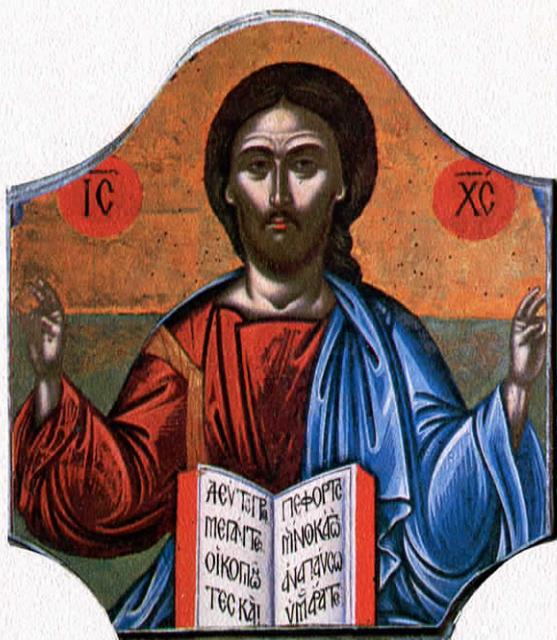


EXHIBITION OF THE ICONS
EPARCHY OF PIANA DEOLI ALBANESE

PALERMO - PALAZZO ARCIVESCOVILE
6th DECEMBER, 1980 - 6th JANUARY, 1981



Piana degli Albanesi is the Church assembling in Sicily the Christians come from the Orient during the XVth century immigrations to the island, who have always been faithful to their rite and culture.

Wholly Sicilian, still today – a unique event in the millenarian tradition of the sicilian culture assimila-

tion – they are wholly Albanian too. They have learned the Sicily byzantine tradition, keeping it still alive.

Today the Sicily-Albanians of the Eparchy of Piana are scattered in the communities of Piana degli Albanesi, Mezzojuso, Palazzo Adriano, Contessa Entellina, S. Cristina Gela. Many of them live moreover in Palermo.



The Virgin Odighitria - Hieromonk Giovannicio. 2nd half of XVIIIth century

Their Church-Cathedral is at Piana degli Albanesi; in Palermo they have the Co-Cathedral of S. Maria dell'Ammiraglio, named La Martorana.

The Icons of the Eparchy.

This exhibition shows the most significant part of the iconogra-

phic inheritance of the Eparchy, heartily assembled with enthusiasm during centuries to meet the theological and liturgical requirements of its byzantine rite.

A delicate restoration work, just begun, has revealed a great deal of images of unsuspected beauty and importance. Some of the icons are quite inedited, as

they have been now cleaned from hiding superfetations that had sank them into oblivion.

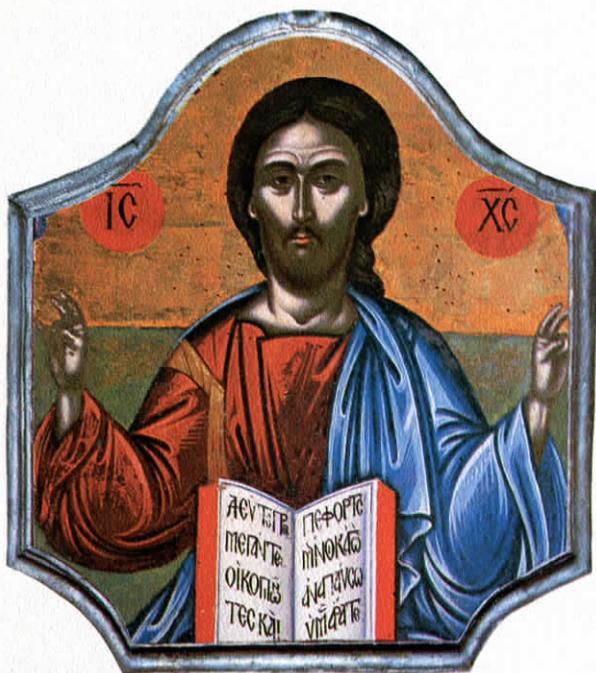
The exhibition will show the big altar-piece of S. Nicola, Venetian-Cretan masterpiece, the Cross of Cretan art painted on both sides, and the icons of greatest quality coming from the iconostasis erected during XVIIIth century in the several churches of the Eparchy. For the first time it will be possible to admire the magnificent icons by the priest-monk Giovannicio, revealed by

the exhibition as one of the most illustrious greek iconographer who operated in the pure byzantine tradition at its splendour decline.

The Eparchy of Piana offers by these icons its whole tradition linking it to the byzantine and Albanian world, to the coming and presence of its sons in Sicily and connect itself and Sicily to the former and today's oriental world with a never drowsy belief in fraternity and an always auspicate efficacy of unity.



Deisis. Cretan. Late XVIIIth century



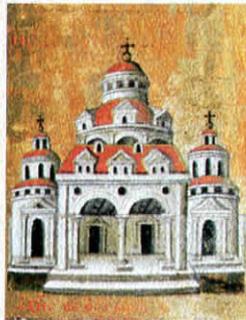
Blessing Christ. Cretan. XVIIIth century

The Icon is the figurative art form of the Christian East. Theorized by the Fathers of the Church and established by the Oecumenical Councils, it was intended to serve as a norm for the whole of Christianity, which was thereby provided with a sacred art analogous to that of the other great religions. This tradition was subsequently lost in the West, but it continues even to the present day as the glory of the Eastern Churches.

The icon is not a formal equilibrium of lines and colours, nor is it a record of personal experience, nor the interpretation of a religious subject. All of these things may be found in it, but

essentially the icon exists to communicate invisible reality through visible means. This is accomplished by virtue of canonical forms, which are designs and compositions transmitted from master to pupil, whose origin, in one sense or another, is held to be inspired. These canons have the effect of distorting normal reality, thereby rendering it ductile to the spiritual power: transformed and incremented, our familiar world can then be established in perdurable structures.

Meaningful in their beauty, the canonical forms guarantee the efficacy as well as the authenticity of this sacred art at all the levels of being".



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EXHIBITION SECRETARIAT

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*The exhibition is cared of by the Professors Mr. John
Lindsay Opie and Mr. Michel Berger.*



"Epi si chéri". Detail. - Moskos. Late XVIIth century
Cross. Detail. - Cretan. Late XVIth century
St. John the Baptist. Detail. - Cretan. End of XVIIth century