



ISSN 0352-6844 / UDK 7 (5)

Matica srpska journal for fine arts

42

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42

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МАТИЦА СРПСКА
Одељење за ликовне уметности

MATICA SRPSKA
Department of Visual Arts

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The Journal is financially supported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia and Provincial Secretariat of Culture and Information of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

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Liturgical vessels from XIX century Serbian Orthodox churches: Pictorial symbolic decoration of Eucharistic chalices*

ABSTRACT: Within the corpus comprising the visual culture of Serbian churches in the XIX century, an important and rarely studied place belongs to liturgical objects. Their visual and symbolic decoration corresponds to their special liturgical purpose. When observed as objects of communication, liturgical vessels are semantically complex, since they mediate between the sacred and the believer; they contain and convey the truths of the church in service of its holiest mystery – the Eucharist. The most distinguished place among these objects belongs to the chalice, whose plain surface demands pictorial decoration that is almost catechetical in character. Such images are in direct communication with both the clergy and the congregation, who together receive the holy mystery of the Eucharist from it. In this sense the iconographic repertoire used in the pictorial decoration of this most important liturgical vessel of the Orthodox Church was gradually conceptualized, formed, and ultimately fixed in the XIX century.

KEYWORDS: Serbian Orthodox Church, liturgy, liturgical vessel, chalice, symbolic decoration, visual culture, XIX century.

In terms of the peculiarities of chalice decoration in comparison with other liturgical objects, it must be emphasized that only as a whole does this decoration provide a complete image; in this sense sacerdotal vestments and liturgical textiles cannot be observed separately from the chalice or the fitting of a cross, just as the covers of Gospels cannot be separated from the fittings of relics. The same dogmatic assumptions lie in the roots of their symbolic decoration and formation.¹ The identical motives and symbolic representations, also

* This article is the result of work within the project “Representation of Identity in Art and Verbo-Visual Culture of the Early Modern Period”. This project is sponsored by the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of the Republic of Serbia, project number: 177001 (2011–2014).

¹ The research in this field to this date is presented primarily through papers concerning the national goldsmithing of a particular epoch (RADOJKOVIĆ 1962; 1966; VUJOVIĆ 1968); also, through the analyses of treasury materials from significant Serbian monasteries (ŠAKOTA 1981; 1984; 1988.); moreover, in the context of the early modern period, church art and the temple as entities in which objects function within the field of visual culture where important contributions were provided and which represent the basis for engaging in detailed scientific analyses (TIMOTIJEVIĆ 1996a: 121–148; 2008: 167–259; MAKULJEVIĆ 2006a: 45–96; 199–238).

iconographic templates, often appear on different liturgical objects, such as Seraphim, who are represented on ripidions (liturgical fans)², tabernacles, or chalices with their special symbolic meaning and role in the liturgical ritual (ŠAKOTA 1984: 232–233; DAUTOVIĆ 2008: 161–162). If attention is directed to the vessels used in proskomide during the office of Oblation and on the altar itself during the liturgy, such as the chalice, paten (diskos), asterisk, spear, liturgical spoon, and zeon, with present textiles such as a liturgical veil for the chalice and diskos and aer, a group of objects dedicated exclusively for use by priests is distinguished from the chalice as the final vessel from which the holiest mystery of the Eucharist is received. This vessel represents an object of a particular communication with the holy by bringing it to the faithful. Therefore, greater attention is dedicated to its visual decoration and its symbolism in a comprehensive way that catechetically summarizes the basic truths of the Church and Christian teaching.

The visual formation of the chalice implies the use of symbolic decoration which is related to its liturgical function. Liturgical sources state that holy images were often found on chalices and that the most commonly displayed was the image of the Good Shepherd, which was used to remind priests of their shepherd obligations (VESNIK SRPSKE CRKVE 1897: 113–114). However, in early modern period practices there are almost no chalices that contain this iconographic template, nor is it recorded as a model on visual art sources. This shows that the beginnings of the symbolic decoration of the chalice date from the first centuries of Christianity, but also that their visual meaning is connected to their function, communicating and transferring messages equally to those who make the offerings in the chalice – the priests and laymen who receive the holy Eucharist from it.

The choice of represented topics is usually related to the Eucharistic function of the chalice, emphasizing some of its segments in decoration. They can symbolically refer to the act of transubstantiation of the offerings into the true body and blood of Christ or to the offerings themselves, sacrificed in the form of bread and wine, which remind of their bloodless character and the establishment by Christ himself at the Last Supper. The sacrificial character can also be emphasized through representations of the cross as the instrument of passion or the redemptive character through use of the depiction of *Deësis* and the figures of saints, such as Evangelists, as founders of the terrestrial apostolic church. The use of text engraved on the chalice can also have a decorative character which usually appears as a prayer or in the form of the donor's votive inscription. Apart from this, in some cases, when perceiving the chalice in the mediating sense, it contained profane emblems such as national symbols.

The decoration of the chalice is formulated in accordance with the dogmatic demands of the Orthodox Church. It is symbolically related to the sacrificial character of the liturgy, emphasizing the importance of the holy offerings and their transubstantiation into the true body and blood of Christ. This also represents the source for the choice of topics related to the interpretation of the chalice as the vessel of salvation (ДМИТРЕВСКИИ 1894: 134–135) and the use of certain iconographic types such as *Deësis* as a visualization of the liturgy itself and its complexity (MOURIKI 1968: 13–16). The disposition of the decoration visually distinguishes the cup of the chalice as the main carrier of the symbolic message on which the above-mentioned motives appear; the handle is rarely decorated with anything apart from nodes or floral

² *Flabellum*, lat.

motives, while on the base simpler and fewer ornaments and symbols related to the cup of the chalice are repeated.

In the first half of the XIX century, on chalices crafted in traditional silversmith workshops,³ representations of angelic powers prevail in the form of angels by way of orders from Cherubim and Seraphim – motives of the cross and floral decoration in which the grapevine appears occasionally as a Eucharistic symbol. They were crafted from silver by chasing and embossing, as well as the *Repoussé* technique and engraving. The base and handle often repeat the form of those on the Altar crosses, while the cup is mostly wider and shallower. Taking the decoration into consideration, this makes them specific objects related to the Serbian Church in the Balkan area. Apart from those already stated, during the uprising period, and in this particular context, profane topics such as national symbols appear on the cup of the chalice.

In the second half of the century chalices formed by goldsmiths⁴ were made in accordance with the current styles of the historicism époque and they were primarily decorated by wheat ears and grapevines as Eucharistic emblems; their Orthodox character is persistently defined by the Eucharistic prayer which appears on the brim of the cup styled after the recent Russian models. Russian chalices are present in large numbers, the characteristics of which are representations of saints and the use of round medallions (DAUTOVIĆ 2008: 165–166). These chalices also left a trace on the practice of the decoration of chalices in Serbian surroundings. This period is characterized by import both from Russia and Austro-Hungary, but also by modernized national production under the influence of historic styles which followed the building and renewal of Serbian temples in the second half of the century.

The end of the XIX and the beginning of the XX century was marked by the almost complete absence of any decoration or its reduction to a minimum. Liturgical objects contain representations of the cross and less abundantly stylized floral ornaments following the general currents of applied art from the beginning of the XX century, primarily treating the form itself and cancelling the superfluous decoration.

SYMBOLS OF THE EUCHARIST

As the basic symbols of the Eucharistic sacrifice, wheat ears, grapes and grapevines appear in the decoration of chalices. Wheat ears symbolize the flour used to make prosphoron, out of which the Lamb will be separated and intended to become the true body of Christ; grapes and grapevines symbolically represent the matter that yields wine which transubstantiates into

³ The term *кyжyнцyиja* is related to the Balkan silversmiths whose works in precious metals were created primarily by the use of traditional goldsmith techniques: *Repoussé* and chasing, filigree, granulation, and *savat*, by which they formed objects and jewelry in accordance with the standards of the Ottoman-Balkan cultural model. The relation of the traditional silversmiths (*кyжyнцyиja*) as opposed to a goldsmith can be observed as one resembling the relation of “Zograph” model painters with the academically educated painters of the epoch of Historicism Cf. (MAKULJEVIĆ 2004: 385–405; 2005: 21–27), who operated in the same period. This transformation was actually a part of the complex process to which Serbian culture was exposed in the XIX century.

⁴ When speaking about goldsmiths, it must be taken into consideration that this term was not only applied to the smiths who manufactured golden objects but also included silversmiths who created objects made of silver, since there is no difference in the techniques of the manufacturing and processing of these two precious metals (LINK 1973: 9); The term *goldsmith* paradigmatically relates to the phenomena of accepting the modern technical procedures of production and the adjoining Western-European historical styles in metal processing in Serbian surroundings, especially after the second half of XIX century, Cf. (DAUTOVIĆ 2012a).

the true blood of Christ. The choice of grapes and wheat ears emphasize the bloodless character of the Eucharistic sacrifice (сокровище христианское 1824: 239–242).

Biblical equating between the wheat and the human appears more often in European art after the Trident reform. During this time the European emblematic accepts it and forms it in the contextual sense. In the form of pictogram, wheat ears are the bases to the moralistic encouragement of the consciousness expressed through an image – physical death as the antecedent of the new life, formed under the influence of the Stoics and through the interpretation of *The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians* (МИХАЙЛОВИЋ 1979: 56). The symbolic equation of the blood of Christ with grapevines out of which the Eucharistic wine is made is a well-known topic in the cultural circle of the Orthodox world since the late middle ages. This topic attains its further development in the Baroque epoch through various forms of representation, such as Christ in the winemaking press and the related representation of Christ as the heavenly bread which is ground in the Eucharist wheat mill (ТИМОТЈЕВИЋ 1996b: 392).

This kind of chalice decoration, organized in the form of a field with emblematically represented grapes and wheat ears, is most commonly placed in the cartouche. This is the form in which it appears on goldsmith works, among which the most relevant is the chalice manufactured in Vienna by the goldsmith Georgije Jovanov for prince Miloš Obrenović; in the name of the young prince Mihailo, he presented it as a gift to the Mihajlovac Church in 1836 (ЋИРОВИЋ 2012: 124–125). Wheat ears and grapes surrounded by floral garlands and ribbons are represented in decorative cartouche, following the brim of the base garlands with entwined wheat and grapes (fig. 1).

On the base of the chalice from the Church in Tijanje (donated in 1851) a frieze of a grape vine appears following the brim as the only decoration that is distinguished from the smooth



Fig. 1. Eucharistic emblems – Ears of wheat and clusters of grapes, chalice from Mihajlovac Church from 1836, the work of goldsmith Georgij Jovanov.

classicist-conceived body of the chalice. On the neobaroque chalice from the Church in Golubac, dating from 1867, this kind of decoration is formed from a grape arranged with three ears of wheat placed between two leaves of vine. Ornamentation made in this manner was consequently applied to the areas adjoining the line of the cup bottom and to its base. The Viennese work from 1853 also includes the chalice from the monastery of Petkovica, which also contains a frieze near the line of its base composed only from entwined ripe grapes.

Traditional smiths used the same decorative motive in their works, just without the heraldicity of the clearly framed fields intended for this kind of decoration. An interesting example is the chalice from the Church in Gornja Trepča, from metochion of the monastery Vujan, gifted to the monastery in 1871. It was manufactured from silver and gold-gilt. It consists of a smooth cup and a gold-gilt silver coronet around it decorated with the *ajouré technique*, with motives of garlands and leaves, which by its conception is more middle European, with a simple handle and the base decorated with four fields formed out of broken arches. In the two opposing ones there are rose flowers and in the remaining two there is a chalice as a Eucharistic emblem represented along the middle axis, while on the sides there are branches of grapevine and grapes bending towards it (fig. 2).

In his first works, the Belgrade goldsmith Jovan Nikolić uses emblematic displays of grapes and wheat ears, first on the chalice from Gornja Dobrinja and then on the one from the Rakovica Monastery. He places them to resemble the heraldic representation in the shield-shaped fields by use of which he forms the rim around the cup, while the base on respective chalices regularly follows the stylistic direction in which he forms the cup. On the rim around the cup, manufactured by the goldsmiths Stojić and Nikolić for the Ascension Church in Belgrade, individual grapes with two vine leaves each appear. On the chalices made by Nikolić for the Cathedral Church in Negotin, but also for the Church in Kobišnica and two chalices



Fig. 2. Eucharistic emblem – Chalice with grape vine, church in Gornja Trepča, votive gift to the monastery of Vujno in 1871.

from the Church in Salaš, he formed a unique decorative field which resembles by symmetry and expression the heraldically composed shield, because he crosses the wheat ears with the branch of vine with grapes. The Topčider chalice is in the style of Neo-Rococo in its shell-like cartouche, and the base also contains these terrestrial fruits, as well as the latter Neo-Baroque chalices from the Cathedral Church in Belgrade and Churches in Radujevac and Rajac. The representative chalice that was donated by Prince Milan Obrenović to the Cathedral Church in Belgrade also contains Eucharistic motives on the base (DAUTOVIĆ 2012a: 180–187).

Apart from the mentioned Eucharistic motives on the cup of the chalice along its brim, the most common inscription among them is a hymn which is sung during the holy Eucharist: *Receive the Body of Christ, Taste the Fountain of Immortality.*⁵

ТѢЛО ХРИСТОВО ПРИИМТЕ ИСТОЧНИКА БѢСМЕРТНАГО ВКУСИТЕ

This prayer is present in the church Slavonic transcription on almost all the chalices made by Nikolić, but also on the chalice from the monastery of Petkovica. It confirms the Orthodox character of the chalice, directly calling for the church hymn sung by the choir with the people while the communicants approach to receive the holy mystery of the Eucharist. In the second half of the XIX century, the use of matrices for metal shaping in accordance with current historical styles is common; these moulds often originated from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The same matrices were used for the production of chalices for the Roman Catholic cultural circle, which share the equal notions of the real and true Eucharistic sacrifice of Christ. Therefore, modeled after the Russian practice, the engraved text of the Eucharistic prayer transformed these objects, fitting them visually into the Orthodox ritual. If the decorative purpose of the calligraphically-engraved text is taken into consideration, but also the old practice of inscribing the votive texts on objects designated for the Church (RADOJKOVIĆ 1966: Fig. 7; 40; 42; 58; 88; 89; 90; 185; 187; 192; 193), then it can also be considered as an equal element of decoration.

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE CROSS

In the symbolic decoration of chalices the cross as an instrument of the Passion occupies a special and honorable place. It is influenced by the Baroque reform of the Orthodox world and opposing the Protestant theology that criticized the emphasized celebration of this relic. Therefore, in Baroque preaching, books, and literature the cross is distinguished as a symbol of Christ's redemptive love towards sinful mankind. It is interpreted as the tree of life whose exegetical image is announced in the Old Testament and confirmed afterwards throughout the New Testament. In emblematic literature the cross is emphasized as a universal symbol, *the paddle of faith*, and *the mast* of the church nave, and then *the key* of the doors of heavenly Jerusalem (TIMOTIJEVIĆ 1996b: 333–334). During the XIX century in liturgical manuals, the cross was conceived as: *the guardian of the entire universe, pulchritude of the church and God's glory, which is to the opprobrium and malison of disbelievers* (MAKULJEVIĆ 2006a: 193). It is an instrument of salvation by which Christ defeated death and Satan.

⁵ The Divine liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom (ŠMEMAN 1992: 72).

As a motive in the symbolic decoration of the chalice, the cross continuously appears during the XIX century. The cup of the chalice made by silversmith Petko, donated in 1812 to the Old Church in Negotin, is decorated with a cross whose base is entwined in a rose flower and leaves, while on the top is a dove (fig. 3). Inside the church space the crucifixion cross with the Dove of the Holy Spirit is placed on the top of the iconostasis, visually and symbolically completing its sense. Pointing to this cross and to the attention of believers was done by specific acts during the liturgical ritual (MAKULJEVIĆ 2008: 100–101). Apart from that already stated, the display of flowers through floral decoration and the dove (i.e. birds) belongs to the old symbolic picture of paradise, conceived already in the visual culture of the early Christian period (KESSLER 2007: 111–139), whose notional and symbolic interpretation remained during the XVIII and XIX centuries (MIHAILOVIĆ 1979b: 312–319; ZARIĆ 2008: 138–139).



Fig. 3. Motive of the cross with a dove, decoration of the chalice cup engraved and made by silversmith Petko in 1812, Old Church in the city of Negotin.

On the chalices of goldsmith Nikolić, the cross always appears beside the rim of the chalice cup, beginning and ending the words of the hymn sung during the holy Eucharist. The emblematic display of the cross on Golgotha is almost regularly represented on Russian chalices and, as the instrument of the Passion, it is glistening in glory, surrounded by rays of light. The cross from the neo-baroque shaped chalice from the Church of Saint Archangel Gabriel in Veliko Gradište is also represented in this way (MAKULJEVIĆ 2006a: 75).

Apart from the medallions with the emblematic representation of the cross, in the second half of the XIX century emblematic pictograms with instruments of Christ's passion also appear, such as on the chalice of Topčider Church in Belgrade (VUJOVIĆ 1986: 421); emblematic pictograms of instruments of the Passion enter Baroque art of the Orthodox world by means of Western-European graphics. The way of composing the pictogram from the chalice of the Topčider Church corresponds to Baroque formulations from printed antimission that were stamped during the XIX century (DAUTOVIĆ 2008: 181–183).

At the end of the XIX century, decoration gradually vanishes from chalices and the cross is sometimes engraved on them, giving them an Orthodox character such as on the chalice from the treasury of the Cathedral Church in Negotin. This chalice was made in Vienna and stamped with the appropriate silver hallmarks; subsequently the votive inscription and a cross were engraved on it in 1893. The cross is depicted as an orthodox with rays of light in the intersection. Almost all ways of displaying the cross follow a similar formulation of a victorious instrument of salvation in glory, out of which sun rays burst.

ANGELIC POWERS

Representations of heavenly angels and angelic powers from the orders of Seraphim and Cherubim are very common motives in the symbolic decoration of chalices. Their appearance on the chalice and other altar vessels reflects the idea according to which the heavenly and earthly liturgy takes place simultaneously. In the moment of the consecration of holy offerings and their transubstantiation into the body and blood of Christ as the topmost and the holiest moment, according to Saint John Chrysostom: *angels surround the priest and a whole troop of celestial chorus is unified in cantillation while the altar is filled with angelic powers* (MIRKOVIĆ 1966: 103). Also, representations of angelic powers were displayed on ripidions which are placed before the altar table. They most commonly contained representations of Cherubim and six-winged Seraphim as guardians who watch over holy offerings, symbolizing the invisible flight of these powers over the holy throne and the holy offerings themselves (MIRKOVIĆ 1965: 118; ДМИТРЕВСКИИ 1993: 142–143). Ripidions also represent the convocation of holy heavenly incorporeal powers from different angelic hierarchies which follow and upheave gratitude to Christ the Emperor, who mysteriously appears in the form of a sacrifice carried in the hands of a priest. Therefore, deacons carry them before the holy offerings during the Great Entrance, representing Cherubim who, trembling with fear, precede the holy mysteries (СОКРОВИЩЕ ХРИСТИАНСКОЕ 1824: 119). These are the reasons why the heavenly incorporeal powers in the form of Seraphim and Cherubim appear as a frequent motive on chalices, which is common in the first half of the XIX century. This practice of symbolic decoration based on representing angelic powers was nurtured in the wider Balkan area under the jurisdiction of Constantinople Ecumenical Patriarchate, whose theological ideas and practices were maintained and about which other preserved chalices from the mentioned period testify (ДРУМЕВ 1976: 294–295, 298; FOTOPOULOS, DELIVORRIAS 1997: 350–357).

On the chalice from 1828 which is in the old Church in Užice, the base and the cup are decorated with winged angelic chests, four of them on both the base and the cup (fig. 4). These



Fig. 4. Depiction of angelic forces, base of the chalice from the Old Church in the city of Užice, made in 1828.

are distinguished by parcel-gilt golden areas, as opposed to the silver mass of the chalice. The other chalice from the same church, donated in 1844, contains two-winged angelic faces which appear only on the cup and which are also covered in gold plating (VUJOVIĆ 1986: 418; 420). The previously-produced chalice in some of the traditional silversmith workshops, under the orders of Duke Dimitrije Georgijević and donated in 1817 to the monastery Studenica, has the pictorial representation of Cherubim and Seraphim on its base in mutual alternation (ŠAKOTA 1988: 128–129). On the base of the chalice from the monastery Petkovića, manufactured in 1853 as the work of some of the Vienna

goldsmiths of the Orthodox cultural circle, six-winged Seraphim are displayed, between which are medallions, made using the *niello technique*. On the massive and deep cup of the chalice from 1874 kept in the Church of the Holy Martyr George in Surdulica, six-winged Seraphim are engraved. Figures of Seraphim on the cup can also be found on a simple chalice, probably made in the mid-XIX century and kept in the Church of Saint Petka in Smiljevići (DAUTOVIĆ 2009: 407–408). The filigree chalice from Osipaonica Church is decorated with heads of Cherubim cast in silver with filigree wings which are applied to the cup of the chalice (DAUTOVIĆ 2012b: 245–246).

The chalice cup from the Church in Prilipac, donated in 1883, is decorated with down-to-the-waist representations of angels between which a censer hanging on chains is displayed. Angels are represented as two-winged with arms crossed over the chest, dressed in tunic, with their heads surrounded by nimbus. The base of this chalice is decorated with floral ornaments. Censer that appears displayed on the chalice possesses the attribute of a Eucharistic symbol which had, as such, appeared on the Iconostasis Imperial Gate together with tablets of the covenant, vessels full of manna, and the chalice itself (TIMOTIJEVIĆ 1996b: 390).

CHRIST AND THE SAINTS

Representing the image of Christ and also the images of saints was a common practice in Russian Orthodoxy (IVANOVA 1976: 78; ŠAKOTA 1988: 127–128; DAUTOVIĆ 2008: 166). The scene that most frequently appears is the one of Deësis, where Christ is blessing people, and on the sides Virgin Mary and Saint John the Baptist are displayed, while the fourth medallion on the cup contains the cross on Golgotha. On the base there were usually Evangelists with their personifications. These representations were mostly engraved on metal, sometimes painted on porcelain medallions and applied into decorative frames, and there are also specimens made by the technique of enamel. The high-quality work of the Moscow goldsmiths, decorated by the engraved scene of Deësis and a cross, exists in Cathedral Church in Vranje. In the Cathedral Church of Belgrade several more chalices are kept, originating from the Russian Empire and designed in this way, on which apart from the cup the base is also decorated with the images of Evangelists. Other scenes can also be found on the base, such as on the mentioned chalice from Belgrade Cathedral Church, manufactured in 1836 in Moscow, on whose base there are the following scenes: *The Agony in the Garden*, *The Arrest of Jesus*, *Way to Calvary*, and *The Entombment of Christ* (VUJOVIĆ 1996: 162–163, 165).

The type of chalice frequently depicted in fresco decoration of the proskomidion niche in the XIX century relies on this method of decoration, performed by the use of figures of saints placed into medallions. The chalice from the monastery of Petkovića is decorated in this way as well; it was produced in 1853, probably as the work of some of the Viennese goldsmiths who, according to the hallmarks, in that same year worked on four marvelous silver ripidions and the cross for the court church of Prince Miloš Obrenović in Kragujevac by the order of Rista Pejović (MARKOVIĆ 1935: 41). This chalice was made from gold-gilt silver and the coronet around the chalice cup is decorated with motives of leaves and garlands made with the *ajouré technique*; on it there are four medallions made of silver and decorated by the *niello technique*. The technique of decorating metal objects with *niello* and *savat* has a long



Fig. 5. Images of saints on the chalice: Virgin Mary in Prayer, The Crucifixion, Saint Archangel Michael and Saint Nicolas. The work of goldsmith Jovan Nikolić from 1872, votive gift of Prince Milan Obrenović to the Cathedral Church in Belgrade.

tradition in the Balkan area (RADOJKOVIĆ 1966: 100–102). Medallions on the base of the chalice were also made using *niello*, on which the four Evangelists are represented with their symbols. The base also contains representations of grapes with grapevines and six-winged Seraphim who are placed between the medallions. This chalice was formed with great precision, as the work of an extremely crafty goldsmith.

The Belgrade goldsmith Jovan Nikolić used porcelain medallions for the decoration of the chalice made according to the order of young Prince Milan Obrenović for the Cathedral Church in Belgrade in 1872 (fig. 5). On the chalice cup in cartouches there are four oval medallions on which are displayed the following scenes: *Virgin Mary in Prayer*, *The Crucifixion*, *Saint Archangel Michael* and *Saint Nicolas*. The choice of individual saints on the cup of the chalice of Prince Milan could have been directed by his personal piety, interpreting them as devotional represent-

atives and protectors in this world and afterwards at the *Last Judgment*, but also related to the cult of Saint Archangel Michael, the patron of the Cathedral Church of Belgrade.

The new Baroque-shaped chalice from the Church of Saint Archangel Gabriel in Veliko Gradište is decorated with three medallions on the chalice cup which contain the following representations: *Christ Holding and Blessing Bread*, *The Crucifixion* and *The Holy Spirit in the Form of a Dove* hovering above an open Gospel on whose pages the initials *IC. XC.* are inscribed (MAKULJEVIĆ 2006a: 72). Medallions with the image of Christ or with *Deësis* point to the chalice as a container of his true blood and, in a miraculous way, Christ himself who is in it. The redemptive role of the sacrifice which is emphasized in this way, according to church teachings, brings salvation to the whole of mankind. The representation of the Holy Spirit as a dove directly reflects the canonicity of the act of epiclesis, visualizing the teaching about the need for the descending of the Holy Spirit upon the holy offerings for the sake of their transubstantiation.

On the base of the chalice made by the technique of filigree from the church in Osipaonica, Evangelists are displayed in oval medallions (DAUTOVIĆ 2012b: 245–246). The display of Evangelists and a topic such as the mentioned *The Agony in the Garden* corresponds to the current theological conceptions of the Russian church, who highlighted the biblically-historical dimension in defense of dogmatism of the Eucharistic act. As such they are present in the Serbian environment during the XIX century (MAKULJEVIĆ 2006a: 110).

PROFANE AND NATIONAL SYMBOLS

In the visual decoration of chalices in the XIX century, the occasional use of profane national symbols is noted. The only known example at the moment is the chalice of Duke Milenko Stojković, donated to the Old Church in Poreč (Donji Milanovac) in 1807. It was produced in the time of the First Serbian Uprising, after a great victory and the liberation of Eastern Serbia from the Turks, with a specifically-conceived decoration.⁶ The chalice was ordered in Vienna and formed in a classicist way, made from gold-gilt silver and located with a letter (A), also dated with a year (1807) as well as the initials of the smith (KS). It consists of a smoothly-polished insert cup; a decorated cup fitting on the handle with filigree nodes is positioned on the base decorated with floral ornamentation.

On one side, the composition surrounding the cup displays the Serbian Coat of Arms – a cross between four firesteels arranged in the quarters around it on a shield. A Coat of Arms is draped with a mantle lined with ermine, flanked as guardians by two Serbian officers from the period of the First Serbian Uprising (VASIĆ 1980: 11–19; 1983: 353–358). On the opposite side is displayed a heroic equestrian figure in full armour, crowned with a victorious laurel wreath by two angels. Below the horse hooves crossed halberds are displayed, spears and broken flags, and also a soldier helmet on a round shield, symbolizing the defeated army. The horse is decorated with a crest in a ceremonious way, like the helmet of the horseman himself (fig. 6).

This form of iconic representation of the triumphator on a horse had been established in the Roman classical period, further developed during the Renaissance and Baroque in the



Fig. 6. Allegorical personification of the triumph of the Serbian army on the chalice cup of Duke Milenko Stojković, Old Church in Poreč, 1807.

⁶ As one of the rebels from Karadorde's time and a participant in the uprising against the Dahias from 1804, Milenko Stojković together with Petar Dobrnjac is one of the most distinguished rebellion leaders in the territory of Eastern Serbia. In July of the mentioned year on the island of Adakale, and caught up with the running Dahias and by the order of Bećir-pasha, Duke Milenko deprived them of their lives. This event ended the first period of rebellious Serbia, and afterwards the battles of Ivankovac (1805), Mišar and Deligrad (1806), and Ičko's peace (1806) followed. By this reconciliation Serbia attained a great compromise, becoming a vassal principality. However, the reconciliation was discarded and a treaty was signed with Russia, while battles continued. In Eastern Serbia Duke Milenko Stojković made a breakthrough at Krajina and attacked Negotin, where Vidin Turks made him retreat and surrounded him on the Štubik northwest from Negotin. Karadorde and a part of the Russian army came forth to help him and on 19 June 1807, the Turkish army was defeated in the battles of Štubik and Malajnica. After this the whole of Krajina was liberated, excluding only Kladovo (VESELINOVIĆ 1966: 60 – 64).

service of magnificence and public representations of the ruler (BOROZAN 2013: 219–221), to which emblematic pictograms of war victory are added (RIPPA 1709: 51).⁷ Until today, scientific research interpreted the displayed chevalier as the Serbian Duke Karadorđe (VASIĆ 1965: 10). However, as much as there are numerous reasons for the point of view that the displayed national hero is Karadorđe himself, it is also possible that at the moment of donation, Duke Milenko Stojković memorializes the great victory of the Christian army as his own and in the name of gratitude for the conducted battle, lives saved, and the liberation of Krajina, he offers the chalice as a gift to the altar with the display of the allegorical victory and the triumph of the Serbian liberation army.

At the moment there is no historical material about the ideator of this chalice or the process of its manufacturing and ordering. The letter of Prince Miloš Obrenović sent to Naum Ičko in Zemun on 24 March 1824 during the preparations for the wedding of his daughter Petrija can point to the interpretation of the symbolic decoration of the chalice from Poreč as an allegorical personification of the Serbian military triumph. In this letter Prince Miloš orders the decoration of his court in Kragujevac, apart from other procurements to be purchased, a silver goblet and flagon. He explicitly describes how these objects should look: *On the goblet and flagon I want these decorations on the sides: on one side the Serbian Coat of Arms and on the other a Duke with a sable-helmet, and from the third one a lord on a horse, and under the horse's legs military signs such as spears, flags, canons, and on the lord's head a knight's helmet, from the right and left side an angel holding with one hand a laurel wreath and trumpets with the other one* (DIMITRIJEVIĆ-STOŠIĆ 1962: 31). The chalice of Duke Milenko was probably familiar to someone from the prince's surroundings or to the prince himself, since this description almost literally fits the chalice, connoted through the concept of the allegorical triumph of the nation in the service of the ruler.

Regarding this chalice, P. Vasić states a doubt in terms of the handle, which he considers to be heterogeneous with the remainder of the chalice and that it was additionally changed due to the use of filigree nodes which are positioned on the top, middle and bottom of the handle separated with silver cylinders (VASIĆ 1964–1965: 114–116). This fact is unlikely, since the handle is gold-gilt like the chalice. Apart from this, the use of filigree as a traditional technique could place the chalice visually in a relation with the older works of Serbian goldsmiths and the period of the “glorious past” (DAUTOVIĆ 2012b: 240–242). Bearing in mind its nationally-engaged decoration this could have been a meaningful gesture, because the chalice was not ordered to accordingly represent a certain stylistic direction but rather to express and convey a certain idea. Also, in the beginning of the XIX century, during the manufacturing of certain works, Viennese and Serbian goldsmiths cooperated (HAN 1970: 663).

Observing this chalice within the frames of the visual culture of nationalism, it can be taken as one of the early examples of a complex allegorical personification from the period of the First Serbian Uprising (MAKULJEVIĆ 2006b: 207–222). Taking into consideration the image of the Eucharist in the structure of the Kosovo myth, it could be actualized exactly by the

⁷ Bearing in mind the Christian cultural context and the genesis of this kind of representation, it can also be connoted through the concept of *Miles Christianus* as one of the forms of its symbolic and allegorical meaning (MOFFITT 1983: 89–95); one can also see this form of representation in Serbian visual culture during the XVIII century (TIMOTIJEVIĆ 1987: 71–78).

symbolic gesture of the chalice, donating with its display of victory for the Christian army over the centuries-old enemy. While in the context of its function, profane elements of the symbolic decoration can point to the spilt blood and sacrifice made for the sake of creating the Christian state, equating it somewhat with the blood of martyrs for faith and with the blood of Christ present in the chalice in a miraculous way.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Liturgical items as objects of visual culture participate in constituting the sacral space of the church and they finally give form to its holy space, since by means of these vessels and objects the space comes to life in the ritual and, above all, the liturgical sense. Vessels are means of communication with believers during various church rituals, even though the manipulation of these utensils lies in the domain of the priest. They are used to conduct the Holy mysteries, indirectly bringing to believers the concept of Christian grace and the complex abstract category of Holiness. Therefore, the symbolic decoration of these objects visually reflects the teachings of the Church, which are connected to their function in a ritual.

The chalice is, semantically speaking, the most complex vessel, with a role during the liturgical ritual that is crucial and in an incomprehensible way contains Christ himself. By staying out of the complex dogma of transubstantiation, its symbolic meaning within the frames of the church is canonically determined and its recognition in the domain of visual culture is almost emblematic. As opposed to the holy images whose sacred nature is differently constructed, Eucharistic utensils are directly consecrated by the liturgical ritual containing Christ himself as the final object and materialization of Christian belief. To a great extent, previous epochs shaped the chalice as a special decorated cup, morphologically influenced by the Gothic and completed with precious gems in accordance with its biblical symbolism, continuing this practice for a long time. During the XVIII century and finally in the XIX century, images appear on the chalice as the main functional carrier of the symbolic message. Under the influence of emblems, pictograms of the Eucharist appear, combining wheat ears and grapevines in different forms. Another important narrative is the representation of angelic powers, in whose unseen and meaningful cooperation the liturgical ritual takes place. Representations of angelic powers can be related to the wider Balkan area as the field of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's jurisdiction. The influence of Russian theology, through import, brought the display of *Deësis* and the representation of saints, also Evangelistic scenes through depicted medallions, enameling or engraving which, as an appropriate expression of Orthodoxy, were accepted in Serbian surroundings. To a significant extent, industrial production determines the further destiny of decoration which moved between historical styles and the mass Russian church production. At the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the following one, all image forms of decoration were abandoned, giving their place to the cross as the basic symbol.

The ways of constructing the notion of holiness in a given time and cultural context are reflected through mechanisms that are in the service of its transfer and communication towards the believers. Within visual culture, objects that are related to practicing different rituals and forms of piety participate in the forming of the concept of holiness as its denominators and

conveyers to the same extent as the images themselves, and sometimes even more than them (BYNUM WALKER 2013: 3–18). Therefore, the pictorial symbolic decoration of liturgical objects can be perceived through the relation between the images recognizable in the iconographic sense and the world of objects with the remark that they are mutually contained by the principle of *mise en abyme*, since objects such as chalices can be found in different iconographic displays and that they themselves are carriers of the image representations. In this sense their meaning as objects and functioning in the XIX century is more clearly tied to the symbolic image, which related to the reception of the observer and more or less brings them closer and interprets them in the abstract sphere of holiness.

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ЛИТУРГИЈСКИ САСУДИ У СРПСКИМ ЦРКВАМА XIX ВЕКА:
ПИКТОРАЛНА СИМБОЛИЧКА ДЕКОРАЦИЈА ЕВХАРИСТИЈСКИХ ПУТИРА

Резиме

У визуелној култури српске цркве у XIX веку, важно и мало проучено место припада литургијским предметима. Посматрани као објекти комуникације, литургијски сасуди су сложени будући да посредују између светог и верника, садржавајући и преносећи истине цркве у служби њене најсветије тајне – евхаристије. Најистакнутије место међу богослужбеним предметима свакако припада путиру. Улога путира у току литургијског ритуала је кључна, управо он на мистичан и несазнатљив начин садржи самог Христа, не улазећи у сложenu догму пресуштаствљења, његово симболичко значење у оквирима цркве канонски је одређено а препознатљивост у домену визуелне културе готово амблематска, што га чини семантички најсложенијим сасудом.

Сведена површина овог објекта захтева пикторалну декорацију која има готово катихетски карактер, чији је садржај у директној комуникацији како са свештенством тако и са верницима који

заједно из њега примају Свету тајну причешћа. Распоред декорације визуелно истиче чашу путира као главног носиоца симболичке поруке, на којој се јављају одређени иконографски типови. Дршка је ретко украшена, изузев формом нодуса или флоралним мотивима. На стопи се понављају орнаменти или симболи који су у вези са чашом путира.

Претходне епохе од средњег века у највећој мери путир су обликовале као украшену чашу, под утицајем готике, допуњену драгим камењем, сходно његовој библијској симболици, настављајући ову праксу током XVI и XVII века. Под утицајем амблематике јављају се од XVIII века пиктограми евхаристије, комбинујући житно класје са виновом лозом у различитим видовима, који се симболички односе на чин претварања предложених дарова у тело и крв Христову, или на саме дарове принесене на жртву у виду хлеба и вина, подсећајући на њену бескрвну природу и установљење од самог Христа на Тајној вечери. Други важан аспект јесте представљање бестелесних анђеоских сила, у чијем невидљивом многозначном садејству се одвија литургијски ритуал. Представе бестелесних сила у виду Серафима и Херувима везане су за шири балкански простор под јурисдикцијом Васељенске цариградске патријаршије. Руски импорт допринео је пракси приказивања светитељских ликова и појединих јеванђеоских сцена, како на сликаним медаљонима и емајлу тако и гравирањем представа попут Деизисног чина, које су као израз православности били прихваћени у српској средини. Жртвени карактер путира наглашаван је приказивањем крста као оруђа страдања. Гравирани текст на путиру, најчешће у виду причесне молитве или у форми приложничког натписа, може се интерпретирати као вид декорације. Поред овога у појединим случајевима, схватајући путир у посредничком смислу, на њему су се могли наћи профани амблеми попут националних обележја.

Пикторална симболичка декорација путира носилац је значења овог литургијског предмета, објашњавајући његову сложену функцију учесницима литургијског ритуала у XIX веку, успостављајући сликом везу са светом објеката које тумачи унутар апстрактне сфере светости.