



The Image of the Nursing Mary : *Erotic and Heretic?*

The Gothic period saw the flowering of the devotional image of Mary. As a consequence of this warmer devotion to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God is for the first time represented in Western art caressing her son Jesus, playing with him or breastfeeding him. But a few centuries later, Renaissance artists favoured the humanity of the body rather than the spirituality and the theme of the Virgin nursing lost its symbolic value. In some cases, it even became an excuse to show off the female body. In this context, some images became "heretic" and were banned by the Council of Trent.

Italian art historian Patrizia Granziera will present the rich history of the *Madonna Lactans* and discuss its anthropological and theological implications



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