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## ON THE THRESHOLD OF CERTAINTY: THE INCREDULITY OF THOMAS IN THE NARTHEX OF THE KATHOLIKON OF THE HOSIOS LOUKAS MONASTERY\*

The *katholikon* of the Hosios Loukas monastery, built around the first quarter of the eleventh century, has a narthex with a mosaic decoration on its west side. The Incredulity of Thomas is included amongst the scenes of the Passion. This paper examines the iconographic, liturgical, and dogmatic roles of the Incredulity within the context of the overall program and the liminal space of the narthex. This monumental representation evidences how depictions of the Incredulity engaged with changing beliefs concerning the senses and faith. In particular, I focus on the implications of the believer's bi-directional movement through the narthex on entering and exiting the church. Iconographically, the representation of a door behind Christ and His wound are understood as symbolic conformation of His divine nature and a marker of the path believers should follow to attain salvation. As a confirmation of Christ's dual nature, the Incredulity of Thomas is read in relation to funerary and Eucharistic contexts as relating to the narthex of Hosios Loukas.

*Keywords:* The Incredulity of Thomas, Hosios Loukas, touch, narthex, dual nature, faith, liminality.

The monastery of Hosios Loukas is located in the province of Phokis in central Greece. The *katholikon* of the monastery was likely built around the first quarter of the eleventh century.<sup>1</sup> The west end of the church has been extended by an elongated

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\* This article is part of the research on the project No. 177032 (*Tradition, innovation and identity in the Byzantine world*), supported by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia. I would like to thank to my dear friend Allan P. Doyle, PhD candidate, Princeton University for his close reading of the text, helpful suggestions, and corrections. I would also like to thank my colleague Prof. Jelena Bogdanović, Iowa State University, for her helpful comments and for permission to publish some of her images. Any remaining errors remain my responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> On the monastery, see *G. P. Kremos*, Προσκυνητάριον τῆς ἐν τῇ Φοκίδι Μονῆς τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκά, τοῦ πικλῆν Στεριώτου (Proskynētarion tēs en tē Phōkidi Monēs tou Hosiou Louka, tou piklēn Steiriōtou), vol. I Athens 1874, vol. II 1880; *C. Diehl*, L'église et les mosaïques du Couvent de Saint-Luc en Phocide, Paris 1889; *R. Schultz – S. Barnsley*, The Monastery of St. Luke of Stiris in Phocis and the Dependent

narthex, rectangular in plan, with short, curved sides. The narthex has exterior entrances on the west and south walls (Fig. 1). It also has three interior doors on the east wall: the central, “Royal door” opening into the nave of the church, and ones on the north and south sides opening to the subsidiary chapels.<sup>2</sup> At its north end there is an *arcosolium*. The narthex is divided into three groin-vaulted bays. The lower part is lined with marble revetments, while the upper register of the walls as well as the ceiling are covered with mosaics executed probably around the middle of the eleventh century.<sup>3</sup>

The aim of this paper is to address the multivalent meanings – iconographic, liturgical, and dogmatic – of the scene of the Incredulity of Thomas and its role in the decorative program within the liminal space of the narthex of the *katholikon* of Hosios Loukas. The motif of the Incredulity was polyvalent and will here be considered as one whose meaning and function changed with each encounter. At Hosios Loukas, the representation of Thomas’ doubting of Christ’s physical resurrection invites further investigation of how depictions of this subject engaged with changing beliefs concerning the senses and faith.

Recent scholars have discussed the narthex as a liminal or transitional zone. Vasileios Marinis has noted that although it was an integral part of the building’s fabric, the narthex was never treated as a sacred space as were other parts of the church.<sup>4</sup> This multi-function area in a Byzantine church is used for a myriad of purposes some of which are unrelated to liturgical ritual.<sup>5</sup> Rituals or services that scholars have ascribed

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Monastery of St. Nicolas in the Fields near Skripou in Beotia, London 1901; *G. E. Stikas*, Τὸ Οἰκοδομικὸν Χρονικὸν τῆς Μονῆς Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ Φωκίδος (Τὸ Οἰκοδομικὸν Chronikon tēs Monēs Hosiou Louka Phōkidos), Athens 1970; *N. Chatzidakis*, Hosios Loukas, Athens 1997; *S. Ćurčić*, Architecture in the Balkans from Diocletian to Süleyman the Magnificent, New Heaven 2010, 297–300 and 383–387. The majority of scholars accept 1011 for a date of the *katholikon* see, *Ćurčić*, Architecture in the Balkans 383; *M. Chatzidakis*, A propos de la date et du fondateur de Saint-Luc, Cahiers Archeologiques 19 (1969) 127–150, especially 127–131. For the discussion on the proposed other dates see, *N. Oikonomides*, The First Century of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992) 245–255; *M.P. Mylonas*, Nouvelles remarques sur le complex de Saint-Luc en Phocide, Cahiers Archéologiques 40 (1992) 115–121.

<sup>2</sup> The central doors that lead from the narthex into the nave of the church are also called “Great Doors,” and “Royal Doors” in the Middle and Late Byzantine periods, see *R. Taft*, The Pontifical Liturgy of the Great Church according to a Twelfth-Century Diataxis in Codex British Museum Add. 34060, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 45 (1979) 279–307, 284.

<sup>3</sup> Fort mosaic decoration, see *Diehl*, L’église et les mosaïques du Couvent 39–72, 39–51; *Schultz*, The Monastery of St. Luke, 42–67; *E. Diez – O. Demus*, Byzantine Mosaics in Greece. Hosios Loukas and Daphni, Cambridge, MA 1931, 37–75; *O. Demus*, Byzantine Mosaic Decoration, New York 1976, 56–58; *Chatzidaki*, Hosios Loukas, 12, 19–54.

<sup>4</sup> *V. Marinis*, Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople: Ninth to Fifteenth Century, New York 2013, 64–77, 64.

<sup>5</sup> The development of the liturgy was probably the main cause for the increased use of narthexes in Early Christian and Byzantine architecture. For the most comprehensive study of the possible rituals performed in the narthex, their development, and use as a setting for iconographic programs, see *V. Milanović*, Kultno-liturgijske osnove za izučavanje ikonografskog programa u pripratama srpskih sredjovekovnih crkava, MA thesis, University of Belgrade, Beograd 2000; also see *A. P. Kazhdan*, (ed.), The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium, vol. 2, Oxford 1991, 1438–1439; see also *Marinis*, Architecture and Ritual, 64.

to narthexes in general include funerary services or the Blessing of the Waters.<sup>6</sup> Some liturgical Hours were performed in the narthex, as is the case today at Mount Athos where services of lesser importance are celebrated in narthexes.<sup>7</sup>

The narthex's multi-functionality and its transitional, liminal position were reflected in a diversity of monumental programs. In general, however, the programs were never completely standardized.<sup>8</sup> According to Rositzka Schroeder, the role of mosaic or fresco decoration in these spaces, was to "provide visual cues for transformative experiences as the churchgoers moved from outside to inside, from secular to sacred."<sup>9</sup> This journey from outside the church to the nave, however, should not be read only in one direction. The decoration in the narthex prepared the viewer for the transition from the secular world to the inner, paradisiac, space of the nave and sanctuary. Leaving the nave through the narthex also provided the churchgoer

<sup>6</sup> A. Papageorgiou has cited several Middle Byzantine *typika* for churches in Cyprus, which refer to commemorative services for the deceased held in narthexes, see *A. Papageorgiou*, *The Narthex of the Churches of the Middle Byzantine Period in Cyprus*, *Rayonnement grec. Hommage à la mémoire de Charles Delvoye*, Brussels 1982, 437–449, 446–448. The narthex in Cappadocian churches have been used to house burials as far back as early Christian times; *N.B. Teteriatnikov*, *Burial Places in Cappadocian Churches*, *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 29/2 (1984) 141–157, 153–155; see also, *Milanović*, *Kultno-liturgijske osnove za izučavanje ikonografskog programa* 381–402, see *F. Bache*, *La fonction funéraire du narthex dans les églises byzantines du XIe au XIVe siècle*, *Histoire de l'Art* 7 (1989) 25–33, 28–29. Čurčić suggested that the twin-domed narthexes in the church architecture of Serbia were developed in connection with their funerary function, *S. Čurčić*, *The Twin-Domed Narthex in Paleologan Architecture*, *Zbornik radova vizantološkog instituta* 13 (1971) 313–323, 342–344. It is not quite certain if the Blessing of the Waters was performed only in narthexes. From Middle Byzantine monastery practice we have evidence only from the *typikon* of Kecharitomene monastery, which stated that the ritual should be celebrated in the narthex where the *phiale* was located, see *P. Gautier*, *Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè*, *Revue des études byzantines* 43(1985) 5–165, 127; see also, *J. Thomas – A. Constantinides Hero* (ed.), *Kecharitomene: Typikon of Empress Irene Doukaina Komnene for the Convent of the Mother of God Kecharitomene in Constantinople*, *Byzantine monastic foundation documents: a complete translation of the surviving founders' typika and testaments* 2, Washington D.C. 2000, 649–752, 702; *Marinis*, *Architecture and Ritual* 71–72. The service of the Blessing of the Waters was celebrated on the eve of Theophany see, *Milanović*, *Kultno-liturgijske osnove za izučavanje ikonografskog programa* 367–375, see also *S. E. J. Gerstel*, *The Layperson in Church*, *Byzantine Christianity*, ed. D. Krueger, Minneapolis 2006, 103–124, 118. For the cases in Serbia, see *S. Čurčić*, *The Original Baptismal Font of Gračanica and Its Iconographic Setting*, *Zbornik narodnog muzeja* 9–10 (1979) 313–324; *Z. Gavrilović*, *Divine Wisdom as Part of Byzantine Imperial Ideology*, *Narthex Programmes of Lesnovo and Sopoćani*, *Zograf* 11 (1980) 44–53.

<sup>7</sup> *Milanović*, *Kultno-liturgijske osnove za izučavanje ikonografskog programa*, 271–297. For more on the liturgy of the hours, see *R. Taft*, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today*, Collegeville 1986.

<sup>8</sup> On the function and decoration of narthexes in Byzantine churches see, *Marinis*, *Architecture and Ritual* 64–77; *R. B. Schroeder*, *Transformative Narratives and Shifting Identities in the Narthex of the Boiana Church*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 64 (2010) 103–128; *G. Gerov*, *The Narthex as a Desert: The Symbolism of the Entrance Space in Orthodox Church Buildings*, *The Ritual and Art: Byzantine Essays for Christopher Walter*, ed. *P. Armstrong*, London 2006, 144–159; *L. Drewer*, *Recent Approaches to Early Christian and Byzantine Iconography*, *Studies in Iconography* 17 (1996) 1–62, 26–29; *Ev. Chatzētryphōnos*, *Το περίστωο στῶο υστεροβυζαντινῆ ἐκκλησιαστικῆ ἀρχιτεκτονικῆ: Σχεδιασμός, λειτουργία* (*To peristōo stēn hysteryvzantinē ekklesiastikē architektonikē: schediasmos, leitourgia*), *Thessalonike* 2004, 67–90; *G. Nicholl*, *A Contribution to the Arhaeological Interpretation of Typika: the Case of Narthex.* In *Work and Worship at the Theotokos Evergetis, 1050–1200*, ed. *M. Mullett – A. Kirby*, Belfast 1997, 285–309; *S. Tomeković*, *Contribution à l'étude du programme du narthex des églises monastiques (XI<sup>e</sup> – première moitié du XIII<sup>e</sup> s.)*, *Byzantium* 58/1 (1988) 140–154; *G. Babić*, *Ikonografski program živopisa u pripatama crkava kralja Milutina*, *Vizantijska umetnost početkom XIV veka: naučni skup u Gračanici* 1973, ed. *S. Petković*, Beograd 1978, 105–126.

<sup>9</sup> *Schroeder*, *Transformative Narratives and Shifting Identities*, 108.

confirmation of what had been promised in the nave: a path to salvation. In other words, what was anticipated by entering the nave through the narthex received verification upon exit.

The subject of the Incredulity of Thomas is depicted above the south door that leads from the narthex to the outside world (Fig. 2). In the center of the composition Christ stands before a large, closed door surrounded on left and right by a group of apostles. He is dressed in a gilded robe with a blue himation overtop. With His left hand, Christ pulls the garment aside while raising His right arm, revealing the holy wound. Thomas stands at Christ's right, advancing towards the wound with an extended finger. Unfortunately, the head of Thomas has been destroyed. On both sides of the doorway stand groups of five apostles.<sup>10</sup> The portal frames Christ and is decorated with a linear pattern that suggests marble decoration. Christ is taller than the other apostles and likely stood on a step or raised platform. This section of the composition has also been lost, but it may be compared with a similar scene in the *katholikon*'s crypt in which Christ stands on a platform.<sup>11</sup> The apostles are clad in tunics with himations and some hold scrolls in their hands. The entire scene is set against a gold background and at the top, just above the monumental doorway, there is an inscription: ΤΩΝ ΘΥΡΩΝ ΚΕΚΛΕΙΣΤΕΝΩΝ (The doors being shut, John 20:26). The scene's lower portion was partially damaged by the opening up of a window at a later point.

The imagery of the scene is similar to other examples from the Middle Byzantine period.<sup>12</sup> There are two essential differences and numerous small variations in the iconography of this motif dating from the Early Christian to Medieval periods.<sup>13</sup> They differ mainly in their depiction of Thomas and Christ. Where in the narthex of Hosios Loukas, Thomas is represented bent over with his extended finger pointing to Christ's wound but not touching it, the other type shows Christ pulling Thomas' hand toward the injury. An example of the latter version is found in the crypt of the *katholikon* in

<sup>10</sup> All eleven apostles appeared in monumental art according to the Gospel's narrative for the first time in Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, *P. Konis*, From the Resurrection to the Ascension: Christ's Post-Resurrection Appearances in Byzantine Art (3<sup>rd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> c.), PhD Dissertation, The University of Birmingham, Birmingham, 2008, 70.

<sup>11</sup> *C.L. Connor*, Art and Miracles in Byzantium: The Crypt of Hosios Loukas and its Frescoes, Princeton 1991, 39–40.

<sup>12</sup> The earliest representation of the scene of the Incredulity of Thomas in monumental art is probably from the church of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, see *A. Urbano*, Donation, Dedication and Damnatio Memoriae: The Catholic reconciliation of Ravenna and the Church of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 13/1 (2005) 71–110, 82, see also *O. Von Simson*, Sacred Fortress: Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna, Princeton 1987. The scene is depicted on several ivories from the Middle Byzantine period such as the example on the panel from the icon with Twelve Great Feasts, from the mid-tenth century, now in the British Museum, see *H. Evans – D.W. Wixom*, (ed.), *The Glory of Byzantium. Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843–1261*, New York 1997, 148, no. 94 C. The scene is found in the monumental art of the eleventh and twelfth century as, for example, in the crypt and the *katholikon* of Hosios Lukas, the *katholikon* of Daphni, the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (1169), Cathedral of Monreale (late twelfth century), see *Konis*, From the Resurrection to the Ascension 303, see also, *W. Harvey, et al.*, *The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem*, London 1910, pl. 11; *O. Demus*, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, London 1949, 288–291, pls. 71b-74a.

<sup>13</sup> *S. Schunk-Heller*, Die Darstellung des ungläubigen Thomas in der italienischen Kunst bis um 1500 unter Berücksichtigung der lukanischen Ostentatio Vulnerum, *Beiträge zur Kunstwissenschaft* 59, Munich 1995.

Hosios Loukas, which was probably altered from a previous iteration that resembled the one in the narthex.<sup>14</sup> Other variables include the number of apostles present, the symmetrical or asymmetrical organization of the composition, the position of Christ's wound on either his left or right side, and the presence of a door or its omission.<sup>15</sup>

The inscription that identifies the scene, "The doors being shut" seems to have appeared in art around the tenth century.<sup>16</sup> This is most likely the first time that this type of inscription accompanied this motif.<sup>17</sup> Here, it emphasizes Christ's divinity by indicating that He could enter despite the doors being closed. An *ampulla* from Monza, ca. 600, reveals that early examples of the Incredulity bore different inscriptions, reading: O KC MOY KAI O ΘEOC MOY ("My Lord and My God": John 20:29); another inscription from Santa Maria Antiqua from the eighth century simply states: APOSTOLI (apostles).<sup>18</sup>

The inclusion of the scene of the Incredulity of Thomas in the narthex of Hosios Loukas is not incidental. Images of the Incredulity are informed by a variety of doctrines regarding Christ's Resurrection, the body, and the holy sacrament. Thomas' doubt was interpreted as an authentication of Christ's dual status as both God and Man, usually in funerary or Eucharistic contexts. It was therefore a suitable subject for narthex decoration.<sup>19</sup> The importance of bodily, and not just spiritual, resurrection was reflected in the sensual confirmation of the truth of Christ demonstrated by Thomas' touch. It is therefore telling that theme was particularly common in monumental Byzantine art after Iconoclasm.<sup>20</sup> The post-Iconoclastic period saw an increase in

<sup>14</sup> Connor, Art and Miracles 39–40; an early example of iconography in which Christ takes Thomas by the hand is found on an *ampullae* in the British Museum, the sixth-seventh century, *J. Engenmann, Palästinensische Pilgerampullen im F. J. Dölger Institut in Bonn, Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 16 (1973) 5–27, pl. 9: c-d.

<sup>15</sup> A diptych from Saint Petersburg, dated between the late tenth and early eleventh century does not include the representation of the door in the scene of the Incredulity, see: *Y. Piatinsky – O. Baddeley – E. Brunner – M.M. Mango*, (eds.) *Sinai, Byzantium and Russia: Orthodox Art from the Sixth to the Twentieth Century*, London 2000, B48, also in *Evans, The Glory of Byzantium*, 144, no. 91. For the date of this object see the explanation in *Konis, From the Resurrection to the Ascension*, 300.

<sup>16</sup> Konis argues that the inscription reflects liturgical influence on this scene. He bases his argument on the discrepancy between Constantinople and Jerusalem in liturgical practice on Thomas' Sunday. In the *typikon* of Hagia Sophia the lection on Thomas' Sunday begins with John 20: 24, a concluding verse of Christ's Appearance to the Eleven, while the Jerusalem Lectionary starts with verse twenty-six which is the episode indicating the Incredulity of Thomas. *Konis, From the Resurrection to the Ascension*, 297–299.

<sup>17</sup> Most likely it first appeared on the tenth-century Constantinopolitan ivory plaque representing the Incredulity of Thomas that is now part of the Dumbarton Oaks collection see, *K. Weitzmann, Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection 3: Ivories and Steatites* Washington D.C. 1972, 43–48, pls. XXII, XXIII and colour pl. 4.

<sup>18</sup> See for example the *ampulla* Monza 9 in *A. Grabar, Les Ampoules de Terre Sainte*, Paris 1958, 24–26, pl. XV; for the Santa Maria Antiqua example, see *J. P. Nordhagen, The Frescoes of John VII (A.D. 705–707) in S. Maria Antiqua in Rome, Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia, Institutum Romanum Norvegiae*, 3, Roma 1968, 32–33.

<sup>19</sup> *E. Benay, The Pursuit of Truth and the Doubting Thomas in the Art of Early Modern Italy*, PhD Dissertation, Rutgers University, New Brunswick 2009, 17–50.

<sup>20</sup> The accepted dates of the Iconoclastic Controversy are 726–843 see, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* vol. 2, 975–977. The first mention of the representation of the Incredulity in the Middle Byzantine monumental art after iconoclasm is the scene in the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, probably depicted in the ninth century and is described in the *Ekphrasis* on Holy Apostles by Nikolaos Mesarites from the twelfth century, see *N. Mesarites, Ekphrasis*, XXXIV:1–8, Nikolaos Mesarites: Description of the

the production of images and the development of new types, including those tied to relics and corporeality. New subjects emerged and fresco and mosaic decoration programs found in churches became more standardized. Their makers demonstrated a heightened concern with establishing emotional and theological truth in images. This corresponded with a new understanding of the function of images and relics that had developed out of the Iconoclastic debate. In addition to doctrinal considerations, the images of post-Iconoclastic Byzantine art were intended to solicit viewers' empathy.<sup>21</sup>

In order to more fully grasp this aspect of the scene of the Incredulity of Thomas at Hosios Loukas, one must consider the narthex mosaic program in general. Besides the Incredulity, the only narrative scenes in the narthex are the Crucifixion and the Anastasis (Fig. 3) on the east wall, and the Washing of the Feet (Fig. 4) on the north wall.

The monumental bust of Christ Pantokrator in the lunette above the central entrance into the nave shows Christ blessing with His right hand while He holds the Book of the Gospel in His left (Fig. 5). This volume bears an inscription from John (8:12): "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," addressing the visitor with a promise of salvation for those entering and leaving the nave.<sup>22</sup> In her study of Anastasis, Anna Kartsonis, connects the image of Christ as a Light over the doorway in Hosios Loukas with the representations of five saints in the medallions on the west wall above the doorway leading from the narthex to the courtyard.<sup>23</sup> According to Kartsonis the names of these imitators of Christ represent some of the major characteristics of Christ as the Light of the World and the guarantor of the light of eternal life of redemption for His followers, which is emphasized in Hosios Loukas by their placement over the exit leading from the narthex to the outside.<sup>24</sup> Such a monumental portrait of Christ over the entrance to the nave from the narthex usually emphasized His soteriological role as articulated in John (10:9): "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." The position of the portrait of Christ on the boundary between the narthex and the nave not only indicates salvation for those who are entering the church, but also for those followers of Christ who return through it on their way out.

Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople, ed. and trans. *G. Downey*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, N.S. 47/6 (1957) 855–924, 887–888.

<sup>21</sup> *T. F. Mathews*, The Sequel to Nicaea II in Byzantine Church Decoration, Perkins Journal 41 (1988) 14–17, 17; *H. Maguire*, Body, Clothing, Metaphor: the Virgin in Early Byzantine Art, The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium: Text and Images, ed. *L. Brubaker – M. B. Cunningham*, Farnham, Surrey 2011, 39–53, 50.

<sup>22</sup> For more on the Pantokrator type, see *S. Barbagallo*, Iconografia liturgica del Pantokrator, Rome 1996; *F. Buri*, Pantokrator: Ontologie und Eschatologie als Grundlage der Lehre von Gott, Hamburg, 1969, see also *T. F. Mathews*, The Transformation Symbolism in Byzantine Architecture and the Meaning of the Pantokrator in the Dome, Church and People in Byzantium, ed. *R. Morris*, Birmingham 1990, 191–214.

<sup>23</sup> The central medallion, which is in line with Christ's face, shows St. Akindynos (Dangerless). He is flanked on either side by the portraits of St. Aphthonius (Abundant or Un-envious) and St. Elpidophorus (Bearer of Hope) to the north, and by St. Pegasus (He Who Gushes Forth) and St. Anempodistus (He Who Cannot be Impeded) to the south. They are commemorated as a group on November 2 by the Orthodox Church see, *A. D. Kartsonis*, Anastasis, the Making of the an Image, Princeton 1986, 217.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, 217–218.

The complementary experiences of moving from the entrance to the nave and exiting from the narthex is further underscored by the representations of the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist in the middle vault. Taken together with the image of Christ Pantokrator over the door, they form a Deesis, highlighting their redemptive meaning.<sup>25</sup> The image of the Virgin Mary in the Orans position praying to Christ for the salvation of humankind is directly linked with the followers of Christ positioned at the threshold of the narthex, asserting the way to salvation through faith in Christ.

The concept of the Pantokrator was closely interwoven with Christ's role as a Redeemer and the promise of salvation. This is elucidated in the narthex with two scenes from the Christological cycle: the Crucifixion and the Anastasis depicted on the east wall, flanking the image of Christ. The Crucifixion scene is placed on the north part of the east wall, above the entrances to the northwest subsidiary chapel. Christ is represented in this scene with closed eyes.<sup>26</sup> Reference to His physical death was essential to the opponents of Iconoclasm during the Controversy. It was used to legitimize the image of Christ and to emphasize his corporality.<sup>27</sup> The physical Death of Christ was seen as parallel to his Incarnation, and thus as justifying His representation in material form.<sup>28</sup> In Hosios Loukas, Christ's body exhibits no expressive sign of pain. This reflects the belief of the Byzantine church that Christ's body was invulnerable.<sup>29</sup> The promise of redemption through Christ's death on the cross is presented to the

<sup>25</sup> The Deesis became a frequent part of *templon* iconography in Byzantine churches from the ninth or tenth century and was depicted in the monumental form since tenth century, see *S. E. J. Gerstel*, *Ceramic Icons from Medieval Constantinople, A Lost Art Rediscovered: The Architectural Ceramics of Byzantium*, ed. *S. E. J. Gerstel – J. Lauffenburger*, University Park, PA 2001, 42–65; *G. Babić*, *O živopisanom ukrasu oltarskih preglada*, *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti* 11 (1975) 3–49; *C. Walter*, *Bulletin on the Deesis and the Paracletis*, *Revue des études byzantines* 38 (1980) 261–269. For examples of Deesis in narthexes, see *S. Kalopissi-Verte*, *The Proskynetaria of the Templon and Narthex: Form, Imagery, Spatial Connections, and Reception, Thresholds of the Sacred. Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West*, ed. *S. E. J. Gerstel*, Washington, D.C. 2006, 107–135, see also, *L. Mirković*, *O ikonografiji mozaika iznad carskih vrata u narteksu crkve Sv. Sofije u Carigradu Ikonografske studije*, Novi Sad 1974, 181–191.

<sup>26</sup> Though there are earlier surviving examples of three-figure compositions of the Crucifixion like the one in Hosios Loukas, the process of transformation by which the complex type became the simple three-figure image belongs to the Middle Byzantine period. What is most important in this transformation was the alteration in the figure of Christ. According to Kurt Weitzman, the earliest Crucifixion showing Christ with closed eyes is from the eighth century and found on an icon at Mount Sinai (no. B.36), see *K. Weitzmann*, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai: The Icons*, vol. 1, *From the Sixth to the Tenth Century*, Princeton 1976, 61–64, see also *K. Corrigan*, *Text and Image on an Icon, The Sacred Images East West*, ed. *R. Osterhout – L. Brubaker*, Urbana and Chicago 1995, 45–63.

<sup>27</sup> *L. Brubaker*, *Inventing Byzantine Iconoclasm*, London 2012; *C. Barber*, *Figure and Likeness, On the Limits of Representation in Byzantine Iconoclasm*, Princeton 2002; *H. Belting*, *Likeness and Presence: a History of the Image Before the Era of Art*, Chicago 1994, 144–164. For the early dates of dead Christ, see *C. Belting-Ihm – H. Belting*, *Das Kreuzbild im 'Hodegos' des Anastasius Sinaites: Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach den ältesten Darstellung des toten Crucifixus*, *Tortulae Studien zu altchristlichen und byzantinischen Monumenten*, ed. *W. N. Schumacher*, Freiburg-im-Breisgau 1966, 30–39, 36ff.

<sup>28</sup> *Kartsonis*, *Anastasis*, 40. The surviving Byzantine monumental images of the eleventh century Hosios Loukas, Nea Moni on Chios (mid eleventh century) and Daphni (end of the eleventh century), indicate that the “dying man” on the Cross was dominant in Middle Byzantine art. For Daphni mosaics, see *G. Millet*, *Mosaïques de Daphni, Monuments et mémoires*, *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, *Fondation Eugène Piot* 2 (1895) 204–214, and *Diez*, *Byzantine Mosaics in Greece*, 47–109. For the mosaic program in Nea Moni on Chios see: *D. Mouriki*, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios*, Athens 1985.

<sup>29</sup> *Corrigan*, *Text and Image on an Icon*, 54.

viewer by the depiction of Christ's blood flowing over Adam's skull.<sup>30</sup> This contact between the Holy Blood and the first human's remains echoes that offered to Thomas as a means of verification of Christ's corporeal resurrection.

The soteriological and eschatological symbolism of the Crucifixion found in the narthex was emphasized further by its placement above the door leading to the northwest chapel. The western subsidiary chapels in the *katholikon* of Hosios Loukas are highly integrated within the narthex, both architecturally and functionally.<sup>31</sup> The decoration in the northwest chapel indicates its funerary function.<sup>32</sup> It is difficult to tell precisely which commemorative ceremonies took place in the narthex, since the *typikon* has not survived, and the commemorative rituals prescribed in other surviving monastic *typika* show great diversity.<sup>33</sup> Though we do not have any evidence of burials in the narthex, the presence of the *arcosolium* and the link to the northwest chapel with a thematic program where death, resurrection and saintly intercession constitute the dominant themes, suggests that some funerary services and commemorative rituals were likely performed in the narthex.<sup>34</sup> This is also indicated by the presence of a similar fresco decoration in the crypt below the *katholikon*, which had an obvious funerary function.<sup>35</sup>

The dogmatic nature of the Incredulity of the Thomas in the narthex of Hosios Loukas may also be read in light of the monastery's role as an important pilgrimage site. Through the northwest chapel, the narthex is directly linked to the most venerable relic of the church, the body of the Blessed Luke that is positioned in the northeast part of the building (Fig. 6). The question of bodily resurrection and Christ's two natures

<sup>30</sup> L. Ouspensky-V. Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, Crestwood NY 1999, 181, see also L. Ross, *Medieval Art: A Topical Dictionary*, Westport, Conn. 1996, 58–60.

<sup>31</sup> S. Čurčić, *Architectural Significance of Subsidiary Chapels in Middle Byzantine Churches*, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 36/2 (1977) 94–110; I. Sinkević, *Western Chapels in Middle Byzantine Churches: Meaning and Significance*, *Starinar* 52 (2003) 79–91.

<sup>32</sup> Shultz, *The Monastery of St. Luke*, 29; G. Babić, *Les chapelles annexes des églises byzantines*, Paris 1969, 162–167; T. Chatzidakis, *Particularités iconographiques du décor peint des chapelles occidentales de Saint-Luc en Phocide*, *Cahiers Archeologiques* 22 (1972) 87–113; Chatzidakis, *Hosios Loukas*, 58–65. Even though there is no apse or niche in the chapel, scholars have assumed that liturgical services or funerary rites were held here based upon its painted program and the presence of an *arcosolium*. Gordana Babić suggests that, given the size of the chapel, the only service that could take place in it was the *pannychis*, a rite performed at the tombs of the dead. In the context of the monastery the tomb can be related either to the donors or the monks of monasteries, see Babić, *Les chapelles*, 166. The *pannychis* was a ritual honoring the deceased, more on *pannychis*, see M. Arranz, *Les priers presbytérales de la 'Pannychis' de l'ancien Eucologe Byzantine et la 'Panikhida' des défunts*, II, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 41 (1975) 314–343; Connor, *Art and Miracles*, 85–86.

<sup>33</sup> The oldest Byzantine textual witness to funeral rites is the collection of prayers in the eight-century Italo-Byzantine *Euchology* Barberini gr. 336, see E. Velkovska, *Funeral Rites according to the Byzantine Liturgical Sources*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001) 21–51.

<sup>34</sup> Funeral thematic or scenes indicating Christ suffering and Passion were often represented in narthexes since the ninth century. Therefore, the decoration of the narthexes included the images of holy monks and hermits, as well as the Last Judgment and the sufferings of Christ, see B. Todić, *L'influence de la liturgie sur la décoration peinte du narthex de Sopoćani*, *Drevnosussskoe iskusstvo, Rus'-Vizantija-Balkany*, XIII vek, S. Peterburg 1997, 43–59, 51; Tomenković, *Contribution à l'étude du programme du narthex*, 140–154; Babić, *Ikonografski program živopisa*, 112–115. The church of Panagia Ton Chalkeon (ca. 1028) in Thessalonike is an early example with narthex decoration within a funerary context, see A. Tsitouridou, *Die Grabkonzeption des ikonographischen Programms der Kirche Panagia Chalkeon in Thessaloniki*, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32/5 (1982) 435–41.

<sup>35</sup> Connor, *Art and Miracles*, 55.



emphasized in the scene are easily connected with these saintly remains. Relics generate a liminal space linking earth and heaven. Pilgrims could access the body of the saint directly through the narthex without entering the nave. Victor Turner has identified pilgrims as a predominant mode of liminality in medieval Christian culture, noting their frequent changes of social status and geographic location on their journey to holy sites.<sup>36</sup> The presence of the preserved body of a saint, who was understood to be neither fully dead nor alive, functioned as an exemplar that the pilgrim could emulate in hope of entering the heavenly kingdom.

An Anastasis is located on the south section of the east wall in the narthex, next to the Incredulity. Anastasis has been interpreted as an affirmation of the historical reality of the Resurrection and as dogmatic proof of the divine nature of Christ.<sup>37</sup> This receives further confirmation by the representation of Adam's rescue, which provides visual proof of promised salvation. The iconography of the Anastasis, together with that of the Crucifixion provides a key reference for the theme of the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and therefore, the redemption of mankind.<sup>38</sup>

The Anastasis in the narthex of Hosios Loukas is depicted above the door to the southeast subsidiary chapel.<sup>39</sup> The painted program relating to baptism and the discovery of the remains of a water basin strongly indicates that rites connected with the blessing and consecrating of the Holy Water were performed here.<sup>40</sup> John of Damascus in the eighth century described the rite of baptism as the burial of original sin that led to the road to redemption for those that received it, making baptism a

<sup>36</sup> V. Turner – E. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture, Anthropological Perspective*, New York 1978, 4.

<sup>37</sup> The visual representation of the Anastasis developed later in Byzantine art compared to other major scenes in the Christological cycle. The Byzantine church interpreted it as a visual statement of theological, liturgical and historical importance. In the Christological cycle, the image of Anastasis is usually placed at the end of the Passion, alluding to the Resurrection of Christ and promised redemption. The scene of Anastasis is part of the festival cycle, which represents an abbreviated Christological cycle. The tenth-century sanctioned the iconography of Anastasis as the liturgical image for Easter. At this same time, changes occurred within the text of the lectionary Gospel. Henceforth, it would open with the reading for Easter, the most important feast in the liturgical year, rather than the feast of the Annunciation as given in the chronology of events found in the Gospel, see *Kartsonis*, *Anastasis*, 4–7, see also *R. Taft*, *The Byzantine Rite*, Collegeville 1992, 52–56.

<sup>38</sup> *G. H. Beck*, *Kirche und theologische Literature im byzantinische Reich*, Munich 1969, 493.

<sup>39</sup> The presence of a niche on its east wall containing a full-length Virgin and Child beside that of a church hierarch opens the possibility that this space functioned independently as a chapel see, *Babić*, *Les chapelles*, 166; *Chatzidakis*, *Particularités iconographiques du décor peint des chapelles*, 87–113; *Th. Chatzidakis-Bacharas*, *Les peintures murales de Hosios Loukas. Les chapelles occidentales*, Athens 1982, 113.

<sup>40</sup> *G. Millet*, *G. Recherches sur l' iconographie de l' évangélie aux XIV e, XV e et XVI e siècles d'après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont-Athos*, Paris 1916, 186–210. Also see *Chatzidakis-Bacharas*, *Les peintures murales de Hosios Loukas*, 108–109; *Schultz*, *The Monastery of St. Luke*, 33. For the ritual of consecration of the Holy Water, see *A. Schmemmann*, *Of Water and the Spirit*, Crestwood, NY 1974, 40–44. Baptisms usually took place shortly before the reenactment of the raising of Christ within the Easter celebration, during the Paschal Vigil, at least as early as the days of Egeria (fourth century), see *G. Bertonière*, *The Historical Development of the Easter Vigil*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 193 (1972) 21–71, 65. There was a strong connection between Easter and Baptism during the Early Christian period that was manifested in performing baptisms before Eastern; this practice continued in the Middle Byzantine period. For example, in the Constantinopolitan tradition of the ninth and tenth centuries Baptism was the focal point in the first part of the Paschal Vigil, see *Kartsonis*, *Anastasis*, 174.

prerequisite for salvation.<sup>41</sup> Since both baptism and the Resurrection opened the door to eternal life, we may assume that the placement of the Anastasis above the entrance to the southwest chapel corresponded to its function.<sup>42</sup>

The Crucifixion and the Resurrection were regularly combined for the purpose of embodying the story of the Passion. By aligning these two images flanking Christ Pantokrator in the narthex, the creator of the program at Hosios Loukas established a single powerful image of the doctrine of Redemption. The presence of the Incredulity in the narthex decoration further emphasizes the “truth of the Resurrection,” that was already indicated with a selection of subjects from the Passion and Resurrection narratives. The Resurrection of Christ is essential in Christian theology as it indicates both natures of Christ and what is more important: His plan for the salvation of humanity.<sup>43</sup> The church fathers had to prove the corporeal resurrection of the dead, verifying that both Christ’s body and spirit were resurrected. Notably, in his treatise on Christ’s two natures, the ninth-century patriarch of Constantinople Nikephoros commented not only on Christ as a man and God, but also on the previous writings of the early church Fathers that justified His appearance in art: “For this [reason] he can be portrayed, because he is human.”<sup>44</sup> Thus, the material representation of Christ in the Incredulity asserts both His humanity and resurrected status while stressing Thomas’s all-too-human need for sensual confirmation of faith.

By including the scene of the Incredulity of Thomas in the narthex in Hosios Loukas next to the Resurrection and the Anastasis, the creator of the program reminded viewers that Christ’s Resurrection brought with it the promise of the resurrection for all of the faithful. By doubting and overcoming his doubt about Christ’s bodily return from the dead, Thomas functions as an instrument in the divine plan to reveal the truth of the Resurrection; in the words of St. Augustine, “The scars of the wounds in His flesh healed the wounds of unbelief.”<sup>45</sup> Whether going toward the nave or leaving it following the liturgy, those passing through the narthex would encounter the Incredulity as a visual synonym for the Resurrection. According to Kartsonis, the Anastasis was used as an analog of the Resurrection. The inclusion of two images with similar symbolic meanings here raises the question of the relation between the two scenes.<sup>46</sup> Polyvios Konis has suggested that when a cycle is inspired by the Great

<sup>41</sup> *John of Damascus*, *De fide orthodoxa* PG 94, 117f, John of Damascus, *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers, Volume 9: Hiliary of Poitiers, John of Damascus*, Second Series, ed. P. Schaff – H. Wace, Peabody, Mass. 1994, 724, see also *Kartsonis*, *Anastasis*, 175; *J.T. O’Connor*, *The Hidden Manna: A Theology of the Eucharist* San Francisco 2005, 77.

<sup>42</sup> The standing figures of St. Constantine and Helena with a triumphal cross between them is depicted across from the Anastasis, further underscoring the importance of the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

<sup>43</sup> *S. Price*, *Latin Christian Apologetics: Minacius Felix, Tertullian and Cyprian, Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews and Christians* eds. *M. Edwards – M. Goodman – S. Price*, Oxford 1999, 103–129, 121–122.

<sup>44</sup> *Nikephoros, patriarch of Constantinople*, *Argumentum: De Christo perfecto homine simul et Deo perfecto* (Objections: That Christ remained a perfect Man and a perfect God), *J. B. Pitra*, *Spicilegium solesmense complectens sanctorum patrum scriptorumque ecclesiasticorum anecdota hactenus opera, selecta e graecis orientalibusque et latinis codicibus*, 1, Paris 1852, 352–65, as quoted and translated in *Konis*, *From the Resurrection to the Ascension*, 185.

<sup>45</sup> *Saint Augustine*, *Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons*, tran. M. Sarah Muldowney, New York 1959, 266.

<sup>46</sup> *Kartsonis*, *Anastasis*, 227–236, 219.

Feasts of the church, the Anastasis commemorates Easter and the Incredulity that of Thomas' Sunday and the appropriate services.<sup>47</sup> The inclusion of both subjects at Hosios Loukas should, however, be viewed as confirmation of Christ's bodily Resurrection and His dual nature, which is implied in the representation of the Anastasis and confirmed by the Incredulity. While the Anastasis shows Christ's divine nature and spiritual resurrection, Thomas's desire for physical proof serves to verify His dual nature and bodily redemption.

The scene of the Washing of the feet is depicted directly across from the Incredulity of Thomas on the north wall, above the *arcosolium*. It is also the first scene to be observed when entering the narthex from the south side (Fig. 7). The ritual of the Washing of the Apostles' Feet by Christ took place during the last Supper on the night before Christ was crucified.<sup>48</sup> John's recording of the event does not provide a clear picture of whether the Washing of the Feet occurred prior to or following the meal (John 13:14–17). If it happened before, as was the custom since Abraham's time, the ritual may be understood as preparation for the Last Supper and thus, symbolically, the Eucharist.<sup>49</sup> This Eucharistic aspect of the Washing of the Feet is suggested by its being juxtaposed with that of the Last Supper in the narthex of the Daphni monastery.<sup>50</sup>

In the Washing of the Feet, Christ touches Peter's feet, highlighting His intimate connection with the apostles. With this gesture Christ demonstrates humility but also

<sup>47</sup> *Konis*, From the Resurrection to the Ascension, 317.

<sup>48</sup> In the canonical Gospels, only John (13:3–11) provides an account of this event. This subject was often illustrated in Byzantine art for its liturgical significance see, *G. Schiller*, *Iconography of Christian art*, vol. 2 tr. *J. Seligman*, New York 1971, 41–48, figs. 131, 133 and 135, see also *Muriki*, *Nea Moni*, 181. The ritual itself was established early, likely in the late third or early fourth century. It became one of the most widely disseminated ceremonies in the Middle Ages as an example of humility and charity, and acquired a significant role in monastic life as demonstrated by the brother's washing each others feet on Saturday nights, see *L. Petit*, *Le lavement des pieds le Jeudi-Saint dans l'église Grecque*, *Échos D'Orient* 3 (1899–1900) 321–333. *Pétridès* gives a detailed description of the ritual, chiefly based on the *typika*, and argues that the rite was introduced to Byzantium from Jerusalem in the tenth century, see *S. Pétridès*, *La cérémonie du lavement des pieds à Jérusalem*, *Échos D'Orient* 14 (1911) 89–99. A ceremony is described for Holy Thursday in which the emperor washed the feet of twelve of the *paupers* of Constantinople by Pseudo-Kodinos in a fourteenth century treatise see, *Pseudo-Kodinos*, *Traité des Offices*, ed. and trans. *J. Verpaux*, Paris 1966, 228f. The ritual occurred in monastic contexts in the eleventh century according to evidence from the *Euchologion*, the prayer book for the Byzantine liturgy, which describes the Holy Thursday liturgy. The text itself goes back at least to the second half of the eighth century, for the text of the *Euchologion* see, *J. Goar*, *Euchologion sive rituale graecorum*, Venetiis, 1730. For dates see, *V. Gurewich*, *Observations on the Iconography of the Wound in Christ's Side, with Special Reference to Its Position*, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 20 3/4 (1957) 358–362; *Petit*, *Le lavement des pieds*, 321. The inclusion of this motif in the decorative program in all three Middle Byzantine monasteries – Hosios Loukas, Nea Moni and Daphni – has inspired some scholars to connect its representation to the actual ritual reenactment performed in these narthexes. Although the imagery used could mime the actual ritual and its prototype, it is not necessary that the scenes in the narthex were inspired by the ritual itself. It is more likely that they confirmed or added to the significance to the rituals enacted in this space. For the reenactment of the ceremony, see *W. Tronzo*, *Mimesis in Byzantium: Notes Toward a History of the Function of the Image*, *Anthropology and aesthetic* 25 (1994) 61–77, 61–63. For the variety of opinions on this topic, see *C. Barber*, *Mimesis and Memory in the Narthex Mosaics at the Nea Moni, Chios*, *Art History* 24/3 (2001) 323–337; there is no strong evidence that the service was performed only in narthexes, see *Marinis*, *Architecture and Ritual*, 72–73.

<sup>49</sup> *E. H. Kantorowicz*, *The Baptism of the Apostles*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 9/10 (1956) 203–253, 210–214.

<sup>50</sup> *Troznio*, *Mimesis in Byzantium*, 64.

His readiness for sacrifice. It also stresses the role of sensual contact with Christ that is explicitly thematized by Thomas' doubt. A similar confirmation of Christ's embodiment via direct contact is conveyed in the scene of Crucifixion, where the blood from Christ's wound runs over Adam's skull, cleansing it from sin. The association of the Holy Blood and touch recurs in the scene of the Anastasis where Christ takes Adam's hand, rescuing him from Hades and displaying the wound on His hand as a sign of His Sacrifice and divine nature.

In the Incredulity, Thomas approaches Christ but does not touch His wound.<sup>51</sup> This lends an ambiguous meaning to the scene. Whether Thomas actually touched the wound or not, Christ by making it available for direct contact affirmed His human nature. The scene accurately follows the text in which the question of whether contact was achieved or not is left open (John 20:27–29).<sup>52</sup> Thomas' need manifests a desire for physical confirmation of Christ's material survival of death.<sup>53</sup> This emphasis on subjective feeling is a piece with a more humanistic approach in art and reflected the growing appetite for empirical knowledge that followed the Iconoclastic period. In this sense, one may argue that Thomas' wish to touch was more for the viewer's sake than for his own.<sup>54</sup>

The implicit opposition of touch and vision in the Incredulity raises the question of the role of perception in knowledge. Although vision was thought to occupy the highest position in the hierarchy of the senses during the medieval period, according to Jeffrey Hamburger, believers insisted "on the truth as something material, sensible, even tangible."<sup>55</sup> As Bisera Pencheva has noted, our experience necessarily involves "enriching the optical apprehension with the auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile experience of the object."<sup>56</sup>

The imbrication of tactility and desire in the Incredulity can be connected with its Eucharistic symbolism. Vision alone is insufficient to capture the mysterious transformation of ordinary bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.<sup>57</sup> An unseen reality manifests itself and is consumed through the act of Holy Communion.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>51</sup> A. Murray, *Doubting Thomas in Medieval Exegesis and Art*, Rome 2006, 36–40.

<sup>52</sup> "27: Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing; 28: And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. 29: Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." The Holy Bible, authorized King James version, Grand Rapids, MI 1998, 776.

<sup>53</sup> W. G. Most, *Doubting Thomas*, Cambridge 2005, 55.

<sup>54</sup> L. Brubaker, *Vision and meaning in ninth-century Byzantium: image as exegesis in the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus*, Cambridge 1999; see also A. P. Kazhdan – A. W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Berkeley 1985; *Sinkević*, *Nerezi*, 57, n. 190, 191.

<sup>55</sup> Benay, *The Pursuit of Truth and the Doubting Thomas*, 11–12; J. Hamburger, *Seeing and Believing: The Suspicion of Sight and the Authentication of Vision in Late Medieval Art, Imagination und Wirklichkeit: Zum Verhältnis von mentalen und realen Bildern in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit*, eds. A. Nova – K. Kruger, Mainz 2000, 47–70.

<sup>56</sup> B. V. Pentcheva, *Ethnology Moving Eyes: Surface and Shadow in the Byzantine Mixed-Media Relief Icon*, *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 55–56 (2009) 222–234, 233.

<sup>57</sup> On Eucharistic *synaesthesia*, see B. V. Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium*, University Park 2010, 41–43.

<sup>58</sup> Maximus the Confessor (sixth-seventh century) commented on the Eucharist: "By adoption and grace it is possible for them [the participants in the Eucharist] to be and to be called gods, because

Ingesting the Eucharist, the true believer is united with the Body of Christ and His church. Leo Tuscus offers a description of the communion of the clergy from the twelfth century: "Bowing before the holy altar simultaneously, each eats the flesh of the Lord. In like manner they extend the chalice to one another in order to drink the blood of the Lord."<sup>59</sup> Even though this commentary belongs to a later period, it provides testimony of the tactile and sensual aspect of this ancient ritual, emphasizing the communicant's physical contact with the transformed bread and wine. Thomas' physical inspection of Christ's wound may therefore be likened to the believers' touch and taste of the holy sacrament during the liturgy confirming Christ's Real Presence. In this regard, Thomas' lack of belief may be viewed in a positive light as a reminder to worshippers that the supreme exercise of the Sacrament's power lies in the consecration of Christ's body and thus the perpetuating of the work of the redemption.<sup>60</sup> By pulling aside his tunic to expose His wound, Christ presents Thomas the opportunity to penetrate His flesh. This gesture amounts to an invitation to enter and become one with God through His son. Linked to the liminal space of the narthex and positioned above a threshold to the church, the body of Christ is here equated with the actual space of the building and the social entity of the Church.

The connection between the Incredulity in the narthex with the Eucharist could be further extended in relation to the service of *diaklysmos* (διακλυσμός), which may have taken place in the space of the narthex. The term *diaklysmos* is mentioned in numerous eleventh and twelfth century *typika*. The *Hypotyposis* of Evergetis describes monks participating in a *diaklysmos* in the narthex of the church immediately after the Divine Liturgy while they awaited summons to *trapeza*.<sup>61</sup> Another document from the Virgin of Kecharitomene monastery recalls a similar situation, mentioning that the nuns waited in the narthex for the call to *trapeza* after the Divine Liturgy, although it does not mention the *diaklysmos*. Even if the *diaklysmos* is not directly cited in the context of *trapeza* it deals with food during Lent, which occurs on the eve of Easter Sunday.<sup>62</sup>

As Gail Nicholl has noted, according to the texts of *typika* and the Evergetis *Hypotyposis*, there are two purposes for *diaklysmos*: first, gathering monks together in order to share bread and wine after the liturgy and before proceeding to the refectory; and second, as a meal on days when services took place back-to-back, not allowing

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all of God completely fills them, leaving nothing in them empty of his presence, *Maximus the Confessor*, *Mystagogia* PG 91, 697A, as quoted in *C. Barber*, *From Transformation to Desire: Art and Worship after Byzantine Iconoclasm*, *Art Bulletin* 75/1 (1993) 7–16, 14.

<sup>59</sup> The commentary comes from Leo's translation of the Liturgy of John Chrysostom, see *A. Jacob*, *La Traduction de la Liturgie de saint Jean Chrysostome* par Léon Toscan, *Orientalia christiana periodica* 32 (1966) 111–162, 160. For translation in English, see *S. E. J. Gerstel*, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries. Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary*, Seattle and London 1999, 57.

<sup>60</sup> *H. de Lubac*, sj, *The Splendor of the Church*, trans. Michael Mason, San Francisco 1986 143–51.

<sup>61</sup> *Milanović*, *Kultno-liturgijske osnove za izučavanje ikonografskog programa u pripratama*, 323–341. Paul Gautier translates *diaklysmos* as a light meal made up of bread, water and wine see, *P. Gautier*, *Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator*, *Revue des études byzantines* 32 (1974) 1–44, see also *Nicholl*, *A Contribution to the Archaeological Interpretation of Typika*, 288; The term *diaklysmos* in the *typikon* of Evergetis monastery is replaced by the word customary, see, *Byzantine monastic foundation documents* 2, 478.

<sup>62</sup> See chapter 47 of the *typikon* of the Kecharitomene monastery dealing with food during Lent. Here it occurs on the eve of Easter Sunday, when the nuns have been fasting see, *Byzantine monastic foundation documents* 2, 691.

time for a proper meal.<sup>63</sup> There is an additional, third possible purpose for the ritual. In the *typikon* of the Pantokrator monastery, it is connected with the commemoration of the founder and the participants are not only monks, but the laity as well.<sup>64</sup>

In some texts, *diaklysmos* and eulogia overlapped. Gabriel Bertonière discusses the connection between them, seeing *eulogia* to be the service that took place after the Eucharist and included eating blessed bread that had not been consecrated.<sup>65</sup> The *eulogia* is identified as an eleventh-century ritual of monastic origin with a mainly commemorative purpose.<sup>66</sup> The *diaklysmos* and the eulogia were communal rituals and required a suitable location. The inclusion of a meal combined with the practice of gathering before proceeding to refectory, made the narthex an appropriate setting.

One can imagine monks gathering in the narthex of Hosios Loukas after the liturgy waiting to proceed to the refectory just across the south door.<sup>67</sup> Scholars have linked decorative programs of narthexes with those of refectories, aligning the Eucharist and the relationship between altar, narthex and refectory.<sup>68</sup> This connection helps to explain the two-way communication of the viewers in the narthex. Liminality, as a sign of transformation, is emphasized in the Incredulity of Thomas through the presence of the resurrected body of Christ positioned on the threshold of a doorway showing the way of salvation to the monks. This aspect accentuated the liminal status of the narthex doors as a border zone between the earthly and heavenly realms.

If the doors were part of the original construction of the narthex, one may assume that the Incredulity of Thomas was placed directly above the door on the south side in order to mime the closed doors in the center of the composition and to indicate the liminal position of the scene and its transformative symbolism (Fig. 8). The Incredulity of Thomas is likewise positioned above a door in the later church of the Ascension of Christ in the Mileševa monastery from ca. 1228–1234. The monumental scene of the Incredulity is depicted on the west wall, just above the door leading from the narthex to the exonarthex.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>63</sup> *Nicholl*, A Contribution to the Archaeological Interpretation of typika, 292, see also *Milanović*, Kultno-liturgijske osnove za izučavanje ikonografskog programa u pripratama, 325.

<sup>64</sup> The *diaklysmos* is usually celebrated at the end of the procession (*liti*) and included bread and wine, see *Nicholl*, A Contribution to the Archaeological Interpretation of Typika, 291–292.

<sup>65</sup> *Bertonière*, The Historical Development of the Easter Vigil, 191. *Tomeković* attributes eucharistic meaning to the diaklysmos and associates it with painted (mosaic) decoration in some narthexes. *Tomenković*, Contribution à l'étude du programme du narthex, 147–149.

<sup>66</sup> *H. Wýbrew*, The Orthodox Liturgy, Yonkers, NY 1990, 137.

<sup>67</sup> For more on the development of the monastery refectory and its place in monastic life, see *S. Popović*, The Trapeza in Cenobitic Monasteries: Architectural and Spiritual Contexts, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 52 (1998) 281–303.

<sup>68</sup> *Tomeković*, Contribution à l'étude du programme du narthex, 147–149; *Z. Ivković*, Živopis iz XIV veka u manastiru Zrce, *Zograf* 11(1980) 83–95; *P. Miljković-Peppek*, Smisao ikonografskog programa u južnom tremu crkve u Veljusi, *Zograf* 13 (1982) 36–42. On the Eucharistic subject painted in refectories, see *J. J. Yiannias*, The Palaologan Refectory Program at Apollonia, The Twilight of Byzantium. Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire, eds. *S. Ćurčić – D. Mouriki*, Princeton 1991, 161–187.

<sup>69</sup> On the Mileševa program and possible reasons for inclusion of the scene of the Incredulity see *S. Tomenković*, Les saints ermites et moines dans le décor du narthex de Mileševa, Mileševa u istoriji srpskog naroda. Međunarodni naučni skup povodom sedam i po vekova postojanja, juni 1985, ed. *V.J. Djurić*, Beograd 1987, 51–66. For the date of the church and its painting see, *G. Subotić – Lj. Maksimović*, Sveti Sava i podizanje Mileševe (Saint Sava and the construction of Mileševa), Vizantijski svet na Balkanu I eds.

The importance and function of the south doors in narthexes is not completely clear. Jelena Bogdanović describes several churches in Serbia that have a south door in their narthexes, noting that some of them probably had a prominent function, such as those in the Dečani monastery (fourteenth century) above which is placed an important inscription.<sup>70</sup> The symbolic and liminal meaning of narthex doors is stressed in the words of Symeon of Thessaloniki (*ca.* 1381–1429) who compared the priest's entrance to the narthex with the descent of Christ into Hades.<sup>71</sup>

The Incredulity of Hosios Loukas asserts that to believe is to enter into direct communion with Christ and to be absorbed within the collective social corpus of the faithful. When considered within the larger decorative program and the functional connotations of the narthex and its related spaces, the mosaic reflects, on a metaphorical level, the bi-directional nature of the literal journey of the believer. The visitor enters the actual church, partakes of the Eucharist and thereby becomes one with Christ. Exiting, he or she carries Christ out into the exterior world via the consecrated bread and wine within his or her body. Thomas, having consumed Christ's flesh at the Last Supper and needing confirmation of His Resurrection, is offered the opportunity for a reciprocal journey to enter Him. Positioned above the door of the church the Incredulity therefore forms a complement to the Eucharist and a sign that identifies the path to the altar and redemption as a two-way street.

Corresponding with the liminality of the narthex and being placed above a door, the scene emphasizes the specific role of Thomas as offering empirical, sensual confirmation of spiritual belief. The doors behind Christ are the entrance to eternal life that will remain closed to the unbeliever. By showing his wound Christ is presenting the way for the believers to follow Him on a road that is traversable only by true faith. At the same time, the doors intimate Christ's promised return when He will open the heavens and bring about the corporeal Resurrection of the faithful. Thomas' desire to touch the body of Christ here links the sacrament of the Eucharist and the dogmatic truth of Christ's dual nature. After Iconoclasm, the viewers' emotional response became an important part of how one should observe art. The Incredulity of Thomas in the narthex of Hosios Loukas represents an image through which believers could find confirmation of their faith in intensely sensual terms.

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*B. Krsmanović – Lj. Maksimović – R. Radić*, Beograd 2012, 97–106, see also, *B. Todić*, Novo tumačenje programa rasporeda fresaka u Mileševi, Na tragovima Vojislava J. Djurića. Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti i Makedonska akademija na naukite i umetnostite, ed. *D. Medaković – C. Grozdanov*, Beograd, 2011, 55–69, 64.

<sup>70</sup> *J. Bogdanović*, Prostorni sklop crkve Svetog Georgija u Budimlju i srednjovekovne graditeljske tradicije, Djurdjevi Stupovi i Budimljanska eparhija: zbornik radova, ed. *M. Radujko*, Beograd 2011, 95–107, 103.

<sup>71</sup> *Symeon of Thessaloniki*, De sacra precatone 339 (PG 155:613C) as quoted in *Kalopissi-Verte*, The Proskynetaria of the Templon and Narthex, 130.

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## НА ПРАГУ ИЗВЕСНОСТИ: ПРЕДСТАВА НЕВЕРСТВА ТОМИНОГ У ПРИПРАТИ КАТОЛИКОНА МАНАСТИРА ХОСИОС ЛУКАС

Манастирски комплекс Хосиос Лукас налази се у Фокиди у централној Грчкој. Католикон манастира је највероватније изграђен у првој четвртини

једанаестог века. Западни део католикона се завршава припратом или нартексом. Изнад јужног улаза у припрати насликана је композиција Неверовања Томиног.

Рад се бави проучавањем иконографских, литургијских и догматских аспеката композиције Неверовања Томиног у оквиру припрате католикона манастира Хосиос Лукас као транзиционалног или лиминалног простора, и у контексту остале мозаичке декорације припрате. Посебно се сагледава однос слике и посматрача у постиконокластичком периоду, када се више пажње посвећује управо емоционалном карактеру слике и емпатичкој реакцији на исту.

Због недостатка типика цркве и друге релевантне документације, тешко је одредити ритуалну намену припрате у католикону манастира Хосиос Лукас. На основу типика других манастира једанаестог и дванаестог века може се извести закључак да су вероватно било обреда фунерарног карактера или повезани са ритуалом Освећења воде. Представа Христа Пантократора изнад централних врата, која из припрате воде у наос цркве, има есхатолошку симболику, како на улазу у сам храм, тако и приликом напуштања.

У догматском смислу, Неверовање Томино се повезује са потврдом Христове двостурке природе, која је наглашена управо представом сцена из циклуса Христових страдања, Распећа и Силазка у ад на источном зиду припрате, а изнад улаза у бочне капеле. Томина сумња и Христова понуда да се његово тело додирне наглашавају телесно васкрснуће тела, док представа заворених врата иза Христа, кроз која је он управо прошао, потврђује његову божанску природу.

Инсистирање на додиру укључује потребу коришћења и осталих чула у сврху прихватања истине, тј. потврде обећаног спасења људи у Христу од греха и смрти. Додир или физички контакт је врло важан елемент у овире свете тајне причешћа, када верник прима освећени хлеб и вино, чијим кушањем постаје део Христове цркве, примајући у себе тело и крв Христову. Сходно томе додир који је круцијалан у сцени Неверовања Томиног у својству потврде Христове двостурке природе може се идејно повезати са евхаристијом. Укључивањем сцене Прања ногу на северном зиду припрате, као историјске припреме за Тајну вечеру, даље сугерише идејну везу између евхаристије, која се одвија на олтару, и декорације припрате.

Неке ритуалне радње које су се можда одвијале у оквиру припрате такође сугеришу на њену симболичку повезаност са евхаристијом. Наиме, ритуал дијаклисме, као дељење монасима мале количине хлеба и вина, од благословених али неосвештених дарова са евхаристије, често се одиграва управо у простору припрате. Овај ритуал уз благослов обично је следио после завршетка литургије, а пре позива монасима на редован обед у трпезарији. Декоративан програм трпезарија у средњем веку често је тематски био повезан са концептом евхаристије. Окупљени монаси у припрати католикона манастира Хосиос Лукас највероватније су до трпезарије одлазили кроз јужна врата припрате изнад којих је сцена Неверовања Томиног собзиром да се трпезарија налазила са те стране цркве. На овај начин, кроз припрату, а посредством симболичког значења сцене Неверовања Томиног и потврде Христове двостурке природе, створена је веза између божанског обреда у олтару, и земаљског у трпезарији.

Улогу припрате и њене мозаичке декорације не треба посматрати само као транзициони простор који ће верника духовно припремити за оно што га очекује у светом простору цркве већ га треба сагледати као битног преносиоца поруке и подсећања на испуњење обећања Божјег о спасењу и Царству небеском при излазу из наоса и из цркве. Наиме, оно што је антиципирано да ће се догодити на олтару, а то је евхаристија, тј поновна жртва Христа за спас људског рода, своју потврду добија при изласку из цркве, у припрати, и њеном програму, а посебно у сцени Неверовања Томиног, као потврди васкрснућа Христовог и догматску истину о његовој двострукој природи.



Fig. 1. The exterior of the narthex, Hosios Loukas, *katholikon*, view from the south



Fig. 2. The Incredulity of Thomas, Hosios Loukas, *katholikon*, narthex, south wall



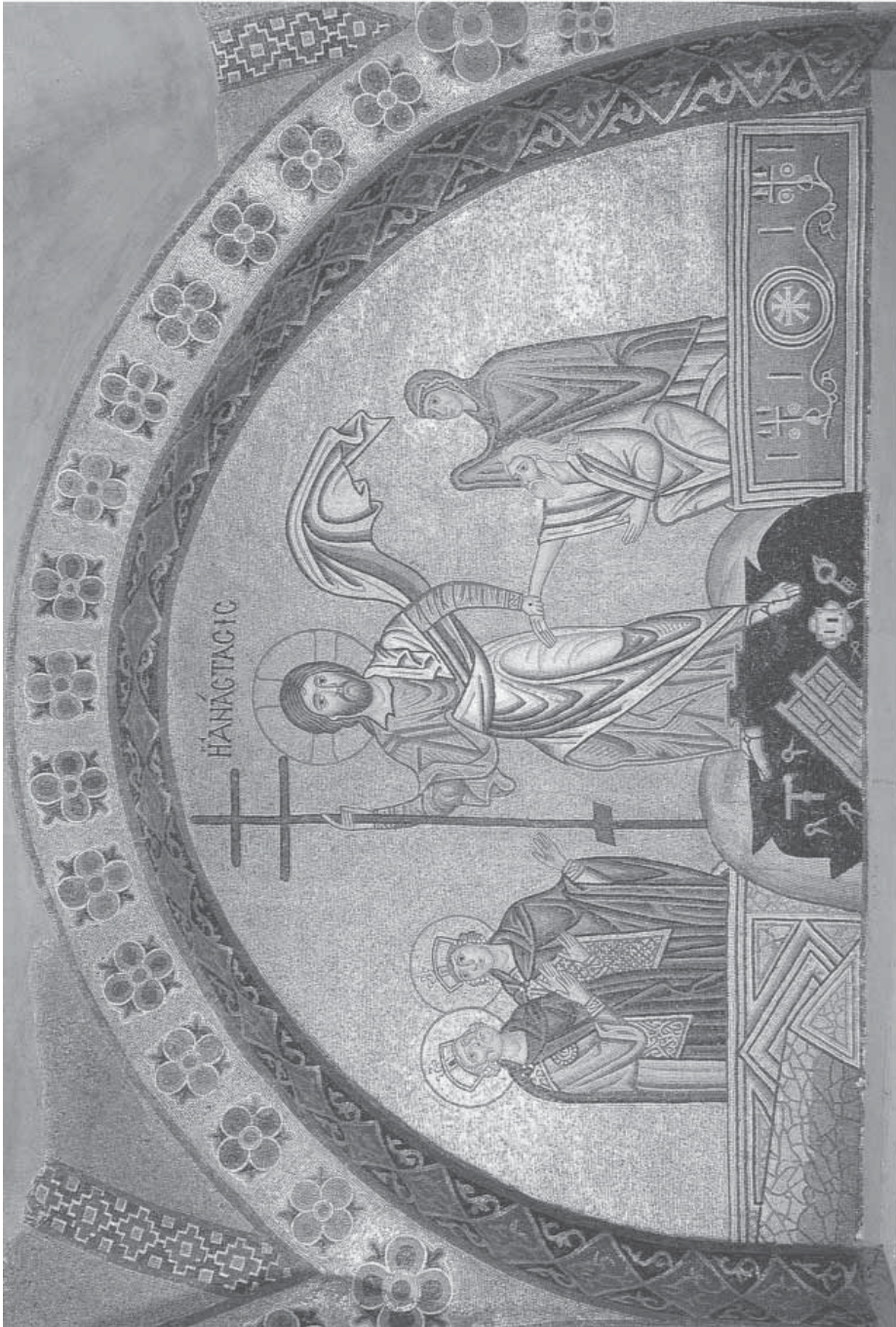


Fig. 3. The Anastasis, Hosios Loukas, *katholikon*, narthex, southeast wall

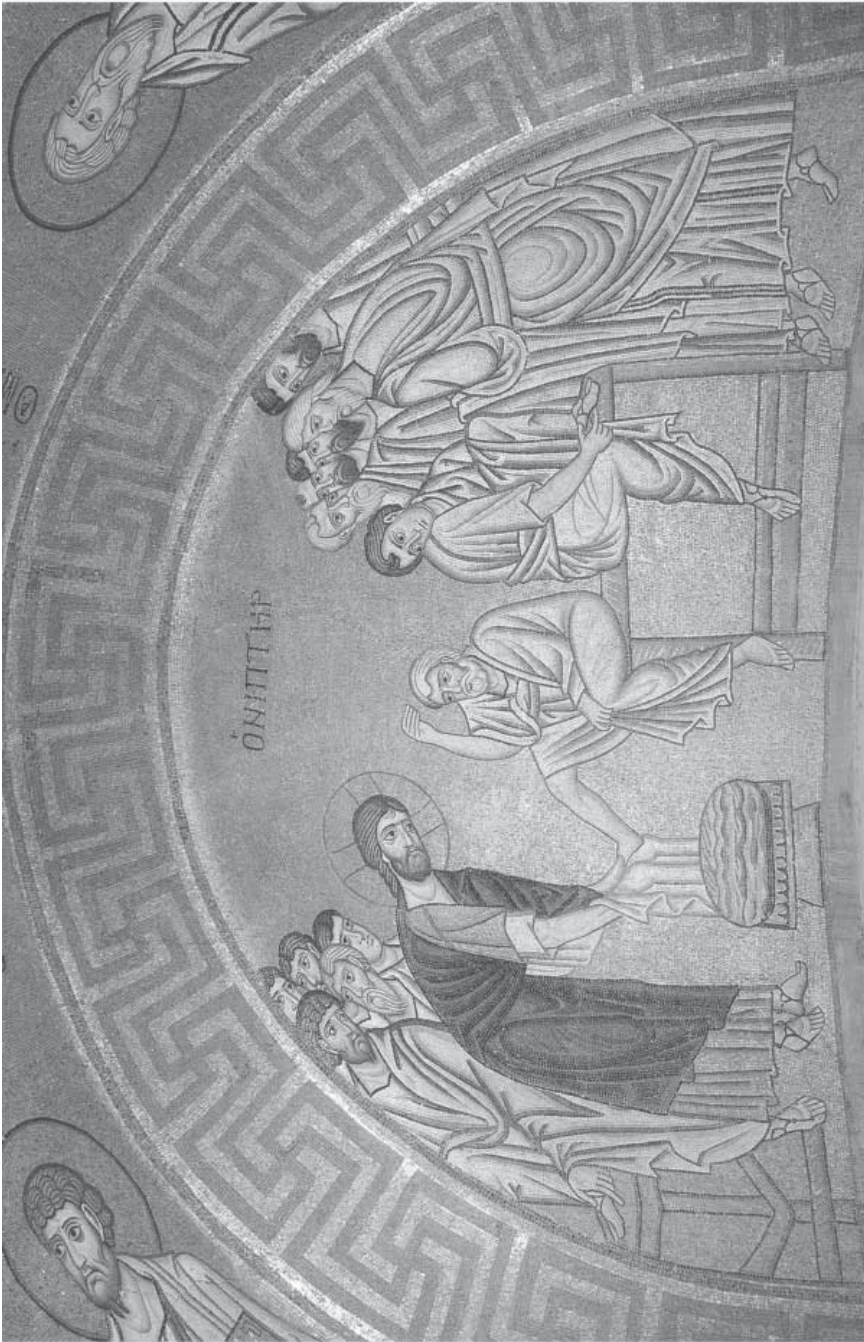


Fig. 4. The Washing of the feet, Hosios Loukas, *katholikon*, narthex, north wall



Fig. 5. The Pantokrator, Hosios Loukas, *katholikon*, narthex, above the Royal door



Fig. 6. The northwest chapel and relics of the Blessed Luke, Hosios Loukas, *katholikon*.  
(Photo by J. Bogdanović)

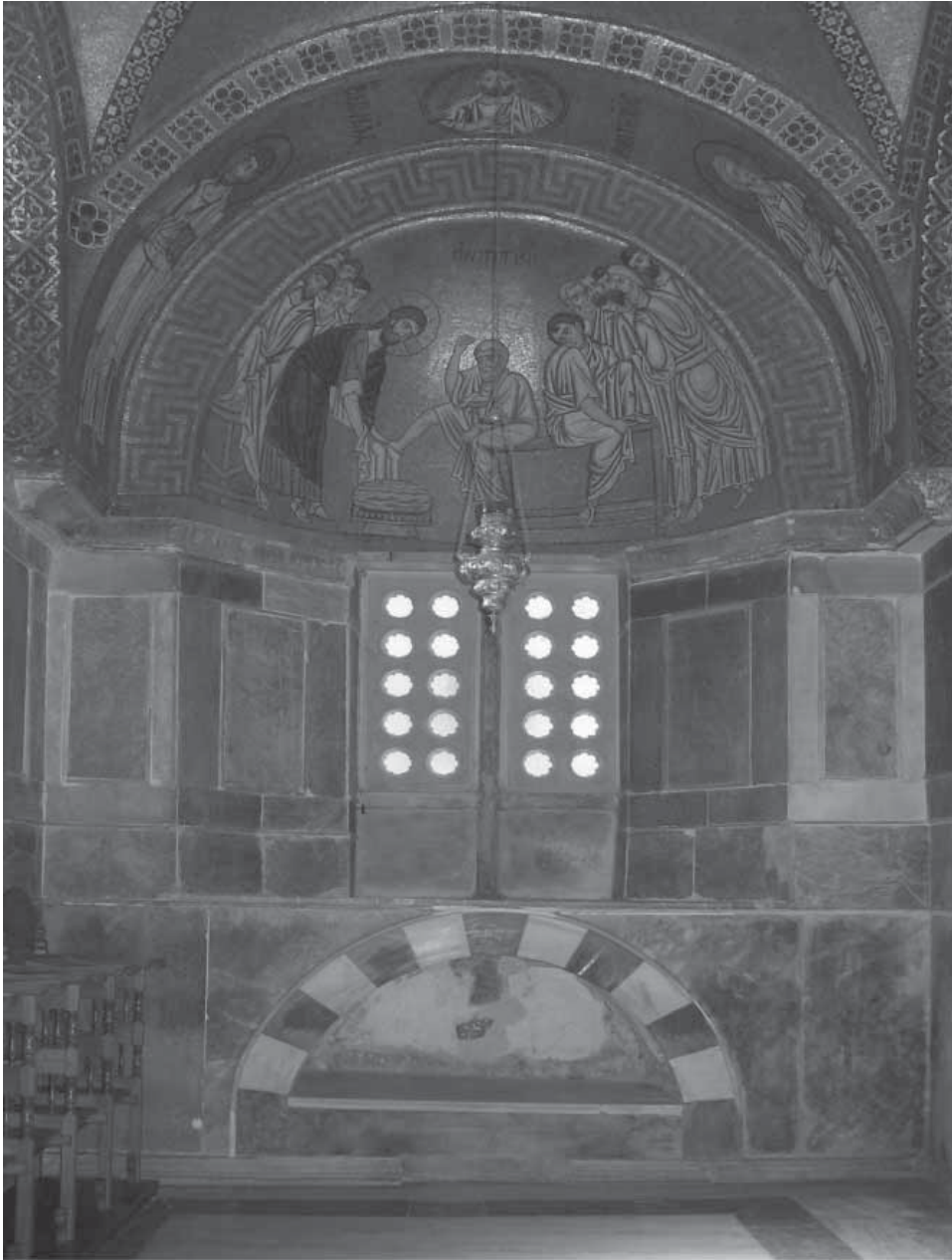


Fig. 7. The narthex interior, view toward north, Hosios Loukas, *katholikon*  
(Photo by J. Bogdanović)

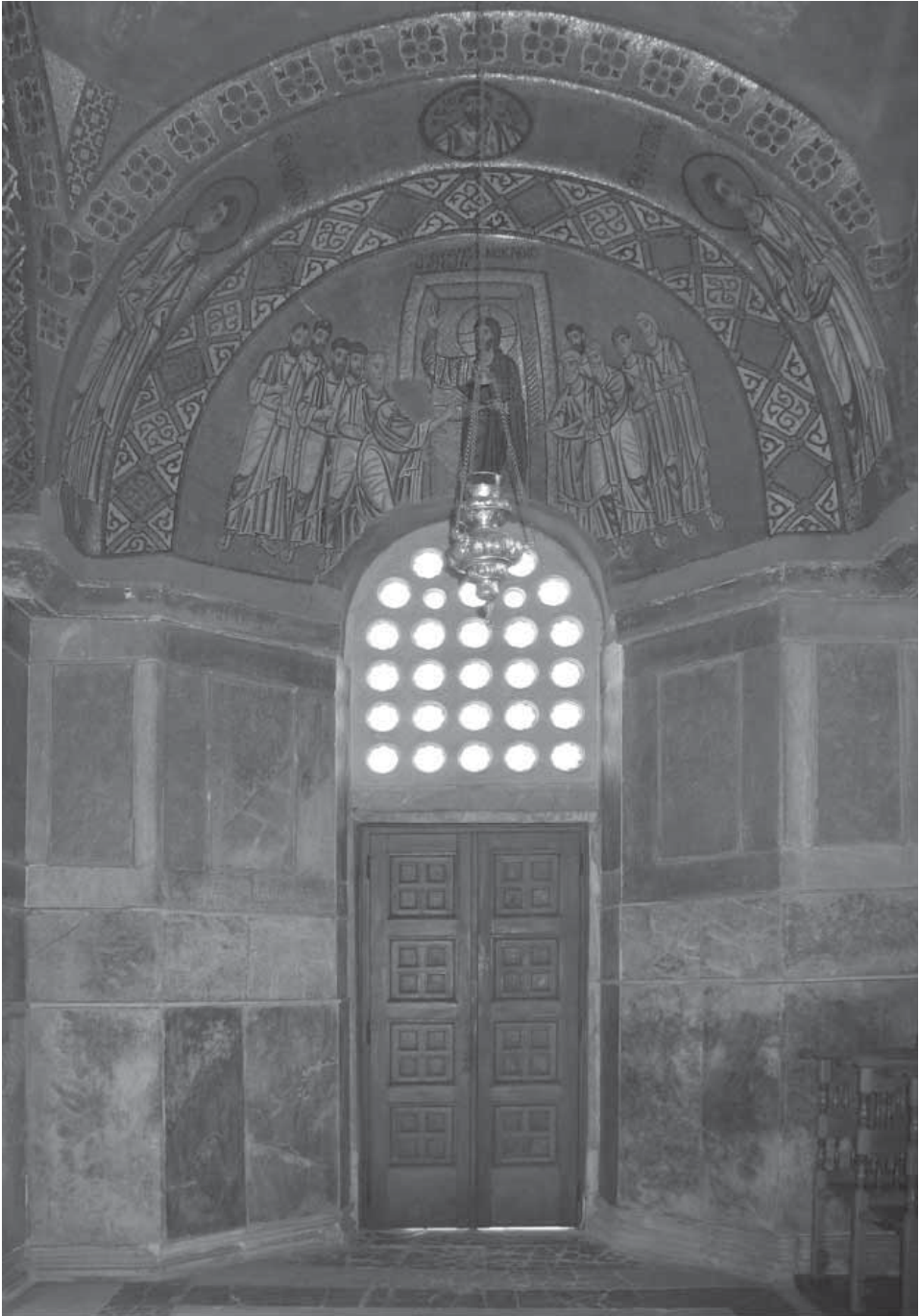


Fig. 8. The narthex interior, view toward south, Hosios Loukas, *katholikon*.  
(Photo by J. Bogdanović)