

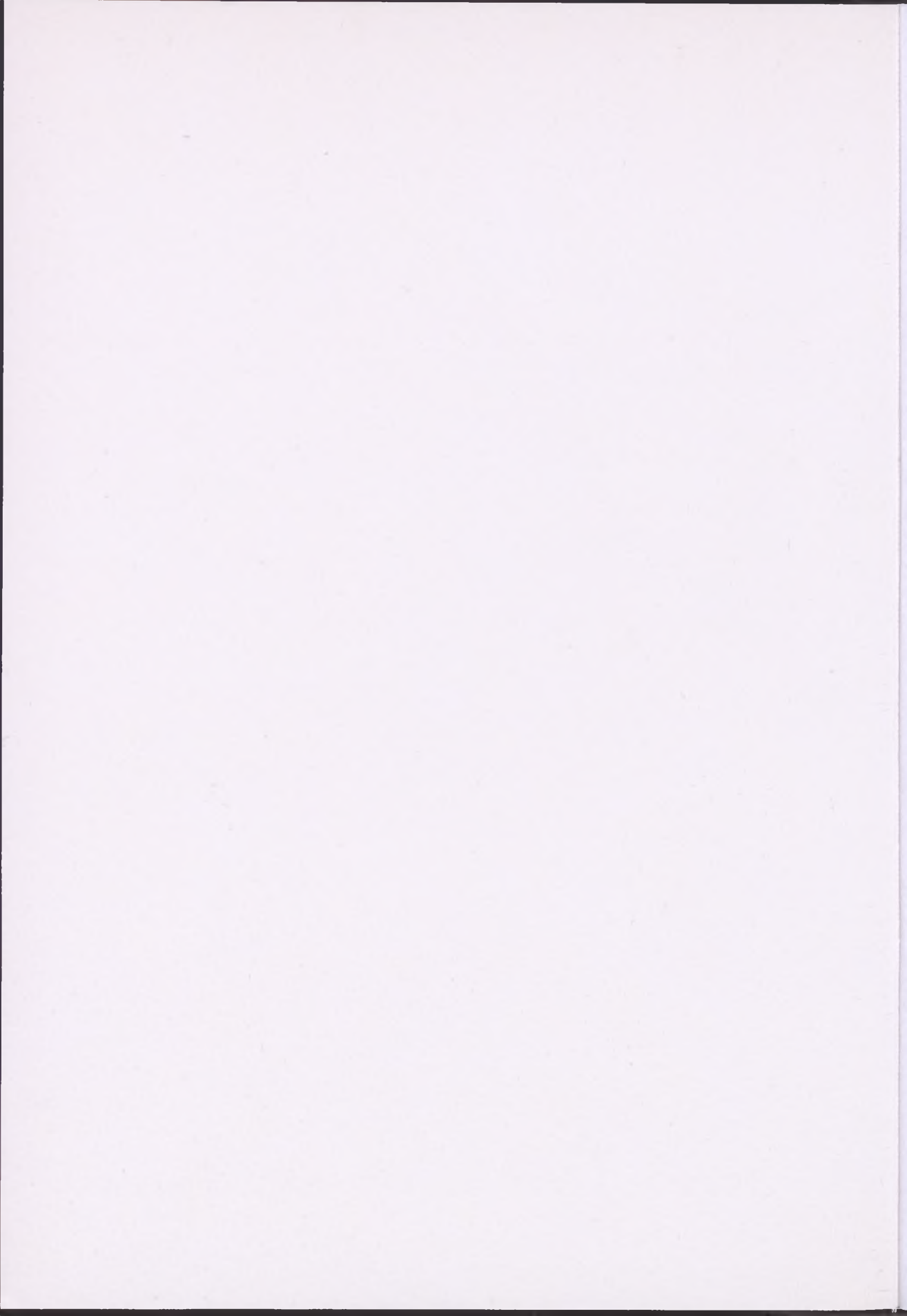
SERIES BYZANTINA

Studies on Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art



VOLUME XII

Warsaw 2014



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Polish Institute of World Arts Studies
CARDINAL STEFAN WYSZYŃSKI UNIVERSITY

Warsaw 2014

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Virgin Mary; glassware decoration, from catacombs in Rome, 4th c. AD;
N. P. Kondakov, *Ikonografia Bogomateri*, St. Petersburg 1914, p. 77

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CARDINAL STEFAN WYSZYŃSKI UNIVERSITY

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Volume 40 (2010)

Introduction

Volume XII of *Series Byzantina* presents papers that emerged from continued dialogue amongst researchers from different countries. Considerable space has been devoted to artistic relations between the Byzantine and Latin worlds, which is a continuation of discussions contained in the previous issues.

Opened in 2014 has been a new gallery of Nubian art from the Faras Cathedral, showing the relics of Christian art in a new arrangement adapted to the modern exhibition solutions, and first of all – meeting the standards of appropriate heritage protection. The exhibition is a success of Polish archaeologists and historians of art and new excavation sites related to Eastern Christianity in Africa have been discovered. This way, there is continuity in the works that have been performed for over a hundred years by many archaeological missions. Therefore we would like to present such issues in our periodical.

In 2014, the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, in cooperation with scholars from other Polish research centres, organised a conference on the migration of relics during the first millennium. One year earlier, on the initiative of Magdalena Łaptaś, a discussion panel was held at the International Centre for Cross-cultural and Cross-religious dialogue. It was then that the basic assumptions of the future conference had been prepared: it was a national event that grouped researchers into epochs before the division into the Latin and Byzantine worlds. The Centre, headed by Rev. Henryk Skorowski, is now expanding its activities to include suggestions offered by historians of art.

The interest in Byzantine and post-Byzantine art is growing in Eastern Europe, and new initiatives keep springing up. Worthy of attention among them are the artistic activities of modern artists who create new works inspired by the old art. Workshops in icon painting are organized. In Poland, a School of Iconography operates in Biała Podlaska. Further, painting workshops are held in Nowica and Garbatka in southern Poland, where the Eastern Church traditionally mingles with the Latin one, and historic wooden Latin and Orthodox churches coexist. Tangible survivors of the ravages of war and communist persecutions, they attract both the faithful and tourists visiting the region. Icon painters representing such communities symbolise the traditional trend of Orthodox Church painting related to the icon canon.



Fig. 1. The Professor Kazimierz Michałowski Faras Gallery, National Museum, Warsaw



Fig. 2. The Professor Kazimierz Michałowski Faras Gallery, National Museum, Warsaw

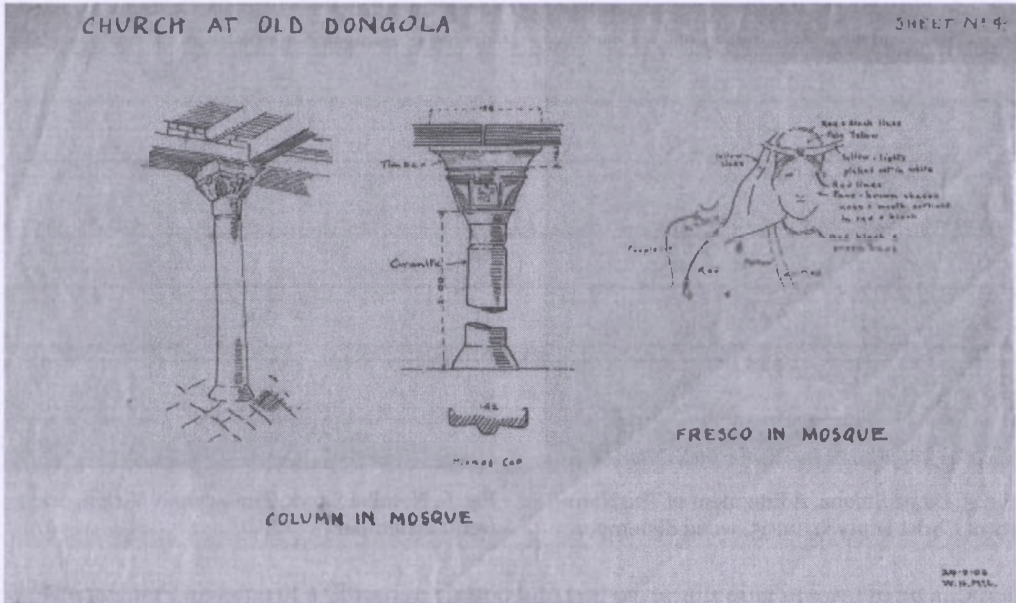


Fig. 3. Church at Old Dongola, drawing, 1906, The Griffith Institute Archive, Oxford

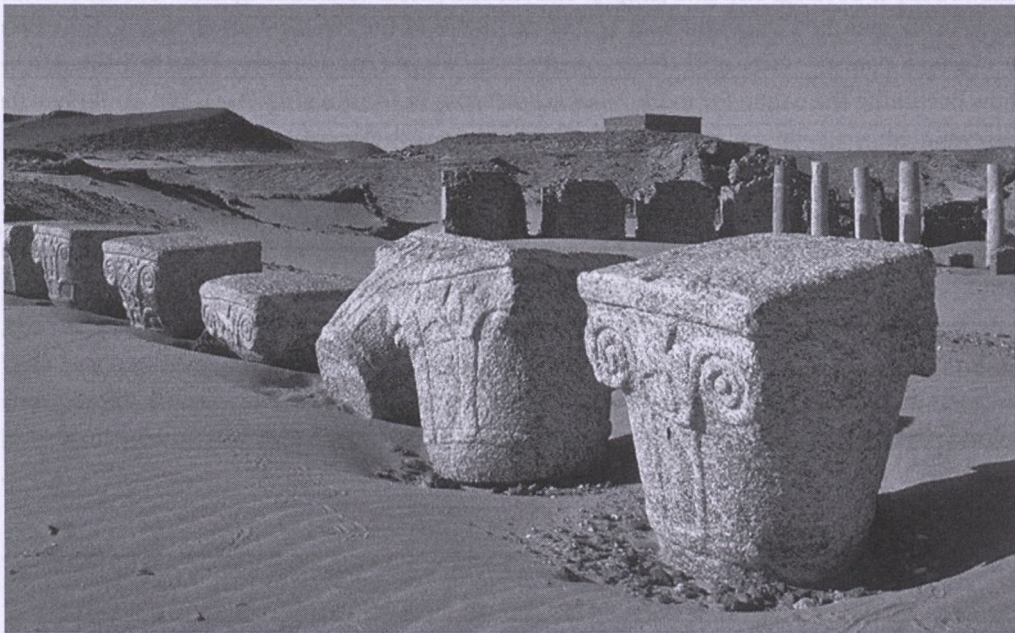


Fig. 4. Ruins at the Old Dongola



Fig. 5. Olena Smaha, A Fragment of The Nativity of Christ Diptych, 2005, wood distemper



Fig. 6. Natalka Sazyk, The Pochaiv Virgin, 2007, wood distemper

Many artists from Ukraine take part in the Polish initiatives; to them, modern sacral art in Poland is a source of inspiration. In particular is the art of Jerzy Nowosielski, who is well known amongst modern artists whom decorate Orthodox churches and his works have been exhibited in Ukraine and other countries of the region. Paradoxically, the once unwanted icons of 1960s and 1970s, painted for village Orthodox churches in Poland, are now becoming the canon for modern sacral painting in Ukraine (fig. 2-4). We would like to discuss such issues in our periodical, and hence why articles on modern Orthodox Church art will be published in the future.

The periodical *Series Byzantina* is greatly appreciated internationally, and highly positioned in the Copernicus index. This is, to us, a great honour; at the same time, we strive after broadening the platform of scholarly discourse, which also includes online. Our first attempts at grouping researchers, mainly from Eastern Europe, was on a website organized by Valery Bulgakov.¹ The site still has visitors today and we want to revert to that formula, and publish full contents of the previous volumes on our online sites (Polish Institute of World Art Studies² and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University³). This will thereby make our periodicals more accessible on the international forum.

Waldemar Deluga

¹ <http://www.archaeology.kiev.ua/>

² <http://series-byzantina.world-art.pl/>

³ <http://www.ihs.uksw.edu.pl/>

Eschatological elements in the schemes of paintings of high iconostases

Agnieszka Gronek, Jagiellonian University, Cracow

The primary division of a Christian church into two parts, alluding in form to an antique Roman basilica, and in ideas to Salomon's temple, had already been interpreted symbolically in *Mistagogia* by Maximus the Confessor. This saint theologian who derived neo-platonic ideas from the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, and who referred to the Jewish tradition, understood a church as a depiction of cosmos, divided into a visible and invisible world, earthly and heavenly, bodily and spiritual.¹ No wonder, therefore, that the barrier on the border of these two spheres also acquired a symbolic meaning.

In the times of Maximus the Confessor it was open-work, and the fabrics hung between its columns were drawn open for the liturgy.² Thus, during the service, the faithful, even though they were standing in the nave and, in line with Canon 69 of the Fifth and Sixth Council in *Trullo*, not allowed entry to the sanctuary³ – had a chance to participate fully in the mystery of the Eucharist, by observing all its phases. Already in the first chapters of *Mistagogia* by Maximus it is easy to find a similar idea of the dichotomy of unity, referring both to the sacral space, unified though divided into the presbytery and the nave, and to the universe – one *universum*, consisting of the earthly and heavenly spheres. This symbolic analogy was also extended to the man, consisting of a body and a soul, and to the soul destined for lower and higher aims.⁴

¹ *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J.P. Migne, vol. 91, chapter 2–4, pp. 667–672.

² A. Różycka Bryzek, 'Symbolika bizantyńskiej architektury sakralnej', in: *Losy w cerkwi w Polsce po 1944 roku. Materiały z sesji naukowej Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki pt. „Tragedia polskich cerkwi” w Rzeszowie*, Rzeszów 1997, pp. 75–76.

³ A. Znosko, *Kanony Kościoła Prawosławnego*, vol. I, Hajnówka 2000, p. 96.

⁴ *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 91, chapter 2–4, pp. 667–672.

Changes in the liturgy at the end of the first millennium, caused by the iconoclastic shock, aimed to increase the mystery of the rituals and, at the same time, deepen a sense of God's unattainability and non-cognisance. It was then that the templon, a purely architectural structure, began to be adorned with figural representations carved in the architrave beam and flagstones placed on the stylobate, or with painted or mosaic pictures hung on and between columns.⁵ They they primarily became the main medium for conveying deeper nuances. But even earlier the very structure of a templon, as well as the fact that it was placed at the boundary of two complementary spaces, filled it with theological meanings. Among them, those with eschatological meaning appear to be of prime importance. And though over the centuries, as the area of partitions increased and was filled with paintings, and the liturgy and its interpretation changed, new meanings were added onto it, those expressing fear of the end of the world and bringing the promise of eternal life last for centuries and even become stronger.

It has been noted in the writings on this subject that the surviving templons have a similar structure and consist of four supports delineating three passages. Almost every attempt to find a formal and ideological source of this construction leads to eschatological ideas. For example, similarity has been noticed between a three-axis composition and antique triumphal arches. The symbolism of a passage and victory encompassed by these buildings is similar to a templon leading to a space which depicts the heavenly world, attainable after victory over sin and death. An analogous similarity in form and contents, derived from the function, can be seen in an extended entrance to an imperial palace, for example the one depicted in the mosaics in the new St Apollinaris Basilica in Ravenna. This is the entrance to the sovereign's house, just like a templon that leads to the Kingdom of Heaven. But the strongest connection, fullest of eschatological ideas, is the one between the construction of the templon in a Christian church and the barrier separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place in the Tent of Meeting (Exod 26:31–33) and the Temple in Jerusalem, as well as the composition of the entrance to the Temple and the gates leading to the Holy City which simultaneously become a picture of the New Jerusalem (Apoc 21:10–13).⁶ The Jews awaiting the Messiah, symbolised by the tri-partite passage, separated by four supports, leading to the holy places aforementioned, becomes an ideological source for the construction of a templon, which expresses the Christians' waiting for the second coming of Christ.⁷

⁵ S. Kalopissi-Veri, 'The Proskynetaria of the Templon and Narthex: Form, Imagery, Spatial Connection, and Reception', in: *Thresholds of the Sacred. Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives of Religions Screens, East and West*, ed. S. E. J. Gerstel, Washington 2006, pp. 107–132.

⁶ И. А. Шалина, 'Вход "святая святых" и византийская алтарная преграда', in: *Иконостас. Происхождение – развитие – символика*, ed. А. М. Лидов, Москва 2000, pp. 52–84; Eadem, 'Боковые врата иконостаса; символический замысел и иконография', in: *Иконостас. Происхождение ...*, pp. 559–598.

⁷ И. А. Шалина, 'Вход ...', pp. 65–66.

These most important ideas were not forgotten when pictures placed on the stone structure started to highlight further meanings: Christological, soteriological and Eucharistic. Eschatological messages were conveyed (including the motives of arcades and palm trees mean the victory, cypresses and ivy as the symbol of immortality⁸, the eagle as a symbol of resurrection and salvation⁹) by the depiction of *Deesis*, one of the oldest depictions placed on the altar screen. It is not known exactly when it appeared here¹⁰, for centuries it constituted an ideological and compositional centre of iconostases, and underlined the intercession of the Mother of God and John the Baptist for the human race with God at the time of the Last Judgement, and their vital role in the act of salvation.¹¹ Primarily, this depiction had a visionary character, and Mary and John were presented as the first and most important witnesses of Christ's divinity. In this sense, *Deesis* co-created church decorations until the 13th century. Yet simultaneously, at least from the 10th century onwards, this group of three people was included in the templon and the scenes of the *Last Judgement*, where the idea of intercession is unequivocal and clear. It is passed on to other people who are added to the central group as iconostasis becomes larger, with rows of a dozen or so figures frozen in identical praying positions. These are firstly archangels, Michael and Gabriel, apostles, Peter and Paul, evangelists, Church Fathers and other saints. Their selection was not strictly prescribed and it usually depended on local custom.

The idea of an intercessory prayer at the Last Judgement is dominant in the schemes of high iconostases, popular in late and post-Byzantine art. They emerged at the end of the 14th century in northern Russia, and the one believed to be the oldest was created by Teophanes the Greek in 1399 for the Archangel Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin, of which only the icons from the *Deesis* row remain today. After 1547 they were combined with other icons painted by Moscow masters at the beginning of the 15th century, i.e. Andrei Rublev and Daniel Cherniy, making up an iconostasis of impressive proportions in the Cathedral of the Annunciation in the Kremlin, admired to this day.¹² The surviving iconostases in the Cathedral of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Vladimir and in the The Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius are solely the works of Andrei Rublev and Daniil Cherny's workshop. They are an unusual phenomenon in the world of art, culture and religion, and their creation required

⁸ Compare for example motives on the templon of St. Sophia in Kijv; E. Архипова, *Резаной камень в архитектуре древнего Киева*, Киев 2005, p. 235, fig. 38.

⁹ E. D. Maguire and H. Maguire, *Others Icons. Art. And Power In Byzantine Secular Culture*, Princeton 2007, pp. 58–96.

¹⁰ L. Nees, 'Program of Decorated Chancel Barriers in the Pre-Iconoclastic Period', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 46 (1983), pp. 15–26.

¹¹ About *Deesis* compare: Th. v. Bogyay, 'Deesis', in: *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. K. Wessel, M. Restle, vol. 1, Stuttgart 1966, pp. 1176–1186; A. Kazdan, 'Deesis', in: *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 1, New York 1991, p. 599–600; Ch. Walter, 'Two Notes on the Deesis', *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 26 (1968), pp. 311–336; H. Madej, 'Deesis', in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 3, Lublin 1995, pp. 1086–1088.

¹² Л. А. Щепникова, 'Древнерусский высокий иконостас XIV – начала XV в.: итоги и перспективы изучения', in: *Иконостас. Происхождение ...*, pp. 392–410.



Fig. 1. Iconostasis, Dmytrovice, Ukraine, Saint Nicholas Church, XVII c., photo by Piotr Krawiec

not only an artistic talent, deep faith and awareness of the mood of the era, but primarily deep philosophical and theological knowledge. No wonder research is still under way to determine the authors of the project and the circumstances and reasons for its execution.¹³ Today, the prevalent view in Russian studies allows us to consider Theophanes the Greek and Cyprian the Metropolitan of Moscow the originators of the high iconostasis.¹⁴ Andrei Rublev took over the idea, developed it artistically and brought it into general use.

The essence of the new altar screen was its size and scheme of paintings. Divided into several rows filled with icons, it created a structure which, like a wall, fully covered the passage to the sanctuary. This space, completely hidden now from the eyes of the faithful, and liturgical rituals taking place in it, became even more mysterious and inaccessible. Thus the division of the Orthodox church into two spheres was strengthened, and the difference between the faithful in the nave and the priests who had ac-

¹³ Some Russian researchers can't agree with thesis, that the oldest high iconostasis was created by Theophanes and consider that idea of creating ones was purely Russian not Greek, compare В. Н. Лазарев, *Теодан Грек и его школа*, Москва 1961, p. 94; Idem, 'Живопись и скульптура Новгорода', in: *История русского искусства*, Москва 1954, vol. 2.1, p. 164; В. Г. Брюсова, *Андрей Рублев и московская школа живописи*, Москва 1998, p. 21.

¹⁴ Л. А. Щенникова, *Древнерусский высокий ...*, p. 399–444; Л. М. Евсева, 'Эсхатология 7000 года и возникновение высокого иконостаса', in: *Иконостас. Происхождение ...*, p. 411–430.



Fig. 2. Iconostasis, Curtae de Arges, Romania, Saint Nicholas Royal Church, XVII c., photo by Piotr Krawiec

cess to the sanctuary was deepened. This definite separation of the sanctuary from the rest of the Orthodox church could be conducive to ideas learnt from the writings of Maximus the Confessor, who saw in it the depiction of the heavenly world. The reflection of these moods, in an already mature and cogent form, combined with the symbolism of liturgy, can be found in the writings of Symeon of Thessalonica who often explained the division of an Orthodox church into two parts: *Being divided into the Holy of Holiest and the external parts, it represents Christ himself, and his two natures: that of God and that of man. One is visible and the other invisible; it also [represents] Man, consisting of the soul and body. But it also perfectly [represents] the mystery of the Trinity, which is inaccessible in [its] essence, cognizable in providence and might. And in particular it reflects the visible and invisible world, but also the visible one alone: heaven through the altar and the earthly matters through the rest of the church.*¹⁵ Further, as the idea of a sanctuary whose depiction of heaven appealed more and more fully to the imagination of the faithful, so was the a high iconostasis wall more and more clearly interpreted in eschatological terms. It became an important and tangible

¹⁵ *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 155, pp. 703–704; pol. trans.: Symeon z Tessaloniki, *O świętyni Bożej*, trans. A. Maciejewska, Kraków 2007, pp. 38–39.



Fig. 3. Central part of Iconostasis, Poland, Gorajec, Nativity of Mary Church, XVIII c., photo by Piotr Krawiec

screen covering, like a horizon, the divine world¹⁶, and at the same time giving the only chance to go over to the other side. No wonder then, that here, in the very middle of the sacred paintings the depiction of *Deesis* dominated, expressing the idea of intercession for the human race at the time of the Last Judgement. The *Deesis* created by Theophanes the Greek was over two metres high. Enormous and monumental, depicted against the gold backdrop, it must have attracted people's eyes and be the focus of prayerful requests. And, in particular, a gigantic Christ placed in the middle of the row in snow-white robes, with a benign face, raising his hand discretely in a gesture of benediction and showing in an open book a quotation from the Holy Gospel according to John: *I am the light of the world; anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark, but will have the light of life* (8:12). Rublev's Christ from the Cathedral in Vladimir is even larger, over three metres high, overwhelming in his enormousness and awe-inspiring. He is the judge at the Last Judgement, as the verse from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew, written in the pages of the Bible, clearly states: *When the Son of man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory...* (Matt 25:31). In Rublev's iconostases Saints Advocates placed in an extended row of the *Great Deesis* are

¹⁶ About iconostasis such the veil compare N. P. Constat, 'Symeon of Thessalonike and the Theology of the Icon Screen', in: *Thresholds of the sacred ...*, pp. 163–183.



Fig. 4. Iconostasis, Polovragi, Romania, Saint Nicholas Church, XVIII c., photo by Piotr Krawiec

accompanied by Old Testament prophets, whose full-length figures create an additional, new row. This type of iconostasis becomes most popular in northern Russia.¹⁷ In the 16th century, at the very latest, another row appears; of Old Testament patriarchs; which changes the upper part of the screen into an extended numerous intercessory group, raising prayers to Christ the Judge.

Researchers indicate several reasons for the emergence and then popularisation of the high iconostasis in the northern areas in this sort of form and with this sort of structure of the ideological schedule. Apart from the expanding hesychastic beliefs and practices and changes in the liturgy introduced by Cyprian the Metropolitan of Moscow, fear of the end of the world appears to be the most convincing. Waiting for the Second Coming of Christ [*parousia*] became more pronounced with the approach of the year 7000 from the creation of the world, i.e. 1492 from the birth of Christ. The belief in the end of the world happening then, known in the entire Byzantine world, drew a particularly strong response in the Muscovite Russia.¹⁸ The apocalyptic texts of the Hippolytus of Rome,

¹⁷ А. Мельник, 'Основные типы русских высоких иконостасов XV – середины XVII века', in: *Иконостас. Происхождение ...*, p. 433.

¹⁸ Н. А. Казакова Я. С. Лурье, *Антифеодальные еретические движения на Руси XIV-начала XVI века*, Москва 1955, p. 391; И.М. Евсева, 'Эсхатология 7000 года ...', p. 296–297.

Ephrem the Syrian, Pseudo-Methodist of Pantara or Palladius the Monk were known here.¹⁹ The idea of the end of the world 7000 years from its creation had already arrived here from Byzantium in the early Middle Ages and it was known to the 12th century writers: Nestor, Abraham from Smolensk and Kiryk from Novogrod.²⁰ It was also reinforced in the 14th century by itinerant monks-hesychasts travelling from the Balkans to the north, and by Cyprian the Metropolitan of Moscow.²¹ Nature itself also strengthened the conviction of the approach of the Judgement Day, displaying a series of dangerous phenomena to the alarmed people, which they would dutifully record and interpret in an eschatological vein, such as the eclipse of the sun or the moon, earthquakes, droughts, fires or epidemics²². Historic events were also perceived in a similar vein, especially of great importance, such as Ottoman invasions²³ and the fall of Constantinople, which deepened the gloom of 15th century apocalyptic visions.

It is worth noting that it was in the Great Entrance that Symeon of Thessalonica saw both the depiction of Christ's funeral and his second coming to the Last Judgement, so the moment of transfer of the Sanctified Gifts and offering them on the altar, was, in his opinion, filled with Passion and eschatological themes²⁴. Therefore the dismissal of catechumens and then the faithful receiving the Eucharist was understood as a representation of Matthew's *separating sheep from goats* (Matt 25:32)²⁵. And all this happened in front of the great wall of paintings, dominated by the representation of Christ the Judge and a procession of saints, the pillars of the Orthodox church, deep in an intercessory prayer for the human race. This ingenious programme of the iconostasis fully answered the faithful's fears of the approaching apocalypse and contributed to the mystery of the liturgy which offered the prize of eternal life. It is not surprising then that it became popular all over Russia, Ruthenia (fig. 1) and also reached the Balkans in the 16th century (fig. 2).

¹⁹ W. Hryniewicz, *Staroruska teologia paschalna w świetle pism św. Cyryla Turowskiego*, Warszawa 1993, p. 160; E. Przybył, 'Historia w cieniu czasów ostatecznych. Ewolucja idei eschatologicznych na Rusi w XI–XVII w.', *Nomos. Kwartalnik Religioznawczy*, 16 (1996), p. 87.

²⁰ E. Przybył, *op. cit.*, pp. 88–90.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 93; compare also J. H. Billington, *Ikona i topór. Historia kultury rosyjskiej*, Kraków 2008, p. 51.

²² In homilie of Serapiona from Volodimir, compare G. Podskalsky, *Chrześcijaństwo i literatura teologiczna na Rusi Kijowskiej (988–1237)*, Kraków 2000, p. 151; W. Hryniewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 160; E. Przybył, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

²³ G. Podskalsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 118–121.

²⁴ *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 155, pp. 727–728; H. Wybrew, *The Orthodox Liturgy. The Development of the Eucharistic Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite*, New York 1996, p. 164; Й. Шульц *Візантійська літургія. Свідчення віри та значення символів*, Львів 2002, p. 199; R. Taft *The Great Entrance. A History of the Transfer of Gifts and other Pre-anaphoral Rites*, Roma 2004, pp. 210–213. Cf. Symeon z Tessaloniki, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

²⁵ *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 155, pp. 293–294.



Fig. 5. *Deesis* Row in Iconostasis, Bartne, Poland, Cosmas and Damian Church, XVIII c., photo by Piotr Krawiec

The earliest evidence of the presence of high altar screens in the areas which are now part of Ukraine comes from the 16th century. We know of the last will and testament of Bazyli Zagorovsky from 1577 in which he obliged his beneficiaries to furnish the Orthodox Church of Ascension in Suchodoly in Volhynia with 'paintings, *Deesis* as well as sovereign, feasts and prophets icons, so that they are beautifully painted to meet the needs and the order of services of our Christian Orthodox church'²⁶. But the *Deesis* group could also be found earlier in lower iconostases. *The Pechersk-Kiev Paterick* includes a story of 'another man, Christ-lover from the same town of Kiev, built an Orthodox church for himself and decided to decorate it with large icons: five *Deesis* and two sovereign ... [so] he gave silver to two monks in the Pechersk monastery to come to an agreement with Alimpi to pay him as much as he wanted for the icons'.²⁷ This note undoubtedly confirms an early formation of a two-tier iconostasis with the *Deesis* group and a row of sovereign icons. This is also confirmed by later, 15th-century icons of Christ, the Mother of God, very

²⁶ *Архив Юго-Западной России*, Київ 1859, vol. 1, part. 1, p. 797; compare also: С. Таранушенко, 'Український іконостас', *Записки Наукового Товариства імені Т. Шевченка*, 217 (1994), p. 150.

²⁷ *Pateryk Kijowsko-Pieczerski czyli opowieść o świętych ojcach w pieczarach kijowskich położonych*, trans. L. Nodzyńska, Wrocław 1993, p. 249.

popular saints and extended *Deesis* groups²⁸. Furthermore the analysis of later historic monuments and source documents confirms that the theme of *Deesis* was very important in the painting schemes of iconostases.

In the inspection documents from Greek Catholic Orthodox churches one of the main questions on the décor refers to *Deesis*²⁹, and though today it is not certain whether this term always refers to the iconographic theme, or rather, to the iconostasis itself, it is the fact of equating *Deesis* with the altar screen that indicates its importance and being established in the painting tradition and the faithful's awareness. In northern Russian *Deesis* Christ is depicted in an extended iconographic type known as *Maiestas Domini* (Rus. *Spas w sylakh*). This depiction came to the Ruthenia (Ukraine) in the 15th century, but rarely constituted the centre of *Deesis*, and was more frequently included in the *sovereign row*³⁰. This departure from the original premises of the creators of high iconostasis, consciously or not, strengthened eschatological ideas and expanded them to the lower row as well. *Christ in Majesty* depicted here is holding the Bible, often open on the following quotation: *Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world* (Matt 25:34) describing the Last Judgement, so he is not a teacher here, but a judge. A similar effect is achieved by placing in the Sovereign row not icons but the depiction of *Christ Pantocrator*, extended to include smaller figures of the Mother of God and John the Baptist, which repeated the *Deesis* theme from the row above.

Perceiving the altar screen as a curtain to paradise is also confirmed by later, mostly 18th century, decoration of the Deacons' doors, on which Archangels Michael and Gabriel were placed, a direct reference to the words from the Book of Genesis: *He banished the man, and in front of the garden of Eden he posted the great winged creatures and the fiery flashing sword, to guard the way to the tree of life* (Gen. 3:24). Examples of such an approach can be found in iconostases in the Birth of Christ Orthodox Church in Zhovkva, in Bohorodchany, Cathedral of the Dormition in Pechersk Lavra, Gorajec (fig. 3) and Chotyniec.

In the Balkans there are however iconostases where the *Deesis* row is replaced with representations of Christ with the apostles, and thus the eschatological meaning of the screen has been lost (fig. 4). But not always, as sometimes the apostles are sitting with open books, for example in St Nicholas Orthodox Church in Hunedoara³¹, in the orthodox

²⁸ W. Jarema, 'Pierwotne ikonostasy w drewnianych cerkwiach na Podkarpaciu', *Materiały Muzeum Budownictwa Ludowego w Sanoku*, 16 (1972), pp. 22–32; C. Таранушенко, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

²⁹ Recently about this subject: M.P. Kruk, '„Deisus dawną zwyczajną robotą y malowaniem” – kilka uwag na marginesie inwentarzy cerkiewnych', in: *Ars Graeca Ars Latina. Studia dedykowane Profesor Annie Różyckiej Bryzek*, Kraków 2001, pp. 207–230.

³⁰ М. Гелитович, *Українські ікони „Спасу у Славі*, Львів 2005, p. 5.

³¹ M. Porumb, *Dicționar de pictură veche Românească din Transilvania sec. XIII–XVIII*, București 1998, pp. 162–167; A. Efremov, *Icoane românești*, București 2002, pp. 9, 56, 172.

church in Vânători-Nemeț or in the monastery museum in Văratec³²; or with closed books in Filipești de Padure. Usually the apostles sit in God's presence in the depictions of *the Last Judgement*. They are the only ones, as promised by God, to be awarded this honour (Matt 19:26, Luke 22:30). Their main attributes are scrolls and codices – symbols of wisdom, bequeathed by Christ. They should be closed, as the Church's mission has not been accomplished yet, and the full mystery of the Incarnation of God's Son will be revealed at the end of the world. Therefore the books will be open at the Last Judgement. Thereby, the sitting position of the apostles in Christ's presence and their open books may be interpreted in the eschatological context, and this depiction may still illustrate the Last Judgement, but without the reassuring presence of influential intercessors.

It is difficult to pinpoint a particular reason for these changes today. In Ukrainian iconostases, for example, from the end of the 18th century, Christ in priest's robes is sitting in the middle of the *Deesis* row (fig. 5). He is no longer a judge in white robes, as Theophanes the Greek envisaged, but the highest priest celebrating the Liturgy. Eschatological ideas have been dominated by Eucharistic and ecclesial ones. The Mother of God and John the Baptist are no longer depicted in an intercessory stance, typical of Orthodox art, but in one of adoration and worship. And the apostles, rather than praying with their hands outstretched, are holding the tools of passion and death in them. The fall of Constantinople, distance from the main centres of Orthodox culture, occidentalisation and Latinisation of orthodox church art, plus a low level of education of eastern priests – all these factors must have contributed to the departure from traditional models, presumably no longer intelligible. Perhaps changes in the civilisation made it possible to treat apocalyptic visions as one of the great myths of culture and religion, which is also characteristic of our times?

Translated by Małgorzata Strona

³² V. Drăguț, *Arta Românească*, București 2000, p. 318.

Orthodox iconography is not a simple matter of copying the Bible. It is a complex system of symbols and signs, which are often very subtle and require a deep understanding of the Orthodox faith and its history. The iconography of the Last Judgment is particularly interesting, as it often depicts the Last Judgment in a way that is both dramatic and symbolic. In the Orthodox tradition, the Last Judgment is often depicted as a scene of divine justice, where the righteous are rewarded and the wicked are punished. This is often shown in a way that is both terrifying and awe-inspiring, reflecting the power and majesty of God. The iconography of the Last Judgment is also often used to teach the faithful about the consequences of their actions and the importance of living a righteous life. In the Orthodox Church, the Last Judgment is often depicted in a way that is both dramatic and symbolic, reflecting the power and majesty of God. The iconography of the Last Judgment is also often used to teach the faithful about the consequences of their actions and the importance of living a righteous life.

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³⁹ W. Jaroma, 'Pierwsza ikonostaza w drewnianym kościele na Podkarpaciu', *Muzeum Podkarpacie* (Lubowiczki), 16 (1971), pp. 22–27; C. Tapakymenc, op. cit., p. 150.

⁴⁰ Recently about this subject: M. P. Krak, 'Ikonostasy i ikony v pravoslavii', in: *Art of the East: Studies in the History of Art*, ed. by M. P. Krak, Krakow 1987, pp. 217–230.

⁴¹ St. Demetrius, *Trisagion*, ed. by G. G. G. G., p. 8.

⁴² M. P. Krak, 'Ikonostasy i ikony v pravoslavii', in: *Art of the East: Studies in the History of Art*, ed. by M. P. Krak, Krakow 1987, pp. 217–230.

Saint George: Artistic and stylistic peculiarities of Galician¹ icons in the 14th–16th Centuries

Natalia Kolpakova, Lviv

The period of 14th–16th century is considered classical one for Ukrainian iconography when the influence of the Palaiologian Renaissance was extremely vivid. Palaiologos epoch consisted of two phases – the early Palaiologos epoch, the basis of which implied neo-Hellenism heritage; and the late Palaiologos epoch implied Hesyachasm trend. The axiomatic icon of St. George of the 14th century from the church of St. Joachim and St. Anne Cathedral in the village of Stanylia (The Lviv National Museum, from now on LNM) and the similar work of the 15th century (?) from the church of translation of the relics of St. Nicholas to the village of Staryi Kropyvnyk in Drohobych region of Lviv area, (The Studion Museum of the Monastery of Studite Order of St. Betrothed Joseph, from now on ‘Studion’)² have stylistic features inherent in Hellenism with the influence of Hesyachasm (figs. 1–2). The new features of style appear in smooth outlines, fluttering cinnabar pallium of a horse-rider, modeling of image, light and shadow treatment of the work. The significance of the outline, the drawing, the reasonableness of compositional solution are the characteristic features of the Palaiologian Renaissance. The light in Palaiologian’s works is conveyed by joyous stroke sliders. The inherent stylistic dynamics introduces the illusion of movement into the composition, that replaces static and symmetry.³

¹ Я. Мороз, ‘Палеологівський ренесанс елліністичної традиції в українській іконі XIV–XV ст.’, *Мультиверсум. Філософський альманах*, 43 (2004), pp. 156–165; http://www.filosof.com.ua/Jornel/M_43/Moroz.htm [access 24. Apr. 2014].

² М. Гелитович, ‘Юрій Змієборець зі Станилі’, *Літопис Національного музею у Львові імені Андрея Шептицького*, 8 (2011), p. 85.

³ Я. Мороз, *op. cit.*; http://www.filosof.com.ua/Jornel/M_43/Moroz.htm [access 24. Apr. 2014].

Hesychasm asceticism provoked minimal usage of means in iconography.⁴ Probably, the black and blue color of a horse is stipulated by the stylistic peculiarities of Palaiologos style, hence the choice of the minimal palette and 'laconic' version of the scene 'Miracle with the Dragon'⁵ intensified the image of asceticism in iconography. On the other hand, iconographic formula of the horse-rider in two versions of icons of St. George is very close to the image of a horse-rider in the art of old Rus.⁶

Stylistically similar to the above mentioned two versions of icon 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon' from the churches in Stanylia and Staryi Kropyvnyk, is the icon of St. Paraskeva with the four biographical scenes of the second half from the 14th century from the village of Kulchytsi of



Fig. 1. 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon', XIV century icon from the village of Stanylia (Drohobych), LNM, Lviv (after Л. Міляєва 2007)

Sambir region, Lviv area (Lviv National Art Gallery). Common features are accuracy and the similarity in the treatment of facial expression and hands. V. Alexandrovych refers the works as painting circles of mountainous monasteries near Staryi Sambir.⁷ The submission

⁴ Я. Мороз, 'Деякі аспекти співвідношення богословських та художніх систем в іконі XIV ст.', *Історія релігій в Україні. Праці XI-ї міжнародної наукової конференції (Львів, 16–19 травня 2001 року)*, 2 (2001), p. 327.

⁵ Iconography of composition 'Miracle with the Dragon' is known in two versions. The first is called 'un-rolled' and presents the battle of St. George with the Dragon, the image of the princess, the city tower with tsar and tsarytsia and their retinue. On the other hand 'laconic' composition depicts only the battle with the Dragon. J. Myslivec, 'Svati Jiři ve východokrestanskem umění', *Byzantinoslavica*, V (1933–1934), p. 357.

⁶ *Історія українського мистецтва в 6-ти томах. Мистецтво XIV – першої половини XVII століття*, ed. Ю. П. Нельговський, vol. 2, Київ 1967, p. 214.

⁷ В. Александрович, 'Образотворче та декоративно-ужиткове мистецтво', in: *Історія української культури у п'яти томах: Українська культура XIII – перша половина XVII століть*, vol. 2, Київ 2001, pp. 288–290.



Fig. 2. 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon', XIV–XV century icon from the village of Staryi Kropyvnyk (Drohobych), 'Studion', Lviv (after Боніфатій [Богдан Івашків], В. Радомська 2004)

In the second half of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century there was characteristic reference to the image of a martyr in the pictures of St. George, as the ideal of passion bearer was significant for the age of Hesychasm.

of two versions of one iconographic type, namely, 'laconic' in the scene of 'Miracle with the Dragon' is evidence of the local iconographic tradition.⁸ There is an assumption that the author of the memorial from the village Stanylia was the icon painter of the 'Cathedral of St. Joachim and St. Anne' (Lviv National Museum),⁹ which originated from the same village. According to the script on the back side of the icon, both of the works date back to the 15th century.¹⁰

In 2011 a complex laboratory investigation of both memorials from the collection of Lviv National Museum and 'Studion' was undertaken and it enabled to specify common and distinctive features of both works. The results of the investigation testify that the authors of both memorials were different.¹¹ According to radio-carbon analysis of the wood, the desk of icon from Stanylia dates back to the beginning of the 15th century, and the desk from Staryi Kropyvnyk dates back to the beginning of the 15th century.¹²

⁸ В. Пуцко, 'Іконопис', *Історія українського мистецтва у 5 т.*, vol. 2, Київ 2010, p. 931.

⁹ В. А. Овсійчук, *Українське малярство X–XVIII століть. Проблеми кольору*, Львів 1996, p. 124.

¹⁰ Л. Скоп, 'Ікона 'Юрій Зміборець' зі Станілі', *Християнські культури в Україні. Тематичний збірник Святопокровського жіночого монастиря Студійського уставу*, 2 (2000), p. 85.

¹¹ М. Друль, 'Техніко-технологічні дослідження ікон 'Юрій Зміборець' зі збірки Національного музею у Львові імені Андрея Шептицького та музею монастиря студійського уставу святого Обручника Йосипа 'Студіон', *Літопис Національного музею у Львові імені Андрея Шептицького*, 8/13 (2011), p. 90.

¹² М. Гелитович, 'Юрій Зміборець' зі Станілі', *Літопис Національного музею у Львові імені Андрея Шептицького*, 8/13 (2011), p. 86.

The works from the collection of Lviv National Museum refer to the oldest icons of the iconographic type: solemn icon of St. George from 14th–15th century in the village of Turje; the image of St. George and St. John Chrysostom at the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century from the village Strilky, and as multifigures Praying with Tier on one desk – during early of 16th century from Daliova and Mszana.

The solemn icon of St. George of the 14th–15th century from the church of St. Nickolas in the village of Turje of Starosambir region of Lviv area (Lviv National Museum) refers to the latest memorials of early Palaiologos period. The work originates from the Przemyśl school of the Ukrainian iconography and is valuable from the scientific point of view as it represents the evaluation of the Deisis Tier.¹³

In the right part of Deisis row the icon of 'St. George and St. John Chrysostom' (the end of the XV century the beginning of the 16th century) originates from the church of Strilky of Starosambirsk region of Lviv area (Lviv National Museum). In the left hand St. George keeps an unfolded script, which is read: 'СЛАВА / ТЄБЬХС БЕ / АНГЛЮМЬ / ПОХВАЛА / И МУЧНИКОМ / ВЕСЕЛІЄ / РАДО...'¹⁴ Modelling of images are similar to the image of St. Paraskeva (the end of the 15th century – the beginning of the XVI century) from the church of Archangel Michael in Floryntsi (Lviv National Museum).¹⁵ The icons 'St. Nicholas and St. Dymytry' and 'Archangel Michel and Apostle Paul' are referred to in the right part of the Praying row. According to the preserved icons of the left part, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the Praying row consists of at least fifteen figures. According to iconographic and stylistic features the most similar to the icons from Strilky is the icon Deisis of the 15th–16th century from the church of 'The Assumption of the Virgin Mary' in Mszana.¹⁶

The thirteen figured Prayer row on the one desk originates from the beginning of the XVI century in the church of St. Paraskeva Piatnytcia from the village of Daliova (Lviv National Museum) St. George is depicted on the left turned with the head bowed in prayer and with the gesture of adoration on the level of his chest, his hand is elongated with elaborately long fingers. The saint is presented with highly arranged hair in the way of long straight threads of hair. The similar treatment of his hair arrangement appears in the image of St. Dymytry from Strilky (Lviv National Museum).¹⁷

Rarely found Deisis row of the 15th–16th century from Mszana (Lviv National Museum) numbers twenty one figures of saints on the one desk (the width is 613 cm).¹⁸ The figures of

¹³ В. Александрович, 'Тур'ївська ікона святого великомученика Георгія з 'Моління', Київська церква, 1/12 (2001), pp. 213–220.

¹⁴ М. Гелитович, 'Маловідомі пам'ятки українського іконопису XV–XVI століття (з колекції Національного музею у Львові)', *Zachodnioukraińska sztuka cerkiewna. Materiały z międzynarodowej konferencji naukowej (Łańcut–Kotań 17–18 kwietnia 2004 roku)*, II (2004), s. 103, fig. 8.

¹⁵ М. Гелитович, *op. cit.*, p. 101, fig. 6.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 70–71.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 102, fig. 7.

¹⁸ Патріарх Димитрій [Ярема], *Іконопис Західної України XII–XV ст.*, Львів 2005, s. 114.

the Prayer composition from Mszana are created according to one sample of the Deisis Tier from Daliova, only with a slight difference in drawing.¹⁹ It is necessary to remark that in the works of the 16th century the attention to a human being is intensified, particularly, to his/her anatomic peculiarities. St. George the martyr is depicted with extremely elongated and thin figures with nails on the contrary to Daliova's pictures. The saint is depicted with straight hair curved at the forehead and temples. A similar hair arrangement treatment appears on canvases of St. George from the village Zdvyzets (National Art Museum of Ukraine)²⁰ and Strilky (Lviv National Museum); where the image has a characteristic parting on the right.²¹

At the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century iconographic motive 'Miracle with the Dragon' becomes the leading and more sophisticated piece due to the introduction of the new details, namely, the figure of blessing Christ appears, or an angel above the figure of St. George. Out of the segment of heaven the angel directs the sword of George, for example, at the icon of the end of the XV century from the village of Zdvyzets; the segment of heaven with the semifigure of blessing Christ is present on the memorial of the XV–XVI century from the village Stupnytsia (LNM); out of the segment of heaven angel crowns St. George in the work of the middle of the XVI century from the village Velyke (NAM) and biographical icon of the 2nd half of the 16th century ('Studion').

Stylistic features of both Palaiologos Renaissance and late Gothic reminiscence were characteristic for Ukrainian icons within the period. They were developed in the works of the XV century when Gothic influence implied reference to naturalism of Western Medieval Art. A though, creative Byzantine traditions and traditions of princely age are basics for the development of 'genuine stylistic direction', as is stressed by Y. Moroz. Early Palaiologos stylistics in combination with Hesychasm are characteristic for Ukrainian memorials of the XV century.²²

Gothic reminiscence are present in two works which convey the battle of St. George of the 2nd half of the XV century, created in Eastern-Christian and Western-Latin traditions. Western-Latin Art introduces innovations in traditional religious scenes of St. George and appears in the historical plan but not in the legendary-poetic.²³

The first work 'St. George's battle with the Dragon' of the 2nd half of the 15th century originates from the monastery church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in the village of Slovity, Zolochiv region of Lviv area (Lviv National Museum).²⁴ The master of the work refers to Western-European engraving and the text of 'The Golden Legend' of the 13 century

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 419.

²⁰ Л. Міляєва за участю М. Гелитовч, *Українська ікона XI–XVIII століть*, Київ 2007, p. 41.

²¹ М. Гелитович, *op. cit.*, p. 103, figs. 8–9.

²² Я. Мороз, *Естетика українського іконопису XIV–XV ст.: автореф. дисертації на здобуття наукового ступеня кандидата філософських наук*, Київ 2005, p. 14 (The summary of PhD dissertation).

²³ Дж. Арган, *История итальянского искусства*, vol. 1, Москва 1990, p. 197.

²⁴ В. І. Свенціцька, О. Ф. Сидор, *Спадщина віків. Українське малярство XIV–XVIII століть у музейних колекціях Львова*, Львів 1990, fig. 27.

(fig. 3).²⁵ The presentation of saint warrior George on foot in the scene of battle with the Dragon is unique and corresponds to Western European traditions. The desire to interpret religious theme in the new outlook, to convey it as the real event, causes new methods of creation. The front side of the canvas is divided into an upper part with the scene of 'St. George's battle with the Dragon' and a lower part, which is partially lost. It illustrates the script in minuscule, that explains the scene. The script consists of eleven verses and is word-for-word renderence of the text of 'The Golden Legend' of the 13 century by Jacob de Voragine.²⁶



Fig. 3. 'St. George's battle with the Dragon', the 2nd half of the XV century painting from the village of Slovity (Zolochiv region of Lviv area), LNM, Lviv (after Ю. Ольхович-Новосадуок 2006)

The aforementioned work from Slovita (Lviv National Museum) the influence of German engraving is present, which enables the development and duplication of the artistic works on religious theme, in particular. Tadeusz Dobrowolski refers to the stylistic and compositional similarity of the work from Slovita with the engraving of Meister E. S.²⁷ To our mind, the author of the work from Slovita (Lviv National Museum) borrowed the religious theme from the German engraving 'St. George's battle with the Dragon', a well-known master of the first generation of engravers in the middle of the 15th century master in playing cards (Meister der Spielkarten). The flourishing of his creativity dates back to the 40-50th of the 15th century. Besides the series of playing cards,

²⁵ Ю. Ольхович-Новосадуок, *Іконографія святого Юрія Змісборця в українському іконописі XII–XIX ст.: магістерська робота*, Львів 2006, pp. 27–28

²⁶ T. Dobrowolski, 'Ze studiów nad ikonografią patrona rycerstwa', *Folia Historiae Artium*, 9 (1973), pp. 49–50.

²⁷ T. Dobrowolski, *op. cit.*, p. 57.



Fig. 4. Meister der Spielkarten, 'St. George's battle with the Dragon', an engraving around 1450, Dresden's Kupferstich-Kabinett (after <http://www.bildindex.de/> [access 24. Apr. 2014])

he only made several engravings of religious and high-society character.²⁸ His works of about 1450 show the new treatment of religious themes, where the saint is presented in movement, in full height with a sword, which he inserts into the ugly creature (fig. 4).²⁹ The main achievement of that period was that masters tried to reconsider the religious theme from the new point of view and convey it as a real event.

The influence of Western European Art, German, in particular, is present in the suggested 'unrolled' scene 'Miracle with the Dragon' at the end of the 15th century (National Art Museum of Ukraine). The icon originates from the church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in the village of Zdvyzen' (Lemkivshchyna).³⁰ Deviation from the principles of canon is traced in creative reacceptance of the image of a warrior

which is characteristic for the Palaiologos age. The Saint (on the icon from the village Zdvyzen') is depicted rather as a martyr than a warrior. According to Byzantine tradition St. George in iconographic type of warrior is, usually, presented in the appropriate military gown: armour, short tunic, pallium. On this particular icon the armour is absent, the saint is decorated on the waist with leather stripes, that usually were fixed to the armour. Similar decoration is around the torso of the Saint, which is bound with a white cloth-wool black striped belt. Metaphysically portrayed semi-figures of the king and the queen with characteristic annoyed gestures of the hand that touches their cheeks are depicted with the great attention to the persons' mood and their psychological state.

²⁸ M. Wolff, 'Meister der Spielkarten', *Neue Deutsche Biographie (NDB)*, 16 (1990), p. 720.

²⁹ <http://www.bildindex.de/> [access 24. Apr. 2014].

³⁰ Л. Мілясва, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

Stylistic influence of the late-Gothic era are present on the icon of 'St. George and Paraskeva Piatnycia' at the end of the XV century the beginning of the 16th century from the church of Saint Cosmas and Damian in the village of Korchyn of Skolivsky region of Lviv area (Lviv National Museum).³¹ St. George appears as a warrior knight on foot, dressed in a shirt made of metal rings and in chain armour trousers. George the warrior is portrayed in metal gloves with a sword in his right hand.³² The white banner with the red cross is fixed to the St. George's ammunition according to Western-European tradition. The cloth of the banner is triangular-extended in shape, whipped by the red stripe with the red multiple fibre.³³ The picture of St. George the warrior on foot with the banner on the left-wing near the Paumgartner altarpiece (Alte Pinakothek, Munich) is the example of the Western-European Art. The canvas was created by German artist of the Renaissance period – Albrecht Dürer approximately in 1498.³⁴

A unique work 'St. George battle with the Dragon' from the monastery church in the village Stupnytsia Drohobych region of Lviv area (Lviv National Museum) refers to the end of the XV century the beginning of the 16th century Traditions of Eastern Christian Art and Western Latin Art have been entangled in one icon.³⁵ The princess is depicted with a lamb according to Western-European tradition³⁶ and Christ with the book is portrayed in accordance with the Byzantine and Old-Rus traditions in the segment of heaven. The tail of the Dragon winds up the horse's hoof. There is also the image of an alert trumpeter which is typical for Balcan and Crete works of post-Byzantine period.³⁷ St. George horse rider is turned to the right inconsistently with the canon. The master tries to deviate from the canon and convey a traditional religious theme realistically. The icon can be divided conventionally into two parts: the left corresponds to the Latin tradition and the right, with the picture of stylized-mountains and the heaven segment with Christ corresponds to the Eastern-Christian tradition. Western-European element, the broken tournament sword appears which is connected with the popular knight's fights. The part of broken sword is depicted for the first time in the work of the 2nd half of the XV century from Slovita (Lviv National Museum).³⁸ Similar religious theme 'St. George's battle with the Dragon' is devel-

³¹ В. І. Свенціцька *op. cit.*, p. 15.

³² Д. В. Степовик, *Історія української ікони Х–ХХ століть*, Київ 2008, p. 199, fig. 58.

³³ Р. Косів, *Українські хоругви*, Київ 2009, p. 48.

³⁴ Ц. Нессельштраус, *Альбрехт Дюрер 1471–1528*, Ленинград–Москва 1961, pp. 106–109.

³⁵ В. І. Свенціцька, В. П. Откович, *Українське народне малярство ХІІІ–ХХ століть. Світ очима народних митців*, Київ 1991, fig. 20.

³⁶ In 'The Golden Legend' (on the contrary to the Greek version of the legend) it is mentioned that the citizens of the city gave two sheep to the Dragon every day. When they had not enough sheep they decided to give one sheep and one man to the Dragon. Jakub De Voragine, *Złota Legenda, wybór, przeł. J. Pleziowa*, oprac. M. Plezia, Warszawa 1983, p. 207. Respectively, in accordance with the Western European composition of the battle with the Dragon, the princess was illustrated with a lamb.

³⁷ *Православная энциклопедия*, vol. 10, Москва 2005, p. 684.

³⁸ В. І. Свенціцька *op. cit.*, fig. 27.

oped in the works of German artists – Master ES and Martin Shongauer,³⁹ but Ukrainian artist didn't simply copy the Western-European sample, but reconsidered creatively the artistic achievements of engravers of that period.

Icons from the collection of LNM which go back to the end of the XV century the beginning of the XVI century, continue the tradition of icon from Zdvyzen'(NAM): 'Miracle of St. George with Dragon' from the church of St. Paraskeva Piatnycia from the village Daliova (Lemkivshchyna) with the three biographical scenes at the bottom,⁴⁰ 'unrolled' version of the 'Miracle with the Dragon' from the church of St. Dymytria in the town of Rohatyn of Ivano-Frankivsk area⁴¹ etc.

The stylistics of the icon of St. George of the 2nd half of the 16th century, inherent in the folk interpretations of the treatment of artistic portrayal. In the middle of the 16th century there are some changes in the colour of the palette, the surface treatment of the form changed for the three-dimensioned modeling. The palette of achromatic shades is enriched, grey colour appears as interim.⁴² The dominance of the grey causes the emergence of silvery black ground, as we see on the icons of the 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon' and 'The Baptism of Jesus' (Lviv National Museum) (fig. 6).⁴³ The background, enriched by ornamental relief in the way of rhombus of the silvery basis, is present in the icon 'Miracle with the Dragon' from the church of the Nativity of the Virgin in Vanivtsi (Lviv National Museum). With a golden-shade background, with rhomboidal stylized quadruples, one can see on icons from the village Velyke (Lviv National Art Gallery); biographical icon of St. George of the 2nd half of the 16th century of the unknown origin ('Studion')⁴⁴; 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon' dates back to 1570 from the church of the Nativity of the Virgin of the town Zovkva of Lviv area.⁴⁵

At the end of the 16th century the beginning of the 17th century the temple icon from the church of Archangel Nickolas in the village of Volya Vysotska, Lviv area (Lviv National Museum) with the 'unrolled' image of the scene 'Miracle with the Dragon' (fig. 5)⁴⁶ is painted in the circle of Lviv's masters (the studio of Fedir Senkovych (?). The icon refers to the transition phase in the Ukrainian art at the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 18th century. The characteristic features of this period is the deviation from Byzantine-Old Rus conventional traditions and shifting to the realistic tendencies of Western-Eu-

³⁹ <http://www.bildindex.de/> [access 24. Apr. 2014].

⁴⁰ Л. Мілясва, *op. cit.*, fig. 113.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, fig. 134.

⁴² В. А. Овсійчук, *Українське малярство X–XVIII століть. Проблеми кольору*, Львів 1996, p. 256.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 259, 272.

⁴⁴ Боніфатій [Богдан Івашків], В. Радомська, 'Галицька ікона зі збірки монахів-студитів монастиря Св. Йосифа Обручника, м. Львів', *Zachodnioukraińska sztuka cerkiewna. Materiały z międzynarodowej konferencji naukowej (Łańcut–Kotań 17–18 kwietnia 2004 roku)*, II (2004), p. 191, fig. 14.

⁴⁵ Л. Мілясва, *op. cit.*, fig. 243.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, fig. 308.

ropean Art.⁴⁷ The joining of two traditions is vivid in new details: the king protrudes from the tower two keys on the rope instead of one; the saint keeps the wooden half of the sword with two hands; the sword is thicker at the top and is decorated with a white stripe. The last requisite characteristic for Western-European Art in the former portraying of St. George usually appears with the tournament spear which is often coloured in red and white stripes. New kind of armour (tournament spear) which is not designed for the battle, is used in knights' fightings. In Ukrainian Art beginning from the 17th century, the tournament spear becomes integral attribute of St. George in the scene 'Miracle with the Dragon'. P. Zoltovsky was the first to pay attention to the spear with extension, a kind of 'spindle type'.⁴⁸

Thus, composition of the traditional scene 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon' is enriched with the new details. The key on the red rope appears, which the king stretches from the tower of the castle. The emotional state of the king and the queen are changed. They are depicted with the open palms; the worried gesture of the palm to the cheek disappears. The landscape becomes more complicated; the horse becomes grey in colour, and on the wings of the Dragon appears the profile of the Moon.⁴⁹ The depicting of



Fig. 5. 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon', XVI–XVII century icon from the village of Volya Vysotska, LNM, Lviv (after Л. Міляєва 2007)

⁴⁷ Українське народне малярство ..., fig. 55.

⁴⁸ О. Ременяка, 'Волинська іконописна традиція в іконі 'Св. Георгій змієборець' зі Стрілець (Польща)', *Народознавчі зошити*, 6/30 (1999), pp. 860–861.

⁴⁹ Ukrainian folk artist, having declined from the Byzantine cannon introduce the elements of archaic symbolics to the iconography 'Miracle with the Dragon' step-by-step: a key, a horn, the image of the Moon, a cave, etc., which symbolize the 'transition' and renovation both in annual and human cy-

a human profile on the wing of the Dragon is an allegoric personification of the Moon which is seen on the icons of the 16th century of 'The Last Judgment'⁵⁰ (for example from Maloi Horozanky, Lviv National Art Gallery) and 'The Crucifix' (for example from Boikovshchyna, Lviv National Museum). The profile of the Moon on the wing of the Dragon is present on the icons: 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon' the first part of the 16th century from the village Velyke near Dobromyl' (from now on National Museum of the Land of Przemyśl)⁵¹; 'rolled up' theme 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon' from Halycia (Lviv National Museum) (fig. 6);⁵² work of the 2nd half of the 16th century (The National Museum in Kraków)⁵³. According to the folk belief, the Dragon also symbolizes the Moon.⁵⁴

In Ukrainian Art of the 14th and 15th century iconography of St. George reveals the best in the scene of 'Miracle with the Dragon', which is known in two versions 'laconic' and 'rolled up'. At the age of Hesychasm the reference to its 'laconic' compositional scheme is characteristic, caused by minimal usage of artistic means in iconography. Asceticism of the image, the graphical treatment of the form, sliders in the way of patch of light on the faces show the influence of Hesychasm, that was widely-spread in the 2nd half of the 14th century. The image of St. George enters into the tier of martyr of the Deisis Tier of iconostasis, as the ideal of passion and patience was highly valued for the monastic-Hesychasmic movement. In the 2nd half of the 15th century the influence of Western-European Art of Latin orientation is present, which introduces the new trends in traditional religious scenes into the battle with

cles. It is the religious experience of renovation of the world, which gives the understanding of spring as spring of the Nature. Thus, the rural residents attached to the chrystian St. George a great amount of pre-chrystian religious heritage, which preserved cosmic structure. М. Еліаде, *Священне і мирське; Міфи, сновидіння і містерії; Мефістофель і андрогін; Окультизм, ворожитство та культурні уподобання*, Пер. з нім., фр., англ. Г. Кьорян, В. Сахно, Київ 2001, pp. 80–86. 'Miracle with the Dragon' reactualizes 'cosmonization' which took place every spring on holiday of St. George. Correspondingly, the artist introduces to the icon the idea of the most important annual sacral event – the renovation of the world in spring. At the end of the XV c. the beginning of the XVI c. the iconographic theme 'Miracle with the Dragon' is complicated by details, namely, by symbols of renovation, which the artists gained from the surrounding world and directly from the holiday of St. George. According to the Ukrainian Folk beliefs St. George not only supervized the changes in the Moon phases, but was in charge of the keys, by which he opened the Earth, the Sky, the Rain, the Due. Г. Василькевич, *Святоюрїївська народнопоетична творчість: проблема семантики і жанрової специфіки*, Львів 2007, p. 35, 42. In the Ukrainian iconography beginning from the XVI c. the image of the Moon (the symbol of cosmic formation) appears and the key, which the king stretches from the tower (the attribute of sacral transformation). For example, in Georgia, the peculiar national veneration of St. George is connected with the fact that the saint was a successor of the Pegan God of the Moon. В. Н. Лазарев, 'Новый памятник станковой живописи XII в. и образ Георгия в византийской и древнерусской иконописи', in: *Русская средневековая живопись: статьи и исследования*, Москва 1970, p. 79.

⁵⁰ Smoki: mity, symbole, motywy: katalog wystawy, ed. W. Passowicz, A. Szczygiel, Kraków 1997, p. 73.

⁵¹ М. Janocha. *Ikonu w Polsce: od średniowiecza do współczesności*, Warszawa 2008, p. 325, fig. 262.

⁵² Ю. Ольхович-Новосадюк, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁵³ J. Kłosińska *Ikonu*, Kraków 1973, p. 203, fig. 38.

⁵⁴ К. Сосенко, *Культурно-історична постать Староукраїнських свят Різдва і Щедрого Вечера*, Львів 1928, p. 41.



Fig. 6. 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon' and 'The Baptism of Jesus', XVI century icon from Galychyna, LNM, Lviv (after Ю. Ольхович-Новосадиук 2006)

the Dragon where St. George appears in historical plan instead of legendary-poetic. Such requisites as sword and broken tournament spear, etc. come forward. Ukrainian Art have borrowed some elements of the Gothic tradition, which is traced in the number of icons with the image of St. George of the 2nd half of the 15th century and on the boundary of the 15th–16th century. Some unique artistic reinterpretation of Western-European samples appear. Thus, the depicting image of St. George in Ukrainian iconography has combined some stylistic features of Palaiologos's Renaissance and reminiscent of late Gothic. The reference to Late Gothic forms is influenced by German engravings, by means of which pieces of art are developed and copied especially on religious theme. The depicting of St. George of that period, usually in 'unrolled' version of the theme 'Miracle with the Dragon' reveals the tendencies of transmission from traditional iconography of Eastern-European tradition to Western-Latin Art. The mentioned icons, 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon', give evidence of the emergence of the new trends that took place in the frames of stylistic changes of Western-European iconography during the 15th–16th century.

The analysed complex of icons of St. George of the 15th–16th century represent keeping to the main parameters of the theme 'Miracle of St. George with the Dragon'. Having gone through the lasting period of formation the iconography of St. George in the composition 'Miracle with the Dragon' has acquired regular features which have become traditional for this type of Ukrainian icons in the process of crystallization.

Translated by Natalia Horal'

*L' église de Treskavac et ses peintures murales et liens avec l « École » de Kastoria à la fin du XVème siècle.**

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Le monastère de la Dormition de la Vierge de Treskavac (fig. 1-4) se trouve près de Prilep en de Macédoine. Il est situé sur la montagne Babuna, près du sommet rocheux « Zlato Vrv » (Sommet doré) qui domine tout le plateau de Pélagonie, à environ 2km du village de Dabnica. C'est l'un des grands centres monastiques et spirituels de l'archevêché d'Ohrid et donc un haut lieu de la foi orthodoxe.

Dès les origines, cet endroit semblait idéal à l'établissement d'un lieu de culte. En effet, nous savons grâce aux données matérielles issues des fouilles archéologiques entreprises en ce lieu que la partie la plus ancienne du sanctuaire chrétien est située sur une partie antique où était vénéré, dès l'époque romaine (IIème-IIIème siècles) semble-t-il, Apollon Eteydanos au sein d'un sanctuaire du nom de Kolobaisa¹.

Quelques fouilles archéologiques entreprises en 1959 dans la partie Est de l'exonarthex et sous le mur Sud de l'église, à l'endroit où les fresques du XIVème siècle sont préservées ont mis au jour quelques tombes datées des IXème/Xème et XIIème siècles ainsi que des tombes plus tardives.

On pense aussi qu'un ancien village appelé Kolobaise existait à cet endroit, mais il reste impossible à ce jour de préciser sa localisation exacte. A 300 mètres au Nord du monastère, sur l'aire Gumenje, les fouilles ont mis au jour une nécropole datant de l'époque romaine.

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¹ A ce sujet, voir les opinions de I. Mikulčić, *The Middle Aged Towns and Forts in Macedonia*, Skopje, 1996, pp. 268, et de V. Lilić. Pour cela, je renvoie à l'article de V. Pecijareska, 'Church of the Dormition of the Virgin at Treskavec monastery before the conservation', *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 4 (2003), pp. 263-269, qui se base sur l'opinion des deux premières.

Le complexe monastique s'organise autour d'un Catholicon (l'église de la Dormition de la Vierge), auquel on accède par une entrée surmontée d'une tour-clocher. A l'intérieur de l'enceinte même du monastère, on observe la présence d'un réfectoire (côté sud) et de konaks (côtés nord et est de l'église).

On pense que le monastère date de la fin du XII^{ème} ou du début du XIII^{ème} siècle. Il a été rénové à l'époque du roi serbe Etienne Dušan, dont un portrait subsiste à l'intérieur de l'église. Apparemment, il aurait été détruit au début du XV^{ème} siècle. S'ensuit alors toute une série de rénovations et d'ajouts postérieurs, et ce, jusqu'au XIX^{ème} siècle. La complexité architecturale du monastère – et notamment de l'église – est le résultat de ces transformations successives.

L'architecture de l'église elle-même consiste en un large espace rectangulaire à nef unique et divisé en quatre compartiments : le bêma surmonté d'une coupole, une travée occidentale, un spacieux narthex couronné d'une coupole „aveugle” et un exonarthex qui possède deux compartiments couverts de dômes sur les côtés Nord et Sud².

En 1959 et en 1966, quelques interventions préventives caractérisées essentiellement par un nettoyage partiel de la couche recouvrant les fresques de la partie centrale de l'église, ont permis de protéger à moindre mesure le monument. A l'intérieur de l'église, on trouve plusieurs couches de peinture appartenant à des époques différentes (fig. 5–8, 12–17).

Les plus anciennes peintures murales ont été préservées dans l'exonarthex qui est dû aux rénovations entreprises par Etienne Dušan en 1334. Les peintures du naos que je présenterai plus loin ont été réalisées en 1485³ : dans cette partie de l'édifice, la zone située sous la coupole centrale et la travée occidentale a été décorée du cycle des Grandes Fêtes, d'une Déisis Royale et de représentations de saints guerriers.

La datation de ce groupe de fresques – attribué à la fin du XV^{ème} siècle – a été acceptée par l'ensemble des chercheurs. Parmi eux, mention doit être faite du savant serbe Svetozar Radojčić qui, dans un de ses articles parus en 1965⁴, avait intégré le monastère de Treskavac à une étude d'ensemble. Il s'agissait en effet de dévoiler les caractéristiques communes et de définir les tendances que ses peintures partageaient avec celles d'un groupe de monuments tout à fait homogènes (Vieux Catholicon de la Transfiguration des Météores, Saint-Nicolas-de-la-nonne-Eupraxia, monastère de Poganovo, Saint-Nikita de Čučer ...), qu'Andreas Xyngopoulos

² Voir E. Kasapova, *Arhitekturata na crkvata Uspenie na Bogorodica – Treskavec (= Architecture of the Church of the Dormition of the Holy Mother of God - Treskavec)*, Skopje 2009.

³ Selon une inscription conservée dans le sanctuaire, une autre restauration partielle du catholicon aurait été entreprise autour de 1570. Elle précise que l'abside a été peinte grâce au donateur Stojan Hrancev. La décoration visible dans le narthex a été réalisée, quant à elle, en 1849 par les zographes Michail et Kyr Zissi de Kruševo, et donc présente peu d'intérêt pour notre étude. Je n'en parlerai pas dans cet article. De même, je ne traiterai pas ici des peintures de la lunette d'entrée du monastère, ni même de celles du réfectoire. Pour la lunette d'entrée, voir S. Cvetkovski, *'The Portraits of Byzantine and Serbian Rulers in the Monastery of Treskavac'*, *Zograf*, 31 (2006/2007), pp. 153–167.

⁴ S. Radojčić, *'Jedna slikarska škola iz druge polovine XV veka'*, *Odabrani članci i studije (1933–1978)*, Beograd 1982, pp. 258–279.

avait mis en lumière avant lui⁵. La décoration de ce groupe de monuments est l'œuvre de petits ateliers de peintres itinérants anonymes de la fin du XV^e siècle originaires de Kastoria⁶, que la plupart des spécialistes préfèrent regrouper aujourd'hui sous la terminologie de « École » de Kastoria. Ses peintres étaient actifs sur une aire géographique assez vaste, comprenant les régions de Macédoine occidentale et de Thessalie en Grèce du Nord ainsi que la Serbie, la Bulgarie et la Moldavie du XV^e siècle. Cette « École », de par son style original caractérisé à la fois par un ensemble de procédés picturaux ouverts aux influences occidentales mais aussi par un retour permanent vers des formes « archaïsantes » plus anciennes héritées des traditions de l'art Paléologue, a attiré l'attention de nombre de spécialistes. Pour les mêmes raisons, l'auteur de cet article envisage alors de revenir sur certains détails, iconographiques, qui ne manquent pas d'intérêt. Bien entendu, il n'est guère possible de tout présenter dans cet article. Aussi, j'ai choisi de ne retenir que quelques fragments de peinture caractéristiques, à savoir ceux qui sont susceptibles de trahir leurs sources d'inspiration et de nous renseigner dans les grandes lignes, sur l'esprit novateur de cette « École » aux accents particuliers.

La première scène iconographique que je présenterai se trouve dans la partie supérieure du mur nord du naos, au niveau de la lunette située juste au-dessus du registre de saints en médaillons. On y voit une *Crucifixion* des plus intéressantes (fig. 8). La Croix est fixée sur un rocher où l'on distingue une petite caverne. Le Christ, au corps très courbé, se détache presque entièrement de la Croix. Il a les bras tendus, en angle obtus. La tête de celui-ci retombe lourdement sur l'épaule droite, les yeux clos. Il est vêtu d'un simple pagne qui redescend jusqu'aux genoux.

⁵ Cf. A. Xyngopoulos, *Σχεδίασμα Ιστορίας της θρησκευτικής μετα την αλωσιν*, Athènes 1975, p. 380.

⁶ A part Andreas Xyngopoulos et Svetozar Radojčić, d'autres byzantinistes de renom ont mentionné cet atelier dans leurs travaux. Je renvoie donc le lecteur à une bibliographie sélective : M. Chatzidakis, *Études sur la peinture postbyzantine*. Variorum reprints, Londres 1976, pp. 177-197 ; E. Δρακοπούλου, *Η πόλη της Καστοριάς τη Βυζαντινή και Μεταβυζαντινή εποχή (12ος-16ος αι.)*. *Ιστορία-Τέχνη-Επιγραφές*, Athènes 1997, pp. 117-122 ; M. Garidis, 'Contacts entre la peinture de la Grèce du Nord et des zones centrales balkaniques avec la peinture moldave de la fin du XV^e siècle (Garidis, Contacts)', dans : *Actes du XIV^e Congrès international des études byzantines*, Bucarest 1975, pp. 563-569 ; Idem, *La peinture murale dans le monde orthodoxe après la Chute de Byzance et dans les pays sous domination étrangère, 1450-1600*, Athènes 1989 ; E. Georgitsoyanni, *Les peintures murales du Vieux Catholicon du Monastère de la Transfiguration aux Météores (1483)*, Paris 1987 ; Eadem, 'Ένα εργαστήριο ανώνυμων ζωγράφων του δευτέρου μισού του 15ου αιώνα στα Βαλκάνια και η επίδραση του στη μεταβυζαντινή τέχνη', *Ηπειρωτικά χρονικά*, 29 (1988-89), pp. 145-172 ; A. Σταυροπούλου-Μακρί, *Les peintures murales de l'église de la Transfiguration à Veltsista (1568) en Épire et l'atelier des peintres Kondaris*, Ioannina 2001 ; Φ. Καραγιάννη, 'Ο ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος του αγίου Αθανασίου Κουστοχωρίου Ημαθίας και η σχέση του με το καστοριανό εργαστήριο', *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, περ. Δ', τ. ΚΔ' (2003), pp. 257-266 ; E. Τσιγαρίδας, 'Κεντρική και Δυτική Μακεδονία', *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον*, 28 (1973), pp. 489-491 ; Idem, 'Η μνημειακή ζωγραφική στη Μακεδονία του 15ου αιώνα, Χριστιανική Αρχαιολογική Εταιρεία. Ογδοο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής και Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης. Πρόγραμμα και περιλήψεις εισηγήσεων και ανακοινώσεων', Athènes 1988 ; Idem, 'Monumental Painting in Greek Macedonia during the Fifteenth Century', dans : *Holy image. Holy Space. Icons and frescoes from Greece*, Athènes 1988, pp. 54-60 ; Idem, 'Οι τοιχογραφίες του ναού της Παναγίας Γοργοπηκόου Βέροιας' (Tsigaridas, Παναγίας Γοργοπηκόου), *Makedonika*, 28 (1991-1992), pp. 91-105 ; C. Valea, 'Sur la question sur la soit-dite 'École artistique de Kastoria', *Ανατλο από τα Βυζαντινά* 28 (2008) ; A. Semoglou, 'L'atelier artistique de Kastoria au XV^e siècle. La restitution d'une iconographie savante', dans : *XX^e Congrès des Études Byzantines*, III. Collège de France, 19-25 août 2001, Paris 2001.

A gauche de la composition, Marie, défaillante, est soutenue par une sainte femme située derrière elle et qui lui saisit la main droite, tandis qu'elle regarde avec agonie son fils sur la croix. Elle se tient sur une estrade et, envahie par la douleur, se penche en avant de façon quasi théâtrale.

A droite de la composition, de manière symétriquement, Jean est placé sur un rocher, courbé par la douleur et fortement incliné vers le Christ en se cachant le visage des deux mains. Il est jeune et imberbe, il a les cheveux courts et est revêtu d'un chiton et d'un himation. Derrière lui se tient le centurion Longin, en costume militaire. Ce dernier est représenté en homme d'âge mûr, barbu et coiffé d'un voile, il regarde le Christ et montre la Croix par un geste du bras droit levé.

Dans le rocher creusé, on voit le buste d'un vieillard nu, à la barbe et aux longs cheveux blancs. Il est en train de s'arracher les cheveux des deux mains. Il s'agit d'un geste de lamentation sur la mort du Christ. Une inscription en slavon accompagne cette figure énigmatique.

De part et d'autre de la Croix se trouvent les personnifications de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament (ou de l'Eglise et de la Synagogue), représentées en buste. A gauche, la personnification du Nouveau Testament (Eglise) est représentée comme une femme couronnée qui tient un calice des deux mains, destiné à recueillir le sang et l'eau qui jaillissent de la plaie du Christ⁷. Un tropaire chanté le Vendredi Saint disait que le sang et l'eau tombaient de la côte transpercée du Christ sur l'Eglise, comparée au Paradis : « Votre côté vivifiant, comme la source de l'Eden, arrose votre Eglise, ce paradis spirituel... »⁸. A droite, par contre, l'état de conservation relativement moins bon ne permet pas de décrire précisément la personnification de l'Ancien Testament.

De part et d'autre du Crucifié, on voit le Soleil et la Lune, de profil et placées dans des faisceaux lumineux. En haut à droite, un ange descend vers le Crucifié, recouvrant son visage des deux mains. Hormis Adam et l'Ancien Testament, tous les personnages sont nimbés.

Sur le plan iconographique, un certain nombre de détails nous permettent de rapprocher cette scène de la *Crucifixion* de l'église des Météores, en Grèce, et de l'église Saint-Nikita de Čučer (fig. 9), près de Skopje. Il s'agit tout d'abord de la figure de Jésus. Signalons

⁷ Cf. I. M. Đorđević, 'Stari i Novi zavet na ulazu u Bogorodicu Ljevišku', *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice Srpske*, 9 (1973), pp. 13-26. A Pološko existe aussi une petite figure, mi-nue, située au pied de la croix et tenant un bol sur son genou qui, selon Radojčić servirait à recueillir le sang du Christ ; à partir de l'étude du « livre du Second Evangile » de Djruči et des Evangiles d'Elisavetgrad ('Radojčić pense qu'il peut s'agir peut-être, dans un cas similaire, de la figure d'Eve, mais sans trop s'avancer sur la figure de Pološko. En examinant l'exemple de Pološko, Djurić a retenu l'interprétation de Radojčić, sur la base d'inscriptions grecques accompagnant la Crucifixion, presque identiques selon lui à un passage du kontakion *Triomphe de la Croix* de Romain le Melode, qui se retrouve dans une homélie de saint Jean Chrysostome, *L'Adoration de la Sainte Croix* où est mentionnée la rédemption d'Eve qui l'élève au statut d'Eglise du Christ. Il semblerait que Gordana Babić ait aussi adopté cette identification d'Eve. Il paraît que le peintre y a personnifié les eaux amères de Marah. Cf. Z. Gavrilović, 'Eve or the Waters of Marah at Pološko', *Zograf*, 25 (1996), pp. 51-56.

⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 51-56 (et bibliographie relative). On trouve, déjà chez André de Crète au VIII^e siècle, une source liturgique pour les deux personifications de l'Eglise tenant calice et de la Synagogue – c'est-à-dire du Nouveau et de l'Ancien Testament – escortés par des anges.



Fig. 1. Vue de l'extérieur du monastère de Treskavac (Prilep) (photographie R. Terryn)

tout d'emblée la tentative du peintre à associer l'image du Christ à celle d'un cadavre réel : son corps s'infléchit de manière excessive dans l'abandon de la mort, formant une ligne courbe très marquée. Cette tendance, amorcée aux XI^{ème}-XII^{ème} siècles, s'est développée à l'époque tardo-byzantine. Jean se couvre le visage des deux mains⁹ au lieu d'exprimer sa tristesse par le geste contenu habituel : main droite posée contre la joue, main gauche ramenée contre la poitrine. Le geste, plutôt rare, provient de l'iconographie macédonienne des XIV^{ème} et XV^{ème} siècles. A notre connaissance, il avait fait son apparition dans certaines fresques de la région d'Ohrid : à Saint-Elie de Dolgaec (1454/5), à Leskoec (1461/62) et à Saint-Nicolas-de-la-dame-Theologina de Kastoria.

Contrairement à Jean, ce trait n'est pas rare pour les anges qui esquissent le même geste. En effet, certains monuments des XIII^{ème} et XIV^{ème} siècles en témoignent et je peux citer d'ailleurs le bel exemple de l'église d'Asomatos à Archanes en Crète (fig. 10)¹⁰, que j'ai eu l'occasion de photographier au cours d'un séjour ponctuel en juillet 2012.

L'élément le plus marquant de cette composition se trouve dans l'espace aménagé sous la croix. Une figure énigmatique y est représentée sous la forme d'un vieillard nu,

⁹ Voir la composition du Vieux Catholicon au Météore, de Saint-Nikita de Čučer et des églises de Kastoria que voici : Saint-Nicolas-de-la-nonne-Eupraxie, Saint-Nicolas-de-la-nonne-Theologina et Saint-Nicolas-Magaliou. En outre, on trouve ce geste dans d'autres oeuvres liées à l'« École » de Kastoria : Kremikovtzi (scène aujourd'hui détruite) et Hirläu.

¹⁰ Il convient de citer, pour le XIII^{ème} siècle : l'Évangile arménien de la reine Keran ; pour le XIV^{ème} siècle : l'église d'Asomatos à Archanes en Crète, de Saint-Nicolas-Orphanos de Thessalonique et certains monuments de Mistra (église Sainte-Sophie, Peribleptos et chapelle Saint-Jean) ; enfin, l'église dite Ilch-Michrab, à Rhodes.

représenté jusqu'à la taille et portant une longue barbe et de longs cheveux blancs, les chercheurs l'ont identifié à Adam se lamentant sur la mort du Christ.

Cette particularité iconographique est digne d'intérêt : dans l'état actuel de nos connaissances, elle est attestée sporadiquement dans un nombre restreint de monuments antérieurs : dans une étude célèbre¹¹, le professeur regretté Miltos Garidis signalait pour le X^e siècle une peinture géorgienne située à Sabereebi (église n°7), dans le complexe de David-Garedja en Kakhétie (fig. 11), ainsi que l'exemple plus tardif de Gračanica en Serbie, et la *Crucifixion* du monastère des Philanthropinon sur le lac de Ioannina, en Epire, qui date de 1542. En ce qui concerne l'exemple de Sabereebi, des recherches récentes ont prouvé qu'il s'agissait en réalité des soldats jouant la tunique du Christ sans couture, le *colobium*, symbole de l'unité de l'Eglise, puisque selon la prophétie du Psaume 21, 19 : « ils se sont partagé mes habits et ont tiré au sort mon vêtement »¹².

Il est difficile de connaître la provenance de cet élément iconographique. Selon Miltos Garidis, le peintre aurait puisé à d'autres sources d'inspiration, peut-être occidentales : on sait en effet que ce thème était beaucoup plus répandu dans l'art occidental comme en témoigne le *Hortus Deliciarum*. Plus tard, cet élément rare fera son apparition dans des églises de Moldavie : à Saint-Georges de Suceava (1534), à Moldovița (1537) et à Hîrlău. Il est intéressant de rapprocher l'iconographie de la tradition textuelle puisque l'on connaissait l'existence de légendes apocryphes et de textes des Pères de l'Eglise qui plaçaient le tombeau d'Adam sur le Golgotha¹³. Des hymnes ecclésiastiques du Vendredi Saint faisant allusion à Adam, baptisé et

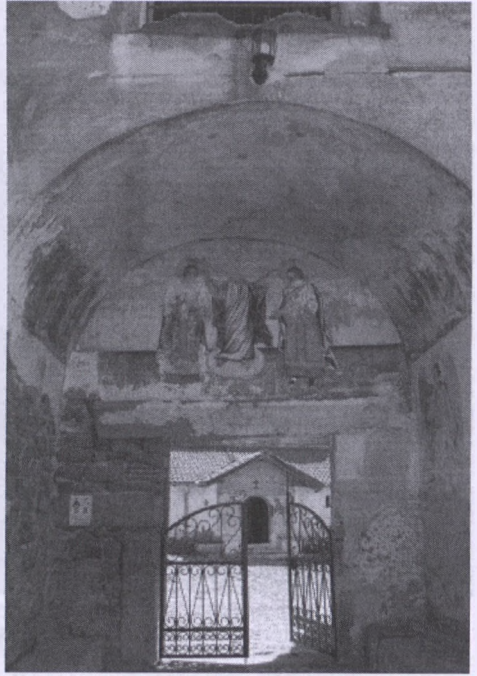


Fig. 2. Lunette située au-dessus de l'entrée du monastère de Treskavac : les empereurs Andronic II et Michel IX Paléologue (1309–1316) couronnés par la Vierge, fresque datant de la fin du XIX^e siècle (photographie R. Terryn)

¹¹ M. M. Garidis, *op.cit.*, p. 62.

¹² Cf. N. Thierry, 'Courants d'influences dans le monachisme gréco-oriental des IX^e-X^e siècles. A propos de Sabereebi n°7', dans : *Desert Monasticism. Gareja and the Christian East (Symposium sept. 2000)*, Tbilisi 2001, pp. 203–219. Marika Didebulidze, directrice du centre Georges Chubinashvili à Tbilisi, éminente spécialiste qui a pu étudier ce monument et revoir l'interprétation de Miltos Garidis pense aussi qu'il s'agit des soldats jouant la tunique du Christ (conversation privée), je tiens à lui adresser mes vifs remerciements pour cette information. Il existe d'autres exemples, notamment une *Crucifixion* placée dans l'Évangile de Rabula.

¹³ J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. LIX (St. Joannes Chrysostomus) 1862, pp. 459, 460 ; St. Ambroise, *Patr. Lat. ol. XV*, p. 1832 ; St. Jérôme, *Patr. Lat. XXVI*, p. 209 ; Origène, *Patr. Gr. vol. XIII*, p. 1777 ; autres références dans G. Heider, *Die romanische kirche zu Schöngrabern*, Vienne 1835, pp. 130–135.



Fig. 3. Catholicicon (église de la Dormition de la Vierge), vue générale (photographie R. Terryn)

libéré par le sang du Christ, sont en outre attestés. Cet élément n'est pas sans rappeler la présence de l'Hadès figuré sous la croix de la *Crucifixion* à Pološko, dans un autre contexte¹⁴.

Poursuivons notre analyse à travers une autre scène, révélatrice des éléments hétéroclites puisés à d'autres sources, qui deviendront « à la mode » chez les peintres de l'« École ». Nous avons retenu la *Trahison de Judas*, où l'influence occidentale est évidente. Les physionomies des soldats et des gardiens entourant le Christ, éloignées des canons idéalisés et idéalistes de l'art byzantin, sont conçues à travers le prisme d'un réalisme exacerbé, d'une sécheresse dans le ton et dans l'expression des visages, au moyen de traits déformés (nez aplatis, larges narines ouvertes) et de regards presque haineux. Miltos Garidis disait à l'époque qu'ils donnent l'impression d'appartenir à une autre race et qu'ils rejoignent l'« exotisme » italien du Trecento à l'expressionnisme caricatural allemand. De tels détails avaient fait dire au grand académicien Manolis Chatzidakis, dans son article *Aspects de la peinture religieuse dans les Balkans (1300–1550)* que « les traits qui se distinguent et servent de liaisons entre les œuvres de cet atelier qui reste toujours anonyme, sont entre autres la recherche du pittoresque, qui frise parfois la caricature », « qu'on y décèle une certaine tendance vers l'accent dramatique, proche par son exagération, d'un réalisme plutôt cru » et que « plusieurs de ces traits, exprimés avec une

¹⁴ Cf. V. J. Djurić, 'Pološko, Hilandarshi metoh i Dragušinova grobnica', *Zbornik Narodnog muzeja*, 8 (1975), pp. 327–344. Plus récemment, voir l'interprétation de Zaga Gavrilović : Z. Gavrilović, *op. cit.*, Renvoi note 7.



Fig. 4. Catholicicon (église de la Dormition de la Vierge) du monastère de Treskavac, façade occidentale (photographie R. Terryn)

verve qui va de pair avec un certain ton de vulgarité, sont dus à des contacts avec l'art occidental »¹⁵. Dans les soldats, on peut relever la présence de casques à bord large et incliné, détail d'origine italienne qui se retrouve dans d'autres monuments décorés par les peintres de l'« École », notamment dans l'Ancien Catholicicon de la Transfiguration des Météores et à Pogonovo. André Grabar avait déjà souligné l'appartenance de ces casques au type de coiffure militaire le plus répandu dans la peinture italienne du XIV^e siècle. Deux détails iconographiques me permettent encore de faire le lien entre cette œuvre et la scène analogue de l'église des Météores, ainsi qu'avec celle de Pogonovo : les attitudes des trois personnages principaux (Judas, Jésus et le chef de la bande) qui sont identiques à celles de la scène de Pogonovo et le geste du chef de la bande, représenté en train de donner la bourse à Judas, qui ne se retrouve que dans l'église des Météores. Dans l'ensemble, les attitudes des autres personnages ressemblent à celles des figures analogues de l'église des Météores et de Pogonovo. Il y a dans cette scène un souci de rendre l'illusion de l'espace, par le biais d'un paysage naturel et d'une architecture fantaisiste. Les collines sont à pentes lisses et ne conservent que peu de rochers sur leur sommet et il s'agit là d'une caractéristique majeure chez les peintres de l'« École ».

¹⁵ Cf. M. Chatzidakis, *op.cit.*, p. 193.

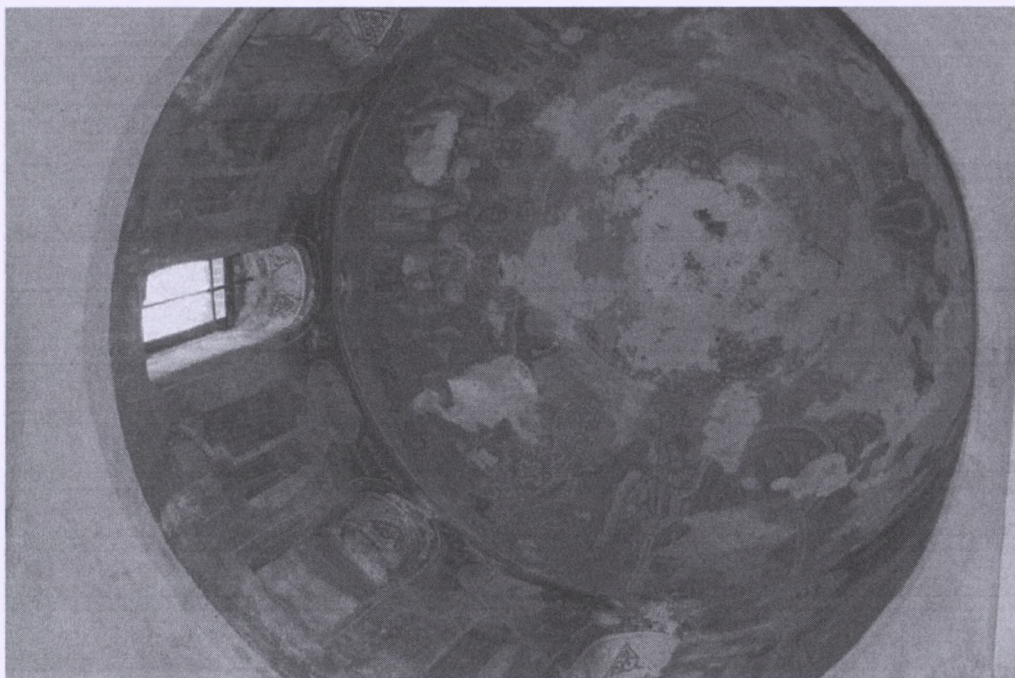


Fig. 5. Exonarthex, fresques du dôme nord (XIV^e siècle; photographie R. Terryn)

Une autre scène digne d'intérêt, déjà mentionnée, occupe une grande partie de la zone basse des murs Nord et Sud : il s'agit de la *Déisis* royale (fig. 13). Le thème de la prière d'intercession se compose généralement de la Vierge et de Saint-Jean Baptiste situés de part et d'autre du Christ, le plus souvent trônant. Selon Tania Velmans¹⁶, ce thème n'a pas de place fixe à l'intérieur des églises byzantines. A Treskavac, il est situé à proximité immédiate de l'iconostase et s'étend sur les murs Nord et Sud. La composition s'organise autour du Christ-Roi et Grand Hiérarque trônant entre la Vierge-Reine et saint Jean Prodrome. Le Christ bénit de la main droite ; il tient, de la main gauche, l'Évangile ouvert sur lequel figure un texte tiré de Jean (8, 12). Le Prodrome fait pendant à la Vierge, il figure en habits liturgiques, et semble esquisser un geste d'intercession de la main gauche.

Le type de la Vierge-Reine était déjà apparu au VI^e siècle à Sainte-Marie-Antique de Rome ainsi que dans des monuments occidentaux des VIII^e-XII^e siècles. Dans l'art byzantin, c'est au XIV^e siècle qu'il fait son apparition, dans la *Déisis*, avec le Christ-Roi en Serbie puis à Zaum près d'Ohrid, dans le Psautier serbe de Munich et dans les fresques

¹⁶ Voir T. Velmans, 'L'image de la *Déisis* dans les églises en Géorgie et dans celles d'autres régions du monde byzantin, 1^e Partie', *Cahiers archéologiques*, 29 (1980/1981), pp. 47-102; Eadem, 'L'image de la *Déisis* dans les églises de Géorgie et dans le reste du monde byzantin, 2^e Partie', *Cahiers archéologiques*, 31 (1983), pp. 129-173.



Fig. 6. Vue sur la partie orientale du naos, murs nord et sud (1485), iconostase (photographie R. Terryn)

du monastère de Marko. Grégoire Palamas disait, à propos de cette Vierge Reine : « Marie est devenue la Reine de toute créature de ce monde et du monde céleste par son enfante-ment ineffable... Elle a maintenant le Ciel comme palais et elle s'est présentée à la droite du roi de l'Univers revêtue d'un habit doré et brodé suivant la parole du psaumiste... Elle est jugée digne d'exercer la plus haute intercession ».

La particularité essentielle de cette *Déisis* repose sur le fait que d'autres personnages viennent s'y associer. Elle est donc élargie.

L'origine de ce thème serait la *Déisis* royale créée au XIV^e siècle en Macédoine, sous l'influence des hésychastes¹⁷ et qui devait représenter la cour céleste à l'image de la cour de Constantinople.

¹⁷ La formation du thème a aussi été influencée par les Psaumes 44:10–12 et 93:1 ainsi que par des textes ecclésiastiques – Homélie de saint Grégoire Palamas, Hymne des Chérubins, Divine Liturgie et *Vie* de saint Basile le Nouveau. Les principaux monuments balkaniques de la deuxième moitié du XIV^e et du XV^e siècle dans lesquels elle fit son apparition sont : les églises de Zaum (1361) et du monastère de Marko (1366/71), les églises de Saint-Athanase-Mouzaki (1383/4) et de Saint-Nicolas-de-la-nonne-Eupraxie (1485/6) à Kastoria, l'église de Lešani (1450), l'église Saint-Nicolas de Vevi (1460) près de Florina, l'église du Prophète Elie (1454/5) à Dolgaec ; il convient de mentionner aussi l'église de la Panagia du monastère de Torniki (1481/2) près de Grevena, Saint-Démétrius de Boboshevo en Bulgarie, l'église ruinée de Saint-Spyridon de Kastoria (1490/1500), Saint-Georges de Vraneštica (1498) à F.Y.R.O.M., la Panagia de Krepičevac (fin XV^e siècle-début XVI^e siècle) en Serbie, les églises du Prophète Elie (1498) et d'Arbore (1502) en Moldavie. Des survivances existent dans l'église de Snagov (1536) en Valachie ainsi que dans d'autres monuments.

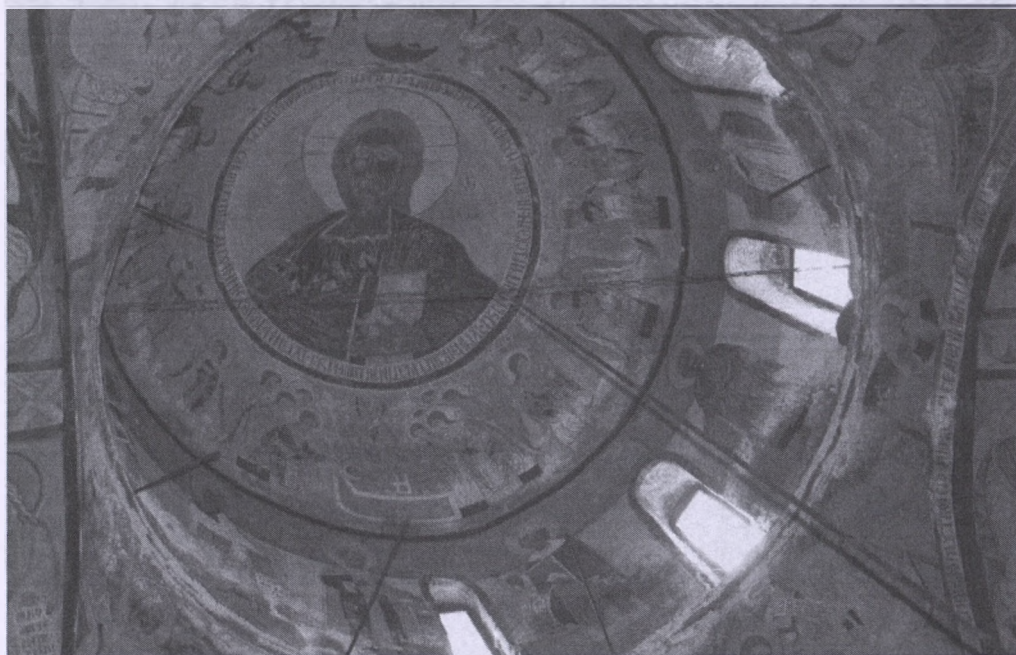


Fig. 7. Voûte du sanctuaire (béma), Christ Pantocrator, Liturgie céleste, Prophètes (photographie R. Terry)

D'un point de vue iconographique, ce type de Déisis diffère peu, en ce qui concerne les figures, du type iconographique dit « Trimorphe », où sont représentées les figures du Christ au centre, de la Vierge à gauche et du Prodrome à droite. Elle se trouve plus ou moins directement associée aux saints militaires Théodore Tiron et Théodore Stratilate¹⁸ et aux saints Georges et Démétrius, les deux derniers étant vêtus de costumes particuliers, inspirés des costumes de dignitaires byzantins du XIV^e siècle ; leur chapeau se compose d'une simple étoffe souple, aux rayures sur fond blanc, et d'une sorte de bonnet élargi vers le haut et retenu sur la tête par un cercle doré, orné de perles¹⁹. Ces chapeaux avaient longtemps été considérés – à tort – comme étant d'origine serbe. Mais on sait grâce à l'iconographie que ce type de chapeau était porté par des dignitaires byzantins du XIV^e siècle²⁰.

¹⁸ Saint Théodore Stratilate est né à Euchaïta de Galatie, et très jeune il devint soldat, il fut martyrisé à l'époque de l'empereur Licinius (250–325), saint Théodore Tiron est né à Amaseia du Pont en Cappadoce et devint soldat, il fut martyrisé en 306 pendant le règne de Maximien (250–310) pour sa foi en Christ. Cf. P. Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints*, Boston 2010 ; Ch. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, Ashgate, 2003.

¹⁹ Cf. B. Popovic, 'Tall Hats - Klobuks of Resava and the Turban of the Theodore Metochites', *Recueil du Musée National. Histoire de l'art*, 19 (2010), no. 2, pp. 91–118.

²⁰ Quelques cas de figure s'en rapprochent sur le plan formel : citons l'exemple le plus célèbre du couvre-chef porté par Théodore Métochite au monastère de Chora à Constantinople. L. Grigoriadou, *op. cit.*, pp. 7–52.



Fig. 8. Naos, partie supérieure du mur nord : Crucifixion, 1485 (photographie R. Terryn)

Au sein des autres monuments attribués aux peintres anonymes de l'« École » de Kastoria, les saints Georges et Démétrius se trouvent associés à la *Déisis* : la même formule iconographique se cristallisa dans la nef de l'Ancien Catholicon de la Transfiguration des Météores, à Saint-Nicolas-de-la-nonne-Eupraxie²¹, à Saint-Nicolas-Magaliou²², aux Saints-Théodores de Servia, au monastère de Torniki près de Grevena²³ et, par la suite, elle passa en Moldavie (à Hîrlău, à Arbore et à Dorohoi). Cette formule est passée en outre dans de petites localités de la Grèce du Nord : à Aiginio et à Koustoxori. Notons qu'à Veria, l'église de Gorgoepikoos comprend des représentations de saints tout à fait semblables²⁴. A Saint-Démétrius de Palatitsia²⁵ (oeuvre des peintres de Linotopi), les saints Georges et Demetrius seront représentés de façon similaire. Une étude récente de Viktorija Popovska-Korobar révèle la persistance de ce type environ un siècle plus tard, dans l'église de Mrzen Oraovec²⁶. Le type iconographique des saints Théodores associés présente lui aussi certaines particularités. La composition

²¹ Στ. Πελεκανίδης, *Καστοριά. Βυζαντινά τοιχογραφία*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1953, pl. 186b.

²² *Ibidem*, pl. 174a.

²³ Cf. Σ. Βογιατζής, 'Η μονή Κοιμήσεως της Θεοτόκου στο Ίρνικι Γρεβενών', *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 15 (1989-1990), περίοδος Δ', pp. 241-256.

²⁴ Il s'agit des saints Mercure et Nestor, représentés sur la paroi orientale du mur Sud. L'étude du costume des saints militaires a permis de révéler l'existence de liens entre l'artiste anonyme de l'église de la Panagia Gorgoepikoos et l'« École » de Kastoria. Il s'agit d'un courant local. E. Tsigaridas, *op. cit.* pp. 257-263.

²⁵ Voir A. Τούρτα, *Οι ναοί του Αγίου Νικολάου στη Βίτσα και του Αγίου Μηνά στο Μονοδένδρι. Προσέγγιση στο έργο των ζωγράφων από το Λινότοπι*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1986.

²⁶ Cf. V. Popovska-Korobar, 'A new View of the Fresco Painting in the Church of St. Nicholas at Mrzen Oreovec', *Patrimonium*, 9 (2011), no. pp. 157-180, ill. 19.

diffère du type des deux saints « face à face », représentés de trois quarts sur une même paroi et recevant la bénédiction du Christ ou la couronne des martyrs²⁷. Dans la composition de Treskavac, nous avons à faire à une représentation des saints Théodore Tiron et Théodore Stratilate situés l'un en face de l'autre, sur les murs Nord et Sud.

Si par le biais de l'ouverture des artistes à de nouvelles sources d'inspiration dont témoigne, entre autres, le recours à l'art italien de la période gothique tardive, on a pu souligner à travers les fresques du naos de l'église de Treskavac l'importance d'un processus de revitalisation de la peinture orthodoxe et de renouvellement de son langage pictural (dont le substrat demeure la tradition de la peinture Paléologue du XIV^e siècle) à une époque

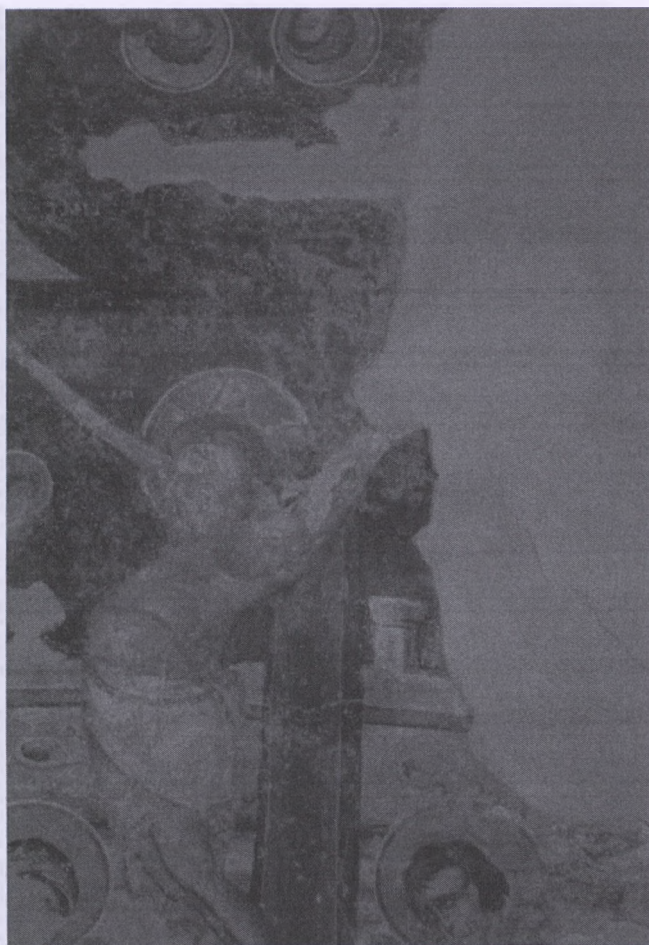


Fig. 9. Eglise Saint-Nikita de Čučer, naos, Crucifixion (détail)
(photographie R. Terryn)

de domination ottomane (Turcocratie), époque où Ohrid en tant que centre majeur de production artistique commençait à décliner au profit de Kastoria, il convient aussi de mettre l'accent sur la présence du portrait du roi serbe Etienne Dušan, figuré dans le narthex.

Sur le mur est du narthex de l'église de la Dormition de la Vierge, des traces de fresques du XIV^e siècle, préservées dans la partie inférieure, à proximité immédiate de l'entrée dans le naos, nous montrent une composition de fondateurs à la sémantique complexe. De l'état de conservation actuel, on peut encore distinguer quelques parties du nimbe et de

²⁷ Cf. A. Trifonova, 'The Iconographical Type of Saints Theodore Tiron and Theodore Stratelates facing each Other and its diffusion during the Byzantine and post-Byzantine Period', *Zograf*, 34 (2010), pp. 53-64.



Fig. 10. Eglise d'Asomatos, Archanes (Crète), mur sud du naos, Crucifixion (détail)
(photographie R. Terryn)

l'ange envoyé de Dieu, plaçant la couronne sur la tête du souverain Etienne Dušan, nommé par une inscription grecque qui le désigne en tant que roi.

La représentation de l'Ange à côté de ce dernier confère à l'iconographie un sens particulier : il s'agirait de l'investiture divine d'Etienne Dušan, véritable délégation surnaturelle de son autorité sur ses sujets. Je pense que l'iconographie endosse ici un rôle de propagande politique : placée à un endroit « stratégique » et, de ce fait, pouvant être vue de quiconque se dirigeait vers le naos, l'image était sans doute utilisée à dessein afin de rappeler constamment les victoires militaires du roi. Plusieurs écrivains du Moyen Age, en effet, avaient glorifié les vertus guerrières des souverains de Serbie, comparées à celles des chefs du peuple d'Israël, à l'instar de Moïse, de David, de Gédéon, de Josué ou même de l'empereur Constantin le Grand. D'ailleurs, à partir du XIV^{ème} siècle les souverains serbes seront perçus comme « Nouveau Josué » et leurs victoires célébrées dans la littérature comme des reflets des victoires de Josué²⁸. Dans notre représentation, Etienne Dušan est perçu en train de recevoir le don surnaturel de la couronne en

²⁸ Cf. V. Djurić, 'Le "Nouveau Josué', *Zograf*, 14 (1983), pp. 5-16. La victoire de Josué devant Jericho a profondément marqué la littérature religieuse serbe, qui s'est répandue dans le milieu de la cour. Dans le préambule d'une charte de l'empereur Dušan, on pouvait lire ceci : "Je t'implore, chef des cohortes célestes, saint archange Michel, de m'armer de tes armes, comme tu l'as fait pour Josué ...".

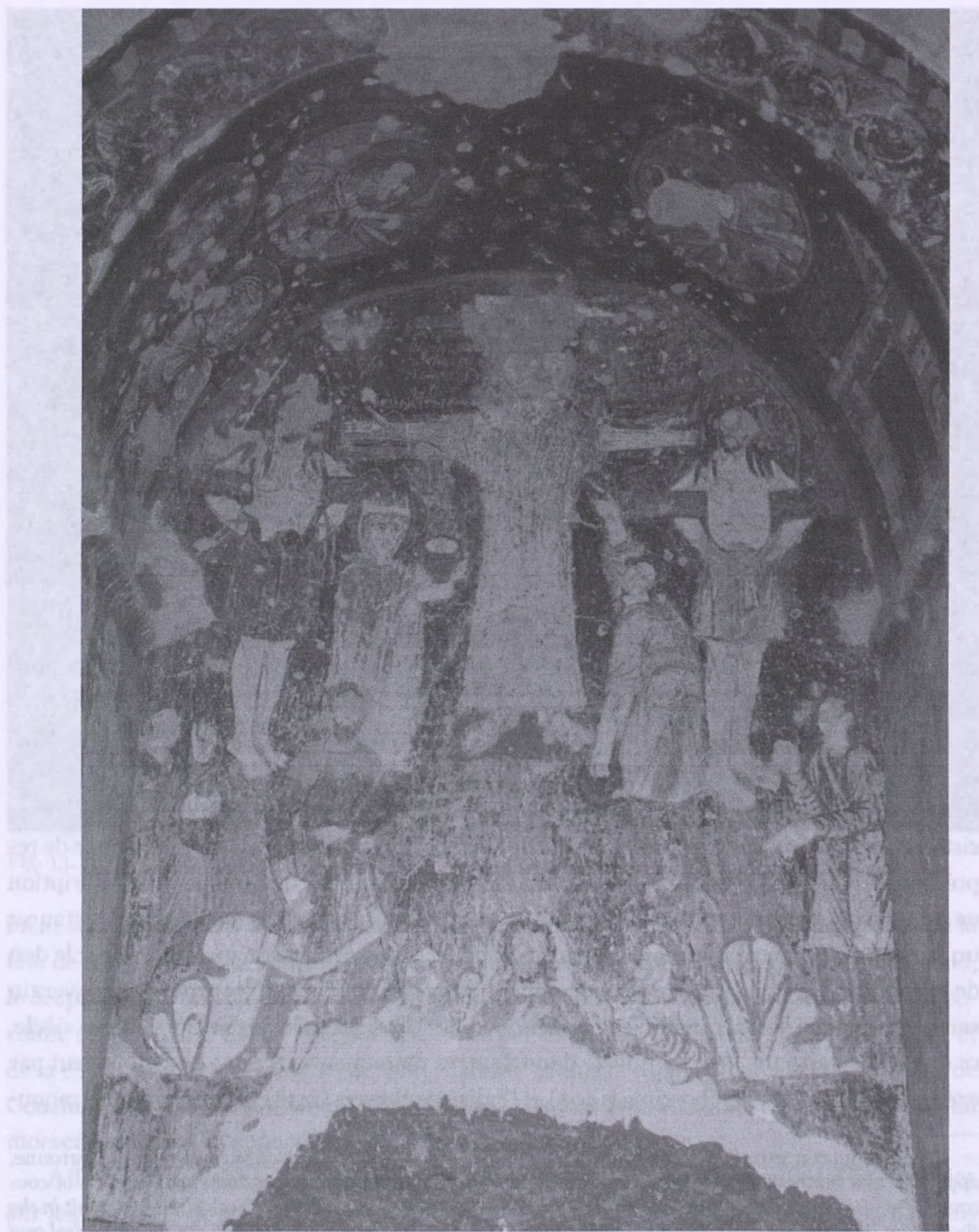


Fig. 11. Sabereebi, église N°7, complexe de David Garedja, Kakhétie (Géorgie). Bras nord : la Crucifixion (photographie R. Terryn)



Fig. 12. Naos, partie supérieure du mur sud : Trahison de Judas, 1485 (photographie R. Terryn)

tant qu'élue de Dieu²⁹, après avoir remporté de grandes victoires sur les Byzantins : nous savons, en effet, qu'au cours de l'été 1334, il venait de s'emparer de Prilep et d'Ohrid³⁰.

Cependant, il faudra attendre la réalisation des fresques de Saint-Georges de Pološko environ dix ans plus tard, c'est-à-dire en 1343, après la conquête de vastes territoires et l'extension de l'Etat serbe beaucoup plus loin vers le Sud de la péninsule balkanique pour assister. Pour la première fois dans l'histoire de l'iconographie royale serbe, à un exemple de représentation où le Christ lui-même – comme Christ Emmanuel, désigné par une inscription en tant que « Christ sous une autre forme » (Marc, XVI, 12), se charge cette fois d'instaurer un rapport direct entre Dieu et le souverain, rapport de subordination matérialisé par le don de la couronne (à Pološko, ce don est complété par celui de l'épée). Il couronne le souverain serbe et le prince héritier qui lui est associé, son fils Uroš. Dans la Serbie du XIV^e siècle, ce don de la couronne s'est manifesté dans d'autres monuments, comme en témoignent par exemple le narthex de Ljubostinja (1405) et l'église de Resava (1418). Dans le premier monu-

²⁹ En ce qui concerne la dimension anthropologique et sociologique du don surnaturel de la couronne, appliquée aux méthodes d'analyse iconographique, voir T. Kambourova, 'Du don surnaturel de la couronne : images et interprétations', *Zograf*, (2009), pp. 45–58. Voir aussi I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in the Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts*, Leiden 1976 ; C. Head, *Imperial Byzantine Portraits. A Verbal and Graphic Gallery*, New Rochelle 1982 ; T. Velmans, 'Le portrait dans l'art des Paléologues,' in : *Art et société à Byzance sous les Paléologues ...*, pp. 93–148.

³⁰ V. Djurić, *op. cit.* pp. 5–16 ; à partir du milieu du X^e siècle certains cycles iconographiques seront exécutés à la suite d'une victoire remportée par un souverain, comme en témoigne par exemple l'église du "Grand Pigeonnier" (Çavuşin) en Cappadoce où l'on voit Nicéphore Phocas représenté à côté d'une scène d'apparition de l'archange Michel à Josué devant Jericho.



Fig. 13. Naos, registre inférieur du mur nord : Déisis élargie (1485) (photographie R. Terryn)

ment sont représentés Vuk Lazarevic et Etienne et deux anges sont placés au-dessus de la tête de ce dernier, ils le couronnent et l'un d'eux lui remet l'épée, tandis que dans le second, le despote et *ktitor* Etienne Lazarevic, en contre-don des attributs reçus (c'est-à-dire la couronne remise par le Christ et l'épée et la lance par deux anges) offre un modèle de l'église et de la charte avec les privilèges à la Sainte Trinité³¹. Dans la copie bulgare de la Chronique de Constantin Manassès (milieu du XIV^{ème} siècle), le tsar Ivan Alexandre était représenté au moment où l'ange lui apporte la couronne accompagnée de l'épée.

A Treskavac, il s'agit en fait d'un couronnement indirect, qui se voyait déjà à Gračanica sur les portraits de Milutine et de Simonide³². L'image de la couronne tendue au basileus par le Christ, la Vierge ou un ange faisait partie de l'iconographie byzantine à partir de

³¹ Je tiens à exprimer ici ma profonde gratitude et infinie reconnaissance envers Jasmina S. Ćirić, qui a bien voulu m'envoyer pour cet article une photographie du portrait d'Etienne Lazarevic, visible à Ravanica.

³² Cf. B. Todić, *Gračanica. Istorija i slikarstvo*, Priština 1999, p. 170.



Fig. 14. Naos, registre inférieur du mur nord : Déisis élargie (1485) avec saint Théodore Tiron (photographie R. Terryn)

l'époque de la dynastie macédonienne³³, et l'image du couronnement symbolique de l'empereur par l'entremise d'une figure déléguée - ange ou archange - fut surtout développée dans l'iconographie byzantine³⁴.

³³ Il est rare de voir, avant le IX^e siècle, le Christ et son souverain céleste associés sur une même image. Sur un bel ivoire du IX^e siècle, pourtant, Leon VI recevait la couronne en image, mais des mains de la Vierge et non du Christ. L'un des premiers *basileis* à avoir été figuré par le don de la couronne est Constantin VII Porphyrogénète, sur une plaque d'ivoire du milieu du X^e siècle. A Byzance, elle se manifestera encore sous les Comnènes. L'iconographie occidentale avait fait usage de ce geste du don de la couronne, à en juger d'après les images conservées d'époques carolingienne et ottonienne telles que l'image d'Henri II ou encore l'investiture de Guillaume II par le Christ à Monreale, en Sicile. Voir T. Kambourova, 'Du don surnaturel de la couronne ...', p. 45-58.

³⁴ Cf. C. Jolivet-Levy, 'L'image du pouvoir dans l'art byzantin à l'époque de la dynastie macédonienne (867-1056)', *Byzantion*, 57 (1987), pp. 441-470 ; Eadem, 'Images de l'empereur', dans : *Economie et société à Byzance (VIII^e-XII^e siècle)*, Textes et documents (ed. Sophie Métivier), Paris 2007, pp. 7-12.



Fig. 15. Naos, registre inférieur du mur nord, pilier nord : Déisis élargie (1485), saint Georges (photographie R. Terryn)



Fig. 16. Naos, registre inférieur du mur sud, pilier sud : Déisis élargie (1485), saint Démétrius (photographie R. Terryn)

Dans le cas présent, l'image symbolique permet au futur « Tsar des Serbes et des Grecs » d'asseoir son pouvoir avec plus de légitimité, en rappel de son succès dans les aventures militaires.

Et pour couronner cela, il ne pouvait trouver une occasion plus belle que celle d'assumer les activités de *ktitor* au sein du monastère de Treskavac, tout en le dotant, dans la partie Ouest de l'église de la Dormition, de nouvelles formes architecturales ainsi qu'en se faisant représenter en tant que chef d'un grand empire et ainsi immortaliser la mémoire de son règne.

Pour conclure, j'aimerais rappeler ce qui a été exposé ci-dessus : l'église de Treskavac, en croix inscrite avec coupole, fut édifiée avant la fin du XIV^{ème} siècle, et suite à un certain nombre de réparations et d'agrandissements subis au cours des siècles (notamment en 1485), il y eut plusieurs phases de décoration, dont la plus ancienne remonte aux environs de 1340. Parmi ces phases, une couche plus récente (1485) que j'ai présentée a permis de mettre en évidence un certain nombre de peintures semblables à celles des autres églises de l'« École » de Kastoria et qui se trouvent sur la coupole, sur la travée occidentale du naos et sur les murs latéraux. Parmi ces peintures, la Crucifixion est identique aux scènes analogues de l'Ancien Catholicon de la Transfiguration des Météores et de Čučer. Le schéma



Fig. 17. Ravanica, le despote et ktitor Etienne Lazarevic couronné offre un modèle de l'église (photographie Jasmina S. Ćirić)

iconographique de la Trahison de Judas reproduit quant à lui celui des scènes de l'Ancien Catholicon des Météores et de Poganovo. Dans l'église de Treskavac figure la Déisis royale, comme dans d'autres œuvres rattachées à la production des peintres de cette «École».

A une époque où les conquêtes ottomanes faisaient rage dans les Balkans, la vie monastique suivait le cours de la nouvelle conjoncture historique. Malgré les conquêtes et la mise en place de la Turcocratie, l'activité artistique ne s'est pas arrêtée du jour au lendemain, comme en témoignent les peintures murales de l'église de Treskavac, conçues pour les besoins d'une communauté de moines à la capacité de renouvellement d'un langage pictural assez riche. Les peintures du naos représentent un exemple majeur de la culture visuelle des chrétiens orthodoxes à l'époque de domination ottomane et témoignent de la préservation de la tradition séculaire et des changements survenus au cours du XV^{ème} siècle dans l'art et dans la culture orthodoxe. Dans ce contexte, parmi les centres d'importance locale du XV^{ème} siècle Kastoria fut l'un des rares à avoir eu une influence globale sur l'art balkanique post-byzantin.

Human – Absolute – Painting. Golden Apses in Byzantine Art and in Venetian Painting of Renaissance

Ika Matyjaszkiewicz

The aim of this paper is to analyse the status of the pictures in the post-iconoclastic era in Byzantium and in Cinquecento Venice. The careful study of the relationship between the image, its surrounding and the viewer should enable an opportunity for the reflection on the art's 'revival' as it stands for mentioned periods in the scholarship.

One of the most important characteristics of post-iconoclastic monumental Byzantine art is the abstract golden ground in the mosaic decoration of apses. In this respect a ground-breaking artwork was the mosaic in the main apse of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, revealed on 29 March 867¹ – on the twenty-fourth anniversary of the restoration of the cult of icons in the Orthodox Church. As Ioli Kalavrezou argues, it was the first time in Byzantine art, when the composition had been narrowed down to the image of the Virgin with Emmanuel and an abstract golden background.² From this moment until the mid-eleventh century, which coincides with the period of the so-called Macedonian Renaissance,³ images of the Theotokos on a golden non-representational background,

¹ Disputes over the dating; C. Mango, E. J. W. Hawkins, 'The Apse Mosaic of St. Sophia at Istanbul. Report on Work Carried out in 1964', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 19 (1965), pp. 142-147; H. Maguire, 'Truth and Convention in Byzantine Descriptions of Works of Art', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 18 (1974), p. 134; N. Oikonomidès, 'Some Remarks on the Apse Mosaic of St. Sophia', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 39 (1985), pp. 111-115; I. Kalavrezou, 'Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary Became «Meter Theou»', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 44 (1990), p. 170; L. James, 'Senses and Sensibility in Byzantium', *Art History*, 27 (2004), no. 4, p. 531.

² I Kalavrezou, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-171.

³ About the term 'Macedonian Renaissance' see: K. Weitzmann 'The Character and Intellectual Origins of the Macedonian Renaissance', in: *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, ed. H. L. Kessler, Chicago-London 1970, pp. 176-223; W. Treadgold, 'The Macedonian Renaissance', in: *Renaissance before the Renaissance: Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. W. Treadgold, Stanford 1984, pp. 75-89; H. Maguire, 'Epigrams, Art, and the «Macedonian Renaissance»', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 48 (1994), pp. 105-115; R. Cormack, *Byzantine Art*, Oxford-New York 2000, pp. 130-142.

placed in the conch above the altar became an invariable element of the iconographic programme of Byzantine shrines.⁴

This classical system of main apse decoration is demonstrated in the flowing churches: Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki (mosaic from the late ninth century),⁵ Church of the Annunciation in Nicea (now Iznik; mosaic from the ninth century; destroyed, as a whole building, in 1922),⁶ the katholikon of Hosios Loukas Monastery near Phokis (mosaic from the early eleventh century),⁷ the katholikon of Nea Moni Monastery on Chios (mosaic from the mid-eleventh century),⁸ and the katholikon of Dafni Monastery near Athens (mosaic from the turn of eleventh and twelfth centuries).⁹

Similar iconography and compositions were introduced in the territories beyond the Empire, remaining under the influences of Byzantine tradition. Good examples are mosaics in: St. Sofia in Kiev (mosaic completed before 1054),¹⁰ in San Giusto Church in Trieste (mosaic from the eleventh century)¹¹ and in the katholikon of Gelati Monastery near Kutaisi (ca. 1125).¹² Although in the latter two examples, there are the figures of the angels adoring Mary, it is clear that Byzantine mosaics of Macedonian period provided the main inspiration for the decorations mentioned. This is evidenced in the way the figure of the Theotokos is placed against the background and in the visual qualities of the golden surface.

Due to strong and long-lasting relationships between Byzantium and Venice, golden apses become a foremost element in the decoration of Venetian medieval churches. One perfect example is the mosaic in the Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta on Torcello island. A similar, typically Byzantine, composition was created in the apse of Santi Maria e Donato church on Murano. The continuation of this tradition was the mosaic decoration of the interior of the Basilica di San Marco, where works were carried out from the end of the twelfth century. Unfortunately, the mosaic in the eastern apse was destroyed by a fire in the fifteenth century. Now, in the conch the figure of the Pantocrator is depicted, which was atypical for a Byzantine programme and it is likely that this image was based on the earlier decoration. If so, the original medieval artwork had significantly deviated

⁴ O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration. Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium*, New Rochelle-New York 1976, pp. 21, 52–61.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

⁶ P. A. Underwood, 'The Evidence of Restorations in the Sanctuary Mosaics of the Church of the Dormition at Nicea', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 13 (1959), pp. 235, n. 5; H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence. A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, tr. E. Jephcott, Chicago 1996, pp. 158, 161.

⁷ O. Demus, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁸ D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios*, vol. 1, Athens 1985, p. 260.

⁹ O. Demus, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 59.

¹¹ E. Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic: the Royal Programmes of Norman Sicily 1130–1187*, Oxford 1990, p. 75.

¹² A. Eastmond, *Royal Imagery in Medieval Georgia*, University Park 1998, p. 59.



Fig. 1. Theotokos Nikopoia, mosaic in the main apse of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey), 867 (?) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Apse_mosaic_Hagia_Sophia_Virgin_and_Child.jpg

from established Byzantine iconographical rules.¹³ Moreover, the preserved medieval mosaics show that since the thirteenth century the classical Byzantine compositional scheme had been transformed. Gold covered larger wall surfaces and more often was supplemented with landscape or architectural motifs. Golden ground lost its non-representational character becoming, as air or sky, part of the scenery. At the same time, narrative scenes and ornaments gained growing importance. All these solutions show a growing tendency to recede from the classical decoration system.¹⁴

In the fourteenth century proto-Renaissance trends started to permeate into Venetian art. Despite this, the mosaic technique dominated in Venice until the end of the century and in Venetian workshops Greek craft traditions were still of primary importance. A distinguishing feature of the art of this period was also the coexistence of Gothic alongside the burgeoning proto-Renaissance forms.¹⁵

From the mid-fifteenth century inspiration from Florence rose in importance.¹⁶

Venetian workshops became independent and artists engaged in further dialogue with Byzantine tradition. This is reflected in panel painting, inter alia by the introduction of the golden apse motif, what resulted in a substantial transformation of the original compositional scheme: the golden ground is separated from the architecture itself and the real space of the church interior. At this moment, golden apses became a part of the painting surface. They also became one of the distinguishing features of Venetian painting.

Golden apses can be found in many artworks created at the end of the fifteenth and in the sixteenth century. The most important examples are the altarpieces by Giovanni Bellini

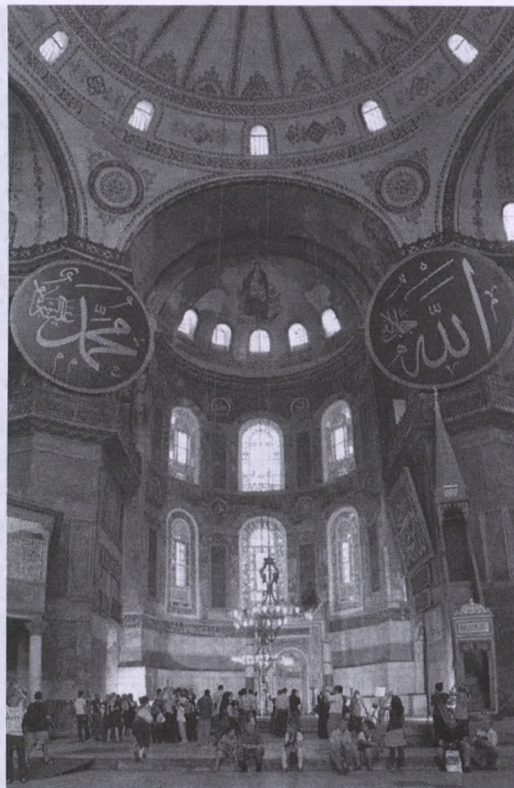


Fig. 2. The main apse of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey), photo by Christophe Meneboeuf [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:HagiaSophia_DomeVerticalPano_\(pixinn.net\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:HagiaSophia_DomeVerticalPano_(pixinn.net).jpg)

¹³ O. Demus, *The Mosaic Decorations of San Marco*, ed. H. L. Kessler, Chicago 1988, p. xxxvi.

¹⁴ Idem, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration ...*, pp. 68–72.

¹⁵ P. Hendy, L. Goldscheider, *Giovanni Bellini*, Oxford-London 1945, pp. 7–8.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 8; G. Robertson, *Giovanni Bellini*, Oxford 1968, pp. 2–9.

painted for the Church of San Giobbe (now in the Venetian Gallerie dell'Accademia), for the Church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari (in situ) and for the Church of San Zaccaria (in situ). These works were created in 1478, in 1488 and in 1505 respectively. Worth mentioning are also paintings by Lorenzo Lotto (*Sacra Converazione*, dated 1504, in Santa Cristina al Tiverone in Treviso and *Polittico di San Domenico*, dated 1508, now in the Museo Civico in Recanati), Cima da Conegliano (*San Pietro in trono con santi* from 1516, in the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan), Vittore Carpaccio (*Presentazione di Gesù al Tempio*, dated 1510, in the Gallerie dell'Accademia), Il Pordenone (*San Lorenzo ed altri Santi*, dated 1532, in the Gallerie dell'Accademia), Paris Bordone (*Sacra Converazione*, after 1532, in the National Museum in Warsaw). The last *Pietà* by Titian, painted at the end of his life, can be regarded as a recapitulation of this tradition.

The popularity of golden apses raises the question of the function of this motif in the Byzantine apses decorations and in the Venetian panel paintings. The use of the abstract golden background seems to determine the relationship between the image, its support and the exterior space. Therefore the method of introducing the motif of the golden apse influences the relationship between the picture and viewer and reflects the status of the picture in the Post-Iconoclastic period in Byzantium and in Cinquecento Venice.

Byzantine mosaics were thoroughly discussed by Otto Demus, who paid special attention to the spatial relationships, compositional systems and light effects. Among others, Demus underlined the importance of the abstract golden ground and spherical shape of vaults in the creation of the relationship between the depicted figures and the real space of the interior, which consequently became the 'spatial icon'.¹⁷ These observations remain indisputable. However, his thesis about the 'magical' properties of this space, where the beholder and saints merge in a spiritual realm requires verification.¹⁸ This is because this interpretation is not compatible with the theory of the icon developed and advocated during iconoclastic discussions.

In studies of Venetian painting, golden apses are interpreted as a homage paid to the Republic, the embodiment of which was the Basilica of Saint Mark – the patron of the city.¹⁹ They are also quoted as a proof of the Venetian painters' exceptional sensitivity to the visual qualities of light and colour and as a way of underlining the independence of the Venetian school within Italian Renaissance art and its relationship with Byzantine tradition.²⁰ Still,

¹⁷ O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration ...*, pp. 9–14, 19–21, 52–55.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 7, 30, 34.

¹⁹ R. Goffen, 'S. Giobbe and Altar Egos', *Artibus et Historiae*, 7 (1986) no. 14, pp. 60–62; R. Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini*, New Haven-London 1989, pp. 154, 162; B. de Maria, *Becoming Venetian*, New Haven-London 2010, pp. 8–9.

²⁰ D. Rosand, 'Titian and Sacred Space', in: *Titian: Prince of Painters*, eds. S. Biaden, M. Yakush, Venice 1990, p. 94; D. Rosand, *Painting in Cinquecento Venice: Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto*, New Haven-London 1982, pp. 16–17; D. Rosand, 'Titian in Frari', *The Art Bulletin*, 53 (1971), no. 2, pp. 210–11, G. Robertson, *Giovanni Bellini ...*, pp. 6–7.

these studies lack a systematic analysis of the role of golden apses in the creation of the 'inside' pictorial space and 'outside' physical stimulus.

The combination of typical Renaissance illusionistic spatial effects and the motif of the apse with the golden conch, rooted in Byzantine architecture, embodies the tension which is a characteristic of any pictorial representation – the tension between the surface of the painting and the pictorial space, between the image and its medium, between the real and the unreal.

This tension is complemented by the transition or borderline between the 'inside' and the 'outside',²¹ which determine the position of the viewer towards the picture. A crucial role is played here by such elements of the composition as perspective, the scene's frame and location of figures, which permit or prevent the viewer's identification with them. In this context the form of the artefact – its size, stage of completion and spatial arrangement should be taken into consideration too.²²

The specificity of the technique and the medium is equally significant. The use of real gold introduces real glitter into the artwork, which is the antithesis of illusionistic light effects and reflections created with the paint and brush. This aspect determines the visual qualities and symbolic meaning. Moreover, it encourages reflection on the nature of the image. Sergej S. Averincev raised these issues in his famous essay "Gold in the symbolic system of early Byzantine Culture". In his opinion, the discrimination between real and painted light forms a significant difference between Medieval and Modern art.²³ This issue is worth further examination using the example of golden apses in Byzantine and Venetian art. For the comparative analysis of different artistic paradigms golden ground in conches seems to be particularly interesting, since it sheds light on the phenomenon of real and unreal space and the phenomenon of real and unreal light at the same time.

Therefore the question regarding the function of gold apses in Byzantine and Venetian Renaissance art should be answered with a particular emphasis on composition, spatial relationships and medium characteristics. The elements listed above define the process of perception, through which the status of a picture characteristic of a certain epoch is decided.

These issues will be analysed using the examples of three Venetian artworks representing three different ideas of art: the mosaic in the main apse of the Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta on Torcello, *Pala di San Zaccaria* by Giovanni Bellini and the last *Pietà* by Titian.

²¹ W. Kemp, 'Kunstwerk und Betrachter: der Rezeptionsästhetische Ansatz', in: *Kunstgeschichte. Eine Einführung*, ed. H. Belting et al., Berlin 1986, p. 208.

²² *Ibidem*, pp. 208–10.

²³ С. Аверинцев, *Поэтика ранневизантийской литературы*, Санкт-Петербург: 2004, pp. 406–8.

Torcello: *Theotokos*

Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta on Torcoello was founded in 639 by the exarch of Ravenna. It was rebuilt several times, but it has retained the original form of a three-aisled, non-transeptal columned basilica with the central and side aisles ending in apses.²⁴ The conch of the main apse is decorated with a mosaic depicting Theotokos with Emmanuel on the gold, nonrepresentational ground filling the entire semi-dome. Because of the place in which it is situated the mosaic has a spherical structure and is spatially combined with the church interior.

The figure of the standing Virgin, placed in the centre, on the apse's axis, is portrayed frontally in a hieratic pose, in a slight *contrapposto*. The static and stiff pose is emphasized by the black garment and veil tightly enveloping the Virgin's body. She is standing on a stone slab, shown in reverse perspective. Her gaze is directed at the viewer. With her right hand, Mary points towards the Child supported on her left arm. Below this scene, on the apse's wall, there are twelve Apostles depicted in the schematic landscape, complemented by a golden background.

It is known that both mosaics were made by Greek workshops active in Veneto.²⁵ Otto Demus's research, carried out in the nineteen-forties, shows that the lower zone was completed around the middle of the twelfth century. The decoration of the conch was made around the same time: the gold ground with an unknown image in the centre, which was replaced with the figure of Mary and Child just after 1180.

The image in the conch may be easily recognized as the Theotokos Hodegetria. It is marked by a Greek inscription MP ΘΥ placed around Mary's nimbus, her pointing gesture and the arrangement of the figures. In Byzantine art, the Theotokos Hodegetria is the most widespread iconographic variant of the image of the Mother of God, which became the Empire's palladium and emblem in the ninth century.²⁶ The zone below the conch represents the Apostles in Paradise, which can be recognized due to the green meadow sprinkled with flowers.²⁷ Paradise is shown, according to the Bible, as part of the earth, but also as an ideal place raised to the rank of sacrum by the frontal images of the Apostles and by introducing the golden background.

²⁴ R. J. Goy, *Chioggia and the Villages of the Venetian Lagoon: Studies in Urban History*, Cambridge 1985, pp. 221–222.

²⁵ R. Cormack, *op.cit.*, p. 182; O. Demus, 'Studies among Torcello Mosaics – III', *The Burlington Magazine*, 84 (1944), no. 497, p. 199.

²⁶ M. Bacci, 'The Legacy of the Hodegetria: Holy Icons and Legends between East and West', in: *Images of the Mother of God. Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. M. Vassiliaki, Burlington 2005, pp. 321–322; T. Beattie, S. J. Boss, *Mary: The Complete Resource*, London and New York 2007, p. 108; H. Belting, *op. cit.*, p. 75; I. Kalavrezou, *op. cit.*, p. 171; *Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. M. Vassiliaki, Athens and Milan 2000, p. 144.

²⁷ S. Kobielus, *Florarium christianum. Symbolika roślin – chrześcijańska starożytność i średniowiecze*, Kraków 2006, p. 15.



Fig. 3. Theotokos Hodegetria, mosaic in the main apse of Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta on Torcello, circa 1180, photo by Remi Mathis (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Torcello_-_Santa_Maria_Assunta_-_mosaics_of_the_choir.JPG)

The Greek inscription, the theme, the mosaic technique, the formal features of the image and the commonly recognised contribution of Greek craftsmen let the mosaic in Torcello's Basilica be regarded as a Byzantine artwork. Therefore the analysis of the function of the golden apse should take into consideration Orthodox theology and the theory of images.

The image of the Theotokos on the gold ground is, above all, a presentation of the dogma of hypostatic union.

The ground was made of tesserae covered with gold. As Sergej S. Averincev argues, using gold, the medieval artist strived to elicit the luminosity given to it by God.²⁸ Light, in contrast to all other things, equates to its properties such as brightness, glitter, and colour. Thanks to these qualities, the beauty of the light is simple, homogeneous, perfectly balanced and, above all, abstract. It is not composed of parts, has no size and no clearly defined boundaries.²⁹ Therefore the luminous ground, being filled to the brim with vibrating light may be identified as a reflection of ideal reality. The dark, erect and stiff silhouette of Mary stands out against this non-representational, spherical background, where a golden glow is created by the play of light and reflections. At the same time, the figure of Theotokos bathed in a blaze of gold, becomes a part of it. This paradoxical relationship between light and the body of the Mother of God indicates that "the divine nature and human nature can never connect, mingle or complement each other, but in Christ they are united in one divine hypostasis of the Logos".³⁰

The illustration of the dogma of the hypostatic union is also a representation of the dogma of the Incarnation, whose main consequence is the possibility of humankind's participation in divinity. Logos became a complete man – body and soul, in order to enable people to "become God".³¹ Byzantine anthropology stressed particularly strongly the integrity of body and soul, and the idea of the resurrection was understood as the resurrection of the human being as a psychosomatic unity.³²

Hence the golden background should be considered not only because of the underlying luminosity connected with the spiritual nature, but also because of its unique material features.

Seemingly immaterial, because of its luminous splendour and vibrating surface, gold is characterized by density and cohesion, thus by a palpable materiality. At the same time it does not oxidize and its beauty is everlasting, which distinguishes it from other physical substances. These features were perceived as a proof of the power hidden in gold. Alchemy consolidated this faith. Alchemists aspire to liberate the divine spirit from the inside of

²⁸ С. Аверинцев, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

²⁹ *Ibidem* p. 183; I. Trzcińska, *Światło i obłok. Z badań nad bizantyjską ikonografią przemienienia*, Kraków 1998, p. 74.

³⁰ J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, New York 1979, p. 154.

³¹ P. Evdokimov, *La Connaissance de Dieu selon la tradition orientale: l'enseignement patristique, liturgique et iconographique*, Paris 1988, p. 22.

³² J. Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

matter, which suffers because of sin. This was supposed to happen through the transformation of base metals into gold – matter fallen into matter full of glory.³³ Moreover, gold is a metal selected and highlighted in the Old Testament – Yahweh recommended the execution of the ritual vessels in gold (Exodus 31.8), thus bestowing gold with holiness.³⁴

Therefore the image of the body of God against a gold ground can be interpreted as a sign of 'glorification', of 'corporeal coating';³⁵ as a hope for release from suffering and decay; as a promise of the 'deification' of the body. This idea finds its culmination in the spatial conjunction of the image and the viewer.

The Theotokos' figure clearly comes to the front of the spherical structure of the background and seems to float above the altar and enter into real space. This effect is achieved by the contrast between the dark garment and the golden brilliance and between the vertical figure and the concave background. The golden background, as Demus argued, is not a symbol of infinity, but is a closing of the scene – its role is to stress the surface and to eliminate the illusion of depth and the optical illusion of space.³⁶ It results in emphasising the actuality of the picture and the importance of the real space. The conjunction of the image and the interior is furthered by the reverse perspective of the slab under Mary's feet. The edges of the footrest, converging towards the viewer, designate a point of intersection in front of the picture. This solution makes it possible to see the church's interior as an integral part of the artwork, as a place from which the image emerges.³⁷ This relationship is strengthened by the use of reflections of real light. The brilliance of gold, being part of the scene, naturally fills the apse's space, enlightening the church's interior. The real space becomes a part of the picture, which is framed by the walls of the building. The viewer's body is placed in its centre and exposed to the stimulation of visual and spatial sensations. The materiality of the medium highlights the role of the senses. The use of mosaic technique, meaning that the picture is composed of innumerable golden tesserae, endows the picture's surface with vibrating, but clearly palpable texture, which creates the impression of tactility.

Stressing the importance of matter and the senses is consistent with the theory of 'non-imitating imitation'³⁸ by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who assigns a special role to images having their source in material things. Thanks to their reality they most effectively prevent the mind from producing terms that would describe God, who, by nature, defies description. These material images lend themselves to the extrasensory and super rational contemplation of divine beauty.³⁹

³³ С. Аверищев, *op. cit.*, pp. 418–19.

³⁴ *Ibidem* pp. 408–12.

³⁵ *Ibidem* p. 418.

³⁶ O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration* ..., p. 10.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 33.

³⁸ B. Dąb-Kalinowska, 'Teologia ikony', in: *Kościół, wspólnota, herezje*, ed. M. Dobkowski, Warszawa 1997, p. 35.

³⁹ B. Dąb-Kalinowska, 'Pojęcie ikony i obrazu sakralnego', *Ikonotheka*, 6 (1993), pp. 167–68.

On the other hand, Theodore the Studite, whose theory of the icon sums up theological reflection on the image, highlights the role of matter as a medium of the image by comparing the icon with the seal's imprint. At the same time, he emphasises that matter itself is not filled with grace. The icon does not share the essence of the prototype – the image and the person depicted are united by likeness only.⁴⁰ Therefore the icon is not entitled to be united with divinity on any particular laws. Still, as any other matter, which derives from God, it always remains related to its Creator.⁴¹ According to Theodore the Studite, the icon does not belong to spiritual reality, but it is an image of the Incarnated Word, which belongs to the visible and physical reality. Theodore the Studite departs from the Pseudo-Dionysius's concept of emanations and from the Platonic theory of image, preached by John of Damascus and others, in which the icon plays the role of intermediary between the human and the Absolute and can permit participation in the divine energy. Theodore indicates that the emphasis put on the spiritual dimension of contemplation contradicts with the fact that the eternal Word became truly human.⁴² He says that the "picture is for us a holy light, a salutary memorial, which shows us Christ in His Birth (...). In all this we are not misled, because all this really once happened"⁴³. The purpose of Byzantine art is to confirm the historical corporality of Christ, because the Incarnation is the phenomenon that reveals God's and humankind's community.

Therefore the icon is a reminder – a trace of the presence – like an imprint is a trace of a seal. Still, as for any trail or imprint, it is also a sign of absence in the present.

This is reflected in the tension between the picture and its medium in the apse of the Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta. The image of the Virgin with Emmanuel emerges from the formless matter of the ground, but does not belong to the same medium. The image belongs to the absent bodies of the Theotokos and Christ.

Thus, the composition underlines the function of the picture, which is to depict – but not to produce – a new presence.⁴⁴ The mosaic's structure places the viewer in this split. In this way the body, subjected to sensory stimulation, becomes a 'site of desire'⁴⁵ caused by the absence of the prototype in the image. In the act of sense perception the beholder imagines the unity of his or her body and Christ's body. The picture, being a trace of God's Incarnation, becomes a harbinger of human deification.

⁴⁰ C. Schönborn, *Die Christus-Ikone. Eine theologische Einführung*, Wien 2001, pp. 216–17.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 214–15.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 220–21.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 221.

⁴⁴ Cf.: C. Barber, 'From Transformation to Desire: Art and Worship after Byzantine Iconoclasm', *The Art Bulletin*, 75 (1993), no. 1, pp. 12–15.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 14.

Giovanni Bellini: *Pala di San Zaccaria*

The altarpiece in the aisle of the church of San Zaccaria in Venice was painted by Giovanni Bellini in 1505.⁴⁶ Albrecht Dürer, who visited Venice one year later, must have seen this painting created by the master already in his seventies.⁴⁷ Impressed, among others, by this artwork Dürer wrote: "He is very old and is still the best in painting".⁴⁸ According to Carlo Ridolfi's *Le maraviglie dell'arte* from 1648, *Pala di San Zaccaria*, at the time of its formation was considered the "most beautiful and refined work of the master".⁴⁹ Enthusiastic opinions about the artwork were still expressed at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1870 John Ruskin wrote about the San Zaccaria altarpiece and Frari's triptych that they "having every quality in balance, are as far as my present knowledge extends, and as far as I can trust my judgment, the two best pictures in the world".⁵⁰

The painting was originally made on wood and placed in a stone frame designed by Pietro Lombardo. In 1797, as war booty, the painting was taken away to Paris, where it was transferred to canvas. Then the composition was slightly changed by trimming the top and bottom parts. After returning to Venice in 1815 the picture was put back to its original location.⁵¹

Pala di San Zaccaria represents the theme of *Sacra Conversazione* typical of the early Italian Renaissance. In the central part of the composition an enthroned Madonna with Child is depicted. At her feet the angel playing on *lira da braccio* is perched on the steps of the throne. Saint Catherina of Alexandria and Saint Lucy accompany Mary and turn to her. The scene is flanked by the figures of Saint Peter and Saint Jerome, directed towards the viewer.⁵²

These figures occupy an illusionistic space that can be identified as the apse of the church. The structure and decoration of the architecture presents the characteristic Lombardesque style supplemented with the typical Byzantine motif of the golden conch.⁵³ This

⁴⁶ G. Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 1; R. Goffen, *op. cit.*, p. 171; D. Howard, 'Bellini and Architecture', in: *The Cambridge Companion to Giovanni Bellini*, ed. P. Humfrey, Cambridge 2004, p. 160.

⁴⁷ Disputes over the date of birth of Giovanni Bellini: G. Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 10–11; R. Goffen, *op. cit.*, p. 3; P. Humfrey, 'Introduction', in: *The Cambridge Companion to Giovanni Bellini*, ed. by P. Humfrey, Cambridge 2004, pp. 5–6; G. Bastek, *Warsztaty weneckie w drugiej połowie XV i w XVI wieku. Bellini, Giorgione, Tycjan, Tintoretto*, Warszawa 2010, p. 152.

⁴⁸ G. Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

⁴⁹ C. Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte: ovvero le vite degli illustri pittori veneti e dello stato*, vol. 1, ed. D. F. Von Hadeln, Berlin 1914–1924 (reprint Rome 1965), p. 70.

⁵⁰ J. Ruskin, 'Lecture VII. The Relation Between Michael Angelo And Tintoret', in: *Idem, Aratra pentelici: Seven Lectures on the Elements of Sculpture given before the University of Oxford in Michaelmas term, 1870*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25897/25897-h/25897-h.htm> (10.10.2011), p. 138.

⁵¹ P. Hendy, L. Goldscheider, *op. cit.*, p. 29; D. Howard, *op. cit.*, p. 161; O. Bätschmann, *Giovanni Bellini*, London 2008, pp. 187–88.

⁵² R. Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini ...*, pp. 173–76; D. Rosand, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

⁵³ Cf.: R. Goffen, 'S. Giobbe and Altar Egos' ..., p. 62.

Byzantine inspiration significantly distinguishes Bellini's work from the Florentine examples of *Sacra Conversazione* such as the most famous *Pala di Brera* by Piero della Francesca, who introduced the composition depicting Madonna in a church interior to Italian art.⁵⁴

A Byzantine golden apse occurs also in two previous Bellini altarpieces painted for the Chiesa di San Giobbe and the Basilica di Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari. Still the altarpiece from San Zaccaria seems to be the most interesting specimen because of the extraordinary consequence of the composition arrangement and because of the expanding of spatial relations by strengthening the role of the landscape.

The spherical shape of the conch and its shimmering colour refer to traditional Christian iconography, in which the sphere and the light are associated with divine reality remaining beyond space and time.⁵⁵

The application of gold leaves⁵⁶ in this area of the composition is worth noticing. The use of real gold in painting is a rejection of Leone Battista Alberti's demands formulated already in 1435. The Florentine theorist practices using gold only on the picture's frame, arguing that the metallic gleam of gold applied on paint layers demolishes the harmony of hues.⁵⁷ Furthermore, he valued the ability to create illusions, including light illusions, more highly



Fig. 4. Giovanni Bellini: Pala di San Zaccaria, 1505, San Zaccaria, Venice http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Pala_di_san_zaccaria_01.jpg (public domain)

⁵⁴ R. Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini ...*, pp. 151–52.

⁵⁵ D. Forstner OSB, *Die Welt der Christlichen Symbole*, Innsbruck-Wien-München 1977, pp. 61–62; C. Аверинцев, *op. cit.*, p. 412; J. Białostocki, *Symbole i obrazy w świecie sztuki*, Warszawa 1982, p. 79; M. Meiss, *The Painter's Choice. Problems in the Interpretation of Renaissance Art*, New York 1976, *passim*.

⁵⁶ About use of gold by Giovanni Bellini: G. Nepi Scirè, *Il colore Ritrovato. Bellini a Venezia*. Cura di Rona Goffen, Venezia 2000, *passim*; J. Dunkerton, 'Bellini Technique', in: *The Cambridge Companion to Giovanni Bellini*, ed. P. Humfrey, Cambridge 2004, p. 211; G. Bastek, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

⁵⁷ L. B. Alberti, *Della Pittura e della Statua*, Milano 1804, p. 80.

than the nobility of the material.⁵⁸ It was the skill shown in imitating nature that decided about the value of an artwork, he believed.

But Bellini did not avoid the use of gold. Introducing gold into a painting can be interpreted as a method of portraying what is eternal and impossible to imitate. The symbolic meaning of the shape of the conch and of the gold is supplemented by the acanthus ornament with two eagles in the centre. Eagles, due to their high flight can be identified as a symbol of spirituality, sublimity and light.⁵⁹ Hence, the conch is the reflection of ideal reality, which towers over the image of Incarnated God – the enthroned Madonna with Child replacing the altar in the apse. The landscape noticeable behind the apse is a picture of the Earth, which is separated from the space of the altar by pilasters and monumental figures of saints.

The diversity of worlds is implied by the application of formal qualities. In the apse zone rigorous bilateral symmetry, emphasized by the ornament, reigns. The composition of the scene below the conch is also based on the principle of symmetry, which was achieved by similar poses and volumes of figures placed on both sides of the vertical axis of the composition. But the symmetry in this zone is not strict. It is distorted by the quest for naturalness in the arrangement of bodies and garment folds. These slight disturbances of symmetry are smoothed out by the central perspective used in the design of the architecture and the floor pattern. As a result, the scene appears idealistic. The warm, soft glow, which fills the niche, enhances the impression of unreality. In contrast the landscape in the background, though idyllic, is presented as a disorderly space illuminated by a sharp, natural daylight. This way *Sacra Conversazione* is alienated from everyday life. This division is extended through shaping the relationship between the image and the viewer.

The most important element determining the way the picture operates is its monumental architectural framing. It belongs both to the depicted scene and to the real space and it constitutes the boundary between the inside presentation and the outside act of perception. Silhouettes of saints situated on the intersection of two realities have a similar function. The setting of the figures towards the beholder implies a relationship with him or her. Still, the lowered eyes and faces shrouded in shadows preclude the saints from becoming intermediaries. They become guardians of the mystery of the Incarnation and the communion of saints taking place in the apse. This mystery is separated from what is earthbound by a real and illusionistic architectural frame. The only mediator between the real world and the enthroned Madonna and Child is the angel gazing at the viewer. The golden conch remains beyond the relation designated by the direction of this look. In contrast to the mosaic on Torcello the space of the semi-dome is detached by a massive

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 44–45.

⁵⁹ Cf. R. Wittkower, 'Eagle and Serpent. A Study in the Migration of Symbol', *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 2 (1939), no. 4, pp. 293, 312–14.

cornice. This is consistent with Neo-Platonic currents, revived in the late fifteenth century, which juxtapose spirit and matter.⁶⁰

The structure of the composition is clearly hierarchical. It leads from the material world, whose parts are the frame and the viewer, through the vision of ideal reality to the abstract space of what is invisible – the space of divine beauty, whose emanation is light. It is a representation of the Neo-Platonic structure of universe, in which the terrestrial world is the reflection of the celestial, which in turn is a reflection of supercelestial.⁶¹ The glitter of the gold applied in the conch is a reflection of divinity inaccessible to sensory cognition. The spiritual dimension of contemplation is indicated by the angel with *lira da braccio*, which recalls extrasensory, heavenly music.⁶²

The use of illusion in Bellini's painting creates a semblance of reality, but it produces the ostensible effect of dematerialization of the medium too. Consequently the picture loses its direct relationship with reality and becomes a reflection of a perfect world. The path to it leads through spiritual contemplation of beauty, when the soul leaves the body in a state of ecstasy.⁶³

Titian: *Pietà*

The *Pietà* is one of the last paintings by Titian. Carlo Ridolfi reports that the picture was planned for the altar of the Crucifix in Capella del Christo in the Franciscan Basilica di Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in Venice. According to Ridolfi, Titian committed himself to offering the picture in exchange for burial in the chapel.⁶⁴ For unknown reasons, monks withdrew from the agreement.⁶⁵ Finally, Titian was buried in his chosen place, but the picture was not hung in the chapel. Instead it became the property of Jacopo Palma il Giovane. After his death it was transferred to the Church of Sant'Angelo, where it was displayed from 1631 till 1810, when the church was closed. Since 1814 it has remained in the collection of the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ J. Białostocki, *Sztuka i myśl humanistyczna*, Warszawa 1966, p. 45.

⁶¹ E. H. Gombrich, *Symbolic Images. Studies in the Art of Art of Renaissance*, vol. 2, London 1972, pp. 152–53.

⁶² Cf.: R. Goffen, 'S. Giobbe and Altar Egos' ..., p. 57; R. Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini* ..., p. 147.

⁶³ E. Gombrich, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁶⁴ C. Ridolfi, *op. cit.*, pp. 186–87.

⁶⁵ G. Nepi Scirè, 'Pietà', in: *Titian: Prince of Painers*, exhib. cat. (Palazzo Ducale, Venice), ed. S. Biadene and M. Yakush, Venice 1990, p. 373; D. Rosand, 'Titian in Frari ...', p. 208, n. 49; G. Nepi Scirè, 'La Pietà', in: *Late Titian and the Sensuality of Painting*, exhib. cat. (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien), ed. S. Ferino-Pagden, Wien 2007, p. 308.

⁶⁶ G. Nepi Scirè, 'Pietà', p. 308–10.

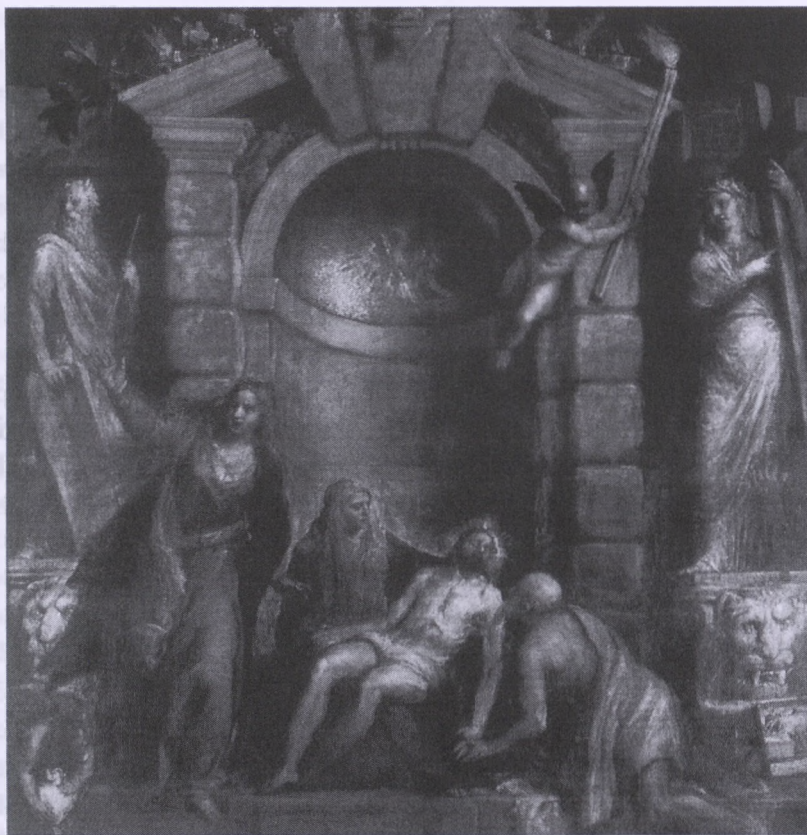


Fig. 5. Titian, *Pietà*, before 1576, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tizian_053.jpg)

It is unclear when the artist started working on the painting. Taking into consideration Titian's way of working characterized by a long creative process,⁶⁷ it can be assumed that at the time of the artist's death in 1576 the work had been ongoing for several years. Carlo Ridolfi conveyed the information that, when Titian died, the painting was unfinished.⁶⁸ This was confirmed by conservation analyses, which also showed Palma's interventions in the painting layers. These interventions were restricted to an angel with a torch painted over Titian's sketch, an inscription on the pedestal and the side parts of tympanum. Palma also camouflaged the stitched areas of the various canvases.⁶⁹

The picture presents a multi-figure composition, whose central part is the figure of the seated Mary cradling the body of the dead Christ on her lap. Mary and Christ are placed in

⁶⁷ Rosand, 'Titian in Frari ...', p. 210.

⁶⁸ C. Ridolfi, *op. cit.*, pp. 186–87.

⁶⁹ G. Nepi Scirè, 'La Pietà ...', p. 310.

a half-round niche covered by a conch, which is decorated with mosaic depicting a pelican on a gold ground. The niche is located on a low, stone pedestal and framed by a monumental portal. On the right side there is a kneeling old man, who supports the falling arm of Christ. Scholars interpret this figure as Saint Jerome, Job, Joseph of Arimathea or Saint Nicodemus.⁷⁰ On the left, Mary Magdalene is running off the pedestal. The scene is flanked with the statues of Sibyl of Hellespont and of Moses, respectively on the right and left.⁷¹ The base of the Sybil's statue serves as a support for a small votive picture showing two men kneeling before the vision of Mary with the body of Christ hovering in the clouds.

It is not possible to determine unambiguously the subject of the scene. The theme of the *pietà* with accompanying saints is typical of Lamentation scenes, but the figure of Mary Magdalene breaks this scheme. In the Passion scenes, she usually leans over the body of Christ. In Titian's painting, she runs towards the viewer, leaving behind the apse with the Saviour's body. The old man is moving in the opposite direction. Kneeling on the pedestal with his back turned towards the viewer he seems to slip in the niche. The climax, delineated by their gestures, is the body of Christ, upon which rests the focus of Mary's gaze too. The pelican in the apse – a symbol of Christ's sacrifice on the cross⁷² – emphasises the meaning of this arrangement, which is the Incarnation and death of God.

Despite numerous references to traditional passion iconography, the *Pietà* is regarded primarily as an artistic testament of Titian and interpreted first and foremost as a reflection on representation. The composition and iconography are subordinated to this subject.

The direction of the viewer's gaze is determined mainly by the compositional diagonal line, defined by the figure of Moses, the body of Christ and the votive picture. Moses with Tablets of Testimony is the embodiment of the time when God revealed Himself to humans in the form of symbols. The planimetric conjunction of the statue and Christ's body portrays the abolition of the Old Covenant and the moment when the body became the image of God. On the other hand, the planimetric conjunction of the body with the votive picture, which is a record of spiritual vision, also proves that painting has a power by which the theophany may be retained in matter.

The vertical axis of symmetry is of similar importance for the meaning. The body of Christ and the mosaic in the conch are assembled on this axis. The pelican's white feathers and bloody wound correspond with the colour of the dead body, but the bird remains a faint sign submerged in the shade. Hence, this is a symbol, which loses its strength in the face of Incarnation. The radiance flowing down from the apse brings out the fleshiness of tissues and the pulsating light on the cold, blue-turning skin and bares the tangibility

⁷⁰ U. R. D'Elia, *The Poetica of Titian's Religious Paintings*, Cambridge 2005, p. 82; W. Molè, *Tycjan*, Warszawa 1958, p. 109; Rosand, 'Titian in Frari' ..., p. 211; D. Rosand, *Painting in Cinquecento Venice: Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto* ..., p. 262, n. 82; G. Nepi Scirè, 'La Pietà ...', p. 311; M. Wallis, *Późna twórczość wielkich artystów*, Warszawa 1975, p. 38; F. Saxl, *Lectures*, vol. 1, London 1957, p. 137.

⁷¹ D. Rosand, 'Titian in Frari ...', p. 212; G. Nepi Scirè, 'Pietà ...', p. 374.

⁷² D. Rosand, 'Titian in Frari ...', p. 212, n. 74; G. Nepi Scirè, 'Pietà ...', p. 374.

of the naked, tortured body. However, the *Pietà* is not a reflection on the legitimacy of the image, but on its essence.

The introduction of the pedestal and the portal, used for framing, abstracts the central scene from the whole composition and changes it into a 'picture within a picture'. This impression is emphasised by the references to existing artworks: Byzantine apses and Michelangelo's *Vatican Pietà*.⁷³ Titian processes these obvious visual quotations according to his own concept of pictorial representation. The essence of his approach is reflected by its ambiguities – by the tension between the real and the unreal. This is chiefly evident in the treatment of the motif of the *pietà*. Titian transforms Michelangelo's sculpture into real bodies and he replaces sublime beauty with dramatic corporality. At the same time he places the scene in architectural frames implying its statuary character.

The golden conch echoes the Byzantine mosaics filling Venetian churches and pays homage to Giovanni Bellini – Titian's teacher. It seems to glow with mystical light, but the *impastos* bring out the brush strokes. Moreover, the apse, framed by a monumental portal, becomes a scenographic backdrop for the scene taking place on the pedestal. The conch, despite the illusory spherical shape and golden brilliance, is an integral part of the painting surface.

At the same time the axes defined by the poses of the old man and Mary Magdalene transgress the picture plane. Introducing these axes aims at exploring the complex relationship between the image and the viewer. Thanks to the spatial diagonals, the figures' gestures, movements and gazes, the seemingly shallow space of the scene is extended into the space in front of the picture. This effect is strengthened by the rich texture of the paint layers. The plane of Titian's painting is reduced to the touches of brushes and fingers, which he used to apply the paint. The condensation of this haptic vision is the touch and the gaze of the old man, who introduces the viewer into the picture: contact with the image is accomplished by the 'sentient seeing'. In the act of perception a touch becomes a gaze and a medium becomes an image.

The analyses conducted in this paper show the different roles of the image in Italo-Byzantine art, in the beginning of Cinquecento and at the end of this period. Venetian masterpieces illustrate significant changes in the status of the picture. What unites these three distinct paradigms of art is a reflection on the essence of the image and on the act of perception.

In Byzantine art of the post-iconoclastic period, the eastern concept of the picture, which identified the image with its prototype, was rejected. Theologians rejected also the Platonic doctrine of the image participating in the nature of its prototype, and of Aristotelian realism in which the image was understood only as a recording of the external appearance of the prototype. It was argued that, because of the quality of matter being part of the picture,

⁷³ E. Panofsky, *Problems in Titian. Mostly Iconographic*, New York 1969, pp. 24–26.

the essences of the icon and its archetype are totally dissimilar. Still, the image in the icon remains an imprint of the archetype. Gold apses in Byzantine churches should be perceived as the frames of a spatial icon interpreted according to this Orthodox image doctrine. The human is placed in the centre of this spatial icon. In the act of sense perception he or she realizes the absence of Christ's body, but finds the image of God in himself or herself.

In Italian art of the early sixteenth century, the influences of Neo-Platonism emerge. The opposition of spirit and matter leads to the doctrine of the picture, whose medium disappears behind what it represents. Golden apses indicate the existence of the immaterial world. The act of perception is identified with the spiritual experience and the image becomes a reflection of the Absolute.

In Titian's *Pietà* a golden glow is materialized through the oily substance of paint, which emphasises an inextricable linkage between the image and the medium. In the act of perception the viewer gives a real, material existence to the image and abolishes the dichotomy between the real and the unreal. A picture becomes a painting, in which the act of creation and the act of perception – the past and the present – are unified.

Both, in Byzantium in the Macedonian era and in Renaissance Venice the era of the image:⁷⁴ when the picture was perceived as a relic or a body, ended. The era of art:⁷⁵ when the picture became a source of a, variously understood, aesthetic experience, began. If this can be perceived as a 'renaissance' or as a 'birth' of art still remains an open question.

⁷⁴ Cf. Eudokim A., *Ekologia ikoona i ikona ikoon* de ikoonno ikoonno, Paris 1962.

⁷⁵ A. Semoglou, *Caricature of Religion XV century in Greece*, in: *Byzantine Identity, Image, Influence, Absence*, XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies, University of Copenhagen, 21–22 August, 1995, Copenhagen, 1996, no. 2123.

⁷⁶ M. Vasilevski-Mirankov, *Western Influences on the Fourteenth Century Art of Crete*, *Zeitschrift der Dörmwischen Byzantinistik* [XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Wien, 3–9. Oktober 1981, *Actes* 115], 22 (1982), no. 3, p. 301.

⁷⁷ M. Constantinides-Caramalios, *Il tempo estetico del XV secolo e la pittura italiana del tardo Medioevo*, in: *Il Corso di Cultura and Arte Rinascenza e Sigurmo*, *Studia* 15–20 (1970) 1991.

⁷⁴ Cf.: Belting, *op. cit.*, pp. xxi–xxii.

⁷⁵ Cf.: *Ibidem*, pp. xxi, 555.

Between Candia and Venice. The role of European engravings in the iconographic transformations of post-Byzantine painting in Greece

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Italo-Cretan painting of the late 15th and early 16th century comprise of the largest group of works in the history of post-Byzantine Greek art.¹ The artists themselves travelled within the Mediterranean Sea basin, and their works were traded.² The seizure of Crete by Venice in 1204, as well as Venetian political control over the island, which lasted until 1669 when Crete was captured by the Turks, resulted in latinization of practically the whole of the Aegean Sea region.³ Following the fall of Konstantinople, the island became the main centre of Eastern Christianity in that part of Europe. Artists traveled regularly between Crete and Venice, which explains the huge impact of Italian paintings within the island's art.⁴ Candia, the then capital of Crete, turned into an Italian rather than a Greek city. Both the architecture and the paintings of the time bear the features of Western art. According to Robin Cormack, icons were manufactured in Candia on a mass scale, as is evidenced by preserved orders; on the basis of those documents, over 120 painters were found to have operated there in the latter half of the 15th century.⁵ Most of them followed

¹ Cf. Embrikos A., *L'école crétoise dernière phase de la peinture byzantine*, Paris 1967

² A. Semoglou, 'L'artiste et l'Église au XVI^e siècle en Grèce', in: *Byzantium. Identity, Image, Influence. Abstracts. XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies. University of Copenhagen, 18-21 August, 1996*, Copenhagen 1996, no. 5123.

³ M. Vassilakis-Mavarakis, 'Western Influences on the Fourteenth Century Art of Crete', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* [=XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Wien, 4-9. Oktober 1981, Akten II/5], 32 (1982), no. 5, p. 301.

⁴ M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, 'Icône cretesi del XV secolo e la pittura italiana del tardo Medioevo,' [in:] *XXXVIII Corso di Cultura suel Arte Ravennate e Byzantina, Ravenna 15-20 marzo 1991*, Bologna, Ravenna 1991, p. 126.

⁵ R. Cormack, *Painting the Soul: Icons, Death Masks and Shrouds. Essays in Art & Culture*, Oxford 2000.



Fig. 1. Wenceslaus Hollar, *The Virgin of Cambrai*, 1548, engraving, The British Museum



Fig. 2. Heronim Wierix, *Virgin Mary with Christ*, engraving, The British Museum

the ancient customs when painting icons: they observed the canonical rules and used patterns to transfer the drawing onto the board and finally to complete the composition. The painters used the novel form of engraving to transfer a “faithful” pattern, and sought to reproduce it – true to the prototype – according to the rules and provisions of icon painting.⁶ Engravings replaced sketches, so-called “antivola”, which guaranteed faithfulness to the message of the prototype, just like the copying of words – an important element of Christianity for many past ages.

The precision of repetition of the sketched compositions is manifested in several icons showing the *Entry into Jerusalem*: a work from a private collection in London, another one from the Christian Art Collection in Lefkas and yet another icon kept at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, the latter being a reverse of the former two. They were painted in the 15th century as elements of the *Dodekaorton* series of scenes depicting twelve feasts, highly popular all over the Christian East. All scenes accurately present the evangelical

⁶ J. Kamiński, ‘Z dziejów kanonu i normy w malarstwie staroruskim’, *Slavia Orientalis*, 2 (1976), pp. 134–145.

events, as is manifested by a drawn sketch kept at the Benaki Museum in Athens.⁷ The scene can also be found in a triptych from the collection of the Elvehjem Art Center⁸ and an icon kept at the Esztergom Museum.

Two features can be distinguished in Italo-Cretan painting: traditional and italianizing. The icons that remain within the current of Byzantine painting are those continuing the tradition, acquired by members not only by the faithful of the Eastern but also of the Latin Church (fig. 1, 2). In a painting of Saint Ursula by Vittore Capaccio, there is an icon shown in Renaissance interiors.⁹ Kept at the cathedral in Cambrai is a beautiful Madonna Eleusa, worshipped since the 15th century.¹⁰ Many Italo-Cretan icons were brought into Central Europe, as for example the work by a 16th century painter, kept at St. Anne's chapel at Kalwaria Zebrzydowska near Cracow. Many descriptions of the 17th and 18th century mention miracle-working icons of Mary of Greek provenience.

There are, among the Italo-Cretan icons, numerous works that diverge from the Orthodox icons of the period in terms of artistic standards. Due to immense demand, they were manufactured on a mass scale at some workshops.¹¹ A number of such works can be found in western collections.¹²

Scholarly disputes have been going on as to the extent of influence of Italian art, and of Venice in particular, in the shaping of the Italo-Cretan school. Painters often took up themes typical of the Latin iconography. Such an example is a painting by Adreas Ritzos (1427–1503), kept at the Byzantine Museum in Athens (fig. 5), which shows the letters *IHS* – the symbol of an idea propagated by San Bernardino de Siena, an ardent advocate of unification of the Churches and participant of the Council of Florence.¹³ Inscribed in the letters are the scenes of Crucifixion and Resurrection that revert to the drawings by Giovannino de'Grassi (from Biblioteca Civica in Bergamo) and the engravings by Master ES and Israel van Meckenem. The composition bears a Greek inscription that refers to the morning prayer *orthros*. According to Cormack, the work is a quintessence of integration of the Eastern and Western traditions in Italo-Cretan art.¹⁴ Worth mentioning, among other compositions of Latin provenience, is *Madonna enthroned with St. John and St.*

⁷ M. Vasilaki, 'An Icon of the Entry into Jerusalem and a question of Archetypes, Prototypes and Copies in Late- and Post-Byzantine Icon-Painting'.

⁸ G. Galavaris, *Icons from The Elvehjem Art Center*, Wisconsin 1963, p. 37, no. 1.

⁹ A. Lamberopoulou, 'Adiences and markets for Cretan icons', in: *Viewing Renaissance Art*, vol. 3, New Haven and London 2007, p. 188, fig. 5.16.

¹⁰ *Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261–1557)* (ex. cat. Metropolitan Museum of Art), ed. H. C. Evans, New Haven and London 2004, p. 582, no. 349.

¹¹ R. Cormack, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

¹² Cf. M. Vasilaki, 'Some Cretan Icons in the Walter Art Gallery', *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 48 (1990), p. 75–92.

¹³ *Post-Byzantium: The Greek Renaissance 15th–18th Century Treasures from the Byzantine & Christian Museum, Athens*, Athens 2002, p. 84, no. 7.

¹⁴ R. Cormack, *op. cit.*, p. 239.



Fig. 3. Anonym, Madonna enthroned with St. John and St. Catherine from Alexandria, National Museum, Warsaw

Catherine of Alexandria (fig. 3) from the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw, probably by Angelos Pitzamanos.¹⁵ Stylistic analogies include a painting from the collection of Pinakothek in Vicenza (fig. 4).¹⁶ Both presentations combine Latin and Byzantine elements. They were probably commissioned by a Latin customer, as they are closer to Italian painters' iconographic solutions in terms of composition. Only the way in which

¹⁵ J. Białostocki, M. Skubiszewska, *Malarstwo francuskie, niderlandzkie, włoskie do 1600. Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie. Galeria Malarstwa Obcego*, Warszawa 1979, p. 224–225, no 195, fig. 123.

¹⁶ *Venetiae quasi alterum Byzantium. Da Candia a Venezia. Icone greche in Italia XV–XVI secolo*, Atene 1993, p. 130, no. 30.



Fig. 4. Angelos Pitzamanos, Virgin Mary with Christ and St. John and St. Sebastien, Pinakothek, Vincenza

the faces and gowns are painted betrays the artist's Eastern provenience. Most such works emerged in the circles of the Greek Diaspora in Venice.

One of the artists who worked for both Italian and Greek customers was Nicolaos Zafuri, who operated in the years 1487–1501. Until recently, little was known about the painter's work: the dictionary by Thieme and Becker¹⁷ even contained an error in the name of the artist who had previously been mentioned as the author of several signed paintings, including a triptych from the former Likhachev's collection, now kept at the Ermitage in Sankt Petersburg.¹⁸ Documents published by Mario Cattapan provide a number of data on artistic activity of the painter who operated in Venice.¹⁹ He was born in Crete and moved to

¹⁷ Thieme Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. 33, p. 457. Cf. Bettini S., *La pittura di icone cretese-veneziana e i madonneri*, Padua 1933, p. 44.

¹⁸ *Gosudarstviennij Ermitazh. Katalog kollekcij N. M. Likhaczeva*, ed. Piatnickij Ju. A., Sanktpeterburg 1991, no. 231.

¹⁹ M. Cattapan, 'I pittori Pavia, Rizo, Zafuri da Candia e Papadopoulo dalla Canea', *Tezaurizmata*, 14 (1977), pp. 225–234.

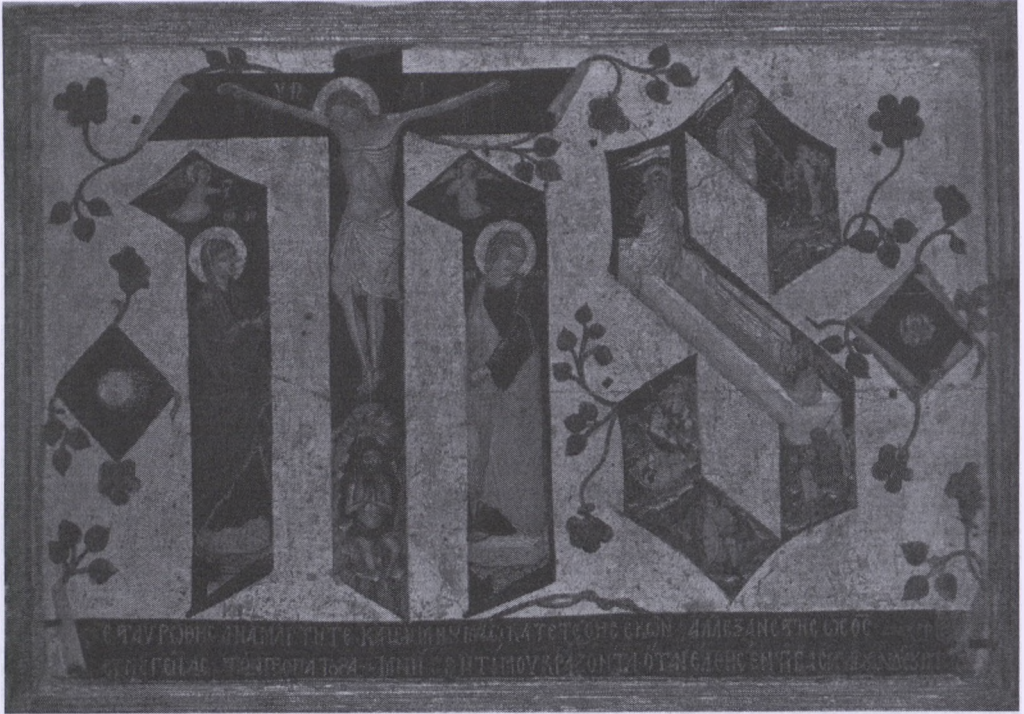


Fig. 5. Andrea Ritsos, The initial *IHS*, 15th century, Byzantine Museum, Athens

Italy around 1490. At the current state of research, his original studio is difficult to identify; he was probably related to one of the studios that operated within the Greek Diaspora in the capital city of the Republic, where many outstanding Cretan painters worked, such as Theophanes the Cretan, Andreos (Andrea) Pavia, or Antonio Papadopulo. As follows from preserved notarial documents, he ran quite a large studio, taking orders both from Catholic customers and from Greeks. The icons were usually painted according to the ancient customs, in compliance with the canonical rules. Zafuri used Tempera painting as was common in his days; however, according to some researchers, his works were Venetian to a greater extent than Cretan.²⁰ Despite the close ties with the Greeks in Venice, his works diverged a lot from the post-Byzantine style in painting. As follows from the preserved documents, he received orders from procurators of the Nauplia Province in the Peloponnese, and the works were designed from one of the peninsula's temples. A significant collection of his works are triptychs, willingly ordered by Catholic customers for personal devotion. They could not have been objects of worship for the Greeks, for whom the Italo-Cretan painters made icons. The recent publication by Marisa Bianco Fiorin introduces into scien-

²⁰ M. Bianco Fiorin, 'Nicola Zafuri, cretese del quattrocento, e una sua inedita „Madonna“', *Arte Veneta*, 37 (1983), p. 166.

tific circulation further works by Zafuri, as e.g. icons from the Byzantine Museum in Athens and the collection of the Serbian Orthodox Church community in Trieste.²¹

Among the numerous Italo-Cretan triptychs of the 16th century, there are those whose ico-



Fig. 6. Attributed to Nicolaos Zafuri, The triptych, National Museum, Warsaw

nography reveals the purpose of the ordered work. An example is a holy image from the Diocesan Museum in Osimo, attributed to George Klotzas (who operated in 1562–1608).²² The right panel, depicting Archangel Gabriel trampling Satan, includes four personages of saints, among them figures of St. Nicholas and St. Gregory Nazianzen in Byzantine attire to the left, and an unidentified bishop and St. Francis of Assisi to the right, with stigmata showing on his palms and feet. This is not the only case of Catholic saints in the paintings by Klotzas. A continuator of the style of Damaskinos, Klotzas resided in Venice from as early as about 1566, his signed works can be found in both Italian and Greek collections; he also made illuminated Greek manuscripts and his works have an especially warm coloring. The Greek Institute Museum in Venice keeps a triptych attributed to the Cretan. The middle panel depicts the *Last Judgement*, a synthesis of the Byzantine and Latin traditions of that scene.²³ At the head, medallions contain scenes showing the history of Adam and Eve, based on the graphic patterns by Jan Wierix.

Italo-Cretan painting gladly utilized Italian engravings of the late 15th and early 16th century to make the composition. An example is a triptych from the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw, which some researchers attribute to Nicolaos Zafuri (fig. 6).²⁴

²¹ *Ibidem*, il. 8 i 6.

²² P. L. Vocotopoulos, 'Le triptique d'Osimo', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 44 (1994), pp. 431–438.

²³ M. Chatzidakis, *Icones de Saint-Georges des Grecs et de la Collection de l'Institut*, Venise 1975, p. 77, no. 51.

²⁴ J. Białostocki, M. Skubiszewska, *op. cit.*, s. 223–224, no. 193, fig. 124. Cf. W. Deluga, 'Un triptyque italo-crétois des collections du Musée National de Varsovie', *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie*, 36 (1996), no. 34, pp. 14–33; *Serenissima. Światło Wenecji. Dzieła mistrzów weneckich ze zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie w świetle nowych badań technologicznych, historycznych i prac konserwatorskich*, ed. G. Bastek, G. Janczarski, Warszawa 1999, pp. 98–107.



Fig. 7. Andrea Mantegna, Descent from the Cross, engraving, Kupferstichkabinet, Berlin

The open holy image includes three scenes of the passion series. The left panel, starting the narration according to the evangelical events, depicts *Deposition from the Cross* (fig. 7). The body of Christ, resting on cloth, is lowered by Nicodemus and supported by Joseph of Arimathea, with Mary to the left and St. John to the right. A young man holding one of the ladders is shown in the background. The middle panel of the triptych is a rectangular niche crowned with a moulding and showing Mary supporting the body of Christ. Madonna supports the hanging head with one hand and the palms of Christ's outstretched hands with the other. The right panel depicts *Imago Pietatis*. In keeping with the Byzantine artistic tradition, Christ is shown standing in the grave, head resting on the right shoulder.²⁵ Lamenting angels are shown on either side. Shutting the panels, we notice two more scenes depicted on the reverse. The left panel contains the image of *St. John the Baptist*, the right one – *Stigmatization of St. Francis of Assisi* (fig. 9). The Warsaw work is an example of a triptych commissioned by a Latin customer, hence the artist's considerable departure from the canons that remained in force even in the post-Byzantine art. The scene of *Lamentation of Christ* depicts a rocky landscape, and especially a grotto with an open sarcophagus. These elements are characteristic of this kind of presentation in Italo-Cretan painting; they bring to the mind the background of a painting showing *Noli me tangere* from the Schiff collection in Pisa, or the 16th century version of the theme from the Museum in Zakynthos.²⁶

The panel showing *Deposition from the Cross* is based on an engraving by Andrea Mantegna (fig. 8). The painter borrowed the central scene of that print, as well as the landscape with two hills to the left and right of the central composition. He left out the fragment of *Lamentation*, figures to the right of the cross, and a tree. The graphic prototype is dated 1456–1459. It was easier for a painter from the Byzantine school to adopt the graphic model as similar scenes of *Deposition from the Cross* could also be found in Balkan paintings. An example of which is a wall-painting in the Orthodox Church in Čučer.

The works by Mantegna indirectly influenced Italo-Cretan painting through Italian imitations of the late 15th and early 16th century.

Other works gladly imitated, not only by Greek painters in Venice but also on the Athos peninsula and Crete, were engravings by Marcantonio Raimondi. The scene of *Stigmatization of St. Francis*, contained in the Warsaw triptych, reverts to the Italian engraver's work. Although a reverse of that work, the Warsaw composition reproduces many details of the engraving, especially as far as the positioning of figures and the landscape are concerned. The discussed panel is similar to a painting placed on a side panel of a triptych from the collection of Museo Nazionale in Ravenna (fig. 10).²⁷ The similarities are notice-

²⁵ Cf. B. Davezac, *Greek Icons after the Fall of Constantinople. Selections from the Rogel Cabal Collection. The Menil Collection*, Houston 1996, pp. 49–50, no. 14.

²⁶ M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Icons of Zakynthos*, Athens 1998, p. 84, no. 14.

²⁷ P. Angiolini Martinelli, 'Le icone della collezione classense di Ravenna', *Rapporti della Soprintendenza per i beni artistici e storici per la province di Bologna, Ferrara, Forlì e Ravenna*, 39 (1982), pp. 263–264, no. 157.



Fig. 8. Attributed to Nicolas Zafuri, Deposition from the Cross,
National Museum, Warsaw



Fig. 9. Attributed to Nicolas Zafari, Stigmatization of St. Francis,
National Museum, Warsaw

able in terms of both style and iconography and the work probably comes from the same studio. Furthermore, the scene of *Imago Pietatis* reproduces a similar composition found in Zafari's painting kept at the Zoodochos Pigi (katolikon) monastery in the Peloponnese, and in another one from the collection of Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. The figure of St. John the Baptist on the reverse of a shut panel of the triptych departs somewhat from the traditional representation of that saint in a cilice, holding a cross and a scroll, a bowl with a martyr's head at his feet. Here, the saint holds a lamb propped on a book and a scroll bearing the inscription: *ECCE AGNUS DEI QUI TOLIS PECATA MUNDI*. The background landscape approximates those by Giovanni Bellini.

Theophanis Strelitzas the Cretan, also known as Bathas, repeatedly reverts in scenes showing Roman soldiers (e.g. *Deposition from the Cross* from the Monastery of Great Lavra on Mount Athos of 1535) to the costumes of warriors shown in Raimondi's engravings. The painter decorated temples in Greece: at the St. Nicholas Anapafsas Monastery in Meteora, founded by hierodeacons Kyprianos and Nikanor and by Denis, the archbishop of Larissa, of 1527.²⁸ On the Athos peninsula, Theophanis made a series of paintings at the Great Lavra katolikon of 1535. The iconographic series is adjusted to the specific function of each part of the church. Above the door to the refectory (trapezoid), beside the scene of *Annunciation* and below the effigy of Maria Teotocos, he also placed a foundation composition.²⁹ According to an inscription on the wall, the founder was Gennadios of Serres. Theophanis also made a series of wall-paintings inside: it starts with a scene of *The Last Supper* located in the abse, where the ihumen of the monastery takes a seat, followed according to the hierarchy by other monks and lastly by pilgrims. Next, the side walls bear the figures of holy monks and illustrations to the *Akathist Hymn* to the Mother of God. The eastern wall bears a scene showing St. Athanasius on his deathbed. The iconostas in the katolikon includes icons by Theophanis, and most importantly, there is among them a series of *Dodekaorton*.³⁰

Wall-paintings by Theophanis have also been preserved at the Stavronikita monastery on the Athos peninsula; according to many researchers, they were among the painter's last works.³¹ They are dated 1546, the year of completion of the works, which probably started four years earlier when the monastery was reconstituted on the initiate of patriarch Jeremiah I. Addition, icons by Theophanis making up the *Dodekaorton* series can also be found here. As a young man, the artist probably studied in Venice, this is demonstrated by paintings depicting the *Feast at Emmaus* from the Great Lavra and Stavronikita, in which

²⁸ M. Chatzidakis, *Etudes sur la peinture postbyzantine*, London 1976, p. 314.

²⁹ R. Lewandowski, 'The Representation of the Annunciation at the Refectory of Megisti Lavra', in: *Mount Athos and Pre-Christian Antiquity*, Thessaloniki 2006, pp. 234–247.

³⁰ M. Chatzidakis, *Etudes sur la peinture postbyzantine ...*, p. 323.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 318.

Manolis Chatzidakis noticed relations to Bellini's works.³² Worth mentioning, among other scenes of Latin provenience, is *St. Christopher* from St. Christopher's monastery in Meteora, as well as *Adam with animals* from the Great Lavra. The painter operated on Crete, which he eventually left moving to the Athos peninsula. He is believed to have authored a new iconographic temple decoration design, adapted by many later artists.³³ Particularly worthy of attention is a wall-painting from the Great Lavra showing the *Massacre of the Innocents*, painted by Theophanis according to a graphic prototype by Marcantonio Raimondi, created around 1512 on the basis of a drawing by Raphael.³⁴



Fig. 10. Anonym, Stigmatization of St. Francis, Museo Nazionale, Ravenna

A number of contemporary reproductions have been preserved, and one of the Italian's most popular sketches, copied by Agostino Veneziano and Etienne Delaune, provided the basis for other post-Byzantine paintings.³⁵ The painter usually adopted the general outline of the composition and then adjusted it to traditional requirements: this is why the naked women shown in Raimondi's plate have been painted in robes by Theophanis.

The composition presenting *Massacre of the Innocents* (fig. 11, 12) was reproduced in a wall-painting project at the Stavronikita monastery (1546), also by Theophanis. Fur-

³² *Ibidem*, p. 331.

³³ A. Embricos, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

³⁴ A. Stavropoulou-Makri, 'Le theme du Massacre des Innocents dans la peinture post-byzantine et son rapport avec l'art italien renaissant', *Byzantion*, 60 (1990), p. 366-381. Cf. J. P. Richter, 'Abendländische-Malerei und Plastik in den Ländern des Orients', *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 13 (1878), p. 207.

³⁵ Cf. H. Delaborde, *Marc-Antoine Raimondi, étude historique est critique suivie d'un catalogue raisonné des oeuvres du maître*, Paris 1988, p. 91.



Fig. 11. Marcantonio Raimondi, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, engraving National Museum, Warsaw

Other reproductions include wall-paintings from the monasteries Koutloumoussiou (1540), Dionysiou (1547), Diochiariou (1568), as well as the Varlaam convent in Meteora (1648). This way, the composition was added to the canon of post-Byzantine painting, and its subsequent description in *Hermeneia* sanctioned its position in a way. An example is a wall-painting from the Orthodox Church in Hopovo, Serbia (1608). Held in the collection of the Benaki Museum in Athens is a sketchbook leaf with a drawing copied from Raimondi's engraving.³⁶ It is worth mentioning that the model of Raimondi's scene appears in icon painting: the examples include an icon attributed to Marco Vatas and a work by George Klotzas from the collection of the Greek Museum in Venice.³⁷

Theofanis utilized other prints by Raimondi. Often he would only select fragments for individual compositions. In the scene of *Deposition from the Cross* from the Great Lavra, the painter inserted Roman soldiers copied from a copperplate *The Triumph of Titus* based on a drawing by Jacopo Ripando.³⁸ The author of the wall-painting accurately copied not only the figures but also their weapons. In Meteora, at the St. Nicholas monastery, we can

³⁶ M. Chatzidakis, *Etudes sur la peinture postbyzantine ...*, p. 331.

³⁷ M. Chatzidakis, *Icones de Saint-Georges des Grecs de la collection l'Institut ...*, fig. 51.

³⁸ M. Κωνσταντουδάκη-Κιτρομηλίδου, 'Ο Θεοφάνης, ο Marcantonio Raimondi, θέματα all' antica και grottesche', in: *Ευφρόσυνον. Αφιέρωμα στον Μανόλη Χατζηδάκη*, vol. 1, Αθήνα 1991, p. 273.



Fig. 12. Drawing, from the composition the Wall-painting from Great Lavra (after Manolis Chatzidakis)

find ornamental grotesques based on engravings by Adrea Zoan.³⁹ Importantly, among the successors of Theophanis the Cretan, is the painter Zorzis, believed to have co-authored refectory wall-paintings at the Dionisiou monastery.⁴⁰

Both in Italo-Cretan painting and in wall-paintings from the Athos peninsula, there appears the scene of *Deposition from the Cross* (fig. 13, 14) that is based on Italian prints composed on the basis of a drawing by Raphael. It is a specific paraphrase of an engraving by Mantegna, which is particularly noticeable in the lower part where lamenting Mary surrounded by three women has been placed in a rocky recess. Probably the first composition based on the sketched prototype was a chiaroscuro woodcut pressed from three blocks by Ugo da Carpi around 1520.⁴¹ Yet another reproduction is a print by Marcantonio Raimondi, a reverse of da Carpi's woodcut. It was copied in that layout by Italo-Cretan painters. That very engraving, which researchers date at around 1525, provided the basis for many graphic imitations, such as a plate by Luca Bertelli (fig. 15, 16).⁴²

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 279.

⁴⁰ A. Embricos, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

⁴¹ K. Oberhuber A. Gnann, *Raphael und der Klassische Stil in Rom, 1515–1525*, Mantua, Wien 1998, p. 172, no. 109.

⁴² National Museum, Warsaw, Gr.Ob.W. 174996.



Fig. 13. Marcantonio Raimondi, *Descent from the Cross*, engraving National Museum, Warsaw



Fig. 14. Attributed to Theodore Poulakis, Deposition from the Cross, Byzantine Museum, Athens

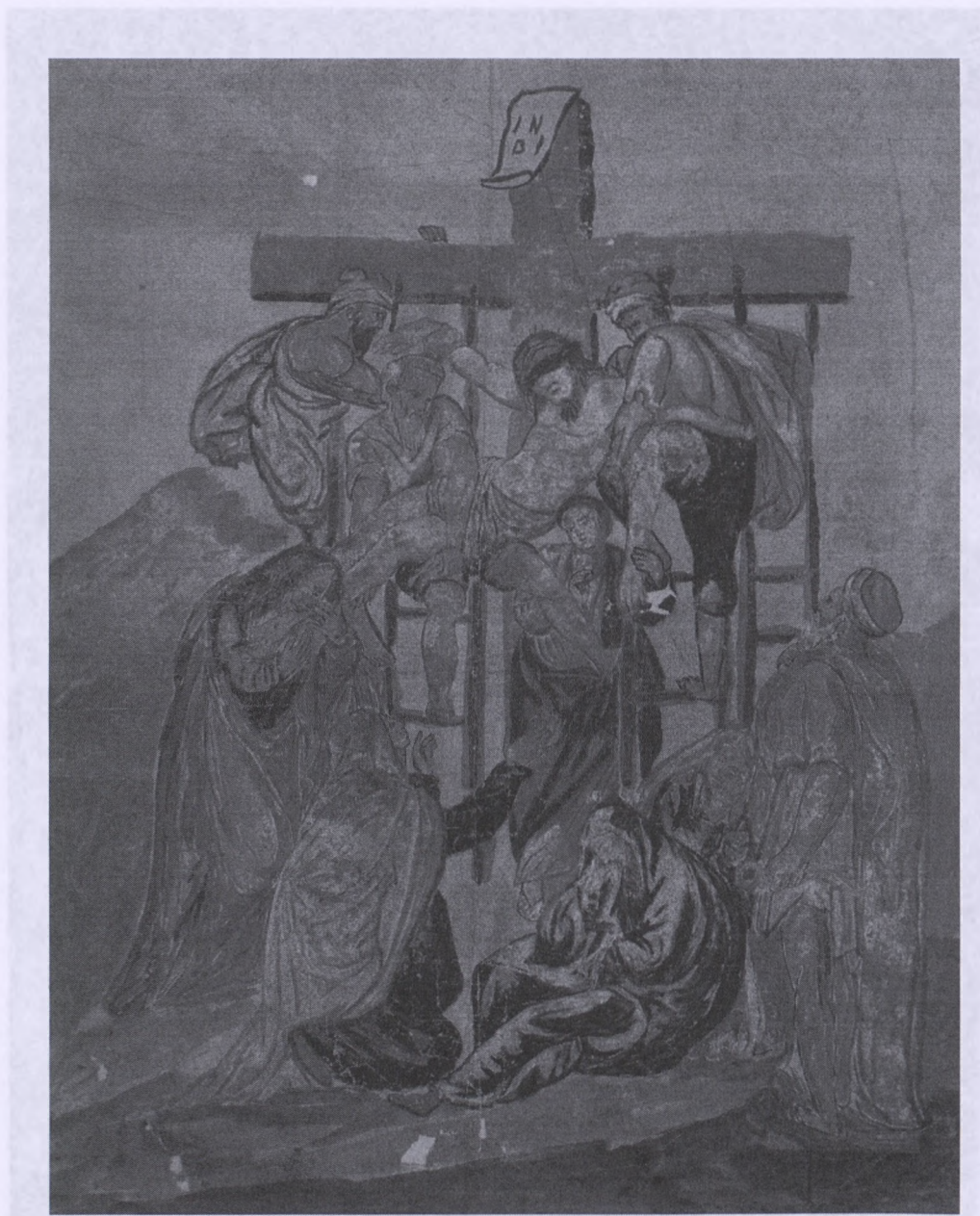


Fig. 15. Deposition from the Cross, drawing (athivola), Byzantine Museum, Athens



Fig. 16. Luca Bertelli, Deposition from the Cross, engraving

¹⁴ Cf. W. Dörmig, *Famiglia Bertelli. I fratelli Bertelli pittori del Rinascimento Venetiano*, Roma, 1928, p. 224, fig. 16 and fig. 17. O. Tappin, *Les Bertelli de Candia*, *Les Beaux-Arts de Paris*, 1928, p. 100, fig. 16 and fig. 17.

¹⁵ Cf. A. Parodi, *Le Pitture Veneziane*, vol. 16, Würzburg, 1928, pp. 107-108, fig. 16 and fig. 17.



Fig. 17. El Greco, *View of Sinai*, Historical Museum, Heraklion

Kept at the Great Lavra monastery on Athos is an icon showing the *Deposition from the Cross*, dated back to early half of the 17th century. Only the upper part of the composition reverts to Marcantonio's graphic model, but Christ has been placed somewhat differently compared to the prototype, which means that the author of that composition already based his work on a sketch. On the other hand, the figure of languid Madonna surrounded by women is an imitation of Byzantine icons. Manolis Chatzidakis traces the scene back to the 12th century miniature painting.⁴³ The background shows a panorama of Jerusalem as represented in the 16th century woodcuts placed in descriptions of peregrinations to the Holy Land. Chatzidakis lists further imitations: an icon from the Byzantine Museum in Athens, probably the work of Theodore Poulakis (1622–1692), and another one from the Benaki Museum in Athens, painted by Stylianos Stavrakis (who operated in 1762–1786).⁴⁴

⁴³ M. Chatzidakis, *Etudes sur la peinture postbyzantine ...*, p. III. 155.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. III. 156–159, fig. 8–10.



Fig. 18. El Greco, The triptych, Galleria Estense, Modena

Worth mentioning here is yet another composition by Alexander Grypares, an icon from the collection of the National Museum in Lviv, and a painting from the Armenian part of the Holy Sepulchre basilica.⁴⁵

Also works from the circle of Giovanni Francesca Mazolla called the Parmigianino influenced Italo-Cretan painting. An example is *The Entombment* from the Stanley Moss collection in New York, which reverts to a plate by Giovanni Battista Franco.⁴⁶ Attributed to El Greco, it is one of the many works that revert to the *Bella maniera* plates.

Icon painters particularly valued works coming from the Bertelli studio in Venice. An example is an engraving showing the *Deposition from the Cross* (fig. 16), known also from many Netherlandish reproductions. Kept in the collection of the Byzantine Museum in Athens is a drawing (fig. 15) that reproduces Bertelli's composition.

Another graphic work by a Venetian artist is a print by Joan Baptista Fontana (1524–1587), published by the graphic studio run by Luca Bertelli.⁴⁷ The central part shows Mount Sinai with Moses standing on the top, a table containing the Ten Commandments in his hand. Mount Aaron is shown to the left, and yet another hill with two angels - to the right.

⁴⁵ Cf. W. Deluga, *Panagiotaftica. Greckie ikony i grafiki cerkiewne*, Kraków 2008, p. 20, fig. B4 and B5.

⁴⁶ Ο Γκρέκο στην Ιταλία και η Ιταλική Τέχνη, επιμέλεια Ν. Χατζηνικολάου, Αθήνα 1995, p. 322, no. 41.

⁴⁷ Cf. A. Bartsch, *Le Peitire Graveur*, vol. 16, Würzburg 1920, p. 137, no. 67.



Fig. 19. Nikodem Zubrzycki, View of Sinai, woodcut, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

At the bottom, there is a walled convent. Mentioned among imitations of Fontana's plate can be the middle scene of El Greco's triptych from the collection of the Estense Gallery in Modena (fig. 18).⁴⁸ Another version is the Cretan's other painting kept at the Historical Museum in Heraklion (fig. 17).⁴⁹ The painter reproduced the motif of three mountains, making the composition vertical. Some researchers suspected that the above paintings by El Greco reflected the memories of Meteora monasteries.⁵⁰ However, as can be noticed, he faithfully reproduced Fontana's graphic prototype: like other artists from the Italo-Cretan school, he repeatedly utilized 16th century Italian prints. The Mount Sinai motif appears in numerous later compositions (fig. 19, 20, 21), such as a triptych kept in a private collection, painted probably at a studio located in St. Catherine convent on Mount Sinai.⁵¹

⁴⁸ E. Palluchini, 'Perché il Domenico che ha firmato l'altare della Galleria Estense e il Theocopulos', *Atti dell' Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, 136 (1978), pp. 331–336.

⁴⁹ M. Chatzidakis, *The Landscape of the Godtrodden Mount Sinai. A Greco's Painting in the Historical Museum of Crete*, Iraklion 1994.

⁵⁰ I. Galicka, H. Sygietyńska, 'Il „Monte Sinai” del Greco: un' evocazione delle Meteore?', *Atti dell' Istituto Veneto di Scienze, lettere ed Arti*, 136 (1977), pp. 337–344.

⁵¹ *Russian Pictures, Icons and Works of Art*. Sotheby's, London 1991, nr 541.

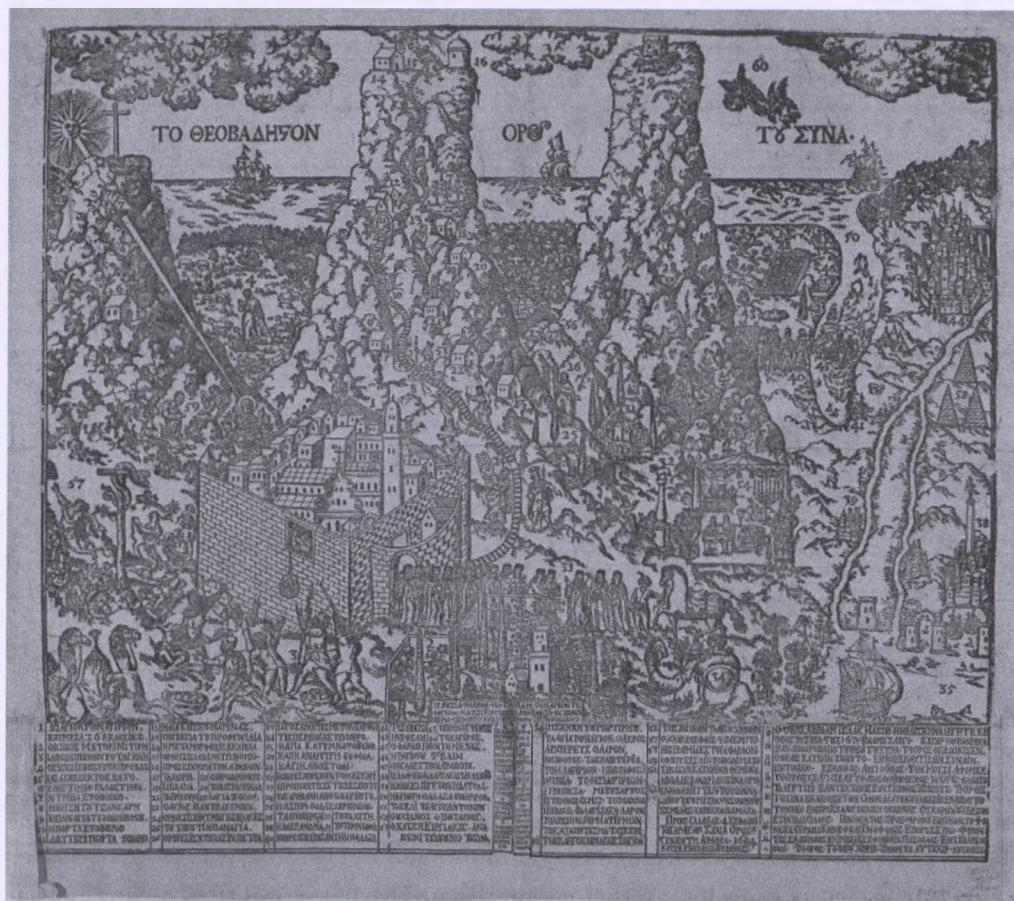


Fig. 20. Nikodem Zubrzycki, View of Sinai, woodcut, University Library, Uppsala

It is worth nothing here that Venetian prints also influenced provincial Italian paintings. A region of special importance for the present discussion, where Raimondi's engravings were utilized, is Otranto where the painters reverted to the Italo-Cretan style, as the region was visited by artists descending from the Byzantine tradition, such as Angelo Bizamano (1467–1532).⁵² He operated in Venice as well as Dalmatia and Otranto. Another painter from that region was Giovanni Maria Scupula, whose series of sixteen paintings is kept at the Provincial Pinakothek in Bari.⁵³ They include a scene of *Deposition from the Cross* based on Marcantonio Raimondi's prototype. The other scenes also revert to plates; however, the compositions were likely based on German woodcuts.

⁵² G. Gianfreda, *Iconografia di Otranto tra oriente e occidentale ...*, p. 57. Cf. M. Bianco-Fiorin, 'L'attività dei Pittori Angelo e Donato Bizamano: Precisazioni ed aggiunte', *Bollettino d'Arte*, 27 settembre-ottobre 1984.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 63.



Fig. 21. Anonym, View of Sinai, National Museum, Lviv

What might be seen as an intermediate link in this iconographic series are Raimondi's copies of works by Albrecht Durer. Similarly, the scene from a triptych kept at the Municipal Museum of Medieval Art in Bologna shows the *Deposition from the Cross* after Raimondi, which is a reverse of that composition. The figure of Christ is lowered on canvas, as in the engraving by Mantegna.

Yet another example of an imitation of Italian plates is El Greco's painting showing *Adoration of the Magi*, where traces of the works by Parmigianino or Angelo del Moro can be found. Here, however, we deal with a compilation of many models, probably borrowed from Netherlandish engraving. The very pose of Madonna with Infant reverts to a woodcut with the scene of *Mystical Marriage of St. Catherine* by Nicola Boldrini after Tytian, while the remaining elements of the composition have been borrowed from a print by Cornelis Cort.⁵⁴ Further, the soldier to the right imitates a copperplate by Parmigianino. An anonymous icon showing *Christmas*, kept in a private collection in Athens, may also revert to a Netherlandish plate⁵⁵, just like the painting from the Boboni collection, attributed to El Greco and showing *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, which contains distant memories of

⁵⁴ El Greco. *Eine Ausstellung des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien*, Wien 2001, no. 2.

⁵⁵ G. Kakavas, 'Venerian Mannerism and Cretan School. The Case of a Cretan Icon with an Unusual Representation of the Nativity', *Byzantion*, 43 (1993), s. 116–143



Fig. 22. Luca Bertelli, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, engraving, National Museum, Warsaw

the works by Cornelis Cort.⁵⁶ Interestingly, El Greco utilized Cort's composition repeatedly. The examples include a painting from the collection of the J. F. Willumsens Museum⁵⁷, and another one from the collection of Duca di Buccleuch.⁵⁸ It is notable that Cort's works were known in Venice, where he moved from the Netherlands taking with him the copperplates. Later on, they were taken over by Italian publishers who used them repeatedly to make new prints.

The aforementioned triptych from the Estense Gallery in Modena contains further imitations of Italian print (fig. 23). The scene of *Adoration of the Shepherds* is based on plates prepared after Titian's prototype.⁵⁹ An example is a copperplate by Luca Bertelli (fig. 22). *God with Adam and Eve* is a scene similar to a print by Heinrich Aldegrever and

⁵⁶ P. Guinard, T. Frati, *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Greco*, Paris 1971, s. 91, nr 6.

⁵⁷ *Ο Γκρέκο στην Ιταλία και η Ιταλική ...*, p. 288, no. 37.

⁵⁸ R. Palluchini, 'Una nuova giovanile „Adorazione dei pastori” di El Greco', *Arte Veneta*, 40 (1986), p. 164.

⁵⁹ *El Greco. Eine Ausstellung des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien ...*, nr 3.

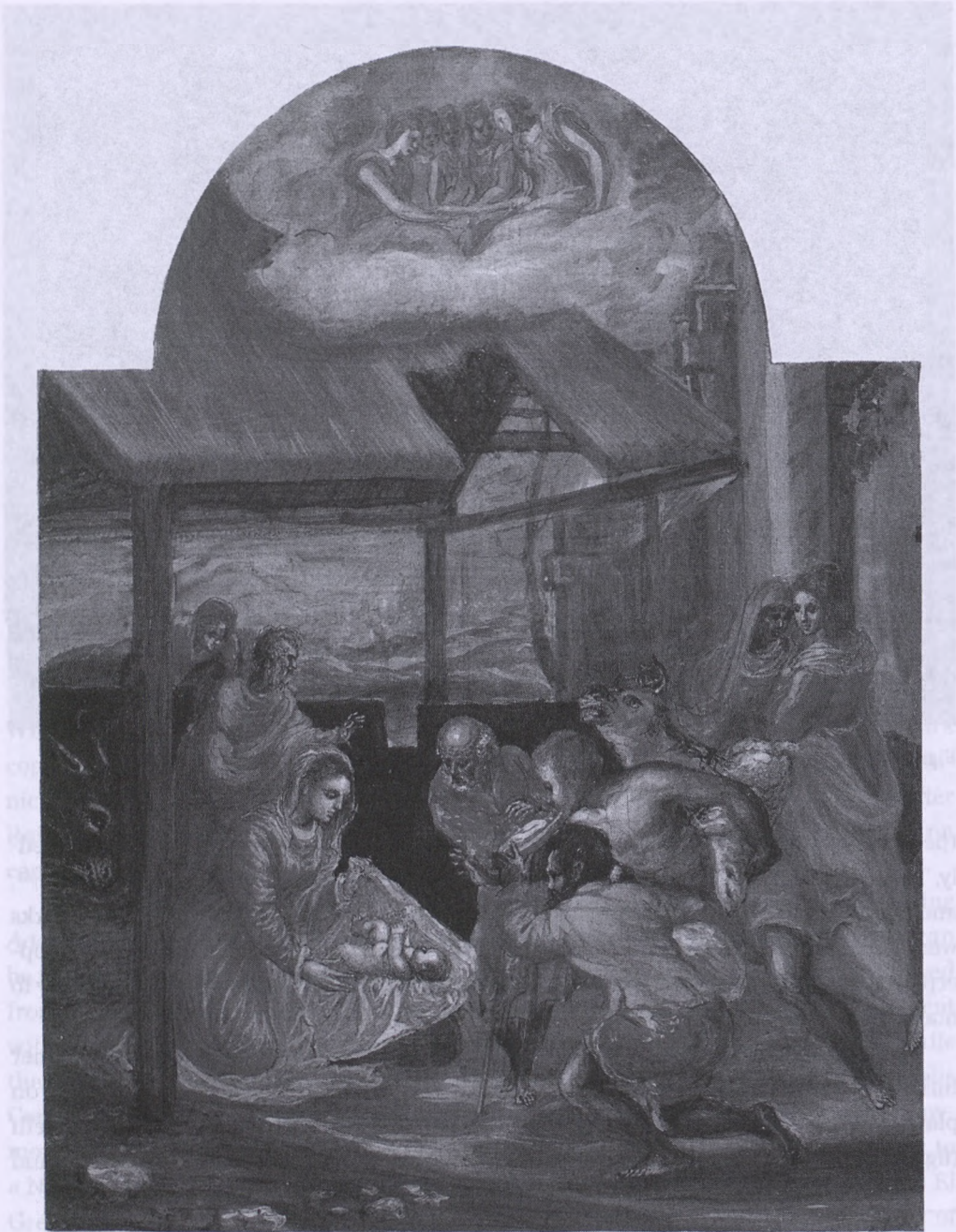


Fig. 23. El Greco, Adoration of the Shepherds, (the fragment of the triptych),
Galleria Estense, Modena

Rosso Fiorentino, probably borrowed through Caraglio's sketches. In many cases, however, the source of the iconographic model is difficult to identify precisely, as the painter skillfully compiled different elements. One should bear it in mind that he could have used sketchbooks or graphic copies, which proves that the Italo-Cretan artists knew how to transform compositions. In that same triptych, the scene of *Annunciation* combines elements of the works by Caraglio and Giulio Bonasone. The central scene of *Accolade of a Christian Knight* (*miles christianus*) reverts to an anonymous Italian woodcut of 1555, after G. B. Franco.⁶⁰ El Greco utilized prints throughout his artistic activity, an example of which is a work from the Spanish period, *Adoration of the Shepherds* from the National Museum of Art in Bucharest, with the composition that contains distant memories of a copperplate by Cornelis Cort after Polidoro Veneziano⁶¹ and its reproduction by Jan Sadeler.⁶² El Greco's work itself was copied by a Spanish engraver Diego Astor.⁶³



Fig. 24. El Greco, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, (the fragment of the triptych), J.F. Willumsen Museum, Fredrikssund



Fig. 25. Anonym, *Noli me tangere*, The British Museum

⁶⁰ J. Szczepińska-Tramer, 'Encore quelques notes sur le panneau central du triptyque de Modène du Greco', *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 144 (2002), pp. 261–269.

⁶¹ National Museum, Warsaw, no inv. 81180.

⁶² National Museum, Warsaw, no inv. Gr. Ob. Nid. 3192.

⁶³ Cf. *Mladzieniec Iesus. Zapadnoevropejskaja graviura XV–XVIII vv. Iz sobranii Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha*, Sankt-Peterburg 2000, p. 27, no. 24.



Fig. 26. Teodor Poulakis, Gabriel's Mission to Mary, Museo Correr, Venice



Fig. 27. Netherlandish painter, *Gabriel's Mission to Mary*, National Museum, Warsaw

In the work of Italo-Cretan painters, of great importance for the transformations of post-Byzantine art were prints of the northern schools, which were however filtered at the early stage by Slav illustrations of liturgical books and by copied Italian engravings. Interesting is the scene of *Noli me tangere*, which appears repeatedly in the Greek painting of the 16th century. Of course, it can also be found in earlier wall-paintings, e.g. in Gračanica (1321) or Dečani (1348). For the present discussion, scenes found on the Athos peninsula in Dionisiou (1547) and Diocheiariou (1568) are of importance, as well as an icon from the collection of the Greek Diaspora Museum in Venice.⁶⁴ A similar icon can be found in the Berlin Museums.⁶⁵ The scene that reverts to a citation from the Gospel (J. 20, 11–17) resembles the Latin graphic solutions. In this case, we deal with a combination of the Byzantine with the Latin tradition. A direct imitation of Martin Schongauer's engraving is a woodcut found in the *Pentekostar* published around 1550.⁶⁶ The anonymous engraver based on a Western model, likely a woodcut copy of Schongauer's work, but adjusted it to the requirements of Byzantine art. The topography resembles the specifically reduced landscapes found in 16th century icons and wall-paintings. Distant reproductions can be found in Italo-Cretan painting (an icon from the collection of the British Museum (fig. 25) and another one from a private collection in Greece).

Towards the close of the Middle Ages, many works as well as book illustrations dealing with the Apocalypse appeared in Central Europe. In 1498, Albrecht Dürer made large woodcuts illustrating the revelation of St. John the Divine. The engraver's work on that series started after his first visit to Italy (1494/1495), hence the visible influence of Italian art accompanying the obvious impact of Schongauer. The next edition was published in 1511.⁶⁷ As early as the start of the 16th century, the first copies appeared, prepared in 1522 by Lucas Cranach the Elder who illustrated Luther's *Bible* and also added illustrations to *Apocalypse*.⁶⁸ In post-Byzantine art, the first known paintings reproducing the Italian models of representation of the Apocalypse are the wall-paintings in Dionisiou, at a convent located on the Athos peninsula. They were founded by the Hospodar of Moldavia Petru Rareș and created around 1547.⁶⁹ Some researchers see traces of Dürer's engravings

⁶⁴ S. Marconi, 'La Raccolta di Icone veneto-cretesi della Comunito Greco-Ortodossa di Venezia', *Atti dell' Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere ed Arti*, 105 (1947), pp. 138–139; M. Chatzidakis, *Icones de Saint-Georges des Grecs ...*, s. 115, nr 96.

⁶⁵ V. H. Elben, *Das Ikonenkabinett der Frühchristlich-Byzantinischen Sammlung. Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, Berlin 1979, p. 18, no. 5.

⁶⁶ J. Bianu, N. Hodoș, *Bibliografia românească veche 1508–1830*, vol. I, București 1903, pp. 34–41.

⁶⁷ F. W. H. Hollstein, *German Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts 1450–1700*, vol. VII, Amsterdam 1962, pp. 135–143.

⁶⁸ T. Döring, *Dürer Apokalypse und ihre Wirkung. Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum Braunschweig*, Braunschweig 1994, p. 3.

⁶⁹ Cf. H. Bruhet-Dirnard, 'Le maitre et inspireur des fresques de l'Apocalypse de Dionisiou', *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 49 (1954), p. 309–316; A. Chingilingirov, 'Vlijanie niemieckoj grafiki na ikonografiju postvizantijskogo iskusstva', in: *Drievnierusskoe iskusstvo, zarubiezchnyje svjazy*, Moskva 1975, p. 325–342.

not only in the Dionisiou paintings, but also in later works made on Athos.⁷⁰ Juliette Renau discovered the sources of the graphic design in the engravings by Lucas Cranach the Elder.⁷¹ Other researches notice also the influence of Hans Holbein's woodcuts.⁷² It is extremely difficult to identify the exact prototype, as the artist from Dionisiou probably used copies made at an Italo-Cretan studio. They could have been copies of Italian book woodcuts. The paintings are hardly an isolated instance on the peninsula: scenes from the Apocalypse (dated at the 17th century) can be found at the Orthodox Church of the Xenofon monastery, in the narthex of the Orthodox Church of the Iviron monastery of 1795, and at the Great Lavra of 1852, by Zacharias Christos Zografos.



Fig. 28. Teodor Poulakis, St. John of Patmos, Byzantine Museum, Athens

As Greek researchers stress, the style developed in the 16th century on the Athos peninsula was continued in Balkan painting due to the migration of studios. It is precisely in Wallachia that scenes from the Apocalypse can also be found, which contain distant memories of the famous Nurnberger's engravings. An example is a series of wall-paintings at the Cretulescu Orthodox Church in Bucharest.⁷³ Mentioned as another example of imitation of Dürer's engravings can be the scenes of a triptych from the collection of the Vati-

⁷⁰ G. Millet, *Monuments de l'Athos*, vol. 1, Paris 1927, fig. 184–185, 206–209; L. H. Heydenreich, 'Die Apokalypsen-Zyklus im Athosgebiet und seine Beziehungen der deutschen Bibelillustration der Reformation', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 8 (1939), p. 5.

⁷¹ J. Renaud, *Le cycle de l'Apocalypse de Dionisiou. Interpretation Byzantine des gravures occidentales*, Paris 1941, p. 25.

⁷² L. H. Heydenreich, *Die Apokalypsen-Zyklus ...*, p. 6. Cf. K. Arndt, 'Hans Burgkmair illustriert die Offenbarung des Johannes', in: *Poesis et Pictura. Studien zur Verhältnis von Text und Bild in Handschriften und alten Drucken. Festschrift für Dieter Wuttke zum 60. Geburtstag*, Baden-Baden 1989, p. 255.

⁷³ C. Pilat, 'Quelques aspects du thème de l'Apocalypse dans la peinture de la Valachie du XVIII^e siècle', *Revue Roumaine d'histoire de l'art*, 10 (1973), no. 2, pp. 165–201.



Fig. 29. John Sadeler, St. John of Patmos, engraving, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



Fig. 30. St. Hieronimus, National Museum, Warsaw

can Museums, which revert to the series of engravings *The Life of Mary*.

Many a time, the scenes contained in icons revert to the plates of the northern schools, including Netherlandish engravings. An example is an icon from the Ermitage collection showing the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, painted by Viktoros who signed his work.⁷⁴ The entire composition is based on a plate by Cornelis Bloemaert after Raffaell.⁷⁵

For the transformations of post-Byzantine iconography, engravings made by the Sadeler family were of great importance (fig. 26, 27). Their engravings greatly influenced the Italo-Cretan painting of the late 16th and early 17th century. One of the most popular painters who borrowed from the Latin iconography through Netherlandish engravings was Teodoros Poulakis (1622–1692).⁷⁶ Born in Kydonia on

Crete, he worked in Venice since 1645. A whole group of the Cretan's works bases on Jan Sadeler's copperplates. An icon showing *Gabriel's Mission to Mary*, from the collection of Museo Correr in Venice, reverts to the Netherlander's copperplate, repeatedly copied



Fig. 31. Raphael Sadeler, after Marten de Vos, St. Hieronimus, engraving, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

⁷⁴ *Iz kolekcii Akademika N. O, Likhacheva*, Sankt Peterburg 1993, p. 112, no 306.

⁷⁵ K. Kružel, J. Motyka, *Katalog rycin Biblioteki Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Krakowie. Szkoła niderlandzka XVI, XVII, XVIII w.*, vol. 1, Wrocław 1991, p. 59, no. 292.

⁷⁶ Cf. 'Ιωάννης Κ. Ρηγόπουλος, *Ο αγιογράφος Θεόδωρος Πουλάκης και η φλαμανδική χαλκογραφία*, Αθήναι 1979.

by European painters. Also another work by Poulakis, kept at the Byzantine Museum in Athens (fig. 28), reproduces Jan Sadeler's prototype.

Kept in the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw is an anonymous work by an Italo-Cretan artist, which also reverts to a Latin graphic prototype. It is an icon showing *St. Hieronimus* (fig. 30) kneeling at the grotto and holding with his left hand an open book supported on the rock.⁷⁷ The board painting was made in the latter half of the 16th century and can be traced back to the works by Damaskenos. Worth mentioning among analogies can be an icon from the former collection of Nikodem Kondakov.⁷⁸ The Warsaw icon represents a theme that was extremely popular among engravers of the northern schools; it was popularized by Albrecht Dürer and his imitators. However, it reverts to a specific prototype by Jan Sadeler (fig. 31), but does it through a copy made by Jacques Granthomme.⁷⁹

The discussed relics of Greek painting demonstrate the huge impact of European engravings. They reached even the most distant artistic enclaves from the center of Europe all the way to its outskirts. Their presence in the process of iconographic transformations of post-Byzantine painting was most marked, which demonstrates the evolution of Orthodox art throughout the Eastern Church territories.

⁷⁷ J. Białostocki, M. Skubiszewska, *op. cit.*, p. 224, no 194, fig. 122.

⁷⁸ *Ze sbírek bývalého Kondakova Institutu*, red. J. Hlávačková, Praha 1995, p. 31, no. 6.

⁷⁹ W. F. H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts 1450–1700*, vol. 21, Amsterdam 1980, p. 220, no. 1006.

to the series of engravings by the Dutch engraver Willem Blaeu. The series of engravings by the Dutch engraver Willem Blaeu.

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Fig. 21. Raphael Sadeler, after Marten de Vos: St. Hieronymus, engraving, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

²⁶ E. Kallitri, *Archontes N. G. Liximouli*, Venetian Republic 1993, p. 112, no. 100.
²⁷ M. C. Krausz, J. Myers, *Kydonia: A History of the Town and its Surroundings*, Kydonia, 1971, p. 100.
²⁸ E. Kallitri, *Archontes N. G. Liximouli*, Venetian Republic 1993, p. 112, no. 100.
²⁹ E. Kallitri, *Archontes N. G. Liximouli*, Venetian Republic 1993, p. 112, no. 100.





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