December 532 and this is preserved in the Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars. St. Sabbas is well represented in Middle Byzantine frescoes and mosaics including Hosios Lukas, Nea Moni\(^{142}\), Monreale Cathedral\(^{143}\) and Tahtali Kilise\(^{144}\). Often he is shown in association with St. Euthymios, as mentioned in the Hermeneia and in the 1105/06 layer at Asinou\(^{145}\).

24,25. SS. Simeon and Daniel

On the west-end pilasters are depicted two
stylist saints. Each is shown on top of a marble pillar, with a floral ornamental capital, retained by a neat white rectangular balustrade. Only a bust-length figure of the saint is visible above the capital.\textsuperscript{146}

24. St. Simeon the Stylite (north wall) (Pl.20)
A very poorly preserved figure who appears to be hooded and with a short beard. One hand is raised, the other holds a book. The main colour of the saint's robes is a red ochre, the capital of the column is green and the column itself is painted simulated multi-coloured marble. The figure is mainly decipherable by examining the incisions, much of the painted surface is lost. Height of saint with the column is 200 cm.

Inscription:

\[
\text{ὁ ἄγιος Σωμέων ὁ τείχιστος}
\]

St. Simeon the Stylite, the elder, was a fifth century saint who was the first and the most famous of the pillar ascetics. Selecting this most extrovert method of isolation, he became a spiritual force in the monastic world and had many imitators.\textsuperscript{148} He is commemorated in the Greek calendar on 26 July, in the Armenian 26 May, and in the Georgian on 27 July. He is found fairly frequently in Middle Byzantine monumental programmes, including Nea Moni, in Cappadocia in St. Eustace, Beli Kilise I and II, Tahtali Kilise and Saklı Kilise, in
Georgia at Udabno and Zemo-Krikhi and at Koutsovendis in Cyprus.

25. Hosios Daniel the Stylite. (Pl.19a.-b.)
The upper two-thirds of Daniel's face is lost, what remains is long white hair and a long white beard whose point disappears into the capital of the column. His arms are raised in an orans position. Dionysius of Fourna simply describes St. Daniel as an old man with a pointed beard. He is dressed in a green garment. Apart from the damage to the head and base of the column the figure is relatively well preserved. The height of the saint including the column is 190 cm. Inscription:

The inscription at Bačkovo retains the more archaic "hosios" form in front of the saint's name. This is common to a number of eleventh century and early twelfth century monuments including the Holy Anargiroi at Kastoria, the Theodore Psalter and hagiographical texts such as MS. Bibl. de la Ville Leipzig, CLXXXVII; MS. Bibl. Imp. Vienna, Hist. gr. 31; MS Bod. Laud. gr. 69 and MS. Bibl. Nat. Paris 1451. By the twelfth century "agios" becomes more frequently used as in the frescoes of the Church of Panagia Mauriotissa in Kastoria, the mosaics at Monreale, and is used fairly exclusively in later monuments and is found in that form in the Hermeneia.
St. Daniel was a Syrian by birth who to some extent took over from St. Simeon, after the latter's death in 459, and until his own death in 493; from his column he gave spiritual guidance and meddled in imperial politics. He is commemorated in the Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars on 11 December.  

26,27 SS. Paul the Theban and Makarios the Egyptian. At the west-end of the south wall there are two standing saints with white beards, holding scrolls and who are famous Egyptian hermits.

26. St. Paul the Theban. (Pl. 18a.-b.)

The saint's face is badly damaged, he has shoulder-length white hair and a long white beard which ends in a single point at about the middle of his chest. He wears a long yellow tunic on which, in ochre, is drawn a checkered pattern - somewhat resembling a woven rush mat. He wears a monastic scapular whose apron hangs down to the feet. The arms are bare, the right is damaged but apparently raised in benediction, the left holds a scroll on which there is a poorly preserved inscription. The central part of the face and the feet are lost. Total height 175 cm. Inscriptions:

\[\text{St. Paul the Theban, an early fourth century hermit, occupies a central position in the} \]
legendary origins of Egyptian monasticism. Versions of his life are heavily embroidered, the version of Jerome includes satyrs, centaurs and grave-digging lions, while the Greek MSS are no less fanciful. St. Paul is commemorated on a number of days in January - the principal one in the Greek calendar is 15 January, the Armenian 17 January and the Georgian 18 January. The Bakovo St. Paul is very close in date to the creation of a new iconographic type for the saint with his long white beard and rush mat garment described in the Hermeneia and which became very popular in late Byzantine and post-Byzantine art. In the undated frescoes on Khirbet Mird (Kastellion) in the ossuary of St. Euthymios, in the photographs published by Mader - the lower part of the saint's head is lost, but he is dressed in what appears to be a dark, single-garment monastic robe, identical to the one worn by the other saints depicted. In a late seventh century relief on the Ruthwell Cross, which Saxl convincingly argues is a copy of an earlier Byzantine relief, SS. Paul the Theban and Anthony are both shown dressed in monastic vestments. On an icon at St. Catherine's on Mt. Sinai, which Weitzmann dates to the middle of the tenth century and ascribes to a Constantinople origin, St. Paul wears the regular monastic robes - a brown long tunic, black scapular and a dark red mantle; he is almost bald and has a long two-strand beard. In the Menologion of Basil II and an eleventh
St. Paul is still shown dressed as a monk\textsuperscript{170}. The representation of St. Paul in a garment of palm leaves, as described in most versions of his Vita\textsuperscript{171}, I have been unable to find in monuments pre-dating Bačkovo. The type is encountered in a Syrian Psalter of 1203, BM Add. 7154 fol. 1, and in an undated, possibly thirteenth or fourteenth century, Coptic icon in Cairo\textsuperscript{172}. In later Byzantine representations the type became quite widespread, the beard became slightly longer and usually reached the waist. Examples include Monreale, the frescoes in the old narthex at Mileševo, St. Nicholas Orphanos and later depictions on Athos\textsuperscript{173}.

27. St. Makarios the Egyptian. (Pl. 18a.)

The saint's white beard and hair flow down to his feet obscuring his nakedness. He holds a scroll in one hand on which the inscription is illegible, and points to it with the other. The face and the lower parts of the figure are largely lost.

Total height of the figure is 178 cm. Inscription:

\begin{verbatim}
0 M A
A K A
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
0 P 0
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
0 \delta a\gamma l\omicron\omicron\upsilon\\upsilon\omicron\sigma\mu\alpha\gamma\alpha\rho\omicron\omicron\upsilon\sigma\zeta\upsilon\omicron
\end{verbatim}

St. Makarios, following the example of St. Anthony, withdrew into the wilderness of Sketis and stayed there for about sixty years, dying c.390. The Greek and Armenian calendars commemorate Makarios
on 19 January, while the Georgian on 21 October. The Hermeneia is very general on Makarios's appearance "γέρων πολλά". The type found at Bačkovo is not characteristic of Middle Byzantine depictions. In tenth and eleventh century depictions including the Menologion of Basil II, twice in the Theodore Psalter and in the mosaics in Hosios Lukas, Makarios is shown fully dressed in a monastic tunic, the scapular and a mantle, and has a white chest-length beard. Likewise this clothed, short-bearded St. Makarios is common to eleventh century Georgian iconography as found in the eleventh century synaxarium (so-called Euthymios the Athonite, Synaxarium) Tbilissi Cod. A-648. This type continues into the twelfth century and is found in the mosaics at Palermo and Monreale, and as late as the frescoes in the narthex at Hagia Sophia at Trebizond.

At the end of the twelfth century, in the frescoes in the naos of the hermitage of St. Neophytos, St. Makarios is shown naked, except for a leaf arrangement concealing his groin, with a beard down to his navel. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Bačkovo type — with the hair and beard going down to the feet, is found in the frescoes of the funerary section of the "old narthex" at Mileševo (c. 1234); Olympiotissa in Elasson (c. 1296); the early fourteenth century frescoes by Damiane at Ubisi and those by Theophanes the Greek at the Church of the Saviour of the Transfiguration at Novgorod (1378). In the fifteenth
and sixteenth centuries, there is a great wealth of examples of this type on Athos and in Slavonic frescoes, panel-painting and illumination. In the depiction of SS. Paul the Theban and Makarios of Egypt, the Bačkovo painter was very close to the source of the creation of a new iconographic type for these saints which at the time was uncharacteristic for Constantinople.

28,29. SS. Arsenios and Ephraim the Syrian (Pl.23)

Opposite SS. Paul and Makarios, on the north wall are SS. Arsenios and Ephraim, dressed as monks and holding scrolls. Unlike the two preceding saints, who were hermits, these two saints were monks who set the example for the monastic communities of Egypt and Mesapotamia.


He has a rounded, curly head of white hair and a fairly long white beard which divides into four distinct strands at about the middle of the chest. He holds a scroll in one hand (with a poorly preserved inscription) and points to it with his right hand. He wears a long green tunic, a light brown or possibly yellow scapular and a dark red mantle. Most of the face has been scratched out and colours have faded considerably with small areas of drapery lost altogether. Total height of the figure 175 cm.

Inscriptions:

Scroll: Of the six line inscription, only the first and second last lines are legible
i.e. Brethren, struggle for the goal you have set yourself, without neglecting your salvation.

In the Hermeneia, St. Arsenios is described as an old man with curly hair and a wide beard, while the number of strands of his beard is not specified, usually he has four or five.

St. Arsenios the Great is an almost legendary character in Egyptian monasticism and his late biographers made him a tutor to the sons of Emperor Theodosius I to stress his learning. He had a reputation as a man of silence, who spoke only a few words and they dealt with moral and spiritual matters. He died ca. 445. The Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars all commemorate him on 8 May.

In the revival of monastic saints on the walls of eleventh and twelfth century churches, St. Arsenios is well represented. He is included in the mosaics at Hosios Lukas, the frescoes at Asinou and in four churches in Cappadocia.

29. St. Ephraim the Syrian.

The saint has white curly hair and a short, sparse beard. He wears a cowl and a red mantle and a darker red long tunic underneath. In one hand he
holds a scroll, the other is raised in benediction. Generally the colour is much faded and the figure is largely preserved in incised outline only. The total height of the figure is 176 cm. Inscription:

Scroll. A five line inscription, with second and fifth lines legible __ΦΔΩΣ/ΠΛΗΡΗΣ'Α i.e. [ματα]στροφ[η]ς and παρ(ρ)πα(ς)α may be part of an inscription reading ΔΡΧΗ ΚΑΤΑΣΤΡΟΦΗΣ ΜΟΝΑΧΟΥ γέλος και παροποία, i.e. The beginning of a monk's ruin are laughter and license of tongue.

St. Ephraim was a hymnographer and theologian of the fourth century church (died 373), whose influence on Syrian and Egyptian monasticism was considerable. He is commemorated in the Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars on 28 January.

The Hermeneia description of St. Ephraim as an old man, beardless by nature, with sparse hair does not correspond to the early tradition of depicting Ephraim with a short beard and wearing a cowl as found at Bačkovo. The Bačkovo type is characteristic of tenth, eleventh and early twelfth century examples including the Menologion of Basil II, a tenth century Sinai icon triptych, the Theodore Psalter, mosaics of Hosios Lukas and Nea Moni, an eleventh century Sinai icon, and an eleventh century Syrian manuscript and in the 1105/06 layer of
frescoes at Asinou. In twelfth century examples a beardless St. Ephraim appears; he gains considerable popularity in the thirteenth and fourteenth century depictions, although as late as Boiana and Nicholas Orphanos, the bearded saint is still encountered. In late depictions St. Ephraim enjoyed a considerable popularity.

30-32 SS. Euthymios, Hilarion and George the Iberians.

On the west wall, on the north side of the doorway, are three of the monastic fathers of the Georgian church. (Pl. 16a.)

30. St. Euthymios the Iberian. (Pl. 16.b)

He has receding hair with curls of white hair on the sides of his head and a broad beard which comes to a single point at about the middle of his chest. The eyes have been scratched out. He is dressed in a long green tunic, a brown scapular whose apron hangs down to his knees, and a dark red mantle. In his left hand he holds a scroll and points to it with his right. The lower parts of the figure have been damaged by water, otherwise the figure is well preserved. Total height 173 cm. Inscription:

Euthymios, together with John, were founders of
the Iviron monastery on Athos. The Life of John and Euthymios was composed less than twenty years after the latter's death and contains many anecdotal details and episodes. Euthymios was the abbot of Iviron and a prolific translator of patristic texts. He is commemorated on 13 May, which is the day of his death in 1028 in Constantinople.

Early depictions of St. Euthymios are rare and include the early eleventh century frescoes in the refectory at Udabno, early thirteenth century frescoes at Akhtala in Armenia and in a fourteenth century Georgian menologion.

31. St. Hilarion the Iberian.

The saint has receding white hair and a short squarish beard, his hands are raised in front of his chest in an orans-like gesture. He wears a light pink long tunic, a dark red mantle with cowl loosely draped over his shoulders and a scapular whose brown apron hangs down to his knees and is decorated with white lines and crosses. The face has been almost entirely scratched out, generally colours are rather faint from water damage and rubbing. Total height of the figure is 172 cm.

Inscription:

\[ \text{Inscription:} \]

\[ \text{\textit{\`I}λαριων} \]

\[ \text{[\`I]Βη[δος] $^{206}$} \]
St. Hilarion is a relatively obscure Georgian saint (822-875) who started life as a desert hermit, then founded various monasteries including one at Olympus in Bithynia, where he spent about five years. He visited both Constantinople and Rome and died in Thessalonika on 19 November, where his disciples established a small oratory. There appear to be three main lives of Hilarion edited by Sabinin, Peeters and Qubanéišvili, all of which disagree on various details.

Depictions of St. Hilarion are rare outside of Georgia. Sabinin claims to have seen an image of St. Hilarion in Ag. Demetrios in Thessalonika in 1882. He is included in the early thirteenth century layer of frescoes in Akhtala (in the same row as St. Euthymios) and is shown together with St. Euthymios in the fourteenth century menologion.

32. St. George the Iberian

The saint's facial type resembles that of St. Nicholas of Myra - bald with a rounded white beard. His right hand is raised in a sign of benediction in front of his chest, in his left he holds a scroll with no surviving inscription. He is dressed in a light green long tunic, a scapular with a brown apron and a dark red mantle. The figure has been pierced with a sharp object in the face, right hand and on the scroll, the colours on parts of the drapery are very faint. Total height of the figure is 169 cm. Inscription:
St. George the Iberian was an abbot of Iviron and his Vita was composed by his disciple, Giorgi the Little, about five years after the saint's death. Historically he is remembered as a strong defender of the autocephaly of the Georgian church. He substantially rebuilt the catholicon at Iviron, established a new typicon, wrote a major work on the Lives of the Georgian saints and was a copious translater of church literature. He died on 29 June 1065.  

St. George is rarely encountered in early monumental decorations and is found together with SS. Euthymios and Hilarion on the monuments mentioned above.

When Grabar noted the depiction of St. Euthymios the Iberian, he saw him simply as another representative of monasticism included at Bačkovo. More recently, Bakalova, in an article entitled "The representation of Georgian saints in the Bačkovo Ossuary" attempts to relate the presence of Georgian saints to the problem of the ktitor's nationality and concludes that the choice of saints not only indicates the ktitor's nationality, but also highlights the struggle of the Georgian Church for its independence from the Greek Church. This argument is not particularly valid. Firstly, SS. Euthymios and George the Iberian are both remembered as church reformers who introduced Greek texts, typica and liturgical reforms in
accordance with the Greek rite and in their struggle won the support of the Byzantine emperors. Secondly, Armenian saints are even more numerous in the programme at Bačkovo than are the Georgians, while SS. Euthymios the Great and Sabbas were considered as Armenian chalcedonite saints and could be used as an argument for an Armenian nationality for the ktitor. Thirdly, the Armenian chalcedonites, as we have noted, include Georgian saints in their calendar, and being very sensitive to charges of monophysite heresy, closely clung to the Georgian Church for protection, while the Georgian calendar commemorated Armenian chalcedonite saints.

The only conclusion that we can come to concerning the inclusion of the Georgian saints, is that in the programme of saints, representatives of Palestinian, Egyptian, Syrian, Greek, Armenian and Georgian monasticism are included.

33-35. SS. Ioannikios, Auxentios and Stephen the Younger.

The three other saints on the west wall, on the other side of the doorway, are all hermit monks from Bithynia. Two of them, Ioannikios and Stephen the Younger, were active opponents of iconoclasm.

33. St. Ioannikios.

Wearing a light red tunic, a brown scapular with two black lines down the centre of the apron and a grey-green mantle, St. Ioannikios holds a scroll between two hands diagonally in front of him. He has short, rounded, curly white hair and a broad white beard which comes to a single point at chest-height. The eyes have been scratched out and
areas of the drapery have been lost through rubbing (the figure is at the edge of the doorway), water damage and clumsy restoration. Total height of the figure is 174 cm. Inscription:

\[ \text{[Δ Ἱοάννης]} \]

After a satisfactory career in the Byzantine army for about twenty years, Ioannikios first became a monk and then a hermit on the Bithynian Olympus. With the conversion to monasticism Ioannikios became a strong iconoclude. From the Bithynian monasteries of Agauros and Antidion he appealed for moderation (in influential quarters) in the treatment of iconoclasts after the victory of Orthodoxy in 842. He died on 3 November 846, but owing to a scribal error is celebrated on 3 and 4 November.220

Ioannikios is not frequently encountered in Middle Byzantine frescoes and mosaics and my only examples are a mosaic in Hosios Lukas, a fresco in the crypt of Hosios Lukas and a twelfth century fresco on Patmos.221 The Bačkovo type is identical to the one found in the menologion of Basil II222 and in the Theodore Psalter223, rather than the one with a longer beard and bare arms and feet that is described in the Hermeneia224.

34. St. Auxentios
Receding dark hair and a short pointed beard is all that remains from this saint's head. He wears a
long white tunic and a brown scapular, the apron of which goes down below the knees, and a very long dark red mantle buttoned at the top and bottom and opened at the waist by the hands. The right hand is raised up to the shoulder in a sign of benediction, the other holds a scroll with no surviving signs of an inscription. The figure is badly damaged round the head and areas of the drapery are lost. The total height of the figure is 175 cm. Inscription:

\[ \text{σ Ἀὐσεντίους} \]

St. Auxentios was a Syrian born in about 420 and served in the Imperial Guard in Constantinople before becoming a hermit. Initially he had monophysite leanings but eventually after the Council of Chalcedon embraced Orthodoxy and was especially venerated by the Armenian chalcedonites. The place of his retreat near Chalcedon was renamed by the Byzantines as Mount Auxentios (probably today's military base at Kayışdağ 12 km. south-east of Kadıköy) and became an important monastic centre which attracted numerous monks including St. Stephen the Younger. St. Auxentios died on 14 February 473 and is commemorated on that day by the Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars. The Greek Synaxarium also mentions him on 28 November,
together with St. Stephen the Younger\textsuperscript{227}.

In the Middle Byzantine art there are two saints named Auxentios - one is in the group of the five martyrs, SS. Eustratios, Auxentios, Eugenios, Mardarios and Orestes - the so-called "Armenian martyrs" who died under Diocletian and are commemorated on 13 December. The other is the holy monk from Bithynia, sometimes referred to as St. Auxentios the Great. Dionysius of Fourna describes both as old men with pointed beards\textsuperscript{228}. The second saint is differentiated from the first by his monastic vestments and in later representations is shown together with a mountain. While the five martyrs are very common in Middle Byzantine art, the monastic Auxentios is quite rare. My only eleventh century examples are the two depictions of the saint in the Theodore Psalter, which correspond closely to the type at Bačkovo\textsuperscript{229}.

35. St. Stephen the Younger

The saint has short brown hair and a short pointed brown beard. He wears a pale green tunic, a brown scapular and a dark red mantle. He holds in his hands an icon, on which remain only faint traces of a single figure, and a scroll with a largely illegible inscription. The saint is relatively well preserved except for some damage to the eyes and the loss of areas of drapery. Total height of the figure is 174 cm. Inscriptions:
Scroll. Of the nine line inscription only the following is decipherable

\[\text{πιον} \quad \text{μη} \quad \text{τον} \quad \text{μονιμον} \quad \text{Χριστον} \ldots\]

i.e. of our Lord Jesus Christ, which could refer to a number of inscriptions associated with St. Stephen. St. Stephen was born in Constantinople of a wealthy family, but abandoned himself to monasticism. He became an abbot of the St. Auxentios monastery near Chalcedon from where he was vocal in his opposition to the iconoclasts. He was martyred under Constantine V in 764 and was canonized shortly after the victory of Orthodoxy and had an oratory in Constantinople. He is commemorated in the Greek calendar on 28 November, in the Armenian on 29 November and in the Georgian on 10 April.

The Bačkovo St. Stephen corresponds exactly to the Hermeneia description of a young man with a pointed beard holding an icon of Christ in one hand and a scroll in the other. Apparently this iconographic type was not fully established by the eleventh century. In the menologia, such as that
of Basil II of the late tenth century\textsuperscript{234} or on the Sinai icon of the second half of the eleventh century\textsuperscript{235} a scene of beheading is shown. The Barberini Psalter (Vatican gr. 372 fol.145\textsuperscript{r}) which probably can be dated to 1092\textsuperscript{236} shows St. Stephen simply as a monk in prayer, while in a mosaic in Hosios Lukas his only attribute is the martyr's cross\textsuperscript{237}. However, in the menologion Bibl. Nat. Paris gr. 580, which was copied by the monk Euthymios in 1055/56, St. Stephen holds an icon\textsuperscript{238}; in the Theodore Psalter of 1066 he holds a diptych with Christ and the Virgin\textsuperscript{239}; and in the frescoes at Vodoča, which Miljkovic-Pepek dates to the end of the eleventh century, he also holds a diptych. By the twelfth century and in later depictions St. Stephen is rarely separated from his attribute, for example, the hermitage of St. Neophytos, Studenica, Omorphi Ecclissia (Athens) and Sopočani\textsuperscript{241}.

In the narthex of the upper church there is again an extensive programme of saints. Except for the east wall, which contains the enormous "Vision of Ezekiel" below which are the Virgin and Child, apostles Peter and Paul and two archangels (which I will discuss separately below), individual images of saints entirely make up the decorations. In the original appearance of the ossuary—the four arches on the lateral walls of the upper narthex were open and so was the large arch of the west wall, so the narthex had a portico-like appearance and was well illuminated\textsuperscript{242}.

As elsewhere in the ossuary, the wall space in the
Narthex is divided by thick red ochre lines into horizontal bands - about 160 cm. wide on the west wall and about 250 cm. wide on the lateral walls. The lower third of the bottom band is painted in dark olive green, while the rest is in dark blue. On the west walls all three bands have been preserved (with a total height of just under five metres) while on the side walls only the bottom band, capped with an ornamental cornice, and the lower parts of the second band have survived.

The pattern for the decoration of the north and south walls is identical. On the central pilaster is a full-length figure of a standing saint; over the eastern arch are three medallions while over the western one there are two medallions, each containing a bust-length figure of a saint. The arches were eventually blocked-in and painted in the fourteenth century under Tsar Ivan Alexander. Insufficient has survived from the second band of fresco to suggest the format of the decorations. None of the narthex saints has been identified or published.

36,37. SS. Arethas and Artemios.

The two full-length saints on the pilasters are eastern martyrs, one from Syria and the other from Arabia.

36. St. Arethas (south wall) (Pl. 26b.)

The saint has longish, curly grey hair and a rather short grey-white beard which comes to a single point. He wears a richly embroidered tunic and a bright red chlamys with tablia. St. Arethas holds a white cross in his right hand, the other hand is lost. Much of the surface has been
damaged through exposure to water. Restoration and graffiti have made the lower part of the figure undecipherable. Total height of the figure is about 200 cm. Inscription:

\[ \text{\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c}
\text{\textdollar \textgreek{a} \textgreek{y} \textgreek{l} \textgreek{o} \textgreek{n} \textgreek{e} \textgreek{A} \textgreek{r} \textgreek{e} \textgreek{h} \textgreek{a} \textgreek{s}}
\end{tabular}
\end{center}} \]

St. Arethas was the leader in the defences of the town of Najran and chief of the Banu Harith. When Dunaan [Dhu Nowas] entered Najran, the promised amnesty was not observed and Arethas and many of his tribe were martyred on 24 October 523. He is commemorated in the Greek calendar on 24 October, in the Armenian he is commemorated together with St. Artemios on 20 October, while the old Georgian calendars commemorate him on 1 April and later ones on 24 October\textsuperscript{243}.

The Bačkovo St. Arethas corresponds to the description in the Hermeneia - an old man with a pointed beard\textsuperscript{244}. Generally in eleventh century depictions Arethas is shown as in Bačkovo with curly grey-white hair and a short pointed beard, for example, in the fresco in the crypt of Hosios Lukas\textsuperscript{245}, Sinai menologion icon\textsuperscript{246} and the Athos Esphigmenou menologion Cod. 14 fol. 136\textsuperscript{V} and 136\textsuperscript{r}\textsuperscript{247}. Twelfth century depictions tend to place a greater emphasis on St. Arethas' age and he is shown as almost bald with a white beard, for example at Patmos and Monreale\textsuperscript{248}. 
37. St. Artemios (north wall). (Pl. 27.b)

The saint has shoulder-length dark brown hair, a slight beard, while the rest of the face is largely lost. He wears a dark red chlamys and a green tunic. It appears that he is holding a cross in his right hand. The lower half of the figure has been particularly savagely attacked with Armenian and Slavonic graffiti (the earliest date is 1703). The total height of the figure is 201 cm., and it is placed into a rectangular frame drawn on the pilaster (225 x 55 cm.). Inscription:

\[ \text{[Ὁ Ἁγιὸς Ἄρτεμις]} \]

The confused and somewhat contradictory lives of Artemios agree that the saint was an Arian who was made the imperial prefect of Egypt and was martyred under Julian the Apostate in Antioch. His remains were transferred to Constantinople at some time before the seventh century and were deposited in the Church of John the Baptist in the Oxeia quarter of the city. Delehaye recounts the miracles witnessed around the relics and they soon became an important pilgrimage attraction of the city. There was a particularly wide-spread cult of St. Artemios amongst the Armenian chalcedonites. The Greek and Armenian calendars commemorate him on 20 October, while the Georgian on 19 October. St. Artemios, like St. Niketas, the Hermeneia describes as having facial features similar to those of Christ. There is an early relief of
St. Artemios, possibly from the tenth century, from the Armenian chalcedonite church of St. Michael in Constantinople\textsuperscript{251}. He is included in the monologion of Basil II, the Theodore Psalter, menologion Esphigmenou Cod. 14 and the eleventh century Sinai icon\textsuperscript{252}. In later centuries SS. Artemios and Niketas became very popular and are included in the programmes of Kinitsvisi (1207) in Georgia, Kariye Camii, Nicholas Orphanos and the Protaton on Athos\textsuperscript{253}. In art historical literature our St. Artemios has been confused with bishop Artemios of Thessalonika\textsuperscript{254}. The grouping of St. Artemios with St. Arethas is rare, but is encountered in the Armenian calendar mentioned above.

38-40. SS. Abibos, Gurias and Samonas. (Pl.26a.)

Over the eastern arch on the south wall are three comparatively well-preserved medallions showing bust-length figures of saints with alternating green and red backgrounds.

38. St. Abibos.

St. Abibos is shown as a young beardless deacon who wears a white sticharion and an orarion over the left shoulder. He holds a martyr's cross in his right hand and an ornate pyxis in the left. Some parts of the figure are rather faint. The medallion has a green background. Inscription:

\[ \text{pol [\alpha 
\text{gl}o\varsigma]} \text{ ~} \text{AB\alpha [\beta]o\varsigma} \]

39. St. Samonas(?)

A young man with a slight brown beard, the hands
are cut off by the medallion frame. He is wearing a green tunic, but details are difficult to distinguish. The figure is somewhat faint and covered with a layer of dirt. The medallion has a red background. No inscriptions survive.

40. St. Gourias.

The saint has curly white hair and a short white beard. He wears a white tunic and a green chlamys draped over his left shoulder. He is holding a cross. Colours are rather faint, but otherwise the figure is well-preserved. The medallion has a green background. Inscription:

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{t} \\
\text{x}
\end{array}\]

The three Syrian martyrs have several early variants of their passio in Armenian and Syriac, which have been analyzed by Gebhard and von Dobschütz. SS Gourias and Samonas were martyred under Diocletian at Edessa, while Abibos - a deacon of Edessa, died shortly later under Licinius. The Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars commemorate them on 15 November.\(^{255}\)

The three martyrs are inevitably shown as a group and are popular in Middle Byzantine art. The facial types found at Bačkovo - a beardless Abibos and a slight beard on Samonas are characteristic of tenth and eleventh century depictions as found in the menologion of Basil II, MS Vatopedi Cod. 456 fol. 221 and fol. 223\(^{256}\), at Daphni, Elmali Kilise, Karanlık Kilise and the Tağah Triconch\(^{257}\). The types
described in the Hermeneia - Abibos with a rounded beard and Samonas with a full short beard become characteristic of twelfth century and later depictions including Patmos, Vernoia (1315), Tlxiarchis Metropoleos (1359/60) at Kastoria and Afendiko at Mistra. The beardless St. Abibos, although rare, is found in some late monuments, as for example, in the mosaics of Kariye Camii.

41, 42. SS. Floros and Lauros.
Over the western arch on the south wall are two medallions slightly larger than the preceding three (70 cm. diameter as opposed to 58 cm. for the other three). They continue the pattern of alternating green and red backgrounds and the entire band against which the five medallions are placed is dark green in the lower third and dark blue for the upper two-thirds.

41. St. Lauros.
The face is poorly preserved, but appears to be that of a beardless youth with longish dark hair. He wears a blue chlamys and a green tunic. The position of the hands is not clear and the whole figure has been damaged by water. The medallion has a red background. Inscription:

\[ \text{[δ ἄγιος λάυρος]} \]

42. St. Floros
The figure is difficult to decipher with colours faint and small areas lost. He appears to be beardless, has a red chlamys and possibly a blue
tunic. There is no inscription surviving, but he can be fairly confidently identified as St. Floros through his association with St. Lauros. The medallion has a green background.

SS. Floros and Lauros are two saints of doubtful authenticity who, according to one legend, were stone-mason brothers who built a pagan temple in Illyria. Upon their conversion to Christianity they converted their temple to Christian use in this way displeasing the local authorities and insuring their martyrdom. The Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars commemorate them on 18 August.

The two saints are inevitably shown together and are well represented in eleventh century monumental fresco decorations including St. Sophia in Kiev (1067), Elmalı Kilise, Karabaş Kilise (Soğanlı) and Tağar Triconch in Cappadocia and the undated frescoes at the Holy Anargyroi at Kastoria. Their popularity did not wane in later depictions and they are included at Asinou (1105/06), Kintsvisi (1207), Arlilje (1296), Kariye Camii, and reached the proportions of a major cult in Novgorod.

43-47. SS. Eustratios, Auxentios, Mardarios, Eugenios and Orestes(?) (Pl.27a.)

The arrangement of medallions on the north wall is identical to that on the south. There are five medallions, two over the western arch (68 cm. diameter) and three over the eastern arch (58 cm. diameter). All the medallions are against a two-tone green and blue background and inside the medallions are alternating green and red backgrounds. They are considerably more damaged than those on
the opposite wall and no inscriptions have survived.

43. Unidentified beardless martyr (Orestes?)
A beardless youth in a red chlamys with richly ornamented tablia, and blue tunic holding a white cross. The top part of the medallion is lost and the rest of the figure is faint. The medallion has a green background with traces of blue.

44. Unidentified youthful martyr (Eugenios?)
The saint has a slight, dark beard and is dressed in a green chlamys. Most of the figure is very faint, the medallion has a red background.

45. Unidentified saint (Mardarios?)
The face is completely lost and only a trace of the green background survives.

46. Unidentified martyr (Auxentios?)
The saint has a short dark beard and wears a green chlamys with golden tablia. He holds a white martyr's cross in front of him. The upper part of the head is lost and the rest of the figure is faint. The medallion has a red background.

47. Unidentified elderly martyr (Eustratios?)
The saint has white hair and a fairly short pointed white beard. He wears a red chlamys with golden tablia and a highly embroidered tunic. A large crack goes down the middle of the figure and the paint surface is very faint through water damage. The medallion has a green background.

The five martyr military saints correspond in facial types to the five Armenian martyrs: SS. Eustratios, Auxentios,
Mardarios, Eugenios and Orestes. They correspond both with their description in the Hermeneia\textsuperscript{265} and depictions in eleventh century monuments such as Daphni, Nea Moni (Chios), Kuğluk Kilise, Karanlık Kilise, Elmalı Kilise and Saklı Kilise in Cappadocia\textsuperscript{266}.

The length of the west wall is five metres. The ground plan is pierced by a single arch 340 cm. wide and reaching a maximum height of 330 cm. The wall area is evenly divided into three bands, each 160 cm. wide. In the top band there are three narrow rounded windows and the wall forms a semi-circle where it meets the barrel vault of the roof. The soffits of the arches are richly decorated with ornament. In the lowest band are two painted, simulated marble slabs (one on each side of the arch and each measuring 75 x 77 cm.) surmounted by two rectangularly-framed bust-length figures of saints.

48, 49. SS. George and Theodore.

Both figures have been repainted on a second layer of gesso which has been superimposed over the original 1074-83 layer. The upper layer has been partially chipped away revealing the original painting. As far as one can see, the upper layer in both instances reproduces the same figures as in the original layer but on an enlarged scale. As the second layer is itself on one side superimposed by the fourteenth century neighbouring niche painting of Tsar Ivan Alexander it must date after 1083 and before 1344. I have suggested that this second layer belongs to the twelfth century\textsuperscript{267}.
48. St. George (Pl.25d.)
In the second layer, the saint holds a red cross in one hand while the other is held open showing the open palm of an orans-like gesture. The frame of the second layer measures 85 x 75 cm., the upper part has now been chipped away revealing the head of the original depiction. The original frame is 48 cm. wide and probably not more than 55 cm. high. The background of the original depiction was green, while in the second layer it had been changed to blue. From what remains of the original layer, the beardless youth with curly dark brown hair corresponds to that of St. George\textsuperscript{268}. The second layer at one stage bore an inscription with the name of St. George in Georgian, but this now has been lost\textsuperscript{269}, while the Armenian graffiti are difficult to date and have no bearing on the subject of the fresco\textsuperscript{270}. The restoration with cement(!) has ruined much of the surface. From Professor Grabar's recollections, in 1920 the surface of the later repainting had not been broken and the facial type corresponded to the one seen now in the original layer. St. George of the second layer wears a dark red chlamys and a white tunic.

49. St. Theodore Teron(?)
The saint has long black hair and a rather short black curly beard that is characteristic of St. Theodore Teron\textsuperscript{271}. He wears a white chlamys with golden tablia and a blue tunic and is shown against a red background. In the later superimposed image, which now covers the lower two-thirds of the
original figure, he has a white chlamys, a red tunic and is shown against a blue background. He holds a white cross in his right hand, while the left is open in an orans-like gesture, similar to that of St. George. As the face in the upper layer has been lost, we can only suppose that as with Saint George the later painting repeated the original saint.

SS. George and Theodore are two of the most popular saints in the Byzantine repertoire of military saints. St. George had an especially widespread cult in Georgia[^272] and apparently was the patron saint of Gregory Pakurianos, the ktitor of Bačkovo[^273].

In the centre band on the west wall are two standing full-length figures of saints, one at either end, between them are two medallions with bust-length figures of saints and between them - in the centre of the composition and at the summit of the west wall arch is the Mandylion.

50, 51. SS. Samson and Mamas.

50. St. Samson

The saint is dressed in a long green cape, the edges of which are lined with white fur and studded with a double row of pearls. At the neck it fastens on with some sort of bow-like arrangement. At waist-height, in the centre, the cape is parted revealing the hands of the saint - the right hand is raised in a sign of benediction, the left holds a bound scroll. Below the cape is a dark red, plain garment. The head is very poorly preserved, he appears to have grey-white hair and a
rather short, rounded, grey-white beard. The total height of the figure is 201cm. Inscription:

\[ \text{[\(\delta \sigma\iota\sigma\gamma\] \(\Sigma(\alpha)\mu\psi\nu]} \]

St. Samson is a relatively obscure saint who is commemorated on 27 June as a priest and "xenodochos". A tradition in the menologia used by Simeon Metaphrastes makes Samson a Roman by birth, a relative of Emperor Constantine and a healer of Justinian. However, a more reliable account by Procopius makes Samson a predecessor of Justinian who erected "a certain hospice, devoted to those who were at once destitute and suffering from serious illness, those who were, namely, suffering in loss of both property and health". This hospice in Constantinople, named after Samson, was twice destroyed by fire, after the Nika riots in 532 when it was rebuilt and richly endowed by Justinian and again in December 563, but continued to function into the fourteenth and probably the fifteenth centuries.

It is interesting that the Bačkovo ktitor, Gregory Pakurianos devotes a special chapter in his typicon to the three hospices which he had established for travellers, the poor and pilgrims. In his typicon he provides for the continued economic life of the xenodocheia and orders the monks to respect the rights and honour the importance of these institutions. Could the prominence given to St. Samson in the Bačkovo ossuary reflect Pakurianos's desire to be seen as another Samson?
The Hermeneia's description of Samson as "an old priest with a rounded beard" generally corresponds with our saint. Depictions of St. Samson are rare - he is found in the frescoes at Nerezi (in a medallion in the south-east chapel) and in St. Nicholas Orphanos.

51. St. Mamas (?)

Dressed in a large dark red loose robe with a white tunic underneath, the saint appears either blessing or holding a small cross in one hand while the other hand is lost. The face is very faint, beardless or with a slight beard. Generally, the upper half of the figure is poorly preserved. Total height of the figure is 195 cm. Inscription:

This identification is far from certain and the Constantinople Synaxarium leaves quite a wide range of possibilities for short names beginning with "Ma" and ending in "s". The Bačkovo image may correspond to the beardless youth, St. Mamas, in the Hermeneia. In dress and stance, the Bačkovo figure is close to the depiction of St. Mamas in Bodleian MS Roe 6 f. 18r. St. Mamas is an inoffensive, Orpheus-like pastoral saint of uncertain origin who was martyred under Aurelian. The Greek, Armenian and Georgian calendars all commemorate him on 2 September.
His inclusion in the homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus insured a very widespread popularity in manuscript illumination\textsuperscript{286}. He had a major cult in Georgia as early as the sixth or seventh century\textsuperscript{287}, was included in the frescoes of S. Maria Antiqua in Rome and the monuments of Constantinople workshops such as the Menologion of Basil II and at Nerezi\textsuperscript{288} and was very popular in his indigenous Cappadocia\textsuperscript{289}. Pakurianos in his typicon celebrates the beauty of uncontaminated nature when setting up his monastery, very much in accordance with the Mamas legend\textsuperscript{290}.

52, 53. Unidentified military saints.
Between SS. Samson and Mamas is the image of the Mandylion on either side of which is a medallion. Each medallion has a diameter of 80 cm. (i.e. larger and slightly higher than those on the lateral walls), the left has a green background, the right a red one. There are no surviving inscriptions.

52. Unidentified military saint.
The saint is beardless and has dark hair. Much of the face is lost. He wears a red chlamys with golden tablia.

53. Unidentified military saint.
The saint has a moustache, similar to that of St. Demetrios, no beard and short, thick dark hair. He wears a green chlamys with golden tablia and a light blue tunic.

Mandylion (Archeiropoietos)
On a plain white veil, which has double red lines at either end and short white tassels, enclosed within a
medallion-like halo is a poorly preserved image of the head of Christ. The length of the veil is 136 cm., the diameter of the halo 31 cm. The type of Mandylion - a flat, spread-out piece of material without folds, corresponds to the earliest examples of this image as found in Cappadocian churches, the Church of the Saviour at Nereditsa (1199) and the Saviour-Mirozhskiy monastery in Pskov (1156). In the alternative form, which probably does not pre-date 1204 and the shifting of the relic to the West, the Mandylion is shown as if suspended with loose folds throughout.

The growth in the ornamentation on the Mandylion is quite interesting. In the earliest example, on a tenth century Sinai icon where the Mandylion is shown in the hands of King Abgarus, it is a completely white, unornamented piece of cloth (with plain white tassels on the lower horizontal edge); the head of Christ is shown frontally (his long hair behind the head and hidden from view) with the outlines of a cross behind his head, but no halo. A similar austerity is preserved in a menologion dated 1063 in the Moscow Historical Museum, Cod. 382, Fol. 192. In Saklı Kilise in Cappadocia, on the lower band on the north wall in the naos, next to a large figure of the Arch-angel Michael and above a small carved lunette, is the Mandylion with two red lines on either vertical edge and on those edges some plain white tassels. The head of Christ is enclosed within a medallion-like halo and his hair does not protrude outside the halo. In Karanlık Kilise, Göreme chapel No. 21 and the second
depiction in Sakli Kilise, on the east wall of the narthex, two plain lines broaden and fill with ornament and the area around the head attracts little decorative spheres\(^{297}\). In the late eleventh century menologion in the Greek Patriarchial Library in Alexandria, Cod. 35, p.286, a cross-hatch ornamental background appears, while the head of Christ is still retained by the halo\(^{298}\).

In twelfth century depictions, such as the one at the Church of the Saviour of the Transfiguration at the Mirozskiy monastery in Pskov (before 1156) and at Nereditsa (1199) near Novgorod\(^{299}\), the checkered background becomes a standard feature and Christ's hair is shown in long curls in front of his head. This became the usual depiction of the Mandylion for the latter half of the twelfth century and numerous examples in the thirteenth century, until it was gradually replaced with the image on the hanging cloth\(^{300}\).

In its form, the Mandylion at Bačkovo corresponds exactly to the one in the naos of Sakli Kilise; although the latter is not dated, a date after c.1050 and before Manzikert (1071) seems likely\(^{301}\).

The positioning of the Mandylion at Bačkovo, on the west wall of the narthex is unusual. The most popular position for the Mandylion appears to be an apsidal one. At Karanlık Kilise it is in the diaconicon, it is in the apse in Göreme Chapel 21, also at Novi Pazar, Peroia, Ubisi, right through to Peribleptos at Mistra and numerous later examples in Slav countries\(^{302}\). The alternative position, which Grabar argues was the earlier one and which is noted in the Hermeneia, was at the foot of the drum of the main dome. It is found here in Pskov.
and Nereditsa, at Boiana, Žiča and in a host of other churches. Occasionally it is found in other areas such as the naos in Sakli Kilise or the west wall of the naos of Pantanassa at Mistra, but these seem more to be peculiarities of iconographic programmes of these specific churches than a tradition of locating the Mandylion.

The earliest example, known to me, where the Mandylion occurs in the narthex is at Sakli Kilise. Here it is shown on the east wall (the arcade of pillars which separates the naos) on an arch between the figure of the prophet Isaiah on the right, pointing to it, and the scene of the Annunciation to the Virgin on the left. Although the inscription on Isaiah's scroll is lost, it probably read "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son ..." (Is. 7:14) and the iconographic raison d'être for the Mandylion is apparent - simply an image of Christ which bears witness to the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy. The Mandylion is found in later examples where it is related to the Annunciation as in the Chapel of St. Euthymios at St. Demetrios in Thessalonika.

The Mandylion appears on the doorway lunette of the south chapel of the exo-narthex of the Virgin's Church at Studenica. The frescoes date from c.1233-34. It is also represented above the doorway on the west wall of the narthex of the Church of the Annunciation at Gradac, dating from c.1275. It is found in a similar position in a number of fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth century Russian, Rumanian and Athos churches. The depictions of the Mandylion at
Bačkovo, Studenica and Gradac have several characteristics in common. They are all found in the narthex area, all of them are monastic churches and all are related to funerary themes and possibly served as mausoleums.

After the Mandylion was brought to Constantinople from Edessa on 16 August 945, to commemorate its first anniversary, a feast homily was written which is sometimes attributed to Constantine Porphyrogenetos. Also about this time a variant of the homily entered the menologia. Illuminated menologia depict either the Mandylion alone or a series of narrative scenes with the shifting of the relic. At Studenica, I feel, we have an extension of this theme — although it is a depiction of the shifting of the relics of Simeon Nemanja, the composition itself is probably derivative of a menologia-based prototype of the Mandylion feast and the image of the Mandylion itself has been retained as part of that iconographic programme. At Gradac, the Mandylion is similarly related to the theme of the shifting of St. Simeon's relics. In the poorly preserved late thirteenth century frescoes in the northern chapel of the original narthex at Sopoćani, the Mandylion on the west wall again probably has a bearing on the theme of the shifting of the relics of St. Stephen.

Returning to Bačkovo. The Mandylion is found on the west wall of the narthex of a church specifically designed for the commemoration of the shifting of relics and bones of holy monks and abbots from one place to another, from the place of temporary burial to their permanent storage in the crypt below. There exists a practice in the orthodox ossuaries today to store the exhumed bones of
monks in the narthex of the church for forty days (the period between the first and final burial rites) before transferring them to the ossuary. Bačkovo with its Mandylion and three-sided open arch ventilation would have provided the ideal facilities.

In the top band on the west wall are four rather poorly preserved medallions. In the two lower medallions, the figures are in apostolic robes, while in the upper, in garments of Old Testament prophets. The medallions have alternating red and green backgrounds and are shown against a dark blue background. Each medallion has a diameter of 65 cm.

54. Apostle James.

The saint has a slight, rounded brown beard and wears a white, square-necked garment, with a green himation on top. He holds a bound scroll in one hand, while the other is spread out pointing to it. The top third of the medallion is lost, while the lower parts are well preserved. The medallion has a red background. Inscription

\[ \text{\begin{tabular}{c}
\phi
\end{tabular}} \]

55. Unidentified apostle.

Only a small fragment of the lower left quarter of the medallion survives, showing that the figure wears a red himation and that the medallion has a green background. By analogy with his companion, it is likely that he too is an apostle.

Although no trace of the decorations survives on
the upper band of the lateral walls of the narthex, it is possible that they continued the row of apostle medallions, four on each side, leading up to the east wall with its niche figures of the Princes of the apostles, SS. Peter and Paul on the sides of the doorway leading into the naos. As noted above, the ossuary tradition places a considerable emphasis on Peter and Paul. Such a reconstruction of the arrangement of the apostles at Bačkovo would find a close analogy in the Hosios Lukas crypt\textsuperscript{316}.

56, 57. Unidentified prophets.

In the highest arch, on either side of the middle window, are two bust-length figures of prophets, while at the summit of the window is a medallion with an ornamental cross. This medallion has no distinct colour background of its own, but continues the dark blue of the wall surface. The floral ornamental cross corresponds exactly to the one repeated twice in the pendentives in Elmali Kilise in Cappadocia\textsuperscript{317}.

56. Unidentified prophet.

The figure has shoulder-length white hair, a pointed beard and generally conforms to the type of Ezekiel. He wears a green tunic with a red chlamys, whose collar is ornamented with golden embroidery and studded with pearls and which has golden tablia. With his left hand he supports a golden pyxis or pot (not an attribute of Aaron as it lacks a flowering staff) and points to it with a fully extended right hand. The top quarter of the medallion is lost, but the face is beautifully
preserved and except for some minor peeling of halo, the figure is in good condition. The medallion has a green background. Inscription: 

57. Unidentified prophet.

Only the lower third of the medallion survives with traces of a green chlamys with golden tablia, set against a red background.

With two figures wearing the garments of the royal ancestors one could speculate that the now lost frescoes of the narthex vault contained possibly an abbreviated genealogy of Christ.

This completes the survey of the depiction of individual saints at the Bačkovo ossuary. The niche depictions of SS. Cosmas of Maiuma and John the Damascene, Apostles Peter and Paul and the full-length apsidal bishops are best discussed in reference to the Koimesis, the Ezekiel Vision and the Melismos.

All Saints (Diagram A, Nos. 58-59, Pls. 6,7)

Apart from the individual saints, there are in the upper church at Bačkovo two large compositions of "All Saints" on the north and south walls immediately outside the bema area. On the south wall, where the composition is in a better state of preservation, an inscription reads:

                   oι ἅγιοι πάντες/οι ἅγιοι πάντες

All Saints (north wall, Pls. 7a.-b.)

It is a large composition measuring 200 x 127cm.
Figures are arranged in two rows, with five figures shown in the front row of an average height of 140cm. and peering over their haloes are an additional six heads from the second row. Beyond that, there is a poorly preserved pattern of edges of further haloes indicating that a crowd of figures is being represented. The composition is faint in places and the lower parts of some of the figures are lost. Most of the faces in the second row are largely undecipherable. Although there are no inscriptions, the figures in the front row can be identified through their facial types and attributes.

The central figure leading this group carries a Gospel book in his left hand while the right is raised to chest height with a gesture of benediction. He is dressed in apostolic garments of light green robes and a loose red cloak over his shoulders. Although the face is partly lost sufficient remains to indicate that the figure has curly white hair and a middle length beard. Of the Apostles, his type corresponds only to that of St. Andrew\(^{318}\). Appropriately he is shown wearing the red cloak of the apostolic martyr. His position as leader of this group of All Saints martyrs reflects the position of importance which he occupied in the Georgian church. Already in the Life of St. Peter the Iberian, the legend is recorded of how Andrew was sent by the Virgin to convert Georgia\(^{319}\) and hence the theory of the apostolic origins and independence of the Georgian church\(^{320}\). St. Andrew was also called the first-named of the Apostles, an honour which he shared with St.
Peter (Mt. 4:18)
To the right of St. Andrew is St. Peter the Apostle shown wearing green robes. His face is relatively well preserved and he is identical to the St. Peter in the Koimesis (Pl. 15a). Here he is shown as the second representative of the apostolic martyrs. On the extreme right is a bearded figure with black shoulder-length unruly hair, dressed in a green goatskin cloak over red robes. In his hands he carries a long staff with a small cross on it. Although the face is almost totally destroyed, the attributed suggest that he is John the Baptist, here shown as the last of the prophets and the first of the Christian martyrs.
To the left of St. Andrew stand two military saints SS. George and Theodore Stratelates (Pl. 7b.). Both are dressed in gold armour, St. George has a red cloak while St. Theodore apparently a blue one. St. George is shown as the youthful beardless saint with a round head of curly brown hair, very similar to his depiction on the original layer of frescoes in the church narthex (Pl. 25d.). St. Theodore is shown with his characteristic brown curly hair and a brown rush-like beard. They are shown here as representatives of warrior martyrs.

All Saints (south wall, Pls. 6.a.-b.)
The All Saints composition on the south wall is better preserved with the main losses being in the areas of the lower parts of the garments and the vandalism done to the faces. The whole composition measures 193 x 122cm. The arrangement is similar to that on the north
wall with two rows of figures followed by some overlapping haloes. If the composition on the north wall showed the holy martyrs of the Church, this one shows the holy ecclesiastic and monastic leaders.

In the centre of the composition St. Anthony is shown leading the group. He is hooded, wearing a dark olive green phelonion and a light red sticharia. He has a white middle length beard which separates into two points and his right hand is raised in a gesture of benediction. To the right is another monastic saint dressed in dark red. He has short, curly white hair and a broad white beard which comes to a single point at chest height. In type he resembles exactly the Bačkovo St. Euthymios the Iberian (No.30, Pl.16b.) but the type is not exclusive to this saint alone and he could also be St. John Climacus, who could be shown in the ranks of major monastic leaders. The figure on the far right, cannot be identified without an inscription, although the type does correspond to St. Pachomios, as an old man, bald with a beard which separates into five strands. He is dressed in a light red garment with a green phelonion worn on top. To the left of St. Anthony stand two bishops each clad in a dark purple phelonion with a white omophorion decorated with black crosses. The figure closest to St. Anthony is St. Nicholas shown with his usual facial characteristics of baldness and a short rounded beard, and next to him is St. John Chrysostom with his pear-shaped head, wrinkled forehead and short dark beard.

The two groups of All Saints at Bačkovo are shown as
the leading representatives of Christian martyrs and
the Christian monastic and ecclesiastic hierarchy here serving in the role of liturgical witnesses
assembled outside the bema area. The selection of
saints may reflect to some extent the wishes of the
patrons with St. Andrew shown as the apostolic leader
of the Georgian and Armenian Chalcedonite Churches,
SS. George and Theodore, the patron saints of the
Pakurianoi brothers, while John the Baptist as the
saint to whom one of the three altars of the main
church was dedicated. On the opposite side is a more
traditional gathering of Church leaders as also found
in Athos Dionysiou Ms. 587m fol. 126r of 1059 and
in two manuscripts of the Panoplia Dogmatica of
Euthymius Zygabenus, Codex Vatican gr. 666 fol. I, probably of about 1120 and in the Historical Museum
in Moscow, Codex Synod. gr. 387 fol. V probably of
the second half of the twelfth century. In all three
manuscripts a similar composition is adopted and there
is a mixture of monastic and ecclesiastic leaders.

We must keep in mind that not the entire programme
of saints has been preserved at Bačkovo. It seems likely,
as Grabar suggests, that in the church naos there was a
second band of feasts above the surviving one which
almost certainly would have involved another six saints on
the pilasters, possibly with crowning bust-length military
saints, as in the band below. There is also uncertainty
about the identity of the saints in the church narthex vault
and the vault of the naos crypt. So no argument is possible
as to why certain saints were not included in the programme
of decorations, but some tentative conclusions can be
suggested concerning the selection of the depicted saints.

Firstly, we are dealing with a single unified programme of saints. There are no repetitions in this programme unlike, for example, the crypt and the church of Hosios Lukas, or the narthex and parecclesion of Kariye Camii. Secondly, it is a predominantly monastic programme that features heavily relatively obscure monastic saints. The strong emphasis on representatives of various monastic communities and the selection of iconoclude saints, suggests a monastic origin for this programme - possibly Athos, especially if we recall that Pakurianoi on at least two occasions, one shortly before the re-founding of Bačkovo, visited Athos.

The Bačkovo frescoes appear at a time when Byzantine monasticism experiences major new growth both in its leadership and geographically. In the tenth and eleventh centuries some of the new leaders included Luke of Stiris (+946), Paul the Younger at Latros (+955), Nikon Metanoeite of Lacedaemon (+998), Athanasios the Athonite (+1004) and Christodulos (+1101). As shown in a recent study by Darrouzes, where he lists fifty-seven monasteries founded in the eleventh century, there was a move away from traditional areas of monasticism such as the Sinai, Anatolia and Bithynia, to western parts of the empire. Also the tenth and eleventh centuries are a period of formation and consolidation of the iconography of numerous Byzantine saints. The appearance of the illuminated menologion, the "irruption of saints", as one scholar expressed it, in illuminated psalters and the creation of vast monumental cycles such as in Hosios Lukas, Nea Moni, Bačkovo, Koutsovendi and Daphni shows a freedom and flexibility in the depiction of saints which is no longer evident in twelfth
In a number of instances, the saints depicted at Backovo are very close to the source of the creation of new iconographic types, for example, SS. Paul the Theban and Makarios. On other occasions Backovo saints cling to archaic types, such as with SS. Euthymios the Great and Ephraim.

What emerges from this survey of Backovo saints, is that the saints - their types and representation - were characteristic of the late eleventh century, and in some instances peculiar only to this period, and in this way the documentary dating to 1074-83 is confirmed.
Apart from the extensive series of saints, a considerable number of scenes have been preserved in the upper church and in the crypt.

The iconographic programme of the church naos is common to a considerable number of Middle Byzantine churches, especially of the eleventh century, with an enthroned Virgin and Child in the apse, a Koimesis on the west wall and a festal tier around the lateral walls. In the church narthex there is a large scene of a mystical vision on the east wall facing the Mandylion on the west.

The naos of the crypt finds no close parallel in extant Byzantine monuments with a Deesis in the apse and a monumental Vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones on the west wall. The narthex of the crypt is decorated on all surfaces with an enormous Last Judgement composition.

I will now discuss the iconography of the individual scenes of the church and crypt referring to similar developments in other Byzantine monuments.

The enthroned Virgin and Child flanked on either side by an archangel in ceremonial garbs (Diagram C.i. Pls. 2a.-c.) entered into what Demus termed the "classical system"
of Byzantine church decoration, as appropriate for the apsidal half dome, at an early date\(^1\). What remains of the Baćkovo Virgin and Child conforms exactly with the apsidal Virgin and Child in S. Sophia in Constantinople of 867\(^2\). However, only the Virgin's torso and the top half of the child survive at Baćkovo. The Virgin is shown seated on a backless throne, on at least one cushion, and is clad in blue with a blue maphorion coming over her shoulders bordered with dark blue tassels. She supports the Christ Child on her lap with her right hand resting on his shoulder. Christ is shown seated frontally, dressed in a gold tunic and himation, with his right hand raised in benediction. The folds in the drapery suggest that the lost part of the composition followed the Constantinople model and the Virgin's left hand was loosely placed at the level of Christ's knees.

Each of the flanking archangels holds a staff surmounted by a small flabellum in one hand\(^3\), while the other hand is shown open, pointing to the Virgin and Child. There is no trace of the customary orb with cross. Each archangel wears a fillet bound around the hair, a richly ornamented gold dalmatic and loros studded with pearls and precious stones. Archangel Michael, on the left, wears a light blue tunic ornamented with gold at the cuffs and shoulders. This figure is poorly preserved with the left hand side of the face and shoulder, as well as the lower part of the body, lost. Archangel Gabriel is better preserved with the only major loss being the feet. He wears a red tunic with gold embroidery on the cuffs and shoulders. Both archangels have light green wings with white highlights.
The Backovo Madonna and Child with archangels provide us with little information that can be used to date the monument. As a general observation it can be noted that the archangels in earlier apsidal compositions such as those at the Euphrasian Basilica at Poreč, Panagia Kanakaria in Lythrankomi⁴ and Panagia Angeloktistos at Kiti⁵ wear a tunic and himation. The archangel in the bema arch of S. Sophia in Constantinople is clad in a buskin, tunic and chlamys⁶. While a full dalmatic and loros already appear on the archangels at the Koimesis church at Nicaea and become widespread in apsidal archangels of the eleventh century such as those at Ateni, Veljusa and the dome archangels in S. Sophia in Kiev⁷. The apsidal archangels at Daphni look more to the tradition of dress of the twelfth century, where on top of the dalmatic a flowing chlamys is worn fastened by a fibula⁸. All of these are rather broad tendencies with numerous exceptions, for example, the apsidal archangels in Sicily and Southern Italy of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are usually shown with the dalmatic and loros⁹. The closest parallel that I have been able to find for the Bačkovo archangels is the archangels on the bema arch in Hosios Lukas¹⁰. These are identical to those in Bačkovo in dress, gestures and attributes.

Below the ornamented cornice and the row of bust-length figures in their alternating medallion and rectangular frames, is a monumental Melismos composition.

At either end there are two bishops, each just over two metres high, shown in three-quarter view, slightly inclined towards the centre and holding open scrolls. The centre of
the composition is disrupted by the three apsidal windows. On either side of the taller, central window is a lit candle on its holder, while on either side of the soffit of the central window is an angel holding a rod, facing into the church towards the altar. There is no trace of the Hetoi-masia or of Christ Amnos, nor is there room for them to have existed.

Bishops (left to right, Diagram C.ii, Pl.4.a - g.)

The four bishops are similarly clad and are all shown bare-headed. Each wears a plain white sticharion and on top of this a richly embroidered epitrachelion, the lower edge of which is fringed and hangs down almost to the feet. The epimanikia are also richly embroidered, but there are no epigonatia. On top of these is a phailonion or chasuble, that of John Chrysostom and Gregory the Theologian are strikingly ornamented with large black crosses combined with framing gammas, the other two bishops have plain white phailonia. Finally, over this is draped the bishop's omophorion, decorated with large dark brown crosses running the full length of the stole. The omophorion is worn simply over the shoulders intersecting at the chest and the two ends hang loosely at the front.

No.iia. St. Nicholas(?) Pl.4.a.

The lower part of the face and part of the inscription on the scroll have been scratched out, otherwise the figure is reasonably preserved. The bishop has white receding hair and is probably, as Grabar has suggested, either St. Nicholas or St. Athanasios.
Inscriptions

\[ +K\xi\sigma\varepsilon \]
\[ H\varepsilon\sigma \]
\[ \_\_\_\_ \]
\[ \_\_ E\beta\alpha\pi \]
\[ \_\_ \]

Prayer of the second antiphon\textsuperscript{12}

No. iib. St. John Chrysostom, Pl. 4.b.

Apart from some damage to the face in the area of the eyes, the figure is well preserved. He has the characteristic youngish face with short black hair and a short rounded beard.

Inscriptions

\[ +K\xi\sigma\varepsilon \]
\[ H\varepsilon\sigma \]
\[ \_\_\_\_ \]
\[ \_\_ E\beta\alpha\pi \]
\[ \_\_ \]

Prayer of the catechumens\textsuperscript{13}

No. iic. St. Basil, Pl. 4.c.

As with the previous figure St. Basil is well preserved except for some damage to the face and his left hand. He has curly dark brown hair and a wide beard which comes to a single point.

Inscriptions

\[ o\beta\alpha \]
\[ A\varepsilon \]
\[ \Gamma\lambda\eta \]
\[ o\varsigma\varsigma \]

\[ o\delta\varepsilon\iota\varsigma\rho\varsigma\]
No. IID. St. Gregory the Theologian, Pls. 4.d.–e.

The figure is damaged on the face in the area of the eyes, but otherwise is well preserved. He is bald at the front and has a wide, rounded white beard.

Prayer of the Trisagion

Nos. IIE. The angels, Pl. 4.f.

The two angels inside the soffit of the central window are rather poorly preserved. As they face inwards, the greatest loss has been from water damage from the window and has affected mainly the wings and feet of the figures.
Each angel is 128cm. high (maximum height of the soffit is 140cm. with a width of 73cm.) and clenches in both hands a brown staff, the top of which in both cases is lost. Each is clad in a white tunic, visible at the sleeves, has some sort of a jewel-studded brown collar, a white mantle and bluish wings. Visible over their left shoulder is a deacon's orarion with gold and red ornament and fringe and a black cross. These are traditional liturgical angels as found in other eleventh century depictions such as in the scene of the eucharist in S. Sophia in Kiev and in S. Sophia in Ohrid\cite{16}.

Over the last few years there has been a considerable interest shown in the early origins of the Melismos composition\cite{17}. Attempts by Dr. Babić to link the emergence of the Melismos scene to the religious controversies of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries and specifically the Church council in Constantinople in 1156-57\cite{18} have run into difficulties. At least three of the earliest apsidal Melismos compositions probably predate this council\cite{19}. However the degree of flexibility shown in the eleventh century examples suggests that the theme was then still in its formative stages and that it developed rather gradually out of the traditional row of frontally posed apsidal bishops. It is also apparent that there was no single Constantinople model that emerged suddenly and was then copied, but rather it was more of an evolution of a type which eventually became established in the late twelfth century as the Christ-Amnos composition\cite{20}.

The tendency to illustrate the liturgical act, rather than simply the eucharist, had appeared by the late tenth century in the frescoes of St. Achile at Prespa (983/6)\cite{21},
in a number of eleventh century fresco cycles including S. Sophia in Ohrid (c.1040-45), at Bačkovo (1074-83), at Veljusa (1085-93) and at Koutsovendis (1092-1118) and in some liturgical manuscripts of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This tendency appears in keeping with the general literalisation of Byzantine symbolism and mysticism in the post-iconoclast period. The more graphic and direct representation of the liturgy may also to some extent reflect the affirmation of the Orthodox position and would be in line with particularly Alexios Comnenos's drive against the Bogomil and Paulician heresies. Both of these heresies rejected the sacrament of the Eucharist, the liturgy and denied the belief in the Real Presence.

Early monumental representations of the Melismos are found specifically in or near areas affected by the Paulician and Bogomil heresies like Philippopolis (Bačkovo), Serdica (Boiana), in what Obolensky calls the "Cradle of Bogomilism" (Veljusa, Nerezi, Kurbinovo and St. Demetrios at Prilep), Kastoria (Holy Anargyroi) or are monuments directly related to Constantinople-linked patronage like Bačkovo, Koutsovendis and Nerezi. The theme is not encountered in surviving monuments of the same period in Cappadocia or Georgia, where the tradition of frontally posed principal Church fathers shown as the chief representatives of the ecclesiastical hierarchy rather than as officiants continues, for example, Elmali Kilise, Çarıklı Kilise, Atene and Gelati. Although the earliest monumental depiction of the Melismos surviving in Constantinople itself is the so-called Melismos chapel at Kalenderhane Camii and must date after 1261, considering the poverty of surviving frescoes from the
eleventh and twelfth centuries in the capital and manuscript
evidence that the theme was known there in the eleventh
century suggest that earlier examples of the Melismos may
have existed in Constantinople.

By the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries,
the Melismos entered the standard repertoire of Byzantine
apsidal decorations and there is a host of examples including
Bezirana Kilise in Peristrema (c.1200) in Cappadocia and
Bertubani (1212-13) in Georgia.

Monumental apsidal Melismos compositions of the
late eleventh and early twelfth centuries do not constitute
a single iconographic type. The one feature which they
have in common is that for the first time the bishops are
shown as officiants, bending forward reverently towards the
centre of the apse and holding open scrolls inscribed with
liturgical texts. In this detail, the most transitional
example of the group is the 1085/93 frescoes at the church
of the Virgin Eleousa at Veljusa. Here there are the
remains of four apsidal bishops, the two outer ones are
shown in the traditional frontal view, holding closed Gospels
and with their right hands raised in benediction, while the
two inner bishops, SS. John Chrysostom and Basil, both hold
open scrolls and bow towards the Hetoimasia depicted between
them. In the first layer of frescoes in the apse of Boiana,
probably of the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries,
there is a similar composition, except now all four bishops
are shown bending forward and in three-quarter view. At
Nerezi (1164), we encounter a far more complex version of the
same scene. There are now eight bishops: SS. Gregory Thaumaturgos, Epiphanius, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Basil, Athanasios, Gregory of Nyssa and Nicholas. All of them are shown bending towards the centre and there is a more elaborate Hetoimasia draped with cloth, with a flying dove above it and flanked on either side by a liturgical angel with a rod\textsuperscript{36}. This type continues to be found in monuments of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries like St. Demetrios at Prilep and at St. Demetrios at Varoš\textsuperscript{37}.

The Bačkovo Melismos differs with this type as the Hetoimasia is not shown. In its arrangement - the two liturgical angels in the soffit of the window face the actual altar as do the two deacons, SS. Stephan and Euplos, from their respective niches. The bema area is slightly elevated (9-10cm.) and is highlighted by a single step synthronon (37cm. high and 30cm. wide) which runs the full perimeter of the apse and has a stone throne in the centre. Directly in front of the cathedra is a stone free-standing altar. Originally the entire bema area was sealed off by a templon. The attachment marks on the pillars show that the templon reached a height of 293cm., while the post marks in the pavement indicate that it stretched the full length of the bema area. In other words, up to the level of the painted framed medallion and rectangular icons, the apse was obscured from the congregation. The illusionistic imago clipeata would have appeared as a continuation or as the top tier of icons on the templon. The Bačkovo Melismos was thus within the concealed section of the sanctuary and the painted
figures were shown celebrating the liturgy around an actual physical altar.

The closest parallel to the Bačkovo Melismos composition is on the frontispiece of a liturgical rotulus, Athens Bibl. Nat. No. 2759, which Weitzmann dates to the twelfth century. Here is shown a view of the sanctuary of a five-dome church showing the templon and apse.

In the apsidal conch is the Virgin Orans, below her are two rectangularly framed icons, possibly of apostles Peter and Paul and below them the scene of the liturgy being celebrated by SS. Basil and John Chrysostom. It is interesting to note the arrangement in the apse. Two deacons with liturgical fans, or possibly angelic deacons as the columns obscure their wings, stand behind, at the sides of the altar and its ciborium. The two bishops in their full regalia stand in front at either side of the altar holding open scrolls in their hands. They are shown in three-quarter view, slightly bent towards the altar. Separated by a column from the central scene, at either side, stands a haloed deacon with hands draped and holding a pyxis. Their facial types resemble that of SS. Stephen and Euplos.

There is an interesting precedent for a monumental liturgical composition to incorporate an actual physical altar into a painted liturgical act. This is the scene of the Communion of the Apostles copied from a monumental model and preserved in the Rossano Gospels. Both rows of apostles move single file towards Christ who is shown twice at opposite ends and who administers the bread and wine. Loerke's suggestion that the composition ultimately derives
from the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople and specifically from the Coenaculum in Sion Church at Jerusalem is not particularly valid as both Nikolaos Mesarites and the seventh century Armenian description of Sion stress the existence of the painted altar, the absence of which specifically characterizes the depiction in the Rossano codex. The conclusion suggested by the Rossano composition — with the two sets of apostles moving in opposite directions away from the centre, is that the original was found on the semi-circular wall of the apse and focused on an actual physical altar within the bema area. As with the Bačkovo Melismos, the model for the Rossano Communion of the Apostles belonged to a period when the composition of the theme was relatively new and flexible.

At Bačkovo, on the lateral walls within the bema area, above the niche figures of the deacons SS. Stephen and Euplos is the Communion of the Apostles. The composition is divided into two scenes — Communion with bread on the north wall and the Communion with wine on the south.

In eleventh century Byzantine churches the Communion of the Apostles had become a frequent feature of apsidal iconographic programmes and is found in S. Sophia in Ohrid, S. Sophia in Kiev, Karabaş Kilise in Soğanlı, Tağah Triconch, Ateni in Georgia and at Akhtala in Armenia. It was also common in twelfth and thirteenth century apse decorations with early examples including Asinou (1105/6) and the Church of Archangel Michael in Kiev (1108). In all of these, the apsidal Communion was placed in a horizontal band which separated the conch image from the Melismos
or row of Church Fathers on the lower level. In more abbreviated programmes the communion scene was frequently left out altogether or was simply reduced to a series of waist-length images of apostles. At Bačkovo, where each communion scene measures 180 x 160cm., it was impossible to include them onto the east wall, where there was space only for a relatively narrow band of medallions (71cm. wide). The Bačkovo solution was to totally divide the composition into two halves and to reproduce not only Christ twice, but also the altar and to place the apostles into two tight, bunched up groups that could fit into the high narrow bays between the apse and the eastern pillars on the lateral walls. The shift of the Communion from the apsidal position is relatively rare. It is found in the crude frescoes of the chapel of St. Stephen near Cemil, which probably date from the tenth or eleventh centuries, where the Communion of the Apostles is shown on the south wall of the nave. At Panagia ton Chalkeon (1028), the Church of the Apostles at Peć (c.1260), Pantanassa and Peribleptos at Mistra and in some later Slav churches a similar arrangement to that of Bačkovo is found with the Communion scenes on the two side walls adjoining the apse.

Communion of the Apostles: Distribution of Bread (north wall, Pl. 9.a.-c.)

Only about two thirds of this composition survives with much of the upper part very faint. The original dimensions were 180 x 160cm., at present about 105-150 x 160cm., remains. At the right, Christ stands alone behind a rectangular altar covered with a purple cloth decorated with a
plain equal-ended cross framed with gammas (a very similar altar cloth is found on the altar of the eleventh century Bristol psalter). On the altar stands a jug resembling an Athenian oinochoe. The lower part of the body of Christ is lost; however, much of the head including the eyes is preserved (Pl.9.c.). Christ is shown with a straight, elongated nose, a small tight mouth, large eyes and a full broad beard. He wears a purple tunic and a light blue himation. The apostles approach the altar huddled together as a group, their bare hands stretched out before them as they reverently lean forward. Only five figures can be clearly differentiated and unfortunately all their heads have been lost. The apostle closest to the altar (St. Peter?), who survives largely in outline, is bent over completely and has his arms stretched out to receive the bread. The apostles are dressed in white or pink tunics with rich flowing robes of green and red. No inscriptions have survived.

Communion of the Apostles: Distribution of Wine (south wall, Pl.8.a.-c.)

The scene is well preserved except for minor damage to the upper right hand corner and top edge and measures 180 x 160cm. Christ once more is shown closest to the apsidal wall of the church, on the left, standing alone, without angels, behind the altar which is covered by a similar cloth to the one on the north wall. He has a cruciform nimbus, stands erect, head slightly bowed and holds the eucharistic bowl in both hands. The bowl itself is in the form of a golden, single-handle ewer with two bands of
incised ornament and in appearance very similar to the so-called "Albanian Ewer" in the Metropolitan Museum which probably dates from the seventh century\(^6\). Six apostles approach Christ from the right all with their hands veiled and reverently bowing. As it had become customary, St. Paul leads the apostles for the distribution of the wine and is shown here drinking from the bowl in Christ's hands, while the other five apostles form a compact group behind him. Christ is robed in a purple tunic and blue himation, while the apostles are in red and green flowing robes. Above the scene is a well preserved inscription.

\[
\begin{align*}
\Pi\Omega\iota\epsilon\tau\varepsilon\varepsilon & \ \Sigma,\ \Pi\alpha\nu\tau\iota\ \varepsilon\ \tau\omicron\ \iota
\\
\pi\epsilon\tau\varepsilon & \ \epsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\ \pi\alpha\nu\tau(\varepsilon\varsigma),\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron(\gamma\alpha\varsigma)\ \varepsilon\sigma\tau\iota\nu[\tau\delta\ \alpha\iota\mu\alpha\ \mu\omicron\nu]
\end{align*}
\]

(Drink of it all of you, for this is my blood.

- Mtt.26: 27-28)

Eleventh century depictions of the Communion of the Apostles belong to two main types and several compositional variants. The first is the more symbolic one, where Christ is shown as the logos, holding a scroll or globe and blessing the host rather than distributing it. Liturgically, it illustrates the section of the prayer of the Entrance of the Holy Gifts, namely the text beginning with the words "O Lord God Almighty, Who alone art Holy and dost receive the sacrifice ... at Thy Holy Altar"\(^6\). In these depictions Christ is frequently surrounded by angelic deacons who separate him from the apostles waiting for the eucharist. Eleventh century examples of this type include S. Sophia in Ohrid\(^6\), the liturgical scroll in Jerusalem (Stavrou No.109)\(^6\) and
The second type is an illustration of the actual distribution of the wine and bread by Christ to the apostles. This is the more ancient tradition that includes the Rossano Gospels, the Rabula Codex, the sixth century Stuma and Riha patens, the Khludov psalter, Kılıçlar Kilise and the Athos Pantokrator codex 6165. Liturgically it refers to the moment just before the consummation of the Sacrament of the Eucharist when the body and blood of Christ are offered66. Compositionally in eleventh century monuments of this type there are essentially two main variants which had already been noted by Dobbert in 189267. The first is a procession of two rows of apostles shown moving single file towards a central altar where Christ is normally shown twice, on one side distributing the bread, and wine on the other. Eleventh century depictions of this compositional variant include S. Sophia in Kiev68, Karabaş Kilise, Tağah Triconch and Canavar Kilise in Cappadocia69, Bibl. Nat. Ms cod. gr. 7470 and in the early twelfth century Asinou and Archangel Michael in Kiev71. The second variant, which appears to have been more popular in miniatures, has the apostles bunched up into two tight groups on either side of the altar. Eleventh century examples include the Barberini and Theodore psalters72 and the second scene in the liturgical scroll at Jerusalem73. While the first variant is compositionally best suited for the frieze-like space of a horizontal apsidal band, the second for miniatures and narrow bays such as in Bačkovo.

In the Bačkovo Communion, none of the apostles has a halo. There appears to be no fixed practice as to when to
represent the halo, for example, in the Stuma paten all the figures have haloes, while in the Riha paten none of the apostles has a halo. In eleventh and twelfth century monuments, most of the illuminated manuscripts showing the Communion leave the apostles without haloes, while in S. Sophia in Ohrid, S. Sophia in Kiev and in all the Cappadocian examples haloes are shown. At the church of Archangel Michael in Kiev and at Nerezi the apostles do not have haloes, while in later twelfth century churches of Nereditsa and Serres they do. In this respect the most interesting example is that of Asinou where only the two leading apostles, SS. Peter and John have haloes and are shown actually receiving the communion, while the rest do not. The Asinou depiction particularly stresses the moment of sanctity of the eucharist "This hath touched my lips and shall take away mine iniquities and purge away my sins." The Asinou Communion is also unusual in replacing St. Paul, who entered the scene at a very early stage as a liturgical counterpart to St. Peter, with the historically more appropriate youthful St. John. Likewise, the addition of the strict profile image of Judas, turned away from the rest of the apostles and accepting the sop and the devil is rare in Byzantine depictions and points to the influence of a western model.

The setting of the Bǎckovo Communion is unusual. Although as in most Middle Byzantine depictions of the theme it is shown within the church, here stressed by the marble floor tiles, the ciborium which rightly belongs over the altar, in both Bǎckovo Communion scenes is placed over the assembled apostles. The ciborium with its "Dome of Heaven"
associations seems here to be used to stress the sanctity of the Apostles.

The Бачково feast cycle follows the pattern of abbreviated feast depictions that emerged in the late ninth century and became codified as the Byzantine "classical system" by the eleventh century. Only the lower band of feasts have survived on the lateral walls and there is just a trace of a Transfiguration scene above the Koimesis on the west wall that suggests that there were originally two bands of feasts and that the second band was lost with the collapse of the vault. Within eleventh century monuments such as Hosios Lukas, S. Sophia in Kiev, Nea Moni on Chios, Elmali Kilise, Çarıklı Kilise, Karakılık, Ateni, Akhtala and Daphni, although there is a fairly similar repertoire of feast scenes there is a considerable sequential variation. Of the so-called Dodekaeorta, only one scene, that of the Koimesis, is constantly found in the same spot, on the west wall of the church naos.

At Бачково, the wall space on the lateral walls is divided into four bays. The eastern bay is the narrowest - 160cm. wide, while the other three are approximately 185cm. wide each. As far as it is possible to see, the pilaster subdivisions of bays continue into the upper band. On the lower level the two eastern bays are taken up with scenes of the Communion of the Apostles, followed on the south wall by the Presentation of Christ, Baptism of Christ and Raising of Lazarus and on the north wall, from west to east, Entry into Jerusalem, Threnos and Myrophores. As Grabar noted, the peculiarity in the Бачково arrangement of scenes makes any
reconstruction of the original programme very difficult.
The usual sequence of scenes in eleventh century single nave
churches, for example, Karabağ Kilise or Pürenli Seki Kilise
in Irhala, is from top to bottom, starting on the south wall
and then from left to right. This arrangement does not work
at Bačkovo if we assume, as the architecture suggests, that
there were eight scenes in the top band. The surviving
scenes suggest that they were originally paired vertically
and arranged from left to right starting on the south wall.
In this proposed reconstruction both narrow eastern bays would
be taken up with an Ascension as frequently found in this
position, for example, in S. Sophia in Ohrid and at Asinou.
Then the proposed sequence on the south wall would be: second
bay Nativity top, Presentation of Christ, bottom; third
bay Baptism of Christ, bottom, possibly Marriage feast in Cana*
top; fourth bay, a Miracle, possibly the Healing of the Blind
Man*, top, Raising of Lazarus, bottom. On the west wall,
above the doorway the Koimesis, with the Transfiguration on
the top. On the north wall (west to east), fourth bay,
Entry into Jerusalem, bottom, Last Supper*, top; third bay,
Crucifixion*, top, Threnos, bottom; second bay, Myrophores,
bottom, Anastasis*, top. The surviving scenes and the
reconstruction suggest that the feast cycle at Bačkovo is
similar to other eleventh century Byzantine cycles with
perhaps a greater emphasis on the latter part of the Passion,
rather than Mariological or Infancy cycles as could be antici­
pated in a church primarily designed for funerary purposes.

Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Diagram C.v. Pl.10.a.-b.)

Apart from some slight damage to the upper part of
the composition and some areas of faint colour the scene is
well preserved. As with all the feast cycle scenes, the Presentation is framed within a green floral triple arch ornamental band, whose original dimensions were 169 x 186cm., of which 163 x 186cm. now survives. The scene is set against a background divided into three horizontal bands. The lowest is a band of painted marble tiles - preserving a similar ground line of similar tiles to that of the neighbouring Communion scene. However, now the pattern of the tiles is successfully exploited to form a narrow stage-like space on which the four protagonists are arranged in a single line. Above the tiles is an uninterrupted band of pale olive green capped with a red banister representing a wall that reaches the waist-line of the participants and suggesting a temple interior as the setting. The top band is of dark blue and is common to all the feast scenes.

The composition is divided vertically by an altar, covered with the same altar cloth as in the Communion, which is placed exactly in the centre with two figures grouped symmetrically on either side. The Bačkovo Presentation is a slight variation on the traditional arrangement in that Simeon stands on the left, rather than on the right of the altar as is more customary. From the left approaches Anna, dressed in a dark olive green mantle and a long-sleeved ochre tunic with dark brown shoes. She is shown in three-quarter view, her right hand raised, pointing prophetically upwards, in her left she holds an open scroll on which is the well preserved inscription:
Next to Anna stands Simeon. He is shown frontally, clasping the Christ-Child in his two bare hands and pressing his cheek against that of the Child. Christ is semi-reclined, almost struggling, with his arms stretched out towards the Virgin. Simeon is bare-headed with rough, long white hair and beard. He is dressed in a golden himation, a long dark blue tunic and has bare feet. His arms are loosely draped with a white cloth on which is a brown checkered design that on the same wall later reappears as the funerary shroud of Lazarus. The funerary associations are further stressed by the pressing of the cheeks, a gesture to be repeated in the Threnos. As in the preceding Communion scene, the ciborium has been shifted away from the altar to be placed directly over Simeon and the Child. Christ is dressed in a red-gold himation and has a crossed nimbus, while all other participants also have haloes. Simeon's hands themselves are not veiled and this suggests that the moment of the narrative illustrated is the completion of the ceremony with the Child about to be returned to his mother (Lk. 2:28-35)\textsuperscript{87}. Although the Virgin holding the child is the more popular form, there are numerous examples of the Child being held by Simeon. These include Hagioi Anargyroi, Nicholas Kasnitzes and St.
Stephanos in Kastoria\textsuperscript{68}, St. Eustace (Göreme chp. 11) in Cappadocia\textsuperscript{89}, Panagia Amasgou, Monagri and Lagoudera in Cyprus\textsuperscript{90}, at the Church of the Saviour of the Transfiguration at the Mirožsk monastery in Pskov and the Koimesis Church at Volotovo in Russia\textsuperscript{91}, a twelfth century gold plaque at the Metropolitan Museum\textsuperscript{92}, several examples at Trebizond\textsuperscript{93} and other later monuments\textsuperscript{94}.

Facing Simeon, on the other side of the altar stands the Virgin, her head inclined towards the Child, her hands uncovered are shown in motion about to stretch towards the Child. She wears a purple chiton and maphorion, dark blue robes and has bare feet. Less than a step behind her is Joseph, who like the Virgin is shown in three-quarter view and who balances Anna by similarly moving towards the altar. His face is well preserved with its short white hair and white rounded beard. He has a white tunic over which he wears a light red mantle the lower edge of which he has lifted with his right hand and in this supports two white doves, shown without a birdcage. The other hand is held loosely at the waist and the feet are in sandals.

Running along the top of the scene is the inscription:

\[ \text{ upcoming text } \]

\[ \text{ upcoming text } \]

\[ \text{ upcoming text } \]

Baptism of Christ (Diagram C.vi, Pl.11a.-b.)

The scene has faded badly with minor losses in the area of the sky, part of one angel and the lower section of the river Jordan. The surviving composition measures approximately 168 x 183cm. The scene is boldly divided
into four colour masses. The light blue of the river shown as a vertical column of water between two very jagged banks and spreading into the foreground to form an inverted T-shape, and this shape is directly reflected in reverse in the dark blue mass of the sky. The blue separates the two land masses - on the left a red tan mountainscape with the solitary tree, axe and John the Baptist; on the right, an ochre landscape with three angels. Dramatically, directly in the centre of the composition is the frontal naked figure of Christ, shown standing statically with his feet crossed. His right hand is raised to waist height in a sign of benediction, his left rests on his thigh\textsuperscript{95}. His face is not well preserved, he has a beard, crossed nimbus and apparently similar features to the Christ of the Communion scenes. The sky above him is lost and consequently there is no trace of a dove or segment of heaven. Likewise the loss of the lower part of the river makes it uncertain if there existed a personification of the river or column and cross.

John the Baptist leans over and touches the head of Christ. He has a halo and the usual unruly dark brown hair and scraggy beard. He wears a single knee-length, short sleeved animal skin tunic which appears to have originally been a dark olive green\textsuperscript{96}. He has highly expressive features, with his head tilted towards heaven, his mouth open and wide bulging eyes. The tree and the axe which is "laid unto the root of the trees" (Mtt. 3:10) are shown to the left of him.

On the opposite side of Christ, leaning towards him are the three angels. Only the two front figures are
shown, both in three-quarter view, while the third is suggested by an overlapping halo. The angels wear light blue and green tunics and beautiful flowing light red himations. Their hands are veiled with light green and light red drapery, their wings, which probably once existed are now lost. The number of angels in eleventh century depictions vary from one to three, while in the twelfth century, as many as six are sometimes shown. All figures in this composition have haloes and there are no surviving inscriptions.

The Bačkovo Baptism belongs to a type frequently encountered in eleventh century monuments. It is characterized by the neck-high column of water between jagged banks; the frontally posed Christ; the emotional Baptist and the classically posed angels. At Bačkovo, the banks of the Jordan closely resemble the jagged entrance of Lazarus's tomb, shown in the neighbouring scene, while the angels seem similar to the adoring angels of numerous Nativities. This type of Baptism is encountered in the early eleventh century Georgian Synaxarium, Tbilissi A-648, early eleventh century Armenian Gospels, San Lazzaro, cod. 1400, fol. 3, at Iprari (1096) in Georgia, in Greek eleventh century manuscripts, Vatican, cod. gr. 1613, p.299, Baltimore Walters Art Gallery, cod. 521, fol. 38, Athos Dionysiou cod. 587, fol. 141, Vatican, cod. gr. 752, fol. 17, Athos, Panteleimon 6, fol. 161, Paris, Coislin 239 fol. 120, Paris gr. 533, fol. 154 and in the frescoes of the eleventh century Cappadocian churches of Sakli Kilise, Elmalı Kilise and Karanlık.
Raising of Lazarus (Diagram C.viii, Pl.12.a.-b.)

Although in many areas colours are faint, the scene is relatively well preserved with the major losses occurring along the top edge and in the upper left hand corner. It measures 160 x 183cm. As in the two preceding scenes, the composition is broken into three sections. On the right, Lazarus in the mouth of the tomb with the old Jew, on the left a group of apostles, and between them in the centre, the dominating figure of Christ.

The background of the scene is reduced to a minimum - a stretch of level ground leading to a solitary cliff in which is roughly hewn the burial cave of Lazarus. The rest of the background is dark blue sky. Lazarus is shown standing erect, with a beardless, alert handsome face and open eyes. From his feet up, he is completely bound in a white swaddling bandage-shroud that covers his head like a kerchief. Hanging over his shoulders down to his waist is a brown checkered funerary sepulchral cloak. Apart from Christ, Lazarus is the only other figure in the composition to have a halo. At the feet of Lazarus is a rectangular red marble slab, apparently the top of a sarcophagus, rather than the stone concealing the tomb. Slightly to the left of Lazarus is the old Jew in a green tunic and hooded purple cloak. He is shown looking with astonishment at Christ and holds up his right hand with an arresting gesture, while with his left pulls out a red handkerchief to cover his nose. Unlike many other examples, there are no other figures surrounding Lazarus - moving the stone away, unwrapping him, supporting him or merely as witnesses.
In front of the cave are the two diminutive kneeling figures of Mary and Martha - both with covered heads, and hands eucharistically veiled, one dressed in blue, the other in white. By convention, one has her head almost touching the ground, the other glances over her shoulder at Lazarus.

Christ is physically larger than any other figure in the composition. He has a crossed nimbus and is shown in three-quarter view dressed in a red tunic and light blue himation. He is pointing to Lazarus with his outstretched right hand with a commanding gesture, in his left hand he holds a closed scroll at waist-height. Behind him, to the left, is a crowd of disciples in green and red robes and one of whom is holding a bound scroll. The crowd is much abbreviated with only three faces and two bodies shown, while a head count increases the number of figures to six. None of them is individualized as a specific apostle nor has a halo.

The Bačkovo type of the Raising of Lazarus had already found its full formulation by the sixth century in the Rossano codex and probably in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople. In this rather laconic type, the scene is reduced to its principal participants, a simplicity which is characteristic of the Bačkovo feast cycle. Grabar, in his detailed analysis of this composition drew attention to the peculiarities of Lazarus' costume and the archaism of simply showing a rough cave, rather than some sort of aedicula and suggested a Syrio-Egyptian origin for this iconography. Whatever the origins may be, Lazarus' costume had become widespread in eleventh and twelfth century
monuments and these include Elmalı Kilise, Karanlık and Çarlık Kilise in Cappadocia, Asinou (1105/6) in Cyprus, Palatine chapel and illuminated manuscripts, while a variation on this costume, with the sepulchral cloak covering the head is shown at Nerezi. The Bačkovo rendering is generally in keeping with other representations of this theme in eleventh century monuments and is free of the elaborations and complexities that swept into its iconography in the latter half of the twelfth century and in the thirteenth century.

Transfiguration (Diagram C.viii, Pl.15.a.)

On the west wall above the enormous Koimesis is a poorly preserved fragment of the Transfiguration. The original composition apparently took up the entire upper section of the wall, capped by the semi-circular arch of the vault and would have measured approximately 150cm. x 400cm. The maximum dimensions of the present fragment are 73cm. x 205cm.

The Transfiguration is one of the Dodekaeorta. It was given an early apsidal pictorial prominence in St. Catherine's at Mount Sinai and at San Apollinare in Classe and at a later date shifted from the apse to the apsidal arch as in Cavuşin and Tavşanlı Kilise in Cappadocia. In tenth and eleventh century monuments it frequently occupies a position on the west wall opposite the apse as in El Nazar, Karabağ Kilise (1060/61) and Karanlık Kilise in Cappadocia. In the latter eleventh century and later, as the Koimesis developed its monopoly over the west wall, the Transfiguration took up its place as one of the feast cycle scenes, usually between the Baptism and the Raising of Lazarus.
The Backovo Transfiguration in its location adheres to the earlier tradition and this is at the expense of the then already established sequence of feasts with the Raising of Lazarus preceding the Transfiguration rather than following it. The surviving Backovo fragment shows the lower edge of the red drapery of a sprawling apostle on the left (Peter?) and in the centre, the lower part of the light blue mandorla of Christ, the tips of his feet, the edge of Christ’s white drapery and the peak of Mt. Tabor. The right hand side of the composition has been totally destroyed. The Backovo type does not follow the so-called "classical variant" as found at Daphni, where on a plane below Christ are the three apostles, but the more abbreviated form where Christ and the apostles share the same ground line and one of the apostles is placed to the left and the other two are grouped together at the right. The prophets are shown floating at either side of Christ on a higher plane. This latter type is fairly widely represented in the Cappadocian churches including El Nazar, Sakli Kilise and Çavuşin.

Entry into Jerusalem (Diagram C.ix, Pl.13)

In all the feast scenes on the north wall the state of preservation is much worse than that on the south wall with only the lower fragments of the compositions remaining. The Entry into Jerusalem fragment measures 110.50 cm. x 180cm.

The movement in the scene unfolds from left to right towards the apse. On the far left are the lower parts of the garments of two figures holding scrolls and dressed in light red and dark olive green himations. As the heads of
the figures are missing, from this we cannot argue, as does Grabar\textsuperscript{120}, that we have here a very laconic form of the scene with only two apostles shown. As we have noticed on the opposite wall, two bodies can stand for three angels in the Baptism or for six disciples in the Raising of Lazarus. At the far right, facing inwards are the lower parts of the drapery of two adult figures, one in a green tunic and purple himation, the other apparently in a simple purple robe. Again there is uncertainty as to how many figures may have been represented here. There are also two children in pure white shirts with no markings, one being held by the hand by the first adult, the other is spreading a striped brown shirt over the ground. Nothing has survived of the gates of Jerusalem. In the centre of the composition is a magnificently drawn white ass, with its front left hoof poised in the air about to tread on the garment laid out for it. Seated on the ass is Christ, riding side-saddle, in a red tunic and with traces of blue on the himation. The top part of the figure has not survived. Below the ass there is a faint trace of green of the background. The surviving fragment of the Bačkovo Entry into Jerusalem conforms entirely with the Middle Byzantine rendering of the scene, which although undergoing some elaboration in detail, compositionally remained largely unchanged\textsuperscript{121}.

Threnos (Diagram C.x, Pl.14)

Less than the lower half of this composition has been preserved (70-40 x 176cm.) The body of Christ, with his head to the left, occupies most of the length of the composition. The Virgin appears to be in a seated or semi-seated frontal position at the left supporting Christ's torso
on her knees. She wears a light blue undergarment and a purple chiton, while the top part of the figure is lost. The figure of Christ is shown naked except for the fine, almost transparent knee-length loin cloth. At Christ's feet kneel Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, pressing their faces to Christ's feet and supporting the lower part of his body in their arms. The foreground space is an olive green, against which, behind the figures is a long red mass outlined in white and more likely to represent the cliff with the sepulchral cave, than a foldless mass of drapery on which Christ's body is placed.

The theme of the Threnos, as shown in the study by Weitzmann, is essentially an eleventh century creation that received its final version late in the eleventh century and in the early twelfth century. In subsequent depictions it underwent little change other than customary elaboration. The Bačkovo version can be specifically related to the type preserved in three eleventh century ivories - the Luton Hoo ivory (Wernher Collection), one at the Museo Bizantino at Ravenna and one at the Staatsbibliothek at Berlin and also the depiction in the Gelati Gospels. This version is characterized by the Virgin being in a seated position supporting the top half of Christ and the two small figures hugging his feet, so that the body of Christ is shown still in mid-air. According to Weitzmann, this is specifically the moment when the scene undergoes the change from being an entombment depiction under the influence of the Koimesis composition. Of the four examples, the Gelati Gospels miniature is the most advanced with the head of Christ being lifted to a semi-seated position by the Virgin. In later
examples the body of Christ comes to rest on the ground or on a sarcophagus and the Virgin takes her place on the other side of her son as in an eleventh century ivory in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London\textsuperscript{130}, the eleventh/twelfth century Gospel lectionary, Vatican Ms. gr. 1156, f. 194\textsuperscript{v}\textsuperscript{131} and in the frescoes of the Saviour of the Transfiguration church at the Mirožsk monastery in Pskov of before 1156\textsuperscript{132}. Alternatively, Christ's body is shown in the process of being lowered as in the Parma Gospels (Palatin Ms. 5 f. 90\textsuperscript{v})\textsuperscript{133}, Gospel book, B.M. Harley 1810, f. 205\textsuperscript{v}\textsuperscript{134} and at Nerezi\textsuperscript{135}.

The Bačkovo Threnos belongs to a specific iconographic type that is peculiar to the second half of the eleventh century. This corroborates the 1074-83 dating for the frescoes and suggests that the Bačkovo master was in touch with recent iconographic developments.

Myrophores (Diagram C.xi, Pl.7.a.)

The last of the feast scenes is also the worst preserved with less than the lower third surviving (53-40 x 179cm.) Against an olive green background, on the left, are the hems of drapery of two figures - one ochre, the other purple. These probably belong to the two or three Holy Women. In the centre there is a large white area against which are seen two feet in sandals and the lower edge of a flowing purple robe belonging to a very large figure. Almost certainly these belong to the monumental angel seated on a marble slab. To the right is the remains of a small sleeping soldier, complete except for the head.

The surviving fragment of the Bačkovo Myrophores conforms generally with the eleventh and twelfth century
iconography of the scene as found in such monuments as the eleventh century Gospel book, Paris B.N. Ms. gr. 74, f208\textsuperscript{v136}, a fresco in the Hosios Lukas crypt\textsuperscript{137}, the Gospel lect-ionary of 1059, Athos Dionysiou, cod. 587m., fol. 167\textsuperscript{v138} and many others\textsuperscript{139}.

Koimesis (Diagram Cxii, Pls. 15.a.-b.)

Above the door on the west wall is a large rectangular composition of the Koimesis (210 x 493cm.) Although the scene is faint in places, especially around the central area, owing to water damage, and there are minor losses in the architectural framing, the composition is well preserved.

Like all the other feast scenes, the Koimesis is placed within a green floral trifoliate arch to which has been added on either side a narrow additional arch framed with painted simulated marble columns. In the centre of the wide central arch, at waist-height, is the Virgin's bier, draped with red cloth. The Virgin reclines in an almost semi-seated position, head to the left, in a purple chiton and maphorion and with a halo. Behind her stands Christ in a red tunic and a blue himation (the colour is badly faded) holding a small swaddled Virgin soul in his arms. Both Christ and the soul figure have haloes. There is no mandorla around Christ, but on either side of him flutters a small angel, one in pink and the other in green robes. At either end of the bier stands a crowd of figures without haloes. Behind the bier, next to Christ, to the left, stands an old apostle, probably St. John\textsuperscript{140}, leaning over the Virgin in a pose reminiscent of John on the bosom of Christ at the Last Supper. The group at the head of the Virgin consists of
eight figures, led by St. Peter with his censor and behind him stands St. Thomas, who according to legend was the only apostle to witness the miracle and is shown addressing himself to Christ. In this group there is also another bishop. In the two side arches are the figures of the hymnographers SS. John Damascene and Cosmas of Maiuma with their scrolls.

Cosmas of Maiuma, who is in the left niche, has a brown, single point, fairly short beard, a rounded white turban with green ornament, an olive green tunic and a purple mantle which ties in a bow at the front. In his left hand he holds an open scroll, while the right is pressed flat against his chest exposing a richly jewelled epimanikion.

Inscriptions

[ὁ ἄγιος] Κοσμᾶς ὁ [ποιητής]

The inscription reads:

In the right arch stands John of Damascus, with a short pointed grey beard and what appears to be a purplish rounded turban. He is dressed in a similar costume to that of St. Cosmas, but with a light red tunic and green mantle. He holds an open scroll in his left hand and points to the
main scene with his right. Both hymnographers have haloes.

Inscriptions

Scroll

The entire Koimesis scene is set against an olive green foreground and a dark blue background. There are no secondary scenes or other figures shown.

By the eleventh century, the feast of the Koimesis was well established both in liturgy and iconography. The earliest extant examples that can be dated fairly securely are from the tenth century. These are predominantly ivories, but also include two Cappadocian fresco cycles – namely the New Church of Tokalı Kilise and Kiliçlar Kilise. From the eleventh century there is a wealth of examples. These again include a number of ivories, a Gospel lectionary at Iviron, cod. 1, fol. 300, the fresco in Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki of 1028, a dated Georgian gold repoussé altarcross – the Katskhi Cross, Ateni fresco in the south apse, the fragmentary fresco in S. Sophia in Ohrid, Gospel lectionary of 1059, Dionysiou cod. 587m f. 163, a Sinai icon, frescoes in the Hosios Lukas crypt at Agios Chrysostom, Koutsovendis, at Saklı Kilise and Kiliçlar Kuğluk in Cappadocia, a Monte Cassino Ms. No. HH 98 of about 1080 and the mosaic at Daphni.
Early twelfth century examples are numerous and include Asinou\textsuperscript{161}, Boiana\textsuperscript{162}, Nicholas Kažnites in Kastoria\textsuperscript{163}, the Pala d'Oro enamel plaque in Venice\textsuperscript{164} and many others\textsuperscript{165}.

What emerges from this survey of monuments is that in the period from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, there is no single "evolutionary line of development of iconography" that can be used to date the various stages of this theme. Any attempt to do so, as in the study by Wratislaw - Mitrovic and Okunev\textsuperscript{166}, leads to major difficulties. No sooner is it stated that the inclusion of bishops is an innovation of the late eleventh century and early twelfth, or that the introduction of women observers to the scene is a twelfth century development\textsuperscript{167}, than tenth century examples can be cited with as many as three bishops present\textsuperscript{168} and others with women\textsuperscript{169}. It is only in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with the introduction of new legendary episodes, that there is a new distinct iconographic development.

Koimesis depictions of the tenth to the twelfth centuries follow two separate traditions. In one, only Christ and the twelve apostles are shown. In the other, there are various ecclesiastical figures and other participants. Examples of the first or "simple type" include the ivory from the Nicephoros group and two of the "triptych group" ivories \textsuperscript{170}, the Iviron Gospel lectionary, the frescoes at Kiliclar Kusluk, Saklı Kilise and the Hosios Lukas crypt and the Katskhi cross. The second group does include some of the tenth century and later ivories, the Dionysiou lectionary, frescoes at Bačkovo and Koutsovendis, the mosaic at Daphni and numerous twelfth century examples. It appears that these two
traditions coexisted from the tenth century onwards and were derived from two different literary traditions. In the twelfth century the latter tradition became the more popular.

The literary source for the first tradition is a large group of manuscripts analysed by Jugie and Wenger that go under the title "The discourse of St. John the Divine concerning the Koimesis of the Holy Mother of God." Although the earliest extant Greek manuscript is the eleventh century Vatican gr. 1982, Wenger convincingly argues for a fifth century source. Within this tradition, the main sequence of apocryphal events remains relatively unaltered. The Pseudo-John relates the gathering of the apostles on clouds, the episode illustrated at the New Church of Tokali Kilise, and then comes the moment when "the Lord spread forth his unstained hands and received her holy and spotless soul," there were the twelve apostles present who "laid her honourable and holy body upon a bed." Subsequent episodes of the miracles of the Virgin's body are not shown in the early depictions.

The sources for the second, the complex iconography of the Koimesis are more difficult to establish. The seventh century homily on the Koimesis by John, the Archbishop of Thessaloniki and the other related tradition close to the above-mentioned apocrypha, published by Halkin, add few new iconographic details and these are not generally reflected in the monuments. The first reference to bishops being present at the Koimesis is found in a late fifth century text, the so-called Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who according to Honigmann can be identified with Peter the
Iberian (411–91), the monophysite-minded Bishop of Majuma near Gaza. Pseudo-Dionysius wrote as an "eye witness" to the event, claiming to be St. Paul's convert, the Areopagite Dionysius (Acts 17:34) and was held to be authentic by the Church until the mid-fifteenth century.

Pseudo-Dionysius in "Divine Names" III/2, wrote as being present at the Koimesis "we [himself and Timothy, another disciple of Paul to whom the "Divine Names" is addressed] with him [Hierotheus] and many of our holy brethren met together to behold that mortal body ... and James, the brother of the Lord was there and Peter [the apostle]." In the mid-seventh century Maximus the Confessor (d.662) gave an orthodox interpretation to Mono­physite-sounding passages of the Pseudo-Dionysius and in the early eighth century we come across specific references to Pseudo-Dionysius in the Koimesis homilies of Andrew of Crete and John of Damascus. Both repeat Pseudo-Dionysius' additional witnesses, however they list Timothy, Dionysius and Hierotheus as being present and then quote the passage from the "Divine Names" that mentions James, the brother of the Lord. This creates an ambiguity as to whether three or four extra people were actually present at the Koimesis.

So according to this literary tradition, there were present at the Koimesis the twelve apostles together with another three or four witnesses - a total of fifteen or sixteen. Koimesis depictions with sixteen witnesses present are encountered fairly frequently as in the tenth century ivory at Dumbarton Oaks, in manuscripts Dionysiou 587m and Paris Gr. 1528 and frescoes at Ateni and Bačkovo.
While the sources refer to the presence of the three or four additional saints, both Andrew of Crete and John of Damascus only refer to one of these as specifically being a bishop, that one being Timothy - Bishop of Ephesus. So in the Dumbarton Oaks ivory, only one of the sixteen is shown as a bishop, while at Daphni and Bačkovo, for reasons suggested below, two are shown as bishops.

The tradition with fifteen witnesses is also found on early ivories, the mosaic at Martorana, Palermo, the fresco at the Church of the Saviour of the Transfiguration of the Mirožsk monastery at Pskov and a twelfth century icon on Athos. It is also this particular tradition, omitting James the brother of our Lord, that entered into the prescriptions of Dionysius of Fourna. An interesting variant of this type is the fourteen witnesses in the scene which shows the three saints mentioned by John of Damascus together with eleven apostles. The apostle who is omitted is Thomas who, according to a tradition going back at least to the Koimesis narrative of Joseph of Arimathaea, was saying mass in India when the Virgin died and arrived too late for the funeral but saw the Virgin over the Mount of Olives where she gave him her girdle. There are fourteen male mourners at Asinou, at Nicholas Kaznites in Kastoria and on an eleventh or twelfth century ivory in the Hermitage.

The Bačkovo Koimesis belongs to this literary source tradition that essentially stems from the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. It also exactly follows the liturgical text of the Koimesis feast in the Festal Menaion of 15 August. Here there are references to two specific
bishops - "James the first Bishop and brother of the Lord" and Bishop Hierotheos\textsuperscript{191}. Also the two hymnographers shown flanking the Bačkovo Koimesis, SS. Cosmas and John of Damascus, are the two named authors of the two canons of the feast\textsuperscript{192}. The particular passages quoted on their scrolls in the Bačkovo frescoes probably come from the two canons of the feast\textsuperscript{193}. These inscriptions are an early variant of those that were later prescribed by Dionysius of Fourna\textsuperscript{193} and generally the composition with the flanking hymnographers became popular in the thirteenth century and later depictions\textsuperscript{194}.

The Bačkovo Koimesis is in keeping with the rest of the Bačkovo feast cycle and is a rather simple, laconic depiction in line with other eleventh century renderings. There are no traces of such later developments as the mandorla around Christ and the host of angels.

The east wall of the church narthex has a physically moulded trifoliate arch, similar to the painted simulated architectural ones shown in the feast scenes. In the two outer arches are the apostles Peter and Paul, in the arch above the doorway is a Madonna and Child - the Eleousa type, and flanking the doorway itself, as pilaster saints, are the archangels Michael and Gabriel. Above all of this, occupying the rest of the wall up to the semi-circular vault, is an enormous, badly preserved composition, of the Vision of Ezekiel. Keeping in mind that the narthex originally had open arches on three sides, this east wall was formerly an outside painted wall at the entrance to the church, a type of decoration which has rarely survived from
the Middle Byzantine period.

SS. Peter and Paul (Diagram C.xiia. and b.) occupy the recessed moulded architectural, round topped niches. The bands of painted ornament on these arches are the same green floral designs as around the feast scenes inside the naos. St. Paul, on the left, is the better preserved of the two, with his niche measuring 265 x 56cm. and the figure itself 186cm. high. The lower part of the figure is shown frontally and it gradually swings around to a nearly three-quarter view position so that the top part of the figure faces the doorway opening. Paul's right hand is largely lost, having been restored with cement; it appears to have been raised in benediction, while in the left hand he carries a gospel. He wears a long, light green tunic and a pale red himation. The face is badly mutilated with only the characteristic receding white hair surviving. The background of the niche is the usual two band blue/green colours and below the figure is a 50cm. high painted imitation marble slab.

Inscription

This figure appears to have been especially a target for Armenian graffiti\textsuperscript{195}.

St. Peter, on the right, is in a similar niche 255 x 54cm., with the figure about 175cm. high. Colours are very faint with much of the surface lost, apparently through restoration. The saint appears to have had his right hand raised in a sign of benediction, while the left holds a closed scroll. The main garment colour is an olive
green, which now is very faint. Little has survived of the head, but again it was turned facing the doorway. As with St. Paul there is the same background and a similar 50cm. high painted red marble tile underneath.

Inscription

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\quad \\quad O^\Gamma \frac{\Pi}{\varepsilon} \quad \quad O^\varepsilon \\
\end{array} \]

SS. Peter and Paul flanking the entrance into the naos is a common occurrence in Byzantine church decoration\(^{196}\). The two 'princes of the apostles', jointly commemorated by the Church on June 29, have frequently been linked with funerary practice. The koimeteria on Athos at the monasteries of Iviron, Panteleimon and at the Grand Lavra are dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul. In the crypt of Hosios Lukas, immediately above the entrance into the bone storage area are depictions of SS. Peter and Paul. There are also a number of chapels of uncertain function, possibly funerary, dedicated to these saints, including one in S. Sophia in Kiev\(^{197}\), at the Palatine chapel\(^{198}\), several in Constantinople\(^{199}\), apparently chapels Belli Kilise II and Balkham Deressî in Cappadocia\(^{200}\) and the small chapel to the right of the catholicon of the monastery of Vlattadon in Thessaloniki\(^{201}\). The Bačkovo ossuary may itself be dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul. It is so referred to in the local oral tradition, the saints are shown flanking the entrance doorway and it would appear to be in keeping with the general Byzantine tradition of linking koimeteria with the names of these two saints.

In the semi-circular lunette above the doorway is a Madonna and Child (maximum measurement 135 x 175cm.)
172.

(Diagram Cxiiic. Pl. 24d.) The Virgin is in a dark blue himation and maphorion, lined with purple, has a halo and supports the Christ child from underneath with her right hand, while her left hand is around his waist. Christ is shown in three-quarter view, facing the Virgin, his right hand raised in benediction, in the left he holds a closed scroll. He wears a red-gold hatched himation and has a crossed nimbus. The figures are placed against a blue background.

Inscriptions

The Madonna and Child appear to be painted purely in secco and with the exception of the eyes, parts of the halo and small segments of drapery, are well preserved. The style and technique of painting differ from that used throughout the church - the figures are more heavily modelled, coloured highlights are used on the drapery and the drapery folds are smaller. Also the painted ornament around the figures differs from the original ornament and overlaps the original ornament at the top edge. This new band of ornament obscures any doorway inscription that may have existed. Generally, the repainting conforms in style with our so-called Georgian layer of probably the twelfth or thirteenth century.

This Virgin and Child conforms to the type traditionally referred to as Eleousa - the Merciful or Compassionate and is quite close to the example found in the mosaic of the Koimesis church at Nicea 202.

Also belonging to this repainted phase of the
173.

decorations are the two archangels directly underneath the Virgin and Child. The one on the left is almost totally lost except for a fragment of the left hand side and a badly mutilated lower area of drapery. The top garment appears to have been a light red, while the lower an olive green. A fragment of an inscription survives near the figure, but appears to have been added at a considerably later date.

The archangel on the right hand side of the door is well preserved except for the face, hands and the lower part of the figure. The existing figure measures 130cm. He is shown frontally, holding a rod in both hands, possibly a flabellum of which the top has now been lost. He is dressed in a white tunic seen at the sleeves and the hem with gold armour and gold cuffs on top of which is a red brown chlamys attached at the right shoulder by a fibula. The wings behind the archangel are tinged with red and green. The halo is outlined with a band of black followed by a band of white.

The type of archangel does not correspond with the ceremonially dressed archangels in the Bačkovo church apse, nor those in the Last Judgement in the narthex of the crypt below.

Vision of Ezekiel (Diagram Cxiv, Pls 24.a.-c.)

In the upper band on the east wall is the enormous composition of the Vision of Ezekiel, the surviving section of which measures 320-180 x 435cm. The scene is set within a landscape - which appears to have largely consisted of red
ochre iconic hillscapes. Within this landscape are three pools of dark olive blue-green in each of which is placed a single figure. The setting is somewhat reminiscent of late Byzantine Nativity compositions in which there are several caves shown and in each cave is depicted a separate episode.

In the central pool, which is by far the largest of the three, there is an almond-shaped light olive green mandorla, outlined by a narrow band of white. Within this is an enthroned figure of Christ, preserved only up to his chest, who is shown seated between two light green bows. He sits with his legs wide apart at the knees, with one foot resting on the lower bow and the other further down at the bottom edge of the mandorla. Only rather faint traces survive of his red-golden himation. In his left hand he holds an open scroll with a poorly preserved seven-line inscription, the right hand is lost. On the lower right hand side of the mandorla is a poorly preserved bull (or lion) with wings and a halo. The figure is very faint and difficult to decipher even on close examination.

Inscription on scroll

Behold our Lord in whom we trusted and have rejoiced in our salvation. He will give rest in this house).
In the left hand side of the composition is a vertically shaped pool in which is seen the lower part of a standing figure with a light-red tunic and rich flowing pale green himation. The figure survives only up to the waist.

To the right of the central figure of Christ, on a rock in front of a rectangular pool, is a seated figure with an open scroll, or possibly an open book, with three very faint lines of script. The figure is seated with open knees crossing his bare feet. He wears a white tunic, visible on the chest, at the sleeves and hem and a rich red himation. His right hand is raised to his face and is spread open, either as a gesture of surprise or of calling, while the left hand supports the scroll. Only the lower edge of the face and halo survive, showing a pointed white curly beard. Nothing else survives in the Backovo composition.

In his original publication of the Backovo fresco, Grabar connected the scene with the passage in Ezekiel 1-3 and drew a parallel with a late Byzantine icon at the Sofia Archaeological Museum (Inv. No 2057). With the discovery and publication of the apsidal mosaic at the Latomos monastery (Hosios David) in Thessaloniki in 1927 a third compositional parallel was added. This last example, most likely of the fifth century, was related by Charles Diehl to a literary source surviving in a manuscript dated 1307.

These four monuments – the Latomos mosaic, the Diegesis of Ignatios (Abbot of the Acophiou Monastery), the Backovo fresco and the Poganovo double-sided icon, are linked
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by a general compositional similarity, a similarity in some of the inscriptions and in three of them, by a direct reference to the Latomos miracle.

Compositionally, the mosaic, fresco and icon all have the figure of Christ within a mandorla surrounded by the symbols of the evangelists in the centre, a standing figure to the left and a seated figure to the right. All three compositions are set within a landscape. Essentially there is nothing in the composition itself that makes the scene peculiar to the Latomos vision. As Mango has noted, the 'liturgical Majestas' - a seated Christ in a mandorla accompanied by tetramorphs, occurs in all parts of the Byzantine world, in pre-Iconoclastic and post-Iconoclastic art and is not based on any one given biblical text, but a combination of details drawn from several passages. The conversion of the 'Liturgical Majestas' into a "vision" occurred through the addition of two witnesses who were placed at either side at the bottom of the mandorla, frequently bearing scrolls. The ultimate model for the conversion was probably the Transfiguration image. This occurs in the illustrations of the Vision of Habakkuk, where the figures are also frequently placed into a landscape setting as, for example, in the manuscripts Paris, Bibl. Nat. cod. gr. 543 fol. 27; Sinai, cod. gr. 339 fol. 9, and Athos, Dionysiou cod. 61 fol. 4. Of particular interest is an early twelfth century Gospel book, Venice, Bibl. Marciana Z 540 fol. 11, where Christ is shown in a mandorla surrounded by the symbols of the Evangelists, sitting in a very similar pose to the Bačkovo Christ and holding an open scroll in one hand and the other in an open gesture. In the lower
corners of the composition are the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel with their open scrolls. A related composition is found in the apse of San Vincenzo at Galliano (1007) where Christ in a mandorla is shown in Glory while below are two archangels bearing scrolls and the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Occasionally instead of the two prophets, there are only the two archangels as in the Chludov Psalter fol. 14r, the Theodore Psalter fol. 16v, in the south apse at Veljusa and numerous other examples related to the text "he did fly upon the wings of the wind" (Ps. 18:10).

So essentially the Bačkovo Vision follows a compositional convention which was widespread in Middle Byzantine art and could refer to a number of different visions. The four rivers of Paradise which figure in the Hosios David mosaic and become the lake with fish in the Poganovo icon, are totally absent from the Bačkovo fresco and judging from the arrangement of the surviving fragments could not have existed. Also it is significant that the Latomos Vision at Hosios David, Ignatios's description and the inscription "Miracle of Latomos" on the Poganovo icon are either apsidal images or refer to an apsidal image. The Vision at Bačkovo is painted in the narthex.

Millet, Grabar and Xyngopoulos have all drawn attention to the text on the scroll held by Christ in the four monuments and have concluded that they are virtually the same and must be dependant on the Latomos inscription. While it is true that the text held by Christ as preserved in the mosaic, recorded in the Diegesis of Ignatios and on the Poganovo icon are identical except for the
syntax in the final part\textsuperscript{220}, the text at Bačkovo differs in several points. It starts differently - 'Οδὲ ὁ ἀγὼ ἦμῶν instead of 'Ἰδοὺ ὁ θεὸς ἦμῶν found in the other three monuments and continues ἐφ' ὁ ἡμεῖς ἠλπίζομεν compared with the Latomos ἐφ' ὁ ἠλπίζομεν and concludes with αὕτω δόσει ἀναπαυσίν τῷ οἰκωτούτῳ as found in the Ignatios text and on the icon, but not on the mosaic. Although all four texts are largely a paraphrase of Isaiah 25:9, the Bačkovo inscription does not follow the same text tradition as the other three monuments. However, in the text of the scroll of the witness, the Bačkovo example differs substantially from the others. While the Latomos mosaic and the Diegesis do not give a text from the scriptures, but rather a version of the dedicatory inscription which is associated with Ezekiel 41:1\textsuperscript{221}, the Poganovo icon takes its text directly from Ezekiel 3:1\textsuperscript{222}. At Bačkovo, little remains of the three line inscription. The fragment can be deciphered as:

+Kal ἐγερομαι
Θ Ὠν ἔπεμψεν
(καὶ θαυμασθήσεται)
μέλπερ(ος καὶ οὐαὶ)

(and there was written in it Lamentation, and mournful song, and woe. Ezekiel 2:10)

If this reading is correct, then the figure holding the book is definitely Ezekiel. This identification is supported by the remaining fragment of the figure's face - the pointed white beard, which corresponds both to the Dionysious of Fournas prescription and the Ezekiel type found in the crypt fresco\textsuperscript{223}. The accompanying figure on the left is then most likely to be Isaiah, which would
explain the use of the quotation on Christ's scroll and is also found in other examples such as the Gospels of the Marciana library Z 540 in Venice, mentioned above. The scene itself is then the Vision of Ezekiel as described in the book of Ezekiel chps. 1-2 and is not directly related with the Latomos Vision.

There does remain the problem of why an essentially apsidal composition is shown on the east wall of the narthex. The church apse at Bačkovo is taken up by the enthroned Virgin and Child between archangels as was usual in eleventh century monuments, while the Deesis is in the apse of the crypt as is characteristic for an ossuary. So it was unlikely for the Vision of Ezekiel to displace the two existing apsidal compositions. The Vision of Ezekiel, especially in the interpretation offered by the two scrolls, is a reference to salvation and the resurrection of the dead and hence most appropriate for a church that commemorated the dead. Recalling that the narthex was originally an open portico, the Vision of Ezekiel originally appeared in an elevated place of honour on the east wall above the entrance to the church.

Deesis (Diagram D,I, Pl.28)

The semidome of the apsidal conch of the naos of the crypt is occupied by a very large, poorly preserved Deesis composition. At its base it measures 6.44m. and rised to a maximum height of 3.02m. The simple three figure composition is placed against a plain, dark blue background. Christ is shown in the centre, seated frontally on a backless throne, to the left stands the Virgin, while
to the right is John the Baptist. The two latter figures hug the outer edges of the conch, exploiting the physical recession of the surface of the vault and creating the illusion of the figures bowing towards Christ.

The best preserved figure is that of the Virgin who has only minor losses of paint in areas of drapery. The entire figure of Christ is difficult to decipher with parts of the head, torso and halo lost and the surviving paint layer rather faint. The figure of the Baptist has also suffered extensive damage to its upper half and survives largely in outline only. The only remaining inscription is the next to the Virgin's halo.

Christ is of the Pantocrator type and is shown seated on a massive wooden throne. It is a low, backless throne built up by a series of step-like blocks shown in attempted perspective. The footrest is a rectangular brown pedestal running almost the full length of the throne. Its front and right hand side are decorated with a double line of pearls, while its upper surface by a series of white diagonal lines creating a narrow stage upon which Christ's feet are placed. He is seated on a dark red cushion that is slightly pointed at the ends and is dressed in a red chiton and a blue himation. His right foot is placed slightly forward and engages most of the active folds of drapery, while the left foot is more withdrawn and the drapery falls loosely from the left knee upon which rests the closed Gospel Book. On the feet are visible sandal straps. The blessing right hand of Christ is stretched out towards the Virgin. It is placed palm upwards with the
second and third fingers outstretched, the other two bent backwards and with the thumb coming across to touch the middle finger. The left hand supports the Gospel Book by the spine, its cover consisting of two concentric diamond shapes made up of pearls. Christ has a wide face - the hair brushed to the sides, pointed nose and a smallish, slightly parted beard. His gaze is directed towards the beholder and he has a crossed nimbus.

This particular type of Pantocrator, characterized by the backless throne, this specific, unusual outstretched blessing gesture directed towards the figure on his right and the Gospel Book held by its spine, first appears on coins, quite suddenly, in the mid-eleventh century under Michael IV (1034-41)^225. Grierson refers to it as the hyperagathos type and suggests that it could have been based on a mosaic in the Anargyroi church that was built under Michael IV in Constantinople^226, however, this hypothesis remains without any supporting evidence. In extant monuments this type of Christ is not frequently encountered in Deesis compositions^227, where Christ usually holds his right hand in front of his body, upright and turned towards the spectator, with the third finger crossing over and touching the thumb in the traditional gesture of benediction^228. Christ's hand gesture itself is found in some Last Judgement compositions, like at Mileșeva^229, where he is shown as part of a Deesis, but without a Gospel Book, also in the late apsidal mosaic in the chapel of Michael Glabas in Fethiye Camii, where he holds the Gospel Book by the top edge, rather than the spine^230.
The standing figure of the Virgin has the lower part of her body shown frontally, then gradually, as the elongated figure follows the curve of the vault, she turns into a three-quarter pose. The curve of the slightly bent head is accentuated by the slope of the vault, so although the Virgin's feet are at the opposite side of the vault, her halo almost touches that of Christ. The hands of the Virgin are held in the deesis gesture - open and slightly outstretched at chest height. Her left hand is on the same level and almost meets the hand of benediction of Christ. It is an effective dramatic confrontation of the two gestures - one pleading a case for intercession, the other blessing. The Virgin is dressed in a dark blue mantle with a dark red maphorion\textsuperscript{231}. Her face is characterized by the somewhat elongated nose which comes to a downward point, thin, tightly closed, almost frowning lips and large eyes whose gaze is directed towards Christ.

On the opposite side of the vault stands John the Baptist whose pose mirrors that of the Virgin. As with the Virgin, the lower part of his body is depicted frontally and then changes into a three-quarter view position with his halo almost touching that of Christ. His hands repeat the same gesture as those of the Virgin. He has a slightly elongated face with loose, unruly black hair and beard, resembling the type of Baptist that we encountered in the scene of the Baptism of Christ in the church naos above. His gaze is directed towards Christ. He wears a brown himation and a dark red chiton.

The Deesis image survives in two iconographic trad-
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The first, which Kirpičnikov termed the trimorfo type, simply illustrates the Virgin, Christ and John the Baptist as three principal figures of the New Testament without suggesting any interrelationship between them. Examples of this type include the three medallions above the apsidal mosaic at St. Catherine's on Mt. Sinai and in the Christian Topography, Cod. Vat. gr. 699, fol. 76\textsuperscript{r}.

The second tradition of Deesis depictions, by far the most popular and the one to which Bačkovo fresco belongs, involves the notion of intercession, where the Virgin and the Prodromos appear in the role of intercessors before Christ the Judge. In the writings of the Church Fathers and the main liturgies, the intercessory role of the Virgin and to a lesser extent of John the Baptist is a relatively common theme. It becomes very widespread in apocryphal literature, especially the numerous editions of the Apocalypse of the Virgin and is often linked with the theme of the Last Judgement. In the Last Judgement depictions themselves the Deesis occupies a central role with Christ usually shown enthroned within a mandorla with outstretched arms. Examples of this intercessory type of Deesis include the Georgian enamel Martvili triptych (variously dated from the seventh to the ninth centuries) and the mid-eleventh century mosaic medallions on the apsidal arch in S. Sophia in Kiev. On one such Deesis image, a late tenth or early eleventh century Georgian mural at the Udabno refectory, the Virgin holds a scroll with the inscription "My Son and my God, I intercede for the world".

The main peculiarity of this type of Deesis
depiction is the gesture with which John and Mary address Christ. Both hands are held open, fingers together and the arms are stretched out at chest height towards Christ. This gesture of submission and adoration is known in antiquity and in early Christian art. In Lehmann-Hartleben's categorization of antique stock expressions, it is placed in the group of "Gesandte und Gefangene." In the LXXV scene on Trajan's column, representing the submission of Decebalus to the victorious Trajan, the vanquished, kneeling and standing stretch out their arms to the merciful emperor. The gesture essentially involves an act of communication, rather than the more abstract or physical nature of the other two basic Byzantine gestures of worship—the orant and proskynesis.

As an apsidal composition the Deesis is found in numerous provincial churches of the post-Iconoclastic period including seventeen examples in Cappadocia, five in Trebizond and a number of examples in Georgia, Armenia, Palestine, Russia, Serbia, Southern Italy, Rhodes and Crete. Also the Deesis is found as an apsidal composition in a number of churches that had specific funerary purposes. These churches include the frescoes in the crypt of Hosios Lukas, Yilanli Kilise in Irhala and Sarica Kilise in Cappadocia, in the apse of the funerary entrance gallery at the main church at Vardzia, the chapel of the hermit Peter at Koriša in Yugoslavia and the funerary parekklesion of the church of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) in Constantinople.

The Deesis in the apse of the Bačkovo crypt is
another example of the use of this theme to emphasize the connotations of salvation and last judgement that became particularly associated with funerary monuments. Numismatic evidence suggests that the type of Christ depicted in the Bačkovo Deesis was characteristic, although not exclusive, of the 1034-1081 period.  

Vision of Ezekiel (Diagram D, II, Pls 30.a.-c.)

On the west wall of the crypt naos is the depiction of the Vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones. Unlike the Deesis, this theme is rare in Byzantine art and there exists no other Byzantine depictions of this Vision of a similar scale.

The Bačkovo Vision of Ezekiel is only marginally smaller than the Deesis, along its base it measures 4.96m., reaches a maximum height of 2.10m. and occupies the west wall above the doorway leading from the narthex. It is the best preserved of all the scenes in the Bačkovo crypt naos, where except for some small losses in the background of the scene, particularly on the top left and along the bottom edge, it is largely intact. Many of the colours, particularly the blue of the background, are rather faint, but all the forms are clearly decipherable.

The prophet Ezekiel is shown in dynamic movement rushing from the left towards the centre of the composition, striding with his left leg forward and arms outstretched in a pose somewhat reminiscent of the angel of the Annunciation. He leans forward and in his hands holds an open scroll. He is dressed in a white tunic going down to his ankles, visible at the sleeves and at the hem, with a loose green
cloak on top. It is these heavy folds of drapery which accentuate his movement, rather than the more customary flutter of drapery behind him. Ezekiel conforms to his usual iconographic type with a short pointed white beard and shaggy white hair²⁵⁷. He has a halo. In the right half of the composition are five white skulls scattered on the ground amongst about a dozen bones. The skulls conform to the Middle Byzantine skull of Adam convention found in numerous Crucifixions - a white head-shape mass with dark cavities for the eyes. Above the skulls and bones stand five nude figures in an orant position. There are no other figures shown.

The setting for this composition is divided into four uneven bands of colour. There is a lower, horizontal band of olive green on which rest Ezekiel's feet. The rest is divided into three triangular segments of colour, an area of yellow ochre from which the figure of Ezekiel emerges on the left, a central triangle of dark blue, against which is held the scroll revealing Ezekiel's prophecy and a large area of red to the right against which the resurrection takes place. In this colour arrangement there is a similarity with the setting of this Vision at the Dura Synagogue where again Ezekiel first appears against a yellow ochre background, then there is a strange gap, the so-called mountain of transition corresponding in shape with our blue area and the scene of the resurrection itself again takes place against a red background²⁵⁸. The scroll held by Ezekiel reads:
Ez. 37:5. Τάδε λέγει κύριος κύριος τοῖς ὀστέοις τοῦτοις ἰδίῳ: ἐγώ φέρω εἰς υἱὸν ζωῆς πνεύματος. (These things saith the Lord God to these bones: Behold I bring upon you the spirit of life.)

There are no other inscriptions.

The iconography of the scene relates directly to the passage in Ezekiel 37:1-10. The prophet is carried by the spirit of the Lord (Ez. 37:1) into an open valley of bones (Ez. 37:1-2). He prophesizes the prophecy of the Lord (Ez. 37:4,7) and the bones are brought to life (Ez. 37:7-10). The Bačkovo depiction omits the four winds which breathe into the resurrected figures the spirit of life (Ez. 37:9) and the hand of the Lord (Ez. 37:1), elements present in a number of other depictions including those at Dura, the tomb relief at Dara and the Ripoll and Roda Bibles.

The biblical text of Ezekiel 37:1-14 is a reference to the revival of Israel and this passage in the synagogue formed the Haftarah (reading from the Prophets after torah) for Passover and its Sabbath. It appears in this context referring to the revival of national life in the mural decorations of the Dura Europos synagogue. Here the scene occupies an entire register on the north wall (almost 7.5m. long).

In the early Christian liturgy the passage from Ezekiel 37:1-14 entered the celebration of Easter. It was
read during the Holy Saturday service immediately after prayers acclaiming Christ's resurrection\textsuperscript{261}. In this passage the early Church saw the promise of a final resurrection. From Apostolic times the teaching of the Resurrection was seen as the basis of the Christian belief (1 Cor. XV: 12-22) and much patristic thought is devoted to this question. It was Christ's own resurrection, his miracles of raising from the dead and the related Old Testament texts which provided most of the scriptural readings proving the existence of Resurrection\textsuperscript{262}. The passage from Ezekiel served a special function in patristic writings. Mentioned by Justin the Martyr (Apologia I: 52-53) in passing, the passage is quoted in full by Irenaeus and Tertullian in their treatises on the Resurrection. Irenaeus cites this passage as proof of "vivifying our dead bodies, promising them resurrection and resuscitation from their sepulchres and tombs."\textsuperscript{263} For Tertullian the passage serves as proof from the scriptures of the "resurrection of the flesh."\textsuperscript{264} Both authors quote the Ezekiel passage to stress the resurrection of the physical body against the belief that it was only the spirit that was resurrected. Origen held the opposite view that it was only a spiritual resurrection and this Origenist view persisted and was extant in sixth century Palestinian monasticism.\textsuperscript{265} The orthodox position of the physical resurrection of the flesh was re-asserted against the Origenist error by Methodius and Jerome, provoked a letter by Justinian to patriarch Menas and is mentioned in the tenth anathema of the council at Constantinople in 543\textsuperscript{266}. Gregory of Nyssa and Cyril of Jerusalem both fall back upon the passage from Ezekiel 37:1-16 as evidence for a physical
resurrection\textsuperscript{267}. By the time John of Damascus wrote on the Resurrection it appears that the orthodox position was no longer under challenge\textsuperscript{268}.

So when turning to illustrations of the Ezekiel passage in art, it is precisely from the pre-Iconoclastic period when the controversy existed over the physical or spiritual nature of the resurrection, that the great majority of our examples date. Depictions of the Vision of Ezekiel have survived from about the middle of the third century and altogether there are about seventeen of them that predate the Bačkovo mural\textsuperscript{269}. All but four of these belong to the pre-Iconoclastic period and follow three distinct traditions. The earliest example is the Dura Europos panel (ca. 250), which Goodenough argues is based on a much older, well established Jewish iconographic tradition\textsuperscript{270} and shows the scene in terms of continuous narration with the figure of Ezekiel being repeated several times against different symbolic backgrounds. Mundell suggests the existence of a separate Near Eastern tradition for the Dara relief\textsuperscript{271} which has an Anastasis-type figure of Ezekiel in the centre with a pile of skulls and bones below and the winds or angels and the hand of the Lord above. This idea of the central Ezekiel figure with the bones or bodies shown at the side below and the hand of the Lord or the angelic host above, is also reflected in the manuscript Paris Gr. 510 (880-883)\textsuperscript{272} and a tenth century ivory relief in the British Museum\textsuperscript{273}. The third type is found on sarcophagi reliefs, gold glass depictions and in a Syrian manuscript of the sixth or seventh century; Bibl. Nat. Ms. Syr. 341 fol. 162\textsuperscript{F274} shows Ezekiel standing and pointing with his rod at several doll-like or
fragmented figures lying at his feet. None of these, nor the remaining three later illuminations Codex Ambrosianus, the Roda and Ripoll Bibles, provides a close parallel to the Bačkovo depiction. Although certain similarities exist between the use of symbolic backgrounds at Dura and at Bačkovo, and in the depiction of skulls and bones with nude resurrected figures arising from them at Dara, the Roda Bible (Bibl. Nat. Ms. lat 6 III fol. 45) and at Bačkovo, no clear single source is apparent for the Bačkovo composition.

Although many of the above examples like the sarcophagi and the Dara tomb are connected with funerary use, none is specifically an ossuary in the sense of Bačkovo. As the theme so closely relates to the function of an ossuary, it seems possible that the Bačkovo fresco is simply a chance survival of what otherwise may have been a common theme for ossuary decorations.

At Bačkovo the Vision of Ezekiel is so placed as to be opposite the Deesis in the apse and overlooking the tombs with the bones of monks. The analogy between "the valley which was full of bones" (Ez. 37:1) and the crypt full of dry bones is a direct one. The promise written on the scroll held by Ezekiel is addressed to "the bones" and is one of life. The apsidal Deesis with the interceding figures of the Virgin and John the Baptist before the Panteocrator in this case alludes to the Last Judgement. Ezekiel's Vision compliments it by an illustration of the resurrection and a promise of redemption.

Last Judgement (Diagram D,III, Pls. 35-40)

At Bačkovo the Last Judgement covers all the walls
and the vault of the narthex of the crypt. In arrangement, the Bačkovo crypt has some similarities with Yılanlı Kilise in Irhala, where again the Last Judgement is placed in the narthex and from here you enter the actual burial chamber with an apsidal Deesis. Similarly at Vardzia a narthex Last Judgement leads to the burial chamber with an apsidal Deesis.

The placement of the Last Judgement in the narthex and distributing it over several wall surfaces is encountered in a number of eleventh and twelfth century Byzantine churches including Panagia Chalkeon (1028) in Thessaloniki, Yılanlı Kilise in Irhala, Panagia Mavriotissa in Kastoria and the Dormition Church in Vardzia in Georgia.

The Bačkovo Last Judgement is rather poorly preserved and has been repainted in areas. In the vault survives a large central Deesis, flanked on either side by a row of seated apostles with archangels, while at the west end of the vault there is a poorly preserved fragment of an angel rolling up the scroll of heaven and from the side an approaching group of elect (Pl.35.a-b.).

The Deesis and the apostles are painted in secco on a separate piece of gesso separated from the rest of the vault by a deep crack. Most of the figure of Christ, including the lower part of his face, survives. He is shown enthroned within a bluish-green mandorla, arms outstretched at his sides with the signs of the stigmata. Much of the drapery has entirely faded except for traces of red in the top part of the figure and both ends of the mandorla are lost. At the top left hand side of the
mandorla there is a fragment of a head, torso and wing of a flying tetramorph holding a book. Christ is shown seated on a double white bow within the mandorla, rather than on a throne as in many earlier depictions.

On the north side of the vault there are traces of six seated apostles all holding open Gospel Books. They appear to be dressed in alternating pale red, green and blue robes. Only one of the apostles is sufficiently well preserved to be identified and he is Peter and is seated on the right end. At the end of the bench on which the apostles are seated, stands the Virgin with her hands in the Deesis gesture. Her head, a dark red maphorion and the top part of her mantle are poorly preserved, while the rest of the figure is lost. Behind the seated apostles are traces of a row of archangels with a band of overlapping haloes behind them. On the south side of the vault, a smaller, but more legible fragment survives (Pl. 35.c,d.). In the front row are the remains of three of the seated apostles, the rest are lost. The best preserved figure is St. Paul on the left, dressed in a white tunic and pale red himation. He holds a closed Gospel Book with a complex, richly embroidered gold ornament on the cover. He is a rather clumsy, angular figure with elongated proportions. His two neighbours are more fragmentarily preserved, both wear white tunics and one has an ochre and the other a reddish himation. They hold open Gospel Books whose texts read:

\[
\text{εἴπεν ὁ κύριος ἐταύ ἔλη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ ὁξίνῃ αὐτοῦ} \\
\text{Matt. 25:31}
\]
Next to Paul stands a figure dressed in a green robe, with hands placed in a Deesis gesture and although his head has not survived he can only be identified as John the Baptist, the third person of the Deesis. Behind the row of seated apostles there survive five heads of archangels and behind them a band of overlapping haloes.

The painter of the Christ in Judgement scene in the vault has encountered difficulties in translating a composition conceived on a flat surface to the steep curve of the vault. In leaving the Virgin and John the Baptist standing at the appropriate ends of the apostles' benches as on his prototype, the unity of the Deesis grouping has been broken. In proportions, technique and style this painter cannot be identified with the main Bačkovo master. Generally it is a far drier style, clumsier and more linear. The analysis of the palaeography of the inscriptions in the Gospels points to a date at least of the late twelfth and probably of the thirteenth century. These inscriptions do not correspond with others accompanying the scenes throughout the church. The use of the "ἡ" and the curved breathings is consistent with that of the Iviropoulos inscription found in the soffit of the vault arch immediately adjoining this Judgement scene.

On the west end of the ceiling vault are some fragments preserved from the original layer of decorations.
On the north side of the vault is an angel with a halo, in a long green tunic and flowing red himation. He is shown against a dark blue background, with one light green wing majestically raised in the air, but the other and the face have not survived. In his hands he holds the scroll of heaven. On the south side of the vault is a small fragment from a corresponding angel with only part of the green and red drapery surviving. Below the angel on the north side of the vault is a rough border which separates the dark blue background from an area of light green. Against this latter background, there has survived a group of the elect. The leading three figures can be clearly differentiated in their green, yellow and red flowing robes and holding their hands in the gesture of supplication. Although none of the faces has survived, several overlapping heads still remain, indicating that originally the group was intended as a crowd. These figures are shown directly above similar groups of elect on the north wall.

Nothing else survives on the crypt vault. The rather large area at the west end of the south vault, directly above the hell sequence on the south wall, may have contained the scene of the hetoimasia and a fiery stream leading from Christ's mandorla if our artist was here following the tradition of Paris, Bibl. Nat. Cod gr. 74 fol. 51 and other related monuments as he does for much of the Last Judgement composition.

The most striking feature about the Bačkovo Last Judgement is the scene of Heaven, placed in the position of supreme prominence on the east wall of the narthex. The
The focal point of the entire composition is a large depiction of the Virgin as the Queen of Heaven, seated on a throne between two angels and set in a physically recessed niche. The niche is directly above the doorway that leads into the naos where the bones of the deceased are stored. Outside the niche, to the left is the Bosom of Abraham, while to the right, the Repentent Thief with his cross. This specific arrangement for the depiction of Paradise seems to have arisen no earlier than the second half of the eleventh century and is found on the ivory plaque in the Victoria and Albert Museum\textsuperscript{287} and such later monuments as Torcello\textsuperscript{288}.

In the rounded lunette above the doorway, the Virgin is shown seated on a full throne with a royal red cushion, a rectangular pearl-studded footrest and a simple, rectangular wooden frame for a backrest along which is loosely suspended a plain piece of white cloth which hangs down in heavy free folds. We encounter exactly the same throne in Paris gr. 74 and on an eleventh or twelfth century Sinai icon of the Last Judgement\textsuperscript{289}. The Virgin wears a purple maphorion, with a golden kerchief beneath, edges of which frame the face and a purple mantle which falls in folds onto the throne. Beneath this she wears a tight-sleeved tunic of dark blue which reaches the footstool and all but covers her feet. Her face is relatively well preserved - a long straight nose, small mouth and a rounded narrow chin. Her hands are held at chest-height in an orant attitude. Generally the Virgin Blachernitissa type, without the child, has numerous associations of the orant, piety, funerary imagery as well as the Virgin's testimony of Christ's second coming in Ascension scenes\textsuperscript{290}. This type of Virgin is
relatively frequently found in Byzantine Last Judgement scenes\textsuperscript{291}. Behind the throne, on either side stands an angel with its head inclined towards the Virgin, with one hand resting on the back of the throne and the other held at chest-height with the open palm facing the spectator. The left angel has a white tunic and a reddish mantle, the one on the right has a reddish tunic and a white mantle. The wings of the angels are tinged with green and skilfully fit into the physical soffit of the arch. The whole scene is placed against a background of the garden of paradise which consists of a twisting yellow vine studded with flowers which have red and blue hearts with seven to nine white petals on each flower. Grabar refers to these flowers as daisies\textsuperscript{292}.

Although the enthroned Virgin seated between two standing angels is encountered in a number of Paradise depictions in Last Judgement compositions including the two Sinai icons\textsuperscript{293}, at Nereditsa (1199) near Novgorod\textsuperscript{294} and at St. Demetrios in Vladimir (c.1195)\textsuperscript{295}, I have been able to find only one monument which exactly repeats the peculiarities of the hand gestures of the Backovo composition. This is the full page illumination in the Winchester Psalter (Pl.34.e) which is one of the two miniatures taken from a purely Byzantine source\textsuperscript{296} and which precede the rest of the Last Judgement sequence in the psalter. Wormald has argued that the model for this illumination was a Byzantine ivory diptych which came to England as one of the "curiosities and antiques" in the collection of Henry de Blois who commissioned the psalter between 1129 and 1171 as Bishop of Winchester\textsuperscript{297}. However an iconographic analysis of the accompanying "Byzantine scene" in the Winchester Psalter - that of the
Koimesis, shows that the artist was using an archaic, probably tenth century model.\textsuperscript{298} As the two Byzantine scenes in the psalter originally faced one another and undoubtedly derive from the same source,\textsuperscript{299} it appears that the Winchester Psalter Queen of Paradise, which bears the inscription "ICI EST FAITE REINE DEL CIEL", preserves the same archaic iconographic tradition as does the Bačkovo mural.

The Virgin as the Queen of Paradise, by nature of the niche within which it is placed, appears as a separate icon above the doorway. However, the floral ornament of its background continues into the two adjoining scenes of the Bosom of Abraham and that of the Repentant Thief creating an overall unity for the three scenes on the east wall. The Bosom of Abraham is shown to the left of the Virgin and compositionally in some ways resembles it. Abraham is shown seated in a similar position to that of the Virgin and the small figure whom he supports on his lap has his right hand raised in an orant-like gesture - identical to that of the Virgin and her angels. Abraham's throne is a massive wooden structure, without a backrest studded with pearls, with a large embroidered red cushion and an extensive, clumsily painted slanting footrest. He is dressed in a white tunic and flowing light red himation with very rich, complex folds and white highlights. On his lap sits the small white clad Lazarus, whom Abraham supports with his right hand while with the left hand lifts part of his himation which covers the lower half of Lazarus. Both he and Lazarus have haloes. Only a fragment of Abraham's face has survived showing a pointed white beard and long white hair which lies
in strands over his shoulders. His throne is surrounded by a rather large crowd of small figures dressed in white with some twenty-three individual faces which can be differentiated. The draperies of these figures are decorated with black ornament which is in the shape of a long rectangle capped by a large black dot.

The entire Bosom of Abraham scene measures at the base 173cm. and reaches a maximum height of 180cm. Most of the scene has been heavily repainted in secco, including the lower part of the composition which is on a layer of fresh gesso. This is clearly visible in the thick red compositional band which separates this scene from the lower register. On the left hand side (Pl. 34.d.) it has been chipped away revealing the original red band underneath. It is precisely on this repainted layer that the Neophytos inscription is placed. In the upper part of the composition, repainting seems to have occurred without re-plastering and there is some confusion between the peeling repainted layer and the original layer particularly in the small figures and the ornament to the left of Abraham's throne. Characteristic of this second layer is reduced modelling, heavier planes of colour and thick black outlines.

The Bačkovo treatment of the parable of Lazarus and the rich man (Lk. 16:19-31) is generally in keeping with an iconographic tradition already established by the time of Paris Gr. 510 fol. 149. It follows closely the type found in Paris Gr. 74 fol. 74, the Victoria and Albert Museum ivory, Ateni and Torcello, rather than the complex three patriarchs in heaven composition as in St. Demetrios
in Vladimir and Çanavar Kilise in Soğanli. The simple, single patriarch composition continues into later Byzantine art as for example in the Last Judgement in the parecclesion of Kariye Camii.

To the right of the Virgin's niche is the scene with the Repentant Thief. He is shown frontally, as a full-length figure with a halo, standing in contrapposto with the right leg engaged. Although lower and upper parts of the figure are rather faint, they are still clearly decipherable. He is nude, save for a rather extensive white loin cloth tied with a knot at the front. The body is anatomically convincing, the beardless, youthful head has markedly classical features. The thief's right hand is raised to shoulder height, where it supports a full-length brown wooden cross, the top section of which is lost. The left hand is raised to chest height in the same orant gesture as Lazarus, the Virgin and angels, establishing a common motif for all three scenes on the east wall. The hands and feet bear the signs of the stigmata. As far as can be seen, there are no signs of overpainting and the figure belongs to the original layer of fresco. To the right of him, there are faint traces of red, probably the remains of the seraphim guarding the gates of paradise which was frequently painted red\textsuperscript{302}, rather than an overlap from the scenes of hell on the south wall.

The Repentant Thief becomes a common motif in Byzantine Last Judgement depictions by the eleventh century\textsuperscript{303}. In a number of examples, including a Sinai icon, Torcello and Nereditsa, he has one hand raised in an orant-like prayer gesture. At Bačkovo, this gesture and the floral
ornament create a unity between the scenes on the east wall. None of the other surviving eleventh, twelfth or thirteenth century Last Judgement scenes preserves an identical floral background to that of the Bačkovo paradise sequence. The closest parallel is found on the early or mid-twelfth century icon at Sinai, where the principle of the twisting vine is similar, but here instead of flowers are red and black berries.

The lower register on the east, north and west walls of the narthex is taken up with a procession of groups of elect. Although there exists a variety in the number and categories of elect mentioned in the liturgy and other texts, or depicted in art, their order of precedence is fairly well established. The prophets and the apostles come first, then the hierarchs and martyrs and finally the "hosioi" or anchorites and holy women. At Bačkovo all six groups are shown as they are at Ateni, on the two Sinai Last Judgement icons and at Nereditsa.

The Bačkovo elect follow essentially the same schema as in the above mentioned examples where figures are brought together in tight little groups, generally identifiable through costume and through specific saints who are included in the front row. All the figures are shown in three-quarter view, in solemn procession with their hands together in the deesis supplication gesture.

The group of elect shown on the vault, mentioned above, are most likely to be the prophets shown approaching the hetoimasia, the angel with the scroll of heaven and the footstool of the Lord. The flowing robes shown at Bačkovo,
without any ecclesiastical or regal embellishments, supports such an identification. This would also be in keeping with other eleventh century depictions such as Paris gr. 74, fol 51V, the eleventh century Sinai icon and the fresco at Ateni. Generally in twelfth century examples, the hetoimasia is approached by the bishops, with their clearly differentiated robes, such as on the twelfth century Sinai icon and Torcello.

Under the scene of the Bosom of Abraham is the largest group of elect (some 175cm. wide) which is identified by an inscription as:

\[\chi_o \rho_o \cdot \pi_\lambda_0 \omega_\nu\]

Not a single face has been preserved. The dress, damaged and mutilated in many places, conforms to the general type of apostolic garbs of tunics and himations in blue, green and red colours. Grabar must have seen the fresco in a better state, at least before its recent restoration, as he identifies the leading figure in the group as St. Paul306. The head is now totally lost. Underneath all the processions of the elect, there is a band of painted imitation marble ornament some 55cm. wide.

On the north wall, between the two filled in arches, are two much smaller and rather cramped groups of elect - the hierarchs and martyrs. The four foreground figures in the first group are dressed in rich bishop's robes - tunics with clavi, chasubles and omophoria. The faces of the leading two figures are now lost beyond recognition, but Grabar managed to identify them as John Chrysostom and Basil the Great, while surviving fragments from the latter two
figures confirm Grabar's identification as Gregory the Theologian and Nicholas.

Following these come the martyrs with a fragmentary inscription פופ. The three foreground saints are all dressed in military costumes - blue, green and red tunics with gold hems and each has a green or red chlamys over a gold armour breast plate. The first figure, despite the loss of most of his face, can be identified through his curly hair and the outline of his youthful features as George. Behind him is Theodore Teron, with his pointed brown beard, the head next to him is possibly that of Demetrios, while the full length figure on the end is Theodore Stratelates with his youthful features and brown rush-like beard.

On the west wall, in the lower register, within the two painted arches beneath the scene of the resurrection, are the anchorites and holy women as the two final groups of the elect. In the first group, that of the anchorites, the leading figure is almost entirely lost except for part of his monastic cape and if the Bačkovo painter was following convention, the figure most likely would have been Anthony. The two other foreground figures wear red tunics and dark brownish green mantles. The face of the middle figure is lost; however, the final figure, when compared to the saints on the west wall of the church naos, has a strong similarity with George the Iberian.

The final group, that of the holy women, is
relatively well preserved. The leading figure wears a red crown with a gold band and a dark red costume with a knot at the front. The face is well preserved and highly individualized – a small mouth, a long rounded nose, a squarish head with an elongated chin and large eyes. This figure, I feel, can be positively identified as St. Nino – the enlightener of Georgia\textsuperscript{310}. A strikingly similar depiction of her is found in the group of the elect holy women in the Last Judgement scene at Ateni\textsuperscript{311}. The only other figure in the Bačkovo group that can be identified is the last figure, who is Mary of Egypt with her blond hair in disarray and strongly classical features. Mary of Egypt is frequently shown leading the group of holy women as on the two Sinai icons, Torcello and at St. Demetrios in Vladimir. The Bačkovo master uses the same arrangement as at Ateni with Nino of Georgia leading the group and Mary of Egypt at the rear\textsuperscript{312}.

Above these groups of the elect on the west wall is the scene of the resurrection of the dead shown in the form of the earth and sea giving up their dead. The land mass is dominated by a reddish rectangular sarcophagus with white upper edges. From it arise three figures with up-stretched arms - throwing off shrouds with a black and white star patterned design (the heads of these figures have been lost). To the left of the sarcophagus is a long snake-like creature whose tail is somewhere beneath the sarcophagus and whose head leads to the left where a reddish glow marks the beginning of hell. Unfortunately none of the hell area has survived. Above the snake is a large black bird, possibly a raven. To the right of the sarcophagus are some badly
preserved land animals giving up the dead - possibly one of these is an elephant, or a mythological animal with a trunk but no tusks and a large eye, who is shown with half a human figure emerging from its jaws. In the area of the sea there is a rather long fish shown in the process of ejecting a human hand and at the right three smaller fish appear each disgorging human parts. In the lower right hand side of the composition is a sea monster with a triple coil in its tail, all covered in fish scales, with its head raised and giving up part of a human torso.

The composition illustrating Apocalypse 20:13 is included in nearly all early depictions of the Last Judgement. The Backovo scenes follow very closely the version in Paris gr. 74 fol. 51\textsuperscript{v}, both showing the sarcophagus with the three figures emerging from it and in both cases the pattern on the shrouds is identical\textsuperscript{313}. Both have similar scenes of fish and animals, including the raven, disgorging human parts. At least in this part of the Last Judgement the similarities are so strong as to point confidently to a common source.

On the east wall, below the Repentant Thief, in the lower band, is the scene of the Weighing of the Souls. Out of an arch of heaven, in the top right hand corner, is a red tape on which is suspended a pair of scales containing white scrolls (good and evil deeds). On the left there are two large angels, one of whom survives in outline only, with the halo and parts of the drapery better preserved, and who appears to be tipping the scales with one hand. The other angel appears to be attacking a now lost foe with a lance.
When Grabar saw the fresco, he could still see traces of little devils leading a way into hell. Images of hell and its tortures must have once occupied the south wall, but now are totally lost.

The closest parallel to the Backovo scene of the weighing of the souls is in Paris gr. 74 fol 51 and in the eleventh century Sinai icon. The latter has the full composition complete with the two angels.

This analysis of the Backovo Last Judgement points to an archetype, probably in mosaic or fresco, almost certainly in Constantinople, that is, as Brenk has argued, common to the manuscript Paris gr. 74 and other related monuments.

The compositional difficulties encountered by the Backovo master suggest that his prototype had been conceived on a flat surface, in registers and probably on a west wall, and that he was amongst the first to try to transfer the composition to occupy a complete vaulted surface. Also the Backovo master was aware of the specifically Georgian modifications made to the composition, like in the west apse at Ateni, and proceeded at Backovo to introduce the Georgian saints into the ranks of the elect.

The iconography of the scenes at Backovo, both in the upper church and in the crypt, confirms a date somewhere towards the close of the eleventh century.
CHAPTER FIVE

STYLE OF THE BACKOVO FRESCOES

In the literature on the style of the Bačkovo murals there is no agreement on either their origin or dating. Grabar in 1924 argued that the Bačkovo murals were an outstanding example of mid-twelfth century Constantinople painting. More recently he has revised the dating to 1100 or simply post-1083. Lazarev argued that the murals were below the standard of Constantinople work and suggested that the main master was a Georgian trained in Athos or Thessaloniki and that they were painted in the second half of the twelfth century. Xyngopoulos, primarily on the strength of the iconographic similarities between the Hosios David "Vision" and the one at Bačkovo, attributed the murals to a twelfth century painter from Thessaloniki. A number of Bulgarian scholars (including Mavrodinov, Filov, Boškov, Krestev and Zakhariev) have dated these murals to the period of the founding of the monastery, while Mijatev preferred a twelfth century dating. There are two recent monographs on the ossuary frescoes, one by Vasiliev (1965), where they are dated to the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth, the other by Bakalova (1977) where she argued that they were executed by a master trained in the traditions of Constantinople in the third quarter of the twelfth century.
Much of the argument on dating, as has been demonstrated above, has been based on spurious documentary evidence. Neither the Neophytes nor the Iviropoulos inscription can be dated and both are later additions on separate layers of gesso and cannot be related to the original layer of decorations.

Nor is there anything in the iconography of the original layer of the decorations which can be used as proof of a twelfth century date. On the contrary, as has been shown above, the iconography of the ossuary murals is characteristic, and in some cases peculiar to, the second half of the eleventh century. What remains to be done is to see how the Backovo murals relate stylistically to the other Byzantine monuments of the period.

Few Byzantine mural cycles can be firmly dated to the second half of the eleventh century and none of these is in Constantinople. So in terms of monumental painting, any attempt made to define an eleventh, or for that matter twelfth century, Constantinople style rests either on an attempted translation from another medium, notably miniature painting, or on that uncertain assumption that Constantinople-based patronage in the provinces carries with it a Constantinople style. On this latter point, except perhaps for Nea Moni on Chios and Nerezi it is difficult to establish with any certainty whether such monuments as Hosios Lukas or Daphni are in fact imperial foundations. Likewise there is no certainty that the Greek Catepan Christophoros in Bari, who built his church in Thessaloniki, or the Grand Domestic
Pakurianos who built his church at Petrizos, or Eumathios, the dux of Cyprus, who built his church on the slopes of the Kyrenia mountain range\textsuperscript{10} sent to Constantinople for their painters, or perhaps were content with local masters. Similarly, it must be remembered that the great majority of the eleventh century monumental cycles encountered in our literary sources have been lost, for example, the lavish imperial foundations like St. Mary Peribleptos and St. George of Mangana in Constantinople mentioned in Clavijo's travel notes have totally vanished.

The frescoes of the Bačkovo ossuary were the result of a single major campaign, both in the crypt and in the upper church, but this over the next three hundred years underwent a series of restorations and repaintings. In their present state, the frescoes fall into several distinct periods\textsuperscript{11}. By far the most important and best preserved period can be identified with the original layer. This includes the frescoes of the entire crypt naos, a fragment of the Last Judgement on the crypt narthex vault, and the images of the elect, the resurrection and parts of Paradise on the side walls. In the upper church it includes the entire naos programme and much of the narthex except for the filled-in arches, the Madonna and Child, apostles Peter and Paul and the archangels and the two military saint busts on the west wall.

The second period was one of repainting with rather minor alterations. It was at this time that the Bosom of Abraham was repainted in the crypt narthex as well as the images of SS. George and Theodore in the
narthex of the upper church. It may have been also at this time that the Madonna and Child, apostles and archangels in the same narthex were repainted, although the combination of a deteriorated surface and bad restoration leaves this an open question.

The third period includes the painting of the major part of the Last Judgement on the vault of the crypt narthex, apparently after the collapse of most of the original layer of fresco on the vault. The Madonna and Child with the flanking apostles and archangels, may have been repainted at this time rather than during the second period.

Finally, in the fourth period - that under the Tsar Ivan Alexander (1344-1363), the five open arches were blocked in and painted.

As a method for stylistic comparison and dating I intend to characterize the particular features of the Bačkovo style in each period and then place them within the context of other monuments of the period. I also intend in the analysis of the Bačkovo style to start with some of its broader aspects such as its overall conception and compositional arrangements and work through to the specific stylistic peculiarities of the main Bačkovo master.

Grabar, when discussing the frescoes of the Bačkovo ossuary, characterized the style as belonging to the "'classical' style of Christian monumental art." Indeed, in the first and principal layer of frescoes at Bačkovo there is an overall simplicity both in form and
conception. The whole decorative scheme is conceived within a tight, geometric framework, with a clarity and simplicity that borders on a classical severity. The lower areas of the walls are covered with an unbroken band of painted simulated marble tiles (except in the apse of the crypt where it is replaced by a painted illusionistically suspended "altar cloth"). The wall area above this is divided into unbroken bands clearly articulated by lines or narrow belts of ornament. The figures and scenes are all strictly confined within these bands, always self-contained, never violating their boundaries. The lines of the internal subdivisions of the scenes themselves closely adhere to the simple architectural units of the ossuary structure itself.

The aspect of illusionism is a major element in the overall conception of the decorations at Bačkovo. As a deliberate decorative device, the Bačkovo master juxtaposes real and illusionistic elements. For example, in the upper church narthex, on the east wall (pl.24a) there is moulded in relief a trifoliate arch which is painted with a green floral ornament. Upon entering the naos, the same framing arch is found, now illusionistically painted around each of the feast scenes and in a slightly more extended form framing the Koimesis (pl.15). Similarly, the principal floral cornice found in the apse and the narthex of the upper church, again is either shown in actual relief (pls.2,26,27) or illusionistically painted. It is within the same context of a play between real and illusionistic elements that the "imago
clipeata" appear illusionistically suspended from nails on the apsidal wall. In the crypt an illusionistically painted suspended cloth drapes the bema area and convincingly, crisp, simulated painted marble tiles are shown throughout. In this sense, there is at Bačkovo a system of classical illusionistic decorative motifs, which has led some scholars to draw comparisons with the illusionistic schemes of decoration found at Pompeii. In the overall conception of the decorative scheme for Bačkovo, ornament plays quite a major role. Although there is a richness in the ornament, that has frequently been commented upon, there is also a marked restraint in its use. In its application, the use of ornament at Bačkovo is in line with a number of other contemporary monuments including Ateni, Daphni and Veljusa. In all of these, ornament is confined to tight bands subdividing the wall surfaces, accentuating architectural features and framing individual scenes or figures. This differs with the far more restricted use of ornament in earlier monuments such as Çavuş or the Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki. Likewise in Bačkovo there is no trace of the use of ornament to dominate the wall space, where it becomes a frieze-like carpet in which scenes and figures appear to be suspended. This latter development already appears in the twelfth century in such churches as the Ag. Anargyroi in Kastoria and at Kurbinovo, but becomes widespread in later Byzantine painting.

There is however a more specific feature in the use of ornament at Bačkovo which does confirm a dating in
the second half of the eleventh century. This is, that although ornament is used extensively both in the church and the crypt there are only twenty-five varieties of ornament employed (Pls. 43i-xxv)\textsuperscript{16} and these essentially derive from four main motifs\textsuperscript{17}. In contrast with this, in the mosaics of Hosios Lukas there are at least eighty-two different types of ornament. This difference cannot be simply explained in terms of size, but rather reflects a difference in thinking about the application of ornament. In Hosios Lukas the emphasis is on copiousness and variety in the use of ornament with the richness of effect achieved through the juxtapositioning of many different types of ornament. The same is true of the apsidal mosaic in S. Sophia in Kiev\textsuperscript{18}, and generally this tendency to seek out a rich variety of ornament types already starts to emerge in the new church in Tokalı Kilise\textsuperscript{19}. At Bačkovo, the master shows a sense of classical economy in his use of ornament types. He has a preference to repeat the same ornament a number of times and attaining variety simply by reversing colour combinations\textsuperscript{20} or through a slight variation in his combination of motifs\textsuperscript{21}. So essentially at Bačkovo there are a very limited number of ornament types, but repeated constantly with a limited number of variations. Exactly the same can be said about the use of ornament at Veljusa\textsuperscript{22}, in the eleventh century frescoes at Ateni\textsuperscript{23}, what survives of the ornament at Daphni\textsuperscript{24}, to some extent of the column churches in Cappadocia\textsuperscript{25} and of the 1105/6 layer of frescoes at Asinou\textsuperscript{25}.

By the middle of the twelfth century a significant
development occurs in the use of ornament, that is, its growth in intricacy and complexity. So that at Nerezi, when ornament types common to Bačkovo are repeated, they are shown against tonal washes that change in colour within a single panel and new and complex designs are explored with the patterns being broken up by elaborate inner detail. These developments are generally in line with those noted by Frantz in the analysis of ornament in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts where again there is a transition from early, simpler ornament, to a more restricted use of more refined ornament in the eleventh century leading to later more elaborate floreate patterns. Although there is insufficient knowledge of Middle Byzantine monumental ornament to use it for precise dating, the features of tightly controlled areas of ornament and a sense of classical restraint in the selection of ornament types that appear in Bačkovo are characteristic of the latter part of the eleventh century.

This essential simplicity and restraint is also characteristic of the main compositional devices used in the individual scenes. As mentioned in the discussion of iconography above, although the programme at Bačkovo is rich in its scope, each scene is narrated as simply as the theme allows retaining only the indispensable details. The backgrounds and architectural props are stated as briefly as possible and the figures are limited to the main participants. In planning his compositions, the Bačkovo master sought out an ordered symmetry as well as developing a slow flowing rhythm. This rhythmic movement
passing from one scene to the next, is re-enforced by the flow of the ornament with its continuous, but varying repetitions and is unhindered by the crisp, painted marble tiles and the simple architectural forms.

The sense of order within his scenes the Băckovo master achieves largely through two devices. One is through a compositional structure which is in terms of roughly symmetrical units. This applies both to compositions which easily and traditionally lend themselves to such a structure, for example, the Baptism, Koimesis or Presentation, where there is a central pivot like Christ or the Virgin's bier, around which to balance the equal sides. Also it applies to scenes where such a structure is not necessarily traditionally implied such as the scenes of the Communion or the Vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones. The painter shifts the position of the ciborium in the Communion with Wine away from the altar where it belongs, to over the group of apostles to balance out the two groups of figures. With the scene of Ezekiel, the group of skeletal figures is used to balance the figure of the prophet.

The second device which the Băckovo master uses is the division of the composition into bold, well balanced blocks of colour. In the Baptism of Christ (Pl.11a) the composition is cut into two by the vertical pillar of blue water which is allowed to spread out both at the top and bottom framing the composition like two "U" shapes on their sides. On either side of the water there is an intense island of colour, red to the
left and ochre to the right. This produces a structured and balanced composition, but to prevent it from being static, the painter transfers in a modified form the colour scheme to the neighbouring scene of the Raising of Lazarus where the ochre island becomes a mountain and the jagged banks — the mouth of Lazarus' tomb. Similarly in the Vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones (Pl.30a) the background is broken up into four large blocks of colour which are used to suspend the dynamic prophet and to balance him with the figures of the resurrected. Through the use of this colour structure the painter achieves a sense of classical restraint in Ezekiel's movement without converting him into a motionless and static figure.

It is in the analysis of the individual figures at Bačkovo that closest comparisons with other monuments can be drawn that can be used for dating purposes. The proportions of most of the Bačkovo figures are 1:8, although in some of the feast scenes such as the Presentation and Raising of Lazarus as well as in several of the individual standing saints the proportions are closer to 1:7 or 1:7:5. A selection of actual measurements of figures from different parts of the decorations gives a more precise impression. In the Group of Elect (Pl.38) in the Last Judgement in the crypt narthex, the average actual height of each figure is 116cm. with the size of heads varying from 15 to 17cm. (proportions 1:8 to 1:7). The Repentant Thief (Pl.34a) in the same place — height of the actual figure 136cm., the head 17cm. (proportions
Gregory the Theologian (Pl.4d) from the Melismos composition in the upper church apse, actual height of figure 199cm., head 26cm. (proportions 1:7.7). The leading four figures in the All Saints composition (Pl.7a) on the north wall of the upper church naos, height of figures 140cm., size of heads 19cm. (proportions 1:7.4). St. Paul the Theban (Pl.18a) on the south wall of the church naos, height of figure 175cm., size of head 23cm. (proportions 1:7.6). Except for the figures on the curved face of the apsidal conch, where complex questions of viewing perspective do not allow simple measurements to act as a real indicator of intended proportions, the Bačkovo proportions of the original layer of decorations are generally within the region of 1:8. Most of the Bačkovo figures are presented on a monumental scale, frequently life-size. They are slender, elegant and slightly elongated figures.

Proportions of between 1:7 and 1:8 are common to a number of monuments of the last third of the eleventh century including Hagios Chrysostom at Koutsovendis, the frescoes in the crypt of Hosios Lukas, at Ateni, Sakli Kilise and the column churches in Cappadocia, Pantocrator Psalter No.49 (Dumbarton Oaks MS.3), Vatopedi Psalter Cod. 762 and Princeton, Univ. Lib. cod. Garrett 16. In the Theodore Psalter (London BM. 19, 352) and in the Paris Bibl. Nat. gr. 74 the proportions are generally 1:8 or 1:9 and both Der Nersessian and Weitzmann have argued that these elongated proportions are characteristic of some monuments of the
last third of the eleventh century\textsuperscript{40}. There is little to support Bakalova's assumption that eleventh century monuments never exceed the proportions of $1:7^{41}$ and indeed, by the last third of the eleventh century proportions of $1:8$ were quite characteristic of the period.

A further elongation in the proportions of the figures does occur in the twelfth century. In the 1105/6 frescoes at Asinou in the Communion, Koimesis and the apsidal bishops, proportions range from $1:7.5$ to $1:9^{42}$. In the Communion mosaic from the Church of the Archangel Michael in Kiev of c.1112, the proportions are from $1:8$ to $1:9.5^{43}$. At Nerezi (1164), the proportions reach $1:9$ and $1:10^{44}$, while at Ag. Anargyroi at Kastoria and in Kurbinovo (1191), the proportions are generally $1:10$ and occasionally $1:10.5^{45}$. Although at Lagoudhera (1192), with some exceptions, the proportions tend to be closer to $1:9^{46}$. Even though the proportions of the figures cannot be taken as a conclusive guide to dating, they are of some indication to prevailing stylistic trends and within that context the Bačkovo figures are best suited to the final third of the eleventh century.

In the treatment of his draperies, the Bačkovo master sets out to imitate many of the mannerisms of classical drapery; however his draperies remain largely unrelated to the body forms underneath. Drapery becomes an attractive, classicizing surface absorbed in a rhythmic life of its own and in no sense attempting to articulate the figure. There are two main varieties of drapery at Bačkovo. One is drapery with heavy independent folds
such as in the scenes of the Communion with Wine (Pl.8) or the angels in the Baptism of Christ (Pl.11). The second variety, and certainly the most popular one, is that of drapery which clings with heavy folds to the body. Examples of this would be the figures of the Elect on the vault of the crypt narthex (Pl. 35c), the figure of Ezekiel (Pl.30c) in the Vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones and the saints in the two compositions of All Saints in the church naos (Pls. 6,7). In all of these, it is characteristic of the Backovo master to place the appropriate folds for the knees very low giving the figures enormously exaggerated thighs. There is a certain crispness in the drapery folds which are outlined and given rather strong highlights. The edges of the drapery develop a pattern quality which enjoys a certain ornamental freedom (Pl.8c).

In their treatment of drapery, the frescoes at Ateni, Sakli Kilise, Hosios Lukas and Bačkovo, have strong stylistic similarities. Taking as examples, the archangel of the Annunciation from the south apse at Ateni (Pl.49), the archangel Gabriel from Sakli Kilise (Pl.48), the figure of Christ in the Entry into Jerusalem from Hosios Lukas (Pl.45) and Ezekiel from the Vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones at Bačkovo (Pl.30c) we have four monumental figures of similar dimensions. In all four, there is a process of dematerialization of form with the draperies developing rich heavy folds with an ornamental linear crispness. The outlines of the folds and highlights are shown rather sharply delineated and in all four
cases only white highlights are used. The hems of the draperies have an ornamental playfulness.

A further comparison is with the figure of Ezekiel from Koutsovendi (Pl.47). Here again the drapery is very close to that of Bačkovo with the characteristic low positioning of the knees and the linear hem pattern (cf. Pl.8c). Koutsovendi does show a degree of sophistication with smaller and more elaborate folds and an increased linearism which found a rather crude reflection in the frescoes at Iprari of 1096 in Georgia\(^7\) and in the 1105/6 layer at Asinou\(^8\).

However, the closest comparison to the treatment of drapery in Bačkovo is with the Pantocrator Psalter No.49 (Dumbarton Oaks Ms. 3) which can almost certainly be dated by its Paschal tables to 1084. The problem of comparing 16 x 11cm. miniatures with monumental painting is an obvious one. But the stylistic developments observed at Ateni, Sakli Kilise, Hosios Lukas and Koutsovendi create a context within which it is possible to view the Pantocrator Psalter. In the figure of Moses (Pl.50) from Moses Receiving the Law, fol. 73\(^r\), in the treatment of drapery, there are present the same qualities that can be observed in the Bačkovo figures, for example that of Ezekiel (Pl.30c). The draperies, proportions and postures of the standing saints in the Psalter\(^9\) find a very close parallel with the standing saints at Bačkovo (Pl.16). The master of the Pantocrator Psalter and the Bačkovo master work within the same stylistic conventions and it has been argued that these conventions were common
to Constantinople in the last quarter of the eleventh century\textsuperscript{50}.

In his facial types, the Bačkovo master adheres to a fairly conventional repertoire of stereotypes which, as has been shown above in the discussion of the individual saints, in many cases was common from the late tenth century onwards. Only in a few instances, as has been shown in chapter three, are the Bačkovo facial types specifically characteristic of the second half of the eleventh century.

The Bačkovo master, on a number of occasions, does introduce strikingly classical features for a number of his figures. This includes the face of Mary of Egypt amongst the Holy Women in the Elect (Pl.39b), the Repentant Thief on the east wall of the crypt narthex (Pl.34a) and the head of St. Panteleimon in the church naos (Pl.14). Generally, most of the heads are slightly smallish, oval shaped with high foreheads, long straight noses and small mouths. The proportions of the face are common to a number of eleventh and twelfth century monuments including the frescoes at Ateni, Hosios Lukas, Veljusa, Daphni, Asinou and Nerezi. However, one peculiarity of the Bačkovo master is his extreme stylization of the ears with the exaggerated long rounded lobes. A good example of this is the deacon Euplos (Pl.5c). This type of ear is repeated on the bishops in the Melismos, scenes of the Communion, on the figures of the feast cycle and on individual standing saints and on the saints in the apsidal crypt. In fact it is common to all figures of the
first layer of decorations, but not to subsequent ones, for example, a very different type of ear appears on the seated apostles on the crypt narthex vault (Pl.35a). Winfield has shown that this particular type of stylization is not unique to the Bačkovo master, but in a very similar form is also encountered at Koutsovendi, Trikomo, Asinou and in a number of other monuments.  

In the physical structure of his faces, the Bačkovo master follows popular practice. He works from a basic green ground, on top of which he places ochre flesh tones, then spots of red, white highlights and lastly the features are lightly delineated with brown. Occasionally, as in the case of St. Poimen (Pl.33) he re-enforces the white highlights after outlining the features. Generally the Bačkovo faces are not as "sharp" or linear in their articulations as are most other eleventh and twelfth century monumental frescoes including Ateni, the column churches and Sakli Kilise in Cappadocia, Hosios Lukas, Koutsovendi, Asinou and Nerezi. In this respect, the Bačkovo master is very close to the master of the first layer of the Veljusa frescoes. A comparison between St. Panteleimon from Veljusa (Pl.46) and the Bačkovo St. George from the front row of the All Saints on the north wall of the church naos (Pl.7b) shows a considerable resemblance in the building up of the face.

At Bačkovo there is a fairly restricted and subdued palette. The basic colours used are red, umber, blue, green, olive green, ochre, black and white. The haloes generally have a yellow ground with black or umber inner
outline and white outer outline. Garments, except in those cases where colours are iconographically prescribed, are largely restricted in colour to pink, dark red, umber, green, blue and yellow. Sandals are shown either with black or umber. For hair, the colours range from black, umber, ochre or grey for a ground colour with articulating outlines added in black, umber or white. The backgrounds are basically dark blue for the top two-thirds of the picture space and a dark olive green for the lower third, except in the feast cycle and the two visions where a series of strong blocks of colour are used - mainly red, ochre, green and blue. Throughout this first layer of decorations only white highlights are used on drapery and the somewhat schematized architectural and landscape forms.

As in the use of ornament, the Bačkovo master shows a restraint in the selection of his colour combinations and prefers to repeat colour harmonies with subtle variations, rather than seeking out a richness of colour through diversity. He frequently employs a system of alternating colour combinations, for example, in the apse of the crypt the series of bust-length figures of bishops placed in circular and rectangular frames, when dressed in predominantly red robes are shown against green backgrounds and alternate with bishops dressed in green and shown against red backgrounds. Similarly, in the individual standing saints around the walls of the church and the groups of saints and apostles in the feast scenes and All Saints there is this subtle variation in garment colour combin-
The use of colour at Bačkovo is best described as subdued and subtle rather than being a reflection on the poverty of the palette. For where the master has decided to use bright and vibrant colours, as in some of his ornaments or on the ornamented Gospel book covers held by bishops in the apses on both levels, he achieves in terms of colour an elaborate intricacy and a jewel-like finish.

None of the monumental fresco cycles known to me at first hand presents a close parallel in its use of colour to that of Bačkovo. The light colours with the predominance of delicate blues, olive green and pinks are reminiscent of earlier eleventh century frescoes such as S. Sophia in Ohrid and Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki. Perhaps Veljusa comes closest to Bačkovo with its subdued colour pattern; however the considerable difference in quality between the Veljusa and Bačkovo masters, prevents the comparison from being taken any further. As noted by Der Nersessian, the use of the earlier eleventh century light colours and the predominance of blues is also a characteristic of the Pantocrator Psalter. Generally a comparison between a folio from a psalter, such as the Canticle of Jonah, now in the Benaki Museum in Athens (Pl.51) with scenes at Bačkovo such as the Raising of Lazarus (Pl.12) or the Baptism of Christ (Pl.11) reveals a similar understanding of colour, a similar use of bold colour masses of blue, ochre and green, the use of subtle white highlights and a general reserve in
the colour range. Both the Bačkovo master and the master of the Pantocrator Psalter use vivid touches of colour to impart a dramatic quality to the composition. For example, in the Canticle of Isaiah\textsuperscript{59}, the personification for night is given a bright red veil, in a similar manner in which the Bačkovo master gave his foreground angel in the Baptism of Christ a red cloth with which to veil his hands. When showing several saints standing in a row, both masters prefer to give their garments rather subtle variations in colour\textsuperscript{60}, rather than dressing them in markedly different coloured garments and establishing a diversity through contrasts as happens in a number of other late eleventh century monuments including Daphni\textsuperscript{61}. The differences in scale and medium between the Pantocrator Psalter and the Bačkovo frescoes precludes any closer comparisons between the two monuments.

Stylistically, the Bačkovo frescoes of the 1074-1083 layer find their closest parallel amongst monuments of the last third of the eleventh century. These include the frescoes at Ateni, Hosios Lukas, some of the Cappadocian churches, Veljusa and Koutsovendi. Possibly the closest parallel is found with the Pantocrator Psalter which can be dated 1084. As for the origins of the Bačkovo style, the complexities of late eleventh century art and the poverty of surviving monumental decorations in the capital, prevent a more precise answer than simply that these frescoes are in line with some of the stylistic and iconographic developments then occurring in Constantinople.
The second layer of frescoes at Bačkovo differs from the first both in style and technique. All three areas which can be attributed to this period are painted on separate layers of gesso which have been superimposed over the original layer. In the Bosom of Abraham, below and to the left of the footstool of Abraham, some of the superimposed layer of gesso has chipped away revealing part of the original dividing band (Pl.34d). In the images of SS George and Theodore, in the upper narthex, part of the superimposed gesso on St. George has been chipped away revealing the original painted image (Pl.25d). Similarly, in the Madonna and Child in the same narthex, which probably dates from this second period, but may have been touched up at a later date, in the band of painted ornament surrounding it, again part of the gesso has chipped away, in one place showing the exposed brickwork, in three places ornament from the original layer and the rest shows the second, super-imposed layer of ornament (Pl.24d).

Whereas in the original layer of decorations, as was noted in the report on techniques and materials used in the Bačkovo ossuary frescoes, the painting was always commenced on fresh plaster, the second layer of decorations was carried out exclusively in secco. Also in this second period there is no trace of olive green grounds in flesh areas, but rather a light red tinted ochre is used as a ground with features drawn in outline onto this. Generally it is a harsher, drier style showing a much reduced sense of plasticity with a far more linear
articulation of form, for example, the use of heavy black outlines in the Bosom of Abraham and St. George. The colours are brighter and throughout the second period - coloured highlights are employed on drapery which is never encountered on the first layer. In the Madonna and Child blue highlights are used on the Virgin's purple drapery, while in the Bosom of Abraham, green highlights are used on Lazarus' white garment and green, red and yellow highlights are used on the draperies of the white-clad figures crowding around Abraham (Pl.34d).63

The master of the second layer of frescoes at Bačkovo has his own mannerisms in his painting. In contrast with the master of the 1074-83 layer, he uses more rounded heads, a different type of rather clumsy, ill-proportioned hands and feet; for example, the contrast between the fine, slender hands of the apsidal archangel (Pl.2c) and the uncertain and clumsy hands in the Bosom of Abraham (Pl.34c). Certainly the master of the second layer was of a considerably lower calibre than the original master. The fact that we are dealing with two different painters working at different periods, rather than exploring the relationship of the master painter and his assistant, is demonstrated by the separate layers of gesso, particularly in the St. George, where a sufficient amount of the new layer has chipped away to reveal the recognisable style of the original Bačkovo master.

There is little internal evidence for the dating of this second period of frescoes, except that they must
predate the final 1344-63 layer which overlaps the second layer with St. George (Pl. 25d). Nor, as has been shown above, does the Neophytos inscription - the patron for the Bosom of Abraham, help us to date it. Iconographically, the second layer of frescoes, does not seem to alter significantly the content of the original layer, particularly in scenes like the Bosom of Abraham and St. George where sufficient fragments survive from the original layer to suggest that the second layer was intended to "renew" rather than replace the existing decorations. It also must be kept in mind that the frescoes of the second period are all found in the two narthex spaces, which at that time were still open portico-like areas, exposed to the elements. The frescoes of the second period are found on the two east walls and on the two pillars, that is, specifically in those areas most exposed to the elements. From this it appears likely that the renewal of the weathered frescoes would have occurred a considerable time after the completion of the original layer, allowing time for them to deteriorate. As to the origins of the painter, it seems probable that he was either involved with other decorations in the monastery itself or may even have been resident there, rather than being specifically brought to Bačkovo for the ossuary commission.

The general pedestrian quality of the work, coupled with its poor state of preservation, make stylistic comparisons difficult. In the postures of the figures of Abraham and Lazarus and their facial types, there is
an analogy with Abraham and Lazarus in the scene of the Parable of the Great Supper in Iviron Ms. 5 fol. 309v64, a manuscript which probably dates from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century65. However in the harshness of its linear qualities and flatness, the style does have some similarities with late twelfth century Georgian painting, for example, the 1184-86 frescoes in the Assumption Church at Vardzia66. This parallel could be relevant as St. George in this second layer did have a Georgian inscription67. The late twelfth century appears to have been a period of intense Georgian activity at Bačkovo and as Ansbertus observed, in 1189 Bačkovo had a Georgian abbot68. The only conclusion concerning the date of this second layer is that it predates 1344-63 and possibly dates from the late twelfth century.

In the third period of decorations at Bačkovo, most of the vault of the crypt narthex was repainted on a new ground apparently after a collapse of the frescoes of the vault, leaving only the angels with the scroll of heaven and the group of elect remaining from the original layer. It may have been at this time, rather than in period two, that the Virgin and Child with Saints Peter and Paul and the archangels were painted in the church narthex above. The very deteriorated state of these frescoes, as well as the "retouching" probably in the fourteenth century, make this difficult to determine.

Unlike the master of the frescoes of the second period, the master of the frescoes of the Last Judgement on the vault of the crypt narthex (Pl.35C) was a talented
painter with a strongly expressed personal style. Again he can easily be differentiated from the master of the original layer through technique and style. He appears to work completely in secco. His standing figures, like John the Baptist, have proportions of 1:8.5, while his seated apostles have elongated heads with large foreheads, thin long noses and very small hooked ears. For the faces he works on a flesh coloured ground which is then modelled with several colours and heightened with broad, expressive white highlights. There are rich classical folds in the drapery with limited colour highlights in green and light red.

The seated figures of the apostles have curiously exaggerated torso proportions with short legs and the feet placed fairly close together. A rather close parallel to this is found in the row of seated apostles from the Last Judgement of 1199 which once graced the Church of the Saviour Nereditsa⁶⁹, where similar proportions and compositional conventions are used. The exaggerated facial mannerisms, particularly the exceptionally long thin nose, are common to a number of late twelfth century and early thirteenth century fresco cycles including Kurbinovo, Ag. Anargyroi in Kastoria and the 1209 frescoes at Studenica.

There is no certainty as to the date of this third period of painting other than it is likely to predate 1344 and the Bulgarian occupation of the monastery. It seems probable that the author of these frescoes was John Iviropoulos as the inscription with his name is painted
on a band of ornament, immediately adjoining the seated apostles in the Last Judgement of the third period. The inscriptions preserved in the two Gospel Books held by the seated apostles have curved breathings \( \mathcal{C} \) (Pl. 35d) as opposed to the \( \mathcal{H} \) shaped breathings found throughout the inscriptions of the original layer, for example, on the inscriptions of the two deacons (Pl. 5). Also it shares in common with the Iviropoulos inscription the \( \mathcal{A} \) form for the alpha, which again is not otherwise encountered in the Bačkovo inscriptions. Generally, the palaeographic complexities of the inscriptions of this third layer suggest a date late in the twelfth century or probably in the thirteenth⁷⁰.

The fourth and final period of decoration of the Bačkovo ossuary can be dated fairly exactly to 1344-63, the period of the Bulgarian occupation under tsar Ivan Alexander⁷¹. It consists of the paintings in the five blocked-up arches, three in the upper church narthex with Tsar Ivan Alexander, SS. Constantine and Helen and St. John the Theologian, and two in the crypt narthex, the first with Gregory and Apasios Pakurianoi and the second with the Monks George and Gabriel (Pls. 26, 27, 41)⁷². Very little of these paintings survives as in all five cases they have been subjected to barbarous mutilation, while Ivan Alexander has been almost totally repainted in a number of subsequent restorations. The best preserved head is that of St. John the Theologian (Pl. 27a) showing that it is painted on an essentially ochre ground with the features imposed with a rather harsh linear style. Generally it is a dry,
clumsy decorative style with figures coarsely blocked in, placed frontally and dressed in highly ornamented robes richly studded with pearls. The Bačkovo fourteenth century frescoes, stylistically, are generally in keeping with such cycles as in the White Church Karanska (1340-42) or Psaca (1365-71) and their ktitor portraits, but are of a considerably lower standard.

In their iconography, the fourteenth century Bačkovo frescoes conform with well established traditions. Gregory and Apasios Pakurianoi are shown as the first ktitors of the monastery, the monks George and Gabriel as the second ktitors, tsar Ivan Alexander as a new ktitor, St. John the Theologian as his patron saint, while SS. Constantine and Helen as the first and model ktitors. Parallels can quite easily be drawn with other depictions of such ktitors and within that tradition the Bačkovo depictions appear as quite conventional. However, the depiction of these ktitors in the ossuary does suggest that greater significance was attached to this building and that it was not simply considered as a humble charnel-house intended for the bones of monks. In a similar manner to the ossuary of Hosios Lukas, the Bačkovo ossuary in the fourteenth century was still regarded as the place with the tomb of the founders of the monastery, as a place worthy of veneration and one where a new ktitor of the monastery should be depicted.
CONCLUSION

The Backovo ossuary can be identified with the "κοιμητηρίον" mentioned in Gregory Pakurianos' typicon, which was confirmed in December of 1083. As the burial of Apasios Pakurianos at Gregory's monastery was a precondition set down in Apasios' will before he was willing to make the donations to the monastery, and these donations are already listed in the typicon, it can be assumed that the ossuary had been completed before December 1083. The choice of saints in the frescoes and other factors make it unlikely that work on the ossuary had commenced before 1074. So the frescoes of the Backovo ossuary were executed at some time between 1074 and 1083, possibly towards the end of this period.

When compared with other surviving ossuaries of the eleventh century at Nea Moni on Chios and at Daphni, the Backovo ossuary is outstanding in its size and quality. The lavishness in the construction and decoration of the Backovo ossuary can be explained by the fact that it was intended to play a twin role as the ktitor's tomb and as a monastic ossuary. This function as a ktitor's tomb is also reflected in the fourteenth century frescoes at the ossuary showing ktitor donor portraits.

The initial and principal layer of fresco decorations covers the great majority of the wall surface at Backovo. Nowhere in this layer is there a trace of an earlier layer of decorations underneath, hence the
frescoes must belong to the period of 1074-83.

The narthex area on both levels of the ossuary was originally conceived as an open portico-like structure and therefore the narthex frescoes were largely exposed to the elements. They were first restored under the patronage of a certain Neophytos probably in the twelfth century. Then the Last Judgement scene on the vault of the narthex of the crypt collapsed. It was repainted on a new layer of plaster, together with some minor alterations in the upstairs narthex, towards the end of the twelfth century or in the early thirteenth century, probably by John Iviropoulos. Finally, at some time between 1344 and 1363, when the Bačkovo monastery was under the control of the Bulgarians led by tsar Ivan Alexander, but as yet had not fallen into the hands of the Turks, the five open arches of the two narthexes were filled in and painted on the inside.

The iconography of the Bačkovo frescoes adheres fairly closely to the conventions of the final third of the eleventh century. In some cases it appears to have been very close to the sources of changes occurring at that time in Constantinople, while on other occasions it reflects the influence of the Caucasus. Armenian and Georgian saints appear in considerable numbers, while the Holy Women of the Elect are led by St. Nino of Georgia, as also occurs in the Last Judgement at Ateni. This seems in keeping with the interests of the major ktitor of the monastery, Gregory Pakurianos, who was probably an Armenian Chalcedonite who clung closely to Georgian Orthodoxy.
In the proportions of the figures, the application and types of ornament, the treatment of draperies and in the construction of the compositions, the Bačkovo master is closest to other painters of the final third of the eleventh century. In individual aspects close parallels are found with the Pantocrator Psalter (Dumbarton Oaks Ms. 3) of 1084, the frescoes of Ag. Chrysostom at Koutsovendi, some of the frescoes in the chapels and crypt at Saklı Kilise in Cappadocia, Veljusa and at Ateni in Georgia. While some schools of painting have been traced in Byzantine monuments of the last third of the eleventh century - such as the Studite scriptorium in Constantinople, the series of frescoed churches by Tevdore (Theodore) in the upper Svaneti region of Georgia or the common school of painters identified by Winfield working in Cyprus late in the eleventh century and in the twelfth century, too little is known of the monumental decorations in Constantinople itself to attempt to attribute the Bačkovo frescoes to a particular school. The Bačkovo murals do largely conform to the stylistic trends observed in the Pantocrator Psalter, which in itself is probably of Constantinople origin.
APPENDIX I. GREGORY PAKURIANOS

Gregory Pakurianos is chiefly known as a key figure behind Alexios Comnenos' seizure of power in 1081 and as Alexios' Great Domestic of the West from 1081 until Gregory's death, probably in 1086. The most satisfactory reconstruction of Pakurianos' career is offered by Lemerle¹, but even that is very sketchy. He is first encountered at Ani in 1064, then he served in the West under Michael VII, returned to the East some time after Manzikert and was again in the West before 1081 and apparently remained there until his death on the battlefield while fighting the Pechenegs. In his typicon he simply mentions that he served in Armenia, Georgia, Syria and Greece² before he came to the West and that he was a good soldier who was loyal to the interests of the Byzantines. His career seems to reflect the difficult military situation which the Empire was experiencing in the final third of the eleventh century.

As to Gregory Pakurianos' background and origins there is even less certainty. In the literature dealing with the question of his nationality, essentially two points of view emerge. The first is that he is a Georgian and says as much several times in the typicon. The second is that he is an Armenian Chalcedonite who tries to stress his Orthodoxy and pass himself off as a Georgian.

Evidence for Gregory's Armenian origins takes the following form. Anna Commena, after praising the role which Pakurianos played in her father's path to power, describes him as an Armenian³. In the Greek version of the Bačkovo typicon, it is mentioned that the typicon was written in Greek, Georgian and Armenian⁴; as it is also stated that Greeks would be barred from the monastery⁵, this implies that the monastery was intended for Georgian and Armenian monks. It is also mentioned that Gregory signed the original Greek
copy of the typicon, in the presence of Euthymios, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, in Armenian. Lemerle has suggested that as Gregory spent his youth in Armenia, he may have been largely illiterate in both Georgian and Greek. There is also mention in the typicon of Gregory's relatives as "τῶν Ἀρμενίων τυχοῦσαν". Honigmann, and Arutyunova after him, link Gregory Pakurianos to an Armenian Pakurianos mentioned by Cedrenus and in their genealogy the Pakurianoi come from the Armenian nobility. Finally, at the Bačkovo ossuary itself, there is a considerable amount of Armenian graffiti which does suggest the existence of an Armenian cult at the monastery at some time in its history.

The case for Gregory Pakurianos' Georgian origins rests largely on his own declarations in the typicon that he is a Georgian. He calls himself a Georgian coming from the noble Georgian race, establishing a Georgian monastery for use by Georgians. It seems unlikely that every time he uses the word Georgian, he really implies "Georgian religious convictions" and not the race or nationality. There is also a mention of a Georgian Pakurianos by the mid-twelfth century Armenian chronicler Matthew of Edessa. From this Šanidze argues that Gregory is a Georgian and that Pakurianos is a Greek corruption of the Georgian name Bakurianisdze. In this he is followed by Litavrin and more cautiously by Lemerle who points out that Pakurianos may not be such an uncommon name and that an alternative Georgian genealogy for the Pakurianoi is possible.

On this evidence, it seems difficult to understand why Pakurianos, if he were a Georgian, would sign his typicon in Armenian, have an Armenian copy made, refer to his Armenian relatives and be known at court as an Armenian. However, reasons for why an Armenian, who wished to succeed at the Byzantine court, would conceal his Armenian background and loudly declare his allegiance to Georgian Orthodoxy are far more apparent. Marr,
who was the first to advance the theory that Pakurianos was an Armenian Chalcedonite\textsuperscript{19} mentions other examples of the de-nationalization of Armenian Chalcedonites into Georgians at the Byzantine court\textsuperscript{20}. In this context, perhaps Charanis' description of Pakurianos as a "Georgian-Armenian" is the most accurate\textsuperscript{21}. As an Armenian Chalcedonite, Gregory would have clung to the protection of the Georgian Church, visited Iviron on Athos and admitted Georgian monks into his monastery. But this would also explain the extraordinary ban which he imposed on Greeks entering his monastery and his distrust of Greeks in general\textsuperscript{22}.

Little is known of Pakurianos' activities as patron of the arts. His gifts to Iviron were in the form of financial support\textsuperscript{23}. In his donations to the Bačkovo monastery there is a mention of several icons including that of the Transfiguration and the Madonna and Child, that of his patron saint, St. George and an icon with SS. George and Theodore. In the liturgical manuscripts which he donated, there is no mention of illumination, but of covers with precious materials\textsuperscript{24}. 
FOOTNOTES TO THE PREFACE

1. For often cited publications and for clarity in presentation when using Cyrillic or Greek titles, an abbreviation of author and year of publication is given in the footnotes while the full bibliographical details are given in the bibliography. Grabar first published his findings in 1920, Grabar (1920) pp.97-164. On the architecture of Bačkovo, Grabar (1922) pp.103-132, and on the paintings Grabar (1924) pp.1-68. With some revisions, in an abbreviated form and in French translation, his essay on the Bačkovo frescoes appeared in his monograph on religious painting in Bulgaria, Grabar (1928) pp.55-86.

2. There is a suggestion of the various layers in Grabar (1924) pp.55-59, also in the restoration report Praškov (1965) pp.24-32. Bakalova treats the paintings as all belonging to the same period, except for the very late Bulgarian work, Bakalova (1977) passim.


6. Šanidze has contributed several articles and two books on Pakurianos and Bačkovo. Most of the earlier material is re-assembled in book form in Šanidze (1971) and for a discussion of the earlier literature on the subject see ibid., pp.243-278.

7. Lemerle, Cinq Études, pp.113-191.

8. Vasiliev (1965). Although it consists of only 22 pages of text and 42 plates it makes several important contributions to the topic.


FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER ONE

1. The relevant passages from the chronicles of crusaders and travellers' notes are published in Ivanov, (1911), pp.191-230.


3. Alexiad, ix:v.


6. Typicon 2:7, p.122. In Typicon 2:2, p.120, there is also a mention of Στενάχως, two neighbouring fortresses, Καρσόν, and several churches. There is no mention of a Panagia church.


8. An account of the most recent excavations is given in Mijatev, (1957), pp.316-21.

9. I have not seen this manuscript. Kondakov and Bakradze, (1890), pp.53-54, publish the inscription as reading that the manuscript was translated in 1030 by Arsenios and the monk David of Petritzros. Marr introduced this reading into the discussion of Gregory Pakurianos. Marr, (1906), p.17ff. K. Kekelidze and M. Tarchnisvili, "Geschichte der kirchlichen georgischen Literatur," Studi e testi, vol.185, Rome 1955, pp.206-07, also mention the MS and note that MS Nr.23 fol.266a states that the text of the Greek original was completed in 1030 and there is no date indicating when the Georgian translation was made. Neither Kekelidze nor Tarchnisvili have apparently seen the MS and base their information on T. Zordonia, Die Chroniken und anderes Material aus Geschichte und Literatur Georgiens, vol.1, Tbilisi 1892-93, pp.310-311, cf. Bakalova (1977), p.195.

10. Alexiad, Bk.ix:v (Leib ed. vol.2, 1943, p.171). Ivanov's suggestion that Anna's Petritzros may refer to another unknown location closer to Sofia is an unsupported complication to the question, Ivanov, (1911), p.194


13. This date is given by Kekelidze, Marr, Nutsubidze and others although it is not based on any documentary evidence. This late date of birth would make John Petritzros scarcely ten years old when he studied under Psello in Constantinople, before the latter left the city. The idea of studying under Psello is likewise unsupported by documentation but inferred on the basis of influences. See Marr, (1909), p.99; Kekelidze, Geschichte, p.211.
14. There is a reference in John Italos' Διαλογισμοί in which he separates those commentaries which belong to him and those which belong to John Petritzi, discussed in Nutsubidze, op.cit., p.230. Cf, G. Cereteli, Iohannis Italii Opuscula Selecta, Tbilisi, (1924), pp.II-III.


16. Ibid., pp.54-57.

17. For example, Baramidze, Padiani and Zevti, (1952), p.22, write that in 1083 Gregory Pakurianos invited John Petritzos to work in his seminary.


24. John Petritzos may have been in contact with Italos shortly after 1082, see Nutsubidze, (1939), p.290.

25. Typicon 1:3, p.116; 2:1, p.120, etc.


27. Typicon 1, pp.112-118.


29. Typicon.1, p.112ff.


32. The literature on Gregory Pakurianos is discussed in Appendix I.

34. Kekelidze, (1908).


40. C.M.H. vol. IV, p.213.


44. Ibid., p.316.

45. In the typicon is mentioned that Gregory Pakurianos has the right to give his property to relatives even if they are of the Armenian faith.

46. Alexiad II iv.

47. The monastery was freed by Alexios from all secular and ecclesiastic control and taxes. Typicon 3:1-3, p.132; 18:12, pp.202-04.


49. Typicon I:4, p.118.

50. Typicon I:5, p.118.


53. Typicon 24:1-2, p.218. At no time in the monastery was there to be more than one Greek monk and he would be retained as a scribe who knew the Greek language. Gregory states that the reason for this is that otherwise the Greeks would eventually take over the monastery as had happened before. Indeed he would have been aware of such attempts made by the Greeks to control Georgian monasteries in the East and on Athos. Discussed in Natroev, (1910), pp.216-22, 253ff; Šanidze, (1971), pp.256-57.

55. Marr, ibid., pp. 35-36.

56. The translation was known to Marr, but has been published only in 1968 by Muradyan, (1968), pp. 266-305.


60. Typicon 15:1-17, pp. 182-190; 9:3, p. 166.

61. Sokolov, (1906), p. 66.


63. The question of the dating of the ossuary and its association with the ktitor's tomb is discussed below in Chapter two.


70. A very detailed description of the architecture, plans and measurements are given in Bobčev and Dinolov, (1960), pp. 7-17, 29-52. The architecture of the interior is discussed below in relation to its fresco decoration.


72. Examples of this line of argument include: G. Balš, "Contribution à la question des églises superposées dans le domaine byzantin," Actes du IV congrès international des études byzantines, vol. 1, Sofia 1934, p. 156; Mijatev, (1965), pp. 204-205;
idem (1966), pp.93-94.


82. Mader studied and published the frescoes in 1937. He was unable to identify only six of the thirty-one saints, today about ten figures survive altogether. E.A. Mader, "Ein Bilderyzyklus in der Gräberhöhle der St. Euthymiuslavra auf Mardes (Chirbet el-Mard) in der Wüste Juda," Oriens Christianus, vol.34, Leipzig 1937, pp.27-58.

83. The function of a series of rectangular chapels with crypts found in northern Syria is uncertain. Butler suggested that they were used as κοιμητήρια or μνημεῖα. In some, the funerary function of the crypt cannot be disputed, for example, the chapel at Burdj Hēdar, dated by an inscription 487, has arcossolia cut into the side walls of the crypt. The chapels which can be included into this group are Serdjibleh, Ban-akfur, Kašr 11-Mudakhin, Dauwar, Tel 'Akibrin and the chapel near Brād. Architecturally, these mainly fifth century double-storey chapels resemble the Bačkovo ossuary. They do not have a narthex, rarely have a rounded apse and the crypt is usually completely submerged. H.C. Butler, Early churches in Syria: fourth to seventh centuries, 1929, pp.74-77; Grabar, Martyrium; also see C.C. Walters, Monastic archaeology in Egypt, Warminster 1974, pp.229-34; H. Torp, Early Coptic monastic architecture, pp.513-38.

84. The ossuary at the church of St. Sava at Karies on Athos, which probably can be dated 1199, presents several peculiarities not
encountered in other Athos ossuaries. It is basically a
large, two-dome church with a hollowed-out crypt beneath the
naos and which is entered through the east end. The crypt is

85. J. Georgirenes, A description of the present state of Samos,
Nicaria, Patmos and Mount Athos, London 1677, p.111; Barskiy,
(1778), pp.534, 595 (also a description of the ossuaries at
the Great Lavra and Iviron); Partheniy (monk), (1856), vol.II,
pp.189-90.

86. Further elaborations are given in Partheniy, ibid, vol.2,
p.189-90; also see Babič, Chapelles annexes, pp.40-47.

87. References to ossuaries in typica are discussed in Chapter two.

is possible that another very similar ossuary existed at the
Brontocheion monastery in Mistra. The account given by
Millet indicates that it was a separate two-storey building with
the crypt used as a sepulchral chamber. Millet, "Rapport sur
Millet noted that the plan is very similar to that of the Daphni
ossuary, Millet, Daphni, p.24.

89. Professor Mango has drawn my attention to a reference to an
ossuary in the typicon of the St. Chrysostom monastery on
Cyprus (Dmitrievskiy, TSM, vol.3, p.124). There exist two
chapels joined together by a lateral wall, some distance from
the monastery, that could possibly be identified as funerary
buildings. The plan and several photographs are published by
Sotiriou, (1935), fig.34, plates 30b, 77b, 107a. The chapels
are poorly preserved. The two chapels are of different
materials, the larger one, slightly higher on the slope of the
hill is of rough, unhewn stone, the smaller is of brick.
Professor Mango has suggested that the scarcity of brick on
Cyprus and its use at the Chrysostom monastery strongly
argues that this building is contemporary with the north
church, ie, 11/12 century. Each chapel has a narthex, a
rounded apse and a single entrance from the west. The choice
of the iconographic programme in the preserved fragments of the
fresco decorations (the only two surviving feasts are the
Lamentation and Descent from the Cross) suggest a funerary
designation for the chapels. The architectural form of the
chapels, the use of brick for one chapel and stone for the
other and their location outside the monastic walls, are all
characteristics which these chapels share with monastic ossuaries.

90. Khalpakch'yan, (1973), pp.54-58, discusses this tradition and
mentions the examples at Agudi, Tsakhatskar, Noravank and Egvart.


92. N. and M. Thierry, "Notes sur des monuments arméniens en Turquie
(1964)", Revue des études Arméniennes, nouvelle série, vol.2,

93. Partheniy, (1856), vol.2, p.190, knew of examples in Moldavia
and Bulgaria. Babič in an important contribution to the study of
the liturgical use of Byzantine chapels, devotes some time
to funerary structures. Her survey, covering a very wide area including Africa, Italy, the Balkans, Asia Minor and Russia, assembles a very large, although by no means comprehensive, list of monuments. The lack of homogeneity within any one of her categories limits their usefulness in the study of a specific liturgical and architectural tradition, such as the one to which belongs the Bačkovo ossuary. Babić, *Chapelles annexes*, esp. pp.40-58.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER TWO

1. The "ktitor's typicon" for the Petritzos Monastery has received considerable attention in scholarly literature. Lemerle, Cinq Etudes, pp.113-191, presents the most convincing account of the existing manuscripts and their editions. Bakalova (1977) pp.186-189, traces their history in Bulgarian accounts. However, Lemerle's suggestion that the original intention was to produce an Armenian version as is mentioned in the Greek manuscript, but simply they did not get around to it and hence mention of it is left out of later copies, is not very convincing. Lemerle, ibid., p.130. It seems more likely that the reference to the Armenian version was purged from the text together with other Armenian references during the period of the intense "Georgification" of the monastery. See Petit, Typikon de Grégoire Pacourianos, p.xvii; Muradyan, Pakurian, pp.103-118; Lemerle, Actes de Lavra, p.185, 374; Cf. Šanidze (1971), p.249ff. who strongly argues against the existence of any Armenian connections.

2. The problem of the nationality of the patrons and their biography is discussed in Appendix I.


4. Typicon, 1.5, p.118.

5. Ibid.


8. Typicon, 2.1, p.120. See Lemerle, Cinq Etudes, p.176; Cf. the Georgian Chios MS, Šanidze, (1971). I express my gratitude to Professor D.M. Lang for comparing the Georgian text with Šanidze's Russian translation of the passages discussed here. There is also an edition with Latin trans. by M. Tarchnislvili, Typikon Gregorii Pacuriani, CSCO, Scriptores Iberici, 143, parts 3 and 4 (1954).


20. C. Mango and E. Hawkins, "The Monastery of Lips (Fenari Camii) at Istanbul", DOP, 18 (1964), p.300-301; A. Megaw, "The Skipou Screen", BSA, 61 (1966), pp.1-32. The catholicon at the Iviron monastery on Athos has two side chapels. It was dedicated to the Koimesis and built under abbot George Matsmindeli (1058-1065). This example would have been known to the Pakurianoi from their visits to Iviron: Natroev, (1910), pp.51-62, pp.232-35, 318, 323.


25. Typicon, Introduction 2, pp.98-100:

...κτίτορος τῆς θεσμοθετού καί νεοθεμητού ταύτης μονῆς καί κοιμητηρίου τῆς ομοίας αναπαύσεως ... τῆς ανυπακοής εἰς φαράγη καί λυπαραί καί σωπολαί αμήν, πρὸς δὲ καὶ τοῦ μακαρίου αὐταδέλφου μου τοῦ μαγιστροῦ Ἀπασίου.


27. Ibid., 107.

28. L. Petit, "Typikon du monastère de la Kosmosotira près d'Aenos". IRAIK, 13 (1908), 61, p.63-64.


34. Typicon, 2.9, p.124.

35. Typicon, 2.11, p.124.


37. Typicon, 2.13, p.126.
38. In early Christian communities in Egypt, the monastic cemeteries were usually located outside the walls, but sometimes within them and at other times burials took place in the church itself; C.C. Walters, *Monastic Archaeology in Egypt* (Warminster, 1974), pp.229-34.


40. Typicon, Conclusion 1, p.252.

41. Typicon, 2.11, p.124.

42. See Chapter One above.

43. Typicon, Introduction 2, p.98.


45. Typicon, 1.2, p.114.

46. Τανύν δὲ κατὰ τοῦ γῆρους μου, Typicon, 1.3, p.116.

47. Typicon, Chrysobull 14, p.248.


50. E.g. by this method Stanimirov, (1940), p.151, arrives at the years 1081-84.


53. Its present appearance:

\[ \text{ΓΙΗΦΔΥΛΗΡΟΜΟ} \]


55. Part of the Bačkovo MSS are published by Gošev, (1931), pp.382-85.

56. Ibid., 382.

57. Ibid., 382.

58. Ibid., 383.

59. Ibid., 380-81.
60. Published in Gošev, (1931), p. 349. The surviving inscription reads:

\[ +\text{ANITOP, 1010, KANE} - \text{HAXETOANOK KATO} \]
\[ DIAKOP, \text{1W, ITO, R} - \text{1BHRPIE LA} \]
\[ KIAH API HOCKONTE} - \text{G KDIAT K} \]

61. \text{Ibid.}, p. 349-51.


63. A. Xyngopoulos, \text{Thessalonique et la peinture macedonienne} (Athens, 1955), pp. 15-25; idem, "Sur l'icone bilatérale de Poganovo", \text{C.A.}, 12 (1962), pp. 341-50. The similarity between the Hosios David "Vision" and the depiction at Bačkovo, together with several vague compositional affinities in the depiction of certain feast scenes with those in some Macedonian churches, do not provide sufficient information to attribute the painter conclusively to a specific school.


68. Protić, (1923), pp. 346-62. Protić remains an exception and dates them to 1083.

69. Ivanov, (1911), pp. 212-15, convincingly reconstructs the Tsar Ivan Alexander inscription and suggests ca. 1344 as the likely date when the tsar enriched the Bačkovo monastery. Grabar repeats this argument, (1924), p. 58.

70. P.A. Syrku collected several Georgian inscriptions at the Bačkovo monastery. A.A. Tsagareli delivered a paper based on these inscriptions before the Oriental section of the Russian Imperial Archaeological Society in 1887. This paper does not appear to have been published and subsequently the inscriptions have been lost; mentioned by Marr, (1913), pp. 149-50.

71. Šanidze, (1971), pp. 362-64. Šanidze suggests a 14th century date.

72. The inscription is mentioned by most authors dealing with Bačkovo. Unfortunately most follow the corrupt reading given by Petit, Typikon de Grégoire Pacourianos, pp. xix-xx, and hence misdate the inscription. Šanidze published the full Georgian text accompanied by a Russian translation. He argues that the Georgian specifies the donors as monks from the Tao province; Šanidze, (1971), pp. 354-62.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER THREE

1. Giacomo di Pietro Luccari, Copioso ristretto de gli annali di Ravasa, Venice 1605 p.52. "A questa maniera Alessando consegui il Regno, & si morì nel 1350 il suoritratto al naturale io ho vedutu nel monasterio di Santa Maria, nella giurisdizione di Stanimaca, città di Tracia ..."


8. The inscriptions are published in A.M. Schneider, "Das Kloster der Theotokus zu Choziba im Wadi el Kelt", Römische Quartalschrift, 1932, pp.297-332.


12. The local oral tradition which mentions Romanos II and his wife as the donors is found in Kremos, (1880), vol.2, p.194. The tradition is soundly rejected by both Stikas and Chatzidakis.


14. The question of the dating of the frescoes and the complex literature devoted to it is discussed in Chapter five below.

15. This disproves the argument of Sotiriou who claims "les saints en buste de la crypte différent de ceux qui figurent dans l'église et ne s'y retrouvent pas pour la plupart". G. Sotiriou, "Peintures murales byzantines du XIe siècle dans la crypt de saint Luc", Actes du IIIème Congrès International d'etudes Byzantines, Athens 1932, p.389.

16. These three saints are found in the mosaic decorations above. "Diag.C. Nos. 5, 16, 70."
17. Akrabova is not correct in her article dealing with illusionistic "imago clipeata" in saying that illusionistic nails and rings are used on both levels. Akrabova, (1950), p.7.


19. Restle suggests that the donor's painting of St. Catherine was a later addition and relates the master of the rest of the decorations to the master of chapel 28 which he dates as c.1070, ibid., p.127. The figure of St. Catherine, although defaced by graffiti, I feel conforms in style with the other decorations which appear cruder and more "provincial" than those in Göreme chapel 28.


22. The decoration of the Gospel book covers is similar to those found in the church apse above.

23. I thank Professor Dowset for this translation.


25. S. Der Nersessian, "Les portraits de Grégoire l'illuminateur dans l'art byzantin", *Byzantion*, XXXVI (1966), Plates 4 & 5; idem., Londres Add. 19, 352, Fig 82.


27. Diez and Demus, *op. cit.*, Fig. 28.


42. Early examples in illuminated MSS includes Menologium of Basil II, p.205; Menologion Athos Dociariou MS.5f 204.

43. de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, vol.I(ii), p.320, Restle, Asia Minor, No.XXIX.


47. Corresponds to the identification in Grabar, (1924), p.7.


49. Menologium of Basil II, p.163.


54. B.H.G. 3 197-197e 1 and 2; Delehaye, Syn, col. 823-824, 149ff, col. 825-826, No.2; Der Nersessian, Le Synaxaire Arménien, p.281; Garitte, Le Calendrier, pp.277-78, 282.


56. de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, vol.I(i), p.125; I(i) p.142; I(i) p.154; I(ii) p.319 (Pl.85/1); II(i) p.314; II(i) p.342; Thierry, Nouvelles églises, p.105, 209; also de Jerphanion II(ii) p.382.


58. de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, P1.85/1, P1.191/3; Restle, Asia Minor, Pls. 498, 511; also in the Georgian MS Synax. A-648 (Tbilisi) Alibegašvili, op.cit., P1.29a.
Grabar in his account of these bishops mentions Cyril of Alexandria (1924), p.7; (1928), p.59), however none of the bishops resembles Cyril's type.


Delehaye, Syn. col.682-4, No.6. Although mentioned here as a bishop our saint is shown in monastic robes.


Delehaye, Syn. col.927-928, No.1; Garitte, Le Calendrier, p.314.


Grabar, (1924), p.7, he deletes this suggestion in his Peintures Byzantines. Bobčev and Dinolov, (1960), repeat Grabar's suggestion in their charts 8 and 10, Nos. 27 and 60.

Grabar suggests that there were ten figures on each side, (1924), p.7; (1928), p.59.

de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, Pl.187(i).


Menologium of Basil II, fol.131; Millet, Athos, Pl.121/2; 45/3; Xyngopoulos, Orphanos, Pl.72.


B.H.G. 3 763y-766i, Delehaye, Syn. col.155-157 No.1; Bayan, Synaxaire Arménien, PO, t.XV, fasc.3, No.74, pp.361-64, Garitte, Le Calendrier, p.365; but also on 18, 25 May, 1st, 26, 29, 31 December; the Patmos MS of the typicon of S. Sophia mentions four commemorations - the major one on 23 October, others on first Sunday after Christmas, second Saturday after Easter and 30 April, Mateos, op.cit., I p.74, 160, 276, II p.212-14; for the alternative Armenian tradition see Der Nersessian, Synaxaire Arménien, p.280.

For Hosios Lukas see Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.119, No.55; for the Cappadocian examples, Restle, Asia Minor, Pls. 359, 474, 478; Asinou-Winfield, Guide, p.9; Georgian examples, Amiranašvili, (1963), p.223, 219; for Patmos, Orlandos, Patmos, p.137, Pl.5.


81. de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, vol.I(ii) p.318; I(i) p.245, I(i) p.154 Pl.38 No.4; II(i) p.342.


83. B.H.G. 3 1647-1648p; P. van den Ven, La légende de saint Spyridon, évêque de Trémiithoue, Louvain 1953; Beck, Kirche und Theologische Literatur, pp.456, 463, 573; Delehaye, Syn. col.303, No.1; Bayan, Synaxaire Arménien, PO t.XVIII fasc.1 No.86, pp.27-34; Garitte, Le calendrier, p.408.

84. Der Nersessian, Londres, Add.19,352, p.76; Theodore Psalter, fol.107V, p.42, fig.176.

85. A somewhat inadequate discussion of the iconography of Bishop Spyridon is given in Johann Georg, "Herzog zu Sachsen: Zur Ikonographie des heiligen Spyridon", BZ vol.19 (1910) pp.107-10, Id., Der Heilige Spyridon, Leipzig 1913; for Hosios Lukas see Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.119 Fig.3; Amasgou-Boyd, "Church of Panagia Amasgou", DOP, vol.28 (1974), Fig.11; Cappadocian examples - de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, vol.I(i) p.203; I(ii) p.320; Restle, Asia Minor, No.XXIX.


88. The literature on illusionistic "imago clipeata" is very limited. Grabar first mentions this peculiarity in (1928), pp.64-65 and there is one somewhat undeveloped article devoted to this question, Akrabova, (1950), pp.5-16. Akrabova cites Grabar and argues that we are dealing with an antique form of illusionism - a descendant of Pompeii; however the only early example which both authors cite are the medallions in S. Maria Antiqua in Rome of 705-707. Grabar was basing himself on the water colour sketch in J. Wilpert, Die römischen Mosaiken und Malereien der kirchlichen Bauten vom IV bis XIII Jahrhundert, Freiburg 1917, vol.2, p.653ff, Pl.152 & 153. Although on the east and west walls of the presbytery there is an illusionistic-
like painted suspended velum, the medallions themselves are in the band above and have no painted attachments to suggest that they are suspended in space. P.J. Nordhagen, The frescoes of John VII in S. Maria Antiqua in Rome, Rome 1968, pp.15-22, Pl.III-XV.


90. Ibid., pp.316-21.

91. Restle, Asia Minor, No.XLVI. The remains of eight painted panels were still visible in 1976.


94. To my knowledge a report on this excavation has not been published and I thank Professor Miljković-Pepek for this information.

95. The husbandry cults SS. Blasios, Mamas, Lauros and Floros became particularly widespread in Slav countries by the 13th and 14th centuries, see V.N. Lazarev, Novgorodian Icon-painting, Moscow 1969, p.21ff. The coupling of SS. Blasios and Mamos in Byzantine art was rare and they are normally shown as martyrs, eg, in the north arch of El Nazar they are shown together with SS. Cozon and Nikitas, de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, vol.I(i) p.180.

96. In 1976 only four of the inscriptions were legible. My identifications are based on those given by Petković, (1911), pp.63-64.

97. For the information concerning this oral tradition I am indebted to the Abbess of the Žiča monastery.


99. Ibid., p.155.

100. C.L. Striker and Y. Dogan Kuban, "Work at Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul: Second Preliminary Report", DOP, vol.22 (1968) p.190 Fig.14. These identifications are very tentative as several saints could quite easily be represented by these facial types.


104. S. Mandić, The Virgin's Church at Studenica, Belgrade 1966, Pl.2 & 33.


106. This identification corresponds to the one given by Grabar, (1924), p.3.


110. Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.121 Fig 77; p.119 (No.60); p.123 (No.10); Orlandos, Patmos, p.137f, Pl.1.


112. de Jerphanion, Église rupestres, II(i) p.315.

113. Corresonds to the identification in Grabar, (1924), p.3.


115. B.H.G. 3 col.629-630p; Delehaye, Syn. 8813s; Der Nersessian, Le synaxaire Arménien, p.283; Garitte, Le Calendrier, p.300.

116. Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.121 No.10, Fig.78; Miljkovic-Pepek, Vodoča 1975, p.27, Fig.10, Pl.11.

117. Pelekanides, Kastoria, Pl.13a.


120. On the lancet as an attribute of SS. Cosmas & Damian in mediaeval art see M-L. David-Danel, Iconographie des Saints médecins Come et Damien, Lille, 1958, pp.192-94.


122. See list of examples in David-Danel, op.cit., pp.211-232.


125. de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, I(ii) p.399, II(i) P.340; Thierry, Nouvelles églises, pp.183-192.


128. Der Nersessian, Londres, Add.19, 352, Pl.93, Fig.260.


130. Identification corresponds to that in Bakalova, Saints, (1973), p.89.


134. Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.119 No.71; p.123 No.17.


139. Festugière, Les moins d'Orient, vol.3(2) p.32.

140. Ibid., pp.43-45.


142. Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.119 No.73; p.123 No.20.


144. de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, II(i) p.324.


146. This particular iconographic form for a stylite was widespread from the sixth century onwards, see J. Dosogne-Lafontaine, Recherches sur le monastère et l'iconographie de S. Symeon Stylite le Jeune, Brussels 1967, p.172ff.


148. (Contd.)


149. Delehaye, Syn., col.845, 22, also on Sept. 1 col.2g.


154. Çubinaşvili, (1948), Pl.16, 85; Virsaladze, (1963), p.115, Fig.3, Pl.51; for further examples see Symeon der Ältere, RBK vol.II col.1072-1076; Kirschbaum, Lexikon, vol.8, col.361-364.

155. Papageorphiou, Byzantine Art of Cyprus, Pl.XV/3.


157. The reading of the inscription corresponds to that in Bakalova, Saints (1973), p.89.

158. Pelekanides, Kastoria, Pl.11.

159. Der Nersessian, Londres, Add.19, 352, f.26v, p.24, Fig.47.

160. Delehaye, Saints Stylites, p.xxxxv.

161. Pelekanides, Kastoria, Pl.69.

162. W. Krönig, Il duomo di Monreale, Palermo 1965, Pl.43.


167. See footnote 9 above.
168. F. Saxl, "The Ruthwell Cross", JWCI, vol.6 (1943) p.3, 7ff, Pl.11c.


170. Menologium Basil II, Pl.321; K. Weitzmann, Illustrated MSS at St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai, Minnesota 1973, Fig.27, first figure top row, p.21. Apparently also in a menologion of ca.1040, Baltimore, Walters cod.W.521 f.28V, of which I have no illustration, see An.Boll. vol.57 (1939) p.233.


172. J. Leroy, Les manuscrits syriaques, conservés dans les bibliothèques d'Europe et d'Orient, Paris 1964, Pl.58/1 - shown between two lions, with a raven, with a similar beard shape and length as in Bačkovo, except that it lacks the scapular. Icon is reproduced in Festugière, ibid., opp. p.48.

173. Demus, Norman Sicily, p.330; Radojčić, (1971), p.20 Pl.XL; Xyngopoulos, Orphanos, Pl.147, 150; at Protaton, Millet, Athos, Pl.46/2.


175. B.H.G. 3 999g-999t; Delehaye, Syn. col.401, No.1; Bayan, Synaxaire Arménien, PO t.XIX fasc.1 No.91 p.60, Garitte, Le Calendrier, p.364.


180. Rice and Winfield, Hagia Sophia, p.43, Pl.60d.


186. Ibid., p.162.

187. The four strands as in Bačkovo we find at Engleistra on Cyprus, Papageorghiou, Byzantine Art of Cyprus, Pl.XX/2, while the five strand variety is found at the hermitage of St. Neophytos, Mango-Hawkins, Hermitage of St. Neophytos, p.154, Pl.38.


189. Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.119 No.85.


191. Göreme chapel 11 (Chapel of St. Eustace); Tokali Kilise II; Beli Kilise e; Gülü Dere Chapel 4 (Ayvalı Kilise) de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, I(i) Pl.55; I(ii) p.326; II(i) p.305, Restle, Asia Minor, No.29.

192. The inscription is only partly reproduced in Bakalova, Saints, (1973), p.92.

193. This is the inscription on St. Ephraim's scroll in the Hermitage of St. Neophytos, Mango-Hawkins, Hermitage of St. Neophytos, p.170.


196. The inscription is only partly reproduced in Bakalova, Saints, (1973), p.92.

197. This is the inscription on St. Ephraim's scroll in the Hermitage of St. Neophytos, Mango-Hawkins, Hermitage of St. Neophytos, p.170.


199. Mavrodinov, (1972), Pl.38; Xyngopoulos, Orphans, Pl.147, 149; for Cappadocian examples see de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, I(i) p.179; I(i) p.201, II(i) p.260; Mango-Hawkins, Hermitage of St. Neophytos, Pl.78; Millet-Frolow, op.cit., vol.II Pl.187/3; Millet, Athos, Pl.46/3, 183/4.


205. Okunev, (1912), pp.43-44.

206. Inscription not given by either Grabar or Bakalova.

207. Janin, Grands centres byzantins, p.156.

208. Ibid., p.386.


218. Marr, (1906), p.27.

219. No identification in either Grabar or Bakalova.


221. Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.119 No.92; Stikas, (1970), p.204, Pl.34a; Orlandos, Patmos, Pl.55y.

222. Menologium Basil II, Pl.158.

223. Der Nersessian, Londres, Add.19, 352, fol.179v, Fig.282.


Delehaye, *Syn.* p.261, 1.34.

Papadopoulos-Kerameus, (1909), p.159; 166.

Der Nersessian, *Londres*, Add.19, 352, fol.38\(^\text{v}\), fig.66; fol.96\(^\text{v}\) fig.157.


Weitzmann, *Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, Pl.301 (bottom row).


H. Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs.*, Paris 1929, Pl.CIII.

Der Nersessian, *Londres*, Add.19, 352, fol.117\(\text{r}\) fig.193.

Miljković-Pepek, *Vodoča*, (1975), p.44, fig.26, Pl.XXVII.


It is interesting to note that in a relatively late fresco on the exterior wall of the refectory, included in the panoramic view of the monastery is the ossuary with open arches on all three sides of the upper narthex. Vasiliev, (1971), Pl.37.


245. Sotiriou, *Peintures*, pp.392-3, Fig.4.


248. Orlandos, *Patmos*, Fig.99; Demus, *Norman Sicily*, p.329.


252. Menologium, Pl.126; Der Nersessian, Londres, Add.19 352, f.33v, fig.56; Athos: *Illuminated Manuscripts*, vol.2, Cod.14 fol.90f and 90v, Pl.331, 332; Weitzmann, Classical and Byzantine Manuscript illumination, fig.301.


254. For example, Professor Lazarev and the associated literature describe the St. Artemios in the Dormition Cathedral in Vladimir (1189) as the Egyptian based warrior saint who was martyred under Julian. The figure shown in the frescoes is a bishop, with a white pointed beard. Lazarev, (1973), Pl.155; Id., Old Russian murals and mosaics, p.244, Pl.58.


256. Menologium Pl.220; Weitzmann, Classical and Byzantine Manuscript illumination, fig.223, 224.
263.


259. Orlandos, Patmos, Pl.30; Pelekanides, Kalliergis, Pl.1b, 63, 64; Pelekanides, Kastoria, Pl.135b; Dufrenne, Mistra, VIII No.62.


261. The alternative λάξος for λάξος is encountered in other 11th century monuments such as Elmalı Kilise and Karabağ Kilise in Soğanlı, de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, I(ii) p.436, II(i) p.338.


266. Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.121, Nos. 17-21, fig.75, p.123 No.1-8; de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, I(i) p.247, I(ii) p.401-402; I(iii) p.436, 440 and Restle, Asia Minor, No.2 Pl.43-44.

267. See discussion Chapter two above.


269. See part two, footnote 70, on the Georgian inscriptions, and Grabar, (1924), p.55.

270. My thanks to Professor Dowset who went to the trouble of translating the semi-literate Armenian inscriptions.


272. For a summary of the literature on the Georgian depictions of St. George see Privalova, Pavnissi, pp.62-133.


275. Simeon Metaphrastes, Vita S. Sampsoni, Migne, P.G. CXV col.281D.


The hospice at Stenimachos was to be provided for from the income of the town of Stenimachos and to be looked after by an administrator monk and an assistant from the town. Typicon 29:1 p.228. The hospice at Marmarion and that of St. Nicholas were to be administered by two monks and the necessary supplies to be drawn from the villages of Sravikos and Prilogo. Typicon 29:6, 7, p.230.

Like St. Samson, Pakurianos was a rich man who set up charitable institutions. The desire to be a second St. Samson was not unknown, eg. Manuel Philes (1275-1345) expressed the wish that the nephew of Michael VIII Palaeologos might become another Samson in his generosity to the poor. E. Miller, Manuelis Philae Carmina, I, Michael Philes, Poem No.213, Paris 1855, p.111, cited in Constantelos, op.cit., p.193. An XI-XII century Byzantine seal has an interesting combination of a bust-length image of St. George on one side and a full-length St. Samson on the other. The epigraph unfortunately is lost. V. Laurent, La collection C. Orghidan, Documents 1, Paris 1952, No.674, p.302.


Xyngopoulos, Nicholas Orphanos, No.II 8a; For his depiction in manuscripts see Der Nersessian, Illustration of the Metaphrastian menologion, pp.229-30.


B.H.G. 3 1017z-1022, Delehaye, Syn. col.5-7 No.1; Bayan, Synaxaire Arménien, PO, t.V fasc.3 No.23 pp.475-78; Garitte, Le Calendrier, p.320


Wilpert, Mos. IV Pl.116; Melologium f.5; Babić, Chapelles annexes, p.166.

For the eight examples in Cappadocia see de Jerphanion, Œglises rupestres, I(i) p.124; I(i) p.180; I(ii) p.210 (P1.46/l); I(ii) p.436 (P1.117/l); II(i) p.256; II(i) p.276; Restle, Asia Minor, No.2.

Typicon: 4 p.100.

This early type is discussed in some detail and eleven examples are listed in Grabar, Spas, p.16.

Ibid., p.16f.

Weitzmann, Mount Sinai: the icons, No.858, Pl.37.


Partly visible in Restle, Asia Minor, Pl.21, on the same level as the Presentation. The position of this Mandylion on Restle's iconographic diagram is difficult to locate as the north and south walls must interchange places to reproduce the arrangement in the church, i.e. Michael is on the north wall as Restle states in the text, ibid., p.104, and not on the south as in the diagram.

In the second depiction at Saklı Kilise - ornament is restricted between the two bands at either end (Restle, ibid., Pl.23); in Karanlık Kilise and chapel Göreme No.21 de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, I(ii) p.399, and I(ii) p.475 have a similar arrangement of ornamental spheres around the head of Christ.

Weitzmann, Mandylion and Constantine Porphyrogennetos, Fig.214.

Lazarev, (1973), Pl.189, 271.

Numerous examples cited in Grabar, Spas, p.16.

For a discussion of the dating of Saklı Kilise see Chp.5.

de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, I(ii) p.399, p.475; Babić, Chapelles annexes, p.169; Pelekanides, Kallierges, p.16, Pl.11; Amiranašvili, Damiane, Pl.4; Xyngopoulos, Orphanos, p.17; Dufrenne, Mistra, fig.61; Grabar, Spas, p.23.

Grabar, ibid., p.23f.

Dufrenne, Mistra, No.XIV 81.

The architectural history of this monument is vague. The section which I refer to as the narthex is separated from the naos by a triple arcade of pillars and has a flat ceiling as opposed to the barrel vault of the naos.

Soteriou, Demetrios, Pl.82.
307. Tasic, Studenica, Pl.19; Babic, Chapelles annexes, p.142, fig. 109,110.


309. Grabar, ibid., p.28, footnotes 1, 2, 3.

310. Discussed in Weitzmann, Mandylion and Constantine Porphyrogenetos, pp.231-35.

311. Celebrated on 16 August. Delehaye, Syn. col. 893-901 No.1; it is interesting that in the Armenian Synaxarium, Abgar is described as king of Armenia and Syria; Bayan, Le Synaxaire Arménien, PO, t.V fasc.3 No.23, pp.390-393.

312. Menologion, 11th century in Alexandria, Greek Patriarchal Library Cod.35, p.286; Weitzmann, Mandylion, fig.214.


314. Djuric, (1963), Pl.fig.135, pp.83-84; not to be confused with the Mandylion mentioned by Grabar at Sopočani in the naos; Grabar, Spas, p.16f, Pl.VI/3; Cf. Djuric, ibid., Pl.128.


316. See discussion of Hosios Lukas crypt above.

317. de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, I(ii) p.451, I(i) Pl.L, fig.IV and Pl.117/2; Restle, Asia Minor, P.191.


322. Ibid., p.164. For example, a very similar depiction of John Climacus is in a manuscript dated 1081, Princeton, Univ. Lib. cod. Garette 16, fol.194r, reproduced in G. Vikan, Illuminated Greek Manuscripts from American Collections, Princeton 1973, fig. 31.


324. Millet argued that the theme of the All Saints was related to that of the Elect in the Last Judgement, G. Millet, La dalmatique de Vatican, Paris 1945, passim. This inter-
324. (Contd.)

...pretation has been applied to the Bačkovo frescoes by Bakalova, Bakalova (1977), p.89.


327. Ibid., p.128f., fig. 83.

328. Grabar, (1928), fig. 16.


FOOTNOTES — CHAPTER FOUR


2. Mango, Mosaics of St. Sophia, p. 80ff, fig. 106, Kähler and Mango, Hagia Sophia, p. 48f.


5. A. Papageorghiou, Masterpieces of the Byzantine Art of Cyprus, Nicosia 1965, pl.III.


8. Diez and Demus, op. cit., figs. 66, 67.


10. Diez and Demus, op. cit., pl. VI.

11. Grabar (1924) p.3.


16. Logvin (1971), pl.52.


19. These are Bačkovo (1074-1083); Veljusa (1085-93); Koutsovendis (1092-1118) and probably Boliana where the original layer with the Melismos is likely to date from the end of the eleventh century or early twelfth, K. Mijatev, Die Wandmalereien in Boliana, Dresden 1961, fig. 35, 39.

20. Early examples of this type include Kurbinovo; SS. Anargyroi in Kastoria, St. Nicholas in Prilep, see Babić, Discussions christologiques, p.386; Ştefanescu, L'illustration des liturgies, pp.108-15.

21. Miljković-Pepek (1975), fig. 5.


23. For the literature on Veljusa see Djurić (1974), f'n 5, pp.180-81, Miljković-Pepek (1975), fig. 12. The problem of dating is discussed under style below.

24. Mango and Hawkins, Report, 1964, pp.333-39, the photographs were kindly provided by Professor C. Mango.


27. Obolensky, Bogomiles, map p.319.

28. This is only a general observation that churches with surviving decorations of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, built in areas infested with Bogomil and Paulician heresies and/or linked with the Comneni and their servants, frequently contain the Melismos scene as part of their iconographic programme. Other contemporary churches in Cappadocia, Georgia, Russia (eg. S. Sophia, Kiev) and mainland Greece (eg. Hosios Lukas) do not. The situation on Cyprus is interesting, where one church - that of Ag. Chrysostom at
Koutsovendi, whose patron Eumathius Philocales, like Gregory Pakurianos, an important military commander under Alexios I, like Bačkovo has the Melismos depicted. Another church, that of Asinou, only about 30 miles away and roughly contemporary to Koutsovendi, founded by a much lower ranking official, a 'magistros' Nicephorus Ischyrios (see Mango-Hawkins, Report, 1964, p.338, f'n 96) has in its 1105/06 layer a row of standing frontal Church Fathers (Sacopoulo, Asinou, pl. XXI, XXII). This difference in the iconographic programme cannot be explained simply in terms of different stylistic schools, as Winfield has shown, Koutsovendi and Asinou belong to a similar workshop. Winfield, Hagios, Chrysostomos, Trikomo, Asinou, pp.285-90.


30. Grabar, Rouleau Liturgique, p.165ff. figs. 6, 7.


33. Miljković-Pepek, (1975) fig. 12; Babić, Discussions Christologiques, figs. 2,3,4, pl.XXVII, 50, XXVIII, 52, 53.

34. Inscriptions discussed in Babić, ibid., p.376, Walter and Babić, Inscriptions, p.273.

35. Grabar (1928) pp.88-92, fig. 17.

36. Discussion and bibliography in Babić, Discussions Christologiques, p.376f, pls. XXIII, 43; XXIV, 44; XXV, 44, 45; XXVI, 46, 47, 48.

37. Ibid., p.383f. Miljković-Pepek (1975), fig. 7.

38. The original appearance of the templon at Bačkovo is uncertain as the mutilation marks to the frescoes on the two side pilasters do indicate that some alterations had taken place after 1083. The typicon, in the donations to the monastery mentions a "τεμπλων ἐν ἐγκυρίῳ τὸς ὀθόνην ἑορτὰς" (Typicon 34 p.240) while the Georgian edition refers to an "altar screen for the main nave" Šanidze (1971) p.321. Although this undoubtedly is a reference to the catholicon and not to the ossuary church it does indicate the existence of an opaque screen by 1083.


44. "Christ Himself, the sacrificer and the sacrifice, stands at the table as though at an altar. For an altar indeed is this mystic and holy table" N. Mesarites, "Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople", ed. G. Downey, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, ns. vol. 47, pt.6 (1957) p.871, quoted in part by Loerke, *ibid.*, p.89; "a wooden cupola in which is imaged the sacred supper of the Saviour. In it an altar at which the liturgy is celebrated", quoted by Loerke, *ibid.*, p.94.


49. Amiranašvili, (1963), pp.218-19, pl. 82, 83.


51. This is a particularly popular Georgian device of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as in the Church of the Cross in Sio-Mgvimi; St. George in Otsindal; St. Demetrios in Ruici, at Zelobani and Pavnis, see Privalova, *Pavnis*, p.24f.

52. The dating is discussed in A. Epstein, "The Iconoclastic Churches of Cappadocia", *Iconoclasm*, ed. A. Bryer and J. Herrin, Birmingham 1976, p.107f. The frescoes are of poor quality with little indication of date, but most likely to be after 843 and before 1071.


56. Dufrenne, *Mistra*, p.25f, plan XIV, figs. 38, 40, plan XVIII, fig. 60.


59. On shapes of eucharistic chalices, see Sacopoulo, *Asinou*, p.70.

60. E.C. Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps*, DOS 7, Washington 1961,
272.

60. (Contd.)

No.103.


63. Grabar, Rouleau liturgique, fig. 10.

64. Dufrenne, Psautiers grecs, pl. 50.

65. Loerke, op.cit., figs. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17; Restle, Asia Minor, No.24, pl.251; Ross, Catalogue, No.10, Ščepkina (1977) fol.115.


68. Logvin (1971) pl. 51-68.

69. Restle, Asia Minor, pl. 457, 458, 370, 466. The date of the Canavar Kilise fresco is uncertain.

70. Omont, Évangiles, 2, pl. 133.

71. Sacopoulo, Asinou, pl. XX; Lazarev, (1973) pl. 131-147.

72. Loerke, op.cit., fig. 18, 19, Der Nersessian, Londres, Add. 19, 352, fig. 244.

73. Grabar, Rouleau Liturgique, fig. 13. To this type may also be added a Sinai icon of the Communion which Sotiriou dates to the eleventh century, Sotiriou, Icones, No.49.


75. Nandrić, Christian Humanism, p.221.


79. For example, St. Sophia in Ohrid, Daphni, Asinou, Martorana, Panagia Amasgou, Monagri.


81. Restle, Asia Minor, Nos. XLVIII, LIV.

82. The vertical coupling of scenes, rather than in horizontal
bands is also found in the Christological Infancy cycles in the New Church of Tokalı Kilise, Kılıçlar Kilise and Ağac Altı Kilise in İrhala, ibid., No. X, LV, XXIV.

83. Scenes which have not survived, but probably existed are marked with an asterisk. One anticipates that the Bačkovo Nativity would have shown the "full" iconography including the Adoration of the Magi as at Daphni and Hosios Lukas, Diez and Demus, op.cit., pp.49-54, pl. X and fig. 3,4.


85. For a discussion of this variant, see Weitzmann, Castelseprio, p.63. Examples of this type include Castelseprio, ibid., pl. 7; Hosios Lukas, Diez and Demus, op.cit., fig. 5, Göreme chp. 16 and Karabâş Kilise, Restle, Asia Minor, Nos. XV, XLVIII, pls. 155, 460.

86. Dionysius of Fourna, prescribes the version "ὃν ὡρησίων" in place of our "ἵνα ἥρωσιν", Papadopoulos-Kerameus, (1909), p.87. The same reading as at Bačkovo is also found at Nerezi, Miljkovic-Pepek, Nerezi, pl. 14.


88. Pelekanides, Kastoria, pls. 16 b, 49 b, 92 b.

89. Restle, Asia Minor, No. XIII pl.150.


91. Lazarev (1973), pl. 190, 349.

92. Wessel, Byzantine Enamels, No. 54 b.

93. Millet, Trebizond, p.161, also p.49, 102, pl. VIII/3, p.131 pl. XXXIV/1.

94. For a discussion of Simeon holding the Christ Child and further examples, see Wessel, R.B.K., col. 1141-42, and other literature cited by Boyd, Panagia Amasgou, p.295, f'n 62.

95. This is a rather popular pose for Christ in tenth, eleventh and early twelfth century monuments, for example Kılıçlar Kilise, Çavuşin (963/69), Gülü Dede chp. 1 and chp. 3, Restle, Asia Minor, XXIV pl. 257, XXVI pl. 302, XXVI pl. 332, XXVII pl. 337; Panagía Mavriotissa, Kastoria, Pelekanides, Kastoria, pl. 84; Vatican Urbino 2 fol. 109V (1128), Millet, L'Evangile, fig. 139. By the mid-twelfth century, the image of Christ striding towards the Baptist became popular, see ibid., pp.179-82. However, for the purposes of dating, this is of little assistance as the striding Christ already appears in the late eleventh century, e.g. Iprari (1096) in Georgia, Aldašvili, Alibegašvili and Voljskaya (1966) pp. 22-23, pl.8;
while the standing frontal Christ, without crossed legs, is common throughout the Middle Byzantine period, Millet, L'évangile, figs. 124, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138; G. Ristow, Die Taufe Christi, Recklinghausen 1965, passim.

Although this costume is popular in sixth century depictions, see Schiller, Iconography, I, figs. 354, 355, 361, and in later western examples, ibid., figs. 370, 371, 375, 376, it apparently does not reappear in Byzantine art until the eleventh and twelfth centuries, for example, eleventh and twelfth century icons from Sinai, Weitzmann, Byzantine miniature and icon painting in the eleventh century, pl. 29 b, 38; Mavriotissa in Kastoria, Pelekanides, Kastoria, pl. 84; Capella Palatina, Demus, Mosaics, pl. 19 a; Boyd, Panagia Amasgou, p.297, pl. 24; Karş Kilise, Restle, Asia Minor, pl. 472; Millet, L'évangile, pp. 182-83.

Grabar is inaccurate in saying that three angels in a baptism scene are virtually unknown prior to the twelfth century, (1924) p.31 and in this is probably reflecting the view expressed by J. Strzygowski, Iconographie der Taufe Christi, Munich 1885, p.22. Millet cites examples of eighth and ninth century baptism scenes with three angels, Millet, L'évangile, p.178. To Millet's list of eleventh century examples can be added Sakli Kilise, Restle, Asia Minor, pl. 28; Nicholas Kasnitzes and Panagia Mavriotissa (both of which Pelekanides dates to the eleventh century) Pelekanides, Kastoria, pl. 61, 84.

Alibegaşvili, (1973), p.34 f, pl. 14a.

Weitzmann, Die Armenische Buchmalerei, p.21 fig. 45.

Aladaşvili, Alibegaşvili and Voljskaya (1966), pp.22-4, pls. 8, 9.

Weitzmann, Byzantine miniature and icon painting, pls. 1, 2, 3, 28b.

Galavaris, Gregory Nazianzenus, fig. 173, 226, 247.

Restle, Asia Minor, pls. 28, 174, 230.

For a discussion of this motif, see Schiller, Iconography, I, p.182ff.

Ibid., fig. 565.

Downey, Nikolaos Mesarites, XXVI p.880


Restle, Asia Minor, pls. 282, 176, 232, 205.

Sacopoulou, Asinou, p.25f, pl. VI.
110. Demus, Norman Sicily, p.270.
111. Millet, L’Évangile, p.236.
112. Miljković-Pepek, Nerezi, pl. 24, 25.
113. For a discussion of the later iconography, see Millet, L’Évangile, p.237ff.
114. Ihm, op.cit., pp.69-75; Forsyth and Weitzmann, Sinai: Church, p.14, pl. CIII, CXXXVI-CXXXVII.
115. Restle, Asia Minor, No. XXVI pl. 303, 314-16; No. XXXIX Pl.388.
116. Ibid., No.1 pl. 13, 16; No. XLVIII pl.456, 464; No. XXII pl. 231.
117. For example at Nea Moni on Chios, at Daphni, Diez and Demus, op.cit., pp.60-62, 121, 123, fig. 92 or the churches of Mistra, Dufrenne, Mistra, passim, Millet, L’Évangile, pp. 216-231.
118. Diez and Demus, op.cit., p.62.
122. The latter suggestion was made by Grabar, (1924), p.34.
124. For the later iconography of the theme, see Millet, L’Évangile, pp.489-516.
126. Goldschmidt-Weitzmann, op.cit., p.75, No.204 pl. LXVII; Weitzmann, Threnos, fig. 13.
128. Millet, L’Évangile, fig. 535. This manuscript, now at the Institute of Manuscripts with the Georgian Academy of Sciences, Q 908, has been dated variously from the mid-eleventh century to the early twelfth. The mention in the manuscript that it was created during the lifetime of George the Hagiorite (1009-65) has led Kondakov and Bakradze to assign it to the eleventh century. Kondakov and Bakradze (1890), pp.51-52. This has
been disputed by some scholars and the manuscript has been assigned to the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries, see discussion and bibliography in Amiranašvili (1966), pp.22-24, f'n. 34.

129. Weitzmann, Threnos, p.483.
130. Goldschmidt-Weitzmann, op.cit., p.30 No. 23 pl. VIII; Weitzmann, Threnos, fig. 15.
131. Weitzmann, Threnos, fig. 16.
133. Millet, L'évangile, p.493, fig. 531.
134. Ibid., p.493, fig. 532, Weitzmann, Threnos, fig. 11.
135. Miljković-Pepek, Nerezi, pl. 35-39; for further examples, see R. Valland, Aquiliée et les origines byzantines de la Renaissance, Paris 1963, pp.27-44, pls. 11-22.
136. Omont, Évangiles avec peintures, pl. 181.
140. For a discussion of this figure see L. Wratislaw-Mitrovic and N. Okunev, "La Dormition de la saint Vierge dans la peinture médiévale Orthodox", Byzantinoslavica, 3 (1931) p.135.
141. Ibid., pp.154-58; Grabar, (1924), p.35.
143. The loss of the opening lines makes it difficult to point to a specific source.
146. Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, II pl. 83/V.
147. Restle, Asia Minor, pl. 257.
151. The inscription mentions eristavteristavi of Racha, an eleventh century Rati ruler, Amiranashvili, *Georgian metalwork*, p.100, pl. 59.
152. Virsaladze, (1978), pl.86.
160. Diez and Demus, *op.cit.*, pl. 108.
161. Sacopoulo, *Asinou*, pl. X.
162. Wratislaw-Mitrovic and Okunev, *op.cit.*, fig. 5.
164. Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels*, pl. 46u.
167. For a discussion of so-called twelfth century peculiarities, *ibid.*, pp.142-44.


178. For example, John of Thessaloniki, rearranges the grouping of the apostles and places Peter at the head while John at the feet", Jugie, Saint Jean, p.395 chp. 12; this is not reflected in the iconography. I find Jugie's insistence on the homily's iconographic impact difficult to justify, ibid., p.373.


183. For example, Goldschmidt-Weitzmann, op.cit., No.175.

184. Valland, Aquilée, pl. 24.


186. K. Weitzmann, Icons from South Eastern Europe and Sinai, London 1968, pl. 35.


191. Ibid., p.511, 519.

192. Ibid., p.514.

194. Examples include Boiana, Mavrodinov (1972), pl.39; Holy Apostles in Saloniki, Xyngopoulos (1953), pp.49-50, pl. 321; Church of the Saviour at Verroia, Pelekanides, Kalliergis, pp.70-73, pls. 40-53; later examples in Bulgaria; Grabar, (1928) pl. XL, L, LVIII, and on Athos, Millet, Athos, pl. 132/1, 133/2, 163/1, 170-71, 176/2, 197/2, 226/1-2, 261/1.

195. None of the graffito is datable.


201. Babić, Chapelles Annexes, p.162.


205. Since its discovery it has been dated variously from the fifth to the seventh century, see f'note 204 above. For some more recent literature see R. Cormack, "Mosaic decoration of S. Demetrios, Thessaloniki", Annual of the British School at Athens, 64 (1969) p.49; E. Kitzinger, "Byzantine art in the period between Justinian and Iconoclasm", Berichte zum XI Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress, IV/I (München 1958), p.24.


207. Mango, Mosaics of St. Sophia, p.34.

209. Lazarev, Storia, pl. 262; L'art Byzantin, Art Européen, Catalogue No.316.

210. Demus, Romanesque Mural Painting, pl. 4, 5.


212. Der Nersessian, Londres, Add. 19, 352, fig. 30.

213. Babić, Chapelles annexes, fig. 58-62, list of further examples p.104f.


215. Grabar does cite some late examples of Visions shown in the narthex, namely St. Clement in Ohrid (1295) and Markov Monastery (c.1370). Grabar, Nouvelles Recherches, pp.374-80.

216. Millet, La Dalmatique du Vatican, p.52; Grabar, Nouvelles recherches, p.373; Xyngopoulos, L'icone bilatérale, p.342ff.


218. Ibid., p.52; Mango, Art of the Byzantine Empire, pp.155-56.


220. On the mosaic "ἀνάμισθαι σώματος αὐτοῦ τοῦ οἴκου τούτου" while in Ignatios and on the icon "ἀνάμισθαι σώματος τοῦ οἴκου τούτου" and correspondingly, the Latomos ἐφ' ἄ becomes ἐφ' ὄ.


222. Gerasimov, op.cit., p.280


224. The figure of Christ appears to have deteriorated since Grabar's first inspection and he reproduces it in a better preserved form, Grabar, (1924), pl.7.


226. Ibid., pp.159-60.

227. Grabar first drew attention to the unusual gesture of Christ's benediction, (1924), p.16; however, he was inaccurate when he saw the gesture as identical to that of the Pantocrators at Daphni, Hosios Lukas and Arta. Here only the index finger is outstretched, while the others rest on the thumb and the gesture points towards Christ, rather than to the Virgin as in Backovo. The Backovo gesture is encountered in the West in twelfth century Roman Redeemer panels such as the Tivoli Cathedral Redeemer tabernacle, see E.B. Garrison, "The Christ enthroned
227. (Contd.)

at Caiape, with notes on the earlier Roman Redeemer panels", Studies in the history of Mediaeval Italian Painting, vol. 2, Florence 1955, pp.5-20, figs. 4 and 8.

228. As, for example, in the Deesis in the South Gallery of S. Sophia in Constantinople, Mango, Mosaics of St. Sophia, pl. 19.

229. The fresco is in the exo-narthex which was built as an ossuary by King Vladimir as a resting place for the bones of St. Sava of Serbia, Radojčić, (1971), p.33, f. col. pl. p.34.


231. Grabar has analyzed the peculiarities of the folds of the Virgin's drapery which he interpreted as being caused by a confusion on the part of the painter, (1924), p.17.


236. This link is discussed in Gordeev, (1914), pp.1-5; G.J. Hoogewerff, "L'iconologie et son importance pour l'étude systématique de l'art chrétien", Rivista di archeologia Christiana, vol. 8 (1931), pp.53-83; Lazarev, (1946), pp.67-76; idem, (1951), pp.122-31.

238. Š. Amiranašvili, Les émaux de Géorgie, Paris 1962, pp.25-27, pl.27.


242. Göreme chapel 9 (Restle, Asia Minor, No.12); Göreme chapel 16 (ibid., No.15); Elmalı Kilise (ibid., No.18 pl.171); Göreme chapel 21 (ibid., No.20); Göreme chapel 22 (ibid., No.21, pl. 196); Karanlık Kilise, (Walter, Two notes fig. 5); Göreme chapel 28 (Restle, op.cit., No.23); Göreme 33, Kılıçlar Kuşluk (ibid., No.25, pl. 281); Ayvalı Kilise (Güllü Dere No.4, Thierry, op.cit., C.A. 15 (1966) fig. 23); Tağar Triconch (Restle, op.cit., No.35, pl.359); Sarıca Kilise (J. Lafontaine, "Sarıca Kilise en Cappadoce", C.A. 12 (1962), p.270, fig.18, hereafter Lafontaine, Sarıca Kilise; Church of the forty martyrs at Sıviş (Restle, op.cit., No.45, pl.414); Soğanlı, Belli Kilise I (ibid., No.45); Arabsun—Gülpınar Kars Kilise (Jerphanion, Églises Rupestres II/1 pp.l-16); Belisırma, Bezır Ana Kilise (Restle, op.cit., No.59); Belisırma, Kirk Dam Altı Kilise (ibid., No.60); Belisırma Direkli Kilise (Thierry, Nouvelle, pp.183-92).


244. Undabno refectory, Voljskaya (1974), pp.57-64, pls. 14,15; Udabno-main church, Amiranašvili (1957) vol.1 pp.44-5, pls. 24, 25; Church of the Archangels at Zemo-Krikhi, Virsaladze (1963), pp. 120-21, fig.1, pl.47; Church of the Archangels, at Iprari (1096), Aladaşvili, Albeşvili and Voljskaya (1966), pl.1; SS. Quiricus and Julitta near Khe (1112), ibid., pl.37; Church of St. George at Nakipari, ibid., pl.38; Church of the Saviour, Tsvirmi, ibid., pl.52-4; Ubisi (c.1240), Amiranašvili, Ubisi, 1929, pp.6-7, pls. 23-7; Pavni (near Akhalkalaki), Tolmacevskaya (1931), p.11 and at Shio-Mgvime, ibid., pp.9-10.

245. For examples in Armenia and Palestine see Šmit, (1916), pp.120-24.

246. Well-known examples include Spas Mirožskiy, near Pskov and Spas-Nereditsa in Novgorod.


248. S. Lorenzo near Fasano; S. Giovanni near Brindisi, Sant'Angelo at Monte Raparo (Basilicata); San Michele di Monticchio,
248. (Contd.)

c.1059; Grotto of the Crucifixion near Lentini (Sicily), E. BERTAUX, L'art dans l'Italie méridionale, Paris 1904 and CH. DIEHL, L'art byzantin dans l'Italie méridionale, Paris 1894.


251. RESTLE, ASIA MINOR, No.57.

252. LAFONTAINE, SARICA KILISE, p.270, fig.18.


255. BELTING, MANGO, MOURIKI, FETHIYE CAMII, p.54ff, pl.l.12.

256. There are six mid-eleventh century issues of coin which are close in date and preserve this type of Christ. They date from the time of Michael IV to that of Nicephorus III, Grierson, op.cit., 3/1 p.159.


259. KRAELING, ibid., pls LXIX-LXXII; W. NEUSS, Die katalanische Bibelillustration um die Wende des ersten Jahrtausends und altspanische Buchmalerei, Bonn 1922, figs. 96, 97. I thank Mrs. MANGO for drawing my attention to the Dura relief, M.C. MUNDELL, "A sixth century funerary relief at Dura in Mesopotamia", Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik, 24 (1975) pp. 209-227, pl.2.

260. For a comparison of the Hebrew, Septuagint, Targum of Jonath and Vulgate texts of the Vision and a discussion of its place in Jewish tradition see G. BUSH, The Valley of Vision or the Dry Bones of Israel revived, New York 1844. A summary of the interpretations of the Dura Europos Ezekiel panel is given in H. RIESENFELD, "The Resurrection in Ezekiel XXXVII and in the Dura Europos paintings", Uppsala Universitets
260. (Contd.)


261. For the history of the use and position of this reading see G. Bertonière, "The historical development of the Easter vigil and related services in the Greek Church", Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 193 (1972) p.61, 128, 131, chart A-2. For the Easter service see R.P.E. Mercenier, La prière des églises de rite byzantin, 2nd ed., II/2 Chevetogne 1953, p.254, 425-6.


269. For the list of examples see W. Neuss, Das Buch Ezechiel in Theologie und Kust bis zum Ende des XII Jahrhunderts, Münster in Westf 1912, pp.141-54; also Mundel, op.cit., p.214.


273. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, op.cit., II No.16, pl.IV.

274. G. Wilpert, Sarcofagi Christiani Antichi, Rome 1932, pp.269-70, pls. CXII/2; CXXIII/3; CLVI; CLXXXIV/1; CCVI/7; CXXV/7, CXXIX/1; Neuss, Buch Ezechiel, fig.1; H. Omont, "Peintures de l'Ancien Testament dans un manuscrit syriaque du VIIᵉ ou du VIIIᵉ siècle", Monuments Piot, 17 (1909), p.85ff, pl.VII, fig.10; J. Leroy, Les manuscrits syriaques à peintures, Paris 1964, pp.207-210.


276. Restle, Asia Minor, No.57.


278. Papadopoulos, Panagia Chalkeon, pp.57-76.


280. Pelekanides, Kastoria, pls. 78-82.


283. The tradition to which the Bačkovo Last Judgement belongs is discussed below. Prototypes on a flat surface that the Bačkovo Christ in Judgement scene derives from include the Bibl. Nat. gr. 74 fol. 51v, the Sinai Last Judgement icons, Torcello, and others, S. Jónsdóttir, An eleventh century Byzantine Last Judgement in Iceland, Reykjavik 1959, pls. 2, 3, 5, 6.

284. For comments on the palaeography of the Bačkovo inscriptions I thank Professor Mango and Professor Sevčenko.


286. Ibid., pl.1, p.122ff. For a summary of literature on Ms. gr. 74 see S. Dufrène, "Deux chefs-d'oeuvre de la miniature du XIᵉ siècle", CA (1967), p.177 f'n 2.

287. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, op.cit., 60, pl. XLV No.123.


290. A. Grabar, Christian iconography: a study of its origins,
290. (Contd.)

Princeton 1968, pp.75-76.

291. For example on the Vatican Last Judgement Panel, Rome Nr. 526, at Torcello, see Jónsdóttir, op. cit., pls. 2, 7; An Armenian Gospel Book of 1332, Erevan Matenadaran Ms. No.7664, L.A. Dournovo, Miniatures Arméniennes, Erevan 1967, pl.64; at Nereditsa and St. Demetrios in Vladimir.


293. Jónsdóttir, op.cit., pl. 5,6; Sotiriou, Icones, p.128ff, pl. 150; p.130, pl. 151.


295. V. Plugin, Frescoes of St. Demetrius' Cathedral, Leningrad 1974, pl.17, 18, 19.


298. The Winchester Koimesis finds its closest iconographic parallel in the simplest tenth century compositions like the Koimesis ivory plaque at Dumbarton Oaks. Weitzmann, Catalogue Dumbarton Oaks Collection, vol.3, p.70ff, also see the discussion of the Koimesis iconography above.

299. Wormald, op.cit., p.87.

300. This ornament is frequently encountered on the drapery of children in scenes of Entry into Jerusalem, for example at Daphni, Diez and Demus, op.cit., fig.92; Grabar (1924), p.21.


302. Examples of this would include Paris gr. 74 fol. 51V, Torcello and both Sinai icons, see Jónsdóttir, op.cit., pl. 2, 3, 5, 6; colour plate in Weitzmann, The Icon, pl. 23.

303. Paris gr. 74 fol. 51V is an exception and omits the figure.

304. Sotiriou, Icones, pl. 151; Weitzmann, The Icon, pl. 23.


307. Ibid., p.23.

308. Ibid., p.23.

309. As on both Sinai icons, Ateni and at Torcello.


312. Ibid., pl.74.

313. It is interesting to note that the ornamental black and white shroud pattern found at Bačkovo, Paris gr. 74 and in some ways reflected in Torcello, by the early or mid-twelfth century has been misinterpreted as a pattern on a bishop's robe and on the Sinai icon is shown as three newly resurrected bishops, about to be led by Peter into Paradise. Weitzmann, *The Icon*, pl.23.


FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER FIVE


11. In her monograph, Bakalova attempts to discuss the Bâckovo frescoes as the product of a single workshop of the same period. The incongruity of this approach has meant that when dealing with comparative material, her versatile Georgian from Constantinople in some of his work looks to mid-eleventh traditions, in other places finds a parallel with Nerezi, while in others is a forerunner of the style of the thirteenth century, Bakalova (1977), pp.118-156.


13. In this it seems to follow the earlier tradition of churches like Çavuşin in Cappadocia which has also a very similar illusionistically painted suspended cloth with a design very similar to the one in Bâckovo. Restle, Asia Minor, pl. 328.


15. For example, Bakalova (1977), p.120.


17. Typology in byzantine ornament remains fairly arbitrary with neither the systems of Jantz or Frantz terribly useful. As by the late eleventh century all the major ornament types had been established, the aspect of categorization of Bâckovo ornaments is not of crucial importance. I have subdivided the
17. (Contd.)

Bačkovo ornament into floral motifs, Nos. i-vi; vine motifs, Nos. vii-x; abstract vine motifs, Nos. xi-xv, and geometric motifs, Nos xvi-xxv.


19. Although ornament remains limited in Tokalı Kilise (New Church) in character with other early churches there is a considerable variety of different ornament types, de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, Iii, p.365f.

20. For example, this is the case with ornaments No.1 and ii; vii, viii and ix; xvi and xvii; xviii and xix; xxiii and xxiv.

21. For example, with ornaments Nos iii and iv; xx, xxi and xxii.

22. At Veljusa there is a considerable economy of ornament types, for example, a simplified version of ornament No.xiv is repeated in a number of places in the church in variants of either black on white or green on white.

23. At Ateni, few of the eleventh century ornaments have survived, but those that have bear a striking resemblance to those at Bačkovo. For example, we encounter Bačkovo types xiv, xxiii, xxiv, xvi, xvii and xxii. There exists no adequate publication on Ateni, amongst the more recent publications on it are Virsaladze (1978), pp.83-91 and T. Virsaladze, "Deux peintures murales de l'église de Sion dans le village d'Aténi", Atti del primo simposio internazionale sull'arte georgiana, Milan 1977, pp.299-308.

24. For a discussion of the ornament at Daphni, see Millet, Daphni, pp.71-75 and specifically D. Ainalov's review of Millet's Daphni in Viz Vrem 8 (1901), pp.136ff.

25. The classical austerity in regimenting as found at Bačkovo has not fully set in, although ornament types are already somewhat restricted, see de Jerphanion, Églises rupestres, pls. II, Nos. 111, 112.


27. For example, compare Bačkovo ornament No. xiv with the more elaborate version of it at Nerezi, published in Jantz (1961), No.394.


29. The main study remains Jantz (1961). Of specific relevance to Bulgaria are Dimitrov (1965) and Dimitrov (1970). More recent studies include L. Hadermann-Misguish, "Tendences expressives et recherches ornementales dans la peinture byzantine de la seconde moitié du XIIe siècle", Byzantion,
29. (Contd.)


30. This monument I have not seen and therefore have been unable to actually physically measure the figures. Also there is a problem that so few figures have been totally preserved. My calculations from photographs suggest the figures like St. Gregory and the bishops have proportions of about 1:7.5 while prophet Ezekiel, considering his pose, 1:7.3.

31. From my measurements the proportions vary from 1:7.5 to 1:8. Similarly this applies to the contemporary frescoes by the same hand in the north-west chapel. The problem of dating the Hosios Lukas frescoes and mosaics remains unresolved. On the mosaics, the account given in Diez and Demus, op.cit., pp.107-109 of a date between 998 and the middle of the eleventh century has not been usefully supplemented by more recent scholarship. Stikas' case for the patronage of Constantine Monomachos rests on a late reference in Ciriaco d'Ancona whose accuracy may be questioned. Stikas (1970) p.13ff, 244ff; E. Stikas, "Nouvelles observations sur la date de construction du Catholicon et de l'église de la Vierge du monastère de Saint Luc en Phocide", Corsi di cult. sull'arte biz XIX (1972), pp.311-30; Stikas (1974-75), Chatzidakis' date of 1011 based on the reference that the date of the deposition of Luke's relics coincided with the feast of the Ascension, as has been pointed out by Mango, need not be true. M. Chatzidakis, "A propos de la date et du fondateur de Saint-Luc", C.A. XIX (1969), pp.127-50; idem., "Précisions sur la fondateur de Saint-Luc", C.A. XXII (1972) p.87ff., Mango, Monuments de l'architecture du XIe siècle, p.364-65; H. Belting, "Byzantine art among Greeks and Latins in Southern Italy", DOP, XXVII (1974), p.15, f'n 49. Personally I favour a date of ca.1045 for the completion of the narthex mosaics in Hosios Lukas on the strength of their striking stylistic similarity with the 1043-46 mosaics in S. Sophia Kiev. The dating of the frescoes of the crypt and the two chapels is uncertain. Structurally, the frescoes in the chapels must have been executed after the completion of the main mosaic decorations, Stikas (1970), pp.195-209; Stikas (1974-75), pp.137-40; Stikas, Nouvelles observations, p.328f. As has been pointed out above, in terms of iconography the crypt frescoes do derive from the mosaics in the church above. (Chp. 3 f'n 15). Stylistically, there is a strong similarity between the crypt frescoes and Athos, Dionysiou MS Cod. 587m which can be dated to 1059. Compare, for example, the Koimesis in both and the similarities in the treatment of draperies, proportions, figure groupings and colour combinations. Also strikingly similar treatment of landscape if, for example, the setting of the Hosios Lukas Crucifixion is compared with that in the scene of Jesus and the Samaritan woman fol. 21v. However certain iconographic features in the Hosios Lukas frescoes, such as the second angel in the Koimesis or the position of Christ's body in the Entombment when compared with similar scenes in Dionysiou 587m suggest
31. (Contd.)

that the frescoes belong to a slightly later period. Also
a comparison between the actual structure of figures, for
example, of the apostles in the scene of the Incredulity of
Thomas at Hosios Lukas, finds a strong parallel with the
figures in Moscow State University Library MS No.2280, fol.
179 which is dated 1072. So a date for the earliest and
main part of the Hosios Lukas crypt may be c.1070. The
later date of end of the eleventh century and the beginning
of the twelfth, suggested by Babić and accepted by Stikas,
seems difficult to justify. Babić, Chapelles annexes, p.164ff; Stikas, Nouvelles observations, pp.328-29.

32. The proportions at Ateni vary from 1:7.5 to 1:8 and these I
have arrived at through photographs. The dating of the
frescoes in the apses at Ateni has been the subject of
considerable debate. Amiranasvili's dating in the tenth
century in view of the new comparative material has been
fairly unanimously rejected, Amiranasvili (1957), p.78ff; Barnaveli (1946), pp.87-93; Barnaveli (1956), pp.281-86. A
date of about 1070-1080 argued for by Virsaladze seems
quite probable, Virsaladze (1978), pp.83-91, also Virsaladze,
Deux peintures murales, op. cit., pp.299-308. On dating
inscriptions see Smerling (1947), pp.267-73 and Barnaveli

33. From measurements, the proportions of most of the figures
in Sakli Kilise that are on flat surfaces are 1:8. In
the internal chronology of Cappadocian churches, Sakli
Kilise appears to be a "late church", with no greater
precision than simply second half of the eleventh century,
but before Manzikert. Restle's suggested date of c.1070
appears quite reasonable, Restle, Asia Minor, No.11. From
the point of view of drapery, proportions and landscape,
a stylistic parallel can be found with scenes in the Moscow
Menologion (State Historical Museum GR 9), see Lixaceva,
Byzantine miniature, No.11 which is dated 1063. However,
the Sakli Kilise frescoes have the imprint of a strong
personal artistic identity.

34. The three churches, Karanlık Kilise, Çarıklı Kilise and
Elmalı Kilise for figures on flat surfaces share the same
proportions which range from 1:6.5 to 1:8, with 1:7 serving
as the average. In the dating of these churches I am
accepting the pre-Manzikert date advanced by de Jerphanion,
Églises rupestres, IIIi and corroborated by the more recent
work by Epstein, see A.W. Epstein, "Rock-cut chapels in
Göreme Valley, Cappadocia. The Yılanli group and the
column churches", C.A. XXIV (1975), pp.115-135. The later
dating suggested by Restle, (Asia Minor, p.56ff;) Lafontaine-
Dosogne (J. Lafontaine, "Nouvelles Notes Cappadoctennes",
Byzantion XXXIII (1963), p.132ff) and Swoboda (op.cit., p.126)
cannot be substantiated. The earlier dating brings this
Cappadocian group within the context of Karabağ Kilise
(1060/61), frescoes in S. Sophia in Kiev (1046-1061/7) and
the manuscripts Athos Dionysiou 587m and Paris gr. 74. The
most convincing internal chronology for these churches is
given in Epstein, ibid., p.126.
Proportions in the Pantocrator psalter are generally from 1:7.5 to 1:8.5. Der Nersessian, Psalter and New Testament, pp.155-183. The manuscript is dated 1084.


Proportions in this Climacus manuscript vary from 1:6.5 to 1:8. Martin, Climacus, passim. The manuscript is dated 1081.

Der Nersessian, Londres, Add. 19, 352, for example figs. 5, 7, 19, 21, 60, 77, 81, 91, etc. The manuscript is dated 1066.

Omont, Evangiles avec peintures, II, Pl. 133.


Sacopoulo, Asinou, pls. X, XX, XXI.


T. Malmquist, Byzantine 12th Century Frescoes in Kastoria, Uppsala 1979, pls. 2, 3, 7, 15, 16.


Aladašvili, Alibegašvili and Voljskaya (1966), for example, pls. 8, 9 and 11.

Sacopoulo, Asinou, for example, pl. XXh.

Der Nersessian, Psalter and New Testament, for example, fol. 266v fig. 41 or fol. 330v col. plate opp. p.155.


Winfield, Hagios Chrysostomos, Trikomo, Asinou, p.288f.


For an analysis of colour structure and the chemical analysis of pigments and grounds see Praškov (1965), p.30ff.

A date between 1086 and 1093 seems likely for this layer. See Miljković-Pepek (1969), pp.147-159; idem (1975), p.43. For earlier literature see bibliography in Malmquist, op.cit., p.144.

For example, ornament Nos. xvi-xxv.

Der Nersessian, Psalter and New Testament, p.164

This would have been fol. 78r of the original manuscript.

Dumbarton Oaks MS 3, fol. 77r.

For example, in Dumbarton Oaks MS 3, fol. 330v that can be compared with individual standing saints in the Bačkovo church naos.

For example, the variety of colours in the garments of the prophets in the drum of the dome or of the apostles in the scene of betrayal.

Praškov (1965), p.29.

See colour plate in Bakalova (1977), pl. 102.

Athos: Illuminated Manuscripts, II, pl. 29.


G. Gaprindashvili, Vardzia, Leningrad 1975, pls. 73-132.

Laskov (1914), pp.268-70.

Relevant extracts published in Ivanov (1911), pp.191-230.

Pokrovskiy (1890), pl. VII.

See chp. 4 fn. 284.

This dating was originally advanced by Grabar (1924), pp.55-59.

For reproductions of Tsar Ivan Alexander and the monks George and Gabriel, see Bakalova (1977), pls. 131, 137.

A useful description of the portraits and a discussion of the inscriptions is included in ibid., pp.157-175.

Djurić (1974), pls. 60, 73, 74.

See Radojčić (1934); Okunev (1930) and Djurić (1968), pp.67-100.
FOOTNOTES TO THE CONCLUSION

1. Charles Bouras informs me that on the analogy of the recessed brick work on the Nea Moni ossuary with that on the Catholicon, he dates the ossuary as being contemporary with the Catholicon. His conclusions will be published in the monograph on the Nea Moni on Chios which he has written jointly with D. Mouriki.


FOOTNOTES TO APPENDIX 1

1. Lemerle, Cinq Études, pp.164-175.


3. Leib I, p.73. Of course, she may have been mistaken as both Sanidze (1971) p.250ff. and Lemerle, Cinq Études, p.158, point out.

4. Typicon p.252. This is not mentioned in the Georgian version of the typicon, which as Lemerle points out, must be of a later date than the Greek. Lemerle, Cinq Études, p.163.

5. Typicon 24, p.218.


7. Lemerle, Cinq Études, p.158.

8. Typicon 36, p.250. Sanidze does propose an ingenuous solution to this problem by suggesting that Gregory Pakurianos' mother (of whom we know nothing) may have married twice and the second time an Armenian, in that way giving Gregory Armenian relatives while leaving him a pure Georgian. Sanidze (1971) p.261.


10. Arutyunova (1968) pp.73-74.


12. None of the dated Armenian graffiti at Bačkovo dates back to an early stage of the monastery. Professor C.J.F. Dowsett kindly informs me that from the photographs which I could supply, some of the Armenian graffiti belong to the mediaeval period, but no greater precision than that is possible.

13. Passages where Gregory refers to himself as a Georgian are gathered by Sanidze (1971) p.250.

14. This suggestion is made in Arutyunova-Fidanyan (1973) p.57ff.


20. Ibid., pp.7-17.


This is not a comprehensive bibliography of material used in the preparation of this thesis and many of the items fully documented in the footnotes I have not repeated in this bibliography.

In my abbreviations of titles of periodicals I have followed the "List of Abbreviations" in DOP, 27 (1973) pp.329-339, supplemented by BZ abbreviations as published in Dumbarton Oaks Bibliographies, li, pp.xvii-lix; 2xvi-xxv. The two exceptions to this are A.B. for The Art Bulletin and C.A. for Cahiers Archéologiques.

Akrabova (1950), Akrabova, I., "За 'окажение портрети' в живописи на една чърква от XII в.," Разкопки и проучвания, 4 (1950) pp.5-16.


Alpatov, M.V., Un nuovo monumento di miniatura della scuola Constantinopolitana, Studi byzantini 2 (1927), pp.103-108.

Amiranašvili Ubisi (1929), Amiranašvili, Š., Убиси, материалы по истории Грузинской стенной живописи Tiflis 1929.


Amiranašvili (1963), Amiranašvili, Š., История грузинского искусства, Moscow 1963.


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THE BAČKOVO OSSUARY FRESCOES OF 1074–83

VOLUME 2
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b. detail.
c. detail.

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iii Communion of the Apostles: Bread
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v Presentation of Christ
vi Baptism of Christ
vii Raising of Lazarus
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<td>3</td>
<td>Apostle</td>
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<td>Apostle</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>S. Luke</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>S. Philotheus</td>
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<td>S. Athanasios</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>S. Theodosios</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>S. Luke Evang.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>S. Mark Evang.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apostle Andrew</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>S. Matthew Evang.</td>
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<td>H. Theodosios</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>H. Luke</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>H. Philotheus</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>H. Athanasios</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>unidentified</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>unidentified</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>S. George</td>
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Diagram G. Hosios Lukas, Catholicon, Location of saints (after O. Demus)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IC XC</td>
<td>Madonna with Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Mary</td>
<td>73. Sabas</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. John the Forerunner</td>
<td>74. Abraham</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Gregory Thaumaturgus</td>
<td>75. James, Kilikites</td>
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<td>5. Theodorus Tiron</td>
<td>76. Pimen</td>
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<td>6. Silvester</td>
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<td>7. Cyril</td>
<td>78. Martindos</td>
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<td>8. Spyridon</td>
<td>79. Stephan, Neon</td>
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<td>9. Athanasios</td>
<td>80. Nikon, Metamites</td>
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<td>10. Eleutherios</td>
<td>81. Iona, Klimakos</td>
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<td>12. Antipas</td>
<td>83. Antonios</td>
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<td>13. Gregorios of Nyssa</td>
<td>84. Lystra</td>
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<td>14. Philotheos</td>
<td>85. Arethas</td>
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<td>15. Hierotheos</td>
<td>86. Hilarios</td>
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<td>16. Dianisos Areeopagites</td>
<td>87. Niketas</td>
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<td>17. Ignatios Theoph.</td>
<td>88. Thoalos</td>
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<td>18. Gregory of Armenia</td>
<td>89. Thoalos Exousios</td>
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<td>19. Kyrillos of Alexandria</td>
<td>90. Maximus</td>
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<td>20. Mary</td>
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<td>22. IC XC</td>
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<td>30. Georgios</td>
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<td>31. Nikolos Neon</td>
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<td>32. Theodorus Stratilates</td>
<td>103. Simon</td>
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<td>33. Mary</td>
<td>104. ........</td>
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<td>34. (Pantekimon) ?</td>
<td>105. ........</td>
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<td>35. IC XC</td>
<td>106. Mary</td>
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<td>36. Peter</td>
<td>107. Gabriel</td>
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<td>37. (Pantekimon)</td>
<td>108. John the Forerunner</td>
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<td>39. Jason</td>
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<td>40. Soupatios</td>
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<td>41. Theodorus Stratilates</td>
<td>112. Tryphon</td>
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<td>42. Eleutherios</td>
<td>113. Makios</td>
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<td>114. Konias</td>
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<td>44. Prokopios</td>
<td>115. Kyrios</td>
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<td>45. Anastasia</td>
<td>116. Domitios</td>
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<td>46. Mary</td>
<td>117. Joannas</td>
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