

REFLECTIONS ON A COLLECTION:
REVISITING THE UWM ICONS FIFTY YEARS LATER

by

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ABSTRACT
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The University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Art Collection is home to a sizable donation of Byzantine and post-medieval icons and liturgical objects. Central to this thesis exhibition catalogue are the thirty-two Greek and Russian icons from this collection and their history with collector Charles Bolles Bolles-Rogers. *Reflections on a Collection: Revisiting the UWM Icons Collection Fifty Years Later* contextualizes the history of icon collecting in the United States and examines the collecting history of these icons.

By first focusing on icon collecting and scholarship in Greece and Russia towards the end of the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries, this catalogue traces the growth of interest in Byzantine and post-medieval Greek and Russian liturgical objects in the West, particularly the United States. Icons and liturgical objects became increasingly desirable for large institutions and museums along with private collectors in the twentieth century. Bolles-Rogers was one such collector. This catalogue sheds new light on the history and acquisition of the Rogers Family Collection of icons and liturgical objects to the UWM Art Collection and shows that the Rogers Family Collection is not only a collection of icons but also a collection that reflects the time period in the art world in which it was assembled.

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Introduction

Being one of the longest living cultures, lasting for more than a millennium, Byzantine art with its classical heritage and its grasp of the essential values of Christianity became the most sublime expression of harmonious balance between these two creative forces on which our own civilization rests.

Kurt Weitzmann, 1947

The study and exhibition of Christian Orthodox icons in the United States has a rich and complicated history. Collecting Orthodox icons and liturgical objects enjoyed increasing popularity in the United States beginning at the turn of the twentieth century and into the wake of the devastation wrought as a result of the First and Second World Wars. Works of art were taken from their countries of origin, sometimes with governments' permission and other times illegally. Collectors in the West quickly seized opportunities to acquire previously unknown or unattainable objects. At the same time, religious art that the art world had never before considered as objects of value became extremely collectable. During this period, Byzantine and post-medieval objects became more desirable to the art community than they had ever been before.

Public and private collectors in the United States began to pursue Orthodox icons and liturgical objects with a particular fervor around the middle of the century. The Dumbarton Oaks museum in Washington D.C. opened its Byzantine Collection in 1940, and the first major exhibition of Byzantine and Early Christian works in the United States took place in 1947 at the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, MD.¹ Art museums and institutions across the nation began to acquire

objects from Byzantium or icons produced in post-medieval, Orthodox context.² No longer dismissed as the art of a fallen Roman Empire, the art of Byzantium became increasingly sought after and a significant subject of study.

Reflections on a Collection: Revisiting the UWM Icons Collection Fifty Years

Later traces the history of one such collection of Byzantine and post-medieval icons assembled in the middle of the twentieth century. It was made possible largely due to the generosity of Professor A. Dean McKenzie, one of the earliest faculty members recruited by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) Department of Art History. Professor McKenzie's relationship with the collection's original owner, Mr. Charles Bolles Bolles-Rogers, ultimately resulted in the 1982 gift to the university by the collector's children of 32 Greek and Russian icons that range in date from the fifteenth through nineteenth centuries, along with several liturgical objects.³ The year 2015 simultaneously marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first exhibition of the icons from the Rogers Family Collection at UWM and the foundation of the UWM Department of Art History; the Rogers Family Collection icons have not been exhibited as a group since 1965.

The UWM Department of Art History is grateful to Professor McKenzie for a recent donation of his personal archive of materials related to the Rogers Family Collection. The archive includes information that sheds new light on the history and acquisition of Bolles-Rogers' impressive collection of icons. Among the most important items are handwritten letters from the collector himself and McKenzie's own correspondence with major figures in the fields of Byzantine and Medieval Art.

The exhibition catalogue that follows examines trends in collecting practice that led to Bolles-Rogers' acquisition of the icons over the course of the middle of the twentieth century. I explore the social climate when such objects were first removed in great numbers from Greece and Russia. Then I discuss two relevant collections of Byzantine and post-medieval objects in the United States and early exhibitions of these works. Having established this context, I introduce Bolles-Rogers, his collection, and how he established a relationship with UWM. By drawing upon the Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archive and phone interviews I conducted with McKenzie himself, I reveal previously unknown aspects about the assembling of this collection and what forces ultimately brought it to UWM. Finally, I conclude with a consideration of the collection's most recent use and reflect on new avenues of study made possible by donations such as the Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archive.

A Brief History of Orthodox Icon Painting

In 330, the Emperor Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire to the newly-consecrated city of Constantinople in Turkey. This move firmly established the Eastern Roman Empire, known by today's scholar as the Byzantine Empire, providing a foothold for Christianity, which flourished as the predominant religion throughout the Mediterranean.⁴ The next two centuries saw the early development of Christian icon painting. While icons (literally "images") could take many forms, the most popular motifs included images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, biblical episodes, or Saints painted on wooden panels to be displayed and venerated in churches and monasteries.

The spiritual and social power of icons was considerable in the Byzantine Empire. Over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries, icons were at the core of the famous theological debate known as the Iconoclastic Controversy. During the Iconoclasm, Christian images used in worship were destroyed and their creation repressed by the Byzantine Emperors. At issue was whether or not icon production and veneration amounted to idolatry. In the year 843, the matter was finally settled in favor of the iconodules, those theologians and faithful who endorsed the use of the icons in worship. The victory of the iconodules saw the promotion of a complex system of theological rationales for the making and use of images in worship. The Byzantine Empire faced additional instability in later centuries, particularly during the Latin occupation of 1204-1261 when many Byzantine artists fled Constantinople and other artistic centers for employment in foreign—if still Orthodox—Christian nations. This period saw a significant dissemination of the culture of icon production and use throughout places such as modern day Greece and Russia. In 1261 the Byzantine Emperors reclaimed Constantinople, but the Empire finally fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453.⁵

Scholars up until the turn of the twentieth century overlooked Orthodox icons for their lack of realism and modeling techniques. Icons were not treated as “art” because they did not adhere to the western canon of artistic representation. The art community and the art-collecting world rejected icons as art objects because icon painters were not concerned with objectivity, or verisimilitude, in representation. The creation of icons and their modes of representation were instead informed by theological debates and non-western ideals of form and beauty.

The icons were not painted to be illusionistic or to re-create real life but to express the most important traits of the subject (i.e. Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Saints) and to suggest sanctity.⁶ Even so, ancient traditions hold that the first icons were painted from life and that it was through the repeated copying of the original “prototype” that subsequent icons gained legitimacy. While the Byzantines were aware that the creation of these images could vary over time, they continued to remember what saints looked like through divine intervention and visions.⁷

Byzantine iconography, which included portraits of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Saints, solidified by the tenth century.⁸ Some portrait types included objects or attributes to identify the subject for the viewer while others included specific formal or narrative compositions to express meaning. Attributes associated with saints, such as Saint Peter with his golden keys or Saint Paul with his letters and sword, identified the subject to the observer. Saints who were martyred typically were shown with a palm branch or the implement of their martyrdom (Figure 1). Icons that relied more on repeated formal compositions could vary but often included specific subject matter, such as the Virgin and Child. Typically the latter icons depict a young Virgin Mary, or *Theotokos*, with the Christ Child. Icons depicting the Virgin enthroned with the Christ Child on her lap are called *Kyriotissa*. Images of the Virgin gently pointing at her son are typically called *Hodegetria* (Figure 2). Probably the most widely known icon type depicts a mature Christ holding a codex in his left hand and making a gesture of blessing with his right—a *Pantokrator* icon (Figure 3). It depicts Christ in his role as judge. These are just a few of the most important icon types that became standardized through their careful reproduction

and repetition. By relying upon repeated types and attributes, people could identify an icon's subject matter and understand its function without additional explanation. Maintained throughout the later Byzantine Empire, the standard Byzantine iconographies continue to be repeated today.

The formal techniques followed for the creation of icons were very specific. In order to defend against accusations of idolatry and image worship, iconographic conventions were followed and icons could only be painted under the strictest rules. Technical instructions for the painting of panel icons survive. For example, in a late-Byzantine codex in the Vatican (*Vatucanus Palatinus graecus 209*), a manuscript written on watermarked paper and dated to ca. 1355, art historians recently discovered detailed instructions for how to paint the various layers of the panel icon in the late Byzantine Empire.⁹ The author wrote, for example, "For the garment's first undercoat after outlining it, the violet of the outer garment is prepared thus: [add] a little black, the same quantity of white, and lay an undercoat. For the dark folds – violet and black."¹⁰ Concerning the painting of the face, the author prescribed, "The face: For the first undercoat, you mix Constantinopolitan ocher (or more ocher with a little cinnabar) and green as well as a tiny bit of white, and the undercoat for the face is laid."¹¹ The author goes on to describe more layers, what colors are to be used, and how much paint should be applied. Texts like this were passed down and often re-translated and even re-interpreted over the years. Post-Byzantine Greek icon painters would have followed similar instructions, as would those in Russia, but in both cases techniques changed in small but noticeable ways over time.

Orthodox icons in the Rogers Family Collection fall into two broad categories, Greek and Russian, and date primarily to the post-Byzantine period. Stylistically, the Greek Orthodox tradition is characterized by severe, elongated bodies and meticulous modeling.¹² Artists that remained in the area of the Byzantine Empire even after its downfall in 1453 perpetuated this style of icon painting. The Russian Orthodox tradition of icon painting, on the other hand, had its origins in the tenth century when in 988 Vladimir, Prince of Kiev, adapted the Orthodox faith and attendant visual culture from the Byzantine capital.¹³ Over time, Russian artists and architects assimilated and transformed the traditions of Byzantine artisans. Cities such as Moscow and Novgorod became important centers for the production of Orthodox art.¹⁴ As early as the eleventh century, certain stylistic traits and iconographic innovations distinguished Russian icons from the Byzantine tradition. These distinctions continued to develop after the fall of Byzantium. Figures tend to be stockier, more two dimensional, and without unessential details.¹⁵ In this respect, perhaps the best-known examples of Russian icon painting are the works of the famous Theophanes “the Greek” (c.1340-c.1410), a Greek icon painter working in Novgorod, and Andrei Rublev (c.1360-c.1430).¹⁶ The innovations of these painters influenced generations of Russian icon painters after the fall of Byzantium.

The Rise of a Secular Market for Icons

In the 1830s, the Russian art market developed a new interest in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine era Russian art.¹⁷ Also in the nineteenth century, many pre- and post-Byzantine icons were removed from their country of origin as a result of wars and a growing economy for icon collecting. In both countries, merchants began

collecting icons not only for their religious significance but for their aesthetic qualities.¹⁸ Demand for icons increased so much that one photographer in the 1880s convinced regional religious authorities in the Caucasus that their old icons were worn and outdated. He then replaced them with new ones and proceeded to acquire and sell the old objects for anywhere between £750 and £1000 each.¹⁹ The Imperial Russian government was quick to put a stop to this. The aesthetic significance of icons was not seriously considered by western collectors until well after the 1920s.²⁰ Many fine art collectors passed on opportunities to collect icons because they were seen as degradations of the Classical forms of the Greeks and the Western Roman Empire. However, in 1927 Nikodim Kondakov's famous *The Russian Icon* was published and interest in Byzantine and Russian art grew considerably in scholarly circles. As a result, icon paintings emerged on the international art market.

Art historians had largely overlooked the study of icons until the latter half of the nineteenth century. Franz Wickhoff's *Weiner Genesis* of 1895 and Alois Riegl's *Spättrömische Kunstindustrie* in 1901 were some of the first publications to draw attention to art from the late Roman and Early Christian periods and to shift scholarly focus from the Renaissance to the importance of Early Christian art.²¹ Wickhoff and Riegl were among the first scholars to observe that Constantine did not put an end to "pagan art" but instead oversaw projects in which Graeco-Roman and Christian styles and motifs mingled. The efforts of Russian art historians were likewise instrumental in calling attention to Late Antique and Medieval art.²² During this time, noted Russian iconographers such as Kondakoff, Pokrovsky, Airalov, and Smirrov were exploring Christian imagery and iconography; likewise, scholars in

Greece and the Balkans were becoming more aware of Byzantine studies.²³ While western art historians stressed the aesthetics of Byzantine art, Russian scholars emphasized the dogmatic meanings of Orthodox Christian art and iconography when looking at icons and liturgical objects.²⁴ As a result of this difference, more Russian scholars seemed to analyze Christian imagery from a practitioner's point of view. Arguably, this set them apart from the west in iconographic analysis and in their understanding of the practical use of such objects.

The dispersal of Greek icons after the First World War

Icon collecting in the twentieth century began largely as a consequence of World War I. European countries were in the process of recovering from the trauma of the war and tensions remained high. While countries were looking for ways to compensate for their financial deficits, others found even more conflict. In 1919, Greece, backed by Great Britain, entered into war with Turkey (a country newly emerged from the fall of the Ottoman Empire). This began the Greco-Turkish War that lasted until 1922, when Greece was forced to surrender and accept Turkey's terms. During this time both sides suffered immensely, but as the losing side, the assets of Greece were dispersed.

Around this time, Englishman W.E.D. Allen emerged as one of the leading collectors of icons. His interests were sparked by Stanley Casson, a fellow of New College Oxford and knowledgeable art historian.²⁵ Allen began to collect Greek and Russian icons in the 1920s not unlike this Greek icon from the Rogers Family Collection (Figure 4). In an interview, Allen recounted how he began collecting Greek icons. He observed that many fugitives from the Russian Revolution moved to

Turkey and Black Sea countries during this time.²⁶ By 1923, Greece's invasion of Turkey had failed and as a result minority populations between the two countries flowed in and out. At the same time, the treasures of the Greek churches were dispersed.²⁷ Allen noted that the great bazaar in Istanbul became the market for many of these treasures, including icons, lecterns, carved gates, and other church furniture.²⁸ No fewer than 55 of these icons purchased from markets such as the great bazaar in Istanbul would later find their home in the Menil Collection in Houston, discussed below.

Greek icons were thus removed from their original context and entered foreign markets to be purchased by collectors from Europe and the United States. Art dealers began to take interest in these objects and, in some cases, more formal arrangements were made for their removal by way of agreements with the government. Some were more difficult to move as they had associations with famous icon painters, for example, the icon of the Virgin at the monastery of Kykkos, Cyprus, which had been re-painted by the famous painter-monk Iakovos.²⁹ An icon with this much history and local significance would be particularly difficult to sell or take. Yet while Greek icons made their way out of their country through dealers and art collectors, it was not nearly as systematic and politically motivated as the sale of Russian icons.

The dispersal of Russian icons by the Soviet Union

After the end of WWI and with the reshaping of Europe, the Soviet Union began to take form with Russia at its center. Officially established in 1922, the communist regime navigated the deficits left by the war and created a new

government. In search of new ways to support military efforts and raise funds, the political leaders looked to the country's resources for help during this time, a period known today as the Great Purge. This was a time when the country's government began to destroy or sell anything that did not fall in line with the aims of the communist regime. An attack of church property thus began in 1921. A decree in October of that year divided church objects into three categories: objects of historical or artistic value (sent to the Museum Department), objects of material value (sent to the recently established Gokhran, the State Precious Metals and Gems Repository), and "everyday" objects (sent to the state fund).³⁰ This systematic pillaging was delegated to the Gokhran and art historians within the Soviet Union. Objects were flown to Moscow, the capitol of the Soviet Union, and examined by government paid art appraisers.

Objects included in this decree were icons not unlike the Saint Gregory the Theologian icon from the Rogers Family Collection (Figure 5). Early on, any icons created before 1725 were spared, as Peter the Great had died in that year.³¹ This is significant to the Soviets since Peter the Great is considered the pivotal monarch who brought strong western influences into Russia from the Enlightenment. Since the Soviet Union was reacting against western influence, icons created after his death would be considered tainted by his western tastes and therefore impure. Valuables were even taken from museums in Russia, sorted, and in some cases, melted down. State-sanctioned museums began to emerge throughout the Soviet Union to house these new collections, and icons were included in their collections along with countless other works of art.

By 1922, scholars in Russian museums were sent into their vaults to assess items that were not “museum quality”, sell them, and return their profits to the Soviet government. Sergei Troinitsky, Director of the Hermitage Museum at the time, was one of the first to voice his concerns regarding the government’s treatment of art.³² He noted that the Hermitage collection housed objects that could not be found overseas and expressed his concerns about the degradation of these national treasures. By 1925 the government’s dispersal in Leningrad, Moscow, and provincial Russia had progressed even further. Art considered tainted by western influence was sold quickly. The art that remained had to be re-imagined by museums so as to not reflect the stigmatized bourgeoisie lifestyle associated with the West. In other words, objects were re-imagined as symbols of the Soviet agenda. Antiquity costs plummeted. New porcelain sold at four rubles while antique porcelain was no more than two.³³ New sketches from minor, modern masters sold at thirteen rubles while antique paintings sold between eight and ten.³⁴

As part of the effort to raise money, the Soviet Union began to reach out to the European art market. The year 1926 saw dealers from France, Germany, and England presented with the opportunity to acquire previously inaccessible works of art. Famous French art dealer Germain Seligman was approached, recognized the seriousness of the works in question, and contacted the French government.³⁵ Eventually the French government sent him to Russia on a diplomatic mission to retrieve Russia’s outstanding collection of eighteenth-century French paintings. Germany set up public auctions of Russian antiquities.³⁶ The losses to the great Russian collections were considerable.³⁷

It is no surprise that many works from Russia were acquired at this time by collectors in Western Europe and the United States. Responses varied between the eager and the tentative, but many jumped at the opportunity to collect such objects at low costs. Some countries, like France, saw an opportunity to reclaim what was rightfully theirs. Others saw it as a time to begin a collection. The Soviet government did what it could to support these sales and bring revenue into the country. Even after the WW II, the government continued selling off the country's cultural patrimony. As a result, collections of Russian art began to appear in Europe and the United States.

Collecting Early Christian and Byzantine Art at the Turn of the 20th Century

During the time that these objects were being sold to art dealers, national collections, and private collectors, large scale exhibitions of these works began to form and the art historical field of Early Christian and Byzantine art began to develop in earnest. Restorations of existing monuments in Greece and the Balkans were underway; a sign that Early Christian archaeological sites were no longer looked at as the "leftovers" of late Roman antiquity. A Byzantine museum was founded in Athens. The Musei Sacro at the Vatican and the Cabinet de Médailles in Paris emerged as major holdings of Byzantine objects. People like W.E.D. Allen returned to their home countries and displayed their collections publicly. As discussed above, France became a major player in the acquisition of Russian art. Indeed, Paris is considered the first city to have a large-scale exhibition of Byzantine art, an event that set a precedent for further major exhibitions in the West. Opening

in 1931, the *Exposition Internationale d'Art Byzantin* showcased over 700 objects from a variety of European collectors and national institutions.³⁸

Byzantine art, which heretofore had been thought of as static and of little aesthetic value, was now appraised in sparkling terms for its content and creation.³⁹ The layout of the Paris exhibition was such that audiences could trace historical developments in Byzantine art and better understand the subtle differences between forms and schools.⁴⁰ Robert Byron, famed British traveler, art critic, and Byzantine enthusiast, praised the exhibition for the presentation of little-known objects from monasteries and cathedrals that had been undisturbed for hundreds of years.⁴¹ While some objects had been removed from cathedrals and monasteries, often to the dismay of its clergy, the exhibition focused on their aesthetics, as their original location or the ethical implications of their removal/sale were unfortunately not of interest or legally consequential at the time.

Following the success of the Paris exhibition, museums in the United States began to mount shows of Byzantine Art. The Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts hosted an exhibition titled *Dark Ages* in 1937. This was the first of its kind and included many Byzantine pieces along with other Medieval works.⁴² The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston opened *Arts of the Middle Ages* in 1940 and the Brooklyn Museum had an exhibition of Coptic (native Egyptian Christians) works in 1941.⁴³ Around this moment, J. Pierpont Morgan made major gifts of Byzantine and Medieval art to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and to his own Morgan Library. However, none of these exhibitions focused exclusively on Early Christian

or Byzantine art until the aptly named *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* exhibition opened at the Walters Art Gallery in 1947.

While the Walters exhibition did not outshine the earlier exhibition in Paris, it was extremely well reviewed. The exhibition originated with an important gift from Josef Brummer, a prominent Byzantine art collector and well-known resident of New York. Brummer surprised many when he decided to donate nearly 200 objects from his collection to the city of Baltimore. That donation, coupled with the objects already collected by the Walters family, created the perfect assemblage for an exhibition.⁴⁴ *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* also showcased loans from some of the best private collections in the United States.⁴⁵ The Princeton University Bicentennial Conference that year spent an unprecedented amount of time devoted to the scholarship of Early Christian and Byzantine art. The conference closed with great interest and excitement about the Walters Art Gallery's exhibition and with a trip to the Freer Gallery's exhibition of East Christian and Byzantine material in Washington D.C.⁴⁶

These exhibitions reflect the changing interests and tastes of art collectors in the United States over the decades of the 1940s and 1950s vis-à-vis Early Christian and Byzantine art. Interest in Early Christian and Byzantine objects grew rapidly, even if the precise definition of "Byzantine art" was still somewhat unclear at this time.⁴⁷ Exhibitions and scholarship devoted to Byzantine art have since developed in tandem. The Metropolitan Museum of Art has put on a trio of exhibitions focused on Early Christian and Byzantine Art spanning several decades. The first was *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century* in 1977.⁴⁸

Curated by renowned Early Christian scholar Kurt Weitzmann, this exhibition marked a major shift in the display and analysis of such material, as it focused on the social, political, and religious setting in which objects were produced.⁴⁹

Weitzmann's show was followed twenty years later by *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture in the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843-1261* in 1997.⁵⁰ Continuing where Weitzmann left off, this exhibition focused on the triumph of images after Iconoclasm up until the end of the Latin occupation. The third exhibition in this trio held at the Met was titled *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)* and was held in 2004.⁵¹ With a focus on the later part of the Byzantine Empire into its fall, this completed the museum's grand trilogy. From the point of view of the study of Orthodox icons, a fourth exhibition held in the United States deserves special mention: in 2006 the J. Paul Getty Museum presented *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai*.⁵² This exhibition focused on the unsurpassed collection of Byzantine icons from the Monastery of St. Catherine's at Mt. Sinai, Egypt. Included in the catalogue were essays not only by art historians, but also from Archbishop Damianos of Sinai.⁵³ The exhibition was an unprecedented, close collaboration with the monastery. In many ways, the Getty exhibition represented the culmination of a century of western interest in Orthodox icon painting. For better or for worse, the collections assembled in Europe and North America in the early to mid-twentieth century helped to pave the way for much of the research on Orthodox icons undertaken over the course of the last century. What follows is a consideration of the history and origins of some lesser known but important American icon

collections, all of which have contributed to our further understanding of this important art form.

The Joseph E. Davies Russian Art Collection

In addition to major exhibitions of Byzantine art in public museums and galleries, the late 1930s also saw the donation of several major private collections to American universities—gifts that fostered the study of Byzantine art in the United States. Prominent among such donations was the Joseph E. Davies Collection of Russian Paintings and Icons. Davies, a native of Watertown, Wisconsin, donated his collection of 23 Russian icons, along with some 96 landscape and genre paintings by Russian artists, to the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 1937. The Davies collection is currently housed at the Chazen Museum of Art on the UW-Madison campus. The acquisition was a driving force behind the creation of the Elvehjem Museum of Art, the Chazen's predecessor.⁵⁴ The Chazen Museum of Art's 2011 icon exhibition, *Holy Image, Sacred Presence*, displayed the Davies icons and highlighted such themes as stylistic developments in Russian icon painting from 1500-1900. The exhibition also shed light on the Soviet Union's systematic removal of icons that pre-dated Peter the Great.

A graduate of UW Madison's law program in 1898, Davies became a practicing lawyer. He entered government through the Wisconsin Democratic Party and became chairman of the party in 1910. Davies was appointed American ambassador to the Soviet Union by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a post he held from 1936 until 1938.⁵⁵ It was during his short time as ambassador that Davies assembled his collection in a flurry of purchases.⁵⁶

At the time of his ambassadorship to the Soviet Union, Davies was married to his second wife, Marjorie Merriweather Post. Robert C. Williams, author of *Selling Russia's Treasures: The Soviet Trade in Nationalized Art 1917-1938*, described Post as "... a royal princess doomed to live in a democratic society."⁵⁷ She had been born into the wealthy Post Cereal family. Known for her parties during her stay in the Soviet Union, Post became friends with Augusto Rosso and his wife, the Italian ambassadors to the Soviet Union.⁵⁸ Together, the friends purchased many porcelain pieces along with some Orthodox icons and other works of art. Many of the works that Post collected, along with the pieces from the Italian ambassador's collection, are now in the collection of the Hillwood Museum in Washington, D.C. It is clear that the Rossos, Davies and Post often went shopping for art together. This may be deduced by the fact that some of the icon panels now housed at the Hillwood Museum were originally part of diptych icons, the other halves of which are now housed in the Chazen Museum of Art.⁵⁹

At the beginning of a 1938 catalog of the Davies collection, the cataloger included a note pertaining to how the collection was assembled. Located at the bottom of the title page, it reads "Descriptions and comments are in the language of the Russian experts who aided in assembling the collection."⁶⁰ Who these Russian experts are is never revealed; likewise, the criteria that might explain why these particular pieces were purchased is unknown. Omission of such information is common in the documentation left behind by collectors of this time. Such omissions create a sense of anxiety for curators and those researching similar icon collections today, especially in light of more recent cultural patrimony laws. Lack of a clear

provenance also means that style and iconography are the primary means by which scholars can trace the origins of icons in such collections. Thus, where an icon originally came from and how it was removed from its original context—either by sale, gift, or even theft—is often troublingly unclear.

The Davies collection of Orthodox icons is characteristic of university icon collections in the United States today. The collapse of economic and political stability in countries like the Soviet Union and Greece after the WWI left even the wealthiest people in those countries in need, a circumstance that worked to the benefit of American collectors. Wealthy collectors like the Davies family were suddenly granted access to works of art never before offered for sale, and for relatively low prices. Indeed, most major universities own some icons. Icon collectors like Davies wanted their collections to be used for educational purposes, both for students and surrounding communities. Universities were happy to accept such collections; in doing so, they not only enhanced the education experiences of students but also institutional prestige. As art historians become more interested in the culture of collecting, the questions of how and by whom these collections were assembled have become almost as compelling as the objects themselves.

The Menil Collection of Byzantine and Russian Icons

A second example of an American icon collection that originated in the mid-twentieth century is the Menil Collection of Byzantine and Russian Icons.⁶¹ In contrast to the Davies collection, the Menil Collection has remained in private hands. Described as the most extraordinary collection of Byzantine and Medieval art in the United States, the Menil Collection is often praised for its owner's exquisite taste.⁶²

Located in Houston, Texas, the Menil Collection was assembled by French expatriates John and Dominique de Menil, avid art collectors and well know patrons of the arts. This collection was not planned but instead created through the Menils' passion for art and social connections. Annemarie Weyl Carr has observed that the Menils had an "uncanny ability to lose their heads at exactly the right moment."⁶³ In other words, they had a lucky tendency to spend a lot of money on objects that turned out to be of great art-historical consequence, even if they were not always aware of such objects' importance at the time of purchase.

Dominique de Menil had a special interest in Orthodox Christianity and Byzantium; her great-great uncle was the noted Byzantinist Gustave Schlumberger. She remarked that, "There was always a love and a reverence for Byzantium in my family, thanks to Gustave Schlumberger... I have been attracted, almost compelled to acquire a few artifacts from Byzantium as tangible proofs of its past existence."⁶⁴ Dominique de Menil accordingly purchased her first icon in 1933, during the height of post-WWI sales in the Soviet Union.⁶⁵ The icon was a sixteenth-century painting of Saint George, acquired in the Torgsin Universal Department Store in Moscow.⁶⁶ Later, in 1964 (coincidentally around the same time that the UWM Art History Department was preparing to exhibit the Rogers Family Collection icons), the Menils purchased over 800 Byzantine objects from noted antiquities dealer John J. Klejman.⁶⁷ The couple was eager to expand their icon collection and Dominique's particular interest was a driving force.

Shortly after their initial icon acquisition the Menils began to hire scholars to research their collections and to create a catalogue, an arrangement which, as we will see, parallels the history of the Rogers Family Collection icons. Marvin Ross, then curator of the Walters Art Gallery, was hired to catalogue the Menil collection and did so until his death in 1977.⁶⁸ Gary Vikan, then a recent Princeton Ph.D. graduate, continued Ross' efforts.⁶⁹ Ross' and Vikan's efforts reveal that the Menil collection includes several icons from Greece and Russia, similar to the Rogers Family Collection icons.

Vikan later advised the Menil's to make a similar purchase of liturgical objects. He organized an exhibition of the Menil's objects at the Rice University museum in Houston in 1981 titled, *Security in Byzantium: Locking, Sealing, and Weighing*.⁷⁰ The exhibition traveled to six venues, including Dumbarton Oaks and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The success of this exhibition inspired Dominique de Menil to explore more purchasing opportunities. In due course, Yanni Petsopoulos, a London based scholar and icon dealer, introduced her to Bertrand Davezac. Davezac encouraged her to round out her collection with even more icons. Around 1984, Menil acquired 55 icons that belonged to the famous English icon collector Eric Bradley. These icons comprised a remarkable collection of Byzantine and Russian icons unrivaled in its day.⁷¹

Today the Menil Collection is housed in a privately owned museum that is open to the public. Scholars conduct research on the icons outside of the university setting. As a private entity, the Menil Foundation does not have to contend with the

larger educational goals of a university. As a result, the Menil collection has expanded and has several times been exhibited in other venues.

The Rogers Family Collection of Greek and Russian Icons

It was within such a larger context of American icon collecting that we must consider the activities of Charles Bolles Bolles-Rogers. Born in 1884, Bolles-Rogers was originally from the Oak Park, Illinois, just west of Chicago.⁷² Bolles-Rogers was one of eight children of Sampson and Clara (Hoover) Rogers. Sampson Rogers was an industrious merchant turned businessman who emigrated from England in 1866.⁷³ Sampson later became business partners with Charles Erwin Bolles, a name that he evidently gave to his own son by naming him Charles Bolles Rogers. At the age of eighteen Bolles-Rogers's (a name change he made official in 1971) began to develop an interest in art.⁷⁴ He began to collect Japanese prints, a medium many collectors pursued because of availability and relatively inexpensive prices. In 1907 he graduated from Williams College. He married Mary Van Dusen of the Van Dusen family in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1913. She was the daughter of George W. Van Dusen, a prominent businessman in Minnesota who made his fortune on the grain market and established a milling company that would later be known as the F. H. Peavey Company.⁷⁵ It is worth noting that, like Davies, Bolles-Rogers married the daughter of a prominent grain company owner.

During World War II, Bolles-Rogers was Deputy Commissioner for the Red Cross in Great Britain. He was in charge of the Red Cross' wartime service pubs. In this position he was able to establish many influential contacts that aided his collecting endeavors later in life. After the war, Bolles-Rogers operated mostly out of

New York, where he continued to build his impressive collection of art. He retired in 1959 as the treasurer of his father-in-law's milling company.⁷⁶

Bolles-Rogers collected a wide variety of artworks. A portrait of him in his New York apartment taken in 1965 (Figure 6) shows a painting and at least one drawing hanging behind him. Such photographs suggest his broad interests and a sizable collection. For example, over his shoulder hangs a drawing that looks to be by or in the style of famous Russian-born artist Kathe Kollwitz, perhaps acquired by Bolles-Rogers during one of his many trips to Eastern Europe. Another photograph shows his icon collection hanging in his apartment (Figure 7). Most of the icons in this photograph are now in the UWM Art Collection; those that are not may have been kept by the children of Bolles-Rogers or possibly given to another institution.

Bolles-Rogers's first visit to Greece was in 1930. It was on this trip that his interest in Orthodox icons developed—an interest probably informed by the growing popularity of icons among American art collectors such as Davies and the Menils. Bolles-Rogers first icon purchase, however, was made in 1952. He recalled the circumstances fondly: he was having lunch with King Paul (1901-1964) and Queen Frederica (1917-1981), the reigning sovereigns of Greece from 1947 until 1964. The King and Queen suggested to Bolles-Rogers that he visit the famous Orthodox monastic site at Mt. Athos. Bolles-Rogers subsequently noted that he purchased two icons on that trip. During a later visit to St. Catherine's monastery at Mt. Sinai, Egypt, Bolles-Rogers stated that he was gifted an icon from the monks. He was told this was the only time a visitor was given such a gift. Exactly which icon was given to Bolles-Rogers at Mt. Sinai remains unclear.⁷⁷

When Bolles-Rogers was asked in an interview when he developed his interest in collecting icons, he responded by stating “all interests are growths.”⁷⁸ He made many trips to Europe and was known to have had an excellent eye for collecting. A survey of interviews with Bolles-Rogers and letters that he sent to McKenzie reveal that he met many famous people; he enjoyed sharing the names of famous people that he had met and befriended during his travels. Perhaps the most prominent example of this is the story of his lunch with the King and Queen of Greece.

Major portions of Bolles-Rogers collections were gifted to institutions throughout the United States, including the Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and the Williams College Art Museum in Williamstown, MA. Bolles-Rogers had important, personal connections to all of these institutions. He spent a great deal of time in the Twin Cities, a place that even has a medical school award named after him. As noted, he attended Williams College in the early twentieth century.⁷⁹ It only makes sense that he would want parts of his collections donated to these institutions. Why, then, did the collector’s children choose to donate their father’s collection of icons to UWM? The answer to this question begins with one man’s response to an advertisement in the *New York Times*.

A. Dean McKenzie’s contributions

In 1964, Bolles-Rogers published an advertisement in the *New York Times* for a photographer and cataloguer of a previously unstudied collection of Greek and Russian icons and liturgical objects. The ad was brought to the attention of young

New York University Ph.D. candidate A. Dean McKenzie.⁸⁰ As McKenzie stated in an interview, when he arrived for the job interview he expressed to Bolles-Rogers that he was not an iconographer or a Byzantinist but an art historian specializing in the medieval period.⁸¹ Undertaking a study of a collection like Bolles-Rogers' would require a great deal of research, especially for a young scholar not focused on icons or liturgical objects. Nonetheless, Bolles-Rogers was impressed with McKenzie's character and after one interview gave the young man keys to his apartment and the opportunity to come and go as he pleased. This experience would have a great impact upon the rest of McKenzie's academic career.

Originally from Pendleton, Oregon, McKenzie was born August 17, 1930, the same year Bolles-Rogers took his first trip to Greece. He studied at San Jose State University in California and received his B.A. in Commercial Art with a Minor in History in 1952. Immediately afterward he studied at the University of California at Berkeley where he received his M.A. in Classical Art and Archaeology in 1955. Shortly after receiving his M.A., McKenzie became an instructor at New York University and began pursuing his Ph.D. and writing his dissertation "The Virgin Mary as the Throne of Solomon in Medieval Art."

McKenzie quickly began research into the Bolles-Rogers collection. If Bolles-Rogers remembered where he had acquired the individual icons, he did not make that information known to McKenzie. According to an interview transcript in the Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection, Bolles-Rogers was often vague about the provenance of the icons. Indeed, he was not unlike many other collectors of the day in his obscuring or omission of object provenance. His reticence could have

been for any number of reasons, not all of them admirable. In one transcript of an interview McKenzie conducted with Bolles-Rogers, the stenographer described an unnamed work as “smuggled”.⁸² As discussed above, Greece, to which many of the Bolles-Rogers icons have been attributed, was especially vulnerable to the designs of unscrupulous dealers and collectors. As the country began to tighten its authority over the antiquities trade, dealers and collectors had to find new ways to transport objects illegally.

It is ultimately unclear which objects from Bolles-Rogers’s collection have a questionable provenance and practically impossible to reconstruct how they were acquired. However generous his gifts to American institutions, it is important to remember that he and his fellow collectors like Davies and the Menils were the beneficiaries of a largely unregulated art market. After the World Wars, government agencies such as UNESCO began to enact cultural patrimony laws that have sought to curb this sort of collecting. One such regulation was the 1970 UNESCO Convention on Protection of Cultural Property, which prohibits the removal of cultural property to a foreign country without adhering to the strictest of rules and regulations. An object’s provenance is now a must before any reputable buyer or institution will consider acquisition. However, this means that objects collected before these laws were implemented are wholly divorced from their original contexts.

On the other hand, it is equally possible that Bolles-Rogers reticence concerning the provenance of the icons could have been due to his age at the time he interviewed with McKenzie. Since he was born in 1884, he must have been eighty

years old at the time. Having lived a long and full life, it is perfectly conceivable that he would have had trouble remembering specifics about individual objects. It is also the case that many people collecting in the early to mid-twentieth century simply were not interested in issues of provenance. Bolles-Rogers was undoubtedly socially connected when he went on his many travels to Europe and was well known as a collector of art. However, after so many purchases and meeting so many people, it is understandable that he may have had trouble recalling some aspects of his purchases.

During his research, one icon in particular caught the fascination of McKenzie. This was the large icon of the Transfiguration (UWM Art Collection, 1983.054AH). During his examination of the piece, he discovered that there was an image on the back. He brought it to the restorer Nicholas Nikolenko in New York (Nikolenko had restored several other icons in the Bolles-Rogers collection by this time) to have it cleaned. The icon was revealed to be a double-sided processional icon; the Transfiguration was in fact painted on both sides (Figures 8 and 9). One side McKenzie dated to sixteenth-century Macedonia.⁸³ The reverse he also attributed to Macedonia, but dated to the fourteenth-century.⁸⁴ This was the earliest of all of the icons in the collection. Besides the quality and condition of the Bolles-Rogers icons, in general, what makes this specific example particularly interesting is the fact that it was designed for use in ritual processions. The Transfiguration was a major feast day of the Orthodox Church and a common theme in icons; in fact, the Bolles-Rogers collection has another icon depicting the same subject.⁸⁵ Processional icons, however, are harder to come by because of what their use. Since they were

physically carried in ceremonies and celebrations, sometimes even out of the church, they were far more prone to damage and wear. That this example survived at all is extraordinary and the UWM Art Collection is extremely fortunate to own it.

While McKenzie continued his research for the catalogue and was finishing his Ph.D., he accepted an appointment to teach at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in the Department of Art History in 1964 (See Figure 10 for image of McKenzie at UWM). At the time, the UWM Department of Art History was in its infancy and eager to establish itself as an important addition to UWM. It did not take long for the first chair of the department, Jack Wasserman, to recognize a potential relationship between UWM and Bolles-Rogers. While Wasserman was acquainted with Bolles-Rogers before McKenzie arrived at UWM, the foundation for an exhibition of the collection had been laid through McKenzie. McKenzie had maintained a good relationship through his move to Milwaukee with the collector and continued work on his catalogue. As McKenzie neared completion of his project, he and the UWM Department of Art History saw potential for an exhibition of the collection at UWM.

The 1965 UWM Exhibition

Letters in the McKenzie/Bolles-Rogers Archival Collection indicate the type of relationship McKenzie had with Bolles-Rogers when he joined the staff at UWM. McKenzie sent many letters updating Bolles-Rogers on the progress of the catalogue and assured him that it would be finished in the new year. In August of 1964 McKenzie wrote to Bolles Rogers saying,

“I have spoken with Professor Wasserman, the chairman of the Art History Department and curator of the Art History Gallery at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, about your collection. After looking over what I have already finished of your catalogue, he said he would be very interested in exhibiting your icons in the Art History Galleries, providing you are amenable to the idea.”⁸⁶

With that, the icon exhibition was set in motion. Bolles-Rogers agreed to the exhibition under strict rules for transportation and care of the works. McKenzie continued correspondence with the collector over the following months regarding the progression of the catalogue and the details of the exhibition. The Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archive also contains correspondence between McKenzie and several important Byzantinists at the time, including Ernest Kitzinger of Harvard University and Paul Underwood, then at Dumbarton Oaks, and Hugo Buchthal of New York University. McKenzie was able to persuade Buchthal to speak at the opening reception of the icon’s first UWM exhibition.

The exhibition titled *Greek and Russian Icons and other liturgical objects: 6th-19th centuries* opened on November 15, 1965 in Mitchell Hall in the UWM Art History Gallery (Figure 11).⁸⁷ According to letters between Bolles-Rogers and McKenzie it was extremely well attended and served as a great beginning for the UWM Department of Art History. Wasserman curated the exhibition with the assistance of McKenzie. McKenzie gave gallery tours of the exhibition and a lecture during its installation (Figure 12). The exhibition included 65 objects from the Rogers Family Collection, the main attractions of which were the Greek and Russian icons. The

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel published a long article with color images by Donald Key, who praised the exhibition (Figure 103). As Key observed, “With the exception of some pieces in the Davies collection, the show contains the finest icon paintings seen in Milwaukee recently.”⁸⁸ He described several of the icons in the collection in detail and announced the opening reception festivities and subsequent events related to the exhibition.

After the exhibition closed on December 10, 1965, McKenzie wrote to Bolles-Rogers on January 4, 1966 stating,

“As for the exhibition, it was a great success. The audience for the two opening lectures averaged around 400. The total number of entrances to the exhibition ran over 3,000 for the five weeks the show was up. I think that speaks eloquently for the response to the exhibition. Scholars who saw the show were amazed at the high quality of the pieces.”⁸⁹

According to McKenzie, the Orthodox community members from the area that came to the exhibition were particularly pleased with the display. In interviews with McKenzie he mentioned the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Wauwatosa (just outside of Milwaukee) as particularly important in helping him with the exhibition.

Soon after, with the help of Bolles-Rogers, McKenzie began to send copies of his completed catalogue of the Bolles-Rogers liturgical collection to various libraries, museums, and universities across the country. Bolles-Rogers sent McKenzie a list of places he wished the catalogue to be sent and provided funding for a large portion of the print and distribution. Subsequently, McKenzie received

dozens of letters congratulating him on the catalogue and thanking him for sending copies. He received letters, for example, from Dumbarton Oaks, Princeton University, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brown University, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Pierpont Morgan Library. The archive even contains a note from the office of Erwin Panofsky, one of, if not the most, celebrated art historians of the twentieth century. McKenzie also received a hand written note of congratulations from Meyer Schapiro, an expert in medieval art and another leading Art Historian of the century.

Not long afterwards, in 1966, McKenzie accepted a position at the University of Oregon as an Associate Professor. The work he had done with the Bolles-Rogers collection was invaluable not only to the academic community, but to the community of Milwaukee. It was his dedication and drive that helped bring the collection to Milwaukee in 1965 for the exhibition. Because of his relationship with Bolles-Rogers, many of the icons from his collection would eventually find their final home at UWM.

The Ten-Year Loan and Acquisition

After McKenzie departed from UWM, Wasserman maintained contact with Bolles-Rogers and continued a relationship with the family through constant communication with the aging collector and his three children, Fredrick van Dusen Rogers, Mary Rogers Savage, and Nancy Rogers Pierson. As their father aged, the children began helping him locate institutions that would be appropriate homes for his vast collections. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, located in the home state of Bolles-Rogers's wife and where he and his children spent a great deal of their time,

now owns Bolles-Rogers' collection of silverware from sixteenth and seventeenth century England. Williams College, Bolles-Rogers's alma mater, received an extensive collection of terracotta, vases, and jewelry, along with ancient Greek marbles, bronzes, Egyptian art, Byzantine manuscripts, and contemporary European and American Art.⁹⁰ This included works from James Whistler and Jackson Pollock. Of the places that his collections were donated, all had close, personal ties to Bolles-Rogers and his family. However, neither he nor his children ever lived in or spent any extended time in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The one tie that the family had to the area was their father's relationship with McKenzie and the UWM Department of Art History.

The university received the objects on extended loan in 1970 through careful negotiations between Bolles-Rogers, his children, and representatives of the UWM Board of Regents. On November 15, 1972, exactly seven years after the opening of their first exhibition at UWM, a new Art History Museum opened on the campus in Greene Hall. On view in the new museum were the Bolles-Rogers icons, per a ten year loan of the icon and liturgical objects collection recently agreed upon by UWM and the children of Bolles-Rogers. Because of this loan, the eleventh annual Midwest Medieval History Conference was hosted at UWM. In a letter from Fredrick van Dusen Rogers to Wasserman, he outlined the terms of the loan. One of the major stipulations was that the exhibition would be "available for public viewing, for teaching, and instructional work for the benefit of students and others."⁹¹ At the opening of the Greene Hall gallery for the exhibition of the collection, Bolles-Rogers and his children were in attendance.

In 1975, Charles Bolles Bolles-Rogers passed away at the age of 91. His three children, along with ten grandchildren, survived him.⁹² Both Bolles-Rogers and his son Frederick were intent on having the icons and liturgical objects go to UWM. They believed that it was at UWM that the collection would not only be safe and cared for, but that the icons would truly be enjoyed and utilized by the students and the community. Fredrick wrote, "The problem has not been one of finding a home for these beautiful things, but in finding an individual or museum where these things would have proper care and would be enjoyed by truly appreciative people and in a proper setting."⁹³ Shortly after the death of Bolles-Rogers, his children and UWM began the transition from the loan to a permanent acquisition of the collection. There are a few discrepancies between in the icons in McKenzie's 1965 catalogue and the collection as constituted, because before the collection was officially gifted to UWM, the family went through the collection and decided on what objects they wanted to remain in the family. A few pieces also went to Williams College. What remained of the collection was officially gifted to UWM 1982 with the understanding that it would be used for education for years to come.

UWM Icon Collection: 50 Years to Today

It has been fifty years since the Rogers Family Collection icons were first exhibited at UWM. In 1975 the icons underwent additional restoration paid for by both the Rogers children and the university to stop the cracking in some of the panels and touch up the pigments. In 1982 the acquisition was made official and the entire collection was appraised and accessioned into the UWM Art Collection. By 1983, thanks to his children, Frederick van Dusen Rogers, Mary Rogers Savage, and

Nancy Rogers Pierson, the collection was moved from Greene Hall on account of moisture levels judged unsuitable for these fragile works. The icons were then placed in Vogel Hall. Then, not long after, the entire collection was moved into storage in the Art History Galley in Mitchell Hall. The Department of Art History thus became the steward of the collection. It is there that the icons have remained. Since its initial installation in Greene Hall, the icon collection has not been exhibited in its entirety until now, fifty years later.

Over the years, students and faculty of the Department of Art History have made educational use of the icon collection, and various pieces have been researched and studied since its acquisition. Whenever Byzantine or post-medieval art is discussed in the classroom, students are brought to the UWM Art History Gallery where the icons to view and discuss the icons in order to enhance their understanding of the subject matter.

Conclusion

When working on this catalogue and exhibition I was constantly torn between focusing on the collection's history and focusing on the icons. Like McKenzie when he started working with these icons, I am not a Byzantinist. The focus of this catalogue has been on the history of the Rogers Family Collection icons as a collection, not as individual works of art. However, the icons are why Bolles-Rogers and the other collectors in the early and mid-twentieth century were traveling throughout Europe in pursuit of icon dealers and sales. The Menil collection grew out of a passion for icons and the Byzantine Empire. The Davies collection grew out of Joseph Davies wanting to make the most of his stay in the

Soviet Union and being captured by the splendor of iconography and the Orthodox tradition.

This catalogue was not made for the Byzantine scholar or Orthodox iconographer. It was made for the collector. The UWM Art Collection eagerly accepted this collection in 1982, just as many other university collections across the United States have been doing for decades. However, the story of how this collection was assembled was quick to fade with time. With an object's provenance becoming crucial for any respected institution acquiring new works, smaller art collecting bodies (and still many large collecting bodies) have found themselves in a difficult position. Many of these collections were acquired in a time when an object's provenance was unimportant to the average art collector. Not only do institutions have works of art that need to be contextually studied, but now they also have gaps in the histories of the objects from creation to acquisition that need to be filled. The object's journey is now becoming almost as important as the object itself.

Reflections on a Collection was made to show this journey. The Rogers Family Collection is, in part, a collection of icons from the sixth – nineteenth century, but that is not all. It is a collection that reflects the time period in the art world in which the collection was assembled. This story can be just as important to art historians as the objects themselves. This catalogue can now be used in future studies of the Rogers Family Collection. Perhaps future research conducted on the other major collections in the UWM Art Collection can also shed light on the collector and the collection's journey. The more time that has passed since an object's creation, the more potential there is for the object to change location or importance, even

meaning. It is my hope that this catalogue reflects these changes and illuminates the importance of a collecting history.

Figures



Figure 1. Saints Basil, John Chrysostom, Gregory, Athanasius, Parakevi. Greek, 18th century. Rogers Family Collection in the UWM Art Collection. (1986.146)



Figure 2. The Virgin and Christ Child (Hodegetria), Greek, 17th century. Rogers Family Collection in the UWM Art Collection. (1983.056AH)



Figure 3. Pantokrator icon, Greek, 16th century. Rogers Family Collection in the UWM Art Collection. (1983.040AH)



Figure 4. The Archangel Saint Michael Overcoming Lucifer, Greek, 17th century, Rogers Family Collection in the UWM Art Collection. (1983.039AH)



Figure 5. Saint Gregory the Theologian, Russian, 17th century, Rogers Family Collection in the UWM Art Collection. (1986.140)



Figure 6. portrait of Charles Bolles Bolles-Rogers, Ritz Tower Hotel, New York, NY. 1964. Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection (2013.08.1)



Figure 7. wall of icons as they hung in the apartment of Charles Bolles Bolles-Rogers, Ritz Tower Hotel, New York City, NY. 1964. Bolles Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection. (2013.10.1)



Figure 8. image of Transfiguration icon before restoration. “Exhibition Photo Album”, Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection (2014.29.1)

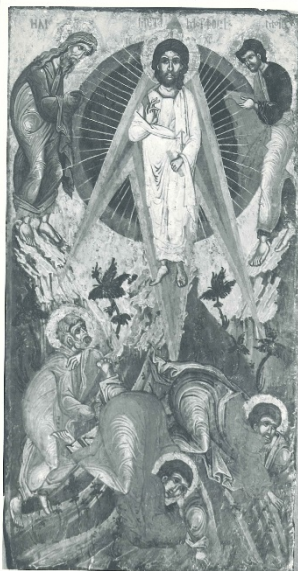


Figure 9. image of Transfiguration icon after restoration. “Exhibition Photo Album”, Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection (2014.29.1)



Figure 10. A. Dean McKenzie with student in the Department of Art History Gallery during *Greek and Russian Icons and other liturgical objects: 6th-19th centuries*, 1965. "Exhibition Photo Album", Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection (2014.29.1)



Figure 11. cover of the invitation for the opening reception of *Greek and Russian Icons and other liturgical objects: 6th-19th centuries*, 1965. Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection (2013.27.1)



Figure 12. gallery tour conducted by A. Dean McKenzie during *Greek and Russian Icons and other liturgical objects: 6th-19th centuries*, November 23, 1965. "Exhibition Photo Album", Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection (2014.29.1)



Figure 13. *Greek and Russian Icons and other liturgical objects: 6th-19th centuries* newspaper clipping, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 1965. Rogers/McKenzie Archival Collection (2013.04.3)

Endnotes

¹ I would like to note the distinction between “Early Christian”, “early Christian”, and “post-Medieval” as all terms will be used throughout this catalogue. “Early Christian” suggests the time period around the middle of the second century to the beginning of the fifth century. While this is a very difficult time period to define, it represents the very first appearance of Christianity in art, particularly in the Roman Empire. When I use the terms “early Christian” I am referring generally to Christian art towards the beginning of its appearance. Finally, the term “post-Medieval” in this catalogue represents Christian art created after the fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453 to the late seventeenth century.

² While there was certainly a fervor of collecting Early Christian, Byzantine, and post-Medieval objects in the United States it should be made clear that this was somewhat a result of the great collecting that was occurring across Europe, mainly in the west. This is shown more clearly later throughout the catalogue.

³ I would like to clarify the collector’s name. When he was born he was named Charles Bolles Rogers. Bolles was his middle name and Rogers was his family name. In conducting research on his family history, I discovered information about the collector’s father and father’s business partner. I suspect the collector was named after his father’s business partner as his father was named Sampson Rogers and his business partner was named Charles Bolles. Nonetheless, Bolles was the collector’s given middle name. In 1970, Charles sent out a name change card stating that as of 1971, for family reasons, he had changed his name to Charles Bolles Bolles-Rogers. This name change card can be found in the Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archives in the UWM Art Collection. However, it should be noted that when the collection was eventually gifted to UWM, it was gifted as the Rogers Family Collection since it was his children that gifted it and they had maintained the last name of Rogers.

⁴ A. Dean McKenzie. *Russian icons in the Santa Barbara Museum of Art* (California: The Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1982) 9.

⁵ A. Dean McKenzie. *Greek and Russian icons and other liturgical objects in the Collection of Mr. Charles Bolles Rogers* (Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin, 1965), 10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁹ Georgi R. Parpulov, Irina V. Dolgikh, and Peter Cowe. “A Byzantine Text on the Technique of Icon Painting,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 64 (2010): 201.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 203.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 203.

¹² Tamara Talbot Rice, *Icons* (London: Batchworth Press, 1959), 10.

¹³ McKenzie. *Greek and Russian icons and other liturgical objects in the Collection of Mr. Charles Bolles Rogers*. 13.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁵ Tamara Talbot Rice, *Icons*, 10.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

²⁰ Natalya Semyonova and Nicolas V. Iljine. *Selling Russia’s Treasures: The Soviet Trade in Nationalized Art 1917-1938* (New York, London: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2013), 315.

²¹ Kurt Weitzmann, “Byzantine Art and Scholarship in America,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 51 (1947): 395.

²² *Ibid.*, 395.

²³ *Ibid.*, 396.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 396.

- ²⁵ Semyonova and Iljine.. *Selling Russia's Treasures: The Soviet Trade in Nationalized Art 1917-1938*, 315.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 315.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 315.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 315.
- ²⁹ Annemarie Weyl Carr. "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage in Middle Byzantine Constantinople," *Dumbarton Oaks*. 56 (2002): 75.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 60.
- ³¹ Ibid., 63.
- ³² Ibid., 96.
- ³³ Ibid., 103.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 103.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 103.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 103.
- ³⁷ The Hermitage, for example, was forced to part with one of its most prized paintings, Lorenzo Lotto's *Family Portrait*.
- ³⁸ Franklin M. Biebel, review of "Early Christian and Byzantine Art," *Speculum* 22 (1947): 638.
- ³⁹ Robert Byron, "The Byzantine Exhibition in Paris," *The Burlington Magazine of Connoisseurs* 59 (1931): 27.
- ⁴⁰ For example, the exhibition included the Chalice of Antioch, at the time thought to be the earliest known work of Christian art.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., 27.
- ⁴² Ernst Kitzinger, Review of "The Byzantine Exhibition at Baltimore, Early Christian and Byzantine Art by Walters Art Gallery," *College Art Journal* 17 (1947): 69.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 69.
- ⁴⁴ It specifically did not draw from the collection at Dumbarton Oaks, one of the best collections of Early Christian and Byzantine art and also curtesy of private collectors Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, and instead included some of its works in its catalogue and referenced the collection as a companion to the Walters exhibition.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 70.
- ⁴⁶ Weitzmann, "Byzantine Art and Scholarship in America," 394.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., 395.
- ⁴⁸ Kurt Weitzmann, *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1979), xi.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., xi.
- ⁵⁰ Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843-1261* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), vii.
- ⁵¹ Helen C. Evans, *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), x.
- ⁵² Robert S. Nelson and Kristen M. Collins, *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006), xi.
- ⁵³ Ibid., xi.
- ⁵⁴ James Watrous. *A Century of Capricious Collecting, 1877-1970: from the gallery in Science Hall to the Elvehjem Museum of Art* (Wisconsin: The Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, 1987), 9.
- ⁵⁵ According to Robert C. William, the departure of the ambassador for the Soviet Union was met with wide publicity.
- ⁵⁶ Maria Saffiotti Dale, Curator of Paintings, Sculpture, and Decorative Arts at the Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin, Madison, telephone interview. September 25, 2014.
- ⁵⁷ Williams, *Russian Art and American Money, 1900-1940*, 231.
- ⁵⁸ Dale, telephone interview, September 25, 2014.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Alumni Association of the University of Wisconsin of the City of New York. *Catalogue of the Joseph E. Davies Collection of Russian Paintings and Icons Presented to the University of Wisconsin* (New York: Alumni Association of the University of Wisconsin of the City of New York, 1938).

⁶¹ The Menil's icon collection is the focus of Annemarie Weyl Carr's *Imprinting the Devine: Byzantine and Russian Icons from the Menil Collection* (2011).

⁶² Annemarie Weyl Carr, *Imprinting the Devine: Byzantine and Russian Icons from the Menil Collection* (Houston, Texas: Menil Collection. 2011), 9.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁶⁹ Vikan went on to become Director of the Walters Art Gallery (now Museum) in Baltimore, a collection home to many Early Christian and Byzantine liturgical objects, as discussed above.

⁷⁰ Carr, *Imprinting the Devine: Byzantine and Russian Icons from the Menil Collection*, 9.

⁷¹ Yuri Pyatnitsky. "Russian Icons in European Collections," in *Selling Russia's Treasures: The Soviet Trade in Nationalized Art 1917-1938*. edited by Natalya Semyonova and Nicolas V. Iljine., 316. New York, London: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2013.

⁷² Letter from Paul E. Sprague (Chairman, UWM Art History Department) to Mary Savage, November 14, 1979. Letter in UWM Art History Gallery records.

⁷³ John William Leonard. *The book of Chicagoans, a biographical dictionary of leading living men of the city of Chicago* (Chicago: Marquis, 1911), 578.

⁷⁴ Leonard. *The Book of Chicagoans, a biographical dictionary of leading living men of the city of Chicago*. 74.

⁷⁵ To this day the Van Dusen Mansion in Minneapolis stands and is used for weddings and events in the heart of downtown.

⁷⁶ Williams College Museum of Art. WCMA Blog: Food and Family, November 22, 2011. Williams College Museum of Art <http://wcma.williams.edu/behind-the-scenes/food-and-family/> (accessed October 12, 2014)

⁷⁷ McKenzie believes it that it might be the icon of Moses on Mt. Sinai, which is pictured in the catalogue by McKenzie but unfortunately did make it into the UWM Art Collection.

⁷⁸ Interview with Bolles-Rogers, Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archives (2013.19.1)

⁷⁹ As a result of these gifts, aspects of the collection have formed the focus of studies published in a variety of journals and papers. A good example is Francies J. Neiderer's study of Bolles-Rogers ancient Greek terracottas, vases and jewelry donated by his children to the Williams College Museum of Art. A copy of this study can be found in the Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archives.

⁸⁰ It is interesting to note that prominent Byzantinist and retired director of the Walters Art Museum Gary Vikan, was also recent Ph.D. graduate like McKenzie when he started his work cataloguing the Menil Collection.

⁸¹ A. Dean McKenzie, February 7, 2014, telephone conversation.

⁸² "Interview with Bolles-Rogers," Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archives, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Art History Gallery archives, Milwaukee, WI. (2013.19.1)

⁸³ McKenzie. *Greek and Russian icons and other liturgical objects in the Collection of Mr. Charles Bolles Rogers*. 27.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁸⁶ "August 29th Letter." Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archives (2014.14.1)

⁸⁷ It is important to note that while this was the title of the gallery in 1965, the gallery's name and location has changed several times over the last fifty years. However, today it is now back in Mitchell Hall now under the same name, UWM Art History Gallery.

⁸⁸ Donald Key. "New York Collection of Rare Icons, Early Bronze Display at UWM", *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. November, 1965.

⁸⁹ "January 4th Letter," Bolles-Rogers/McKenzie Archives (2014.17.1)

⁹⁰ Williams College Museum of Art. (accessed October 12, 2014)

⁹¹ "Letter from Frederick to Wasserman in the Peck Papers Collection", Letter in UWM Art History Gallery records.

⁹² Williams College Museum of Art. (accessed October 12, 2014)

⁹³ "Letter from Frederick to Wasserman in the Peck Papers Collection", Letter in UWM Art History Gallery records.

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Appendix: Exhibition Checklist

(all works from the Rogers Family Collection in the UWM Art Collection)

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| 1. Christ Pantokrator, Greek, 16 th century, tempera on Wood, 37.5 x 28.6 cm, (1983.040AH) | 9. Old Testament Trinity, Russian, 18 th century, tempera on wood, 33 x 27.3 cm, (1983.045AH) |
| 2. The Sacred Blessing Icon (Christ Pantokrator), Greek, 14 th century, tempera on canvas mounted on wood, 27.6 x 22.2 cm, (1983.052AH) | 10. New Testament Trinity, Greek, 17 th century, tempera and gesso on wood, 29.2 x 22.9 cm, (1983.044AH) |
| 3. Virgin and Christ Child (Hodegetria), Greek, 17 th century, tempera on wood, 53.3 x 40.6 cm, (1983.056AH) | 11. New Testament and Christian Saints, Greek, 17 th century, tempera on wood, 35.3 x 26.7 cm, (1983.043AH) |
| 4. Virgin and Christ Child (Hodegetria), Macedonian, 16 th century, tempera on wood, 23.5 x 17.8 cm, (1983.057AH) | 12. Holy Mandilyon, Greek (Cretan), 17 th century, tempera on wood, 13.3 x 17.2 cm, (1983.053AH) |
| 5. Hodegetria and Christ Pantokrator (Diptych), Greek, 15 th century, tempera on wood, 13.9 x 22.2 cm, (1986.149) | 13. Saints Peter and Paul Reconciled, Greek, 16 th century, tempera on wood, 34.9 x 27.6 cm, (1983.051AH) |
| 6. Virgin Mary from Deesis Triptych, Greek, 16 th century, tempera on wood, 37.5 x 28.6 cm, (1983.059AH) | 14. All Saints Icon (Consecration of a Church), Greek, 18 th century, tempera on wood, 40.6 x 31.1 cm, (1986.130) |
| 7. Virgin of the Unfading Rose, Balkin, 18 th century, tempera on wood, 37.5 x 25.4 cm, (1986.152) | 15. Saint Demetrius, Greek, 17 th century, tempera on wood, 40.6 x 14.6 cm, (1986.139) |

8. Archangel Michael Overcoming Lucifer, Greek, 17th century, tempera on wood, 35.6 x 28.3 cm, (1983.039AH)
16. Saints Nicholas the Wonder Worker, Russian, 19th century, tempera on wood, 26.7 x 20.3 cm, (1986.143)
17. Saint Gregory the Theologian, Russian, 17th century, tempera on wood, 21 x 16.5 cm, (1986.140)
25. Saint John the Forerunner, Greek, 17th century, carved and stained ivory, 10.6 x 7.6 cm, (1986.141)
18. Saints Basil, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Theologian, Athanasius, and Paraskevi, Greek, 18th century, tempera on wood, 37.2 x 50.8 cm, (1986.146)
26. Liturgical Prayer of Saint Basil, Russian, 15th century, carved and stained ivory, 10.7 x 8.8 cm, (1986.134)
19. Saints Basil, John Chrysostom, and Gregory the Theologian, Greek, 17th century, tempera on wood, 45.7 x 32.4 cm, (1986.145)
27. Our Lady of the Burning Bush, Russian, 17th century, tempera on wood, 17.8 x 17.8 cm, (1983.046AH)
20. Saint Xenophen, Greek, 18th century, tempera on wood, 19.8 x 14.2 cm, (1986.144)
28. Transfiguration (verso), Macedonian, 14th century, (redo), Macedonian, 16th century, tempera on wood, 88.4 x 44.5 cm, (1983.054AH)
21. Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, Greek, 16th century, tempera on wood, 24.8 x 19 cm, (1986.147)
29. Transfiguration, Greek, 18th century, tempera on wood, 30.2 x 30.2 cm, (1983.055AH)
22. Saint Catherine of Alexandria, Greek, 17th century, tempera on wood, 24.8 x 19 cm, (1986.138)
30. Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Greek, 16th century, tempera on wood, 31.8 x 23.5 cm, (1983.048AH)
23. Saints Catherine and Anthony, Greek, 18th century, tempera on wood, 22.8 x 19 cm, (1986.147)
31. Dormition of the Virgin, Russian, 17th century, tempera on wood, 17.8 x 17.8 cm, (1983.041AH)

24. Saint Nicholas, Greek, 19th century, tempera on shell, 16.5 cm, (1983.050AH)
32. Pentecost, Greek, 17th century, tempera on wood, 63.5 x 46.9 cm, (1983.047AH)