

Addendum 1: Catalogue of Icons Painted by Sylvester of Antioch or Attributed to Him

This is a catalogue of all the icons painted by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch or attributed to him that we know of at this time and we have had access to, accompanied by descriptions and sources (if available). Full references to the sources cited here are included in the *Bibliography*. Figure numbers are indicated at the end of each description, wherever a reproduction was accessible to us.

A Icons painted by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch

A.1 *The Mother of God Hope and Shelter of the Christians*

Description: The Mother of God enthroned, with Christ child and two angels holding scrolls.

Dimensions: 103 x 79.75 cm.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field of the icon, in Greek: “ΜΡ ΘΥ”, “Ἡ Ἐλπίς καὶ Σκέπη τῶν Χριστιανῶν”, “ΙΣ ΧΣ”, “Ο ΞΝ”, Μ[ιχαήλ], Γ[αβριήλ]. Words from the *Akathistos Hymn* are inscribed on the scrolls held by the angels: “Χαῖρε ὅτι ὑπάρχεις”, “Χαῖρε ὅτι βαστάζεις”. A better-quality photograph obtained from Christie’s auction house proves that the inscription is in Greek and the year is 1726. The Greek inscription can be reconstructed as: “Χεῖρ Σιλβέστρου ἐλέω Θεοῦ Πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας Ἀφκς’” (“By the hand of Silvestros, by the mercy of God, Patriarch of Antioch”). The auction catalogue states: “By the hand of Silvestros, with the mercy of God, Patriarch of Antioch, 1727” and does not mention the language of the inscription – Greek. The photograph shows no trace of the Arabic inscription placed in the lower part of the 20th-century copy of the icon.

Provenance: The icon used to be in the church of Our Lady and Saint Nicholas (al-Balad), Tripoli, Lebanon, where an almost identical copy of it, dating from the 20th century, is preserved.¹ In the beginning of the 19th century, it was transferred from the iconostasis to one of the lateral walls of the church. It was sold by Nicolas C. Vafopoulos on September 29, 1964, in Beirut, Lebanon, to an unknown buyer. The icon was accompanied by a certificate of expertise written by the dealer Nicolas C. Vafopoulos when he sold it in 1964. It was sold again as item no. 90, at Christie’s

¹ The copy has been identified as a 20th-century painting by Fayad, *Οι ζωγράφοι Μιχαήλ Πολυχρόνιος καὶ Μιχαήλ Ελευθέριος*, p. 386–388.

auction no. 7522, *Icons and Artefacts from the Orthodox World*, in London, on June 11, 2007, for £66,000.

Present location: Private European collection, location unknown.

Sources: S. Agémian, “Les icônes melkites”, in *Lumières de l’Orient Chrétien. Icônes de la collection Abou Adal*, Beirut-Geneva, 1997, p. 143; Christie’s, *Icons and Artefacts from the Orthodox World*, p. 62; <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-4930097>.

Illustration: Christie’s, *Icons and Artefacts from the Orthodox World*, p. 62. See Fig. 39.

A.2 *Jesus Christ Pantokrator*

Description: Jesus Christ enthroned, with an open book and two angels holding scrolls.

Dimensions: 103 x 79.75 cm.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: “ΙΣ ΧΣ”, “Ο ΩΝ”. The angels’ scrolls contain texts from the Doxology of the Orthodox Church services: “Υμνοῦμεν Σε [...]”² “Κύριε Βασιλεῦ”. The inscriptions on the book are: “Εγώ εἰμι ὁ Ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν ὁ ἐκ τοῦ Οὐρανοῦ καταβάς· ἐάν τις” (John 6, 51: “I am the living Bread which came from Heaven: if any [man]”), “Εγώ εἰμι τὸ Φῶς τοῦ κόσμου· ὁ ἀκολουθῶν Ἐμοὶ οὐ μὴ [...]” (John 8, 12: “I am the Light of the World: he that followeth me shall not [...]). No trace is visible in the available photograph of the Arabic inscription present in the lower part on the 20th-century copy. A better-quality photograph obtained from Christie’s auction house proves that the inscription is in Greek and the year is 1726 (see B.1 below). The Greek inscription can be reconstructed as: “Χεῖρ Σιλβέστρου ἐλέω Θεοῦ Πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας, αψκς’” (“By the hand of Silvestros, by the mercy of God, Patriarch of Antioch”). The auction catalogue states: “By the hand of Silvestros, with the mercy of God, Patriarch of Antioch, 1727” and does not mention the language of the inscription – Greek. The photograph shows no trace of the Arabic inscription placed in the lower part of the 20th-century copy of the icon.

Provenance: The icon used to be in the church of Our Lady and Saint Nicholas (al-Balad), Tripoli, Lebanon, where an almost identical copy of it, dating from the 20th century, is preserved.³ In the beginning of the 19th century, it was transferred from the iconostasis to one of the lateral walls of the church. It was sold by Nicolas C. Vafopoulos on September 29, 1964, in Beirut, Lebanon, to an unknown buyer. The icon was accompanied by a certificate of expertise written by the dealer Nicolas C.

² Another three letters, probably “EYB”.

³ The copy is identified as a 20th century painting, see Fayad, *Οι ζωγράφοι Μιχαήλ Πολυχρόνιος και Μιχαήλ Ελευθέριος*, p. 386–388.

Vafopoulos when he sold it. It was sold again, as item no. 91, at Christie's auction no. 7522, *Icons and Artefacts from the Orthodox World*, in London, on June 11, 2007, for £54,000.

Present location: Private European collection, location unknown.

Sources: Agémian, "Les icônes melkites", p. 143; Christie's, *Icons and Artefacts from the Orthodox World*, p. 63; <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-4930098>.

Illustration: Christie's, *Icons and Artefacts from the Orthodox World*, p. 63; <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-4930098>. See Fig. 38.

A.3 The Mother of God *Hodēgētria*

Description: The Mother of God *Hodēgētria*, with Christ child and two angels holding scrolls, on a blue background.

The icon is attributed to Sylvester of Antioch, but in the present form it presents features of the Russian school, or one influenced by it, at the beginning of the 19th century. It is possible that Sylvester's icon was repainted or replaced by the present one. The icon was restored in the 20th century.

Dimensions: 110 x 80cm (according to Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 10).

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: "MP ΘΥ", "Η Οδηγήτρια" "ΙΣ ΧΣ", "Ο ΩΝ", and in Arabic: يسوع المسيح, والدة الله. On the angels' rolls it is written: "Χαῖρε δι' ἧς ἡ χαρὰ ἐκλάμψει" ("Rejoice through whom the joy will shine"), "Χαῖρε τῶν δακρύων τῆς Εὔας ἡ λύτρωσις" ("Rejoice the redemption of Eve's tears"). No inscription is visible at present in the lower area, but (Arabic?) dedicatory inscriptions mentioning the name "Sylvester, patriarch of Antioch" were read by the *Protopresbyteros* Konstantinos Moraitakis sometime between 1947 and 1958.⁴ The information was provided to Sylvia Agémian by Emmanuel Kondekakis in 1973. The icon is undated but attributed to Sylvester of Antioch.

Provenance/Present location: Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Saint George, Beirut, Lebanon.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 10; S. Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges. Exposition organisée par Le Musée Nicolas Sursock du 27 septembre au 29 octobre 2000*, Beirut, [2000], p. 17, il. 7; <http://home.balamand.edu.lb/english/ARPOA.asp?id=15485&fid=270>; A. Haby, *Al-ṣuwar al-muqaddasa aw al-iqūnāt*, Jūniya, 1989, p. 88; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 520, 521, 524.

⁴ For the Protopresbyteros Konstantinos Moraitakis, see E. C. Moraitakis, *Preotul Constantin E. Moraitakis. Arhon Mare Presbiter al Patriarhiei Ecumenice din Constantinopol 1890–1964. Viața și opera sa după documente inedite publicate și comentate*, Bucharest, 2004.

Illustration: Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 17, il. 7; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 522. See Fig. 47.

A.4 Christ Pantocrator

Description: Christ *Pantokrator*, with two angels holding scrolls, on a blue background. The icon is attributed to Sylvester of Antioch, but in the present form it contains features of the Russian school, or one influenced by it from the beginning of the 19th century. Possibly, Sylvester's icon was repainted or replaced by the present one. The icon was restored in the 20th century.

Dimensions: 110 x 80 cm (according to Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 11).

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: “ΙΣ ΧΣ”, “Ο ΩΝ”, “Ο Παντοκράτωρ”, and in Arabic: الضابط الكل, يسوع المسيح. The inscription on the open book is in Greek: “Ο πιστεύων εἰς Ἐμὲ ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον. Ἐγὼ εἰμὶ ὁ Ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς ἐάν τις φάγῃ ἐκ τούτου τοῦ Ἄρτου ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ Ἄρτος ἡ Σὰρξ Μου ἐστὶ” (“He that believes in Me has eternal life. I am the Bread of life, if someone eats this Bread he shall live forever, and the Bread is My Body”). No inscription is visible at present in the lower part, but (Arabic?) dedicatory inscriptions mentioning the name of Sylvester, patriarch of Antioch, were read by the *Protopresbyteros* Konstantinos Moraitakis sometime between 1947 and 1958. This information was provided to Sylvia Agémian by Emmanuel Kondekakis in 1973. The icon is undated but attributed to Sylvester of Antioch.

Provenance/Present location: Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Saint George, Beirut, Lebanon.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 11; Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 17, il. 8; <http://home.balamand.edu.lb/english/ARPOA.asp?id=15485&fid=270>; Haby, *Al-ṣuwar al-muqaddasa*, p. 62; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 524.

Illustration: Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 17, il. 8; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 520, 521, 523; <http://home.balamand.edu.lb/common/images/photogallery/ARPOA/Beyrouth/Beyrouth/StGeorgesCat/18.jpg>. See Fig. 46.

A.5 The Holy Mandylin (1)

Description: The Holy Mandylin, painted on wood in a style influenced by the Russian tradition. A decorated metal (most likely silver) ornament, in relief, was applied on the halo.

Dimensions: 59 x 42.5 x 2.8 cm.

Inscriptions, signature and date: “Θεοῦ Θέα Θεῖον Θαῦμα” (“God’s sight divine miracle”),⁵ “Τὸ Ἅγιον Μανδήλιον” (“The Holy Mandyllion), “,αψμς’” (1746), “Παρὰ Σιλβέστρου Ἀντιοχείας” (“By Sylvester of Antioch”). The last part of the inscription can be interpreted as a signature rather than a dedicatory text. In the present state of knowledge about Sylvester’s work, the icon in Patmos is one of the few icons preserving the patriarch’s signature in Greek.

Provenance: Unknown. It may have painted by the patriarch for a private individual. Stylistically, the icon resembles the one with the same subject in Skopelos and it is very much influenced by the Russian school of icon painting.

Present location: Church of Hypapantē, Chora, Patmos, Greece.⁶ The icon was also attested in Patmos in the 1990s.⁷

Sources: M. Chatzidakēs, E. Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες ζωγράφοι μετὰ την Ἀλωση (1450–1830)*, vol. 2. *Καβαλλάρος – Ψαθόπουλος*, Athens, 1997, p. 349, no. 3; <https://nationalarchive.culture.gr/el/exhibits/explore/view?id=852972>.

Illustration: <https://nationalarchive.culture.gr/en/exhibits/explore/view?id=852972>. See Fig. 42.

A.6 The Holy Mandyllion (2)

Description: Depiction of the Holy Mandyllion in a style influenced by the Russian tradition. The icon presents similarities with the icon in Patmos.

Dimensions: Unknown.

Inscriptions, signature and date: The icon was painted before 1760, probably before 1757. No inscriptions, signature, or date are visible. This could be due to the presence of its frame, which is a later addition, possibly hiding inscriptions. On the silver frame there is an inscription with the date August 4, 1762.⁸

Provenance: The icon belonged to Marioritza, sister of Iakovos Rizos. It was donated to Kaisarios Dapontes for the Monastery of Xeropotamou or for the Monastery of Panagia Evangelistria (Παναγία ἡ Εὐαγγελίστρια) on the island of Skopelos, Greece, a *metochion* of the Monastery of Xeropotamou.

Present location: Monastery of Panagia Evangelistria (Παναγία ἡ Εὐαγγελίστρια), island of Skopelos, Greece.

5 This is one of the texts used in Byzantine and post-Byzantine art, often in the shortened form (acronym) ΘΘΘΘ.

6 I thank Mrs. Kōnstantia Kephala for providing me this information.

7 According to information provided by the Deacon Chrysostomos Phlorentēs to Manolēs Chatzidakēs, the icon was at some point located in the Andreadakēs house, Patmos; see Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες ζωγράφοι μετὰ την Ἀλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 3.

8 Polyviou, “Ταύτιση ανυπόγραφης εικόνας Σιλβέστρου Ἀντιοχείας”, p. 67.

Sources: K. K. Dapontes, „Κατάλογος ιστορικός”, in K. Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. 3, p. 149–150; M. Polyviou, “Ταύτιση ανυπόγραφης εικόνας Σιλβέστρου Αντιοχείας”, *Χριστιανική Αρχαιολογική Εταιρεία. Δέκατο Πέμπτο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης. Πρόγραμμα και περιλήψεις εισηγήσεων και ανακοινώσεων*, Athens, 1995, p. 66–67; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση*, 2, p. 349; Chițulescu, “Le patriarche Sylvestre d’Antioche”, p. 157–168.

Illustration: Chițulescu, “Le patriarche Sylvestre d’Antioche”, p. 157–168.

A.7 The Holy Martyr Christina of Tyre

Description: The Holy Martyr Christina of Tyre (3rd century). The technique is, according to the museum’s description, “gesso, pigment, and burnished gold leaf on canvas mounted to panel”.

Dimensions: 39.6 x 28.9 x 3.8 cm (15 5/8 x 11 3/8 x 1 1/2 in).

Inscriptions, signature and date: Inscribed in Greek on the front: “Saint Christina (“Ἡ Ἁγία Χριστίνα”). An Arabic inscription on the halo around the head in the saint’s hand mentions Patriarch Sylvester and the date. The inscription reads:

القديسه خريستينا الشاهده حامله هامتها المكرمه صورها سيلبيسترس البطريرك الانطكي في ١٧٥٧
 “Saint Christina the Martyr holding her honorable head, painted by Sylvester, the patriarch of Antioch, in 1757”.

The museum’s description also mentions an inscription on the back which identifies “Nasrallah Suleiman” as owner of the icon.

Provenance: Syria or Lebanon. The icon was bought from a major international auction house in the 1990s.

Present location: Huntington Museum of Art, Huntington, WV, USA, inventory no. 1991.2.157. Gift of Drs. Joseph and Omayma Touma and family.⁹ The icon was included in the exhibition *Reverent Ornament: Art from the Islamic World* organized by the Huntington Museum of Art and toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC, from September 2021 to October 2024.¹⁰

Sources: M. Schiavone (ed.), with W. B. Denny, S. D’Auria et al., *Touma Near Eastern Collection, Huntington Museum of Art*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2010, p. 74.

⁹ I thank Dr. Joseph B. Touma and John Spurlock, Registrar/Assistant Curator, Huntington Museum of Art, for the information on the icon.

¹⁰ For the exhibition, see <https://www.artsandartists.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Reverent-Ornament-Prospectus.pdf>.

<https://hmoa.pastperfectonline.com/webobject/C047E2E5-6F01-41A6-91E8-417191841940>.

Illustration: Schiavone (ed.), with W. B. Denny, S. D'Auria et al., *Touma Near Eastern Collection*, p. 74. See Fig. 45.

https://s3.amazonaws.com/pastperfectonline/images/museum_1067/057/19912157.jpg.
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CrGYCPNOaMu>. See Fig. 45.

A.8 *Scenes from the Life of Saint Spyridon*

Description: Frame around an older icon of Saint Spyridon. The frame contains scenes from the saint's life and cult, some of which are miracles he performed. The icon had silver ornaments on the aureole and the Saint's hands, visible in surviving photographs. According to the inscription, only the images on the frame were painted by Sylvester, while the icon in the center is older.

Dimensions: 111 x 76 cm, central panel 63 x 48.5 cm. According to another source, the size is 127 x 92 cm, possibly the dimensions of the framed icon.¹¹

Inscriptions, signature and date: Painted by Sylvester of Antioch in 1747 or 1748, according to the Arabic inscription. The main area of the icon had a long Arabic inscription written by Buṭrus Nawfal at Patriarch Sylvester's orders, which is visible on a color photograph taken in the 1970s.¹² On the upper part of the icon, in Greek: "Ο Άγιος Σπυρίδων" ("Saint Spyridon"). The inscriptions on the frame scenes are in Romanian in Cyrillic script, probably written in paint later, and possibly repainted.

Provenance: Church of the Monastery of Saint Spyridon "the Old" in Bucharest, since 1747 or 1748.

Present location: Until 1987 in the Church of Saint Spyridon "the Old" in Bucharest. Present location unknown.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 3; Radu, "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei", p. 18–22; Zidaru, "Probleme în restaurarea temperei vechi", p. 372–380; Căndea (ed.), *Icones melkites*, p. 115, 189–192, il. 50; Căndea, "Une icône melkite disparue", p. 59–61; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 4; I. Bitha, "Παρατηρήσεις στον εικονογραφικό κύκλο του Αγίου Σπυρίδωνα", *Δελτίον Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 19, 1996–1997, p. 264; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 510–511; Feodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians in Ottoman Lands*, p. 206–207.

¹¹ Elian, Bălan et al. (eds.), *Inscripțiile medievale ale României*, vol. I, p. 396.

¹² See Ch. 19.5.

Illustration: Radu, “Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei”, p. 19; Bitha, “Παρατηρήσεις στον εικονογραφικό κύκλο του Αγίου Σπυρίδωνα”, p. 265; Color image in Virgil Căndea’s archive. See Fig. 43.

A.9 Christ King of Kings and Great Archpriest

Description: Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Great Archpriest, with a Byzantine crown (miter) and an open book. The icon was restored and repainted in the 19th century by Athanasios al-Qudsi. The repainting was removed during the restoration after 2010 by Fr. Spyridon Fayad. The iconographic type is very similar to icons of the Cretan school of post-Byzantine painting, like the one by Michael Damaskinos (16th century) in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens¹³ and the one by Petros Lambardos (16th century) in the Benaki Museum, in Athens, Greece (inv. no. 2990).¹⁴

Dimensions: 114.5 x 91.5 cm (according to Fr. Spyridon Fayad); 106 x 86 cm (according to Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 6).

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: “ΙΣ ΧΣ”, “Ο ΩΝ”, “Ο Βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων καὶ Μέγας Ἀρχιερεὺς” (“King of Kings and Great Archpriest”). On the book: “Ἡ Βασιλεία ἡ Ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου· εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου” (*John* 18:36: “My Kingdom is not of this world: if [my Kingdom were] of this world”), and “Λάβετε, φάγετε, τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ Σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν” (*1 Corinthians* 11:24: “Take, eat: this is My body which [is broken] for you”). Arabic inscription in the lower part, mentioning the name of Sylvester of Antioch and the date, 1759.

قد صورها بيده الفانيه الفقير سيلبسترس البطريك الانطاكي واقفها على كنيسة القديسين الاربعين
شاهد في مدينة حمص سنة ١٧٥٩ مسيحية

“It was painted by the mortal hand of the humble Sylvester, the patriarch of Antioch, and he gave it as an endowment [*waqf*] to the church of the Holy Forty Martyrs in the city of Homs in the Christian year 1759”.

Provenance: Painted for the church of the Holy Forty Martyrs in Homs as one of its main icons (“despotic”, “imperial” icon, “δεσποτική εἰκόνα”) and later transferred to the church of Saint George, Homs, Syria.

Present location: Church of Saint George al-Ḥamīdiya, Homs, Syria.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 6; Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 17; “Église Saint Georges (Mar Girgis) de Homs”, in *Architecture religieuse du Patriarchat*

¹³ <https://russianicons.files.wordpress.com/2018/01/megasarkhierbyzantinemuseum.jpg?w=768&h=1199>.

¹⁴ https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d0/Petros_Lambardos_Christ_High_Priest.png.

d'Antioche ARPOA, University of Balamand, <http://193.227.187.44/english/ARPOA.asp?id=9937&fid=270>; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 510.

Illustration: Fayad, *Οι ζωγράφοι Μιχαήλ Πολυχρόνιος και Μιχαήλ Ελευθέριος*, p. 415, no. 33, 35; Fayad, “Īqūnatāni”, p. 116; <http://www.balamand.edu.lb/IOT/PublishingImages/IconOfChrist.jpg>. See Fig. 48, 50.

A.10 *The Mother of God with Symbols of the Passion*

Description: The Mother of God holding the Child, with an angel on the right side, holding symbols of the Passion. The icon was restored and repainted in the 19th century by Athanasios al-Qudsi. The repainting was removed during the restoration after 2010 by Fr. Spyridon Fayad.

Dimensions: 115.5 x 90.6 cm (according to Fr. Spyridon Fayad); 106 x 86 cm (according to Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 5).

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: “MP ΘΥ”, “ΙΣ ΧΣ”, “Ο ΞΩΝ”, and two longer inscriptions in the field on the right, one in Greek, the other in Arabic. The Greek inscription states: “Ο τὸ Χαῖρε πρὶν τῇ Πανάγνῳ μηνύσας, τὰ σύμβολα νῦν τοῦ Πάθους προδεικνύει, Χριστὸς δὲ θνητὴν σάρκα ἐνδεδυμένος πότμον δεδοικώς, δειλιᾷ τοῦτο βλέπων” (“The one who before had announced the Most Pure ‘Rejoice’, now shows the symbols of the Passion, and Christ, vested in mortals’ flesh, fearing death, hesitates seeing it”).

Under the Greek inscription, the Arabic one mentions Sylvester of Antioch (يكاظن الالكيري رطبيل سورطس بلس) and the year 1759.

قد صوّرها بيده الفانيه الفقير سيلبسترس البطريرك الانطاكي ووقفها على كنيسة القديسين الاربعين شاهد في مدينة حمص المحروسة سنة ١٧٥٩ مسيحية

“It was painted by the mortal hand of the humble Sylvester, the patriarch of Antioch, and he gave it as an endowment [*waqf*] to the church of the Holy Forty Martyrs in the God-protected city of Homs in the Christian year 1759”.

Provenance: Painted for the church of the Holy Forty Martyrs in Homs as one of its main icons (“despotic”, “imperial” icon, “δεσποτική εικόνα”) and transferred to the church of Saint George, Homs, Syria.

Present location: Church of Saint George al-Ḥamīdiya, Homs, Syria.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 5; Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 17; “Église Saint Georges (Mar Girgis) de Homs”, in *Architecture religieuse du Patriarchat d'Antioche ARPOA*, University of Balamand, <http://193.227.187.44/english/ARPOA.asp?id=9937&fid=270>; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 510.

Illustration: See Fig. 49, 51.

A.11 *The Great Martyr Saint George (1)*

Description: Saint George on horseback slaying the dragon. On the upper right side there is an angel holding a palm leaf and crowning the Martyr. The background is a mountainous landscape. The icon's repainting, probably dating from early 19th century was removed during the restoration after 2010 by Fr. Spyridon Fayad.

Dimensions: 87.7 x 62 cm (according to Fr. Spyridon Fayad).¹⁵

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the upper part, in Greek: “Ο Ἅγιος Μεγαλομάρτυς Γεώργιος” (“The Great Martyr Saint George”). An Arabic inscription in the lower part on the left mentions Patriarch Sylvester and the date 1759.

قد صوّرها [...] سيلبسترس البطريك الانطاكي ووقفها على دير القديس مار اليان بمدينة حمص سنة ١٧٥٩ مسيحية

“It was painted by [...] Sylvester, the patriarch of Antioch, and he gave it as an endowment [*waqf*] to the monastery of Saint Elia in the city of Homs in the Christian year 1759”.¹⁶

Provenance: Probably painted for the church of Saint Elia, Homs, Syria.

Present location: Church of Saint George al-Ḥamīdiya, Homs, Syria.

Sources: No references in the available bibliography.

Illustration: See Fig. 52, 53.

A.12 *The Great Martyr Saint George (2)*

Description: Saint George on horseback slaying the dragon, a boy holding a jug behind him, on his horse. On the upper left corner, a blessing hand appears, while on the right side an angel holding a palm leaf is crowning the Martyr. The background is a mountainous landscape. In the lower right corner, a crowned figure is running towards a building resembling a portico and pointing to it.

Dimensions: 113.5 x 83 cm.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the upper part, in Greek: “Ο Ἅγιος Μεγαλομάρτυς Γεώργιος” (“The Great Martyr Saint George”). In the lower part, an Arabic inscription mentions Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch and the year 1765. The Arabic inscription is:

قَدْ صَوَّرَ هَذِهِ الْأَيُّوْنَةُ الْمَقْدَسَةُ الْفَقِيرُ سِيلْبِسْتَرُسُ الْبَطْرِيَرِكُ الْاَنْطَاكِي وَاقَفَهَا عَلَى دَيْرِ سَيِّدَتِنَا وَالِدَةِ الْاَلَةِ الْكَلْبِي طَهَّرَهَا فِي دَيْرِهَا الْمَقْدَسِ فِي سَنَةِ ١٧٦٥

¹⁵ The information on this icon and the previous ones were first presented by Fr. Spyridon Fayad in a communication in 2023 at a conference at the University of Balamand, Lebanon. I thank Fr. Spyridon for providing me digital images of the icons and kindly allowing their publication.

¹⁶ Some words of the inscription are illegible. I thank Dr. Yulia Petrova for helping me reading, transcribing and translating the Arabic inscriptions of the icons A.9, A.10, A.11, A12, and A.13.

“This holy icon was painted by the humble Sylvester, the patriarch of Antioch, and he gave it as an endowment [*waqf*] to the Monastery of Our Lady, the All-Pure Mother of God, in her holy monastery in the year 1765”.¹⁷

Provenance: Probably painted and donated by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch to the Orthodox Monastery of Our Lady of Şaydnāyā, Syria.

Present location: Orthodox Monastery of Our Lady of Şaydnāyā, Syria. In 1987, the icon featured in an exhibition organized in Damascus by the Syrian Ministry of Tourism.¹⁸

Sources: Căndeia (ed.), *Icones melkites*, p. 115; Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 7; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Αλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 6; Nassour, *Σύλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 220; *Icones de Syrie. Exposition et Symposium*, Damascus, 1987, no. 20.

Illustration: Zayyāt, *Khabāyā al-zawāyā min tārīkh Şaydnāyā*, p. 56; Nassour, *Σύλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 220. See Fig. 54.

A.13 *Jacob's Dream (Jacob's Ladder)*

Description: The traditional post-Byzantine composition of Jacob's Dream, also called Jacob's Ladder (Η Κλίμαξ τοῦ Ἰακώβ).¹⁹ The presence of a ladder has led in the past to its misidentification as the Ladder of Saint John (“Échelle Spirituelle de Saint Jean Climaque”).²⁰

Dimensions: No available information. It looks as if the icon was trimmed to the right and to the left by a few centimeters. Initially it had the same dimensions as the icon of Saint George, 113.5 x 83 cm (A.12).

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the upper, in Greek: “Η Κλίμαξ ἣν εἶδεν ὁ Πατριάρχης [Ἰακώβ]” (“The ladder that the Patriarch [Jacob] saw”). The last part of the inscription is missing because of the panel trimming. Arabic inscriptions can be seen in the center and lower part. Above the city represented at the right is written: قرية سوحار (Sūkhār village). To the right of the Prophet Jacob's head there is written:

¹⁷ I thank my colleagues Nicholas Bishara and Dr. Yulia Petrova for their help in transcribing, transliterating, and translating the inscription of this icon and the next one.

¹⁸ On this exhibition, see Nassif, “Cinquante ans d'études sur l'art melkite”, p. 306–307.

¹⁹ For this iconographic type, see Dionysios ho ek Phournas, *Ερμηνεία τῆς ζωγραφικῆς τέχνης*, p. 52, § 34: “Ὁ Ἰακώβ ἀρχιγένης κοιμώμενος καὶ ἐπάνωθέν του σκάλα ἀκουμπίζουσα εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, καὶ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναβαίνουν καὶ καταβαίνουν εἰς αὐτήν”; *The 'Painter's Manual' of Dionysius of Fournas*, p. 20: “Jacob, with an incipient beard, asleep; above him a ladder leads up into heaven, and angels of God go up and down on it”. The composition is based on *Genesis* 28:12. See also P. and L. Muray, *A Dictionary of Christian Art*, p. 266.

²⁰ Căndeia (ed.), *Icones melkites*, p. 115; Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 9.

اب اليا يعقوب راقدا ("The Father of Fathers Jacob sleeping"). There is also another long Arabic inscription above Prophet Jacob's head.

السلم التي راها اب اليا بعقوب الملايكة صاعدين الي السماء ونازلين تضاهي سر تجسد كلمة الله من مريم البتول

"The ladder that the Father of Fathers Jacob saw, the Angels ascending to Heaven and descending, which resembles the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God from the Virgin Mary".

The Arabic inscription in the lower part of the icon is:

قَدْ صَوِّرَ هَذِهِ الْاَيْقُونَةَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الْفَقِيرُ سِيلْبِسْتَرُسُ الْبَطْرِيَرِكُ الْاَنْطَاكِي وَاقَفَهَا عَلَى دَيْرِ سَيِّدَتِنَا وَالِدَةِ الْاَلَةِ الْكَلِيِّ طَهْرُهَا فِي دَيْرِهَا الْمُقَدَّسِ فِي سَنَةِ ١٧٦٥

"This holy icon was painted by the humble Sylvester, the patriarch of Antioch, and he gave it as an endowment [*waqf*] to the Monastery of Our Lady, the All-Pure Mother of God, in her holy monastery in the year 1765".

Provenance: Painted and donated by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch to the Orthodox Monastery of Our Lady of Şaydnāyā, Syria.

Present location: Orthodox Monastery of Our Lady of Şaydnāyā, Syria.

Sources: Cîndea (ed.), *Îcônes melkites*, p. 115; Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 9; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Ἀλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 7.

Illustration: Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 221. See Fig. 55.

A.14 *Jesus Christ Pantokrator*

Description: Icon of Jesus Christ represented as *Pantokrator*, blessing and holding a closed book.

Dimensions: No information. Based on the scale of the existing photographs, each of the four icons from the Deisis composition were over 100 cm in height. They were probably used at some point as the main icons of an *iconostasis*, as "despotic" or "imperial" icons ("δεσποτικές εικόνες"). One of four icons placed in the upper part of the *iconostasis*.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: "ΙΣ ΧΣ", "Ο ΩΝ". An Arabic inscription mentions the painter, Sylvester of Antioch, his parents, the donation to the monastery, and the date, September 1756.

Provenance: Painted by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch and dedicated by him to the Monastery of Saint Thekla in Ma'lūla, Syria, together with three other icons.

Present location: Church of Saint John the Baptist, Orthodox Monastery of Saint Thekla, Ma'lūla, Syria. Damaged by fire before April 2014, the icon is probably largely destroyed, as shown in press photographs. Until 2014, it was in the upper part of the *iconostasis*, on the right side (near the icon of Saint John the Baptist). According to press photographs and videos, the icon is displayed in a room in the same monastery.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 4; Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 206, 218; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Ἀλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 8 (“Δέηση”); Căndeia (ed.), *Icônes melkites*, p. 115.

Illustration: Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 218 (il.); <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-syria-maaloula-greek-orthodox-monastery-of-santa-tecla-taqla-the-church-48028101.html>. <https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/the-frescoes-in-the-church-of-the-greek-orthodox-convent-of-news-photo/480273367>; <https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/photo/santa-tecla-monastery-maaloula-royalty-free-image/180548368>. See Fig. 56.

A.15 *The Mother of God Hodēgētria*

Description: Icon of the Mother of God, *Hodēgētria* iconographic type.

Dimensions: Same as A.14.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: “MP ΘΥ”, “Ο ΞΝ”. An Arabic inscription mentions the painter, Sylvester of Antioch, his parents, the donation to the monastery, and the date, September 1756.

Provenance: Painted and dedicated by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch to the Monastery of Saint Thekla Ma'lūla, Syria.

Present location: See A.14. Until 2014 it was located in the upper part of the *iconostasis*, left side.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 4 (dated 1756); Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 207, 219; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Ἀλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 8 (“Δέηση”); Căndeia (ed.), *Icônes melkites*, p. 115.

Illustration: Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 219 (il.). See Fig. 55.

A.16 *Saint John the Baptist*

Description: Saint John the Baptist, turned to the left, blessing and holding a scroll.

Dimensions: See A.14.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: “Ο [Ἅγιος] Πρ(ό)δρο(ο)μ(ος) Ἰω(άν)νης”. An Arabic inscription mentions the painter, Sylvester of Antioch, his parents, the donation to the monastery, and the date, September 1756.

Provenance: Painted and dedicated by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch to the Monastery of Saint Thekla Ma'lūla, Syria.

Present location: See A.14. Until 2014 it was placed in the upper part of the *iconostasis*, on the right side.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 4 (dated 1756); Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 207, 218; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Ἀλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 8 (“Δέηση”); Căndeia (ed.), *Icônes melkites*, p. 115.

Illustration: Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 218 (il.). See Fig. 56.

A.17 *Saint Thekla*

Description: Saint Thekla, the First Martyr.

Dimensions: See A.14.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek: “Ἡ Ἁγία Πρωτομάρτυς Θέκλα” (“Saint Thekla, the First Martyr”). An Arabic inscription mentions the painter, Sylvester of Antioch, his parents, the donation to the monastery, and the date, September 1756.

Provenance: Painted and dedicated by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch to the Monastery of Saint Thekla Ma'īlūla, Syria.

Present location: See A.14. Until 2014 it was located in the upper part of the *iconostasis*, on the left side.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 4 (dated 1756); Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 207, 219; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Ἕλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Ἀλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 8 (“Δέηση”); Căndeia (ed.), *Icones melkites*, p. 115.

Illustration: Nassour, *Σίλβεστρος πατριάρχης Αντιοχείας*, p. 219 (il.). See Fig 55.

A.18 *Deisis*

Description: No information.

Dimensions: No information.

Inscriptions, signature and date: No inscriptions. No mention of a signature. Dated 1765 in the sources below.

Provenance: Unknown.

Present location: Collection of Metropolitan Elia Karam, Beirut, Lebanon (according to Sylvia Agémian). Present location unknown.

Sources: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 8; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Ἕλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Ἀλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 5 (private collection, Beirut); Căndeia (ed.), *Icones melkites*, p. 115.

Illustration: No information.

B Icons Attributed to Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch and Copies

B.1 *Christ Pantokrator*

Description: Almost identical copy of A.2.

Dimensions: 102.3 x 77.3 cm or 101.5 x 76.5 cm.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek. In the lower part there is an Arabic inscription that mentions the date 1726 and Patriarch Sylvester of

Antioch. According to Sylvia Agémian and Fr. Spyridon Fayad, the original icon was restored in 1816 by Michael Polychronis.

Provenance: Copy, probably 20th century, before 1964.

Present location: Church of Our Lady and Saint Nicholas (al-Balad), Tripoli, Lebanon.

Sources: Căndeia (ed.), *Icônes melkites*, p. 115, 185–186; Fayad, *Οι ζωγράφοι Μιχαήλ Πολυχρόνιος και Μιχαήλ Ελευθέριος*, p. 28, 78, 378, no. 9, 386–388; Fayad, „Īqūnatāni”, p. 108, 120; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 510; Jabre Mouawad, *Icônes et églises de Tripoli*, p. 98–99.

Illustration: Agémian, *List of Icons*, no. 2; Căndeia (ed.), *Icônes melkites*, il. 46; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 2; Fayad, *Οι ζωγράφοι Μιχαήλ Πολυχρόνιος και Μιχαήλ Ελευθέριος*, p. 415, 453, il. 403, 408; Jabre Mouawad, *Icônes et églises de Tripoli*, p. 99. See Fig. 40.

B.2 The Mother of God Hope and Shelter of the Christians

Description: Almost identical copy of A.1.

Dimensions: 102.3 x 77.3 cm or 101,5 x 76,5 cm.

Inscriptions, signature and date: In the field, in Greek, and an Arabic inscription that mentions the date 1726 and Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch, and the restoration in 1816 by Michael Polychronis.

Provenance: Copy, probably 20th century, before 1964.

Present location: Church of Our Lady and Saint Nicholas (al-Balad), Tripoli, Lebanon.

Sources: Căndeia (ed.), *Icônes melkites*, p. 183–185; Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση*, 2, p. 349, no. 1; Fayad, *Οι ζωγράφοι Μιχαήλ Πολυχρόνιος και Μιχαήλ Ελευθέριος*, p. 28, 78, 378–379, no. 10; Fayad, „Īqūnatāni”, p. 111; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 510; Jabre Mouawad, *Icônes et églises de Tripoli*, p. 98–99.

Illustration: Căndeia (ed.), *Icônes melkites*, il. 45; Fayad, *Οι ζωγράφοι Μιχαήλ Πολυχρόνιος και Μιχαήλ Ελευθέριος*, p. 453, il. 404; Jabre Mouawad, *Icônes et églises de Tripoli*, p. 99. See Fig. 41.

B.3 Saint George the Great Martyr

Description: Saint George on horseback slaying the dragon, a boy holding a jug on his horse. In the upper left corner, the figure of Jesus Christ in glory, His hands blessing. On the right, crowned female figure running and pointing towards a tower. On the city walls, a crowned king and other figures. In the rear plan, a city, identified by researchers with Beirut.

Dimensions: 126 x 93 cm.

Inscriptions, signature and date: Inscriptions in Greek on the front: signed by Antonis Grigorakis, known as Zorzi of Chios, and dated 1746. On the back, an Arabic inscription mentioning Sylvester and the year 1749, when the icon was donated to the cathedral of Beirut. The inscription was probably copied from another icon.²¹

Provenance: Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Beirut.

Present location: Reserves of the Greek Orthodox Archbishopric, Beirut, Lebanon. The icon featured in the exhibition at the Sursock Museum in Beirut in 2000.

Sources: Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 18–20; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 526.

Illustration: Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 18; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 518, 527.

B.4 The Annunciation

Description: Icon attributed to Sylvester of Antioch, located in the church of Saint John the Baptist in the Orthodox Monastery of Saint Thekla, Ma'lūla, Syria. No further information.

Sources: G. Nahas, S. Slim (eds.), *Monasteries of the Antiochian Orthodox Patriarchate*, Kalhat, Al Koura, 2007, p. 88–97; <https://www.antiochpatriarchate.org/en/page/the-convent-of-st-thecla-ma-lula/149>.

B.5 The Holy Martyr Sebastian

Description: An icon of the Holy Martyr Sebastian in the Abou Adal collection in Beirut dated 1719 and signed by a “Σιλβεστρος ιερομόναχος” (“Silvestros hieromonachos) could be attributed to Sylvester before becoming patriarch. The painter is not attested in other sources. The information about the icon was taken from the notes of Manolēs Chatzidakēs for the repertory of Greek artists, where the painter is listed as different from the patriarch.

Sources: Chatzidakēs, Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση*, 2, p. 348, Σιλβεστρος (2).

B.6 Christ Archpriest with the Mother of God and Saint John the Baptist (Deisis)

Description: The icon may belong to the Russian school, dating from the first half of the 18th century. The inscriptions on this icon and three others belonging to the same set are in Slavonic, except for a few abbreviations. The icon has an unusual frame decorated with mother of pearl. It belonged to a group of four icons (B.6, B.7,

21 Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 19; Ziadé, *L'art des chrétiens d'Orient*, p. 526.

B.8, and B.9) with similarly decorated frames, which used to be in a *parekklesion* of the Colțea Monastery in Bucharest. A connection with Sylvester of Antioch cannot be excluded, since the patriarch ordered icons from the Russian Empire²² and he also copied Russian icons.²³ In the letter to Samuel from Nizhyn, dated August 10, 1746, Sylvester mentioned some “despotic” or “imperial icons” (“Δεσποτικές εικόνες”) that he had ordered, which were to be sent with Dēmētrios Kromidis to Bucharest, where the patriarch was also heading to.

Present location: Museum of the Sinaia Monastery, Romania.

B.7 *The Enthroned Theotokos with the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel*

Description: See B.6.

Present location: Museum of the Sinaia Monastery, Romania.

B.8 *The Dormition of the Theotokos*

Description: See B.6.

Present location: Museum of the Sinaia Monastery, Romania.

B.9 *Saints Kosmas and Damianos*

Description: See B.6.

Present location: Colțea Church, Bucharest, Romania.

B.10 *The Mother of God Hope and Shelter of the Christians*

Description: Copy dated 1771 by Metropolitan Parthenios of Tripoli of an icon painted by Sylvester, formerly in Tripoli (see A.1).

Present location: In 1969 it was in the Orthodox church of Our Lady in Hama, Syria. As churches in Hama were damaged during the war in the 1980s, the present location of the icon is unknown.

Sources: Căndea (ed.), *Icones melkites*, p. 186.

B.11 *Jesus Christ Pantokrator*

Description: Copy dated 1771 by Metropolitan Parthenios of Tripoli of an icon painted by Sylvester, formerly in Tripoli (see A.2).

²² Letter of Sylvester of Antioch to Samuel in Nizhyn, August 10, 1746, MS 210 Țarișă, f. 50v.

²³ Dapontes, “Κατάλογος ιστορικός”, p. 149–150.

Present location: In 1969 it was in the Orthodox church of Our Lady in Hama, Syria. As churches in Hama were damaged during the war in the 1980s, the present location of the icon is unknown.

Sources: Căndea (ed.), *Icônes melkites*, p. 185.

B.12 *The Mother of God (1)*

Description: Copy by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch of the icon of the *Mother of God*, formerly belonging to George Doukas, prince of Moldavia. Mentioned by Kaisarios Dapontes.

Present location: Unknown.

Sources: K. K. Dapontes, *Κήπος Χαρίτων*, in É. Legrand, *Bibliothèque grecque vulgaire*, t. III, Paris, 1881, p. 34; Chițulescu, “Le patriarche Sylvestre d’Antioche”, p. 165, 167.

B.13 *The Mother of God (2)*

Description: Icon of the Mother of God (“Θεομητορική εικόνα”) mentioned in a letter dated May 1752 from Sylvester to the *postelnikos* Dimitris. Most likely it is an icon painted by the patriarch. It was sent to the abovementioned *postelnikos*, probably in Moldavia, at the same date.

Present location: Unknown.

Sources: Iorga, *Textes post-byzantins*, p. 36.

B.14 *Saint Nicholas*

Description: Icon of Saint Nicholas, which Patriarch Sylvester declared he intended to paint, as mentioned in a letter to *spatharessa* Mariora in November 1752. Present location unknown.

Sources: Iorga, *Textes post-byzantins*, p. 41–42.

B.15 *The Holy Mandylion*

Description: Icon of the Holy Mandylion, which Patriarch Sylvester declared he intended to paint, as mentioned in a letter to *spatharessa* Mariora in November 1752. If Mariora is identifiable with Marioritza, sister of Iakovos Rizos, this icon might in fact be A.5.

Present location: Unknown.

Sources: Iorga, *Textes post-byzantins*, p. 41–42.

B.16 *Baptism of Jesus Christ*

Description: Icon representing the Baptism of Jesus Christ, which Patriarch Sylvester declared he intended to paint, as mentioned in a letter to *spatharessa* Matoria in November 1752.

Present location: Unknown.

Sources: Iorga, *Textes post-byzantins*, p. 41–42.

B.17 *Christ, the Twelve Apostles, and Two Archangels*

Description: Fifteen icons in the upper row of the *iconostasis* in the church of Saint George al-Ḥamīdiya, representing Christ, the twelve Apostles and another two figures, probably two Archangels. The icons were attributed, at least in part, to Sylvester of Antioch. Many of them were totally or partially damaged in 2012, during the war in Syria, by an explosion. The remaining icons were placed again in their former position on the *iconostasis*. The icons were probably painted for the church of Saint Elian in Homs. According Fr. Spyridon Fayad, these icons were not painted by Sylvester of Antioch.²⁴

Sources: “Église Saint Georges (Mar Girgis) de Homs”, *Architecture religieuse du Patriarchat d’Antioche*. ARPOA, University of Balamand, <http://193.227.187.44/english/ARPOA.asp?id=9937&fid=270>.

Illustration: <http://193.227.187.44/common/images/photogallery/ARPOA/Homs/Homs/MarGeorges/16.jpg>.

²⁴ Personal correspondence with the author, May 2024.