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Published by:
Office of the President of Malta
The Palace
Valletta, Malta
2017

Printed at:
Printcare Press, UBT 8B, Industrial Estate
San Ġwann, SGN 3000, Malta

Publication sponsored by:
Churchill Restaurant
Triq San Xmun, Xlendi XLN 1300, Gozo

ISBN: 978-99957-1-168-9 (Print format)
ISBN: 978-99957-1-169-6 (Electronic format)

Celebrating the legacy of Cyril and Methodius

*with special reference to
Historical Iconography*

hosted by
The President of Malta
and Mr Preca

San Anton Palace, Attard
12 – 13 May 2017



Foreword by The President of Malta

H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca

A year has passed since the Bulgarian community in Malta celebrated Cyril and Methodius. I am pleased to say that during the past year, the diplomatic relations between Malta and Bulgaria were further reinforced through a State Visit from the Republic of Bulgaria in November 2016. More importantly, our people-to-people friendly relations have also grown during this time.

Our two countries have supported great civilisations, the cradle of our culture, the inheritance from our ancestors, which we are entrusted to guard for present and future generations. We are the conveyors, the medium and wardens of this legacy. Cultures are best understood in contact with others; our diversity is the uniqueness which enriches us; together we enrich ourselves further.

I had the opportunity to be present at a class, held over video conference, between a Bulgarian school in Sofia and the Bulgarian Sunday School Cyril and Methodius in Malta on 31 March 2017. On this occasion, I could feel the vibrancy of the

children, across so many miles, yet communicating so brilliantly together. I am very proud of the Bulgarian community in Malta. It is a wonderful community, very peaceful, and hardworking. It is always a pleasure to welcome a number of Bulgarian descendants that live in Malta to the historical palace of San Anton.

It is a great pleasure to know that the programme of studies of the Bulgarian Sunday School in Malta, which teaches Bulgarian children residing in Malta their native language, literature and history and culture studies, is the official one recognized by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Bulgaria. It is of satisfaction to note that this year, in the second year of the



school, the number of pupils has doubled, and that from the coming year it will be open to Maltese children as well.

Cyril and Methodius are hailed as the apostles of culture and education. Whilst culture forms the psyche of the nation, education, in the wise words of

Noble Peace prize holder Nelson Mandela, is the most influential weapon which one can employ to transform humanity.

Let us keep nurturing endeavours that bring peace to our families and communities, as this is the only way we can ensure peace throughout the world.



Memories . . .



A selection of photographs



The President of Malta H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca accompanied by the First Gentleman at the inauguration of the exhibition of works of art by Bulgarian artists held at Antoine de Paule Hall, San Anton Palace



“The Bulgarian community in Malta is a wonderful community, very peaceful, hardworking and it is a real pleasure to welcome a number of Bulgarian descendants that live in Malta to this historical place.”

H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca (Speech during virtual class which Bulgarian Sunday school, Malta, had with the 61st School, Sofia, 31 March 2017)

*“Peace is the greatest need
of our time.”*

H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro
Preca (Speech at exhibition
entitled Art for Peace, 3
March 2017)



*“We cannot allow the
fundamental rights
of children to be
compromised. The dignity
of children cannot be
a fairytale or simply a
platitude.”*

H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro
Preca (Conference entitled
Lost in Migration, 26 January
2017)





Malta-May 2017 Photo by: Peter John Bosse (c) 2017

“Let us always, and in all ways, keep working together to safeguard the best interests of our families and our children.”

H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca (closing speech during the launch of a research study entitled The Prevalence of Problematic Internet Use in Malta among young persons, 11 July 2017)



“Let us never stop doing all that we can to empower, to nurture, and to celebrate the dignity and the well-being of each and every child.”

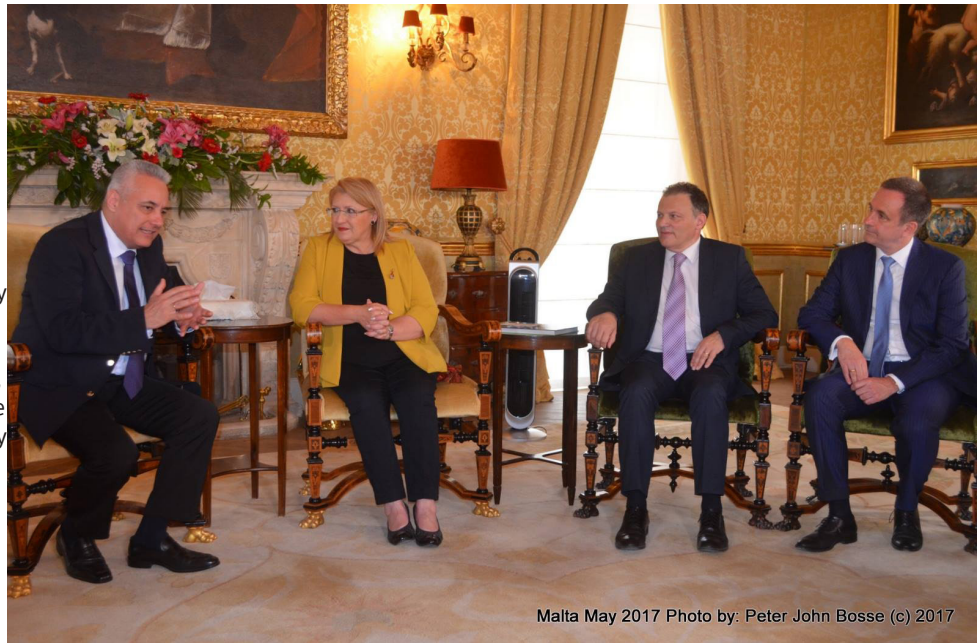
H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca (Conference entitled Lost in Migration, 27 January 2017)

The President of Malta receives a courtesy visit by the special guests invited for the celebration of Ss Cyril and Methodius



Malta May 2017 Photo by: Peter John Bosse (c) 2017

During the courtesy visit, *from left to right*: The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Bulgaria to Malta H.E. Marin Rakov, the President of Malta, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Malta to the Republic of Bulgaria H.E. Prof. Lino Bianco and Dr Borislav Boyanov, the Honorary Consul of Malta to the Republic of Bulgaria



Malta May 2017 Photo by: Peter John Bosse (c) 2017



With the Ambassador
Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of the
Republic of Bulgaria to
Malta H.E. Marin Raykov,
Mrs Raykova and daughter
Laura Marinova Nikolova



With the Honorary Consul
of Malta to the Republic
of Bulgaria Dr Borislav
Boyanov

With tenor Mro Ivaylo Mihaylov, Mrs Mihaylova and their children Trifon and Ema



With Prof. Ralitsa Rousseva and Peter Bosse





With H.E. Svetlan Stoev,
the Director of State
Protocol of the Republic
of Bulgaria



With the staff of the
Bulgarian Sunday School
Ss Cyril and Methodius,
Malta, *from left to right*:
Zornitsa Kirova, Gergana
Kostova, Lidia Kortova,
Valcho Valchev and
Asenka Bogdanova-
Manova

With the Bulgarian folk dance group Balkan Heart



Participants in the fine art exhibition, *from left to right*: Joeaby Vassallo (curator), Elena Toncheva, Zornitca Vlaeva, Daniela Guevska, Vania Goshe, Aglika Bochukova and Anelia Guteva





During the inauguration of the art exhibition: Dr Borislav Boyanov, the Honorary Consul of Malta to the Republic of Bulgaria (*left*), with H.E. Marin Rakov, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Bulgaria to Malta



Dr Giannella de Marco and Dr Borislav Boyanov, the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Bulgaria to Malta and the Honorary Consul of Malta to the Republic of Bulgaria respectively

Reception at San Anton
Palace following the
concert



Bulgarian folk dancing at
the Secret Garden, San
Anton Palace





The programme



Malta May 2017 Photo by: Peter John Bosse (c) 2017

This year was the second consecutive one when the feast of Cyril and Methodius was hosted by H.E. Marie-Louise Colerio Preca, the President of Malta, once again at her official Presidential Residence at San Anton. The distinguished Bulgarian guests who flew over for the event were all accommodated at the Presidential Palace.

The programme was held on the 12 and 13 May 2017. It opened with a public lecture on the morning of 12 May held in the Russian Chapel of San Anton Palace. The theme was Cyril and Methodius in Historical Iconography. The lecture was delivered by Professor Ralitsa Rousseva, a member of the academic staff at the Department of Old and Mediaeval Art within the Institute of Art Studies of the Bulgaria Academy of Sciences. She is also the Head of the Museum of Christian Art located at the crypt of St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral which museum forms part of the National gallery of Sofia. After the lecture, H.E. The President, accompanied by the First Gentleman, inaugurated at the newly restored Antoine de Paule Hall at San Anton Palace an exhibition of works of art of Bulgarian artists residing in Malta. The exhibition

was entitled Malta through the eyes of Bulgarians. The artists taking part were, in alphabetical order, Aglika Bochukova, Bogdan Dyulgerov, Daniela Guevska, Vania Goshe, Anelia Guteva, Elena Toncheva and Zornitca Vlaeva. Afterwards H.E. Madam President inaugurated a digital photographic exhibition with the same theme, which exhibition will be made available to the public in Bulgaria. The art exhibition and the digital photographic exhibition were curated by Joeaby Vassallo and Stephan Borg respectively.

A concert was held in the evening of the 12 May in the music room at San Anton. Taking part were Ivaylo Mihaylov, Plovdiv's tenor and disciple of the Bulgarian tenor Kaludi Kaludov, soprano Maria Eleonora Schembri and mezzo soprano Christine Dalli, both students at Johann Strauss School of



Malta May 2017 Photo by: Peter John Bosse (c) 2017

Music. Maria-Elena Farrugia played the piano. The selected repertoire included Bulgarian, Maltese, Italian and Russian pieces. These events were well attended by distinguished guests, members of the diplomatic corps including the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Bulgaria to Malta resident in Rome, H.E. Marin Raykov who flew over to Malta for the celebrations, and Borislav Boyanov, the Honorary Consul of Malta in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The morning of the 13 May was characterised by a courtesy meeting of the distinguished guests with H.E. The President. Also present was H.E. Svetlan Stoev, the Director of State Protocol of the Republic of Bulgaria. H.E. Raykov and Dr Boyanov each presented a gift to H.E. The President. After the meeting, H.E. The President and the distinguished guests joined the pupils of the Bulgarian Sunday School Cyril and Methodius at the

Secret Garden, one of the gardens at the Presidential residence. As was done last year, each Bulgarian pupil brought along a Maltese friend. A performance was put up by the pupils under the direction of their teachers; Asenka Bogdanova-Manova, Lidia Kortova, Gergana Kostova and Zornitsa Stefanova Kirova. It included the singing of the national anthems of Malta and Bulgaria. H.E. personally gave a token gift to each pupil.

After the activity of the pupils, the Bulgarian folk dance group “Balkan Heart”, led by the artistic director Nikola Lalov, performed a number of traditional dances from Bulgaria.



Celebrating friendship

*A teaching session of the
Bulgarian Sunday School, Malta*



The Bulgarian Sunday School Ss Cyril and Methodius, Malta

Valcho Valchev

For the second consecutive year, the feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius was celebrated in Malta. It was once again hosted by H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, The President of Malta, at her official Residence at San Anton Palace, Attard. As in the previous year, the festive programme was spread over two days, 12 and 13 May 2017.

It was a great honour for the Bulgarian community in Malta and, in particular, for the Bulgarian Maltese Cultural Association (BMCA) and The Bulgarian Sunday School to take part in these events. The school in Malta is named after the holy brothers and founders of the Slavic alphabet. The pupils from the school participated in the programme. During the activity held on the morning of the 13 May at the Secret garden, one of the private gardens of San Anton Palace, each Bulgarian pupil brought along a Maltese school friend for the event.

Guided by their school teachers, the students presented a programme of different genres to H.E. the President of Malta and other distinguished guests, and to their parents. Together with their Maltese friends, the Bulgarian children sang the national anthems of Malta and Bulgaria. Some read poems and presented their works

of art to H.E. The President. All the students who turned up for the event were individually given a token gift by Madam President. The following subjects are taught at the Bulgarian Sunday School to Bulgarian children residing in Malta: Bulgarian language and literature, Bulgarian history and culture studies. The school follows the official programme of studies of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Bulgaria. In the current scholastic year the number of students attending the school has doubled. The Bulgarian Sunday School has opened its doors not only to Bulgarian children but also to anyone who is interested in learning Bulgarian language and literature including Maltese children.

The long term vision to set up a Bulgarian Sunday School in Malta was realised primarily thanks to the support and assistance of the Ambassador of Malta to Bulgaria



Malta May 2017 Photo by: Peter John Bosse (c) 2017

H.E. Prof. Lino Bianco and the Ambassador of Bulgaria to Malta H. E. Marin Raykov. Their practical, result-oriented approach made this dream come true.

The BMCA is a non-governmental and non-profit making organization which aims to preserve the cultural identity of the Bulgarian Community in Malta and works to enhance the cultural exchange between the two countries. It is the BMCA which coordinates and directs the organisation and implementation of educational activities in Malta within the limits of the project for the Bulgarian Sunday School in

Malta under the Bulgarian National Programme “Language and Culture Abroad”.

During the event the Bulgarian folk dance group ensemble “Balkan Heart” set up in the beginning of 2017 performed traditional folk dances. This group, open for all, is made up of enthusiasts who are keen on traditional Balkan dancing.



Malta May 2017 Photo by: Peter John Bosse (c) 2017

The Director responsible for the administration of the Bulgarian Sunday School Saints Cyril and Methodius, Malta is Valcho Valchev. The school is run by the Teachers` Committee (made up of all the teaching staff) and the Parents` Committee (made up of elected parents of children attending the school). The teaching is undertaken by the following qualified staff: Lidiya Ilieva Kortova, Gergana Ivanova Kostova, Asenka Kolyova Bogdanova-Manova and Zornitsa Stefanova Kirova. Ms Kirova has replaced Ms Yordanka Chakarova who retired at the end of the last scholastic year.

The Artistic Manager of the Bulgarian folk dance group "Balkan Heart" is Nikola Lalov. The name of the group was chosen with a purpose; it is a club for traditional dances from the Balkan region and not just Bulgaria.

The Bulgarian-Maltese Cultural Association is a non-governmental organisation with Valcho Valchev and Stefan Konchev as president and secretary respectively.



A night of operatic music

A concert by

Bulgarian and Maltese opera singers



Programme

Parashkev Hadzhiev *Гроздано, моме (Grozdana)*

Joseph Vella *Wahdi*

Ivan Marinov *Dream*

Giacomo Puccini “Recondita armonia”, Cavaradossi’s aria from *Tosca*

Georgi Zlatev-Cherkin *Гиду Любо (Ghidy Lyubo)*

Alex Vella Gregory “Tliet Għanjiet bil-Malti” and “X’Għandu Jahseb Kulhadd” from the song cycle *Mill-Qamar sal-Qabar*

Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky “Where have you gone...”, Lenski’s aria from *Eugene Onegin*

Georges Bizet “Habanera” from *Carmen*

Giacomo Puccini “Quando me’n vo”, Musetta’s waltz from *La Bohème*

Cesare Andrea Bixio *Mamma son tanto felice*

Eduardo Di Capua *O, sole mio*

Giuseppe Verdi Brindisi from *La Traviata*

Гроздано, моме (Grozdana)

Song | Music by Parashkev Hadjiev

Гроздано, моме Гроздано,
свада на сите ергени,
знайш ли девојка в махлата,
девојка като за мене?

Юначе, море, юначе,
скоро е чума въртяла,
та не остала девојка,
като за тебе, юначе.

Гроздано, моме, Гроздано,
я никни, моме, над менци,
която мома там видиш,
она ке биде за мене! Юх!

The son of Todor Hadjiev, a conductor and an early champion of Bulgarian opera, Parashkev Hadjiev (1912 - 1992) was a lead Bulgarian composer of the

later part of the century with 26 works to his name. Composed in 1959, Lud Gydia is his masterpiece.

Grozdana, maiden Grozdana,
you, cause of discord to all lads,
do you know now in the village
a lassie for me to suit me?

Listen you young man and hear,
the plague has been here a-raging,
it spared no lassie, no lassie,
now there is no lassie to suit you.

Grozdana, maiden Grozdana,
you bow now over the water,
which ever lassie you see there,
she will well suit me, well suit me! Hey!

Гиди Любо (Ghidy Lyubo)

Song | Music by Georgi Zlatev-Cherkin

*Гиди Любо, гиди чудо,
Агне мое рудо (2),
Имаш уста-мед смокия,
мен се ревне сиротина,
Де гиди чедо болярско,
Де пусто тегло бекярско!*

*Гиди Любо, гиди чудо,
Пъстра пеперудо (2),
Имаш страни-гюл в градина,
Мен се ревнат от година,
Де гиди чедо болярско,
Де пусто тегло бекярско!*

Georgi Zlatev-Cherkin, former academic and Rector of the State Academy of Music, Bulgaria, was a composer of operettas, cantatas, chamber music and songs. His musical-poetical repertoire

include Pastoral for flute and piano and Sevdana for violin and piano and the song The Blue-eyed Girl and the cycle Bachelor Songs.

Hey, Lyubo, you wonder,
My soft wool lamb (2),
Your mouth is like honey fig,
I am crying for it,
Oh, you noble lad,
Oh, my unhappy unmarried bachelor's life!

Hey, Lyubo, you wonder,
Colourful butterfly (2),
Your cheeks are like roses in a garden,
I am crying for them for a year,
Oh, you noble lad,
Oh, my unhappy unmarried bachelor's life!

Ivaylo Mihaylov

Tenor

Ivaylo Mihaylov is a tenor from Plovdiv, Bulgaria. He graduated in classical singing from the State Academy Pancho Vladigerov where he studied under the world-renowned soprano singer Valerie Popova.

Through a scholarship from the Ministry of the Culture of Bulgaria, he went to “Boris Hristov” Academy in Rome in 2012 where he studied under Giuseppe Taddei. Afterwards he proceeded to follow studies at the Academy of Lyric Art in Osimo, Italy.

His debut in the Sofia National Opera and Ballet, Bulgaria, was in 2012 as Ernani from Giuseppe Verdi’s opera *Ernani*. In 2013 he made his debut in the Bucharest National Opera and Ballet, Romania, as Faust in Charles Gounod’s opera *Faust*. In 2013/14 he was a mentor and judge in the first edition of Pop star to opera star, Vietnam, and a vocal coach in X-factor. His debut in *Carmen* as Don Jose’ was on the 24th of May 2014 at Porto, Portugal. His debut in *Cherevichki* of Tschaikowski was at the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Italy, in December 2014. On 8 January 2015



it was broadcast on RAI 5. In the same year he took part as Rodolfo in the production of *La Boheme* at the Teatro Lirico Sperimentale of Spoleto, Italy.

He worked with Donato Renzetti, Carlo Palleschi and stage directors Yuri Alexandrov, Giulio Ciabatti, Giorgio Bongiovanni. He played over 30 roles, most notably those of Ernani, Don Jose’, Rodolfo, Nemorino, Duca di Mantova, Don Carlo, Fenton, Pinkerton, Alfredo, Radames, Faust, Vakula and Cavaradossi. He was recorded by both the Bulgarian National Radio and Television.



Mihaylov is a disciple of the leading Bulgarian tenor Kaludi Kaludov.

His main repertory consists of Don Jose' in *Carmen*, F. B. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Rodolfo in *La Boheme*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Ernani in *Ernani*, Fenton in *Falstaff*, Radames in *Aida*, Duca di Mantova in *Rigoletto*, Don Carlo in *Don Carlo*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Ismaele in *Nabucco*, Vacula in *Cherevichki*, Mozart Requiem and Symphony No. 9, Beethoven.

He is the vocal pedagogue of the

Plovdiv's boys and men choir "Stefka Blagoeva". He has worked as a soloist in most of the Bulgarian opera theatres.

Based on

1. <http://www.ivailomihailov.com/en/biography.php>
2. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ivaylo_Mihaylov_-_tenor.jpg

Maria Eleonora Schembri

Soprano

Maria Eleonora Schembri is a Maltese soprano who has performed in various operas, private recitals and public events. She made her debut at the National Theatre in 2009 as a chorus member in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and since then she has taken part in numerous other productions, both as a soloist and as a chorus member.

Her most notable roles include: First Witch in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (2015), Eurydice in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* (2016) and First Bridesmaid in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (2017). She has also premiered works by Maltese composer Alexander Vella Gregory (2016) and performed with him as part of his act *Cikku l-Poplu*. Schembri has taken part in various concerts and events and performed with different orchestras and ensembles, including V.I.B.E. and the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra. She has performed under the baton of various conductors, including Mro Philip Walsh, Mro Brian Schembri, Mro Prof. Michael Laus and Mro Alice Farnham, among others. Her repertoire includes works by Mozart, Bellini, Donizetti, Puccini, Rossini, Mascagni,



Offenbach, Verdi, Glinka, Schubert, Schumann, Faure, Marinov and Vella Gregory. Schembri started her vocal training under Dame Marie Therese Vassallo and specialised in opera studies with Miriam Cauchi and Karmene Radovska through Toi Toi, where she formed part of the Teatru Manoel Youth Opera group. She is reading for a Diploma in Performance at the Johann Strauss School of Music under the tutelage of Ms. Miriam Cauchi

Based on

1. http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/arts/music/58300/opera_review__dido_and_aeneas
2. <http://valletta2018.org/events/orpheus-in-the-underworld/>

Christine Dalli

Mezzo Soprano

Christine Dalli started singing at an early age with the Cantores Sancti Juliani, under the tuition and direction of baritone Lino Attard, with whom she sang in concerts both locally and abroad, including the International Choral Festival of Sacred Music “Orlando di Lasso” in Rome (1998); Choral Festival of Sacred Music “Guido d’Arezzo” (2000); London Commonwealth pre CHOGM event (2005).

She started her opera and classical music studies as a soloist with her mentor Lino Attard and recently joined Atelier Lyrique Malta, pursuing her studies under the pedagogical guidance of soprano Dr Andriana Yordanova. Dalli was a finalist at the Malta International Voice Competition held in 2016. She participated in various master classes of leading professionals: Prof. Laura Sarti, Soprano Dr Andriana Yordanova and Soprano Miriam Gauci. Dalli formed part of the Manoel Theatre Youth Opera for young singers during the 2013 season. She recently sang the mezzo soprano parts in the premier performance of the oratorio



of *Marija Adeodata, is-Soru li Habbet* composed by Mro.Raymond Zammit set to the lyrics by Paul Ellul, interpreting the roles of Marija Adeodata’s mother and the Badessa. Dalli sang Schubert’s Rosamunde accompanied by the Junge Philharmonie Wien at the Manoel Theatre, a concert held in aid of The Malta Community Chest Fund. Dalli is currently a student at the Johann Strauss School of Music under the direction of Dr Yordanova.

Based on

1. <http://president.gov.mt/media-all/music-compelling-international-language-peace/>
2. <http://www.tvn.com.mt/mt/djarju247/junge-philharmonie-wien/>

Maria Elena Farrugia

Pianist

Maria-Elena Farrugia started piano lessons at the age of 5 with Antoinette Borg and later, at the Fransina Abela Brincat Piano School, with Maki Yagi, Gergely Nemeth and Ingrid Calleja Gruppetta. Since 2005 Farrugia has been active in Malta, participating in a number of competitions and concerts including several Lunchtime Concerts at St. James Cavalier and in the Victoria International Arts Festival. She attended master classes run by internationally acclaimed pianists Yuri Didenko, Vassily Scherbakov, Arkady Zenziper, Christoph Traxler and Alexander Zolotarev.

Farrugia won several national and international competitions: EPTA (Malta, 2003), 12th Gianluca Campochiaro Competition (1st Prize, Pedara, Sicily), 6th Young Musicians Contest of the Malta Society of Arts, Manufacturing and Commerce (1st Prize, Malta), the Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition (1st Prize, Malta, 2011).



The EPTA competition led her to follow lessons at the Liszt Academy in Budapest under the direction of Balazs Szokolay whilst the Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition led her to follow master classes by Norma Fisher at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.

In 2013, she graduated from the University of Malta with first class honours in music studies under the mentorship of Mro Prof. Michael Laus.



In 2016 she completed her master's degree in pianoforte at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester where she was tutored by several teachers including Sally Ann MacLeod, Michel Beroff, Philippe Cassard, Harvey Davies, Stefano Fiuzzi, Kathryn Stott and Hui-Ying Liu-Tawaststjerna. It was during this period that Farrugia performed at Manchester both as a soloist and with duo and chamber ensembles, most notable being the Philetas Piano Trio.

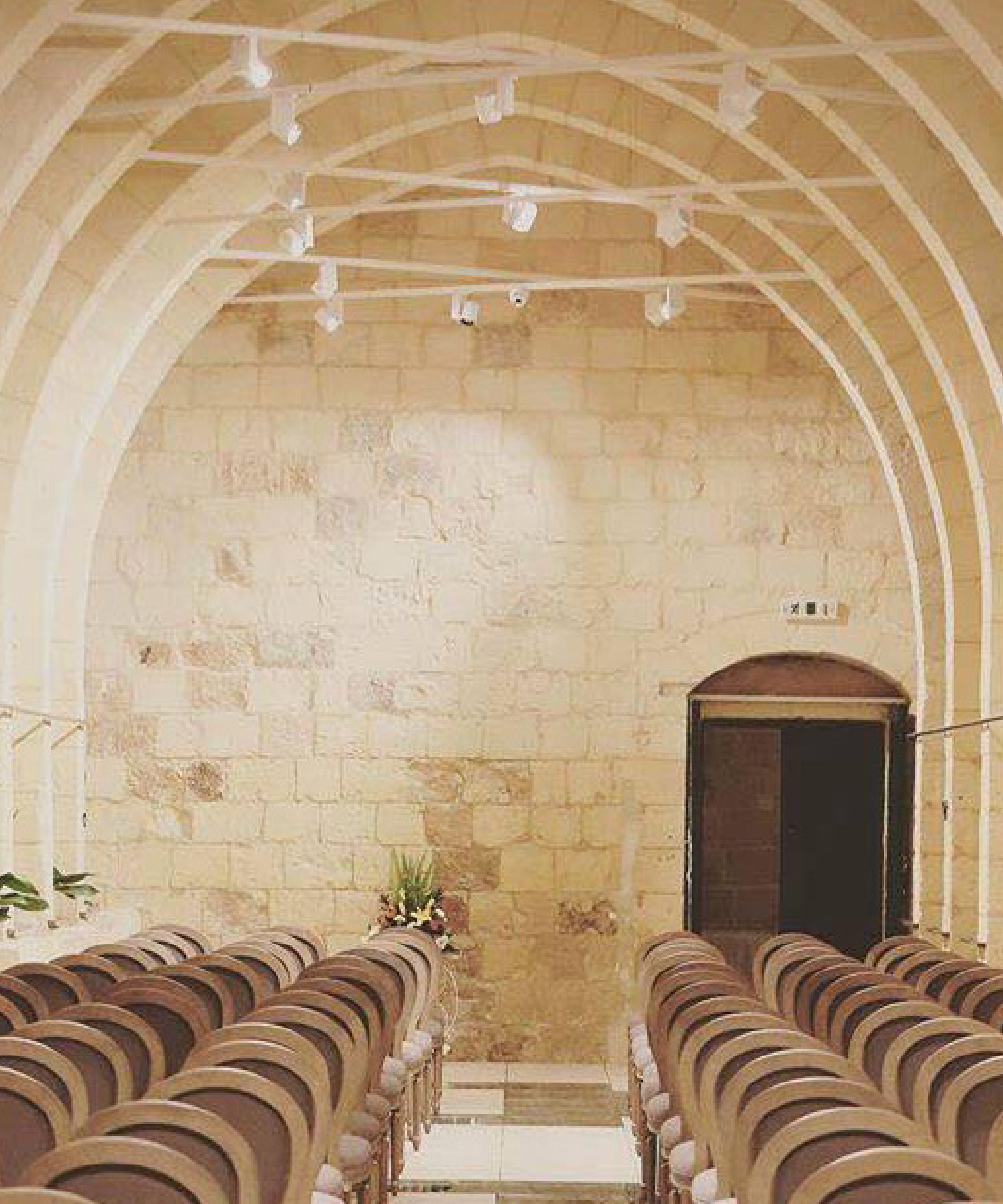
In September 2016, Farrugia joined the NGO Opening Doors which helps develop and showcase persons with disabilities through music and other art forms. It was during the same month that she had the opportunity to stand in as repetiteur for the production of the opera *Orpheus in the Underworld* held at the Manoel Theatre.

In the past weeks she performed twice at San Anton Palace, Malta. On 28 March 2017 she was an accompanist in a vocal recital led by soprano Dr Andriana Yordanova and on the 3rd of May she performed alongside students of soprano Miriam Cauchi.

Farrugia is currently a staff pianist at the Johann Strauss School Music, at various Ballet schools and academies, besides being a regular freelance pianist, accompanist, and tutor around Malta and Gozo.

Based on

1. <http://schoolofmusic.edu.mt/portfolio-item/maria-elena-farrugia/>
2. *A Vocal Recital led by Andriana Yordanova*, San Anton Palace, 28 March 2017, unpublished.
3. <http://www.josephvella.com.mt/cincievsky-trio-at-aula-mgr-farrugia/>



Malta through the eyes of Bulgarians

*A fine-art exhibition by
Bulgarian artists in Malta*

Aglika Bochukova

Aglika Bochukova, a Mixed Media Artist, was born in 1968 in Bulgaria. She has lived in Veliko Tarnovo and Varna, Bulgaria and in 2015 she moved to Birzebbuga, Malta, where she still resides.

In 1987 she graduated from the Art School of Applied Arts “Dimitar Dobrovich” – Sliven, Bulgaria, where she specialised in textile art. In 1992, Bochukova graduated with a master’s degree from the Veliko Tarnovo University “Ss Cyril and Methodius” Bulgaria where, under Prof. Ivan Marinov, she specialised in Pedagogics of Fine Arts and Black and white drawing; she has also specialised in Design and Fashion.

Currently, Bochukova teaches students aged 7 to 18 years of age at the “Lyuben Karavelov” School of Fine Arts in Varna, Bulgaria. She also teaches art decoupage at the Art



Academy also in Varna, Bulgaria.

Bochukova has participated in several group and solo exhibitions and her work is included in various private and public collections around the world. In her work, she likes to experiment and she uses a variety of materials and techniques.

List of Exhibits

Door Alexandra

Mixed media on canvas, 90 x 60cm

Luzzu Malta -1

Mixed media on canvas, 60 x 90cm

Bogdan Dyulgerov

Bogdan Dyulgerov was born in 1965 in the town of Sliven, Bulgaria. In 1989 he graduated from the Medical College in Varna as a Dental Technologist. Since then Dyulgerov has been actively practising his profession. He has been painting since childhood. His interest in sculpture began during his high school years. His first bronze sculptures were cast while he was a student in the Medical College.

Since 2008 Dyulgerov has been living and working in Malta. Currently his preferred art-style is abstract. From 1988 onwards he has held 9 solo exhibitions in different parts of Bulgaria, at the Aktuarius Gallery, Strasbourg, France, at the



Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France and in Brussels, Belgium. Furthermore he has participated in various exhibitions, some of which were held in Malta.

List of Exhibits

Sunday stroll

Mixed media on canvas, 32 x 24cm

Sunny land

Mixed media on canvas, 60 x 45cm

Vania Goshe

Vania Goshe was born in 1976 in Bulgaria. She graduated from the New Bulgarian University, Sofia, in cinema, television and advertising.

During this period she pursued her artistic interest in drawing and painting. She worked as a videographer in television and as a camera person for international film companies.

Her artistic vision is to offer her viewers a chance to escape the bleak realities of life, lift their spirits and instil a sense of optimism. This is achieved by accentuating the positive through harmonious and colourful compositions. She finds inspiration in many aspects of Maltese life and culture, through its rich traditions and various activities.



The effect of the sun on the Maltese landscape came as an unexpected revelation to her; having grown up in the extremes of a continental climate; living in Malta has given her work a new dimension.

List of Exhibits

Mdina at Spring

Oils on canvas, 50 x 40cm

Luzzu

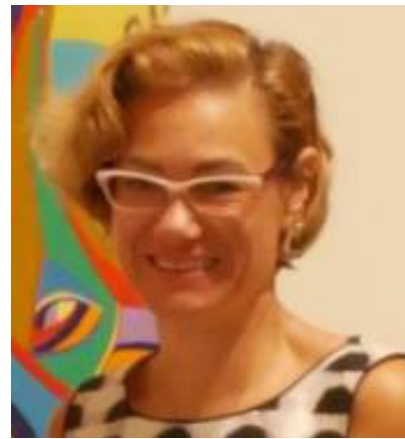
Oils on canvas, 40 x 50cm

Daniela Guevksa

Daniela Guevska is a visual artist and art educator based in Malta. In Bulgaria, she studied applied and fine arts in parallel with pedagogy, and theology. She received a scholarship for a Summer Tutorial in Wheaton College, Wheaton IL USA, where she expanded her entrepreneurial skills and encountered new ways of how to apply the use of visual arts for corporate training and community outreach.

In 2014 she conducted community art projects for children and in 2015 she delivered an art workshop for dyslexic young people and an art project in conjunction with St Patrick School, Sliema, sponsored by the BOV Joseph Calleja Foundation.

In her art, she focuses on classical



methods of drawing, using an alternative approach to combine the applied and fine arts.

Guevska has held a number of solo exhibitions in Malta including her participation in the 2015 Mdina International Art Biennale and in the Mediterranean Donkey for peace.

List of Exhibits

Luzzu with a lantern

Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 120cm

Two small luzzu

Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 120cm

View next to the lift

Acrylic on canvas, 35 x 50cm

A bird look from the bastions

Acrylic on canvas, 38 x 46cm

Anelia Guteva

Anelia Guteva was born in Bulgaria in 1986. She showed interest in art at a very young age and during her adolescence she was fuelled with inspiration during her travels with the family to Japan, South Africa and Malta where she is currently based. These rich cultural experiences have helped her grow both on a personal and artistic level.

Guteva is specialised in painting, illustration, as well as traditional 2D frame-by-frame animation. For her Masters research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, in South Africa, she focused on eastern European traditional and experimental animation as a fine art tradition. Alongside her studies Guteva has undertaken various commissions for



portrait paintings.

To date, she has completed three short animated films using digital as well as traditional painting stop-motion techniques.

List of Exhibits

Sunny Days

Acrylic on canvas, 45 x 60cm

Rain in Zebbug

Acrylic on canvas, 71 x 55cm

***Valletta* (x2)**

Acrylic on canvas, 40 x 29.5cm

Elena Toncheva

Elena Toncheva is a Bulgarian artist based in Malta. In 1985 she graduated with a Masters degree in engineering from the University of Mining and Geology, Sofia, and later worked for a number of years in scientific research in the capital.

In 2003, while living outside Paris, she started painting using oils as her first medium. In 2005 Toncheva moved to Malta where she further developed her skills in drawing and painting under the tuition of Anton Grech, Philip Agius and Matthew Cassar.

In 2008 she joined the Society of Arts and participates annually in its collective exhibitions. In 2012



Elena Thoncheva worked on a joint exhibition and in 2016 she was one of the artists representing Malta in two Maltese- Japanese exhibitions.

List of Exhibits

Azure Window - Malta

Oils on canvas, 80 x 60cm

Silence and light

Oils on canvas, 80 x 60cm

Zornitca Vlaeva

Born in the Bulgarian Capital, Zornitca Vlaeva was educated in Sofia. Her education in art is varied and extensive. Textile and graphic design are her expertise.

She graduated in 2004 from the National Academy of Arts, Sofia, with specialisation in textile art. After her studies at this reputable institution of tertiary education in the Balkans, she moved to the New Bulgarian University where she completed her postgraduate degree graduating with a Masters degree in graphic design and the visual arts. Her style and media are varied ranging from art collages to mixed media to oils on canvas. Another of her artistic passions is the making of leather accessories and jewellery.



In 2015, Zornitca Vlaeva moved with her family to Malta.

List of Exhibits

Valletta sunrise

Oil on canvas, 30 x 60cm

Malta rocks

Oil on paper painting, 35 x 50cm



Door Alexandra

Aglika Bochukova | Mixed media on canvas, 90 x 60cm



Luzzu Malta -1

Aglika Bochukova | Mixed media on canvas, 60 x 90cm



Sunday stroll

Bogdan Dyulgerov | Mixed media on canvas, 32 x 24cm



Sunny Land

Bogdan Dyulgerov | Mixed media on canvas, 60 x 45cm



Mdina at spring

Vania Goshe | Oils on canvas, 70 x 50cm



Luzzu

Vania Goshe | Oils on canvas, 40 x 50cm



Luzzu with a lantern

Daniela Guevska | Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 120cm



Two small luzzu

Daniela Guevska | Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 120cm



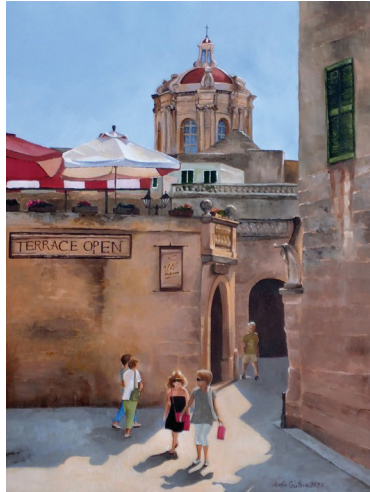
View next to the lift

Daniela Guevska | Acrylic on canvas, 35 x 50cm



A bird look from the bastions

Daniela Guevska | Oils on canvas, 38 x 46cm



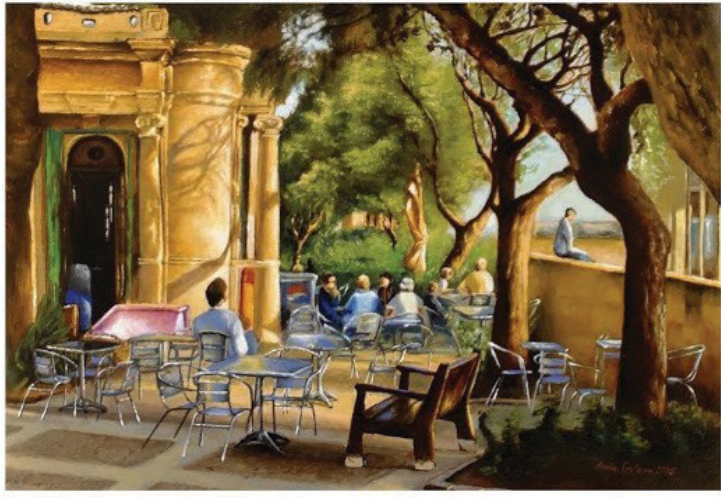
Sunny Days

Anelia Guteva | Acrylic on canvas, 45 x 60cm



Rain in Zebbug

Anelia Guteva | Acrylic on canvas, 55 x 75cm



Valletta

Anelia Guteva | Mixed media on canvas, 40 x 29.5cm



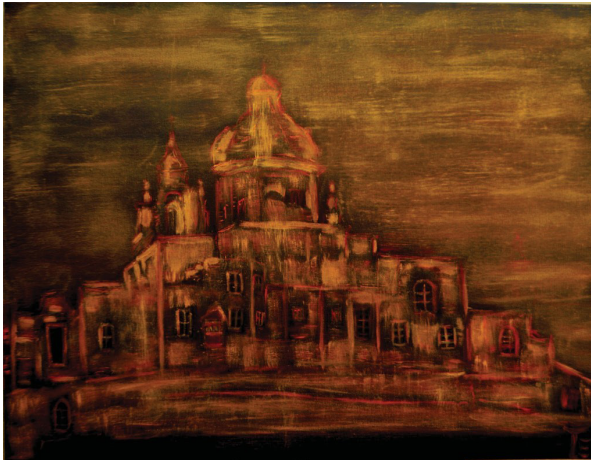
Valletta

Anelia Guteva | Mixed media on canvas, 40 x 29.5cm



Azure Window - Malta

Elena Toncheva | Oils on canvas, 80 x 60cm



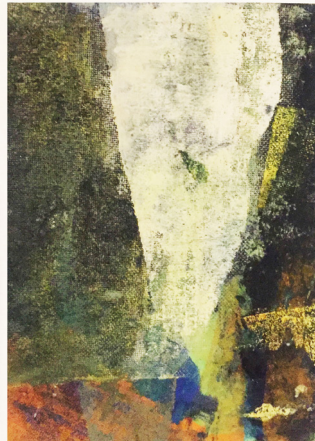
Silence and light

Elena Toncheva | Oils on canvas, 80 x 60cm



Valletta sunrise

Zornitca Vlaeva | Oils on canvas, 30 x 60cm



Malta rocks

Zornitca Vlaeva | Oil on paper painting, 35 x 50cm



Malta May 2017 Photo by: Peter John Bosse (c) 2017

Cyril and Methodius in Historical Iconography

A lecture delivered by Ralitsa Rousseva

Cyril and Methodius in Historical Iconography

Ralitsa Rousseva

The theme of this occasional lecture that forms part of the events marking the feast of Cyril and Methodius hosted by the President of Malta H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca at San Anton Palace is the iconography of these apostles of culture and education through the ages.

Background

In the second half of the 9th century two events related to Bulgaria changed the cultural characteristics of Europe. These are the adoption of Christianity and the creation of the Old Bulgarian alphabet by the holy brothers, equal-to-the-apostles, Cyril and Methodius. For the first time the three languages in which the divine word could be spoken: Hebrew, Greek and Latin, the fourth was added: Bulgarian. This act opened the opportunity in the following centuries for other European countries to make the word of Christ accessible also in their spoken languages. Through the Christianization of the Bulgarian Kingdom and the slavification of Divine Liturgy and liturgical books, the model of Slavic Orthodox culture, or more generally the 'non-Greek' Orthodox culture, was later transferred to Russia, Serbia, Moldavia and Wallachia.

The creation of the Bulgarian alphabet, the introduction of Liturgy in Bulgarian and the translation of church literature into Bulgarian constitute the most categorical act of creating the specific national aspect of the Bulgarian Orthodox culture.

The definition of Orthodox-Byzantine, Bulgarian, Russian, Serbian, Albanian, and later Moldovan-Wallachian cultures can be accepted as a 'Slavonic-Byzantine' cultural circle whose characteristics are predetermined by the Christian Orthodox view. Here, however, it should be emphasized that it was precisely Bulgaria that created the appearance of this Slavic Orthodox world, at least because it introduced the mechanism, the institutions and the language of Slavia Orthodoxa according to Riccardo Picchio.

The main determinative element of

the cult of most saints is their graves and their miraculous relics. The images of a saint are an integral part of the whole cult, of its formation and development, and that is why one can speak not only about the graphic aspect of the cult but also about the visual cult. In this respect the images of Slavic enlighteners are no exception. The tomb of St Cyril the Philosopher is in Rome in the Basilica of San Clemente. In his hagiography, it is stated that an icon with his image was placed on his tomb in the San Clemente church; this was probably his first image, but it did not reach us. The respect for Cyril and Methodius in Rome, as well as their images there, are mainly related to their role in the transfer of the relics of Pope St Clement from Kherson to Rome to the Basilica of San Clemente. In Rome, Pope Adrian II was the first to pay tribute to the Slavs' first teachers. The images of Cyril and Methodius were painted in the Basilica of San Clemente in Rome at the end of the ninth century. There is also depicted the scene 'The Death of St Cyril the Philosopher'. In the middle of the composition there is Christ, on the one side there is the Archangel Gabriel with St Cyril and St Clement of Rome, and on the other the Archangel Michael with St Methodius and St Andrew. The Slavic teachers are represented as monks. From the end of the eleventh century comes the composition with the translation of the relics of

St Clement of Rome, where Pope Adrian II is depicted beside the Slavonic teachers.¹ Here Cyril is depicted with a holy nimbus, but not Methodius. This image is based on the texts of the so-called Italian Legend and the letters of Anastasius Bibliothecarius. It is assumed that Cyril is depicted one more time in the Basilica of San Clemente, probably during the Hazar or Moravian mission, sent by the Byzantine Emperor Michael III.

For the appearance of the images, the iconographic features and variants, it was especially important to accept Ss Cyril and Methodius and St Clement and the glorification of their work in the circles of the Archbishops of Ohrid after the fall of Bulgaria under Byzantine rule.² To promote and disseminate the cult of Cyril and Methodius and their disciples, principally St Clement of Ohrid, the work of the Ohrid Archbishop Theophylact played a special role over the centuries.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the images of Clement of Ohrid and St Nahum of Ohrid were much more widespread than those of Cyril and Methodius. Their cult developed locally in the Ohrid region and was predetermined by the presence of their relics there, where miracles are still attributed to them. In the Byzantine Menologion from the medieval period, the names of Cyril and Methodius and their disciples are absent. There is

only one assumption that they are depicted in the Vatican Menologion of Basil II at the end of the tenth century in the illustration of the day commemorating Pope St Clement and the transfer of his relics from Kherson. In 861, they were sent to the Khazar Mission on the Crimean Peninsula.

Early Images of Ss Cyril and Methodius and St Clement of Ohrid

The earliest preserved 'portraits' in Orthodox art of Cyril the Philosopher, St Clement and probably Methodius are in the church of St Sofia in Ohrid (about 1045), painted by order of Archbishop Leo.³ Their figures are on the southern wall of the deaconikon. Cyril is designated as διδάσκαλος τῶν 'the teacher of' (?) probably the Bulgarians, judging by a later preserved image. The existence of earlier images of these saints that have served as an iconographic model remains a hypothesis. As for Clement of Ohrid, it is logical to assume that his earliest image was at his grave and his miraculous relics.⁴ Another possible theory is that the images of the most revered saints in the Archbishopric of Ohrid were present in the iconographic programme of the Archbishop's Basilica St Achillius on the island

in the Little Prespa Lake. If one accepts the scientific claims that the St Achillius basilica served as a model for the architecture of St Sofia church, the same can be said for the iconographic programme. Considering the royal donations of King Samuel and its cathedral functions, as well as its overall



St Cyril and St Methodios, Pope Adrian II. San Clemente, Rome, 9th c.

historical significance, its decoration should have been accepted as a model. Certainly, one can assume that the choice of saints in the iconographic programme of the churches in the Prespa and Ohrid regions is predetermined by the saints who were depicted there in places of honour. First of all, these are the images of St Achillius, Cyril and Methodius and Clement of Ohrid. It was Peter Milyukov who deciphered letters of the inscriptions of the two saints, on the basis of which Moutsopoulos identified the left hierarch as St Achillius and the right one as St Oecumenius.⁵

According to Moutsopoulos, St Achillius was probably depicted in the southern part of the supposed sarcophagus with his relics (the

end of the tenth century), and later on the second painting layer on the northern wall together with St Oecumenius (ca. 1100).⁶ As suggested by the majority of the researchers, the images of Cyril, Methodius and Clement were present in the basilica, as demonstrated by their later images in the region.⁷

Judging from the preserved monuments, for more than a century and a half, the images of Cyril and Clement in the St Sofia church in Ohrid remain an isolated phenomenon; chronologically the next monument depicting the figures of the Slavic saints is the St George church in Kurbinovo (1191) near the Prespa Lake. In Kurbinovo, the selection of the saints clearly shows a connection with the Archbishop's Basilica of the Little Prespa Lake. St Achillius is depicted in the southern part of the altar apse in the Melismos scene before St Nicholas of Myra. In the southern part of the altar space are the figures of Cyril, designated as *διδάσκαλος των βουλγάρων* (teacher of the Bulgarians), and Methodius. According to the identification by Tsvetan Grozdanov, Clement of Ohrid is depicted on the northern wall next to the altar opposite the figures of Cyril and Methodius.⁸ At the same place, St Clement is depicted in the churches from the post-Byzantine period in the Prespa region. In his researches on the church in Kurbinovo, Tsvetan

Grozdanov repeatedly emphasized the influence of the St Achillius basilica on the choice of saints in the iconographic programme of the churches in this region.⁹ This is confirmed by the paintings of the later period, but, unfortunately, it is difficult to trace the continuity of church art in the Prespa region between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries, due to the absence of preserved monuments.

Cult and Imagery from the 14th until the 17th century

The next stage of the establishment and popularization of St Clement's iconography is closely related to the works in his glory by Ohrid's hierarchs, Demetrios Chomatenos, Constantine Cabasilas and Archbishop Gregory. In the second half of the thirteenth century, his image began to appear more prominently in the art of the Ohrid diocese and especially in the city of Ohrid. The cult of St Clement was certainly strong and persistent enough, and its iconographic features were already established and its typological features were fixed. His images were located mainly in the eastern part of the churches, in the altar space or near it. Clement was depicted dressed in hierarchical vestments, the forehead enlarged, the face elongated and

narrowed at the bottom, the beard white and pointed, and often holding a closed gospel. From the thirteenth century come the mural paintings of St Clement in St Nicholas in Manastir, Mariyovo (1266-1271), St John Kaneo (ca. 1280-1290) in Ohrid, where St Erasmus of Lichnida and St Constantine Cabasilas are depicted nearby.

A significant contribution to the later distribution of the image of Clement and also of Cyril and Methodius, especially outside the Ohrid region in the first half of the fourteenth century, was made by the painters from Thessaloniki, Michael Astrapas and Eutychios.¹⁰ They depicted him for the first time, alongside St Constantine Cabasilas, on the northern wall next to the altar in the Holy Virgin Peribleptos (1295) in Ohrid. Then St Clement was presented once again with St Constantine Cabasilas in St George Church in Staro Nagorichane (1316-18), in the prothesis as part of the Melismos scene, apparently under the influence of the paintings in the Holy Virgin Peribleptos. Perhaps Cyril and Methodius are also depicted in the calendar cycle of the same church, but science is uncertain as to whether the depicted saints are the Slavic first teachers. The presentation of Clement with an opened scroll is rare, another example is in the narthex of St Sofia church (1345), where he is depicted as a monk, and in the St Demetrios church in Markov Monastery (1376-

77) where he is depicted together with St Blasios in the altar space.¹¹

In addition to traditional images with a closed gospel and the exceptions with an opened scroll, in Mali Sveti Vrachi church (1340) in Ohrid and in Christ Saviour (1462) in Leskovets, St Clement is depicted with a model of the town of Ohrid, with the walls of the fortress painted in great detail.



St Clement and St Blasios,
Church of St Demetrios
(1376), Markov Monastery

In the fourteenth century, the image of St Clement became mandatory in the repertoire of the Ohrid churches; icons of that period are preserved, as well as his famous wooden figure. In the fourteenth century, the image of St Clement was included also in the repertoire of the churches of Kastoria (St Archangel Michel, 1359/60; St Athanasius, 1383-84), where it was often placed alongside

St Achillius, again in the eastern part of the churches.¹² In the Middle Ages, the author is aware of two images of Clement of Ohrid among the preserved murals in the region of Prespa and Korca in Albania: in the church of St Mary Eleousa (1345, 1369) on the Mali Grad island in the Great Prespa Lake, and in Christ Zoodotis (1390) in Embore (Korca).¹³

From the examples examined, it can be concluded that in the medieval churches in the regions of Prespa and Kastoria, the image of St Clement is presented alongside that of St Achillius. This is probably a consequence of the impact of the iconographic programme of the St Achillius basilica and also of the general worship of the protector saints of the region. In the Ohrid monuments, St Clement is depicted alongside the other patrons of the city: St Nicholas of Myra and St Nahum, as well as its protector St Panteleimon. It is important that his figure is located among saints with a regional cult or even protector saints of the respective site.

The cult of St Nahum originated in the Monastery of the Holy Archangels, which he built on the shores of the Ohrid Lake, where his grave still stands. His images until the mid-fourteenth century however are not preserved in Ohrid and in the region. Most likely, the propagation of the cult of St Nahum, as well as its visual side, was restricted

to the Monastery of the Holy Archangels and did not influence the iconographic programme of the nearby metropolitan centre, Ohrid. A stimulus for the expansion and spread of his cult and the emergence of his images was the hagiography and the sticheron dedicated to him by the Archbishop of Ohrid Constantine Cabasilas and the hymnographic works by Archbishop Demetrios Chomatenos.

The earliest image of St Nahum is on a double-sided icon for religious processions from the Holy Virgin Peribleptos church in Ohrid, which was made by the school of the painter John Theorian. On the other side is the face of St Clement of Ohrid. The next images of St Nahum are in: the Gregorian Gallery of the St Sofia church, together with healing saints; in St Zaum (1361) and in Holy Virgin of Peshtani (ca. 1370) on the Ohrid Lake, in Little St Clement (1378) in Ohrid, and on an icon from the Holy Virgin Ailing church. On most of the monuments his image is next to those of St Clement and St Nicholas, the protectors of Ohrid. Since the fifteenth century, there are no images of his in the churches of Ohrid and its surroundings, and only from the mid-sixteenth century is there an icon in the Holy Virgin Peribleptos church.

There are two images of St Cyril from the fourteenth century, preserved outside the Ohrid region.

He is depicted in the altar space of the St Peter church in Berende (Bulgaria), and is referred to as 'Philosopher'.¹⁴ The iconographic features of St Cyril of Alexandria and St Cyril the Philosopher are often duplicated and confused by iconographers. Nearby is the St Nicholas church (1331) in Stanichane (present Serbia), where St Cyril is designated in the same way in the altar apse.¹⁵ The church was painted during the time of the Bulgarian Tsar Ivan Alexander and Belaur, the ruler of Vidin.

The images of St Cyril and St Clement are depicted opposite each other in the Holy Virgin church (1496) near Matka in the Skopje area, painted by icon painters associated with the Ohrid centre. An interesting example is the upper-body image of St Cyril from the fifteenth century in the calendar cycle of the narthex of the Patriarchate of Pech (present Kosovo). A confirmation that the depicted saint is the Slavic first teacher comes from the fact of the placement of his image on February 14, the date of his assumption. In the Holy Virgin cave church (16th century) in Kalishta, in the lunette on the northern wall, there is a unique composition, depicting St Cyril and St Clement of Ohrid, facing each other and holding scrolls.¹⁶ In the sixteenth century the interest in the Slavic saints grew also on Mount Athos.¹⁷ St Clement of Ohrid together with

St Constantine Cabasilas and St Erasmus are depicted in the St John the Forerunner chapel (1526) in the Protaton. On the left frame of an icon of St Nicholas (16th century) in the Docheiariou Monastery on Mount Athos are depicted the figures of Ss Cyril and Methodius.



St Cyril the Philosopher
Church of St Peter 14th C.
Berende

In summary, until the seventeenth century the images of St Clement of Ohrid and St Nahum of Ohrid were predominant in church art, which was predetermined by the presence of their miraculous relics, and their cult can be considered as a regional one. The images of St Cyril the Philosopher appear sporadically, even rarer are those of St Methodius, while their identification is not entirely certain, and those of Ss Sava, Gorazd and Angelarius are absent.

St Pimen's contribution to the development of the image of Cyril

The next stage in the development of the iconography of Slavic saints is related to the activity of the famous icon painter St Pimen: he was born in Sofia and later became a monk in the Zograf Monastery. In 1607-08, St Pimen of Zograf, together with an unknown icon painter, made the frescoes in the naos of the Monastery of Slivnitsa near the Prespa Lake, where he positioned the figure of St Cyril the Philosopher on the eastern side.¹⁸ In 1612 his collaborators painted the narthex of the same church. In the first register on the northern wall, for the first time among the known monuments, they are presented together as the Seven Saints. Their figures are depicted en face, side by side, similar to the other standing saints, without being distinguished in a separate composition, the monks holding closed scrolls and the hierarchs holding gospels.¹⁹ This iconographic approach remains an isolated example of their joint depiction. St Cyril takes the central place there.²⁰ Tsvetan Grozdanov finds that the images of St Clement and St Nahum do not coincide with the iconographic formulae found in the Ohrid region, since probably the iconographers did not know them. At the same time, the image of St Cyril follows

the instructions of the Russian herminiae (manuals) from the 16-17th centuries, which are based on the Mount Athos tradition.²¹

This suggests the Mount Athos origins of St Pimen's associates and the use of Mount Athos primary literary sources.²² This monument is extremely important as it proves that their veneration as a joint group of saints in the region of Prespa had existed more than a century before the printing of the first joint service of the Seven Saints in Moschopolis. Tsvetan Grozdanov associates this appearance with the probable presence of their images in the St Achillius basilica. Perhaps not accidentally, it was the icon painters Constantine and Athanasius from Korca who created the group composition of the Seven Saints in the eighteenth century, which was then replicated in churches in different regions of Albania, as will be discussed hereunder.

The school of St Pimen of Zograf painted the churches of St Theodore Tyron and St Theodore Stratelates in Dobursko (1614)²³ and the church of the Monastery of Seslavtsi near Sofia (1616). The two churches include the images of St Cyril Philosopher and St Clement of Ohrid with similar iconography, although science is uncertain with regard to their identification.

The images of Cyril and Methodius in the altar space of the St Archangel Michael church in the Monastery

of Dolno Beshovo date from the beginning of the seventeenth century.²⁴ Their names have no explanatory inscriptions and the iconographic features of St Cyril correspond to those of St Cyril of Alexandria. However, the presentation of the two figures, according to most researchers, shows that they are images of the Slavic first teachers. From this same period come the images of Ss Cyril and Methodius in the altar apse of St Nicholas in Hopovo (1608, Vojvodina).

The Cult of Cyril and Methodius in Albania

A new phase of the cult of the Slavic saints developed in the region of Moschopolis (present day Albania) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By the end of the seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth centuries the town of Moschopolis became an important economic and cultural centre whose influence spread well over the boundaries of the Ohrid diocese into most of the enslaved Eastern-Orthodox territories reaching as far as the Austro-Hungarian strip of the Danube. Until it was razed in 1769, the town traded on a large scale with renowned European commercial centres such as Venice, Vienna and Leipzig. In 1916 the Moschopolis was devastated by fire and only five from about thirty churches survived

as well as the St John the Baptist Monastery in the vicinity of the town. At the beginning of the 20th century these churches were not only reminiscent of past glory, but as Demetrios Kallimachos put it, “they were bustling with life”.²⁵

The neighbouring settlement of Vithkuqi had a similar fate. Only three downtown churches were preserved, as well as the monastery church of Ss Peter and Paul with its adjoining chapel of Ss Cosmas and Damian. The cultural and economic development of Vithkuqi is inseparable from that of Moschopolis and that is why its Churches will be viewed as part of these in Moschopolis.

Nineteenth century travellers Gustav Weigand²⁶ and Heinrich Gelzer²⁷, as well as some eyewitnesses of the town’s destruction, give one a rough idea of what the settlement used to look like. Of great value is the work of the local citizen Theophrastos Georgiades who lived in Moschopolis before the city was ransacked. He made brief descriptions of the 22 churches and chapels, the church donors’ inscriptions and the church registers.²⁸ He also described the architecture and the decoration of these temples. Unfortunately, Georgiades did not say a lot about the murals, mentioning only that on the inside and the outside the church walls were covered with scenes from the hagiography of saints and

martyrs, the Holy Bible and the Apocalypse.

Moschopolis was also the educational centre of the Ohrid Diocese in the eighteenth century. There is material evidence as well as a symbolic proof that it was a large school with 40 classrooms which was built there in 1750. The school was named Nea Akadimia and its headmaster became Theodoros Kaballiotis. During the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries Ohrid, the St Nahum Monastery and Moschopolis took part in the process of cultural and cleric-educational upsurge, headed by the then Archbishop of Ohrid Joasaph of Moschopolis (1719-45). Through the vigorous activities of this man, the old fame and glory of the Ohrid Archbishopric were restored. Apart from this overall cultural and historic context the activation of certain cults was underlined by what may be termed the “general movement of thought”. It takes two directions: the first one is the penetration of modern Western thinking; the second one, which I would like to accentuate, is the coming into existence of a specific, patriotic feeling. On the one hand, it was regionally bound, but on the other, it was open to all Eastern Orthodox followers. Bulgarians, Greeks, Walachians and Orthodox Albanians got infatuated with the idea of liberation from Turkish domination.²⁹ That is why they renewed the cult of saints from the

Ohrid diocese. In Ivan Snegarov’s words, “by means of this mystic media the Ohrid diocese managed to bind spiritually all nationalities belonging to the Church of Ohrid into one inseparable entity”.³⁰

The printing house established in Moschopolis during the time of Archbishop Joasaph played the role of a powerful engine to this clerical, ideological and educational upsurge. In circa 1744 the St Nahum Monastery took over the printing house, named it after the Monastery and the portrait of St Nahum became the hallmark of its publications. The printing house was run by Abbot Gregorios Konstantinidi of Moschopolis. He was succeeded by Constantine of St Nahum Monastery.³¹ The bulk of the material printed consisted of saints offices and hagiographies³², theological literature³³ and scholarly books.

In its service to religion, the printing house in Moschopolis directly took part in reviving and popularizing the cult of the patron saints of the region, most of whom were Slavs. It was there that Archbishop Joasaph started the publication of *Akoluthie of the Saints* from the Ohrid Archbishopric (1740-42).³⁴ This paper will not go into details about all the sermons and hagiographic pieces, but will map the three main ways in which the printed word influenced the proliferation of the cult. The first

was through revival, enrichment and widening of the scope of the cult of Slavic saints from the period of the First Bulgarian Kingdom: the Seven Slavic Saints (Holy Heptarithmoi), primarily St Nahum of Ohrid and St Clement of Ohrid and St John Vladimir. The second way was through localization and concretization of the cult of saints like the Fifteen Martyrs of Tiberoupolis (Strumitza) and St Marina. In the process of modernizing the cult of St Marina it was related to the cult of St Nahum and St John Vladimir as patrons of this region and its population. The third way was through establishing the cult of new martyrs (neomartyres) as in the case of St Nicodemos of Vithkuqi.

Aesthetical Representations of the Cult

This new stage in establishing the cult of Slavic saints was carried out not only in the field of the written word but also in the field of church art. Alongside publishing offices and hagiographies, the pictorial aspect of the cult got a steady push ahead. This is yet another piece of evidence of the inseparable link and continuity between art and the written word. To a great extent, circulated graphic prints lay at the basis of this new stage of visual

worship. These turned out to be a phenomenon of extraordinary importance to Eastern Orthodox culture. This art form, which was a novelty in the Balkans, could not gain autonomy and respect. In the way of function and reception, it remained mainly within the narrow realm of the preliminary sketch. These graphic illustrations on religious subjects became patterns for the creation of new forms of images: murals and icons.³⁵

The aesthetics of Eastern Orthodox art are alien to the monochrome prints on paper. Consequently, the opportunity offered by modern times for their circulation in large numbers would not bring about their growth in value and importance. They simply became sort of easy-to-use manuals on religious painting. The painters used these 'ephemeral' images on paper as models to create authentic, unique, and lasting images of cult practices. Simultaneously, using and rejecting the achievements of modern times, these painters actually adhered to the world viewpoint characteristic of Byzantine aesthetics. This process related to the formation, during the Turkish period, of a new stage in the visual cult of Slavic saints. They were mostly influenced by the lithographs in Christophor Zhefarovic's *Stematography* (1741).³⁶ This book, used as a model by many painters of the Balkans, had a major role in eighteenth and nineteenth century art, particularly

with regard to the popularisation of the images of Bulgarian and Serbian saints and kings in their new Baroque iconography.

The images of Slavic saints which the author of this publication will dwell further upon are to be found in the following churches: Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Moschopolis (1720-25); Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Vithkuqi (1628-1728); St Athanasius (1745) in Moschopolis, the exonartex of St Nicholas church in Moschopolis (1750), the Ss Cosmas and Damian chapel (1750) and the monastery church of the Apostles Peter and Paul (1764) in Vithkuqi; Theotokos in Vithkuqi (18th century), the Monastery of St Marina (1754) in Llëngë.

The painters Constantine and Athanasius of Korca

The family of painters Constantine and Athanasius of Korca,³⁷ joined later on by their sons Terpo and Nahum, made a great contribution to the formation and proliferation of the visual cult of the Seven Slavic Saints (Holy Heptarithmoi) and St John Vladimir. By applying all types of graphic prototypes they created galleries of Slavic saints in traditional Eastern Orthodox forms of iconography and mural painting.³⁸ They worked in the Korca region (Moschopolis, Vithkuqi, Korca), in

the region of Muzakia (the Ardenitsa Monastery, Ljubofsk) and later on Mount Athos.³⁹

The cult of St Nahum may be traced without interruption from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century.

The images I will discuss continue the medieval pictorial tradition of depicting St Nahum as a monk who has taken a great monastic σχήμα. In spite of the obvious iconographic similarities, he is always wearing a hooded monk's habit. However, there are some differences as well. In the process of modernising, the cult of St Nahum was related to the cults of St John Vladimir, of St Marina and of the neomartyr St Nicodemos of Vithkuqi as patrons of this region and its population. This process directly inspired new images and compositions.

The image of St Nahum is almost omnipresent in the churches in Moschopolis and in the area. In the church of St Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Vithkuqi, he is depicted on the western wall, next to St John Vladimir, holding a scroll in one hand, and giving a blessing with the other. In the church of Archangel Michael (1722) in Moschopolis, he is depicted on the eastern side of the gallery, where he is billed ταυματουργός. He is holding prayer beads in the one hand, and in the other he has a chaplet. The icon painters Constantine and Athanasius depict him in the following Moschopolis



The Seven Slavic Saints. 1773,
Constantin and Athanasios.
Detail, Korca Museum

churches: St Athanasius (1744-45), on the external wall, near the entrance; St Nicholas (1750) on the southern external wall, next to St John Vladimir; in the one hand he is holding a scroll and a chaplet, and with the other he gives a blessing. In the chapel of Ss Cosmas and Damian in Vithkuqi (1750) he is depicted on the northern wall, next to the neomartyr St Nicodemos, giving a blessing with the one hand, and holding a scroll in the other. He is also depicted on the western wall of the monastery church of Ss Peter and Paul. The author would like to add an icon from the Museum of Korca, painted by Constantine Zograf in 1759. The crowning of

the Holy Mother is presented in the centre; it is framed by 12 panels of saints, including St Nahum. The image of St Nahum is presented on the northern wall, next to St John Vladimir, in the church of Theotokos in Vithkuqi.

The cult of the Saint may be explained by the proximity of his monastery as well as with his relics which are still considered as a source of miracles, in addition to the preserved medieval iconographic tradition of depicting him.⁴⁰ One may also note the fact that St Nahum is often depicted next to St John Vladimir, which is hardly coincidental. One can note a saintly

pair: the saint monk and the saint ruler symbolising the two sides of Christianity: the spiritual and the secular. The images imply the religious and historical continuity of a place that has been and still is protected by its own saints.

The hagiographic cycle of depicting St Nahum dates back to the same period. The visual hagiographic cycle of this saint is created on the basis of the contamination of various verbal primary sources: medieval works dedicated to St Nahum, St Clement; their hagiographies, as well as that of St John Vladimir, printed in Venice and Moschopolis, as well as local folklore legends, which are not recorded in writing. Some of the events described there lack historical credibility and are the result of hagiographic interpolations from other periods and other personae.

An engraving of Hristofor Zhefarovich, printed in Vienna in 1743, had a major role for the distribution of the images of scenes from the life of St Nahum. It depicts the saint full size, surrounded by sixteen scenes illustrating his life and miracles, St Marina, and a landscape with the Ohrid Lake underneath, the St Nahum Monastery, the town of Moschopolis, Ohrid and the surrounding villages. This engraving became extremely popular and was not only replicated in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries in

different places in the Balkans and Hungary, but it also became an iconographic model for creating new picturesque images: murals and icons. In monumental painting, the only known cycle with scenes of his life is from the tomb chapel of his monastery, painted by Terpo Zograf (1800). Zograf reduced the 16 scenes of Zhefarovich's engraving to nine.⁴¹ The largest one is the scene with the assumption of the saint, which is above the grave itself. The original iconography of this composition is not replicated anywhere else. Foremost among the surrounding figures mourning the body of the saint there are the rest of the Seven Saints and another figure of a deacon with a halo. This could be Laurentius, mentioned instead of St Sava by Theophylact of Ohrid in St Clement's hagiography. This fact shows that the Theophylact's hagiography was known among the icon painters of Korca and served as a literary groundwork for their works.

The visual cult of St Clement of Ohrid also derives from a medieval tradition, but it was assumed that during the Ottoman period his cult in the region of Korca was not as strong as St Nahum's. Max Peyfuss even published an image of him in the chapel of Ss Cosmas and Damian and mentioned another in the church of Archangel Michael in Moschopolis. He reported that his images were no longer popular in the region.⁴² The author will

now present these two images as well as another one from the church of Ss Peter and Paul. In all three, in keeping with the medieval tradition, his image was painted on the northern wall, next to the iconostasis; he is dressed in archbishop's vestments, holding a book in the one hand and giving a blessing with the other. The first image of St Clement is in the church of St Archangel Michael in Moschopolis (1720) and is not well preserved. The inscription is Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΚΛΗΜΗΣ ΕΚ ΑΧΡΗΔΩ. Next to him is the Vision of St Peter of Alexandria. In the chapel of Ss Cosmas and Damian (1750) the inscription is Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΚΛΗΜΕΝΤΟΣ (next to him on the altar there is also a depiction of St Peter of Alexandria). He is presented in yellow sakkos, blue sticharion, gold epigonation and blue omophor with white crosses. The third image is from the church of Ss Peter and Paul (1764) in Vithkuqi the inscription is Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΚΛΗΜΕΝΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΟΣ ΑΧΡΙΔΟΝ (translated 'St Clement, Archbishop of Ohrid). Next to him is St John Chrysostomos. He is presented in white sakkos with brown floral motifs, hemmed with gold, red sticharion, gold epitacheilion and gold omophor with red crosses. These three images reveal that the iconography of St Clement was as popular in the region as that of St Nahum during the eighteenth c.

Iconographer Konstantin from Spat

For the establishment and popularization of the cult of the Slavic saints in the eighteenth century, the iconographer Konstantin from Spat has a certain opinion. He had painted the images of St Clement, St Nahum of Ohrid and St John Vladimir in the church of the St Marina Monastery in Llëngë (1754), in Mokra Mountain.⁴³

The individual images of St Clement and St Nahum did not gain popularity outside of the region of Prespa and Korca in Albania but their images are included in the group compositions of the Seven Slavic Saints, which proliferate in the region of Muzakia and in Berat: both locations are too far away from Ohrid as the centre of their cult. The creation and development of the group composition of the Seven Slavic Saints resulted from the activities of two iconographic families - the family of Constantine and Athanassius from Korca, and later the Chetiri family of Grabovo.⁴⁴ Brought together, the works by these two families of icon painters outline a particular geographical region (Muzakia) and a timeline scope, where images of the Seven Saints have been heavily present. According to the study, the activity of the Bishops of Berat also underlies this process. According to the currently known monuments,

the icon painters Constantine and Athanassius of Korca are responsible for the affirmation and distribution of the iconography of the Seven Saints together, as a common group, in a centric, often pyramidal composition, where St Methodius is depicted in the centre, holding a model of the Church. Here the model of the Church should be accepted not as a particular church, as in donation portraits, but as an image of the ‘spiritual Slavic church’, whose founders are the Seven Saints. Obviously in this later period, the awareness of St Methodius’s leading position in the Church hierarchy was resumed again and, despite the stronger and more popular regional cults of the other Seven Saints, St Methodius is depicted in the centre. In general, the iconography is borrowed from the Apostolic Council, which is not accidental and has its own deep historical meaning and symbolism.⁴⁵ In medieval literature St Cyril and St Methodius are called the new apostles Peter and Paul. This tradition continues in the later period, in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, when in many works by Greek authors, the Seven Saints were called equal-to-the-apostles, and their mission was compared to the apostolic mission of spreading Christianity. Although this type of composition is imposed on the territory of present-day Albania by the icon painters Constantine and Athanassius of Korca, the first

example is the church of St Nicholas (1735) in Dracha, near Kragujevac.⁴⁶ Painters working in Dracha most probably belonged to the same region, especially given the active relations between Moschopolis and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The Seven Saints are painted together for the first time by Constantine and Athanassius in the Church of the Holy Virgin (1744) in the Ardenitsa Monastery, on the western wall, and St John Koukouzeles is represented as the eighth figure in the lineup. The inspiration to depict St John Koukouzeles must have been drawn not only from the data about his being born in Dyrachion; nor is it only the outcome of a powerful regional cult either. It is a clear display of historical knowledge and memory manifested through the specific vernacular binding Slavic saints from different ages. St John Koukouzeles holds a scroll with the words of the troparion of Theotokos *ΑΝΩΘΕΝ ΟΙ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΑΙ* (translated as ‘The Prophets predict you’), the music of the troparion is attributed to St John Koukouzeles. The same troparion is performed during the Divine Liturgy of the Archbishop, while dressing the bishop in the centre of the naos. One might look for a relationship between the figures of St Methodius, St Cyril and St Clement of Ohrid clothed in bishop’s garments, and the use of this troparion during the Divine Liturgy of Archbishop.

After the composition in the Ardenitsa Monastery, they depict the Seven Slavic Saints in the monastery church of Ss Peter and Paul (1764) in Vithkuqi, on the western wall of the portico. Similar to the composition in Ardenitsa is the one in the church of St George (1782) in the village of Libofshe (Muzakia) where Constantine and his son Terpo worked.⁴⁷ Terpo Zograf depicted the Seven Saints in the narthex of the church in the St Nahum Monastery (1800, 1806), St Methodius in the centre, and St Knyaz Boris-Mihail represented nearby. The icon painters Constantine and Athanasius included the composition of the Seven Saints in two icons too: one is in the National Gallery in Tirana, the second is in the Museum of Korca (1773). In the second, St Nahum of Ohrid is depicted in the centre, not St Methodius, which was probably related to the specific desire of the person ordering the icon.

The Chetiri Family

The icon painters of the Chetiri family (John, George, Nahum and Nicholas) represented the Seven Saints at the churches of St Nicholas (1795) in the village of Vanaj; of the Annunciation (1806) in the village of Kozare and on the iconostasis of the Church of the Assumption (1812-1814) in Berat. These have been explored in the context of

and in relation to the images of the Seven Saints, painted by the family of Constantine and Athanasius from Korca.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, in the monuments of the territory of Albania, a general iconographic scheme of the composition of the Seven Slavic Saints was formed, which underwent some internal variations. The representation of the Seven Slavic Saints has already found its permanent place in the 'topography' of churches: on the western wall of the naos, next to the entrance, as protectors and patrons of the Church area. On the monuments under consideration the images of St John Vladimir and of the neomartyr St Nicodemos of Vithkuqi also have a permanent place in the iconographic programme of the churches: on the north wall amidst the standing saints. The images under review fill in the gaps in the chronology and development of the Seven Saints' iconography, enriching the overall picture one has for the Arts as well as for the general historical trends of the given period.

It also manifests the way the local icon-painters established their iconographic schemes and characteristics, which would later transcend national boundaries and spread across Balkan art. They can now be found in the churches of Mount Athos, Bulgaria and Serbia as late as the end

of the nineteenth century. The significance of Moschopolis for the cultural development of the Orthodox Balkans as well as for the preservation of church memory is evident even when seen against the background of this merely iconographic problem. Finally the author of this paper would like to underline that the Moschopolitans succeed in preserving and reinforcing the regional significance of the Slavic Saints and simultaneously to impose them as Panorthodoxal Saints.

St Paisius of Hilendar wrote in his Slavonic-Bulgarian History that “the Greek icon painters depict all seven teachers together on the icons and call them ‘Slavic teachers’ who created and compiled Slavic books; here are Sts. Cyril and Methodius too”.⁴⁸ It is interesting to find out where Paisius has seen such a composition, since no image of the Seven Saints on Mount Athos is known at that time. It is very likely that there were earlier images of the Seven Saints on Mount Athos before the aforementioned compositions in Albania, used by the icon painters Constantine and Athanassius of Korca as a model.

One finds a completely different iconographic interpretation of the Seven Saints in two icons in Berat, also made by the Chetiri family. On the iconostasis in the church of The Assumption of the Holy Virgin an icon is placed (1812-14) depicting

the Dormition of St Gorazd and St Angelarius against the background of the town of Berat, the upper part depicting en face the other five Slavic luminaries: in the centre is St Methodius in hierarch’s garments. A second icon is preserved in the same church, a replica, which is dated 27 September 1873 and was made by the painter Adam Hristo of Samarina. It originates from the church of St George in Berat. It is believed that in the altar of the church The Assumption of Holy Virgin Church in Berat are kept the relics of St Gorazd and St Angelarius.⁴⁹

The Debar Family

The next stage in the development of the composition of the Seven Slavic Saints is related to the works of the icon painters of Debar from the family of Dicho Zograf. This painter imposes and develops a new iconography of the Seven Saints: the central characters no longer hold a model of the Church, Ss Cyril and Methodius hold a horizontal scroll with the Slavonic alphabet, in the centre between them is depicted St Clement of Ohrid.

In the iconographic scheme imposed by the family of Dicho Zograf, the emphasis is on the creation of the alphabet and on the enlightenment mission of the Seven Saints. The frescoes and icons in which Ss Cyril and Methodius or the Seven Saints

together are present at or behind the altar table, and the scroll with the Slavonic alphabet is placed on it or held above it or next to it, unequivocally show the reflection and connection with the struggle for an independent Bulgarian Church and Liturgy in Bulgarian.

Final Comments

To conclude one can say that the general composition of the Seven Saints was first created in the circles of the Greek clergy, as a consequence of the policy of the same clergy, the bishops of Ohrid and Berat (Metodius, Joasaph I, Joasaph II), abbots, etc. for the imposition and renewal of cults to local saints. Later, these images mirror the struggle for an independent Bulgarian church against the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Greek clergy.

The images of the Slavic saints also find their place in the churches of Mount Athos. Perhaps the most complete ensemble of Bulgarian saints is in the main church of St George of the Zograf Monastery. Its construction was completed in 1801, and the painting continued for several years, ending in 1817. The painting was carried out by a team led by the icon painter Nicephorus of Carpenissi, and including his son Mitrofan and Joasaph, Nicephorus and Gerassim. The altar features

St Cyril, St Methodius, Slovenian teacher, St Clement of Ohrid, Theophylact of Ohrid, as well as St Cosmas of Zograf, St John of Rila and St Pimen of Zograf.⁵⁰ In the sacristy of the Zograf Monastery there is an icon of St Theophylact, called here Patriarch of Turnovo, holy equal-to-the-apostles and Slavonic-Bulgarian teachers Cyril and Methodius and Clement, Archbishop of Ohrid, dating back to 1864, painted by Symeon Molerov.⁵¹ The saints are presented in front of a library of books, emphasizing their role as church writers and translators. Another similar icon from 1861 depicts Cyril and Methodius with St Nahum of Ohrid and St Kozma of Zograf, this being the only image on which is depicted a scroll with Glagolitic letters, not Cyrillic ones.⁵²

On the territory of present day Bulgaria the images of Sts Cyril and Methodius and their disciples appear as late as the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Among their first images is an icon from the monk Gabriel Rilets in 1832 in the Transfiguration Monastery: St John of Rila and St Cyril the Philosopher are depicted on both sides of the Virgin Mary.⁵³ The images of the Slavic saints, especially of St Clement and St Methodius, are depicted in the churches and chapels of the Rila Monastery.⁵⁴ In the cemetery church of The Entrance of the Holy Virgin in the temple (1795): St Methodius; in

the chapel of St Nicholas (1841) in the Katholikon: St Clement and St Methodius in hierarchical garments (painters Dimitar Christov and Zaphir); in the Katholikon (1844): St Methodius and St Nahum (painters Dimitar Christov and Zaphir). Zahari Zograf presents Ss Cyril and Methodius in monastic garments at the Monastery of Troyan (1848) and at the Transfiguration Monastery (1849-51) near Turnovo.

published in Moscow in 1844.⁵⁵

After the middle of the nineteenth century, the images of the Slavic enlighteners Cyril and Methodius became numerous, with the significant contribution of the icon painters from the schools in Samokov and Tryavna. The introduction of their common feast on May 11, which soon became a nation-wide and school holiday, the dedication of churches, chapels and schools in their name helped to develop their iconography. Scenes from their lives appear, probably the first ones in lithography Bulgarian Enlighteners, published by Hristo Danov in Vienna in 1864.⁵⁶

St Cyril and St Methodius,
19th C. School of Samokov,
Sofia



From the second half of the nineteenth century, in the icon painting in Bulgaria there spread the iconographic scheme of Ss Cyril and Methodius holding a scroll with the alphabet or with the scroll placed on an altar table. The earliest such image, in which the two are depicted together, holding a scroll with the Slavic alphabet, is the illustration on the cover page of the Bulgarian Grammar Book by Georgi Busilin,

By way of a final remark, one may recall the only pictorial cycle devoted to the life and activity of Cyril and Methodius, in the Arapovo Monastery St Nedelya (1864) near Assenovgrad. The artists Alexi Atanassov and Georgi Danchov depicted ten scenes dedicated to the creation of the Bulgarian alphabet, the baptism of Knyaz Boris and the court, the preaching mission of the holy brothers among the Bulgarians, their consecration on different levels of the church hierarchy and their assumption. In addition to the church, Georgi Danchov depicted the scenes of the Slavonic alphabet, the baptism of the Preslav court and a composition of the Seven Saints in the spring of the monastery (agiasmo). Some of the plots depicted do not correspond to

historical facts and are not found in medieval literature, but apparently were popular during this period.

Cyril and Methodius became the patrons and symbol of the struggle for an independent Bulgarian Church for Bulgarians in Constantinople. Many of the icons of this period depict a landscape from Constantinople and the Bulgarian church there behind Cyril and Methodius.



St Cyril and St Methodios.
Monastery of Arapovo, 1864

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- ⁸ Грозданов Ц. - *Хадерман-Мисгвиш*, Л. Курбиново, Скопје, 1992; Грозданов, Ц. *Курбиново и други студии за фрескоживописот во Преспа*, Скопје, 2006, с. 39, 44, 49-50, 58-60
- ⁹ Ц. Грозданов, *Курбиново и други студии за фрескоживописот во Преспа*, с. 39, 44, 49-50, 58-60, 67,

- ¹⁰ St George Church in Staro Nagorichane (1316), King's Church (1314) in Studenica, Grachanica (1320), The Holy Virgin Odeghetria (1337) Pehc, Zica (1310), The Holy Virgin (1350) Matejche, Bela crkva Karan (1332-1337).
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- ²¹ *Ibid.*, с. 116-117.
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- ³¹ Снегаров, И. Op. cit.
- ³² In Moshopolis (1741-1742) were printed the Offices of St Theodora of Thessaloniki, St Haralampios, St Nicholas the New, St Seraphimos archbishop of Phanachoret, St Nahum of Ohrid, St Clement of Ohrid, The Fifteen martyrs of Tiberoupoli, St John Vladimir, St Erasmos, St Nocodemus, The Seven Slavic Saints, St Visarion of Larissa. In 1740 and 1742 in Moschopolis the offices of St Nahum and other Slavic Saints were edited. The editors dedicated the office of St John Vladimir to the archbishop Joasaph.
- ³³ I.e. the works of Theophylaktos Bishop of Bulgaria.
- ³⁴ The printing house used the help of Venetian engravers and the tipographer was Gregory of Moschopolis.
- ³⁵ Давидов, Д. О украјинско-српским уметничким везама у XVIII в., Зборник Матице српске за ликовне уметности, Нови Сад, 4, 1968, 211-235.
- ³⁶ Давидов, Д. Op. cit., 132-135, 280-285, ill. 79-85; Христофор Жефарович, Стематография. *Факсимилно издание, коментир от Ас. Василев*, София 1986
- ³⁷ David of Seleniza painted inside the Church of St Nicholas, but Konstantin and Athanas painted the exonartex. They also painted the Church of St George 1767 in Vitkuqi, of which only the mural on the eastern wall is preserved; it is not a subject of discussion here.
- ³⁸ Their iconographic repertoire in Mount Athos presents also St John of Rila.
- ³⁹ Popa, T. *Piktoret mesjetare shqiptare. Tirana, 1961*; Τσιγάρας, Γ. *Οι ζωγράφοι Κωνσταντίνος και Αθανάσιος από την Κορυτσά. Το έργο τους στο Άγιον Όρος (1752-1783)*. Αθήνα 2003....,
- ⁴⁰ Грозданов, Ц. *Свети Наум Охридски...*, 163-170.
- ⁴¹ Грозданов, Ц. *Свети Наум Охридски...*, 127-128.
- ⁴² M. Peufuss, Op. cit., 171, ill. 27.
- ⁴³ Грозданов, Ц. *Портрети на светители...*, 210-218. Поповска-Коробар, В. *Иконописот во Охрид во XVIII век*, Скопје 2005, 87-91 and literature.
- ⁴⁴ Popa, T. *Piktoret grabovarë Cetiri nga familija Katro. – Buletin i Universitetit Shtetëror të Tiranës, Seria Shkencave Shoqërore*, 3, 1960; Popa, T. *Piktoret mesjetare shqiptare. Tirana, 1961*, 105-120; Thomo, P. *Kishat Pastbizantine në Shqipërinë e Jugut*. Tiranë, 1998, 214-130, 256; Χατζηδάκης Μ., Ε. *Δρακοπούλου. Έλληνες Ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση (1450-1830)*. Αθήνα, 1997, 438; Lozanova, R. The Slavic Saints in the Churches in Moschopolis and Vitkuqi /Albania/. In : *The Slavic Saints in the History of Christian Church*, Annuaire de l'Universite de Sofia "St Clement Ohridski". Centre de recherches Slavo-Byzantines "Ivan Dujcev" 92 (XI), 2002, Sofia, 2003, 177-189; Русева, Р. *Образите на св. Наум в църковното изкуство на територията на Албания*, Сб. *Св. Наум – живот и дело* (Охрид), Скопје 2006, 247-259;

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- ⁴⁵ Serafimova, A. Image and Imagery: Revisiting the Depictions of the Seven Slavic Saints. –In: *Patrimonium MK*, Skorije 2014, 279-296.
- ⁴⁶ Грозданов, Ц. *Портрети на светители*, 119-121.
- ⁴⁷ Lozanova, R. *The Slavic Saints in the Churches in Moschopolis and Vitkuqi /Albania/*, p. 189; ill. 18, p. 348; Русева, Р. *Образите на св. Наум в църковното изкуство на територията на Албания*, с. 254.
- ⁴⁸ Паисий Хилендарски, *Славяно-българска история*, София 1972, 185-186.
- ⁴⁹ Kissas, S. *Op. cit.*, 249.
- ⁵⁰ Божков, А., Ас. Василиев, *Художественото наследство на манастира Зограф*, с. 106, 107, ill. 70-72
- ⁵¹ Божков, А., Ас. Василиев, *Художественото наследство на манастира Зограф*, ill. 212; Генова, Е. *За две икони на свети Седмочисленици от XIX век*, Обществени и културни връзки между Унгария и Балканите. Budapest 2011 80-92.
- ⁵² *Ibid.* ill. 213;
- ⁵³ Василиев, А. *Български светци в изобразителното изкуство*, с. 71.
- ⁵⁴ Куюмджиев, А. *Стенописите в главната църква на Рилския манастир*, София 2015, 345-348
- ⁵⁵ Гергова, И. *Графични модели във възрожденската иконография на славянските просветители*, *Проблеми на изкуството*, кн. 4, 1993., с. 4; Генова, Е. Славянските просветители Кирил и Методий и късновьрожденските зографи. In: *Герои, култове, светци. Изкуствоведски четения 2015 г.* София, 2015, с. 343-356
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She holds an M.A. in History of Art from the National Academy of Art, Sofia and a Ph.D. from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. She was the curator of a number of exhibitions and participated in a number of scientific projects.

Notable curator activity includes the following:

- 2002 Exhibition “Icônes et manuscrits bulgares”, Musées royaux d’Art et d’Histoire, Bruxelles;
- 2003 Exhibition “Bulgarian Christian Art”, State Historical Museum, Moscow;
- 2004 Exhibition “Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261 – 1557)”, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; responsible for the Bulgarian section of the said exhibition.
- 2006 Exhibition “The Bulgarian Christian Art 13th – 15th Centuries and the Palaeologan Renaissance”, National Museum of History, Sofia;
- 2009 Exhibition “Icons from Bulgaria 13th – 19th Centuries”, State Historical Museum, Moscow;
- 2014 Exhibition “The Rejoicing of Prayer. Unknown



Icons from the Fund of Crypt”,
Museum of Christian Art,
Crypt of St Alexander Nevsky
Cathedral, Sofia; and

- 2015 Exhibition “The
Balkans – a Shared Heritage”;
UNESCO Paris. Author Ivo
Xadzimishev.

**Notable scientific projects
include:**

- 1999 – 2000: The Apocalypse
of St John in Bulgarian Art.
Individual scientific project
financed by International
Organization RSS;
- 2003: Orthodox Albania.
Project and scientific
expedition financed by Open
Society, Sofia;

- 2004: Church Paintings
in Albania and FYROM.
Comparative Study. Individual
scientific project and scientific
trips at invitation of the
Academy of Sciences and Arts
of Skopje.
- 2006-2008 Scientific
consultant of project
Civilizations on the Balkans of
photographer Ivo Hadzimishev.
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Selected Publications:

Books and Catalogues

The Church of St Demetrius in Boboshevo. Architecture, Wall Paintings, Conservation. Sofia 2009 (in co-authorship with H. Staneva 168 p.). /In English/

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Exhibit

Bulgarian Icon, 2016

Bulgarian Icon

Donated to H.E. The President of Malta, 2016

The Bulgarian feast of Cyril and Methodius was celebrated in Malta for the first time on the 13th and 14th May 2016, the year marking the 45th anniversary since Malta and Bulgaria established diplomatic relations. All events associated with this celebration were hosted by the President of Malta H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca and Mr Preca. The distinguished guests, who included H.E. Marin Raykov, the former interim Prime Minister of Bulgaria and the current Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to Malta, Borislav Boyanov, the Honorary Consul of Malta to the Republic of Bulgaria, tenor Boiko Tzvetanov and Prof. Andrei Bojadžiev, were all accommodated by the President of Malta at her official residence at San Anton Palace.

Background

Borislav Boyanov paid a courtesy call on H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca on 14th May 2016. On his behalf and on behalf of his family, he presented a prestigious icon of Sveta Bogoroditsa (translated, Holy Mother of God) produced by Studio Dimchovsky to The President.

The icon of the Holy Mother of God was not ordered by Boyanov but he travelled to Studio Dimchovsky based in Gostilitza, Bulgaria, to select one. The following techniques were applied: chekanka (hammering) of the metal and painting with egg emulsion, different pigments of natural original

minerals.

In a meeting held at Studio Dimchovsky in August 2016 with the Ambassador of Malta to the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania H.E. Prof. Lino Bianco, Dimcho Dimchovsky and his wife Antonia explained the difference between an ordered icon and one which is created in one's breath and inspiration. When an icon is ordered, one has to create it and sometimes feels compelled to do what the client wants. This is not the case of the above mentioned icon. This icon is inspired and followed a previously painted icon of Jesus Christ; it is

Borislav Boyanov
presenting the icon to
the President of Malta
H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro
Preca at San Anton
Presidential Palace on
14th May 2016



the logical continuation of the icon of Christ. Thus, the icon of the Holy Mother of God donated to the President of Malta is the fruit of an

inspirational work of art driven by an innate vocational spiritual urge to create it.

Studio Dimchovsky

Studio Dimchovsky is a family run practice comprising Dimcho, Antonia and their three sons. Their approach to work is more vocational rather than professional. They are the only living artists who have an icon in Alexander Nevski Cathedral, Sofia. Other icons are at the Trojan Monastery, the Church Pokrov Bogorodichen, Dupnitsa. An icon of the studio was presented by the Bulgarian Patriarch Neofit to the Russian Patriarch Kiril. Other

works in hand include the icon of Ss Constantin and Elena for a church in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia.

Based on

1. Bianco, L. (Ed.), *Celebrating the legacy of Cyril and Methodius: Apostles of Culture and Education*, Office of the President of Malta, 2016.
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A leading lawyer in South East Europe in particular Bulgaria, Borislav Tzvetkov Boyanov has been the Honorary Consul of Malta in Bulgaria since the year 2000. He is duly acknowledged by respected international legal authorities. Reference to international recognition and rankings of his firm are available at <http://boyanov.com/en/about-us/rankings/>

Hailing Malta-Bulgaria

Music relations

Lino Bianco and Andriana Yordanova

The music rapport between Malta and Bulgaria go back to the 1970s following the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Various published literature and official documents relate to this theme (Borg, 2000; Fenech, 2000; Micallef Judge, 1975; Miceli, 2001; Yordanova, 2015a). The main research to date was undertaken at the National Academy of Music Prof. Pancho Vladigerov, Sofia (Yordanova, 2016).

Background

Since 1975, leading Bulgarian opera singers who performed in the Maltese islands included Boris Christoff, Raina Kabaivanska and Ghena Dimitrova (Yordanova 2015b). Prior to this date there are no available records regarding Bulgarian classical singers performing in Malta.

Over the years, particularly in the late 1980s, Maltese-Bulgarian music relationships started to blossom. The peak was between 1982 and 1987 during the term when H.E. Agatha Barbara was President of Malta. Many concerts by visiting Bulgarian artists, masterclasses in opera singing, and a week of Bulgarian culture were among the initiatives. At the end of 1980, between 24th

and 30th December, a group of Bulgarian musicians including three leading opera singers of the time namely soprano Blagovesta Karnobatlova-Dobreva, soprano Lyudmila Cheshmedzhieva and baritone Nikola Vasilev together with the Folklore Ensemble of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski were invited in Malta to present a week of Bulgarian Culture. The event was supported by the Ministry of Labour, Culture and Welfare of Malta, the Minister being Agatha Barbara.

Christoff-Kabaivanska and Dimitrova

The music rapport between Malta and Bulgaria commenced in the mid 1970s through the performance of Bulgarian bass Christoff, the



Boris Christoff during an interview on Radio Malta with Emy Scicluna (Courtesy: Emy Scicluna, Personal archive).

brother-in-law of the Italian baritone Tito Gobbi. Christoff was a prominent voice teacher and a legend of the Bulgarian and European opera scene. He is widely considered as one of the top basses in the history of opera. He is much remembered for his roles in operas: Philip II in *Don Carlo*, Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino*, Boris in *Boris Godunov*, Seneca in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and a number of others. Christoff had set up at his residence in Rome the Academy for Bulgarian Culture, now known as L'Accademia d'Arte e Cultura Bulgara Boris Christoff, for future generations of Bulgarian singers to study with some of the best Italian vocal coaches including himself and improve their knowledge of the Italian language. Unfortunately his connection with Malta consisted only of one performance in 1975 when he was invited to give a song recital at the Manoel Theatre. This event was supported by the

Italian Ambassador at the time H.E. Massa Bernucci. The programme of the bass consisted of works by Franz Schubert, Leonardo Leo, Sergey Rachmaninov, Piotr Ilich Tchaikovsky among others.

The next Bulgarian opera star visiting Malta and performing one of her significant roles was the soprano Kabaivanska who was at the peak of her career. She was invited by the Aurora Theatre in Gozo to perform the role of Manon in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* (Miceli, 2001; Yordanova, 2016). Kabaivanska is one of the best interpreters of Verdi and Puccini. Unforgettable are her roles of Tosca, Madama Butterfly, Leonora in *Trovatore*, Nedda in *I Pagliacci* etc. At the age of 82 she is still very active and fully dedicated to the pedagogy of the young generation.

In 2000 the Maltese audiences had a chance to hear and see a live performance of another

Blagovesta Karnobatlova-Dobrevva with former Prime Minister Edward Fenech Adami and Lino Attard (Courtesy: Lino Attard, Personal archive).



unforgettable Bulgarian voice – the dramatic soprano Dimitrova. She performed one of her top roles – Laura in Ponchieli’s *La Gioconda*. The performance was a triumph. She shared the stage with another Bulgarian, a tenor – the soloist of Sofia State Opera – Rumen Doikov (Borg, 2000). Dimitrova was one of the greatest interpreters of the dramatic and demanding repertoire like Turandot in *Turandot*, Abigaille in *Nabucco*, Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth*, Tosca in *Tosca*, Amelia in *Un ballo in Maschera*, Norma in *Norma* and many others (Manolova, 2016).

Karnobatlova-Dobrevva and the setting up of Opera Studio

After this cultural programme which was well received by the audience and the public in general, Karnobatlova-Dobrevva was invited to Malta on many other occasions. In addition to being an established

opera singer, she was a professor and a former Dean of the Vocal Faculty at the National Academy of Music Prof. Pancho Vladigerov. Her visits were as a performer, lecturer and teacher to voice students. Soprano Tanya Parlato Trigona, a former student of the Maltese operatic soprano Antoinette Miggiani, attended her master classes.

After a significant interest from local singers, an Opera Studio for young opera singers, a private Maltese initiative, was set up in 1989. Once again Karnobatlova-Dobrevva was brought over from Sofia as the main protagonist in the field of pedagogy in classical singing in Malta (Yordanova 2015c). This music education was at first supported by the Government of Malta but later relied on the support of Maltese benefactors notably baritone Lino Attard and Emy Scicluna, main founders of the studio. The Opera Studio remained active for some



Karnobatlova-Dobрева with Maltese friends; Dr Abraham Borg, later Malta's Ambassador to Israel, is second from right (Courtesy: Lino Attard, Personal archive).

four years. It presented many concerts with different themes in Italian, French, Russian, as well as opera productions which included Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and Rossini's *Cambiale di Matrimonio*.

Official celebrations of Cyril and Methodius in Malta

The celebration of the feast of Cyril and Methodius, the apostles of culture and education, started to be hosted by the President of Malta H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca at the official Presidential Palace of San Anton as from 2016, the year which marked the 45th anniversary since the establishment of Malta-Bulgaria diplomatic relations (Bianco, 2016). Furthermore, the aim of celebrating these apostles of

education and culture has been to help bring together and acknowledge the existing Bulgarian diaspora in Malta. These celebrations comprised a number of events including a vocal recital. Given that the official event in Bulgaria is held as per Gregorian calendar, that is 24 May, the event in Malta is celebrated during the weekend closest to the 11 May, the day marking the saints as per the Julian calendar.

Tenor Boiko Zvetanov, one of Christoff's last and best loved students, was invited for the 2016 event. Considered the musical 'heir' of Christoff, he was for decades the leading tenor in Zurich Opera House. He is loved for his outstanding technique and top register. Among his best interpretations are Calaf in *Turandot* by Puccini, Guglielmo in

Guglielmo Tell by Rossini, Manrico in *Trovatore* by Verdi and many other leading tenor roles. This recital included Andriana Yordanova, a soprano from Varna who made Malta her second home. Since 2001 she has dedicated herself to the Maltese opera scene as a performer and as a vocal pedagogue, an area of expertise which she majored in during her studies at the National Academy Prof. Pantcho Vladigerov. The piano accompaniment was by John Galea, the Head of the Music Department at the University of Malta. Galea had extensively corroborated in the past with Karnobatlova-Dobrevva and still works closely with recording studios, colleagues and singers in Bulgaria. The programme of the evening consisted of Italian and French popular pieces. New for the audience were Bulgarian and Maltese pieces from *Lud Gydia* by Parashkev Hadzhiev, songs by Dobri Hristov, Carmelo Pace and John Galea (Bianco, 2016).

In the spirit of the continuation of this Malta-Bulgaria music legacy, the vocal recital for this year included Iwaylo Mihaylov, a soloist tenor in Plovdiv State Opera, soprano Maria-Eleonora Schembri and mezzo soprano Christine Dalli. Mihaylov, a former graduate of the National Academy of Music Prof. Pancho Vladigerov, was, and currently is, under the mentorship of the prominent Bulgarian tenor Kaludy Kaludov who performed

on a number of occasions in Malta (Yordanova, 2016). Schembri and Dalli, both students at the Johann Strauss School of Music, are respectively studying under the direction of soprano Miriam Cauchi and soprano Yordanova. Both Cauchi, a former student of Karnobatlova-Dobrevva, and Yordanova, a former student of Ilka Popova, are graduates of the same National Academy and are the living continuation of the Maltese-Bulgarian music relationship and inspiration for young singers. Both teachers are working in the field of voice pedagogy and are introducing them to the music traditions not only of the known West European countries, but also to Maltese and Bulgarian voice treasures.

The 2017 programme included the Neapolitan songs *O, sole mio* and *Mamma son tanto felice*, arias 'Recondita armonia' from *Tosca* by Puccini, 'Kuda, kuda' from *Eugene Onegin* by Tchaikovsky, 'Quando me'n vo' from *La Boheme* by Puccini and pieces by Parashkev Hadzhiev, Georgi Zlatev-Tcherkin, Alex Vella-Gregory and Joseph Vella.

Final Comment

This year's vocal recital celebrating the patrons of Bulgarian education Cyril and Methodius is a manifestation of the symbiotic development over the past decades in the sphere of



Karnobatlova-Dobrevva with Maltese students (Courtesy: Lino Attard, Personal archive).

music culture between the two countries. Furthermore, it is a commemoration, and an attempt to recall the contribution of various Maltese to make this happen. Two such personalities include Scicluna and Attard. The former played an active role in the visit of Christoff. Baritone Attard, who was the main bridge with Karnobatlova-Dobrevva.

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Caro Sciclunoff,

Grazie molto per la lettera
e del Suo interesse per il
disimpegno dei miei dadi
H.M. Price. Sono queste cose
visibile e non sanno guardare
nemmeno i loro interessi!

In mia parola: sono ne-
gativi per il corso della
Arte.

A fine a sua Napoli in-
vis, molto a nome della
mia corrente, gli auguri
per venturo.

Ed Arriva la bella Napoli!

Con
Giovanni Christoff

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Communication between
Christoff and Scicluna,
addressed as 'Sciclunoff'
(Courtesy: Emy Scicluna,
Personal archive).

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Acknowledgement:

Printcare Press, UBT 8B, Industrial Estate
San Ġwann, SGN 3000, Malta

Churchill Restaurant
Triq San Xmun, Xlendi XLN 1300, Gozo



978-99957-1-168-9