LOST ICON PROTOTYPES FROM THE TIMES OF NEAGOE BASARAB

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The study analyzes a group of lesser-known icons from Wallachia, dating from the 15th century to the mid-17th century. They are Eleousa-Glykophilousa icons, sometimes mixing in a rarer iconographic detail, a phylactery with inscription held by the Infant Jesus. These icons do not descent from a single prototype, but from several related types, of Late Byzantine, Macedonian, and Cretan origins. They seemed to have entered Wallachia in two different stages. The first Eleousa icon known in Wallachia, originating in the former Metropolitan Cathedral at Curtea de Argeş and later moved to the monastery founded by Neagoe Basarab on the same spot, likely was a Late Byzantine icon from the 14th or 15th century. The Wallachian icons of the 16th century shared related iconographic characteristics. The epoch of Neagoe Basarab acted as a catalyst for the different iconographic variants of Palaiologan and post-Palaiologan tradition, both through the cult dedicated to the Mother of God that the voivode developed at the Curtea de Argeş Monastery, his emblematic aulic foundation, and through the great development and renewal of the artistic culture that he sustained in Wallachia and which was emulated later on.

Keywords: icon painting, Eleousa, Glykophilousa, Neagoe Basarab, Curtea de Argeş, Metropolitan Cathedral of Wallachia.

Research on the painting of the period of Voivode Neagoe Basarab has been confronted with the quasi complete lack of preserved artistic material from the 15th century, a situation that limited the investigation of stylistic and iconographic evolution of the early 16th century to a great degree. As a consequence, art historians were forced more to intuit, rather than document, a continuum of evolution and conservation of typologies between the second half of the 14th century and the early 16th century. Alexandru Efremov[1] and especially Constanţa Costea[2] covered the gap left by the lack of artistic vestiges by inferring a Late Palaiologan tradition that had been acclimatized in Wallachian painting from the mid-14th century and which continued since then, still manifesting strongly during Neagoe Basarab's period.

[1] See Alexandru Efremov, "Icoane de la Bistriţa Craioveştilor", *Revista Muzeelor*, 6, 1969, p. 467–470; idem, "Probleme ale cristalizării stilului în pictura de icoane în sec. XVI şi o „nouă" icoană din epoca lui Neagoe Basarab", *Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice*, XL, 1971, no. 3, p. 87–94; idem, *Icoane româneşti*, Editura Meridiane, Bucureşti, 2003, p. 30–44.

[2] Constanţa Costea, "Unpublished works to complete the catalogue of Wallachian painting in the sixteenth century", *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art – Série Beaux-Arts*, 27, 1990, p. 19–33, at 33.

The hypothesis seems well-founded if we consider the high-quality painting works made in Wallachia in the second half of the 14th century[3] and then the exceptional artistic examples of the early 16th century, which apparently suggest a continuum of uninterrupted evolution between them. However, this view becomes problematic when confronted with the rarity of major founding initiatives in Wallachia from 1420s to the late 1480s, which challenges the view that the artistic evolution was uninterruptedly kept throughout the 15th century. In this study, I will analyze a group of little known icons which were not thoroughly studied nor corroborated, and I will readdress the issue of the "lost 15th century", investigating how the Late Palaiologan painting tradition became articulated into the Wallachian painting and how this influence came into different stages, being progressively synthesized in the local art. The group of icons shares related iconographic characteristics and the role of the epoch of Neagoe Basarab is that it acted as a melting pot for the different iconographic variants of Palaiologan and post-Palaiologan tradition, both through the cultic aspects the voivode developed at the Curtea de Argeş Monastery and through the great development of the artistic culture that he sustained in Wallachia.

No significant patronage initiatives were recorded after the reign of Mircea the Elder and until Vlad the Monk. The chapter on architecture is modest both in the quality and the quantity of the monuments built during this period and extremely poor in preserved examples, although historians like Cristian Moisescu have seen in it, not without pertinent arguments, "qualitative accumulations, sometimes marked by original syntheses"[4]. Apparently, there was one – debatable – exception: the construction or renovation of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Curtea de Argeş, a monument extremely uncertain in terms of date, attribution, and even location. The only contribution to the Metropolitan complex that is known belongs to Voivode Vlad Dracul (Vlad the Dragon), who apparently put his sculpted coat of arms on the bell tower shortly before 15 August 1439, fact which undoubtedly relates him to the Metropolitan complex in some manner[5], though it remains unknown whether

[3] The frescoes of St. Nicholas Princely Church in Curtea de Argeş and the Cozia Monastery, the icon of St. Athanasius from the Great Lavra on Mount Athos donated by voivode Vladislav Vlaicu and the icon of the Mother of God from the Cotmeana Monastery; Petre Ş. Năsturel, "Aux origines des relations roumano-athonites: L'icône de saint Athanase de Lavra du voévode Vladislav", in *Actes du VIe Congrès international des études byzantines*, Paris, 1951, vol. II, p. 307–314; Efremov, *Icoane româneşti*, p. 24–27; p. 179 cat. 1–2.

[4] Cristian Moisescu, "Secolul al XV-lea, un *hiatus* şi o *stagnare* în arhitectura bisericilor de zid din Ţara Românească?", *Ars Transsilvaniae*, VII, 1997, p. 5–59, at p. 58; cf. Pavel Chihaia, "Date noi despre începuturile mănăstirii Govora", *Studii şi Cercetări de Istoria Artei – Seria Artă Plastică*, 13, 1966, p. 247.

[5] Pavel Chihaia, "Deux armoiries sculptées appartenant aux Voivodes Vlad Dracul at Neagoe Basarab", *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art*, vol. 1, 1964, p. 151–167; idem, "Stema voievodului Vlad Dracul de la Muzeul oraşului Curtea de Argeş", *Revista Muzeelor*, V, 1969, no. 5, p. 455–457; idem, "Steme şi simboluri la Mănăstirea Argeşului", in idem, *Artă medievală*, vol. 2: *Învăţături şi mituri în Ţara Românească*, Editura Albatros, Bucureşti, 1998, p. 64–82, at 64–65; Tereza Sinigalia, "Arhitectura Ţării Româneşti până către 1500", in Răzvan Theodorescu, Marius Porumb (eds.), *Arta din România, din preistorie în contemporaneitate* (col. Civilizaţia Românească 10), Editura Academiei Române, Bucureşti, 2018, vol. I, p. 135.

Vlad's intervention was restricted to the erection of the bell tower, it was more extensive or whether Vlad was the actual founder of the Metropolitan Cathedral. Neagoe Basarab decided, immediately after coming to the throne in 1512, to demolish the Metropolitan Cathedral, which was being found in ruins at that time, and to build on the same place his monastery, made of stone apparently in the same manner the former Metropolitan Cathedral was, as we find out from the Wallachian version of the *Life of St. Niphon the Patriarch of Constantinople*: "and took down the Argeş Metropolitan Cathedral together with its foundation and built on its place another holy church, *similarly of smooth wrought stone and carved with flowers* [emphasis added]"[6]. Of course, the stone sculpted façade of the Metropolitan Cathedral probably did not share any of the Ottoman-inspired decoration of the new monastery. It perhaps had sculpted rosettes (as Cozia, Dealu and Curtea de Argeş monastery churches do), carved portals and windows, maybe some bordering decorations on the domes and possibly other sculpted additions of which we do not know anything about. The stone sculpted with the coat of arms of Vlad the Dragon was the only piece from the former complex that was reused as building material to the construction of the bell tower at the new monastery.

The Metropolitan complex became ruined towards the end of the 15th century most likely because of the swampy ground on which it had been erected. Paul of Aleppo recorded that Neagoe and his masons "started the construction guided by God, as the chosen place was a lake in which brooks were gathering"[7]. As the location was not favorable, Patriarch Nifon of Constantinople insisted in 1502–1503 that Radu the Great moved the Metropolitan Seat to Târgovişte, fact which the voivode intended to do, but did not get to accomplish.[8] From the inscription on the façade of the Argeş Monastery church we find that the dedication feast of the former Metropolitan Cathedral was the Dormition of the Virgin Mary: "...having a heartful desire for the most holy and divine sanctuary of the most holy, pure and blessed Our Lady Mother of God and ever Virgin Mary, of the honorable Dormition, which I found my lordship at Curtea de Argeş dilapidated and unfortified ..."[9].

An old vestige that may be linked to the Metropolitan Cathedral is the miraculous icon of the Mother of God which was recuperated by Neagoe Basarab and put in the templon of the catholicon of his monastery. The story recorded by Paul of Aleppo in relation to it is particularly interesting because it offers key information on the initial location of the icon. The author recounted that, in the above-mentioned lake in which brooks were gathering, an old icon of Mother of God appeared. A priest took it and brought it to the church of St. Nicholas in the town, the former church of the Princely Court. Apparently, the icon did not approve its

[6] *Ibidem*, p. 27.

[7] Cf. Paul din Alep, *Jurnal de călătorie din Moldova şi Valahia*, ed. Ioana Feodorov, Bucureşti-Brăila, 2014, p. 325–326.

[8] "Viaţa şi traiul Sfântului Nifon, Patriarhul Constantinopolului", ed. Tit Simedrea, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, LV, 1937, p. 28, 30.

[9] Constantin Bălan, *Inscripţii medievale şi din epoca modernă a României. Judeţul istoric Argeş (sec. XIV–1848)*, Editura Academiei Române, Bucureşti, 1994, cat. 232, p. 208–210.

new location and returned to its previous place, "and thus God guided late voivode Neagoe who went to that place and started to build the monastery"[10]. A strong connection between the icon and the former Metropolitan Cathedral seems to come implicitly from the story. Moreover, the insistence in the story that the icon refused to stay in the Princely Church of St. Nicholas seems to indicate a strong memory among locals regarding the origin of the icon in the Metropolitan complex which apparently had been in a different location than the church of St. Nicholas of the Princely Court. This story apparently contradicts the opinion of most historians, starting with Nicolae Iorga, that the first location of the Metropolitan Seat of Wallachia was at the Princely Church in Argeş.

The locals considered the wonderworking icon of the Mother of God to be older than the double-sided Byzantine mosaic icon of Christ with lateral scenes, known as the Stabbed, brought by Neagoe Basarab from Constantinople and put in the templon of his monastery in Argeş, next to the Wallachian icon[11]. But this impression might have been caused by the state of preservation of the icon found in the swamp, which also passed through a fire during the attack of Gabriel Báthory's army on the monastery, in 1610–1611[12]. It still existed in the church in 1860, when Gheorghe Tattarescu represented it in a pencil drawing, occasion on which we find that its iconographic type was that of an Eleousa (fig. 1)[13]. The icon was permanently lost in a fire that broke out in the church on December 2, 1867[14]. As a precious relic of the Metropolitan Cathedral in the town, the Eleousa wonderworking icon must have been seen as a holy object of reference for Wallachia, finding its place in the luxurious monastic foundation of Neagoe Basarab. It was decorated by Neagoe with metal clothing and precious stones: "And the holy table, in the altar, was arranged and placed by Voivode Neagoe himself with his hands, for consecration, and he put the miracle-working icons of the Pantocrator and the Most Holy Virgin in the church in their place, also adorned with gold and precious stones"[15].

The icon is a classic type of Eleousa[16], the first with this iconography known from Wallachia. Tattarescu's drawing shows it covered with metalworks dating

[10] Paul din Alep, *Jurnal de călătorie*, p. 325–326.

[11] *Ibidem*, p. 329. A discussion of the mosaic icon of Curtea de Argeş with bibliography, at E. Negrău, „The Evolution of the Iconostasis in Wallachia in the 16th Century", in Srđan Pirivatrić, Andrei Timotin, and Oana Iacubovschi (ed.), *The Byzantine Heritage in Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages* [= *Études Byzantines et Post-Byzantines*, n.s., IV (IX), 2022], p. 175–207, at p. 180.

[12] Paul din Alep, *Jurnal de călătorie*, p. 327; cf. Emil Lăzărescu, "O icoană puţin cunoscută din secolul al XVI-lea şi problema pronaosului bisericii Mănăstirii Argeşului", *Studii şi Cercetări de Istoria Artei – Seria Artă Plastică*, 14, 1967, nr. 2, p. 196.

[13] Emanuela Cernea, Lucreţia Pătrăşcanu (eds.), *Mărturii. Frescele Argeşului*, catalog de expoziţie, Muzeul Naţional de Artă al României, 2nd edition, Bucureşti, 2019 (1st ed. 2012), p. 181, cat. 59b.

[14] E. Lăzărescu, "O icoană puţin cunoscută", p. 190–194, 198.

[15] "Viaţa şi traiul Sfântului Nifon", p. 29.

[16] On the birth and the evolution of the iconographic type of Eleousa, see André Grabar, "Sur les origines et l'évolution du type iconographique de la Vierge Eléousa", in *Mélanges Charles Diehl*, vol. 2, Paris, 1930, 29–42; Viktor Lasareff, "Studies in the Iconography of the Virgin", *The Art*

from various periods, the latest being 19th-century additions. However, the contours of the metal cover described long golden tassels of Byzantine fashion bordering the maphorion of the Virgin on her arm, which looked like they were reproducing the original painting. Thus, the icon likely was a sumptuous example of Late Byzantine painting. Contrariwise, the post-Byzantine Wallachian icons contemporary to the period of Neagoe Basarab, from Bistriţa and Govora monasteries (fig. 2) lost this luxurious detail of Byzantine origin with all its liturgical connotations behind it[17]. If the icon dated from the consecration of the Metropolitan Cathedral that took place sometime between the foundation of the Metropolis of Wallachia in 1359 and the feast of the Dormition of Mother of God on August 15, 1439, then it likely was a precious work, bought or received as a gift from Byzantium. It should have been seen as a reference devotional object for Wallachia since, as we will see further, it constituted an important iconographic link towards the 16th-century painting.

Another quasi-unknown icon is the Mother of God Hodegetria with the Infant brought from Stoeneşti-Suseni in Vâlcea, today preserved in a fragmentary state in the Art Museum in Râmnicu-Vâlcea (fig. 3). Laurenţiu Ene, who published the icon in 1986[18], linked it to the phase of the decoration with murals of the Govora Monastery by Voivode Radu the Great in 1495–1496[19]. The painter's hand precision, the graphic manner in which the golden tints on the vestments of Infant Jesus were drawn and the quality of the modelling of the hand of the Mother of God indicate a painting practice still closely tied to the Late Palaiologan traditions. The icon shows the Infant Jesus holding an unfolded phylactery on which it can be read the passage from John 8:12, азъ есьмь свѣтъ миру, "I am the Light of the world". The first preserved examples of this iconographic motif may be dated towards 1200. During the 13th and the 14th centuries it became assigned to various

Bulletin Vol. 20, No. 1, Mar., 1938, p. 26–65, at. 36–42; A. Grabar, "L'Hodigitria et l'Eleousa", *Зборник Матице Српске за Ликовне Уметности*, 10, 1974, p. 3–14; Mirjana Tatić-Đurić, "Eleousa: A la recherche du type iconografique", *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 25, 1976, p. 259–267 (republished in Serbian in eadem, *Студие о Богородици*, Belgrade, 2007, 133–143); Nicole Thierry, "La Vierge de tendresse à l'époque macédonienne", *Zograf*, 10, 1979, p. 59–70; Robert P. Bergman, "The Earliest Eleousa: A Coptic Ivory in the Walters Art Gallery", *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 48, 1990, p. 37–56; Maria Panayotidi, "Η εικόνα της Παναγίας Γλυκοφιλούσας στο μοναστήρι του Πετριζού (Bačkovo) στη Βουλγαρία", *Ευφρόσυνον. Αφιέρωμα στον Μανόλη Χατζηδάκη*, vol. 2, Athens, 1992, p. 449–468.

[17] On the liturgical significance of this iconographic motif apparently originating in the Old Testament vestments of the high priest, see Alexei M. Lidov, "Les motifs liturgiques dans le programme iconographique d'Axtala", *Zograf*, 20, 1989, p. 36.

[18] Laurenţiu Ene, "Uşile împărăteşti de la Stoeneşti-Vâlcea: premise ale unei analize stilistice şi iconografice", *Studii şi Cercetări de Istoria Artei – Seria Artă Plastică*, 33, 1986, p. 9, 11 şi fig. 8–9.

[19] Chrysobull of voivode Mircea Ciobanu to Govora Monastery, Apr. 1, 1551: "The father of my lordship, the late Radu voivode .... erected it and renewed it and painted it [i.e. the Govora Monastery] with the wealth of his lordship....as it stands to this day", in *Documente privind istoria României*: *B. Ţara Românească. Veacul al XVI-lea*, vol. II, Editura Academiei Române, Bucureşti, 1951, nr. 149, p. 150.

[19] Cf. L. Ene, "Uşile împărăteşti de la Stoeneşti-Vâlcea...".

icon types: Hodegetria, Eleousa, Glykophilousa, Karyotissa[20] (fig. 4). In the late 15th century, it had a momentum, although relatively short, among the Cretan painters. The inscriptions on the phylactery (or book) may differ, but in general the Late Byzantine and the Cretan icons display the passage from Luke 4:18 / Isaiah 61:1, read by Jesus in the synagogue after the 40 days spent in the wilderness: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor"[21] (fig. 4–5), a quote which is also frequently associated with the Emmanuel in mural representations. The icon examples from Late Byzantine and post-Byzantine periods illustrate this type in various formulae of Eleousa/Glykophilousa and variants of Hodegetria[22]. Within all these icons displaying a phylactery there is a preference for depicting the Infant's chiton in green or blue color, oftentimes short-sleeved and tied with a belt with stripes[23].

The scheme of the icon of Stoeneşti was resumed in an icon of the Mother of God at the Ostrov Monastery (fig. 6), a work that underwent later repainting in several stages[24]. It was dated in the second half of the 16th century, along with other two icons preserved in the iconostasis, the Pantocrator and the Nativity of the Virgin Mary[25]. However, the dimensions of the icon of the Mother of God are larger than those of the other two icons and moreover, the classical proportions of the figures and the finesse of the golden hatches on the Infant's garment, which have been left untouched by repainting, differ from the style of the other two icons, with thin, elongated silhouettes and strong brushstrokes of highlights. The typological and even chromatic similarities with the icon from Stoeneşti – the classical proportions of the facies of the Infant Christ, the phylactery with the passage from John 8:12 and the chiton of Jesus in the same blue-green color – indicate a direct kinship between the two icons and bring the icon closer to the moment of the reconstruction of the Ostrov hermitage by Neagoe Basarab and Despina in the summer of 1521.

Hodoş-Bodrog Monastery in Arad County, an Orthodox monastery with an extremely long existence going back to the 12th century, conserves a very little known icon of the Mother of God and the Infant with phylactery (fig. 7). Its very brief bibliography describes it as a piece of Cretan manufacture, a synthesis between the Glykophilousa and Kardiotissa[26]. Its iconographic type belongs to a

[20] Miodrag Marković, "The Virgin of Tenderness from Syracuse. Presentation and Iconographical Analysis of the Icon with Special Reference to the Belt with Straps of the Christ-Child", in Heide Buschhausen, Jadranka Prolović (eds.), *Erforschen – Erkennen – Weitergeben. Gewidmet dem Gedenken an Helmut Buschhausen*, Lohmar, 2021, p. 247–292 + 41 pl., at 252–254.

[21] *Ibidem.*

[22] *Ibidem*, p. 255–256.

[23] On this motif with liturgical connotations, evoking the Old Testament vestments of the high priest, see *ibidem*, p. 258–275.

[24] C. Bălan, *Inscripţii medievale şi din epoca modernă a României. Judeţul istoric Vâlcea (sec. XIV–1848)*, Editura Academiei Române, Bucureşti, 2005, p. 292.

[25] Marina-Ileana Sabados, "Les anciennes icônes de l'ermitage Ostrov–Vâlcea", *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art – Série Beaux-Arts*, L, 2013, p. 36–37, 43–44.

[26] See Ana Dumitran, review on Marius Oprea, Adriana Scărlătescu, *Mănăstirea Hodoş-Bodrog, Restaurarea picturii murale. Documentaţie ştiintifică*, Editura Arhiepiscopiei Aradului, Arad, 2012, 128 p., in *Apulum*, nr. 50, 2013, p. 644.

group of Cretan icons which flourished during the 15th century[27]. One of the first icons of this kind is found in the Hypapante Church in Santorini and may be dated to the early 15th century[28] (fig. 8). The icon at Hodoș-Bodrog was dated to the end of the 15th century or the beginning of the 16th century[29]. Indeed, the smooth modelling of the flesh and the vividness and brilliance of the eyes show a contamination with the naturalistic aesthetics of the Renaissance present among the Cretan painters toward 1500. The inscription on the phylactery, in Greek, reproduces the passage from Isaiah 61: 1 / Luke 4:18: Πν<εῦμ>α Κ<υρίο>υ/ ἐπ' ἐμέ/ οὗ ε[ἵ]νε/κεν ἔχ/ρυσέ<ν> μ[ε],"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and He hath anointed me (to preach good tidings to the poor)", used by the Cretan painters in this type of icons.

A different variant of the Eleousa/Glykophilousa we find in the icon with prophets at the church of St. Nicholas in Şcheii Braşovului (fig. 9). An inscription on its metal cloth put in 1761 dates the making of the icon and/or its donation to the church in 1564, by a Wallachian family of inhabitants in Şchei[30]. The icon was investigated and cleaned in 2003 by a team of specialists from the Art Museum in Braşov, but the urgent interventions were limited to fixing and cleaning the exposed parts of the painting layer without removing the metal cloth[31]. The type of icon in which the Infant has his arms denuded and grabs the Virgin Mother's chin with one hand had its cult center in the region of South-Western Macedonia and was therefore named Pelagonitissa after the principal town of the region, the ancient Pelagonia (Bitola). The cult probably had at its core a wonderworking icon that arrived in Bitola in the 13th century at the latest[32]. The birth date and origin of the iconography of Pelagonitissa remains subject to debate. André Grabar opted for identifying its source in the Glykophilousa type of Eleousa, whose oldest preserved exemplars date from 10th to 12th centuries[33]. It likely became spread in Byzantium in the 12th century and came to maturity in the 13th and 14th centuries.

[27] Such types of icons of Cretan manufacture are found in Louvre (inv. MI350/Campana 18), Petit Palais in Paris (inv. PPP4869), or National Gallery in Prague ("the Blue Madonna" attributed to Michael Fokas, loan from the Institute of Art History – The Czech Academy of Sciences, inv. VO304).

[28] On the pseudo-script on the border of the maphorion of the Virgin, a motif which flourished in the second half of the 14th century and the first decades of the 15th century, see Gordana Babić, "Le maphorion de la Vierge et le Psaume 44 (45) sur les images du XIVe siècle", in *Ευφρόσυνον. Αφιέρωμα στον Μανόλη Χατζηδάκη*, vol. 1, Athens, 1991, p. 57–64.

[29] A. Dumitran, *loc. cit*.

[30] Marius Porumb, "Vechi icoane din Şcheii Braşovului (sec. XVI–XVII)", *Revista Muzeelor şi Monumentelor – Seria Muzee*, XII, 1975, no. 2, p. 73–74; idem, *Pictura românească din Transilvania*, I, Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1981, p. 68–69.

[31] Gheorghe Mitran, "Eleusa – Icoana Maicii Domnului cu Pruncul din patrimoniul bisericii Sf. Nicolae din Schei-Braşov", *Cumidava*, XXVIII, 2005, p. 94–101.

[32] See Sanja Pajić, Rosa D'Amico, *La Theotokos Pelagonitissa. Un' iconografia tra l'Oriente, i Balcani e l'Italia nel medioevo*, Kragujevac, 2015, p. 12–15, 27–34.

[33] André Grabar, "Les images de la Vierge de tendresse. Type iconographique et thème (à propos de deux icons à Dečani)", *Zograf*, 6, 1975, p. 25–30; idem, "Remarques sur l'iconographie byzantine de la Vierge", *Cahiers Archéologiques,* XXVI, 1977, p. 169–178, at 171–174. See also M. Panayotidi, "Η εικόνα της Παναγίας Γλυκοφιλούσας".

Lydie Hadermann-Misguich added that the original lost icon from Bitola could have come from Thessaloniki, where such a late 12th century icon had survived (fig. 10), and the type probably had a Constantinopolitan origin, stemming from revered wonderworking icons like Kikkotissa, with which it shares thematic and compositional similitudes[34]. The famous wonderworking Byzantine icon offered by Alexios Comnenos to the Kikkos Monastery in Cyprus in 1082 is known from a contemporary copy at Sinai[35] and from the many subsequent reproductions of this Byzantine original which did not survive to us. The emotional theme of the Virgin playing with the Infant had its first manifestations in the Comnenian period. Apart from a certain sense of tenderness and the motif of playing[36], some authors stressed the Passion allusions in this type of icons, linking the Pelagonitissa variant to the Anapeson iconography[37]. The type, in its various forms, became widespread throughout the 13th and the 14th centuries in Macedonia, Serbia, Dalmatia, on Mount Athos, reaching Sinai, Italy, and Russia[38]. Among the Eleousa, Glykophilousa and Pelagonitissa, it knew several variants which named Byzantine monastic establishments like Avramiotissa, Kardiotissa, and Karyotissa, or epithets like Kecharitomene[39], Gorgoepikoos, and Axion Estin[40].

The icon from Şchei can be attributed to a Wallachian workshop. The icon presents post-Palaiologan stylistic qualities that can be found in the Wallachian

[34] Lydie Hadermann-Misguich, "Pelagonitissa et Kardiotissa: Variantes extrêmes du type Vierge de tendresse." *Byzantion*, 53, 1983, no. 1, p. 9–16, at p. 9, 11–12; Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trasl. by Edmund Jephcott, University of Chicago Press, Chicago – London, 1997, p. 281, 291; M. Marković, "The Virgin of Tenderness", p. 252–253.

[35] G. and M. Soteriou, *Εἰκόνες τῆς μονῆς Σινᾶ*, 2 vols., Athens, 1956–1958, vol. 1, fig. 54–55 and vol. 2, p. 73–75.

[36] V. Lasareff, "Studies in the Iconography of the Virgin", p. 42–46.

[37] See a bibliographic discussion of the subject, at S. Pajić, R. D'Amico, *La Theotokos Pelagonitissa*, p. 21–22, 71.

[38] *Ibidem*, p. 35–70.

[39] Which was an epithet originating in hymnography but night as well have alluded to the much-revered icon of the Mother of God in the Kecharitomene Monastery in Constantinople. See *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, edited by John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero with the assistance of Giles Constable, 5 vols., Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C., 2000, vol. 2, "Kecharitomene: Typikon of Empress Irene Doukaina Komnene for the Convent of the Mother of God Kecharitomene in Constantinople" (transl. Robert Jordan), p. 654, 677, 697, 710. Eleousa and Hodegetria have been both epithets and toponyms. For Hodegetria, see Christine Angelidi, Titos Papamastorakis, "The Veneration of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Hodegon Monastery", in Maria Vassilaki (ed.), *Mother of God. Representations of the* Virgin *in Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, Milan – Athens, 2000, p. 373–387. For Eleousa, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, vol. 2, "Eleousa: Rule of Manuel, Bishop of Stroumitza, for the Monastery of the Mother of God Eleousa", transl. Anastasius Bandy, p. 167 *sqq*.; "Typikon of Emperor John II Komnenos for the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator in Constantinople" (trans. Robert Jordan), p. 753 *sqq*.

[40] Gordana Babić, "Епитети Богородице коју дете грли", *Зборник Матице Српске за Ликовне Уметности*, 21, 1985, p. 261–274; Euthymios N. Tsigaridas, "Η εικόνα «Άξιον Εστίν» του Πρωτάτου και η Παναγία η Κυκκώτισσα, in *Πρακτικά Συνεδρίου «Η Ιερά Μονή Κύκκου στη βυζαντινή και μεταβυζαντινή αρχαιολογία και τέχνη»*, Nicosia, 2001, p. 181–190.

painting of the first half of the 16th century[41]. The Mother of God icon with figures of prophets on the sides, which was widespread in the Byzantine world in the 14th century, became paramount in the Romanian Principalities particularly in the first half of the 16th century.

The Glykophilousa icon from Snagov Monastery (fig. 11), a church built by Neagoe Basarab, also resumes an iconographic variant originating in the Late Byzantine period[42], reshaped further in the Cretan milieu, as we can see from an icon in Chania painted on Crete, attributed by Jenny Albani to a Constantinopolitan expat artist of the early 15th century[43], and a Cretan icon dated by Svetlana Rakić to the early 16th century, preserved in the Old Orthodox Church of St. Archangels in Sarajevo[44] (fig. 12). The icon from Snagov was dated by Alexandru Efremov to ca. 1563–1565[45], its painting modelling and facial typologies showing connections with the mural paintings in the monasteries of Snagov (1563) and Tismana (1564), both executed by painter Dobromir the Younger[46].

At Snagov and Tismana in the narthex, in the representation of the strophe 20 (11th kontakion) of the Akathist Hymn ("Every hymn is defeated…"), appears an Eleousa/Glykophilousa icon being revered by a bishop and chanters, which is a rather unusual iconographic choice to illustrate this oikos (fig. 13–14). Usually, Christ and not the Virgin was the central figure, as the stanza is addressed to Him, while the Virgin is not mentioned at all[47]. However, there are some 14th-century examples where the Mother of God was depicted in the strophe 20: at Cozia Monastery (1391), the Virgin is represented standing alone on a low pedestal, while two groups of chanters venerate her, while at Dečani (ca. 1350) and Matejiče (ca. 1360), the Hodegetria icon on a stand is revered by bishops and chanters[48] (fig. 15).

[41] Cf. G. Mitran, "Eleusa – Icoana Maicii Domnului cu Pruncul", p. 99.

[42] M. Marković suggested for the icon at Snagov a distant prototype in the mid-14th-century Glykophilousa icon in the Benaki Museum, cat. 2972; Marković, "The Virgin of Tenderness", p. 257 note 44. See Maria Vasilaki, "Εικόνα της Παναγίας Γλυκοφιλούσας του Μουσείου Μπενάκη (αρ. ευρ. 2972): Προβλήματα της έρευνας", in *Βυζαντινές Εικόνες: Τέχνη, Τεχνική και Τεχνολογίς (=Byzantine Icons: Art, Technique and Technology)*, Heraklion, 2002, p. 201–211.

[43] Jenny Albani, "Εικόνα της Παναγίας Ελεούσας στη Βυζαντινή και Μεταβυζαντινή Συλλογή Χανίων", *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 45, 2006, 271–282, see fig. 1 at ap. 272.

[44] Svetlana Rakić, "The Representations of the Virgin on Cretan Icons in Serbian Churches in Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Serbian Studies. Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies*, Vol. 20, 2006, no. 1, p. 57–93, at p. 69–71, cat. 6. The Cretan icons of Bosnia were first published by the same author in her book *Иконе Босне и Херцеговине, (16–19. вијек)*, Републички завод за заштиту споменика културе (Посебна издања 21), Belgrade, 1998; eadem, *Serbian Icons of Bosnia-Herzegovina (16th–18th Century)*, A. Pankovich Publishers, New York, 2000.

[45] A. Efremov, *Icoane româneşti*, cat. 16, p. 44–46, 184. Earlier, Ana Dobjanschi had dated it to the first decades of the 16th century; *Arta Ţării Românesti în secolele XIV–XVI*, Muzeul Naţional de Artă al României, Bucureşti, 2001, p. 70–71, cat. 20 (Ana Dobjanschi).

[46] Carmen-Laura Dumitrescu, "Deux églises valaques décorées au XVIe siècle: Snagov et Tismana", *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art*, 10, 1973, no. 1–2, p. 129–164.

[47] Ioannis Spatharakis, *The Pictorial cycles of the Akathistos Hymn for the Virgin*, Alexandros Press, Leiden, 2005, p. 149–150.

[48] *Ibidem*, p. 150 and figs. 88, 144, and 327.

However, the presence of the Eleousa/Glykophilousa icon at Snagov and Tismana, and not of the Hodegetria, is even more strange. Indeed, at Markov Monastery (ca. 1370), in the last two strophes of the Akathist Hymn, appear two different icons of the Mother of God: an Eleousa being carried in a procession by the emperor (strophe 23), and a Hodegetria revered by bishops and singers (strophe 24). Commenting upon them, André Grabar suggested a connection with the Hodegetria procession initiated by emperor John II Komnenos to the Pantokrator Monastery in Constantinople, founded by him in 1136. The Hodegetria icon was carried in a procession from the Imperial Palace and put in the necropolis church of the Pantokrator complex, next to the tombs of the emperor and his family[49]. The foundation was in fact a triple church: the south church dedicated to Christ Pantocrator, the central one to Archangel Michael and the northern church to Mother of God Eleousa. The central one, dedicated to Archangel Michael, was designed to serve as a necropolis for the Comnenian dynasty. Next to it was the church of the Mother of God Eleousa. Grabar suggested that the two images at Markov referred to the procession of the Hodegetria icon at the Pantokrator complex in Constantinople, which had a church dedicated to the Eleousa, and hence the conflation[50]. However, this may not be entirely the case, as the motif of the Virgin playing with her Child in the Stanza 23 already appeared in the Tomić Psalter, Cod. Muz. 2752, Moscow (ca. 1360), where she was figured sitting on a throne caressing her Infant and being praised by chanters[51]. It may be due to the large spread of this motif during the Late Palaiologan period, especially in the Macedonian area, that made it enter the visual and devotional culture and permeating the narrative cycles.

The two Wallachian depictions do not display a procession but, similarly to the examples at Dečani and Matejiče, the icon of the Virgin is displayed on a stand while revered by churchmen. This could be due to a Dečani–Matejiče prototype (with Hodegetria) that the artist may have had access to, but, on the other hand, it also implies that the iconographic type of the Eleousa/Glykophilousa had a certain spread in Wallachia at the time, up to becoming a common visual motif for artists and replacing the traditional Hodegetria. The Eleousa/Glykophilousa type of icon was resumed in Wallachia at Căluiu Monastery (1594), being held by St. Mary of Egypt in her arms, a reference to the hagiographic episode of her encounter with the

[49] *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, vol. 2, Typikon of Pantokrator, p. 753, 756: "However, I wish the holy icon of my most pure Lady and Mother of God Hodegetria to be taken into the monastery on the days of our commemorations – that is, those for the most beloved wife of my majesty, for my majesty itself, for my most beloved son and basileus, Lord Alexios, if he will want to be buried with me – and while her holy icon is brought in, an ektenes should be made for us by all those who are following it and the Kyrie eleison repeated thirty times. Then this holy icon should be set in the church of the Incorporeal near our tombs and on those nights vigils should be held by the monks and the clergy, and on the next day the divine liturgy should be celebrated while the holy icon is present, and after the dismissal an ektenes should again be made for us in the presence of all the assembled people".

[50] A. Grabar, "Une source d'inspiration de l'iconographie byzantine tardive: les cérémonies du culte de la Vierge", *Cahiers Archéologiques*, XXV, 1976, p. 143–162, at p. 145–146.

[51] I. Spatharakis, *The Pictorial cycles of the Akathistos*, fig. 214.

miracle-working icon of the Mother of God at the entrance to the church on Golgotha (fig. 16). It might be the case that the image alluded to a particular miracle-working icon found at that time in the Principality of Wallachia, an object that may have been revered as a country's palladium. We see such a candidate in the Eleousa icon from the former Metropolitan Church, which was kept at the Curtea de Argeş Monastery, the foundation of Neagoe Basarab.

Several icons from the end of the 16th century reiterate the Cretan type with phylactery, whose oldest preserved example in the Wallachian milieu we find at Hodoş-Bodrog in Transylvania, but, as we saw from the icons at Stoeneşti and Ostrov, the theme was already assimilated in the Wallachian painting by the end of the 15th century. Several variations appear in the inscription on the phylactery, for example in a late-16th century or early 17th-century icon at the Bishopric Palace in Râmnicu-Vâlcea (fig. 17), presumably brought from the Argeş Monastery[52], the text is a passage from John 16:28: изидо(х)<ъ> ѡ(т)/ оца . и прьі/идо(х)<ъ> въ миръ:, "I came out from the Father and came into the world; (I leave the world again and go to the Father)"[53], which is read at the matins of the Twelve Vespers of the Holy Friday.

In an icon in the former monastery of Stăneşti-Vâlcea (fig. 18), a piece dated around 1591–1605 and signed by a painter Andreas for whom was proposed a Greek Macedonian origin on stylistic grounds[54], the inscription on the book held by the Infant, […]Y/[…] KPA/TOYΣA/ ΘAY/MA O/ ΠΩΣ/ οὐ φλέγει ("holding […], a miracle of which you are not burned"), is however more enigmatic. We find the same syntagm in the inscription of the Panagia Gorgoepikoos icon painted in the Docheiariou monastery on Mount Athos in 1563 (fig. 19), which describes the icon of the Mother of God as holding the Divine Fire without being burned, a theological motif which draws its typos from the Old Testament Burning Bush. The inscription on the Docheiariou icon reads: "M(HTH)P Θ(EO)Y H ΓΟΡΓΟΕΠΗΚΟΟS. ΒΡΕΦΟΚΡΑΤΟΥCA M(HT)EP H ΦΟΒΕΡΑ ΠΡΟ/ CTACIA *ΤΟ ΠΥΡ ΚΡΑΤΟΥCA ΘΑΥΜΑ ΚΑΙ/ ΠΩC ΟΥ ΦΛΕΓΕΙ* [emphasis added]. ΕΠΙ ΕΤΟΥC ζΟΑ/ ΗΝ<δικτιώνος> Ϛ ΟΤΑΝ ΕΚΤΗCΑΝ ΤΗΝ ΕΚΚΛΗ/CΙΑΝ ΤΟΥ ΔΟΧΙΑΡΙΟΥ"[55] ("Mother of God, quick to hearken, Mother holding the Infant and Frightful Intercession, holding the Fire, a miracle of which you are not burned. In the year 7071 indiction 6 (1563) when the church (i.e. parecclesion) of Docheiariou was built"). The icon at Stăneşti thus recalls the wonderworking Gorgoepikoos at

[52] A. Efremov, *Icoane româneşti*, cat. 25, p. 49–50, 186–187.

[53] Cf. M. Marković, "The Virgin of Tenderness", p. 257 and fig. 3.

[54] Carmen-Laura Dumitrescu, "O reconsiderare a picturii bisericii din Stăneşti-Vâlcea", in *Pagini de veche artă românească*, vol. 2, Academia Română. Institutul de Istoria Artei, Bucureşti, 1972, p. 169, 219–222 and fig. 31; A. Efremov, *Icoane româneşti*, p. 50–51.

[55] Lilyana Mavrodinova, "L'icône miraculeuse de Docheiariou et l'iconographie de la Vierge Gorgoepikoos dans la peinture médiévale", in *Ἅγιον Ὄρος, Φύση-Λατρεία-Τέχνη*, vol. 2, Thessaloniki, 2001, p. 75–79, at p. 75; Georgios Martzarides, Euthymios N. Tsigaridas, *Οι θαυματουργές εικόνες στο Περιβόλι της Παναγίας*, Σύγχρονοι Ορίζοντες, Athens, 2013, p. 216–221, at p. 221. For further bibliography on the subject, see more recently Ivanka Gergova, Aleksandra Trifonova, "Икона Богородица Горгоепикоос с цикъл чудеса", *Проблеми на изкуството*, 2021, no. 2, p. 24–33.

Docheiariou, an absolute rarity in Wallachia at the time and certainty owed to the Macedonian painter Andreas who probably had this inscription noted among his hermeneia drawings that he used for his painting. However, the 16th-century Athonite icon is not a Glykophilousa, nor does it contain an inscribed phylactery or book. We may only wonder whether the painter was inspired by a previous icon of the Mother of God at Stăneşti, which may have formed a pair with the existing one of the Pantocrator, dated 1568, and which, from unknown reasons, perhaps fire or smoke, became damaged and needed to be replaced[56]. The new icon was painted with the aid of the great seneschal Stroe Buzescu, inheritor of the monastery.

The variety of Glykophilousa formulae and their local solutions show a long practice of this iconographic type among the Wallachian painters. Their name was also sometimes confused, for example the Eleousa/Glykophilousa icons from Ruda-Bârseşti (1624)[57] and Sâmbureşti (c. 1650)[58] bear the inscription "Hodegetria". In an icon at Plătăreşti Monastery, made by a Russian painter in the style of the Kremlin Armory Palace workshops after a Wallachian model[59], the inscription on the phylactery reiterates John 8:12, "I am the Light of the world", used in Wallachia since the 15th century (fig. 20). A Wallachian icon or drawing may have been sent to the painter in Russia to serve as a model for the icon. It must have contained a phylactery with inscription and an angel with the instruments of the Passion. The existent quasi-identical Wallachian specimens do not have a phylactery, although they display an identical iconographic setting. The icons from the White Church in Târgovişte (late 16th to early 17th century, fig. 21)[60] and from Ruda-Bârseşti contain even the detail of the intertwined fingers of the Mother of God, which we also find in the icon at Plătăreşti.

In conclusion, we can infer that all these variants of icons in Wallachia do not descent from a single prototype, but from several related types. They seemed to have entered Wallachia in two different stages. First, the Late Byzantine phase, between the mid-14th century and the first half of the 15th century, is characterized by Byzantine imports among which was likely the sumptuous Eleousa icon from the former Metropolitan Church of Curtea de Argeş. It was a time when variants of Eleousa and Glykophilusa were flourishing in Byzantium and the Balkans: in

[56] An Athonite tradition mentioned the Gorgoepikoos icon of Docheiariou as being repellent of fire and smoke; see Manolis Varvounis, Nikos Rodosthenous, "Religious Traditions of Mount Athos on Miraculous Icons of Panagia (The Mother of God)", *Balkan Studies*, 52, 2017, p. 139–149, at 142.

[57] A. Efremov, *Icoane româneşti*, cat. 24, p. 49–51, 186.

[58] Florin Şerbănescu, "Pictura pe lemn de la jumătatea secolului al XVII-lea la monumentul istoric din comuna Sâmbureşti, judeţul Olt", *Revista Muzeelor şi Monumentelor – Monumente Istorice şi de Artă*, XLVII, 1978, no 2, p. 78–84, at p. 80–81.

[59] Cf. Marina-Ileana Sabados, "Icoanele împărătești de la Plătărești. Ipoteză de datare și atribuire", in *Închinare lui Petre Ş. Năsturel la 80 de ani*, edited by I. Cândea, P. Cernovodeanu, Istros, Brăila, 2003, p. 479–494, at p. 481.

[60] Ana Dobjanschi, Maria Georgescu, *Icoane din Târgovişte. Secolele XVI–XIX/ Icons of Târgovişte. 16th–19th Centuries* (in Romanian, French, and English), Editura DAIM, Bucureşti, 1998, cat. 1, p. 65, 105; A. Efremov, *Icoane româneşti*, cat. 26, p. 51, 187.

Staro-Nagoričane the Glykophilousa in the local version of Pelagonitissa was painted on the templon (1318), and at Dečani, the icon of the Mother of God in the templon was an Eleousa version (ca. 1350)[61]. The murals in the King's Church at Studenica (church of Sts. Anna and Joachim), founded by king Milutin (1313–1314) and the parecclesion of the Chora Monastery in Constantinople (c. 1320) also contain such fresco representations of the Mother of God Eleousa/Glykophilousa caressing the Infant. We saw the type entering the Akathist Hymn at Markov Monastery (stanza 23), while in the Tomić Psalter and Cod. R.I. 19, Escorial, ca. 1400, the scene of the Adoration of the Shepherds (stanza 7) displays Virgin Mary caressing her Infant, in the cave[62]. Emperor Alexios III of Trebizond offered such an Eleousa icon – later known as the Mother of God of the Akathistos – to the Dionysiou Monastery on Mount Athos at its foundation in the second half of the 14th century. This Late Palaiologan fashion probably entered Wallachia on official channels at the earliest with the foundation of the Metropolis of Wallachia in 1359.

During the 15th century, amidst the instability of the internal political situation, the interest among the Wallachian princes for founding large-scale monuments weakened, situation which also must have been disrupting for the painting activity. Therefore, the stylistic continuity with the Palaiologan tradition, which the scholars have rightly observed, likely took place in two phases, as we can see from the iconographic evidence. After the Late Palaiologan trend, which manifested until the end of the 1430s, Wallachia entered a phase of artistic stagnation. Toward the end of the 15th century, under voivode Vlad the Monk, the major founding programs were resumed with the erection of the Glavacioc Monastery (1487) and the Bistriţa Monastery (1491–1492). A new vision of patronage further developed, under the reigns of Radu the Great and Neagoe Basarab. They favored an influx of Cretan models that gave an impetus to and updated the local artistic activity. The two voivodes extended their interest in art commissions also to Mount Athos and Sinai. Icons of the Mother of God with the Infant with phylactery, of Cretan provenance, entered Wallachia and were adapted in a more simplified manner in the icons at Stoeneşti and Ostrov. They found a favorable ground which likely had been laid by the Eleousa at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Curtea de Argeş. These icon prototypes then merged into various forms in Wallachia, from the late 15th century on, having a momentum between the 1560s and the 1650s. They even entered the sigillography: the seal of the capital town of Bucharest had between 1563 and 1590 a Virgin of Tenderness stamped on it[63].

It is likely that the proliferation of this type of icons took place on the grounds of the adoption of Curtea de Argeş Monastery as a dynastic monument par excellence during the 16th century and even as an architectural model of voivodal

[61] See André Grabar, "Les images de la Vierge de tendresse".

[62] I. Spatharakis, *The Pictorial cycles of the Akathistos*, fig. 154, 176, 198, 453, 454, 461.

[63] Paul I. Cernovodeanu, Nicolae Vătămanu, "Considerații privitoare la peceţile oraşului Bucureşti în secolele al XVI-lea și al XVII-lea", *Materiale de Istorie și Muzeografie*, Muzeul de Istorie al Orașului București, vol. IV, 1966, p. 5 fig. 1, p. 7–8.

necropolis, first by Voivode Alexander II Mircea, at Radu Vodă Monastery in Bucharest in 1575–1577[64]. At Curtea de Argeş, each Wallachian ruler added his own portrait from 1517 until the 1570s[65]. This type of icon, which was likely grounded in the Eleousa icon then found at the Argeş Monastery, probably became for the later rulers an iconographic landmark of the golden period that the country experienced under Radu the Great and Neagoe Basarab, which the later rulers were trying to emulate. This type of icons persisted during Mihai Viteazul (the Brave), Radu Mihnea, and Matei Basarab. They were finally replaced with the major changes in iconography and style that started under the reigns of Mihnea III and Şerban Cantacuzino. The icon painters then began to adopt the representation of Mother of God with the Infant in full figure, on the throne, massively circulated at the time in the Cretan (Ionian), Macedonian, and Epirote areas, which resulted in the interest toward these Eleousa prototypes of Palaiologan and post-Palaiologan tradition to eventually fade off.

[64] Ștefan Balș, "Restaurarea bisericii Radu Vodă din București", *Revista Muzeelor şi Monumentelor – Monumente Istorice şi de Artă*, XLIV, 1975, no. 1, p. 45–52, at 46–47.

[65] Carmen-Laura Dumitrescu, *Pictura murală din Ţara Românească în veacul al XVI-lea*, Editura Meridiane, Bucureşti, 1978, p. 58–70; E. Cernea, L. Pătrăşcanu (eds.), *Mărturii. Frescele Mănăstirii Argeşului*, cat. 59c-i, p. 180–185.

Fig. 1. Mother of God Eleousa, icon from the former Metropolitan Cathedral in Curtea de Argeş, Curtea de Argeş Monastery, drawing by Gheorghe Tattarescu, *Albumul naţional*, 1860, f. 1 (after E. Cernea, L. Pătrăşcanu, *Mărturii. Frescele Argeşului*).

Fig. 2. Mother of God with the Infant, 1512–1513, 124,5 × 107,5 cm, National Museum of Art in Bucharest, inv. i 350/11683, from Bistriţa Monastery (photo courtesy of the National Museum of Art in Bucharest).

Fig. 3. Mother of God with the Infant, end of the 15th century, Art Museum in Râmnicu-Vâlcea, from Stoeneşti-Susani, hypothetically originally from Govora Monastery (photo courtesy of the Museum of Art in Râmnicu-Vâlcea).

Fig. 4. Virgin Karyotissa, Protaton Karyes, late 13th century (after M. Marković, "The Virgin of Tenderness").

Fig. 5 Virgin Eleousa, second half of the 14th century, Museum of Archaeology in Syracuse, (after M. Marković, "The Virgin of Tenderness").

Fig. 6. Mother of God with the Infant, ca. 1522, Ostrov Monastery, Vâlcea County (photo courtesy of Dan Dinescu).

Fig. 7. Virgin Glykophilousa, ca. 1500, Cretan, Hodoş-Bodrog Monastery
(photo courtesy of Ana Dumitran).

Fig. 8. Panagia Glykophilousa, early 15th century, Cathedral of Hypapante at Fira, Santorini
(photo Thomas McCloughlin).

Fig. 9. Mother of God Glykophilousa, 1564, church of St. Nicholas in Şcheii Braşovului (photo courtesy of Marius Porumb).

Fig. 10. Virgin Glykophilousa, late 12th century, from Thessaloniki, Hypapante church, today at the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (photo source: Wikimedia Commons).

Fig. 11. Virgin Glykophilousa, ca. 1563, from Snagov Monastery, in custody at the National Museum of Art in Bucharest (photo courtesy of the National Museum of Art in Bucharest).

Fig. 12. Virgin Glykophilousa (Phaneromeni), early 16th century, Cretan, Sarajevo Church of the Holy Archangels (Old Orthodox Church), 34.5 × 27 cm, (photo source: www.rastko.rs).

Fig. 13. Snagov Monastery, 1563, Strophe 20/Kontakion 11
(photo courtesy of Viorel Maxim).

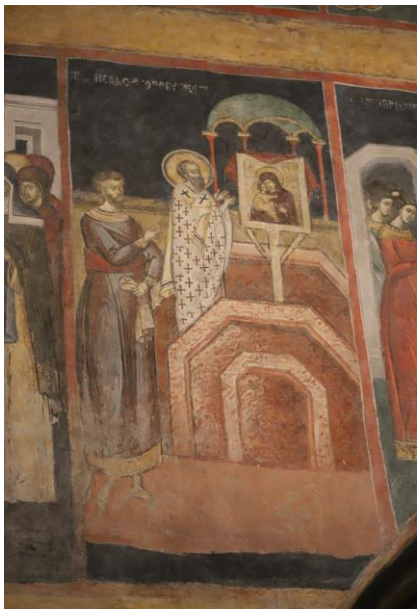

Fig. 14. Tismana Monastery, 1564, Strophe 20/Kontakion 11
(photo courtesy of Viorel Maxim).

Fig. 15. Dečani Monastery, c 1350, Strophe 20/Kontakion 11
(photo source: www.blagofund.org).

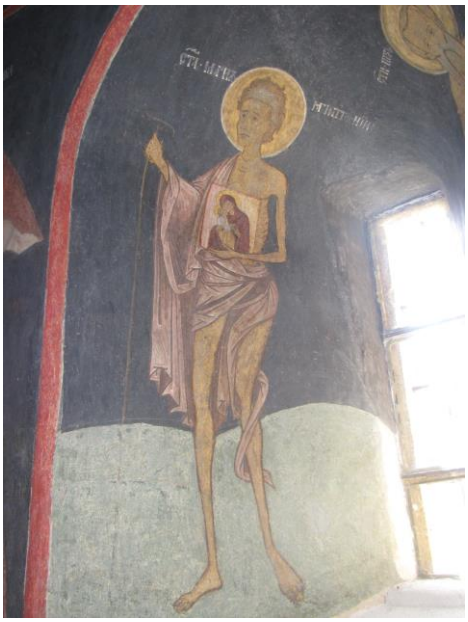

Fig. 16. St. Mary of Egypt, 1594, Căluiu Monastery
(photo courtesy of the author).

Fig. 17. Virgin Glykophilousa, end of 16th century, the Episcopal Palace
in Râmnicu-Vâlcea (photo courtesy of Dan Dinescu).

Fig. 18. Mother of God Glykophilousa, 1591–1605, Stăneşti former monastery in Vâlcea County (photo courtesy of the author).

Fig. 19. Panagia Gorgoepikoos, 1563, Docheiariou Monastery, Mount Athos (photo source: www.goarchangels.org).

Fig. 20. Mother of God Glykophilousa, post 1650, Russian after a Wallachian model, Plătărești Monastery (photo courtesy of Ana Dumitran)

Fig. 21. Mother of God Glykophilousa, end of 16th century, White Church in Târgoviște (after A. Dobjanschi, M. Georgescu, *Icoane din Târgoviște*).