A Stylistic Tendency in Ninth-Century Art of the Byzantine World

An Example of Miniatures in Three Greek Illuminated Manuscripts: the Book of Job (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 749), the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, cod. E49–50inf) and the Sacra Parallela (Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 923)

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In the first part of the article the style of miniatures in the three manuscripts is reconsidered, and this provides the basis to prove the Roman origin of the Milan Gregory and Vatican Job. The miniatures of the Sacra Parallela appear to be the work of a Palestinian artist who has most probably executed its vast cycle of illustrations in one of the Greek monasteries in Rome. The second part of the article contains a review of the so-called abstract and expressive stylistic tendency which dominated religious art of the Byzantine world in the first half of the ninth century.

The style of the miniatures in the three manuscripts and the origin of the Sacra Parallela has led scholars to express very contradictory opinions. This article has two aims: the

1 This article is based on my PhD thesis defended at the Department of Art History in Moscow State University in late 2002. Besides a stylistic analysis of the miniatures in the three manuscripts the dissertation embraces a study of the relationship between text and images in the Milan Homilies, an examination of the historical and cultural situation in the Christian world in the first half of the ninth century and the role of the miniatures in the three manuscripts in the artistic production of the age etc.

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When speaking about the Byzantine world as given in the title I have in mind the territories which in that period lay within the sphere of the cultural influence of Byzantium.

first is to analyse the stylistic features of the miniatures in each manuscript and on this basis make a new suggestion as to their origin; the second is to pinpoint those features which enable us to attribute them to a coherent stylistic group and to characterize the tendency in 9th-century art represented by them. I believe that all three manuscripts were written and illuminated in the first half or around the middle of the ninth century.

3 This dating is corroborated by their paleography (G. Cavallo, *Funzione e strutture della Manuscripta Graeca tra i secoli VIII–XI*, in: La paléographie grecque et byzantine. Colloque international du Centre national de la recherche scientifique (1974), Paris 1977, 95–137; idem, *La cultura italo-greca nella produzione libraria*, in: idem, *I Bizantini in Italia*, Milano 1982, 497–612). All the manuscripts are written in sloping uncial and we encounter in all of them a system of diacritical signs which is not fully developed. This system had taken shape in uncial script approximately by the 860's (though some exceptions exist). It was Professor B. Fonkič who drew my attention to this detail (B. L. Fonkich, *Grecheskie rukopisi evropeĭskih sobranii*, Moscow 1999, 13). Dr. A. Vinogradov pointed out the similarity of the uncial of the Milan codex to that of the palimpsest [Sreznevsky 72 (24. 4. 25)] from the Library of the Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg, which dates back to the late eighth – early ninth century. The arguments proposed by J. Osborne in favour of the second half of the ninth century as the date for the Sacra Parallela do not seem totally convincing to me [J. Osborne, *A Note on the Date of the Sacra Parallela (Parisinus Graecus 923)*, Byzantion 51/1 (1981), 316–317]. J. Osborne noticed that Methodius, the bishop of Olympus in Lycia, is depicted on the fols. 131v and 325r with a tight-fitting white hood very similar to that worn by his namesake Methodius, the patriarch of Constantinople, in the two mosaics of St. Sophia in Constantinople dating to the second half of the ninth century. The scholar quotes C. Mango’s reasoning: ‘This distinctive headgear is in reality a bandage. It is alleged that during the iconoclast persecutions under the emperor Theophilos, Methodius’ jaws were broken and his teeth pulled out; thus maimed, the future Patriarch was obliged to wear a bandage round his head’ [C. Mango, *Materials for the Study of the Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies VIII), Washington 1962, 52–53]. Firstly, the representations of Methodius in St. Sophia may not be the earliest ones. He may have been
The Milan codex is one of the two earliest surviving illustrated copies of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus together with the famous Paris manuscript (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, gr. 510), which both contain the full edition of Gregory’s texts. The large-scale format manuscript (435 × 305 mm) consists of two volumes (814 pages in total). It includes 171 miniatures; 78 were cut out, partly or entirely, before the manuscript was obtained in the early 17th century by the Biblioteca Ambrosiana. Most of the miniatures occupy the broad margins of the text. Almost all of them are set against the parchment, as the mode of illustration chosen by the miniaturist does not imply any locus in quo. Only the frontispiece and last miniature appear to be full-page images. The greater part of the miniatures in the Milan manuscript represent the prophets, apostles and church fathers whose writings Gregory cites in his Homilies. The images exist in the margins of the Milan codex quite independently as do the citations drawn from various sources in Gregory’s text. The compositional scheme most frequently found in the manuscript represents Gregory of Nazianzus pronouncing an oration before his audience (Figure 2). Minor variations concern the place (the interior of a church with slight differences in its appearance or simply a vague background of parchment) and the group of attendants.

The human figures may be of elongated or shortened proportions, and both may appear in the same scene. All the figures in this codex seem stark and motionless even when they are supposed to be moving. Movement has seemingly no time frame, it is depicted as being everlastingly performed. Poses get conventional treatment, especially if the figures are depicted frontally sitting or lying. The same way of rendering movement was used by masters who embellished Roman churches with mosaics in the early ninth century.

Fig. 4. Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, cod. E49–50inf). Pag. 537. David (fragment) (photo: Biblioteca Ambrosiana)

Fig. 5. S. Prassede. Apse. Saint Zeno (fragment) (photo: courtesy of Prof. V. Pace)
A particular feature of the miniatures in the Milan codex noted by all researchers is the lavish use of gold, not only for vestments and haloes but also for buildings and some elements of the landscape. The few other colours are applied rarely, primarily in two full-page miniatures and narrative compositions. The contours are drawn in black and orange-red. The order of work of the artist can be easily reconstructed: first, the outlining of the figure, facial features, hair, and perhaps, the main folds of clothing; then the filling in of the robes with gold or, in rare cases, other colours; the painting of the faces with a thin layer of light grey-pink and, after that, the sketchy accentuation of the features supplemented by patches of orange on the lower parts of the cheek-bones and, sometimes, also orange strokes at the line of the growth of the hair and the bottom of the neck; finally, the tracing of the folds and contours of the figures with thick rigid lines in black or orange. The folds are not numerous and their pattern does not remind us of the corporeal forms, movements or chiaroscuro modelling. Sometimes there are only a few parallel lines, at times the folds form almost ornamental fluttering structures (pag. 156 – Figure 2). A similar mode of treatment is to be found in the Roman mosaics of Paschal I, but there the ornamental character and repetition of similar motifs is more emphasized (Figure 3).

Fig. 7. Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, cod. E49–50inf). Pag. 814 (photo: Biblioteca Ambrosiana)

11 This technique was widespread in all the Roman mosaics of the period under consideration. The closest resemblance to its use in the Milan Homilies is revealed in the mosaic of the apse arch of SS. Nereo ed Achilleo with sparse, almost straight lines on the clothes of the apostles. On the mosaic of SS. Nereo ed Achilleo: G. Curzi, La decorazione musiva della basilica dei SS. Nereo ed Achilleo in Roma, Arte medievale 2 (1993), 21-45.
The faces are oval and broad with narrow foreheads (Figure 4). A. Grabar has noticed that many clerics are shown tonsured which is undoubtedly a Western feature. The handling of the faces strongly resembles that in the mosaics of S. Prassede (Figure 5). The image of Christ in the vault of the S. Zeno chapel (Figure 6) reveals a strong similarity with the images of Gregory’s attendants and some others. The faces have a remote expression; it is as if if the gold of their robes is the gleam of the other world, and their presence in that world is emphasised also by the lack of vivid expression on their faces.

The main means of artistic expression in the miniatures of the codex are the gold and line. The human figures, animals (stylised as in the Vatican Job and Sacra Parallela, but less skilfully executed), and architectural settings are given a flat treatment. The disembodied figures robed in gold float against the background of the parchment.

The same stiff, stark figures devoid of volume and weight as if they are dwelling in the immobility of the other world, appear in the Roman mosaics of Leo III and Paschal I. The faces of all the personages also look remote. The martyrs gliding to the gates of Paradise on the triumphal arch of S. Prassede, represented by superimposed rows of flat images, are very similar to the attendants of Gregory of Nazianzus depicted in the same way. The rendering of the folds in the mosaics reminds us of that in the miniatures of the Milan codex; the rows of tesserae accentuating the shaded sides of folds correspond only very approximately to their real position. The similarity of the impressions produced by the miniatures in the Milan manuscript and the S. Prassede mosaics is strengthened by the abundant use of gold in the mosaics and miniatures. Thus, the Roman mosaics of the early ninth century bear in whole and in details the closest stylistic resemblance to the miniatures of the Milan Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus.

The first and last miniatures (Figure 7), as observed by scholars, stand out stylistically against all the others. In the last miniature of the Milan codex only the architectural framework, the arch under which Gregory and two men stay,
Fig. 9. Sacra Parallela (Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 923). Fol. 96r. Jeremiah, Solomon, Isaiah and Jesus, son of Sirah (photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Fig. 10. Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, cod. E49–50inf). Pag. 422. Enos, Enoch, Noah and Abraham (fragment) (photo: Biblioteca Ambrosiana)
is gold. The figures are painted in colours and look more three-dimensional but are still disembodied. Their clothes are modelled more thoroughly than in the other miniatures of the manuscript, there are more folds and their lines correspond more to the body structure. Their rendering resembles that in the frescoes of the lower church of S. Clemente, the Descent into Limbo (last third of the ninth century?) and the Ascension (847–855). The faces are handled in a less conventional manner. The image of Gregory on the last page differs in expression; he looks more vivid and mobile and emotionally more neutral. For the closest parallel in style some frescoes of S. Vincenzo in Volturno (830-s) can be cited. The style of the last miniature conforms to the suggested Roman origin of the manuscript.

The Sacra Parallela is the only illustrated florilegium (collection of quotations from the Bible and patristic texts) that has come down to us. It is also a large-format codex (356 × 265 mm); all of its 1658 miniatures occupy the quite narrow margins of the text. Among the illustrations there are scenes and a multitude (more than a thousand) of half and full-length figures and medallions.

The images of the Sacra Parallela are bigger in scale than those of the Milan codex. Compositions with two or more figures occur much more often. Sometimes there are up to four scenes in the outer margin so that it appears totally occupied (Figure 8). The Sacra Parallela is perceived as an extremely luxurious work of art not only because of the abundant use of gold for its miniatures but also because of the visibly higher degree of their execution. The scene is often set against the skillfully elaborated architectural settings; here too, the parchment serves as a background.

The proportions of figures are usually shortened; their heads are excessively big. The figures look quite mobile, but sometimes the miniaturist does not achieve the effect he strove for, and without referring to the corresponding fragment of text one could not recognise the exact character of the movement represented.

The faces of the personages are individualised, and this feature also distinguishes the Sacra Parallela from the Milan codex (Figure 9). The miniaturist makes use of the same facial type, changing it slightly from one image to another.

16 Osborne, The Painting of the Anastasis, 287.
17 Matthiae, Pittura romana, 179–181.
19 Weitzmann, The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela, 10.
20 The margins generally do not exceed 65-70 mm. It is known that they were trimmed in the fifteenth century when the manuscript was bound (Weitzmann, op. cit., 1, 7).
21 Unlike the miniaturist of the Milan Homilies the artist of the Sacra Parallela did not make use of simple, sketchy compositional schemes. If he did reproduce earlier models, he would seem not to have transformed or simplic-     fied them, but merely to have reduced the compositions because of the lack of space in the narrow margins.
22 For example, looking at the four medallions containing the portraits of Eno, Enoch, Noah and Abraham on page 422 of the Milan codex (fig. 10) one may conclude that the same face is depicted four times. To compare – on the fol. 96r of the Sacra Parallela Jeremiah, Solomon, Isaiah and Jesus, son of Sirah are depicted on four medallions: for every portrait the artist has invented (or borrowed from his predecessor?) the colour of the hair, the hairstyle, the form and length of the beard. Their physiognomic features differ slightly as well.
This Eastern type of face with a narrow forehead, big eyes and a glance directed strongly to one side may be observed in the images on the wings of the two triptychs in the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai: the first, depicting the saints Chariton and Theodosios was dated by Weitzmann to the 8th–9th centuries (Figure 11),\(^{23}\) the second, with the warrior saints Theodore and George was given the advanced date of the 9th–10th centuries (Figure 12);\(^{24}\) we find this facial type in the image of the Ascension from the same monastery which, perhaps, once formed the central part of the second triptych (Figure 13).\(^{25}\) Time and again scholars have pointed to the similarity of the images of the Sacra Parallela, especially those in medallions, to the Paschal mosaics, and above all, to the *imagines clipeatae* above the entrance arch to the S. Zeno chapel (Figure 14), and the portraits in the medallions used to demarcate the compositions in the temple of Fortuna Virilis (872–882)\(^ {26}\) (Figure 16).

The motif of the double folds in the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela and in some images of the Vatican Job, which Weitzmann pointed out in 1935,\(^ {27}\) was not for some reason used by him to support his hypothesis about the Eastern origin of the Paris manuscript. This motif as it is treated in the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela, in the form of two dark lines drawn close to each other, often completed by small hooks, and used to differentiate the pictorial surface, appears in the works of Eastern art and may even go back to its very origins.\(^ {28}\)

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25 *Ibid.*, 69–71, pls. XCVI and XXVIII. The difference in height between the Ascension panel and those with the warrior saints is considerable enough (3.2 cm). Moreover, saints Theodore and George are represented riding in the same direction, which is quite unexpected for the wings of the same triptych. However that may be, the Ascension and the two wings were painted by the same artist. It seems that the interval between the dates of the wing with saints Chariton and Theodosios and the three previously mentioned panels should not be considerable, as all these works are characterized by the use of the same facial types and a similar manner of painting and colouring. They are undoubtedly products of the same period, probably, of the time when the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela were created. The images of the warrior saints and those on the Ascension panel differ from the images of the Paris codex in their sharpness and more pronounced interest in stylisation and decorative treatment of the pictorial surface.
27 Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei*, 80.
28 Weitzmann has correctly observed this in the Sinai icons and the Nubian frescoes (Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela*, 17–18) but it
lines of the folds correspond more to the anatomy of the human body and reflect real chiaroscuro modelling better than in the Milan codex. But because of the predominant use of gold, the illustrations of this manuscript remain two-dimensional.

Apart from the double folds the miniaturist of the Sacra Parallela often used double lines for the architectural settings (Figure 15). We come across some more “coincidental” elements in the architectural settings in the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela and the frescoes of Fortuna Virilis. Two of them – the double door wings with concentric discs in the fresco representing the arrival of the apostles at the house of the Mother of God and in the miniature with the bathing of Bathsheba (fol. 282v), and the images of the St. Basil and John of Damascus (fol. 208r) standing under similarly decorated arches – were pointed out by A. Grabar.29 One can also find the similarities in the décor of the roof of the tower-like building (on the fresco it is definitely a temple): the elements resembling petals, and horizontal bands of jewels30 (Figures 15 and 16).

Thus, we have seen a series of iconographical and stylistic coincidences in the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela and in contemporary and slightly later Roman painting. The resemblance of the facial types and expressions in the miniatures and Paschalian mosaics is unmistakable.31 But seems that he was wrong to find it also in the Paschal mosaics where there are often more than two lines which are not always parallel, and in the marginal psalters with their totally different treatment of the images tending to three-dimensionality. The Khludov psalter (State Historical Museum, gr. 129d) may not be considered in this context as it was strongly renewed apparently in the first half of the thirteenth century. It is to be emphasised that the case in question is the rendering of the motive in purely linear and two-dimensional way. The motif of the double folds can be found in the ivory plaques with images of prophets and saints and scenes from the lives of Christ and St. Mark, dating to the late 7th–8th century, which obviously originated in Syria or Palestine. See, for example, the plaque with the prophet Joël in the Louvre collection (Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises, Catalogue de l’exposition tenue au Musée du Louvre le 3 novembre 1992 – 1er février 1993, Paris 1992, 182). The double folds appear already in the fragment of the Syrian ivory diptych of the sixth or seventh century with the images of the Annunciation to Anne and Anne with the maidservant in the State Hermitage collection (Sinaï Vizantiia. Rus’. Pravoslavnoe iskusstvo s 6 do nachala 20 veka, katalog vystavki, red. O. Baddleĭ, E. Briunner, IV. Piatnitskiĭ, London – Saint Petersburg 2000, 62). I believe, having this aim, one may trace the motif of the double folds back to the pagan art of the Near East.

29 Grabar, Les manuscrits grecs, figs. 28 and 29, 24 and 25, p. 23.
30 Trimarchi, op. cit., tav. II, and Weitzmann, pl. LXXI, fig. 357. The function of these petals may be different. In the miniature (fol. 252v – fig. 15) they decorate a shell-shaped niche (still one cannot be sure because of the very conventional rendering), in the fresco they are, perhaps, supposed to represent tiles, as they are in the previously mentioned miniature with the Bathing of Bathsheba. M. Trimarchi has observed that the building on the fresco of Fortuna Virilis apparently went back to images of the fountain of life in illuminated manuscripts (Trimarchi, op. cit., 658). The scholar maintained that the whole fresco cycle of the temple was based on iconographical schemes drawn from a Greek illuminated manuscript (Trimarchi, op. cit., 675, 677).
31 In the murals of Fortuna Virilis another physiognomic type appears, with a bigger and heavier chin and some stylisation in the treatment of the features. It reflects, I think, the next stage in the evolution of medieval Roman painting represented also by the frescoes of the Descent into Limbo and the Last Judgment in the lower church of S. Clemente.
the more accentuated glances, directed usually to one side, give the faces more passion and vivacity and distinguish the miniatures of the Paris codex from the Roman mosaics and frescoes, bringing them closer to the panels from Sinai. This difference in the nuances of expression is one of the reasons why I regard the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela a work of the Palestinian artist, and see in the Roman painting of the period only mediated Eastern influence (the use of the Eastern models or, perhaps, tuition by Eastern masters). The mode of rendering double folds in the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela is found only in works of art originating in the Christian East. However, the use of motifs widespread in the ninth-century Roman painting even if they did come from Eastern sources and at least two more details make one think that the miniaturist of the Sacra Parallela worked on its vast cycle of illustrations in Rome, in one of the Greek scriptoria. Realising that the arguments in favour of the Roman origin of the Sacra Parallela are not sufficient to reject the other proposed suggestions, it remains to be noted that at that time the best conditions for such a great enterprise existed in Rome.

The Vatican Book of Job consists of two volumes (375 × 273 mm) and is embellished with 55 miniatures usually placed on the low part of the page. The miniatures are large-scale, and this distinguishes them from the images of the other two manuscripts. Their contours have no regular form; sometimes the miniatures are framed with two or three lines, at times they are left without any frame. There are three discernible groups of miniatures (i.e. there were three artists who had carried out the work): 1) up to fol. 30r, 2) from 38r to 118v, and 3) the images in the remaining part of the codex.

The first miniaturist illustrated the most dramatic part of the story of Job. The figures in the miniatures executed by him are represented on the architectural background or in the landscape (Figure 17). The people depicted are stocky,

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32 Both cases concern “strange” headgear. The first case is the image of Methodius on fols. 131v and 325r (see n. 3). The other is the image of John of Damascus on fol. 146r where he is represented in the luxurious vestments of a courtier (he was a logothete of the Caliph) and in the hood of a monk, resembling those depicted time and again in the miniatures of the Milan Homilies. It seems that the artist did not know what kind of headdress was worn by courtiers in the Caliphate, but he was aware that John of Damascus after his secular career withdrew to the Great Lavra. This discrepancy is more to be expected of a person who lived and worked in Rome than of a resident of the East.

33 The work undertaken needed considerable financing, the presence of a qualified artist and a good library (for instance, in case of the need to verify a textual fragment). All these necessary conditions would most probably have appeared in Rome. On the activity of the Greek monasteries in Rome: Cavallo, La cultura italo-greca; J.-M. Sansier, Les moines grecs et orientaux à Rome aux époques byzantine et carolingienne (milieu du V° s. – fin du IX° s.), Bruxelles 1982; idem, Le monachisme byzantin à Rome, Bisan- zio, Roma e l’Italia nell’alto Medioevo, in: Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull’alto Medioevo 34, Spoleto 1988, 701–746.


35 This division was proposed by Weitzmann (Weitzmann, Die byzantinische Buchmalerei, 79) and it seems correct. A. Grabar has also picked out three groups but divided them differently (1°: 6r–30r; 2°: 38r–209v; 3°: 226r–249v). He believed that there were two artists, and the third group of miniatures was executed by the first artist under the influence of the second (Grabar, Les manuscrits grecs, 17). P. Huber discerned the same three groups of images as Grabar, but remarked that the work was evidently done by four miniaturists (Huber, op. cit., 93–94).
with big heads. In spite of the predominantly plain rendering, some idea of volume still remains in the human figures, images of animals, and architectural settings. Sometimes the miniaturist treated the folds as double parallel lines ending with little hooks – we met the same device that originated in Eastern art in the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela. The characteristic feature of the first 26 miniatures, observed in the images of the Paris codex as well, is the mobility of the figures (not only are the people shown able to move, but so are the animals and even the trees) (Figure 18). It is clear that the rendering of movement was not easy for the artist, one can see that the distortion of proportions and the improbable poses resulted from this difficulty.

The faces of the personages are broad, with big eyes, sometimes expressive and beautiful (Figure 19). The features are painted with black or orange lines, or strokes over the pale colour of carnation. The faces gravitate towards the Eastern facial type represented in the images of the Sacra Parallela but show a tinge of naivety and frankness.

Apart from the gold, which is used sparingly in the miniatures of the Vatican Job and kept mainly for the architectural elements and details of clothes, the palette of the first artist is quite limited: orange-red, greyish blue and green. In the first miniatures the images are outlined inaccurately and roughly. Still this was the way in which the artist gave them more completeness and clarity.

The first artist was probably responsible for the only painted initial in the manuscript, which depicts a putti saddling the dragon (Figure 17). The figure of the putti is well proportioned and looks three-dimensional, compared with the more abstract and decorative painted initials in the Carolingian manuscripts.

The compositions with many figures look rather overcrowded, which may be due to the large scale of the figures in relation to the space assigned for them. Sometimes the artist divides the pictorial surface into cells or separates the foreground as a scene for the action to take place.

On the whole, the miniatures executed by the first artist reveal the closest resemblance to the images of the Sacra Parallela and those on the wings of the two Sinai triptychs and the panel of the Ascension referred to above. Some resemblance to them may be found in the miniatures on the four folios of a Greek ninth-century manuscript inserted in a 13th-century codex (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Hamilton, 246).

36 This tinge is inherent in some Carolingian works of art; it is especially characteristic of the miniatures of the Trier Apocalypse (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Cod. 51) and Stuttgart Psalter (Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. bibl. fol. 23).

37 These principles of operating with the pictorial space can not, from my point of view, be called flat or ornamental as Weitzmann has defined them (Weitzmann, Die byzantinische Buchmalerei, 78). Of course, the dominant flatness of the images in the Book of Job contributes much to such a view, and one is tempted to mention the Gospels of Saint-Médard-de-Soissons (Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 8850) for similar compositional structures. However, the same principles of spatial organisation can be found in Byzantine manuscript illumination as well, to give only two very famous examples here, the Paris Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus (Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 510) for the division of the whole pictorial surface into horizontal stripes or small cells, and the so-called Leo-Bible (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. Gr.1) for the scenic organisation of the foreground.

38 See notes 23–25.

39 C. Nordenfalk, Die spätantiken Kanontafeln, Göteborg 1938, Taf. 5–7; Weitzmann, The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela, 237; R. S. Nelson, The Iconography of Preface and Miniature in the Byzantine Gospel Book, New York 1980, 12f. The artistic quality and bad state of preservation of the images inserted in the Berlin manuscript do not permit us to conclude that the artist belonged to the same artistic milieu as the miniaturists of the Vatican Job. These inserted images lack the brightness and expressiveness of the first images of the Vatican Job and even more so of those in the Sacra Parallela.
The first group of miniatures of the Vatican Job appears to be a striking combination of features of various origin: Byzantine, Carolingian, Roman and Eastern. A fleeting glance is enough to see this. The miniature on fol. 7r contains in each of its three parts a domed tower-like building of the Eastern type (Figure 18). A similar building is shown behind the city walls on fol. 25v.40 The use of double folds and gold for some details of the clothing and architectural settings has already been mentioned. The house of Job that collapsed on his sons and daughters on fol. 20r41 is represented in a very similar way to the ruins that remained after the earthquake in Nicea on page 78 of the Milan Gregory. The compositions are more static. From one miniature to the next the artists changed the colour of the clothes, their decorative pattern and the form of the tower-like building in the background. They wanted to embellish everything; even the ulcers on Job’s body look ridiculous and the normal proportions of their features are unbalanced. Besides the gold of the Job’s halo and the background, the colouring consists of a few tints blue and violet supplemented with brown and yellow.

The work of the second artist, if compared with that of his companions, is remarkable for its poor quality. The colouring strikes one by its lack of harmony. Unlike the first miniaturist who attained a significant final effect, the second artist did not manage to endow the faces with emotions or expressions. They seem rather ugly and are painted roughly, with rose patches on the cheeks and along the hair line, and blue shadows near the eyebrows and inferior eyelids. Analogies for this mode of treatment and facial types can be found in the miniatures of the Stuttgart Psalter (Figure 22).42

The miniatures executed by the third artist beginning with fol. 119r are characterised by bright, intense colour and a tendency for ornamentation. In the last miniatures he, like the first artist, used the motif of double folds.

On the whole, the miniatures painted by the second and third artists are more decorative and emotionally neutral. The compositions are more static. From one miniature to the next the artists changed the colour of the clothes, their decorative pattern and the form of the tower-like building in the background. They wanted to embellish everything; even the ulcers on Job’s body look different every time.

The striving for decoration, the rendering of the background with alternating stripes of different colours and the portrayal of the ground using a narrow dark green band with bunches of flowers, bring the Vatican Job close to the Carolingian manuscripts.43 However, their similarities are rather unspecific, being formal in character and only let us conclude that they were both created in the European cultural area. With regard to stylistic and partly technical matters, the miniatures of the Vatican codex can be compared only with the images of the Trier Apocalypse44 and Stuttgart Psalter.
Despite the stylistic differences between the three groups of images in the Vatican Job, there exist some features common to all of them, such as the use of a very limited assortment of colours, the shortened proportions of the figures varying even within a single miniature, the arbitrary compositional organisation (lacking any tendency to equilibrium and visual harmony in the miniatures with Job and his friends, and sometimes intentionally symmetrical in the first scenes).

The combination of quite different stylistic features (Western, Roman, Eastern and Byzantine), which we have encountered in the Vatican Book of Job, and especially in the first group of its images, can be used as evidence to suggest that the manuscript was produced in one of the Greek monasteries in Rome.46

Thus, the conclusion about the origin of the three manuscripts coincides with the idea proposed in 1935 by K. Weitzmann and later maintained by A. Grabar. For the former scholar the reasons to argue the Roman origin of the Vatican Job, Milan Gregory and Sacra Parallela were primarily the stylistic similarities of their miniatures with the fresco of the Ascension of Christ in the lower church of S. Clemente and the miniatures in the tenth-century manuscripts from Benevent.47 The latter pointed out that painted initials like the one with putti in the Vatican Job were widespread in Italian manuscripts of the tenth and eleventh centuries. He proposed that the links with Western and Byzantine art, so obvious in the miniatures of this codex, could most likely have taken place in Rome. Grabar found some iconographic analogies to the miniatures of the Milan Gregory in tenth and eleventh century manuscripts of Exultet from Central Italy and in Roman mosaics and frescoes. And it was the comparison with Italian paintings (the mosaics of S. Prassede and the chapel of S. Zeno, and the frescoes of Fortuna Virilis, Cimitile, S. Bas- tinello and S. Vincenzo in Volturro) and some compositional details found in the contemporary Latin manuscripts that led him to claim the Italian origin of the Sacra Parallela.48 Claiming the Roman origin of the Vatican Job, C. Bertelli pointed out the similarities in the style of its images to slightly earlier and later works of Roman art, the frescoes of the Chapel of Theodotus in S. Maria Antiqua and Fortuna Virilis.49

From my point of view, the reasons to attribute the three manuscripts to Greek scriptoria in Rome are different in each case. For the Milan Gregory it is the clear resemblance of the miniatures to Roman mosaics of the first half of the ninth century. In the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela, stylistic similarities to the Paschalian mosaics seem less strong than those to Sinai icons painted, as is usually considered, by Palestinian artists. Still some iconographic details, more likely in Roman than in Palestinian works of art, as well as the use of motifs widespread in Roman art of the period, speak in favour of the Roman origin of the Sacra Parallela. It was not possible to find such close stylistic parallels with the images of the Vatican Job, as in the case of the other two manuscripts. But the combination of features of various origins leads us to think about a place where all these contributions could have come together. In this period it would most probably have been Rome.50

In spite of the differences in style between the miniatures of the three manuscripts and the three groups of images of the Vatican Job, which became apparent whilst studying them, there are some peculiarities inherent in all of them, making them representative of the same phenomenon in ninth-century art of the Byzantine world. These include a lack of interest in the rendering of volume and the normal proportions of the human body, in the colour and chiaroscuro modelling, in the compositional organisation of the pictorial space – overall, in everything that is material; and, at the same time, striving for extreme expressiveness in these images. One sometimes has the impression that the heightened expression of the images is

46 Perhaps, it really was the monastery of S. Saba as Ch. Eggenberger argued [Ch. Eggenberger, Mittelalterliche Miniaturen aus Rom zum Buch Hiob, Sandoz Bulletin 51 (1980), 22–31].
47 Weitzmann, Die byzantinische Buchmalerei, 80–81.
49 Storia dell’arte, 83.
a result of the loss of aesthetic, beauty and classical harmony. The purpose of the creation of these images seems to be not to decorate the pages of the manuscripts but rather to remind the future reader of the prototypes behind the images and the phenomena of the celestial world. The images exist like symbols, shells for the ideas embodied in them. Their expressiveness wins them the strained attention of a viewer; perhaps, the artists have found the best way of realising the idea of an icon as it was formulated in 787 by the Second Council of Nicaea: the faithful contemplating the icons raise their thoughts from the types to the prototypes.51

The main source of the styles of the Milan and Vatican manuscripts is found in Roman medieval art, the evolution of which from the classical plastic treatment of form to its gradual flattening and simplification, that took place approximately from the second third of the sixth century, is brilliantly traced in the studies by Kitzinger and Krautheimer.52 The development of the style found in the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela and partly in the first group of images of the Vatican Job may be represented by a group of Sinai icons, which are listed here in order of the growing proximity of their style to that of the miniatures of the Sacra Parallela: the Χαίρετε (7th century),53 the Crucifixion (8th century),54 the Three Hebrews in the Fiery Furnace (7th century),55 the Saints Paul, Peter, Nicolas and John Chrysostom (7th–8th centuries),56 the Nativ- 

53 The dates are given according to Weitzmann, The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons. The sequence of images based on stylistic matters differs a little from the chronological one drawn by Weitzmann. Ibid., 50–51, pl. XXI, LXXV.
54 Ibid., 61–64, pl. XXV, LXXXIX.
55 Ibid., 56, pl. XXII, LXXXII–LXXXIII.
56 Ibid., 58–59, pl. XXIV.
57 Ibid., 67–69, pl. XXXVII.
58 Ibid., 73–76, pl. XXX. The date of this icon is cited here according to K. Weitzmann, Loca sancta and the representational arts of Palestine, Dumbarton Oaks Papers 28 (1974), 33–55. In the aforementioned volume (The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons) it dates back to the second half of the ninth – tenth century. In the current context this early dating seems preferable.
59 On the whole, in the Christian East the stylistic tendency under consideration always played a leading role and had its individual path of development. The main problem is that in speaking about Eastern art we have to deal with very imprecise dates. Scholars, as a rule, assign to the time in question, which for the most part coincides with the second period of iconoclasm, the aniconic decoration of some churches in Cappadocia. However, even this commonly accepted opinion was rightly challenged recently by L. Brubaker (L. Brubaker, On the Margins of Byzantine Iconoclasm, in: Pré-actes XXe Congrès international des études byzantines, Paris 2001, 209–216). Some similarities to the style of the first group of images of the Vatican Job may be found in the frescoes of the Yalinal kliisse, but I tend to accept the date (first half of the tenth or late ninth century) proposed for them by C. Jolivet-Lévy (C. Jolivet-Lévy, Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce. Le programme iconographique de l’abside et de ses abords, Paris 1991, 307–310). In the miniatures of the Syrian codex (Staatbibliothek zu Berlin, Sachau 220) dated roughly to the ninth century, the Eastern facial types appear but the faces themselves are painted with a better knowledge of anatomy than that revealed in the manuscripts under review (E. Sachau, Verzeichniss der syrischen Hand- schriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin, Berlin 1899). Weitzmann compared the Sacra Parallela miniatures to the frescoes of Faras, belonging to the so-called “white style” (c. 870 – early 11th century), still it seems that nothing except double folds bring them together, and the murals of the previous period, of the “violet” style (early eighth – middle of the ninth century), less abstract and decorative, reveal a greater similarity to the miniatures of the Paris codex (K. Weitzmann, Some Remarks on the Sources of the Fresco Paintings of the Cathedral of Faras, in: Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in christlicher Zeit. Ergebnisse und Probleme auf Grund der jüngsten Ausgrabungen, ed. E. Dinkler, Recklinghausen 1970, 325–344).
60 Besides the miniatures of the Trier Apocalypse and Stuttgart Psalter which have similar modes of rendering forms and movements, and of compositional organisation to those of the Vatican series of the Ger- 

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Један стилски правац у уметности византијског света IX века на примеру минијатура Књиге о Јову (Vatican. gr. 749), Хомилија Григорија Назијанског (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, cod. E49–50inf) и рукописа Sacra Parallela (Paris. gr. 923)

Ирина Орецка

У првом делу чланка, у коме је извршена стилска анализа минијатура три рукописа, изнова се поставља питање њиховог порекла. Вероватно су сви они били украшени минијатурама у грчким манастирима Рима, али су аргументи који говоре у прилог таквом закључку за сваки рукопис различити. За Хомилије Григорија Назијанског из миланске Амброзијане то је снажна сличност минијатура с римским мозаицима из времена папа Лава III (795–816), Паскала I (817–824) и Григорија IV (827–844). Илустрације рукописа Sacra Parallela, нарочито карактер ликовна на минијатурама, показују већу стилску блискост с неколико сицијских икона које су урадили, како се сматра, палестински мајстори него с поменутим мозаицима прве половине IX века. Ипак, неки иконографски детаљи, а и употреба мотива који су били веома раширенi у римском сликарству, сведоче о томе да је Рим био место настанка рукописа из париске Националне библиотеке. За минијатуре ватиканске Књиге о Јову није пронађено толико стилских аналогија као за представе у друга два рукописа. И поред тога, сног црта које воде порекло из блискоисточне, византијске, римске и каролиншке уметности одводи нас тамо где су се у првој половини IX века сви ти утицаји могли „сусрести“. Такво место, према свега, био је Рим.

У другом делу чланка укратко су изложене карактеристике стилског праваца у уметности византијског света IX века представљеног илустрацијама три разматрана рукописа. За стил њихових минијатура, који је према свега окренут духовној страни приказаних ликова, могуће је наћи аналогије у поменутој епохи и на истоку и на западу хришћанског света. У оквиру тог апстрактно- eksпресивног праваца, који је имао водећу улогу у религиозној уметности прве половине IX века, постојало је много могућности за реализацију. Она су зависиле како од националне припадности, индивидуалног манера и уметничког нивоа мајстора тако и од духовног програма који је лежао у основи одређеног дела.