

## Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας

Τόμ. 33 (2012)

Δελτίον ΧΑΕ 33 (2012), Περίοδος Δ'. Στη μνήμη του Δημήτρη Κωνστάντιου (1950-2010)



**Θεϊκή τροφή: Μαστοί και φιάλες στις μικρογραφίες του Ιακώβου της μονής Κοκκινοβάφου**

*Mati MEYER*

doi: [10.12681/dchae.1252](https://doi.org/10.12681/dchae.1252)

### Βιβλιογραφική αναφορά:

MEYER, M. (2014). Θεϊκή τροφή: Μαστοί και φιάλες στις μικρογραφίες του Ιακώβου της μονής Κοκκινοβάφου. *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 33, 265–276. <https://doi.org/10.12681/dchae.1252>

Mati Meyer

## DIVINE NOURISHMENT: ON BREASTS AND BOTTLES IN THE MINIATURES OF IAKOBOS KOKKINOBAPHOS\*

Το άρθρο προτείνει ότι το εικονογραφικό στοιχείο του μαστού σε μορφή φιάλης, που θυμίζει παραστάσεις Γαλακτοτροφούσας και εμφανίζεται σε μια σειρά μικρογραφιών στο γνωστό εικονογραφημένο χειρόγραφο των Ομιλιών του Ιακώβου της μονής Κοκκινοβάφου (Βατικανό, Αποστολική Βιβλιοθήκη, gr. 1162) χρησίμευσε ως δομικό υλικό στην κατασκευή ενός ιδεώδους εικονιστικού προτύπου για τη Θεοτόκο. Τυπολογικά, έρχεται σε αντίθεση με το λιγότερο ογκώδες φυσιοκρατικά αποδοσμένο, στήθος της Εύας, το οποίο προφανώς υπαινίσσεται τον δικό της ρόλο ως ως φορέα του θανάτου στη γη και την «καταραμένη», χωρίς χαρές, μητρότητά της. Το άρθρο υποστηρίζει ότι η διαφορετική εικονογραφική προσέγγιση αντανακλά την αντίθεση μεταξύ Εύας και Μαρίας, η οποία διατυπώνεται στο κείμενο του μοναχού Ιακώβου.

The article suggests that the bottle-shaped breast motif, reminiscent of the Galaktotrophousa, and appearing in a series of images in the well known illustrated copy of the Kokkinobaphos homilies (Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., gr. 1162), was employed as an iconographical building block in the construction of an ideal visual Marian model. On a typological level, it is contrasted with the less voluminous, naturalistic, breast of Eve, possibly alluding to her role in bringing death on earth and to her “cursed,” joyless, motherhood. The article’s premise is that the different pictorial approach reflects the Eve-Mary antithesis voiced in Iakobos’s text.

In recent years, scholars interested in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts have become more attuned to the richness of the two illustrated codices known as the Kokkinobaphos homiliaries, one preserved in the Vatican Li-

brary (gr. 1162; hereafter referred to as V[aticanus])<sup>1</sup> and the other in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (gr. 1208; hereafter referred to as P[arisinus])<sup>2</sup>. Both contain the six homilies on the life of the Virgin written by Iako-

### Λέξεις κλειδιά

Μεσοβυζαντινή εποχή, Κωνσταντινούπολη, εικονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα, Ιάκωβος της μονής Κοκκινοβάφου, Σεβαστοκρατόρισα Ειρήνη, Γαλακτοτροφούσα, θηλασμός.

### Keywords

Middle Byzantine, Constantinople, Illuminated manuscripts, Iakobos Kokkinobaphos, Eirene the Sebastokratorissa, Galaktotrophousa, Breast feeding.

\* This article sprung from an ongoing project on the representation of the female body in Byzantine art and its cultural implications, which I hope to complete in the near future. I would like to thank Maria Parani for a careful reading of this article’s draft as well as for her insightful comments.

<sup>1</sup> C. Stornajolo, *Miniature delle Omilie di Giacomo Monaco (cod. Vatic. gr. 1162) e dell’Evangelario Greco Urbinate (cod. Vatic. Urbin. gr. 2)*, Codices e Vaticanis Selecti, series minor 1, Rome 1910 (hereafter: *Omilie*); I. Hutter and P. Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar des Mönchs Jakobos von Kokkinobaphos. Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1162*, facsimile with commentary, Codices e Vaticanis Selecti 79, Zurich 1991 (hereafter: *Das Marienhomiliar*).

<sup>2</sup> H. Omont, “Miniatures des homélies sur la Vierge du moine Jacques (MS grec 1208 de Paris)”, *Bulletin de la société française de reproductions de manuscrits à peintures* 11, Paris 1927 (hereafter: “Miniatures”). For a discussion of both manuscripts, see recently K. Linardou, “Reading Two Byzantine Illustrated Books: The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts (Vaticanus graecus 1162 and Parisinus graecus 1208) and Their Illustration”, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Birmingham 2004; a monograph on the mss is in preparation. At the time of writing the article, Linardou’s dissertation was unavailable for consultation, but, the author was gracious enough to answer some of my queries and sent me her publications as well as a copy of her forthcoming “Depicting the Salvation: Typolo-

bos, an otherwise unknown monk of the Kokkinobaphos Monastery. As both books were produced in the same Constantinopolitan workshop<sup>3</sup>, it is most probable that they were illustrated within a short span of time under the supervision of the monk himself<sup>4</sup>: V in the 1140s and P in the early 1150s<sup>5</sup>. It has been cogently shown that V was commissioned by the noblewoman Eirene the Sebastokratorissa (ca. 1110-1151/52), sister-in-law of the emperor Manuel Komnenos and wife of the Sebastokrator Andronikos Komnenos (1108/9-1143)<sup>6</sup>, one of the most active literary patrons of her time; the monk Iakobos acted as her confidant and spiritual counselor<sup>7</sup>. In contrast, Linardou argues that P was created for Iakobos's private use<sup>8</sup>, whereas Evangelatou suggests that this book may have been commissioned by Eirene as well<sup>9</sup>. Both codices present numerous iconographic peculiarities, which were already noticed in the past<sup>10</sup>. The present article will investigate another, hitherto unstudied, feature appearing in some miniatures – the bare female bottle-shaped breast. I will explore its meaning based on the

relevant apocryphal and homiletical materials as well as on what is known about those who commissioned the manuscripts.

V shows a unique setting of The First Bath of the Virgin in the same frame as The Debate of the Elders of Israel. The midwife on the left is seated, bathing the naked and gold-haloed newborn Maria. A young maidservant on the right assists with the divine bath<sup>11</sup>. The scene takes place against an architectural background indicative of a neutral domestic interior; however its domesticity is deceptive owing to the presence of the canopy, actually a *ciborium*, under which the bath is being given. Hutter suggests that the architectural element bespeaks the sacrificial aspect of the scene, since the era of Christ is announced through Anne's conception and Mary's birth (Fig. 1)<sup>12</sup>. She also notes the single bottle-shaped breast with its prominent nipple protruding from the midwife's raised sleeve as if appended to her back, dismissing this anomaly as an artistic mistake<sup>13</sup>.

Yet, a careful reading of the textual sources indicates that

gical Images of Mary in the Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts", in L. Brubaker and M. B. Cunningham, eds., *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium: Texts and Images*, Aldershot [hereafter: "Depicting the Salvation"). I am indebted to Kallirroe Linardou for her generosity.

<sup>3</sup> Hutter and Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar*, 17; J. C. Anderson, "The Illustrated Sermons of James the Monk: their Dates, Order, and Place in the History of Byzantine Art", *Viator* 22 (1991), 69–120, esp. 83–85 (hereafter: "The Illustrated Sermons").

<sup>4</sup> Hutter and Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar*, 14; K. Linardou, "The Couch of Solomon, a Monk, a Byzantine Lady and the Song of Songs", in R. N. Swanson, ed., *Mary and the Church*, Studies in Church History 39, London 2004, 73–85, esp. 74–75. For another opinion, identifying the artist with the otherwise unknown Kokkinobaphos Master responsible for the illustration of number of contemporary manuscripts, see Anderson, "The Illustrated Sermons", 83–85, 90, 94–95, 100–101.

<sup>5</sup> K. Linardou, "The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts Revisited: the Internal Evidence of the Books", *Scriptorium* 61/2 (2007), 384–407 (hereafter: "The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts Revisited"). Hutter has also voiced the opinion that the V codex precedes P; Hutter and Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar*, 473–490. Contrary to this chronology of production, Anderson ("The Illustrated Sermons", 83–85) ante dates P to V by two decades, dating them to the 1130s and the 1150s, respectively.

<sup>6</sup> Anderson, "The Illustrated Sermons", 101–105; Linardou, "The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts Revisited".

<sup>7</sup> On the intellectual figure of Eirene, see E. Jeffreys, "The Sevas tokratorissa Eirene as Literary Patroness: the Monk Iakovos", XVI. *Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress: Vienna 4-9 Oct. 1981, Akten* 2.3, Vienna 1982 (= *JÖB* 32/3), 63–71 (hereafter: "The Sevas tokratorissa Eirene"); Linardou, "The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts Revisited", 384–407; M. and E. Jeffreys, "Who Was Eirene the Sevas

tokratorissa?" *Byzantion* 64 (1994), 40–68.

<sup>8</sup> Linardou, "The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts Revisited", 388–390.

<sup>9</sup> M. Evangelatou, "Pursuing Salvation through a Body of Parchment: Books and their Significance in the Illustrated Homilies by Iakobos of Kokkinobaphos", *Mediaeval Studies* 68 (2006), 266–267, n. 84 (hereafter: "Pursuing Salvation").

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., J. Anderson, "Anna Komnene, Learned Women, and the Book in Byzantine Art", in T. Gouma Peterson, ed., *Anna Komnene and her Times*, New York and London 2000, 125–156, esp. 142, 145; K. Linardou, "Mary and Her Books in the Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts: female Literacy or Visual Strategies of Narration?" *DeletChrA* 29 (2008), 35–47.

<sup>11</sup> On the clear cut distinction between the midwife and the maidservant, each performing a different task, see my *An Obscure Portrait. Imaging the Reality of Women in Byzantine Art*, London 2009, 36–44, 46–50 (hereafter: *An Obscure Portrait*).

<sup>12</sup> Fol. 29r: τόκος ἄννης καὶ σύγκλητος τῶν φυλάρχων ἱ(σρα)ήλ ("Anna gives birth and the assembly of the Tribes of Israel"); Hutter and Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar*, 28–29. P repeats the scene, including the inscription, in a very similar manner on fol. 38v, although omitting the breast exposed through the sleeve; Omont, *Miniatures*, 13; pl. IV (2).

<sup>13</sup> I. Hutter, "Das Bild der Frau in der byzantinischen Kunst," in W. Horändner et al., eds., *Βυζάντιος: Festschrift für Herbert Hunger zum 70. Geburtstag*, Vienna 1984, 167, fig. 11. For a discussion of this peculiar bodily rendering in the framework of a larger study of Byzantine dress and the potential revelatory and, by extension, sexually alluring function of the broad sleeve as a feature of Byzantine female attire, see M. Parani, "Encounters in the Realm of Dress. Attitudes towards Western Styles in the Greek East", in D. Gondicas, ed., *Renaissance Encounters: Greek East and Latin West*, Princeton, NJ (forthcoming).





Fig. 1. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 1162, *Homilies of the Monk James of Kokkinobaphos, Constantinople, 1130s, fol. 29r: The Birth of the Virgin* (photo: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).

this visual motif may find justification in the Greek version of the apocryphal Pseudo-James, which renders  $\mu\alpha\sigma\theta\acute{o}\nu$  (“her breast”) when recounting the episode of Anna giving her breast to the child<sup>14</sup>. The suckling organ is further hinted at in the phrase  $\pi\alpha\rho' \acute{\epsilon}\lambda\pi\acute{\iota}\delta\alpha \theta\eta\lambda\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omicron\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu$  (“unhoped-for suckling”) in Iakobos’s homily, relating Anna’s summoning of the twelve tribes at the birth of the Virgin to rejoice in her motherhood<sup>15</sup>. However, the texts fail to elucidate the (mis)placement of the peculiar visual motif. Moreover, the rare examples of Anna nursing the infant Mary are all of a later date; surviving only in monumental art outside of Constantinople, they cannot provide a comparable platform<sup>16</sup>. Therefore, we can only speculate at this time that the breast was ascribed to the midwife since suckling the infant in a well-to-do household (illustrated by the sumptuous interior of the miniature) would have been one of her tasks<sup>17</sup>.

The Birth of John the Baptist, where Elizabeth, with bottle-shaped breast, nourishes the nimbed child sitting in her lap, also appears exclusively in V. Not only does the breast

seem to be detached from her flat chest, thereby precluding the possible existence of another breast, but it is also disproportionately large (Fig. 2)<sup>18</sup>. The miniature illustrates Luke 1:58: “And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her”. Conforming with the text, Mary, Elizabeth’s cousin, appears twice in the miniature – once conversing with the High Priest Zacharias, and again standing beside him when he sings a hymn in her honor. How do the images of the nursing Elizabeth or that of the midwife bathing Mary differ, or how do they resemble other images in Byzantine art? What is the main message they convey? How are they related to other themes in the Kokkinobaphos homiliaries?

Visual images of mothers baring one breast and suckling their infants are quite rare. One revelatory example is the figure of Zipporah, Moses’ Egyptian wife, offering one of their children a round and ample breast protruding from her dress. The breast is not only located in its natural anatomical place, but its realistic rendering is also complemented by the roundness of the other breast, which, although concealed, is suggested by shading of her dress (Fig. 3)<sup>19</sup>. Comparison of the Kokkinobaphos depictions



Fig. 2. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 1162, *Homilies of the Monk James of Kokkinobaphos, Constantinople, 1130s, fol. 159r: The Birth of St. John the Baptist* (photo: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).

<sup>14</sup> “In the seventh [ninth] month Anna brought forth.... And she lay down. And when the days were fulfilled, Anna purified herself from her childbed and to the child, and called her Mary” (Protoevangelion of James 5.2); E. Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, ed. W. Schneemelcher, English trans. R. McL. Wilson, London 1966, 377.

<sup>15</sup> *In Deiparam* 2:5 (PG 127: 573C).

<sup>16</sup> J. Lafontaine Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la vie de la Vierge dans l'empire byzantine et en occident*, Brussels 1964, 135.

<sup>17</sup> Meyer, *An Obscure Portrait*, 96 97, 129, 132 134.

<sup>18</sup> Fol. 159r: Ἡ γέννησις τοῦ Προδρόμου καὶ ὑποχώρησις τῆς Θεοτόκου (*In Deiparam* 6:28 33 [PG 127: 689C D]); Hutter and Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar*, 74 75.

<sup>19</sup> Fol. 76v; K. Weitzmann and M. Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs, The Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint* 2, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ 1999), 151, fig. 614.



Fig. 3. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 747, *Octateuch*, Constantinople, ca. 1070, fol. 76v: Zipporah Nursing One of Her Children (photo: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).

with the biblical woman shows that the artistic movement toward portraying the latter as homely figures engaged in nourishing their young is belied by the objectification of the breast, its peculiar pendulant appearance, and, most

importantly, the absence of a second breast, which consciously disengages this female organ from its usual connotations<sup>20</sup>.

On the other hand, the bottle-shaped breast in the Kokkinobaphos manuscripts may be visually related to the Coptic iconic formula of the Virgin Galaktotrophousa ("She who nourishes with milk"). The image shows the Virgin seated hieratically, offering her bottle-shaped breast to

<sup>20</sup> M. Yalom, *A History of the Breast*, New York 1998.



the infant Jesus nestled in her lap<sup>21</sup>. Understood as embodying the doctrine of the Incarnation through the Mother of God<sup>22</sup>, the bottle-shaped breast is construed as symbolic of breastfeeding<sup>23</sup>. Although there is no proof that the Galaktotrophousa type was worshipped in Constantinople<sup>24</sup>, its presence is indirectly suggested in scenes such as the one discussed above, of Elizabeth nursing John the Baptist<sup>25</sup> or of the Virgin suckling Jesus in later scenes of the Nativity<sup>26</sup>. Thus, it is evident that the bottle-shaped breast associated with Marian motherhood, although objectified and wrongly placed, does not display a realistic rendering and thus serves as a symbolic trait of the suckling scenes connoting the idea of divine nourishment. We may therefore contend that this artistic element was imbued with religious significance because of the miraculous conception and divine maternity associated with the figures of Anna, Mary, and Elizabeth.

Lastly, both V and P illustrate The Rest of the Virgin on her way to visit Elizabeth, based loosely on Luke 1:39: "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah"<sup>27</sup>. We will discuss

V's image of Mary, nimbed and veiled, seated frontally and majestically on a small hill in the foreground while a conspicuous tree forms a vertical axis with it. The Virgin looks at James, Joseph's son, who, from the height of a fig tree, plucks the fruit and offers it to her; four ripe figs already lie on the cloth spread over Mary's lap. The lower right corner bears the personification of the river in the form of a bust of a young man carrying on his shoulder a vessel from which water flows. The lower left corner exhibits the naked personification of the Earth (Gaia)<sup>28</sup> half-buried in the earth, with waist-length hair and a single bottle-shaped breast protruding from beneath her right armpit; she turns toward the Virgin and implores her mercy (Fig. 4)<sup>29</sup>. The scene is set against a bountiful paradisiacal landscape<sup>30</sup>.

Gaia's presence in the scene is clarified by the hymnal prayer of the Earth, according to which she is "the mother of all creatures," her most precious fruit being Mary. It is through the Virgin that the earth will be ridden of sin, idolatry, and death, and it is through her that "the plant matures, showing the fruit of immortality, which converts

<sup>21</sup> L. Langener, *Isis lactans – Maria lactans. Untersuchungen zur koptischen Ikonographie*, Altenberge 1996. The peculiar objectification of the Virgin's breast may have been modeled after feeding bottles from the eastern Mediterranean; D. Gourévitch, "Femme nourrissant son enfant au biberon", *Antike Kunst* 35/1 (1992), 78–81; figs 1–5. For the Western counterpart, the *Madonna lactans*, see, e.g. M. R. Miles, "The Virgin's One Bare Breast: Nudity, Gender, and Religious Meaning in Tuscan Early Renaissance Culture", in N. Broude and M. Garrard, eds., *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, New York 1992, 27–37; B. Williamson, "The Virgin *lactans* as Second Eve: image of the *Salvatrix*", *Studies in Iconography* 19 (1998), 107–138; E. S. Bolman, "The Enigmatic Coptic Galaktotrophousa and the Cult of the Virgin Mary in Egypt", in M. Vassilaki, ed., *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, Aldershot 2005, 13–22 (hereafter: "The Enigmatic Coptic Galaktotrophousa"); idem, "The Coptic Galaktotrophousa Reconsidered", *Coptic Studies in the Threshold of a New Millennium*, eds. M. Immerzeel and J. van der Vliet (Orientalia Louvaniensia Analecta 133, Leuven 2004), 1173–1184.

<sup>22</sup> N. P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (based on the original text by G. Alberigo et al.), 2 vols., London and Washington, DC 1990, vol. 1, 59, 70, 71. For the argument that the motif serves as a metaphor for the Eucharist, refuting therefore the notion that it bespeaks Christ's humanity, see Bolman, "The Enigmatic Coptic Galaktotrophousa", 17–19.

<sup>23</sup> One should nevertheless be cautious and mention that the breast was never a purely religious symbol, as medieval illustrations of medical and legal texts show. See, e.g.: M. Bernabò, "Scriptorium. La Biblioteca Laurenziana", *Kos* 1/1 (1984), 115–116.

<sup>24</sup> A. Cutler, "The Cult of the Galaktotrophousa in Byzantium and Italy", in idem, *Byzantium, Italy and the North: papers on Cultural*

*Relations*, London 2000, 164–189; Bolman, "The Enigmatic Coptic Galaktotrophousa", 13–22.

<sup>25</sup> V. Lazarev, "Studies in the Iconography of the Virgin", in idem, *Studies in Byzantine Painting*, London 1995, 213, with additional examples (hereafter: "Studies in the Iconography of the Virgin").

<sup>26</sup> See, e.g. the mid 14th century mural painting in the nave of the Church of St. Nikolas of the Roof, Kakopetria (Cyprus); E. Hein, A. Jakovljević and B. Kleidt, *Cyprus. Byzantine Churches and Monasteries: Mosaics and Frescoes*, Ratingen 1998, 67–69, fig. 45; V. Foskolou, "The Virgin, the Christ child and the Evil Eye", in Vassilaki, ed., *Images of the Mother of God*, 251–262.

<sup>27</sup> Fol. 200r; Omont, *Miniatures*, 22; XXV (1). Although very similar, the miniature in P is less detailed.

<sup>28</sup> Although feared and destroyed in Byzantium, the classical gods and their visual rendering were never wholly excluded (C. Mango, "Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder", *DOP* 17 [1963], 55–75; H. Saradi Mendelovici, "Christian Attitudes toward Pagan Monuments in Late Antiquity and Their Legacy in Later Byzantine Centuries", *DOP* 44 [1990], 47–61), and certainly not in illuminated manuscripts (K. Weitzmann, "Survival of Mythological Representations in Early Christian and Byzantine Art and Their Impact on Christian Iconography", *DOP* 14 [1960], 43–68; M. Kominko, "Visions and Meanings: Personifications in Octateuch Cycles", in A. Lymberopoulou, ed., *Images of the Byzantine World. Visions, Messages and Meanings*, Aldershot 2011, 121–134).

<sup>29</sup> Fol. 145r: Ἀνάπανσις τῆς Παρθένου ἐν τῇ ὁδοῖ; P does not have the inscription; Hutter and Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar*, 72–73.

<sup>30</sup> On the changes Paradise undergoes in Byzantine mentality and art, both before the iconoclasm, and following it, see H. Maguire, "Paradise Withdrawn", in idem, *Image and Imagination in Byzantine Art*, Aldershot 2007, 23–35.



Fig. 4. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 1162, *Homilies of the Monk James of Kokkinobaphos*, Constantinople, 1130s, fol. 147r: *The Rest of the Virgin on Her Way to Elizabeth* (photo: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).

the sterility of my daughters in the grace of fertility”<sup>31</sup>. Yet, her visual rendering is most peculiar and does not conform to contemporary depictions, such as the one in the Athens *Homilies of Saint Chrysostom*, where Gaia holds a male figure in her right extended hand (Fig. 5)<sup>32</sup>. Facing front, with the bottom part of her torso missing, Gaia’s full breasts are portrayed quite naturalistically, reminiscent of earlier occurrences, such as the personifi-

cation of the Earth supporting the foot of the mounted Justinian on her right hand appearing on the sixth-century Barberini ivory<sup>33</sup>. Consequently, the full breast of the personification in the Kokkinobaphos can be understood as reflecting not only the Earth’s abundance, but also Mary’s ability to nourish. This interpretation fits well with Hutter’s suggestion that the insertion of *The Rest of Mary* into the cycle of miniatures was done in accordance

<sup>31</sup> A smaller sized personification of Gaia forms the horizontal shaft of the letter G, the initial of her name opening her monologue; *In Deiparam* 6:28 (PG 127: 676–677).

<sup>32</sup> Athens, gr. 211, fol. 34v. The depiction was understood to be related to the parable of the ten drachmas and the prodigy child following Luke 15: 8–10, 11–32. André Grabar interpreted the male figure as Adam and the personification as Terra; *Les manuscrits grecs enluminés de provenance italienne (IXe-XIe siècle)*, Paris 1972, 25–27,

fig. 47. For a different identification – St. John the Baptist and the personification of the river Jordan, respectively – see Z. Gavrilović, “La résurrection d’Adam: une réinterprétation”, in idem, *Studies in Byzantine and Serbian Medieval Art*, London 2001, 1–27.

<sup>33</sup> A. Cutler, “Barberiniana. Notes on the Making, Content, and Provenance of Louvre OA. 9063”, *Tesserae. Festschrift für Josef Engemann*, Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum 18, Münster 1991, 329–339.





Fig. 5. Athens, National Library, gr. 211, *Homilies of Saint Chrysostom*, southern Italy (?), 10th century, fol. 34v: *The Personification of Terra (det.)* (photo: Athens, National Library).

with the illuminator's intention to introduce The Incarnation of Christ as a renewal of man as well as a new creation devoid of sin and death eclipsed by the sun of justice (i.e. Christ), with Mary herself guaranteeing the reality of the future heavenly state. The idyllic landscape, with figs and fresh water, symbolizes the anticipated peace and abundance<sup>34</sup>.

The salvific message implied in the scene is augmented by the theological Eve-Maria antithesis, which, referring to the birth of the Virgin<sup>35</sup>, was developed in the second homily of the monk Iakobos and visualized in *The Fall* cycle (Gen. 3: 1-24), which is appearing against a comparable landscape and preceding *The Rest on the Road to Elizabeth*. In V, the focus of the composition is *The Temp-*

<sup>34</sup> Hutter and Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar*, 72-73.

<sup>35</sup> PG 127: 580-4. For further aspects of Marian typology found in Eastern homiletical literature, where Mary is likened to Paradise

and nature is renewed and sanctified through the coming of Christ, see M. Hansbury, ed., *Jacob (of Serug), On the Mother of God*, Crestwood, NY 1998, esp. 9, 11-2, 40, 82.



tation of Eve, with The Fall, The Admonition, and The Expulsion from the Paradise surrounding it (Fig. 6)<sup>36</sup>. We should note that the artist made a distinct effort to render Eve's breasts, though flat, as naturalistic as possible, their shape and size conforming well with the proportions and elegance of the body. The centrality of the sinning female figure in this image may be explained, following the miniature, by Adam's post-lapsarian accusation of Eve:

Oh that wicked and profane advice! She who interwove the deceit; she who discharged the death bearing virus into my own ears!... Oh woman, how did not you realize the sharpened sword you brought upon us? How did not you recognize that you held death in your tongue? Why did you do this wicked thing?<sup>37</sup>.

A series of iconographic elements in paradisiacal landscapes emerging from both the OT and NT are important to my antithetical contention. The Tree of Life standing beside the couple in The Temptation<sup>38</sup> can be typologically related to the tree, which seemingly sprouts from Mary's body. Byzantine thought abounds with this association, designating it as a salvific sign. For example, both Iakobos and the illuminator were certainly more acquainted with the seventh *oikos* of the fifth-century Akathistos hymn—"Hail, tree of glorious fruit on which the faithful feed"<sup>39</sup>. The same idea is evinced in one of Proklos's homilies (ca. 410-485), in which he describes an imaginary Annunciation wherein the angel addresses the Virgin as follows: "Hail, favoured one, the unfading Paradise of chastity, in which the tree of life was planted and

will burgeon with the fruits of salvation for all"<sup>40</sup>. The Tree of Life mentioned here is the one associated with the cross in Rev. 22:2, which was to become widely understood as the prefiguration of the Cross, the restorative Tree of Life<sup>41</sup>. This typological link is also reflected in Orthodox liturgy, expressed in the hymn the priests recite when preparing the bread for Communion:

Make ready, O Bethlehem, for Eden hath been opened for all. Prepare, O Ephratha, for the tree of life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the Virgin; for her womb did appear as a spiritual paradise in which is planted the divine Plant, whereof eating we shall live and not die as Adam. Christ shall be born, raising the image that fell of old<sup>42</sup>.

The girdles, made of dry and lifeless fig leaves covering the couple's loins after the Fall, are a stark contrast to the ripe figs, signs of fruition and fertility, that the Virgin held in her lap. This implies that the Tree of Life in Paradise, desiccated by the transgression of God's law, will again turn green following the Virgin's sacred pregnancy. Thus, whereas the oversized bottle-shaped breast protruding from Gaia's side in the Christological scene conveys the idea of bountiful nourishment, Eve's life-like mortal breasts imply, once again, lifelessness and void. Lastly, Eve of The Fall, addressing the twining serpent on the tree, seems to be holding her prominent abdomen; her gesture and (pregnant?) body part may be seen as a double entendre of her sin – disobedience toward God and sexuality. The inclusion of related iconographic elements in both The Rest of the Virgin and The Fall establishes a concep-

<sup>36</sup> Fol. 35r: Ὁ ἐκ τοῦ παραδείσου ἐξοικισμὸς τῶν πρωτοπλάστων ("The Expulsion of the First Parents from Paradise"); Hutter and Canart, *Das Marienhomiliar*, 30–31. P depicts the episodes per the usual reading, from the upper left corner toward the lower right corner: The Temptation of Eve; The Fall; The Admonition (in the center); and The Expulsion from Paradise; Fol. 47r; Omont, *Miniatures*, 22; pl. XXIV(3); Anderson, "The Illustrated Sermons", 78–79; Linardou, "The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts Revisited", 390–392.

<sup>37</sup> In *Deiparam* 2:11 (PG 127: 580C); English trans. by Linardou, "The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts Revisited", 391. In P, this text appears in conjunction with Adam's lament, followed by the corresponding miniature. See also Anderson, "The Illustrated Sermons", 78–79. Iakobos's reprimanding attitude toward Eve's role in the story of the Fall is quite unusual; in contrast, the church fathers adopt, for the most part, a positive attitude of Eve; M. Meyer, "Eve's Nudity. A Sign of Shame or a Precursor of Christological Economy?" in K. Kogman Appel and M. Meyer, eds., *Between Judaism and Christianity. Art Historical Essays in Honour of Prof. Elisabeth (Elisheva) Revel-Neher*, Leiden 2009, 243–258.

<sup>38</sup> This detail is not mentioned in the Septuagint, which locates

Adam and Eve generally among the trees of Paradise. However, the Greek exegesis mentions that the couple hid behind a fig tree, from which they made the girdles of leaves; cf. Theodoret, *Quaest. in Gen.* 28 (PG 80: 125C).

<sup>39</sup> English trans. in L. M. Peltomaa, *The Image of the Virgin in the Akathistos Hymn*, Leiden 2001, 13.

<sup>40</sup> PG 85: 444A; trans. in Peltomaa, op. cit., 80, n. 166.

<sup>41</sup> G. Ladner, "Medieval and Modern Understanding of Symbolism: A Comparison", *Speculum* 54/2 (1979), 236–237, with further bibliography. See also R. Hatfield, "The Tree of Life and the Holy Cross," in T. Verdon and J. Henderson, eds., *Christianity and the Renaissance*, Syracuse 1990, 137 and 139. The iconography of the Tree of Life as a sign of the Cross was established early on, as, for example, on an ampulla from sixth or early seventh century, where palm leaves – symbols of victory – grow from the wood of the Cross; cf. A. Grabar, *Ampoules de Terre Sainte (Monza-Bobbio)*, Paris 1958, 32, pl. 32.

<sup>42</sup> Antiochan Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, *The Liturgikon. The Book of Divine Services for the Priest and Deacon*, 2nd edition, Englewood, NJ 1994, 245.



Fig. 6. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 1162, *Homilies of the Monk James of Kokkinobaphos*, Constantinople, 1130s, fol. 35r: *The Fall* (photo: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).

tual contiguity and temporal sequence wherein the sin, i.e. death, brought into the world by the fault of the former, will be rectified by the grace of the latter, i.e. the fruit-bearing Virgin/tree through which life and nourishment will issue forth.

In summary, while the Kokkinobaphos miniatures were illustrated through an association with the texts, they also convey the idea of ‘joy’: the unrestrained joy of Anna summoning the twelve tribes of Israel to bear witness to her “unhoped for milk”, i.e. the birth of the Virgin; Elizabeth

rejoicing in the fruit of her sterile womb, feeding her newborn; and the joy of the Earth (Gaia), on whose abundant flora and fauna the Virgin, carrying the divine fruit in her womb, treads.

The question of the extent to which the bottle-shaped breast was noticed by the alleged patron of Kokkinobaphos homiliaries, given the discrepancy between them, is yet to be clarified. While both codices illustrate the objectified breast as an attribute (Gaia), only V shows it in relation to maternal nourishment (Anna, Elizabeth)<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> It has been suggested that the numerous visual discrepancies between the codices were executed per Iakobos’s instructions in order

to meet the expectations and needs of the various recipients; Linardou, “The Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts Revisited”, 387–406.



There is a general consensus that V's iconographic program was meant to edify the moral and devotional character of its commissioner, Eirene Sebastokratorissa<sup>44</sup>. In her forthcoming article, Linardou argues that the monk's didactic approach was probably motivated by his concern for the noblewoman's attraction to the 'heretical' philosophy of the Greeks and her Orthodox integrity (or lack thereof), and attempted to save her soul by providing her with a suitable model to emulate – Mary<sup>45</sup>.

Evangelatou has eloquently demonstrated that there seems to be a topical correlation between the theological subjects broached in the Kokkinobaphos pictorial program and the theological and moral issues voiced by Iakobos in his frequent and well-known correspondence with Eirene. In it he forged his expectations of the noblewoman and set down the moral standards he thought she should adopt<sup>46</sup>. Thus, for example, he admits to Eirene in his 35th letter, that "whatever moral or theological issues he mentions in a rather cursory way in his letters he has presented more formally and elaborately in his book"<sup>47</sup>.

The monk has attached great importance to the role the book might have played in the edification of Eirene's soul; in it he praises her continuous thirst for the "divine waters" and urges her to read attentively the book he presents her:

When a treasure is stepped underfoot, it does not demonstrate its wealth; one must first dig through the ground and descend in depth in order to find its riches. The same is true with this book: reading is not enough in order for the treas-

ures of virtue to be revealed, if your royalty does not investigate in depth...<sup>48</sup>.

Although we do not have sufficient material to ascertain whether the book the monk speaks about is indeed the abundantly illustrated copy (= V) he presented to the noblewoman, it is nevertheless clear that the rich Marian imagery served Iakobos in his pursuit to theologically educate its female recipient.

Pulling all threads together now, it seems that the artist strategically and consciously used the bottle-shaped breast motif, reminiscent of the Galaktotrouphousa, as an iconographical building block in his construction of an ideal visual Marian model. On a typological level, it is contrasted with the less voluminous, naturalistic, breast of Eve, possibly alluding to her role in bringing death on earth and to her "cursed," joyless, motherhood, and forms the Eve-Mary antithesis voiced in Iakobos's second homiliary. Eirene, urged by her religious guide to use the book as a spiritual tool and weapon against the dark forces ("wherever spiritual books are kept, any diabolic energy is chased away..."<sup>49</sup>), would have been inclined to make all the above associations between the visual motif resonating with allusions to an abundant and divine nourishment, and, more specifically, to Marian motherhood. His miniatures might have been more effective than much of his discursive theological reasoning. In light of these conclusions, a pronounced emphasis on the maternal nourishment in P, designed for Iakobos's private use, would have been entirely superfluous<sup>50</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> See above, nn. 6 and 7.

<sup>45</sup> Linardou, "Depicting the Salvation". See also M. and E. Jeffreys, "The Sebastokratorissa Eirene", 63–71.

<sup>46</sup> The 43 letters are written in a parchment codex from the 12th century (Paris, BnF, gr. 3039). The letters are being prepared for publication by E. and M. Jeffreys in a forthcoming volume of the *Corpus Christianorum, series graeca*. But see already M. J. Jeffreys, "Iakovos

Monachos, Letter 3", in A. Moffatt, ed., *Maistor. Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning*, Byzantina Australiensia 5, Canberra 1984, 241–257.

<sup>47</sup> Evangelatou, "Pursuing Salvation", 263.

<sup>48</sup> Trans. by Evangelatou, *ibid.*, 256, n. 56.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted and discussed by Evangelatou, *ibid.*, 259, n. 63.

<sup>50</sup> See above, n. 8.

## ΘΕΪΚΗ ΤΡΟΦΗ: ΜΑΣΤΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΦΙΑΛΕΣ ΣΤΙΣ ΜΙΚΡΟΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ ΤΟΥ ΙΑΚΩΒΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΜΟΝΗΣ ΚΟΚΚΙΝΟΒΑΦΟΥ

Στο το παρόν άρθρο εξετάζεται ένα ιδιαίτερο χαρκτηριστικό που εμφανίζεται σε ορισμένες μικρογραφίες στους κώδικες των Ομιλιών του Ιακώβου της μονής Κοκκινοβάφου, στον κώδικα της Αποστολικής Βιβλιοθήκης του Βατικανού gr. 1162, που δημιουργήθηκε στη δεκαετία του 1140, και σε εκείνον της Παρισινής Εθνικής Βιβλιοθήκης gr. 1208, που χρονολογείται στη δεκαετία του 1150. Είναι γενικά αποδεκτό ότι τον κώδικα του Βατικανού παρήγγειλε η ευγενής σεβαστοκρατορίσσα Ειρήνη (περ. 1110-1151/52), εξ αγχιστείας συγγενής του αυτοκράτορα Μανουήλ Κομνηνού και σύζυγος του σεβαστοκράτορα Ανδρόνικου Κομνηνού (1108/9-1143). Ο κώδικας, που δημιουργήθηκε από τον μοναχό Ιάκωβο, ο οποίος ήταν επίσης έμπιστος και πνευματικός σύμβουλος της Ειρήνης, προοριζόταν ως μέσο ανάδειξης του ήθους και της ευλάβειάς της. Ο παρισινός κώδικας δημιουργήθηκε μάλλον για προσωπική χρήση του ιδίου του Ιακώβου.

Το εικονογραφικό στοιχείο που εξετάζεται είναι ο γυνινός γυναικείος μαστός σε μορφή φιάλης, που οπτικά μπορεί να συνδεθεί με τον κοπτικό εικονογραφικό τύπο της Θεοτόκου Γαλακτοτροφούσας. Ο φιαλόσχημος μαστός, που θεωρείται ότι εκφράζει το δόγμα της Ενσάρκωσης μέσω της Θεοτόκου, εκλαμβάνεται ως σύμβολο του θηλασμού. Στον κώδικα του Βατικανού διακρίνεται προσαρτημένος στο μανίκι της τροφού η οποία τελεί το πρώτο λουτρό της Θεοτόκου στη σχετική παράσταση. Εικάζουμε ότι ο μαστός προσγράφεται στην τροφό, καθώς ο θηλασμός του βρέφους σε μια ευκατάστατη οικογένεια θα ήταν ένα από τα καθήκοντά της. Στη μικρογραφία του Γενεσίου του Προδρόμου η Ελισάβετ ταΐζει το καθισμένο στην αγκαλιά της βρέφος με τον ίδιο τρόπο. Επομένως, είναι φανερό ότι το φιαλόσχημο στήθος, που συνδέεται με τη μητρότητα της Παναγίας, χρησιμεύει ως στοιχείο με συμβολικό περιεχόμενο σε σκηνές θηλασμού, υποδηλώνοντας την ιδέα της θεϊκής τροφής. Για τον λόγο αυτό είναι δυνατό να υποστηριχθεί ότι πρόκειται για εικονογραφικό στοιχείο με θρησκευτική σημασία, εξαιτίας της θαυμαστής σύλλη-

ψης και της θείας μητρότητας που σχετίζονται με τις μορφές της Άννας και της Ελισάβετ.

Μια άλλη παράσταση στην οποία εμφανίζεται αυτό το ιδιαίτερο στοιχείο και η οποία απαντά τόσο στον κώδικα του Βατικανού όσο και στο παρισινό αντίγραφο είναι εκείνη της Ανάπαυσης της Θεοτόκου στον δρόμο προς την οικεία της Ελισάβετ. Σε αυτή τη σκηνή η γυνή προσωποποίηση της Γαίας, που προβάλλει κατά το ήμισυ από το έδαφος, φέρει ένα και μοναδικό φιαλόσχημο μαστό, ο οποίος προεξέχει κάτω από τη δεξιά της μασχάλη. Η Γαία είναι στραμμένη προς τη Θεοτόκο και ικετεύει για το έλεός της. Η παρουσία της στο πλούσιο παραδεισιακό τοπίο ερμηνεύεται από τον ύμνο προς τη Γή, σύμφωνα με τον οποίο εκείνη είναι η μητέρα όλων των πλασμάτων και ο πιο πολύτιμος καρπός της είναι η Θεοτόκος, και μπορεί να γίνει κατανοητή, καθώς αντικατοπτρίζει όχι μόνο την αφθονία της Γής, αλλά και την ικανότητα της Παναγίας να θρέψει. Το σωτηριολογικό μήνυμα της σκηνής εντείνεται από τη θεολογική αντίθεση μεταξύ Εύας και Μαρίας, η οποία αναπτύσσεται στη Δεύτερη Ομιλία του μοναχού Ιακώβου σε σχέση με τη γέννηση της Θεοτόκου και παρουσιάζεται εικονογραφικά στον Κύκλο της Έκπτωσης των Πρωτοπλάστων από τον παράδεισο, τον οποίο συναντούμε και στα δύο χειρόγραφα. Σε επίπεδο τυπολογίας, ο φιαλόσχημος μαστός έρχεται σε αντίθεση με το λιγότερο ογκώδες, νατουραλιστικά αποδοσμένο στήθος της Εύας, στοιχείο μέσω του οποίου γίνεται, πιθανώς, υπαινιγμός στον δικό της ρόλο ως φορέα του θανάτου στη γη και στη δική της «καταραμένη», χωρίς χαρές, μητρότητα. Το γεγονός ότι ανάλογα εικονογραφικά στοιχεία περιλαμβάνονται τόσο στην παράσταση της Ανάπαυσης της Θεοτόκου όσο και σε εκείνη της Έκπτωσης των Πρωτοπλάστων από τον παράδεισο δημιουργεί μεταξύ των δύο μια νοηματική προσέγγιση και μια χρονική αλληλουχία, στο πλαίσιο της οποίας η αμαρτία, πιο συγκεκριμένα ο θάνατος, που ήρθε στον κόσμο από το παράπτωμα της πρώτης, θα διορθωθεί με τη χάρη της δεύτερης, της καρποφορούσας Θεοτόκου, η οποία θα φέρει ζωή και τροφή. Περιληπτικά, ενώ και οι δύο κώδικες παριστά-



νουν το, αποδοσμένο σε σχήμα αντικειμένου, στήθος ως διακριτικό ορισμένων μορφών (Γαίας), μόνο ο κώδικας του Βατικανού το συσχετίζει με τον θηλασμό (Άννα, Ελισάβετ).

Προς συζήτηση είναι το ερώτημα σε ποιο βαθμό έγινε αντιληπτός ο φιαλόσχημος μαστός από τους θεωρούμενους ως παραγγελιοδότες των δύο χειρογράφων των Ομιλιών του Ιακώβου. Στο άρθρο εκφράζεται η άποψη

ότι η πλούσια εικονογραφία της Παναγίας, που περιλαμβάνει και το ιδιαίτερο στοιχείο του φιαλόσχημου στήθους, με υπαινιγμούς σε μια άφθονη, τόσο θεϊκή όσο και μητρική, τροφή, θα είχε μεγαλύτερη απήχηση στον κώδικα που δόθηκε στη γυναίκα παραγγελιοδότη παρ'όσον προοριζόμενο για προσωπική χρήση του μοναχού Ιακώβου παρισινό κώδικα, στον οποίο το στοιχείο αυτό θα ήταν εντελώς περιττό.