

ADALYA



SUNA-İNAN KIRAÇ AKDENİZ MEDENİYETLERİ ARAŞTIRMA ENSTİTÜSÜ
SUNA & İNAN KIRAÇ RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON MEDITERRANEAN CIVILIZATIONS

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The Burial Chamber Wall Paintings of Saint Nicholas Church at Demre (Myra) Following Their Restoration

Nilay KARAKAYA*

The restoration and conservation work on the wall paintings of the burial chamber, which is located to the south of St. Nicholas Church in Demre (ancient Myra), began in 2001 and was completed in 2004¹. During the course of this work, a total of 45 figures were restored, in five festival scenes in the burial niches on the north, in 15 scenes from the life cycle of St. Nicholas painted on the arch surfaces of the niches in the walls, as well as depictions of Saints, Bishops, martyrs and monks, full-length or busts. Due to this work, some new vegetal and geometric decoration was also revealed. I am sincerely grateful to Prof. Dr. Yıldız Ötüken for granting permission and supporting my study of this topic, that forms a part of the St. Nicholas Church excavation project.

After restoration, the iconographic features of the “Dormition” (Koimesis) and “Resurrection” (Anastasis), both scenes of Apocryphal origin, and the “Nativity” and “Crucifixion”, both scenes of Gospel origin, found on the burial niches in the north wall, have been clearly revealed. The wall of the first niche from the west on the north wall is decorated with the “Nativity”² (Fig. 1). Only the angels and shepherds in the upper part have survived. One of the angels is depicted facing the shepherds (Fig. 6). On the inner side of the niche arch, only one standing shepherd figure, of the original two, has survived. This figure, holding a stick in his right hand, raises his left hand towards the angel. In the right upper part of the scene, there are two angels with their hands making an imploring gesture, and behind them, only the upper parts of the haloes of other angels are to be seen today. Nativity scenes with the shepherds and numerous angels with these same gestures are to be found from the 11th century onwards. The Nativity scenes at the Jesus (İsa) Cave on Latmos (12th c.), Phokis St. Luka (H. Lukas) (from the 1st half of the 11th century), at

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¹ I am very grateful to restorer R. İşler, who supported my study in all aspects. For the restoration work executed by restorer R. İşler and his team, see Ötüken 2003 (R. İşler, Duvar Resimlerini Koruma ve Onarım Çalışması) 40; R. İşler, Duvar Resimlerini Koruma ve Onarım Çalışması (in print).

² Çorağan 1990, 84; Ötüken 1996a, 382; Ötüken 1998, 101; Ötüken 1999, Çiz. 4; U. Peschlow, RBK VI, 2002, bk. “Myra” Abb. 4 (N. Çorağan).

Daphni (1080/1100) and at Lagoudera-Panagia tou Arakou (1192) in Cyprus have examples of this scene that are similar to that at Myra³.

On the wall of the second niche from west on the north wall, there is the “Dormition” (Koimesis), i.e. Death of Mary, a scene of Apocryphal origin⁴ (Fig. 2, 7). In the center of the scene, Mary is depicted lying, with her head on the left. Generally, from the 11th century, Mary’s head is depicted on the left. Mary’s head is depicted on the left at Kılıçlar Kuşluk (1st half of the 11th century) and Saklı [Hidden] Churches at Göreme and also in the Bible (Cod.1 fol.300r [11th c.]) at the Ivirion Monastery at Mount Athos⁵. Jesus, behind the bed, is vaguely discernible. Jesus is probably handing the soul of Mary that he is holding to the angel that is arriving, flying from the right. Above, three angels as a group are flying towards left. Such groups of flying angels are found on the ivory triptych (11th c.) at the Victoria and Albert Museum and also in the Harley Bible at the British Museum (Inv.1810, 12th c.)⁶. The group of flying angels at H. Nikolaos tou Kasnitzi in Kastoria (12th c.) is the closest parallel to the Myra example⁷.

At the center, in the top semicircular part of the scene is an angel between door wings. Such door depictions, that symbolize Paradise, are first depicted in the scene “Jesus Rises to the Heavens” in the 9th century Khludov Psalter (Cod.Gr.129, fol.22r)⁸. In the “Dormition” scene at Asinou Panagia Phorbiotissa Church (1105/6) in Cyprus, there is only the upper semicircular part depicted that symbolizes Paradise⁹. The “Gate of the Paradise” composition has an advanced form with many angels and this type is found in monumental paintings of the late period (13th-14th century)¹⁰. Therefore, the scene at Myra is closer to the examples of pre-13th century, particularly to those of the 12th century.

The Apostles form two groups, to the left and right of Mary’s bed. The Apostle Peter is probably closest to the head end of the bed. The one by foot is the Paul. The Evangelist John by the head of the bed is vaguely discernible. As in the Churches of Kılıçlar Kuşluk (1030-1040) and Joannes (1070) at Göreme, the Evangelist John was depicted in Dormition scenes from the 11th century onwards¹¹. The gestures of the mourning Apostles, with their hands covering their faces are worthy of notice (Fig. 8, 9). Apostles exhibiting these same gestures are also to be seen on Cypriot examples¹².

³ T. Wiegand, *Der Latmos* (1913) Taf. VI.1 (Latmos, Pantokrator İsa); O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration* (1948) Fig. 10 B (Daphni, Katholikon), Fig. 11 A-B (Phokis H. Lukas); A. J. Stylianou, “Αι τοιχογραφαι του ναου της Παναγιας του Αρακου Λαγουδερα Κυπρος”, *Actes du IX^e Congrès d’études byzantines Thessaloniki* (1958) Fig. 147 (Lagoudera, Panagia tou Arakou).

⁴ Çorağan 1990, 84, 89 (Çiz.); Ötügen 1996a, 382; Ötügen 1998, 101.

⁵ L. Wratislav – Mitrovic – N. Okunev, “La dormition de la Sainte Vierge dans la Peinture Médiévale Orthodoxe”, *Byzantinoslavica* 3, 1931, 136 Fig. 1 (The Bible at Iviron Monastery in Athos); Restlé 1969, II Fig. 26 (Göreme, Saklı) Fig. 286 (Göreme, Kılıçlar Kuşluk).

⁶ For the ivory triptych and the Harley Bible see supra n. 5, 3 Fig. 6.

⁷ T. Malmquist, *Byzantine 12th Century Frescoes in Kastoria, Agioi Anargyroi and Agios Nikolaos tou Kasnitzi* (1979) Fig. 18.

⁸ S. G. Tsuji, “Destruction des Portes de l’enfer et ouverture des Portes du Paradis”, *CahArch* 31, 1983 Fig. 3.

⁹ D. C. Winfield - E. J. W. Hawkins, “The Church of Our Lady at Asinou, Cyprus. A Report on the Seasons of 1965 and 1966”, *DOP* 21, 1967 Fig. 7.

¹⁰ For examples for the late period, see supra n. 5, Pl. VII (Staro Nagoricino, H. Georgios) Pl. VIII. (Gracanica, Monastery), Pl. XIV.2 (Cucer - Sv. Nikita), Pl. XV (Markov - Monastery).

¹¹ Y. Ötügen, “Selime’de Derviş Akın Kilisesi ve Mezar Odası”, *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Armağan Dizisi* 2, 1984, 299-300.

¹² D. C. Winfield, “Reports on Work at Monagri, Lagoudera and Hagios Neophytos, Cyprus 1969/1970”, *DOP* 25, 1971 Fig. A (Monagri, Panagia Amasgou), Fig. 16 (Lagoudera, Panagia tou Arakou).

Also in this scene are depicted two bishops and mourning women. The bishops and mourning women appear in “Dormition” scenes from the second half of the 11th century onwards¹³. There are bishop figures depicted in the Bible (Cod.587, fol.163v), dated to 1059 at the Dionysiou Monastery, at Mount Athos¹⁴. The depiction of mourning women belongs to a date after the 11th century; they are to be found quite often, as in the mosaic at the Martorana in Palermo (1146-50), the Miroz Monastery Church in Pskov (1156), Kakopectria H. Nicholas (11th c.) and the Asinou Panagia Phorbiotissa (1105/6) churches in Cyprus, and also in the Harley Bible (Inv.1810, 12th c.) at the British Museum¹⁵. The Palermo mosaic is the closest example to that at Myra in regard to both the number of women and their depiction within an architectural setting. The iconography of the “Dormition” is dated to the 12th century; however, it has common iconographic features with examples from Cyprus and Sicily in the Mediterranean. Further, this scene has common iconographic features with the scene dated to 1118 in the arcosolium in the western courtyard of the church at Myra.

On the western part of the arch surface of the second niche from the east on the north wall is depicted the “Way of Golgotha”¹⁶ (Fig. 10). Jesus, with a sorrowful expression on his face, follows Simeon of Kirine, who is carrying the cross. Behind Jesus is probably a guard, only his head is visible. In the lower part of the scene, a small figure is depicted wearing a reddish brown pelerine with his right hand raised¹⁷. The iconographic features of the scene are dated to the 12th century and after¹⁸.

On the wall of the same niche, only slightly visible, is the “Crucifixion” scene¹⁹. In the middle is depicted Jesus, with his body slightly turned to left and his head tilted downwards to his right shoulder. In the lower left part are shown the three Mary’s, while in the lower right part, the young John and two figures with haloes are shown. The cross is flanked by the depictions of Ekklesia and Synagoge and there are two angels above.

The two figures with haloes standing behind the depiction of the young John are seen in Crucifixion scenes from the 10th century onwards. In the Güvercinlik Church in Çavuşin (963-969), the figure with a halo behind John is Peter²⁰. On an ivory triptych (10th c.) in the National Museum in Berlin, there is a figure with a halo between John and the centurion²¹. The scene continues in the eastern half of the arch with the figure of the lieutenant

¹³ supra n. 11, 300.

¹⁴ supra n. 11, 304, n. 16.

¹⁵ supra n. 5, Fig. 7 (Palermo, Martorano) Fig. 8 (Psikov, Miroz); A. J. Stylianou, *Μια τοιχογραφία της κοιμώσεως της θεοτόκου τοι ᾿αἰωνῶς εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ ἁγίου νικολαίου τῆς στεγῆς (κακοπετρία, κύπρος)*, *DeltChrA* 1964-65 Fig. 75-76 (Kakopetria, H. Nikolaos); M. Sacoropoulou, *Asinou en 1106 et sa contribution à l’iconographie* (1966) Pl. X a-d (Cyprus, Asinou Panagia Phorbiotissa).

¹⁶ Çorağan 1990, 84, 89 (Çizim); Ötügen 1996a, 382; Ötügen 1998, 101.

¹⁷ This figure is probably one of the figures holding a hammer in his hand. For a manuscript of the 11th-12th c. in London with the depiction of the same figures, as well as the Barberini Psalter, see G. Schiller, *Iconographie der christlichen Kunst* (1968) II 298 -299.

¹⁸ Y. Ötügen, “Demre-Myra Aziz Nikolaos Kilisesi Kazısı Buluntuları ve Duvar Resimleri Çalışmalarından Örnekler” (N. Karakaya, Wall paintings), *OTKAS VIII* (in print).

¹⁹ Çorağan 1990, 84, 89 (Çizim); Ötügen 1996a, 382; Ötügen 1998, 101; Ötügen 1999, Çiz. 4.

²⁰ M. Mrass, “Kreuzigung Christi”, *RBK* 5, 1991, 341.

²¹ E. Luchessi Palli – G. Jaszai, “Kreuzigung Christi”, *LCI* 2 (1970) Abb. 3.

and the soldier figures. The lieutenant with dark hair and beard wears a military costume. His right hand is raised and he holds a shield in his left hand. He is generally depicted with a halo from the 12th century, as in this wall painting at Myra (Fig. 11). Depictions of the lieutenant with a halo and with the same gesture are also to be seen in the scenes from the 11th century at Saklı (1070), Çarıklı (second half of the 12th c.), Elmalı (1190-1200) and Karanlık (1200/1210) churches, at Göreme²². The iconographic features of the scene generally suggest a date in the 12th century²³.

On the first niche from the east on the north wall is the "Resurrection" (*Anastasis*)²⁴ (Fig. 3, 12). Jesus depicted in the middle of the scene pulls Adam with his right hand and holds a cross in his left hand. Jesus' body is turned slightly to the left while his head turns to the right, towards Adam. On the left are three unidentified figures with haloes standing in a sarcophagus. These figures, depicted frontally, hold a rolled scroll in their right hands while with their left hands they make an imploring gesture. These figures are first seen in a 10th century manuscript (Cod.Gr.20, fol.20v)²⁵ and they are not often depicted in Resurrection scenes. But they are also to be found on the ivory casket (10th c.) at the Württembergisches National Museum in Stuttgart, and at S. Maria Assunta Cathedral (1175) in Torcello²⁶. Angels take their places on the arch surfaces (Fig. 13). The angel figure within a Resurrection scene is first seen at S. Maria Prassede Chapel in Rome (9th c.) and in the Bible (Cod.1, fol.1v) (10th c.) at the Iviron Monastery at Mount Athos²⁷. The Resurrection scene at Myra can be dated to the 12th century due to its iconographic features, it also exhibits regional characteristics.

There are 15 scenes with Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of the church, on the arch surfaces of the burial niches on the north and south walls and on the northern upper part of the west wall²⁸. The recent conservation and restoration work has clarified their iconographic and stylistic features. The 15 scenes restored from the cycle are as follows: The Sea story (I), the Sea story (II), the Three Generals in prison, Saint Nicholas appears to the Emperor Constantine, Saint Nicholas appears to the Governor Ablabius (Fig. 14-15), The Three Commanders come before the Emperor Constantine, The Three Generals thank Saint Nicholas, Saint Nicholas saves the Basileus from the Saracens, The Basileus's father thanks Saint Nicholas, Saint Nicholas saves Demetrios from drowning, Saint Nicholas helps a childless family (I-II), Saint Nicholas heals a person suffering from demonic possession, the story of the Three Maidens (?) and a fragment of a scene²⁹.

²² Restle 1969, II, Fig. 183 (Göreme, Elmalı); Fig. 209 (Göreme, Çarıklı); Fig. 237 (Göreme, Karanlık).

²³ For dating the iconographic features of this scene, see supra n. 18.

²⁴ Çorağan 1990, 84, 89 (Çiz.); Ötüken 1996a, 382; Ötüken 1998, 101; Ötüken 1999, Çiz. 4; For the Anastasis scene after restoration, see Y. Ötüken "2002 Yılı Demre - Myra Aziz Nikolaos Kilisesi Kazısı ve Duvar Resimlerini Belgeleme-Koruma-Onarım Çalışmaları" (N. Karakaya, Wall painting), Adalya VIII, 2005, 275-276.

²⁵ E. Lucchesi Palli, RBK 1, 1966, 144, bk. "Anastasis".

²⁶ Kartsonis 1986, Fig.57-58.

²⁷ op.cit. Fig. 23 (Roma, S. Maria Prassede), Fig. 50 (the manuscript at the Iviron Monastery in Athos).

²⁸ For the cycle, see Çorağan 1990, 85, 89 (Çizim); Ötüken 1995, 371; Ötüken 1996a, 383; Ötüken 1996b, 480-481; Ötüken 1998, 101; Ötüken 1999, 491 Çiz. 4; N. Karakaya, "Demre (Myra)deki H. Nikolaos Kilisesi'nde bulunan H. Nikolaos Siklusu", STD XI, 2001, 97-104; Ötüken 2003, 38; Ötüken supra n. 18.

²⁹ For the scenes of Saint Nicholas appears to the Emperor Constantine and Governor Ablabius, Saint Nicholas saves Demetrios from drowning and the unidentified scene after the restoration, see Ötüken 2003, 38; For the scenes of the Sea story II, Saint Nicholas helps a childless family, see Ötüken supra n. 18.

On the outer face of the arch on the west wall is the “Sea story (I)” (Fig. 4b, 16). Saint Nicholas is aboard a boat with a mast in the centre and a curving stern, together with some sailors. Two sailors wearing white tunics and the legs of a third, standing and sitting, are visible. The imploring gesture of the sailors is usually seen in late examples³⁰. The earliest example of this scene is to be found in an icon of the 12th century from Mount Sinai³¹. On the outer face of the first niche from the west on the north wall is the “Sea story II” (Thauma de Artemide), which was not very often depicted in monumental painting (Fig. 1, 17). The only other example is that from H. Nicholas Orphanos (14th c.) in Salonica³².

The “Three Generals in prison” is depicted on the outer surface of the arch of the second niche from the west on the south wall. The three generals raise their hands in a gesture signifying that they are talking with each other (Fig. 41, 18). The general on the right has white hair and beard, while one in the middle has dark brown hair and beard, and that on the left has dark brown hair and no beard. On the far right is a guard. The scenes at H. Nicholas Church (2nd quarter of the 13th c.) in Kastania and the H. Nicholas Church (1259) in Bojana also have a guard figure, like that at Myra³³.

On the same wall, on the outer surface of the arch of the first niche from the west is depicted the scene of “the Three Generals come before Emperor Constantine” and “the Three Generals thank Saint Nicholas” (Fig. 5a). In the former, behind the emperor enthroned are the figures of guards and of courtiers, which were added to this scene in the 13th century³⁴ (Fig. 19).

On the outer surface of the second arch from the west on the north wall are depicted the scenes “Saint Nicholas saves the Basileos from the Saracens”, and “the Basileos’ family thank Saint Nicholas” (Fig. 2, 20-21). Nicholas is on the right and before him, the Basileos holds a chalice. The four figures encircle in the middle an almost round shaped table. The father, wearing white headgear, is seated in an armchair decorated with floral and geometric motifs. In the middle of the table is a large, footed bowl (diskos), flanked by a chalice on either side. The scene has parallel iconographic features to a 12th century icon from Mt. Sinai³⁵.

On the outer surface of the second arch from the east on the north wall is depicted “Saint Nicholas saving Demetrios from drowning” (Fig. 22). No iconographic parallel to this scene has been found.

On the outer surface of the second niche from the west on the north wall is depicted “Saint Nicholas healing a person suffering from demonic possession” which has unique

³⁰ For the 13th-14th century examples of this scene, see Sevchenko 1983 Fig. 6.1 (Arta Nikolaos), Fig. 7.6 (Megala, Kastania H. Nikolaos) Fig. 10.7 (Bojana, H. Nikolaos), Fig. 28.7 (Platsa, H. Nikolaos), Fig. 38.6 (Curtea Argeş, H. Nikolaos).

³¹ Sevchenko 1983, 99 Fig. 3-7.

³² op.cit. 102, Fig. 23.0.

³³ op.cit. 111, n. 6, Fig. 7.7, Fig. 10.9.

³⁴ op.cit., Fig. 10.12 (Bojana, H. Nikolaos), Fig. 28.11 (Platsa, H. Nikolaos), Fig. 34.13 (Decani, Jesus Rises to the Heaven), Fig. 36.11 (Markov, H. Demetrios).

³⁵ op.cit., 144, Fig. 3.16.

features (Fig. 2, 23). In addition, this cycle introduces an innovation in the cycle, with the unparalleled depiction of the scene “Saint Nicholas helping a childless family”³⁶ (Fig. 1, 24-25).

Due to its restoration, the scene on the outer surface of the second niche from the west on the south wall can be identified as a scene probably belonging to the “Story of Three Maidens” (Fig. 4b, 26)³⁷. Nicholas depicted on the left, stretches out his left hand, to a figure sleeping in a bed. By the head of the bed there is a representation of architecture. The scene has similarities with those of an icon from Sinai (11th c.) and at the H. Nicholas Church in Bojana³⁸.

A total of 45 figures have been restored in the burial chamber. 24 out of these figures are newly discovered and have not to date been published³⁹. The figures of saints, accompanied by their inscriptions, comprise the majority of these figures. They are saints whose days are in the winter months of January, February, November and December. H. Abibos, H. Gurias and H. Samonas are depicted together in medallions inside the burial chamber. Examples of these saints depicted together can be found from the 11th century onwards⁴⁰. On the inner surfaces and back walls of the arches of the burial niches on the south wall are depicted bishops, monks and saints. H. Nicandros and H. Polycarp in the eastern niche have the same portrait features as parallel examples dated to the 11th century and later⁴¹.

On the west niche on the south wall, H. Eutymios, H. Antonios and H. Sabas are depicted together (Fig. 27). The facial type and posture of Eutymios are close to examples from the 11th century⁴². Examples of these three saints depicted together are common in the 12th century. On the back wall of the same niche are H. Ephraim and a stylite (i.e. pillar) saint (Fig. 28). As with the other saints, Ephraim carries the same facial characteristics from the time of his earliest depiction. Depictions of him wearing a monk's costume, as at Myra, have been dated from the 11th century onwards⁴³. The inscription of the stylite saint has not survived; however, as it is depicted together with saints whose days are in November, December, January and February in the same niche, he is thought to be either the stylite Alypios or Daniel. Depictions of stylite saints became widespread in monumental

³⁶ Ötügen 1998, 101.

³⁷ For the iconographic features of the scene, see Sevcenko 1983, 87-90.

³⁸ op.cit. 88 Fig. 10.5.

³⁹ For the figures published, see Y. Demiriz, “Demre'deki Aziz Nikolaos Kilisesi”, *TürkArkDerg* 1966, 16; O. Feld, “Die Innenausstattung der Nikolaos Kirche in Myra”, see J. Borchhardt (ed.), *Myra. Eine lykische Metropole in antiker und byzantinischer Zeit* (1975) 389-390 Pl. II 2 Pl. 125 A B Pl. 126 A B; N. Thierry, “L'art monumental byzantine en Asie Mineure du XI^e siècle au XIV^e”, *DOP* 29, 1975, 90 Fig. 26.

⁴⁰ Demus, op.cit. Plan 43 a no: 23-25 (Daphni); Restle 1969, Plan XVIII no: 101-102 (Göreme, Elmalı) Plan XXII no: 101-103 (Göreme, Karanlık); III Plan XXXV no: 101-103 Fig. 365-366 (Tagar triconch); E. Kollias, *Patmos. Byzantinische Kunst in Griechenland* (1987) Plan 3 no: 42-44 (Patmos, Panagia).

⁴¹ For H. Polycarpus, see A. Xyngopoulos, *Thessalonique et la peinture Macedonienne* (1955) Fig. 8,2 (Selanik, H. Sophia); For H. Nicandros, see C. Jölviet-Levy, *Les Eglises byzantines de Cappadoce, Le programme iconographique de l'abside et de ses abords* (1991) Pl. 91 (Göreme, Mary).

⁴² For H. Eutymios, see E. Γ. Στικός, *Το Οικοδομικόν χρονικόν της Μονής Οσίου Λουκά Φωκίδος* (1970) Fig. 32a, b (Phokis, H. Lukas); Mouriki 1985 II Fig. 333d (Chios, Nea Moni).

⁴³ For H. Ephraim, see J. Leroy, *Les manuscrits syriaques à peintures* (1964) II Fig. 61. 1 (Homs. no: 69, fol. 10); Mouriki 1985 II Fig. 310 b (Chios, Nea Moni); Mango, Hawkins, op.cit. Fig. 78 (Cyprus, H. Neophytos).

paintings from the 11th century⁴⁴. Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos, an important patron of St. Nicholas's Church, as can be inferred from the Church's repair inscription, made donations to a stylite saint at Mount Galesion, thus, the significance of the stylite saint for the depictions from Monomachos's reign, as at Nea Moni, can be understood⁴⁵. Only a very small portion is preserved in the same niche of the depiction of H. Theodosios, who was also frequently depicted in the 11th and 12th centuries⁴⁶. In the 11th and 12th centuries, figures of single saints became widespread and their common iconographic features are to be observed.

Efforts were made to identify the saints with no inscriptions in the burial chamber, taking into consideration their facial characteristics and the day of their commemoration. The martyrs on the inner surfaces of the two western arches on the north wall can be identified as H. Onesimos, H. Elpidios and H. Trifon. On the eastern niche on the south wall are the Bishops, probably H. Spridon, H. Ignatios and H. Gregory of Nyssa. On the western part of the arch surface of the western niche on the south wall are two saints, possibly H. Theodore Studites and H. Stephanos (Fig. 29). The figure that is presumed to be H. Stephanos holds an icon with a depiction of the Christ figure⁴⁷. Our identification is due to the fact that H. Stephanos was the best-known iconodule saint during the period of Iconoclasm. The iconographic features of these single figures, with or without inscriptions, can be dated to the 11th and 12th centuries.

The iconographic features of the wall paintings in the burial chamber generally suggest a date in the 12th century and parallels are to be found in the examples from the Mediterranean that were influenced from the capital city. A stylistic study of these wall paintings reveals that the parallel examples are those in Cyprus that were influenced by the capital and which have been dated to the 12th century⁴⁸. The style of these figural depictions at Myra can be characterized as follows: of slim figures with legs longer than the body, with small heads and with wide shoulders, figures that are framed with dark contours, the faces stand out with almond-shaped eyes, with the eyebrows joining each other, with long, slim noses and with small mouths (Fig. 30). Volume is given to the hair and beard by parallel lines. The static figures gain motion through the use of stereotyped hand gestures, mimics and eye glances in the faces and the intensive costume drapes. The schematized and linear drapes vaguely reflect the form of the body and treat the form of the figure in a superficial manner. On the garments, light is depicted through the employment of white areas or lines, while areas of shadow are established through dark colored lines. The human and emotional feelings in the faces are further strengthened through their combination with the hand gestures, as can be observed in the depictions of the "Dormition" (Koimesis) and "Way to Golgotha". These wall paintings were applied on dry plaster, in the *secco* technique, and the differences in the portrait treatment suggest the hand of several artists. It can be understood that these wall paintings were created in

⁴⁴ For stylite saints, see H. Delehay, *Les saints Stylites* (1923); M. J. Lassus, "Images de Stylites", *BEO* 2.1, 1932, 67-82.

⁴⁵ F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des ostromischen Reiches von 565-1453* (1925) II 4 no: 855.

⁴⁶ For H. Theodosios, see Stikas *supra* n. 49, Fig. 32 a b (Phokis, H. Lukas); Mouriki 1985 II Fig. 231 (Chios, Nea Moni).

⁴⁷ For H. Stephanos, see Mouriki 1985, I, 156.

⁴⁸ Ötügen 1999, 491 n. 50.

the 12th century by local artists who were influenced stylistically by the style of the Byzantine capital.

It is possible to observe the influence of the Constantinople on the decoration of the burial chamber at Myra in particular, with the floral and geometric decoration of the vault of the western niche on the south wall which finds its closest parallel in the capital⁴⁹. Stylized foliates forming spirals are among the most popular motifs of 11th and 12th century monumental paintings (Fig. 31)⁵⁰. In addition, the motifs exposed on the outer surface of the arch in the eastern part of the wall are worthy of notice (Fig. 32).

⁴⁹ For similar decoration at the capital, see P. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami, Historical Introduction and Description of Mosaics and Frescoes* (1966) III 531 a, b 532 a, b.

⁵⁰ For similar decoration, see Restle 1969, II Fig. 177 (Göreme, Elmalı), Fig. 207 (Göreme, Çarıklı), Fig. 385 (Susumbayırı, H. Teodoros), Fig. 423 (Söviş Şahinefendi, Kırkmartır); D. Talbot Rice, *The Church of Hagia Sophia at Trebizond* (1967) Fig. 124 (Trabzon, H. Sophia).

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Özet

Restorasyon Sonrası Demre (Myra) - Aziz Nikolaos Kilisesi Mezar Mekanı, Duvar Resimleri

Demre'deki Aziz Nikolaos Kilisesi'nin güneyinde bulunan mezar mekanı duvar resimlerinin koruma ve onarım çalışmaları 2001 yılında başlamış olup, 2004 yılında tamamlanmıştır. Çalışmalar sırasında mekanın kuzey duvarındaki mezar nişlerinde yer alan beş bayram sahnesi ile birlikte, duvarlardaki nişlerin kemer yüzeylerinde bulunan Aziz Nikolaos'un yaşamını içeren siklutan onbeş sahne ile tüm ve büst şeklinde tasvir edilmiş aziz, piskopos, martir, keşiş olmak üzere kırkbeş figür restore edilmiştir. Ayrıca koruma ve onarım çalışmaları sonucu bazı yeni bitkisel ve geometrik bezemeler de ortaya çıkmıştır.

Restorasyon sonrası, kuzey duvardaki mezar nişlerinde yer alan apokrif (halk için yazılmış inciller ve bunlardan alınmış dini mevzular üzerine yapılmış resimler) kaynaklı Koimesis, Anastasis ile İncil kaynaklı İsa'nın doğumu ve Çarmıhta İsa sahnelerinin ikonografik özellikleri belirginleşmiştir. Mekanın kuzey ve güney duvarlarındaki mezar nişlerinin kemer yüzeylerinde ve batı duvarın kuzey üst bölümünde kilisenin patron azizi Aziz Nikolaos'a ait onbeş sahne vardır. Yapılan koruma ve onarım çalışmaları sonucunda sahnelerin ikonografik ve üslup özelliklerinin belirginleştiği izlenmiştir. Deniz Mucizesi (I), Deniz Mucizesi (II), Üç Komutan hapiste, Aziz Nikolaos'un İmparator Konstantin'e rüyasında gözükmesi, Aziz Nikolaos'un Vali Ablabius'a rüyasında gözükmesi, Üç Komutan İmparator Konstantin önünde, Üç komutanın Aziz Nikolaos'a teşekkürü, Aziz Nikolaos'un Basileos'u Araplardan kurtarması, Basileos'un babasının Aziz Nikolaos'a teşekkürü, Aziz Nikolaos'un Demetrios'u boğulmaktan kurtarışı, Aziz Nikolaos'un çocuğu olmayan bir aileye yardımı (I-II), Aziz Nikolaos'un büyülü bir kişiyi iyileştirmesi, Üç Bekar Kızın hikayesi (?) ve bir sahne fragmanı olmak üzere onbeş sahne restore edilmiştir.

Mezar mekanında restore edilen toplam kırkbeş figürden yirmidördü yayınlanmamış olup, yeni bulunmuştur. Mezar mekanında kitabesi ile günümüze gelen azizler yoğunluktadır. Bunlar genellikle ölüm yıl dönümleri Ocak, Şubat, Kasım ve Aralık olan azizlerdir.

Mekandaki resimler üslup açısından incelenirse, benzer örneklerin Kıbrıs'taki, başkent etkili, 12. yy.'a ait duvar resimleri olduğu görülür. Sonuçta resimlerin 12. yy.'da başkent etkili bölgesel sanatçılar tarafından yapıldığı düşünülmektedir.



Fig. 1 The Nativity and scenes of St. Nicholas: The sea story II. and St. Nicholas helps a childless family.



Fig. 2 The Dormition and scenes of St. Nicholas: St. Nicholas heals a person suffering from demonic possession and he saves the Basileus from the Saracens.

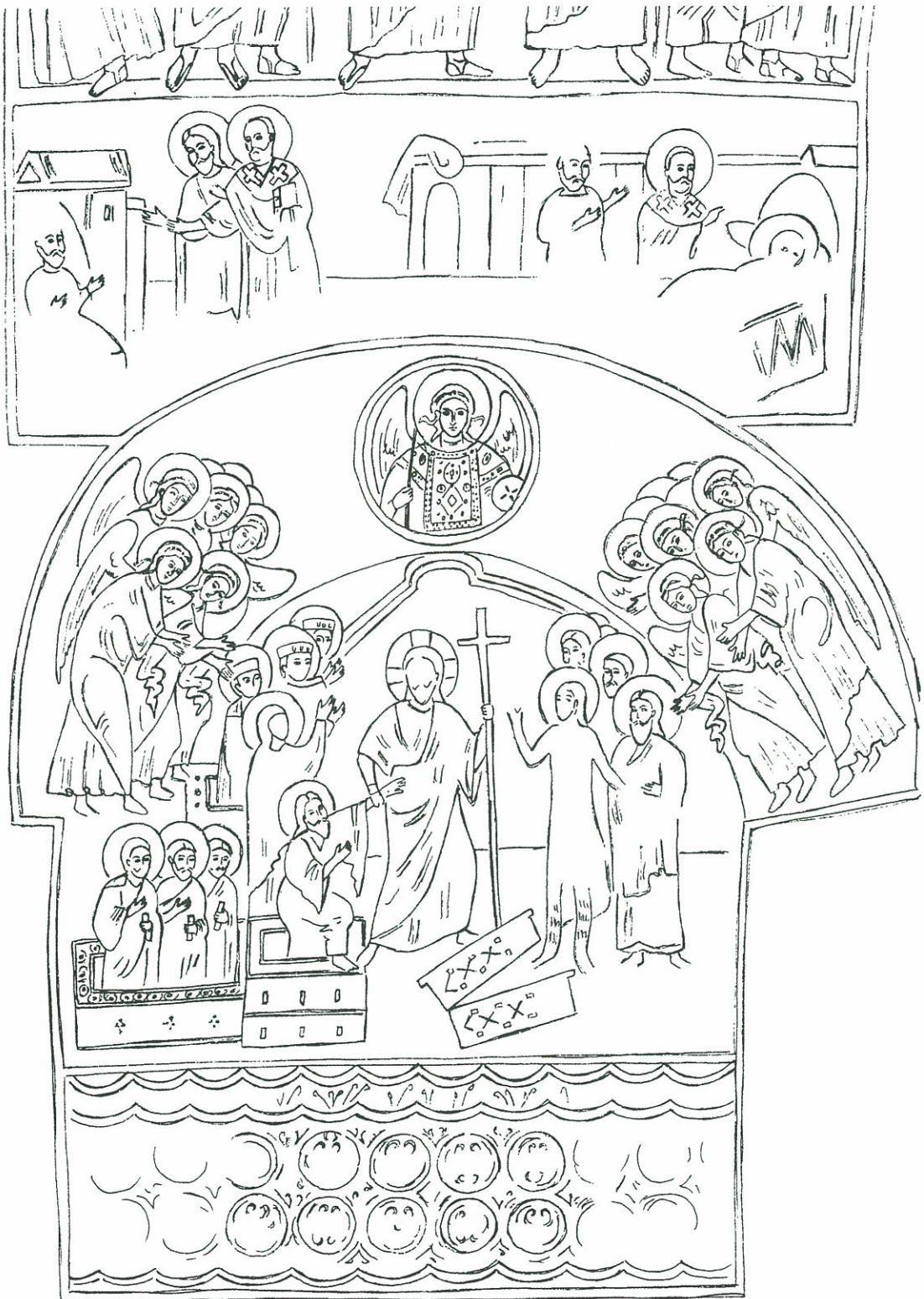


Fig. 3 The Resurrection, scenes of St. Nicholas: He appears to the Emperor Constantine and Governor Ablabius and the Ascension.



Fig. 4-a
Scene of St. Nicholas:
The Three Generals in
prison.

Fig. 4-b
Scene of St. Nicholas:
The Story
of the Three Maidens (?).

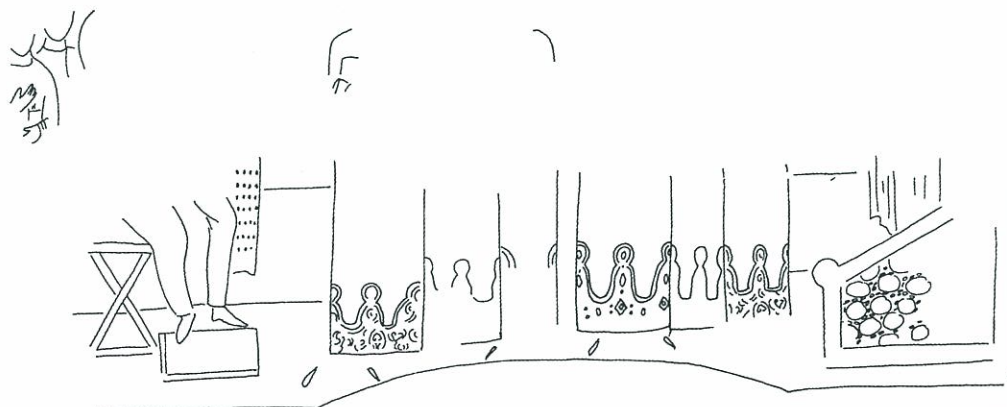
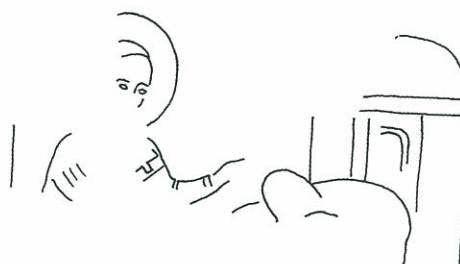


Fig. 5-a
Scene of St. Nicholas:
The Three Commanders
come before the Emperor
Constantine and
St. Nicholas.



Fig. 5-b
Scene of St. Nicholas:
The sea story I.



Fig. 6
One of the the Angels
facing the shepherds,
from the scene of the
Nativity.



Fig. 7
The Dormition.



Fig. 8
The Mourning Apostles
from the Dormition.



Fig. 9 The Mourning Apostles from the Dormition.



Fig. 10 The way of Golgotha and Jesus (Detail).



Fig. 11 The Lieutenant from the scene of the Crucifixion.



Fig. 12 The Resurrection.



Fig. 13 The Angels from the scene of the Resurrection.



Fig. 14
Scene of St. Nicholas: He
appears to the Emperor
Constantine and
Governor Ablabius and
the Ascension.



Fig. 15
A detail of the scene:
St. Nicholas appears to
Governor Ablabius.



Fig. 16
Scene of St. Nicholas:
The sea story I.



Fig. 17
Scene of St. Nicholas:
The sea story II.



Fig. 18
Scene of St. Nicholas:
The Three Generals in
prison.



Fig. 19 Scene of St. Nicholas: The Three Commanders come before the Emperor Constantine.



Fig. 20 Scene of St. Nicholas: He saves the Basileus from the Saracens.

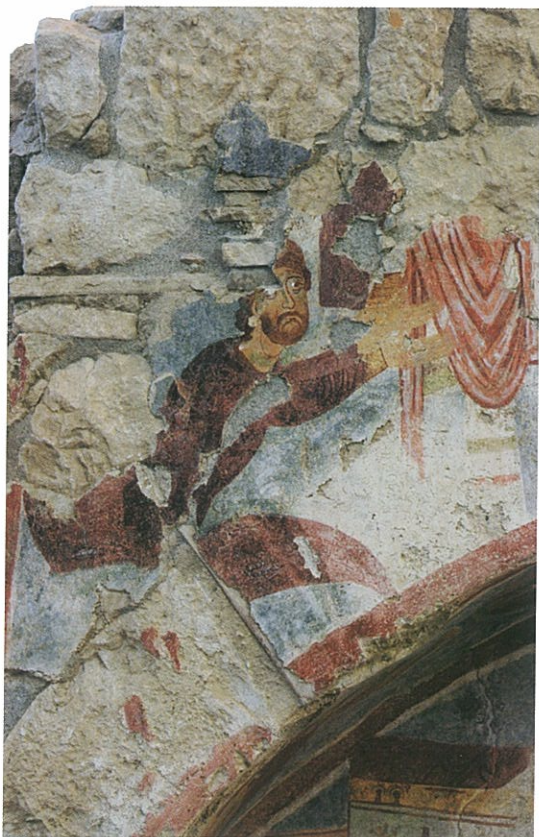


Fig. 21 Scene of St. Nicholas: The Basileus' family thank St. Nicholas.



Fig. 23 Scene of St. Nicholas: He saves Demetrios from drowning and a fragment of a scene.



Fig. 22 Scene of St. Nicholas: St. Nicholas heals a person suffering from demonic possession.



Fig. 24
Scene of St. Nicholas:
St. Nicholas helps a
childless family I.



Fig. 25
Scene of St. Nicholas:
St. Nicholas helps a
childless family II.



Fig. 26
Scene of St. Nicholas:
The story of the Three
Maidens (?).



Fig. 27 Eutymios and Antonios.

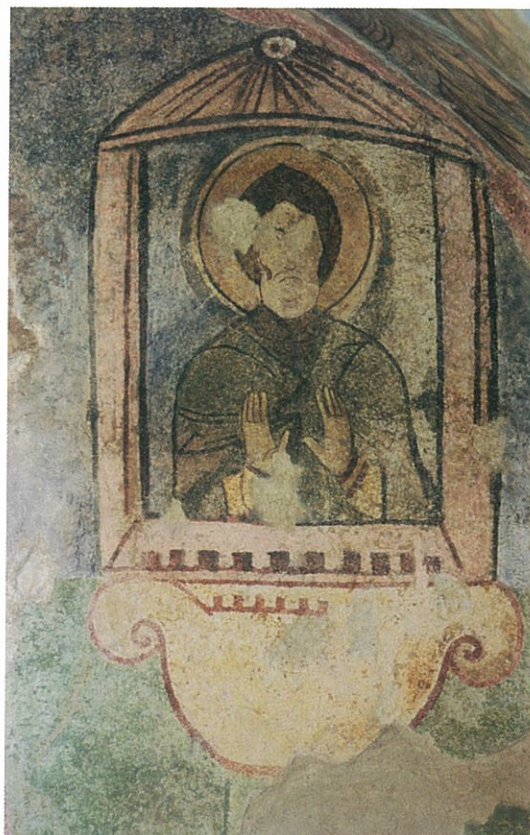


Fig. 28 A Stylite Saint.



Fig. 29 St. Theodosios, St. Theodoros Studites, St. Stephanos.



Fig. 30 Detail.



Fig. 31 Decoration.



Fig. 32 Decoration.

