

**Figure 2.** Christ Pantocrator before conservation, seventeenth-century layer with eighteenth-century painting on the face of Jesus Christ. © Dana Decheva.



instead of one: the double-sided icon with the earliest paint layers from the twelfth-thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Figure 5), a panel with the transferred seventeenth-century layer with decorative metal relief application (Figure 6) and a panel with an eighteenth-century fragment.<sup>8</sup> Of course, in order to keep the integrity of these objects, they should be presented together and supported with additional information about the history and technique of the icon.

Unfortunately, it was not always possible to separate and transfer the upper paint layers. In some instances, when the decision was to reveal the earliest paint layer, this meant destroying the upper layers. Sometimes, however, it proved possible to save some 'evidence' of the destroyed paint layer. One such example was the icon of the Virgin Blachernitissa. The seventeenth-century layer had been painted over the layer from the fourteenth century (Figure 7). When the fourteenth-century painting was uncovered (after destroying the seventeenth-century layer), some areas of the seventeenth-century painting remained as they were painted in the lacunae of the destroyed first layer.