Chapter 9
An Ancient Modernity: Ikons and the Reëmergence of orthodox Britain

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Introduction

Many early histories of the Christian church in Britain start with St. Lucius, king of Britain.[1] However, a Christian presence in the British Isles, as it is under- stood by Eastern Orthodox Christians, goes even further back. Among various accounts, factual or mythical, of St. Joseph of Arimathea and any number of others coming in the first centuries to the shores of Albion, there is credible evidence that there was a Christian presence quite early on.[2] Of particular note, especially for the purposes of this chapter, is the account that appears in the *Menaion* of the Greek Orthodox Church. is twelve-volume work records the festal calendar of fixed commemorations[3] and provides a reading associated with each saint and feast. On March 15, it remembers the Apostle St. Aristobulus of the Seventy, bishop of Britain. Originally from Cyprus, this man was the brother of the better-known St. Barnabas, who with St. Aristobulus followed Christ as one of the Seventy.[4] Aristobulus also travelled with St. Paul,[5] and by his hand was elevated to episcopal rank and sent to Britain. He was then, possibly, one of the first British Cypriots.

Characters like St. Aristobulus offer to modern Orthodox Christians a point of continuity with an ancient and Orthodox practice of Christianity, all but lost. That he is remembered in the *Menaion* indicates that there is continuity in his commemoration, linking the contemporary community with religious forbearers. This chapter explores the means by which the ancient Orthodox heritage of the British Isles is made present in the modern era. Although Orthodox Christians in Britain are certainly modern, in some sense,[6] theirs is a material practice of religion that places itself in an intersubjective relationship with the ancient. e Orthodox practice of the saints—made material in pilgrimage, and ikonography—serves to produce Britain as a place of Orthodox Christian spirituality.

This chapter begins with a brief account of the development of modern Britain, as it is understood by Orthodox Britons. Drawing on Edmund Husserl's phenomenology of time, particularly as Alfred Gell uses it in relation to art-like objects, the first section places contemporary Orthodox Christians not in a historiographical context, but one of present continuity.[7] The chapter then moves to discuss the modern re-introduction of Orthodoxy into Britain and the re-introduction of Britain into Orthodoxy. Then, after a discussion of some of the doctrine concerning material and worship, it

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[1] See for example the *Liber Pon calis, XIV Eleutherius* and Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* Book I Chapter 4.
[2] Tertullian, in *An Answer to the Jews*, Ch. VII:4 and Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evan- gelica*, Book III, Chapter 3.
[3] That is, as opposed to the feasts that move in relation to when Pascha, or Easter, is celebrated in a given year.
[4] See the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 10.
[5] St. Paul mentions him in Romans 16.10, sending greetings to his household.
[6] Cf. Webb Keane, *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
[7] See Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time 1893–1917*, translated by John Barnett Brough (Kluwer Academic Publishers: London, 1991); Alfred Gell, *e Anthropology of Time: Cultural Constructions of Temporal Maps and Images* (Oxford: Berg, 1998); *Art and Agency* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013); "The Network of Standard Stoppages (c.1985)" in *Distributed Objects: Meaning and Mattering after Alfred Gell*, ed. Liana Chua and Mark Elliott (Berghahn Books: New York, 1992).

moves to consider the materiality of the revitalisation of British Orthodoxy as seen in a parish located in East London, which I call St. Æthelwald's.[8] rough the material practice of an ancient modernity, Orthodox like those at St. Æthelwald's make claims concerning what England and Britain truly are. Examining the materiality of their worship, the chapter closes with some reflection, and critique, of the notion of authenticity.

Ancient Continuity

St. Aristobulus is but one among many. Notable saints of the Eastern Church include many recognized in the West, too. For example, St. Augustine of Canter- bury, St. Theodore of Tarsus, and St. Cuthbert. During the first millennia thousands of Christian saints lived in Britain—and the Orthodox Church recognizes them as her own. This is important to note: the continuity of Christianity from the time of St. Aristobulus onward, even with its complications and tensions both interior and exterior, is understood by the Orthodox Church to be Orthodox. There is breakage, however, after the millennium. St. Edward the Confessor is, some say, the last Orthodox saint-king from antiquity in the British Isles. Some extend this honour to his successor Harold, seeing him as the king, and also a martyr at the hand of William of Normandy.

What is certain in the minds of many Orthodox Britons is that William of Normandy systematically eradicated the Church in Britain. In the years following the conquest, the last of the Orthodox bishops were driven out and their sees given to Roman Catholics. Coming in the wake of the Great Schism and the excommunications of 1054, the conquest is understood to have been done under the blessing of an excommunicate bishop and to the detriment of the Orthodox (and hence, "true") Church in Britain. This process is understood to fulfil the deathbed prophecy of St. Edward, when, in a vision, he learned that because:

> [T]hose who have climbed to the highest offices in the kingdom of England, the earls, bishops and abbots, and all those in holy orders, are not what they seem to be, but, on the contrary, are servants of the devil, on a year and one day after the day of your death God has delivered all this kingdom, cursed by Him, into the hands of the enemy, and devils shall come through all this land with re and sword and the havoc of war.[9]

In fulfilment of this prophecy, William's coronation was a year and a day after the repose of St. Edward.

The ecclesiastical rift between Orthodox Christians and other Christians in Britain was then made worse by the destruction of the Orthodox material culture. The Dissolution of the Monasteries undertaken by Henry VIII destroyed much of the material remains of Orthodox Christianity. By this point in time only the ecumenically minded Orthodox Christians would consider the monastics in Britain to be spiritual kin, but there is a great loss felt, nonetheless, because the destruction included many ancient relics, ikons, and monasteries that were extant from the period before the Schism and Conquest. is event in British history marks a worsening by degrees of an already dire situation. While the Roman Catholics were bad, one informant said, the Protestants proved much more hostile and destructive.

Retentions of the Past

[8] Pseudonyms are used within the ethnography except where informants speci cally requested I use their real name.
[9] From the *Vita Aedwardi Regis*, translated by Frank Barlow, quoted from Vladimir Moss, *e Fall of Orthodox England*; *e Spiritual Roots of the Norman Conquest, 1043–1087* (Self-published online at orthodoxchristianbooks.com, 2013). [Original emphasis removed].

Although the past is central to this chapter, the chapter is not concerned with history; rather it is about continuity. Husserl draws a useful distinction between a historical event remembered and a past event still experienced.[10] Although the Battle of Hastings is an historical event, the Conquest and consequential severance of the Church in Britain from the Orthodox Church is a moment of the past still experienced for Orthodox Christians in Britain today. For Husserl, history is something that takes the mind's attention and focuses it on something separate and past.[11] As what he calls a "reproduction," historical considerations restrict the mind's perception from the present context. In contrast, he outlines a system wherein the past is remembered as a continuity of the present. A musical note held for five seconds, is, in this way, seen to be a "time object" wherein the first second of the note is held in the mind, as a "retention," when hearing the final second. The first is still being experienced even though it has past. Husserlian retentions, and their forward-looking sisters, "protentions," expand the "time horizons" of the present.[12] It is the argument here sustained that Orthodox British presence is an "expanded present," which includes people such as St. Aristobulus and events like the Dissolution of the Monasteries within the local time horizons of Orthodox presence.

Material Retentions

In keeping with the theme of this volume, however, the argument moves beyond Husserl's focus on the perception of phenomena to consider the sensuous aspects of those things held within perception. This artefactual approach, looking at the qualities of materials moving forward in time, is largely done following Alfred Gell's application of Husserl to the analysis of art.[13] In his understanding of the extended mind, Gell sees art-like production to be a process of objectification of the artist's mind. Earlier pieces, which exhibit themes developed in later pieces, are seen as retention within the whole *œuvre* of an artist's life work.[14] For Gell there is a strong bond between the perception (and reception) of an art-like object and the artist's mind, linked through the medium of the art-like object.[15] The manipulation of materials is able to produce pieces that trap the viewer, drawing the viewer into a relationship with the mind of the artist and the prototype after which the piece is modelled.[16]

Gell applies this model of relations of retentions and protentions both within a single artist's corpus and within artefactual elements of a larger society.[17] Examining a Maori meetinghouse, Gell identifies the assemblage of woodcarvings that form the architectural structure of the building as a series of retentions of previous generations and protentions toward future generations.[18] These,

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[10] Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*.

[11] Ibid. See also Gell "The Network of Standard Stoppages," *The Anthropology of Time*; Christopher Gosden, *Social Being and Time* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

[12] Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*; Gell, "The Network of Standard Stoppages."

[13] For discussion on the artefactual quality of art-like objects, see, among others, George Dickie, "The New Institutional Theory of Art," in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, ed. George Dickie et al. (Boston: Bedford/St Martin's, 1989) and Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency*.

[14] Gell, *Art and Agency*.

[15] Gell, *Art and Agency*, 86; see also Alfred Gell, " e Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology," in *Anthropology, Art, and Aesthetics*, eds. Jeremy Coote and Anthony Shelton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 40–63.

[16] Alfred Gell, "Vogel's Net: Traps as artworks and artworks as traps," *Journal of Material Culture* 1:1 (1992): 15–38; Gell, *Art and Agency*.

[17] Alfred Gell, "The Network of Standard Stoppages (c.1985)" in *Distributed Objects: Meaning and Mattering after Alfred Gell*, eds. Liana Chua and Mark Elliott (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 88–113; Gell, *Art and Agency*.

[18] Gell, *The Anthropology of Time*, 251.

which Husserl class together as "intentions," produce an expanded present in which the multiple generations of a Maori clan may be together present at the same time via the artefactual quality of the house-as-intention.

Following this material reading of Husserl, the argument set forth in this chapter examines how Orthodox Christian pilgrimage in Britain practice past not as history but as a set of retentions. e next section then turns to examine an ikonographer's practice of producing protentions for future generations. It should be noted that my informants did not use this Husserlian model to understand their own material practice of the saints. A few with whom these ideas were shared did see the promising nature of the enquiry, however within their own teaching and discussions of the past the language that is used is that of collective consciousness (having "the mind of the Church") and familial history. There is an understanding of inherited memory that ties the individuals into the inter-generational community of both the living and those who have died. In a sense, everything that is remembered is held in common lived memory. The analogy that is used by the St. Æthelwald's parish priest to describe this to neophytes is that of familial history. A newly wed in-law will never, truly, become part of the family, the argument goes, unless he takes on the stories of his bride's heritage as his own. For the community of St. Æthelwald's in London, this is understood to include such wide-ranging events as the Diocletian persecution, the Ottoman and Turkish Yoke, the Communist Yoke, the Ikonoclastic Era, and the Dissolu- tion of the Monasteries. These are each events that the family has endured and each shape this community in their relationship to the Britain in which they now find themselves. It is a Britain that is often hostile, but is also rich with retentions of the Church's own material culture.

Modern Re-emergence

Since the late seventeenth century there has been a slow re-introduction of Ortho- doxy into Britain. First with labourers, sailors, and merchants, as well as scholars being sent to study at Oxford, a trickle of Greek and Russian communities became established in Britain.[19] In 1677, a Greek parish dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God was opened in Soho under the auspices of the Duke of York, later James VII and II. However, this parish met protest from the Anglican Bishop of London who forbade the use of ikons and required them to forfeit "Romish" doctrines. Under such, rather absurd, constraints it was closed shortly thereafter.[20] Then, in conjunction with the four-month stay of Tsar Peter the Great in England, in 1698, a small parish was established under the hospice of the Russian Embassy.[21] This parish, though soon to outgrow their space, appears to be the rst permanent Orthodox parish in Britain in modern history.

Over the next century a handful of parishes sprang up around Britain, but it was only in the 1920s that the population of Orthodox immigrants was large enough to warrant local episcopal oversight. This was introduced first by the Œcumenical Throne of Constantinople in 1922, with the formation

[19] Timotheos Catsiyannis, *The Greek Community of London (1500–1945)* (London: privately printed, 1993); Jonathan Harris, "Silent Minority: The Greek Community of Eighteenth-Century London," in *Greek Diaspora and Migration Since 1700: Society, Politics and Culture*, ed. Dēmētrēs Tziovas (London: Ashgate Publishing, 2009).
[20] Gregorios Theocharous, "The Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain and Orthodoxy in the British Isles," available online at: http://www.thyateira.org.uk/ accessed May 31, 2012.
[21] Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA) "Cathedral of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God and Holy Royal Martyrs, London; Parish History," available online at www.russianchurchlondon.org under "Parish History" accessed May 30, 2012.

of the diocese of Western and Central Europe under the Metropolitan Germanos (Strenopoulos).[22] Then, in 1929, seeking to meet the needs of the large numbers of Russians fleeing the Revolution, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (later ROCOR[23]) consecrated their first bishop of London, Nicholas (Karpov). Bishop Nicholas achieved relatively little, as he died three years later. His Eminence Germanos, however, was quite influential—but there are two contrasting narratives concerning his influence. The first was attested to at various points during fieldwork, suggesting that there was an "infamous agreement" between His Eminence Germanos and the Church of England. Although there is little evidence as to what exactly this was, the general understanding among my informants was that Germanos agreed to not proselytize nor receive converts from the Church of England. This, a local priest asserts, fits within the broader narrative of insular, ghettoized Orthodox communities that are held as stereotypical even today.[24] The second narrative suggests that he was an astute ecumenist.[25] As the first metropolitan bishop of the Orthodox Churches in Great Britain, H. E. Germanos participated with particular zeal in dialogues with the Church of England as well as with Old Catholics on the Continent. e Church in Constantinople joined the ecumenical movement in earnest in 1920, and as a western-trained scholar, the then bishop of Seleucia, Germanos, was involved from the start. At the time, there was much optimism that unity could be found between the various Christian Churches worldwide. Despite ongoing dialogue between the Church of England and the Orthodox Churches, currently such optimism is hard to find.

The succeeding years saw Orthodoxy in Britain undergo three more periods of growth worth mentioning. The first was the influx of Cypriot immigrants because of the Turkish invasion in 1974. The second was composed of various Eastern European communities immigrating following the fall of the Soviet Union. The third is a "native" movement, largely of former Anglicans who came to Orthodoxy following years of increased discontent with the liberalizing and modernizing forces within the Church of England. This last group was received into the Antiochian Greek Orthodox Church in 1995 by Patriarch Ignatios IV (Hazim), by the hand of the then vicar, later Metropolitan Gabriel (Saliby), of Paris.[26] The deanery established out of this movement has since been elevated to archdiocesan status, with a broad and varied demographic character.

It is within the parish of St. Æthelwald's, which grew out of this third group, that I carried out fieldwork, between 2009 and 2012, and whose material practice of the British saints forms the crux of this chapter. During the three years of my fieldwork the parish had an average attendance of between 20 and 40 individuals each Sunday morning. At the time of its founding in 1995, it was primarily a group of former Anglicans who, having found a new home under the Greek Patriarch of Antioch, worshipped alongside their Arabic speaking brothers until they were able to set up a stable English-speaking parish. Almost 20 years on, there has been considerable growth and the parish is now a cosmopolitan mix of both convert and "cradle" Orthodox from Britain, Ireland, Greece, Central and Eastern Europe, the Near East, and the Americas and Caribbean.

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[22] Clerics' names are provided using the Orthodox convention of placing family names as a parenthetic following their given name. The family names of priests and bishops are rarely ever used in speech, except to distinguish priests with exceptionally common names.

[23] Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

[24] For an extensive theological perspective on this, see Alexander Tefft, "Phyletism as an Anthropological Heresy" (Doctoral Thesis, Anglia Ruskin University, 2010).

[25] Vasil Istavridis, "The Work of Germanos Strenopoulos in the Field of Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations," *The Ecumenical Review* 11:3 (1959): 291–99.

[26] Gregory Hallam, "The Genesis of the Deanery: A Personal Perspective from Fr. Gregory Hallam," available online at: http://www.antiochian-orthodox.co.uk/Antioch/deanery.htm, accessed March 20, 2014.

Before moving to the ethnography, however, it is important to consider two modern saints and their influence in these practices.

The Word of Prophecy and Teaching

This section examines accounts of two recent Orthodox saints in order to frame the material practices of veneration in terms of the retentions and protentions of a continuous British Orthodoxy. e framing is also in apposition, and in some ways opposition, to the wider British context in which they see themselves, both Protestant and secular. The first is St. Arsenios of Paros. Arsenios lived from 1800 to 1877, first in mainland Greece, then on the island of Paros where he became a beloved spiritual father. He never came to Great Britain, but did give a prophecy concerning it. It was retold to me as "the Church in the British Isles will only begin to grow when she begins to venerate her own Saints." This need to venerate "her own" was also taught by St. John Maximovich. St. John was a Russian bishop, for a time located in Shanghai, then in Paris and Brussels for 12 years before being moved to San Francisco. During his tenure in Europe (1951–1962), he also oversaw the ROCOR Church in Britain. From one visit to England, the following memory is recorded from Archimandrite Ambrose (Pogodin):

> Vladyka[27] John routinely visited churches of other faiths, where the grace of Orthodoxy might still manifest itself, especially in the form of the holy relics of saints who had been glori ed before the Schism. Following this practice, Vladyka John expressed the intention of visiting Westminster Abbey. At one time it may have been a holy place. In spite of the devastation wreaked by Henry VIII, the Abbey had miraculously been preserved as a working church. Now, however, it no longer possesses the holiness it once had as an ancient church. Now people simply go to see it as one of London's tourist attractions. Vladyka also went to see it, but after spending only a short time there, he left, saying: 'There is no grace here.' It is true, there could be found the remains of famous English figures, of the country's political founders, writers and scholars, but not of saints.[28]

This pattern of going into non-Orthodox places of worship in order to venerate the relics is not unique to St. John, but it is extraordinary. e remarkability of the practice comes in its juxtaposition with canon law—a body of rules and guidelines that, while often debated, hold great influence within the practice of Orthodox Christianity. Among the most ancient, and from an Orthodox perspective consequently most important, is Apostolic Canon LXIV. It reads "[i]f any clergyman or layman shall enter into a synagogue of Jews or heretics to pray, let the former be deposed and let the latter be excommunicated."[29] By canonical standards of Orthodox ecclesiology, Westminster Abbey, and indeed any edifice of the Church of England, is a "synagogue of the heretics," though more friendly terms, such as "heterodox," are now more often used. Vladyka's decision to enter Westminster Abbey could have been cause to strip him of his clerical rank if it were not for Orthodox *oikonomia*—economy—and their theology of sacred material. Oikonomia, literally "keeping of the house," is a practice of interpreting the canons according to the local need at the time as it concerns the salvation of those persons involved. Paired with *akriveia,* which denotes a strict reading of canon law, it guides how a canon may be applied. Within Orthodox practice of oikonomia it is deemed permissible to enter into the "synagogue of the heretic" in order to venerate

[27] This is a Russian honorific for "bishop," which is also connotative of affection.
[28] Quoted in Andrew Anglorus, "Orthodox Holiness: St John the Wonderworker in England," available online at: www.orthodoxengland.org.uk/stjohnen.htm, accessed May 31, 2012.
[29] Schaff, Philip, ed. "The Canons of the Holy and Altogether August Apostles," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Series II, Volume 14, The Seven Ecumenical Councils 1899*. Ebook, published by Christian Classics Ethereal Library; Grand Rapids.

the relics of Orthodox saints.[30] Thus, should sacred things have fallen into the hands of those outside the Church, Orthodox Christians are allowed to break the literal meaning of the canon and go to pray therein. There are two conclusions that come out of this account of Vladyka John. In the first instance, it demonstrates the real power of sacred material over what is otherwise perceived to be a harmful and spiritually toxic environment. Following from this, it reiterates the degree to which Orthodoxy perceives the Anglican witness as a hostile force. As St. John Maximovich said, "There is no grace here."

St. John's practice of visiting "churches of other faiths" was part and parcel of a wider instruction for the Orthodox Christians from the East now residing in the West to learn about and venerate the ancient saints of the pre-Schism Church. There is a harmony between St. John's teaching and St. Arsenios's prophecy, and through the work of John Maximovich much was done toward cataloguing and venerating the local saints.[31] The continuity of the Church, both living and dead, is central to Orthodox ecclesiology. Therefore, the saints of a region are fundamental to the well-being of that local Church. Recognizing this, the intra-Orthodox ecumenical endeavours under the Episcopal Assemblies,[32] which were organized in 2010, have sought to complete this process. Although many lists of saints exist, they do not all agree; and, when they do all attest to a certain saint, the biographical accounts may differ. For example, the Greek Menaion records St. Aristobulus to be a martyr. This is not part of the record held by the Orthodox Church in America,[33] which works from Russian sources. Despite the variance, what is important to note is a strongly felt need at all levels and across ethnic boundaries to establish an Orthodox Christian practice in the British Isles that is a continuation of what was before and is still retained in part. Britons and Irish find themselves living in a group of islands rich with a religious history with which they both identify very closely and from which they are markedly separated. The practice of Christianity in the British Isles has become something with which many Orthodox can only partially identify. However, many art-like objects and points of interest within the landscape are objects of great importance for understanding how Orthodox Britons dwell in Britain.[34] With this context, the chapter now turns to examine this ancient modernity—how modern Orthodox experience their ancient predecessors.

Practicing the Saints

This section engages with the ethnography arising from three-years fieldwork among those at St. Æthelwald's. It takes three pilgrimatic practices, each in turn, in order to provide examples of the interaction with material retentions of Orthodoxy within the British landscape. The first is a parish pilgrimage, the second is a local pilgrimage, and lastly individual pilgrimages are discussed. These highlight how Orthodox Christians go about finding material retentions of their religious heritage, a theme that is then pursued in the following section on holy ikons.

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[30] This view was supported most notably by the twelfth-century canonist, Theodore IV (Balsamon) of Antioch.

[31] The influence of Maximovich on this matter can be seen in the creation of ikons of All Saints of the British Isles and a service to the same, which was commissioned by his successor.

[32] These are local synods of bishops that have been called together based on geographic region across the traditionally non-Orthodox parts of the world. Every local bishop, from each of the self-ruling Orthodox Churches, present in a region are members of these Episcopal Assemblies tasked with specific pastoral and administrative duties within their local geographic context.

[33] The OCA commemorates him on March 16, information available online at https://oca.org/saints/lives/2014/03/16/100816-apostle-aristobulus-of-the-seventy -the-bishop-of-britain accessed February 19, 2014.

[34] See Basso, Keith (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache.*

Our Lady of Walsingham

In the spring of 2012, to coincide with the eve of the Annunciation, the parish organized a pilgrimage to Little Walsingham in Norfolk to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. The vision of Mary the Theotokos (The One Who Bore God) in 1061 falls into that short period after the Great Schism but before the Conquest. As such the original site and the still extant well are commonly held as a holy site by Orthodox Christians.[35] Traveling together on a hired coach, the roughly 35 parishioners and friends, arrived in Little Walsingham in time for a brief service of supplication—the small paraklesis to the Most Holy Theotokos. After a break for lunch and some time to explore the village, the group met again in the small upstairs chapel for Vespers. The small chapel is tucked away in the northeast corner of the Anglican Shrine. Situated in a portico near the belfry, the Diocese of Sourozh, under the Patriarch of Moscow, set up the chapel, which holds roughly 15—standing room only. Those who could not fit into the space, spilled out and down the stairs and back along the belfry. After the services, the pilgrims either stayed in the chapel to pray or went down and looked around the larger Anglican premises. Toward the back of the Shrine is the holy well, and, as is common among many British Christians, the pilgrims drank of this water and filled up bottles to take home with them. Before doing so, however, several checked to make sure that it was the same (ancient) holy well, not a reproduction. As addressed above, reproductions do not have the same continuity as retentions. The Orthodox pilgrims were not interested in Anglican holy water; but as a material retention of ancient British Christianity they readily participated in drinking water from the ancient well. What Husserl identified in terms of the mind's perception of an event in time finds a parallel in Orthodox perception of material remnants of Orthodox presence in Britain.

The next morning, as part of the Feast of the Annunciation, the parish of St. Æthelwald's processed out onto the high street, carrying a large ikon of Our Lady of Walsingham. The ikon has become a regular part of the community's worship and is now used each Feast of the Theotokos for processions. The pilgrimage was deemed a great success, and a parish pilgrimage to Walsingham has persisted each year hence. The birth of this new communal practice is best understood as part of the parish's wider goal to venerate Britain's own saints.

It may not be immediately obvious to think of Mary, a first-century Jew from Palestine, as a saint of the British Isles—but to those at St. Æthelwald's she is. As the choir prepared for the Feast of All Saints Britain in 2011, there was some discussion as to which *troparia* (hymns) would be sung for the occasion. When it appeared that there would be no troparia for the Theotokos a protestation erupted, arguing that She, Our Lady, being of Walsingham, which was known as England's Nazareth, was certainly a Saint of the British Isles and warranted commemoration first and foremost. As such, this specifically English representation of Our Lady has become central to the practice of St. Æthelwald's in song, ikon, and pilgrimage. Before leaving the chapel in Walsingham, each of the faithful led forward to venerate the Holy Ikon and to be anointed by the priest with the holy (and hot) oil taken from the lamp hanging in front of Our Lady's ikon. By traveling, praying, bowing, and kissing in veneration and being anointed, as well as drinking the holy water, the pilgrims understood themselves to be elbowing their way into the midst of a "synagogue of the heretic" to lay claim to an authentic expression of Christianity and re-establish a tradition of Orthodox spirituality in Britain.

[35] It is worth noting not all Orthodox are particularly fond of Our Lady of Walsingham. There is one voice from within the parish which I heard protest that her veneration was post-Schism, and thus not suitable.

All Saints Barking

A similar project of claiming and celebrating true British Christianity can be seen on a more local level, too. In May 2012, the third annual Pilgrimage to Barking Abbey drew a number of those from the London parish as well as a sister parish in Essex. For the first time, a small number met at St. Paul's Cathedral to pray at the chapel of St. Erkenwald and St. Ethelburga (more commonly known as the Middlesex Chapel[36]) before going by foot, boat, and then train to the site of the ancient abbey. e following comes from a May 2011 newsletter from the sister parish, in anticipation of the second Barking pilgrimage. It reads

> Last year's Pilgrimage in the lovely ruins at Barking was prayerful and happy. This Pilgrimage is open to the Orthodox faithful from all parishes, especially those in the London area. Please make it as widely known as possible. The Holy Monastery at Barking was founded in the mid-seventh century by **St. Erkenwald**, who later became Bishop of the East Saxons, with St. Paul's as his cathedral. The first Abbess was **St. Ethelburga**, who ruled with **St. Hildelith** as her spiritual guide. Other Orthodox saints also are connected with Barking, and we celebrate them all in this pilgrimage to a place which should be a centre of great devotion. Join us for this celebration of holiness, the holiness of our own region. (Emphasis original.)

Alongside establishing an annual pilgrimage, the sister parish commissioned an ikon of All Saints Barking from a Syrian ikonographer who had done extensive work for the Arab-speaking London Cathedral. Although it is beloved by many, the ikon has come under some criticism from a number of individuals. There is the understanding, even among those who rejoice that it was made, that it is not ideal. The ikon captures none of the character of Barking nor the saints imaged therein, instead it shows generic persons standing in front of a Syrian desert. So, although the image is received as a holy ikon and both it and postcard copies are venerated by many, it goes only part way to rightly portray British saints in an appropriate materiality.[37]

Although Walsingham has enjoyed the attention of Anglicans, Catholics, and Orthodox for some years, Barking is primarily and simply a ruin. And, though it has a rich and ancient history going back to the seventh century, it receives little attention from wider circles of contemporary Christianity. This fact is something of which those at St. Æthelwald's and its sister parishes are quite aware, and find in need of correction. As such, the newly commissioned ikon of All Saints Barking and the yearly pilgrimage to the ruins are part of a process of reëmergence. If the weather allows, the services are held out in the open, among the ruins themselves. Here the stones and mortar are the only material things that house testament to the saints, but this is enough. As the announcement says, this is "holiness, the holiness of our own region." e continuity of geography is itself what makes Barking a holy site.

The fact that there is no Orthodox chapel at Barking is a useful contrast to Walsingham, as it highlights that it is the relic (e.g., the holy well and the old abbey stones), as a retention, rather than

[36] As a side note, there is no relic, nor even an ikon, which would link this chapel to the saints. It is in name only. The present site of St. Paul's Cathedral, however, is thought to be the same as that of St. Erkenwald's day. Tgis is enough to constitute the Anglican chapel as the starting point, as the pilgrims would take the same journey from the cathedral to the abbey as their forbearer.

[37] It is worth pointing out that Orthodox Christians are not concerned with the anxieties of authenticity in the age of mechanical reproduction, a la Benjamin, Walter (1936) "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." See also David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), especially Chapter 6.

the building (e.g., the Walsingham shrine), as a reproduction, which legitimizes the place as worthy of pilgrimage.

St. Cuthbert
The last pilgrimage to mention here is that to St. Cuthbert in Durham. St. Cuthbert is an incredibly unique case wherein the Orthodox saint has survived—intact—since the seventh century. I have heard of no large group pilgrimages taken to visit St. Cuthbert and St. Oswald and the Venerable Bede, who are all in the Durham cathedral, but St. Cuthbert is a favourite for many individuals and some visit him quite often. In Durham, the tombs of the saints allow veneration much in the fashion of the eastern saints.[38] With the presence of holy relics, and quite considerable ones, the faithful pilgrim is able to do a full prostration (*metanoia*), kiss the stone cover and make their prayer.

An Englishman in his 60s whom I will call Clarence laughed when he told me about his experience making a personal pilgrimage to Durham. He had joined up with a group of Anglicans as they went about the cathedral on a tour. Arriving at the tomb of St. Cuthbert, the group bowed their heads in prayer to the saint. He crossed himself and went down "on all fours, smacking my forehead on the tomb, as one does," he says, "and I gave the Anglican minister leading the group quite a shock." For Clarence, the Anglicans served as suitable companions while visiting the building and seeing what there was there, but once coming upon the relics of the saint, he distinguished himself through the custom of his religious devotion. The process of bowing, often with one's forehead to the ground, before a relic or holy ikon before kissing it is a customary act of repentance and humility before an object recognized as sacred and holy. But this customary use of material often sets the Orthodox Christian at odds with the wider Christian milieu in Britain.

Rematerializing the Holy
The previous sections have brought out the doctrinal and praxiological aspects of venerating the ancient Orthodox saints.[39] Looking at the teachings of Ss. Arsenios and John, the chapter shows the internal tension within Orthodox theology of the simultaneous need to venerate and fellowship with the ancient saints and the spiritual danger that is perceived in non-Orthodox settings. Looking then at the three pilgrimages, the chapter highlights the ways in which this tension becomes felt in Orthodox praxis as the faithful work within existing heterodox (that is, not Orthodox) structures in order to find what reputable pieces of Orthodoxy are still retained so as to ground their veneration and commemoration in a fully material fashion. This final section focuses on this process of finding aspects that are deemed to be acceptable in order to produce an authentic local expression of Orthodoxy. It focuses on one ikonographer from St. Æthelwald's and her work in order to draw out some of the intricacies and ingenuity with which Orthodox Britons seek to make the most suitable British expression of Orthodoxy.

In 2011 a young couple connected to the parish asked the ikonographer, Christabel, to paint an ikon of their newborn son's patron, St. Theodore of Tarsus and Canterbury. Receiving the commission, Christabel started on the very long process toward producing a suitable, and quite beautiful, ikon of St. Theodore. For Christabel, preparing to paint an ikon is a way of life, and must—she feels—be in practice long before any formal design work may take place. Following traditional norms of

[38] See for example, Jill Dubisch, *In a Different Place: Pilgrimage, Gender, and Politics at a Greek Island Shrine* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).
[39] See also, Jean-Pierre Warnier, "A Praxiological Approach to Subjectivation in a Material World," *Journal of Material Culture* 6:1 (1991): 5–24.

Orthodox Christian ikonographic practice, Christabel sees her work as an ikonographer made possible first and foremost by her life as a communicant member of the Orthodox Church. As ikonography is a spiritual practice, recording theology in visual form, ikonographers traditionally must observe the cycles of feasts and fasts, observe abstinence in preparation for painting an ikon, and work under the guidance of a spiritual father or mother, with the blessing of an Orthodox bishop. Only with this totalizing practice within the holy tradition of the Orthodox Church is Christabel then ready to paint ikons. The design process begins with prayer in order to establish a connection with the saint; then, where possible, Christabel makes pilgrimage to venerate their relics, or at least a place associated with their life. As Christabel informed me, this enables her to "form a more meaningful spiritual connection" with the saint.

In preparing for the ikon of St. Theodore, she visited Canterbury, spending time in the Cathedral and the ancient holy places in the area associated with St. Theodore. After doing this, Christabel then proceeded to read everything that related to the saint, including period texts about the saint and those from the same region. She tries to find the sources closest to the individual, but also reads widely about the regions in which the individual lived, worked, and travelled.

As St. Theodore was a native of Tarsus, and was then in Rome before being sent to Canterbury, Christabel read up on each of these places during the period St. Theodore would have been there. Christabel also considered archaeological evidence, finding examples of what images, architecture, and art objects were created in those regions during the appropriate time period—or as close as possible thereto. She found images of frescos in Rome, and mosaics from Ravenna that were contemporaneous to the late seventh century saint. Adding to this, she found examples of local artefacts from the period such as the Kingston Down Brooch (c. 630) and the St. Matthew Gospel from the Stockholm Codex (mid eighth century). Collating these and other examples, she considered what material culture would have been available to the person; what the formal features of their material ecology would be, such as the shape of their vestments or monastic tonsure; the architectural style of their built environment; and what they may have made, or participated in making themselves. rough this lengthy process she seeks to learn St. Theodore's personality, and a feeling for the time and place he lived.

Christabel is very particular, and while she recognizes that not every ikonographer goes through such a highly engaged process as outlined above, she feels she must. For Christabel, this process prepares her for her work as it allows her to get to know the saint on a personal level. In her work to gain a perspective wherefrom she can know the saint personally there is a parallel between what Christabel does and a wider practice in Orthodox Christianity of remembrance, or *anamnesis*. Anamnesis is not, like Husserl's "reproduction," a type of historical recollection. Rather, it is a means whereby the Orthodox Christian is, through mindfulness, able to participate within events long ago. It is a process of coming- to-know-as-if-I-where-there, and is central to Orthodox participation within the passion-play of the Great Feasts—most specifically Pascha;[40] it is also the avenue toward partaking of the Eucharist correctly. Christ said, "Do this in remembrance of me," and this remembrance, or mindfulness, is understood to let the memorial become an embodied, lived experience. In this way, it can be said that anamnesis, as a religious practice, is an activation of

[40] Pascha is the Feast of the Resurrection, roughly synonymous to Western Easter.

material retentions (be they relics, the Eucharist, or liturgical pageantry) in order to experience the original event—what Husserl calls "the originary act"—in the same manner as those long before.[41] Once Christabel feels she has a good sense of the saint, she begins to work with the layout of the ikon. Examining existing ikons of the individual, Christabel tries to discern the best way to represent the saint. With St. Theodore, she was, at the time, only able to find six extant ikons of him, all from recent his- tory (and more have been made since). She chose as her primary exemplar one which demonstrated both technical skill and conformity to broader schools of Orthodox ikonography, but decided that she would like to change a number of things. As one can see if one looks at the exemplar by Aidan Hart, St. Theodore looks something of an old Oxford Don.[42] In contrast, Christabel decided that she would prefer to show St. Theodore as an old monk from the eastern Mediterranean.

<Image here.>
Figure 9.1 Christabel Helena Anderson, St. Theodore of Tarsus and Canterbury (2011). Courtesy of the artist.

She also decided to modify the colour of his vestments, and the generously sculpted depiction of the fabric. The pale blue of Hart's St. Theodore, she tells me, was available in the late seventh century, through the use of woad (*isatis tinctoria*); however she felt that a richer dye would have been more appropriate to a person of such a high rank as St. Theodore. It would also serve to emphasize the strength and singularity of his character. On one hand, this may seem like a trivial issue, but one should not underestimate the value of particularity. Ikons, in Orthodox Christianity, are more than simply art-like objects; they are theological statements, used for teaching and worship. Christabel feels the weight of this, and strives for the most accurate, most true, and highest quality representation to which she is able to achieve.

From her readings about St. Theodore's life and work, she got a sense that he was a very ordered and organizing man. He set up schools, established ecclesiastical structures, was the first bishop to really unify practice across the English Church; and many of the structures established by him still survive today. As such, Christabel designed his ikon with a rare level of internal geometry. She assesses harmony and proportion as well as symbolism through the Orthodox Christian understanding of geometry, perceiving and balancing the harmony between parts. This is an internal harmony, and it is rarely obvious except in the forms seen in architecture or woven into holy vestments. This is not something she usually emphasizes, but because of this aspect of St. Theodore's personality, she did a number of drafts overlaid with geometric grids in order to lay out the lines of the ikon in a manner which suggests a "harmony between parts."[43] (See Figure 9.2 for example.)

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[41] Edmund Husserl, "The Origin of Geometry", translated by David Carr, in Jacques Derrida, *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction.* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989 [1936]), 155–80.

[42] A reproduction of Hart's ikon is not offered here. It can be found on the ikonographer's webpage, http://aidanharticons.com/, under Western Saints. Since 2011– 2012, when the work carried out by Christabel discussed in this chapter took place, Hart has created additional St. eodore ikons. e original one, which Christabel followed as an exemplar, is on a gold background, with his name reading "St eo- dore of Tarsus Archbishop of Canterbury."

[43] It may be worth pointing out the difference here between what Christabel identifies as internal "harmony between parts" and what, for example, appears in the Islamic arts. Maryam Al-Ainati's 2012 work *Exploring Islamic Geometries*, by contrast, highlights the role of geometries in Islam as a means of visualizing theology. For Christabel, working within a tradition that not only allows, but necessitates, the use of representational images of holy persons, balance and proportion are means of conveying personality, not solely means of constructing sacred visual space.

The geometric analysis for St. Theodore can be contrasted with her St. Cuthbert's ikon. St. Cuthbert was a farm boy and an ascetic. He held off his consecration to the episcopate as long as he could, and was much more a man of the wilderness and prayer. For his ikon, she created forms inspired by what is sometimes called the "wet fold" technique, stylizing the water and hills in a particularly organic manner found in early British art and best typified in the Lambeth and Bury Bibles. In each case, Christabel has sought the techniques and motifs that best demonstrate the aspects of the saint which she feels most accurately portrays who they are. She describes what she calls the *biomorphic* quality of the saint—literally the shape of their life. Christabel draws on any and every resource available to her in order to come away with a sense of the personality, character, life events, and lived context of the saint. She then seeks the best method to represent that life in the visual and tactile field of the ikon's surface.

<Insert Image.>
Figure 9.2 Photo of artist's sketch of internal harmonies (2012).
Timothy Carroll 2012. Courtesy of the artist.

<Insert Image.>
Figure 9.3 Christabel Helena Anderson, St. Cuthbert (2010).
Source: Courtesy of the artist.

This dedication to detail and quality is seen not only in the research to find the biomorphic quality, but also in how she moves to portray that—both in the formal design and also in her choice of materials. Christabel uses natural pigments and occasionally historic manmade pigments (such as minium), and prefers to source the material locally. She sources minerals, when available, from British mines, and produces her own ink from oak galls collected from local forests. is should not be read as a fixation on being British—rather it is a concern with quality and a more holistic realisation of the shape of the saint's life. She sources British (what she calls "regionally appropriate") materials, and establishes a prayerful relationship with each material, to ensure that the pigments match those to which the saint, living in the British Isles, would have had access. Producing her own pigments allows Christabel to have better control of, for example, the pH level of her ink. Her attention to the potential allowances of her material mean that for egg tempera paintings such as the St. Theodore ikon, she only uses organic, free-range chicken eggs that are as fresh as possible and have been collected with consideration for the laying hen. Like with the oak gall ink, this improves the quality of the paints, helping ensure the ikon will last. This detail is important to take into consideration, as longevity of the art-like object will allow for multiple generations of Orthodox worshipers to join together in the same act of veneration—something that can be seen to heighten the unity of the Church in an embodied, praxiological way. Likewise, with gold leaf, she only uses 24k gold. In every case, from textual sources, to images, to historical artefacts, to the raw materials, Christabel strives to find the most appropriate items, information, and inspiration in order to ensure the production of an ikon that can last.

It is noted here, and developed below, that there is not anything "wrong," in her understanding, with Hart's ikon. Likewise, any number of pigments and designs could be used. Her choice in selection, however, discerns which means, among many viable options, will produce the best possible option. In other words, she seeks to produces art-like objects that as material protensions

can most effectively extend the present continuity of the Orthodox Church in Britain into the future.

With the material components, there is often a clear choice as to which wood, gesso, or pigment is of the best quality. And likewise, there is often good historical evidence to suggest which colours are most appropriate to the rank, time, and location in question. Christabel's task becomes more di cult, however, when she must find the appropriate means of representation. With some saints, and most especially with the Theotokos, Christabel has access to copious possible forms well within sacred tradition, proved by use and reuse. In the case of the British saints, however, this is not the case—due primarily to sixteenth and seventeenth century iconoclasm. From the wealth of representational forms available in the broader, modern context, Christabel seeks out what is most appropriate to show the shape and form of the saint's life. Here, as the Orthodox community seeks to venerate her native saints in fulfilment of St. Arsenios' prophecy and the teaching of St. John and many others, it must search among artefacts and texts from other traditions in order to find the bits of, what the pilgrimage to Barking called, "the holiness of our region."

The Death of Authenticity

This "holiness of our region" is best understood in both degrees of "our." The holiness found in the ancient pilgrimage sites, and sought in the burgeoning ikonographic tradition of the British saints, is "ours," that is, belonging to the Orthodox Church in Britain. It is understood to be the spiritual heritage of all Orthodox Christians residing in these lands, regardless of ethnic bloodlines—after all, St. Aristobulus was Cypriot. But this "our" is also best understood as their (i.e., the Orthodox Christian's), personal and communal, means to holiness. The bond between the well-being of the local Orthodox Church in Britain and her treatment of her saints can be seen on each level.

The prophecy of St. Arsenios describes this bond as a conditional relationship: When the saints are venerated, then the Church will be healthy and grow. The pilgrims experience it as a real, lived correlation. The process of finding Orthodox spiritual treasure within the secular landscape—such as in Barking, or within heterodox space—such as in Walsingham and Durham—helps reconstitute an Orthodox vision of Britain. By engaging with remnants of ancient Orthodoxy as retentions within modern Britain, Orthodox Christians make a claim concerning the continuity of Orthodoxy and Britain in relationship together. e continuity is one of participation, which maintained through the material retentions of Orthodoxy within the British Isles. Much like the Maori meetinghouse as discussed by Gell, these distributed art-like objects and intentions allow the multi-generational unity of Orthodox Christians in Britain. Orthodox Britons are able to retain the past moments of Orthodox presence through the Orthodox practice of anamnesis (remembrance). By doing so the present Orthodox Church in Britain is constituted as a great centre of holiness and missionary zeal—just as were its forbearers in places like Walsingham and Barking. Within the space of the ikon, the materiality of this process of venerating long forgotten saints is fore-fronted. e crisis of representing the sacred where there is no sacred tradition to follow forces those who are given this task of revitalisation to seek out and find Orthodox spiritual treasures within the secular landscape—such as archaeological digs, or within heterodox spaces—such as the churches of Rome, Ravenna or Lambeth.

A cursory read of this practice might suggest that Christabel, those at St. Æthelwald's, and other Orthodox Britons are seeking to establish an authentic local Orthodoxy, much like their Muslim co-

nationals.[44] In the building of the Cambridge Mosque, the planners sought to articulate what an "English mosque" would look like, not through the development of "a new 'English' form but, on the contrary, one that moves toward traditional Islamic roots in a more profoundly academic way that is perhaps perceived by its commissioners as more authentic."[45] The comparison, however, is most useful only by contrast. Although both practices draw on ancient religious practice and artefactuality, there is a very strong sense within the community of Orthodox Britons that theirs is not something introduced to Britain recently, but something that has existed here for almost two millennia—but silenced for the latter half of that history. By contrast, Muslim presence in Britain is largely a post-colonial phenomena, growing from a few immigrants in the mid nineteenth century, but only becoming particularly visible after World War II.[46] Without a regional history, the Cambridge Mosque, "through its reliance on an interpretation of traditional Muslim architecture[,] suggests a new one where forms are re-invented for an English context."[47] Thus the highly academic pursuit of authenticity is, like Islam itself, something recently moved into the British landscape. By contrast, the Orthodox position toward their religion and their region is best articulated as reëmergence. Even in cases where the individual is not ethnically "British," there is a felt connection between the region in which they live and the religious devotion which, they feel, has deep roots in British soil. The long history of the Church in the British Isles, spoken of briefly at the beginning of this chapter, is held to be not just something of national heritage, but something which actively shapes the spiritual tenacity of the region; these are events within the temporal horizons of British Orthodoxy. Thus the growth of Orthodox Christian veneration of Orthodox saints of the British Isles is not seen as a new interpretation of Byzantine or Slavonic Orthodoxy in Britain, but a revitalization of something local, specifically the "holiness," "of our region."

The anthropologist Georgios Tsourous, who works on Greek Christianity and specializes in Orthodox material culture, emphasizes that "every action resulting from [an Orthodox Christian's] relationship to Christ is authentic and adds to the pre-existing 'authenticity' (if we could say this)."[48] Such a Christ-focused, and accumulative, authentification is a result of the Orthodox position concerning the world. As Christabel's practice of searching out everything from historical documentation to archaeological finds, to producing her own pigments shows—anything is potentially useful for the Orthodox Christian in her practice of Orthodox worship. Her choice in picking a source of pigment is not a question of "Is this native to Church tradition?," but "Will this help convey the biomorphic qualities of the saint to current and future Orthodox faithful?" A few categories of resources emerge from the wide range available to Orthodox practitioners. The first is items of historical continuity, like the stones of Barking Abbey and the Well of Our Lady of Walsingham. The second category is that of materials which will ensure the longevity of the holy things into the future of the Church, such as inks with a neutral pH, or free-range organic egg yolk. The third is that of items that capture the biomorphic quality of the saint, like the formal geometry or organic fluidity of Ss Theodore's and Cuthbert's ikons, respectively, or certain pigments.

The first two categories are actually the same. Both endeavour to expand the temporal horizons of the Orthodox Church. The first does so through active participation in the material retentions of

[44] Shahed Saleem, "The Mosque in Britain: Finding its Place" in *Religious Architecture: Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Oskar Verkaaik (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013), 185–204.
[45] Saleem, "The Mosque in Britain," 202.
[46] Joel Fetzer and Christopher Soper, "Britain: Establishment Religion and Islamic Schools," in *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 25–61.
[47] Saleem, "The Mosque in Britain," 202.
[48] Personal Communications, February 24, 2014.

preceding Orthodox communities. The latter does this as protentions for participation with successive Orthodox communities. In the act of anamnesis they are identical. Both facilitate larger parts of the Church to join together in a heightened tactile unity. As such, only two categories remain. The first allows for the praxiological unity of the Church, expanding the temporal horizons across time; the second facilitates the presentation of absent persons as present subjects.

The absence and presence of persons in ikonography is worth considering in more detail. In Christabel's own understanding of her work, she is removed from the picture as the ikon proceeds forward in time. As is common in Orthodox ikonographic practice, she leaves her work unsigned. Even those who do sign their work do not do so outright. Rather, they say "by the hand of [name]," emphasizing the lack of authorial initiative. The endurance of the ikon into the remembrances of future generations is not, in Christabel's understanding, a legacy of herself-as-artist. It is a facilitation of the Church-future as users of a good quality ikon.

The absence of the ikon's maker is reminiscent of the argument put forth by Roland Barthes in his "Death of the Author."[49] Barthes identifies the author as a "modern gure";[50] and in this the author is kin to its etymological sister authenticity.[51] The concept of the "author," Barthes says, is among other things the product of the personal faith of the Reformation and the "prestige of the individual."[52] The ikonorapher's anonymity, or distance through the use of the "by the hand of" phrasing, is much more akin to Barthes's "scriptor,"[53] who writes the piece, but is not sufficient for the explanation of its meaning.[54] In this way the text written, or ikon painted, both arise in the space of the reader/ viewer, who is "the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination."[55] This is why it is all the more important for Christabel to capture in an appropriate way the biomorphic quality of the saints. The ikon, persisting past the painter, will always be seen in the present. It is in that moment that 'authenticity,' if it can be called that, takes shape. The capacity of the ikon to facilitate the intentions (that is, retentions and protentions, both) of Orthodox presence in Britain is not contingent on the art-object's inalienability in relation to the artist. Instead, it is in the ability of the reader/viewer to see, and be seen in (with haptic,[56] even corpothetic[57] gaze) the

[49] Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image Music Text*, translated by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 142–48.
[50] Barthes "The Death of the Author," 142.
[51] Richard Handler, "Authenticity," *Anthropology Today* 2:1 (1986): 2–4; "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in The *Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 45.
[52] Barthes "The Death of the Author," 143; for similar concerning "authenticity," see also Handler "Authenticity," 2.
[53] Barthes "The Death of the Author," 145.
[54] Ibid. 143.
[55] Ibid. 148.
[56] George Mentore, "The Master Art, the Haptic, and the Concorporate," in *Flow and Fixity: The Question of Intersubjectivity in Amazonia*, special issue of *Anthropology and Humanism* 37:2 (2002): 129–33; and Birgit Meyer, "'There is a Spirit in that Image': Mass-Produced Jesus Pictures and Protestant-Pentecostal Animation in Ghana," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52:1 (2010): 100–30.
[57] Christopher Pinney, *Photos of the Gods: The Printed Image and Political Struggle in India* (Hong Kong: Reaktion Books, 2004); and "Piercing the Skin of the Idol" in *Beyond Aesthetics: Art and the Technologies of Enchantment*, eds. Christopher Pinney and Nicholas Thomas (London: Berg, 2011), 157–79.

ikon's "unity."[58] If the Orthodox Christian is able to see the "unity" of the ikon, or find in the Anglican Cathedral a presence of "grace," then this is "authentic."

Conclusion

It is worth noting, especially in light of the topic of this volume, that there is nothing particularly "British" about the practice that Christabel articulated to me. This fidelity to the theology and materiality of the Orthodox Church is part of "our holiness," as Orthodox Britons understand it—it is not cultural, nor national, it is a regional—local—expression. The homily given by the priests during the third annual pilgrimage to Barking stressed the continual introduction of "foreign" people into those constituted as "British," going back to the first apostles. So, while this revitalization movement within the Orthodox Church in Great Britain can be seen in the doctrinal modes of their religiosity,[59] it can only be fully understood in the material culture of the Church and the imagistic means of worship.

Taking seriously the material culture of Orthodoxy in the British Isles, this chapter explores the ways in which Orthodox Britons practice the holiness of their region. In so doing, the objects and places extant from ancient Christianity are seen to be retentions through which modern-day Orthodox are able to practice a continuity and intersubjective relationship with their predecessors. Put in a different manner, relics such as holy wells and abbey stones are material retentions which facilitate an expanded present wherein, through anamnesis, Ortho- dox Christians are able to experience the originary moment of Orthodox Britain, and carry it forward. It is in these examples that Britain can be seen most clearly as a place full of Orthodox presence, and—if Orthodox Britons succeed in their practice of their saints, a future presence, too.

Notes

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[58] Unity, in the Orthodox religious context, must be seen in the context of Trinitarian theology: perfect unity within the distinct persons. It is not the unity of oblivion, and it is, following John 17, a unity that is to be shared by believers.

[59] For a discussion of Harvey Whitehouse's doctrinal versus imagistic modes of religiosity in an Eastern Christian context, see Vlad Naumescu, *Modes of Religiosity in Eastern Christianity: Religious Processes and Social Change in Ukraine*, Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia Vol. 15 (Berlin: Verlag, 2007).

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