Introduction

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On a spring day in the middle of the twentieth century, the Swedish poet Gunnar Ekelöf visited the holy fountain (*hagiasma*) of the Virgin in the Blachernai church in modern Istanbul. His experiences at the famous shrine elicited a whole cycle of poems. One of them addressed the Marian icon next to the spring:

> The black image
> framed in silver worn to shreds by kisses
> Framed in silver
> the black image worn to shreds by kisses
> […]
> Darkness, O, darkness
> worn to shreds by kisses
> darkness in our eyes
> worn to shreds by kisses
> All we wished for[1]

This fragmentary modernist impression may convey aspects of the Marian image unimagined by a Byzantine viewer or painter. Ekelöf's captivation by the abyss of blackness might have puzzled a Constantinopolitan writer of *ekphrases* (rhetorical descriptions), especially since the poem eventually turns the reader's attention towards the observer. Yet in so doing, precisely, these lines highlight an important point: even in the guise of a static image, the Virgin Mary continues to inspire stories to this very day.

We live in a time of narratives – as has everyone else in history. Byzantium, too, can be described as 'a large and complex web of intersecting stories which informed the actions and perceptions of its people, even as those same people continuously retold and recast these stories for themselves'.[2]

[1] G. Ekelöf, *Selected Poems*, trans. W. H. Auden and L. Sjöberg (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), 42.

[2] E. Bourbouhakis and I. Nilsson, 'Byzantine Narrative: The Form of Storytelling in Byzantium', in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 263; for Byzantine narrative traditions, see now C. Messis, M. Mullett and I. Nilsson (eds.), *Storytelling in Byzantium: Narratological Approaches to Byzantine Texts and Images* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2018) and also J. Burke et al. (eds.), *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott* (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2006).

Stories are inherent to human culture. Storytelling occurs involuntarily in people's minds and in dreams. 'Narrative imagining – story – is the fundamental instrument of thought', according to the cognitive scientist Mark Turner.[3] If we accept this statement, we also realise that both listening to stories and retelling stories are vital to the way we work as humans. Ekelöf cannot look at a picture without starting to make up stories. His is not an epic, but even this little fragment of a poem comes with faltering narration. One can veritably sense how he prises out his own composition from the image – a tale of imagined kisses – as he is polishing forth a silver framing, a metallic veil on the verge of disintegration under the weight of kisses, centuries of kisses, the summoning of love and the ever-present decay on the same mirror, the black surface and the desirous first person plural, into which Ekelöf draws the reader, the encounters with the darkness hidden in the eyes of the Virgin, our lips and Byzantine beauty crumbling.

Stories bring people together. By narrating we make sense of our existence, sort and interpret the massive storm of minutiae that the world would otherwise offer a storiless mind. This explains why religious traditions typically comprise stories, myths and legends; narrative yields understanding – or, rather, it befalls as understanding. To tell is to make sense. Storytelling has a contemporaneous function, as a way to grasp life. On the other hand, it has a historical aspect to it, since most stories are new versions of older ones, revised reiterations of past knowledge. By studying historical narratives we can gain insight into how people understood their lives and how sensitivities changed.

Marian Stories

The legacy of the second-century 'apocryphal' text known as the *Protevangelium of James* in Marian storytelling can scarcely be exaggerated; one might almost argue that the history of Marian narratives amounts to a reception of the *Protevangelium*.[4] Throughout the Byzantine era, this

[3] M. Turner, *The Literary Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 4.

[4] For this important text, see CANT 50; C. Tischendorf (ed.), *Evangelia apocrypha* (Leipzig: Avenarius and Mendelssohn, 1876), 1–50; E. de Strycker (ed.), *La forme la plus ancienne du Proévangile de Jacques*, Subsidia Hagiographica 33 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1961), 64–191; J. K. Elliott (trans.), *The Apocryphal New Testament. A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation Based on M. R. James* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 57–67. We follow scholarly convention in using the term 'apocryphal' for this and other non-canonical texts that provided narratives about the Virgin's life from about the second century onward. However, it should be recognised that such texts were widely read and even used as liturgical readings, judging by the surviving manuscripts

work – which primarily tells of Mary's birth, upbringing and motherhood – continued to inspire new narratives about her in various media. This does not mean that all the icon painters and hymn writers necessarily sat down and read the *Protevangelium* themselves, but versions of it lived on in their culture, and they offered their own tweak or twist to a story that was more or less familiar. Writing to ascetic women, Athanasius (295–373) could emphasise Mary's virginity, especially during her formative years, and relate how 'she did not permit anyone near her body unless it was covered, and she controlled her anger and extinguished the wrath in her inmost thoughts'.[5] Other authors could tell of her parturition and breastfeeding in a cave. An influence from the *Protevangelium* may arguably be traced in both examples, but the writers addressed devotees with different concerns and worries. Authors and artists drew attention to the Marian aspect that was most relevant to their particular audiences. Hence studies of the *Protevangelium* and its reception also lead to the following historical questions: which aspects of older stories were privileged or received, and which aspects were left out or censored?

Mary emerged as a part of the Jesus story (not least in the Gospel of Luke) or as a prolegomenon to the same (as in the case of the *Protevangelium*) during the first Christian centuries. These two texts provided a background story for what culminated at Calvary. Yet they told nothing of what happened to the Virgin Mother later in life. Quite early, people grew interested in her final hours and manner of death, as well as in her state and whereabouts after the Dormition, or her passing away.[6]

and translations into ancient languages including Syriac, Ethiopic, Georgian, and many others. See Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 48–52; S. J. Voicu, 'Ways to Survival for the Infancy Apocrypha', in C. Clivaz, A. Dettwiler, L. Devillers and E. Norelli (eds.), *Infancy Gospels. Stories and Identities* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 401–17. For discussion of the Christian Fathers' wariness in alluding directly to such texts (at least before about the early eighth century), see M. B. Cunningham, 'The Use of the *Protevangelion of James* in Eighth-Century Homilies on the Mother of God', in L. Brubaker and M. B. Cunningham (eds.), *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium: Texts and Images* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), esp. 165–7.

5 Athanasius of Alexandria, *First Letter to Virgins* 13–17, trans. D. Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 277–9.

6 S. J. Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); S. C. Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption de Marie. Histoire des traditions anciennes* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1995); see also J. Baun, *Tales from Another Byzantium: Celestial Journey and Local Community in the Medieval Greek Apocrypha* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); L. M. Peltomaa, A. Külzer and P. Allen (eds.), *Presbeia Theotokou: The Intercessory Role of Mary across Times and Places in Byzantium (4th–9th Century)* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015); T. Arentzen, 'The Virgin in Hades', in G. Ekroth and I. Nilsson (eds.), *Round Trip to Hades in*

Episodes from Mary's life were elaborated in iconography and hymnography, often in relation to liturgical celebrations. Many Marian stories and themes first made their appearance alongside emerging feasts of the Virgin, and filled such occasions with narrative content. Whereas the canonical gospels furnished Dominical festivals with literary accounts, commemorations of the Mother of God could not always rely on New Testament sources. The *Protevangelium*, on the other hand, provided valuable material for artists and composers. By the fifth century the first known Marian feast was celebrated; three centuries later the Nativity of the Theotokos, her Entrance into the Temple, her Conception, the *Hypapante* (or the Presentation of Christ in the Temple), the Annunciation and the Dormition/Assumption had all entered the festal calendar of the Byzantine church.[7] The whole annual cycle was now telling Marian stories. Although the *Protevangelium* and various accounts of the Dormition and Assumption of the Virgin could offer a narrative framework, most of these festivals required the expansion of earlier stories and the development of motifs.

Much recent Marian scholarship has centred on imagery and cult.[8] Such emphasis has rightly challenged the dogmatic focus of earlier scholarship. Was the official recognition of Mary's role as 'Theotokos' ('God-bearer') at the Council of Ephesus (AD 431) the one formative event in the history of Marian history? Attention to relatively early source material has accompanied such questions.[9] This volume instead takes an interest in the stories about the Virgin: how ecclesiastical or cultural circumstances favoured particular ways to tell her story, and how historical people related their various versions to interpret their own lives. The enquiries bring the volume into the less researched Middle Byzantine period. Many of

the Eastern Mediterranean Tradition: Visits to the Underworld from Antiquity to Byzantium (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 287–303.

7 For a more detailed table of feasts related to Mary in Byzantium in the ninth century, see I. M. Calabuig, 'The Liturgical Cult of Mary in the East and West', in A. J. Chupungco (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies,* vol. 5: *Liturgical Time and Space* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 271–2.

8 The new emphasis is represented by volumes like M. Vassilaki (ed.), *Images of the Mother of God. Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium* (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); Brubaker and Cunningham, *Cult of the Mother of God*; C. Maunder (ed.), *Origins of the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Burns and Oates, 2008).

9 See e.g. Peltomaa et al., *Presbeia Theotokou*; recent monograph studies include L. M. Peltomaa, *The Image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathistos Hymn* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); N. Constas, *Proclus of Constantinople and the Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity: Homilies 1–5, Texts and Translations* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); S. Shoemaker, *Mary in Early Christian Faith and Devotion* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016); T. Arentzen, *The Virgin in Song: Mary and the Poetry of Romanos the Melodist* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

the studies employ material that has so far attracted little or no scholarly interest; they draw scholarly attention to 'new' and exciting sources in various media.

The book traces changes and fluctuations in the accounts of Mary, from the Early through the Middle Byzantine period.[10] During the course of these centuries, Greek authors began to fill the gaps and piece together extensive stories of the Virgin's life from beginning to end. Such *Lives* of the Virgin have been described as compositions that sit somewhere between hagiography and homiletics.[11] As scholars have recently demonstrated, the boundaries between genres in Byzantine literature were porous, such that both structural and rhetorical modes of expression could pass between them.[12] It is thus through the vehicle of both poetry and prose that a complete Marian biography (or versions of a biography) evolved in the course of the Middle Byzantine period. Church buildings, such as the one in the Daphni Monastery, conveyed the narrative of Mary's life in large iconographic sequences. Isolated episodes formerly expanded to fit particular cultic events were now kneaded into a coherent life-story. But much had happened along the way. Narratives concerning the Virgin's birth, infancy, relationship to Jesus during his ministry, passion and resurrection, as well as her death or 'dormition' and assumption into heaven had already circulated in extra-canonical literature of the late antique period.[13] Such stories, known from the earliest sources, reappeared in later songs and sermons, as well as in images and amulets.[14] As several chapters in this volume point out, however, Byzantine writers and iconographers assimilated older extra-canonical versions in different ways, sometimes accepting this material

[10] For recent studies of Marian narratives and panegyrics in the Middle period, see B. V. Pentcheva, *Icons and Power. The Mother of God in Byzantium* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2006); B. K. Reynolds, *Gateway to Heaven. Marian Doctrine and Devotion. Image and Typology in the Patristic and Medieval Periods*, vol. 1: *Doctrine and Devotion* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2012).

[11] S. Mimouni, *Les traditions anciennes sur la Dormition et l'Assomption de Marie* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 75.

[12] See M. E. Mullett, 'The Madness of Genre', *DOP* 46 (1992): 235–43; P. A. Agapitos, 'Literary Criticism', in E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, and R. Cormack (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), esp. 79–80.

[13] Texts containing full biographies, or *Lives*, of the Virgin survive from an earlier date in Syriac. See A. Desreumaux, 'Deux anciens manuscrits syriaques d'œuvres apocryphes dans le nouveau fonds de Sainte-Catherine du Sinaï: la Vie de la Vierge et les actes d'André et Mathias', *Apocrypha* 20 (2009): 115–36; C. Naffah, 'Les "Histoires" Syriaques de la Vierge: traditions apocryphes anciennes et récentes', *Apocrypha* 20 (2009): 137–88.

[14] For previous studies on these issues, see M. B. Cunningham, 'The Reception of Romanos in Middle Byzantine Homiletics and Hymnography', *DOP* 62 (2008): 251–60; Cunningham, 'Use of the *Protevangelion*'.

as 'historically' accurate and sometimes interpreting it allegorically. The dynamics of stories' reception, reuse and recycling justifies the focus on narrative in this book.

What is Narrative?

There are many kinds of stories, and these can be defined in various ways. Often *narrative* is thought of as a particular expression of a given story or event. It may be described as an account of events with a certain chronology. Barbara Herrnstein Smith defines it as 'someone telling someone else that something happened'.[15] The definition works for an oral story, and even for the short Ekelöf fragment, but perhaps less well for narrative images. The literary theorist Roland Barthes has suggested a much wider concept of narrative: 'Among the vehicles of narrative are articulated language, whether oral or written, pictures, still or moving, gestures, and an ordered mixture of all those substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fables, tales, short stories, epics, history, tragedy, *drame*, comedy, pantomime, paintings … , stained-glass windows, movies, local news, conversation.'[16]

This book adopts a broad concept of narrative, and suggests, following Barthes, that a still picture can be the vehicle for narrative, because it indicates motion or insinuates that something is happening. A picture of the Annunciation does not give a chronological account or a series of events; it stages an episode. The 'narrative' is monoscenic and frozen, but it implies action. Moreover, the picture draws on a rich narrative thesaurus from the well-known story that it reiterates. Into the reading of the image go the viewer's own preconceptions of the event, learned perhaps from hearing the Gospel of Luke or the *Protevangelium*. Thus the narrative is not captured in the image, or restricted to the image as such, but comes about as a reflection of it.[17] The icon that came before Ekelöf in Istanbul sparked narrative glimpses in him and engendered historical musings about the Virgin Mary.[18]

[15] B. H. Smith, 'Narrative Version, and Narrative Theories', in W. J. T. Mitchell (ed.), *On Narrative* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 228.

[16] R. Barthes, 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative', *New Literary History* 6/2 (1975): 237.

[17] As Stendhal famously wrote, 'a novel is a mirror travelling down the road. Sometimes it reflects the blue of the heavens to your eye, sometimes the mud of the filthy puddles on the road'. Stendhal, *The Red and the Black*, trans. R. Gard (London: Penguin Classics, 2002), 374.

[18] For a discussion of images and narratives, see W. Steiner, 'Pictorial Narrativity', in M.-L. Ryan (ed.), *Narrative across Media: The Language of Storytelling* (Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 145–77.

We do not aim to explore the intricacies of narratology in relation to the various media of the Byzantine period,[19] but rather to study a growing Byzantine urge to tell stories about the Virgin Mary. This urge led her in different directions, in visual, textual and aural media, from the fourth century to the Komnenian period, through the Justinianic era, Iconoclasm and the time of the Macedonian dynasty. The book studies, in other words, the dynamic unfolding of tradition, understood as the continuous creative retelling of received stories.

This Book

Part I, 'Telling Visual Stories', turns to material and space in order to highlight that narratives are more than words. The Virgin's story grew out of and came to shape devotional spaces and practices, from the earliest small-scale images to fully developed Marian imagery in the ecclesiastical architecture of the post-Iconoclastic Middle Byzantine period.

Maria Lidova opens the section by tracing early narrative imagery in Late Antiquity and studying how Marian narrative scenes developed. This investigation leads her to question the impact of the Council of Ephesus on visual representations of Mary. She shows that Christian artists in the pre-Ephesine period already took an interest in Mary's personal story, thus demonstrating that she was a venerable figure in her own right in addition to playing a fundamental role in Christ's incarnation. The Council did not provoke a change in the way that Mary's visual story was told, although it may have encouraged the expansion of this form of expression.

Andrea Olsen Lam focuses on small-scale objects and amulets from this early period of visual Marian narrative. Deriving their narrative content from the New Testament texts, these images served several purposes: some were worn prophylactically while others were read for educational reasons. Lam suggests that representations of Mary's pregnancy, such as the Visitation (or the meeting between Mary and Elizabeth when both women were pregnant, as described in Luke 1:39–45), may have served to charm the wearer into conceiving, carrying and giving birth to a child. In this way the visual evocations of miraculous pregnancy stories were produced in order to engender new stories of new pregnancies.

[19] For studies in narrative and various media, see M.-L. Ryan (ed.), *Narrative across Media: The Language of Storytelling* (Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

Eirini Panou examines the reception of the *Protevangelium* with particular attention to Mary's childhood and her mother Anna. Panou shows how Middle Byzantine homilies and art used the *Protevangelium* to interpret in a theological way the relationship between these holy figures. Tension existed between commentators who accepted different versions of the Marian infancy story because these conveyed separate – and sometimes conflicting – messages about her forthcoming role in the incarnation of Christ. The Christological implications of Mary's narrative continued to be refined during the Iconoclast period; preachers and hymnographers also began to accept more fully the elements that were found only in apocryphal literature.

Maria Evangelatou approaches the intersection of imagery, ritual, poetry and the re-enactment of the sacrifice story in the Christian Eucharist. Building on the suggestive location of Mary's icon over the altar in church sanctuaries, she shows that both liturgical texts and images render the Theotokos as the provider of Christ's mystical body and blood. Evangelatou is thus able to conclude from her multimedial survey that 'Mary's Eucharistic identity was continuously explored' in Byzantine sources.

Leslie Brubaker rounds off this section with a ground-breaking study of the eleventh-century monastic church of the Virgin at Daphni, near Athens. This church contains one of the oldest visual representations of Mary's life in Byzantine monumental art. Brubaker explores the location of the Marian cycle of images, arguing that their arrangement within the church allows 'visual links' to occur between the scenes. This contributes to a kind of *spatial storytelling*, which would have engaged viewers according to their gender since men and women stood separately within the liturgical space. The events depicted in the mosaics thus resonate within the monumental space and interact with each other as well as with their viewers.

Part II turns to festal and Lenten hymnography that was composed in honour of the Virgin Mary throughout the Early and Middle Byzantine periods. It starts with the Constantinopolitan kontakion hymn and its greatest proponent, Romanos the Melode.[20] Studies of kanon hymnography

[20] The studies of Romanos the Melode are too numerous to list here. See (most recently) Arentzen, *The Virgin in Song*; S. Gador-Whyte, *Theology and Poetry in Early Byzantium: The Kontakia of Romanos the Melodist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) and her 'Changing Conceptions of Mary in Sixth-Century Byzantium: The Kontakia of Romanos the Melodist', in B. Neil and L. Garland (eds.), *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 77–92; G. Frank, 'Dialogue and Deliberation: The Sensory Self in the Hymns of Romanos the Melodist', in D. Brakke, M. L. Satlow and S. Weitzman (eds.), *Religion and the Self in Antiquity* (Bloomington, IN, and Indianapolis: University of

follow those on the kontakion. The kanon originated in Jerusalem and came to Constantinople as part of the hagiopolite influence.[21] By about the end of the ninth century such hymns adorned each day of the liturgical year and came to represent one of the richest surviving sources of Byzantine theological and devotional teaching. The genre has so far not received the scholarly attention that it deserves.[22]

Thomas Arentzen compares the treatment of the Annunciation story by the eighth-century preacher Germanos I of Constantinople (ca. 650–742), with that of the sixth-century hymnographer Romanos the Melode. He demonstrates how the pre-Iconoclastic Annunciation celebrations, as exemplified by these Constantinopolitan writers, privileged dramatic storytelling. Mary appears as someone who is characterised through her own speech. Germanos was clearly influenced by Romanos, but assumed a much more 'royal' perception of the Virgin.

Georgia Frank studies how Romanos the Melode worked with Mary's voice within his songs. Frank not only explores some of the more well-known kontakia for major feasts, but also engages with the understudied *stichera* for the Nativity. Looking at how Mary holds her tongue, Frank discovers patterns of speech and silence and analyses the Virgin's role in the gendered realm of voices. As instances of narrative suspense and theological meditation, the liturgical songs let other voices resound in anticipation of Mary's own words.

Derek Krueger ventures into the relatively uncharted territory of Byzantine kanon poetry and draws attention to a phenomenon even less studied than the kanons themselves, namely, the *theotokia*, which are specific Marian verses included at the end of most odes of kanons. He analyses in particular a kanon entitled *On the Transgression of Adam*. It is

Indiana Press, 2005), 163–79; L. M. Peltomaa, '"Cease Your Lamentations, I Shall Become an Advocate for You". Mary as Intercessor in Romanos' Hymnography', in Peltomaa et al., *Presbeia Theotokou*, 131–7.

[21] For the early kanon, see S. S. Frøyshov, 'The Rite of Jerusalem', in *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*: www.hymnology.co.uk/r/rite-of-jerusalem; for the its later reception in the wider Byzantine rite, see Dimitri Conomos, 'Byzantine Hymnody', *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*: www.hymnology.co.uk/b/byzantine-hymnody.

[22] See, however, P. Toma, *Joseph the Hymnographer. Kanons on Saints According to the Eight Modes. Critical Edition* (Inaugural PhD thesis, University of Münster, 2016); D. Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects. Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), which focuses on Andrew of Crete's *Great Kanon* and on those in the Lenten Triodion, 130–96; N. P. Ševčenko, 'Canon and Calendar: The Role of a Ninth-Century Hymnographer in Shaping the Celebration of Saints', in L. Brubaker (ed.), *Byzantium in the Ninth Century: Dead or Alive?* (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1998), 101–14.

composed by a certain Christopher who probably lived in the ninth century. Examining the interaction between the narrative of Adam's fall in the kanon and the interspersed *theotokia*, Krueger points out that the kanon genre interweaves various threads of images and narratives, through which the Marian theotokia run as a separate but central thread. The result, at least in this pre-Lenten kanon, is what Krueger calls 'an idiosyncratic Mariology'.

Fr Damaskinos Olkinuora follows with a chapter on unpublished Byzantine kanon hymns that celebrate the feast of Mary's Entrance into the Temple. His material includes kanons attributed to the eighth-century Joseph the Hymnographer, but also to otherwise unknown poets. Fr Damaskinos demonstrates that various versions of the story exist side by side in the hymns: webs of cross-references combine to form new, multi-layered narratives, narratives in which the congregation becomes directly involved with the help of 'musical intertextuality'. He proposes, therefore, a multi-faceted methodology for studying Byzantine hymnography. Fr Damaskinos concludes that the feast of the Entrance, like that of the *Hypapante*, offers a symbolic boundary between the old and new covenants. In the case of the former feast, the Virgin Mary mediates the two states of existence, since she is the place – and vehicle – for their meeting and fulfilment.

Part III of the book deals with homiletic texts dating from the earliest Byzantine period to the twelfth century. Homiletic literature exhibits a persistent and uncontested presence throughout Byzantine civilisation.[23] Preachers used it to form dogmatic meditations as well as dramatic confrontations. Some were didactic, some encomiastic and some hagiographical.

Stephen Shoemaker shows how diverse Late Antique narratives of Mary can be in their content as he investigates debates about whether she, in

[23] For earlier surveys of Mary in Byzantine homilies, see P. Allen, 'Portrayals of Mary in Greek Homiletic Literature (6th–7th Centuries)', in Brubaker and Cunningham (eds.), *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium*, 69–88; in the same volume: N. Tsironis, 'Emotion and the Senses in Marian Homilies of the Middle Byzantine Period', 179–96, S. Shoemaker, 'A Mother's Passion: Mary at the Crucifixion and Resurrection in the Earliest *Life of the Virgin* and its Influence on George of Nikomedeia's Passion Homilies', 53–67; M. B. Cunningham, 'The Meeting of the Old and the New: The Typology of Mary the Theotokos in Byzantine Homilies and Hymns', in R. N. Swanson (ed.), *Mary and the Church*, Studies in Church History 39 (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2004), 52–62. For collections of Marian homilies in translation, see M. B. Cunningham, *Wider than Heaven: Eighth-Century Homilies on the Mother of God* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 2008); B. Daley, *On the Dormition of Mary: Early Patristic Homilies* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1998). For a recent assessment of the problems associated with study of this literary genre, see T. Antonopoulou, 'Byzantine Homiletics: An Introduction to the Field and its Study', in K. Spronk, G. Rouwhorst and S. Royé (eds.), *Challenges and Perspectives: A Catalogue of Byzantine Manuscripts in their Liturgical Context*, Subsidia 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 183–98.