

ИЗКУСТВОВЕДСКИ ЧЕТЕНИЯ

*Тематичен рецензиран годишник за изкуствознание в два тома
2017.I – Старо изкуство*

**ВИЗАНТИЙСКО
И ПОСТВИЗАНТИЙСКО ИЗКУСТВО:
ПРЕСИЧАНЕ НА ГРАНИЦИ**



**BYZANTINE
AND POST-BYZANTINE ART:
CROSSING BORDERS**

ART READINGS

*Thematic Peer-reviewed Annual in Art Studies, Volumes I–II
2017.I – Old Art*

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София, 2018

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The Illustrated Slavonic Miscellanies of Damascenes Studite's *Thesaurus* – a New Context for Gospel Illustrations in the Seventeenth Century

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Abstract: Looking at the older tradition of illustrating the South Slavonic Gospel manuscripts, which was rather poor with regard to themes and iconography, one becomes aware of the late adoption of a common narrative cycle, representing Christ's life, miracles and parables in the so called *damaskini*. These seventeenth-century books with their miniatures, however simplified and naïve, went a long way towards extending the limited range of Gospel illustrations that had dominated the artistic representations of the preceding decades and centuries.

Key words: *damaskin*, iconography, liturgy, miniature, Adzhar, Kostenets, Rila.

A survey of the extant illustrated South Slavonic Gospels predating the fifteenth century amounts to a rather brief story. Except for the Old Slavonic (Old Bulgarian) Glagolitic Codex Assemanianus², the

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2 Several illuminated initials in this manuscript form a kind of a narrative cycle referring to Christ's miracles and parables: see *Ivanova-Mavrodinova, Vera, Dzhurova, Aksiniya. Асеманиевото евангелие. Старобългарски глаголически паметник от X в. [Asemanievoto evangelie. Starobalgarski glagolicheski pametnik ot X v.]. 1–2. Sofia, 1981; Musakova, Elisaveta. Илюстрираните глаголически евангелия [Ilustriraniite glagolicheski evangelia]. – Izkustvo/*



Serbian Miroslav Gospel, a lectionary dating to ca 1180s³, and the Bulgarian Gospels of Tsar Ivan Alexander of 1356⁴, all remaining Gospel books are adorned solely by portraits of the evangelists.

A similar situation persisted in the period between the fifteenth and the end of the seventeenth century, when the conquered Balkans were part of the Ottoman Empire. None of the miniatures in the old Gospels was ever repeated in the later manuscripts. A pattern which withstood the test of time was that of the headpiece, itself drawing on Byzantine prototypes, featuring the image of the evangelist writing, as can be seen in the Gospels of Ivan Alexander and the Serbian Patriarch Sava (1365–1375)⁵. This developed into a standardized, so-called Kratovo headpiece⁶, which was widespread in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Gospel manuscripts produced in the territories of present-day Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia. As to the full-page portrait miniatures, for the most part, they were simplified replicas of distant Palaeologan and late Palaeologan models⁷. The rare narrative cycle of (the second) Beočin Gospels⁸ only confirms the rule. Therefore, the late appearance of miniatures treating New Testament subjects, which had for many centuries been depicted by both Western and Eastern Christian artists, could be seen as an example of 'border-crossing' if manuscripts, lacking any pictorial embellishment up to the seventeenth century, are considered.

Art in Bulgaria, 1996, No. 33–34, 6–12.

3 Several initials in this manuscript are pictorial; for the manuscript, see: *Otašević, Dušan, Rakić, Zoran, Špadjer, Irena* (eds.). *The World of Serbian Manuscripts (12th–17th Centuries)*. Belgrade, 2016, 234–240.

4 *Filov, Bogdan*. *Les miniatures de l'Évangile du roi Jean Alexandre à Londres*. Sofia, 1934. The illustrative cycles, exceptional even among the Byzantine illuminated Gospels, were most probably copied from the eleventh-century cod. Paris. gr. 74, see a recent (though not exhaustive) summary of the discussion in *Boeck, Elena*. *Displacing Byzantium, Disgracing Convention: The Manuscript Patronage of Tsar Ivan Alexander of Bulgaria*. – *Manuscripta*, 2007, No. 51/2, 5–6.

5 *Otašević, Dušan, Rakić, Zoran, Špadjer, Irena* (eds.). *The World of Serbian Manuscripts*, 282–286.

6 Named after priest Ioan of Kratovo, a prominent sixteenth-century copyist; their distinctive feature is the adoption of certain Islamic ornaments in the frames around the images; for its adoption see *Kotseva, Elena*. *Украсата на българските ръкописи през XV–XVII век [Ukrasata na balgarskite rākopisi prez XV–XVII vek]*. In: *Traditsiya i novi cherti v balgarskoto izkustvo*. Sofia, 1976, 74–75.

7 *Moussakova, Elissaveta*. *Late Medieval South Slavonic Illumination in the Byzantine Context*. – *Art Studies Quarterly*, 2017, No. 1, 35–44.

8 AD 1565/1567; one of the rare examples for such miniatures, see: *Harisijadis, Mara*. *Минијатуре и орнаменти Октоиха Р. 64 Градске библиотеки у Загребу [Minijature i ornamenti Oktoihā R. 64 Gradske biblioteke u Zagrebu]*. – *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti*, 1968, No. 4, 283; see *Rakić, Zoran*. *Српска минијатура XVI и XVII века [Srpska minijatura XVI i XVII veka]*. Belgrade, 2012, 116, 117, 205–210, ill. 27, 28, 55, 135.

The shift to a new kind of visuality is best demonstrated by the so-called *damaskini*, Slavonic manuscripts which comprise or which are based on Damascenes Studite's *Thesauros*, a collection of moralizing sermons written in vernacular Greek. It was soon recognized as a book suitable for preaching and, maybe later, for private reading, as well as a stimulus for the diffusion of the vernacular into early-modern Bulgarian religious literature⁹. Its first, so-called archaic or Sredna-Gora translation, made in the second half/late-sixteenth century in Church Slavonic, was revised in the same literary centre in the next century. From the revised version stemmed several groups of the contemporary *damaskini* written in the vernacular¹⁰. The *damaskini* of the revised archaic group were among the most richly illustrated manuscripts of the seventeenth century, even though their pictures were of rather mediocre workmanship¹¹. The village of Adzhar (today Svezhen) in Sredna Gora, near Karlovo is regarded as the main production centre for illustrated liturgical books, and in particular of *damaskini*¹². In 1686 the most prominent Adzhar men of letters, the priest and *daskal* Nedyalko and his son *daskal* Filip, signed the *Adzhar Damaskin*¹³ (Fig. 1). *Daskal* Nedyalko's handwriting has been identified in the *Kostenets Damaskin* of the second half of the seventeenth century¹⁴. On the basis of its script, or-

9 The sermons, read for the 'edification of the people', were composed for the whole calendar cycle, see: *Lavrov*, Pavel. Дамаскин Студит и сборници его имя „дамаскины“ в южнославянской литературе [Damaskin Studit i sborniki ego imya "damaskiny" v yuzhnoslovenskoj literatury]. Odessa, 1899; on the subject see also *Petkanova*, Donka. Дамаскините в българската литература [Damaskinite v balgarskata literatura]. Sofia, 1965; *Demina*, Evgeniya. Тихонравовский дамаскин. Болгарский памятник XVII в. Исследование и текст [Tikhonravovskiy damaskin. Bolgarskiy pamyatnik XVII v. Issledovanie i tekst]. Т. 1-3. Sofia, 1968-1985; *Mladenov*, Atanas, ik. Дамаскинските сборници в християнската проповед [Damaskinskite sbornitsi v hristiyanskata propoved]. Veliko Tarnovo, 2003; *Miltanova*, Anisava (ed.). История на българската средновековна литература [Istoriya na balgarskata srednovekovna literatura]. Sofia, 2009, 729-740.

10 For a most recent textual analysis, re-examining the relations of the *damaskini* of the archaic and vernacular versions see: *Mladenova*, Olga. Vernacularization of Bulgarian Literacy in the Seventeenth Century. – Canadian Slavonic Papers (forthcoming).

11 Single images decorate some of the *damaskini* of the New-Bulgarian (the vernacular) version.

12 See *Doncheva-Panayotova*, Nevyana. Аджарски книжовници-илюстратори от XVII век [Adzharski knizhovnitsi-ilyustratori ot XVII vek]. Sofia, 2015, also *Radoslavova*, Dilyana. The Scribal Centre of the Village of Adzhar in the 17th Century. New Data. – Scripta & e-Scripta, 2004, No. 2, 291-309.

13 Saint-Petersburg, Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences cod. 24.4.32 (Sreznevskiy Coll. No. 79).

14 *Musakova*, Elisaveta. Илюстрациите на два български дамаскина от XVII век [Ilyustratsiite na dva balgarski damaskina ot XVII vek]. – Izkustvo, 1983, No. 7, 28-34; *Doncheva-Panayotova*. Аджарски книжовници [Adzharski knizhovnitsi], 58; cod. ЦИАИ 503, in the Church-Historical



ДНН АСІУННІ ПНОІСА ПНО ОІА ІСОНА ІС

Анти слово ѿбщимъ еси еси, кхнелю сиропученъ
 ОИСТНАНИ, АДЛМОВЪ ПООУЧЕНІЕ КЪМЛІТНИ СЪТЪ БІ

ІГОАТЕ ЕДИНЬ УЛІГЪ ЕДА РОЩЕТЬ ПО
 ИТИ КАРГОУТМО СВОЮ, ІНЕГОАДЕТЬ,
 ІЩЕ НЕВЪГРОЩІЕТЬ ІСОВЕНІА ТАІСА
 ОСИЧЬКІЕ ІГОУТЛІЕ. АНТОІГОАТЕ ЕМУ
 ІАРИБІ ИТИ КЪ ІТЪСТА ОНОМУ
 ІИТАЩІЕТЬ. ПЛОКЪ СЪЗОВАРИ
 ШЕ ІСПІАИ, СІУН ЦРІСОВІНІАШЕ,
 БЛВЕНІИ ДРІТІАІЕ, ЕМАЖЕ ПРИ
 СПЕ ПОУТЪ СІБІЕ, ІА. ЦЕ ДОВЕРІЕ

ІДШЕ, ПОМЪЗНІЕ ІВЪПЛІЕ, ІЧАВІТЬ СЪЗАОУТРА НАДЕТИ
 ІЕЮ ПОМОЩІЮ КЪЖІУ, ПОМЪЗУВІТР ІІІТЬ ДІА
 КЪЛІНО ОІКО ДОКРО Е ПО, КОЛІНО ІІІГІА СІО Е МНОГО

Fig. 1. Adzhar Damaskin, The Fall of Man, f. 88r

nament and pictures, the contemporary *Rila Damaskin* has also been attributed to both the father and the son¹⁵. Hereinafter the three manuscripts will be referred to as *A*, *K* and *R* respectively.

Since Damascene's sermons were composed to celebrate the most important Christian holidays, the narrative cycles of illustrations in the three *damaskini* rely on a well-established exegesis and iconographical repertoire. Judging by their choice of subjects, the majority of illustrations in *K*, *A*, and *R*, present the most basic 'inventory' of headpiece- and full-page-miniatures illustrating Christ's life, his miracles and parables: Annunciation (*R*), Presentation (*K*, *R*), Theophany (*A*, *R*), Healing of the Paralytic (**Fig. 2**), Healing of the Blind Man (**Fig. 3**), Christ and the Samaritan Woman (**Fig. 4**) (*A*, *K*, *R*), Transfiguration, Raising of Lazarus, Entry to Jerusalem (*A*, *R*), Crucifixion (*A*), Lamentation (*A*, *R*), Resurrection/The Harrowing of Hell (*A*, *R*) (**Fig. 5**), Christ Appearing to Mary Magdalene (*K*, *A*) (**Fig. 6**), Myrrhbearers (*R*) (**Fig. 7**), Incredulity of Thomas (**Fig. 8**) (*A*, *R*), Ascension (*R*), Pentecost (*A*)¹⁶. Those scenes which are based on Old Testament stories also follow established patterns (**Fig. 1**).

The artists, that is, the scribes themselves in all the three manuscripts, did not search for models in the older Slavonic or Byzantine Gospel manuscript traditions, nor did they borrow from the rich pictorial repertoire found in the Byzantine manuscripts of the homilies of the Church Fathers, a genre to which the *damaskini* belong¹⁷. Instead, as generally happened with the late medieval South

and Archive Institute at the Bulgarian Patriarchate, see *Hristova*, Boryana, Darinka *Karadzova*, Anastasiya *Ikonotova*. Български ръкописи от XI до XVIII век запазени в България. Своден каталог [Balgarski rakopisi ot XI do XVIII vek zapazeni v Balgariya. Sviden katalog]. T. 1. Sofia, 1982, 212, No. 584.

15 *Doncheva-Panayotova*. Аджарски книжовници [Adzharski knizhovnitsi], 83; her previous conclusion favoured *daskal* Filip alone, *Idem*. Аджарски книжовници-илюстратори от XVII век [Adzharski knizhovnitsi-ilyustratori ot XVII vek]. Veliko Tarnovo, 1998, 48 (not quoted further). The manuscript is kept in the Rila monastery library, cod. PM 4/10. On criticism of Doncheva-Panayotova's opinion see *Musakova*. Илюстрациите [Ilyustratsiite], 34; *Radoslavova*. The Scribal Centre, 303, though its attribution to the Sredna Gora – Adzhar group should not be ignored.

16 Only Second Coming/*Hetoimasia* in *A* and Adam and Eve Expelled from Paradise in *A* and *R* rely on other biblical sources. The saints' images fall outside the scope of this paper.

17 In its content and rhetorical strategies Damascene's *Thesaurus* agrees in every respect with the Byzantine tradition of the festal homilies; on the latter see: *Cunningham*, Mary B. The Reading of Sermons in Byzantine Churches and Monasteries. In: Angeliki Lymberopoulou (ed.). Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages and Meaning. Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker. Farnham, 2011, 85: 'Another notable feature of the middle and late Byzantine homiletic tradition is the preponderance of festal sermons that survived... the chief purpose of festal homilies is



Fig. 2. Kostenets *Damaskin*, Healing of the Paralytic, f. 149v

Slavonic illumination, the source is once more to be found in the books printed for the Slavs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Their woodcuts not only offered a fusion of familiar images and a novel stylistics, but established reproduction and standardization as a valuable artistic device¹⁸. The most representative were the editions of the Venetian printers, but other printing houses in present-day Serbian, Romanian and Ukrainian towns and monasteries also supplied the manuscript illuminators with suitable models¹⁹. In fact, the turning point at which narrative illustrations appeared in the headpieces and full-page miniatures²⁰ of the Orthodox South Slavonic handwritten books for daily use in the service and for private prayer – *horologia*, *triodia*, *menaia*, and *octoechoi* – was the advent of South Slavonic early-printed books. In fulfilling their patriotic yearning to support the religious life and thus to raise the national consciousness of the Orthodox people within and outside the Ottoman Empire²¹, the printers carefully selected iconographic patterns²² from the post-Byzantine and the Creto-Venetian artistic vocabulary. Easy to print, easy to grasp by the readers and expected to appeal to them, these condensed pictures belong to the type of il-

to celebrate the day on which an event or holy person is commemorated. By the early eighth century, the genre was fully formed, drawing its inspiration most noticeably from the great festal orations of Gregory of Naziansos... but also incorporating other elements.' One may recall the programmatic 19th canon of the Council in Trullo (A.D. 692): 'It behoves those who preside over the churches, every day but especially on Lord's days, to teach all the clergy and people words of piety and of right religion, gathering out of holy Scripture meditations and determinations of the truth, and not going beyond the limits now fixed, nor varying from the tradition of the God-bearing fathers.' (quoted from: Fathers of the Church, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3814.htm>).

18 For prints as models for miniatures see: *Kotseva*. Украсата [Ukrasata], 74; *Petković*, Sreten. Илустрације из штампаних књига као предлошки српским и бугарским минијатуристима XVI–XVII века [Илустрације из штампаних књига као предлошки српским и бугарским минијатуристима XVI–XVII века]. In: Zorica Vitić, Tomislav, Jovanović, Irena Špadijer (eds.). Slovensko srednjovekovno nasleđe. Beograd, 2001, 401-423.

19 *Bianu*, Ion, *Nerva Hodoș*. Bibliografia Românească veche (1508–1830). T. 1. București, 1903; *Medaković*, Dejan. Графика српских штампаних књига XV–XVII века [Grafika srpskih štampanih knjiga XV–XVII veka]. Beograd, 1958; *Pantić*, Miroslav (ed.). Пет векова српског штампарства. Раздобље српскословенске штампе XV–XVII век [Pet vekova srpskog štamparstva 1494–1994. Razdoblje srpskoslovenske štampe XV–XVII vek.] . Beograd, 1994; *Petković*. Илустрације.

20 *Kotseva*. Украсата, 74-75.

21 For the complex incentives of Božidar Vuković's printing activity see: *Lasić*, Miroslav. Between Patriotism, Piety and Commerce: Motives for the Publishing Enterprise of Božidar Vuković. – *Archeographical Papers*, 2013, No. 35, 49-93.

22 Their iconography, unbiased towards the separation of Eastern and Western Churches, and the revival of 'syncretic iconographic models' in a time of confessional controversy are commented by *Kotseva*. Украсата, 74, 69.



Fig. 3. Adzhar Damaskin, Healing of the Blind Man, f. 201r



Fig. 4. Kostenets Damaskin, Christ and Samaritan Woman, f. 159v

illustration Kurt Weitzmann once named 'liturgical' or 'lectionary'²³.

While a number of miniatures in *A* represent faithful copies of the illustrated Triodion-Pentecostarion printed by deacon Coresi in Târgoviște (Romania) in 1558²⁴, the sources of the other two manuscripts are still not identified. The two identical miniatures – Resurrection/The Harrowing of Hell and Myrrhbearers – in *R* and in the Octoechos No. 64 of 1685 of the Public Library in Zagreb²⁵ hint at a common, possibly printed model (Fig. 9, 10). The origin of both manuscripts remains uncertain, in spite of some suggestions of the Lesnovo monastery as provenance for the Octoechos, and Adzhar village for *R*. Their pictures, together with similarities of the ornament and rendering of the figures, and, to some extent, of the script and orthography, indicate a probable common place of origin, or close contacts between the scribes. As to the images in *K*, rendered in a naïve, not to say primitive, manner, it is evident that while their artistic idiom is that of the prints, they do not depend on any particular model²⁶.

Who were the beholders of these pictures of Christ's life, drawn

23 Weitzmann, Kurt. The Narrative and Liturgical Gospel Illustration. In: Merrill M. Parvis and Allen P. Wikgren (eds.). *New Testament Studies*. Chicago, 1950, 151-174.

24 *Doncheva-Panayotova*. Аджарски книжовници [Adzharski knizhovnitsi], 137; I would only disagree with her statement that the Lamentation and Ascension miniatures in *R* 'exactly reproduce' two of its prints. My gratitude is to Ralph Cleminson for his helpful remarks and for turning my attention to the correct dating of the edition, registered in *Bianu, Hodoș*. Bibliografia Românească, 31-43 as 'c. 1550'; for recent references see for example *Erich*, Agnes. Arta ornamentală a tipăriturilor românești din secolul al XVI-lea. – Studii de Biblioteconomie și Știința Informării, 2003, No. 7, 92-93 [http://www.lisr.ro/7-erich.pdf, accessed 15.10.2017].

25 Noted in my MA thesis ('Украса на българските дамаскини от XVII век [Ukrasa na balgarskite damaskini ot XVII vek], defended in 1981) but omitted in *Musakova*. Иллюстрацииите, where only the reference is given: *Harisijadis*. Минијатуре, 282-296 + ill. 1-16; for the codex see also *Rakić*. Српска минијатура, 292-294, il. 255-257.

26 No comments are known to me on whether the Greek editions of *Thesaurus* or their handwritten copies had illustrations. On the title page of 1603 Venetian edition Christ and his prophets are represented in a composition, following the pattern of the Tree of Jesse, see *Biblion seu liber Thesaurus Sermonum dictus*, https://www.google.bg/url?sa=t&rc=tj&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjvZjLy_VAhUBMBQKHsRZBxcQFgg0MAI&url=http%3A%2F%2Freader.digitale-sammlungen.de%2Ffen%2Ffs1%2Fobject%2Fdisplay%2Fbsb10524526_00572.html&usq=AFQjCNGoInxvrC7ogWnnJdpAuulmPNMc3g [accessed 03.08.2017]. The references to the *editio princeps* are sometimes contradictory, for example *Gerd*, Lora. Дамаскин Студит [Damaskin Studit]. In: *Pravoslavnaya entsiklopediya*. Т. 13. Moscow, 2012, 698-699 [http://www.pravenc.ru/text/168736.html, accessed 21.08.2017]; *Goulet*, Richard. Cinq nouveaux fragments nominaux du traité de Porphyre "Contre les chrétiens". – *Vigilae Christianae*, 2010, No. 64, 140-159 (see p. 153-154, notes 31, 32) [https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00458046/document, accessed 21.08.2017] who counts about 15 editions, the latest one from 1971 (repr. 1983), and points correctly to the earliest edition of 1557/8.

on the pages not of a Gospel but of a moralizing book of sermons? The colophon in *A* (f. 219r) testifies to its donation to the church of St Theodore Tyro in Panagyurishte by a group of *ktetores* who bought the book from *daskal* Nedyalko²⁷. Some scholars suggest that the seventeenth-century *damaskini* of both archaic and vernacular versions best fitted a parochial use²⁸ but we do not know whether this illustrated copy was ever displayed, or whether its reading and viewing remained a privilege of the priests. For the two other copies, *R* and *K*, there is no information about their commissioners or purpose.

Even though unclear, the context of the viewer gives an idea about the new dimensions of the impact on the beholder of the New Testament pictorial narration, especially if another feature of it is considered – the inclusion of explanatory inscriptions in the compositions. While sporadically inserted in *R* and *A*, the inscriptions are the most extensive in *K*, being developed into dialogues between the protagonists (Christ and the Samaritan) or into a story retold (Healing of the Paralytic, The Harrowing of Hell, Christ and Mary Magdalene, Incredulity of Thomas). It is well known that the interplay between pictures and written words of central importance to the Christian understanding of images²⁹. In our case the simplicity of the images, which makes a sharp contrast with the author's rich and emotional rhetoric, is adequate to the intention of the sermons in so far as their modernized language and the enlightening, educational purpose are born in mind. If the example of the Christ and the Samaritan in *K* is taken, the respondent's mind focusses on the holiday, commemorating the event, by means of several excerpts from the Gospel (John 4:6 – retold, and part of the verses in John 4: 29-30). The 'mute image which could speak from the walls' (after Gregory of Nyssa) is literally made to speak and thus, without trig-

27 See the full text of the colophon in *Doncheva-Panayotova*. Аджарски книжовници, 158.

28 *Radoslavova*, Dilyana. Етрополският книжовен център: проблеми и перспективи на изследванията [Etopolskiyat knizhoven tsentar: problemi i perspektivi na izsledvaniyata]. In: Etopolskata knizhovna shkola i balgarskiyat XVII vek. Sofia, 2011, 73. *Petkanova*, Donka. Народното четиво през XVI–XVIII век [Narodnoto chetivo prez XVI–XVIII vek]. Sofia, 1990, 7, presumes that the first *damaskini* particularly, i.e. the archaic ones, were used for preaching in church.

29 'Art and text are parallel streams of communication that create a dialog between what words can describe and what a picture can show', *Brubaker*, Leslie. Every Cliché in the Book: The Linguistic Turn and the Text-Image Discourse in Byzantine Manuscripts. In: Liz James (ed.). Art and Text in Byzantine Culture. Cambridge, 2007, 58 (as quoted in the review of Franziska E. Schlosser in Bryn Mawr Classical Review, 2008. 02.12, <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2008/2008-02-12.html>).



Fig. 5. Rila Damaskin, Harrowing the Hell, f. 177r



Fig. 6. Kostenets *Damaskin*, Christ Appearing to Mary Magdalene, f. 138r



Fig. 7. Rila Damaskin, Myrrhbearers, f. 212v



МІСЦІ НАННОІ ГАН ПОДІАГО НА ІСТУ ХІТА.

слово простиимъ ескадіемъ взицѣю фоминъ. ѿ сѣни.

ри соуть великии добродѣтели. вѣра
 надѣжа. и любовь. и ѿ надѣжды оуко и намы.
 ѣли вѣра ѿ сѣми нни мѣи речемъ. а ѿвѣ
 рѣ дощемъ рещи нѣкѣи. пониже ѿповѣ

Fig. 8. Adzhar Damaskin, Incredulity of Thomas, f. 151r

gering a subtle exegesis but by echoing the voice of the preacher, the explanatory inscriptions enhance the pictures' sovereignty in confirming of the 'glorious good news about the Christ'³⁰. The very presence of texts to be read within and with the picture, certainly not suitable for reading aloud to an audience, suggests the private possession of K.

Such a situation, in which an imagery built on the Gospels narration proved its effect through a moralizing book of sermons, became possible in a political atmosphere in which ecclesiastical figures sought to defend the confessional identity of their Christian flock within the Ottoman Empire. This raising of consciousness, formed by political, social, economic, dogmatic, ecclesiological and other issues, is too complicated a matter to be treated here. Instead, I would only refer to the clash of views on defending the Christian self-identity. The Confession of Faith (1629) of the Ecumenical Patriarch Cyril Lucaris, who sought the solution in reconciliation with the Calvinist Protestant Church, inflamed a series of Church councils and orthodox, though also contradictory, expositions of faith. In 1638 the Council in Constantinople condemned Lucaris and his Confession; in 1640 Peter Mogila, Metropolitan of Kiev, wrote his *Expositio fidei*, endorsed, despite its Catholic tint, by the Council of Jassy (1642) at which Lucaris was condemned once again. The Synod convened by Dositheos II Notaras, Patriarch of Jerusalem in 1672, rejected any further attempts at reformulation of Orthodox teachings and strengthened Orthodox beliefs against both the Protestant Reformation and Catholicism; Lucaris' authorship of Confession was contested as a Calvinist forgery³¹. One way towards achieving the goals of the Orthodox church authorities was to enlighten both the clergy and the congregation regarding the soteriological mission of the Orthodox faith and teaching, and another, to regulate the everyday service as a guarantee of righteous life, leading to salvation. In this light, the illustrated *damaskini*, though looking like a humble relative of the imposing decorative programs of certain sixteenth- and seventeenth-century churches, make another true witness to the aims and means of Orthodox Christian propaganda³². Never-

30 1 John 2:16.

31 This historical outline is compiled from various generalizing sources.

32 At that time it was less prompted by a fear of Islamisation than by the threat posed by the vigorous Catholic and Protestant Churches, see, for example: *Ribolov*, Svetoslav. The Orthodox

theless, their impact should not be overestimated regarding their limited number, concentration in one scribal centre, and probable commission on special occasions.

The extent to which Orthodox scribes and artists forged an approach to liturgical texts that was simultaneously innovative and archaizing is best witnessed by the Zagreb Octoechos and the Festival Menaion of *daskal* Philip³³, both dating to the late seventeenth century. They remain unique examples in the entire history of the South Slavonic manuscript illumination. Here we find an appropriation by service books of a biblical illustrative cycle that suited their purpose as tools for catechetical teaching and moral instruction. The radical change of the 'social status' of the liturgical books and, correspondingly, of their artistic attire, is reflected by the execution of some of them as deluxe copies. The transformation of what was commonly an ordinary design into a mark of piety and prosperity of donors (and owners) affected the *damaskini* as well, especially if, along with the pictures, one takes into consideration the occasional application of gold, as in the case of the illumination of *R*, and of the *Elena Damaskin*, a manuscript whose quality of execution and lavish decoration testify to considerable scribal and ornamental excellence³⁴.

The manuscript illustrators rediscovered a repertoire of images that had previously been only incidentally applied and only in the context of Gospel books. They thereby sent a message directly affecting the viewer³⁵ who, whether priest or lay owner of a *damaskin*, was

Church in the Ottoman Empire and its Perspectives for Theological Dialogue. – Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe, 2013, No. 33/2, 7–24 [<http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1078&context=ree>, accessed 25.09.2017].

33 Registered with inv. No 6252 in the Veliko Tarnovo Metropolitan library, now of unknown location. For its full-page miniatures, illustrated headpieces and marginal miniatures, some of which are of amusing profane character and others – still unsolved riddles, see *Doncheva-Panayotova*. Аджарски книжовници [Adzharski knizhovnitsi], 61–64.

34 НБКМ 1418, second quarter of the seventeenth century, *Hristova*, Boryana, Darinka *Karadzho-va*, Nina *Vutova*. Опис на славянските ръкописи в Софийската народна библиотека [Opis na slavyanskite rakopisi v Sofiyskata narodna biblioteka]. Т. 5. Sofia, 1996, 131–139.

35 *Daskal* Filip, the author of the illustrations of *A*, revived the emphatic introductory *zde*, usual for medieval miniatures, in the inscriptions in the Fall of Man; this corresponds to a similar use of *ubi* in Latin inscriptions, for the semantics and function of which see *Debiais*, Vincent. Lettering Medieval Imagination. A Note on the Inscriptions and Images of Daniel Capital in San Pedro de la Nave. In: Emmanuel Moutafov, Elena Erdeljan (eds.). Texts. Inscriptions. Images /Art Readings. I.2016. Sofia, 2017, 150–153. The scene in *A* is a part of a frieze composition representing the Fall of Man.



Fig. 9. Zagreb Octoechos, Myrrhbearers, f. 86r



Fig. 10. Zagreb Octoechos, Harrowing the Hell, f. 72v

recognized by contemporary Church officials as insufficiently literate. The reader was not expected to read through a sophisticated visual interpretation of a literary work. Why later vernacular miscellanies of sermons, which became so numerous over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, were not illuminated (with only one exception), is therefore puzzling. However, this must be left as a potential subject for further research.

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Илюстрираните славянски сборници, съдържащи „Съкровище“ на Дамаскин Студит – нов контекст за евангелските илюстрации през XVII век

Елисавета Мусакова



Славянските ръкописи, широко известни като дамаскини, съдържат преводния текст на „Съкровище“ (1558), сборник от поучителни проповеди, съставен от Дамаскин Студит и написан на говоримия гръцки език. Неговото съчинение се оказва изключително продуктивна литературна форма за поучение и катехетично образование както на „простия народ“, така и на не особено грамотното свещеничество, както се вижда от запазените преводи и преработки на съчинението от втората половина/края на XVI в. и през XVII в. и от по-късните сборници с прибавени други слова към само част от дамаскиновите. Дамаскините бележат явление, специфично за българската литературна традиция, като особено важна е ролята на дамаскинската проповед за модернизирването на езика и въвеждането на новобългарския в религиозната литература. Ръкописите, съдържащи преработката на първоначалния, т.нар. архаичен превод, които са преписвани в Аджарското книжовно средище към края на XVII в., представят най-богато илюстрираните ръкописи от епохата – дамаскини, наред с други богослужбни книги. На фона на сравнително ограничения иконографски репертоар на ръкописното южнославянско Евангелие до края на XIV в., а и по-късно, илюстрирането на дамаскините със сцени, типични за украсата на евангелия във византийската традиция, е разгледано като пример за „преминаване на границите“. Изработени без особено майсторство, миниатюрите в Аджарския, Костенечкия и Рилския дамаскин (последният с несигурен, но възможен средногорски произход), следват модели, вече зададени в славянските първопечатни книги. Именно там започва илюстрирането с евангелски теми на книгите за ежедневно богослужение, чието изработване и разпространение от страна на печатарите е подтикнато от желанието им да спомогнат за засилването на националното самосъзнание на православните християни в Отоманската империя и извън нея. Дамаскините се появяват в сложния политически, икономически и верски контекст на усиленото съперничество между православиято, протестантството (калвинизма) и католицизма през XVII в., така че освен текстовете, техните опростени илюстрации – в някои случаи съпроводени с обяснителни текстове, са подходящо средство, служещо на православната пропаганда. Авторът обръща внимание,

че въпреки казаното, ролята на илюстрираните дамаскини не бива да се преувеличава, тъй като техният брой не е голям и вероятно са били поръчвани по специални поводи, а също и поради факта, че през следващите два века внушителният брой сборници със смесено съдържание от дамаскински тип, остават – с едно изключение – отново без украса.

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Изкуствоведски четения 2017

Art Readings 2017

**ВИЗАНТИЙСКО И
ПОСТВИЗАНТИЙСКО ИЗКУСТВО:
ПРЕСИЧАНЕ НА ГРАНИЦИ**

**BYZANTINE AND
POST-BYZANTINE ART:
CROSSING BORDERS**

Институт за изследване на изкуствата, БАН

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предпечат
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Майа Лачева

Content Management
Lyubomir Marinchevski
Maya Lacheva

печат
Дайрект сървисиз

Press
Direct Services

ISBN 978-954-8594-70-7
ISSN 1313-2342

ISBN 978-954-8594-70-7
ISSN 1313-2342