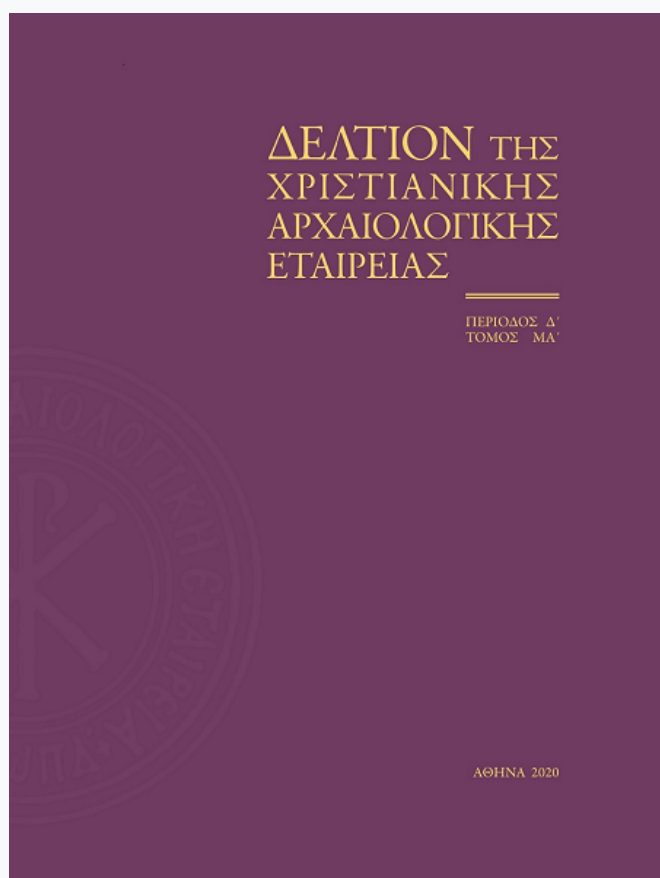


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Iconographic remarks on an icon of Constantine Tzanes Bouniales depicting the Birth of the Virgin, 1676

Γεώργιος Δ. ΤΣΙΜΠΟΥΚΗΣ (Georgios D. TSIMPOUKIS)

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ICONOGRAPHIC REMARKS ON AN ICON OF CONSTANTINE TZANES BOUNIALES DEPICTING THE BIRTH OF THE VIRGIN, 1676

Η εικόνα του Γενεσίου της Θεοτόκου από τη μονή Υπεραγίας Θεοτόκου Φισκάρδου Κεφαλληνίας, έργο του ζωγράφου Κωνσταντίνου Τζάνε Μπουνιαλή, 1676, αποτελεί ένα από τα λίγα ενυπόγραφα έργα του. Μέσα από τη συγκριτική αντιπαραβολή της εικόνας του Φισκάρδου με άλλες φορητές εικόνες με θέμα τη Γέννηση της Θεοτόκου (και του Προδρόμου), κυρίως από τον 17ο αιώνα, καταβάλλεται προσπάθεια για τη διερεύνηση των πιθανών εικονογραφικών προτύπων που χρησιμοποιήσε ο ζωγράφος.

Λέξεις κλειδιά

17ος αιώνας, 1676, μεταβυζαντινή ζωγραφική, φορητές εικόνες, χαρακτηριστικά, εικονογραφία, Γενέσιο της Θεοτόκου, ζωγράφος Κωνσταντίνος Τζάνε Μπουνιαλής, Κεφαλονιά.

The icon of the Birth of the Virgin, which is kept at the Monastery of the Holy Theotokos in Phiskardo, Cephalonia, is one of the few works bearing the signature of the painter Constantine Tzanes Bouniales, 1676. By comparing this icon with other surviving examples from the 17th century depicting the Birth of the Virgin (or the Birth of John the Baptist), various aspects of the iconography are discussed and an effort is made to trace the painter's iconographic sources.

Keywords

17th century; 1676; post-Byzantine painting; portable icons; engravings; iconography; Birth of the Virgin; painter Constantine Tzanes Bouniales; Cephalonia.

The Birth of the Virgin and the Birth of John the Baptist –two themes that are usually discussed together due to their iconographic similarities– are among the well known subjects of Byzantine iconography. Older contributions by J. Lafontaine-Dosogne regarding the iconographic cycle of the life of the Virgin¹, as well as more recent studies, as

those of N. Chatzidaki², M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides³ and A. Katsioti⁴, contributed a lot to our understanding of the iconography of both the late Byzantine period and the first centuries after the Fall of Constantinople.

The portable icon depicting the Birth of the Virgin⁵,

* Dr Archaeologist, Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports, gstimpoukis@gmail.com

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¹ J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, "Iconography of the Cycle of the Life of the Virgin", P. Underwood (ed.), *Studies in the Art of the Kariye Djami and Its Intellectual Background* (The Kariye Djami, 4), Princeton – New Jersey 1975, 161-194.

² N. Chatzidaki, "Γέννηση Παναγίας – Γέννηση Προδρόμου. Παραλλαγές και αποχρυστάλλωση ενός θέματος στην κρητική εικονογραφία του 15ου-16ου αιώνα", *DChAE* 11 (1982-1983), 127-180.

³ M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, "Εικόνα του Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνού με τη Γέννηση της Παναγίας και οι ιταλικές πηγές της", *Proceedings of the 6th International Cretological Conference*, 2, Chania 1991, 239-254, pls 84-92.

⁴ A. Katsioti, *Οι σκηνές της ζωής και ο εικονογραφικός κύκλος του αγίου Ιωάννη του Προδρόμου στη βυζαντινή τέχνη*, Athens 1998. See, also *Μεγάλη Ορθόδοξη Χριστιανική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια*, 9, entry «Ιωάννης ο Προδρόμος» (A. Katsioti).

⁵ For the Phiskardo icon, see D. Konomos, *Ἡ χριστιανική τέχνη στην Κεφαλονιά*, Athens 1966, 16. P. L. Vocotopoulos, "Μεσαιωνικά

a work of 1676, today kept at the Monastery of the Holy Theotokos in Phiskardo, Cephalonia, is one of the few surviving icons bearing the signature of the painter Constantine Tzanes Bouniales (Constantino Zane) (Figs 1, 2). Constantine⁶, brother of the widely known painter Emmanuel Tzanes Bouniales⁷ and the poet Marinos

μνημεῖα Ἰονίων Νήσων”, *AD* 24 (1969), *Chronika* B2, 289, pls 288a and b. I. Rigopoulos, *Ὁ ἀγιογράφος Θεόδωρος Πουλάκης καὶ ἡ φλαμανδικὴ χαλκογραφία*, Athens 1979, 186. G. Moschopoulos (ed.), *Κεφαλονιά, ἓνα μεγάλο μουσεῖο: Εκκλησιαστικὴ τέχνη*, 1, Argostoli 1989, 217 (P. L. Vocotopoulos). M. Chatzidakis – E. Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι μετὰ τὴν Ἄλωσιν*, 2, Athens 1997, 424 (icon no. 9). M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Ἀπὸ τὸ Ρέθυμνο στὴ Βενετία: Ὁ ζωγράφος Κωνσταντῖνος Τζάνες Μπουνιαλῆς καὶ ἡ ἐξέλιξη τῆς τέχνης του”, *Τῆς Βενετίας τὸ Ρέθυμνο: Πρακτικὰ Συμποσίου – Rethymno veneziano: Atti del Simposio*, eds Ch. Maltezos – A. Papadaki, Venice 2003, 425-426, fig. 7.

⁶ For the painter Constantine Tzanes Bouniales, see A. Xyngopoulos, *Συλλογὴ Ἑλένης Ἀ. Σταθάτου. Κατάλογος περιγραφικῶς τῶν εἰκόνων, τῶν ξυλογλύπτων καὶ τῶν μεταλλινῶν ἔργων τῶν βυζαντινῶν καὶ τῶν μετὰ τὴν Ἄλωσιν χρόνων*, Athens 1951, cat. no. 12 p. 14-15, pl. 12. M. Chatzidakis, *Icônes de Saint-Georges des Grecs et de la Collection de l'Institut Hellénique de Venise*, Venice 1962, cat. nos 120-123, 135, 136, 138, 139 p. 140-142, 152-153, pls 65-67. P. L. Vocotopoulos, *Εἰκόνες τῆς Κερκύρας*, Athens 1990, 123-125. Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι*, op.cit. (n. 5), 424-426. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Ἀπὸ τὸ Ρέθυμνο στὴ Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 415-434, figs 1a-10b.

⁷ For the painter Emmanuel Tzanes Bouniales, see M. Chatzidakis, “Συμπληρωματικὰ στὸν Ἑμμανουὴλ Τζάνε”, *Kretika Chronika* 2 (1948), 469-476. Xyngopoulos, *Συλλογὴ Ἑλένης Ἀ. Σταθάτου*, op.cit. (n. 6), cat. no. 10 p. 12-13, pl. 10. N. Drandakis, *Ὁ Ἑμμανουὴλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς θεωρούμενος ἐξ εἰκόνων τοῦ σωζομένων κυρίως ἐν Βενετίᾳ*, Athens 1962. Chatzidakis, *Icônes*, op.cit. (n. 6), cat. nos 107-119 p. 128-140, pls 60-64. N. Drandakis, “Συμπληρωματικὰ εἰς τὸν Ἑμμανουὴλ Τζάνε. Δύο ἄγνωστοι εἰκόνες του”, *Thesaurismata* 11 (1974), 36-72, pls B-IZ. N. Drandakis, “Ἑμμανουὴλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς”, *Nea Christianiki Krete* 2 (1989), 221-239. Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 215-216 (P. L. Vocotopoulos). Vocotopoulos, *Εἰκόνες τῆς Κερκύρας*, op.cit. (n. 6), 104-108. A. Katselaki, “Εἰκόνα τοῦ Ἑμμανουὴλ Τζάνε στο Βυζαντινὸ Μουσεῖο”, *DChAE* 18 (1995), 129-138, figs 1-9. Ch. Baltoyanni et al., *Βυζαντινὸ Μουσεῖο: τὰ νέα ἀποκτῆματα (1986-1996)*, Athens 1997, cat. no. and fig. 21 p. 76-79 (Ch. Baltoyanni). Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι*, op.cit. (n. 5), 408-423. I. Leontakianakos, *L'œuvre peint d'Emmanuel Tzanes Bounialès (ca 1610-1690). Contribution à l'étude de l'école crétoise*, PhD thesis submitted to the University of Sorbonne, Paris 2000. I. Leontakianakou, “Παρατηρήσεις σε ἓνα ζωγραφικὸ σύνολο τοῦ Ἑμμανουὴλ Τζάνε”, *Proceedings of the*

Tzanes Bouniales, was born about 1633 and passed away between 1682 and 1685. Originating from Rethymno, Crete, Constantine lived for many years in Venice along with his brother, Emmanuel. Approximately 21 signed icons, covering the period from 1650 to 1682, are attributed to Constantine, while three more icons bear his –probably forged– signature.

It is noteworthy that the Phiskardo icon is not the only work of Constantine depicting the Birth of the Virgin; another icon of 1681 (85,5x63 cm), depicting the same theme, was reported in 1949 as being on sale in Paris, and is now part of a private collection⁸ (Fig. 3). As we shall see below, the two icons, in terms of the iconographic details chosen, their arrangement, the postures of the figures etc., are almost alike.

Today the Phiskardo icon (122x92x2,5 cm) is part of the decoration of the main church (*katholikon*) of the Monastery of the Holy Theotokos, which is dedicated to the Birth of the Virgin. An inscription in Greek, in the lower part of the icon⁹, just below Anna's bed, informs us about the donors of the icon, Anastasios Antypas and his brother Eustathios; another inscription¹⁰, also in Greek, and on the far right, next to the wooden furniture, preserves the name Constantine Tzanes Bouniales and the year 1676, when the icon was painted (Fig. 2).

9th International Cretological Conference, eds Th. Detorakis – A. Kalokairinos, B2, Heraklion 2004, 281-296, figs 1-10. S. Chondrogiannis, *The Antivouniotissa Museum, Corfu*, Thessaloniki 2010, 124-125. A. Katselaki, “Δύο δεσποτικὲς εἰκόνες τοῦ Ἑμμανουὴλ Τζάνε στο Βυζαντινὸ καὶ Χριστιανικὸ Μουσεῖο”, *Proceedings of the 10th International Cretological Conference*, ed. M. Andrianakis, B2, Chania 2011, 431-444, figs 1-16. On Flemish influences in his work, see I. Rigopoulos, *Φλαμανδικὲς ἐπιδράσεις στὴ μεταβυζαντινὴ ζωγραφικὴ. Προβλήματα πολιτιστικοῦ συγκρητισμοῦ*, Athens 1998, 141-143.

⁸ For the icon of 1681, depicting the Birth of the Virgin, see S. Morsink (ed.), *The Power of Icons. Russian and Greek Icons, 15th-19th century. The Morsink Collection*, Ghent 2006, cat. no. and fig. 8 p. 64-65 (Ph. Kalafatis), where more bibliography is given. See, also, Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι*, op.cit. (n. 5), 424 icon no. 12.

⁹ The text of the inscription is: «ΕΓΙΝΕΝ Η ΑΓΙΑ ΑΥΤΗ ΟΙΚΟΝΑ | ΔΙΑ ΧΗΝΔΡΟΜΗΚ Κ(ΑΙ) ΒΟΪΘΗΑC ΑΝΑCΤΑCΙΟΥ | ΠΡΟΤΟΠΑΠΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΠΑ Κ(ΑΙ) ΕΥCΤΑΘΙΟΥ ΑΥΤΑΔΕΛΦΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΥ».

¹⁰ The text of the inscription is: «χείρ | κωνσταντίνου | τζάνε τοῦ ἐπιλεγομένου | Μπουνηαλῆ | ἀρχς».



Fig. 1. Cephalonia, Phiskardo, Monastery of the Holy Theotokos. *The Birth of the Virgin*, a work of Constantine Tzanes Bouniales, 1676.



Fig. 2. Cephalonia, Phiskardo, Monastery of the Holy Theotokos. The three inscriptions (detail of Fig. 1).

There is also a third –mostly damaged– inscription, between the basin and the wooden furniture, written probably in three verses (Fig. 2). Despite my effort, I was not able to read the last inscription; nevertheless, the forthcoming paper of Anna Zafeira, conservator of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Cephalonia, who has recently restored the icon, will probably shed some light not only in the content of the third inscription, but also in questions regarding the extent of the restoration (especially in the left part of the icon, from top to bottom) and the authenticity of all inscriptions, since it is quite peculiar for Constantine, who is regarded as a literate painter, to make –especially in the first inscription– so many spelling mistakes.

Be that as it may, no specific information has yet been found about the two supposed donors; we know, however, that the Antypas family was a prosperous and noble family in Cephalonia, since the family name “Antipa / Antipapa” is included both in the Catalogue of Noble Families of the year 1604¹¹, and in the proceedings of the Cephalonia Council¹². In addition, it is attested that the construction

of many churches and their internal and external decoration during the Venetian rule of the island (1500-1797)¹³ came about thanks to many prosperous and noble people of Cephalonia¹⁴, so it is likely that Anastasios and his brother Eustathios provided financial help for this project. Moreover, the fact that Georgios Antypas, probably a member of the same family, is listed among those wealthy people of Cephalonia who rigged galleys for the Cretan War (1645-1669), spending their own money¹⁵, can also provide strong evidence of the high status of the donors’ family. The high social status of Anastasios Antypas, in particular, is also testified by his high ecclesiastical office as a *protopapas*¹⁶, that is head of priests.

The narrative in the Birth of the Virgin icon unfolds in three episodes, which are harmoniously connected with each other: the Annunciation of Joachim (upper left), the care of Anna (right half), and the care of the

¹¹ E.-R. Rangabè, *Livre d’or de la noblesse ionienne*, II/1, Athens 1926, 10.

¹² P. Kagkellaris, *Ιστορία και γενεαλογία του Οίκου Καγγελάκη της Κεφαλονιάς (16ος-20ός αιώνες)*, Corfu 2011, 103.

¹³ For the period of Venetian rule in Cephalonia, see G. Moschopoulos, *Ιστορία της Κεφαλονιάς*, 1, Από τα αρχαία χρόνια ως το 1797, Athens 1985, 79-232. E. Livieratos, *Ιστορία της νήσου Κεφαλληνίας*, Piraeus 1988, 359-500.

¹⁴ Moschopoulos, *op.cit.*, 216.

¹⁵ *Op.cit.*, 88.

¹⁶ *Op.cit.*, 180.



Fig. 3. Amsterdam, The Morsink Icon Collection. *The Birth of the Virgin*, a work of Constantine Tzanes Bouniales, 1681.

newborn Mary (lower left). Several buildings are also depicted in the background; a tower just behind Joachim, an arched portico attached to the tower, and an arched niche framing Anna's bed.

The depiction is based on the narration of the Proto-Gospel of James, in particular the first five chapters, a text dated to the second half of the second century¹⁷. The

good news of the forthcoming baby is delivered to Joachim by an angel¹⁸ coming to him through the arched portico. Joachim, who is identified by an inscription in Greek¹⁹, is looking towards the angel, having his hands in a gesture of supplication.

The Mother of the Virgin, whom an inscription identifies as "Saint Anna"²⁰, is depicted recumbent in a luxurious bed, above which there is a canopy with red curtains. One maidservant on the right is opening the curtain

¹⁷ For the Proto-Gospel of James, see especially C. Tischendorf, *Evangelia Apocrypha*, Leipzig 1853, xii-xxii, 1-50. B. Ehrman – Z. Pleše, *The Apocryphal Gospels: texts and translations*, New York 2011, 31-71. See, also S. Agouridis, "The Virgin Mary in the texts of the Gospels", M. Vassilaki (ed.), *Mother of God: representations of the Virgin in Byzantine art* (exhibition catalogue), Milan – New York 2000, 60. I. Karavidopoulos, "On the information concerning the Virgin Mary contained in the Apocryphal Gospels", *Mother of God*, op.cit., p. 69-70.

¹⁸ "Joachim, Joachim, the Lord God has heard your prayer. Go down from here; see, your wife Anna has conceived a child." (Proto-Gospel of James 4, 2). For the translation, see Ehrman – Pleše, *The Apocryphal Gospels*, op.cit. (n. 17), 45.

¹⁹ The text of the inscription is: "Ο ΔΙΚΕΟC ΙΩΑΚΕΙΜ".

²⁰ The text of the inscription is: "Η ΑΓΙΑ ΑΝΝΑ".

of the canopy; on the other side, three more servant girls are serving Anna: the first is offering her a tray with a glass, another is following with a second tray with food, while a third, just under the column of the portico, is holding a bottle. All servant girls are wearing luxurious garments and a scarf on their heads.

The care of the newborn Mary is placed in the lower left part. The baby is swaddled and is depicted in the arms of the midwife, probably just before bathing. The seated midwife is assisted by two servant girls, one kneeling in front of the infant and one standing upright holding a jug with water. The two servant girls are looking each other, as if they are having a conversation about the care of the newborn Mary. A basin containing water and a basket with white garments are placed on the floor. The floor is paved with red and white rectangular slabs.

In its key points, the Phiskardo icon follows the iconography of the Birth of the Virgin (or the Birth of the Baptist) formed in the late Byzantine period. According to this established arrangement, the new mother (Anna or Elizabeth) is depicted recumbent in a bed on one side of the composition, her spouse (Joachim or Zacharias) is on the other side, while the newborn (Mary or John) is placed in the lower part. In addition, two or more servant girls take care of the new mother and her baby. Several buildings are depicted in the background.

The first point in which Constantine differentiates himself from the usual iconography of the subject is the position in which Anna is depicted. In portable icons of the 16th²¹ and 17th century Anna is placed on the

left half of the composition, as for example the icon in the church of the Virgin of Strangers (Panaghia *ton Xenon*) in Corfu (first decades of the 17th century) (Fig. 4),²² the icon in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (first half of the 17th century)²³ and an icon in the Museum of Zakynthos (end of the 17th – beginning of the 18th century) (Fig. 5)²⁴. Anna is sometimes placed in the center of the composition, as well²⁵. Constantine, by contrast, chooses to place the Mother of the Virgin on the right. It is noteworthy that the same choice is also made by the painter Elias Moskos in the icon depicting the Birth of John the Baptist in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (second half of the 17th century) (Fig. 6)²⁶, where he places Elizabeth on the right part of the composition.

Τὸ Μουσείο Παύλου καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρας Κανελλοπούλου. Ὁδηγός, Athens 1985, 126-127, fig. in p. 129. H. Egger – R. Wenckheim (eds), *Ikonen, Bilder in Gold: sakrale Kunst aus Griechenland*, Graz 1993, cat. no. 71 tbl. 42 p. 256; the icon attributed to Michael Damaskinos in the National Gallery of Bologna (1575-1580): Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Εἰκόνα του Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνοῦ”, op.cit. (n. 3), 239-254, pl. 84; the icon in the State Historical Museum in Moscow (16th-17th century): Borboudakis (ed.), *Εἰκόνες Κρητικῆς Τέχνης*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig 44 p 404 (I. Kyzlasova); the icon in a private collection in Moscow (end of the 16th century); S. Morsink (ed.), *Collecting old icons: Russian and Greek icons, 15th-19th century. Catalogue 2011*, Ghent 2011, cat. no. and fig. 11 p. 52; and, finally, the depiction in the icon in the church of Christ Pantocrator in Zakynthos (16th-17th century): M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εἰκόνες τῆς Ζακύνθου*, Athens 1997, cat. no. 15 and fig. p. 87-89.

²² Inv. no. 25. Vocotopoulos, *Εἰκόνες τῆς Κεγκύρας*, op.cit. (n. 6), cat. no. 71 p. 102, fig. 200. J. Albani (ed.), *Icons Itinerant. Corfu, 14th-18th century. June – September 1994, Church of Saint George in the Old Fortress, Corfu* (exhibition catalogue), Athens 1994, cat. no. and fig. 12 p. 88-89 (Fr. Kephallonitou).

²³ Inv. no. T. 307. Chatzidaki, “Γέννηση Παναγίας”, op.cit. (n. 2), 153, fig. 14.

²⁴ I. Rigopoulos, *Εἰκόνες τῆς Ζακύνθου καὶ τα πρότυπά τους*, 2, Athens 2006, 222-227, fig. 148.

²⁵ See, for example, the Theodoros Poulakes icon (inv. no. 298) in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (17th century) [see in this article Fig. 7] and the icon in the Rena Andreadis Collection (middle of the 17th century): A. Drandaki, *Εἰκόνες, 14ος-18ος αἰώνας. Συλλογὴ Πένας Ἀνδρεάδη*, Milan – Athens 2002, cat. no. and fig. 44 p. 192-193.

²⁶ Inv. no. T. 1600. Rigopoulos, *Φλαμανδικές επιδράσεις*, op.cit. (n. 7), 135, pl. 39 fig. 91. For the painter Elias Moskos, see Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι*, op.cit. (n. 5), 198-203.

²¹ See, for example, the icon in the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (16th century): Em. Borboudakis (ed.), *Εἰκόνες τῆς Κρητικῆς Τέχνης (Ἀπὸ τὸν Χάνδακα ὡς τὴν Μόσχα καὶ τὴν Ἀγία Πετρούπολη)*, Heraklion 1993, cat. no. and fig. 9 p. 342-343 (Y. Piatnitsky); the icon in the Menil Collection in Houston, Texas (beginning of the 16th century): A. Weyl Carr (ed.), *Imprinting the Divine: Byzantine and Russian Icons from the Menil Collection*, Houston 2011, cat. no. and fig. 42 p. 124-125 (B. Davezac – A. Weyl Carr); the depiction in the icon (inv. no. T. 1561) in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (middle of the 16th century): Lafontaine-Dosogne, “Iconography”, op.cit. (n. 1), 190, fig. 28. Chatzidaki, “Γέννηση Παναγίας”, op.cit. (n. 2), 152. M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εἰκόνες τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ Μουσείου Ἀθηνῶν*, Athens 1998, cat. no. and fig. 48 p. 164-167; the icon (inv. no. 356) in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (first half of the 16th century): M. Brouskari,

Another detail in which Constantine makes a different choice as far as the previous iconographic tradition is concerned, is the absence of a table with food. In contrast with the majority of the icons depicting the Birth of the Virgin²⁷

²⁷ See, for example, the icon in the Bavarian National Museum in Munich (end of the 14th – beginning of the 15th century): B. Davezac, *Greek icons after the fall of Constantinople: selections from the Roger Cabal Collection*, Houston 1996, 45-47; the icon attributed to Angelos Akotantos in the Old Museum of Zakynthos (15th century): Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εικόνες της Ζακύνθου*, op.cit. (n. 21), fig. 13 p. 26; the depiction in the icon (inv. no. 7) in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (ca 1500): Brouskari, *Μουσείο Κανελλοπούλου*, op.cit. (n. 21), 162, fig. in p. 163. N. Chatzidaki, *From Candia to Venice: Greek icons in Italy, 15th-16th centuries* (exhibition catalogue), Athens 1993, 104-107; the icon in the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (16th century): Borboudakis (ed.), *Εικόνες Κρητικής Τέχνης*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 9 p. 342-343 (Y. Piatnitsky); the icon in the Menil Collection in Houston, Texas (beginning of the 16th century): Weyl Carr, *Imprinting the Divine*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 42 p. 124-125 (B. Davezac – A. Weyl Carr); the depiction in the icon (inv. no. T. 1561) in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (middle of the 16th century): Lafontaine-Dosogne, “Iconography”, op.cit. (n. 1), 190, fig. 28. Chatzidaki, “Γέννηση Παναγίας”, op.cit. (n. 2), 152. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εικόνες Βυζαντινού Μουσείου*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 48 p. 164-167; the icon (inv. no. 356) in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (first half of the 16th century): Brouskari, *Μουσείο Κανελλοπούλου*, op.cit. (n. 21), 126-127, fig. in p. 129. Egger – Wenckheim, *Ikonen*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. 71 tbl. 42 p. 256; the icon attributed to Michael Damaskinos in the National Gallery of Bologna (1575-1580): Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Εικόνα του Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνού”, op.cit. (n. 3), 239-254, pl. 84; the icon in the State Historical Museum in Moscow (16th-17th century): Borboudakis (ed.), *Εικόνες Κρητικής Τέχνης*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 44 p. 404 (I. Kyzlasova); the icon in a private collection in Moscow (end of the 16th century): Morsink, *Collecting old icons*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 11 p. 52; the depiction in the icon in the church of Christ Pantocrator in Zakynthos (16th-17th century): Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εικόνες της Ζακύνθου*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 15 p. 87-89; the icon (inv. no. 25) in the church of the Virgin of Strangers (Panaghia *ton Xenon*) in Corfu (first decades of the 17th century) [see in this article Fig. 4]; the icon (inv. no. T. 307) in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (first half of the 17th century): Chatzidaki, “Γέννηση Παναγίας”, op.cit. (n. 2), 153, fig. 14; the icon in the Rena Andreadis Collection (middle of the 17th century): Drandaki, *Εικόνες Πένας Ανδρεάδη*, op.cit. (n. 25), cat. no. and fig. 44 p. 192-193; the icon in the Xenophontos Monastery on Mount Athos (second half of the 17th century): S. Papadopoulos (ed.), *Τερά Μονή Ξενοφώντος: Εικόνες*, Mount

or the Birth of John the Baptist²⁸ dating from the 15th to the 17th century, where a table with food is placed next to the new mother, Constantine chooses not to depict this iconographic detail. At almost the same time, the second half of the 17th century, the same choice is also made by Theodoros Poulakes, in his icons depicting the Birth of the Virgin²⁹ and the Birth of John the Baptist³⁰, by Elias Moskos, in his icon depicting the Birth of John the Baptist (Fig. 6), as well as by

Athos 1998, 197-202, fig. 87 (Ch. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi); the icon (inv. no. 8) in the Hekatontapyliani Collection in Paros (end of the 17th century): A. Mitsani, *Εικόνες και κειμήλια από τη Συλλογή της Εκατονταπυλιανής Πάρου*, Athens 1996, cat. no. and fig. 20 p. 52-53; and, finally, the icon in the Museum of Zakynthos (end of the 17th-beginning of the 18th century) [see in this article Fig. 5].

²⁸ See, for example, the icon (inv. no. T. 1547) in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (15th century): Chatzidaki, “Γέννηση Παναγίας”, op.cit. (n. 2), 128-137, figs 1-4. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εικόνες Βυζαντινού Μουσείου*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 33 p. 122-123; the icon in the church of Saint Lazarus in the town of Zakynthos (15th century): Rigopoulos, *Εικόνες της Ζακύνθου*, op.cit. (n. 24), 176-183, fig. 120; the icon in the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (second half of the 15th – beginning of the 16th century): Chatzidaki, “Γέννηση Παναγίας”, op.cit. (n. 2), 144-145, fig. 5. Borboudakis (ed.), *Εικόνες Κρητικής Τέχνης*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 5 p. 335-336 (Y. Piatnitsky); the icon (inv. no. 3732) in the Benaki Museum (beginning of the 16th century) [A. Delivorrias – N. Chatzidaki, *Icons from the Velimezi Collection: Museum of Byzantine Culture (Thessaloniki, 29 January – 30 April 1997), Megaron the Athens Concert Hall (Athens, 22 September – 7 November 1997)* (exhibition catalogue), Athens 1997, fig. 8; the depiction in the icon of Fragkias Kavertzas in the Toplou Monastery in Sitia, Crete (17th century): Borboudakis (ed.), *Εικόνες Κρητικής Τέχνης*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 141 p. 497-498 (Em. Borboudakis); the icon (inv. no. MAA 5) in the Museum of Saint Catherine in Heraklion (1670) [see in this article Fig. 8]; the icon in the Church of Saint John the Baptist in the Chilandari Monastery on Mount Athos (1683/84): S. Petković, *Εικόνες Τεράς Μονής Χελανδαρίου*, Mount Athos 1997, 55, fig. in p. 163; and, finally, the Stephanos Tzankarolas icon in the church of the Annunciation in the Castle of Saint George, Cephalonia (end of the 17th century): Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 147, fig. 264.

²⁹ See, for example, the Theodoros Poulakes icon (inv. no. 298) in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (17th century) [see in this article Fig. 7]. For the painter Theodoros Poulakes, see Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες Ζωγράφοι*, op.cit. (n. 5), 304-317.

³⁰ See, for example, the Theodoros Poulakes icon in the Spyridon Charokopos Collection (Korgialenios Library) in Cephalonia (second half of the 17th century): Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 53, fig. 57.



Fig. 4. Corfu, Church of the Virgin of Strangers (*Panaghia ton Xenon*). The Birth of the Virgin, first decades of the 17th century.



Fig. 5. Zakynthos, Museum. The Birth of the Virgin, end of the 17th – beginning of the 18th century.

the anonymous painter of an icon depicting the Birth of the Virgin in the Karakallou Monastery on Mount Athos³¹.

Constantine seems to be aware of iconographic tendencies; this could be concluded, for instance, from his decision to include the Annunciation of Joachim (see above Fig. 1). This iconographic detail can certainly be found in portable icons of the 16th century³²; it is found

much more frequently, however, in icons of the 17th century, as for example in the icon in the church of the Virgin of Strangers (*Panaghia ton Xenon*) in Corfu (first decades of the 17th century) (Fig. 4), in the Theodoros Poulakes icon in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (17th century) (Fig. 7)³³, in the icon in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (first half of the 17th century)³⁴, and in the icon in the Museum of Zakynthos (end of the 17th – beginning of the 18th century) (Fig. 5).

The fact that Constantine is aware of the iconography

³¹ E. Tsigaridas, *Εἰκόνες Τετρᾶς Μονῆς Καρακάλλου*, Mount Athos 2011, cat. no. 45 p. 186-188, fig. 92.

³² See, for example, the icon (inv. no. 356) in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (first half of the 16th century): Brouskari, *Μουσείο Κανελλοπούλου*, op.cit. (n. 21), 126-127, fig. in p. 129. Egger – Wenckheim, *Ikonen*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. 71 tbl. 42 p. 256; the icon attributed to Michael Damaskinos in the National Gallery of Bologna (1575-1580): Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Εἰκόνα του Μιχαὴλ Δαμασκηνοῦ”, op.cit. (n. 3), 239-254, pl. 84; and, finally, the icon in the State Historical Museum in Moscow

(16th-17th century): Borboudakis (ed.), *Εἰκόνες Κρητικῆς Τέχνης*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 44 p. 404 (I. Kyzlasova).

³³ Inv. no. 298. Brouskari, *Μουσείο Κανελλοπούλου*, op.cit. (n. 21), 167-168, fig. in p. 165.

³⁴ Inv. no. T. 307. Chatzidaki, “Γέννηση Παναγίας”, op.cit. (n. 2), 153, fig. 14.



Fig. 6. Athens, Byzantine and Christian Museum (inv. no. T. 1600). *The Birth of John the Baptist*, work of Elias Moskos, second half of the 17th century.



Fig. 7. Athens, Kanellopoulos Museum (inv. no. 298). *The Birth of the Virgin*, work of Theodoros Poulakes, 17th century.

tendencies of his era is also testified in the way in which the newborn Mary is depicted. Unlike other painters, who used to depict the baby reclining in a cradle, Constantine places the newborn in the arms of the midwife. This choice occasionally appears in some 16th century icons depicting the Birth of the Virgin³⁵; during the 17th century, however, it appears more and more often, not only in icons depicting the Birth of the Virgin, such as the icon in the church of the Virgin of Strangers (Pagnahia *ton Xenon*) in Corfu (first decades of the 17th century) (Fig. 4), but also in icons depicting the Birth of John the Baptist, as for example the icon in the Museum of Saint Catherine in Heraklion (1670) (Fig. 8)³⁶, the Elias Moskos icon in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (second half of the 17th century) (Fig. 6),

³⁵ See, for example, the icon in the Menil Collection in Houston, Texas (beginning of the 16th century): Weyl Carr, *Imprinting the Divine*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 42 p. 124-125 (B. Davezac – A. Weyl Carr); the icon attributed to Michael Damaskinos in the National Gallery of Bologna (1575-1580): Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Εικόνα του Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνοῦ”, op.cit. (n. 3), 239-254, pl. 84; and, finally, the icon in a private collection in Moscow (end of the 16th century): Morsink, *Collecting old icons*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 11 p. 52.

³⁶ Inv. no. MAA 5. V. Sythiakaki (ed.), *Μουσείο Αγίας Αικατερίνης Ηρακλείου* (exhibition catalogue), Heraklion 2014, cat. no. and fig. 12 p. 88 (G. Tsimpoukis).

and, finally, an icon, signed by Stephanos Tzankarolas in the church of the Annunciation in the Castle of Saint George, Cephalonia (end of the 17th century)³⁷.

Another detail indicating that Constantine was not only aware of the iconography of his era, but also sought to enrich it, is the number of servant girls. In the majority of the icons dating from the 15th to the 17th century, the number of women serving the new mother and her baby is limited to four or five; in the Phiskardo icon, however, the servant girls are seven³⁸. It should be noted that in the icon attributed to Michael Damaskinos in the National Gallery of Bologna (1575-1580)³⁹, and in the Theodoros

³⁷ Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 147, fig. 264. For the painter Stephanos Tzankarolas, see Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, “Ελληνες Ζωγράφοι”, op.cit. (n. 5), 426-428.

³⁸ It is noteworthy that the increased number of the servant girls is also found in the *Hermeneia* of Dionysios of Fourni (ca 1730), in the paragraph “The Birth of the Virgin”; this, of course, cannot be regarded as an influence of Dionysios’ guidebook upon Constantine. See A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Διονυσίου τοῦ ἐκ Φουρνῶν Ἑρμηνεία τῆς ζωγραφικῆς τέχνης καὶ αἱ κύριαι αὐτῆς ἀνέκδοτοι πηγαί*, ἐκδομένη μετὰ Προλόγου νῦν τὸ πρῶτον πλήρως κατὰ τὸ πρωτότυπον αὐτῆς κείμενον, Saint Petersburg 1909, 143, § 2.

³⁹ Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Εικόνα του Μιχαήλ Δαμασκηνοῦ”, op.cit. (n. 3), 239-254, pl. 84. M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, who has published the icon, points out that Michael Damaskinos probably based his composition on a painting of Jacopo



Fig. 8. Heraklion, Museum of Saint Catherine. *The Birth of John the Baptist*, 1670.

Poulakes icon in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (17th century) (Fig. 7), both depicting the Birth of the Virgin, the total number of servant girls is eight, while in the icon in the church of the Virgin of Strangers (*Panaghia ton Xenon*) in Corfu (first decades of the 17th century) (Fig. 4), depicting the same theme, their number is nine.

Another tendency of the iconography of this subject of which Constantine seems to be aware is the omission of the red curtains that join the roofs of the buildings,

in the background. These curtains are depicted in portable icons dating up to the middle of the 17th century, namely in the icon in the church of the Virgin of Strangers (*Panaghia ton Xenon*) in Corfu (first decades of the 17th century) (Fig. 4) and in the icon in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (first half of the 17th century)⁴⁰, both depicting the Birth of the Virgin, later found mainly in icons following the Mount Athos

Tintoretto depicting the same subject (ca 1563) in Saint Zacharias church in Venice.

⁴⁰ Inv. no. T. 307. Chatzidaki, “Γέννηση Παναγίας”, *op.cit.* (n. 2), 153, fig. 14.

tradition⁴¹. By contrast, in addition to the Phiskardo icon, the red curtains are also omitted from representations both of the Birth of John the Baptist⁴² and of the Birth of the Virgin, such as the Theodoros Poulakes icon in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (17th century) (Fig. 7), an icon in the Rena Andreadis Collection (middle of the 17th century)⁴³, an icon in the Karakallou Monastery (second half of the 17th century)⁴⁴, and, finally, the icon in the Museum of Zakynthos (end of the 17th – beginning of the 18th century) (Fig. 5).

Instead of the red curtains that join the roofs of the buildings, Constantine chooses to depict the canopy with the red curtains behind Anna's bed (Fig. 1). This detail is also found in the icon in the Museum of Zakynthos (end of the 17th – beginning of the 18th century) (Fig. 5), and in a contemporary encolpion in the Byzantine and Christian

Museum in Athens⁴⁵, both depicting the Birth of the Virgin. At the same time, this detail is also found in some icons depicting the Birth of John the Baptist⁴⁶.

Despite Constantine's effort to enrich the iconography, the depiction of some generic details that represent humble occupations of everyday life is missing, not only from the Phiskardo icon, but also from all his signed works. The use of such details, like the stretching out of the clothes, the picking up of the dry clothes etc., enriches the iconography and makes an icon's narrative more vivid. Such is the case both in the icon attributed to Michael Damaskinos in the National Gallery of Bologna (1575-1580)⁴⁷, in which the Birth of the Virgin is depicted, and in some icons dating to the 17th century. Some characteristic examples are the Theodoros Poulakes icon in the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (17th century) (Fig. 7) and the icon in the Museum of Zakynthos (end of the 17th – beginning of the 18th century) (Fig. 5), both depicting the Birth of the Virgin, as well as the icon in the Museum of Saint Catherine in Heraklion (1670) (Fig. 8) and the Elias Moskos icon in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (second half of the 17th century) (Fig. 6)⁴⁸, whose subject is the Birth of John the Baptist.

The study of an icon of the Birth of Virgin, a work of the painter Emmanuel Tzanes Bouniales originally kept in the Loverdos Collection in Athens⁴⁹, would contribute a

⁴¹ See, for example, the icons depicting the Birth of the Virgin in the Xenophontos Monastery (second half of the 17th century): Papadopoulos, *Τερὰ Μονὴ Ξενοφώντος*, op.cit. (n. 27), 197-202, fig. 87 (Ch. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi); and in the Pantokratoros Monastery (second half of the 17th century): S. Papadopoulos – Ch. Kapioladasi-Sotiropoulou (eds), *Εἰκόνες Μονῆς Παντοκράτορος*, Mount Athos 1998, 196-197, fig. 103 (K. Kalamartzi-Katsarou); as well as the icon depicting the Birth of John the Baptist in the Church of Saint John the Baptist in the Chilandari Monastery on Mount Athos (1683/84): Petković, *Εἰκόνες Τερὰς Μονῆς Χελανδαρίου*, op.cit. (n. 28), 55, fig. in p. 163. See, also, the icon depicting the Birth of the Virgin (inv. no. 8) in the Hekatontapyliani Collection in Paros (end of the 17th century): A. Mitsani, *Εἰκόνες και κειμήλια*, op.cit. (n. 27), cat. no. and fig. 20 p. 52-53.

⁴² See, for example, the depiction in the icon of Fragkias Kavertzas in the Toplou Monastery in Sitia, Crete (17th century): Borboudakis (ed.), *Εἰκόνες Κρητικῆς Τέχνης*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 141 p. 497-498 (Em. Borboudakis); the icon (inv. no. MAA 5) in the Museum of Saint Catherine in Heraklion (1670) [see in this article Fig. 8]; the Theodoros Poulakes icon in the Spyridon Charokopos Collection (Korgialenios Library) in Cephalonia (second half of the 17th century): Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), vol. 1, 53, fig. 57; the Elias Moskos icon (inv. no. T. 1600) in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (second half of the 17th century) [see in this article Fig. 6]; and, finally, the Stephanos Tzankarolas icon in the church of the Annunciation in the Castle of Saint George, Cephalonia (end of the 17th century): Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 147, fig. 264.

⁴³ Drandaki, *Εἰκόνες Πένας Ανδρεάδη*, op.cit. (n. 25), cat. no. and fig. 44 p. 192-193.

⁴⁴ Tsigaridas, *Εἰκόνες Μονῆς Καρακάλλου*, op.cit. (n. 31), cat. no. 45 p. 186-188, fig. 92.

⁴⁵ Inv. no. BM 8530 / T 2837. *Βυζαντινὸ Μουσείο*, op.cit. (n. 7), cat. no. and fig. 120 p. 206-207 (G. Kakavas).

⁴⁶ See, for example, the depiction in the icon of Fragkias Kavertzas in the Toplou Monastery in Sitia, Crete (17th century): Borboudakis (ed.), *Εἰκόνες Κρητικῆς Τέχνης*, op.cit. (n. 21), cat. no. and fig. 141 p. 497-498 (Em. Borboudakis); the icon (inv. no. MAA 5) in the Museum of Saint Catherine in Heraklion (1670) [see in this article Fig. 8]; and, finally, the Elias Moskos icon (inv. no. T. 1600) in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (second half of the 17th century) [see in this article Fig. 6].

⁴⁷ Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, "Εἰκόνα του Μιχαὴλ Δαμασκηνοῦ", op.cit. (n. 3), 239-254, pl. 84.

⁴⁸ On Flemish influences in the work of Elias Moskos see Rigopoulos, *Φλαμανδικὲς ἐπιδράσεις*, op.cit. (n. 7), 144-148.

⁴⁹ For the existence of the –probably still unpublished– icon, see Chatzidakis, "Συμπληρωματικὰ στὸν Ἑμμανουὴλ Τζάνε", op.cit. (n. 7), fig. 19 p. 473. Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι*, op.cit. (n. 5), 414, icon no. 24. Our research, however, did not succeed in finding this icon. It is noteworthy that the icon is not included in the Loverdos Museum catalogue, published in 1946, although other paintings of Emmanuel were included. The only icon

lot to our understanding of the artistic relation between the two brothers, especially in terms of the iconography. In spite of their differences, it is more than likely that between Emmanuel and Constantine there is an artistic affinity, as has already been argued⁵⁰.

One detail that counts in favor of this view is the floor in the Phiskardo icon, which is paved with red and white rectangular slabs; this detail, probably influenced by western works⁵¹, seems to be quite common in the icons of Emmanuel (Figs 1, 2). Some characteristic examples are found in the scene “First Ecumenical Council” of the icon “Saint Spyridon” (1636) in the Correr Museum in Venice⁵², in the icon “Saint Mark” (1657) in the Benaki Museum in Athens⁵³, in the icon “Andrew the Apostle” (1658) in the Museum of the Hellenic Institute in Venice⁵⁴, and in the icon “The healing of the

Paralytic” (1682) in the Museum of the Hellenic Institute in Venice⁵⁵.

Another iconographic detail which also counts in favor of accepting the artistic affinity between Emmanuel and Constantine is the kneeling maidservant in the lower left part. The way her face has been restored (and was originally depicted, in all probability) could be compared, in my view, with the face of the Samaritan woman from the homonymous icon of Emmanuel (1689) in the Museum of the Hellenic Institute in Venice (Fig. 9 a and b)⁵⁶.

It is reasonable to assume that the two painter brothers worked together and probably had at their disposal several working drawings and engravings, as has been discussed⁵⁷, which explains the similarities found in their icons. It seems, however, that Constantine draw some details from western European works⁵⁸, as well, which makes perfect sense for a painter who spent many years in Venice⁵⁹. Western influences are to be found in the naturalistic painting of some figures⁶⁰, especially the servant girls, in their garments, in the furniture and, of course, in the buildings of the background.

depicting the Birth of the Virgin in this catalogue, with dimensions 23x29 cm, dates to 18th century; two more depictions of the Birth of the Virgin, one in a triptychon (8x12 cm) and one in a pentptychon (19x26 cm), date also to the same period. See A. Loverdos, *Μουσείον Διονυσίου Λοβέρδου*, Athens 1946, cat. no. 413 p. 61 (icon), cat. no. 249 p. 40 (triptychon), cat. no. 260 p. 41 (pentptychon).

⁵⁰ Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 418-420.

⁵¹ See, for example, the paved floor in the engraving “Carnival” of Pieter van der Heyden (1567): C. Huidobro – I. González Negro (eds), *El arte del grabado flamenco y holandés de Lucas van Leyden a Martin de Vos*, Madrid 2001, cat. no. and fig. 103 p. 99; the paved floor in the engraving “The Birth of the Virgin” from Cornelis Cort (1578): W. Strauss (ed.), *The Illustrated Bartsch*, 52, *Netherlandish Artists: Cornelis Cort*, New York 1986, no. 20-II (45) p. 28; and the paved floors in the paintings of Tintoretto “The supper at Emmaus”: Drandakis, *Ἐμμανουήλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς*, op.cit. (n. 7), pl. 10b; and “The Annunciation”: Drandakis, *Ἐμμανουήλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς*, op.cit. (n. 7), pl. 34b.

⁵² Drandakis, *Ἐμμανουήλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς*, op.cit. (n. 7), 17-24, pls 1 and 4b. Leontakianakou, “Παράτηρήσεις”, op.cit. (n. 7), fig. 10.

⁵³ Inv. no. 11198. Egger – Wenckheim, *Ikonen*, op. cit. (n. 21), cat. no. 88 tbl. 53 p. 266. Drandaki, *Εικόνες Πένας Ανδρεάδη*, op.cit. (n. 25), 131, fig. 67. A. Delivorrias – E. Georgoula (eds), *From Byzantium to modern Greece: Hellenic art in adversity, 1453-1830. From the collections of the Benaki Museum, Athens*, New York 2005, cat. no. and fig. 13 p. 56-57. K. Staikos (ed.), *From the Incarnation of Logos to the Theosis of Man: Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Icons from Greece. National Museum of Art of Romania (6 October 2008 – 15 January 2009)* (exhibition catalogue), Athens 2008, cat. no. and fig. 30 p. 68-69 (A. Drandaki).

⁵⁴ Drandakis, *Ἐμμανουήλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς*, op.cit. (n. 7), 39-42,

pl. 10a. Chatzidakis, *Icônes*, op.cit. (n. 6), cat. no. 108 p. 131, pl. 60. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), fig. 2b.

⁵⁵ Drandakis, *Ἐμμανουήλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς*, op.cit. (n. 7), 78-84, pls 27a, 29a. Chatzidakis, *Icônes*, op. cit. (n. 6), cat. no. 117 p. 138, pl. 63.

⁵⁶ Drandakis, *Ἐμμανουήλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς*, op.cit. (n. 7), pls 41a, 43c. Chatzidakis, *Icônes*, op.cit. (n. 6), cat. no. 118 p. 139, pl. 62. M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides believes that the face of the kneeling maidservant in the lower left part might have been over-painted. See Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 426 note 42. In any case, the forthcoming paper of Anna Zafeira, conservator of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Cephalonia, who has recently restored the icon, will probably shed some light in this issue.

⁵⁷ Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 423-424.

⁵⁸ On the issue of copying individual elements or entire compositions from western works, see Rigopoulos, *Φλαμανδικές επιδράσεις*, op.cit. (n. 7), 22-24. M. Vassilaki (ed.), *Working Drawings of icon painters after the fall of Constantinople: the Andreas Xyngopoulos portfolio at the Benaki Museum*, Athens 2015, 28.

⁵⁹ Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 424.

⁶⁰ Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 421.

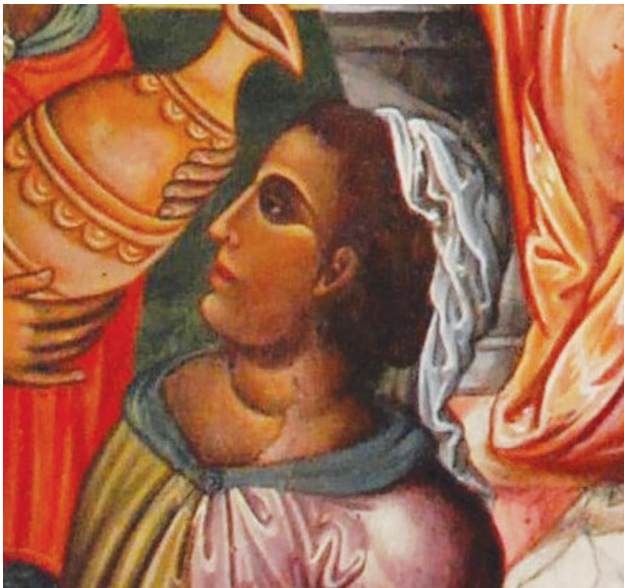


Fig. 9. (a) Left: Detail of Fig. 1. (b) Right: Venice, Museum of the Hellenic Institute. *The Samaritan woman (detail)*, work of Emmanuel Tzanes Bouniales, 1689.

There are also some figures that might have been drawn from western works. The midwife holding the newborn in her arms, for example, could have been influenced by the engraving of Pieter Jalea Furnius “The Three Fates” (1570)⁶¹; in addition, the posture of the second maidservant waiting to offer Anna an extra tray of food is reminiscent of some feminine figures in Cornelis Cort engravings, such as, for example, “The Birth of the Virgin” (1578) or “The Last Supper” (1578)⁶²; the maidservant holding a bottle, just under the column of the portico, is also quite similar, in my view, to the representation of “Religion” in the engraving of Johan Sadeler I (Fig. 10 a and b)⁶³.

Western influences have also been pointed out in some other icons of Constantine; a characteristic example is

the figure of Maria Magdalena in the icon kept in the Museum of the Hellenic Institute in Venice. The archetype of Maria Magdalena has been convincingly traced to the “Pieta” of Correggio (ca 1522) and to the Johan Sadeler I engraving “The Three Women at the Tomb”⁶⁴.

The elaborately made wooden furniture in the lower right part of the icon (Fig. 1), might also have been drawn from western engravings; the Johan Sadeler I engraving “Arithmetic”⁶⁵, for example, could have been used by Constantine as a prototype, in my view. Nevertheless, elaborately made wooden furniture, such as that in the Phiskardo icon, is also found in the Theodoros Poulakes icon depicting the Birth of the Virgin (17th century) in

⁶¹ Huidobro – González Negro, *El arte del grabado flamenco*, op.cit. (n. 51), cat. no. and fig. 37 p. 45.

⁶² Strauss, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, op.cit. (n. 51), no. 20-II (45) p. 28 and no. 76-II (89) p. 92, respectively. M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, arguing in favor of the possibility that Constantine might have seen some engravings of Cornelis Cort, points out some more examples. See Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 425-426 note 40.

⁶³ W. Strauss (ed.), *The Illustrated Bartsch*, 70/3, Johan Sadeler I, New York 2003, n. 084 p. 285-286.

⁶⁴ W. Strauss (ed.), *The Illustrated Bartsch*, 70/1, Johan Sadeler I, New York 1999, n. 217 p. 270-271. See, also, Drandakis, *Εμμανουήλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλῆς*, op.cit. (n. 7), 105, pls 44a-b (pointing out the similarity to the painting of Correggio). Chatzidakis, *Ιcônes*, op.cit. (n. 6), cat. no. 123 p. 142, pl. 65 (pointing out the similarity to the engraving of Johan Sadeler I). Rigopoulos, *Θεόδωρος Πουλάκης*, op.cit. (n. 5), 185. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 425 notes 36 and 37, figs 6a and 6b. On the influence of Johan Sadeler I on Constantine, see, also, Rigopoulos, *Θεόδωρος Πουλάκης*, op.cit. (n. 5), 185-186.

⁶⁵ Strauss, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, op.cit. (n. 63), n. 508 p. 111-112.

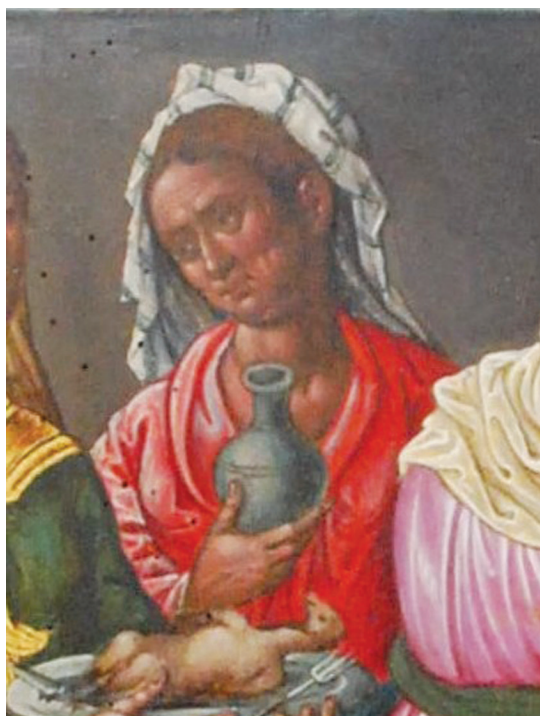


Fig. 10. (a) Left: Detail of Fig. 1. (b) Right: Stuttgart, State Gallery. *Religion* (detail), engraving of Johan Sadeler I.

the Kanellopoulos Museum in Athens (Fig. 7)⁶⁶, and in the icon “Saint Alexius the Man of God” (end of the 17th century), a work of Stephanos Tzankarolas kept in the Monastery of Antivouniotissa, Corfu⁶⁷.

In conclusion, Constantine Tzanes Bouniales, who painted the icon of the Birth of the Virgin in 1676, at the request of Anastasios Antypas and his brother Eustathios, in general follows the iconography of the subject, as it was developed in the late Byzantine period, but he makes different choices; Anna is placed on the right part of the composition, while the table with food and the red curtains joining the roofs of the buildings are omitted. In addition, being aware of the iconography tendencies of his

era and seeking their enrichment, Constantine increases the number of servant girls to seven, chooses to add the canopy with the red curtains behind Anna’s bed, and places the newborn Mary not in a cradle, but in the arms of the midwife. In addition, some iconographic details, as for example the floor paved with red and white rectangular slabs, seem to have drawn from icons of his brother, Emmanuel. Finally, other elements of the Phiskardo icon have probably been influenced by western engravings, in particular those of the Sadeler family; that choice was reasonable, since the Sadeler family is known to have the monopoly of the production and distribution of engravings in Venice⁶⁸, where Constantine spent much of his life.

Taking all this into account, it is obvious, as has already pointed out⁶⁹, that Constantine is a good painter, but also an “eclectic” one; his eclecticism, however, is not surprising for a painter who spent much of his life in

⁶⁶ On Flemish influences in the work of Theodoros Poulakes, see, in particular, Rigopoulos, *Θεόδωρος Πουλάκης*, op.cit. (n. 5). Rigopoulos, *Φλαμανδικές επιδράσεις*, op.cit. (n. 7), 149-161.

⁶⁷ Vocotopoulos, *Εἰκόνες τῆς Κερκύρας*, op.cit. (n. 6), cat. no. 128 p. 160, figs 64 and 301. Chondrogiannis, *The Antivouniotissa Museum*, op.cit. (n. 7), 126-129. On Flemish influences in the work of Stephanos Tzankarolas, see Rigopoulos, *Φλαμανδικές επιδράσεις*, op.cit. (n. 7), 172-175 (especially 174-175, regarding the icon “Saint Alexius the Man of God”).

⁶⁸ Rigopoulos, *Φλαμανδικές επιδράσεις*, op.cit. (n. 7), 20-22.

⁶⁹ Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, “Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία”, op.cit. (n. 5), 426-428. See, also, Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 217 (P. L. Vocotopoulos). Vocotopoulos, *Εἰκόνες τῆς Κερκύρας*, op.cit. (n. 6), 123.



Fig. 11. Athens, Helen A. Stathatos Collection. *The Birth of the Virgin*, work of Victor, 1674 (possibly bearing the forged signature).



Fig. 12. Athens, Benaki Museum (inv. no. 33336), Andreas Xyngopoulos Portfolio (Ξ 161). *The Birth of the Virgin*, working drawing, 18th century.

Venice, painting in the western style, but who was also expected to meet the needs of some Greek patrons, as is the case of the Phiskardo icon.

It is noteworthy that the icon of 1681, depicting the same theme, in terms of the iconographic details chosen, their arrangement, the postures of the figures etc., (see above Fig. 3) is very similar to the Phiskardo icon (1676). In the most recent work of Constantine, however, the background buildings are slightly different, the floor is not paved with red and white rectangular slabs, while the elaborately made wooden furniture is omitted. Moreover, the newborn Mary is naked, while the midwife holds the baby with her left hand, but also feels the water's temperature with her right hand. Therefore, in his icon of 1681 Constantine appears to have succeeded in the enrichment of the iconography furthermore.

This study did not manage to give a satisfactory answer regarding the possible prototype of the Phiskardo icon. Some iconographic details, of course, could have

been drawn from icons of Theodoros Poulakes and Elias Moskos, who were active in Cephalonia⁷⁰. The example most similar to the Phiskardo icon, however, is the Birth of the Virgin icon in the Helen A. Stathatos Collection⁷¹, a work of 1674 bearing the –probably forged– signature of the painter Victor (Fig. 11)⁷². In spite of the differences

⁷⁰ For Theodoros Poulakes, see Konomos, *Ἡ χριστιανικὴ τέχνη στὴν Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 16, pl. 65-72, figs 36-43. Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 216 (P. L. Vocotopoulos). Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι*, op.cit. (n. 5), 306. For Elias Moskos, see Konomos, *Ἡ χριστιανικὴ τέχνη στὴν Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 15-16. Moschopoulos, *Ἱστορία τῆς Κεφαλονιάς*, op.cit. (n. 13), 157, 220-221. Moschopoulos, *Κεφαλονιά*, op.cit. (n. 5), 211 (A. Paliouras). Chatzidakis – Drakopoulou, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι*, op.cit. (n. 5), 198.

⁷¹ Xyngopoulos, *Συλλογὴ Ἑλένης Α. Σταθάτου*, op.cit. (n. 6), cat. no. 11 p. 13-14, pl. 11.

⁷² M. Chatzidakis, *Ἑλληνες Ζωγράφοι μετὰ τὴν Ἀλωση*, 1, Athens 1987, 199, icon no. 7. See, also, Vassilaki, *Working Drawings*, op.cit. (n. 58), cat. no. and fig. 261 p. 292.

existing between the two icons, Anna, Joachim and the newborn Mary are depicted in the same way; moreover, the sculptural decoration of the background buildings is quite similar, and the number of the servant girls is increased in both icons. Thus, it would be reasonable, at least, to accept that the two icons, which were painted almost at the same time (1674 and 1676, respectively), belong to the same iconographic tradition.

The view, according to which Constantine simply used the same details in a selective way, without drawing on a specific prototype⁷³, might be close to the truth; the same, as well, has been pointed out about his brother, Emmanuel, who often drew on many engravings depicting the same subject in order to form his own composition⁷⁴. In any case, the possibility this prototype of the Phiskardo icon will be found in the future cannot be excluded.

Be that as it may, there is, in my opinion, a working drawing (*anthivolon*) that, in terms of the iconography, is very similar to the Phiskardo icon; that is the 18th century working drawing from the Andreas Xyngopoulos Portfolio, with dimensions 42,7x31,8 cm (Fig. 12)⁷⁵. Although the similarity between the Phiskardo icon and

the drawing is obvious, in terms of the iconographic details chosen, their arrangement, the postures of the figures etc., it is not easy to decide if the working drawing⁷⁶ was based on the Phiskardo icon or on another, perhaps earlier, icon that was used as a prototype not only by Constantine, but also by the drawing maker.

More research in the future will probably shed some light in these questions. Whatever the truth is, however, Constantine Tzanes Bouniales succeeded in offering us a remarkable icon, which vividly conveys the joyful message of the Birth of the Virgin.

⁷⁶ For the way working drawings were produced, see Vassilaki, *Working Drawings*, op.cit. (n. 58), 20, 23-24.

Illustration credits

Figs 1, 2, 9a, 10a: Archive of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Cephalonia. Fig. 3: <https://paletaart.wordpress.com/2017/03/25/> (last visit: March 29th, 2020). Fig. 4: Albani, *Icons Itinerant*, op.cit. (n. 22), fig. on p. 88. Fig. 5: Rigopoulos, *Εικόνες της Ζακύνθου*, op.cit. (n. 24), fig. 148. Fig. 6: Rigopoulos, *Φλαμανδικές επιδράσεις*, op.cit. (n. 7), pl. 39 fig. 91. Fig. 7: Brouskari, *Μουσείο Κανελλοπούλου*, op.cit. (n. 21), fig. on p. 165. Fig. 8: Sythiakaki, *Μουσείο Αγίας Αικατερίνης Ηρακλείου*, op.cit. (n. 36), fig. on p. 88. Fig. 9b: Chatzidakis, *Icônes de Saint-Georges des Grecs*, op.cit. (n. 6), pl. 62 fig. 118. Fig. 10b: Strauss, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, op.cit. (n. 63), fig. on p. 285. Fig. 11: Xyngopoulos, *Συλλογή Ἑλένης Ἀ. Σταθάτου*, op.cit. (n. 6), pl. 11. Fig. 12: Vassilaki, *Working Drawings*, op.cit. (n. 58), fig. on p. 292.

⁷³ Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, "Από το Ρέθυμνο στη Βενετία", op.cit. (n. 5), 426.

⁷⁴ Leontakianakou, "Παρατηρήσεις", op.cit. (n. 7), 284.

⁷⁵ Inv. no. 33336 (Ξ 161). Vassilaki, *Working Drawings*, op.cit. (n. 58), cat. no. and fig. 261 p. 292.

ΕΙΚΟΝΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΕΣ ΠΑΡΑΤΗΡΗΣΕΙΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΙΚΟΝΑ
ΤΟΥ ΓΕΝΕΣΙΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ, ΕΡΓΟ ΤΟΥ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ
ΤΖΑΝΕ ΜΠΟΥΝΙΑΛΗ, 1676

Η εικόνα του Γενεσίου της Θεοτόκου, έργο του 1676, που φυλάσσεται στη μονή Υπεραγίας Θεοτόκου Φισκάρδου Κεφαλληνίας, αποτελεί ένα από τα λίγα ενυπόγραφα έργα του ζωγράφου Κωνσταντίνου Τζάνε Μπουνιαλή (Εικ. 1, 2). Ο Κωνσταντίνος, αδελφός του ευρύτερα γνωστού ζωγράφου Εμμανουήλ Τζάνε Μπουνιαλή, φιλοτέχνησε την εικόνα ύστερα από παραγγελία του πρωτοπαπά Αναστάσιου Αντύπα και του αδελφού του Ευστάθιου, πιθανότατα μελών της ανώτερης κοινωνικής τάξης του νησιού.

Ο Κωνσταντίνος ακολουθεί σε γενικές γραμμές το καθιερωμένο ήδη από την ύστερη βυζαντινή περίοδο εικονογραφικό σχήμα, διαφοροποιείται όμως από αυτό σε επιμέρους λεπτομέρειες, όπως είναι η απεικόνιση της Άννας στη δεξιά πλευρά της σύνθεσης και η παράλειψη απεικόνισης τόσο του τραπεζιού με τα εδέσματα όσο και των κόκκινων παραπετασμάτων που ενώνουν τις στέγες στα αρχιτεκτονήματα του βάθους. Επιπλέον, ο ζωγράφος, ενήμερος των εξελίξεων στην εικονογραφία του θέματος κατά τον 17ο αιώνα και επιδιώκοντας ενίοτε τον εμπλουτισμό της, αυξάνει τον αριθμό των θεραπεινίδων σε επτά, προχωρεί στην προσθήκη ενός παραπετάσματος κλίνης με ανοιγμένα τα βήλα, στερεωμένο στην οροφή, πάνω από το κρεβάτι της Άννας, ενώ απεικονίζει τη μικρή Μαρία όχι μέσα σε λίκνο ή σε λεκάνη λουτρού αλλά στην αγκαλιά της μαμής.

Για τη δημιουργία της δικής του σύνθεσης ο Κωνσταντίνος φαίνεται πως χρησιμοποιεί, επιλεκτικά βέβαια, κάποια εικονογραφικά στοιχεία από έργα του αδελφού του, όπως το χαρακτηριστικό στις εικόνες του Εμμανουήλ πλακόστρωτο δάπεδο, ενώ αντλεί και στοιχεία από την τέχνη της δυτικής Ευρώπης, ενδεχομένως με κάποια προτίμηση στα χαρακτηριστικά της οικογένειας Sadeler (Εικ. 10β), η οποία, άλλωστε, είχε το μονοπώλιο σχεδόν στην παραγωγή και διακίνηση χαρακτηριστικού υλικού κυρίως στη Βενετία, όπου έζησε μεγάλο μέρος της ζωής του ο Κωνσταντίνος.

Η μελέτη μας για τη συγκεκριμένη εικόνα επιβεβαίωσε

κάτι που και παλαιότερα είχε επισημανθεί, ότι δηλαδή ο Κωνσταντίνος είναι ένας ικανός και εκλεκτικός ζωγράφος, ο οποίος ζει στη Βενετία, ένα περιβάλλον μεικτό από καλλιτεχνική άποψη, και προσαρμόζεται στις απαιτήσεις της συγκεκριμένης κάθε φορά παραγγελίας. Στην εικόνα του Φισκάρδου ο Κωνσταντίνος επιτυγχάνει να ανασυνθέσει τα όποια δάνεια στοιχεία και να τα εκφράσει στο μεταβυζαντινό εκφραστικό ιδίωμα.

Σε ό,τι αφορά στο πιθανό πρότυπο που χρησιμοποίησε ο Κωνσταντίνος για την εικόνα του Φισκάρδου, η δική μας έρευνα δεν κατάφερε να δώσει κάποια πειστική απάντηση. Οποσδήποτε στην εικόνα του Κωνσταντίνου μπορεί κανείς να εντοπίσει επιδράσεις από αντίστοιχες συνθέσεις του Ηλία Μόσκου (Εικ. 6) και του Θεόδωρου Πουλάκη (Εικ. 7). Ωστόσο, το πλησιέστερο παράδειγμα, που θα μπορούσε να αντιπαραβληθεί στην εικόνα του Φισκάρδου, αποτελεί ίσως η εικόνα της Γέννησης της Θεοτόκου από τη Συλλογή της Ελένης Α. Σταθάτου, έργο του 1674, που φέρει την –πιθανώς πλαστή– υπογραφή του ζωγράφου Βίκτωρα (Εικ. 11). Παρά τις επιμέρους διαφορές τους και την αντίστροφη διάταξη των εικονογραφικών στοιχείων, ο τρόπος απόδοσης των κύριων προσώπων, της Άννας, του Ιωακείμ και του βρέφους, ο γλυπτός διάκοσμος στα αρχιτεκτονήματα του βάθους, ακόμη και ο αυξημένος αριθμός των θεραπεινίδων, όλα μαρτυρούν ενδεχομένως την ύπαρξη κάποιας εικονογραφικής παράδοσης, στην οποία εντάσσονται οι δύο εικόνες.

Ίσως τελικά η υπόθεση, σύμφωνα με την οποία ο Κωνσταντίνος κατέφυγε σε ερανίσματα, χωρίς να έχει υπόψη του ή να προτίμησε ένα συγκεκριμένο πρότυπο, να είναι πολύ κοντά στην αλήθεια, ιδιαίτερα αν αναλογιστεί κανείς ότι και ο αδελφός του Εμμανουήλ συχνά αντλούσε στοιχεία όχι από ένα αλλά από σύνολο χαρακτηριστικών του ίδιου θέματος, τα οποία, έτσι κι αλλιώς, συγγένευαν πολύ μεταξύ τους. Οι παραπάνω παραδοχές δεν αποκλείουν, βέβαια, το γεγονός να βρεθεί μελλοντικά το πρότυπο της εικόνας του Φισκάρδου.

Η δική μας έρευνα εντόπισε ένα ανθίβολο, το οποίο παρουσιάζει πολύ μεγάλη εικονογραφική συγγένεια με την εικόνα του Κωνσταντίνου. Πρόκειται για το ανθίβολο με αριθ. 33336 (Ξ 161) από τη Συλλογή του Ανδρέα Ξυγγόπουλου (Εικ. 12), το οποίο χρονολογείται στον 18ο αιώνα. Η ομοιότητα ανάμεσα στην εικόνα και στο ανθίβολο –ως προς την επιλογή των εικονογραφικών στοιχείων, τη διάταξή τους, ακόμα και ως προς τις στάσεις και τις κινήσεις των προσώπων– είναι προφανής. Ωστόσο, δεν μπορεί με ασφάλεια να υποστηριχθεί αν το ανθίβολο παράχθηκε από την εικόνα του Κωνσταντίνου ή από κάποια άλλη –άγνωστη σε εμάς– εικόνα, πρωτιότερη της εικόνας του Φισκάρδου,

η οποία, ενδεχομένως, χρησιμοποιήθηκε ως πρότυπο τόσο από τον Κωνσταντίνο όσο και από τον δημιουργό του ανθιβόλου.

Η μελλοντική έρευνα ενδεχομένως να δώσει περισσότερες απαντήσεις. Όποια και αν είναι η πραγματικότητα, πάντως, βέβαιο είναι ότι η εικόνα του Κωνσταντίνου Τζάνε Μπουνιαλή μας χάρισε ένα έργο που μεταδίδει με παραστατικότητα και ζωντάνια το χαρμόσυνο μήνυμα της Γέννησης της Θεοτόκου.

*Δρ Αρχαιολόγος
Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού και Αθλητισμού
gtsimpoukis@gmail.com*