





SERBIAN ARTISTIC HERITAGE IN
KOSOVO AND METOHIJA
IDENTITY, SIGNIFICANCE, VULNERABILITY



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IVa.4. SAINT SAVA, FIRST SERBIAN ARCHBISHOP

Fresco from the katholikon of Gračanica monastery, ca. 1320, copy

Copied by Časlav Colić, 1983

Casein tempera on primed linen canvas

2.00 × 0.71 m

Inscription: С(ВЄ)ТН САВА АРХИЕП(ИСКО)ПЪ

Gallery of Frescoes of the National Museum in Belgrade, inv. no. 27_1280

The portrait of St. Sava, the first Serbian archbishop, was painted in the Church of the Annunciation in Gračanica monastery, in the lower zone on the western wall of the naos. The inscription next to his image describes him as 'St. Sava the Archbishop.' The first Serbian ecclesiastical leader is painted representatively, facing forward, with a nimbus around his head. The portrait's iconography is common for all posthumous presentations of the first Serbian archbishop. St. Sava is portrayed as a middle-aged man, with short, dark and slightly graying hair, and a long beard separated into two locks. His features are done in pale ocher with greenish shadows around the eyes and on the edges of the face and brow. He has a tonsure, which is characteristic of almost all his portraits. St. Sava is wearing a *sticharion*, over which is a white *sakkos* with

big dark crosses. The side borders of the *sakkos* as well as the ends of the short sleeves have a golden hem decorated with crosses enclosed in medallions. Here, the archbishop of the Serbian autocephalous church was shown for the first time holding a handkerchief and a cross decorated with pearls and precious stones in his right hand, and the closed Book of Gospel in his left. Protomaster Michael, the son of Eutychios, who, with his workshop, painted the frescoes in Gračanica, also did this portrait of Serbian Archbishop Sava I.

LITERATURE: Тодић, *Грачаница*, 98, 177–178, Pl. XIV, fig. 79; idem, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 82, 167, 332, fig. 19; idem, *Рейрезенийайивни йорйрейи свейої Саве*, 236–239, fig. 6; Стародубцев, *Сакос црквених достй-јансийвеника*, 526, 534; Војводић, *Лушеви и фазе*, 71.

DRAGANA PAVLOVIĆ

