

Hirofumi SUGAWARA

**ANNA ELEOUSA:
REPRESENTATION OF
TENDERNESS**



fig. 1 Icon of the Virgin Eleousa, ca. 1100, Moscow

Preface

Eleousa (fig.1)¹ is the name given to the image of the Virgin holding the Child in her arms, tilting her head to touch cheeks with him. The Child meanwhile reaches towards the mother's neck and collar with both hands. In images of the Virgin and the Child, the Child typically demonstrates his divinity by a scroll and blessing. The Child in Eleousa lacks either. Because of this tender and poetic image, the Virgin Eleousa stands out among the generally austere Byzantine votive images.

Depictions of emotion such as the cheek touching embrace, the forward tilt, and the melancholic facial expression, came to be emphasized after the Iconoclasm (726-843). Can God the invisible be presented

visually - the debate concerning the legitimacy of religious images centered on the humanity of Christ, which was the ground for creation of his images in human form. In order to prove the authenticity of Christ's Incarnation, those in favor of religious images takes note of the Passion and the Virgin themes. The Passion, which centers on crucifixion, is the best theme to indicate Christ's mortality as a human, and the humanity of Christ originates in his mother, the Virgin. Thus, the Virgin's apparent lament at the scene of Passion ensures the fact that Christ was born unto earth as a human. It was due to such reasoning that after the Iconoclasm, the Virgin came to be created as a motherly and richly emotional figure². Motherly images of the Virgin formed

in the homilies on Passion were then visualized into narrative images such as Descent from the Cross and the Lamentation (fig.2).

It is likely that as the Passion themed homilies and images were deployed into rituals and church decorations, and as the newly created image of the Virgin propagated, the elements of the Passion and Lamentation were demanded also of the Virgin and the Child images symbolizing incarnation. H. Belting points out that the Byzantines were able to discover infinite webs of connection among separate images, literature, and poetry, relating them mutually³. Taking this into account, one may reasonably imagine that the audience who nurtured their interpretive ability by experiencing the rituals, with the imagery in

¹ A. Lidov, "Miracle-Working Icons of the Mother of God," in *Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. by M. Vasilaki, Milan, 2000, 55, fig. 24. Abbreviations of literature hereon will be based on eds. by A. Kazhdan et al., *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols., New York/ Oxford, 1991.

² I. Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary Became Meter Theou," *DOP* 44(1990), 168-170, esp. 169.

³ H. Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum in Mitteralter: Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion*, Berlin, 1981, 182.



fig. 2 Lamentation (*Epitaphios Threnos*), 1164, Nerezi, Sv. Pantelejmon

the lectures as their medium, looked at Threnos while remembering the Virgin and the Child's happy past, and Eleousa while foreseeing the coming Passion. Although Threnos emphasizes death and Eleousa birth, both ensure the Incarnation of God and are connected by the imagery of embrace. Furthermore, the lack of scroll or the blessing gesture in the imagery of the Child in Eleousa would also have helped emphasize the humanity of Christ. Thus, Eleousa was established during the Mid-Byzantine (9th through 12th century) during which time its expression of emotion was interpreted with the Passion and Lamentation in mind, and was accepted as iconography embracing Incarnation and Passion, the two dogmas crucial to the understanding of Christology⁴.

The researcher has analyzed the reception of Eleousa during the mid Byzantine period as stated above. However, further survey and research came to suggest that during the Late Byzantine (13th through 15th century), the Eleousa iconography came to be received on dimensions beyond that of the dogmas. The source of inspiration for this hypothesis was the mosaic of Anna in Chora Monastery in Istanbul represented in the iconography of Eleousa (fig.3). The aim of this paper is to consider why Anna came to be painted in the iconography of Eleousa, and signifi-

cance the Anna Eleousa has in the field of Byzantine Art.

However, despite the fact that Anna as a character is an essential presence about whom any would be able to identify as the mother of the Virgin, hardly any study has been conducted on Anna, mother of the Virgin. The pioneering study on the Chora Monastery by P. Underwood⁵ does not go beyond a mere description of the Anna icon in question, and although J. Lafontaine-Dosogne⁶ lists examples of Anna created in the iconography of the Virgin and the Child, her study does not go beyond tracing the iconographical development, and either fails to answer the question in point.

Thus, this paper will first organize the materials gathered by the researcher also taking into account the previous studies, and then probe the Byzantines' grasp of the relationship between Anna and the Virgin, returning at the conclusion to the above-mentioned issue.

Examples and Data

This paper will first organize in chronological order the Anna created in the iconography of the Virgin and

⁴ H. Sugawara, "Acceptance of the Virgin of Tenderness in Cappadocia," *BIJUTSUSHI Journal of the Japan Art History Society* 162 (2007.3), 84-97 (in Japanese).

⁵ P. A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, vol. 1, London, 1967, 160-161, vol. 2, 314, pl. 179.

⁶ J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'empire byzantin et en Occident*, vol. 1, Brussels, 1964 (1992²), 133-135.

the Child, and attempt to present an overview of how Anna has been portrayed within the Byzantine world. (1) *Santa Maria Antiqua, Rome, Italy (circa 650, 7th century)*⁷

Two frescoes of Anna remain in Santa Maria Antiqua. The image painted in the presbyterium is estimated to be dated around 650. Anna mostly faces the front, holding the young Virgin in her left hand, putting her right hand on the infant's right knee, as if to draw attention to her. In the Byzantine tradition, images of the Virgin holding the Child in her left arm are addressed Hodegetria. Although paint has chipped off on the large area on the upper right including Anna's left eye, it is evident that she directs her gaze towards the viewer. The infant Virgin is also painted mostly in front-view. Peeling of the paint makes it difficult to decipher the state of her right hand, but what remains suggests the blessing gesture. The left hand slightly touches the left knee. Paint has chipped significantly also in the facial area, but her gaze is directed towards the viewer, and an earring decorates the right ear. The state of the nimbus is unclear, due to chipped paint.

On the other hand, in the niche, portraits of the three holy mothers, Anna, the Virgin, and Elizabeth are painted from left to right facing the niche. The works are said to date back to the 7th century. The portrait of the Virgin, encircled in mandorla holding the front-view Child in her bosom (a type of Virgin and the Child images are called Kyriotissa), is placed at the center. The two other images are painted in the iconography of Hodegetria. Anna holds the Virgin in her left arm, and touches the Virgin's right knee with her right arm. Anna's face is directed slightly towards the Virgin and the Child in the center, and although discoloration prevents clear view, her gaze is towards the Virgin and the Child. The infant Virgin is wrapped entirely in maphorion, and points the right hand towards the Child in the center. The state of the left arm is unclear due to discoloration. Like her mother Anna, her face and gaze is directed towards the Virgin and the Child at the center.

(2) *Direkli Kilise, Belisırma, Cappadocia, Turkey (976-1025, fig. 4)*⁸

Anna's torso remains on the column in the northwestern corner. Paint in over half the lower left field of the painting is chipped, taking with it most part of the images of Anna and the Virgin. Fortunately an inscrip-



fig. 3 *Anna Eleousa, 1316-21, Istanbul, Chora Monastery*

tion remains on the upper right area, stating "I ΑΓΙΑ ANNA(sic.)." Although the detailed expressions and the gestures of the two figures cannot be deciphered due to damaged condition, Anna holds the Virgin in the left arm. The iconography of the painting can be identified as Hodegetria and not Eleousa, due to the fact that Anna and the Virgin's nimbi do not overlap. (3) *Agioi Anargyroi, Kastoria, Greece (1180's, fig. 5)*⁹ An Anna Hodegetria remains on the eastern wall of the narthex. The fresco is discolored in places, and the paint on the lower half chipped. Anna painted in three-quarter view holds the infant Virgin in her left arm, and points to her with her right hand. Inscriptions, "Η ΑΓΙΑ ANNA" flanks either side of Anna's head. Anna tilts her head slightly towards the Virgin, and gazes towards the front right. Abundant use of shadows adds a melancholy nuance to her facial expression. The infant Virgin is also painted in three-quarter view, directing her gaze towards Anna and reaching out towards her mother with both hands, as if to talk to her.

(4) *Sv. Gjorgji, Kurbinovo, Macedonia (1191, fig. 6)*¹⁰

⁷ There are abundant studies on churches with Anna Eleousa. The works mentioned here below are the most fundamental works. P. Romanelli et P. J. Nordhagen, *Santa Maria Antiqua, Ist. poligrafico dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato, Roma, 1964 (1999²)*.

⁸ N. Thierry, *Nouvelles églises rupestres de Cappadoce: region du Hasan Dağı, Paris, 183-192*.

⁹ S. Pelekanidis and M. Chatzidakis, *Kastoria, Athens, 1985, 22-49*.

¹⁰ L. Hadermann-Misguisch, *Kurbinovo, Bruxelles, 1975*; Ц. Грозданов, *Курбиново и Други Студии за Фрескоживописот во Преспа, Скопје, 2006, 173*.



fig. 4 Anna Hodegetria, 976-1025, Belisırma, Direkli Kilise

A peculiar fresco of Anna remains on the southern wall. Although the lower area of the painting is partially discolored, the condition is mostly fair. Anna painted in three-quarters view holds the infant Virgin in her left arm, and with her right hand tucks up the maphorion to hold the left breast. The Virgin painted mostly in side-view clutches onto Anna's right hand with her left hand, and drinks milk. Images such as this where the Virgin suckles the Child are called Galaktotrophousa. The Kurbinovo artist is known to have the most eccentric brush strokes in the history of Byzantine art, and here deep creases are painted on Anna's cheeks and between her brows, as if to lay particular emphasis on her old age. Although Anna's gaze is directed towards the viewer, paint on a part of her face is chipped, and her facial expression is unclear.

(5) *Sveti Chetirideset Machenitsi, Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria (1230)*¹¹

An Anna Galaktotrophousa remains on the lunette over the doorway of the exonarthex. The fresco has been removed from the wall and transplanted onto the protective wall, in its original condition. As the paint on the summit and the rims of the lunette has chipped, and discoloration has progressed severely,

¹¹ В. Димова, *Църковите в България през XIII-XIV век*, София 2008, 193-200.



fig. 5 Anna Hodegetria, 1180's, Kastoria, Agioi Anargyroi

the figures of the mother and daughter are hardly visible. Three-quarters view Anna holds the infant Virgin in her left arm, tucking up the maphorion and holding the left breast with the right hand. Infant virgin painted mostly in side-view clings to her mother's right hand with her left hand, and suckles on the breast. Their expressions are obscure due to discoloration.

(6) *Agios Stephanos, Kastoria, Greece (13/14C)*¹²

Two images of Anna remain on the second floor of the narthex. An Anna Dexiokratousa, featuring a mirror image composition of Hodegetria, is painted in the southern face of the partition of the window looking into naos from the narthex. The field is covered in graffiti and preservation is far from ideal. Three-quarters view Anna holds the infant Virgin in her right arm, and points to the child with her left hand. Anna tilts her head slightly towards the Virgin, and directs her gaze towards her. The Virgin's expression and gestures are obscured by graffiti. However, the Virgin lifts her chin and looks upwards towards Anna, suggesting that the two exchanged glazes.

The second image, an Anna Galaktotrophousa painted on the northern surface of the partition, has already been restored. Anna painted in three-quarters view wraps her left arm around the infant Virgin's

¹² Pelekanidis and Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, 6-21.



fig. 6 *Anna Galaktotrophousa*, 1191, Kurbinovo, Sv. Gjorgji

back, and supports her daughter's thigh with the right hand. Inscription flanking either side of Anna's head reads "Η ΑΓΙΑ ANNA. Anna tilts her head slightly towards the Virgin, and directs her gaze to the forward right. Infant Virgin is painted largely in side-view, supporting the mother's breast with both hands to drink milk. Her gaze is directed towards the mother's breast. The Virgin covers her body entirely with maphorion, and wears a veil on her head.

(7) *Bogorodica Zaumska, Peštani, Macedonia (1361, fig. 7)*¹³

An Anna Galaktotrophousa remains on the northern wall of the naos. A posthumously placed window cuts the left half of Anna's lower body, and graffiti has been carved onto the remaining field. Anna in three-quarters view wraps her left arm around the infant Virgin's back, and with the right hand tucks up the maphorion and to hold the left breast. Anna tilts her head slightly towards the Virgin, and looks at her daughter drinking milk. The Virgin painted in side-view lies in the mother's left arm, placing her left hand on the breast to drink milk. The direction

¹³ Ц. Грозданов, *Охридското зидно сликарство од XIV век*, Охрид 1980, 103-120; С. Коруневски и Е. Димитрова, *Византиска Македонија: Историја на Уметноста на Македонија од IX до XV век*, Milano, 2006, 197-198.



fig. 7 *Anna Galaktotrophousa*, 1361, Peštani, *Bogorodica Zaumska*

of her gaze cannot be determined due to chipping of the paint.

(8) *Agios Nikolaos Orphanos, Thessaloniki, Greece (1310-20)*¹⁴

An Anna Eleousa remains in the northern aisle. Although partly chipped with some discoloration around the feet, the fresco is fairly well preserved. Three-quarters view Anna places her right hand on the infant's left knee, and draws the Virgin closer by wrapping her left arm around the waist. Anna tilts her head and touches cheeks with the infant. The eye area has been scraped off and the direction of her gaze is unknown. The Virgin painted mostly in side-view places her left hand on her mother's collar and wraps the right hand around the mother's neck. The Virgin's face has also been scraped off and the direction of her gaze is unclear, but the mother and the child most likely exchanged gazes as is common among images of the Virgin Eleousa. Anna and the Virgin both cover their bodies in maphorion, and wear a veil the head.

(9) *Kraljeva Crkva, Manastir Studenica, Serbia (1314, fig. 8)*¹⁵

¹⁴ Ed. by X. Μπακιρτζής, *Αγίος Νικόλαος Ορφανός: Οι Τοιχογραφίες*, Θεσσαλονίκη, 2003.

¹⁵ R. Hamann-Mac Lean and H. Hallensleben, *Die Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien vom 11. bis*



fig. 8 Anna Eleousa, 1314, Manastir Studenica, Kraljeva Crkva

An Anna Eleousa remains on the southern wall. Although here too the paint is partly chipped and the feet area discolored, the fresco is fairly well preserved. The artwork is known to be painted by Michael and Eutychios who worked under the Serbian king Stefan Uroš II Milutin (reign 1282-1321). Anna depicted in three-quarters view places her left hand along the Virgin's right knee, and wraps her right arm around the Virgin's waist to hold her closer. Anna tilts her head to touch cheeks with her daughter. Her gaze is directed towards the forward left. The Virgin painted mostly in side-view places her right hand on her mother's collar and wraps the left hand around the mother's neck. The direction of the Virgin's gaze is unknown due to chipped paint, but judging from the direction of the face, was towards her mother, Anna. The Virgin covers her head with a scarf, and wears an earring on the right ear.

(10) *Chora Monastery, Istanbul, Turkey (1316-21 fig. 3)*¹⁶
A mosaic panel of Anna Eleousa remains in the exonarthex. Paint on the large part of the panel has chipped, leaving only Anna's upper body and the Vir-

gin's head. Anna painted in three-quarters view seems to be placing her right hand on the young daughter's knee, and drawing her close by wrapping the left arm around her waist. Anna tilts her head deeply as if to touch cheeks with the Virgin. Anna's gaze is towards the forward right. The Virgin most likely was painted in side-view. The remaining left hand was probably placed on the mother's collar, with the right hand holding the mother's neck. The depth of the tenderness shown in this work is worth a special mention. Although the tesserae around Anna's mouth have been scraped off, the mother and the daughter seems to be exchanging kisses rather than merely touching cheeks.

(11) *Prophetis Ilias, Thessaloniki, Greece (second half of 14th century)*¹⁷

In the niche on the western outer wall is an Anna Eleousa. The paint is chipped severely, leaving the fresco in poor condition. Three-quarters view Anna places her right hand on the infant's left knee, drawing the Virgin close by wrapping her left arm around the waist. Anna tilts her head lightly to touch cheeks with the infant. Paint on the face is chipped entirely, and the direction of her gaze is unclear. The Virgin is depicted in side-view, laying her hand on the mother's collar, and wrapping her right hand around the neck. The expression on the Virgin's face is also unknown, due to chipped paint. The Virgin's body is wrapped entirely in maphorion, with a veil over the head.

(12) *Kalenić Monastery, Serbia (Circa 1415)*¹⁸

An Anna Hodegetria remains on the Northern wall of the sanctuary. Although discoloration has progressed, preservation can be considered fair. Three-quarters view Anna holds the Virgin in her left arm, and lays the right hand along the infant's left foot. The Virgin directs her gaze towards the forward right, and lies peacefully and relaxed in her mother's arms. Her face is towards the right in the opposite direction from Anna, and although the condition of the painting around her eyes is poor and the direction of her gaze difficult to decipher, it was most likely directed towards the forward right, similar to her mother. The right arm is placed lightly on the right leg, but the position of the left arm behind the iconostasis is unknown.

(13) *Agia Anna, Anisaraki, Crete, Greece (1462)*¹⁹

¹⁷ Eds. by Ch. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi et al., *Thessaloniki and Its Monuments*, Thessaloniki, 1985, 128-136; eadem, *Byzantine Thessaloniki*, Thessaloniki, 1992, 157-161.

¹⁸ M. Đ. Milićević, *Manastir Kalenić: Zadužbina despota Stefana Lazarevića (1405-1427)*, Beograd, 1897; S. Radojčić, *Kalenić: Medieval art in Yugoslavia*, Beograd, 1964.

¹⁹ I. Spatharakis, *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete*, Leiden, 2002, 207-210.

zum frühen 14. Jahrhundert, Bildband (Osteuropastudien der Hochschulen des Landes Hessen Reihe II, Band 3), Giessen, 1963, pls. 29-30.

¹⁶ See note 5.

Two frescoes of Anna remain in Agia Anna. The image on the iconostasis is painted according to the iconography of Hodegetria. Preservation is fair, although paint on Anna and the Virgin's eye and mouth area have both been scraped off. Anna is painted in three-quarters view, holding the infant Virgin in the left arm, and pointing to her with the right hand. The direction of her gaze is unknown, but was probably towards the viewer, as seen in most Hodegetria images with upright position. Deep creases line Anna's face. The Virgin is also painted in three-quarters view, directing her gaze towards Anna, reaching her left hand towards the mother, and laying the right hand on the right knee.

The fresco remaining on the north pilaster is an Anna Galaktotrophousa. Here too Anna's eyes have been scraped off, and paint is chipped significantly especially in the lower body. Anna is painted in three-quarters view, holding the Virgin with her left arm, tucking up the maphorion to hold the left breast with her right hand. The direction of the gaze is unknown. The Virgin is painted in side-view, and lies in Anna's left arm wrapped in swaddling clothes. She drinks milk at her mother's bidding, and her gaze is towards the mother.

Table 1: List of Anna Eleousa

Iconography	Date	Country	Town	Church
Hodegetria	ca. 650	Italy	Rome	Santa Maria Antiqua
Hodegetria	ca. 7C	Italy	Rome	Santa Maria Antiqua
Hodegetria	976-1025	Turkey	Belisırma	Direkli Kilise
Hodegetria	1180's	Greece	Kastoria	Agg. Anargyroi
Galaktotrophousa	1191	Macedonia	Kurbinovo	Sv. Gjorgji
Galaktotrophousa	1230	Bulgaria	Veliko Tarnovo	Chetirideset Machenitsi
Dexiokratousa	13C	Greece	Kastoria	Ag. Stephanos
Galaktotrophousa	14C	Greece	Kastoria	Ag. Stephanos
Galaktotrophousa	1361	Macedonia	Ohrid	Bogorodica Zaumska
Eleousa	1310-1320	Greece	Thessaloniki	Ag. Nikolaos Orphanos
Eleousa	1314	Serbia	Studnica	Kraljeva Crkva
Eleousa	1316-1321	Turkey	Istanbul	Chora
Eleousa	1360-1370	Greece	Thessaloniki	Prophetis Ilias
Hodegetria	ca.1415	Serbia	Kalenić	Kalenić Monastery
Hodegetria	1462	Greece	Anisaraki	Ag. Anna
Galaktotrophousa	1462	Greece	Anisaraki	Ag. Anna

Anna and the Virgin in Sources and Narrative Images Above, the paper has overviewed 16 works of Anna Eleousa remaining in 13 churches, as listed in Table 1. According to the table, works featuring Anna has been created since as early as pre-iconoclasm period. Out of the 16 works, the most prevalent is Hodegetria with 7 remaining, including one Dexiokratousa. Next is Galaktotrophousa with 5, and lastly, Eleousa with 4. The table also shows that Hodegetria is the oldest among the iconography applied to Anna, with

the Galaktotrophousa images appearing after Mid-Byzantine.

The most interesting iconographic development apparent from the table is that the Anna Eleousa appears in Constantinople and the Balkans only after the beginning of 14th century. The Byzantines are known for recreating the same iconographies for as long as over 1,100 years, which some for lack of creativity. However on the other hand, minute changes and creation of new iconography in such conservative Byzantine iconographical tradition can be interpreted as signifying the change in the attitudes of those who perceive the themes and the objects involved in the artworks. Thus, the introduction of Eleousa into the iconographical tradition of Anna would suggest a change in the Byzantine's attitude towards Anna.

Why then, was Eleousa implemented in representations of Anna? The paper has pointed out in the beginning how during Mid-Byzantine, expressions of emotions unique to Eleousa such as touching of the cheeks and the embrace were understood by the viewers as motifs foretelling the Passion of Christ. This may lead some to suspect that perhaps element of the Passion seen between the Virgin and the Child is shared by Anna and the Virgin. Thus the paper will

now consider the connection between the mother Anna and the child Virgin and the Passion during the Mid-Byzantine, when numerous homilies on Passion were written. Below is part of a homily read by Patriarch Photios (858-67, 877-86) on the Birth of the Virgin (September 8th, 863).

The present feast honouring the birth of the Virgin Mother of God easily carries off the glittering prize of seniority against every competitors. For, just as we



fig. 9 Holy Family, 1314, Manastir Studenica, Kraljeva Crkva

know, the root to be the cause of blanches, the stem, the fruit and flower, though it is for the sake of the fruit that care and labour are expended on the others, and without the root none of the rest grows up, so without the Virgin's feast none of those that sprang out of it would appear.....

Today Anna is shorn of the reproach of sterility, and the world reaps the crop of joy..... The Virgin comes forth from a sterile womb..... What a miracle! When the time of sowing had passed, then came the moment of bearing fruit. When the flame of desire had been extinguished, then the torch of childbearing was lit. Youth did not produce a flower, yet old age puts forth a shoot.²⁰

Although Photios sees the birth of the Virgin as the origin of salvation and celebrates the miraculous conception of elderly Anna throughout, no part of the homily relates the mother and the child with Passion. Photios is known to have participated actively as an iconodule polemist immediately after iconoclasm, and has authored a total of 18 homilies during his years as the Patriarch. In line with the other contem-

porary authors, he too wrote the Passion homilies from the standpoint of those who argue for the humanity of Christ²¹ -which was the focus of iconoclastic argument-, and criticisms against iconoclasts are often woven into his other homilies as well. However, even Photios is unable to insert apologetic remarks on the Birth of the Virgin, and preaches the Virgin's birth to Anna as an event to be celebrated with joy.

If there is no element of Passion between Anna and the Virgin, what are the other possibilities? Returning to the point of origin, there may be some hints in the Protoevangelion of James, which is the basis for the Life of the Virgin. The Protoevangelion of James is known to cover the events from the Birth of the Virgin up till the Nativity of Christ, and for its thorough description of the first half of the Virgin's life. Nonetheless, there is no place in the story for the Virgin's parents -Joachim and Anna- after the Presentation of the Virgin, and thus even in the Protoevangelion of James, there is only one scene that suggest the relationship between Anna and Mary.

And day by day the child waxed strong, and when she was six months old her mother stood her upon the ground to try if she would stand; and she walked

²⁰ Ed. by Β. Λαούρδας, *Φωτίου Ομίλιαι*, Θεσσαλονίκη, 1959 [hereafter Λαούρδας, *Ομίλιαι*], 90; ed. and trans. by C. Mango, *The Homilies of Photius Patriarch of Constantinople*, Cambridge, Mass., 1958 [hereafter Mango, *Homilies*], 165-166.

²¹ Photios' Homily XI is the first Byzantine homily with the Descent from the Cross as its theme. Λαούρδας, *Ομίλιαι*, 105-121; Mango, *Homilies*, 193-212.



fig. 10 Holy Family, 1316-21, Istanbul, Chora Monastery

seven steps and returned unto her bosom. And she caught her up, saying: As the Lord my God liveth, thou shalt walk no more upon this ground, until I bring thee into the temple of the Lord. And she made a sanctuary in her bed chamber and suffered nothing common or unclean to pass through it. And she called for the daughters of the Hebrews that were undefiled, and they carried her hither and thither.....
And her mother caught her up into the sanctuary of her bed chamber and gave her suck. And Anna made a song unto the Lord God, saying: I will sing an hymn unto the Lord my God, because he hath visited me and taken away from me the reproach of mine enemies, and the Lord hath given me a fruit of his righteousness, single and manifold before him. Who shall declare unto the sons of Reuben that Anna giveth suck? Hearken, hearken, ye twelve tribes of Israel, that Anna giveth suck. And she laid the child to rest in the bed chamber of her sanctuary, and went forth and ministered unto them. And when the feast was ended, they gat them down rejoicing, and glorifying the God of Israel.²²

As the main image source for the Life of the Virgin,

²² Trans. by M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament: being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses, with other narratives and fragments*, Oxford, 1926, 41.

the Protoevangelion of James provides an abundance of information. First of all, the question of how Anna came to be depicted in Galaktotrophousa is answered in Anna's troparion presented in the latter half of the excerpt. Galaktotrophousa Virgins are quite rare in Byzantine tradition to begin with. Among the more than 1,200 examples of the Virgin and the Child images that the researcher surveyed thus far, only 10 are Galaktotrophousa. Contrarily, the above table shows that 5 out of 16 works are Anna Galaktotrophousa. Notwithstanding the difference in the total number of remaining works and the possibility that the remaining works don't necessarily reflect fairly the contemporary situation, this difference in ratio seems to suggest the establishment of the tradition to depict Anna as the nursing mother during the Mid-Byzantine. Right after the above excerpt of the homily, Photios inquires the audience why Anna is able to provide milk from her barren breasts²³. If the remark speaks for the general understanding of Anna, it is understandable why the iconography of Galaktotrophousa, which was rarely used to depict the Virgin, was applied to Anna. The barren chest nourishing the child is the most phenomenal miracle attributed to Anna, and it is this image of her baring her breast to nurse the child that proves the works of God that made the impossible possible.

²³ Λαούρδας, *Ομιλίες*, 91; Mango, *Homilies*, 166-167.



fig. 11 North Wall of Kraljeva Crkva, 1314, Manastir Studenica, Kraljeva Crkva

The first half of the excerpt depicts how Anna raises the Virgin segregated from all impurities, confirming the Virgin's purity and her adequacy as the mother of God. Remarks such as "thou shalt walk no more upon this ground" or descriptions such as setting up a sanctuary in the bedroom may cause some readers to smile at Anna's protectiveness as a mother. The section in the excerpt describing how the "she walked seven steps and returned unto her bosom" was incorporated into the Life of the Virgin illustrations in churches, beginning with Chapel of Joachim and Anna in Kızıl Çukur, Cappadocia (end of 9th century through beginning of 10th century)²⁴, and by the beginning of 14th century, had become a common theme in various churches²⁵.

Two centuries after the First Seven Steps was first introduced into church decoration, an image nowhere to be spotted in the Protoevangelion of James suddenly start to appear in the Virgin's Childhood cycle either before or after the depiction of the First Seven Steps. Fig.9 is part of the Childhood of the Virgin cycle painted on the southern wall of Kraljeva Crkva in Manastir Studenica. Joachim sits on the left side of a sofa with a backrest. Anna sits on the right side, and the Virgin is positioned between her parents, on Anna's knee. Joachim tilts his head towards the Virgin, and supports her with the right hand. On the

other hand, Anna tilts her head deeply as if to kiss the Virgin, and places her left hand on the Virgin's left knee. The Virgin, perhaps delighted to be nursed by both of her parents, touches her mother Anna's cheek with her left hand.

Till this day, there is no definite diminutive for this warm scene of the holy family, quite rare in Byzantine. This paper will tentatively call the iconography, the "the Holy Family." The researcher believes that the Holy Family holds the key to understanding the Byzantines' understanding of the relationship between Anna and the Virgin, and the reason for depicting Anna in the Eleousa style. The paper will now discuss these questions in five points.

First is the question of distribution. Above Table 2 is the accumulation of data on the Holy Family listed by J.Lafontaine-Dosogne. For some of the Churches, she mentions only the locations and not the names. Such churches are listed with a question mark in the "church/material" column. According to the table, 4 examples of the Holy Family remain from the 12th century. For the 13th century, 4 remains and the number develop onto 12 in the 14th century, and 6 in the 15th century. The notable tendency is the spread of iconography to Constantinople and the Balkans after 13th century, and sudden rise in number during the 14th century. Returning to the development of data in Table 1, the fact that this phenomenon matches with the case of Anna Eleousa both in terms of geography and period is suggestive. It is possible to dismiss this

²⁴ Lafontaine-Dosogne, *op. cit.*, 122.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 122-124.

as a natural phenomenon, considering that the effective Byzantine territory in the 14th century was in the vicinity of the capital and the Balkans. However, the concentration of Anna Eleousa and the Holy Family in certain period and geography, and the existence of “masterpieces” such as the works remaining in Studenica and Chora Monastery seem to suggest even that the two iconographies were received simultaneously in combination.

an Armenian version titled *The Armenian Gospel of the Infancy*, which is commonly called the Peeters edition. It is said that the Protoevangelion of James reached Armenia by the 9th century through the medium of the Syriac manuscript, and the text was further revised in the process of translation, leading to the present day Armenian version.

The previously quoted original Protoevangelion of James, merely states “she walked seven steps and re-

Table 2: List of the Holy Family

Support	Date	Country	Town	Church / Material
Fresco	1150's	Russia	Pskov	Spas-Mirožski
Fresco	1189	Russia	Arkaž	Bragovieschjenje
Manuscript	12C	Italy	Vatican	Vat.gr.1162, fol.46 ^v
Fresco	12C	Georgia	Ahtala	?
Fresco	1265-1268	Serbia	Sopoćani	Sv. Trojici
Fresco	before1276	Croatia	Gradac	Bogorodica
Fresco	1294/95	Macedonia	Ohrid	Bogorodica Periblepta
Fresco	late13C	Macedonia	Sušica	Bogorodica
Fresco	1310-1314	Greece	Thessaloniki	Agg. Apostoloi
Fresco	1312	Greece	Mt. Athos	Vatopedi
Fresco	1314	Serbia	Studenica	Kraljeva Crkva
Fresco	1316-1318	Macedonia	Staro Nagoričane	Sv. Gjorgji
Mosaic	1316-1321	Turkey	Istanbul	Chora
Fresco	1324-1337	Kosovo	Peć	Bogorodica
Fresco	ca.1330	Serbia	Donja Kamenica	Bogorodica
Fresco	1335	Serbia	Karan	Bela Crkva
Fresco	ca.1350	Kosovo	Dečani	Sv. Spas
Fresco	1355-1360	Macedonia	Matejče	Bogorodica
Fresco	ca.1368	Macedonia	Ohrid	Bogorodica Bolnička
Fresco	1384-1396	Georgia	Calendžicha	?
Fresco	14C	Georgia	Zarzma	?
Fresco	14C	Greece	Krista	Panagia Kera
Fresco	ca.1400	Serbia	Donja Kamenica	Bogorodica
Fresco	1407-1413	Serbia	Kalenić	Vavedenje
Textile	1410-1425	Russia	Moscow Hist. Mus.	Aer of Souzdal
Fresco	1462	Greece	Kandanos	Ag. Anna
Fresco	1493	Bulgaria	Kremikovtsi	Sv. Georgi Pobedonosets
Fresco	15C	Greece	Kardos	Panagia

Secondly, there is the question of source. J.Lafontaine-Dosogne has pointed out that the Scene of the Holy Family is based on the two alternative versions of the Protoevangelion of James²⁶. The first is a Syriac manuscript commonly called the Budge edition after its reviser. Although the complete manuscript Budge used is from 1680 and relatively new, the text itself is preserved in the Peeters edition and a 14th century manuscript, and the original version is said to have been created no later than 9th century. The second is

turned unto her bosom. And she caught her up, saying” right after the first seven steps. However, both the Syriac and the Armenian versions adds some embellishments to the original words, the corresponding section in the Syrian version stating “she caught her up, kissed her and saying”²⁷, and the Armenian version “she caught her up, saying with caress²⁸”. Al-

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 125.

²⁷ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The History of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the History of the Likeness of Christ which the Jews of Tiberias Made to Mock at*, London, 1899, 14.

²⁸ Ch. Michel et P. Peeters, *Évangiles apocryphes, II: 1'*



fig. 12 South Wall of Kraljeva Crkva, 1314, Manastir Studenica, Kraljeva Crkva

though when and how the alternative versions, or the images found in the alternative versions entered the Byzantine mainland, the expression of tenderness is reflected strongly in the Holy Family in Studenica, as previously confirmed.

In relation to the embellishments seen in the alternative versions, the captions added to the Scene of the Holy Family is also a matter worth considering. The paper has thus far called the iconography of the happily interacting holy family “the Holy Family,” having explained that this is not the formal diminutive. In Byzantine art, particular scenes are often assigned particular inscriptions. Scholars of Byzantine art are able to learn how a scene was recognized by the contemporaries by looking at the inscriptions. However, most of the Holy Family lacks inscription, and to this day, scholars use varying names to address the iconography.

Under such circumstances, the work remaining in Chora monastery (fig.10)²⁹ is an only exception. The iconography itself is almost identical to that of Studenica. Joachim touches his cheek with the Virgin, and Anna nurses the Virgin. The Virgin sitting on the knees of her parents twists her body and reaches with

the right hand towards her mother’s face. An inscription remains above the family’s heads, reading “Ἡ κολακεία τῆς Θεοτόκου,” or “caress of the Mother of God.” Thus, the inscription in Chora monastery points out that the contemporaries understood this iconography as a scene depicting the parents giving their love to a young daughter.

Having addressed the issue of how the contemporary Byzantines understood the relationship between Anna and the Virgin, the paper will now consider the other issue – why Anna was painted in the iconography of Eleousa. The iconographic program of Kraljeva Crkva in Manastir Studenica provides some hints to this question. On the Kraljeva Crkva’s northern wall, the middle tier shows the Virgin being blessed by the priests and the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple. The lower tier shows the Virgin Hodegetria (fig.11). On the southern wall, the middle tier shows the scenes starting with the Meeting at the Golden Gate to the Virgin being loved by her parents, together constituting scenes before and after the Virgin’s birth. The bottom tier shows an Anna Eleousa (fig.12). Looking at the combination with the Infancy of the Virgin scenes in the northern and the southern walls, the role of the two mother and the child images become naturally clear. The Virgin Hodegetria on the northern wall foretells the viewers of the Virgin’s future, or the events after the presentation in the temple, where the Virgin will part with her parents to grow

Évangile de l’Enfance. Rédactions syriaques, arabe et arméniennes, Paris, 1914 (1924²), II, 9.

²⁹ Underwood, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, 71-72, vol. 2, 114-115, pls. 90-91.



fig. 13a Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1162, fol. 46v, second quarter of 12th century, Rome, Vatican Library



fig. 13b Part of fig. 13a

up in the temple and then become the Mother of God. Contrarily, the Anna Eleousa in the southern wall, together with the Holy Family reminds the viewers of the events prior to the presentation in the temple, or the past, where Anna gave her love to the miraculously conceived daughter. The two mother and the child images were clearly painted with the intention that the viewers will look alternately between the vertical tiers in order to understand one another, and thus, it is highly likely that the Anna Eleousa and the Holy Family were, as in the case of the Virgin Eleousa and Threnos, acknowledged as iconography enhancing the understanding of the other.

An Even better and more direct example implying the inter-referentiality between Anna Eleousa and the Holy family are the illustrations in Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1162 (fig.13a)³⁰. The illustration consists of three parts, the top tier featuring the Virgin being blessed by the priests, the lower left the infant Virgin being lulled in her cradle, the lower right the Virgin being caressed by her mother. In the lower right illustration, Anna holds the Virgin up to kiss her, and Mary reaches towards the mother's neck (fig. 13b), as stated in the alternative versions of the Protoevangelion of James. Here, Anna is clearly represented in the same

iconography as Eleousa, and thus is a unique proof that the Byzantines saw Eleousa as an iconography appropriate to represent a mother loving her child.

Conclusion

What then does the emergence of Anna Eleousa signify in Byzantine Art History? This chapter will look back on the argument of this paper and consider the significance of Anna Eleousa. The Byzantines seem to have held two different impressions towards the Virgin's mother, Anna. One is Anna as the "embodiment of miracle," who due to God's will conceived a daughter at an old age. The extraordinary event of an elderly woman suckling her infant was the miracle representing Anna's life, and in order to maintain this miracle in their memory, the Byzantines applied the breast-baring Galaktotrophousa in depicting Anna.

The other is the impression of a tender mother giving love to her daughter. When and how exactly the alternative versions of the Protoevangelion of James, which is the source of this image, was brought into the Byzantine mainland remains a mystery. Perhaps the contemporaries merely overlapped the images of the ordinary mothers on the simple descriptions of the Protoevangelion of James. In any case, one could point out the possibility that the iconography of Eleousa could have permeated by 14th century as a way of representing the tender mother Anna.

³⁰ Lafontaine-Dosogne, *op. cit.*, 125, fig. 75.

This is extremely important in considering the reception of the Virgin Eleousa in Byzantine society. In Mid-Byzantine, the embrace and display of emotion seen in Eleousa was said to signify the Passion and the Lament. Thus, Eleousa was understood as the iconography containing the two dogmas crucial to the understanding of Christology, Incarnation and Passion. In the words of Kalavrezou³¹, in Mid-Byzantine, the embrace in Eleousa was seen as the representation of salvation. With the coming of the Late-Byzantine, the same embrace and the display of emotion were received not merely in the context of dogmatic framework such as Incarnation or Passion, but also in the emotional dimension, as a materialization of the maternal tenderness. In the Late-Byz-

antine, the Virgin Eleousa begin to appear in more private mediums such as smaller icons or funeral chapels³². This also seems to confirm the fact that the contemporaries perceived Eleousa as an iconography inspiring familiarity.

Patriarch Photios for the first time in Byzantine history, commented on the Virgin as a tender mother on March 29th, 876³³. People most likely already viewed the Virgin as the tender mother at that time, or since even further back to the times before propagation of Christianity. However, this only becomes visible to our eyes after the Late-Byzantine.

Waseda University, Tokyo
Translation by Suijun Ra

³¹ I. Kalavrezou, “*Exchanging Embrace. The Body of Salvation,*” in: *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. by M. Vassilaki, London, 2005, 103-116, esp. 109.

³² H. Sugawara, “*The Virgin Eleousa in the Parekklesion of Chora Monastery, Istanbul,*” *Studies of media, body, and image* 2 (2012), 27-45 (in Japanese).

³³ Λαοῦρδᾶ, *Ομιλίες*, pp. 166-67; Mango, *Homilies*, 289-290.

СВ. АНА ЕЛЕУСА КАКО ПРЕТСТАВА НА НЕЖНОСТА

Резиме

Овој труд се фокусира на св. Ана Елеуса, при што таа се разгледува од аспект на тоа како Богородица Елеуса била прифатена за време на доцновизантискиот период (XIII-XV век Н.Е.).

Според сознанијата на авторот, постојат шеснаесет слики на св. Ана од овој тип, создадени во духот на иконографија на Богородица со Христос. Разгледувањето на овие претстави во еден хронолошки редослед не води до едно интересно откритие.

Од VII, па сè до доцниот XII век, Ана била претставувана во иконографскиот тип на Одигитрија. Меѓутоа, од крајот на XII век Галактотрофуса, каде што мајката ги открива градите за да го нахрани детето, станува водечка иконографска претстава.

Св. Ана Елеуса за која станува збор се појавува ненадејно на почетокот на XIV век.

Изборот на последните два иконографски типови, што е голема реткост во случајот на Богородица со Христос, силно го одразува византиското разбирање на Ана.

Разгледувањето на службите и наративните претстави на детството на Марија, како што е Протоевангелието на Јаков, откриваат дека за разлика од случајот на Богородица со малиот Христос, не постојат елементи кои укажуваат на идната трагедија, како што е Страданието помеѓу Ана и Марија, и дека рождеството на Марија е сфатено, главно, како радосен настан.

Покрај тоа, станува јасно дека современите негувале две различни претстави на Ана: првата е претставата на Ана како отелотворение на чудото според кое, со Божјата промисла, жена во поодминати години родила дете. Противречноста, при која стара жена го дои новороденчето е навистина најголемото чудо во животот на Ана. Иконографскиот тип на Галактотрофуса, каде што мајката ги

открива градите, најверојатно бил избран со цел да се одржи споменот на ова чудо.

Втората слика на Ана е онаа каде што таа е претставена како нежна мајка која ја милува својата малечка ќерка. Оваа претстава се базира врз сириската и ерменската верзија на Протоевангелието на Јаков и се шири брзо во текот на XIV век, кога Ана Елеуса се јавува како семејна слика каде што Јоаким и Ана со љубов ја милуваат малечката Марија.

Фактот што овие две ликовни претстави се концентрирани приближно околу истиот период, укажуваа на тоа дека современите ја признале и потврдиле меѓусебната поврзаност на двете претстави.

Понатаму, земајќи ги во предвид делата како што се Хомилиите на Јаков Кокинобафос, може да заклучиме дека иконографскиот тип на Елеуса бил прифатен како најпогоден за претставување на нежната мајка кон почетокот на XIV век.

Појавата на св. Ана Елеуса е од суштинско значење во однос на прифаќањето на идентичниот тип на претставата на Богородица со Христос.

Во средновизантискиот период, откако поминале низ научните дебати од времето на иконоборството, на преградката и изразувањето на емоциите кај Богородица Елеуса се гледало како на показател на Страданието и претстојната тага, на тој начин како што и сликата ја содржела во себе доктрината на Овоплотувањето и на Страданието што било од суштинско значење за разбирањето на дискусиите за Христос.

Меѓутоа, во доцновизантискиот период, таа иста преградка и покажувањето на емоциите, најверојатно, биле прифатени надвор од доктринарната рамка, исто како и Овоплотувањето и Страданието, на повисоко психолошко и емоционално ниво.

