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Popular Piety and the Paper Icons of Zaharija Orfelin

Abstract: The paper deals with the phenomenon of popular piety in the eighteenth century and its reflections in art media through several prints made by the Serbian engraver Zaharija Orfelin. Paper icons, the cheapest means of meeting the spiritual needs of Orthodox Serbs in Hungary in the eighteenth century, were mass produced and easy to transport to remotest places. As they were the main channels of expressing piety, it is not unexpected that some artists-entrepreneurs such as Orfelin started such a lucrative production. Orfelin shaped the iconography of those images, combining the traditional Orthodox heritage and contemporary Baroque models that had migrated from Central European religious art. His imagery included particular national saints and their patriotic cults, dogmatic and doctrinal views of the church, as well as images of the Mother of God.

Keywords: Zaharija Orfelin (1726–1785), popular piety, paper icons, engravings, the Metropolitanate of Karlovci (Karlowitz), eighteenth century

Eighteenth-century people's religious needs were met by the production of numerous religious representations, the most widespread among them being literary illustrations and popular religious prints. Religious literature was illustrated with appropriate visual material, and the title page most often consisted of a visual and a textual part. Given the very small number of surviving popular eighteenth-century prints and the substantial level of physical decay, the question that arises is whether the printers that produced them intended them to last or created them with an awareness of their brevity and practical use.¹ Of course, the exception was engraved illustrations, which were cut and then set in different contexts. It seems that the single prints of Zaharija Orfelin, the leading Serbian copper engraver of the second half of the eighteenth century,

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¹ On prints in early modern art, see D. Papastratos, *Paper Icons: Greek Orthodox religious engravings 1665–1899*, vol. I–II (Athens 1990); C. Goldstein, *Print Culture in Early Modern France: Abraham Bosse and the Purposes of Print* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 13–17; E. L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1–12.

were ephemeral and should be viewed in the same discursive frameworks and practices as other similar works.²

During this period in the Habsburg Monarchy, the educational reforms of Maria Theresa raised the level of literacy among the general population, so the potential audience for Orfelin's prints was vast and diverse: from artisans and small merchants, through prominent and wealthy citizens, to city and state officials.³ That meant that prints were accessible to a variety of audiences with a variety of tastes and values, often different from those promoted by artists or scholars, which led to different reactions to the same text or image. Engravings should not be understood in terms of a single "true" reading or the author's intentions but in terms of the many and different truths seen by contemporary observers. From this perspective, engravings are recognized as a social and cultural practice dependent on reception and interpretation. Intermediaries in that process and their interpretation could unpredictably change the meaning of every single print, depending on current political and cultural circumstances.⁴

From the beginning of the eighteenth century, Serbian print consumers turned to Viennese engravers for meeting their needs. This situation, which would remain unchanged until the first decades of the nineteenth century, was partly conditioned by the fact that the successive Metropolitans of Karlovci could not obtain permission from the authorities to open a printing house, but also by the lack of skilled Serbian engravers.⁵ Not even the appearance of Hristofor Džefarović and Zaharija Orfelin could fully meet the great demand for printed icons and books. Both of them pursued several other activities besides printing and these often kept them away from the printing press for long stretches of time. Again, the Serbian clientele was in constant need for print-

² From the abundant literature on Zaharija Orfelin, the most important are D. Davidov, *Zaharija Orfelin 1726–1785* (Belgrade 2001); L. Čurčić, *Knjiga o Zahariji Orfelinu* (Zagreb 2002); B. Čalić, *Zaharija Orfelin* (Novi Sad 2011), 7–22.

³ The last two groups constituted a limited audience for engravings with inscriptions in Latin, French or German. The prints with inscriptions in Latin and Greek were intended exclusively for the classically educated elite able to understand the figures and tropes. For more about the buyers of paper icons in 18th-century Hungary, see O. Gratziou, "Searching for the public of some Greek religious engravings in 18th century Hungary", *ZLUMS* 29/30 (1993/1994), 93–94; V. Simić, "Zaharija Orfelin (1726–1785)", PhD dissertation (University of Belgrade, 2013), 120–130.

⁴ J. V. Curran, "Oral Reading, Print Culture, and the German Enlightenment", *The Modern Language Review* 100/3 (2005), 695–708; C. Karpinski, "The print in thrall to its original: a historiographic perspective", in *Retaining the original: multiple originals, copies, and reproductions* (Baltimore 1985), 101–109.

⁵ R. Grujić, "Priloži za istoriju srpskih štamparija u Ugarskoj u polovini XVIII veka", *Spomenik SKA XLIX*, dr. raz. 42 (1910), 145–152; N. Gavrilović, *Istorija ćirilskih štamparija u habsburškoj monarhiji u XVIII veku* (Novi Sad 1975), 62–67.

ers, so Thomas Mesmer's workshop in Vienna was considered as permanent engraving and printing place. It accepted not only purchase orders for new engravings but also for prints from older copperplates, which were stored in the Orthodox church of St George in Vienna. A similar status was held by Jakob Schmutzer, the most renowned Austrian engraver, both before and, especially, after his arrival in Vienna. This is evidenced by letters sent by Metropolitan Pavle Nenadović from Sremski Karlovci to Vienna, purchasing from Jakob Schmutzer the engravings *View of the Lepavina Monastery (Manastir Lepavina)* and *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple (Vavedenje Bogorodice)*, and from Thomas Mesmer *View of the Studenica Monastery (Manastir Studenica)* and *View of St Anna's Monastery (Manastir Sveta Ana)*.⁶ One metropolitan's letter reveals that there was in the Church of St. George in Vienna a whole collection of copperplates, mostly by Viennese engravers, which were very carefully kept and occasionally printed.⁷

Especially important for the religious life of the Orthodox Serbs in Hungary was a book devoted to Serbian saints, *Правила молебнаја свјатих сербских просветитељей*, also known as "Srbljak". Zaharija Orfelin prepared in 1765 a new, illustrated edition of this book at the printing shop of the Greek Demetrios Theodosios in Venice (Fig. 1). In order to avoid problems related to censorship and importation into the Habsburg Monarchy, he marked the book *con falsa data* – as if it had been published in Moscow.⁸ The texts collected in *Srbljak* had a strong patriotic connotation, which influenced the visual design of the book. Orfelin used the frontispiece to depict a group of Serbian saints in medallions receiving the blessing from Jesus Christ, and in the largest oval in the middle of the composition he portrayed the first Serbian king, Stefan the First-Crowned (Prvovenčani), as the holy monk Simon. Following the structure of the book, Orfelin defined the order of the saints by the order of their appearance in the church calendar. Thus, St. Simon is surrounded by: the Holy Despot Stefan Štiljanović (just above), the Holy Despot Stefan Branković, and then crosswise, St. Arsenije the Sarmian, Archbishop of Serbia, the Holy King Milutin, the

⁶ D. Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII veka* (Belgrade 2006), 216. On Schmutzer's influence on Zaharija Orfelin, see V. Simić, "Zaharija Orfelin i Likovna akademija u Beču: prilog biografiji", *Zbornik Narodnog muzeja* 21/2 (2014), 197–203; B. Vuksan, "Ideje reforme i pojave bakroreza kod Srba u XVIII veku", *ZFF* 16 (1989), 218–221.

⁷ Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII veka*, 216; M. Kostić, "Srpski bakrorezi XVIII veka", *LMS* 304/2 (1925), 147–156.

⁸ It has already been noticed that the copperplate had the engraver's signature in the bottom left corner, below the line framing the composition. It was partially rubbed away before printing, luckily not quite successfully, so that there were still traces on the print. Orfelin had obviously prepared and signed the plate before it was decided that the book would be published as if it had been printed in Moscow, when Orfelin erased his signature, see Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII veka*, 170.

Holy King Stefan Dečanski, the Holy Emperor Uroš, the Holy Despot Jovan Branković, St. Sava the first Archbishop of Serbia, then a medallion with the figures of St. Athanasius the Great, St. Maksim (Branković) the Archbishop of Serbia and St. Cyril of Alexandria, then St. Simeon the Myrrh-Gusher (Myroblyte), titled as a former King of Serbia, and finally the Holy Prince Lazar and the Holy Mother Angelina, a Serbian despotess. A short text accompanying this image at the bottom of the page informs the reader that it depicts the holy Serbian emperors, princes, despots, and archbishops praying for their lineage and fatherland.⁹

Represented as a Serbian saintly pantheon that watches over its Orthodox people and the land they inhabit, this print develops an idea characteristic of the political program of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. Earlier, Hristofor Džefarović had consistently implemented the same idea in several engravings commissioned by Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta.¹⁰ That such a visual conception was not so rare is evidenced by a similar example of the title page of Juraj Rattkay's book *Spomen na kraljeve i banove Kraljevstava Hrvatske, Slavonije i Dalmacije* (1652), engraved by Juraj Šubarić (Fig. 2). It shows a large central medallion with the image of St. Peter, and the wreath of eight smaller medallions with the images of "Illyrian saints and martyrs" arranged around it. At the top are St. Jerome, Pope Caius, who was born in Dalmatia, and St. Cyril, titled as Constantine the Philosopher, Bishop of Bulgaria, surrounded by two bishops on the left and right: St. Quirinus of Siscia and St. Augustine Kažotić of Zagreb. At the bottom are the three holy Illyrian kings – St. Budimir, St. Ivan, son of King Gostumil, and Godeskalk, the legendary King of Slavonia.¹¹ The frontispiece of Stefan Yavorski's book *Камень веры* (The Rock of Faith), published in 1729, which was very influential in the Orthodox world, has a similar compositional form. Around the central panel the following figures are arranged in medallions: the four Evangelists, the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and sainted Russian bishops: Sts. Peter, Alexius, Jonah and Philip. Above them is a medallion with the scene of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, and a view of Moscow (the Kremlin) at the bottom.¹² Orfelin might have modelled this fron-

⁹ M. Timotijević, "Serbia Sacra i Serbia Sancta u baroknom versko-političkom programu Karlovačke Mitropolije", in *Međunarodni naučni skup Sveti Sava u srpskoj istoriji i tradiciji*, ed. Sima Ćirković (Belgrade 1998), 394–395.

¹⁰ K. Vasić, "Patrijarh Arsenije IV Jovanović i bakrorezna grafika na području Karlovačke mitropolije 40-tih godina XVIII veka", MA thesis (University of Belgrade, 2007), 95–100.

¹¹ M. Pelc, "Georgius Subarich sculpsit Viennae – bakrorezac Juraj Šubarić u Beču oko 1650. godine: djela i naručitelji", *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 39 (2015), 63–65; Z. Blažević, *Ilirizam prije ilirizma* (Zagreb 2008), 289–291.

¹² On the influence of Yavorski's work on Serbian culture in the 18th century, see V. Vukašinović, *Srpska barokna teologija: biblijsko i svetotajinsko bogoslovlje u Karlovačkoj mi-*

tispiece on an engraving of the Russian printer Grigorii Tepchegorskii showing an allegorical composition about Peter I with the figures of Russian saints.¹³ This visual pattern was used in icon-painting, where it proved to be very effective, encouraging the emergence of new iconographic forms aimed at strengthening piety and religious patriotism among Orthodox Serbs. It can be seen in the appearance of icons created towards the end of the eighteenth century and based on Orfelin's engraving, e.g. the icon of *Serbian Saints* from the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church.¹⁴

The texts of the Akathists and services collected in *Srbljak* reflected the patriotic appeals to Serbian saints. The saints were expected to act patriotically from heaven, as they had while still on earth, and to watch over their people, fatherland, and the Orthodox church. The Venetian edition of Orfelin's book from 1765 leaves out the offices for St. Theodore Tyron and the Translation of the Relics of St. Stephen the Protomartyr, and includes the office for Saint Arsenije the Syrmian, the immediate successor of St. Sava as archbishop of Serbia. Thus, in the final redaction of the book, old medieval cults of Serbian saints were equally represented with the cults of the saints that appeared later, among Serbs in Hungary. They were used in religious disputes in support of the claim to the antiquity of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci and to secure its legitimacy in areas north of the Danube. Of the thirteen saints, only two are associated with Serbian ecclesiastical history, whereas the others belong to the domain of political history. A few years after the appearance of the printed *Srbljak*, at the church assembly in Sremski Karlovci in 1769, the commemorations of these saints were established as feast days for Orthodox Serbs. Two years later, Jovan Georgijević, the Metropolitan of Karlovci, printed a church calendar listing all national saints whose offices were included in the *Srbljak*, and the book was therefore named the Serbian calendar.¹⁵

In the mid-1770s, Orfelin printed several small religious engravings intended for the everyday personal devotional needs of the faithful. A number of these images have found their place in manuscript books – mostly prayerbooks. Due to the expensiveness of printed books, it was common for individuals to copy prayerbooks and related literature by hand, and then decorate them with

tropoliji XVIII veka (Belgrade 2010), 61, 201; M. Timotijević, *Srpsko barokno slikarstvo* (Novi Sad 1996), 149–162.

¹³ Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII veka*, 210; for more on Tepchegorskii, see *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*, ed. A. A. Polovtsova, vol. 20 (Saint Petersburg 1912), 484–485.

¹⁴ Simić, *Za ljubav otadžbine*, 68–70.

¹⁵ Timotijević, "Serbia sancta i Serbia sacra", 394–395; L. Čurčić, *Srpske knjige i srpski pisci 18. veka* (Novi Sad 1988), 62.

drawings or small engravings which they glued into them.¹⁶ Like other engravers in the Habsburg Monarchy, Orfelin also cut and sold such small religious compositions. Tens or hundreds of these small prints, which were sold apiece at fairs and church festivals, represented a small but steady source of income. Like any art entrepreneur, Orfelin kept an eye on what his clientele expected and developed some of his activities in that direction. His prints *Crucifixion (Raspeće)* and *Christ Praying before God the Father for the Salvation of the Sinner (Hristos pred Bogom-Ocem moli za spas grešnika)* belong to this type of work. The *Crucifixion* bears Orfelin's signature, but is undated (Fig. 3). Based on its characteristics, Dinko Davidov has dated it to his early years, but it seems that it could easily be a later work, created after 1770, as suggested by the simple signature "Orfelin rezal" (cut by Orfelin) which is more frequent after that year.¹⁷ The basic iconographic solution was of a general type because it was part of the standard imagery intended for private piety. Orfelin certainly used some models, perhaps from printing workshops of Vienna or Augsburg, which widely circulated throughout the Monarchy. As there is no donor inscription, the engraving is believed to have been made by Orfelin for sale at the fairs.¹⁸

The iconographic concept of this composition occurs rarely in Serbian Baroque painting, and its literary source is in the Gospels: "But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out" (John 19:34). On the right side of the crucified Christ there is a figure of a Roman horseman piercing his chest with his spear. In the background, on the left, are the Virgin and John the Theologian, as well as another equestrian figure leaving Golgotha with a flag in his hands. In the Gospels, the soldier who pierced Christ is not named, but later tradition identifies him as Longinus, who subsequently became a Christian and died as a martyr in Caesarea in Cappadocia. The cult of Longinus became important from the time of the Counter-Reformation when Protestant theologians began to challenge it. In the eighteenth century, it appeared in Serbian religious art, mostly on the iconostases of churches of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. The basic idea of Orfelin's print is related to the baroque piety associated with the veneration of the wounds of Christ, especially the fifth wound – the pierced chest. The introduction of the Virgin and John the Theologian in the background brings a new level of complexity into the composition and can be interpreted as expressing compassion for Christ's suffering on

¹⁶ J. Černý, "Neuinterpretation eines Einblattdruckes: Die 'bernhardinische Sonne' in der Olmützer Handschrift C. O. 120", in *Practicing new editions: transformation and transfer of the early modern book, 1450–1800*, eds. Hiram Kümper and Vladimir Simić (Nordhausen 2011), 18–25.

¹⁷ Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII veka*, 189–190.

¹⁸ V. Simić, "Ime i znak: o pseudonimu Zaharije Orfelina", *PKJIF* 82 (2016), 83–86.

Golgotha, or as an allusion to a great Baroque theme – the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin.¹⁹

The other engraving, *Christ Praying before God the Father for the Salvation of the Sinner*, shows Christ as an intercessor between God the Father and a repentant sinner. He is holding a cross in one hand and pointing to the sinner with the other, supporting the latter's prayers to God, who blesses him and forgives sins (Fig. 4). Orfelin printed the engraving in Vienna in 1783/4 and signed it at the bottom with his initials "Z. O." As his iconographic model he probably used a painting that was in his possession, which he entrusted, together with his other belongings, to the brotherhood of the Great Remeta Monastery just before leaving for Vienna.²⁰ To emphasize the idea of Christ interceding for sinful humanity, Orfelin depicted the sinner in the bottom left corner with his head raised, looking up at the Saviour. Two angels are approaching him, one of them placing a laurel wreath on his head, the other giving him a palm branch. In the very act of repentance, the role of faith and belief in the redemptive power of Christ's blood and body were emphasized as preconditions for obtaining absolution from sin. Within the frame, below the composition itself, are written the words spoken by Christ: "Father! I want those who truly believe in me and trust in me forever, to be saved by my blood and death."²¹ At the top of the composition, Orfelin inscribed the reference to the Holy Scripture to which the image refers – "1 John 1: 1, 2" – the First Epistle of the Holy Apostle John the Theologian. This engraving, by its format and content, belongs to the standard type of small religious images (*Andachtsbilder*) intended for encouraging personal devotion.²²

¹⁹ For more on different datings of this print, see M. Timotijević, "Zaharije Orfelin – Raspeće sa Longinom i poštovanje Hristovih rana u srpskoj umetnosti XVIII veka", *ZMSLU* 21 (1985), 223–230; Timotijević, *Srpsko barokno slikarstvo*, 343–344.

²⁰ L. Čurčić, "Ilustrovanje rukopisnih knjiga 18. veka bakrorezom i jedan takav rad Zaharija Orfelina", *Bibliotekar* XIII (1961), 67–69; B. Vuksan, "Pokajanje i ispoved kod Srba u religioznoj literaturi i grafici XVIII veka", *ZFF* 17 (1991), 242.

²¹ In 18th-century piety, the idea of Christ's baptismal sacrifice and the redemption of sinful humanity through his blood occupied a very important place. It is no coincidence therefore that this kind of imagery occurs as painted decoration in the prothesis of the Orthodox churches in Kikinda, Mokrin, Timisoara, Sremska Kamenica or the Monastery of Bodjani: M. Timotijević, "Hleb životni u niši proskomidije hrama manastira Bođana", *GPSKV* 18 (1996), 151–155. Cf. G. Tüskés and É. Knapp, "Graphische Darstellungen in den Publikationen barockzeitlicher Bruderschaften", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 52/3 (1989), 368.

²² Timotijević, *Zaharija Orfelin*, 231–232. As a convenient vehicle for meditation, the print was sold for a long time. Along with similar images, it even appears around 1800 in the catalogue of the bookseller Damjan Kaulici. I. V. Veselinov, "Jedan nepoznat katalog Damjana Kaulicija iz 1800", *ZMSKJ* 21/3 (1973), 532.

It is believed that Orfelin found the model for this work in a graphic illustration by Hieronymus Wierix (1553–1619), one of the most important Flemish engravers of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. He combined the iconography of the Holy Trinity with the theme of repentance, intricately emphasizing the idea of active repentance as a condition for absolution. The image of the remorseful penitent before the heavenly Father was thus an image of the act of sacramental forgiveness of sin. At the moment when the confessor, in the figure of God the Father, makes the sign of the cross, he utters the words: “Ego te absolve a peccatis tuis, in Nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.” At the bottom of the image is the prayer addressed to the Holy Trinity (Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, miserere nobis) because the priest giving absolution does so on behalf of the one who gave him the authority to do so. The traditional representation of the Holy Trinity became, in that way, the image of the Saviour’s intercession for the salvation of sinful humanity.²³

From the mid-eighteenth century, the rite of Holy Repentance and Confession in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci drew largely on Ukrainian and Russian theological literature. The rite of confession of the penitent based on Ukrainian books must have been substantially different from the one in old Serbian printed or manuscript service books. After church officials introduced it in the Russian Church during the seventeenth century, changes in the rite of Holy Repentance also made their way into the Serbian Church. The traditional belief of the Serbs was that repentance was a type of spiritual therapy supposed to heal the human soul from sin. The priest was, therefore, considered as a spiritual healer, and sinner as a sick person.²⁴ Instead of this therapeutic understanding of the confessor’s role, under the influence of the Catholic Reformation, he becomes something closer to a judge. The main means by which this idea spread in other Eastern Orthodox churches was the influential book *Православное исповедание веры* (The Orthodox Confession of Faith) published in 1643 by Peter Mogila, the Metropolitan of Kyiv. Although it was directly influenced by Latin scholastic theology, it was accepted as the correct in doctrine and teaching.²⁵ In the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, Mogila’s book was used as a school textbook, and it was so popular that Orfelin printed it twice: at first in Sremski Karlovci in 1758, and then in Venice in 1763. The frontispiece of his first edition shows the Holy Trinity in glory (Fig. 5).²⁶ He designed the image according to a

²³ Vuksan, “Pokajanje i ispoved kod Srba”, 246–247.

²⁴ Vukašinović, *Srpska barokna teologija*, 94.

²⁵ Vuksan, “Pokajanje i ispoved kod Srba”, 251; D. Ruvarac, “Arhijerejske pouke – poslanice”, in *Arhiv ISPKM IV* (1914), 268–270; D. Ruvarac, “O duhovnicima”, *Srpski Sion XV* (1905), 477–478.

²⁶ For the iconography and symbolism of the image of the Holy Trinity in Baroque art, with earlier literature, see Timotijević, *Srpsko barokno slikarstvo*, 294–303. Cf. Tüskés and Knapp,

Russian printed copy and added short verses at the bottom of the page: "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Holy One / Allow me to see your face in heaven." This brief couplet belongs to the genre of prayer, and in terms of typology, it shows characteristics noticed in another work of Orfelin's – *Molitva pred smrt* (Prayer before Death).²⁷

Another work Orfelin made for popular piety was the 1770 engraving of the miraculous icon of the Mother of God of Vinča-Bezdin (Fig. 6). This icon belongs to the Eleusa iconographic type, frequent in Serbian religious art, with one of its most famous examples being the Russian icon of Our Lady of Vladimir.²⁸ Among the Serbs, the cult of this icon saw a revival in the eighteenth century, when the monk Pajsije brought to Belgrade in 1727 an older copy of the icon of Our Lady of Vladimir. A few years later, the icon was transferred to the nearby Vinča Monastery, where it remained until the Turks destroyed the monastery. Abbot Teodosije Veselinović took the icon to the Bezdin Monastery, where it became the focus of a strong cult over time. It acquired a great reputation among people when miracles started to happen in its presence, including miraculous healings. In the meantime, the Bezdin Monastery became one of the most important focuses of pilgrimage for the Eastern Orthodox population and the centre of devotion to the Mother of God north of the Sava and Danube.²⁹ To meet the needs of these pilgrims, artists made a series of painted and printed replicas: like Orfelin, the Viennese engraver Johan Winkler made a large engraving of the Mother of God of Vinča-Bezdin in 1762. However, Orfelin's engraving was smaller in size, and therefore cheaper and easier to sell. The worn-out copperplate grooves show that it was used a lot, and printed many, many copies.³⁰

"Graphische Darstellungen", 369–370.

²⁷ Borivoj Čalić has noted that Orfelin discussed problems of prayer poetics, and that he certainly did so again in Timisoara in 1762, when he wrote *Molitva roditelja* (Parent's Prayer) and included it in his manuscript of the catechism titled *Apostolsko mleko* (Apostolic Milk), which he prepared for his son Petar. This book has been lost and is not known today. B. Čalić, "O Orfelinovoj 'Molitvi pred smrt' i njenom grafičkom dvojniku", in *Ljetopis* (Zagreb 2002), 95–96.

²⁸ M. Tatić-Đurić, "Bogorodica Vladimirska", *ZMSLU* 21 (1985), 35–47.

²⁹ For more on the series of events related to the attempt of Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta to have the icon transferred to the Serbian Orthodox cathedral church in Sremski Karlovci and to make it the symbolic protector of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, see M. Timotijević, "Bogorodica Bezdinska i versko-politički program patrijarha Arsenija IV Jovanovića", *Balkanica* 22–23 (2001/2002), 338–339. For more on various forms of devotion to the Virgin in the 18th century, see S. Brajović, *U Bogorodičinom vrtu: Bogorodica i Boka Kotorska – barokna pobožnost zapadnog hrišćanstva* (Belgrade 2006), 88–106.

³⁰ Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII veka*, 194–195.

Throughout the eighteenth century, St. Simeon and St. Sava maintained a central place among the Serbian saints. They were particularly used by the hierarchy of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to convey the idea of ecclesiastical continuity of the medieval Serbian Church, and as a symbolic shield in its conflicts with the Roman Catholic Church. For example, Maksim Branković, founder of the monastery, was depicted between St. Simeon and St. Sava in one of the bottom (sovereign) tier of icons of the iconostasis of the Krušedol Monastery, establishing a symbolic connection between the Patriarchate of Peć and the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.³¹ Visual programs of Serbian Baroque churches often claimed that Stefan Nemanja had been a holy king, or a holy emperor, and the founder of a secular dynasty. Having completed his worldly affairs, he renounced the insignia and authority of a ruler in favour of spiritual advancement and became a monk, thus providing an example of a most virtuous person. Hence, on church iconostases, he is more frequently depicted as a holy monk than as a holy ruler. The cults of the two Serbian saints were propagated more effectively through engravings, which were multiplied in hundreds and thousands of copies. In that way, the printed image became an efficient tool of propaganda, fostering the veneration of these saints.

Familiar with that tradition, Orfelin made in 1780 an engraving of St. Sava and St. Simeon for the community of the Hilandar Monastery (Fig. 7). The print was commissioned by a certain Andrija Mandri from the town of Šipiska and donated to the monastery in memory of the deceased monk Atanasije Trpko, as can be read from the inscription at the bottom. Andrija Mandri was probably a Tsintsar (Aromanian) from Aegean Macedonia who had business ties with his compatriots in the Habsburg Monarchy. Commemorating and celebrating the two most important saints associated with Hilandar, he sponsored the creation of the engraving for his eternal memory.³² Orfelin represented the Serbian saints as full-length figures facing the observer and holding the model of the monastery between them. St. Sava, wearing episcopal robes and a mitre, blesses with his right hand, while St. Simeon holds a cross in his left hand. Under their feet are discarded royal insignia – crowns, sceptres and orbs – and in this act of rejecting earthly power and turning to the heavenly kingdom, Jesus Christ appears and receives them into Heaven with blessings. Many verses from

³¹ M. Timotijević, "Stefan Nemanja u baroknom versko-političkom programu Srpske crkve", in *Stefan Nemanja – Simeon Mirotočivi: istorija i predanje*, ed. Jovanka Kalić (Belgrade 1996), 396–401.

³² It is almost certain that Atanasije Trpko had relatives in the Habsburg Monarchy who could help him find the right engraver – Zaharija Orfelin: a certain Hristo Trpko is mentioned as a resident of Semlin in the census of 1774/5, and a Petar Trpko as a resident of Novi Sad in 1793, see D. J. Popović, *O Cincarima: prilozi pitanju postanka našeg građanskog društva* (Belgrade 1998), 460.

the *Service* for St. Simeon, as well as from the one for St. Sava, published in Orfelin's *Srbljak* in 1765, could have served as a literary inspiration for this visual composition.³³ The crucial role entrusted to them was the role of representing the Serbian people before God, as underlined in the verses in *Srbljak*: "Like two beacons on the spiritual fort, you enlighten with faith the land of your people, and that is why we piously hold service in your memory."³⁴ Orfelin knew these verses very well because they were taught in schools and sung in churches, and was undoubtedly influenced by them when he conceived and designed that image. At the same time, he sought to respect the iconographic canon, following the already established visual patterns. Orfelin borrowed the basic compositional scheme from the central part of his work from 1770, the engraving of Sts Peter and Paul with a view of the church in Sremski Karlovci dedicated to them. The figures of the apostles are shown in a similar manner, holding the model of the church between them, while Christ blesses them from Heaven. The iconographical solution of the central part of the composition undoubtedly points to some older Baroque iconographical models. The credible representation of the urban complex surrounding the Church of Sts Peter and Paul shows that Orfelin as an engraver had mastered perspective and cartography.³⁵

Zaharija Orfelin's engravings adequately responded to the religious needs of the Serbs in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci in the eighteenth century. As a member of the Orthodox community, he knew very well what kind of religious imagery was in demand on the market, and how to give it appropriate shape, design and measure. Accordingly, he chose which saints he would depict and in what iconographic manner, giving priority to the national saints, among whom St. Simeon and St. Sava had precedence. The number of printed copies depended on the popularity of a particular icon, as was the case with the miraculous icon of the Mother of God of Vinča-Bezdin. Poor-quality prints prove that this image was in high demand and that Orfelin sometimes stretched the use of his copperplates to the limit. In their pursuit of redemption, people equally sought engravings with the themes of repentance and the Eucharist. Consequently, Orfelin's engravings depicting Christ's mediatorial role in the salvation of humankind were still in high demand, and remained so until the end of the eighteenth century, when political turmoil changed the long-standing religious and cultural models of the Baroque epoch.

³³ Sava Nemanjić, "Služba Svetom Simeonu", in *Srbljak*, vol. 1: *Službe, kanoni, akatisti*, ed. Đorđe Trifunović (Belgrade 1970), 9, 15, 141.

³⁴ Teodosije Hilandarac, "Služba Svetome Simeonu", in *ibid.*, 209.

³⁵ Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII veka*, 194.

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Fig. 1 Zaharija Orfelin, Title page of Srbljak, engraving, Venice 1765



Fig. 2 Juraj Šubarić, Title page of Juraj Rattkay's book *Memoria Regum et Banorum Regnorum Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae*, engraving, Vienna 1652



Fig. 3 Zaharija Orfelin, *Crucifixion*, engraving, after 1770



Fig. 4 Zaharija Orfelin, Christ before God the Father prays for the salvation of the sinner, engraving, c. 1782/3



Fig. 5 Zaharija Orfelin, *The Holy Trinity in Glory*, title page of Peter Mogila's book *The Orthodox Confession of Faith*, engraving, Sremski Karlovci 1758



Fig. 6 Zaharija Orfelin, Icon of the Mother of God of Vinča-Bezdin, engraving, 1770

