

Cross-Cultural and Artistic Dialogues in the Seventeenth Century
Constantinople/Istanbul:
The Iconography of Madonna della Misericordia and the Galata Icon

by

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Koç University

Graduate School of Sciences and Engineering

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To my mother

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ABSTRACT

**Cross-Cultural and Artistic Dialogues in the Seventeenth Century
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From its foundation to today, Constantinople/Istanbul has always been the threshold of cross-cultural interactions between the East and West. This thesis examines these interactions from the perspective of a Marian icon in the city, bearing the inscription of *SS.V. Odighitria*, kept in the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata/Pera, known but insufficiently studied. This composite icon is made of two components: a 13-14th century, now highly deteriorated, wooden panel that arrived at Constantinople/Istanbul by Caffan Dominican friars who translocated to the Ottoman capital in 1475, and a very elaborative silver revetment applied to the artwork at the end of the 17th century (1698-1699). As an object whose spatial and historical contexts were altered, this icon embodies cross-cultural interactions - between Byzantium and the Latin West and later between the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe. Along with its hybrid medium and polymorphic historical narrative, the iconographical formula on its metal revetment, *Madonna della Misericordia*, which underlines the Virgin Mary's merciful nature by displaying devoted Christians gathered under her miraculous mantle, further addresses interactions in question as an iconography that developed in the synthesis of particular Eastern and Western features. By utilizing this icon as a case study, this thesis demonstrates the catalyst role of the Virgin Mary in the long-standing cross-cultural interactions between both spheres. Furthermore, this thesis emphasizes how this Marian icon has historically been misinterpreted and offers an entirely novel perspective by designating it as the Galata icon and addressing cultural perspectives that have been effective in its representation. Moreover, this thesis demonstrates how the Galata icon enriched the iconography of the Madonna Misericordia with references to 17th-century society. By analyzing it from the perspective of enduring cross-cultural interactions, this thesis elaborates on the Galata icon as a unique visual and cultural testimony of the composite (multicultural) identity of Constantinople/Istanbul.

Keywords: Marian icons, Madonna della Misericordia (Virgin of Mercy)/Schutzmantelmadonna, Constantinople/Istanbul, Pera/Galata, Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, Dominican Order, Genoa, Caffa, Venice, Byzantium, Ottoman Empire.

ÖZETÇE

On Yedinci Yüzyıl İstanbul'unda Kùltürler Arası Diyaloglar: Madonna della Misericordia İkonografisi ve Galata İkonası

Çise İpek Çınar

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Bu tez, tarih boyunca çok kültürlü bir kimliğe sahip olan Konstantinopolis/İstanbul'un Doğu ve Batı arasındaki kültürel etkileşimlerine bir tanık olarak Galata(/Pera)'daki San Piyer Kilisesi'nde bulunan ve *SS.V. Odighitria* olarak bilinen Meryem Ana ikonasına odaklanmaktadır. Varlığı bilinmesine karşın bu zamana dek detaylı bir incelemeye tabi tutulmamış olan bu hibrit ikona mekânsal ve tarihsel bağlamı değişmiş bir nesne olarak Bizans - Latin Batı - Osmanlı Devleti - Batı Avrupa arasındaki etkileşimlerin somutlaştığı bir görsel tanık konumundadır. Söz konusu hibrit ikona iki temel unsurdan oluşmaktadır: 13-14. yüzyıllara tarihlenen, 1475'de şehre gelen Kefeli Dominik rahiplerinin yanlarında getirdiği, bugün oldukça yıpranmış ahşap panel ve esere 17. yüzyılın son yıllarında (1698-99) uygulanan oldukça detaylı gümüş kaplama panel. Bu gümüş kaplama üzerine işlenmiş olan *Madonna della Misericordia* betimlemesi, Bakire Meryem'in mucizevi örtüsü altında bir araya gelmiş Hristiyanları göstererek onun merhametli doğasını vurgulamaktadır. Bu betimleme Doğu'ya ve Batı'ya özgü özelliklerin sentezi sonucunda oluşmuş bir ikonografi ortaya koyarak farklı tarihsel ve kültürel katmanlar arasındaki etkileşimlerle ilgili yeni sorulara zemin hazırlamaktadır. Bu ikonayı bir vaka incelemesi olarak ele alan bu tez, Bakire Meryem'in iki kutup arasında tarih boyunca süregelen kültürel etkileşimlerdeki katalizör rolünü ortaya koymaktadır. Bu çalışma ayrıca Meryem ikonasının yanlış yorumlanageldiğini ortaya koyarak onu "Galata İkonası" olarak tanımlamakta ve onun temsilini belirleyen kültürel perspektiflere değinerek konuya bütünüyle yeni bir yorum getirmektedir. Bu yaklaşımların sonucu olarak bu tez Galata İkonu'nun Madonna della Misericordia ikonografisini 17. yüzyılın kültürel yapısını temel alarak nasıl zenginleştirdiğini ortaya koyarken, bu ikonanın Konstantinopolis/İstanbul'un Hristiyan kimliğinin bir sembolü ve şehrin kompozit, multikültürel yapısına bir atıf olduğunu öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Madonna della Misericordia, Hodegetria, Yol Gösteren Meryem, Konstantinopol, İstanbul, 17. Yüzyıl, Meryem Ana ikonası, Merhametli Meryem, Dominikan Rahipleri, Galata/Pera, Bizans İmparatorluğu, Keffe, Cenova, Cenevizliler, Venedik, La Serenissima, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu.

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Figure 3.21. Bartolomeo Boun and his circle, *Virgin and Child with kneeling members of the Guild of the Misericordia*, c.1445-1450, relief made of Istrian stone, Venetian origin, currently at Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom (Accession Number: 25-1882) (<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O92842/virgin-and-child-with-kneeling-relief-buon-bartolomeo/>).

Figure 3.22. Unknown German artist, *Madonna in a Wreath of Roses*, c. 1490-1500, engraving, prepared by a Hamburg-based workshop, currently at the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., United States (Accession Number: 1943.3.553) (<https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.3765.html>).

Figure 4.1. Detail of the Galata Icon. The Virgin's left arm and one of the angels (Ziadé "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 80).

Figure 4.2. Jean Marot, *Serrurerie*, 1660-1679, etching and print, 11.6 x 17.6 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom (Accession Number: E.1155-1908) (<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O795306/serrurerie-etching-marot-jean/>).

Figure 4.3. Jacques Stella's drawings of Baroque ornaments, each page is excerpted from the book *Baroque Ornament and Designs* (Dover Publications, 1987) (Stella, *Baroque Ornament and Designs*, 3-4,6-7, 10).

Figure 4.4. *Virgin Hodegetria*, wood and silver, the former's date proposed to Late Byzantine period while the application of the latter in 1772, 120 x 86 cm, the church of Saint Mary of Draperis, Pera, Istanbul (<https://www.istanbulofm.org/2021/11/santa-maria-draperis-choir.html>).

INTRODUCTION

Over the centuries, Constantinople/Istanbul attained a perpetual multicultural identity. Regardless of the sovereignty that controlled the region, i.e., Byzantium, the Ottoman Empire, and the Turkish Republic, Constantinople has always been a significant junction point where various influences intersected thus, resulted in acculturation. Constantinople's function as a mediator in the East-West cultural exchanges and its participation in such interactive dynamics led to the development of hybrid vocabularies mirrored in the artistic endeavors of those interacting political powers. In that regard, artworks that came to existence in Constantinople's various political onsets are instrumental in analyzing the cross-cultural interactions that those particular political powers had with their Eastern and Western counterparts.¹ Since Christianity has always been a fundamental feature of Constantinople's multicultural identity from past to present, Christian artworks, i.e., liturgical, votive imageries, and religious paintings, particularly the Marian icons, illustrate the dynamics of cross-cultural interactions between Constantinople/Istanbul and the Latin West in different periods. This thesis aims to demonstrate such interactions from the perspective of a specific Marian icon in the city, *SS.V. Odighitria*, in the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata. The main reason for selecting this particular Marian icon for the thesis was its intricate hybridity, effectively incorporating Eastern and Western artistic elements from different historical periods. As will be further elaborated in the following pages, the attributed title of this Marian icon is misleading, as it does not display the Hodegetria iconography. Therefore, in the context of this thesis, I denominated this artwork as *the Galata icon* to prevent misleading statements and highlight its unique iconography. Even though Galata and Pera had been used to refer to the area where this particular icon was placed for a long time and both terms were used elaborately to characterize the territory, in this thesis, the term "Galata" is further highlighted and designated for the novel title of this Marian image.²

¹ Lyn Rodley, "The Byzantine Context" in the *Byzantine Art and Renaissance Europe*, ed. Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Rembrandt Duis (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), 9-10; World, Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe, published on March 20, 2023. <https://ehne.fr/en/encyclopedia/themes/europe-europeans-and-world/european-trade-routes/venetian-merchants-and-traders-actors-venetian-empire>.

² Afife Batur, "Galata and Pera 1, A Short History, Urban Development Architecture and Today," *ARI, The Bulletin of Istanbul Technical University* 55, no.1 (2000): 1-2; Hasan Sercan Sağlam, "Urban Palimpsest at Galata & An Architectural Inventory Study for the Genoese Colonial Territories in Asia Minor," (PhD diss., Politecnico di Milano, 2018), 7.

The Galata icon comprises a hybrid identity regarding its materiality, history, and iconography. Given that it is composed of a wooden panel (c. 13th-14th century) coated with a silver revetment (applied in 1698-1699), the Galata icon comprises two different media on its body. Moreover, regarding the dating of both features to distinct timelines, the Galata icon further harmonizes the artistic and cultural contexts developed between c. the 13th and 17th centuries.³ Additionally, given that it was initially the object of veneration of the Dominican congregation in the Genoese colony of Caffa and arrived at Constantinople in 1475, its historical narrative can be considered another layer characterizing its hybridity.⁴ Finally, the imagery on its later attached silver revetment, representing Madonna della Misericordia, attributes a uniqueness to the Galata icon among all Marian icons in the city, given that it was the only artwork representing that specific iconography illustrating numerous Eastern and Western artistic features under one typology. From this perspective, the representation of the Misericordia iconography on the Galata icon's 17th-century revetment can be interpreted as a reference to the perpetual, very well-established multicultural identity of Constantinople/Istanbul.

The meaning of the Misericordia iconography is the merciful nature of the Virgin Mary. In Misericordia representations, such a notion is visualized by centralizing her figure, who opens her miraculous mantle and gathers pleading figures underneath it in the composition. Therefore, along with the emphasis on the Virgin Mary, the Misericordia iconography highlights one of the common grounds that unifies all Christians, regardless of their sects and ethnicities, as all devoted Christians can find shelter under the protective cloak of their heavenly mother.⁵ In the context of 17th-century Istanbul, the utilization of this particular Marian iconography on the Galata icon, an artwork symbolizing the Latin-rite Christians residing in the Ottoman capital, can be further elaborated as

³ P. Benedetto Palazzo and P.A. Raineri O.P., *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata, Note Storiche Illustrative in Occasione dei I Centenario della Consacrazione* (Istanbul: HARTİ ve Şki Basımevi, 1943), 42-43; E. Dalleggio D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata* (Istanbul: Milli Neşriyat Yurdu, 1935), 23-24; Chiara Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata. Fonti per Un'Iconografia Tra Oriente e Occidente," in *Domenicani a Constantinopoli prima e dopo L'impero Ottomano*, edited by C. Monge and S. Pedone (Firenze: Edizioni Nerbini, 2017), 151-54.

⁴ Raphaëlle Ziadé "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," in *Grandes Heures des Manuscrits Irakiens*, ed. J. Charles-Gaffiot and A. Desreumaux (Suresnes: les Éditions du Net, 2015), 84; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata, Note Storiche Illustrative in Occasione dei I Centenario della Consacrazione*, 38-9, 41, 42-3; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata. Fonti per Un'Iconografia Tra Oriente e Occidente," 154, 158, 167.

⁵ Palazzo, and Raineri *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5, 37; Katherine T. Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art, Devotional Image and Civic Emblem* (United States: Routledge, 2017), 45-6.

an emphasis on the notable Christian identity of Ottoman society.⁶ Therefore, as a unique Marian iconography reflecting the cross-cultural interactions between the East and the West, namely Constantinople/Istanbul and the Italian peninsula, along with essential notions of the Marian devotion among Christians in both spheres and the Christian identity embedded in the texture of the Ottoman capital, the Madonna della Misericordia typology develops into a visual testimony of the multicultural entity of the Ottoman capital, that was formed in parallel to cross-cultural interactions in question, in the 17th century.

Interestingly, the Galata icon and its symbolism remain blind spots in art historical circles, given that this particular icon is often overlooked and not included in art historical studies. In other words, even though this particular icon is known, it has yet to be studied sufficiently. In fact, only two art historical accounts solemnly focus on the icon and discuss its details thoroughly. The first contemporary account on the Galata icon is Raphaëlle Ziadé's article "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," published in the book *Grandes Heures des Manuscrits Irakiens* edited by J. Charles-Gaffiot and A. Desreumaux (2015).⁷ In this relatively short account (seven pages), Raphaëlle Ziadé provides significant information regarding the Caffan context of the icon while elaborating on its iconography by contextualizing it in the Dominican context. On the other, the second art historical research that is significant in the context of the Galata icon is Chiara Bordino's article "L' Odigitria della chiesa dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata. Fonti per Un'Iconografia tra Oriente e Occidente," published in the book *Domenicani a Constantinopoli prima e dopo L'impero Ottomano*, edited by C. Monge and S. Pedone (2017).⁸ Compared to Ziadé's work, Bordino's iconographical analysis contextualizes the icon into a historical narrative of the church Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, given that the book in her article was published mainly focuses on the history of the Dominican order in the Ottoman capital. Furthermore, like Ziadé, Bordino underlines the inconsistency between the traditional title and the imagery of the icon by focusing on both layers. In the context of this research, their accounts significantly aided me in reconstructing the Misericordia imagery

⁶ Eric R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople. Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 23.

⁷ Ziadé, Raphaëlle. "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique." In *Grandes Heures des Manuscrits Irakiens*, edited by J. Charles-Gaffiot and A. Desreumaux, 80-86. Suresnes: Les Éditions du Net, 2015.

⁸ Bordino, Chiara. "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata. Fonti per Un'Iconografia Tra Oriente e Occidente." In *Domenicani a Constantinopoli prima e dopo L'impero Ottomano*, edited by C. Monge and S. Pedone, 151-174. Firenze: Edizioni Nerbini, 2017.

of the Galata icon in tandem with the 17th-century Ottoman and Latin Western contexts, thus significantly contributing to my discussion on the cross-cultural interactions between Constantinople and the Latin West, namely La Serenissima, by centering the Galata icon.

As my methodology, I have utilized some primary resources and compilations of archival documents to understand the reflections of such notions on this particular Marian icon and construct its historical narrative. Moreover, I have performed contextualized art historical analysis on the icon, which has revealed that the Galata icon's imagery is composed of various cultural elements, including particular contemporary details (e.g., modeling 17th-century velvets for the Virgin Mary's garments). The latter notion demonstrated that the Galata icon had artistically and stylistically adapted to the ever-changing trends of concurrent centuries, enhancing its reflectivity. The iconographical analysis has been carried out hand-in-hand with a comparative perspective on details; in other words, textual and visual evidence are combined throughout the thesis. Furthermore, I have benefited from phenomenological analysis in exploring the icon from the lens of its materiality. Last but not least, I analyzed the Galata icon from the perspective of Marian devotional practices of the East and West.

In that regard, apart from Raphaëlle Ziadé's and Chiara Bordinò's valuable contributions to the art historical analysis of the Galata icon, other sources I benefited from were focusing on the history of the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata while making relatively few remarks on its icon. In this perspective, there are two critical historical accounts that I benefited from, especially when constructing the possible patronage dynamics effective on the execution of the Galata icon's revetment: Dalleggio D'Alessio's book *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata* (1935) and P.B. Palazzo and P.A. Raineri O.P.'s collective account *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata, Note Storiche Illustrative in Occasione dei I Centenario della Consacrazione* (1943).⁹ Both sources were prepared by utilizing the archival documents of the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, now preserved in the archival collection of SALT Archives; thus, information obtained from both accounts formulated a critical portion of this thesis.¹⁰

⁹ D'Alessio, E. Dalleggio. *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*. Istanbul: Milli Neşriyat Yurdu, 1935; Palazzo, P. Benedetto and Raineri, P.A. Raineri O.P., *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata, Note Storiche Illustrative in Occasione dei I Centenario della Consacrazione*. Istanbul: HARTİ ve Şki Basımevi, 1943.

¹⁰ "Saints Pierre and Paul Church in Galata," SALT Archives, accessed May 14, 2024, <https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/2572>.

Furthermore, for my research, I have also utilized some secondary sources on the history of the church Saints Peter and Paul in Galata: Sezim Sezer Darnault's book *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul, A Historical Perspective (1839-1923)* (2004), Vanessa R. De Obaldía's Ph.D. dissertation "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul from the Ottoman Conquest of 1453 until 1740" (2018), P. Ğ. İncicyan's account of the Ottoman capital in the 18th century, *18. Asırda İstanbul* (1976), and Hakan Gündoğar's master's thesis "Galata Sn. Pierre Kilisesi'nin Tarihi" (2006).¹¹

For the contextualized art historical analysis, I have benefited from various resources surveying the artistic and stylistic trends of the 17th century, along with academic accounts demonstrating their development and discussing the possible factors behind them. Given that the mantle of the Virgin Mary holds a significant portion of the icon (material and iconographical-wise), I have utilized Anna Muthesius' publications on Byzantine silks, particularly "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium" (1992), "Cloth, Color, Symbolism and Meaning in Byzantium (4th-15th centuries)" (2016) and "Imperial Identity: Byzantine Silks, Art, Autocracy, Theocracy, and the Image of Basileia" (2022).¹² For constructing my hypothesis proposing the fabric of the Virgin Mary's mantle as velvet, the book *In 5000 Years of Textiles* (edited by Jennifer Harris, 1995), Christa C. Mayer Thurman's book *European Textiles in the Robert Lehman Collection* (2001), and Nurhan Atasoy's collaborative work with Walter B. Denny, Louise W. Mackie, and Hülya Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets* (2001) became illuminating.¹³ Similarly, Lale Görünür's book *Pabuç, Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan* (2014), John Wortley's article "The Marian Relics at Constantinople" (2006), Stephen J. Shoemaker's work "The Cult of

¹¹ Darnault, Sezim Sezer. *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul, A Historical Perspective (1839-1923)*. Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2004; De Obaldía, Vanessa R. "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul from the Ottoman Conquest of 1453 until 1740." PhD diss., Aix-Marseille University, 2018; İncicyan, P. Ğ. *18. Asırda İstanbul*. İstanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1976; Gündoğar, Hakan. "Galata Sn. Pierre Kilisesi'nin Tarihi." Master Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2006.

¹² Muthesius, Anna Maria. 1992. "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium." In *Textiles in Daily Life: Proceedings of the Third Biennial Symposium of the Textile Society of America, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington, September 24-26, 1992*, 99-110. Earleville, MD: Textile Society of America, Inc; Muthesius, Anna Maria. "Cloth, Color, Symbolism and Meaning in Byzantium (4th-15th centuries)." *Δελτίον Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας* 37 (2016): 181-198; Muthesius, Anna Maria. "Imperial Identity: Byzantine Silks, Art, Autocracy, Theocracy, and the Image of Basileia." In *The Routledge Handbook on Identity in Byzantium*, edited by Michael Edward Stewart, David Alan Parnell and Conor Whately, 81-103. Routledge, March 2022.

¹³ Harris, Jennifer, ed. *In 5000 Years of Textiles*. London: British Museum Press, 1995; Thurman, Christa C. Mayer. *European Textiles in the Robert Lehman Collection*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001; Atasoy, Nurhan, Walter B. Denny, Louise W. Mackie, and Hülya Tezcan. *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*. London: Azimuth Editions Limited, 2001.

Fashion, The Earliest Life of the Virgin and Constantinople's Marian Relics" (2008), Jean K. Cadogan's "The Chapel of the Holy Belt in Prato: Piety and Politics in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany" (2009), E. Jane Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," (2006), and Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Threads of Authority: The Virgin Mary's Veil in the Middle Ages" (2001) aided me to identify the possible factors and models influencing the portrayal of the Virgin Mary in the Galata icon.¹⁴ Brian Corson's survey on the history of hairstyles, *Fashions in Hair The First Five Thousand Years* (2001), Madeline C. Zilfi's article "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire" (2019), and Betül İspirli Arğıt work "Clothing Habits, Regulations and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire" (2005) are some of the studies that I referred to for my analysis of the community under the Virgin's mantle.¹⁵ Moreover, to identify the prominent figures portrayed on the icon, I have utilized Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints* (translated by William Granger Ryan, 2012), Rosa Giorgi's book *Saints in Art* (2003), the account of the Blessed Raymond of Capua, *The Life of Saint Catherine of Siena* (translated by 'a member of the Order of the Sacred Heart', 1901?), George Ferguson's *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (1961) and Most. Rev. J.S. Alemany's, D.D. book *The Life of St. Dominic and A Sketch of the Dominican Order* (1867).¹⁶

For my assessment of the Misericordia typology, the primary source I have benefited from is Katherine T. Brown's book *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art, Devotional Image and Civic Emblem* (2017).¹⁷ In parallel, Christa-Belting Ihm's book *Sub Matris Tutela*,

¹⁴ Görünür, Lale. *Pabuç, Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan*. Istanbul: Mas Matbaacılık San. Ve Tic. A.Ş.: 2014; Wortley, John. "The Marian Relics at Constantinople." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 45, no. 2 (2006): 171-187; Shoemaker, Stephen J. "The Cult of Fashion: The Earliest "Life of the Virgin" and Constantinople's Marian Relics." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 62 (2008): 53-74; Cadogan, Jean K. "The Chapel of the Holy Belt in Prato: Piety and Politics in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany." *Artibus et Historiae* 30, no. 60 (2009): 107-137; Burns. E. Jane. "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," *Speculum* 81, no.2 (April 2006): 365-397; Weyl Carr, Annemarie. "Threads of Authority: The Virgin Mary's Veil in the Middle Ages." In *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, edited by Stewart Gordon, 59-93. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.

¹⁵ Corson, Brian. *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*. London: Peter Owen Limited, 2001; Zilfi, Madeline C. "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650– 1830." In *The Right to Dress*, edited by Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack, 393-415. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019; Arğıt. Betül İspirli. "Clothing Habits, Regulations and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire." *Journal of Academic Studies* 6, no:24 (2005): 79-96.

¹⁶ de Voragine, Jacobus. *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, translated by William Granger Ryan. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012; Giorgi, Rosa. *Saints in Art*. California: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003; The Blessed Raymond of Capua. *The Life of Saint Catherine of Siena*, translated by 'a member of the Order of the Sacred Heart.' Dublin: James Duffy And Co., Limited, 1901?; Ferguson, George. *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1961; Alemany, Most. Rev. J.S., D.D. *The Life of St. Dominic and A Sketch of the Dominican Order*. New York: P. O'Shea Publisher, 1867.

¹⁷ Brown, Katherine T. *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art, Devotional Image and Civic Emblem*. United States: Routledge, 2017.

Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte der Schutzmantelmadonna (1976) aided me to comprehend the apparent Byzantine influences on the development of the Misericordia typology, while Jutta Seibert's passage on "Schutzmantelschaft" in *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie Volume 4*, edited by Engelbert Kirschbaum SJ, Günter Bandmann, Wolfgang Braunfels, Johannes Kollwitz, Wilhelm Mrazek, Alfred A. Schmid, and Hugo Schnell (1972), provided me a solid ground for interpreting the Western perspective on the development of this particular Marian iconography.¹⁸ Furthermore, Sirarpie Der Nersessian's extensive work *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I-II* (1993) was highly influential in identifying the prototypic images of the Misericordia iconography, as well as demonstrating its Eastern roots.¹⁹ Bissera Pentcheva's book *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium* (2006), was influential in acknowledging the Marian devotion in the Byzantine Empire and its reflection in the Latin West.²⁰ Lastly, Michele Bacci's article "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale" (2018) was instrumental in synthesizing various influences on this particular Marian iconography.²¹

For the phenomenological analysis of the metal revetment, Andre Grabar's book *Les Revêtements en or et en Argent des Icônes Byzantines du Moyen Age* (1975), Bissera Pentcheva's article "The Performative Icon" (2006), Lauro Stagno's work "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor. Reception and Celebration of Eastern Cult Images in the Republic of Genoa in 16th-18th Centuries" (2016), and Jacques Stella's account *Baroque Ornament and Designs* (1987) became beneficial throughout the research.²²

¹⁸ Belting-Ihm, Christa. *Sub Matris Tutela, Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte der Schutzmantelmadonna*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter GmbH, 1976; Seibert, Jutta. "Schutzmantelschaft." In *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie Volume 4*, edited by Engelbert Kirschbaum SJ, Günter Bandmann, Wolfgang Braunfels, Johannes Kollwitz, Wilhelm Mrazek, Alfred A. Schmid, and Hugo Schnell, 128-34. Freiburg: Herder, 1972.

¹⁹ Der Nersessian, Sirarpie. *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1993; Der Nersessian, Sirarpie. *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume II*. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1993.

²⁰ Pentcheva, Bissera V. *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006.

²¹ Bacci, Michele. "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale." *Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia* 21, no.7, edited by Siri Sande, and Lasse Hodne (2018): 171-195.

²² Grabar, Andres. *Les Revêtements en or et en Argent des Icônes Byzantines du Moyen Age*. Venice: Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies, 1975; Pentcheva, Bissera V. "The Performative Icon." In *The Art Bulletin* 88, no. 4 (December 2006): 631-55; Stagno, Laura. "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor. Reception and Celebration of Eastern Cult Images in the Republic of Genoa in 16th-18th Centuries," *IKON* 9 (2016): 283-298; Stella, Jacques. *Baroque Ornament and Designs*. New York: Dover Publications, 1987.

As previously underlined and further demonstrated through literary sources predominantly benefited from, the main emphasis in this thesis is given to the Galata icon, its symbolic meaning for the non-Muslim subjects, especially the Latin-rite Christians of the Ottoman sultan in the 17th century, and the Misericordia iconography represented on its metal revetment.²³ My objective for emphasizing such particular aspects of the Galata icon depends on its ‘reflectivity’ and ‘adaptivity’; in other words, the Galata icon’s harmonious expression of cross-cultural interactions between Constantinople/Istanbul and the Latin West for centuries, through its materiality, history, and iconographical features. Therefore, this thesis comprises four chapters focusing on different aspects of the Marian icon in question.

In Chapter I, the historical narrative of the Galata icon is underlined. As an artwork whose spatial context had been repeatedly altered in consequent centuries (corresponding to the period between the 15th and 19th centuries), a historical discourse on its Caffan origins, its journey to Constantinople with Dominican friars in 1475, its relocation to Galata, and new spatiality within the church building renovated by Fossati brothers (1841-1843) is provided for comprehending its enhancement within distinct cultural and historical contexts.²⁴

In Chapter II, a contextualized art historical analysis of the Galata icon is executed. The main aim of such an approach is to understand which artistic, historical, and cultural contexts were influential in the context of the Galata icon and how they were embedded in its dual iconography, i.e., the distinctive imageries of its 13th-14th century wooden panel and the 17th century silver revetment.²⁵ The hybrid artistic vocabulary employed on the Galata icon is highlighted by contextualizing each detail within their corresponding cultural contexts. Therefore, the main objective of Chapter II is to analyze the repercussions of well-established cross-cultural interactions between the Byzantine and later Ottoman, Constantinople, and the Latin West by treating the Galata icon as a medium of interaction.

Chapter III elaborates on the iconographical analysis of the Galata icon, both its wooden panel and metal revetment. The deterioration of the wooden panel becomes compelling for interpreting its original iconography, thus resulting in a restricted analysis. Yet, by focusing on the historical narratives describing the imagery of the wooden panel, its iconographical representation

²³ Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople. Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, 23.

²⁴ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-43; D’Alessio, *Le Couvent et L’Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata* 23-24; Bordino, “L’Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata,” 151-54.

²⁵ Bordino, “L’Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata,” 151-54.

is interpreted from the perspective of Madonna di Constantinopoli icons.²⁶ On the other hand, iconographical analysis of the Galata icon's silver revetment reveals that it exhibits the Madonna della Misericordia, or Virgin of Mercy, typology.²⁷ As a particular Marian iconographical type that was nourished from various Eastern and Western features, in Chapter III, further emphasis is given on the development of the Misericordia iconography, its significance for the Dominican Order, and the comparative analysis with Misericordia examples from La Serenissima.

In Chapter IV, the revetment of the Galata icon is analyzed in the context of Byzantine revetment tradition and from the perspective of Baroque splendor characterizing the 17th century.²⁸ This chapter also illustrates the role of metal revetments in the perception of artworks they cover and their effect on the religious experiences of beholders.²⁹ Lastly, the emphasis is given to the revetments of Marian icons in Latin Catholic churches of Istanbul, particularly the Galata icon and the icon Virgin Hodegetria in the church of Santa Maria Draperis in Istanbul, to understand their visual testimony.³⁰

In my conclusive remarks, I am presenting a synthesis of the outcomes of each chapter. This approach aims to comprehend the symbolic meaning of the Galata icon for the Christian community of Constantinople/Istanbul in its past and present days. Moreover, I further elaborate on how the Galata icon expresses cross-cultural interactions.

²⁶ Michele Bacci, "The Legacy of the Hodegetria: Holy Icons and Legends between East and West," in *Images of the Mother of God, Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. by Maria Vassilaki (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 323-29; Anne Derbes, and Amy Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," in *Byzantium, Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. Helen C. Evans (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 450,453-54; National Gallery of Art, "Byzantine Art and Painting in Italy during the 1200s and 1300s."

²⁷ Hanneke Van Asperen, "The Sheltering Cloak: Images of Charity and Mercy in Fourteenth-Century Italy," *Textile* 11 (2013): 264-67, 274-75; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 68-9; Maria Georgopoulou, "Venice and the Byzantine Sphere," in *Byzantium, Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. by Helen C. Evans, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 489; Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50; Jutta Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," in *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie Volume 4*, ed. by Engelbert Kirschbaum SJ, Günter Bandmann, Wolfgang Braunfels, Johannes Kollwitz, Wilhelm Mrazek, Alfred A. Schmid, and Hugo Schnell (Freiburg: Herder, 1972), 159.

²⁸ Andre Grabar, *Les Revêtements en or et en Argent des Icônes Byzantines du Moyen Age* (Venice: Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies, 1975), 9, 13-4; Jannic Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," in *the Byzantium, Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. Helen C. Evans (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 243-44; Ann Sutherland Harris, *Seventeenth-Century Art & Architecture* (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2005), xi, xxi, 1-4.

²⁹ Bissera Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," *The Art Bulletin* 88, no.4 (December 2006): 631, 636-37, 644-45, 650-51.

³⁰ Sezim Sezer Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul, A Historical Perspective (1839-1923)* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2004), 98; Sezay Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," (master's Thesis, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 2018), 43-4.



Figure 1.1: *The Virgin Hodegetria, or the Galata Icon*, c. 13-14th century (wooden portions), 1698 (metal revetment), wood and metal, Saints Peter and Paul Church, Istanbul, Turkey

Chapter 1:

THE HISTORY OF THE GALATA ICON

The metal-coated icon of the Virgin Mary and the Child, originally a 13th-14th century wooden panel, in the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, Istanbul, has a unique history. Brought to Constantinople in the late 15th century by Caffan Dominican priests who refugeed in the imperial city after being expelled from their mainland by Ottoman forces, the Galata icon rapidly transformed into a significant emblem of Christianity in the multicultural Ottoman society. Moreover, its survival from numerous fires that significantly damaged the city resulted in the icon attaining a miraculous nature. The subsequent alterations on the icon in the following centuries: covering with a metal revetment in 1698, adding the Virgin's crown and a crescent moon in 1855, and relocating the icon into a glass frame on one of the niches constructed during the renovation project of Fossati brothers in 1843, contributed to the allure and the importance of the icon for the Latin-Catholic community of Constantinople. The aim of this chapter is to emphasize the history of the Galata icon and provide a brief discourse on the matter. In that regard, remarks on the early history of the icon in Ottoman Istanbul (including its journey from Caffa), the relocation of the Dominican congregation and the icon to Galata, and lastly the Fossati renovation and late history of the icon would be detailed.

1.1 From Caffa to Constantinople: The Early History of the Galata Icon

Information regarding the icon's origin is, unfortunately, incomplete. Even though there is some information about the Galata icon, including its presumed date of execution (c. 13th-14th century), medium (wood), and original location (church of Notre Dame de la Couronne, Caffa, i.e., today's Feodosia); its commissioner or any information about its origin story is not available.³¹ The latter situation limits one's understanding of the icon's iconography since it makes it impossible to comment on the commissioners' aesthetic or devotional perception. It constrains possible discussions regarding the icon's further historical identity as it might have been a diplomatic gift from Constantinople or elsewhere, but unfortunately, unknown. Moreover, the degradation of the original wooden part provides another restrictive situation parallel to restricting

³¹ Ziadé "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84; Palazzo and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 38-9.

technical analysis in detail.³² Nevertheless, the aforementioned information present at the moment, especially the icon's Crimean origin, incorporates different topics into the discussion regarding the icon's historical narrative and perception by the beholders.

Due to its geographically critical location on the Black Sea, situated on the southern coast of the Crimean Peninsula, Caffa was a significant place in the control of commerce and politics of the region.³³ In that regard, the aspiration of the Genoese Republic to transform Caffa into one of its colonies to dominate the trade network of the Black Sea region was a plausible element of its political agenda. After deliberating with Khan Möngke Timur in 1266 (as the Crimean Peninsula had been under Mongolian control since 1249), the Genoese Republic transformed Caffa into one of its overseas colonies.³⁴ In a similar timeline, another Genoese colony was established in Pera, Constantinople.³⁵ With the Treaty of Nymphaeum in 1261, Genoa obtained numerous privileges from the Byzantine Empire in return for its promise of naval aid for reconquering Constantinople and freeing the city from Latin rule.³⁶ Such privileges, including tax reductions and obtaining a district in the town, resulted in thriving colonial and merchandise activities of Genoese in the Black Sea region, as well as attaining a Genoese identity to the texture of Constantinople by the rapid transformation of Pera into a Genoese colony (reached to its peak by 1267).³⁷ Genoa aimed to strengthen its control over the region by constructing both colonies as regulatory seats. Following the beginning of the 14th century, "...nearly all consuls of the Genoese Black Sea colonies were subordinated to the consul of Caffa; meanwhile, the podesta of Pera had ... authority over the consuls from the western part of the Black Sea coast of Asia Minor...".³⁸

³² Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 155; Ziadé, "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81.

³³ "Feodosiya," Cities & Towns, Britannica, last modified March 11, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Feodosiya>; Rafal Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.): Present State of Knowledge and Selected Research Problems," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 74, no. 3-4 (2012): 425.

³⁴ Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.): Present State of Knowledge and Selected Research Problems," 425-26.

³⁵ Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 425-26.

³⁶ Cecily J. Hilsdale, "The Imperial Image at the End of Exile: The Byzantine Embroidered Silk in Genoa and the Treaty of Nymphaion (1261)," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 64 (2010): 152-53; "Trading Posts and Fortifications on Genoese Trade Routes from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea," UNESCO World Heritage Convention, accessed May 2, 2024, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/6468/>; "Boccanegra Family," Historic Dynasties & Families, Britannica, last modified July 20, 1998, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Boccanegra-family#ref161708>.

³⁷ Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 425; Seda Sicimoğlu Yenikler, "The Artistic Hybridity of the Church of San Domenico (Arap Camii): Mirroring The Multicultural Milieu of Galata From Byzantine to Ottoman Times," (Master Thesis, Koç University, 2019), 40-41.

³⁸ Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 428-29.

In addition to commercial growth, the territorial expansion of Genoese colonies further strengthened the Catholic texture of the region, especially in Caffa, as the seat of the Catholic bishop is believed to have been present there from the early 14th century onwards. The ongoing activities of mendicant orders, especially Franciscans and Dominicans, over the earlier century had been accelerated in parallel to Genoese existence in the region, resulting in the development of Caffa to a center of Franciscan vicariates in 1280.³⁹ The Franciscan identity of Genoese Caffa is essentially significant in the context of the Galata icon as, according to Rafal Quirini-Poplawski, it was venerated in the Franciscan church of Caffa before reaching Constantinople.⁴⁰ While Palazzo and Raineri's account states the name of the Caffan church as the church of Notre Dame de la Couronne, no concrete data regarding the order-based identity of that initial church has been coming across in this research.⁴¹ Considering the importance of the Galata icon to the Dominican congregation of Istanbul for centuries, attaining a Dominican identity to the original church of the icon becomes plausible. Therefore, in this thesis, the Galata icon is presented within the context of the Dominican order of Constantinople/Istanbul.

As an artwork whose early history extends to 13th-14th century Caffa, corresponding to Genoese domination of the region, the Galata icon, the original wooden panel with the depiction of the Virgin and the Child, had been shaped in a multi-ethnic and multicultural environment.⁴² As an overseas colony of Genoa and one of the significant commerce outposts of the Black Sea region, Caffa had been an intersection point of various cultures, incorporating different artistic traditions in its body.⁴³ From this perspective, reconstructing the original state of the Galata icon is compelling, especially considering the deterioration of wooden parts over the ensuing centuries. The icon might have been created using Byzantine iconography, it might have portrayed regional customs in a hybrid form with Genoese artistic traditions, or it might have been brought to Caffa from Genoa or one of its colonies, thus representing Italian characteristics. It could also have been commissioned by Caffan Dominicans from Constantinople via the intermediary of their allies in

³⁹ Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 429; "Mendicant Orders in the Medieval World," Heilbrunn Timeline Of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified October 2004, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mend/hd_mend.htm; "Mendicant," Roman Catholicism, History & Society, Britannica, last modified June 12, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mendicant-Roman-Catholicism>.

⁴⁰ Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 459.

⁴¹ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 38-9.

⁴² Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 38-9; Ziadé "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84.

⁴³ Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 426-27, 437-38.

the Genoese colony of Pera, or it may have been given to the Caffan community as a diplomatic gift from Byzantium or European states. Although its original iconography is still unknown and difficult to establish, the Galata icon's Caffan background, its journey to Constantinople, and its enduring veneration as one of the city's symbols of Catholic identity highlight both the icon's value to beholders and its attraction to diverse communities.

The Constantinopolitan narrative of the Galata icon started with its journey from Caffa to Constantinople, which took place in 1475 when the Ottomans gained complete control of the land and forced Christians, including Dominican monks owning the icon, to leave the city and find refuge in Constantinople.⁴⁴ While it was a new chapter for the ones departing from Caffa, it was not a novel development for the Dominican community of Constantinople as the city had already attained it back in the Byzantine era, in 1219, when both Dominicans and Franciscans settled down in the capital city during its Latin occupation (1204-1261).⁴⁵ Even though initially Dominicans resided in Galata and established their apostolic mission in today's Arab Camii, which used to be the Church of San Paolo under their ownership, the 'new-coming' Genoese population of Caffa was directed to the district of Salmatomruk, above the Golden Horn, because the church of San Paolo had already been converted to the Arab Camii by Sultan Mehmed II, and concurrently became the religious setting of the migrated Arabs who came from Andalusia and resided in the Galata district during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II.⁴⁶ The number of people migrating from the Genoese Caffan community to Constantinople was so high that the neighborhood they settled in was later called the 'Kefeli Mahallesi' as a tribute to them.⁴⁷ The Caffan Dominicans (i.e., the Dominican congregation of Caffa who have established themselves in Constantinople) started their religious practices in the church of Santa Maria di Constantinopoli, which also got the name of Santa Maria del Rosario as a reference to the rosary tradition related to Saint Dominic, the founding father of the Dominican order.⁴⁸ Even though it disappeared, and no remaining evidence is left,

⁴⁴ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158; Ziadé, "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 142-3.

⁴⁵ Vanessa R. De Obaldía, "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul from the Ottoman Conquest of 1453 until 1740" (PhD diss., Aix-Marseille Université, 2018), 107.

⁴⁶ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158; Obaldía, "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul from the Ottoman Conquest of 1453 until 1740" 111.

⁴⁷ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158.

⁴⁸ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158; "Dominicans: The History of the Order of Preaches," Sen Piyer Kilisesi, accessed February 4, 2024, <http://senpiyer.org/dominicans/>; Charles M. Daley, O.P., "Some Dominican Iconography," *Dominicana* 14, no. 14 (Washington: Dominicana, 1929): 298-301.

the church of Santa Maria di Constantinopoli, or Saint Mary of Constantinople, was considered the later Odalar Camii that was burnt down in 1919. Even though the long-running tradition assumed that the church of Saint Mary of Constantinople was converted to Odalar Camii as a whole, a relatively recent study by Neslihan Asutay Effenberger proposed that the old church of the Odalar Camii included portions of nearby monuments including the Kasım Ağa Camii, İpek Bodrumu (an old Byzantine cistern complex), and what was left from the Monastery of Johannes Prodromos.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, it was very likely that the Caffan Dominican congregation established their new order and housed their icon of the Virgin in that church.⁵⁰

1.2 Relocation to Galata: The Church of Saints Peter and Paul

The existence of Dominicans in Salmatomruk, and relatedly, the church of Saint Mary of Constantinople, was not perpetual. Like their pioneers who came to Constantinople in the 13th century, members of the Dominican congregation residing in Salmatomruk were driven to leave their neighborhood and join the continuing Dominican convent in Galata (who settled down in the region after the conversion of their church to Arab Camii) with the conversion of their church into a mosque in 1634, both sharing a similar destiny.⁵¹ The establishment of the preceding congregation to Galata was accomplished with the aid of the Genoese (or Venetian?) nobleman Angelo Zacharia, who resided in the region. In the beginning, Angelo Zacharia allowed the congregation members to live and practice their religion (as the house already had a built-in chapel) in one of his properties near the Galata Tower. When their new home/honorary church burnt down in 1497, the congregation pursued another place to dwell in, and the father of Angelo Zacharia, Pietro Zacharia, first leased and then bestowed a new house where the current church stands.⁵² In subsequent years, the church went through numerous misfortunate events, like fires and losing the estate to the Ottoman state, but eventually managed to regain their property and developed their establishment in Galata through obtaining additional lands as with the translocation of the

⁴⁹ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158-9; Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger, "Das Kloster des Ioannes Prodromos της Πέτρας in Konstantinopel und sein Bezug zur Odalar und Kasım Ağa Camii," *Millenium* 5 (2008), 304-5, 313, 325.

⁵⁰ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158.

⁵¹ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 159-160; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 40-1.

⁵² Obaldía, "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul," 115-6; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 134-5.

Salmatomruk congregation under their roof, the Galata congregation became the central Dominican parish of the capital city.⁵³

The great Istanbul fire of 1660 had become a turning point for the icon. As a catastrophe that demolished nearly two-thirds of the capital city, most edifices in Galata were damaged, including the church of Saints Peter and Paul.⁵⁴ Only the icon of the Virgin and the Child and the iron gates of the church had survived from burning into ashes.⁵⁵ The icon's survival was considered a divine intervention, thus strengthening its miraculous identity, which had been attained by the icon from its earlier days in Salmatomruk, Constantinople, as its historical narrative became blurred and confused with the miraculous Blachernai icon in time.⁵⁶ Moreover, according to Father Guiducci's report written in 1700, during the great fire of 1660, a crack running along the length of the wooden panel damaged the icon while leaving the face of the Virgin Mary intact as it had miraculously changed its direction while stretching out to the top of the icon.⁵⁷ As a wooden panel, the Galata icon was already showing the wearing-off effect of time and bedbugs, nail damage, and partial damage from previous earthquakes and fires.⁵⁸ After the great fire of Istanbul, a protective measure became required for the icon. Therefore, during 1698-1699, the Galata icon acquired its metal revetment, and the exhibited iconography on the icon had affluently altered, becoming a fine example of Madonna della Misericordia representations.⁵⁹ Presumably, the Dominican congregation of Galata considered the need for a revetment as a chance to modify the representation of the icon according to their ideology, and by choosing the Misericordia iconography with various cultural references within, they represented themselves (as the generic figures on the revetment are presumably a reference to the Galata congregation) in one of the most popular iconographical genres of the Dominican circle in Europe, as numerous artworks of Misericordia typology existed in the context of the Dominican order in the Latin West.⁶⁰

⁵³ Obaldia, "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul," 116-7.

⁵⁴ Marc David Baer, "The Great Fire of 1660 and the Islamization of Christian and Jewish Space in Istanbul," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36, no.2 (May 2004): 159; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154.

⁵⁵ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 136.

⁵⁶ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 160-66.

⁵⁷ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154.

⁵⁸ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154.

⁵⁹ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41.

⁶⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 107-9.

According to Palazzo and Raineri's account of the history of the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, the money required for the silver revetment was raised as a collective enterprise; in other words, all congregation members contributed, notwithstanding to their financial statues.⁶¹ Moreover, the French ambassador of the time, Marquis Castagné, and Armenians living nearby donated money (and silver) for the same purpose.⁶² Furthermore, considering intermarriages between two prominent families of the Latin Catholic Community of Pera and Galata, Zacharias, and Draperis (the patron family who bestowed the ancient icon of the Virgin Mary and their initial

sanctuary to a group of Franciscan friars who later constructed the church of St. Mary Draperis in Pera), along with the redistribution of Zacharias' wealth to Draperis' through subsequent inheritances, it is coherent to propose that most likely the Draperis family, too, donated sumptuous amount of money for the application of the revetment (even though such notion was not explicitly mentioned in Palazzo and Raineri's account).⁶³ Last but not least, the perpetual interest of Venetians in the icon and their continuous donations to church officials were remarkable in that regard.⁶⁴ Concerning all those donations that made the execution of the revetment possible, patronage of the Galata revetment can be interpreted as a collective one.

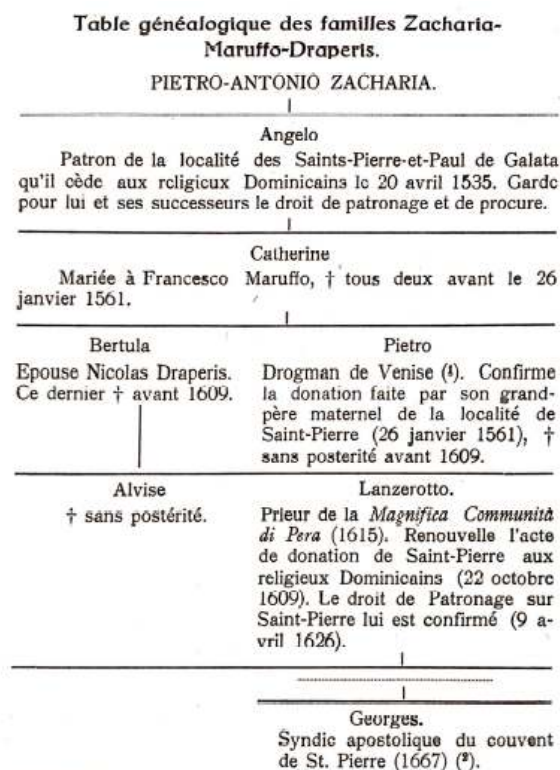


Figure 1.2: An excerpt from E. Dalleggio D'Alessio's book *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata* (1935), diagram reflecting intermarriages between Zacharias and Draperis family (p.37)

⁶¹ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41-2.

⁶² Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41-2.

⁶³ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41-2; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 37.

⁶⁴ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

Another repercussion of the great fire of Istanbul on the Galata icon was related to its future. Over the years, La Serenissima was the sole protector of the church and its congregation, just like many others in Pera and Galata.⁶⁵ In the case of the church of Saints Peter and Paul, La Serenissima's particular interest in the icon was apparent with the annual donations, approximately 140 reali, for propagating the cult of the Virgin Mary centering the Galata icon.⁶⁶ Thus, when the fire demolished the church, the Venetian bailo of the time, Jean Baptiste Ballarin, wanted to take the icon under La Serenissima's total custody and send it to Venice to be preserved/displayed in Doge's palace.⁶⁷ The Dominican friars opposed such an interest, and one of the church's friars, Fr. Fra Umberto Pimpinella, kept the icon in his house until the church complex was reconstructed. In return, the Venetian bailo put suspense on their annual payments to the church, leading Dominicans to find a new benefactor and converging with French officials. Later, for reconciliation, Venetian ambassador Alvise Molin donated substantial money to the church. In time, Venetians resurfaced their interest in the Galata icon by requesting to take it to La Serenissima, indicating that it would be safer for the icon as its current neighborhood was receptive to possible fires.⁶⁸ This time, the dispute between La Serenissima (claiming the rightful ownership of the icon) and the friars of the church of Saint Peter and Paul in Galata resulted in the latter's decision to pass under the protection of France around the beginning of early 18th century.⁶⁹ As the Galata icon had received its metal revetment during that timeline, the Venetian patronage on the application of the coating, along with smaller donations from congregation members and other religious institutions, comes to the forefront as probably the most substantial one, underlying the Venetian influence on its style and iconography.⁷⁰

1.3 The Fossati Renovation in 19th Century and Remarks on the Late History of the Icon

The fires in Ottoman Constantinople continued to affect the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata. After further devastation of the church building as an outcome of the Great Galata Fire of 1731, the flock rebuilt the church as a wooden complex and served as the parish church for 110

⁶⁵ Eric R. Dursteler, "The Bailo in Constantinople: Crisis and Career in Venice's Early Modern Diplomatic Corps," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 16, no.2 (December 2001): 7.

⁶⁶ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 22.

⁶⁷ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 22.

⁶⁸ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 22-3.

⁶⁹ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 23-4.

⁷⁰ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154.



Figure 1.3: The Frame of the Galata Icon and Its Inscription 'SS. V. Odighitria'

years.⁷¹ During 1841-1843, the church underwent an extensive restoration project by the Fossati brothers, resulting in the construction of the present church complex.⁷² The Fossati brothers, Gaspare and Giuseppe, had spent considerable time in Istanbul and renovated numerous buildings, including Hagia Sophia, which Sultan Abdulmecit I imperially commissioned.⁷³ In the context of the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, the primary aim of the Dominican friars was to construct a solid, enduring church complex as all previous church buildings were demolished in consequent fires.⁷⁴ The Fossati brothers designed and constructed a rectangular, neoclassical church building for the Dominican congregation in Galata.⁷⁵ Even though most of the church was built from scratch, the wall behind the high altar was

constructed with remains of the Genoese ramparts, thus architecturally commemorating the Genoese of the Galata district.⁷⁶

In this restoration/reconstruction project, the Galata icon also moved into its current position, to the niche near the altar.⁷⁷ Moreover, it has started to be displayed behind the glass frame that contains 'SS. V. ODIGHITRIA' inscription.⁷⁸ The iconography of the metal revetment, Madonna della Misericordia, does not correspond to the inscription of its frame. Even though it might be compelling and misleading, this choice of entitlement of the Galata icon can be

⁷¹ Obaldia, "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul," 118.

⁷² Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 137.

⁷³ "Aya Sofia Constantinople," Collections, Victoria & Albert Museum, last modified June 30, 2009, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O723060/aya-sofia-constantinople-print-gaspare-fossati/>.

⁷⁴ "Construction of the New Temple," The Church of St. Peter and Paul, Sen Piyer Kilisesi, accessed May 4, 2024, <https://senpiyer.org/church/>.

⁷⁵ Paolo Girardelli, "Architecture, Identity, and Liminality: On the Use and Meaning of Catholic Spaces in Late Ottoman Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 22 (2005): 233; Sen Piyer Kilisesi, "Construction of the New Temple," The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul.

⁷⁶ Sen Piyer Kilisesi, "Construction of the New Temple," The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul.

⁷⁷ Sen Piyer Kilisesi, "Construction of the New Temple," The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul.

⁷⁸ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151-52.

acknowledged as a reference to the long-lasting tradition of referral to the icon as the miraculous Hodegetria icon, painted by Saint Luke himself.⁷⁹ In that regard, by maintaining this inscription for the icon, even though it is clear that they must be aware of the fact that the given inscription did not correspond to the new iconography, members of the congregation were able to put an emphasis on the long-continued legacy of their artwork and made artistic and historical references to the Byzantine and Ottoman contexts they existed in.⁸⁰

Last but not least, the Galata icon was modified once again in 1855 with the addition of the golden crown (commissioned from Malta) and the golden crescent moon (currently removed from the artwork) on the revetment to celebrate the establishment of the papal dogma, the Immaculate Conception.⁸¹⁸² On December 8, 1855, the insertion of the crown of the Galata icon and the placement of the crescent moon took place in the church. Prominent clerical members of Constantinople and Anatolia, including the Archbishop Monsignor Mussabini, the Armenian Catholic Primate Monsignor Assoun, the Armenian Catholic Bishop of Erzurum Monsignor Salviati, Archbishop of Babylon Monsignor Trioche, and also French Ambassador Tuvenel, who was representing the affairs of France on the church since the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata passed under total protection of France in 1701, which is also re-established with a hattı-şerif declared in 1813, were apparent on the event.⁸³ Their inclusion in the event underlines that the Galata icon had further developed into a significant landmark of Christians in Ottoman Constantinople and Ottoman lands, not just by its Dominican congregation.

Concerning these, the Galata icon attained a dynamic spirit, i.e., adaptability, as it enhanced to reflect different characteristics and incorporated contemporary reality into its body. With the application of the metal coating, the Galata icon rigidly preserves its past by embodying the Caffan, Byzantine, Italian, and Ottoman elements while further representing the city's Christian community. The existence of the 'SS. V. Odighitria' inscription for the icon contrasts with its ever-changing nature and appearance, constantly emphasizing its glorious past and miraculous identity, thus elevating the icon's status and transforming it into an invaluable cultic imagery. As an artwork

⁷⁹ Bordino, "L'Odighitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 161-67; P. Ğ. İncicyan, *18. Asırda İstanbul* (İstanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1976), 104.

⁸⁰ Bordino, "L'Odighitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 167.

⁸¹ Bordino, "L'Odighitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-3.

⁸² Hakan Gündoğar, "Galata Sn. Pierre Kilisesi'nin Tarihi" (Master Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2006), 38.

⁸³ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-43; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 23-24.

that journeyed from Caffa to Constantinople and transformed into the emblem of the Dominican congregation and later the whole Catholic community living in the capital city, it attained a miraculous identity by surviving numerous catastrophes and altered with new iconography and spatial context, the Galata icon illustrates a colorful survival history. In that regard, the historical narrative of the Galata icon can be comprehended as the reflection of the ever-changing, multicultural texture of Constantinople/Istanbul. This visualized reflection will be enlightened in the following chapter by analyzing various features within historical and cultural frameworks.



Chapter 2:

CONTEXTUALIZED ART HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GALATA ICON

Due to its unconventional iconography, the Galata icon only partially fits both into the Byzantine and Western artistic traditions. In reality, it uses components from both and uniquely portrays them. This particular icon represents a valuable case study in this thesis, given that it illustrates how different artistic tendencies of Byzantium, and the West came together in this artwork, with an emphasis on the continuing legacy of Marian icons in the Ottoman context. However, it is difficult to put this icon in specific iconographical typologies, characteristics for both cultural spheres. The Galata icon reflects both cultural milieus for a long duration. Its story began in the c. 13-14th century in Genoese Caffa, while its legacy is still continuing in present-day Istanbul.⁸⁴

The Galata icon was made of two materials, wood and metal, that compose its two main layers. The original icon, dated to the 13th or 14th century, was painted on wood. It has been extensively damaged over the years, and the faces of the Virgin Mary and the Child are the only surviving parts of the original icon.⁸⁵ Although the original size of the icon is uncertain, the preserved part is rectangular in shape and measures 42.5-43 x 13.5-14 x 1.3 cm. In 1698-1699, the Galata icon was covered with a metal revetment to secure the icon from further damage and, relatedly, emphasize it as votive imagery, notions parallel to numerous other icons covered with revetments. The metal overlay surpasses the dimensions of the wooden portion, measuring 160 x 120 cm, the only part of the wooden icon that the revetment does not cover are the faces of the Virgin Mary and Christ. The remaining component is coated with the metal part by setting the wooden fragment on a wooden board of the same size as the metal and applying the revetment.⁸⁶ The technique of metal coating is well-known in both artistic traditions; there are many icons with top-mounted revetments, whether they originated in Byzantine world or spread through Latin West and the Orthodox world.⁸⁷ The 'allure' or 'beauty' of icons with ornate decorations is enhanced by metal revetments, which also stabilize and strengthen icons by guarding against damage to the

⁸⁴ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84.

⁸⁵ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154.

⁸⁶ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154-5.

⁸⁷ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243-4, 249.

original components beneath.⁸⁸ The revetment frequently mimics the appearance of the wooden icon, revealing the original iconography underneath, visible through the wooden piece's uncovered portions that generally correspond to the faces and hands of depicted holy figures.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the Galata icon is not one of them. Even though the original faces are still visible, the detailed ornamentation on the revetment and the icon's puzzling inscription suggests that the depiction on the metal revetment does not mimic the original one. In the following parts of this chapter, the focus will be on these aspects.

As an object with multiple layers, the Galata icon provides the spectator with a challenging and thought-provoking reading. The multi-component physicality of the icon, indicating its complex structure that includes a fragmented wooden panel embedded in a silver revetment, which is gilded in certain parts, adds up to the already existing issue of complexity surfaced by its hybrid iconography and open-ended historical analysis revolving around the artwork.⁹⁰ Therefore, an on-point analytical approach by considering intentionality beneath each iconographic element and detail is indispensable for a better understanding of the Galata icon.

2.1 The Remaining Wooden Parts of the Original Icon: Faces of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child

Due to heavy deterioration, what remains from the 13th-14th century original wooden panel is the faces of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child. The metal revetment applied on the icon was designed to reveal their faces, while covering and creating a novel iconography on other parts. Compared to the Virgin Mary, Christ's face on the wooden panel has been heavily damaged, rendering his facial features and gestures almost invisible thus, making its analysis compelling.⁹¹

Focusing on the facial features of the Virgin Mary, the subtle expression on the face, together with her direct gaze towards to viewer, creates an emotionless appearance at *prima facie*, yet a considerate look in her eyes appeals to certain emotions in the viewer. Even though, at a personal

⁸⁸ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154.

⁸⁹ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 245.

⁹⁰ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81-2; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151.

⁹¹ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151, 154-56.

level, one might experience different sets of emotions, at the collective level, in this kind of representation, the motherly affection of the Virgin expresses itself together with the sadness she feels towards the sacrificial death of her son. Therefore, the subtle expression on the Virgin's face actually indicates the mixture of love and sadness at a deeper layer.⁹²



Figure 2.1: Detail of the Galata icon, remains of the original wooden panel, faces of the Virgin Mary and the Child Christ.

Stylistically, the Virgin of the Galata icon has not a contoured and elongated nose as one commonly comes across in Byzantine depictions; relatedly, her glabella is not as distinctly underlined, her eyebrows are more elaborately defined, and even her under eye-bags are not explicit. Though the almond-shaped eyes, the small, tightly closed lips, and the rather slender face of the Galata Virgin remind of Byzantine examples, in general, her face is pictorially unparalleled among contemporary works of its time.⁹³ In that regard, the Virgin's face on the Galata icon creates the impression of sensible plasticity, especially in comparison with angular, stylized faces predominantly featured in Byzantine and Italian art of the given period.⁹⁴ Moreover, according to Chiara Bordino, who had the chance to examine the Galata icon in detail and access archival

⁹² The Byzantine artworks depicting the sorrowful Virgin Mary illustrate the emotions in a stylized manner, just like the other portions of the figures shown. For instance, to emphasize the sorrowful nature of the Virgin over the sacrificial death of her son, as visible in various iconographies representing the Virgin and the Child emphasizing the Virgin's anticipation over Christ's future sacrifice or in scenes of Christ's life cycle such as the Crucifixion, the Virgin is mainly depicted with a frowning expression, her eyebrows strikingly forming a linear V, and sometimes with tears. From this point of view, the Galata Virgin's expression does not correspond to the generic emotion formula of Byzantine art. Henry Maguire, "The Asymmetry of Text and Image in Byzantium," *Texte et image au Moyen Âge. Nouvelles perspectives critiques* 38 (2017), Open Edition Journals, accessed January 30, 2024, <https://journals.openedition.org/peme/12218#quotation>.

⁹³ Paul Hetherington, *The 'Painter's Manual' Of Dionysius Of Fourna* (London: Oakwood Publications, 1981), 87.

⁹⁴ In this regard, one cannot make a solid connection with the 13th-14th century Western artworks because in that period, Western art was highly influenced by some aspects of Byzantine art as an outcome of the Fourth Crusades and the Sack of Constantinople. Many representations of the Virgin culminated with an even mixture of Byzantine and Western aspects, e.g., depicting the Virgin with linear, massless body and eminently unrealistic facial expressions whereas painting her with blonde hair and mainly in Western iconographic traditions. "Byzantine Art," Glossary, National Galleries Scotland, accessed January 30, 2024, <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/glossary-terms/byzantine-art>.

documents, including the restoration report of the icon, the faces of the Virgin and the Child were most probably repainted when the revetment was applied in 1698, thus, proposing an extended timeline for both features.⁹⁵ From this perspective, the disparity of the Virgin's face to the original wooden piece and the fashion of the 13th-14th centuries is reemphasized.

Moreover, touching upon the issue of subtle expression, the Galata Virgin is more idealistically depicted since her emotions cannot be read immediately and require more of an attentive observing. Her face also seems more realistic, as if it is a portrait of a real person, making the Galata icon a unique artwork of its time by attributing a naturalistic outlook.⁹⁶ The Virgin's face resembles the works of later periods, conforming with flourishing art styles of the Western sphere (i.e., Renaissance and Baroque), in the sense of the realistic details and the subtle depiction of emotions on her face. This interpretation can be further strengthened with Chiara Bordino's analysis of the Galata icon and, thus, can be interpreted as a notion underlying the complexity of the Galata icon and how it is perpetually shaped by the changing cultural context it belonged to, just like the other features of the artwork.⁹⁷

2.2 The Metal Revetment

Unlike the wooden portions, the metal revetment of the Galata icon represents numerous details. Besides being fully ornamented, each figure received elaborate detailing on the icon, exhibiting a finely crafted artwork. While the identity of the workshop executed the metal coating remains unknown, the Constantinopolitan origin of the craftsmanship is asserted from the archival documents.⁹⁸

2.2.1 The Virgin Mary

As the Galata icon's central figure, the Virgin Mary's depiction offers various features to examine. The Virgin's face, like that of Christ, corresponds to one portion of the original 13th-14th-century wooden icon, but the other parts of her appearance are portrayed on the later added metal revetment.⁹⁹ Furthermore, given that the majority of the metal panel was devoted to the

⁹⁵ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 155.

⁹⁶ National Galleries Scotland, "Byzantine Art."

⁹⁷ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 155.

⁹⁸ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 86.

⁹⁹ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84.

Virgin's representation, the prominence of her image in the artwork further reinforces the significance of the Virgin in the Galata icon, together with her importance for the patrons and the Dominican congregation of Galata.¹⁰⁰ In addition, the meticulous attention to detail in the Virgin's clothing and slippers, in conjunction with the previously mentioned characteristics, offers a number of perspectives to consider about the cultural milieu the Galata icon belonged to and how they were mirrored in the depiction of the Virgin.

2.2.1.1 *The Mantle of the Virgin Mary*

In contrast to her face painted on the wood panel, other features of the Virgin Mary are pierced onto the metal revetment done in the repoussé technique and layered with silver and gold.¹⁰¹ Compared to other details, the Virgin's body and her expanded mantle occupy the most space on the revetment. Along with the mantle, the Virgin's other garments, too, are exquisitely processed on the metal with fine detailing and delicate workmanship. Furthermore, a closer look at the outline of the Virgin's figure reveals that it comes to the forefront among other parts as forming the outmost layer of the revetment by being a separate piece of layered metal nailed down on the main and backmost portion of the metal piece. A closer look at the outer arms of the Virgin reveals the nails, thus, exhibiting the attachment points of this layer to the main one. Regarding the space occupied by the Virgin and her domical representation creating the illusion of a protruding figure out of the revetment, one can propose that the Virgin is positioned as the prominent figure and focus of veneration as she is attracted to her figure through such elaborations.¹⁰²

The exquisite depiction of the Virgin's garments also contributes to the centrality of her figure. In addition to playing a crucial role in the manner of centralizing the Virgin, her mantle deposits historical and stylistic importance, underlying the hybridity attributed to the icon by

¹⁰⁰ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-2.

¹⁰¹ The term repoussé indicates one of the methods to ornament metal pieces. In this technique, the intended portions of metalworks can be elevated as relief structures, creating layers on objects by hammering and puncturing them from the back portions. Even though it was an ancient metalworking technique, it was prevalent during the High Renaissance and the Baroque period, roughly corresponding to the period between the 15th and 17th centuries. Given that the Galata icon's revetment application date is 1698-1699, it is possible to argue that, similar to its other characteristics, the Galata icon also appears to have followed prevailing trends in terms of medium. "Repoussé," Decorative Art, Arts & Culture, Britannica, last modified February 9, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/art/repousse>; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81.

¹⁰² "Principles of Design," Education, The J. Paul Getty Museum, accessed January 31, 2024, https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/formal_analysis2.html.

possessing both Eastern and Western characteristics.¹⁰³ The mantle, or the cloak, is represented as an extensive piece of fabric covering the entire body of the Virgin and seems to emerge underneath her golden crown. Due to the monochrome effect created by the silver revetment, it is hard to understand whether there is a separate veil around her head. Considering Annemarie Weyl Carr's discussions on her work 'Threads of Authority: The Virgin Mary's Veil in the Middle Ages,' the Virgin's mantle in the Galata icon seems to be signifying the legendary maphorion of the Virgin Mary, her relic which was believed to embody the Virgin's miraculous powers and aided Byzantium during wars, since Weyl Carr emphasized maphorion as "the heavy mantle that cloaks the head and shoulders of the Byzantine figure of Mary, falling in deep swags over her chest and cascading over her arms to deeply fringed hems at knee-level."¹⁰⁴ The icon does not provide an insight into the length of the depicted mantle, meaning it might be going down to the Virgin's slippers. Even though figures limit the view on the below section of the mantle, the length of the garment is not a strictly decisive element, considering the possible ideology behind artworks depicting Mary, which is to represent her with her symbolic and most important attributions.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, artworks with similar iconography from the Western sphere do not differentiate from the Byzantine depiction of the maphorion in this manner. Even though there are some paintings with the mantle depicted falling down along Mary's body, it cannot be read as an elusive material to characterize her representation as purely Westernized.¹⁰⁶ When artistic exchanges between the two spheres are taken into account, the Misericordia typology of the Virgin appears to have a

¹⁰³ The mantle, sometimes referred to as a cloak, plays a crucial role in artworks depicting the Virgin Mary. As one of her attributions, the Virgin's mantle emphasizes her characteristics, such as modesty and chastity, underlying the Virgin's characterization as the Second Eve. As it will be further emphasized in the upcoming subchapter, the Virgin's mantle is associated with her miraculous intervention in time of need for those who seek refuge, thus symbolizing the eternal protection that the faithful strive to achieve. For instance, in the context of Byzantine Constantinople, the Virgin's mantle kept in the Blachernae Church was considered the city's palladium since, through the Virgin's agency, it is believed to be the talisman that protected the city from numerous misfortunate events. Moreover, as a generic garment worn by women from antiquity to the pre-modern period, the Virgin's mantle has numerous parallels throughout history, mainly utilized for modeling the Virgin's modesty for ordinary people. Altogether, portraying the Virgin Mary with a mantle formed her canonical representation, and artworks in Eastern and Western spheres share her mantle as a standard feature. Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 48-9, 52-3, 54-6.

¹⁰⁴ Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Threads of Authority: The Virgin Mary's Veil in the Middle Ages," in *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. by Stewart Gordon (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 65.

¹⁰⁵ George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961) 94-6.

¹⁰⁶ Some of the Western artworks depicting Virgin of Mercy with full-length mantle is as following: Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Madonna of Mercy*, c. 1472, fresco, Church of the Ognissanti, Florence, Italy, and Sieneese School, *The Madonna della Misericordia with Saints Peter and Francis, and Angels*, 15th century, tempera on panel, current owner is unknown as it was sold in a Sotheby's Auction in 2016. "Madonna of Mercy," Ghirlandaio, Domenico, Web Gallery of Art, accessed January 31, 2024, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/g/ghirland/domenico/1early/2ogniss1.html; "The Madonna della Misericordia with Saints Peter and Francis, and Angels," Sotheby's, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2016/old-master-british-paintings-116030/lot.795.html>.

similar perspective when it comes to representing the mantle with the Byzantine prototype, presenting the relic in a way that is consistent with its miraculous nature. Since the main message of this typology is to offer refuge and divine forgiveness by sheltering under the Virgin's cloak, depictions of the Virgin of Mercy give substantial emphasis on



Figure 2.2: Detail of the Galata icon. The rosebush pattern is composed of two distinct designs on the Virgin's mantle.

the mantle. In that regard, such depictions further underline the mantle's identity as maphorion and especially becoming coherent with the multilayered nature of the Galata icon.¹⁰⁷ Considering these elements leads to recognizing that Galata's Virgin's veil is a component of the mantle rather than a distinct piece of cloth, thus representing the maphorion in the Galata icon coherently to Weyl Carr's description of the miraculous relic.

Due to her upright stance, the inner and outer parts of the mantle, along with the details of the fabric, are visible; the fabric of the mantle has a heavy texture which gives the possibility to interpret it as velvet, making it coherent with the definition of the maphorion.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, this representation of the mantle, together with the collective memory on the matter composed of numerous depictions of the Virgin's garments, creates the illusion of a soft yet simultaneously heavy velvety texture, a type of fabric making the rustling sound with the movement when imagined. The unornamented outer part creates a contrast with the grandiosely executed inner part, highlighting the design of the latter.¹⁰⁹ The elaborately tailored inner part is embroidered with rose bushes that are composed of similar yet two unique designs with a subtle difference, filling most of the space on the mantle. Generally, in this icon, rose bushes contain one branch that divides into

¹⁰⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 17-20.

¹⁰⁸ Weyl Carr, "Threads of Authority: The Virgin Mary's Veil in the Middle Ages," 65.

¹⁰⁹ This is an exciting aspect of the Galata icon since most artworks with the Misericordia iconography provide different representations. On the contrary, in most of them, the outer part of the Virgin's mantle is ornamented with various designs, either with gold striations (as a stylistic feature of Byzantine art that was later adopted by the Western sphere and became an essential feature of Italo-Byzantine style) or with vegetal and/or abstract ornaments, just like in Duccio di Buoninsegna's work *Madonna of Franciscans* (c. 1300) and Sano di Pietro's *Mother of Mercy* (15th century). For the context of the Galata icon, ornamentation of the inner portion of the Virgin's mantle, then, can be approached as an intention of the icon's patrons, namely Venetians and the Dominican congregation. As it will be further emphasized in the upcoming subchapter, the interest of the Dominican confraternities in the Madonna of Rosary theme is seemingly emphasized through the rose patterns on the icon for the context of the Galata congregation. National Gallery of Art, "Byzantine Art and Painting in Italy during the 1200s and 1300.," Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 96.

three or four subbranches, each containing one rose. In each design, the rose in the center is surrounded by the ones on subbranches and remains the biggest among others. The shape of the roses depicted behind the central one is the key consideration that creates the differences between the two design sets. The revetment provides a limited space and handicaps the ‘reality’ of the details, meaning roses behind appear as if they are on top of the central ones. Even though the revetment is an extra, three-dimensional feature of the icon, its surface does not provide enough space for practicing some spacious details or enough area for creating a grid to apply an apparent linear perspective on the mantle.¹¹⁰ Composed of two different shapes, the ones on the ‘behind’ create unlike designs by portraying a bloomed rose, different than the ones on the subbranches, or as a rosebud, remaining as an unblown rose, standouts from the composition. One cannot observe a continuous sequence of these patterns, each does not fully occupy a consisted line on the icon, but they seem to be scattered throughout the inner layer of the fabric.

It is not easy to understand whether there is a reason behind the particular rose patterns. It might be an unintentional consequence of being the works of different craftsmen of the revetment workshop, or there might be an intentionality in placing the rosebushes with different patterns. About the latter, considering the vertical-horizontal composition of the Galata icon and how every figure is composed in some sort of balance, one would expect to see a similar harmony between the rosebushes, meaning one pattern fills an imaginary line, row or column on the mantle, such as the second one and continuously remain in this order.¹¹¹ Therefore, in addition to their style, the placement of the rosebushes is also puzzling. One consideration for the existence of such irregular rose patterns can be proposed as an emphasis on the Virgin Mary’s shifting nature when she miraculously conceived Christ and the conversion of the Logos to the flesh through Christ’s incarnation took place.¹¹² As a theme numerous underlined in the Visitation and Annunciation scenes and largely discussed in ecclesiastical circles starting with the early patristic texts, the Virgin Mary attained a miraculous nature through her virginal motherhood, and she was

¹¹⁰ “Linear Perspective,” Arts & Culture, Britannica, last modified September 21, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/art/linear-perspective>.

¹¹¹ “Post-and-lintel,” Architecture, Britannica, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/architecture/Post-and-lintel>.

¹¹² Teresa P. Reed, “Mary, the Maiden, and Metonymy in ‘Pearl,’” *South Atlantic Review* 65, no. 2 (Spring, 2000), 135-6; Bissera V. Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 65, 68, 160; Henry Maguire, “Body, Clothing, Metaphor: The Virgin in Early Byzantine Art,” in *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium*, ed. by Leslie Brubaker, and Mary B. Cunningham (London: Routledge, 2011), 39-40.

transformed into a vital figure of Christianity and an intercessor between the faithful and the God.¹¹³ From this perspective, the irregularity of rose bushes can be read as a shrouded symbolism of the Virgin's miraculous body and the Incarnation of Christ. Furthermore, in his sermon on the Avar Siege of Constantinople (626), Theodore Syncellus put particular emphasis on the Virgin's mantle as the swaddling clothes of Christ, thus, attained a secondary identity to the relic kept in Blachernai. From this perspective, reading the irregularity of rose bushes on the Galata Virgin's mantle as a connotation to the Virgin Mary's changing nature becomes plausible since Christ's meditation attained her miraculous spirit through the Incarnation.¹¹⁴ This characterization of the rosebushes and their relation to the Virgin's relic of maphorion is my assumption in the context of the Galata icon. But considering the centuries-old canonical scheme dictating the depictions of religious and imperial figures, it becomes plausible to assume some intentions behind every detail and that they represent meanings in the visual language.¹¹⁵

Additionally, the area under the rose bushes seems filled with little squares composing the backdrop of the mantle. This continuous square pattern constitutes one of the characteristics of the depicted fabric, providing a visual clue about its nature.¹¹⁶ As previously indicated, the overall representation of the mantle creates the perception of a velvety texture. Principally, the square detail of the depicted textile can be read as a supportive element for the velvet argument since the squarish appearance is actually the weaves composing the fabric.¹¹⁷ Essentially, velvet is a type of fabric achieved from a specific weaving process of silk threads, in which yarns of silk threads coiled up on a wire system, creating loops of warps. Once the loops are produced, they are either

¹¹³ Maguire, "Body, Clothing, Metaphor: The Virgin in Early Byzantine Art," 39-42; Vassiliki Limberis, *Divine Heiress, The Virgin Mary and the Creation of Christian Constantinople* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 101-6; Ioli Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary Became "Meter Theou"," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 165, 167-9, 172.

¹¹⁴ Averil Cameron, "The Virgin's Robe: An Episode in the History of Early Seventh-Century Constantinople," *Byzantion* 49 (1979): 43-4, 53-4.

¹¹⁵ Anna Maria Muthesius, "Cloth, Color, Symbolism and Meaning in Byzantium (4th-15th centuries)," *Δελτίον Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας* 37 (2016): 184; Maria G. Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images, Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th-15th Centuries)* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 49-50.

¹¹⁶ In the short account on velvet weaves that is published in the bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum (vol. 22, 1927), Nancy Andrews Reath briefly mentioned characteristics of different velvet weaves by illustrating the end products of each method. The first figure (Figure 1) on this article represents an uncut velvet pile in detail, in which the squarish detail composing each pile is visible, thus it provides a visual reference to the weaves of velvet textiles. Nancy Andrews Reath, "Weaves in Hand-Loom Fabrics, V. Velvet Weaves" *Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum* 22, no. 112 (April 1927): 358-9.

¹¹⁷ Reath, "Weaves in Hand-Loom Fabrics, V. Velvet Weaves" 358-9.

cut or left uncut and arranged in a specific way according to their destined velvet type.¹¹⁸ Regarding typology, the Galata icon's mantle seems to be executed from a particular type of velvet known as *soprarizzo* or *ceselatto* velvet, also entitled as *cisele* or *chiselled*. The *soprarizzo* velvets have layered compositions that semi-resemble relief structures with their combination of

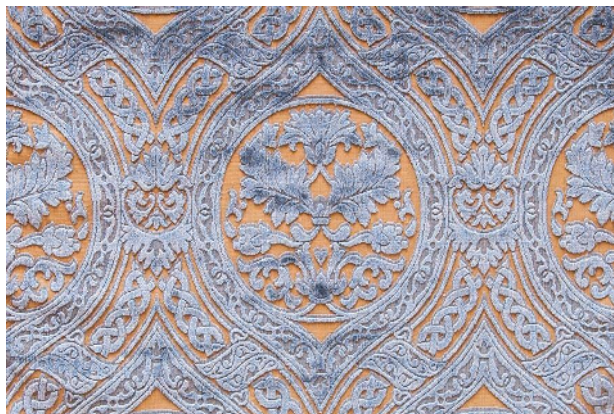


Figure 2.3: Da Vinci soprarizzo velvet by Tessitura Luigi Bevilacqua, Venice, Italy.

uncut and cut piles.¹¹⁹ Using both types of piles create layers on the fabric since the cut piles are purposefully placed on the top, whereas the uncut piles with curly configuration are placed beneath them. Furthermore, to highlight the design pattern composed of cut and uncut piles, they are weaved on a silken shiny fabric, constituting the *soprarizzo* velvets' base layer.¹²⁰ In addition to the three-dimensionality and layered composition of *soprarizzo* velvets, one characteristic achieved via the cut piles on the top is the creation of contrast within the design layers and, overall, a tinselly appearance of the velvet.¹²¹ Since each layer is composed differently, concurrently, light shines differently on each, and the overall appearance of the textile, as well as the appearance of each velvet compartments differ from the rest. Notably, the cut piles form the darkest tone layer on the velvet since light does not reflect similarly to the other layers. On the other hand, the ground silken layer creates a shiny outlook via its nature, and the uncut piles in the middle reflect the light better than the cut ones, thus resulting in a lighter tone.¹²² Altogether, in addition to the tinselly appearance, the *soprarizzo* velvets also create the illusion of a soft and silky look on their heavy texture via their three-layered, almost relief-like structure that is distinguished from each other through different levels of light reflection on the surfaces of the velvet.¹²³

¹¹⁸ Melinda Watt, "Renaissance Velvet Textiles," Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified August 2011, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/velv/hd_velv.htm.

¹¹⁹ "Soprarizzo Or Cesellato: The Finest Among Our Velvets," Luigi Bevilacqua, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://www.luigi-bevilacqua.com/en/soprarizzo-velvet/>.

¹²⁰ Yvette Stanton, "The Velvet Weavers of Venice," Inspirations issue #83, The Inspiration Studios, last modified November 1, 2019, <https://www.inspirationsstudios.com/the-velvet-weavers-of-venice/>.

¹²¹ Luigi Bevilacqua, "Soprarizzo Or Cesellato: The Finest Among Our Velvets."

¹²² Stanton, "The Velvet Weavers of Venice," The Inspiration Studios; Luigi Bevilacqua, "Soprarizzo Or Cesellato: The Finest Among Our Velvets."

¹²³ Stanton, "The Velvet Weavers of Venice," The Inspiration Studios; Luigi Bevilacqua, "Soprarizzo Or Cesellato."

Considering the fabric of the Galata Virgin's mantle as a soprarizzo velvet is equally plausible regarding the historical and cultural contexts that shaped the Galata icon. In view of the interest of Venetians to the Galata icon and their role as the guardian of the church for an extended period of time, elements represented on the revetment were probably chosen under certain Venetian influence. Thus they fitted to the current fashion dominating the Serenissima in a mixture with multi-layered Eastern features, referring to the different artistic and cultural elements defining Constantinople that developed under the Byzantine and Ottoman rules.¹²⁴ At the time the revetment was applied to the icon, in 1698-1699, Venice was one of the leading centers of velvet production in Italy.¹²⁵ Venetian workshops registered to silk and velvet guilds produced a wide range of velvets with differentiating elements and qualities, serving various social classes, yet primarily to notable and wealthy members of society.¹²⁶ One of those workshops belonged to the Bevilacqua family and they specialized in producing high-quality textiles, mainly soprarizzo velvets.¹²⁷ The Bevilacqua's are still actively producing high-quality velvets and trading worldwide; even though the current workshop of the family, the *Tessitura Luigi Bevilacqua*, was founded in 1875, it is indicated that the early members of the family were already established a

¹²⁴ Apart from the constant interest of the Venetian state in the Constantinopolitan market and goods during the Byzantine era, the impact of Venetians in Constantinople and Anatolia did not stop when Ottomans conquered the old Byzantine capital. On the other hand, both states formed a mutually advantageous commercial relationship, especially in terms of silk and velvet goods, and just like in the Byzantine period, Venetians revived their trade network in Istanbul and Bursa (a vital manufacturing center of textiles of the Ottoman Empire). Furthermore, both Ottoman envoys and Venetian diplomats spent considerable time in each other's mainland to maintain diplomatic ties, which was especially thrived by la Serenissima since, with the downfall of Constantinople, it gained the role of protecting Christendom in Europe. Even though the relationship between Venice and the Ottoman Empire was shattered after the Battle of Lepanto (1571), both of them still maintained their commercial interest in one another's land, all resulting in the formation of a shared artistic vocabulary expressed through silk and velvet garments. Therefore, la Serenissima was already aware of and utilized Eastern weaving techniques and motifs, even before the metal revetment was commissioned for the Galata icon. Altogether, the cultural transformation between both states had a solid heritage that was majorly supplied by textiles. Stefano Carboni, "Moments of Vision: Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797," in *Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797*, ed. Stefano Carboni (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 16, 19, 22, 29, 30-2; Walter B. Denny, "Oriental Carpets and Textiles in Venice," in *Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797*, ed. Stefano Carboni (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 175-8, 183, 186-9; Sandra Sardjono, "Ottoman or Italian Velvets? A Technical Investigation," in *Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797*, ed. Stefano Carboni (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 193, 198; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

¹²⁵ Denny, "Oriental Carpets and Textiles in Venice," 183; Nurhan Atasoy, Walter B. Denny, Louise W. Mackie, and Hülya Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets* (London: Azimuth Editions Limited, 2001), 182; Watt, "Renaissance Velvet Textiles," The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

¹²⁶ Lisa Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," in *5000 Years of Textiles*, ed. Jennifer Harris (London: British Museum Press, 1995), 167-9; Jacqueline Herald, "Italian Silks (1500-1900)," in *5000 Years of Textiles*, ed. Jennifer Harris (London: British Museum Press, 1995), 172, 175.

¹²⁷ Luigi Bevilacqua, "Soprarizzo Or Cesellato: The Finest Among Our Velvets."

place for themselves in the Venetian textile world, dating back to the late 15th century.¹²⁸ Considering the centuries the Bevilacqua family produced silk and velvets, their specialization in the production of *soprarizzo* velvet, and their accumulated experience in this regard, it might be possible that the Venetian influence on the depicted mantle of the Virgin Mary might be based on the existing patterns and textiles produced by the Bevilacqua families through the centuries.¹²⁹ It is an assumption, but the involvement of Bevilacqua's in the production of *senatori soprarizzo* velvets in the 17th century, red velvet robes (stylized roses and crowns ornamented with vegetal stems) worn as a uniform by the male members of the Venetian senate, underlines specific shared values with the Ottoman velvets and usage since *kaftans* with similar patterns used for similar purposes, such as worn in the meetings of *Divan-ı Hümayun*.¹³⁰

Another Venetian family specializing in *soprarizzo* velvets and, like Bevilacqua's, still actively producing high-quality textiles is the Rubelli family. Founded by Lorenzo Rubelli in 1899, the Rubelli workshop, like Bevilacqua's, was constructed into a family-run textile business.¹³¹ Even though Rubellis attended the velvet world centuries later than Bevilacqua's, their profitable

¹²⁸ Even though the current velvet weaving workshop belonged to the Bevilacqua family and was founded in 1875, it is known that the family members have been actively producing fine-quality textiles since the late 15th century. Their involvement in the textile world at such an early date is visually supported by Giovanni Mansueti's painting *The Capture/Arrest of St. Mark in the Synagogue* (1499), which is currently in the Lichtenstein Museum. In his work, Mansueti inscribed the names of the patrons who financially contributed to the preparation of this artwork on one of the stairs; close inspection reveals the name of Giacomo Bevilacqua, entitled a weaver. Therefore, the long history of the Bevilacqua family in the Venetian textile market can be proposed to the 15th century. "A Weaving Workshop With Ancient Roots," History, Luigi Bevilacqua, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://www.luigi-bevilacqua.com/en/history/>.

¹²⁹ Luigi Bevilacqua, "Soprarizzo Or Cesellato: The Finest Among Our Velvets."

¹³⁰ In addition to similar utilization of luxurious velvet garments in political meetings, it is also essentially important to underline that the majority of Italian velvets currently deposited at the Topkapı Palace Museum constituting the imperial *kaftans* worn by the sultan and other members of the Ottoman court. Those velvet garments/ pieces were specifically woven according to Ottoman taste with motifs such as *çintamani*, crescents, pomegranate, etc., and with compositional considerations such as gold brocading and the use of crimson color. The latter is interesting in the context of Venetian-Ottoman interactions since Venetian *senatori* velvets were in crimson red and ornamented with crowns and stylized rosettes, thus canonically resembling one another. The Italian velvets, especially the ones accustomed to Ottoman appetite, were preferred by the members of the Sublime Porte, but this should not be considered as the lack of Ottoman velvets in the realm. On the contrary, silk and velvet garments were actively produced in Bursa perpetually to the empire's existence, revealing that the acquisition of Italian velvets was merely for prestige display, not due to the lack of material. Similarly, Ottomans exported velvet to European royal houses, especially trading with the Italian peninsula. Apart from examples in la *Serenissima*, the utilization of Turkish brocaded silk and velvet for the liturgical garments belonging to Pope Urban VIII can be approached as a significant instance reflecting the Ottoman influence on the European textile fashion. Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 182-190; Denny, "Oriental Carpets and Textiles in Venice," 187-9; "Senatori Velvet," Luigi Bevilacqua, last modified February 2, 2022, <https://www.luigi-bevilacqua.com/en/senatori-velvet/>.

¹³¹ "Our History," Rubelli, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://www.rubelli.com/en/history/>; Dominic Lutyens, "How the design world fell in love with Venetian textile company Rubelli," Effect Magazine, last modified July 28, 2023, <https://magazine.thebrunoeffect.com/venetian-textile-company-rubelli/>.

move of obtaining the mill of Giovanni Battista Trapolin, who developed the weaving technique of *soprarizzo* velvets and patented it, aided them in getting their reputation in the fashion world.¹³² Considering the foundation date of the Rubelli company, it is impossible to propose their signature designs and unique patterns as models for the Virgin's mantle in the Galata icon since such a proposal would present an anachronistic statement as the revetment application date of the Galata icon outdates the Rubelli's foundation. Nevertheless, considering the old available examples of *soprarizzo* velvets, considering the available data for Bevilacqua's works mostly dated back to the 17-18th centuries respecting the weaving mills they are using, for Rubelli's earliest example can be attributed to the 19th century, and others found in museum collections approximately dated back to the 17th century, the emergence of this specific velvet type can be proposed around to the mid-16th, early 17th century, making the proposition of this velvet type for the Galata icon plausible.¹³³ Furthermore, considering the structural details of the mantle, in which the inner ornamental elements, the rose designs, executed protuberantly (compared to the weave details remaining hindered), it is very highly that the velvet that the silversmiths modeled on while they were preparing the revetment had embossed details. Even though Venetian *soprarizzo* velvets are appropriate in this regard, some other velvets with similar structural properties gained popularity among the elites and increased in their production since the 15th century.¹³⁴ Additionally, these velvets underline the artistic and commercial interaction between Constantinople and Venice and present the dynamics of those interactions, similar to *soprarizzo* velvets as discussed above.¹³⁵ Those velvets are known as the voided satin velvets and are quite analog to *soprarizzo* pieces, the

¹³² Rubelli, "Our History.," "Production," Rubelli, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://www.rubelli.com/en/production>.

¹³³ "The Fruits Of Downfall," History, Luigi Bevilacqua, last modified March 5, 2014, <https://www.luigi-bevilacqua.com/en/fruits-downfall/>; Rubelli, "Our History.," Some of the *soprarizzo/cisele* velvets that are preserved in museum collections are as follows: Two fragmentary pieces of green *cisele* velvet (Italian origin, 1650-1700) currently at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the *cisele* velvet depicting ogival motifs with pineapple (Florence, 1550-1575) currently at the Museo del Tessuto, Italy; the *cisele* velvet with Genoa origin (c.1700) featured in the Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts of the City of Detroit Volume 25 (1946), the *cisele* velvet (Florence, c.1600) at the RISD Museum; the hanging *cisele* velvet (French, c.1700) at the Seattle Art Museum. "Woven Silk," Victoria and Albert Museum, last modified June 24, 2009, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O355906/woven-silk-unknown/>; "Patterned velvet, *cisellè*," Museo del Tessuto, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/velvet-patterned-velvet-cisell%C3%A8/UwE17pSV7MOvEw?hl=en>; Adele Coulin Weibel, "Cisele Velvet, Italian, Genoa," in *Detroit Institute of Arts of the City of Detroit* 25, no. 3 (1946): 67; "Cisele Velvet," Collection, RISD Museum, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://risdmuseum.org/art-design/collection/cisele-velvet-31267>; "Hanging of Cisele Velvet," Collections, Seattle Art Museum, accessed January 31, 2024, <https://art.seattleartmuseum.org/objects/21358/hanging-of-cisele-velvet;jsessionid=4855421E230AEED9047C56260EF1B9D7>.

¹³⁴ Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 169.

¹³⁵ Herald, "Italian Silks (1500-1900)," 172.

voided satin velvets also have ridged appearances since the velvety designs are put front via their contrast with the satin ground.¹³⁶ Furthermore, even though the production of the voided satin velvets increased during the 15th century Italian peninsula, historical evidence indicates that they were already favored by some European courts in the 14th century. This is shown, for example, on the wardrobe of Richard II of England (1367-1400), who purchased numerous high-quality velvets from Italy, including one composed of different layers of pile, similar to both voided satin and soprarizzo velvets.¹³⁷ Terminologically, velvets with different pile levels are entitled as pile-on-pile velvets, and both voided satin and soprarizzo pieces can be considered as more advanced and ornamented versions of pile-on-pile examples.¹³⁸ Since similar velvet garments with comparable typologies already existed before the application of the revetment, this perspective opens up more discussion space on the velvet issue without restricting the research solely to the soprarizzo examples and to a limited time range; also creates a solid foundation for choosing and proposing velvet as the material of the Virgin's mantle in the Galata icon revetment. Furthermore, like soprarizzo velvets, voided satin velvets and other velvets weaved by pile-on-pile technique possess similar historical and cultural values underlying the interaction between Italo-Ottoman spheres.¹³⁹

As an icon whose existence can be traced back to the 13th-14th century, an icon that developed in Genoese Caffa and maintained close relationships with the Genoese colony in Pera, the possible Byzantine influence on the Galata icon should not be overlooked.¹⁴⁰ Even though the Byzantine past precedes the metal revetment, thus, details displayed on the Galata Virgin's mantle, the Byzantine identity embedded in the texture of Constantinople and the Latin West (as an outcome of their cross-cultural interactions for centuries) played an essential role in the development of silk and velvet industry in the Latin West, namely the Italian peninsula, while some features of the Byzantine silken legacy were adopted by Ottomans when they conquered Constantinople in 1453. Therefore, incorporating a Byzantine perspective on the analysis of the Galata icon, both for its wooden panel and metal revetment, is significant even though for the latter

¹³⁶ Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 169.

¹³⁷ Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 168-9.

¹³⁸ Luigi Bevilacqua, "Senatori Velvet."

¹³⁹ Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 168-9; Luigi Bevilacqua, "Senatori Velvet."

¹⁴⁰ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 38-9; Quirini-Poplowski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 425-26.

feature, one can emphasize indirect notions, like the traces of Byzantine silken legacy on the Galata mantle that can only be read through its impact on the velvet production.

Silks were one of the critical wings of commercial activities between those geographies.¹⁴¹ Even though Byzantium was forced to withdraw from its prime position in the commercial world in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade and continued to produce and export textiles on much smaller scales, silks and velvets were progressively weaved in the Latin West and European cities such as Venice, Lucca, and Genoa transformed into substantial production centers in that regard.¹⁴² Considering the inception of the velvet production in the Latin West, that is roughly the mid-13th century, and the translocation of numerous Byzantine and foreign (mostly Italian) artisans who resided in Constantinople to the European sphere due to political and economic declines of the empire, the lack of Byzantine imperial initiative on velvet production becomes plausible.¹⁴³ Comparative studies of the Late Middle Ages velvet industry also revealed that Byzantium's imperial workshops did not make the most common type of velvet: warp-looped pile velvets fashioned from silk, thus additively underlining the incompetence of the Byzantine Empire in velvet manufacture.¹⁴⁴ Nonetheless, that situation should not be understood as if Byzantine imperials and their subjects had never been accustomed to velvets, considering the establishment of Italian merchants in the empire's neighboring regions (i.e., Anatolia, Black Sea regions, etc.), as well as progressive Turkish settlements in close proximity, who were actively trading silks and textiles with one another.¹⁴⁵ Since the foundation of European velvet tradition was related to Byzantine silks, even though a direct connection between Byzantium and velvets is difficult to

¹⁴¹ Lyn Rodley, "The Byzantine Context," in *The Byzantine Art and Renaissance Europe*, ed. by Angeliki Lymberopoulou and Rembrandt Duis (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), 9-10.

¹⁴² David Jacoby, "Silk Production," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Robin Cormack, John F. Haldon, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 426-7; David Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction: Byzantium, the Muslim World, and the Christian West," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58 (2004): 228-30.

¹⁴³ Sumiyo Okumura, "Silk Velvets Identified as Byzantine: Were warp- looped silk pile velvets woven under the Byzantine Empire?," Paper presented at *The Social Fabric: Deep Local to Pan Global; Proceedings of the Textile Society of America 16th Biennial Symposium, Vancouver, 2018*, <https://doi.org/10.32873/unl.dc.tsasp.0043>; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction: Byzantium, the Muslim World, and the Christian West," 229-30; Sumiyo Okumura, "Velvet and Patronage: The Origin and Historical Background of Velvet and Patronage: The Origin and Historical Background of Ottoman and Italian Velvets Ottoman and Italian Velvets," Paper presented at the Crosscurrents: Land, Labor, and the Port. Textile Society of America's 15th Biennial Symposium, Savannah, 2016, <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tsaconf/1008>.

¹⁴⁴ Okumura, "Silk Velvets Identified as Byzantine: Were warp- looped silk pile velvets woven under the Byzantine Empire?."

¹⁴⁵ Okumura, "Silk Velvets Identified as Byzantine: Were warp- looped silk pile velvets woven under the Byzantine Empire?."

establish, the silken legacy of Byzantium appears to have resisted across cultural milieus and periods.¹⁴⁶ The latter is given that the Latin West had already adopted Byzantine weaving techniques and raw materials (silken weaves for velvet goods) in earlier centuries.¹⁴⁷

In other words, as tangible objects of reflecting interactions, textiles became tools for reflecting and introducing one's culture to the other, as well as representing one's artistic tendencies (including fashion and technical aspects of weaving), thus functioning as an initiator and transmitter of the interaction between both spheres. In that regard, the intermediary role of textiles between Byzantium and the West seemingly played a crucial role in developing an artistic vocabulary that, in the following centuries, reflected on the Galata icon. Moreover, that artistic vocabulary and Byzantine silken heritage became instrumental in further developing the commercial relationships between European states and Ottomans, as the latter adopted Byzantium's silken traditions and lucrative commerce position in international trade with the conquest of Constantinople (1453).¹⁴⁸ That lucrative position included the textile trading by establishing good relationship and providing commercial privileges to the 'foreign' inhabitants of the city, mainly Venetians and Genoese who established their offices and trading posts in Galata and served as merchants and agents between East and the West for centuries.¹⁴⁹ Under Ottoman rule, Constantinople's central role in the textile trade had increased with the flourishing in velvet production, the introduction of velvet goods to the international market, and the revival of commerce of silken pieces that during the last phases of the Byzantine Empire diminished and autonomized to a small square within the empire.¹⁵⁰ Similar to the dynamics of artistic and cultural interactions reflected in the silk trade, commercial activities of velvet pieces from both spheres

¹⁴⁶ Okumura, "Velvet and Patronage: The Origin and Historical Background of Velvet and Patronage: The Origin and Historical Background of Ottoman and Italian Velvets Ottoman and Italian Velvets."

¹⁴⁷ Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 230; Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 168.

¹⁴⁸ K. E. Fleming, "Constantinople: From Christianity to Islam," *The Classical World* 97, no.1 (2003): 69; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 230; Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 168.

¹⁴⁹ Annick Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe, 2023, <https://ehne.fr/en/encyclopedia/themes/europe-europeans-and-world/european-trade-routes/venetian-merchants-and-traders-actors-venetian-empire>; Anna Maria Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," in *Textiles in Daily Life: Proceedings of the Third Biennial Symposium of the Textile Society of America, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington, September 24-26, 1992* (Earlville, MD: Textile Society of America, Inc.), 104; Fatma Özden Mercan, "From The Genoese To The Perots: The Genoese Community In Byzantine/Ottoman Constantinople (14th-15th c.)," in *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi XXXVI*, no.2 (February 2021): 593.

¹⁵⁰ "Istanbul," Silk Roads Program, UNESCO, accessed February 1, 2024, <https://en.unesco.org/silkroad/content/istanbul>; Nina Ergin Macaraig, "Constantinople/Istanbul: A Vortex of Peoples and Cultures," in *Places of Encounter: Time, Place and Connectivity in World History*, ed. Aran MacKinnon, and Elaine MacKinnon (Colorado: Westview Press, 2012), 117-8.

were shaped according to the demand of Constantinopolitan and Venetian markets (other Ottoman territories such as Bursa and Italian city-states like Florence are includable to this discussion).¹⁵¹ The demand of both parties for one another's goods had increased in such a way that, in addition to trading textiles that were available for domestic use, they started to weave fabrics specialized only for the other's market and prohibited their internal use.¹⁵² For example, to fulfill the Ottoman demand, Venetians produced velvet pieces accommodating the Ottoman's unit in measure, thus specializing the fabric only for Ottoman use and using techniques and iconographical patterns favored by Ottomans.¹⁵³ In such an environment, both societies became familiar with each other's textile traditions and fashion, and the availability of materials responding to one's culture was unconfined and created space for mixing local and hybrid elements. All such dynamics were expressed in the Galata icon, especially on the velvety nature of the Virgin's mantle.

The familiarity of patterns, textiles, and usage underlines the artistic and cultural interactions and commercial activities between both spheres. Whether the velvet typology on the icon was modeled specifically by *soprarizzo* velvets or already existing voided velvets, the shared values mentioned above indicate the existence and already established familiarity with such textiles within both societies. This created a common ground for the viewers of the icon by symbolizing the hybridity of the Galata icon.

2.2.1.2 The Belt of the Virgin Mary

In addition to the cloak's fabric, the rose bush patterns on Virgin's belt underline the repetitiveness of this motif throughout the icon. The belt supplements the mantle; additively, it aids drapery to slightly cover the Virgin's body and acquaint the viewer with a real space and, correlatively, an actual figure underneath the fabric. The understanding of the 'actual figure' is strengthened with the *contrapposto* stance of the Virgin, together with the depiction of arms that creates a sense of volume.¹⁵⁴ This element of the Galata icon distinguishes itself from its Eastern equivalents and strengthens an already strong Occidental aspect when compared to other Byzantine and 'Byzantinized' examples, notably those older than the Palaiologan artworks.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 182-3.

¹⁵² Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 183, 186-7.

¹⁵³ Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 183, 190.

¹⁵⁴ "Contrapposto," Arts & Culture, Britannica, last modified November 8, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/art/contrapposto>.

¹⁵⁵ Since the Palaiologan emperors purposefully altered the visual program, it is imperative to distinguish between the stylistic traits of art from the early and middle Byzantine periods, with the Palaiologan dynasty being the empire's

Dissimilar to the cloak, the belt strand, material-wise, does not possess elaborate detail or embroidery. Furthermore, the fabric of the strand is different from velvet, a type of duffel or wool since it appears as a knitted piece. Considering the material as wool, a comment on the potential reason behind that choice of material can be



Figure 2.4: Detail of the Galata icon. The girdle of the Virgin Mary.

proposed: in various Byzantine artworks representing the Annunciation, the Virgin Mary is depicted as wrapping a hank (a ball of wool) when the Archangel Gabriel delivers the miracle, and this symbolism is associated with the Incarnation.¹⁵⁶ Considering the appearance of the Child Christ to the mortals from his mandorla, together with the position of the belt near the Virgin's miraculous womb, consolidates the symbolism of the Incarnation in the Galata icon, just like on the famous Sinai icon of Annunciation.¹⁵⁷ Besides the remaining parts of the Virgin's belt, the belt buckle impresses the viewer with its elaborate design. At its center, the belt buckle contains a blossomed rose while two rose bushes, turned 90° degrees to their right sides, flank the central

final stage. By defeating the Latins and reiterating Constantinople as the capital city of Byzantium, the emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos wanted to restore the empire. His patronage of renovating and reconstructing essential landmarks of the city and introducing a new artistic style under his reign, which swiftly dominated the empire's regions, characterized the period referred to as the Palaiologan Renaissance today. Through such patronage activities, Michael VIII Palaiologos aimed to legitimize his reign as the rightful ruler of Byzantium and revitalize the impeccable nature of the empire. In line with this objective, he promoted the return to classical artistic models through his monumental and artistic commissions, reshaping the canonical tradition and expression models of Byzantine art in a more naturalistic manner, that can be comprehended as the characterization of the intention of the emperor as a pictorial attempt to restore the empire according to its ancient past. As an attempt to promulgate the art of antiquity coherently to the contemporary Byzantine characteristics on images, subtle yet effective changes, such as representing voluminous figures and enhancing the spatial depictions in more three-dimensional manners, as well as stressing the plasticity of figures to create a naturalistic perception on beholders, in the already existing artistic style took place. Moving towards the 14th century, the formulation of representations coherently to the classical canon of antiquity intensified, yielding increased depictions of idealized and more naturalistic figures. In that regard, in terms of plasticity and intensification of natural stance, the Galata icon fits into the Palaiologan artistic style more than the earlier artistic forms and compositions (such as Komnenians') as their artworks represented flatter and more stylized figures of the Virgin Mary. Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, "Patronage and Artistic Production in Byzantium during the Palaiologan Period," in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Symposia, Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557), Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*, ed. Sarah T. Brooks (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 76-9; National Gallery of Art, "Italian Paintings of the 13th and 14th centuries."

¹⁵⁶ The famous *Annunciation* icon of Sinai (*Icon with Annunciation or Annunciation*, late 12th century, St. Catherine Monastery, Mount Sinai) exemplify this statement; the Virgin who is depicted sitting on a throne, listens the Gabriel with care, while compacting a purple wool into the shape of ball. Robert Nelson commented on the detail of the purple wool as an indicator of the Incarnation. Robert S. Nelson, and Kristen M. Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 153.

¹⁵⁷ Nelson, and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai*, 153.

detail, creating a different rose pattern compared to the detailing of the mantle. Moreover, the other parts of the belt buckle seem filled with interlace design that was prominent in the Medieval period, especially in the Anglo-Saxon communities, just like the belt-buckle excavated from Sutton Hoo Ship Burial (currently at the British Museum, museum number: 1939,1010.1), and also in Islamic artistic traditions including the geometric ornamentations found in the Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain.¹⁵⁸ The consideration of the belt buckle, presumably made out of metal, makes it possible to comment on the issue as such since the interlace designs are renowned for their usage on highly stylized daily life materials in the Medieval Period.¹⁵⁹

On the other hand, the plain strand/cord of the Virgin's belt reminds one of the important Marian relics that attracted the attention of both Eastern and Western spheres, the miraculous girdle of the Virgin Mary. Like the Virgin's mantle/maphorion that was kept in the Blachernae church, which constituted of utmost importance to the city of Constantinople and the Byzantine society, the Virgin Mary's girdle was another object of veneration in the context of the Virgin's cult of the imperial capital.¹⁶⁰ The girdle of the Virgin Mary was preserved in the Chalkoprateia Church, and it characterized the imperial cult and civic devotion to the Virgin in Constantinople, along with the churches of Blachernae and Hodegon. Like other relics of the Virgin, her girdle was believed to have miraculous properties.¹⁶¹ Interestingly, this Marian relic had two distinct foundation stories, one narrating the agency of St. Thomas and the translocation of the girdle from Jerusalem to Prato through the agency of a Pratese merchant in the mid-12th century whose family later bestowed the relic to the church of Santo Stefano, where it is still shrined, and the other indicating the arrival of the holy item to Constantinople through the theft of Galbrios and Kandidos, as in the case of the

¹⁵⁸ The British Museum's collection of Anglo-Saxon belt buckles, for example, exhibits resemblances to the object on the Galata icon. Without the rose motifs, the form of both objects and their highly stylized appearances are quite similar. Even with the rose motifs, the Virgin's belt buckle is reminiscent of the interlaced design, and an expert eye on the subject would most likely not overlook this relationship. "Belt-buckle," Britain, Europe and Prehistory Department, British Museum, accessed February 1, 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1939-1010-1; "Interlaced Ornaments from the Alhambra," Wallach Division Picture Collection, The New York Public Library Digital Collections, accessed February 1, 2024, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e1-3eda-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>.

¹⁵⁹ Rosie Weetch, and Craig Williams, "Decoding Anglo-Saxon Art," Blog, British Museum, last modified May 28, 2014, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/decoding-anglo-saxon-art>.

¹⁶⁰ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 120-21.

¹⁶¹ Thomas Arentzen, "Conversing with Clothes, Germanos and Mary's Belt," in *The Garb of Being, Embodiment And The Pursuit Of Holiness In Late Ancient Christianity*, ed. Georgia Frank, Susan Holman, and Andrew Jacobs (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019), 59-61.

Virgin's maphorion.¹⁶² Unlike the latter item (the maphorion), the girdle of Theotokos had a materialized testimony when the revetment was applied to the Galata icon, as one portion of the miraculous girdle has been kept at Prato since the 14th century.¹⁶³ The Pratese relic of the Virgin Mary is composed of unornamented, wool-like strands, lacking a belt buckle.¹⁶⁴ From this perspective, the remains of the Virgin's belt in Prato might have been a model for the cord of the Virgin's belt in the Galata icon. It is a possibility that cannot be indeed asserted, yet the similarities of the two cords underline the fact that apart from the buckle (as it represents a later artistic conception), the girdle of the Galata icon was coherently represented the historical and artistic narratives describing the miraculous relic of the Virgin Mary.¹⁶⁵ Thus, while it emphasizes the historical tradition of the girdle, the belt strand of the Galata icon underscores the aesthetics and diplomatic agenda of both the Dominican congregation of Galata and La Serenissima (as the church's long-standing patrons), assuming that Venetian merchants had the chance to visit Prato and see the relic of the Virgin's belt during the ostentation, while highlighting the interaction between both cultural milieus, much like the fabric and ornamentation of the Virgin's mantle on the Galata icon.

2.2.1.3 The Tunic of the Virgin Mary

Like her mantle, the Virgin's tunic on the Galata icon takes up an extensive space on the revetment, related to the space reserved for her portrayal. Yet, in contrast to such similarity driven by their sizes, the Virgin's mantle and tunic styles do not correspond to each other. Compared to

¹⁶² According to the Pratese narrative, Saint Thomas obtained the Virgin's girdle as a proof of her assumption and confided the holy relic to a priest. In subsequent years, the girdle had never changed hands, i.e., it remained as a property of that priest's family for generations, and in early 12th century, it passed down to the Pratese merchant since he got married with one of the descendent of the priest's family, obtaining the girdle as their wedding gift. When back to his homeland, he decided to keep the relic for himself, and his family, and donated the holy girdle to the church of Santo Stefano, i.e., the Prato Cathedral, before he died. His primary intention of autonomizing the girdle for himself bears resemblances with the story of Galbrios and Kandidos brothers, who initially wanted to keep the miraculous maphorion hidden from the eyes but then, through imperial 'incentive', forced to concede the item and submitted the relic to the imperial ownership. The Holy Belt, The precious relic of the Madonna kept in the Cathedral of Prato," Stories of Prato: A Bit of History, City of Prato, accessed February 2, 2024, <https://www.cittadiprato.it/EN/Sezioni/291/The-Holy-Belt/>; Stephen J. Shoemaker, "The Cult of Fashion, The Earliest Life of the Virgin and Constantinople's Marian Relics," in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 62 (2008): 55-6, 64-5; Jean K. Cadogan, "The Chapel of the Holy Belt in Prato: Piety and Politics in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany" *Artibus et Historiae* 30, no. 60 (2009): 107; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 174-5; John Wortley, "The Marian Relics at Constantinople," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 45, no. 2 (2006): 174-6.

¹⁶³ Cadogan, "The Chapel of the Holy Belt in Prato: Piety and Politics in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany," 107; City of Prato, "The Holy Belt, The precious relic of the Madonna kept in the Cathedral of Prato."

¹⁶⁴ City of Prato, "The Holy Belt, The precious relic of the Madonna kept in the Cathedral of Prato."

¹⁶⁵ Weech, and Williams, "Decoding Anglo-Saxon Art," British Museum.

the elaborately executed inner portion of the mantle, the Virgin's tunic represents a relatively simpler appearance, only ornamented with single roses on the cuffs and the ending border of the garment. Moreover, a close examination of the Virgin's hands reveals the coarse needlework on the arms of the tunic and the single rose pattern depicted within the borders they created.¹⁶⁶ Moving along the arms that peak slightly through the mantle, the tunic seems knitted with wool, similar to the belt around the Virgin's waist. On the other hand, the rest of her garment does not exhibit a braiding pattern; rather, it is portrayed as a shiny, patternless fabric. The tunic is partially folded around the Virgin's slippers, emphasizing the inner side of her garment and the possible fabric it was woven of. Like the mantle and the slippers, as underlined in the following pages, the texture of the tunic's fabric is seemingly composed of squarish weaves that were previously identified as velvet weaves, thus exhibiting the tunic in a velvety manner.¹⁶⁷ The utilization of velvet garments as the Virgin's costume in artworks was a common practice, especially in the Italian peninsula, as Italian city-states such as Venice and Florence led the velvet production in the Latin West, thus the Galata icon seemingly follows this tradition.¹⁶⁸ The velvet of the tunic cannot be assigned to a specific type because, in contrast to the mantle, its representation on the revetment does not offer sufficient details for such identification.

¹⁶⁶ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82.

¹⁶⁷ Reath, "Weaves in Hand-Loom Fabrics, V. Velvet Weaves" 358-9.

¹⁶⁸ Denny, "Oriental Carpets and Textiles in Venice," 183; Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 182; Watt, "Renaissance Velvet Textiles," The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Jacqueline Orsini, *Mary, Images of the Holy Mother* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books 2000), vii-viii.

Furthermore, another consideration that creates differentiation among both items is the availability of one Virgin's tunic at Chartres Cathedral during the time of the revetment's application on the icon, 1698-1699.¹⁶⁹ A similar notion cannot be proposed for the Virgin's mantle as it was not deposited in any of the significant European shrines. Even though it was the primary relic of the Blachernai Church and attributed as the palladium of Constantinople during the Byzantine Empire, no account, including the Virgin's maphorion or its deposition in a reliquary, emerged after the fall of the city in 1453.¹⁷⁰

Therefore, apart from visual and written narratives on the miraculous maphorion of the Virgin, there were no other tangible models to be influenced for its portrayal in

the Galata icon. On the other hand, the deposition of the Virgin's tunic and veil to the Chartres Cathedral in the late 9th century characterized the city as an essential pilgrimage center while the cathedral was developed into a significant Marian shrine in the Latin West.¹⁷¹ Even though the relic was kept in the reliquary and not represented to lay people visiting the shrine, it was most probably displayed when the shrine was visited by European nobles and members of the overclass, underlying the possibility of the actual garment to being a model for the Galata icon. At the same time, the certainty of such modeling or influence cannot be indicated.¹⁷² Moreover, the pilgrimage badges depicting the Virgin's tunic had traveled across various cultural milieus through the agency

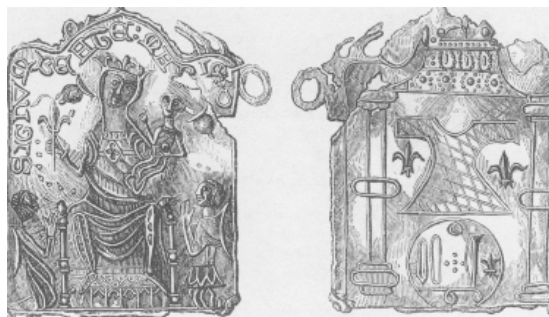


Figure 2.5. : The Chartres Pilgrim Badge depicting the Virgin and the Child on obverse, the Virgin's Chemise on reverse (engraved by Arthur Forgeais, 19th century)

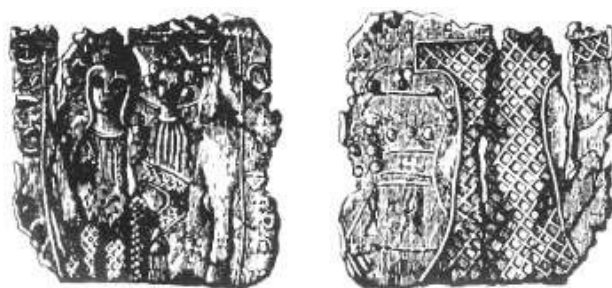


Figure 2.6: The Chartres Pilgrim Badge depicting the Virgin and the Child on obverse, the Virgin's Chemise with elaborate cross-stitching pattern on reverse (engraved by Arthur Forgeais, 19th century)

¹⁶⁹ E. Jane Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," *Speculum* 81, no.2 (April 2006): 369-70; "Chartres Cathedral," *History & Society*, Britannica, last modified January 12, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chartres-Cathedral>.

¹⁷⁰ Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," 366-8, 378.

¹⁷¹ Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," 366-8, 378.

¹⁷² Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," 366-8, 378.

of pilgrims and merchants who actively participated in Chartres's economic activities, which were enhanced in parallel to the pilgrimage activities.¹⁷³ Altogether, it is plausible to consider modeling the Chartres garment for the item on the Galata icon. Even though the Chartres tunic is composed of tiraz-like silken material but not as velvet as it appears for the Galata item, its simple design and non-patternless appearance resemble the tunic on the Galata icon.¹⁷⁴ Whether it was the case or not, such a possibility underlines the continuing interaction between both cultural milieus, like in the case of the Virgin's mantle and belt, even though the Byzantine identity of the capital city had changed within the Ottoman context.

2.2.1.4 The Slippers of the Virgin Mary



Figure 2.7: Detail of the Galata icon.
Slippers of the Virgin Mary, gold and silver
in repousse technique.

The Virgin's slippers initially give the impression that the rose bush theme is making a reappearance, but a closer look reveals that this is not the case. Instead of rosebushes, the Virgin's slippers have designs that resemble pomegranate blossoms, or *punica granatum* in botanical nomenclature¹⁷⁵, with pomegranates on each side placed on the top branch and other sub-branches blooming with specific

pomegranate tree blooms. The pomegranate motif adds another layer of symbolism to the Galata icon. It represents two significant notions related to Christianity: through its association with Christ's blood, it emphasizes the death and resurrection of the Lord, and additively, it signifies the Christian church as one community, highlighting the church's function of uniting believers under the roof of Christianity through utilizing the metaphor of numerous seeds of one plant, as the pomegranate itself.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, in the context of Byzantium, Latin West, and subsequently, the Ottoman Empire, the pomegranate symbol reflects the cross-cultural interactions between

¹⁷³ Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," 385-7.

¹⁷⁴ Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," 368-70; Weyl Carr, "Threads of Authority: The Virgin Mary's Veil in the Middle Ages," 73.

¹⁷⁵ Hamid Reza Rahimi, Mohammad Arastoo, and Seyed Nasar Ostad, "A Comprehensive Review of *Punica granatum* (Pomegranate) Properties in Toxicological, Pharmacological, Cellular and Molecular Biology Researches," *Iranian Journal of Pharmaceutical Research : IJPR*, 11, no. 2 (2012), article published online, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3832175/>.

¹⁷⁶ Trinita Kennedy, "Catalogue of Exhibited Works, no.19," in *Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797*, ed. Stefano Carboni (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 301; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 37.

those milieus since the pomegranate motif was appropriated, like numerous others, from the Eastern sphere by Venetians through the textile trade.¹⁷⁷ Transforming into a highly desired motif in the Latin West, imported silk and velvets with pomegranate ornamentation were increasingly utilized for the ecclesiastical and courtly attires, and eventually resulted in the local production of textiles with the motif in la Serenissima, and consequently, in the Western sphere.¹⁷⁸ From the perspective of such notions, the preference of pomegranates over rosebushes on the Virgin's slippers only corresponds to a small portion of the revetment becomes plausible as that motif refers to essential doctrines of Christianity, emphasizing the relationship between the East and the West. Furthermore, as the pomegranate motifs cover only a tiny portion of the icon (compared to rose bushes), they do not overshadow the symbolism and domination of the Virgin's figure.¹⁷⁹

Even though in terms of motifs, the mantle and the slippers differentiate in their design elements, both commodities seem to share the same material, velvet. The small square detailing underneath the pomegranate motif resembles the velvety material of the cloak, enforcing the possibility to consider the fabric of the slippers as velvet.¹⁸⁰ Half of the slippers are hidden underneath the Virgin's garment, thus restricting their appearance on the icon. The linearity, in other words the inverted perspective utilized in icons resulting in the limitation the beholder's view of the slippers is another aspect to take into account when 'imagining the real appearance' of the displayed objects, much like the other elements shown on the icon.¹⁸¹ Nevertheless, the visible features provide enough material to understand a general outline. The slippers of the Virgin have prolonged toecaps, a feature that can be further commented on as pointed, slightly upturned toes. Furthermore, the upper part of each slipper ends with coarse needlework, most probably made of *kılaptan*, a fragile metal-wrapped thread, mainly ornamented with gilding or silvering.¹⁸² The needlework forms the border of the uppers as a slight double U, "W," near the ankle bone. Despite the invisibility of the heel area, consideration of the Virgin's plain yet graceful style, with numerous artworks depicting the Virgin with flat shoes or even barefoot, her slippers in the Galata

¹⁷⁷ Kennedy, "Catalogue of Exhibited Works, no.19," 301.

¹⁷⁸ Kennedy, "Catalogue of Exhibited Works, no.19," 301.

¹⁷⁹ Kennedy, "Catalogue of Exhibited Works, no.19," 301; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 37; Ziadé, "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83.

¹⁸⁰ Reath, "Weaves in Hand-Loom Fabrics, V. Velvet Weaves," 358-9.

¹⁸¹ Jan B. Derogowski, Manfredo Massironi, and Denis M. Parker, "The Perception of Spatial Structure with Oblique Viewing: An Explanation for Byzantine Perspective?," *Perception* 23, no.1 (1994): 5-7, 12.

¹⁸² Amanda Phillips, *Everyday Luxuries: Art and Objects in Ottoman Constantinople, 1600-1800* (Bölen: Druck Verlag Kettler GmbH, 2016): 164, 166.

icon should also contain either flat or low heels.¹⁸³ The latter claim can be further supported by applying it to the Galata icon since numerous images of the Virgin Mary in Byzantium and the Latin West were characterized by red (or dark-hued variations of red) pointed slippers, which was the only item of clothing that the Virgin and the Byzantine imperial family shared, as demonstrated for the Byzantine imperials in the mosaic of Emperor Justinian in Ravenna.¹⁸⁴ The similar situation, illustrating the Virgin with red slippers, was additively apparent in the Latin West with further alternation of the Virgin's costume. Regarding her positioning as Maria Regina in the Western counterpart, Virgin Mary was represented with imperial garments in the Latin West.¹⁸⁵ On the other hand, similar circumstances regarding the Virgin's portrayal in Byzantium (except her slippers) never took place since empresses had the right to dress in Byzantine imperial regalia, and representing the Virgin with similar garments would be acknowledged as blasphemy.¹⁸⁶

All displayed elements on the Galata icon contain not only historical but also contemporary references suitable to the iconographical contexts framing the Virgin Mary. While the depiction of the Virgin's mantle provides a link to its miraculous past and revered history in Byzantium, it also displays components relatable to its contemporary world, such as the textile trade between Ottomans and Venetians.¹⁸⁷ Therefore, analyzing the Virgin's slippers with an expectation to find similar connotations occurring on the icon's other features is highly probable and required for its context. In this regard, similar to the issue of the mantle's fabric, the Ottoman slippers' material and style seem to be playing a crucial role and underline the cross-cultural interaction between the East and the West, namely Ottoman Constantinople and Venice, two cities that represent themselves and their interactions at every layer of the Galata icon.¹⁸⁸ Particular slippers from the Sadberk Hanım Museum's collection in Istanbul, Turkey, exhibit similarities to the slippers worn by the Virgin in the Galata icon; as a result, they are valuable objects for understanding the tradition surrounding slippers and how to interpret the Galata slippers in terms of cross-cultural interactions. One of the catalogues published by the Sadberk Hanım Museum, including the

¹⁸³ Some of these artworks can be listed as following: *The Virgin and the Child*, 9th century, mosaic, Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey., *Icon with Annunciation or Annunciation*, late 12th century, St. Catherine Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt., Raphael, *Madonna del Prato*, 1506, oil on canvas, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria., *Virgin Mary and the Saints*, 18th century, oil on panel, St. Catherine Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.

¹⁸⁴ Judith Herrin, "The Imperial Feminine in Byzantium," *Past & Present*, no. 169 (November 2000): 16.

¹⁸⁵ Herrin, "The Imperial Feminine in Byzantium," 15-6.

¹⁸⁶ Herrin, "The Imperial Feminine in Byzantium," 16-7.

¹⁸⁷ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82.

¹⁸⁸ Sardjono, "Ottoman or Italian Velvets? A Technical Investigation," 193.

museum's footwear collection displayed on the temporary exhibition, *Pabuç* (November 2014-May 2015), lists exhibited items by numerically entitling them and items 018, 021, 022, 023, 026, 027, 031 and 032 bare resemblances with the Galata slippers in different layers.¹⁸⁹



Figure 2.8: Item 018.



Figure 2.9: Item 021.



Figure 2.10: Item 022.



Figure 2.11: Item 023.



Figure 2.12: Item 026.



Figure 2.13: Item 027.



Figure 2.14: Item 031.



Figure 2.15.: Item 032.

¹⁸⁹ Lale Görünür, *Pabuç*, *Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan* (İstanbul: Mas Matbaacılık San. Ve Tic. A.Ş.: 2014), 90-1, 96-101, 106-9, 116-9.

For example, items 018, 021, 031, and 032 resemble the Galata icon's slippers in terms of 'W' shaped upper endings.¹⁹⁰ Among these items, 032 has a more elaborate upper end than others; the middle point seems ornamented with a lotus motif.¹⁹¹ Motifs on all items and the needlework on upper borders are embroidered by using metal-wrapped threads, which seems to be the case for the Virgin's slippers by the appearance and the intended 'universal' choice of depicting the Virgin with the most precious materials in a subtle way.¹⁹² Moreover, all of these items have pointed upturned toes, yet none of their embroidered motifs have pomegranate nor resemble the design on the icon in any way.¹⁹³ Last but not least, all items except 018 are composed of leather and velvet, and the zoom-in image on items 026 and 027 reveal the squarish texture that corresponds to the tiny knots of velvet, which is an element highlighting this research's criticism of the velvet fabric used in the Virgin's mantle, tunic, and slippers.¹⁹⁴



Figure 2.16: Detail of item 027.



Figure 2.17: Detail of item 026.

¹⁹⁰ Görünür, *Pabuç, Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan*, 90-1, 96-7, 118-9.

¹⁹¹ Görünür, *Pabuç, Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan*, 118-9.

¹⁹² Görünür, *Pabuç, Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan*, 90-1, 96-101, 106-9, 116-9.

¹⁹³ Görünür, *Pabuç, Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan*, 90-1, 96-101, 106-9, 116-9.

¹⁹⁴ Görünür, *Pabuç, Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan*, 90-1, 106-9; Reath, "Weaves in Hand-Loom Fabrics, V. Velvet Weaves," 358-9.

These slippers from the Sadberk Hanım Museum generally date between the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 20th century.¹⁹⁵ The preservation of such objects is a difficult task; textiles, in particular, decompose quickly in nature and cannot last as long as paintings and other plastic arts materials, even with the careful attention paid by owners of the artifacts, whose patronage signifies their importance in society and that of their families.¹⁹⁶ In studies of material culture, slippers were treated with less attention because they were merely seen as a commodity and a daily necessity in comparison to artworks. As a result, it is less common to find slippers from older eras contrary to paintings.¹⁹⁷ However, this would not restrict the consideration of the possibility of an earlier tradition of slippers with comparable qualities.¹⁹⁸ The history of footwear endorses the continuity of tradition, regarding a rare example of a *rather archaic* slipper, compared to the dating of other items in most museum collections, broadly dated to the 3rd-7th century from Akhmim, Egypt.¹⁹⁹ The general outline of this leather slipper resembles the rather contemporary examples discussed above, with its pointy upturned toe, the slightly ‘W’ shaped end of the ornamented upper, even if the design of this slipper is not similar.²⁰⁰ Features of the typical slipper designs revealed themselves in other shoe types throughout history. For instance, as an analogy between monotheistic religions, the consideration of showing flesh as a taboo underlined the transition from sandals to closed shoes, which developed into a design with long pointy toes during the 8th-9th centuries and lasted till the 15th century, especially in Europe.²⁰¹ The effectiveness of this specific shoe style reveals itself in some depictions of the Virgin, especially in Byzantium,



Figure 2.18: *The Egyptian Slippers* dating back to 3-7th century, currently in the Islamic Art Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States of America.

¹⁹⁵ Görünür, *Pabuç*, *Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan*, 7, 90-1, 96-101, 106-9, 116-9.

¹⁹⁶ Caitlin Dover, “How Do You Conserve Art Made from Textiles? Very, Very Carefully,” Blogs, The Guggenheim Museums and Foundation, last modified September 20, 2016, <https://www.guggenheim.org/blogs/checklist/how-do-you-convert-art-made-from-textiles-very-very-carefully>.

¹⁹⁷ Dover, “How Do You Conserve Art Made from Textiles? Very, Very Carefully,” The Guggenheim Museums and Foundation.

¹⁹⁸ Duncan Haskell, and Jade They, “The History of Slipper,” *Ernest*, last modified August 14, 2017, <https://www.ernestjournal.co.uk/blog/2017/8/14/the-history-of-the-slipper>.

¹⁹⁹ “Slipper,” The Islamic Art Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed February 2, 2024, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/443621>.

²⁰⁰ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Slipper,” <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/443621>.

²⁰¹ Görünür, *Pabuç*, *Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan*, 11-2.



Figure 2.19: *Italian Chopines*, 1550-1650, silk, velvet and metal thread, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States of America.

where the Virgin is depicted with closed, pointy shoes, mainly in the color red or purple, and also as a notable interaction issue between Byzantium and the West, namely Italy, since the depictions of the Virgin started to bare pointy toecaps as the artistic interactions accelerated between the two parties.²⁰² Therefore, the pointy and slightly upturned toe of the Virgin of the Galata icon addresses different cultural and historical agendas of the East and the West and reemphasizes the issue of interaction. This assertion also emphasizes the bilateral

nature of the interaction matter by highlighting the positive effects of economic operations on both societies, which led to the development of comparable but somewhat distinct styles that reflected regional preferences and religious and cultural norms on both sides.

Returning to the issue of preservation, an example of a slipper from both geographies dated to the 17th century is not available for the context of this research. Nevertheless, it is possible to indicate that a slipper style similar to Galata's Virgin was most probably apparent in the 17th century by rehearsing the continuing tradition mentioned above.²⁰³ It is also crucial to emphasize the footwear trend of the century by depending on the available material. In addition to the likelihood that slippers existed, the Italian counterpart also favored a particular type of shoe known as the *chopine*.²⁰⁴ Chopines first appeared in the 16th century and gained enormous popularity; as a result, women all over Europe kept on using them in the 17th century. The prevailing agreement regarding chopines suggests that they originated in the Venetian Republic and expanded throughout Europe, therefore Venetian ladies were not spared from this trend, more likely they were the pioneers of it.²⁰⁵ Chopines featured high platforms and firmly substantial heels. Their primary function was to shield wearers from the muddy and filthy streets in public areas. Over time, chopines gained prestige as a status symbol, with the owner's noble standing being linked to

²⁰² Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 53.

²⁰³ Haskell, and They, "The History of Slipper," Ernest.

²⁰⁴ For the chopines displayed on the image, please visit the website with the following reference: "Italian Chopines," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed July 5, 2023, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/156215?what=Chopines&ao=on&ft=*&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=2.

²⁰⁵ Harold Koda, "The Chopine," Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified October 2002, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chop/hd_chop.htm.

the height of the heels, which meant that higher heels denoted a higher rank in society.²⁰⁶ By appearance, chopines resemble Ottoman *nalins*; apart from the analog features such as the platform structure and very dense heels, the uppers are distinctive from each other: Ottoman *nalins* have a singular thin band as their uppers, whereas chopines' uppers are reminiscent of the ones with slippers, meaning they are mostly covering the upper part of the foot, sometimes with open toes, and embroidered metal-wrapped threads outlining the ornamentation.²⁰⁷ Therefore, chopines became another feature that strongly emphasizes artistic and cultural interactions, as well as proposing an established tradition of slippers.²⁰⁸

The Venetian Shoes Collection of the Museo della Calzatura di Villa Foscari Rossi contains important examples framing the 18th-century shoe tradition in Venice.²⁰⁹ Even though these examples outdate the Galata icon, they still underline the possibility of the proposed tradition and enhance the perception of the framework given in this analysis. Two slippers from this collection, entitled Venetian slippers, bear high resemblances with the slippers from the Sadberk Hanım Museum; furthermore, the webpage displaying the slippers indicated that the Venetian slippers were influenced by their Middle-Eastern parallels, supporting the argument of this research.²¹⁰ Other Venetian shoes in the collection, such as the court shoes worn by patricians working in the senate, poulaines, and ballet shoes too, with their embroideries, metal-wrapped threads, and glass beans, and their shape, provide a similar outline to the slippers discussed previously, again providing evidence on the possible tradition of interest.²¹¹



Figure 2.20: *The Venetian Slipper Shoe*, 18th century, silk and metal thread, Museo della Calzatura di Villa Foscari Rossi, Stra, Italy.



Figure 2.21: *The Venetian Slipper Shoe*, 19th century, silk and metal thread, Museo della Calzatura di Villa Foscari Rossi, Stra, Italy.

²⁰⁶ Koda, "The Chopine," The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

²⁰⁷ Katsiaryna Kolesava, "Chopines," 16th Century & 17th Century, Fashion History Timeline, last modified May 28, 2019, <https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/chopines/>.

²⁰⁸ Kolesava, "Chopines," Fashion History Timeline.

²⁰⁹ "In Venetian Shoes," Museo della Calzatura di Villa Foscari Rossi, Google Arts and Culture, accessed July 4, 2023, <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/0AVRfwRShszJlg>.

²¹⁰ Google Arts and Culture, "In Venetian Shoes."

²¹¹ Google Arts and Culture, "In Venetian Shoes."

Till 1701, the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata was under the protection of the Republic of Venice, corresponding to two years later after the application date of the revetment (1698-1699). Several historical accounts from the church's archive display the constant interest of the Serenissima, especially towards the icon; thus, the Venetian influence over the themes and elements represented in the revetment cannot be overlooked.²¹² The represented features, even in tiny details such as the slippers of the Virgin, can be elaborated as instrumental in revealing the Venetian influence in multiple layers, thus showing acculturation.

2.2.1.5 The Crown of the Virgin Mary

Virgin Mary's slippers, belt buckle, and the border of her garment are coated with gold, but her golden crown is the shiniest among them. Stylistically, the Virgin's crown looks like one of the juxtaposed crowns at the bottom of the revetment. These crowns, serving as attributes, aid the beholder to identify the figures depicted. All of them, except the one underneath the figure next to St. Dominic, which is a papal tiara, are royal crowns, and the Virgin's crown resembles one of them from this group: the one next to the holy book, depicted underneath the female members of the congregation.²¹³ Similar to other elements that form the Virgin's appearance on the icon, the crown ascribes additional meanings and contexts rather than being a mere decorative item; it signifies the immaculate nature of the Virgin.²¹⁴ As a monolithic golden piece, the crown creates a monochromatic illusion to the viewer; thus, does not reveal certain details and attributed meanings at first glance. In this perspective, it acts similarly to the icon's monochromatic nature. A close examination of the item reveals that the Virgin's crown bears resemblances with European royal jewelry, mainly with the crown of the King of Bavaria (c.1807), made by jeweler Marie-Etienne Nitot and goldsmiths Jean-Baptiste Leblond, and Martin-Guillaume Biennais who also worked on other items of the royal insignia of Bavaria.²¹⁵ While not as strikingly similar to the crown of the Galata icon as the crown of the King of Bavaria is, the crown of the Queen Consort

²¹² D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

²¹³ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 160.

²¹⁴ Ronda Kasl, "Crown of Andes," MetCollects, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed February 2, 2024, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/online-features/metcollects/crown-of-the-andes#:~:text=An%20attribute%20of%20Mary's%20divine,more%20than%20a%20century%20later.>

²¹⁵ "Krone des Königreichs Bayern auf zugehörigem Präsentationskissen," Schatzkammer – Bildergalerie, Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung Residenz München, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://www.residenz-muenchen.de/deutsch/skammer/bild01.htm>.

of Bavaria is another component of the royal insignia that is more stylized in terms of form and use of precious stones than the king's crown.²¹⁶

The crowns of interest are constructed similarly, meaning they are formed of a circlet, arches (as referring to the protruding metal bars connecting tools between the top and bottom parts), a cross and a 'monde' on the top layer, together with precious stones forming decorative patterns on these parts.²¹⁷ In most of the European royal crowns, including the crown of Emperor Rudolph II, the Kaiser of the Holy Roman Empire (1576–1612), the fleur-de-lis motif adorns the upper part of the circlet and is sometimes placed on the emerging points of the arches.²¹⁸ However, in the case of the Galata icon and the Bavarian crowns, the fleur-de-lis is replaced with another floral motif, resembling a rose.²¹⁹ Considering the repetitive rose pattern on the Galata icon and its significance from the Marian perspective, the choice of rose motif instead of fleur-de-lis makes the crown convenient on underlying the concepts of the icon representing such as the Madonna of Rosary. Despite the voluminous look created by the embossed parts, the general linearity of the revetment limits the beholder's perspective, meaning the viewer can only observe five arches of the crown. The arches, emerging from rose motifs on the boundary line of the circlet, are decorated with semi-circular motifs in gold, most probably imitating precious stones.²²⁰ Between the roses, a very simplified tiara-like motif fills the space and altogether, creates another pattern. Moreover, the circlet has a decorative pattern formed as juxtaposed jewels, where three pieces of pearls follow a singular precious stone (diamond?). Unlike the Bavarian ones, most of the other European royal

²¹⁶ "Kroon van de koningin van Beieren," Diamant Museum Amsterdam, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://www.diamondmuseum.com/topstukken/kroon-van-de-koningin-van-beieren/?lang=nl>.

²¹⁷ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 166.

²¹⁸ "Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor," Britannica, last modified January 16, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rudolf-II-Holy-Roman-emperor>; "Die Krone Kaiser Rudolfs II., später Krone des Kaisertums Österreichs," Kaiserliche Schatzkammer Wien, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://www.khm.at/en/objectdb/detail/100360/>.

²¹⁹ Kaiserliche Schatzkammer Wien, "Die Krone Kaiser Rudolfs II., später Krone des Kaisertums Österreichs."

²²⁰ "Crown, head ornament," Britannica, last modified October 18, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/crown-headwear>.

crowns contain mitre²²¹ as seen in the Imperial Crown of Vienna.²²² The monolithically represented crown of the Galata icon does not provide insight into this aspect; therefore, the existence of a possible mitre is questionable. Furthermore, the crown itself is ‘crowned’ with a diamond crucifix on top, depicted with a golden ‘monde’ underneath.²²³ From the point of royalty, the crucifix on the monde, referred as *globus cruciger* or *sphaira*, represents the legitimacy of the ruler as the rightful heir and his status as a faithful Christian and leader of the Christian sphere.²²⁴ On the other hand, the cross and the monde on the Virgin’s crown become the insignia of the Virgin Mary and emphasize her role of being the Queen of Heaven.

From 1854 onwards, the representation of the Virgin Mary with a crown started to bear another meaning: it became a symbol of the Immaculate Conception. The Immaculate Conception, a church doctrine that affirms the Virgin Mary's innocence and immunity from original sin at the moment of her conception, became a major topic of discussion for all Catholic congregations around the world, and the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata also earned its fair share of interest on the subject.²²⁵ Like other themes included in artworks, the representation of the Immaculate Conception required iconographical cues to signify its meaning. This need is fulfilled by ascribing attributions such as the crown of the Virgin, crescent moon, lilies, twelve stars, etc.²²⁶ Archival documents and P. Benedetto Palazzo’s and P.A. Raineri’s O.P. collaborative work on the church’s history, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*²²⁷, confirm that the crown on the icon is not originally a part of the revetment; instead, it is a later addition placed to celebrate the approval of

²²¹ “St. Edward’s Crown,” Royal Collection Trust, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/trails/the-crown-jewels/in-detail-st-edwards-crown>; “Crown of Christian V,” Kongehuset, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://www.kongehuset.dk/kongelige-samlinger/christian-5-s-krone/>; “Dronningens krone,” Kongernes Samling Rosenborg, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://www.kongernessamling.dk/rosenborg/object/dronningens-krone/>; “Crown Jewels of the Kings of Württemberg, 1797, 1809-1813, and 1820-1821,” Landesmuseum Württemberg, Sotheby’s, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://www.sothebys.com/en/museums/landesmuseum-wuerttemberg>; “Symbols of the Spanish Monarchy,” The Monarchy Through History, Casa De Su Majestad El Rey, accessed June 16, 2023, <https://www.casareal.es/EN/MonarquiaHistoria/Paginas/simbolos-monarquia.aspx>; “Couronne personnelle de Louis XV,” Musée du Louvre, <https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010097015>.

²²² Kaiserliche Schatzkammer Wien, “Die Krone Kaiser Rudolfs II., später Krone des Kaisertums Österreichs.”

²²³ “Monde from the Crown of State,” Collection, Royal Collection Trust, accessed February 2, 2024, <https://www.rct.uk/collection/31711/monde-from-the-crown-of-state>.

²²⁴ Alexander Kazhdan, “Sphaira,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): 1936-7.

²²⁵ “Immaculate Conception, Roman Catholicism,” Britannica, last modified February 18, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Immaculate-Conception-Roman-Catholicism>.

²²⁶ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 95-96.

²²⁷ P. Benedetto Palazzo and P.A. Raineri O.P., *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata, Note Storiche Illustrative in Occasione dei I Centenario della Consacrazione* (Istanbul: HARTİ ve Şki Basımevi, 1943).

the Immaculate Conception as a church dogma.²²⁸ The idea of attaching a crown was not as straightforward as one anticipated; in reality, the first attempt to celebrate the newly accepted dogma by adorning the revetment was to place a crescent moon underneath the Virgin's feet. The idea of decorating the icon with an appropriate element to the dogma and the commissioning process of the crescent moon was the initiative of the Vicario Generale P.M. Giacinto Cambiaso, who arrived in Istanbul on March 4, 1852, and maintained his position as the high priest of the Galata order until 1888.²²⁹ The crescent moon should be commissioned not long after the papal bull on the dogma is published, taking into account that the crescent moon's and the crown's application date, December 8, 1855, corresponds to the first anniversary of the doctrine's adoption.²³⁰ According to Palazzo and Ranieri, who explicitly based their account on P.M. Cambiaso's account in the archives, the Book of Memoirs (?); P.M. Cambiaso reportedly asked congregation members for donations in this regard and stated that the material of the crescent moon (either wood, silver, or gold) would be based on the money collected. The donations were substantial enough to commission a golden crescent, which was ordered from Malta.²³¹ Malta became an essential hallmark of the coronation of the Galata icon since the story of the Virgin's crown originated there. According to the account, two Maltese, Ferdinando and Gaetano Grech, offered to church officials to commission a crown for the icon at their own expense; albeit they were not successful in their mission of finding a workshop in Malta that had the sufficient ability, thus the task assigned to a particular craftsman Belli, whose identity is not clear, in Rome. Pope Pius IX, who established the papal bull on the Immaculate Conception, ordered the crown to be brought to him before its journey to Constantinople, and he blessed the crown, through which attained a different meaning and importance both to icon and the congregation of the Galata order, since by blessing/crowning the image, the pope affirms the devotion of the Galata congregation.²³²

²²⁸ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42.

²²⁹ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42; Gündoğar, "Galata Sn. Pierre Kilisesi'nin Tarihi," 23-24.

²³⁰ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 43.

²³¹ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42.

²³² Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42; "Canonical Coronation," National Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche at Mission Nombre de Dios, accessed February 3, 2024, <https://missionandshrine.org/about-us/canonical-coronation/>.

On December 8, 1855, the insertion of the crown of the Galata icon and the placement of the crescent moon took place in the church. Prominent clerical members of Constantinople and Anatolia (the Archbishop Monsignor Mussabini, the Armenian Catholic Primate Monsignor Assoun, the Armenian Catholic Bishop of Erzurum Monsignor Salviati, Archbishop of Babylon Monsignor Trioche, and French Ambassador Tuvenel)²³³, were apparent on the event.²³⁴ Following the speech of P.M. Cambiaso, Archbishop Monsignor Mussabini placed the crown on the icon, and another member placed the crescent moon underneath the Virgin's feet while the litanies and preaches took place.²³⁵ Currently, the crown is still intact on the icon. On the other hand, the crescent moon has been removed during a restoration project in 1993 and remained absent from the icon since; it is unclear why it was never restored to its original place. In a lithograph prepared by the Constantinople-based print house the *Zellich fils* (Zellich's sons), the crescent moon is depicted attached to the revetment, and in this research, it is the only visual evidence that comes across and provides insight on the existence of the crescent moon, together with its visual appearance.²³⁶

The re-assignment of the crown to a Roman craftsman and the Pope's interest in this issue, and subsequently in the Galata icon, played an important role by not just enhancing the icon's perception, providing additional Western connections and introducing new meanings; but also, by altering its appearance stylistically. If a Maltese craftsman made the crown, the outcome would



Figure 2. 22: Lithograph depicting the Virgin of church Saints Peter and Paul (the Galata icon), made by the lithography company *A. Zellich et fils*, date unknown, Istanbul, Turkey.

²³³ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-43.

²³⁴ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 23-24.

²³⁵ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 43.

²³⁶ The Dalmatian lithograph artist Antonio Zellich migrated to Constantinople around 1840. After nearly spending 20 years in Henri Cayol's lithography studio, Zellich opened his studio, the *A. Zellich et fils*. The Zellich family gained a reputation in the city and was responsible for printing Ottoman Turkish liras in 1914. In addition to providing lithographs to various magazines and booklets, the son of Antoine Zellich, Henri, printed and edited different postcards in his own company, which today serve as illuminating materials on the history of the early 20th century of Constantinople. Vjeran Kursar, "Carigradska tiskara "Zellich"," *Knjizevna Smotra* 173, no.3, (2014): 109; "Zellich fils," Publishers/Editors, Turkish Postcards, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.turkishpostcards.com/ZellichFils>; Gündoğar, "Galata Sn. Pierre Kilisesi'nin Tarihi," 38.

have stylistic differences, if not many. Therefore, the lack of documents providing information on the craftsman stylistic apprehensions and choices would not hinder the exception of seeing Italian tendencies on the crafted item. The crown of the Galata icon highly resembles the golden crown on the mosaic of the altar of Immaculate Conception in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican.²³⁷ This mosaic altarpiece is a replica of a painting by Pietro Bianchi, the original piece is in the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, Rome.²³⁸ In this artwork (exact date is unknown), the Virgin Mary is venerated by John Chrysostom (347-407), the archbishop of Constantinople whose Marian doctrine revolves around the Virgin's miraculous conception and the Virgin Birth²³⁹, and by Franciscan saints Francis of Assisi (c.1181-1226) and Anthony of Padua (1195-1231), who, being the first members of the Franciscan order, supported the idea of the Virgin's freedom from the original sin.²⁴⁰ In addition to the existence of figures who proposed their ideas on the miraculous conception of the Virgin, the coronation of the altarpiece by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854, the declaration day of the Immaculate Conception, made the artwork one of the emblems of the newly accepted Marian doctrine.²⁴¹ As a result, it is possible to interpret the Galata icon's crown's resemblance to St. Peter's crown as a deliberate choice to highlight the doctrine. However, concerning the craftsmanship and delicate detailing on the item, the St. Peter's crown seems to be executed by someone who is the master of his profession. On the other hand, contrary to its Roman origin and similar outline, the Galata icon's crown does not seem to be an outcome of such talented hands, eliminating the chance of fully identifying the particular craftsman Belli.

Additionally, the existence of the crown also introduces one of the important religious themes in art of Western Europe: the Coronation of the Virgin Mary. In the artworks with this

²³⁷ "Pietro Bianchi, *Immaculate Conception (Immaculata e Santi)*, c?, mosaic panel, St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican," accessed March 4, 2024, <http://stpetersbasilica.info/Altars/ImmaculateConception/ImmaculateConception.htm>.

²³⁸ St. Peter's Basilica, "Pietro Bianchi, *Immaculate Conception (Immaculata e Santi)*, c?, mosaic panel, St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican."

²³⁹ "St. John Chrysostom," Catholic Encyclopedia, New Advent, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08452b.htm>; "Virgin Birth," Christianity, Britannica, last modified February 19, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Virgin-Birth/additional-info#history>; Fr. Félix López, S.H.M., "St. John of Chrysostom," In the writings of the Church Fathers, Virgin Mary, Home of the Mother, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.homeofthemothor.org/en/resources/virgin-mary/fathers/8163-st-john-chry>; The Reverend Joseph Pohle, Ph.D., D.D., *Mariology, A Dogmatic Treatise on the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1914), 78-79.

²⁴⁰ "The Immaculate Conception with Saints Francis of Assisi, and Anthony of Padua," Collections, Minneapolis Institute of Art, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://collections.artsmia.org/art/1613/the-immaculate-conception-with-saints-francis-of-assisi-and-anthony-of-padua-giovanni-benedetto-castiglione>.

²⁴¹ St. Peter's Basilica, "Pietro Bianchi, *Immaculate Conception (Immaculata e Santi)*, c?, mosaic panel, St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican."

subject matter, Christ crowns the Virgin Mary to celebrate her ascension to heaven and announce her as the Queen of Heaven. The crowning of the Virgin is not a marginal theme in the Western world as it was in the Byzantine counterpart; in fact, it became a trendy artistic theme among Western societies, starting with the Gothic period.²⁴² As seen in the work of Giovanni di Tano Fei, *The Coronation of the Virgin and Saints*, one of the earliest examples in the Gothic period representing this iconographical theme, the Virgin Mary is seated on the throne with Christ while the coronation takes place.²⁴³ Both figures are venerated by numerous saints, including Saints Peter and Paul, while the angels chant and play serene tunes.²⁴⁴ The facial features and the golden background representing the heavenly realm and the nimbus remind the characteristics of Byzantine art since accelerated artistic connections between Byzantium and the West characterize the 12th century.²⁴⁵

Even though the preliminary reason behind the crown is related to the Immaculate Conception, the crown on the Galata icon also underlines the Virgin's role as the *Regina Coeli*, the Queen of Heaven, correlatively to her assumption and coronation.²⁴⁶ In fact, by emphasizing the Virgin's role as the Queen of Heaven, the artistic theme of the coronation and the placement of the crown on this icon underline the hierarchy of the heavenly realm and where the Virgin stands among it. Starting with the council of Ephesus in 431, the series of theological debates concluded by attributing the name of Theotokos to the Virgin Mary; and continued with being a religious figure whose humanity and divinity restlessly thought upon by church fathers and medieval theologians²⁴⁷, the Virgin Mary had been announced as not just the Queen of Heaven but also as

²⁴²José María Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin in the Renaissance Italian Painting in the Light of the Medieval Theology," *Eikón Imago* 3 (January 2013): 1.

²⁴³ "Giovanni di Tano Fei, *The Coronation of the Virgin and Saints*," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed February 3, 2024, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436299>; "The Coronation of the Virgin and Saints," European Paintings, Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed February 3, 2024, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436299>.

²⁴⁴ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Coronation of the Virgin and Saints."

²⁴⁵ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Coronation of the Virgin and Saints."; National Gallery of Art, "Italian Paintings of the 13th and 14th centuries."

²⁴⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 94.

²⁴⁷ Some early church fathers, especially St. John of Damascus and St. John of Chrysostom, emphasized the virginal motherhood of the Virgin and proposed a link to her queenship. In his homily on the Annunciation of the Virgin, St. John of Chrysostom underlines the Virgin's exalted status as follows: "Hail, the only Queen among the queens...the mother of the King of Universe..." Furthermore, important medieval theologians, including the German monk Hermann de Reichenau (1013-1054), the Benedictine master St. Anselm of Aosta (c.1033-1109), a Cistercian master named St. Bernard (1090-1153), and the Franciscan master St. Bonaventure (1218-1274) made critical remarks on the issue of interest and appealed to the Virgin with titles associated to her queenship in their sermons. For example, in his second homily on the Assumption, St. Bonaventure indicates the following: "...being the Mother of the Highest Emperor, she is by her dignity and conditions the worthiest of all creatures...she was elevated above them and placed

the Queen of all heavenly and earthly creatures.²⁴⁸ The driving force behind her unreachable rank among all creatures lies in the divine position of Christ, the ultimate king of heaven; thus, being the mother of Jesus granted the Virgin her queenship.²⁴⁹ The hierarchical rank of the Virgin based on the developed theological doctrine over centuries is visible in the Galata icon. In addition to the depictions of mortals who found themselves a refugee under the Virgin's mantle, the two flanking angels, too, underline the hierarchical differences. Even though they are represented as flying over the Virgin's head, size-wise, they are much smaller than the Virgin and take less space on the icon.²⁵⁰ Compared to the gathered congregation, which includes saints and royals in the front line; with their elevated placement on the icon, the hierarchical importance of angels over mortal beings is also highlighted. Altogether, the collage of variety of differences in the Galata icon, and the existence of the crown, emphasizes on the Virgin's importance among all creatures and her role as the Queen of Paradise.²⁵¹

Regarding artworks with coronation-related subject matter, hierarchical differences are represented and provided mainly by a standard visual formula. As shown in Tano Fei's work, Christ and the Virgin Mary are depicted sitting on the same throne and separated from the rest of the group with the platform that the throne is put upon.²⁵² Furthermore, the 'musical' angels kneel before them while playing their instruments.²⁵³ The placement and grouping in this work of art are also visible in Giotto di Bondone's work, *the Coronation of the Virgin with Angels and Saints*, in Baroncelli Chapel, the church of Santa Croce, Florence.²⁵⁴ Similar to Tano Fei's work, Giotto depicted the Virgin and Christ separately from the rest of the group, and the elevated throne again creates the separation. Four angels kneel before the holy mother and son and show their respects, which can be understood from their hand gestures, while angels on the other panels play instruments.²⁵⁵ Numerous saints including St. Francis of Assisi, St. Gerome and St. Dominic de

to the right of her Son in a sublime throne." Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin in the Renaissance Italian Painting in the Light of the Medieval Theology," 2-4.

²⁴⁸ Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin," 12.

²⁴⁹ Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin," 1.

²⁵⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 94-95.

²⁵¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 94.

²⁵² The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Coronation of the Virgin and Saints."

²⁵³ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Coronation of the Virgin and Saints."

²⁵⁴ Giotto di Bondone, *the Coronation of the Virgin with Angels and Saints*, after 1328, tempera and gold on wood, Baroncelli Chapel, the church of Santa Croce, Florence, Italy. "Coronation of the Virgin with Angels and Saints (Baroncelli Polyptych)," Santa Croce Opera, accessed February 3, 2024, <https://www.santacroceopera.it/en/catalogue-of-works/giotto-baroncelli-polyptych/>.

²⁵⁵ Santa Croce Opera, "Coronation of the Virgin with Angels and Saints (Baroncelli Polyptych)."

Guzman, depicted on both panels as experiencing the coronation, and the golden background indicates the heavenly atmosphere to the beholder.²⁵⁶ Additionally, the submissive posture of the Virgin, primarily presented by the way she crosses her arms above her torso, is another commonality between Tano Fei and Giotto's works. Even though not all artworks about coronation depict angels and saints but only the holiest mother and son, and sometimes together with scenes from the Virgin's life, the ideology behind all of them is the same, and they indicate the place of the Virgin both in the finite and infinite realms.²⁵⁷

The visual language of the Galata icon provides a mixture of specific iconographies in a blended manner, and the beholder can decipher each of them by referring to certain characteristic elements from different iconographical representations on various themes. Therefore, hidden meanings that are primarily not assigned can still be apparent on the icon due to the shared elements and complexity of the visual artistic tradition in Christian art. So, by mainly referring to the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, the crown of the Galata icon also emphasizes the queenship of the Virgin Mary and the hierarchical order of the universe, even if at first glance only to the educated eyes.²⁵⁸

Whether Byzantine or Western, in most of her representations, the Virgin Mary is depicted with a halo (or nimbus).²⁵⁹ As seen in Giovanni di Tano Fei's painting or the altarpiece in St. Peter's Basilica, the existence of the crown neither eliminates nor limits the existence of the halo; in fact, both elements are represented together harmoniously.²⁶⁰ Yet, this is not the case for Galata's Virgin Mary, which is puzzling considering the hybridity of the icon that exhibits a balanced blend of Byzantine and Western features. A potential reason for the lack of the Virgin's halo might be the placement of the crown. Since it is a later addition to the icon, insufficient space is possible to represent both details together. Insufficient space might also be the driving force behind crafting a rather shallow and flat crown but not a higher one. Considering the reason behind the attachment of the crown and the newly ascribed meaning to the icon and the congregation via the blessing by the Pope, the Galata friars might choose to have the crown instead of the previous

²⁵⁶ Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin," 15.

²⁵⁷ Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin," 13, 14, 22.

²⁵⁸ Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin," 12-5, 22.

²⁵⁹ Alexander Kazhdan, and Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Nimbus," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): 1487.

²⁶⁰ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Coronation of the Virgin and Saints."

halo. This is an assumption, but the top part lacking a piece of revetment might signify a damaged piece during the attachment of the new detail.²⁶¹

2.2.2 Angels

Angels flanking the Virgin Mary have a similar golden coating on their hair, banners of their clothes, the top of their wings, and the symbols they hold in their hands. Both angels are composed of similar, generic features and perform the act of sanctifying. In contrast, the only element that differentiates them is the object they are holding: the angel on the Virgin's right-hand side carries a palm leaf while the one on the left has a rose. The latter signifies numerous features of the Virgin, including her affection towards her son and humankind. As the Galata icon emphasizes the Virgin's role of protection and intercession, the utilization of rose motifs, both in her garments and in the hands of an angel, strengthens the visual narrative of the Virgin's representation.²⁶² On the other hand, palm leaves signified the signification of victory and one's triumph over death and are encoded in the artistic vocabularies of both Romans and later Christians.²⁶³ Once again, like in the case of rose motifs, the Virgin Mary's protective role is emphasized through a palm leaf since, in this visual narrative, she promises salvation to people gathered underneath her mantle.²⁶⁴

Looking at the size issue, compared to the Virgin Mary, angels seem to be much smaller. As mentioned previously, this representation re-emphasizes the illusion of the heavenly sphere and the Virgin's role as the Queen of Heaven. Interestingly, the creation of this illusion is a common feature in artworks depicting a similar iconography to the Galata icon.²⁶⁵ The emphasis on the Virgin's scale acts as a differentiation tool to separate her from the mortals placed underneath her mantle.²⁶⁶ While the angels point out heaven, the mortals indicate a co-existing terrestrial land; so, by bringing the tangible and intangible together, an indescribable and unattainable realm is created.²⁶⁷

²⁶¹ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-3.

²⁶² Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 99-100; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 37-8.

²⁶³ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 36.

²⁶⁴ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 131-4, 137-8.

²⁶⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 94-5.

²⁶⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

²⁶⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 105.

2.2.3 The Christ Child

The Christ Child is portrayed within an almond-shaped mandorla around the Virgin's upper torso, adorned with a zigzag pattern.²⁶⁸ Upon close examination, the zigzag pattern transforms into a golden relief with triangular motifs, representing holy light beams coming out of the mandorla, portraying Christ as he is stepping out of the heavenly sphere and coming into existence among the mortals.²⁶⁹ Traditionally, mandorla, also referred to as an aureole, symbolizes God's presence and power; it represents a cloud of light that embodies the figure inside, representing a glimpse of the heavenly realm. In that regard, mandorlas surrounding the Virgin and the Child, together or separately, emphasize their eternal glory to the beholder.²⁷⁰

In the context of the Galata icon, the portrayal of the Christ Child in the mandorla indicates his presence and emphasizes his Incarnation, like in artworks depicting the Annunciation.²⁷¹ Featuring the Christ Child in the mandorla in the Annunciation scenes is significant as it symbolizes the embodiment of the Holy Spirit into a human body, emphasizing the miraculous nature of Christ and her mother.²⁷² In the context of artworks with Misericordia typology, like in the Galata icon, the inclusion of the Christ Child was a common feature to observe, along with the singular portrayal of Mary.²⁷³ Resembling the Galata icon, numerous artworks sharing this subject matter placed the mandorla-Christ composition around the upper torso of the Virgin, not around her belly, thus not signifying her miraculous pregnancy.²⁷⁴ Instead, such figuration underlines the intercessory role of the Virgin between God and mankind, specifically for the flock who gathered underneath her mantle for protection and salvation.²⁷⁵ From this perspective, this detail of the Galata icon resembles one of the most significant Byzantine Marian iconography, Hodegetria.²⁷⁶

²⁶⁸ "Mandorla," Glossary, The National Gallery, accessed February 9, 2024, <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/glossary/mandorla>; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 165-66.

²⁶⁹ Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 2*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1281-282.

²⁷⁰ Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282.

²⁷¹ Maguire, "Body, Clothing, Metaphor: The Virgin in Early Byzantine Art," 39-40.

²⁷² Nelson, and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai*, 153.

²⁷³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 74-8, 98, 100.

²⁷⁴ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 75, 98-100.

²⁷⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 105.

²⁷⁶ Nancy Patterson Sevcenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 2172-173.

Similar to Hodegetria iconography, in the Galata icon, the portrayal of the Christ Child is composed of him holding a scroll, symbolizing the Logos, on his left hand while he is sanctifying the viewer with the blessing gesture he performs with his right hand.²⁷⁷ Unlike the Virgin, the Christ Child is depicted with a halo around his head. The halo is elaborately ornamented with vegetal and floral motifs, expressing the craftsmanship of the revetment.

2.2.4 Remarks on the Gilded Parts of the Galata Icon

The gilded parts with coatings adorning details such as Christ's mandorla, the Virgin's veil and slippers, wings of angels, etc. are not coincidental.²⁷⁸ They are restricted to only a few figures, despite being visually appealing and harmonic details to the whole icon. The demarcation between the holy and the mortal is clearly emphasized to the beholder by highlighting the holy figures. Even though the icon represents an imaginative space between the heavenly and earthly realms, the holy ones can still not be acknowledged as the equals of members of the faithful congregation under the Virgin's mantle. Therefore, the Virgin, the Christ Child, and the angels are separated from others by drawing a 'golden' line that reflects their sacred identity.²⁷⁹ Moreover, as an additional consideration, golden coatings on these details impose a decorative attachment and function as fracturing the monochrome effect of the metal parts to create a 'less' complex, or hard to read, visuality. Altogether, the gilding applied to selected figures and its symbolism connotes the Byzantine artistic tradition, thus strengthening the Byzantine character of the Galata icon.

2.2.5 The Congregation under the Virgin's Mantle

A tightly gathered community features underneath the Virgin's mantle. The community, divided into two subgroups that are gender-bounded and hierarchically ordered, seeks protection and guidance from the Virgin by gathering around her and taking refuge underneath her mantle.²⁸⁰ Similar to many artworks one might come across in art history, the front line is occupied by figures that can be identified by their personal symbols. On the other hand, other 'less important' figures who could only find themselves a place in the back rows and who try to exist as independent beings yet blended in the crowd, assumed to be representing the congregation of the church of Saint Peter

²⁷⁷ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81-2; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 164-65.

²⁷⁸ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82.

²⁷⁹ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82.

²⁸⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

and Paul in Galata, Istanbul.²⁸¹ These figures have similar features, curly and elaborate hairstyles, and facial expressions which, similar to the Virgin Mary, are relatively subtle yet reveal some sentiment, gratitude, and hope. The striking similarities between the congregation members suggest they are represented as generic types.²⁸² The portrayal of the community as generic figures is intentional since this icon does not represent a fixed point in time; it provides continuity and embraces every member of the Dominican congregation of the church (old and young, men and women, ordinary and saintly), both alive and dead.

2.2.5.1 Hairstyle of the Congregation Members

Male figures' hairstyles are not only elaborate and curly, but they also seem highly unnatural, with stylized curls that suggest they are somewhat reminiscent of the aristocratic wigs of the 17th century. This is evident in the case of some of the male figures in the Galata icon. Periwigs, or wigs for short, also known as peruke, represent a cultural and stylistic trend that was most popular between the 17th and 19th centuries.²⁸³ In truth, periwigs have been used since the 16th century to conceal specific body flaws, such as hair loss, which is one of the symptoms of syphilis, a sexually transmitted disease that affected a large proportion of the world's population.²⁸⁴ The transformation of the usage of perukes from concealing deficiencies to representing wealth and signifying the members of the elite class took place in the 17th century, to be exact, when King Louis XIV (also known as the *Sun King*) started to wear elaborate periwigs to hide his baldness.²⁸⁵ Parallel to his French cousin, King Charles II of England started to wear periwigs too, this time to prevail the display of his prematurely greyed hair in public.²⁸⁶ Even though the royal cousins'

²⁸¹ The lesser importance of figures in the back, in comparison to the figures aligned on the front row, is further signified by the limited view of their depictions, as well as their diminutive sizes, all corresponding to the features of antique hieratic scale that were executed nearly in every artwork with the Virgin of Mercy theme. Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

²⁸² Jean Sorabella, "Portraiture in Renaissance and Baroque Europe," Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified August 2007, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/port/hd_port.htm.

²⁸³ "Peruke," Fashion & Personal Adornment, Britannica, last modified September 3, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/peruke>.

²⁸⁴ Murielle Schlup, "The Power and the Pomp of the Wig," Swiss National Museum, last modified March 20, 2023, <https://blog.nationalmuseum.ch/en/2023/02/the-power-and-pomp-of-the-wig/>; M. Tampa, I. Sarbu, C. Matei, V. Benea, S.R. Georgescu, "Brief History of Syphilis," *Journal of Medicine and Life* 7 (1), (March 2014): Syphilis in Europe (article published online), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3956094/#:~:text=Around%203000%20BC%20the%20sexually,the%20rest%20of%20the%20world>.

²⁸⁵ Britannica, "Peruke."

²⁸⁶ Richard Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years* (London: Peter Owen Limited, 2001), 215.

primary aim was similar to 16th-century tendencies, the subjects of both kingdoms, especially the aristocrats, adopted periwigs as their new fashion and altered the usage of periwigs to distinguish their wealth and display their rank in the social hierarchy by commissioning flamboyant perukes that mimic the ones royals wore.²⁸⁷ From the royal class and elites, the tradition of perukes spread to the other levels of society, including some professional classes such as physicians and lawyers, and representation of one's social rank started to become readable by the peruke's style and height.²⁸⁸

The generic male figures of the Galata icon share the same hairstyle, seemingly short, with stylized curls that are visually indicated via bumpy, convex portions of the hair. Despite the identical hairstyle, some figures have shorter hair leaving the nape open, whereas others have longer hairs that fall to their shoulders. Even though the hair of each figure does not correspond to the fashion that one associates with the century, the existence of short hair can be considered as an element that sheds light on the reality of the lower class who could not afford wigs. In the context of the Galata icon, this display can be read as another element that provides an inclusive approach in terms of representing the flocks of the Galata congregation without eliminating anyone.²⁸⁹ Via this generic approach, anyone from the community might substitute themselves as a figure depicted on the icon.

Moreover, similar to the depiction of the crown, the linearity of the icon also limits the perception of the hairs of all figures. Most figures are represented in a three-quarter position; additionally, placing figures in a big batch without providing enough space for each, obstructs the beholder's view of their hair. Perukes formed of curls and relatively short hair (compared to the periwigs worn by kings and aristocrats whose perukes fall over to their chests) generally end at the nape and might be divided into three tails bonded with ribbons around the neck.²⁹⁰ In the group on the Virgin's right-hand side, the male figure touching the Virgin's garment, which is the figure on

²⁸⁷ "Peruke Makers of the 18th Century," People & Genealogy, Limerick's Life, last modified December 11, 2012, <https://limerickslife.com/peruke-makers/>.

²⁸⁸ Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 223.

²⁸⁹ Even though there were wigs of varied qualities and prices, still, wigs were unreachable for a significant portion of society who belonged to the lower stratum of the social hierarchy. Furthermore, in Europe, to meet the increasing demand for wigs, wigmakers purchased natural hair from women with poor economic backgrounds, who sold their long hair to provide side income to their families. Therefore, it was impossible for the lower-class families to wear wigs when they needed to sell their hair to survive the harsh conditions of the life they were living in. Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 223; Schlup, "The Power and the Pomp of the Wig," Swiss National Museum.

²⁹⁰ "Hair: The Styling of Society," Online Exhibitions, Chertsey Museum, accessed June 1, 2023, <https://chertseymuseum.org/hair>; Limerick's Life, "Peruke Makers of the 18th Century.," Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 223.

the second row placed behind the saint and depicted in profile provides an insight into this kind of a peruke. Since he is depicted in profile, the neck of the figure is more visible than others, and one tail of hair is visible around his ear. The proximity of this figure to the Virgin also suggests that he is most probably an important person among the congregation, might be someone among the flock who contributed most to the revetment's cost, and by depicting him in profile, his peruke becomes more elaborately visible to the beholder and distinguishes him from the rest of the group. Because his peruke, too, gives a different sensation in addition to other elements mentioned above, this portrayal could be seen as an envisioned indicator of that figure's higher social standing.²⁹¹

Despite some exceptions, most figures with peruke do not have beards in the Galata icon. The lack of beards is related to the popularity of periwigs in the 17th century. People gradually abandoned using beards as periwigs became popular and made in a higher, more flamboyant style.²⁹² As visible in the icon, figures with beards contrast with other figures concerning their hair. The bearded figures are depicted with shorter hair (most probably their own hair but not peruke) and have more prominent foreheads than the contrasting group. Furthermore, the group of interest (figures with beards) differentiates from the others via the resemblances of the group members to the saint and the pope depicted in the front line. Correlatively, these figures can be comprehended as clergy members, while the others (without beards) can be considered regulars of the church and the Catholic congregation of the Galata. This hypothesis can be further supported by the fact that in the 17th century, most European countries banned the clergy from



Figure 2.23: William Hogarth, *The Five Orders of Periwigs*, 1761, print, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States of America (Accession Number: 32.35(116))

²⁹¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

²⁹² Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 220.



Figure 2.24: Georges Jacques Gatine, Duchess of Fontange, 1827, print, from the costume book *Galerie française de femmes célèbres*.

wearing wigs and even proposed that clergy members with wigs were immoral and inappropriate for the church's regulations.²⁹³ As shown in William Hogarth's engraving 'The Five Orders of Periwigs' (1761), prohibition progressively faded throughout the 18th century, and the clergy began to wear wigs, even if they remained relatively basic in comparison to other classes of society.²⁹⁴

Regarding the topic of natural hair, some people from higher social strata, similar to the clergy and lower class, prefer to preserve their natural hair rather than wear wigs.²⁹⁵ Even while wearing wigs as a social statement was well established in society by the end of the century, the 17th century was a transitional period in this regard, and people had diverse attitudes on wearing wigs. Although most of the time a connotation between short hair and natural hair can be drawn directly, the issue of long hair is more complex because the

appearance of wigs mimics the real ones, creating constraints on differentiating wigs and natural hair by analyzing visual evidence from the century.²⁹⁶ Same thing is applicable for the Galata icon, and considering the stylized hairs, making a distinction between natural hair and wigs on the icon

²⁹³ Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 215-216.

²⁹⁴ In his satirical work, William Hogarth (1697-1764), a British engraver and painter, classified and ranked the wigs worn in the 18th century in a similar manner to Andrea Palladio's analysis of classical architecture. In his work *Quattro libri dell'architettura* (Four Books of Architecture), Palladio formulated an ideal hierarchy among classical architecture's orders: Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite. According to Palladio's theoretical approach, this ranking indicates the level of sophistication and complexity, assigning the lowest value to Tuscan and the highest value to the Composite order. By mimicking Palladio's analysis, William Hogarth formulates his order of periwigs by ranking them according to the style and social class the 'order' is favored by. Hogarth's satirical ranking and his orders of periwigs are as follows: 1. Episcopal (worn by the clergy), 2. Old Peerian or Aldermanic (worn by council officials and lords), 3. Lexonic (worn by the lawyers), 4. Composite or Half Natural, 5. Queerinthian or Queue de Reynard. Similar to Palladio's ranking, in Hogarth's ranking, the level of sophistication and ornamentation increases from Episcopal to Queerinthian. David Hemsoll, "Palladio's Architectural Orders: From Practice to Theory," *Architectural History* 58 (2015): 1; William Hogarth, *Anecdotes of William Hogarth, Written by Himself* (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 25, Parliament Street, 1833): 256-7.

²⁹⁵ Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 238-246.

²⁹⁶ Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 238-246.



Figure 2.25: Depiction of Queen Mary II of England with the *fontange*. John Smith (after Jan van der Vaart), *Queen Mary*, 1690, mezzotint on laid paper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, United States of America.

became even more difficult. Apart from the possible donor, clergyman, and the figure next to the pope, with the crown and the specter underneath attributed as a king, whose long hair resembles the French aristocracy, so most likely wearing a wig, the hairs of figures cannot be defined as real or fictive.

Unlike male figures, depictions of the females, grouped on the Virgin's left-hand side, do not provide various hairstyles; all females, except the saint on the front line, share the same. Similar to men, females of the Galata icon have stylized curls that appear as bumpy, convex piles. However, regarding the historical perspective of periwigs, in the 17th century, the majority of female perukes were quite flamboyant and embellished, meaning that the society of the century did not favor a more uncomplicated peruke, such as the hairstyle represented in the Galata icon.²⁹⁷ As a result, a simple connotation of supporting the exhibition of female hairs as perukes would be incorrect; instead, the high possibility of presenting natural hair in a simple style should be examined. When reviewing the issue of natural hair, an emphasis on the trendy coiffures of the century should be given.²⁹⁸ In terms of hair, the silhouette of the century was defined as bonding a small bun in the back and framing the face with short curls while placing slightly longer ringlets and loops to the front.²⁹⁹ This coiffure was a trend, throughout the 17th century, and favored by women who belonged to different layers of society, similar to the case with perukes as the subjects of kings Charles II and Louis XIV mimicked the hairstyles applied on perukes of their kings.³⁰⁰ As seen in the print published in Pierre de La Mésangère's French costume book *Galerie Française de femmes célèbres*

²⁹⁷ Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 225-7, 252-3, 258-9.

²⁹⁸ Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 225-7, 252-3, 258-9.

²⁹⁹ Chertsey Museum, "Hair: The Styling of Society."; Nicole Kipar, "The Whole Look, Accessories: Hairstyles Women," The 1660s, Restoration Costume Comes to Life, accessed by July 1, 2023, http://www.kipar.org/archive/costume-workshop/part4_11hair-women.html; Justine De Young, "1650-1659," 17th century, decade overview, Fashion History Timeline, last modified August 18, 2020, <https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/1650-1659/>; Justine De Young, "1660-1669," 17th century, decade overview, Fashion History Timeline, last modified August 18, 2020, <https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/1660-1669/>.

³⁰⁰ De Young, "1650-1659."; De Young, "1660-1669."

par leurs talens, leur rang ou leur beaute, depicting Marie Angélique de Scorailles (1661-1681), better known as the Duchess of Fontange, who was Louis XIV's mistress and the 'founder' of one of the signature peruke styles of the century, the *fontange*, the duchess is represented with her natural hair and her coiffure is as depicted as indicated above; a portion of her hair is tied as a bun in the back of the head, curls in different size frames her face while more prolonged ringlets fall over her shoulders.³⁰¹ Some women of the century favored flattening the top of the hair, and the popularity of this particular usage was initiated by Henrietta Maria of France (1609-1669), queen consort of England and the sister of Louis XII. In her portrait by Anthony Van Dyck, Henrietta Maria is depicted with a flattened top, whereas other parts of her hair resemble the signature style of the time.³⁰² This coiffure was not only specified to France but spread throughout Europe. Important female figures of the time from different locations, including Venice, chose to wear this hairstyle and be part of the popular trend.³⁰³ Furthermore, some chose to shorten their hair but abided by the use of curls and loops, as visible in the portrait of Elena Lucrezia Cornaro



Figure 2.26: Anthony van Dyck, *Queen Henrietta Maria*, 1636, oil on canvas, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States of America (Accession Number: 2019.141.10)

³⁰¹ Emerged as a spontaneous hairstyle made by the Duchess of Fontange, whose hair was scattered during a hunting party of Louis XIV, and she put them together in a pre-fontange style that was admired by the king and started to use by every woman in his court; the basic outline of this trendy hairstyle of the 17th century was a batch of numerous curls tied together with ribbons and placed on top of the forehead. This hairstyle was often ornamented with elaborate lace framing the set of curls, mostly attached to a linen cap worn on the back of the head to stabilize the structure. In time, women tended to wear their fontange more elongated, and false hair was added to make the hair structure even higher. Thus, the fontange progressively turned into a signature peruke style as women of the century tended to wear it as a form peruke rather than applying this complicated style on their natural hair daily. Corson, *Fashions in Hair The First Five Thousand Years*, 228; "Fontange," 17th Century, Fashion History Timeline, last modified August 18, 2020, <https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/fontange/>; Pierre de La Mésangère, *Galerie Française de femmes célèbres par leurs talens, leur rang ou leur beaute*, Paris: Chez L'Éditeur, Boulevard Montmartre, No. 1., 1827. "Galerie Française de femmes célèbres par leurs talens, leur rang ou leur beaute / portraits en pied, dessinés par M. Lanté, la plupart d'après des originaux inédits; gravés par M. Gatine et coloriés; avec des notices biographiques et des remarques sur les habillemens." Royal Academy of Arts, accessed June 28, 2023, <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/book/galerie-franc-aise-de-femmes-ce-le-bres-par-leurs-talens-leur-rang-ou-leur->, "M.elle de Fontanges," Costume Print, British Museum, accessed June 28, 2023, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1871-1209-2584.

³⁰² Chertsey Museum, "Hair: The Styling of Society."

³⁰³ De Young, "1660-1669," Fashion History Timeline; "Elena Cornaro," Religious Personages & Scholars, Britannica, last modified June 1, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Elena-Cornaro>.

Piscopia (1646-1684), a Venetian philosopher and the first woman to receive a Doctor of Philosophy degree.³⁰⁴ In one of the engravings, the 17th-century engraver Cassini Giovanni Francesco depicted Elena Cornaro with her short but quite curly hair.³⁰⁵ In another portrait found in the Italian Women Writers section of the University of Chicago Library, Elena Cornaro is depicted in three-quarter composition in which pearls tie up the bun of her hair and leaving untied parts flowing down in curls.³⁰⁶ Throughout the 17th century, this unique coiffure with variations remained popular and displayed throughout Europe even though some figures chose to use this style with some alterations.³⁰⁷

Like the males, most females in the Galata icon are represented in three-quarter position and grouped as a batch, implying that view of the females is as limited as perception of the males; hence, the backs of their heads are not visible. Nonetheless, the form of the ringlets only partially corresponds to trendy European coiffure because ringlets represented on the Galata icon seem to form all of the hair rather than just indicating the residuary parts from the bun.³⁰⁸ The most significant similarity that can be drawn is the curls that outline both hairstyles. Moreover, females of the Galata icon lack the hair locks framing the upper part of the face, and their foreheads are very prominently depicted, compared to the European ladies with the hairstyle of interest. It is important to underline that the European coiffure of interest required more effort and attention than it seems to make; most of the time, attendants would enhance their hair skills and make the hair of their ladies daily.³⁰⁹ In light of this and given the possible intention of embracing every member of the congregation, the relatively simpler hairstyle of females may represent the tendency of not eliminating anyone of the flock based on their social rank, and representing most figures generically aids the targeted beholders, who are initially members of the congregation, in feeling as a member of the community and not alienated from the others.

³⁰⁴ Britannica, "Elena Cornaro."

³⁰⁵ "Cassini John Francis, Ritratto della Poetessa Elena Lucrezia Cornaro Piscopia," Stampe, Istituto Centrale per La Grafica, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.calcografica.it/stampe/inventario.php?id=S-FC73021>.

³⁰⁶ "Cornaro Piscopia, Elena Lucrezia (1646-1684)," Italian Women Artists, University of Chicago Library, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/efts/IWW/Portraits/HTML/A0236.html>.

³⁰⁷ Chertsey Museum, "Hair: The Styling of Society."

³⁰⁸ Chertsey Museum, "Hair: The Styling of Society."

³⁰⁹ Corson, *Fashions in Hair, The First Five Thousand Years*, 228.



Figure 2.27: Cassioni John Francis, *Ritratto della Poetessa Elena Lucrezia Cornaro Piscopia*, Stampe, Istituto Centrale per La Grafica, Rome, Italy.



Figure 2.28: Cornaro Piscopia, Elena Lucrezia. From Maria Bandini Buti's *Enciclopedia Biografica e Bibliografica Italiana: Poetesse e Scrittrici* (1941), University of Chicago Library.

2.2.5.2 Clothing of the Congregation Members

Regarding the hairstyles, representations of male and female figures of the icon contain many elements that resemble European fashion of the time. However, the fact that the icon has never left Constantinople since the 13-14th century and the revetment applied on the icon in 1698 was made by an unknown Constantinopolitan workshop suggests that the represented crowd on the icon must be Galata-Pera based non-Muslims, devoted Christians who lived and settled their lives in the Ottoman Empire, rather than religious flocks from Europe.³¹⁰ Throughout the centuries, numerous non-Muslims, not just Christians but also Jewish communities, lived in the lands of the Ottoman Empire by obeying the rules and regulations issued by the officials. Compared to European kingdoms, especially the case of Sephardic Jews who found themselves a refugee in the Ottoman Empire when they were cast out from Spain with the issue of the Alhambra Decree by King Ferdinand II of Aragon and his wife Queen Isabella I of Castille, Ottomans were more

³¹⁰ Paolo Girardelli, "Between Rome and Istanbul: Architecture and Material Culture of a Franciscan Convent in the Ottoman Capital," in *Mediterranean Studies* 19 (2010): 162-3.

tolerant and indiscriminate up to some level to their non-Muslim subjects.³¹¹ Furthermore, with the Istimalet policy, Ottomans did not force the non-Muslims of the conquered lands to convert to Islam but let habitants live in their native lands and practice their cultural and religious activities as long as they followed the Ottoman regulations.³¹² As a multi-ethnic empire, Ottomans used headdresses and garments as discriminative tools to differentiate Muslims and non-Muslims and identify subjects according to their ethnicity and religion.³¹³ While Ottomans showed lenience to non-Muslims, as a Muslim empire and the house of caliphates (a religious title attributed to Ottoman sultans starting with the reign of Yavuz Sultan Selim (1470-1520)), Muslim subjects received higher regard and significance compared to minorities of the empire.³¹⁴ Social differences that depended on the religion and ethnicity of subjects were represented in different layers via different regulations for each group, and the clothing arrangements were a reliable way to express those differences.³¹⁵ Restrictions on the color and material of garments outlined the clothing regulations applied to the non-Muslim population, especially for the ones who lived in Constantinople since it is the main seat of the administration and religion due to the caliphate status of sultans (since the 15th century).³¹⁶ For example, because of its indicated link with Islamic customs, the color green was solely used by Muslims coming from the blood of the prophet.³¹⁷ Regulations of the 16th century indicated specific color codes for each ethnic and religious group, allowing yellow color (especially on shoes) for Muslims and mandating red to Armenians, black (shoes and headgear) to Christians, mainly Greeks, and blue garments to Jews. As time progressed, alterations to color codes, such as mandating both Jews and Christians to wear blue- and purple-colored clothes, as stated by a firman issued in 1750, took place.³¹⁸ Furthermore, non-Muslims were not allowed use expensive materials on their garments but interestingly, apart from these

³¹¹ Francois Boyer, Matthew Warshawsky, Ethan Marcus, "The History of Antisemitism: The Alhambra Decree," Virtual Seminar on Zoom, recorded March 28, 2023, Museum of Jewish Heritage, <https://mjhny.org/events/the-history-of-antisemitism-the-alhambra-decree/>.

³¹² Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlılar, Fütihat, İmparatorluk, Avrupa ile İlişkiler* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2022), 94-5.

³¹³ Betül İşpirli Argıt, "Clothing Habits, Regulations and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Academic Studies* 6, no:24 (2005): 81.

³¹⁴ Madeline C. Zilfi, "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650– 1830," in *The Right to Dress*, ed. Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 394.

³¹⁵ Argıt, "Clothing Habits, Regulations and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire," 81.

³¹⁶ Zilfi, "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650– 1830," 394.

³¹⁷ Zilfi, "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650– 1830," 393.

³¹⁸ Argıt, "Clothing Habits, Regulations and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire," 81-83.

differences the clothing style of both groups were very similar.³¹⁹ Those regulations aimed to signify the superiority of Muslims over minorities living in the Ottoman lands.

Due to the monochromatic nature of the Galata icon, one cannot observe any depiction with color (except the gilded portions). Therefore, it is impossible to comment on the sect or the faith of the represented crowd by merely relying on the color regulations. Nevertheless, this does not create a problem in identifying the religious identity of the flock members because the Galata icon's representation of the faithful Catholic Christians is already established by the artwork's type, medium, iconography, location, and history. Considering the possibility of observing the Ottoman aspects on the icon, one can look into the headgear represented since the Ottoman Empire's regulations on non-Muslim's communities forced them to wear different headgear than the others.³²⁰ But more importantly, notwithstanding one's religion, all female subjects of the empire had to cover themselves from the head to the toe when they were in public places. In addition to their headwear, females were obliged to use veils to hide their faces; those were the expectations from Ottoman women of all religions and ethnicities.³²¹ Considering the depiction of female members of the Galata icon, one cannot observe any headwear or veil, with only the exception of Saint Catherine of Siena on the front line, and if the Galata icon fully expressed the reality of its location's regulations, this representation would not be accepted. Thus, considering the portrayal of male figures with perukes and unveiled females showing their natural hairs, the Galata congregation seems to be represented in a European manner, as Catholic individuals living in Europe, rather than their reality of being levants in the Ottoman Empire.³²²

Last but not least, another significant piece of information that is transferred to the beholder via the hairstyle of figures is their vocative identity. Considering the depiction of Saint Catherine of Siena, an influential Dominican Nun of the 14th century, the religious attire covering the figure's whole body underlines her vocation as a nun, and her attributes reveal her identity.³²³ Other female figures are represented in secular vestments, meaning they are not nuns nor saints but women from all layers of society who had a strong faith in their religion and, thus, earned a

³¹⁹ Argit, "Clothing Habits, Regulations and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire," 81-2; Zilfi, 394.

³²⁰ Zilfi, "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650– 1830," 394-5.

³²¹ Zilfi, "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650– 1830," 399-402.

³²² Zilfi, "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650– 1830," 399-402.

³²³ Marilyn Dunn, *Invisibilia Per Visibilia: Roman Nuns, Art Patronage, and the Construction of Identity*, in *Wives, Widows, Mistresses, and Nuns in Early Modern Italy, Making the Invisible Visible through Art and Patronage*, ed. Katherine A. McIver (Leiden: Routledge, 2012): 196.

place on the icon as generic figures representing women alike from different places and time. A similar implication might be offered for the male figures; those with perukes represent a secular identity because, in the 17th century, religious members were forbidden from wearing perukes.³²⁴ Thus, in terms of hairstyles, figures of the Galata icon resemble figures living in the European counterpart rather than resembling their expected depictions as non-Muslims living in Galata.³²⁵

2.2.5.3 Examining Figures in Detail

In this representation, the female congregation members are collected together under the mantle on the Virgin's left side, contrasting with the male congregation members, who find a spot for themselves beneath the mantle on the Virgin's right side.³²⁶ There is one thing in common with all the figures that is independent of their rank: their size. This means that there is no distinction made between the revered ones in the front row and the less significant ones hiding in the back. The most significant historical characters are arranged in the front row, adhering to the canonical hieratic scale, and all figures beneath the mantle are half the size of the Virgin Mary. On the other hand, the generic figures of the congregation are positioned near the back as they do not attain significance like the figures of the front row.³²⁷ The alteration of the sizes is a gesture of respect; since the Virgin is undefiled and immaculate, her human nature cannot be ranked as the nature of the mortals, even including the nature of the saints depicted in the front row. In both realms, earthly and divine, the Virgin Mary is one of the worthiest souls and unreachable in that respect. Moreover, the diminutive size issue can be considered as a characteristic feature of the Misericordia typology as it differentiates the divine from the mortal, i.e., the Virgin from the community underneath her mantle.³²⁸ Furthermore, all figures seem to be depicted as bending their knees towards the Virgin, visible in Saint Dominic's representation, who stands next to the Virgin on the right side, which his kneeled knee, with the detail of his barefoot signifying a modest lifestyle, is displayed.³²⁹

Unlike the Virgin Mary, who is depicted in a frontal composition, all the other figures have three-quarter depictions since they are turned towards to the Virgin to pay their respects and pray

³²⁴ William Gibson, "Pious Decorum: Clerical Wigs in the Eighteenth-Century Church of England," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 56, no.2 (June 1996): 145-6, 158.

³²⁵ Zilfi, "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650– 1830," 399-402.

³²⁶ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83.

³²⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

³²⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

³²⁹ Kurt Moritz, and Arthur Goldammer, "Religious Symbolism and Iconography," *Philosophy & Religion*, Britannica, last modified November 12, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/religious-symbolism>.



Figure 2.29:
Detail of the
Galata icon. The
Male Donor?

for salvation.³³⁰ The frontality of the Virgin is another common feature of the iconography represented on the Galata icon. Through such formulation, the roles attained by the Virgin Mary, protecting humanity under her mantle and granting them eternal salvation, are emphasized.³³¹

Furthermore, the existence of two figures who are different than the rest of the group, not in terms of style but in terms of how they ‘act’ adds to the complexity of the Galata icon. The two individuals closest to the Virgin Mary in the second row, in both groups, appear to be touching her garment, posing a perplexing contradiction. Despite finding a spot right behind them and not being among the "venerated ones," they can touch the Virgin's garment while the venerated figures cannot. Stylistically, the woman seems to be blending with her group; on the other hand, the divergent figure on the Virgin's right-hand side, the figure with an apparent wig compared to the rest (except the royal figure in front), asserts himself from the rest of the group via his appearance and his depiction in profile. An analytical approach to the issue of these particularly unique figures underlines the value and prestige given to these individuals. The lack of attributive symbols emphasizes the high possibility that these figures are not historically nor culturally well-known thus, cannot be identified via symbolism.³³² By eliminating their identity as attributable characters, the only consideration on the role of these figures becomes accepting them as prominent donors who aided the application of the revetment by donating a substantial amount of money, compared to the other members of the flock.³³³

Identifying these figures as donors is acceptable from art historical point of view, from both Western and Byzantine perspectives, since artworks displaying their donors were apparent in both cultural milieus.³³⁴ For instance, as Rico Frances significantly stressed in his book *Donor*

³³⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 21.

³³¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 21.

³³² Britannica, "Religious Symbolism and Iconography."

³³³ Gordon Campbell, "Donor Portrait," *The Oxford Dictionary of Renaissance*, Oxford Renaissance, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780198601753.001.0001/acref-9780198601753-e-1148>.

³³⁴ Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Donors in the Frames of Icons: Living in the Borders of Byzantine Art," *Gesta* 45, no.2 (2006): 189; Sorabella, "Portraiture in Renaissance and Baroque Europe," Heilbrunn Timeline Of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Portraits in Byzantine Art, The Vicissitudes of Contact between Human and Divine, the representation of the donor figures featured in Byzantine visual art in the highest regard. Such representations are mainly composed of two iconographies, which Frances differentiated as the donor and contact portraits.³³⁵ He claims that donor portraits mainly highlight the philanthropic and devoted acts of the donor towards God, and they are portrayed as offering the models of their donations, such as in the mosaic on the southwest vestibule of Hagia Sophia, which depicts Emperor Justinian and Emperor Constantine offering a small-scale model of Hagia Sophia and Constantinople, respectively the Virgin and the Child.³³⁶ Even though a similar representation is not underlined on the Galata icon, it does not necessarily indicate that donors are not included in the Galata composition. Returning to Rico Frances' account, in addition to the donor portraits, he further emphasized a notion that he referred to as contact portraits, explaining that such portraiture does not exhibit donors bestowing models to the holy mother and the child; instead, they are depicted as either in reverence or supplicating to the Virgin and the Child.³³⁷ While the reverence is suggested by the gestures of the figures beneath the Virgin's mantle—most notably those of St. Dominic and St. Catherine of Siena—who turned to face the Virgin and bowed slightly in respect—no such conscious act of supplication is emphasized in the context of the Galata icon.³³⁸ Though their restricted representation prevents pillaged figures in the background from offering a similar show, one may reasonably assume they are exhibiting similar displays of respect.



Figure 2.30:
Detail of the
Galata icon. The
Female Donor?

³³⁵ Rico Frances, *Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art, The Vicissitudes of Contact between Human and Divine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 19-21, 22.

³³⁶ Frances, *Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art*, 19-22, 223-24; Carole Raddato, "Mosaic with the Virgin Mary, Constantine and Justinian, Hagia Sophia," World History Encyclopedia, accessed February 8, 2024, <https://www.worldhistory.org/image/8259/mosaic-with-the-virgin-mary-constantine-and-justin/>.

³³⁷ Frances, *Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art*, 18, 24-7, 224-25.

³³⁸ The act of supplication in Byzantine art was generally signaled to the beholder by displaying donors in proskynesis, like in the mosaic of emperor Leo VI (9th century) in Hagia Sophia. Furthermore, it is significant to emphasize that the differentiation between both typologies, donor and contact portraits, was not always clear; in some artworks, the line diverting them gets blurred, and both types were blended into one another, like in the Chora mosaic representing Theodore Metochites as displaying the model of the Chora Church to Christ (14th century). Kalopissi-Verti, "Patronage and Artistic Production in Byzantium during the Palaiologan Period," 79; Evan Freeman, "Picturing salvation — Chora's brilliant Byzantine mosaics and frescoes," Late Byzantine, Byzantine, Medieval Europe + Byzantium, Smart History, last modified April 28, 2021, <https://smarthistory.org/picturing-salvation/>.

As previously underlined, depicting donors in artworks was widespread in the Western sphere, like in Byzantium.³³⁹ Furthermore, artworks with similar iconography to the Galata icon represented their donors under the Virgin's mantle, underlying their devotion and pleading for protection by commissioning such artworks.³⁴⁰ Moreover, as dictated in contracts between artists and patrons, the latter were influential on the identity of figures depicted, especially notable ones like saints and royalties, through which they manifest their own identity and groups (family, confraternity, etc.) they belonged to.³⁴¹ In addition, by their specific depictions of the Galata icon, i.e., facing towards the Virgin, being in the closest proximity even if placed on the second row, and touching the Virgin's garment, their representation contrasts with the crowd in the background and highlights their importance.

When considered from these points of view, the possibility of comprehending these two perplexing figures on the icon as possible patrons or most significant beneficiaries who extensively contributed to the revetment application of the Galata icon. Unfortunately, there are no inscriptions on the revetment nor documents implying such regard and names of possible donors; therefore, the assumption regarding the identity of these figures remains as a hypothesis. Nevertheless, considering the particular interest of Venetians in the church and the icon and their role as patrons of the church for years, strengthen the possibility of identifying these two puzzling figures as a wealthy Venetian couple, who charitably paid a considerable sum of money for the revetment and therefore found themselves a spot in proximity to the Virgin on the icon.³⁴² This is only a supposition, but it makes sense to think of them as donors given the well-established practice of donor portraits in both cultures, in which contributors are shown honoring the holy figures and stressing their own importance by being close to the holy figure.

2.2.6 Identity of Figures

In contrast to the community and potential benefactors beneath the Virgin Mary's mantle, the identity of figures aligned on the front line is deductible by accompanying symbols. Based on

³³⁹ Sorabella, "Portraiture in Renaissance and Baroque Europe," The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

³⁴⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 131-33.

³⁴¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 95, 136; Charles Hope, "Altarpieces and the Requirements of Patrons," in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, ed. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 545; Dennis Romano, "Aspects of Patronage in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Venice," *Renaissance Quarterly* 46, no.4 (Winter 1993): 712.

³⁴² D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

an iconographical research, the Galata icon depicts St. Dominic, St. Catherine of Siena, Pope Pius V, and notable members of European royal houses who were involved in the Battle of Lepanto (1571).

2.2.6.1 Saint Dominic

The highly respected figures accompanying the front line emphasize the prominent Dominican identity of the Galata icon. Focusing on the row of the venerated ones, the most salient figures would be Saint Dominic and Saint Catherine of Sienna, notable saints of the Order of Preachers.³⁴³ Saint Dominic, carved on the Virgin's right-hand side in the closest proximity, attracts attention with his elaborated depiction that contains several identifiable iconographic elements. As told in the *Golden Legend*, a mid-13th century hagiography book compiled by Jacobus de Voragine, stories surrounding Saint Dominic's miraculous life started when he was unborn and characterized important attributions indicating his future sainthood. When expecting his infant, Saint Dominic's mother had a dream in which the child in her womb appeared as a little dog carrying a lighted torch in its mouth that set an 'enlightening' fire on the world after the labor.³⁴⁴ A similar detail on the Galata icon underneath Saint Dominic's figure, a dog carrying a torch, underlines the influential aspect of the story and provides the reason for this particular attribute.³⁴⁵ Furthermore, the star on Saint Dominic's forehead, rooted in his godmother's vision, also becomes an attribute on the icon.³⁴⁶ The torch and the star, elements that shine and provide a light (of hope) to humanity in times of darkness, indicate the important vocation appointed to Saint Dominic as one of the illuminators of the Christian society with his teachings.³⁴⁷ With the Dominican habit, tonsured head and the lily on his hand (a symbol both alluding to the chastity of

³⁴³ "Saint Dominic," History & Society, Britannica, last modified August 2, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Dominic>; "Saint Catherine of Siena," History & Society, Britannica, last modified January 17, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Catherine-of-Siena>.

³⁴⁴ Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, translated by William Granger Ryan (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012), 430-31.

³⁴⁵ Rosa Giorgi, *Saints in Art* (California: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003), 106-7.

³⁴⁶ According to the tradition, on the day of his baptism, Saint Dominic's godmother saw a star appearing and shining on his forehead. Her vision was interpreted as the light and wisdom Saint Dominic would bring to this world with his teachings. Like the dog with the torch, the star on the forehead became a vital symbol attributed to Saint Dominic. Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 115.

³⁴⁷ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 115; Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 106-7.

the Saint Dominic and symbolizes the purity of the Virgin), all details strongly emphasize the depiction of Saint Dominic in the Galata icon.³⁴⁸

2.2.6.2 Saint Catherine of Siena

On the other side, placed symmetrically with Saint Dominic, Saint Catherina of Siena stands out in a three-quarter position while her face is depicted in profile. Similar to Saint Dominic, Saint Catherine of Siena comes to the forefront among the female members of the Galata congregation.³⁴⁹ Highly revered and considered one of the most influential saints, being a tertiary member of the Dominican Order and an associate of the Sisters of Penitence of St. Dominic, Saint Catherine of Siena fit numerous accomplishments, visions, and miracles in her 33 years of life span (1347-1380).³⁵⁰ In the hagiographical work *Legenda Major* (c.1263), compiled by Raymond of Capua, the confessor of Saint Catherina, the vivid life of the saint is presented to the reader by providing details on her miraculous visions, including her mystical marriage with Christ.³⁵¹ One of the visions that characterized attributes favored in her depictions is about the Crown of Thorns and her stigmatic experience.³⁵² As the patron saint of ill, Saint Catherine spent considerable time as a companion of the sick, praying and caring for them physically by dressing their wound. When one of her patients, under the influence of the Satan, accused her with not being worthy enough as a bride of Christ (i.e., being corrupted and not a virgin anymore); Christ appeared to Saint Catherine to ease her pain. Showing her two crowns, one decorated with precious gems and the other similar to his Crown of Thorns, Christ offered her either earthly merits or suffering, contempt, and the promise of being on her side throughout her humane life, attributing to each crown in particular, Saint Catherine chose the crown of thorns and mandated to wear it for the rest of her life.³⁵³ Moreover, in his hagiographical work, Saint Raymond of Capua indicated that she received stigmata, being imprinted with the wounds of Christ, during her occupation at Pisa in the year 1375.³⁵⁴ These two miraculous occasions marked her iconography in art and became integral

³⁴⁸ Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 106-10; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 33-4.

³⁴⁹ Britannica, "Saint Catherine of Siena."

³⁵⁰ Britannica, "Saint Catherine of Siena."

³⁵¹ Karen Scott, "St. Catherine of Siena, 'Apostola'," *Church History* 61, no.1 (March 1992): 34-6.

³⁵² Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 80.

³⁵³ The Blessed Raymond of Capua, *The Life of Saint Catherine of Siena*, translated by 'a member of the Order of the Sacred Heart' (Dublin: James Duffy And Co., Limited, 1901?), 85-90.

³⁵⁴ Raymond of Capua, *The Life of Saint Catherine of Siena*, 413; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 111-12.

symbols of her representations.³⁵⁵ Similarly, in the Galata icon, Saint Catherine Siena is represented with the crown of thorns and stigmata on her hands, together with a Dominican habit, analogous to Saint Dominic on the other side.³⁵⁶ A book with an elaborate cover is depicted underneath her figure. Rather than being the Bible, this book is most probably the *Dialogo*, also known as the *Trattato della Divina Provvidenza* or *Libro della Divina Dottrina*, compiled by the visions of Saint Catherine that are dictated during her ecstatic experiences.³⁵⁷ Along with these attributes, the lily on her hand signifies not just her but also the purity of the Virgin Mary.³⁵⁸ In addition, the other lily carried by Saint Dominic strengthens this emphasis on the Virgin simultaneously with the Dominican identity of the icon.³⁵⁹

2.2.6.3 Pope Pius V

Returning to the other side, the figure next to Saint Dominic attracts attention with his different garments and headgear. Like the Virgin Mary, this figure is depicted in two-fold clothes, meaning a simplified garment is visible underneath his ornamented pelerine. The ornaments on the pelerine resemble the leaves of the *Acanthus mollis*, a renowned decorative nature-based element found in the Corinthian columns.³⁶⁰ On his head, the figure has either a *zucchetto* or a *camauro*, both referring to papal caps worn in summer and winter. Furthermore, the crown depicted underneath is a papal tiara, worn only by popes throughout centuries.^{361 362 363} Concerning these, it is possible to comment on the figure's identity as a pope. The two essential accounts regarding the Galata icon, written by Chiara Bordino and Raffaella Ziadé, tackle the issue and have a consensus on the figure's identity as Pope Pius V.³⁶⁴ For the Dominican congregations

³⁵⁵ Raymond of Capua, *The Life of Saint Catherine of Siena*, 427; Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 80; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 111-12.

³⁵⁶ Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 80; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 112.

³⁵⁷ Britannica, "Saint Catherine of Siena."; Scott, "St. Catherine of Siena, "Apostola"," 43, 45.

³⁵⁸ Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 80; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 33-4.

³⁵⁹ Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 106-10.

³⁶⁰ "Acanthus," Arts & Culture, Britannica, last modified October 30, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/art/acanthus-ornamental-motif>.

³⁶¹ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 160.

³⁶² The camauro has the same function as the zucchetto; the only difference between these two pieces of clothing is that camauro is worn during winter, mainly made out of velvet, whereas zucchetto has a lighter fabric and meant to be worn in a warmer season. "Zucchetto," Catholic Encyclopedia, New Advent, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15765b.htm>

³⁶³ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 160.

³⁶⁴ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 172; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83-4.

worldwide, Pope Pius V (1504-1572) has the utmost importance since he was the first Dominican friar elected as the pope. In his six years of the papal regime, he succeeded his occupation with multiple victorious, including his crusade campaign against the Turks that resulted in the naval victory of Lepanto, the launching of the papal bull on standardizing the use of rosary (according to the Dominican method), as well as initiating the feast of the rosary.³⁶⁵ These accomplishments propound connective points on his appearance in the Galata icon. Similar to Byzantine examples in which besieged cities were miraculously saved by the divine intervention of the Virgin Mary, the victory of Lepanto, too, was acknowledged as being granted by the Virgin Mary. The prayers and number of cycles on a rosary-linked ritual were established with the papal bull. By order of the pope, cleric members on the battlefield, together with other believers, performed the rosary ritual in the same method. This was apprehended as a pleasing rite towards the heavens, resulting in the Virgin's aid in the victory. Afterward, Pope Pius V established the month and the feast of the rosary in October to strengthen the ritual and constantly remind its outcomes.³⁶⁶ His depiction next to St. Dominic has a profuse meaning since Saint Dominic received the rosary from the Virgin Mary in the first place.³⁶⁷ Moreover, the repetitive motif of rose bushes on the icon also underlines the issue of the rosary.³⁶⁸ Altogether, these representations accommodate in harmony and signify the essentiality of the theme Virgin of Rosary and her divine contributions to the protection of the Christian community as she gathers believers, including prominent members like the pope, underneath her mantle.

2.2.6.4 Royalty on the Front Row

Respecting the details of their representations and especially taking into account the crowns beneath as attributes, the other figures in the front row can be identified as members of royal families, most likely belonging to the European ruling houses that have members in the Dominican congregations. The figure that is next to Pope Pius V and further than the Virgin on her right-hand side has an additional attribute; not visible since it is blended with the continuous motifs, vegetal

³⁶⁵ "Saint Pius V," History & Society, Britannica, last modified January 30, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Pius-V#ref5754>; "St. Pius V and Feast of the Holy Rosary," Society of Saint Pius X, accessed February 7, 2024, <https://sspx.au/en/st-pius-v-and-feast-holy-rosary-34962>.

³⁶⁶ Society of Saint Pius X, "St. Pius V and Feast of the Holy Rosary.," "Battle of Lepanto," History & Society, Britannica, last modified January 18, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Lepanto>.

³⁶⁷ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 96.

³⁶⁸ St. Louis-Marie de Montfort, "St. Dominic Receives the Rosary," excerpted from Secret of the Rosary, Dominican Friars Association, accessed February 7, 2024, <https://dominicanfriars.org/st-dominic-receiving-rosary/>.

ornaments, and possibly rose bushes in the background that fills empty spaces on the icon; is a royal staff with four folds separated with cylindrical ornaments. Another additional feature of this figure is the damask-like collar around his neck, probably made of silk while a similar collar is also visible in the left-hand side, on the figure next St. Catherine of Siena. Such features certainly denote the royal identity of the figure, and according to Chiara Bordino, that figure might be the representation of either Philip II (1527-1598), the King of Spain and Portugal, or John of Austria (1547-1578), commander of the Holy League in Lepanto, who were characterized as significant figures who participated in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571.³⁶⁹ Chiara Bordino stresses that figures on the front row should be historical figures involved in the Battle of Lepanto, correlatively to the portrayal of Pope Pius V, who unified Catholic states as a single source of power against the forthcoming Ottoman thread for the Mediterranean and relatedly the European kingdoms.³⁷⁰ The Ottoman navy was defeated in Lepanto and for Europeans, that triumph characterized their supremacy over the Ottomans as it was the first naval war that Europeans won over their overmighty Ottoman rivals.³⁷¹ Such assertions for the identity of these figures are compatible in the context of the Galata icon since the Battle of Lepanto resulted in the initiation of a concept subtly represented on the icon, which is the theme and the feast of the Madonna of Rosary, as previously underlined.³⁷² Chiara Bordino further identifies the figure represented next to Saint Catherine of Siena as the Anne of Austria (1601-1666).³⁷³

On the other hand, Raphaëlle Ziadé did not comment on the identity of the figure behind Pope Pius V; however, she proposed that the figure next to Saint Catherine of Siena, which Chiara Bordino interpreted as Anne of Austria, is presumably Saint Louis IX (1214-1270), the king of France who was later venerated as a saint.³⁷⁴ Raphaëlle Ziadé stresses the reason behind her identification as the proximity of the figure to Saint Catherine of Siena, who is depicted with the

³⁶⁹ Britannica, "Battle of Lepanto"; "Philip II," History & Society, Britannica, last modified September 9, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Philip-II-king-of-Spain-and-Portugal>; "Juan de Austria," History & Society, Britannica, last modified September 27, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Juan-de-Austria>; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-71.

³⁷⁰ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-72.

³⁷¹ Britannica, "The Battle of Lepanto."

³⁷² Society of Saint Pius X, "St. Pius V and Feast of the Holy Rosary"; Britannica, "The Battle of Lepanto."

³⁷³ "Anne of Austria," History & Society, Britannica, last modified January 16, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Anne-of-Austria>; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-72.

³⁷⁴ "Louis IX," History & Society, Britannica, last modified December 21, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Louis-IX>; Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 227-29; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83-4.

Crown of Thrones, an essential relic of Christianity that Saint Louis IX had bought from Baldwin II, the Latin emperor of Constantinople reigned after the Fourth Crusade.³⁷⁵ Furthermore, the existence of the ermine coat and the crown underneath certainly implies the royalty of the figure.³⁷⁶ In addition, Raphaëlle Ziadé further identifies the figure behind Saint Louis IX as Saint Louis of Toulouse (1274-1297), also known as Louis of Anjou, one of the grandchildren of Saint Louis IX.³⁷⁷ Even though the representation is unclear, he is depicted with a (Franciscan) episcopal habit and monastic robe.³⁷⁸ His barefoot representation and the crown underneath highlight the duality of his life, i.e., his abdication from the royal life and his choice to become a Franciscan monk, who was later appointed as the bishop of Toulouse.³⁷⁹

Both Chiara Bordino's and Raphaëlle Ziadé's assertions are compatible with the Galata icon as their identifications represent significant figures of the Western sphere. As previously emphasized on the donor issue and portraiture, unfortunately, it is impossible to understand whether these propositions are correct due to the lack of documentation explaining the actual identity of the figures on the front row. Even though both accounts are plausible, my concern is that in artworks with similar iconography, in addition to hieratic scaling, gender-based differentiation of the group is generally emphasized.³⁸⁰ In such representations, male figures are depicted on the Virgin's right-hand side, which is also entitled as the preferred side due to the notion that the right-hand side reflects a higher hierarchy regarding the Virgin's fondness. In contrast, female figures are grouped and find themselves a refugee on the left-hand side. This gender-based differentiation, which one can further comment on as a 'Haremlik-Selamlık' composition, was apparent in the course of art history as an outcome of patriarchy and relatedly the idea implying that women were inferior to men and even to misogyny.³⁸¹ Even though there are some examples of Misericordia themes with the inclusion of male and female figures in opposite groups, they can be categorized as exceptions rather than generic features.³⁸² In that

³⁷⁵ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83-4.

³⁷⁶ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83-4; Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 227-29.

³⁷⁷ "St Louis of Toulouse," British Museum, accessed February 9, 2024, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG154812>; Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 225-26.

³⁷⁸ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83-4.

³⁷⁹ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 83-4; Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 225-26.

³⁸⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104, 132, 135-37.

³⁸¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 132, 135-36.

³⁸² For instance, Enguerrand Charonton's panel painting the Virgin of Mercy (1452) represents a blended group under the Virgin's mantle. Even though males dominate the scene, on the Virgin's left-hand side, the portrayal of a queen

regard, Raphaëlle Ziadé's interpretation seems odd at first glance, and the facial features of these figures she identified as Saint Louis IX and Saint Louis of Toulouse differ from the male figures on the right-hand side, causing a perplexity. Nevertheless, the interpretation of Raphaëlle Ziadé is still possible, like Chiara Bordino's identification, because no documents or written accounts currently exist to aid beholders in correctly identifying.

2.2.7 *The Ornamented Background*

Like the portrayed figures, the background of the Galata icon was elaborately depicted. By resembling a woven textile, the background was composed of repetitive patterns extending along the height and width of the icon. Unlike patterns adorning the Virgin's mantle and slippers, the pattern embellishing the background is seemingly abstract, appearing as stylized vegetal scrolls. Concerning such features, the background image can be acknowledged as a woven textile fragment, which can be further proposed due to the coarse needlework appearance at the end of ornamentation, on the lowest part of the revetment. Adorning images of the Virgin Mary and the Child with textiles spreading along the background was a habitual artistic application in the Latin West, and such textiles were commonly referred to as clothes of honor.³⁸³ The utilization of cloth of honor for decorating backgrounds of such images were especially apparent in Italian panel paintings from the Late Medieval Ages and maintained its popularity throughout the Renaissance period. This specificity was related to the interest of Italian society in luxurious textiles, either locally produced or imported from the Eastern lands (including the lands of Byzantines and Saracens), as the latter highlights the ongoing tradition of silken commerce and diplomatic gift system between Byzantium and the Latin West for centuries, even though such tradition was weakened as an aftermath of the Fourth Crusade.³⁸⁴ Furthermore, even though the early Italian art forms were nourished by Byzantine artistic traditions, with the increasing interest in the aesthetics of antiquity, relatedly to naturalistic and proportional compositions, Italian artists started to

among males catches the eye of the beholder, distorting gender-based differentiations. "The Virgin of Mercy," Web Gallery of Art, accessed February 9, 2024, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/c/charonto/v_mercy.html.

³⁸³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104-5; "Cloths of honour," Glossary, The National Gallery, accessed February 24, 2024, <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/glossary/cloths-of-honour>; Lilian Zirpolo, "(De)Constructing the Madonna's Cloth of Honor Pieced Cloths in Late Medieval Italian Paintings, Their Origins, and Iconographic Significance," *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 47, no.2, (2021): 199, 223.

³⁸⁴ Cathleen S. Hoeniger, "Cloth of Gold and Silver: Simone Martini's Techniques for Representing Luxury Textiles," *Gesta* 30, no.2 (1991): 154-55; Jacoby, "Silk Production," 426-7; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 228-30.

abandon specific artistic characteristics they appropriated from Byzantium and replaced such features with more naturalistic substitutions.³⁸⁵ In that regard, clothes of honor did not merely represent the commercial layer but also exhibited the changing artistic dynamics in the Italian peninsula as such clothes were utilized to replace the golden background, creating a heavenly sphere in a more naturalistic manner.³⁸⁶



Figure 2.31: Detail of the Galata icon's ornamented background.

Therefore, the Galata icon's ornamented background can be understood as a cloth of honor placed on the artwork for a similar purpose; that is, to embellish the scene with opulent textiles that were most likely imported from Eastern lands or locally produced in silk and velvet workshops, signifying the patron's wealth as well as the significance of the figures depicted, while distorting reality in a way that is much naturalistic and emphasizing the heavenly sphere.³⁸⁷ Besides, the cloth of honor, like the other figures in the Galata icon, is a representation of exquisite craftsmanship given that the pattern is executed along the entire cloth's dimensions rather than just in one spot, displaying an exhaustively ornamented textile. Motifs forming the extensive pattern resemble scrolling vines combined with ogival-like lattices, motifs popularly woven on silk and velvet fabrics in both spheres, exhibiting stylized vegetal ornamentations.³⁸⁸ In addition, close inspection of the item reveals that underneath that vegetal ornamentation, little triangulars formed a horizontally continuous pattern, which is especially visible around the two angels and the head and crown of the Virgin, reminding semi-diamonds. With such motifs, the cloth of honor belonging to the Galata icon resembles one item among European textiles in the Robert Lehman Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.³⁸⁹ Classified as an Italian velvet dated to the late

³⁸⁵ Bloemsmas, "Byzantine Art and Early Italian Painting," 37-9; "Italian Paintings of the 13th and 14th centuries," National Gallery of Art, accessed February 24, 2024, <https://www.nga.gov/collection/paintings/italian-13th-and-14th-centuries.html>.

³⁸⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104-5; National Gallery of Art, "Italian Paintings of the 13th and 14th centuries."

³⁸⁷ Hoeniger, "Cloth of Gold and Silver: Simone Martini's Techniques for Representing Luxury Textiles," 160-61; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104-5; The National Gallery, "The cloths of honour"; Jacoby, "Silk Production," 426-7; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 228-30; Zirpolo, "(De)Constructing the Madonna's Cloth of Honor Pieced Cloths in Late Medieval Italian Paintings," 199.

³⁸⁸ Sardjono, "Ottoman or Italian Velvets? A Technical Investigation," 193.

³⁸⁹ Christa C. Mayer Thurman, *European Textiles in the Robert Lehman Collection* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 194; "Cover," Robert Lehman Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed February 24, 2024, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/460591>.



Figure 2.32: *The Italian Velvet (Cover)*, late 16th-early 17th century, velvet, metal thread, cotton, Robert Lehman Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States (Accession number: 1975.1.1833)

sixteenth-early seventeenth century, this velvety piece, used as a covering, is composed of cut and uncut pieces of green velvet woven on a light-yellow ground.³⁹⁰ It resembles the chiseled velvets, the same typology proposed for the Virgin's mantle in the Galata icon. As visible in the figure, its ornamentation resembles the Galata icon's cloth of honor, especially in lattice-like vegetal scrolls and diamond-shaped triangulars filled with stylized flowers.³⁹¹ The latter is especially enlightening for the context of the Galata icon since it is hard to distinguish what kind of design the triangular, diamond-like motifs

were adjoined with due to the unclearness of the revetment at that particular part. Nevertheless, by observing the Metropolitan item, one can further comment on the unclear part of the Galata icon's cloth of honor, interpreting the juxtaposing motif to the triangular-diamond-like pattern as stylized flowers.³⁹² Even though it would not be possible to be sure of what that motif is without removing the revetment from the glass case and closely examining it, visible existing items, just like the Metropolitan example, present the possible scenarios. Considering the consistent flowery design on the icon, i.e., the Virgin's mantle, borders of her tunic, slippers, etc., the diamond motif can be interpreted as petals of stylized flowers, together with the vegetal lattice-like scrolls along the fabric. Altogether, these motifs embellish the cloth of honor and create a distorted reality, thus symbolizing the heavenly sphere from which the Virgin, Christ, and two angels emerged.³⁹³

³⁹⁰ Thurman, *European Textiles in the Robert Lehman Collection*, 194; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Cover," Robert Lehman Collection.

³⁹¹ Thurman, *European Textiles in the Robert Lehman Collection*, 194.

³⁹² Thurman, *European Textiles in the Robert Lehman Collection*, 194; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Cover," Robert Lehman Collection.

³⁹³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104-5; Zirpolo, "(De)Constructing the Madonna's Cloth of Honor Pieced Cloths in Late Medieval Italian Paintings," 199, 223; The National Gallery, "Cloths of honour," Glossary.

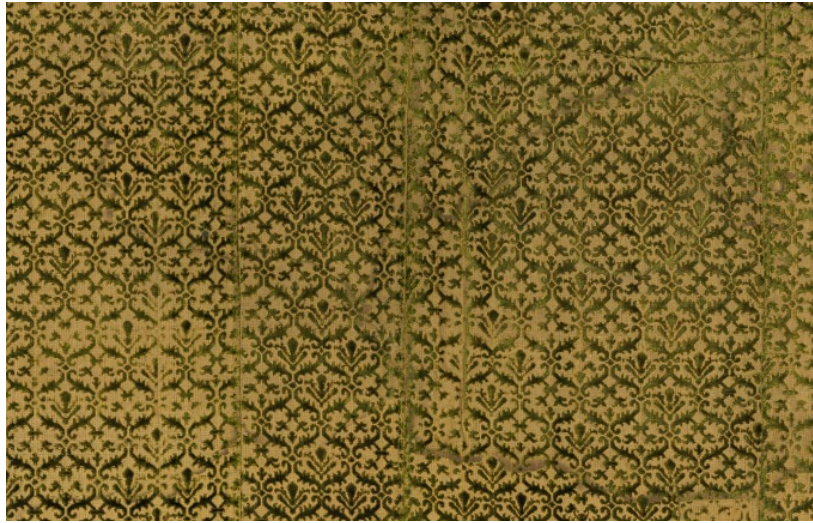


Figure 2.33: Detail of the Italian velvet in the Robert Lehman European Textiles Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

To conclude this subchapter, and before moving onto the iconographical discussion, it is necessary to make some remarks on the possible meaning of this work. The central message of the Galata icon can be the importance and the protectress role given to the Virgin Mary, in addition to her motherly affection and relationship with the Christ Child.³⁹⁴ Albeit the central depiction of the Child Christ on this icon and his recognition as the most crucial figure of Christianity and the focal point of religious artworks, the Virgin's face attracts the immediate attention of the viewer looking at the Galata icon.³⁹⁵ One reason for this issue is the most visible, unadorned, and lack of ornamented state of the Virgin's face, compared to the remaining parts of the Galata icon that are covered with silver revetment with golden plating in some parts. The Virgin's face stands at the forefront in the 'natural' contrast between the silver revetment and the wooden parts of the icon. Despite of lacking the fine metal craftsmanship and the adornment with precious materials that the revetment has, the wooden part that represents the Virgin's face emphasizes her pure, innocent, and immaculate soul by remaining relatively simple and unornamented.³⁹⁶ Furthermore, it underlines the fact that painting the Virgin's face in an extravagant manner (too ornamented or decorative) to capture her immaculate condition is an unnecessary attempt and not needed. As mortals, we cannot contain the holy aura that radiates even from the plainest representation of her.

³⁹⁴ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 21.

³⁹⁵ Jean Sorabella, "Painting the Life of Christ in Medieval and Renaissance Italy," Heilbrunn Timeline Of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified June 2008, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chri/hd_chri.htm.

³⁹⁶ Britannica, "Immaculate Conception."

The Virgin's sacred dignity is unattainable and cannot be achieved through excessive ornamentation of her representation. However, it is not sufficient to explain the effect of the Virgin's face on beholders by merely relying on the icon's material and technique; it also depends on how people contextually perceive the icon. Throughout the centuries, the Virgin Mary has been referred to in a certain way, which has never changed: pure, immaculate, and free from the original sin, along with its role as the compassionate mother and the protector of humanity.³⁹⁷ These repetitive notions took a permanent space in the collective memory of societies; thus, regardless of one's religion and level of faithfulness, the immediate ideas in one's mind who views an artwork depicting Virgin Mary are related to one of her attributes mentioned above.³⁹⁸ The contrast within the Galata icon enhances this special perception and veneration of the Virgin Mary and provides a particular essence that directs the beholder's gaze towards her figure on the icon.

Another point of consideration is the hybridity of the Galata icon. The hybridity in question is not merely material-wise (wood and metal) but also related to the cultural and historical diversity of elements displayed on the icon. As demonstrated in the preceding pages, every detail of the Galata icon symbolizes the historical and cultural contexts in which it has been partaken through centuries: the wooden panel corresponds to its Caffan past and the shared artistic vocabulary of Genoese colonies (Caffa and Pera), while the metal revetment reflects Constantinople and its

³⁹⁷ Britannica, "Immaculate Conception."

³⁹⁸ According to Jung, archetypes composing the human unconsciousness are universal and innate values, meaning they did not develop relatedly to human communication; an archetype on a specific concept instinctively exists in the subconsciousness of everyone, not limited to particular geography, culture, ethnicity, or religion. Moreover, according to Jung, the unconscious mind is formed of different archetypes shared by all members of Gaia (even though the mental imagining and its perception, both arising from the shared archetypes of humanity, are unique to individuals). Further, Jung indicated that even though the individuality of mental imaging persists in many layers of the human condition, the mythological and religious representations and systems mostly share the same images; he emphasized this metamorphic situation as the collective unconsciousness. Based on his theories, the collective unconsciousness of humans is characterized by universally shared and innately coded archetypes, which Jung claimed are the reason behind the formation of similar religious dynamics and myths all over the world. Interestingly, the Jungian ideas on archetypes, archetypal images, and collective unconsciousness were embedded in the figure of the Virgin Mary in Christian societies for centuries. According to him, the Virgin was a reflection of the mother archetype embedded in the collective unconsciousness of humankind. From the Jungian perspective, the mother archetype represents certain motherly qualities, including compassion and protection, that characterize the human nature of the Virgin Mary, thus clarifying everyone's specific perception of the Virgin Mary through the lens of his psychoanalytical approach. In the context of this thesis, the Jungian archetypes and collective unconscious were utilized as a part of my methodological analysis to comprehend the meaning and the importance of the Virgin Mary to humankind. Jolanda Jacobi, *Complex/Archetype/Symbol in the Psychology of C.G. Jung* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 36-7, 38, 41, 43, 52, 55; Carl Gustav Jung, "Approaching the Unconscious," in *Man and His Symbols*, ed. Carl Gustav Jung and M.-L von Franz (United States of America: Dell Publishing, 1968): 26-8, 41; Carl Gustav Jung, *Four Archetypes, Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970), 15-6; "The Mother Archetype," The Jungian Confrerie, accessed January 16, 2024, <https://www.jungian-confrerie.com/phdi/p1.nsf/supppages/8209?opendocument&part=24>.

cultural texture in different periods, i.e., Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire. Notably, the latter feature, the metal revetment, represents various socio and cultural dynamics that were shaped through the cross-cultural interactions that the Byzantine and Ottoman Constantinople involved with the Latin West, namely the Italian peninsula, and particularly la Serenissima due to its long-term protectorship of the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, and its congregation.³⁹⁹ The analysis of the Galata icon underlines the commercial relationship between both cultural milieus in the indicated historical periods, especially reveals the dynamics of textile trading and each party's position in the international market.⁴⁰⁰ Such analysis further emphasizes the shared artistic vocabularies and the utilization of specific iconographical patterns for representing the Virgin with the Child, the faithful congregation, and significant historical figures in both spheres. It also underlines the impact of Byzantine art and culture on the canonical representation of the Virgin Mary, since in the Galata icon, her garments were represented coherently in the Byzantine manner even though the revetment was applied to the icon at the end of the 17th century.⁴⁰¹ Altogether, such elaborative detailing on the Galata icon creates familiarity for the beholder by exhibiting the artistic and cultural notions that the community was shaped within. By representing the Virgin Mary and the Child and the religious flock underneath the Virgin's mantle, emphasizing such notions, the Galata icon offers an inclusive reading to everyone without discriminating according to one's religious sect, ethnicity, or social rank, thus, becoming a symbol of the Christianity in Constantinople/Istanbul throughout the centuries, and distinguishing the Virgin Mary as the protector of the humankind.

³⁹⁹ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

⁴⁰⁰ Herald, "Italian Silks (1500-1900)," 172; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 230; Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 168; Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 182-3.

⁴⁰¹ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-43.

Chapter 3:

ICONOGRAPHY OF THE GALATA ICON

The descriptive analysis of the Galata icon's revetment reveals the fact that the icon represents a unique iconography among other prevailing icons in Constantinople, especially the ones of Byzantine origin and coated with metal revetments.⁴⁰² Considering different typologies used for displaying the Virgin Mary and Christ Child in Byzantine traditions, it is apparent that the representation of the revetment does not strictly follow a Byzantine iconographical formula either. Reviewing this issue from a Western-oriented perspective reveals that the Galata icon's revetment displays a significant Marian iconography that was predominantly preferred in the Latin West for an extensive period, 13th-16th centuries. This particular iconography is known as Madonna della Misericordia or the Virgin of Mercy, and it emphasizes the merciful nature of the Virgin Mary and her protective role over humankind.⁴⁰³ While the metal revetment of the Galata icon harmoniously represents the main artistic features of this particular iconography, its original wooden panel (c. 13th-14th century) and its traditional denomination as Virgin Hodegetria illustrate another story. While the remaining portions of the wooden icon, i.e., faces of the Virgin Mary and the Child, fit into the Misericordia iconography due to their vertical composition, they certainly do not fall under the artistic features of the Hodegetria typology. Even though the Galata icon's iconographical hybridity propounds an enigmatic situation to the beholder, it also emphasizes the cross-cultural interactions between Byzantine, and concurrently, Ottoman Constantinople and the Latin West and the development of the shared artistic vocabularies between those spheres for centuries. Therefore, the dynamics of such interactions can be elaborated by analyzing the dual iconographical identity of the Galata icon.

In that regard, this chapter aims to present an iconographical analysis of the Galata icon by focusing on the wooden panel and the metal revetment separately. For both features, the iconographical analysis would be executed parallel to the Galata icon's historical narrative. Moreover, remarks on the development of the Misericordia iconography, its utilization by the Dominican order in the West, and the role of this specific iconography in reflecting cross-cultural

⁴⁰² No other artwork or Constantinopolitan icon depicting Misericordia imagery had been encountered in the context of this thesis. As a result, this viewpoint has made the Galata icon even more unique.

⁴⁰³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 11, 22, 32.

interactions in question, namely between Constantinople and La Serenissima would be underlined for acknowledging why Dominican friars of Galata preferred this particular iconography in the late 17th century.

3.1 Remodeling the 13-14th Century Fragmentary Wooden Parts in the Light of Historical Narratives: The Iconography of Madonna di Costantinopoli

The Galata icon has fragmentary wooden parts corresponding to the faces of the Virgin Mary and the Child. As previously underlined, these fragmentary wooden portions are the remnants of the 13th-14th century panel initially in Genoese Caffa that arrived Constantinople in the late 15th century.⁴⁰⁴ Due to years of deterioration, the preserved wooden fragments are measured approximately 42.5/43.5 x 13/cm 14 x 1.3 cm, and only the faces of both figures are left intact on that remaining panel.⁴⁰⁵ While the facial features of the Virgin are more apparent and most probably repainted, Christ's face is overly demolished, and his features cannot be traceable. Nevertheless, the alignment of the Virgin's and the Child's faces on the same line offers insight into the possible representation of the original wooden panel, thus making its remodeling possible by using incomplete wooden portions on the current state of the icon.

Via their frontal depiction and vertical alignment, the faces of the Virgin and the Child resemble the Blachernitissa depictions. The iconography of the renowned Blachernai icon was formulated through the synthesis of two already existing Marian iconographical typologies: the Virgin Orans, in which the Virgin opens her arms to both sides, emphasizing her intercessory role, and the Virgin Nikopoios, representing the Virgin, and the Child in frontal composition (their faces aligned on the same vertical plane) while the Virgin holds a medallion containing the figure of Christ, as seen in Figure 3.1.⁴⁰⁶ The Blachernai church, along with Hodegon and Chalkoprateia, was one of the Constantinopolitan cult centers dedicated to the Virgin Mary.⁴⁰⁷ As the house of

⁴⁰⁴ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 38-9; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 142-43.

⁴⁰⁵ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 155.

⁴⁰⁶ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 145-46; Nancy Patterson Sevcenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 2170-171; Nancy Patterson Sevcenko, "Virgin Nikopoios," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 2176.

⁴⁰⁷ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 146; Arentzen, "Conversing with Clothes, Germanos and Mary's Belt," 59-61.

the Virgin's miraculous maphorion, through which the agency of the Virgin Mary interceded and aided in the survival of the city from numerous catastrophes (elaborated in upcoming subchapters), the Blachernai church, starting from the late 5th century, rapidly transformed into a significant center of Marian devotion of the empire.⁴⁰⁸ Various icons of the Virgin executed in different iconographies were preserved and displayed in Soros and the church of Blachernai.⁴⁰⁹ Such a variety of icons in the Blachernai church obstructs the perception of the renowned, miraculous icon of Blachernai, along with its correct iconographical formula. The current consensus on this subject implies that the Blachernitissa typology, named after the possible iconography of the renowned icon, displays the Virgin Mary in Orans position with the Child Christ in a medallion that independently hovers around his mother's upper torso.⁴¹⁰ In the context of the Galata icon's wooden panel, both representations, the Virgin Nikopoios and Blachernitissa, can be offered for the iconography of the 13th-14th century wooden panel as the remaining portions, faces of the Virgin and the Child aligning on the same vertical plane, corresponds to the compositional features of both typologies.⁴¹¹

3.1.1 *The Inconsistency Between the Galata Icon's Iconography and Inscription*

The Galata icon's frame inscription expresses a perplexing situation regarding the icon's perception. Written as 'SS.V. ODEGHITRA,' the inscription on the frame emphasizes one of the well-known Byzantine iconographical types of the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Hodegetria.⁴¹² Transliterated as 'She who shows the Way,' thematically, the Hodegetria typology discourses on the Virgin's intercessory role between Christ and the beholder while emphasizing the sole rulership of Christ over humankind.⁴¹³ Such notions are visually expressed by representing the Virgin Mary as holding Christ on her left arm while pointing to him with her right hand. Moreover, the Virgin

⁴⁰⁸ Wortley, "The Marian Relics at Constantinople," 171-75; Shoemaker, "The Cult of Fashion, The Earliest Life of the Virgin and Constantinople's Marian Relics," 53-4.

⁴⁰⁹ Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage in Middle Byzantine Constantinople," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 (2002): 77-8.

⁴¹⁰ Sevcenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, 2170-171.

⁴¹¹ Christine Angelidi, and Titos Papamastorakis, "Picturing the Spiritual Protector: from Blachernitissa to Hodegetria," in *the Images of the Mother of God, Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 213-17; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 146-47; Sevcenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170-171; Sevcenko, "Virgin Nikopoios," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, 2176.

⁴¹² Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151-52.

⁴¹³ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 110; "The Virgin Hodegetria and the Man of Sorrows," National Gallery of Art, accessed May 7, 2024, <https://www.nga.gov/features/byzantine/virginmanofsorrows.html>; Sevcenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," 2172-173.

Mary is represented with a tilted head towards her son, while her gaze fluctuates (to the Child or the beholder) in different icons. On the other hand, Christ is depicted with a scroll, implying the Logos, while performing the blessing gesture with the other.⁴¹⁴ Another iconographical type that had developed as a derivation of the Hodegetria typology is the Eleousa type.⁴¹⁵ Icons entitled Virgin Eleousa portray the mother and child in an affective display in which the child in his mother's arms reaches out to the Virgin's face, and their cheeks touch one another's.⁴¹⁶ While the Eleousa's visual formula strictly differs from the Nikopoios and Blachernitissa typologies, due to compositional similarities, the placement of the Child in the Virgin's arms, both Eleousa and Hodegetria types are considered as highly analogous to one another.⁴¹⁷ From this perspective, one can acknowledge that neither the imagined iconography of the original wooden panel nor the representation of the metal revetment follows the Hodegetria, or the Eleousa, typology, thus revealing the contradiction between the visual representation and the inscription of the Galata icon. In this thesis, such discrepancy is the main reason for utilizing a novel title for the icon in question; thus, throughout this thesis, it is referred to as the Galata icon, not Hodegetria.

One possible reason for this perplexing referral to the Galata icon might be arising from the first church that the icon was kept when it arrived in Constantinople, the church of Santa Maria di Constantinopoli, in Salmatomruk region of the imperial capital.⁴¹⁸ The location of the church that those Caffan friars established themselves, Saint Mary of Constantinople, is an essential point of consideration for the misleading title of the Galata icon since the Blachernai Church was situated in a very close proximation⁴¹⁹ and the existence of the church in question in vicinity is believed to resulted in confusing their icons with one another as underlined by Raphaëlle Ziadé, "Une

⁴¹⁴ Sevcenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," 2172-173.

⁴¹⁵ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 177.

⁴¹⁶ Angelidi, and Papamastorakis, "Picturing the Spiritual Protector: from Blachernitissa to Hodegetria," 213-15; Sevcenko, "Virgin Nikopoios," 2176.

⁴¹⁷ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 177.

⁴¹⁸ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84.

⁴¹⁹ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 158; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84.

confusion se serait établie par la suite entre cette image et la fameuse icône Blachernitissa que possédait jadis la capitale byzantine, l'église Sainte-Marie-de-Constantinople étant prise pour l'ancienne église des Blachernes."⁴²⁰

Furthermore, the paradox that characterizes the Galata icon can be understood from a different angle by practicing the icons from the church of Blachernai that were, according to written accounts, in the Eleousa and Blachernitissa typologies.⁴²¹ On the other hand, in addition to the portrayal of the remaining portions of the wooden panel and the depiction of Christ within a mandorla on the silver revetment strengthens the Galata icon's compatibility with the

Blachernitissa typology, thus enlightening the reasons behind the possible confusion of beholders by adding another layer on the issue, as an addition to the close proximity of both churches.⁴²²

Another point of consideration in the Blachernai context is the miraculous nature of the aforementioned icons. The Blachernitissa icon, like the Hodegetria icon attributed to Saint Luke and constituted as the palladium of the city, was characterized with a miraculous nature.⁴²³ It was described as a performative one that miraculously changed its appearance, a miracle tradition solidly embedded in the Byzantine tradition as the Usual Miracle.⁴²⁴ Like the Blachernitissa, the Galata icon also had its share in the context of miracles, considering its survival from consequent



Figure 3.1: *The Mother of God of Blachernae among Moses and Jerusalem Patriarch Euthymius II*, c.1224, tempera on wood (44,4 X 36,5 cm), St. Catherine's Monastery At God-trodden Mount Sinai.

⁴²⁰ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84.

⁴²¹ Angelidi, and Papamastorakis, "Picturing the Spiritual Protector: from Blachernitissa to Hodegetria," 213-17; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 145-47.

⁴²² Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 146; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84.

⁴²³ Sevchenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," 2172-173; Wortley, "The Marian Relics at Constantinople," 171-73.

⁴²⁴ Angelidi, and Papamastorakis, "Picturing the Spiritual Protector: from Blachernitissa to Hodegetria," 214; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 154-161.

fires. As mentioned in the historical discourse of the icon, legend has it that nothing had escaped the fire in the church of St. Peter and Paul in Galata (1660) except the Galata icon, and additively, the faces of both the Virgin and the Child remained intact as the damage was miraculously diverted from their faces on that occasion.⁴²⁵ The miraculous nature of both icons and other features probably resulted in the beholders' perception of the analogousness of both items.

Returning to Eleousa typology, which was also ascribed to icon(s) kept in Blachernai, one other factor yielded in the confusion can be highlighted. As a derivative of the Hodegetria typology, apart from Blachernitissa, the Eleousa icon, enacted in various written narratives, can be apprehended as another motive of influence and mixture that resulted in referring to the Galata icon as Hodegetria.⁴²⁶ The consideration of the Hodegetria icon and the Virgin's mantle deposited at the Blachernai church as the palladiums of the city, the entitlement of the Galata icon as Hodegetria can be evaluated as a conscious intention of the Dominican congregation to create a link with highly venerated and well-known Hodegetria icon and its legacy to enhance the sensation of their item, and relatedly, their congregation.⁴²⁷

Apart from the Blachernitissa icon, the other three Constantinopolitan icons of the Virgin Mary might have influenced the perception and misidentification of the Galata icon as a Hodegetria. Two of those icons, dated to the 14th century, were venerated in churches of Genoese Pera until the mid-15th century. After the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, most artworks kept in the depository of Genoese churches of Pera were transferred either directly to Genoa or first to Chios (another Genoese colony) and then to the capital of the Genoese state in 1461.⁴²⁸ Documentation on the topic reveals that during this transfer period, eleven icons coated with silver revetments had reached Genoa and were distributed to churches belonging to different mendicant

⁴²⁵ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 86.

⁴²⁶ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 177; Angelidi, and Papamastorakis, "Picturing the Spiritual Protector: from Blachernitissa to Hodegetria," 213-15; Sevchenko, "Virgin Nikopoios," 2176; Pentcheva, "The Activated Icon: the Hodegetria Procession and Mary's Eisodos," 202.

⁴²⁷ Pentcheva, "The Activated Icon: the Hodegetria Procession and Mary's Eisodos," 202; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 52-3; Sevchenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," 2172-173; Sevchenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170-171.

⁴²⁸ Lauro Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor. Reception and Celebration of Eastern Cult Images in the Republic of Genoa in 16th-18th Centuries," *IKON* 9 (2016): 286-88; Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 457-59, 460-61.



Figure 3.2: *Madonna di Pera*, 14th century, tempera on canvas further applied on a chestnut panel, the Museo di Sant'Agostino, Genoa, Italy (Inventory Number: PB 2096) Retrieved from the Musei di Genova's website, courtesy of Museum of Sant'Agostino.

orders, including Dominicans, thus emphasizing the adaptation of the revetment tradition predominating the artistic sphere of Byzantium by the Latin Catholic groups residing in the capital, underlying another layer of cross-cultural interaction driven by the Galata icon.⁴²⁹ Among all artworks passed to the control of churches in Genoa, two icons of the Virgin and the Child, one comprised of wooden panel while the other had silver revetment, are significant in the context of the Galata icon and its misinterpretation. Those icons, both referred to as *Madonna di Pera*, were representing the Hodegetria iconography thus, nuanced the legend of the authentic image of the Virgin Mary painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist.⁴³⁰ While the wooden *Madonna di Pera* icon still exists and is currently deposited at the Museo di Sant'Agostino, Genoa, the other 'Pera' icon, the one coated with silver revetment

(c.1383), is presently missing as it was stolen from the Dominican church of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa in 1878, and unfortunately, was not recovered.⁴³¹ As visible in Figure 3.2., the wooden *Madonna di Pera* icon displays the typical Hodegetria iconography in the Byzantine manner, with the elongated facial structures of the Virgin and the Child, representation of their garments as in other Byzantine icons, stylized figuration of each detail, and the golden background distorting the reality and signifying the heavenly realm.⁴³² As an icon that follows Byzantine

⁴²⁹ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 288.

⁴³⁰ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 286-88; Flora Boros, "Myth and Miraculous Performance: The Virgin Hodegetria," Iris Blog, Getty, accessed May 10, 2024, <https://blogs.getty.edu/iris/myth-and-miraculous-performance-the-virgin-hodegetria/>.

⁴³¹ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 287-88; Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 457-58.

⁴³² Sevchenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," 2172-173; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 109-11, 112-14; "Madonna di Pera," Museo di Sant'Agostino, Catalogo, Musei di Genova, accessed May 10, 2024, <https://catalogo.museidigenova.it/oggetti/198176-madonna-di-pera?i=27>.

iconographical tradition and came into existence in the Genoese colony of Pera, this particular Madonna di Pera parallels the Galata icon as both share similar historical and cultural contexts by being artworks of Genoese colonies overseas.⁴³³ An analogous interpretation can be proposed to the Madonna di Pera icon with the silver revetment, as the photographic evidence displaying the metal coating underlines the iconographical and compositional resemblances between both ‘Pera’ icons.⁴³⁴ While some features of the latter, including the representation of saints in the medallion, were acknowledged as further Western influence on Byzantine iconography, both Madonna di Pera icons, with their historical contexts and artistic features, denominate their possible confusion with the Galata icon, thus providing another exciting interpretation for the misleading title of the Galata icon.⁴³⁵

Another icon that requires elaboration on the matter is the Virgin Hodegetria icon that is currently at the Meryem Ana Türk Ortodoks Kilisesi (also known as the Galata Panagia Kilisesi) in Karaköy, İstanbul.⁴³⁶ According to the historical narration, it was brought to Constantinople by the Greek community of Caffa in 1475, just like the Galata icon that was transferred to Constantinople from Caffa in 1475 by Dominican friars refugeeed in the imperial capital.⁴³⁷ The historical and cultural analogousness of both icons forefront this particular icon as one of the possible items that might have resulted in the confusion and the misinterpretation of the original wooden panel of the Galata icon. Moreover, the Hodegetria icon of the Galata Panagia Kilisesi underlines an additional, mainly Orthodox, layer to the Genoese colony in Caffa, thus emphasizing its multicultural identity, as well as hybrid artistic vocabulary predominating the region as Caffa was one of the thresholds of cross-cultural interactions in the Black Sea region.⁴³⁸

⁴³³ Stagno, “Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor,” 286-88; Quirini-Poplawski, “Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.),” 457.

⁴³⁴ Stagno, “Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor,” 288; Quirini-Poplawski, “Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.),” 457-59.

⁴³⁵ Stagno, “Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor,” 288.

⁴³⁶ Bülent Ayberk, “Bağımsız Türk Ortodoks Patrikhanesi ve Meryem Ana Kilisesi’nin İç Mekanının İncelenmesi,” (Paper presented at the İstanbul International Modern Scientific Research Congress, İstanbul, June 2021), 545, 553-54; Zafer Karaca, *İstanbul’da Tanzimat Öncesi Rum Ortodoks Kiliseleri* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2018), 329.

⁴³⁷ Karaca, *İstanbul’da Tanzimat Öncesi Rum Ortodoks Kiliseleri*, 39-41; Ayberk, “Bağımsız Türk Ortodoks Patrikhanesi ve Meryem Ana Kilisesi’nin İç Mekanının İncelenmesi,” 545, 553-54.

⁴³⁸ Quirini-Poplawski, “Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.),” 426-27, 437-38; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 38-9; Ziadé, ““Madone de Constantinople” du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique,” 84.

3.1.2 *Madonna di Costantinopoli and Historical Narratives Describing the Galata Icon*

Relatedly, the European perception of the miraculous Byzantine Marian icons and their appropriation in the Latin West might have played an important role in denominating the Galata icon misleadingly. The cross-cultural interactions between Byzantium and the Latin West were driven with the translocation of Marian icons in both spheres (along with many other cultural artifacts and commodities), resulting in the production of Byzantine-like artworks of the Virgin Mary, especially in the Italian peninsula.⁴³⁹ Among all Byzantine iconographies of the Virgin Mary, the Hodegetria typology drew considerable interest within the Italian peninsula.⁴⁴⁰ In addition to Byzantine Hodegetria icons



Figure 3.3: Antonello Riccio, *La Madonna dell'Itria, with Saints Peter and Paul*, 17th century (?), oil on canvas (?), the Church of S. Caterina di Valverde Messina, Italy.

reaching the sphere, locally produced, Hodegetria-like artworks were demanded by Italian society approximately by the 13th century when the fame of the Constantinopolitan Hodegetria, as the palladium of the capital city, started to disseminate to Latin West.⁴⁴¹ By imitating the archetypal image of the original Hodegetria icon made by Saint Luke himself, cults centering the Hodegetria icon(s) and miraculous Marian narratives that had been already circulated in the Latin West starting in the 12th century became canonized, especially in southern Italy.⁴⁴² In time, such 'southern' icons started to be called *Madonna dell'Itria*, an alteration of the word Hodegetria according to southern

⁴³⁹ Bacci, "The Legacy of the Hodegetria," 323-29; Derbes and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 450, 453-54; National Gallery of Art, "Byzantine Art and Painting in Italy during the 1200s and 1300s."

⁴⁴⁰ Bacci, "The Legacy of the Hodegetria," 321-22.

⁴⁴¹ Bacci, "The Legacy of the Hodegetria," 323, 326-27.

⁴⁴² Bacci, "The Legacy of the Hodegetria," 326-28; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 163-65.



Figure 3.4: Pantaleone Calvo, *Madonna d'Itria*, 1641-1660, oil on canvas, National Art Gallery of Cagliari, Italy

Italian dialects.⁴⁴³ Interestingly, to emphasize the origin of the archetypal image, some of those icons were further entitled as *Madonna di Costantinopoli*.⁴⁴⁴ Even though the majority of such items followed the typical Byzantine model of *Hodegetria*, some *Madonna di Costantinopoli* icons represented a different kind of iconographical formula, which exhibits "...the half-length Virgin Mary either in an Italianate variant of *Hodegetria* or in the orans pose with the Child upright; in any event, she is always shown inside a case held by two men in religious dress.", reminding or visualizing the Tuesday procession of Constantinople in that regard.⁴⁴⁵ As demonstrated in Antonello Riccio's and Pantaleone Calvo's paintings, those iconographical variants were represented under the same title,

creating complexity in distinguishing the exact representation formula.⁴⁴⁶ The development of

⁴⁴³ Bacci, "The Legacy of the *Hodegetria*," 327.

⁴⁴⁴ Bacci, "The Legacy of the *Hodegetria*," 328.

⁴⁴⁵ Bacci, "The Legacy of the *Hodegetria*," 329-30; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 166-67.

⁴⁴⁶ In Antonello Riccio's painting, two figures carrying the platform representing the holy mother and the Child come to the forefront with their rather 'exotic' garments, especially in the context of Westernized paintings. Dressed in black vestments from head to toe, these figures most probably represent Greek ecclesiastical figures who carried the miraculous *Hodegetria* icon throughout the weekly civic processions dedicated to it every Tuesday, even though the Constantinopolitan costumes were described in red, not black. In addition to their Orthodox-like vestments and long beards, their capes distinguish their employment for that particular regard, given that the *hodegoi(s)*, priests of the *Hodegon Monastery* in Constantinople, wore such headgears. Moreover, rehearsing the imitation of the Tuesday procession in southern Italy, in which the local *Hodegetria* icons were carried by Italians dressed as Greek priests, the inclusion of those figures in *Itria* and *Costantinopoli* icons to strengthen the Constantinopolitan identity became coherent. Bacci, "The Legacy of the *Hodegetria*," 329-30; Alexei Lidov, "The Flying *Hodegetria*, The Miraculous Icon as Bearer of Sacred Space," in *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance, papers from the conference held at the Accademia di Danimarca in collaboration with the Bibliotheca Hertziana (Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte)*, Rome, 31 May - 2 June 2003, ed. by Erik Thunoe and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: *Analecta Romana*

such variant iconographical formulas and their referral as Constantinopolitan Madonnas are significant for the context of the Galata icon, considering the existence of narratives relating the Galata icon to those Italian variants. For instance, in one of his letters dating back to 1614, the traveler Pietro della Valle implied that the church (and consequently the icon?) was named after similar Madonnas in Italy, especially in Naples, which received substantial devotion.⁴⁴⁷ Similarly, after visiting and seeing the Galata icon in 1622, Monsieur Pietro de'Marchis, the bishop of Santorini, underlined the discrepancy between the title and representation of the icon by describing the wooden panel as the image of the Virgin and the Child, the latter displayed in a clypeus, placed around his mother's chest.⁴⁴⁸ Last but not least, a descriptive account of Constantinople, published in Paris in 1721, further remarked on the iconography of the Galata icon by explaining it as a prominent, wooden figure displaying the Virgin in the design of Gonfalonier in Rome, yet varying in terms of the placement of Christ around the Virgin's breast, implying that the Galata icon differentiates from the Roman image in that regard.⁴⁴⁹ According to Chiara Bordino, the author of the Parisian book referred to the altarpiece of Santa Lucia del Gonfalone, which is modeled on the icon Santa Maria del Popolo, an Italianate Hodegetria, thus underlying that it does not follow the typical Hodegetria formula.⁴⁵⁰ Because the author further emphasized the Galata image as the miraculous and ancient figure of Our Lady of Constantinople, he strengthened the possible connection of the Galata icon with the Constantinopolitan tradition predominating the Italian peninsula.⁴⁵¹ Considering the entitlement of such icons as Madonna dell'Itria or Madonna di Costantinopoli and their iconographical mixture with Hodegetria and Orans, previous interpretations of the Galata icon as an artwork similar to Madonna di Costantinopoli of southern

Instituti Danici : Supplementum ; 35, 2004), 280-81, 283, 288-90, 301-4; "Madonna d'Itria. Madonna con Bambino e Santi," *Catalogo Generale dei Beni Culturali*, accessed February 25, 2024, <https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/2000139267>; "Riccio Antonello, Madonna dell'Itria tra San Pietro e San Paolo con due donatori," *Catalogo Fototeca, Fondazione Federico Zeri, Università di Bologna*, accessed February 25, 2024, <http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/scheda/opera/31957/Riccio%20Antonello%2C%20Madonna%20dell%27Itria%20tra%20san%20Pietro%20e%20san%20Paolo%20con%20due%20donatori>.

⁴⁴⁷ Ziadé, "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 85.

⁴⁴⁸ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 162.

⁴⁴⁹ Ziadé, "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 85; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 162.

⁴⁵⁰ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 162; Anne Dunlop, "Pinturicchio and the Pilgrims: Devotion and the Past at Santa Maria Del Popolo," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 71 (2003): 259-61, 267-68.

⁴⁵¹ Ziadé, "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 85.

Italy can be comprehended as one of the possible reasons of its misleading, incorrect entitlement, along with other reasons mentioned above.⁴⁵²

In conclusion, careful examination of the faces of the Virgin Mary and the Child on the Galata icon, the only remaining parts of the original wooden panel, reveals certain clues for remodeling the 13th-14th century wooden icon. Despite the deterioration of their faces, the alignment of the Virgin and the Child figures on the same vertical line increases the possibility of the Blachernitissa typology as the iconography of the original wooden icon. While, stylistically, both the wooden panel and the metal revetment do not follow the Hodegetria iconography, the inscription on the Galata icon's frame, SS.V. ODEGHITRIA, proposes a perplexing situation regarding the true iconographical identity of the artwork. By taking the compositional features of the Galata icon into account, one can undoubtedly propose that it does not correspond to the inscription on the frame; thus, the latter must have been attributed to the icon due to some historical and cultural contexts. From this perspective, the church of Santa Maria di Constantinople, where the icon was kept before moving to Galata, and its proximity to the Blachernai church, one of the centers of the Marian devotion and the house of one of the miraculous icons of the Virgin, come to forefront as the predominant reasons for the confusion of the Galata icon as a Hodegetria. Moreover, icons sharing similar historical and cultural contexts, i.e., came into existence in Genoese colonies of Caffa and Pera, can be acknowledged as additional artworks in Constantinople that might have led to such confusion. Furthermore, historical accounts regarding the Galata icon further propose its elaboration as the Madonna dell'Itria or Madonna di Costantinopoli, iconographical typologies that were developed in parallel with the Byzantine portrayal of the Virgin Mary and became popular in the Italian peninsula, thus underlying the possible confusion of the Galata icon with such Italian depictions. Altogether, these notions emphasize the complexity of the Galata icon and its diverse identity that was developed under the influence of different historical and cultural contexts. In that regard, the composite nature of the Galata icon is once again emphasized.

⁴⁵² Bacci, "The Legacy of the Hodegetria," 328-30.

3.2 Iconography of the Metal Revetment: *Madonna della Misericordia*

As previously emphasized, the closer examination the Galata icon's revetment reveals that rather than illustrating a Byzantine iconography, it displays the iconography known as *Madonna della Misericordia* (Virgin of Mercy) that was favored in the Western sphere during the Late Middle Ages and in the Renaissance period.⁴⁵³ Thoroughly, artworks featuring the *Misericordia* theme emphasize the compassion and charity of the Virgin Mary.⁴⁵⁴ Moreover, the *Misericordia* theme can be acknowledged as a powerful tool of artistic communication for reflecting the Christian context of mercy, considering the directness of the theme due to its iconography developed by embodying artistic and historical elements that beholders were acquainted with through the expression of such elements for centuries.⁴⁵⁵ For instance, the apocryphal texts on the Virgin mentioned, interpretation of the Old and New Testaments, and the Byzantine conception of Theotokos—which played a crucial role in the development of the cult of the Virgin Mary and, consequently, its dissemination to the Latin West through Marian relics it housed and venerated for centuries—were among the deeply ingrained artistic traditions that laid the foundation for the *Misericordia* iconography.⁴⁵⁶ Concerning the impact of all three entities listed above on the formation of the Marian devotion in Byzantium and, consequently, in the Latin West, the utilization of similar notions in developing a significant Marian iconography clarifies the repercussion of the *Misericordia* theme on Christian communities.⁴⁵⁷ Moreover, long-lasting consideration of mercy as a significant Christian virtue that people should attain and show to one

⁴⁵³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 11, 22, 32.

⁴⁵⁴ Ziadé, ““Madone de Constantinople” du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique,” 81-3; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 17-20.

⁴⁵⁵ In the context of the Virgin Mary, notions such as mercy, charity, and protection are intertwined. In other words, emphasizing the Virgin's merciful nature evokes her protective attitude towards humankind and guides the devoted flock to charitable acts. In that regard, in addition to iconographic formulas developed to express those notions through specific gestures and compositions, the Virgin's miraculous relics, mainly her garments, were utilized as signifiers of such concepts. Among all of her secondary relics, her mantle symbolizes the best notions of mercy, charity, and protection since similar garments were connotated with similar meanings in antiquity and early Jewish traditions. For instance, in Ancient Roman tradition, adopted children were referred to as the children of the mantle since the mantle was considered a symbolic representation of protection. Similar visualizations also appeared in antique coins and seals in which imperial heirs were depicted under the protective cloak of deities like Jupiter and Concordia. Therefore, the association of mantle or outer garments with the notion of protection, charity, and mercy already existed in the antique past, thus familiarizing similar concepts in the portrayal of the Virgin Mary, especially when her mantle was highlighted. In that regard, *Misericordia* iconography was developed upon already existing archetypal images, becoming highly adaptable and popular among Christian communities. Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 17, 47-8; Van Asperen, “The Sheltering Cloak: Images of Charity and Mercy in Fourteenth-Century Italy,” 264-67, 274-75.

⁴⁵⁶ Brown *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20.

⁴⁵⁷ Limberis, *Divine Heiress, The Virgin Mary and the Creation of Christian Constantinople*, 104-6, 122.

another as a reflection of God's mercy on humankind, the Misericordia images gained an emblematic meaning reflecting the heavenly mercy through the agency of the Virgin Mary.⁴⁵⁸ The agency of the Virgin is an essential concept regarding the Misericordia typology since, as Katherine Brown pointed out, "...Mater Misericordiae, as a specific type of Marian image, could be interpreted in two, non-mutually exclusive ways: Mary as the mother of the mercy of God and the dispenser of that mercy to humankind."⁴⁵⁹ Therefore, through such representations, the intercessory role of Theotokos, which was underlined through Byzantine iconographical conventions such as Hodegetria, obtained an extra layer in the Latin West, and she became the signifier of the Lord's mercy while guiding the Christian flock to a virtuous life, offering them eternal protection, and subsequently, salvation.⁴⁶⁰

Reviewing the dynamics of intercultural interactions between Byzantium and the Latin West from a Marian perspective, one can recognize how the Misericordia theme developed as a result of the significant Marian influence that shifted from Constantinople to the Italian peninsula. This influence was mainly due to the use of Marian legends, the capital city's collection of her relics, and icons that were attained with her miraculous nature—that is, characteristics of the imperial cult of Theotokos.⁴⁶¹ As underlined above, this artistic theme reflecting the merciful nature of the Virgin had been nourished heavily from the well-established Marian tradition of both spheres, resulting in the formation of the Misericordia iconography with familiar items that the society would be acquainted with.⁴⁶² Furthermore, with the emergence of mendicant orders, i.e., Franciscan, Dominican, and Cistercian Orders, in Europe, whose primary objection was stressing and portraying the humane elements of holy figures, the Marian devotion in the Latin West intensified, resulting in the solidification on the perception of the miraculous Virgin as the protectress of mankind.⁴⁶³ This notion had already been established in Byzantine oikumene since the 7th century, primarily through the intercession of the Virgin Mary to the Avar Siege of

⁴⁵⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 18.

⁴⁵⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20.

⁴⁶⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20; Pentcheva, "The Activated Icon: The Hodegetria Procession and Mary's Eisodos," 196-7.

⁴⁶¹ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Cult of the Virgin Mary in the Middle Ages."

⁴⁶² Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20; Limberis, *Divine Heiress, The Virgin Mary and the Creation of Christian Constantinople*, 104-6, 122.

⁴⁶³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20; "Mendicant Orders in the Medieval World," Heilbrunn Timeline Of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified October 2004, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mend/hd_mend.htm; "Mendicant," Roman Catholicism, History & Society, Britannica, last modified June 12, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mendicant-Roman-Catholicism>; National Gallery of Art, "Byzantine Art and Painting in Italy during the 1200s and 1300s."

Constantinople in 626.⁴⁶⁴ The latter underlines the perpetual impact of Byzantine notions on the Latin West while emphasizing the possible Byzantine contribution to developing one of the Marian iconographies that predominated the Western sphere for centuries. In other words, by making references to the traditional Marian theological perception, devotion, and artistic representation, the Misericordia typology was readily accepted by the society as it put emphasis on the agency of the Virgin and her intercessory, as well as protectory role, for humankind.⁴⁶⁵

3.2.1 *The Development of the Misericordia Iconography*

As previously emphasized, the Misericordia iconography brings together particular Eastern and Western iconographical motives and stylistic elements, thus acknowledged as a significant Marian iconography that reflects the cross-cultural interactions between Byzantium and the Latin West. While the impact of Byzantine Marian narratives and artistic representations were prominent in the formulation of the Misericordia iconography, the flourishing of this specific iconography had concurrently started in the Latin West, especially in Germanic regions. Therefore, the Misericordia iconography has developed in a two-folded manner, in other words, in parallel to existing artistic traditions in both spheres. In that regard, proposing Eastern and Western roots for this particular Marian iconographical type becomes plausible in the context of this thesis.

3.2.1.1 *Eastern Roots of the Misericordia Iconography: Possible Byzantine Influences Journeying to Italian Peninsula*

From a Byzantine point of view, the representation of the Virgin Mary and the Child in the Galata icon, and relatedly in numerous Misericordia artworks, bears compositional similarities with two significant Byzantine Marian iconographies: Platytera and Nikopoios. Virgin Platytera icons, which feature the frontally portrayed Virgin in the Orans position and the Child Christ in a mandorla hovering around his mother's upper torso, illustrate the generic role of the Virgin as an intercessory figure while underscoring Christ's independence from his mother because his mandorla, also known as the clypeus (a shield-like medallion), indicates his glimpse towards the scene of the heavenly sphere.⁴⁶⁶ That specific iconography became one of the typologies proposed for the identity of the much-debated Blachernitissa icon, which was kept at the Blachernai Church

⁴⁶⁴ Arentzen, "Conversing with Clothes, Germanos and Mary's Belt," 69.

⁴⁶⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20.

⁴⁶⁶ Sevchenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170-171.

in Constantinople along with the Virgin's miraculous maphorion, becoming the palladium of the city, and consequently, the empire, especially after its intervention resulting in the survival of the capital city from the Avar Siege in 626 and Russian Siege in 860.⁴⁶⁷ Considering the very possibility of the existence of icons of the Virgin executed with different typologies such as Episkepis (or Eleousa, as both of them are very similar to one another), Nikopoios, and Platytera in the Blachernai Church, comprehending the actual typology of the Blachernitissa icon is still compelling.⁴⁶⁸ Nevertheless, the current consensus on the issue underlines that the Blachernitissa icon was most probably executed as either a Platytera or Nikopoios, both exhibiting the Virgin and the Child Christ together, either the latter in medallion or the Virgin in orans position.⁴⁶⁹ In this sense, the well-known Blachernitissa icon and the maphorion, which was preserved side by side, most likely had an impact on the creation of the Misericordia iconography.⁴⁷⁰ Additionally, the idea that the Blachernai Church, with its icon and relic, serves as the paradigm for the Misericordia typology is reinforced by two narratives that describe the miraculous nature of the maphorion.

The first narrative worth mentioning is Patriarch Photios' account of the miraculous intervention of the Theotokos through the agency of her maphorion during the Russian Siege of



Figure 3.5: Circle of Bernardo Daddi, *Allegory of Mercy*, 1342, fresco, previously on the façade of Confraternity of Compagnia di Santa Maria della Misericordia, currently at Museo del Bigallo, Florence, Italy.

⁴⁶⁷ Sevchenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170-171.

⁴⁶⁸ Sevchenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170-171.

⁴⁶⁹ Sevchenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170.

⁴⁷⁰ Christa Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela, Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte der Schutzmantelmadonna* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter GmbH, 1976), 56.



Figure 3.6: The cityscape detail of the fresco *Allegory of Mercy*, 1342.

Constantinople. In 860, the Russian forces besieged Constantinople and set their military camps around the city walls.⁴⁷¹ As the memory of defeating Avars back in 7th century through divine intervention was presumably still fresh on the collective consciousness of Byzantines, considering the fact that the Theotokos was acknowledged as the protectress of the city and empire as an aftermath of that event, the emperor Michael

III and Patriarch Photios aimed to benefit from similar divine help. They performed liturgical processions around the city wall, just like in the Avar siege, but this time carrying the miraculous maphorion of the Virgin with them.⁴⁷² Furthermore, the chronicler describes how Patriarch Photios proceeded to the shore and immersed the miraculous maphorion in the sea. At the same time, an enormous storm formed and eventually destroyed the Russian ships that were anchored nearby, forcing the Russians to abandon their siege.⁴⁷³ Thus, the Russians were defeated by the agency of the Theotokos, who reflected her miraculous intervention through the holy relic of maphorion.⁴⁷⁴ An interesting feature of that event emerges from the personal survey of the Patriarch since he explained that when he submerged the maphorion of the Holy Virgin to the sea, he saw the vision of the Theotokos, covering Constantinople with her maphorion, protecting the city underneath her mantle, and consequently resulting in the destruction of Russians' military camps on the premises.⁴⁷⁵

The vision of Patriarch Photios describes an illustration similar to the Misericordia iconography. In the context of Photios, the Theotokos spread her maphorion not just to a selected group of people but to all of Constantinople, thus providing refuge to all citizens of the capital

⁴⁷¹ Maria Tomadaki, "Literary Depictions of the Constantinopolitan Walls in Byzantium," Essays, Istanbul City Walls, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://istanbulsurlari.ku.edu.tr/en/essay/62/literary-depictions-of-the-constantinopolitan-walls-in-byzantium>.

⁴⁷² Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 41-3; Mary B. Cunningham, *The Virgin Mary in Byzantium, c.400-1000 CE, Hymns, Homilies, and Hagiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 131.

⁴⁷³ Tomadaki, "Literary Depictions of the Constantinopolitan Walls in Byzantium," Istanbul City Walls.

⁴⁷⁴ Tomadaki, "Literary Depictions of the Constantinopolitan Walls in Byzantium," Istanbul City Walls.

⁴⁷⁵ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 41-3; Cunningham, *The Virgin Mary in Byzantium*, 131-2; Tomadaki, "Literary Depictions of the Constantinopolitan Walls in Byzantium," Istanbul City Walls.

city.⁴⁷⁶ Even though Photios' vision highlights a prior illustration of the Virgin's mercy through the agency of her maphorion, then the emergence of the Misericordia theme, corresponding to the late 13th century, resemblances between his vision and the artistic representation of the Virgin's mercy are striking. Additively, the existence of Misericordia examples that feature the Virgin's mantle over cityscapes further emphasizes the possible influence or modeling of the miraculous nature of the Byzantine relic in the development of the Misericordia iconography in the Latin West.⁴⁷⁷ For instance, the Compagnia di Santa Maria della Misericordia, one of the most well-known confraternities of Florence in the fourteenth century, commissioned the fresco Allegory of Mercy (1342), which is attributed to the circle of Bernardo Daddi, one of the students of Giotto di Bondone (c. 1267-1337), the forerunner of the Renaissance.⁴⁷⁸ This fresco, previously adorning the façade of the confraternity's headquarters on Piazza del Duomo, currently at the Museo del Bigallo, slightly differentiates from the canonical Misericordia iconography since it does not portray the Virgin of Mercy but illustrates the personification of the God's mercy, as the inscription written on the headgear of the frontally depicted woman that characterizes the personified mercy of the Lord.⁴⁷⁹ Underneath her mantle, the city view of Florence, the oldest depiction of the city, was illustrated.⁴⁸⁰ Meanwhile, pleading figures belonging to different levels of the social strata were represented on both sides of the mantle, further implying God's mercy over the whole Florentines.⁴⁸¹ The roundels on the image were composed of the images of seven works of mercy, altogether symbolizing God's mercy over the city of Florence, which had gone through numerous unpleasantness such as plague and famine, while instructing the citizens to be merciful and charitable to ones in need, only through that way the celestial mercy would be granted.⁴⁸² Even though Photios' vision did not elaborate on such features, the protection of Constantinople

⁴⁷⁶ Cunningham, *The Virgin Mary in Byzantium*, 131-32; Tomadaki, "Literary Depictions of the Constantinopolitan Walls in Byzantium," Istanbul City Walls.

⁴⁷⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

⁴⁷⁸ Kristen Renner Swan, "William R. Levin. The Allegory of Mercy at the Misericordia in Florence: Historiography, Context, Iconography, and the Documentation of Confraternal Charity in the Trecento. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 2004. Pp. viii, 180," in online journal *Heliotropia* 5, no.1 (2008): 95; "Giotto," Arts & Culture, Britannica, last modified January 4, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Giotto-di-Bondone>.

⁴⁷⁹ Swan, "William R. Levin. The Allegory of Mercy at the Misericordia in Florence," 95-6.

⁴⁸⁰ "Museo del Bigallo," Cultura, Comune di Firenze, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://cultura.comune.fi.it/node/134>; "Museo del Bigallo," Feel Florence, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://www.feelflorence.it/en/node/12222>; Federico Botana, "What You Give is What You Get," in *The Visual Commentary Of Scripture*, ed. by Ben Quash. (London: The Visual Commentary on Scripture Foundation), accessed February 14, 2024, <https://thevcs.org/sheep-and-goats#what-you-give-what-you-get>.

⁴⁸¹ Swan, "William R. Levin. The Allegory of Mercy at the Misericordia in Florence," 97.

⁴⁸² Swan, "William R. Levin. The Allegory of Mercy at the Misericordia in Florence," 95-7.

underneath the Virgin's mantle underlines similar aspects to the Florentine fresco. Such resemblances are significant in the context of the development of the Misericordia iconography as scholars working on that issue, like Christa Belting-Ihm and Katherine Brown, underlined that the Blachernai complex with the icons it housed (the Blachernitissa mentioned above with Orans Virgin and Child Christ in medallion) and mantle of the Virgin deposited there for centuries, presumably became one of the driving factors that the Misericordia iconography nourished from.⁴⁸³

The second narrative further strengthens the proposition of Blachernai's influence on the theme. Narrating the miraculous appearance of the Theotokos at the Blachernai Church, the account of the Life of Andreas Salos compiled by Nicephorus, who introduced himself as a priest of the Hagia Sophia, highlights the merciful nature of the Virgin Mary and her prayers for the salvation of the Blachernai congregation that was visualized through her act of spreading her veil (or maphorion) on them.⁴⁸⁴ According to Nicephorus, Saint Andrew the Fool (a.k.a. Andreas Salos) and his companion Epiphanius, the future patriarch of Constantinople according to Andreas, were visiting the Blachernai Church on Sunday, October 1, most probably in year 926, for the nightly vigil.⁴⁸⁵ At some points of the prayers (according to account at the fourth hour of the night), Blachernai's dome was widened, and the miraculous Virgin, along with numerous saints and angels in white garments, entered the church. The miraculous Theotokos moved across the church and reached the ambo, knelt before the altar, and prayed for the congregation with tears in her eyes.⁴⁸⁶ At that time, one of her saintly companions approached St. Andrew and asked him if he

⁴⁸³ Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 43-4, 47, 52-6; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20, 60-2.

⁴⁸⁴ Lennart Rydén, "The Date of the 'Life of Andreas Salos'," *Dumbarton Oak Papers* 32 (1978): 129; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 62-3.

⁴⁸⁵ Nicephorus' account of St. Andrew the Fool contains anachronistic elements. According to his text, St. Andrew was a figure contemporary to emperor Leo I (?-474), while the general consensus on the subject indicates that he lived during the 10th century, a plausible assertion considering the dating of his companion Epiphanius' life and his employment of the patriarch of Constantinople, also corresponding to 10th century. In that regard, Nicephorus seemingly mimicked a 6th-century holy fool for Christ, Symeon of Emesa, for the figuration of St. Andrew the Fool on his account. Even though the dating of St. Andrew's vita by Nicephorus corresponds to the 5th-6th century, the date of the miraculous Blachernai vision is indicated as the 10th century, once again underlying the anachronistic nature of the work. Alexander Kazhdan, and Nancy Patterson Sevcenko, "Andrew the Fool," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* Volume 1, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 93; Lennart Rydén, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool Volume I, Introduction, Testimonies, and Nachleben Indices* (Uppsala: Textgruppen i Uppsala AB, 1995), 38-40; Rydén, "The Date of the 'Life of Andreas Salos'," 129-132; "Leo I," History & Society, Britannica, last modified January 30, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Leo-I-Roman-emperor>.

⁴⁸⁶ Lennart Rydén, "The Vision of the Virgin at Blachernae and the Feast of Pokrov," *Analecta Bollandiana* 94, Issue 1-2 (1976): 66-7.

could see the Virgin in the church, and St. Andrew replied that he was referring to the saint as his spiritual father. After she finished her prayers, the Theotokos headed towards the sanctuary, where she continued her prayers.⁴⁸⁷ While praying, the Virgin removed her maphorion and spread over the congregation, which miraculously extended extensively, leaving no one excluded. The vision of the maphorion remained on the spot as long as the miraculous mother was there. Even though she took her miracle away when she left Blachernai and returned to the heavenly sphere, the protection and salvation she promised remained with the congregation members throughout their lives.⁴⁸⁸

The Blachernai miracle experienced by St. Andrew the Fool, his companion Epiphanius, and the congregation attending the nightly vigil illustrates the symbolism of the Virgin's maphorion, typically rehearsing the notions of the Misericordia theme developed in Italy nearly in the next 300 hundred years, or even more. The act of spreading veil/maphorion over devoted Christians by the holy Virgin is a concept that both the 10th century, Byzantine-originated, vision and the Italian iconography illustrating the Virgin's mercy evidently share, enhancing the possibility of the Byzantine influence over the Misericordia iconography.⁴⁸⁹ Even though the Blachernai miracle did not further elaborate as an artistic theme of Byzantium, instead developed into an important feast and, relatedly, iconographical theme in the lands of Rus, what the Blachernai church provided as a complex, i.e., iconography, miracles, and miraculous relic of maphorion, to the Latin West should not be overlooked in the context of this artistic theme.⁴⁹⁰ Considering the continuous cross-cultural interactions between Byzantium and the Latin West and their hybrid outcomes (as illustrated through silken garments and Marian icons), the Byzantine impact on the Virgin of Mercy theme becomes apparent, even if it was not in direct manners,

⁴⁸⁷ Rydén, "The Vision of the Virgin at Blachernae and the Feast of Pokrov," 66-7.

⁴⁸⁸ Rydén, "The Vision of the Virgin at Blachernae and the Feast of Pokrov," 66-7.

⁴⁸⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 11, 62-5, 66.

⁴⁹⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 58, 62-5, 66. The Blachernai vision became famous in Russian lands, and annual celebrations of the vision were initiated in the 12th century. Such celebrations collocated with the festivities called Pokrov, and in subsequent years, illustrations of the Blachernai's vision on icons became popular, adopting the title of the festivities, Pokrov, for that artistic theme. According to Rydén, one of the possible factors for the development of the Pokrov festival and iconography was the translation of Nicephorus' text from Greek to Old Church Slavonic (late 11th-early 12th century) and his indication of St. Andrew's identity as a Scythian on the vita, resulting in Slavs affection on the subject as they considered St. Andrew as one of them. The representation of the Blachernai vision, i.e., Pokrov, did not find a place in Byzantium. On the other hand, numerous illustrations were executed in the Russian counterpart, depicting the Virgin with one veil on her hands and the other still around her hair, thus not distorting her dignified figure, accompanied by angels and sometimes with Christ. At the same time, the portrayal of St. Andrew and Epiphanius was not always apparent. Rydén, "The Vision of the Virgin at Blachernae and the Feast of Pokrov," 74-7.

especially in terms of the nonpersistent inclusion of the Child in mandorla since not all Misericordia examples feature him.

Although not detailed as the previous two narratives, John Skylitzes remarked on Romanos I Lekapenos (r. 920-944) preparation for his meeting with the Bulgarian leader Symeon for peace negotiations in 926, that he wrapped himself with the miraculous maphorion kept at the Blachernai, is equally important for the Misericordia concept as it highlights the notion of finding protection under, or in this case inside, the Virgin's mantle that predominated the Misericordia theme.⁴⁹¹ Considering that personalized images of the Misericordia, in other words, the portrayal of nobilities and wealthy laymen under the Virgin's maphorion, existed along with depictions of members of specific mendicant orders, congregations, or confraternities in the same regard; Romanos I Lekapenos' preference of wrapping himself to the Virgin's maphorion, can be considered as one of the precursors of what numerous people materialized their wish of protection through Misericordia representations.⁴⁹²

In terms of iconography, miracle narratives, and the maphorion of the Virgin, the Blachernae Church incorporates some significant features of the Misericordia iconography long before the development and prevalence of this specific iconographic type in the Italian peninsula. In that regard, Constantinople can be comprehended as one of the origin places of the theme. While interactions between Byzantium and the Latin West were generally directed through the Constantinople-Venice link, the diffusion of such Blachernae features and, eventually, the Misericordia iconography's development did not occur directly on that line. In fact, the transition of interest was maintained through the commercial and artistic interactions along the Mediterranean, given that the prototypic image of the Misericordia theme first emerged in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia.

⁴⁹¹ "Romanos I Lekapenos (920-944)," God's Regents on Earth: A Thousand Years of Byzantine Imperial Seals, Online Exhibits, Dumbarton Oaks, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://www.doaks.org/resources/online-exhibits/gods-regents-on-earth-a-thousand-years-of-byzantine-imperial-seals/not-born-in-the-purple-interlopers-and-usurpers/romanos-i-constantine-vii-and-stephen-931201344>; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 53; Siren Çelik, "Certain Historical Events Witnessed by the Walls in the Byzantine Period," Istanbul City Walls; Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 44.

⁴⁹² Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 132-37; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 53.

The Armenian Cilicia, also referred to as the Little Armenia, indicates the Armenian Kingdom established on the Cilicia region of the Mediterranean coast, spread from Isauria, today's Bozkır county of Konya, across to the eastern end of Amanus Mountains, today's Nur Mountains in Hatay.⁴⁹³ Ruled over the territory throughout 1198-1375, Armenians established their kingdom in the region as an aftermath of consequent delocalization of the Armenian population for nearly two centuries; initiated with the reconquest of the Cilicia region by Byzantine emperor Nikephoros Phokas in 965 (as the area was lost to Umayyads in 8th century), continued with the increasing Seljuk threat over the lands of Greater Armenia, especially after the Manzikert in 1071.⁴⁹⁴ In order to devitalize the Byzantine domination of their internal and political affairs, Armenians affiliated with the Frankish Imperials, fought with the Franks over Seljuks and Byzantines, strengthening their existence in the Cilician region. Moreover, by marrying members of Frankish ruling families, the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia established close ties with the Latin



Figure 3.7: *The Marshal Ōshin Gospel Book, illumination depicting Ōshin and his sons under the Virgin's garment, with archbishop Johannes, 1274, manuscript illumination, 222 x 153 mm, The Morgan Library and Museum, New York, United States of America (ascension number: MS M.1111)*

⁴⁹³ Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Introduction," in *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, ed. Sirarpie Der Nersessian, and Sylvia Agemian (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1993), xi; "Little Armenia," Geography & Travel, Britannica, last modified August 28, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Little-Armenia>; "Isauria," Geography & Travel, Britannica, last modified April 2, 2014, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Isauria>; "Amanus Mountains," The Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018 (online publication)), Oxford Reference, accessed February 15, 2024, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780198662778.001.0001/acref-9780198662778-e-195>.

⁴⁹⁴ Weyl Carr, "Introduction," xi-xii.

West rather than the adjacent Byzantine Empire, especially in the 12th century.⁴⁹⁵ In the subsequent century, with the changing political dynamics in Constantinople and Anatolia, that was, through the Latin occupation of the Byzantine capital (1204) and the rupture of Seljuks in 1247, the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia became the central point of the political and cultural route between the East and the West.⁴⁹⁶ In addition to being a transition point for Latin Crusaders headed to the Holy Land, as well as for the commerce between the East and the West, the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia was a rendezvous place for traveling friars of mendicant orders, significantly for Franciscans and Dominicans, who wished to convert non-Christians to their true religion, as well as to appeal the Eastern Christians into Catholicism.⁴⁹⁷ Moreover, popes employed mendicant orders as acting bodies in the name of the Vatican to initiate negotiations between the Catholic and the Orthodox realms and to reunify both churches as they became separate entities after the Great Schism in 1054. The reunification attempts were significant for both spheres, given the increasing threat of Islam on Christianity.⁴⁹⁸ Even though missionary activities mainly carried out by members of those two mendicant orders did not flourish as required, their pious attempts resulted in hybrid artistic forms in both regions.⁴⁹⁹

The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia has significant importance in developing and popularizing the Misericordia iconography in Italy since one of the earliest examples, or prototypes of illustrations of the merciful Virgin, had emerged in that region.⁵⁰⁰ Appeared in the Marshal Ōshin Gospel Book (1274), the illumination featuring Marshal Ōshin, a high-ranking official of the court, his two sons, Konstandin and Het'um, and Archbishop Johannes, together with the Virgin and Child.⁵⁰¹ Interpreted as a donor portrait, this illumination on the manuscript displays the father and sons underneath the Virgin's mantle, who was enthroned and holding the Child Christ on her lap.⁵⁰² Archbishop Johannes did not find himself a space underneath the miraculous

⁴⁹⁵ Weyl Carr, "Introduction," xi-xii.

⁴⁹⁶ Weyl Carr, "Introduction," xii-xiii.

⁴⁹⁷ Weyl Carr, "Introduction," xii-xiii; Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50.

⁴⁹⁸ Derbes and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 450.

⁴⁹⁹ Derbes and Neff, "Italy, and the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 450, 452-53.

⁵⁰⁰ Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 69-70; Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, ed. Sirarpie Der Nersessian, and Sylvia Agemian (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1993), 159.

⁵⁰¹ Alice Mary Talbot, "Revival and Decline: Voices from the Byzantine Capital," in *Byzantium, Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. Helen C. Evans (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 61.

⁵⁰² Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, 158-59; Talbot, "Revival and Decline," 60-61.



Figure 3.8: Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Madonna of the Franciscans*, c. 1280, tempera on wood, 23,5 x 16 cm, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena, Italy.

garment. Instead, he pointed the father and sons to the Virgin as if he represented them to the Holy Mother and Child, asking for their mercy and acceptance.⁵⁰³ The beholder can understand that mercy was granted to them since the Virgin gathered them under her mantle, and simultaneously, Christ offered them blessings.⁵⁰⁴ As previously mentioned, the mendicant orders played an essential role in the diffusion of Eastern artistic features into the Western sphere, especially in incorporating Byzantine aesthetics into Italian art, eventually forming Italian panel painting.⁵⁰⁵ In that regard, the Cilicia manuscript of interest clearly demonstrates some notions that the Latin West appropriated, such as the golden background, gold striations on

the Virgin's porphyry mantle, elongated bodies, etc.⁵⁰⁶ Similarly, the Western infusion into the region was also concluded in reverse appropriation; in other words, Eastern artworks started to represent specific Western characteristics.⁵⁰⁷ In the case of this illumination, as underlined by Sirarpie Der Nersessian, the fleur-de-lys motif adorning the archbishop's garment can be proposed as one of the Western elements of the item.⁵⁰⁸ Furthermore, the kneeling position of Ōshin and his

⁵⁰³ Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, 159; Talbot, "Revival and Decline," 61.

⁵⁰⁴ Michele Bacci, "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale," *Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia* 21, no.7, edited by Siri Sande, and Lasse Hodne (2018): 180.

⁵⁰⁵ Derbes and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 450,453-54; National Gallery of Art, "Byzantine Art and Painting in Italy during the 1200s and 1300s."

⁵⁰⁶ National Gallery of Art, "Byzantine Art and Painting in Italy during the 1200s and 1300s."

⁵⁰⁷ Derbes and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 460.

⁵⁰⁸ Talbot, "Revival and Decline," 61; Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, 159.

sons and the fur borders ornamenting their robes, together with the luxurious, silken look of Johannes' vestment, can be acknowledged as one of the visual testimonies of the cross-cultural interaction between the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia and the Italian peninsula.⁵⁰⁹

Apart from such commonalities between artworks of those interacting spheres, the portrayal of the Virgin Mary comes to the forefront in this illumination.⁵¹⁰ Seated on a backless throne, the Virgin welcomes Ōshin and his two sons underneath her mantle, gathering them on her right-hand side, i.e., the preferred side.⁵¹¹ Even though such display differentiates from the canonical representation of the Virgin of Mercy theme since she only opens one side of her mantle, the implication of the illumination is the same: receiving protection underneath the Virgin's mantle, who intervened and pleaded Christ for their salvation, which was granted as understandable from the blessing gesture of the Child.⁵¹²

Interestingly, the earliest known example of Madonna della Misericordia shares the same composition as the mentioned Marshal Ōshin illumination.⁵¹³ Painted by Duccio di Buoninsegna (?-c. 1319), Madonna of the Franciscans, c. 1280, strikingly resembles the Cilician example.⁵¹⁴ Even though Duccio's painting contains missing spots, the remaining portion suffices to comment on the artwork and the similarities it shares with the aforementioned Cilician illumination.⁵¹⁵ Once again seated on an elaborate yet backless throne, Duccio's Virgin opened her mantle to three friars identified as Franciscans due to their tonsured heads and brown vestments, whose figuration represents proskynesis, the typical uniform of their order.⁵¹⁶ Like the Cilician manuscript, the heads of the Holy Mother and Son were slightly tilted. The Child's gaze and attention were forwarded to friars seeking refugee under the Virgin's mantle in both representations.⁵¹⁷

⁵⁰⁹ Talbot, "Revival and Decline," 61; Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, 159; Derbes and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50; Weyl Carr, "Introduction," xi-xiii.

⁵¹⁰ Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 69.

⁵¹¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104, 132, 135-37; Derbes and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 461.

⁵¹² Bacci, "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale," 180.

⁵¹³ Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, 159.

⁵¹⁴ Bacci, "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale," 171-73; "Duccio," Arts & Culture, Britannica, last modified April 30, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Duccio>.

⁵¹⁵ Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 68-70.

⁵¹⁶ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 121; Bacci, "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale," 171; Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 130-36.

⁵¹⁷ Bacci, "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale," 173.

On the other hand, both works of art differ with respect to the enhanced naturalism in Duccio's work, i.e., more voluminous figures, non-existent golden background or striations, increased spatially, etc.⁵¹⁸ Furthermore, four angelic/celestial figures flank the Virgin and the Child and most probably hold the garment behind, just like other *Misericordia* artworks, even though it is impossible to be sure of due to the damaged portions of the panel. That garment, referred to as a cloth of honor, distorted the reality of the space; in other words, it signifies the heavenly sphere, just like the golden background of Ōshin's illumination.⁵¹⁹ The reason behind such different approaches to obtaining the distorted reality of space in both artworks might rely on their cultural backgrounds.⁵²⁰ The golden background in Ōshin's illumination represents the predominant Byzantine influence on the region.⁵²¹ In contrast, the luxurious silken piece in Duccio's panel painting signifies the tradition of reflecting wealth and power by representing traded or locally woven expensive clothes.⁵²² This notion was commonly incorporated into *Misericordia* artworks, as previously mentioned.⁵²³ Last but not least, the garments of the holy figures in both paintings are incompatible. While Ōshin's illumination follows the Byzantine canon, especially in the Virgin's garments and Christ's tunic, Duccio's painting displays a different formulation for the latter.⁵²⁴ As Michele Bacci emphasized, Duccio depicted the Child Christ in a diaphanous tunic; his visible flesh symbolizes the future Crucifixion, while his tunic underlines his human nature; in that regard, his tunic seemingly substitutes the lacking mandorla, which had been occasionally displayed in that theme to illustrate the same notion.⁵²⁵

The differences mentioned above between both artworks came into sight concerning the cultural milieu they belonged to. Yet, the similarities, especially the same composition, demonstrate that cross-cultural interaction between both spheres had been reflected in their artworks as a shared artistic language.⁵²⁶ Moreover, in the context of *Misericordia* paintings, Cilician illumination is an interesting yet significant point to consider. Considering the discussion

⁵¹⁸ Cecilia Jannella, *Duccio di Buoninsegna* (Florence: SCALA, 1991), 16; "Duccio's Madonna and Child," Exhibitions & Events, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed February 18, 2024, <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2004/duccio>.

⁵¹⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 102; Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," 99-101.

⁵²⁰ Jannella, *Duccio di Buoninsegna*, 16.

⁵²¹ Weyl Carr, "Introduction," xi-xii.

⁵²² Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," 99-101.

⁵²³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 102; Jannella, *Duccio di Buoninsegna*, 16.

⁵²⁴ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images, Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography*, 227.

⁵²⁵ Bacci, "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale," 173; Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282.

⁵²⁶ Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 450, 460.

on the Blachernai Church and its possible influence on the Misericordia theme with respect to its icons and miracle narratives, coming across another influential model in Armenian Cilicia, which was a relatively close geography to Constantinople, is not too surprising given that impacted each other's culture through interaction.⁵²⁷ Yet, it is essential to acknowledge that Constantinopolitan and Cilician notions functioned as influences; in other words, one cannot propose that the Misericordia iconography had emerged in either location. Instead, such similarities between artworks imply that the Misericordia iconography had been cultivated from various cultural themes and elongated before developing into its last phase in Italy.⁵²⁸ Rehearsing the execution date of the Cilician illumination, 1274, its interpretation as a possible model of Duccio's painting, painted in c. 1280, and the journey of such compositional influence from Armenian Cilicia to Italy through the agency of the mendicant orders becomes plausible.⁵²⁹

The diffusion of artistic influences regarding the Misericordia typology was eligible due to the connection between Armenian Cilicia and Italy, sparked by the missionary activities of mendicant orders.⁵³⁰ However, disseminating those influences was not straightforward; instead, they commenced in Cilicia and proceeded towards the Dalmatian Coast, mainly Bari and Venice, after reaching Cyprus.⁵³¹ As a Mediterranean island, Cyprus had a lucrative position in terms of cultural and commercial interactions, given its centrality in the East-West direction.⁵³² Like Cilicia, Cyprus was transformed into a frequent destination for the migration of Armenians running away from the growing Seljuk threat.⁵³³ Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the affinity established between Cilicians and Franks, which gave rise to intermarriages between both groups and accelerated the cultural exchange among them, was also apparent in Cypriot counterpart.⁵³⁴ The existence of Armenians in Cypriot lands, either settled there due to forced migration or family relations, resulted in the hybridization of their aesthetics, formulating a shared repertoire.⁵³⁵ Even though Latin families predominantly ruled Cyprus, especially the French Lusignan family before

⁵²⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 12, 20, 60-3, 67-8; Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 56.

⁵²⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 60-3, 67-8; Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 56.

⁵²⁹ Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, 159; Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50.

⁵³⁰ Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50.

⁵³¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 68-9.

⁵³² "Cyprus," Geography & Travel, Britannica, last modified February 15, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Cyprus>; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69.

⁵³³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 68-9.

⁵³⁴ Weyl Carr, "Introduction," xi-xii.

⁵³⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69.

the Venetian state, the Byzantine artistic tradition had already been established in the region, i.e., Byzantine iconographical formulas, including the Virgin's frontal position, were featured in the Cypriot artistic language.⁵³⁶ Such Byzantine notions were preferred by Latin patrons, along with the Orthodox congregation, as understood by using Eastern style and iconographies in Latin religious settings.⁵³⁷ That was an essential notion to consider since Cypriots, along with Eastern and Western settlers on the island, were already familiar with multicultural ethnicity and hybrid artistic tradition, all of which paved the way for disseminating composite artistic forms formulated/evolved in Cypriot region to the Italian peninsula.⁵³⁸

One of the Cilician characteristics that reached Cypriot lands was seemingly the iconographical type elaborating the merciful Virgin through the gathered devotees underneath her mantle, the prototypic *Misericordia*, as previously emphasized for the Marshal Ōshin Gospel Book (1274).⁵³⁹ The interest in that iconography by Cypriots and Latin patrons living on the island can be attested through the late-13th-century panel painting (inventory number: BMIAM. 006) currently exhibited at the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation, Nicosia, Cyprus.⁵⁴⁰ That panel painting, *Enthroned Virgin with Christ, Carmelite monks under her cloak, and flanking scenes of miracles of the Virgin*, demonstrates a very similar composition with the aforementioned illumination on the Marshal Ōshin Gospel Book: the enthroned Virgin opens the right-hand side of her cloak and gathers the pleading Carmelite monks underneath while Christ blesses them.⁵⁴¹ Interestingly, the same artwork bears further resemblances with Duccio's *Misericordia* regarding the existence of friars underneath the mantle, Carmelite brothers in the Cypriot panel, and Franciscans in Duccio's painting.⁵⁴² Both aspects can be acknowledged as visual testimonies of the artistic interactions between Constantinople, Armenian Cilicia, Cyprus, and the Italian peninsula since the similar characteristics attest to the journey and development of

⁵³⁶ Georgopoulou, "Venice and the Byzantine Sphere," 489; Brown, 69.

⁵³⁷ Brown *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69; Georgopoulou, "Venice and the Byzantine Sphere," 489-90.

⁵³⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69; Georgopoulou, "Venice and the Byzantine Sphere," 489-90.

⁵³⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69.

⁵⁴⁰ Ioannis A. Eliades, "Enthroned Virgin Mary and Child with Carmelite monks and scenes of miracles in the Museum of Nicosia," in *La Vie della Misericordia, Arte, Cultura e Percorsi Mariani tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. by Maria Stella Calo Mariani, and Anna Trono (Lecce: Congedo Editore, 2017), 54.

⁵⁴¹ Eliades, "Enthroned Virgin Mary and Child with Carmelite monks," 58-9; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69.

⁵⁴² Eliades, "Enthroned Virgin Mary and Child with Carmelite monks," 58-9; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69; Bacci, "La Madonna della Misericordia individuale," 171.

this specific iconographical formula while also testifies the existence of such theme in Cypriot lands that reached through the agency of traveling Armenians.⁵⁴³ Altogether, the proposed diagram reflecting the development of the Misericordia theme through different lands becomes plausible.

As previously emphasized, the Misericordia theme entered the Italian peninsula through two important coastal states, Bari and Venice.⁵⁴⁴ In the context of this thesis, only the Venetian aspect will be elaborated concerning the Venetian characteristics of the Galata icon. La Serenissima was not foreign to Byzantine aesthetics due to its constant interaction with the empire and its trading posts established in the Byzantine capital.⁵⁴⁵ In that regard, the Venetian state displayed numerous Byzantine cultural and artistic elements on monumental and private spheres.⁵⁴⁶ The icon of the Virgin Nicopeia displayed in the San Marco Basilica can be proposed as an essential example.⁵⁴⁷ In fact, La Serenissima had numerous representations of the Virgin Mary with Child in clypeus/or mandorla, just like the Nicopeia icon, either with an enthroned Virgin or her display in Orans position.⁵⁴⁸ According to Katherine Brown, Cyprus served as a significant artistic space for the diffusion of such iconography into the Venetian sphere, along with religious items depicting the same themes from Constantinople.⁵⁴⁹ Moreover, the Cilician type of Misericordia seemingly reached the Venetian soils after it was further developed by incorporating certain Cypriot artistic features, such as the frontal display of the Virgin, as visible in the aforementioned Cypriot painting of the enthroned Virgin and the Child with Carmelite friars.⁵⁵⁰ Brown underlines that such iconography reaching La Serenissima was gradually combined with the Venetian aesthetics of displaying the Virgin in frontal composition and, consequently, transformed into the Misericordia iconography, like in the Galata icon.⁵⁵¹

⁵⁴³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 68-9.

⁵⁴⁴ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69-70, 74-6.

⁵⁴⁵ Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe.

⁵⁴⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 74.

⁵⁴⁷ Sevcenko, "Virgin Nikopoios," 2176.

⁵⁴⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 74-7.

⁵⁴⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 75-6.

⁵⁵⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 74-5; Eliades, "Enthroned Virgin Mary and Child with Carmelite monks," 58-9.

⁵⁵¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 79.

3.2.1.2 Western Roots of the Misericordia Iconography

As illustrated in the preceding pages, particular features of the Byzantine artistic heritage played a crucial role in the development of the Misericordia iconography, especially in the Italian peninsula, namely in Venice and Bari. Their impact was not straightforward; in other words, such Byzantine influences first resulted in the flowering of a prototypic Misericordia imagery in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, which had been transferred to Cyprus and later to Venice, mainly through the agency of mendicant friars, aristocratic families, and merchants.⁵⁵² On the other hand, a similar artistic emphasis on the Virgin's merciful



Figure 3.9: Seal of the Cistercian Convent and the Hospital of Ste.-Marie de la Byloke, 14th-15th century, retrieved from Paul Perdrizet's book *La Vierge de Miséricorde; étude d'un thème iconographique* (1908) p.II.2

cloak in the Latin West had started to develop simultaneously, especially since its imagery became visible in the late 13th century.⁵⁵³ While the impact of such Western development had also been observed in the Italian peninsula, the Byzantine, Armenian, and Cypriot influences were seemingly more instrumental in developing Italian Misericordia typology.⁵⁵⁴ This notion can be acknowledged through the formation of the Veneto-Byzantine artistic vocabulary as an outcome of the sturdy cross-cultural interactions between both states for centuries.⁵⁵⁵ The visual

⁵⁵² Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 68-9; Georgopoulou, "Venice and the Byzantine Sphere," 489; Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50.

⁵⁵³ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 129.

⁵⁵⁴ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 131; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 69-79; Eliades, "Enthroned Virgin Mary and Child with Carmelite monks," 58-9; Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century Volume I*, 159; Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50; Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 56.

⁵⁵⁵ Michele Bacci, "Veneto-Byzantine 'Hybrids': Towards a Reassessment," *Studies in Iconography* 35 (2014): 73-6.



Figure 3.10: Gmünder Bauhütte (?), *Maria mit dem Schutzmantel (Pestbild)*, 1370, sandstone, currently at Landesmuseum Württemberg, Germany (Inventory Number: WLM 14288)

representation of the previous statement, the distinctive impact of Byzantine artistic features on the Italian Misericordia typology, is apparent in Misericordia artworks that Italian artists painted throughout the 13th and 14th centuries. Such artistic examples will be illustrated in the following pages.

Even though the main focus of this thesis is on the Italian, namely the Venetian Misericordia imagery, given that the execution of the Galata icon's revetment took place when the church was still under La Serenissima's protection (thus influenced by Venetian features), the concurrent development of this Marian iconography in other regions of the Western sphere is equally crucial for interpreting the iconography represented on the Galata icon, considering the perpetual artistic interactions happening within the Latin West as

well.⁵⁵⁶ From a Western point of view, the origin of the Misericordia iconography can be attributed to the Roman practice of accepting children by their fathers as legitimate members of their lineages. That particular earthly legal practice was connotated with sheltering those legitimate children under their fathers' cloaks; therefore, the initial imagery of the Misericordia iconography had developed in antiquity with an emphasis on paternal protection.⁵⁵⁷ The concept of the sheltering cloak, which was nuanced by that legal Roman practice in the following centuries, was further associated with the divine nature of the Virgin in 12th-13th centuries.⁵⁵⁸ Such association was achieved through miracle narratives indicating the divine intervention of the Virgin for those who were in need, and particularly in Western Europe, the Marian legend that illustrates the Virgin

⁵⁵⁶ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

⁵⁵⁷ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 128; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 49.

⁵⁵⁸ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 128-29.

saving people who are about to drown by covering with her mantle became influential in that association.⁵⁵⁹ In relation, the concept of the Virgin Mary's protective cloak was adopted by friars of mendicant orders in the West, especially by Cistercians and Dominicans, who further developed the idea of the protective cloak into the notion of *Mater Omnium*, the mother of everyone who believes, i.e., the mother of all devoted Christians.⁵⁶⁰ The perception of *Mater Omnium* being intertwined with the miraculous mantle of the Virgin Mary resulted in the formation of one of prototypic images of Misericordia typology in the Western sphere. One such image had appeared on the banner of a Roman fraternity in the late 13th century (c.1267), while in the 14th century, similar representations were engrafted on the seals of the Cistercian order, altogether indicating that the development of the Misericordia imagery in the West was tightly connected to the perception of the Virgin's miraculous mantle by the mendicant orders.⁵⁶¹

As the Misericordia typology gained popularity in the 14th and 15th centuries, Western Europe saw a rapid production of artwork in a variety of media, including painting, sculpture, fresco, and more. This was particularly evident in Germanic areas where the faithful community began to refer to this typology as *Schutzmantelmadonna*, embracing the idea of the merciful Virgin and the miraculous agency of her mantle in the context of salvation.⁵⁶² Still interpreting the Misericordia typology intertwined with the notion of *Mater Omnium*, artworks displaying *Schutzmantelmadonna* put emphasis on different contexts that the Virgin's mantle shelters the humankind, including the anger of the God and the earthly disasters.⁵⁶³ Of these two iconographic formulas demonstrating the *Schutzmantelmadonna*, the first one (which had to do with natural disasters) was primarily linked to the late 14th-century bubonic plague, the Black Death.⁵⁶⁴ In such representations, the Misericordia iconography had been utilized as a visual guarantee of being protected from becoming transmitted with the disease since it gives the possibility of pleading to God and asking prayers from the Virgin Mary simultaneously, as the former is generally depicted

⁵⁵⁹ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 129; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 53; Siren Çelik, "Certain Historical Events Witnessed by the Walls in the Byzantine Period," *Istanbul City Walls*; Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 44; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 132-37.

⁵⁶⁰ Eamon Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988: Mater Dolorosa, Mater Misericordiae," *New Blackfriars* 69, No. 816 (May 1988): 212-13; Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 159; Britannica, "Mendicant."

⁵⁶¹ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 129-30; Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 213; Susan Solway, "A Numismatic Source of the Madonna of Mercy," *The Art Bulletin* 67, No. 3 (September 1985): 360-62.

⁵⁶² Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 130.

⁵⁶³ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 129-30; Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 213.

⁵⁶⁴ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 130; "Black Death," *World History*, Britannica, last modified May 6, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Black-Death>.

in the form of the Child around his mother's chest. At the same time, the Virgin Mary gathers all the believers of the world underneath her mantle, thus providing protection.⁵⁶⁵ The late 14th-century sculpture *Maria mit dem Schutzmantel (Pestbild)* (Fig. 3.10.) is one of the examples representing this specific sub-category of the Misericordia iconography. This particular sandstone sculpture was attributed to Gmünder Bauhütte in 1370 and is considered one of the oldest sculptural representations of the Misericordia typology in Germany.⁵⁶⁶ Currently preserved at Landesmuseum Württemberg in Germany, this sculpture is categorized as a plague painting given that during that period, sculptural representations of Schutzmantelmadonna were interrelated to the plague (1348-50) that predominantly affected the region and relatedly the population.⁵⁶⁷ While in terms of iconographical details, this sculpture slightly differentiates from the generic 'pestbild' with the merciful Virgin given that the representation of the Child is missing, due to its historical and spatial contexts, it was acknowledged as a rare example of this particular iconography.⁵⁶⁸ Furthermore, in this specific iconography, the intercessory role of the Virgin Mary between Christ and humankind is further emphasized, given that such imagery was utilized for the faithful to plead mercy and protection from Christ and simultaneously to request the Virgin's intercession between them and the God for granting the former's well-being. In that regard, one can draw parallels with the Hodegetria iconography, thus underlining the latter's impact on forming the Misericordia imagery.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁵ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 130; Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 214-15.

⁵⁶⁶ "Maria mit dem Schutzmantel (Pestbild)," Museum-Digital:Baden-Württemberg, last modified November 25, 2023, <https://bawue.museum-digital.de/object/1845>; "Schutzmantelmadonna," Bildindex, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, accessed May 12, 2024, <https://www.bildindex.de/document/obj20715114?medium=mi08966c14>.

⁵⁶⁷ Museum-Digital: Baden-Württemberg, "Maria mit dem Schutzmantel (Pestbild).", Bildindex, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, "Schutzmantelmadonna."

⁵⁶⁸ Museum-Digital: Baden-Württemberg, "Maria mit dem Schutzmantel (Pestbild)."

⁵⁶⁹ Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 214-15; Sevchenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170-171.

Another sub-typology of the Misericordia iconography that predominated the Germanic areas in the 14th and 15th centuries emphasizes the Virgin Mary's protective role of humankind from God's anger by sheltering all Christians underneath her miraculous mantle.⁵⁷⁰ Typically, in these depictions, Christ was portrayed as the father of heaven, intended to punish humanity for its sins (pride, greed, and avarice) by



Figure 3.11: Simon von Taisten, *Schutzmantelmadonna mit Stifterbildern*, 1495, fresco, Trinity Chapel, Bruck Castle, Lienz, Germany.

bringing forth famine, war, and plague—three symbolic arrows that he launches from the clouds.⁵⁷¹ On the other hand, the Virgin Mary gathers a crowded group of people from different levels of the social strata, thus emphasizing humankind, and wards off the arrows sent by God with her miraculous cloak. In such representations, angels generally hold and extend the Virgin's cloak, while various saints find themselves in a position in the composition.⁵⁷² The late 15th-century fresco *Schutzmantelmadonna mit Stifterbildern* by Simon von Taisten illustrates the abovementioned features of this iconographical type in a clarifying manner.⁵⁷³ In this fresco, painted on the north wall of the Trinity Chapel in the Bruck Castle, Lienz, Germany, the Virgin Mary is displayed at the center of the composition, looking towards God and pointing herself as if she is asking him to forgive the humankind; thus her intercessory role and merciful nature are visualized.⁵⁷⁴ Underneath her mantle, a mixed group of people from different professions and social classes are represented, which can be interpreted from their headgear and garments.⁵⁷⁵ All

⁵⁷⁰ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 130-31.

⁵⁷¹ Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 213.

⁵⁷² Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 130-31; Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 213.

⁵⁷³ "Schutzmantelmadonna mit Stifterbildern," Bildindex, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, accessed May 12, 2024, https://www.bildindex.de/document/obj19051666?medium=fmlac9130_36.

⁵⁷⁴ Bildindex, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, "Schutzmantelmadonna mit Stifterbildern."

⁵⁷⁵ Leopold Kretzenbacher, "Schutz- und Bittgebärden der Gottesmutter, Zu Vorbedingungen, Auftreten und Nachleben mittelalterlicher Fürbitte-Gesten zwischen Hochkunst, Legende und Volksglauben," *Bayerische Akademie Der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Sitzungsberichte* 1981, no.3, (February 1981): 17.



Figure 3.12: Detail of God. Simon von Taisten, *Schutzmantelmadonna mit Stifterbildern*, 1495, fresco, Trinity Chapel, Bruck Castle, Lienz, Germany.

figures are bending on their knees with praying gestures, features underlying their respect and pleading to the Virgin. God, represented as an older man, appears above the clouds from the celestial realm, looking towards the Virgin Mary and the crowd underneath her mantle with a mixture of anger and sadness; the latter can be interpreted as his sorrow. Altogether, Simon von Taisten's fresco dually emphasizes the Virgin's merciful nature and her intercessory manner while reinforcing the idea of aiming to live an impeccable life to beholders by representing what would happen if they did otherwise.⁵⁷⁶

Another variation of the Misericordia iconography displays the Virgin Mary in a similar composition, with a pleading crowd underneath her mantle while the Child is placed in her arms, blessing the crowd. Contrary to the previous typology that emphasizes Christ's anger towards humanity, his merciful nature is underlined in this representation and further strengthened by the similar representation of the Virgin.⁵⁷⁷ Through such illustration of the Virgin Mary and the Child, the intended message of the Misericordia iconography, achieving divine help and eternal salvation through the agency of the Virgin and the Child, is accentuated. Along with the *pestbild* type, the representation of the merciful Christ within the Misericordia iconography predominated Germanic lands throughout the 14th and 15th centuries.⁵⁷⁸ The altarpiece, *Schutzmantelmadonna*, of the Locherer Chapel in Freiburg: Minster of Our Dear Lady exhibits this particular iconography. Constructed by Hans Sixt von Stafuen in 1521-24, this specific artwork emphasizes the merciful nature of the Virgin Mary and Christ.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁶ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 130-31; Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 213.

⁵⁷⁷ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 131.

⁵⁷⁸ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 130-31.

⁵⁷⁹ "Schnitzaltar," Bildindex, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, accessed May 12, 2024, https://www.bildindex.de/document/obj20223616?part=0&medium=sskkf10950_13; "Freiburg: Minster of Our Dear Lady," Google Arts & Culture, accessed May 12, 2024, <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/freiburg-minster-of-our-dear-lady-0001/rgHfyTpeibJgFg>; Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 130-31; "Schutzmantelaltar in der Locherer-Kapelle," Universität Konstanz, accessed May 12, 2024, https://www.lkm.uni-konstanz.de/otg/karten.php?ID=20&item_ID=5040.

Like in previous examples, the Virgin Mary is posited on the center of the altar, holding the Child in her arms, who gazes downward at a group of devotees gathered under his mother's miraculous mantle. Interestingly, the Virgin's garment seems to be floating, an illusion created by angels holding her cloak, altogether resembling the Baroque examples appearing in the following centuries.⁵⁸⁰ A close inspection of figures that came together under the Virgin's mantle reveals that, once again, they belong to different classes of the social strata, given that their garments clarify their professions: pope, cardinal, royalties, and even a knight exist within



Figure 3.1.3: Hans Sixt von Stafuen (and Hans Wysinger), *Schnitzaltar Schutzmantelmadonna*, 1521-1524, wooden (?) altar, Locherer Chapel, Minster of Our Dear Lady, Freiburg, Germany.

that group.⁵⁸¹ Their act of pleading is visualized with their gestures, all of them looking towards the holy mother and the Child. Lastly, the canopy they stand under is a work of delicate craftsmanship, combining Gothic features with interlaced ornaments.⁵⁸² All such details intensify the effect of this particular iconography on the beholder and offer a sacred experience.⁵⁸³

As time progressed towards the 16th century, this particular Misericordia typology with the abovementioned Western characteristics became further popularized in Germany and France, and significant historical and religious figures (saints, kings, queens, etc.) started to be represented underneath the Virgin's cloak.⁵⁸⁴ While the inclusion of figures with religious and royal attributions had already been part of this artistic iconography in preceding centuries, by the 15th century onwards, those figures became identifiable with their attributions and portrayed as the

⁵⁸⁰ "Baroque," Sotheby's, accessed May 12, 2024, <https://www.sothebys.com/en/art-movements/baroque>.

⁵⁸¹ Kretzenbacher, "Schutz- und Bittgebärden der Gottesmutter," 17.

⁵⁸² Bildindex, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, "Schnitzaltar"; "Gothic art," Britannica, last modified April 17, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/art/Gothic-art>.

⁵⁸³ Bildindex, Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, "Schnitzaltar"; Seibert "Schutzmantelschaft," 130-31.

⁵⁸⁴ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 132.

prominent figures under the Virgin's mantle.⁵⁸⁵ In that regard, in the 15th century, various Christian orders (Dominicans, Franciscans, and Cistercians), royal houses, and wealthy patrons were portrayed as members of the devoted group, along with significant historical figures they wanted to be represented with. Through such imagery, all of them visualized their plead for salvation.⁵⁸⁶

Last but not least, a further elaboration on the Child's portrayal in the Misericordia iconography should be included. While his portrayal in the Misericordia images that were developed under Eastern influences symbolizes his Incarnation, thus the divine nature of the Virgin, in the Western-oriented Misericordia representations, Christ's appearance, particularly in a mandorla hovering around the Virgin's chest, put further emphasis on the acknowledgment of the Virgin Mary as the second Eve.⁵⁸⁷ Moreover, since figures seeking salvation are portrayed as turned towards the Virgin and the Child, their inclined postures resemble the Deesis iconography, once again remarking on seeking salvation. In that regard, the inclusion of the Child attains further meaning related to eternal salvation in the Misericordia iconographies.⁵⁸⁸

The analysis of the development of the Misericordia iconography in the Latin West reveals that this particular iconography has been nourished by different artistic and cultural contexts and their interaction with one another. From this perspective, one cannot propose a singular root in which this typology had flourished; in other words, both Eastern and Western artistic and cultural values became equally influential. As an iconography that harmoniously combines Eastern and Western features, the choice of executing the Misericordia iconography on the Galata icon's revetment can be acknowledged as a retrospective emphasis on its multilayered history, along with an elaboration of the icon's position in the 17th century Constantinople/Istanbul. In other words, the multicultural nature of the Misericordia iconography became suitable for the representation of the Galata icon's metal revetment given that the original wooden panel had been in different cultural contexts, thus attaining a multicultural entity that was further highlighted with the application of the revetment. In this regard, the Misericordia representation on the Galata icon comprises both Eastern and Western features, thus highlighting the hybrid nature of the icon.

⁵⁸⁵ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 132; Kretzenbacher, "Schutz- und Bittgebärden der Gottesmutter," 17.

⁵⁸⁶ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 132-33.

⁵⁸⁷ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 131; Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 96.

⁵⁸⁸ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 131-33.

3.2.2 The Order of Preachers and the Misericordia Iconography

Since the Galata icon was commissioned by the Dominican community in Galata and acquired the Misericordia theme through the application of the revetment, it is important to take into account the fondness of mendicant orders, including the Dominicans, i.e., the Order of Preachers, for the Misericordia typology.⁵⁸⁹ From such a viewpoint, the depictions of notable Dominican Order historical figures, such as Saint Dominic and Saint Catherine of Siena, suggest that the Galata congregation deliberately attempted to adhere to the artistic tradition that dominated the aesthetics of other Latin West congregations by changing the original iconography and executing the Misericordia theme on the revetment.⁵⁹⁰ By integrating representations of the compassionate Virgin gathering Dominicans beneath her mantle alongside an explicit focus on the Madonna of Rosary theme—which has a direct connection to Saint Dominic—the Galata icon makes a clear statement about the Dominican identity of the community.⁵⁹¹ The concepts of mercy and Saint Dominic, and relatedly, the Order of Preachers (the Dominican Order), were heavily interrelated since Saint Dominic had numerous visions stressing the mercy of the Virgin towards humankind.⁵⁹² For instance, as narrated in Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*, Saint Dominic had a vision when he was residing in Rome, waiting for the pope to approve the establishment of his order.⁵⁹³ In his vision, the merciful Virgin Mary pleaded to Christ to forgive humanity for the wrongs they wreaked upon him. At that instance, Christ was just about to destroy mankind with three spares he was holding, items signifying three vices, including vices, pride, concupiscence, and avarice, all condemned by the Holy Book.⁵⁹⁴ With the intervention of the Virgin and her request to his son to temper his fury with mercy, she presented Saint Dominic and, afterward, Saint Francis, the founding father of the Franciscan Order, to Christ, indicating that they will be his faithful servants who will act upon his rules and return the apostatized ones back to the righteousness. The following day, according to tradition, Saint Dominic ran to Saint Francis, whom he came across in the church, and told him his vision, telling him that now they were partners to

⁵⁸⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20.

⁵⁹⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20; “Dominican,” History & Society, Britannica, last modified November 3, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Dominican-order>.

⁵⁹¹ St. Louis-Marie de Montfort, “St. Dominic Receives the Rosary.” Dominican Friars Association.

⁵⁹² De Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, 433-34.

⁵⁹³ De Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, 433-34.

⁵⁹⁴ De Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, 433.

spread the Lord's word once again.⁵⁹⁵ Thus, through Saint Dominic's religious experience, both orders became one heart and soul in the light of Christ and worked for the same purpose.⁵⁹⁶ From the intervening perspective of the Virgin, both saints were appointed to ensure Christ's mercy on mankind by enlightening the lost flock and returning them back to the virtuous path of Christianity.⁵⁹⁷

Regarding the Misericordia iconography, another passage from Saint Dominic's life is particularly important since it offers a reasonable explanation for why Dominican congregations in the Latin West and, similarly to the Galata icon, in the Ottoman Istanbul, adopted the theme on several occasions. St. Dominic had an influential vision that contained the miraculous mantle of the Virgin, according to St. Cecilia Cesarini (1203-1290), a Dominican nun who met with St. Dominic and related miraculous incidents involving him while he was residing at the Dominican monastery of St. Sisto in Rome.⁵⁹⁸ In that vision, St. Dominic found himself in a heavenly realm, seeing that numerous members from significant Christian orders, except his, appeared before the Christ and the Virgin, who was seated on her son's right-hand side, wearing a sapphire-colored mantle. Since his Order was excluded from the sphere, he felt reluctant to approach Christ and the Virgin.⁵⁹⁹ Noticing this, first the Virgin, then Christ, called him to their side and later asked St. Dominic why he was crying. Explaining that he was frustrated because members of his Order were not here, Christ explained that he had entrusted the Dominican friars to the Virgin.⁶⁰⁰ Then the Virgin opened up her miraculous mantle, which St. Cecilia described as significant enough to cover the heavenly realm, and St. Dominic saw his companions under the Virgin's mantle. Learning that he and his Order were under the Virgin's protection, St. Dominic expressed his gratitude to both, and with that, his vision was concluded.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁵ De Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, 434, 611; "St. Francis of Assisi," History & Society, Britannica, last modified December 29, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Francis-of-Assisi>.

⁵⁹⁶ De Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, 433-34, 611.

⁵⁹⁷ De Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, 433-34.

⁵⁹⁸ Sister Mary Jean Dorcy, O.P., *Saint Dominic's Family, The Lives of Over 300 Famous Dominicans* (North Carolina: TAN Books, 1983), 85-6.

⁵⁹⁹ Most Rev. J. S. Alemany, D. D., *The Life of St. Dominic and A Sketch of the Dominican Order* (New York: P. O'Shea Publisher, 1867), 137-38; Sister Cecilia, "The Miracles of St. Dominic," Dominican Central Archives, accessed February 10, 2024, <http://www.domcentral.org/trad/domdocs/0006.htm>. (Originally from the book Saint Dominic, Biographical Documents, ed. Francis C. Lehner, O.P. (Washington: The Thomist Press, 1964).)

⁶⁰⁰ Alemany, D. D., *The Life of St. Dominic and A Sketch of the Dominican Order*, 137-38; Sister Cecilia, "The Miracles of St. Dominic," Dominican Central Archives.

⁶⁰¹ Alemany, D. D., *The Life of St. Dominic and A Sketch of the Dominican Order*, 137-38; Sister Cecilia, "The Miracles of St. Dominic," Dominican Central Archives.

The placement of St. Dominic's Order underneath the Virgin's mantle and Christ's declaration on the appointment of the Order of Preachers as confidants of the Virgin express the cordial relationship between the Holy Mother and the Dominicans.⁶⁰² Together with the vision of the Virgin's pleading to Christ for mercy on humankind in which she assigned St. Dominic and St. Francis to return the lost souls to the path of righteousness to gain Christ's mercy, St. Cecilia's account of the vision, as mentioned earlier of St. Dominic underlines the importance of the concepts of mercy and the Virgin's miraculous mantle for members of Dominican congregations all over the Globe, thus, clarifying why the artistic theme, Madonna della Misericordia, became so prevalent for the Order of Preachers as such artworks directly express these concepts.⁶⁰³



Figure 3.14: "Misericordia- MS M.766 fol. 59v," c. 1400, parchment and brown ink, part of the manuscript *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, The Morgan Library & Museum, New York, United States of America.

⁶⁰² Alemany, D. D., *The Life of St. Dominic and A Sketch of the Dominican Order*, 137-38; Sister Cecilia, "The Miracles of St. Dominic," Dominican Central Archives.

⁶⁰³ Interestingly, similar vision stories were partaken in the heart of the other mendicant orders. Caesarius of Heisterbach (1180–1240), a prominent Cistercian monk of the 13th century, for example, wrote of a vision he had in which he saw members of his Order shielded by the Virgin's mantle. He understood this to mean that they were being allowed entry into Paradise. This vision was recorded in his book *Dialogus Miraculorum* published about 1222. This demonstrates the interest that various orders had in the Misericordia theme as well as the visions that featured the Virgin and her miraculous mantle. Through these visions, they conveyed that they were chosen by the Virgin and that they received protection and salvation through the intervention of the Holy Mother. "Caesarius of Heisterbach," History & Society, Britannica, last modified December 30, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Caesarius-of-Heisterbach>; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 168-70; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82-3; Alemany, D. D., *The Life of St. Dominic and A Sketch of the Dominican Order*, 137-38; Sister Cecilia, "The Miracles of St. Dominic," Dominican Central Archives; De Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*, 433-34.



Figure 3.15: Fra Angelico, *Madonna della Misericordia* (the Missal 558, 156v.), c. 1430, tempera and gold parchment, Museo di San Marco, Florence, Italy.

In terms of the prevalence of the Misericordia theme, the book *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* (Mirror of Human Salvation), which was written by an unknown Dominican friar, can be contextualized as the written testimony of the perpetual interest of Dominicans in that artistic theme.⁶⁰⁴ Initially written in the early 14th century, presumably sometime between 1309 and 1324, the book *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* became widely popular in Europe, and more than 350 copies were produced during the 14th-16th centuries.⁶⁰⁵ It is important not just in terms of the theological writings it comprised but also the illustrations it involved since numerous Madonna della Misericordia depictions had been featured in multiple copies of this book.⁶⁰⁶ For instance, one of

the copies currently deposited at the Morgan Library & Museum, New York, represents a relatively simple (compared to the ornamentation present on the Galata icon) but beautiful illustration of the Madonna della Misericordia.⁶⁰⁷ Featuring in a manuscript of presumably Yorkshire, England origin and dated to c.1400, the illustration of the Madonna della Misericordia represents one of the prime examples of the utilization of the theme by the Dominican order.⁶⁰⁸ As visible in the image, the Virgin Mary, adorned with a halo and a crown, gathers the religious flock underneath her mantle. The identity of figures under the Virgin's miraculous mantle is unknown, yet by examining

⁶⁰⁴ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 168-69; Deirdre Jackson, and Nigel Morgan, "Speculum Humanae Salvationis (MS Add. 6447)," Digital Library, University of Cambridge, accessed February 10, 2024, <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-06447/80>.

⁶⁰⁵ Adrian Wilson, and Joyce Lancaster Wilson, *A Medieval Mirror, Speculum Humanae Salvationis 1324-1500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 26-7; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82-3.

⁶⁰⁶ Ian Chilvers, "Speculum Humanae Salvationis (The Mirror of Human Salvation)," The Oxford Dictionary of Art (Third Edition), Oxford Reference, accessed February 10, 2024, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780198604761.001.0001/acref-9780198604761-e-3316>; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82-3.

⁶⁰⁷ "Speculum Humanae Salvationis, MS M.766 fol. 59v," Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts, The Morgan Library & Museum, accessed February 10, 2024, <https://ica.themorgan.org/manuscript/page/75/131050>.

⁶⁰⁸ The Morgan Library & Museum, "Speculum Humanae Salvationis, MS M.766 fol. 59v."

their depictions and the symbols they are bearing, it can be proposed that the group is composed of friars, who have tonsured heads like most Dominican monks, crowned king, and a woman wearing a wimpled veil.⁶⁰⁹ All figures are portrayed on their knees and facing towards the Virgin while their hands signify their act of praying. On the other hand, the Virgin's mantle and other garments do not resemble the ones on the Galata icon, as they are depicted rather unornamented. The only decorative element in the illustration is the collar and the strap emerging from it, which goes along the Virgin's torso.⁶¹⁰ The latter item is seemingly composed of either stars or stylized flowers, presumably roses, symbolizing the Virgin.⁶¹¹

Another example that was acknowledged as one of the earliest examples of Madonna della Misericordia with the members of the Dominican Order is by the hands of Fra Angelico (c.1395-1455).⁶¹² By attending to the convent of San Domenico in Fiesole, he chose to become a Dominican friar, and altered his name from Guido di Pietro to Fra Angelico, after he took his vows.⁶¹³ As a Dominican friar and a very talented painter as Giorgi Vasari commented on his *book Le Vite de' Più Eccellenti Pittori, Scultori, e Architettori* (1550), Fra Angelico's works matter to comprehending the artistic tastes of the Dominican patrons.⁶¹⁴ Therefore, it should come as no surprise that one of the first depictions of the compassionate Virgin with the Dominican congregation beneath her mantle is attributed to Fra Angelico and is part of the San Marco Missal, which is kept in the Museo di San Marco in Florence, Italy at present.⁶¹⁵ The representation of the Virgin in this image adheres to the Misericordia type's qualities. Five Dominican members are seen beneath her cloak, bending slightly and gazing at her with pleading eyes.⁶¹⁶ The attribution of Dominican identity to those figures is plausible concerning their black cloak, white habit, and

⁶⁰⁹ The Morgan Library & Museum, "Speculum Humanae Salvationis, MS M.766 fol. 59v.,"; Edward A. Gosselin, "A Dominican Head in Layman's Garb? A Correction to the Scientific Iconography of Giordano Bruno," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 27, No. 3 (Autumn, 1996): 674-75; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 160.

⁶¹⁰ The Morgan Library & Museum, "Speculum Humanae Salvationis, MS M.766 fol. 59v."

⁶¹¹ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 37-8, 44-5.

⁶¹² Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82-3.

⁶¹³ "Fra Angelico," Arts & Culture, Britannica, last modified February 14, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Fra-Angelico>; Ross Finocchio, "Fra Angelico (ca. 1395–1455)," Heilbrunn Timeline Of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified October 2006, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/fang/hd_fang.htm.

⁶¹⁴ Giorgi Vasari, *Sanatçıların Hayat Hikayeleri* (İstanbul: Sel Yayıncılık, 2013), 169.

⁶¹⁵ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82-3; Vasari, *Sanatçıların Hayat Hikayeleri*, 169.

⁶¹⁶ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-71; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 82-3; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 40.

tonsured heads, all symbolizing the renowned 'uniform' worn by the friars of the Order.⁶¹⁷ Rays of holy light sprouted from behind her, revealing a semi-aureole, which signified the heavenly sphere she belonged to.⁶¹⁸ When these lights appear at the start of the paragraph, two fish are depicted as spiraling toward the center from the letter "S," which is the initial letter of the first word on the page, i.e., decorative initial, a coherent aspect of the missal in terms of following the canon dictating the preparation of the illustrated manuscripts.⁶¹⁹ Additionally, just like in the Gothic manuscripts, the ornamental initial letter confines the image; however, Fra Angelico applied a perspective that the viewer can understand, creating a broader space.⁶²⁰ The initial letter is visually appealing to the spectator as it is further framed or embellished with vibrant acanthus leaves in various colors.⁶²¹

3.2.3 Juxtaposing the Galata Icon Alongside Balduccio's *Misericordia*: Contextualizing the *Misericordia* Iconography

Another artwork featuring the Dominican order underneath the Virgin's mantle, and subtly resembles the Galata icon, is the fresco that used to be at the Oratory of the Monastery of Santa Maria Novella, Arezzo, Italy, but is currently preserved at the Museo Nazionale d'Arte Medievale e Moderno in Arezzo.⁶²² Painted by Giovanni d'Angelo di Balduccio in 1414, the fresco depicting Madonna della Misericordia comprises one item of the fresco cycle of the Oratory. Together with the remnants of two other frescoes, *Madonna Enthroned with Child between Saints Lorenzo and Antonio Abate* and *Santa Barbara and San Jacopo*, both dated to 1414, the Madonna of Misericordia was transferred to the National Museum of Arezzo in the late 20th century.⁶²³ Balduccio's fresco represents generic features of the Misericordia typology; frontally depicted, the

⁶¹⁷ Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 106-10; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 44-5.

⁶¹⁸ Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282.

⁶¹⁹ "Illuminated Manuscript," New World Encyclopedia, accessed February 10, 2024, https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Illuminated_manuscript; "La Madonna Della Misericordia Miniata Dal Beato Angelico Nel Messale Di San Domenico," *Bibliofili*, Firenze 1903, last modified March 4, 2016, <https://www.firenze1903.it/la-madonna-della-misericordia-nel-messale-san-domenico/>.

⁶²⁰ New World Encyclopedia, "Illuminated Manuscript."; Firenze 1903, "La Madonna Della Misericordia Miniata Dal Beato Angelico Nel Messale Di San Domenico."

⁶²¹ Firenze 1903, "La Madonna Della Misericordia Miniata Dal Beato Angelico Nel Messale Di San Domenico."; Britannica. "Acanthus."

⁶²² "Madonna della Misericordia," Beni Storici e Artistici, Catalogo Generale dei Beni Culturali, last modified 2016, <https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/0900259209>.

⁶²³ Catalogo Generale dei Beni Culturali, "Madonna della Misericordia," Alessandro Ferrini, "Un Allievo Di Spinello Aretino," Museo Nazionale d'Arte Medievale e Moderno Arezzo, *Il Bel Casentino*, accessed February 10, 2024, <https://www.ilbelcasentino.it/museo-arte-medievale-moderna-arezzo-seq.php?idcat=&pag=19&idimg=7143>.

standing Virgin opens her mantle and gathers the congregation of interest underneath, promising protection and salvation.⁶²⁴ As an outcome of the gender-based differentiation, the congregation's male members were gathered on the Virgin's right-hand side, also referred to as the preferred side. Females, on the other hand, were clustered together and positioned beneath the mantle, which corresponded to the left side of the Virgin.⁶²⁵ This emphasizes the males' occupation of the preferred side, which is a recurring component of many artworks featuring the Misericordia theme.⁶²⁶ The Dominican identity of the congregation underneath the mantle was predominantly stressed by three Dominican nuns on the front row, whose dark-color cloaks and white habits inform the beholder about the Order to which they belonged, along with the friar on the right-hand side, who, once again, identifiable as a Dominican monk due to his black cloak, white habit, and tonsured head.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁴ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20, 47-9.

⁶²⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 135.

⁶²⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104, 132, 135-37.

⁶²⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 135; Giorgi, *Saints in Art*, 80-2, 106-10, Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 44-5.



Figure 3.16: Giovanni d'Angelo di Balduccio, *Madonna della Misericordia*, 1414, fresco, originally at the Oratory of the Monastery of Santa Maria Novella, Arezzo, later transferred to Museo Nazionale d'Arte Medievale e Moderna, Arezzo, Italy.

Continuing with the Virgin's portrayal on the fresco, in addition to her predominating figure achieved by the diminutive display of the congregation member's, the Virgin attracts the attention of the beholder with her garments.⁶²⁸ Even though the Virgin's garments appear to be less ornamented compared to the Galata icon, the dichroism of the mantle (darker tones govern the exterior of the cloth while the internal part is woven with a light-blue, shiny material adorned with red decorative bands) remarks the emphasis on the figure of the Virgin.⁶²⁹ Concerning the design of mantles in both artworks, the Galata icon and Balduccio's *Misericordia* seemingly share the same characteristics since the Galata mantle also creates a contrast through its outer and inner parts.⁶³⁰ Moreover, the Virgin's mantle on Balduccio's fresco is represented coherently by the

⁶²⁸ Brown *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 48-9, 94-5.

⁶²⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 48-9, 94-5.

⁶³⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 48-9, 94-5.

Virgin's maphorion in Byzantium, since the miraculous maphorion of the Virgin, which was deposited in the Blachernai Church and protected the city several times, was characterized as a heavy mantle that falls along the length of the Virgin.⁶³¹ Moreover, considering the depiction of the Virgin's mantle in Byzantine artworks and the Italian panel paintings that were developed following Byzantine icons, the miraculous mantle of the Virgin in Balduccio's fresco became coherent with the traditional canon of Byzantium, as it was always depicted in the porphyry color to signify her unattainable nature and superiority over the mankind given the preciousness and autonomy of the porphyry color for the imperial house and depictions of the most holy figures.⁶³² Furthermore, the tunic of Balduccio's Virgin is displayed in white and adorned with little stars or flowers that become only apparent upon close inspection of the material. The unflamboyant, simplistic display of the Virgin's tunic in Balduccio's fresco relatively resembles the Chartres's relic, the Virgin's chemise, as it was identified as a tiraz-looking white silken garment, making it possible to suggest that the Chartres item might be one of the models that Balduccio was influenced from.⁶³³ Yet, interestingly, the 'Arezzon' fresco does not display the Virgin's girdle, resulting not just in differentiating Balduccio's fresco from the Galata icon but also presenting a compelling situation given that the Virgin's girdle is one of the prime relics that was revered and venerated by the whole Christendom, as exemplified in the context of Chalkoprateia and Prato.⁶³⁴ Moreover, considering the Marian shrine in Prato, which was developed by centralizing the holy relic of the Virgin's girdle, it seems odd for Balduccio to not include the renowned relic of Prato, which he had means to see in real life during the Ostentation ceremony but to resemble the Virgin's garment to Chartres' relic.⁶³⁵ Although it is impossible to comprehend the reason for the lack of a girdle, the influence drawn from the Marian relics in the Latin West should not be overlooked, especially for the Virgin's tunic in Balduccio's fresco.

⁶³¹ Weyl Carr, "Threads of Authority: The Virgin Mary's Veil in the Middle Ages," 65.

⁶³² Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images, Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography*, 227; National Gallery of Art, "Byzantine Art and Painting in Italy during the 1200s and 1300s."; Barry Baldwin, and Alexander Kazhdan, "Porphyry," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, ed. by Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1071-72; Muthesius, "Cloth, Color, Symbolism and Meaning in Byzantium (4th-15th Centuries)," 184.

⁶³³ Burns, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's Chemise: Cultural Crossing in Cloth," 368-70; Weyl Carr, "Threads of Authority: The Virgin Mary's Veil in the Middle Ages," 73.

⁶³⁴ Arentzen, "Conversing with Clothes, Germanos and Mary's Belt," 58-61; Cadogan, "The Chapel of the Holy Belt in Prato: Piety and Politics in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany," 107-9, 112-6, 126-7.

⁶³⁵ Cadogan, "The Chapel of the Holy Belt in Prato: Piety and Politics in Fourteenth-Century Tuscany," 107-9, 112-6, 126-7.

Apart from including most of the Marian relics, Balduccio's *Misericordia* features some significant features commonly found in other works of Virgin of Mercy. For instance, as Katherine Brown underlined, Balduccio's Madonna shows one of the two emotional modes featured in artworks with this theme: calmness vs affection.⁶³⁶ Expressing the first of these, the Virgin on Balduccio's fresco was rendered with tightly closed lips and a non-emotional gaze.⁶³⁷ Such figuration is vital for the *Misericordia* iconography since it reflects the calm and virtuous nature of the Virgin Mary, as she is not overwhelmed or panicked with the needs and pleas of the flock underneath her mantle.⁶³⁸ Moreover, her non-emotional gaze directly meets with the beholder, like in the Byzantine icons depicting the Virgin generally with the Child, thus emphasizing her role in intercession and mediation between humankind and God.⁶³⁹ Considering the characterization of the Virgin's facial gesture on the Galata icon as a subtle expression, one can further interpret that expression as calmness with respect to the discussion above. Moreover, with her calm expression and tilted head, the Virgin concentrates on the beholder's prayers and pleads.⁶⁴⁰ Altogether, the subtle expression implying the peaceful nature of the Galata Virgin highlights her merciful nature and intercessory role, just like the *Hodegetria* examples.⁶⁴¹

Unlike Fra Angelico's depiction of *Madonna della Misericordia*, Balduccio's fresco does not contain a mandorla representing the Virgin as she steps out from the heavenly realm.⁶⁴² While her halo emphasizes her divinity, the garment held by two angels in the background further implies an unrealistic space through the stylized ornamentation it contains (stylized flowers, stars, Arabesque scrolls, geometric patterns, etc.), thus indicating the celestial sphere to the Virgin and the two angels belonged.⁶⁴³ In addition to distorting reality and expressing the heavenly sphere, the fabrics on the backdrop were utilized as status and wealth symbols.⁶⁴⁴ Referred to as cloth of honors, such garments mark the wealth and social status of the owner or the patron of the artwork since they are mainly represented as luxurious, hand-woven items attainable only by a small

⁶³⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 46-7.

⁶³⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 45-6.

⁶³⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 46.

⁶³⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 45.

⁶⁴⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 45-6.

⁶⁴¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 45-6; Sevchenko, "Virgin *Hodegetria*," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 2*, 2172-173.

⁶⁴² Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 105.

⁶⁴³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104-5.

⁶⁴⁴ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 102-5.

portion of society.⁶⁴⁵ Furthermore, by considering the substantiality of the commercial relationship between Byzantium and the Italian peninsula, especially in terms of silken garments exported from Constantinople to Venice, most of the clothes of honors represented in the Italian artworks bore Byzantine features, as well as Islamic elements, given that the commerce was not limited only to Byzantine oikumene, since owning a good-quality, foreign material implies the wealth and high social-strata directly.⁶⁴⁶

The ornamental framework around Balduccio's fresco functions as an additional layer that separates the Virgin and other figures from the beholder, thus maintaining the closed form of the artwork.⁶⁴⁷ Generally, in Misericordia artworks, frames enveloping the depiction are composed of geometric borders mainly adorned with vegetal ornamentation.⁶⁴⁸ In the case of Balduccio's fresco, the upper frame is seemingly composed of Arabesque scrolls.⁶⁴⁹ On the other hand, the side borders are more geometrically patterned, even resembling the pattern design found in the Anatolian and Mamluk carpets that first reached Venice mainly from Ottoman lands and diffused along the Italian peninsula.⁶⁵⁰ Even though the Galata icon does not have a similar framework around the revetment, the marble niche it is embedded in, and the glass cover it is placed behind similarly create a contrast between the revetment and reality.⁶⁵¹ Nevertheless, it would be plausible to underline that the majority of the Misericordia artworks tend to have a separative layer that is adorned with geometric and vegetal designs, resembling patterns woven on carpets that reached La Serenissima and later to other regions of the Italian peninsula, from Ottoman lands, especially during 15th-17th centuries.⁶⁵² The latter notion is especially significant in this thesis since it highlights how cross-cultural interactions, in this case, mediated through trade activities, resulted in the formation of a hybrid artistic vocabulary expressed in artworks of both regions.⁶⁵³ In addition

⁶⁴⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 102.

⁶⁴⁶ Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," 99-101.

⁶⁴⁷ Mark Thorson, "The Renaissance Model of Art," Encounters With The Arts: Readings For Artc150, Pressbooks, accessed February 10, 2024, <https://oer.pressbooks.pub/encounterswiththearts/chapter/the-renaissance-model-of-art/>.

⁶⁴⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

⁶⁴⁹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104; "Arabesque/Scroll," Artsy, accessed February 10, 2024, <https://www.artsy.net/gene/arabesque-slash-scroll>.

⁶⁵⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104; "Star Ushak' Carpet," Islamic Art, The Collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed February 10, 2024, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/451471>; Denny, "Oriental Carpets and Textiles in Venice," 175-80.

⁶⁵¹ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 152, 154.

⁶⁵² Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104; Denny, "Oriental Carpets and Textiles in Venice," 177-80.

⁶⁵³ Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," 101-2.

to the hybridity of the Galata icon, certain features mentioned earlier in Misericordia artworks underline the roles to which artworks are eventually assigned, reflecting cultural and artistic interactions between diverse cultural milieus.

Last but not least, one of the most striking differences between the Galata icon and Balduccio's fresco of Misericordia is the existence of the Child Christ in mandorla, placed on the Virgin's upper torso, hovering in the air without any help from the holy mother.⁶⁵⁴ Such depiction of the Child Christ does not signify the Virgin's miraculous pregnancy as in the Sinai icon of Annunciation.⁶⁵⁵ On the other hand, by ingrafting the Child in mandorla around the Virgin's upper torso, the emphasis is given to the notion of protection and salvation in which the Virgin acts as an agency between heavenly and mortal realms.⁶⁵⁶ In that regard, the Child Christ in mandorla metamorphically takes the form of a shield that the Virgin bears while gathering Christians underneath her mantle.⁶⁵⁷ Katherine Brown also interpreted such figuration as an emphasis on the victory promised by God and the Virgin to humankind, i.e., eternal salvation, mainly because the Assumption of the Virgin became a tangible testimony of salvation to beholders.⁶⁵⁸ Furthermore, as elaborated in the description subchapter, Child Christ within mandorla symbolizes his Incarnation, underlying the unattainable nature of both the Virgin and his, relatedly emphasizing their eternal glory.⁶⁵⁹ From this perspective, the lack of such a figuration of Christ on Balduccio's fresco can appear odd at first glance. Yet, this is actually not a case to consider as an oddity; on the other hand, in the context of Misericordia artworks, the Child Christ within mandorla, or just his figure without any framework around, was not a necessity that this specific iconography dictated; instead, his existence was optional.⁶⁶⁰ The general interpretation of this issue implies that the Misericordia iconography centralizes the portrayal of the Virgin, and with her miraculous mantle, she provides protection and salvation to the flock underneath; her aforementioned roles of

⁶⁵⁴ The National Gallery, "Mandorla"; Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282.

⁶⁵⁵ For instance, the specific Annunciation icon (Princeton work number 773, Michigan inventory number: 1269) at Sinai, dating to the 12th century, becomes a sufficient example in analyzing the motif of Child Christ in mandorla, especially for artworks displaying the Misericordia theme. Nelson, and Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai*, 153; "Annunciation," The Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expeditions to Mount Sinai, The Sinai Archive, accessed February 12, 2024, <https://www.sinaiarchive.org/s/mpa/item/13490#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&xywh=-2423%2C-1%2C7306%2C3600>.

⁶⁵⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 96.

⁶⁵⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 75-6.

⁶⁵⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 75, 99.

⁶⁵⁹ Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282.

⁶⁶⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 96.

intercession are sufficiently and visually emphasized through such formulation.⁶⁶¹ Consequently, it can be argued that the presence of the Child Christ in the representation serves as a strengthening element for the Virgin's function, but it is not strictly required given that the Misericordia iconography serves as a sufficient visual formula for such symbolism.⁶⁶²

3.2.4 *La Serenissima and the Madonna della Misericordia*

In the context of the Galata icon, the Venetian Misericordia formula has utmost importance given that the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, its congregation, and the icon were protected and sponsored by the Venetian embassy of Constantinople in the time of the revetment application.⁶⁶³ Relatedly, considering the interest of Venetians in the icon and their wish to patronize the item further and take it to La Serenissima highlights the Venetian influence on the representation depicted on the revetment.⁶⁶⁴ Considering that the iconographical elements of the Galata icon precisely follow the Venetian type, thus slightly differentiating from the generic formula, contextualizing the Galata icon concerning the Venetian Misericordia examples would be beneficial for the context of this research. The earliest Venetian Misericordia example ever



Figure 3.17: Paolo Veneziano, *Enthroned Madonna and Child with Two Donors*, 1325, tempera on wood, 142 x 90 cm, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, Italy.

known is Paolo Veneziano's *Enthroned Madonna and Child with Two Donors* (1325), currently displayed at Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, Italy.⁶⁶⁵ Like the Cilician and Cypriot examples,

⁶⁶¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 96.

⁶⁶² Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 95-6; Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282.

⁶⁶³ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-43; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 23-24.

⁶⁶⁴ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

⁶⁶⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 77.



Figure 3.18: Detail of the Virgin's mantle in Veneziano's *Enthroned Madonna and Child with Two Donors*.

Veneziano's *Misericordia* also portrays the enthroned Virgin extending her mantle to pleaded couple, in this case a married couple, presumably the donors of the painting, while the Child Christ in mandorla focuses on the couple and blesses them.⁶⁶⁶ While signifying the theme's arrival in La Serenissima, Veneziano's artwork reflects the apparent Cilician and Cypriot influences on the state. Furthermore, the Virgin still resembles the Byzantine models, especially in terms of her facial features, with her narrow and elongated nose, tightly closed lips, thin eyebrows, and prominent massy area on her neck.⁶⁶⁷ Moreover, the Virgin on Veneziano's artwork is tilted towards figures under her mantle, just like previous examples mentioned above, all representing Byzantine figuration of Mary, explicitly reminding the Hodegetria typology to beholder, a similarity commonly featured on *Misericordia* paintings.⁶⁶⁸ In addition to the Virgin's direct gaze toward viewers, her illustrious garments attract attention and direct one's interest in artwork and its intended message. The floral decoration on the Virgin's maphorion and her tunic displays an extremely ornate, opulent fabric, a stylistic commonality in Veneziano's paintings, who painted Oriental silken pieces that reached Venice through its commercial activities with the East, including Byzantium and Middle Eastern regencies.⁶⁶⁹ The floral decoration of the Virgin's garments is seemingly stylized, considering curvilinear figuration around such floral motifs, especially evident on her tunic. Compared to the tunic design, the ornamentation of the maphorion is more elaborately defined, seemingly composed of either peacock-feather motif or saz style floral ornamentation adorned with tulip and blossoming wine motifs, both apparent in the stylistic vocabulary of Eastern textiles.⁶⁷⁰ Patterns ran along both fabrics and were woven with relatively large-scale pattering, emphasizing their high quality since such patterning would require more

⁶⁶⁶ "Madonna Col Bambino in Trono e Due Committenti," Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia, accessed February 18, 2024, <https://www.gallerieaccademia.it/madonna-col-bambino-trono-e-due-committenti>.

⁶⁶⁷ Hetherington, *The 'Painter's Manual' Of Dionysius Of Fournas*, 87; National Galleries Scotland, "Byzantine Art."

⁶⁶⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 45-6.

⁶⁶⁹ Similar 'silken' treatment on the Virgin's garments is observable in other paintings of Veneziano, just like *the Coronation of Virgin, or Santa Chiara, Polyptych* (c. 1335-340), displayed in the exact location, Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice. Valeria Poletto, "Paolo Veneziano, the Coronation of Virgin (or Santa Chiara) Polyptych," in *Inside the Artwork, Sixty masterpieces as you have never seen them before*, ed. by Rosanna Alberti, and Stefano Grandi (Venice: Marsilio Editori*S.p.a., 2022), 9.

⁶⁷⁰ Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 262, 279.

material, such as gold/silver threads, and would consume more time to finish.⁶⁷¹ Altogether, the Virgin's garments, along with Christ's tunic that shares similar aesthetics, signify the commercial façade of the Venetian state and how cross-cultural interactions were influential in the formation of the artistic language.⁶⁷² In the background, two angels carry the cloth of honor to signify the heavenly sphere while crowning the Virgin Mary as the Queen of Heaven, a notion predominantly existing in the Latin West, as emphasized in the previous subchapter.⁶⁷³ Like garments, the cloth of honor represents a luxurious material, once again, most probably imported from the East.⁶⁷⁴ The flowers on the cloth of honor resemble carnations or blossomed roses, both plausible for displaying with the Virgin and the Child Christ in mandorla, considering their symbolic meanings. In general, carnations symbolize motherly love and affection, additively signifying the tears the Virgin shed on her way to Golgotha, anticipating her son's Crucifixion.⁶⁷⁵ As previously emphasized, the mandorla or clypeus the Child Christ is depicted with is an implication of his Incarnation, relatedly, his future sacrificial death.⁶⁷⁶ In that regard, by reflecting such symbolic expressions, carnations are seemingly suitable to be included in artistic representations of the Virgin and the Child.

As demonstrated by Veneziano's example, garments were crucial in portraying La Serenissima's lucrative position in commerce and, conversely, in the cross-cultural interactions it engaged in with its commercial alliances.⁶⁷⁷ Remembering Parani's comments on garments religious figures depicted in the Byzantine sphere, the canonical tendency of dressing both the Virgin and Christ in garments with imperial attributes such as porphyry-colored garments, the Western, more specifically Venetian tendency of reflecting both the holy mother and son in



Figure 3.19: Detail of the cloth of honor in Veneziano's *Enthroned Madonna and Child with Two Donors*.

⁶⁷¹ Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 263.

⁶⁷² Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe; Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," 104.

⁶⁷³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 102; Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin," 1.

⁶⁷⁴ Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe.

⁶⁷⁵ Ernst Lehner, and Johanna Lehner, *Folklore and Symbolism of Flowers, Plants and Trees* (New York: Dover Publications, 2003), 54.

⁶⁷⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20, 45-7; The National Gallery, "Mandorla"; Weyl Carr, "Mandorla," 1281-282.

⁶⁷⁷ Poletto, "Paolo Veneziano, the Coronation of Virgin (or Santa Chiara) Polyptych," 9.

Byzantine-like garments that were executed with Byzantine or Oriental silks coming from East becomes comprehensible.⁶⁷⁸ Considering the variety of examples of this theme displaying imported luxurious silks, the Misericordia artworks, especially the Venetian ones, underline the cross-cultural interactions in dual perspective: the aforementioned Byzantine influence, in terms of icon tradition and miraculous narrative of the Virgin's garment, on the theme, together with the display of imported Byzantine silks on such artworks.

Another Venetian panel depicting Madonna della Misericordia, this time representing the developed iconographical formula, is also at the Accademia of Venice.⁶⁷⁹ Painted by Jacobello del Fiore, the early 15th-century panel painting, *Triptych of the Madonna della Misericordia with Saints Giovanni Battista and John the Evangelist*, portrays the Virgin Mary as a frontally aligned, standing figure, gathering faithful flock on both sides of her mantle, and once again with the hovering Christ in mandorla around her upper torso, altogether reminding the Galata icon's composition, just like Balduccio example from the same period.⁶⁸⁰ Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Giovanni Battista were depicted on the right and left panels. They slightly turned to the central panel, where the Virgin and the Child were portrayed. Both saints' gazes were directed to the flock underneath the Virgin mantle, just like the Christ in mandorla, who sanctified and blessed the group. Only the Virgin's gaze was forwarded to the beholder among all figures.⁶⁸¹ Like the Galata icon, with her tilted head and calm expression, the Virgin's merciful nature and interest in the flock's pleads were underlined.⁶⁸² Even though spaciousness underneath the Virgin's mantle, elaborate draperies on garments, and proportionality of figures conform to the International Gothic Style that started to develop around that period, the golden background, detailing of figures' faces and bodies, and rather unnaturalistic figuration of saints (especially visible for Saint John the

⁶⁷⁸ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images, Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography*, 36, 227.

⁶⁷⁹ "Jacobello Del Fiore, Madonna Della Misericordia, I Santi Giovanni Battista E Giovanni Evangelista, Annunciazione," Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia, accessed February 18, 2024, <https://www.gallerieaccademia.it/madonna-della-misericordia-i-santi-giovanni-battista-e-giovanni-evangelista-annunciazione>.

⁶⁸⁰ Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia, "Jacobello Del Fiore, Madonna Della Misericordia, I Santi Giovanni Battista e Giovanni Evangelista, Annunciazione"; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 22, 26-7, 40, 105.

⁶⁸¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 45.

⁶⁸² Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 46.

Baptist's portrayal, regarding his stylized ribs) still bear resemblance to the predominant Italo-Byzantine style.⁶⁸³



Figure 3.20: Jacobello del Fiore, *Triptych of the Madonna della Misericordia with Saints Giovanni Battista and John the Evangelist*, 1415–1436, tempera on wood, 86 x 113 cm, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, Italy.

Compared to flanking saints on both sides, the Virgin Mary on the central panel appears elegant and radiant.⁶⁸⁴ Her subtle gaze invokes faithfulness in the beholder who might substitute oneself with devoted figures under the Virgin's miraculous flock and further receive the eternal salvation.⁶⁸⁵ Parallel to Veneziano's artwork, the Virgin's attractive clothes focus attention to herself while distinguishing her apart from other figures and underscoring her duty as a mediator

⁶⁸³ Jennifer Meagher, "Italian Painting of the Later Middle Ages," Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified September 2010, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/iptg/hd_iptg.htm; "Icon with St John the Baptist," British Museum, accessed March 10, 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1986-0708-1.

⁶⁸⁴ "Triptych of the Madonna della Misericordia," Web Gallery of Art, accessed March 10, 2024, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/j/jacobell/triptych.html.

⁶⁸⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 45, 83-4.

between God and humanity, thus highlighting her compassionate side.⁶⁸⁶ Fiore's figure, like the Madonna of Veneziano, was attired in contrasting garments, with her golden tunic serving as the focal point of her dichromatic maphorion, which together conveyed opulence. While Veneziano modeled on imported Oriental silks reached La Serenissima, Fiore further elaborated the Virgin's garments by adding an ornamented, relief-like texture by applying the pastille technique, in which protruding features were achieved by using base plaster and glue together, and later gilded to render a sumptuous effect on the artwork.⁶⁸⁷ Fiore applied the same technique in the *Misericordia* triptych, particularly on the Virgin's tunic, which, upon closer examination, has diamond motifs that approximate relief structures.⁶⁸⁸ Moreover, the stylized ornamentation along the Virgin's tunic, collar of her girdle, and borders of her maphorion (the last two items share the same decoration) propounds flamboyant silken and velvety fabrics as possible models.⁶⁸⁹ Another layer of clothing appears under the Virgin golden tunic, only leaving the prolonged tips of her sumptuous, golden shoes.⁶⁹⁰ Altogether, the Virgin's appearance demarcates her from the rest of the depicted figures.⁶⁹¹

As another commonality of numerous *Misericordia* paintings, including all of the examples discussed in this subchapter, Fiero also utilized diminutive/hieratic scaling, emphasizing the holy nature of the Virgin and the Child.⁶⁹² Moreover, even though the exact identity of figures gathered under the Virgin's maphorion is unknown, observing their clothing, the hybridity of the group becomes comprehensible.⁶⁹³ Religious habits along with secular garments, veiled heads contrasting with ostentatious hairstyles, together male and female figures represented both sides; Fiore's *Misericordia* displays a mixed group of people rather than a specific religious order, confraternity or patron family.⁶⁹⁴ In that regard, along with other details elaborated above, the

⁶⁸⁶ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 20, 45, 135-7.

⁶⁸⁷ Poletto, "Paolo Veneziano, the Coronation of Virgin (or Santa Chiara) Polyptych," 9; Valeria Poletto, "Jacobello del Fiore, Justice Enthroned between the Archangels Micheal and Gabriel (The Justice Triptych)," in *Inside the Artwork, Sixty masterpieces as you have never seen them before*, ed. by Rosanna Alberti, and Stefano Grandi (Venice: Marsilio Editori*S.p.a., 2022), 29.

⁶⁸⁸ Poletto, "Jacobello del Fiore, Justice Enthroned between the Archangels Micheal and Gabriel (The Justice Triptych)," 29.

⁶⁸⁹ Poletto, "Paolo Veneziano, the Coronation of Virgin (or Santa Chiara) Polyptych," 9; Rodley, "The Byzantine Context," 9-10.

⁶⁹⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 53.

⁶⁹¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 70.

⁶⁹² Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104.

⁶⁹³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 135-36.

⁶⁹⁴ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 135-36, 170.

Galata icon shares further similarities with Fiore's work. Such analogousness between both artworks strengthens the Venetian perspective of the Galata icon, which was already exhibited through some features of the item in the previous subchapter. In that regard, Venetian *Misericordias* became significant tools for comprehending the patronal tendencies behind the formation of Galata's revetment, together with the aforementioned commercial and cultural features that the state had interacted through with Byzantium, and later the Ottoman Istanbul, periods that the Galata icon went through alterations.

The last artwork that would be included in this thesis, among numerous Venetian *Misericordia* examples, is the mid-15th century relief sculpture presumably made by Bartolomeo Buon (c.1400-1467) and his circle, *Virgin and Child with kneeling members of the Guild of the Misericordia*, originally adorned the façade as a tympanum above the main portal of the Scuola Vecchio in Venice, currently at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.⁶⁹⁵ The Scuola Vecchio served as the headquarters of the confraternity of the Scuola della Misericordia until 1612 when the confraternity moved to a new place, the Fabbrica Nuova della Misericordia. Later, the tympanum was attached to the façade of the abbey church of Santa Maria della Madonna in the mid-19th century. The relief sculpture displaying Madonna and the Child with confraternity members left the Continent, reached London in 1881, and became a part of the collection of V&A Museum in subsequent years.⁶⁹⁶ Like Fiore's panel, the *Misericordia* tympanum features a frontally depicted-standing Virgin Mary with a hovering mandorla containing Child Christ.⁶⁹⁷ Compared to the execution dates of previous Venetian artworks, i.e., Veneziano's and Fiore's depictions, Bartolomeo Buon's relief dates back to a slightly later period, therefore demonstrating the gradual evolvement of the *Misericordia* iconography to its finalized, canonical stage that dictates the frontal representation of the Virgin Mary.⁶⁹⁸ In that regard, the portrayal of the Virgin in tympanum was considered *Platytera*-like, in other words, following the Byzantine formula that

⁶⁹⁵ Peta Motture, and Víctor Hugo López Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," *The Burlington Magazine* 151, no. 1280 (November 2009): 746-48.

⁶⁹⁶ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 746; "Virgin and Child with kneeling members of the Guild of the Misericordia," Collections, Victoria and Albert Museum, last modified February 12, 2004, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O92842/virgin-and-child-with-kneeling-relief-buon-bartolomeo/>.

⁶⁹⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 22, 26-7, 40, 105.

⁶⁹⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 79.



Figure 3.21: Bartolomeo Boun and his circle, *Virgin and Child with kneeling members of the Guild of the Misericordia*, c.1445-1450, relief made of Istrian stone, Venetian origin, currently at Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom (Accession Number: 25-1882)

was popularized in Venice at that time.⁶⁹⁹ Unlike many other Misericordia artworks, including the Galata icon, Buon's Virgin does not tilt her head towards the flock underneath but directly looks to the beholder, which fits into the Platytera identification.⁷⁰⁰ Her contrapposto stance enhances the naturalistic expression while following one of the canonical aspect of the Misericordia iconography in that regard, just like the Virgin of the Galata icon.⁷⁰¹ Even though the current shape of the artwork only displays the Misericordia image, it is known that the Virgin was flanked by three sculptures personifying essential virtues associated with the merciful mother: hope, charity, and faith.⁷⁰² Moreover, all figures were framed with the Tree of Jesse motif, thus additively displaying the ancestors of Christ along

with other figures.⁷⁰³ With scrolls in their hands, Christ's ancestors announced his miraculous coming to the Earth as the God, a notion that was strengthened on the artwork through the display

⁶⁹⁹ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 746.

⁷⁰⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 74-7; Sevcenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170-171.

⁷⁰¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 27-8, 31-2.

⁷⁰² Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 746, 750-51.

⁷⁰³ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 746; Victoria and Albert Museum, "Virgin and Child with kneeling members of the Guild of the Misericordia."

of the Child in mandorla, signifying his Incarnation.⁷⁰⁴ Therefore, by including both symbolic motifs, Christ's significance and, relatedly, the Virgin's intercessory role were reemphasized.⁷⁰⁵

Even though it is missing today, the Virgin used to have a metal crown around her head, signifying her role as the Queen of Paradise.⁷⁰⁶ Although detailed information on the crown is unavailable, considering its material, metal, and divergence from the rest of the relief, composed of Istrian stone, might suggest that the crown was a later attachment, that became lost before the relief's journey to London.⁷⁰⁷ Rehearsing the analogous refinement on the Galata icon, which received the golden crown and crescent moon in 1855 to celebrate the establishment of the Immaculate Conception dogma, a similar enhancement on the Misericordia tympanum for the identical regard can be proposed.⁷⁰⁸ Though the current data is insufficient to ensure such a notion, the materialistic differences and approximate dates make it possible.

Another characteristic of the Misericordia tympanum parallel with the Galata icon was the ornamentation of the Virgin's garment. Despite the fact that most of the ornamentation vanished today, closer examination of the item revealed remaining pigments and residual decorations, particularly on the Virgin's maphorion.⁷⁰⁹ Firstly, the examination of pigmented areas displayed that the Virgin's maphorion, borders of her tunic, along with Christ's hairs and cross embedded on his halo, were gilded. The remaining etched patterns demonstrate etched patterns; while the borders of the Virgin's tunic were adorned with squiggles or Kufic inscriptions, her maphorion was decorated with stylized flowers or/pomegranates combined with vegetal motifs.⁷¹⁰ Additively, such ornamentation was exhibited along the length of the maphorion and featured on the internal and exterior portions of the garment.⁷¹¹ As previously underlined, the sumptuous, opulent ornamentation of the Virgin's garment, particularly in Venetian Misericordias, indicates the

⁷⁰⁴ Victoria and Albert Museum, "Virgin and Child with kneeling members of the Guild of the Misericordia."

⁷⁰⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 40, 45.

⁷⁰⁶ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 750; Victoria and Albert Museum, "Virgin and Child with kneeling members of the Guild of the Misericordia"; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 94; Salvador-González, "The Iconographic Type of the Coronation of the Virgin," 12.

⁷⁰⁷ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 750; Victoria and Albert Museum, "Virgin and Child with kneeling members of the Guild of the Misericordia."

⁷⁰⁸ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 43.

⁷⁰⁹ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 752-53.

⁷¹⁰ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 753.

⁷¹¹ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 753.

possible utilization of imported, luxurious silks for modeling.⁷¹² Considering the popularity of flower and pomegranate motifs in the Eastern sphere, the garments in the tympanum relief might also imitate such silken pieces that arrived in La Serenissima through their involvement in international commerce.⁷¹³ Moreover, considering the execution date of the relief sculpture, approximately the mid-15th century, and the correspondence of that date with the enhancement of local silk and velvet production in La Serenissima, the Virgin's maphorion on the Venetian tympanum might be modeled on local, luxurious textiles, such as silk, velvety damasks, brocaded with gold and silver threads.⁷¹⁴ Rehearsing the discussion regarding the Galata Virgin's maphorion and its approximate identification as Venetian velvets (produced starting with the late 14th-early 15th century), similar reasoning for the Misericordia tympanum can be proposed.⁷¹⁵ Furthermore, according to Motture and Borges, the Virgin's garments on the tympanum would be portrayed similarly to uniforms worn by doges and dogaressas in formal events. By relating to the remaining stylized flower/pomegranate pattern on the item, they proposed the costume ornamentation displayed in Giovanni Bellini's portrayal of Doge Leonardo Loredan as a resembling model, therefore implying that "...the powerful image of the Madonna della Misericordia must have presented a stunning image in her brocaded white and gold damask."⁷¹⁶ Reviewing the Byzantine canon of illustrating the Virgin Mary and Christ in imperial costumes, the similar utilization in La Serenissima mentioned above can be proposed as one of the cultural traits that Venetians appropriated through artistic and cultural interactions between both spheres.⁷¹⁷ Recollecting the previous discussion regarding Byzantine-Western interactions, how Byzantine features often entered the Italian peninsula through Venetian ports, and how Venetians continued the Byzantine silken legacy and further developed their local silk and velvet industry, analogousness between

⁷¹² Poletto, "Paolo Veneziano, the Coronation of Virgin (or Santa Chiara) Polyptych," 9; Rodley, "The Byzantine Context," 9-10.

⁷¹³ Atasoy, Denny, Mackie, and Tezcan, *İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, 80, 89, 128, 279; Poletto, "Paolo Veneziano, the Coronation of Virgin (or Santa Chiara) Polyptych," 9; Rodley, "The Byzantine Context," 9-10; Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe; Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," 104.

⁷¹⁴ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 753.

⁷¹⁵ Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 168-9; "Senatori Velvet," Luigi Bevilacqua; Reath, "Weaves in Hand-Loom Fabrics, V. Velvet Weaves" 358-9; Watt, "Renaissance Velvet Textiles," Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

⁷¹⁶ Motture, and Lopez Borges, "A Venetian tympanum of the 'Madonna della Misericordia' by Bartolomeo Bon," 753; "Doge Leonardo Loredan," The National Gallery, accessed February 19, 2024, <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/giovanni-bellini-doge-leonardo-loredan>.

⁷¹⁷ Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images, Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography*, 36, 227.

both spheres, not just in terms of textile production, but also their reflection in artworks can be asserted.⁷¹⁸ In that regard, the Misericordia tympanum might have been an influential prototype for the Galata icon. Even though this is purely an assumption, the stylistic resemblances between both artworks and the perpetual Venetian interest in the icon that continued until the Saints Peter and Paul Church's handover to the French protectorate in 1701 further strengthens its possibility.⁷¹⁹ Last but not least, the revetment of the Galata icon enhances the spatiality of the artwork, distorting the flatness attained to wooden fragment behind. In that regard, metal revetment seemingly substitutes relief icons as it provides enhanced, yet still limited depth to the piece. Therefore, particularly with the repoussé technique, the revetment of the Galata icon features more naturalistic portrayal, compared to the traditional Byzantine icons.⁷²⁰

3.2.5 *The Hybridity of the Galata Icon's Metal Revetment: The Madonna of Rosary Theme Along with the Misericordia Iconography*

Last but not least, emphasis should be given to the Rosary theme, considering its utmost importance for the Dominican Order and its relationship with the Misericordia iconography. As previously emphasized in the description part, according to the tradition, Saint Dominic, the founder of the Order of Preachers, received a rosary from the Immaculate Virgin in one of his visions.⁷²¹ Fastly becoming one of the essential narratives related to the Dominican Order, the rosary theme became a significant feature incorporated into artworks and attained a specific iconographical formula when Alain de la Roche established the cult of rosary in the late 15th century.⁷²² Within that particular formula, the Virgin was portrayed most of the time with the Child Christ on her lap, reaching out to the beloved Dominican devotees from the celestial realm and

⁷¹⁸ Okumura, "Velvet and Patronage: The Origin and Historical Background of Velvet and Patronage: The Origin and Historical Background of Ottoman and Italian Velvets Ottoman and Italian Velvets"; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 230; Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 168; Rodley, "The Byzantine Context," 9-10; Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe; Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," 104.

⁷¹⁹ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 23-24.

⁷²⁰ Britannica, "Repoussé"; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81.

⁷²¹ Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 96.

⁷²² Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170.

handing them the rosary.⁷²³ Furthermore, with the establishment of the feast of Madonna del Rosario by Pope Pius V to commemorate the victory of the Christian community over the Ottomans in Lepanto, the artistic theme of the rosary was further popularized and started to include historical figures involved in that naval battle, such as Philip II and John of Austria.⁷²⁴ As an iconography bringing different layers of society in one artistic medium, given that royalties, laypeople, and ecclesiastical figures were depicted altogether, the Madonna of Rosary became a well-loved artistic theme at all levels of the social hierarchy.⁷²⁵ Similar affection can be



Figure 3.22: Unknown German artist, *Madonna in a Wreath of Roses*, c. 1490-1500, engraving, prepared by a Hamburg-based workshop, currently at the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., United States (Accession Number: 1943.3.553).

proposed for the Galata congregation, exceedingly strengthened through the agency of the Galata icon, with the repetitive rose forms implying the theme, together with the correspondence of the relocation of the icon to the church after the revetment application with the feast day of the rosary, on October 7, 1699.⁷²⁶ Even though the iconography of the Galata icon does not strictly follow the formula of the rosary theme elaborated above, its implications on the Galata icon are still apparent. Likewise, according to Katherine Brown, the Madonna of Rosary iconography and other iconographical formulas, such as Madonna del Popolo, were developed relatedly to the Misericordia iconography and, therefore, intertwined with the representations of the merciful Virgin.⁷²⁷ For instance, a late-15th century engraving by an unknown German artist, currently deposited at the National Gallery of Art, features the Misericordia iconography with a subtle

⁷²³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 112-13; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170.

⁷²⁴ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-71; Britannica, "Battle of Lepanto."

⁷²⁵ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 112-13.

⁷²⁶ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-72; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 96.

⁷²⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 112-13.

emphasis on the Rosary theme, yet not entitled as the Virgin of Mercy but as the *Madonna in a Wreath of Roses*, thus instead emphasizing on the latter theme intertwined on the depiction.⁷²⁸

In this engraving, the Virgin is depicted in an upright composition, in contrapposto position, embraced her hands in prayer. While the Child Christ is exempted from the scene, two angels are flanking the Virgin as they carry her mantle, presenting a safe space for protection to the faithful crowd underneath the Virgin's garment.⁷²⁹ The figures who found shelter under the Virgin's mantle are comprised of mixed identities, representing different layers of society given that their social status (royal, laypeople, ecclesiastical figures, etc.) are comprehensible mainly through their headgears and garments.⁷³⁰ One of the interesting features of the item is the inclusion of God in the scene, who appears within the clouds as an emphasis to the heavenly sphere and holding three spars directed to the crowd underneath.⁷³¹ Relatedly, the Virgin Mary and angels seemingly blended with the scenery and earthly sphere, as they do not appear to the faithful from the cloudy space or there is no cloth of honor to distort the reality, thus diverting from the canonical formula of the Misericordia theme.⁷³² Lastly, the representation is adorned with roses in the form of a wreath, exhibiting all scenes within a roundel composition.⁷³³ Concerning all elements, the only artistic reference to the Madonna of Rosary theme comes to the forefront as the wreath of roses embellishing the whole representation. In that regard, even though the main iconography underlines the Misericordia, one can still apprehend the Rosary theme among the representation, and even the title of the artwork puts emphasis on the latter theme. Thus, the close relationship between both themes comes to the forefront, just like in the Galata icon.

In conclusion, the Galata icon is comprised of two separate iconographies. As a composite icon composed of a wooden panel and a silver revetment, the Galata icon's iconographical program further strengthens the hybrid nature of the artwork by harmonizing two distinct iconographical typologies on its body. In comparison to its metal revetment, the wooden panel of the Galata icon forefronts a compelling reading given that most of the panel had deteriorated over the years, and

⁷²⁸ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-71; "Madonna in Wreath of Roses," Collection, National Gallery of Art, accessed February 24, 2024, <https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.3765.html#history>.

⁷²⁹ National Gallery of Art, "Madonna in Wreath of Roses."

⁷³⁰ National Gallery of Art, "Madonna in Wreath of Roses"; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170.

⁷³¹ National Gallery of Art, "Madonna in Wreath of Roses."

⁷³² National Gallery of Art, "Madonna in Wreath of Roses"; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 104-5.

⁷³³ National Gallery of Art, "Madonna in Wreath of Roses."

only the faces of the Virgin and the Child remained visible underneath the 17th-century silver revetment. On the other hand, the iconography of the metal revetment, *Madonna della Misericordia*, is represented more clearly and offers various historical and cultural features regarding the icon. As a particular iconography that was favored in the Latin West for centuries, the development of the *Misericordia* typology had occurred in a bidirectional manner; in other words, this iconography has both Eastern and Western roots given that artistic traditions belonging to both spheres were equally effective in the formation of its final version. The fact that various Byzantine characteristics, especially Marian iconographical features, had an impact on the development of the *Misericordia* iconography, this particular typology can be acknowledged as a visual demonstration of the cross-cultural interactions between the East and the West, namely Constantinople and La Serenissima, for centuries. Considering the importance of this iconography for the Dominican Order and its inclusiveness, i.e., promoting the Virgin Mary as *Mater Omnium*, the mother of all believers, who offers protection and salvation under her miraculous mantle, its execution on the Galata icon's metal revetment can be interpreted as the intentionality of the Dominican Order in Galata for representing itself as a sanctuary of the Catholic community of Constantinople/Istanbul, as well as emphasizing the unique history and position of the Order. Therefore, like its historical narrative and the various cultural contexts it illustrates, the hybrid iconography of the Galata icon further classifies the icon as a significant medium of interaction, presenting the Caffan, Constantinopolitan, and Venetian contexts and their cross-cultural interactions.

Chapter 4:

THE REVETMENT OF THE GALATA ICON

As previously emphasized, the Galata icon is mainly composed of the silver revetment applied to the fragmentary wooden icon dating from the 13th-14th century in 1698-1699, measuring 160x120 cm, consisting of three pieces nailed together.⁷³⁴ By its application, the silver revetment implemented a novel iconography to the icon, altering the previous representation that was mainly acknowledged as the type of Blachernitissa. In that regard, the revetment transformed the icon into a distinguishable artwork among other icons remained in Ottoman Constantinople (given that the revetment application date corresponded to the late-17th century). While the Misericordia iconography mainly influenced and originated from distinct Eastern characteristics, it was always acknowledged as a Western iconographical formula given its sizable utilization and popularity among the confraternities of the Latin West.⁷³⁵ Therefore, by reflecting that specific iconography, the silver revetment attained Western characteristics to the Galata icon, transforming it into a culturally composite artwork. Furthermore, the notion of covering icons with revetments to show piety and preserve the artwork, an artistic practice that dates back to the 10th century and was largely popularized in the Palaiologan era, is a concept that can be applied to the Galata icon.⁷³⁶ Thus, the silver revetment served as a means of both providing a Western attribution for the icon and emphasizing Byzantine retrospect, which linked the icon's past and present in Constantinople.⁷³⁷

Metal coatings were usually constructed accurately in terms of the portrayal of the image they were superimposing.⁷³⁸ Yet by not following the exact portrayal on the wooden fragment, the silver revetment of the Galata icon altered its original iconography, thus attaining another unique characteristic to the artwork. All such features distinguish the Galata icon from other icons with metal revetments that have remained in Ottoman and, later, in the Turkish Republic's Istanbul, just like the icon with the Virgin and the Child in the church of Saint Mary of Draperis. This uniqueness of the Galata icon transpires among preceding Byzantine icons and its contemporaries in the Latin

⁷³⁴ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154-5.

⁷³⁵ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 11, 22, 32, 46-7, 75-6, 95-9, 102-5.

⁷³⁶ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243.

⁷³⁷ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 11, 22, 32, 46-7, 75-6, 95-9, 102-5; Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 246-47.

⁷³⁸ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 245.

West and the Orthodox world.⁷³⁹ Furthermore, the protruding features of the Galata icon's revetment, i.e., the Virgin Mary, angels, and the community underneath the mantle, represent a fine example of the repousse technique, in which figures/patterns applied on the revetment are embossed by hammering the metal from the reverse side.⁷⁴⁰ As Andre Grabar underlined in his work *Les Revêtements en or et en Argent des Icônes Byzantines du Moyen Age* (1975), numerous Palaiologan icons with metal coating were executed by the repousse technique.⁷⁴¹ Therefore, in terms of its application, material choice and the silversmith technique, the metal revetment of the Galata icon visually manifests the Byzantine legacy of this artistic tradition. To comprehend the particularity of the revetment of the Galata icon and, relatedly, the artwork itself, comparisons with the generic Byzantine features would be beneficial.

4.1 The Galata Icon and the Byzantine Revetment Tradition

In Byzantium, covering icons with metal revetments and embellishing them with precious materials was an artistic application that can antecedently be dated to the late 9th-early 10th century, as an artistic progression followed the aftermath of the Iconoclasm.⁷⁴² Originally covering the frames and embellishing recognizable features of the figures with gold and silver gilding (such as halos), the technique evolved into more extensive layering in certain aspects. By the end of the 9th century, a variety of icons had been installed into metal revetments that imitated the original iconographical formula, but left crucial details like heads, hands, and feet disclosed, allowing the authentic representations to be seen by beholders.⁷⁴³ Revealing the original wooden fragments by not applying coating on those areas was an important aspect of covering icons with revetments since that manner was an attempt to remind beholders that the revetment only serves as a covering, a protective layer of the authentic and sacred material underneath.⁷⁴⁴ In that regard, metal revetments were addressed merely as an imprint of holy beings in Byzantine mindset, but not their actual representations, just like the ideology being influential on the perception of other artworks portraying religious figures in Byzantium.⁷⁴⁵ Considering the existence of similar dynamics in the

⁷³⁹ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 245.

⁷⁴⁰ Elizabeth Yoder Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2016), 30-2.

⁷⁴¹ Grabar, *Les Revêtements en or et en Argent des Icônes Byzantines du Moyen Age*, 9, 13-4.

⁷⁴² Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243-44.

⁷⁴³ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243-45.

⁷⁴⁴ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 245.

⁷⁴⁵ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631.

Galata icon, i.e., the visibility of the authentic wooden fragment on the faces of the Virgin and Child, the coherency of the Galata icon to the long-lasting tradition becomes comprehensible.⁷⁴⁶ Since the original 13th-14th century wooden icon was in a fragmentary and deteriorated state before the revetment application, and only the faces of the Virgin and Child believed to remain intact after the consequent fires and other aforementioned damages.⁷⁴⁷ Therefore, their hands and feet were overlayed with the silver covering, leaving their faces as the only wooden portions revealed to viewers. The deterioration of those areas and the need for their covering seemingly aided the Galata congregation in recasting the icon according to their disposition, as they were not limited to displaying hands and feet in specific places, thus more accessible to interpret the new iconography without facing any restraints, unlike the majority of Byzantine icons remaining in the Ottoman Constantinople and the Christian West, along with the contemporarily executed ones.⁷⁴⁸



Figure 4.1.: Detail of the Galata Icon. The Virgin's left arm and one of the angels.

Although it is a very sumptuous artistic application, the metal revetment tradition peaked during the Palaiologan era. Even though this situation appears to be perplexing at first glance, given that the empire had entered an immense predicament in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade, the increase in adorning icons with precious revetments highlights the conscious investment to such application by patrons as an attempt to signify their piety and devotion.⁷⁴⁹ Considering the decline in other economic industries, such as the considerable diminishment in silk production and exportation (except the ones sent as diplomatic gifts to the Latin West), the increasing popularity and utilization of revetments underline the prominence of godliness and piousness of patrons as their motive was to present their devotion to God through coating icons.⁷⁵⁰ In that regard,

⁷⁴⁶ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 245.

⁷⁴⁷ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154.

⁷⁴⁸ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41-2.

⁷⁴⁹ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 245-46.

⁷⁵⁰ Muthesius, "Silk, Power and Diplomacy in Byzantium," 99; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 198; Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 245-46.

representing patrons/donors as praying or in proskynesis, on the lowest edge of revetments (to visualize their request for salvation and protection), became a common practice, especially during the Late Byzantine period.⁷⁵¹ A similar reflection is also apparent on the Galata icon, even though the identity of patrons is not deducible due to a lack of inscriptions. As elaborated in the description part, neither the identity of donors nor their representation on the icon is distinguishable. Only two figures, displayed on either side of the Virgin Mary, touching her garments, can be proposed as possible donors due to their proximity to the central figure, yet cannot be precisely interpreted as such.⁷⁵² Considering that the generic figures on the Galata icon were interpreted as the members of the church's congregation, this representation can be understood as the representation of those who made financial contributions for the revetment, since most members of the congregation provided funds for its creation and placement on the icon. Given that the main intention was to signify the combined efforts of the community for the application of the silver coating and to represent all of them under the protection of the Virgin Mary, the Galata icon's revetment stands out from artworks that strictly adhere to the Byzantine tradition, even though it still contains certain harmonious features. Given that the Misericordia imagery reflect figures' pleas for their eternal salvation, the representation of the Galata congregation under the Virgin's mantle further underlines those Christians' devotion and piousness. Even though the latter statement seemingly parallels the Byzantine revetment tradition, the uniqueness of the Galata icon precludes its signification as directly following the Byzantine or Western traditions.⁷⁵³

Apart from portraying specific iconographical formulas, figures, and inscriptions intertwined with the icon's theme, metal revetments exhibit non-figural, stylized ornamentations that elaborate and embellish representations on their surfaces. They were applied to "empty" sections of the metal sheet, meaning they filled in any spaces left on revetments following the execution of figures and iconography.⁷⁵⁴ While embellishing the artwork, such non-figural ornamentations collectively symbolize the heavenly realm by creating a distorted, unrealistic scenery.⁷⁵⁵ In that regard, ornamentations on metal revetments play a significant part in icon

⁷⁵¹ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 246-47.

⁷⁵² D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5; Frances, *Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art*, 18, 24-7, 224-25.

⁷⁵³ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 246-47; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81-3; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 17-20.

⁷⁵⁴ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 53.

⁷⁵⁵ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 51-2, 56, 254.

reverence as they contribute to the religious experience of the beholder.⁷⁵⁶ The Byzantine artistic vocabulary of ornamentations comprised many elements, varied from stylized forms to relatively naturalistic flower/vegetal motifs.⁷⁵⁷ Some of these motifs can be remarked as follows: cross-stars, six-pointed stars, interlocking shapes, spirals, knots and meanders, palmettes, circles, interlaces, hearts, and guilloches.⁷⁵⁸ In the context of the Galata icon, as illustrated in the description part, the flower motifs; i.e., roses, adorning the Virgin's mantle and borders of her tunic were not merely ornamental, they were responsible for signifying essential notions regarding the Virgin Mary, such as the Madonna of the Rosary theme and the shift the Immaculate Virgin went through once the holy spirit miraculously conceived her.⁷⁵⁹ Even this one motif signifies the Galata icon as a piece of art that blends elements of the East and the West, the Galata icon demonstrated some features of Byzantine artistic traditions and reflected characteristics that evolved concurrently with cross-cultural interactions in the shifting sociopolitical environment of Constantinople over centuries, persistently expressing the same notions in modern Istanbul.

In addition to those rose motifs, the cloth of honor pattern parallels the Byzantine revetment tradition, given that it features some of the most common motifs that belonged to the latter's artistic vocabulary. Denominated as vegetal scrolls and stylized roses formed by adjoining diamond-like motifs, the cloth of honor of the Galata icon exhibits a non-figural representation, mostly mimicking the imported or locally produced luxurious textile fragments (e.g., silk and velvet), distorting the reality and emphasizing the heavenly sphere.⁷⁶⁰ Regarding Byzantine ornamental vocabulary, those vegetal scrolls can be classified as scrolls embellished with pairing heart motifs, whereas the diamond-like, triangulars can be proposed as zigzag patterns.⁷⁶¹ Moreover, the coarse needlework defining the ending border of the cloth, visible at the lowest end of the Galata icon's revetment, can be denominated as guilloche, a motif that appears as continuous twisting bands,

⁷⁵⁶ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 51-2, 56.

⁷⁵⁷ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 51-3.

⁷⁵⁸ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 440-46, 449, 456-58, 459-63, 464-69, 470, 471, 472-73, 475, 477, 479.

⁷⁵⁹ Maguire, "Body, Clothing, Metaphor: The Virgin in Early Byzantine Art," 39-42; Limberis, *Divine Heiress, The Virgin Mary and the Creation of Christian Constantinople*, 101-6; Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary Became 'Meter Theou'," 165, 167-9, 172; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 170-72; Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 96.

⁷⁶⁰ Hoeniger, "Cloth of Gold and Silver: Simone Martini's Techniques for Representing Luxury Textiles," 154-55, 160-61; Jacoby, "Silk Production," 426-27; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 228-30; Zirpolo, "(De)Constructing the Madonna's Cloth of Honor Pieced Cloths in Late Medieval Italian Paintings," 199.

⁷⁶¹ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 459-63, 480.

thus reminding densely executed needlework.⁷⁶² In that regard, even though for the Galata icon, the assembly comprised of those motifs indicated the design of the cloth of honor, the existence of similar ornaments in Byzantine vocabulary suggests that surviving examples of Byzantine icons with metal coatings have possibly been influential on the execution of the Galata icon's revetment.

Another compositional element that requires attention is the halo of the Child Christ in the Galata icon. As a golden roundel plaque sticking out from the primary layer of the revetment, Christ's halo/nimbus attracts beholders' attention to his portrayal with its elaborate outlook.⁷⁶³ In the Galata example, Christ's halo comprises wide, interlacing guilloche bands filled with five-petalled roses or flowers, renowned motifs of the Byzantine ornamental vocabulary.⁷⁶⁴ In addition to the consimilarity of ornamentations, the portrayal of halos as rounding fragments protruding from the main revetment, generally embossed with golden material, or decorative enamel application, or precious stones, was another shared element between the preceding Byzantine custom and the relatively new coating of the Galata icon.⁷⁶⁵ Furthermore, the zigzag pattern adorning Christ's mandorla is another element of the Galata icon that can fall under the ornamental category of the Byzantine revetment custom.⁷⁶⁶ Even though that particular pattern signifies a ray of lights coming out of the mandorla, relatedly to the heavenly sphere, Christ is peaking through, visually, its parallels with the Byzantine tradition, just like rose motifs on the Virgin's garments.⁷⁶⁷ Altogether, the Galata icon's revetment seemingly follows the traditional Byzantine ornamentation; subsequently, the Byzantium's revetment customs, embodying and expressing various Eastern and Western characteristics, became a visual testimony of the continual cross-cultural interactions that centered Constantinople from the time of Byzantium, integrating the Ottoman days, reaching to the contemporary Istanbul.

⁷⁶² Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 456-58.

⁷⁶³ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 165-66.

⁷⁶⁴ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 440-50, 456-58.

⁷⁶⁵ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 51-2; Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243.

⁷⁶⁶ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 480.

⁷⁶⁷ The National Gallery, "Mandorla"; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 165-66.

4.2 Contextualizing the Galata Icon's Revetment from the Perspective of the Western Artistic Traditions of the Seventeenth Century

In the 17th century, the Baroque style characterized the artistic texture of the Latin West.⁷⁶⁸ While its further influence was visible in the Eastern sphere, especially in architectural projects commissioned by the Ottoman court (such as the Nuruosmaniye Mosque in Istanbul), in the context of the Latin West, the Baroque artistic style had heavily expressed in various contexts, including art, architecture, theatre, literature, and music.⁷⁶⁹ Even though Baroque art had developed in parallel to the Council of Trent (1545-1563) in the mid-16th century and was heavily utilized to propagate the Catholic doctrines by the Vatican (as an attempt to overcome the impact of Protestantism in the Latin Catholic church), throughout the 17th century, it was spread across geographies, and further utilized by imperial courts to signify their power and wealth.⁷⁷⁰ As an artistic attempt to evoke emotions in the beholder by creating dynamic and dramatic scenery, the Baroque style was composed of various decorative elements, i.e., fluid ornaments, contrasting colors and textures, gilding with precious materials, etc., altogether expressing flamboyancy and monumentality of the patrons.⁷⁷¹ Such a notion was also apparent in the minor arts, especially in metalworks, as they hybridized skilled labor, precious materials, and complex ornamentations, thus signifying the social rank of their patrons in a direct manner. From a Baroque-oriented perspective, the Galata icon's revetment further proposes a 'Western reading,' along with references to the Byzantine revetment tradition.

⁷⁶⁸ Sutherland Harris, *Seventeenth-Century Art & Architecture*, xi, xxi, 1-4.

⁷⁶⁹ "Baroque art and architecture," Visual Arts, Britannica, last modified May 6, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/art/Baroque-art-and-architecture>; Selva Suman, "Questioning an "Icon of Change": The Nuruosmaniye Complex and The Writing of Ottoman Architectural History (1)," *METU JFA* 28, no.2 (2011): 145-46.

⁷⁷⁰ "Council of Trent," Britannica, last modified May 8, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Council-of-Trent>; "How did Baroque art and architecture come about?," Baroque Art and Architecture, Britannica, accessed May 9, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/question/Where-does-the-term-Baroque-come-from>.

⁷⁷¹ Britannica, "Baroque art and architecture."

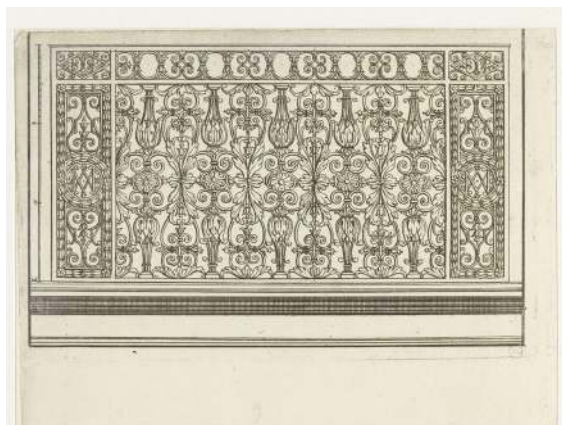


Figure 4.2.: Jean Marot, *Serrurerie*, 1660-1679, etching and print, 11.6 x 17.6 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom (Accession Number: E.1155-1908)

The enhancement of metalworking and its reflections on the Baroque period is rooted in the revival of bronze casting in the Early Renaissance. As an artistic tradition of classical antiquity, bronze casting had been gradually diminished from the artistic circles of European courts in the Middle Ages; it revived with the characterizing emphasis on ancient knowledge and techniques of the Renaissance period.⁷⁷² The growing interest in casting bronze for artistic purposes resulted in the development of new metalworking techniques and enhancement of the skilled-labored work; thus, during the Baroque period, impressive motifs were engrafted on bronze, along with other materials such as gold and silver, the latter which was emphasized as "...a sculptural medium...used to create some of the masterpieces of the (Baroque) period."⁷⁷³ Furthermore, in the 17th century, in terms of collectible, small-sized sculptures, silver ones were favored over their bronze counterparts, while the collectors were either acquiring bronze sculptures with silver gilding or bronze works of the preceding century. In other words, with the advancements in silversmithing and variations in the artistic taste of wealthy patrons and collectors, silver became a significant medium for casting artworks and artifacts of the 17th century.⁷⁷⁴⁷⁷⁵ From this angle, in addition to the protective motives and the desire to change the iconography, the Galata icon's implementation of silver revetment with gold gilding reveals another intentionality: the desire to grandly represent the church and its congregants, the city's Catholic community, and in particular the Venetian state (due to its role as the protectorate at the time of the revetment application).

⁷⁷² "Metalwork," Visual Arts, Britannica, last modified July 29, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/metalwork>.

⁷⁷³ Jennifer Montagu, *Gold, Silver and Bronze, Metal Sculpture of the Roman Baroque*, *The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts*, 1990 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2023), 1-2.

⁷⁷⁴ Montagu, *Gold, Silver and Bronze, Metal Sculpture of the Roman Baroque*, 6-8.

⁷⁷⁵ In terms of current availability, the number of bronze artworks from the earlier periods, mainly Renaissance and Baroque, is higher than the silver ones as the latter were frequently melted and re-casted as items of need (i.e., coins) when financial and political challenges arose; or when the owners wanted to have another item by 'recycling' the silver they already had. Therefore, the issue of current availability, i.e., items that have been preserved today, is not necessarily a decisive element in the favoritism of silver in different periods. Montagu, *Gold, Silver and Bronze, Metal Sculpture of the Roman Baroque*, 8-10.

As previously emphasized, the Galata icon's revetment embodies various motifs from the Byzantine ornamental vocabulary. In parallel to contextualizing such motifs as a part of Byzantine artistic tradition, one can further discourse them in the ornamental contexture of the Baroque style. For instance, the design of the cloth of honor, which was previously emphasized as adjoining stylized diamond motifs composed of vegetal scrolls paired with hearts, bears resemblances to French Baroque artist Jean Marot's (1619-1679) ornamental designs.⁷⁷⁶ The ornamental prints prepared using Jean Marrot's etchings were published under the title *Serrurerie* (as Marrot's designs were designated for ironwork) around the second half of the 17th century (1660-79) in Paris. As visible in Figure 4.2., this particular design by Marrot, especially the scrolling motifs on the upper and lower portions, resembles the design pattern continuing along the cloth of honor depiction in the Galata icon.⁷⁷⁷ In Baroque ornamental vocabulary, variations of continuous scrolls adorned with vegetal forms, i.e., scrolling foliage, constitute a significant place by being the most frequent and favored ornamentation executed on Baroque artworks.⁷⁷⁸ Some of the scrolling designs are visible in Figure 4.3., an excerpt from the book *Baroque Ornament and Designs* (Dover Publications, 1987) in which the French Baroque artist Jacques Stella's (1596–1657) drawings of elements of Baroque ornamental vocabulary are compiled; the intertwined scrolls with floral embellishments resemble the motifs of the cloth of honor and the belt-buckle of the Virgin Mary, while the fluidity of rose motifs along the Virgin's mantle, like flowing motifs in Stella's account, underlines the Baroque aesthetics in the Galata icon.⁷⁷⁹ While Marot's pattern was further embellished with acanthus leaves, the Galata icon does not display such intertwined acanthus motifs along the scrolling ornaments of the cloth of honor; instead, the only acanthus ornamentation on the icon was executed on Pope Pius V's mantle.⁷⁸⁰ Even though the Galata icon's revetment lacks an obvious Auricular style—another fundamental component of Baroque artistic style that consists of flowing, continuous motifs that mimic organic and anatomical forms—details on the revetment, like the figures' vividness, the surface's embellishment with a variety of motifs,

⁷⁷⁶ “Jean Marot,” Visual Art, Britannica, last modified March 25, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jean-Marot-French-architect-and-engraver>; “Serrurerie,” Collections, Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed May 10, 2024, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O795306/serrurerie-etching-marot-jean/>.

⁷⁷⁷ Victoria and Albert Museum, “Serrurerie.”

⁷⁷⁸ “The Baroque style,” Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed May 10, 2024, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/the-baroque-style>.

⁷⁷⁹ Jacques Stella, *Baroque Ornament and Designs* (New York: Dover Publications, 1987), 3-4,6-7, 10.

⁷⁸⁰ Victoria and Albert Museum, “Serrurerie”; Britannica, “Acanthus.”

and the subtle fluidity that creates dynamism, give the revetment a rather theatrical quality that further characterizes it as a synthesis of Byzantine and Baroque artistic traditions.⁷⁸¹

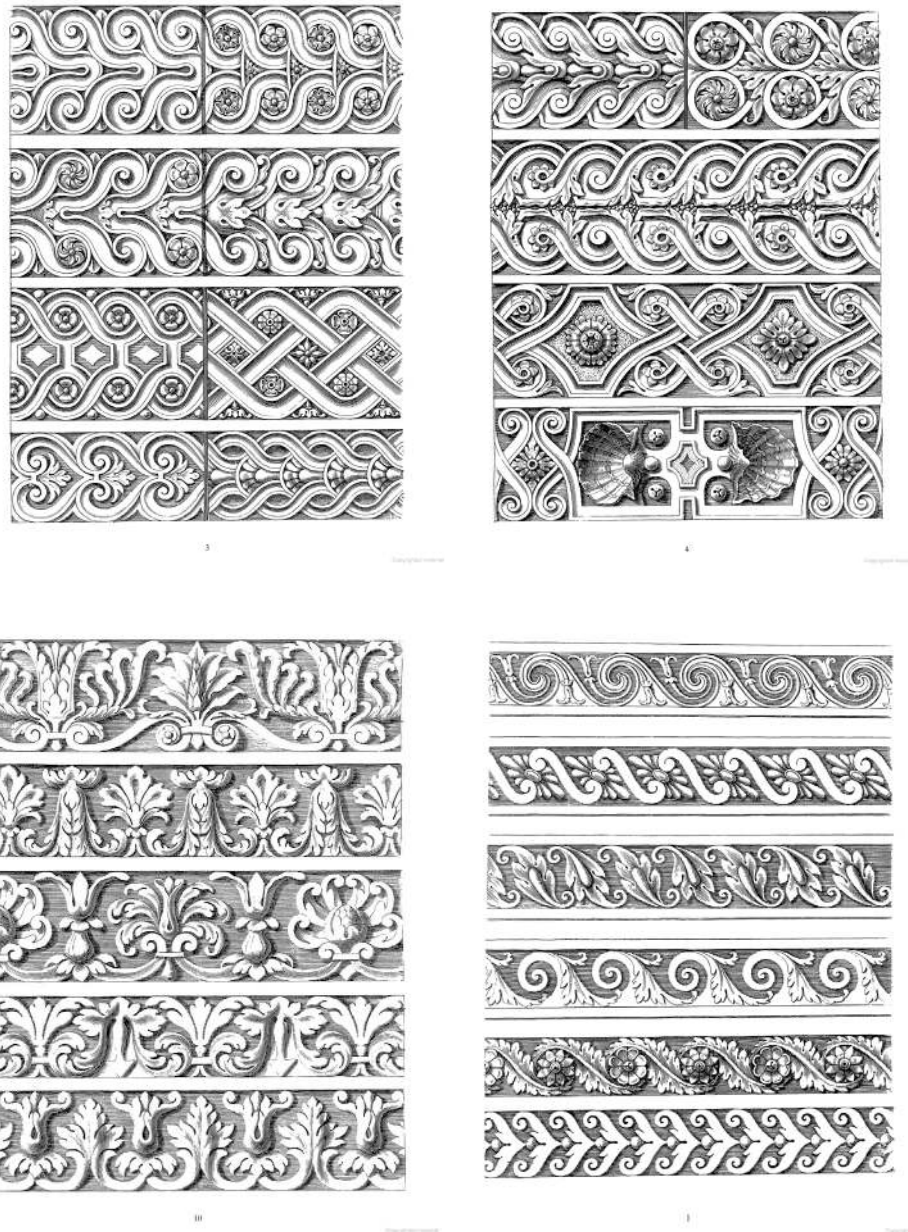


Figure 4.3: Jacques Stella's drawings of Baroque ornaments, each page is excerpted from the book *Baroque Ornament and Designs* (Dover Publications, 1987).

⁷⁸¹ Femke Speelberg, "Extravagant Monstrosities: Gold- and Silversmith Designs in the Auricular Style," Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified May 2014, http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/extr/hd_extr.htm; Victoria and Albert Museum, "The Baroque style."

The interpretation of the Galata icon's revetment as a synthesis of Byzantine and Baroque artistic traditions also derives from another significant perspective on the matter developing during the period: the Baroque-oriented viewpoint on Byzantine icons. This perspective is based on the growing interest in Byzantine icons in the Latin West during the 16th and 18th centuries, their recognition as genuine images of Christianity, and the emergence of cults devoted to them, particularly in the Italian peninsula.⁷⁸² In the context of the Counter-Reformation, Byzantine images were utilized to propagate the Latin Catholic doctrines over the Protestant ideology since the latter condemned the veneration of the images and underlined them as an act of heresy. In return, the Vatican church emphasized the miraculous images of the East, i.e., Byzantine icons that were either acknowledged as *Acheiropoieta* (not made by human hands), such as the Mandylion in Genoa and the Shroud of Turin or appropriated to Saint Luke the Evangelist, who painted the portrait of the Virgin Mary and nuanced with the *Hodegetria* iconography over the centuries, as authentic images that came to existence with the agency of the God and his disciples, therefore contrasted to the Protestant perception on the matter.⁷⁸³ In this regard, Byzantine icons with miraculous attributions developed into the symbol of the Christian faith in the Latin West, following the Post-Tridentine, i.e., the Baroque period.⁷⁸⁴ Icons that were first sent from Pera to Chios and then to Genoa in 1461 (following the Ottoman Conquest of Constantinople in 1453) and their role in propagating the veneration of images in Post-Tridentine Genoa hold significance in the context of the Galata icon as they illustrate the Baroque perception of Byzantine icons while emphasizing on their colonial context in Constantinople, a notion that one can draw parallels with the Galata's Virgin, as elaborated in the previous chapter.⁷⁸⁵ As previously emphasized, the 14th-century icon *Madonna di Pera* that is currently displayed at the Museo di Sant'Agostino, Genoa, demonstrates important notions on the incorrect identification of the Galata icon as a *Hodegetria*

⁷⁸² Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 283; Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 250-51.

⁷⁸³ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 283-84; Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Acheiropoieta," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 1*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): 12; "Mandylion," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 2*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): 1282-283.

⁷⁸⁴ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 283-84; Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 250-51.

⁷⁸⁵ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 286-88; Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 460-61.

by underlying the possible confusion of both icons with one another in following centuries.⁷⁸⁶ On the other hand, the ‘Pera’ icon of Virgin Hodegetria with silver coating draws parallels with the Galata icon through the application method of the revetment (only the faces of the Virgin and the Child were left uncovered), as well as with the ordeal identity of its residency in Genoa, the Dominican church of Santa Maria di Castello.⁷⁸⁷ Even though one cannot propose a direct connection between that particular Madonna di Pera and the Galata icon, the former can be elaborated as a prototypic image for the latter, at least in the minds of the Dominican congregation in Constantinople, due to the abovementioned characteristics. Additionally, the further alteration of that icon by the Dominican order in Genoa, the attachment of outer wings that display the typical scene of Saint Luke the Evangelist with the Virgin Mary and the Child (a representation that appears when the wings were closed), resembles the historical narrative of the Galata icon, as novel additions to both artworks enhanced the iconographical representation on them, thus proposing that particular Madonna di Pera icon as a possible prototypic notion for the Galata icon.⁷⁸⁸ Therefore, both Madonna di Pera icons offer novel insights into the interpretation and cultural reception of the Galata icon. Furthermore, like the ‘Pera’ icon with silver revetment, the wooden Madonna di Pera icon went through a similar alteration in which it was embedded into a painting displaying Saint Nicholas of Myra, along with numerous female saints, by Giovanni Andrea Carlone (1639–97) in the 17th century. Carlone’s painting framed the icon Madonna di Pera, attributed another iconographical layer to the icon, transformed it into an ‘image within an image’.⁷⁸⁹ According to Stagno, by such elaboration, the artwork in question is enhanced into a devotional image that dually emphasizes the icon, i.e., one of the authentic images of Christianity as perceived by the Genoese community, its historical discourse, and significance to the Catholic religion while interconnecting the icon into its Genoese context, thus remarking on its cultic perspective and propagative features in the Baroque period.⁷⁹⁰ In other words, the attachment of Carlone’s painting as a framing panel over the wooden icon of Madonna di Pera had been utilized

⁷⁸⁶ Quirini-Poplawski, “Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.),” 460-61; Stagno, “Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor,” 287-88.

⁷⁸⁷ Stagno, “Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor,” 287-88.

⁷⁸⁸ Stagno, “Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor,” 288; Boros, “Myth and Miraculous Performance: The Virgin Hodegetria,” Iris Blog, Getty.

⁷⁸⁹ Stagno, “Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor,” 288; “Carlone, Giovanni Andrea,” Web Gallery of Art, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?bio/c/carlone/giovandr/biograph.html>.

⁷⁹⁰ Stagno, “Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor,” 288-89.

as a way of mediating icon's different cultural contexts while enhancing the authentic perception of the icon by acting like a reliquary that envelops and embellishes that particular image. Similar artistic applications on 'authentic' images of the Christianity, i.e., Byzantine icons (with miraculous identities) in the Latin West, were executed during the Baroque period, thus elevating their perception and devotional practices by 'revetment' with additional imagery.⁷⁹¹ From this Baroque-oriented point of view, the revetment of the Galata icon can further be acknowledged as an intentional emphasis on the authenticity of the original wooden panel, even remarking that it is the Hodegetria icon painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist or the Blachernitissa icon that performs the Usual Miracle.⁷⁹² Moreover, covering the wooden panel of the Galata icon with silver coating, whose iconography underlines the intercessory role of the Virgin Mary together with the Incarnation of Christ, with Misericordia iconography strengthens the protective and intercessory role of the Virgin; as through her agency, devoted Christians seek for forgiveness and the mercy of God.⁷⁹³ Considering the compatibleness of the revetment application date of the Galata icon to the period characterizing the enhancement of the Baroque ideology on propagating images through such artistic applications, it is plausible to suggest that the application of the silver revetment to the Galata icon also nourished and influenced from the Baroque artistic tradition.⁷⁹⁴

Therefore, along with the impact of the Byzantine revetment tradition and ornamental vocabulary on the Galata icon's revetment, the Baroque influence on the item, in terms of silversmithing, excessive ornamentation, and the particular perception of the Byzantine images in the Latin West, becomes apparent in this research. In that regard, like its iconography, details, and history, the revetment of the Galata icon reflects the hybridization of particular Eastern and Western features on its body.

4.3 The Role of the Galata Icon's Revetment in Beholders' Religious Experiences

In addition to highlighting religious iconography and strengthening the reception of the intended content of the artwork, metal revetments covering icons embellish beholders' religious perceptions by offering tactile and sensorial-driven experiences.⁷⁹⁵ When applied, revetments provide subtle three dimensionality on icon's flat surfaces, thus, characterizing them as relief-like

⁷⁹¹ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 288-92.

⁷⁹² Sevcenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," 2172-173; Sevcenko, "Virgin Blachernitissa," 2170-171.

⁷⁹³ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 17-20, 47-9, 104.

⁷⁹⁴ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 283-84.

⁷⁹⁵ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631.

structures. Moreover, some metalsmithing techniques, like repousse, create embossing features on revetments and further fracture the two-dimensional perception of artworks that are covered by revetments executed with such techniques.⁷⁹⁶ In Byzantine artistic tradition, such revetments, i.e., composed of partial or complete reliefs, were considered mediums projecting the divine spirits of figures portrayed on their surfaces.⁷⁹⁷ Such projection is further strengthened in the eye of the beholder through the achieved theatricality, or performance, on revetment's surfaces when they interact with surrounding elements, such as light and the touch of venerators.⁷⁹⁸ The performance displayed on icons with revetments attains an animated nature in such artworks, thus transforming them into living, or rather inspirited, paintings, a concept Bissera Pentcheva interpreted as *empsychos graphe*.⁷⁹⁹ According to Pentcheva, *empsychos graphe* indicates "...images that show divine presence through some physical change or iconography or style, as well as representations that eloquently conveyed complex figures of speech or theological dogma."⁸⁰⁰ While such performativity was intertwined with miracle narratives of famous icons such as Blachernai (the Usual Miracle) and the Hodegetria (the Tuesday Processions) in Byzantium, icons coated with revetments were also acknowledged as performative, or animated, due to the sacred experience created by the tactile and sensorial interactivity of revetments with their surroundings.⁸⁰¹ Due to their intrinsic material features, metal revetments obtain glimmering appearances when light reflects upon them. Moreover, using different metals, i.e., gold, silver, and bronze, results in varying levels of glimmer along the surfaces of icons.⁸⁰² A similar notion is observable on revetments with embossing relief features due to their three-dimensional characteristics: the reflection of the light varies from revetments with relatively flatter surfaces, thus resulting in a luminous effect that creates the illusion of animation of the portrayed image.⁸⁰³ Such illusion,

⁷⁹⁶ Grabar, *Les Revêtements en or et en Argent des Icônes Byzantines du Moyen Age*, 9, 13-14; Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 30-2.

⁷⁹⁷ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631-32, 636-37.

⁷⁹⁸ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631, 636-37, 644-45, 650-51.

⁷⁹⁹ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 632; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 149-52.

⁸⁰⁰ Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 152.

⁸⁰¹ Pentcheva also emphasizes how the holy spirit's animating power allowed icons to perform miracles. One such instance is the Usual Miracle of Blachernae, where the Holy Spirit's power lifted the silk veil covering the well-known Blachernitissa icon and left it suspended in that position for the duration of the day. Furthermore, the associated miracle of the Hodegetria icon—which has been implied to have been accomplished by the Holy Spirit engrafted on the icon—was observed at Tuesday processions in Constantinople during which the icon attributed to Saint Luke the Evangelist was processioned. Pentcheva, *Icons and Power, The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 129-33, 149-52; Weyl-Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage in Middle Byzantine Constantinople," 77-8.

⁸⁰² Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 644.

⁸⁰³ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631-32, 636-38.

along with other contributing factors available in the environment, like the scent coming from incense, chants sung by choirs, the gloomy atmosphere of churches, etc., create a sacred sensation in the beholder's mind, which results in the animations, or performance, of the imprinted material on revetments, thus enhancing the religious experience of the beholder by activating their senses.⁸⁰⁴ Therefore, the interaction of revetments with environmental features and the animation of the representations engrafted on their surfaces result in a synesthetic vision in which the beholders experience the heavenly realms and go through a religious sensation, altogether enhancing their devotion and strengthening their faith.⁸⁰⁵

Similar perception dynamics should be observed in the case of the Galata icon, which has been considered to be a relief icon given that of the presence of a silver revetment with embossing features covering a significant portion of the icon. Yet, currently, beholders of the Galata icon cannot experience the synesthetic vision that its revetment would create, due to the glass frame that the icon was placed behind.⁸⁰⁶ The protective glass over the icon distorts its interaction with surrounding features (such as the glimmering effect anticipated to be produced by reflecting light on its surface), thus constraining the sacred experience that beholders would typically have. Nevertheless, considering the abovementioned discussion, one can still determine the sensorial effect the Galata icon would create on beholders when the icon's glass frame does not limit their veneration. From this perspective, the revetment of the Galata icon would have produced a synesthetic vision and sacred reception on its beholders between 1699 and 1843, which corresponds to the first time the icon coated with silver revetment was displayed to congregants and to the Fossati renovation project on the church where the icon was placed behind the glass frame on the niche.⁸⁰⁷ As the yearly contributions of La Serenissima to the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata were mainly meant to be spent for mass celebrations at the Virgin Mary's altar and the spread of the cult surrounding it, it is possible to suggest that the Galata icon also drew in worshippers by providing them with religious experiences stimulated by synesthetic vision.⁸⁰⁸ Such vision would be created by the interaction of the Galata icon's revetment with the immediate

⁸⁰⁴ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631-32, 636-37, 639-40, 648-51.

⁸⁰⁵ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 644-45, 651.

⁸⁰⁶ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151-54.

⁸⁰⁷ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 137; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151-52.

⁸⁰⁸ D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 22.

surroundings, resulting in perceiving the animated spirits of the portrayed figures as mental images by the beholders.⁸⁰⁹

4.4 The Revetments of Marian Icons in Latin Catholic Churches of Istanbul: Galata vs Draperis

As previously emphasized, coating icons with metal revetments has dual functions: protecting the wooden panel from further deterioration and enhancing the artwork's perception by providing an ornamented 'façade' on the icon.⁸¹⁰ As a significant Byzantine artistic tradition that availed in representing the piousness of patrons who commissioned the revetment while emphasizing their religious devotion, the application of metal revetments on artworks was further adopted by other Orthodox communities (that denominated icon revetments as *Riza*), while such icons that had reached the Latin West were considered as visual testimonies of the Byzantine heritage, along with being artistic tools utilized in power projection.⁸¹¹ In contemporary Istanbul, icons with silver revetments are either displayed or preserved in inventories of Orthodox churches, thus clearly making visual reference to the Byzantine past of the city, as well as the multicultural ethnicity of Ottoman Istanbul where different Orthodox groups (i.e., Greeks, Armenians, Syriac Christians) had lived for centuries.⁸¹² In parallel to their Orthodox counterparts, two prominent Latin Catholic churches in Istanbul have Marian icons coated with silver revetments. While the first icon in question is thoroughly analyzed in this thesis, the Galata icon in the church of Saints Peter and Paul, the second icon, Virgin Hodegetria, displayed in the church of Saint Mary of Draperis, require further elaboration for contextualizing those icons with Catholic identities within the revetment tradition that predominated in the city over the centuries.⁸¹³

⁸⁰⁹ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631-32, 636-37, 639-40, 644-45, 648-51.

⁸¹⁰ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 245.

⁸¹¹ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 245-46; Nina Chichinadze, "Icons as Relics, Re-interpreting Repousse Revetments of Devotional Images in Medieval Georgia," *Iconographica* 10/11 (2011/12): 47; "The Mother of God Vladimirskaia," Collection, The British Museum, accessed May 11, 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1924-1101-1; Montagu, *Gold, Silver and Bronze, Metal Sculpture of the Roman Baroque*, 6-8.

⁸¹² Karaca, *İstanbul'da Tanzimat Öncesi Rum Ortodoks Kiliseleri*, 622-23; Erdem Yücel, *Bizans Resim Sanatı ve İkonalar* (İstanbul: Kitab-ı Mukaddes Şirketi, 2020), 107.

⁸¹³ Darnault *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 98; Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 43-4.

Like the Galata icon, Draperis' Hodegetria received its silver revetment in a later period (18th century) as a further alteration of the artwork.⁸¹⁴ According to historical narratives, the Hodegetria icon was bestowed to Franciscan friars residing in Constantinople by Clara Bertola, widow of Nicolo Draperis, in 1584, along with a small house near Mumhane for them to use as their sanctuary. The name of the church, Saint Mary of Draperis (or Santa Maria Draperis), comes from the arrangement between those Franciscan friars and Clara Bertola, who wished that the new church building would be denominated after her family, thus Saint Mary of Draperis.⁸¹⁵ The Draperis



Figure 4.4.: *Virgin Hodegetria*, wood and silver, the former's date proposed to Late Byzantine period while the application of the latter in 1772, 120 x 86 cm, the church of Saint Mary of Draperis, Pera, Istanbul.

family had a long-standing past in Constantinople, as their existence in the city can be traced back to the Byzantine period, particularly after the Fourth Crusade.⁸¹⁶ As a family with Genoese origins that believed to have constructed a profitable textile business in Constantinople (from which the family name Draperis derives), members of the Draperis family had played an intermediary role between the Byzantine court of Micheal Palaiologos and the Genoese state in the second half of the 13th century, given that their names, Matteo Draperis and Elion Draperis, were inscribed in the treaty of Nymphaeum (1261).⁸¹⁷ From this perspective, the Draperis icon, which is of Byzantine origin and iconography, might have been imperially commissioned and bestowed to the Draperis family by the emperor Micheal Palaiologos to acknowledge Draperis' role in accomplishing the treaty.⁸¹⁸ While this remains my assumption and cannot be further certified due to a lack of evidence, the diplomatic relations between the family and the Byzantine court and the Byzantine identity attributed to their Hodegetria icon render the possibility of such a situation.

⁸¹⁴ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 43.

⁸¹⁵ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 10,43; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 98, 102.

⁸¹⁶ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 9.

⁸¹⁷ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 9-10; Hilsdale, "The Imperial Image at the End of Exile: The Byzantine Embroidered Silk in Genoa and the Treaty of Nymphaion (1261)," 152-53.

⁸¹⁸ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 9-10.

The attribution of miraculous identities of both the Galata and the Draperis images shares comparable qualities, in addition to their Genoese context, since these miraculous conceptions of the icons originated after the great Istanbul fire of 1660. Like in the case of the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, the church of the Franciscan Friars in Mumhane was utterly destroyed as an outcome of the great Istanbul fire of 1660, and the Hodegetria icon venerated in that church had miraculously escaped from being entirely demolished by the fire, just like the Galata icon.⁸¹⁹ As previously underlined, Dominican friars had continued to reconstruct their church at the exact location, and the current church complex on the site was constructed through the renovation project run by the Fossati brothers in 1841-1843.⁸²⁰ On the other hand, after the great Istanbul fire of 1660, Franciscan friars relocated their church to Pera, to their current location on İstiklal Street, while the contemporary church complex is dated to a later period (1769) since the pioneering constructions on the site have been demolished due to consequent fires and earthquakes.⁸²¹ Moreover, similarly, the silver revetment of the Draperis' Hodegetria was attached to the wooden panel in a later period, on August 15, 1772.⁸²² While both icons share similar historical features, the main element that differentiates them is the iconography of their metal revetment.

As seen in Figure 4.4., the revetment of the Draperis' icon displays the Hodegetria iconography, just like the wooden original icon it encompasses underneath, thus not altering the original representation as in the case of the Galata icon.⁸²³ Moreover, by mimicking the wooden panel's authentic representation, the silver coating of the Draperis' icon precisely follows the Byzantine revetment tradition, a notion hybridized with the Western point of view in the context of the Galata icon's revetment. Furthermore, in terms of motifs and ornaments adorning the silver coating, the Draperis' Hodegetria seemingly follows the Byzantine ornamental vocabulary through the visual representation of interlaced scrolls with six-petalled roses framing the portrayal of the Virgin and the Child, six-pointed stars filling the background, and the stucco-like nimbuses around

⁸¹⁹ Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 98; Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 11; İnciyan, *18. Asırda İstanbul*, 109-10.

⁸²⁰ Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 137; Sen Piyer Kilisesi, "Construction of the New Temple," The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul; Girardelli, "Architecture, Identity, and Liminality: On the Use and Meaning of Catholic Spaces in Late Ottoman Istanbul," 233.

⁸²¹ Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 98.

⁸²² Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 98; Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 37, 43.

⁸²³ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 43; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 102; İnciyan, *18. Asırda İstanbul*, 109-10.

the heads of the holy mother and the Child.⁸²⁴ The existence of a similar interlace design on the borders of each figure's garments and the rose motif engrafted around the collar of the Virgin's tunic strengthens the Byzantine ornamental identity of the Draperis icon's revetment. While the icon seemingly lacks gold gilding, the utilization of the repousse technique in the execution of both the Virgin Mary's and the Child's figuration emphasizes the likeness between the Draperis and the Galata icon.⁸²⁵ On the other hand, unlike the Galata icon, the Draperis icon's revetment illustrates an exact Hodegetria iconography in the Byzantine artistic manner. It thus does not contrast with its given title. In terms of gestures of both figures (pointing and blessing), their plain garments, the tilted head of the Virgin and two stars around her shoulders, along with the positioning of Christ on his mother's left arm and the scroll on his hand, the Hodegetria iconography represented on the Draperis' revetment follows the Byzantine tradition and bears resemblances with Hodegetria icons executed in Byzantine style.⁸²⁶ Interestingly, the faces of the Virgin and the Child on the Draperis icon do not illustrate stylized and elongated facial structures of Byzantine art; instead, they seem to be painted in a more naturalistic manner.⁸²⁷ Considering the historical origin attributed to this icon, i.e., Byzantine, the elaboration of faces does not correspond to the stylistic features of the Byzantine period, thus forefront the possibility of their repainting in later centuries, reminding Bordino's comment on the facial structure of the Galata's Virgin and the possibility of repainting of that feature.⁸²⁸ In addition, crowns of the Virgin Mary and the Child that appear 'alien' from the rest of the details engrafted on the revetment might be a later addition, particularly to celebrate the papal bull regarding the Immaculate Conception.⁸²⁹ While no information regarding the attachment of crowns to the Draperis icon came to the forefront in this research, the fact that the current church complex was inaugurated (1769 and 1874) on the celebration day of the Immaculate Conception, on December 8, and the painting signifying the Immaculate Conception with the representation of Franciscan saints (the figure holding the lily is identified as the Saint Anthony of Padua) on the aisle, might be considered as indicators of such

⁸²⁴ Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 440-46, 449, 456-58, 459-63, 464-69, 470, 471, 472-73, 475, 477, 479; "Looking at Byzantium through materials: the case of stucco (ca 850-1453)," British School of Athens, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://www.bsa.ac.uk/videos/looking-at-byzantium-through-materials-the-case-of-stucco-ca-850-1453/>.

⁸²⁵ Grabar, *Les Revêtements en or et en Argent des Icônes Byzantines du Moyen Age*, 9, 13-14.

⁸²⁶ Sevcenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," 2172-173; "The Virgin Hodegetria and the Man of Sorrows," National Gallery of Art, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://www.nga.gov/features/byzantine/virginmanofsorrows.html>.

⁸²⁷ National Galleries Scotland, "Byzantine Art."

⁸²⁸ Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 155.

⁸²⁹ Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 98-9.

possibility on the attachment of crowns.⁸³⁰ The fact that the Galata icon received its crown and crescent moon around the same time to signify the same notion further strengthens the possibility of the motive behind adding crowns to the Virgin and the Child in the Draperis icon.⁸³¹

While the Draperis' revetment follows the Byzantine artistic tradition without incorporating any Western elements, its frame enclosing the icon was executed in Baroque style by Fr. Alberto Farina in 1958.⁸³² The illustration of rays of light, i.e., the divine light, coming out of the frame, particularly resemblances the gilded bronze rays on Bernini's sculpture *The Ecstasy of Saint Theresa* (1645–52) in the Cornaro Chapel, Rome, Italy, that were utilized for creating the effect of divine light and the celestial sphere.⁸³³ In that regard, while its revetment thoroughly follows the Byzantine revetment tradition, due to Baroque elements on its frame, the Draperis icon attained Western features.⁸³⁴ Last but not least, the fact that the commissioning of the revetment for the Draperis icon became possible through charitable donations of Christians (?) residing in the Pera and Galata regions further proposes a similar dynamic between the Galata and the Draperis icon.⁸³⁵ Furthermore, as illustrated in Chapter I, the patron families of both churches, Zacharia and Draperis, were closely interrelated with one another, primarily through consequent marriages between both family members; thus, even though it is not indicated in a written document, Zacharia family may have provided a substantial contribution for the execution and the application of the revetment.⁸³⁶ Visually, the partnership of both families and their churches with different ordeal identities, i.e., Dominican and Franciscan, can be interpreted through the representation of the coat of arms belonging to both orders above the church's main entrance.⁸³⁷

The analysis of the Virgin Hodegetria icon in the church of Saint Mary of Draperis has revealed various characteristics shared with the Galata icon. Although the latter's revetment

⁸³⁰ Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 98-9, 102; Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 45.

⁸³¹ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-3; Gündoğar, "Galata Sn. Pierre Kilisesi'nin Tarihi," 23-4.

⁸³² Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 43-4; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 102.

⁸³³ "Gian Lorenzo Bernini," Visual Arts, Britannica, last modified April 17, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Gian-Lorenzo-Bernini>.

⁸³⁴ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 43-4.

⁸³⁵ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 43; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41-2; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5, 37.

⁸³⁶ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41-2; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 37.

⁸³⁷ Balcı, "İstanbul Beyoğlu'nda Bir Latin Katolik Müessesesi: Santa Maria Draperis," 34.

expresses specific Western characteristics and features that were developed under its historical and contemporary (17th century) contexts, the execution of metal coating on both icons signifies an essential notion regarding their Catholic identity and their existence in the Ottoman and, later, the Republic's Istanbul.⁸³⁸ By being artworks receiving high regard and reverence from the Catholic community of Constantinople/Istanbul, their representations within silver revetments draw a link between different historical onsets of the city. As a Byzantine artistic tradition typically observed in artworks of Orthodox circles, metal revetments on these 'Catholic' Marian icons can be elaborated as visual testimonies of the Byzantine heritage in the city, along with cross-cultural interactions that Byzantium had with the Latin West for centuries.⁸³⁹ While both icons also touch upon the Ottoman context of the imperial capital, the continuum of Byzantine artistic traditions and their altered expressions in parallel with the creative and cultural features of the following centuries becomes apparent through the analysis of both icons' revetment. Furthermore, their Marian identities can be interpreted as another visual testimony of the Byzantine past since, under Byzantine rule, Constantinople became the center of the Marian cults and attained the title of *Theotokopolis* (as referred to by Theodore Synkellos).⁸⁴⁰ Altogether, revetments of both icons hybridize the different artistic, cultural, and historical contexts of Constantinople/Istanbul and harmoniously reflect them in their mediums. These notions can be further acknowledged as the evolving dynamics of the Catholic community in the city throughout the centuries, which attained novel characteristics (when compared to their counterparts in the Latin West) within the multicultural entity of the city of Constantinople/Istanbul.

In conclusion, the Galata icon's revetment harmonizes various artistic and cultural contexts on its body, thus becoming much more than a silver coating with protective and embellishing features.⁸⁴¹ By employing elements from the Byzantine revetment tradition and ornamental vocabulary, composing an illustration in parallel to the contemporary fashion predominating the

⁸³⁸ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 246-47, 250-51; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81-3; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 17-20; Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 459-63, 480; Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 283-84.

⁸³⁹ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 245-46; Chichinadze, "Icons as Relics, Re-interpreting Repousse Revetments of Devotional Images in Medieval Georgia," 47; The British Museum, "The Mother of God Vladimirskaya"; Montagu, *Gold, Silver and Bronze, Metal Sculpture of the Roman Baroque*, 6-8.

⁸⁴⁰ Shoemaker, "The Cult of Fashion, The Earliest Life of the Virgin and Constantinople's Marian Relics," 64.

⁸⁴¹ Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 245; Marlia M. Mango, Laskarina Bouras, and Anthony Cutler, "Silver," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Volume 3*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, Alice-Mary Talbot, Anthony Cutler, Timothy E. Gregory, and Nancy P. Sevcenko (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991):1898-899.

Western sphere, and transforming the icon to be perceived like a relic of Christianity by reflecting the Baroque-oriented point of view, the Galata icon became one of the most significant artworks expressing the cross-cultural interactions between Constantinople/Istanbul and the Latin West over the centuries.⁸⁴² In addition to such expression, the materiality of the icon, along with the embedded contents and messages, enhanced the perception and the religious experience of beholders, thus becoming a critical Marian imagery that provides sacred connections and functions as a temporary gateway to the celestial realm.⁸⁴³ While the Draperis icon is equally essential in the context of Catholic identity and its representation in the multicultural environment of the city, the Galata icon envelops all the abovementioned notions, through which it functions as a cultic image appealing to the Marian devotion and relatedly, consolidates the Christian belief of its venerated.

⁸⁴² Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 246-47; Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 459-63, 480; Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 283-84; Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631-32, 636-37, 639-40, 648-51.

⁸⁴³ Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631-32, 636-37, 639-40, 648-51.

CONCLUSION

One of the objectives of this thesis is to demonstrate the dynamics of the long-standing cross-cultural and artistic dialogues between the Byzantine, later Ottoman, Constantinople, and the Latin West and how they were reflected in the 17th century Constantinople/Istanbul. In order to comprehend those dynamics and comment on their reflections on the multicultural texture of the Ottoman capital in the 17th century, the icon *SS.V. Odighitria* in the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata, Istanbul, is utilized as a case study.⁸⁴⁴ The main motivation behind selecting this specific Marian icon for the purpose of this thesis was its multifaceted hybridity, which effectively integrates artistic features of the East and the West.⁸⁴⁵ The icon's given title of *Odighitria/Hodegetria* presents a misleading statement on its iconographical typology since its composition demonstrates the impossibility of interpreting it as *Hodegetria*.⁸⁴⁶ Owing to the contrast between its title and iconography, this Marian icon is referred to as the Galata icon in the context of this thesis to ensure clarity on the subject.

The Galata icon, an artwork of a severely deteriorated wooden panel from the 13th or 14th century covered in a silver revetment (applied in 1698-1699), portrays two separate iconographies.⁸⁴⁷ The former's depiction is too fragmented to fully interpret its original iconography in its current state, while the latter shows the *Madonna della Misericordia*, also known as the *Virgin of Mercy*, a significant Marian iconography that dominated the Latin West for centuries.⁸⁴⁸ In *Misericordia* representations, the Virgin Mary is the composition's central figure, displayed as opening her miraculous mantle and gathering a pleading Christian community underneath, thus granting them protection and eternal salvation. Through such visualization, the motherly nature of the Virgin Mary, along with her intercessory role between God and the humankind, is emphasized.⁸⁴⁹ As thoroughly discussed in Chapter III, the formulation of the *Misericordia* iconography has two separate roots that can be characterized as the product of cross-

⁸⁴⁴ Bordino, "L'Odighitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151.

⁸⁴⁵ Bordino, "L'Odighitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151-54.

⁸⁴⁶ Sevchenko, "Virgin Hodegetria," 2172-173; Angelidi, and Papamastorakis, "Picturing the Spiritual Protector: from Blachernitissa to Hodegetria," 213-15; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 177.

⁸⁴⁷ Bordino, "L'Odighitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 151-54.

⁸⁴⁸ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 11, 17-20, 22, 32; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81-3.

⁸⁴⁹ Van Asperen, "The Sheltering Cloak: Images of Charity and Mercy in Fourteenth-Century Italy," 264-67, 274-75.

cultural interactions between Byzantium and the Latin West for centuries.⁸⁵⁰ Such interpretation is plausible in the context of this thesis, given that the Misericordia typology embodies various Byzantine and Eastern (Armenian and Cypriot) artistic and cultural features harmoniously with their Western counterparts. At the same time, similar formation dynamics were also seen in Western Europe, further asserting the parallelism of the Marian devotion practices in both spheres.⁸⁵¹ Consequently, in this thesis, the Misericordia iconography is examined by highlighting its artistic implementation and hybrid nature, as well as its significance for the Dominican Order. In particular, the Venetian Misericordia examples have been highlighted to propose prospective artistic and cultural factors that shaped the portrayal of the Misericordia iconography on the Galata icon.⁸⁵² In this respect, this thesis aimed to contextualize the Galata icon and its Misericordia iconography as visual references to the abovementioned cross-cultural interactions.

The addressing of the Galata icon as a notable medium of interaction reflecting the cross-cultural interactions between Byzantine, later Ottoman Constantinople, and the Latin West, namely La Serenissima, is further asserted by analyzing details of portrayed figures and contextualizing them within coherent artistic and cultural contexts implying such interactions. For instance, the analysis of the Virgin Mary's mantle revealed that, very likely, the Venetian chiseled velvets were modeled to represent the Virgin's miraculous garment.⁸⁵³ While this particular type emphasizes La Serenissima's artistic production in the 16th and 17th centuries, it further implies the long-running commercial relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian state, along with the position of Constantinople in international trade for centuries, by emphasizing its Byzantine and Ottoman contexts.⁸⁵⁴ A similar approach also applied to the revetment of the Galata icon, highlighting the harmonious composition of the Byzantine revetment and Baroque artistic

⁸⁵⁰ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 68-9; Georgopoulou, "Venice and the Byzantine Sphere," 489; Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50; Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 159.

⁸⁵¹ Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 68-9; Georgopoulou, "Venice and the Byzantine Sphere," 489; Derbes, and Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," 449-50; Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 159; Belting-Ihm, *Sub Matris Tutela*, 56; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

⁸⁵² Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-43; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 23-24.

⁸⁵³ Luigi Bevilacqua, "Soprarizzo Or Cesellato: The Finest Among Our Velvets"; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5.

⁸⁵⁴ Fleming, "Constantinople: From Christianity to Islam," 69; Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction," 230; Monnas, "Italian Silks (1300-1500)," 168; Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Universite Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe.

traditions on the Galata icon's silver coating.⁸⁵⁵ Altogether, in terms of its materiality, the representation of each figure and detail within particular cultural contexts and the composite nature of its iconography, the Galata icon became an artwork reflecting the artistic and cultural contexts in which it was developed.

The historical narrative of the Galata icon (its Caffan background, journey to Constantinople, miraculous survival from the great fire of Istanbul (1660), attachment of the metal revetment, obtaining a new spatiality after the Fossati renovation of the church (1841-1843), and lastly its coronation) had been instrumental in the icon's transformation into an emblematic artwork of Christianity in Constantinople/Istanbul.⁸⁵⁶ Moreover, the embodiment of artistic and cultural features referring to the icon's past and present, along with their harmonized representation within the Misericordia iconography, had been highly influential in signifying the Latin-rite Christians residing in the Ottoman capital. Therefore, in light of these, remarking on the possible perception of the Galata icon by the Christian community of Constantinople/Istanbul, particularly in the 17th century, is significant for synthesizing all features of the icon and strengthening its interpretation of an essential medium of interaction, and an object of Christian devotion.

Constantinople/Istanbul has always attained a Christian identity from its past to the present day. As Christianity was the official religion of Byzantium, Constantinople had been considered the center of Orthodox Christianity, perpetual for the duration of the empire (330-1453).⁸⁵⁷ On the other hand, the initial residency of the Latin-rite Christians in the Byzantine capital dates back to the late 11th century, when La Serenissima received privileges, including obtaining a quarter in the city, as an act of appreciation by Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1057-1118) in 1082 for their help defeating the Normans.⁸⁵⁸ Similar developments were followed by the Genoese state,

⁸⁵⁵ Stagno, "Embedding Byzantine Icons in Post-Tridentine and Baroque Splendor," 283-84; Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," 243, 246-47, 250-51; Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 81-3; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 17-20; Moss, "Framing the Holy: Revetments on Late Byzantine Icons," 459-63, 480.

⁸⁵⁶ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople' du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 38-9, 41, 42-3; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154, 158, 167; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 134-5, 137, 142-3; Obaldia, "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul," 115-6; Sen Piyer Kilisesi, "Construction of the New Temple," The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul; Girardelli, "Architecture, Identity, and Liminality: On the Use and Meaning of Catholic Spaces in Late Ottoman Istanbul," 233.

⁸⁵⁷ "Byzantine Empire," Britannica, last modified May 6, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Byzantine-Empire>.

⁸⁵⁸ Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople. Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, 23; Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe.

approximately in the late 13th century, with the Treaty of Nymphaeum in 1261.⁸⁵⁹ Like its Venetian counterpart, Genoa obtained numerous privileges from the Byzantine Empire in return for its promise of naval aid for reconquering Constantinople and freeing the city from Latin rule.⁸⁶⁰ In that regard, by the end of the 13th century, numerous Latin-rite Christians from different European states (i.e., Venetians, Genoese, Florentines, Ragusans, and Catalans) had established themselves in Constantinople.⁸⁶¹ Even though their population in the city had relatively diminished after the Fall of Constantinople (1453), the existence of the Latin Christians, along with Orthodox Greeks and Armenians, maintained the Christian identity of the Ottoman Constantinople. While the Bab-ı Ali considered Greeks, Jews, and Armenians as *millet* and granted them certain legal rights, the Latin-rite Christians living in the Ottoman Constantinople/Istanbul did not receive a similar treatment from the Ottoman court.⁸⁶² Instead, they, especially Genoese subjects of the empire, had established the *Magnifica Communita*, a religious and political body that was regulated by Ottoman governors of Galata and Pera, and embraced all Catholic Christians residing in the Ottoman capital.⁸⁶³ Due to diplomatic fluctuations, like the long-termed conflicts between Ottoman Empire and the Venetian State that resulted in numerous Veneto-Ottoman wars in the course of 15th-18th centuries, number of Latin Catholics living in the capital gradually declined over the centuries.⁸⁶⁴ Nevertheless, in the context of Ottoman Istanbul, the Magnifica Communita comprised a significant place among the non-Muslim subjects of Ottoman sultans as the members of that community generally worked as intermediators between the Ottoman court and the European states.⁸⁶⁵

⁸⁵⁹ Hilsdale, "The Imperial Image at the End of Exile: The Byzantine Embroidered Silk in Genoa and the Treaty of Nymphaion (1261)," 152-53.

⁸⁶⁰ Quirini-Poplawski, "Art in the Genoese Colonies on the Black Sea (in the 13-15th c.)," 425; Sicimoğlu Yenikler, "The Artistic Hybridity of the Church of San Domenico (Arap Camii): Mirroring the Multicultural Milieu of Galata From Byzantine to Ottoman Times," 40-1.

⁸⁶¹ Eric R. Dursteler, "Erken Modern Dönem İstanbulu'nda Latin Kilisesi Hristiyanları / Latin-Rite Christians in Early Modern Istanbul," in *Osmanlı İstanbulu I*, ed. by Feridun M. Emecen and Emrah Safa Gürkan (İstanbul: İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2014), 138.

⁸⁶² Dursteler, "Erken Modern Dönem İstanbulu'nda Latin Kilisesi Hristiyanları / Latin-Rite Christians in Early Modern Istanbul," 138-9.

⁸⁶³ Dursteler, "Erken Modern Dönem İstanbulu'nda Latin Kilisesi Hristiyanları / Latin-Rite Christians in Early Modern Istanbul," 137-38.

⁸⁶⁴ Dursteler, "Erken Modern Dönem İstanbulu'nda Latin Kilisesi Hristiyanları / Latin-Rite Christians in Early Modern Istanbul," 138-9.

⁸⁶⁵ Dursteler, "Erken Modern Dönem İstanbulu'nda Latin Kilisesi Hristiyanları / Latin-Rite Christians in Early Modern Istanbul," 142-43; Peters-Custot, "Venetian merchants and traders, actors of the Venetian Empire," Sorbonne Université Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe.

The Galata icon, a symbol of the Latin Catholics residing in the Ottoman capital, is one of the artworks that emphasize the multicultural entity of the Ottoman Empire, thus signifying the Magnifica Communita in Istanbul. Furthermore, at the end of the 17th century, the Galata icon transformed into a crucial symbol of the Christian community of the Ottoman capital, given that the commissioning of the icon's silver revetment was a collective endeavor, meaning that Latin Catholics, Orthodox Greeks, and Armenians residing in Galata/Pera provided substantial donations in that regard.⁸⁶⁶ Such a collective endeavor further highlights the revetment as a treasury that the church had attained, thus underlying the material credibility that the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Galata achieved through the collective investment of non-Muslims to apply the silver coating. Although the Dominican identity of the Galata icon, and relatedly the church it was venerated in, forefronts the Catholic nature of the icon, contributions of non-Muslim minorities for the application of its silver revetment underlines the inclusiveness of this particular icon, thus further symbolizes the Christian identity of the Ottoman Empire. From an iconographic viewpoint, the patronage dynamics that successfully carried out the silver revetment of the Galata icon ought to have an impact on the iconography of the object. In other words, in addition to the aforementioned historical figures and members of the Dominican congregation in Galata, the non-Muslim minorities who contributed to the application of the revetment on the icon can be interpreted as formulating some of the figures that place themselves beneath the mantle of the Virgin Mary.⁸⁶⁷ The representation of devoted Christians under the Virgin's mantle reminds the concept of *Mater Omnium*.⁸⁶⁸ From this perspective, the Galata icon's representation further contextualizes the Virgin Mary as the mother of all Christians residing in the 17th-century Ottoman capital, without discriminating them according to their sects, thus representing the notion of *Mater Omnium* in a Constantinopolitan context.⁸⁶⁹ While the majority of its iconographical features illustrate the representation of the Galata icon's revetment as a Venetian-like Misericordia image, thus underlying the significant Eastern artistic features that the Misericordia iconography nourished from, the concept of *Mater Omnium* further emphasizes on the Western European

⁸⁶⁶ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5, 37.

⁸⁶⁷ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 41; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 20-5, 37.

⁸⁶⁸ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 129-30; Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 129-30.

⁸⁶⁹ Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 129-30; Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 129-30.

perception and development of this particular iconography.⁸⁷⁰ In that regard, the imagery of the revetment synthesizes the aforementioned influences arising from the Eastern and Western roots of this iconographical typology, thus elaborating the Galata icon as an essential medium of interaction that reflects the cross-cultural interactions between Constantinople and the Latin West.

As illustrated in this thesis, the Galata icon is a multilayered Marian artwork that reflects various notions of the cross-cultural interactions between the East and the West from the 13th-14th to the late 17th century, namely Constantinople/Istanbul and La Serenissima. Moreover, it further demonstrates the coexistence of varying artistic and cultural features in the city, remarking on the complex history of Constantinople/Istanbul. By its history, dual iconography, silver revetment, and exhaustive representation, the Galata icon provides numerous approaches to cross-cultural interactions and composite artistic vocabularies formulated as their consequences. In that regard, the Galata icon further emphasizes the fluidity of the cultural forms and their coexistence in defined milieus, i.e., in the case of this thesis, Constantinople/Istanbul. Moreover, its Constantinopolitan context emphasizes the multicultural entity of the Ottoman and, later, the Republic's Istanbul, thus being instrumental in highlighting the city's contemporary artistic and cultural contexts. Although in terms of art, historical research propounds significant points regarding the Genoese community in Caffa and Pera, the artistic texture of Byzantine and Ottoman Constantinople, the Marian devotion and iconographies developed with the interactions between the East and the West, along with the issue of coexistence of artistic and cultural forms within the city, in the current art historical studies, the Galata icon is overlooked.⁸⁷¹ As previously mentioned, there are only two publications centering around the icon.⁸⁷² Therefore, I would like to conclude my thesis by indicating that one of my primary goals was to take the initiative to attribute the

⁸⁷⁰ Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 42-43; D'Alessio, *Le Couvent et L'Eglise des Saints-Pierre-et-Paul a Galata*, 23-24; Seibert, "Schutzmantelschaft," 129-30; Duffy, "Aquinas Lecture 1988," 129-30; Brown, *Mary of Mercy in Medieval and Renaissance Italian Art*, 45-6.

⁸⁷¹ Ziadé, "'Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique," 84; Palazzo, and Raineri, *La Chiesa di S. Pietro in Galata*, 38-9, 41, 42-3; Bordino, "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata," 154, 158, 167; Darnault, *Latin Catholic Buildings in Istanbul*, 134-5, 137, 142-3; Obaldía, "A Legal and Historical Study of Latin Catholic Church Properties in Istanbul," 115-6; Sen Piyer Kilisesi, "Construction of the New Temple," The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul; Girardelli, "Architecture, Identity, and Liminality: On the Use and Meaning of Catholic Spaces in Late Ottoman Istanbul," 233.

⁸⁷² Bordino, Chiara. "L'Odigitria Della Chiesa Dei Santi Pietro e Paolo a Galata. Fonti per Un'Iconografia Tra Oriente e Occidente." In *Domenicani a Costantinopoli prima e dopo L'impero Ottomano*, edited by C. Monge and S. Pedone, 151-174. Firenze: Edizioni Nerbini, 2017; Ziadé, Raphaëlle. "La "Madone de Constantinople" du couvent des Dominicains de Galata et son revêtement métallique." In *Grandes Heures des Manuscrits Irakiens*, edited by J. Charles-Gaffiot and A. Desreumaux, 80-86. Suresnes: Les Éditions du Net, 2015.

significance the Galata icon deserves in art historical research. I strive to achieve this goal by attracting attention to the Galata icon and its unique iconography.



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