





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



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#### IVa.2. KING MILUTIN

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

Copied by Olga Tiran, 1964

Casein tempera on primed linen canvas, 3.51 × 1.22 = 4.282 m

Inscription: СТЕФАНЪ ОУРОШЪ Х(РН)С(Т)ΟΥ В(ОГ)ΟΥ ВѢРЬНЪ М(Н)Л(О)СТНЮ В(О)ЖНЮ КРАА(Ъ) САМОДРЪЖЬЦЪ  
ВСѢХЪ СРЪПЬСКНХЪ ЗЕМЛЪ И ПОМОРЬСКНХЪ И ХТНТОРЪ

Gallery of Frescoes of the National Museum in Belgrade, inv. no. 27\_701

The portrait of King Milutin, ktetor of the Gračanica, was painted at a prominent place in the Church of the Annunciation, in the lower zone of the southern side of the passage connecting the narthex and the naos. Milutin's portrait makes a whole with the picture of his wife, Queen Simonis, painted opposite him, on the northern side of the same passage. This fresco displays the iconographic formula of the ruler's Divine Investiture, taken from Byzantine art. The idea was illustrated by the representation of Christ surrounded by cherubs, at the top of the soffit of the vault, at the moment when he blesses Milutin and, simultaneously, sends a crown to the Serbian king through angels. In this way the heavenly origin of Milutin's authority and its legitimacy were underlined. The inscription next to the figure of the king-ktetor contains his full title: *Stefan Uroš, faithful to Christ God, by the mercy of God sovereign king of all Serbian lands and the littoral, and ktetor*. In Gračanica, King Milutin is represented facing forward, with a nimbus around his head and holding a model of his foundation. He is wearing a crown dec-

orated with pearls and precious stones, with *prependoulia* – strings of pearls falling from the edges of the crown. The Serbian ruler is presented as an old man, with impressive features, a long narrow nose, and long gray hair falling in locks to his shoulders. He also has a long, thin mustaches and a long gray beard divided in the middle in two locks. His face, damaged at the place where his left eye was painted, was done in light ochre with reddish and brown shades around the eyes, and with softly lighted and blushed cheeks. King Milutin is dressed in a black *sakkos*, with a *loros* which falls over his left hand. The *loros*, as well as the *maniakion*, *peribrachia* and the *epimanikia*, is decorated with precious stones and pearls. It is believed that Thessalonian zographos Michael, the son of Eutybios, who painted Gračanica's frescoes with his workshop, did Milutin's portrait at the very end of the king's life, ca. 1320.

LITERATURE: Тоџић, *Грачанница*, 108, 170–171, 206, Pl. XVII, fig. 106; idem, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 56–57, 254, 333, fig. 21.

DRAGANA PAVLOVIĆ

